

sively that nothing could be gained by violence. Mr. Sampson, in his speech, exhibited considerable ability, and was frequently applauded.

THIRD DAY—MORNING SESSION.

At 9 o'clock a. m., the President called the convention to order, and after prayer by the chaplain, a motion was made for reading the rules.

The Secretary then read the minutes of Saturday's proceedings, which were adopted.

The remainder of the morning was consumed in considering and disposing of various propositions and addresses in behalf of the education of freedmen, among which was one defending negro suffrage and equal rights before the law, which was adopted and laid on the table.

Other important business was transacted, when the convention adjourned to 2 1/2 o'clock.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

At the appointed hour, the Convention was called to order and opened with prayer by the chaplain.

Various addresses were then made by members from different counties of the State, when James H. Harris, of this city, on motion, presented the following address to the Constitutional Convention now in session:

To the Constitutional Convention of North Carolina and Legislature to assemble thereafter:

Assembled as delegates from different portions of the State of North Carolina and representing a large body of the colored population, therefore, we most respectfully and humbly beg leave to represent to you, and through you to the people of the State, something of our situation and our wants as a people.

Earnestly disclaiming all wish to forestall your action or to dictate in the solemn and important duties which have been intrusted to you, at this most critical period, and confiding in your justice, wisdom and patriotism, to guard the interests of all classes, and more particularly of that class which, being more helpless, will most need your just and kind consideration, they but exercise the right guaranteed to the humblest citizen in this, their petition.

It is with reverent and grateful acknowledgment of the Divine power and interposition, that we accept the precious boon of freedom, resulting as it has from a prolonged and sanguinary struggle between two great powers, and finally decreed by the national will, we look forward with confidence to see the decree ratified by the whole people of the State.

Though it was impossible for us to remain indifferent spectators of such a struggle, you will do us the justice to admit that we have remained throughout obedient and passive, acting such part only as has been assigned us, and calmly awaiting upon Providence. Our brethren have fought on the side of the Union, and have been obliged to serve in the camp, to build fortifications and raise subsistence for the confederate army. Do you blame us that we have, meantime, prayed for the freedom of our race?

Just emerging from bondage, under which our race has groined for two hundred and fifty years, and suffering from its consequent degradation, we are fully conscious that we possess no power to control legislation in our behalf, and that we must depend wholly upon moral appeal to the hearts and consciences of the people of our State.

Both upon the same soil, and brought up in an intimacy of relationship unknown to any other state of society, we have formed attachments for the white race which must be as enduring as life, and we can conceive of no reason that our God-bestowed freedom should now sever the kindly ties which have so long united us.

Filled with gratitude to God for His great blessing, we would bury in oblivion the wrongs of the past, and wish to become more united, as well as more useful and honorable in our sphere of life.

We are fully conscious that we cannot long expect the presence of government agents, or of the troops sent to secure us against evil treatment from unscrupulous prejudice, and unjust men, yet we have no desire to look abroad for protection and sympathy. We know we must find, both at home and among the people of our own State, and merit them by our industry, sobriety and respectful demeanor, or suffer long and grievous evils. We acknowledge with gratitude that there are those among former slave masters who have promptly conceded our freedom, and have manifested a just and humane disposition towards their former slaves. We think no such persons, or very few at least, have lost their working hands by desertion. At the same time it must be known to you that many planters have either kept the freedman in doubt; have wholly denied his freedom, or have grudgingly conceded it, and while doing so have expelled his family from the plantations which they may have cleared and enriched by their toil through long and weary years. Some have withheld a just compensation, or have awarded such pay as would not support the laborer and his family. Others have driven their hands away without any pay at all, or even a share of the crops they have raised. Women with families of children, whose husbands have been sold, have died, or have voluntarily deserted them, have in some cases been driven away from the homes where, under slavery, they have spent a lifetime of hard service. It is just or Christian thus to thrust out upon the cold world helpless families to perish? These grosser forms of evil we believe will correct themselves under wise and humane legislation, but we do most respectfully urge that some suitable measures may be adopted to prevent unscrupulous and avaricious employers from the practice of these and other similar acts of injustice towards our people.

Our first and pressing concern in our new relation is, how we may provide shelter and an honorable subsistence for ourselves and families. You will say work; but without your just and considerate aid, how shall we secure adequate compensation for our labor? We must respectfully and earnestly urge that we desire shall prevail, must there not be mutual co-operation? As our longer degradation cannot add to your comfort, make us more obedient as servants, or more useful as citizens, will you not aid us by wise and just legislation to elevate ourselves?

We desire education for our children, that they may be made useful in all the relations of life. We earnestly desire to have the disabilities under which we formerly labored removed, and to have all the oppressive laws which make unjust discriminations on account of race or color wiped from the statutes of the State. We invoke your protection for the society of our family relations. Is this asking too much? We most respectfully and earnestly pray that some provision may be made for the care of the great number of orphan children and the helpless and infirm, who, by the new order of affairs, will be thrown upon the world without protection. Also

that you will favor, by some timely and wise measure, the re-union of families which have long been broken up by war or by the operations of slavery.

Though associated with many memories of suffering, as well as of enjoyment, we have always loved our homes, and dreamed, as the worst of evils, a forcible separation from them. Now that freedom and a new career are before us, we love this land and people more than ever before. Here we have toiled and suffered; our parents, wives and children are buried here; and in this land we will remain unless forcibly driven away.

Finally, praying for such encouragement to our industry as the proper regulation of the hours of labor and the providing of the means of protection against rapacious and cruel employers, and for the collection of just claims, we commit our cause into your hands, invoking heaven's choicest blessings upon your deliberations and upon the State.

J. H. HARRIS, Chairman.  
JOHN R. GOOD,  
GEO. A. BUE,  
ISHAM SWEET,  
J. RANDOLPH, Jr., Committee.

After the reading, on motion it was received and afterwards adopted, with the understanding that it should also be referred to the first legislature of the State.

A committee of three was appointed to present the address to the first body, consisting of Harris, Galloway and Good.

A resolution to print 350 copies of the Address was adopted, in conjunction with another to supply each delegate with two copies of the same.

The next business considered was the 16th recommendation of the business committee, that colored teachers and preachers be employed where they could be had of competent cultivation.

This proposition elicited a long debate, in which ten or twelve members participated pro and con. The discussion occupied the attention of the convention from 3 until 5 o'clock, when according to rule, an adjournment was had till Tuesday morning.

MORNING SESSION.

TUESDAY, October 3d, 1865.

Vice President Harris called the body to order. After prayer by the Chaplain, the unfinished business was taken up, being the 16th resolution, concerning the colored teachers for colored schools, and when they shall be considered competent.

On the motion to adopt, a lively debate ensued between Messrs. Green, Galloway, Ellison and others. The resolution was finally laid on the table.

The following resolutions were presented by the Business Committee and were received and adopted:

Resolved, That the members of the Convention who assembled in Raleigh on the 29th of September, in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, return their hearty and sincere thanks to the citizens of Raleigh and the members of said church for the hospitable manner in which they have been entertained; also that we heartily thank the officers of our Convention for the manner in which they have performed their duties.

Resolved, That our grateful thanks are due to those benevolent societies at the North who have so liberally provided for the education of our children, and to the Freedmen's Bureau for their efforts in our behalf—that we are especially grateful to the intelligent and excellent ladies who are now laboring in the Schools of Raleigh and other parts of the State.

Mr. Sampson moved that on the adjournment of this Convention it resolve itself into a State Equal Rights League. A committee of nine were appointed in relation to the matter, consisting of Messrs. J. H. Harris, Randolph, J. P. Sampson, Bass, Schenck, Croom, Johnston and Littleton.

Bills for printing, &c. to the amount of—dollars were ordered to be paid.

An appeal was then made to the Convention to assist in burying the son of a poor refugee colored woman. The sum of \$11 was raised for the purpose.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

The Committee appointed to report upon the Equal Rights League asked that the nominations of its officers be referred to a special committee; which was appointed, consisting of Messrs. Randolph, Nixon, Schenck, Brooks and Caswell.

The general Committee of nine reported a constitution of the League which was adopted as follows:—

The Business Committee, through their Chairman, J. P. Sampson, reported the following Preamble and Constitution for an Equal Rights State League:

PREAMBLE.

Feeling the stern necessity of encouraging a well ordered and dignified life, and emulating the efforts of the friends of Equal Rights in New Berne, looking to the same end, therefore we are met in concert with the determination to organize more permanently, consolidating all efforts looking to our general elevation, operating in harmony with the National League or any other national organization looking forward to the same end.

CONSTITUTION.

ARTICLE 1. Resolved that this Mass Convention shall be called the North Carolina State Equal Rights League.

ART. 2. The object of this League shall be to secure, by political and moral

means, as far as may be, the repeal of all laws and parts of laws, State and National, that make distinctions on account of color.

ART. 3. To accomplish this object the Society shall establish its headquarters permanently in the city of Raleigh, N. C. There it shall have its office and business rooms; it shall also employ the press and such numbers of agents and teachers as may be needed to carry out the objects of its creation.

ART. 4. Any person may become a member of Leagues by subscribing to its principles as above expressed, and by making such contributions to its funds as he or she may be able. Church organizations, societies and schools may become auxiliary on the same conditions, and shall be entitled to send delegates to the annual meetings of the League.

ART. 5. Representatives from the sub-Leagues will communicate with the State League. The officers of the League shall be a President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary and Treasurer, who shall hold their offices one year, or until their successors are chosen and qualified, and who, with five persons, chosen from the remaining members of the League, shall constitute an Executive Board.

ART. 6. It shall be the duty of the President to preside at all meetings of the League and the Executive Board. In his absence these duties shall be performed by the Vice-President. It shall be the duty of the Recording Secretary to keep a full and complete record of the doings of the League and of the Executive Board, which record shall be open to the inspection of the members of the League at all times. It shall be the further duty of the Recording Secretary to keep all the books and papers belonging to the League at the office in Raleigh. And it shall further be the duty of the Recording Secretary to take charge of and keep in good order the offices and business rooms of the League; for the performance of these duties the Recording Secretary shall receive such compensation as the Executive Board may determine. The duties of the Corresponding Secretary and Treasurer shall be such as usually attach to such offices. The Treasurer shall give bonds in the sum of one thousand dollars (\$1,000) as security for the proper disbursement of all funds that may come into his hands, and shall make a report to the Executive Board of all moneys received by him and expended under its order at its quarterly meetings. It shall be the duty of the Executive Board to take charge of the particular and general interests of the League, and make such useful rules and regulations for the accomplishment of the object of the League as sound discretion and necessity shall dictate. It shall be the further duty of the Executive Board to make an annual report of its doings to the League at its annual meetings.

ART. 7. The annual meetings of the League for the election of officers, hearing the annual report of the Executive Board and transactions of other business of the League shall be held in such places as the Executive Board may determine on the first Tuesday in October in each year after 1865.

ART. 8. The meetings of the Executive Board shall be held at the discretion of the President, and at such places as he shall designate. Each meeting shall revise reports from its agents and lecturers in regard to all they have done and all moneys collected; which reports shall be preserved by the Recording Secretary. It shall also be the duty of the Executive Board, at each meeting, to settle in full with its agents and lecturers.

ART. 9. All agents shall be accountable to the Executive Board.

ART. 10. The Executive Board shall be paid travelling expenses.

ART. 11. A majority of the Executive Board shall constitute a quorum for doing all business pertaining to the League.

ART. 12. This Constitution may be altered or amended by a vote of two-thirds of the members of the League at any annual meeting.

On motion of Mr. Galloway a Committee of three were appointed to wait upon Gen. Ruger, a king protection for certain delegates returning home where bitter feelings exist against the colored convention. Messrs. Galloway, Best and Littleton were appointed.

Mr. E. P. Brooks, Editor of the Journal of Freedom, now addressed the Convention.

On motion of Mr. Galloway, the Journal of Freedom was recommended by the convention to the colored population of the State.

The following communication from Walker Pearce, dated at Newbern, Sept. 28th, was received and incorporated into the proceedings of the convention:—

Gentlemen.—In directing my attention to matters concerning the colored portion of the community, I would like, precisely as in the treatment of every other subject, to do so with a mind perfectly free from the influence of undue passion or prejudice; and I would aspire above all things to exemplify at all times by my life and principles, as did man's august Model, a distinct answer to the interrogatory of Pilate:—"What is truth?" Beyond this is unworthy of desire, and short of it will be unsatisfactory to me, (so

also with respect to you, my friends, whoever may be offended in consequence.

Believing that the now currently agitated affair of Free Suffrage will, according to the light in which it shall be regarded, immeasurably affect not only the present, but the everlasting interests of the commonwealth, I am constrained as a rational being both to form and express an opinion thereupon. At the same time (thank heaven!) I am well aware that the formation and expression of opinions on such topics in order to be effective of good—may absolutely innoxious, require a careful and prayerful investigation of the ground on which they are based. I do not propose at this late period to enter into a lengthened argument on what has been already so closely examined, so elaborately and ably discussed—leaving clear enough in my mind the inherent right of Universal Suffrage incontrovertibly established. But it may be as well to notice, the opposition no doubt will insist that by clothing the colored man with this distinguished privilege, he will inevitably be tempted through revenge to retaliate upon them who have so long held him in bondage. Now it is very true that there is no discovered policy, nor will there ever be, by which offenders may altogether screen themselves from the natural and swiftly following effects of their own misdeeds. Who that opens his eyes upon things around him does not perceive the conspicuous truthfulness of the declaration—

"Whoever a man soweth that shall he also reap."

However, is the late man-stealer, alias man-stealer, so blinded by his master, the devil, as to dream that his condition will be improved by a known persistence in wrong? No—whatever punishment a righteous Providence may see fit to inflict upon him for the guilt-stained past, the sooner the ballot is placed in the hands of his former slaves, the sooner will his country and his posterity be dragged from the revolting degradation to which, through his suicidal agency, they have been reduced by oppression.

Again, it is apprehended if the Freedman be allowed to vote he will therefrom become ambitious of social equality. If by the objection is meant that by having his rights untrammelled, he will naturally take, agreeably to the divine regulation and intention, that position to which his merits shall justly entitle him—what more desirable result as far as all parties are concerned could be asked than this? Yet, it is further feared, the granting of the voting power and its adjuncts might lead him even to—

"wish or amalgamating with the whites." Well, such irregular intermixtures had sometimes occurred, and I presume if there was anything degrading therein it affected one side as much as the other. Though doubtless for manifold reasons, the greatest good of both races would be subserved by avoiding an alliance of this kind, still there is no more necessary connection between voting as Freedmen and falling in love, than there is between not voting as slaves, and being overborne by the tender passion. There is one guarantee on this point which from some observation in the Northern as well as in the Southern States, I would not hesitate to make, viz., that no true-hearted, loyal colored person will ever consent to force a marriage with a white rebel; but on the other hand, from what, has already taken place, I am very much afraid some stringent enactment will be required to prevent violent amalgamation on the part of the whites with the colored.

Not to consume your time with trifles—I do most cordially hope that the Delegates to the approaching convention of the colored people in Raleigh will have plainly and deeply impressed upon their minds, the solemn duties intrusted to them, notwithstanding the unfavorable predictions and other peculiarly adverse circumstances with which, as a deliberative body, they will be environed. Let them remember albeit, that success in the midst of such difficulties will be crowned with ten-fold glory, and be replete with innumerable and incalculable benefits—yes, blessings throughout all succeeding ages. You will soon appear as you are peradventure aware before a class of men whose sympathies are not with you; of whom you may indeed say, "We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced, we have mourned unto you and ye have not wept." You are about to confront in their representatives inhuman feelings—deeply rooted, highly dangerous, radically—totally erroneous sentiments—body and soul corrupting dogma—a heaven-defying, Satanic code—ay, an unspeakably abominable, intensely nauseating creed of "damnable heresies!"—errors from which your race has suffered untold calamities—errors by which this our once beautifully flourishing and magnificently peerless country, has been doomed to bleed almost to the verge of exhaustion—and even now quakes through late convulsions from her most populous cities to her remotest forests. Nevertheless, some of you have cheerfully assisted in safely guiding the honorable old Ship of State between the phosphorescent surges of the deep and the lightning clouds of war, within sight of a godly, tranquil anchorage. Many of you or your constituents have on the sanguinary mountain-top, (as before Chattanooga) or in the gory vale (as in front of Vicksburg) heard undimmed the clashing of steel and thundering artillery—and trusting in God and your right you will also be equal to this con-

fiot—be amply enabled (we fervently entreat of heaven), to bear simultaneously away with excessive joy, (as the trophies of your persevering fidelity) the palm of complete victory and the olive-branch of enduring peace. Be not diverted from the simplicity and singleness of your design by the pomp and harmony of ingenious diction, by the grand parade of handsomely-bound Law Books—many of them long since condemn'd for their affected homage to the Almighty, while "teaching for commandments the doctrines of men;" many of them being as their authors were described, "like painted sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful without, but within are full of rottenness and dead men's bones." Give not way to the audacious arrogance of temporary power, or the flimsy paraphernalia of place.

You merely go with a calm confidence, manly dignity and christian intrepidity to demand a bare recognition of those rights which are involved in the very acknowledgment of your Freedom. Apposing equivocation about the validity of your claim, or the least delay in granting that claim will be an open insult to your common-sense. The great question of your right to liberty, or otherwise citizenship, has already been affirmatively decided on the congressional forum and on the battle field, and been ratified by the unanimous consent of christendom; and as to any procrastination in its execution being admissible, you will bear in mind that at this identical moment of time, you alone are regarded as representing yourselves. You are held at law no longer as minors, &c., are held, that is under a guardian. Hence what is yours in part is yours in whole; and what you are entitled to at all, you are entitled to now. It is expected no more of you than of others to be children except (what is scripturally directed) "in malice." But since it is further enjoined upon you "in understanding be ye men"—in the event of your application being withheld "malice aforethought" indignantly rejected, in case that the great impartial principles of the Moral Law shall as heretofore be contemptuously ignored, with the civilized-world-approved policy of the Lincoln Administration founded on that law, which policy was professedly to be carried into effect by the present Executive of the Federal government—I say in case of all this, then you may undoubtedly, with the consent, approbation, advice and assistance of Congress and the country, accept the necessary, the only alternative, and, infinitely preferring death to slavery under whatever form or name imposed, assume those disputed rights, and in the fear of God only strike in their defence and maintenance, wherever, whenever and by whomsoever invaded. Rather than resign "one jot or tittle" of that Constitutional Independence which has so long withstood the angry storms of tyrannic persecution, been baptised in the raging fires of deadly strife, and sanctified by the truly "noble blood" or Martyrdom, in the words of Poet Leavitt—"We yet will spill the crimson flood!"

On going North I insisted on the speedy reduction of Fort Fisher, such being, as I conceived sometime previously, a key to the pretended Southern Confederacy.—Possibly there were many others who contemporaneously thought as I did, but anyhow the beneficial effects of its overthrow soon became apparent. With it went down that blood-thirsty Herod of North Carolina—Gen. Whiting—the notorious, epauletted, insurrectionary minion who presumptuously with scrupulous watchfulness and severe penalties, interdicted any approach of our unfettered citizens to our own ocean-embosomed coast, lest some of us, like the Pilgrim Fathers, should thereby (committing ourselves to the tempestuous billows rather than to despotism) escape to some friendly asylum of liberty. There tumbled with that fortification and ingloriously "bit the dust" that ungrateful graduate of West Point (I think) that seceding, wolfish renegade of a Northern State, Col. Lamb. But even anterior to that period who did not notice among the "first fruits of the idolatrous secession-rebellion," in its obedient, infatuated victims belonging to this very State—who did not mark the finger of superintending destiny and the scourge of retributive justice? What happened to the recalcitrant Gov. Ellis? What befell that artful-mischief-making, confederate tool (then U. S. Senator elect) Winslow, with a host of other insurgents of less magnitude, among whom were the revolutionary, Huske, the defiant Meares, the ferocious Lutterloh and the Belial-driven Mullin? I would not be understood as withholding from the dead, whatever may have been their crimes that degree of respect which may be justifiably claimed for them, but when I refer to historical incidents or individuals (ordained solely to bear upon human welfare either in the way of warning or of encouragement) if I mention them at all I must call them by their right names—may the word of inspiration teaches me, I incur a fearful malediction if I put biter for sweet "or sweet for bitter." Gentleman—Delegates, in bidding you adieu, I tender with my most earnest supplications to the Supreme Being in your behalf, my sincere wishes for a successful issue of your labors. We would fain indulge the charitable hope that the shockingly deluded gang (even to utter loathsomeness) of State Rights' counterfeit sovereigns (if

any be still living) who originated and precipitated the revolution, are not incurably impenitent. You are at liberty to assure emphatically any at the capital whose curiosity it might gratify that notwithstanding my unworthiness of such a privilege, I have deliberately arrayed myself on the side of the much-loved, ever-memorable (though alas, thrice-basely assassinated) Lincoln in the sacred work of Universal Emancipation. I have become identified in their eminently philanthropic objects, (b, the grace of heaven determined ever to be to the extent of my feeble power) with Sumner and Chase, and Cheever, and Beechee, and Tappan, and Garrison, and Phillips. If on coming South I can do anything to clinch the nail of triumph which was driven at Fisher and elsewhere, by aiding to bring about free suffrage in my native State; I shall feel that I have not lived entirely in vain. As to whether I fall or not in the effort it signifies little, but whether in that fall I be found leagued with truth or with error is to me (and God grant we may all so feel as to each other) of the utmost vital importance.

The committee on the officers of the Equal Rights League reported the following:

President, J. H. Harris, of Wake; Vice President, J. R. Good, Craven; Corresponding Secretary, Isham Sweet, Cumberland; Executive Committee, William Cawthone, Warren; G. W. Milcher, Cabarrus; Wm. Smith, New Hanover; J. Roberts, Chowan; J. Boreman, Cumberland; H. Fuller, Franklin; A. Pratcher, L. Johnson, Wayne; Thompson, J. T. Schenck, Mecklenburg; J. Nixon, New Hanover.

After the adoption of a resolution encouraging sub-Leagues in every County, the convention adjourned.

EVENING SESSION.

The convention met at early candle light, and was addressed by the Rev. Mr. Fisk, Supt. of Freedmen's schools for the State of North Carolina, on the subject of education. After the conclusion of Mr. Fisk's address the convention adjourned sine die.

Negro Troops—What Gen Grant Says. The Springfield Republican, a sort of Bunsby among New England country newspapers, undertakes to settle the value of negro troops as follows:

"The truth about the matter is, that on several occasions the negro troops fought well. Taken together, they were not equal to the same number of white troops, and no reasonable man ever supposed they could be."

Would the Republican perhaps consider General Grant a "reasonable man," his opinion being quite different on this point? General Grant said of the negro troops, "For guard duty and picket duty, on the march and in an assault, I consider the negro troops surpassed by no soldiers in the world, and equalled by very few."

"But," queried a listener, "does not that include all you can say of a soldier?" "Nearly, but not quite all," responded the Lieutenant General; "what remains is the ability to endure the steady pounding of a protracted campaign." "Yes," said another questioner, "but if the negroes are good for everything else, why not for that?" "I don't say they are not," rejoined General Grant; "I only say they have not been tried."

The parties to that conversation were General Grant, Edwin M. Stanton and Henry Ward Beecher, and we had it from the lips of the latter. We don't think the negro troops are in need of a certificate, even from General Grant, but we print the foregoing for the benefit of such papers as like to be sure of a respectable indorsement before they make up their opinions.—N. Y. Tribune.

REV. H. W. BEECHER ON NEGRO SUFFRAGE.—Rev. Henry Ward Beecher opened the political campaign at Plymouth church last evening, by a sermon in favor of negro suffrage. He claimed suffrage as a right of the negro, although he might ask it even on other grounds. He was for universal suffrage, and would give a vote to every man that lands on our shores. At the same time, he believed that the four millions of Africans now here could be better trusted with the ballot than the Irishmen and foreigners that swarm here from the old countries.

Speaking of negro suffrage again, Mr. Beecher said: "God abhors and is false to his attributes, if there is peace before you settle that question of right." He continued to speak of the duty on the part of the strong to protect the weak.—One of three things must happen to the freedmen—their masters must take care of them, or we must take care of them, or they must take care of themselves. The voice of the people, speaking as the voice of God, has decided that their old masters shall take care of them no longer; and it is our duty to give them all the rights of citizenship, that they may be able to take care of themselves. In conclusion, he spoke hopefully of the future of the North, and of the South will finally be more friendly than ever before.

Why is an eagle like a good Christian. Because he always preys (prays) before he eats.