

BINDING UP THE NATION'S WOUNDS

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.

Lincoln's Second Inaugural.



The house in which President Lincoln died.

254. The Death of Lincoln.—No sooner had the country begun to rejoice that the war was over and that “a healing time of peace” was at hand than it was plunged into gloom by the occurrence of an awful tragedy. On April 14, 1865, precisely four years after the fall of Fort Sumter and five days after Lee's surrender at Appomattox, President Lincoln,¹ while sitting in his box in a theater in Washington, was shot in the head by John Wilkes Booth,

an actor who, in his sympathy for the South, had become a fanatic because the South had failed to win.² Lincoln fell forward unconscious when he was shot, and never regained consciousness. He sank rapidly, and on the morning of April 15 he died.

¹ Lincoln was now just entering upon his second term as President, having been reelected in the fall of 1864 over General McClellan, the Democratic candidate. He received the electoral votes of all the States except New Jersey, Delaware, and Kentucky.

² Booth was one of a party of conspirators whose purpose was to assassinate the leading officers of the government. One of the conspirators forced his way to the bed of Secretary Seward (p. 321) and stabbed him but did not kill him. Booth was tracked to his hiding-place and shot. (Read the *Century Magazine* for April, 1896.)