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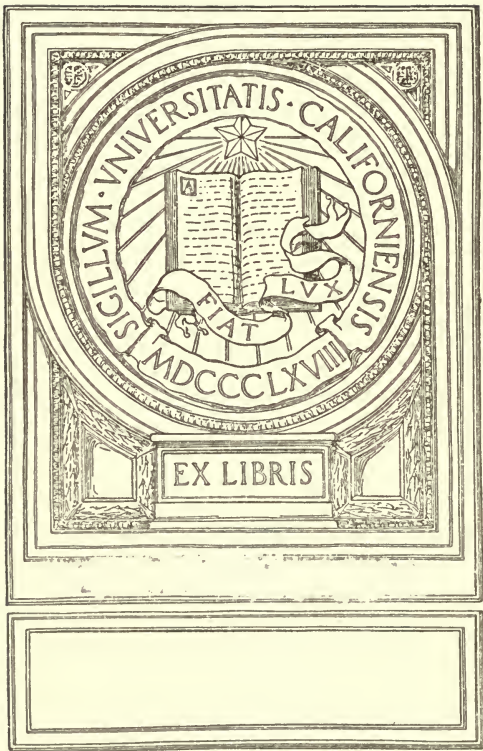
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*C. J. von Meunayer.*

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DEPARTMENT OF DRAMATIC ART







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GENERAL EDITOR

HENRY VAN DYKE

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*Abraham Lincoln.*

GATEWAY SERIES

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SELECTIONS

FROM

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

EDITED BY

ANDREW S. DRAPER, LL.B., LL.D.

COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION FOR THE STATE OF NEW YORK



PROPERTY OF  
DEPARTMENT OF DRAMATIC ART

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SELECTIONS FROM ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

K. P. I

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PREFACE BY THE GENERAL  
EDITOR

THIS series of books aims, first, to give the English texts required for entrance to college in a form which shall make them clear, interesting, and helpful to those who are beginning the study of literature; and, second, to supply the knowledge which the student needs to pass the entrance examination. For these two reasons it is called *The Gateway Series*.

The poems, plays, essays, and stories in these small volumes are treated, first of all, as works of literature, which were written to be read and enjoyed, not to be parsed and scanned and pulled to pieces. A short life of the author is given, and a portrait, in order to help the student to know the real person who wrote the book. The introduction tells what it is about, and how it was written, and where the author got the idea, and what it means. The notes at the foot of the page are simply to give the sense of the hard words so that the student can read straight on without turning to a dictionary. The other notes, at the end of the book, explain difficulties and allusions and fine points.

## 6 Preface by the General Editor

The editors are chosen because of their thorough training and special fitness to deal with the books committed to them, and because they agree with this idea of what a Gateway Series ought to be. They express, in each case, their own views of the books which they edit. Simplicity, thoroughness, shortness, and clearness, — these, we hope, will be the marks of the series.

HENRY VAN DYKE. \*

## PREFACE

THE appreciation of Lincoln has grown so great that there is no need of excuse for sending forth another book concerning him. This little volume presents some new thoughts about him, and contains some of his addresses, public papers, and letters which are not as easily available to the ordinary reader as are others of his writings which can hardly be said to have superior historic interest, earmarks of the genius of statesmanship, or literary merit.

The special editor is indebted to his secretary, Mrs. Honoré H. Greene, for help in the selection and arrangement of material and in the proofreading, and to Mr. Gilbert S. Blakely of the Morris High School, New York City, for the preparation of the notes.

Acknowledgment is also made to the Century Company, for permission to reprint the selections in this volume from "The Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln," edited by John G. Nicolay and John Hay.

ANDREW S. DRAPER.

ALBANY, NEW YORK.

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# PROPERTY OF DEPARTMENT OF DRAMATIC ART

## INTRODUCTION

IN the thought of the world Lincoln grows greater and greater with the passing of the years. The universal interest in all that concerns his career becomes more and more acute. The quest for information about all he did and all he thought has been incessant and untiring and ingenious. It cannot be that there are many more incidents of his life to be discovered and sustained by good evidence, although it is likely enough that further search for the information which justified and the intellectual processes by which he reached well-known conclusions will be rewarded. Probably all of the physical facts associated with his life that will ever be known are already known. The rest depend upon the reasoning of the judge, and are matters of opinion.

To my mind there does not appear the slightest sign of the popular reaction which a few have thought they saw. The common thought of the people dismisses many stories that have been related of Lincoln, and discounts much that has been said of him, and steadily deepens in its appreciation of him. The simple facts that are well known appeal more and more to the feelings of the multitude. It is not those things which are doubtful or

mysterious, but the simple and sober facts of his modest and serious life and the irresistible outworking of his logical mind, that make the character of Lincoln more and yet more impressive with the unfolding years.

In this little book we are to set forth the greatest of his writings. They will be placed in chronological order. We shall see that he dealt with a definite though somewhat comprehensive subject. It involved the legal phases of his country's doings about African slavery. All else that he did bears only upon the personality of an interesting because unique character, and is subordinate to and far below the doings which place the progressive world under obligations to him. We shall see that associated with the extreme plainness of the man and the marked simplicity of his life there was logical reasoning that is inexorable and unanswerable, expressed in a literary style that has of itself impressed the world and is distinctly and completely his own. And we shall see that his legal reasoning crystallized and solidified, and that his manner of expression became yet more chaste and strong and distinctive as he moved on from the opening to the culmination of his career.

Seeing all this we necessarily ask the reasons for it, and we must find them not in the mysteries but in the verities of his life. One must now look upon Lincoln according to his own lights, his own views of men, and his own understanding of events. The simple view of a simple life, which through its very simplicity and its singular opportunity became great, is likely to be the truer one.

In childhood Lincoln was poor, deplorably poor. His father moved easily and was certainly unsubstantial. It is quite apparent that more and better than this may be said of his mother. The boy grew up tall and lank, but sinewy and strong. He lived almost wholly in the open, and engaged in the vocations of the farm, the country store, and the near-by river. He was at times exclusive and moody, and at other times he mixed freely in the primitive games and discussions of the neighbourhood. He was never devoid of humour. He was aggressive enough even in his youth to make an early impression upon a rude civilization. His absolute honesty was always acknowledged. His spirit was warm in its kindness, exact in its sincerity, and reverent towards the higher things of life. From first to last he was a very plain American boy and man, intensely human, and he was always in political and professional activities which often make flaws or find fissures in human nature. But the most penetrating search into all he did has revealed no selfishness or guile among the splendid ingredients of his character.

He was educated. Any other view would be absurd. Of course he was without the finish and polish, the superficial artfulness, which too many think the exclusive evidence of education; but, better than that, his mind was trained into an efficient machine. It could gather and digest facts and draw conclusions and express them in a convincing way. Surely that is education. He was self-educated. He went to school but little. What

he learned he dug out himself, and he dug out not a little, but a great deal. He brought himself to square with knowledge that was exact. He knew as much of mathematics as any one in his region. He mastered grammar as well as mathematics. He was much interested in such exact development of the natural sciences as there had been up to his time. He read Shakespeare and Burns. He had a propensity for poetry, particularly the "little sad songs," as he called them. He developed a phenomenal memory, could recall all he had read, and repeat verses and passages almost word for word. So his mind became not only trained, but stored. He acquired rich intellectual stores, and he also acquired the power to draw upon and use them. Relatively speaking—and the whole world is relative—he became intellectually wealthy, and noted in the region round about for his mental powers and resources.

The further progress of his career was orderly and natural. There is little of the mysterious, and nothing of the supernatural, about it. It may be summed up in a sentence. He knew the fundamentals of the law and the groundwork of society; he liked politics; he became an expert on the relations of slavery to the political philosophy and institutions of the Republic; he foresaw the only attitude which his country could take upon that question and endure; he was able to make that plain to plain people: all the rest "did itself," for it was only the necessary result.

Lincoln was a fine lawyer. He tried many cases and

argued many appeals; he had a large measure of professional success. He did not insult the judge, browbeat witnesses, quarrel with counsel, anger the jury, get beaten and then mislead and swindle his clients. He had care about the causes he espoused, but when he took up a burden he carried it to the end of the journey. There were not so many precedents in the law books in his day as now, and not so many law books. He would not have paid so very much attention to them, if there had been, any more than the very great lawyers do now. His legal reasoning was of the kind that could stand alone. He knew the sources, the philosophy, and the spirit and intent of the law; and this knowledge, with his powers of application, carried him to an invulnerable position as to the justness of his cause. Seeing that clearly, he used all plainness and exactness of speech to compel the court or the jury to see it as he did.

Whether or not Mr. Lincoln was a "politician" depends upon the definition of the word. He was unquestionably fond of public life. He clearly enjoyed political campaigns. He looked after the selections of delegates, the nominations of candidates, and the declarations of conventions. He was a member of the Legislature several times, and of Congress once. He went through a long and notable canvass of Illinois for the office of United States Senator and was beaten by Senator Douglas. But it never occurs to any one that all this was because he wanted office. It was all in consequence of his interest in the political life and health of the country. It was

because his legal and logical mind tended very naturally to the making of laws, and became expert upon the political structure of the Republic. He was chosen to the presidency because he was the first to reconcile the moral feelings of the greater number of his countrymen with the fundamental laws of the country upon the momentous question of slavery ; because he first declared the attitudes which the Republic *must* take upon that subject if it were to endure. The inherent sincerity of the man, his fascination for political philosophy, his new and definite position upon the slavery question, and his remarkable gifts in writing and speaking his opinions, forced him into the forum and carried him to the presidency, in spite of the fact that he looked upon public life as something of a drawback and disadvantage to himself.

And what was his attitude upon the burning and consuming question of slavery? He was born in a slave state, understood the Southern people perfectly, and had much in common with them, but he believed that no man should "eat his bread in the sweat of another man's brow," and hoped for the time when "all men everywhere might be free." There were good men, and many of them, who would abolish slavery, at once, by law and if necessary by force, on the ground that it was an unmitigated evil and could justly be treated in no other way ; but Mr. Lincoln was not one of them. He did not localize responsibility for slavery in the South. He held, and truly, that the whole country had in the beginning participated in the evil, that it was legally recognized and approved by the



convention which framed the Federal Constitution, and that if this had not been done there would have been no "more perfect Union." He saw that economic conditions had defeated the common hope that it would dwindle and perish which was indulged by the fathers of the Republic. He thought that, whether repugnant to moral sense or not, the laws of the country conferred a legal right of property in slaves, and that laws were to be respected so long as they were laws. His lawyer-mind saw that slave-owners had property in slaves which was given them by the laws of the country, and he was opposed to taking this legal right away from them without paying them for the loss they would sustain. He was reluctant about taking it away even with compensation, if without their consent. Moreover, he foresaw that it was not possible to pass and enforce laws doing away with slavery, without bloodshed and without the real danger that the Union might be dissolved and democratic progress receive a blow from which it might not recover in many years. Therefore he was opposed to the forcible abolition of slavery at the time. So far as rights in slave property had been given by law, he would uphold them. As to slavery in the slave states, he would wait.

But slavery was more aggressive than freedom. Under one pretext or another, and with one plan of procedure or another, it sought to enter free territory. Its spokesmen were able, its sophistries were specious, and its determination was of the kind which realizes that its very life is at stake. It was coming to be that the atmosphere

of the world was charged with the feeling that human bondage was a moral wrong and was doomed. The inconsistency of it in a new world Republic dedicated to the principle that all men are entitled to equal rights under the law was humiliating. It was beginning to look as though either slavery or freedom would have to go, in America at least. The expansion of the spirit of freedom only exasperated the slave system and made it more desperate. If the country was to become all slave or all free, the slave states were determined that it should become all slave. For half a century, in one way and another, it had been able to maintain at least a voting equilibrium in the Senate between slave states and free; it had managed to have a president from the South, or a "northern man with southern sympathies," practically all of that time; and it had secured, perhaps not so illogically as the North thought, the decisions of the Supreme Court which extended legal rights over slaves taken into or fleeing into free territory.

All this and even more the North was disposed to acquiesce in reluctantly, rather than force a course which any could hold to be the unjust cause of a sectional war. But when Senator Douglas, of Illinois, the great leader of the political party that for half a century had been dominant in the nation, cast aside the compromises and agreements which had been the doubtful basis of a semblance of peace for a generation, and secured legislation giving slavery the legal opportunity to enter the free territories — the common lands of all the people —

and thus acquire the political control in the nation and a preponderance of votes in the Senate, Lincoln shattered the sophistry of the senator and set the stakes beyond which, war or no war, slavery ought not to be allowed to go by so much as the breadth of a hair. He did it in a state in the politics of which Douglas had been absolute master for a score of years; in a political campaign which took every last voter of the state into consideration; and with a result which showed that convictions were looking for opportunities to limit if not destroy the slave system, and which made the new tribune of the people a logical and inevitable candidate for the presidency. The returns of the presidential election withdrew eventualities from the hands of lawmakers and replaced them in the hands of the God of truth and freedom, as well as in the hands of the God of battles.

So much it has seemed necessary to say to recall to the reader's mind the setting of Lincoln's addresses and state papers. The purity of his literary style is entrancing. His effort to make what he wanted to say plain to any understanding in the fewest possible words is always apparent. Before he reached his zenith he had read many of the standard authors; he was fond of poetry; he could quote by the hour; but he drew upon literature hardly at all to embellish what he wrote and what he said. He had been a student of law and of politics, and was familiar with all that had been said upon the question of slavery; he had read the fathers of the Republic, and was familiar with Webster, Clay, and Calhoun, as he

certainly was with Theodore Parker and Giddings and Greeley and Seward and Sumner ; but he called none of them to the aid of his writings and his speeches. The substance of all he said was that slavery was fundamentally wrong ; that while it might be tolerated within existing territorial limitations it must not be allowed to extend over an inch of free territory ; that the progress of the world demanded that the union of the states be preserved at whatever hazard ; that he would not bring on a war to abolish slavery, but would resist one to sever the Union ; and that all the rest was necessarily in the keeping of the Almighty.

If Lincoln did not ornament his writings with quotations from the great orators and authors, he did not blemish them by the arts of the demagogue or by the use of the commonplace. Of course, before he came to the presidency his work was with a plain, hardy, pioneer people, and his illustrations were of a kind which would illustrate to them. But there was nothing of the commonplace in that ; it was precisely that which trained his great power to express his convictions in ways to compel all people to understand. He had a keen sense of humour, and it helped him. He knew more anecdotes than most men, and in conversation he had no trouble in recalling one to aptly enforce his point ; but he used them not at all in his writings and most sparingly in his political addresses. In the great joint debates with Senator Douglas, neither of the speakers related a story.

Lincoln had no thought of producing " literature," al-

though all he said and wrote makes fine reading now. His early political speeches show not a little ridicule and irony, a directness of thrust and a quickness of repartee which are of course absent from his later state papers, but there is nothing which might better have been omitted. Although his responsibilities became heavier and his words correspondingly serious as his career advanced, there is a uniformity of outlook and method and style from the beginning to the end of his career; and there is also a steadily growing consecration to a cause which was pathetically and completely crowned by the manner of his death.

To the graver and more stately public addresses which are best known we have added several more informal addresses to delegations, with which the people are much less familiar, and a considerable number of letters, of which by far the greater number of people know nothing at all. To my mind these less known papers, hastily prepared and without thought of such use as we are making of them now, prove Lincoln's superior mind and magnanimous soul even more completely than do the more dignified state papers which are better known. They also go even further to show that his masterful and distinctive English style was a common habit. His grasp of fundamental principles never hesitated, his logic never faltered, his good, pure expression was as common as any other habit of his life.

The selections for this book have been made in the hope of exemplifying both the uniform strength and

beauty of his writings from the viewpoint of literature, and the compelling convictions and vital reasoning which did more than all else to make them so. From the very beginning his words were marked by much feeling, guided and governed by the clearest and closest legal reasoning; but with his coming to the presidency they are enshrouded in unavoidable pathos and sorrow, and throughout his administration they are bowed down with the griefs of his suffering country and countrymen, while they are uplifted by his trust in God and his unyielding confidence that democracy shall in some way endure. And what wonder, when of all men he realized that the acceptance of his reasoning and his conclusions meant war; when better than any other he knew that his inauguration, and the consequent discharge of official duty as he saw it, made a dreadful war inevitable and immediate; and when his faith in the justice of the cause, in the great mission of the country, and in the overruling guidance of the Almighty was of the kind that made it necessary to go forward. In the light of all this he must be read much and often to be even partially understood. And he must be understood by his country if the country is to grow in strength, for it was given to him above other men to lay the legal and moral foundations of its strength.

## ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Born . . . . .	Feb. 12, 1809
Moved to Indiana . . . . .	1816
Moved to Illinois . . . . .	1830
Served in Black Hawk War . . . . .	1832
Unsuccessful Candidate for the Illinois Legislature	1832
Member of Legislature . . . . .	1834-1835
Admitted to the Bar . . . . .	1836
Married . . . . .	1842
Elected to Congress . . . . .	1846
Unsuccessful Candidate for the U. S. Senate . . . . .	1858
Lincoln-Douglas debates . . . . .	1858
Nominated for the Presidency . . . . .	1860
Inaugurated . . . . .	March 4, 1861
Fall of Fort Sumter . . . . .	April 13, 1861
First call for volunteer troops . . . . .	April 15, 1861
Emancipation Proclamation . . . . .	Jan. 1, 1863
Re-elected President . . . . .	Nov., 1864
Fall of Richmond . . . . .	April 3, 1865
Surrender of Lee . . . . .	April 9, 1865
Assassination . . . . .	April 14, 1865





# PROPERTY OF

# DEPARTMENT OF DRAMATIC ART

## ADDRESSES AND LETTERS

JUNE 21, 1836.—LETTER TO ROBERT ALLEN

NEW SALEM, June 21, 1836.

*Dear Colonel:* I am told that during my absence last week you passed through this place, and stated publicly that you were in possession of a fact or facts which, if known to the public, would entirely destroy the prospects of N. W. Edwards and myself at the ensuing election ; but that, through favour to us, you should forbear to divulge them. No one has needed favours more than I, and, generally, few have been less unwilling to accept them ;<sup>10</sup> but in this case favour to me would be injustice to the public, and therefore I must beg your pardon for declining it. That I once had the confidence of the people of Sangamon, is sufficiently evident ; and if I have since done anything, either by design or misadventure, which if known would<sup>15</sup> subject me to a forfeiture of that confidence, he that knows of that thing, and conceals it, is a traitor to his country's interest.

I find myself wholly unable to form any conjecture of what fact or facts, real or supposed, you spoke ; but my<sup>20</sup> opinion of your veracity will not permit me for a moment to doubt that you at least believed what you said. I am flattered with the personal regard you manifested for me ; but I do hope that, on more mature reflection, you will view the public interest as a paramount consideration, and<sup>25</sup>

therefore determine to let the worst come. I here assure you that the candid statement of facts on your part, however low it may sink me, shall never break the tie of personal friendship between us. I wish an answer to this, 5 and you are at liberty to publish both, if you choose.

Very respectfully,

COL. ROBERT ALLEN.

A. LINCOLN.

OCTOBER 31, 1840. — LETTER TO W. G. ANDERSON

LAWRENCEVILLE, October 31, 1840.

10 W. G. ANDERSON.

*Dear Sir:* Your note of yesterday is received. In the difficulty between us of which you speak, you say you think I was the aggressor. I do not think I was. You say my “words imported insult.” I meant them as a fair set-off 15 to your own statements, and not otherwise; and in that light alone I now wish you to understand them. You ask for my present “feelings on the subject.” I entertain no unkind feelings to you, and none of any sort upon the subject, except a sincere regret that I permitted myself to 20 get into such an altercation. Yours, etc.,

A. LINCOLN.

JANUARY 12, 1848. — SPEECH IN THE UNITED STATES  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Mr. Chairman:* Some if not all the gentlemen on the 25 other side of the House who have addressed the committee within the last two days have spoken rather complainingly, if I have rightly understood them, of the vote

given a week or ten days ago declaring that the war with Mexico was unnecessarily and unconstitutionally commenced by the President. I admit that such a vote should not be given in mere party wantonness, and that the one given is justly censurable, if it have no other or better 5 foundation. I am one of those who joined in that vote ; and I did so under my best impression of the truth of the case. How I got this impression, and how it may possibly be remedied, I will now try to show. When the war began, it was my opinion that all those who because 10 of knowing too little, or because of knowing too much, could not conscientiously oppose the conduct of the President in the beginning of it should nevertheless, as good citizens and patriots, remain silent on that point, at least till the war should be ended. Some leading Democrats, 15 including ex-President Van Buren, have taken this same view, as I understand them ; and I adhered to it and acted upon it, until since I took my seat here ; and I think I should still adhere to it were it not that the President and his friends will not allow it to be so. Besides 20 the continual effort of the President to argue every silent vote given for supplies into an endorsement of the justice and wisdom of his conduct ; besides that singularly candid paragraph in his late message in which he tells us that Congress with great unanimity had declared that “ by the 25 act of the Republic of Mexico, a state of war exists between that Government and the United States,” when the same journals that informed him of this also informed him that when that declaration stood disconnected from the ques-

tion of supplies sixty-seven in the House, and not fourteen merely, voted against it; besides this open attempt to prove by telling the truth what he could not prove by telling the whole truth—demanding of all who will not  
5 submit to be misrepresented, in justice to themselves, to speak out, — besides all this, one of my colleagues [Mr. Richardson] at a very early day in the session brought in a set of resolutions expressly endorsing the original justice of the war on the part of the President. Upon these  
10 resolutions when they shall be put on their passage I shall be compelled to vote; so that I cannot be silent if I would. Seeing this, I went about preparing myself to give the vote understandingly when it should come. I carefully examined the President's message, to ascertain  
15 what he himself had said and proved upon the point. The result of this examination was to make the impression that, taking for true all the President states as facts, he falls far short of proving his justification; and that the President would have gone farther with his proof if it had  
20 not been for the small matter that the truth would not permit him. Under the impression thus made I gave the vote before mentioned. I propose now to give concisely the process of the examination I made, and how I reached the conclusion I did. The President, in his first war  
25 message of May, 1846, declares that the soil was ours on which hostilities were commenced by Mexico, and he repeats that declaration almost in the same language in each successive annual message, thus showing that he deems that point a highly essential one. In the impor-

tance of that point I entirely agree with the President. To my judgement it is the very point upon which he should be justified, or condemned. In his message of December, 1846, it seems to have occurred to him, as is certainly true, that title—ownership—to soil or 5 anything else is not a simple fact, but is a conclusion following on one or more simple facts; and that it was incumbent upon him to present the facts from which he concluded the soil was ours on which the first blood of the war was shed. 10

Accordingly, a little below the middle of page twelve in the message last referred to he enters upon that task; forming an issue and introducing testimony, extending the whole to a little below the middle of page fourteen. Now, I propose to try to show that the whole of this—issue 15 and evidence—is from beginning to end the sheerest deception. The issue, as he presents it, is in these words: “But there are those who, conceding all this to be true, assume the ground that the true western boundary of Texas is the Nueces,<sup>1</sup> instead of the Rio Grande; and 20 that, therefore, in marching our army to the east bank of the latter river, we passed the Texas line and invaded the territory of Mexico.” Now this issue is made up of two affirmatives and no negative. The main deception of it is that it assumes as true that one river or the other is nec- 25 essarily the boundary; and cheats the superficial thinker entirely out of the idea that possibly the boundary is some-

<sup>1</sup> A river from 50 to 100 miles to the east of the present Mexican border.

where between the two, and not actually at either. A further deception is that it will let in evidence which a true issue would exclude. A true issue made by the President would be about as follows: "I say the soil was  
5 ours, on which the first blood was shed; there are those who say it was not."

I now proceed to examine the President's evidence as applicable to such an issue. When that evidence is analyzed, it is all included in the following propositions:—

10 (1) That the Rio Grande was the western boundary of Louisiana as we purchased it of France in 1803.

(2) That the Republic of Texas always claimed the Rio Grande as her western boundary.

(3) That by various acts she had claimed it on paper.

15 (4) That Santa Anna<sup>1</sup> in his treaty with Texas recognized the Rio Grande as her boundary.

(5) That Texas before, and the United States after, annexation had exercised jurisdiction beyond the Nueces—between the two rivers.

20 (6) That our Congress understood the boundary of Texas to extend beyond the Nueces.

Now for each of these in its turn. His first item is that the Rio Grande was the western boundary of Louisiana, as we purchased it of France in 1803; and seeming to  
25 expect this to be disputed, he argues over the amount of nearly a page to prove it true; at the end of which he lets us know that by the treaty of 1819 we sold to Spain the whole country from the Rio Grande eastward to the

<sup>1</sup> The President of Mexico and Commander-in-Chief of her army.

Sabine. Now, admitting for the present that the Rio Grande was the boundary of Louisiana, what, under heaven, had that to do with the present boundary between us and Mexico? How, Mr. Chairman, the line that once divided your land from mine can still be the boundary 5 between us after I have sold my land to you is to me beyond all comprehension. And how any man, with an honest purpose only of proving the truth, could ever have thought of introducing such a fact to prove such an issue is equally incomprehensible. His next piece of evidence 10 is that "the Republic of Texas always claimed this river (Rio Grande) as her western boundary." That is not true, in fact. Texas has claimed it, but she has not always claimed it. There is at least one distinguished exception. Her State constitution — the republic's most 15 solemn and well-considered act; that which may, without impropriety, be called her last will and testament, revoking all others — makes no such claim. But suppose she had always claimed it. Has not Mexico always claimed the contrary? So that there is but claim against claim, 20 leaving nothing proved until we get back of the claims and find which has the better foundation. Though not in the order in which the President presents his evidence, I now consider that class of his statements which are in substance nothing more than that Texas has, by various 25 acts of her Convention and Congress, claimed the Rio Grande as her boundary, on paper. I mean here what he says about the fixing of the Rio Grande as her boundary in her old constitution (not her State constitution),

about forming congressional districts, counties, etc. Now all of this is but naked claim; and what I have already said about claims is strictly applicable to this. If I should claim your land by word of mouth, that certainly would not  
5 make it mine; and if I were to claim it by a deed which I had made myself, and with which you had had nothing to do, the claim would be quite the same in substance — or rather, in utter nothingness. I next consider the President's statement that Santa Anna in his treaty with  
10 Texas recognized the Rio Grande as the western boundary of Texas. Besides the position so often taken, that Santa Anna while a prisoner of war, a captive, could not bind Mexico by a treaty, which I deem conclusive — besides this, I wish to say something in relation to this treaty,  
15 so called by the President, with Santa Anna. If any man would like to be amused by a sight of that little thing which the President calls by that big name, he can have it by turning to *Niles's Register*,<sup>1</sup> Vol. L, p. 336. And if any one should suppose that *Niles's Register* is  
20 a curious repository of so mighty a document as a solemn treaty between nations, I can only say that I learned to a tolerable degree of certainty, by inquiry at the State Department, that the President himself never saw it anywhere else. By the way, I believe I should not err if I were to  
25 declare that during the first ten years of the existence of that document it was never by anybody called a treaty — that it was never so called till the President, in his ex-

<sup>1</sup> A weekly publication devoted largely to politics and public affairs, published at Baltimore.



tremity, attempted by so calling it to wring something from it in justification of himself in connection with the Mexican war. It has none of the distinguishing features of a treaty. It does not call itself a treaty. Santa Anna does not therein assume to bind Mexico; he assumes only to act as the President-Commander-in-Chief of the Mexican army and navy; stipulates that the then present hostilities should cease, and that he would not himself take up arms, nor influence the Mexican people to take up arms, against Texas during the existence of the war of independence. He did not recognize the independence of Texas; he did not assume to put an end to the war, but clearly indicated his expectation of its continuance; he did not say one word about boundary, and, most probably, never thought of it. It is stipulated therein that the Mexican forces should evacuate the territory of Texas, passing to the other side of the Rio Grande; and in another article it is stipulated that, to prevent collisions between the armies, the Texas army should not approach nearer than within five leagues — of what is not said, but clearly, from the object stated, it is of the Rio Grande. Now, if this is a treaty recognizing the Rio Grande as the boundary of Texas, it contains the singular features of stipulating that Texas shall not go within five leagues of her own boundary.

Next comes the evidence of Texas before annexation, and the United States afterward, exercising jurisdiction beyond the Nueces and between the two rivers. This actual exercise of jurisdiction is the very class or quality of evidence we want. It is excellent so far as it goes;

but does it go far enough? He tells us it went beyond the Nueces, but he does not tell us it went to the Rio Grande. He tells us jurisdiction was exercised between the two rivers, but he does not tell us it was exercised over all the territory between them. Some simple-minded people think it is possible to cross one river and go beyond it without going all the way to the next, that jurisdiction may be exercised between two rivers without covering all the country between them. I know a man, 10 not very unlike myself, who exercises jurisdiction over a piece of land between the Wabash and the Mississippi; and yet so far is this from being all there is between those rivers that it is just one hundred and fifty-two feet long by fifty feet wide, and no part of it much within a hundred 15 miles of either. He has a neighbour between him and the Mississippi — that is, just across the street, in that direction — whom I am sure he could neither persuade nor force to give up his habitation; but which nevertheless he could certainly annex, if it were to be done by merely 20 standing on his own side of the street and claiming it, or even sitting down and writing a deed for it.

But next the President tells us the Congress of the United States understood the State of Texas they admitted into the Union to extend beyond the Nueces. Well, I 25 suppose they did. I certainly so understood it. But how far beyond? That Congress did not understand it to extend clear to the Rio Grande is quite certain, by the fact of their joint resolutions for admission expressly leaving all questions of boundary to future adjustment. And it

may be added that Texas herself is proved to have had the same understanding of it that our Congress had, by the fact of the exact conformity of her new constitution to those resolutions.

I am now through the whole of the President's evidence ; 5 and it is a singular fact that if any one should declare the President sent the army into the midst of a settlement of Mexican people who had never submitted, by consent or by force, to the authority of Texas or of the United States, and that there and thereby the first blood of the war was 10 shed, there is not one word in all the President has said which would either admit or deny the declaration. This strange omission it does seem to me could not have occurred but by design. My way of living leads me to be about the courts of justice ; and there I have sometimes 15 seen a good lawyer, struggling for his client's neck in a desperate case, employing every artifice to work round, befog, and cover up with many words some point arising in the case which he dared not admit and yet could not deny. Party bias may help to make it appear so, but 20 with all the allowance I can make for such bias, it still does appear to me that just such, and from just such necessity, is the President's struggle in this case.

Some time after my colleague [Mr. Richardson] introduced the resolutions I have mentioned, I introduced a 25 preamble, resolution, and interrogations, intended to draw the President out, if possible, on this hitherto untrodden ground. To show their relevancy, I propose to state my understanding of the true rule for ascer-

taining the boundary between Texas and Mexico. It is that wherever Texas was exercising jurisdiction was hers ; and wherever Mexico was exercising jurisdiction was hers ; and that whatever separated the actual exercise of jurisdiction of the one from that of the other was the true boundary between them. If, as is probably true, Texas was exercising jurisdiction along the western bank of the Nueces, and Mexico was exercising it along the eastern bank of the Rio Grande, then neither river was the boundary ; but the uninhabited country between the two was. The extent of our territory in that region depended not on any treaty-fixed boundary (for no treaty had attempted it), but on revolution. Any people anywhere being inclined and having the power, have the right to rise up and shake off the existing government, and form a new one that suits them better. This is a most valuable, a most sacred right — a right which we hope and believe is to liberate the world. Nor is this right confined to cases in which the whole people of an existing government may choose to exercise it. Any portion of such people that can may revolutionize and make their own of so much of the territory as they inhabit. More than this, a majority of any portion of such people may revolutionize, putting down a minority, intermingled with or near about them, who may oppose this movement. Such minority was precisely the case of the Tories of our own revolution. It is a quality of revolutions not to go by old lines or old laws ; but to break up both, and make new ones.

As to the country now in question, we bought it of

France in 1803, and sold it to Spain in 1819, according to the President's statements. After this, all Mexico, including Texas, revolutionized against Spain; and still later Texas revolutionized against Mexico. In my view, just so far as she carried her resolution by obtaining the actual, 5 willing or unwilling, submission of the people, so far the country was hers, and no farther. Now, sir, for the purpose of obtaining the very best evidence as to whether Texas had actually carried her revolution to the place where the hostilities of the present war commenced, let the Presi- 10 dent answer the interrogatories I proposed, as before mentioned, or some other similar ones. Let him answer fully, fairly, and candidly. Let him answer with facts and not with arguments. Let him remember he sits where Washington sat, and so remembering, let him answer 15 as Washington would answer. As a nation should not, and the Almighty will not, be evaded, so let him attempt no evasion — no equivocation. And if, so answering, he can show that the soil was ours where the first blood of the war was shed, — that it was not within an inhabited 20 country, or, if within such, that the inhabitants had submitted themselves to the civil authority of Texas or of the United States, and that the same is true of the site of Fort Brown, — then I am with him for his justification. In that case I shall be most happy to reverse the vote I 25 gave the other day. I have a selfish motive for desiring that the President may do this — I expect to gain some votes, in connection with the war, which, without his so doing, will be of doubtful propriety in my own judgement,

but which will be free from the doubt if he does so. But if he can not or will not do this,—if on any pretence or no pretence he shall refuse or omit it—then I shall be fully convinced of what I more than suspect already—  
5 that he is deeply conscious of being in the wrong; that he feels the blood of this war, like the blood of Abel,<sup>1</sup> is crying to Heaven against him; that originally having some strong motive—what, I will not stop now to give my opinion concerning—to involve the two countries in a  
10 war, and trusting to escape scrutiny by fixing the public gaze upon the exceeding brightness of military glory,—that attractive rainbow that rises in showers of blood—that serpent's eye that charms to destroy,—he plunged into it, and has swept on and on till, disappointed in his  
15 calculation of the ease with which Mexico might be subdued, he now finds himself he knows not where. How like the half-insane mumbling of a fever dream is the whole war part of his late message! At one time telling us that Mexico has nothing whatever that we can get but  
20 territory; at another showing us how we can support the war by levying contributions on Mexico. At one time urging the national honour, the security of the future, the prevention of foreign interference, and even the good of Mexico herself as among the objects of the war; at an-  
25 other telling us that “to reject indemnity, by refusing to accept a cession of territory, would be to abandon all our just demands, and to wage the war bearing all its expenses, without a purpose or definite object.” So then this

<sup>1</sup>Genesis iv: 3-10.

national honour, security of the future, and everything but territorial indemnity may be considered the no-purposes and indefinite objects of the war! But, having it now settled that territorial indemnity is the only object, we are urged to seize, by legislation here, all that he was content to take a few months ago, and the whole province of Lower California to boot, and to still carry on the war — to take all we are fighting for, and still fight on. Again, the President is resolved under all circumstances to have full territorial indemnity for the expenses of the war; but he forgets to tell us how we are to get the excess after those expenses shall have surpassed the value of the whole of the Mexican territory. So again, he insists that the separate national existence of Mexico shall be maintained; but he does not tell us how this can be done, after we shall have taken all her territory. Lest the questions I have suggested be considered speculative merely, let me be indulged a moment in trying to show they are not. The war has gone on some twenty months; for the expenses of which, together with an inconsiderable old score, the President now claims about one half of the Mexican territory, and that by far the better half, so far as concerns our ability to make anything out of it. It is comparatively uninhabited; so that we could establish land offices in it, and raise some money in that way. But the other half is already inhabited, as I understand it, tolerably densely for the nature of the country, and all its lands, or all that are valuable, already appropriated as private property. How then are we to make anything

out of these lands with this encumbrance on them? or how remove the encumbrance? I suppose no one would say we should kill the people, or drive them out, or make slaves of them; or confiscate their property. How, then, can we make much out of this part of the territory? If the prosecution of the war has in expenses already equalled the better half of the country, how long its future prosecution will be in equalling the less valuable half is not a speculative, but a practical, question, pressing closely upon us. And yet it is a question which the President seems never to have thought of. As to the mode of terminating the war and securing peace, the President is equally wandering and indefinite. First, it is to be done by a more vigorous prosecution of the war in the vital parts of the enemy's country; and after apparently talking himself tired on this point, the President drops down into a half-despairing tone, and tells us that "with a people distracted and divided by contending factions, and a government subject to constant changes by successive revolutions, the continued success of our arms may fail to secure a satisfactory peace." Then he suggests the propriety of wheedling the Mexican people to desert the counsels of their own leaders, and, trusting in our protestations, to set up a government from which we can secure a satisfactory peace; telling us that "this may become the only mode of obtaining such a peace." But soon he falls into doubt of this too; and then drops back on to the already half-abandoned ground of "more vigorous prosecution." All this shows that the President is in nowise satisfied



with his own positions. First he takes up one, and in attempting to argue us into it he argues himself out of it, then seizes another and goes through the same process, and then, confused at being able to think of nothing new, he snatches up the old one again, which he has some time <sup>5</sup> before cast off. His mind, taxed beyond its power, is running hither and thither, like some tortured creature on a burning surface, finding no position on which it can settle down and be at ease.

Again, it is a singular omission in this message that it <sup>10</sup> nowhere intimates when the President expects the war to terminate. At its beginning, General Scott was by this same President driven into disfavour, if not disgrace, for intimating that peace could not be conquered in less than <sup>15</sup> three or four months. But now, at the end of about <sup>20</sup> twenty months, during which time our arms have given us the most splendid successes, every department and every part, land and water, officers and privates, regulars and volunteers, doing all that men could do, and hundreds of things which it had ever before been thought men could <sup>25</sup> not do — after all this, this same President gives a long message, without showing us that as to the end he himself has even an imaginary conception. As I have before said, he knows not where he is. He is a bewildered, confounded, and miserably perplexed man. God grant <sup>25</sup> he may be able to show there is not something about his conscience more painful than all his mental perplexity.

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The following is a copy of the so-called "treaty" referred to in the speech :

Articles of Agreement entered into between his Excellency David G. Burnet, President of the Republic of Texas, of the one part, and his Excellency General Santa Anna, President-General-in-Chief of the Mexican Army, of the other part.

Article I. General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna agrees that he will not take up arms, nor will he exercise his influence to cause them to be taken up, against the people of Texas during the present war of independence.

Article II. All hostilities between the Mexican and Texan troops will cease immediately, both by land and water.

Article III. The Mexican troops will evacuate the territory of Texas, passing to the other side of the Rio Grande Del Norte.

Article IV. The Mexican army, in its retreat, shall not take the property of any person without his consent and just indemnification, using only such articles as may be necessary for its subsistence, in cases when the owner may not be present, and remitting to the commander of the army of Texas, or to the commissioners to be appointed for the adjustment of such matters, an account of the value of the property consumed, the place where taken, and the name of the owner, if it can be ascertained.

Article V. That all private property, including cattle, horses, negro slaves, or indentured persons, of whatever denomination, that may have been captured by any portion of the Mexican army, or may have taken refuge in the said army, since the commencement of the late invasion, shall be restored to the commander of the Texan army, or to such other persons as may be appointed by the Government of Texas to receive them.

Article VI. The troops of both armies will refrain from coming in contact with each other; and to this end the commander of the army of Texas will be careful not to approach within a shorter distance than five leagues,

Article VII. The Mexican army shall not make any other delay on its march than that which is necessary to take up their hospitals, baggage, etc., and to cross the rivers; any delay not necessary to these purposes to be considered an infraction of this agreement.

Article VIII. By an express, to be immediately dispatched, 5 this agreement shall be sent to General Vincente Filisola and to General T. J. Rusk, commander of the Texan army, in order that they may be apprised of its stipulations; and to this end they will exchange engagements to comply with the same.

Article IX. That all Texan prisoners now in the possession of 10 the Mexican army, or its authorities, be forthwith released, and furnished with free passports to return to their homes; in consideration of which a corresponding number of Mexican prisoners, rank and file, now in possession of the Government of Texas shall be immediately released; the remainder of the Mexican prisoners that 15 continue in the possession of the Government of Texas to be treated with due humanity, — any extraordinary comforts that may be furnished them to be at the charge of the Government of Mexico.

Article X. General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna will be sent 20 to Vera Cruz as soon as it shall be deemed proper.

The contracting parties sign this instrument for the above-mentioned purposes, in duplicate, at the port of Velasco, this fourteenth day of May, 1836.

DAVID G. BURNET, *President*,  
 JAS. COLLINGSWORTH, *Secretary of State*, 25  
 ANTONIO LOPEZ DE SANTA ANNA,  
 B. HARDIMAN, *Secretary of the Treasury*,  
 P. W. GRAYSON, *Attorney-General*.

FEBRUARY 15, 1848. — LETTER TO WILLIAM H. HERNDON

WASHINGTON, February 15, 1848. 30

*Dear William* : Your letter of the 29th January was received last night. Being exclusively a constitutional

argument, I wish to submit some reflections upon it in the same spirit of kindness that I know actuates you. Let me first state what I understand to be your position. It is that if it shall become necessary to repel invasion, 5 the President may, without violation of the Constitution, cross the line and invade the territory of another country, and that whether such necessity exists in any given case the President is the sole judge.

Before going further consider well whether this is or is 10 not your position. If it is, it is a position that neither the President himself, nor any friend of his, so far as I know, has ever taken. Their only positions are — first, that the soil was ours when the hostilities commenced; and second, that whether it was rightfully ours or not, 15 Congress had annexed it, and the President for that reason was bound to defend it; both of which are as clearly proved to be false in fact as you can prove that your house is mine. The soil was not ours, and Congress did not annex or attempt to annex it. But to return to your 20 position. Allow the President to invade a neighbouring nation whenever he shall deem it necessary to repel an invasion, and you allow him to do so whenever he may choose to say he deems it necessary for such purpose, and you allow him to make war at pleasure. Study to 25 see if you can fix any limit to his power in this respect, after having given him so much as you propose. If to-day he should choose to say he thinks it necessary to invade Canada to prevent the British from invading us, how could you stop him? You may say to him, “I see

no probability of the British invading us"; but he will say to you, "Be silent: I see it, if you don't."

The provision of the Constitution giving the war-making power to Congress was dictated, as I understand it, by the following reasons: Kings had always been involv-5 ing and impoverishing their people in wars, pretending generally, if not always, that the good of the people was the object. This our convention understood to be the most oppressive of all kingly oppressions, and they re-10 solved to so frame the Constitution that no one man should hold the power of bringing this oppression upon us. But your view destroys the whole matter, and places our President where kings have always stood. Write soon again.

Yours truly,

A. LINCOLN. 15

FEBRUARY 27, 1860.—ADDRESS AT COOPER INSTITUTE,  
NEW YORK

*Mr. President and Fellow-citizens of New York:* The facts with which I shall deal this evening are mainly old and familiar; nor is there anything new in the general use 20 I shall make of them. If there shall be any novelty, it will be in the mode of presenting the facts, and the inferences and observations following that presentation. In his speech last autumn at Columbus, Ohio, as reported in the *New York Times*, Senator Douglas said: "Our 25 fathers, when they framed the government under which we live, understood this question just as well, and even better, than we do now."

I fully endorse this, and I adopt it as a text for this discourse. I so adopt it because it furnishes a precise and an agreed starting-point for a discussion between Republicans and that wing of the Democracy headed by 5 Senator Douglas. It simply leaves the inquiry: What was the understanding those fathers had of the question mentioned?

What is the frame of government under which we live? The answer must be, "The Constitution of the United 10 States." That Constitution consists of the original, framed in 1787, and under which the present government first went into operation, and twelve subsequently framed amendments, the first ten of which were framed in 1789.

Who were our fathers that framed the Constitution? 15 I suppose the "thirty-nine" who signed the original instrument may be fairly called our fathers who framed that part of the present government. It is almost exactly true to say they framed it, and it is altogether true to say they fairly represented the opinion and sentiment 20 of the whole nation at that time. Their names, being familiar to nearly all, and accessible to quite all, need not now be repeated.

I take these "thirty-nine," for the present, as being "our fathers who framed the government under which 25 we live." What is the question which, according to the text, those fathers understood "just as well, and even better, than we do now"?

It is this: Does the proper division of local from Federal authority, or anything in the Constitution, forbid

our Federal Government to control as to slavery in our Federal Territories?

Upon this, Senator Douglas holds the affirmative, and Republicans the negative. This affirmation and denial form an issue; and this issue—this question—is precisely what the text declares our fathers understood “better than we.” Let us now inquire whether the “thirty-nine,” or any of them, ever acted upon this question; and if they did, how they acted upon it—how they expressed that better understanding. In 1784, three years before the Constitution, the United States then owning the Northwestern Territory,<sup>1</sup> and no other, the Congress of the Confederation had before them the question of prohibiting slavery in that Territory; and four of the “thirty-nine,” who afterward framed the Constitution were in that Congress, and voted on that question. Of these, Roger Sherman, Thomas Mifflin, and Hugh Williamson voted for the prohibition, thus showing that, in their understanding, no line dividing local from Federal authority, nor anything else, properly forbade the Federal Government to control as to slavery in Federal territory. The other of the four, James McHenry, voted against the prohibition, showing that for some cause he thought it improper to vote for it.

In 1787, still before the Constitution, but while the convention was in session framing it, and while the

<sup>1</sup> The district about the Great Lakes comprising the present states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, and a part of Minnesota.

Northwestern Territory still was the only Territory owned by the United States, the same question of prohibiting slavery in the Territory again came before the Congress of the Confederation ; and two more of the “ thirty-nine ”  
5 who afterward signed the Constitution were in that Congress, and voted on the question. They were William Blount and William Few ; and they both voted for the prohibition — thus showing that in their understanding no line dividing local from Federal authority, nor  
10 anything else, properly forbade the Federal Government to control as to slavery in Federal territory. This time the prohibition became a law, being part of what is now well known as the ordinance of '87.

The question of Federal control of slavery in the  
15 Territories seems not to have been directly before the convention which framed the original Constitution ; and hence it is not recorded that the “ thirty-nine,” or any of them, while engaged on that instrument, expressed any opinion on that precise question.

20 In 1789, by the first Congress which sat under the Constitution, an act was passed to enforce the ordinance of '87, including the prohibition of slavery in the Northwestern Territory. The bill for this act was reported by one of the “ thirty-nine ” — Thomas Fitzsimmons, then a  
25 member of the House of Representatives from Pennsylvania. It went through all its stages without a word of opposition, and finally passed both branches without ayes and nays, which is equivalent to a unanimous passage. In this Congress there were sixteen of the thirty-nine



fathers who framed the original Constitution. They were John Langdon, Nicholas Gilman, Wm. S. Johnson, Roger Sherman, Robert Morris, Thos. Fitzsimmons, William Few, Abraham Baldwin, Rufus King, William Paterson, George Clymer, Richard Bassett, George Read, Pierce Butler, 5 Daniel Carroll, and James Madison.

This shows that, in their understanding, no line dividing local from Federal authority, nor anything in the Constitution, properly forbade Congress to prohibit slavery in the Federal territory; else both their fidelity to correct 10 principle, and their oath to support the Constitution, would have constrained them to oppose the prohibition.

Again, George Washington, another of the "thirty-nine," was then President of the United States, and as such approved and signed the bill, thus completing its 15 validity as a law, and thus showing that, in his understanding, no line dividing local from Federal authority, nor anything in the Constitution, forbade the Federal Government to control as to slavery in Federal territory.

No great while after the adoption of the original 20 Constitution, North Carolina ceded to the Federal Government the country now constituting the State of Tennessee; and a few years later Georgia ceded that which now constitutes the States of Mississippi and Alabama. In both deeds of cession it was made a condition by the 25 ceding States that the Federal Government should not prohibit slavery in the ceded country. Besides this, slavery was then actually in the ceded country. Under these circumstances, Congress, on taking charge of these

countries, did not absolutely prohibit slavery within them. But they did interfere with it—take control of it—even there, to a certain extent. In 1798 Congress organized the Territory of Mississippi. In the act of organization 5 they prohibited the bringing of slaves into the Territory from any place without the United States, by fine, and giving freedom to slaves so brought. This act passed both branches of Congress without yeas and nays. In that Congress were three of the “thirty-nine” who 10 framed the original Constitution. They were John Langdon, George Read, and Abraham Baldwin. They all probably voted for it. Certainly they would have placed their opposition to it upon record if, in their understanding, any line dividing local from Federal 15 authority, or anything in the Constitution, properly forbade the Federal Government to control as to slavery in Federal territory.

In 1803 the Federal Government purchased the Louisiana country. Our former territorial acquisitions 20 came from certain of our own States; but this Louisiana country was acquired from a foreign nation. In 1804 Congress gave a territorial organization to that part of it which now constitutes the State of Louisiana. New Orleans, lying within that part, was an old and compara- 25 tively large city. There were other considerable towns and settlements, and slavery was extensively and thoroughly intermingled with the people. Congress did not, in the Territorial Act, prohibit slavery; but they did interfere with it—take control of it—in a more marked and

extensive way than they did in the case of Mississippi. The substance of the provision therein made in relation to slaves was :

1st. That no slave should be imported into the Territory from foreign parts. 5

2d. That no slave should be carried into it who had been imported into the United States since the first day of May, 1798.

3d. That no slave should be carried into it, except by the owner, and for his own use as a settler ; the penalty 10 in all the cases being a fine upon the violator of the law, and freedom to the slave.

This act also was passed without ayes or nays. In the Congress which passed it there were two of the "thirty-nine." They were Abraham Baldwin and 15 Jonathan Dayton. As stated in the case of Mississippi, it is probable they both voted for it. They would not have allowed it to pass without recording their opposition to it if, in their understanding, it violated either the line properly dividing local from Federal authority, or any 20 provision of the Constitution.

In 1819-20 came and passed the Missouri question. Many votes were taken, by yeas and nays, in both branches of Congress, upon the various phases of the general question. Two of the "thirty-nine" — Rufus King and 25 Charles Pinckney — were members of that Congress. Mr. King steadily voted for slavery prohibition and against all compromises, while Mr. Pinckney as steadily voted against slavery prohibition and against all com-

promises. By this, Mr. King showed that, in his understanding, no line dividing local from Federal authority, nor anything in the Constitution, was violated by Congress prohibiting slavery in Federal territory; while Mr. Pinckney, by his votes, showed that, in his understanding, there was some sufficient reason for opposing such prohibition in that case.

The cases I have mentioned are the only acts of the "thirty-nine," or of any of them, upon the direct issue, which I have been able to discover.

To enumerate the persons who thus acted as being four in 1784, two in 1787, seventeen in 1789, three in 1798, two in 1804, and two in 1819-20, there would be thirty of them. But this would be counting John Langdon, Roger Sherman, William Few, Rufus King, and George Read each twice, and Abraham Baldwin three times. The true number of those of the "thirty-nine" whom I have shown to have acted upon the question which, by the text, they understood better than we, is twenty-three, leaving sixteen not shown to have acted upon it in any way.

Here, then, we have twenty-three out of our thirty-nine fathers "who framed the government under which we live," who have, upon their official responsibility and their corporal oaths, acted upon the very question which the text affirms they "understood just as well, and even better, than we do now"; and twenty-one of them—a clear majority of the whole "thirty-nine"—so acting upon it as to make them guilty of gross political impro-

priety and wilful perjury if, in their understanding, any proper division between local and Federal authority, or anything in the Constitution they had made themselves, and sworn to support, forbade the Federal Government to control as to slavery in the Federal Territories. Thus 5 the twenty-one acted ; and, as actions speak louder than words, so actions under such responsibility speak still louder.

Two of the twenty-three voted against congressional prohibition of slavery in the Federal Territories, in the 10 instances in which they acted upon the question. But for what reasons they so voted is not known. They may have done so because they thought a proper division of local from Federal authority, or some provision or principle of the Constitution, stood in the way ; or they may, 15 without any such question, have voted against the prohibition on what appeared to them to be sufficient grounds of expediency. No one who has sworn to support the Constitution can conscientiously vote for what he under- 20 stands to be an unconstitutional measure, however expedient he may think it ; but one may and ought to vote against a measure which he deems constitutional if, at the same time, he deems it inexpedient. It, therefore, would be unsafe to set down even the two who voted against the prohibition as having done so because, in their under- 25 standing, any proper division of local from Federal authority, or anything in the Constitution, forbade the Federal Government to control as to slavery in Federal territory.

The remaining sixteen of the "thirty-nine," so far as I have discovered, have left no record of their understanding upon the direct question of Federal control of slavery in the Federal Territories. But there is much reason to believe that their understanding upon that question would not have appeared different from that of their twenty-three compeers, had it been manifested at all.

For the purpose of adhering rigidly to the text, I have purposely omitted whatever understanding may have  
10 been manifested by any person, however distinguished, other than the thirty-nine fathers who framed the original Constitution; and, for the same reason, I have also omitted whatever understanding may have been manifested by any of the "thirty-nine" even on any other phase of  
15 the general question of slavery. If we should look into their acts and declarations on those other phases, as the foreign slave-trade, and the morality and policy of slavery generally, it would appear to us that on the direct question of Federal control of slavery in Federal Territories,  
20 the sixteen, if they had acted at all, would probably have acted just as the twenty-three did. Among that sixteen were several of the most noted antislavery men of those times,—as Dr. Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, and Gouverneur Morris,—while there was not one now known to  
25 have been otherwise, unless it may be John Rutledge, of South Carolina.

The sum of the whole is that of our thirty-nine fathers who framed the original Constitution, twenty-one—a clear majority of the whole—certainly understood that no

proper division of local from Federal authority, nor any part of the Constitution, forbade the Federal Government to control slavery in the Federal Territories; while all the rest had probably the same understanding. Such, unquestionably, was the understanding of our fathers who framed the original Constitution; and the text affirms that they understood the question "better than we."

But, so far, I have been considering the understanding of the question manifested by the framers of the original Constitution. In and by the original instrument, a mode was provided for amending it; and, as I have already stated, the present frame of "the government under which we live" consists of that original, and twelve amendatory articles framed and adopted since. Those who now insist that Federal control of slavery in Federal Territories violates the Constitution, point us to the provisions which they suppose it thus violates; and, as I understand, they all fix upon provisions in these amendatory articles, and not in the original instrument. The Supreme Court, in the Dred Scott case, plant themselves upon the fifth amendment, which provides that no person shall be deprived of "life, liberty, or property without due process of law"; while Senator Douglas and his peculiar adherents plant themselves upon the tenth amendment, providing that "the powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution" "are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people."

Now, it so happens that these amendments were framed by the first Congress which sat under the Constitution—

the identical Congress which passed the act, already mentioned, enforcing the prohibition of slavery in the Northwestern Territory. Not only was it the same Congress, but they were the identical, same individual men who, at the same session, and at the same time within the session, had under consideration, and in progress toward maturity, these constitutional amendments, and this act prohibiting slavery in all the territory the nation then owned. The constitutional amendments were introduced before, and passed after, the act enforcing the ordinance of '87; so that, during the whole pendency of the act to enforce the ordinance, the constitutional amendments were also pending.

The seventy-six members of that Congress, including sixteen of the framers of the original Constitution, as before stated, were pre-eminently our fathers who framed that part of "the government under which we live" which is now claimed as forbidding the Federal Government to control slavery in the Federal Territories.

Is it not a little presumptuous in any one at this day to affirm that the two things which that Congress deliberately framed, and carried to maturity at the same time, are absolutely inconsistent with each other? And does not such affirmation become impudently absurd when coupled with the other affirmation, from the same mouth, that those who did the two things alleged to be inconsistent, understood whether they really were inconsistent better than we — better than he who affirms that they are inconsistent?

It is surely safe to assume that the thirty-nine framers of the original Constitution, and the seventy-six members of



the Congress which framed the amendments thereto, taken together, do certainly include those who may be fairly called "our fathers who framed the government under which we live." And so assuming, I defy any man to show that any one of them ever, in his whole life, declared 5 that, in his understanding, any proper division of local from Federal authority, or any part of the Constitution, forbade the Federal Government to control as to slavery in the Federal Territories. I go a step further. I defy any one to show that any living man in the whole world 10 ever did, prior to the beginning of the present century (and I might almost say prior to the beginning of the last half of the present century), declare that, in his understanding, any proper division of local from Federal authority, or any part of the Constitution, forbade the 15 Federal Government to control as to slavery in the Federal Territories. To those who now so declare I give not only "our fathers who framed the government under which we live," but with them all other living men within the century in which it was framed, among whom to search, and 20 they shall not be able to find the evidence of a single man agreeing with them.

Now, and here, let me guard a little against being misunderstood. I do not mean to say we are bound to follow implicitly in whatever our fathers did. To do so 25 would be to discard all the lights of current experience — to reject all progress, all improvement. What I do say is that if we would supplant the opinions and policy of our fathers in any case, we should do so upon evidence so

conclusive, and argument so clear, that even their great authority, fairly considered and weighed, cannot stand ; and most surely not in a case whereof we ourselves declare they understood the question better than we.

5 If any man at this day sincerely believes that a proper division of local from Federal authority, or any part of the Constitution, forbids the Federal Government to control as to slavery in the Federal Territories, he is right to say so, and to enforce his position by all truthful evidence  
10 and fair argument which he can. But he has no right to mislead others, who have less access to history, and less leisure to study it, into the false belief that "our fathers who framed the government under which we live" were of the same opinion — thus substituting falsehood and  
15 deception for truthful evidence and fair argument. If any man at this day sincerely believes "our fathers who framed the government under which we live" used and applied principles, in other cases, which ought to have led them to understand that a proper division of local  
20 from Federal authority, or some part of the Constitution, forbids the Federal Government to control as to slavery in the Federal Territories, he is right to say so. But he should, at the same time, brave the responsibility of declaring that, in his opinion, he understands their principles better than they did themselves ; and especially  
25 should he not shirk that responsibility by asserting that they "understood the question just as well, and even better, than we do now."

But enough ! Let all who believe that "our fathers

who framed the government under which we live understood this question just as well, and even better, than we do now," speak as they spoke, and act as they acted upon it. This is all Republicans ask — all Republicans desire — in relation to slavery. As those fathers marked 5 it, so let it be again marked, as an evil not to be extended, but to be tolerated and protected only because of and so far as its actual presence among us makes that toleration and protection a necessity. Let all the guaranties those fathers gave it be not grudgingly, but fully 10 and fairly, maintained. For this Republicans contend, and with this, so far as I know or believe, they will be content.

And now, if they would listen, — as I suppose they will not, — I would address a few words to the Southern 15 people.

I would say to them : You consider yourselves a reasonable and a just people ; and I consider that in the general qualities of reason and justice you are not inferior to any other people. Still, when you speak of us 20 Republicans, you do so only to denounce us as reptiles, or, at the best, as no better than outlaws. You will grant a hearing to pirates or murderers, but nothing like it to "Black Republicans." In all your contentions with one another, each of you deems an unconditional condemna- 25 tion of "Black Republicanism" as the first thing to be attended to. Indeed, such condemnation of us seems to be an indispensable prerequisite — licence, so to speak — among you to be admitted or permitted to speak at all.

Now can you or not be prevailed upon to pause and to consider whether this is quite just to us, or even to yourselves? Bring forward your charges and specifications, and then be patient long enough to hear us deny or  
5 justify.

You say we are sectional. We deny it. That makes an issue; and the burden of proof is upon you. You produce your proof; and what is it? Why, that our party has no existence in your section—gets no votes  
10 in your section. The fact is substantially true; but does it prove the issue? If it does, then in case we should, without change of principle, begin to get votes in your section, we should thereby cease to be sectional. You cannot escape this conclusion; and yet, are you willing  
15 to abide by it? If you are, you will probably soon find that we have ceased to be sectional, for we shall get votes in your section this very year. You will then begin to discover, as the truth plainly is, that your proof does not touch the issue. The fact that we get no votes  
20 in your section is a fact of your making, and not of ours. And if there be fault in that fact, that fault is primarily yours, and remains so until you show that we repel you by some wrong principle or practice. If we do repel you by any wrong principle or practice, the fault is ours;  
25 but this brings you to where you ought to have started—to a discussion of the right or wrong of our principle. If our principle, put in practice, would wrong your section for the benefit of ours, or for any other object, then our principle, and we with it, are sectional, and are justly

opposed and denounced as such. Meet us, then, on the question of whether our principle, put in practice, would wrong your section ; and so meet us as if it were possible that something may be said on our side. Do you accept the challenge? No ! Then you really believe 5 that the principle which "our fathers who framed the government under which we live" thought so clearly right as to adopt it, and endorse it again and again, upon their official oaths, is in fact so clearly wrong as to demand your condemnation without a moment's consid- 10 eration.

Some of you delight to flaunt in our faces the warning against sectional parties given by Washington in his Farewell Address. Less than eight years before Washington gave that warning, he had, as President of the United 15 States, approved and signed an act of Congress enforcing the prohibition of slavery in the Northwestern Territory, which act embodied the policy of the government upon that subject up to and at the very moment he penned that warning ; and about one year after he penned it, he 20 wrote Lafayette that he considered that prohibition a wise measure, expressing in the same connexion his hope that we should at some time have a confederacy of free States.

Bearing this in mind, and seeing that sectionalism has 25 since arisen upon this same subject, is that warning a weapon in your hands against us, or in our hands against you? Could Washington himself speak, would he cast the blame of that sectionalism upon us, who sustain his

policy, or upon you, who repudiate it? We respect that warning of Washington, and we commend it to you, together with his example pointing to the right application of it.

5 But you say you are conservative — eminently conservative — while we are revolutionary, destructive, or something of the sort. What is conservatism? Is it not adherence to the old and tried, against the new and untried? We stick to, contend for, the identical old  
10 policy on the point in controversy which was adopted by “our fathers who framed the government under which we live”; while you with one accord reject, and scout, and spit upon that old policy, and insist upon substituting something new. True, you disagree among your-  
15 selves as to what that substitute shall be. You are divided on new propositions and plans, but you are unanimous in rejecting and denouncing the old policy of the fathers. Some of you are for reviving the foreign slave-trade; some for a congressional slave code for the Territories; some  
20 for Congress forbidding the Territories to prohibit slavery within their limits; some for maintaining slavery in the Territories through the judiciary; some for the “gur-reat pur-rinciple” that “if one man would enslave another, no third man should object,” fantastically called “popu-  
25 lar sovereignty”; but never a man among you is in favour of Federal prohibition of slavery in Federal Territories, according to the practice of “our fathers who framed the government under which we live.” Not one of all your various plans can show a precedent or an advocate in the

century within which our government originated. Consider, then, whether your claim of conservatism for yourselves, and your charge of destructiveness against us, are based on the most clear and stable foundations.

Again, you say we have made the slavery question more 5 prominent than it formerly was. We deny it. We admit that it is more prominent, but we deny that we made it so. It was not we, but you, who discarded the old policy of the fathers. We resisted, and still resist, your innovation; and thence comes the greater prominence of the 10 question. Would you have that question reduced to its former proportions? Go back to that old policy. What has been will be again, under the same conditions. If you would have the peace of the old times, readopt the precepts and policy of the old times. 15

You charge that we stir up insurrections among your slaves. We deny it; and what is your proof? Harper's Ferry! John Brown!! John Brown was no Republican; and you have failed to implicate a single Republican in his Harper's Ferry enterprise. If any member of our party 20 is guilty in that matter, you know it, or you do not know it. If you do know it, you are inexcusable for not designating the man and proving the fact. If you do not know it, you are inexcusable for asserting it, and especially for persisting in the assertion after you have tried and failed 25 to make the proof. You need not be told that persisting in a charge which one does not know to be true, is simply malicious slander.

Some of you admit that no Republican designedly

aided or encouraged the Harper's Ferry affair, but still insist that our doctrines and declarations necessarily lead to such results. We do not believe it. We know we hold no doctrine, and make no declaration, which were  
5 not held to and made by "our fathers who framed the government under which we live." You never dealt fairly by us in relation to this affair. When it occurred, some important State elections were near at hand, and you were in evident glee with the belief that, by charging the blame  
10 upon us, you could get an advantage of us in those elections. The elections came, and your expectations were not quite fulfilled. Every Republican man knew that, as to himself at least, your charge was a slander, and he was not much inclined by it to cast his vote in your favour.  
15 Republican doctrines and declarations are accompanied with a continual protest against any interference whatever with your slaves, or with you about your slaves. Surely, this does not encourage them to revolt. True, we do, in common with "our fathers who framed the government under  
20 which we live," declare our belief that slavery is wrong; but the slaves do not hear us declare even this. For anything we say or do, the slaves would scarcely know there is a Republican party. I believe they would not, in fact, generally know it but for your misrepresentations of us in  
25 their hearing. In your political contests among yourselves, each faction charges the other with sympathy with Black Republicanism; and then, to give point to the charge, defines Black Republicanism to simply be insurrection, blood, and thunder among the slaves.



Slave insurrections are no more common now than they were before the Republican party was organized. What induced the Southampton insurrection, twenty-eight years ago, in which at least three times as many lives were lost as at Harper's Ferry? You can scarcely stretch your very elastic fancy to the conclusion that Southampton was "got up by Black Republicanism." In the present state of things in the United States, I do not think a general, or even a very extensive, slave insurrection is possible. The indispensable concert of action cannot be attained. The slaves have no means of rapid communication; nor can incendiary freemen, black or white, supply it. The explosive materials are everywhere in parcels; but there neither are, nor can be supplied, the indispensable connecting trains.

Much is said by Southern people about the affection of slaves for their masters and mistresses; and a part of it, at least, is true. A plot for an uprising could scarcely be devised and communicated to twenty individuals before some one of them, to save the life of a favourite master or mistress, would divulge it. This is the rule; and the slave revolution in Hayti was not an exception to it, but a case occurring under peculiar circumstances. The gunpowder plot of British history, though not connected with slaves, was more in point. In that case, only about twenty were admitted to the secret; and yet one of them, in his anxiety to save a friend, betrayed the plot to that friend, and, by consequence, averted the calamity. Occasional poisonings from the kitchen, and open or stealthy assassina-

tions in the field, and local revolts extending to a score or so, will continue to occur as the natural results of slavery ; but no general insurrection of slaves, as I think, can happen in this country for a long time. Whoever much fears, or much  
5 hopes, for such an event, will be alike disappointed.

In the language of Mr. Jefferson, uttered many years ago, " It is still in our power to direct the process of emancipation and deportation peaceably, and in such slow degrees, as that the evil will wear off insensibly ; and  
10 their places be, *pari passu*,<sup>1</sup> filled up by free white labourers. If, on the contrary, it is left to force itself on, human nature must shudder at the prospect held up."

Mr. Jefferson did not mean to say, nor do I, that the power of emancipation is in the Federal Government.  
15 He spoke of Virginia ; and, as to the power of emancipation, I speak of the slave-holding States only. The Federal Government, however, as we insist, has the power of restraining the extension of the institution — the power to ensure that a slave insurrection shall never occur on  
20 any American soil which is now free from slavery.

John Brown's effort was peculiar. It was not a slave insurrection. It was an attempt by white men to get up a revolt among slaves, in which the slaves refused to participate. In fact, it was so absurd that the slaves,  
25 with all their ignorance, saw plainly enough it could not succeed. That affair, in its philosophy, corresponds with the many attempts, related in history, at the assassination of kings and emperors. An enthusiast broods over the

<sup>1</sup> With equal pace; in like proportion.

oppression of a people till he fancies himself commissioned by Heaven to liberate them. He ventures the attempt, which ends in little else than his own execution. Orsini's attempt on Louis Napoleon, and John Brown's attempt at Harper's Ferry, were, in their philosophy, precisely the same. The eagerness to cast blame on old England in the one case, and on New England in the other, does not disprove the sameness of the two things.

And how much would it avail you, if you could, by the use of John Brown, Helper's Book, and the like, break up the Republican organization? Human action can be modified to some extent, but human nature cannot be changed. There is a judgement and a feeling against slavery in this nation, which cast at least a million and a half of votes. You cannot destroy that judgement and feeling — that sentiment — by breaking up the political organization which rallies around it. You can scarcely scatter and disperse an army which has been formed into order in the face of your heaviest fire; but if you could, how much would you gain by forcing the sentiment which created it out of the peaceful channel of the ballot-box into some other channel? What would that other channel probably be? Would the number of John Browns be lessened or enlarged by the operation?

But you will break up the Union rather than submit to a denial of your constitutional rights.

That has a somewhat reckless sound; but it would be palliated, if not fully justified, were we proposing, by the mere force of numbers, to deprive you of some right

plainly written down in the Constitution. But we are proposing no such thing.

When you make these declarations you have a specific and well understood allusion to an assumed constitutional  
5 right of yours to take slaves into the Federal Territories, and to hold them there as property. But no such right is specifically written in the Constitution. That instrument is literally silent about any such right. We, on the contrary, deny that such a right has any existence in the  
10 Constitution, even by implication.

Your purpose, then, plainly stated, is that you will destroy the government, unless you be allowed to construe and force the Constitution as you please, on all points in dispute between you and us. You will rule or ruin in all  
15 events.

This, plainly stated, is your language. Perhaps you will say the Supreme Court has decided the disputed constitutional question in your favour. Not quite so. But waiving the lawyer's distinction between dictum and  
20 decision, the court has decided the question for you in a sort of way. The court has substantially said, it is your constitutional right to take slaves into the Federal Territories, and to hold them there as property. When I say the decision was made in a sort of way, I mean it was  
25 made in a divided court, by a bare majority of the judges, and they not quite agreeing with one another in the reasons for making it; that it is so made as that its avowed supporters disagree with one another about its meaning, and that it was mainly based upon a mistaken statement

of fact — the statement in the opinion that “the right of property in a slave is distinctly and expressly affirmed in the Constitution.”

An inspection of the Constitution will show that the right of property in a slave is not “distinctly and expressly affirmed” in it. Bear in mind, the judges do not pledge their judicial opinion that such right is impliedly affirmed in the Constitution ; but they pledge their veracity that it is “distinctly and expressly” affirmed there — “distinctly,” that is, not mingled with anything else — “expressly,” that is, in words meaning just that, without the aid of any inference, and susceptible of no other meaning.

If they had only pledged their judicial opinion that such right is affirmed in the instrument by implication, it would be open to others to show that neither the word “slave” nor “slavery” is to be found in the Constitution, nor the word “property” even, in any connection with language alluding to the things slave, or slavery ; and that wherever in that instrument the slave is alluded to, he is called a “person” ; and wherever his master’s legal right in relation to him is alluded to, it is spoken of as “service or labour which may be due” — as a debt payable in service or labour. Also it would be open to show, by contemporaneous history, that this mode of alluding to slaves and slavery, instead of speaking of them, was employed on purpose to exclude from the Constitution the idea that there could be property in man.

To show all this is easy and certain.

When this obvious mistake of the judges shall be brought to their notice, is it not reasonable to expect that they will withdraw the mistaken statement, and reconsider the conclusion based upon it?

5 And then it is to be remembered that "our fathers who framed the government under which we live" — the men who made the Constitution — decided this same constitutional question in our favour long ago: decided it without division among themselves when making the decision; 10 without division among themselves about the meaning of it after it was made, and, so far as any evidence is left, without basing it upon any mistaken statement of facts.

Under all these circumstances, do you really feel yourselves justified to break up this government unless such a 15 court decision as yours is shall be at once submitted to as a conclusive and final rule of political action? But you will not abide the election of a Republican president! In that supposed event, you say, you will destroy the Union; and then, you say, the great crime of having 20 destroyed it will be upon us! That is cool. A highwayman holds a pistol to my ear, and mutters through his teeth, "Stand and deliver, or I shall kill you, and then you will be a murderer!"

To be sure, what the robber demanded of me — my 25 money — was my own; and I had a clear right to keep it; but it was no more my own than my vote is my own; and the threat of death to me, to extort my money, and the threat of destruction to the Union, to extort my vote, can scarcely be distinguished in principle.

A few words now to Republicans. It is exceedingly desirable that all parts of this great Confederacy shall be at peace, and in harmony one with another. Let us Republicans do our part to have it so. Even though much provoked, let us do nothing through passion and ill temper. Even though the Southern people will not so much as listen to us, let us calmly consider their demands, and yield to them if, in our deliberate view of our duty, we possibly can. Judging by all they say and do, and by the subject and nature of their controversy with us, let us determine, if we can, what will satisfy them.

Will they be satisfied if the Territories be unconditionally surrendered to them? We know they will not. In all their present complaints against us, the Territories are scarcely mentioned. Invasions and insurrections are the rage now. Will it satisfy them if, in the future, we have nothing to do with invasions and insurrections? We know it will not. We so know, because we know we never had anything to do with invasions and insurrections; and yet this total abstaining does not exempt us from the charge and the denunciation.

The question recurs, What will satisfy them? Simply this: we must not only let them alone, but we must somehow convince them that we do let them alone. This, we know by experience, is no easy task. We have been so trying to convince them from the very beginning of our organization, but with no success. In all our platforms and speeches we have constantly protested our purpose to let them alone; but this has had no tendency

to convince them. Alike unavailing to convince them is the fact that they have never detected a man of us in any attempt to disturb them.

These natural and apparently adequate means all failing, what will convince them? This, and this only: cease to call slavery wrong, and join them in calling it right. And this must be done thoroughly — done in acts as well as in words. Silence will not be tolerated — we must place ourselves avowedly with them. Senator  
10 Douglas's new sedition law must be enacted and enforced, suppressing all declarations that slavery is wrong, whether made in politics, in presses, in pulpits, or in private. We must arrest and return their fugitive slaves with greedy pleasure. We must pull down our free-State constitutions.  
15 The whole atmosphere must be disinfected from all taint of opposition to slavery, before they will cease to believe that all their troubles proceed from us.

I am quite aware they do not state their case precisely in this way. Most of them would probably say to us,  
20 "Let us alone; do nothing to us, and say what you please about slavery." But we do let them alone, — have never disturbed them, — so that, after all, it is what we say which dissatisfies them. They will continue to accuse us of doing, until we cease saying.

25 I am also aware they have not as yet in terms demanded the overthrow of our free-State constitutions. Yet those constitutions declare the wrong of slavery with more solemn emphasis than do all other sayings against it; and when all these other sayings shall have been



silenced, the overthrow of these constitutions will be demanded, and nothing be left to resist the demand. It is nothing to the contrary that they do not demand the whole of this just now. Demanding what they do, and for the reason they do, they can voluntarily stop nowhere <sup>5</sup> short of this consummation. Holding, as they do, that slavery is morally right and socially elevating, they cannot cease to demand a full national recognition of it as a legal right and a social blessing.

Nor can we justifiably withhold this on any ground <sup>10</sup> save our conviction that slavery is wrong. If slavery is right, all words, acts, laws, and constitutions against it are themselves wrong, and should be silenced and swept away. If it is right, we cannot justly object to its nationality — its universality ; if it is wrong, they cannot <sup>15</sup> justly insist upon its extension — its enlargement. All they ask we could readily grant, if we thought slavery right ; all we ask they could as readily grant, if they thought it wrong. Their thinking it right and our think- <sup>20</sup> ing it wrong is the precise fact upon which depends the whole controversy. Thinking it right, as they do, they are not to blame for desiring its full recognition as being right ; but thinking it wrong, as we do, can we yield to them? Can we cast our votes with their view, and against our own? In view of our moral, social, and <sup>25</sup> political responsibilities, can we do this?

Wrong as we think slavery is, we can yet afford to let it alone where it is, because that much is due to the necessity arising from its actual presence in the nation ;

but can we, while our votes will prevent it, allow it to spread into the national Territories, and to overrun us here in these free States? If our sense of duty forbids this, then let us stand by our duty fearlessly and effectively.

5 Let us be diverted by none of those sophistical contrivances wherewith we are so industriously plied and belaboured — contrivances such as groping for some middle ground between the right and the wrong: vain as the search for a man who should be neither a living man nor

10 a dead man; such as a policy of “don't care” on a question about which all true men do care; such as Union appeals beseeching true Union men to yield to Disunionists, reversing the divine rule, and calling, not the sinners, but the righteous to repentance; such as invocations

15 to Washington, imploring men to unsay what Washington said and undo what Washington did.

Neither let us be slandered from our duty by false accusations against us, nor frightened from it by menaces of destruction to the government, nor of dungeons to ourselves.

20 Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith let us to the end dare to do our duty as we understand it.

DECEMBER 8, 1860. — LETTERS TO W. H. SEWARD

SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS, December 8, 1860.

*My dear Sir:* With your permission I shall at the

25 proper time nominate you to the Senate for confirmation as Secretary of State for the United States. Please let me hear from you at your own earliest convenience.

Your friend and obedient servant,     A. LINCOLN.

(*Private and confidential.*)

SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS, December 8, 1860.

*My dear Sir:* In addition to the accompanying and more formal note inviting you to take charge of the State Department, I deem it proper to address you this. 5 Rumours have got into the newspapers to the effect that the department named above would be tendered you as a compliment, and with the expectation that you would decline it. I beg you to be assured that I have said nothing to justify these rumours. On the contrary, it has 10 been my purpose, from the day of the nomination at Chicago, to assign you, by your leave, this place in the administration. I have delayed so long to communicate that purpose in deference to what appeared to me a proper caution in the case. Nothing has been developed 15 to change my view in the premises; and I now offer you the place in the hope that you will accept it, and with the belief that your position in the public eye, your integrity, ability, learning, and great experience, all combine to render it an appointment pre-eminently fit to be made. 20

One word more. In regard to the patronage sought with so much eagerness and jealousy, I have prescribed for myself the maxim, "Justice to all"; and I earnestly beseech your co-operation in keeping the maxim good.

Your friend and obedient servant,

25

A. LINCOLN.

HON. WILLIAM H. SEWARD, Washington, D.C.

FEBRUARY 11, 1861. — FAREWELL ADDRESS AT  
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

*My Friends*: No one, not in my situation, can appreciate my feeling of sadness at this parting. To this place, 5 and the kindness of these people, I owe everything. Here I have lived a quarter of a century, and have passed from a young to an old man. Here my children have been born, and one is buried. I now leave, not knowing when or whether ever I may return, with a task before 10 me greater than that which rested upon Washington. Without the assistance of that Divine Being who ever attended him, I cannot succeed. With that assistance, I cannot fail. Trusting in Him who can go with me, and remain with you, and be everywhere for good, let us con- 15 fidently hope that all will yet be well. To His care commending you, as I hope in your prayers you will commend me, I bid you an affectionate farewell.

FEBRUARY 22, 1861. — ADDRESS IN INDEPENDENCE  
HALL, PHILADELPHIA

20 *Mr. Cuyler*: I am filled with deep emotion at finding myself standing in this place, where were collected together the wisdom, the patriotism, the devotion to principle, from which sprang the institutions under which we live. You have kindly suggested to me that in my 25 hands is the task of restoring peace to our distracted country. I can say in return, sir, that all the political sentiments I entertain have been drawn, so far as I have

been able to draw them, from the sentiments which originated in and were given to the world from this hall. I have never had a feeling, politically, that did not spring from the sentiments embodied in the Declaration of Independence. I have often pondered<sup>5</sup> over the dangers which were incurred by the men who assembled here and framed and adopted that Declaration. I have pondered over the toils that were endured by the officers and soldiers of the army who achieved that independence. I have often inquired of myself<sup>10</sup> what great principle or idea it was that kept this Confederacy so long together. It was not the mere matter of separation of the colonies from the motherland, but that sentiment in the Declaration of Independence which gave liberty not alone to the people of this country, but<sup>15</sup> hope to all the world, for all future time. It was that which gave promise that in due time the weights would be lifted from the shoulders of all men, and that all should have an equal chance. This is the sentiment embodied in the Declaration of Independence. Now,<sup>20</sup> my friends, can this country be saved on that basis? If it can, I will consider myself one of the happiest men in the world if I can help to save it. If it cannot be saved upon that principle, it will be truly awful. But if this country cannot be saved without giving up that principle,<sup>25</sup> I was about to say I would rather be assassinated on this spot than surrender it. Now, in my view of the present aspect of affairs, there is no need of bloodshed and war. There is no necessity for it. I am not in favour of such a

course ; and I may say in advance that there will be no bloodshed unless it is forced upon the government. The government will not use force, unless force is used against it.

5 My friends, this is wholly an unprepared speech. I did not expect to be called on to say a word when I came here. I supposed I was merely to do something toward raising a flag. I may, therefore, have said something indiscreet. [Cries of "No, no."] But I have said  
10 nothing but what I am willing to live by, and, if it be the pleasure of Almighty God, to die by. .

#### MARCH 4, 1861. — FIRST INAUGURAL ADDRESS

*Fellow-citizens of the United States :* In compliance with a custom as old as the government itself, I appear  
15 before you to address you briefly, and to take in your presence the oath prescribed by the Constitution of the United States to be taken by the President "before he enters on the execution of his office."

I do not consider it necessary at present for me to  
20 discuss those matters of administration about which there is no special anxiety or excitement.

Apprehension seems to exist among the people of the Southern States that by the accession of a Republican administration their property and their peace and personal security are to be endangered. There has never  
25 been any reasonable cause for such apprehension. Indeed, the most ample evidence to the contrary has all

the while existed and been open to their inspection. It is found in nearly all the published speeches of him who now addresses you. I do but quote from one of those speeches when I declare that "I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of 5 slavery in the States where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so." Those who nominated and elected me did so with full knowledge that I had made this and many similar declarations, and had never recanted them. And, more than 10 this, they placed in the platform for my acceptance, and as a law to themselves and to me, the clear and emphatic resolution which I now read :

*Resolved*, That the maintenance inviolate of the rights of the States, and especially the right of each State to order and control 15 its own domestic institutions according to its own judgement exclusively, is essential to that balance of power on which the perfection and endurance of our political fabric depend, and we denounce the lawless invasion by armed force of the soil of any State or Territory, no matter under what pretext, as among the gravest of 20 crimes.

I now reiterate these sentiments ; and, in doing so, I only press upon the public attention the most conclusive evidence of which the case is susceptible, that the property, peace, and security of no section are to be in 25 any wise endangered by the now incoming administration. I add, too, that all the protection which, consistently with the Constitution and the laws, can be given, will be cheerfully given to all the States when lawfully

demand, for whatever cause — as cheerfully to one section as to another.

There is much controversy about the delivering up of fugitives from service or labour. The clause I now read is 5 as plainly written in the Constitution as any other of its provisions :

No person held to service or labour in one State, under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall in consequence of any law or regulation therein be discharged from such service or labour, but 10 shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labour may be due.

It is scarcely questioned that this provision was intended by those who made it for the reclaiming of what we call fugitive slaves ; and the intention of the lawgiver 15 is the law. All members of Congress swear their support to the whole Constitution — to this provision as much as to any other. To the proposition, then, that slaves whose cases come within the terms of this clause “ shall be delivered up,” their oaths are unanimous. Now, if 20 they would make the effort in good temper, could they not with nearly equal unanimity frame and pass a law by means of which to keep good that unanimous oath ?

There is some difference of opinion whether this clause should be enforced by national or by State authority ; 25 but surely that difference is not a very material one. If the slave is to be surrendered, it can be of but little consequence to him or to others by which authority it is done. And should any one in any case be content that



his oath shall go unkept on a merely unsubstantial controversy as to how it shall be kept?

Again, in any law upon this subject, ought not all the safeguards of liberty known in civilized and humane jurisprudence to be introduced, so that a free man be not, in any case, surrendered as a slave? And might it not be well at the same time to provide by law for the enforcement of that clause in the Constitution which guarantees that "the citizen of each State shall be entitled to all privileges and immunities of citizens in the several States"?

I take the official oath to-day with no mental reservations, and with no purpose to construe the Constitution or laws by any hypercritical rules. And while I do not choose now to specify particular acts of Congress as proper to be enforced, I do suggest that it will be much safer for all, both in official and private stations, to conform to and abide by all those acts which stand unrepealed, than to violate any of them, trusting to find impunity in having them held to be unconstitutional.

It is seventy-two years since the first inauguration of a President under our National Constitution. During that period fifteen different and greatly distinguished citizens have, in succession, administered the executive branch of the government. They have conducted it through many perils, and generally with great success. Yet, with all this scope of precedent, I now enter upon the same task for the brief constitutional term of four years under great and peculiar difficulty. A disruption of the Federal

Union, heretofore only menaced, is now formidably attempted.

I hold that, in contemplation of universal law and of the Constitution, the Union of these States is perpetual. 5 Perpetuity is implied, if not expressed, in the fundamental law of all national governments. It is safe to assert that no government proper ever had a provision in its organic law for its own termination. Continue to execute all the express provisions of our National Consti-  
10 tution, and the Union will endure forever—it being impossible to destroy it except by some action not provided for in the instrument itself.

Again, if the United States be not a government proper, but an association of States in the nature of contract  
15 merely, can it, as a contract, be peaceably unmade by less than all the parties who made it? One party to a contract may violate it—break it, so to speak; but does it not require all to lawfully rescind it?

Descending from these general principles, we find  
20 the proposition that, in legal contemplation, the Union is perpetual confirmed by the history of the Union itself. The Union is much older than the Constitution. It was formed, in fact, by the Articles of Association in 1774. It was matured and continued by the Decla-  
25 ration of Independence in 1776. It was further matured, and the faith of all the then thirteen States expressly plighted and engaged that it should be perpetual, by the Articles of Confederation in 1778. And, finally, in 1787 one of the declared objects for ordain-

ing and establishing the Constitution was "to form a more perfect Union."

But if the destruction of the Union by one or by a part only of the States be lawfully possible, the Union is less perfect than before the Constitution, having lost the vital element of perpetuity.

It follows from these views that no State upon its own mere motion can lawfully get out of the Union; that resolves and ordinances to that effect are legally void; and that acts of violence, within any State or States, against the authority of the United States, are insurrectionary or revolutionary, according to circumstances.

I therefore consider that, in view of the Constitution and the laws, the Union is unbroken; and to the extent of my ability I shall take care, as the Constitution itself expressly enjoins upon me, that the laws of the Union be faithfully executed in all the States. Doing this I deem to be only a simple duty on my part; and I shall perform it so far as practicable, unless my rightful masters, the American people, shall withhold the requisite means, or in some authoritative manner direct the contrary. I trust this will not be regarded as a menace, but only as the declared purpose of the Union that it will constitutionally defend and maintain itself.

In doing this there needs to be no bloodshed or violence; and there shall be none, unless it be forced upon the national authority. The power confided to me will be used to hold, occupy, and possess the property and places belonging to the government, and to collect the

duties and imposts ; but beyond what may be necessary for these objects, there will be no invasion, no using of force against or among the people anywhere. Where hostility to the United States, in any interior locality, shall be so great and universal as to prevent competent resident citizens from holding the Federal offices, there will be no attempt to force obnoxious strangers among the people for that object. While the strict legal right may exist in the government to enforce the exercise of these offices, the attempt to do so would be so irritating, and so nearly impracticable withal, that I deem it better to forego for the time the uses of such offices.

The mails, unless repelled, will continue to be furnished in all parts of the Union. So far as possible, the people everywhere shall have that sense of perfect security which is most favourable to calm thought and reflection. The course here indicated will be followed unless current events and experience shall show a modification or change to be proper, and in every case and exigency my best discretion will be exercised according to circumstances actually existing, and with a view and a hope of a peaceful solution of the national troubles and the restoration of fraternal sympathies and affections.

That there are persons in one section or another who seek to destroy the Union at all events, and are glad of any pretext to do it, I will neither affirm nor deny ; but if there be such, I need address no word to them. To those, however, who really love the Union may I not speak ?

Before entering upon so grave a matter as the destruc-

tion of our national fabric, with all its benefits, its memories, and its hopes, would it not be wise to ascertain precisely why we do it? Will you hazard so desperate a step while there is any possibility that any portion of the ills you fly from have no real existence? Will you, 5 while the certain ills you fly to are greater than all the real ones you fly from—will you risk the commission of so fearful a mistake?

All profess to be content in the Union if all constitutional rights can be maintained. Is it true, then, that 10 any right, plainly written in the Constitution, has been denied? I think not. Happily the human mind is so constituted that no party can reach to the audacity of doing this. Think, if you can, of a single instance in which a plainly written provision of the Constitution has ever 15 been denied. If by the mere force of numbers a majority should deprive a minority of any clearly written constitutional right, it might, in a moral point of view, justify revolution—certainly would if such a right were a vital one. But such is not our case. All the vital rights of 20 minorities and of individuals are so plainly assured to them by affirmations and negations, guarantees and prohibitions, in the Constitution, that controversies never arise concerning them. But no organic law can ever be framed with a provision specifically applicable to every 25 question which may occur in practical administration. No foresight can anticipate, nor any document of reasonable length contain, express provisions for all possible questions. Shall fugitives from labour be surrendered by

national or by State authority? The Constitution does not expressly say. *May* Congress prohibit slavery in the Territories? The Constitution does not expressly say. *Must* Congress protect slavery in the Territories? The  
5 Constitution does not expressly say.

From questions of this class spring all our constitutional controversies, and we divide upon them into majorities and minorities. If the minority will not acquiesce, the majority must, or the government must cease. There  
10 is no other alternative ; for continuing the government is acquiescence on one side or the other.

If a minority in such case will secede rather than acquiesce, they make a precedent which in turn will divide and ruin them ; for a minority of their own will secede  
15 from them whenever a majority refuses to be controlled by such minority. For instance, why may not any portion of a new confederacy a year or two hence arbitrarily secede again, precisely as portions of the present Union now claim to secede from it? All who cherish disunion sentiments  
20 are now being educated to the exact temper of doing this.

Is there such perfect identity of interests among the States to compose a new Union, as to produce harmony only, and prevent renewed secession?

Plainly, the central idea of secession is the essence of  
25 anarchy. A majority held in restraint by constitutional checks and limitations, and always changing easily with deliberate changes of popular opinions and sentiments, is the only true sovereign of a free people. Whoever rejects it does, of necessity, fly to anarchy or to despotism.

Unanimity is impossible ; the rule of a minority, as a permanent arrangement, is wholly inadmissible ; so that, rejecting the majority principle, anarchy or despotism in some form is all that is left.

I do not forget the position, assumed by some, that constitutional questions are to be decided by the Supreme Court ; nor do I deny that such decisions must be binding, in any case, upon the parties to a suit, as to the object of that suit, while they are also entitled to very high respect and consideration in all parallel cases by all other departments of the government. And while it is obviously possible that such decision may be erroneous in any given case, still the evil effect following it, being limited to that particular case, with the chance that it may be overruled and never become a precedent for other cases, can better be borne than could the evils of a different practice. At the same time, the candid citizen must confess that if the policy of the government, upon vital questions affecting the whole people, is to be irrevocably fixed by decisions of the Supreme Court, the instant they are made, in ordinary litigation between parties in personal actions, the people will have ceased to be their own rulers, having to that extent practically resigned their government into the hands of that eminent tribunal. Nor is there in this view any assault upon the court or the judges. It is a duty from which they may not shrink to decide cases properly brought before them, and it is no fault of theirs if others seek to turn their decisions to political purposes.

One section of our country believes slavery is right, and ought to be extended, while the other believes it is wrong, and ought not to be extended. This is the only substantial dispute. The fugitive-slave clause of the  
5 Constitution, and the law for the suppression of the foreign slave-trade, are each as well enforced, perhaps, as any law can ever be in a community where the moral sense of the people imperfectly supports the law itself. The great body of the people abide by the dry legal ob-  
10 ligation in both cases, and a few break over in each. This, I think, cannot be perfectly cured; and it would be worse in both cases after the separation of the sections than before. The foreign slave-trade, now imperfectly suppressed, would be ultimately revived, without  
15 restriction, in one section, while fugitive slaves, now only partially surrendered, would not be surrendered at all by the other.

Physically speaking, we cannot separate. We cannot remove our respective sections from each other, nor  
20 build an impassable wall between them. A husband and wife may be divorced, and go out of the presence and beyond the reach of each other; but the different parts of our country cannot do this. They cannot but remain face to face, and intercourse, either amicable or hostile,  
25 must continue between them. Is it possible, then, to make that intercourse more advantageous or more satisfactory after separation than before? Can aliens make treaties easier than friends can make laws? Can treaties be more faithfully enforced between aliens than laws can



among friends? Suppose you go to war, you cannot fight always; and when, after much loss on both sides, and no gain on either, you cease fighting, the identical old questions as to terms of intercourse are again upon you.

This country, with its institutions, belongs to the people 5 who inhabit it. Whenever they shall grow weary of the existing government, they can exercise their constitutional right of amending it, or their revolutionary right to dismember or overthrow it. I cannot be ignorant of the fact that many worthy and patriotic citizens are desirous 10 of having the National Constitution amended. While I make no recommendation of amendments, I fully recognize the rightful authority of the people over the whole subject, to be exercised in either of the modes prescribed in the instrument itself; and I should, under existing cir- 15 cumstances, favour rather than oppose a fair opportunity being afforded the people to act upon it. I will venture to add that to me the convention mode seems preferable, in that it allows amendments to originate with the people themselves, instead of only permitting them to take or 20 reject propositions originated by others not especially chosen for the purpose, and which might not be precisely such as they would wish to either accept or refuse. I understand a proposed amendment to the Constitution — which amendment, however, I have not seen — has 25 passed Congress, to the effect that the Federal Government shall never interfere with the domestic institutions of the States, including that of persons held to service. To avoid misconception of what I have said, I depart

from my purpose not to speak of particular amendments so far as to say that, holding such a provision to now be implied constitutional law, I have no objection to its being made express and irrevocable.

5 The chief magistrate derives all his authority from the people, and they have conferred none upon him to fix terms for the separation of the States. The people themselves can do this also if they choose ; but the executive, as such, has nothing to do with it. His duty is to  
10 administer the present government, as it came to his hands, and to transmit it, unimpaired by him, to his successor.

Why should there not be a patient confidence in the ultimate justice of the people? Is there any better or equal hope in the world? In our present differences is  
15 either party without faith of being in the right? If the Almighty Ruler of Nations, with his eternal truth and justice, be on your side of the North, or on yours of the South, that truth and that justice will surely prevail by the judgement of this great tribunal of the American people.

20 By the frame of the government under which we live, this same people have wisely given their public servants but little power for mischief ; and have, with equal wisdom, provided for the return of that little to their own hands at very short intervals. While the people retain their  
25 virtue and vigilance, no administration, by any extreme of wickedness or folly, can very seriously injure the government in the short space of four years.

My countrymen, one and all, think calmly and well upon this whole subject. Nothing valuable can be lost by

taking time. If there be an object to hurry any of you in hot haste to a step which you would never take deliberately, that object will be frustrated by taking time; but no good object can be frustrated by it. Such of you as are now dissatisfied, still have the old Constitution unimpaired, and, on the sensitive point, the laws of your own framing under it; while the new administration will have no immediate power, if it would, to change either. If it were admitted that you who are dissatisfied hold the right side in the dispute, there still is no single good reason for precipitate action. Intelligence, patriotism, Christianity, and a firm reliance on Him who has never yet forsaken this favoured land, are still competent to adjust in the best way all our present difficulty.

In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow-countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The government will not assail you. You can have no conflict without being yourselves the aggressors. You have no oath registered in heaven to destroy the government, while I shall have the most solemn one to "preserve, protect, and defend it."

I am loath to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battle field and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.

MARCH 8, 1861. — LETTER TO SCHUYLER COLFAX

EXECUTIVE MANSION, March 8, 1861.

HON. SCHUYLER COLFAX.

*My dear Sir*: Your letter of the 6th has just been  
5 handed me by Mr. Baker, of Minnesota. When I said  
to you the other day that I wished to write you a letter,  
I had reference, of course, to my not having offered you  
a cabinet appointment. I meant to say, and now do  
say, you were most honourably and amply recommended,  
10 and a tender of the appointment was not withheld, in any  
part, because of anything happening in 1858.<sup>1</sup> Indeed,  
I should have decided as I did easier than I did, had  
that matter never existed. I had partly made up my  
mind in favour of Mr. Smith — not conclusively, of course  
15 — before your name was mentioned in that connexion.  
When you were brought forward I said, “Colfax is a  
young man, is already in position, is running a brilliant  
career, and is sure of a bright future in any event; with  
Smith, it is now or never.” I considered either abun-  
20 dantly competent, and decided on the ground I have stated.  
I now have to beg that you will not do me the injustice to  
suppose for a moment that I remember anything against  
you in malice.

Yours very truly,

25

A. LINCOLN.

<sup>1</sup> The allusion here is to the fact that in the senatorial campaign of 1858 in Illinois, between Lincoln and Douglas, Mr. Colfax was understood to favour the re-election of Douglas.

APRIL 1, 1861.—REPLY TO SECRETARY SEWARD'S MEMORANDUM

EXECUTIVE MANSION, April 1, 1861.

HON. W. H. SEWARD.

*My dear Sir*: Since parting with you I have been 5 considering your paper dated this day, and entitled "Some Thoughts for the President's Consideration." The first proposition in it is, "*First*, We are at the end of a month's administration, and yet without a policy, either domestic or foreign." 10

At the beginning of that month, in the inaugural, I said: "The power confided to me will be used to hold, occupy, and possess the property and places belonging to the government, and to collect the duties and imposts." This had your distinct approval at the time; and, taken 15 in connexion with the order I immediately gave General Scott, directing him to employ every means in his power to strengthen and hold the forts, comprises the exact domestic policy you now urge, with the single exception that it does not propose to abandon Fort Sumter. 20

Again, I do not perceive how the reinforcement of Fort Sumter would be done on a slavery or a party issue, while that of Fort Pickens would be on a more national and patriotic one.

The news received yesterday in regard to St. Domingo 25 certainly brings a new item within the range of our foreign policy; but up to that time we have been preparing circulars and instructions to ministers and the like, all in

perfect harmony, without even a suggestion that we had no foreign policy.

Upon your closing propositions — that “whatever policy we adopt, there must be an energetic prosecution of it.

5 “For this purpose it must be somebody’s business to pursue and direct it incessantly.

“Either the President must do it himself, and be all the while active in it, or

10 “Devolve it on some member of his cabinet. Once adopted, debates on it must end, and all agree and abide”

—I remark that if this must be done, I must do it. When a general line of policy is adopted, I apprehend there is no danger of its being changed without good reason, or continuing to be a subject of unnecessary debate; still, upon 15 points arising in its progress I wish, and suppose I am entitled to have, the advice of all the cabinet.

Your obedient servant,

A. LINCOLN.

APRIL 1, 1861.—LETTER TO GENERAL SCOTT

20 EXECUTIVE MANSION, April 1, 1861.  
LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SCOTT.

Would it impose too much labour on General Scott to make short comprehensive daily reports to me of what occurs in his department, including movements by him- 25 self, and under his orders, and the receipt of intelligence? If not, I will thank him to do so.

Your obedient servant,

A. LINCOLN.

APRIL 13, 1861. — REPLY TO A COMMITTEE FROM THE  
VIRGINIA CONVENTION

HON. WILLIAM BALLARD PRESTON, ALEXANDER H. H.  
STUART, GEORGE W. RANDOLPH, Esq.

*Gentlemen:* As a committee of the Virginia Conven- 5  
tion now in session, you present me a preamble and  
resolution in these words :

*Whereas*, in the opinion of this Convention, the uncertainty  
which prevails in the public mind as to the policy which the Federal  
Executive intends to pursue toward the seceded States is extremely 10  
injurious to the industrial and commercial interests of the country,  
tends to keep up an excitement which is unfavourable to the adjust-  
ment of pending difficulties, and threatens a disturbance of the  
public peace: therefore

*Resolved*, that a committee of three delegates be appointed by 15  
this Convention to wait upon the President of the United States,  
present to him this preamble and resolution, and respectfully ask  
him to communicate to this Convention the policy which the Federal  
Executive intends to pursue in regard to the Confederate States.

Adopted by the Convention of the State of Virginia, Richmond, 20  
April 8, 1861.

In answer I have to say that, having at the beginning  
of my official term expressed my intended policy as  
plainly as I was able, it is with deep regret and some  
mortification I now learn that there is great and injurious 25  
uncertainty in the public mind as to what that policy is,  
and what course I intend to pursue. Not having as yet  
seen occasion to change, it is now my purpose to pursue  
the course marked out in the inaugural address. I com-

mend a careful consideration of the whole document as the best expression I can give of my purposes.

As I then and therein said, I now repeat : "The power confided to me will be used to hold, occupy, and possess 5 the property and places belonging to the government, and to collect the duties and imposts ; but beyond what is necessary for these objects, there will be no invasion, no using of force against or among the people anywhere." By the words "property and places belonging to the 10 government," I chiefly allude to the military posts and property which were in the possession of the government when it came to my hands.

But if, as now appears to be true, in pursuit of a purpose to drive the United States authority from these 15 places, an unprovoked assault has been made upon Fort Sumter, I shall hold myself at liberty to repossess, if I can, like places which had been seized before the government was devolved upon me. And in every event I shall, to the extent of my ability, repel force by force. In case 20 it proves true that Fort Sumter has been assaulted, as is reported, I shall perhaps cause the United States mails to be withdrawn from all the States which claim to have seceded, believing that the commencement of actual war against the government justifies and possibly demands this.

25 I scarcely need to say that I consider the military posts and property situated within the States which claim to have seceded as yet belonging to the government of the United States as much as they did before the supposed secession.



Whatever else I may do for the purpose, I shall not attempt to collect the duties and imposts by any armed invasion of any part of the country ; not meaning by this, however, that I may not land a force deemed necessary to relieve a fort upon a border of the country. 5

From the fact that I have quoted a part of the inaugural address, it must not be inferred that I repudiate any other part, the whole of which I reaffirm, except so far as what I now say of the mails may be regarded as a modification.

MAY 1, 1861.—LETTER TO GUSTAVUS V. FOX 10

WASHINGTON, D.C., May 1, 1861.

CAPTAIN G. V. FOX.

*My dear Sir* : I sincerely regret that the failure of the late attempt to provision Fort Sumter should be the source of any annoyance to you. 15

The practicability of your plan was not, in fact, brought to a test. By reason of a gale, well known in advance to be possible and not improbable, the tugs, an essential part of the plan, never reached the ground ; while, by an accident for which you were in no wise responsible, and 20 possibly I to some extent was, you were deprived of a war vessel, with her men, which you deemed of great importance to the enterprise.

I most cheerfully and truly declare that the failure of the undertaking has not lowered you a particle, while the 25 qualities you developed in the effort have greatly heightened you in my estimation.

For a daring and dangerous enterprise of a similar

character you would to-day be the man of all my acquaintances whom I would select. You and I both anticipated that the cause of the country would be advanced by making the attempt to provision Fort Sumter, even if it should fail; and it is no small consolation now to feel that our anticipation is justified by the result.

Very truly your friend,

A. LINCOLN.

10 MAY 25, 1861. — LETTER TO COLONEL ELLSWORTH'S  
PARENTS

WASHINGTON, D.C., May 25, 1861.

TO THE FATHER AND MOTHER OF COLONEL ELMER E.  
ELLSWORTH.

15 *My dear Sir and Madam*: In the untimely loss of your noble son, our affliction here is scarcely less than your own. So much of promised usefulness to one's country, and of bright hopes for one's self and friends, have rarely been so suddenly dashed as in his fall. In size, in years, and in youthful appearance a boy only, his power to com-  
20 mand men was surpassingly great. This power, combined with a fine intellect, an indomitable energy, and a taste altogether military, constituted in him, as seemed to me, the best natural talent in that department I ever knew.

25 And yet he was singularly modest and deferential in social intercourse. My acquaintance with him began less than two years ago; yet through the latter half of the intervening period it was as intimate as the disparity of our

ages and my engrossing engagements would permit. To me he appeared to have no indulgences or pastimes; and I never heard him utter a profane or an intemperate word. What was conclusive of his good heart, he never forgot his parents. The honours he laboured for so laudably, and for which in the sad end he so gallantly gave his life, he meant for them no less than for himself.

In the hope that it may be no intrusion upon the sacredness of your sorrow, I have ventured to address you this tribute to the memory of my young friend and your brave and early fallen child.

May God give you that consolation which is beyond all earthly power.

Sincerely your friend in a common affliction,

A. LINCOLN. 15

SEPTEMBER 2, 1861. — LETTER TO GENERAL FRÉMONT

WASHINGTON, D.C., September 2, 1861.

MAJOR-GENERAL FRÉMONT.

*My dear Sir:* Two points in your proclamation of August 30 give me some anxiety: 20

*First.* Should you shoot a man, according to the proclamation, the Confederates would very certainly shoot our best men in their hands in retaliation; and so, man for man, indefinitely. It is, therefore, my order that you allow no man to be shot under the proclamation without first having my approbation or consent. 25

*Second.* I think there is great danger that the closing

paragraph, in relation to the confiscation of property and the liberating slaves of traitorous owners, will alarm our Southern Union friends and turn them against us; perhaps ruin our rather fair prospect for Kentucky. Allow  
 5 me, therefore, to ask that you will, as of your own motion, modify that paragraph so as to conform to the first and fourth sections of the act of Congress entitled, "An act to confiscate property used for insurrectionary purposes," approved August 6, 1861, and a copy of which act I  
 10 herewith send you.

This letter is written in a spirit of caution, and not of censure. I send it by special messenger, in order that it may certainly and speedily reach you.

Yours very truly,

15

A. LINCOLN.

SEPTEMBER 22, 1861.—LETTER TO O. H. BROWNING

*(Private and Confidential)*

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, September 22, 1861.

HON. O. H. BROWNING.

20 *My dear Sir:* Yours of the 17th is just received; and coming from you, I confess it astonishes me. That you should object to my adhering to a law which you had assisted in making and presenting to me less than a month before is odd enough. But this is a very small part.  
 25 General Frémont's proclamation as to confiscation of property and the liberation of slaves is purely political and not within the range of military law or necessity. If a

commanding general finds a necessity to seize the farm of a private owner for a pasture, an encampment, or a fortification, he has the right to do so, and to so hold it as long as the necessity lasts ; and this is within military law, because within military necessity. But to say the farm 5 shall no longer belong to the owner, or his heirs forever, and this as well when the farm is not needed for military purposes as when it is, is purely political, without the savour of military law about it. And the same is true of slaves. If the general needs them, he can seize them and use 10 them ; but when the need is past, it is not for him to fix their permanent future condition. That must be settled according to laws made by lawmakers, and not by military proclamations. The proclamation in the point in question is simply "dictatorship." It assumes that the 15 general may do anything he pleases — confiscate the lands and free the slaves of loyal people, as well as of disloyal ones. And going the whole figure, I have no doubt, would be more popular with some thoughtless people than that which has been done ! But I cannot assume this reckless 20 position, nor allow others to assume it on my responsibility.

You speak of it as being the only means of saving the government. On the contrary, it is itself the surrender of the government. Can it be pretended that it is any 25 longer the Government of the United States — any government of constitution and laws — wherein a general or a president may make permanent rules of property by proclamation? I do not say Congress might not with

propriety pass a law on the point, just such as General Frémont proclaimed. I do not say I might not, as a member of Congress, vote for it. What I object to is, that I, as President, shall expressly or impliedly seize and exercise the permanent legislative functions of the government.

So much as to principle. Now as to policy. No doubt the thing was popular in some quarters, and would have been more so if it had been a general declaration of emancipation. The Kentucky legislature would not budge till that proclamation was modified; and General Anderson telegraphed me that on the news of General Frémont having actually issued deeds of manumission, a whole company of our volunteers threw down their arms and disbanded. I was so assured as to think it probable that the very arms we had furnished Kentucky would be turned against us. I think to lose Kentucky is nearly the same as to lose the whole game. Kentucky gone, we cannot hold Missouri, nor, as I think, Maryland. These all against us, and the job on our hands is too large for us. We would as well consent to separation at once, including the surrender of this capital. On the contrary, if you will give up your restlessness for new positions, and back me manfully on the grounds upon which you and other kind friends gave me the election and have approved in my public documents, we shall go through triumphantly. You must not understand I took my course on the proclamation because of Kentucky. I took the same ground in a private letter to General Frémont before I heard from Kentucky.

You think I am inconsistent because I did not also forbid General Frémont to shoot men under the proclamation. I understand that part to be within military law, but I also think, and so privately wrote General Frémont, that it is impolitic in this, that our adversaries have the power, 5 and will certainly exercise it, to shoot as many of our men as we shoot of theirs. I did not say this in the public letter, because it is a subject I prefer not to discuss in the hearing of our enemies.

There has been no thought of removing General Fré- 10 mont on any ground connected with his proclamation, and if there has been any wish for his removal on any ground, our mutual friend Sam. Glover can probably tell you what it was. I hope no real necessity for it exists on any ground. 15

Your friend, as ever,

A. LINCOLN.

OCTOBER 21, 1861. — LETTER TO ARCHBISHOP HUGHES

WASHINGTON, D.C., October 21, 1861.

ARCHBISHOP HUGHES. 20

*Right reverend Sir*: I am sure you will pardon me if in my ignorance I do not address you with technical correctness. I find no law authorizing the appointment of chaplains for our hospitals; and yet the services of chaplains are more needed, perhaps, in the hospitals than with 25 the healthy soldiers in the field. With this view, I have given a sort of *quasi* appointment (a copy of which I

enclose) to each of three Protestant ministers, who have accepted and entered upon the duties.

If you perceive no objection, I will thank you to give me the name or names of one or more suitable persons of the Catholic Church, to whom I may with propriety tender the same service.

Many thanks for your kind and judicious letters to Governor Seward, and which he regularly allows me both the pleasure and the profit of perusing. With the highest respect,

Your obedient servant,

A. LINCOLN.

NOVEMBER 10, 1861.—LETTER TO GENERAL McCLEARNAND

WASHINGTON, November 10, 1861.

15 BRIGADIER-GENERAL McCLEARNAND.

*My dear Sir:* This is not an official, but a social letter. You have had a battle, and without being able to judge as to the precise measure of its value, I think it is safe to say that you and all with you have done honour to yourselves and the flag, and service to the country. Most gratefully do I thank you and them. In my present position I must care for the whole nation; but I hope it will be no injustice to any other State for me to indulge a little home pride that Illinois does not disappoint us. 20 I have just closed a long interview with Mr. Washburne, in which he has detailed the many difficulties you and those with you labour under. Be assured we do not forget or neglect you. Much, very much, goes undone; but it



is because we have not the power to do it faster than we do. Some of your forces are without arms, but the same is true here and at every other place where we have considerable bodies of troops. The plain matter of fact is, our good people have rushed to the rescue of the govern- 5  
ment faster than the government can find arms to put into their hands. It would be agreeable to each division of the army to know its own precise destination ; but the government cannot immediately, nor inflexibly at any time, determine as to all ; nor, if determined, can it tell 10  
its friends without at the same time telling its enemies. We know you do all as wisely and well as you can ; and you will not be deceived if you conclude the same is true of us. Please give my respects and thanks to all.

Yours very truly,

A. LINCOLN.

15

FEBRUARY 3, 1862. — LETTER TO GENERAL G. B.  
McCLELLAN

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, February 3, 1862.

MAJOR-GENERAL McCLELLAN.

20

*My dear Sir:* You and I have distinct and different plans for a movement of the Army of the Potomac — yours to be down the Chesapeake, up the Rappahannock to Urbana, and across land to the terminus of the railroad on the York River ; mine to move directly to a point on 25  
the railroad southwest of Manassas.

If you will give me satisfactory answers to the following questions, I shall gladly yield my plan to yours.

*First.* Does not your plan involve a greatly larger expenditure of time and money than mine?

*Second.* Wherein is a victory more certain by your plan than mine?

5 *Third.* Wherein is a victory more valuable by your plan than mine?

*Fourth.* In fact, would it not be less valuable in this, that it would break no great line of the enemy's communications, while mine would?

10 *Fifth.* In case of disaster, would not a retreat be more difficult by your plan than mine?

Yours truly,

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

MAJOR-GENERAL McCLELLAN.

15 *Memorandum accompanying Letter of President Lincoln to General McClellan, dated February 3, 1862*

*First.* Suppose the enemy should attack us in force before we reach the Occoquan, what?

*Second.* Suppose the enemy in force shall dispute the  
20 crossing of the Occoquan, what? In view of this, might it not be safest for us to cross the Occoquan at Colchester, rather than at the village of Occoquan? This would cost the enemy two miles more of travel to meet us, but would, on the contrary, leave us two miles farther from our ultimate  
25 destination.

*Third.* Suppose we reach Maple Valley without an attack, will we not be attacked there in force by the enemy marching by the several roads from Manassas; and if so, what?

MARCH 6, 1862. — MESSAGE TO CONGRESS RECOMMENDING  
COMPENSATED EMANCIPATION

*Fellow-citizens of the Senate and House of Representatives* : I recommend the adoption of a joint resolution by your honourable bodies, which shall be substantially as follows :

*Resolved*, That the United States ought to co-operate with any State which may adopt gradual abolishment of slavery, giving to such State pecuniary aid, to be used by such State, in its discretion, to compensate for the inconveniences, public and private, produced by such change of system.

If the proposition contained in the resolution does not meet the approval of Congress and the country, there is the end ; but if it does command such approval, I deem it of importance that the States and people immediately interested should be at once distinctly notified of the fact, so that they may begin to consider whether to accept or reject it. The Federal Government would find its highest interest in such a measure, as one of the most efficient means of self-preservation. The leaders of the existing insurrection entertain the hope that this government will ultimately be forced to acknowledge the independence of some part of the disaffected region, and that all the slave States north of such part will then say, "The Union for which we have struggled being already gone, we now choose to go with the Southern section." To deprive them of this hope substantially ends the rebellion ; and the initiation of emancipation completely deprives them

of it as to all the States initiating it. The point is not that all the States tolerating slavery would very soon, if at all, initiate emancipation ; but that while the offer is equally made to all, the more Northern shall, by such initiation, make it certain to the more Southern that in no event will the former ever join the latter in their proposed confederacy. I say "initiation" because, in my judgment, gradual and not sudden emancipation is better for all. In the mere financial or pecuniary view, any member of Congress, with the census tables and treasury reports before him, can readily see for himself how very soon the current expenditures of this war would purchase, at fair valuation, all the slaves in any named State. Such a proposition on the part of the General Government sets up no claim of a right by Federal authority to interfere with slavery within State limits, referring, as it does, the absolute control of the subject in each case to the State and its people immediately interested. It is proposed as a matter of perfectly free choice with them.

In the annual message, last December, I thought fit to say, "The Union must be preserved, and hence all indispensable means must be employed." I said this not hastily, but deliberately. War has been made, and continues to be, an indispensable means to this end. A practical acknowledgment of the national authority would render the war unnecessary, and it would at once cease. If, however, resistance continues, the war must also continue ; and it is impossible to foresee all the incidents which may attend and all the ruin which may follow it. Such as may seem

indispensable, or may obviously promise great efficiency, toward ending the struggle, must and will come.

The proposition now made, though an offer only, I hope it may be esteemed no offence to ask whether the pecuniary consideration tendered would not be of more value to the States and private persons concerned than are the institution and property in it, in the present aspect of affairs?

While it is true that the adoption of the proposed resolution would be merely initiatory, and not within itself a practical measure, it is recommended in the hope that it would soon lead to important practical results. In full view of my great responsibility to my God and to my country, I earnestly beg the attention of Congress and the people to the subject.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN. 15

WASHINGTON, March 6, 1862.

MARCH 9, 1862. — LETTER TO HENRY J. RAYMOND

(*Private*)

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, March 9, 1862.

HON. HENRY J. RAYMOND. 20

*My dear Sir:* I am grateful to the New York journals, and not less so to the *Times* than to others, for their kind notices of the late special message to Congress.

Your paper, however, intimates that the proposition, though well intentioned, must fail on the score of expense. I do hope you will reconsider this. Have you noticed the facts that less than one half day's cost of this war would

pay for all the slaves in Delaware at \$400 per head — that eighty-seven days' cost of this war would pay for all in Delaware, Maryland, District of Columbia, Kentucky, and Missouri at the same price? Were those States to take the step, do you doubt that it would shorten the war more than eighty-seven days, and thus be an actual saving of expense?

Please look at these things and consider whether there should not be another article in the *Times*.

10

Yours very truly,

A. LINCOLN.

MARCH 19, 1862. — LETTER TO DR. S. B. TOBEY

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, March 19, 1862.

DR. SAMUEL BOYD TOBEY.

15 *My dear Sir*: A domestic affliction, of which doubtless you are informed, has delayed me so long in making acknowledgment of the very kind and appropriate letter signed on behalf and by direction of a meeting of the representatives of the Society of Friends for New England, 20 held at Providence, Rhode Island, the 8th of second month, 1862, by Samuel Boyce, clerk, and presented to me by yourself and associates.

Engaged as I am in a great war, I fear it will be difficult for the world to understand how fully I appreciate 25 the principles of peace inculcated in this letter and everywhere by the Society of Friends.

Grateful to the good people you represent for the

prayers in behalf of our common country, I look forward hopefully to an early end of war and return to peace.

Your obliged friend,

A. LINCOLN.

APRIL 9, 1862.—LETTER TO GENERAL G. B. McCLELLAN 5

WASHINGTON, April 9, 1862.

MAJOR-GENERAL McCLELLAN.

*My dear Sir:* Your dispatches, complaining that you are not properly sustained, while they do not offend me, do pain me very much. 10

Blenker's division was withdrawn from you before you left here, and you knew the pressure under which I did it, and, as I thought, acquiesced in it—certainly not without reluctance.

After you left I ascertained that less than 20,000 un- 15  
organized men, without a single field-battery, were all you designed to be left for the defence of Washington and Manassas Junction, and part of this even was to go to General Hooker's old position; General Banks's corps, once designed for Manassas Junction, was divided and 20  
tied up on the line of Winchester and Strasburg, and could not leave it without again exposing the upper Potomac and the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. This presented (or would present, when McDowell and Sumner should be gone) a great temptation to the enemy to 25  
turn back from the Rappahannock and sack Washington. My explicit order that Washington should, by the judgment of all the commanders of corps, be left entirely

secure, had been neglected. It was precisely this that drove me to detain McDowell.

I do not forget that I was satisfied with your arrangement to leave Banks at Manassas Junction; but when  
5 that arrangement was broken up and nothing was substituted for it, of course I was not satisfied. I was constrained to substitute something for it myself.

And now allow me to ask, do you really think I should permit the line from Richmond *via* Manassas Junction to  
10 this city to be entirely open, except what resistance could be presented by less than 20,000 unorganized troops? This is a question which the country will not allow me to evade.

There is a curious mystery about the number of the  
15 troops now with you. When I telegraphed you on the 6th, saying you had over 100,000 with you, I had just obtained from the Secretary of War a statement, taken as he said from your own returns, making 108,000 then with you and *en route* to you. You now say you will have  
20 but 85,000 when all *en route* to you shall have reached you. How can this discrepancy of 23,000 be accounted for?

As to General Wool's command, I understand it is doing for you precisely what a like number of your own  
25 would have to do if that command was away. I suppose the whole force which has gone forward to you is with you by this time; and if so, I think it is the precise time for you to strike a blow. By delay the enemy will relatively gain upon you—that is, he will gain faster by



fortifications and reinforcements than you can by reinforcements alone.

And once more let me tell you it is indispensable to you that you strike a blow. I am powerless to help this. You will do me the justice to remember I always insisted 5 that going down the bay in search of a field, instead of fighting at or near Manassas, was only shifting and not surmounting a difficulty; that we would find the same enemy and the same or equal entrenchments at either place. The country will not fail to note — is noting now 10 — that the present hesitation to move upon an entrenched enemy is but the story of Manassas repeated.

I beg to assure you that I have never written you or spoken to you in greater kindness of feeling than now, nor with a fuller purpose to sustain you, so far as in my 15 most anxious judgement I consistently can; but you must act.

Yours very truly,

A. LINCOLN.

APRIL 10, 1862.—TELEGRAM TO R. YATES AND 20  
WM. BUTLER

WASHINGTON, April 10, 1862.

HON. R. YATES AND WILLIAM BUTLER, Springfield, Illinois:

I fully appreciate General Pope's splendid achievements, with their invaluable results; but you must know 25 that major-generalships in the regular army are not as plenty as blackberries.

A. LINCOLN.

MAY 1, 1862.—TELEGRAM TO GENERAL G. B.  
MCCLELLAN

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, May 1, 1862.

MAJOR-GENERAL MCCLELLAN :

5 Your call for Parrott guns from Washington alarms me, chiefly because it argues indefinite procrastination. Is anything to be done?

A. LINCOLN.

MAY 24, 1862.—TELEGRAM TO GENERAL J. C.  
FRÉMONT

10

WAR DEPARTMENT, May 24, 1862. 4 P.M.

MAJOR-GENERAL FRÉMONT, Franklin :

You are authorized to purchase the 400 horses, or take them wherever or however you can get them.

15 The exposed condition of General Banks makes his immediate relief a point of paramount importance. You are therefore directed by the President to move against Jackson at Harrisonburg and operate against the enemy in such way as to relieve Banks. This movement must  
20 be made immediately. You will acknowledge the receipt of this order, and specify the hour it is received by you.

A. LINCOLN.

MAY 24, 1862.—TELEGRAM TO GENERAL J. C.  
FRÉMONT

25

WAR DEPARTMENT, May 24, 1862. 7.15 P.M.

MAJOR-GENERAL FRÉMONT, Franklin, Virginia :

Many thanks for the promptness with which you have

answered that you will execute the order. Much—perhaps all—depends upon the celerity with which you can execute it. Put the utmost speed into it. Do not lose a minute.

A. LINCOLN. 5

MAY 25, 1862. — TELEGRAM TO GENERAL R. SAXTON

WAR DEPARTMENT, May 25, 1862. 4.15 P.M.

GENERAL SAXTON, Harper's Ferry :

If Banks reaches Martinsburg, is he any the better for it? Will not the enemy cut him from thence to Harper's 10 Ferry? Have you sent anything to meet him and assist him at Martinsburg? This is an inquiry, not an order.

A. LINCOLN.

MAY 25, 1862. — TELEGRAM TO GENERAL R. SAXTON

WAR DEPARTMENT, May 25, 1862. 6.50 P.M. 15

GENERAL SAXTON, Harper's Ferry :

One good six-gun battery, complete in its men and appointments, is now on its way to you from Baltimore. Eleven other guns, of different sorts, are on their way to you from here. Hope they will all reach you before 20 morning. As you have but 2500 men at Harper's Ferry, where are the rest which were in that vicinity and which we have sent forward? Have any of them been cut off?

A. LINCOLN.

MAY 25, 1862. — TELEGRAM TO GENERAL R. SAXTON

WAR DEPARTMENT, May 25, 1862.

GENERAL SAXTON, Harper's Ferry :

I fear you have mistaken me. I did not mean to question the correctness of your conduct ; on the contrary, I approve what you have done. As the 2500 reported by you seemed small to me, I feared some had got to Banks and been cut off with him. Please tell me the exact number you now have in hand.

10

A. LINCOLN.

MAY 31, 1862.—TELEGRAM TO GENERAL G. A. McCALL

WASHINGTON, May 31, 1862. 3-35.

BRIGADIER-GENERAL McCALL,

Commanding, Fredericksburg :

15 Are you about to withdraw from Fredericksburg ; and if so, why, and by whose orders?

A. LINCOLN.

JULY 12, 1862.—APPEAL TO FAVOUR COMPENSATED EMAN-

CIPATION, READ BY THE PRESIDENT TO BORDER-STATE

20 REPRESENTATIVES

*Gentlemen:* After the adjournment of Congress, now very near, I shall have no opportunity of seeing you for several months. Believing that you of the border States hold more power for good than any other equal number  
25 of members, I feel it a duty which I cannot justifiably

waive to make this appeal to you. I intend no reproach or complaint when I assure you that, in my opinion, if you all had voted for the resolution in the gradual-emancipation message of last March, the war would now be substantially ended. And the plan therein proposed 5 is yet one of the most potent and swift means of ending it. Let the States which are in rebellion see definitely and certainly that in no event will the States you represent ever join their proposed confederacy, and they cannot much longer maintain the contest. But you cannot 10 divest them of their hope to ultimately have you with them so long as you show a determination to perpetuate the institution within your own States. Beat them at elections, as you have overwhelmingly done, and, nothing daunted, they still claim you as their own. You and 15 I know what the lever of their power is. Break that lever before their faces, and they can shake you no more forever. Most of you have treated me with kindness and consideration, and I trust you will not now think I improperly touch what is exclusively your own, when, for 20 the sake of the whole country, I ask, Can you, for your States, do better than to take the course I urge? Discarding punctilio and maxims adapted to more manageable times, and looking only to the unprecedentedly stern facts of our case, can you do better in any possible event? 25 You prefer that the constitutional relation of the States to the nation shall be practically restored without disturbance of the institution; and if this were done, my whole duty in this respect, under the Constitution and my oath

of office, would be performed. But it is not done, and we are trying to accomplish it by war. The incidents of the war cannot be avoided. If the war continues long, as it must if the object be not sooner attained, the institution  
5 in your States will be extinguished by mere friction and abrasion — by the mere incidents of the war. It will be gone, and you will have nothing valuable in lieu of it. Much of its value is gone already. How much better for you and for your people to take the step which at once  
10 shortens the war and secures substantial compensation for that which is sure to be wholly lost in any other event ! How much better to thus save the money which else we sink forever in the war ! How much better to do it while we can, lest the war ere long render us pecuniarily unable  
15 to do it ! How much better for you as seller, and the nation as buyer, to sell out and buy out that without which the war could never have been, than to sink both the thing to be sold and the price of it in cutting one another's throats ? I do not speak of emancipation at once,  
20 but of a decision at once to emancipate gradually. Room in South America for colonization can be obtained cheaply and in abundance, and when numbers shall be large enough to be company and encouragement for one another, the freed people will not be so reluctant to go.

25 I am pressed with a difficulty not yet mentioned — one which threatens division among those who, united, are none too strong. An instance of it is known to you. General Hunter is an honest man. He was, and I hope still is, my friend. I valued him none the less for his

agreeing with me in the general wish that all men everywhere could be free. He proclaimed all men free within certain States, and I repudiated the proclamation. He expected more good and less harm from the measure than I could believe would follow. Yet, in repudiating it, I gave dissatisfaction, if not offence, to many whose support the country cannot afford to lose. And this is not the end of it. The pressure in this direction is still upon me, and is increasing. By conceding what I now ask, you can relieve me, and, much more, can relieve the country, in this important point. Upon these considerations I have again begged your attention to the message of March last. Before leaving the capital, consider and discuss it among yourselves. You are patriots and statesmen, and as such I pray you consider this proposition, and at the least commend it to the consideration of your States and people. As you would perpetuate popular government for the best people in the world, I beseech you that you do in no wise omit this. Our common country is in great peril, demanding the loftiest views and boldest action to bring it speedy relief. Once relieved, its form of government is saved to the world, its beloved history and cherished memories are vindicated, and its happy future fully assured and rendered inconceivably grand. To you, more than to any others, the privilege is given to assure that happiness and swell that grandeur, and to link your own names therewith forever.

AUGUST 9, 1862. — LETTER TO J. M. CLAY

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, August 9, 1862.

MR. JOHN M. CLAY.

*My dear Sir:* The snuff-box you sent, with the accom-  
 5 panying note, was received yesterday. Thanks for this  
 memento of your great and patriotic father. Thanks  
 also for the assurance that, in these days of dereliction,  
 you remain true to his principles. In the concurrent  
 sentiment of your venerable mother, so long the partner  
 10 of his bosom and his honours, and lingering now where  
 he was but for the call to rejoin him where he is, I recog-  
 nize his voice, speaking, as it ever spoke, for the Union,  
 the Constitution, and the freedom of mankind.

Your obedient servant,

15

A. LINCOLN.

AUGUST 22, 1862. — LETTER TO HORACE GREELEY

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, August 22, 1862.

HON. HORACE GREELEY.

*Dear Sir:* I have just read yours of the 19th, addressed  
 20 to myself through the New York *Tribune*. If there  
 be in it any statements or assumptions of fact which I  
 may know to be erroneous, I do not, now and here, con-  
 trovert them. If there be in it any inferences which I  
 may believe to be falsely drawn, I do not, now and here,  
 25 argue against them. If there be perceptible in it an  
 impatient and dictatorial tone, I waive it in deference to an  
 old friend whose heart I have always supposed to be right.



As to the policy I "seem to be pursuing," as you say, I have not meant to leave any one in doubt.

I would save the Union. I would save it the shortest way under the Constitution. The sooner the national authority can be restored, the nearer the Union will be "the Union as it was." If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time save slavery, I do not agree with them. If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time destroy slavery, I do not agree with them. My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union, and is not either to save or to destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that. What I do about slavery and the coloured race, I do because I believe it helps to save the Union; and what I forbear, I forbear because I do not believe it would help to save the Union. I shall do less whenever I shall believe what I am doing hurts the cause, and I shall do more whenever I shall believe doing more will help the cause. I shall try to correct errors when shown to be errors, and I shall adopt new views so fast as they shall appear to be true views.

I have here stated my purpose according to my view of official duty; and I intend no modification of my oft-expressed personal wish that all men everywhere could be free.

Yours,

A. LINCOLN.

SEPTEMBER 13, 1862. — REPLY TO A COMMITTEE FROM THE  
RELIGIOUS DENOMINATIONS OF CHICAGO, ASKING THE  
PRESIDENT TO ISSUE A PROCLAMATION OF EMANCIPATION

The subject presented in the memorial is one upon  
5 which I have thought much for weeks past, and I may even  
say for months. I am approached with the most opposite  
opinions and advice, and that by religious men who are  
equally certain that they represent the divine will. I am  
sure that either the one or the other class is mistaken in that  
10 belief, and perhaps in some respects both. I hope it will  
not be irreverent for me to say that if it is probable that  
God would reveal his will to others on a point so connected  
with my duty, it might be supposed he would reveal it  
directly to me ; for, unless I am more deceived in myself  
15 than I often am, it is my earnest desire to know the will  
of Providence in this matter. And if I can learn what it  
is, I will do it. These are not, however, the days of mir-  
acles, and I suppose it will be granted that I am not to  
expect a direct revelation. I must study the plain physi-  
20 cal facts of the case, ascertain what is possible, and learn  
what appears to be wise and right.

The subject is difficult, and good men do not agree.  
For instance, the other day four gentlemen of standing  
and intelligence from New York called as a delegation on  
25 business connected with the war ; but, before leaving, two  
of them earnestly beset me to proclaim general emanci-  
pation, upon which the other two at once attacked them.  
You know also that the last session of Congress had a decided

majority of antislavery men, yet they could not unite on this policy. And the same is true of the religious people. Why, the rebel soldiers are praying with a great deal more earnestness, I fear, than our own troops, and expecting God to favour their side ; for one of our soldiers who had 5 been taken prisoner told Senator Wilson a few days since that he met with nothing so discouraging as the evident sincerity of those he was among in their prayers. But we will talk over the merits of the case.

What good would a proclamation of emancipation from 10 me do, especially as we are now situated? I do not want to issue a document that the whole world will see must necessarily be inoperative, like the Pope's bull against the comet. Would my word free the slaves, when I cannot even enforce the Constitution in the rebel States? Is 15 there a single court, or magistrate, or individual that would be influenced by it there? And what reason is there to think it would have any greater effect upon the slaves than the late law of Congress, which I approved, and which offers protection and freedom to the slaves of rebel masters 20 who come within our lines? Yet I cannot learn that that law has caused a single slave to come over to us. And suppose they could be induced by a proclamation of freedom from me to throw themselves upon us, what should we do with them? How can we feed and care for such a 25 multitude? General Butler wrote me a few days since that he was issuing more rations to the slaves who have rushed to him than to all the white troops under his command. They eat, and that is all ; though it is true

General Butler is feeding the whites also by the thousand, for it nearly amounts to a famine there. If, now, the pressure of the war should call off our forces from New Orleans to defend some other point, what is to prevent the masters  
5 from reducing the blacks to slavery again? For I am told that whenever the rebels take any black prisoners, free or slave, they immediately auction them off. They did so with those they took from a boat that was aground in the Tennessee River a few days ago. And then I am very  
10 ungenerously attacked for it! For instance, when, after the late battles at and near Bull Run, an expedition went out from Washington under a flag of truce to bury the dead and bring in the wounded, and the rebels seized the blacks who went along to help, and sent them into  
15 slavery, Horace Greeley said in his paper that the government would probably do nothing about it. What could I do?

Now, then, tell me, if you please, what possible result of good would follow the issuing of such a proclamation  
20 as you desire? Understand, I raise no objections against it on legal or constitutional grounds; for, as commander-in-chief of the army and navy, in time of war I suppose I have a right to take any measure which may best subdue the enemy; nor do I urge objections of a moral nature,  
25 in view of possible consequences of insurrection and massacre at the South. I view this matter as a practical war measure, to be decided on according to the advantages or disadvantages it may offer to the suppression of the rebellion.

I admit that slavery is the root of the rebellion, or at least its *sine qua non*.<sup>1</sup> The ambition of politicians may have instigated them to act, but they would have been impotent without slavery as their instrument. I will also concede that emancipation would help us in Europe, and convince 5 them that we are incited by something more than ambition. I grant, further, that it would help somewhat at the North, though not so much, I fear, as you and those you represent imagine. Still, some additional strength would be added in that way to the war, and then, unquestionably, 10 it would weaken the rebels by drawing off their labourers, which is of great importance; but I am not so sure we could do much with the blacks. If we were to arm them, I fear that in a few weeks the arms would be in the hands of the rebels; and, indeed, thus far we have not had arms 15 enough to equip our white troops. I will mention another thing, though it meet only your scorn and contempt. There are fifty thousand bayonets in the Union armies from the border slave States. It would be a serious matter if, in consequence of a proclamation such as you desire, they 20 should go over to the rebels. I do not think they all would — not so many, indeed, as a year ago, or as six months ago — not so many to-day as yesterday. Every day increases their Union feeling. They are also getting their pride enlisted, and want to beat the rebels. Let me 25 say one thing more: I think you should admit that we already have an important principle to rally and unite the people, in the fact that constitutional government is at

<sup>1</sup> An indispensable condition.

stake. This is a fundamental idea going down about as deep as anything.

Do not misunderstand me because I have mentioned these objections. They indicate the difficulties that have thus far prevented my action in some such way as you desire. I have not decided against a proclamation of liberty to the slaves, but hold the matter under advisement; and I can assure you that the subject is on my mind, by day and night, more than any other. Whatever shall appear to be God's will, I will do. I trust that in the freedom with which I have canvassed your views I have not in any respect injured your feelings.

NOVEMBER 24, 1862.—LETTER TO CARL SCHURZ

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, November 24, 1862.

15 GENERAL CARL SCHURZ.

*My dear Sir:* I have just received and read your letter of the 20th. The purport of it is that we lost the late elections and the Administration is failing because the war is unsuccessful, and that I must not flatter myself that I am not justly to blame for it. I certainly know that if the war fails, the Administration fails, and that I will be blamed for it, whether I deserve it or not. And I ought to be blamed if I could do better. You think I could do better; therefore you blame me already. I think I could not do better; therefore I blame you for blaming me. I understand you now to be willing to accept the help of men who are not Republicans, provided

they have "heart in it." Agreed. I want no others. But who is to be the judge of hearts, or of "heart in it"? If I must discard my own judgement and take yours, I must also take that of others; and by the time I should reject all I should be advised to reject, I should have 5 none left, Republicans or others—not even yourself. For be assured, my dear sir, there are men who have "heart in it" that think you are performing your part as poorly as you think I am performing mine. I certainly have been dissatisfied with the slowness of Buell and 10 McClellan; but before I relieved them I had great fears I should not find successors to them who would do better; and I am sorry to add that I have seen little since to relieve those fears.

I do not clearly see the prospect of any more rapid 15 movements. I fear we shall at last find out that the difficulty is in our case rather than in particular generals. I wish to disparage no one—certainly not those who sympathize with me; but I must say I need success more than I need sympathy, and that I have not seen the so 20 much greater evidence of getting success from my sympathizers than from those who are denounced as the contrary. It does seem to me that in the field the two classes have been very much alike in what they have done and what they have failed to do. In sealing their faith with their 25 blood, Baker and Lyon and Bohlen and Richardson, Republicans, did all that men could do; but did they any more than Kearny and Stevens and Reno and Mansfield, none of whom were Republicans, and some at least of

whom have been bitterly and repeatedly denounced to me as secession sympathizers? I will not perform the ungrateful task of comparing cases of failure.

In answer to your question, "Has it not been publicly stated in the newspapers, and apparently proved as a fact, that from the commencement of the war the enemy was continually supplied with information by some of the confidential subordinates of as important an officer as Adjutant-General Thomas?" I must say "No," as far as my knowledge extends. And I add that if you can give any tangible evidence upon the subject, I will thank you to come to this city and do so.

Very truly your friend,

A. LINCOLN.

15 JANUARY 1, 1863. — FINAL EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION  
BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA :

*A Proclamation*

Whereas, on the twenty-second day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two, a proclamation was issued by the President of the United States, containing, among other things, the following, to wit :

"That on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any State, or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thence-



forward, and forever free ; and the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authority thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons, and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them, in any efforts they 5 may make for their actual freedom.

“That the Executive will, on the first day of January aforesaid, by proclamation, designate the States and parts of States, if any, in which the people thereof respectively shall then be in rebellion against the United States ; and 10 the fact that any State, or the people thereof, shall on that day be in good faith represented in the Congress of the United States by members chosen thereto at elections wherein a majority of the qualified voters of such State shall have participated, shall in the absence of strong coun- 15 tervailing testimony be deemed conclusive evidence that such State and the people thereof are not then in rebellion against the United States.”

Now, therefore, I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, by virtue of the power in me vested as 20 commander-in-chief of the army and navy of the United States, in time of actual armed rebellion against the authority and government of the United States, and as a fit and necessary war measure for suppressing said rebellion, do, on this first day of January, in the year of our Lord 25 one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and in accordance with my purpose so to do, publicly proclaimed for the full period of 100 days from the day first above

mentioned, order and designate as the States and parts of States wherein the people thereof, respectively, are this day in rebellion against the United States, the following, to wit :

- 5 Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana (except the parishes of St. Bernard, Plaquemines, Jefferson, St. John, St. Charles, St. James, Ascension, Assumption, Terre Bonne, Lafourche, St. Mary, St. Martin, and Orleans, including the city of New Orleans), Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia,  
10 South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia (except the forty-eight counties designated as West Virginia, and also the counties of Berkeley, Accomac, Northampton, Elizabeth City, York, Princess Ann, and Norfolk, including the cities of Norfolk and Portsmouth), and which ex-  
15 cepted parts are for the present left precisely as if this proclamation were not issued.

And by virtue of the power and for the purpose aforesaid, I do order and declare that all persons held as slaves within said designated States and parts of States are, and  
20 henceforward shall be, free ; and that the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons.

And I hereby enjoin upon the people so declared to  
25 be free to abstain from all violence, unless in necessary self-defence ; and I recommend to them that, in all cases when allowed, they labour faithfully for reasonable wages.

And I further declare and make known that such persons of suitable condition will be received into the armed

service of the United States to garrison forts, positions, stations, and other places, and to man vessels of all sorts in said service.

And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the Constitution upon military necessity, I invoke the considerate judgement of mankind and the gracious favour of Almighty God.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand, and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the city of Washington, this first day  
of January, in the year of our Lord one thou-  
[L. S.] sand eight hundred and sixty-three, and of the  
independence of the United States of America  
the eighty-seventh.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN. 15

By the President : WILLIAM H. SEWARD, Secretary of State.

MARCH 23, 1863. — LETTER TO GOVERNOR SEYMOUR  
(*Private and Confidential*)

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, March 23, 1863.

HIS EXCELLENCY GOVERNOR SEYMOUR. 20

*Dear Sir* : You and I are substantially strangers, and I write this chiefly that we may become better acquainted. I, for the time being, am at the head of a nation which is in great peril, and you are at the head of the greatest State of that nation. As to maintaining the nation's life  
and integrity, I assume and believe there cannot be a  
difference of purpose between you and me. If we should  
differ as to the means, it is important that such difference

should be as small as possible ; that it should not be enhanced by unjust suspicions on one side or the other. In the performance of my duty the co-operation of your State, as that of others, is needed—in fact, is indispensable. This alone is a sufficient reason why I should wish to be at a good understanding with you. Please write me at least as long a letter as this, of course saying in it just what you think fit.

Yours very truly,

10

A. LINCOLN.

JULY 4, 1863. — ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEWS FROM  
GETTYSBURG

WASHINGTON, July 4. 10.30 A.M.

The President announces to the country that news from 15 the Army of the Potomac, up to 10 P. M. of the 3d, is such as to cover that army with the highest honour, to promise a great success to the cause of the Union, and to claim the condolence of all for the many gallant fallen ; and that for this he especially desires that on this day He 20 whose will, not ours, should ever be done be everywhere remembered and revered with profoundest gratitude.

A. LINCOLN.

JULY 13, 1863. — LETTER TO GENERAL GRANT

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, July 13, 1863.

25 MAJOR-GENERAL GRANT.

*My dear General:* I do not remember that you and I ever met personally. I write this now as a grateful

acknowledgment for the almost inestimable service you have done the country. I wish to say a word further. When you first reached the vicinity of Vicksburg, I thought you should do what you finally did — march the troops across the neck, run the batteries with the trans-<sup>5</sup> ports, and thus go below; and I never had any faith, except a general hope that you knew better than I, that the Yazoo Pass expedition and the like could succeed. When you got below and took Port Gibson, Grand Gulf, and vicinity, I thought you should go down the river and<sup>10</sup> join General Banks, and when you turned northward, east of the Big Black, I feared it was a mistake. I now wish to make the personal acknowledgment that you were right and I was wrong.

Yours very truly,

A. LINCOLN.

15

AUGUST 17, 1863. — LETTER TO J. H. HACKETT

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, August 17, 1863.

JAMES H. HACKETT, Esq.

*My dear Sir:* Months ago I should have acknowledged<sup>20</sup> the receipt of your book and accompanying kind note; and I now have to beg your pardon for not having done so.

For one of my age I have seen very little of the drama. The first presentation of "Falstaff" I ever saw was yours here, last winter or spring. Perhaps the best compliment<sup>25</sup> I can pay is to say, as I truly can, I am very anxious to see it again. Some of Shakespeare's plays I have never read; while others I have gone over perhaps as frequently

as any unprofessional reader. Among the latter are *Lear*, *Richard III*, *Henry VIII*, *Hamlet*, and especially *Macbeth*. I think nothing equals *Macbeth*. It is wonderful.

5 Unlike you gentlemen of the profession, I think the soliloquy in *Hamlet* commencing "Oh, my offence is rank," surpasses that commencing "To be or not to be." But pardon this small attempt at criticism. I should like to hear you pronounce the opening speech of *Richard*  
 10 *III*. Will you not soon visit Washington again? If you do, please call and let me make your personal acquaintance.

Yours truly,

A. LINCOLN.

15 OCTOBER 26, 1863.—LETTER TRANSMITTING ORIGINAL  
 DRAFT OF EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, October 26, 1863.

LADIES HAVING IN CHARGE THE NORTHWESTERN FAIR  
 FOR THE SANITARY COMMISSION, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS :

20 According to the request made in your behalf, the original draft of the Emancipation Proclamation is herewith enclosed. The formal words at the top and the conclusion, except the signature, you perceive, are not in my handwriting. They were written at the State Department,  
 25 by whom I know not. The printed part was cut from a copy of the preliminary proclamation, and pasted on, merely to save writing. I had some desire to retain the

paper ; but if it shall contribute to the relief or comfort of the soldiers, that will be better.

Your obedient servant,

A. LINCOLN.

NOVEMBER 2, 1863. — LETTER TO J. H. HACKETT 5

(*Private*)

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, November 2, 1863.

JAMES H. HACKETT.

*My dear Sir*: Yours of October 22 is received, as also was in due course that of October 3. I look forward <sup>10</sup> with pleasure to the fulfilment of the promise made in the former.

Give yourself no uneasiness on the subject mentioned in that of the 22d.

My note to you I certainly did not expect to see in <sup>15</sup> print ; yet I have not been much shocked by the newspaper comments upon it. Those comments constitute a fair specimen of what has occurred to me through life. I have endured a great deal of ridicule without much malice ; and have received a great deal of kindness, not <sup>20</sup> quite free from ridicule. I am used to it.

Yours truly,

A. LINCOLN.

NOVEMBER 19, 1863. — ADDRESS AT THE DEDICATION OF  
THE GETTYSBURG NATIONAL CEMETERY 25

Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion  
5 of that field as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate — we cannot consecrate — we cannot hallow — this ground. The brave  
10 men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the un-  
15 finished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us — that from these honoured dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devo-  
20 tion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

25 MARCH 4, 1864. — MEMORANDUM ABOUT CHURCHES

I have written before, and now repeat, the United States Government must not undertake to run the churches. When an individual in a church or out of it



becomes dangerous to the public interest he must be checked, but the churches as such must take care of themselves. It will not do for the United States to appoint trustees, supervisors, or other agents for the churches. I add if the military have military need of the church building, let them keep it ; otherwise let them get out of it, and leave it and its owners alone except for causes that justify the arrest of any one.

A. LINCOLN.

March 4, 1864.

10

MARCH 13, 1864. — LETTER TO M. P. GENTRY

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, March 13, 1864.

HON. M. P. GENTRY.

*My dear Sir:* Yours by the hand of General Grant is received. Of course I have not forgotten you. General Grant is hereby authorized, in his discretion, to send you South ; and it is rather my wish that he may find it not inconsistent with his view of the public interest to oblige you.

Yours truly,

A. LINCOLN. 20

MARCH 18, 1864. — REMARKS ON CLOSING A SANITARY FAIR IN WASHINGTON

*Ladies and Gentlemen:* I appear to say but a word. This extraordinary war in which we are engaged falls heavily upon all classes of people, but the most heavily upon the soldier. For it has been said, all that a man hath will he give for his life ; and while all contribute of

25

their substance, the soldier puts his life at stake, and often yields it up in his country's cause. The highest merit, then, is due to the soldier.

In this extraordinary war, extraordinary developments have manifested themselves, such as have not been seen in former wars; and amongst these manifestations nothing has been more remarkable than these fairs for the relief of suffering soldiers and their families. And the chief agents in these fairs are the women of America.

10 I am not accustomed to the use of language of eulogy; I have never studied the art of paying compliments to women; but I must say, that if all that has been said by orators and poets since the creation of the world in praise of women were applied to the women of America, it  
15 would not do them justice for their conduct during this war. I will close by saying, God bless the women of America.

APRIL 5, 1864.—LETTER TO MRS. HORACE MANN

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, April 5, 1864.

20 MRS. HORACE MANN.

*Madam:* The petition of persons under eighteen, praying that I would free all slave children, and the heading of which petition it appears you wrote, was handed me a few days since by Senator Sumner. Please  
25 tell these little people I am very glad their young hearts are so full of just and generous sympathy, and that, while I have not the power to grant all they ask, I trust they

will remember that God has, and that, as it seems, He wills to do it.

Yours truly,

A. LINCOLN.

APRIL 18, 1864. — ADDRESS AT SANITARY FAIR IN 5  
BALTIMORE

*Ladies and Gentlemen*: Calling to mind that we are in Baltimore, we cannot fail to note that the world moves. Looking upon these many people assembled here to serve, as they best may, the soldiers of the Union, it occurs at 10 once that three years ago the same soldiers could not so much as pass through Baltimore. The change from then till now is both great and gratifying. Blessings on the brave men who have wrought the change, and the fair 15 women who strive to reward them for it!

But Baltimore suggests more than could happen within Baltimore. The change within Baltimore is part only of a far wider change. When the war began, three years ago, neither party, nor any man, expected it would last till now. Each looked for the end, in some way, long 20 ere to-day. Neither did any anticipate that domestic slavery would be much affected by the war. But here we are; the war has not ended, and slavery has been much affected — how much needs not now to be recounted. So true is it that man proposes and God disposes. 25

But we can see the past, though we may not claim to have directed it; and seeing it, in this case, we feel more hopeful and confident for the future.

The world has never had a good definition of the word liberty, and the American people, just now, are much in want of one. We all declare for liberty; but in using the same word we do not all mean the same thing. With  
5 some the word liberty may mean for each man to do as he pleases with himself, and the product of his labour; while with others the same word may mean for some men to do as they please with other men, and the product of other men's labour. Here are two, not only differ-  
10 ent, but incompatible things, called by the same name, liberty. And it follows that each of the things is, by the respective parties, called by two different and incompatible names — liberty and tyranny.

The shepherd drives the wolf from the sheep's throat,  
15 for which the sheep thanks the shepherd as his liberator, while the wolf denounces him for the same act, as the destroyer of liberty, especially as the sheep was a black one. Plainly, the sheep and the wolf are not agreed upon a definition of the word liberty; and precisely the  
20 same difference prevails to-day among us human creatures, even in the North, and all professing to love liberty. Hence we behold the process by which thousands are daily passing from under the yoke of bondage hailed by some as the advance of liberty, and bewailed by others as  
25 the destruction of all liberty. Recently, as it seems, the people of Maryland have been doing something to define liberty, and thanks to them that, in what they have done, the wolf's dictionary has been repudiated.

It is not very becoming for one in my position to make

speeches at great length ; but there is another subject upon which I feel that I ought to say a word.

A painful rumour — true, I fear — has reached us of the massacre by the rebel forces at Fort Pillow, in the west end of Tennessee, on the Mississippi River, of some three hundred coloured soldiers and white officers, who had just been overpowered by their assailants. There seems to be some anxiety in the public mind whether the government is doing its duty to the coloured soldier, and to the service, at this point. At the beginning of the war, and for some time, the use of coloured troops was not contemplated ; and how the change of purpose was wrought I will not now take time to explain. Upon a clear conviction of duty I resolved to turn that element of strength to account ; and I am responsible for it to the American people, to the Christian world, to history, and in my final account to God. Having determined to use the negro as a soldier, there is no way but to give him all the protection given to any other soldier. The difficulty is not in stating the principle, but in practically applying it. It is a mistake to suppose the government is indifferent to this matter, or is not doing the best it can in regard to it. We do not to-day know that a coloured soldier, or white officer commanding coloured soldiers, has been massacred by the rebels when made a prisoner. We fear it, — believe it, I may say, — but we do not know it. To take the life of one of their prisoners on the assumption that they murder ours, when it is short of certainty that they do murder ours, might be too serious, too cruel, a mistake.

We are having the Fort Pillow affair thoroughly investigated; and such investigation will probably show conclusively how the truth is. If after all that has been said it shall turn out that there has been no massacre at Fort 5 Pillow, it will be almost safe to say there has been none, and will be none, elsewhere. If there has been the massacre of three hundred there, or even the tenth part of three hundred, it will be conclusively proved; and being so proved, the retribution shall as surely come. It 10 will be matter of grave consideration in what exact course to apply the retribution; but in the supposed case it must come.

APRIL 30, 1864. — LETTER TO GENERAL U. S. GRANT

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, April 30, 1864.

15 LIEUTENANT-GENERAL GRANT :

Not expecting to see you again before the spring campaign opens, I wish to express in this way my entire satisfaction with what you have done up to this time, so far as I understand it. The particulars of your plans I 20 neither know nor seek to know. You are vigilant and self-reliant; and, pleased with this, I wish not to obtrude any constraints or restraints upon you. While I am very anxious that any great disaster or capture of our men in great numbers shall be avoided, I know these points are 25 less likely to escape your attention than they would be mine. If there is anything wanting which is within my

power to give, do not fail to let me know it. And now, with a brave army and a just cause, may God sustain you.

Yours very truly,

A. LINCOLN.

MAY 14. 1864. — ENDORSEMENT OF LETTER OF GOVERNOR 5  
CARNEY DATED MAY 13, 1864

The within letter is, to my mind, so obviously intended as a page for a political record, as to be difficult to answer in a straightforward, businesslike way. The merits of the Kansas people need not to be argued to me. They are 10 just as good as any other loyal and patriotic people, and as such, to the best of my ability I have always treated them, and intend to treat them. It is not my recollection that I said to you Senator Lane would probably oppose raising troops in Kansas because it would confer 15 patronage upon you. What I did say was, that he would probably oppose it because he and you were in a mood of each opposing whatever the other should propose. I did argue generally, too, that in my opinion there is not a more foolish or demoralizing way of conducting a po- 20 litical rivalry than these fierce and bitter struggles for patronage.

As to your demand that I will accept or reject your proposition to furnish troops, made to me yesterday, I have to say I took the proposition under advisement, in 25 good faith, as I believe you know; that you can withdraw it if you wish; but while it remains before me, I

shall neither accept nor reject it until, with reference to the public interest, I shall feel that I am ready.

Yours truly,

A. LINCOLN.

5 NOVEMBER 21, 1864. — LETTER TO MRS. BIXBY

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, November 21, 1864.

MRS. BIXBY, Boston, Massachusetts.

*Dear Madam:* I have been shown in the files of the War Department a statement of the Adjutant-General of  
 10 Massachusetts that you are the mother of five sons who have died gloriously on the field of battle. I feel how weak and fruitless must be any words of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so  
 overwhelming. But I cannot refrain from tendering to  
 15 you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the Republic they died to save. I pray that our heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours  
 20 to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom.

Yours very sincerely and respectfully,

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

MARCH 4, 1865. — SECOND INAUGURAL ADDRESS

25 *Fellow-countrymen:* At this second appearing to take the oath of the presidential office, there is less occasion for an extended address than there was at the first. Then



a statement, somewhat in detail, of a course to be pursued, seemed fitting and proper. Now, at the expiration of four years, during which public declarations have been constantly called forth on every point and phase of the great contest which still absorbs the attention and engrosses the energies of the nation, little that is new could be presented. The progress of our arms, upon which all else chiefly depends, is as well known to the public as to myself; and it is, I trust, reasonably satisfactory and encouraging to all. With high hope for the future, no prediction in regard to it is ventured.

On the occasion corresponding to this four years ago, all thoughts were anxiously directed to an impending civil war. All dreaded it—all sought to avert it. While the inaugural address was being delivered from this place, devoted altogether to saving the Union without war, insurgent agents were in the city seeking to destroy it without war—seeking to dissolve the Union, and divide effects, by negotiation. Both parties deprecated war; but one of them would make war rather than let the nation survive; and the other would accept war rather than let it perish. And the war came.

One-eighth of the whole population were coloured slaves, not distributed generally over the Union, but localized in the Southern part of it. These slaves constituted a peculiar and powerful interest. All knew that this interest was, somehow, the cause of the war. To strengthen, perpetuate, and extend this interest was the object for which the insurgents would rend the Union, even by war;

while the government claimed no right to do more than to restrict the territorial enlargement of it.

Neither party expected for the war the magnitude or the duration which it has already attained. Neither anticipated that the cause of the conflict might cease with, or even before, the conflict itself should cease. Each looked for an easier triumph, and a result less fundamental and astounding. Both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God ; and each invokes his aid against  
10 the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces ; but let us judge not, that we be not judged. The prayers of both could not be answered — that of neither has been an-  
15 swered fully.

The Almighty has his own purposes. "Woe unto the world because of offences ! for it must needs be that offences come ; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh." If we shall suppose that American slavery is  
20 one of those offences which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through his appointed time, he now wills to remove, and that he gives to both North and South this terrible war, as the woe due to those by whom the offence came, shall we  
25 discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to him? Fondly do we hope — fervently do we pray — that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled

by the bondmen's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, "The judgements of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."

With malice toward none ; with charity for all ; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in ; to bind up the nation's wounds ; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan — to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations.

APRIL 11, 1865. — LAST PUBLIC ADDRESS

We meet this evening not in sorrow, but in gladness of heart. The evacuation of Petersburg and Richmond, and the surrender of the principal insurgent army, give hope of a righteous and speedy peace, whose joyous expression cannot be restrained. In the midst of this, however, He from whom all blessings flow must not be forgotten. A call for a national thanksgiving is being prepared, and will be duly promulgated. Nor must those whose harder part gives us the cause of rejoicing be overlooked. Their honours must not be parcelled out with others. I myself was near the front, and had the high pleasure of transmitting much of the good news to you ; but no part of the honour for plan or execution is mine.

To General Grant, his skilful officers and brave men, all belongs. The gallant navy stood ready, but was not in reach to take active part.

By these recent successes the reinauguration of the  
5 national authority — reconstruction — which has had a large share of thought from the first, is pressed much more closely upon our attention. It is fraught with great difficulty. Unlike a case of war between independent  
10 — no one man has authority to give up the rebellion for any other man. We simply must begin with and mould from disorganized and discordant elements. Nor is it a small additional embarrassment that we, the loyal people, differ among ourselves as to the mode, manner, and  
15 measure of reconstruction. As a general rule, I abstain from reading the reports of attacks upon myself, wishing not to be provoked by that to which I cannot properly offer an answer. In spite of this precaution, however, it comes to my knowledge that I am much censured for some  
20 supposed agency in setting up and seeking to sustain the new State government of Louisiana.

In this I have done just so much as, and no more than, the public knows. In the annual message of December, 1863, and in the accompanying proclamation I presented  
25 a plan of reconstruction, as the phrase goes, which I promised, if adopted by any State, should be acceptable to and sustained by the executive government of the nation. I distinctly stated that this was not the only plan which might possibly be acceptable, and I also distinctly protested

that the executive claimed no right to say when or whether members should be admitted to seats in Congress from such States. This plan was in advance submitted to the then Cabinet, and distinctly approved by every member of it. One of them suggested that I should then and in <sup>5</sup> that connexion apply the Emancipation Proclamation to the theretofore excepted parts of Virginia and Louisiana; that I should drop the suggestion about apprenticeship for freed people, and that I should omit the protest against my own power in regard to the admission of members to <sup>10</sup> Congress. But even he approved every part and parcel of the plan which has since been employed or touched by the action of Louisiana.

The new constitution of Louisiana, declaring emancipation for the whole State, practically applies the proclama- <sup>15</sup> tion to the part previously excepted. It does not adopt apprenticeship for freed people, and it is silent, as it could not well be otherwise, about the admission of members to Congress. So that, as it applies to Louisiana, every member of the Cabinet fully approved the plan. The message <sup>20</sup> went to Congress, and I received many commendations of the plan, written and verbal, and not a single objection to it from any professed emancipationist came to my knowledge until after the news reached Washington that the people of Louisiana had begun to move in accordance <sup>25</sup> with it. From about July, 1862, I had corresponded with different persons supposed to be interested [in] seeking a reconstruction of a State government for Louisiana. When the message of 1863, with the plan before mentioned,

reached New Orleans, General Banks wrote me that he was confident that the people, with his military co-operation, would reconstruct substantially on that plan. I wrote to him and some of them to try it. They tried it, 5 and the result is known. Such has been my only agency in getting up the Louisiana government.

As to sustaining it, my promise is out, as before stated. But as bad promises are better broken than kept, I shall treat this as a bad promise, and break it whenever I shall 10 be convinced that keeping it is adverse to the public interest; but I have not yet been so convinced. I have been shown a letter on this subject, supposed to be an able one, in which the writer expresses regret that my mind has not seemed to be definitely fixed on the question 15 whether the seceded States, so called, are in the Union or out of it. It would perhaps add astonishment to his regret were he to learn that since I have found professed Union men endeavouring to make that question, I have purposely forborne any public expression upon it. As 20 appears to me, that question has not been, nor yet is, a practically material one, and that any discussion of it, while it thus remains practically immaterial, could have no effect other than the mischievous one of dividing our friends. As yet, whatever it may hereafter become, that 25 question is bad as the basis of a controversy, and good for nothing at all — a merely pernicious abstraction.

We all agree that the seceded States, so called, are out of their proper practical relation with the Union, and that the sole object of the government, civil and military, in re-

gard to those States is to again get them into that proper practical relation. I believe that it is not only possible, but in fact easier, to do this without deciding or even considering whether these States have ever been out of the Union, than with it. Finding themselves safely at home, 5 it would be utterly immaterial whether they had ever been abroad. Let us all join in doing the acts necessary to restoring the proper practical relations between these States and the Union, and each forever after innocently indulge his own opinion whether in doing the acts he 10 brought the States from without into the Union, or only gave them proper assistance, they never having been out of it. The amount of constituency, so to speak, on which the new Louisiana government rests, would be more satisfactory to all if it contained 50,000, or 30,000, or even 15 20,000, instead of only about 12,000, as it does. It is also unsatisfactory to some that the elective franchise is not given to the coloured man. I would myself prefer that it were now conferred on the very intelligent, and on those who serve our cause as soldiers. 20

Still, the question is not whether the Louisiana government, as it stands, is quite all that is desirable. The question is, will it be wiser to take it as it is and help to improve it, or to reject and disperse it? Can Louisiana be brought into proper practical relation with the 25 Union sooner by sustaining or by discarding her new State government? Some twelve thousand voters in the heretofore slave State of Louisiana have sworn allegiance to the Union, assumed to be the rightful political power

of the State, held elections, organized a State government, adopted a free-State constitution, giving the benefit of public schools equally to black and white, and empowering the legislature to confer the elective franchise upon the  
5 coloured man. Their legislature has already voted to ratify the constitutional amendment recently passed by Congress, abolishing slavery throughout the nation. These 12,000 persons are thus fully committed to the Union and to perpetual freedom in the State — committed to the  
10 very things, and nearly all the things, the nation wants — and they ask the nation's recognition and its assistance to make good their committal.

Now, if we reject and spurn them, we do our utmost to disorganize and disperse them. We, in effect, say to the  
15 white man : You are worthless or worse ; we will neither help you, nor be helped by you. To the blacks we say : This cup of liberty which these, your old masters, hold to your lips we will dash from you, and leave you to the chances of gathering the spilled and scattered contents in  
20 some vague and undefined when, where, and how. If this course, discouraging and paralyzing both white and black, has any tendency to bring Louisiana into proper practical relations with the Union, I have so far been unable to perceive it. If, on the contrary, we recognize and sustain  
25 the new government of Louisiana, the converse of all this is made true. We encourage the hearts and nerve the arms of the 12,000 to adhere to their work, and argue for it, and proselyte for it, and fight for it, and feed it, and grow it, and ripen it to a complete success. The coloured man, too,



in seeing all united for him, is inspired with vigilance, and energy, and daring, to the same end. Grant that he desires the elective franchise, will he not attain it sooner by saving the already advanced steps toward it than by running backward over them? Concede that the new government of Louisiana is only to what it should be as the egg is to the fowl, we shall sooner have the fowl by hatching the egg than by smashing it.

Again, if we reject Louisiana we also reject one vote in favour of the proposed amendment to the national Constitution. To meet this proposition it has been argued that no more than three-fourths of those States which have not attempted secession are necessary to validly ratify the amendment. I do not commit myself against this further than to say that such a ratification would be questionable, and sure to be persistently questioned, while a ratification by three-fourths of all the States would be unquestioned and unquestionable. I repeat the question: Can Louisiana be brought into proper practical relation with the Union sooner by sustaining or by discarding her new State government? What has been said of Louisiana, will apply generally to other States. And yet so great peculiarities pertain to each State, and such important and sudden changes occur in the same State, and withal so new and unprecedented is the whole case that no exclusive and inflexible plan can safely be prescribed as to details and collaterals. Such exclusive and inflexible plan would surely become a new entanglement. Important principles may and must be inflexible. In the present

situation, as the phrase goes, it may be my duty to make some new announcement to the people of the South. I am considering, and shall not fail to act when satisfied that action will be proper.

# PROPERTY OF DEPARTMENT OF DRAMATIC ART

## NOTES

The heavy marginal figures stand for page, and the lighter ones for line.

25 : 1. **Letter to Robert Allen.** During the summer of 1836 Lincoln was vigorously campaigning for re-election to the Illinois State Legislature. N. W. Edwards was another of the nine candidates from Sangamon County on the Whig ticket.

26 : 22. **Speech in United States House of Representatives.** Lincoln was elected to Congress in November, 1846, and took his seat in December, 1847. The speech here given was the first speech of any length that he made in Congress. It has to do with the great question of that session, the Mexican War. The Whig party, to which Lincoln belonged, maintained that the United States was not justified in declaring war, but since the war had begun, supplies should be voted to prosecute it successfully.

The direct cause of the war was the annexation of Texas in 1845. Texas had gained her independence from Mexico with the aid of many citizens of the United States who had settled there, and had been recognized as an independent state by the United States, England, and other countries. Mexico, however, did not yield her claim, and took offence when Texas was annexed to the United States. In fact, it was the signal for war, but neither side wished to be the aggressor. President Polk maintained that Mexico had begun the war; Lincoln took the Whig view, and criticized the President for beginning it.

43 : 29. **William H. Herndon.** William H. Herndon was a law partner of Lincoln's, and for many years a warm personal friend. He became one of Lincoln's biographers.

45 : 16. **Address at Cooper Institute, New York.** By a series

of debates with Stephen A. Douglas in 1858, Lincoln had become a national figure. Before this time he had a considerable following in the West, but now the East was beginning to take an interest in the new leader from Illinois. Accordingly, the following year, he was invited to speak at Cooper Union, where so many doctrines have been presented by all sorts of men. It was an opportunity that Lincoln gladly accepted, for he was anxious for an introduction to the East. William Cullen Bryant, the poet and editor of the *New York Evening Post*, introduced the speaker, who was awkward and somewhat embarrassed. He won his audience, however, and unconsciously put himself one step nearer the presidency.

The speech was a defence of the new Republican party, which had been formed largely out of the old Whig party since Lincoln had served his term in Congress.

**55 : 19. The Dred Scott case.** Dred Scott, a slave, had been taken by his owners into a state where slavery was prohibited, and later taken back to a slave state. He then sued for freedom. The case became very famous because of its bearing on the slavery question. The court dealt with the rights of slaves, and called the Missouri Compromise unconstitutional. Thus the fires of sectional feelings were fanned into flames.

**63 : 17. Harper's Ferry! John Brown!** John Brown, a radical Abolitionist, led a band of less than twenty into Harper's Ferry, Va., October 16, 1859, and seized the national arsenal. He supposed that it would be a signal for a general uprising of slaves, but it served only further to embitter the South. He was captured, tried for treason, and executed December 2, 1859.

**65 : 3. Southampton insurrection.** An insurrection in 1831 in Southampton County, Va., led by a fanatic slave named Turner, which resulted in the massacre of fifty-three whites and the execution of seventeen negroes.

**65 : 21. The slave revolution in Hayti.** An insurrection of negroes in 1791 in which Toussaint l'Ouverture took an active part.

**65 : 23. The gunpowder plot.** A band of men in the reign of James I, believing that the Catholics were unjustly persecuted, formed a plot to blow up the House of Parliament and kill the King, ministers, and members of Parliament. One of the conspirators warned a friend, and the plot was discovered. Guy Fawkes was found in charge of the powder in the cellar under the Parliament building, and so the anniversary, November 5, is called Guy Fawkes Day.

**67 : 3. Orsini's attempt on Louis Napoleon.** Felice Orsini, an Italian who was convinced that Napoleon III was the greatest obstacle to the liberation of Italy, went to Paris, and January, 1858, attempted to assassinate the Emperor and Empress by throwing a bomb. The attempt failed, though several bystanders were killed, but Orsini was captured and executed.

**74 : 22. W. H. Seward.** William H. Seward was Lincoln's chief competitor for the presidential nomination in 1860, and was the choice of the East. He had had far greater advantages of education, had been Governor of New York, and had served as United States Senator from New York since 1849. Lincoln appointed him Secretary of State, a position which he held with great distinction through Lincoln's and Johnson's terms of office. His position in Washington and the East, his ability, and his training, made many feel that he should have had the nomination for President. This feeling accounts for the gossip over whether Lincoln would offer him the chief place in the cabinet, and whether, if it should be offered him, Seward would accept it.

**76 : 1. Farewell Address.** It is difficult for the younger generations to realize the excitement that prevailed after the election of a Republican President in November, 1860. The war cloud was growing very black. Bitter things were said of Lincoln. The danger to his personal safety was thought to be very great. This speech was made from the platform of the train that was about to take him and his family toward Washington. It was spoken to his friends and neighbours in Springfield who had come to see him off. Burdened with a sense of his responsibility, and realizing some of

the dangers that he was to go through, he spoke with a seriousness and simplicity that were both beautiful and pathetic.

**76 : 18. Address in Independence Hall.** On his way from Springfield to Washington, Lincoln passed through Philadelphia, where he was asked to speak at a flag-raising in Independence Hall. Before the formal occasion he seems to have made this impromptu speech, which shows plainly his feeling in regard to the problems that he was facing.

**81 : 29. A disruption of the Federal Union.** South Carolina, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas had already passed acts of secession.

**88 : 4. The fugitive-slave clause of the Constitution.** Article IV, section 2, clause 3.

**91 : 22-29.** The poetical thought of the last paragraph of the First Inaugural was suggested by Mr. Seward, but the beautiful form in which it stands was Mr. Lincoln's work, and is said to have been written just as he was called upon to join the inaugural procession.

**92 : 1. Schuyler Colfax.** A statesman from Indiana, who served fourteen years in Congress, four years as Speaker of the House, and was Vice-President from 1869 to 1873.

**93 : 1. Secretary Seward's Memorandum : —**

## SOME THOUGHTS FOR THE PRESIDENT'S CONSIDERATION

APRIL 1, 1861

*First.* We are at the end of a month's administration, and yet without a policy, either domestic or foreign.

*Second.* This, however, is not culpable, and it has even been unavoidable. The presence of the Senate, with the need to meet applications for patronage, have prevented attention to other and more grave matters.

*Third.* But further delay to adopt and prosecute our policies

for both domestic and foreign affairs would not only bring scandal on the Administration, but danger upon the country.

*Fourth.* To do this, we must dismiss the applicants for office. But how? I suggest that we make the local appointments forthwith, leaving foreign or general ones for ulterior and occasional action.

*Fifth.* The policy at home. I am aware that my views are singular and perhaps not sufficiently explained. My system is built upon this *idea* as a ruling one, namely, that we must

*Change the question before the public from one upon slavery, or about slavery, for a question upon union or disunion.*

In other words, from what would be regarded as a party question to one of *Patriotism or Union*. The occupation or evacuation of Fort Sumter, although not in fact a slavery or a party question, is so regarded. Witness the temper manifested by the Republicans in the free states, and even by the Union men in the South.

I would therefore terminate it as a safe means for changing the issue. I deem it fortunate that the last Administration created the necessity.

For the rest, I would simultaneously defend and re-enforce all the forts in the Gulf, and have the war ships recalled from foreign stations to be prepared for a blockade. Put the island of Key West under martial law.

This will distinctly raise the question of *Union or Disunion*. I would maintain every fort and possession in the South.

#### *For Foreign Nations*

I would demand explanations from Spain and France categorically, at once.

I would seek explanations from Great Britain and Russia, and send agents into Canada, Mexico, and Central America, to rouse a vigorous continental spirit of independence on this continent against European intervention.

And, if satisfactory explanations are not received from Spain and France, would convene Congress and declare war against them.

But whatever policy we adopt, there must be energetic prosecution of it.

For this reason it must be somebody's business to pursue and direct it incessantly.

Either the President must do it himself, and be all the while active in it, or

Devolve it on some member of his Cabinet. Once adopted, debates on it must end, and all agree and abide. It is not in my especial province. But I neither seek to evade or assume responsibility.

**97 : 10. Gustavus V. Fox.** A naval officer who fitted out in New York a relief expedition for Fort Sumter, which was unsuccessful. He later became Assistant Secretary of the Navy, and served in that capacity through the war.

**98 : 12. Colonel Elmer E. Ellsworth.** Colonel Ellsworth organized a regiment from among the volunteer firemen of New York, and became its colonel, after having gained much renown for having organized and drilled a company of "Chicago Zouaves" in 1859-60. In May, 1861, he was shot in Alexandria, Va., by the proprietor of the Marshall House, for tearing down a Confederate flag which flew above the house, and was buried from the White House with military ceremony. His grave is at Mechanicsville, N. Y.

**99 : 16. General Frémont.** A distinguished American explorer, soldier, and aspirant to the presidency. He was at this time in command of the Western Department of the Army, with headquarters at St. Louis.

**100 : 16. O. H. Browning.** A friend and political associate of Lincoln's in Illinois, who afterward became Secretary of the Interior and Attorney-General under President Johnson.

**104 : 13. General McClernand.** A general in the Union army, who, like Lincoln, was born in Kentucky, brought up in Illinois,



served in the Black Hawk War, became member of Congress, and practised law in Springfield, Illinois.

**105 : 17. General G. B. McClellan.** Commander of the Army of the Potomac, and general in chief of the Union forces from November 1, 1861, to March 11, 1862. There was great criticism of him because he did not act more promptly and march on Richmond.

**107 : 2. Compensated Emancipation.** President Lincoln was trying to settle the slavery question by getting the states and the United States to co-operate in freeing the slaves by purchasing them from their masters.

**110 : 15. Domestic affliction.** In February, 1862, Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln lost their son Willie by death, and were kept very anxious over the serious illness of their son Thomas, or Tad, as he was called.

**120 : 1. J. M. Clay.** The youngest of the five sons of Henry Clay.

**120 : 16. Horace Greeley.** Horace Greeley was the editor of the New York *Tribune*, and gained a tremendous influence during the war through his paper, which was very widely read.

**126 : 13. Carl Schurz.** A German by birth, he was an American by adoption. He was prominent among the leaders of the North, and became a member of President Hayes' Cabinet in 1877.

**131 : 17. Governor Seymour.** The Democratic Governor of New York.

**132 : 23. Letter to General Grant.** General Grant had just won brilliant success at Vicksburg, had received the surrender of General Pemberton with 30,000 men, July 4, 1863, and had been made major-general in the United States Army.

**134 : 19. Sanitary Commission.** The Sanitary Commission was an organization formed during the Civil War for the relief of sick and wounded soldiers.

**135 : 5. J. H. Hackett.** An American comedian, 1800-1871, and father of James K. Hackett.

135 : 25. **Gettysburg National Cemetery.** A part of the field where the great battle of Gettysburg was fought, July 1-3, 1863, was set apart as a national cemetery. The President was invited to be present, but the speaker of the day was Edward Everett, a great orator from Massachusetts. To-day Lincoln's speech is known everywhere, while Everett's is forgotten.

137 : 11. **M. P. Gentry.** A statesman from Tennessee who had been in Congress with Lincoln some fifteen years before this letter.

139 : 7. **Calling to mind that we are in Baltimore.** Baltimore had been a hotbed of southern sympathy. It was here that the first blood of the war was shed while northern soldiers were marching toward Washington in 1861.

141 : 4. **Fort Pillow.** The reports of the so-called massacre at Fort Pillow never agreed. It is true that many lost their lives, but whether in defending the fort or by slaughter after the surrender may be open to doubt.

146 : 12. **Let us judge not, that we be not judged.** — *Matthew* vii. 1.

146 : 16. **“Woe unto the world because of offences,”** etc. — *Matthew* xviii. 7.

147 : 5. **“The judgements of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.”** — *Psalms* xix. 9.

147 : 14. **Last Public Address.** This address was given at the White House where a great crowd had gathered to offer congratulations on the close of the war.

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