

Lincoln

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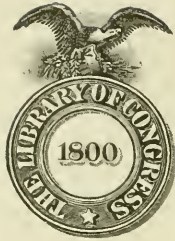
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E U L O G Y

ON

ABRAHAM LINCOLN,

LATE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

DELIVERED BEFORE

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THE NEW ENGLAND HISTORIC-GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY,

BOSTON, MAY 3, 1865,

BY

REV. ELIAS NASON,

MEMBER OF THE SOCIETY.

"He that hath the vantage ground to do good is an honest man." — BACON.



BOSTON:

WILLIAM V. SPENCER.

134 WASHINGTON STREET.

1865.

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Cambridge Press.
DAKIN AND METCALF.



EULOGY.

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN:

WE assemble again — and oh, how soon and sadly! — to render our mournful tribute of respect to the illustrious dead. Our hearts are bowed and stricken at the judgment of Almighty God, who hath stretched forth his hand from the folds of eternity and taken to himself the Chief Magistrate of this nation.

Another great man has fallen, and the voice of lamentation and wailing resounds through every loyal city, village, and hamlet of this Union. The faces of the sons and daughters of Columbia are bathed in tributary tears, as when George Washington, father of his country, was translated from the arms of his compatriots to the skies.

The mournful dirge in memory of our departed President is swelling as the sobbings of the melancholy ocean, and every demonstration which weeping sorrow can devise attests the depth and sincerity of the emotion which this bereaved nation now experiences.

The long, slow-moving funereal trains, the sable robes and decorations, the flag depressed, private residences, public edifices and sacred temples draped in the memorials of woe; the tolling bell, the organ's deep and solemn peal, the soldiers' arms reversed and plaintive requiem; the muffled drum-beats and the minute guns,

the coronach of the Caledonian; the "langsame trauerlied" of the tearful German; the "Mourir pour la patrie" of the sympathetic Frenchman; the simple-hearted lay of the Freedman, weeping sad and lonely, do most touchingly proclaim, as once the harps and voices of God's chosen people when they wept by "Babel's willowy streams," the intensity of the nation's grief.

Yes! God has suddenly struck the chords of the heart of this vast nation, and they tremble as when the forest bends beneath the blow of the dark autumnal tempest, or the ship quivers in every beam beneath the sudden stroke of the Euroclydon.

Abraham Lincoln, the President of these United States, is dead! Assassinated by the ruthless hand of a godless rebel! Instantaneously cut down, as the magnanimous Prince of Orange, in the prime and vigor of his manhood, just at the moment when the fruition of his hopes was about to be experienced;—in cold blood, mercilessly murdered by the impitiable hand of a dastardly minion of treason!

Assassination of the good and great in power; assault upon the chosen of the people, upon the supporter of the country's honor, the standard-bearer of the flag of civil freedom; assassination of the chieftain and the saviour of the Republic, around whom the hearts of the millions clung as the tendrils of the vine around the towering oak of the mountain; assassination of the friend of the friendless, of the oppressed, of you and of me! Crime unheard-of in America; crime, whose "deep damnation" treason's tongue itself must speak, its blood must seal.

What sudden grief, what load of sorrow bore us down as the intelligence came flashing through the electric wire that our good President had been shot! How universal and how deep the gloom!

From hoary-headed sire, from prattling child; matron and maid, teacher and taught; from judge and advocate, pastor and physician; from merchant, mechanic, husbandman, soldier, sailor,

freedman ; from all ranks, parties, states, and conditions of men ; from your own hearts and from mine, went forth exclamations of bitter grief, condolence, agony : — “ O miserable day ! O bleeding country, wounded cruelly in the head of thy beauty ! O God, have mercy on thy suffering and afflicted people ! The star of the nation’s diadem is set in blood ; its lustre is extinguished ; the gloaming of our burden of sorrow has come ; the face of the mighty is shrouded, — and

“ Who from the shades of gloomy night
 When the last ray of hope is fled,
 Can bid the soul return to light,
 Or break the silent slumber of the dead ? ”

It is, gentlemen, a profound *personal* grief we feel, as when a dear old father, a beloved mother, or a brother is torn relentlessly from our breast.

It is not mourning for some great national loss only that veils our faces in the shades of woe ; it is lamentation for one who has been very near and very dear to us ; for one who seemed to be of the immediate circle of our own familiar friends and acquaintances ; for one who had so identified himself with our own views and feelings that he seemed to be an elementary part of our own being, — bone of our bone, blood of our blood ; for one so entirely with us in sympathy, in genius, in love, in action, in aspiration, that he must ever bear the august appellation of the PEOPLE’S OWN BELOVED PRESIDENT. Even the little children looked upon him as their own kind-hearted ruler, and they now weep in the sweet simplicity of childhood over his sacred remains. Yes, gentlemen, as those relics are now borne slowly, amid vast and imposing pageantries, amid obsequies more sublime than ever honored mausoleum of king or conqueror, the little child, true to the instincts of its loving nature, steals through the mighty throng and drops its simple flower

and sheds its simple tear of sweet affection beside this good man's bier.

But this flood of national grief is just as natural as the falling of the dews of evening, or the tears of Niobe, when we consider who and what Abraham Lincoln was, and what his head and heart and hand achieved.

This remarkable man was the son of Mr. Thomas and Nancy [Hanks] Lincoln, and was born the 12th day of February, 1809, in a rude log cabin in Hardin [now Larue] County, in Kentucky, on a small branch of the Rolling Fork, a tributary of the Salt river, which empties into the Ohio.

His grandfather, Abraham, had removed from Rockingham, one of the most beautiful counties of the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia, to that place as early as 1780; he was one of the hardest and boldest of the frontier settlers, and four years later fell a victim to the revenge or cupidity of the aborigines, — leaving a widow and five children, — Mordecai, Joseph, Mary [who married Ralph Crume], Nancy [who married William Brumfield], and Thomas, who, being the youngest son, remained at home with his mother.

Thomas, who was but a mere child when his father removed to Kentucky, grew up in the wilderness, a poor, hard-working, and illiterate boy. He was, however, good-natured, kind-hearted, and affectionate; and, on arriving at the age of twenty-seven, he married [1806] Miss Nancy Hanks, a Virginian by birth, and lived in a log cabin, furnished with a deal table, two or three wooden stools, wooden plates and spoons, and surrounded by the howling wolves and savages of that unexplored and inhospitable region.

The issue of this marriage was a daughter, who grew up to womanhood, was married, and is long since dead; a son, who died in infancy; and another son, named from his grandfather, Abraham, who became President of the United States.

“ So from the humble vale, fed by the secret springs,
 The palm-tree rises towering toward the sun,
 To hail its morning beam and spread it o'er the land.”

The line of Mr. Lincoln's ancestry has been followed with certainty only to his grandfather, Abraham, who was born in Berks County, Pennsylvania, early removed to Virginia, and thence to Kentucky, where he was massacred by the Indians in 1784; but I am most happy to state that there is a very high degree of probability that it will be eventually traced to the strong-minded Lincoln family of Massachusetts Bay. This New England stock came from Hingham, England, to Hingham in this State, as early as 1633-7, and, singular as it may appear, three of them who had families bore the name of Thomas, and were designated respectively as Thomas, the miller, Thomas, the cooper, and Thomas, the husbandman. The name of the fourth original settler was Samuel, from whom Governor Levi Lincoln and the Honorable Solomon Lincoln of this society are descended. The sons of Samuel were Daniel, Mordecai, and Thomas. Mordecai Lincoln had a son Mordecai, born April 24th, 1686, and another named Abraham, born January 13th, 1689. In or about the year 1750, there were two Mordecai Lincolns in the town of Taunton, and some of the family removed thence into Connecticut.

Now, by the aid of my friend Mr. Trask, I find from Rupp's History of Berks and Lebanon Counties, Pennsylvania, that among the taxable inhabitants in Exeter, Berks County, soon after its settlement in 1752, were Mordecai and Abraham Lincoln; also that Mr. Thomas Lincoln was living at Reading, Pennsylvania, as early as 1757, and that Mr. Abraham Lincoln was one of the Representatives from Berks County in 1782-5, and a member of the Convention for the framing of the Pennsylvania State Constitution of 1789-90. Now, in comparing the names of Massachu-

setts and the Pennsylvania Lincoln family from which that of the President sprung, we are struck with this remarkable coincidence, that Mordecai, a very unusual appellation, Abraham, Thomas, etc., are constantly occurring in both branches, and we can account for it only upon the theory that some members of the Massachusetts stock wandered away — it might have been on account of quakerism — into Berks County, Pennsylvania, where the great-grandfather of our lamented President lived, and that his family does thus proceed from the sturdy, brave, and liberty-loving Hingham stock. In corroboration of this point, I would mention that that section of Pennsylvania was in part settled by New Englanders; that there is a tradition with the Virginia race that they came through Berks County from New England, that some biographers of the President assert, on what authority I know not, that he is of the same blood as General Benjamin Lincoln, born in Hingham. 1733, and that but one family bearing the name of Lincoln is known to have emigrated to this country anterior to the revolution.

The link, however, which connects the two families is still concealed in the obscurity of the past; but I hope the piercing glance of some genealogist will soon detect it; for I hold it nobler to claim parentage from the honest sons of toil who fled from the insolent edicts of the star-chamber to breathe the air of freedom on our rock-bound coast, than from the proudest peerage England ever saw.

Born in the depths of the dreary wilderness, of poor but pious parents, our distinguished President was rocked in the cradle of adversity, and tried in the crucible of toil, from which he came forth a gem, rough and angular to be sure, but shining with “purest ray serene” and brighter and brighter unto the perfect day.

He was, I beg you to observe, preëminently a self-made man.

By the glimmer of the pitch-pine torch, a little assistance from his noble mother and a backwoodsman by the name of Caleb Hazel, he picked out from a dog-eared copy of Dilworth's spelling-book, which had strayed away into those western wilds, the rudiments of a very meagre education.

The volume which he mainly studied was what we call the Book of Nature ; and for him its great words were full of eloquence and beauty ; its royal illustrations beamed with inexpressible splendor. He learned to love betimes the voice of the leaping streamlet, of the thunder and the storm. As Daniel Webster, he was fond of roaming through the lonely forest ; of driving through the drifting snows of winter ; of breasting the tempest and the gale ; of standing front to front with those majestic scenes which God spreads out alike for the eye of peasant and of peer, but which the peasant has the keener eye to see. His hands were early inured to honest toil, and the woodman's axe was the wand of his power until he attained the age of manhood.

This kind of training strengthened mightily his physical system, so that in his youth he was, like Washington, the most agile swimmer, runner, leaper, in his State. This style of training, also, imparted life and freshness to his thought, so that his words were always to the point, and marked with laconic power.

In 1817, the Lincoln family removed across the Ohio River into Spencer county, Indiana ; and here young Abraham aided his father in erecting a log cabin, in whose narrow loft he rested from his daily toil, and read by night his slender stock of books, until the age of twenty. The next year his beloved mother died, — leaving him her benediction and her Bible ; yes, and that sweet and genial temper, that reverence for Almighty God which held him to the eternal rule of rectitude, in the solitudes of the wilderness, on the rough political arena, as amid the blandishments of power, and made him a tower of strength, incorruptible, invincible, for the salvation of the State.

So lonely and isolated was the situation of the Lincoln family, that nearly a twelvemonth elapsed ere a minister could be found to perform funereal rites over that beloved mother's grave ; and what a day for that little mourning circle when the good pastor came ! The father, Thomas, holding Abraham and his sister by the hand ; the Rev. Mr. Elkins standing with them there in the midst of the primeval forest, performing solemn service, while the unbidden tears are falling, over that solitary grave of Nancy Hanks ! How strange the contrast between that evening scene of domestic sorrow and the outpouring of a nation's wail as the corse of one of that little group is borne to-day from city to city through demonstrations of woe unparalleled in the annals of man !

What has caused the contrast ? Those mother's hallowed lips ; the training she initiated ; the preparation I am now attempting to delineate.

It is a remark of Sir Walter Scott, in *Waverley*, that a paucity of books is favorable to the development of mental power in boyhood ; and I accept the statement. Mr. Lincoln had and read and re-read, until every word was indelibly imprinted on the tablets of his memory, *Æsop's Fables*, *Weems's Life of Washington*, and *Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress* ; and highly as I respect the services of the caterers for the victims of our modern juvenile literature, I most heartily rejoice he had but these three books.

The incomparable *Æsop*, reducing the sublimest principles of morality, political economy and æsthetics, even, to the slender comprehension of a little child ; the patriotic *Weems*, by the vivacity and glowing fervor of his style, inspiring, as no other man, a love of country and of the father of his country in the breast of youth, and the quaint, dramatic *Bunyan*, prince of allegory, painting the golden road to glory just as clear and bright as Jacob saw it shining underneath the footsteps of God's angels glancing over it ! And was it not some angel's hand that bore such golden bowls of

milk and honey into that log-cabin loft to nourish the mind of Abraham Lincoln from the age of ten to twenty ; — and was it not an angel's hand also that kept some other bowls, on which our children sometimes feed and grow up underlings, from reaching it ?

It is true that young Lincoln in his buckskin clothes and racoon-skin cap did pick up a little of Dobell's arithmetic at a log-house school, taught by Andrew Crawford, about the time of his father's second marriage. It is true, also, that he read "Riley's Narrative," and a life of that great Western statesman, Henry Clay ; but the literary companions of his daily life were Æsop, Weems, and Bunyan, and could Macaulay himself, think you, have selected better for a pioneer boy and a backwoodsman, forty years ago, or even now ? It is inspiration that the human spirit needs, and that these give.

Thus feeding his soul with a kind of celestial fire, and ever kindling it anew at the same creative shrine, he rose in mental power above the heads of those who bend exclusively over ancient classic lore, and are content to drink the cups which other lips have tasted.

This nation bears down to the portals of the grave, to-morrow, a glorious specimen of a self-made man ; and, say what we will in praise of college hall and consecrated grove, such have proved to be our best made men.

They are the working men, the practical, business men ; they learn by keen experience how the rough board, how the flinty rock, the axe, the scythe, the sickle feel ; they know the sharp sensation of a blistered hand, a burning tongue ; they come out of dream-land into actual contact with this matter of fact land, and they know by their own quick perceptions the distinction between hot and cold, sweet and sour, soft and solid ; — for them the objective world stands out in points so clearly cut, so luminous, so palpable, that the subjective seizes with unerring grasp the essential and the

true ; and such men are, therefore, in position to tell, not what other men dimly conceive and guess at, but what they themselves do actually know.

The teaching of history is that the alumnus of the alma mater must tread his diploma underneath his feet and lay his hand to the rugged oar of intellectual labor, if he mean to be of any essential service to himself or country.

As the headlands stand boldly forth along our line of coast to resist the dashing and encroachment of the surges of the ocean, so the self-made men of America have stood in the fore-front to defend the nation, and to give it majestic outline, power, and dignity. Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, Andrew Jackson, and, I dare add, Andrew Johnson, testify to the truth of what I say ; and if the names of Webster and Everett seem to contravene it, I tell you that to all intents and purposes they were self-made men, cleaving their way to fame and fortune by reiterated blows of manly and unshrinking toil.

Through and through, our honored President was a self-made man ; but the business to be transacted in this country demands self-made men ; the people love and honor self-made men, for they are the efficient, self-relying, quick-thinking and quick-moving men, and Mr. Lincoln being such, the people had a most profound regard and fellow-feeling for him, and hence with no ordinary sorrow they deplore his loss, and bitterly feel that a great man has fallen.

At the age of twenty-one, Mr. Lincoln removed with his father's family, in an ox-team, to a new settlement in the frontier State of Illinois. In company with another man, he cut and split the rails for fencing in ten acres of land ; he built a flat-boat and run it down to New Orleans, — an exploit in those early times demanding enterprise and daring ; he served gallantly as a captain in the famous Black Hawk war ; he espoused the protective policy of

Henry Clay ; set up a country store, and fortunately for his country failed in business, and then took up his borrowed commentaries for the study of the law. In 1834 he was elected to the State legislature, and three years afterwards, removed to Springfield, where he commenced the practice of the law in company with the late John T. Stewart, Esq.

But it were quite impossible here to present the record of his eventful and romantic life ; to follow him in his struggles against poverty ; in his earnest pursuit of knowledge ; his stanch adherence to principle during his labors as an advocate ; his various successes in political life, until he found himself the supreme leader of the old Whig party in the State of Illinois, and a member of Congress in 1847 ; to mark the first blow he struck against the traffic in human blood, his manly course upon the tariff question, the reception of the new territories and the disposition of the public lands ; the prominent part he took in the great senatorial contest of 1858, when, by the force of his powerful argumentation and invective, his ready wit, his shrewd and masterly management of the whole question at issue, he rose to cope successfully with the leading politician of the West, and left an impression of his mental power, of his sterling honesty, of his lofty patriotism, never to be effaced, and which even at that period turned the eyes of the Republican party to him as the fitting representative of its policy in the presidential chair. It were not possible — and events are so fresh in your memories, it is not needful — to follow him through the exciting scenes which immediately preceded his nomination as chief magistrate of the Union ; to trace him in his perilous journey to the city of Washington, when the nation was seething, as a vast caldron, with the elements of sedition ; or in his course during these last four years of crime and bloodshed, — so calm, so fair, so dignified, so just and true, — moving on step by step, intrepidly, just

as fast as the country could move ; holding steadily the ground obtained ; looking for the good of the greatest number ; hushing the clamor of the contending factions at the capitol ; calling forth the best talent within his reach to solve the mighty problem God had given him, and under a storm of obloquy and reproach such as no other man ever knew, guiding, with a strong arm, the nation through the surges of secession, through the wilderness of doubt and danger ; through the baptism of fire, till he himself, like Moses on the summit of Mount Pisgah, came to die in the prospect of that promised land which Heaven did not permit him, while on earth, to enter.

You know this mighty record well, for you have journeyed with him ; you have drunk with him of the waters of Marah and of the smitten rock ; you have seen the pillar of flame ; you have felt with him the anguish of defeat, the exultation of victory ; and hence you weep to-day as soldiers weep when a beloved companion in arms sinks by the wayside, leaving them to move along, revolving, in the silence of sorrow, sad memories of the departed.

But let us turn a moment from this outward life, and see what Abraham Lincoln, in the structure of his mind and temper, really was. Let us go down into the hold of the steamship that so majestically breasts the stormy floods, and look at the motive power that impels it thus triumphantly over them, — bearing it proudly onward above wreck and disaster to the appointed haven. As every man of mark, Mr. Lincoln had sharp, salient points of character, standing prominently forth to be read and admired of all men, and one of them was that sound and sterling common sense,

“ which only is the gift of Heaven,”

and which led him ever, as by intuition, to the right conclusion. He took enlarged and proper views of things ; and while some men were looking into some dark corner of selfishness, his eye swept over the whole extended field of action. He seemed to possess

that broad range and scope of vision which characterized Edmund Burke, and yet with this remarkable breadth of mind, he saw with astonishing clearness into the secret of things, grasped at once the why and wherefore of any question, and struck the knot of any difficulty right upon the head. He saw intuitively just what men and things were good for; he had the skill to use them as he wanted them, and this, I think, is one of the chief secrets of executive power.

I never knew a more close and shrewd observer of human life than our lamented President. He had the New England knack of guessing at the truth, — of guessing right; and so his guess was a prophetic omen.

It was by looking at things in the sunshine of this native, pre-scient, sterling common sense, that he came to lay his hand upon the heart of this nation, as the skilful player upon the strings of his instrument, and to make the discordant elements blend harmoniously for the perpetuation of the Union. It was by this celestial ray that he was able to hold fast to the “golden mean,” curbing the spirit of the ultras upon either side and drawing them in skilfully to strengthen the current and bear away the obstructions which they themselves had raised. It was by this God-given effulgence that he saw the magnitude of the question at stake; the cause and the tendency of the tremendous national agitation, and issued, when the right time came, and not till the right time came, that proclamation of freedom which stamps his administration as the most illustrious of them all; and sets up a landmark in the progress of the nations more magnificent than that of Magna Charta at old Runnymede.

Mr. Lincoln was strictly honest in his dealings with his fellow-men. I do not think he ever wronged a man of a single dollar in his life. His word was as good as his bond; you saw it in every lineament of his benignant features. He stood upright in the

integrity of an honest heart through the criminations and recriminations of the sharpest political strife ; and never was any sobriquet more fairly won than that of HONEST OLD ABE. —

“His was the celestial beauty
Of a soul that does its duty;”

and in an age of political and commercial huckstering and chicanery, when we were swinging fast away into bankruptcy of national and mercantile faith, it was of Heaven’s high mercy thus to set him up as a granite buttress of honesty to turn the tide.

Mr. Lincoln loved the truth, and lived it spotlessly ; his words, his deeds are pure as virgin gold, and this in times like these is loftiest virtue, far outshining any splendor of commanding intellect. Through the darkest, gloomiest storm of this unnatural rebellion, his honesty was —

“ Still an unmoved rock,
Washed whiter, but not shaken by the shock ;
His heart conceived no sinister device ;
Fearless he played with flames and trod on ice ;”

and this is why he was so profoundly loved by the American people, — *et extinctus amabitur idem.*

Our lamented chief magistrate was a man of great Republican simplicity. In his mode of dress and address he was as unaffected and as simple as the ancient Cincinnatus. In this he was a fitting representative of what our nation was in the times of the sage Franklin ; the plain and sensible John Adams ; of the other unpretending fathers of the revolution, and of what it ought to be to-day.

He assumed no French airs ; he followed no foreign fashions ; he did not forget, he did not wish to forget, his humble origin. He went about his business at the White House just as one of the

people; he shook you cordially by the hand as one of the people. He conversed with you frankly, without any pretension or parade; he sympathized with you as a kind and generous friend; and this is another reason why your tears flow forth so freely over his remains, since the large-hearted forever stir, by some angelic power, responsive chords in other noble hearts; and this leads me to assert that our beloved President was a man of the finest, tenderest sympathies. His head was a "fountain of tears" for those in distress. His private, his public, life was luminous, all over, as the starry firmament, with deeds of charity; with touching instances of kind consideration for the poor and the unfortunate.

One of the last acts of his life was to send a sum of money to assist the patriot Petigru of Charleston, in the sad reverses he had met in that hot-bed of secession for adhering steadily to the principles of the Union.

His sympathies extended to the little children, — to the bondman, — to the misguided and the wounded rebel.

On one of his reception days, three little girls in plain attire, the daughters of a mechanic, came in to look at him, but fearing to approach him, were moving around him at a distance in the crowd, when he, observing them, in his cordial way exclaimed: "What, little girls, are you going to pass me without shaking hands?" and taking them up in his arms, as the Good Shepherd of old, he tenderly bestowed on them his blessing, while many eyes were moistening at the touching beauty of the scene.

At another time, some one saw him counting over a pile of "greenbacks," when, looking up and smiling, he observed: "This may seem rather out of place for me; but the truth is, a poor old negro, having the small-pox at the hospital, and not able to write his name, has found it difficult to draw his pay, and I have taken some little pains to get his money for him."

Will not that simple deed shine beautifully down through the un-

born generations? Does it not send up a little radiance to the eye of Him who said, "In as much as ye have done it unto one of these, the least of my disciples, ye have done it unto me?"

His heart, though mighty as a lion's, was full of the milk of human kindness; his golden charities, as the perfume of the sandal wood, flowed out even upon the axe that was cutting his life away; and perhaps no man ever revealed more of the spirit of that touching verse of a beloved poet of our own society, —

"A little word in kindness spoken,
A motion or a tear,
Has often healed the heart that's broken,
And made a friend sincere."

He had a great, loving, generous heart, and his actions come to us as sunbeams through the cloud of war; they enshrine him eternally in the deepest chambers of the soul of his country.

The man whose honored relics are to be deposited in the tomb to-morrow was, in the best and broadest sense of the word, temperate. He held command over his own spirit. He revered the soul which God had given him, and the temple in which it dwelt. He looked not upon the wine when it was red.

A wager once was laid that he could not lift a barrel of whiskey. He bent his athletic frame and raised the cask containing forty gallons to his lips, and filled his mouth with the intoxicating draught, when some one standing by, cried out, "Well, that is the first time, Abraham, I have ever seen you swallow a drop of whiskey." "And, you have not seen me swallow it now," rejoined the sturdy son of temperance, at the same time throwing the burning liquid from his mouth. "Nor," says the writer, many years later, "have I known of Mr. Lincoln's drinking any spirituous liquor since."

Though exposed to the temptations of a great and dissolute cap-

ital, our Executive Head kept himself pure and unspotted from the world; so that his enemy, even, could say, "Mr. Lincoln has no vices."

Our Chief Magistrate was a man of indomitable industry. His days and nights were consecrated to intense intellectual labor; whatever he undertook to do, he finished. His mind was a tempest till he understood the question he was studying, and could see entirely round and through it. He learned to cut away intellectual difficulties as with axe he felled the forest in his boyhood.

"I remember," says Mr. Lincoln, "how, when a mere child, I used to get irritated when anybody talked to me in a way I could not understand. I don't think I ever got angry at anything else in my life. I can remember going to my little bedroom after hearing the neighbors talk of an evening with my father, and spending no small part of the night in walking up and down, and trying to make out what was the exact meaning of some of their, to me, dark sayings. I could not sleep, though I often tried to, when I got on such a hunt after an idea, until I had caught it; and when I thought I had got it, I was not satisfied until I had repeated it over and over, until I had put it in language plain enough for anybody to comprehend. This was a kind of passion with me, and it has since stuck by me, for I am never easy now when I am handling a thought till I have bounded it north, and bounded it south, and bounded it east, and bounded it west."

Here is a course of intellectual education superior to anything set forth in the works of Milton, Locke, Fenelon, or Rousseau, — giving the mind mastery of itself and its possessions, and the ability to settle questions of the highest moment on the basis of eternal truth. Mr. Lincoln says, again: —

"In the course of my law-reading I constantly came upon the word *demonstrate*. I said to myself, 'What do I mean when I *demonstrate*, more than when I reason or prove? How does *demonstration* differ from any other proof?' I consulted Webster's Dictionary; that told of 'certain proof;' but I could form no idea what sort of proof that was. I thought a great many

things were proved beyond a possibility of a doubt without recourse to any such extraordinary process of reasoning as I thought *demonstration* to be. You might as well have defined *blue* to a blind man. At last I said: 'Lincoln, you can never make a lawyer if you do not understand what *demonstraté* means;' and I left my situation in Springfield, went home to my father's house, and stayed there till I could give any proposition in the six books of Euclid at sight. I then found out what demonstration means, and went back to my law studies."

What a severe and self-denying discipline! What an admirable preparation for meeting his political opponents and grasping logically the great partisan questions of the day! So William Pitt braced up his thought, by reading Euclid, for his gigantic efforts in the British Parliament; so Abraham Lincoln came to the successful *demonstration* of the mighty theorem of a nation saved and strengthened by emancipation!

Thus, through the full development of the physical system, a native good sense, unimpeachable integrity, the culture of the social affections, simplicity in living, the perusal of a few books of sterling character,* and the constant collision with some of the strongest minds of the West, Mr. Lincoln came at length to be a man of commanding intellectual ability. I may not have your quick response to this; but still I must maintain that we are now holding obsequies over a man of transcendent mental power.

He was very plain and unpretending, to be sure; but he was keen, sagacious as Thomas Jefferson or Alexander Hamilton to discern the real "status" of a case, and sound to the core in logic and in argumentation. Some of his speeches, and especially his last inaugural, are perfect masterpieces. Some of his sentences are Demosthenic; they come like solid shot from the Colum-

* Mr. Lincoln's favorite author in later life was Shakspeare. Macbeth and Hamlet afforded him intense delight.

biad. His wit was keen and trenchant as a Damascus blade ; and though he might not have possessed the graces, he had the power of oratory ; and that is the main thing, after all. The ring of eloquence was in him, and when you heard, you felt.

He stated his point with absolute precision ; he kept to it with unflinching pertinacity ; and his excellent judgment, his apt illustrations, his racy anecdotes, his downright honesty and invariable good-humor, enchained the attention of the popular assembly and produced conviction. His official papers have, I know, been keenly criticised ; but to my mind they are among the very best that ever emanated from the White House. They are the honest transcript of his thought ; they tell in plainest language just exactly what he means to tell, so that the public cannot fail to understand him. They mark out with masterly hand just what is to be done ; and if state papers are not written for this, then I ask what you would have them written for ? I know the English have often sneeringly spoken of Mr. Lincoln as a man of ordinary, if not inferior, ability, and some men at home have echoed this opinion ; but to express contempt is one thing, — to work out an immortal name is quite another.

Could any man of common ability, think you, have raised himself through the sharp struggles of the strong-minded politicians of Illinois from a log hut to a seat in our national Congress ? Could a man of ordinary talents have met and discomfited in seven intellectual battles in open field such a giant as Judge Douglas ? Could any man of low mental energy have penned such an inaugural address as that of Mr. Lincoln when he took the helm of state ? Could any man of no marked intellectual power have grasped that helm as he did in 1861 ; with treason, as the guns upon the Light Brigade at Balaclava, in front of him, treason to the right of him, treason to the left of him, and treason to the rear of him ; with the military power in the hands of the rebellion ; with no

army or munitions of war ; with no well-trained generals ; with no navy at his command ; with everything in tumult and disorder ; with mutiny itself on the quarter-deck ; — could any man without ability have taken the crazy old ship of state, at such a time, swung out upon the breakers and the quicksands, and have piloted her through the rocks of secession, — the Scylla and Charybdis of the political parties, amid the clashing of ten thousand counter-currents of opinion, along beneath the storm and thunder-bolts of such a war as we have had ; holding the kings abroad and the rebels at home at bay, and keeping such a bark in such a sea from foundering ?

Do you believe it ? Could a man of any inferior mental force have so built up such an army ; so sustained the public confidence and credit ; so cut up the roots of human slavery ; bringing on step by step the dawn of freedom's glorious day ; silencing by masterly strokes of policy the tongue of calumny ; breaking up the very den of rebellion ; out-mastering the master of rebellion ; leading what we called a "ruined country," as William the Silent led the United States of Netherlands, out of the wilderness ; resisting slave-power as that William resisted the Inquisition ; breaking up slave-power as God broke up the pride of the Egyptians in the ruby sea ; — could any man of second-rate ability have executed that ? There is not another man, I do believe, upon the face of this fair globe that could have done it ; and when you say that a great man, a prince in Israel, has not fallen, I tell you that you do not understand the magnitude of the work that has been achieved, the peril from which this Union has been rescued, or what it is to settle a question that has baffled the skill of ablest statesmen for a century, or to meet the expectations of the advocates of Freedom, and demonstrate to the world that "still she lives."

Our deceased President was a true patriot. He loved his country with intense affection ; he wept over it in its bleeding struggles ; he bravely did his best to avert the bloodshed, and when it came,

he would have sacrificed his life at any time to have stayed it. He loved the honored names of the patriots of the revolution; he loved the soldier, — he shook his hand with thrilling interest, and when he saw him sick or wounded, the fountain of his tears was opened and he did what could be done for his relief. In view of the unceasing, self-denying labors of woman to assuage the sorrows of war, he once in the fulness of his heart observed: “If all that has been said by orators and poets since the creation of the world in praise of woman were applied to the women of America, it would not do them justice for their conduct during this war.”

Yes, he was a true patriot, — your tears confess it. He loved the Union; tasked the whole energy of his noble soul to save it: he HAS saved it. The flag floats low indeed, but proudly over it; and so we calmly and trustfully breathe above his grave; — *REQUIESCAT IN PACEM.*

“With conquerless will
He has climbed from the base to the top of the hill;
Undaunted in peril, unwavering in strife,
He has fought a good fight in the battle of life;
He has been our warm friend in woe and in weal;
Just as firm as the rock and as true as the steel;” —

and if to befriend the widow and the fatherless; if to love judgment and follow mercy; if to live soberly and honor the truth; if to devote our talents sacredly to the service of our fellow-men; if to cherish a forgiving temper, — to bless our enemies; if to save a bleeding country and to let the oppressed go free; if to take daily counsel of God and to acknowledge his Son Jesus Christ to be our Saviour, — entitle us to indulgence in the audit-chamber of the Almighty Sovereign, may we not hope that he, whom we deplore, has joined the illustrious ones of the eternal city, and beholds the complete demonstration of that principle of love by which his course below was guided?

Thus, gentlemen, I have endeavored to touch upon the leading

characteristics of our beloved Ruler, over whom, pale, cold, speechless as the monumental marble, this nation now is weeping, and for whose loss it will indeed more bitterly weep as it comes more and more to realize the immense debt of gratitude we owe to him. What tongue, think you, can tell it? We are indebted to him for the worth of a consistent example in private and public life, — for some of the noblest sentiments of humanity ever spoken; we are indebted to him for the rescue of our bleeding country from the clutches of the most foul revolt this world has ever seen, and for leading us through fire and blood to a high position as a people; we are under obligations to Abraham Lincoln for setting up our shattered fortunes at home and abroad, — for uniting the bonds of the broken Union, and for making them ten times mightier than before, — for casting out the evil spirit of the nation, — for opening the preliminaries for a permanent peace, because based on the principles of humanity, and for inaugurating a career of unexampled civil strength and prosperity.

We are indebted to him for making that word “Yankee” everlastingly honorable.

Shall we not, then, drop a few garlands of praise; shall we not, then, shed a few drops of kindly sympathy; shall we not chant a few mournful dirges over his consecrated grave?

Yes, thou noble scion of the tree of Liberty, — honored outgrowth of our Republican institutions; yes, thou representative man of modern times, bright as the star of morning in thy genius, temper, integrity, honor, patriotism; yes, thou peerless pioneer in the cause of human freedom, — thou conqueror of thine enemies by the power of goodness; thy name shall be embalmed in the most sacred cells of our grateful memories; it shall glow serenely in the constellation of the worthies of thy native land, unobscured by that of the immortal Washington! Yes, thou martyr, sealing thy love

of freedom by thy blood ; the rallying cry henceforth shall be, —
 “ Washington the FATHER, Lincoln the SAVIOUR, of our country ! ”

“ While kingdoms crumble, old and hoary,
 In a world where all is transitory,
 These names shall ever shine, twin stars of glory,
 With undimmed splendor in our nation's story.”

But let the martyr sleep. His mission is accomplished ; and, because of his departure, there remains the more for us to do. As he himself once said above the braves of Gettysburg : “ It is for us the living rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work thus far so nobly carried on ; it is rather for us * * * that we here highly resolve that the dead shall not have died in vain ; that the nation shall, under God, have a new birth of freedom, and that the government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth.” And could those silent lips still move again, the words, I think, to us would be : “ Maintain the heritage which the God of your fathers has intrusted to your hands ; love justice, show mercy, relieve the oppressed, march on manfully to possess the land before you : I have led you to the borders, — have pointed you to a Joshua, who will lead you in triumphantly. The deep water-floods are murmuring still ; but the Lord God omnipotent reigneth ; his bow is in the cloud ; the returning dove admonishes you that the deluge of his wrath is subsiding ; the signs of your manifest destiny are in the heavens ; and out of the deeps of his providence God is calling you to fulfil his purposes of mercy. Weep not for me, but, with undaunted front, move on to execute the mandates of the Almighty, to build up the temple of freedom, along whose massive walls shall be written, ‘ SALVATION,’ and over its golden portals, ‘ PRAISE.’ ”

ARRANGEMENTS were made with Hon. Henry Wilson to furnish the exceedingly interesting eulogy delivered by him at the same meeting; but he was suddenly called to Washington, rendering it impossible for him to provide a copy: it is therefore omitted. Below will be found a short abstract from the Boston "Evening Transcript" of May 5th, 1865:—

"Hon. Henry Wilson followed in a brief eulogy. He corroborated, from personal observation and intercourse with the late President, many of the traits of character that Rev. Mr. Nason had dwelt upon. The nation, he thought, had failed to comprehend fully the character of Abraham Lincoln in all its proportions; but now that he had suddenly fallen, in the moment of crowning victory, the people were beginning to do justice to their lost leader. He would pass into history as the foremost man of the age. Mr. Lincoln was a genuine product of our Democratic institutions, and had a living faith in their permanency. His sympathy for the poor and oppressed was hearty and genuine. Of his mind, one characteristic was the power of stating an argument clearly, and of quickly detecting a fallacy. He had also a felicity of expression. There were many phases of power and beauty in his letters and speeches. The speech at Gettysburg was instanced as containing some of the noblest utterances of any age."

The Burial of Abraham Lincoln.

READ BEFORE THE SOCIETY.

“ I would save the Union, and I would save it in the shortest way under the Constitution.”

PRESIDENT LINCOLN.

LONG and loud is the People's wail,
 From city and village, hill and dale :
 The crowded street is draped in woe,
 The half-mast flag is drooping low,
 As the sad cortege winds afar
 From State to State with funeral car,
 Like an Eclipse which veils the sky,
 So solemn is the obsequy.

Do tears like these, so freely shed,
 Hallow some royal chieftain dead,
 Or mourn we boundless wealth or power,
 That lived the wonder of an hour ?
 Ah ! no. His were no blazoned arms,
 Nor dazzling, intellectual charms ;
 But, who in Fame's proud path can find
 Such moral grandeur of the mind ?

Like Israel's king, by unseen Hand
 Raised to restore a bleeding land,
 In darkest hour he looked to God,
 Alone the path of duty trod,
 Saw the poor slave forever free,
 Then, martyred, fell in victory.
 Alas ! And do the avenging skies
 Demand such noble sacrifice ?

Aloft the Stars on Sumter waved,
The Battle o'er — the UNION saved,
And songs of Peace his bosom stirred,
Songs, such as Judah's hills once heard,
When, as he saw the end of strife,
He sealed his Mission with his life ;
His glory chose the better part,
His goodness won a Nation's heart.

I. H. S.

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