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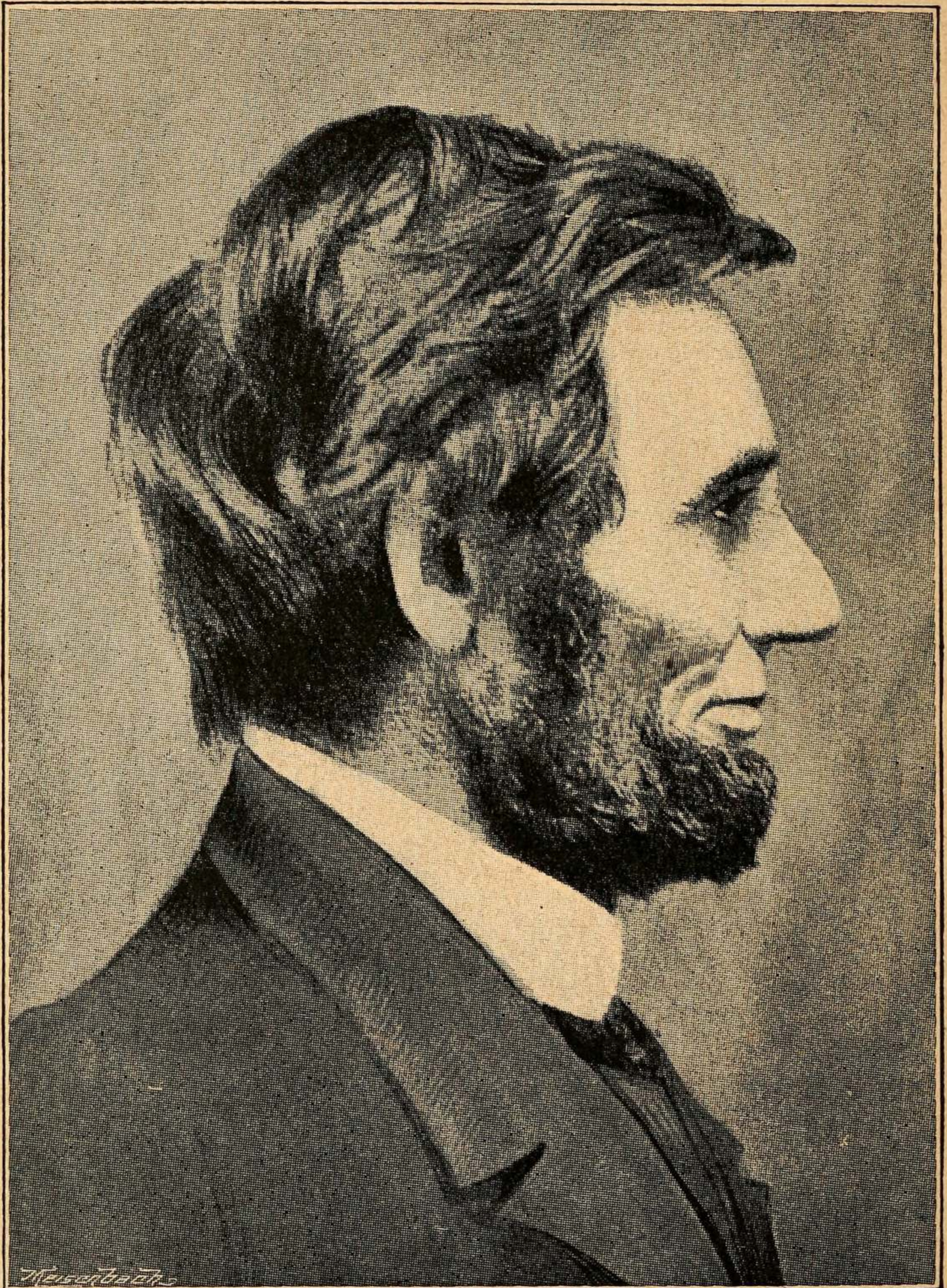

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

Born 12*th Feb.* 1809. *Died* 15*th April* 1865.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Plough-Boy, Statesman, Patriot

BY

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"THE STORY OF GARFIELD"

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ABRAHAM LINCOLN

CHAPTER I.

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

Three Great Names—The Discoverer, the Founder, and the Saviour of America—The Declaration of Independence—Condition of Society—Kentucky—Frontiersmen—Daniel Boone—Adventures in the Forests—Boone's Fame and Exploits—The First Abraham Lincoln—A Home in the West—Shot by an Indian—The Marriage of Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks.

THE names of three men—Christopher Columbus, George Washington, and Abraham Lincoln—stand apart in the history of America. The first of the three great men was an Italian, who discovered the New World. The second was an Englishman, who founded the United States. And the third was an American, who saved the Union and gave freedom to the slave.

The American people honour the name of the

man who first dared to cross the waste of waters and plant the banner of civilisation on Western shores. They are proud of their first President, whom they call "The Father of his country." But when they speak of "The Saviour of the nation" and the liberator of the slave, their hearts glow with patriotic love, and they bow their heads before the first American who reached the lonely height of immortal fame.

In 1776, little more than a hundred years ago, the American colonists issued "The Declaration of Independence," which formally severed the land of their adoption from the mother country. But the great struggle, between men of the same race, continued until 1781, when the surrender of the British army at Yorktown put an end to the conflict. In the following year the independence of the United States was recognised, and the thirteen colonies became thirteen States.

In 1789, George Washington, to whose military skill, patience, wisdom, and unselfish patriotism the new nation owed so much, was elected the first President of the infant Republic. Large in area it was even then, but small in population. When the first census was taken in 1790, the whole country contained only four million inhabitants, of whom about half a million were negro slaves.

In those early days of American history the people clung to the sea, which was almost their only highway of commerce. Railways had not then been invented, and good roads did not exist, therefore they could only carry on their business by water. Inland the population was scanty, and there were no towns of any size. The people dwelt in rude cabins, and there was an absence of many of the conveniences of civilised life.

The settlements ended at the Alleghany Mountains, and the wilderness began. All the wide region west of these mountains was overrun by hostile savages and wild beasts, except the little pioneer settlements in Kentucky and Tennessee, in which are laid the opening scenes in our story. The western boundary of the United States was not, as now, the Pacific Ocean, but the great Mississippi river, which then flowed through unbroken forests and virgin prairies on its way to the Gulf of Mexico.

Most of the inhabitants were farmers, who produced all the food and clothing their families required. Wool or flax was made by hand into homespun cloth, and rough shoes were worn in winter. Children, and in many cases their parents also, went barefoot in summer. The farming was, to a large extent, of the rudest description. Ploughs and other implements were mostly made

on the farms. Waggons were used by some of the well-to-do people, but the majority had to be satisfied with pack-horses in summer and rough sledges in winter, to carry themselves or their goods from place to place. Where access could be had to a navigable river, boats were employed.

Backwoodsmen lived chiefly by hunting and fishing, trapping animals, poling boats, driving pack-horses, and trading with the Indians. These men dressed in loose hunting-shirts of deerskin or homespun, a fur cap, moccasins and buckskin leggings. They had few wants, which were easily satisfied, and they were prepared to undergo considerable hardships rather than give up the freedom they so much enjoyed.

Shortly after peace had been declared with Great Britain, a cruel and deadly war broke out between the white men and the Indian tribes on the borders of the new country. The territory now known as the State of Kentucky, was then called by the same name, though it was not a State. The Indians gave it this name because it was the scene of fierce and sanguinary encounters between hostile tribes. "Kentucky" signifies "Dark and Bloody Ground." And this evil reputation it continued to bear, for during seven years more than fifteen hundred settlers were killed by Indians, and many more

were carried away to die by torture or to languish in captivity.

In the gradual spread of settlements from the sea, back towards the mountains, there had risen quite a new race of men, the like of whom the world had hardly ever known. These were the frontiersmen, who kept moving west in advance of the settlements—men who loved solitude, and were fearless in the presence of every danger. They carried their lives in their hands, and died without a murmur if accident, or sickness, or savage foes dealt them a mortal blow.

Trained from their youth to get their food and clothing and shelter in the most desolate wilderness, with no other tools than a trusty rifle and a sharp knife, and no supplies but what they carried in powder-horns and bullet-bags, no power on earth could prevent them from following their impulse, and pushing their way across the mountains into the western valleys, where they found game in abundance.

One of the most famous of these frontiersmen was named Daniel Boone, whose connection with the Lincoln family changed the whole current of their lives, and, it may be, indirectly gave to America one of its greatest Presidents. For beyond question the early life of Abraham Lincoln was spent in the best school in the world for making

men, and especially such men as the American nation needed in the time of difficulty and danger. A brief reference to the experiences of this mighty hunter will be of service to us, in picturing to ourselves the state of the country one hundred years ago.

In 1769, while the American colonies were still under British rule, Daniel Boone, with his brother and several friends, made his way into what is now Kentucky. The perils they had to face may be imagined from the fact that one of the men was killed by Indians, one was eaten by wolves, and three were lost and never heard of again. While Boone's brother went to the settlements for powder and shot, Daniel spent several months alone. During this period he had no company, not even a horse or a dog, and he was all the time without bread, salt, or sugar. For fear of lurking Indians he rarely slept two nights in the same place; and having no powder, he only saved himself from falling into the grip of a bear by killing it with his knife.

Boone was a noted athlete as well as a daring warrior. He could outrun a dog or a deer, thread his way through the pathless forests with unerring certainty in any direction, and so sure was his aim that he rarely had to fire a second shot at the same object. Yet he did not love fighting for its own

sake, and never struck a blow except in self-defence. Three times he was made prisoner by the Indians, and twice they adopted him into their tribes. It is said that no white man equalled him in his knowledge of the Indians, and his great influence over them was a mystery to both friends and foes. Boone survived all his perils, and lived to see populous States where he had explored trackless forests. He died in Missouri, at the age of eighty-three.

In the same year that Boone first went out West, Abraham Lincoln, the grandfather of the President who bore his name, married Anna Boone, a first cousin of the famous frontiersman. Two years afterwards Lincoln followed Boone into that virgin wilderness, which the dwellers in the more populous parts of the country regarded as the region of romance and fable. A steady stream of pioneers had already begun to make tracks over the mountain passes, on their way to their new homes in the green and fertile valleys of Kentucky and Tennessee.

In 1780, the year in which Lincoln emigrated from North Carolina, three hundred "large family boats" conveyed settlers up the Ohio river, and settlements were made in various parts of the new region. In their manner of life the settlers were little removed from primitive barbarism. Their clothing consisted largely of the skins of animals.

Their food was chiefly game, fish, and roughly ground corn meal. Their exchanges were made by barter. Money in any form was rarely seen. Large families lived in log huts, not equal in comfort to many of the sheds used by the farmers of to-day to house their cattle.

One of their early schoolmasters says that he was sent to lodge at a house which consisted of but one room sixteen feet square, and which was occupied by the husband, his wife, their ten children, three dogs, and two cats. The cold was so great that they often had to sleep on their shoes to keep them from freezing too stiff to be put on next morning. The children became so accustomed to exposure that they thought nothing of playing barefoot in the snow.

The terror of the settlers was not wild beasts nearly as much as Indians, who, alert and hostile, lurked around the settlements to avenge their wrongs on the hated palefaces. For days they would watch for an opportunity to shoot the men, and carry off the women and children, and all the live stock on which they could lay their hands. There was no day in which the pioneer could leave his cabin, with the certainty of not finding it in ashes when he returned, and his family lying murdered in its ruins, or carried into a captivity worse than death.

AN EARLY KENTUCKY SETTLER.

In Daniel Boone's field-book there is an entry of five hundred acres of land, bought by Abraham Lincoln, on the site of the present city of Louisville, in 1782. Here Lincoln built a log cabin near a military post, and began to clear the land and plant his first crops. In the second year he was one day working with his three sons on the edge of the forest, when a shot from among the trees stretched him dead on the ground.

Mordecai, the eldest son, rushed to the cabin for a rifle. Josiah ran off to the fort for help. Thomas, the youngest, a child of seven, was left with his dead father. Looking through a loophole, Mordecai saw an Indian in full war-paint stooping to lift his brother from the ground, and, firing at him, killed him on the spot. Thomas ran at once to the cabin, and was admitted by his mother. The rest of the Indians then appeared, but Mordecai's well-aimed shots kept them at a distance until Josiah returned with help. Then they fled, leaving one of their number dead and another wounded. The murder of his father made such a strong impression on the mind of the eldest son, that he ever afterwards had an intense hatred for Indians. Careless whether they were friends or foes, he shot down all who came within range of his deadly rifle.

The sudden death of her husband left Mrs. Lincoln with five children, three boys and two

girls, so she removed to a more settled part of the country. Here her children grew up, and Thomas learned the trade of a carpenter. He was a tall man, well built, very strong, quick with his rifle, and, like most of the men of the backwoods, an expert hunter.

In 1806, Thomas Lincoln married Nancy Hanks, a niece of his employer. She was better educated than her husband, for she could read and write—a somewhat rare accomplishment in their sphere of life and in that region. These two—Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks—were the parents of Abraham Lincoln, who became President of the United States of America, and proved himself to be the greatest man of the times in which he lived.

CHAPTER II.

EARLY YEARS IN THE BACKWOODS.

Thomas Lincoln's First Home—The Birth of Abraham Lincoln—First Lessons—Parson Elkin—A Good Mother and Faithful Wife—Stories of Childhood—A New Home in Indiana—A Half-Faced Camp—Rude Furniture—Scanty Food—The Boy Abraham Lincoln—A Precocious Lad—A Clever Woodsman—The Sparrows—The Plague—The Forest Funerals—"My Angel Mother"—The Stone Erected by a Friend.

HE home to which Thomas Lincoln took his young bride was a rude log cabin built by himself in Elizabethtown, and here their first child, a daughter, named Sarah, was born. In the following year a move was made to a small farm on the Big South Fork of Nolin Creek, which had nothing attractive about it but its cheapness. It was rocky, barren, and weedy; and as Thomas Lincoln did not take kindly to hard and methodical work, the family suffered great privations.

In this humble and poverty-stricken home Abraham Lincoln was born on the twelfth day of

February 1809. He could scarcely have begun life on a lower rung of the ladder, which he was destined to climb to the very top. Probably no man who has risen to such greatness ever entered the world under more unpromising circumstances.

Four years later, Thomas Lincoln bought another farm not far distant, and here Abraham lived until he was about seven years of age. Very little is known of this period of our hero's life. He spent much of his time playing in the woods, and with his sister learning their first lessons in reading and spelling at their mother's knee. Nor were her children her only scholars. She persuaded her husband to learn to read and write, and at length he no longer signed his name with a cross, and could slowly spell his way through the Bible.

Both father and mother were professing Christians, and they were careful to bring up their children in the fear of God. They had, however, few opportunities of attending public worship, for churches were few and far between, and sermons were luxuries in which the settlers could not often indulge. Now and again a wandering preacher passed that way, and held a service under the trees or in one of the cabins, which happened to be a little larger than the rest.

Parson Elkin, a Baptist preacher, travelled

through that region at long intervals, and his sermons made such an impression on the lad's mind, that many years afterwards he spoke of the preacher as the most wonderful man he had known when a boy. He was, however, a big lad when for the first time he had the opportunity of attending a service in a proper church.

Abraham rarely spoke of his childhood's days even to his most intimate friends, but he has left on record that his earliest recollection of his mother was of sitting at her feet with his sister, listening to the stories and legends she read or told them. She was herself passionately fond of reading, and eagerly devoured every book that came within her reach.

Badly off as the Lincolns were, they would have suffered still more if Mrs. Lincoln had not sometimes shouldered a rifle, and added the flesh of a deer or a bear to their scantly supplied larder. Then, with skilful hands, she converted the skins of the animals she killed into garments for the members of her family.

John Davis, afterwards a preacher of some note, was one of the boy's companions, and he relates how on one occasion they ran a ground hog into a crevice between two rocks, and after working vainly for two hours to get him out, Abe ran off about a quarter of a mile to a blacksmith's shop,

and returned with an iron hook fastened to the end of a pole. With this rude contrivance they hooked the animal out of its hiding-place.

Austin Gollaher, an old man of eighty, still living at Knob Creek in Kentucky, claims to have known Lincoln in his childhood, and to have saved him from drowning. The two lads were in the woods in pursuit of partridges, when, in trying to cross the creek on a log, Lincoln fell in, and Gollaher fished him out with the branch of a sycamore tree.

The thriftlessness of Thomas Lincoln caused him to again move on. He had bought two farms or tracts of land since his marriage, but when the time for payment came round, he had no money, and was obliged to give up the land. Hearing, therefore, that there were vast stretches of rich and unoccupied lands in Indiana, he resolved to cross the Ohio River, and seek his fortune farther west. For his improvements he received ten barrels of whisky and twenty dollars (£4) in cash.

At that time, and in that locality, whisky was largely used instead of money, even by persons who seldom indulged in liquor. Each barrel of whisky had a fixed value, and therefore it often passed from hand to hand in payment for goods. Each barrel was reckoned equal to about twenty dollars.

Thomas built a flat boat and launched it on a tributary of the Ohio. Then he loaded it with the whisky and some of his furniture, and pushed off alone. At the junction of the tributary with the parent stream, Lincoln's boat was caught between eddying currents and upset, and all it contained went to the bottom. By dint of considerable labour and patience, the luckless boatman succeeded in fishing up much of his property, and then he drifted with the current to the place where he intended to land. He sold the boat, and, leaving his goods with a settler, he set out on foot to find a suitable place for his new home.

Then he started to fetch his family, walking all the way, and at once made ready to transport his wife and children to Indiana. It was a long journey, but two hired horses carried all their remaining household goods. They were of little value, and consisted of bedding, clothing, and a few pots and pans. They relied on Lincoln's rifle to supply them with food on their march. Slowly and carefully they made their way through the dense forest, often having to cut a passage through the tangled thickets. When they came to a stream, they forded it, or made a raft of logs on which to cross.

On their way they picked up the goods left by

Lincoln on his first visit, and conveyed them in a waggon lent to them by the settler. Then they pushed on till they came to a grassy knoll on the bank of Little Pigeon Creek. Here, in the heart of the untrodden forest, they decided to make their home.

Assisted by his wife and children, Thomas quickly ran up a shelter — it could scarcely be called a house, for it was merely a shed of poles enclosed on three sides and open in front. It was known as a "half-faced camp," and was without floor, door, or windows. A few skins of animals were hung across the front of this rude structure, to shield the inmates from foul weather, and a fireplace of sticks and clay occupied one corner.

For a whole year the family lived in this wretched hovel, while they cleared a patch of ground for planting corn and on which to build a better dwelling. The furniture of the cabin was in keeping with it. It consisted of a few three-legged stools; a bedstead made of poles stuck between the logs in the angle of the cabin, the outside corner supported by crotched sticks driven into the ground; and a huge log which served for a table. Abraham's bed of dried leaves was in the loft, to which he climbed by a ladder of wooden pins driven into the logs.

Food was not too plentiful, even in this fertile spot, for Thomas Lincoln's mode of cultivating the land was not a success. He was indeed a skilful hunter, but he did not trouble himself to make use of it, except when forced by hunger. Yet he could almost at any time have brought down a deer at the cost of an hour or two's stalking.

Abraham was now eight years old, and is described as "a tall, ungainly, fast-growing, long-legged lad." He wore an undershirt of homespun, deerskin leggings or breeches, and a hunter's shirt of the same material. When he wore shoes, they were made of cowhide or moccasins, like those worn by Indians. Stockings he never wore until he was a young man. On his head was a coon-skin cap with the tail hanging down behind.

His life at this period was one that a healthy boy could enjoy, as long as he did not suffer from cold or hunger. He was quick-witted and somewhat precocious, and was not afraid to speak out, though sometimes his ready tongue brought summary punishment. One day the only dish provided for the family meal consisted of roasted potatoes. His father always asked a blessing before a meal, and did so on this occasion; on which Abraham looking from the potatoes to his

father's face, said, "Dad, I call these mighty poor blessings."

No one could call the lad impudent, and he was always an obedient son, yet he was often uncomfortably inquisitive. When strangers rode past his father's cabin, he rarely allowed them to go on their way without asking a few questions. His father did not like this apparent rudeness, and a heavy blow showed his displeasure. When thus punished, Abraham never cried out, but dropped a silent tear, to relieve his sensitive feelings.

While but a child, according to our notions, Abraham learned to use the axe, and soon showed great dexterity in handling this tool. And he could render his father efficient help in splitting rails and hewing logs for building and fencing. His knowledge of woodcraft increased with his years. He knew every tree and bush by its leaves and bark, and was well acquainted with the furred and feathered tribes which inhabited the forest round his home.

He was always fond of roaming through the wild woods and indulging in day-dreams, which, to a lad so imaginative and fanciful, were almost as real as the stern facts of everyday life. In the solitude of the forest he acquired habits of reflection, which bore fruit in after years, when he was better

able to express his thoughts in words. Never to his latest day did Abraham lose the impressions his mind received from those days spent in the wilderness of Indiana.

The Lincolns had not been long in their new home when they were joined by the Sparrows. Thomas and Betsy Sparrow,—Mrs. Lincoln's aunt,—with a nephew named Dennis Hanks, shared their half-faced camp for more than a year, and provided Abraham with a playmate, which the lonely lad greatly appreciated.

Then a plague fell on the little household—a strange disease called milk fever or milk sickness. It was thought to have been caused by the animals eating some kind of poisonous herbs, and attacked cattle as well as human beings. Even when doctors could be obtained, they were of little use, because they did not understand this dreadful disease, which from time to time ravaged the settlements.

In the autumn of 1818, Mr. and Mrs. Sparrow were taken ill, then Mrs. Lincoln was smitten with the same disorder. All three died, and Thomas Lincoln made rude coffins out of green lumber cut with a whip saw, and in a little clearing of the forest laid the tired pioneers to rest. No friendly mourners, but the bereaved husband and children, were present at those forest funerals, and no

religious ceremony was then performed over their graves.

Before Mrs. Lincoln died, and when she knew that the end was near, she called her children to her side to receive her last message. Placing her feeble hand on Abraham's head, she bade him be kind to his father and sister. Then she told the brother and sister to be good to one another, and she expressed a hope that they might live as she had taught them, to love and fear God.

When the grave had closed over the form of his wayworn mother, the orphan lad sat alone by the side of that fresh mound of earth. And as the shadows of evening fell on the darkening forest, he shed his first bitter tears of sorrow. What she had been to her son no one but God knew, but long afterwards, when with clearer eyes he saw how she had implanted the good seed of eternal life in his heart, and made him a Christian man, he said, as he again stood by that lonely grave in the forest, "All that I am, or hope to be, I owe to my angel mother."

"Though of lowly birth, the victim of poverty and hard usage, she takes a place in history as the mother of a son who liberated a race of men. At her side stands another mother, whose Son performed a similar service for all mankind eighteen

hundred years ago." A stone now marks the spot where she was buried. It bears the following inscription: "Nancy Hanks Lincoln, died October 5th, 1818, aged 35 years. Erected by a friend of her martyred son, 1879."

CHAPTER III.

LAYING A GOOD FOUNDATION.

Abraham Lincoln's First Letter—The Funeral Sermon in the Forest—The Second Mrs. Lincoln—A Wise Christian Woman—Mother and Son—School—A Practical Youth—Room at the Top—A Small Library—His First Book—The Schoolboy Poet—A Man of One Book—How Lincoln Succeeded.

ABRAHAM sorrowed deeply for his dead mother, and, strange to say, for one so young, was grieved to think that no funeral sermon had been preached over her grave. He talked over the matter with his father, and then sat down to write his first letter. It was to Parson Elkin, the Kentucky Baptist preacher, who had stayed in their cabin in Kentucky. In the letter the bereaved lad told the kindly minister the sad story of their loss, and asked the good man to come and preach a sermon over the faithful mother's grave. It was indeed a great favour to ask, for it meant a special journey through the wilderness, of more than one

hundred miles. But the man, who spent his energies in breaking the bread of life to the scattered children of the Father's family, could not refuse such a request. He saw that the letter had been prompted by filial love, trust in God, and confidence in His servant to comfort them in their affliction. A letter in reply informed them of the minister's intended visit, and the sorrowing lad was content to wait till he could come.

The trees of the forest had donned their brightest garments, and the grass was green on his mother's grave, when Abraham welcomed the devoted man of God to their humble home. Far and near the invitations went forth from cabin to cabin, and on a bright Sabbath morning in the early summer, more than two hundred settlers and their families gathered round Mrs. Lincoln's grave. Men, women, and children had come from all the district round, on horseback, in waggons, and many on foot, to be present on the solemn occasion.

When all was ready, the preacher led the way from the Lincoln cabin, followed by the father and his two children, and Dennis Hanks. The mourners took their places on one side of the grave, and the minister on the other. Then the memorial service began, and as the preacher's voice was heard in supplication, asking God to bless and comfort the widowed man and his motherless children, tears

shone in the eyes of stern men and coursed down sun-browned cheeks, while a softer, holier feeling crept into many hearts which for a long time had been strangers to such influences. To Abraham, the preacher's words came as the fitting end of a lovely and gentle life. Now he was ready to take up his burden and go bravely along, to struggle, and if need be to suffer, but never to swerve from the path of duty. Great events and stirring incidents, affecting the well-being of the nation, might claim his attention and for a time shut out all memories of the past, but ever and anon there would rise before him the solemn scene in the forest clearing, and the preacher's message of love came like the voice of his heavenly Father—and spoke words of peace.

One winter in that wretched home, with only a girl of twelve to keep house, and two younger children to care for, convinced Thomas Lincoln that it would be necessary for him to enter into a second marriage. So in December, a year after his wife's death, he went to Elizabethtown, and asked a widow, named Mrs. Johnston, to be his wife. They had known each other from childhood, and therefore he asked her to allow the ceremony to take place at once. She agreed, and they were married on the following day.

The second Mrs. Lincoln had a goodly store

of household goods, which required a four-horse waggon to transport them to her husband's home. Where their father had gone the children did not know, and therefore, when the waggon appeared early one December morning, and they were introduced to their new mother and two new sisters and a brother, they were lost in wonder and surprise. But when they saw the household stores unpacked, they opened wide their eyes in amazement.

Their new mother seemed to have come from fairyland, for she had brought real chairs and tables, a sideboard with drawers that would push out and in, real china crockery to replace their rude tins, knives and forks, good bedding, and a wonderful assortment of kitchen utensils.

And this thrifty, smiling, motherly, God-fearing woman had come to dwell in the half-faced camp of thriftless Thomas Lincoln? How, or by what magic, such a man had persuaded such a woman to throw in her lot with him we cannot tell. But Thomas always had been of a genial disposition, and his pleading with her, to come and save his motherless children from neglect and utter destitution, had no doubt found a responsive chord in her sympathetic heart.

Was she disappointed when she saw the miserable shelter to which she had been brought? Did

the floorless, doorless, windowless cabin answer the description which her husband had given her of his home in Indiana ?

We do not know, though we can make a shrewd guess. But not from any word or sign of disappointment made by the good woman herself. She had come to stay. That was enough for her, and with true womanly courage she cheerfully entered upon her duties. She was prepared to do her part, and she took care to bring the right kind of influence to bear on her husband. At once she clothed her step-children warmly and decently, and gave them a place in her heart alongside her own children.

From that December day when she stepped down from the waggon which had brought her from Kentucky, till that sad day when Abraham Lincoln fell stricken down by an assassin's bullet, the second Mrs. Lincoln was before God and man a true mother to him, and he was, in all respects but birth, her own son.

Of her he said, "She was a noble woman, affectionate, good, and kind, rather above the average woman, as I remember women in those days." While her tribute to his memory is one that any mother would be proud to utter: "I can say what not one mother in ten thousand can of a boy,—Abe never gave me a cross look, and

never refused, in fact or appearance, to do anything I requested him; nor did I ever give him a cross word in all my life. He was dutiful to me always. Abe was the best boy I ever saw, or ever expect to see."

Thomas Lincoln would have been less than a man, if he had not risen to the occasion, and made his home fit to receive the furniture and fittings his new wife had brought him. And in a short time the log cabin had a substantial floor, and windows, and a door. The cracks between the logs in the wooden walls were plastered up, and the dwelling made snug and comfortable. Deerskin mats were laid on the floor, and feather beds took the place of dried leaves, which so long had done duty.

Abraham had attended school for a few weeks before the family left Kentucky, and Mrs. Lincoln was anxious to give all the children every opportunity she could to obtain an education. On the matter of schools, Abraham afterwards said: "It was a wild region, with many bears and other wild animals still in the woods. There were some schools so called, but no qualification was ever required of a teacher beyond 'readin', writin', and cypherin',' to the rule of three. If a straggler supposed to understand Latin happened to sojourn in the neighbourhood, he was looked upon as a

wizard. There was absolutely nothing to excite ambition for education."

From first to last Abraham was practical or nothing. He regarded everything as a means to an end. He thirsted for knowledge, because he felt that, without the information contained in books, he would have little chance of improving his condition in life, and that he was determined to do at all costs. He learned to read, that he might find out how other men had made their way in the world. He learned to write, that he might be useful in writing letters for his father. And he learned arithmetic, that he might be able to find employment of a better kind than labouring on a farm.

Yet, eager as he was to learn, the whole of his attendances at school, both in Kentucky and Indiana, did not amount to a whole year. The teachers only stayed for a few months at a time, usually in winter, when little work was required on the land. During the latter part of this time the lad walked nine miles a day—four and a half each way—to share in the instruction given in a neighbour's cabin. A companion of that period says, " He was always at school early and attended to his studies. He was always at the head of his class, and passed us rapidly in his studies

" At the head of his class." Yes, Abraham

Lincoln discovered the truth of the saying, "There is plenty of room at the top," while he was yet a lad. Others might be satisfied with a place in the crowd, and be content to be hustled and jostled along with the human stream which is ever found struggling through the valleys, seeking outlets which require no effort to pass through. But Lincoln stepped out of the valley, and at once began to climb the mountain side. The height above him might be difficult to reach, but that did not daunt him. He had strength to climb, and he saw there was plenty of room at the top.

In one respect Lincoln regarded himself as a very lucky fellow. He had a library. True, it at first consisted of only three books, but this very poverty of literature proved to be the wealth of his life. They were the Bible, *Pilgrim's Progress,* and Æsop's Fables. Having so few, he read them again and again, until he could repeat from memory whole chapters of the Bible; the most striking passages of Bunyan, and every fable in Æsop.

At length his heart was gladdened by a copy of *Robinson Crusoe,* followed by a *History of the United States,* and, best of all, the *Life of Washington.* About this last-named book a story is told which shows the sterling character of the young reader. This work had been borrowed from a neighbour named Josiah Crawford, who was popularly known as

"Old Blue Nose," because he was close-fisted. After reading it, Abraham placed the book on a shelf, and during a driving storm of wind and rain, the wet came through and completely ruined its appearance.

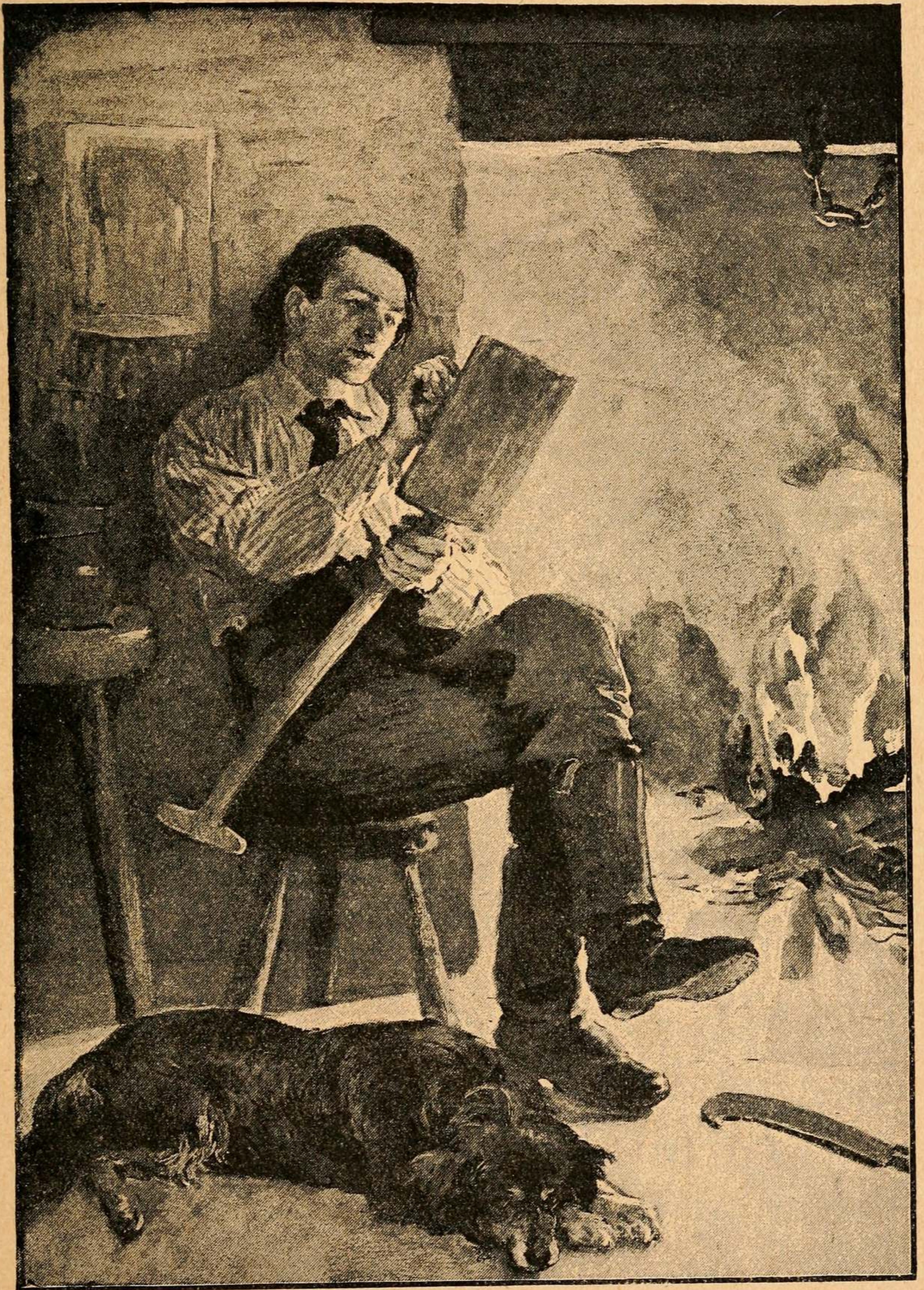
The poor lad was in great distress when he saw it, not only because he knew the value of books from their rarity, but he knew only too well the character of the man from whom he had borrowed it. He was not, however, the lad to shirk a duty because it was unpleasant. So he took the damaged book to its owner, and at once offered to make good the loss in any way that was within his power.

The bargain he at length made was to do three days' work at twenty-five cents a day—equal to about one shilling—by way of a settlement.

"But does that pay for the book, or only for the damage done to it?" asked the shrewd lad.

"Well," said the owner, "it is not of much account to anyone now, so if you do the three days' work, you can have the book."

This was the first volume Abraham Lincoln bought and paid for. And as his own property he made the most of it. The lessons to be learned from the life of Washington were conned over and over and laid to heart for after use. And to him the story of that life was invaluable, for he was made acquainted with his country's great struggle for independence, and the manner of man who first



WORKING SUMS ON A WOODEN SHOVEL.

occupied the chair he was one day to fill with honour to himself and profit to the people who placed him there.

Lincoln was about fourteen years of age at this time, and in a copy-book still preserved, in which he wrote down the tables of weights and measures to be committed to memory, is the following original verse :—

> Abraham Lincoln,
> His hand and pen.
> He will be good,
> But God knows when."

He is also said to have composed other bits of rhyme, which, while not exhibiting much poetic genius, show the mind of the writer. In a companion's book he wrote—

> " Good boys who to their books apply,
> Will be all great men by and by."

It has always been a matter of wonder to his friends, that with such a meagre education Lincoln was able to reach " the heights by great men trod." But they forget that the only man we are cautioned to beware of is " the man of one book." And Lincoln's scanty library made him thoroughly master of every book he had a chance of reading. And when he was not reading, he was thinking about what he had read, until men who did not under-

stand the meaning of his deep meditation and abstraction sometimes called him "lazy."

Committing everything to memory, and thinking about it, made him mentally, as well as physically, a giant. So that, by the time he was twenty-five, he had without instruction made himself a good lawyer—one who argued from a knowledge of sound principles. But we are anticipating.

By day the lad's chief delight was to lie under the shade of a tree and devour the contents of one of his beloved books. By night he would often sit on a stool in front of the open fire-place, and with a piece of charcoal work sums on the broad part of a wooden shovel. When he wished "to clean his slate," he shaved off the figures he had made with a plane. Often with a piece of chalk he covered every flat piece of wood in the house with figures, then rubbed them all out and began again.

He made notes of all he read, and never failed to repeat to his mother in his own words the information he had acquired. It was thus by slow degrees that the boy developed into the man. Without the advantage of good school discipline or college culture, he trained himself until his intense powers of concentration enabled him to thoroughly master the most minute details, and continue his re-searches until he felt that he had found the bottom

and in that subject stood on solid ground. And yet he owed little to what is called natural genius or talents, but much to sheer determination and to a dogged perseverance, which made failure almost impossible.

CHAPTER IV.

YOUNG MANHOOD.

No Bookworm—A Famous Wrestler—A Giant among Men—A Kind Heart—Kindness to Animals—A Lesson in Oratory—Speech-Making—Story-Telling—Working and Studying—A Silver Dollar—A Long Voyage—An Exciting Incident—The Blot on the Union Flag—The Liberator.

OUNG Lincoln was fond of books, and when he was engaged in reading or studying, he gave himself up body and soul to the work in hand. But he was no bookworm. As we have already seen, he could handle an axe like a man while he was yet a child. And in the athletic sports of the time he took his usual place first. He was superior to any boy of his own age.

Wrestling was a favourite trial of strength, and in this sport Abe Lincoln, as he was generally called, could throw any lad of his own weight and

years in the country side. While he was training his mind and storing it with information, he did not neglect his body, and he sought in every peaceable way to develop his muscles.

When he was nineteen years of age, his height was six feet four inches, and he stood head and shoulders above the ordinary crowd. Then, to his other physical accomplishments, he was a noted runner and walker. At either pace he had no difficulty of keeping in front of anyone he knew. It was said of him, " He could strike the hardest blow with either axe or maul, jump higher and farther than any of his fellows, and there was no one far or near that could lay him on his back." Yet he never misused his great strength, or showed a quarrelsome spirit. He always objected to strike the first blow in a fight, but he took good care to have the second, and that very often decided his antagonist to make a declaration of peace.

His unfailing good temper and continuous flow of wit made him a most agreeable companion. And everyone knew that he was always ready to perform a kindly act for another. One cold night he was on his way home with a companion, when they saw a settler, who often indulged in strong

drink, lying helpless on the ground. Lincoln's friend said that the man's condition was no business of theirs, and he ought to be left where his own folly had brought him.

Abraham had no sympathy with drinking, but he could not leave the man to freeze to death on the ground. He therefore took the unconscious settler on to his back and carried him to the nearest house. There he stayed all night, and spared no pains to restore the half-frozen man to consciousness.

His hatred against cruelty to animals in any form was intense. No matter where he saw a dumb creature being tortured, he spoke out boldly, and often made the thoughtless tormentor ashamed of his cruel conduct. His comrades often referred to his boyish outbursts of righteous indignation, when he saw them inflict pain on, or take the life of, a living thing.

The first great speech he ever heard was when he was seventeen years old. He happened to be at Boonville, when a murder trial took place. Entering the courthouse, he listened, with an admiration approaching to awe, to the address of an eminent lawyer, named Breckinridge. When the trial was over, the youth stepped forward to congratulate

and thank the advocate for his speech, and was haughtily brushed aside for his pains. On one day he learned two lessons from the same man—the one in oratory and the other in social distinction. He forgot neither. The first he at once put into practice, and the second he quietly laid aside. But when he was President of the United States, he gently reminded Breckinridge of the treatment he had received from him on that day at Boonville.

After this Lincoln went in for speech-making on every imaginable topic. Gathering around him his companions, "the boys," as they were called, he soberly addressed them on the chief questions of the day. At one time he would discourse on the school-tax, at another on the road question, and again on the bounty given for slaying wolves and bears. Then he would get up a mock trial, and, taking in turn the place of each character, speak for and against the prisoner, address the court as prisoner, as judge, and as foreman of the jury.

This marvellous story-telling power, for which he was always famous, never failed to bring him a spellbound audience. His jokes and witty sayings were always original, and often so odd that his

hearers were convulsed with laughter. He drew largely on his old friend Æsop for illustration ; and the fables he so well knew were no longer familiar when presented in the dress he wished them to wear. The boys, and men too, often stayed till midnight listening to him at the village store, which was at that time the meeting-place of the village worthies, and the centre of wit and wisdom.

Though not fond of manual labour, Lincoln never shirked his task, however uncongenial. He believed in doing as well as he knew how the job he had in hand, and at the same time fitting himself for work more to his mind. He attended to the farm as if he had no idea in life but to become a farmer. And when he had finished the work of the day, he studied as if he never intended to touch spade or plough again.

There is still in existence an exercise book which he wrote when he was seventeen years of age. It contains "Discount" worked out under various heads, such as "A Definition of Discount—Rules for its Computation — and Proofs and Various Examples." And this was the kind of work in which he often employed himself, after a long day in field or forest, when his companions were

An army of a 10000 men having plundered a
City took so much money that when it was
Shared among them each man had £27. I demand
how much money was taken in all

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Abraham Lincoln His Book

FROM A LEAF OF LINCOLN'S EXERCISE-BOOK.

resting and passing the time in various amusements.

When he was eighteen years of age, he built a boat, and, loading it with produce from the garden, paddled down stream to dispose of his wares at the nearest trading post. It was on this occasion that he was asked by two men to take them in his boat to a steamer which was passing. He at once complied with their request, and to his astonishment received a dollar—four shillings and twopence.

This handsome payment, for what he regarded as so small a service, filled him with surprise. He could scarcely believe his eyes. And yet, the two silver coins—half dollars—were a proof that he was not dreaming. He afterwards said that this was the most important incident in his life. "I could scarcely believe," were his words, "that I, a poor boy, had earned a dollar in less than a day. The world seemed wider and fairer before me. I was a more hopeful and confident being from that time."

A year later, when Lincoln was nineteen years old, Mr. Gentry, the owner of a neighbouring store, asked him to accompany his son in charge of a boat-load of produce to New Orleans. For this service

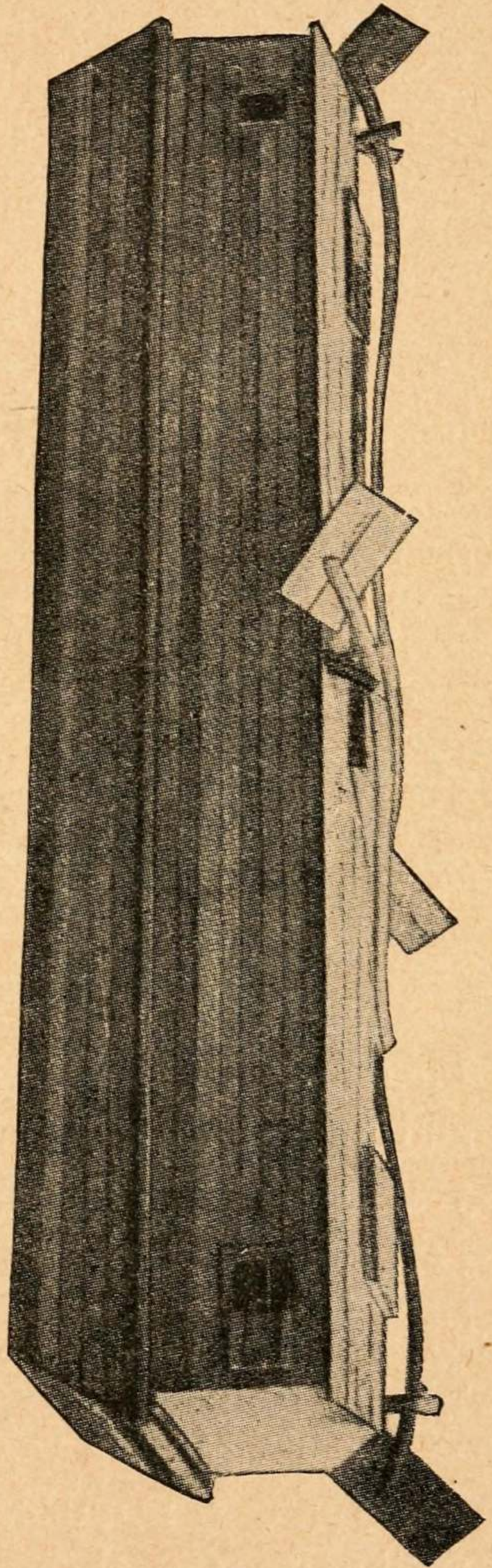
Lincoln was to receive eight dollars a month and board. Though he was glad to earn the money, he was delighted to have such an opportunity of seeing the world. And so well did the young men attend to their duties, that they made the voyage of eighteen hundred miles without a mishap, and did their business to the satisfaction of their employer.

They had, however, one exciting incident to relate. One night they had tied their boat to the shore, and were sound asleep, when they heard the noise of someone scrambling on board. A party of negroes, intent on plunder, appeared, but when Abraham had knocked four of them overboard with a handspike, the rest hastily departed. In the struggle, however, Lincoln received a scar, which he carried to his grave.

On that voyage down the great river, Lincoln had his first view of the outer world, but he also saw for the first time the blot on the Union Flag. He saw slavery in all its vileness, in all its hopeless misery and degradation. On the plantations, on the wharfs, in the country and in the towns, among some of the fairest scenes on God's earth, he saw God's creatures toiling and suffering, and cruelly whipped by brutal men, whose only claim to

enslave them was that their Maker had made them black.

The day of reckoning was yet far off, but the Great Liberator had been "down South," and seen for himself what those terrible words meant to the hopeless negro, the victim of the white man's greed. There is no record of what he thought about slavery then, but those who knew him best said that he thought most when he said the least. But a time was coming when every slaveholder in the Union would hear his words with anger and fear, and the poor slaves would thank God when they heard the name of Abraham Lincoln.



A RIVER PRODUCE BOAT.

CHAPTER V.

"HONEST ABE."

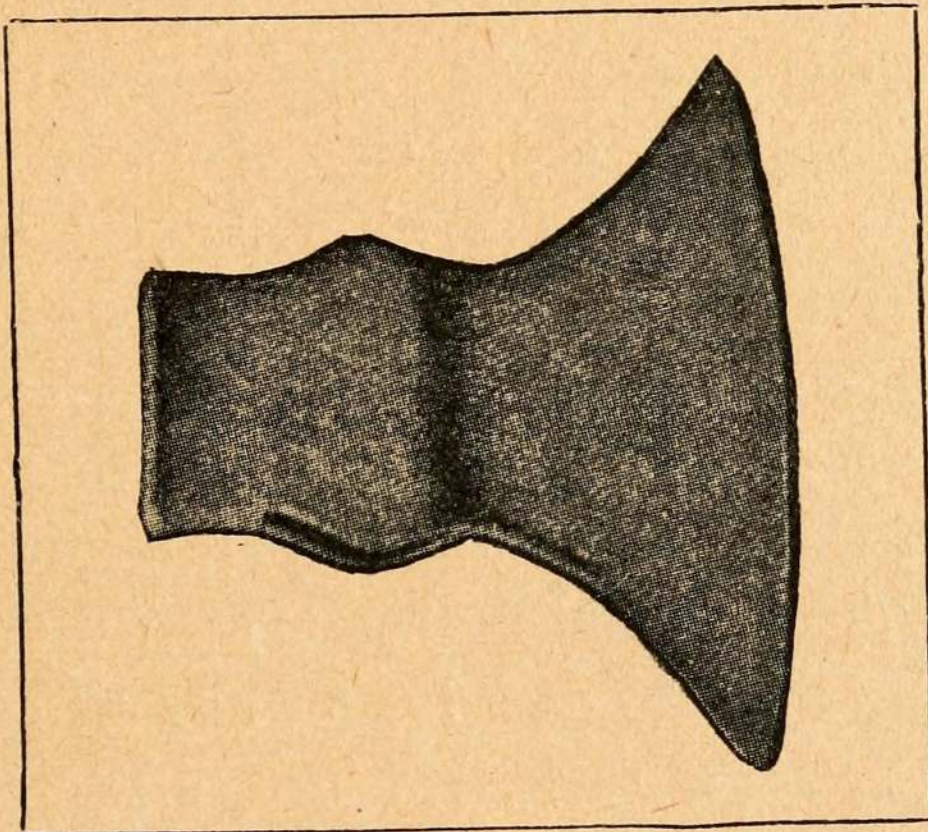
On the Move—Twenty-one—Rail-Splitting—A Severe Winter—A Trip to New Orleans—The Horrors of Slavery—Lincoln's Vow—New Salem—Lincoln's Honesty—Lincoln's Chivalry—Clary's Grove Boys—Jack Armstrong's Defeat—A New Title.

IN 1830 a waggon drawn by two yoke of oxen set out from Little Pigeon Creek settlement, laden with the household effects of Thomas Lincoln. Once more he had "pulled up stakes" and was moving westward. During the previous year Dennis Hanks had emigrated to the newly-developed State of Illinois, and his reports were of such a glowing description that the Lincolns decided to join him.

Thomas Lincoln was always ready to move, and the younger members of the family were quite willing to try their fortunes in a new country. So far Thomas had made no progress, and was little better off than when he first married, more

than twenty years before. He had been able to provide for the actual wants of his family, but that was all. The party consisted of thirteen persons, and included the husbands of Mrs. Lincoln's daughters by her first marriage.

The journey was long and tedious, and occupied two weeks. It was yet early spring, and the ground had not got rid of the winter's frost. During the



LINCOLN'S AXE.

day the roads thawed, and during the night they were again frozen over. As there were no bridges, all the streams on the route had to be forded, or crossed as best they could.

And where was Abraham? Like a dutiful son, driving the oxen, and endeavouring, with smiling face and cheery words, to keep up the spirits of the little party. He was now twenty-one years of

age, and already thinking that it was time to strike out for himself. But before he did so, he wished to see his father settled in the new home in Illinois.

As soon as the family were housed in a log cabin, built on the North Fork of the Sangamon river, Abraham, assisted by John Hanks, his own mother's cousin, ploughed fifteen acres of land, and split enough railings to enclose the clearing with a fence. As the two men swung their axes and split the rails, they little thought that those self-same rails would make one of them immortal. But a day was to come when John Hanks, with two of those rails on his shoulder, would electrify a State Convention, and kindle a great enthusiasm throughout the land, which would influence the history of their country through all time.

Then Abraham Lincoln became a daily labourer, ready and willing to do a job for any man in return for a fair day's pay. He seems to have been especially famous for making rails, and split three thousand for one employer. He still kept up his reading, and never lost an opportunity of engaging in public speaking.

The first winter in Illinois was so severe that it became a historical epoch, like the Great Fire of London. The season was spoken of during the next half-century as "The winter of the deep snow." Many persons lost their lives, frozen to

death in the snowdrifts, while others were devoured by famishing wolves. Herds of deer were so easily caught that they were slain by thousands, and provided the hungry settlers with food.

As no farm work could be done, Lincoln and Hanks were glad to engage with a trader named Denton Offutt to take a boat-load of provisions to New Orleans. The two young men were to receive half a dollar a day and their food, and a further payment on their return if the venture turned out successful. John Johnston, Lincoln's step-brother, was added to the crew, and for the second time Lincoln was on his way to the sunny South.

At New Salem the craft stuck on the edge of a mill-dam, and there seemed little prospect of their getting it off again. The people of the village stood on the bank and chaffed the shipwrecked boatmen on their unfortunate position. But Lincoln did not mean to lose his trip, and the profits on which he had already counted. Wading into the stream, he unloaded the boat, and soon rigged up a contrivance by which he hoisted the vessel over the dam. Then again loading it, the voyagers sailed away amid the cheers of the populace. Many years afterwards Lincoln patented the invention he then used, and to-day it may be seen in the Patent Office in Washington.

New Orleans was reached in safety, and the cargo disposed of to advantage. Then a visit was paid to the sights of the city. It was his second visit to the land of slavery, and this time he saw more than he had done before of the horrors of slavery. Before his eyes "negroes were chained, maltreated, whipped, and scourged." As John Hanks said, "Slavery ran the iron into him then and there."

One morning he visited a slave auction, and the revolting treatment the poor wretches received at the hands of buyers and sellers caused Lincoln to turn away with an overpowering feeling of unconquerable hate. "By God, boys, let's get away from this. If ever I get a chance to hit that thing [slavery], I'll hit it hard." Never was the name of God invoked in a better cause, and never was it used with greater reverence than when Lincoln called his Maker to witness his determination to strike a deadly blow at the inhuman traffic.

On his return from New Orleans, Lincoln was engaged by Offutt to take charge of a store at New Salem, the place where the boat had stuck on the dam. Here, as elsewhere, "the long-legged young giant," as the people called him, became a general favourite. Honest and civil to all, and ever ready to oblige, the customers soon came to appreciate his good qualities.

On one occasion, finding that he had overcharged a woman a few cents (3¼d.), he could not rest until he had put the matter right. When he closed the store for the night, though the hour was late, he walked several miles to pay the customer the amount, which lay heavy on his conscience, and of the loss of which she had no knowledge.

Another time Lincoln found that he had accidentally given short weight. In the morning the weight, still lying on the scales, told him that it was not the amount of tea for which a woman had paid him on the previous night. She had received too little for her money, so he at once weighed the difference, and before he began the day's business, he called on his customer, and to her surprise made up her purchase to the right amount.

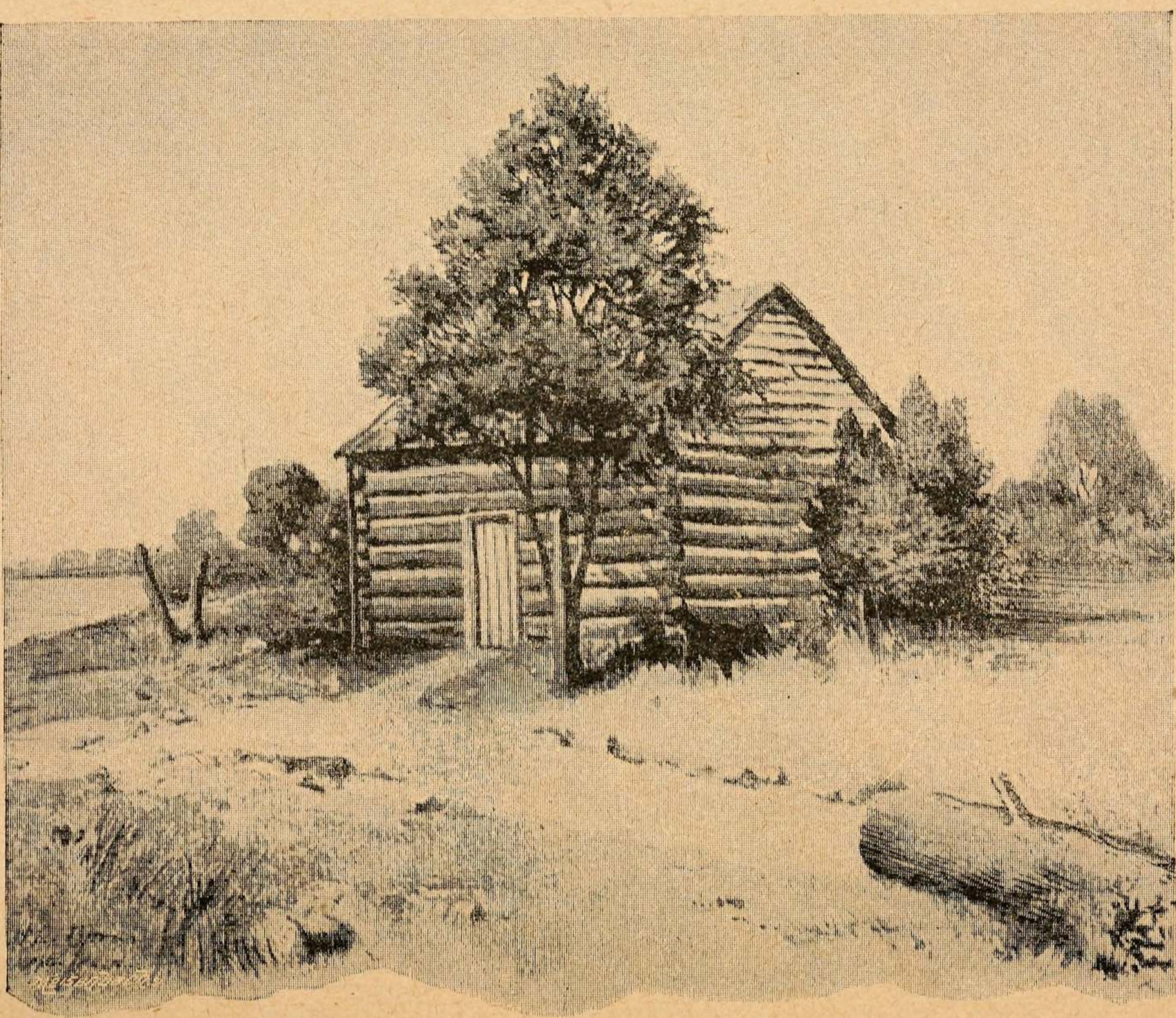
Then, again, he would not tolerate rude and insulting treatment to women or children. They had rights which he was determined to see everyone respect as far as he could. In new settlements there were always coarse and hardened characters, who rode rough-shod over weaker and gentler natures, just as in every community there are bullies; and on the outskirts of civilisation such persons are less afraid of showing themselves in their true colours than in more well-ordered circles. One of these fellows had been more than usually

offensive in the use of bad language, when Lincoln asked him to be silent. This was regarded as a declaration of war, which ended in a fight and the complete defeat of the man, who soon howled for mercy. Evidently he could swear or cry better than he could fight.

A more serious encounter was, however, necessary before Lincoln could be said to "have won his spurs," in a place where physical strength and personal courage were cardinal virtues. The man who could not fight was despised, the man who was slow to fight was tolerated, but the man who came out victor in a fight was a hero, no matter what might have been the cause of the quarrel. Ever after he was sure to be treated with respect.

Now, close to New Salem a number of young men had formed a small settlement on the edge of the forest, and were known as "Clary's Grove Boys." They had no special desire to win a name for sheer wickedness, but, determined to rule the neighbourhood in the only way they knew how, they became noted for their rude, boisterous, swaggering ways, and, above all, they were tremendous fighters.

They were friendly and good-natured; they could trench a pond, dig a bog, or build a house; they could pray or fight; they were ready to form a village or create a State. They would do almost



LINCOLN'S FIRST HOME IN ILLINOIS.

anything for sport or fun, love or necessity. If they heard of a sad case of sickness or an accident, a poor widow or a helpless orphan, they at once gave liberally, and often all they had. There was never probably a more generous company of rowdies in any settlement.

One thing, however, they would not allow, and that was the presence of a man in their midst who bore a reputation for feats of strength which he had not proved on the spot. Offutt, Lincoln's employer, was proud of his store clerk, and, being a bit of a boaster, he took pains to inform all his friends that Lincoln could outrun, whip, or put on his back any man in the county.

The Clary's Grove Boys heard Offutt's story, and though they admired the length of the stranger, they significantly remarked that "honours were to be won before they were worn at New Salem." Lincoln had no wish to test his strength and skill as a wrestler, merely to prove that he possessed both, but the "Boys" had made up their minds to see for themselves how far Offutt's words were true.

After standing out against it for a time, the newcomer agreed to meet one Jack Armstrong, the leader of the band, who was expected by his friends and supporters to obtain an easy victory. A crowd gathered round to see the sport, and the wrestling

match began. But it was soon seen that the champion of Clary's Grove was no match for the stalwart Kentuckian. Then, regardless of fair-play, Jack's friends endeavoured to trip Lincoln, and nearly succeeded in throwing him down, while the struggle between him and their champion was still undecided.

This aroused the anger of Lincoln, and with his back to the wall he lifted Armstrong off his feet, and, shaking him as a dog shakes a rat, sent him whirling on to the ground. As soon as the defeated wrestler had breath enough to speak, he exclaimed, "Boys, Abe Lincoln is the best fellow that ever broke into this settlement! He shall be one of us!"

Armstrong became one of Lincoln's best friends. And when, in later days, Lincoln was out of work and needed money, Jack came forward and gave him a helping hand. The friendship so strangely begun continued for many years, and in a memorable trial which afterwards took place, Lincoln succeeded in saving Armstrong's son from the gallows.

It was at this time that the young storekeeper gained the title "Honest Abe," which he bore through life, and which was always spoken by his friends with pride. It was simple but expressive. To men engaged in opening up a new country,

where everyone was fighting for his own hand, and where even the struggle for existence often tested a man's strength and staying powers to their utmost, such a title spoke volumes. All of them were honest when it did not pay them better to cheat; most of them would rather act squarely than not; but few of them possessed the incorruptible soul of Lincoln, of whom it could with truth be said—

"An honest man's the noblest work of God."

CHAPTER VI.

CAPTAIN LINCOLN.

The Black Hawk War—Captain Lincoln—A Brave Deed—Lincoln's Military Experience—A Candidate for the Legislature—His Address—His First Stump Speech—Defeated—Postmaster—The Balance was there—A Faithful Friend—Bolin Greene's Eulogy.

LACK HAWK, the great Indian chief, at this time broke his treaty with the Government. At the head of a band of warriors he proceeded to the old hunting-grounds of his tribe, which he had agreed to give up for ever to the Americans. The chief, when requested to recross the Mississippi, said he had come to plant corn, but it was known that he expected a general uprising of Indian tribes in his favour.

The Governor of the State then called for two thousand volunteers to assist in driving the Indians back across the river. Lincoln was one of the first to offer his services. To his no small satisfaction,

he was elected captain of his company, among which were many of the Clary's Grove Boys. In fact, these harum-scarum fellows declared that no other man but Lincoln should lead them to the war.

There was little glory or profit in the campaign, and still less fighting, and when the time for which the men had enlisted came to an end, most of them returned home. It was during the Black Hawk war that an aged Indian, half starved and alone, entered the camp. He carried a letter from General Cass, commending him for his past faithful services to the whites. Drawing the document from under his blanket, the trembling savage offered it to one of the volunteers for his persual. But the white men were at that time very angry on account of some of Black Hawk's recent atrocities, and would listen to no explanations.

"Shoot him! He's a spy!" one and another exclaimed, as they levelled their muskets at the helpless man before them. Just then the tall figure of Captain Lincoln appeared on the scene, and, stepping between the Indian and the death-dealing weapons, he cried, "Boys! you shall not do this thing! You shall not shoot this Indian!"

For a moment the men stood irresolute, but

Lincoln never flinched. He looked as calmly on the barrels of the muskets pointed towards him by angry men, as if they had only been pop-guns in the hands of children. Beyond question they would have shot the Indian, but they could not pull a trigger on the man who calmly and bravely shielded him with his own body. So, lowering their weapons, they turned sullenly away, and the Indian was saved. "I never saw Lincoln so roused before," said one of his friends, who was present at the scene.

When the volunteers were disbanded, Lincoln enlisted again as a private soldier for another term. But what war there was had practically come to an end. Lincoln afterwards referred to his military record in a humorous speech which he delivered in Congress.

"Did you know, Mr. Speaker," he said, "I am a military hero? In the days of the Black Hawk war I fought, bled, and came away. It is quite certain that I did not break my sword, for I had none to break, but I bent my musket pretty badly one occasion. I had a good many bloody struggles with the mosquitoes; and although I never fainted from loss of blood, I can truly say that I was often very hungry."

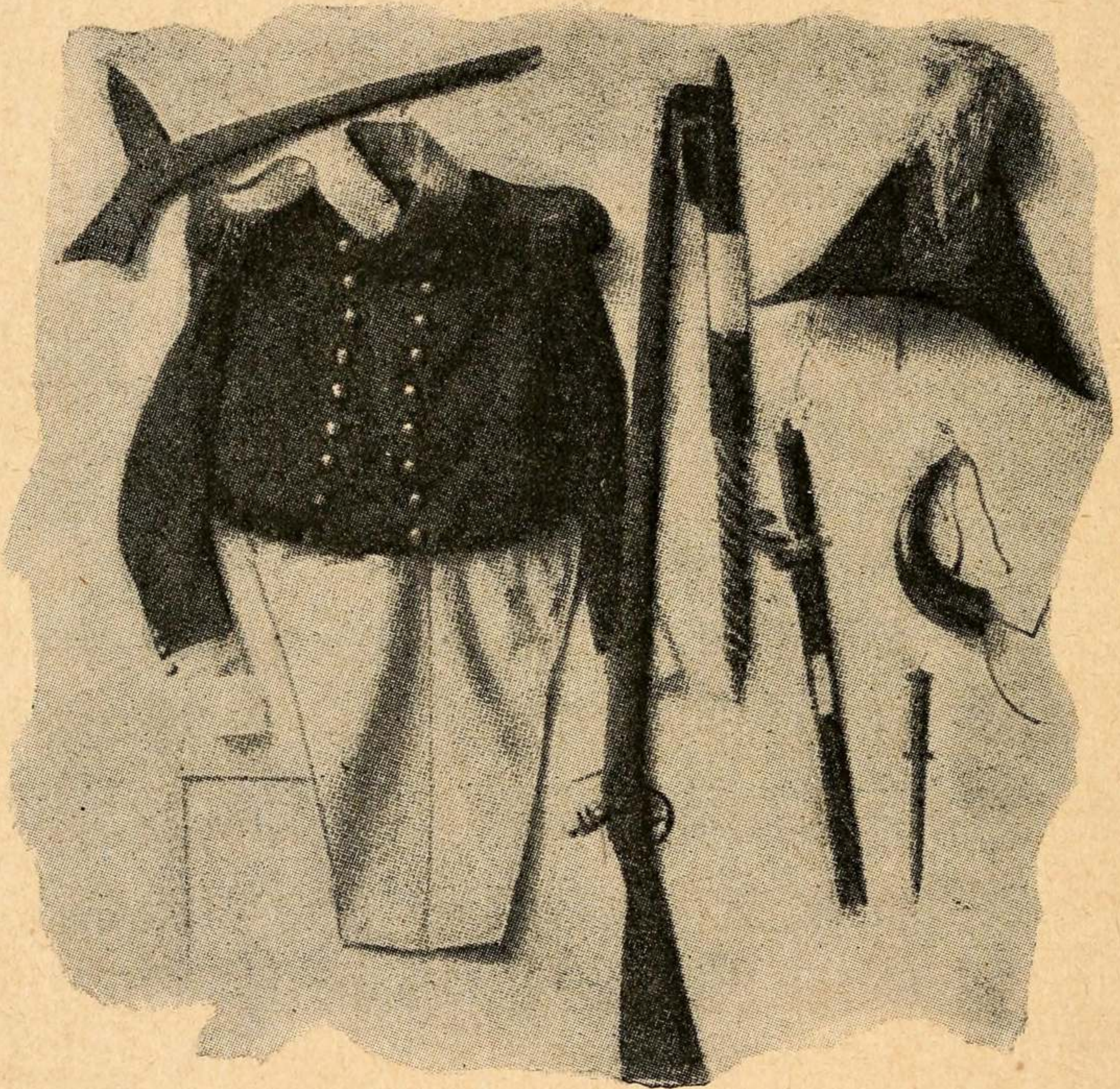
On his return to New Salem, Lincoln became a candidate for a seat in the Legislature, or State

Parliament. In an address to the electors, he dealt with the leading questions of the day, and gave special attention to the subject of public education, contending that every child, however poor, should be able "to read the Scriptures and other works of a moral and religious nature for themselves." Then he concluded with these words: "I was born and have ever remained in the most humble walks of life. I have no wealthy or popular relatives or friends to recommend me. My case is thrown exclusively upon the independent voters of the county; and if elected, they will have conferred a favour upon me for which I shall be unremitting in my labours to compensate. But if the good people in their wisdom shall see fit to keep me in the background, I have been too familiar with disappointments to be very much chagrined."

We have several descriptions of Lincoln's appearance at this time. Judge Logan says: "He was a very tall, gawky, and rough-looking fellow then; his pantaloons didn't meet his shoes by six inches. But after he began speaking, I became very interested in him."

A friend who was with him says: "He wore a mixed jeans coat, claw-hammer style, short in the sleeves and bobtail—in fact, it was so short in the tail that he could not sit on it; flax and tow-linen

pantaloons, and a straw hat. If he had a waistcoat on, I do not remember how it looked.. He wore pot-metal boots."



BLACK HAWK WAR RELICS.
(*In the collection of the Wisconsin Historical Society, U.S.A.*)

His first speech on the stump—as electioneering addresses were called—was interrupted by a free fight among the audience. Lincoln saw that one of his friends was being badly used, and at once

proceeded to his assistance. Descending from the rude platform, he seized the bully by the neck and the seat of his trousers and threw him "twelve feet away." Then he calmly resumed his place on the platform, and delivered the following speech, which did not err on the side of length or high-flown expressions. As our American cousins would say, it suited his audience "down to the ground."

"Fellow-citizens," he said, "I presume you all know who I am. I am humble Abraham Lincoln. I have been solicited by my friends to become a candidate for the Legislature. My politics are short and sweet, like the old woman's dance. I am in favour of a national bank. I am in favour of the internal improvement system and a high protective tariff. These are my sentiments and political principles. If elected, I shall be thankful; if not, it will be all the same."

The time to prepare for this contest was too short. Lincoln only had two or three days in which to make himself known throughout the county after his return from the war. Out of eight candidates he was the third on the list, and in New Salem, where he was best known, every elector voted for him, except three. He was able afterwards to say that this, his candidature, was

the only time that he ever suffered defeat at the hands of the people.

Lincoln had previously read three law-books, and now he began to study law seriously. He was very poor, and lived by helping a Mr. Ellis in his shop. Then he was engaged to assist the surveyor of the county, and in a few weeks he was efficient at the work.

In 1833 he was appointed postmaster for New Salem. This sounds very grand, but when we learn that the mail arrived only once a week, we may conclude that both the duties and salary were not very heavy. It is said that Lincoln combined in his person both officer and office, and carried the letters in his hat.

The weekly mail, however, brought newspapers, and Lincoln made it his duty to read them all before they were called for. This privilege, he used to say, was worth far more than the money he received for the work he did. He also read the news aloud to gatherings of the villagers, and often he read the letters and wrote the replies for those who could neither read nor write.

A man's true character is often indicated more by little things, in which he has to reckon more with himself than with others, than by the public acts he is called on to perform. Few men are

entirely free from a desire to please, and, through a fear of giving offence, or to win favour, adopt a course of action, which is more or less misleading to those who wish to estimate them at their real worth. It is therefore in little things and simple incidents that we see how well Lincoln deserved his homely title of "Honest Abe."

New Salem, like many another small town which sprang up suddenly and nearly as suddenly disappeared, almost ceased to exist. The work that had been going on came to an end, and the people migrated elsewhere, so there was no further need for a post-office or a postmaster. One day a Government agent called to close the business and the accounts. It was then found that a balance of seventeen dollars and a few cents was due from Lincoln to the Government. A friend who was with him at the time, and who knew how very poor he was, offered to lend him the money. "Stop a minute," said Lincoln; "let us see how it will come out."

Going to his sleeping-room, he brought an old stocking, and, emptying its contents on the table, counted the coins. There they were, just as he had received them from the various persons with whom he had done post-office business. And there was the exact amount the agent required. To

Lincoln that money had been a sacred trust; though many a time, while it was in his possession, he had scarcely known how to obtain the necessities of life, yet he would not use a single farthing of it.

Among Lincoln's dearest friends was Bolin Green, who often showed his regard in times of adversity. When, through the dissolute habits of a partner, Lincoln became responsible for money he could not pay, his horse, saddle, and bridle were seized and put up for sale. Lincoln was too cast down to be present, but Bolin Greene was there. After the sale was over, his friend appeared with the outfit, saying, "Pay for them, Abe, when you get ready; and if you never get ready, it's all the same to me."

Lincoln was a rising lawyer when Greene died, and he was asked to deliver an address over his friend's grave. Gladly did he consent to pay this last tribute to a man who had done so much for him, but when he rose to speak, his voice failed him. Tears ran down his cheeks, and, overcome by emotion, he turned away without uttering a single word, and the grateful tears of Abraham Lincoln formed the eulogy of Bolin Greene.

CHAPTER VII.

THE YOUNG LAWYER.

Elected to the Legislature—"The Long Nine"—A Protest against Slavery—Abolitionists—The New State Capital—Riding Circuit—An Honest Lawyer—A Great Debate—Standing by a Friend—A Duel which did not come off—Lincoln's Views on Personal Quarrels.

HERE was another election in 1834, and Lincoln headed the poll. He was now, at the age of twenty-five, a member of the Legislature of the State of Illinois. But before he could make a decent appearance at the State capital, he had to borrow money to purchase suitable clothing. For this purpose Coleman Smoot lent him two hundred dollars (£40), "which," says the lender, "he returned according to promise."

The electors of Sangamon County could not have chosen a better representative. In all the State there was not a man better fitted to speak for them, and who had so little to say for himself.

Many of the members sought the position to serve their own ends and to advance their own interests in other ways, but Lincoln "never had an axe to grind." He knew the people who had elected him, their wants and their manner of life, and he knew every yard of the country round about. He was brave, patient, tender, and true. What he did know he was master of, and he was never ashamed to confess his ignorance, or too proud to accept advice.

From the same county were sent nine representatives—all tall men, the tallest of whom was Lincoln. They were known as "The Long Nine," and Lincoln was usually spoken of as "The Sangamon chief." It was by the exertions of these men that the capital of the State was changed from Vandalia to Springfield.

In his second session Lincoln put on record for the first time a protest against slavery. This was a very bold thing to do, for the whole country, North as well as South, was in a state of excitement, which was being stirred up by a few resolute persons, whose consciences would no longer allow them to be even silent witnesses of the evils of slavery. These persons were known as Abolitionists, and though they did not at first number many, they were a very rapidly growing body, and they attacked slavery with fiery zeal. Their

deadly hatred of the traffic seemed to render them regardless of all consequences to themselves. They had made up their minds that slavery was not only wrong, but wicked, and that the slave should have his freedom even if it cost them their lives.

Only two men, Abraham Lincoln and Dan Stone, had the courage to oppose the extension of slavery in Illinois. Lincoln's friends were very much alarmed when they saw the course he was taking, for they thought that it would make his re-election impossible. The slave-owning and slave-defending class was both numerous and influential, and showed an intolerant and brutal spirit towards those who dared to question the righteousness of their policy or attempt to interfere with their practices.

Abolitionists bold enough to give expression to their views in any of the Slave States were mobbed and treated with great violence, and were sometimes almost murdered. They could not have been more cruelly treated if they had been guilty of attempting to take away the liberty of their fellow-creatures, instead of trying, as they actually were, to restore liberty to those from whom it had been filched.

When the representatives of Sangamon County appeared before the electors, the long-limbed group

received a hearty welcome. The people were so delighted to have Springfield for the capital that they seemed to have forgotten Lincoln's "harmless vagary," as his protest against slavery was called. At the feast held in honour of "The Long Nine" two of the toasts were, "Abraham Lincoln; he has fulfilled the expectations of his friends and disappointed the hopes of his enemies." And again "A. Lincoln, one of nature's noblemen."

In 1837 Lincoln took up his residence in Springfield, where he commenced business as a lawyer, and here he lived until he removed to the White House at Washington, as President of the United States.

One day Lincoln rode into Springfield on a borrowed horse, with the whole of his earthly possessions packed in a pair of saddle-bags. It was his intention to hire a room and furnish it for himself. This, however, he found could not be done for less than four to five pounds; but, small as this sum may seem for a man in Lincoln's position, it was more than he possessed. He had, therefore to take advantage of the offer of his friend Joshua Speed, who invited the young lawyer to share his room and his bed.

In those days the lawyers, like the preachers,

travelled from place to place, proceeding from courthouse to courthouse, and picking up whatever business they could. Each lawyer carried with him a change of raiment and the few law-books he might require, and it was in these wanderings through the country that Lincoln picked up a large number of the stories of Western life for which in later years he was so famous.

On one occasion he overtook on the road the foreman of the jury in a case just concluded, where a man had been convicted for robbing a neighbour's hen-roost. Lincoln had been largely instrumental in securing the prisoner's conviction, and the foreman complimented him on the zeal and ability he had shown. The good man had not words to express his contempt for a hen-stealer, which was shown in his remark: "When the country was young, and I was stronger than I am now, I didn't mind lifting a sheep now and again. But stealing hens!"

At another time Lincoln was riding circuit, as journeying from courthouse to courthouse was called, with other lawyers and Court officials, when he was missed from the rest of the party. On his absence being remarked, one of the men said, "When I saw him last, he had caught two young birds that the wind had blown out of their nest,

and was hunting for the nest to put them back." Shortly afterwards Lincoln appeared, and his companions began to joke him about his kindly consideration for the nestlings. To which he replied, "I could not have slept unless I had restored those little birds to their mother."

As a lawyer, Lincoln added to rather than diminished the reputation he had acquired as a trader. He was still honest Abe Lincoln. Never would he undertake a case which his conscience told him ought not to be successful. The legal quibbles and smart tricks, for which some of his companions were famous, were beneath his notice. Never would he stoop for either fee or fame to any course of action which would have caused him to lose his self-respect. He had ever before him an ideal of what his life and work ought to be, and, come what might, he was determined that no word or act of his should destroy it. Speaking of these early struggles after he had become President, he simply said, that the rule of his life had been to do his "level best," and leave the rest to take care of itself.

In 1839, in a debate in the Legislature, one of his opponents taunted Lincoln's side with being few in number and the advocates of a hopeless

cause. Lincoln's reply was characteristic of the man. He said, "Address that argument to cowards and knaves. With the free and the brave it will affect nothing. It may be true; if it must, let it. Many free countries have lost their liberty, and ours may lose hers; but, if she shall, let it be my proudest plume, not that I was the last to desert, but that I never deserted her."

On one occasion, when an election for a new President was going on, Edward Baker, one of Lincoln's friends, was addressing a meeting in a room immediately below Lincoln's office. There happened to be a trap-door exactly over the place where the speaker stood. Lincoln was in his room, and, wishing to hear his friend's speech, he slightly raised the trap-door and listened. Baker, losing his temper, used some very strong language in speaking of his opponents, some of whom were present. This so angered them that they made a rush for the platform, crying as they did so, "Pull him down! pull him down!"

To the astonishment of everyone, the trap-door opened at that minute, and the tall form of Lincoln appeared, feet first, and, taking his place by the side of his friend, he waved the angry men back, saying as he did so, "Gentlemen, let us not disgrace the age and the country in which we

live. This is a land where the freedom of speech is guaranteed. Baker has a right to speak, and a right to be permitted to do so. I am here to protect him, and no man shall take him from this stand if I can prevent it." It is needless to say that the speaker was not further interfered with.

Some letters which Lincoln wrote to the local paper gave offence to one of the State officials named James Shields. This made the man so very angry that he declared his intention to kill the author of them. Shields demanded the name of the writer from the editor of the paper, and on meeting with a refusal, challenged the editor to fight a duel. On hearing this, Lincoln declared that he was the author, and accepted the challenge for himself. Lincoln was not anxious to fight, but he was not afraid, and he had a belief that Shields only required an excuse to back out of the position he had taken. Nor was he far wrong, for at the last moment Shields expressed himself satisfied with Lincoln's explanation that the letters were political and not personal.

Lincoln's views of personal quarrels were expressed by him in the following words: "Quarrel not at all. No man resolved to make the most of himself can spare time for personal contention. Yield larger things to which you can show no more

than equal right; and yield lesser ones, though clearly your own. Better give your path to a dog than be bitten by him in contesting for the right. Even killing the dog would not cure the bite."

CHAPTER VIII.

A MEMBER OF CONGRESS.

Marriage—A Modest Beginning—A Temperance Lecture—A Life-long Abstainer—Elected to Congress—His Position there—On the Stump—On the Side of the Slave—Lincoln's Bill to Abolish Slavery in Columbia—His Retirement.

BRAHAM LINCOLN married Miss Mary Todd on the 4th of November 1840. She was a daughter of Robert Todd of Kentucky, and belonged to a family of considerable standing in the State. Miss Todd was a handsome woman, well educated, and able to write with wit and ability. She is described as being in everything the exact reverse of Lincoln.

The young couple began life in a very modest manner. They did not attempt to set up house-keeping in a separate dwelling, but were content to lodge at the Globe Tavern, a respectable boarding-house in Springfield. The cost for board was only four dollars (less than a pound) a week. And yet Lincoln was able, in a letter to a friend, not only

to refer to the cheapness of their living, but also to the comforts they enjoyed. And this man, so easily satisfied, was on the high road to the White House.

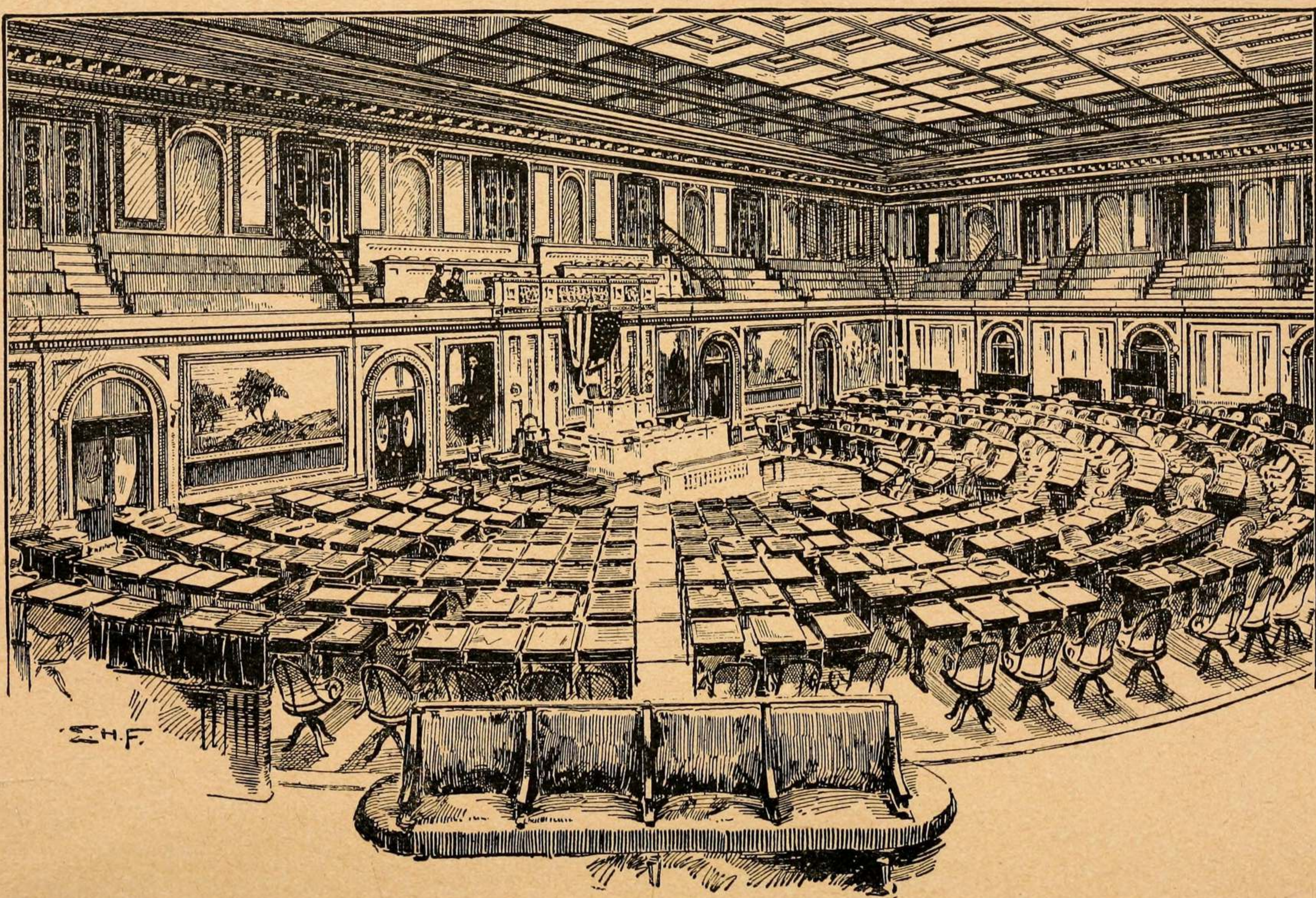
In a lecture which Lincoln delivered in the same year that he was married, he referred to the drinking customs of society. He said : " The practice of drinking is just as old as the world itself; that is, we have seen the one just as long as we have seen the other. We found intoxicating liquor recognised by everybody, used by everybody, repudiated by nobody. It commonly entered into the first draught of the infant, and the last draught of the dying man. From the sideboard of the parson down to the ragged pocket of the homeless loafer, it was constantly found. Physicians prescribed it in this, that, and the other disease; governments provided it for soldiers and sailors; to have a rolling or raising, a husking or 'hoe-down' anywhere about without it was *positively insufferable.* So, too, it was everywhere a respectable article of manufacture and merchandise. The making of it was regarded as an honourable livelihood, and he who could make most was the most enterprising and respectable. Waggons drew it from town to town, boats bore it from clime to clime, and the winds wafted it from nation to nation; and merchants bought and sold it, wholesale and retail,

with precisely the same feelings, on the part of the seller, buyer, and bystander, as are felt at the selling and buying of ploughs, beef, bacon, or any other of the real necessities of life. Universal public opinion not only tolerated, but recognised and adopted its use."

In these words he showed the position of the drink traffic and then his personal attitude towards it. He had been surrounded during the greater part of his life up to that time by drunkards and tipplers, and though he had made no promises not to take drink, he was convinced of its uselessness and mischievous effects, and he never, to the end of his life, could be persuaded to partake of any intoxicating liquors.

In 1846 Lincoln was elected a member of the United States Congress. This is the name given to the representatives of the people who form the Legislature of the United States, and answers to the British Parliament. Congress comprises two Houses, the Senate and the House of Representatives. Each State sends two senators chosen by the State Legislature, and a certain number of representatives, according to the population, elected by the people. Both senators and representatives have a salary of five thousand dollars (£1,000) a year and their travelling expenses.

Lincoln's previous experience in the State Legis-



THE UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.
(Photo by C. M. Bell, Washington.)

lature, and his knowledge of the history of his country and the leading questions of the day, gave him a good position at once, and "the tall backwoods lawyer" was regarded as a valuable friend or a formidable opponent, according to the side he took.

In Congress "he always attracted and riveted the attention of the House when he spoke. His manner of speech, as well as thought, was original. He had no model. He was a man of strong convictions, and what Carlyle would have called an earnest man. He illustrated everything he was talking about with an anecdote, which was always pointed."

When Congress was not sitting, Lincoln "took the stump," and endeavoured to educate the people, and more especially his own party, by making vigorous and luminous speeches. He knew what he was talking about, and he took care that his hearers should be in no doubt about his meaning. When calling upon them to rally and make themselves heard on one question, he said, "Let everyone play the part he can play best. Some can speak, some can sing, and all can halloo."

In matters relating to slavery Lincoln voted with the friends of freedom, and, filled with shame to see gangs of negroes in chains marched through the streets of the capital on their way to the Slave

States, he introduced a Bill to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia. It must be remembered that Washington is not in any State, but in a special district, set apart for that purpose, and called the District of Columbia.

The terms of this Bill were very moderate, and allowed the slave-holders compensation, but it raised a storm. It was the getting in of the thin edge of the wedge, and the Southern members fought against it tooth and nail. They were determined that no measure, which even implied wrong to slave-dealing, or cast a shadow on slave-holders, should pass the Union Parliament. It was a small beginning, but they did not intend to allow the abolition of slavery to begin at all.

Congress adjourned without Lincoln's Bill coming to a vote, and as its author did not offer himself for re-election, it fell to the ground. But Lincoln was able to wait his time. The slave-holders were not sorry to see the man, who was always so dreadfully in earnest, retire from the struggle, in which they had everything to lose and nothing to gain; but they did not reckon on his return twelve years later to abolish slavery, not from a little district, but from end to end of the great Republic.

And now, let us turn for a moment to his own family—his thriftless father and his careful stepmother—whom he had left in their new home in

Macon County, Illinois. Unable to overcome his roving disposition, Thomas Lincoln had moved several times, and finally settled down in "Goose Nest Prairie." There he remained until his death, which took place in 1851, at the age of seventy-three. He did not live to see the height to which his son eventually rose, but before he died, Abraham had served in Congress, and had become one of the leading lawyers of the State.

Though Abraham had little to spare during the years which followed after he left the parental home, he helped his father to the full extent of his power. They were continually receiving presents from him, and the lands on which they settled were bought with his money. He also gave considerable assistance to John Johnstone, his step-brother, who was always needing a lift on account of his unthrifty habits. In fact, John might have been the son of Thomas Lincoln, and Abraham the son of John's mother, so much were they alike these persons in their habits and dispositions.

When he heard that his father was severely ill, he was unable to pay him a visit, but in a letter to his stepbrother he said—

"I sincerely hope that father may yet recover his health, but, at all events, tell him to remember to call upon and confide in our good and great and merciful Father and Maker, who will not turn

away from him in any extremity. He notes the fall of the sparrow, and numbers the hairs of our heads, and He will not forget the dying man who puts his trust in Him. Say to him that, if we could meet now, it would be doubtful whether it would not be more painful than pleasant; but that if it be his lot to go now, he will soon have a joyful meeting with the loved ones gone before, and where the rest of us, through the mercy of God, hope ere long to join them."

CHAPTER IX.

LINCOLN IN COURT.

A Governorship offered—Home at Springfield—Improved Courts —Lincoln's Hat—Lincoln's Partner—A Student—Dividing the Profits—He gave many Points—"The Snow Boys"—How he "skinned" Wright—Justice done—How he saved young Armstrong—The Slave's Friend—A Judge's Opinion—Favourite Books—A Favourite Poem.

S Lincoln did not offer himself for re-election to Congress, the President wished him to become Governor of the territory of Oregon, a wide region in the Far West, on the shores of the Pacific Ocean. He was at first in some doubt whether to refuse or accept the offer, but his wife's strong opposition against his acceptance decided him to refuse.

He therefore built a house in Springfield and settled down to practise law. He was now the father of two boys, Robert and Edward, and he took great delight in the company of his children. Visitors to his bright and well-ordered home regarded him as too indulgent, and in their opinion

he spoiled his boys. But there is little doubt that his own hard lot as a child caused him to make the lives of his own children as joyous as he could. They at least should not bear the burden of life as long as he could carry it on his own shoulders.

While Lincoln had been attending Congress, the law courts had been steadily improving, and had become graver and more learned. This gave men like Lincoln a greater chance of success, for he still retained his power of application, and few could reason as closely, or had a better knowledge of the principles on which the law of the land was conducted. He also kept up his student's habits, and long after others were asleep in bed, he was intent on the solution of some problem which presented unusual difficulty.

One day, in a letter to a lawyer in another town, whose letter he had failed to answer, he wrote: "First, I have been very busy in the United States Court; second, when I received the letter, I put it in my old hat, and, buying a new one the next day, the old one was set aside, and so the letter was lost sight of for a time."

Lincoln's hat was, as in his old post-office days, something more than merely a covering for the head. It was his desk and memorandum-book. In the lining he carried his bank-book and

unanswered letters, and when he wished to remember anything, he made a jotting on a scrap of paper and placed the document in this extraordinary receptacle ; his idea for this course being, that when a thing was needed, it was best to have only one place to look for it.

On his desk he also kept a bundle of papers, into which he slipped anything that he wished to keep, and might possibly have to refer to at some future time. Years afterwards, when his partner, William H. Herndon, was removing to another office, he took up this bundle, then covered with dust. Blowing this off, he read in Lincoln's handwriting on the uppermost paper beneath the string, "When you can't find it anywhere else, look in this."

A lawyer, who was several years a student in Lincoln's office, describes his introduction to the firm. We may say that Lincoln had already arranged with the young man's brother for his visit. The partners were both present when the youth entered the room.

Mr. Lincoln addressed his partner thus: "Billy, this is the young man of whom I spoke to you. Whatever arrangement you make with him will be satisfactory to me."

Then, turning to the young man, he said, "I hope you will not become so enthusiastic in your

studies of Blackstone and Kent as did two young men whom we had here. Do you see that spot over there?" pointing to a large inkstain on the wall. "Well, one of these young men got so enthusiastic in his pursuit of legal lore that he fired the inkstand at the other one's head, and that is the mark he made."

However busy Lincoln was when anyone called at his office, he could always spare a moment to say something pleasant, and generally his remarks ended with an anecdote or a joke. He was never afraid of repeating over and over again the same story. And he laughed as heartily over it the last time as the first. Those who were much with him also joined in the laughter, for his humour was infectious, but they did not laugh as much at the story as the fun of hearing him repeating it so often.

No account-books were kept at the firm of Lincoln and Herndon. The partners divided all the fees as they received them, and neither asked for nor gave each other receipts. One day Lincoln walked into the office with over one thousand pounds, which he had received in a case he had been conducting. "Well, Billy," he said, addressing his partner, "here is our fee; sit down and let us divide it." Then he counted out his partner's share and handed it to him in the same careless

way that he would have passed a sheet of note-paper.

One peculiarity of Lincoln's in conducting a case was his seeming readiness to give away points. This he would do to such an alarming extent, that any other lawyer associated with him, but who did not understand his methods, was often filled with dismay. Knowing his case thoroughly, and the ground on which he intended to make a stand, he did not believe in waiting to have the weaker part of his case disclosed by the other side, and then reluctantly given up by him. He often gave away six points of his case, which he saw he could not maintain, and then go in on the seventh for all it was worth, and win. This mode of procedure often caused his adversary to regard Lincoln as a simple-minded man, but a few minutes later he would wake up to the fact that he had underrated his opponent, and when too late, found himself beaten. As a rule, Lincoln relied on what is called the equity of the case, and he seldom appealed to the jury's sense of justice without success.

In one instance, an old farmer, named Case, sued two young men known as "The Snow Boys" for the price of three yoke of oxen. When the animals were bought, the Snow boys were not of age, therefore they pleaded that as they were infants in the eyes of the law, they could not be compelled to pay

the money they owed. In the trial Lincoln admitted everything, and it seemed as if there was nothing for it but to allow the young men to win.

Turning to one of the witnesses, who had proved that the Snow boys were under twenty-one when they bought the team, Lincoln asked him where the oxen were now.

"On the farm of the Snow boys," was the reply.

"When did you see them using them?" asked Lincoln.

"Yesterday," was the reply.

"How old are the boys now?" was the next question.

"One is twenty-one and the other twenty-three," was the reply.

"That will do," said Lincoln.

Turning to the jury, Lincoln said, "Gentlemen, these boys would never have tried to cheat old Farmer Case out of his oxen, but for the bad advice of their lawyer. It was bad advice, bad in morals, bad in law. The law never sanctions cheating." Then he showed that if the boys had not meant to cheat his client, they would have given up the oxen if they could not pay for them. The jury saw the force of this, and Lincoln won his case.

Another instance was that of an old widow whose husband had been a soldier, and fought in the Revolutionary war against Great Britain. An

agent named Wright had retained for his own use one half of her pension, and when she hobbled into Lincoln's office and told him the story, he was filled with indignation. At once he took up her case, and said to his partner, "You must be in court when I address the jury. I am going to get back that money and skin Wright."

The only witness called by Lincoln was the old lady, who with many tears told her sad story. Then Lincoln got up and in graphic language described the Revolutionary war and all the hardships endured by the men who went through it. He pictured them with bare and bleeding feet creeping over the ice to serve their country in her hour of need. Then how this rascally agent had fleeced the old woman of the pension a grateful country had bestowed in recognition of her husband's services. He drew an ideal picture of the widow's husband, and described him parting with his wife and kissing their baby in its cradle when he set out for the war. "Time rolls by," he said, "the heroes of '76 have passed away and are encamped on the other shore. The soldier has gone to rest, and now, crippled and blinded and broken, his widow comes to you and to me, gentlemen of the jury, to right her wrongs. She was not always thus. She was once a beautiful woman. Her step was as elastic, her face as fair, and her voice as sweet as any that

rang on the mountains of Old Virginia. But now she is poor and defenceless. Out here on the prairies of Illinois, many hundreds of miles away from the scenes of her childhood, she appeals to us, who enjoy the privileges achieved for us by the patriots of the Revolution, for our sympathetic aid and manly protection. All I ask is shall we befriend her?"

Before Lincoln had finished, half of the jury were in tears, and the agent Wright looked fearfully round, as if afraid of being subjected to personal violence. The jury decided in favour of the widow, and Wright sneaked off looking as if he had been literally "skinned." Nor would Lincoln receive a penny for his services. Instead of taking payment, he paid the widow's fare back to her home, and her hotel bill at Springfield. One of his friends was not far wide of the mark when he said, "There is but one Abraham Lincoln."

In another case a widow had the title to a piece of valuable land challenged by the heirs of the man from whom she had bought it. They said that she claimed to possess more than she had paid for. Lincoln had once been a surveyor, so, taking his instruments, he surveyed the ground, and found that the heirs were right. The widow objected to pay for the mistake, but Lincoln insisted upon it, and refused to act for her unless she did.

Reluctantly she gave way, and no trial took place.

Hannah Armstrong was the widow of Lincoln's friend Jack Armstrong, the leader of the Clary's Grove Boys. Ever after that famous wrestling bout, in which Jack was worsted, he had stood by his formidable antagonist and given him a hearty welcome at his home. Now he was dead, and his son William Armstrong was in prison, waiting to be tried on a charge of murder at a camp meeting quarrel. The widowed mother begged her husband's friend to defend her son, whom, as a child, Lincoln had often sported on his knee.

Lincoln agreed to take up the case, and when the trial came, one of the witnesses swore that by the light of the moon he saw young Armstrong deal the fatal blow. In a masterly speech Lincoln showed that the charge had no foundation in fact, that to him it seemed like a conspiracy got up against the prisoner. Only one witness said he had seen a blow struck, and declared that at the time the moon was shining brightly. Then, calling for an almanac, he showed that on the night in question there was no moon! The verdict was "Not guilty."

Where the rights of slaves were involved, few lawyers would take up the cases. They had not courage to face the ill-will they knew would be

shown by the friends of slave-holders, and they were afraid of being looked on as Abolitionists, "Go to Lincoln" they used to say. "He is not afraid of an unpopular case." And they were right. Lincoln was afraid of nothing on earth but doing wrong. And in one instance, where a free slave had been seized and imprisoned while on business in a Slave State, and Lincoln found that the law was on the side of the negro's captors, he paid the money to restore the man to freedom. But he never rested until that unjust law was repealed.

To a man, who wished Lincoln to undertake a case of which he did not approve, he said: "Yes, we can doubtless gain your case for you, we can set a whole neighbourhood at loggerheads, we can distress a widowed mother and her six fatherless children, and thereby get for you six hundred dollars to which you seem to have a legal claim, but which rightfully belongs, it seems to me, as much to the woman and her children as it does to you. You must remember that some things legally right are not morally right. We shall not take your case, but will give you a little advice, for which we shall charge you nothing. You seem to be a sprightly, energetic man: we would advise you to try your hand at making six hundred dollars in some other way."

An eminent American judge thus gives his opinion of Lincoln as a lawyer: "I have no hesitation in saying that he was one of the ablest lawyers I have ever known. He always tried a case fairly and honestly." Nor was he ever known intentionally either to misrepresent the evidence of a witness or the argument of the opponent. When he was thoroughly roused and became excited in speaking, he drew himself to his full height, until one of his hearers exclaimed, after hearing him, "He seemed to be about twenty foot high!"

Beyond a few great authors, the Bible, and *Pilgrim's Progress*, Lincoln's reading rarely extended, and his knowledge of general literature was very limited. He generally carried three books with him to ponder over at odd times—the Bible, Shakespeare, and Euclid. When staying at a country inn while on circuit, he often rose before the others to dip into one or other of these volumes. In this way every leisure moment was turned to account.

One day, as he was passing a house, he heard a young lady singing a song, which attracted his attention. When he reached his office, he sent her a letter containing a request for a copy of the words. A day or two afterwards they were left at the office addressed to him. Who the young lady was is not known. Lincoln was so charmed with the poem that he often read it over, and thirty

years afterwards it was found among his papers. The dainty perfumed envelope bore this endorsement in Lincoln's handwriting, "Poem — I like this."

It was Charles Mackay's poem, "The Enquiry," the first and last verses of which are as follows—

"Tell me, ye wingèd winds,
That round my pathway roar,
Do ye not know some spot
Where, mortals weep no more?
Some lone and pleasant vale
Some valley in the West,
Where, free from toil and pain,
The weary soul may rest.
The loud wind dwindled to a whisper low,
And sighed for pity as it answered, No.

. . . .

Tell me, my secret soul,
Oh, tell me, Hope and Faith,
Is there no resting-place
From sorrow, sin, and death?
Is there no happy spot
Where mortals may be blessed,
Where griefs may find a balm
And weariness a rest?
Faith, Hope, and Love, best boon to mortals given,
Waved their bright wings and whispered, Yes, in Heaven."

The plaintive strain of these lines seems to have struck a responsive chord in his heart, which was often filled with thoughts too deep for words.

CHAPTER X.

THE RAIL-SPLITTER OF ILLINOIS.

The Battle of Freedom—The Slave-holders' Success—Kansas and Nebraska—Douglas and Lincoln—A False Majority—What Freedom did for Lincoln—The New Republican Party—The Rights of Man—The Rail Candidate—Hanks and the Rails—Introduced to the Eastern States—The Effect of a Great Speech—The Greatest Man since St. Paul.

T is impossible, in the compass of a small work like this, to give more than a brief outline of the events which took place in the United States during the ten years which preceded the election of Lincoln to the Presidency. Nor can we more than indicate the course Lincoln pursued in the great struggle, which engaged the attention of every thinking person both in the North and South.

During those years the battle of freedom was fought and won. But before the blot was wiped out of the Union flag, and the Stars and Stripes floated in the breeze an emblem of true liberty, thousands of brave men were called upon to lay

down their lives, and the country was deluged in blood.

The slave-holding interest had secured one advantage after another, until, in 1850, it seemed as if negro slavery was an institution that could not be abolished on the American continent. But the very success of the party proved the ruin of their cause, and eventually brought on the great civil war, and the liberation of the slave.

The passage of a Bill through Congress, which gave the two territories, Kansas and Nebraska, the right to decide for themselves whether they would be Free States or Slave States, set the whole North aflame. Douglas, the author of the Bill and Lincoln's lifelong rival, was filled with dismay when he saw the storm of wrath he had brought down on his head. He had hoped to win popularity, and he found himself execrated by many of the best men in the land.

Douglas and Lincoln stumped the country, the one defending his action and the other condemning it. Douglas said that "It was an insult to the emigrants to Kansas and Nebraska to intimate that they were not able to govern themselves, voting slavery in, or out, as they chose." To which Lincoln replied, in never-to-be-forgotten words, "I admit the emigrant to Kansas and Nebraska is competent to govern himself; but

I deny his right to govern any other person without that person's consent."

SENATOR STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS.

Hordes of ruffians entered Kansas from the Slave States, and when the voting took place to decide whether the new territory should be "slave" or

"free," they compelled the inhabitants at the peril of their lives to vote for slavery or to abstain from voting. Houses and crops were destroyed, and personal injuries were inflicted on Free State men, and some of the outrages were followed by the deaths of the victims.

The result was, that a majority of votes was cast in favour of slavery, and a government was established in Kansas on the basis of the right of any man to own human beings in the territory. Lincoln was indignant when he heard of the outrages committed in Kansas to bolster up the slavers' interests. But he calmly bided his time. He was enough of a seer to know that a storm was brewing, which, when it burst on the land, would sweep away this horrible thing that, cancer-like, was eating into the vitals of the national life, or would wreck the Union. The South was sowing the wind, sooner or later they must reap the whirlwind.

During the campaign, when Lincoln was addressing a meeting in a part of the country where there were many in favour of slavery, one of his opponents, to disconcert him, cried out, "Mr. Lincoln, is it true that you entered the State barefooted, driving a yoke of oxen?" This question referred to the removal of the Lincoln family from Indiana to Illinois.

For a moment there was a dead silence in the

vast audience. It seemed as if he was in doubt what reply to make. But when his friends saw the speaker rise to the full height of his gigantic stature, which he always did when much moved, they knew that he was prepared to deliver a crushing blow. Straight out from the shoulder it came, with all the force of concentrated energy and indignant scorn.

"Yes," he said, "I entered the State barefooted, the driver of an ox team, and what freedom has done for me, it will do for any man; while slavery drags down black and white together." And, concluding his reply, he declared that he and his party would speak for freedom and against slavery, as long as the constitution of the country guaranteed free speech, until everywhere in that broad land the sun should shine and the rain should fall and wind should blow upon no man that goes forth to unrequited toil.

In these memorable words Lincoln took his final stand, and from that time the nation regarded him as the foremost champion of freedom for the slave. He had indeed put his hand to the plough, and Abraham Lincoln was not the man to look back. He might suffer defeat for a time; but, convinced of the righteousness of his case, he carried it to the highest tribunal, knowing that the Judge of all the earth would do right.

At a great convention of anti-slavery men, a new party was organised, having for its one great object the abolition of slavery. On other questions these men did not agree, but on this question they were unanimous. When they asked Lincoln to frame a policy to which all of them could subscribe, he said, "Let us, in building our new party, make our corner-stone the Declaration of Independence. Let us build on this rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against us." Thus was the great Republican party established, and those who were present, and heard Lincoln's great speech, say, "Never was an audience more completely electrified by human eloquence."

Douglas was continually talking about the rights of the people, and maintained that each State should be absolutely free to decide for itself the position the negro should occupy within its borders. Lincoln also talked about the rights, not of white men, but of *all* men. He declared that every human being was born free—that the negro was a man—and that he could not justly be deprived of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

At length, the nation was called upon to decide the question which had shaken the Union to the very foundations. In 1860 the new President had to be chosen. James Buchanan, who was then the chief magistrate of the Republic, was opposed to slavery, but for the sake of peace he took no steps

to carry out his convictions. Everyone felt that in the selection of his successor the future policy of the Union would be decided. Therefore, the minds of the leading politicians were greatly exercised on the subject, and the whole nation was on the tip-toe of expectancy. Who would the new President be?

In 1859 the new Republican party had its annual convention at Decatur, Macon County, the place where Thomas Lincoln had settled when he emigrated from Indiana. Lincoln was there, but was not taking a leading part in the business, when the Governor of Illinois rose and said, "I am informed that a distinguished citizen of Illinois, and one whom Illinois will ever delight to honour, is present, and I wish to move that this body invite him to a seat on the platform." Then, pausing for a moment, the speaker exclaimed, "Abraham Lincoln!"

Amid tremendous applause the audience literally handed the backwoodsman on to the platform. In their arms they lifted him off the floor and bore him to the stand where the speakers were gathered round the chairman. Then, when the tall form of the popular hero was seen on the platform, every man sprang to his feet, and cheer after cheer rang forth; "it seemed as if they never would stop."

Then a dramatic incident took place which

settled the matter once for all, and answered the question which was filling men's minds, and till then unanswered—"Who will be the new President?"

As soon as order was restored and the audience was ready for business, the Governor again spoke. He said that there was at the door a citizen who had a contribution to make to the convention. What could it be? Full of curiosity, the delegates waited for a reply. A moment later John Hanks entered the room, bearing on his shoulder two old fence rails decorated with ribbons. Standing before the audience, he showed them the inscription on the rails—"Abraham Lincoln, the Rail Candidate for the Presidency in 1860. Two rails from a lot of three thousand, made in 1830 by Thomas Hanks and Abe Lincoln, whose father was the first pioneer in Macon County."

The effect of this proceeding cannot be described in words. It can only be faintly imagined by those who were not present. But from that meeting there went forth a wave of extraordinary force and overwhelming power, which spread through the North, widening as it flowed, surging round every popular centre, and bearing down all opposition. Friends of freedom and enslaved negroes hailed the coming liberator in "The Rail-splitter of Illinois."

But how would the cities of the Eastern States regard this man of the people, who had not been taught in any of their great schools or graduated in any of their colleges? What would the cultured classes of New York and Boston say when the rugged Kentuckian was presented to them, and they were asked to vote for him, and place him at the head of the nation?

In 1860 he stood before them in New York, in one of the largest halls of the United States. The building was packed from floor to ceiling, and on the platform were gathered some of the chief men of the land—scholars, orators, lawyers, and politicians. The chair was occupied by William Cullen Bryant, the poet. And there sat Lincoln, on whom every eye was fixed, and about whom all were eager to learn something. Newspaper reports had told them much, but now they were to hear and judge for themselves. They did not know what to think, as they hastily compared him with the leaders whom they had known, and who had moved in good society. Would this forest-bred, self-educated, unpolished man, whom force of character and the nation's needs had brought to the front, be equal to the tremendous responsibilities he was now ready to assume?

And what thought Abraham Lincoln as he sat there waiting to be introduced to the most critical

audience that could have been brought together? He knew, no one better, that these were not the men to be satisfied with the funny stories and rude wit which was the only eloquence the rough and ignorant settlers in the Western State understood. He shrewdly guessed that many of his hearers expected something comical, something clever, and even original; but he had prepared a very different address than they had come to hear.

Never before had such a speech been given in New York City. Men, who had great claims to scholarship, and who had spent the greater part of their lives among books and in colleges, were amazed when they heard the masterly exposition which Lincoln gave of the history and political institutions of their country. Uncultured, yet scholarly; untrained, yet logical; unpolished, yet deeply sympathetic; mighty in stature and eloquent in speech, the people listened to him spell-bound, and from time to time testified to their approval and delight with thunders of applause.

One who was present on that great occasion says—

"When Lincoln rose to speak, I was greatly disappointed. He was tall, tall—oh, how tall!—and so angular and awkward that I had, for an instant, a feeling of pity for so ungainly a man.

His clothes were black and ill-fitting, badly wrinkled —as if they had been jammed carelessly into a small trunk. His bushy head, with the stiff black hair thrown back, was balanced on a long and lean head-stalk, and when he raised his hands in an opening gesture, I noticed that they were very large. He began in a low tone of voice, as if he were used to speaking out-doors, and was afraid of speaking too loud. I said to myself, 'Old fellow, you won't do; it's all very well for the Wild West, but this will never go down in New York.' But pretty soon he began to get into his subject; he straightened up, made angular yet graceful gestures, his face lighted as with an inward fire, the whole man was transfigured. I forgot his clothes, his personal appearance, and his individual peculiarities. Presently, forgetting myself, I was on my feet with the rest, yelling like a wild Indian, cheering this wonderful man. When he reached a climax, the thunders of applause were terrific. It was a great speech. When I came out of the hall, my face glowing with excitement and my frame all a-quiver, a friend, with his eyes aglow, asked me what I thought of Abe Lincoln, the rail-splitter. I said, 'He's the greatest man since St. Paul.' And I think so yet."

CHAPTER XI.

FROM THE WHITE HOUSE TO THE GRAVE.

Secession—Lincoln adopted by the Republicans—Elected President—Farewell to Springfield—A Triumphal Journey—A Vain Appeal—The First Shot—The Confederate States—Bull Run—The End of Slavery—Vicksburg—Gettysburg—Simple Habits—Humanity—Tenderness—Death—Burial.

HEN the South saw that the North had taken a stand against slavery, the slave-holders began to talk about secession, that is, a separation between the Free States and the Slave States. In reply to this, Lincoln said: "You say you will destroy the Union, and then you say the great crime of having destroyed it will be put on us. That is cool. A highwayman holds a pistol to my ear, and mutters through his teeth, 'Stand and deliver, or I shall kill you, and then you will be a murderer.'"

On June 17, 1860, the Republican party met at Chicago, and amid tremendous excitement, and after

many ballots had been taken, finally adopted Lincoln as their candidate. Inside the great building there was a hurricane of enthusiasm. Men flung away their hats, danced in a wild delirium of delight, hugged and kissed each other, and cheered and cheered again, as if they could find no vent to their overpowering joy. Outside, cannon thundered forth the news to the waiting North.

In the newspaper office at Springfield, Lincoln, surrounded by his friends, waited for the result. A telegram brought the glad news, "Abraham Lincoln the first man on the list." Shaking hands with his friends, who were profuse in their congratulations, Lincoln walked off home, saying, "There is a little woman on Eighth Street who would like to hear about this."

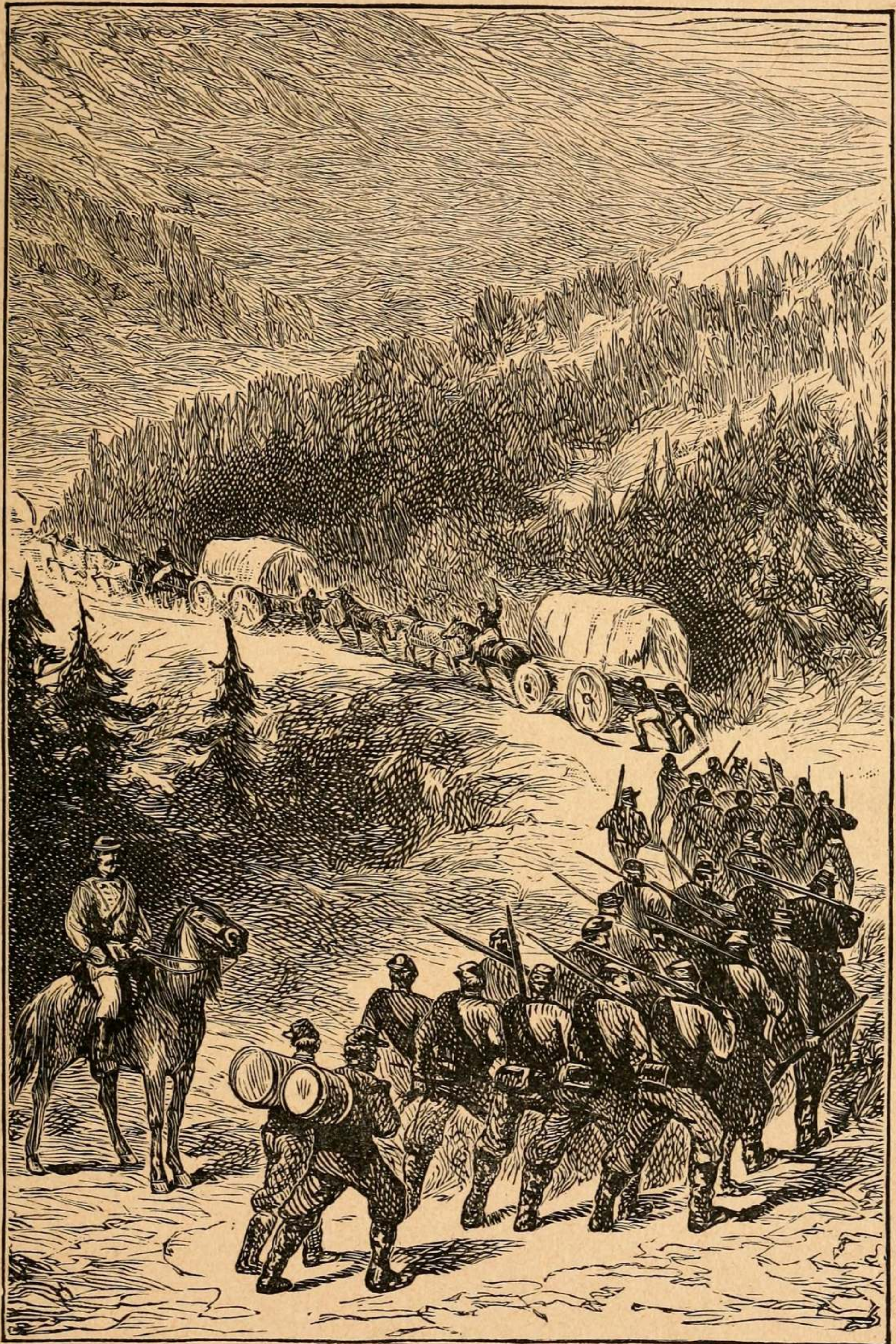
Springfield was soon astir, and eager to give expression to its unbounded gratification. Nothing less than a salute of one hundred guns would satisfy Lincoln's excited fellow-townsmen. Delegates from the great convention visited the place to formally announce to the successful candidate the result of the ballot. Friends sent a quantity of wine to Lincoln's house to be used by the visitors, but he returned it with thanks. When the delegates arrived, they drank the health of the proposed President in water.

The vote of the nation had yet to be taken. The Republican party were unanimous in their support of Lincoln, but would they be able to carry him? Men wanted to know what his religious views were. He did not make any great profession of personal piety, but he said, "I know there is a God, and that He hates injustice and slavery. I see a storm coming, and I know His hand is in it. If He has a place and work for me, and I think He has, I believe I am ready. I am nothing, but truth is everything. I know I am right, because I know that liberty is right, for Christ teaches it, and Christ is God." Four men in all were nominated—Lincoln, Breckinridge, Douglas, and Bell. The election took place in November. Here is the result—

Lincoln—1,866,452.
Douglas—1,375,157.
Breckinridge—847,953.
Bell—590,631.

Lincoln was elected the sixteenth President of the United States. The battle of freedom was really won, but it had yet to receive its baptism of blood.

Threats to leave the Union now filled the air, and there was a talk about seizing Fort Moultrie and other fortifications in Charleston Harbour on



FEDERAL TROOPS CROSSING TO THE SHENANDOAH.

behalf of the South. "If any man attempts to haul down the American flag, shoot him on the spot," were the orders of General Dix, the Secretary of the Treasury. Open revolt soon followed, and seven Slave States declared they no longer belonged to the Union. Each of them assumed absolute independence. The South was courting disaster and rushing blindly on to its doom.

In February 1861, Lincoln, with his family, stood on the platform of the railway station at Springfield, ready to depart to the scene of his new labours. To his friends and neighbours he said—

"Friends—No one who has never been placed in a like position can understand my feelings at this hour, nor the sadness I feel at this parting. For more than a quarter of a century I have lived among you, and during all that time I have received nothing but kindness at your hands. Here I have lived from youth until now I am an old man, here the most sacred ties of earth were assumed, here all my children were born, and here one of them lies buried. Let us all pray that the God of our fathers may not forsake us now. To Him I commend you all. Permit me to ask that with equal sincerity and faith you will invoke His wisdom and guidance for me. With these few words I must leave you, for how long I know not. Friends, one

and all, I must now bid you an affectionate farewell."

The train started amid the cheers of the populace, and Lincoln commenced his journey to Washington. Five years later, another train steamed into Springfield station. It was covered with all the emblems of a nation's mourning. Lincoln had fallen at the post of duty. The President was dead, but the slaves were free. His work was done, and the train had brought him home to rest.

His journey to Washington was a grand triumphal procession which occupied many days. His enemies had declared that he should never reach the capital alive. Plots were made to waylay and murder him. None of them succeeded, and on March 4, 1861, Abraham Lincoln was inaugurated President. The Rail-splitter of Illinois had stepped out on the mighty stage on which there was to be enacted one of the most tremendous tragedies the world has ever seen.

One of Lincoln's first acts was to inform the Southern States that he had no intention of interfering with the institution of slavery in the States where by law it then existed. He did not believe that he could lawfully do so. But this did not satisfy them. They would not concede the right, as they called it, of each State being its own master.

Lincoln's appeal, though tender, affectionate, and generous to a degree, fell on deaf ears in the South, but was received by the North with a loyal shout of approval. To the able men he called around him in these perilous times he said, "Let us forget ourselves and join hands like brothers, to save the Republic. If we succeed, there will be glory enough for all."

The South prepared for war, and called on the garrison of Fort Sumter at Charleston to surrender. This was refused, and on April 12, 1861, fire was opened on the fort. That shot was intended to be the knell of the Union—it proved to be the knell of slavery. The North could have overlooked many overt acts on the part of the angry South, but the insult to the flag of the Union must be avenged. It could only be wiped out in blood. A great burst of patriotic wrath swept over the North. The loyal part of the nation rose as one man, and prepared to defend their beloved Union, and punish those who had dared to insult the nation.

The South had already formed a new Government, calling themselves the Confederate States of America, with Jefferson Davis as their President. Their view of the matter can be expressed in a single sentence: "Our States are sovereign, and have a right to secede [separate themselves] when they think they have a reason." To this the North had but one

reply—"You are part of the Union, which forms but one nation, and to break up the Union is rebellion." But, as we know, slavery was at the bottom of the whole business.

Men and money were speedily forthcoming, and soon there were two armies in the field. The rush to arms in the North showed that the loyalists were terribly in earnest, and the Southern States rallied in a manner worthy of a better cause. The first great battle was fought at Bull Run in July 1861, and was won by the Confederates. The Federal (Northern) soldiers were outnumbered, and had to fall back on Washington. Many smaller engagements followed with varying success, but at Shiloh, in 1862, General Grant won a great victory for the North.

On September 22, 1862, Lincoln issued a declaration that on and after January 1, 1863, the slaves in all States, or parts of States, which should then be in rebellion, would be proclaimed free. This proclamation of freedom was then made, and, though the war was not over, slavery was virtually at an end. The *Continental Magazine* contained a poem on the subject, the first written. It expresses the feelings of the North.

> "Now who has done the greatest deed
> Which History has ever known?
> And who in Freedom's direst need
> Became her bravest champion?

Who a whole continent set free ?
  Who killed the curse and broke the ban
Which made a lie of liberty ?—
  You, Father Abraham—you're the man !

The deed is done. Millions have yearned
  To see the spear of Freedom cast.
The dragon roared and writhed and burned,
  You've smote him full and square at last.
O Great and True ! you do not know—
  You cannot tell—you cannot feel
How far through time your name must go,
Honoured by all men, high or low,
  Wherever Freedom's votaries kneel.

This wide world talks in many a tongue—
  This world boasts many a noble state,
In all your praises will be sung—
  In all the great will call you great.
Freedom ! where'er that word is known—
  On silent shore, by sounding sea,
'Mid millions, or in deserts lone—
  Your noble name shall ever be.

The word is out, the deed is done,
  The spear is cast, dread no delay ;
When such a steed is fairly gone,
  Fate never fails to find a way.
Hurrah ! hurrah ! the track is clear,
  We know your policy and plan ;
We'll stand by you through every year—
  Now, Father Abraham—you're our man."

The capture of Vicksburg by General Grant, and the defeat of the Confederates at Gettysburg by General Meade, were hailed with great rejoicing, and proved the turning-point in the great struggle. Lincoln had a very high opinion of Grant, who was charged by his enemies with intemperance. When

the President heard this, he gravely said, "I wonder where he buys his whisky?" "Why?" was the astonished answer. "Because if I knew," slowly replied Lincoln, with a twinkle in his eye, "I would send a barrel to some other generals I know."

The time had come round for the election of a new President, as Lincoln's turn of office was about to expire, and there was a good deal of what is called "wire-pulling," or scheming, on the part of Lincoln's opponents, but the people had too much sense to "Swop horses while crossing a stream." By a large majority they elected him for a second term of four years, and on March 4, 1864, his second inauguration took place. On that occasion his address concluded with this passage: "With malice towards none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive to finish the work we are engaged in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and orphan—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations."

The simple habits which Lincoln had formed when he was poor and little known were followed by him in his exalted position. There was not a man in the States who worked harder or dressed

plainer than the President, or who cared as little about the pleasures of the table. He was always accessible to high and low, and ever turned a kindly, sympathetic ear to a tale of woe. Opponents were always treated with every consideration, and received appointments, if they were worthy of them, and in spite of the fact that they had done their utmost to prevent him from being President.

Many stories are told of Lincoln's humane disposition and his reluctance to shed blood. When urged by one of his generals to agree to the execution of twenty-four deserters, to check the frequency of this offence, which had become serious, Lincoln replied, "General, there are already too many weeping widows in the United States. For God's sake don't ask me to add to the number, for I won't do it." One case may be mentioned which will show his kindness of heart. A young soldier from Vermont, named Benjamin Owen, was condemned to death for sleeping on sentry duty. In the interval before the sentence should be carried out, his sister hastened to the Capitol, and sought an interview with the President. This was granted, and the girl showed him a letter which her brother had written to her father. The letter ran as follows—

"DEAR FATHER,—When this reaches you, I shall be in eternity. At first it seemed awful to me, but

I have thought about it so much now that it has no terror. They say they will not bind me, but that I may meet my death like a man. . . . You know I promised Jemmy's Carr's mother I would

PLEADING FOR A BROTHER'S LIFE.

look after her boy, and when he fell sick, I did all I could for him. He was not strong when he was ordered back into the ranks, and the day before *that* night, I carried all his luggage, besides my

own, on our march. Toward night we went in on double quick, and though the luggage began to feel very heavy, everybody else was tired too; and as for Jemmy, if I had not lent him an arm now and then, he would have dropped by the way. I was all tired out when I came into camp, and then it was Jemmy's turn to be sentry, and I would take his place; but I was too tired, father, I could not have kept awake if I had had a gun at my head. But I did not know it until—well, until it was too late. . . . Our good Colonel would save me if he could. He says—forgive him, father —he only did his duty. And don't lay my death against Jemmy. The poor boy is broken-hearted, and does nothing but beg and entreat them to let him die in my stead. I can't bear to think of mother and sister. Comfort them, father! God help me! it is very hard to bear. Good-bye, father! God seems near and dear to me; not at all as if He wished me to perish for ever, but as if He felt sorry for His poor, sinful, broken-hearted child, and would take me to be with Him and my Saviour, in a better, better life! God bless you all!"

The President's heart was touched by the simple statement, and the tears were in his eyes as he looked up. Briefly reassuring the girl that all would yet come right, he wrote out a pardon, and, lest there should be any delay in its transmission,

he ordered his carriage and took it personally to the authorities.

The sister's joy seemed complete when she was informed that not only was her brother forgiven, but that, by order of the kindly President, a furlough (leave of absence) had been granted the lad, that he might return home with her to see his friends.

After the battle of Fredericksburg the young soldier was found among the dead. Next his heart lay the photograph of Lincoln, and beneath was written—" God bless President Lincoln."

One day in May 1863, whilst the great war was raging in America between the North and South, President Lincoln paid a visit to one of the military hospitals. He had spoken many cheering words of sympathy to the wounded as he proceeded through the various wards, and now he was at the bedside of a Vermont boy of about sixteen years of age, who lay there mortally wounded.

Taking the boy's thin white hands in his own, the President said in a tender tone, " Well, my poor boy, what can I do for you ? "

The lad looked up into the President's kindly face, and asked, " Won't you write to my mother for me ? "

" That I will," answered Mr. Lincoln ; and, calling for a pen, ink, and paper, he seated himself by the

side of the bed, and wrote from the boy's dictation.

It was a long letter, but the President betrayed no signs of weariness. When it was finished, he rose, saying, "I will post this as soon as I get back to my office. Now, is there anything else I can do for you?"

The boy looked up appealingly to the President. "Won't you stay with me?" he asked. "I do so want to hold on to your hand."

The kind-hearted President at once perceived the boy's meaning. The appeal was too strong for him to resist, so he sat down by his side and took hold of his hand. For two hours the President sat there patiently, as though he had been the boy's father.

When the end came, he bent over and folded the thin hands over his breast. As he did so, he burst into tears, and when, soon afterwards, he left the hospital, they were still streaming down his cheeks.

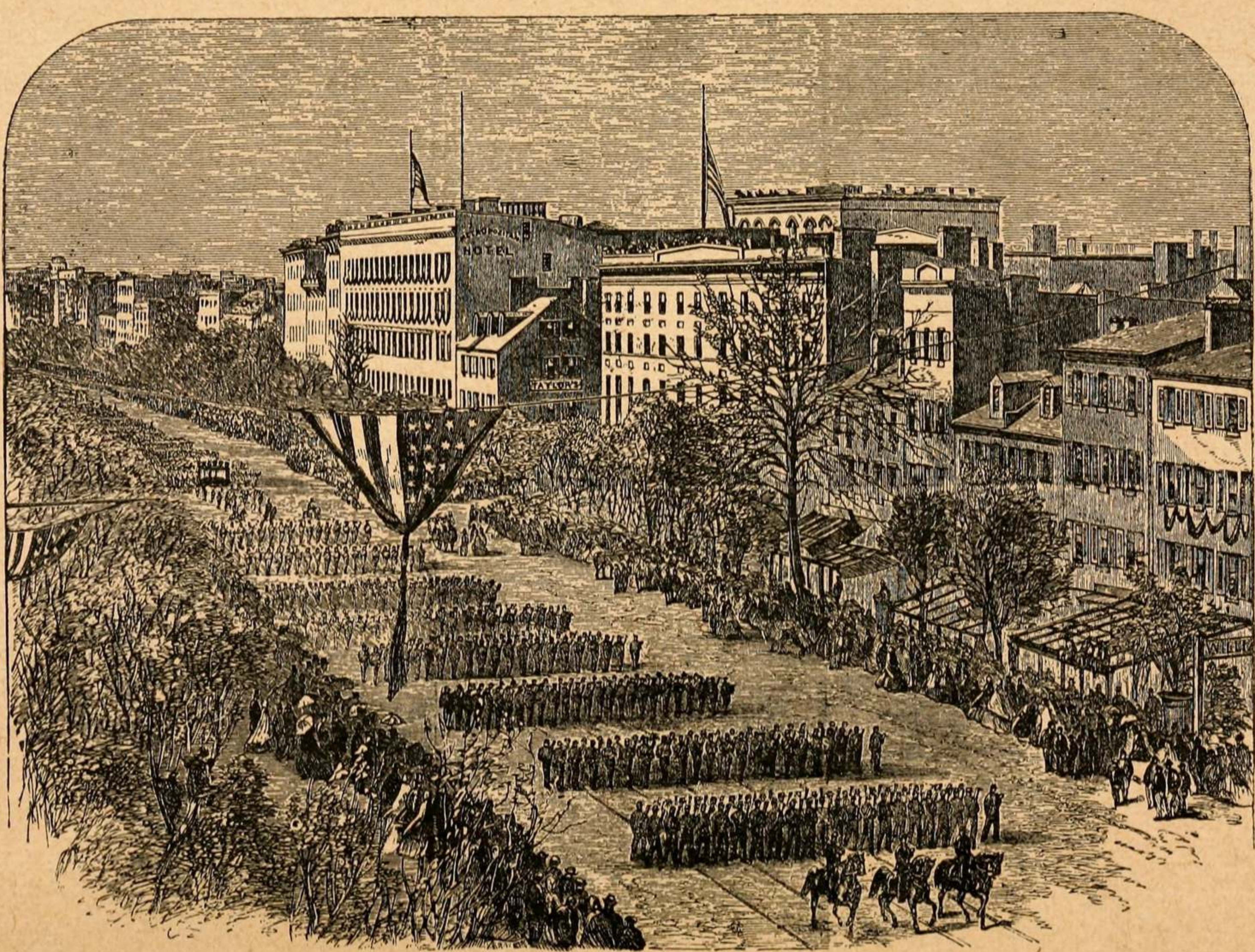
The fall of Richmond brought the war to an end, and on foot, and leading his boy by the hand, Lincoln entered the late rebel capital. There was no display, and, on his part, no demonstration. But the negroes who had received their freedom at his hands went wild with joy when they saw their liberator. "They danced, they sang, they

prayed for blessings on his head, and crowds knelt weeping at his feet. But in that supreme moment he wore no look of triumph or expressed one word of exultation. Silently he passed through that excited throng, with mingled feelings of gratitude and sorrow—gratitude to God, who had enabled him to complete his great work, and sorrow for those who had fallen, and those who were mourning for them."

It was scarcely to be expected that the abolition of slavery would become an accomplished fact, without an attempt being made by some of the desperate men of the South to satisfy their thirst for vengeance on the one man who, above all others, had succeeded in defeating them. Secretly they met, and in their wild fury determined on the assassination of the President.

The 14th of April 1865 had been declared a public holiday. This day was the anniversary of the fall of Fort Sumter four years previously. A programme had been arranged for that day, and among other things, it was announced that Lincoln, accompanied by some of the leading men, would attend a special performance at Ford's Theatre.

On the night in question, while the President, with his wife and friends, were watching the play, John Wilkes Booth passed to the rear of the President's box, and, holding a pistol close to



THE PROCESSION THROUGH WASHINGTON WITH THE BODY OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN.

Lincoln's head, fired. The ball entered the brain, and he fell forward insensible. Jumping from the box on to the stage, Booth shouted, "Sic Semper Tyrannis!" (the motto of the State of Virginia, "Ever so to tyrants"). Then, adding "The South is avenged!" he vanished.

Booth was the son of Junius Brutus Booth, an English tragedian who emigrated to America, and died there in 1852. The son followed his father's profession, but as an actor he was not successful, and he entered into the conspiracy to avenge the defeat of the Confederates. After he had fired the fatal shot he managed to get clear of the theatre, though in doing so he broke his leg. Mounting a horse, which was in readiness, he rode off, and was soon out of sight. He was tracked to Virginia, and his hiding-place was discovered on the 20th of April. Being armed, and refusing to surrender, he was shot dead by one of the soldiers. Some of his fellow-conspirators were afterwards taken, and four of them were executed.

The insensible form of the President was carried to his house, but no human skill could save his life or restore him to consciousness. He never spoke again, and early on the following morning, April the 15th, he ceased to breathe. When the terrible news was flashed through the land, the people were mad with grief, and the whole

nation went into mourning for their murdered chief.

One who was present says: "All was gloom and mourning. Men walked in the public places and wept aloud as if they had been alone, women sat with children on the steps of houses, wailing and sobbing. Strangers stopped to converse and cry. I saw in that day more of the human heart than in all the rest of my life. I saw in Philadelphia a great mob surging idly here and there between madness and grief, not knowing what to do. By common sympathy every family began to dress their houses in mourning, and to hang black stuff in all the public places. Before night the whole nation was shrouded in black."

Thousands of persons went to the Capitol, where his body lay in state, guarded by the chief officers of the army and navy, to look for the last time on that face which had so often lighted up with sympathy for them and theirs. On the 21st of April the funeral train left Washington, and for two thousand miles passed between two lines of grief-stricken people. Day and night, in sunshine and shower, as the train sped on with its precious burden, the silent watchers could be seen waiting for the sad procession to pass. In the larger cities the coffin was carried from one end to the other by the chief citizens, and then again sent on its way to Lincoln's home.

His friends and neighbours were waiting to receive him, when "Honest Abe Lincoln" returned from the scene of his great achievements and tragic death. And those who had known and loved the simple, unpretending citizen, joined with great statesmen who had sat at his councils and famous generals whom he had encouraged to victory, to pay a final tribute to a man whose name will ever be "The watchword of Liberty."

THE END.

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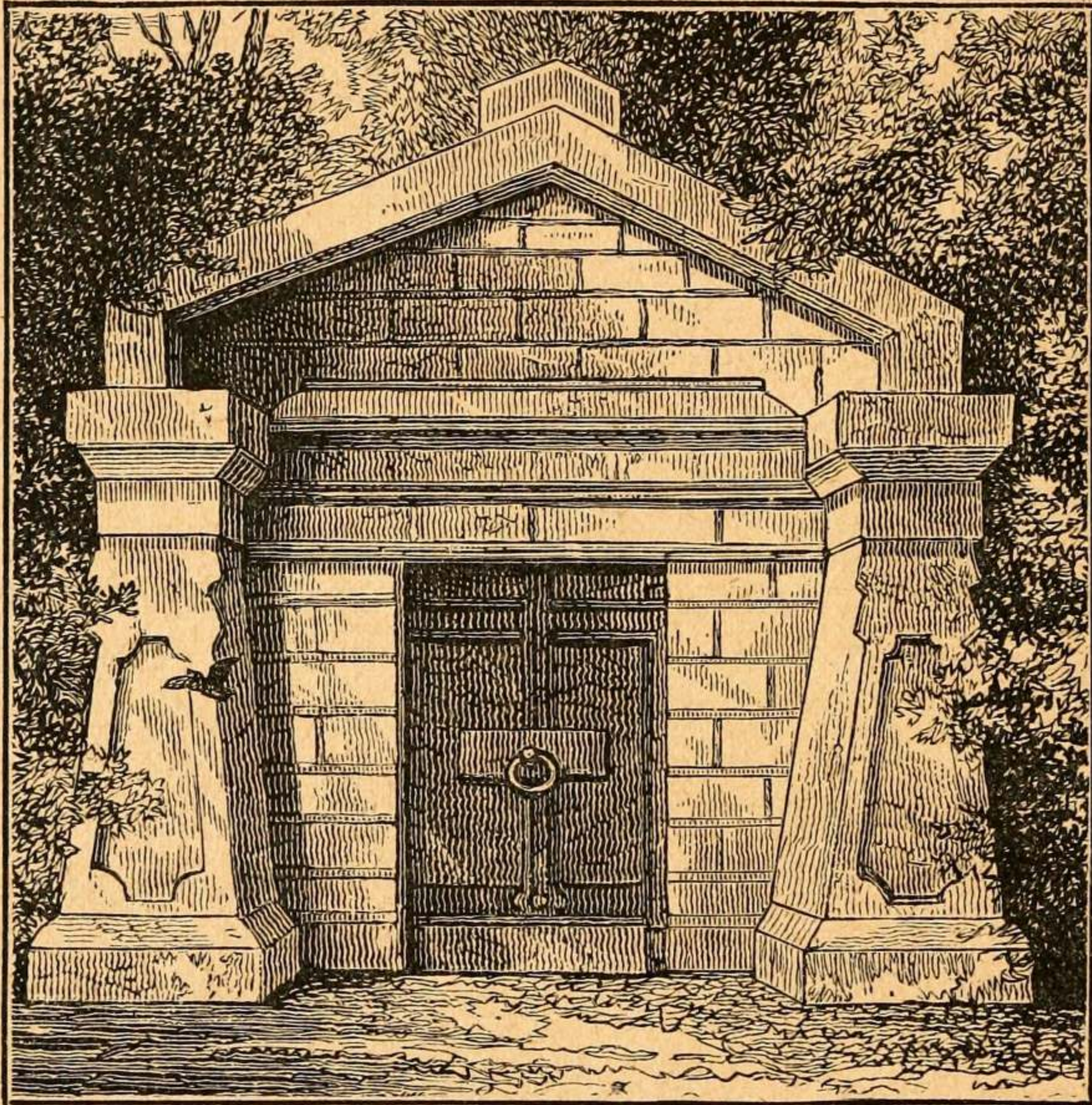

ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S TOMB.

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