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THE WILMINGTON REVOLUTION

Forced Upon the People to Preserve Life and Protect Property.

IT WAS NOT POLITICAL

The Condition of Lawlessness Preceding it Was Result of Fusion Government.

HOW IT WAS ORGANIZED AND CONDUCTED

In the Midst of the Whites Protected the Negroes. It Occurred After the Election.

Beneficial Results to City and County.

By IREDELL MEARES.

The effort by the Republican speakers in this campaign to make it appear that the Wilmington revolution, which occurred November 10th, 1898, was inaugurated by the Democratic party in New Hanover county, to carry elections by intimidating negroes, even to killing them, merits the disapproval of every citizen of the State who understands the real significance of that revolution. It was not conceived nor consummated in the interest of any political party. The revolution was the outcome of a social condition caused by the incompetent administration of public affairs in this city, and county by the Republican and Populist parties. This condition, in 1898, was one of lawlessness, insecurity to life and property, and its dangers confronted the people of Wilmington night and day, with aggravating and increasing insistence. The city government had been directed previously to the fusion Legislature of 1895 by the mayor and a board of ten aldermen. There were five wards in the city, two aldermen being elected from each ward. Three of these wards were controlled by white men, who were thus enabled to elect always six of the ten aldermen, and by that narrow majority the city government was controlled and directed by the white citizens. The aldermen elected all city officials and appointed all subordinate employees. There was a Board of Audit and Finance, having a veto power upon expenditures, whose members were appointed by the Governor of the State. The Fusion Legislature of 1895 created a Board of Police Commissioners, with power to elect all officials and employees, with the exception of the mayor, and the members of that board were named in the act. It consisted of three white Republicans, one Populist and one negro. The board of aldermen was continued, but practically stripped of power. It had no power to appoint subordinate officials, employees or policemen, but it was supposed to have control of these in administering the government and in preserving the public peace. This Act was repealed in 1897 by the Fusion Legislature, and instead, the Governor was given the power to appoint, not only the Board of Audit and Finance, but five of the board of aldermen. The citizens were allowed in each ward to elect one alderman. This enabled the Governor and the Republican party to control the board of aldermen, by the five aldermen appointed by the Governor and the two aldermen elected from the negro wards. Governor Russell made the appointments. The result was that a Dr. S. P. Wright was elected mayor and John E. Melton the chief of police. The former was a Republican and the latter claimed to be a Populist. Neither of these men were fitted for the positions. The subordinate city officials and employees, with few unimportant exceptions, were composed of incompetent white men and negroes. The assistant city clerk and treasurer was a negro. There were about seventeen negro policemen appointed. The county government passed into the control of the Populists and Republicans at the fall election of 1896 under the county system provided by the Fusion Legislature. Elijah Hewlett, a Republican, was elected sheriff; G. Z. French, a Republican, was elected to the Legislature. It was French's desire to have been elected sheriff, but Russell was him in the Legislature. The arrangement was made by which Hewlett would receive a nominal salary from the office, and French, after coming back from the Legislature, would administer the office and take the fees. French was, therefore, practically the sheriff. The greater number of his deputies were negro politicians of objectionable character. Hewlett was afterwards indicted for farming out his office, and, rather than face the indictment, compromised with the author. There were forty-two negro magistrates elected. The Board of County Commissioners was controlled by Republicans. The criminal court for this county had been presided over by an able Democratic jurist for many years, but the Fusion Legislature of 1897, abolished the court, in order to oust the presiding judge, and recreated it to supply a place for a Republican, and gave authority to the Governor to appoint the judge. Governor Russell appointed Judge Sutton, who presided over the court from that time to the fall of 1898.

In the summer of 1897, President McKinley re-appointed John C. Dancy, a negro politician, who did not reside here, Collector of Customs for this port. His special deputy was a negro. A number of inspectors and boatmen were negroes. Altogether there were in the fall of 1898 as many as ninety-three negroes, holding office in this city and county, including some six or seven in Federal appointive offices.

It will be seen from the above state-

ment that for the two years preceding the revolution the administration of the city government, the county government and the criminal courts were in the hands of Republicans and Populists. The condition which followed is due directly to their mismanagement, incompetency and mal-administration of the law and public affairs.

CONDITIONS IN 1898.

It is not my purpose to state at length the lawless condition that followed. It is well known in this State. Burglaries and incendiary fires were a matter of ordinary occurrence. No arrests were made. On one occasion a negro burglar was detected by two ladies. Neighbors were called and the burglar secured. On the following morning, notwithstanding the frequent happening of these burglaries, the chief of police released the fellow on a straw bond, and before night he was out of the city. In wanton devilry the street cars in the remote sections of the city were fired upon by lawless negroes. On one occasion a motorman of one of these street cars discovered a negro in the act of firing upon the car. He attempted to pursue him and was stopped by a mob of negroes, and, though a riot was threatened, to the personal knowledge of this writer, neither the chief of police nor the mayor of the city could be found, and not until a number of citizens took the situation in hand was a riot prevented. Other instances of the condition existing here was the fact of negro men attempting to join ladies upon the streets, as if these ladies were common women, and in making indecent exposures of themselves to ladies and young children. Even the negro children commenced making taunting insults to white children. Of course, these



MR. IREDELL MEARES.

insults were committed at times when it was impossible of identification or arrest of the offenders, and often not mentioned outside of the home circle, from the modest shrinkage of a woman in having her name mentioned in such connection. The writer is conversant with several instances of this sort which have never been mentioned outside of the intimate circle of the ladies' acquaintances. The city government was paralyzed with incompetency. The police were thoroughly demoralized and respected by no class of citizens. The lawless defied them at will. If attempting to make arrests properly, they were often scoffed at and resisted, as if without authority. They as frequently succumbed to this resistance as they succeeded in arresting violators of the law. It was the habit of the chief of police, when negroes were arrested, to take straw bonds of negro politicians, and one of these negro politicians (who was afterwards run out of the city) is said to have made a business of giving such bonds, for a consideration. The county government was equally demoralized in the administration of the law. The sheriff was surrounded with negro deputies. The sessions of the criminal court were a travesty upon the administration of the law. The courtroom was packed and jammed with negroes. They literally took possession of the criminal court. Negroes were crowded upon the juries and frequented the court house for that purpose. It was impossible to convict a negro of any offense when the negroes did not want him convicted. The lawyers of the Wilmington bar practically withdrew from the criminal court. The court was run by a group of negro lawyers, incompetent and insolent, and Judge Sutton, who encouraged their presence. Even the Populist Solicitor, Mr. Richardson, not infrequently, in private conversation, complained that it was difficult to convict a negro. There was perhaps no one cause that contributed more to the demoralization of this county and city than the administration of the law in the criminal court. Judge Sutton apparently was indifferent to the seeming miscarriage of justice and did command the respect of either race.

As the negro's power behind these officials grew in strength, it grew in insolent self-assertion. He commenced to feel that he was in the saddle, the reins were in his hands, and he was driving and would drive the white men when and where he pleased. Wilmington was being advertised as a negro town, and negroes were flocking to it from all sections. This condition was going from bad to worse, until it became a self-evident fact that either the city had to be turned over to the negroes or taken possession of by the whites.

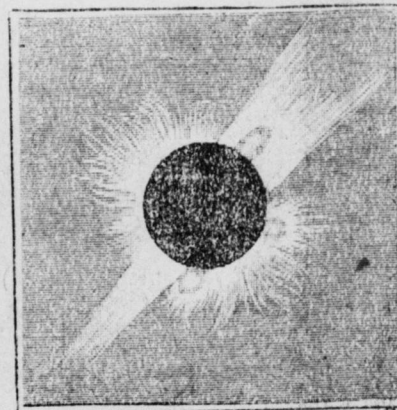
THE CAMPAIGN OF 1898.

Early in the campaign of 1898 appeared the article in the Daily Record, a negro newspaper then published in this city, insulting to the white women of the State. The intense indignation felt in this community would have led, at that time, to the destruction of the paper and the expulsion of its editor, had not the people determined, through wise counsel, that their action, when taken, should be devoid of even an appearance of political purpose. After the publication of this article, the owner of the property where the Record was published refused to allow its editors to remain longer in his building. The press was then removed to a hall belonging to a negro woman's association. Its editors announced that thereafter they would "edit a negro paper from a negro home." It was this building that was afterwards destroyed. The confer-

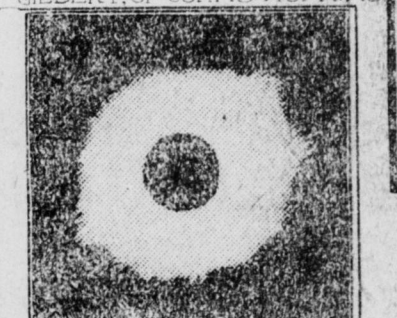
FOUR VIEWS OF THE CORONA

Taken Especially for The World

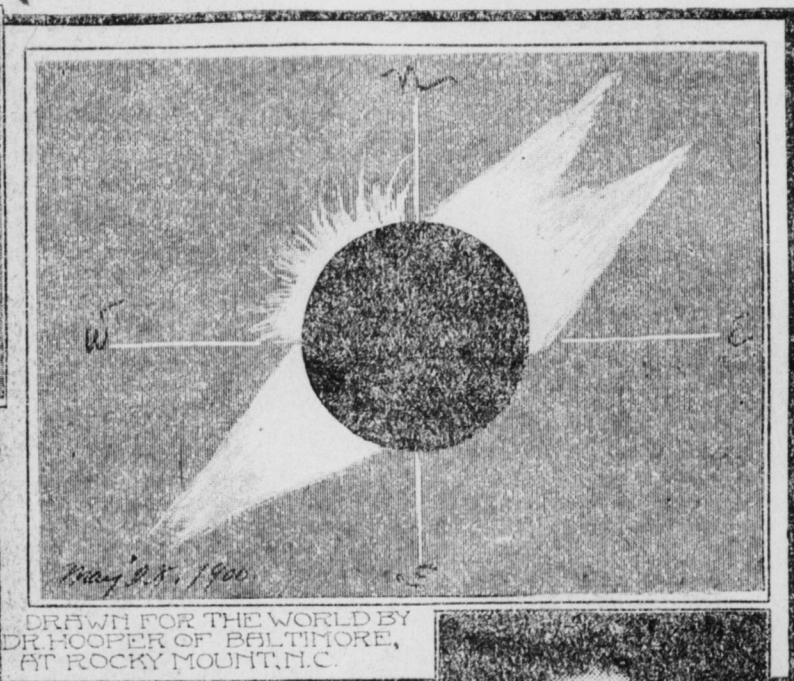
BY SCIENTIFIC OBSERVERS.



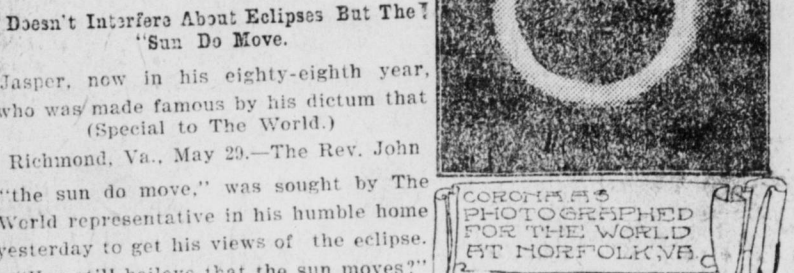
DRAWING OF CORONA AS IT APPEARED TO THE EYE. DRAWN FOR THE WORLD BY FREDERICK MC EYERHART, JR. GILBERT OF JOHN HOPKINS.



PHOTOGRAPHED FOR THE WORLD AT PINEHURST, N.C. BY NORMAN E. GILBERT OF JOHN HOPKINS.



DRAWN FOR THE WORLD BY DR. HOOPER OF BALTIMORE, AT ROCKY MOUNT, N.C.



PHOTOGRAPHED FOR THE WORLD AT NORFOLK, VA.

JASPER STILL UNSHAKEN.

Doesn't Interfere About Eclipses But The "Sun Do Move."

Jasper, now in his eighty-eighth year, who was made famous by his dictum that "the sun do move," was sought by The World representative in his humble home yesterday to get his views of the eclipse. "You still believe that the sun moves?" he was asked.

"Yes," answered the dusky preacher. "I believe it as much as I believe that I am sitting here, and no man will ever be able to make me believe that it don't move until he can convince me that the Word of God is wrong. The sun has been moving ever since the Lord put him in his habitation, and he has never stopped but once, and that was when Joshua commanded him to stand still. When Hezekiah was laying on his couch sick and asked the Lord to spare his life the Lord turned the sun back ten degrees, but the sun never stopped."

"Well, what do you think of the eclipse?" "I have never interfered myself about it," was the answer. "I know that it occurs annually, but God attends to all those matters. Some things He has revealed to His children and some things He has kept secret from them. The heavens declare the glory of God, and He has arranged all these things to suit Himself. The sun and the moon and the stars obey God, but man don't. That's the trouble."

"I never thought any man was fool enough to believe that the sun did not move. Everybody can see with his own eyes that the sun do move, for he rises

in the east in the morning and goes over his circuit like a strong man to run a race, and sets in the west. But the newspapers and the philosophers tried to make me out a contemptible liar, and so I just took down the Word of God and proved out of God's word that they were the liars and not me."

The Aycock Hat.

(Charlotte Observer.)

Some of the friends of Mr. Charles B. Aycock, Democratic candidate for Governor, met in his home town, Goldsboro, some time ago and adopted a style for "The Aycock Hat," to be worn in the campaign. An Observer representative saw one yesterday in the hands of Mr. R. B. Brittain, of Morganton. His concern, Joyner, Witz & Co., of Baltimore, was given the contract to make the hat. In shape it is an Alpine and in style a light colored crush. The lining is of silk and bears a good picture of Mr. Aycock, printed in the crown, and the following words: "North Carolina's Next Governor, Charles B. Aycock." The price of the hat will be \$2.25, and will do for a "go-to-meetin'" hat.

place the responsibility upon the leaders of the negro race to see to its removal, the stopping of its publication, and the banishment of its editors. They would be given the opportunity to act before the white man acted. If they acted in response to the demand, it would be an acknowledgment at last of the power of the white men in this city to stop its present and prevent its future publication.

The election occurred on November 8, 1898. On November 9th, we knew that the State had been redeemed, and a white man's Legislature elected. We knew our county government had been redeemed and competent officials elected; but our city government was still in the hands of irresponsible white men and incompetent negroes, without disposition or power to control the existing lawlessness. The Legislature would not meet for several months to come and this city government would have been continued, with its attendant evils, but for the action of the people that compelled its resignation.

A GREAT MEETING.

On November 9th, at mid-day, upon a call of a few citizens, there assembled a large body of the white men of this city at the county court house. Over fifteen hundred or two thousand men were present. It was a remarkable meeting. A series of resolutions were adopted, declaring that the Daily Record Office should be removed from this city, and its editor, Manly, banished; that it was the purpose of the white man to control this city at all hazards, as a protection to life and property; that he desired to live in peace, but that peace he would enforce at any cost. The resolutions were intended as a declaration to the negro, as the white man's ultimatum to him, that he should not again force upon this city the conditions from which it had suffered for several years past. The meeting was in itself a demonstration that had been kept in abeyance until after the election, in order that it might have, not a political, but a social significance. A committee of twenty-five was appointed, to carry into effect these resolutions and to communicate them to certain negro leaders. The committee did not act hastily. It sent for thirty self-constituted negro leaders and informed them of the purpose of the white man and demanded of them that they should remove the Record press. Opportunity was given them to remove it; they took no action. Then, on the morning of November 10, a large body of citizens of this community, consisting of a thousand or more, marched to the Record office, in broad day-light, and destroyed it. This

(Continued on page four.)

NO NEGRO RULE FOR WHITE MEN

The Republican Party is Four Fifths Negro.

AND THE NEGRO IS ON TOP

Negro Domination Follows Success of the Republican Party.

OLD TIME REPUBLICAN LEADERS GONE

Twenty-One Negro Justices in Warren County.

There Are Negro Postmasters, Negro Constables, and Negro School Committeemen.

Whether those men who hold to the theory that all races are sprung from a common origin are correct or not, it is certain that there are racial differences and antipathies based on the differences between races. The Mongolian, the Indian and the Negro are different in their characteristics from the white man. The negro has been the same that he is now from the earliest period of history. The Ethiopian has not changed his skin; neither has he changed his characteristics. He is on a different plane and level intellectually and morally, from the white man. Nature has taken account of the fact, and by nature the lower organism is repulsive to the higher. The negro is repulsive to the white man. It is therefore not a mere matter of prejudice when the white man declares that negro domination is repulsive to him; but rather it is an expression of antipathy fixed in the heart of the white man by his very nature itself.

NEGRO RULE ODIUS TO WHITE MEN.

To the white man negro rule is not merely repulsive, but it is odious and oppressive, and cannot be borne.

It is the domination of the superior race by an inferior race, and it is against nature. White men cannot stand it. The Republican party is composed of two distinct elements—20,000 white men and 120,000 negroes. As might be supposed the strongest and most numerous element controls the weaker. The negroes control the Republican party, and whenever that party rules the State, the negro becomes the ruler. It is because of these truths that the Republican party in the Eastern counties has degenerated merely into a mass of negroes.

THE NEGRO HAS DRIVEN OUT WHITE REPUBLICANS.

Formerly there were a considerable number of white men in the Eastern counties who affiliated with the Republican party. But they could not stand the rule of their negro political associates, and so they have, for the most part, dropped away from the party, leaving it composed almost exclusively of negroes. With but few exceptions, the white men who continue to affiliate with the negroes in the East, belong to the office-holding class, and remain with the negroes in order to obtain office.

Mr. E. V. Cox, who is a Republican, living in Pitt county, in an open letter, has recently said:

"The Republican party so far as North Carolina is concerned is divided into two distinct and separate parts: West and East and Black belts. The average Western North Carolina Republican, and in this respect I am sorry to say Senator Pritchard seems but little better informed than the average, but illy and incompletely comprehends the situation in Eastern North Carolina, where the negroes, ignorant and insolent, are entirely in control of all Republican conventions and where every effort to better the condition of affairs is counteracted by the opposition of some black-hearted white man with corrupt practices who sees in added intelligence and reputable work a diminution of his own unscrupulously acquired power. Although the Republican party has an excellent plan of organization it is scarcely ever followed on account of the ignorance and corruption of the negro politicians, who being numerically stronger, preside over white men, call them to order at will and occasionally consent for them to be elected delegates to a State Republican convention. The white Republican, if honest, is entirely at the mercy and under their control; if corrupt he must purchase their votes and influence. This is not an overdrawn picture."

In concluding this part of my paper, let me say a last word as to the situation in Eastern North Carolina. If the Amendment is defeated by the people at the polls in August, in the future there will or may be white Republicans in Western North Carolina, and negro Republicans alone in Eastern North Carolina. The carpet-bagger, the kuklux abuse, persecution, all these could not drive the white Republicans in Eastern North Carolina from this party. Many chose death instead. But what the kuklux and the carpet-bagger could not do, the logic and force of events is doing. I will give one example which I do not doubt may be paralleled in a majority of the counties in North Carolina east of the Raleigh. In this county, Pitt, in 1898 there were several hundred white Republicans. There cannot be twenty-five counted now. No party can hope to succeed for any length of time under these conditions.

What Mr. Cox says of Pitt, he avers to be true of other Eastern counties, and

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