

now it has 1 archbishop, 6 bishops, 988 priests, 218 seminaries, 668 churches and a membership of 1,180,100 (active communicants). It has at present twice as many priests as the whole country had fifty years ago. In the Southern States the Catholic Church has not made as much progress as in the New England and the Middle and Western States. However, it has, outside of Louisiana, which is considered a Catholic State, 8 bishops, 223 priests, 71 seminaries and 316 churches in the South.

The actual number of communicants cannot be accurately ascertained. The *American Catholic News* says: "The bishops as a rule are very guarded in their estimates of members, and the figures they furnish are never exaggerated; in fact, they frequently and almost generally fall far below the real figures."

Roman authorities, however, estimate the number of Catholics in the United States at about 14,000,000. The Bishop of Kansas City, in a discourse published last year puts the church at these figures. The growth of the church in Canada is equally great, while in Mexico and further south it is not by any means declining. This church is composed of a great variety of races and peoples. It reminds us of what the angel told Nephi to look at. He saw many nations and kingdoms, all of the Gentiles, and among them the foundation of a great church, which is to cut a formidable and dramatic figure in the events of the latter times.

THE LAMENTED ABRAHAM LINCOLN

FEB. 12th was the anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln, one of the greatest men in American history. He was born in Hardin County, Kentucky, February 12, 1809. At this time Thomas Jefferson was nearing the end of his second term as President of the United States.

In early life the Lincoln family moved into Illinois. Shortly after, young Abraham is found working for hire in various capacities as a manual laborer. His young manhood was marked by diligence, industry and energy. By his own unaided efforts he became a good surveyor, a fair English scholar and a good lawyer.

In 1832 we find him elected captain of a militia company, organized to fight Indians. In the same year he was a candidate for the Illinois Legislature, but was defeated. Two years later he was successful, and served four years in that Legislature. In 1846 he went to Congress. After serving one term, he returned home and

applied himself earnestly to law. At this time he had achieved considerable fame as an attorney.

In 1854 politics had assumed an exciting phase. The Missouri Compromise law had been repealed. The question of slavery came up once more in all its hideousness. Abraham Lincoln was aroused, and he went into the arena fearless, vigorous and unconquerable. In a short time he became the recognized leader of the anti-slavery party. By his strategy and self-sacrifice, Lyman Trumbull, then a Democrat, was elected United States Senator in preference to a Douglas man. Lincoln himself was the candidate of his party, but seeing the impossibility of his election he withdrew and gave his support to an anti-slavery Democrat. But it was in 1858 that he fully demonstrated his superior intellectuality, moral insight, and political sagacity. In that year his famous debating tour with Senator Stephen A. Douglas was made. In that year, on June 16, he uttered the prophetic words:

"A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved; I do not expect the house to fall; but I do expect that it will cease to be divided. It will become all the one thing or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in course of ultimate extinction, or its advocates will push it forward until it shall become alike lawful in all the States, old as well as new, north as well as south."

Abraham Lincoln was in the early part of 1860, the undisputed head of the Republican party. His New York speech of February 27, 1860, showed conclusively that he was the safest and best man to trust with the practical leadership. It is little wonder then, that at the Chicago convention of May, 1860, he was the nominee of the party for the presidency.

The campaign of that year was a memorable one. The Democrats split into factions. There were three candidates, Douglas, Breckenridge and Bell. When the votes of the Electoral College were taken, Lincoln had 180, Breckenridge 72, and Douglas 12. The popular vote stood: For Lincoln, 1,866,462; for Douglas, 1,375,157; for Breckenridge, 847,953; for Bell, 590,631. It will be seen that if the Democrats could have united on one candidate and on one platform, their popular vote would have been 2,223,110. But there was a hand directing the course of events which the unthinking mind does not take note of. That was the Hand of God, the hand which first directed Washington and Jefferson, and then directed Lincoln.

Lincoln was inaugurated March 4, 1861. He surrounded himself with able men in his Cabinet. William H. Seward, Salmon P. Chase, Simon Cameron, Gideon Welles, Caleb B. Smith, Edward Bates and Montgomery Blair. Of these Seward, Smith and Bates were of Whig paternity, in politics, while the others were all of Democratic antecedents.

It is needless to go over in detail the organization of the "Confederate States of America," and the dreadful civil war which tore asunder the Union for four dark and sanguinary years after. But one fact must not be omitted, and it is, that Abraham Lincoln did not precipitate the war. On the contrary, he tried every means of preserving the Union without recourse to arms. He said:

"In your hands my dissatisfied fellow-countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The government will not assail you. You can have no conflict without being yourselves the aggressors. You have no oath registered in heaven to destroy the government, while I shall have a most solemn one to preserve, protect and defend it."

Shortly after, on April 13, 1861, Fort Sumpter, surrendered to the secessionists. Then it was that Lincoln showed himself the man for the hour. He called for soldiers and obtained them. He called a special session of Congress for July 4, 1861. The first battle of Bull Run took place July 21, 1861. A bitter controversy has arisen as to the merits and patriotism of the early leaders of the war. But they are all beyond the reach of human criticism now, and we must charitably think that if there was error, it was of the head and not of the heart. All meant well, but all were not like Lincoln, worthy of Divine guidance. The telegraph tells us that one of the great actors in this terrible drama, is now on the point of death. That is General Sherman, one of the last surviving great soldiers of the war.

That period from the attack on Sumpter to the fall of Richmond, and the surrender of Lee at Appomattox, on April 9, 1865, is a thrilling one in American history. The bitter memories it has left still rankles in the bosoms of many, and vicious men endeavor to perpetuate and intensify them.

This is wrong. Our duty is to remember that we are Americans and not party fighters or propagators of sectional hate. Unfortunately the hand of the assassin struck down the man who could best heal the wounds made by the civil war. That man was Abraham Lincoln, the assassin was Wilkes Booth, a misguided, insane fanatic who fancied himself a patriot. Let the name of Lincoln be forever revered. Its noblest bearer Abraham, died April 15, 1865.