THE

LIFE AND TIMES

OF

ABRAHAM LINCOLN,

SIXTEENTH

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

INCLUDING HIS

SPEECHES, MESSAGES, INAUGURALS, PROCLAMATIONS, ETC., ETC.

BY

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"THE LIFE AND TIMES OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN!" and why, pray, add another to the many memoirs of him already published?

Because, dear reader, there was need of just one more. Listen, and we will prove it. The memoirs and biographies of our late President, which have already appeared, are, some of them, from able pens, and clearly and fairly accomplish the object for which they were written. Without exception, we believe, they belong to the class of campaign biographies; some written before his first, others during the canvass which preceded his second, election. Their principal object was, of course, political. They have not, we think, dealt in misrepresentation; there was no need of that. But they have presented him as a fit and proper candidate for the office of President of the United States, and for this purpose they have dwelt largely upon his previous political career in Congress; in the Senatorial canvass; in the closing portion of Mr. Buchanan's presidency; and some of them on the stupendous events of the four years of his first administration, and the policy he pursued during that long period of darkness and gloom. This is all right and admirable in its way, and were there any question of a campaign life of the Good President, were he still with us, and still a candidate for the highest honors a grateful people could bestow, we should say at once, "that which is written is sufficient; we can add nothing to a record so pure and honorable."

But this is not the time for a campaign life of Abraham
Lincoln. He whom he served with singleness of heart here, hath called him up higher, and henceforth his place is with the glorified, whose brows are illumined with the pure and holy light which proceeds from the throne of God.

We could not if we would, and we would not if we could, attempt a political life of him whose loss we, as well as the nation, most deeply mourn. We have no fondness for the devious track of party politics, no desire to pander to so groveling and base-born an ambition. But we have loved Abraham Lincoln as a child might love a father; we have confided in him, have trusted his sagacity, have honored his patriotism, have admired that sterling common sense which led him to judge so wisely, to act so honorably and justly, and to meet questions of such difficulty with such a wise and clear discrimination.

We desired to prepare this life of him, that we might exhibit him as he appeared and was, in all the relations of life, a man of the people, hardy, laborious, and self-reliant—a self-made man in the best sense of that title—studious, desirous ever to make up the deficiencies of education entailed by a frontier life, and of a rare teachable spirit; an honest, frank, manly man, one in whom his neighbors and friends could trust most implicitly; a pattern man in his fidelity to truth and principle and right. We have sought also to delineate him in his domestic and social relations, as a dutiful son, a kind and tender husband, a loving father, a genial and social friend, with a keen sense of humor, great conversational powers, and a fascinating way which, though his form was ungainly, won him the love of all who were thrown in his society. And it has been our aim also to depict him as he appeared in public life, a clear and lucid speaker, a skilful debater, who won the hearts of his audience to his own side, not by trick or subterfuge, but by his apt and effective way of “putting things;” clinching a point often by a telling illustration, which, however homely it might be, was never out of place; a statesman whose enlarged per-
exceptions and breadth of view took in all the bearings of the
great questions which have agitated the public mind in the
last five years; a man who, acting slowly, with calmness and
great deliberation, never made a mistake in regard to a prin-
ciple, and never indulged a thought of self; but always sought
his country’s good; a chief magistrate, who though reviled
reviled not again, but with an almost angelic patience, sought
to do good to those who despitefully used him; a diplomatist
who believed that truth, honesty and frankness were better
weapons for managing the intricate questions of our foreign
policy, than deceit, duplicity, and “paltering in a double sense.”
And if some “good angel will guide our pencil while we draw,”
we would portray him also, as the Christian, in public and
private life, seeking counsel from above, and amid all his weighty
cares and his wearying burdens, looking to God for guidance,
and devoutly acknowledging his indebtedness to him for every
blessing. Having thus shown his character as it was in life,
we would also venture, though with eyes bedimmed with tears,
to draw aside the veil, and describe how the demon slavery,
possessing the heart and firing the brain of the wretched assass-
in, led him to commit a deed which shall consign him to eternal
infamy; and how, all over our land, and throughout christen-
dom, at the tidings of his death, a wail of anguish went up to
heaven from millions of stricken hearts, who had recognized in
him the second founder of the Republic, the Emancipator, the
one historic name which shall go down to posterity, linked in
our country’s history, with that of Washington.

With such a purpose, we submit that there are ample reasons,
as there is abundant room, for a new memoir of our martyred
President Abraham Lincoln.