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The Anderson Intelligencer.

An Independent Family Journal---Devoted to Politics, Literature and General Intelligence.

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POLITICS OF THE DAY.

SPEECH OF HON. J. P. REED

At the Complimentary Demonstration, in honor of his Election to Congress, on Tuesday Night, November 10.

In accordance with the promise made last week, we herewith present our readers with the substance of the remarks of Hon. J. P. Reed, on the occasion referred to in the heading:

My fellow-citizens, neighbors and friends: The position which I occupy, as one of the successful standard bearers of the National Democratic Party, in South Carolina, at the recent election, without reference to any individual merit on my part, has prompted, I am quite sure, the demonstration with which you have honored me this evening. And yet, I not only thank you most sincerely for the compliment you thus indirectly pay me personally, but cordially unite with you in your congratulations and rejoicings that another opportunity has been afforded the citizens of our beloved old commonwealth, to approach the ballot box, and unite their voices, in the choice of those who are to rule the destinies of our country. This, fellow-citizens, after years of disfranchisement and exclusion, as to many of you, should indeed be cause of profound rejoicing to our entire population; and that the recent election, the first that many of you had participated in for years, although conducted with unusual ardor and enthusiasm, should have passed off without popular tumult or violence, is not only cause of personal congratulation to every citizen of the State, but affords the highest possible evidence that our population are devoted to the preservation of the peace, and the due observance of the laws of the country. True, fellow-citizens, you have been defeated in the paramount object of the great contest through which you have just passed. You had earnestly hoped and believed, that Horatio Seymour, the distinguished citizen and statesman of New York, would be elevated to the Chief Executive office of the country, and that, through his great experience, wisdom and statesmanship, the Constitution and the Union, with the modifications necessarily accomplished by the war, would have been speedily restored to the equality, energy and purity with which it was endowed by the fathers of the Republic. But although defeated in securing the administrative agent whom they desired, the National Democracy have demonstrated that "there is life in the old land yet," and that, but for the unbounded personal popularity of Gen. Grant,—a popularity, I venture to say, several hundred thousand votes greater than the strength of the party who nominated him,—the result of the election would have shown an overwhelming majority of the American people conservative in their sentiments, and in favor of the immediate restoration of the Southern States to the Union, freed from the fetters of the Reconstruction Acts and the other enormities perpetrated against them by the extremes of Radicalism, on terms of perfect equality with the other States. If, I am correct in this opinion, then the contest that has been waged, has been prolific in important results to the South, and may lead under the administration of one, who nominally the head of the opposition, is so far uncommitted by personal pledges, or the elastic platform of his party, that sustained by the conservatism of the whole country,—yielding to the impulses of an enlarged patriotism, and desiring to make himself first in peace as in war, will have it in his power to secure the restoration and redemption of his country, including the down-trodden and suffering South, more speedily and certainly than perhaps any other man in America. At all events, these are hopes and consolations, that now that the smoke of battle has cleared away, and we are permitted to review the field calmly and dispassionately, we should seize hold of and cherish as an anchor to the soul, in this our day of tribulation. It will never do to despair of our country. It cannot be, that an experience of eighty years, has extinguished in the bosoms of the American people, the spirit of liberty and free government. No, my fellow citizens, it is not dead but sleepeth, and it may be as before remarked, notwithstanding the terrible forebodings we have indulged, that Gen. Grant is the man ordained of Providence, to rekindle the fires of liberty, lead us out of the wilderness of despair, and restore our country to its former condition of fraternity and prosperity. In one word, though beaten we are not destroyed. We must "never give up the ship."

"But nail its colors to the mast,
And hold our country's honor fast."

But, fellow-citizens, though defeated in the Presidential election, we have the proud consolation to know that the Democracy have succeeded beyond their most sanguine anticipations, in the redemption of our own glorious old Commonwealth, and that but for the false and seductive influences that have been used by those who are strangers to our people, and in the main enemies to our prosperity, to estrange the recently enfranchised class of our citizens from their allegiance to their friends and their State, we would to-day have stood before the world a unit in sentiment and action, from the seaboard to the mountains. This result, so gratifying in itself and so important in its consequences, should go very far towards reconciling us to the National defeat we have encountered. It is here in the State of South Carolina that all the interests, most important to us as a people, are to be developed and maintained; and, if left to ourselves, the day is not far distant when we will be able to settle upon a just and satisfactory basis, all the complex and difficult questions resulting from the new relations of our colored population; and our entire people will be prepared to unite peaceably, energetically and satisfactorily in an effort to build up our waste places, and enforce a prosperity and contentment unprecedented by our earlier history. To aid in accomplishing this end, to the extent of my poor abilities, was the leading purpose which I had in view during the somewhat exciting campaign that has just closed, and is, I beg to assure you, my fellow citizens, the object of my highest future ambition. Prior to my nomination as the Democratic candidate for Congress from this District, a nomination that I accepted, as your delegates to Columbia are aware, with great reluctance—I had attended some public discussions of the issues of the day, by our ablest and most distinguished fellow-citizens, and whilst I was deeply impressed with the zeal and ability with which the speakers entered into the merits of the Presidential canvass, I must confess that I considered the spirit manifested and utterances used as, in many respects, unguarded and impolitic. In other words, it appeared to me, that the style in which the canvass was opened, was rather calculated to unduly excite the passions of our people at home, and the prejudices of our political enemies abroad, than to convince the understanding and influence the judgment. I, therefore, determined at the commencement of the canvass, which I felt it my duty to make, to endeavor to temper the ardor of debate so as to conciliate rather than excite, and by addressing myself to the practical questions involved in the issues of the day in a way that could not fail to reach the understanding of the most illiterate—produce, if possible, a unity of feeling, sentiment and action on the part of our entire population. This line of policy relieved me from the necessity of assailing either the character or personal position of any one of our political opponents, and prompted me to insist, as I did most strenuously every where, that the peace should be preserved, all acts of violence avoided, and none other than legitimate means resorted to, to control the pending election. And in turning now to a review of the field, I am not conscious that I uttered a word in any one of my addresses that any individual could take personal exception to, or that could be construed into an effort to excite the passions of either sections or races. Of Gen. Grant, the standard-bearer of the opposition, I knew nothing, except that he had been a successful soldier, and as such, belonged to a class that the American people have always delighted to honor, and I sedulously avoided the mention of his name until after the result of the State elections in Indiana, Ohio and Pennsylvania was known, which produced so depressing an effect on our people, that I felt it my duty to say, on more than one occasion, that he would doubtless be found a much better and wiser man than we had been taught to regard him—that being elevated to the first office in the gift of the American people, uncommitted and untrammeled as to his future policy, ignoring the control of the more ultra of his party, we had reason to hope that he would be influenced by wise counsels—that his patriotism would be found large enough to embrace the interests of the people of the whole Union—that we need not apprehend the evils from his administration that the fertile imaginations of many had depicted; and that the result of the election in our own State was of incomparably more importance to us than the result of the Presidential election. I stated then, as I repeat now, that no matter what party succeeded in the Presidential election, we could not hope to throw off the incubus of tyranny and oppression that has been fastened upon the State otherwise than by our own exertions—through the peaceable instrumentality of the ballot-box, under the existing State Constitution; that with the influence and patronage of a Democratic administration, we would doubtless have been able to have accomplished that much desired result at an earlier day, but that it was only a question of time, and defeat in the Presidential election should prompt us to increased efforts to excite the pride and stimulate the interest of every citizen of the State, without regard to race or color, to unite in one grand and unyielding struggle to throw off the unparalleled oppression that we are subjected to by our domestic rulers; that the interests of the white and colored population are identical, and their future prosperity or adversity entirely in their own keeping; that the party in power will neither clothe or feed them, but protecting all alike in the rights guaranteed to them by the fundamental law, will leave them to work out their future destiny in their own way; that if not the policy, the inevitable consequence of the administration of the State Government by the present *regime* of foreign adventurers and their native adherents, as they have set out, will be to accomplish the utter ruin, degradation and expatriation of a large proportion of our population, white and colored, leaving them, with the fresh importations of birds of like feather, which they intend to introduce, to revel in the homes of our fathers, and luxuriate on the lap of our venerated mother.

Topics like these, fellow-citizens, enlarged upon and illustrated by a particular analysis of the principal enactments of the body which styles itself the General Assembly of South Carolina, and more particularly of its financial policy, by which swarms of new officers with enormous salaries have been created, to do the simple work which has heretofore been performed by public spirited citizens, without fee or reward. Its vast, unnecessary and unjustifiable increase of the public debt; its enormous burthen of taxation and expenditure, inaugurated by a body who, in the main, own no property, and pay no taxes; together with the internal revenue and tariff systems of the United States, by which, unlike any thing in the previous financial history of the Government, discriminations are made in favor of the rich and against the poor, in favor of the few and against the many, whereby the rich will grow richer, and the poor poorer, until we will have a nation of lords and vassals; the freedom of the few colored people South, having been substituted by the worse than domestic slavery of the great mass of the American people, white and colored, North and South. Topics like these, I say, fellow-citizens, have constituted the staple of the numerous public addresses I have had the privilege of making to the people during the recent Presidential campaign. In the Counties below this, where the colored population are much more numerous than with us, I was favored with the opportunity of addressing large numbers of them on divers occasions, and it gives me pleasure to state that I invariably found them not only anxious to hear all that might be said, but readily impressed by reasoning addressed to their understanding, respecting their personal, pecuniary, and political interests. I endeavored to convince them of the truth that the only real friends they now have left upon the whole face of the earth, are their former owners,—the whites with whom they have been raised, that they know, and by whom they are intimately known. That whilst their necessity is regular and profitable employment, the requisite of the land owner is steady and reliable labor. That the two races being mutually dependent on each other, if left to adjust their own relations, would readily accommodate things so as to secure the highest attainable degree of prosperity and contentment, to each. But that, to insure peace and prosperity, the employer and employee must necessarily be on terms of personal and political friendship, and that such a friendship it is utterly impossible to maintain, if they continue to affiliate with a party whose policy, in the opinion of their employers, is destructive of their highest and dearest interests. That next to their honor, mankind generally are disposed to defend their rights of property, and that the burthen of taxation to which our poverty-stricken commonwealth is subjected by the Federal and State Governments under Radical rule, is so utterly ruinous to our entire population, that the man at the South who sustains that party in its premeditated oppression, might justly be regarded as a public enemy,—nay more, as in some degree, the enemy of every good citizen. That it was not to be expected that persons desiring laborers—or "help," to use a New England phrase—would employ those who were opposed and unfriendly to their interests, personally or politically, and I appealed to them to state whether they would do so, if they were themselves employers, and was invariably and promptly answered in the negative. That employees as a general rule, in all countries, and of all races, readily acquiesce in the judgment and wishes of their employers, as to the persons or party they shall support at political elections. That this was particularly the case in the Northern States, where it is well known the wealthy manufacturer invariably marches his white operative to the polls with the ballot in his hand, which is deposited as directed, with the precedent understanding, that if he ventures to disregard the directions given him, he is to be promptly dismissed from service. That this is, but a practical illustration of the influence that capital exercises over labor everywhere, and accounts, in a great measure, for the unanimity of political sentiment in the manufacturing towns of New England. That this accord between the capitalist and laborer is essential to the profits and income of each, at all times and in all places, and more especially so at the South at this time, where our highest interests demand that our people should be a unit in all things. That in this State, there should be but one party, and the dictates of an enlarged patriotism demand that every voter, white and colored, from the sea-board to the mountains, should stand in solid phalanx to resist the oppressive taxes and penalties heretofore fastened upon us by Radical misrule, and which looms up infinitely more terrific in the future, from the action of the existing Legislature of South Carolina. I explained to the colored people how, perhaps, one-half of their hard earnings are at present taken from them indirectly, without their knowledge, by Radical Congressional legislation, and thereby the wages of labor reduced, and the prices of the necessaries of life increased, until with all their efforts, they, together with the poor of all races and colors, are comparatively speaking, perpetually the objects of hunger and want; and it gives me pleasure to state, that I found no person so illiterate as not to understand and appreciate why it is that he now has to pay, if purchased at retail anywhere in this State, one dollar for three pounds of Rio coffee, whilst prior to the war he could purchase eight or nine pounds of the same article for a dollar,—when it was explained that the import duty—tax—on coffee, imposed by a Radical Congress is five cents per pound in gold, whilst during the whole previous history of the Government coffee was admitted *free* of duty,—paid no tax whatever; nor could any one fail to perceive how it is that the Radical party by its system of taxation, discriminates *in favor of the rich and against the poor*, thus reversing the rule adopted and acted upon by the Democratic party from the foundation of the Government, until it was expelled from power; when it is explained that although the poor man has to pay to the Government a tax of five cents per pound in gold on every pound of coffee he buys, and an equivalent tax on every other necessary of life which he consumes; the Northern capitalist who owns his thousands and tens of thousands of dollars worth of Government bonds, the principal and interest of which is payable in gold, to be extorted from the hard earnings of the poor man by direct and indirect taxation, is not himself required to pay a farthing of taxes to the Government. I say that these illustrations seemed to be understood and appreciated by the most illiterate, and prepared them to put a proper estimate on the honesty and sincerity of those who pretend that the Radical party is the friend of the colored man or the poor man of any class; and it is well known that we are all poor in this country at present. I also attempted to show to those, who might chance to be a little obtuse in perceiving the enormous proportion of their hard earnings that they pay to the Federal Government, in indirect taxes, how they would very soon realize the amount they would have to pay, *directly*, to the State Government, if the enormous system of taxation and expenditures, inaugurated by the powers that be, is persisted in. That, to say nothing of the unjustifiable increase of the public debt by millions of dollars, by funding the bills of the Bank of the State at their par value, which had been purchased up at eight or ten cents on the dollar, and are held by Northern speculators; by the issue of several other millions of bonds to aid certain railroad companies; by the expenditure of nearly half a million by a so-called Convention and Legislature, and otherwise, the interest on all which has to be paid annually from the toil and sweat of the poor laborer, the ordinary expenses of the State government, as it is proposed to run it, will amount annually to probably ten times the sum we were required to pay in the days of our highest prosperity. That even the expenses of collecting the taxes, under the system inaugurated, will amount to more annually than the entire expenses of the State government at any time before the war. That to add to the symmetry and beauty of this system, we have been suddenly converted, on paper, into a great and prosperous people, by the enactment, almost *verbatim et literatim*, of the statutes on the same subjects of Massachusetts, Vermont, or some other New England State, where an exceedingly dense population, and great wealth, excuses, if it does not justify, so complex and expensive a machinery; but which with us, with our sparse population and extreme poverty, will give to almost every foreigner and native white affiliated with that party an office, at a rate of compensation that will enable them, in a few years, thus indirectly to confiscate and appropriate to their own use, a large proportion of the little property remaining in the State. That such, indeed, seems to be the settled purpose of the existing State authorities, as is evidenced by the land system they propose to establish. A land commission, consisting of a number of well paid persons, is to be appointed, whose duty it will be to buy up for the State all lands that are sold for taxes, or that can be purchased otherwise at low rates; and to enable them to pay for these lands, it is proposed to issue at the outset three millions of State bonds, which will be put upon the market and sold for cash at what they will bring. The three millions being appropriated, another and another like sum may from time to time be substituted, until the State has reclaimed a title to its entire territory. The lands thus acquired, are to be divided into forty or fifty acre lots, and made subject to pre-emption, as the public lands of the West, upon the person who enters paying one-third of the valuation in cash, and giving bond and security to pay the balance in two or three years. That it is falsely and fraudulently represented to the colored man that he will in this way, which is neither more nor less than absolute robbery, be enabled to acquire the forty acres of land, which he has long been led by Radical promises to expect; when it is well known that if the lands of the present proprietors are sold for taxes, or by compulsion otherwise, no native citizen of the State, white or colored, will be able to acquire one foot of them, but that, being open to pre-emption upon payment of the value fixed on them, the teeming population, native and foreign, of the New England and Northern States, who are crowded for elbow-room, and where greenbacks are plenty "as autumn leaves in Vallambrosa," will swarm down upon us like the locusts of Egypt, and occupy our entire territory, to the utter exclusion of our native population, of all races and colors. That such is unquestionably the end and aim of the magnificent system of expenditures and taxation which is about to be inaugurated. But these taxes are to be imposed exclusively on property, and the idea is held out to the colored race, and all those who own no property, that they will escape the burthen that others are subjected to. Not so, but on the contrary they will necessarily be the greater sufferers. I take it that the landholders of the State understand their own interests, and so far as their own action is concerned, will be able to take care of themselves. To do this, they will be compelled to make the employee, the laborer, pay his full proportion of the taxes they are subjected to, and if the laborer is Radical in his proclivities, and has contributed by the ballot to the ruin of his own countrymen, he should, and will be compelled to pay, in a way he will understand, the lion's share of the taxes imposed to run the machine he has helped to construct. For example—A. owns a farm of the value of one thousand dollars, the amount of the Homestead exemption, which, by the by, cannot avail against taxes or public dues. During this year he paid certain laborers ten dollars per month wages, and to others he gave one-third of the crop produced by them. Before the crop is pitched another year, he is required to pay one hundred dollars State taxes on his farm. This he must necessarily provide for, and can do so in no other way than by throwing it off on his employees, by giving to those to whom he paid ten dollars per month heretofore, six dollars per month hereafter, and to those to whom he gave one-third of the crop heretofore, one-fifth hereafter, to be fixed irrevocably in his contract. This result is both just and natural, as every man white and colored must perceive at once, and it cannot fail to convince them that we are alike interested in throwing off the incubus of Radical misrule.

But having satisfied the colored man by reason and argument that his interests are identical with those of the white man, it became necessary to expose to his understanding the fraud and falsehood by which his credulity and fears had been excited, in relation to his emancipation and his future status as a freeman. He had been taught to believe that he had been freed by the Radical party, and that if the Democracy were successful in the Presidential election he would be remanded to slavery. It is painful to know that even men who drifted South as the hangers on of a victorious army, and remained here as a part of its *debris*, to fill their carpet-bags with the scanty earnings of both the white and colored races, and then decamp to their own country, should have united in propagating such unmitigated and mischievous falsehoods. But the fact was nevertheless so, and it had to be met. As to the mode by which the slave became free, it is admitted that he was practically emancipated by the results of the war, but he is really more indebted to the Confederate than the United States army—for the fact. The former began and persevered in the contest which ended in his freedom, in despite of the offer held out by Mr. Lincoln, the head of the Radical party, as also by the Radical Congress of the United States, up to the first of January, 1863, that an abandonment of the contest on our part should secure to us the perpetuation of slavery. This the South refused to do, preferring rather to give up slavery than abandon the contest for self-government, in which, after years of sectional strife, they had been led to engage. Therefore, the South, on the first of January, 1863, consented to give up slavery, upon being defeated in the contest of arms. But if we admit that they were practically emancipated by the army of the United States alone, then that was not emancipation by the Radical party. That army was composed of both Radicals and Democrats, and, generally as we were advised, much the largest proportion of the latter, and it was not, therefore, the act of a party, but of the American people. But, however, their practical emancipation may have been accomplished, they were never legally free until the people of the South in their own State Constitutions, and by the ratification of an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, *unanimously* declared them free, and that slavery should *never again* exist in the broad limits of the American Union; and to sustain their freedom, thus established and secured, every Democrat in the United States is pledged by the ballot, by principle and by honor, and every white native of the Southern States by his solemn oath in writing, which is filed with the archives of the country. Not so, however, with the Radicals as a party. On the contrary, whilst falsely and corruptly charging that the success of the Democracy would re-establish slavery, they have themselves took a position that would enable them to affirm, consistently, if their interest prompted them to do so, that the colored people have never been emancipated, and are, to-day, legally the slaves of their former owners. By the Reconstruction Acts they, in effect, affirm that the territories South, formerly known as States, were not States at the close of the war, but conquered provinces. If this position be correct, then slavery has not been abolished, for the people of mere provinces could neither have made constitutions for themselves, or ratified the amendment to the Constitution of the United States abolishing slavery; and it would remain to-day, as it stood when the Northern merchant-man and speculator forcibly brought the negro from his native country and sold him to the Southern planter, thus establishing an institution that has recently become revolting to most of the civilized world.

But, my fellow-citizens, I am sure you will say, as I said to the colored people on all occasions, that it is absurd and ridiculous to discuss this question, even to meet a most malignant falsehood, and but for the illiterate character of that people, it would have been so. They are free, and no party or individual in the United States or in the world, will ever again even think of remanding them to slavery. If, however, they continue to countenance the persons or party who propagate such falsehoods amongst them, and suffer themselves alienated from their fellow-citizens of the white race by men who are deliberately plotting the pecuniary and social ruin of all classes South, they will realize ere long that the boon of freedom is a curse instead of a blessing. I am pleased, however, to be able to express the opinion, that the colored people of this State, and particularly of the Third Congressional District, are being rapidly enlightened as to their true interests, and that the time is at hand when they will be zealous to drive from our territory those who have so basely deceived them, and cordially unite with their former owners and friends in building up a prosperity and happiness that we are all now strangers to.

Having informed myself of the change of sentiment that was rapidly taking place amongst the colored voters of this Congressional District, I was not surprised at the result of my own election. I knew that large numbers of them would vote with the Democratic party, whilst the great mass had determined to stay away from the polls, and have nothing more to do with elections until better informed as to their true interests, by testing practically the sincerity of the contending parties; and it is to this commendable determination on their part that we are indebted for the overwhelming victory achieved in the Third District, which would have been still more crushing if the people of gallant old Edgefield had been permitted to participate in the election; for there I found that most of the citizens, white and black, felt that whether in a State or territory, they were still Carolinians, and disposed to join in a huzza for their country and their countrymen.

I know it has been charged by the opposition, and as the newspapers state, by my late opponent, Judge Hoge, that the colored voters were kept away from the polls by intimidation. The allegation, so far as my observation and information extends, is utterly groundless; and, indeed, the result of the election incontestibly proves it so. They went to the polls wherever they desired, throughout the Congressional District, and cast a large Radical vote without hindrance or molestation anywhere; and I venture to affirm that a more quiet and orderly general election was never held in any State in the Union. If they labored under any intimidation, other than that produced by the fear of loss of employment, which I have shown it is entirely legitimate and natural the employee should be subjected to by the employer, then it was as groundless as was the intimidation of my late competitor, Mr. Justice Hoge, when he fled from this place on the night of the 16th of October last. There was not the slightest cause for his intimidation or flight, unless it arose from a consciousness of the unholy work in which he was engaged, in trying to stir up strife and alienation between the white and colored races. If, however, he is possessed of the usual silent monitor within, which it is generally thought is difficult to find about persons following the business in which he was engaged elsewhere than in the recesses of their port-monies, then he may have had cause of apprehension—

"For conscience makes cowards of us all;
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought."

Even this cause, however, could not have operated to intimidate and keep colored voters from the polls; and it is not true that they were intimidated. On the contrary, most of those who did not choose to vote with their employers and friends, absented themselves of their own accord, influenced chiefly by the causes I have already mentioned; and hence their conduct in the recent election should commend them to the confidence and kindness of our entire white population, as did their patriotic and praiseworthy deportment during the war, and generally since its close. It is true that a large number of them, unable to throw off the party shackles with which they had been bound, and chiefly on account of intimidation from the threatenings of the "Loyal League," as it is falsely termed, adhered persistently to the opposition in the late contest; but it is very difficult now to determine who they were. They are generally heartily ashamed of it, and ready to exclaim, "thou canst not say I did it;" and my advice, fellow-citizens, is, that those of them who are earnestly repentant should receive a full and free pardon, with the hope, that having seen the error of their ways, they will go "and sin no more."

In conclusion, allow me to suggest, fellow-citizens, that although disappointed in the leading result of the recent election, it cannot fail to have taught us many important lessons, and if we possess ourselves in patience, the day-star of our deliverance will soon be seen rising above the political horizon. Amongst other things, we have learnt that even the universal enfranchisement of the colored race, forced upon us, and maintained by military power, in violation of the express letter of the Constitution of the United States, is not, it foreign influence were removed, and we were left to ourselves, the intolerable grievance we had apprehended. That in this State, as elsewhere, intelligence and wealth is competent to mould the politics of the country, and that at an early day, South Carolina may and will be remanded to the government of South Carolinians. That to secure this result the sooner, it is essential that we should yield to some extent our preconceived opinions on the subject of suffrage, and unite on the platform laid down recently by the Central Executive Committee of the Democratic party, which assures the colored man that when restored to power, we will promptly and ungrudgingly secure to him a liberal qualified suffrage, based on education and property. This will not only be just, but is satisfactory to the intelligent portion of them, as I have had ample assurance. They well know that the present condition of things is unnatural and unjust. They know that the Constitution expressly provides that the States shall regulate the elective franchise, each for itself. That Congress has no power to interfere in the matter, and that one rule for the South and another for the North cannot con-