

# LINCOLN LORE

Bulletin of The Lincoln National Life Foundation - - - - - Dr. Louis A. Warren, Editor  
Published each week by The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana

Number 1404

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

March 5, 1956

## THE QUEEN, THE EMPEROR, THE PRESIDENT, 1861

People familiar with the history of America find it difficult to associate the inaugurations of our Presidents with any other season except early March. The date of this bulletin, but one day removed on the calendar from the anniversary of both Lincoln's first and second inaugural ceremonies, recalls an interesting reaction of "The Lounger," a contributor to *Harper's Weekly* in the "sixties."

The emphasis by "The Lounger" was placed on the approach to their respective seats of government by the Queen of England, the Emperor of France and the President of the United States, all occurring within the period of a month. Attention was called to the impressive processions in the three greatest cities of modern times, each in honor of the progress of its country's recognized leader, to address the nation upon its intimate and important relations.

A description is presented of the Queen greeted in London and surrounded by "every kind of pageantry in which the military is most conspicuous." The Emperor is described as "The wise head of a military despotism as he marches to his assembly through his bright camp in Paris." But how different is the progress of the President as he passes through New York on the way to Washington: "The President, the plainest and simplest of citizens, without badge or decoration without a soldier or a drum . . . with bare head, in an open barouche" rides through the nation's largest city.

However, the words spoken by these three representatives of different political systems as they assumed their respective responsibilities of leadership in the early weeks of 1861 are of more importance than their processions.

The Queen of England opened Parliament in person on February 5 and delivered her speech in part as follows:

### THE QUEEN

"MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,—It is with great satisfaction that I again meet you in Parliament, and have recourse to your assistance and advice. My relations with foreign Powers continue to be friendly and satisfactory, and I trust that the moderation of the Powers of Europe will prevent any interruption of the general peace. . . . Serious differences have arisen among the States of the North American Union. It is impossible for me to look without great concern upon any event that can affect the happiness and welfare of a people nearly allied to my subjects by descent, and closely connected with them by the most intimate and friendly relations. My heartfelt wish is that these differences may be susceptible of satisfactory adjustment. The interest which I take in the wellbeing of the people of the United States can not but be increased by the kind and cordial reception given by them to the Prince of Wales during his recent visit to the continent of America. I am glad to take this opportunity of expressing my warm appreciation of the loyalty and attachment to my person and throne manifested by my Canadian and other North American subjects on the occasion of the residence of the Prince of Wales among them."

The speech of the French Emperor opened the Chamber in France on February 4th and excerpts from his address follow:

### THE EMPEROR

"I have endeavored to prove, in my relations with foreign Powers, that France sincerely desires peace, and

that, without renouncing a legitimate influence, she does not pretend to interfere in any place where her interests are not concerned; and, finally, that, if she sympathizes with all that is great and noble, she does not hesitate to condemn every thing which violates international right and justice. It is sufficient for the greatness of the country that its right be maintained in the quarters in which they are incontestable, to defend its honor wherever it may be attacked, and to afford her support where it is supplicated by a just cause. . . . My firm resolution is not to enter into any conflict in which the cause of France should not be based on rights and justice. What, then, have we to fear? Can a united and compact nation, numbering forty millions of souls, fear to be drawn into struggles the aim of which she could not approve, or be provoked by any menace whatever? The first virtue of a people is to have confidence in itself, and not allow itself to be distrusted by imaginary alarms. Let us, then calmly regard the future in the full consciousness of our strength as well as in our honorable intentions. Let us engage, without exaggerated preoccupations, in the development of the germs of the prosperity that Providence places in our hands."

The First Inaugural Address of Abraham Lincoln, newly elected President of the United States, was delivered at 1:30 p.m. on March 4, 1861 from a platform of unsightly planks and boards with little attempt at decorations except for a small canopy under which Mr. Lincoln stood. A few of his comments are noted:

### THE PRESIDENT

"FELLOW CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES,—In compliance with a custom as old as the government itself, I appear before you to address you briefly, and to take, in your presence, the oath prescribed by the Constitution of the United States, to be taken by the President 'before he enters on the execution of his office.'

"I hold, that in contemplation of universal law, and of the Constitution, the Union of these States is perpetual. Perpetuity is implied, if not expressed, in the fundamental law of all national governments. It is safe to assert that no government proper, ever had a provision in its organic law for its own termination. Continue to execute all the express provisions of our national Constitution, and the Union will endure forever—it being impossible to destroy it, except by some action not provided for in the instrument itself.

"By the frame of the government under which we live, this same people have widely given their public servants but little power for mischief; and have, with equal wisdom, provided for the return of that little to their own hands at very short intervals.

"While the people remain patient, and true to themselves, no man, even in the presidential chair, by any extreme of wickedness or folly, can very seriously injure the government in the short space of four years."

"The Chief Magistrate derives all his authority from the people, and they have conferred none upon him to fix terms for the separation of the States. The people themselves can do this if they choose; but the executive, as such, has nothing to do with it. His duty is to administer the present government, as it came to his hands, and to transmit it, unimpaired by him, to his successor."