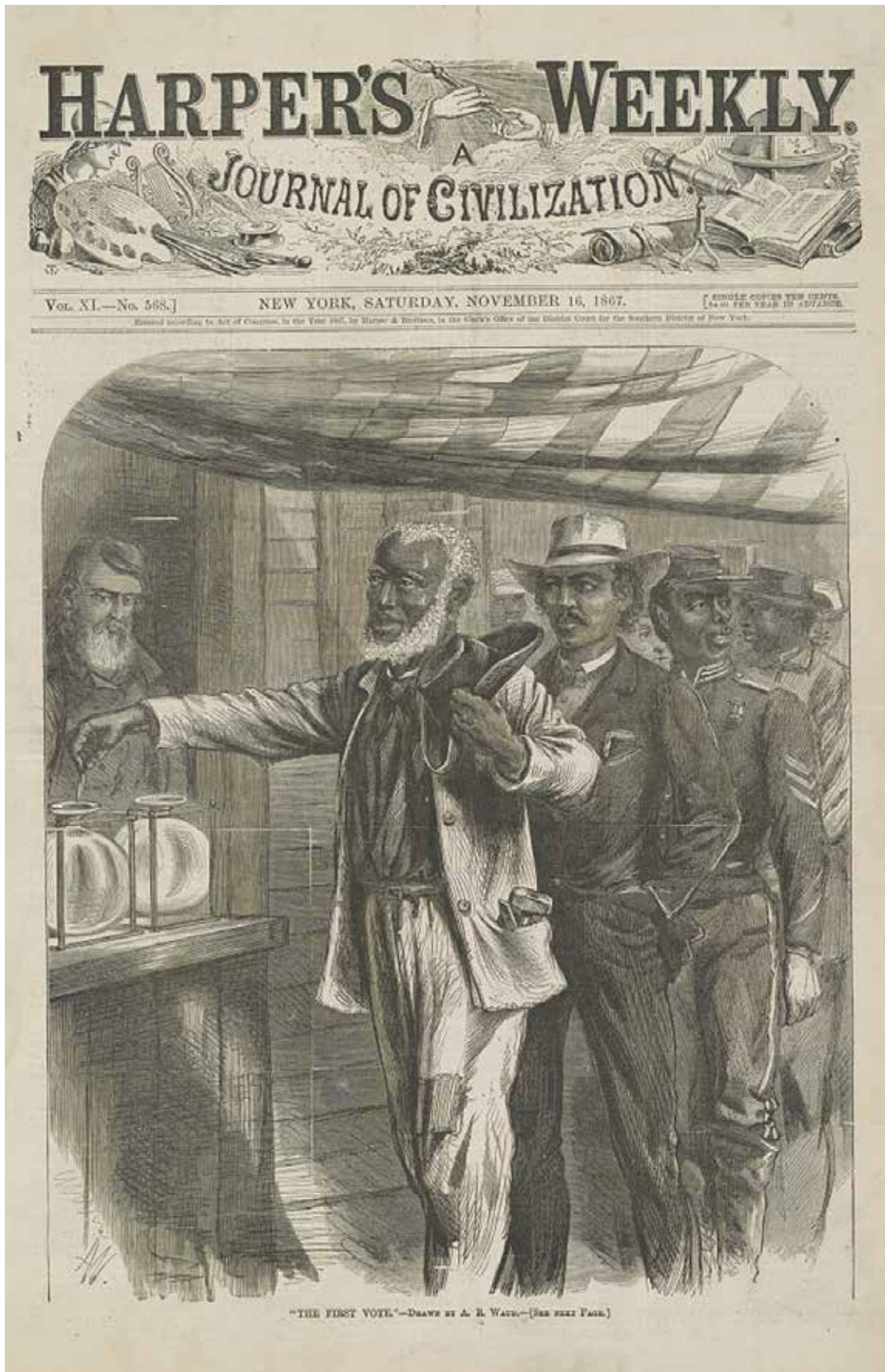
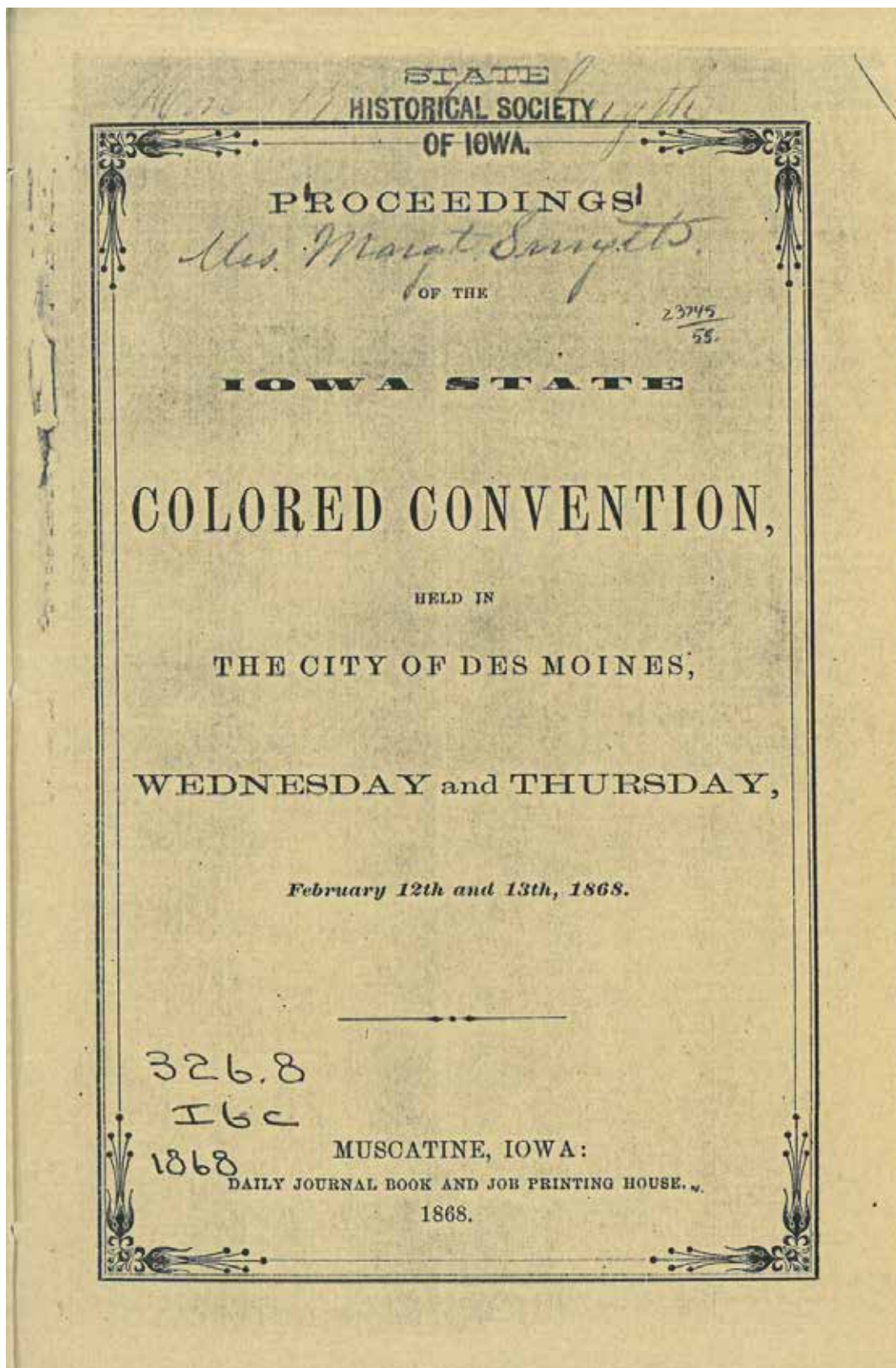


“The First Vote” Illustration, November 16, 1867



Waud, Alfred R., "The first vote," *Harper's Weekly*, 16 November 1867. [Courtesy of Library of Congress](#)

Alexander Clark's Speech at the "Colored Convention" in Des Moines, Iowa, 1868 (Pg.1)



Alexander Clark's Speech at the "Colored Convention" in Des Moines, Iowa, 1868 (Pg.2)

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ADDRESS

OF THE COLORED STATE CONVENTION TO THE PEOPLE
OF IOWA IN BEHALF OF THEIR ENFRANCHISEMENT.

PREPARED AND DELIVERED TO THE CONVENTION BY A. CLARK, CHAIR-
MAN OF THE COMMITTEE ON ADDRESS, FEB. 13TH, 1868.

TO THE PEOPLE OF IOWA: To every true, honest and liberty-loving citizen of Iowa do the colored men of your proud commonwealth appeal for sympathy and aid in securing those rights and privileges which belong to us as freemen. Having established our claim to the proud title of American soldiers and shared in the glories won by the deeds of the true men of our own color, will you not heed and hear our appeal? We appeal to the sense of justice of the Legislature and of the people of our own State, for those rights of citizenship without which our well-earned freedom is but a shadow. We ask no privilege; we simply ask you to recognize our claim to manhood by giving to us that right without which we have no power to defend ourselves from unjust legislation, and no voice in the government we have endeavored to preserve. Being men, we claim to be of that number comprehended in the Declaration of Independence, and who are entitled not only to life, but to equal rights in the pursuit and securing of happiness and in the choice of those who are to rule over us. Deprived of this, we are forced to pay taxes without representation; to submit, without appeal, to laws however offensive, without a single voice in framing them; to bear arms without the right to say whether against friend or foe—against loyalty or disloyalty. Without suffrage, we are forced into strict subjection to a government whose councils are to us foreign, and are called by our own countrymen to witness a violence upon the primary principles of a republican government as gross and outrageous as that which justly stirred patriot Americans to throw overboard the tea from English bottoms in a Boston harbor and to wage war for Independence. Let a

Alexander Clark's Speech at the "Colored Convention" in Des Moines, Iowa, 1868 (Pg.3)

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ADDRESS OF THE STATE COLORED CONVENTION.

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consistent support be given to this principle of government, founded only "on the consent of the governed"—to this keystone in the arch of American liberty—and our full rights as freemen are secured. Our demands are not excessive; we ask not for social equality with the white man, as is often claimed by the shallow demagogue; for a law higher than human must forever govern social relations. We ask only that privilege which is now given to every white, native-born or adopted, male citizen of our State—the privilege of the ballot-box. We ask that the word "white" be stricken from the Constitution of our State; that the organic law of our State shall give to suffrage irrevocable guarantees that shall know of no distinction at the polls on account of color; and in this we simply ask that the "two streams of loyal blood which it took to conquer one, mad with treason," shall not be separated at the ballot-box; that he who can be trusted with an army musket, which makes victory and protects the nation, shall also be intrusted with that boon of American liberty, the ballot, to express a preference for his rulers and his laws. We demand this as native born citizens of the United States, and who have never known other allegiance than to its authority and the laws of our State, and as those who have been true and loyal to our government from its foundation to the present time, and who have never deserted its interest whilst even in the midst of treason and under subjection to its most violent enemies. We ask, in the honored name of 200,000 colored troops, five hundred of whom were from our own Iowa, who, with the first opportunity, enlisted under the flag of our country and the banner of our State, and bared their breasts to the remorseless storm of treason, and by hundreds went down to death in the conflict, whilst the franchised rebels and their cowardly friends, the now bitter enemies of our right to suffrage, remained in quiet at home, safe, and fattened on the fruits of our sacrifice, toil and blood. We make these demands as one of right and necessity, if not expediency, and are unwilling to believe that a powerful, ruling people, strengthened by new victories with the aid of our hands, could be less magnanimous in purpose and in action, less consistent with the true theory of a sound democracy, than to concede to us our claims. We believe that with expediency even our demands are not at war, but that with right does public policy strike hands and unite our votes, as it did our muskets, to the maintenance of authority over the disorganizing elements which attend a returning peace. We have too much faith in the permanency of this government to believe that the extension of the elective franchise to a few loyal colored men

Alexander Clark's Speech at the "Colored Convention" in Des Moines, Iowa, 1868 (Pg.4)

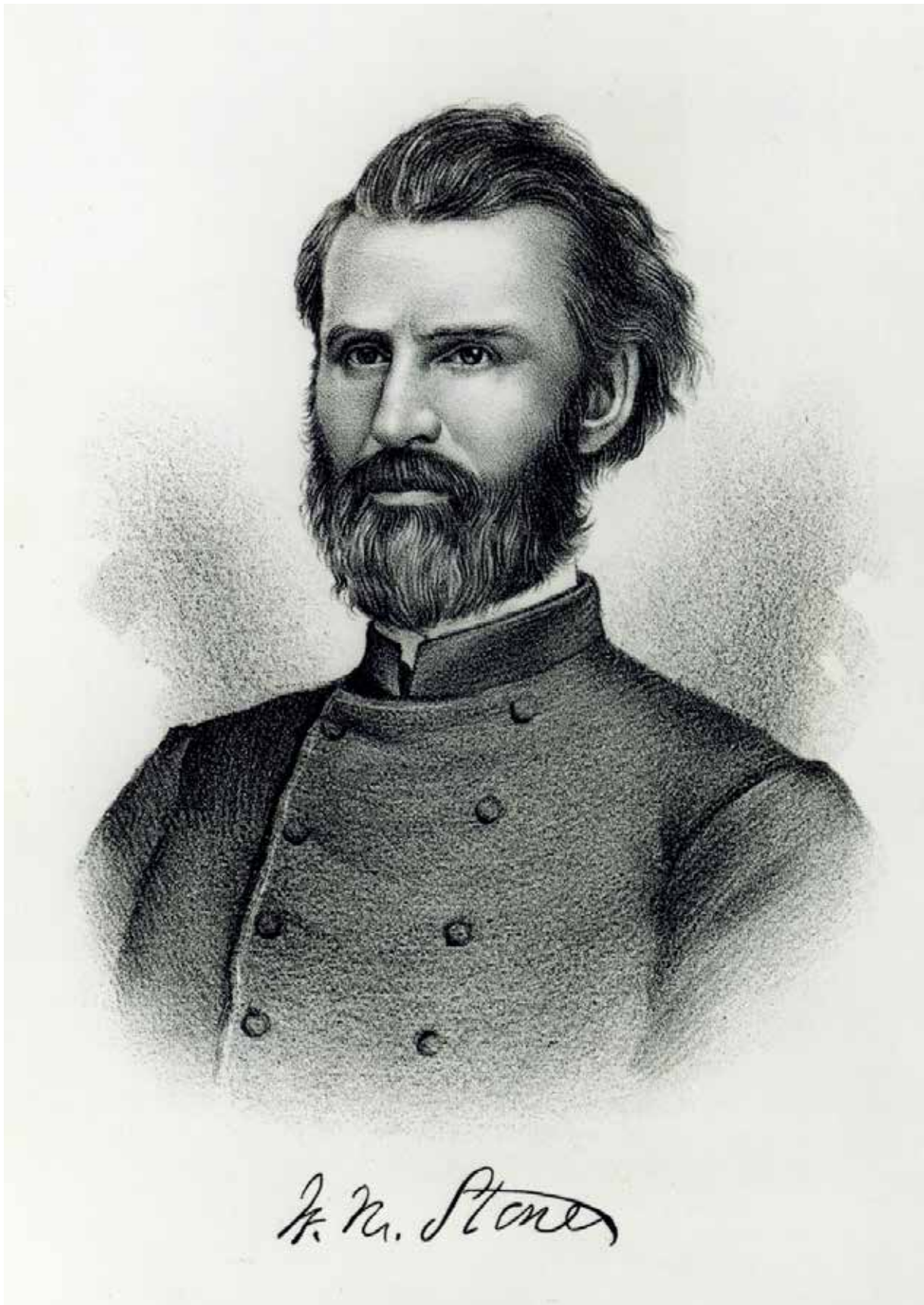
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ADDRESS OF THE STATE COLORED CONVENTION.

could unsettle its foundation or violate a single declaration of its rights. Therefore we will not believe but that the people of Iowa will be the first to do full justice to the men of color, as they have been among the foremost in upholding the flag of our country. We rejoice in the fact, and congratulate the people of our own color in every part of the land that in the recent State election Col. Merrill has been chosen to the gubernatorial chair, and the entire Republican State ticket elected by the handsome majority of nearly thirty thousand votes, and that they stand as firm on the manhood suffrage issue as did their predecessors. In this can the colored men of Iowa take courage, and say to our white friends, we are Americans by birth and we assure you that we are Americans in feeling; and in spite of all the wrongs which we have long and silently endured in this our native country, we would yet exclaim, with a full heart, "O, America! with all thy faults, we love thee still."

A. CLARK,
P. C. COOPER, } Committee.
G. PHELPS, }

Portrait of Governor William M. Stone, 1868



Courtesy of State Historical Society of Iowa, 1868

15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, February 27, 1869

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FORTIETH CONGRESS. SESS. III. RES. 11, 14, 15, 16. 1869.

Ryan-Hitchcock mode of marine fortifications to be inquired into, and report made to Congress.

the admiral of the navy, or in the absence of the admiral, then the vice-admiral, be authorized and directed to inquire into the utility and practicability of the Ryan-Hitchcock mode of marine fortifications, and that they report to Congress at the next session thereof.

APPROVED, February 19, 1869.

Feb. 27, 1869.

[No. 14.] *A Resolution proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.*

Fifteenth amendment to the Constitution.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, (two thirds of both houses concurring,) That the following article be proposed to the legislatures of the several States as an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which, when ratified by three fourths of said legislatures, shall be valid as part of the Constitution, namely:

ARTICLE XV.

SECTION 1. The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.

SEC. 2. The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

SCHUYLER COLFAX,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

B. F. WADÉ,

President of the Senate pro tempore.

Attest:

EDWD. MCPHERSON,

Clerk of House of Representatives.

GEO. C. GORHAM,

Sec'y of Senate U. S.

Received at Department of State February 27, 1869.

March 1, 1869.
1864, ch. 217,
§ 10.
Vol. xiii. p. 370.

Consent of Congress given to the Northern Pacific R. R. Co. to issue bonds, &c.

[No. 15.] *Joint Resolution granting the Consent of Congress provided for in section ten of the Act incorporating the Northern Pacific Railroad Company, approved July second, eighteen hundred and sixty-four.*

Be it resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the consent of the Congress of the United States is hereby given to the Northern Pacific Railroad Company to issue its bonds, and to secure the same by mortgage upon its railroad and its telegraph line, for the purpose of raising funds with which to construct said railroad and telegraph line between Lake Superior and Puget Sound, and also upon its branch to a point at or near Portland, Oregon; and the term "Puget Sound," as used here and in the act incorporating said company, is hereby construed to mean all the waters connected with the straits of Juan de Fuca within the territory of the United States.

APPROVED, March 1, 1869.

March 1, 1869.

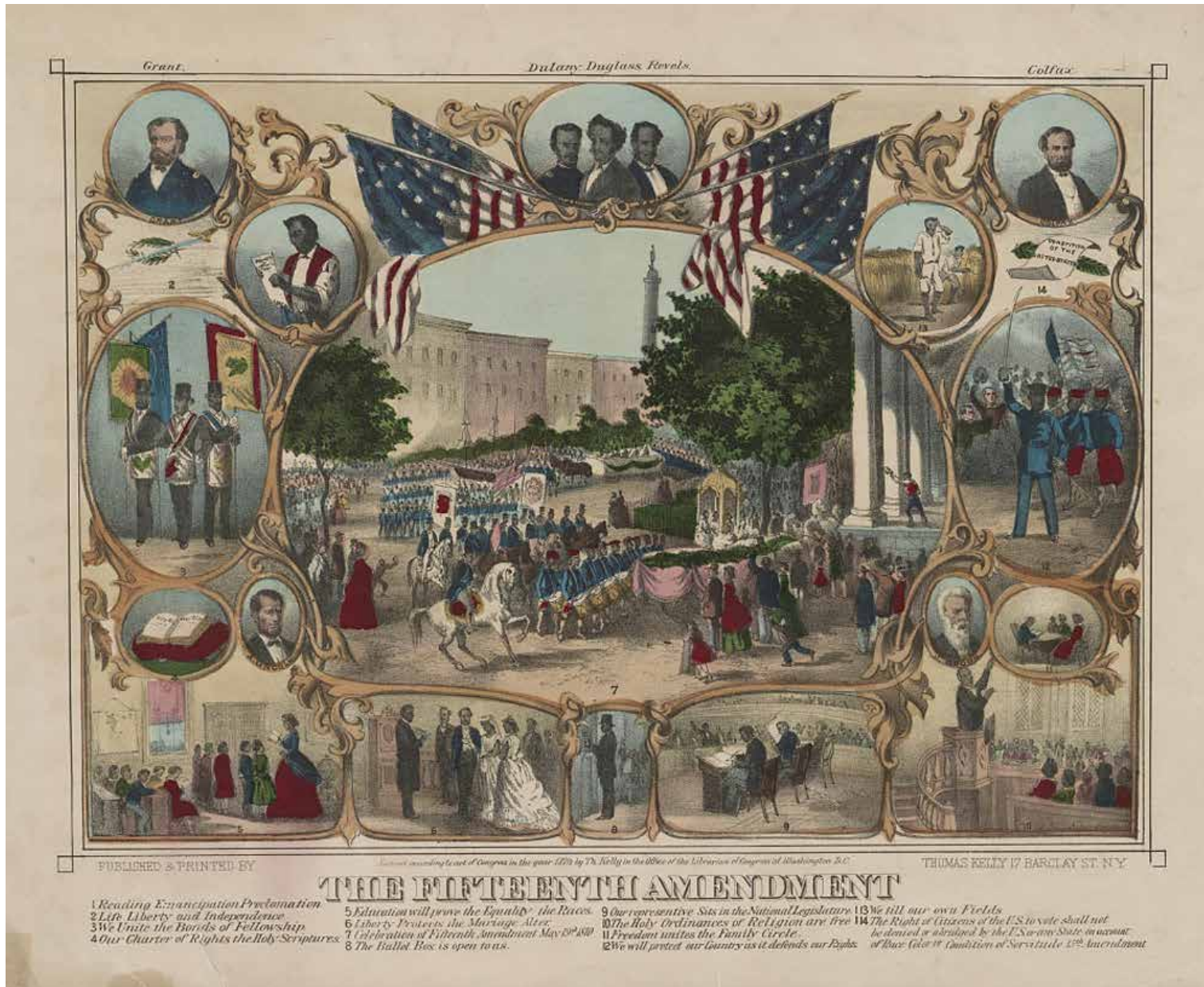
[No. 16.] *Joint Resolution in Relation to the Meeting of the House of Representatives at the first Session of the Forty-first Congress.*

Time of first regular meeting of the House of Representatives of the 41st Congress.

Be it resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the time for the first regular meeting of the House of Representatives of the Forty-first Congress be, and is hereby, postponed from twelve o'clock meridian, on the fourth day of March, eighteen hundred and sixty-nine, to the hour of three o'clock in the afternoon of the said day.

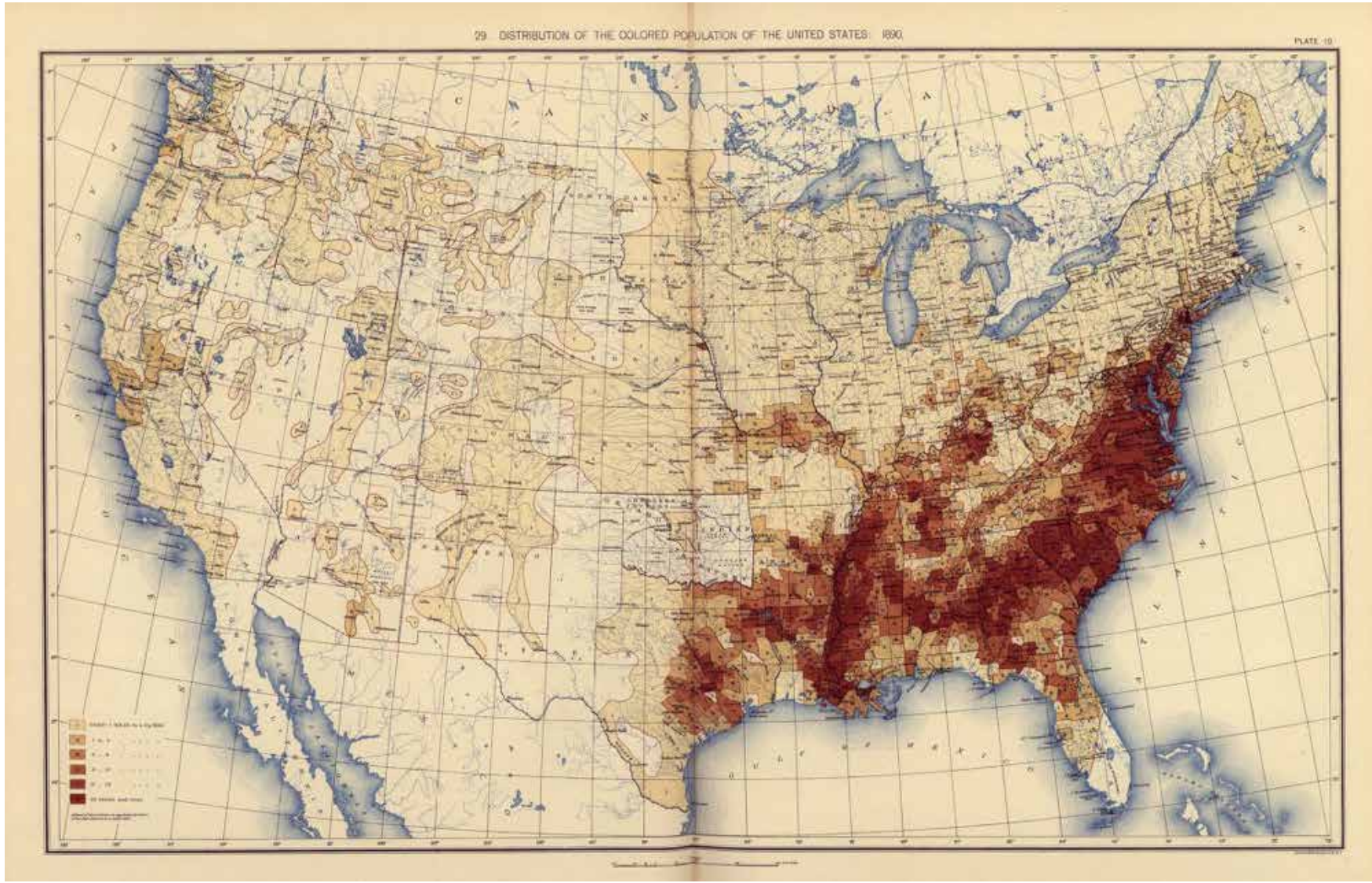
APPROVED, March 1, 1869.

“The Fifteenth Amendment,” 1870



Kelly, Thomas, “The Fifteenth Amendment,” 1870. [Courtesy of Library of Congress](#)

Distribution of the Colored Population of the United States in 1890, 1898



United States Census Office, 11th Census (1890), and Henry Gannett, *Statistical Atlas of the United States, based upon the results of the eleventh census*, Washington, 1898. [Courtesy of Library of Congress](#)

Voter Registration Literacy Test in Alabama, 1964 (Pg.1)

APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION, QUESTIONNAIRE AND OATHS

PART I

(This is to be filled in by a member of the Board of Registrars or a duly authorized clerk of the board. If applicant is a married woman, she must state given name by which she is known. Maiden surname, and married surname, which shall be recorded as her full name.)

Full Name: _____
Last First Middle

Date of Birth: _____ Sex _____ Race _____

Residence Address: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Voting Place: Precinct _____ Ward _____ District _____

Length of Residence: In State _____ County _____
Precinct, ward or district _____

Are you a member of the Armed Forces? _____

Are you the wife of a member of the Armed Forces? _____

Are you a college student? _____ If so, where _____

Have you ever been registered to vote in any other state or in any other county in Alabama? _____ If so, when and in what state and County and, if in Alabama, at what place did you vote in such county? _____

Highest grade, 1 to 12, completed _____ Where _____

Years College completed _____ Where _____

PART II

(To be filled in by the applicant in the presence of the Board of Registrars without assistance.)

I, _____, do hereby apply to the Board of Registrars of _____ County, State of Alabama, to register as an elector under the Constitution and laws of the State of Alabama and do herewith submit my answers to the interrogatories propounded to me by the board.

(Signature of Applicant)

1. Are you a citizen of the United States _____

2. Where were you born? _____

Voter Registration Literacy Test in Alabama, 1964 (Pgs.2-3)

4. Have you ever been married? _____ If so, give the name, residence and place of birth of your husband or wife _____

Are you divorced? _____

5. List the places you have lived the past five years, giving town or county and state _____

6. Have you ever been known by any name other than the one appearing on this application? _____ If so, state what name _____

7. Are you employed? _____ If so, state by whom. (If you are self-employed, state this.) _____

8. Give the address of your present place of employment _____

9. If, in the past five years, you have been employed by an employer other than your present employer, give name of all employers and cities and states in which you worked _____

10. Has your name ever been stricken for any reason from any list of persons registered to vote? _____ If so, where, when and why? _____

11. Have you previously applied for and been denied registration as a voter? _____ If so, when and where? _____

12. Have you ever served in the Armed Forces? _____ If so, give dates, branch of service, and serial number _____

13. Have you ever been dishonorably discharged from military service? _____

14. Have you ever been declared legally insane? _____ If so, give details _____

15. Give names and addresses of two persons who know you and can verify the statements made above by you relative to your residence in this state, county and precinct, ward or district _____

16. Have you ever seen a copy of this registration application form before receiving this copy today? _____ If so, when and where? _____

17. Have you ever been convicted of any offense or paid any fine for violation of the law? _____ (Yes or No) If so, give the following information concerning each fine or conviction: charge, in what court tried, fine imposed, sentence, and, if paroled, state when, and if pardoned, state when. (If fine is for traffic violation only, you need write below only the words "traffic violation only.") _____

(Remainder of this form is to be filled out only as directed by an individual member of the Board of Registrars.)

PART III

Voter Registration Literacy Test in Alabama, 1964 (Pg.4)

INSERT PART III (1)

INSTRUCTIONS "A"

The applicant will complete the remainder of this questionnaire before a Board member and at his instructions. The Board member shall have the applicant read any one or more of the following excerpts from the U. S. Constitution using a duplicate form of this Insert Part III. The Board member shall keep in his possession the application with its inserted Part III and shall mark thereon the words missed in reading by the applicant.

EXCERPTS FROM THE CONSTITUTION

1. "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people."
2. "The judicial power of the United States shall not be construed to extend to any suit in law or equity, commenced or prosecuted against one of the United States by citizens of another state, or by citizens or subjects of any foreign state."
3. "Representatives shall be apportioned among the several states according to their respective numbers, counting the whole number of persons in each state, excluding Indians not taxed."
4. "The congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes or incomes, from whatever source derived, without apportionment among the several states, and without regard to any census or enumeration."

INSTRUCTION "B"

The Board member shall then have the applicant write several words, or more if necessary to make a judicial determination of his ability to write. The writing shall be placed below so that it becomes a part of the application. If the writing is illegible, the Board member shall write in parentheses beneath the writing the words the applicant was asked to write.

HAVE APPLICANT WRITE HERE, DICTATING WORDS FROM THE CONSTITUTION.

Voter Registration Literacy Test in Alabama, 1964 (Pgs.5-6)

Part III of this questionnaire shall consist of one of the forms which are Insert Part III as herein below set out. The insert shall be fastened to the questionnaire. The questions set out on the insert shall be answered according to the instructions therein set out. Each applicant shall demonstrate ability to read and write as required by the Constitution of Alabama, as amended, and no person shall be considered to have completed this application, nor shall the name of any applicant be entered upon the list of registered voters of any county until after such Insert Part III of the questionnaire has been satisfactory completed and signed by the applicant.

Signature of Applicant: _____

African-American Demonstrators Outside the White House, March 12, 1965



Leffler, Warren K., "[African American demonstrators outside the White House, with signs "We demand the right to vote, everywhere" and signs protesting police brutality against civil rights demonstrators in Selma, Alabama]," 12 March 1965. [Courtesy of Library of Congress](#)