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★ Isaac Markens

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ABRAHAM LINCOLN

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE

R. E. LEE CAMP, No. 1
CONFEDERATE VETERANS

AT

RICHMOND, VA., OCTOBER 29, 1909

BY

Hon. GEORGE L. CHRISTIAN

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Impressions

Abraham Lincoln

*An address delivered before R. E. Lee Camp, No. 1, on October 29, 1909,
by Hon. George L. Christian, and published by order of the Camp.*

"Out of the old fieldes,
Cometh al this new corne."—*Chaucer.*

COMRADES OF LEE CAMP, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN :

By a resolution adopted by the unanimous vote of this Camp, I have been asked to deliver an address on the life and character of Abraham Lincoln, late President of the United States. Believing the request a reasonable one to be preferred by the Camp and that such a request from the Camp to one of its members is equivalent to a command, I have, with some hesitation, and with greater distrust of my ability to meet the expectations of the Camp, undertaken the fulfilment of the uncongenial and perhaps unprofitable task thus imposed upon me. I wish to state in the outset that what I shall say on this occasion will be said in no spirit of carping criticism, with no desire to do injustice to my remarkable subject, and will be as free from sectional prejudice and passion as one who has suffered as I have, by the conduct of Mr. Lincoln and his followers, can make it; and I shall also strive to say what I do say *solely in the interest of the truth of history.*

"*Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free,*" is a maxim of the Divine Teacher, and it embodies a principle which should be the "guiding star" of every writer of history. The *truth* about the cause, the character and conduct of the leaders in the great conflict from '61 to '65 is all that we of the South ask, or have a right to ask, *and we should be satisfied with nothing less than the truth about these.*

Whenever the good character of a person is put in issue, the party avouching that good character challenges the opposite side to show, by all legitimate means, the contrary of the fact thus put in issue. In the war between the States the character and conduct of the leaders on both sides were necessarily involved, and especially was this true of the character and conduct of the official heads of the respective sides. Last year was the centennial of the birth of Jefferson Davis, the civic leader and official head of the Southern Confederacy; the South duly celebrated that centennial and avouched to the world the conduct and the character of their representative head and his leadership, and we think every one who loves the memory of the Confederacy, and of our great struggle to maintain it, ought to feel gratified and satisfied with the result.

This year is the centennial of the birth of Abraham Lincoln, the civic leader and official head of the United States during the existence

of the Confederacy, and the North has, with singular temerity, as it seems to us, thrust this character and conduct before the world, some of them even claiming that he was the "greatest, wisest and godliest man that has appeared on the earth since Christ." (See *Facts and Falsenesses*, 4.)

This being true, and since some Southern writers have united in these, it seems to us, unmerited adulations of this man, no apology would seem to be necessary for enquiring as to the real basis of the claims of these eulogists of Mr. Lincoln to the admiration, veneration and alleged greatness now attempted to be heaped upon him.

In this discussion we would, if we could do so and speak the truth, gladly adopt the Roman maxim, to speak nothing but good of the dead. But since some of Mr. Lincoln's nearest and dearest friends (?) have not seen fit, or been able to do this, surely a Southern writer should not be criticized or judged harshly for repeating what some of these friends, who apparently knew him best and loved him most, and who tell us they are only telling what they know to be true of this remarkable man, have to say about him, his character and his conduct.

That the career of Mr. Lincoln was one of the most remarkable recorded in history, and that he must have had some element of character which made that career possible, no one will deny. But that he was the pious and exemplary Christian, the great and good man, "the prophet, priest and king," the "Washington," the "Moses," the "Second to Christ," now being portrayed to the world by some of his prejudiced and intemperate admirers, we unhesitatingly deny, and we think it our duty, both to ourselves and to our children, to correct some of the false impressions attempted to be made about this man's character and career, let the criticisms or consequences be what they may.

We have no right to do so, and we do not object, in the least, that Mr. Lincoln shall be put forward as the representative man and ideal of the North; but we do object to, and protest against, his being proclaimed to the world as the exemplar and representative of the South and its people. We proclaim Washington, Henry, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, Jefferson Davis, Robert E. Lee, "Stonewall" Jackson, Joseph E. and Albert Sydney Johnston, Wade Hampton, Jeb Stuart, and such like men, as our heroes and ideals and as the exemplars for our children and our children's children.

REASONS FOR LINCOLN'S FAME.

There are three reasons which we think in great measure account for the erroneous conceptions and extravagant portrayals now being made of Mr. Lincoln, viz.:

(1) The cause of which he was the official head has, temporarily at least, been deemed a success.

(2) The manner of his death was such as to shock all right-thinking people and to create sympathy in his behalf; for, like the great Roman

Germanicus, it may well be said, he was most fortunate in the circumstances of his death.

(3) He was the first President of the Republican party—the party which has practically dominated this country ever since Mr. Lincoln's first election.

The acts and doings of that party during the time he was its official head, many of which were illegal, unconstitutional, tyrannical and oppressive, will be judged, to a degree at least, by the character and conduct of the man who held that official position; and the representatives of that party have, therefore, hesitated at nothing to try to make it appear that their official leader was a great and good man, and that, therefore, they were justified in following his leadership.

In the course of this address we shall say but little of Mr. Lincoln's private life, and shall refer to it only to show that much of it was utterly at variance with the life of the man now being portrayed to us; and we shall certainly not criticise his humble and obscure birth and origin, but, on the contrary, we extol him for being able to rise so far as he did above these, believing, as we do, with Pope, that

"Honor and shame from no condition rise,
Act well your part; there all the honor lies."

As to the cause of which he was the official head being successful, we will only remark that it was certainly successful in preventing the establishment of the Southern Confederacy within certain territorial limits; but whether successful in any other sense, remains yet to be determined. The *Washington Post*, of August 14, 1906, said:

"Let us be frank about it. The day the people of the North responded to Abraham Lincoln's call for troops to coerce sovereign States, the Republic died and the Nation was born."

And a Massachusetts man has written of the Confederates that—

"Such character and achievement were not all in vain; that though the Confederacy fell as an actual physical power, it lives eternally in its just cause—the cause of constitutional liberty."

MANNER OF LINCOLN'S DEATH AND THE MURDER OF MRS. SURRETT.

As to the manner of Mr. Lincoln's death, aside from the abhorrence with which we regard and denounce every form of assassination, we have to remark: (1) That it really exalted his name and fame as nothing before it happened had done, or, in our opinion, could have done; and (2) as dastardly, as cowardly and cruel as that deed was, it was, in our opinion, not so dastardly, cowardly or cruel, and no more criminal in the eye of the law, than the murder of Mrs. Surratt, an innocent woman, by Andrew Johnson, Edwin M. Stanton, Joseph Holt, David Hunter and their wicked and cowardly associates. The act of Booth was that of a frenzied fanatic, taking his life in his own hands, and attempting to avenge his people's

wrongs by ridding the world of the man he believed to be the author of those wrongs; the act of Johnson, Stanton and others in murdering Mrs. Surratt was the deliberate and criminal act of cruel, cowardly men, perpetrated on a helpless, harmless and innocent woman, through instrumentalities and forms as cruel as any that were ever devised in the darkest ages of the world, but by methods and at a time when the perpetrators knew that their cowardly bodies were safe from all harm. (See *DeWitt's Assassination of Lincoln*, p. 92, *et seq.*) This woman was tried and convicted by a military commission, of which General David Hunter was the president. It was pointed out to the so-called court, by that great lawyer, Reverdy Johnson, that such a tribunal had no jurisdiction to try the case, and it was afterwards expressedly so decided in *Ex parte Milligan*, 4th Wallace. But this commission convicted this woman, who even such a creature as Ben Butler said was perfectly innocent, thereby bringing themselves within the principle stated by Lord Brougham in a famous case, when he said :

“When the laws can act, every other mode of punishing supposed crimes is itself an enormous crime.”

EXAGGERATIONS ABOUT LINCOLN AND APOTHEOSIS AFTER HIS ASSASSINATION.

In all our reading, we know of no man whose merits have been so exaggerated and whose demerits have been so minimized as have those of Abraham Lincoln. Indeed, this course has been so insistently and persistently pursued by some Northern writers that it amounts to a *patent perversion of the truth, and a positive fraud on the public.*

General Don Piatt, an officer in the Federal Army, a man of character and culture, says :

“With us, when a leader dies, all good men go to lying about him. * * * Abraham Lincoln has almost disappeared from human knowledge. I hear of him, and I read of him in eulogies and biographies, but I fail to recognize the man I knew in life.” (*Facts and Falsehoods*, p. 36-7; *Men Who Saved the Union*, p. 28.)

William H. Herndon, Mr. Lincoln's close friend and law partner for twenty years, who, we are informed, wrote a biography of him in 1866, which is said to have been bought up and suppressed, simply because it told the unvarnished truth, said :

“I deplore the many publications pretending to be biographies of Lincoln, which teemed from the press so long as there was hope for gain. Out of the mass of these works, of only one (Holland's) is it possible to speak with any degree of respect.” (*Facts and Falsehoods*, p. 37; *Lamon's Preface*, iii.)

And Ward Hill Lamon, who was Mr. Lincoln's close friend and at

one time his law partner, who was especially selected by Mr. Lincoln to accompany him on his midnight journey to the capital when he was to be inaugurated, who was appointed by him marshal of the District of Columbia, who was probably his closest and most confidential friend and adviser during his whole official life, says immediately after his assassination, "there was the fiercest rivalry as to who should canonize him in the most solemn words, who should compare him to the most sacred character in all history. He was prophet, priest and king. He was Washington. He was Moses. He was likened to Christ the Redeemer. He was likened to God. (*Facts and Falsehoods*, p. 9; *Lamon*, 312.)

Again says Lamon :

"Lincoln's apotheosis was not only planned but executed by men who were unfriendly to him while he lived, and that the deification took place with showy magnificence some time after the great man's lips were sealed in death. Men who had exhausted the resources of their skill and ingenuity in venomous detraction of the living Lincoln, especially during the last years of his life, were the first when the assassin's bullet had closed the career of the great-hearted statesman to undertake the self-imposed task of guarding his memory—not as a human being endowed with mighty intellect and extraordinary virtues, *but as a god.*" (*Lamon's Recollections of Lincoln*, p. 169.)

And again he says :

For days and nights after his assassination "it was considered treason to be seen in public with a smile on the face. Men who spoke evil of the fallen chief, or ventured a doubt concerning the ineffable purity and saintliness of his life, were pursued by mobs, were beaten to death with paving stones, or strung up by the neck to lamp posts." (*Lamon*, 312.)

We shall attempt to show you that this whole apotheosis business not only took place, as Lamon says, after Mr. Lincoln's assassination, and because of the manner of his death, but why it was begun then, and has continued until this day.

We have already said that Mr. Lincoln was the first President of the Republican party. He was the official head of that party through the most terrible and trying conflict recorded in history. The leaders of that party were, and are still, in need of a real hero. They knew that they and their conduct would be judged by the character and conduct of their official head. The country was stunned and dazed by the assassination of this leader—the first assassination of the kind in its history. The South was prostrate and helpless at the feet of the North, and its leaders charged with complicity in that awful crime. That time, of all others, afforded the leaders of the Republican party—always quick and bold in action—the opportunity to deify this its first President; and those leaders, with a

stroke of audacity and genius never surpassed, seized upon that opportunity and manufactured a false glamour with which they have surrounded the name and fame of their chosen head calculated to deceive the "very elect"; and they have so persisted in their efforts in this direction, from that day to this, that the lapse of nearly half a century has failed to dispel the delusions manufactured at that time and amid these surroundings by these people. Mr. Lincoln is credited with the saying:

"You can fool some of the people all the time; you can fool all the people some of the time, but it is impossible to fool all the people all the time."

We believe the time is coming, if it is not already here, when the scales will fall from the eyes of a great many in regard to the true history and character of this chosen hero of the North.

CHARACTERISTICS OF LINCOLN.

Of course, within the limits of this paper, we shall make no attempt to do more than to give some glimpses of the true character, characteristics and conduct of Mr. Lincoln, nor shall we attempt to follow his biographers in their details of the career and conduct of this enigmatical man.

Lamon says he was "morbid, moody, meditative, thinking much of himself, and the things pertaining to himself, regarding other men as instruments furnished to hand for the accomplishment of views which he knew were important to him, and therefore considered important to the public. Mr. Lincoln was a man apart from the rest of his kind. * * * He seemed to make boon companions of the coarsest men on the list of his acquaintances—low, vulgar, unfortunate creatures." * * * "It was said that he had no heart—that is, no personal attachments warm and strong enough to govern his passions. It was seldom that he praised anybody, and when he did, it was not a rival or an equal in the struggle for popularity and power." * * * "No one knew better how to damn with faint praise, or to divide the glory of another by being the first and frankest to acknowledge it."—(*Lamon*, pp. 480-1.) * * * "He did nothing out of mere gratitude, and forgot the devotion of his warmest partizans as soon as the occasion for their services passed."—*Id.*, p. 482. * * * "Notwithstanding his overweening ambition, and the breathless eagerness with which he pursued the objects of it, he had not a particle of sympathy with the great mass of his fellow-citizens who were engaged in similar struggles for place."—*Id.*, p. 483.

Now mark you, this is what Lamon, his closest friend, and most ardent admirer, has to say of the "make up" of Mr. Lincoln. Is this the stuff of which the world's greatest characters, heroes, martyrs, and the exemplars for our children are made? Surely it would seem not, and further comment is deemed unnecessary.

LINCOLN NOT A CHRISTIAN.

One of the commonest, and one of the most attractive, claims now asserted by the admirers of Mr. Lincoln is, that he was a pious man and a Christian. Lamon tells us after his assassination he was compared to the Saviour and Redeemer of mankind. One of his reverend admirers compares his assassination to the crucifixion of our Lord; and since both of these events occurred on Good Friday, the writer says "*even the day was fit.*" But since Mr. Lincoln's "taking off" was in a theater, it may be noted that this fanatical divine says nothing as to the *fitness of the place* at which this "taking off" occurred.

Another divine, in an oration delivered this year on the centennial anniversary of Mr. Lincoln's birth, begins it with the words:

"There was a man sent from God whose name was Abraham Lincoln."

He then speaks of him as being "like unto Melchizedek," and as the "*one great man, and mystery and miracle of the nineteenth century.*"

It seems to us that the real *mystery* here is the fact that any one anywhere should be so foolish in this enlightened age as to suppose he can make sensible people swallow any such twaddle, nonsense and sacrilege as this.

Herndon says of Mr. Lincoln's alleged Christianity:

"Lincoln was a deep-grounded infidel. He disliked and despised churches. He never entered a church except to scoff and ridicule. On coming from a church he would mimic the preacher. Before running for any office, he wrote a book against Christianity and the Bible. He showed it to some of his friends and read extracts. A man named Hill was greatly shocked and urged Lincoln not to publish it; urged it would kill him politically. Hill got this book in his hands, opened the stove door, and it went up in flames and ashes. After that Lincoln became more discreet, and when running for office often used words and phrases to make it appear that he was a Christian. He never changed on this subject; he lived and died a deep-grounded infidel." (*Facts and Falsehoods*, p. 53.) (See also *Lamon*, 489-493.)

Lamon says:

"Mr. Lincoln was never a member of any church, nor did he believe in the inspiration of the Scriptures in the sense understood by evangelical Christians." * * * "Overwhelming testimony out of many mouths, and none stronger than out of his own, place these facts beyond controversy." (*Lamon*, p. 486.) * * * "When he went to church at all, he went to mock, and came away to mimic." (*Id.*, p. 487.)

Lamon further says:

"It was not until after Mr. Lincoln's death that his alleged orthodoxy became the principal topic of his eulogists; but since then the effort on the part of some political writers and speakers to impress the public mind erroneously seems to have been general and systematic." (Id., 487.)

He then inserts the letters of a number of Mr. Lincoln's closest friends and neighbors, all of whom fully sustain his statements. One of these says:

"Lincoln was enthusiastic in his infidelity."

Another says:

"Lincoln went further against Christian beliefs and doctrines and principles than any man I ever heard. He shocked me." (*Id.*, 488.)

Another (Herndon) says:

"Lincoln told me a thousand times that he did not believe the Bible was a revelation from God as the Christian world contends." * * * "And that Jesus was not the Son of God." (*Id.*, 489.)

Another (Judge David Davis) says:

"He had no faith, in the Christian sense of the term." (*Id.*, 489.)

Lamon then quotes Mrs. Lincoln as saying:

"Mr. Lincoln had no hope and no faith, in the usual acceptance of those words." (*Id.*, 489.)

And Mr. Nicolay, Lincoln's private secretary, as saying:

"Mr. Lincoln did not, to my knowledge, in any way change his religious views, opinions or beliefs from the time he left Springfield to the day of his death." (*Id.*, 492.)

It seems to us that these statements from these sources ought to settle this question, and that it is wrong, and nothing short of an *outrage on the truth of history to assert* that Mr. Lincoln was, or ever claimed to be, a Christian; that such an assertion can only reflect on those who make it, and must bring upon them the application of the maxim, *falsus in uno falsus in omnibus*; for surely those who are so reckless as to misrepresent a fact of this nature will not hesitate to misrepresent any other fact that it suits them to misrepresent or to misstate.

CONTRADICTIONS OF CHARACTER.

We come now to consider some other phases of this strange man, his conduct and his character.

First. We think it can be safely affirmed that Mr. Lincoln was one of the most *secretive, crafty, cunning* and *contradictory* characters in all history, and therein lies, we believe, the true reason why the world now deems him great. In short, he and his unscrupulous eulogists have, for the time being, outwitted and deceived the public. Mr. Seward said his "cunning amounted to genius"; and if there ever was on this earth a judge of real cunning, William H. Seward was that man. The best evidence of the contradictions of his character is furnished by Holland, one of his most partizan admirers and biographers. Mr. Holland says, at page 241 :

"To illustrate the effect of the peculiarity of Mr. Lincoln's intercourse with men, it may be said that men who knew him through all his professional and political life have offered opinions as diametrically opposed as this, viz. : That he was a very ambitious man, and that he was without a particle of ambition; that he was one of the saddest men that ever lived, and that he was one of the jolliest men that ever lived; that he was very religious, but that he was not a Christian; that he was a Christian, but did not know it; that he was so far from being a religious man or Christian that the least said on that subject the better; that he was the most cunning man in America, and that he had not a particle of cunning in him; that he had the strongest personal attachments, and that he had no personal attachments at all, only a general good feeling toward everybody; that he was a man of indomitable will, and that he was a man almost without a will; that he was a tyrant, and that he was the softest-hearted, most brotherly man that ever lived; that he was remarkable for his pure-mindedness, and that he was the foulest in his jests and stories of any man in the country; that he was the wittiest man, and that he was only a retailer of the wit of others; that his apparent candor and fairness were only apparent, and that they were as real as his head and his hands; that he was a boor, and that he was in all essential respects a gentleman; that he was a leader of the people, and that he was always led by the people; that he was cool and impassive, and that he was susceptible of the strongest passions."

Now it seems to us, with all deference to the opinions of others, that any man who could play the chameleon and present to the world such contrasts and contradictions of character as are here described must be singularly devoid of the finest ingredients which are essential to real greatness, viz. : unwavering and steadfast devotion to principle and to duty and that uniform bearing towards his fellow-man which can only

lift those who have these characteristics into the atmosphere of true greatness.

Another of Mr. Lincoln's friends, a brother lawyer, having been asked to describe him, says:

"My opinion of him was formed by a personal and professional acquaintance of over ten years, and has not been altered or influenced by any of his promotions in public life. The adulations by base multitudes of a living, and the pageantry surrounding a dead President, do not shake my well-settled convictions of the man's mental calibre. Phrenologically and physiologically, the man was a sort of monstrosity. His frame was large, bony and muscular; his head was small and disproportionately shaped; he had large, square jaws; a large, heavy nose; a small, lascivious mouth; soft, tender, bluish eyes. I would say he was a cross between Venus and Hercules. I believe it to be inconsistent with the law of human organism for any such creature to possess a mind capable of anything great. The man's mind partook of the incongruities of his body. It was the peculiarities of his mental, and the oddity of his physical structure, as well as his head, that singled him out from the mass of men." (See *3 Herndon & Weik*, p. 584.)

Mr. Morse in the preface of his biography makes this very remarkable statement. He says:

"If the world ever settles down to the acceptance of any definite, accurate picture of him (Lincoln), *it will surely be a false picture. There must always be vague, indefinable uncertainties in any presentation of him which shall be truly made.*"

Is this the record of any other of the world's great heroes and leaders? Will any *accurate picture* of any one of them "surely be a false picture"? What does Mr. Morse mean? We confess we do not know.

We have heretofore referred to the fact that Mr. Lincoln was secretive, cunning, crafty and tricky, and certainly his course during his public life, as will be pointed out later on, fully sustains this view of his character. We have already noted what Mr. Seward had to say of this feature of his character. Herndon says:

"The first impression of a stranger, on seeing Mr. Lincoln walk, was that he was a tricky man." (*Facts and Falsehoods*, p. 54.)

The duplicity practiced by him in preventing the renomination of Hamlin, as described by Colonel McClure in "Lincoln and Men of War Times," is a striking illustration of his ability in this direction.

Stanton says:

"I met Lincoln at the bar and found him a low, cunning clown." (*Facts and Falsehoods*, p. 19.)

And several of his biographers make reference to his secretiveness, cunning and craftiness as among his chief characteristics.

OPINIONS OF CONTEMPORARIES.

But one of the best evidences of the real worth and true character of a man is shown by the estimation in which he was held by his contemporaries and those who were brought in daily contact with him. Up to the time of the assassination of Mr. Lincoln, several members of his cabinet were engaged in what Lamon calls "venomous detractions" of his character both as a man and as a statesman. Nor were these detractions by any means confined to his cabinet. Besides Seward, Stanton and Chase of the cabinet, Hamlin, Fremont, Sumner, Trumbull, Wade, Wilson, Thad. Stevens, Beecher, Henry Winter Davis, Greeley and Wendell Phillips were among those who did not hesitate to denounce and belittle him in every way in their power. Members of his cabinet were in the habit of referring to him as "the baboon at the other end of the avenue," and some senators referred to him as the "idiot of the White House." (*Facts and Falsehoods*, p. 9.) Lamon says:

"The opposition to Lincoln became more and more offensive.

The leaders resorted to every means in their power to thwart him.

This opposition continued to the end of his life." (*Idem*, p. 32.)

Nicolay and Hay say that—

"Even to complete strangers Chase could not write without speaking slightly of President Lincoln. He kept up this habit to the end of Lincoln's life. Chase's attitude toward the President varied between the limits of active brutality and benevolent contempt." (*Idem*, p. 12.)

Colonel McClure says:

"Outside of the cabinet, the leaders were quite as distrustful of President Lincoln's ability to fill the great office he held." (*Idem*, p. 32.)

And Charles Francis Adams (the elder), in his memorial address on Mr. Seward, says Mr. Lincoln was "selected partly on account of the absence of positive qualities," and "with a mind not open to the nature of the crisis."

And he further says:

"Mr. Lincoln (in his contact with Seward) could not fail to perceive the fact that whatever estimate he might put on his own natural judgment, he had to deal with a superior in native intellectual power, in extent of acquirement, in breadth of philosophical experience, and in the force of moral discipline. On the other hand, Mr. Seward could not have been long blind to the deficiencies of his chief in these respects." (See *Well's Reply to Adams*, p. 24.)

DOMINATED BY SEWARD AND STANTON.

And Joseph Medill, of the *Chicago Tribune*, wrote to Schuyler Colfax in 1862, saying:

"Seward must be got out of the cabinet; he is Lincoln's evil

genius. He has been President *de facto*, and has kept a sponge saturated with chloroform to Uncle Abe's nose all the while, except one or two brief spells." (*1 Bancroft's Seward*, p. —.)

The "*Pennsylvanian*" characterized Mr. Lincoln's first inaugural as a "tiger's claw concealed under the fur of Sewardism," and the "*Atlas and Argus*," of Albany, as "weak, rambling, loose-jointed" and as "inviting civil war." (See *2 Tarbell's Lincoln*, p. 13.)

We refer to these last citations especially to show, what we have always maintained, viz.: that Mr. Lincoln was dominated by Seward and Stanton, in our opinion, two of the worst men this country has ever produced.

In his speech at Cooper Institute in 1864 Wendell Phillips said:

"I judge Mr. Lincoln by his acts, his violations of the law, his overthrow of liberty in the Northern States. I judge Mr. Lincoln by his words and deeds, and so judging him, I am unwilling to trust Abraham Lincoln with the future of this country. Mr. Lincoln is a politician; politicians are like the bones of a horse's fore shoulder—not a straight one in it." (*Facts and Falsehoods*, p. 17.)

Mr. Lincoln was asked if he had seen the speech of Wendell Phillips, and he said:

"I have seen enough to satisfy me that I am a failure, not only in the opinion of the people in rebellion, but of many distinguished politicians of my own party." (*Lamon's Recollections*, p. 187.)

But enough of this; and we have made these citations only for the purpose of showing, *first*, that the character of Mr. Lincoln, as now presented to the world, is utterly at variance with his character as understood by those who knew him best and were daily brought in contact with him whilst living; and, *secondly*, to show that if his character was such as is presented to us by those who best knew him in life, that character was in keeping with his conduct towards the people of the South in the great war from '61 to '65.

SOME VIOLATIONS OF THE CONSTITUTION.

We, therefore, come now to consider some of the things (because we can only refer to a few of them) which Mr. Lincoln did in bringing on, and in the conduct of, that war.

When Mr. Lincoln was inaugurated as President of the United States on the 4th of March, 1861, he took an oath to support the Constitution of the United States. Says one of his most ardent admirers, McClure:

"As the sworn executive of the nation, it was his duty to obey the Constitution in all its provisions, and he accepted that duty without reservation."

In his first inaugural, Mr. Lincoln said:

"I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with

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." And yet we know that within eighteen months from that time he issued his Emancipation Proclamation.

EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION.

As to this proclamation, it is worthy of remark, that it is claimed to have been issued by virtue of some kind of "war power" vested in the President by the Constitution and laws. *The Northern historian Rhodes*, Vol. 4, p. 213, says:

"There was, as every one knows, no authority for the proclamation in the letter of the Constitution, nor was there any statute that warranted it."

Let us ask, then, where did Mr. Lincoln find any authority to issue it? Certainly not in the Constitution. For, says the Supreme Court of the United States in *Ex parte Milligan*, 4 Wallace 120:

"The Constitution of the United States is a law for rulers and people equally in war and in peace, and covers with the shield of its protection all classes of men at all times and under all circumstances. No doctrine involving more pernicious consequences was ever invented by the wit of man than that any of its provisions can be suspended during any of the great exigencies of government. *Such a doctrine leads directly to anarchy or despotism.*"

And says Chief Justice Chase, in the same case, p. 136-7:

"*Neither President, nor Congress, nor courts, possess any power not given by the Constitution.*"

So that the issuing of that proclamation (which, it is also worthy of note, did not even attempt to emancipate all the slaves in all the States, as generally supposed, but only those in ten named States, and only in certain parts of some of these) was a palpable violation of the Constitution and of Mr. Lincoln's oath of office; and the only plea on which the friends of Mr. Lincoln can justify his conduct is the plea of "necessity," the last refuge of every tyrant.

DUPPLICITY TOWARD VIRGINIA COMMISSIONERS.

But before we refer to other violations of the Constitution we propose to consider some acts of deceit and duplicity practiced by Mr. Lincoln, or to which he was a party, on representatives of the South.

After the secession of seven of the Southern States and the formation of the Southern Confederacy, with its capital at Montgomery, and after the failure of the "Peace Conference" inaugurated by Virginia in her most earnest effort to prevent war between the sections, and during the sessions of the Virginia Convention that body determined to send commissioners to Washington to ascertain, if possible, what course Mr. Lincoln intended to pursue towards the seceded States, since it was impossible to determine this course from the ambiguous language employed in

his inaugural address. These commissioners, the Honorables William Ballard Preston, Alexander H. H. Stuart and George W. Randolph, went to Washington and had an interview with Mr. Lincoln, and an account of that interview will be found in the first volume "Southern Historical Society Papers," at page 443. At page 452, Mr. Stuart says:

"I remember that he (Lincoln) used this homely expression, 'If I do that (recognize the Southern Confederacy), what will become of my revenue? I might as well shut up housekeeping at once.'"

But, says Mr. Stuart, "his declarations were distinctly pacific, and he expressly disclaimed all purpose of war."

Mr. Seward, the Secretary of State, and Mr. Bates, the Attorney-General, also gave Mr. Stuart the same assurances of peace. That night the commissioners returned to Richmond, and the same train on which they traveled brought Mr. Lincoln's proclamation calling for seventy-five thousand men to wage a war of coercion against the Southern States.

"This proclamation," says Mr. Stuart, "was carefully withheld from us, although it was in print, and we knew nothing of it until Monday morning when it appeared in the Richmond papers. When I saw it at breakfast, I thought it must be a mischievous hoax, for I could not believe Lincoln guilty of such duplicity."

This proclamation is now conceded by nearly all Northern writers to be a virtual declaration of war, which Congress alone has the power to declare. Congress alone having the power to "raise and support armies"; to "provide for calling forth the militia to execute the laws of the Union, suppress insurrection and repel invasions"; to "provide for organizing, arming and disciplining the militia, and for governing such part of them as may be employed in the service of the United States."

And yet Mr. Lincoln, in violation of the Constitution and of his oath, did all of these things before Congress was allowed to assemble on the 4th of July, 1861, and it is said he had an organized army before the assembling of Congress of over three hundred thousand men. We know too that, without any authority to do so, he did not hesitate to suspend the privilege of the writ of *habeas corpus*, which Congress alone had the power to authorize the suspension of, according to the decision of Chief Justice Taney in *Merriman's case*, and there are numerous other decisions to the same effect.

DUPPLICITY TOWARDS CONFEDERATE COMMISSIONERS.

But again, we know too (at least, Mr. Seward says so), that Mr. Lincoln was a party to the duplicity and deception practiced through Mr. Seward on the commissioners sent by the Confederate Government to treat with him "with a view to speedy adjustment of all questions growing out of the political separation upon such terms of amity and good will as the respective interests, geographical contiguity and future welfare of the two nations may render necessary."

Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Seward practiced this deception on these commissioners by promising the evacuation of Fort Sumter, through Justices Campbell and Nelson, of the Supreme Court of the United States. Mr. Seward was charged by Judge Campbell with the enormity of his conduct in regard to this matter, and he was asked to explain it, but no explanation was ever made, simply because there was none that could be made.

VIOLATIONS OF RULES OF CIVILIZED WARFARE.

But again, Mr. Lincoln was the Commander-in-Chief of the Armies and Navies of the United States, and he, therefore, had the power, *and it was his duty*, to see that the war was conducted on the principles adopted by the Federals themselves for the government of their armies, *and which are those adopted and enforced by all civilized nations*. Two of the most important of these rules were:

(1) "That private property, unless forfeited by crimes, or by offences of the owner against the safety of the army, or the dignity of the United States, and after conviction of the owner by court martial, can be seized only by way of military necessity for the support or benefit of the army of the United States.

(2) "All wanton violations committed against persons in the invaded country, all destruction of property not commanded by the authorized officer, all robbery, all pillage, all sacking even after taking a place by main force, all rape, wounding, maiming or killing of such inhabitants, are prohibited under penalty of death, or such other severe punishment as may seem adequate for the gravity of the offence."

Now, we repeat, these were the rules adopted by the United States for the government of its armies in the field, and *it was the duty of Mr. Lincoln, as the Executive head of the government and Commander-in-Chief of its armies, to see that they were respected and enforced*. We know how palpably these rules were violated by Grant, Sherman, Sheridan, Pope, Butler, Hunter, Milroy, Steinweyer, and in fact by nearly every Federal commander; *and we know too that these officers would not have dared to thus violate these rules, unless these violations had been known by them to be sanctioned by their official head, Mr. Lincoln, from whom they received their appointments and commissions, and whose duty it was to prevent such violations and outrages*.

General McClellan, a gentleman and a trained soldier, wrote to Mr. Lincoln from Harrison's Landing on July 7, 1862, saying, among other things:

"In prosecuting the war, all private property and unarmed persons should be strictly protected, subject only to the necessity of military operations. All property taken for military use should be paid or receipted for, pillage and waste should be treated as high crimes, and all unnecessary trespass sternly prohibited, and

offensive demeanor by the military towards citizens promptly rebuked." (See *2 Am. Conflict, by Greeley*, page 248.)

And yet, within two weeks from that time, the Federal Secretary of War, *by order of Mr. Lincoln*, issued an order to the military commanders in Virginia, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas and Arkansas, directing them to seize and use any property belonging to the inhabitants of the Confederacy which might be necessary or convenient for their several commands; and no provision whatever was made for any compensation to the owners of private property thus directed to be seized and appropriated.

SHERMAN'S CONDUCT.

General Sherman says in his official report of his famous (or rather infamous) march to the sea:

"We consumed the corn and fodder in the region of country thirty miles on either side of a line from Atlanta to Savannah, also the sweet potatoes, hogs, sheep and poultry, and carried off more than ten thousand horses and mules. I estimate the damage done to the State of Georgia at one hundred million dollars, at least twenty millions of which inured to our benefit, and the remainder was simply waste and destruction."

General Halleck, who was at that time Lincoln's chief of staff, and, therefore, presumably in daily contact with him, wrote to Sherman on the 18th of December, 1864:

"Should you capture Charleston, I hope that by some accident the place may be destroyed, and if a little salt should be thrown upon its site it may prevent the future growth of nullification and secession."

To which Sherman replied on the 24th of the same month:

"I will bear in mind your hint as to Charleston, and do not think that salt will be necessary. When I move, the Fifteenth Corps will be on the right of the right wing, and their position will naturally bring them into Charleston first; and if you have watched the history of that corps, you will have remarked that they generally do their work pretty well," etc. (*2 Sherman's Memoirs*, pp. 223-227-8.)

Of this infamous conduct on the part of Sherman, Mr. Whitelaw Reid, of New York, our present representative at the Court of St. James, has recently written in "Ohio in the War," pp. 475-8-9, referring especially to the burning of Columbia, as follows:

"It was the most monstrous barbarity of this barbarous march. * * * "Before this movement began, General Sherman begged permission to turn his army loose in South Carolina and devastate it. He used this permission to the full. He protested that he did not wage war upon women and children. But, under the operation of his orders, the last morsel of food was taken from

hundreds of destitute families, that his soldiers might feast in needless and riotous abundance. Before his eyes rose, day after day, the mournful clouds of smoke on every side, that told of old people and their grandchildren driven, in mid-winter, from the only roofs there were to shelter them, by the flames which the wantonness of his soldiers had kindled." * * * "Yet, if a single soldier was punished for a single outrage or theft during that entire movement, we have found no mention of it in all the voluminous records of the march."

Let us ask, Who alone had any semblance of authority to give this permission to Sherman and who gave it? There can be but one answer—Abraham Lincoln, the then President of the United States. Will the people of the South lick the hand that thus smote their fathers, their mothers, their brethren and their sisters by now singing peans of glory to his name and fame?

"Lord God of hosts, defend us yet
Lest we forget, lest we forget."

The New York *Evening Post*, one of the most sectional papers in the country, said editorially, a short time since, that—

"Mention of Sherman still opens flood gates of bitterness. He was a purloiner of silver; his soldiers spared neither women nor children; he burned towns that had not offended, and cities that had surrendered; and he spared not even the convents occupied by women of his own religious faith." (See *Myer's letter in "Confederate Cause and Conduct,"* p. 84.)

GRANT AND SHERIDAN'S CONDUCT.

On the 5th of August, 1864, General Grant wrote to General David Hunter, who preceded Sheridan in command of the Valley:

"In pushing up the Shenandoah Valley, where it is expected you will have to go first or last, it is desirable that *nothing should be left to invite the enemy to return.* Take all provisions, forage and stock wanted for the use of your command; *such as cannot be consumed, destroy.*"

And it was Grant who suggested to Sheridan the order that Sheridan executed in so desolating the Valley that "a crow flying over it would have to carry his own rations." Sheridan says:

"I have destroyed over two thousand barns filled with wheat and hay and farming implements; over seventy mills filled with flour and wheat; have driven in front of the army over four thousand head of stock, and have killed and issued to the troops not less than three thousand sheep. This destruction embraces the Luray Valley and Little Fort Valley, as well as the main Valley."

Contrast these orders, and this conduct, with General Lee's Chambersburg order of June 27, 1863, when his army invaded Pennsylvania, and the conduct of his army in that hostile country, and you have the difference between barbarous and civilized warfare.* General Lee's order was approved by President Davis; Grant's, Sherman's, Sheridan's and others by President Lincoln. To which of these two will you men and women of the South render the meed of your reverence, honor and respect? I know your answer because I know and honor you.

But this is, by no means, all. Judge Jeremiah S. Black, of Pennsylvania, writing to Mr. Charles Francis Adams, said:

"I will not pain you by a recital of the wanton cruelties they (the Lincoln administration) inflicted upon unoffending citizens. I have neither space, nor skill, nor time, to paint them. A life-sized picture of them would cover more canvas than there is on earth. * * * Since the fall of Robespierre, nothing has occurred to cast so much disrepute on republican institutions." (See *Black's Essays*, p. 153.)

Verily,

"He left a Corsair's name to other times
Linked with one virtue and a thousand crimes."

* "HEADQUARTERS A. N. V.,
"CHAMBERSBURG, PA., June 27, 1863.

"GENERAL ORDERS No. 73.

"The Commanding General has marked with satisfaction the conduct of the troops on the march and confidently anticipates results commensurate with the high spirit they have manifested. No troops could have displayed greater fortitude or better performed the arduous marches of the first ten days. Their conduct in other respects has, with few exceptions, been in keeping with their character as soldiers, and entitles them to approbation and praise.

"There have, however, been instances of forgetfulness on the part of some, that they have in keeping the yet unsullied reputation of the army, and the duties exacted of us by Civilization and Christianity, are not less obligatory in the country of the enemy than in our own. The Commanding General considers that no greater disgrace could befall the army, and through it our whole people, than the perpetration of the barbarous outrages upon the innocent and defenceless and wanton destruction of private property that have marked the course of the enemy in our own country. Such proceedings not only disgrace the perpetrators and all connected with them, but are subversive of the discipline and efficiency of the army and destructive of the ends of our present movements. It must be remembered that we make war only on armed men, and that we cannot take vengeance for the wrongs our people have suffered without lowering ourselves in the eyes of all whose abhorrence has been excited by the atrocities of our enemy, and offending against Him to whom vengeance belongeth, without whose favor and support our efforts must all prove in vain. The Commanding General therefore earnestly exhorts the troops to abstain, with most scrupulous care, from unnecessary or wanton injury to private property; and to enjoin upon all officers to arrest and bring to summary punishment all who shall in any way offend against the orders on this subject.

"R. E. LEE, *General*."

GENERAL LEE'S LETTER TO THE PEOPLE OF MARYLAND.

In the address issued by General Lee to the people of Maryland when his army first entered that State, in September, 1862, he said :

"It is right that you should know the purpose that brought the army under my command within the limits of your State, so far as that purpose concerns yourselves. The people of the Confederate States have long watched with the deepest sympathy the wrongs and outrages that have been inflicted upon the citizens of a commonwealth allied to the States of the South by the strongest social, political and commercial ties. They have seen with profound indignation their sister State deprived of every right and reduced to the condition of a conquered province. Under the pretense of supporting the Constitution, but in violation of its most valuable provisions, your citizens have been arrested and imprisoned upon no charge, and contrary to all forms of law. The faithful and manly protest against this outrage made by the venerable and illustrious Marylander (Taney), to whom in better days no citizen appealed for right in vain, was treated with scorn and contempt; the government of your chief city has been usurped by armed strangers; your legislature has been dissolved by the unlawful arrest of its members; freedom of the press and of speech has been suppressed; words have been declared offences by an arbitrary decree of the Federal Executive, and citizens ordered to be tried by a military commission for what they may dare to speak. Believing that the people of Maryland possessed a spirit too lofty to submit to such a government, the people of the South have long wished to aid you in throwing off this foreign yoke, to enable you again to enjoy the inalienable rights of freedom, and restore independence and sovereignty to your State. In obedience to this wish, our army has come among you, and is prepared to assist you with the power of its arms in regaining the rights of which you have been despoiled.

"This, citizens of Maryland, is our mission, so far as you are concerned. No constraint upon your free will is intended; no intimidation will be allowed within the limits of this army, at least. Marylanders shall once more enjoy their ancient freedom of thought and speech. We know no enemies among you, and will protect all, of every opinion. It is for you to decide your destiny freely and without constraint. This army will respect your choice, whatever it may be; and while the Southern people will rejoice to welcome you to your natural position among them, they will only welcome you when you come of your own free will

"R. E. LEE, *General Commanding.*"

No more severe or more just arraignment of the tyranny practiced

by Lincoln's administration can be written than this, and that it is true no one will have the temerity to deny. The contrast here presented, too, is as striking as it is painful. It is that between the Christian soldier and the Godless tyrant.

WHAT NORTHERN PEOPLE THOUGHT IN NOVEMBER, 1864.

And it should never be forgotten that in the election held in November, 1864, between Lincoln and McClellan, in which the platform of McClellan's party charged that the war had been a failure; that the Constitution had been disregarded in every part; that justice, humanity, liberty and the public welfare demanded that immediate efforts be made for a cessation of hostilities with the ultimate convention of all the States that these may be restored on the basis of a federal union of all the States; * * * that they considered the administration's "usurpation of extraordinary and dangerous powers not granted by the Constitution" as "calculated to prevent a restoration of the union"; and which further charged that administration with "woeful disregard of its duty to prisoners of war"; that during this canvass Lincoln was denounced as a "remorseless tyrant," and his administration as the "Rebellion of Abraham Lincoln." That out of a vote of four millions of the Northern people cast in that election, nearly one-half, viz., 1,800,000 *voted for McClellan and in condemnation of Mr. Lincoln on the foregoing platform and charges.* So with this evidence of the condemnation of Mr. Lincoln and his administration, just five months before his death, by so many of his own people, we must be excused if we decline to accept the portraiture of his character and conduct as now so persistently presented to us by these same people, and we must be excused too for being skeptical about *their sincerity in believing in the truthfulness of that portraiture themselves.*

We charge, and without the fear of successful contradiction, that Mr. Lincoln, as the head of the Federal Government, and the Commander-in-chief of its armies, was *directly responsible for the outrages committed by his subordinates; and that the future and unprejudiced historian will so hold him responsible, we verily believe.*

TREATMENT OF PRISONERS.

But this is not all. *Mr. Lincoln was directly responsible for all the sorrows, sufferings and deaths of prisoners on both sides during the war.* At the beginning of the war, the Confederate Government enacted that "rations furnished prisoners of war shall be the same in quantity and quality as those furnished to enlisted men in the army of the Confederacy"; that "hospitals for prisoners of war are placed on the same footing as other Confederate States' hospitals in all respects, and will be managed accordingly." And General Lee says, "The orders always were that the whole field should be treated alike; parties were sent out to take the Federal wounded as well as Confederate, and the surgeons were told to treat the one as they did the other. These orders given by me were respected on every field."

At the very beginning of hostilities, the Confederate authorities were likewise most anxious to establish a cartel for the exchange of prisoners. The Federals refused to do this until July 22, 1862, and almost directly after this cartel was established it was violated and annulled by the Federal authorities with Mr. Lincoln at their head. On the 6th of July, 1861, Mr. Davis wrote to Mr. Lincoln, saying:

"It is the desire of this government so to conduct the war now existing as to mitigate its horrors as far as may be possible, and with this intent its treatment of the prisoners captured by its forces has been marked by the greatest humanity and leniency consistent with public obligation."

This letter was sent to Washington by a special messenger (Colonel Taylor), but he was refused even an audience with Mr. Lincoln, and although a reply was promised, no reply to it was ever made.

On the 2d of July, 1863, Mr. Davis addressed another letter to Mr. Lincoln and tried to send it to him by the hands of Vice-President Stephens, saying:

"I believe I have just grounds of complaint against the officers and forces under your command for breach of the cartel; and being myself ready to execute it at all times, and in good faith, I am not justified in doubting the existence of the same disposition on your part. In addition to this matter, I have to complain of the conduct of your officers and troops in many parts of the country, who violate all the rules of war by carrying on hostilities not only against armed foes, but against non-combatants, aged men, women and children, while others not only seize such property as is required for the use of your troops, but destroy all private property within their reach," etc.

And he implored Mr. Lincoln to take steps "to prevent further misunderstanding as to the terms of the cartel, and to enter into such arrangement and understanding about the mode of carrying on hostilities between the belligerents as shall confine the severities of the war within such limits as are rightfully imposed, not only by modern civilization, but by our common Christianity."

And yet Mr. Stephens, with a letter of this import, was not even permitted to go through the lines to carry it.

Mr. Charles A. Dana, the Assistant Federal Secretary of War, the same man who permitted the shackles to be placed upon Mr. Davis, says:

"The evidence must be taken as conclusive: It proves that it was not the Confederate authorities who insisted on keeping our prisoners in distress, want and disease, but the commander of our armies."

And that commander-in-chief of their armies, the one who had

absolute control of the whole matter, was Abraham Lincoln. We know that President Davis even went so far when the prisoners at Andersonville were suffering from disease and want, which the Confederate Government could not relieve or prevent, as to send a delegation of these prisoners to Mr. Lincoln to beg him to renew the cartel for their exchange, and Mr. Lincoln sent these men back to die; and, further, that when Mr. Davis offered to send home from ten to fifteen thousand of these prisoners at one time, without demanding any equivalent in exchange, this humane offer was indignantly rejected; that medicines were declared "contraband of war," and the Federal Government not only refused to furnish these for their own prisoners, to be administered by its own doctors, but refused to allow the Confederates the means to procure them when they were informed that these prisoners were dying on account of the need of these medicines. Hence we say that *Mr. Lincoln, as the head of the Federal Government and the Commander-in-chief of its armies, is directly responsible for all this misconduct and cruelty on the part of his subordinates, and for the deaths, sufferings and sorrows which ensued in consequence of that misconduct and cruelty.*

WAS HE A TRUE FRIEND OF THE SOUTH ?

But it is often said that, notwithstanding all these things, Mr. Lincoln was a friend of the Southern people, and that his death was a great misfortune to the South, since he would have been able to prevent the outrages, severities and cruelties of "Reconstruction." As some evidence of this, it is claimed, first, that in the so-called "Peace Conference" held in Hampton Roads in February, 1865, Mr. Lincoln offered, if the South would return to the Union, that the Federal Government would pay for the slaves by making an appropriation of four hundred millions of dollars for that purpose. Indeed, it is claimed that he said to Mr. Stephens:

"Let me write 'Union' at the top of this page, and you may then write any other terms of settlement you may deem proper."

We undertake to say, after a careful reading of the joint and several reports of our commissioners (Messrs. Stephens, Hunter and Campbell), and after reading the message sent by Mr. Lincoln to Congress after his return from that conference, *that there is no just foundation for any such claim.*

Mr. Lincoln himself says:

"No papers were exchanged or produced, and it was in advance agreed that the conversation was to be informal and verbal merely. *On our part, the whole substance of the instructions to the Secretary of State hereinbefore recited was stated and insisted upon, and nothing was said inconsistent therewith.*"

The instructions to the Secretary here referred to in reference to slavery were:

"No receding by the Executive of the United States on the slavery question from the position assumed thereon in the annual message to Congress and in preceding documents."

And the terms here referred to in the annual message to Congress were:

"I retract nothing heretofore said as to slavery. I repeat the declaration made a year ago, that while I remain in my present position I will not attempt to retract or modify the Emancipation Proclamation."

Certainly there was nothing in the Emancipation Proclamation which indicated any intention or desire on his part to make any compensation for the slaves of the Southern people.

And Colonel McClure, who, as before stated, is a partizan of Mr. Lincoln, and claims everything for him that could possibly be claimed, says this matter was not even suggested by Mr. Lincoln to Mr. Stephens, for reasons which he attempts to explain. (See *Lincoln and Men of War Times*, p. 92.)

But again it is claimed that Mr. Lincoln would have been most lenient and kind in his treatment of the people of the South after the termination of the war, and that hence his death was a great calamity to the South. The sole basis of this claim seems to be that when Mr. Lincoln came to Richmond on the 5th of April, 1865, two days after the evacuation by the Confederates, he had a conference with Judge Campbell, Assistant Secretary of War of the Confederacy, and Mr. Gustavus A. Myers, then a member of the Legislature from Richmond, and suggested to them to have the Virginia Legislature re-assemble for the purpose of restoring Virginia to the Union. In a statement published in Vol. 36, page 252, of the "Southern Historical Society Papers," Judge Campbell gives an interesting account of this interview with Mr. Lincoln, and says, among other things:

"Mr. Lincoln desired the Legislature of Virginia to be called together to ascertain and test its disposition to co-operate with him in terminating the war. He desired it to recall the troops of Virginia from the Confederate service, and to attorn to the United States and to submit to the national authority."

Judge Campbell further says that whilst he (Campbell) expressed the opinion that General Lee's army was in such a condition that it could not be held together for many days, "Mr. Lincoln did not fully credit the judgment that was expressed as to the condition of General Lee's army. He could not realize the fact that its dissolution was certain in any event, and that its day was spent. He knew that if the 'very Legislature' that had been sitting in Richmond were convened and did vote as he desired, that it would disorganize and discourage the Confederate army and government."

In our opinion, this was the true and only reason why Mr. Lincoln wanted the Legislature recalled. It was that it might order the withdrawal of the Virginia troops, with General Lee at their head, from the Army of Northern Virginia, and in that way destroy the efficiency of that army.

But whatever may have been Mr. Lincoln's motives and purposes at that time, we know that as soon as he knew that the Army of Northern Virginia had surrendered, *and only two days before his assassination, he recalled the suggestion for the assembling of the Virginia Legislature because of the fact, as alleged, that conditions had changed since he made that suggestion; and the great change in these conditions was the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia.* And Colonel McClure himself says, at page 227:

"What policy of reconstruction Lincoln would have adopted, had he lived to complete his great work, cannot now be known."

We have reached the conclusion, therefore, that there is no good reason to believe, and certainly no satisfactory evidence on which to found the opinion, that had Mr. Lincoln survived the war he would have been either willing or able to withstand the oppressions of the malicious and revengeful men in his cabinet and in Congress in their determination to further punish the people of the already prostrate and bleeding South, *to which condition of affairs he had done so much to contribute.* A striking evidence of this is furnished by the statement of Admiral Porter, who was with Mr. Lincoln when he came to Richmond immediately after the evacuation. Admiral Porter says that when Lincoln told him he had authorized the re-assembling of the Virginia Legislature, and began to reflect on what Seward would have to say about this, he (Lincoln) sent a messenger post haste to General Weitzel and revoked the order before he left Richmond. (See *Porter's Naval History*, p. 779.)

Although Andrew Johnson was, as we have heard General Wise say of him "as dirty as cart-wheel grease," we have always believed he withstood the malice of these bad men longer than Mr. Lincoln would have done, and that he (Johnson) really tried to help the South after the war, as we know that he tried to prevent the adoption and carrying out of the wicked "Reconstruction" measures.

We know that on May 9, 1865, within less than a month from his inauguration, Johnson issued an executive order restoring Virginia to the Union; that on the 22d of the same month he proclaimed that all the Southern ports, except four in Texas, should be opened to foreign commerce on July 1, 1865; that on the 29th of May he issued a general amnesty proclamation (with some notable exceptions), after which the irreconcilable differences between him and his party became so fierce and bitter that he was obstructed in every way possible, and came very near being impeached, and mainly on account of his attempted acts of kindness to the Southern people. So that, we are constrained to say, if Mr. Lincoln was a true friend of the South, *Good Lord, deliver us from our friends."*

CAREER IN DETAIL.

But let us now examine Mr. Lincoln's career, somewhat in detail, and see what we can find in it to entitle him to rank with the good and great men of the earth.

(1) Up to the time he attained his majority he was literally a "hewer of wood and a drawer of water." This was, of course, his misfortune, a thing for which he was in no way to blame, and we only refer to it as a fact, and not by way of reproach to him in any sense.

(2) For three or four years after attaining his majority, he first kept a store, then a post office, did some surveying, and employed his leisure hours in studying and preparing himself for the bar.

(3) He practiced law about twenty-five years, and made but little reputation as a lawyer, beyond the fact that he was regarded as a shrewd, sensible and honest lawyer. During that period he was sent to the Illinois Legislature four times, but made little or no reputation as a legislator.

(4) In 1847 he was elected to Congress, and served only one term. He certainly made no reputation as a member of Congress, unless his speech advocating the right of secession, as referred to by Judge Black in his Essays, entitled him to such distinction.

(5) We next hear of him in the canvass with Stephen A. Douglas for the Senate, in which he did make reputation both as a ready debater and stump speaker, and was regarded as one of the most ambitious and shrewdest politicians of his time. He was twice defeated for the Senate, but the reputation won in his last canvass with Douglas laid the foundation for his candidacy for the presidency, although Seward was, by far the foremost candidate for that office up to the time of the meeting of the Convention. This convention, fortunately for Lincoln, met in Chicago, where his "boosters" did most effective work in his behalf. He was only nominated by means of a corrupt bargain entered into between his representatives and those of Simon Cameron, of Pennsylvania, and Caleb B. Smith, of Indiana, by which Cabinet positions were pledged both to Cameron and to Smith in consideration for the votes controlled by them, in the convention, and which pledges Lincoln fulfilled, and, in that way made himself a party to these corrupt bargains. (1 *Morse*, 169; *Lamon*, 449.) He was nominated purely as the sectional candidate of a sectional party, and not only received no votes in several of the Southern States, but he failed to get a popular majority of the section which nominated and elected him, and received nearly one million votes less than a popular majority of the vote of the country. (1 *Morse*, 178.)

(6) After his election, he sneaked into the national Capitol at night in a way he was, and ought to have been, ashamed of the rest of his life, and commenced his administration by acts of deceit and duplicity and by palpable violations of the Constitution he had sworn to support, as already set forth herein, and by plunging the country into war without any authority or justification for so doing.

(7) At the end of two years his administration had become so un-

popular and was deemed so inefficient, that the appointment of a Dictator was seriously considered, and Lamon says, if Grant had not succeeded in capturing Vicksburg in July, 1863, "*certain it is that President Lincoln would have been deposed, and a Dictator would have been placed in his stead as chief executive, until peace could be restored to the nation by separation or otherwise.*" (*Lamon's Recollections*, 183-4.)

(8) We have already alluded to his standing with the Northern people at the election in November, 1864, when nearly one-half of these people voted gainst him, and when, but for the improper use of the army in controlling the election, it is believed he would have been defeated by McClellan, since in many of the States carried by Lincoln the popular vote was very close. (See *Butler's Book* and *McClellan's Platform*.)

(9) Between the time of his second election and his assassination, the South had become so completely exhausted, that he had only to keep his armies, as already marshalled, in the field, to accomplish its defeat. Says Lamon:

"At the time McClellan took command of that army (Army of the Potomac), the South was powerful in all the elements of successful warfare. It had much changed when General Grant took command. Long strain had greatly weakened and exhausted the resources of the South." (*Lamon's Recollections*, p. 199.)

(10) And Lamon says of him at the time of his election:

"Few men believed that Mr. Lincoln possessed a single qualification for his great office." * * * "They said he was good and honest and well meaning, but they took care *not to pretend that he was great*. He was thoroughly convinced that there was too much truth in this view of his character. He felt deeply and keenly his lack of experience in the conduct of public affairs. He spoke then and afterwards about the duties of the presidency with much diffidence, and said with a story about a justice of the peace in Illinois, that they constituted his 'great first case misunderstood.'" (*Lamon*, p. 468.)

That he had no just appreciation of the gravity of the situation, or of the duties of the office he was about to assume, is best evinced by the character of the speeches made by him *en route* to Washington to be inaugurated. Of these speeches, the Northern historian, Rhodes. (3 *Rhodes*, 303), thus writes:

"In his speeches the commonplace abounds, and though he had a keen sense of humor, his sallies of wit grated on earnest men, who read in quiet his daily utterances. The ridiculous, which lies so near the sublime, was reached when this man, proceeding to grave duties, and the great fame that falls to few in the whole world, asked at the town of Wakefield, for a little girl correspondent of his, at whose suggestion he had made a change in his personal

appearance, and when she came, he kissed her and said, 'You see I have let these whiskers grow for you, Grace.'"

But let us ask, can *statesmanship* be predicated of any *American*, who expressed the opinion, as Mr. Lincoln did, that the relations of the States to the Union were the same as those of the counties to the States of which they severally formed a part? Surely comment is unnecessary.

Mr. Lincoln had in his cabinet five of the ablest men then in the country, and we think it fair to assume that these men are entitled to much, if not most, of the credit (if it can be so called) now so recklessly and unsparingly ascribed to him. But did it require genius or ability in any man, or set of men, to wear out, as by "attrition," six hundred thousand half-starved and poorly equipped men with two million eight hundred thousand well-fed and thoroughly equipped men with unlimited resources of all kinds?

Napoleon said:

"A man who exhibited no evidence of greatness before reaching forty, has no element of greatness in him."

Mr. Lincoln was fifty-two when he was elected President, and Lamon says no one pretended he had developed any element of greatness up to that time.

So that, with every disposition to write truthfully about Mr. Lincoln, we are unable to find in his career any substantial basis for the great name and fame now claimed for him by his admirers both at the North and at the South, and certainly nothing either in his character, career or conduct to engender veneration, admiration and love for his memory on the part of the people of the South.

CAN'T RELY ON WHAT IS NOW WRITTEN.

The fact is, most of the Northern, as well as some Southern, writers have so distorted and exaggerated nearly every word and act of Mr. Lincoln's that it is impossible to arrive at the truth about anything said or done by, or concerning him or his career from their statements. Many illustrations of this could be given, but owing to the length of this paper, one or two must suffice. Perhaps nothing that Mr. Lincoln ever said or did has been so applauded as his Gettysburg speech, a speech of about twenty lines in length, embodying less than a dozen thoughts, not original, but very well expressed. Lamon says he was present at the time of the delivery of that speech; that it fell perfectly flat on the audience, and Mr. Everett and Mr. Seward expressed great disappointment at it. Mr. Lincoln himself said: "*It fell like a 'wet blanket,' and I am distressed about it.*" o o o "*It is a flat failure and the people are disappointed.*" (*Lamon's Recollections*, 171-2). And Lamon then adds:

"In the face of these facts, it has been repeatedly published that this speech was received by the audience with loud demon-

strations of approval; that amid the tears, sobs and cheers it produced on the excited throng, the orator of the day, Mr. Everett, turned to Mr. Lincoln, grasped his hand and exclaimed, 'I congratulate you on your success,' adding in a transport of heated enthusiasm, 'Ah, Mr. President, how gladly would I give my hundred pages to be the author of your twenty lines.' Nothing of the kind occurred (says Lamon). *It is a slander on Mr. Everett, an injustice to Mr. Lincoln and a falsification of history.*" (*Idem*, p. 172-3.)

Again (and we would not refer to this but for the fact that it is discussed by several of his biographers with almost shameless freedom): The relations between Mr. Lincoln and his wife were notoriously unpleasant. After he had fooled her even when the day had been set for their marriage and the bridal party had assembled, by failing to appear, Lamon says: "They were married, but they understood each other, and suffered the inevitable consequence as other people under similar circumstances. But such troubles seldom fail to find a tongue, and it is not strange that in this case neighbors and friends, and ultimately the whole country, came to know the state of things in that house. Mr. Lincoln scarcely attempted to conceal it, but talked of it with little or no reserve to his wife's relatives as well as to his own friends." (*Lamon*, 474. See also 3 *Herndon-Weik*, 429-30.) Herndon says: "I do not believe he knew what happiness was for twenty years." "*Terrible*" was the word which all his friends used to describe him in the black mood. "It was 'terrible,' it was 'terrible,' says one and another." (*Lamon*, 475; 1 *Morse*, 65-5.)

And yet, in the face of this testimony, one of his latest biographers (Noah Brooks), writing for the series of "*Heroes of the Nations*," says:

"The relations of Lincoln and his wife were a model for the married people of the republic of which they were the foremost pair." (P. 422.)

Verily, as Dr. Lord says:

"Nothing so effectually ends all jealousies, animosities and prejudices as the assassin's dagger." (12 *Beacon Lights of History*, 314.)

So that, re repeat, you have to take everything written or said about Mr. Lincoln, by most of the Northern and some Southern writers, *with many grains of allowance*, for there seems to be no bounds to their exaggerations and misrepresentations. It is not out of place to add here that one of his biographers, Hapgood, says foreign writers have written but little about Mr. Lincoln, which would seem to indicate that they are yet waiting to learn the truth about him.

We cheerfully admit that Mr. Lincoln was an honest man in the sense that he was absolutely free from what is now termed "graft," and

that he never manifested any disposition to "put money in his purse" which did not properly belong there. He may have been a patriot, too, in the usual acceptation of that term; but as we diagnose his patriotism, it was so intermingled with, and controlled by, an inordinate personal ambition it is impossible to say how far that predominated. Certainly his readiness to sacrifice the lives and property both of his friends and his foes would seem to show a recklessness and heartlessness more consistent with ambition than with any characteristic which was noble and good. If he was a patriot or a statesman at all, he ought certainly to have known that a union "pinned together with bayonets," enforced by the power of coercion, "against the consent of the governed" in a large part of that union, *could never be the "Union" as formed by "our fathers."*

"Popular beliefs in time come to be superstitions, and create both gods and devils," says Don Piatt, in speaking of how little is now known of the "Real Lincoln." (*Men Who Saved the Union*, p. 28.) And the same writer further says:

"There is no tyranny so despotic as that of public opinion among a free people. The rule of the majority is to the last extent exacting and brutal, and when brought to bear on our eminent men, *it is also senseless.*" (*Idem*, p. 27.)

The North has had and has exercised the "rule of the majority" over the South for nearly half a century, and in many respects that rule has truly been "exacting and brutal," and especially is this true in their attempts to make us fall down and worship their false gods. Let us never consent to do so. No,

"Better the spear, the blade, the bowl,
Than crucifixion of the soul."

We are not vain enough to think that what we have said to-night will have any other effect than to inform the members of this Camp of the true character and conduct of this contradictory, strange and secretive man, but we are vain enough to think that you, at least, will believe that what we have said to you *we believe to be the truth, and nothing but the truth.* And we further believe that if the cause espoused by Mr. Lincoln had not been deemed successful, and if the "assassin's bullet" had not contributed so greatly to immortalize him, his name would be now bandied about as *only that of an ordinary, coarse, secretive, cunning man and wily politician, and one of the greatest tyrants of any age.*

But it will doubtless be replied to all these things, that, admitting their truth, "*He saved the Union, and the end was worth and justified the means.*"

If this was an argument at all, we might feel the force of it, viewing the matter from a Northern standpoint. But, in our opinion, any such attempted answer is an evasion, and "begging the question" now under discussion. The real question is, not what was accomplished, but *what was the character and conduct of the man, and what were the methods*

and instruments employed by him to do his work? Was the character of Abraham Lincoln such as to make him an ideal and exemplar for our children, and were the methods employed by him such as to excite and command the reverence, admiration and emulation of those who come after us? *We answer, No; a thousand times, No.*

REASONS FOR THIS PAPER.

But some will doubtless ask, and with apparent justification, Is it not wrong in this Camp to bring forward these things, especially at this time, when so much is, ostensibly, being done to allay sectional feeling between the North and the South?

The answer to all such inquiries is, to our mind, perfectly simple and satisfactory. In the first place, these efforts to allay sectional bitterness are far more *apparent* than *real*, as any one who has read the history and current literature which has teemed from Northern presses ever since the war, and is still issuing from those presses, will be forced to admit. These histories and this literature, written almost wholly by our conquerors, naturally give their side of the conflict, and they not only exalt their leaders, and seek especially to deify Mr. Lincoln, but they misrepresent the cause and motives of the Southern people, and vilify us and our leader, Mr. Davis, in the most flagrant and outrageous way. Mr. Lincoln is portrayed, as we have seen, as a man of ineffable purity, piety and patriotism, and his cause as the cause of humanity, patriotism and righteousness, whilst Mr. Davis was the Arch traitor and felon, our cause that of treason, rebellion and inhumanity, our people are denominated a "slave oligarchy," and their only reason for going to war was to prolong their "slave power," with no higher motive than to save the money value of their slaves. As an illustration of the way our people have been misrepresented and maligned, we need only refer to the fact that such a Northern writer as James Russell Lowell has preserved in his most permanent form of literature statements that during the war our Southern women "wore personal ornaments made of the bones of their unburied foes"; that we wilfully "starved prisoners," "took scalps for trophies," and we are called "rebels" and "traitors," deserving punishment for our crimes as such, when we were only defending our homes against ruthless invasion. In a word, that we are a *bad people*, led by those who were worse, whilst they are all *good people*, led by those who did and could *do no wrong*. These things are taught to our children by the literature to which we have referred, and the effect of such teaching must in the end make them deplore, if they do not come to despise, the cause and conduct of their fathers.

It is proper to say that there are some fair-minded and truthful Northern writers, who, whilst differing from us to the justice of our cause, have had the manliness and candor to say that we were honest and patriotic in the course we pursued, and these have written kindly and considerately about us, our cause and some of our leaders, and to all such we express our appreciation and gratitude. But the great mass of Northern

histories and literature is such as we have described them, and especially is this true of the biographies and literature concerning the life, the conduct and character of Mr. Lincoln, the writers of these, as a rule, apparently seeming to think they could only exalt their subject by belittling and belying us, our cause and our leaders.

The members of this Camp are all ex-Confederate soldiers; they loved the Confederate cause, and they love it still; they believed it was right when they enlisted in its defence, *and they believe so now*; they gave their young manhood, they suffered, they made sacrifices; many of them shed their blood, and have seen thousands of their comrades die on the field, in hospitals and in prisons in defence of that cause; they *know* that many of the things written about the cause and conduct of the North, and its leaders, *and especially about Mr. Lincoln, are false*. Are we so debased and cowed by the results of the conflict that we must remain silent about these for the sake of political expediency or material gain, and not tell our children *the truth*, when our *quondam* enemies have furnished us the evidences of *that truth*? If we do, then, in our opinion, we are unworthy of our Confederate uniforms, and to have been the followers of Lee and Jackson and their compeers. If we remain silent, can we expect those who come after us to speak? Nay, will they not rather interpret our silence as a confession of guilt, and that we deemed our cause an unholy one? So that, it seems to us, this address not only finds its justification on the low plea of "*relation in kind*," but that its justification rests upon the *impregnable foundations of truth and necessity, as well as that of a duty we owe alike to the memories of our dead comrades, to ourselves, our children and our children's children.*

"Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

relational

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