

best personal friends are divided, my profound conviction of the truth and importance of the views I have announced, alone has overcome the reluctance which I naturally felt to displease any of them. On whichever side of the question their judgment at present may range them, none of them, I apprehend, will be disinclined to accord to me the claim of sincerity. In any event, no one *can* rob me of the satisfaction I derive from a consciousness of the rectitude, benevolence, and patriotism of my design in this exposition of my opinions on a topic of assuredly *no evanescent* interest; for when the agitations of the present generation concerning it have subsided into the solemn quiescence of the sepulchre, the course they now take in reference to it, will leave its impress—it may be for ages—on the destinies of the living.