Mr. President; the manner in which this question has been discussed has certainly awaken a my surprise, the attention of the Convention, has been chiefly directed, to the question of the colored man's right to vote. This to my apprehension sir, is a dead issue, a settled question. it has been forever fixed and decided, by the colored man himself. Not in the remote and indistinct past alone, but in the days and years that are fresh in the memory of all in that conflict which the nation has just emerged, scared and dimmed but unweakened, it seems but a few days sir since I was one of those who were swayed and controlled by that unmanly prejudice that has found such full expression on this floor, since I too thought the negro a kin to the brute and accepted the truth stamped upon the first page, of God's revelation of one blood are all nations of the earth, with a proviso. I can remember sir, when in my folly I recoiled at the idea the uniform I wore should cover a black breast, for the Flag which I served be upborn by bayonets in the hands of dusky soldiers.

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Speech on
vi
Elective Franchise
Delvd in Convn
of 1868

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I conjure it now with shame as I dwell upon it now there comes before me a picture photographed for ever on my mind. It is a sunny slope in Tennessee the wreck and ruin of a bloody battle lie around. Carnage has builded his altar there and his miriad of victims is cast upon it, the sacrifice is over and the bloody servitors have departed, the mellowed Sunrise casts its glory over all. Beside a stiffened Corpse which lyes with tightly folded arms, and looks with glassy eyes up into the bright heavens, as if appealing for the light of life again bends a young officer my friend, he seeks for a memento to send to some loved one, of the brave man by whose cold clay he knelt. With difficulty he unclasps the folded arms unlooses the Blue Jacket and looks for his watch, it is gone, he unbuttons the vest and there between a black hide and a blue shirt stained with the blood of a dusky martyr ~~to~~ finds the colors of his Regiment That corpse was the Color Sergeant and That

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The colored of the 6th United States Colored Infantry massacred at Fort Pillow after fair and honorable surrender, by a fiend who walks to day unhung and clamors for a white man's government, If I forget that day and its lesson of noble manhood, and ever fail to give my voice and my strength for the equal, political and civil rights, to that race which gave one hundred and eighty thous and such heroes in the darkest hour of the conflict to snatch the Banner of freedom from such foes may God forget me and mine forever.

But sir this question has been settled also by the government of the United States, when coming time shall hymn the glories of the present era, when our age shall be classic in history, when children shall study our literature and laws with the reverence to which we now turn to Rome and Athens, then the historian will write, as the crowning glory of the nineteenth century, the recognition of the rights of manhood. Man is man is the ~~keen~~ ~~oat of our~~ key note to our civilization.

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And it is the highest glory of our ~~nation~~ country, that she was first among the nations of the earth, to write upon her forehead This great truth, Its glory will shine back like the star of evening over the darkening orient world, and be the beacon light of promise and of joy to the downtrodden peoples of the old world, The providence of God sweeping through the cycles of the past like Homer's Gods through space, has turned and overturned the works of man and nations until the American people have been forced to declare, amid the anguished throes of dissolution, Man is man as the great idea of Gulhood and its unity filling and inspiring the followers of Mahomet giving power to their arms and victory to their valor was cristalized in that glorious aphorism which has become their watchword Alah Aleh So the great idea of our American nationality and civilization is enthroned in that one word the proudest of earthly names manhood There is no color before the law, black and white are citizens alike.

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of our glorious nationality, colaborers in working out her destiny and heirs alike with the glories purchased with their mingled blood.

But gentlemen may say that this idea is not universally adopted in the States of this Union and that we have the same right to exclude colored men in N. Carolina as in New York, the root is dead and the branches will soon either you might as well try to stay the tide as the progress of this principle, it is fixed and fixed forever. The solemnity with which some Delegates choose to consider this established principle, the tragic garb which they confer upon the pet Hob Goblin of an extinct era is really amusing, the earnestness with which they strive to reanimate the defunct negro of our anti war politics is worthy of a better cause alas, it is too late. The Ethiopean plank in the Democratic platform has lost its strength. The root nurses of American politicians will never more frighten their protiges with the blab lipped broken noses long heels and crooked shins of the typical African

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Proudly he stand in the political arrena and proclaims himself the peer of his fellow men, glorying that God has made him such as he is, it will not do the cry has lost its potency the Scepter has departed from Judea, the mournful wail whose cadences have fallen on our ears is but the echo of a dead lie

It is a voice from the tombs like the whining chant of the peddlers of Constantinople in the name of the prophets figs

The question is not shall any race be excluded from suffrage, but shall any men be debarred from that priviledge whether they be white or black and if so what men?

The fundamental principle of Republican government I conceive to be that no man shall be deprived of any of the rights or priviledges ~~except~~ enjoyed by his fellow men, except so far as may be necessary to secure the rights of others.

This principle has forced itself upon the minds of every political philosopher and found expression in miread forms. I has burst through every artificial organization of society

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and struggled on towards its own fulfill-ment, despotism could not crush it, and revolutions have compelled monarchs to acknowledge its truth, it is above law being the basis of all law, it is greater than Constitutions being the Rock upon which all true government is founded.

I have saved the Republic was the only answer of the great Roman, when asked if he had not violated the law. The safety of the State is the highest law, was the richest truth which the medieval philosopher could ~~wield~~ glean from all the wisdom of the ancient lore;

This truth has also been forced upon the American people as one of the eternal principles, which the Omnicient wisdom has ordained, and which neither men nor nations can violate with impunity, it is the pith and marrow of the war through which we have passed; it's first lesson. Upon no other ground, can that great uprising of freemen which crushed the power of rebellion be justified or excused.

No legal sophistry no self styled

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Science, no superficial lore, can stand before its Damascenic edge; law, customs, contracts, constitutions, fall before it;
It is the instinct of justice more true and certain than the wisdom of the schools: it is the truth of Almighty God written in the watch fires of hundred circling camps, the American people read the message aright; they obeyed its teachings and victory perched upon their Standard; their deliverance was accomplished the peon was shouted, the people were free — the nation was saved, how soon was the lesson forgotten
Rejoicing for the triumph sorrow for the dead and pity for the conquered mingled in every breast

. The nation mourned. Her noblest sons had fallen in the conflict, by hundreds of thousands every family mourned. Every hearthstone was draped and the ~~immortelle~~ wreath of immortelle,

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rested sweetly on a half mil=
lion of martyr=graves. The na=
tion mourned. ~~Her~~ heart was
tender. Mercy gleamed in every
teardrop, and joy at our great
triumph, sorrow for the dead and
pity for the conquered, mingled in
in every breast. At that hour, the Amer=
ican people would have received
the people of the rebel states with
open arms, to a full communi=
on of political privileges and rights
~~The God in whose hands~~ He "to whom nations
and peoples are but sand," saw
fit to change this mood. The hand of
the assassin struck the beloved head
of our nation, and he was borne
to his beautiful prairie tomb amid
the wailings of millions of indignant
mourners. It was enough. Justice re=
sumed her sway. Without forgetting

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mercy — the sword of justice was unsheathed. The immortal maxim of the Kero-martyr whom they mourned, was enshrined in every heart, — "to do the right as God gives us to know the right." That glorious principle was made the corner-stone of future legislation. And what was the result? How has this great lesson ~~maxim~~ been crystalized in our laws?"

The amendment known as the 14th Article of the Constitution of the United States, the Civil Rights Bill and the Reconstruction Acts are its glorious first fruits. Shall our Constitution be another; that is the question which we are called upon to decide.

But against what danger are we called upon to guard? how shall the Safety of the State be secured? How shall this greatest of political principle be applied?

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"The war which has just closed was indeed a war of great ideas. But those ideas were wider and deeper than the gentleman from Beaufort seems to apprehend. It was not simply between Slavery, — African servitude — and the non-enslavement of that race. It was between the principles of free labor, free speech and free truth, ~~against Aristocracy~~ Oligarchy builded upon ~~and~~ fed and sustained by Slavery. Slavery was the mere feeder, the nurse and supporter of Aristocracy. The basis principle of the Rebellion was not Slavery. That institution was a mere concomitant, a companion piece of the greater, fouler, and more damnable principle — a few are born to rule, the rest of mankind to obey — a few should govern the many serve.

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This was the basis principle of the rebellion, the corner stone of the Confederacy, to maintain power in the hands of the few, the rights and liberties of many were overthrown. Color was nothing cast was everything in the theory of the rebellion. It was builded upon the principle that later was the badge of servitude, that a nation was composed of two classes only, the ruling class and the serving class. It was enunciated by the master mind of that movement in the columns of "De Bows Review" in these words: "I am aware that in order that one real gentleman may live a thousand paupers must die yet I would by all means make them and make them permanent by laws of entail and primagenature"

This was the object and purpose of the Confederacy, the path and motion of rebellion.

Men were to be divided into gentlemen and servants, nobles and serfs, color had no place in the creed, the poor white man was to be the compeer of the Ethiopean slave

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Did time permit a thousand evidences could be produced of the truth of this statement, I will refer to but one.
It has been often noted sir, with what accuracy the minds of the common people grasp a great truth and enshrine it in a maxim never shall I forget how vividly this fact forced itself upon my mind when a prisoner in one of the Revolutionary Bastiles a ~~guerrilla~~ gurulous soldier said to me with mournful emphasis oh! sir this is the rich man's and the poor man's fight. it was the whole matter in a nutshell, a volume in a sentence. The war from which we have just emerged was a struggle between Republicanism and Oligarchy, between the rights of the people and the usurpations of Aristocracy, between the ~~[illegible]~~ the elevation of the masses and the exaltation of the few; between feudal theory and free principles. It was the old sophism of the Divine right to rule, and the ambition of a pampered aristocracy pitted against the unerring instincts of a free people.

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'The war of the Revolution established and fixed upon this continent the principle of National freedom and equality of Right. The struggle was not ended. The young giant was exhausted, by years of war and fruit were necessary that he might be able to grapple with the great Dragon Despotism again and in another form ~~again~~

Meantime, the ~~great~~ mighty foe had been strengthened by the same years of rest, and had become entrenched at the South, and had ~~strengthened~~ made Slavery the bulwark, behind which the next battle of the war of ~~Liberty~~ Republicanism against Oligarchy was to be fought. The issue was made up, the battle fought the rampart carried one more stronghold of ~~Aristocracy~~ Oppression was overthrown ~~carried~~

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Did the struggle end here? Was the accursed spirit which animated and maintained Rebellion finally exorcised by defeat? Did the few renounce their right to rule, and yield the sovereignty to the people? If so we nothing more to fear. The ballot may then be safely entrusted to all, within the limits of the State. If we are assured that these men accepted in its fullness the arbitrament of war, if they were willing that the poor and the oppressed, the humble and the enslaved, should stand forth erect as when they came from the hand of the Creator and enjoy the same rights and privileges as themselves, then indeed the ends of justice are accomplished and our liberties are secure. But let us see. What was the first act of these men whom the Mercy of the Conqueror had spared from destruction, was to spurn the freedman, the former

slave to whom they owed a debt
which eternity is hardly long enough
to liquidate, — spurned him with
contempt and obloquy from their
doors. They left him desolate and a-
lone to struggle with the world
which their own enslavement had
unfitted him to grapple with. Did
they devise means for his elevation
and education? Did they take the
outcast whom they claim to be so
terribly degraded, by the hand and
strive to lift him up and purify
prepare him for the duties of the man
and the citizen? Or did they with cow-
ardly spite seek to drive him further
into vice and press him lower into
degradation! Did they grant him the
rights of manhood before the law or
did they shut him from the jury-box
— no matter how intelligent and how
honorable he might become? Did they
put him upon the witness stand and
allow a jury, even of themselves to

decide upon his credibility as a witness or did they declare that his testimony against a white man was void? Did they allow him representation when taxed or did they put an unheard of tax upon his property and the employer responsible for its payment? Did they grant him any of the rights of a man, not to say freemen which they claimed withheld? Did they grant to him the right to a voice in the formation and execution of the laws by which he was governed or did they decree that one sixteenth of negro blood should debar him from the privileges of citizenship? Did they grant them one single right or privilege ~~that~~ civilly political, moral and educational, or did they deny them all, and then come and justify the Officer, because one doctor, prescribing for his own disease had found the negro's skin to be as crooked as the

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paths treason! But did they go further? Did they burn churches and school houses built by the toil-earned money of the ~~slave~~ newly-freed slave, and the kindly charity of earnest friends? Did they do more! Let Memphis and New Orleans answer! I shudder at the picture! It is too horrible for recital! I turn to another branch of the inquiry.

Did they offer reparation for past injury? Did they restore that of which they had robbed the poor! Did they provide that the malefactor should suffer for his crimes? Did they declare that the cries of women tortured and Children maimed by inhuman monsters in unholy warfare should reach the ear of justice and punishment be meted out impartially? or did they vote immunity to all, bully the loyal men of his remedy and permit the foulest demons who have disgraced the earth to go unpunished? Did they offer any reparation ~~[illegible]~~ for any

act Committed? If so, when and what?

Were they sorry for the act of rebellion or did they glory in the misery and carnage, suffering and woe which which their own foul wickedness had wrought? Do they show penitence for crime or do they openly boast that their only regret is that they did not more deeply imbrue souls in blood and crime, their only sorrow that the foul wickedness they inaugurated was not completed and perfected in all terrific vileness? Do they honor loyalty and treat with respect the patriot who refused to sully his fame forever by taking any part or lot in their unparalleled crime, who took his life in his own hand, and chose to run the gauntlet of guards and spies, who chose rather to match himself in cunning and fortitude with the myriall bloodhounds of con=

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reciption; ~~rather than~~ who left home friends and family to the mercy of the merciless rather than become a party in the overthrow of our glorious nationality whose loyalty was tried as not peoples was ever tried and came forth from the crucible pure gold; do they honor these patriots for their devotion to the government which they now claim to serve, or do they come upon this floor and with a vengefulness worthy of Catiline ask that every such man, shall be deprived of the election franchise!

Do they even honor him who gave his strength to the ^ unholy cause until hope was lost and success despaired of, and who at the last moment of this final hour, threw down his arms, accepted in hearty good will the terms of the conquering power and put himself in

the harness, to render effective and successful the policy and laws of the government to which he owed his life and fortune? or does he curse him as a renegade and a traitor, and ask that he too may may be shut out from the privileges of freedmen.

Are they loyal? or do they come upon this floor boastful only that they do not longer offer resistance to the Government of the United States?

What has been their course toward the government of the United States? Have they accepted the terms offered in Mercy or flung them back with scorn!

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Constitutional Convention of North-Carolina,

Raleigh, ... 1868.

Have there men power and is that power dangerous?

Will it be increased by ~~abolishing~~ giving the right of suffrage?

The power of the State is exercised through the ballot.

We are told that we are not the tribunal to punish crime against the United States.

We are told that we should not go further than Congress of the U.S.

Let us follow Congress.

It is God-like to forgive.

Summum jus summa injuria —

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Constitutional Convention of North-Carolina,

Raleigh. ..... 1868.

~~A bill~~

Should we confer this right upon these men Can we go before our Constituents and stand before the future and say that we have fulfilled this greatest, highest principle of government, and answer like the noble Roman, "I have stood the Republic"?

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... [illegible] ... - Look at him!

... [illegible] ...

... [illegible] ...

man party - ... [illegible]

... - Congress holds the ... & if we choose

to cut our throats Cong. will still have ...

... [illegible] ...

Not so, ... [illegible] ...

the ... [illegible] ...

Humanity ... like to forgive - the

highest ... is the ... - so

mercy & charity highest most ... of old

... - Champion of Rep. ... - came

with tears ... as termed now

by American ... pardoned penitent +. What

the result, not 10 min. after pardon, curse

& ... the men, who had ... them. Rec'd

no favors - as strong & defiant as Satan - ...

... if still in hell - God never ...

... an adult generation - Any more thankful

to us, than ... to ... - Pause - Open the door to

all, can we go back & let it pass ... pos.

... - Granted ... of Rep. to enemies & still

... claim said Rep - not ...

... enough to ... right to hold office -

Tyrant & buffoon, double traitor, with all

his ..., held ... as typical

... on this ... - Of all

Abscondites, mortist. We are told as far as Congress has gone - not true - So far as dealt shut off - If we follow example do the same - Hope in main features minority report become the law of the land -

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