

WILLIAM H. SEWARD,

SECRETARY OF STATE OF THE UNITED STATES,

July 20, 1868.

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS MAY COME, GREETING:

Preamble.

WHEREAS the Congress of the United States, on or about the sixteenth of June, in the year one thousand eight hundred and sixty-six, passed a resolution which is in the words and figures following, to wit:—

“JOINT RESOLUTION PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES.

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“*Be it 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 XIV.

“SECTION 1. All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law, nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

“SECTION 2. 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. But when the right to vote at any election for the choice of electors for President and Vice-President of the United States, Representatives in Congress, the executive and judicial officers of a State, or the members of the legislature thereof, is denied to any of the male inhabitants of such State, being twenty-one years of age, and citizens of the United States, or in any way abridged, except for participation in rebellion or other crime, the basis of representation therein shall be reduced in the proportion which the number of such male citizens shall bear to the whole number of male citizens twenty-one years of age in such State.

“SECTION 3. No person shall be a Senator or Representative in Congress, or elector of President and Vice-President, or hold any office, civil or military, under the United States, or under any State, who, having previously taken an oath, as a member of Congress, or as an officer of the United States, or as a member of any State legislature, or as an executive or judicial officer of any State, to support the Constitution of the United States, shall have engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same, or given aid or comfort to the enemies thereof. But Congress may, by a vote of two thirds of each House, remove such disability.

“SECTION 4. The validity of the public debt of the United States, authorized by law, including debts incurred for payment of pensions and bounties for services in suppressing insurrection or rebellion, shall not be questioned. But neither the United States nor any State shall assume or pay any debt or obligation incurred in aid of insurrection or rebellion against the United States, or any claim for the loss or emancipation of any slave; but all such debts, obligations, and claims shall be held illegal and void.

“SECTION 5. The Congress shall have power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.

“SCHUYLER COLFAX,

“*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

“LA FAYETTE S. FOSTER,

“*President of the Senate pro tempore.*

“Attest:

“EDWD. MCPHERSON,

“*Clerk of the House of Representatives.*

“J. W. FORNEY,

“*Secretary of the Senate.*”

And whereas by the second section of the act of Congress, approved the twentieth of April, one thousand eight hundred and eighteen, entitled "An act to provide for the publication of the laws of the United States, and for other purposes," it is made the duty of the Secretary of State forthwith to cause any amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which has been adopted according to the provisions of the said Constitution, to be published in the newspapers authorized to promulgate the laws, with his certificate specifying the States by which the same may have been adopted, and that the same has become valid, to all intents and purposes, as a part of the Constitution of the United States;

1818, ch. 80, § 2.
Vol. iii. p. 489.

And whereas neither the act just quoted from, nor any other law, expressly or by conclusive implication, authorizes the Secretary of State to determine and decide doubtful questions as to the authenticity of the organization of State legislatures, or as to the power of any State legislature to recall a previous act or resolution of ratification of any amendment proposed to the Constitution;

And whereas it appears from official documents on file in this Department that the amendment to the Constitution of the United States, proposed as aforesaid, has been ratified by the legislatures of the States of Connecticut, New Hampshire, Tennessee, New Jersey, Oregon, Vermont, New York, Ohio, Illinois, West Virginia, Kansas, Maine, Nevada, Missouri, Indiana, Minnesota, Rhode Island, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Massachusetts, Nebraska, and Iowa;

And whereas it further appears from documents on file in this Department that the amendment to the Constitution of the United States, proposed as aforesaid, has also been ratified by newly constituted and newly established bodies avowing themselves to be and acting as the legislatures, respectively, of the States of Arkansas, Florida, North Carolina, Louisiana, South Carolina, and Alabama;

And whereas it further appears from official documents on file in this Department that the legislatures of two of the States first above enumerated, to wit, Ohio and New Jersey, have since passed resolutions respectively withdrawing the consent of each of said States to the aforesaid amendment; and whereas it is deemed a matter of doubt and uncertainty whether such resolutions are not irregular, invalid, and therefore ineffectual for withdrawing the consent of the said two States, or of either of them, to the aforesaid amendment;

And whereas the whole number of States in the United States is thirty-seven, to wit: New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Vermont, Kentucky, Tennessee, Ohio, Louisiana, Indiana, Mississippi, Illinois, Alabama, Maine, Missouri, Arkansas, Michigan, Florida, Texas, Iowa, Wisconsin, Minnesota, California, Oregon, Kansas, West Virginia, Nevada, and Nebraska;

And whereas the twenty-three States first hereinbefore named, whose legislatures have ratified the said proposed amendment, and the six States next thereafter named, as having ratified the said proposed amendment by newly constituted and established legislative bodies, together constitute three fourths of the whole number of States in the United States:

Now, therefore, be it known that I, WILLIAM H. SEWARD, Secretary of State of the United States, by virtue and in pursuance of the second section of the act of Congress, approved the twentieth of April, eighteen hundred and eighteen, hereinbefore cited, do hereby certify that if the resolutions of the legislatures of Ohio and New Jersey ratifying the aforesaid amendment are to be deemed as remaining of full force and effect, notwithstanding the subsequent resolutions of the legislatures of those States, which purport to withdraw the consent of said States from such ratification, then the aforesaid amendment has been ratified in the manner hereinbefore mentioned, and so has become valid, to all intents and purposes, as a part of the Constitution of the United States.

Fourteenth amendment to the constitution has been adopted, if, &c.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand, and caused the seal of the Department of State to be affixed.

Done at the city of Washington, this twentieth day of July, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the ninety-third.

WILLIAM H. SEWARD, *Secretary of State.*