

A Deed Without a Name.

The wing of the Death Angel broods over the Capitol and his shadow has fallen upon all the land. There is consternation in the public places, and the hearts of the people are appalled with a sadness that is something more than sorrow. Our banners droop low and the cities are clothed in the habiliments of woe. Nature herself is hushed to silence as though in sympathy with the National bereavement.

For a nameless crime has been committed, the people have been stricken down in the person of their Chief Magistrate, and the Nation, humbled to the dust by an assassin hand, sits weeping in sack-cloth and ashes. Strong men, unused to shed tears, wander about with heads bended low and sorrowing like children. The announcement comes like an electric shock, paralyzing the public mind with speechless horror—but for one moment only.

The mask is now thrown aside and the fell fiend of treason stands forth, revealed in all its hideous depravity, its devilish propensities—is seen to be a principle of unmixed malevolence, the incarnation of evil. This is the spirit that has animated those, who have murdered their captives in cold blood and starved to death the prisoners of war confined in southern dungeons. This is the spirit, that has rioted in our northern cities, made them the food of incendiary fires and revelled in the blood of helpless victims.

Well would it be for those, who have heretofore held sympathy with treason, well for the nation, if the wretched madmen, who have wrought this last frightful tragedy, with all of their coward league of conspirators, could be at once overtaken and brought to condign punishment at the hands of constituted authority. Else no man can foresee the consequences, for there is a spirit abroad that little brooks restraint, vengeance which possesses the souls of men and cries aloud for retribution. Should it break forth, it will spread like a conflagration, like a deluge of fire, and God have mercy on any that stand in its course, for there will be none in the hearts of men. God help them, if thus groping blindly for revenge, the innocent are made to suffer for the crimes of the guilty. We regard this as the most critical hour of the Republic, for never was there such cause to make imminent the inauguration of a reign of terrible anarchy, and it will surely be our crowning triumph, if we can raise ourselves above the impulses of the hour. Alas! this feeling must have longer duration, and the danger will grow as we are enabled to comprehend the awful tragedy. It will go ill with all who have manifested treasonable sympathies in the time of trial, for the fury of public wrath will sweep them down as whirlwinds in their passage crush forests to the earth.

Never was messenger of fate winged with such fearful consequences. Rash fools! raving madmen! when they struck down Abraham Lincoln, they slew their best friend. He was the mediator between them and their enemies—between treason and outraged humanity. Who shall row stay the tide of righteous anger—who stretch his hands over the mad sea of human passion, saying to the troubled waves, "peace, be still," and be obeyed? We fear the end is none.

"*Sic semper tyrannis.*" Never were words more inaptly applied than those to the great Apostle of Freedom, Abraham Lincoln; and who would dare to question Justice, if the people, who loved him as men seldom love a ruler, should answer from hearts, now for the first time burning with quenchless hate,—“death to traitors?”

We would not seem irreverent, but cannot help remembering, that the anniversary of the self same day, which saw the Crucifixion on Mount Calvary of the Messiah, eighteen hundred years after saw the assassination of the great Liberator, whose martyrdom has henceforth canonized as such and made immortal.

“As Christ died to make men holy, he has died to make them free.”