

THE LIFE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

BY

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PUBLISHED BY LINCOLN HISTORY SOCIETY
NEW YORK.

Volume IV - Page 28-29

A few days after this, as he was sailing down the James bound for Washington, Charles Sumner, who was in the party, was much impressed by the tone and manner in which Mr. Lincoln read aloud two or three times a passage from Madbeth:

"Duncan is in his grave;
After life's fitful fever, he sleeps well;
Treason has done his worst; nor steel, nor poison
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing,
Can touch him further!"

Never since he had become convinced that the end of the war was near had Mr. Lincoln seemed to his friends more glad, more serene, than on the 14th of April. The morning was soft and sunny in Washington, and as the spring was early in 1865, the Judas-trees and the dogwood were blossoming on the hillsides, the willows were green along the Potomac, and in the parks and gardens the lilacs bloomed - a day of promise and joy to which the whole town responded. Indeed, ever since the news of the fall of Richmond reached Washington the town had been indulging in an almost unbroken celebration, each new victory arousing a fresh outburst and rekindling enthusiasm. On the night of the 13th, there had been a splendid illumination, and on the 14th, the rejoicing went on. The suspension of the draft and the presence of Grant in town - come this time not to plan new campaigns, but to talk of peace and reconstruction - seemed to furnish special reason for celebrating.