“The Negro has No Rights a White Man is Bound to Respect.”
Dred Scott Decision of a Democratic Supreme Court.

COLORED MEN

AND

The Democratic Party

Review of American History on this Issue.

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There are just two places in the United States today, where every negro voter enjoys the privilege of casting one ballot, according to his own judgment, and having it counted for the candidate of his choice.

The first of these places is, where the Republican party is in power; for there his vote is never challenged; while the second is, where the Democratic and Republican parties are nearly evenly divided; so that the Republican minority is able to exercise a supervising and restraining influence in behalf of the colored voters.

In the same ratio that the Democratic party advances in influence and power, the civil and political rights of the colored man recede and vanish.

Prior to the adoption of the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, the colored American had never enjoyed the right of suffrage, as an American citizen, in all parts of the Union.

As far back as the first quarter of the present century, free colored men in the State of North Carolina exercised the right of suffrage, and they, as a class, voted the Whig ticket, which, like the Republican ticket of the present day, was emblematical of what was highest and most salutary for the great Republic; but, in 1833, yielding to the persuasive voice of Democratic writers and stump speakers, they, by their votes, helped to place the Democracy of that state in power, and were by them deprived of that great privilege, which was not regained until the passage of the Fifteenth Amendment.

First Negro Voters in Ohio.

In the State of Ohio, even, no colored-American was permitted to cast a ballot for the election of men to office who both ruled him and levied taxes, which he was obliged to pay, unless he could prove to the satisfaction of the judges of election that, he had in his veins a preponderance of "white blood"—which was in accordance with a decision rendered by the Supreme Court of the State of Ohio.

In the fullness of time, however, the grand old Republican party came to the rescue, and bestowed on every colored American, regardless of the color of his skin or the curl of his hair, that great boon which we call the Elective Franchise; thereby putting us on a par with the most favored white man who glories in his American citizenship.

The franchise was given to us not more in grateful remembrance of patriotic services rendered by the colored American in camp and in field to the cause of our glorious Union, during the
great Civil War, than as a means of protecting the liberties which the Proclamation, the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments, had bestowed on us.

Without this safeguard, in this republican form of government, the term Liberty would be for us, only a delusion and a snare; since we would be the butt and jeer of every evil-disposed person who might condescend to defraud and ill-treat us.

Woman without the franchise does not suffer appreciably, because the love, respect and honor which the father, husband and son bear for her furnish an aegis of protection, shielding her from all active and passive harm. The infant, under twenty-one years of age is secure in his personal and property rights, because his parents and guardians exercise that power for him; but the poor negro, in many instances, without either guardian or friends, is left an outcast—a political pariah in the land.

Democratic Opposition.

The franchise was freely given to the colored American, in the face of great and persistent opposition on the part of the Democratic party, at a time when the negro had no political favor to offer in return for it; but he has shown his appreciation of and gratitude for the same, by using it for the perpetuation of the great Republican party, composed as it is, for the most part of the brain, heart and enterprise of the country.

Slightly digressing here, I might add, as a reminder to the more youthful class of my readers that, all three Amendments (the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth), were stubbornly opposed, step by step, not only on the floors of Congress, but in the various State Legislatures, also, by the Democratic party. Indeed, it was seriously feared by our friends, at one time, while we were waiting for the adoption of the Fourteenth Amendment, by which our citizenship is guaranteed, that the Democrats would be successful in defeating it; for when it was first passed upon, in the State of Ohio, the General Assembly was Democratic in its majority; and by voting against it, they rejected it; the majority in the next General Assembly, however, was Republican; and they adopted it; thereby preserving to us our citizenship of this greatest nation on earth.

Coming back to the consideration of the relative positions occupied by the Republican and Democratic parties during the decade in which the war for the Union was waged, and the reconstruction amendments and acts came into existence, it may be well to remind the colored voters of Ohio, of the unrelenting bitter-
ness and hostility which the Ohio Democracy displayed against the bestowal of the suffrage upon colored men in this state; and we must not forget that this opposition to the civil and political welfare of the negro was displayed by them at a time when it could not be said that the negro was the enemy of the Democratic party: for he had not as yet, voted with either party, as a class.

In 1869, one year before the adoption of the Fifteenth Amendment, when the heroic and disinterested efforts of our patriotic negro soldiers, in behalf of the Union, were still fresh in the minds of all—when the empty sleeves and legless trunks of our brave black boys were in evidence everywhere, telling for them a story more praiseworthy and pathetic than human tongue can ever express, the Democratic General Assembly of Ohio, enacted a law, which can be found on Page 119, Vol. 66, of the Laws of Ohio, which reads in part, as follows:

"Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Ohio:

"Section 1. That any person who shall vote at any election held under the laws of this State, not being a white male citizen of the United States, shall, on conviction thereof, be imprisoned in the penitentiary and kept at hard labor not more than five years nor less than one year.

"Sec. 2. Any person who shall procure, aid, assist, counsel or advise any person, not being a white male citizen of the United States, to vote at any election held under the laws of this State, shall, on conviction thereof, be imprisoned in the county jail of the proper county, not more than six months nor less than one month; and shall be also liable to a civil action for a penalty in the sum of one thousand dollars, which may be brought against him by any elector of the county or district in which the vote was received. * * *

"Sec. 3. If any judge of elections shall receive or sanction the reception of a vote from a person not being a white male citizen of the United States, on conviction thereof, he shall be imprisoned in the jail of the proper county, not more than six months nor less than three months; and shall also be liable to a civil action for a penalty in the sum of a thousand dollars, which may be brought against him by any elector of the county or district in which the vote was received." * * *

Hostility in Democratic Platforms.

Whoever will take the trouble to examine the platforms of the Ohio Democracy, during the decade from 1860 to 1870, will be surprised to find how ultra in its hostility that party was to every
movement which was even suggested for the protection and comfort of our poor people, struggling not only for political recognition, but even for social places.

I need hardly refer to the fact that, in the Southern States of Mississippi, Louisiana, North and South Carolina, where the Democratic party is in power, it has, by specious and unjust amendments to the state constitutions, and by legislative enactments, substantially nullified the Fifteenth Amendment, and thereby rendered Section 1, of the Fourteenth Amendment essentially null and void.

We are told, by our political opponents and by some of our own race whose zeal in wrongdoing seems to outrun their discretion, that a sovereign remedy for the ills of which we complain—for ballot box stuffing, fraudulent counting of ballots, unconstitutional amendments and hostile legislation, is to surrender to them and permit them to have their own way. Listen to the Rev. Daniel W. Shaw, a Methodist minister of Charleston, W. Va.—the ablest, perhaps, of all the apologists for the political crimes which have been perpetrated on the colored American, in the South, and winked at by Democrats in the North:

"The center of our difficulty," says Mr. Shaw, "is the negro's political opposition to the white man. If this be true, and I think no man will deny it, the way out is for the negro to stop opposing the white man."

In a former paragraph, on Page 5 of his pamphlet, Mr. Shaw had railed against the young colored man for not being governed in his political conduct by his own educated and enlightened reason. Here is what he says: "What is the use of our schools, if we are all going to follow in the same grooves of thought?"

Now here is a patent inconsistency between his theory and his practice; for, while in one breath he clamors for education and intelligent action, in the next he advises these same discriminating voters to surrender their convictions, arrived at after enlightened and mature reflection, to their opponents, whose economic and political views are at variance with all that we deem best and most expedient.

The average Democrat must not imagine that, because the colored Republican refuses to repudiate the Republican party and cast in his lot with the Democratic party, that therefore he does not reason; far be it from the fact; for, on the contrary, it is the most indubitable proof that he does reason.

The colored Republican reflects on all the deeds of the Democratic party during the sixties—his opposition to all the
amendments; his hostile legislation, especially the Ohio law quoted above; then he looks at the red-shirted, red-handed Democracy of North Carolina this year; after that he turns and sees the Tammany policemen of New York, who were sent out to protect the few colored men from the many white men of the mob, themselves with their batons breaking more heads of the colored men than of the mob; then he reads the following, recently given out for publication, by Senator McEnery of Louisiana:

"Senator Chandler is mistaken," says Senator McEnery, "in saying that the Democrats of Congress have never agitated the question of the repeal of the Fifteenth Amendment. In fact, I have done so myself. I believe, furthermore, that not a single Southern Senator would object to such a move."

Disfranchisement of Negroes Advocated.

After all the foregoing, the negro voter remembers that, only a month or two ago, W. Bourke Corkran, who is a fair representative of New York Tammany Democracy, in a speech made before a conference of Southern men held at Montgomery, Ala., where he spoke by invitation, favored the repeal of the Fifteenth Amendment; and then the Republican negro, with mathematical precision, putting all these indicia together, concludes, with the late Frederick Douglass, that, "on deck is within the ranks of the Republican party; everywhere else is at sea!"

A good and honest citizen does not wear loosely his political belief, to be cast aside with every change in the political wind; like the good churchman who lives and dies in the faith, the colored Republican clings to his political choice. "The Old Guard dies; it never surrenders!"

Our reverend friend would be in better business, if he desires to lead our race up to a higher plane of life, if he would endeavor to teach them to be sober, industrious, studious, and economical—to learn to read the platforms of principles of the different political parties and understand them; and above all, to seek, in every manly way, to cultivate and maintain friendly relations with the best people in every state wherein he resides. He should teach him to study the difference between "16 to 1" and an honest dollar; to discriminate between "free trade" and a protective tariff, and to be able to explain what part Mr. Bryan took in securing the ratification of the Paris Treaty.

The colored Americans, as a class, are wage earners, and ought to be taught if, indeed, they do not already know it, that what-
ower improves trade and commerce for the farmer, the mechanic, the manufacturer, the railroader—in fact, whatever sets money in motion, benefits the colored man proportionately, as much as it does them—that when they have money to spend, he gets some of it; but when they have none, he too, is lacking.

On Page 7 of his pamphlet, Mr. Shaw, like other "independent" colored men to whom I have listened, attempts to detract from the glory of the Republican party and dim the lustre of the stars which shine in the crown which adorns the brow of grand old Abraham Lincoln, by arguing that, "they did not voluntarily free the slaves"; but that the august result was consummated as "an accident of the war." If these men actually believe what they say, it is evidence of profound ignorance of both law and fact, on their part; for their action was a result, not an accident of the war!

These men who teach the youth of our race base ingratitude, "sharper than a serpent's tooth," should remember that slavery was a constitutional evil; that it had been recognized by the highest court of the land, and that Mr. Lincoln as an oath-bound, constitutional officer, whatever might have been his views and sympathies with reference to slavery, had no more right to emancipate than you or this writer, could say, in good faith, people of the country, was forced to do the act by the exigencies of the war. Had he acted without this or some other equally strong reason, this act would have been illegal and void.

Another favorite expression on the part of "independents" colored voters, and which Mr. Shaw also used, is that "Mr. Jefferson Davis, the President of the Southern Confederacy, was a leading contributor to the emancipation of the negroes."

**How Jeff Davis Contributed.**

Yes, I answer that, is true. Mr Jefferson Davis, in the same way and to the same extent, contributed towards the emancipation of the slave that Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Jesus, contributed towards the redemption of mankind.

They tell us that colored troops fought for the freedom of the slave. Yes, this is true; it is a fact of which I am very proud; but, let us never forget that it was the Republican party which armed them in the face of most stubborn opposition on the part of the Democratic party. The Cubans fought for their liberties, but the United States is none the less to be thanked and praised for the glorious services which it has rendered to the Cuban cause.
amendment platform of the Republican party, adopted at the Philadelphia Convention, we read the reaffirmation of the loyalty of the party to the highest interests of the colored American. Listen!

"It was the plain purpose of the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution to prevent discrimination on account of race or color, in regulating the elective franchise. Devices of state governments, whether by statutory or constitutional enactment, to avoid the purpose of this amendment, are revolutionary and should be condemned."

Here then, in the platform of the Republican party—the party which put the amendment into the Constitution—we find ourselves looking for that assurance of support and encouragement which we so much need.

We look in vain for any word of encouragement in the Democratic platform. It is a wonder that the "independent" politicians of color, who grumble because the declaration contained in the Republican platform is not more elaborate, did not succeed in having, at least, one word of assurance put into the Democratic, Kansas City platform!

This writer has voted the Republican ticket during the thirty-three years, last passed; and he feels that from the eminence of duty conscientiously performed, he is authorized to offer one word of warning to the colored American, if such there be, who feels that he is "almost persuaded" to vote any ticket other than the straight Republican ticket, from William McKinley down to the least, and that one word is that, in changing his politics, he should "make haste slowly."

JOHN P. GREEN.