

repentance and better reason have come to many of those who have suffered under the provisions of the law; we hope that it is so; but the memorial of the petitioners does not so set forth; there is no repentance acknowledged, and it is not mercy that is asked, but rather the clamor of an unshrived multitude demanding justice. They are here because the Government was great and powerful first, and merciful afterwards, not because they have repented of their treason, or have any more attachment to the State or its institutions than they had when a year ago they were laboring for its destruction; and your committee hold them justly obnoxious to the wise discriminations of the Constitution.

In the position they have chosen for themselves let them stand until those who have upheld the Government against their most strenuous efforts to destroy it, shall have shaped its institutions in conformity with the new order of things, and until they shall make it manifest that their purpose in clamoring for the ballot is not that they may make it the instrument of attaining the same infamous end which they sought, but failed to reach by the bullet. The reasons here cited, that the petitioners have not yet brought forth fruits meet for repentance, are not, in the opinion of your committee, the only reasons that would make the repeal of the Registration Law unwise and injudicious; but in addition to these very grave reasons, the committee are clearly of the opinion that no power exists in the General Assembly to repeal the Registry Law, and that to do so would be a plain violation of the Constitution. The Constitution confides no discretion on this subject to the General Assembly. It declares that the General Assembly "shall provide by law for a uniform registration of voters." Nor does it stop there; but to secure the perpetuity of such a law, it further declares that after its enactment, "no person shall vote unless his name appears on the register." Without this latter clause it certainly would not be conforming to the spirit of the Constitution to enact a registry law and to follow its enactment by its hasty repeal; but with this latter clause added, all doubt of the power of the General Assembly under the Constitution as it stands is removed. That power is limited to the perfection of the law; it does not extend to its repeal.

The committee therefore respectfully recommend to the General Assembly the adoption of the following resolution, viz:

*Resolved*, That neither the temper or conduct of the people of this State who have been hostile to the Government, nor the condition of our national affairs, nor the provisions