

**THE  
MARTYR PRESIDENT.**

ABRAHAM LINCOLN,  
THE  
PRESERVER OF HIS COUNTRY,

BORN, FEBRUARY 12, 1809.

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DIED,

**A Martyr to Freedom,**

APRIL 15, 1865.

*Memoria in Aeternis.*

THE MARTYR PRESIDENT.

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M DCCC LXV.

*Drape the banner, toll the bell!  
Gentle Chieftain, fare-thee-well.  
Thine a Martyr blest to be,  
In the hour of Victory.*

*Light the altar, hide the bier!  
Ours to look with joy and fear,  
Where the Country's FATHER past,  
Its PRESERVER meets at last.*

THE MARTYR PRESIDENT.

'Twas needed—the fall of our Highest and  
best—

To rouse to their duty the hearts of the rest;  
And now, that the path of our duty is plain,  
The soul of our Leader is with us again,—  
To walk with the Nation, a glorified sire,  
Through all her ordèal of tempest and fire;

To dwell in her councils, a wisdom refined  
By death from the dross of mortality's kind;  
To temper her justice, a memory bright  
And tender with charity's loveliest light;  
To soften her pulses when conquering war  
Bids all the land's banners for Victory soar;

To fade to a holier presence, yet still  
A presence remain, when 'tis justice to kill!

To point to the Lord our thanksgivings for  
peace

When red-handed strife in the future shall  
cease;

And beam from on high to our vision at last,  
A beautiful star o'er the night of the past.

'Twas needed,—the name of a Martyr sub-  
lime,  
To vindicate God in this terrible time;  
'Twas fitting the thunder of Heaven should  
roll,  
Ere cannon exultant had deafened the soul  
To what in all ages the Maker hath taught,  
The pardon of sin is with suffering bought;



'Twas fitting the lightning of Heaven should

fall

On him, the supreme and beloved of us all,

Ere, blest in his living to guide us and save,

Our honor forgot what was due to the slave.

For still with the South must we share in the

guilt

That stabs us at last to the murderous hilt;

And still to the loyal the horror belongs  
Of aiding the chief of humanity's wrongs,  
Till, fostered at length to its devilish prime,  
The traitor sprang forth from its bosom of  
crime.

'Twas thine to Atone, when we fancied the  
end,

Our gentle First Citizen, Chieftain and  
Friend!

'Twas needed,—the loss of the Honest and

Just,

To humble our arrogant pride to the dust,

Ere, mad in the triumph and strength of our

youth,

We mocked the dead centuries' lesson of

truth:

What time is the national zenith of pow'r,

Most imminent perils encompass the hour,

And oh! if in blessings is Discord awoke,  
What arm shall defend from Divinity's stroke!  
Still reeking with patriot blood was the plain  
Where treason's last legions had struggled in  
vain ;  
Still sounded each village its funeral bell  
In woe, for our sons and our brothers who  
fell ;

Still pled for the widow's and orphan's relief  
An instinct fraternal, made sacred by grief,  
When loud from the lips of a nation redeemed,  
Harsh notes of discordance and enmity  
screamed !  
God marked the ingratitude, pointed the dart,  
And smote us to earth through our President's heart!

We bow to the blow, though it woundeth us  
sore,

And still for our country God's mercies im-  
plore ;

The rod of correction our vanities need,  
Our souls shall be strong, though our bosoms  
may bleed.

But, oh ! we are human ; as men we must feel,  
'Gainst reason's, religion's, or duty's appeal :

The heart at its latest, as earliest, breath,  
Is young like a child to the wringing of  
death;

No argument priestly can soothe it to sleep,  
The Christian's resigned, but the mortal must  
weep.

And long for thee, LINCOLN, a people shall  
mourn,

From glory, and honor, and victory torn;

Forever revere in thy character mild,  
The lamb and the lion both led by the child;  
Thy mem'ry enshrine with the Good and the  
Great,  
Who leave the world, dying, a lonely estate;  
Thy name with the name of a Washington  
take,  
Who made them a nation, who died for its  
sake.



We cannot recall thee ; too sure was the deed  
That doomed thee for us and our children  
to bleed ;

No more shall the hand ever ready to bless,  
Be stretched to the humble to spare his  
distress ;

No more shall the tongue ever kindly and  
true,

Speak mercy to error, give merit its due ;

No more shall the eye ever bright with a  
smile,

Bring light to the honest, confusion to guile;

No more shall we see thee erect at the helm,

When threatens the tempest our Ship to o'er-  
whelm;

Yet all through thy history simple we trace,

The strength of thy manhood, the light of  
thy face;

The touch of thy hand and thy wisdom are  
there,

An honesty open and pure as the air ;

The spirit to rise from the fetters of things

And soar to a majesty higher than kings.

That majesty, LINCOLN, still lives for us all,

And reigneth immortal to honor thy fall.

While stands the Republic her children may  
claim

A birthright for each in her loftiest fame ;  
Not lineage courtly, nor heritage vast,  
Can raise to her offices names of the past ;  
Like prizes to quicken a nation of kings,  
The doors of her honors wide open she  
swings,

And each of her sons, by equality's light,  
Sees stretching before him the path to the  
height

Where tow'rs the First Citizen's temple of  
state,

Approached by no passage of royalty's gate,  
But free unto him who by genius the best  
Shall prove himself worthy to govern the  
rest.

Full many have mounted from stations  
obscure

To bid the Republic increase and endure ;

Full many have added to history's page

The acts of the statesman, the thoughts of  
the sage ;

But LINCOLN, 'twas thine to make Holy the  
place,

And give it thy blood for a suffering race.

How pure is the lustre of virtues that climb  
Imperial summits of pow'r in their time,  
Unaided by patronage, conquest, or birth,  
But lifted aloft by the magic of worth :  
Like jewels in primal reflection that shine,—  
Not drawn from a casket, but raised from  
the mine,

A growth from the sunless domain of the  
moles,

Yet born with a splendor of light in their  
souls!

Behold where the lowliest son of the West  
Inherits such virtues to dwell in his breast:  
He knows not his riches; he bendeth to toil,  
Where scant is the harvest and stubborn  
the soil;



While broods in his bosom such patience  
    serene

As giveth to labor its tenderest mien.

None tell to the liegeless of houses and lands

The fate of a nation shall rest in his hands;

Yet sleeps there a might in the calm of his eye

To rescue a nation from peril—and die!

Oh, bitterest lot that the lowly can find,  
Where labor's monotony crushes the mind,  
Till poverty, prison'd in poverty still,  
To dust is degraded, or madden'd to kill.  
'Tis thus in the countries far over the sea ;  
But happy, my Country, the poor man with  
thee ;

For wide over thee may his industry range,  
And sweeten his toil with the blessings of  
change.

From tracing the furrow and planting the  
grain,

The youth turneth back and forsaketh the  
plain ;

He mates with the boatmen, and joins in their  
song,

Where rolleth the Father of Waters along ;

Still patient with fortune, still earnest to bear  
What God and humanity mark for his share.  
None read from the future his glorious fate  
To stand at the helm of the vessel of State,  
Its stay till the night and the tempest are done,  
And then, into Heaven go up with the sun !

How strong is the Manhood that beareth  
the test

When Duty and Impulse make war in the  
breast ;

How bitterly struggles the nature humane  
With something that's higher than heart in  
the brain ;

A god with our fallen mortality strives,  
And Manhood is lost if the fonder survives.

'Tis Duty that calleth the sturdy to go  
Where lurks in his forest the Indian foe;  
The gentle of heart and the merciful man  
Is called by his country to march in the van;  
He goes, and his rifle is heard in the wood;  
His duty is done, but he sickens of blood.

Time only, that Spirit of kindness could face  
With savages, worse than the Indian race,  
To mock at the tenderness ever its own,  
And pleading for them at the steps of the  
    throne ;  
For loving indulgence a martyrdom give,  
And murder sweet Mercy, that Justice might  
    live !

Well tried is the genius that rises to rule  
From lessons of man in adversity's school :  
Ill-balanced by honors too lavishly flung,  
It scorneth the level from which it is sprung ;  
Embitter'd by contest with rank as it rose,  
Its logic is iron that hardens with blows ;



Or, true to the balance, in victory mild,  
It tow'rs like a mountain grown up from  
the wild ;

Still firm at its base in the primitive plain,  
To shrink to a summit more humble than  
vain.

So, he of the West, from obscurity's vale,  
Goes up to a height in political tale ;

So, true to the lowly, refined with the high,  
To these he lends counsel, with those in his  
eye.

“Half free and half slave the Republic must  
fall ;

Yet saved it will be,” are his words for us all !  
Time put him to proof when the issue was  
tried,

He lived for the Deed, for the Principle died !

Now, borne on his countrymen's louder  
acclaim,

He mounts to the station most noble of fame ;  
A chief in the halls where a Washington trod,  
And like unto him as a saint to a god.

Foul Treason has risen, its horrors flame  
forth

To rouse from their slumbers the souls of  
the North,

And pealeth from cities, from prairies and  
farms,

The rallying cry of the loyal in arms.

War breaks on the nation, she enters the  
strife

And struggles with traitors for Honor and  
Life!

Where dwelleth the spirit her being to save  
From murderers bred in the toil of the slave?

The Capitol answers: the spirit is there,  
And holdeth its court in the President's  
chair.

That nature so gentle containeth a will  
Which glows like a fire in an air that is still.  
Alas! that our pillar of guidance by night  
Should fade from the world at the coming of  
light.

Why follow the record? His glories are told

In all that his people the tenderest hold:

A nation redeem'd, and its Banner unfurl'd,

The fairest, the strongest, the best in the  
world;

Henceforth be that Banner to patriot eyes

A pray'r from its Shepherd of Stars in the  
skies ;

Henceforth be its meaning for ages to scan,  
That Heaven lies bleeding upon it for man !  
How wise was the leader; how gentle the  
    sage ;  
How calm with the hasty, indulgent to rage ;  
All fervent of purpose to follow the right,  
And merciful still in the midst of the fight ;

To calumny silent ; to enmity mild ;  
In action a giant, in faith like a child ;  
Four millions of bondmen he called to be  
free ;  
And saved thee, my Country, and perished  
for thee !



Bright Honor, the plume of the lily  
Let Woe from thy morion take ;  
And weep at the direful disaster,  
And kneel at the tomb of our Master,  
Who laid down his life for thy sake.

Fond Mercy, thy shield for the praying  
Let Pity's last injury break ;  
And mourn over all that was mortal  
Of him of thine innermost portal,  
Who laid down his life for thy sake.

Great Freedom, thy soul of the dauntless,  
Let sorrow invincible shake ;  
And blot with a tear in thy charter,  
The name of the patriot Martyr  
Who laid down his life for thy sake.

R. H. NEWELL.