

U. S. Senate Dec 16. 1864

Colonel.

Your favor of last week
has been received and I have to
thank you for the kind expressions
it contains. So far as the issue
broached in my letter to the Cosmos
is concerned I do not and cannot
doubt that the principle will be
established in our Constitution and
that even those who are now halting
in doubt about the policy will overcome

their hesitancy and dare to be just
and do right. My great regret is that
many who seem to feel personally and
=morally against myself, or perhaps I should
say a call to take the place I occupy in
the Senate - indicate a disposition to make
this the pretext for antagonism - to wound
Freedom in the name of Freedom - to go
backward to the slave policies & foster the
Slave prejudices rather than forward in
the path our whole country is so grandly
treading. This should not be. We must
recognize the danger of leaving questions

unsettled now which will involve a future
for our State disgraced by entrenchment for the
maintenance of "black laws" and other disqualifying
statutes, and assuredly no one thing will
tend so much to repress migration from the
free North, and from the Freedom loving people
of Europe as the knowledge that they are to
be involved in a community where a social
and political ostracism exists against those
entertaining decided and uncompromised
abolition views.

I have said that our whole country is on
the march toward a free & equal suffrage

regardless of color, and only limited by wise
qualifications as to time and maturity and
perhaps public service such as may secure it
from falling into the hands of an indiscriminate
mass just emerging from slavery into freedom.
That our National Congress is largely of
that faith in the present, and will be almost
unitedly so in the coming year you need
no other assurance than the utterances
flowing daily from the men who composed
it. That the Administration will give an
earnest support to the Right in the
same direction is also happily not left-

to doubt. I presume I violate no confidence when I state the fact that the President has already written a letter to Governor Mahu of Louisiana calling his attention to this question of franchise in connection with the deliberations of their state convention for revising the constitution in which occurs the following ~~among other~~ passage bearing on that ~~point~~ point

"You will have a convention which among other things will have to consider the question of franchise... I barely suggest

for your private consideration whether
some of the colored people may not be
let in and especially those who have
fought gallantly in our armies."

The publication of this letter which
evidences an urgent desire for the establishment
in the Constitution by the Convention of the
same principle for which we contend in
Missouri has not yet been authorized
but probably soon will, and at all events
has been read by many with great
satisfaction and was read by the
President himself to our own Governor Elect.

Thus you will see how surely and
how momentously the great cause of
Equal Rights is moving on and
pressing into its service all the philanthropy
all the representative power, and all the
ardent advanced patriotism of the Nation.

But I have not time to enlarge on
this theme as I would wish. I have
only sought to respond fittingly to
the interest your note manifests in the
issue, and to give you some of the
reasons why I feel so sanguine that
the right will prevail. But above all

I do hope that no low or selfish or jealous
influences will be permitted to mingle in
our deliberation & effort in this behalf. I
believe you know me well enough to feel persuaded
that any position I may hold from the people
will be freely rendered back at any moment
they may find one more worthy of the place.
Let them the distribution of honor for the
hereafter take care of themselves. I have
no inordinate craving for such compliment
and others will find the duties involve much
of labor, and mental disquietude. Our duty
to day is to advance - and to advance unitedly
that Missouri may blaze as a very jewel of
freedom in the eyes of all the world.

This letter is not intended for publication but you
may show it to such of our friends as may feel
interested in the matters of which it treats. My compliments
to your lady. My wife & family are in Kentucky.
Yours truly
Col James Peckham. St Louis