

## ANNA ELIZABETH DICKINSON AND THE CIVIL WAR: FOR AND AGAINST LINCOLN <sup>1</sup>

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Anna Elizabeth Dickinson was an oratorical prodigy who, during the Civil War, inspired a war-weary North at one of the periods of its deepest gloom, forwarded the abolition crusade during the moments of the realization of its aims, and pleaded the cause of the Republican Radicals during the days of their rise to power.

A Quaker girl, Anna Dickinson was born in Philadelphia in 1842, descended from Friends who had settled in Maryland in the seventeenth century.<sup>2</sup> Her merchant father had been a friend of Whittier and an ardent member of the Liberty party. He died when Anna was two, leaving his wife, three sons, and two daughters in straitened circumstances. For a short time Anna attended the Friends' Free School in Philadelphia, but she was forced to find employment in order to help support the family. At the age of seventeen she tried her hand at teaching school; the experience was neither extensive nor happy. The next year she secured a position in the Philadelphia mint. But Anna did not confine her energies to teaching or to weighing coins; already she had begun to develop her one significant talent, oratory.

In January, 1860, at a meeting of the Association of Progressive Friends,<sup>3</sup> Anna Dickinson made her first public utterance,

<sup>1</sup> This article is based on a doctoral dissertation entitled "Anna Elizabeth Dickinson and the Civil War" presented to the University of Illinois in 1941.

<sup>2</sup> The material on Anna Dickinson's early years is negligible. The following has been used in preparing this paragraph: *Who's Who in America*, VI, 1910-1911, p. 520; *New York Times*, October 25, 1932; unidentified newspaper clipping, May 23, 1889, citing *Seranton Truth* [n. d.], Scrapbook, Anna E. Dickinson Manuscripts, Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress, Washington; *Boston Times*, November 10, 1880, Scrapbook, Dickinson MSS. The Dickinson MSS. were received by the Division of Manuscripts, according to the accession card, on May 5, 1933, less than a year after Miss Dickinson's death, "in five trunks (four very small, fifth about twice as large)." The collection is composed of letters, scrapbooks of newspaper clippings, manuscript lectures and plays, photographs, and various items of memorabilia covering the period, roughly, 1860 to 1920.

<sup>3</sup> This organization was founded in 1854 in Chester County, Pennsylvania, to oppose the conservative stand of the majority of Quakers. Arthur C. Cole, *The Irrepressible Conflict 1850-1865* (New York, 1934), p. 257.

vigorously denying a man's assertion of woman's inferiority.<sup>4</sup> During the following months she gained growing renown for her forthright speaking at various Quaker and anti-slavery meetings in and around her native city. In October, 1861, she participated in the annual meeting of the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society, and there she made a contact of inestimable value to her future career. William Lloyd Garrison, one of the demi-gods of the abolition circle in which Anna moved, was present and was impressed by the "remarkable oratorical fluency" of the young Quakeress.<sup>5</sup> In conversation Garrison expressed to Anna his conviction that her future was bright; he promised to help her if she should ever come to New England.<sup>6</sup>

If she had insured her future by the impression of her oratory upon Garrison, Anna cut the ties of her past with another speech toward the end of 1861. Shortly after the battle of Ball's Bluff, Anna gave evidence of her readiness for armchair military criticism. "Future history will show," ran the tenor of her glib prediction, "that this battle was lost not through ignorance and incompetence, but through the treason of the commanding general, George B. McClellan. . . ."<sup>7</sup> The rash impertinence of such a condemnation forced the director of the mint to release Anna from her job.<sup>8</sup> Thus it was that she became compelled to consider making oratory her profession. Remembering Garrison's suggestion, Anna wrote to him asking his assistance in arranging some lectures in New England.<sup>9</sup> Garrison generously complied, responding that he had secured for Anna an engagement before the famous Boston Twenty-Eighth Congregational Society and a series of speeches in various Massachusetts towns under the auspices of the state Anti-Slavery Committee.<sup>10</sup>

The times were ripening for this girl of nineteen with her passionate belief in emancipation and her winning oratorical

<sup>4</sup> *New York Times*, October 25, 1932; *Boston Times*, November 10, 1880, Scrapbook, Dickinson MSS.

<sup>5</sup> Garrison to Mrs. Helen E. Garrison, October 29, 1861, William Lloyd Garrison Manuscripts, Boston Public Library.

<sup>6</sup> Anna Dickinson to Garrison, March 16, 1862, Garrison MSS.

<sup>7</sup> Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Matilda Joslyn Gage, and Ida Husted Harper, eds., *History of Woman Suffrage* (6 vols., New York, 1881-1922), II, 41-2.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*; Anna Dickinson to Garrison, March 16, 1862, Garrison MSS.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Garrison to Anna Dickinson, March 22, 1862, Dickinson MSS.

power. After months of war, with steadily mounting casualty lists, with general replacing general, the war seemed no nearer a conclusion than when it had begun. The elections of 1862 were shortly to express the dissatisfaction in a way so tangible as almost to cost the administration its majority in the House. Northern public opinion, under the influence of Republican Radical propaganda, was swinging toward an acceptance of the themes Anna was reiterating. With so much to bemoan, the northern people were ready to welcome opportunities to wax enthusiastic, and the enthusiasm was likely to be excessive. "They do mistake," averred one newspaper, "who do think we want all argument in our public speeches now. We want Peter the Hermit, to preach crusades."<sup>11</sup> For northerners of radical bent, who believed in the emancipation of the slaves as a war aim, one stimulus to enthusiasm was provided by the appearance on New England's rostrums of Anna Dickinson. Because she was a girl and not a venerable sage, she was welcomed not as Peter the Hermit but as Joan of Arc.

The spectacle of a young lady upon the lecture platform, as assured as any man of her right to discuss the burning questions of the day, acted like a magnet. Her appearance on the rostrum was striking. Anna was slender; her short brown hair rippled in waves over her head and tossed like a mane when she spoke; her face was round, her nose Grecian, her chin determined, and her grey eyes expressive.<sup>12</sup> Newspaper reporters debated among themselves whether she was "beautiful" or merely "handsome" and "prepossessing." Anna began her lecturing career garbed in plain Quaker costume, grey dress with white surplice. When she first visited New England she was dressed in "a style half-way between that of Quakerism and the world."<sup>13</sup> As Anna's fortunes rose, she abandoned Quaker simplicity to become a lady of fashion.

Anna spoke extemporaneously, possessing a strong contralto

<sup>11</sup> Unidentified clipping, Scrapbook, Dickinson MSS.

<sup>12</sup> Anna Dickinson's appearance and oratorical methods are discussed in the following: *Philadelphia Press*, February 28, 1861, March 26, 1862, May 5, 1863; *Chicago Daily Tribune*, November 5 and 11, 1863; *Boston Post*, February 12, 1864; *New York National Anti-Slavery Standard*, March 4, 1865; passport, January 13, 1876, Dickinson MSS. The Dickinson MSS. contain several contemporary photographs.

<sup>13</sup> Lillie Buffum Chace Wyman and Arthur Crawford Wyman, *Elizabeth Buffum Chace, 1806-1899, Her Life and Its Environment* (2 vols., Boston, 1914), I, 235.

voice and the habit of distinct enunciation. Though her gestures were wooden, her intense earnestness while speaking, her emotional self-immersion in her subject, absorbed all but the most critical in her audiences. Her greatest oratorical talent was the sarcastic scorn with which she flayed any opponent of the principles she supported.

The address which Anna brought to New England in the spring of 1862 was labeled by the opposition press a rehash of the traditional abolition arguments. The judgment was accurate. Bred in that school, Anna spoke for its tenets. She approached all American history, of the past as of the moment, with the fixed idea of the moral evil of slavery. Her convictions were entirely emotional, distilled from the pages of abolition journals and tracts and from the lips of abolition orators and friends. The saints, the oppressed Negroes and the abolitionists who sought their welfare, were to be wept over and cheered. The devils, the southern slavocracy and their northern ally, the Democratic party, were to be hooted at and damned. Even President Lincoln was a stock character in Anna's addresses: when his policies were good in her eyes, she pictured him as very, very good; when his acts were bad, she denounced him as horrid. In the spring of 1862, Lincoln's annulment of General Hunter's proclamation freeing the slaves in his department led Anna to criticize the President publicly as being "not so far from . . . a slave-catcher after all," and privately she wrote him down as "an Ass . . . for the Slave Power to ride."<sup>14</sup>

These sentiments Anna proclaimed in Massachusetts and in other parts of New England from mid-April into June, 1862.<sup>15</sup> Her audiences, nearly all arranged by the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, were favorably predisposed to the emotions she expressed. More important to Anna's success was the fact that she was young, striking, animated, and earnest. As her oratorical orbit enlarged, her fame preceded her. Her audiences assembled, wanting to be impressed by the fervor of the prodigy, the prophetess. And those who came in this spirit dispersed, convinced that they had heard a Joan of Arc indeed.

<sup>14</sup> Boston *Liberator*, June 6, 1862; Anna Dickinson to Susan Dickinson, May 27, 1862, Dickinson MSS.

<sup>15</sup> Dickinson MSS.; Boston *Liberator*, March 28-June 6, 1862, *passim*.

Such a fascinating and eloquent figure was bound to appeal to the Radical Republican politicians. It was Benjamin Franklin Prescott, chairman of the New Hampshire Republican state committee, who took Anna from the anti-slavery lecture platform to the political stump for the 1863 spring campaign in New Hampshire. The 1863 elections were watched closely by those interested in the political scene to determine whether or not the serious trend of 1862 away from Republican banners would continue. In New Hampshire, the Republican candidate for governor was an abolitionist railroad promoter, James A. Gilmore; his platform condemned slavery as the cause of the war and lauded the recent emancipation proclamation.<sup>16</sup> The Democratic standard-bearer was Ira A. Eastman, a former member of the national House and of the state supreme court, who ran on a platform condemning Lincoln's arbitrary acts and proclaiming the Constitution as it was and the Union as it had been.<sup>17</sup>

Anna Dickinson delivered over twenty speeches for the Republican cause, most of them in small towns.<sup>18</sup> Other abolitionists helped stump the state, but Anna's audiences were the largest granted any speaker during the campaign.<sup>19</sup> Prescott counselled Anna on what to say, though his advice was a repetition of what she had been saying.<sup>20</sup> She accused the Democrats of pro-rebel sympathies and declared all their generals incompetent. She scorned the inconsistency of the Democratic slogan, the Constitution as it is and the Union as it was, in view of Democratic advocacy of the Crittenden Compromise. She encouraged the nervous mothers of soldiers and pleaded for the use of Negro legions to combat the foe.

The Democrats won a plurality of the votes cast on March 10, but the late appearance of a third candidate threw the selection

<sup>16</sup> *Manchester Democrat and American*, January 8, 1863; *New York National Anti-Slavery Standard*, January 10, 1863.

<sup>17</sup> Ansel Wold, comp., *Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1927* (Washington, 1928), p. 931; *Concord New Hampshire Patriot and State Gazette*, December 10, 1862.

<sup>18</sup> Prescott to Anna Dickinson, February 10, 11, 12, 15, 18, 20, 25, March 4, 5, 6, and 8, 1863, Dickinson MSS.; various clippings in Scrapbooks, Dickinson MSS.

<sup>19</sup> *Philadelphia Press*, March 24, 1863; *Concord Independent Democrat*, March 19, 1863, Scrapbook, Dickinson MSS.

<sup>20</sup> Prescott to Anna Dickinson, February 11 and 12, 1863, Dickinson MSS.; *Boston Evening Transcript*, February 2, 1863.

of the governor into the legislature, where the Republicans managed to squeeze Gilmore into the governor's chair.<sup>21</sup> None of the blame for the lack of a clear-cut Republican victory was to be laid on the shoulders of the young lady who had done her utmost to secure such a triumph. In fact, the Republican leaders, even the governor-elect, lauded Anna for her efforts and indicated that the results would have been more favorable to the Republicans had she spoken in every town in the state.<sup>22</sup> The sentiment, at least, cost nothing. Perhaps the greatest indication of the esteem in which Anna was held by the Republican leaders was her initiation into the Union League at Concord. "You are the only woman who belongs to the Union League, proper," Prescott wrote the young recruit.<sup>23</sup> What Anna was paid in money for her activities the records do not reveal, though the sum was neither so large as Anna had hoped, nor so ample as Prescott had desired to give.<sup>24</sup> Praised and paid in New Hampshire, Anna was ready to take the stump in Connecticut.

The Connecticut election, because of the clear-cut issues, was considered a perfect political barometer.<sup>25</sup> The Republicans chose as their candidate for governor the incumbent, William A. Buckingham, an ardent administration supporter who favored vigorous war against the Confederacy. The Democrats chose an ex-governor, Colonel Thomas H. Seymour, whose record of opposition to administration policies was marked. The Democrats boasted of an easy victory; the Republicans were not sanguine of success. Both sides girded themselves for a violent, bitter campaign. The Republicans imported an array of stump speak-

<sup>21</sup> The vote was Eastman, 32,833; Gilmore, 29,035; Harriman, 4,372. *The American Annual Cyclopaedia and Register of Important Events of the Year 1863* (New York, 1870), p. 681.

<sup>22</sup> Lebanon *Granite State Free Press*, March 11, 1863, Scrapbook, Dickinson MSS.; Concord *Independent Democrat*, March 19, 1863, Scrapbook, Dickinson MSS.; Prescott to Anna Dickinson, April 2, 1863, Dickinson MSS.; Anthony, Stanton, Gage, and Harper, eds., *History of Woman Suffrage*, II, 43-4.

<sup>23</sup> Prescott to Anna Dickinson, March 25 and May 11, 1863, Dickinson MSS.

<sup>24</sup> Prescott to Anna Dickinson, May 11, 1863, Dickinson MSS. "I have learned since," he explained, "that they [the campaign committee in Connecticut] got \$10,000 from Boston which was promised to New Hampshire. Had we had that, we could have paid our speakers more liberally, and we ought by rights to have had it, as New York had promised to take care of Connecticut."

<sup>25</sup> Horace Greeley, *The American Conflict: A History of the Great Rebellion in the United States of America, 1860-'65* (2 vols., Hartford, 1866), II, 486.

ers, including three "governors," several generals, and a young woman destined to usurp the major share of acclaim.<sup>26</sup>

The initiative for including Anna Dickinson on the roster of speakers probably lay with Prescott of New Hampshire, although when the suggestion was made the Connecticut state committee hesitated at permitting a woman to enter the lists.<sup>27</sup> After Anna's first address in Hartford on March 24, the committee changed heart like converts at a revival, and indeed the situations had kindred elements.<sup>28</sup> Anna's eloquence impressed others the same way. The young editor of the *Hartford Press*, Charles Dudley Warner, gave print to the general Republican opinion: "... [T]his woman is sent from on high to save the state."<sup>29</sup>

Hundreds were turned away from the crowded halls where Anna spoke in her fortnight of campaigning.<sup>30</sup> The state committee was so impressed with Anna's campaigning in the provinces that they chose her to give the windup address on April 4 in the state capital.<sup>31</sup> Her appeal was directed for the most part to Irish laborers, and her subject matter varied somewhat from her customary stark generalizations, evidencing Republican coaching. Anna undertook to convince the laborers that Democratic free trade was certain to bring Old World starvation to America, that exemptions in the conscription law really were designed to benefit the poor,<sup>32</sup> that a Confederate victory meant

<sup>26</sup> Unidentified clippings, Scrapbook, Dickinson MSS. The "governors" were Alexander W. Randall, Wisconsin governor, 1859-1861; Joseph A. Wright, Indiana governor, 1849-1857; and Alexander J. Hamilton, reconstruction governor of Texas.

<sup>27</sup> Prescott to Anna Dickinson, March 23, 1863 (two letters), April 2, 1863, Dickinson MSS.; Mrs. J. Olmsted to Prescott, March 23, 1863, Dickinson MSS.

<sup>28</sup> The Connecticut state committee, when Anna's name was first suggested, stated that it was "opposed to ladies taking so conspicuous a position, as that of speaker to promiscuous assemblies. . . ." Mrs. J. Olmsted to Prescott, March 23, 1863, Dickinson MSS. After Anna's Hartford address, the committee chairman, J. W. Batterson, telegraphed Prescott: "Miss Dickinson spoke to a crowded house last night. She has no equal in Connecticut. People wild with enthusiasm." Cited, Prescott to Anna Dickinson, March 25, 1863, Dickinson MSS.

<sup>29</sup> *Hartford Press* [March 25, 1863], Scrapbook, Dickinson MSS.

<sup>30</sup> *Hartford Daily Courant*, March 25 to April 5, 1863; *Hartford Press* [March 25 to April 5, 1863], Scrapbook, Dickinson MSS.

<sup>31</sup> *Hartford Daily Courant*, April 6, 1863.

<sup>32</sup> The logic on this point ran: "The exemptions are all for the laboring and poor men. The law says you shall not pay more than \$300; it does not say how much less. In case the poor man is drafted and cannot pay his \$300, the Secretary of War can decide how much less he shall pay." *Ibid.*

an end to the laboring man's dream of free homes, schools, churches in the West.

Buckingham squeezed through to victory over Seymour,<sup>33</sup> and Anna Dickinson was given the lion's share of the credit by the abolitionists and Republican Radicals. The general sentiment was reflected in the words of Wendell Phillips: "And the Goliath of Connecticut Copperheads has been killed not by a stripling but by a Girl."<sup>34</sup> Serenaded by bands, showered with watches, revolvers, ornaments — and currency — she was likened not only to Joan of Arc, but in various attributes to Portia, Pythia, Evangeline, Juliet, Cassandra.<sup>35</sup> The opposition journals, finding Anna a force to be contended with, were not to be outdone at name-calling and replied with "spiritual medium," "political witch," "parrot," and "crowing hen."<sup>36</sup>

The popularity gained from the Connecticut campaign opened to Anna the great lecture halls of the North, and she reaped a greenback profit from her fame: Springfield, Boston, New York, Philadelphia.<sup>37</sup> In New York such worthies as Henry Ward Beecher, Theodore Tilton, and Horace Greeley flanked the self-confident speaker on the platform.<sup>38</sup> Beecher introduced Anna to the audience which filled Cooper Union, and afterwards he wrote a mutual friend that the crowd "cried, laughed & cheered enough to satisfy even . . . rash enthusiasts. . . ." <sup>39</sup> In Philadelphia Anna learned that sometimes a prophet is honored in his own land, especially if the prophet is vigorous, feminine, and loudly enough acclaimed elsewhere. Anna used the opportunity to abuse a fellow-Philadelphian, General McClellan, with even more than her usual bitter sarcasm, following the line laid down by the committee on the conduct of the war.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Buckingham had 41,032 ballots to 38,395 for Seymour. *American Annual Cyclopaedia . . . of the Year 1863*, p. 330.

<sup>34</sup> Cited in a letter, Joseph Ricketson to Anna Dickinson, May 30, 1863, Dickinson MSS.

<sup>35</sup> Anthony, Stanton, Gage, and Harper, eds., *History of Woman Suffrage*, II, 45; *Boston Liberator*, May 8, 1863; *Springfield Weekly Republican*, April 25, 1863; *Hartford Press* [March 25, 1863], Scrapbook, Dickinson MSS.

<sup>36</sup> *Hartford Times*, March 30, 1863; *New York World*, May 4, 1863; *New York Herald*, February 16, 1865; [*New York Mercury*, May 3 or 4, 1863], Scrapbook, Dickinson MSS.

<sup>37</sup> *Springfield Weekly Republican*, April 18 and 25, 1863; *New York Times*, April 22, 1863; *Philadelphia Inquirer*, May 5, 1863.

<sup>38</sup> *Springfield Weekly Republican*, April 25, 1863.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*; Beecher to Belle Hooker, n. d., Dickinson MSS.

<sup>40</sup> *Philadelphia Inquirer*, May 5, 1863.



In the autumn of 1863, rejecting an offer from the Ohio Republicans, Anna employed her talents in the coal-mining regions of her native state of Pennsylvania in the campaign to re-elect Governor Andrew Curtin. The Republicans went to great lengths to stump the state with Generals Butler and Logan; Governors Johnson of Tennessee, Pierpoint of Virginia, Bradford of Maryland; and many prominent journalists.<sup>41</sup> Amidst this array, Anna Dickinson did not shine forth as in Connecticut, though she undertook a strenuous fortnight of day-in, day-out campaigning in the southeastern part of the state, and thirteen thousand copies of one of her speeches were printed for circulation.<sup>42</sup> "Pennsylvania for the last five or six weeks has been a protracted anti-slavery meeting," in the over-sanguine phrase of the *National Anti-Slavery Standard*.<sup>43</sup> And the crusade, aided by a huge influx of questionable soldier votes, gave Curtin the victory.<sup>44</sup>

From Pennsylvania Anna hurried to Buffalo to share with Curtin in a plea for a Republican victory in the Empire State.<sup>45</sup> The Republican state committee had invited her to remain longer in New York,<sup>46</sup> but she declined because of a previous invitation to share in the great fair sponsored by the Chicago Sanitary Commission.<sup>47</sup>

Anna Dickinson was approaching the climax of her career. In a year and a half she had risen from obscurity to national prominence. She had been hailed as little less than a redeemer by the emancipationist circle. She had rendered significant service to the Republican Radicals. She had forced the Democratic opposition to take notice of her as a figure requiring refutation and

<sup>41</sup> Philadelphia *Press*, September 9, 24, and 28, 1863.

<sup>42</sup> Philadelphia *Press*, September 29 and October 8, 1863; W. D. Kelley to Anna Dickinson, August 8 and 20, 1863, Dickinson MSS.

<sup>43</sup> New York *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, October 24, 1863.

<sup>44</sup> The vote was Curtin 269,496; Woodward 254,171. *American Annual Cyclopaedia . . . of the Year 1863*, p. 740; T. Harry Williams, *Lincoln and the Radicals* (Madison, Wisconsin, 1941), p. 293.

<sup>45</sup> Buffalo *Morning Express*, October 30 and November 2, 1863.

<sup>46</sup> Chas. Jones [chairman of the New York Republican state committee] to Anna Dickinson, telegram, n. d. [1863], Dickinson MSS.

<sup>47</sup> Chicago *Evening News*, November 4 and 5, 1863; Chicago *Daily Tribune*, November 5, 8, and 10, 1863. The Democratic press censured Anna for receiving exorbitant fees for the Chicago addresses, since the purpose of the fair was to raise money for soldier relief. Anna paid her own expenses, received \$600 for two lectures. *Ibid.*, November 18, 1863.

abuse. She had discovered that oratory paid, and paid handsomely. There was but one event remaining to fill her cup to overflowing, an appearance before the celebrities at Washington.

Through the arrangements of W. D. Kelley, fellow-campaigner in New Hampshire and Connecticut, congressman from Philadelphia, fatherly mentor, Anna was invited to deliver a lecture in the hall of the House of Representatives in Washington. Nearly a hundred congressional signatures graced the document of invitation, Vice-President Hamlin and Speaker Colfax signing first.<sup>48</sup> Kelley, accompanied by one of Lincoln's secretaries, J. G. Nicolay, brought the invitation to Anna's home.<sup>49</sup>

On the evening of January 16, 1864, the hall of the House of Representatives was crowded with as distinguished an audience as the capital could provide: senators, cabinet members, Supreme Court justices, representatives, sharing space with reporters, diplomats, and war celebrities.<sup>50</sup> The scene reminded one reporter of Macaulay's description of the trial of Warren Hastings.<sup>51</sup> Escorted to the rostrum by Hamlin and Colfax, Anna was once more likened to Joan of Arc in the introduction by the Vice-President.<sup>52</sup>

Anna began to discuss the war policies before those by whom the policies were formed. Her "words for the hour" were not unfamiliar to the Radical Republicans who, in truth, had invited her to present their own ideas to them anew, for her caustic castigations, her touching tales of soldier heroism, her symbolic allusions all pointed the same moral she had stressed in her stump speeches. Northern Democrats were cowards, not brave enough to follow their former allies into rebellion; displaced from power in 1860, the Democrats were like "the mass of revolting life" on the bottom of a "stone suddenly upheaved

<sup>48</sup> Members of the Senate and House to Anna Dickinson, December 16, 1863, Dickinson MSS. Among the signers were Charles Sumner, John Sherman, Henry Wilson, S. C. Pomeroy, Benjamin F. Wade, Thaddeus Stevens, James A. Garfield, J. H. Lane, Robert C. Schenck, George W. Julian, Oakes Ames, B. Gratz Brown, Owen Lovejoy, and J. G. Blaine. The invitation and Anna's letter of acceptance were printed in the *Washington Daily National Intelligencer*, January 16, 1864.

<sup>49</sup> Susan Dickinson to Anna Dickinson, December 23, 1863, Dickinson MSS.

<sup>50</sup> *Washington Daily Morning Chronicle*, January 19, 1864.

<sup>51</sup> *St. Louis Daily Missouri Democrat*, January 25, 1864.

<sup>52</sup> *New York Independent*, January 21, 1864; *Washington Sunday Chronicle*, January 17, 1864.

from its long resting-place.”<sup>53</sup> Emancipation was a fact, but it was not enough; the brave Negro should have a soldier’s full pay, a man’s rights, and a constitutional amendment to protect him from the Supreme Court.

Anna was in the midst of a violent attack on Lincoln’s amnesty proclamation and his lenient plan of reconstruction announced the previous month, when the President and his wife entered the hall. Lincoln sat with bowed head as the self-possessed orator finished her criticisms: “Let no man prate of compromise. Defeated by ballots, the South had appealed to bullets. Let it stand by the appeal. There was no arm of compromise long enough to stretch over the sea of blood, and the mound of fallen heroes, to shake hands with their murderers.”<sup>54</sup> The audience applauded Anna’s sentiment and the courage she exhibited in proclaiming it, while an enthusiast in the balcony wildly waved a flag over her head.<sup>55</sup>

Anna continued:

This was pre-eminently a people’s war. It was guided by the man of the people, who had never been behind the great heart of the people. We had done much, and all was hopeful before us. Granted that we had much yet to do, we had the man to complete the grand and glorious work, *and that work was left for his second term of office.*<sup>56</sup>

Taken completely by surprise by Anna’s forthright advocacy of Lincoln’s re-election, the audience responded with “volleys of cheers.”<sup>57</sup> “The careworn face of the President dropped lower still. . . .”<sup>58</sup>

Why Anna Dickinson took this stand in view of her fervent opposition to Lincoln’s moderate policies cannot be determined. Perhaps it was at the suggestion of an unwise friend of the President; perhaps Lincoln’s presence startled Anna into the statement as a sort of apology for her criticisms; perhaps, in view of Anna’s temperament, the words were inserted on the spur of the moment by the young lady, warmed and flattered by

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> New York *Independent*, January 21, 1864; Washington *Sunday Chronicle*, January 17, 1864.

<sup>55</sup> New York *Evening Post*, January 18, 1864.

<sup>56</sup> Washington *Daily National Republican*, January 18, 1864. The italics are those of the newspaper.

<sup>57</sup> New York *Evening Post*, January 18, 1864.

<sup>58</sup> New York *Independent*, January 21, 1864.

the President's entrance, with the possible hope that such a blessing coupled with her criticism might help work a desirable change in his policies. Both the President and the Radicals, foreseeing their battle over the issue of reconstruction, must have felt considerable embarrassment.

If there were disgruntled feelings among the Radicals in private, they were not allowed to mar the public praise. Senator S. C. Pomeroy, already at work nursing a boom for the Republican presidential nomination of Salmon P. Chase, pronounced Anna's speech "an *entire & complete* success!"<sup>59</sup> The exuberant Charles Dudley Warner wrote to Anna: "You have conquered Washington — you have taken the capital — . . . I only wish you could take Richmond as easily. . . . To see Uncle Abraham at your feet, and Mrs. Abe at your head, and to bring down the House in the way that you did."<sup>60</sup> The *Washington Chronicle* soared to the very summit of eulogy.<sup>61</sup> Praise of the young lady was accompanied by a sense of wonder that her feat could have been performed at all. Two years before, the Cincinnati *Daily Gazette* pointed out, "neither man nor woman could have made [such an address] without peril of the tar-barrel or the gallows anywhere within two-thirds of the Country's limits."<sup>62</sup>

All was not praise. A London correspondent was amazed and perplexed that Congress should permit in its halls such an exhibition by a "crazy Jane in a red jacket. . . ." <sup>63</sup> Anna's forthright advocacy of Lincoln's re-election was in exceedingly poor taste, commented the *Daily Missouri Democrat*.<sup>64</sup> In the House of Representatives the wrath of the Democrats flared forth. Representative Edgerton of Indiana introduced a formal resolution criticizing Anna's partisan "political rhapsody," given under semi-official sanction, as designed "to influence grave measures of legislation now before this House."<sup>65</sup>

Anna Dickinson's support of the President was bound to be fleeting in view of her radical beliefs, and, as she journeyed

<sup>59</sup> J. G. Randall, *The Civil War and Reconstruction* (Boston, 1937), p. 609; Pomeroy to Anna Dickinson [January 17], 1864, Dickinson MSS.

<sup>60</sup> Warner to Anna Dickinson, January 19, 1864, Dickinson MSS.

<sup>61</sup> *Washington Daily Morning Chronicle*, January 18, 1864.

<sup>62</sup> Cincinnati *Daily Gazette*, January 25, 1864.

<sup>63</sup> London *Telegraph* [n. d.], cited, Boston *Daily Courier*, March 7, 1864.

<sup>64</sup> St. Louis *Daily Missouri Democrat*, January 25, 1864.

<sup>65</sup> *Congressional Globe*, 38 Cong., 1 Sess. (1863-1864), Part 1, pp. 258, 261.

into the Midwest to fulfill invitations to repeat the Washington lecture, she omitted her plea for Lincoln's re-election and increased the venom of her attack upon his policies.<sup>66</sup> In Chicago, for example, the newspapers treated fully the content of her address but reported no endorsement of the re-election of the President.<sup>67</sup> The antagonism toward Lincoln's reconstruction policy bore an increased bitterness. The President had usurped the right of the legislature in offering terms of reconstruction, Anna maintained, and he had exhibited gullibility in proposing an oath of loyalty to which ex-rebels should swear. "The President is a lawyer, and a Western one at that; it is a wonder that he does not know that the oaths of such men are but as the idle wind."<sup>68</sup> Anna in the West was so far distant from the President that, unrestrained by his presence, she could criticize sharply his policies which, even to his face, she had opposed.

Less than two months after the Washington address, Anna wrote her friend Whitelaw Reid a full confession of her error in bestowing her blessing upon Lincoln. Reid had told Anna in January that the day would come when she would repent her words; in early February he chided her for persisting in her "wickedness."<sup>69</sup> On March 12 from Erie, Anna avowed her error.<sup>70</sup> In replying, Reid did not exult, stating that many others had made "the same mistake" and cautioning:

But let me beg of you *not* to "make efforts to set" yourself "straight,"

<sup>66</sup> Anna received invitations from all over the North to repeat the lecture, including requests from the legislatures of Pennsylvania, Ohio, and New York. Members and officers of the senate and house of Pennsylvania to Anna Dickinson, January 28, 1864; members of the Ohio legislature and citizens of Columbus to Anna Dickinson, February 8, 1864; members of the New York legislature to Anna Dickinson, March 9, 1864; Dickinson MSS. Before traveling into the Midwest, Anna repeated the address at various eastern cities, including Philadelphia, New York, and Boston. In New York, after a plea for the utter extinction of slavery, Anna remarked with great ill taste and indubitable lack of truth: "You can afford to cheer that, for Mr. LINCOLN cheered it at Washington." *New York Times*, February 3, 1864; *Philadelphia Press*, January 28, 1864; *Boston Daily Courier*, February 12, 1864.

<sup>67</sup> *Chicago Times*, *Chicago Post*, *Chicago Daily Tribune*, March 1, 1864. Before reaching Chicago on her western trip, Anna had made addresses in Cincinnati, Columbus, Indianapolis, and St. Louis. *Cincinnati Daily Gazette*, February 17, 1864; Susan Dickinson to Anna Dickinson, March 12, 1864, Dickinson MSS.; *Indianapolis Daily State Sentinel*, February 18 and 19, 1864; *St. Louis Daily Missouri Democrat*, February 22 and 23, 1864.

<sup>68</sup> *Chicago Daily Tribune*, March 1, 1864.

<sup>69</sup> Reid to Anna Dickinson, February 5, 1864, Dickinson MSS.

<sup>70</sup> Anna's letter is referred to in Reid's reply, April 3, 1864, Dickinson MSS.

whether in Washington or elsewhere. It can do no good now for *you* to get tangled in the strifes of personal politics, & it may do much harm. Mr Lincoln's popularity with the masses is established, — but what means it no longer does good to inquire, — & attacks on him only serve to inflame the ardor of his friends.<sup>71</sup>

Nonetheless, having reversed her attitude toward Lincoln's candidacy, Anna disregarded Reid's advice for cautious conduct and exhibited the crusading zeal of a new convert. Armed with her overpowering sense of self-righteousness, she went to Washington in late March or early April and secured an interview with President Lincoln.<sup>72</sup> At Cooper Union in New York on April 19, Anna concluded an address with a "graphic sketch" of her interview.<sup>73</sup> At Music Hall in Boston on April 27, she elaborated on this theme. The opposition Boston *Daily Courier* reported the episode. Anna ridiculed the presidential person — "his figure — his dress — his old coat, out at the elbows which look[ed] as if he had worn it three years and used it as a paper wiper — his stocking limp and soiled." During the interview the President remarked: "That reminds me of a little story." "I didn't come to hear stories," she replied, "I can read better ones in the papers any day than you can tell me." She told Lincoln his plan of reconstruction was "all wrong; as radically bad as can be." He ended the conversation, according to Anna's account, by remarking, "All I can say is, if the radicals want me to lead, let them get out of the way and let me lead." "When he said that," Anna told her Boston audience, "I came out and remarked to a friend — I have spoken my last word to President Lincoln."<sup>74</sup>

The *Courier* in reporting this incident of *lèse majesté* undoubtedly barbed its phrases against Anna. But there was another version of the interview with Lincoln than that expounded by Anna at Boston. One of Anna's early mentors, J. M. McKim, renowned Pennsylvania abolitionist, learned that she had described the interview to a mutual friend in words that resembled the Boston narration.<sup>75</sup> Representative W. D. Kelley had accom-

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>72</sup> The date of this interview has not been established, though it must have occurred in the time between Anna's arrival in Philadelphia in late March after her western tour and April 19 when in New York she mentioned the interview.

<sup>73</sup> New York *Tribune*, April 20, 1864.

<sup>74</sup> Boston *Daily Courier*, April 28, 1864.

<sup>75</sup> McKim to William Lloyd Garrison, May 3, 1864, Garrison MSS.

panied Anna to the conversation with Lincoln, and, according to Anna's account, he likewise was unfavorably impressed. To McKim this seemed difficult to believe, so he wrote to Kelley requesting his version. Kelley replied: "That interview helped me to the conclusion in which I abide, that 'Abraham Lincoln is the wisest radical of us all.' . . . [T]he impression made on my mind by the interview was much to Mr. Lincoln's advantage."<sup>76</sup>

McKim enclosed a copy of Kelley's explanation in a letter to William Lloyd Garrison.<sup>77</sup> Two days later, on the basis of "testimony not to be questioned," McKim wrote Garrison elaborating on Anna's role in the interview with the President. If the Boston account resembled the private version Anna had told in Philadelphia, he avowed, it was "a story 5/6ths of which was without a shadow of foundation in fact . . . [,] the most . . . mischievous perversion of the truth that I have almost ever heard." He continued:

In that interview A. E. D. said but very few words. She was more a witness than a party. What she did say was "fool"ish according to her own acknowledgment at the time. She burst into tears — struck an attitude and begged Mr L. to excuse her for coming there to make a fool of herself. The President was paternally kind and considerate in what he said to her, and her requital is most — inexcusable.<sup>78</sup>

It is true that the growing schism in the Republican party already was being reflected by the abolitionists, as was made vividly evident by the debate at the annual meeting of the American Anti-Slavery Society in New York on May 10 and 11.<sup>79</sup> The issue was whether or not to support Lincoln. Wendell Phillips led the anti-Lincoln forces, and Garrison headed the faction that still believed the President would be converted to the entire abolitionist platform. Anna's Boston attitude seemed to place her in the Phillips camp, whereas McKim sided with Garrison. Further, W. D. Kelley and Anna were not on friendly terms at the time Kelley reported to McKim, a breach not healed for many months.<sup>80</sup> Therefore, it is possible that the Kelley-McKim version of the conversation between the President and Anna may

<sup>76</sup> Kelley to McKim (copy), May 1, 1864, Garrison MSS.

<sup>77</sup> McKim to Garrison, May 3, 1864, Garrison MSS.

<sup>78</sup> McKim to Garrison, May 5, 1864, Garrison MSS.

<sup>79</sup> New York *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, May 14 and 21, 1864.

<sup>80</sup> Kelley to Susan Dickinson, February 21, 1865, Dickinson MSS.

have been somewhat biased against her. Nonetheless, it seems a more likely account than that delivered by Anna from the Boston platform, which, even if true, would not have been to Anna's credit. The exhibition of a determined young lady petulantly scolding the President demonstrates that adulation as the Radicals' darling had not developed in her a sense of propriety and respect.

As the campaign of 1864 developed, Anna's correspondence was full of political gossip. She had been aware of the abortive Chase movement headed by Senator Pomeroy.<sup>81</sup> Radical friends like Whitelaw Reid and B. F. Prescott, the New Hampshire politician, had expressed their hope that the Republican convention at Baltimore might be postponed.<sup>82</sup> Although Frémont had been one of Anna's idols, she refused to act on the implications of her Boston address and join Wendell Phillips in supporting him after his nomination at Cleveland. She considered the step. In June she wrote a young friend: "Whatever I may have said of Mr. Phillips in the past, his attitude today is godlike."<sup>83</sup> But by late August she was definitely antagonistic. To a Chicagoan who desired to know her attitude, she replied categorically that she had never been, was not, nor ever expected to be in favor of Frémont for the presidency.<sup>84</sup>

In the midsummer gloom resulting from lack of military success, Lincoln's pocket veto of the Wade-Davis bill, and the resignation of Chase, Anna sat at home reading her mail. It contained attacks upon Lincoln as savage as her own at Boston. The suffragist, Susan B. Anthony, before Lincoln's renomination, labeled his statement that he could not immediately free all the slaves a "Canting lie," and bemoaned the fact that "the vast masses of the people really believe the man *honest*."<sup>85</sup> After Lincoln's renomination at Baltimore in June, Miss Anthony grieved over the adherence to Lincoln of abolitionists like Garrison, for the sake of expediency: "We read no more of the good

<sup>81</sup> Whitelaw Reid to Anna Dickinson, April 3, 1864, Dickinson MSS.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*; Prescott to Anna Dickinson, April 10, 1864, Dickinson MSS.

<sup>83</sup> Cited, Lillie B. Chace to Lucy F. Lovell, July 2, 1864, Wyman and Wyman, *Elizabeth Buffum Chace*, I, 263. As late as August, Frederick Douglass, the Negro orator, reported that a letter from Anna sounded as if she might back Frémont. Lillie B. Chace to Anna Dickinson, August 21, 1864, Dickinson MSS.

<sup>84</sup> Anna Dickinson to L. U. Reavis, August 29, 1864, Illinois Miscellaneous Manuscripts, Chicago Historical Society.

<sup>85</sup> Susan B. Anthony to Anna Dickinson, April 14, 1864, Dickinson MSS.



old doctrine ‘*of two evils choose neither.*’”<sup>86</sup> Anna agreed: she avowed “faith neither in his [Lincoln’s] ability nor his integrity”; she saw in the President “neither principle nor a wise policy.”<sup>87</sup>

Anna was aware of the hope of certain Radicals to replace Lincoln as Republican nominee at a proposed Cincinnati convention.<sup>88</sup> But her mail contained letters expressing the view which Miss Anthony so earnestly condemned, letters acknowledging that expediency seemed to dictate support of Lincoln’s renomination and re-election. A week before the Baltimore convention, B. F. Prescott, the Radical politician, was convinced that Lincoln’s renomination was “the best and wisest course” because “[t]here is no other man who could run as well. . . .”<sup>89</sup> An abolitionist friend saw the Lord’s hand at work in the situation: “[T]he Wise One means to make the *people* of America save their own cause, & so he is going to give them a President once more who jogs along as fast as they do — no faster, no slower.”<sup>90</sup> Theodore Tilton expressed the dilemma as he saw it: “This party [the Republican] . . . cannot be *wholly* trusted — but every other party is to be wholly distrusted.”<sup>91</sup>

The midsummer Republican gloom was dispelled by the military success of Farragut at Mobile and Sherman at Atlanta. Republican hopes were raised by the Chicago convention of the Democrats, their so-called peace plank, and their nominee, McClellan. The period of the peace gestures was past, and the Democratic platform, even though repudiated by McClellan, sounded traitorous in the ears of Republicans cheering the fall of Atlanta, and offered a worse of two evils for Radicals to oppose in trooping back to Lincoln as the lesser. The problem for the Radicals was further simplified by Frémont’s withdrawal from the lists on September 22. Yet as late as mid-September, one of Anna’s correspondents wrote that Sumner still had hopes of a Radical substitution for Lincoln, and White-law Reid confessed: “. . . I know one young person, who does

<sup>86</sup> Susan B. Anthony to Anna Dickinson, July 1, 1864, Dickinson MSS.

<sup>87</sup> Lillie B. Chace to Lucy F. Lovell, July 2, 1864, Wyman and Wyman, *Elizabeth Buffum Chace*, I, 263.

<sup>88</sup> Theodore Tilton to Anna Dickinson, September 3, 1864, Dickinson MSS.

<sup>89</sup> Prescott to Anna Dickinson, May 29, 1864, Dickinson MSS.

<sup>90</sup> C. G. Ames to Anna Dickinson, May 13, 1864, Dickinson MSS.

<sup>91</sup> Tilton to Anna Dickinson, July 13, 1864, Dickinson MSS.

not mean to get on the stool of repentance, & who will vote for Mr Lincoln, if at all, very much as he has swallowed pills.”<sup>92</sup>

Anna Dickinson, though feeling the same about Lincoln, had climbed the stool of repentance early in September with a letter to the *Independent*. Anna denied that she had ever favored Frémont for president, though she admitted that the previous winter she had believed other men superior to Lincoln. She had hoped, too, that a postponement of the Republican convention would force the Democratic party “to show its hand before the loyalists played a card. . . .” That was all past, Anna declared, and no duty remained for patriots than “the most earnest, persevering work” in behalf of the Republican nominees. Anna avowed: “I shall not work for Abraham Lincoln; I shall work for the salvation of my country’s life. . . . First save the life of the nation; then we can carry our leader to a higher plane, a broader and nobler work than any he has yet accomplished.”<sup>93</sup>

Thus Anna climbed aboard the Republican band wagon along with many other abolitionists and Radicals, not to re-elect a man, but to perpetuate a party in power. Anna’s main contributions to the campaign were addresses in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia.<sup>94</sup> Inasmuch as McClellan had been her particular *bête noire* throughout the war, Anna’s campaign speeches consisted primarily of vicious, biased attacks on the Democratic candidate and his platform. Her consideration of the opposition platform suffered in part from the same lack of breadth evident in other Republican orators who denounced the peace plank without recognizing that the plank proposed peace only if the Union be restored, and that McClellan, campaigning on his war record, had emphasized vigorous prosecution of the war. The cohorts of McClellan were “traitors, cowards, and ignoramus,”<sup>95</sup> and the Democratic standard-bearer was “a soldier and yet seeing no way of ending a traitor’s war save by a disgraceful compromise; an officer, wearing the uniform and car-

<sup>92</sup> Lillie B. Chace to Anna Dickinson, September 19, 1864; Reid to Anna Dickinson, September 11, 1864; Dickinson MSS.

<sup>93</sup> New York *Independent*, September 8, 1864. The letter was widely reprinted: Philadelphia *Press*, September 9, 1864; New York *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, September 10, 1864; Boston *Liberator*, September 16, 1864.

<sup>94</sup> Boston, October 25, Boston *Daily Journal*, October 26, 1864; New York, October 29, New York *World*, October 31, 1864; Philadelphia, November 2, Philadelphia *Press*, November 3, 1864.

<sup>95</sup> New York *World*, October 31, 1864.

rying the arms of his country, and yet wearing them only to injure and stab that country to the heart.”<sup>96</sup>

On the other hand, the Republican allies were “education, refinement, character, art, science, truth, justice, liberty, God.”<sup>97</sup> Their leader — but Anna refrained from devoting much comment to Lincoln. In an address lasting an hour and a half, she mentioned Lincoln’s name but once.<sup>98</sup> The strictures she had laid upon the President in the past, she did not intend to withdraw, Anna proclaimed, yet she would still assert that never was there in the past nor would there be in the future an act equal in “divine splendor” to that of freeing three and a half million slaves.<sup>99</sup>

The Republican triumph ended the uneasy truce between Lincoln and the Radicals. Anna Dickinson rounded the circle and joined the Radicals’ continuing campaign for a relentless prosecution of the war and a vindictive reconstruction policy. In a New York address on February 14, 1865, Anna voiced the Radical position:

We want war — bitter, unrelenting war. . . . We want war that means war — the confiscation of the property of the leaders of this most infamous rebellion. No amnesty for the leaders of the rebellion — no weak pardon for robbers, cutthroats and murderers. Then, having whipped our enemies until they cannot stand, and they cannot sit, and cannot do anything but lie down in the dust under our feet; having done that we will give them terms — generous terms — most generous terms for themselves, for us and for the world. Wo [sic] will give them just such terms as General Grant gave General Pemberton at Vicksburg — unconditional surrender.<sup>100</sup>

The very idea of the Hampton Roads conference, between Lincoln and the Confederate commissioners, was anathema to Anna Dickinson. Alluding sarcastically to Lincoln’s “good-nature and lack of dignity,” she condemned the conference as a disgrace both to the President and the whole nation.<sup>101</sup>

Peace commissioners from the capital of the rebellion came within our lines on a peace mission, and we were told that the President in his

<sup>96</sup> *New York Tribune*, October 31, 1864.

<sup>97</sup> *Philadelphia Press*, November 3, 1864.

<sup>98</sup> *Boston Daily Journal*, October 26, 1864.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>100</sup> *New York Herald*, February 15, 1865.

<sup>101</sup> *Portland Transcript*, February 18, 1865.

sovereign capacity went down to confer with them—to confer with these robbers, cutthroats and murderers, and who deserved nothing at our hands save the rope and the nearest tree when they crossed our lines. . . . This man has no right to treat as to terms of peace. Give me, if you please, a definition of the sovereign capacity of this servant of mine and yours and I will be greatly obliged to you.<sup>102</sup>

Glancing at the future, she saw it as either “radiant with glory, or tarnished with dishonor.”<sup>103</sup> The planks of her platform of glory were the bestowal of confiscated rebel land upon the freed slave, the poor white, and the ex-soldier, and the granting of franchise to the Negro. Such a course, Anna insisted, was necessary not only for the well-being of the blacks but also for the security of the loyal whites. Bolstered by the votes of the “ignorant, depraved and imbruted” Irish, who were infinitely less capable of exercising the franchise than were the noble freedmen, the Copperhead Democrats, North and South, would restore slavery to the country, and the war would have been fought in vain.<sup>104</sup>

Upon the assassination of President Lincoln, Anna Dickinson joined the mourners and the eulogists with a rapidity and to a degree that seemed too abrupt an about-face in her attitude toward the martyred leader. Her address, entitled “He Being Dead, Yet Speaketh,” proved that Anna had no comprehension of the spirit of the departed leader that was to be the basis of his greatness.<sup>105</sup> Her praise was lavish:

He was so true in life that a little child might read the record without wavering; so brave in the defense of right, and so loving to all. He never paltered with Eternal God for power. His life was work, and he never spoke against a foe. What a marvel that his nation stands chief mourner, and humanity weeps around his grave.<sup>106</sup>

He stood . . . as the high water mark of American justice, liberty and mercy. Let us imitate his glorious example of purity and patriotism, and labor, as he did, unselfishly, for the good of the race.<sup>107</sup>

<sup>102</sup> New York *Herald*, February 15, 1865.

<sup>103</sup> New York *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, March 4, 1865.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>105</sup> Anna delivered the address in Philadelphia, April 28, New York, May 10, and Washington, June 9. Philadelphia *Press*, April 29, 1865; New York *Evening Post*, May 11, 1865; Washington *Daily Morning Chronicle*, June 10, 1865.

<sup>106</sup> New York *Daily News*, May 11, 1865.

<sup>107</sup> Philadelphia *Inquirer*, April 29, 1865.

This was indeed eulogy from one who, a year before, had aped the President's gestures, ridiculed his clothes, and mocked his little stories. As Anna proceeded with her address, the words she put in Lincoln's mouth were not the words Lincoln had uttered. Mercy died when Lincoln fell, she proclaimed in unison with the Radicals, and stern justice must replace it. "Sneaking, child-stealing slavery" actually had assassinated Lincoln, and mercy toward the leaders of the defeated slavocracy was "a monstrous thought," "a willful crime"; "[h]anging should be their deserts."<sup>108</sup> Booth had taken a life and paid for it with his own; there was a murderer more vile than Booth, and he was General Lee.

He has no excuse for what he has done. He stood a traitor to his country, a breaker of oaths, and carrying on his soul the maiming or murder of half a million souls. . . . The power of his brain and will has been more than armies and navies of the South. We owe to him, more than to any other, our tens of thousands slain in battle. When he goes from this tribunal to a higher sixty thousand souls will be his accusers, and send him down to his doom.<sup>109</sup>

Anna Dickinson was sincere in the praise she bestowed on the martyred President, but the earnestness of her soul was lavished upon her condemnations. Her persuasive voice was to continue at the disposal of the Radicals. After a brief visit to Richmond to see the capital of the Confederacy and to survey the neighboring battlefields,<sup>110</sup> Anna faced the reconstruction era with two major addresses. In "The Record of the Democratic Party during the Rebellion" she was to refurbish her array of epithets against the Copperheads to damn their past as a warning for the future.<sup>111</sup> In "Flood Tide" she was to extend her plea for more rights for Negroes and less rights for those who had been members of the Confederacy.<sup>112</sup> Anna was to join her voice with those of the Radicals of Congress in attacks against President Johnson, exhibiting the same sarcasm and bitterness she had once bestowed upon Lincoln. The Civil War, for Anna Dickinson, had not ended.

<sup>108</sup> New York *Daily News*, May 11, 1865.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>110</sup> Richmond *Republic*, June 19, 1865; Rufus Ingalls to Col. E. V. Sumner, June 26, 1865, Dickinson MSS.

<sup>111</sup> Philadelphia *Press*, October 4, 1865.

<sup>112</sup> Boston *Daily Journal*, October 13, 1865.

Anna Dickinson's contribution was not of the type that tips delicately balanced scales; her importance lies in the fact that she was an example, a strikingly colorful example, of a general trend. With the possible exception of the 1863 Connecticut campaign, she decisively influenced the outcome of no event during the war. She was, in Wendell Phillips' phrase, "the young elephant sent forward to try the bridges to see if they were safe for older ones to cross."<sup>113</sup> This is true to the extent that the Radicals, for reasons of expediency, accepted abolition tenets as their policy, and Anna was an abolitionist from the beginning, though not a pace-maker of abolition doctrine. Anna was a tool of the Radicals in that her principles largely coincided with the principles they increasingly adopted, and they could benefit by the votes and opinion that she could capture with the novelty of her sex and youth and the spellbinding of her fiery words. The opposition journals were partly correct in dubbing Anna a parrot, for she absorbed what she read, casting the thoughts into her own dramatic oratory. Prescott had given Anna advice before she took the stump in New Hampshire in 1863, but the advice coincided perfectly with her own sentiments as she had expressed them in New England. Her Connecticut campaign speeches dealt with wage rates and the conscription act, topics new to her oratory. There seems no reason to doubt that these references, as well as the sophistry to justify conscription in the minds of the working class, were contributions of the Connecticut Republicans to Anna's political ideas. Nonetheless, Anna's capriciousness made her an undependable tool. This is illustrated by her advocacy of Lincoln's re-election in her Washington speech. It is likewise apparent in the tone of the counsel Prescott wrote her during the late summer of 1864, which was not in the nature of a command given to a subordinate eagerly awaiting orders, but was a plea to an equal whose judgment was independently determined. Capitalizing on the spirit of vindictiveness which war arouses, Anna Dickinson's meteoric sweep across the North received a tremendous ovation, indicating the sentiment many in the North most wanted to applaud. In her devious political course are indicated the interrelationships between abolitionist and Radical, are reflected the kaleidoscopic aspects of the Republican party during the Civil War.

<sup>113</sup> Anthony, Stanton, Gage, and Harper, eds., *History of Woman Suffrage*, II, 42.