270. FOURTH RECONSTRUCTION ACT

March 11, 1868

(*U. S. Statutes at Large*, Vol. XV, p. 41)

The Second Reconstruction Act, Doc- No. 265, provided for the ratification of the new state constitutions only where they were accepted by a majority of the registered voters. The defeat of the Alabama Constitution in February 1868 by the absence from the polls of a majority of the registered voters led Congress to pass the Act of March 11, 1868. Under the provisions of this Act a number of constitutions were ratified and in the summer of 1868 Congress admitted seven of the southern States to the Union. For references, see Doc. No. 260.

An Act to amend the Act [of March 23, 1867]

Be it enacted, That hereafter any election authorized by the act [of March 23, 1867], shall be decided by a majority of the votes actually cast; and at the election in which the question of the adoption or rejection of any constitution is submitted, any person duly registered in the State may vote in the election district where he offers to vote when he has resided therein for ten days next preceding such election, upon presentation of his certificate of registration, his affidavit, or other satisfactory evidence, under such regulations as the district commanders may prescribe.

SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted*, That the constitutional convention of any of the States mentioned in the acts to which this is amendatory may provide that at the time of voting upon the ratification of the constitution the registered voters may vote also for members of the House of Representatives of the United States, and for all elective officers provided for by the said constitution; and the same election officers who shall make the return of the votes cast on the ratification or rejection of the constitution, shall enumerate and certify the votes cast for members of Congress.