

In compliance with a custom as old as the government itself I, appear 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."

The more modern custom of electing a Chief Magistrate upon a previously declared platform of principles, supercedes, in a great measure, the necessity of re-stating those principles in an address of this sort. Upon the plainest grounds of good faith, one so elected is not at liberty to shift his position. It is necessarily implied, if not expressed, that, in his judgment, the platform which he thus accepts, binds him to nothing either unconstitutional or inexpedient.

Having been so elected upon the Chicago Platform, and while I would repeat nothing in it, of aspersion or epithet or question of motive against any man or party, I hold myself bound by duty, as well as impelled by inclination to follow, within the executive sphere, the principles therein declared. By no other course could I meet the reasonable expectations of the country.

I do not consider it necessary at present for me to say more than I have, in relation to those matters of administration, about which there is no special 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 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 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 have made this, and many similar declarations, and had never recanted them. And more than 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 its own domestic institutions according to its own judgment 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 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 anywise 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—as cheerfully to one section as to another.

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

“No person held to service or labor 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 labor, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labor 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 law-giver 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 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; 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?

☞ 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 think proper 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 now 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, on the whole, with great success. Yet, with all this scope for 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 is menaced and, so far as can be on paper, is already effected. The particulars of what has been done are so familiar and so fresh, that I need not to waste any time in recounting them.

I hold, that in contemplation of universal law, and of the Constitution, the Union of these States is perpetual. 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 Constitution, 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 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 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 Declaration of Independence in 1776. It was further matured and expressly declared and pledged, to be perpetual, by the Articles of Confederation in 1778. And finally, in 1787, one of the declared objects for ordaining and establishing the Constitution, was "*to form a more perfect union.*"

But if destruction of the Union, by one, or by a part only, of the States, be lawfully possible, the Union is *less* perfect than before, which contradicts the Constitution, and therefore is absurd.

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 nothing; and that acts of violence, within any State or States, against the authority of the United States, are insurrectionary or treasonable, according to circumstances.

I therefore consider that the Union is unbroken; and, to the extent of my ability, I shall take care 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 tangible way, 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* have its own, and *defend* 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. All the power at my disposal will be used to reclaim the public property and places which have fallen; to hold, occupy and possess these,

and all other property and places belonging to the government and to collect the duties on imposts; but beyond what may be necessary for these objects, there will be no invasion of any State.* Where hostility to the United States, in any interior locality, shall be so great and so 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 with all, that I deem it better to forego, for the time, the uses of such offices.

The mails, unless refused, 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 favorable to calm thought and reflection. This course will be pursued until current experience shall show a modification or change to be proper.

☞ That there are persons who seek to destroy the Union at all events, and are glad of any pretext to do it, I will neither affirm or 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 destruction of our national Union 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, 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 any right, plainly written in the Constitution, has been denied? I think not. Happily the human

*SPRINGFIELD, Illinois, Feby. 17, 1861.

To day I wrote to Mr. Lincoln suggesting that for the purpose of avoiding every thing of an irritating character, he had better modify the above passage so as to make it read

"See the power at my disposal will be used to hold, occupy and possess the property and places belonging to the government, and to collect the duties on imposts, etc."

As it now stands it will be construed into a threat and will be irritating.

mind is so constructed, 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 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 right were a vital one;—but such is not our case. All the vital rights of minorities, and of individuals, are so plainly assured to them, by affirmations and negations in the Constitution, that controversies never arise concerning them. But no organic law can ever be framed with a provision specifically applicable to every 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 labor 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 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 submit, the majority must, or the government must cease. There is no other alternative; for continuing the government, is submission on one side or the other. If a minority, in such case, will secede rather than submit, they make a precedent which, in turn, will divide and ruin them; for a minority of their own number will secede from them whenever a majority refuses to be controlled by such minority. For instance, why may not South Carolina, a year or two hence, arbitrarily, secede from a new Southern Confederacy, just as she now claims to secede from the present Union? Her people, and indeed, all secession people, are now being educated to the precise temper of doing this. Is there such perfect identity of interests among the States to compose a Southern Union, as to produce harmony only, and prevent renewed secession?

Plainly, the central idea of secession, is the essence of anarchy. A constitutional majority 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 the suit. 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 over-ruled, and never become a precedent for other cases, can better be borne than could the greater evils of a different rule. But if the policy of the government, upon vital questions affecting the whole people, is to be irrevocably fixed by decisions of the Supreme Court, it is plain that the people will have ceased to be their own rulers, having turned their government over to the despotism of the few life-officers composing the Court. 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.

☞ The Republican party, as I understand, have avowed the purpose to prevent, if they can, the extension of slavery, under the national auspices; and upon this arises the only dispute between the sections.

One section 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 Constitution, and the law for the suppression of the foreign slave trade, are each as well enforced, as any law can ever be in a community where the moral sense of the people is against the law itself. The great body of the people abide by the dry legal obligation 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 revived without 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 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, must continue between them. Is it possible to make that intercourse more advantageous or 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 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. As I am not much impressed with the belief that the present Constitution can be improved, I make no recommendations of amendments. I am, rather for the old ship, and the chart of the old pilots. If, however, the people desire a new, or an altered vessel, the matter is exclusively their own, and they can move in the premises, as well without as with an executive recommendation. I shall place no obstacle in the way of what may appear to be their wishes.

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 if they choose; but the executive, as such, has nothing to do with it. His duty is to 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 either party without faith in the right? If the Almighty Ruler of nations, with his eternal truth and justice, be on our side, or on yours, that truth and that justice will surely prevail, by the judgment of this great tribunal, the American people.

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 remain patient, and true to themselves, no man, even in the presidential chair, 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, take *time* and think *well*, upon this whole subject. Nothing valuable can be lost by taking time. Nothing worth preserving is either breaking or burning. 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 favored 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*, unless you *first* assail it. 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. *You* can forbear

the *assault* upon it; *I can not shrink from the defense of it. With you, and not with me, is the solemn question of "Shall it be peace, or a sword?"*

ENDORSEMENT ON ORIGINAL DRAFT IN AUTOGRAPH OF
O. H. BROWNING

INDIANAPOLIS, Indiana, Tuesday, Feby 12, 1861.

Having come this far with Hon. Abraham Lincoln, President elect, on his way to Washington, where he had requested me to accompany him, and being compelled to quit him here, and return to Springfield, Illinois, on important business, before we parted, being in his room at the Bates House, he took this copy of his Inaugural address from a small carpet bag, and requested me to read it, and give him my candid opinion of it before we separated.

I did so. It met my hearty approbation, and I so informed him. He permitted me to retain this copy, and after now rereading it more calmly, I think it a most admirable document.

O. H. BROWNING.

Springfield, Feby 15, 1861.

CHANGES IN ORIGINAL DRAFT

1 — Mr. Seward proposed to omit from the words—"The more modern custom, (down to)" "By no other course could I meet the reasonable expectations of the country" or to amend the paragraphs to read: "The modern custom of nominating a Chief Magistrate upon a previously declared summary of principles supersedes in a great measure the necessity of restating those principles in an address of this sort. It is necessarily implied, if not expressed, that the summary binds the officer elected to nothing either unconstitutional or inexpedient. With this explanation I deem it my duty, as I am disposed in feeling, to follow, as far as they apply to the Executive sphere, the principles on which I was brought before the American People." The latter suggestion was adopted, and no reference made to the Chicago platform.

2 — Mr. Seward proposed "will be cheerfully given in every case and under all circumstances to all the States." Mr. Lincoln did not adopt the suggestion but changed the sentence to read "will be cheerfully given to all the States when lawfully demanded, for whatever cause—as cheerfully to one section, as to another."

3 — Mr. Lincoln added the remainder of this paragraph of his own accord.

4 — Mr. Seward suggested the change from "and on the whole, with great success" to "and generally with great success."

5 — Mr. Seward suggested the change from "A disruption of the Federal Union is menaced, and, so far as can be on paper, is already effected. The particulars of what has been done are so familiar and so fresh that I need not waste any time recounting them" to "A disruption of the Federal Union, heretofore only menaced, is now formidably attempted." This suggestion was adopted.

6 — Mr. Lincoln of his own accord changed "It was further matured and expressly declared and pledged to be perpetual" to "It was further matured, and the faith of all the then thirteen States expressly pledged and engaged that it should be perpetual."

7 — Mr. Seward suggested that "and therefore is absurd" be stricken from the original draft which read "The Union is less perfect than before, which contradicts the Constitution, and therefore is absurd." Mr. Lincoln remodeled the whole sentence to "The Union is less perfect than before the Constitution, having lost the vital element of perpetuity."

8 — Mr. Seward's suggestions to substitute "void" for "nothing" and "revolutionary" for "treasonable" were adopted.

9 — Mr. Seward's suggestion to use "will constitutionally defend and maintain itself" instead of "will have to own and defend itself" was adopted.

10 — Mr. Seward's suggestion to strike out the words "tangible way" and substitute therefor the words "authoritative manner" was adopted.

11 — Mr. Seward's suggestion to strike out "will have its own and defend itself." and insert "will constitutionally defend and maintain itself," was adopted.

12 — In the original draft this paragraph, after the first sentence, stood as follows: "All the power at my disposal will be used to reclaim the public property and places which have fallen; to hold, occupy, and possess these and all other 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 of any State. Where hostility to the United States, in any interior locality, shall be so great and so 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."

Mr. Seward proposed to strike out the above, and to insert the following:

"The power confided to me shall be used indeed with efficacy, but also with discretion in every case and exigency, according to the 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. There are in this Government, as in every other, emergencies when the exercise of power lawful in itself is less certain to secure the just ends of administration than a temporary forbearance from it, with reliance on the voluntary though delayed acquiescence of the people in the laws which have been made by themselves and for their own benefit. I shall not lose sight of this obvious maxim."

Mr. Lincoln did not adopt this proposal, but made the change which had been suggested by Hon. O. H. Browning, who wrote to Mr. Lincoln (February 17, 1861) referring to this paragraph: "Would it not be judicious so to modify this as to make it read: 'All the power at my disposal will be used to hold, occupy, and possess the property and places belonging to the Government, and to collect the duties and imposts, etc.,' omitting the declaration of the purpose of reclamation, which will be construed into a threat or menace, and will be irritating even in the border States? On principle the passage is right as it now stands. The fallen places ought to be reclaimed. But cannot that be accomplished as well or even better without announcing the purpose in your inaugural?"

Mr. Lincoln adopted Mr. Browning's advice, and modified his own phraseology as proposed. He also made in this paragraph another slight change of phraseology. For, "there will be no invasion of any State," he substituted, "there will be no invasion, no using of force against or among the people anywhere."

13 — This phrase originally was, "The mails, unless refused, will continue to be furnished," etc. Mr. Lincoln himself changed this to read: "The mails, unless repelled."

14 — This paragraph originally closed with the following sentence: "This course will be pursued until current experience shall show a modification or change to be proper." Mr. Lincoln himself changed this so as to read: "The course here indicated will be followed unless current events and experience shall show a modifi-

cation or change to be proper." He also added a part of the language proposed by Mr. Seward for the previous paragraph.

15 — This sentence originally stood: "That there are persons who seek to destroy the Union," etc. Mr. Seward proposed to amend so as to make it read: "That there are persons in one section as well as in the other, who seek to destroy the Union," etc. Mr. Lincoln changed the amendment to, "That there are persons in one section or another who seek to destroy the Union at all events, and are glad of any pretext," etc.

Mr. Seward also proposed to add to the last clause of the sentence, after the word, "them," the following: "because I am sure they must be few in number and of little influence when their pernicious principles are fully understood." Mr. Lincoln did not adopt the suggestion.

16 — Mr. Lincoln himself struck out the word "Union," and inserted in lieu the words "fabric, with all its benefits, its memories, and its hopes."

17 — Mr. Seward proposed to insert the word "distinct" after the words, "Is it true, then, that any," in the second sentence of this paragraph. Mr. Lincoln did not adopt the suggestion.

18 — In this sentence Mr. Lincoln himself changed the word "constructed" to "constituted."

19 — The phrase, "by affirmations and negations," Mr. Seward proposed to make, "by affirmations and negations, guarantees and prohibitions." Mr. Lincoln adopted the suggestion.

20 — The phrase, "applicable to every question," Mr. Seward proposed to change to, "applicable to every possible question." Mr. Lincoln did not adopt the change.

21 — Mr. Seward proposed to substitute the words "acquiesce" and "acquiescence" for "submit" and "submission." Mr. Lincoln adopted the suggestion.

22 — The original phrase, "a minority of their own number will secede from them," Mr. Lincoln himself changed to, "a minority of their own will secede from them."

23 — In the original these sentences are: "For instance, why may not South Carolina, a year or two hence, arbitrarily secede from a new Southern Confederacy, just as she now claims to secede from the present Union? Her people, and, indeed, all secession people, are now being educated to the precise temper of doing this." Mr. Seward proposed to substitute the names, "Alabama or Florida" for "South Carolina;" and the word "communities" for "people." Instead of adopting this, Mr. Lincoln re-wrote the whole, as follows: "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 are now being educated to the exact temper of doing this."

24 — For the original phrase, "a Southern Union," Mr. Lincoln himself substituted, "a new Union."

25 — The original sentence, "A constitutional majority is the only true sovereign of a free people," Mr. Seward proposed to change to, "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," etc. Mr. Lincoln adopted the change.

26 — The final clause, "while they are also entitled to very high respect and consideration in all parallel cases by all other departments of the Government" was suggested by Mr. Seward and adopted by Mr. Lincoln. (Seward's suggestion follows Lincoln's language in the debates with Douglas).

27 — In the original this phrase ran: "the greater evils of a different rule." Mr. Seward proposed to substitute "practice" for "rule," and Mr. Lincoln struck out the word "greater," making it read, "the evils of a different practice."

28 — In the original this sentence stood: "but if the policy of the Government, upon vital questions affecting the whole people, is to be irrevocably fixed by decisions of the Supreme Court, it is plain that the people will have ceased to be their own rulers, having turned their government over to the despotism of the few life officers composing the court." Mr. Seward proposed to amend it as follows: "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, made in the ordinary course of litigation between parties in personal actions, the people will have ceased to be their own rulers, having practically resigned their government into the hands of that eminent tribunal." Mr. Lincoln adopted the amendment, first changing the phrase, "made in the ordinary course of litigation," to "the instant they are made, in ordinary litigation," and also the phrase, "having practically resigned," to, "having to that extent practically resigned."

29 — Mr. Seward proposed to strike out: "The Republican party, as I understand, have avowed the purpose to prevent, if they can, the extension of slavery under the national auspices; and upon this arises the only dispute between the sections." Mr. Lincoln adopted the suggestion.

30 — In the original this phrase stood: "One section believes slavery is right," etc. Mr. Seward proposed to make it read: "One section of our country believes slavery is right," etc. Mr. Lincoln adopted the suggestion.

31 — The phrase, "as well enforced as any law," Mr. Seward suggested should read: "as well enforced, perhaps, as any law," etc. The suggestion was adopted.

32 — The phrase, "where the moral sense of the people is against the law itself," Mr. Seward suggested should read: "where the moral sense of the people imperfectly supports the law itself." The suggestion was adopted.

33 — The phrase, "would be revived," Mr. Seward suggested should read: "would be ultimately revived." The suggestion was adopted.

34 — Following the words, "dismember and overthrow it," the original reads:

"As I am not much impressed with the belief that the present Constitution can be improved, I make no recommendations of amendments. I am rather for the old ship and the chart of the old pilots. If, however, the people desire a new or an altered vessel, the matter is exclusively their own, and they can move in the premises as well without as with an Executive recommendation. I shall place no obstacle in the way of what may appear to be their wishes."

Mr. Seward proposed to change the first sentence of the above to the following: "While so great a diversity of opinion exists on the question what amendments, if indeed any, would be effective in restoring peace and safety, it would only tend to aggravate the dispute if I were to attempt to give direction to the public mind in that respect." Mr. Lincoln did not adopt Mr. Seward's suggestion; but struck out all the above, and remodeled the whole paragraph to the form in which it now stands in the text, adding the reference to the new constitutional amendment.

35 — The original "can do this if they choose," Mr. Lincoln himself changed to read, "can do this also if they choose."

36 — The original, "is either party without faith in the right?" Mr. Lincoln himself changed to, "is either party without faith of being in the right?"

37 — The original, "be on our side or on yours," Mr. Seward suggested should read: "be on the side of the North, or of the South, of the East, or of the West," Mr. Lincoln changed it to read: "be on your side of the North, or on yours of the South, that truth and," etc.

38 — The original, "While the people remain patient and true to themselves, no man, even in the Presidential chair, can," etc. Mr. Seward proposed to change to "While the people retain their virtue and vigilance, no legislature and no administration can," etc. Mr. Lincoln changed it to read as follows: "While the people retain their virtue and vigilance, no administration, by any extreme of wickedness or folly, can," etc.

39 — The original, "take time and think well," Mr. Seward suggested should read: "think calmly and think well." Mr. Lincoln changed it to, "think calmly and well."

40 — The original, "Nothing valuable can be lost by taking time. Nothing worth preserving is either breaking or burning." Mr. Seward proposed to strike out. Mr. Lincoln retained the first, and struck out the second.

41 — In the original sentence, "The Government will not assail you, unless you first assail it," Mr. Seward suggested striking out the last clause. Mr. Lincoln adopted the suggestion.

42 — The original draft, after the words, "preserve, protect, and defend it," concludes as follows:

"You can forbear the assault upon it, I cannot shrink from the defense of it. With you, and not with me, is the solemn question of 'Shall it be peace or a sword?'"

Mr. Seward did not like this termination; and suggested that "something besides or in addition to argument is needful—to meet and remove prejudice and passion in the South, and despondency and fear in the East. Some words of affection—some of calm and cheerful confidence." He submitted two separate drafts for a closing paragraph, from which Mr. Lincoln might choose one to substitute for the two sentences which he proposed to strike out.

Suggestions for a closing paragraph:

No. 1. "However unusual it may be at such a time to speak of sections or to sections, yet in view of the misconceptions and agitations which have strained the ties of brotherhood so far, I hope it will not be deemed a departure from propriety, whatever it may be from custom, to say that if in the criminations and misconstructions which too often imbue our political contests, any man south of this capital has been led to believe that I regard with a less friendly eye his rights, his interests, or his domestic safety and happiness, or those of his State, than I do those of any other portion of my country, or that I would invade or disturb any legal right or domestic institution in the South, he mistakes both my principles and feelings, and does not know me. I aspire to come in the spirit, however, far below the ability and wisdom, of Washington, of Madison, of Jackson, and of Clay. In that spirit I here declare that in my administration I shall know no rule but the Constitution, no guide but the laws, and no sentiment but that of equal devotion to my whole country, east, west, north, and south."

No. 2. "I close. We are not, we must not be, aliens or enemies, but fellow-countrymen and brethren. Although passion has strained our bonds of affection too hardly, they must not, I am sure they will not, be broken. The mystic chords which, proceeding from so many battlefields and so many patriot graves, pass through all the hearts and all hearths in the broad continent of ours, will yet again harmonize in their ancient music when breathed upon by the guardian angel of the nation."

The first of these drafts, containing 139 words in its opening sentence, and made up of phrases which had become extremely commonplace by iteration in the six years' slavery discussion, was clearly inadmissible. The second draft, containing the germ of a fine poetic thought, Mr. Lincoln took, and, gave it the life and spirit and beauty which have made it celebrated in the text.