

—ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S 2ND INAGURAL ADDRESS

Below (Continued)

At this season, appealing to all the worth of the Presidential office there is less occasion for an extended address than there was at that time. There is, however, something to direct all a course to be pursued toward living and peace. Now, at the expiration of four years, during which public

discussions have been constantly held both on every point and phase of the administration, which will absorb the attention and engrosses the energies of the nation, little that is new could be presented. The progress of our arms, upon which all other stability depends, is as well known to the public as to myself; and it is, I trust, sufficiently satisfactory and encouraging in all. With high hope for the future, no prediction is regard to it is ventured.

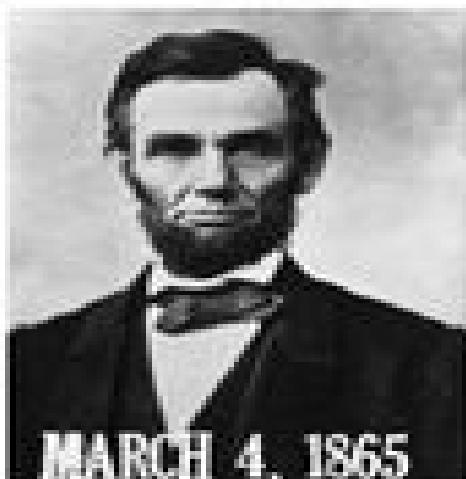
On the occasion corresponding to this I propose to all those who were unanimously directed here, suspending still more. All directed to, all except me, went to. While the inaugural address was being delivered from this place, several delegations from the Union, without me, urgent appeals were to their ally making for freedom to certain states, including in them the Union and divided either by negotiation, both parties represented were, 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 colored slaves, not distributed generally over the Union, but concentrated in the southern part of it. These slaves constituted a peculation and potential interest. All knew that this interest was somehow the cause of the war. To strengthen, propagate, and extend this interest was the object for which the insurgents would make the Union cease by force, while the Government claimed no right to do more than to prohibit the territorial enlargement of it.

Neither party expected for the war the magnitude or the duration which it has closely visited. Both looked for an easier triumph, and a much less protracted and bloody struggle. Both read the same Bible and pray to the same God, and both invoke His aid against the other. It may seem strange that any man 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 powers of both could not be measured. That of justice has been exercised fully. The Almighty has His own purposes.

Finally, 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 250 years of unrequited toil shall be paid, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as we read three thousand years ago, we still, I trust, he will. The judgments 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 to finish the work we have in hand, 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 witness and declare a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.



MARCH 4, 1865