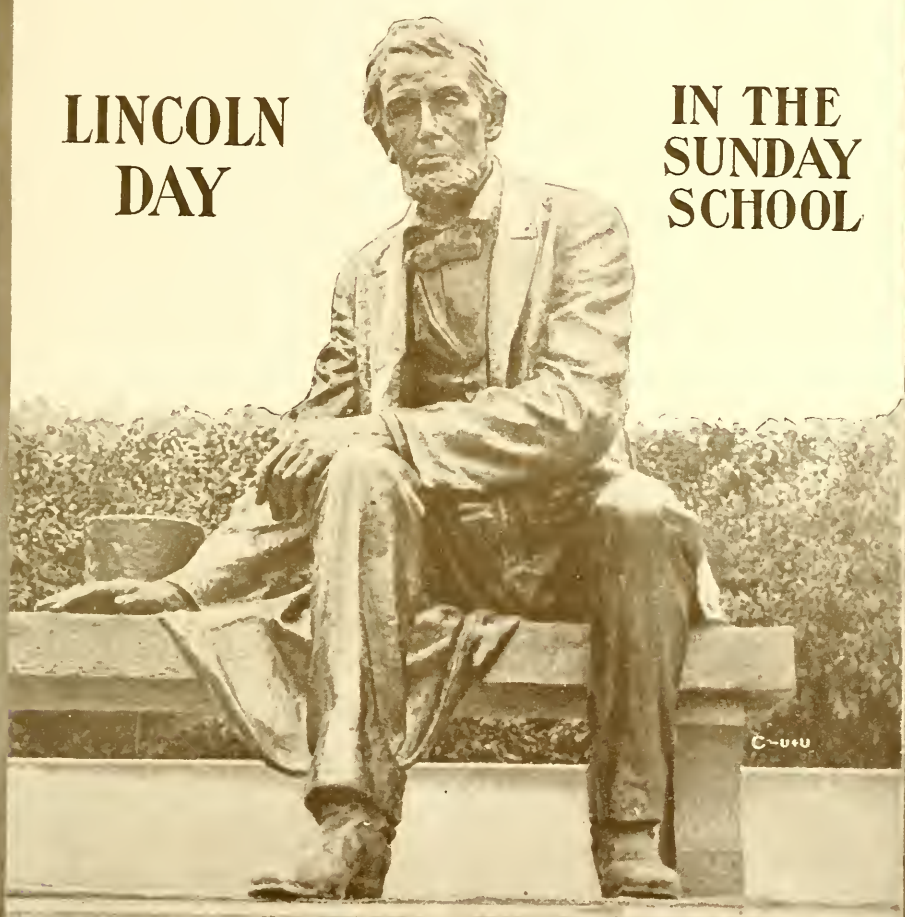


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GOD'S COUNTRY

LINCOLN DAY

IN THE SUNDAY SCHOOL



"With malice towards none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphans, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and a lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

The American Missionary Association
 287 FOURTH AVENUE, NEW YORK

God's Country

Opening Hymn—(Tune: Materna.)

O beautiful for spacious skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
Above the fruited plain!
America! America!
God shed his grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brother-
hood
From sea to shining sea!

O beautiful for pilgrim feet,
Whose stern, impassioned stress
A thoroughfare for freedom beat
Across the wilderness!
America! America!
God mend thine every flaw,
Confirm thy soul in self-control,
Thy liberty in law!

O beautiful for heroes proved
In liberating strife,
Who more than self their country
loved,
And mercy more than life;
America! America!
May God thy gold refine,
Till all success be nobleness,
And every gain divine.

O beautiful for patriot dream
That sees beyond the years
Thine alabaster cities gleam
Undimmed by human tears!
America! America!
God shed his grace on thee
And crown thy good with brother-
hood
From sea to shining sea!

Katherine Lee Bates.

Scripture Lesson: Rev. XXI:1-4

Leader *I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.*

School *And I, John, saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*

Leader *And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying "Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God."*

School *And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.*


Leader Is this a description of heaven?

School No; not of heaven itself, but of a place which must be very much like it, for this, as we have just read, is a vision of a holy city called "New Jerusalem" which is to *come down from God out of heaven.*

Leader Where will this holy city be located?

School It is as likely to be here as anywhere in the world; for New Jerusalem is a symbol of human society as it will be whenever and wherever God has his way. It therefore stands for any country that is really God's country.

Leader Would it not then be quite as proper to speak of "New America" as New Jerusalem?



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Half Minute Reports from The American Missionary Association Fields

FIRST REPORTER

I Speak for the Negro Field

One-tenth of the people of the United States are of Negro blood. Their ancestors were cruelly captured, brought to these shores and sold for slaves. Fifty years ago they were set free by Abraham Lincoln. They began their life of freedom without education and without possessions, owning not even the clothes upon their backs. In the course of half a century they have made wonderful progress. Three-fourths of them can now read and write. They own more than a billion dollars' worth of property. In this great war they have made a splendid record as soldiers, yet they still need help. More than anything else they need education. We have among them 26 High Schools and 5 Colleges where we are training leaders, preachers and other professional men, farmers, mechanics and, most of all, teachers. We have also 179 flourishing churches.

SECOND REPORTER

I Speak for the People of the Southern Mountains, Three Millions of Them.

We Call Them the American Highlanders.

They are of the same race with Abraham Lincoln. Shut in by their mountain heights and cut off by their poverty from the life and opportunity of the modern world, they have remained poor, ignorant and backward. We have among them three High Schools and a College full of ambitious boys and girls of splendid promise. An enormous proportion of the students and graduates of these institutions have been following the flag in the great war.

THIRD REPORTER

I Speak for the Indian Field

There are in this country about 350,000 Indians. They are the first Americans. The whole country once belonged to them. Their old savage plan of living, in which the women did the work and the men went to war and hunted game, is no longer possible in our modern world. They are being civilized and taught the white man's way of living in government schools and their land is being distributed among them that they may use it as farmers. We are helping by churches, Sunday Schools and day schools and especially by our fine Normal Training School at Santee, Neb., to lead them over the perilous bridge from barbarism to civilization. Indians make earnest and devoted Christians and thrifty citizens. The soldiers they sent to the great war were of the bravest sort and were wonderful as scouts.

FOURTH REPORTER

I Speak for the Eskimo Field

Our work lies at Cape Prince of Wales, the extreme northwestern point of this continent where America reaches over with its finger tips and almost touches Asia, close by the Arctic Circle. The people there once lived in hunger, want and fear in their damp, miserable dugouts through their long, dark winters. Our mission has done wonderful things for them, providing them abundant food through the reindeer herds, comfortable homes and a life of happiness. There is now the largest Eskimo village in the world at Cape Prince of Wales. This centers in a Christian church, everybody belongs, everybody goes and everybody sings. But we sorely need, at the present moment, heroic missionaries for our Eskimo work.

FIFTH REPORTER

I Speak for the Oriental Field

This comprises Chinese, Japanese and Hindu settlers on the Pacific Coast and in Utah, immigrants from vast countries beyond the sea, among whom we have a group of flourishing churches and Sunday Schools. These people make generous Christians. They are sending men and money home for the spread of the gospel in the crowded countries from which they came.

I speak also for the Hawaiian Islands, largely peopled at the present day by Japanese and Chinese who have come thither to work on great sugar and pineapple plantations. They sorely need the Christian gospel. Here too we have a flourishing church, a Christian Endeavor Society and a Sunday School in the famous Leper Colony.

SIXTH REPORTER

I Speak for the Field of Porto Rico

This, our new possession, is a beautiful island crowded with people most of whom are very poor. They have, for centuries, been under the blight of a harsh Spanish rule and of a degraded form of Catholicism. To the blessings of a free and honest government which Uncle Sam has given them we wish to add the blessing of a pure faith. Besides 11 churches we have placed there a beautiful Hospital—for it is a sickly country—where we minister to more than 100 patients a day.

SEVENTH REPORTER

I Speak for our New Mexico Field

Here lies a group of little, remote, stagnant villages among the mountains settled long ago by Spanish-speaking people from Old Mexico. Here we have schools which are like little, green oases in a desert land. Our teachers at these points are the finest of heroes battling with disease and superstition, introducing Christian ideals and showing the beauty, cleanliness and order of Christian homes. To this field too belongs our Rio Grande Industrial School where boys and girls add to ordinary school duties a training in the practical work of modern life.



School Yes; it certainly would. Whenever we repeat the Lord's Prayer, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in Heaven," we are praying that our country may become God's country.

Leader What sort of a place will America be when it has become God's country?

School Boys It will be a land of genuine liberty, of even-handed justice, of equal privileges for all, of clean living and practical righteousness.

Girls It will be an intelligent land, with the best of free schools and libraries, a place where knowledge and wisdom go hand in hand.

Boys It will be a busy land, humming with fruitful industry and therefore a land of plenty, where poverty is unknown; and at the same time a land of leisure, where all the workers, both young and old, shall have ample time for play and full opportunity to enjoy the good things of life.

Girls It will be a land of order and many-sided beauty; a land of happy homes; a land of good will and full of kindness; a land of reverence, whose people love God with all their might and their neighbors as themselves.

All Such will be God's America.

Leader Will this New America, like the New Jerusalem, come down from God out of heaven?

School Yes; it will come from the Spirit of God, which descending from heaven moves upon the hearts and works mightily through the lives of men and women. This is going to be God's America because the American people, by God's help, are going to make it such.

Leader When will this work begin?

School It has begun already. Our fathers commenced it long ago when they came to these shores seeking to build here a commonwealth of freedom and of faith.

It has been carried on since then by men of the same spirit, of whom Abraham Lincoln is a conspicuous example.

No small progress has been made. We already have one of the freest, happiest lands that the world has ever known, and yet it is far from being completely God's country. Much remains to be done.

Leader Who is to do it?

School All of us who love God and follow Jesus Christ are appointed to take up the work.

Leader How is our task to be accomplished?

School We are to proceed somewhat as a farmer does, who has waste land to redeem. *Vice*, which is like a poisonous vine, must be destroyed. *Injustice*, which is like thistles and brambles, must be cut down. *Superstition*, which is like stagnant water, must be drained away. *Prejudices*, which are like stones, must be removed. *Indolence* and *Idleness*, which are like weeds, must be uprooted. *Ignorance*, which is like a barren soil, must be broken up and the good seed of *Knowledge*, of *Industry*, of *Thrift*, of *Christian Faith* and *Love*, must be planted.

Leader With what instruments is such work to be done?

School Our principal instruments are of two kinds. First—churches with educated ministers who know their Bibles and are able efficiently to teach and preach the great life lessons of the Christian faith. Second—schools which, with a reverent spirit and in the fear of God, open to their pupils the wide book of human knowledge.

Leader What portion of this noble task comes before us today?

School Certain fields for which we are working under the leadership of the American Missionary Association.

Leader What fields are these?

School The Association labors for what are known as “the less privileged” races of America; peoples who, though they are under our flag and fellow citizens of our own country, have never had an equal chance with the rest of us to receive and enjoy the benefits of life.

Leader Please give your attention to reports from these fields. We shall now hear from our first Reporter.

(Here follow in turn the seven half-minute reports from The American Missionary Association fields.)

Leader Let us thank God for the privilege of working with him in these great tasks, and let us ask his blessing upon the work and the workers.

Prayer,—closing with the Lord’s Prayer.

Leader Let us now take a practical part in the business of making America God’s country by a generous gift to The American Missionary Association.

Remember the words of our Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

Offering for The American Missionary Association.

Hymn—“My Country, ’tis of Thee.”

Benediction.