

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

ORATION

— BY —

REV. M. BURNHAM, D. D.

—: OF :—

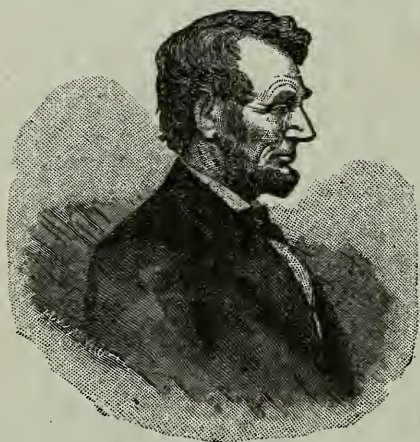
ST. LOUIS, MO.

Delivered May 30th, 1895,

MEMORIAL DAY,

— AT —

SPRINGFIELD, ILL.



ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

ORATION

By the **REV. M. BURNHAM, D. D.**

OF ST. LOUIS, MO.

Delivered May 30th, 1895,

MEMORIAL DAY,

—BY REQUEST OF—

Ransom Post No. 131, Saint Louis

Department of Missouri, Grand Army of the Republic.

ON THE OCCASION OF THEIR PILGRIMAGE TO THE

Tomb of our Martyred President,

AT SPRINGFIELD, ILL.

"The speech was replete with tender touches, apt illustrations and patriotic fire, and will dwell long in the minds of all who heard it."—*St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, May 31, 1895.

ST. LOUIS, MO., June 17th, 1895.

REV. M. BURNHAM, D. D.,
St. Louis, Mo.

Dear Sir :

The undersigned, Committee in behalf of Ransom Post No. 131, Department of Missouri, Grand Army of the Republic, desire to extend to you our most sincere and cordial thanks for services rendered by you in delivering the Oration upon the occasion of our pilgrimage to the tomb of our Martyred President, Abraham Lincoln, at Springfield, Illinois, upon Memorial Day, May 30th, 1895.

We simply express the voice of Ransom Post when we say that your oration was a most masterly effort, and one well worthy the occasion.

In extending to you these thanks, we desire to say that it is done by the unanimous vote of Ransom Post, held at the last meeting, June 8th, 1895.

With assurances of our personal regard, we are,

Yours, very sincerely,

A. G. PETERSON,
J. F. CLULEY,
J. E. ASHCROFT,
Committee.

R. B. SCOTT Commander,
JAS. B. WILDE, Adjutant,
Ransom Post No. 131,
Department of Missouri, G. A. R.

3844 Delmar Boulevard,
ST. LOUIS, MO., July 1st, 1895.

Gentlemen :

I am in receipt of yours of the 29th, which is as follows :

REV. M. BURNHAM, D. D.,
3844 Delmar Boulevard, St. Louis.

"ST. LOUIS, June 29th, 1895.

Dear Sir :

At the Meeting of Ransom Post, No. 131, Department of Missouri, Grand Army of the Republic, it was unanimously voted that you be requested to allow your oration on Abraham Lincoln to be published in pamphlet form at the expense of the Post.

JAMES B. WILDE,
Adjutant.

Fraternally yours,
R. B. SCOTT,
Commander."

In reply please allow me to say I appreciate the unanimous vote of the Ransom Post, and, while I am duly grateful for the honor conferred upon me by the Post, I can read and understand that deeper spirit that underlies your action, namely, that spirit of loyalty to our country and to the cause you so nobly served and to the name of Abraham Lincoln, whom we all honor. Joining with you in that loyalty, appreciating the services of the men, one and all, who helped save our country, when such service cost, uniting with you in thanksgiving to God for the life and work of Abraham Lincoln, I heartily accede to the request and furnish you the oration for publication. It was hastily prepared under great pressure from other duties ; but I give it to you as it is.

Very sincerely,

M. BURNHAM.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Memorial Service, Springfield, Ill., May 30, 1895.

MR. COMMANDER, MR. CHAIRMAN, MEMBERS OF THE RANSOM
POST, OF ST. LOUIS, MAYORS OF THESE CITIES, CADETS
OF THE UNIVERSITY, CITIZENS OF SPRINGFIELD, AND
FRIENDS, ONE AND ALL, GATHERED ON THIS OCCASION :

I esteem it a great honor to be permitted to address you, and yet no words can express my feelings or the way in which I shrink, before the monument inscribed with this historic name, from attempting any comprehensive or just eulogy of the man we all honor. I almost wish it were possible for these lips to speak again and this face to shine again with that inner light which moved it when he addressed audiences on earth.

When Michael Angelo had finished his statue of Moses he smote it with his hammer in his rapture, crying "Now speak," as if he somehow believed that the gift of speech might be added to his conception of the man in marble. I could wish the man in bronze, whose memory is dear to us, could speak to-day. But he does speak, and with silent, mighty power his voice has come down to us through the decades. Moreover, there is an accumulation of earnestness and potency after these decades and since history has more and more truly put him in his place as one of the foremost, if not *the* foremost, historic name in the nation.

There are two questions which I shall ask, and attempt briefly to answer in what I shall say at this time.

1. The first is, What made this man what he was and gave him the position of power that we so honor?

2. The second question is, What did Abraham Lincoln bequeath to us or to the nation he loved?

The answer to these two questions is worth our thought. I do not know that there is any accurate philosophy, or that there is any philosophy by which accurately we can determine what a life shall be. The babe comes into the home—into our home—into your home or mine—we love it, we caress it, we have bright hopes for it, possibly, but there is no data or philosophy of events by which we shall accurately determine what that life shall be or do, as we attempt to prophesy its future. I am sure we could not have prophesied the future of Abraham Lincoln had we stood by his cradle; but we are not asked to read the life of Abraham Lincoln forward to-day—but we do read it, and with swelling pride and with deep emotion, backward in history as we sum up some of those powers or influences or causes that produced the man. I will say:

1. Abraham Lincoln owed much, undoubtedly, to his heredity. From nothing, nothing comes. So I believe somewhere in the heritage of that lad, born in the wilderness and reared in the wilderness, with everything seemingly against him, with a father manifestly not of the greatest energy of character, and with a mother whose history is comparatively unknown to us, there was yet in the Lincoln stock, and for that boy of the log cabin, a heritage and combination and fineness of blood that ran through veins whose exterior was comparatively rough and unpromising. He was born to be a child, if not eventually, yet for at least those earlier years, of little contact with the world—to be clad in the roughest garb and to be surrounded with little else beyond his humble home than the beasts of the field, and the birds of the air, and the strange mystic voices of his wilderness life. But I say somewhere, somehow in the history, or in the heritage of that son of Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks, was the blood of freedom and an heritage of life that carried him through privation, sorrow and hardship from the first moment of his existence until the hour when his precious life was taken by the das-

tardly hand of the assassin. This heritage had to do with what he was.

2. Those personal qualities that were peculiarly his, were prophetic of his future.

a. He possessed a marvelous physical strength. Scarcely any stories of the heroes and reputed Gods of fable life are more full of physical conquests and physical strength and physical courage than that life of this young giant of the wilderness. You move with him from victory to victory with a kind of fascination you cannot shake off—whether he is lifting the river boat from the dam, on which it had stuck, by his genius—or meeting the negro brigands on the bank of the Mississippi—or shaking Jack Armstrong, the bully of the Clary's Grove boys, above his head, with Jack's long legs dangling in the air while Lincoln shook him as easily as the lurcher would shake a rabbit—or whether he stands before the aged Indian, who had come half starved into the camp with a safe conduct from Gen. Cass, and saves him from the infuriated atrocities of the soldiers who were fighting Black Hawk's men, until "Bill Green" declares, "I never saw Lincoln so 'roused before"—or whether you follow him into your own Springfield and there find him hand to hand sometimes in those earlier days with problems that taxed all his strength—wherever you look at him you are fascinated with the physical courage of the man. It was that giant power of physical life within him, as well as the intellectual and moral power of the man, that met *Douglas* in that hundred days of debate and came almost unscathed bodily from the herculean task. It was, I say, the giant strength of the boy of the plow and the farm—the power to fell forest trees or defy bullies—that had to do with the future of Lincoln.

b. But he had that thirst for knowledge, likewise, which never left him. It was well-nigh abnormal. The Bible, Pilgrim's Progress, Æsop's Fables, were the only books he had at first in his log cabin, and he mastered their contents as easily as the ordinary boy will master his alphabet. He could recite large portions of them. He could give by heart all of Æsop's Fables. He never let a moment for reading pass by. His retentive memory and his unquenchable thirst for knowledge were qualities life-long. He was always an omnivorous reader. He read thoroughly; he read rapidly;

he digested rapidly. Whether he took Euclid, or an English grammar, books of law, histories of nations, and especially his own nation, the history of great men, the rise of parties and political movements, whether he studied as a boy or as a man, to the extent of his ability he made himself master of the whole theme in hand. He allowed himself to be superficial in nothing, but went to the bottom in everything. The traits of the pioneer boy became the traits of the mature man of Congress. He was not a child of battle fields; but he studied battle fields. The finished externals of the men with whom he came to be peers were not the possession of at least his earlier life; but nothing escaped him. He aped no one in externals; but the fineness of his soul came more and more to put upon the earlier awkwardness of his exterior a refinement the most polished dancing master could never have given.

I must emphasize this thirst for knowledge. I do not know where he obtained it or where it came from, but I do know it was the key to all his success. He was eminently a self-made man. If he could not enter the halls of learning, the result of the halls of learning in the best authors and the best treatises must come to him. He spared no pains in getting knowledge; books on every theme he coveted and as fast as limited means and opportunity allowed, they became his possession and were mastered by him one by one until he was a man of great erudition in the arts of peace or war—in mathematics, history, language or philosophy. Such a man labors, especially in early life, with great disadvantage; but what he does make himself master of, it is his—pre-eminently his own. So what Lincoln knew, he knew, and knew because he learned it, not in theory alone, but he applied everywhere his acquisitions of knowledge to practice. You cannot fail to be fascinated with the scholarly element of Abraham Lincoln, whether he bends as a boy in his log cabin, by the light of the pine-knot fire, over the borrowed life of Washington, or studies in later life far into the small hours of the night the great battles of the world or the science of war, that he may be able to understand and intelligently direct or correct the tardy movements of the splendid army of the Peninsula; we are stimulated by the student; and we know why he became as familiar with the great questions that agitated the country through the decades of years, in all their length and breadth,

as the valedictorian of the Latin class with the rules for the subjunctive. He studied laboriously. He was thorough and he was broad in thinking and investigation. His speeches at length were listened to, not only for the personal magnetism of the man, but because of the closeness of their logic and the wealth of learning which they revealed as digested, and because the illustrations brought from every phase of life about him instructed and entertained the most learned and fastidious of his critics.

c. But he possessed a moral courage, which had to do with the man. Gently as the mother bird with her young, he would wait by the roadside to put a sparrow that had fallen from its nest under the protecting wing of the parent bird ; or he would halt in the freezing cold of a winter's night to carry on his back some poor drunkard, who had imbibed too much and was in danger of freezing by the roadside. He was as tender as a mother on that side of his life—but he did not fail to attack great wrongs. He would defend a child from unjust wrath ; or a young man from unjust accusation. There was something of the lion in Lincoln ; slow to be roused, possibly, because the lion was never roused except intelligently. A colored boy, the son of a widow, was once in a way kidnapped in Louisiana, whither he had gone from Springfield, Ill., on a river boat. He was in danger of being sold as a slave, and Lincoln vowed before God, if there were no law by which he could reach that boy, he would fight for twenty years until such a law existed.

Lincoln had courage—that moral courage that would permit him to take part in nothing unless he saw it to be right, and that would finally lead him, through his intelligent conception of the right, to die before he would yield. He was stung to the quick by insults ; but he never manifested, save in deepest moments, the emotions that filled him, and then when roused nothing could daunt him or put him down. He awed his enemies and opponents sometimes by the power of his righteous wrath. He handled the excited, angry mob in the same way and moulded them to his will. Some of the brightest men of the nation knew his moral courage and respected it. It was this that commanded the respect of Stephen A. Douglas, his most active opponent in the West, and this moral uprightness and courage by and by made Douglas his friend. It

was this that conquered adversaries again and again and swept down opponents that were not adversaries and won them over to a cause that was his by a moral right given of God.

When an anti-slavery friend of a certain man, who knew Lincoln well, was applied to for advice and asked, "Who shall I get for a lawyer to take a case that needs moral bravery?" "Go to Lincoln," was the reply. "He is not afraid of an unpopular case. When I go for a lawyer to defend an arrested fugitive slave, other lawyers will refuse me; but if Lincoln is at home, he will always take my case." This was true. Abraham Lincoln always had the courage of strong conviction. I think this was one of the most eminent qualities in his varied life and one that had much to do with his success.

d. In his personal qualities I cannot fail to mention the humanity of the man. Lincoln was human, of course, but he was humane in the noblest sense of the term. He had reverence for Being as Being, and this is always a sign of greatness; it is an element in all great character. I care not whether Lincoln looked at Being in some poor fellow who was pressed down by poverty, or in a negro slave, whose cause he espoused at heart ever after he saw the condition of slavery in New Orleans on his river voyages, or whether he sought to defend some client who was unjustly oppressed, or to defend in later years some man in public office unjustly criticised—he was noted for his humanity. It was well-nigh impossible for Lincoln to see suffering and not be touched. It was impossible, well-nigh, for Lincoln to sign the death warrant of a soldier who had slept on duty, or had been guilty of some misdemeanor, which the army so often punished severely. Lincoln's course was different from that of many in this. He could not help being humane. He always espoused the cause of the lowly, the oppressed or the suffering.

Moreover, he knew what it was to struggle, and to the marrow of his bones he believed in doing good. He always wanted to do good to somebody and to help somebody, and those awful battle fields of Bull Run, or Antietam, or Chancellorsville, or Gettysburg, or the Wilderness—the slaughtered dead—the sights in hospitals—on the field—they cut him to the heart. Indeed, I think it was in his humanity that he came, if you please, into touch with the whole life and mission of Him who was not only human, but

Divine. You remember the reply to an Illinois clergyman—“When I left Springfield, I asked the people to pray for me; I was not a Christian. When I buried my son, the severest trial of my life, I was not a Christian; but when I went to Gettysburg and saw the graves of thousands of soldiers, I then and there consecrated myself to Christ. Yes, I do love Jesus.” A friend of mine told me that he once saw Lincoln at the White House, care-worn, depressed, having passed a sleepless night in thought and effort to secure the release of some soldier boy condemned to be shot. Yes, Lincoln was a humane man. But

e. He had that prophetic insight into the future that is necessary for all great leaders. You remember again and again, in the memoirs of his life, it is said that he would all at once lapse into a kind of unconsciousness concerning things about him. That far-away look came in his eyes and he was well-nigh utterly oblivious to everything going on about him, and when roused, would declare, to use his own expression, “I was off wool-gathering.” But this power to measure the present in its relation to far-reaching future results was an important element in Mr. Lincoln’s greatness. Take his debates with Douglas—when someone cautioned him about a certain measure that might injure his chances for the senatorship from Illinois, he declared, “I am hunting bigger game,” and his wisdom proved in his handling Douglas that he was seeking farther-reaching results than a senatorship from Illinois. He knew somebody must meet greater issues for the country, and that in a few years. Take his wisdom in dealing with McClellan or concerning the criticisms thrown in his way by the ill-timed newspaper editorials of Horace Greeley. Take him almost anywhere, and when you have given months and years of time to his statements you will find him wiser than the wisest of his friends. By a kind of prophetic insight into the future he regulated present deeds and words.

3. You ask again what made Lincoln what he was. I say it was a country that made it possible for him to grow; a country that makes it possible for a Wilson, or a Garfield, or a Grant, or a Lincoln to stand by and by a peer to a king on his throne. I shall have occasion to refer to this again when I come to the fact of what Lincoln left us.

4. But it was more than a country; it was an opportunity, an epoch in his country's history that made Lincoln what he was. The man was ready and moved into his place under the lead of God when his country needed him. His inauguration as President of the United States was no accident. He was the *only* man for the place. I care not to discuss whether epochs make great men, or great men make epochs; but I simply say here that this back-woods boy, with his peculiar training, with his ability to endure hardship, with his physical strength, with his thirst for knowledge, with his moral courage, with his humanity, his reverence for Being as Being, his prophetic insight, his loyalty under the stars and stripes that floated as the ensign of a country that made it possible for such a boy to aspire and to be—the epoch in that country's history for just this man trained of God, as well as self-trained—it all had to do with results; and I say that when the opportunity came, trained for his place, Lincoln stepped *into* his place.

5. But I think another point ought to be noticed. Lincoln had a moral purpose as big as the possibilities of his own being. He always felt that there was something greater in advance of him to be done, until his work was finished. He never regulated his life by a low motive. He had a motive as big as the possibilities involved in his life, and he somehow felt that his life was under the training of the Providence of God, and he could not afford to make it small. Which ever way you look at his life, God was training Lincoln for the Presidency of these United States. There was not a single step in the progress where you cannot, as you read backward, trace the Divine hand, until Lincoln's work was done and his mighty heart ceased to beat. He was one of the most wonderful men of history.

But now let us turn to the other question—What has Lincoln left us as his legacy?

1. In the first place, he has left us himself. The best legacy any man can leave his home, his city, his commonwealth, his country, is himself—not his possessions, but himself. Not what he gathers round him, but what he is.

Something has been said about turning this monument over to the State; I believe the thing has been done and a sum voted to keep it in repair—a noble thing to do. But, however

that may be, let me say here that neither this city, where he so long lived and where you so honor his name; nor this State, justly proud of his record and loyal to his memory as we see to-day, holds the man. He belongs to the United States. Not a State in this union that does not, to-day, bless his memory. To the United States did I say? He belongs not only to the United States, but he belongs to the world. He is a man of history. Speak his name anywhere to-day and it elicits the interest and applause of every man worthy the name of man, and of every nation worthy the name of nation, the round world over.

I do not know that it is always wise to compare men; but the literary world to-day are treated on the right hand and on the left to Napoleonic life and literature. I have stood, as some of you have stood, at the tomb of Napoleon, with the sentinels about it and with the splendor and magnificence of that tomb built for the centuries. His life God used, selfish as it was in ambition; but I confess to you that I would rather lie in the grave of a Lincoln, in the crypt under the base of this monument, with the tears of a nation falling to-day, after three decades of history, a thousand times, than lie in the splendor of Napoleon's tomb. Lincoln had no selfish motives or ambitions. God was using him as no scourge in his hand to punish his country or the nations. Lincoln had no throne in mind. He desired to wield no scepter of power for power's sake. Greater thoughts stirred his soul. He was a patriot. He was laboring all his life long on lines of truth and righteousness. He brought all the power of the majesty of his being to establish truth, to establish humanity, and by and by to make the kingdom where his power was exerted a part of that greater kingdom of righteousness and peace.

2. But Lincoln has left us a nobler conception of humanity. He has taught us emphatically the lesson of its sacredness. "I admit," he said in the struggle over the Kansas and Nebraska bill, when Stephen A. Douglas had proved disloyal to the Missouri compromise and it seemed as if slavery would be extended into the Territories, "I admit that the emigrant to Kansas and Nebraska is competent to govern himself; but I deny his right to govern any other person without that person's consent." It was this sentiment, finally,

that broke the shackles that would have bound Kansas and Nebraska and later Territories to the Union by and in the bonds of slavery.

I suppose some of you have stood here and there by the statues of men whose beneficent deeds and life have fallen like a benediction upon the world. I shall never forget the feelings with which I stood by the statue of John Knox, at Edinburgh, with the finger of the right hand pointing heavenward and the left hand clasping the Bible as the book of God. That statue has done more for the evangelization of Scotland and to make Scotland what she is than many other influences combined. But I declare to you that, with our history behind us, with the strange vicissitudes of war, with the tremendous opposition that the friend of the slave and the down-cast has had through so much of our history, with the influence of the emancipation of the slave upon other nations and sure to be more and more felt to prevent the tendency to barbarisms in other and future centuries, I believe there is scarcely a statue on earth of mightier significance than that of Abraham Lincoln with the emancipation proclamation in his hand. Would to God that to-day christian nations would study it as they ought! Would to God to-day that half-barbaric nations, like Russia and Turkey, would study it as they ought! I do not mean as a conception of art alone—in this aspect it is magnificent—but I mean as a conception of God's notion of the rights and greatness of man in His image; as prophetic of a day that is to come; as symbolic of the love of a great God who bends over us and would strike, not only the shackles from the slave, but strike off the shackles of ignorance and superstition wherever they bind humanity. It is to me one of the most speaking statues of the world, and the great, divinely humane face above us, finished in bronze, seems to me as I speak to possess a light that shines from the heaven of heavens itself.

3. But Lincoln stands to-day as an inspiration for the young life of a nation like America. The old Roman world deified its heroes, deified abstract virtues: but here is humanity—not deified, but exalted, and no man can look on this statue and think of the life that is behind it without a new inspiration for toil. When I take the chain of events in his life and move along from point to point, I find an increasing inspiration as I read. You cannot help standing with a kind of wonder

by the little log cabin in the Kentucky wilderness, where on that dar February 12, 1806, Abraham Lincoln, who was to be the sixteenth President of the United States, was born. You may trace the events of his life, until by and by you stand with the lad, ten years of age when, as one of that stricken home accompanied by Parson Elkin, the Kentucky preacher, he stood at the grave of his mother in Indiana, and your tears fall with his. Lincoln never forgot that day. "All that I am or hope to be," he declared in later days, with great tenderness, "I owe to my angel mother." With growing wonder we pass through the years of strange events until he has adopted Springfield as his home and begins to move out into the life of strength and vigor of relationship to his country, enters his campaign with Douglas, and like experiences. I pass over succeeding years until we find him, having carried the West on these great National questions, standing in Cooper Institute, in New York, as majestically master of the situation as when he stood on the platform in a small town in his native State and began with his quaint ways and talk, that had not adopted always the language and pronunciation of the schools, to make his address, until the great congregation were listening now with bated breath and now cheering to the echo with thunderous applause, this wonderful man. "When I came out of the hall of the Cooper Institute address," said one, "my face glowing with excitement, my frame all aquiver, a friend, with his eyes aglow, asked me what I thought of Abe Lincoln, the rail splitter? I said, he is the most wonderful man since St. Paul, and I think so yet." Then stand at his nomination as President and the welcome given him as the news reached his native Springfield; or the days of the more formal delegation, of which Geo. Ashmun, of my own Springfield, Mass., in the East, was chairman; or stand by his sad, sad death-bed on the morning of April 15, 1865, when the stricken body of Lincoln was carried to the White House followed by a little procession of weeping but stern-faced men—"the victim of a needless, cruel crime," and when the country were listening to the tidings of the foul, unnatural murder, that went over the length and breadth of the land, and were lamenting with spontaneous bitter tears, when bells were tolled and minute guns fired. I say when you follow that history you do it with strange fascination and in-

spiration, and every boy in the commonwealth who reads it is inspired to be a nobler, better boy ; every man is stimulated to be a better man ; he learns to despise wrong and injustice and to love humanity and truth and right.

4. Lincoln has left us the very noblest conception of our land and of loyalty to the stars and stripes. Did you ever come to a foreign port after days of inland travel and see the American flag flying at the mast-head of some American vessel? Did you ever look at it without emotion? What does it stand for? "When our flag goes up and down the Nile; when it goes streaming through the desert," says one of our finest scholars, "there is not an Arab on his horse, or a peasant at his plow that does not hail with delight our starry banner." But what has made it what it is—the cruel hand of the destroyer? Nay, it is men like Lincoln; it is men like Washington; such men have stamped America with its power. Such men have helped make our flag mean what it does and have helped add to its meaning for our own nation and for the world.

5. But our Abraham Lincoln has given greater meaning to national unity. Our country has grown to be immense. Down to the time of Jefferson a man who had been as far west as Ohio was considered a great traveler. When Jefferson concluded with Napoleon Bonaparte the purchase of Louisiana, we extended from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains. But the Mississippi River at the beginning of this century was the unknown river. Vast have been the strides of the century. From a narrow belt of land on the east sea-board, we have grown to a territory more extensive than Rome could boast in her proudest days of conquest. From a population of three and a half millions, we are now a nation of sixty millions and more; a nation that stretches between two mighty oceans, oceans connected by railroads that thread the continent. Our industries are marvelous. The little patches of Indian corn on our eastern coast have given way to the vast, vast prairies. The old hand-looms of our maternal ancestry have given way to the thousands and thousands times thousands of spindles. In 1860 our wealth was \$16,160,000. In 1880 our wealth had increased \$27,482,000,000. But our increase from 1880 to 1890 was still more startling, and our cities have grown like magic. Our first

printing press was in Cambridge in 1639; our first newspaper in 1704—and to-day look at the contrast! One of the Governors of Virginia wrote in 1671, “I thank God there are no free schools or printing presses, and I hope we shall not have for these hundred years.” Look at the contrast! Our national progress means much.

But now I say that there is no man in modern history that, since the armies of our Revolutionary War fought under Washington for our liberty and independence as a nation, has done so much for the preservation of the national unity as Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln presided at the birth of the Republican party at Bloomington, Illinois, May 29, 1856, and made a speech at that convention that electrified that entire audience. His nomination at Chicago in 1860 and his subsequent election completed the work, and for all those years, so momentous in the history of our country, it was this man and the leader of this party that moved forward to unify and weld together our native land as one.

Lincoln was at the helm in a day when no man but he could have done the work he did. He was as truly put there by an all-wise Providence as Washington was put into his place and kept there immortal until his work was done.

The close of Webster’s celebrated oration, through the life of such a man as Lincoln, has had a wonderful emphasis in these three decades. Listen to those sentences: “When my eyes shall be turned to behold for the last time the sun in heaven, may I not see him shining on the broken and dishonored fragments of a once glorious Union; on States dissevered, discordant, belligerent; on a land rent with civil feuds, or drenched, it may be, in fraternal blood! Let their last feeble and lingering glance rather behold the gorgeous ensign of the Republic, now known and honored throughout the earth, still full high advanced, its arms and trophies streaming in their original lustre, not a stripe erased or polluted, nor a single star obscured, bearing for its motto no such miserable interrogatory as ‘What is all this worth?’ nor those other words of delusion and folly, ‘Liberty first and Union afterwards;’ but everywhere, spread all over in characters of living light, blazing on all its ample folds, as they float over the sea and over the land, and in every wind under the whole heavens, that other sentiment, dear to every true

American heart—"Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable!" "

Now I say Lincoln put the whole power of his majestic life into that "Liberty and Union." He died a martyr to the cause he espoused; he sealed the sacred bond of liberty with his blood; that blood cried to heaven itself for "Union and Liberty," and God heard the cry and the nation bowed in prayer and tears, and, while God answered prayer, said "Amen."

But I cannot leave you to-day dear friends without one more thought in advance even of what I have already said. That thought is this:

6. Lincoln has left us a better heritage of national purity. He was more than a politician; he was a statesman, and a statesman with a great moral motive that left the country better for his life. We have not yet finished our battles as a nation; not battles with the hilted sword and the tramp of armies let us hope; but truth is yet to struggle; our nation is not yet pure; we are yet cursed with national sins that cry to heaven.

You, some of you, were soldiers under Lincoln. Will you now gird yourselves, one and all, for yet great, perhaps greater victories than have yet been won? I entreat you to be loyal to the highest and holiest interests involved in our national life. A nation has served its purpose only as it is allied with the Kingdom of God. Our place and power as a nation must be determined by that standard. Some of you may have been with Sheridan; you remember that night, when having been up to Washington after his Shenandoah raid, he rested at Winchester. Mounting his horse after breakfast the next morning, he rode leisurely on toward his command, little thinking that for hours his army had been driven like sheep by the overwhelming surprise and attack of the enemy under Gen. Early. Soon the sound of the cannonade broke upon his ear. Then it grew nearer and louder; his heart leaped to his throat. His practiced ear told him the truth—his army were routed! He put spurs to his horse and came upon the flying soldiers. He could not endure to think of his proud army as broken, scattered and destroyed. His whole nature was aroused. He would not be conquered. The number of the flying increased! "Face the other way,

boys! face the other way! we are going back." The flying men paused. They recognized their commander. They hastened to rally. The wounded by the roadside cheered him on as the shout ran: "Sheridan has come! Sheridan has come! Sheridan! Sheridan! Hurrah!" His horse was covered with foam, his face was ablaze with excitement, as he appeared at length before the larger remnant of his flying army to turn them back. In a brief lull of the battle he formed his line. "Boys, if I had been here, this would not have happened, and now we are going back. Face the other way!" Back and forth he rode for two hours, cheered everywhere. He would not trust his orderlies to give his commands. He gave them in person. His own presence and power must inspire his army. "March!" A general advance! a splendid sight! Out in the open field! A volley from the rebel battery; the lines were rent again, and wavered; but the tremendous power of that man, galloping, threatening, appealing, held his men. They rallied again; on moved the musketry. Then "Charge!" and, with Sheridan at the front, his eyes flashing fire, they won; it was a victory of magnificent proportions snatched from the jaws of defeat.

Oh, soldiers of the Grand Army and Citizens gathered here at this hour! I have looked with unutterable longing for evidences of victory for our country along the battle lines of more glorious achievements. To whom shall we turn? Shall it be to our generals? Lincoln is beyond the shock of battle; his tomb is here. Your own Sherman, your loved General and your first Post Commander, sleeps in the cemetery yonder, in Missouri. From McGregor, the soul of the heroic Grant went up to God. The gallant Sheridan is on the silent roll of the dead.

Shall it be to our statesmen? I know not the man big enough to hold the forces of life here from defeat, or direct them to battle. But there is ONE on whose head are a thousand crowns; his brow has a diadem of stars gathered from the centuries. He is "The Lion of the Tribe of Judah." He rides gloriously. His sword is the flame of Truth eternal, and it is unsheathed for victory. His vesture is dipped in blood, and "He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, King of Kings and Lord of Lords." Oh, comrades on a score of battle fields and loyal soldiers in a

great cause, march with Him into victory now and forever! I hear not only the multitudes of ancient Israel, but the legions of history and the best thought and life of this American people saying, "Amen" to the Psalmist's words: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle." "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord of Hosts, he is the King of Glory."

He shall be triumphant. He shall stir the hearts of men and of nations for victory along the battle lines of Truth. Wheel into line, O North! wheel into line, O South! wheel into line, O ye comrades of Fredericksburg, and the Wilderness, and Port Hudson! Ye heroes of many battles! follow your triumphant Leader and Lord to His victory. Identify yourselves with the "King of Kings and Lord of Lords;" and you shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. And so to-day, about the tomb of the martyred, glorified Lincoln, we clasp hands and covenant to make America a part, a glorious part of the Kingdom of Truth and Righteousness.







