

**LINCOLN'S GETTYSBURG
ORATION AND
FIRST AND SECOND
INAUGURAL ADDRESSES**

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Lincoln's Gettysburg Oration and First and Second Inaugural Addresses by Abraham Lincoln

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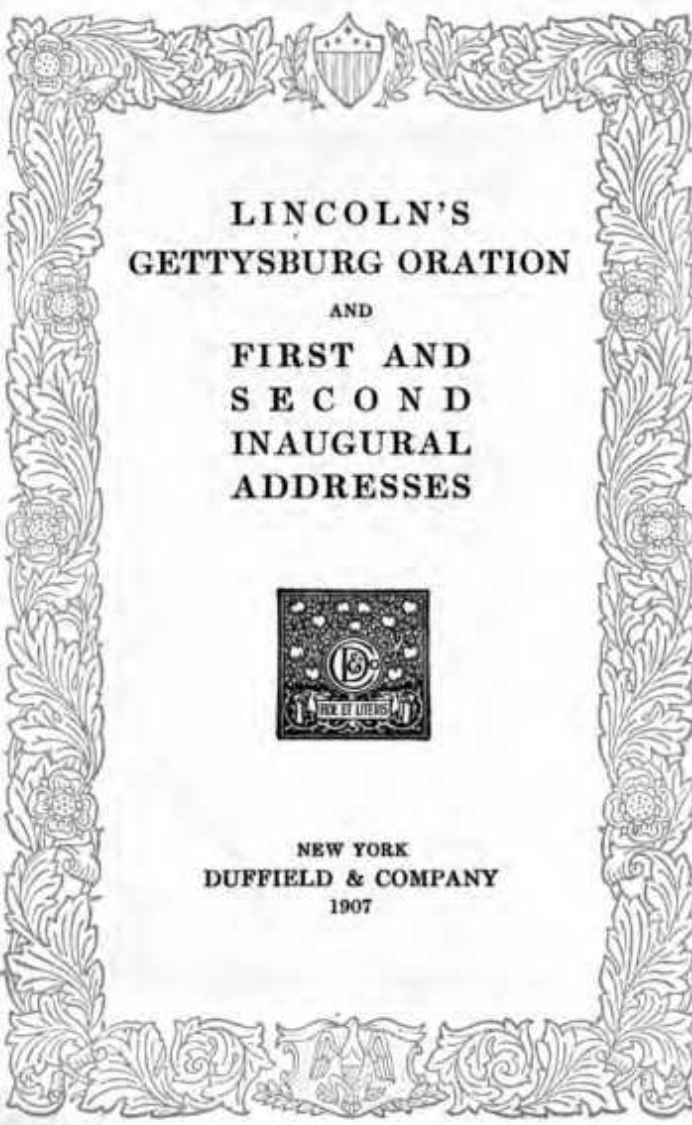
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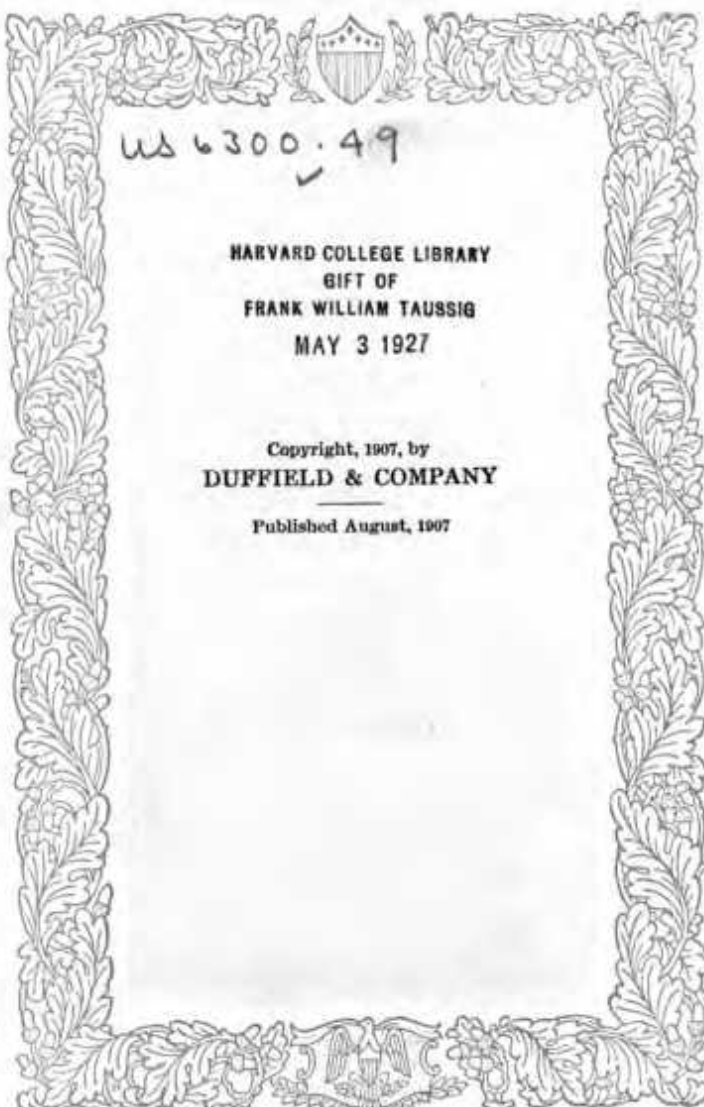
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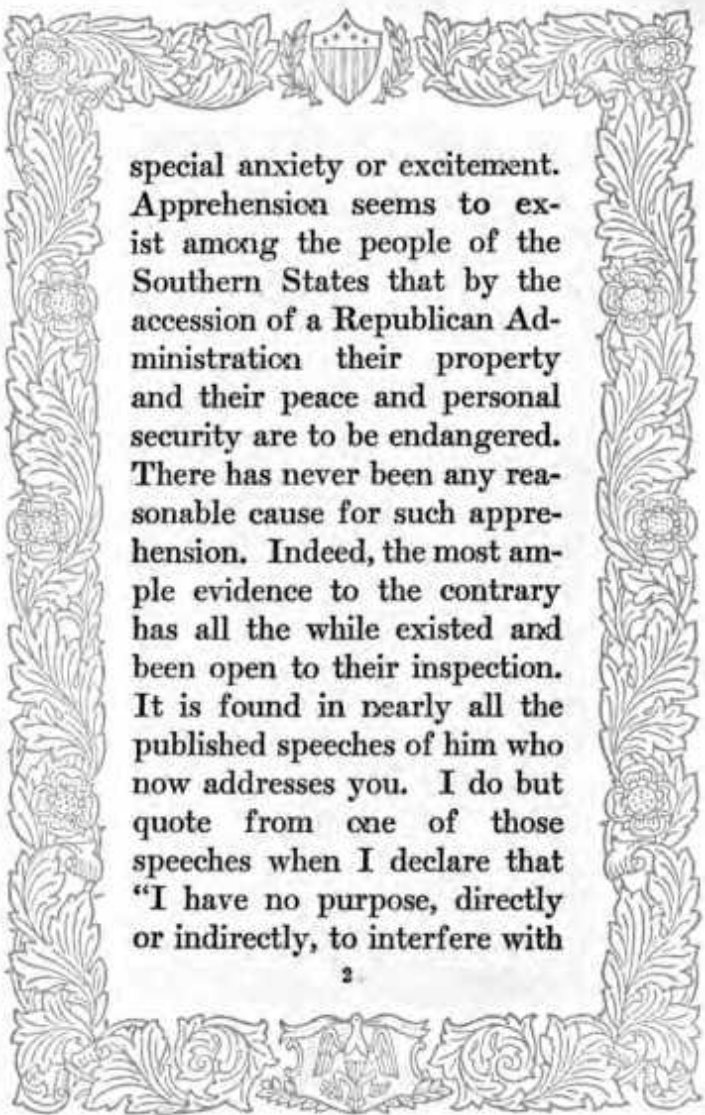
LINCOLN'S FIRST
INAUGURAL ADDRESS

DELIVERED ON THE
4TH OF MARCH, 1861

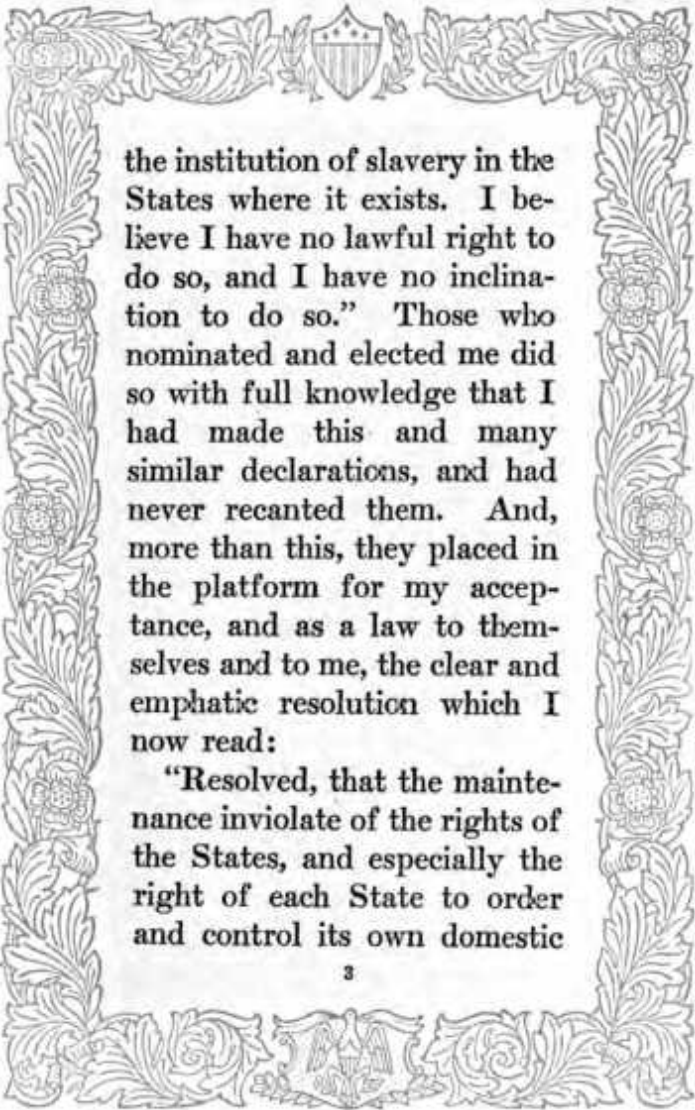
*Fellow-Citizens
of the United States:*

In compliance with a custom as old as the Government itself, I appear before you to address you briefly, and to take in your presence the oath prescribed by the Constitution of the United States to be taken by the President "before he enters on the execution of his office."

I do not consider it necessary at present for me to discuss those matters of administration about which there is no

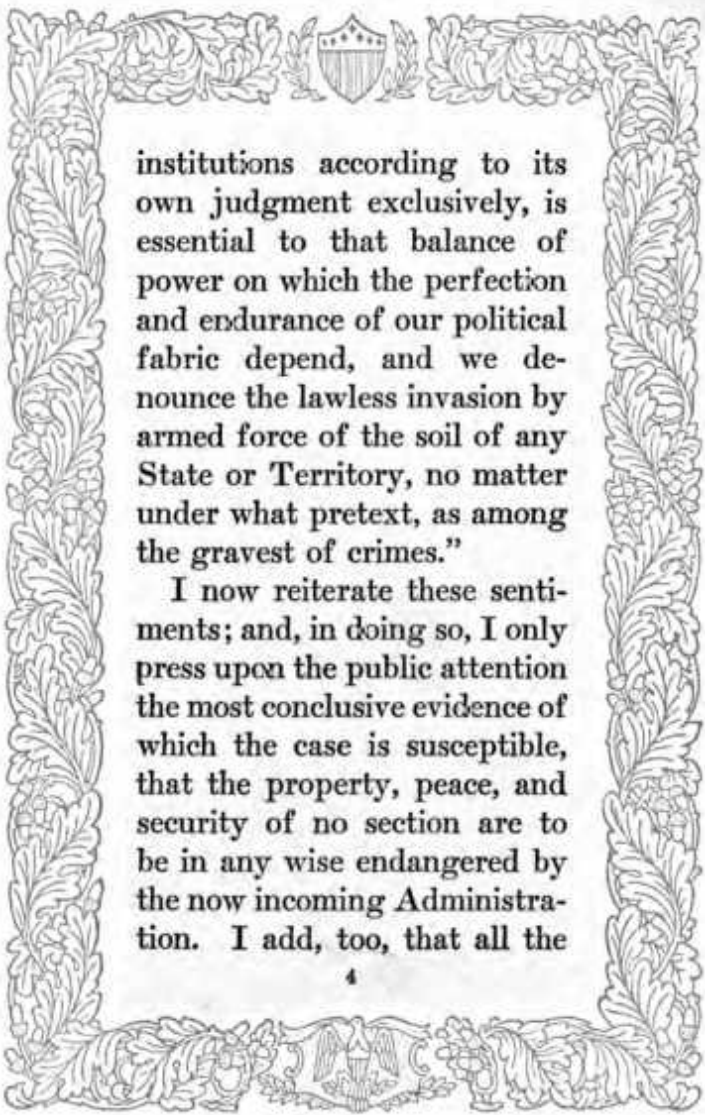
A decorative border surrounds the text, featuring floral and heraldic motifs. At the top center and bottom center, there are shields with stars and stripes, flanked by laurel wreaths. The sides of the border are filled with intricate floral and leaf patterns.

special anxiety or excitement. Apprehension seems to exist among the people of the Southern States that by the accession of a Republican Administration their property and their peace and personal security are to be endangered. There has never been any reasonable cause for such apprehension. Indeed, the most ample evidence to the contrary has all the while existed and been open to their inspection. It is found in nearly all the published speeches of him who now addresses you. I do but quote from one of those speeches when I declare that "I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with

A decorative border surrounds the text, featuring floral and heraldic motifs. At the top center is a shield with stars and stripes, flanked by laurel branches. At the bottom center is an eagle with wings spread, also flanked by laurel branches. The sides of the border are filled with repeating floral and leaf patterns.

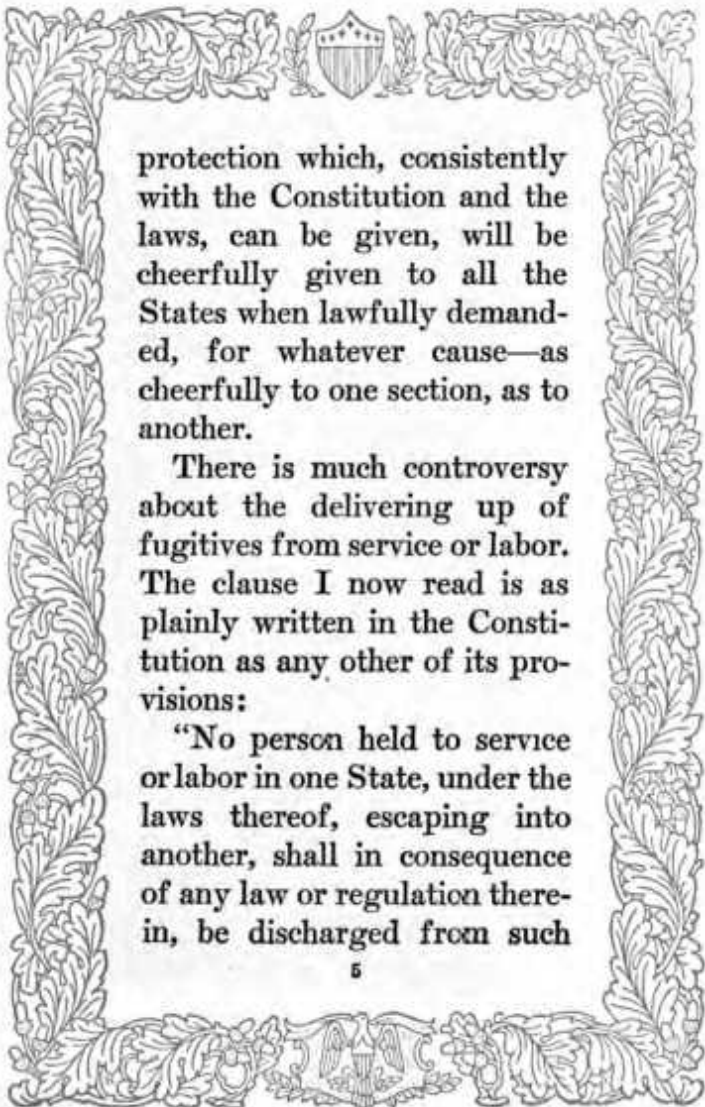
the institution of slavery in the States where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so." Those who nominated and elected me did so with full knowledge that I had made this and many similar declarations, and had never recanted them. And, more than this, they placed in the platform for my acceptance, and as a law to themselves and to me, the clear and emphatic resolution which I now read:

"Resolved, that the maintenance inviolate of the rights of the States, and especially the right of each State to order and control its own domestic



institutions according to its own judgment exclusively, is essential to that balance of power on which the perfection and endurance of our political fabric depend, and we denounce the lawless invasion by armed force of the soil of any State or Territory, no matter under what pretext, as among the gravest of crimes."

I now reiterate these sentiments; and, in doing so, I only press upon the public attention the most conclusive evidence of which the case is susceptible, that the property, peace, and security of no section are to be in any wise endangered by the now incoming Administration. I add, too, that all the



protection which, consistently with the Constitution and the laws, can be given, will be cheerfully given to all the States when lawfully demanded, for whatever cause—as cheerfully to one section, as to another.

There is much controversy about the delivering up of fugitives from service or labor. The clause I now read is as plainly written in the Constitution as any other of its provisions:

“No person held to service or labor in one State, under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such