

DEATH OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN.

Public Meeting in Boone County, Missouri.

(From the Columbia Missouri Statesman, April 28, 1865.)

At a large meeting of the loyal citizens of Boone county, Missouri, holden at the Court house in Columbia, on the 22nd April, 1865, on motion of Hon. Jas. S. Rollins, Prof. J. H. Lathrop, L. L. D., was elected President, and Rev. Isaac Jones and Gen. Jos. B. Douglass Vice-Presidents; John F. Baker and Robert L. Todd, Secretaries.

On motion, a committee, consisting of Hon. J. S. Rollins, Elder T. M. Allen, Dr. M. R. Arnold, Judge David Gordon and Col. Jas. R. Shields, was appointed to submit resolutions for the action of the meeting.

The Committee having retired, Col. W. F. Switzler, being called for, addressed the meeting on the death of President Lincoln, the melancholy cause which had convened them, in an appropriate, impressive and touching manner.

Col. Switzler said that often in times past it had been his fortune to meet the people of Boone, but never under such solemn circumstances as those which called this assemblage together. The death of the President of the United States at any time was an event good men deplored as a national calamity, occasioning the profoundest sorrow in all hearts. This was true even in periods of the profoundest peace. How much more keenly, therefore, must the national heart be touched and more deeply the national sorrow be moved at the brutal and cowardly assassination of the President in the crisis of civil war, at a period in which his administration was amid momentous events, and he as our Chief Executive was approaching his greatest triumph and the meridian of his fame in the accomplishment of an honorable Peace on the basis of a fraternal and never-ending Union !

No man who deserves our great ancestry or a participa-

tion in the rich heritage they vouched safe to us can regard this dastardly assassination in any other light than as a national disgrace, blurring the fair escutcheon of our country's fame; and the death of our President at this hour as anything less than a great national calamity. It is a terrible affliction falling with mighty force upon the people at a time in which all hearts were radiant with joy in anticipation of an early close of the fratricidal struggle which has for four years desolated our land, and at a crisis in which more than at any other in our previous history the Republic needed the honest, patriotic, and magnanimous direction of Mr. Lincoln, and of his Secretary of State, Mr. Seward, in guiding us to a restored Union and to national fraternity and peace.

Other nations in the darker and more bloody ages of the world have been called to mourn the assassination of their rulers. Other nations, far less enlightened and far less free, in the dreadful struggles between barbarism and civilization which mark the history of the middle ages, have had fixed upon them by some dastard hand the ineffaceable stain of assassinations. Rome itself had not escaped. We all remember to her shame the notable events in her history; B. C. about 48, of the assassination of Julius Cæsar in the Senate-house at the base of Pompey's statue by Marcus Junius Brutus. Ungrateful wretch! Notwithstanding Cæsar at the decisive battle of Pharsalia had conquered Pompey, to whose fortunes Brutus had linked himself by word and deed, and had driven the vanquished chieftain into Egypt, he spared Brutus, made him one of his friends, and conferred upon him the governorship of Cisalpine Gaul. And although the assassin in this case attempted to extenuate his guilt and to reconcile the Roman people by the plea of patriotism—"not that he loved Cæsar less, but that he loved Rome more," Anthony put a tongue in every wound of Cæsar, and Brutus like the assassin of our departed President was damned to everlasting infamy.

It is true, it is sadly true, (continued Col. Switzler) Abra-

ham Lincoln is dead, but the President still lives. Under our noble form of government, the fairest and the brightest monument of human wisdom and liberty known to history, although the official head of the nation is stricken down by an assassin the Republic still lives, moving on in the even tenor of its way to the complete overthrow of the rebellion and to its glorious destiny.

On the same day, and in three hours after the death of Mr. Lincoln his successor was peacefully inaugurated with his cabinet ministers around him, assured from all quarters of the generous confidence and support of an afflicted but hopeful and confiding people. He said that such a constitution, a form of government so wisely adapted to the harmonious accomplishment of the great ends of its being, was priceless; and its preservation as a rich heritage for our children was even worth the blood of the holy martyrs who had gone down in this war to defend it.

Among these martyrs was Abraham Lincoln, whose untimely death the nation mourns this day with bitter and unaffected grief. His was a magnanimous spirit, a genial and a noble nature. Let us bury with him in the grave and forever forget all past differences of opinion, and remember him as a patriot who loved his country, and whose fame is immortal. Let us live, not to embitter strife by nursing partisan rancor, but to remember our slain chieftain as a noble patriot, and to rely with confidence on the overruling Providence of God, how inscrutable it may be, to preserve our calmness and unconquerable love of the Union, and in good faith to submit and adhere to the sovereign laws of the land. As loyal citizens of the Republic, let us live to remember that notwithstanding this disastrous and bloody strife and the many hearts and hearthstones made desolate, that Abraham Lincoln regarded this nation as one people, north as well as south, south as well as north, with a common ancestry and a common heritage. Let us live to love our country and to serve it as well as he has done; and to stand by his successor in

the patriotic work of giving a finishing blow to the rebellion, of binding up the bleeding wounds of this sorrowing people, and of permanently restoring peace from the lakes to the gulf and from ocean to ocean on the basis of national unity and perpetual brotherhood.

At the conclusion of Col. Switzler's remarks, Major Rollins, on behalf of the committee, submitted the following—accompanying the same with an earnest, eloquent, feeling tribute to the memory and worth of Mr. Lincoln—after which the preamble and resolutions were unanimously adopted:

WHEREAS, Abraham Lincoln, the President of the United States, on the night of the 14th instant, was stricken down by the hand of an assassin, and removed by a violent death, from his exalted position of usefulness and honor; and whereas, the simultaneous attempt to take the lives of other eminent public men, indicates concert of action, with a traitorous as well as a murderous intent; and whereas, it becomes a great people, whom God has set up as an example to the nations of the earth to purge themselves from all taint of sympathy with this crime against civilization, and also to give utterance to their sense of the national bereavement, therefore,

Resolved, That we, in common with our fellow citizens throughout the country, hold up to present execration and perpetual infamy as enemies of the human race, the procurers and the perpetrators of the savage and revolting murder of the Chief Magistrate of the American Republic, and other like crimes, simultaneously attempted but mercifully averted.

Resolved, That our gratitude is due to Almighty God for the leadership of the distinguished dead, in the period of our country's peril; for the exemplary purity of his private and public life; for his just appreciation of the national crisis; for the admirable temper with which he met its exigencies in defeat as well as in victory; for his heroic faith in the exalted destiny of the American people; for his self-devotion to the cause of human liberty, even unto death; and for the consolation, which we cherish that now, in the triumphant moment of his eminent public service, the hand of the assassin has failed to impair the value of his official work; and has been only able to commit to the historic page the name of Abraham Lincoln as the second founder of the great Republic.

Resolved That although this attempt has been made by traitorous hands to reach the life of the country, through the assassination of its distinguished public men, we have unshaken confidence in the speedy restoration of the national authority over every acre of its soil; and the termination of the shock of arms in the formation of a still closer union; in the establishment of a more comprehensive and authoritative justice; in the assurance of an enduring domestic tranquility, in a more effective provision for the common defence; in a more vigorous

promotion of the general welfare; in the immovable security of the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity; and in the extension of the benefit of our great example to the nations of the earth.

Resolved, That we recognize in Andrew Johnson, the chosen instrument of the American people for the promotion of these great national ends; a patriot statesman,

“among the faithless faithful found,”

and commend his incoming administration to the generous and persistent support of every steadfast heart, that tempers the sorrow of our national bereavement, by an undying confidence in the integrity, the perpetuity, and the ever progressive greatness of our American Union.

Resolved, That, in testimony of our respect for the memory of our fallen chief, the public buildings of Columbia be draped in mourning for thirty days; and to this end the resident Curators of the State University and the county court of Boone co., are respectfully requested to carry into effect this resolution.

Resolved, That we tender to the widow and family of the illustrious dead, our heartfelt sympathies for the great loss which, in common with the nation, they have sustained; and request the chairman of this meeting to communicate a copy to them of the foregoing resolutions.

Resolved, That the proceedings of this meeting be signed by the officers thereof, and that the newspapers of the state, be requested to publish the same.

Col. Switzler then offered the following resolutions, during his advocacy of which he read to the audience a recent letter from Gov. Fletcher to Mr. J. F. Baker, Sheriff of the county:

1. That we have great confidence in the wisdom, integrity and patriotism of the present Governor of Missouri, Thomas C. Fletcher, and of Major Generals Pope and Dodge, our District and Department Commanders; and that we will individually and collectively aid them by all the means in our power in suppressing disorder and in enforcing the laws of the land.

2 That we deeply regret Gov. Fletcher was prevented by circumstances over which he had no control from meeting the people of Boone, pursuant to appointment, on the 31st of March; and as there is universal desire to have him address us in regard to the great interests of our State and nation, a committee of five be appointed by the President of this meeting to invite him to visit Columbia and address the people of the county at as early a day as may suit his convenience.

Mr. R. L. Todd offered as an additional resolution, the following :

Resolved, That we thank Gov. Fletcher for his able, sound, patriotic letter to our Sheriff, Mr. Baker; and that, heartily approving its sentiments, we—individually and collectively—pledge ourselves to aid and sustain him in the course thereby indicated; and will nobly vindicate the propriety of his confidence in the people of Boone county,

which being accepted by Mr. Switzler, the resolutions

were unanimously adopted.

Under the second resolution, the chair appointed as a committee, W. F. Switzler, J. S. Rollins, F. T. Russell, R. L. Todd, and J. H. Waugh.

On motion of Mr. Todd,

Resolved, That Dr. J. H. Lathrop be requested to prepare an address on the life and character of our late President, Abraham Lincoln, to be delivered before the people of Boone county, at such time as may suit his convenience.

Elder T. M. Allen, being called for, addressed the meeting briefly and felicitously, and Col. Russell, in response to an urgent invitation made a few remarks, well timed and happy; when on motion the meeting adjourned.

J. H. LATHROP

R. L. TODD.

President.

J. F. BAKER. Secretaries.

The following is a copy of Gov. Fletcher's letter to Sheriff Baker :

STATE OF MISSOURI, EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, }
CITY OF JEFFERSON, April 19th, 1865. }

DEAR SIR: I have requested the Major General commanding this Department to remove the Provost Marshal and all troops, except the company organized in your own county and the militia of your county, from among your people.

Now I rely on you and the honest people of your county to preserve the peace and enforce the law. If at any time you desire military assistance inform me and you shall have it. I want it understood that there is not and cannot be any such thing as a confederate soldier in your county. Taking horses or other property is not capturing from the enemy; it is robbery or larceny and must be dealt with accordingly. Killing a man in Missouri now is not making war on a belligerent force, it is murder.

A fair opportunity is afforded your people to arm themselves and to control and manage their own affairs with the officer of the law at their head. No violation of law on the part of any man is to be permitted. When the law is violated it is the duty of the officers of the law and of every good citizen to arrest the offender, and any person has a right to kill a man engaged in committing a felony if it is necessary in order to arrest him.

No man who refuses to assist in enforcing the law is fit to live in Missouri. You will please call on everybody to assist you in enforcing the law; those who do so may rely upon it that nothing more will be required of them. Those who refuse to do so must expect me to regard them as accessories before or after the fact to any lawless act committed by the

bushwhackers who they refuse to pursue, and to treat them accordingly.

No sane man, who is not himself a robber and a murderer, will refuse to stand by me in this effort to restore peace. I have taken the responsibility of this policy for your county, and despite all opposition, am resolved to try it. I have confidence that the great majority of the people are honest and want peace and will help me prove to my doubting friends that they are worthy of this confidence.

I am truly yours, THOS. C. FLETCHER.
JNO. F. BAKER, Esq.

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