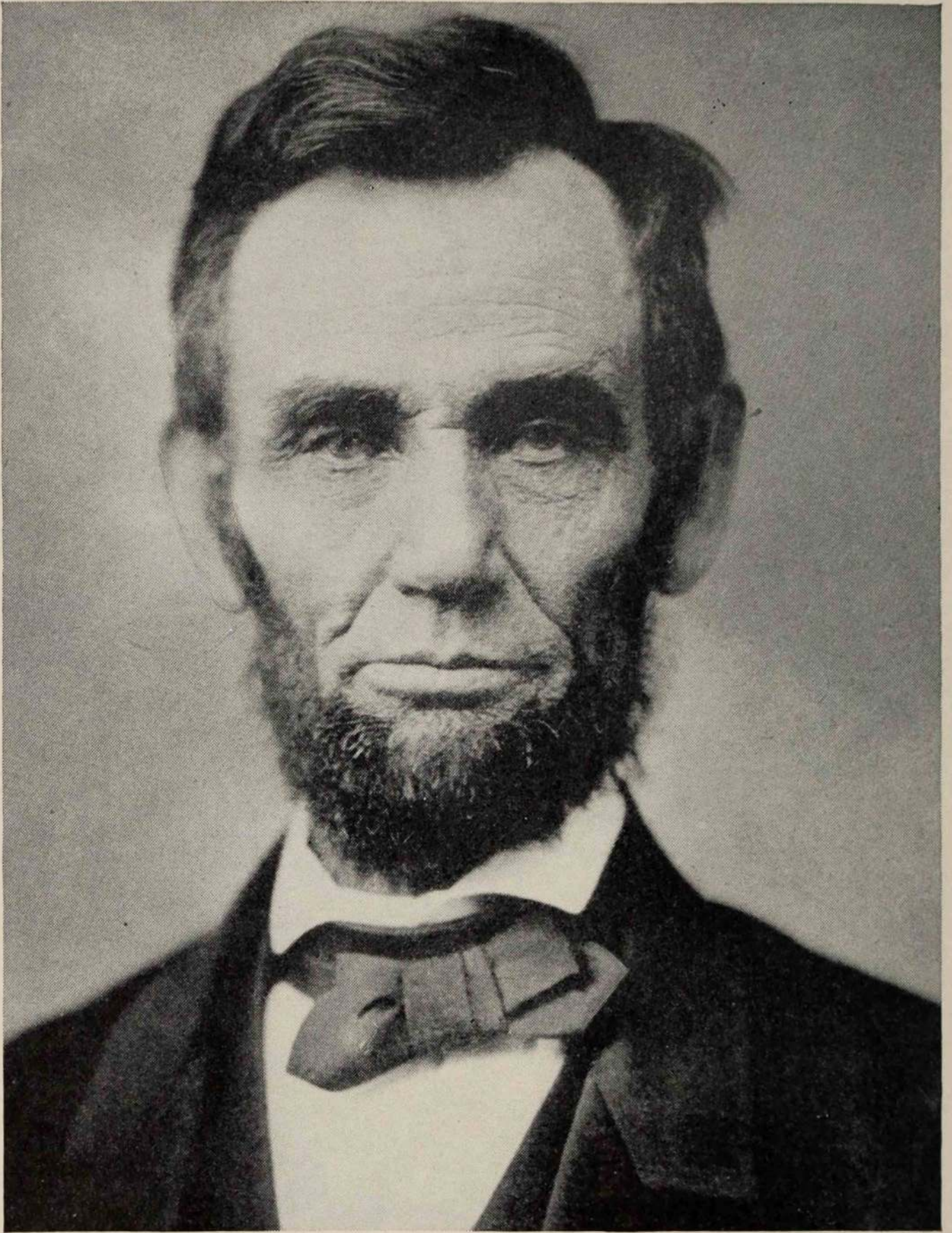




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ABRAHAM LINCOLN

PRESIDENT
LINCOLN

*A Two Hour Play in Three Acts
With Three Scenes Each*

by

EARL HOBSON SMITH

Author of STEPHEN FOSTER



The Lincoln Book Company

HARROGATE, TENNESSEE

1940

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Published, January, 1940

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To

FERDINAND W. LAFRENTZ

FOREWORD

Here at Lincoln Memorial University, among historical and dramatic circles, it has been felt for some time there was a need for a new Lincoln play on the period of his glory which is usually specified as falling within the Civil War years. This need was felt because most of the Lincoln plays dealing with this period concern events beside the point of historicity. In some places, however, the earlier plays reach great dramatic heights; but their likenesses of Lincoln are distorted, probably due to the adoring worship of their playwrights who have substituted vehicular actions for his actual deeds. For these reasons this play has been written, presenting the Sixteenth President in actuality, in his true spirit along the path of his career, in his actual deeds and with the actual people in the midst of their own trials and situations: using, when possible, the actual words purported to have been spoken so that they might give lesson interpretations. It appears that Democracy must never cease to learn if it would continue to teach.

Some will maintain that his character should come first, but it was thought best to agree with Lincoln who said that he did not control events but that the events of this Democracy controlled him. After an exhaustive survey of Lincoln plays it appeared that the early

dramatists in writing of this period surveyed a biography or two. Perhaps this is best for the playwright; but it was decided that all the books that could be procured should be read to glean facts, deeds, and utterances concerning the man in order that his character and actions might be accurately portrayed. This was no small task because Lincoln ranks high in the historical-literary field.

In writing this play of actual events, if the keyhole dramatic method was to be avoided, it was necessary to present Lincoln in a series of major actions which were continuous and relative to that major action, the Civil War, instead of the usual series of fictitious incidents clustered about a major event of the Civil War, calculated to show his likeness. Now, since actual events are depicted in this play many admirers of Lincoln and the Civil War period will note that some events are sacrificed or rearranged to accentuate major events. As an example of what I mean I will cite these instances: many times before Lincoln uttered his Second Inaugural Address he expressed the same sentiments but nowhere quite so well; and it will be noted, therefore, in expressing these sentiments to Senator Toombs, in Act One, I have him use his noble words out of the Second Inaugural which was actually delivered some years later; one may also note words edited from the speech in Independence Hall, delivered some months before, and which sentiments were expressed until his death. But one must consider that drama differs from history; it compresses years into hours and broadly pictures actions, while history inches days into years of events by

recording what has happened, only to have drama reverse the method and reveal the facts of history as actions that may happen. Then there was the invention of Ann Rutherford. A survey of this episode will make itself clear. There are some half dozen "fables" making up this brief interval which, it was felt, would help make a more complete action of the Lincoln story.

In closing, appreciation is extended to a host of Lincoln's biographers and chroniclers of the Civil War, and to Mary Todd Lincoln's biographers, and to the biographers and autobiographers of the Union and Confederate generals and Lincoln's Cabinet members, and to those who recorded his stories, and to the sculptors and artists who have recorded the Lincoln epoch, and to those who have collected and compiled Lincoln's spoken and written words. In appreciation of immeasurable assistance, I wish to extend my gratitude to R. Gerald McMurtry, Director of the Department of Lincolniana, for his untiring editorship; to President Stewart W. McClelland for his generous advice; to Dean Boyd A. Wise for his orientations.

EARL HOBSON SMITH

Harrogate, Tennessee
December 4, 1939

PRESIDENT LINCOLN

ACT ONE

SCENE I

We are at the Great Western Railroad depot in Springfield, Illinois, on February 11, 1861, at 7:55 A.M. The depot is decorated with conventional, patriotic decorations, and with American flags with thirty-three stars. Springfield has elected one of her lawyers President of the United States, and his Presidential train—ready to leave for Washington—is on the tracks nearest the depot, with only the rear coach's platform and several of the coach's windows in view at stage left. The morning is a stormy one. Dense clouds hang heavily overhead. Although rain is falling, a great throng of Springfield citizens have gathered to see the distinguished Presidential party off. A brakeman makes his usual rounds of inspection. Soldiers and Zouaves act as guards. They keep the people behind the lines on either side of the exit from the depot. The train bell is ringing, not unlike a funeral dirge. Steam pops off at the engine valve. Railroad noises abound. Depot confusion everywhere. Much seriousness covers the crowd. We now take up our position out among the side tracks, and opposite the depot exit that we might get a good view of the President when he comes out of the depot. ROBERT

TODD LINCOLN *and* COLONEL ELMER ELLSWORTH *are near us.*

ELLSWORTH. Well, Robert, you will live in Washington with your distinguished father!

ROBERT. Oh, no, Colonel Ellsworth. Only to Washington, then back to my studies at Harvard.

ELLSWORTH. You Harvard fellows, Robert, have it pretty soft, don't you!

ROBERT. Wwweell, nnnooo; but at least we don't have to split rails and maul Democrats like father did.

ELLSWORTH. You have a fighting chance, Robert, to make something out of yourself.

ROBERT. Colonel Ellsworth as Commander of the fighting Zouaves, and as America's most popular young man, would you exchange your glory to graduate from twenty Harvards?

ELLSWORTH. Robert, you are, indeed, a chip off the old block. Here he comes. This old Great Western Railroad depot may never see him or his like again. [ABRAHAM LINCOLN *with his Presidential party comes out of the depot.*] God bless him. What a marvelous composite figure he is! The whole country is summed up in him.

[*The train whistles. The citizens shout to LINCOLN. LINCOLN and his party come down through the corridor of people to get on the train. His right hand holds the*

left hand of little TAD; his left hand the right of little WILLIE.]

THE PEOPLE. Helloo, Mr. President! Howdy, Abe! Sure glad to see you, Abe! Uncle Abe! Abraham Lincoln, President! How are you, Mr. Lincoln? Abraham Lincoln! Honest Abe! Honest Abe, the President! Etc.

THE GUARDS AND THE ZOUAVES. [*Simultaneously with the people's exclamations.*] Stand back! Hey, you! Get back there! Stand back against the depot there! Look out! Stand back! That's it. Stand back for the President. Stand back, everybody! Make room! That's it! That's it. Stand back for the President.

[ROBERT LINCOLN and COLONEL ELLSWORTH *join the Presidential party which consists of MRS. LINCOLN, also; JOHN G. NICOLAY and JOHN HAY, LINCOLN'S private secretaries; COLONEL E. V. SUMNER, U.S.A.; MAJOR DAVID HUNTER, U.S.A.; JUDGE DAVID DAVIS, COLONEL WARD LAMON, HONORABLE JESSE K. DUBOIS, HONORABLE O. H. BROWNING, R. IRWIN, ESQ., DR. WALLACE, and special reporters from the country's leading newspapers. LINCOLN and his party turn left, then proceed along the depot platform where the waiting special train hides them from view.*]

THE PEOPLE. Speech! Speech! Speech! Let us have a speech, Abe! Uncle Abe! Abe Lincoln, a speech! Abe, you're not forgetting to tell your old friends good-by, are you? Abraham Lincoln! Abe Lincoln, President! Speech! We want to hear you talk, Abe! Come out and talk to us, Abe! Speech! Speech!

[LINCOLN comes on through the rear car and out onto the rear platform. Grouped with him are MRS. LINCOLN, ROBERT, COLONEL ELLSWORTH, TAD, and WILLIE. With his stovepipe hat in his hand, he stands bareheaded in the rain. He appears pale. He labors under the strain of emotion. The men in the throng bare their heads. They stand bareheaded in the rain. In solemn voice, with eyes not free from tears, with breast heaving with emotion so that he can scarcely command his feelings sufficiently to commence, he speaks.]

LINCOLN. *My friends:* No one, not in my situation, can appreciate my feelings of sadness at this parting. To this place, and the kindness of these people, I owe everything. Here I have lived a quarter of a century, and have passed from a young to an old man. Here my children have been born, and one is buried. I now leave, not knowing when or whether ever I may return, with a task before me greater than that which rested upon Washington. Without the assistance of that Divine Being who ever attended him, I cannot succeed. With that assistance, I cannot fail. Trusting in Him who can go with me, and remain with you, and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be well. To His care commending you, as I hope in your prayers you will commend me, I bid you an affectionate farewell.

[*Amid the applause there are not a few tears, and, as his train pulls out, the people exclaim.*]

THE PEOPLE. Good old Abe! Good old Abe! God bless Honest Abe! Uncle Abe! Good-by, Abe! Good-by, Mr.

President! Good-by! Good-by, President Abraham Lincoln! Good-by, Abe! Good-by, Abe! Good-by! Good-by! Uncle Abe, good-by! Good-by! Good-by!

[And as the slow chug-a-chug-chug of the engine increases amid the applause, LINCOLN waves his stovepipe hat to the ovations of good-bys. The tolling train bell chimes in with the ovations; and as the train disappears, Father Time marks the hour with eight strokes on the village clock. The engine whistle sounds that certain impression that the train is gathering speed.]

CURTAIN

ACT ONE

SCENE II

We come into the beautiful East Room of the White House. It is April. GENERAL WINFIELD SCOTT, dressed in full military regalia, is sound asleep. He is located in an appropriate easy chair near the center of the Room. ABRAHAM LINCOLN, COLONEL ROBERT E. LEE, MRS. LINCOLN, and BEN HARDIN HELM enter.

LINCOLN. Well, there still sleeps our old War Horse of the United States Army—just like I left him hours ago. Poor old man, he is ready for that eternal sleep. General Scott, as you know, defeated the British, conquered the Indians, divided Mexico, and gave us his half. To the General with his manhood, genius, kindness, the nation owes undying gratitude; but now he's just Old Fuss and Feathers—a Virginian—placating the rebels; in six months he has let the military evaporate into thin air.

LEE. Mr. President?

LINCOLN. Yes, Colonel Lee, national hero of the Mexican War, you have guessed it. I offer you command of the United States Army.

LEE. I could never permit the United States to violate the sacred soil of Virginia.

LINCOLN. Colonel Lee, step to this window. Do you see Old Glory floating over your mansion of Arlington Heights at the other end of that bridge across the Potomac?

LEE. Yes.

LINCOLN. Look through the telescope yonder. Do you see Old Glory floating over Alexandria?

LEE. Yes.

LINCOLN. Beneath Old Glory in Alexandria, the Confederacy of eleven sovereign States have concentrated 10,000 soldiers. The rebels swear they will hoist their rebel Stars and Bars, and march their rebel army into Washington the instant that the roaring rebel cannon at Charleston destroy Fort Sumter.

LEE. You are helpless. You have no army. Besides, Mr. Lincoln, I could never permit the United States to desecrate the sacred soil of Virginia.

LINCOLN. Colonel Lee, you married Miss Mary Custis, granddaughter of Martha Washington, wife of George Washington. By virtue of this marriage you inherited Washington's private White House near Richmond, and also Arlington Heights whose mansion stands yonder across the Potomac—upon Virginia's sacred soil—and in all her majestical glory looks down on Washington, capital of America—the soil of it donated by Washington's hand—the nation of it donated by Washington's hardships—George Washington, Father of his country.

LEE. Mr. Lincoln, neither would George Washington permit the United States to violate the sacred soil of Virginia.

LINCOLN. Colonel Lee, George Washington was a world seer—not a Virginian. Washington is the mightiest name on earth. In solemn awe pronounce the name, and in its naked, deathless splendor leave it shining on. Colonel Lee, I do wish you'd think upon this sacred matter. Don't give your final answer now. . . . Ben, here is something for you. [*Hands BEN HARDIN HELM a sealed envelope.*] Think it over by yourself, Ben, and let me know what you will do.

[HELM *examines the contents of the envelope.*]

HELM. Brother Lincoln, your offer of Paymaster for the United States Army fills me with the greatest struggle of my life.

MRS. LINCOLN. Ben, the ideal career has been opened before you. Darling sister Emily will die with joy over you, Ben.

HELM. The very highest position in the profession for which I was educated is opened to me in one day. I would be the youngest officer of my rank in the United States Army.

MRS. LINCOLN. With all the resignations going on, I would think you would be a Colonel right away, Ben.

HELM. Paymaster for the United States Army!

MRS. LINCOLN. Yes, Ben!

HELM. Oh!

MRS. LINCOLN. Marvelous!

HELM. Think what a career! What possibilities! are upon me, and I so young! Oh, my dear Emily will die with joy! [*He goes over to LINCOLN as LINCOLN lays the telescope on the window sill.*] Such an opportunity rarely offers itself, and it would kill me to decline.

LINCOLN. These are terrible times, Ben. And if something should happen to you, Ben, I could not guess the tears that I would wipe from my eyes.

HELM. I will go home, to Kentucky, and answer you from there. Colonel Lee, did you know Mr. Lincoln is my brother-in-law?

LEE. No, I did not. But now let me say one word: I have no doubt of Lincoln's kindly intentions, but he cannot control the elements. There must be a great war. I cannot strike at my own people. So today I wrote out my resignation, and have asked General Scott, as a favor, for its immediate acceptance. My mind is too much disturbed to give you any advice. But do what your conscience and honor bid. Good-by.

HELM. Good-by, Colonel Lee.

LINCOLN. Good-by, Colonel Lee.

LEE. Good-by. [*COLONEL ROBERT E. LEE goes out.*]

LINCOLN. Mother, please tell Lizzy I want to see her. Ben, you be a good boy, and try to see my way.

HELM. I will try.

[*MRS. LINCOLN and BEN HARDIN HELM go out.*]

[LINCOLN gazes at sleeping GENERAL SCOTT. LINCOLN goes to the window, picks up the old brass telescope, and gazes in the old direction.]

[LIZZY KECKLEY, a mulatto of stately manner and dignified appearance, comes in.]

LIZZY. Yas, Mista Lincoln?

LINCOLN. Lizzy, we would like refreshments.

LIZZY. [*Meaning him and GENERAL SCOTT.*] We?

LINCOLN. The Cabinet and I.

LIZZY. Yas, sah, Mista Lincoln.

LINCOLN. Lizzy, bring each of the boys his special.

LIZZY. And you, sah? Clabbah, as usual?

LINCOLN. Not clabber today. I think I want some Port for a rebel—yes, a rebel—who will come here before you get back.

LIZZY. Port? Yas, sah. You think that will be all, sah?

LINCOLN. Yes. Port. And tell Mr. Hay to tell the Cabinet to report to the East Room.

LIZZY. Thank you, Mista Lincoln.

LINCOLN. [*LIZZY is now at the door.*] Lizzy?

LIZZY. Yes, sah, Mista Lincoln?

LINCOLN. Tell Mr. Hay I said the Cabinet may come in now. That will be all.

LIZZY. Thank you, sah. [*LIZZY goes out.*]

[LINCOLN goes to the south window and looks in the old direction through his telescope.]

[Enter the CABINET which consists of GOVERNOR WILLIAM HENRY SEWARD, GOVERNOR SALMON P. CHASE, SIMON CAMERON, GIDEON WELLES, EDWARD BATES, CALEB BLOOD SMITH, and MONTGOMERY BLAIR.]

SEWARD. Well?

LINCOLN. [Joining the CABINET.] Robert E. Lee said he gave his resignation to General Scott yesterday.

SEWARD. Mr. President, we feel we must have a power behind the throne. [Gives sealed envelope to LINCOLN. LINCOLN pockets it.]

CHASE. If you are unwilling for Governor Seward to take up the reign of government, I will do so—and that without a scandal.

CAMERON. [To LINCOLN.] They are right. Also the Southern Governors validate our refusals to force the Confederacy to remain in the Union.

LINCOLN. Mr. Secretary of War, read to me the naked truth from the Southern Governors on my latest request for troops to save this Union.

CAMERON. South Carolina says, "The Union is dissolved."

LINCOLN. South Carolina's big guns speak to Fort Sumter, and her sons o'guns speak to us.

CAMERON. "You can get no troops from North

Carolina. We cannot be a party to the wicked violation of the Constitution, and to this war upon the liberties of a free people."

LINCOLN. Arkansas.

CAMERON. "The people of the Commonwealth of Arkansas are freemen, not slaves, and will defend until the last extremity their honor, their lives, their property against usurpation and Northern mendacity."

LINCOLN. Tennessee.

CAMERON. "In such a vile, unholy crusade, no gallant son of Tennessee will draw his sword."

LINCOLN. Missouri.

CAMERON. "Your requisition, in our judgment, is illegal, unconstitutional, revolutionary in its object, inhuman, diabolical, and cannot be complied with."

LINCOLN. Kentucky.

CAMERON. "Kentucky will furnish no troops for the wicked purpose of subduing her sister Southern States."

LINCOLN. That will be enough, Secretary Cameron. . . . Secretary Cameron, at what hour yesterday morning did the howitzers and mortars begin dropping bombs upon Fort Sumter?

CAMERON. At four-thirty A.M.

LINCOLN. What says Fort Sumter's latest distress call?

CAMERON. Our men have ceased firing, and have their faces to the ground to prevent suffocation—so intense is the smoke from Fort Sumter's blazing upper stories.

SEWARD. Mr. President, the B. and O. Limited, under full steam, is waiting to take this government out of Washington. We must go! The rebels will come marching into Washington, then what will happen to us! The nation has fallen apart. Mr. President, even the Zouave Military Fire Departments of New York, Boston, and Chicago, have failed us! Can you tell us where are these Zouaves? Elmer Ellsworth has failed us, and General Scott has disintegrated the army.

CABINET. [*Ad lib.*] Yes, Mr. President; you must tell us what to do or we must tell you what to do. Tell us where are the Zouaves! Murdered in Baltimore! Have you heard from the Zouaves? [*A band, playing "John Brown's Body," and the tread of marching columns are heard.*] The Zouaves now! We are saved! Thank God! At least 5,000! They will hold Washington! A handful of peacocks for rebel targets! [*Washington's streets are filled with loud, lusty, boisterous ovations by the citizens honoring the Zouaves.*]

[GENERAL SCOTT *is aroused.*]

SCOTT. Oh, hum. Ummm! Are those Confederate soldiers? Zouaves! Those whippersnappers! I wish we could have less noise around Washington. I want less uproar around here. I am a feeble, a weary, and an infirm old man, seventy-six years old, seventy-six years old!

ELLSWORTH. [*Coming down the hall.*] Hello, Mr. Nicolay; hello. Hello, Hay. Hello there! [*Enter ELMER ELLSWORTH.*] Greetings, Mr. President!

LINCOLN. Thank God, Elmer, you were not killed!

ELLSWORTH. You have a right to thank God.

LINCOLN. Gentlemen, as knight and squire of old, I want to introduce to you young Colonel Elmer Ellsworth, Commander of the Zouaves, and who was my young law student back in Springfield. Colonel Ellsworth, this is my official family: Secretary William Henry Seward; Secretary Salmon P. Chase; Secretary Simon Cameron; of course you know General Scott of Virginia; Secretary Gideon Welles; Attorney-General, Edward Bates; Secretary Caleb Blood Smith; Postmaster-General, Montgomery Blair.

ELLSWORTH. Say here: you have chosen your Nomination opponents.

LINCOLN. Yes. If Jesus chose his twelve Apostles today, the shrieks of locality would have to be heeded.

ELLSWORTH. Gentlemen, I'm at your service. Patriotism is not dead. Patriotism slumbers. You can depend on me, for I am an old man at twenty-two. My 10,000 Zouaves are a glorious company whose purpose is:

“To break the heathen and uphold the Christ,
To ride abroad redressing human wrongs.”

[*Enter* JOHN HAY.]

LINCOLN. What is it, Hay?

HAY. Senator Robert Toombs of Georgia, having just delivered his fire-eating speech before Congress, comes

demanding that you leave the Room while he arbitrates with your Cabinet.

CABINET. [*Ad lib.*] Show Toombs in. We want to talk to Toombs. We are expecting Toombs. Toombs is worth 100,000 militia. Show Toombs in.

LINCOLN. Show Toombs in. [*HAY goes.*] My friend from old Congressional days. [*HAY shows in TOOMBS.*] Come right in, Bob. I was expecting you this moment.

TOOMBS. I don't believe you. How did you know I was coming here!

LINCOLN. Only God and Abe Lincoln know, and he won't betray it.

TOOMBS. Which he won't betray it?

LINCOLN. Neither.

TOOMBS. Mr. Lincoln, I wish to parley with your Cabinet. You realize your Cabinet alone of your government holds the confidence and respect of the Confederacy.

LINCOLN. I reckon, Bob, I must hear what you have to say to this body.

[*The atmosphere is so tense you could cut it with a knife, and into this situation come MRS. LINCOLN and LIZZY.*]

MRS. LINCOLN. [*Sensing the situation.*] Senator Toombs! How are you? I'm so glad to see you!

TOOMBS. Thank you, *Mary*. If your husband had half the judgment that went into making your exquisite ensemble, he could read the handwriting on the wall.

MRS. LINCOLN. Why, Senator! How exciting, you are! Oh, now, now, Mr. Toombs! [*Archly, and with a twit.*] Lizzy, an ex-slave, made it. You flatterer!

LIZZY. Refreshments, sah? I didn't know the Senata would be heah. I'm sorry, Senata. I'll be right back, Senata.

LINCOLN. No, no, Lizzy. The Port is for the Senator. I never drink.

[*The CABINET and SENATOR TOOMBS take refreshments.*]

TOOMBS. Well, Mr. Lincoln, you're so Almighty omniscient, take your Cabinet's straw vote on raising that 75,000 militia for ninety days to save the Union.

LINCOLN. The straw vote before the Cabinet is: all who are in favor of raising 75,000 militia for ninety days that the Union may be saved, please stand up.

[SEWARD, SMITH, and WELLES stand.]

TOOMBS. Now you see? Defeated! I told you! Gentlemen, Lincoln would enslave the States to free the nigger.

LINCOLN. Labor shall enjoy its fruits of toil.

TOOMBS. You'd make the nigger equal to us whites.

LINCOLN. Before the law, and before his fruits of toil.

TOOMBS. You Yankees want to marry our black winches.

LINCOLN. Our 400,000 mulattoes have rebel fathers.

TOOMBS. For niggers like her you'd bring Civil War.

LINCOLN. She and her quadroon son have rebel fathers.

TOOMBS. What States permit is not your business.

LINCOLN. Yours is a breeding ground of lust and crime.

TOOMBS. Lincoln, you'll make your reign a reign of steel.

LINCOLN. Well, the Democrats have just ended a reign of stealing.

[*Enter HAY.*] What is it, Hay?

HAY. A telegram, Mr. Lincoln. [*Hands the telegram to LINCOLN.*]

LINCOLN. Fort Sumter has surrendered . . . after twenty-four hours of heavy bombardment.

[*ELLSWORTH looks through the telescope in the old direction.*]

TOOMBS. Force freedom for the slave and you will be assassinated. I know it. It is a national conspiracy to assassinate you. Even President Jefferson Davis can't prevent your assassination.

ELLSWORTH. Mr. President of the United States?

LINCOLN. What is it, Commander of the Zouaves?

ELLSWORTH. I must march on Alexandria, and remove that Confederate flag.

LINCOLN. Colonel Ellsworth, do be careful of your life.

TOOMBS. Lincoln, you're sending this young peacock to his grave. You ought to at least have as much judgment as General Scott or Robert E. Lee.

ELLSWORTH. Thank you, Mr. President of the United States.

[COLONEL ELLSWORTH *goes out.*]

TOOMBS. You seek to outlaw four thousand million dollars worth of our slave property from the common territories . . . our blood and money paid for it. . . . Four thousand million dollars worth of our slave property! Is not this outlawing of our four thousand million dollars worth of our slave property from the common territories cause enough for war? This is cause enough for war. The Constitution is a compact. The Constitution contains all our obligations and duties to the Federal Government. All the obligations, all the chains that fetter the limbs of my people are nominated in the bond, and the States wisely excluded any conclusions against themselves by declaring that the powers not granted by the Constitution to these United States—mind you, not granted or forbidden by the Constitution to the States—belong to the States respectively or to the people. The South has always said try the Constitution by the Supreme Court; but the Supreme Court is in our favor by declaring that our four thousand million dollars worth of slaves are property movable to the common territories, and Lincoln will not stand the judgment of the Supreme Court. You say the Confederacy shall

submit to your interpretation; but we lay down this law that if the Supreme Court cannot be our common Constitutional arbiter, then the sword shall be our Constitutional arbiter. You may call it secession, or you may call it revolution; but this big fact stands before you ready to oppose you; this fact is freemen with arms in their hands. You will not regard your oaths to protect our slave property in the common territories. What, then, am I to do? Am I a freeman? Is my State, a free State, to lie down and submit because political fossils raise the cry of the glorious Union? Too long already have we listened to this delusive song. We are freemen. We have our rights; I have stated them. We have wrongs; I have recounted them. And I put them before the civilized world, and demand the judgment of today, of tomorrow, of distant ages, and of Heaven itself, upon the justice of these causes.

LINCOLN. You say the sword is your Constitutional arbiter. I believe you. With the sword of slavery in your hand you slave owners would sever the head from the shoulders of this nation of free labor. But we won't let you. Slavery has no hope, but free labor has hope. And the influence of hope upon mankind is wonderful. The prudent, penniless beginner in the world labors for wages for awhile, saves a surplus with which to buy tools or land for himself, then labors on his own account another while, and at length hires another new beginner to help him. This is the just, and generous, and prosperous system, which opens the way to all, gives hope to all, and consequent energy, and progress, and

improvement of condition to all. No men living are more worthy to be trusted than those who toil up from poverty, none less inclined to take or touch aught which they have not honestly earned, a thing necessary in a Democracy. [*To his CABINET.*] Let us beware of surrendering political power which we already possess, and which, if surrendered, will surely be used to close the door of advancement against us, and to fix new disabilities and burdens upon us, till all of liberty shall be lost. I am pledged to preserve, protect, and defend this divided house; and I expect to do so until I am successful, or till I die, or am conquered, or my term expires, or Congress, or the Country forsakes me. [*To SENATOR TOOMBS.*] This Union of free men made the Constitution, not the Constitution the Union. If the emergency should arise that slavery or any other institution stood in the way of Union, and the alternative was presented to me for the destruction of the one or the other, I could not hesitate between the two. In such an age of hate war is bound to come; for one-eighth of our whole population is colored slaves, not distributed generally over the Union, but localized in the Southern part of it. These slaves constitute a peculiar and powerful interest, in the face of which I must preserve, protect, and defend this divided house. [*To his CABINET and TOOMBS.*] Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray that this scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that war be waged until all the wealth piled by the bondsman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword,

as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, "The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether." . . . "Woe unto the world because of offenses! for it must needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh!" I have often enquired of myself what great principle or idea it was that kept this Confederacy so long together. It was not the mere matter of separation of the colonies from the motherland, but that sentiment in the Declaration of Independence which gave liberty not alone to the people of this country, but hope to all the world, for all future time. I have said nothing but what I am willing to live by, and, if it be the pleasure of Almighty God, to die by.

CURTAIN

ACT ONE

SCENE III

A year later. We come into Lincoln's Cabinet room, located in the White House. The windows of the room are down; but we can hear, however, the constant, treading measures of a mighty army marching by. Above the noise of this constant marching, we hear military bands, commands of officers, and the singing of the passing army.

ARMY. We are coming, Father Abra'am, three hundred
thousand more,
From Mississippi's winding stream and from
New England's shore;
We leave our plows and work-shops, our wives
and children dear,

[LINCOLN and MRS. LINCOLN come into the room, and go directly across to one of the windows.]

With hearts too full for utterance, with but a
silent tear;

[As LINCOLN raises the window the song and noises of the army are amplified, and as LINCOLN and MRS. LINCOLN wave their hands to the soldiers, every noise sinks beneath the army's salvo of lusty cheers.]

We dare not look behind us, but steadfastly before.

We are coming, Father Abra'am, three hundred thousand more.

MRS. LINCOLN. Yes, father. The esprit de corps of the army augurs disaster for the rebels in Richmond Thursday.

LINCOLN. Mother, I grieve over the passing year of heartbreak disasters: of losing battles, of the iron Merrimack's destruction of our wooden fleet yesterday. The war began in sorrow when Elmer Ellsworth died replacing Old Glory for the rebel Stars and Bars over Alexandria. Poor Ellsworth, poor Ellsworth. I feel as if I shall meet some terrible end.

MRS. LINCOLN. Long live the spirit of Elmer Ellsworth in John Noble whom you will save today from bloody Friday's firing squad.

LINCOLN. No. I must do my duty. All captured guerillas must die.

MRS. LINCOLN. Then you've just simply got to see Ann Rutherford!

LINCOLN. I still refuse to see Ann Rutherford.

MRS. LINCOLN. Do not forget, Abraham, that John and Ann are to be married.

LINCOLN. No, mother, they will not be married; for John and his guerilla gang must die.

MRS. LINCOLN. Judge Rutherford will pull down curses upon you.

LINCOLN. Oh, let the Judge go hang himself in his suspenders, the rebel.

MRS. LINCOLN. Well, you can expect curses upon you from my family, for the Rutherfords and we are inseparable. Futhermore, I expect Ann to live in the White House. The Rutherfords aren't good enough for you, but their relatives, the Rutledges, signed the Declaration of Independence, and I haven't seen any Lincoln name under it!

LINCOLN. Mother, you're just wasting your breath.

MRS. LINCOLN. Oh, no, I'm not.

LINCOLN. Oh, yes, you are. I have promised my War Department not to interfere in matters of Army Court Martials.

MRS. LINCOLN. You will pardon John Noble!

LINCOLN. I won't; for if I save John I save his gang, and if I save his gang, I break the morale of the country.

MRS. LINCOLN. I don't care what you break.

LINCOLN. But Congress, the People, moral purpose—

MRS. LINCOLN. It's always Congress, or the People, or moral purpose. I made you President, but what have they made of us! Two miserable creatures. As First Lady I had hoped to have Washington Society clustered at my feet, but before I got [EDWIN M. STANTON *comes in. He is unnoticed by the LINCOLNS. STANTON has taken CAMERON'S place as Secretary of War.*] you here, your abolitionist ideas had driven all Washington's

decent Society south, and had filled Washington up with Stanton's, Chase's, and forty other brands of hybrid cattle. They hate my graces, they envy my culture, they scandalize my heritage. Stanton, and Congress, and the People have their every little wish granted that is in your power! Which of my wishes do you grant? Only those which humiliate me beneath Northern crowns of thorns and upon Southern lakes of fire and brimstone. And, to add to your insults and injuries, your legions attack my brothers, your legions will make widows of my sisters. Can I help it because my brothers are rebels? I was a rebel when you married me, I am a rebel, and I'll die a rebel. Oh, how I wish that I had taken father's advice and listened to the pleadings of Henry Clay against marrying an abolitionist. Henry Clay taught me, and I taught you, and this is what I get. You left me at the altar, you forsook me, you betrayed me on our wedding day! Oh! Oh! Oh, what a fool, what a fool I was, I am, and always will be to have given you the second opportunity of marrying me. I should have married Stephen Douglas and placed him here. Rebel or no rebel, guerilla or no guerilla, you will pardon John, whether you will or no! [*She sees STANTON.*] Well, when you come into the White House, say something; don't hide out till I find you.

STANTON. I beg your pardon?

MRS. LINCOLN. For a *new* Secretary of War, you are entirely too domestic, Secretary Stanton.

LINCOLN. What is it, Stanton?

STANTON. I came to remind you of Congress' demand that all guerillas must pay the penalty of death. Tomorrow is butchers' day again, bloody Friday. Do I understand Miss Rutherford of Lexington, Kentucky, is in the White House?

LINCOLN. Who told you, Stanton?

STANTON. The Committee on the Conduct of the War . . . the Committee was secretly informed of Miss Rutherford's presence here.

MRS. LINCOLN. So now you have spies in the White House!

STANTON. Also, I came to talk with you before the Cabinet reaches you. I am firmly convinced—so is most of Congress—that it is most unwise to destroy Richmond at present.

MRS. LINCOLN. Secretary Stanton, do you have any letters or telegrams for me today?

STANTON. No.

MRS. LINCOLN. Thank you.

STANTON. Oh, yes; here is a letter from Ben Hardin Helm.

MRS. LINCOLN. You men are so forgetful of us women.

STANTON. Ben Hardin Helm says he is now a rebel Brigadier-General.

MRS. LINCOLN. Did Ben say he was a "rebel"?

STANTON. "Confederate." Helm goes on to say that your

three brothers, Samuel, David, and Alexander are all rising officers in the "Confederate" ranks. [STANTON gives the letter to MRS. LINCOLN.] I will send the Cabinet right over, Mr. President. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. [STANTON goes out.]

[MRS. LINCOLN reads the letter, and wipes a tear.]

[Enter HAY.]

HAY. Ann Rutherford of Lexington to see you, Mr. Lincoln.

MRS. LINCOLN. Well! Show her in! Don't stand there! What are you waiting for! Come right on in, Ann, dear. [MRS. LINCOLN goes to the door, takes ANN RUTHERFORD by the hand, and leads her into the room.] Abraham is waiting to say, "Yes."

ANN. Mista Lincoln. [Bows her head.]

LINCOLN. Howdy do, Ann. [MRS. LINCOLN goes out; JOHN HAY follows.] Why, you're the spit-n-image of your relative, my New Salem Ann Rutledge, long since dead.

ANN. It's just mighty nice of you to be so glad to see me, Mista Lincoln.

LINCOLN. Weeeellll, you have the inside track there, I guess; for as I gaze upon your April eyes, I wonder if I am warmed by Ann Rutledge or Ann Rutherford—Ann Rutherford or Ann Rutledge. I see the log village of New Salem recreated, the old mill dam on the river

Sangamon; I see us walking through the fields, hand in hand, in summer; I see us studying grammar by Rutledge fires in winter; I, a rustic youth; and Ann Rutledge, a village maid. Well, how's the Judge, your father, down in Lexington?

ANN. Fatha is old, now. All day long fatha walks up and down the rooms of the house, and calls you a fool; but then fatha calls me a fool, too, for coming here to play upon your feelings—I, the living image of your beautiful and tender dead.

LINCOLN. Tell that old fool, your father—my dear but rebel friend—that today I saw Ann Rutledge and her Abe, the village clerk in Offutt's general store back in the Abe Lincoln-Ann Rutledge New Salem Days. Tell the old fool he has sent a rebel army against me with the usual rebel success. You are the living image of Ann Rutledge. Tell the old fool that for sheer pathos poetry has no more pathetic lines than—

ANN. [*Chanting.*]

The mossy marbles rest
On the lips that I have pressed
In their bloom;
And the name I love to hear
Has been carved for many a year
On the tomb.

LINCOLN. A ribbon of timber some fifty yards away, hides the sun's early rise upon the City of the Dead. At 9 o'clock he makes his splendorous visitation upon Ann's sad City. In Ann's City lie the Berrys, the Rutledges, the Clarys, the Armstrongs, the Joneses, old and

respected citizens, pioneers of an early day. My heart lies buried there in the grave of the beautiful and tender dead. I still hear the "tinkleful" cow bell. I hear the roll and roar of the Sangamon eastward as the waters curl and leap over the dam and plunge into the stream beneath. Ann and I watched this old waterfall for a million years or so together, and although Ann is gone, it roars and rolls on, and will for ages yet to come. Oh, how sad, how solemn, are New Salem's memories to me, lonely, yet sweet. Ann and I saw the wild asters, the daisies, the blue lobelia, the morning and the evening primroses. Then, on winter nights, growing tired of studying grammar, Ann and I pondered aloud by the burning fireplace:

Oh! why should the spirit of mortal be proud?
Like a swift-fleeting meteor, a fast flying cloud,
A flash of the lightning, a break of the wave,
Man passes from life to his rest in the grave.

ANN. [*Chanting.*]

The infant, a motha attended and loves;
The motha, that infant's affection who proved;
The husband, that motha and infant who blest,
Each, all are away to their dwellings of rest.

The maid on whose cheek, on whose brow, in whose
eye,
Shone beauty and pleasua, her triumphs are by.

[LINCOLN, *taking his red bandana, wipes a tear from his eye.*]

And the memory of those who loved her and praised,
Are alike from the minds of the living erased.

The hand of the king, that the septa hath borne,
The brow of the priest, that the mita hath worn,
The eye of the sage, and the heart of the brave,
Are hidden and lost in the depths of the grave.

'Tis the wink of an eye—'tis the draught of the
breath,

From the blossom of health to the paleness of death;
From the gilded saloon to the bier and the shroud:—
Oh! why should the spirit of mortal be proud. . . .

LINCOLN. My dear girl, you have come here with no Governor or Senator or member of Congress to plead your cause. You seem truthful, and you don't wear hoops. Whipped by Stanton and Congress I will be for pardoning your John Noble; but, by jingo, I believe guerilla John can serve his country better above than under ground.

[ANN *impulsively kisses* LINCOLN.]

ANN. I'd just simply have died if I hadn't kissed you, Mista Lincoln.

LINCOLN. [*Taking his red bandana and wiping the convulsive tears from her eyes.*] There, now.

ANN. I'm just so happy, I'm just about to die anyway.

LINCOLN. Weeeelll, I suggest we just go let Mary help you do some of this fancy style of dying; she loves it. Mary and I want you to live with us in the White House. I shall make John my private spy by virtue of his cun-

ning training under Quantrill. [LINCOLN *and* ANN *go out.*]

[STANTON *comes in, and following him is the suspiciously whispering and nodding* CABINET.]

STANTON. Gentlemen, do not look so suspicious. God's Ugliest Man can detect suspicion at forty rods. Spread yourselves about the room, as usual, so if our backwoods Jupiter surprises us he will not be suspicious. [*They spread themselves about the room—and suspiciously, of course.*] Then Mrs. Hellcat shouted, "Rebel or no rebel, guerilla or no guerilla, you'll pardon our John Noble, willy nilly!" I could drown you with their rabid slobbers of domestic fights, but we must deal with only teeth that tear our national safety bringing tragedy. Now these documents which I hold in my hands are damnable documents damning Mrs. Lincoln's damnable treason to the Federal Government. They show signed leakage to the rebels. Now these painful damnable documents revealed to Congress mean death or imprisonment to Mrs. Lincoln. One of us today will present the damnable evidence to Congress, and stop the leakage.

[MAJOR THOMAS T. ECKERT *and* CHARLES A. DANA, STANTON'S *Assistant Secretaries of War, rush in excitedly.*]

ECKERT *and* DANA. [*Ad lib.*] Secretary Stanton! President Lincoln! He's coming! Watch out!

[*Enter* LINCOLN *and* GENERAL GEORGE B. MCCLELLAN. LINCOLN *is holding to* GENERAL MCCLELLAN'S *arm.* LINCOLN, *removing his stovepipe hat, moves to the end*

of the table. After gazing at the CABINET and summing up the evidence, he speaks with pathos.]

LINCOLN. I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, appear of my own volition before this instrument of the Senate here in my Cabinet room to say that I, of my own knowledge, know that it is untrue that any of my family hold treasonable communication with the enemy. . . . General McClellan and his staff officers are about to leave Washington for Richmond, but General McClellan must say a few words to you before he goes out to battle. General McClellan.

MCCLELLAN. Certain branches of this government, as you are aware, have not supported the army in the past campaigns, are not supporting the army and do not expect to support the army on this Richmond Peninsula Campaign that could end into dire disaster. This new army marching by—built upon the bones of past disasters—has an esprit de corps auguring disaster for the rebels in Richmond Thursday. By this dictation to you, I find myself in a new and strange position here. By your deference to me, which I greatly appreciate, all of you reassure me that I am charged with the fate of this nation.

LINCOLN. You are our Napoleon Bonapart.

MCCLELLAN. I am not unmindful of this grave obligation which devolves upon me. Now recalling how traitorous agencies undid us at Bull Run and twenty other places during the past year, I wonder if I may now expect the wholehearted support of this Administration?

CABINET. [*Ad lib.*] Hell, yes! What do you take us for! Certainly! In God we trust! Assuredly! Positively! On to Richmond! End the war! On to Richmond! We're tired of war! On to Richmond! Stop dillydallying!

MCCLELLAN. Dillydallying?

STANTON. Now while I approve of *your* Peninsula Campaign at Richmond's back door because Richmond and Robert E. Lee knocked hell out of you when you attacked her front door, yet I must agree with Congress; namely, your new Richmond Peninsula Campaign is not to capture Richmond—your Peninsula Campaign is to be a smoke screen to blind the public's eyes. To end this war before the South is literally destroyed will be to compromise, saving slavery. Hell, we've had no war. Only blood, rivers of blood will strangle slavery into doomsday forever.

LINCOLN. The success of the United States Army and the cause of the country are the same, but you and Congress would continue executing the war in the future with elder stalk squirts charged with rosewater?

STANTON. It is the will of Congress, not my will.

LINCOLN. Well, the people elected only two-thirds of the opinion in Congress, but it elected three-thirds of mine.

MCCLELLAN. I was expecting these results from the Army at this showdown, but may I expect the unflinching support of the Navy since we expect the invincible Merrimack's bombsnells upon Washington any moment?

WELLES. The Navy will support the Army to its utmost capacity. However, the whole world is aware that every navy on the face of the earth is now at the mercy of this rebel, ironclad, Merrimack. The Merrimack with her heavy tongue-flamed guns—as we know too well—belching hell and destruction into our fleet—the pride of the Navy, yesterday at Hampton Roads, while our cannon balls bounced like rubber balls from her, has abruptly brought to a close forever the ancient era of wooden battleships. I am sad, I am sick, I am sorrowful over this miserable state of affairs; barren fights, fruitless campaigns, wasted energies.

[*Enter HAY. He is followed immediately by HORACE GREELEY, GOVERNOR JOHN HICKS of Maryland, and MAYOR GEORGE BROWN of Baltimore.*]

HICKS. Mr. President!

LINCOLN. What's your trouble now, Governor Hicks?

HICKS. Will you at last force Maryland to join the Confederacy? Another pollution of your troops through Maryland and Maryland's 70,000 guards will make your troops fight every inch of their way through Maryland.

LINCOLN. Now, listen to me, Governor: my men aren't moles; so they can't dig under Maryland; neither are my troops birds, so they can't fly over Maryland. Since you think my troops are moles or birds, I may be silly to ask you this simple question; but since this war is not a personal matter with me as it is with you and the rebel Governors, I will ask you, anyway: did it ever occur to

you that Maryland is not such a small State but what it can find room to bury 70,000 Maryland guards?

BROWN. I tell you here and now, Mr. President, that if you bring, hereafter, your troops through Baltimore, I won't stand responsible for assassinations, and other measures of extreme violence.

LINCOLN. Mayor Brown, are you a relation of John Brown?

BROWN. No.

LINCOLN. I thought not, Mayor Brown. John Brown died to free the slave. You have my answer in my remarks to Governor Hicks.

GREELEY. Mr. President, if our disaster at Bull Run is fatal, and all of us believe our disaster was fatal, do not be afraid to sacrifice yourself by letting the Confederacy go in peace, or retire from office.

LINCOLN. Horace Greeley, it was the traitorous outrages of your Tribune, and the Boston presses, and the Chicago presses that hurled our green army into the slaughter pen at the Battle of Bull Run.

GREELEY. Shame on you, shame! The Press Association demands a showdown policy from you. We are filled with gall and wormwood. We haven't slept for seven days and seven nights; yet, we strive, however bitterly, to live. Let the Confederacy go is the prayer of twenty million people.

LINCOLN. The naked front and aspect of this situation is we expect to win the war in thirty days.

GREELEY. We've heard that old stuff for twelve times thirty days already. You start and forget; you begin and get lost.

LINCOLN. There are certain traitorous agencies both in and out of our government.

GREELEY. Now, Mr. President, since you can't decide on a policy the press has decided for you. Here is the policy you are now to follow: let the Confederacy go or let loose a hell on earth; on to Richmond, liberate the slaves to butcher their masters and burn down their mansions.

LINCOLN. Let not him who is houseless pull down the house of another, but let him work diligently and build one for himself, thus by example assuring that his own shall be safe from violence when built.

GREELEY. Sirrrr! We must have a helllll! on earrrrth! and ennnnnd this thinnng! The prrrrrraaaayer! of tweeeenty milllllllions!

LINCOLN. Horace Greeley, if there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time save slavery, I do not agree with them. If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time destroy slavery, I do not agree with them. My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union, and is not either to save or to destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that. What I do

about slavery and the colored race, I do because I believe it helps to save the Union; and what I forbear, I forbear because I do not believe it would help to save the Union. I shall do less whenever I shall believe what I am doing hurts the cause, and I shall do more whenever I shall believe doing more will help the cause. I shall try to correct errors when shown to be errors, and I shall adopt new views so fast as they shall appear to be true views. I have here stated my purpose according to my view of official duty, in language simple enough for you to understand, and accurate enough for the Press Association to distribute; and you might add that I intend no modification of my oft-expressed personal wish that all men everywhere could be free.

MCCLELLAN. Thank you, Mr. President.

[LINCOLN *takes* GENERAL MCCLELLAN'S *arm*, and as they go the army, still passing, plays "John Brown's Body." LINCOLN and MCCLELLAN stop at the door and swing around.]

LINCOLN. Mr. Shadrach, and Mr. Meshach, and Mr. Abednego, you may broil on my Cabinet, but Napoleon and Abraham must blow their horns at the walls of Jericho! [*Exeunt* LINCOLN and GENERAL MCCLELLAN *en grande*.]

ARMY. John Brown's body lies a mould'ring in the
grave,
John Brown's body lies a mould'ring in the
grave,

[GREELEY, HICKS, and BROWN go over to the window and look down at the passing army.]

John Brown's body lies a mould'ring in the grave,
His soul goes marching on!

[GREELEY, HICKS, and BROWN turn from the window. They eye the CABINET and the CABINET eyes them. The trio's bluff having been called, they walk out.]

Glory, glory, hallelujah!

Glory, glory, hallelujah!

[The CABINET breaks up session.]

Glory, glory, hallelujah!

His soul goes marching on!

[By now the CABINET, except STANTON, has gone out.]

STANTON. Well, the Army of the Potomac's 200,000 war horses have been marching out of Washington to Richmond for two days, and at last here comes its rear end.

ECKERT and DANA. Yes, yes, Secretary Stanton.

STANTON. Horace Greeley is a damn fool.

DANA. Yes, indeed, Secretary Stanton. Greeley always acted the damn fool while I was his City Editor. I suppose you saw him eye me, but would not speak.

STANTON. If eyes could kill, I'd be dead. Napoleon McClellan is a damn fool, too.

DANA and ECKERT. Yes, yes, Secretary Stanton.

STANTON. Old backwoods Jupiter is a damn fool. . . . I see you don't agree with me that Abe Lincoln is a damn fool. Dana and Eckert?

DANA and ECKERT. Yes, yes?

STANTON. As my worthy Assistant Secretaries of War—

ECKERT and DANA. Yes, yes, Secretary Stanton?

STANTON. You must bear in mind that Du Chaillu was a fool to wander all the way to Africa for the original gorilla which he could so easily have found in Springfield. . . . You don't agree with me, but you shall see: old backwoods Jupiter is mad, so now the war will be very bloody and very long.

ARMY. [*Disappearing.*]

Glory, glory, hallelujah!

Glory, glory, hallelujah!

Glory, glory, hallelujah!

[*Fade out.*]

CURTAIN

ACT TWO

SCENE I

We are back in the Cabinet room, but many more months are behind us. The various members of the Cabinet are here and there about the room: some are reading, some are bored and angry, others are just sitting. As a matter of fact, they have been waiting. Into this silent storm of agitation, LINCOLN comes, stovepipe hat stuck on the back of his head, and with the air of a waggish fellow who has been frustrated by dull people.

LINCOLN. Has *Little Napoleon* arrived?

STANTON. [*Answers without looking up from his newspaper.*] No.

LINCOLN. Has *Napoleon McClellan* sent couriers *mes-*
saging his absence?

STANTON. [*Answers without looking up from his newspaper.*] No.

[*The Cabinet members arise leisurely, one by one. STANTON, however, remains seated.*]

LINCOLN. Keep *your* seats, gentlemen. *I* am too busy to have *you* stand on ceremony. *I* must work while *Little Napoleon* keeps *us* waiting; but before *I* leave *you*

again, *I* want to tell *you* that *I* have learned something new today.

STANTON. What could that be, Mr. President?

LINCOLN. That it is a great thing to be an *office holder*. Since nine o'clock this morning—while waiting for *Little Napoleon*—I have been trying my best to get an audience with a clerk in the Pension Office, but without success. *I* have been upstairs and downstairs, from the ground floor to the attic, half a dozen times, and *I* am completely fagged out.

STANTON. Pardon me, Mr. President, but it is rather an uncommon thing for the President of the United States to become a solicitor of pensions. . . . When you have any pension business of that kind demanding attention, send it to me, and *one* of *my Secretaries* will be glad to attend to it, *without* delay.

LINCOLN. [LINCOLN *takes off his hat, mops his brow with his bandana, and then draws letters, and papers, and documents out of his hat.*] I am sure the claim is a just one, for I have gone over the papers with care.

STANTON. [*Calling.*] O Dana. Come in here.

DANA. Yes, yes, Secretary Stanton. [DANA *comes into the Cabinet room, out of LINCOLN'S private telegraph room.*] Yes, yes, Secretary Stanton.

LINCOLN. The applicant is the widow of a corporal who was killed by the Indians. She would have had her money long ago, but nobody seems to have taken any interest in her pension. She has been haunting the White

House almost daily for weeks. I am resolved to wind up the matter one way or another today. I have promised the poor woman an answer at four o'clock, and she is waiting for me downstairs now. How long do you think it will take you, Dana, to get this case through the Pension Office?

DANA. I should have it completed in half an hour.

LINCOLN. Good. Go ahead, my son, and I will wait for you here. [LINCOLN gives the document to DANA. DANA goes out. The CABINET resumes its old positions. LINCOLN walks the floor. Finally he sits down and props his feet higher than his head, against the mantle.] Hummmmmmmmm! How I do love an open fire. [Yawns.] The Army—what's left of it—is Napoleon's body guard, and the world must wait while *he* finishes parading before it. Ho hum! Stanton, tomorrow is butcher's bloody Friday again, and I have decided to comply with Jeff Davis' telegram, and not hang Robert E. Lee's two sons.

STANTON. If our officers are hanged in Richmond, the sons of Robert E. Lee will be hanged in Washington.

LINCOLN. Stanton, I cannot prevent the crimes committed in Richmond, but a crime like that committed under my jurisdiction would stamp upon my heart by command of my conscience the word "murder." Stanton, it can't be done. It can't be done. [He gets up.] We are not savages. Let us see what the good Book says. [He picks up the Bible and turns to the passage.] Stanton, here is a command from Almighty God in

His Book. Read the words yourself: " 'Vengeance is mine; I will repay,' saith the Lord." [*Calling.*] O Major Eckert.

ECKERT. Coming, Mr. President. [MAJOR ECKERT *comes out of LINCOLN'S private telegraph room.*] Yes, Mr. President?

LINCOLN. Major Eckert, a telegram to Fortress Monroe. "Immediately release both of the sons of Robert E. Lee, and send them back to their father. A.L."

ECKERT. Will that be all, Mr. President?

LINCOLN. That's all, Major.

[ECKERT *goes back into the private telegraph room.*]

[*There is again much silence. Out of the silence comes the clicking of MAJOR ECKERT'S telegraph keys. This clicking of the telegraph keys is gradually overpowered by a pair of army boots, with clanging spurs attached, coming down the hallway.*]

[GENERAL MCCLELLAN *walks into the Cabinet room. MCCLELLAN breaks the spell.*]

MCCLELLAN. I have not returned to Washington from Richmond to be questioned. I have come back for more troops.

STANTON. McClellan, if you had a million men, you would swear the rebels had two million, and then you

would sit down in the swamps—not Richmond—and yell for three million.

MCCLELLAN. No. I would pray to the gods at Washington for 4,000,000 and have 50,000 thrown at me on the battlefield.

LINCOLN. Well, the gods at Washington prayed to you when Stonewall Jackson's 30,000 marched around our 160,000, and destroyed our baggage trains, and destroyed our ammunition, and led away our horses—all this and you were afraid to even skirmish to destroy a single whisker in Stonewall Jackson's brigades.

MCCLELLAN. You use poor judgment in praising Jackson and defaming me. *Stanton's* War Department had petrified *my* army by warning us the rebels marched out from Richmond twice *our* number for Jackson's hair raising escapade.

LINCOLN. You do wrong to defame the War Department because we were in our offices here in Washington and you were on your battlefield there *near* Richmond.

STANTON. General McClellan, you are a knight of the Golden Circle?

MCCLELLAN. Yes. That is, I was.

STANTON. Well, I'll be damned! The riddle of this Sphinx is solved because the consuming passion and purpose of your Golden Circle of Copperheads is to either save slavery or to destroy the Union, or compromise, or assassinate this body.

MCCLELLAN. *You* are hard of hearing. I said I *was* a member of the Golden Circle. And *was* is not *is*. At present no heart is beating more patriotically than mine.

CHASE. No. Your heart is not beating patriotically or you would explain why *our* army transport ships that we sent to *you* were too wide to pass through your locks that you made for yourself in the James River below Richmond.

MCCLELLAN. Your God of War sent me *your* crooked yardstick.

STANTON. Well, then, why didn't you uncrook *our* 200,000 soldiers and make new locks?

MCCLELLAN. *My* soldiers are fighters, not hod carriers. Besides, I had only 160,000—not 200,000—40,000 had been killed.

BLAIR. That “was” of *yours* seems like an “is” to *me* because you gave ship loads of *our* quinine and citrus fruits to the *rebels* after the rebels had slaughtered *you*, quartered *you*, routed *you* in the disastrous battles of the Chickahominy.

MCCLELLAN. Secretary Blair, regardless of what the rebels do to us, we must remember that the rebels are our brothers.

LINCOLN. You crucify me, for in the Seven Days' Battle of Harrison's Landing, I had to rush to the Battlefield on peril of my life to keep you from surrendering to the rebels what was left of our army.

MCCLELLAN. Well, at any rate, had I surrendered *my* army to the rebels before *you* got to Harrison's Landing, the surrender would not only have ended the war, but the surrender would have saved you from assassination—that is, in the event that we do win the war. Gentlemen, the Richmond Peninsula Campaign disasters are far away and long ago; and I wish to forget the Richmond Peninsula Campaign disasters.

LINCOLN. *We* can never forget the Richmond Peninsula Campaign disasters. But dropping on down to the Battle of Antietam: with *our* new army you lost 17,000 in one single day of that three days' holocaust.

MCCLELLAN. I admit I lost 17,000 of *my* army in one day in your Battle of Antietam, but *my* 17,000 slain represented a full day's fighting, and besides *my* Army of the Potomac in *your* Battle of Antietam was hardly twice the size of Lee's Army of Northern Virginia.

STANTON. Well, if numbers count for anything and you have a *patriotic palpitation*, why did Lee's left wing of 4,000 crush *your* right wing of 40,000?

MCCLELLAN. Blood? We haven't started shedding blood. The rivers all over this fair land will yet run red with blood.

STANTON. Will you explain why Lee's left wing of 4,000 crushed *your* right wing of 40,000 in the Battle of Antietam?

MCCLELLAN. I ordered General Burnside to cross the bridge, but Burnside would not cross the bridge.

STANTON. Did *you* cross the bridge?

MCCLELLAN. No. But I captured 300 rebels and seven stands of rebel colors.

CHASE. O God, this is too much. The Treasury Department can't stand it.

STANTON. So *you* abhor dwelling on the Richmond Peninsula Campaign, but *you* gloat over *our* Battle of Antietam. Well, let *us* go back to *your* Richmond Peninsula Campaign slaughter pen, let *us* return to *your* Richmond Peninsula Campaign's catastrophes, *your* Richmond Peninsula Campaign's disasters. Briefly—for *I* abhor thinking about *your* Richmond Peninsula Campaign calamities—*your* Richmond Peninsula Campaign tragedies made *us* fire *you* from *our* army; but with a halter around *your* neck and treason in *your* heart, *you* stole *our* army out of Washington and fought *your* Battle of Antietam; and had *you* not driven the rebels out of Maryland, had *you* surrendered—we would have hanged *you* by the neck until *dead*!

MCCLELLAN. You men betrayed *my* Army of the Potomac and through General Pope's hands delivered it to *your* Second Battle of Bull Run catastrophe; but *I* stole *my* Second Battle of Bull Run wreckage from Pope, dumped over the breastworks of Washington by the infuriated rebels, and *I* fought the Battle of Antietam, and *I* drove the rebels out of Maryland, and *I* preserved civilization for this continent and democracy for the world. General Pope, the political liar, is praised while *I*, the savior of the Union, am blamed. What

would Stanton and Lincoln have done with a halter around their necks!

CHASE. We agree that *you* saved the Union, but why could Robert E. Lee cross the Potomac in one night, but it took *you* eleven days and eleven nights—or twenty-two times as long to cross and follow him?

MCCLELLAN. I meant to capture Lee's Army of Northern Virginia, after the Battle of Antietam; then Stanton childishly refused to send me shoes, blankets, medical supplies, and marching equipment because I had stolen *my* army.

LINCOLN. General, your rarest military trait is a combination of negatives.

MCCLELLAN. Combinations of negatives, eh? Well, in the face of Stanton's eleven-days of antics, *I* pontooned *my* Army of the Potomac over the Potomac where *I* attacked Robert E. Lee's entrenched Army of Northern Virginia. And *I* know, Mr. President, even if *you* don't, that *we* were met and driven by the most tremendous artillery fire ever witnessed here or in Europe until *my* Army of the Potomac's blue bodies piled up in the broad Potomac, choking and clogging *its* bloody, muddy waters.

LINCOLN. My God, my God. Not only *you* and *I* know it, but the whole world knows it, too. And in the words of Horace Greeley's New York Tribune, hear the groaning people: [*Reads from the New York Tribune.*]

Abraham Lincoln, give us a man:
Give us a man of God's own mould,

Born to marshall his fellow man;
One whose fame is not bought and sold
At the stroke of a politician's pen;
Give us a man of thousands ten,
Fit to do as well as plan;
Give us a rallying cry, and then,
Abraham Lincoln, give us a man.

[*He takes his red bandana and wipes the tears from his cheek, then from his eyes.*] I am just an old railsplitter who by toil became a jackleg lawyer whom the people chose as their mast-fed President, and may God help my soul. [*He reads another stanza from the New York Tribune.*]

No leader to shirk the boasting foe,
And to march and counter march our brave
Till they fall like ghosts in the marshes low,
And swamp-grass covers each nameless grave;
Nor another whose fatal banner waves;
Aye, in disaster's shameful van;
Nor another to blunder, to lie, to rave:
Abraham Lincoln, give us a man.

[*While LINCOLN wipes the tears away, STANTON queries GENERAL MCCLELLAN.*]

STANTON. So, *you* lost only 150,000 in the Peninsula Campaign?

MCCLELLAN. *You* don't have to be insulting, Stanton; for *my* loss was only between 125,000 and 140,000. All of you, the President of the United States included, have predetermined to ruin *me* in any event and by foul

means. *You* forced *me* into premature battles, knowing that failure would end *my* military career. In the Peninsula-Chickahominy disasters, *you* withheld means necessary to achieve success—this at a fearful sacrifice of blood and treasury. *My* men did all that men could do, all that soldiers could accomplish; but we were overwhelmed by vast hordes of superior numbers, ending my Peninsula Campaign in *your* mass of Chickahominy calamities. *I* saw too many miles of dead and wounded comrades than to feel otherwise than *this* government did not nor has not sustained *my* army. *You* did your best to sacrifice *my* army. If *I* save this nation now, *I* tell you plainly that *I* owe no thanks to *you* nor any persons in Washington. If the President of the United States is afraid of Horace Greeley, if he is afraid of his Cabinet, if he is afraid of Congress or the Stanton-Congress combination with their purblind war-prolonging patriotism, if he is afraid to die for his country—for die he will if the Confederacy dies—*I* cheerfully take upon *myself* the responsibilities of *this* government and agree to lay down *my* life when the country is finally saved. From the light now thrown on Stanton's character, *I* know from an early date that Stanton was in this treasonable conspiracy against *me*. Stanton is wicked. Stanton is a diabolus of treacheries. Stanton is offensively despotic. Stanton *would be* Dictator, yet *Stanton* advises *me* to seize this government whose negligence has made it most difficult to prevent *my* army from doing so, and making peace with the Confederacy.

LINCOLN. Stanton, we will reinstate General McClellan.

STANTON. He is not a General.

LINCOLN. [*Signs a document.*] He is now.

STANTON. But the vacancy has been promised.

LINCOLN. We will appoint *him* General-at-large.

STANTON. There is no warrant for this Bull-In-A-China-Closet appointment.

LINCOLN. Appoint *him* anyhow.

STANTON. I will not.

LINCOLN. General McClellan, Stanton says go to Trenton and gnaw on a file.

MCCLELLAN. Does Lincoln tell me to gnaw on a file?

LINCOLN. Yes. Go to Trenton and gnaw on a file.

MCCLELLAN. The Democrats in the next election will make you pay for this, see if they don't! [GENERAL MCCLELLAN *goes out.*]

LINCOLN. Thus set the Morning Star of the *Little Napoleon* of the Western Hemisphere. [*Enter* DANA.] Well, Dana, did you get those pension papers fixed up so soon?

DANA. Yes, sir.

LINCOLN. How?

DANA. I asked the Pension Office, "Did you see a dark-complexioned man here today? He wore a stovepipe

hat, and was interested in the pension of a woman whose husband was killed in the Seminole War.”

“Oh, yes, I remember the man,” was the reply. “He said he was a lawyer from somewhere out West.”

“Well,” I shouted, and pounded my fist, “You’ve got yourselves in a pretty fix. That man is President Lincoln, and I have promised him I would bring him an answer from you inside half an hour.” This brief announcement wrought an instant change in the Pension Office. Bells were rung and heads of divisions sent for, while clerks and messengers ran here and there at the seeming peril of life and limb.

LINCOLN. [*Looking the papers over carefully, and then with a quizzical smile.*] Can you tell me, Major, how it is that the President of the United States was so long and failed and you were so short and succeeded?

DANA. To speak frankly, Mr. President, I regret to say you are not known by sight in the Pension Office.

LINCOLN. [*Returning the documents to DANA.*] Now, Major, do me another good deed, and deliver them to the good woman who is waiting downstairs.

DANA. Yes, sir. [*DANA takes the documents and goes out.*]

LINCOLN. [*Taking a little book out of his pocket, and opening it.*] Artemus Ward has sent me his latest book. I propose to read a chapter which I think very funny. The chapter is “High-Handed Outrage at Utika.” [*Reads.*] “In the Faul of 1856, I showed my show in Utiky, a trolly grate sitty in the State of New York.

The people gave me a cordyal resepsion. The press was loud in her prases. One day as I was givin' a descripsion of my beests and snaiks in my usual flowry stile what was my skorn and disgust but to see a big burly feller walk up to the cage containin' my wax figgers of the Lord's Last Supper, and cease Judas Iscarrot [*Looking over his glasses at STANTON seated behind him.*] by the feet and drag him out on the ground. He then commenced fur to pound Judas Iscarrot as hard as he cood. 'What under the son are you about?' cried I. Sez he, 'What did you bring this pussylanermus cuss here fur?' and hit the wax figger another tremenjis blow on the hed. Sez I, 'You egrejus ass, that air's a wax figger, a representashun of the false 'Postle.' Sez he, 'That's all very well fer you to say, but I tell you, ole man, that Judas Iscarrot can't show hissself in Utiky with impunerty by a darn sight!' With which observashun he kaved in Judassis hed. The young man belonged to one of the first famerlies in Utiky. I sood him, and the joory brawd't in a verdick of Arson in the third degree." [*The CABINET enjoys it—all except STANTON.*] Stanton, I find a heap of fun in Artemus Ward's book.

STANTON. Yes—[*Dryly.*] But what do you think of that chapter where he makes fun of you?

LINCOLN. Stanton, to save my life, I could never see any humor in that chapter. Gentlemen, I have, as you are aware, thought a great deal about the relation of this war to slavery; and you all remember that several weeks ago I read to you the Emancipation Proclamation which, on account of objections made by some of you,

was not issued. I think the time has now come. I wish it was a better time. I wish that we were in a better condition. But we have reached the end of *our* rope. *We* must change *our* tactics or lose the game. The Emancipation will give moral color to the war both at home and abroad. The action of the Army against the rebels has not been quite what I should have best liked. But the rebels have been driven out of Maryland, and Pennsylvania is no longer in danger of invasion. When the rebel army was at Frederick I determined as soon as it should be driven out of Maryland, to issue a Proclamation of Emancipation, such as I thought most likely to be useful. I said nothing to anyone, but I made the promise to myself and . . . to my Maker. The rebel army is now driven out, and I am going to fulfill that promise. I do not wish your advice about the main matter, for that I have determined for myself. This I say without intending anything but respect for any of you. One other observation I will make. *I* know very well that many *others* might, in this matter as in others, do better than *I* can and if *I* was satisfied that the public confidence was more fully possessed by *any one* of them than by *me*, and knew of any Constitutional way in which he could be put in *my* place, he should have it. *I* would gladly yield it to *him*. But, though I believe that I have not so much of the confidence of the people as I had some time since, I do not know that, all things being considered, any other persons has more, and, however this may be, there is no way in which *I* can have any other man put where *I* am. I am here; *I* must do the best *I* can, and bear the responsibility of taking the



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FIRST READING OF THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

course which *I* feel *I* ought to take. The Emancipation Proclamation is so proclaimed in the main part: [*Reads.*] "That, on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free."

SEWARD. The general question having been decided, nothing can be said further.

CHASE. Mr. President, your kind and candid considerations fully satisfy me.

BATES. I still maintain this Emancipation Proclamation will cost us the fall elections, and untold slaughter from the rebels.

WELLES. I am afraid of the influence of the Proclamation on the Border States.

BLAIR. The rebels will certainly give us hell and damnation now. I would ask to have my paper, presented some days ago, against the policy, filed with the Proclamation.

LINCOLN. It so shall be. And upon this Act, sincerely believed to be an act of Justice, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind, and the gracious favor of Almighty God. [*He signs.*]

CURTAIN

ACT TWO

SCENE II

We are in the United States War Department. It is July 3, 1863. The CABINET is clinging on to every word MAJOR ECKERT deciphers on the telegraph coming in from the Battle of Gettysburg Battlefield. MAJOR ECKERT'S method is not unlike that used by our present day police in "calling all cars."

ECKERT. [*Deciphering.*] The earth trembles with slaughterous cannonading. Cannonading began at 4 A.M. God save us. News arrives that Jeb Stuart's cavalry are destroying our rear. Third day of battle. Gettysburg's a slaughter. Shot and shell terrific. Battle of Gettysburg is Battle of Hell against Hell. 11:00 A.M. Battle of Gettysburg most awful, bloodiest conflict of modern times. 40,000 dead men lie rotting in the July sun. Confederates occupy South Mountain and Oak Ridge while Federals occupy Culp's Hill, Round Top, Granite Spur, and Cemetery Hill. Furious fighting all day. Full regiments attack, reel, stagger, fall, surrender, or retreat, reform, advance, but only fragments return alive to tell the tale of horror. Casualties evenly divided. This new angle of Stuart's army of cavalry has become acute. Stuart's undefeated demons *are* annihilating our rear infantry. Fighting reported most bloody, desperate.

Stuart's now devastating our ammunition dumps. Roaring volcanoes of flame and mountains of smoke roar through the blue heavens. Rear infantry can't check Stuart's army of cavalry. Stuart destroys communication. Stuart cuts us off. Stuart's army of cavalry will get between us and Washington.

LINCOLN. This is our reward, with General McClellan gnawing on a file. With McClellan out of the way, General Burnside's slaughter at Fredericksburg caused General Hooker's destruction at Chancellorsville. Hooker's destruction at Chancellorsville has led us to this national grave at Gettysburg.

ECKERT. [*Deciphering.*] Stuart's defeated our rear infantry. Stuart reported destroying all communications with outside world. Stand by. Stuart—any moment—will cut us off. Stuart's between us and Washington. General Meade sent Major Dana to you two hours ago. Fear Major Dana slain. Here they come. Stampeding spectacle magnificent, but hair-raising. Stand by. Stuart plunges our rear ranks into our center. Stand by. Protect Washington. Bring up convoy. Prepare for eventualities. Volcanoes from our ammunition dumps blot out the sun. . . . Gentlemen, our communications to Gettysburg are cut in two.

LINCOLN. Read to us, Seward. Read to us more from Horace Greeley's Tribune, the voice of the people.

SEWARD. Mr. President, you have no business listening to Greeley's insults added to injuries.

LINCOLN. Oh, yes, I have; for Greeley is telling us the truth this time.

SEWARD. Horace Greeley emblazons to the nation, "Who doubts Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation was signed at the wrong time? Who doubts Lincoln's Emancipation precipitated Burnside's slaughter at Fredericksburg? Who doubts the slaughter of Burnside at Fredericksburg precipitated Parson Hooker's destruction at Chancellorsville? Who doubts that Chancellorsville was the prelude to Gettysburg?"

LINCOLN. Enough, enough.

SEWARD. Well, you asked for it.

LINCOLN. Read on. Read some more. We must know the naked truth.

SEWARD. Horace Greeley now insults our President's judgment, "Then Parson Hooker's right wing was hit by the death bringing rebel simoon's left tail—ridden by Stonewall Jackson and Jeb Stuart—with such cyclonic fury that Abe's Parson Hooker's handful of 130,000 officers and men were so massacred by Jeb Stuart and Stonewall Jackson that Robert E. Lee's brigades merely watched Stuart and Jackson plunge this nation into the greatest inferno of the war before Gettysburg.

LINCOLN. My God! Stanton, our cause is lost! We are ruined—we are ruined; and such a fearful loss of life! My God! this is more than I can endure. If I am not about early tomorrow, do not send for me, nor allow

anyone to disturb me. Defeated again, and so many of our noble countrymen killed. What will the people say?

STANTON. Mr. President, I, too, am feeling that I would rather be dead than alive; but is it manly, is it brave that you—that I should succumb before Robert E. Lee? I rue McClellan's Richmond Peninsula Campaign. I chastize my soul with the whip of repentance that I did not support McClellan's Richmond Peninsula Campaign.

SEWARD. Greeley scorns our annihilation at Chancellorsville, "Take a look at Chancellorsville. Solid columns of infantry retreating at double-quick; a dense mass of militia fleeing; thousands of cavalry horses left riderless, dashing frantically about in all directions; scores of batteries flying; battery wagons, ambulances, horses, men, cannon, caissons, all jumbled, and tumbled together in one inextricable mass; the stampede universal; the disgrace general.

LINCOLN. Defeated again, and so many of our countrymen killed. What will the people do! What will the people do!

SEWARD. [*Reads.*] Greeley is now knelling the end of Union in Democracy at Gettysburg, "Piling disgrace upon disgrace high enough to outrage heaven, Abe's Parson Hooker runs away and makeshift Meade has lost the day with 20,000 dead at Gettysburg—and the battle is raging, raging, with thousands dying by the hour.

LINCOLN. Gentlemen, let us pray. God, I want to ask a little favor of ye. Please let us win this bloody Battle at

Gettysburg. God, it's in your hands, for our people are out there doing and dying that freedom might be universal for mankind. You know the anguish felt at Calvary. Well, my Proclamation of Emancipation's on the cross at Gettysburg today. To lose this Battle now in progress means your children must continue to bow down before a master and no third man may raise objection, as men have bowed and choked upon the bread of slavery before the dawn of history began. I place this Battle in your hands, God, and beg that you remember Calvary. You have great and mighty things to do. You swing the far-flung heavens in their orbits; but man, your Book says, is your handiwork, and we are fighting now at Gettysburg for Liberty and Freedom, for Peace and Contentment, for Democracy, for Civilization and Hope. I have been tried, and found wanting in all the major struggles and battles of this war. I am poor, and weak, and sinful. O God! who didst hear Solomon when he cried for wisdom, hear me. O Thou God who heard Solomon in the night when he prayed for wisdom, hear me. Without Thy help, I cannot lead these people. Hear me. Amen.

STANTON. Amen!

CABINET. Amen!

[With clothes torn and dirty, enter MAJOR DANA as the CABINET, ECKERT, and LINCOLN come out of their kneeling positions.]

STANTON. Dana, how goes the Battle!

LINCOLN. God, I thank you they didn't kill Dana.

CABINET. [*Ad lib.*] How goes the Battle! Don't keep us waiting! You needn't tell us! We read your message! The same old story! Defeated again! I told you so! Dana, we must know the worst!

DANA. Gettysburg a battlefield? Gettysburg is a slaughter pen! A madhouse slaughter against both sides. Antietam, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville—all three rolled into one at Gettysburg.

STANTON. What about Jeb Stuart's cavalry? Do we have any hope there?

DANA. No hope against invincible Jeb Stuart. Remember Stuart at Chancellorsville and Fredricksburg! but today Stuart's fury is full grown in his cyclonic onslaught.

LINCOLN. Gentlemen, go to your offices. Remain firm.

[*The CABINET goes out, leaving LINCOLN, STANTON, ECKERT, and DANA. STANTON, ECKERT, and DANA continue to pack up the War Department. LINCOLN reclines on the lounge. Someone knocks on the door.*]

STANTON. There's that woman again. [*She knocks again.*] Damn you, come in!

[*A WOMAN comes in.*]

WOMAN. As you love God, give me the life of my son!

STANTON. How dare you interrupt me again, Madam!

WOMAN. How dare I interrupt! How dare I interrupt! My son fought through every battle of the Peninsula

Campaign with McClellan, at Antietam; at Fredricksburg, at Chancellorsville. He was wounded twice, enlisted again, and has now been sentenced—[*Punctuated by a despairing laugh.*] as a bounty jumper!

STANTON. Ah, Private Charles Allen Putnam of the Seventh Vermont must die, Madam. I am sorry for you, but I do my duty. Don't distress me by an appeal that is useless.

LINCOLN. [*Getting up, he joins the battle.*] Don't be in such a hurry, Stanton. Listen to any woman speaking for her son's life. You say your son, Mrs. Putnam, fought for his country for nearly three years?

MRS. PUTNAM. Yes, sir.

LINCOLN. 'Tis strange he is a deserter now.

MRS. PUTNAM. Not really a deserter. He is simply made foolish by a woman.

LINCOLN. Weeeell, I can understand that! It's quite the natural thing, you know.

MRS. PUTNAM. God has sent you here, Mr. Lincoln, to hear my prayer! I am a widow from Vermont. I have given seven sons to death for their country; will you take the eighth, the last—the only—the youngest one from me?

LINCOLN. Seven sons? Seven sons? Stanton—you hear—seven sons?

MRS. PUTNAM. [STANTON *writes order for her son's immediate death.*] Yes, all volunteered from our Vermont farm. The eldest fell at the First Battle of Bull

Run; one more died in McClellan's Peninsula Campaign, though they couldn't find his body in the swamps; one died at Antietam; one at Fredericksburg; two more were slaughtered at Chancellorsville, and one in the present Battle of Gettysburg. And this one—all that is left to me—fought in all those battles except Gettysburg, protected by God, and came back on furlough to our farm in Vermont and there saw the woman who has brought him to this. He was refused leave six days ago. He would see her eyes. He came to Washington from the army and was arrested as a deserter, and you know what a quick court martial means. It was only to get a kiss or two from the foolish girl who was waiting for him in Washington, and then go back and fight again. Listen, please listen to me, Mr. President: seven sons dead and one to be shot because he—he wanted to kiss the girl he loves.

LINCOLN. Stanton, you must listen to this lady—this patriotic lady—who has given more than either you or I for this country.

STANTON. [*Speaking to DANA.*] Immediate! [*Gives sealed envelope to DANA.*] Tell the orderly to hurry!

[*DANA goes out.*]

LINCOLN. Listen to this lady, Stanton, and see if there isn't virtue in her appeal for some revision, some commutation for her son's sentence.

STANTON. Mr. President, under my duty as Secretary of War I have sworn to myself, for the salvation of the American Army, whose effectiveness is now necessary for the preservation of this country, that no convicted

deserter shall have pardon or commutation of sentence. It is vital that we stop bounty jumping in the present status of the recruiting service.

MRS. PUTNAM. But my son fought at Fort Stephens and protected you and the capital. He was wounded at Fort Stephens and the scar of the Southern bullet is not yet entirely healed upon his arm. Mercy, Mr. Stanton! Mr. President, [STANTON *goes out.*] as you love your own offspring, listen to me; you have a kinder heart.

LINCOLN. Follow him. Keep reciting your case. I have, as you must know, very little influence with this Administration. I do not wish to interfere, if possible.

[MRS. PUTNAM *follows* STANTON.]

ECKERT. Mr. President, if you have any intention of pardoning that man, you have no time to lose.

LINCOLN. And what do you mean?

ECKERT. Why, I mean simply, Mr. Stanton has just given the execution papers to Dana. Come to the window. Look. You see that orderly that has just galloped away from this building is turning north toward Fort de Russey, where I believe the prisoner is held awaiting execution.

LINCOLN. Well, I'm damned! A wire is run to Fort de Russey?

ECKERT. Yes, Mr. Lincoln, to every fort in the fortifications of Washington, of course.

LINCOLN. Call up Fort de Russey at once.

ECKERT. The wire to Fort de Russey is in use, Mr. President, on very important orders with regard to the movement of the Sixth Corps to Gettysburg.

LINCOLN. Hold the dispatch!

ECKERT. It is very important, Mr. President. It has Mr. Stanton's personal orders that the Sixth Corps be put through to Gettysburg immediately.

LINCOLN. Stop that dispatch! I direct it! We need the Sixth Corps at Fort de Russey, anyway! Now! Telegraph to the Provost Marshal having in charge Private Charles Allen Putnam of the Seventh Vermont, sentenced to execution today. Direct him to bring immediately to the War Department his prisoner. . . . Order him under the personal commands of the President of the United States to disregard all orders whatsoever, as regards the disposition of the prisoner. Tell the Provost Marshal this message is given by Abraham Lincoln in person, and that I am in the War Department waiting for the prisoner.

[*As ECKERT is concluding the message over the wires, MRS. LINCOLN and her son, ROBERT, come in.*]

MRS. LINCOLN. Abraham, I have come to take you home. You have been here all night, and now it is past noon.

LINCOLN. Mother, I have sad news for you: Brigadier-General Helm is dead.

MRS. LINCOLN. I know, father. Stanton sent me little sister's letter this morning, and Emily said, as you

know, Ben had no ill will against you, and that he died gloriously in battle fighting for his Confederacy.

LINCOLN. I feel as David of old did when he heard of the death of Absalom: "Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!"

MRS. LINCOLN. Three of my Confederate brothers are now slain: brother Samuel fell at the Battle of Shiloh; brother David at the present siege of Vicksburg; and my dearly beloved Alexander at the Battle of Baton Rouge. God, where I had expected much, has taken all—even little Willie.

LINCOLN. You still have me, and Bob, and Tad, mother. Be a sweet Little Mother now, and don't cry, don't cry. Bob, take your mother home.

ROBERT. Yes, father.

LINCOLN. [LINCOLN *takes* MRS. LINCOLN *to a window.*] Mother, do you see that large, white building on the hill yonder? Try to control your grief or it will drive you mad, and we may have to take you there. [*As LINCOLN and ROBERT lead her to the door.*] This too shall pass away, never fear, never fear. I pray that our Heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost. [ROBERT, *with his mother on his arm, goes out.*] [LINCOLN *walks the floor and wrings his hands.*] This, too, shall pass away, never fear, never fear.

[STANTON *enters, followed close by* MRS. PUTNAM.]

MRS. PUTNAM. You are the dragon, Draco, you are so cruel. Mercy, Mr. Stanton! Mercy on my soul!

LINCOLN. Stanton, you have postponed the execution? Until you can make further investigation?

STANTON. On the contrary. In order to avoid discussion on this matter, you having promised me yourself, in such cases, to withhold the pardoning power and leave it entirely in my hands, I have already taken such steps that discussion is—

LINCOLN. Discussion is never useless as long as a man is alive.

MRS. PUTNAM. Ah, you intend to pardon my son, Mr. President!

LINCOLN. If what you have said to me is substantially true, I do, Madam.

MRS. PUTNAM. God forever bless you! [*Sobbing.*] Such a happy month, and now—now! But I must convince you, Mr. President. This fatherless son of my old age. At home he met a girl that he took to powerfully, and she—this foolish girl who has brought him death—loved him like an idiot. So after Charlie had come down to Washington and done his duty here—you saw him, Mr. President, at the Battle of Fort Stephens. They all say you were there.

LINCOLN. Why, yes. I believe I was at the Battle of Fort Stephens.

MRS. PUTNAM. Then you saw my son fight. You saw

the Seventh Corps drive the Rebels out of Maryland and run them back into Virginia and save the capital. My boy was wounded in the line of battle beside you.

LINCOLN. Madam, I was near the fort, I assure you, when the bullets got too thick.

[STANTON, *hearing the beat of horses' hoofs, goes to the window.*]

MRS. PUTNAM. Bring him here, and I will show you the unhealed wound upon his arm. These records I hold in my hand will prove that he was present at every engagement of his regiment during this whole bloody war.

STANTON. What's that cavalry escort doing drawing up down there?

MRS. PUTNAM. Bring him here and I will show you, Mr. Secretary Stanton, that my boy risked his life for his country and his flag. Then that foolish country girl to whom my boy had taken such a shine came trolloping down to Washington after him.

[DANA *comes in.*]

DANA. The Provost Marshal from Fort de Russey with a prisoner.

STANTON. How? What? Impossible!

[*A cavalry CAPTAIN comes in.*]

CAPTAIN. I have the President's personal orders by telegram to present before him in the War Department

the prisoner condemned to execution today, Private Charles Allen Putnam of the Seventh Vermont.

[Four troopers of the CAPTAIN'S guard enter with the young Vermont giant, fair-haired and grey-eyed like his mother, drawn lines on his haggard face. Gazing in a dazed way about the Department, the boy gasps.]

CHARLES. Mother!

MRS. PUTNAM. My son! *[As she holds her son in her embrace, she falters.]* Mr. President, you have let my boy come into my arms once more; you have given me hope. See! *[She tears the blue sleeve from her son's arm and shows the awful unhealed wound inflicted by a Confederate Minié ball.]* This wound inflicted by a Confederate Minié ball is proof he risked his life for his country. I have here a certificate from all the officers of the regiment in which he served stating he did his duty gallantly. I have here the affidavit of the girl that he told her he must leave her to return to his command. You have given him to my arms, you cannot take him from them to murder him.

LINCOLN. *[He hands her a slip of paper.]* The free pardon of your son!

STANTON. *[Who has been talking to the CAPTAIN.]* He will break down the morale of the country! You received my command by orderly?

CAPTAIN. Yes, sir; but not until I had received by direct telegram attested from the telegraph clerk of this Department directions that the execution be stayed,

and that I forthwith report with the prisoner here personally to the President of the United States. The orders were attested to have the sign manual of Abraham Lincoln. I had signed for their receipt; I could not disobey them.

LINCOLN. Stanton, that's where I had a little joke on you. You're not up to the modern telegraph, Mr. Secretary. Electricity beats horse-flesh. Young man, your sentence to death by court martial acts as a discharge from the Army of the United States. My pardon has made it an honorable discharge. Go home and support and cherish your noble mother who has given you a second life. [*Tears well up in the deep-set eyes of the backwoods* PRESIDENT *as the mother, supported by the son, whose manacles have been taken off, is carried half fainting from the Department.*] I think, Stanton, that we had better burn, *unopened*, the dispatch you sent to the Provost Marshal. [*LINCOLN lights the cruel document over a blazing taper used for the sealing of official documents.*] The rural maiden who lured that young fellow from his duty loves him also.

[*A message begins to come in over the telegraph wires.*]

ECKERT. A message from Gettysburg!

LINCOLN. Thank God! At long last! Thank God!

ECKERT. [*Deciphering.*] John Noble on the Battlefield at Gettysburg calling President Lincoln in Washington.

STANTON. There goes your damn guerilla again! Won't "Guerilla John" ever learn I'm Secretary of War!

LINCOLN. Dana, go tell the boys we are communicating with the Battlefield at Gettysburg again.

[DANA goes out.]

ECKERT. [*Deciphering.*] Jeb Stuart's army of cavalry is repulsed. Heavy losses to both Confederates and Federals.

LINCOLN. God, you heard me. That is Stuart's first defeat.

ECKERT. [*Deciphering.*] Robert E. Lee prepares mass movements in our front, not knowing that Stuart is slaughtered in our rear.

LINCOLN. Robert E. Lee is at his old "grand strategy" again.

STANTON. Sure. Expects to wipe us off the map today.

ECKERT. [*Deciphering.*] One o'clock. Three days of thundering hell have ceased. Federal Army exhausted. Confederate Army exhausted. Each awaits in deathlike silence for new attacks.

LINCOLN. If General Meade can now attack, the honor will be his if he succeeds. The blame may be mine if he fails.

ECKERT. [*Deciphering.*] Action in Confederate ranks displaces deathlike dreadful silence.

LINCOLN. Oh, God: Meade is not striking first.

ECKERT. [*Deciphering.*] Confederates open fire from

hill tops. Blazing hell from one hundred fifty cannon bomb us limb from limb.

CABINET. [*Ad lib.*] We're lost! Why don't we retreat! Why don't we attack! No doubt we are retreating! The jig is up! The same old story! The jig is up! It's Chancellorsville again! It's Fredericksburg again!

ECKERT. [*Deciphering.*] We swarm like flies caught in a trap. We swarm behind the rocks. We swarm behind the trees. We swarm within our trenches and our fortifications. We are like Satan and his angels tossed from heaven amid blasting lightning. From the toes of the Confederate mountain a glittering army emerges. General Pickett's troops. Held in reserve. Robert E. Lee's plans are clear: Stuart drives our rear upon our front—Lee's one hundred fifty cannon blasting heaven and earth with hell have demoralized us—Pickett will stampede us—Robert E. Lee's army following Pickett will complete our finish and end the war.

CABINET. [*Ad lib.*] Destruction at Gettysburg is slavery forever. The end of freedom. A mock democracy. Your Emancipation Proclamation was a farce. Grand Strategy! Mass murder! The public cries, "Hold! Enough!" I am sad. I am sick. I am sorrowful. Miserable state of affairs. Barren fights. Wasted energies. Fruitless campaigns. Effusions of blood.

LINCOLN. We must have courage, gentlemen. Doubtless Robert E. Lee believes our ammunition is exhausted.

ECKERT. [*Deciphering.*] Bombardment continuous. Federal guns remain silent amid this slaughter as

Pickett's army approaches from across the valley below. Confederate hell increases. We cheer Pickett's 15,000 heroes.

STANTON. We cheer? Well, that means that we will murder Pickett's parading rebel hordes!

ECKERT. [*Deciphering.*] The Federal war clouds are gathering on the crowns of the hills. A hundred Federal cannon dip their muzzles downward. A hundred flashing tapers burn. The Federal war clouds rain iron hail and thunderbolts of bursting steel on Pickett's charging army. The Federal war cloud sprays and splatters the rebel red blood upon the green earth, tearing craters, gashing cracks in Pickett's heroic ranks. Pickett's heroes have crossed over the valley. On they come: shouting, screaming demons. Confederate cannon now grow silent. Pickett's heroes approach our fortifications.

LINCOLN. Surely General Meade can see the whites of their eyes!

ECKERT. [*Deciphering.*] General Meade now orders rifle fire. We slice away Pickett's front rank. We slice away Pickett's right flank. We slice away Pickett's left flank. On they come: screaming, charging. We slice away their front, their right, their left. On they come. The valley is clear. We are amazed. Robert E. Lee's army does not follow up Pickett's charge. Lee has heard of Stuart's defeat. Pickett's heroes scale our fortifications. We engage in mortal combat. The enemy are clubbed and stabbed with rammers, swords, muskets, bayonets, and stones.

STANTON. Hell's breaking loose at Gettysburg.

LINCOLN. Jeb Stuart's destruction was the voice of God.

WELLES. At last we speak to invincible Robert E. Lee.

LINCOLN. We watch the birth of a new nation: with Union in Democracy.

SEWARD. This is Lee's high water mark.

LINCOLN. Slavery's ebb-tide is at hand.

CHASE. The crest of the Confederacy.

LINCOLN. Slavery dies and freedom lives.

ECKERT. [*Deciphering.*] Pickett's heroes are retreating. They are silent, scattered, meager. In the tug with swords and bayonets Pickett's heroes left our Iron Brigades in wind-rows of slaughtered dead co-mingled with their slaughtered thousands. You have just witnessed the murder of 15,000. Total dead estimated at 60,000 with Confederate losses heavier. Telegram from General Meade. "President Lincoln, the enemy are retreating from our soil. We cannot follow. We are too tired. We are too broken up to follow."

LINCOLN. From our soil! The whole nation is our soil. Eckert wire Meade.

ECKERT. Ready, sir.

LINCOLN. I do not believe you appreciate the magnitude of the misfortune involved in Lee's escape. Providence has twice delivered the Army of Northern Virginia into our hands—first at Antietam and now—and with such

opportunities lost we ought scarcely hope for a third chance. Lee was within your easy grasp, and to have closed upon him would have ended the war. As it is the war will be prolonged indefinitely.

[*On closing the message to GENERAL MEADE, a message begins to come in from Vicksburg.*]

ECKERT. [*Deciphering.*] Vicksburg, Mississippi: General Grant's headquarters calling President Lincoln.

STANTON. Wire Grant when his advice is needed I will ask for it.

CABINET. [*Ad lib.*] What is it? The Confederates have defeated Grant. Grant will bankrupt the Treasury. The West Point failure. The \$400.00 a year leather tanner. Grant is officious. Positively rude.

ECKERT. [*Relates the telegram that has come in by now.*] General Grant says that he has captured Vicksburg, Mississippi. Pemberton's surrendered army numbers 30,000, but our loss was 9,000. Grant says today ends a twelve day bombardment of Vicksburg by the Army and Navy combined with 220 heavy guns.

LINCOLN. I am amazed. God is everywhere today, and the Father of Waters again goes unvexed to the sea. Grant fights. I must have Grant here. In spite of opposition I must bring Grant East to end this war by placing him over all our armies.

CHASE. Mr. President, I feel you should heed my unadulterated opinion of Grant. Grant is a whiskey-fed butcher who will yet bankrupt the United States.

STANTON. Grant is dangerous. Grant is too self-determined.

BATES. The drunkard!

CHASE. The Temperance League certainly won't tolerate Grant.

BLAIR. What is a Cabinet for if you won't listen to its advice! Grant's bad examples will break down the morale of hundreds of our generals all along our 3000 mile front!

LINCOLN. Ah! By the way, can any one of you tell me where General Grant procures his peculiar whiskey, because if I can find out, I will send every general in the field a barrel of it.

CURTAIN

ACT TWO

SCENE III

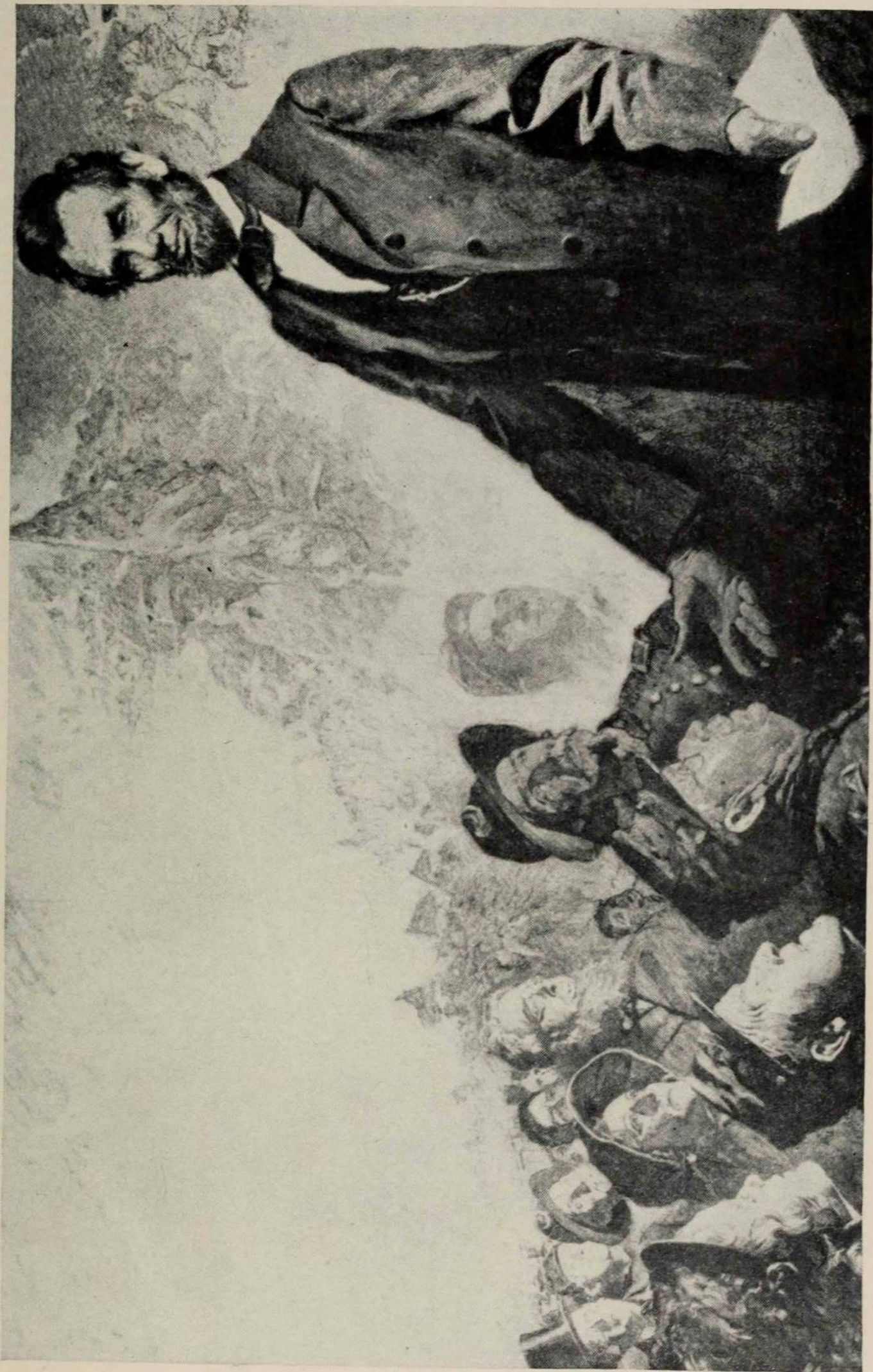
On the Battlefield of Gettysburg in late November, 1863, they are holding the dedicatory ceremonies setting aside a portion of that field as a final resting place for those who died there in battle. We stand before an open-air platform filled with our national leaders. Back of us is a sea of upturned faces: mothers, fathers, children, crippled soldiers, old men. Applause still billowing upon billow roars for EDWARD EVERETT, most famous orator, with oration concluded, who is bowing graciously to his ocean of fans who have come to hear him. The platform is profusely decorated with American flags and patriotic bunting. Overtures between EVERETT and audience concluded, EVERETT, as the peacock of the occasion, seats himself beside ABRAHAM LINCOLN. MR. WARD H. LAMON as the Chairman comes forward. LAMON bows to EVERETT, then he bows to the audience.

LAMON. Ladies and gentlemen, you have just heard the world-famous Edward Everett, the golden voiced Edward Everett. You have just been entranced for two short hours by the Greek and Roman exemplified speech of Edward Everett, the ex-Governor of Massachusetts, the ex-Ambassador to England, the ex-Secretary of

State, the ex-Senator of the United States. [*To ABRAHAM LINCOLN.*] It is the desire that, after the oration, you, as chief magistrate, formally set apart these grounds to their sacred use by a few *appropriate* remarks.

[*MR. LAMON is seated. ABRAHAM LINCOLN comes forward. A squirming ripple goes through the audience. A whisper passes over the multitude, then all grow suddenly quiet.*]

LINCOLN. Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth upon this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But, in a larger sense we cannot dedicate—we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to



Courtesy of the Lincoln National Life Insurance Company

LINCOLN AT GETTYSBURG

that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this Nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

CURTAIN

ACT THREE

SCENE I

We come to GENERAL GRANT'S headquarters near Richmond, and the time is April, 1865: just before dawn. LINCOLN, GRANT, and STANTON are having a council of war. GRANT'S staff—one of whom is ROBERT LINCOLN—and soldiers acting as guards stand waiting. The first part of this scene should not be played too seriously, for STANTON is the butt of the argument between LINCOLN and GRANT.

LINCOLN. So, you think it is impertinent of me to come to *your* battlefield. Well, *I* have come, General Grant, to remind *you* that *you* should not forget the five lessons in military strategies, captures, and slaughters which the rebels have taught you since the Battles of Gettysburg-Vicksburg. One: General Lee has slaughtered of your army five armies the size of his own—some 125,000—in these your bloody Peninsula Battles of the Wilderness where poor General McClellan, and General Burnside, and General Hooker met their Waterloo. Two: what did you learn at Cold Harbor when Lee slew 13,000 in thirty minutes? Three: you are throwing away the information you gained at your Battle of Shiloh, and your Battle of Lookout Mountain and Missionary

Ridge, and Nashville, and your other battles too numerous to mention here. Four: you are letting the Confederacy out of the jug again. Five: he who fights and runs away may live to fight another day.

GRANT. [*With a humorous face to LINCOLN, but with a serious face to STANTON.*] Mr. President, I am a man of few words; but what I have to say amounts to a rebuke to Mr. Lincoln. Now, from my first entrance into the volunteer service of the country to the present day, I have never had cause of complaint—have never expressed or implied complaint—against the Administration, or against the Secretary of War, for throwing any embarrassment in the way of my vigorously prosecuting what appeared to be my duty.

LINCOLN. Weeelll, the only reply necessary to answer that remark is that if we fail here this time it will go far to prove the incapability of the people to govern themselves. You have an army of 200,000 forming a jug around General Robert E. Lee's miserable 25,000 starving men. You command 1,000,000 troops. So far this war has done nothing but prove that a majority can't preserve this government.

[*A MESSENGER enters.*]

GRANT. Well, what is it!

MESSENGER. Word of mouth, sir.

GRANT. All right! All right! What is it!

MESSENGER. General Sheridan says General Lee's whole

army can be captured at once or destroyed, sir, if we do not delay, sir.

STANTON. And why is Phil Sheridan so damn certain Robert E. Lee can be taken *this* time?

MESSENGER. Why, Mr. Secretary Stanton, General Meade and General Custer have moved their armies to General Lee's left; General Krutz and General Butler have moved their armies to General Lee's rear; then as soon as this was completed General Sheridan headed off General Lee's army on General Lee's right. General Sheridan is now ready, sir, to capture Lee's army, or destroy it to a man, sir.

LINCOLN. Tell Phil Sheridan the President of the United States said jug Lee, stopper Lee, swallow Lee, capture Lee dead or alive; for in doing so, we nobly save or meanly lose the last best hope on earth.

MESSENGER. Yes, sir.

[*The MESSENGER and ROBERT LINCOLN go to the line of battle.*]

LINCOLN. Gentlemen, something very extraordinary is going to happen, and that very soon.

STANTON. Something *very* good, I *hope*, sir?

LINCOLN. I don't know—I don't know. But it will happen and shortly.

STANTON. Have *you* received any *information*, sir, not yet disclosed to *us*?

LINCOLN. No, but *I* have had a dream. And I have had

the *same dream* three times: once the night preceding the Battle of Bull Run, once on the night before our slaughter at Chancellorsville.

STANTON. Might one ask the nature of this dream, *sir*?

LINCOLN. [*Without lifting his head or changing his attitude.*] Two nights ago, I retired late. I could not have been long in bed when I fell into a slumber, for I was weary. I soon began to dream. There seemed to be death-like stillness about me. Then I heard subdued sobs, as if a number of people were weeping. I thought I left my bed and wandered downstairs. There the silence was broken by the same pitiful sobbing, but the mourners were invisible. I went from room to room; no living person was in sight, but the same mournful sobbing of distress met me as I passed along. All the rooms were lighted; every object was familiar, but where could be the people sobbing as if their poor hearts would break? I was puzzled and alarmed. What could be the meaning of all this? Determined to find the cause of a state of things so mysterious, so shocking, I searched until I came upon the East Room, which I entered. Before me was a catafalque on which was a form wrapped in funeral vestments. Around it were stationed soldiers who were acting as guards; there was a throng of people, some gazing mournfully upon the catafalque, others weeping pitifully. "Who is dead in the White House?" I demanded of one of the soldiers. "The President," was his answer. "He was killed by an assassin." Then there arose a burst of grief from the crowd which woke me from my dream.

STANTON. It *will* be *curious* to notice whether *anything* ensues of this.

[*We hear a continuous roar and rumble of artillery fire.*]

CURTAIN

ACT THREE

SCENE II

We are witnessing the surrender of GENERAL ROBERT E. LEE to GENERAL ULYSSES S. GRANT. The scene takes place in the house of a Mr. McLean, Appomattox Court House, Virginia, April 9, 1865. With GENERAL GRANT are several Generals and several staff officers; but with GENERAL LEE is only COLONEL MARSHALL. GENERAL LEE is dressed in a full uniform which is entirely new, and he wears a sword of considerable value, which was presented to him by the State of Virginia; GENERAL GRANT is in a rough traveling suit, the uniform of a private with the insignia of a Lieutenant-General, and he contrasts very strangely with a man so handsomely dressed, six feet high and of faultless form. GENERAL GRANT is sitting at a table near the center of the room. Occasionally he puffs upon the vile stub of a cigar.

GRANT. As a matter of course, I remember you perfectly in the old army times; but from the difference in our rank and years—there being about sixteen years difference in our ages—I thought it very likely that I had not attracted your attention sufficiently for you to remember me after such a long interval.

LEE. Oh, yes; I remember you very well from old army

times. But so pleasant is our conversation becoming that we are forgetting the purpose of our meeting.

[GENERAL GRANT *takes a sip of whiskey from a table glass. He concludes writing the terms of surrender.*]

GRANT. How many men and officers do you have in your army?

LEE. 25,000.

GRANT. I am anxious for peace with yourself, and the whole North entertains the same feeling. The terms upon which peace can be had are well understood. By the South laying down their arms they will hasten that most desirable event, save thousands of human lives, and hundreds of millions of property not yet destroyed.

[GRANT *hands LEE the terms of surrender.*]

LEE. [*With eyes fixed upon the terms, after putting on and adjusting his spectacles.*] Unlike the United States Army, the Confederate Army's horses are privately owned. Do I understand the United States permits my soldiers to retain their horses?

GRANT. No. But your men will need their mules and horses for spring plowing; and I will so instruct my officers.

LEE. This will have a happy effect upon my army. And we may keep all side arms and private property?

GRANT. Yes.

LEE. May I beg of the United States food for my men?

GRANT. Oh, you will find plenty of food in the trains we stopped at the Junction. General Lee, you are the most beloved man in the South; and thus with only Johnston's army in the field you could advise Jefferson Davis to command General Johnston to surrender his army to General Sherman under these similar terms which President Lincoln has here suggested.

LEE. No. I could never advise President Davis on such a course. The Confederacy is a large nation; and the war is not over, for the Confederacy still has under arms more men than George Washington ever commanded during the Revolutionary War. Now with great admiration for your continued constancy and for your devotion to your United States, let us pray to Almighty God that our age of hate has not turned already into a blood feud, bringing with it all the tragedy of irreparable personal violences. With a grateful remembrance of your kindness and of your generosity to my army and to myself, I bid you farewell.

[GRANT *and* LEE *shake hands.*]

GRANT. Good day, General Lee. [*Exeunt* GENERAL LEE *and* COLONEL MARSHALL.] Men, it looks as if the war will end in a few days; but there is something I dread more than a continued conflict. All know there is a coterie of Southern conspirators—unprincipled and unreasonable—located in our cities, who will attempt to assassinate the government and the generals of the United States Army now that Richmond lies in ashes

and crushed is the crown of the South. Therefore, now that our work is done, let each one look to and beware of his own personal safety that he may avoid unexpected death in unexpected places.

CURTAIN

ACT THREE

SCENE III

On Good Friday night, April 14, 1865, we come into Ford's Theatre with its Aladdin-lamp gaudiness. The massive stage curtain cuts off "Our American Cousin" stage set from the apron which supports two stage boxes right and two stage boxes left. Each pair of the stage boxes has a pair of tall procenium boxes above. The procenium boxes at the left have been thrown together to accommodate President Lincoln's party. The Presidential box is profusely decorated with silk American flags. The treasury regimental flag of blue with white stars drapes itself along the banisters of the box. A lithograph of George Washington rests at the center of the banisters where the dividing column cuts the box into the two original procenium boxes. Fluted double columns, with the elaboration of a Greek temple, adorn both sides of the procenium boxes. Everybody in the whole theatre is in that holiday mood of gaiety characteristic at the fall of the curtain on an act of good comedy. The orchestra plays "between curtain" music. Distinguished people are in the stage and procenium boxes.

A LADY. This is the silliest stuff that ever I heard.

A GENTLEMAN. Of course. All Americans in England are silly. They have to be: otherwise they would be Englishmen back home.

A LADY. But English Lords, on the stage in America are just as silly in their own way, don't you think?

A GENTLEMAN. Oh, yes. This Tom Taylor was a pretty foxy chap to have dashed off "Our American Cousin." Some of these week-ends I'm going to stay home and do something like it, myself.

A GIRL. I simply adore Asa Trenchard. The "rustic angel" type always gets under my skin.

A YOUNG MAN. Well, then, hereafter, I shall, at least, swagger like a "rustic angel." But, believe me, I could go in a big way for Laura Keene—she's a "celestial angel."

A GIRL. Don't be absurd; Laura Keene's old enough to be your mother: fifty at least.

ANOTHER LADY. It's getting late. Isn't the President ever coming?

A GENTLEMAN. This is Good Friday, you know, and Mr. Lincoln is a religious man.

ANOTHER GENTLEMAN. Oh, President Lincoln is bound to come, for he is so advertised throughout the nation with General Grant.

JOHN R. FORD. [*Announcing.*] His Excellency, the President! His Excellency, the President!

[*A murmur runs through the audience.*]

[*The orchestra shifts to "Battle Hymn of the Republic."*]

[*The Presidential party, consisting of MR. LINCOLN, MRS. LINCOLN, MAJOR RATHBONE, and MISS HARRIS, proceeds to the President's box.*]

THE PEOPLE. How wonderful he looks. In all his glory. The war has worn him. Who's the young couple with them? He looks tired. General Grant was advertised to make up his party. I wonder why Grant and Stanton are not here! Oh, the majesty of this event! Etc.

[*The Presidential party comes into the box and is seated. LINCOLN takes the rocking chair adjacent to the audience but facing the stage.*]

[*The orchestra shifts to "Hail to the Chief."*]

THE PEOPLE. Speech! Speech! Abraham Lincoln! Mr. President, a speech! Abe Lincoln, Liberator! Speech! Father Abraham! Speech! Mr. President! Liberator! Speech! Speech! President Lincoln, speak to us! Speak to us! Speak to us! Speech! Speech! Etc.

LINCOLN. [*He arises. The orchestra ceases. He smiles, then he deliberates.*] My friends, we have just finished a great war. God bless your loyalty to the United States. At what point shall we expect the approach of danger? By what means shall we fortify against it? Shall we expect some trans-Atlantic military giant to step the ocean and crush us at a blow? Never! All the armies of Europe, Asia and Africa combined with all the treasure of the earth in their military chest, with a

Bonapart for a commander, could not by force take a drink from the Ohio or make a track in the Blue Ridge in a trial of a thousand years. [*Cheers.*] At what point, then, is the approach of danger to be expected? I answer, if it ever reaches us, it must spring up amongst us; it cannot come from abroad. [*Cheers.*] If destruction be our lot, we must ourselves be its author and finisher. As a nation of free men we must live through all time or die by suicide. [*Cheers.*] I hope I am not over wary; but if I am not, there is even now something of evil omen amongst us. I mean the increasing disregard for law which pervades the country—the growing disposition to substitute the wild and furious passions in lieu of the sober judgment of courts; and the worse than savage mobs for the executive ministers of justice.

The answer is simple. Let every American; every lover of liberty, every well-wisher of his posterity, swear by the blood of the revolution never to violate in the least particular the laws of the country, and never to tolerate their violation by others. Let reverence for the laws be breathed by every American mother to the lisping babe that prattles on her lap; let it be taught in the schools, in seminaries and in colleges; let it be written in primers, in spelling books and in almanacs; let it be preached from the pulpits, proclaimed in legislative halls and enforced in courts of justice. And, in short, let it become the political religion of the nation—[*Cheers.*] And let the old and the young, the rich and the poor, the grave and the gay of all sexes and tongues and colors and conditions, sacrifice unceasingly upon its altars. [*Cheers.*] Let us confidently hope that this na-

tion, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom 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; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations. [*Cheers.*] I have always thought "Dixie" one of the best tunes I ever heard. [*The orchestra shifts its music sheets.*] I insisted yesterday we had fairly captured it. I presented the question to the Attorney-General and he gave his opinion that it was our lawful prize. I have not heard the old tune for four years. Now let the orchestra play "Dixie." [*Cheers.*]

[*The orchestra plays "Dixie." Near the closing bars of it, we have a slowly rising curtain on "Our American Cousin." With ASA TRENCHARD, MRS. MOUNTCHESSINGTON, and AUGUSTA MOUNTCHESSINGTON on stage.*]

ASA. Be you an old woman of the world?

MRS. MOUNTCHESSINGTON. Yes, sir.

AUGUSTA MOUNTCHESSINGTON. Oh, yes.

ASA. Well, I don't doubt it in the least. [*Aside.*] This gal and the old woman are trying to get me on a string. [*Aloud.*] Wal, then, if a rough spun feller like me was to come forward as a suitor for your daughter's hand, you wouldn't treat me as some folks do, when they find out I wasn't heir to the fortune.

MRS. MOUNTCHESSINGTON. Not heir to the fortune, Mr. Trenchard?

ASA. Oh, no.

AUGUSTA. What, no fortune?

ASA. Nary a red. It all comes to their barking up the wrong tree about the old man's property.

MRS. MOUNTCHESSINGTON. Which he left to you?

ASA. Oh, no.

AUGUSTA. Not to you?

ASA. No, which he meant to leave to me, but he thought better on it, and left it to his granddaughter, Miss Mary Meredith.

MRS. MOUNTCHESSINGTON. Miss Mary Meredith! Oh, I'm delighted.

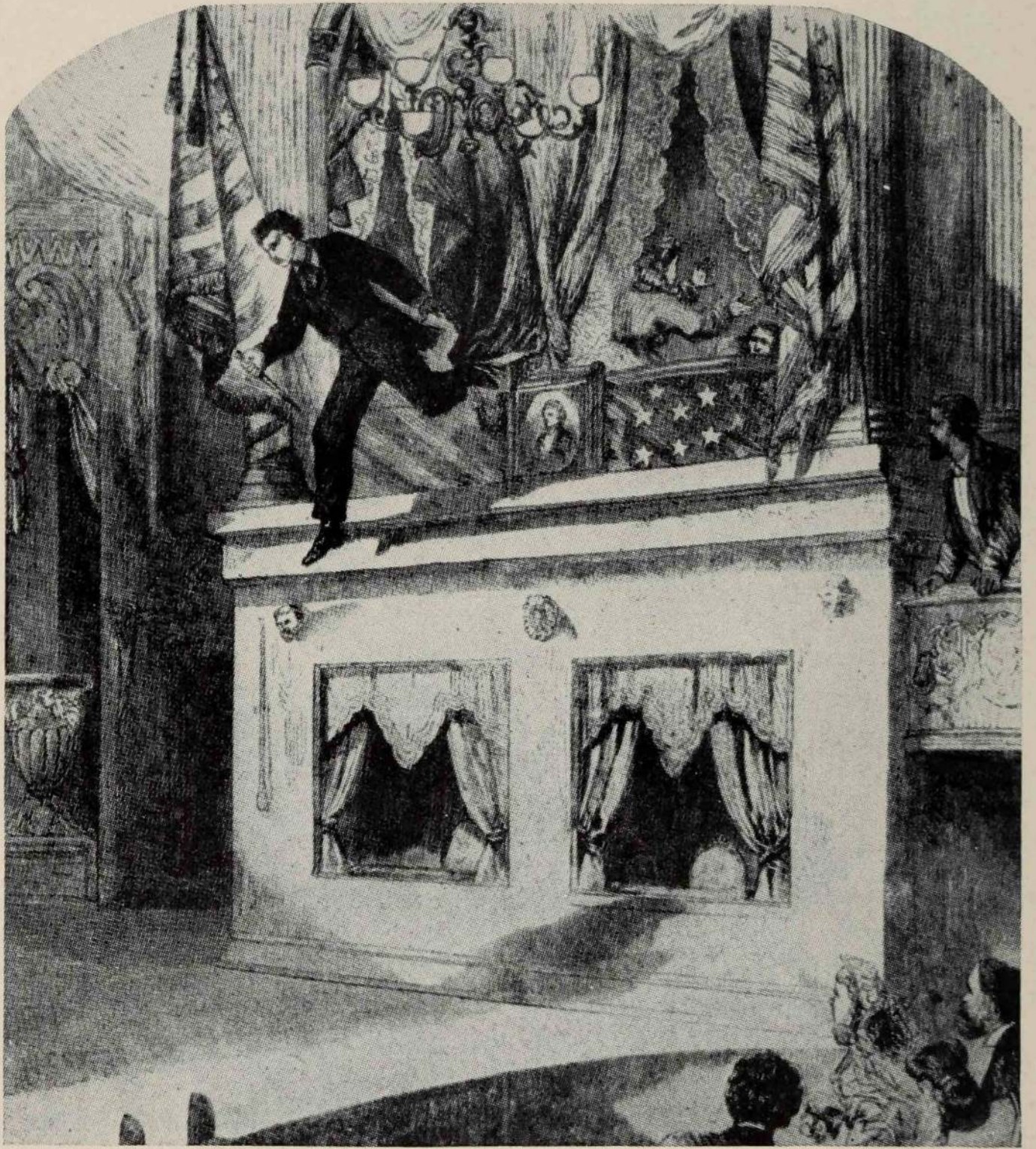
AUGUSTA. Delighted?

ASA. Yes, you both look tickled to death. Now, some gals, and mothers would go away from a fellow when they found out that, but you don't valley fortune, do you, Miss Gusty?

MRS. MOUNTCHESSINGTON. [*Aside, across to AUGUSTA.*] My love, you had better go.

ASA. You crave affection, do you? Now, I've no fortune, but I'm biling over with affections, which I'm ready to pour out all over you like apple sass over roast pork.

MRS. MOUNTCHESSINGTON. Mr. Trenchard, you will



Photograph by Keystone View Co.

BOOTH'S LEAP AFTER THE ASSASSINATION

please recollect you are addressing my daughter, and in my presence.

ASA. Yes, I'm offering her my heart and hand just as she wants them, with nothing in 'em.

MRS. MOUNTCHESSINGTON. Augusta, dear, to your room.

AUGUSTA. Yes, ma, the nasty beast. [AUGUSTA goes out at the right.]

MRS. MOUNTCHESSINGTON. I am aware, Mr. Trenchard, you are not used to the manners of good society, and that, alone, will excuse the impertinence of which you have been guilty.

ASA. Don't know the manners of good society, eh? Wal, I guess [*A young man—JOHN WILKES BOOTH, handsome brunette, dressed in black frocktails, a popular actor of one of the local stock companies of Ford's, enters the Presidential box, and locks the door behind him.*] I know enough to turn you inside out, old gal—you sockdologizing old man-trap. [BOOTH, while LINCOLN laughingly looks down upon the mirthful audience, fires a bullet crashing into LINCOLN'S brain. MAJOR RATHBONE of the Presidential party grapples with BOOTH, and is slashed by BOOTH with a broad-bladed dagger. BOOTH shouts, "Sic semper tyrannis," as he places a hand on the banisters of the box, and leaps to the stage some twelve feet below as LINCOLN, dropping his head upon his breast, sinks into unconsciousness. As BOOTH leaps, the riding spur of his left boot catches in one of the American flags, as if by Providence, di-

verts the angle of his leap, and sends him crashing upon the stage. He gets up, brandishes his dagger as he limps to the center of the stage where he shouts, "The South is avenged! Thus be it ever to tyrants!" The audience thinks BOOTH'S act is a part of the play, but the actors have scampered like mice before him. MRS. LINCOLN shouts, "Stop that man! Stop that man! Oh, Abraham! Abraham, oh! O! he has murdered my husband!" The awfulness of the situation dawns. There are shouts, confusions, disorders, and men pursuing the assassin.]

CURTAIN

EPILOGUE

ANN RUTHERFORD. They buried Lincoln beneath a
coffin lid

Within a marble tomb—to hush the tears—
That thirty million people might forget
This prince of men, this first American.
But such a giant figure no tomb could hold
Though he be Greek or Hebrew or Englishman;
Nor could we bury Lincoln although we closed
Grand Canyon in upon his marble tomb.



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