were destroyed by fire, the heart of the city was eaten out,—all of the business portions, all the banks and insurance-offices, half of the newspapers, mills, depots, bridges, foundries, workshops, dwellings, churches, thirty squares in all, swept clean by the devouring flames. It was the work of the Confederate Government. And not only this, but human life was remorselessly sacrificed.

In the outskirts of the city, on the Mechanicsville road, was the almshouse, filled with the lame, the blind, the halt, the bedridden, the sick, and the poor. Ten rods distant was a magazine containing fifteen or twenty kegs of powder, of little value to a victorious army with full supplies of ammunition. been rolled into the nd; but the order of blow up the magazine ıust be executed.

"We g nutes to get out of th sole notice to that cr reatures lying in th o'clock in the morni nen begged for mercy ries. The officer in ter was inexorable. oeless, the inmates of n in terror from the in the ravines. Bu who could not run, wl ı was laying, rent t ks of terror. The t he expiration of the he whole side of the l h a crash, as if it were ısteboard. Windows fl particles. Bricks, stoı ums, and boards went ı the air. Trees were though a giant had twi ıes. The city rocked a an earthquake. The tches remaining in the almshouse were torn to pieces. Their bodies were but blackened masses of flesh, when the fugitives who had sought shelter in the fields returned to the shattered ruins.

How stirring the events of that morning! Lee retreating, Grant pursuing; Davis a fugitive; the Governor and Legislature of Virginia seeking safety in a canal-boat; Doctors of Divinity fleeing from the wrath to come; the troops of the Union marching up the streets; the old flag waving over the Capitol; Rebel iron-clads blowing up; Richmond in flames; the fiery billows rolling on from house to house, from block to block, from square to square, unopposed in their progress by the panic-stricken, stupefied, bewildered crowd; and the Northern Vandals laying aside their arms, manning the engines, putting out the fire, and saving the city from total destruction! Through the terrible day, all through the succeeding night, the smoke of its torment went up to heaven. Strange, weird, the scenes of that Monday night, — the glimmering flames, the clouds of smoke hanging like a funeral pall above the ruins, the crowd of woe-begone, houseless, homeless creatures wandering through the streets: —

"Such resting found the soles of unblest feet!"

Late Scenes in Richmond
by C C Coffin
The Atlantic Monthly
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VISIT OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN.

AMONG the memorable events of the week was the visit of President Lincoln to the city of Richmond. He had been tarrying at City Point, holding daily consultations with General Grant, visiting the army and the iron-clads at Aiken's Landing, — thus avoiding the swarm of place-hunters that darkened the doors of the executive mansion.

On Tuesday noon a tug-boat belonging to the navy was seen steaming up the James, regardless of torpedoes and obstructions. A mile below the city, where the water becomes shoal, President Lincoln, accompanied by Admiral Porter, Captain Adams of the navy, Captain Penrose of the army, and Lieutenant Clemmens of the Signal Corps, put off from the tug in a launch manned by twelve sailors, whose long, steady oar-strokes quickly carried the party to the landing-place, — a square above Libby Prison.

There was no committee of reception,

no guard of honor, no grand display of troops, no assembling of an eager multitude to welcome him.

He entered the city unheralded; six sailors, armed with carbines, stepped upon the shore, followed by the President, who held his little son by the hand, and Admiral Porter; the officers followed, and six more sailors brought up the rear. The writer of this article was there upon the spot, and, joining the party, became an observer of the memorable event.

There were forty or fifty freedmen, who had been sole possessors of themselves for twenty-four hours, at work on the bank of the canal, securing some floating timber, under the direction of a Lieutenant. Somehow they obtained the information that the man who was head and shoulders taller than all others around him, with features large and irregular, with a mild eye and pleasant countenance, was President Lincoln.

"God bless you, Sah!" said one, taking off his cap and bowing very low.

"Hurrah! hurrah! President Linkum hab come!" was the shout which rang through the street.

The Lieutenant found himself without a command. What cared those freedmen, fresh from the house of bondage, for floating timber or military commands? Their deliverer had come,—he who, next to the Lord Jesus, was their best friend! It was not an hurrah that they gave, but a wild, jubilant cry of inexpressible joy.

They gathered round the President, ran ahead, hovered upon the flanks of the little company, and hung like a dark cloud upon the rear. Men, women, and children joined the constantly increasing throng. They came from all the by-streets, running in breathless haste, shouting and hallooing and dancing with delight. The men threw up their hats, the women waved their bonnets and handkerchiefs, clapped their hands, and sang, "Glory to God! glory! glory! glory!"—rendering all the praise to God, who had heard their wailings in the past, their moanings for wives, husbands, children, and friends sold out of their sight, had given them freedom, and, after long years of waiting, had permitted them thus unexpectedly to behold the face of their great benefactor.

"I thank you, dear Jesus, that I behold President Linkum!" was the exclamation of a woman who stood upon the threshold of her humble home, and with streaming eyes and clasped hands gave thanks aloud to the Saviour of men.

Another, more demonstrative in her joy, was jumping and striking her hands with all her might, crying,—"Bless de Lord! Bless de Lord! Bless de Lord!" as if there could be no end of her thanksgiving.

The air rang with a tumultuous chorus of voices. The street became almost impassable on account of the increasing multitude. Soldiers were summoned to clear the way. How strange the event! The President of the United States—he who had been hated, despised, maligned above all other men living, to whom the vilest epithets had been applied by the people of Richmond—was walking their streets, receiving thanksgivings, blessings, and praises from thousands who hailed him as the ally of the Messiah! How bitter the reflections of that moment to some who beheld him!—memory running back, perhaps, to that day in May, 1861, when Jefferson Davis, their President, entered the city,—the pageant of that hour, his speech, his promise to smite the smiter, to drench the fields of Virginia with richer blood than that shed at Buena Vista! How that part of the promise had been kept!—how their sons, brothers, and friends had fallen!—how all else predicted had failed!—how the land had been filled with mourning!—how the State had become a desolation!—how their property, their hoarded wealth, had disappeared! They had been invited to a gorgeous banquet; the fruit was fair to the eye, of golden hue and beautiful; but it had turned to ashes. They had been promised a place among the nations, a position of commanding influ-

ence and fame. Cotton was the king of kings, and England, France, and the whole civilized world would bow in humble submission to his Majesty. That was the promise; but now their king was dethroned, their government overthrown, their President and his cabinet vagrants, driven from house and home to be wanderers upon the earth. They had been promised affluence, Richmond was to be the metropolis of the Confederacy, and Virginia the all-powerful State of the new nation. How terrible the cheat! Their thousand-dollar bonds were not worth a penny. A million dollars would not purchase a dinner. Their money was valueless, their slaves were freemen, the heart of their city was eaten out. They had been cheated in everything. Those whom they had trusted had given the unkindest cut of all, — adding arson and robbery to their other crimes. Thus had they fallen from highest anticipation of bliss to deepest actual woe. The language of the Arch-Rebel of the universe, in "Paradise Lost," was most appropriate to them: —

> "'Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,'
> Said then the lost Archangel, 'this the seat,
> That we must change for heaven, this mournful gloom
> For that celestial light?'"

Abraham Lincoln was walking their streets; and, worst of all, that plain, honest-hearted man was recognizing the "niggers" as human beings by returning their salutations! The walk was long, and the President halted a moment to rest. "May de good Lord bless you, President Linkum!" said an old negro, removing his hat, and bowing with tears of joy rolling down his cheeks. The President removed his own hat, and bowed in silence; but it was a bow which upset the forms, laws, customs, and ceremonies of centuries. It was a death-shock to chivalry, and a mortal wound to caste. Recognize a nigger! Faugh! A woman in an adjoining house beheld it, and turned from the scene in unspeakable disgust. There were men in the crowd who had daggers in their eyes; but the chosen assassin was not there, the hour for the damning work had not come, and that great-hearted man passed on to the executive mansion of the late Confederacy.

Want of space compels us to pass over other scenes, — the visit of the President to the State-House, — the jubilant shouts of the crowd, — the rush of freedmen into the Capitol grounds, where, till the appearance of their deliverer, they had never been permitted to enter, — the ride of the President through the streets, — his visit to Libby Prison, — the distribution of bread to the destitute, — the groups of heart-broken men amid the ruins, who beheld nought but ruins, — a ruined city, a ruined State, a ruined Confederacy, a ruined people, — ruined in hopes and expectations, — ruined for the past, the present, and the future, — without power, influence, or means of beginning life anew, — deceived, subjugated, humiliated, — poverty-stricken in everything. All that they had possessed was irretrievably lost, and they had nothing to show for it. All their heroism, valor, courage, hardship, suffering, expenditure of treasure, and sacrifice of blood had availed them nothing. There could be no comfort in their mourning, no alleviation to their sorrow.

Forgetting that Justice is the mightiest power of the universe, that Righteousness is eternal, and that anything short of it is transitory, they planned a gorgeous edifice with Slavery for its corner-stone; but suddenly, and in an hour, their superstructure and foundation crumbled. They grasped at dominion, and sank in perdition.