WITH MALICE TOWARD NONE;
WITH CHARITY FOR ALL;
WITH FIRMNESS IN THE RIGHT,
AS GOD GIVES US TO SEE THE
RIGHT, LET US STRIVE ON TO
FINISH THE WORK WE ARE IN; TO
BIND UP THE NATION’S WOUNDS;
TO CARE FOR HIM WHO SHALL HAVE
BORNE THE BATTLE, AND FOR HIS
WIDOW, AND HIS ORPHANS—TO DO
ALL WHICH MAY ACHIEVE AND
CHERISH A JUST AND A LASTING
PEACE, AMONG OURSELVES,
AND WITH ALL NATIONS.”
At this second appearance to take the oath of the presidential office, there is less occasion for an extended address than there was at the first. Then a statement somewhat in detail, of a course to be pursued, seems as fitting and proper. Now, at the expiration of four years, during which public declarations have been constantly called forth on every point and phase of the great contest which still absorbs the attention, and engrosses the energies of the nation, little that is new can be presented. The progress of our arms, upon which all else chiefly depends, is as well known to the public as myself; and it is, I trust, reasonably satisfactory and encouraging to all. With high hope for the future, no prediction in regard to it is venturesome.

On the occasion corresponding to this four years ago, all thoughts were anxiously directed to an impending civil war. All dreaded it—in all, sought to avert it. While the inaugural address was being delivered from this place, devoted altogether to saving the Union without war, the loudest agents were in
the city seeking to destroy it without war seeking to dissolve the Union, and divide it effects by negotiation. Both parties deprecated war; 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 localized in the Southern part of it. These slaves constituted a peculiar and powerful interest. All knew that this interest was, somehow, the cause of the war. So strong was it, that the Union must be, and it was, maintained. Both parties deprecated war, but one party was in favor of using force, while the other was against it. The one anticipated[ing] the war, the other expected the war; and the one, by their predictions, made it more and more certain.

Neither party expected for the war, the magnitude, or the duration, which it has already attained. Neither anticipated that
the cause of the conflict might cease with, or even before, the conflict itself should cease; each looked for an easier triumph, and a result less fundamental and astounding. Both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God; and each invokes His aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men 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 prayers of both could not be answered; that of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has His own purposes. "Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!" If we shall suppose that American Slavery is one of those offences which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove, and that He gives to both North and South, this terrible war, as the woe due to those
by whom the offence came, shall we discern there-
in any departure from those divine attributes
which the believers in a living God always
ascribe to Him? Finally, do we hope—fervent-
ly 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 bondman's two hundred and
fifty years of unremitting toil shall be sunk,
and until every drop of blood drawn with the
lash, shall be paid by another drawn with
the sword, as was said three thousand years
ago, so still it must be said "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 on to finish the work we
are in; to bind up the nation's wounds;
to care for him who shall have borne the bat-
tle, and for his widow and his orphan,
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All knew that this interest was,
somehow, the cause of the war.

To strengthen, perpetuate
and extend this interest was the object for which the in-
surgers would resort to the Union, even by war, while the
government claimed no right to do more than to restrict the
territorial enlargement of it.

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might cease with, or even before, the conflict itself should
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