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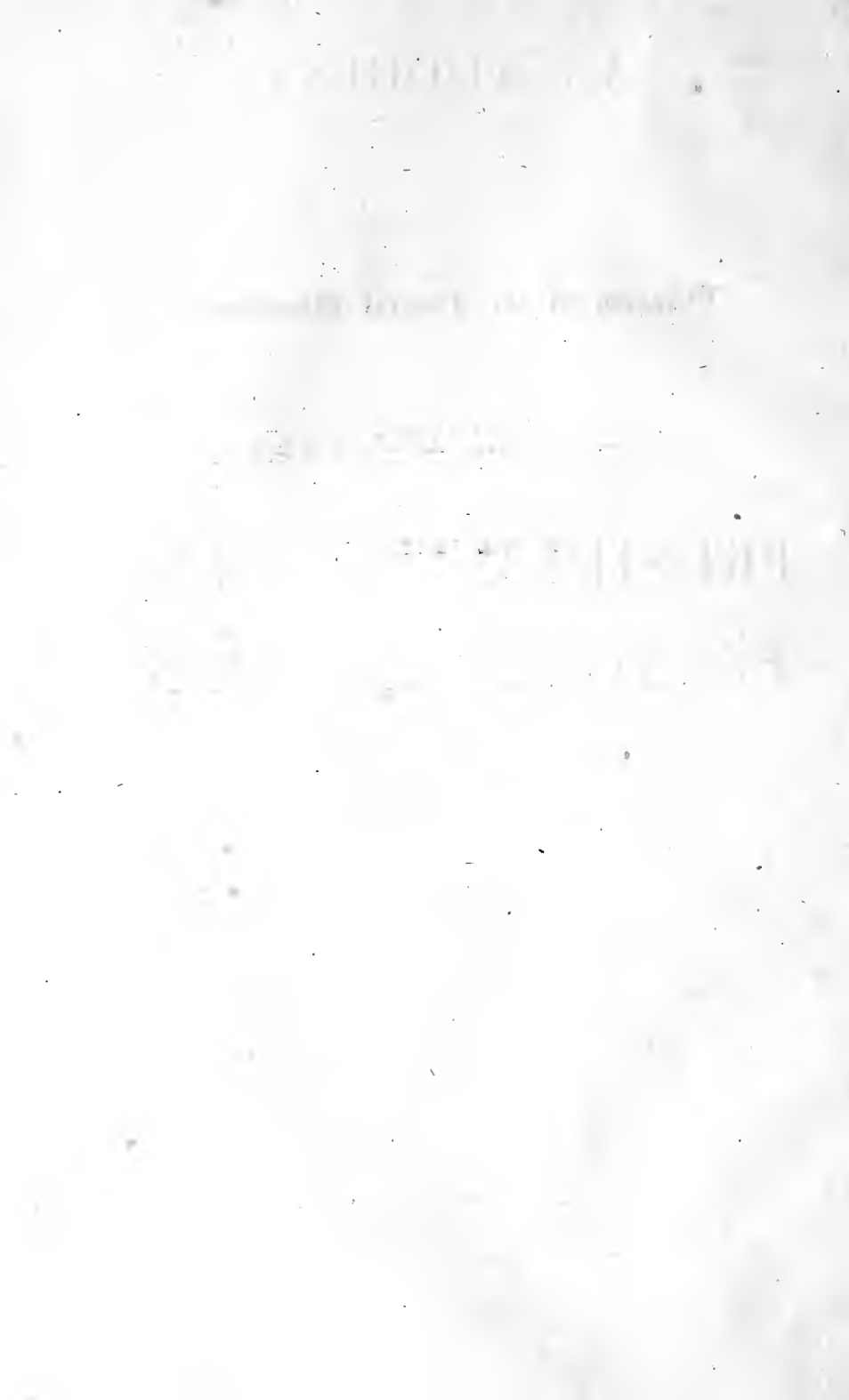


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AN ADDRESS

ON THE DEATH OF

PRESIDENT LINCOLN.



AN ADDRESS

ON THE

Occasion of the Funeral Obsequies

OF THE LATE

PRESIDENT LINCOLN,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

CITIZENS OF RANDOLPH, VT.,

APRIL 19, 1865.

BY REV. E. H. RANDALL.

MONTPELIER:
WALTON'S STEAM PRINTING ESTABLISHMENT.
1865.

CORRESPONDENCE.

RANDOLPH, VT., April 20th, 1865.

Rev. E. H. RANDALL,—

Dear Sir: Having listened to your address, delivered at this place the 19th inst., on the occasion of the funeral obsequies of our late President, we respectfully request of you a copy for the press.

J. K. PARISH,
GEO. W. DILLINGHAM,
RICHARD ANDRUS.

RANDOLPH, VT., April 22, 1865.

GENTLEMEN:—Your note of the 20th inst. is at hand. In reply, I thank you for your kind regard.

In furnishing a copy of my address for the press, I must state that, owing to its hasty preparation, I deem it expedient to make some slight changes in it. Thus altered, it is at your disposal.

Very truly,
E. H. RANDALL.

ADDRESS.

A GOOD MAN HAS FALLEN. Brief though this eulogy be, to say more would, I fear, be but to trifle with the memory of him for whom a nation mourns. To interrupt the flow of tears which do mark the intensity of your grief, would be an unwelcome intrusion; and I will not long intrude. Grief which words cannot express, will be only increased by the vain attempt.

We have come up to this house of prayer, in the presence of God, to mingle our common sorrow. We have come here to weep and to pray. We have come to sorrow over the fearful calamity which has so recently overtaken us in the midst of our rejoicings. Oh! "the joy of our heart is ceased; our dance is turned into mourning."

Silence is most befitting this hour. It were better, that our aching hearts were allowed mutely to consider their sorrows: better, that we linger here for a season in silent communion with Him who is even now whispering, "Peace, be still: and know that I am God." It is well, however, that, having looked to Him for grace and guidance, we give our attention for a short time to the cause of our present mourning; that we speak of the noble—the lamented dead. And oh! that my words could, in any slight measure, meet the de-

mands of the hour; that I might, in the least degree, utter language which should not do irreverence to the occasion.

Eighty years of our national history have enrolled upon its pages the memorials of her strong pillars. He who first took her from the womb of the mighty past, and nourished her infancy, is noted there. The illustrious Adams, Jefferson and Madison—guardians of her early youth—now speaking to us in the language of wisdom and good example, are written there. Their successors too, who filled the place of greatest responsibility, and who in their turn went peacefully to their rest, are noticed in the records of the past. And, alas! to-day the national heart is throbbing in the midst of the funereal obsequies of one whom the civilized world has learned to honor and to love. To-day makes the mournful record of the burial of ABRAHAM LINCOLN. Abraham Lincoln? no; *he* is not dead; for while we bewail the loss of his presence in the councils of the nation: while we may no longer look upon the features of him whom four years of consistent life, wise policy, unflinching integrity, kind-hearted sympathy, manly generosity, almost superhuman energy, and a godlike merey, have taught us to regard with more than filial affection: while, as at this hour, the slow, the solemn, the heart-broken procession moves to the narrow house, there to deposit the visible part of our beloved benefactor: while every village and hamlet, throughout the wide land, is draped in the habiliments of deepest sorrow: and

while God's will (mysterious though it be to us) is being done; we find some relief in our affliction from these assurances that Abraham Lincoln, though dead, is living still; and, although his presence in a visible form, to cheer and to guide us, will henceforth be no more,—his influence, his penetrating wisdom, his rectitude of purpose, his forgiving heart, will live on in the memories of future generations to the end of time: and his history, or rather the annals of his administration of the government of this nation, will stand out upon the historic page with a superlative brightness: his sayings—his noble deeds—his kind offices—his private affability, and his public valor; (for he dared to be, and to act himself:) these, together with his love of freedom and his devotion to the welfare of all mankind, will, by those of the ages to come, be perused with candor and studied with diligence.

And, methinks I see the future student of history, with mind intent upon the records of the past, turning the interesting pages of our history from '76 downward; scanning every sentence, word and letter, noting here and there the great events which freemen should understand, and which should be selected for transmission to generations to come. And no part, I think, will more deserve his attention; no part shine with greater luster; no part have the impress of a mind great and good more plainly stamped upon it, than the period from March 4th, 1861, to April 15th, 1865. I see this same student intensely eager to grasp the mighty events connected with the war of Rebellion, Slavery and Sin. He turns the radiant pages till the

evening of the 14th day of April, 1865; and, behold! the fiendish assassin has written this last one in letters of blood!

Thus, fellow citizens, will close the history of the nation's noblest friend. Let it be written out in characters of living light, let it be known by our posterity, that Abraham Lincoln, the truest friend of a rebellious people: that Abraham Lincoln whose leniency to traitors was exercised, almost to a weakness: that Abraham Lincoln who, day by day, remonstrated with the enemies of freedom and humanity: and, who never uttered a sentence of revenge towards those whom his position made it necessary for him to chasten: that this true hearted patriot, whose words were always the simple expression of good nature and common sense:—let it be plainly recorded, I say, that this man was brutally murdered by traitorous hands. And that they may not err in their judgment of the moral sense of this nation,—nominally Christian at least,—that they may not fail to discover our appreciation of the great distance between a Christian people and modern chivalry; let it be written, that this wicked tragedy did not pass by without indications, appropriate and beautiful, of the depth to which it penetrated the national mind; that a loyal, liberty-loving and God-fearing people, on this 19th day of April—a day already filled with historic interest, made doubly interesting now,—put on the badges of grief and assembled together, as in one great congregation, to testify of our high esteem for Mr. Lincoln, and of our sad affliction in his removal from earth: and also, to express our

determination henceforth to sustain the government in applying with utmost rigor the penalties which justice demands and law prescribes, against the leaders of this conspiracy.

Be it not said of us, however, that we acted in the spirit of revenge; that we had no sympathy for the misguided many; that we executed law and justice without discriminating between the innocent and the guilty. Better far, if it be said, that we showed mercy so far as consistent with the peace and security of the nation; remembering, however, that mercy to individuals is not always justice to the country.

Mourning friends: Many times you may have asked why it should be thus? Why an all-wise Providence should allow our beloved Chief to fall so suddenly from our midst; but the answers are not forthcoming. I have *thought* many: I have dared to *speak* none.

Burdened, as we are, with grief, let us look upward; let us remember that though our late President has fallen, God has *not* fallen; that though a lamented Patriot is no more, God still *lives*.

We do well, if in the midst of our affliction, we learn patiently to bear it: and, weep though we must, yet we may not sorrow as those without hope.

God moves in a mysterious way; and, while we may not pry into His secret will, we may so consider His providential dealings with us as shall help us to a better understanding of our relations to Him and to a fuller acknowledgement of His righteous will. And in this view I seem to hear it whispered that idolatry

which sets our hearts on things upon the earth and not on heavenly treasure: idolatry which leads us to trust in man—in the strength of armies—and in the skill of generals, instead of leaning upon God, who alone can cause one to chase ten thousand; that idolatry in some form or other, may be our crying sin. It is a word of wide meaning; and whether our great sin lie within its signification or not, it becomes us at all times, and especially at *this* time, to examine into our past course, that we may turn from our evil ways.

God has often laid His heavy hand upon this nation, and now He bears us down with a triple weight. He has observed our waywardness, our want of faith, our arrogance, and our pride. He has observed, and forbore to lay upon us, the full measure of our deserts. Military disasters have frequently come upon us; fasts have been appointed: we have increased our armies; turned our fasts into carnivals; and listened not to His reproofs. Though often chastened, we have not been humbled; though sternly rebuked, we have continued boastful and self-reliant: and oh! my friends, God has spoken by His afflictive providence to us once more. Now, as by a contrast, He would seem to compel us to realize that there is a difference—a vast difference—between the house of feasting and the house of mourning. What more powerful means could he have chosen by which to accomplish it!

Yesterday, filled with hope and happy expectation: our joys—our praises, and our boastings too, going forth upon the same breath: to-day, “the joy of our

heart is ceased," and we sadly follow our Chief, wrapped in a bloody shroud, to the tomb.

He who a ten days' since wrote from the headquarters of triumphant armies, sending joy to loyal millions in those expressive words, "all seems well with us," is now removed from the strifes and turmoils of earth, while a grief-stricken nation submissively bows the head, trusting that all is well with the nation's dead.

While we weep, however, let us be hopeful: let us not forget that Almighty God can overrule all events—even this seeming calamity—for good: let us hope that this act of assassination may prove to be the last link in the long chain of arguments, convincing the world that this war, begotten in iniquity and nourished in ambition, is but a stupendous system of murder on the part of its originators; waged in the spirit of malice; and conducted in utter violation of the rights of a deluded people; dependent for its life upon a power already fast dwindling to a banditti of thieves, murderers and assassins.

The nations of the earth cannot look upon this last sad tragedy in our history, without branding with eternal infamy a cause which lives upon hatred and revenge, and which wrecks the venom of its wicked spirit upon friend and foe alike. They cannot do it.

Fear not then. God fights our battles for us. He goes forth with our statesmen, our generals and our soldiers: and even now, before the last tribute of esteem be paid to the earthly remains of Mr. Lincoln,

God sends us further tokens of His mercy and love. Let us not, then, be cast down; let us look up to Him, earnestly and constantly beseeching His blessing upon the cause of justice and righteousness. Let us, following his example who has gone before us; nay, rather, following Him who died and rose again for all men, ask for forgiving minds, patiently waiting and laboring and praying for an honorable and a permanent peace: a peace the more honorable for having been obtained in justice; and the more secure for having been purchased at the price of noble blood.

