

opinion has always to be scanned and measured, and that it is possible while respecting it to lead it. Mark the way in which Abraham Lincoln at that time places the question before the country. He says it is not a conflict to save or to destroy slavery, but that it is a conflict for the Union and upon that ground he appealed to the nation, and his appeal was responded to, but, had he asked the nation to fight to abolish slavery, his appeal would have remained unheeded. Yet, at the very time that Lincoln was penning that letter, he had in his desk a proclamation already prepared for the abolition of slavery; he was biding his time, and two months later, when he thought the moment had come, he issued his proclamation. It was simply a war measure, not applicable all over the Union, but only in the insurgent States. As the war proceeded public opinion at last commenced to move, and then moved rapidly. At first the Northern people, who were adverse to slavery, out of the respect they had for the views of their fellow-countrymen in the South, had refused to interfere with it, but, when they found their country invaded, the Union jeopardized then they were prepared to go to the bottom and to deal with slavery, and Abraham Lincoln, the keenest judge of the fluctuation of public opinion that ever lived, saw the time was ripe. He advised the Republican Convention, which met in 1864, to adopt a plank in favor of the total abolition of slavery. His advice was accepted, the plank was adopted, and in November following the principle was ratified by the people, and, in the following March, 1865, the curse and the shame of slavery was forever blotted out from the fair name of the American Republic.

Now, Ladies and Gentlemen, it may be interesting if I give you the judgment which was passed by Lincoln himself upon Slavery, its origin, its course and the responsibilities of the American people for the same. I will, therefore, if you will permit me, read you the Second Inaugural Address of Abraham Lincoln, delivered by him on the 4th of March, 1865, a few weeks before his assassination, and to me it is one of the most extraordinary papers that was ever written. I think