

V  
F. D. Standard: ~~Happy~~ Happening  
to take up the Sentinel of the 12<sup>th</sup> inst I  
was surprised to find in its columns  
the following bit of verse -

Copies of letter  
to Standard

July 19<sup>th</sup> - 1887



Now, Mr Editor, ~~and~~ I suppose  
I have a right to claim to be a radical  
"of the strictest sect", a lion-pure  
ultraish of the first water. At least  
this is my reputation, and one who  
has been so frequently cursed by the  
Sentinel may certainly claim this  
without denial by the opposition -  
~~In the Fall of 1887, being then a~~  
~~member of the Council~~

I had hitherto supposed myself to be the  
 only public man in the State who had  
 ever openly advocated, <sup>perhaps though one</sup> ~~and~~ <sup>who</sup>  
 earnestly believe in the abolition of the poll-  
 tax - Having long been convinced both of  
 the bad policy and unrighteousness of  
taxing souls, I was in favor of refusing  
 a place to any such provision in the  
 Constitution of 1868, and used my  
 utmost exertions to prevent its adoption.  
 My attention had been peculiarly di-  
 rected to ~~the~~ the unjust and  
 dangerous character of this system of tax-  
 ation by the terribly oppressive and bur-  
 densome taxes which were levied upon the  
 polls by the legislature of 1865-66.  
 Evidently and avowedly done for the  
 purpose of carrying upon the recently  
 emancipated, ~~black~~ and then unrepre-  
 sented blacks, ~~the~~ all that was pos-  
 sible of the burden of the government  
 which refused them every right and  
 was efficient <sup>only</sup> ~~completely~~ in their oppression.  
 Accompanying this tax was the equally  
 infamous provision of the same legislature  
 by which the employer was made  
 accountable and responsible  
 for the poll-tax of his employees.



By this means ~~it was intended~~ the most  
gigantic scheme for robbing the poorest  
of the poor, in order that the rich might  
batten upon the spoils of their poverty  
was organized and for three years car-  
ried into successful operation. The  
doctrine that "from him that hath, more  
shall be taken away even that which he  
hath" was most beautifully exemplified.  
From an estimate made at that time  
from the best data I could obtain, I  
arrived at the conclusion that the aver-  
age poll and road tax of the ordinary  
farm hand amounted to about the value  
of one month's labor, or one  
twelfth of his time. This estimate was  
at that time admitted by our bitterest  
opponents to be a fair one and they only  
grounded their opposition to it upon the cry  
of "Agrarianism" and the assurance that  
in the future it should be lighter.

Fully impressed with the importance of reme-  
dying this great evil I openly advocated the  
entire abolition of this ~~tax~~ system of taxation  
during the campaign for the Convention  
in 1867 and was elected upon that  
platform. The Convention refused to dis-  
card this system of taxation, and to its last-  
ing disgrace continued this relic of mon-  
archical tyranny in the State.



They did however make a great advance upon all previous legislation upon the subject, by putting an unmistakable limit to the extent of the injustice. They reduced the burden as to leave only the obnoxious principle as a ground of future complaint. For this act alone if by no other - the Republican party has entitled itself to the lasting respect and gratitude of every poor man in the state. While it perpetuated the fall-tall it took away almost entirely the power of oppression thereby by limiting its possible amount to two dollars.

I was much surprised to find this song in the columns of the Sentinel and but for its contemporaneous matter and the old saw about the deal quoting Scripture, I might have supposed that this journal and the party in representations, were working up to the fact that "the world does more."

The history of this song is a little peculiar also. It appears as original matter in the Sentinel "words by Prof. Henry C. Carter" but it is really pilfered, and from an old source too considering its present status as a Conservative Campaign song.



but such a little bit of business for a lifetime  
of the same kind

It is not author's stock however for our opponents to steal or counterfeit  
from the columns of the Anti-Slavery Standard written by one so terribly ignorant  
to the party of brains and culture as myself. I do not expect it as it is

It was actually prepared by your cor-  
respondent, while canvassing as a Re-  
publican candidate for the Convention of  
1868. It was first published in the  
"Anti-Slavery Standard" of which, as  
you are aware, sir, I had long been a  
regular correspondent, under the pseudonym  
de plume of "Wenckan" my maternal  
name. It was afterwards published in  
clip form and circulated and sung in  
my county. The Sentinel probably filed  
its copy from the the Standard as it was  
then published with the remark that it  
was "sung at Mass meetings and  
other gatherings." I recollect being  
mortified at the expression when I  
came to see it in print, as I thought it  
a very awkward ~~one~~. Being approved by the organ  
of the party of brains and culture, I suppose I may  
now regard the ~~change~~ phrase as elegant and the song  
edge of these facts did not lessen  
my surprise at seeing it in the Sen-  
tinel - I little dreamed that I  
should ever fall as low as to  
write campaign songs for the Con-  
flict party which has been so long trying  
to buck up against the stream of pro-  
gress - We ~~cannot~~ cannot tell to  
what fair uses we may come!

Wenckan

did not  
send to  
to the p

prayer and remembrance for him  
and other sufferers! I think it is a good

W. Buckner

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