

GOVERNOR JARVIS ON THE EFFECT

Of the Proposed Constitutional Amendment Reg- ulating Suffrage.

THREE ASPECTS VIEWED

AS IT RELATES TO WHITE VO-
TERS, NEGRO VOTERS AND
THE STATE'S INTERESTS.

IT WILL PROMOTE PUBLIC EDUCATION

There is not a *White Boy* in the State Who Can-
not Learn to Read and Write by
1908. A Blessing to
Good Negroes.

In this discussion I shall assume that the proposed amendment is not in conflict with the Constitution of the United States. It is similar to the provisions of the Constitution of Louisiana which has been passed upon and pronounced constitutional by some of the ablest lawyers in the United States. It was passed by the a legislature composed of many of the ablest lawyers of this State. The American system of government leaves the question of suffrage very largely with the State, and the Supreme court of the United States has recently affirmed and upheld this doctrine in passing upon the new constitution of Mississippi, which contained provisions restricting and regulating suffrage. So notwithstanding the condemnation of the amendment by a few

write, and he will have a motive to study and learn that much, and I have no doubt he will do it. There is no reason or excuse, in this day of educational opportunities, for any boy. I care not how poor he may be, growing up to manhood without being able to read and write. In saying this I am not ignorant or unmindful of the struggles of the poor boys. I grew up among them and I have lived among them all my life. I know they have to work, to toil and strive, and yet I assert they may, if they will learn to read and write before they are 21 years old. I also know that many parents have been indifferent to the education of their children, and have failed to send their boys to school when they might have done so. But I cannot suppose that any father, if this amendment is adopted, will hereafter neglect to send his boy to the common schools, where he may learn to read and write. However much the father may need the services of the boy he can, if he will, spare him from his labor long enough to learn to read and write before he becomes twenty-one. Father and son will have a motive they never had before for the boy to go to school, and in this I see the day coming when it cannot be said, as now, that there are thousands of white men, in North Carolina who can neither read nor write.

TO INCREASE SCHOOL FACIL-
ITIES.

If the people shall say, by ratifying this proposed amendment, that the young men who become twenty-one years old after January 1st, 1908, must be able to read and write in order to vote, then it will be the duty of the people to so improve and extend the common schools as to bring them within the reach of every boy in the State. These schools belong to the people, and I am sure they will make them sufficient to fit their boys to become qualified voters. So I assert that one of the effects of this amendment upon the white people will be to give them better schools, and to the State a more intelligent population.

GOOD GOVERNMENT.

Another effect upon the white population will be to secure to them good government in State, country, city and town, administered and controlled by in-



HON. THOMAS J. JARVIS.

He Has Served the State as Speaker of the House, Governor and U. S. Senator.

Republican lights, who have been dragged from obscurity by the negro vote, I shall assume the amendment to be constitutional, and that it is within the province of the people of North Carolina to ratify it and make it a part of their constitution if they see proper to do so.

• **THE PEOPLE TO DETERMINE.**

The Legislature has performed its part in preparing and passing the proposed amendment to be voted on. It now remains for the people to say whether it shall be ratified or not. If a majority of the votes cast shall be against it that ends it. If a majority shall be for it

telligent white men. Neither the negro nor his corrupt white allies can again dominate our local governments and re-enact the scenes of strife and riot and ruin of 1868 and 1869. Good government is an absolute essential to the peace and prosperity of a State. This is too plain to need argument. We have seen it in in our own State. To establish and maintain it in Cuba, in Porto Rico and Philippine Islands the President and Congress have called up on the American people to pay taxes to carry on wars and to mourn over their sons slain in battle. The negro has demonstrated the fact that he cannot govern.

ends it. If a majority shall be for it then it will become a part of our constitution. So the whole question and responsibility is now with the people. It is for them to say what shall be done with it. And in making up their minds and arriving at their conclusions they have ample time to consider this great question in all its bearings upon the future policies and interests of their State. Much will probably be written and spoken for and against the amendment before the day of voting comes. It will be well for the conservative, thoughtful people to take these arguments and reasons, consider them and then vote as they be convinced is for the best interest of themselves, their homes and their States. If anything I may say in this article shall aid any one in his consideration of this great question then it will not have been written in vain.

In order to treat this question as plainly and at the same time as comprehensively as possible in a brief article, I shall discuss it under the three following general propositions.

First. Its effect upon the State's white population.

Second. Its effect upon the State's colored population.

Third. Its effect upon the State's general policies and industries.

EFFECT ON WHITE MEN.

I now ask the read to consider the effect of this amendment, if adopted upon the white people of the State. And first of all I assert it does not disfranchise a single white voter whose name goes on the registration books prior to January 1st, 1908. Not one. Every white man who is a qualified voter now will continue to be so as long as he lives, so far as this amendment affects his right to vote. Every young man arriving at full age before January 1st, 1908, can register and vote if he puts his name on the registration books before that date, and he will continue to be a voter as long as he lives. Then what class of white men can it affect? I answer, only those who become 21 years old after January 1st, 1908, and who will not learn to read and write. I say will not because there is not a white boy in the State who cannot learn to read and write if he will. Every boy will understand that to be a voter he must be able to read and

strated the fact that he cannot govern. It is likewise true that the white man who is dependent upon the negro for his place and who is dominated and controlled by him is equally unfit to govern. The adoption of this amendment eliminates that class of white men as well as the negro from prominence in political matters in the State and insures to the intelligent, worthy white men the management of public affairs. Page after page might be written along these lines of thought, but I must abandon this inviting field for the present and hasten on to consider our second general head, lest I make this paper too long. This, then, bring us to a brief discussion of

THE EFFECTS OF THE AMENDMENT UPON THE COLORED POPULATION.

Its first effect upon this race will be to greatly reduce the number of colored voters in this State, and consequently to practically eliminate the colored man from politics. Will this be a blessing or a curse to his race?

After thirty years of earnest endeavor to advance the negro race in all that pertains to their best interests, I give it as my opinion that it will be a blessing to them to eliminate the great body of them from politics. They were suddenly changed from slaves to sovereigns. Without any preparation for a proper discharge of the important duties of American citizenship, they were by military edicts clothed with all its prerogatives, powers and privileges. It is but natural that they should have prized these new-born rights above everything else, and should have revelled in them. For thirty years they have devoted themselves to politics only to find that it does not bring to them that which they most need. The negro race, above all things else, need homes for their families and mental, moral and industrial training for their children. They cannot get these out of politics

WILL MAKE THIRTYLESS NEGROES THRIFTY.

The colored race may be divided into two classes—those who are trying to do something, to acquire something and to make something out of themselves and their children, and those who have no concern for anything beyond one day's

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ON THE EFFECT

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rations. The first class make good citizens, the second do not. All who belong to the first class will soon fit and qualify themselves and their offspring to become voters under the proposed amendment if it shall be adopted. Those who belong to the second class will soon learn that they must do better or forever be cut off from the ballot box. I believe this will appeal to them as nothing else will. When they see a part of their race walking up to the ballot-box and participating in all the privileges of the elective franchise and then fully understand that it is within their power to qualify themselves and their children to become voters it will tend, I trust, to move many to a higher activity and zeal to become better citizens. The process among the colored people of acquiring such knowledge and education as may be necessary to fit them for a proper discharge of their duties of citizenship and to qualify them as voters may be slow, but I believe it will be stimulated by the adoption of the proposed amendment. In the meantime the white people who will control the administration of public affairs will give to the colored population an infinitely better government than they could possibly provide for themselves. I therefore verily believe that the amendment will not affect the colored people injuriously.

ITS EFFECT UPON THE STATE'S POLITICS AND INDUSTRIES.

It must be manifest to every one who gives the matter any thought whatever that so long as the danger of negro domination in a single city, town or county exists it will overshadow every other question. As much

town or county causes it to be
shadow every other question. As much
as men differ in their opinions on great
economic questions they cannot afford
to let these differences divide them so
long as they are in the presence of this
danger. But only let this danger pass
away and the question of negro domina-
tion in any section will be put to rest,
and then our people can and will turn
their attention to the consideration of the
great public questions that are pressing
themselves upon us for solution. Tariff
taxation may be an old threadbare
question, yet it is by no means a set-
tled one. The great trusts and combi-
nations which are imposing onerous
burdens upon the consumer as well as
seriously paralyzing the energies of
the enterprising young men of small
means, rest largely for their security
and protection upon the present exor-
bitant rates of tariff taxation. Fortu-
nately there is a feeling growing up
among the great mass of the people
that these trusts and combinations
must be destroyed or they will destroy
the freedom of trade and the just re-
muneration of individual efforts, en-
terprise and labor.

OTHER PROBLEMS TO BE SET- TLED.

The financial problem—the money
question—in its various phases and
ramifications, is still a living question
and will be, till it is settled right and
in the interest of the people. It may
not be as acute as it was in 1896, be-
cause imperialism, expansion and other
questions may obscure it for the
time being, but it will ever engage the
attention of the American people till
they are satisfied with the method and
measure of its settlement.

The policy of the conquest, expansion,
acquisition, imperialism and war in-
augurated and pushed forward by the
present administration, seems to be a
breaking away from all the traditions
and policies of the fathers of the re-
public. The wonderful victories won
at Manila and Santiago by American
valor threw a glamour over this new
policy that seemed to secure for it the
applause and approval of the Ameri-
can people. But when the burden of
high taxation to carry on a foreign
war presses itself upon the people and

high taxation to carry on a foreign war presses itself upon the people and they see thousands upon thousands of their young men dying of disease and slain in battle to force American ideas, policies and systems upon a people ten thousand miles away who are not prepared for them and who do not want them, this new policy must be discussed upon the hustings and receive its solution at the ballot box.

North Carolina possesses wonderful and untold sources of wealth. We need an intelligent, progressive administration of public affairs that will lead the way and encourage the movements for the the development of these resources and that is able to establish and maintain good government intelligently, economically and peacefully administered in every part and parcel of our State, so that the laborer and the capitalist shall know that his labor and investments will not be imperiled or swept away by bad government.

These are mere outlines of some of the great questions which demand thoughtful consideration and ample discussion and the settlement of which one way or the other will materially affect the policies and industries of the State. So long as the danger of negro domination in any section of our State is ever present with us it will overshadow these and all other economic qualifications. Then, too, it must be admitted that a few Republican leaders can cast the great mass of the ignorant negro vote on either side of any of these great questions without any regard as to how it affects the voter himself or the community in which he lives. Hence it seems that the elimination of this vote will open the way for an intelligent consideration and wise settlement of these and other great questions which must engage the attention of the people of North Carolina.

I have thus briefly outlined some of the reasons why the amendment should be ratified. Elaboration in a paper of this length has not been possible. The thoughtful reader can take up these lines of thought and pursue and elaborate them for himself, and it seems to me that when he does so, he must come to the conclusion that the amendment should be ratified.

THOS. J. JARVIS.

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