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COVER

The frontispiece is a copy of the famous painting "The Verdict of the People" (1854) by the celebrated artist, George Caleb Bingham (1811-1879), who for many years lived on the frontier in Missouri, which was perhaps largely settled by Kentuckians. The picture reproduced with the kind permission of The Boatmen's National Bank, St. Louis, Missouri.

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NEGRO POLITICS AND THE SUFFRAGE QUESTION IN KENTUCKY, 1866-1872

by VICTOR B. HOWARD*

With the adoption of the Thirteenth Amendment, it was natural for the blacks to expect freedom to include all the privileges and immunities of white citizens. Among the most obvious was universal white male suffrage. Even before slavery was legally abolished in Kentucky, there developed an organized movement among the blacks and their supporters to abolish all the incidental restriction, which had existed in ante-bellum society, against slaves and free blacks. In 1865 Negroes met in Louisville and elected a delegation to journey to Washington "on a mission of liberty" to hold an interview with the President for the purpose of calling his attention to the laws and restrictions which "bore . . . heavily" on the Negroes of Kentucky.¹

On July 4, 1865, Negroes of Louisville organized a celebration of liberty. The correspondent to the *Anglo African* summed up the sentiment of the ten thousand participants in the procession — and an estimated ten thousand additional observers on the ground — with an expression of his own feelings: "We can breathe the fresh pure air of heaven as men, now, not as chattels . . . We have a right to 'life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.'" After several blacks spoke, Major General John Palmer addressed the gathering. "All of those intelligent white men were *rebels* — therefore *foolish*; and all of those senseless, ignorant niggers were *loyal* — therefore *wise*; and I am in favor of giving the right of suffrage to wise men," he declared. There is no slavery in Kentucky, he repeated over and over. Brigadier General James Brisbin (originally of Boalsburg, Pennsylvania; chief of staff to Major General Stephen A.

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¹ *Five Black Lives*, ed. Arna Bontemps, "Autobiography of James L. Smith" (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University, 1971).

Burbridge; ardently anti-slavery from childhood), Commander of Negro troops in Kentucky, followed Palmer on the platform. He favored universal amnesty and universal suffrage. A similar celebration was held on the same day by the Negroes of Camp Nelson, Kentucky. The blacks spoke in the forenoon, and the courageous abolitionist, the Reverend John G. Fee, who was just as enthusiastic for Negro suffrage as Brisbin, spoke in the afternoon.²

Fee took the lead in urging the blacks to organize churches and schools in order to prepare themselves for freedom. During the last half of 1865 he spoke to Negro congregations in Louisville, Camp Nelson, Lexington and Danville. He was a firm believer in black suffrage and in his frank and open way he doubtlessly encouraged the Negroes to look forward with expectation to the day when they would be enfranchised. He was delighted to find that the Yankee superintendent of the Freedmen's Bureau was of the opinion that the Negroes of Kentucky were better prepared to vote than most foreigners.³

A liberal view was also taken toward the blacks by two of Kentucky's Congressmen. One, William H. Randall, of Laurel County, represented the eastern district of Kentucky in the U. S. House of Representatives. He favored the Fourteenth Amendment and full civil rights for the Negro. In the autumn of 1866, he travelled through his district, the county courts in

² *The Liberator*, July 21, 1865. James Brisbin to Benjamin Wade, November 29, 1865, Benjamin Wade Papers, Library of Congress. J. G. Fee to George Whipple, July 6, 1865, No. 44153, American Missionary Correspondence, Amisted Archives, Dillard University. Hereafter AMA Correspondence.

³ John Fee to George Whipple, July 15, 1865, No. 44151; Fee to M. E. Striely, August 11, 1865, No. 44179; Fee to Whipple, November 30, 1865, No. 44260; Fee to Whipple, December 2, 1865, No. 44270; Fee to Whipple, January 29, 1866, No. 44303; Fee to Whipple, March 26, 1866, No. 44323, AMA Correspondence. *The Union Standard* (Lexington), December 5, 1865. The American Missionary Association was one of the most important agencies in Kentucky which was working for the expansion of civil rights for the freedmen. It was dedicated to the cause of the Republican party and worked for civil rights and suffrage for the blacks in Kentucky. See: *American Missionary*, XI, (October, 1868), p. 228. Richard B. Drake, "The American Missionary Association and the Southern Negro, 1861-1888", Ph.D. Emory University (1857), 219. See: Gabriel Burdett's series of letters to AMA from July 1, 1871 to December 11, 1872, AMA Correspondence.

session, and "strongly advocated negro suffrage". U. S. Representative Sam McKee, of Montgomery County, spoke in favor of the Fourteenth Amendment, but he denied that by making blacks citizens, they were being conceded the ballot.⁴

On January 1, 1866, Negroes of Louisville met in convention to celebrate the anniversary of the adoption of the Emancipation Proclamation. They unanimously adopted a set of resolutions and petitioned the Kentucky legislature for full equality. A similar meeting was held in Frankfort on the same day.⁵ Later in January a meeting of other blacks of central Kentucky convened in Lexington for the purpose of considering their new status. A measure was adopted by the convention to go on record as "favoring universal amnesty and universal enfranchisement."⁶

The Negro leaders of the city of Lexington met on January 15, 1866 in the colored Methodist Episcopal Church and issued a call for a state-wide convention to meet in that city on March 22.⁷ When the convention met, Fisk and John Ely, the superintendent of the Bureau in Kentucky, were there, and Fisk "saw that negro suffrage was given a prominent place in the discussion."⁸ The question of the right to the ballot by freedmen was earnestly discussed by several blacks, including the

⁴ *Louisville Daily Courier*, November 30, 1866. *Cincinnati Daily Gazette*, August 2, 1866. *The Union Standard*, February 13, 1866. *Louisville Daily Journal*, February 14, 1866. *The Independent* (New York), February 15, 1866. *Daily Morning Chronicle* (Washington), March 2, 1866. *Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1961* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1961), 1496, 1304.

⁵ *Louisville Daily Democrat*, January 3, 1866. *Louisville Daily Journal*, January 4, 1866. *The Frankfort Commonwealth*, January 2, 1866.

⁶ *Union Standard*, June 26, 1866.

⁷ *Union Standard*, January 23, 1866. *Louisville Daily Courier*, January 25, 1866. John Fee to George Whipple, March 26, 1866, No. 44323, AMA Correspondence.

⁸ Merton E. Coulter, *The Civil War and Readjustment in Kentucky* (Gloucester, Massachusetts: Peter Smith, 1966, reprint of 1926 edition), 350. The Bureau became the most significant force in Kentucky working for Negro suffrage. As early as August 1, 1865, Fisk felt that the political success of the Union party in Kentucky was essential for freedom. See: C. B. Fisk to John G. Fee, August 4, 1865, No. 44174, AMA Correspondence. Oliver O. Howard, Bureau Commissioner, later claimed that he informed a Negro delegation that he favored Negro suffrage as early as 1866. See: O. O. Howard, *Autobiography of Oliver Otis Howard, Major General, United States Army*, (New York: The

Reverend George W. Dupree, of Paducah, and Horace Morris, Cashier of the Freedmen's Bank in Louisville. A. H. Hubbard, the United States Commissioner of the Lexington area entered into the discussion. The convention later adopted a resolution which claimed for the Negroes "each and every right and power guaranteed to every American citizen, including even that of suffrage, as naturally belonging to us to-day."⁹

The sentiment for suffrage was not restricted to the black leadership. During the August election, 1866 in Lexington, a correspondent to the *Louisville Daily Courier* wrote that "flocks of negroes . . . hung like a cloud around the polls, eager and solicitous" for the triumph of the Republican party. It was openly threatened on the streets, he claimed, after the defeat of the Radicals that Negro suffrage was "a *sine qua non* — that at the next election, ballots of negroes would have to be accepted" in the service of the Republican party.¹⁰

The sentiment in the ranks of the Republican party for Negro suffrage, however, was not widespread. The Union members of the Kentucky General Assembly met on January 17, 1866, and went on record as favoring the right of each state to determine the qualifications of its voters,¹¹ but the posture of the Kentucky Republicans did not discourage the Negroes.

Baker and Taylor Company, 1907), II, 317. Victoria M. Olds, "The Freedmen's Bureau as a Social Agency," Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1966, p. 73, says that Howard first favored Negro suffrage in 1867 or 1868. In January, 1869, Howard publically announced that he favored Negro suffrage. See: *The Evening Star* (Washington), January 2, 1869. By 1868 the Bureau stepped up its activities for suffrage after Ben P. Runkle became the superintendent in Kentucky and the ties between the Bureau and Republican party became stronger. See: George W. Gist, President Kentucky Republican Association, to O. O. Howard, November 2, 1870; Ben P. Runkle to E. W. Whittlesey, May 26, 1871, Record of the Freedmen's Bureau, Record Group 105, National Archives, Washington, D. C. Hereafter Bureau Records. James Brisbin and James Fidler were the most active political agents that the War Department had stationed in Kentucky.

⁹ *Cincinnati Daily Gazette*, March 24, 26, 27, 1866. *Louisville Daily Courier*, March 2, 1866. John Fee to George Whipple, March 26, 1866, No. 44323, AMA Correspondence.

¹⁰ *Louisville Daily Courier*, August 11, 1866.

¹¹ *The Union Standard*, January 19, 1866. *The American Annual Cyclopedia and Register of Important Events of the Year 1866* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1870), VI, 424.

The celebration of the Emancipation Proclamation in Louisville on January 1, 1867, was primarily concerned with the question of political rights for the freedmen. William F. Butler, the president of the convention, insisted that it was a mockery to call the blacks free and deprive them of the ballot. "We claim . . . a position of political equality with the whites as a matter of right, as a matter of justice," insisted Butler.¹²

Although the Negro's desire for suffrage was not received with enthusiasm by the Republicans who controlled the Kentucky party, those in leadership of the party were experiencing a change of attitude. James Speed had earlier insisted that if suffrage came, it must be granted by the state. By the summer of 1866 Speed began to change his view on Negro suffrage when he saw that Kentucky was falling completely under the domination of conservative Democrats.¹³ In January, 1867, Speed met in a secret caucus with the Republicans in the legislature, and urged that the party take a stand in favor of universal suffrage. The debate was "decidedly acrimonious" and threatened to divide the party. The opponents of universal suffrage for the time being had their way,¹⁴ and, when the state convention convened, the platform endorsed the national administration, but resolved that Kentucky was unalterably opposed to Negro suffrage.¹⁵

The Republicans of the Sixth Congressional District came the closest, of any Republican group, to endorsing Negro suffrage. When they met in convention in March, 1867, a resolution was introduced endorsing the national administration. A delegate objected because he believed the measure

¹² *Louisville Daily Courier*, January 2, 1867. *Louisville Daily Democrat*, January 2, 1867. *Cincinnati Commercial*, January 2, 1867.

¹³ James Speed, *James Speed, A Personality*, by James Speed. His Grandson (Louisville: John P. Morton and Company, 1905), 66-67. James Speed to Charles Sumner, November 28, 1866, Charles Sumner Papers, Harvard University. James Speed to Edwin Stanton, August 4, 1866, Edwin M. Stanton Papers, Library of Congress.

¹⁴ *Louisville Daily Journal*, January 1, 1867. *Frankfort Commonwealth*, January 18, 1867. *Kentucky Statesman*, January 15, 1867.

¹⁵ *Louisville Daily Journal*, February 27, 1867. *Semi-Weekly Statesman*, March 1, 1867. See: Martin Bijur's speech, February 16, *Louisville Daily Courier*, February 18, 1867.

would commit the party to Negro suffrage. He introduced a substitute which declared that Negro suffrage rested in the realm of state authority. It was voted down and the original resolution passed with one dissenting vote.¹⁶

The Democrats were not willing to concede Negro suffrage on any grounds. In January 1867 they rejected the Fourteenth Amendment in the General Assembly of Kentucky because the majority feared it could be used to establish Negro suffrage. During February the Kentucky Senate passed a resolution, with one dissenting vote, which asserted that the people of the state were "unalterably opposed to negro suffrage."¹⁷

The determined advocacy of Negro suffrage, however, could not be put down. A correspondent for the *Cincinnati Commercial* in April, 1867, declared: "Negro suffrage is the vital issue of politics."¹⁸ The drive for universal suffrage centered around the Negro benevolent societies and a small group of Radical Republicans who sustained and supported their interest in politics. Through the benevolent societies the leaders had contact with almost all blacks in the cities and towns.¹⁹ The Reconstruction Act of March 2, 1867, had assured the Negroes in the secession states of the right to vote, and the blacks in the border states were restless for a change of their own status. Although the Negroes were told by whites that they would never secure the ballot, in Kentucky, according to one correspondent, they would only laugh and reply: "It's a comin', massa." They did not know from where, but they had faith. "One thinks it will come from Washington in the mails, and goes to the post office to see if it has yet arrived; another expects it to drop down from Heaven, and looks for it every morning; a third reckons the law for it has not yet been made, but is 'sorting Massa Stebens' is making it in his great legal

¹⁶ *Cincinnati Commercial* cited by *Owensboro Monitor*, March 20, 1867.

¹⁷ Hambleton Tapp, "Three Decades of Kentucky Politics, 1870-1900," Ph.D., dissertation, University of Kentucky, 1950, p. 27. *Cincinnati Daily Gazette*, February 15, 1867. *Louisville Daily Democrat*, February 15, 1867.

¹⁸ See "Mack" letter in *Cincinnati Commercial*, April 4, 1867.

¹⁹ *Kentucky Statesman*, May 7, 1867. *Cincinnati Commercial*, October 2, 5, 1867. Coulter, *op. cit.*, 350.

work-shop at Washington." James Speed was their prophet and James Brisbin was their Moses.²⁰

In 1867, blacks of Louisville organized an association called the Law League to aid freedmen with legal problems, but much of their time and attention was directed to the suffrage question. In their published proceedings in March, 1867, mention was made of their hope of "being endowed with the elective franchise."²¹ No Negro society or organization was free from consideration of the suffrage question. In April, the Colored Conference of the Methodist Church met in Lexington and was addressed by Brisbin. He informed them that they should have "a voice in the election of the country" which they had "helped to save." On August 1, colored people held celebrations at two different locations in Louisville to hear orators speak on the rights and duties of the freedmen. A meeting was held on the same day to raise funds for the African Methodist Zion Church in Frankfort. The absorbing topic turned on suffrage as speaker after speaker took up the topic. Thomas H. Jackson, a Negro clergyman of Louisville, reminded the audience that blacks could vote in many parts of the country and that they needed the ballot in Kentucky to protect themselves from their enemies.²²

Brisbin, Fee and Radical Republican Judge William C. Goodloe, of Lexington, spoke at a "Colored People's Barbecue" on the fourth of July in Lexington. Goodloe informed the audience that, although they could not expect to secure suffrage from the state during their generation, Congress would grant them this right before it adjourned.²³ Fee took the ground of impartial suffrage. "God was the author of the Emancipation Proclamation, the Civil Rights Bill, and would soon give suf-

²⁰ "Toodles," May 10, 1867, to Editor, Louisville, Kentucky. *Cincinnati Commercial*, May 13, 1867.

²¹ *Louisville Daily Courier*, March 11, 1867.

²² *Cincinnati Daily Gazette* cited by *The Elyria Independent Democrat* (Ohio), May 1, 1867. *Chicago Tribune*, August 2, 1867. *Louisville Daily Courier*, August 2, 1867.

²³ *Lexington Observer and Reporter*, July 6, 10, 1867. *The True Kentuckian* (Paris, Kentucky), July 16, 1867. *Semi-Weekly Statesman*, July 9, 1867. *Frankfort Commonwealth*, July 12, 1867.

frage to them," for Congress was in session at that time.²⁴

The August election of 1867 for the state officers was an overwhelming victory for the Democrats. The Republicans were reduced to seven of thirty-eight seats in the state Senate and ten out of one hundred in the House.²⁵ The need of Negro votes became obvious.²⁶ As early as October, 1865, a small group of Union men, including Dr. Robert J. Breckinridge, General Stephen A. Burbridge, General James Brisbin and others, had secretly met in Lexington, to determine what action should be taken to protect the liberties of black and white unionists. They decided to ask for troops and appeal to the Radicals in Washington.²⁷ Even with federal troops in Kentucky, conditions deteriorated. In March, 1867, a group of "Loyal Kentuckians" called on Thaddeus Stevens to use his influence in the Congress to bring relief to the loyal whites and blacks in Kentucky.²⁸

Charles Sumner agreed with Brisbin in May, 1867, that "Nothing was more certain" than that Kentucky did not have "a republican form of government,"²⁹ and a Radical correspondent from Kentucky to the *Cincinnati Commercial* called for a reconstruction of Kentucky.³⁰ A contributor to *Harper's Weekly* in June wrote that the loyal Kentuckians had come to see that it was necessary to have Negro votes in order for loyal Kentucky to become a majority.³¹

²⁴ John Fee to W. E. Whiting, July 15, 1867, No. 44481, Fee to E. M. Cravath, September 3, 1867, No. 44487, AMA Correspondence. *Louisville Daily Courier*, July 8, 1867. *Georgetown Weekly Times*, July 10, 1867.

²⁵ *Louisville Daily Journal*, August 19, 1867.

²⁶ *Georgetown Weekly Times*, August 21, 1867.

²⁷ R. J. Breckinridge to E. M. Stanton, October 22, 1865; M. L. Rice to E. M. Stanton, October 23, 1865; Jonathan B. Wilgus to E. M. Stanton, October 26, 1865; Sam McKee to E. M. Stanton, October 26, 1865; James S. Brisbin to E. M. Stanton, November 5, 1865, Edwin M. Stanton Papers, Library of Congress.

²⁸ "Loyal Kentuckians" to Thaddeus Stevens, March 4, 1867, Thaddeus Stevens Papers, Library of Congress.

²⁹ Charles Sumner to James S. Brisbin in *Cincinnati Daily Commercial*, May 31, 1867.

³⁰ "Publius" in *Cincinnati Commercial* cited by *Louisville Daily Journal*, May 29, 1867.

³¹ *Harper's Weekly* cited by *Kentucky Statesman*, June 11, 1867.

After the election of August, 1867, James M. Fidler, a Bureau agent and a defeated candidate for the Kentucky General Assembly, announced that "universal manhood suffrage" was "necessary and right," and Sam McKee came out for Negro suffrage and the reconstruction of Kentucky.³² In August the Radical Union leaders of Kentucky were considering having a new secret consultation, but they delayed hoping first to find out what action the congressional committee investigating conditions in Kentucky would take.³³

In July the Radical Republicans and the black leaders of Lexington met in a closed session. Although there was no public statement as to the proceedings, the Negroes soon organized themselves into a state central committee and called a Negro state convention. After the election it was rumored that the Republicans would call a state convention in September and declare in favor of black suffrage. A Republican correspondent to the *Cincinnati Commercial* claimed that a resolution was unanimously passed which opened the state convention to delegates without regard to color.³⁴

During August the Radical leaders held a series of meetings to organize the blacks for their future political role. In Mt. Sterling, Brisbin shared the platform with Sam McKee, and both strongly endorsed Negro suffrage. McKee predicted that by the next presidential election, the freedmen of Kentucky would be voting for men who made their laws.³⁵ After appearing in Lexington, Brisbin journeyed on to Nicholasville and told the Negroes that there were only two ways to defend liberty — by the bayonet and by the ballot. "We must give

³² *Georgetown Weekly Times*, August 21, 1867. *Cincinnati Daily Gazette*, August 15, 1867.

³³ James M. Ogden to Joseph Holt, August 17, October 22, 1867, Joseph Holt Papers, Library of Congress. *Georgetown Weekly Times*, August 21; October 16, 1867.

³⁴ *Louisville Daily Democrat*, October 3, 1867. *Georgetown Weekly Times*, August 21, 1867. "D.S." to Editor, Louisville, September 30, 1867. *Cincinnati Commercial*, October 2, 1867.

³⁵ *Cincinnati Commercial* cited by *Louisville Daily Democrat*, October 3, 1867. *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, September 28, 1867. *Cincinnati Daily Gazette*, August 15, 1867. *Lexington Observer and Reporter*, August 31, 1867. *Maysville Republican*, August 24, 1867.

you one or the other," he explained. "I know of no way of electing loyal men . . . in this or any other Southern state, except by extending the elective franchise to you black men," he added.³⁶ At Paris on August 29, Brisbin and others promised a large audience of freedmen that the Congress would meet during the winter of 1867 and enfranchise them.³⁷

The Benevolent Society of Winchester sponsored a meeting early in September which took on the appearance of a political training program, as a long parade of speakers instructed and advised the freedmen on their duties and responsibilities as voters.³⁸ During mid-October, Brisbin attended a similar rally in Maysville. "There are men in office now who will not give you your rights," Brisbin charged, "but when you get the right to vote you then can put men in office who will give you your rights." A letter was read at the meeting from John Ely, the superintendent of the Bureau in Kentucky: "You have earned your freedom and the privilege of the ballot, and . . . the day is not far distant when the right will be acceded."³⁹

On October 16, the Negro State Central Committee of Lexington issued a call for a state convention to meet in Lexington on November 26. The purpose of the meeting was to consider steps necessary, among other things, to secure Negro suffrage. All communities were urged to elect delegates to attend the convention.⁴⁰ A correspondent from Danville, Kentucky, condemned the convention as a meeting gotten up by "foolish white men." The blacks were urged to cultivate industry, good habits and obedience to the law and not snatch at the shadow as the dog in the fable.⁴¹ Two Negro leaders in Danville published a circular repudiating the convention,

³⁶ *Lexington Observer and Reporter*, August 31, 1867.

³⁷ *Cincinnati Daily Gazette*, August 31, 1867. *Georgetown Weekly Times*, September 4, 1867. *Louisville Daily Democrat*, August 28, 1867.

³⁸ *Cincinnati Commercial*, September 20, 1867.

³⁹ *Maysville Republican*, October 11, 26, 1867.

⁴⁰ *Louisville Daily Journal*, October 23, 1867. *Louisville Daily Democrat*, October 19, 1867. *New York Times*, October 26, 1867. *Frankfort Commonwealth*, October 25, 1867.

⁴¹ "Occasional," Danville, Kentucky, October 23, 1867, to the Editor, *Louisville Daily Journal*, October 28, 1867.

which, they felt, was not calculated to promote the interest of the black community at that time.⁴²

Local conventions were held throughout Kentucky to elect delegates and instruct them.⁴³ A meeting at Mount Sterling asked for suffrage for blacks in Kentucky because "they had given thirty thousand of their sons to the War for the Union."⁴⁴ A delegates' convention in Clark County declared that "time had demonstrated that the liberties not only of the colored people but of the masses of the white people can only be preserved by clothing all the loyal part of the community with political privileges, and putting more restraint upon the rebels."⁴⁵ This convention took the most radical position that any Negro meeting had yet taken.⁴⁶

At the state convention, Fee and Brisbin spoke, but R. T. James, a black clergyman from Louisville elected president of the convention, made the most important speech. He denied that the lack of education disqualified the Negro for suffrage. "We claim the right to vote in the name of liberty that has been purchased by colored soldiers," he declared. The convention drew up a petition to Congress praying that they be granted the right to vote, and Brisbin was commissioned to take the petition to Washington.⁴⁷

The opposition to the Negro political activities of 1867 was not limited to the ranks of the conservative Republicans. Not all black leaders agreed that the freedmen were following the correct course. On January 1, 1868, Horace Morris, a teller at the Freedmen's Bank in Louisville, spoke at the annual emancipation celebration in Louisville. He questioned the cur-

⁴² *Lexington Observer and Reporter*, November 6, 1867.

⁴³ *Louisville Daily Courier*, October 26, 29, 1867. *Glasgow Times*, November 21, 1867, cited by *Louisville Courier*, November 25, 1867. *Maysville Republican*, November 23, 1867.

⁴⁴ *Kentucky Statesman*, November 8, 1867. *Maysville Republican*, November 9, 1867.

⁴⁵ *Kentucky Statesman*, November 22, 1867.

⁴⁶ *Kentucky Gazette*, November 2, 1867. *Semi-Weekly Kentucky Statesman*, November 26, 1867.

⁴⁷ *Cincinnati Daily Gazette*, November 27, 28, 29, 1867. *Louisville Daily Journal*, December 3, 1867. *Semi-Weekly Kentucky Statesman*, December 3, 6, 1867.

rent political aspirations and activities of the blacks in Kentucky. "Politics is not our trade," he advised. The freedmen should not follow the Radicals blindly for these politicians were using them "for their own agrandisement." He recommended hard work and education as the chief contemporary concern of the blacks.⁴⁸ Not all of the black community, nor all Republicans were in entire agreement upon the desirability of Negro participation in political activities with the Republicans.

When the Republican state convention met at Frankfort in 1868, Negro delegates were refused seats in the assembly. Although the Radical Republicans urged a resolution in favor of Negro suffrage, they had to settle for a measure expressing a commitment to equality before the law. That the Kentucky Republicans were in harmony with the national party majority was made clear in May after the national convention resolved, over the objections of some of the border state delegates, that the suffrage question in the loyal states properly belonged to the people of those states.⁴⁹

The Radical Republicans and the mass of town and city blacks continued the drive to secure Negro suffrage. On July 4, 1868, the political meetings of the Negroes were renewed throughout Kentucky.⁵⁰ The blacks in the "Blue Grass" counties gathered near Lexington, on July 4th, and heard Brisbin speak on black suffrage which he said should be granted not because it would help the Republican party but because it was just.⁵¹ At a picnic in Winchester later in the summer, Brisbin gave the Negroes twenty commandments, the second of which was: "Never vote for a rebe. or Democrat for office."⁵²

When Congress met in December, 1868 a number of suf-

⁴⁸ *Louisville Daily Courier*, January 2, 1868.

⁴⁹ Walter L. Fleming, *Documentary History of Reconstruction: Political, Military, Social, Religious, Educational and Industrial, 1865 to the Present Time*. (2 vols., Cleveland: A. H. Clark Company, 1906-1907), I, 480. *Louisville Daily Journal*, May 31; June 12, 1868.

⁵⁰ *Louisville Daily Courier*, July 8, 1868. *Tri-Weekly Kentucky Statesman*, July 4, 1868. W. E. DuBois, *Black Reconstruction in America* (New York: World Publishing Company, 1964), 568-599.

⁵¹ *Cincinnati Commercial*, July 7, 1868.

⁵² Coulter, *op. cit.*, 351.

franchise amendments were introduced and the movement for suffrage on the federal front stimulated a broader interest within the Negro community in Kentucky. On January 1, 1869, the Emancipation Day celebration in Louisville centered around the suffrage question. Henry J. Young, a Negro clergyman, urged his audience to "use every lawful means to obtain manhood suffrage" as a necessary tool for their defense.⁵³

The usual Fourth of July celebrations were held by the blacks throughout the state. The largest was held near Paris and suffrage was the prominent topic of every orator.⁵⁴ The Negro State Educational Convention in Louisville on July 14, 1869, however, was the most important black convention during the year. It was called to formulate a Negro school system for the entire state. The suffrage question vied with education for prominence. Thomas Jackson, a black native of Kentucky, had faith that the day was at hand when the Negro could vote. When the vote was secured, Jackson said, "We will give them to the men who are willing to give us equal rights before the law."⁵⁵ The Convention resolved to uphold the "glorious Union" with ballots as they formerly upheld it with bayonets.⁵⁶

Not all black leaders were optimistic about the political future of the Negro in Kentucky. Henry H. Trumbo, a successful business man in Frankfort, saw the civil rights of blacks in Kentucky as so precarious that he doubted that the Fifteenth Amendment would ever reach Kentucky. "The case seems dark," he continued, "but we are aware that the darkest hour is just before day."⁵⁷ J. W. Alvord, Superintendent of Schools of the Freedmen's Bureau, was of a similar view. In January, 1870, he was travelling through Kentucky examining the conditions of the blacks. "At best, voting is the only thing which will save the negro" in Kentucky, he concluded.⁵⁸

On January 27, 1870, the Negro leaders of Kentucky met

⁵³ *Louisville Courier-Journal*, January 3, 4, 1869.

⁵⁴ *The True Kentuckian* (Paris), July 7, 14, 1869.

⁵⁵ *Courier-Journal*, July 15, 1869.

⁵⁶ *Cincinnati Daily Gazette*, July 16, 1869.

⁵⁷ H. H. Trumbo to Editor, September 29, 1869, Frankfort, Kentucky, *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, October 9, 1869.

⁵⁸ J. W. Alvord to O. O. Howard, January 28, 1870, Records of the Bureau.

in Frankfort to organize the freedmen for the anticipated ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment. The convention resolved "to resort to the most expedient means in organizing and educating our people . . . on political issues and vital demands of the times." The convention agreed that when blacks had the right to vote they must use it "judiciously and with becoming dignity" in behalf of the interest of their race, but they pledged support to the Republican party.⁵⁹ A call was issued for a "Colored Men's State Convention" to meet in Frankfort on February 23, and the black communities were urged to hold meetings and select delegates to the state convention.

The call to elect delegates for the state assemblage received a welcome response throughout the state.⁶⁰ At a meeting held in Midway, it was agreed that all possible help should be given to maintain, uphold and support the true principles of a Republican government. From Nicholas County came a report that the blacks had "Thoroughly endorsed Republican principles."⁶¹ Meetings were also held in Greensburg, Hardinsburg, Paris, and in Lebanon, where representatives from eighteen counties met. At Lebanon both the white and black speakers urged the Negroes to "stand together" and vote as a bloc. "They should vote as one man for the party that freed them." The meeting at Lexington resolved that they, the blacks, not be influenced to vote against their interest. "We know our friends and will stand by them, provided they stand by us." The blacks of Louisville met and formed a Republican club. "We know our friends," asserted resolutions of the Louisville meeting, "and will testify our appreciation . . . at the polls as soon as they are open to our race."⁶²

⁵⁹ *Frankfort Commonwealth*, February 4, 1870.

⁶⁰ Delegate meetings held in Estill and Owsley counties contained few Negroes. See: *Frankfort Commonwealth*, February 18, 1870. *Semi-Weekly Kentucky Statesman*, February 25, 1870.

⁶¹ *Semi-Weekly Kentucky Statesman*, February 18, 1870. *Louisville Commercial*, February 22, 1870.

⁶² *The Shelby Sentinel*, March 2, 1870. *Louisville Commercial*, February 14, 17, 21, 23, 24, 1870. *The Kentucky Gazette*, February 16, 19, 1870. *Semi-Weekly Kentucky Statesman*, February 18, 1870. Meetings in McCracken, Mercer and Lewis County passed resolutions strongly sustaining the Republican party. See: *Louisville Commercial*, February 19, 23, 1870. *Maysville Bulletin*, February 24, 1870.

When the "Colored People's State Convention" met, nearly a hundred counties were represented.⁶³ The convention agreed that they should organize a Negro Republican party with local societies in every town and county. An address was issued to the colored citizens of the state urging them to maintain harmony within their ranks, and ally with the white Republicans.⁶⁴

The convention of February 23, 1870, set up an organization to canvass the districts. With the question of ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment coming up in March, black lecturers took to the field. T. F. Boaz, a Negro clergyman of Frankfort, spoke in Shelbyville with great effect and George Griffith, of Owensboro, rendered a similar service in Daviess County in meetings that found blacks and whites on the same platform.⁶⁵

Since the Negroes had a majority in the Republican party of many counties, they demanded a voice in the party organization. The Republican committee of Boyle County had an equal number of blacks and whites, and the *Danville Advocate* reported that the Negroes dictated the nominations for county offices. In Fayette County, where the black voters greatly outnumbered the white Republicans, the Republican county committee scheduled precinct meetings in which each elected three white and three black delegates to attend the county nomination convention to select candidates for the August election. The Negroes were not to be so easily satisfied. An all black county meeting convened in Lexington, and the Negro orators made it clear that, since they held the balance of power, they should share the offices. The Scott County Republican party probably checked any movement for Negro office holding by agreeing in theory that the blacks had a right to hold office.⁶⁶

⁶³ *Louisville Commercial*, February 25, 1870.

⁶⁴ *Daily Kentucky Yeoman*, February 25, 1870. *New York Daily Tribune*, February 28, 1870.

⁶⁵ *Lexington Observer and Reporter*, March 9, 1870. *Louisville Commercial*, March 19, 25, 1870.

⁶⁶ *Danville Advocate* cited by *Weekly Maysville Eagle*, June 8, 1870. *Louisville Commercial*, March 24, 1870. *Lexington Observer and Reporter*, March 26, 1870. "Avery," March 25, 1870, *Cincinnati Commercial*, April 1, 1870. *Georgetown Weekly Times*, June 8, 1870.

The Democrats encouraged the Negroes to demand offices as means of dividing the Republican party.⁶⁷ But the black leaders, themselves, were divided on this question. Late in March, G. W. Dupree wrote a letter to *The Louisville Commercial* in which he declared: "It is not office and power that my people want, but it is simple justice . . . my people has (sic) more cornfield common sense than to flatter themselves with the idea of stepping right out of two hundred years of slavery in political office, without a moment's reflection or preparation." Two days later his views were contested by M. E. Lynn, a black leader of Frankfort. Lynn insisted that capable blacks did not need to wait until the masses were educated. "Mississippi did not wait for the next generation to send a Revels to Congress" he declared, and Kentucky had her Revels. Henry Marrs also disagreed with Dupree's position in an argument similar to Lynn's. Marrs reminded the Paducah clergyman that the blacks held the balance of power in Kentucky. Henry Bush, of Bridgeport, Kentucky, supported Dupree's position in the *Commercial*, and Marrs conceded that support of the Republican party was more important than office.⁶⁸

With the announcement of the adoption of the Fifteenth Amendment, celebrations took place in black communities throughout Kentucky. The most spectacular took place in Louisville. The meeting agreed to support and uphold the Republican party which had crushed out the attempt to perpetuate human bondage. The adoption of the Fifteenth Amendment was "a victory of right over wrong, of liberty over slavery, of freedom over oppression." The convention declared that it had "no terms to make with Kentucky Democracy."⁶⁹

⁶⁷ W. E. Connelley and E. M. Coulter, *History of Kentucky* (5 vols., Chicago: The American Historical Society, 1922), II, 91. *The Kentucky Gazette*, February 12, 1870. *Shelby Sentinel* (Shelbyville, Kentucky), March 30, 1870.

⁶⁸ *Louisville Commercial*, March 23, 25; April 1, 1870.

⁶⁹ *Cincinnati Evening Chronicle*, April 8, 1870. *Republican Banner* (Nashville), April 9, 1870. *American Annual Cyclopaedia and Register*, X, (1870), 427.

Ratification celebrations were held in Frankfort, Hopkinsville, Georgetown and other locations.⁷⁰

On May 4, 1870, the Republican State Central Committee met and selected a committee of two whites, and Horace Morris, to appoint a committee to canvass the state and explain to the blacks their rights and duties under the Fifteenth Amendment. The Negroes selected to canvass the state as lecturers were George A. Griffith of Owensboro, J. B. Stansberry of Louisville, and Henry Marrs of Frankfort. They spoke throughout the state during the summer until election day.⁷¹ The Republican State Central Committee issued an Address to the people of Kentucky on the Fifteenth Amendment. The Address assured the new voters that the Republican party, which was alone credited with securing black suffrage, would fearlessly and earnestly demand the rights and powers conferred by the amendment. As the tempo of the campaign was accelerated, political meetings became weekly occasions in many communities.⁷²

The charge of the Democrats that the Republicans were "making hobbyhorses of the blacks" to ride into office may have had effect. The Democrats persuaded a Negro to announce for jailer in Shelby County, a black announced for sheriff in Madison County, another sought office in Lincoln County, and there

⁷⁰ *Frankfort Commonwealth*, April 15; May 20; 1870. *Louisville Commercial*, April 30; May 13, 1870. Celebrations were held at Simpsonville, Munfordville, LaGrange, Cynthiana, Cadiz, Winchester, Carlisle, Paris, and in Garrard and Bullitt counties. See: *Frankfort Commonwealth*, April 22, 23; May 7, 17, 24, 1870. *Maysville Bulletin*, May 5, 1870. *Cynthiana News*, May 12, 1870. *Daily Cincinnati Gazette*, June 3, 1870. John Fee to William Whiting, May 31, 1870, AMA Correspondence. During June, 1870, a new series of celebrations of the ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment were held throughout the state. Meetings were held at Bardstown, Paris, Scott and Henderson counties. See: *Louisville Commercial*, June 11, 14, 23, 1870. *Western Citizen*, June 14, 1870. *Paris True Kentuckian*, June 15, 1870. *Georgetown Weekly Times*, June 22, 1870.

⁷¹ *Frankfort Commonwealth*, May 13, 1870. *Louisville Commercial*, June 15, 23, 24, 25, 29, 1870.

⁷² *Courier-Journal*, May 22, 1870. *Daily Cincinnati Gazette*, June 3, 1870. *Tri-Weekly Kentucky Yeoman*, May 12, 1870. *Louisville Commercial*, May 7, 1870. During May, significant black political meetings were held in Maysville, Mt. Sterling and Paris. See: *Maysville Bulletin*, May 12, 1870; *Paris True Kentuckian*, May 25, 1870.

was fear that both a black and a white Republican ticket would appear in Fayette County. White Republicans in Fayette County generally agreed that justice would dictate that some blacks should be on the ticket since they numbered eight of every nine Republicans, but they insisted that justice should bow to expediency because such a ticket would lose white votes. To check a division in the ranks of the Republican party, prominent Negro leaders in central Kentucky issued an address to the black citizens urging them to refrain from standing for office, and to vote for reliable white Republicans. The running of black Republicans or black Independent candidates was declared to be a Democratic trick "calculated to defeat the Republican party" and keep the Negro "hewers of wood and drawers of water."⁷³

The Republican campaign did not falter. During July the picnics and barbecues in the black communities took on a more practical aspect of rallying support for specific Republican candidates. John G. Fee was reaching hundreds of black and white unionists in Madison County with sermons and addresses, and Judge William C. Goodloe, of Lexington, spoke in most towns in Madison; also extended his campaign into Bourbon County where General John T. Croxton, Paris, was urging the freedmen to make use of the Fifteenth Amendment to put friends of blacks into office.⁷⁴ Sam McKee campaigned in the black communities in Fleming and neighboring counties, and Reverend G. W. Dupree lectured to his fellow freedmen in western Kentucky. The black clergyman, Elijah Marrs, like his brother, Henry Marrs, worked among the freedmen in opposition to the Democrats and used his pen to solicit their votes for the Republicans through the press.⁷⁵

⁷³ *Western Citizen* (Paris, Kentucky), June 7, 1870. "Avery," March 25, 1870. *Cincinnati Commercial*, April 1, 1870. *Carrollton West Alabamian*, April 13, 1870. *Louisville Commercial*, March 28; June 11, 1870.

⁷⁴ *New York Daily Tribune*, July 19, 1870. *Richmond Register* (Kentucky) cited by *Lexington Observer and Reporter*, July 6, 20, 1870. *Paris True Kentuckian*, July 13, 1870. *Selma Argus* (Alabama), cited by *Paris True Kentuckian*, July 13, 1870.

⁷⁵ *Flemingsburg Democrat*, July 28, 1870. *Louisville Commercial*, July 20, 1870. Elijah P. Marrs, *Life and History of the Rev. Elijah P. Marrs* (Louisville: The Bradley and Gilbert Company, 1885), 82-83; 86-87.

The Democrats were divided on what attitude they should take toward the new voters. Some wanted to compete with the Republicans and bid for black votes. Others felt they did not need the Negro votes to carry the election and that they should refuse the support of blacks. In order to prevent Republican victories in many cities, Democratic leaders (presumably) were able to get changed the charters to eliminate Negro wards from the city. Nicholasville and Paris avoided Republican control temporarily by this strategy.⁷⁶ Another piece of chicanery: Louisville, Lexington, Frankfort and other cities counteracted Republican dominance for a short time by having the legislature alter their charters so that the municipal elections could be held before the Fifteenth Amendment was ratified.⁷⁷

The Democrats used other tactics to try to counteract Negro suffrage. Since most large land owners and farmers were Democrats, before the election the Negro was threatened with a loss of employment. Militias were organized. As election day approached, they were drilled nightly in the "Blue Grass" region and became a subtle threat to black suffrage. On election day, blacks and whites often entered different doors or filed into the polling place in different lines, and in some areas the blacks were subjected to prolonged questioning so that all could not vote before the polls closed. In the rural precincts the *viva voce* voting kept many timid black agricultural workers

⁷⁶ *Acts of Kentucky*, (1871), I, 4. *Frankfort Commonwealth*, March 25; April 1, 1870.

⁷⁷ *The Madison Daily Courier* (Indiana), February 25, 1870. *Louisville Commercial*, February 24, 1870. *Cincinnati Commercial*, February 1, 3, 10, 1870. *Journal of the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Kentucky* (1869), 3, 35, 429, 484, 900-901. In Danville whites who lived in the county worked out a scheme by which they purchased four inch strips of land in the city and thereby had the right of suffrage in the municipal election. See: *Acts of Kentucky* (1871), I, 2, 252-253. *Frankfort Weekly Commonwealth*, February 24, 1871. *Cincinnati Commercial*, February 24, 1871. *Cincinnati Commercial*, August 8, 1870. Shelbyville and Midway had a bill introduced to amend their charters to make the payment of taxes a prerequisite to voting. See: *The Courier-Journal*, March 2, 1870. *Cincinnati Daily Gazette*, March 4, 1871. Danville, Mount Olivet, and Eminence had their charters amended to require payment of a poll tax. See: *Kentucky Acts*, I, 252; II, 5, 180, 182, 193.

away from the polling place; otherwise, their votes were cast for the Democratic ticket.⁷⁸

After 1870 the Republican monopoly of the Negro votes began to erode. The blacks insisted that the right to vote implied the right to be voted for. As early as February 23, 1870 in the "Address to the Colored People of Kentucky," the Negro convention reiterated to the freedmen: "We demand the emoluments that the franchise has bequeathed unto us." H. J. Young informed the same convention that when they secured political and civil rights, the black man would "be like white men; some will be radical and some conservative."⁷⁹ The same position was taken by Horace Morris, of Louisville. In April, 1870, Edward A. Pollard, of South Carolina, wrote an article in *Lippincott's Magazine* in which he praised the progress of the freedmen. If the blacks were wise, he concluded, they would put native whites in office instead of carpetbagger Republicans. Horace Morris answered his article in a letter directed to the author. Morris said Negroes were forced to identify with the Radical Republicans as the only party that would give them anything. He agreed that the interest of the conservative whites and the Negro were identical. "The Republican party, like all other parties, must grow old and die, or die prematurely," he said; "the Democratic party is not only dead, but it stinketh. A new party can be built upon its ruins, a party of liberal views, broad principles — that will embrace in its ranks all lovers of their country — who know no North, no South, no East, no West."⁸⁰

The resistance of the Republican party of Kentucky to Negro office seekers soon caused many black leaders to become disillusioned with the Republican party. In 1871 three Lexington blacks bolted the Republican state convention and accepted seats in the Democratic convention. By June, 1871,

⁷⁸ *Daily Cincinnati Gazette*, August 5, 1870. *Cincinnati Commercial*, November 16, 1870; June 8, 1871. *Louisville Commercial*, July 19, 1871.

⁷⁹ *Louisville Commercial*, February 25, 1870. *Weekly Maysville Eagle*, March 2, 1870.

⁸⁰ Edward A. Pollard, "The Negro in the South," *Lippincott's Magazine*, V. (April, 1870), 383-384, 390-391. Horace Morris to Edward A. Pollard, March 24, 1870, Louisville, Kentucky, *Daily Morning Chronicle* (Washington), April 12, 1870.

they had formed a black Democratic organization in Lexington, and a Negro from Lexington was soon canvassing central Kentucky for the Democrats.⁸¹ The Democratic sentiment among the blacks began to spread to other districts in Kentucky.⁸²

Because of the Democratic legislature's failure to pass a law in Kentucky permitting blacks to testify against whites and the failure of the legislature to deal with the problem of the "Regulators" and the Klu Klux Klan, the freedmen could not overcome their strong antipathy to the Democratic party. A new party, as suggested by Morris, soon took shape to overcome the repugnance to an alliance with the old enemy. In Kentucky, Cassius M. Clay led the way, and no white in the "Blue Grass" state was trusted more than he. Clay called a meeting of leading Democrats at his home and urged the necessity of a new party movement. On January 2, 1871, he informed a convention of blacks in Richmond, Kentucky, that he would continue to advocate their claims until they had full equality, but he could not support Grant. If they would be prosperous and happy, they must stand by their old masters. On July 4, Clay spoke at a black barbecue in Lexington and made substantially the same speech, and advocated Horace Greeley for president.⁸³

On February 29, 1872, the colored Republicans of Covington, who had heard several speeches by the antislavery wing of the party in northern Kentucky, held a meeting to decide their position in relation to the national administration. A resolution endorsing Grant's administration was defeated and white and black Radicals bitterly denounced the President.⁸⁴ When

⁸¹ *Cincinnati Commercial*, November 16, 1870. *Kentucky Gazette*, May 6, 1871. *Lexington Observer and Reporter*, June 14, 1871. *Maysville Bulletin*, June 15, 1871. *Covington Journal*, June 24, 1871. *Kentucky People*, August 5, 1871.

⁸² *Maysville Bulletin*, June 15, 1871. *Covington Journal*, August 10, 1871.

⁸³ C. M. Clay to S. P. Chase, January 3, 1871, S. P. Chase Papers, Library of Congress. *Lexington Statesman* cited by *Paris True Kentuckian*, January 11, 1871. *Lexington Observer and Reporter*, cited by *Covington Journal*, January 7, 1871. *Paris True Kentuckian*, July 5, 1871.

⁸⁴ *Cincinnati Commercial*, April 1, 1871. *Covington Journal*, July 15, 1871. *The Evening Star* (Washington), March 1, 1872. On May 23, 1871, the Negro supporters of Grant met in Covington and endorsed him. See: *Evening Star*, May 21, 1872.

the State convention convened a Radical Republican offered a resolution in favor of giving a "liberal share" of the subpositions within the gift of the Republican office-holders to Negroes. After a bitter debate the resolution was referred to a committee of three whites and three blacks.⁸⁵ When a Negro delegate from Lexington suggested that the anti-Grant delegates from northern Kentucky take a pledge to support the nominee of Philadelphia Convention, fourteen of the seventeen delegates from Kenton County, including the black delegate, bolted the convention and party.⁸⁶

After the Liberal Republicans and Democrats nominated Horace Greeley, the Negro supporters of Greeley met in Louisville in a national "Colored Liberal Convention" and resolved that "equal human rights" had ceased to be an issue between the contending parties. The convention announced something of a "balance of power" position. Although the mass of black voters in the cities remained in the Republican camp, Negro stump speakers canvassed the state for the Liberal Republicans in competition with black orators of the regular Republican party.⁸⁷

Although a majority of the Negroes sustained the Republican party, the election of 1872 marked the end of Republican dominance of the Negro vote. At a nonpartisan colored education convention in February, 1873, a resolution was introduced expressing gratitude to the Democratic dominated Kentucky legislature for granting them the right to testify in courts. Considerable opposition was expressed on the ground that the legislature had only submitted to federal pressure, but the resolution was adopted. The legislature of 1873 also set up a state system of Negro schools, but did not establish a system of equal per capita distribution of all school funds with-

⁸⁵ *Louisville Commercial*, March 14, 1872. No published report was made of the committee's disposal of the resolution.

⁸⁶ *Covington Journal*, March 16, 1872, cited *Louisville Ledger*.

⁸⁷ *Western Citizen*, October 1, 1872. *Maysville Bulletin*, October 10, 1872. *Covington Journal*, November 2, 1872. Collins, *op. cit.*, I, 231; Gabriel Burdett to E. M. Cravath, June 8, 1872, No. 44945; September 16, 1872; October 2, 1872, No. 44971, AMA Correspondence. *Lexington Statesman*, July 10, 19; November 1, 1872.

out regard to race. A resolution in the February, 1873, convention to return thanks to the legislature for this enactment was tabled.⁸⁸ The failure to distribute school tax money without regard to race still remained a strong grievance among the blacks against the Kentucky Democrats. In a colored state convention of November, 1873, however, a resolution warned the Republican party that if their claims for office continued to be ignored, they would feel no special obligation to the party.⁸⁹ The threat was not heeded, and after the election of 1874, the (Frankfort) *Yeoman* could say without being challenged by *The Courier-Journal* that hereafter the Republican party could never "calculate with any certainty upon wielding the Negro vote as a unit."⁹⁰ By 1882 the Democrats removed the last grievance of the Negroes in Kentucky by passing an act to consolidate the state school fund and distribute it on a per capita basis without regard to race or color. The Republicans of Kentucky had lost their last claim to the black bloc vote, and both parties had to bid for the Negro vote, which was divided.⁹¹

⁸⁸ *Louisville Daily Ledger*, February 20, 1873. *Courier-Journal*, February 20, 1873.

⁸⁹ *Lexington Dollar Weekly Press*, December 3, 1873.

⁹⁰ *Frankfort Yeoman* cited by *The Courier-Journal*, August 7, 1874. In 1877 the Republican nominee from the Fayette district to the house of representatives of the Kentucky General Assembly was opposed by the editors of the Negro newspaper in Lexington. The editors were also leaders in one of the most prestigious Negro churches in Lexington. See: *Courier Journal*, July 24, 1877.

⁹¹ In February, 1882, speaker after speaker at a Negro Citizens Convention avowed that in the future, the one question which would decide how the blacks would cast their votes would be whether the candidate was a friend of Negro education, and if he be so, they would support him, whether Democrat or Republican. See: *Lexington Daily Transcript*, February 27, 1882.