

result cannot be reached without a Constitutional amendment.

Without stopping to consider how far this suggestion is sincerely made by those who urge it, or to point out that its adoption would necessarily delay until 1903, and perhaps until 1905 the desired relief, I am unwilling to believe that the Constitution can stand as an obstacle in the way of such a meritorious and imperative measure of reform.

In this belief I acted in calling you together, and the full public discussion of the subjects in the press within the last few weeks has strengthened me in my conclusion that there is not to be found in the Constitution any prohibition of the contemplated movements.

THE REGISTRATION LAW.

Scarcely inferior to these important amendments, the adoption of which will assuredly largely rescue our elections from the deadly taint which now rests upon them is the proposed improvement of the law relating to registration.

No man will deny that the administration of the affairs of the State would be determined by the free, intelligent and honest votes of our people, and that non-residents who seldom appear within our borders except on election day ought not by their votes to be permitted to overcome and thwart the will of our resident citizens.

Yet it is a well-assured fact, that in some portions of the State our registry books contain the names of large numbers of persons who do not really and truly reside in the State, and who ought not to be allowed to vote and control our elections. To meet and put an end to this evil, and to purge our registry books of these fraudulent names, it is proposed to re-enact the provisions of the Act of 1890, chapter 573, section 14, upon this subject, which, while it stood on the statute books, proved such an effective barrier against this palpable wrong.

These provisions have been upheld by the Court of Appeals to be Constitutional, and no good reason can be given why they should not be promptly re-enacted for the relief of the people.