

Friends and Fellow Citizens: On this day, one year ago, the 1st of January, 1863, no less than 4,000,000 slaves were released from their bondage, stripped of their chains, emancipated and set free, by the President's Proclamation. Facts have come to your knowledge which induce you to believe that the President will yet be fully vindicated for issuing his much-talked-of Proclamation. There were reasons for his actions with which the public are unacquainted, as also with many things connected with that great movement. But, my friends, he did well, though he did nothing more than his duty; nay, he performed nothing but an act of justice. Be this, however, as it may, Abraham Lincoln is surely entitled to the credit of issuing the first Emancipation Proclamation. The great names of Abraham Lincoln, Sumner, Thaddeus Stevens, Lovejoy and Arnold will long be reckoned as bright stars in the annals of time, and their glory will grow brighter as the long ages of the world shall roll away. Napoleon himself was but a common conqueror; he reduced to vassalage whole nations of freemen, and France rained showers of blood, and with the red light of blazing roofs he built his rainbow-glory, and to shuddering consciences cried, "Lo! the bridge to heaven." But these truly great men sought to immortalize their names by connecting them with the freedom of man and his elevation from degra-

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dition. They are the disciples of liberty, and not the oppressors of mankind. The halo of their glory was bright, because its radiance was heavenly, and not because it had been kindled at the funeral pyre of blazing cities and desolated fields. The star of Napoleon will pale its fires as men grow better, whilst that of Abraham Lincoln will only become more and more lustrous, until the whole world shall be illuminated by its splendors. It is not like the lurid rain of some holiday fire, piercing the imperial heavens and then falling rayless and blackened to the dust, a thing for all men's feet to trample; but like the oak that shakes in summer's wind, but stripped by winter, stands immovable.

My friends, I do not wish to consume too much of your time, but the President's Proclamation was so necessary a prelude to the abolition of slavery that I must necessarily refer frequently to the former, who has taken such a prominent part in regard to Emancipation; but there are parts of the South left yet, to which the President's Proclamation does not extend. The day is approaching, however, when those who are now held as slaves will be slaves no longer: then the son of Lot shall stand up, proud in his recovered rights, unfettered in his freedom; then his fortunes shall no longer be regarded as ignominious, his complexion a crime, his gift of life a diploma

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of servitude, his existence a curse, his wife and children hereditary bondsmen. Yes, friends, this anniversary is the inauguration of better times. I can see them looming up in the future, grandly, gloriously.

I hope that we all may live to see the day when Georgia and Massachusetts shall shake hands, never to be separated again; and then we shall have the Union that is to be, and the Union that we want. But, my friends, so sure as there is a God in heaven, the days of tyranny are numbered. The anniversary we are now engaged in celebrating speaks loudly on our side. We are fast emerging from the oppression of ages. Our claim to be considered as men is fast beginning to be regarded by the rulers of the earth. Our great mission will be, in coming ages, to civilize and redeem our brothers who are now held as slaves. When we have accomplished this we will reverse the prophecy of the past.

Westward the course of empire takes its way.

We will not follow the sun in his wanderings, nor the stars in their courses, with enlightened minds and emancipated hands we will recross the stormy Atlantic, land upon the savage shores of our ancestors, plant upon the desert and the plain the Banner of the Cross and the Star of Liberty. Then the glorious millenium will

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be accomplisæd, and universal peace prevail throughout all the families of man.

Glorious America! We love thee as the land which first taught tyrants to respect the rights of man; we love thee as the land of liberty, and destined, at no distant day, to take the lead in the enfranchisement of the world.

Here shall mankind their pilfered rights maintain;
Here freedom burst the last link in her chain;
Justice and law shall triumph over fraud,
The weak be sheltered and the tyrant awed;
Kings shall be sceptreless, and princes find
That true nobility is in the mind.

Let us again resolve, on this glorious anniversary, to conquer our hard lot; to triumph over unpropitious circumstances; to rise above all opposition, and, on the wings of light and learning, soar into the more congenial regions of unfettered freedom, where the mind shall be clothed with the genius of knowledge and the feet shod with the sandals of liberty.

Ladies and Gentlemen—I propose three cheers for Abraham Lincoln, the fast friend of the African and the pioneer in the emancipation of the South. W. J. O. BRYANT.

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