

LINCOLN LORE

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ORIGINAL DRAFT OF THE FIRST INAUGURAL

(Continued from Lincoln Lore No. 358)

20, O. "refused."
F. "repelled." (L).
20, O. "This course will be pursued until current experience shall show a modification or change to be proper."
F. "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." (L).
21, O. "persons who seek."
F. "persons in one section or another who seek." (L).
22, O. "national Union would it not."
F. "national fabric, with all its benefits, its memories, and its hopes would it not." (L).
23, O. "constructed."
F. "constituted." (L).
23, O. "by affirmations and negations."
F. "by affirmations and negations, guarantees and prohibitions." (S).
24, O. "submit."
F. "acquiesce." (S).
24, O. "submission."
F. "acquiescence." (S).
24, O. "their own number."
F. "their own." (L).
24, O. "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."
F. "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." (L).
25, O. "a Southern Union."
F. "a new Union." (L).
26, O. "A constitutional majority is the only true sovereign of a free people."
F. "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." (S).
27, O. "to the object of the suit."
F. "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." (S).
27, O. "the greater evils of a different rule."
F. "the evils of a different practice." (L. & S.)
27, O. "but if the policy of the Government."
F. "At the same time, the candid citizen must confess that if the policy of the Government." (L. & S.)
27, O. "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."
F. "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." (L. & S.)
Following paragraph 27, Mr. Seward recommended that the paragraph here presented be stricken 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."
28, O. "One section believes slavery is right."

F. "One section of our country believes slavery is right." (S).
28, O. "as well enforced as any law."
F. "as well enforced, perhaps, as any law." (S).
28, O. "is against the law itself."
F. "imperfectly supports the law itself." (S).
28, O. "would be revived."
F. "would be ultimately revived." (S).
30, O. "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."
F. "I cannot be ignorant of the fact that many worthy and patriotic citizens are desirous 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 circumstances, favor 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 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 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." (L).
31, O. "can do this if they choose."
F. "can do this also if they choose." (L).
32, O. "faith in the right."
F. "faith of being in the right." (L).
32, O. "be on our side or yours."
F. "be on your side of the North, or on yours of the South." (L. & S.)
33, O. "While the people remain patient, and true to themselves, no man, even in the presidential chair."
F. "While the people retain their virtue and vigilance, no administration." (L. & S.)
34, O. "take time and think well."
F. "think calmly and well." (L. & S.)
34. On Mr. Seward's suggestion the words "Nothing worth preserving is either breaking or burning" were omitted.
35. Mr. Seward suggested striking out the words "unless you first assail it," which followed the clause "The Government will not assail you." Mr. Lincoln adopted the suggestion.
36, O. "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?"
F. "I am loth 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 battlefield 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." (L. & S.)