


LINCOLN AT GETTYSBURG

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# LINCOLN AT GETTYSBURG.

## HIS ADDRESS.

"Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth upon this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that Nation, or any Nation, so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We are met to dedicate a portion of it as the final resting place of those who here gave their lives that that Nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But in a larger sense we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here have consecrated it far above our power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work that they have thus far so nobly carried on. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to the cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion—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."

The battle of Gettysburg was fought on the first, second and third of July, 1863.

The Confederate army under the command of General Robert E. Lee, elated with success, had entered Pennsylvania, menacing Harrisburg, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington. Even New York was threatened, for, had the advance of Lee not been checked, the great metropolis would have been at his mercy, and there can be little doubt but that the southern rebellion would have been successful. Under these circumstances, with the invading hordes upon them, the consternation and

terror of the loyal people of Pennsylvania can be better imagined than described. That this invasion of the north was not successful is due to the heroism and fortitude of the Union soldiers, who, under the command of General George G. Meade, met the invader in mortal combat, and, after three days of desperate fighting in which many thousands were killed and a vast number wounded, hurled him back across the border, never to return.

### Illinois Opened the Battle.

It is not generally known that Illinois soldiers were the first to meet the onset of the enemy, and to fire the first shot in the great battle. This is the fact, brought out clearly by Colonel William Gamble, of the 8th Illinois cavalry, in a letter to Hon. William L. Church and myself of date of March 10, 1864, the truth of which, so far as I know, has not been questioned. This regiment belonged to Buford's cavalry division, and fired the first shot in meeting and checking the advance of the Confederate General A. P. Hill. This shot precipitated and brought on the three days' conflict which turned the tide of war.

### The National Cemetery.

Scarcely had the reverberations of the guns of the battle died away, when the Honorable David Wills, a citizen of Gettysburg, wrote to the Honorable Andrew G. Curtin, the great war governor of Pennsylvania, suggesting that a plat of ground in the midst of the battlefield be at once purchased and set apart as a soldiers' national cemetery, and that the remains of the dead be exhumed and placed in this cemetery. He suggested that the ground to be selected should be on what was known as "Cemetery Hill," so called because adjoining it, is the local cemetery of Gettysburg. As a reason why the ground should be chosen, Mr. Wills said, "It is the place where our army had about forty pieces of artillery in action all Thursday and Friday, and, for their protection, had thrown up a large number of earthworks. It is the point where the desperate attack was made by the Louisiana brigades on Thursday evening, when

taking possession of them, and were finally driven back by the infantry, assisted by the artillerymen, with their handspikes and rammers. It was the key to the whole line of defenses, the spot of the triangular line of battle. It is the spot above all others, for the honorable burial of the dead who have fallen on these fields.'

Governor Curtin at once approved of the recommendation of Mr. Wills, and correspondence was opened with the governors of loyal states, whose troops had engaged in the battle, asking them to co-operate in the movement. The grounds proposed by Mr. Wills, seventeen acres, which embraced the highest point of Cemetery Hill, and overlooks the whole battlefield, were at once purchased.

The governors of fifteen states immediately responded, foremost among whom was our great war governor, known and recognized everywhere as "the soldiers' friend," Richard Yates.

The Legislature of Pennsylvania passed an act incorporating **The Soldiers' National Cemetery**, naming one trustee for each state co-operating, who was suggested by its governor. I was named for Illinois.

When the first meeting was held, supposing that each state would have two on the board, the governor appointed Hon. Wm. L. Church of Chicago, then clerk of the Circuit court, and recorder of Cook county, and myself, and together we attended the first meeting, after which I alone represented Illinois on the board. When Governor Yates retired from the executive office, I was re-appointed by Governor Oglesby. The board was organized by the election of Mr. David Wills of Gettysburg, who had initiated the movement, president, and Mr. John R. Bartlett, secretary of state of Rhode Island, also one of our commissioners, secretary.

#### **First National Cemetery.**

It must be remembered that when this board was established, the general government had not entered upon nor even considered the policy of establishing soldiers' national cemeteries. This came afterward, and I think that the suggestion of

such a policy came from the Soldiers' National Cemetery at Gettysburg. Our board continued in charge there until the government system was inaugurated, when we turned the cemetery over to the general government which, having a fund for that purpose, has since cared for it. As is the case with the other National cemeteries, an officer of the army and a couple of men are always kept there in charge.

The appropriations given us by the different states amounted on the aggregate to nearly an hundred and forty thousand dollars, Illinois contributing, notwithstanding the small number of our dead buried there, only six, \$11,774.84. Illinois had but three regiments in the battle, the 8th and 12th cavalry, and the 82nd infantry.

The first action necessary after the movement to inaugurate the National cemetery had been determined upon, and the ground purchased, was to lay out a plot for graves, and to take up and remove the remains of the dead which were scattered over a radius of many miles. The dead had been hastily buried in the fields where they had fallen, and bodies were frequently found with scarcely any covering.

The cemetery was laid out in the form of a half circle the center of which was reserved for the imposing monument which has since been reared from which the half-circles of the graves radiate, the inner half-circle, of course, being very small, and the half circles increasing in length and capacity as they extended. On this inner semi-circle, that nearest the monument, I was able to have placed the Illinois section, which, of course, is very small. On one side of our Illinois section is a large one, containing the graves of the unknown, and on the other that of the State of Virginia. It was upon the ground in the center reserved for the monument that the platform upon which the addresses were delivered was placed. This platform fronted away from the cemetery proper, giving room for the vast audience of people in front of and facing it, to be near to, but not upon, the graves.

At the head of every grave was placed a headstone of granite, rising nine inches above the ground, upon which was sculptured the name, company and regiment of each soldier so far as could be ascertained, while those who could not be identified, were marked "unknown." Of the known there were 2,585 and of the unknown 979, making in the aggregate 3,564. Large as this number is, it does not nearly represent the number of fatalities among the union soldiers. Many of the wounded died in the hospitals and elsewhere, and the remains of quite a large number had been removed from the field by relatives and friends and taken to their respective homes.

#### **Dedicatory Exercises Proposed.**

It was proposed, as this work proceeded, that memorial dedicatory exercises be held to consecrate this sacred ground, which was finally determined upon. The day first fixed upon for these exercises was the 23rd of October.

#### **Hon. Edward Everett Invited to Deliver Oration.**

The Honorable Edward Everett of Massachusetts was then regarded as the greatest living American orator, and it was decided to invite him to deliver the oration and this was done. But he replied that it was "wholly out of his power to make the necessary preparation by the 23rd of October." So desirous were we all to have Mr. Everett, that the dedication was postponed to Thursday, the 19th of November, 1863, nearly a month, to suit Mr. Everett's convenience, when it took place.

A formal invitation to be present was sent to the president of the United States and his cabinet, to Major General George G. Meade, who commanded our troops in the battle of Gettysburg, and to the officers and soldiers who participated, and gained the memorable victory. Invitations were also sent to the venerable Lieutenant General Winfield Scott and to Admiral Charles Stewart, the distinguished and time-honored representatives of the army and navy, the diplomatic corps representing foreign

governments, to the members of both Houses of Congress and to other distinguished personages.

All these invitations and all the arrangements for the dedicatory exercises, as was the case with everything relating to the cemetery, were considered and decided upon by our board of commissioners, and were, in so far as he was able, under the direction of the board, carried into effect by Mr. Wills, our president. As we were all representing and speaking for the governors of our respective States, by whom we were appointed, we made all the invitations in their names.

#### **Asking Lincoln to Speak an After Thought.**

The proposition to ask Mr. Lincoln to speak at the Gettysburg ceremonies was an after-thought. "The President of the United States" had, like the other distinguished personages, been invited to be present, but Mr. Lincoln was not, at that time, invited to speak. In fact, it did not seem to occur to any one, that he could speak upon such an occasion.

Scarcely any member of the board, excepting the member representing Illinois, had ever heard him speak at all, and no other member had ever heard him, or read from him, anything except political discussion. When the suggestion was made that he be invited to speak, while all expressed high appreciation of his great abilities as a political speaker, as shown in his debates with Senator Douglas, and in his Cooper Institute address, the question was raised as to his ability to speak upon such a grave and solemn occasion as that of the memorial services. Besides, it was said that, with his important duties and responsibilities, he could not possibly have the leisure to prepare an address for such an occasion. In answer to this it was urged that he himself better than anyone else, could determine as to these questions, and that, if he were invited to speak, he was sure to do what, under the circumstances, would be right and proper.

It must be remembered that Mr. Lincoln had not then proved to the

world his ability to speak upon such an occasion. He had not yet made a Gettysburg address, and he had not then made that other address, which, for sublimity and pathos, ranks next to it, his second inaugural.

### **President Lincoln Not Invited to Speak Until Six Weeks After Everett Was Invited.**

It was finally decided to ask President Lincoln to, "after the oration," (of Mr. Everett) as chief executive of the nation, formally set apart these grounds to their sacred use by a few appropriate remarks." This was done, in the name of the governors of the States, as was the case with others by Mr. Wills; but the invitation was not settled upon and sent to Mr. Lincoln until the 2nd of November, more than six weeks after Mr. Everett had been invited to speak, and but a little more than two weeks before the exercises were held.

### **Arrival of the President.**

The president arrived at Gettysburg upon a special train about dusk on the evening before the exercises. Nov. 18, accompanied by Secretary Seward and other distinguished personages, including those two Illinois boys who afterwards became distinguished, John G. Nicholay, his private secretary, and his assistant private secretary, John Hay. He was driven at once to the residence of Mr. Wills, where he was entertained during his stay in the town.

We all, headed by a brass band, marched to Mr. Wills' house, and serenaded Mr. Lincoln, who appeared upon the verandah, but said little more than to excuse himself from speaking, after which we serenaded Secretary Seward, who made quite an extended address, and afterwards we serenaded others, who also spoke.

### **When and Where Mr. Lincoln Prepared the Address.**

As to the time and manner of preparation of President Lincoln's address, I think that the best authority is that of Mr. Nicholay, who published an article on "Lincoln's Gettysburg address" which I find in a bound

volume of the Century Magazine, running from November, 1893, to April 1894.

After saying that there is no decisive record of when Mr. Lincoln wrote the first sentences of his proposed address. Mr. Nicholay speaks of Mr. Lincoln's "usual" habit of "using great deliberation in arranging his thoughts, and molding his phrases, mentally, waiting to reduce them to writing until they had taken satisfactory form." There was greater necessity of precaution in this case, because the invitation specified that the address should only be "a few appropriate remarks." After saying that "brevity in speech and writing was one of Lincoln's marked characteristics"—that Mr. Everett would be quite certain to make a long address and speaking of "the want of opportunity" for Mr. Lincoln "even to think leisurely," Mr. Nicholay concludes the remark by saying that "all this strongly confirms the correctness of the statement made by the Hon. James Speed, in an interview published in the "Louisville Commercial," in November, 1870, that the President told him that the day before he left Washington he found time to write about half of the speech.

Mr. Nicholay continues as follows:

"It was after the breakfast hour, on the morning of the 19th, (the day the address was delivered) that the writer, Mr. Lincoln's private secretary, went to the upper room in the home of Mr. Wills, which Mr. Lincoln occupied, to report for duty, and remained with the President while he finished writing the Gettysburg address during the short leisure, he could utilize for this purpose before being called to take his place in the procession, which was announced on the program to move at 10 o'clock.

"There is neither record evidence nor well founded tradition" Mr. Nicholay continued, "that Mr. Lincoln did any writing, or made any notes on the journey between Washington and Gettysburg. The train consisted of four passenger coaches, and, either composition or writing would have been extremely troublesome amid the movement, the noise, the conversation, the greetings, and the questionings which ordinary courtesy required

him to undergo in these surroundings; but, still worse would have been the rockings and joltings of the train, rendering writing virtually impossible. Mr. Lincoln carried in his pocket the autograph manuscript of so much of his address as he had written at Washington the day before."

Mr. Nicholay's article contains a facsimile reproduction of the address then as he declares, he for the first time made public and printed in this article, one page of which is written in ink in the President's strong, clear hand, without blot or erasure, and the remainder written with a pencil, which latter were no doubt written at Gettysburg."

There are three versions of authority for Lincoln's Gettysburg address, says Mr. Nicholay.

First—The original autograph M. S. draft, written by Mr. Lincoln, partly at Washington and partly at Gettysburg. (This is the version to which reference is made above.)

Second—The version made by the shorthand reporter on the stand at Gettysburg, when the President delivered it which was telegraphed and was printed in the leading newspapers of the country on the following morning.

Third—The revised copy made by the President a few days after his return to Washington, upon a careful comparison of his original draft, and the printed newspaper version, with his own recollections of the exact form in which he delivered it.

#### **Authentic Text of the Address.**

Mr. Nicholay says that "four days after Mr. Lincoln's return to Washington Mr. Wills," president of our board of commissioners, wrote him "on behalf of the states interested in the National cemetery here" requesting "the original manuscript of the dedicatory remarks delivered by you here last Monday. We desire them to be placed with the correspondence and other papers connected with the project," and that, "to comply with this request," the President, after comparing the "Associated Press report as it appeared in the newspapers with his original draft," made a new autograph copy—a careful and deliberate revision—which has be-

come the standard and authentic text." (It will be observed that four days after he spoke at Gettysburg, Mr. Wills designated the production as merely "dedicatory remarks.") I have in my possession a book published by the secretary of our board of commissioners, under the direction and at the expense of the board, entitled "The Soldiers' National Cemetery at Gettysburg," which contains the address made from that copy. It does not differ from those generally published.

New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, Pittsburg, and all the towns and country round about were represented at the dedicatory exercises.

It was estimated that there were an hundred thousand people who attended. The crowds began to arrive two days before the exercises were held. I went over from Harrisburg on the day before and rode from there in a box freight car which was seated with rough boards for the occasion. I think that most of the passengers had similar accommodations, as the passenger coaches could not begin to carry the people who attended. The town, which then had a population of about two thousand, did not begin to be able to take care of the people, many of whom sat up all night. Fortunately for us, Mr. Wills had reserved quarters for the members of our board at the hotel.

It was expected that there would be a great number in a procession to follow the presidential party to the grounds, in which we were disappointed, as most of the people chose to go out by themselves over the battlefield, and through the cemetery.

At about ten o'clock in the morning President Lincoln appeared at the door of Mr. Wills' house. Horses had been provided for him and his party, and some other distinguished personages, and for the members of the board of commissioners. The procession was delayed for some time by people pressing forward to shake hands with the President after he was mounted upon his horse, which continued until stopped by the marshals.

Following those already mentioned, came civil and military organizations

on foot, and finally the people at large. One of the most interesting features of the procession was a large company of veteran soldiers, who had been wounded in the battle.

The procession was under the direction of Major General Couch, marshal of the day.

President Lincoln, as we moved slowly forward, sat at first erect upon his horst, handling the reins of the bridle in the white gauntlet gloves he wore, in such a stately and dignified manner as to make him appear the commander in chief of the army and navy of the United States, which he was. Before we reached the grounds he was bent forward, his arms swinging, his body limp and his whole frame swaying from side to side. He had become so absorbed in thought that he took little heed of his surroundings and was riding just as he did over the circuit in Illinois, during the years of his early practice of law, with his saddle bags, which contained all of his possessions, dangling upon each side of his horse.

Seats were reserved on the platform for the President, the board of commissioners, and invited guests.

I have no recollection of when Mr. Everett reached Gettysburg, or how he got out to the grounds, but I distinctly remember that we waited for him a half hour before the exercises commenced, during which the bands of music played airs that were solemn and impressive.

The exercises were opened by an invocation by Reverend Doctor Stockton, who was, I think, then chaplain of the United States Senate. Letters of regret were read from General George G. Meade, who commanded our troops in the great battle and was still in command of the army at the front, from the venerable General Winfield Scott, and others, and after which Mr. Everett was introduced and began his oration.

#### Mr. Everett's Oration.

Volumes have been written upon Mr. Everett's address, many of them in a vein of unfriendly criticism, especially contrasting his long and studied speech with the short and pungent sentences of Mr. Lincoln.

Every just and fair person who intelligently reads that oration, must

rise from its perusal with a feeling that few efforts of ancient or modern times in splendors of metaphor, classical lore, eloquence of diction, lofty sentiments, and clear and logical reasoning, surpass it. He drew inspiration from the orators of Greece, at the fountain of whose eloquence he had drank, being able to read their productions in the language through whose matchless purity and elegance and strength they had been given to the world. He took us at the outset to the wonderful Ceramicus in a most beautiful suburb of Athens, "adorned by Cimon the son of Miltiades with walks, and fountains, and columns, whose groves were filled with altars, and shrines, and temples, whose gardens were kept forever green by the streams from the neighboring hills, whose pathways gleamed with the monuments of the illustrious dead, the work of the consummate masters that ever gave life to marble," and told us of the votive offerings laid upon the coffins of the dead, flowers, weapons, precious ornaments, painted vases, wonders of art, which, after two thousand years, adorn the museums of Europe; and of himself, "after an interval of twenty-three centuries, a youthful pilgrim from the world unknown to ancient Greece," visiting that "holy ground." He told of how, when the funeral obsequies were held in this wonderful Ceramicus, "beneath the overarching plane trees, upon a lofty stage, erected for the purpose, it was ordained that a funeral oration should be pronounced by some citizen of Athens, in presence of the assembled multitude."

After thus eloquently portraying the beauties of that wonderful cemetery, and recalling the exercises held over the dead heroes of the Peloponnesian war who met and triumphantly hurled back the enemy, Mr. Everett even more eloquently pronounced an eulogium upon the dead heroes of the Union Army who so heroically met and overcome the invader and now slept beneath, and about us, whose glories we were assembled to commemorate.

This led the orator to a narrative of the events of the campaign until the clash of arms came upon the



field about us, in the center of which we were, and of the awful struggle and carnage of the three days of conflict.

#### **Mr. Everett's Account of the Battle.**

It has been said that, were every official report and every printed word in regard to the battle of Gettysburg, except Mr. Everett's oration, destroyed, in its pages would be preserved to posterity such a lucid and concise account of the great battle as would make every important movement of every command perfectly clear.

Mr. Everett had asked for and received from General Meade and other officers accounts of the battle; he had read all the official reports that were available, and had himself after he accepted the invitation to speak, come to Gettysburg and visited every portion of the field, remaining several days, and so perfectly and completely did he picture the onset, the falling back, the desperate assault, and resistance of every corps, and division, and almost every brigade of both armies, for every hour and almost every moment of those three days of desperate fighting that as he spoke one could almost see the movements. The published oration which appears in the book to which I have already referred is illustrated by a map of the field. When Mr. Everett spoke, the field itself was before and about him, and his audience and he needed no other map. There is no better guide book to the battle of Gettysburg than Edward Everett's oration.

#### **Mr. Everett's Second Hour.**

It would be supposed that any orator, after giving such an account of the battle which was necessarily very extended, in such a presence, with the ablest and most brilliant men of the age about him, with the President of the United States sitting near, waiting to speak, it would be supposed, that he would then have drawn his oration to a close. Not so! Mr. Everett was the orator of the day, and he went on for another hour, every hearer interested and absorbed in the sublime sentiments he enunciated, none more so than the President.

He called to account the "hard hearted men whose cruel lust of pow-

er brought this desolating war upon the land." He showed who was responsible for all this carnage and blood, and sorrow and despair. He showed that it all came from envy and ambition, for which there was" and could be, no justification.

He pictured the dire consequences that would have followed had the enemy succeeded in that battle which would have resulted in the overthrow of the nation and in blighting the last hope of free government.

He referred to the attempt by those who instigated the war to justify themselves by citing the rebellions of our fathers against George the third, and of Cromwell against Charles, the First, and asked, "What would have been thought by an impartial history of the American rebellion against George, the third, if the colonies had been more than equally represented in parliament, and Jeans Otis, and Patrick Henry, and Washington, and Franklin, and the Adamses, and men of their stamp had for two generations enjoyed the confidence of the sovereign, and had administered the government of the Empire? What would have been thought of the rebellion against Charles the first, had Cromwell and the men of his school been his advisors? And then he showed how these men had, when they precipitated the war control of both houses of Congress, and that not one assault had been made upon them and not one right invaded.

He showed by citing the constitution the supremacy given by its framers to the general government and how weak and silly was the contention that the general government was a mere "agency" of sovereign States, and how absurd was the claim of the confederates of justification for cession when in control of both Houses of Congress and everything in their own States, on the State rights theory, rights that had never been invaded, nor denied.

Knowing as we did his history, how he had always, to his own disadvantage, blighting at times all hopes of political preferment, favored measures to conciliate the south, it was almost pathetic to hear Mr. Everett exclaim, "A sad foreboding of what would ensue if a war should break out be-

tween the North and the South has haunted me through life, and led me, perhaps too long to tread in the path of hopeless compromise, in the fond endeavor to conciliate those who were predetermined not to be conciliated."

It is not necessary to go further into detail of Mr. Everett's address, a glimpse of which it has been deemed proper to give, in order to place the situation clearly before us. Suffice it to say that very soon after he began to speak he rose to a lofty height of eloquence, which, constantly holding the undivided and at times almost breathless attention of his audience, he sustained for two hours.

I can give no young man who seeks to perfect himself in literature better advice than that he make a study of that oration.

At the close of Mr. Everett's address a solemn dirge written by Mr. B. B. French, especially for the occasion was sung by a hundred voices after which President Lincoln was introduced to the great multitude.

#### Mr. Lincoln Speaks.

When the President thus appeared it was the first opportunity the people had to really see him. There was the usual craning of necks, the usual exclamations of "down in front," the usual crowding to get places to see, and much confusion. He waited patiently for the audience to become quiet, and there was absolute silence while he spoke. He began in those high piercing tones, which the people of Illinois had so often heard to which he held to the close. His was a voice which, when he made an effort, could reach a great multitude, and he always tried to make every one hear. He held in his left hand two or three pages of manuscript, toward which he glanced but once. He spoke with deliberation, but could not have continued more than three or four, some said, two minutes.

A moment's reflection will convince any one that before the great multitude of people, nearly all of whom were standing, could have prepared themselves to intelligently listen, before they had, I may say, become poised, before their thoughts had become sufficiently centered upon the speaker to take up his line of thought

and follow him, he had finished and returned to his seat.

#### People Disappointed Lincoln's Address

So short a time was Mr. Lincoln before them that the people could scarcely believe their eyes when he disappeared from their view. They were almost dazed. They could not possibly, in so short a time, mentally grasp the ideas that were conveyed, or even their substance. Time and again expressions of disappointment were made to me. Many persons said to me that they would have supposed that on such a great occasion the President would have made a speech. Every one thought as expressed by Mr. Wills four days later to which reference has been made, that, instead of Mr. Lincoln's delivering an address, he only made a very few "dedicatory remarks."

We on the platform heard every word. And what did we hear? A dozen common place sentences, scarcely one of which contained anything new, anything that when stated was not self-evident.

I am aware because I noted it at the time, that in the associated press report which appeared in the morning papers there were the punctuations of "applause," "long continued applause," etc. which was the invariable custom in those days. Except when he concluded I did not observe it, and, at the close the applause was not especially marked. The occasion was too solemn for any kind of boisterous demonstrations.

#### Ward H. Lamon's Recollection of How the Address Was Received.

In his "recollections of Abraham Lincoln" edited by his daughter, a very interesting book, Ward Hill Lamon, marshal of the district of Columbia, which position, beside being a most intimate friend, brought him into constant and close relation with the president, says.

#### Seward, Everett and Lamon's Estimate of Address.

"On the platform from which Mr. Lincoln delivered his address, and only a moment after it was concluded Mr. Seward turned to Mr. Everett and asked him what he thought of the

President's speech. Mr. Everett replied, "It is not what I expected from him. I am disappointed." Then, in his turn, Mr. Everett asked, "What do you think of it, Mr. Seward?" The response was, "He has made a failure, and I am sorry for it. His speech is not equal to him." Mr. Seward then turned to me and asked, "Mr. Marshall, what do you think of it?" I answered, "I am sorry to say that it does not impress me as one of his great speeches."

"In the face of these facts," continues Mr. Lamon "it has been repeatedly published that this speech was received by the audience with loud demonstrations of approval; that "amid the tears, sobs, and cheers it produced in the excited throng, the orator of the day, Mr. Everett, turned to Mr. Lincoln, grasped his hand and exclaimed "I congratulate you on your success! adding in a transport of heated enthusiasm, "Ah, Mr. President, how gladly would I give my hundred pages to be the author of your twenty lines."

"As a matter of fact," Mr. Lamon goes on to say, "the silence during the delivery of the speech and the lack of hearty demonstrations of approval immediately after its close, were taken by Mr. Lincoln as certain proof that it was not well received. In that opinion we all shared. If any person then present, saw, or thought he saw, the marvelous beauties of that wonderful speech, as intelligent men in all lands now see them, his super-abundant caution closed his lips and stayed his pen."

In concluding his comments upon Mr. Lincoln's address, Mr. Nicholay in his Century article to which reference has been made, says "They" the hearers, "were therefore totally unprepared for what they heard, and could not immediately realize that his words, and not those of the carefully selected orator, were to carry the concentrated thought of the occasion like a trumpet peal to farthest posterity."

My own recollection which is more clear as to occurrences in those troublesome times, especially those upon that occasion, the responsibilities of which devolved in a great degree upon a board of which I was a member,

coincides with that of Mr. Lamon and Mr. Nicholay. It is true as Mr. Nicholay says, the hearers were totally unprepared for what they heard, and could not immediately realize how able and far reaching was Mr. Lincoln's address. My recollection also confirms that of Mr. Lamon, that no one there present saw the marvelous beauties of that wonderful speech. I did not hear the expressions of Mr. Seward and Mr. Everett in regard to it, as my seat was with the members of our commission, but from the expressions of opinion I did hear, I have no doubt that they were made.

I heard every word and every articulation of Mr. Lincoln, and had no realization that he did anything more than make "a few dedicatory remarks." His expressions were so plain and homely, without any attempt at rhetorical periods, and his statements were so axiomatic, and, I may say matter of fact, and so simple, that I had no idea that, as an address, it was anything more than ordinary.

#### **Mr. Lincoln's Manner and Bearing.**

I was very much struck, many times as I had heard him, by the appearance of Mr. Lincoln when he arose and stood before the audience. It seemed to me that I had never seen any other human being who was so stately, and, I may say, majestic, and yet benignant. His features had a sad, mournful, almost haggard, and still hopeful expression. Every one was impressed with his sincerity and earnestness.

#### **Anglo-Saxon Words.**

I asked Dr. W. E. Simonds, professor of English Literature in Knox college, to give me an idea of the character and derivation of the words in Mr. Lincoln's Gettysburg address. In the course of his reply, he says:

"In Lincoln's Gettysburg address there appear to be thirty-two words of Latin origin," which Prof. Simonds names. "These," he continues, "with repetitions of the same word, or other forms of the same word, make forty-six Latin derivatives all told. There are 267 words in the address, leaving the balance, 221, Anglo-Saxon.

"That is, 1-5 or 20 per cent are Latin words, while 4-5 or 80 per cent are Anglo-Saxon."

### Analysis of Address.

Short as is Mr. Lincoln's Gettysburg address, it contains all the elements of an elaborate and finished oration; exordium, argument, climax, and peroration. While each of these divisions are far more extended in Mr. Everett's oration, they are not more marked than in Mr. Lincoln's.

In his exordium, consisting of five simple sentences, each one of which recalls a fact apparent to every hearer, he lays foundations for the superstructure upon which he builds, broad and deep.

"Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth upon this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

"Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation, so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We are met to dedicate a portion of it as the final resting place of those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this."

After thus laying the foundation, comes the argument:

"But in a larger sense we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work that they have thus far so nobly carried on," and, to make the argument stronger, to clinch it, we would say, he repeats, "It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great work remaining before us — that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to the cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion," and then follows the climax: "That we here highly resolve that the dead shall not have died in vain"—and then the perora-

tion—"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."

I want to say in passing that there was one sentence that deeply affected me—the only one in which the president manifested emotion. With the close of that sentence his lips quivered, and there was a tremor in his voice which I can never forget. I recall it whenever I consider the address. The sentence was, "The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here."

### "Of the People, by the People and for the People."

The words "of the people, by the people and for the people," were not original with Mr. Lincoln. There was considerable comment at the time upon his using them, which went so far that it was insinuated that he was guilty of wilful plagiarism—that he took them from Webster's reply to Hayne. The matter was thoroughly investigated by Lamon, Nicholay and others, and it was found that the phrase had been so often used as to become common property. It appears substantially as Mr. Lincoln used it in Webster's reply to Hayne, 1830, in a work by James Douglas, in 1825, and in the Rhetorical Reader by Jas. Porter in 1830. The phrase was used by Theodore Parker in an anti-slavery convention at Boston, May, 1850, and substantially the same phrase was used by Joel Parker in the Massachusetts constitutional convention in 1853. Long before Mr. Lincoln used the phrase it was used in other languages. The first appearance of this phrase, so far as it has been possible to ascertain, was in the preface to the Old Wickliffe Bible, translated before 1384, when that bright "morning star of the reformation" died, which declares that "This Bible is for the government of the people, by the people and for the people."

### When and How Address Began to Be Appreciated.

On the next day after it was delivered, Nov. 20, the address ap-

peared in full, as has been said, in every leading newspaper of the United States. Even then, those who in a high degree appreciated it, were comparatively few. Some of us who heard it, formed, as we deliberately read it, a very different idea of it from that we had when it was delivered.

We had supposed and expected that the president would, in what he said, simply dedicate that ground to the sacred purpose for which it had been set apart. As we read, it gradually dawned upon us that the chief executive of a great nation had solemnly dedicated those who heard him, and not merely those who heard him, but all his people to the cause for which the martyr heroes about him died, and that this was the underlying thought and object of his address. Besides this, we saw that the attention of the country had been drawn, in the most striking manner, to the foundation of the nation, and how, and when, and why, it was established, and to the sublime purpose of "our fathers in bringing it forth upon this continent." The country was made to see that the great Civil war, still going on, was waged for the purpose of testing whether, not only that nation, but "whether any nation, so conceived and so dedicated, could long endure," and that it was for us to be dedicated to the work remaining to be done. This central thought was in a few terse sentences so engraved upon the hearts of all that it could not be effaced, and, after all this, the splendors, and glories, and worth to the people at large, and the peril of that nation and of all free government, were held up and depicted before us by the closing sentence, "that the government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

As was the case with others, Mr. Everett, when he read the address, began to realize (not so fully as afterwards) something of its merits. On the following day, in a note to the president, mostly about other matters, he said:

"Permit me also to express my great admiration of the thought expressed by you with such eloquent

simplicity and appropriateness at the consecration of the cemetery. I should be glad if I could flatter myself that I came so near the central idea of the occasion in two hours as you did in two minutes."

But, even then, while our people began to, in some degree, appreciate the high character of the address, we do not realize how sublime it really was. Not until it had been read and commented upon on the other side of the Atlantic did we place it in our own minds among the masterpieces. I recollect distinctly how I was impressed upon seeing a quotation from the "Edinburg Review" stating that no other address except that of Pericles made in eulogy of the heroes of the Peleponesian war, could begin to compare with it. The London "Spectator," the "Saturday Review," and several other English periodicals spoke of it in the highest terms of commendation.

These commendations, in some degree opened our eyes to its merits.

In recalling these eulogies of the address, and the expressions of appreciation of its author which appeared in foreign prints, I am reminded of the lines

"A man in whom his neighbors see  
One like themselves of common  
mould,  
May, to the thoughtful stranger be,  
Among the great and wise enrolled.  
In Vishnu, clowns a shepherd saw—  
Gods viewed the Lord of All, with  
awe."

### Conclusion.

In human achievements that which is greatest in proportions is not always the most sublime. A traveler who had visited the mighty structures along the Nile, the pyramids, the temples, the palaces, the tombs, surpassing in grandeur any others that have so far as we know in all the ages, been reared, at last found himself in a little city of southern Europe, standing upon an eminence before a structure so limited in extent and amplitude as not to compare in these regards with the mighty edifices whose grandeur had so filled his mind with wonder and awakened in his bosom emotions that overwhelmed him. He was standing upon the Acropolis at

Athens and contemplating the Parthenon. In his travels and study he had gained sufficient knowledge of architecture to be a connoisseur. As he made more careful examination and study of the wonderful temple, its splendors and sublimity gradually dawned upon him. He found that in every element of its construction, in form, in grace, and beauty and strength, and character, and in the nobility and grandeur of all its appointments, it far surpassed everything he had hitherto seen, every other architectural achievement upon the face of the earth. In this conclusion he was and is confirmed by the general consensus of opinion of the world.

Philosophers and sages, men of literary culture who have explored the labyrinths, stood upon the heights and basked in the glories of the sublime creations of Demosthenes, Peri-

cles and Cicero, of Burke and Pitt and Brougham, of Webster, Sumner and Everett, and in the elaborate and finished triumphs in oratory of all the ages, are moved with similar emotions to those of this traveler in contemplating Lincoln's Gettysburg address. By universal consent it has become the Parthenon of oratorical creation.

In the region round about Athens, marble, cement and clay and everything necessary to the construction of an edifice are as abundant and cheap as the sods upon the prairie. To those commonplace materials the inspired architect gave form and beauty and strength and life. Out of a few, simple, plain, commonplace sentences familiar to all, President Lincoln constructed an oration that will be the wonder and admiration of the world for all time—the crowning triumph of literary achievement.



