

The Fifteenth Amendment.

The last decade has been so crowned with impressive and historical events that the most striking movements of the age occur without exciting much comment. We wonder not that our colored friends are awakening the echoes of our country with their peals of artillery, and touching the general sympathies with their pathetic demonstrations over their consummated citizenship. These are very simple words which have been introduced into the good fellowship of the articles of the Constitution of the United States, but how pregnant are they with significance to a long-suffering race, and to the new people of another hue now stepping upon the Pacific shores of our Republic!

ARTICLE 15, SECTION 1. The rights 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.

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

As the whole matter is without a precedent in our history, so, without a parallel incident of this kind, President Grant accompanied the announcement of the Secretary of State that the amendment had been ratified by the required number of States with a characteristic message—simple, clear, impressive, and full of Christian humanity. He earnestly recommends that adequate educational provision should be made to enable these newly enfranchised men to meet the responsibilities now laid upon them, and to render the assumption of their rights a blessing, and not a curse, to their country.

The introduction of so large a number of voters in some of the States, like Delaware, Maryland, and Kentucky, which have come somewhat reluctantly to the admission of the inevitable logic of the late war, will be a wholesome element. If it does not, at first, reverse all the late prescriptive acts which have been passed to the disadvantage of the man of color, and in opposition to his civil rights, it will ultimately secure these results.

The country is in a fair way to discharge its duty to its new citizens, removing all civil obstacles, and providing, as far as the Federal Government can, for their education. It now rests upon themselves to illustrate the confidence of their friends in their eagerness for intellectual improvement, and in their ability to meet the civil and political incidents of their present enlargement.
