

THE HISTORY OF THE

245
Presbyterian Church of Harrisburg,

APRIL 19, 1865.

In Memoriam.

AN ADDRESS BY THE PASTOR,

Rev. S. S. MITCHELL.

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1865.



WASHINGTON, D. C., *April 15, 1865.*

MAJOR GENERAL DIX:

Abraham Lincoln died this morning, at twenty-two minutes past seven o'clock.

E. M. STANTON,
Secretary of War.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, D. C., April 17, 1865. }

TO THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES:

The undersigned is directed to announce that the funeral ceremonies of the lamented Chief Magistrate will take place at the Executive Mansion, in this city, at 12 o'clock noon, on Wednesday, the 19th inst. The various religious denominations, throughout the country, are invited to meet in their respective places of worship, at that hour, for the purpose of solemnizing this occasion with appropriate ceremonies.

(Signed)

W. HUNTER,
Acting Secretary of State.



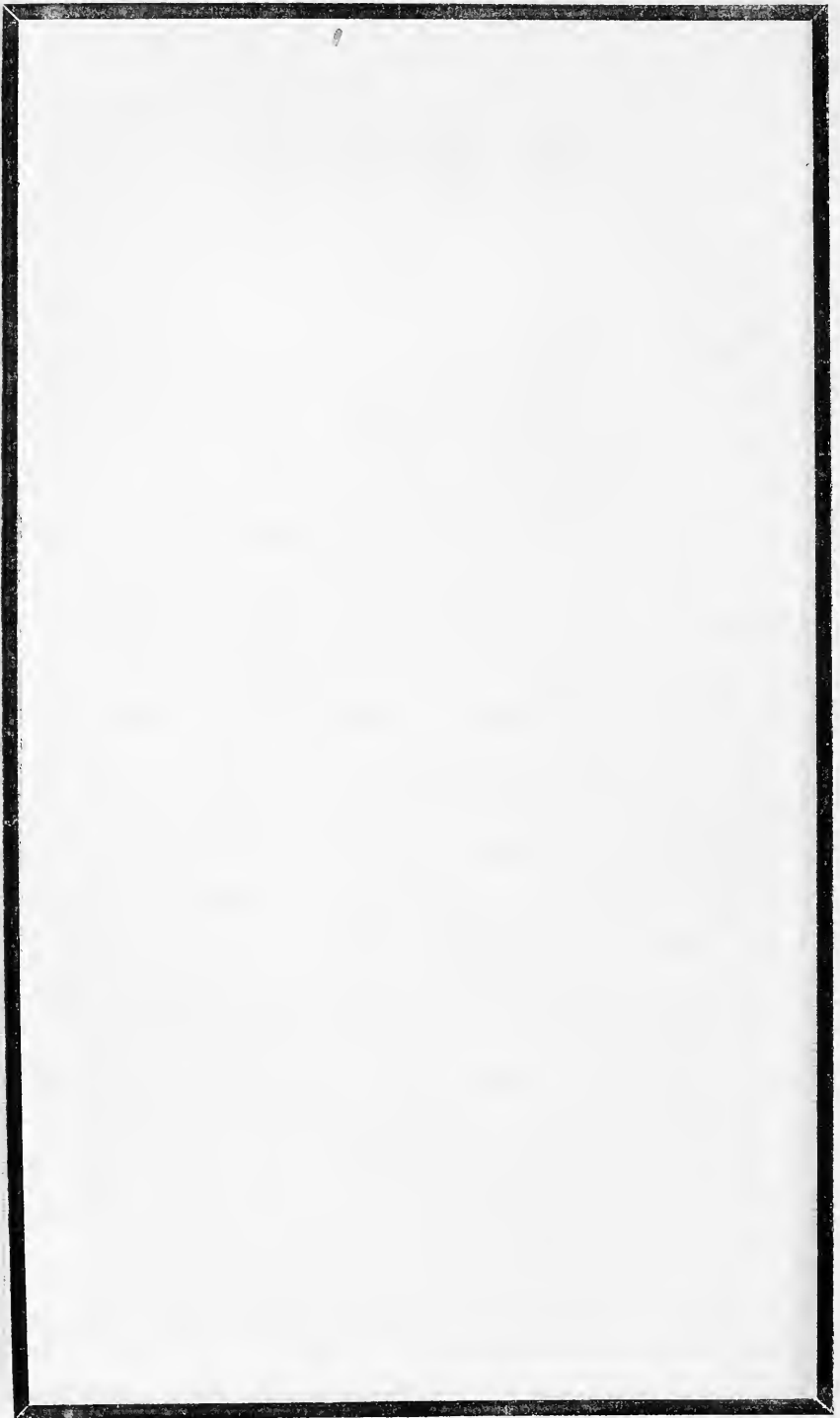
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
Harrisburg, Pa., April 19, 1865. }

REV. S. S. MITCHELL, *Pastor:*

DEAR SIR: The undersigned members of your congregation, believing that the address delivered by you to-day, during the services held in this Church, as part of the National Funeral of Abraham Lincoln, late President of the United States, gives expression in a chaste and appropriate form, to the views and feelings not only of those who listened to its delivery, but of many others, all of whom would be pleased to possess it in a more enduring form, respectfully request you to furnish us a copy for publication.

Respectfully and Truly Yours,

U. H. MYERS,	J. W. SIMONTON,
F. WYETH,	B. F. ETTER,
J. F. SEILER,	H. A. THOMPSON,
H. M. GRAYDON,	WM. KNOCHE,
A. BURNETT,	S. T. CHARLTON,
H. UHLER,	WM. WILLIS,
ALEX. HAMILTON,	J. McCORMICK, JR.
W. W. HAYS,	



In Memoriam.

CHRISTIAN CITIZENS:

THIS is a National funeral. We are here at this time to participate, with twenty millions of people, in the obsequies of their Chief. To-day, even at this hour, the Republic buries ABRAHAM LINCOLN! The mourners are the friends of the Nation, the champions of freedom and the rights of man throughout the world—the corpse is that of our good, our honest, and our beloved President.

There is weeping to-day wherever the sad news has sped, and patriotic hearts overflow at this hour with a sudden and a measureless grief. In the day of our victory and our joy, God has laid his hand upon us, and there is lamentation throughout the land—the Republic weeping for a faithful son, and refusing to be comforted because he is not. In the Capital City of our Nation there is to be seen, at this hour, a pageant of woe, the spectacle of a mighty sorrow, which casts its dark shadow of affliction from the Potomac to the Oregon, and underneath which strong hearts are bursting with an indignant grief while they exclaim, “Great God! Is it true? Can it really be so?” And we, who are gathered here to-day, can only say, “Yes! God has willed it—it *is* true.”

There, in the inactivity of death, sleeps the brain, which, but a few short days ago, was wracked and fevered with

the august care of a nation—which thought, and planned, and purposed, (O! with how much faithfulness,) for you and me, and the Republic which we love. There, in the deep and untroubled rest of the last sleep, lies the face, from which so much of kindness and greatness of soul ever beamed, and upon which are now the carved and moveless furrows of four years of oppressive care and faithful service. There in the Capital City, which bears the name of the Father, lies cold in death the prostrate form of him who shall hereafter be known—shall I not say it—as the Preserver of his Country—the man, who, called to the kingdom in troublous times, was faithful found among the faithless, and who, through four long years of storm, of darkness and of disaster, never lost his faith, or quit the deck.

Weep, O Republic, for your faithful dead! Weave cypress wreaths around your brow to-day, O resuscitated and preserved Nation! Build him a monument to-day broad as the basis of your vindicated nationality, and high as the summit of your present hopes, and upon it write, "*Honest ABRAHAM LINCOLN, who loved and served his Country.*"

Not for his own untarnished fame, not for his future memory and renown, has he fallen too soon. But too soon, alas! for us, who were just beginning to feel how much we owed to his unswerving fidelity, his steadfast faith and patriotic zeal. Too soon, alas! for those, who, in the hour of their humiliation and righteous disaster,

have lost their most magnanimous enemy and their most forgiving friend; too soon, alas! for the Nation, which was about to rise in the grandeur of its re-united strength, and place upon his brow the diadem of "faithful servant;" too soon, alas! for us all, who needed, so much at this hour, his steady hand to do the bidding of his judicious mind and kindly heart, and garner up in the store-house of our future, the fruits of the Nation's struggle, the Nation's tribulation, and the Nation's blood.

Yet, God has done it, and we are still. As the righteous and all-wise Ruler of the Universe passes by us to-day in the storm-cloud of this terrible judgment, we would cover our face, while we exclaim—"It is the Lord, and His name is secret."

We are here, Christian citizens, to mourn, but not to murmur. We are here to weep, but not to despair of the Republic; here to drop tears over the grave which the Nation shall dig to-day, but to see those tears transfigured into sacrificial drops, which shall purge away our Nation's sins, which shall water with healthful and life-giving influences, the seeds of National unity and prosperity, which that now relaxed and nerveless arm has scattered, and bring germination and life and growth to a nobler, deeper and truer love for our country.

We give up ABRAHAM LINCOLN to-day as a man who has done his work.

God prepared an *honest man* for a terrible crisis—a crisis in the history of our Republic and the world—and He

gave that man to us when the crisis came. From the far west He brought him, and from the humble walks of life, and placed him upon the summit of an influence nobler than that of kings, and put within his hands a sceptre bigger with the destinies of men than emperor has often wielded.

In darker days than this one He preserved him. During the long night of our country's danger and shame He spared him, and now, just as the first aslant rays of coming peace begin to lighten our national horizon, He withdrew the shield of His protection, and the dagger of the assassin is the voice which tells us that the sixteenth President of the United States has done his work.

Let us believe to-day, Christian citizens, that the God of our Fathers, who gave them Washington, gave us Lincoln. Let us also believe that He re-called him none too soon. There is some great national "*needs be.*" This shall yet be seen by those of us who shall search for it.

The sun of God's providence rising with healing beams upon our afflicted Nation, will yet tell us why our Leader was now stricken down. Surely it must be for our good. Surely our God is not now to dash to the ground our highest and purest hopes—to blast, as in a moment, the noblest fruits of the Nation's tears and the Nation's blood. No! we will not—we cannot believe it. No! the work had reached the stage when another hand might hold our National standard. The time had come when the Nation must make another sacrifice That sacrifice has

now been made. That new hand now grasps the Stars and Stripes. God is in all, God is over all—all is well.

Freedom is proclaimed throughout the land—the Union is saved—ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S work is done. The scenery in the great providential drama now changes, and God gives us another agent to accomplish his will for the Nation. He, even the God of our Fathers, is with their children, therefore will we not fear.

We give up ABRAHAM LINCOLN also, to-day, as a sacrifice to his Country. All noble life is self-sacrifice. The only question is, whether the life shall be given by inches, or at once. The law of progress in this world is, labor, suffering, death. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, but if it *die*, it bringeth forth much fruit." Martyrs die for the Church, patriots die for the Nation—the law is the same in both.

The fruit of hope and peace which now begins to ripen in, and for our Nation, has been watered by the life blood of two hundred and fifty thousand patriot souls. Yes! "perfect through suffering"—"blessings and victory through sacrifice and death," God's own Son has proclaimed and consecrated these principles, and henceforward and forever they are paths of development, in which both nations and individuals must walk.

Thus through the great sacrifice are its human types both necessitated and accepted. During the last four years we have laid many a precious victim upon the altar of Union,

Liberty, and a safe future, and to-day we immolate the last and most precious.

Accept it, O God, and for the sake of thy Son, give us peace in our day. Accept it, and give us as its fruits, a restored, re-united and a purified Republic. Accept it, and send our nation down along the ages, the peerless embodiment of civil and religious liberty; the home of the free, the refuge for the oppressed, the herald of thy Son and his religion to all nations, and through all time. Accept it, and make us the benefactors of a grateful posterity—the builders of a national temple, upon whose altars unborn millions shall sacrifice the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and fill its walls with praise. Accept it, and lay for us the foundation of our national unity and peace, so deep and so broad, that it shall remain unmoved until the second coming of thy Son. Accept this, our sacrifice, O God, and make us that “happy people, whose God is the Lord”—that people, which, underneath the streaming light of thy renewed benediction, shall stand out before the nations of the earth, “fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.”

Thus, Christian citizens, do we give up the beloved Chief Magistrate of our Nation to-day. Thankful to God who raised him up; thankful to that Providence which guarded him so long; as one who has done his work; as a holocaust, even a sweet smelling sacrifice upon the altar of his country, do we, at this hour, bury ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

And here, by the side of his grave, let our sorrow consecrate within us all a spirit of more ardent, more devoted and more holy patriotism. "Our country,"—let it mean more to us to-day than it has ever done before. It is the land which God has given us. It is our home. It is the mother of us all. God gave it its birth through toil, through suffering and through blood. For its preservation He has now accepted the lives of a quarter of a million of its sons, and to-day, before our eyes, He re-consecrates it by a new and a noble sacrifice. O, where is the man whose heart cannot burn, and whose eyes cannot moisten, before the mourning flag of his country to-day? Where is the patriot who is not willing, at this hour, to come up again to the altar of his country, and, lifting his right hand to Heaven, take anew that solemn oath of Christian allegiance, "*If I forget thee, O America, may my right hand forget her cunning; if I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth.*"

God puts into your hands to-day Christian citizens, the sacred trust of this great Republic. He gives into your keeping anew to-day, the ark of civil and religious liberty. He commits to you, as your most sacred responsibility, this grand experiment, this noble embodiment of Republican institutions. His providence to-day holds up before you the land for which your fathers died, and which is now dripping fresh with the sacrificial blood of your brothers and your Chief, and asks you if you will not receive, and defend, and preserve, and transmit to the

needy millions of the future, the priceless legacy, the precious hope, and the unfathomed benediction of the American Republic. Let every heart pulsate with a holier love for Country. Let every soul be burdened with the prayer, "God of our Fathers, bless America." Let every lip invoke benedictions. From every son and heir of the Republic, let there be breathed the words, "*O, thou be'oved land! bound together by so many bonds of brotherhood, and common interest, and peril, live forever, one and undivided.*"

And now turning from our Country to him, from whose fallen form, we take, with prayers and vows and tears, the standard of our Nation—what shall I say.

Friend of the Republic—farewell! Rest within the inner sanctuary of a Nation's gratitude! Thou needst not desire a more sacred mausoleum. "*Faithful servant*" is the verdict which twenty millions of thy countrymen to-day pronounce over thy tomb. "*Faithful servant*" are the words with which a weeping Nation to-day speaks thy praises.

Thou hast served the Republic. Thy work is done. Thou wast faithful, noble, true. Thou didst stand in thy lot. The tears, which we this day shed over thy grave, shall purify a nobler patriotism for America. Our children will bless thee. Thy memory shall be the inheritance of thankful and succeeding generations. The future history of the Republic will be the record of thy deeds, the proclamation of thy praise.

Farewell! modest, faithful, kind-hearted, honest ABRAHAM
LINCOLN.

Upon each of our hearts to-day we write thy epitaph:
“*With faith in God he loved his Country, and was true to
the people.*” Nobler praise than this thou couldst not de-
sire, less than this thou shalt never receive. *Servant of
the Republic, true friend of thy country-men—again fare-
well!*

