

African American Civil Rights: The Civil War and Reconstruction 1857-1877

Guiding Question: How were civil rights created in the Reconstruction Era?

How to use this lesson plan:

This lesson is built on primary sources and the action of critically reading and viewing the texts or illustrations to build an understanding of this historical narrative. An outline follows with three topics that flow in chronological order covering a twenty-year span. Each topic includes a contextual statement and a list of documents that can help to illustrate the topic. Following the topics are the documents themselves (with links to their sources) and questions that can guide the investigation of each source.

Lesson Outline:

Topic 1: The need for civil rights in the American Constitution

Context: The idea of specific protections for people living in the United States was a topic of significant debate at the founding of the country. In the Constitution, all people were guaranteed due process of the law, but no other specific rights were expressed nor was a clear definition of who should receive legal protections and rights (a concept we today recognize as citizenship). This issue was partially addressed by the first Congress which convened in 1789 and drafted the first ten amendments to the Constitution, known as the Bill of Rights. These amendments provided specific rights, such as freedom of speech, religious freedom, the protection from unlawful search and seizure, and protection from cruel and unusual punishment. The Bill of Rights did not however clearly define who these rights belonged to, leaving this a matter for debate in both the legislature and the courts for the coming decades.

For African Americans, this was particularly challenging because they were routinely barred from defending themselves in courts of law and denied the education to discern their place in America's representative democracy. In 1857, the U.S. Supreme Court used the vague definition of "citizenship" in the United States to declare that African Americans were not citizens and thus not entitled to legal representation or protection under the Bill of Rights.

Documents:

- 1) Dred Scott v. Sandford Majority Decision (Excerpt), 1857
- 2) "Lincoln's Last Warning" Political Cartoon, 1862
- 3) 14th Amendment to the United States Constitution, 1868

Topic 2: The government assumes the role of protecting its citizens through civil rights

Context: The federal government experienced a rapid evolution in its power and role in domestic policy during the Civil War and Reconstruction Eras. The idea that power flowed from the people and was granted to the government, a concept which shaped the founding of the nation and the drafting of the Constitution, was challenged in this moment when proponents of African American Civil Rights determined that the government had the power to act on behalf of oppressed peoples and to lift them to an equal playing field with their oppressors. The concept of civil rights, a government-granted protection extended to the people reversed this historic power dynamic.

In order to grant full protection to African Americans, including those recently freed from slavery, the government had to amend the Constitution. The three Reconstruction Era amendments ended the institution of slavery (the 13th Amendment), extended citizenship to all U.S.-born individuals and those naturalized (the 14th Amendment), and extended the right to vote to all men regardless of race, color, or previous condition of servitude (the 15th Amendment).

Documents:

- 4) The Fifteenth Amendment Engraving, 1870
- 5) "U.S. Grant and the Colored People" Pamphlet by Frederick Douglass, 1872
- 6) The Sumner Civil Rights Bill, 1873

Topic 3: What happens when civil rights are challenged?

Context: As African Americans lobbied members of Congress and eventually began to win seats in the legislatures at state and federal levels themselves, former slaveholders and Confederates who were barred from serving in the government or voting grew increasingly angry and retaliated through political activism and outright violence against African Americans. On the national stage, as the political parties began to lose their commitment to the cause of African American Civil Rights, the push for greater protection grew more difficult.

For African Americans themselves, facing a lack of economic opportunity and threatened by the rise of vigilante groups such as the Ku Klux Klan, the fight for equality began to be weighed against person safety, leading some to abandon their opposition to punitive measures taken against those who had rebelled against the United States. After the election of 1877, the Republican Party which had defended African American efforts for equality agreed to withdraw U.S. soldiers from the south in return for the breaking of an electoral tie in favor of their candidate, Rutherford B. Hayes. Without this strong government oversight, the gains made by African Americans during Reconstruction rapidly deteriorated in the face of Jim Crow.

Documents:

- 7) Engraving of the Colfax Massacre, 1873
- 8) Colored Citizens' Petition for the Restoration of Voting Rights, 1867/69

Document 1: Dred Scott v. Sandford Decision (Excerpt from Chief Justice Roger B. Taney's Decision)

Transcribed by the National Archives and Records Administration [[Full Version](#)]

- 4. A free negro of the African race, whose ancestors were brought to this country and sold as slaves, is not a "citizen" within the meaning of the Constitution of the United States.
- 5. When the Constitution was adopted, they were not regarded in any of the States as members of the community which constituted the State, and were not numbered among its "people or citizen." Consequently, the special rights and immunities guaranteed to citizens do not apply to them. And not being "citizens" within the meaning of the Constitution, they are not entitled to sue in that character in a court of the United States, and the Circuit Court has not jurisdiction in such a suit.
- 6. The only two clauses in the Constitution which point to this race, treat them as persons whom it was morally lawful to deal in as articles of property and to hold as slaves.
- 7. Since the adoption of the Constitution of the United States, no state can by any subsequent law make a foreigner or any other description of persons citizens of the United States, nor entitle them to the rights and privileges secured to citizens by that instrument.
- 8. A State, by its laws passed since the adoption of the Constitution, may put a foreigner or any other description of persons upon a footing with its own citizens, as to all the rights and privileges enjoyed by them within its dominion, and by its laws. But that will not make him a citizen of the United States, nor entitle him to sue in its courts, nor to any of the privileges and immunities of a citizen in another State.
- 9. The change in public opinion and feeling in relation to the African race, which has taken place since the adoption of the Constitution, cannot change its construction and meaning, and it must be construed and administered now according to its true meaning and intention when it was formed and adopted.
- 10. The plaintiff having admitted, by his demurrer to the plea in abatement, that his ancestors were imported from Africa and sold as slaves, he is not a citizen of the State of Missouri according to the Constitution of the United States, and was not entitled to sue in that character in the Circuit Court.
- 11. This being the case, the judgment of the court below, in favor of the plaintiff of the plea in abatement, was erroneous.

Questions:

What is Chief Justice Taney arguing in his opinion?

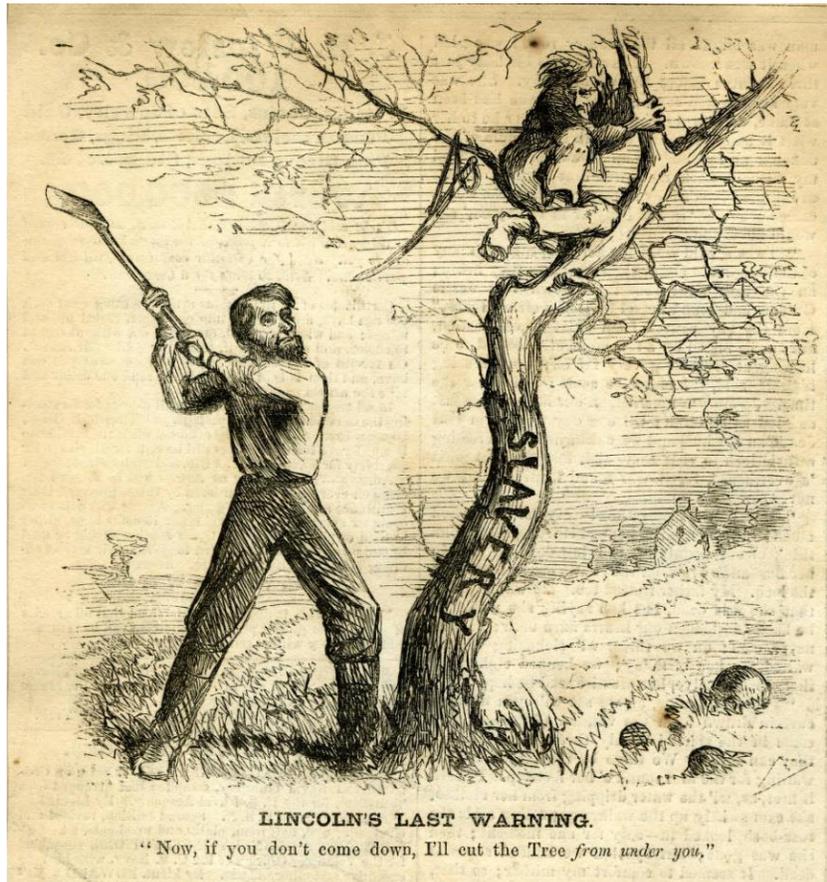
What does this mean for African Americans living in the United States?

Document 2:

“Lincoln’s Last Warning” Cartoon by Frank Bellew, 1862

From the Musselman Library Special Collections at Gettysburg College [\[Source\]](#)

Originally Published in *Harper’s Weekly*



Questions:

Who is being depicted in this cartoon?

What is the cartoonist saying about the issue of slavery in the Civil War?

Document 3:

Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, 1868

Transcribed by the National Archives and Records Administration [[Full Version](#)]

Amendment 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.

Questions:

What is this amendment changing that was not already present in the Constitution?

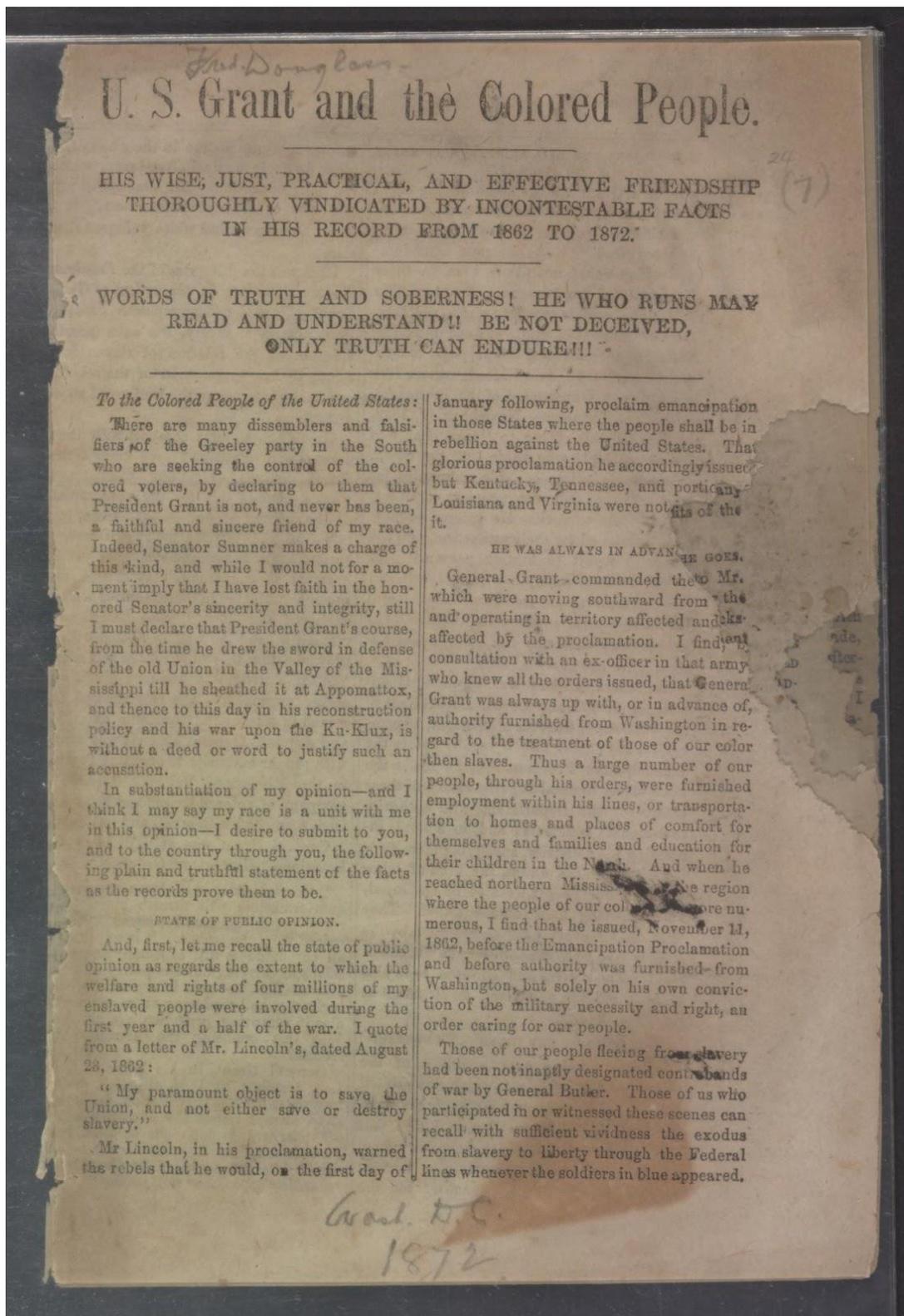
What does it mean to be a citizen?



Questions:

What functions of daily life do you see being illustrated here?

How does the fifteenth amendment, which grants voting rights, lead to all of these possibilities for African Americans?



HE FORESEES THE EVIL AND PROVIDES MEANS
TO AVOID IT.

General Grant saw the demoralizing effect upon the army of thousands of men, women, and children pouring through the camps; he recognized, too, the humane consideration which would not allow, even in those disturbed and fearful scenes, the starvation of those negroes, in regard to whom, as slaves, the Government had not yet fixed its policy. Selecting an officer for the purpose, in Special Order No. 15, dated Headquarters 13th Army Corps, Department of the Tennessee, Lagrange, Tennessee, November 11, 1862, he directed this officer to "take charge of the contrabands who came into the camp, organize them into suitable companies for work, see that they were properly cared for, and set them to work. He ordered suitable guards detailed for their protection, and the officer to report to him in person." He followed this with ample orders to the Commissary General and Quartermaster General for the issuing of rations, clothing for men, women, and children, and implements necessary for use in their labor.

In General Orders No. 18, dated Headquarters 13th Army Corps, Department of the Tennessee, Oxford, Mississippi, December 17, 1862, 'still half a month before the Emancipation Proclamation, he made the same officer General Superintendent of these affairs for the Department, with authority to designate assistants; and, in a word, increasing his authority, specifying more fully the details of his duties, the kind of labor in which our people were to be employed, and enforcing their compensation. They were to fill every position occupied by the soldier save what depended upon his enlistment. Their wives and children were also to be cared for and given employment as far as possible.

HE ANTICIPATES THE FREEDMEN'S BUREAU.

Indeed, looking over a report of the General Superintendent, which was printed in the winter of 1865, and favorably reviewed by the *North American Review*, I find that each military post came to have an office, and that office had one officer to care for supplies furnished them, another for the

enforcement of justice in their behalf, another for their medical attendance, another for their education. All abandoned property was ordered used for them. In these benefits I find white refugees share also.

Here was the full germ of the *Freedmen's Bureau* apparent in the orders of General Grant before the Emancipation Proclamation, not as a theory, but as a practical solution of the relation of slaves in the South to the suppression of the rebellion and in the interest of the welfare of all concerned.

How do these facts comport with the accusations in question? We know General Grant dislikes everything dramatic, what a scene is this for the contemplation of the people of our color! Here, in the midst of the terrible scenes of war, slaves, so far as law and the action of Government is concerned, they are as far as possible protected in their families and sheltered and clothed, their sick furnished with medicines, and the well furnished with employment that they might learn self-support.

After slavery was declared abolished in the spring approached, the Government determined to employ the freedmen as soldiers, and Adjutant General Thomas was sent with proper authority to organize regiments in the Mississippi Valley. Already a company of colored troops had been organized, furnished with arms, and put on duty.

General Grant was at Milliken's Bend, Louisiana. His General Orders No. 25,

"Commissaries will issue supplies, quartermasters will furnish stores, and the same requisitions and returns as required from the troops. It is expected all commanders will especially exert themselves in carrying out the policy of the administration, not only in organizing colored regiments and rendering them efficient, also in removing prejudice against the freedmen. Was this opposing the organization of colored troops?"

General Grant, in his letter to General Lee, October 19, 1864, although declining to discuss the slavery question, declares, "I shall always regret the necessity of resorting to arms for wrongs done our soldiers, but regard it my duty to protect all persons who are received into the army of the United States, regardless of color or nationality."

HE WAS ALWAYS READY TO HEAR CONCERNING
THE FREEDMEN.

* I learn from an ex-officer, who was thoroughly cognizant of the facts, that in the midst of the fearful labor around Vicksburg, General Grant always found time to attend to the calls necessary to make upon him in regard to the colored people or colored troops; that he gave every aid to the development of their industry and the means of their improvement. He favored no Utopian schemes, and sought practical solution of every difficulty in the way of the welfare of our people. That when before Vicksburg, he, and his associates in the chief command of the troops, who, night and day, were pressing the siege, found time to listen to an extended report of the officer he had placed in charge of our people in the November previous. This report he afterwards forwarded to President Lincoln with a private letter, dated June 11, 1863, in which he says :

† "Finding that negroes were coming into our lines in great numbers and receiving kind or abusive treatment according to the peculiar views of the troops they first came in contact with, and not being able to give that personal attention to their care and use the matter demanded, I determined to appoint a General Superintendent over the whole subject, and give him such assistants as the duties assigned him might require. I have given him such aid as was in my power, by the publication, from time to time, of such orders as seemed to be required, and generally at the suggestion of the Superintendent.

He speaks of the results up to that date as of great service to the blacks in having them provided for, when otherwise they would have been neglected, and to the Government in finding employment for the negro whereby he might earn what he was

receiving. And, in closing, directs special attention to that portion of the report which would suggest orders regulating the subject which a Department Commander is not competent to issue.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN WAS SATISFIED WITH HIM.

The officer who delivered this letter and report to Mr. Lincoln, states that Mr. Lincoln received them with the greatest satisfaction, asking many questions about General Grant's views upon the whole subject of the treatment of the colored people, and on thus learning something in detail of the success of General Grant's plans and the usefulness, in his judgment, of colored soldiers, he repeated the expressions of his gratification that a General who was winning such military successes over the rebels was able, from a military standpoint, to give him so many practical illustrations of the benefits of the emancipation policy.

HE ORGANIZES FREE LABOR WHERE HE GOES.

I find in a printed copy of a letter to Mr. Levi Coffin, then in England, written by the General Superintendent, and dated at Vicksburg only a year after its fall, a statement that "this supervision, embracing the territory within the lines of our army, from Cairo down the Mississippi to Red river, together with the State of Arkansas, numbered in its care during the past year 113,650 freedmen. These are now disposed as follows: In military service as soldiers, laundresses, cooks, officers' servants, and laborers in the various staff departments, 41,150; in cities, on plantations, and in freedmen's villages and cared for, 72,500. Of these, 62,300 are entirely self-supporting—the same as any industrial class anywhere—as planters, mechanics, barbers, hackmen, draymen, &c., conducting enterprises on their own respon-

* He relates that, one evening in the midst of the siege of Vicksburg, Gen. Grant was sitting by the trunk of a great tree near his tent talking to the Superintendent of Freedmen of their affairs, telling him in detail of a great bend in the Mississippi 25 miles below the town, indicating how easily it could be protected, saying a considerable portion of the land then deserted was owned by Jeff. Davis and his brother Joe, whose plantation was often visited as a model by foreigners, suggested that this bend should be occupied by the freedmen, and be made a "negro paradise." So it was. Soon it was divided into small farms for their cultivation, houses built, schools opened, the administration of order left chiefly to the colored people, and the whole protected against guerrillas by colored troops. Now Joe Davis' former slave and foreman, one of these free cultivators of the bend, owns and successfully carries on the Davis plantation, having purchased it from his former master. † Colonel—afterwards General—Samuel Thomas, and Assistant Commissioner of the Freedmen's Bureau, in one of his reports, says: "Unprincipled men took advantage of the negro's ignorance to impose upon their confidence, and often robbed them of all they had. Only a few days since, a negro was telling me, that eighteen months ago he had ten bales of cotton of his own on his master's plantation; that he was Major General Grant's servant; and, backing the General's boots one day, told him the story of his wrongs and sufferings, ending with the mention of this cotton. The General sat down and wrote him an order for it, and ordered that all officers should assist him in getting it to market."

sibility, or as hired laborers. The remaining 10,200 receive subsistence from the Government. Thirty thousand of them are members of families whose heads are carrying on plantations, and have under cultivation 4,000 acres of cotton, and are to pay the Government for their subsistence from the first income of crop. The other 7,200 include the paupers (those over and under the self-supporting age, the crippled and sick in hospital) of the 113,650, and those engaged in their care, and, instead of being unproductive, have now under cultivation 500 acres of corn, 790 acres of vegetables, and 1,500 acres of cotton, besides the work done at wood-chopping, &c.

There are reported in the aggregate something over 100,000 acres of cotton under cultivation. Of these about 7,000 acres are leased and cultivated by blacks. Some of these are managing as high as 300 or 400 acres. It is impossible to give, at the present date, any definite statement of many of the forms of industry. Fifty-nine thousand cords of wood are reported to me by Col. Thomas, Superintendent and Provost Marshal of Freedmen, as cut within the lines of 110 miles on the river banks above and below this place. It would be only a guess to state the entire amount cut by the people under this supervision; it must be enormous. The people have been paid from 50 cents to \$2.50 per cord for cutting. This wood has been essential to the commercial and military operations on the river.

"Of the 113,650 blacks here mentioned, 13,820 have been under instruction in letters; about 4,000 have learned to read quite fairly, and about 2,000 to write." So our people were helped by General Grant's policy through this terrible transition.

HE SEES NO PEACE WHILE THERE IS SLAVERY.

August 16, 1864, General Grant wrote Mr. Washburne the celebrated letter so widely quoted, in which he affirms that the Confederate leaders had robbed the cradle and the grave to carry on the war, urging that our friends in the North could have no hope for peace from separation; and among the special reasons in reply to "peace on any terms," he affirms that the South would de-

mand the restoration of their slaves already free; they would demand indemnity for losses sustained; they would demand a treaty which would make the North slave hunters for the South; they would demand pay for every slave that escaped to the North.

In his last and noted order to the great army, dated June 2, 1865, General Grant distinctly recognizes the good results they had accomplished; affirms that they had "overthrown all armed opposition to the enforcement of the laws, and the proclamation forever abolishing slavery—the cause and pretext of the rebellion."

May we not justly say, will it not be the unquestioned sentiment of history that the liberty which Mr. Lincoln declared with his pen General Grant made effectual with his sword—by his skill in leading the Union armies to final victory?

But I prefer that General Grant shall speak for himself, by here quoting from his private letter to Mr. Washburne, and published without the General's knowledge or permission, dated August 30, 1863, in which he said: "The people of the North need not quarrel over the institution of slavery. What Vice President Stephens acknowledges as the corner-stone of the Confederacy is already knocked out. Slavery is already dead, and cannot be resurrected. It would take a standing army to maintain slavery in the South, if we were to make peace to-day guaranteeing to the South all their former constitutional privileges.

"I never was an Abolitionist—not even what could be called anti slavery—but I try to judge fairly and honestly, and because patent to my mind, early in the rebellion, that the North and South could never live in peace with each other except as one nation. *As anxious as I am to see peace, and that without slavery, re-established, I would not therefore be willing to see any settlement until this question is forever settled.*"

In a letter written by Mr. Lincoln to General Grant, April 30, 1864, is this emphatic sentence: "I wish to express in this way my entire satisfaction with what you have done up to this time."

HE HAS BEEN TRUE IN PEACE AS IN WAR.

But since he became President how faithfully has he carried out his pledges in which we are most directly interested?

In his inaugural, March 4, 1867, we find these wise words in regard to suffrage and the fifteenth amendment:

"The question of suffrage is one which is likely to agitate the public so long as a portion of the citizens of the nation are excluded from its privileges in any State. It seems to me very desirable that this question should be settled now, and I entertain the hope and express the desire that it may be by the ratification of the fifteenth article of amendment to the Constitution."

Indeed, his language often points to his clear apprehension of the fact that peace could only be fully restored by removing the causes of disturbance. In his message in regard to Mississippi and Virginia, April 7, 1869, while he urges the restoration of the States to their proper relations to the Government as speedily as possible, he clearly states that it must be conditioned that the people of those States shall "be willing to become peaceful and orderly communities, and to adopt and maintain such constitutions and laws as will effectually secure the civil and political rights of all persons within their borders."

HE COMMENDS THE INDUSTRY OF THE FREEDMEN.

True to all his instincts, all his declarations and acts in his first annual message, he has for our people as freedmen a kind word, and declares "the freedmen, under the protection they have received, are making rapid progress in learning, and no complaints are heard of lack of industry on their part where they receive fair remuneration for their labor; and among the reasons which he finds for gratitude to the Giver of all good, is a country "with a population of forty millions of free people, all speaking one language; with facilities for every mortal to acquire an education; with institutions closing to none the avenues to fame or any blessing of fortune that may be coveted; with freedom of the pulpit, the press, and the school." Again, he declares that the "second great object of the Government is

to secure protection to the person and property of the citizen of the United States in each and every portion of our common country wherever he may choose to move, without reference to original nationality, religion, color, or politics, demanding of him only obedience to the laws and proper respect for the rights of others."

THE RATIFICATION OF THE 15TH AMENDMENT.

Though, as he said, it is unusual to notify the two Houses by message, of the promulgation of the ratification of an amendment to the Constitution, yet he sent one in regard to the ratification of the fifteenth amendment, in which he said: "Institutions like ours, in which all power is derived directly from the people, must depend mainly upon their intelligence, patriotism, and industry. I call the attention, therefore, of the newly-enfranchised race to the importance of their striving in ever honorable manner to make themselves worthy of their new privilege. To the race more favored heretofore by our laws I would say, withhold no legal privilege of advancement to the new citizen. The framers of our Constitution firmly believed that a republican government could not endure without intelligence and education generally diffused among the people." The "Father of his country," in his farewell address, used this language: "Promote, then, as a matter of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge. In proportion as the structure of the Government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened." In his first annual message to Congress the same views are forcibly presented, and are again urged in his eighth message.

I repeat that the adoption of the fifteenth amendment to the Constitution completes the greatest civil change, and constitutes the most important event that has occurred since the nation came into life. The change will be beneficial in proportion to the heed that is given to the urgent recommendations of Washington. If these recommendations were important then, with a population of but a few millions, how much more import-

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ent now, with a population of forty millions, and increasing in a rapid ratio.

I would, therefore, call upon Congress to take all the means within their constitutional powers to promote and encourage popular education throughout the country; and upon the people everywhere to see to it that all who possess and exercise political rights shall have the opportunity to acquire the knowledge which will make their share in the Government a blessing, and not a danger.

COLORED MEN APPOINTED TO OFFICE.

An inquiry into the appointments of colored men to office under General Grant gives results more satisfactory than I anticipated. No records, so far as I learn, appear to be kept of the color of the appointees.

I can only ascertain facts by my own personal knowledge and from the personal knowledge of others acquainted with the appointees. It is impossible for me to fix the exact number, but I find them in all departments of the civil service. Two have been appointed foreign Ministers, several Collectors of Customs, some Assessors of Internal Revenue, and so on down through all the various grades of the service—as route agents, postmasters, clerks, messengers, &c., according to the intelligence and character of the applicants.

I should have been glad to have obtained the exact number of appointees of our color. In one Department at Washington I found 249, and many more holding important positions in its service in different parts of the country. In other Departments I ascertain corresponding gratifying facts as I pursued the inquiry, meeting some new man at every step, and left it satisfied, as I think any colored man would be, that there has been a hearty disposition to disregard all past prejudices and treat us in the matter of appointments according to our merits. The appointments to West Point, as overcoming the army prejudices, are well known, and too significant to be overlooked.

PROTECTION AGAINST THE KU-KLUX.

And what shall I say of his enforcement of the law for the preservation of life and property in the South, whereby the savage

outrages of organizations, known as Ku-Klux Klans, upon an innocent and suffering people have been so generally suppressed? What a change has come? These outrages, the burning of schoolhouses and churches, the whipping and shooting of teachers, the midnight murder of men and women without cause by masked villains, were so contrary to the ideas of the country that they hardly seemed possible in a civilized land. But by the quiet yet firm course of General Grant in enforcing the law, thousands have openly acknowledged the crimes charged, the organizations stand confessed to the amazement of all good men North and South, and peace has come to many places as never before. The scourging and slaughter of our people have so far ceased.

History will not mistake the first and yet humane part General Grant has performed in this work. Have not all violence and injustice to us ceased, it is not because he has failed to do his duty, but because of the prejudices and opposition of those who now claim to be the special friends of the colored man. And should not the good work of peace and good will go on till every American citizen is known in the law and treated the same without regard to his color, it will be by the fatal success of those who assail General Grant, and would defeat his election, and thus prevent the successful accomplishment of his benign purpose of perpetual union for the country and of assured liberty and protection to every person in it.

Indeed, I closed the inquiry thoroughly satisfied, and believe that any man of my race would be, with the same facts before him, that with General Grant at the head of the Administration of the country we are assured, in due time, not only of all our rights, but of our privileges.

Let me now come to my own personal relations with General Grant, as well as my own personal knowledge of him; for I have the honor to know him well. Very much that you have heard concerning him is true, and very much is false. He, like most public men, has been severely criticized, not only as an officer, but as a man. Here,

then, is my testimony concerning him. During my varied public career of more than thirty years, I have, perhaps, more than any other colored man of my times, been brought into direct contact with our nation's great men, and taking my whole experience into account, I affirm that after our martyred President, Abraham Lincoln, and Senator Charles Sumner, no man in high position has manifested in his intercourse with me upon all occasions and in all places a more entire freedom from vulgar prejudice of race and color, than Ulysses S. Grant. I have called upon him often, (never, however, to solicit office for myself or for others,) and have always found him to be easily accessible, gentlemanly, and cordial. Like most of you when meeting with distinguished white persons, I was on the lookout when meeting with General Grant for some indication of the presence in his manners and words of the slavery-born aversion to my race. I found nothing of the kind in him. You have heard that General Grant is a man of few words, and the inference has been drawn by his enemies, that he is a man of few ideas. Never was an inference more unjust. It often requires more talent to be silent, than to speak. It is the merit of this man that he knows just when to speak, and when to be silent. I have heard him converse, and converse freely, and to those who have seen him only in his silent moods my statement will hardly be credited, that few men in public life, or otherwise, can state facts with greater clearness and fluency, than General Grant.

I have often been called upon to reconcile my exalted opinion of President Grant with the fact that I failed to be invited with the Commissioners of Inquiry to Santo Domingo to dine with the President at the White House. I have two answers to those who inquire of me on this point. First. The failure of the President to invite me could not have been because my personal presence on account of color would have been disagreeable to him, for he never withheld any social courtesy to General Tate, the Minister Plenipotentiary from the Republic of Hayti, a man of my own complexion; and in this connection I

may state that during the war he showed himself as free from Indian prejudice as negro prejudice, by retaining upon his staff General Eli Parker. It is, besides, impossible that color is the explanation of the omission to invite me, because the gentlemen whom he did invite had dined with me daily during ten weeks on an American ship, under an American flag, and in presence of representatives of the leading presses of the United States, and this doubtless by the President's special direction. It is further obvious that color had nothing to do with the omission, because other gentlemen accompanying the expedition to Santo Domingo equally with myself, though white, failed to receive an invitation to dine at the White House. The only Commissioners provided for by the act of Congress, were Messrs. B. F. Wade, Andrew D. White, and S. G. Howe, with one Secretary, Mr. Allan A. Barton. These gentlemen called in a body upon the President and were invited in an informal way to dine with him. I was not in company with the Commissioners when this call was made, and did not see the President until afterward. Had I been in company with the Commissioners at the time of their visit, I have no question but that an invitation would have been extended to me as freely as to any of the gentlemen of the Commission who were invited. My second answer is that my devotion to General Grant rests upon high and broad public grounds, and not upon personal favor. I see in him the vigilant, firm, impartial, and wise protector of my race from all the malignant, reactionary, social, and political elements that would whelm them in destruction. He is the rock-bound coast against the angry and gnawing waves of a storm-tossed ocean saying, thus far only shalt thou come.

Wherever else there may be room for doubt and uncertainty, there is nothing of the kind with Ulysses S. Grant as our candidate. In the midst of political changes he is now as ever—unswerving and inflexible. Nominated regularly by the time-honored Republican party, he is clothed with all the sublime triumphs of humanity which make its record. That party stands to-day free

from alloy, pure and simple. There is neither ambiguity in its platform nor incongruity in its candidates. U. S. Grant and Henry Wilson, the one from the West and the other from the East—the soldier and the Senator—are men in whom we can confide. No two names can better embody the precious and priceless results of the suppression of rebellion and the abolition of slavery. We can no more array ourselves against these candidates and this party than we can resume our chains or insult our mothers. We are allied to the Republican party by every honorable sentiment of the human soul. While affection and gratitude bind us to the party, the well known character of the Democratic party, and the long line of antecedents of that party, repel us and make it impossible for us to cast in our lots with it. To vote for Messrs. Greeley and Brown would justly invite to our heads the contempt and scorn of honest men. We should not only brand ourselves as political knaves but as political fools, meanly marching to occupy a position to which we are invited by the Democratic party, which party during the last forty years has existed almost exclusively to make sure our slavery and degradation as a race. The key-note of the whole Greeley movement was sounded by Mr. James R. Doolittle upon taking the chair of the convention that nominated Mr. Greeley. He announced as one of the objects of the movement the “overthrow of negro supremacy.” Can any negro be so blind as not to see the meaning of this? Where has the negro been supreme in this country? Is the simple exercise of the elective franchise

(for surely this is all we have exercised) to be overthrown? We leave the question with you.

In view of the foregoing facts, the following most excellent letter should be added:

EXECUTIVE MANSION,

WASHINGTON, D. C., *May 9, 1872.*

GENTLEMEN: I am in receipt of your invitation extended to me to attend a mass meeting, to be held for the purpose of aiding in securing civil rights for the colored citizens of our country. I regret that a previous engagement will detain me at the Executive Mansion, and that I shall not be able to participate with you in person in your efforts to further the cause in which you are laboring. I beg to assure you, however, that I sympathize most cordially in any effort to secure for all our people, of whatever race, nativity, or color, the exercise of those rights to which every citizen should be entitled.

I am, very respectfully,

U. S. GRANT.

Such is the record of the great chieftain whose sword cleft the hydra-head of treason, and by whose true heart and good right arm you gained the ballot, that glorious insignia of your citizenship. Such is the record of the wise statesman for whom you trusted your first ballot for President; for no other than him can you trust your second. Rally, then, to his support with that resistless spirit in which you fought for your liberties, with that deep sincerity in which you mourned the foul death of your liberator—Lincoln—and with the same exultant hope in which you made General Grant your first President, with your first votes, in 1868.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS.

WASHINGTON, *July 15, 1872.*

Question:

What is Frederick Douglass advocating for in his pamphlet for the advancement of African American Civil Rights?

43D CONGRESS,
1ST SESSION.

S. 1.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

DECEMBER 1, 1873.

Mr. SUMNER asked and, by unanimous consent, obtained leave to bring in the following bill; which was read twice and ordered to be printed.

A BILL

Supplementary to an act entitled "An act to protect all citizens of the United States in their civil rights, and to furnish the means for their vindication," passed April ninth, eighteen hundred and sixty-six.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*
3 That no citizen of the United States shall, by reason of race,
4 color, or previous condition of servitude, be excepted or ex-
5 cluded from the full and equal enjoyment of any accommoda-
6 tion, advantage, facility, or privilege furnished by inn-keepers;
7 by common carriers, whether on land or water; by licensed
8 owners, managers, or lessees of theaters or other places of
9 public amusement; by trustees, commissioners, superintend-
10 ents, teachers, and other officers of common schools and
11 public institutions of learning, the same being supported by
12 moneys derived from general taxation or authorized by law;
13 also of cemetery associations and benevolent associations sup-

14 ported or authorized in the same way: *Provided*, That
15 private schools, cemeteries, and institutions of learning estab-
16 lished exclusively for white or colored persons, and maintained
17 respectively by voluntary contributions, shall remain according
18 to the terms of the original establishment.

1 SEC. 2. That any person violating any of the provisions
2 of the foregoing section, or aiding in their violation, or
3 inciting thereto, shall, for every such offense, forfeit and pay
4 the sum of five hundred dollars to the person aggrieved
5 thereby, to be recovered in an action on the case, with full
6 costs, and shall also, for every such offense, be deemed guilty
7 of a misdemeanor, and, upon conviction thereof, shall be fined
8 not less than five hundred nor more than one thousand dol-
9 lars, or shall be imprisoned not less than thirty days nor more
10 than one year: *Provided*, That the party aggrieved shall not
11 recover more than one penalty; and when the offense is a
12 refusal of burial, the penalty may be recovered by the heirs
13 at law of the person whose body has been refused burial.

1 SEC. 3. That the same jurisdiction and powers are hereby
2 conferred and the same duties enjoined upon the courts and
3 officers of the United States in the execution of this act as are
4 conferred and enjoined upon such courts and officers in sections
5 three, four, five, seven, and ten of an act entitled "An act to
6 protect all persons in the United States in their civil rights,
7 and to furnish the means of their vindication," passed April

8 ninth, eighteen hundred and sixty-six, and these sections are
9 hereby made a part of this act; and any of the aforesaid
10 officers failing to institute and prosecute such proceedings
11 herein required shall, for every such offense, forfeit and pay
12 the sum of five hundred dollars to the person aggrieved
13 thereby, to be recovered by an action on the case, with full
14 costs, and shall, on conviction thereof, be deemed guilty of a
15 misdemeanor, and be fined not less than one thousand dollars
16 nor more than five thousand dollars.

1 SEC. 4. That no citizen possessing all other qualifications
2 which are or may be prescribed by law shall be disqualified
3 for service as juror in any court, national or State, by reason
4 of race, color, or previous condition of servitude; and any
5 officer or other persons charged with any duty in the selection
6 or summoning of jurors who shall exclude or fail to summon
7 any citizen for the reason above named shall, on conviction
8 thereof, be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and be fined not
9 less than one thousand dollars nor more than five thousand
10 dollars.

1 SEC. 5. That every discrimination against any citizen
2 on account of color by the use of the word "white," or any
3 other term in any law, statute, ordinance, or regulation,
4 national or State, is hereby repealed and annulled.

Questions:

What is Charles Sumner trying to achieve with this bill?

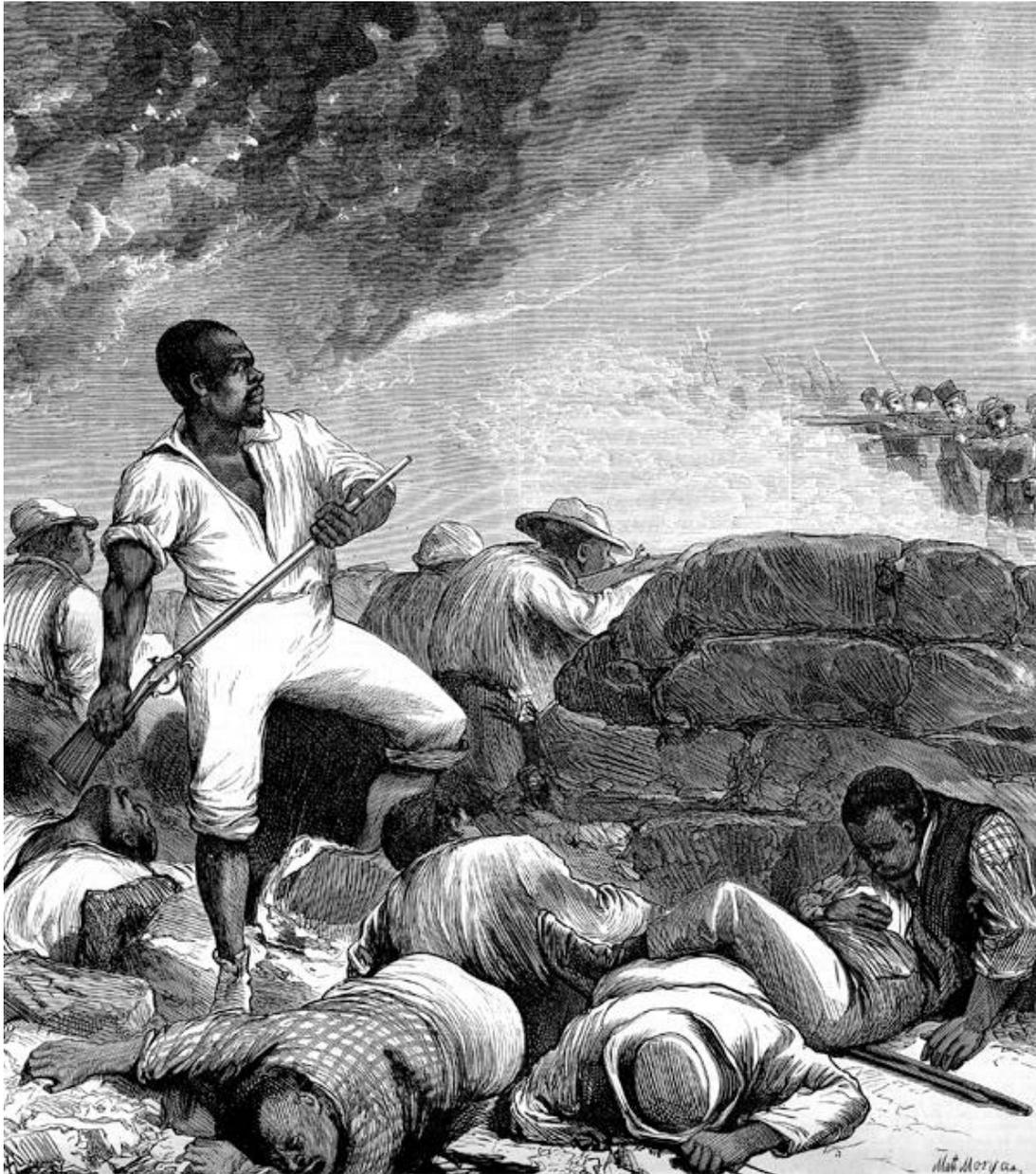
What areas does Sumner feel the government needs to step in to protect African Americans?

Document 7:

Engraving of the Colfax Massacre by M. Morgan/G. Srong, 1873

The Historic New Orleans Collection [[Source](#)]

Originally Published in *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*



Question:

Who is being depicted in this engraving as the victim and who is the aggressor?

To the Honorable, the General Assembly
of the State of Tennessee.
The undersigned, Colored Citizens
of Shelby County have seen with
deep regret, and not without appre-
hension the feeling of bitterness
among the citizens of the State and
they believe it results from the whole-
sale disenfranchisement of her citizens
who have been accustomed to vote; and
they therefore pray your Honorable
body to call a convention at an
early day, to so amend the consti-
tution as to remove this cause of
dissention and to make the clerk of
the county court, Registrar, and
require the Sherriffs to hold the elections

John H. Brown
John Henderson
Pho. Shavers
Edw. P. Cuy
Wm. B. B. B.

Transcription: "To the Honorable, the General Assembly of the State of Tennessee. The undersigned colored citizens of Shelby County have seen with deep regret, and not without apprehension, the feeling of bitterness among the citizens of the state and they believe it results from the wholesale dis[en]franchisement of her citizens who have been accustomed to vote; and they therefore pray your Honorable body to call a convention at an early day, to so amend the constitution as to remove this cause of dissention, and to make the clerk of the county court, registrar, and require the sherriffs to hold the election."

Questions:

What are the writers of this petition asking their elected representatives to do?

Why would African Americans be challenging the gains they had made during Reconstruction?