

faces; but let us judge not, that we be not judged. The prayers of both could not be answered—that of neither has been answered fully.

The Almighty has His own purposes. “Woe unto the world because of offenses! for it must needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh.” If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offenses which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove, and that He gives to both North and South this terrible war, as the woe due to those by whom the offense came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to him? Fondly do we hope—fervently do we pray—that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God

wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondman’s two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, “The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.”

With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation’s wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations.

LINCOLN, SECOND INAUGURAL ADDRESS, MARCH 4, 1865.

## 39. HE BELONGS TO THE AGES

*Gideon Welles, Secretary of the Navy throughout Lincoln’s administration, kept a detailed and revealing diary during those crucial years. He had the true New England temperament and was as conscientious as any Adams. His diary is one of the most valuable sources of information on men and events of that period.*

*Welles retired about 10:30 on the evening of April 14, 1865. Shortly thereafter a messenger clamored outside and announced that the President and Seward and the latter’s son had been assassinated. Dressing hastily Welles hurried across Lafayette Square to Seward’s house on 15th Street. Stanton arrived there at about the same time. They found Seward severely wounded and his son slightly injured. Together, they then hastened on to Ford’s Theatre. There they learned that the mortally wounded and unconscious President had been carried to a house across the street. The bullet from John Wilkes Booth’s derringer had found its mark while the President was enjoying a few moments in his favorite form of relaxation. He had gone to the theatre to see Laura Keane in an English comedy called “Our American Cousin.” Gideon Welles tells the story of the final hours.*

The President had been carried across the street from the theater, to the house of a Mr. Peterson. We entered by ascending a flight of steps above the basement and passing through a long hall to the rear, where the President lay extended on a bed, breathing heavily. Several surgeons were present, at least six, I should think more. Among them I was glad to observe Dr. Hall, who, however, soon left. I inquired of Dr. H., as I entered, the true condition of the President. He replied the President was dead to all intents, although he might live three hours or perhaps longer.

The giant sufferer lay extended diagonally across

the bed, which was not long enough for him. He had been stripped of his clothes. His large arms, which were occasionally exposed, were of a size which one would scarce have expected from his spare appearance. His slow, full respiration lifted the clothes with each breath that he took. His features were calm and striking. I had never seen them appear to better advantage than for the first hour, perhaps, that I was there. After that, his right eye began to swell and that part of his face became discolored.

Senator Sumner was there, I think, when I entered. If not he came in soon after, as did Speaker Colfax, Mr. Secretary McCulloch, and the other members of