

# **The Lincoln Story Book**

Henry L. Williams



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# The Lincoln Story Book

**Henry L. Williams**

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- “CLOSE YOUR EYES!”
- DON'T JUDGE BY APPEARANCES.
- “NOTHING CAN TOUCH HIM FURTHER.”
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THE LINCOLN STORY BOOK  
A Judicious Collection of the Best Stories  
and Anecdotes of the Great President,  
Many Appearing Here for the  
First Time in Book Form  
COMPILED BY

## The Lincoln Story Book

HENRY L. WILLIAMS

### PREFACE.

The Abraham Lincoln Statue at Chicago is accepted as the typical Westerner of the forum, the rostrum, and the tribune, as he stood to be inaugurated under the war-cloud in 1861. But there is another Lincoln as dear to the common people—the Lincoln of happy quotations, the speaker of household words. Instead of the erect, impressive, penetrative platform orator we see a long, gaunt figure, divided between two chairs for comfort, the head bent forward, smiling broadly, the lips curved in laughter, the deep eyes irradiating their caves of wisdom; the story-telling Lincoln, enjoying the enjoyment he gave to others.

This talkativeness, as Lincoln himself realized, was a very valuable asset. Leaving home, he found, in a venture at “Yankee notion-peddling,” that glibness meant three hundred per cent, in disposing of flimsy wares. In the camp of the lumber-jacks and of the Indian rangers he was regarded as the pride of the mess and the inspirator of the tent. From these stages he rose to be a graduate of the “college” of the yarn-spinner—the village store, where he became clerk.

The store we know is the township vortex where all assemble to “swap stories” and deal out the news. Lincoln, from behind the counter—his pulpit—not merely repeated items of information which he had heard, but also recited doggerel satire of his own concoction, punning and emitting sparks of wit. Lincoln was hailed as the “capper” of any “good things on the rounds.”

Even then his friends saw the germs of the statesman in the lank, homely, crack-voiced hobbledohoy. Their praise emboldened him to stand forward as the spokesman at schoolhouse meetings, lectures, log-rollings, huskings auctions, fairs, and so on—the folk-meets of our people. One watching him in 1830 said foresightedly: “Lincoln has touched land at last.”

In commencing electioneering, he cultivated the farming population and their ways and diction. He learned by their parlance and Bible phrases to construct “short sentences of small words,” but he had all along the idea that “the plain people are more easily influenced by a broad and humorous illustration than in any other way.” It is the Anglo-Saxon trait, distinguishing all great preachers, actors, and authors of that breed.

He acknowledged his personal defects with a frankness unique and startling; told a girl whom he was courting that he did not believe any woman could fancy him; publicly said that he could not be in looks what was rated a gentleman; carried the knife of “the homeliest man”; disparaged himself like a Brutus or a Pope Sixtus. But the mass relished this “plain, blunt man who spoke right on.”

He talked himself into being the local “Eminence,” but did not succeed in winning the election when first presented as “the humble” candidate for the State Senate. He stood upon his “imperfect education,” his not belonging “to the first families, but the seconds”; and his shunning society as debarring him from the study he required.

Repulsed at the polls, he turned to the law as another channel, supplementing forensic failings by his artful story-telling. Judges would suspend business till “that Lincoln fellow got through with his yarn-spinning” or underhandedly would direct the usher to get the rich bit Lincoln told, and repeat it at the recess.

Mrs. Lincoln, the first to weigh this man justly, said proudly, that “Lincoln was the great favorite everywhere.”

Meanwhile his fellow citizens stupidly tired of this Merry Andrew—they “sent him elsewhere to talk other folks to death”—to the State House, where he served several terms creditably, but was mainly the fund of jollity to the lobby and the chartered jester of the lawmakers.

Such loquacious witchery fitted him for the Congress. Elected to the House, he was immediately greeted by connoisseurs of the best stamp—President Martin van Buren, “prince of good fellows;” Webster, another intellect, saturnine in repose and mercurial in activity; the convivial Senator Douglas, and the like. These formed the rapt ring around Lincoln in his own chair in the snug corner of the congressional chat-room. Here he perceived that his rusticity and shallow skimmings placed him under the trained politicians. It was here, too, that his stereotyped prologue to his digressions—“That reminds me”—became popular, and even reached England, where a publisher so entitled a joke-book. Lincoln displaced “Sam Slick,” and opened the way to Artemus Ward and Mark Twain. The longing for elevation was fanned by the association with the notables—Buchanan, to be his predecessor as President; Andrew Johnson, to be his vice and successor; Jefferson Davis and Alex. H. Stephens,

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President and Vice-President of the C. S. A.; Adams, Winthrop, Sumner, and the galaxy over whom his solitary star was to shine dazzlingly.

A sound authority who knew him of old pronounced him “as good at telling an anecdote as in the '30's.” But the fluent chatterer reined in and became a good listener. He imbibed all the political ruses, and returned home with his quiver full of new and victorious arrows for the Presidential campaign, for his bosom friends urged him to try to gratify that ambition, preposterous when he first felt it attack him. He had grown out of the sensitiveness that once made him beg the critics not to put him out by laughing at his appearance. He formed a boundless arsenal of images and similes; he learned the American humorist's art not to parade the joke with a discounting smile. He worked out Euclid to brace his fantasies, as the steel bar in a cement fence-post makes it irresistibly firm. But he allowed his vehement fervor to carry him into such flights as left the reporters unable to accompany his sentences throughout.

He was recognized as the destined national mouthpiece. He was not of the universities, but of the universe; the Mississippi of Eloquence, uncultivated, stupendous, enriched by sweeping into the innumerable side bayous and creeks.

Elected and re-elected President, he continued to be a surprise to those who shrank from levity. Lincoln was their puzzle; for he had a sweet sauce for every “roast,” and showed the smile of invigoration to every croaking prophet. His state papers suited the war tragedies, but still he delighted the people with those tales, tagging all the events of what may be called the Lincoln era. The camp and the press echoed them though the Cabinet frowned—secretaries said that they exposed the illustrious speaker to charges of “clownishness and buffoonery.”

But this perennial good-humor—perfectly poised by the people—alleviated the strain of withstanding that terrible avalanche threatening to dismember and obliterate the States and bury all the virtues and principles of our forefathers.

Even his official letters were in the same vein. Regarding the one to England which meant war, he asked of Secretary Seward if its language would be comprehended by our minister at the Victorian court, and added dryly: “Will James, the coachman at the door—will he understand it?” Receiving the answer, he nodded grimly and said: “Then it goes!” It went, and there was no war with the Bull.

Time has refuted the purblind purists, the chilly “wet-blankets”; and the Lincoln stories, bright, penetrative, piquant, and pertinent are our classics. Hand in hand with “Father Abraham,” the President next to Washington in greatness, walks “Old Abe, the Story-teller.”

## LINCOLN CALENDAR.

- Abraham Lincoln, born February 12, 1809, Hardin County, Kentucky. "Lincoln Day."
- 1817—Settled in Perry County, Indiana; father, mother, sister, and self.
- 1818—October 5, Mrs. Thomas Lincoln (Nancy Hanks) died; buried Spencer County, Indiana. In 1901, a monument erected to her memory, the base being the former Abraham Lincoln vault. Schooling, a few months, 1819, '20 and '28, about six months' school.
- 1819—Thomas (father of A. L.) marries again: Mrs. Johnson (Sally Bush) of Kentucky.
- 1830—March, Lincoln family remove into Illinois, near Decatur.
- 1831—Works for himself: boatbuilding and sailing, carpentering, hog-sticking, sawmilling, blacksmithing, river-pilot, logger, etc., in Menard County, Indiana.
- 1831—Election clerk at New Salem. Captain and private (re-enlisted) in Black Hawk War. Store clerk and merchant, New Salem. Studies for the law.
- 1832—First political speech. Henry Clay, Whig platform. Defeated through strong local vote. Deputy surveyor, at three dollars a day, Sangamon County.
- 1834—Elected to State legislature as Whig. (Resides in Springfield till 1861. Law partner with John L. Stuart till 1840.)
- 1835—Postmaster, New Salem; appointed by President Jackson.
- 1838 to 1840—Reelected to State legislature.
- 1840—Partner in law with S. T. Logan.
- 1842—Married Miss Mary Todd, of Kentucky. Of the four sons, Edward died in infancy; William ("Willie") at twelve at Washington; Thomas ("Tad") at Springfield, aged twenty; Robert M. T., minister to Great Britain, presidential candidate, secretary of war to President Garfield. His only grandson, Abraham, died in London, March, 1890.
- 1844—Proposed for Congress.
- 1845—Law partner with W. H. Herndon, for life.
- 1846—Elected to Congress, the single Whig Illinois member; voted antislavery; sought abolition in the D. C.; voted Wilmot Proviso. Declined reelection.
- 1848—Electioneered for General Taylor.
- 1849—Defeated by Shields for United States senator.
- 1852—Electioneered for General Scott.
- 1854—Won the State over to the Republicans, but by arrangement transferred his claim to the senatorship to Trumbull. October, debated with Douglas. Declined the governorship in favor of Bissell.
- 1856—Organized the Republican Party and became its chief; nominated vice-president, but was not chosen by its first convention; worked for the Fremont-Dayton presidential ticket.
- 1858—Lost in the legislature the senatorship to Douglas.
- 1859—Placed for the presidential candidacy. Made Eastern tour "to get acquainted."
- 1860—May 9, nominated for President, "shutting out" Seward, Chase, Cameron, Dayton, Wade, Bates, and McLean.
- 1861—March 4, inaugurated sixteenth President; succeeds Buchanan, and precedes his vice—Andrew Johnson, whom General Grant succeeded. Civil War began by firing on Fort Sumter, April 12.
- 1862—September 22, emancipation announced.
- 1863—January 1, emancipation proclaimed. November 19, Gettysburg Cemetery address. December 9, pardon to rebels proclaimed.
- 1864—Unanimous nomination as Republican presidential candidate for re-election, June 7. Reelected November 8.
- 1865—March 4, inaugurated for the second term. April 14, assassinated in Ford's Theater, Washington, by a mad actor, Wilkes Booth. April 19, body lay in state at Washington. April 26, Booth slain in resisting arrest, by Sergeant Boston Corbett, near Port Royal. April 21 to May 4, funeral-train through principal cities North, to

## The Lincoln Story Book

Springfield, Illinois.

1871—Temporarily deposited in catacomb.

1874—In catacomb, in sarcophagus. The completed monument dedicated.

1876—To frustrate repetition of body-snatchers' attempt, reinterred deeper.

1900—A fifth removal; the whole structure solidly rebuilt, containing the martyred President, his wife, and their three children, as well as the grandson bearing Abraham's name.

THE LINCOLN STORY BOOK

\* \* \* \* \*



**CHILDISH RIME.**

In a copybook, at the age of nine or ten:  
Abraham Lincoln,  
his hand and pen.  
he will be good, but  
god knows when.

The small “g” led a public speaker to denounce the sort of men—“sordid and ignorant”—who write “God with a small g and gold with a big one.” This was a scrapbook in humble imitation of the albums in the East.

Another copybook motto. (A year or so later.)

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

\* \* \* \* \*

## THE LITTLE HATCHET DID IT.

In 1823 Abraham Lincoln went briefly to Crawford's school, a log house, pleasing the teacher by his attention to the simple course. The boy had read but a small library, principally "Weems' Life of Washington," which had impressed him deeply. This is shown by the following anecdote told by Andrew Crawford, the Spencer County pedagogue: The latter saw that a buck's head, nailed on the schoolhouse, was broken in one horn, and asked the scholars who among them broke it. "I did it," answered young Lincoln promptly. "I did not mean to do it, but I hung on it"—he was very tall and reached it too easily—"and it broke!" Though lean, he weighed fairly. "I wouldn't have done it if I had 'a' thought it would break."

Other boys of that "class" would have tried to conceal what they did and not own up until obliged to do so. His immediate friends believed that the hatchet and cherry-tree incident in Washington's life traced this truthful course.

\* \* \* \* \*

## THE LITTLE HATCHET AGAIN TURNS UP.

In his teens Abraham Lincoln, while not considered a man, was able to swing an ax with full power. It was the borderer's multifarious tool and accompanied him everywhere. One time, while sauntering along Gentryville, his stepsister playfully ran at him of a sudden and leaped from behind upon him. Holding on to his shoulders, she dug her knees into his back—a rough trick called fun by these semi-savages—and brought him to the ground. Unfortunately, she caused him to release the ax in his surprise, and it cut her ankle. The boy stopped the wound and bandaged it, while she moaned. Through her cries, he reproached her, and concluded:

“How could you disobey mother so?” for she had been enjoined not to follow her brother. “What are you going to tell her about getting hurt?”

“Tell her I did it with the ax,” she replied. “That will be the truth?” she questioned, with the prevarication of her sex inborn.

“Yes, that's the truth, but it is not all the truth. You tell the whole truth.”

The mother was forgiving, and nothing more came of the casualty.

\* \* \* \* \*

## LINCOLN'S WEDDING–SONG.

Abraham Lincoln's own sister Sarah married one Aaron Grigsby, a man in the settlers' line of life; and Abraham, a youth under age, composed an epithalamium on the occasion. The title was "Adam and Eve's Wedding–Song," and the principal verses are given to show what roughness pervaded the home on the frontier:

The woman was not taken from Adam's feet, we see,  
So we must not abuse her, the meaning seems to be.  
The woman was not taken from Adam's head, we know;  
To show she must not rule him—'tis evidently so.  
The woman, she was taken from under Adam's arm,  
So she must be protected from injuries and harm.

## **“RISK THE HOGS AND I WILL RISK MYSELF!”**

At the age of seventeen, Lincoln, the strongest and “longest” youngster of the neighborhood, was let out by his father for six dollars a month and board to a James Taylor, ferryman of Anderson's Creek and the Ohio River. He was also expected to do the farmwork and other jobs, as well as the chores in and about the house. This included tending to the baby—the good wives uniting to pronounce Abe the best of helps as “so handy,” as Mrs. Toodles would say.

He had attained his fixed height, exactly six feet three inches. (This is his own record.) He really did, with his unusual strength, more than any man's stint, and failing to gain full man's wages, whether it was his father or he handled it, he felt the injustice, which soured him on that point. He enraged his employer's son by sitting up late to read, so that the young man struck him to silence. But the young giant refused from retaliating in kind, whether from natural magnanimity belonging to giants, or from respect for the “young master,” or from self-acknowledgment that he was in the wrong. He learned the craft of river boatman in this engagement. One day, on being asked to kill a hog, he replied like the Irishman with the violin, “that he had never done it, but he would try.”

“If you will risk the hog,” he said, “I will risk myself!”

Becoming hog-slaughterer added this branch occupation to the many of “the man of all work.” Taylor sub-let him out in this capacity for thirty cents a day, saying:

“Abe will do any one thing about as well as another.”

## THE REST WAS VILE.

The Lincoln homestead in Indiana, in 1820–23, had at the first the primitive corn–mill in the Indian fashion—a burnt–out block with a pounder rigged to a well–sweep. A water–mill being set up ten miles off, on Anderson's Creek, that was superseded, as improvement marched, by a horse–power one. To this Lincoln, as a lad of sixteen or seventeen, would carry the corn in a bag upon an old flea–bitten gray mare. One day, on unhitching the animal and loading it, and running his arm through the head–gear loop to lead, he had no sooner struck it and cried “Get up, you de——,” when the beast whirled around, and, lashing out, kicked him in the forehead so that he fell to the ground insensible. The miller, Hoffman, ran out and carried the youth indoors, sending for his father, as he feared the victim would not revive. He did not do so until hours after having been carried home. When conscious, his faculties, as psychologically ordained, resumed operations from the instant of suspension, and he uttered the sequel to his outcry:

“——vil!”

Lincoln's own explanation is thus:

“Just before I struck the mare, my will, through the mind, had set the muscles of my tongue to utter the expression, and when her heels came in contact with my head, the whole thing stopped half–cocked, as it were, and was only fired off when mental energy or force returned.”

His friends interpreted the occurrence as a proof of his always finishing what he commenced.

**“NO HEAPING COALS OF FIRE ON THAT HEAD.”**

The wantonly cruel experiment of testing the sensitiveness in reptiles armored, passed into a proverb out West in pioneer times. Besides carving initials and dates on the shell of land tortoises, boys would fling the creatures against tree or rock to see it perish with its exposed and lacerated body, or literally place burning coals on the back. In such cases Lincoln, a boy in his teens, but a redoubtable young giant, would not only interfere vocally, but with his arms, if needed.

“Don't terrapins have feelings?” he inquired.

The torturer did not know the right answer, and, persisting in the treatment, had the shingle wrenched from his hand and the cinders stamped out, while the sufferer was allowed to go away.

“Well, feelings or none, he won't be burned any more while I am around!”

He did not always have to resort to force in his corrections, as he obtained the title of “Peacemaker” by other means, and the spell in his tongue, at that age.

## **STUMPING THE STUMP-SPEAKER.**

When Lincoln became a man and, divorced from his father's grasping tyranny, set up as a field-hand, he lightened the labor in Menard County by orating to his mates, and they gladly suspended their tasks to listen to him recite what he had read and invented—or, rather, adapted to their circumscribed understanding. Besides mimicry of the itinerant preachers, he imitated the electioneering advocates of all parties and local politics. One day, one such educator collected the farmers and their help around him to eulogize some looming-up candidate, when a cousin and admirer of young Lincoln cast a damper on him, crying out, with general approval, that Abe could talk him dry! Accepting the challenge, the professional spellbinder allowed his place on the stump of the cottonwood to be held by the raw Demosthenes. To his astonishment the country lad did display much fluency, intelligence, and talent for the craft. Frankly the stranger complimented him and wished him well in a career which he recommended him to adopt. From this cheering, Lincoln proceeded to speak in public—his limited public—“talking on all subjects till the questions were worn slick, greasy, and threadbare.”



## MAKING THE WOOL, NOT FEATHERS, FLY.

The “export trade” of the Indiana farmers was with New Orleans, the goods being carried on flatboats. The traffic called for a larger number of resolute, hardy, and honest men, as, besides the vicissitudes of fickle navigation, was the peril from thieves. Abraham early made acquaintance with this course as he accompanied his father in such a venture down the great river. Then passed apprenticeship, he built a boat for Gentry—merchant of Gentryville—and “sailed” it, with the storekeeper's son Allen as bow-hand or first officer. He and his crew of one started from the Ohio River landing and safely reached the Crescent City—safely as to cargo and bodies, but not without a narrow escape. At Baton Rouge, a little ahead of the haven, the boat was tied up at a plantation, and the two were asleep, when they became objects of an attack from a river pest—a band of refugee negroes and similar lawless rogues.

Luckily their approach was heard and the two awoke. Having been warned that the desperadoes would not stand on trifles, the young men armed themselves with clubs and leaped ashore, after driving the pirates off the deck. They pursued them, too, with such an uproar that their number was multiplied in the runaways' mind. Both returned wounded—Abraham retaining a mark over the right eye, noticeable in after life, and not to his facial improvement. They immediately unhitched the boat and stood out in the channel.

“I wish we had carried weapons,” sighed Lincoln. “Going to war without shooting-irons is not what the Quakers hold it to be.”

“If we had been armed,” returned Allen, as regretfully, “we would have made the feathers fly!”

It had not been too dark for the shade of the enemy to be perceived, so his skipper gave one of his earnest laughs, and replied:

“You mean *wool*, I reckon!”

## LOG-ROLLING TO SAVE LIVES.

It was in the spring after the deep snow of 1831, that three or four lumbermen, who had built a large flatboat for carrying a cargo to New Orleans, were on the Sangamon River, trying the rowboat, or scow, to accompany the vessel. The river was very high and on the run. Two of the men leaped into the boat to get the drink for being the first in, and sent her out into the current. They were unable to stem it and row back. Lincoln shouted for them to head up and try the sleeping, or dead water, along shore. But they were mastered, and paddled for a wrecked boat, which had a pole sticking up. But though the man who grabbed for it secured his hold, the boat was capsized and the other was flung into the tide.

Lincoln, as captain, shouted out to him:

“Carman, swim for that elm-tree down there! You can catch it! Keep calm. Lay hold of a branch.”

The tree was at a convenient height, and Carman caught on and swung himself out; but the icy water chilled him to the bone. But he was safe for the present, seeing which the captain called out to the other to let go his pole and let himself be carried down to the tree, also. If he hung on in the open there much longer, he would become stiff and unable to swim. The man managed to reach his mate, and the two were joined at the tree.

The manager of the rescue found a log and, attaching a rope, rolled it into the stream, with the help of others who had arrived on the scene. They towed it up some distance to get a good send-off, and a young daredevil got on it with the intention of being floated down to the tree, where all three would become passengers and be drawn home. But in his haste to do so, Jim Dorrell raised himself off his log by the branch he grasped and, along with the other unfortunates, made three men to be saved.

When the riderless log was hauled up inshore, Lincoln mounted it to make the next cast in person. Having an extra rope with him, he lassoed the tree and soon drew the log up. Cold as they were, the three men dropped down and straddled beside him. At his orders the men on the bank held the rope taut, so that the log, allowed to swing off freely, slung around with the current to the side, and the four were disembarked. This made Abraham the hero of the Sangamon River among the boatmen.

(Narrated by John Rolls, of New Salem, a witness.)

## LINCOLN'S FIRST DOLLAR.

As in all farming communities, where the only movement of currency is when the crop comes in and the debts accumulating during the growth are settled and the slight surplus spent, the Indiana pioneers little knew “extra” cash. To obtain it, the men used their off hours in guiding intending settlers, assisting surveyors and prospectors, felling and hewing trees, and horse-trading. Another source of income out of bounds was to send a stock of produce down the river to sell or barter for the Southern plantation produce. As there was talk at home of furnishing their house, Abraham bethought him of this resource. His father consented readily to any notion that might result in gain, and his mother, though believing nearly two thousand miles of water travel onerous, allowed her “yes.” Besides, the young man, by excessive work on their place, had piled up a goodly stock of salable stuff. Abraham had only to make a boat. It was small, merely to hold the “venture” and his hand-bundle of “plunder” for the trip and land cruise at New Orleans. Western country boys who had seen the Crescent City talked of the exploit as the Easterners of seeing Europe.

Abe was maneuvering his boat on the Ohio River, at Rockport, when he heard the whistle announcing the approach of a steamboat. These craft were not enabled to make a landing anywhere, even with a run-out gang-plank—but took passengers and parcels aboard by lighters. Lincoln's small boat seemed admirably placed to serve as a transport to a couple of gentlemen who came down to the shore to ship on the steamboat. Their trunks were taken out of their carriages, and they selected Lincoln's new boat among some others. In his homespun, the gawky youth looked what he was—not the owner of the craft and about to try a speculation on the river, but one of the “scrubs.” The “scrubs,” not from any relation with washing—quite otherwise—were those poor families on the outskirts of towns who lived in the scrub or dwarfed pines. Accordingly one of them asked, indicating the flatboat:

“Who owns this?”

The hero relates the story thus:

“I answered, somewhat modestly: 'I do!'”

“Will you take us and our trunks out to the steamboat?”

“Certainly,' glad of the chance of earning something. I supposed that each of them would give two or three *bits*—practically the dime of nowadays.”

Lincoln carried the passengers aboard the vessel and handed up their trunks. Each of the gentlemen drew out a piece of silver and threw it on the little deck.

“Gentlemen, you may think it was a very little thing, and in these days it seems to me a trifle; but it was a most important incident in my life. I could scarcely believe my eyes as I picked up the two silver half-dollars. I could scarcely credit that I, a poor boy, had earned a dollar in less than a day—that by honest work, I had earned a dollar!” (Lincoln's flatboatman wage was \$10 a month.)

(Related by Frank B. Carpenter, the portrait-painter, as given out by President Lincoln to a party of friends in the White House executive chamber, Secretary Seward, notably, being among them.)

## CONVICTION THROUGH A THRASHING.

In 1831, Abraham Lincoln, returning from a voyage to New Orleans, paid the usual filial visit to his father, living in Coles County. A famous wrestler, one Needham, hearing of the newcomer's prowess in wrestling, more general than pugilism on the border, called to try their strength. As the professional was in practise, and as the other, from his amiable disposition and his forbidding appearance was not so, the latter declined the honor of a hug and the forced repose of lying on the back. Nevertheless, taunted into the trial, he met the champion and defeated him in two goes. The beaten one was chagrined, and vented his vexation in this defiance:

“You have thrown me twice, Lincoln, but you cannot *whip* me!”

“I do not want to, and I don't want to get whipped myself,” was the simple reply.

“Well, I 'stump' you to lick me!” went on Needham, thinking he was gaining ground. “Throwing a man is one thing and licking him another!”

“Look here, Needham,” said the badgered man, at last, “if you are not satisfied that I can throw you every time, and want to be convinced through a thrashing, I will do that, too, for your sake!”

The man “backed out.” But he was ever afterward one of the champion's warmest friends.

## BOATING ON GROUND “A LEETLE DAMP.”

In a letter of August, 1862, the President alludes to the amphibious minor navy, which made their tracks “wherever the ground was a little damp.” This is hardly an exaggeration of Western shallow-water navigation. Lincoln, as pilot on the Sangamon River in 1831, was engaged to run a steamboat called the *Talisman*, after Sir Walter Scott's popular romance. It was to test the point whether the Sangamon River was navigable or not, an important local problem on which Lincoln, later, got into the legislature. As he had “tried” the river a good deal with the flatboats, he answered, he would try and do the best he could. A large crowd flocked in from all sides to witness the experiment. Lincoln guided the bark well up to the New Salem dam. Here a gap had been cut to let the vessel slip through. But at a place called Bogue's Mill, the water was rapidly lowering, and they had to wheel about and get back, or be shoaled and be held there until the spring freshets. The return trip was slow, as, though the stream was in his favor, the high prairie wind delayed the boat. The falling water had made the broken hole in the dam impracticable. But Lincoln backed the *Talisman* off as soon as she stranded and stuck; and, by casting an anchor so as to act as a gigantic grapnel, to tear away some more of the dam, the opening sufficed for the boat to “coast” on the stones and get over into deep water. “I think,” says an old boatman—J. R. (“Row”) Herndon—“that the captain gave Lincoln forty dollars to keep on to Beardstown. I am sure I got that!”

## THE INITIATOR INSTALLED.

As a fruit of incessant study Abraham Lincoln fitted himself to accept the post of clerk at Offutt's store, in New Salem, in 1831. It was a responsible position, requiring strict honesty, intelligence, glib talk, attention, and courtesy to the few dames in the population of twenty households, "with the back settlement to hear from." In fact, Lincoln's gifts and cultivated acquirements made him such a favorite that the list of customers from out of town was extensive. This promotion of a newcomer nettled the bad element of the region. They were located from congeniality in a suburb termed Clary's Grove. Like the tail which undertakes to wag the dog, this tag constituted itself the criterion and proposed "initiating" any accession to the inhabitants. To take the conceit out of the upstart who had leaped from the flatboat deck to behind the counter at the store—the acme of a bumpkin's ambition—they selected their bully. This Jack Armstrong was held so high by Bill Clary, "father" of the Grove boys, that he bet with Offutt, over-loud in praise of his help, that Jack could beat Abe, "and your Abe has got to be initiated, anyway!"

Abraham refused under provocation to have anything to do with "rough-and-tumble" fighting—as also known as "scuffle and tussle," and "wooling and pulling"—in short, these agreeable features promise to include all brutalities save gouging, which was unfashionable so far to the North. But a man could not live quietly on the frontier without showing to such ruffians that his hands could shield his head. For the honor of the store, the clerk had to stand up to the opponent.

The bout came off. In the first attack, Lincoln lifted the foe, though heavier, clean off his feet, but he was unable to lay him down in the orthodox manner, consisting in placing him flat on his back, with both shoulder-blades denting the earth. The semi-victor amicably said: "Let's quit, Jack! You see I cannot give you the fall—and you cannot give it me."

The gang shouted for a resumption of the "sport," thinking this was weakness of the competitor. They joined again, but Armstrong, having his doubts, resorted to foul play—kicking or "legging," as the localism stands. Indignantly, Lincoln drew him up again and shook him in mid-air as a terrier does a rat. The rowdies, seeing their champion bested, shouted for him to make a *fight* of it, and probably they would have "mixed in" and made a "fight for all" in another minute. But Jack had his doubts set at rest as to the prospect of overcoming a man who could hold him out and off at arm's length; and, begging to be set down, grasped his antagonist's hand in friendship and proclaimed him the best man "who had ever broke into" that section. The two became friends, and the gang gradually dwindled by this recession from their ranks of their Goliath.

## THE HORRORS FOR THE THIRD TIME!

When Abraham Lincoln was a poor young lawyer from Springfield, attending the perambulatory court down at Lewiston, Illinois, he found the place crowded by a Methodist meeting as well as the court having an attractive case to try. He was obliged—because of exclusion from the inn—to put up at the sheriff's house. Mrs. Davidson herself could only offer him shares with Mr. Stephen A. Douglas, also a rising man, and Peter Cartwright, the noted preacher—on the floor, but on a feather bed. At that period the wild goose flew low. It may be supposed that the student of Shakespeare might quote “When shall we three meet again?” on rising between the famous border worthies in the dawn. The hospitality was so refreshing that the trio spent the next night there. They sat up by the large fireside, capping stories. The enmity of lawyers, and even of politicians, is but skin-deep, and Steve and Abe clashed not at all to meet the minister's reproof. Lincoln rocked while story-telling in a cane-bottomed chair, taken from the steamboat celebrated in Spoon River annals as its first navigator. Lincoln was the more interested, as he had been boatman and pilot on his river, the Sangamon. In the 1820's, this toy boat, the *Utility*, struggled into the high water of Spoon River. It is a tributary of the Illinois. Now, though the county is named Fulton, none of the inhabitants knew anything about the inventor of steam navigation, and doubted that a steamboat existed near them. Hence the snorting, puffing, and clangor of the vessel as she surged against the freshet, alarmed all the population in hearing when she ascended the virgin Spoon.

One Sam Jenkins had been on a spree for a week, and even he was roused by the tremendous sound. As he rushed from his cabin, by the terrific blaze from the high smoke-stack and the furnace burning pitch-pine, he sank onto his shaking knees and yelled:

“Boys, I have got 'em for the third time! It is all up with me!”

## **THE WHISTLE THAT STOPPED THE BOAT.**

Lincoln was pitted, as a lawyer, against a brother of the toga who was of fat and plethoric habit, and who puffed and blowed when most he wished to get on with his speech. The wag said:

“The gentleman reminds me of a little steamboat I knew about on the Spoon River. She had been equipped with a whistle disproportionate to her capacity of steam–power, and every time she blew off it stopped the boat!”



## IT IS THE DEED, NOT THE DOER.

By one of those unaccountable contradictions which disturb one's calculations upon women's conduct, the fair sex "took to" him with extraordinary kindness, though he always remained shy in their presence. This favor on their part was fortified by his striking honesty in little points which the close-seeing feminine eye never misses. To cap the climax he defended the purity of social order with a rarity in those quarters sufficient to single him out. Not that the roughest Westerner was not excessively gallant, but his restrictions in the ladies' presence did not always curb his proneness to "tall talk."

Once in the way, a loafer hanging about in the store, and having paid only attention to the dram counter, the necessary concomitant of the village center, became garrulous, but unfortunately more than seasoned the flow with a profanity tolerably rich in variety if not distinguished for refinement; he was of the Clary's Grove *genus*. As there was a crowd at the "ladies' department," that is, the dry-goods and finery, where it happened Lincoln was commonly besieged, the language was resented by woman's weapons—tosses of the head, affected deafness, glances into the future, and so on, but the clerk resented it in another way. He bade him be silent.

Now, the fellow thought, with his kind, that he was entitled to exhale the breath which was strengthened by the strong waters vended here, and expressed himself more foully than before.

He had a resentment against the clod rising to be a flower of courtesy, and here was his opportunity to satisfy the grudge, and before an audience timid and not apt to intervene.

Singularly, the men who most despise women are the ones who seek to have her applause. He wished to see the man who would stop him from uttering his sentiments. He was answered that his business would be attended to, as soon as the offended ladies had withdrawn.

The undesired witnesses took the hint and quitted the store. Thereupon the long-limbed clerk verified the taunt of "counter-jumper" by clearing it at a bound. "Will you engage not to repeat that rowdy (blackguard) talk in the store while I am the master, and leave instanter?"

The bully protested in a torrent of unrepeatable words.

"I see," said the champion of decency, "you want a whipping, and *I* may as well give it you as any other man."

And he forthwith administered the correction; not only did he drag him outdoors, but laid him out so senseless that nothing less than the border finish of a knock-down and drag-out encounter—the rubbing the conquered man's eyes with smart-weed—revived him to beg for mercy, and a drink. The victor allowed him to rise, converted his appeal into mockery by offering plain water, which the brute applied solely to his doubly inflamed eyes, and sent him away in tears. But the shock had a reparative effect; he became a good neighbor, and a convert to temperance.

(This or a similar lesson to the village bully is testified to by an eye-witness of Sangamon, but resident of Viroqua, Wisconsin; his name is John White. He worked at chopping rails with the rail-splitter on more than one job.)

## **TURN OUT OR BE TURNED OUT.**

Superintendent Tinker, of the W. U. T., says he heard Secretary Seward say to President Lincoln:

“Mr. President, I hear that you turned out for a colored woman on a muddy crossing the other day?”

“Did you?” returned the other laughingly. “Well, I don't remember it; but I always make it a rule, if people do not turn out for me, I will for them. If I didn't, there would be a collision.”

## THE BEST THING TO TAKE.

When Lincoln worked in and kept a grocery-store, it was flanked by a groggery and he had to supply spirits, but from that fact he saw the evils of the saloon and early identified himself with the novel temperance movement. In 1843, he joined the Sons of Temperance. While he said he was temperate on theory, it was not so—he was practically abstinent. Not only did he lecture publicly, but, at one such occasion, he gave out the pledges. In decorating a boy, Cleophas Breckenridge, with a badge, after he took the pledge, he said:

“Sonny, that is the best thing you will ever *take*.”

## DRINKING AND SWALLOWING ARE TWO THINGS.

It has been stated that Lincoln, after reigning at the village store, had become the idol of the settlement. A stranger to whom he was shown was not properly impressed. One of the clerk's friends, William Greene, bragged that his favorite was the strongest man in the township—this was not affecting the critic—and even went on: “The strongest in the country!”

“H'm! not the strongest in the State!” denied the stranger. “I know a man who can lift a barrel of flour as easily as I can a peck of potatoes.”

“Abe, there, could lift *two* barrels of flour if he could get a hold on them.”

“You can beat me telling 'raisers', but—”

“Taking a lift out of you or not, I am willing to bet that Abe will lift a barrel of spirits and drink out of the bung-hole to prove he can hold it there!”

“Impossible! What will you lay on the thing?”

They made a wager of a new hat—the Sunday hat of beaver being still costly.

Greene was betting unfairly—on a sure thing—as he had seen his friend do what he asserted, all but the drinking flourish. Lincoln was averse to the wagering at all, but to help his friend to the hat, he consented to the feat. He passed through it, lifting the cask between his two hands and holding the spigot-hole to his lips while he imbibed a mouthful. As he was slowly lowering the barrel to the floor, the winner exclaimed jubilately:

“I knew you would do it; but I never knew you to drink whisky before!”

The barrel was stood on the floor, when the drinker calmly expelled the mouthful of its contents, and drolly remarked:

“And I have not *drunk* that, you see!”

As a return for his action to win the hat, he asked Greene not to wager any more—a resolve which he took to oblige him.

## WORSTED IN A HORSE-TRADE.

Until Lincoln—seeing that his decisions created enemies, whichever way they fell—renounced being umpire for horse-racing and the like events, momentous on the border, he officiated in many such pastimes. Before he found them “all wrong,” he had a horsy acquaintance in a judge. This was at a time when he was practising law, which involved riding on circuit, as the court went round to give sittings like the ancient English justices, attending assizes. During such excursions, they played practical jokes, naturally. Among their singular contests was a bet of twenty-five dollars—as forfeit if, in horse-swapping, the loser rejected the horse offered on even terms with the one he “put in.” Neither was to know anything of the equine paragon until simultaneously exhibited.

As good sport was indicated where two such arrant jokers were in conflict, a vast throng filled the tavern-yard where the pair were to draw conclusions. At the appointed hour the court functionary dragged upon the scene a most dilapidated *simulacrum* of man's noblest conquest—blind, spavined, lean as Pharaoh's *kind*, creaking in every joint—at the same time that his fellow wagerer carried on under his long arm a carpenter's *horse*—gashed with adze and broadax, bored with the augur, trenched with saw and draw-knife—singed, paint, and tar-spotted, crazy in each leg of the three still adhering—in short, justifying Lincoln to reverse his cry at viewing the real animal:

“Jedge (for judge), this is the first time I ever *got the worst* of it in a hoss-trade!”

## HOW MANY SHORT BREATHS?

In the nearest town to the Lincolns lived a man called "Captain" Larkins. He was short and fat, and consequently "puffing." He was logically fond of "blowing." For example, if he bought any object, he would proclaim that it was the best article of its sort in the settlement. His favorite orating-ground—in fact, the only theater for displays was the front of the village store, where, among the farmers who came in to dicker and purchase stores, he would dilate. Lincoln did not like the pompous little fellow whose rotund and diminutive figure was in glaring contrast to his own—a young man, but colossal, while his stature was augmented by his meagerness.

"Gentlemen," bawled Larkins, "I have the best horse in the county! I ran him three miles in two—forty each and he never fetched a long breath!"

"H'm!" interrupted Lincoln, looking down at the man panting with excitement; "why don't you tell us how many short breaths *you* drew?"

## LINCOLN'S HEIGHT.

One of the committee appointed to acquaint Mr. Lincoln formally with the decision of the Chicago Presidential Convention of 1860 was Judge Kelly, a man of unusual stature. At the meeting with the nominee he eyed the latter with admiration and the jealousy the exceptional cherish for rivals. This had not escaped the curious Lincoln; he asked him, as he singled him out: "What is your height?"

"Six feet three. What is yours?"

"Six feet four." [Footnote: This will probably never be exactly settled now. Speaker Reed agreed with this statement. But Miss Emma Gurley Adams, in a position to know, published in the *New York Press* : "Mr. Lincoln told my father that he was exactly six feet three inches." This was at the end of his life. The contrariety of the assertions simply baffles one.]

"Then, sir, Pennsylvania bows to Illinois," responded the judge. "My dear sir, for years my heart has been aching for a President I could look up to, and I have found him at last in the land where we thought there were none but *little* giants."

(Stephen Douglas, leader of the Democratic party, was a pocket Daniel Webster and bearing the by-name of "the Little Giant.")

## MEASURES AND MEN.

The earlier audiences at the White House were inspired by ludicrous ideas, far between patriotism and interest in the “tall Hoosier.” The habitual attendants and guards soon discovered that the chief was an unrivaled host, adapting modes of reception to the differing kind of callers. He noticed once two young men who hung about the door, so that, sympathizing with the shy—for he had been wofully troubled by that feeling in his youth—he went over to the pair, and to make them feel at home, asked them to be seated while they looked on. But they didn't care for chairs. The shorter of the two stammered that he and his friend had a talk about the President's unusual height, and would the host kindly settle the matter, and see whether he were as tall as his excellency.

Lincoln had been scanning the competitor and, smiling, returned: “He is *long* enough, certainly. Let us see about that.” He went for his cane [Footnote: Lincoln's cane. This was the cane he carried, instead of going armed. But he was forever leaving it anywhere about, so that, nine times out of ten, he went forth without it on his errant “browsing” around; and it was a wonder that this time he knew where to find it.] and, placing the ferule end to the wall, to act as a level, he bade the young man draw near and stand under. When the rod was carefully adjusted to the top of the head, Mr. Lincoln continued:

“Now, step out and hold the cane while I go under.”

This comparison showed that the young man stood six feet three exactly. Lincoln's precise figure, too.

“Just my height,” remarked the affable President to the herald of the match; “he guessed with admirable accuracy!”

Giving both a shake of the hand, he gave them the good-by warmly. He had seen that they were innocents and shrank from letting them know that they had unconsciously offended his dignity.



## THE PRIZE FOR HOMELINESS.

In keeping with his proneness to jest at his own expense rather than lose a laugh, Lincoln is credited with telling the following story upon himself:

“In the days when I used to be on the circuit (law), I was accosted on the road by a stranger. He said: 'Excuse me, sir, but I have an article in my possession which belongs to you.' 'How is that?' I asked, considerably astonished.

“The stranger took a 'Barlow' from his pocket.

“‘This knife,’ said he, ‘was placed in my hands some years ago with the injunction of the community, through its bearer, that I was to keep it until I struck a man homelier than I. I have carried it from that time till this. Allow me to say, sir, that you are fairly entitled to the testimonial.’”

## HOW LONG LEGS SHOULD BE.

A quipster, harping on Mr. Lincoln's abnormal tallness, had the mishap to draw upon himself some quizzing; the President putting the *non plus* on him by asking:

“How long, then, ought a man's legs to be?”

The answer was given by the sphinx:

“Long enough to reach from his body to the ground.”

## LONG METER.

John Sherman will be remembered as originator of the politicians' "cover" for electioneering activity, "I am going home to mend my fences." He was fresh from Ohio, but he included in his round of duties, on visiting the capital, an attendance of a Lincoln reception. He waited in the long file for his turn to shake hands, and, while doing so, wondered how he would be received. For the informal "function" was enlivened by the most untoward incidents, due to the host's simplicity, spontaneous acts and words, and the homelike nature of the scene. Truly enough, when his chance came, the meeting was eccentric.

Lincoln scanned him a moment, threw out his large hand, and said:

"You're a pretty tall fellow, aren't you? Stand up here to me, back to back, and let's see which of us two is the taller!"

"In another moment I was standing back to back with the greatest man of his age. Naturally I was quite abashed by this unexpected evidence of democracy.

"You are from the West, aren't you?" inquired Lincoln.

"My home is in Ohio," I replied.

"I thought so," he said; "that's the kind of men they raise out there!"

## **“HARDSHIPS STRENGTHEN MUSCLES.”**

As in the old country, kings evade the tiresome features of receptions, after a time, by retiring and leaving the ceremony to be carried out by a deputy, so the daintier Presidents before the sixteenth one eluded the handshaking when possible. But, on the contrary, “the man out of the West” continued to the last, and the latest visitor had no reason to cavil at the grip being less hearty to him than the first comer. On visiting the army hospital at City Point, where upward of three thousand patients awaited his passing with enrapt respect, he insisted on no one being neglected. A surgeon inquired if he did not feel lamed in the arm by the undue exertion, whereupon he replied smilingly:

“Not at all. The hardships of my early life gave me strong muscles.”

And as there happened to be in the yard, by the doorway, a chopping-block with the ax left stuck on the top as usual, he took it out, swung, and poised it to get the unfamiliar heft, and chopped up a stick lying handy. When he paused, from no more left to do, he held out the implement straight, forming one line with his extended arm, and not a nerve quivered any more than the helve or the blade. The workers, who knew what hard work was, gazed with wonder at what they could not have done for a moment. One of them gathered up the chips and disposed of them for relics to the sightseers who welcomed such tokens of the great ruler.

(An American visiting Mr. Gladstone's country seat, Hawarden, and seeing the premier chopping a tree for health's sake, observed humorously, having also seen Mr. Lincoln employed as above: “Your Grand Old Man is going in at the same hole ours went out!”)

## HE USED TO BE “GOOD ON THE CHOP.”

In the beginning of 1865, the President was wont to pay visits to the James River, not merely to inspect the camps and the field-hospitals, but to have a peep at “the promised *land*”—that is, Richmond, still held by the rapidly melting and discouraged Southerners as the “Last Ditch.” In one of his strolls he came upon a gang of lumbermen cutting up logs and putting up stockades and cabins for the wet weather. Joining one group he chatted freely with the woodmen and as one of themselves. Presently, he asked for the loan of an ax. The man hesitating, since his blade had just been fine-edged, he explained that he was one of the Jacks and “used to be good on the chop.” Then seizing the arm with familiarity he attacked a big log and, using it as a broad-ax, shaped the rough-hewn sides till it was a perfect slab. He handed back the tool and stalked off amid cheers.

## A MAN WHO CAN SCRATCH HIS SHINS WITHOUT STOOPING.

One of the want-to-knows had the impertinence to inquire of Mr. Lincoln his opinion of General Sheridan, not yet known, who had come out of the West early in 1864, to take command of the cavalry under General Grant as lieutenant-general.

“Have you not seen Sheridan?” The answer was in the negative. “Then I will tell you just what kind of a chap he is: One of those *long* -armed fellows, with *short* legs, that can scratch their shins without having to stoop over to do it!”

## **STRUCK BY THE DEAD HAND.**

Edwin Booth, the tragedian, brother of the regicide Wilkes, was at a friend's house. By the purest chance, dallying over the knickknacks, he picked up a plaster-cast of a hand. It was something more than a paper-weight, he was intuitively prompted, for he said, handling it reverently as Yorick's relict:

“By the way, whose is this?”

Before the cue could be given to hush or utter a subterfuge, some one blurted out:

“Abraham Lincoln's! Don't you know?”

“The murder was out!” and the distinguished guest, who suffered a long term for a crime wholly out of his ken, was silent for the evening.—(W. D. Howells.)

## **THIS CLINCHES IT.**

A party accompanying the President to the ground to see experiments with new ordnance in the Navy Yard, in 1862, were diverted by his taking up a ship-carpenter's ax from its nick in a spar, and holding it out by the end of the handle; a feat that none of the group could imitate.

He said that he had enough of the Dahlgreens, Columbiads, and Raphael repeaters—and that this was an American institution, which, “I guess, I understand better than all other weapons!”



## LINCOLN'S FIRST LOVE-STORY.

In 1833, when Abraham was just over twenty, he fell in love with Anne, or Annie Rutledge, at New Salem. Her father kept the tavern where Lincoln boarded. But the girl was engaged to a dry-goods merchant, named McNeil. This man, pretending to be of a high old Irish family, likely to discountenance union to a publican's daughter, shilly-shallied, but finally went East to get his folks' consent. He acknowledged that he was parading under borrowed plumes, as he was a McNamara in reality. He stayed away so long that the maid-forlorn gave him up and listened to other suitors. Lincoln proposed, but waited till the apparent jilt was heard from. Then they were espoused. But a block to the match came in Lincoln having no position. Awaiting his efforts as a law student, the wedding was postponed; but, meanwhile, death came quick where fortune lagged. She died and left her lover broken-hearted. He seems then to have been smitten with the brown study afflicting him all his life, and by some, like Secretary Boutwell, affirmed to be independent of the surrounding grounds for depression and grief. Fears of suicide led his friends to watch him closely; and he was known to go and lie on the grave of the maid, whose name he said would dwell ever with him, while his heart was buried with her. The rival, McNamara, returned too late to redeem his vow, but lived in the same State many years, "a prosperous gentleman."

## A PUT-UP JOB—OR CHANCE?

The ways of the petitioner are deep and mysterious. The Virginia (Illinois) *Enquirer*, March 1, 1879, had the following:

“John McNamer (Namara?) was buried last Sunday, near Petersburg, Menard County. He was an early settler and carried on business at New Salem. Abe Lincoln was the postmaster there and kept a store. It was here that, at the tavern, dwelt the fair Annie Rutledge, in whose grave Lincoln wrote that his heart was buried. As the story runs, the fair and gentle Annie was John's sweetheart, but Abe took 'a shine' to her, and succeeded in heading off Mac, and won her affections. During the war, a Kentucky lady went to Washington with her daughter to procure her son's pardon for being a guerrilla. The daughter was a musician. Sitting at the piano while her mother was sewing, she sang 'Gentle Annie.' While it was being charmingly rendered, Abe rose from his seat, crossed the room to a window, and gazed out for several minutes with that sad, 'far-away' look noticed as one of his particularities. When he returned to his seat he wrote a note which, as he said, was the pardon besought. The scene proves that Mr. Lincoln was a man of fine feelings, and that, if the occurrence was a put-up job on the lady's part, it accomplished the purpose all the same.”

## LINCOLN'S MARRIAGE.

In 1839, another Kentucky belle [Footnote: Addressing Kentuckians in a speech made at Cincinnati, in 1859, Lincoln said: "We mean to marry our girls when we have a chance; and I have the honor to say I once did have a chance in that way."] arrived in Illinois to follow the steps of her sister, who had found a conquest there. This Mrs. Edwards introduced Miss Mary Todd, and she became the belle of the Sangamon bottom. Lincoln was pitted against another young lawyer, afterward the eminent Stephen A. Douglas, but, odd as it appears, Miss Todd singled out the Ugly Duckling as the more eligible of the two. Whatever the reason—strange in a man knowing how to bide his time to win—Lincoln wrote to the lady, withdrawing from the contest, allowed to be hopeless by him. His friend Speed would not bear the letter, but pressed him to have a face-to-face explanation. The rogue—who was in the toils himself, and was shortly wedded—believed the parley would remove the, perhaps, imaginary hindrance. But Miss Todd accepted the deliverance; thereupon they parted—but immediately the reconciliation took place. The nuptials were settled, but here again Lincoln displayed a waywardness utterly out of keeping with his subsequent actions. He "bolted" on the wedding-day—New-year's, 1841. Searching for him, his friends—remembering the fit after the Rutledge death—found him in the woods like the Passionate Pilgrim of ancient romance. Luckily he was inspirited by them with a feeling that an irrepressible desire to live till assured that the world is "a little better for my having lived in it." Seeing what ensued, one could say then "Good *Speed!*" to his bosom friend of that name. But this friend married in the next year, and in his cold loneliness so doubled, Lincoln harked back to the flame. She ought never to have forgiven him for the slight, but it was not possible for her to repay him with poetic justice by rejoicing Stephen A. Douglas, as that gentleman had looked elsewhere for matrimonial recompense. Lincoln and Miss Todd, in 1842, renewed the old plight and never again were divided.

## THE BURLESQUE DUEL.

Lincoln was plunged willy–nilly into the society he shunned at home, on entering the legislature at Springfield. A newspaper there published the account—from her side—of a young lady's difference with a noted politician, General James Shields. He married a sister of Lincoln's wife, and there was a feud between them. Shields flew to the editor to demand the name of the maligner, as he called the correspondent, or the editor must meet him with dueling weapon—or his horsewhip. In the Western States the whip was snapped at literary men as the cane was flourished in England at the date, 1842.

The editor consulted with Lincoln as a lawyer and a friend. With his enmity as to Shields, the friend promptly advised him to say “I did it!” This was, in fact, sheer justice, for it was Lincoln's wife who uttered the articles. And, by the way, their style and rustic humor were much in the vein of the “Widow Bedott” and the “Samantha” papers of later times. Mrs. Lincoln was not the mere housekeeper the scribes accuse her of being. Lincoln knew what was her value when he read his speeches first to her for an opinion, as Moliere courted his stewardess for opinions. Sumner heeded her counsel.

Abraham championed the mysterious “Aunt 'Becca,” who had characterized Shields as “a ballroom dandy floating around without heft or substance, just like a lot of cat–fur where cats have been fighting.” Is not this quite Lincolnian?

Thus put forward, Lincoln received a challenge.

Trial by battle—personal still ruled. The politicians coupled with the necessity of going out with weapons to maintain an assertion in speech or publication were Jefferson Davis, Jackson, the President; Henry Clay, the amiable; Sam Houston, Sergeant S. Prentiss, etc.

Shields naturally challenged the lady's champion. As the challenged party, Lincoln, who had cooled in the interim, not only chose broadswords (not at all “the gentleman's arm in an affair of honor”), but, what is more, descanted on the qualities of the cutlas in such a droll manner and words that the second went off laughing. He imparted his unseemly mirth to his opponent's seconds, and all the parties concerned took the cue to soften down the irritation between two persons formerly “chums,” and relatives so close.

The meeting took place by the river–side out of Alton, where the leaking out of the gallantry of Lincoln in taking up the cudgels for the lady led to an explanation, although no such enlightenment ought to be permitted on the ground. Besides, all was ludicrous—the broadswords intolerably broad.

The principals shook hands. But the plotters were not content with this peaceful ending. They had determined that the outside spectators on the town side of the river should be “in at the (sham) death.” They rigged up a log in a coat and sheet like a man wounded and reclining in the bottom of a boat, and pretended it was one of the duelists, badly stricken, whom they were escorting to town for surgical assistance. The explosion of laughter receiving the two principals when the hoax was revealed caused the incident to be a sore point to both Lincoln and Shields.

## “WANTING TO DANCE THE WORST WAY.”

A Miss Mary Todd had come to visit a sister married in the neighborhood of Springfield. Lincoln was there as a member of the legislature sitting. He had eschewed society, though he liked it, in favor of study, but now rewarded himself for achieving this fruit of application by joining the movements around him. He made the acquaintance of Miss Todd, vivacious, sprightly, keenly insighted so as to divine he would prove superior in fate to Stephen Douglas, also courting her. Although unsuited by nature and his means to shine in the ballroom, Lincoln followed his flame thither. Using the vernacular, he asked for her hand, saying earnestly:

“Miss Todd, I should like to dance with you *the worst way*.”

After he had led his partner to her seat, a friend asked how the clumsy partner had carried himself.

“He kept his word. He did dance the worst way!”

## **“THE STATUTE FIXES ALL THAT!”**

Even Lincoln's marriage was to be accompanied by a diversion of that merry imp of incongruity always with him—as Shakespeare's most stately heroes are attended by a comic servant. He married Miss Mary Todd, of Kentucky, at Springfield, at the age of thirty–three. It was the first wedding performed with all the ceremonial of the Episcopalian sect. This was to the awe of the Honorable Judge Tom C. Brown, an old man, and friend and patron of our Abraham. He watched the ecclesiastical functionary to the point of Lincoln's placing the ring on his bride's finger, when the irate old stager exclaimed at the formula: “With this ring I thee endow with all my goods,” etc.

“Grace to Goshen! Lincoln, the statute fixes all that!”

## HE DID NOT KNOW HIS OWN HOUSE.

In 1842 Abraham Lincoln married Miss Mary Todd, a Kentucky lady, at Springfield, where he took a house for the wedded life. Previously, while qualifying for the bar, he had dwelt for study over a furniture-store.

On account of his attending the traveling court, which compelled a horse, since he could not afford the gig associated with the chief lawyers' degree of respectability, he was frequently and for long spells away from home. In one of these absences his wife deemed it fit for his coming dignity of pleader to have a second story and roof of a fashionable type set upon the old foundations. Under a fresh coat of paint, too, this renovation perplexed the home-comer when he drew up his horse before it. At the sound of the horse's steps he knew that some one was flying to the parlor window, but, affecting amazement, he challenged a passer-by:

“Neighbor, I feel like a stranger here. Can you tell me where Abraham Lincoln lives? He used to live here!”

## THE ONLY ONE WHO DARED “PULL WOOL OVER LINCOLN'S EYES.”

While Mr. Lincoln was living in Springfield, a judge of the city, who was one of the leading and most influential citizens of the place, had occasion to call upon him. Mr. Lincoln was not overparticular in his matter of dress, and was also careless in his manners. The judge was ushered into the parlor, where he found Mr. Lincoln sprawled out across a couple of chairs, reclining at his ease. The judge was asked to be seated, and, without changing his position in the least, Mr. Lincoln entered into conversation with his visitor.

While the two men were talking, Mrs. Lincoln entered the room. She was, of course, greatly embarrassed at Mr. Lincoln's offhand manner of entertaining his caller, and, stepping up behind her husband, she grasped him by the hair and twitched his head about, at the same time looking at him reprovingly.

Mr. Lincoln apparently did not notice the rebuke. He simply looked up at his wife, then across to the judge, and, without rising, said:

“Little Mary, allow me to introduce you to my friend, Judge So-and-so.”

It will be remembered that Mrs. Lincoln's maiden name was Mary Todd, and that she was very short in stature.—*Leslie's Monthly*.



## **THE LONG AND SHORT OF IT.**

The contrast between the statures of the Lincolns, man and wife, was palpable, but this hardly substantiates the story of the President appearing with his wife on the White House porch in response to a serenade, and his saying:

“Here I am, and here is Mrs. Lincoln. That's the long and short of it!”

## **“ALL A MAN WANTS—TWENTY THOUSAND DOLLARS!”**

In one of his messages to Congress, the President foretold and denounced the tendency of wealth acquired in masses and rapidly by the war contractors and the like as “approaching despotism.” He saw liberty attacked in “the effort to place capital on an equal footing with—if not above—labor in the structure of government.” It is never to be forgotten that neither he nor his Cabinet officers were ever upbraided for corruption; [Footnote: It is true that Lincoln's first war minister, Simon Cameron, was accused of smoothing the way to certain fat war contracts, a wit suggesting Simony as the term, but no charges were really brought. Lincoln said that if one proof were forthcoming, he would have the Cameronian head—but Mr. Cameron died intact.] some, like Secretary Stanton, though handling enormous sums, died poor men comparatively. It is in accordance with this honesty of the “Honest Old Abe” rule that he said to an old friend whom he met in New York in 1859:

“How have you fared since you left us?”

The merchant gleefully replied that he had made a hundred thousand dollars in business. “And—lost it all!” with a reflection of Lincoln's and the Western cool humor. “How is it on your part?”

“Oh, very well; I have the cottage at Springfield, and about eight hundred dollars. If they make me vice-president with Seward, as some say they will, I hope I shall be able to increase it to twenty thousand. That is as much as any man ought to want!”

## “I’LL HIT THE THING HARD!”

In Coffin's “Lincoln,” it is stated that when Lincoln and Offutt, boating to New Orleans, attended a slave auction for the first time, the former said to his companion:

“By the Eternal, if ever I get a chance to hit this thing, I’ll hit it hard!”

The oath was General–President Jackson's, and familiar as a household word at the day. The promise is premature in a youth of twenty. Herndon, twenty–five years associated with Lincoln, doubts, but says that Lincoln did allude to some such utterance. But it is Dennis Hanks, cousin of Lincoln, who affirms that they two saw such a sight, and that he knew by his companion's emotion that “the iron had entered into his soul.”

In 1841 Lincoln and Speed had a tedious low–water trip from Louisville to St. Louis. Lincoln says: “There were on board ten or a dozen slaves shackled together with irons. That sight was a continual torment to me ... a *thing* which has and continually exercises the power of making me miserable.”

But his acts show that he “hit the thing hard.” It could not recover from the telling stroke which rent the black oak—the Emancipation Act.

## THE “LEX TALIONIS” CHRISTIANIZED.

Frederick Douglass, the colored men's representative, called on the President to procure a pledge that the unfair treatment of negro soldiers in the Union uniform should cease by retaliatory measures on the captured Confederates. But his hearer shrank, from the bare thought of hanging men in cold blood, even though the rebels should slay the negroes taken.

“Oh, Douglass, I cannot do that! If I could get hold of the actual murderers of colored prisoners, I would retaliate; but to hang those who have no hand in the atrocities, I cannot do *that!*”—(By F. Douglass, in *Northwestern Advocate*.)

## THE SLAVE-DEALER.

“You have among you the class of native tyrants known as the slave-dealer. He watches your necessities, and crawls up to buy your slave at a speculating price. If you cannot help it, you sell to him; but, if you can help it, you drive him from your door. You despise him utterly; you do not recognize him for a friend, or even as an honest man. Your children must not play with his; they may rolick freely with the little negroes, but not with the slave-dealer's children. If you are obliged to deal with him, you try to go through the job without so much as touching him. It is common with you to join hands with the men you meet; but with the slave-dealer you avoid the ceremony— instinctively shrinking from the snaky contact. If he grows rich and retires from business, you still remember him, and still keep up the ban of non-intercourse with him and his family.”

“Those who deny the poor negro's natural right to himself and make mere merchandise of him deserve kickings, contempt, and death.”—(Speech; Reply to Douglas, Peoria, Illinois, October 16, 1854.)

## THE NEGRO HOME, OR AGITATION!

Lincoln was admitted to the law practise in 1837; he went into partnership with John F. Stuart. The latter elected to Congress, he united his legal talents with S. T. Logan's, a union severed in 1843, as both the associates were aiming to be congressmen also. Not being nominated, the consolation was in the courts, with Judge Herndon as partner. It was from this daily frequentation that the latter was enabled to write a "Life of Lincoln."

An old colored woman came to them for legal aid. Her case was a sad one. Brought from Kentucky, Lincoln's natal State, by a planter, Hinkle, he had set her and children free in Indiana, not fostering the waning oppression. Her son, growing up, had the rashness to venture on the steamboat down to New Orleans. His position was as bad as that of an Americanized foreigner returning into a despotic land. He was arrested and held for sale, having crossed a Louisiana law framed for such intrusions: a free negro could be sold here as if never out of bond. There was little time to redeem him, and Lincoln—whose view of the institution had not been enchanting—seized the opportunity to hit "and hit hard!" as he said in the same city on beholding a slave sale.

The office was in Springfield, the capital, and the state-house was over the way. While Lincoln continued to question and console the poor sufferer, his partner went over to learn of the governor what he could do in the matter. But there was no constitutional or even legal right to interfere with the doings of a sovereign State. This omission as regards humanity stung Lincoln, always tender on that score, and he excitedly vowed:

"By virtue of freedom for all, I will have that negro back—or a twenty years' agitation in Illinois, which will afford its governor a legal and constitutional right to interfere in such premises."

The only way to rescue the unfortunate young man was to make up a purse and recompense a correspondent at the city below, to obtain the captive and return him to his mother.

Such cases, of more often fugitive—slave matters, were not uncommon in the State. Lincoln was already linked with the ultras on the question, so that it was said by lawyers applied to, afraid as political aspirants:

"Go to that Lincoln, the liberator; he will defend a fugitive—slave case!"

## LINCOLN'S VOW.

On the 17th of September, 1862, the Confederate inroad into Maryland was stopped by the decisive defeat of Antietam, and the raiders were sent to the retreat. Lincoln called the Cabinet to a special meeting, and stated that the time had come at last for the proclamation of freedom to the slaves everywhere in the United States. Public sentiment would now sustain—after great vacillation, and all his friends were bent upon it.

“Besides, I promised my God I would do it. Yea, I made a solemn vow before God that, if General Lee was driven back from Pennsylvania, I would crown the result by the declaration of freedom to the slave!”

It was remarked that the signature appeared tremulous and uneven, but the writer affirmed that that was not “because of any uncertainty or hesitation on my part.”

It was done after the public reception, and “three hours' handshaking is not calculated to improve a man's chirography.”

He said to the painter of the “Signing the Emancipation Act,” Mr. Carpenter:

“I believe that I am about as glad over the success of this work as you are!”

The original was destroyed in the great fire at Chicago, where it was under exhibition. The pen and the table concerned should be in the Lincoln Museum. The ink-stand was a wooden one, in private hands, and bought at public sale when Lincoln relics were not at the current high price.

## “DEN I TAKES TO DE WOODS!”

Secretary Seward, as manager of the foreign relations, met much trouble from the disposition of the aristocratic realms of Europe to await eagerly for a breach by which to enter into interference without quarreling. He was also a great trouble-maker, having the innate repugnance of men of letters and voice to play second fiddle—since he was nominated on the trial ballot above Lincoln in the Presidential Convention. The black speck in the political horizon was San Domingo; the Abolitionists wanted to help her to attain liberty, in which case Mother Spain would assuredly come out openly against the United States and consequently ally with the Confederacy.

The statement of the dilemma—side with Spain, or the black republic—reminded the President of a negro story, quite akin.

A colored parson was addressing his hearers and drew a dreadful picture of the sinner in distress. He had two courses before him, however. But the exhorter asserted in a gush of novelty that:

“Dis narrer way leads on to destruction—and dat broad one to damnation—”

Feeling he was overshooting the mark by the dismay among his congregation, he paused, when an impulsive brother started up with bristling wool and staring eyes, and, making for the door, halloed:

“In dat case, dis chile he takes to de woods!”

Mr. President elucidated the black prospect.

“I am not willing to assume any new responsibilities at this juncture. I shall, therefore, avoid going to the one place with Spain or with the negro to the other—but shall take *to the woods!*”

A strict and honest neutrality was therefore observed, and—San Domingo is still a bone of contention, though not with Spain, for it is an eye on our canal.



## THE UNPARDONABLE CRIME.

The mass of examples of Lincoln's leniency, mercifulness, and lack of rigor, lead one to believe he could not be inexorable. But there was one crime to which he was unforgiving—the truckling to slavery. The smuggling of slaves into the South was carried on much later than a guileless public imagine. Only fifty years ago, a slave-trader languished in a Massachusetts prison, in Newburyport, serving out a five years' sentence, and still confined from inability to procure the thousand dollars to pay a superimposed fine. Mr. Alley, congressman of Lynn, felt compassion, and busied himself to try to procure the wretch's release. For that he laid the unfortunate's petition before President Lincoln. It acknowledged the guilt and the justice of his condemnation; he was penitent and deplored his state—all had fallen away from him after his conviction. The chief arbiter was touched by the piteous and emphatic appeal. Nevertheless, he felt constrained to say to the intermediary:

“My friend, this is a very touching appeal to my feelings. You know that my weakness is to be, if possible, too easily moved by appeals to mercy, and if this man were guilty of the foulest murder that the arm of man could perpetrate, I might forgive him on such an appeal. But the man who could go to Africa, and rob her of her children, and sell them into interminable bondage, with no other motive than that which is furnished by dollars and cents, is so much worse than the most depraved murderer, that he can never receive pardon at my hands. No! he may rot in jail before he shall have liberty by any act of mine!”

## BEYOND THE BOON.

The other slave-trade case is more tragic than the above.

It roused much excitement, as the conviction for slave-trading was the first under the special law in any part of the land. The object of the unique process was William Gordon. Sentenced to be hanged like a pirate, the most prodigious effort was made to have the penalty relaxed with a prospect that the term of imprisonment would be curtailed as soon as decent. It would seem that merchant princes were connected with the lucrative, if nefarious, traffic in which he was a captain. But the offense was so flagrant that the New York district attorney went to Washington to block mistaken clemency. He was all but too late, for the President had literally under his hand the Gordon reprieve. The powerful influence reached even into the executive study. Lawyer Delafield Smith stood firmly upon the need of making an example, and Mr. Lincoln gave way, but in despair at having to lay aside the pen and redoom the miserable tool to the gallows, where he was executed, at New York. "Mr. Smith," sighed the President, "you do not know how hard it is to have a human being die when you know a stroke of your pen may save him."

## **VAIN AS THE POPE'S BULL AGAINST THE COMET.**

The potency of the Emancipation Act was so patent to the least politician that, long before 1863, when its announcement opened the memorable year for freedom, not only had its demonstration been implored by his friends, but some of his subordinates had tried to launch its lightning with not so impersonal a sentiment. To a religious body, pressing him to verify his title of Abolitionist, he replied:

“I do not want to issue a document that the whole world will see must necessarily be inoperative, like the pope's bull against the comet.”

## **A VOLUNTEER CAPTAINCY WORTH TWO DOLLARS.**

While he was a lumberer, Lincoln was in the employ of one Kirkpatrick, who “ran” a sawmill. In hiring the new man, the employer had promised to buy him a dog, or cant–hook, of sufficient size to suit a man of uncommon stature. But he failed in his pledge and would not give him the two dollars of its value for his working without the necessary tool. Though far from a grudging disposition, Lincoln cherished this in memory. When the Black Hawk War broke out and the governor called out volunteers, Sangamon County straightway responded and raised a company of rangers. This Kirkpatrick wished and strove to be elected captain, but Lincoln recited his grievance to the men, and said to his friend William Green (or Greene):

“Bill, I believe I can now make even with Kirkpatrick for the two dollars he owes me for the cant–hook.”

Setting himself up for candidate, he won the post. It was a triumph of popularity which rejoiced him. As late as 1860, he said he had not met since that success any to give him so much satisfaction.

## GETTING THE COMPANY COLUMN THROUGH “ENDWISE.”

Captain Lincoln was drilling his men, marching the twenty or so “by the front,” when he found himself before a gap in the fence through which he wanted to go.

He says: “I could not for the life of me remember the proper words of command—(“By the right flank—file left—march.—Hardee's Tactics”)—for getting my company endwise so that it could get through the gateway; as we came near the passage, I shouted:

“Company, halt! break ranks! you are dismissed for two minutes, when you will fall in again on the other side of the gap!”“

## REGULAR AND IRREGULAR.

In the Black Hawk War, Captain Lincoln came to cross-purposes with the regular army commissariat. The latter insisted on the fare and other service for the army being superior to what the Bucktail Rangers got; the latter, however, were empowered by the governor to forage rather freely, so that the settlers were said to fear more for their fowls through their protectors than from the Indians for their scalps. Once, when Lincoln's corps were directed to perform some duty which he did not think accrued to them, he did it. But he went to the army officer, to whom he reported, and said plainly:

“Sir, you forget that we are not under the orders and regulations of the War Department at Washington, but are simply volunteers under those of the governor of Illinois. Keep in your own sphere and there will be no difficulty! But resistance will be made to your unjust orders. Further, my men must be equal in all particulars to the regular army.”—(William Greene, who was in the Rangers.)

## KNOWING WHEN TO GIVE IN.

If you will refer to the table of the Presidents, you will see that Lincoln's origin is set down as "English." But with the noted English love of fair play is coupled the art of not knowing when a man is beaten. This descendant of John Bull differs from his ancestors on this head.

During the Black Hawk War, the soldiers in camp entertained themselves by athletic contests. The captain of the Sangamon company excelled all the others, regulars and volunteers, in bodily pastimes. This induced the men to challenge all the army, pitting Lincoln against the whole field, one down t'other come up! A man of another regiment, named Thompson, appeared, with whom the preliminary tussle to feel the enemy gave Lincoln a belief that he had tackled more than he could pull off this time. He intimated as much to his backers, who, with true Western whole-souledness, were betting not only all their money, but their "possibles" and equipment. Disbelieving him, though he had never shown the white feather, the first bout did terminate disastrously for Illinois. Lincoln was clearly "downed." The next, or settling bout, ended the same way—only Lincoln's supporters would not "see," and refused to pay up their bets. The whole company was about to lock horns on the decision, when Captain Lincoln spoke up:

"Boys, Thompson threw me fair and clean, and he did the same the next time, but not so clearly."

"In peace or in war," it was always the same "Honest Abe" of Sangamon.

## A FRUITFUL SPEECH.

At the age of twenty, Lincoln was studying law in off hours, and used to walk over to Boonville, ten or twelve miles, the county court center, to watch how law proceedings were conducted. He was interested in one murder case, ably defended by John Breckenridge; in fact, Lincoln hanging around the court-room doors to see the lawyers come out, was impelled by his ingenuous admiration to hail him, and say:

“That was the best speech I ever heard.” The advocate was naturally surprised at this frank outburst of the simple country lad. Years afterward, Breckenridge, [Footnote: Not the ex-vice-president and Confederate Cabinet officer of that name.] belonging to Texas, and having been an active Confederate, was in the position to implore the executive's clemency. It was granted him, while the donor reminded him of the far-off incident—which he still insisted included “the best speech I ever heard!” The beneficiary might have retorted that the plea for his own pardon was, in his mind, more effective in sparing a life.



## A CAPTAIN CHALLENGED BY HIS MEN.

At the outset of the Black Hawk War, an outbreak of Indians in Illinois, the popularity of Abraham Lincoln induced the young men of the Sangamon Valley, in forming a company of mounted riflemen, to vote him as their captain. The forces were very irregular *irregulars*, did no fighting as a body, and were insubordinate to the last. Once it was in an ironically amusing manner. The commander had saved a friendly Indian from a beating, that being General Cass' order, as well as what his humanity prompted, though at the same time there had been Indian tragedy in his own family, and he had the racial Indian hatred in his blood. The mutineers threatened still to shoot the captive.

“Not unless you shoot *me!*” rejoined the taunted commander.

The men recoiled; but one voiced the general sentiment in:

“This is cowardly on your part, Lincoln, presuming on your rank!”

“If any of you think that, let him test it here and now!” was the reply, equally as oblivious of military decorum.

But they flinched, for he was larger and lustier than anybody else.

“You can level up,” he said, guessing their reasoning; “choose your own weapons.”

The more sane roared with laughter at this monstrous offer on the superior's part, and the good feeling was renewed between chief and file.

## GENERAL McCLELLAN'S OPINION OF LINCOLN AS A LAWYER.

The whirligig of time brings about strange revenges, for a truth. General McClellan was chosen to visit the seat of the Crimean War to study the siege operations about Sebastopol. Returning and seeing no prospects in the air—of his professional line—he became superintendent of the Illinois Central Railroad Company. He was acting for its president in December, 1855, when a bill was laid under his eyes. It was the demand of Abraham Lincoln, of the law firm of Lincoln & Herndon, Springfield, Illinois.

The firm had offered in October to act for the company to defend a suit brought by McLean County. Lincoln had won it. To prevent any demurrer about the fee of one thousand dollars, a fourth of that having been paid for the retainer, he had six members of the bar append their names to testify the charge was usual and just. Nevertheless Superintendent McClellan refused to pay, alleging that:

“This is as much as a first-class lawyer would charge!”

You see, Mr. Lincoln was still but “the one-horse lawyer of a one-horse town.”

## KENTUCKIANS ARE CLANNY.

Senator John C. S. Blackburn, of the United States Supreme Court, began his life as a lawyer at the age of twenty. This should have won him sympathy in his first case. It was before Justice McLean. Opposed to Mr. Blackburn was the chief of the Chicago bar, I. N. Arnold, afterward member of Congress, and author of the first biography of Abraham Lincoln. Blackburn was a Kentuckian, but the stereotyped reputation for courage does not include audacity in a court of law. He was nervous with this first attempt and made a mull of his presentment, when a gentleman of the bar, rising, and extending a tall, ungraceful figure, intervened and laid down the case on the young Kentuckian's lines so feebly offered and entangled that the hearers might be glad to be so disembarrassed of a feeling for the novice floundering. The bench sustained Blackburn's demurrer. Arnold was so vexed that he objected to the volunteer intervener, whereupon the befriended man learned it was one Abraham Lincoln, as unknown to him as he was to fame. Lincoln defended himself against the senior's spite, by saying he claimed the privilege of giving a newcomer the helping hand. No doubt the fellow Stateship backed his prompting. —(Related by Judge Isaac N. Arnold, member of Congress.)

## NOT TO BE THOUGHT OF!

It has been seen that creditors treated the struggling Lincoln with the utmost forbearance, countering the adage that “forbearance is not acquittance.” He was given the occasion to show how he was neighborly when the turn came. A client of his was long deferring settlement when the lawyer met him by chance on the courthouse steps, at Springfield.

He accosted him cordially, and remarked about an accident that had befallen him.

Cogdale had been blown up by gunpowder and lost a hand. He began to apologize for the business delay, showing that he was crippled manually as well as in his pursuits.

Lincoln plainly expressed his sympathy and sorrow.

“I have been thinking about that note of yours,” faltered the unhappy man.

The lawyer drew the paper in question out of his wallet and forced it upon him.

“It is not to be *thought of!*” replied he, laughing in his droll yet saturnine mode.

Cogdale honestly added that he did not know when he really could pay.

But the donee hurried away, saying:

“If you had the money, I would not take it out of your only hand!”

## “SKIN WRIGHT AND CLOSE!”

In more than one event the Lincolnian snappy and headlong manner was the fruit of study and deliberation. Apparently holding aloof from politics after his return from Washington, in 1849, Lincoln was earning a great name at the bar. His popularity was the wider as he did not disdain poor clients and often won a case without permitting any remuneration. There came to Lincoln & Herndon's office one day a poor widow. She was entitled to a pension of four hundred dollars, but the agent, one Wright, who had drawn it for her, retained one-half as his fee. This greed so stirred Mr. Lincoln that he at once went to the agent to demand disgorging of the money. On refusal, a suit was instituted for the recovery.

At the trial, with his buoyancy, Lincoln said to his partner:

“You had better stay, and hear me address the jury, as I am going to *skin* Wright and get the money back.”

He pleaded that there was no contract between the parties; that the man was not an authorized agent; his charge was unreasonable; he had never given the money due to the soldier's widow, but retained one-half. Next he expatiated on her husband, during the Revolutionary War, experiencing the hardships of the old Continentals at Valley Forge in the winter; barefoot in the deep snows; ill-clad against the rigors; their feet, cut by ice staining the ground, and so on.

The men in the box were also affected to tears, like the spectators, while the pension “shark” wriggled under the invectives. The verdict was in favor of the relict. Her advocate not only remitted his costs, but paid her fare home and for her stay in Springfield, so that she went off rejoicing.

Lincoln's partner had the curiosity to look at his brief, which concluded:

“*Skin Wright! Close!*”—(Related by Mr. Herndon, present at the trial.)

## HOOKING HENS IS LOW!

Mr. Lincoln had assisted in the prosecution of a fellow who stole some fowls. The lawyer jogged homeward in the company of the jury foreman. He eulogized the young man for his good work in the prosecution, and, when the other returned the compliment by speaking warmly of the jury's prompt and speedy deliverance of the verdict, the fereman replied:

“Yaas, the vagabond ought to be locked up. Why, when I was young and pearter than I am now, I didn't mind packing a sheep or two off on my back—but stealing hens—faugh! It is low and shows what the country is coming to!”

## “THE STATE AGAINST MR. WHISKY!”

When Lincoln was a briefless barrister, frequenting the courts on their own peregrinations, to catch the eye of client or judge, he was at Clinton, Illinois, where a case came up of a very modern nature. To be sure, “the Shrieking Sisterhood” was then invented for the advocates of female suffrage and anti-slavery. But these twelve or fifteen young women presented themselves in custody for a novel charge. They had failed to induce a liquor dealer to restrict his license, and “smashed” his wine-parlor incontinently. Although public sympathy was theirs for the act, as well as for their youth, prettiness, and sex, none of the lawyers would take up their defense on account of the influence of the brewers' and distillers' agent. In this emergency, Abraham Lincoln stepped into the breach and volunteered to defend the defenseless.

“I would suggest, first,” began he, “that there be a change in the indictment so as to have it read 'The State against Mr. Whisky!' instead of 'The State against these women.' This is the defense of these women. The man who has persisted in selling whisky has had no regard for their well-being or the welfare of their husbands and sons. He has had no fear of God or regard for man; neither has he any regard for the laws of the statute. No jury can fix any damages or punishment for any violation of the moral law. The course pursued by this liquor dealer has been for the demoralization of society. His groggery has been a nuisance. These women, finding all moral suasion of no avail with this fellow, oblivious to all, to all tender appeal and alike regardless of their tears and prayers, in order to protect their households and promote the welfare of the community, united to suppress the nuisance. The good of society demanded its suppression! They accomplished what otherwise could not have been done.”—(*The Lincoln Magazine*.)

## AS CLEAR AS MOONSHINE.

In 1858, Lincoln was committed to the political campaign which was a passing victory, superficial, to his opponent, Senator Douglas, to eventuate in his accession to the Presidency. So he had let legal strife fall into abeyance, during two years. He was, therefore, vexed to have an applicant for his renewing that line of business, but at once welcomed the suitor on learning her name. It was Hannah Armstrong. He was eager to see her. She was the wife of the bully of Clary's Grove, the locally noted wrestler, Jack Armstrong. After they had become friends, Lincoln had been harbored in their cottage, in the days when poverty held him down so he scarcely could get his head above water. The good soul had repaid his doing chores about her house, such as minding the baby, getting in the firewood, and keeping the highway cows out of her cabbage-patch, after her husband died, by darning his socks, filling up a bowl with corn-mush, at the period when it was a feast to have "cheese, bologna, and crackers," in the garret where he pored over law-books. Her news was painful. The baby, whose cradle Lincoln had rocked, was a man now, and was in what the vernacular phrased "pretty considerable of a tight fix."

It looked as though Mr. Lincoln would have difficulty in loosening the fix, far more to remove it.

At a camp-meeting, the young men had been riotous. Armstrong and a companion had been entangled in a fight for all comers, in which one man was seriously injured by some weapon. The companion, Norris, was tried and convicted for manslaughter of Metzgar, receiving the sentence of eight years' imprisonment. But Armstrong was to be indicted for murder, as the injuries were indicated as inflicted with a blunt instrument, and a witness affirmed that they were done by a slung-shot in Armstrong's hands. It was little excuse that he, like the rest implicated, was drunk at the time. Nevertheless, dissolute as was the young man of two-and-twenty, Lincoln did not need the woman's assurance that her son was incapable of murder so deliberate. Armstrong averred that any blow he struck was done with the naked fist. Furthermore, it was said that Metzgar was not left insensible on the field of battle, but was going home beside a yoke of oxen when the yoke-end cracked his skull; it was this, and no slung-shot, that caused his death the following day.

Recognizing that the complication forebode a strenuous task, Lincoln none the less accepted it and, assuring his old "Aunt Hannah" that he would not suffer her to talk of remuneration, he resumed the toga to contest the effort to take away Armstrong's life and release Norris, as convicted under error.

He closeted himself with the prisoner to hear his account, and upon that concluded he was guiltless. It has been said that Lincoln would never undertake a defense of a man he believed guilty. This held good in the present instance.

As the statement about the slung-shot blow was made by a man who disputed the ox-yoke accident, and that the fatal hurts were received in the free fight at the camp-meeting, it was necessary that he should be explicit. He had seen the blow and distinguished the weapon by the light of the moon.

Lincoln was accustomed from early life to relieve his brain when toiling or distressed, by the turning to a vein utterly opposed to those moods. His chief diversion from Blackstone and the statutes was his favorite author, Shakespeare. Hackett, the *Falstaff* delighted in by our grandfathers, pronounced the President a better student of that dramatist than he expected to meet.

As the ancients drew fates, as it is called, from Virgil, and the medievals from the Bible, so the lawyer drew hints from his author. The process is to open at a page and read as a forecast the first line meeting the eye. The play-book opened at "Midsummer Night's Dream." To refresh himself after his speeches in rehearsal, Lincoln had been enjoying the humor of the amateur-actor clowns. So the line "leaping into sight" was on parallel lines with his thought.

"Does the moon shine that night?" So the text. Whereupon, *Nick Bottom*, a weaver, cries out: "A calendar! look in the almanack! find out moonshine!"

The pleader had his cue!

It was not necessary to postpone the trial on the ground that the debate upon the new charge prevented a fair jury in the district. Besides, the widow would grow mad in the long suspense, even if the prisoner bore it manfully, though sorrowing for her and his misspent life. The trial was indeed the event of the year at the courthouse. The witnesses for the prosecution repeated about Armstrong much the same story as had convicted



## The Lincoln Story Book

Norris: Armstrong had led a reprehensible career, and the deliberate onslaught with a weapon after the fight could hardly have been made by an intoxicated man. It was vindictiveness from being worsted by the unhappy Metzgar in a fair fight. In vain was it cited that he and Metzgar had been friends and that the accuser was a personal enemy of the former.

The case looked so formidable—unanswerable, in short—that the State proctor's plea for condemnation might all but be taken for granted.

However highly the prisoner had been elated by his father's friend, his own, having promised to deliver him before sundown, he must have lost the lift-up. For he wore the abandoned expression of one forsaken by his own hopes as by his friends. Norris, in his cell, could have not been more veritably the picture of despair.

Lincoln rose for the final, without eliciting any emotion from him. He dilated on the evidence, which he asserted boldly was proof of a plot against an innocent youth. He called the principal witness back to the stand, and caused him definitely to repeat that he had *seen* Armstrong strike the fatal stroke, with a slung-shot undoubtedly, and by “the light of the moon.” The proof that his accusation was false was in the advocate's hand—the almanac, which the usher handed into the jury, while the judge consulted one on his desk.

The whole story was a fabrication to avenge a personal enmity, and the rock of the prosecution was blasted by the defense's fiery eloquence.

The arbiters went out for half an hour, but the audience, waiting in breathless impatience, discounted the result. The twelve filed in to utter the alleviating “Not guilty!” and the liberator was able to fulfil his pledge.

It was not sunset, and the prisoner was free to comfort his mother.

In vain did she talk of paying a fee, and the man supported the desire by alleging his intention to work the debt out. Lincoln said in the old familiar tongue:

“Aunt Hannah, I sha'n't charge you a *red*—I said 'without money or price!' And anything I can do for you and yours shall not cost you a cent.”

Soon after, as she wrote to him of an attempt to deprive her of her land, he bade her force a case into the court; if adverse there, appeal to the Supreme Court, where his law firm would act, and he would fight it out.

(Regarding the rescued man, he enlisted in the war at the first call. He was still in the ranks two years later, when his mother, in her loneliness, begged for him of the President—commander—in—chief, for his release to come home. His leave was immediately written out by Lincoln's own hand, and the soldier went home from Kentucky. He remained a valuable citizen. It was Lincoln's speech and the moonbeam of inspiration that saved him.)

## “NICE CLOTHES MAY MAKE A HANDSOME MAN—EVEN OF YOU!”

In 1832, Lincoln, elected to the Illinois legislative chamber, found himself in one of those anguishing embarrassments besetting him in all the early stages of his unflagging ascent from the social slough of despond. Unlike eels, he never got used to skinning. For the new station, however well provided mentally, he had no means to procure dress fit for the august halls of debate.

He was yet standing behind the counter in Offutt's general shop at New Salem, when an utter stranger strolled in, asked his name, though his exceptional stature and unrivaled mien revealed his identity, and announced his own name. Each had heard of the other. The newcomer was not an Adonis, perhaps, but he was one compared with the awkward, leaning Tower of Pisa “cornstalk,” who carried the jack-knife as “the homeliest man in the section.” Lincoln was doubly the *plainest* speaker there and thereabouts.

“Mr. Smoot,” began the clerk, “I am disappointed in you, sir! I expected to see a scaly specimen of humanity!”

“Mr. Lincoln, I am sorely disappointed in you, in whom I expected to see a *good-looking* man!”

After this jocular exchange of greeting, the joke cemented friendship between them. The proof of the friendship is in the usefulness of it. Lincoln turned to this acquaintance in his dilemma.

This future President may have divined the saying of the similarly martyred McKinley—about “the cheap clothes making a cheap man.” He summed up his situation:

“I must certainly have decent clothes to go there among the celebrities.”

No doubt, the State capital had other fashions than those prevailing at Sangamon town, where even the shopkeeper's present attire, in which he had solicited suffrages, was scoffed at as below the mark. It was composed of “flax and tow—linen pantaloons (one Ellis, storekeeper, describes from eye-witnessing), I thought, about five inches too short in the legs, exposing blue—yarn socks (the original of the Farmers' *Sox* of our mailorder magazines); no vest or coat; and but one suspender. He wore a calico shirt, as he had in the Black Hawk War; coarse brogans, tan color.”

“As you voted for me,” went on the ambitious man about to exchange the counter for the rostrum, “you must want me to make a decent appearance in the state—house?”

“Certainly,” was the reply, as anticipated, Lincoln was so sure of his wheedling ways by this time.

And the friend in need supplied him with two hundred dollars currency, which, according to the budding legislator's promise, he returned out of his first pay as representative.

## THE ABUTMENT WAS DUBERSOME.

President Lincoln was told that the Northern and Southern Democrats had at last accomplished a fusion. "Well, I believe you, of course," said he to the informant, "but I have my doubts of the foundation, like my friend Brown. Brown is a sound church member. He was member, too, of a township committee, having to receive bids for building a bridge over a deep and rapid river. The contractors did not seem to like the proposition, so Brown called in an architectural acquaintance, named—we will say, Jones. At the question 'Can you build this bridge?' he was overbold, and replied: 'Yes, sir, or any other. I could build a bridge from Sodom to Gomorrah with abutment below.' The committee being good and select men were shocked at the strong language, and Brown was called upon to defend his protege.

"I know Jones well enough," he rejoined, "and he is so honest a man and good a builder, that if he states positively that he can build a bridge from Sodom to Gomorrah, why, I believe him! But—I feel bound to state that I am in some doubt as to the abutment on the other side!"

"My friend, I reassert I have my doubts about the abutment!"

## “GOOD ENOUGH FOR THE PRESIDENT.”

It was while at the store in New Salem that Lincoln made the acquaintance of Richard Yates, contemporarily in office with him as war governor of Illinois. So proud were the citizens of the colloquial abilities of their rising young man that they used to show him to visitors as their lion. Yates was introduced and stayed to hear him roar. Later, Lincoln asked him to join him in his noon meal at the cabin where a woman boarded him. The latter was one of those good souls who give the best in the larder, but are all the time apologizing. They had happened upon the ordinarily plain repast of bread—home—made, and of the sweetest corn—and milk from the cow. Flurried by the unknown company, the auntie, in dealing out the bowls to a numerous family, somehow, between herself and Lincoln, let the vessel slip, and, falling to the floor, it was smashed and the milk wasted. Lincoln disputed it was her fault, as she politely averred. She continued to argue for her guiltiness.

“Oh, very well,” said Lincoln, at last, “we will not wrangle on whose was the slip, or if it does not trouble you it will not trouble *me*. Anyway, what is a basin of pap?—nothing to fret about!”

“Mr. Lincoln, you are wrong”—the woman remembered the children to whom a lesson ought to be given—“a dish of bread and milk is fit for the President of these United States.”

Both the guests acquiesced. The cream of a story is in the application. Years afterward, when the man from Sangamon, the unknown, occupied the curule chair, an elderly woman from Illinois called at the White House and requested an interview. It was the Aunt Lizzie of the above episode. Her mere mention of being “home folks” won her admittance, and her recognition the best of the Executive Mansion lard—pantry. When she had finished the elegant collation, and intermingled the tasty morsels with reminiscences, the host slyly inquired if now in the Presidential dwelling she stuck to the sentiments about the diet enunciated in her log cabin.

“Indeedy, I do! I still stick to it that bread and milk is a good enough dish for the President.”

Lincoln smiled with his sad smile. He had been long—not to say a lengthy—martyr to dyspepsia, and she uttered a truism that struck him to the—the digestive apparatus!

## LINCOLN'S FIRST POLITICAL SPEECH.

In 1831, or '32, Abraham Lincoln made his maiden political speech at Pappsville (or Richland), Illinois. He was twenty-three, and timid, and the preceding speakers had “rolled the sun nearly down.” The speech is, therefore, short and agreeable:

“Gentlemen, fellow citizens: 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 an old woman's dance! I am in favor of a national bank, the international improvement scheme, and a high protective tariff. These are my sentiments and political principles. If elected, I will be thankful. If defeated, it will be all the same!”—(Springfield *Republican*.)

## A LIGHTNING-ROD TO PROTECT A GUILTY CONSCIENCE!

One term in the Illinois State legislature only whetted the predestined politician for a seat again at that table, though it was not he who won the loaves and the fishes. He was to speak at Springfield, the more gloriously welcomed as he was prominent in the movement hereafter realized, of changing the capital from Vandalia to this more energetic town.

The meeting had foreboded ill, as a serious wrangle between two of the preceding speakers threatened to end in a challenge to a duel, still a fashionable diversion. But Lincoln intervened with a speech so enthralling that the hearers forgot the dispute and heard him out with rapture. He had found the proper way to manage his voice, never musical, by controlling the nasal twang into a monotonous but audible sharpness, “carrying” to a great distance. He was followed by one George Forquer (Farquhar or Forquier), a facing-both-ways, profit-taking politician, who had achieved his end by obtaining an office. This was the land-office register at this town. He had been a prominent Whig representative in 1834. The turncoat assailed Lincoln bitterly (much as Pitt was derided in his beginning) and had begun his piece by announcing that “the young man (Lincoln) must be taken down.” As if to live up to the lucrative berth, Mr. Forquer had finished a frame-house—Springfield still had log houses, and not only in the environs, either!—and to cap the novelty, had that other new feature, a lightning-rod, put upon it. The object of the slur at youth had listened to the diatribe, flattering only so far as he was singled out.

Mr. Joshua F. Speed, a bosom friend of Lincoln, reports the retort as follows:

“The gentleman says that ‘this young man must be taken down.’ It is for you, not for me, to say whether I am up or down. The gentleman has alluded to my being a young man; I am older in years than in the tricks and trades of politicians.

“I desire to live, and I desire place and distinction as a politician; but I would rather die now than, like the gentleman, live to see the day that I would have to erect a lightning-rod to protect a guilty conscience from an offended God!”

Mr. Speed says that the reply was characterized by great force and dignity. The happy image of the lightning-rod for a conscience has passed into the fixed-star stage of a household word throughout the West.

## FIRING ON A FLEA FOR A SQUIRREL.

In 1841, while serving a term in the Illinois legislature, Lincoln was the longest of the Sangamon representatives, distinguished as the Long Nine. They were much hampered by an old member who tried to put a stopper upon any measure on the set ground that it was “un-con-sti-tu-tional.” Lincoln was selected to “spike his gun.” A measure was introduced benefiting the Sangamon district, so that its electee might befittingly push it, and defend it. He was warrantably its usher when the habitual interrupter bawled his stereotyped:

“Unconstitutional!”

The “quasher” is reported as follows in the local press, if not in the journal of the House, which one need not, perhaps, consult:

“Mr. Speaker,” said the son of the Sangamon Vale, “the attack of the member from Wabash County upon the un-con-sti-tu-tion-al-i-ty of this measure reminds me of an old friend of mine.

“He k a peculiar-looking old fellow, with shaggy, overhanging eyebrows, and a pair of spectacles under them. (This description fitted the Wabash member, at whom all gaze was directed.)

“One morning just after the old soul got up, he imagined he saw a gray squirrel on a tree near his house. So he took down his rifle, and fired at the squirrel, as he believed, but the squirrel paid no attention to the shot. He loaded and fired again and again, until, at the thirteenth shot, he set down his gun impatiently, and said to his boy, looking on:

“Boy, there's something wrong about this rifle.’

“Rifle's all right—I know it is,’ answered the boy; ‘but where's your squirrel?’

“Don't you see him, humped up about half-way up the tree?’ inquired the old man, peering over his spectacles and getting mystified.

“No, I don't,’ responded the boy; and then turning and looking into his father's face, he exclaimed: ‘Yes, I spy your squirrel! You have been firing at a flea on your own brow!’“

This modern version of seeing the mote and not the beam in one's own eye smothered the member for Wabash in laughter, and he *dropped* the standard objection of “unconstitutional” as he had not his mark.

## THE CREAM OF THE JOKE.

By reason of the distances and the lonesomeness, it was the pleasant habit of candidates to make their electioneering tours together. In seeking reelection in 1838, Lincoln was accompanied by Mr. Ewing. They stopped at one country house about dark, when the good wife was going a-milking, while her husband was still a-field. Intent on securing her, as she had the repute of being "the gray mare," the two partizans accompanied her to the paddock. Ewing, to show his gallantry as well as his familiarity with farm work—a main point in such communities—offered to relieve the dame of the pail and fill it, while she rested. In the meantime, Lincoln chatted with her, so that Ewing could hardly get a word in. At his finishing his self-chosen task, he beheld the pair deeply absorbed, for Lincoln had exercised his glib tongue to such advantage as to secure her influence over her man's vote.



## **PARALLEL COURSES.**

In the thirteenth Congress, Jefferson Davis was in the Senate, while Lincoln and Alexander Stephens were in the House.

## **JUMPING JIM CROW!**

When in Congress, he was a conscience Whig, as opposed to the cotton ones—that is, for the anti-slavery doctrine and not “cottoning” for the South. He wrote home:

“As you (at Springfield) are all so anxious for me to distinguish myself, I have concluded to do so before long.” He nearly ex-tinguished himself, for suddenly he went right about face— according to the popular song—quite a political if not a politic course:

You wheel about and jump about, and do just so!

And ebery time you jump about, you jump Jim Crow!

He had gone against the general tide in hindering the Mexican War as sure to bring Texas into the Union as a slave State, yet now he espoused its hero, “Rough and Ready” Taylor. He had to excuse himself as recognizing that the general was the Whigs' best candidate, and as the Whig National Convention agreed with him, the apparent truckling was condoned.

## **FACTS ARE STUBBORN THINGS.**

“Your letter on McClellan reminds me of a story that I (A. Lincoln) heard in Washington, when I was here before. There was an editor in Rhode Island noted for his love of fun—it came to him irresistibly—and he could not help saying just what came to his mind. He was appointed postmaster by Tyler. Some time after Tyler vetoed the Bank Bill, and came into disrepute with the Whigs, a conundrum went the round of the papers. It was as follows: 'Why is John Tyler like an ass?' This editor copied the conundrum and could not resist the temptation to answer it, which he did thus: 'Because he *is* an ass!' This piece of fun cost him his head—but it was a fact!”—(*Chatauque Democrat.*)

## THE PARTY GAD.

“In 1846, General Cass was for the (Wilmot) Proviso [Footnote: Wilmot Proviso: that money to buy Mexican land should not go toward slave-buying.] at once; in March, 1846, he was still for it, but not just then; and in December, 1847, he was against it altogether. When the question was raised in 1846, he was in a blustering hurry to take ground for it. He sought to be in advance, and to avoid the uninteresting position of a mere follower; but soon he began to see a glimpse of the great Democratic ox-gad waving in his face, and to hear indistinctly a voice saying:

“Back, back, sir; back a little!”

“He shakes his head and bats his eyes, and blunders back to his position of March, 1847; and still the gad waves and the voice grows more distinct and sharper still:

“Back, sir! back, I say! farther back!” And back he goes to the position of December, 1847, at which the gad is still, and the voice soothingly says:

“So! stand still at that!”—(Speech by A. Lincoln, House of Representatives, Washington, July 27, 1848.)

## HARD TO BEAT!

Of his Washington experience in 1848, Lincoln brought a pack of tales about the statesmen then prominent. He declared to have heard of Daniel Webster the subjoined:

In school little Dan had been guilty of some misdoing for which he was called up to the teacher to be caned on the hand. His hands were dirty, and to save appearance he moistened his right hand, on his way up, and wiped it on his pants. Nevertheless, it looked so foul on presentation to the ferule that the teacher sharply protested:

“Well, this is hard to beat! If you will find another hand in this room as filthy, I will let you off!”

Daniel popped out his left hand, modestly kept in the background, and readily cried:

“Here it is, sir!”

(Told by Lincoln before “the Honorable Mr. Odell, and others.” This is not the ex-governor, Mr. Odell, of New York, who pleads guilty to the editor of “being too young to have the honor of speaking with Mr. Lincoln.” The worse luck—both would have profited by the mutual pleasure.)

## “I RECKON I TOOK MORE THAN MY SHARE.”

Lincoln confessed at the outset of life that he was going to avoid society, as its frequentation was incompatible with study. He avowed at the same time that he liked it, which enhanced the sacrifice. No doubt so, since his Washington sojourn and his legal and legislative company earned him the title of the prince of good fellows. To be coupled with the genial Martin van Buren with the same epithet was, indeed, a compliment.

At Washington he had, in 1848, made acquaintance with the fashionable world. He preferred the livelier and less strait ways of the Congressional boarding-house table, the Saturday parties at Daniel Webster's, and the motley crowd at the bowling-alley, as well as the chatterers' corner in the Congressional post-office. Still, as chairman of a committee, and by reason of his being a wonder from the hirsute West, he was invited to the receptions and feasts of the first families. Green to the niceties of the table, he committed errors—so frankly apologized for and humorously treated that he lost no standing.

At one dinner the experience was new to him of the dish of currant jelly being passed around for each guest to transfer a little to his plate. So he took it as a sweet, oddly accompanying the venison, and left but little on the general plate. But after tasting it, he perceived that the compote-dish was going the rounds, and suddenly looking pointedly at his plate and then at the hostess, with a troubled air, he said, with convincing simplicity:

“It looks as though I took more than my share.”—(Supplied by the hostess, and collected by J. R. Speed.)

## LINCOLN WAS LOADED FOR BEAR.

An eminent man of politics has said that the similes of the learned which liken Abraham Lincoln to King Henry IV. of France and other historical notables are far from the mark and reveal their miscomprehension of the Machiavel redeemed by moral goodness. He thinks that without the hypocrisy being censurable he was more of the type of Pope Sixtus the Fifth. This celebrity, who, like Lincoln, was in the hog business at one time, pretended silliness to be elected pontiff. The die cast, he stood forth in all his native strength, keeping the friends who did not try to sway him, and becoming a rod of steel where he had been rated as lead. [Footnote: Greeley stamped Lincoln as “the slowest piece of lead that ever crawled.”] At the same time as he dispraised himself—mocked and laughed—he let out glimpses of true ambition. When his short-sighted advisers warmly crossed his ground of setting himself with freedom against the pro-slavery party, assuring him that he would thereby lose the senatorship as against Douglas, he confessed:

“I am after larger game. The battle of 1860 (for the chair of Washington) is worth a hundred of this.”

**“A BOUNTEOUS PRESIDENT—IF ANYTHING IS LEFT!”**

“Mr. Speaker, we have all heard of the animal standing in doubt between two stacks of hay and starving to death; the like of that would never happen to General Cass. Place the stacks a thousand miles apart; he would stand stock–still, midway between them, and eat both at once; and the green grass along the line would be apt to suffer some, too, at the same time. By all means, make him President, gentlemen. He will feed you bounteously—if—if—there is anything left after he shall have helped himself.”—(Speech, House of Representatives, July 27, 1848.)



## THE ART OF BEING PAID TO EAT.

“I have introduced General Cass' accounts here chiefly to show the wonderful physical capacities of the man. They show that he not only did the labor of several men at the same time, but that he often did it at several places many hundred miles apart, at the same time! And at eating, too, his capacities are shown to be quite as wonderful. From October, 1821, to May, 1822, he ate ten rations a day in Michigan, ten a day here in Washington, and near five dollars' worth a day besides, partly on the road between the two places. And then there is an important discovery in his example: 'The art of being paid for what one eats, instead of having to pay for it.' Hereafter, if any nice man shall owe a bill which he cannot pay, he can just board it out!”—(Speech, House of Representatives, July 27, 1848.)

(A tilt at a general drawing rations for himself and staff.)

## **A VICE NOT TO SAY “NO!”**

Mr. Lincoln said to General Viele: “If I have got one vice, it is not being able to say 'No.' And I consider it a vice. Thank God for not making me a woman! I presume if He had, He would have made me just as homely as I am, and nobody would have ever tempted me!”

## THE BEST CAR!

From his previous sojourn in the capital, President Lincoln had a fund of good stories upon his predecessors. Among them was the following tale about President Tyler, one of the weakest chiefs the republic has ever known, with the exception of Franklin Pierce. Lincoln said that this President's son "Bob" was sent by his father to arrange about a special train for an excursion. The railroad agent happened to be a hard-shell Whig, and having no fear of the great, and wanting no favor, shrank from allowing him any "specials" for Presidents.

"Stop!" interrupted Bob, "did you not furnish a special for General-President Harrison?" (Died 1841.)

"S'pose we did," answered the superintendent; "well, if you will bring your father here in that condition, you shall have the best train on the track!"

## **SELF-MADE.**

“Self-made or never made,” says one of the apologists for Lincoln's ruggedness of character and outward air; at an early political meeting, when asked if he were self-made and he answered in the affirmative, the rough critic remarked: “Then it is a poor job,” as if it were by nature's apprentice. But in 1860, when friends reproached him for the lack of “Old Hickory” Jackson's sternness, he replied nobly:

“I am just as God made me, and cannot change.”

## **HIS HIGH MIGHTINESS.**

The little “court” of the White House wrangling about a fit title for the Chief, that of “excellency” not being taken as sufficient, one disputant suggested that the Dutch one of “high mightiness” might fit. Speaker Mullenberg, at the first Presidency, pronounced on the question at a dinner where Washington was sitting.

“Why, general, if we were certain the office would always be held by men as large as yourself (how cleverly he shunned the use of either “great” or “grand!”) or Mr. Winkopp there, it would be appropriate enough! But, if by chance a President as small as my opposite neighbor should be elected, his high mightiness would be ridiculous!”

The quarrelers were hushed, thinking if Douglas, the Little Giant, had preceded or should follow their colossus of six feet three!

## **LINCOLN'S OPINION AT THIRTY.**

Diffident, but having been twice disappointed in love-making, Abraham wrote in support of a Miss Owen rejecting him: "I should never be satisfied with any one blockhead enough to have me."

## THE BLANK BIOGRAPHY.

Lincoln had been reading from Edmund Burke's life, when he threw down the book with disrelish. He fell into his habit of musing, and on reviving, said to his associate, Herndon:

“I've wondered why book publishers do not have blank biographies on their shelves, always ready for an emergency; so that if a man happens to die, his heirs or his friends, if they wish to perpetuate his memory, can purchase one already written—but with blanks. These blanks *they* can fill up with rosy sentences full of high-sounding praise.”

He sent the “Dictionary of Congress” his autobiography in a single paragraph of fifty words—as an example(?).

## “THE HOMELIEST MAN UNDER GOVERNMENT.”

When General Lee surrendered to General Grant, one point was noticed by the spectators which, it was held, distinguished the Cavalier from the Puritan. Grant was in his fighting clothes and his every-day sword by his side, while General Lee, dressed faultlessly as a soldier should always be, carried a court sword, presented him as a honor by the Southerners. So, in wars, Providence does not flourish the showy weapon, but uses a strong and sharp blade without ornamental hilt. Abraham Lincoln was the instrument of Heaven for work—ceaseless, bloody work, hard, for it was that least to his taste.

From boyhood the looks of the wood-chopper and river boatman were subjects of jeering. Whether the budding genius spurned such adventitious aids as graces of person in his career, or was already a philosopher who believed that handsome is that handsome does is a winning motto, we may never know. It is enough that he joined in the laugh and kept the ball rolling.

On the loss of a first love, one Annie Rutledge—a name he said he always loved—his friends were alarmed for his health and sanity. They took away the knife every man carried in the West, and discovered it was the obligatory one presented to the ugliest man and not to be disposed of otherwise than to one still homelier.

There is a record of the clerical gentleman to whom Lincoln was justified in offering it, who died with it in his uncontested possession, in Toronto.

As is the custom, an office-holder going out of his seat calls on the President with his successor to transfer the seals and other tokens. The unlucky man enumerated the good qualities of his substitute, and was surprised that Mr. Lincoln should dilate upon his with excessive regrets that he was going to leave the service. This Mr. Addison was indeed a first-class servant, but uncommonly ill-favored.

“Yes, Addison,” said the chief, “I have no doubt that Mr. Price is a pearl of price, but—but nothing can compensate me for the loss of *you*, for, when you retire, I shall be the homeliest man in the government!”



## **BETTER LOOKING THAN EXPECTED.**

(Related by the President to Grace Greenwood):

“As I recall it, the story, told very simply and tersely, but with inimitable drollery, ran that a certain honest old farmer, visiting the capital for the first time, was taken by the member of Congress for his 'destrict,' to some large gathering or entertainment. He went in order to see the President. Unfortunately, Mr. Lincoln did not appear; and the congressman, being a bit of a wag, and not liking to have his constituent disappointed, designated Mr. R., of Minnesota. He was a gentleman of a particularly round and rubicund countenance. The worthy agriculturist, greatly astonished, exclaimed:

“Is that old Abe? Well, I du declare! He's a better-lookin' man than I expected to see; but it do seem as how his troubles have druv him to drink!”

## **LINCOLN AND SUPERSTITION.**

Childhood's impressions are ineffaceable, though they may be for a time set aside. Abraham Lincoln with all his lofty mind, acquiesced in the vulgar belief when he took his son Robert to have the benefit of a "madstone," at a distance from where the boy was dog-bitten. He made the pact with the Divine Power as to the Emancipation Act, with a sincerity which robbed worldly wisdom of its sting, and he had dreams and visions like a seer.

## **LINCOLN'S DREAM.**

“Before any great national event I have always had the same dream. I had it the other night. It is a ship sailing rapidly.”—(To a friend, in April, 1865. See “Ship of State,” a pet simile.)

## LINCOLN'S VISION.

Abraham Lincoln had been nominated for the Presidency. The consummation of his ambition had naturally a deep impression upon him. He came home and threw himself on the lounge, expressly made to let him recline at full-length. It was opposite a bureau on which was a pivoted mirror happening to be so tilted that it reflected him as he lay.

“As I reclined,” he says, “my eye fell upon the glass, and I saw two images of myself, exactly alike, except that one was a little paler than the other. I arose and lay down again with the same result. It made me quite uncomfortable for a few minutes, but some friends coming in, the matter passed out of my mind.

“The next day, while walking in the street, I was suddenly reminded of the circumstances, and the disagreeable sensation produced by it returned. I determined to go home and place myself in the same position—as regards the mirror—and if the same effect was produced, I would make up my mind that it was the natural result of some principle of refraction or optics, which I did not understand, and dismiss it. I tried the experiment with the same result; and as I had said to myself, accounted for it on some principle unknown to me, and it then ceased to trouble me. But the God who works through the laws of nature, might surely give a sign to me, if one of His chosen servants, even through the operation of a principle of optics.”

This, seeing one's simulacrum, or double, was so common, especially when looking-glasses were full of flaws, designedly cast faulty to give “magical” effects for conjurors, that old books on the black art teem with instances. Lincoln was right to demonstrate that the vision was founded on fact, and no supernatural sight at all. His trying the repetition was like Lord Byron's quashing a similar illusion, but of a suit of clothes hung up to look like a friend whom he believed he saw in the spirit. A more widely read man would have dismissed the “fetch” like the President-elect, but with a laugh.

**“IT IS A POOR SERMON THAT DOES NOT HIT SOMEWHERE.”**

President Lincoln was wont to carry his mother's old Bible about with him in the Capital City. Often he would be consulting it in mental plights. He said that the Psalms was the part he liked best. “The Psalms have something for every day in the week, and something for every poor fellow like me.”

## **THE RELIGION OF FEELING.**

Lincoln told a friend that he heard a man named Glenn say at an Indiana church-meeting:  
“When I do good, I feel good; when I do bad, I feel bad; that is my religion!”

## THE TWO PRAYERS.

In Lincoln's inaugural address will be found the passage about the sad singularity of the two contendants in the fratricidal combat being Christians alike: "Both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God." The example is forthcoming. There is plenty of evidence that the speaker always "took counsel of God." His words are: "I have been driven many times to my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I have nowhere else to go." [Footnote: No longer was Lincoln's piety held as hypocrisy, as in 1860, when a campaign song sneers at

How each night he seeks the closet,  
There, alone, to kneel and pray.]

(Connect with the Confederate commander, Robert E. Lee's avowal: "I have never seen the day when I did not pray for the people of the North.")

"Everybody thinks better than anybody."—(Lincoln.) (This is also ascribed to Talleyrand. "It is only the rich who are robbed.")

**“WE SHALL SEE OUR FRIENDS IN HEAVEN!”**

For weeks after the death of his son Willie the inconsolable father mourned in particular on that day in each week, and even the military sights at Fortress Monroe to court a change failed to distract him. He was studying Shakespeare. Calling his private secretary to him, he read several passages, and finally that of Queen Constance's lament over her lost child:

And, father cardinal, I have heard you say  
That we shall see, and know, our friends in heaven.

*(King John, III., 4.)*

“If that be true, I shall see my boy again!” He said:

“Colonel, did you ever dream of a lost friend, and feel that you were holding sweet communion with that friend, and yet have a sad consciousness that it was not reality? Just so I dream of my boy Willie!”

(Colonel Lamon, the presidential body-guard-in-chief, was the recipient of this spiritual confidence.)



## **MORE PRAYING AND LESS SWEARING!**

On accompanying Mrs. Pomeroy, military nurse, to her hospital, the President discovered that the authorities of the house had forbidden praying to the patients, or even reading the Bible to them, as it was denominational. He promptly removed the restriction, and furthered the visiting missionaries in holding prayer-meetings, read the Scriptures to "his boys in blue," and pray with them as much as they pleased.

"If there was more praying," he said, "and less swearing, it would be far better for our country."

## GLOVES OR NO GLOVES.

An old acquaintance of the President's visited him at Washington. Each man's wife insisted on the gentleman, her lord, donning gloves. For they were going as a square party out in the presidential carriage, and the Washingtonians would not accept a king as such unless he dressed as a king. Mr. Lincoln, as a shrewd politician, and married man, put his gloves in his pocket, not to don them until there was no wriggling out of the fix; the other one had his on at the hotel where the carriage came to take that couple up.

They went out and took seats in the vehicle, whereupon the newcomer, seeing that his host was ungloved, went on the rule of leaving the fence bars as you find them. He set to drawing off his kids at the same time as Mr. Lincoln commenced to tug at his to get them on.

"No, no, no!" protested the caller, fetching away his kids, one at a time, "it is none of my doings! Put up your mittens, Lincoln!"

And so they had their ride out without their hands being in guards.

## **THE USE OF BOOKS.**

“Books serve to show a man that those original thoughts of his aren't very new, after all.”—(By an Illinois clergyman, knowing Lincoln in the 'Fifties.)

The Lincoln Story Book

## **LINCOLN'S BOOK CRITICISM.**

“For those who like this kind of book, this is the kind of book they will like.”—(New York *Times Book Review*, July 7, 1901.)

## THE HAND-TO-HAND ENCOUNTER.

Toward the evident close of the struggle an English nobleman came to Washington, credited to the embassy. This was somewhat impudent and imprudent of him, too, as, in early times, he was prominent among the British aristocrats who had supported the Confederate States. He had assisted in their being declared belligerents—a sore point. He had invested in the “Cotton Loan,” and voted in sustenance of the Lairds getting the rebel pirates out of the Mersey. Altogether, he must have attended the regular White House reception from thinking his hostility was unrecorded. But the President was clearly prepared for the *fox-paw*! He spoke to the Briton smoothly enough, but when the unsuspecting hand was placed in his grasp he gave it one of those natural and not formal grips which left an impression on him forever. The balladist's line was realized for him: “It is *hard* to give the hand where the heart can never be.”

**BETTER SOMETIMES RIGHT THAN ALL TIMES WRONG.**

In 1832, when candidate for the Illinois legislative chambers, Lincoln said he held it “a sound maxim better only sometimes to be right than at all times wrong.”

## **MAKING THE DAGGER STAB THE HOLDER.**

Upon the first debate of the Lincoln–Douglas series, an admirer of the former, having no doubt now “the stump speaker” would defeat the meretricious parliamentarian, said:

“I believe, Abe, you can beat Douglas for the Senate.”

“No, Len, I can't beat him for the Senate, but I'll make him beat himself for the Presidency.”

Douglas did gain the prize, but he lost his chances in the presidential race by alienating the whole Southern vote.—(Related by Mr. Leonard Swett, the “Len” above, to Mr. Augustus C. Buell.)

**THE TAIL OF THE KITE.**

“Congress, like the poor, is always with us!”—(To General Grant. “Grant's Memoirs.”)



**NO DAY WITHOUT A LINE.**

“I don't think much of a man not wiser to-day than he was yesterday.”—(A. Lincoln.)

**TRUTH AND THE PEOPLE.**

“The people are always much nearer the truth than politicians suppose.”—(A. Lincoln.)

**“CALL ME 'LINCOLN.'“**

Like the Friends, Abraham Lincoln had a dislike for handles to a name, and at the first incurred criticism in fastidious Washington circles by his using the last name and not the Christian one to familiars. To an intimate friend he appealed:

“Now, call me 'Lincoln,' and I'll promise not to tell of the breach of etiquette, if *you* won't (Ah, how well he knew the vanity of great men's Horatios!), and I shall have a resting spell from *Mister* Lincoln!”

## THE ELOQUENT HAND.

The colonel of the famous Massachusetts Sixth, which fought its way through Baltimore, risen in riot, B. F. Watson, led fifty men to cleave their way through “the Plug-uglies,” vile toughs. On reporting at the capital he found Commanding General Scott receiving the mayor of Baltimore, hastening to sue for the sacred soil not being again trodden on by the ruthless foot of the Yankees. President Lincoln happened in and, recognizing Colonel Watson, who was only second in command then, complimented him on his “saving the capital,” and introduced him to the company. Presuming that his quality would awe a young and amateur soldier, the unlucky mayor had the audacity to require his confirmation of his story. He said that he had dared the mob, and, to shield the soldiers, marched at their head, etc. But the officer, still warm from his baptism of fire, truly replied that he could not give a certificate of character. He related how the riff-raff had assailed the volunteers, wonderfully forbearing about not using their guns, and that the police and other officials had sworn that they should not pass alive, while the head and front, as he called himself, marched only a few yards—quitting on the pretext that it was too hot for him!

“Many times,” said Colonel Watson, “have I recalled the mayor's look of intense disgust, the astonishing dignity of the commanding general, and the expression, half-sad, half-quizzical, on the face of the President at the evident infelicity of his introduction. If I did not leave that distinguished presence with my reputation for integrity unimpaired, the pressure of Abraham Lincoln's honest hand, as we parted, deceived me.”

**WOMAN.**

“Woman is man's best present from his Maker.”—(A. Lincoln.)

**TO THINK AND TO DO WELL.**

“It is more than mortal to think and to do well on all occasions and subjects.”—(To Senator James F. Wilson.)

## **“SET THE TRAP AGAIN!”**

To fix extreme abolition upon Abraham Lincoln, Senator Douglas lent himself to assuring that his rival had taken part in a convention and helped pass a certain resolution. This was a fraud, as there was no such resolution passed, and Lincoln was not present.

“The main object of that forgery was to beat Yates and elect Harris for Congress, object known to be exceedingly dear to Judge Douglas at the time.... The fraud having been apparently successful, both Harris and Douglas have more than once since then been attempting to put it to new uses. As the fisherman's wife, whose drowned husband was brought home with his body full of eels, said, when asked what was to be done with him: 'Take out the eels and set him again!' [Footnote: See Colman's “Broad Grins.”] So Harris and Douglas have shown a disposition to take the eels out of that stale fraud by which they gained Harris' election, and set the fraud again, more than once.”—(Speech by A. Lincoln, Jonesboro, Illinois, September 15, 1858.)

## **“NO ROYALTY IN OUR CARRIAGE.”**

From August to mid-October, 1858, Lincoln and Douglas warred on the platform throughout Illinois, in a celebrated series of debates. As the senator was in a high position, and expected to reap yet more important honors, the Central Railroad corporation extended to him all graces. A special car, the Pullman in embryo in reality, was at his beck, and a train for his numerous friends if he spoke. On the other hand, his rival, becoming more and more democratic in his leaning to the grotesque, gloried in traveling even in the caboose of a freight-train. He had no brass bands and no canteen for all comers; on one occasion his humble “freighter” was side-tracked to let the palace-cars sweep majestically by, a calliope playing “Hail to the Chief!” and laughter mingling with toasts shouted tauntingly through the open windows. The oppositionist laughed to his friends, and said:

“The gentleman in that decorated car evidently smelled no royalty in our scow!”

He scoffed at these “fizzlegigs and fireworks,” to employ his phrase.

But his keen sense of the ludicrous was not shared with his admirers. On the contrary, the women saw nothing absurd in drowning him with flowers and the men in “chairing him.” Henry Villard relates that he saw him battling with his supporters literally, and beseeching them who bore him shoulder-high, with his long limbs gesticulating like a spider's, for them to “Let me down!”

In another place, after Douglas had been galloped to the platform in his carriage and pair, his antagonist was hauled up in a hayrack-wagon drawn by lumbering farm-horses.



## THE TRAP TO CATCH A DOUGLAS.

In the course of the Lincoln–Douglas debates, the former, among his friends, announced that at the next meeting he would put a “settler” to his contestant, and “I don't care a continental which way he answers it.”

As he did not explain, all awaited the evening's speeches for enlightenment. In the midst of Douglas' “piece,” Lincoln begged to be allowed a *leetle* question. The Lincolnian “leetle questions” were beginning to be rankling darts.

Formally, the question was: “Can the people of a United States territory, in a lawful way, against the wishes of any citizen of the United States, exclude slavery from its limits, prior to the foundation of a State constitution?”

In the homely way Lincoln put it, it ran:

“Suppose, *jedge* (for Judge Douglas) there was a new town or colony, just started in some Western territory; and suppose there was precisely one hundred householders—voters, there—and suppose, *jedge*, that ninety–nine did not want slavery and the one did. What would be done about it?”

This was the argument about “Free Soil” and “squatter sovereignty” in a nutshell.

The wily politician strove to avoid the loop, but finally admitted that on American principles the majority must rule. This caused the Charleston Convention of 1860 to split on this point, and Douglas lost all hope of the Presidency.

## PRACTISE BEFORE AND BEHIND “THE BAR.”

The debate between Douglas and Lincoln, while marked by speeches severe and stately, was interspersed with repartees and innuendoes as might be awaited from former friends and become, by double rivalry, fierce enemies.

The senator did not disdain to stoop to casting back at Lincoln's humble beginning, and taunted him with having kept store and waited *behind the bar* before waiting before the bar judicial for his turn to practise law. His adversary rose amid the laughter, and rejoined:

“What the jedge (Judge Douglas) has said, gentlemen, is true enough. I did keep a grocery, and sometimes I did sell whisky; but I remember that in those days Mr. Douglas was one of my best customers for the same. But the difference between us now is that I do not practise behind the bar at present, while Mr. Douglas keeps right on *before* it.”

The Lincoln Story Book  
**CONNUBIAL AMITY.**

“Mr. Douglas has no more thought of fighting me than fighting his wife.”—(Said during the Lincoln–Douglas debates, at a rumor that the senator would challenge him for some personality.)

## THE MODEL WHISKY-BARREL.

During the Douglas-Lincoln series of debates, the former made a jest counting upon his being President some day. He said that his father was a cooper, yet, with prescience, had not taught him the paternal craft, but made him a *cabinet*-maker. His adherents who counted on office if he won loudly applauded. Douglas was a thick-set, rotund man, whose florid gills revealed that he was a host for boon companions. Lincoln was his antithesis, as tall, long-drawn, and somber as the cold-water man he was rated. He rose, and at once shot his shaft:

“I was not aware that Mr. Douglas' father was a cooper, but I doubt it not, or that he was a good one. In fact, I am certain that he has made one of the best whisky-casks I have ever seen!”

## **FIGHTING OUT OF ONE COAT INTO THE OTHER.**

“I remember being once much amused at seeing two partially intoxicated men engaged in a fight, with their greatcoats on, which fight, after a long and rather harmless contest, ended in each having fought himself out of his own coat and into that of the other! If the two leading parties of to-day are really identical with the two in the days of Jefferson and Adams, they have performed the same feat as the two drunken men.”—(Letter declining a Jefferson banquet invitation, Springfield, Illinois, April 6, 1859.)

## **THE PROMISING FACE!**

“Senator Douglas is of world–wide renown. All the anxious politicians of his party have been looking upon him as certainly, at no distant day, to be the President of the United States. They have seen in his round, jolly, fruitful face post–offices, land offices, marshalships and cabinet appointments, charge–ships and foreign missions, bursting and sprouting out in wonderful exuberance, ready to be laid hold of by their greedy hands.... On the contrary, nobody has ever expected me to be President. In my poor, lean, lank face nobody has ever seen that any cabbages were sprouting out.”—(Speech by A. Lincoln, Springfield, Illinois, July 17, 1858.)

**“A HOUSE DIVIDED CANNOT STAND.”**

This often–quoted passage was uttered in June, 1857, at Springfield, Illinois, during Lincoln's congressional campaign:

“A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe that this government cannot endure permanently, half–slave and half–free. I do not expect this house to fall: I do not expect the Union to be dissolved. But I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become one thing or the other.”

## THE CONCERT ON “DRED SCOTT.”

The Supreme Court of the United States decided in a fugitive–slave case, one Dred Scott, that no negro slave could be any State citizen; that neither Congress nor a territorial organization can exclude slavery; that the United States courts would not decide whether a slave in a free State becomes free, but left that to the slave–holding State courts. Lincoln, in debate with Senator Douglas, asserted that the latter, Chief Justice Taney, and others, were in a league to perpetuate slavery and extend it.

“We cannot absolutely know, but when we see a lot of framed timbers, different portions of which we know have been gotten out at different times and places, and by different workmen—as Stephen, Franklin, Roger, and James (Douglas, President Pierce, Taney, Buchanan), and when we see these timbers joined together, and see they exactly make the frame of a house or mill ... in such a case we find it impossible not to believe that Stephen, and Franklin, and Roger, and James all understood one another from the beginning, and all worked upon a common plan or draft, drawn up before the first blow was struck.” —(The “Divided House” Speech, June 17, 1858, Springfield, Illinois.)



## **PLAYING CUTTLEFISH.**

“Judge Douglas is playing cuttlefish!—a small species of fish that has no mode of defending itself when pursued except by throwing out a black fluid which makes the water so dark the enemy cannot see it, and thus it escapes.”—(Lincoln in Lincoln–Douglas Debate, Illinois, 1858.)

## **A VOICE FROM THE DEAD.**

“Fellow citizens, my friend, Mr. Douglas, made the startling announcement to-day that the Whigs are dead. If that be so, you will now experience the novelty of hearing a speech from a dead man.” With his arms waving like windmill-sails, and his frame vibrating in every one of the seventy-five inches perpendicular, he shrilled: “And I suppose you might properly say, or sing, in the language of the old hymn: 'Hark, from the tombs a doleful sound!’” —(Lincoln-Douglas Debate, 1858.)

**“IF I MUST GO DOWN, LET IT BE LINKED TO TRUTH.”**

In 1856, a red-letter day in American politics, the Republican party was organized at Bloomington, Illinois, and, after his speech at the inauguration, Abraham Lincoln was hailed as the foremost of the league throughout the West. A civil war raged, as he had foretold, in Kansas, through repeal of the Missouri Compromise, and Douglas was forced to about face and actually vote, as senator in Congress against the very measures he advocated, with the Republicans. He sought reelection, and so believed he would allure them over to his side. At the Republican State Convention in June, however, Lincoln was the unanimous representative for Cook County, and he made the celebrated speech known as “The House Divided Against Itself.” This discourse had been rehearsed before his clique of friends—the men who afterward boasted that they made the President out of the “little one-horse lawyer of a little one-horse town!” They agreed that it was sound and energetic, but that it would not be politic to speak it then. The Republicans were cautious, and shrank from uniting with the advanced theorists known as the Abolitionists.

Lincoln slowly repeated the debated passage:

“A house divided against itself cannot stand.’ I will deliver it as written. I would rather be defeated with this expression in the speech than be victorious without it.”

Before the persistence the advisers again implored him to moderate the lines. “It would defeat his election—it will kill the embryo party!” and so on.

But after silent reflection, he suddenly and warmly said:

“Friends, if it must be that I must go down because of this speech, then let me go down linked to truth—*die* in the advocacy of what is right and just.”

That famous utterance of what was fermenting in the great heart of the people, and which perfect oneness with it and his own, enabled him to be the touchstone of the Satan yet disguised, cleared the sky, and all saw the battle, if not the doom, of the black stain on the United States.

## COME ONE, COME ALL!

On his road to inauguration, Lincoln held a reception at Chicago. The autograph fiend was not prominent in the thick crowd, but still several little girls were pushed forward by their besieging mamas and, under pretense of one gift deserving a return, gave flowers, and the spokesgirl said as she waved a sheet of paper:

“Your name, Mr. President, please!”

“But here are several other little girls——”

“They come with me,” replied the little miss, with the intention of gaining her end alone.

“Oh, then, as my signature will be little among eight—more paper!”

And he wrote a sentiment on each of eight sheets and affixed his sign manual.

## **ASSISTING THE INEVITABLE.**

In 1854, the Missouri Compromise Bill of 1820, made to shut out the free States from the invasion of slavery, was repealed. The author of this yielding on a vital question to the pro-slavery party was Stephen A. Douglas, leader of the Democrats. He had been Lincoln's early friend, and they were rivals for the hand of the Miss Todd who wedded Lincoln, with spoken confidence, and woman's astonishing art of reading men and the future, that he would attain a loftier station in the national Walhalla than his brilliant and more bewitching adversary. Indignant at this revoke in the great game of immunity which should have been played aboveboard, the lawyer sprang forth from his family peace and studious retirement to fall or fulfil his mission in the irrepressible conflict.

Lincoln delivered a speech at Springfield when the town was crammed by the spectators attending the State Fair. It was rated the greatest oratorical effort of his career, and demolished Douglas' political stand. The State, previously Democratic, slid upon and crushed out Douglas' Kansas-Nebraska Bill, and a Whig legislature was chosen. Having "the senatorship in his eye," or even a dearer if not a nearer object, Lincoln resigned the seat he won in this revolutionary house. On the other hand, a vacancy in the State senatorship at Washington falling pat, he was set up as Whig candidate. Douglas had selected General James Shields, who had married Miss Todd's sister, but was as antagonistic to his brother-in-law as Douglas himself. The fight was made triangular, by the Anti-Kansas-Nebraska Bill party advancing Lyman Trumbull. Although Shields was not strong enough, a substitute in Governor Mattheson, "a dark horse," uncommitted to either side, came within an ace of election in the ballotage.

## **SELF-SACRIFICE.**

Mr. Lincoln had the finished art of the politician; he had also a magnanimous heart, ready to sacrifice all personal gain to the party. He proposed withdrawing, and throwing all his supporters' votes over to Mattheson—anything to beat Douglas! His friends resisted; he had distinguished himself sufficiently as a “retiring man” in letting Baker get the seat over his head. But he was terribly bent on this stroke of victory. He gave up the reins and, in his great self-sacrifice, passionately exclaimed:

“It *must* be done!”

He was said to be, then, a fatalist, and so vented this command as if he believed “What must be, must be!” unlike the doubter who said: “No! what must be, won't be!” The Douglasites could not meet this change of base, and Trumbull became senator by the Lincolnites' coalition. Lincoln publicly disavowed any such formal compact.

## A FIGHT PROVES NOTHING.

Stung by the repetition here in the West by Horace Greeley's quip upon Douglas, whose trimming lost him supporters, "He is like the man's pig which did not weigh as much as he expected, and he always knew he wouldn't," a partizan of the senator's wanted to challenge Lincoln. The latter declared that he would not fight Judge Douglas or his second.

"In the first place, a fight would prove nothing in issue in this contest. If my fighting Judge Douglas would not prove anything, it would prove nothing for me to fight his *bottle*-holder."

(It is to be borne in mind that the senator had a high reputation as a convivial host, and the toady was believed to be his familiar —"the Bottle Imp.")

**“WIN THE FIGHT, OR DIE A-TRYING.”**

Though Douglas had his misgivings from knowing Lincoln is “the ablest of the Republican party,” he was forced by his standing and the pressure of his less dubious followers to accept the oratorical challenge of the other. The trumpeteers at once boasted the Little Giant could make small feed of the animated fence-rail. Lincoln said on the subject to Judge Beckwith, of Danville, on the eve:

“You have seen two men about to fight? Well, one of them brags about what he means to do. The other fellow, he says not a word. He is saving his wind for the fight, and as sure as it comes off, he will win it—or die a-trying!”



## **PILLS TO PURGE MELANCHOLY.**

The Puritanic and classically sedate critics blamed the President for finding recreation in reading and hearing comic tales, used to illustrate grave texts. He said to a congressman who brought up the censure at a time when the country was profoundly harried:

“Were it not for this occasional vent, I should die!”

## **“DOWN TO THE RAISINS!”**

It was the regular habit of President Lincoln to read the day's telegrams in order in the “flimsy” triplicates. They were kept in a drawer at the White House telegraph-office. As he handled the papers almost solely, each addition would come to be placed on the last lot of the foregoing day. When this was attained, he would say with a sigh:

“There, I have got down to the raisins!”

It was due to the story, which amused him, of the countryman. This tourist entered a fashionable restaurant, and on viewing the long menu, and concluding that all the dishes were for the customer at the fixed price, manfully called for each in turn. When he arrived at the last line, he sighed in relief, and cried:

“Thanks be! I have got down to the raisins!”

## **GIANT AND GIANT-KILLER.**

As Stephen A. Douglas, from his concentrated force and limited height was nicknamed “the Little Giant,” his opponent, the elongated Lincoln, was dubbed “the Giant-Killer.”

## LINCOLN'S "SENTIMENTS" ON A MOOTED POINT.

The President's reply to an autograph fiend who sought his signature, appended to a sentiment, was:  
"DEAR MADAM: When you ask a stranger for that which is of interest only to yourself, always enclose a stamp."

## CHESTNUTS UNDER A SYCAMORE.

The President, on his way to the Department of War, perceived a gentleman under a tree, scraping among the heaped leaves with his cane. He knew him, a Major Johnson, of the department, an old District of Columbia man who had never been out of the district.

“Good morning, major!” hailed the executive officer. “What in the world are you doing there?”

“Looking for a few horse–chestnuts.”

“Eh? Do you expect to find them under a sycamore–tree?” The President laughed freely and passed on. He ought to have removed the misguided botanist into the Department of Agriculture, where he might have learned something.

## **STILL OF LITTLE NOTE.**

On hearing that a man had been arrested in Philadelphia for trying to procure \$1,500 by a forgery of Lincoln's name, he humorously said: "It is surprising that any man could get the money!"

The secretary pointed out that use might have been made of a signature given to a stranger as an autograph on a blank paper, the body of which had been improperly filled up as a note.

"Well," answered the President, then, as to interfering, "I don't see but that he will have to sit on 'the blister-bench.'"

## THE TREE-TOAD AND "TIMOTHEUS."

In the early days when Abraham Lincoln went with his pioneer father to settle in wild Indiana, the chief diversion of the rude inhabitants was from the preaching of the traveling pastors. They were singular devotees whose sincerity redeemed all their flaws of ignorance, illiteracy, and violence. Abraham, with his inherent proneness toward imitation of oratory, used to "take them off" to the hilarity of the laboring men who formed his first audiences. Out of his recollections came this tale, which he liked to act out with all the quaint tones and gestures the subject demanded.

The itinerant ranters held out at a schoolhouse near Lincoln's cabin; but in fine weather preferred the academy—as the Platoists would say—what was left of an oak grove, only one tree being spared, making a pulpit with leafy canopy for the exhorter. This man was a Hard-shell Baptist, commonly imperturbable to outside sights and doings when the spirit moved him. His demeanor was rigid and his action angular and restricted. He wore the general attire, coonskin cap or beaver hat, hickory-dyed shirt, breeches loose and held up by plugs or makeshift buttons, as our ancestors attached undergarments to the upper ones by laces and points. The shirt was held by one button in the collar.

This dress little mattered, as a leaf screen woven for the occasion hid the lower part of his frame and left the protruding head visible as he leaned forward, standing on a log rolled up for the platform.

He gave out the text, from Corinthians: "Now if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear; for he worketh the work of the law." The following runs: "Let no man despise him," etc.

As he began his speech, a tree-toad that had dropped down out of the tree thought to return to its lookout to see if rain were coming. As the shortest cut it took the man as a post. Scrambling over his yawning, untanned ankle jack-boots, it slipped under the equally yawning blue jeans. He commenced to scale the leg as the preacher became conscious of the invasion. So, while spooning out the text, he made a grab at the creature, which might be a centipede for all he knew; and then, as it ascended, and his voice ascended a note or two, with the words "be without fear," he slapped still higher. Then, still speaking, but fearsomely animated, he clutched frantically, but always a leetle behindhand, at the unknown monster which now reached the imprisoning neckband. Here he tore at the button—the divine, not the newt—and broke it free! As he finally yelled—sticking to the sermon as to the hunt, "worketh the work of the law!" an old dame in among the amazed congregation rose, and shrieked out:

"Well, if you represent Timotheus and that is working for the law—then I'm done with the Apostles!"

**“IF IT WILL DO THE PRESIDENT GOOD—“**

G. H. Stuart, chief of the Christian Commission, was a Bible distributor during the war. The organization had a special soldiers' Bible called the Cromwell one, whose mixture of warrior and preacher seemed to couple him with Abraham Lincoln. The soldiers usually accepted a copy without pressing, though some said they preferred a cracker. But one man, a Philadelphian, like Stuart himself, rejected the offer. Among the colporteur's arguments, however, was one that overcame him.

“I'll tell you that I commenced my tract distribution at the White House, and the first person I offered one to was Abraham Lincoln. He took it and promised to read it.”

“I'll take one,” promptly cried the man; “if the President thought it would do *him* good, it won't hurt me!”



## GROUNDS FOR A FINANCIAL ESTIMATE.

When the mercantile agencies were young, they acquired a consensus of opinion upon a business man by annoying his acquaintances with inquiries. One such house queried of Lincoln about one of his neighbors. His reply was a smart burlesque on the bases on which they rated their registered "listed."

"I am well acquainted with Mr. X——, and know his circumstances. First of all, he has a wife and baby; together, they ought to be worth \$50,000 to any man. Secondly, he has an office in which there is a table worth \$1.50, and three chairs worth, say, \$1. Last of all, there is in one corner a large rat-hole, which will bear *looking into!* Respectfully, etc."

## “I WANTED TO SEE THEM SPREAD!”

It is related that the ushers and secret service officials on duty at the Executive Mansion during the war were prone to congregate in a little anteroom and exchange reminiscences. This was directly against instructions by the President.

One night the guard and ushers were gathered in the little room talking things over, when suddenly the door opened, and there stood President Lincoln, his shoes in his hand.

All the crowd scattered save one privileged individual, the Usher Pendel, of the President's own appointment, as he had been kind to the Lincoln children.

The intruder shook his finger at him and, with assumed ferocity, growled:

“Pendel, you people remind me of the boy who set a hen on forty–three eggs.”

“How was that, Mr. President?” asked Pendel.

“A youngster put forty–three eggs under a hen, and then rushed in and told his mother what he had done.

“But a hen can't set on forty–three eggs,’ replied the mother.

“No, I guess she can't, but I just wanted to see her spread herself.’

“That's what I wanted to see you boys do when I came in,” said the President, as he left for his apartments.—(By Thomas Pendel, still usher, in 1900.)

## THE LINCOLN NON SEQUITUR.

Though a Democrat, Member of Congress John Ganson, of New York, supported the President, and he thought himself entitled to enjoy what no one had surprised or captured—the confidence of Abraham's bosom, as was the current phrase. He, calling, insisted that he ought to know the true situation of things military and political, so that he might justify himself among his friends. Ganson was bald as the egg and was the most clean-shaven of men. The “Northern Nero” eyed the presumptuous satrap fixedly, and drawled:

“Ganson, how clean you shave!”

He had escaped another inquisition by his close shave. (Told by Senator C. M. Depew.)

## WHY SO MANY COMMON PEOPLE.

Like another Daniel, Lincoln interpreted dreams. He said that he had one in this guise:  
He imagined he was in a great assemblage like one of his receptions multiplied. The mass described a hedge to let him pass. He thought that he heard one of them remark:

“That is a common-looking fellow!”

To whom Lincoln replied—still in the dream:

“Friend, the Lord loves common-looking people—that is why He made so many of them.”

(NOTE.—Another current saying substitutes “the poor” for “common.”)

## ENVY OF A HUMORIST.

It is difficult for the present generation to perceive the streak of fun in “the Petroleum V. Nasby Papers” which regaled our grandfathers, and Mr. Lincoln above others, who waited eagerly for the next letter in the press. He requested the presentation of the author, John Locke, and thanked him face to face—neither, like the augurs, able to keep his *face*—for such antidotes to the blues. He said to a friend of “the Postmaster at Confedrit X-rodés”:

“If 'Petroleum' would impart his talent to me, I would swap places with him!”

## THE STOPPER ON JOURNALISTIC “GAS.”

Having examined a model cannon devised not to allow the escape of gas, he quizzically glanced at the group of newspaper reporters, and said:

“I really believe this does what it is represented to do. But do any of you know of any machine or invention for preventing the escape of *gas* from newspaper establishments?”

## SALT BEFORE PEPPER.

The Cabinet being assembled in September, 1862, to consider the first draft of the Emancipation Act, those not yet familiar with the chairman's habit to supply a whet before the main dish, were startled that he should preface the business by reading the New York paper— *Vanity Fair*—continuing the series of “Artemus Ward's” tour with his show. This paper was the “High-handed Outrage at Utica.” He laughed his fill over it, while the grave signiors frowned and yet struggled to keep their countenances.

If they had more experience, they would have heard him read “Josh Billings,” particularly “On the Mule,” from the New York *Weekly* columns. It was as “good as a play,” the stenographers said, to see the President dart a glance over his spectacle-rims at some demure counselor whose molelike machinations were more than suspected, and with mock solemnity declaim:

“I hev known a mewl to be good for six months jest ter git a chance to kick his owner!” In allusion to those remarkable feats of arms and—legs—Early's or Stuart's raids and Jackson's forced rapid marches, almost at horse-speed, when the men carried no rations, but ate corn-ears taken from the shucks and roasted them “at their pipes,” the droll ruler would bring in that “mewl” again:

“If you want to find a mewl in a lot, you must turn him into the one next to it.”

Only the rebel “fly-by-nights” were more like the Irishman's flea—“when you put your hand on him, he was not there!”

## “MATCHING” STORIES.

The President looking in at the telegraph-room in the White House, happened to find Major Eckert in. He saw he was counting greenbacks. So he said jokingly:

“I believe you never come to business now but to handle money!”

The officer pleaded that it was a mere coincidence, and instanced a story in point:

“A certain tailor in Mansfield, Ohio, was very stylish in dress and airy in manner. Passing a storekeeper's door one day, the latter puffed himself up and emitted a long blow, expressive of the inflation to oozing-point of the conceited tailor, who indignantly turned and said: 'I will teach you to blow when I am passing!' to which the storekeeper replied: 'And I'll teach you not to pass when I am blowing!'“

“Very good!” returned the hearer. “That is very like a story *I* heard of a man driving about the country in an open buggy, caught at night by a pouring rain. Passing a farmhouse, a man, apparently struggling with the effects of whisky, thrust his head out of a window, and shouted loudly:

“Hello!”

“The traveler stopped for all of his hurry for shelter and asked what was wanted.

“Nothing of you!” was the blunt reply.

“Well, what in the infernals are you shouting 'Hello' for when people are passing?” angrily asked the traveler.

“Well, what in the infernals are you passing for when people are shouting hello?”“

The rival story-tellers parted “at evens.”



## **THE ONLY DISCREDIT.**

A backhanded compliment of the acutest nature is credited to Lincoln as a lawyer and gentleman. A Major Hill accused him of maligning Mrs. Hill, upon which Lincoln denied the accusation and apologized with “whitewash” which blacked the bystander:

“I entertain the highest regard for Mrs. Hill, and the only thing I know to her discredit is that she is Major Hill's wife!”

## **NO RE-LIE-ANCE OF THEM!**

Mrs. Secretary Welles, more susceptible about press attacks on her idol—and everybody in Washington officialdom's idol—the President, called attention to fresh quips and innuendoes.

“Pshaw! let pass; the papers are not always reliable. That is to say, Mrs. Welles,” interposed the object of the missiles, “they lie, and then they *re-lie!*”

## **NO VICES—FEW VIRTUES.**

Some one was smoking in the presence of the President, and had complimented him on having no vices—such as drinking or smoking.

“That is a doubtful compliment,” said the host. “I recollect being once outside a coach in Illinois, and a man sitting beside me offered me a cigar. I told him I had no vices. He said nothing, smoked for some time, and then grunted out:

“It's my experience that folks who have no vices have plaguey few virtues.”

(Mrs. General Lander—Miss Jean Davenport, of stage life, the original of Dickens' “Miss Crummies”—must have heard this in the presidential circle, for she would say: “If a man has no petty vices, he has great ones.”)

A later version ascribes the reproof to a brother Kentuckian, also a stage companion, variation sufficient to prove the happening.

## THE APPLES OF HIS EYE.

“Up in the State, out my way,” says the narrator, “there was a farmer in the days when his sort were not called agriculturists; he kep' an orchard, at the same time, without being called a horticulturist. He was just another kind of 'Johnny Appleseed,' for he doted on apples and used to beg slips and seeds of any new variety until he had one hundred and eighty-two trees in his big orchard. I have counted them and longed for them, early, mid, and late harvest—he fit off the bug and the blight and the worm like a wizard. If there was any one thing save his orchard he doted upon it was a daughter o' his'n, her name being Rose, and all that you can cram of lush and bright-red and rosy-posy nicety into that name. An' yet he hankered much on the latest addition to his garden—a New York State apple as he sent for and 'tended to at great outlay of time, anyway. 'This here daughter' and 'that there apple-tree' were his delights. You might say the Rose and the Baldwin, that were the brand of the fruit, were the apples of his two eyes!

“Well, there were two men around there, who cast sheep's eyes, not to say wolfish ones, at the fruit and the girl. They Both expected to have the other by getting the one. Well, one of those days the pair of young fellers lounged along and kinder propped up the old man's fence around the orchard. They was looking out of the tail of the eye more for the Rose than the other thing in the garden. But they could not help spying the Baldwin. It was the off year, anyhow, for apples, and this here one being first in fruiting had been spared in but one blossom, and so the old man cared for it with prodigious love. As mostly comes to pass with special fruit, this one being petted, throve—well, you have no idea how an apple tended to can thrive. It was big and red and meller! Well, one of the fellers, being the cutest, he saw the other had his cane with him and was spearing a windfall every now and then, and seeing how close he could come to flipping the ears of a hog wallering down the lane, or mayhap a horse looking over the paddock fence. Then a notion struck him.

“Lem,' said he, for the rival's name was Lem, for Lemuel; 'Lem,' he says, 'I bet you a dollar you can't fire at that lone apple and knock it off the stem—a dollar coin!' For they were talking in coonskins them times. So Lem he takes the bet, and, sticking an apple on the switch, sends it kiting with such accuracy of aim that it plumps the Baldwin, ker-chung! in the plum center, and away fly both apples. Then, while he grabbed the dollar—the girl and the old soul come out, and the old soul see the pet apple rolling half-dented at his feet, and the girl ran between him and the two men. But the feller who was such a good shot, he sees a leetle too late what he had lost for a dollar and he scooted, with the old man invoking all the cusses of Herod agin' him.

“The other feller he opened the gate as bold as a brazen calf, and said, anticipating the old man:

“Oh, *I* don't come for apples—I want to spark your darter!”

## THE WHETSTONE STORY.

Abraham Lincoln was not given to boasting, but he did pride himself on his gift of memory of faces. It included all sorts of things. Among the soldiers calling at the White House was one from his section. He knew him at sight, used his name, and said:

“You used to live on the Danville road. I took dinner with you one time I was running for the legislature. I recollect that we stood talking together out at the barnyard gate while I sharpened my jack-knife on your whetstone.”

“So you did!” drawled the volunteer, delighted. “But, say, whatever did you do with that stone? I looked for it mor'n a thousand times, but I never could find it after the day you used it! We 'lowed that mebbby you took it along with you.”

“No,” replied the presumed purloiner seriously, “I sot it on the top of the gate-post—the high one.”

“Thunder! likely enough you did! Nobody else couldn't have boosted it up there! and we never thought to look there for it!”

When the soldier was allowed to go home, the first thing he did was to look up to that stone. Surely enough it was on the gate-post top! It had lain there fifteen years, since the electioneerer had stuck it there as easily as one might place it on a table.

**“THE MONARCH OF ALL HE SURVEYED.”**

Lincoln's coquetting with the science of Gunter, Jack of all trades that he was, empowered him to perpetrate a fine pun on the United States surveyor-general in California, General Beall. This official acquired in his course so much real estate of the first quality that on a reference being made to it in the President's hearing, he observed:

“Yes, they say Beall is 'monarch of all he *surveyed*.'” (New York *Herald*.)

## MEN HAVE FAULTS LIKE HORSES.

While riding between the court towns, Menard and Fulton Counties, Illinois, Lincoln rode knee to knee with an old settler who admitted that he was going to Lewiston to have some “lawing” out with a neighbor, also an old-timer. The young practitioner already preached, as a motto, that there would always be litigation enough and again exerted to throw oil on the riled water.

“Why, Uncle Tommy, this neighbor has been a tolerable neighbor to you nigh onto fifteen year and you get along in *hunk* part of the time, don't 'ee?”

The rancantankerous man admitted as much.

“Well, now, you see this nag of mine? He isn't as good a horse as I want to straddle and I sometimes get out of patience with him, but I know his faults as well as his p'int's. He goes fairly well as hosses go, and it might take me a long while to git used to another hoss' faults. For, like men, all hosses hev faults. You and Uncle Jimmy ought to put up with each other as man and his steed put up with one another; see?”

“I reckon you are about right, Abe!”

And he went on to town, but not to “law.”

## LINCOLN'S PUNS ON PROPER NAMES.

Though as far back as Doctor Johnson, punning was regarded as obsolete, it was still prevalent in the United States and so up to a late date. Mr. Lincoln was addicted to it.

Mr. Frank B. Carpenter was some six months at the presidential mansion engaged on the historical painting of "The President and the Cabinet Signing the Emancipation Act," when the joke passed that he had come in there a *Carpenter* and would go out a *cabinet-maker*. An usher repeated it as from the fountain-head of witticism there.

At a reception, a gentleman addressed him, saying: "I presume, Mr. President, you have forgotten me?"

"No! your name is Flood. I saw you last, twelve years ago, at ——. I am glad to see that *the Flood* still goes on."

The Draft Riots in New York, mid-July, 1863, had, at the bottom, not reluctance to join the army, but a belief among the Democrats, notably the Irish-Americans, that the draws were manipulated in favor of letting off the sons of Republicans. However, the Irish were prominent in resistance. The President said: "General *Kilpatrick* is going to New York to put down the riots—but his name has nothing to do with it."

In 1856, Lincoln was prosecuting one Spencer for slander. Spencer and a Portuguese, Dungee, had married sisters and were at odds. Spencer called the dark-complexioned foreigner a nigger, and, further, said he had married a white woman—a crime in Illinois at that era. On the defense were Lawrence Weldon and C. H. Moore. Lincoln was *teased* as the court sustained a demurrer about his papers being deficient. So he began, his address to the jury:

"My client is not a negro—though it is no crime to be a negro—no crime to be born with a black skin. But my client is not a negro. His skin may not be as white as ours, but I say he is not a negro, though he may be a *Moore!*" looking at the hostile lawyer. His speech was so winning that he recovered heavy damages. But being a family quarrel, this was arranged between the two. Mr. Weldon says that he feared Mr. Lincoln would win, as he had said with unusual vehemence:

"Now, by Jing! I will beat you, boys!"

By Jing! (Jingo—St. Gengulphus), was "the extent of his expletives." Byron found a St. Gingo's shrine in his Alpine travels.

On paying the costs, Lincoln left his fee to be fixed by the opposing pair of lawyers, saying: "Don't you think I have honestly earned twenty-five dollars?"

They expected a hundred, for he had attended two terms, spent two days, and the money came out of the enemy's coffer.



## NOT SO EASY TO GET INTO PRISON.

William Lloyd Garrison, the premier Abolitionist, was imprisoned in Baltimore for his extreme utterances when a stronghold of the pro-slavery party. After the war, he visited the regenerated city, and, for curiosity, sought unavailingly the jail where he had been confined. On hearing the fruitlessness of his quest, the President said:

“Well, Mr. Garrison, when you first went to Baltimore, you could not get out of prison—but this second time you could not get in!”

\* \* \* \* \*

“THEM THREE FELLERS AGIN!”

The gamut of possible atrocities in connection with fulfilment of the threats of secession being run through the rumors became stale and flat. Lincoln, receiving one deputation of alarmists with considerable calm, no doubt thought to excuse it by saying:

“That reminds me of the story of the schoolboy. He found great difficulty in pronouncing the names of the three children in the fiery furnace. Yet his teacher had drilled him thoroughly in 'Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego,' so that, one day, he purposely took the same lesson in Bible reading, and managed to have the boy read the passages containing these names again. As the dull pupil came to them he stopped, looked up, and said:

“Teacher, there's them three fellers ag'in!”

## LINCOLN THE GREAT AND LINCOLN THE LITTLE.

In 1856, the new Republican party tested its strength by offering a ticket: General Fremont, popular through his invasion of California and Rocky Mountain exploration, was selected as the presidential nominee, with Dayton as vice. But during the balloting, Lincoln was opposed to the latter, and received over a hundred votes. This news was despatched to Illinois as a compliment to her “favorite son.”

But on going to congratulate “our Lincoln,” the deputation found him easy and incredulous on the felicitation. “You are barking up the wrong tree, neighbors,” he said gravely; “that must be the great Lincoln—of Massachusetts.”

There was a Levi Lincoln, to whom he had been introduced as a form and as a kinsman of the Massachusetts Lincolns. So the namesake's mistake in modesty was pardonable in one who studied the train of politics most thoroughly since he had said he would be President of these United States. It was in his teens, but the saying is common property of young America, and it is more notable that before he left Indiana, and early in his new and unalterable one in Illinois, his astounded admirers prophesied the same goal; it is a fact that his own hand proves; that in 1854, he says, “I have really got it into my head to be United States senator.” [Footnote: Nevertheless, a friend, Speed or Herndon, says, a year or two later, that Lincoln had no more founded idea that he would be President than Emperor of China. It may be permitted to believe that no man is a confidant to his valet or friend.]—(Letter to Joseph Gillespie, preserved in Missouri Historical Society Library.)

**“GO, THOU, AND DO LIKEWISE.”**

Lord Lyons was the British ambassador at Washington when the Prince of Wales—now King Edward—was betrothed to the Princess Alexandra, of Denmark, since queen regent of England. He used the most stilted, ornate, and diplomatic language to carry the simple fact. The President replied offhand with trenchant advice to the bearer, who was unmarried:

“Go, thou, and do likewise!”

This did not alter the amity existing between the two, for Lincoln so won upon the envoy that he notified his premier, Lord Russell, at a critical instant when England and France were expected to combine to raise the Southern blockade, that it was wrong to prepare the American Government for recognition of the Confederacy. As for the Russian alliance with the powers, that was a fable, since the czar had sent a fleet to New York, where the admiral had sealed orders to report to President Lincoln in case the European allies' declared war.

In consequence of Lord Lyons opposing the English move, he had to resign.—(A later account in Malet's “Shifting Scenes.”)

## “IS THE WORLD GOING TO FOLLOW THAT COMET OFF?”

Two gentlemen going by stage-coach from Terre Haute to Indianapolis, in 1858, found one part of the vehicle occupied fully by a tall, countrified person, in a cheap hat and without coat or vest, but a farm roundabout. They had to wake him up, but he was civil and polite enough in his unkempt way. They thought he would be a good butt for play, as educated folk were uncommon out there in 1847, and considered the untaught as their legitimate prey. So they bombarded the poor bumpkin with “wordy pyrotechnics,” at which the stranger bewilderingly added his laugh and finally was emboldened to ask what would be the upshot of “this here comet business?”

The comet was the talk, especially in the evening, of the world, as it was taken to forerun disasters. If the editor remembers aright it was sword-shaped. That portends war. The intelligent jesters answered him to confuse still more, and left him at Indianapolis. One of the two travelers was Judge Abram Hammond, and his companion, who tells the story, Thomas H. Nelson, of Terre Haute. The latter, coming down after preening up, found a brilliant group of lights of the law in the main room. They were judges and luminaries of the bar—but who should be the center of the galaxy but the uncouth fellow traveler! All were so interested in a story he was telling that Mr. Nelson could, unnoticed, inquire of the laughing landlord as to the entertainer of these wits.

“Abraham Lincoln, of Sangamonvale, our M. C.!”

He was so stupefied that, on recovery, he hurried upstairs and got Hammond to levant with him. But he was not to remain unpunished. Years after, when Hammond was governor of the State, and he to become minister to Chile, Nelson, was at the same hotel—Browning's—at the capital, when looking over the party welcoming and accompanying the President-elect to Washington, he saw a long arm reached out to his shoulder; a shrill voice pierced his ear:

“Hello, Nelson! do you think, after all, the whole world is going to follow that darned comet [Footnote: Donati's comet.] off?”

The words were Nelson's own in reply to the supposed Reuben's question in the stage-coach twelve years before!

No joke of a memory, that—for a joke!

## A GOOD LISTENER.

The invidious who would themselves get a word in, accused Lincoln of monopolizing the conversation where he wished to reign supreme. This is contradicted in several instances. Rather his confraternity describe their meetings as “swapping stories,” the flow circulating.

Mr. Bowen pictures Lincoln as getting up half-dressed, after a speech at Hartford, in his hotel bedroom at Mr. Trumbull, of Stonington, rapping at the door. Trumbull had just thought of “another story I want to tell you!” And the tired guest sat up till three in the morning “exchanging stories.” This does not resemble monopoly.

A clerk, Littlefield, in the Lincoln–Herndon office, prepared a speech, and said to his senior employer:

“It is important that I get this speech correct, because I think you are going to be the presidential candidate. I told him I would like to read it to him. He consented, sitting down in one corner of the room, with his feet on a chair in front of him.

“Now,’ said he, in his hearty way, ‘fire away, John! I think I can stand it.’ As I proceeded, he became quite enthusiastic, exclaiming: ‘You are hitting the nail on the head.’ He broke out several times in this way, finally saying: ‘That is going to go.’“

It did go, as the fellow clerk, Ellsworth, of Chicago Zouaves fame, borrowed it, and it disappeared—wads for his revolver, perhaps.

## **CARRIED THE POST—MATTER IN HIS HAT.**

It is to Abraham Lincoln is fastened the joke that as postmaster he carried the mail in his hat. This was at New Salem, postmaster of which he was appointed by President Jackson, as he was the best qualified of any of the burgesses. Indeed, he often had to read letters to their ignorant receivers, and habitually acted as town clerk in reading out newspapers for the general good, on the stoop.

## PRESIDENT LINCOLN DUBBED THEM THE “WIDE–AWAKES.”

In looking over the illustrated newspapers of the war, one may find drawn the processions anterior to election of the various political parties. Gradually the lines, at first only uniform in certain organizations, became regular as a body. The Republicans at rich Hartford, having funds for the purpose, formed a corps of three or four hundred young men. They drilled to march creditably, assumed a kind of uniform: a cape to shed sparks and oil from the torches, and swinging lamps carried; and a hat, proof also to fire, water, and missiles!

In March, 1860, Mr. Lincoln paid a visit to the college city to speak at the old City Hall. He was introduced as one who had “done *yeoman* service for the young party (the Republican).” The word *yeoman* was understood in the old English sense of the small independent farmers. Old Tom Lincoln's boy came into this class. He assented to it and even lowered the level by presenting himself as a hard worker in the cause—“a dirty shirt” of the body. After the meeting, the marchers surrounded the speaker's “public carriage” to escort him to the mayor's house. His introducer was Sill, later lieutenant–governor of the State. To him the guest observed on the ride:

“Those boys are wide–awake! Suppose (they were seeking a name) we call them, the Wide–awakes?”

The name was enthusiastically adopted. The wide felt hat, with one flap turned up, was called the Wide–awake, but the election marchers did not wear them at all. Lincoln had added a new word to the language.

## TRUST TO THE OLD BLUE SOCK.

Several incidents in Lincoln's early career earned him the title of "honest," confirmed by his uncommon conduct as a lawyer; [Footnote: The Honest Lawyer. It is said that he was amused by the conjunction, which he observed, to an adviser who turned him into the legal field, was rather a novelty. He thought of the story of the countryman who saw a stranger by the God's acre, staring at a gravestone, without however any emotion on his face to betray he was a mourner. On the contrary, the man wore a puzzled smile, which piqued him to inquire the cause.

"Relative of yours?" asked the native.

"No, not at all, except through Adam. But," reading the epitaph, "'X., an honest man, and a lawyer.' Why, how did they come to bury those *two* men in one grave?""] but a principal event was in connection with his postmastership. It was in 1833. After renouncing the position, he removed to Springfield to take up the study of the law. An agent from the Post-office Department called on him to settle his accounts; through some oversight he had been left undisturbed for some years. He was living with a Mr. Henry, who kept a store, anterior to his lodging in Mr. Speed's double-bedded room. As he was poverty-stricken and had been so since quitting home. Mr. Henry, hearing that a matter of fifteen or twenty dollars was due the government, was about to loan it, when Lincoln, not at all disquieted, excused himself to the man from headquarters to go over to his boarding-house. Usually when a debtor thus eclipses himself the official expects to learn he is a defaulter and has "taken French leave," as was said on the border. But the ex-postmaster immediately came over, and, producing an old blue woolen sock, such as field-hands wore, poured out coin, copper and silver, to the exact amount of the debit. Much as the poor adventurer needed cash in the interval, the temptation had not even struck him to use the trust—the government funds. He said to partner Herndon he had promised his mother never to use another's money.



## IF ALL FAILED, HE COULD GO BACK TO THE OLD TRADE!

The Illinois Republican State Convention of 1860 met at Decatur, in a *wigwam* built for the purpose, a type of that noted in the Lincoln annals as at Chicago. A special welcome was given to Abraham Lincoln as a “distinguished citizen of Illinois, and one she will ever be delighted to honor.” The session was suddenly interrupted by the chairman saying: “There is an old Democrat outside who has something to present to the convention.”

The present was two old fence—rails, carried on the shoulder of an elderly man, recognized by Lincoln as his cousin John Hanks, and by the Sangamon folks as an old settler in the Bottoms. The rails were explained by a banner reading:

“Two rails from a lot made by Abraham Lincoln and John Hanks, in the Sangamon Bottom, in the year 1830.”

Thunderous cheers for “the rail—splitter” resounded, for this slur on the statesman had recoiled on aspersers and was used as a title of honor. The call for confirmation of the assertion led Lincoln to rise, and blushing—so recorded—said:

“Gentlemen: I suppose you want to know something about those things. Well, the truth is, John and I did make rails in the Sangamon Bottom.” He eyed the wood with the knowingness of an authority on “stumpage,” and added: “I don't know whether we made those rails or not; the fact is, I don't think they are a credit to the makers!” It was John Hanks' turn to blush. “But I do know this: I made rails then, and, I think, I could make better ones now!”

Whereupon, by acclamation, Abraham Lincoln was declared to be “first choice of the Republican party in Illinois for the Presidency.”

Riding a man in on a rail became of different and honorable meaning from that out.

This incident was a prepared theatrical effect. Governor Oglesby arranged with Lincoln's stepbrother, John D. Johnston, to provide two rails, and, with Lincoln's mother's cousin, Dennis Hanks, for the latter to bring in the rails at the telling juncture. Lincoln's guarded manner about identifying the rails and sly slap at his ability to make better ones show that he was in the scheme through recognizing that the dodge was of value politically.

(Confirmed by several present, notably by Missouri Congressman John Davis, who was taking notes, and by the present Speaker, Joseph Cannon, also “a gentleman from Illinois.” He was at this meeting and saw Lincoln standing on the platform, between the rails he split. He thought then that the orator's years of hard work and close study told on him and that serious illness impended. It may be added, as a link with the past, that on hearing; Lincoln and Douglas in their debates, his courage and hopes as to advance through public speaking fell; yet he was State attorney.)

## AS A LIGHT PORTER.

One morning when Lawyer Lincoln was walking from his house to the state-house, at Springfield, he spied a child weeping at a gate. The girl had been promised a trip by the railroad-cars for the first time; all was arranged for her to meet another little companion and travel with her, but she was detained from getting out for the station, as no one was about to carry her trunk. She drew the conclusion that she must lose her train, and she burst into fresh tears.

The box in question was a toy casket proportionate to her size. Lincoln smiled, and that almost dismissed her tears if not her fears. They were immediately dispelled, however, by his cheerily crying out:

“Is that all? Pooh-pooh! Dry your eyes and step out.”

He reached over the fence and lifted clear across to him the trunk. He raised it on his shoulder with the other hand, crossing as a corn-bag is carried. He grabbed her by the hand just as the tooting of the train whistle was heard in the mid-distance. So half-lugging her, the pair hurried along to the depot, reaching it as the cars rolled in and pulled up.

He put her on the car, kissed her, and cheered her off with:

“Now, have a real good time with your auntie!”

Always wanting to relieve somebody of a burden, you see!

## WHISKERED, TO PLEASE THE LADIES AND GET VOTES.

As Mr. Lincoln was utterly unknown in the East, the “engineers” of his campaign for President planned to have him make himself liked by a tour of the Middle and Northern States. To lessen the impression from one unprepossessing in aspect, “some fixing up” was compulsory. The journalist, Stephen Fiske, recites that on arriving at New York, Mrs. Lincoln, a sort of valet for the trip, had hand-bag of toilet essentials, and that she “brushed his hair, and arranged that snaky black necktie of his—which would twist up and play the shoe-string in five minutes after adjustment. But it was not she, as thought, who coaxed him into making the lower part of his features become cavernous as strong feeling surged upon him. He revealed the source of the improvement.

“Two young ladies in Buffalo wrote me that they wanted their fathers and sweethearts to vote for me, but I was so homely-looking that the men refused! The ladies said that if I would only grow whiskers (what were called “weepers,” or the Lord Dundreary mode, was popular) it would improve my appearance, and I would get four more votes! I grew the whiskers!”

(In the Lincoln iconology, his pictures before and after the whiskers is a distinction.)

## **AFTER VOTES.**

Lincoln had become the readiest of public speakers by his long experience. So it was matter for surprise that he, famed for rapid repartee, should have refrained from taking any notice of an interrupter whose shout could have been turned on him; so thought a friend on the platform.

“Why don't you answer him?”

“I am after votes and that man's is as good as any other man's!” replied Mr. Lincoln.

(The Honorable Mr. Palmer says of above: “Mr. Lincoln told me this.”)

## **THE HIGHWAYMAN'S NON SEQUITUR.**

“But you will not abide the election of a Republican President? In that supposed event, you say you will destroy the Union; and then, you say, the great crime of having destroyed it will be upon 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!’”—(Speech, New York City, February 27, 1860.)

**“HOW TO GET MEN TO VOTE!”**

“Let them go on with their howling! (Political opponents.) They will succeed when, by slandering women, you get them to love you, or by slandering men you get them to vote for you!”

\* \* \* \* \*

**BEGINNING AT THE HEAD WITH CLOTHING.**

Upon Mr. Lincoln's nomination in 1860, a hatter sent him a silk hat for the advertisement and send-off. He put it on before the glass, and said to his wife:

“Well, Mary, we are going to have some new clothes out of this job, anyway!”

**“LUCE A JUG—THE HANDLE ALL ONE SIDE.”**

Lincoln's intimates thought it remarkable that he should keep his finger on the political pulse and show himself as fully cognizant of the trend of popular feeling. Oddly enough the professional politicians themselves would not own that he was a king among them, though Douglas affirmed him to be in his time the most able man in the Republican party. On clashing returns coming in, he humorously remarked on two reports: “If that is the way doubtful districts are coming in, I will not stop to hear from the certain ones.” He observed to Alexander H. Rice, then up for Congress in Massachusetts: “Your district is a good deal like a jug—the handle is all one side!”

## “SUCH A SUCKER AS ME, PRESIDENT!”

When Lincoln's wife, at his prospect of being United States senator was on the verge of realization, reminded him of her prophecy, away back in the fifties, that he would attain the highest niche—the inevitable feminine “I told you so!” he clasped his knees in keen enjoyment, and, laughing a roar, cried out:

“Think of such a *sucker* as me as President!”

But presently, he said with his dry smile: “But I do not pretend I do not want to go *to the Senate!*”—(Henry Villard, then newspaper reporter.)



## ONE HAPPY DAY.

To his friend Bowen, Lincoln avowed during the electioneering-time that he was sure “from the word go,” to become President, though the split of the opposition into three parties was materially helpful: Douglas, Bell, and Breckenridge. He thought the reward due him as having gone “his whole length” for the Republican party, almost his creation. So he frankly said on his success:

“I cannot conceal the fact that I am a very happy man. Who could help being so under such circumstances?”—(To H. C. Bowen, of the New York *Independent*.)

## OLD ABE WILL LOOK BETTER WHEN HIS HAIR IS COMBED.

“Did I ever tell you the joke the Chicago newsboys had on me? (To the War Department telegraph manager, A. B. Chandler.) A short time before my nomination (for President), I was at Chicago attending to a lawsuit. A photographer asked me to sit for a picture, and I did so. This coarse, rough hair of mine was in particularly bad touse at the time, and the picture presented me in all its fright. After my nomination, this being about the only picture of me there was, copies were struck off to show those who had never seen me how I looked. The newsboys carried them around to sell, and had for their cry:

“Here's your “Old Abe”—he will look better when he gets his hair combed!”

He laughed heartily, says Mr. Chandler.

NOTE.—Mrs. Lincoln seems to have perceived this bar to her husband's facial beauty. For the journalist, Fiske, relating the arrival of the Lincolns in New York for the Eastern tour in 1860, speaks thus of the toilet to befit him for the reception by Mayor Fernando Wood:

“The train stopped, and Mrs. Lincoln opened her handbag, and said:

“Abraham, I must fix you up a bit for these city folks.”

“Mr. Lincoln gently lifted her upon the seat before him. (She was an undersized, stout woman.) She parted, combed, and brushed his hair.

“Do I look nice, now, mother?” he affectionately asked.

“Well, you'll do, Abraham,” replied Mrs. Lincoln critically.”

## **A CURIOUS COMBINATION.**

When the names of Lincoln and Hamlin were painted large on the street banners, it was immediately noticed that a singular effect appeared, as

## ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

One of the anagrams upon the President had, at least, peculiar signification:

Abraham Lincoln: *O ba! an III. charm.*

It was Hamlin who proposed at the Lincoln Club, of New York, that a day should be set aside as “the Lincoln Day.”

## THE SNAKE SIMILE.

“If I saw a venomous snake crawling in the road, any man would say I might seize the nearest stick and kill it. But if I found that snake in bed with my children, that would be another question. I might hurt the children more than the snake, and it might bite them. Much more if I found it abed with my neighbor's children, and I had bound myself by a solemn contract not to meddle with his children under any circumstances, it would become me to let that particular mode of getting rid of the gentleman alone. But—if there was a bed newly made up, to which the children were to be taken, and it was proposed to take a batch of young snakes and put them there with them, I take it no man would say there was any question how I ought to decide.” —(Speech by Abraham Lincoln at New York Cooper Institute, and repeated through Connecticut, 1860.)

## **WHAT'S IN A NAME?**

The Reverend Doctor Moore, of Richmond, derived Lincoln from two words, meaning: “On the precipice verge,” and Davis as interpretable as “God with us.”

## **PAYING FOR WHISKY HE DID NOT DRINK.**

In 1858, Mr. Lincoln was campaigning in Ohio, and staying in Cincinnati at the Burnett House, it was the meeting-place of the party of which he was the looming light. Some of the younger Republicans (says Murat Halstead, there as a newspaper man) had refreshments in his rooms, and from some stupid oversight, allowed the whisky and cigars to be included in his bill. This raised a hot correspondence between them and the guest, ticklish about his lifelong abstinence principles. Mr. Halstead said that the episode rankled in the blunderers after they had elected their pride President. He must have felt like the gentleman at the inn dining-room who, falling asleep at his meal, had the fowl consumed by some merry wags; then greasing his lips with the drumstick, they left him before the carcass so that the host naturally charged him with the feast.

**“THE HIGHEST MERIT TO THE SOLDIER.”**

“This extraordinary war in which we are engaged falls heavily upon all classes of people, but the most heavily upon the soldier. For it has been said, 'All that a man hath he will give for his life;' and, while all contribute of their substance, the soldier puts his life at stake, and often yields it up in his country's cause. The highest merit, then, is due to the soldier.”



## “HOW SLEEP THE BRAVE?”

If Lincoln did not possess a wide range of reading, he had the habit of committing to memory entire pages of the text he delighted in. The consequence was his invariable ability to not only utter apt quotations at length, but to cap them, if need be. Joining a group of visitors to Washington, at the Soldiers' Home, during the war, he suddenly, but in an undertone, murmured:

How sleep the brave who sink to rest  
By all their country's wishes blest?

The women were affected to tears by their susceptible nature, the surroundings of the cemetery with its graves, the evening dusk, and the touching voice with its apposite lines. An effect he redoubled by concluding:

And women o'er the graves shall weep,  
Where nameless heroes calmly sleep!

## THE STOKERS AS BRAVE AS ANY.

The first troops arriving by way of the Potomac River were the volunteers of the first call, ninety-day men; the steamship *Daylight* —name of good omen! It was torrential rain, but the President and Secretary Seward came out to welcome them on the wharf. As he would give a reception then and there, four sailors held a tarpaulin over his head like a canopy, and he shook hands all around, including the firemen and stokers out of the coal-hole. Grasping their smutty hands, he declared that they were as brave as any one! —(By General Viele, present.)

## TRY AND GO AS FAR AS YOU CAN!

On the President, indefatigable in visiting the soldiers anywhere to see “how the boys are getting on,” telling the head surgeon at City Point Hospital that he had come to shake hands with *all* the inmates, the medical authority demurred. There were several thousands in the wards, and any man would be tired before he had gone the grand rounds.

“I think,” protested Lincoln, with his set smile and dogged determination to have his own way, “I am quite equal to the task. At any rate, I can try, and go as far as I can!”

It was on this, at another time—there were many of them, alas!—that it being found that the patients in one ward were clamoring because they had been passed over, he insisted on shaking off the fag and going to pay them respect also.

“The brave boys must not be disappointed in their 'Father Abraham!'“

## ARGUMENT OF "THE STUB-TAILED COW."

The President had the knack of illustrating a false syllogism by a story from the front. Soldiers stole a cow from a farmyard. It had but the stump of a tail, and foreseeing that there might be a requisition by the owner, who passed for a Union sympathizer, they disguised the creature by attaching a long switch from a dead bovine. Sure enough the man came to headquarters, and from his patriotic plea of having lost much by adhering to the old cause, his demand was accorded. If he could find his lost animal, he was entitled to it and the offenders would be punished. It had not been obtained by the regular forage, that he swore. Well, he was brought by the officer seeing him round to the pen where the beeves were secured which the commissariat duly furnished. Here the rival suppliers had stabled the creature, and she was lashing off the flies with the substitute for the detached tail with supreme felicity in the lost enjoyment. The farmer scanned her with more than a merely suspicious eye, so that the lookers-on grew anxious, and the sub-officer with him, and who thought of his own plate of beef, hastened to say:

"Well, you don't see anything here anywheres like your beastie, do you, old father?"

"I dunno. Thar suttinly is one cow the pictur' of mine—but my Lilywhite was a stump—had a stub-tail, you know!"

"Hum!" said the corporal firmly, "but this here cow has a long tail!—ain't it?"

"True—and mine were a stub—let us seek farther, officer!"

## PEGGED OR SEWED?

Shoemaking machinery not having attained the present development which pastes imitation—leather uppers upon paper soles, the soldiers of the first Union Army had to trudge in the boots made with wooden pegs to hold the portions together; in wet weather the pegs swelled and held tolerably, but in dryness the assimilation failed and the upper crust yawned off the base like a crab—shell divided. As for the supposed sewed ones, they went to the sub—officers, but the thread was so poor that parting was as thorough as sudden. Mr. Lincoln *wanted*, as Walt Whitman says, to repeat this tale when the army contractors were swarming in his room for a bidding:

“A soldier of the Army of the Potomac was being carried to the rear among the other wounded, when he spied one of the women following the army to vend delicacies. In her basket, no doubt, were the cookies to his fancy—the tarts and pies—open or covered. So he hailed her: 'Old lady, are them pies sewed or pegged?'“

## **SOLDIERING APART FROM POLITICS.**

In 1864, a soldier at work on the Baltimore defenses, an outbreak of Southern sympathizers being apprehended, attended a Democratic meeting and made a speech there in favor of its principles and General McClellan as the standard-bearer. Secretary of War Stanton, fierce like all apostates, turned on this Democrat, and his disgrace as to the army was threatened. Captain Andrews went to the fountain-head with his remonstrance. He was right, for Lincoln said:

“Andrews has as good a right to hold onto his Democracy, if he chooses, as Stanton had to throw his overboard. No; when the military duties of a soldier are fully and faithfully performed, he can manage his politics his own way!”

## A TIME THAT TRIED THE SOUL.

It was the Pennsylvania governor, Curtin, who brought the bad news from Fredericksburg battle-field, where Burnside was repulsed in December, 1862.

“It was a terrible slaughter—the scene a veritable slaughter-pen.”

This blunt trope stirred up Lincoln, who had been a pig-slaughterer in his day, remember. He groaned, wrung his hands, and “took on” with terrible agony of spirit.

“I remember his saying over and over again,” says the governor: “What has God put me in this place for?”

## “CABINET” TALK.

Like all persons whose early life was passed in seclusion from the exhibitions common in society eager for anything to animate jaded nerves, Mr. Lincoln at Washington sought distractions in his brief intervals for them. One of the *shows* he tolerated—he called all sights so—was the seances of Charles E. Shockle—“Phoebus! what a name!” This medium came to the capital in 1863, under eminent auspices, and the President and his wife, members of the Cabinet, and other first citizens were induced to patronize the illusions. The spirits were irreverent, “pinching Stanton's and plucking Welles' beard.” As for the President, a rapping at his feet announced an Indian eager “to communicate.”

“Well, sir,” said the President, “happy to hear what his Indian majesty has to say. We have recently had a deputation of the red Indians, and it was the only deputation, black, white, or red, which did not volunteer advice about the conduct of the war!”

The writing—under—cover trick was played. A paper covered with Mr. Stanton's handkerchief was found before the President, scrawled with marks interpreted as advice for action, by Henry Knox—no one knew him—but the lecturer said he was the first secretary of war in the Revolution. The recipient said it was not Indian talk!

He transferred it to Mr. Stanton as concerning his province. He asked for General Knox's forecast as to when the rebellion would be put down. The reply was a jumble of wild truisms purporting to be from great spirits, from Washington to Wilberforce.

“Well,” exclaimed the President, “opinions differ as much among the saints as among the—ahem—sinners!” He glanced at the *cabinet* whence the materialized specters were to emerge if called upon, and added: “The celestials' talk and advice sound very much like the talk of *my* Cabinet!”

He called for Stephen A. Douglas, as his dearest friend, [Footnote: Stephen Arnold Douglas was so patriotic at the Rebellion's outbreak that Lincoln forgave him all the politically, hostile past. Douglas held his new silk hat—Lincoln's abhorrence—at the first inauguration. Douglas left the field for home, where he assisted in raising the first volunteer levy by his eloquence.] to speak, if not appear. The reporter affirms that a voice like the lamented “Little Giant's” was heard and if others thought they recognized it the President must have been more affected than he allowed. But the eloquent statesman also breathed platitudes in which the illustrious auditor said he believed, “whether it comes from spirit or human.”

Here Mr. Shockle became prostrated, and Mrs. Lincoln compassionately suggested an adjournment. The Spiritualists did not see the sarcasm in Mr. Lincoln's remarks, and claim that he was not only a convert, but that he was himself a medium. [Footnote: There is serious evidence for this fact; he was, at all events, a Spiritualist. See *Was Lincoln a Spiritualist?* By Mrs. Nettie Colburn Maynard (1891).]



## ON THE BLISTER-BENCH.

At the taking of Elizabeth City, North Carolina, 1862, the steamer *Valley City* was saved from blowing up by a gunner's-mate. This John Davis coolly sat on a powder-keg from which the top had been shot off, and was so found by an officer, who hastily censured him for his loafing—"bumming" during recess. But, on the reason for his taking his seat being pointed out, Davis was recommended for promotion. In countersigning the papers entitling him to the rank of gunner, at a thousand a year for life, the President mock-solemnly observed:

"Metaphorically, we occupy the same position; *we* are sitting on the powder under fire!"

## **“ABE, A THUNDERING OLD GLORY!”**

Ex-Registrar Chittenden tells the following incident. It was the 14th of April, 1865. Captain Robert Lincoln, on General Grant's staff, had brought the details of the victory of Appomattox, and the gratified chief had passed the day with the Cabinet revolving those plans of reconstruction which amazed all the world by their exclusion of all bitterness and retaliation. He was coming down the White House stairway to take his accustomed ride in the carriage when he heard a soldier in the waiting crowd say:

“I would almost give my other hand (he was one-armed) if I could shake Abe Lincoln's hand!”

Lincoln confronted him. “You shall do that, and it shall cost you nothing!” interrupted the revived President, grasping the lone hand, and, while he held it, he asked the man's name, regiment, etc.

The happy soldier, in telling of this meeting, would end: “I tell you, boys, Abe Lincoln is a thundering Old Glory!”

## PERFECT RETALIATION.

The more apparent it was that inconsistency reigned in the Lincolnian Cabinet, the more earnestly the marplots strove to incite them individually against one another and their head. A speculator who had induced the latter to oblige him with a permit to trade in cotton reported with zest how Secretary Stanton had no sooner seen the paper than, instead of countersigning, he tore up the leaf without respect even for the august signature. Stanton was famous for irascibility. And he did not forbear to manifest it toward all, even to the President. But, as the latter observed, hot or cold, Stanton is generally right. This time he was not sorry at heart for the reproof as to his allowing a signal favor which might work harm. But, affecting rage, he blurted out:

“Oh, he tore my paper, did he? Go and tell Stanton that I will tear up a dozen of *his* papers before Saturday night!”

## LET DOWN THE BARS A LEETLE.

One of the mischief-makers abounding in Washington, and doing more harm than all the rebel calumniators, hastened to repeat to the President that the secretary of war had plainly called him a “d——d fool!”

“You don't say so? This wants looking into. For, if Stanton called me that, it must be true!—for he is nearly every time right!” He took his seat, and excused himself, jerking out as he stalked forth, glad to be quit of the pest:

“I will step over and see him!”

He was going to have the bars let down “a leetle.”

**“THE ADMINISTRATION CAN STAND IT IF THE TIMES CAN.”**

Mrs. Hugh McCulloch and Mrs. Dole (Indian Commissioner) went to Mrs. Lincoln's reception. The host expressed constant gladness to see the ladies, as “they asked no offices.”

Mrs. McCulloch protested that she did want something.

“I want you to suppress the *Chicago Times* because it does nothing but abuse the Administration.”

McCulloch was in the treasury.

“Oh, tut, tut! We must not abridge the liberties of: the press or the people! [Footnote: The suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, 1863, was sorely against the President's sentiments, fond of liberty himself and fixed on constitutional rule—but he bowed to the inevitable. Nevertheless, he softened the rod, and many imprisoned under the edict were never brought to trial.] But never mind the *Chicago Times*! The Administration can stand it, if the *Times* can.”

## **BOTTLING THAT WASP.**

It was confidently forethought by the numerous admirers of Governor Seward—who escaped being the President by a political combination and not want of supreme merit—that he would in the Cabinet, whatever nominally his post, be the ruling spirit. Not a man suspected that the plain man of the prairie could develop into the lord of the manor, and put and keep not only the able and cultured Seward, but the turbulent Stanton and the obstreperous Chase, in their places. The pettifogger of the West simply expanded, like its sunflower, in the fierce white light around the chair, and was the lion, among the lesser creatures.

Seward raised his hand early. Within a month he had the impertinent fatuity to lay before his superior a paper suggesting the policy, and moving that the President might commit to him, the secretary, the carrying out of that policy! With gentle courtesy—says General Viele—Lincoln took the paper from the author and popped it into his portfolio. He had no policy, and did not want another's. He had bottled his wasp. Seward was obedient as the spaniel. His powers were recognized by the villains who comprised him in the detestable plot.

## THAT KING LOST HIS HEAD.

In 1865 the President and his state secretary received as peace commissioners Alexander Stephens, Hunter, and Campbell. They wanted recognition of their President, Davis, as head of the Confederate States—an entity. Without stultification, this was impossible. In the course of the discussion, reference was made to King Charles I. of England and his Parliament negotiating—so might the established Washington government treat with the rebel Davis. On Lincoln's features stole that grim smile foretelling his shaft ready to shoot, and he interjected:

“Upon questions of history I must refer you to Mr. Seward, for he is posted on such things, and I do not profess to be; but my only distinct recollection of that matter is that Charles I. lost his head!”

## **SWEARING LIKE A CHURCHWARDEN.**

To convey the President from General Hooker's camp to the review of General Reynolds' corps, a ride had to be taken in a six-mule ambulance. Either not knowing the rank of his passenger, or being a teamster, which in our army replaces the French sapper for rudeness, the driver showered as many oaths of the largest caliber—fire and fury signifying nothing—as snaps of the long cowhide. Lincoln, who had known the genus in the clay of the West, kept his eye on him while leaning out of the window. In an interval when the vociferator had to take breath, he asked quietly:

“Excuse me, my friend, are you an Episcopalian?”

“N—no, Mr. President,” stammered the astonished jehu, “I am a Methodist.”

“Well, I thought you must be an Episcopalian, for you swear like Secretary Seward, a warden of that church.”

(Seward was the great man of the Republican party, next to Lincoln only in some essentials for political success. While a church member, he was man of the world enough to give a backing to this jest of the President.)



**“MY SPEECHES HAVE ORIGINALITY AS THEIR MERIT.”**

Instead of believing that Lincoln's extraordinary experiences in the multifarious West produced a factotum, his revilers asserted that he looked to one minister for financial instructions, to another for military guidance, etc. But it is true that by tradition, as the premier in fact, the secretary of state is supposed to write the first drafts at least of the presidential speeches to foreign ministers, and, as the secretary was Seward, a man of letters preeminently, he had Lincoln's addresses, even to home delegations, fathered upon him.

The President was chatting in his own study when a messenger ran in with a paper, explaining his haste with the words:

“Compliments of the secretary with the speech your excellency is to make to the Swiss minister.”

Anybody else would have been abashed by the seeming exposure, but the executive merely cried aloud as if to publish the facts to the auditory:

“Oh, this is a speech Mr. Seward has written for me. I guess I will try it before these gentlemen, and see how it goes.” He read it in the burlesque manner with which he parodied circuit preachers in his boyhood and public speakers in his prime, and added at the close:

“There, I like that. It has the merit of originality!”

## **RIGHTING WRONG HURTS, BUT DOES GOOD.**

In May, 1861, all looked with anxiety to the letter by which the United States of America should reply to Great Britain furnishing the Confederate States with its first encouragement, the rights of belligerents. Without them their privateers were useless, as they could have gone into no ports and sold their prizes nowhere. Mr. Seward was in touch with the New England school. It clamored for war with any friend to the revolting States. But Lincoln corrected what was provocative in the original advice to our minister, Adams, at St. James'. The English were no longer held to have issued a proclamation without due grounds in usage or the law of nations. It became by the modification no more a proceeding about which we could warrantably go to war. For instance, the President changed the words "wrongful" into "hurtful." According to Webster, wrongful means unjust, injurious, dishonest; while hurtful implies that the course will cause injury. The original has vanished in that odd but certain way in which state documents disappear when casting odium on public men; they are mayhap "filed away"—in the stove!

## STANTON'S SERVICE WAS WORTH HIS SAUCE.

Among the President's minor worries was the assiduity with which his generosity was cultivated by his relatives—not only those by his marriage, but by his father's second marriage. He was like the eldest son of the family to whom all looked for sustenance. There came to the seat of government that Dennis Hanks, his cousin, who stood to reach for boons on the platform of rails which they had cut long ago in cohort. Dennis was seeking the pardon of some “Copperheads”—that is, Southern sympathizers of the North, veiled in their enmity, but dangerous. The secretary of war had pronounced against any leniency toward what were dubbed glaring traitors. All the chief could do—for he bared his head like *Lear* to let the Stanton tempest blow upon him and so spare others—was to say he would look at the cases the next day. Hanks was muttering.

“Why, Dennis, what would you do were you President?” he asked the raw backwoodsman, turning badly into suppliant.

“Do? Why, Abe, if I were as big and 'ugly'—aggressively combative—as you are, I would take your Mr. Stanton over my knee and spank him!”

This caused a laugh, but the other replied severely:

“No. Stanton is an able and valuable man for this nation in his station, and I am glad to have his *service* in spite of his *sauce*.”

## **A SECRET OF THE INTERIOR.**

Lincoln, the junior, "Tad," had the run of the Executive Mansion, and, like all spoiled children, abused the license. He burst into the heart of a company listening to his father's talk with the exclamation:

"Ma says, come to supper!"

It was impossible for the most diplomatic to pretend that he had not heard, and all looked from the intruder to the host. Never at a loss, Mr. Lincoln rose from the sofa, and blandly said as to "married folks together":

"You have heard, gentlemen, the announcement concerning the seductive state of things in the dining-room. I had intended to train up this young man in his father's footsteps, but, if I am elected, I must forego any intention of making him a member of my Cabinet, as he manifestly cannot be trusted with secrets of the interior!"

## ALL STAFF AND NO ARMY.

Many of the volunteer officers developed a liking for the new profession, and to secure a permanency obtained entrance into the established army. Among these was one Lieutenant Ben Tappan. Secretary Stanton being his uncle, no difficulty offered but this autocrat ought to remove, but unfortunately Stanton was a stickler for forms, and the relationship looked like nepotism to the world. Tappan particularly wished to stay on the staff on account of the privileges. His stepfather, Frank Wright, induced their congressman, Judge Shellabarger, to accompany him to the presidential mansion to obtain the boon. Lincoln was lukewarm, and told a story about the army being all staff and no strength, saying that, if one rolled a stone in front of Willard's Hotel, the military rendezvous for those officers off duty and on (dress) parade, it must knock over a brigadier or two, but suddenly wrote a paper to this novel effect:

“Lieutenant Ben Tappan, of —, etc., desires transfer to —Regiment, regular service, and is assigned to staff duty with present rank. If the only objection to this transfer is Lieutenant Tappan's relationship to the secretary of war, that objection is hereby overruled.

“A. LINCOLN.”

This threw the responsibility upon the secretary.

## **NO MAN IS INDISPENSABLE.**

One of the Cabinet ministers disagreed with the majority on a vital question, and rose with a threat to resign. One of his friends advised the chairman to do anything to recover his aid, whereupon he sagely said:

“Our secretary a national necessity?—how mistaken you are! Yet it is not strange—I used to have similar notions. No, if we should all be turned out to-morrow, and could come back here in a week, we should find our places filled by a lot of fellows doing just as well as we did, and in many instances better! It was truth that the Irishman uttered when he answered the speaker: 'Is not one man as good as another?' with 'He is, sure, and a deal betther!' No, sir, this government does not depend on the life of any man!”

## **SLEEPING ON POST CANCELS A COMMISSION.**

Nobody who met Secretary Stanton—the Carnot of the war—would give him credit for joking, but Mr. Lincoln's example that way was infectious. The eldest son, Robert, was at college, but a captaincy was awaiting him when he could enter the army. So the war secretary for a pleasantry issued a mock commission to Tad, ranking him as a regular lieutenant. As long as he confined his supposed duties to arming the under servants and drilling the more or less fantastically, as well as he remembered, evolutions on the parade-grounds, where he accompanied his father, all was amusing. But he terminated his first steps in the school of "Hardee's Tactics," the standard text-book of the period, by bringing his awkward squad from the servants' hall, and, relieving the sentries, replaced the genuine with these tyros. For the sake of the vacation they, the regulars, bowed to the commission with its potent Stanton and Lincoln, and United States Army seal. His brother, startled, intervened, but the cadet vowed he would put him in "the black hole," presumably the coal-shed. The President laughed, and when he went to check the usurpation he found the little lieutenant, overpowered by his brief authority, asleep. So he removed him from the service, put aside his commission, and, when he woke to the situation, made it plain that, being a real soldier and officer, he had forfeited his title by falling asleep on post! He went then and formally discharged the sham sentinels placed by the boy's orders and replaced them by the "simon pures."

## MY QUESTION!

A recent volume has undertaken the superfluous vindication of President Lincoln from being the mere ornamental figurehead of the republic during the Civil War. In fact, there are many instances of his incurring the reproach of interfering with the chiefs of departments, but it is testified to by a leading minister that he paid much less attention to details than was popularly supposed and invidiously asserted in the capital. He “brought up with a round turn,” to use river language, both General Fremont and other military commanders who tried to steal the finishing weapon he kept in store: to wit, the emancipation of the Southern slaves. Senator Cameron, as war secretary, advised in a report that the slaves should be armed to enable them successfully to rise against their masters. The President scratched out this recommendation, which would have spiked his gun, and perverted a great statesmanlike act into a fostered insurrection, saying:

“This will never do! *Secretary* Cameron must take no such responsibility. This question belongs exclusively to me!”



## **“IF GOOD, HE'S GOT IT! IF T'AIN'T GOOD, HE AIN'T GOT IT!”**

A revenue cutter conveyed a presidential party from Washington to Fortress Monroe, consisting of the chief, his secretaries of war and of the treasury, and General Egbert L. Viele—who preserved this tale. On the way Secretary Stanton stated that he had telegraphed to General Mitchell in Alabama “All right—go ahead!” though he did not know what emergency was thus to meet. He wished the executive to take the responsibility in case his ignorance erred.

“I will have to get you to countermand the order.” So he hinted.

“Well,” exclaimed the good-humored superior, “that is very much like a certain horse-sale in Kentucky when I was a boy (Lincoln was only eight when leaving Kentucky for Indiana). A particularly fine horse was to be sold, and the people gathered together. They had a small boy to ride the horse up and down while the spectators examined it for points. At last, one man whispered to the boy as he went by:

“Look here, boy, ain't that hoss got the splints?”

“The boy replied: 'Master, I don't know what the splints is; but, if it is good for him, he has got it! If it ain't good for him, he ain't got it!' Now,” finished the adviser, “if this was good for Mitchell, it was all right; but, if it was not, I have to countermand, eh?”—(Noted by General Viele.)

## LINCOLN GUESSED THE FIRST TIME.

Postmaster-General James reflects a dialogue between Lincoln and one of his Cabinet officers, evincing how the iron hand in the velvet glove squeezed persons into his own mold.

“Mr. President”—Secretary Stanton speaking—“I cannot carry out that order! It is improper, and I don't believe it is right.”

“Well, I reckon, Mr. Secretary”—very gently—“that you will *hev* to carry it out.”

“But I won't do it—it's all wrong!”

“I guess you will hev to do it!”

He guessed right, the first time.

## **A PHANTOM CHASE.**

Despite Chase's political enmity to him, President Lincoln said of Salmon Portland Chase: "I consider him one of the best, ablest, and most reliable men in the country." But he had to "let him slide" off upon the Supreme Court bench to have "knee-room" at the council-table. He explained: "He wants to be President, and, if he does not give that up, it will be a great injury to him and a great injury to me. He can never be President."—(Ex-Secretary Boutwell, the authority.)

## **THE WORD FLIES, BUT THE WRIT REMAINS.**

Mr. Chase bemoaning that in leaving home he had in the hurry forgot to write a letter, Lincoln sagely consoled:

“Chase, never regret what you don't write—it is what you do write that you are often called upon to feel sorry for!”—(Heard by General Viele.)

## THE WAR-LORD.

Lincoln states that the community among whom he was brought up would have hailed him as a wizard who spoke the dead tongues; and, granting his legal studies made him familiar with Latin as lawyers use it, he carefully avoided those hurdles of the classic orator, Latin quotations. Nevertheless, we have an exception to what would have pleased Lord Byron—the poet thought we have had enough of the classics. The President, spying Secretary Stanton, of the War Department, inadvertently striking an imposing attitude in the doorway of the telegraph-office in the Executive House, without knowing the President was here, at the desk, suddenly was aroused by hearing the jocose hail:

“Good evening, *Mars!*”—(Certified by Mr. A. B. Chandler, manager of the postal telegraph, War Department.)

**FILE IT AWAY!**

Stanton, as secretary of war, was bombarded with complaints and bickerings of the officers under him; they seemed to revel in annoying one famed for being of the irritable genus. Once he showed his principal a letter written in answer to a general who had abused him and accused him of favoritism. Lincoln listened with his quizzing air, and exclaimed rapturously:

“That's first-rate, Stanton! You've scored him well! Just right!”

As the pleased writer folded up the paper for its envelope, he quickly inquired:

“Why, what are you going to do with it now?”

It was to be despatched.

“No, no, that would spoil all. File it away! that is the kind of filing which keeps it sharp—and don't wound the other fellow! File it away.”

**“WHAT WE HAVE, WE WILL GIVE YOU.”**

It being rumored that the paper notes, “the greenbacks,” should bear a motto as the coin had, “In God We Trust,” it was suggested to quote from the apostles:

“Silver and gold we have not, but what we have we will give.”

It was ascribed to Mr. Lincoln from his familiarity with the Scriptures and prevalent quoting from them.

## **MORE “SHINPLASTERS” TO HEAL THE SORE.**

In 1863 President Lincoln went out to condole with the beaten Unionists, whom General Hooker had led fatally against Lee at Chancellorsville. Lincoln took his little son “Tad” with him. Amid the cheering one of the soldiers plainly voiced a terrible grievance—just when the sufferers were mostly in need of necessaries, the pay was behindhand. So one cried: “Send along more 'greenbacks,' Father Abraham!”

The boy was puzzled, but his companion explained that the soldiers wanted their money due. The hearer thought this over for a moment, and then pertly said: “Why don't 'Governor' Chase print some more?”



**“THERE IS MUCH IN AN 'IF' AND A 'BUT.'“**

Mr. Tinkler, telegraph-operator of the cipher telegrams at Washington, in the Executive residence, took the despatch announcing the nomination of Andrew Jackson, of Tennessee, to the vice-presidency with Lincoln for the second term. The latter read it carefully, and *thought aloud*:

“Well, I thought possibly that he might be the man; but—”

He passed out of the office, leaving the hearer impressed. Indeed, it was a prophecy of the future—poor, inebriate Andy—not the Handy Andy, but the Merry Andrew of the fag-end of the lamentably sundered second term. Charles A. Dana, editing the New York *Sun*, printed this drop-line, and said it was a proof that Lincoln had no hand in his Vice being proposed or nominated.

## DON'T WASTE THE PLUG, BUT USE IT!

Treasurer Chase conducted the financial course of the war on the principle of each day taking care of itself; but still he resisted plans for relief not of his own conception. So he threw cold water on the Walker suggestion that the currency should bear interest with a view that holders would hoard it. Walker's aid, Taylor, of Ohio, ran to the President for a higher hearing. But, though the President now espoused the scheme, the secretary still was counter on the ground that the Constitution was against it.

"Taylor," said Lincoln, with his frankness, which resembled impiety now, "go back and tell Chase not to bother about the Constitution—I have that sacred instrument here, and am guarding it with great care!" But a personal discussion with Chase was compulsory, during which the granite man stood on the Constitution.

"Chase," finally said the decisive factor, "this reminds me of a little sea yarn.

"A little coaster on the Mediterranean was in stress of storm. The Italian seamen have their own ideas of behavior under disaster, and fell on their knees to invoke the interposition of the usual stronghold—the Madonna—of which there was a statue in wood. But, many and genuine as were the invocations, all were unanswered. The gale continued, and more and more damage was done the upper works. Whereupon in a rage the skipper ordered the image to be hurled overboard. Strange to say, almost instantly the tempest lulled, and in a short time the bark rode steadily on the pacific waters. Come to examine the leak in the side, they found the wooden effigy thrown over, sucked into it, and so plugged up the cavity. The ship was saved by the castaway notion.

"Now, we are all aboard to save the ship, by any plug [Footnote: Plug, in Western speech: any substitute, worthless otherwise; an old horse; a leaden counter, a makeshift; the plug hat, however, comes from the shape—a cylinder of tobacco being so called.] that is offered, since prayers don't seem to do it. Let us try friend Amasa Walker's proposition."

## THE RUNNING FEVER.

“There is a malady of vulnerable heels—a species of running fever—which operates on sound-headed and honest-hearted creatures very much like the cork leg in the song did on its owner. When he had once got started on it, the more he tried to stop it, the more it would run away. A witty Irish soldier always boasting of his bravery when no danger was nigh, but who invariably retreated without orders at the first charge of the engagement, being asked by his captain why he did so, replied:

“Captain, I have as brave a heart as Julius Caesar ever had; but, somehow or other, whenever danger approaches, my *cowardly* legs will run away with me.”—(Debate, Lincoln: Springfield, Illinois, December, 1839.)

## “ONE AND A HALF TIMES BIGGER THAN OTHER MEN!”

Most conspicuous among the host of seeming friends consistently and constantly plotting against their chief to replace him if not actually displace him, was Salmon P. Chase. His whole career was that of the office-seeker incarnate. School-teacher, lawyer, governor of his State of adoption, Ohio—for he was a New Hampshire man—he tried from 1856 all parties to nominate him for the Presidency, at all openings. His inability to inspire trust forbade his having a personal following of any strength. Lincoln easily saw through him, but he had a fellow-feeling for an indubitably honest treasurer. To think of the countless opportunities he had to enrich himself out of the public coffers! Like another incorruptible statesman, he might have said: “I wonder at my qualms when I had but to stretch out my hand to pocket thousands!” But he truthfully said, when a hack impudently hinted that he could have the nomination dearest to his heart if he would but use to his private ends the vast patronage at his command:

“I should despise myself if capable of appointing or removing a man for the sake of the Presidency.”

In February, 1861, the Peace Congress (Massachusetts) delegation called on the President to recommend Salmon P. Chase for the Treasury Department. Lincoln was already favorable, for he said:

“From what I know and hear, I think Mr. Chase is about a hundred and fifty to any other man's hundred for that place.”

This is why Lincoln, when compelled to remove the underminer, solaced him with the bed to fall upon of the Supreme Court judgeship. He said of him: “Chase is about one and a half times bigger than any one I ever knew.”

## SO SLOW, A HEARSE RAN OVER HIM!

By treachery of those in charge of our navy-yards, arsenals, and treasury, the South began the bloody strife better provided than the simple North. But adverse fate seemed bent on keeping the disparity for long in favor of the weaker contestant. By one of those wicked dispensations tripping up our early march, the secretary of the navy was selected in Gideon Welles, an estimable gentleman in person, but woefully unsuited to the berth, if from age alone. Patriarchal in appearance, with a long face and longer beard, white and sere, it became proverbial without appearing much of a far-fetched joke that he was the naval constructor to Noah of Ark-aic fame. Unfortunately his "set" were antiques as well. Yet Lincoln clung to him—or he clung to the President like the Old Man of the Sea—under which aspect he was presented by the caricaturists. One day, however, said the gossips of the White House, Mr. Lincoln dropped the newspaper in reading, and exclaimed:

"Listen!" said he to his secretary, "a man has been *run over by a hearse!* As I saw Welles not so long ago, it must be one of *Gideon's Band!*"

A song entitled "Gideon's Band," introduced by the negro minstrels in New York, was popular on the streets and in the camps.

## **BLOOD–SHEDDING REMITS SINS.**

Judge Kellogg, having an application for condoning a death sentence against a soldier, urged that he had served well hitherto, having been badly wounded under fire.

“Kellogg,” remarked Lincoln quickly, “is there not something in the Bible about the shedding of blood for the remission of sins?”

As the judge was not familiar with ecclesiastical law, he merely bowed. In fact, the blood–offerings of the ancients was of animals, and it was deemed profane to offer one's own. Still, the offering of blood is dedication to a friend or the country. Lincoln had *the idea* correctly.

“That's a good point,” he brightly said, “and there is no going behind it!”

So saying, he wrote the pardon, which Kellogg transmitted to the gladdened father of the culprit.

Mr. Lincoln had no need to go back to Scripture for his defense. It is martial law, unwritten but valid, that if a delinquent soldier, fugitive from justice, or breaking prison, reaches the battle–field and takes his place gallantly, no more would be said about the hanging charge, even though it were literally a hanging one.

## HIS “LEG CASES.”

The judge advocate—general, Holt, as well as the military chiefs, were in despair at their superior trifling with the laws of war by suspending mortal decrees, and, in short, in hunting up excuses for delaying the blow of justice. Once the judge brought to the President a case so flagrant that he did not doubt that, for a rarity, the chief would sign without any cavil and hesitation. A soldier had demoralized his regiment in the nick of a battle by dashing down his rifle and hiding behind a tree. He had not a friend or relative to sue for him. Despite all this, the Executive laid down the pen quivering between his long fingers, and said:

“Holt, I think I must, after all, file this away with my 'Leg Cases.’” And thrust the paper in one of a series of pigeonholes already crammed with the like.

The judge was taken off his guard by the inconsistent levity, and demanded the meaning of the term with acerbity.

“Holt, were you ever in battle?” he counter queried.

The man of law was a man of peace; he had seen lead, but in seals, not bullets.

Secretary of War Stanton was spurring the military justice on, as often before.

“Did Stanton ever march in the first line, to be shot at like this man?”

Holt answered for his colleague in the negative.

“Well, I tried it in the Black Hawk War!” proceeded the Illinoisian, “and I remember one time I grew awful weak in the legs when I heard the bullets whistle around me and saw the enemy in front of me. How my legs carried me forward I cannot now tell, for I thought every minute that I should sink to the ground. I am opposed to having soldiers shot for not facing danger when it is not known that their legs would carry them into danger! Well, judge, you see the papers crowded in there? You call them cases of 'Cowardice in the face of the enemy,' a long title, but I call them my 'Leg Cases,' for short!—and I put it to you, Holt, and leave it to you to decide for yourself, if Almighty God gives a man a *cowardly pair of legs*, how can he help them running away with him?”

## HOW THE DELINQUENT SOLDIER PAID HIS DEBT.

There is a great similarity in the many stories of Lincoln's leniency to soldiers incurring the death—penalty according to the code of war, and no wonder, when they were so numerous that he often had four—and—twenty sentences to sign or ignore in a day.

A member of a Vermont regiment was so sentenced for sleeping at his post. The more than usual intercession made for him induced Lincoln to visit the culprit in his cell. He found him a simple country lad, impressing him as a reminder of himself at that age. In the like plain and rustic vein he discoursed with him.

“I have been put to a deal of bother on your account, Scott,” he said paternally. “What I want to know is how are you going to pay *my* bill?”

From a lawyer turned sword of the State, this was reasonable enough; so the young man responded:

“I hope I am as grateful to you, Mr. Lincoln, as any man can be for his life. But this came so sudden that I did not lay out for it. But I have my bounty—money in the savings—bank, and I guess we could raise some money by a mortgage on the farm; and, if we wait till pay—day for the regiment, I guess the boys will help some, and we can make it up—if it isn't more nor five or six hundred, eh?”

With the same gravity, the intermediary reckoned the cost would be more.

“My son,” said he, “the bill is a large one. Your friends cannot pay it—nor your comrades, nor the farm, nor the pay! If from this day William Scott does his duty so that, if I were there when he came to die, he could look me in the face as now and say: 'I have kept my promise and have done my duty as a soldier,' then *my* debt will be paid.”

The boy made the promise, and was immediately restored to the regiment. He earned promotion, but refused it. At Lee's Mills, on the Warwick River, he was wounded while distinguishing himself in a grand assault. Mortally wounded in saving three lives, he was enabled with his dying breath to send a message to the President to the effect that he had redeemed his pledge. On his breast was found one of the likenesses of Lincoln with the motto, “God bless our President!” which the Grand Army men were given. He thanked the benefactor for having let him fall like a soldier, in battle, and not like a coward, by his comrades' rifles.



## “THE SWEARING HAD TO BE DONE THEN, OR NOT AT ALL!”

An old man came from Tennessee to beg the life of his son, death–doomed under the military code. General Fiske procured him admittance to the President, who took the petition and promised to attend to the matter. But the applicant, in anguish, insisted that a life was at stake—that to–morrow would not do, and that the decision must be made on the instant.

Lincoln assumed his mollifying air, and in a soothing tone brought out his universal soothing–sirup, the little story:

“It was General Fiske, who introduced you, who told me this. The general began his career as a colonel, and raised his regiment in Missouri. Having good principles, he made the boys promise then not to be profane, but let him do all the swearing for the regiment. For months no violation of the agreement was reported. But one day a teamster, with the foul tongue associated with their calling and mule–driving, as he drove his team through a longer and deeper series of mud–puddles than ever before, unable to restrain himself, turned himself inside out as a vocal Vesuvius. It happened, too, that this torrent was heard surging by the colonel, who called him to account.

“Well, yes, colonel,' he acknowledged, 'I did vow to let you do all the swearing of the regiment; but the cold fact is, that the swearing *had* to be done thar and then, or not at all, to do the 'casion justice—and you were not thar!’

“Now,” summed up Mr. Lincoln to the engrossed and semiconsoled parent, “I may not be there, so do you take this and do the swearing him off!”

He furnished him with the release autograph, and sent another mourner on his way rejoicing.

## **DISPLACE THE THISTLES BY FLOWERS.**

Two ladies called upon the President at the end of 1864, one the wife, the other the mother of western Pennsylvanians imprisoned for resisting the military draft. A number of other men were fellows in their durance on precisely the same grounds. Finding it meet to grant this dual relief sought, Lincoln directed the whole to be liberated, and signed the paper with one signature to cover the entire act of humanity. His old friend, Speed, was witness of this scene, and, knowing only too well the sensitive nature of the President, he spoke his wonder that such ordeals were not killing.

Lincoln mused, and agreed that such scenes were not to be wantonly undergone.

“But they do not hurt me. That is the only thing today to make me forget my condition, or give me any pleasure”—he was unwell, then; his feet and hands were always cold, and often when about he ought to have been abed. “I have in that order made two persons happy, and alleviated the distress of many a poor soul whom I never expect to see. It is more than one can often say that, in doing right, one has made two happy in one day. Speed, die when I may, I want it said of me by those who know me best, that I always plucked a thistle and planted a flower when I thought a flower would grow.”—(Vouched for by Joshua R. Speed, the first to be friend to Lincoln when he set out to become a lawyer, at Springfield, in 1837.)

## **“YOU HAVE ONE, AND I HAVE ONE—THAT IS RIGHT!”**

An elderly woman was among the suitors of the President, when the commander-in-chief by virtue of office was besought to release her eldest son of three, her husband and two younger sons having been slain in action.

“Certainly,” returned the chief, “if you have given us all, and your prop has been taken away, you are justly entitled to one of your boys.”

The woman took the discharge, and gratefully went away. But she was compelled to return more grieved than before, as she had found the son she sought dying in a hospital at the front. The surgeon made a note of the fatality, with which, unable to speak, she presented herself to the President. He knew what she wished this time, and proceeded to write out the release of the second son. On handing her the paper, he said—a new judgment of a kinder judge than Solomon:

“Now, you have one, and I the other of the two left; that is no more than right!”

**“SHOOTING A MAN DOES HIM NO GOOD!”**

Judge Kellogg, of New York, begged off the son of a voter in his district, condemned for military infraction; in fact, the judge did not know much of the case, but his insistence prevailed over the rectifier of the law and articles of war. Lincoln dryly remarked, as he appended his signature to the pardon:

“I do not believe that shooting a man does him any good!”

## **BENEVOLENCE IS BEAUTIFUL.**

Thaddeus Stevens accompanied a lady of his constituents to beg a pardon of the President, her son being under death sentence of a court-martial. The senator backing up the petition, it was granted. The grateful woman was choking, and was led away by her escort, without speaking in thankfulness. But at the exit she found her voice, and burst forth feelingly:

“Mr. Stevens, they told me that the President was homely looking! It is a lie! He is the handsomest man I ever saw!”

**“IT WAS THE BABY THAT DID IT.”**

A young mother came to Washington to sue for the life of her husband, a deserter, condemned to die. Such was the crowd of besiegers for grace, offices, and simple greeting by the host of the White House that she was kept out in the hall. But one day, the master passing through the corridor “to hold the show,” heard a baby’s pitiful wail. He halted, listened again to make sure, and on entering his reception-parlor asked his favorite usher if he had not heard that odd thing—there—an infant’s cry.

The attendant promptly related that a woman with a babe was without, who had been losing her time three days.

“Go at once, and send her to me,” he ordered, expressing regret that she should have been overlooked.

As there were several extenuating points in her plea, or the benign official leaned that way, he wrote his pardon and gave it to the woman, whose still plaintive smile shone through tears of gratitude.

“Take that, my poor woman, and it will bring you back your husband,” he said, going so far as to direct her to what authority to apply for the action.

In showing her forth, the old usher, who knew his employer’s tender heart where children were concerned, whispered:

“It was the baby that did it!”—(Told by “Old Dan’el,” the good-natured Irish usher.)

**“IT RESTS ME TO SAVE A LIFE!”**

Schuyler Colfax, then Speaker of the House, pleaded with Lincoln for the life of an elector's son, sentenced to be shot. Though he intruded on the arbiter very late after a long spell of official duties, Lincoln accorded the boon.

“Colfax,” explained he, “it makes me rested after a hard day's work, if I can find some good excuse for saving a man's life, and I go to bed happy as I think how joyous the signing of my name will make him, and his family, and his friends.”

**“A FAMILY MAN WANTS TO SEE HIS FAMILY.”**

Superintendent Tinker, of the Western Union Telegraph Company, vouches for the following:

A woman came to the Honorable Francis Kernan, member of Congress, with a pitiful tale, with which he went to the President. Her husband was a soldier who had been away from home a year. He deserted in order to have a glance at the family, and was captured on his way back to the front. But the rules of war are imperative, and without compassion. The President was interested, as in all such cases where a deserving life and a sorrowing woman were at stake. He said:

“Of course, this man wanted to see his family! They ought not to shoot him for that!” He telegraphed for action in the matter to cease, and finally pardoned the deserter.

“A fellow-feeling”—for all his thoughts reverted to *his* family life at Springfield.



## **A RULE WITHOUT EXCEPTION.**

Lincoln's Amnesty Proclamation, issued in December, 1863, exemplifies the perpetual attempt to infuse mercy into that intestine warfare, which always grows more fierce by oil thrown on the flames, and only once, in our case, terminated in the brothers becoming brothers again. He replied thus to a public criticizer of the document:

“When a man is sincerely penitent for his misdeeds, and gives satisfactory evidence of the same, he can safely be pardoned, and there is no exception to the rule.”

## **EVEN REBELS MIGHT BE SAVED.**

A Mr. Shrigley, of Philadelphia, having been appointed hospital chaplain, the President sent in his name to the Senate, and his confirmation was imminent. A deputation came on to protest on the grounds that he was a Universalist, a large-minded man, who did not believe in endless punishment. Logically, he believed that “even the rebels will be saved,” concluded the opposition, horrified.

“Well, gentlemen,” determined the President gravely, “if that be so, and there is any way under heaven whereby the rebels can be saved, then, for God's sake and for their sakes, let the man be appointed.”

## WHIPPING AROUND THE STUMP.

On New-year's morning, 1864, President Lincoln entered the War Department building. His sensitive nature, more than ever strained to the utmost tension, was irritated by hearing a woman wailing over a child in her arms at an office door. Major Eckert requested to ascertain the cause of the grief brought back the painful but not unexampled explanation. A soldier's wife had come to Washington with her babe, expecting to have no difficulty in going on under pass to the camp where her husband was under the colors. But she learned, to her dismay, that, while an officer's wife has few obstacles to meet in communing with her husband under like circumstances, the private's is dissimilarly situated. This poor soul, with little money anyway, was perplexed how to wait in the expensive city till her wish was granted.

"Come, Eckert," blurted out the chief in his frank manner, "let's send the woman down there!"

It was recited that the war office had strengthened the orders against women in camp.

"H'm!" coughed the other in his dry way, ominous of an alternative, "let us whip the devil around the stump since he will not step right over! Send the woman's husband leave of absence to report *here* —to see his wife and baby!"

So the officer on duty wrote the order, and the couple were happily reunited.—(By A. B. Chandler, manager of postal telegraphs, attached to the War Department in the war.)

## **“LIFE TOO PRECIOUS TO BE LOST.”**

Benjamin Owen, a young Vermont volunteer, was sentenced to the extremity for being asleep on post. Lincoln was especially lenient in these cases, as he held that a farm-boy, used to going to bed early, was apt to maintain the habit in later life. It came out that the youth had taken the place of a comrade the night before, as extra duty, and this overwork had fatigued him so that his succumbing was at least explicable. This clue being in a letter he wrote home, his sister journeyed to the capital with it and showed it to the President.

“Oh, that fatal sleep!” he exclaimed, “thousands of lives might have been lost through that fatal sleep!”

He wrote out the pardon, and said to the girl:

“Go home, my child, and tell that father of yours, who could approve his country's sentence, even when it took the life of a youth like that, that Abraham Lincoln thinks the life too precious to be lost.”

He went in his carriage to deliver the pardon to the proper authorities for its execution—and not the soldier's. Then, making out a furlough for the released volunteer, he saw him and the sister off on the homeward journey, pinning a badge on the former's arm with the words:

“The shoulder which should bear a comrade's burden, and die for it so uncomplainingly, must wear that strap!”

## MERCY HAS PRECEDENCE OVER THE RIGID.

On the 9th of April, 1865, Lee accepted Grant's easy conditions, and practically everything was completed but the formal signing of the capitulation. The wide rejoicing covered the earth, the eye-witnesses may say, with one smile of relief and gladness. Washington looked gay with bunting, like New York City on the day of "Show your flag!" Above all, the President, whose words at Springfield, in 1860, to the Illinois school superintendent, Newton Bateman, were justified: "I may not see the end, but it will come, and I shall be vindicated (in condemning slavery)."

It was, therefore, in a receptive mood that he was found by Senator J. B. Henderson, of Missouri. This gentleman came for the third time on an errand of pity.

At the close of the war, one Colonel Green, brother to United States Senator James S. Green, crossed into Mississippi with his friend and brother in arms, George E. Vaughan. He gave Vaughan letters for home and started him to carry news to his family. Captured within the Federal lines, he was held as a spy. Mr. Henderson succeeded in getting a retrial, and even a third hearing, but still the man was under sentence of death. On the afternoon of April 14, he called at the White House, and insisted that the pardon should be granted now if ever, "in the interest of peace and consideration."

The gladsome chief agreed with him, and directed him to go to Secretary Stanton and have the prisoner released. But the inflexible official, on whom the general glee had no softening, refused, and the man had but two days to live. When the intermediary hurried back to the Executive Mansion, the President was dressed to go to Ford's Theater, with his wife, his son, and a young couple of friends.

Nevertheless, he stopped, went into the study, and wrote an unconditional release and pardon for Vaughan, saying:

"I think this will have precedence over Stanton!"

It was his last official act—one of mercy and forgiveness.

## TAKEN FROM REBELLION AND GIVEN TO LOYALTY.

A lady out of Tennessee, which was early to join secession, came to Washington in search of her son, a youth enlisted in the Confederate Army. She found him in the Fort Henry hospital, where, allowed to see him, as she was loyal, in spite of regulations about prisoners of war, she learned that he would recover. She induced him to recant and offer his parole if he were allowed freedom. She called on Secretary Stanton, but he was in one of his boorish moods—was he ever out of them?—and repulsed her with rudeness. She finally appealed to the President, who seemed very often balm to Stanton, “a fretful corrosive applied to a deathly wound,” and he gave her an order to receive the young man if he swore off his pledge to the wrong side.

“To take the young man from the ranks of the rebellion,” he said to her, “and give him to a loyal mother is a better investment to this government than to give him up to its deadly enemies.”

The young man was enabled to resume his studies, but in a Northern college!

## SUSPENSION IS NOT EXECUTION.

Among those generals—amateurs, like the President, themselves—who disapproved of any leniency in discipline, was Major-general Benjamin F. Butler. He wrote to his commander-in-chief so impudent an epistle as the annexed:

“MR. PRESIDENT: I pray you not to interfere with the court-martial of this army. (*His*, of course—his skill was discoursed upon by General Grant, who said that Butler had “corked himself up.”) You will destroy all discipline among the soldiers.”

But in the teeth of this embargo, moved by the entreaties of an old father whose son was under death sentence by this despot, he said:

“Butler or no Butler, here goes!” and, seizing his pen, wrote that the soldier in prison was not to be shot until further orders.

The affected parent eagerly took the precious paper, but his jaw fell on seeing the text: he had looked for a full pardon. But the comforter hastened to explain:

“Well, my old friend, I see that you are not very well acquainted with me. If your son never looks upon death till further orders from me to shoot him, he will live to be a great deal older than Methuselah.”

## **“THE DISCONTENTED ... ABOUT FOUR HUNDRED—“**

In 1856, Mr. Lincoln had figured prominently in the Fremont–Dayton presidential campaign, and ever since he had been partial to the “Pathfinder,” though he clearly saw that he would be a rival for the chair at Washington—his long–cherished ambition. He gave, at the outset of the war, the most important military command, that of the Mountain, or Western Department, to Fremont. The latter attempted to “steal his thunder” by issuing a forerunner of the Emancipation Act, and was removed; but Lincoln reinstated him till he had to repeat the removal. He was repaid by the incorrigible marplot setting up as candidate for the chief magistracy after it was settled that the retiring officer should be reelected. Nevertheless, the competitor's party was so small that, in allusion to it, Lincoln read from “Samuel,” Book I:

“And every one who was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one who was discontented, gathered themselves unto him, and he became captain over them, and there were with him about four hundred men!”



**“NOT MUCH OF A HEAD, BUT HIS ONLY ONE!”**

Although the life of a soldier sleeping on post was at stake, the pleader wished to forbear on finding that the supreme decider, the President, meant to make a personal matter of it. He suspended the execution while looking into it. But it was objected that this was a burden not intended to impose.

“Never mind,” Lincoln answered. “This soldier's life is as valuable to him as any person's in the land. It reminds me of the old Scotch woman's saying about her laird going to be beheaded for participation in a Jacobite rebellion:

“It waur na mickle of a head, but it is the only head the puir body ha' got.”—(Assured, in substance, by L. E. Chittenden.)

**“G’E US A GOOD CONCEIT!”**

A place-hunter hastened to his old acquaintance, Lincoln, when he was seated, of course, to secure a trough. But he aimed high—in contrast to Lincoln's adage that a novice should aim low! The least he named was the berth of master of the mint.

“Good gracious!” ejaculated the chief. “Why did he not ask to be secretary of the treasury and have done with it?” Reflecting, he observed: “Well, now, I never thought that lank had anything more than average ability when we were youngsters together. But, then, I suppose, he thought the same thing about me, and yet—here I am!”

## **THEY WENT AWAY SICKER STILL.**

A party were pressing the claims of a solicitor for a consulship; his particular plea that his health would be benefited by residence on these Fortunate Islands. The Lord Bountiful terminated the interview by lightly saying:

“Gentlemen, I am sorry to say that there are eight other applicants for the place—and all of them are sicker than your client!”

## OF TWENTY APPLICANTS, NINETEEN ARE MADE ENEMIES.

Hampered, harassed, and hounded by office-seekers, the President once opened his confidence on this irritating point to a conscientious public officer. He wished the senators and others would start and stimulate public sentiment toward changes in public offices being made on good and sufficient cause—that is, plainly, never on party considerations. The ideal civil service, in a word. Nine-tenths of his vexations were due to seekers of sinecures.

“It seems to me that such visitors dart at me and, with finger and thumb, carry off a portion of my vitality,” was his saying.

His hearer laughed at the image, but the other pursued earnestly:

“I have made up my mind to make very few changes in the offices in my gift for my second term. I think, now, that I shall not move a single man, except for delinquency. To remove a man is very easy, but when I go to fill his place, there are twenty applicants, and of these I must make nineteen enemies.”—(Authenticated by Senator Clark, of New Hampshire, to whom the confidence was imparted.) [Footnote: Secretary Blaine, out of his similar experience, reiterated the sentiment thus: “When I choose one out of ten applicants to fill an office, I find that nine have become my enemies and one is an ingrate.”]

## RID OF AN OFFICE-SEEKER.

“There was an ignorant man,” said a senator, “who once applied to Lincoln for the post of doorkeeper to the House. This man had no right to ask Lincoln for anything. It was necessary to repulse him. But Lincoln repulsed him gently and whimsically without hurting his feelings, in this way:

“So you want to be doorkeeper to the House, eh?”

“Yes, Mr. President.”

“Well, have you ever been a doorkeeper? Have you ever had any experience of doorkeeping?”

“Well, no—no actual experience, sir.”

“Any theoretical experience? Any instructions in the duties and ethics of doorkeeping?”

“Umh—no.”

“Have you ever attended lectures on doorkeeping?”

“No, sir.”

“Have you read any text-book on the subject?”

“No.”

“Have you conversed with any one who has read such a book?”

“No, sir. I'm afraid not, sir.”

“Well, then, my friend, don't you see that you haven't a single qualification for this important post?” said Lincoln, in a reproachful tone.

“Yes, I do,” said the applicant, and he took leave humbly, almost gratefully.”—(*Chicago Record-Herald.*)

## NOT GOOD OFFICES, BUT A GOOD STORY.

When Washington and its chief guardians were more sorely besieged by office-seekers than by the Confederates, a politician locally important and generally importunate was sent as a “committee of one” to headquarters to secure the loaves and fishes for his congeries. But in about a fortnight this forager came home, full of emptiness. Asked if he had not seen the President—accounted commonly as only too accessible—and why he did not get the places, he replied glumly, yet with a tinge of brightening:

“Yes, I saw the old man. He heard me state my errand, the President did. He heard me patiently all right enough; and then he said: 'I am sorry not to have any good offices for you, but—I can give you something—a good story!'”

“And he went on with—

“Once there was a certain king who kept an astrologer to forewarn him of coming events, and especially to tell him whether it was going to rain when he wished to go on hunting expeditions. One day he had started for the forest with his train of lords and ladies, when he met a farmer.

““Good morning, farmer,” said the king.

““Good morning, king,” said the farmer; “where are you folks going?”

““Hunting,” said the king.

““Hunting! You'll all get wet,” said the farmer.

“The king trusted his astrologer and kept on, but at midday there came up a tremendous rain that drenched the king and all his party.

“On getting back to the palace the king had the astrologer decapitated, and sent for the farmer to take his place.

““Law's sakes!” said the farmer, when he arrived, “it ain't me that knows when it's going to rain, it's my donkey. When it's going to be fair weather, he always carries his ears forward, so. When it's going to rain, he puts 'em backward, so.”

““Make the donkey the court astrologer!” shouted the king.

“It was done; but the king always declared that that appointment was the greatest mistake he ever made in his life.’

“Mr. Lincoln stopped there,” said the office-seeker.

““Why did he call it a mistake?” we asked him. 'Didn't the donkey do his duty?’

“Yes,’ said the President, 'but after that every donkey in the country wanted an office.’”

## **ENCOURAGE LONGING FOR WORK.**

In 1861, the badgered President had so novel an application that he wrote the annexed note to facilitate its harvest:

“To Major Ramsey: The lady—bearer of this—says she has two sons who want to work. Set them at it, if possible. Wanting to work is so rare a merit that it should be encouraged.”

**“BUT AARON GOT HIS COMMISSION!”**

To animadversion on the President appointing to a post one who had zealously opposed his reelection, he replied:

“Well, I allow that Judge E——, having been disappointed before, did behave pretty 'ugly,' but that would not make him any less fit for the place; and I think I have scriptural authority for appointing him. You remember when the Lord was on Mount Sinai getting out a commission for Aaron, said Aaron was at the foot of the mountain, making a false god for the people to worship? Yet Aaron got his commission, you know.”



## **SOMETHING LINCOLNIAN ALL COULD TAKE.**

When the President had an attack of spotted fever, and was told he must be immured, as it was catching, he smiled and said:

“It is a pity to shut the public off—as while every act of mine is not taken to, *now* I have something everybody might take!”

## “NOT MANY SUCH BOYS OUTSIDE OF SUNDAY-SCHOOLS!”

A Boston business house was deceived in an errand boy. Fresh from the country he succumbed to temptation and robbed the mails. His father tried to get him off the penalty as the United States Government took up the case. He went to Washington and prevailed on his representative, Alexander H. Rice, to intercede for him. Rice and the President were on familiar terms. As soon as the pleader presented himself, Mr. Lincoln assumed an easy attitude, legs stretched, leaning back, and read the petition.

“Well,” said he, “did you meet a man going out as you came in? His errand was to get a man out of the penitentiary, and now you come to get a boy out of jail. I am bothered to death about these pardon cases; but I am a little encouraged by *your* visit. They are after me on the men, but appear to be roping *you* in on the boys. What shall we do? The trouble appears to come from the courts. Let us abolish the courts, and I think that will end the difficulty. And it seems to me that the courts ought to be abolished, anyway, for they appear to pick out the very best men in the community and send them to the penitentiary, and now they are after the same kind of boys. I don't know much about boys in Massachusetts, but according to this petition, there are not many such boys as this one outside the Sunday-schools in other parts!”

It was settled that if a majority of the Massachusetts delegates signed the paper, a pardon would be given.—(Testified to by Honorable Alexander H. Rice, former governor of Massachusetts.)

## THE GOOD BOY GETS ON.

According to White House etiquette, as a congressman and a senator, Wilson and Rice, called together on the President, they were admitted in company. As they were readmitted from the anteroom a boy of about twelve, on the lookout, slipped in with them. After the salutations the host became absorbed in the intruder, as he was always interested in the young.

But the two gentlemen were unable to answer the natural question:

“Who is this little boy?”

But the boy could speak for himself, and instantly said that he was “a good boy,” come to Washington in the hope of becoming a page in the House of Representatives. The President began to say that Captain Goodenow, head doorkeeper there, was the proper person to make that application to, as he had nothing to do with such appointments. But the good little boy pulled out his credentials, from his folks, the squire, and the parson and schoolmaster, and they stated not only that he was good, but good to his widow mother, and wanted to help the needy family. The President called the boy up to him, studied him, and wrote on his petition:

“If Captain Goodenow can give this good boy a place,  
it will oblige A. LINCOLN.”

(Vouched for by Alexander H. Rice, member of Congress, and ex-governor of Massachusetts.)

## HOW McCULLOCH WAS CONSTRAINED TO SERVE.

For two arduous years Hugh McCulloch, banker of Indianapolis, served in organizing the Currency Control. He was looking forward to release and repose at the second Administration, when the renewed incumbent begged him to become secretary of the treasury. He remonstrated.

“But I could not help myself,” he confessed to Janet Jennings. “Mr. Lincoln looked at me with his sad, weary eyes, and throwing his arm over my shoulder, said:

“You must; the country needs you!”

That was a gesture worth all the elegant tones in the elocution-books.

## **ALL MOUTH AND NO HANDS' CLASS.**

“I hold if the Almighty had ever made a set of men that should do all the eating, and none of the work, He would have made them with mouths only and no hands, and if He had ever made another class that He had intended should do all the work and none of the eating, He would have made them without mouths and with all hands.”—(A. Lincoln.)

## HOT AND COLD THE SAME BREATH.

Underlying the innate frankness, there was a deep shrewdness in President Lincoln, which fitted him to cope with the most expert politicians, albeit their vanity would not let them always or promptly acknowledge it. When Chief Justice Taney died, the President had already planned to fill up the vacancy and at the same time shelve that thorn in his side, Salmon P. Chase. But always keeping his own counsel, he was mute on that head, when an important deputation attended to recommend Chase. After hearing the address, the President asked for the engrossed memorial to be left with him.

“I want it, in order, if I appoint Mr. Chase, I may show the friends of the other persons for whom the office is solicited, by how powerful an influence and what strong recommendations I was obliged to disregard in appointing him.”

This was heard with great satisfaction, and the committee were about to depart, thinking their man sure of the mark, when they perceived that the chief had not finished all he had to say.

“And,” he continued, “I want the paper, also, in order that, if I should appoint any other person, I may show *his* friends how powerful an influence and what strong recommendations I was obliged to disregard in appointing *him*.”

The committee departed mystified.

## WANTED THE JAIL EARNINGS.

A Western senator bothered the President about a client of his for back pay of a dubious nature. Lincoln responded with one of his evasive answers—that is, “a little story”:

“Years ago, when imprisonment for debt was legal, a poor fellow was sent to jail by his creditor, and compelled to serve out his debt at the rate of a dollar and a half a day.

“When the sentence had expired, he informed the jailer of the fact and asked to be released. The jailer insisted on keeping him four days longer. Upon making up his statement, however, he found that the man was right. The prisoner then demanded not only a receipt in full for his debt, but also payment for four days' extra service, amounting to six dollars, which he declared the county owed him. Now,” concluded Lincoln, “I think that county would be about as likely to pay this man's claim as this government will be to pay your friend's claim for back pay.”—(Told before Colonel Noteware, of Colorado, a Western senator, and a congressman.)

## **A TITLE NO HINDRANCE.**

A German noble and military officer wished to serve as volunteer under our colors. After being welcome, he thought it expedient to unfold his family roll, so to say, but the ultra-democratic ruler gently interpolated as if he saw an apology in the recital, and soothingly observed:

“Oh, never mind that! You will find *that* no hindrance to your advance. You will be treated as fairly in spite of that!”



## A TALKER WITH NOTHING TO SAY.

A reverend gentleman of prominence, M. F., of ——, was presented to the President, who resignedly had a chair placed for him, and with patient awaiting said:

“My dear sir, I am now ready to hear what you have to say.”

“Why, bless you, Mr. President,” stammered the other, with more apprehension than his host, “I have nothing to say. I only came to pay my respects.”

“Is that all?” exclaimed the escaped victim, springing up to take the minister's two hands with gladness. “It is a relief to find a clergyman—or any other man, [Footnote: Any other man. From this frequent expression of Mr. Lincoln's, a true comedian, the “negro entertainer,” Unsworth, conceived a burlesque lecture, “Or Any Other Man,” with which he went around the world. The editor, passing through London, remembers his attention being called to Mr. Gladstone and other cabinet ministers, who came to the Oxford Music-hall nightly between Parliament business, to hear Unsworth, who, on such chances, introduced personal and pat allusions to the subjects debated that night.] for that matter—who has nothing to say. I thought you had come to preach to me.”

## **STICK TO YOUR BUSINESS.**

Among the bores who assailed the President was a Western stranger who had another plan to end the war. Lincoln listened to him all the way, and then obliged him and the crowd with a story:

“You may have heard of Mr. Bounce, of Chicago? No; well, he was a gentleman of so much leisure that he had no time to do anything! This superb loafer went to a capitalist at the time of a wheat flurry, when speculators reckoned to make fortunes, and he informed Mr. Blank Check how his project would make them both terribly rich. The reply came sharp as a bear-trap: 'My advice is that you stick to your business!'

“But I have no business—I am a gentleman.'

“Whatever that is, I advise you to stick to that!'

“And now, my friend,” proceeded the President, “I mean nothing offensive, for I know you mean well—but I think you had better stick to your business and leave the war-threshing to those who have the responsibility.”

## **MARRYING A MAN WITHOUT HIS CONSENT.**

Major Hoxsey, Excelsior (N. Y.) Brigade, wounded in the Fighting Joe Hooker division, could not accept a commission in the army, but wished to be put upon the staff of the volunteers, as he could not walk. He was upheld in his desire by Adjutant-general Hamlin, who accompanied him to the President. They were both asked to sit while the authority consulted the Congressional laws. Staff appointments could not be heard by the President unless the general commanding the desired rank was approving.

“I have no more power to appoint you without that request,” said the President, “than I would have to marry a woman to any man she might desire for a husband without his consent!”—(By General Charles Hamlin.)

**“A LUXURY TO SEE ONE WHO WANTS NOTHING.”**

Senator Depew was secretary of New York State in 1864, under Governor Seymour. He had to wait upon President Lincoln, reelected, to harmonize the calls for men, as his State was split on the accusation that the draft favored one party above the other. His official business finished, Secretary Depew called to bid farewell. Lincoln was not holding a reception, but sitting in that study accessible to the public, that never was a public man's sanctum before—or after. He was intruded upon all the time, as he let the door remain wide open. (Old New Yorkers may recall P. T. Barnum, the showman's, similar habit.) Every now and then some petitioners would make a desperate rush in and, on seeing they were not repelled by order or by the ushers' own initiative, others would be emboldened to do the same. The New Yorker no sooner took this cue than the besieged man perceived him.

“Hello, Depew! what do you want?” was his hail.

“Nothing, Mr. President, save to pay my respects to you, as I am going home.”

“Stay! it is such a luxury to see any one who does not want anything!”

He had the room cleared and discussed the war, interspersing the dialogue with apposite stories.—(Told by Senator C. M. Depew.)

**“ACCUSE NOT A SERVANT——“**

As the possibilities of rapid advancement were redoubled during the war, the President, in his first term of office, was stormed by the office-seekers, who thought it the best plan to have occupiers of posts ousted to give them an opening; so they maligned and even accused chief officials with a freedom unknown in other countries where the bureaucracy is a sacred institution—as within a generation it has become here. Lincoln rebuked one of these covetous vexers by saying gravely to him:

“Friend, go home and attentively read 'Proverbs,' chapter thirteen, verse ten.”

The rebuffed applicant found at that page in the book: “Accuse not a servant to his master, lest he curse thee, and thou be found guilty!”—(Attested by Schuyler Colfax.)

**A WOLF IN A TRAP MUST SACRIFICE HIS “TAIL” TO BE FREE.**

The presidential private secretary, Stoddard, maintains that his chief sorely astonished and baffled the tribe of acquaintances who flocked in upon him as soon as he was elevated and went back home, with empty haversacks, wondering that he ignored them with heartless ingratitude. “He did not make even his own father a brigadier nor invite cousin Dennis Hanks to a seat in his Cabinet!”

## **SOMEWHAT OF A NEWSMAN.**

Innately attached to letters, and precocious, Abraham Lincoln soon learned his letters and drank in all the learning that his few books could supply. Hence at an early age he became the oracle on the rude frontier, where even a smattering made him handy and valuable to the illiterate backwoodsmen. Besides, as working at any place and at any work, he rarely abided long in any one spot, and had not what might be called a home in his teens.

Dennis Hanks, his cousin, said of Abraham, at fourteen to eighteen: "Abe was a good talker, a good reader, and a kind of newsboy." Hence he was a sort of volunteer colporteur distributing gossip, as a notion pedler, before he was a store clerk where centered all the local news. It was on this experience that he would mingle with the newspaper reporters and telegraph men fraternally, saying with his winning smile and undeniable "push":

"Let me in, boys, for I am somewhat of a news-gatherer myself."

And then he would fix his footing by one of his stories, always—well, often—uttered with a view to publication.

**“A LITTLE MORE LIGHT AND A LITTLE LESS NOISE.”**

As the President was a diligent devourer of the newspaper in the vexatious times (as at all others), he met many a torrent of criticism, incitement, and counsels which left him stunned rather than alleviated. To a special correspondent who hampered him, he said:

“Your papers remind me of a little story. There was a gentleman traveling on horseback in the West where the roads were few and bad and no settlements. He lost his way. To make matters worse, as night came on, a terrible thunder–storm arose; lightning dazzled the eye or thunder shook the earth. Frightened, he got off and led his horse, seeking to guide himself by the spasmodic and flickering electric light. All of a sudden, a tremendous crash brought the man in terror to his knees, when he stammered:

“Oh, Lord! if it be the same to Thee, give us a little more light and a little less noise!”



## “MY PART OF THE SHIP IS ANCHORED.”

Among the first men called out was a young Massachusetts man, Burrage, who went as a private. Grievously wounded, he was sent into the hospital and then to his home. Recuperated, he joined his old regiment at the front. He was unaware that strict orders were out against the soldiers exchanging newspapers, and so performed the daily courtesy of giving a paper to the rebels; they had two, and he promised to give them the one due next time. This was held as keeping up correspondence with the Johnnies, and the authorities reduced him to the ranks, as he was then a captain. Worse and worse, the enemy seized him when he went out to redeem his promise about the news, and he was imprisoned on their side. This regalled his wounds and he was a great sufferer. The Massachusetts member of Congress, Alexander Rice, pleaded with the President for his native citizen. The complication was that Burrage was a captain when captured, but a private again soon after, and the rebels would probably hold him at the higher rate if an exchange was allowed, while the Union War Department stood for his being but a common soldier.

“If General Wadsworth raises that point,” replied the President, who had allowed this pathetic case to break his rule to deal with classes and not individual offenses, “tell him if he could take care of the exchange part, I guess I can take care of the rank part!”

It is clear that the President saw in this punctilio about a humane act, whose “offense was *ranker*.”

It reminded one of the story of the New England skipper who, with his mate—and crew of a small fisher—owned the vessel. They having quarreled and the captain bidding the other mind his part of the ship, the latter did so, and presently came to the stern to report:

“Captain, I have anchored my part of the ship! Take care of your own.”

## **ANGELS SWEARING MAKE NO DIFFERENCE.**

On the President being urged to answer some virulent newspaper assault, his reply was:

“Oh, no; if I were to try to read, much less answer, all the attacks made on me, this shop might as well be closed for any other business, I do the very best I know how—the very best I can; and I mean to keep doing so, until the end. If the end brings me out all right, what is said against me won't amount to anything; if the end brings me out wrong, ten angels swearing I was right would make no difference.”

## WASHINGTON'S DIFFICULT TASK.

Shortly after Lincoln's inauguration, a senator said to him:

“You have as difficult a task as Washington's, when he took command of the American Army, and as little to do it with.”

“That is true, but I have larger resources.”

(The three thousand millions spent on the war vividly contrasts with the Colonies fighting rich England with an empty treasury and barefoot, ragged soldiers.)

## STEEL AND STEAL.

President Lincoln asked a friend, a senator, immediately on his taking office, upon an embarrassed condition of affairs:

“Have you seen that prophecy about my administration in the papers? A prophet foretells that my rule will be one of steel! To which the wags retort: ‘Well, Buchanan’s was one of *steal*.’”

The Georgian slave–holder, late secretary of the treasury, was accused of “diverting” some millions to the South, as that for the war office similarly “diverted” ordnance and munitions to the same quarter; the head of the navy, with what “looked” like collusion, had scattered the war–vessels so as to be long delayed in concentrating.

## “THAT'S WHAT'S THE MATTER.”

In a Spiritualist performance at the White House, which seemed to have been “edited” by the President himself—as often royalty revises plays—for his special entertainment, the Cabinet being invited, after a rigmarole of stilted phrases purporting to be by Washington, Franklin, Napoleon, and other past celebrities, Mr. Welles, secretary of the navy, remarked: “I will think this matter over, and see what conclusion to arrive at!” (His set phrase.)

There was a smile at this, as the aged minister's prolonged meditations were the laughing-stock of the country, he being the clog on the wheels of the car of state. Instantly raps were heard in the spirit-cabinet, and, the alphabet being consulted, the result was spelled out as:

“That's what's the matter!”

This hit at Mr. Welles' stereotyped fault aroused more mirth, and the crowd at the back of the room, domestics, petty officials, and sub-officers, laughed prodigiously, while the secretary stroked his long white beard musingly.

To this cant term hangs a tale apropos of the President. Its origin was low, but humorous. A benevolent gentleman pierced a crowd to its center to see there, on the pavement under a lamp-post, a poor woman, curled in a heap, with a satisfied grin on her flushed face, breathing brokenly. “What's the matter?” eagerly inquired the compassionate man. A bystander removed his pipe from his mouth, and with it pointed to a flattened pocket-flask sticking out of her smashed reticule, half-under her, and sententiously explained:

“That's what's the matter with Hannah!” The sentence took growth and spread all over the Union. It has settled down, as we know, to a fixed form at political meetings, where the audience beguile the waiting time with demanding “What is the matter?” with this or that favorite demagogue. In the sixties, it patly answered any problem. At the presidential election—time of Lincoln's success, a negro minstrel, Unsworth, was a “star” at “444” Broadway, dressing up the daily news drolly under this title—that is, ending each paragraph with that line.

On the 22d of February, 1861, Abraham Lincoln, scheduled to pass on from Harrisburg, where he made a speech as arranged, instead of waiting to depart by the morning train, sped to Philadelphia and thence by a special train detained for “a military messenger with a parcel,” to Washington, by the regular midnight train. The news of his arrival at the capital by this unexpected and clandestine route, and in disguise—this was denied—of a Scotch cap and plaid shawl, startled everybody. Rumors of an attempt to make mischief, as he called it, were rife. But the public still took things as quake-proof, and Mr. Lincoln assured his audiences, as he spoke at every city on his way, that “the crisis was artificial.” On the evening of the twenty-third, the writer dropped into the Broadway negro minstrel hall. Newspaper men knew that Unsworth introduced the latest skimming of the press into his burlesque lecture and liked to hear his funny versions and perversions. The comic sheet of the metropolis, *Vanity Fair*, enframing the witty scintillations of “Artemus Ward,” George Arnold, and a brilliant band, complained that this “nigger comedian” used or anticipated their best effusions. On the whole the public saw in the surreptitious flight of the ruler into his due seat only a farce, in keeping with his jesting humor—he was regarded as a Don Quixote in figure, but a Sancho Panza, for his philosophic proverbs, widely retailed and considered opportune. So the indignation proper toward the forced escapade was absent; everybody still mocked at the “terrible plots,” as so much stale quail, and when the blackened-face orator, coming to a pause after enunciation of his “That's what's the matter” looked around wistfully, the audience were agog. Suddenly out of the wing an attendant darted with alarmed manner and face. He carried on his arm a shawl, gray and travel-stained, and in one shaking hand a Scotch bonnet. Unsworth snatched them in hot haste and fright, clapped on the cap, and, draping himself in the plaid, rushed off at the side, forgetting his own high silk hat. This, with the black suit, the orthodox lecturer's, now gave him a resemblance to Mr. Lincoln, not previously perceived, for they were men of opposite shapes. The eclipse brought home to the spectators the ludicrousness of the President entering his capital in secret, but, I repeat, no one felt any shame, and the audience went forth to relate the excellent finish to the parody, at home or in the saloons, to hearers as obtuse as themselves, to the seriousness of the episode. Somehow, so far, the elect from Illinois was ever the Western buffoon. But when, in his inaugural address, Lincoln thundered the new keynote, the veil fell:

## The Lincoln Story Book

“In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow countrymen, is the momentous issue of the Civil War.”

War! The crisis was no longer “artificial”—he admitted that! What impended, what had fallen? Jest and earnest were still coupled, but earnest took the lead from that hour. Said the Chief Magistrate, in his first official speech: “Physically speaking, we cannot separate—that's what's the matter.”

## **“THE SHIP OF STATE” SIMILE.**

On the morning of Lincoln's arrival in Washington, General Logan and Mr. Lovejoy called on him at Willard's Hotel, to urge a firm and vigorous policy. He replied:

“As the country has placed me at the helm of the ship, I'll try to steer her through.” The Sangamon River pilot spoke there.

“I understand the ship to be made for the carrying and the preservation of the cargo, and so long as the ship can be saved with the cargo, it should never be abandoned, unless it fails in the probability of its preservation, and shall cease to exist, except at the risk of throwing overboard both freight and passengers.”— (Speech, New York reception, 1861.)

“I trust that I may have the assistance of the members of this legislature in piloting the ship of state through this voyage, surrounded by perils as it is; for, if it should suffer shipwreck now, there will be no pilot ever needed for another voyage.”—(Speech, Trenton, New Jersey, 1861.)

## A PILL FOR THE PUBLIC PRINTER.

In Lincoln's first message to Congress, special session, July 4, 1861, is seen this passage:

“With rebellion thus *sugar-coated*, they have been drugging the public mind,” etc.

Mr. Defrees, public printer, with the proofreader's sublime spurning of plain speech, objected to this sweet word, and said: “Mr. President, you are using an undignified expression! I would alter the construction if I were you!”

“Defrees,” was the crushing reply, “that word expresses precisely *my* idea, and I am not going to change it. The time will never come in this country when the people won't know exactly what 'sugar-coated' means!”

“I JINKS! I CAN BEAT YOU BOTH!”

One day the public printer wanted to correct a Lincolnism in one of the presidential documents.

“Go home, Defrees, and see if you can better it.” The next day, Defrees took him his amendment. It happened that Secretary Seward had spied the same fault as the printer, and Lincoln confronted the two improvements.

“I jinks! (by Jingo!) Seward has been rewriting the same paragraph. I believe you have beat Seward, but I think I can beat you both!”

And he wrote with his firm hand “*Stet!* so let it stand!” on the proof-sheet.



## “LET THE GRASS GROW WHERE IT MAY!”

Up to the dread day when the news of the flag of our Union being fired upon, in Charleston harbor, the country resembled the sea in one of those calms preceding a storm. When the placidity betrays hidden and mighty currents, and overhead, in the clear sky, one divines the coursers of the tempest gathering to race in strife like that beneath. Up to Lincoln's arrival in Washington, the nest of sedition, the pro-slavery, peace-at-any-price party slackened in no efforts to retain the *statu quo*, or worse, a new State of the Southern States branching off as suckers strike from the main stem. William E. Dodge had the courage to face the wrought-up Chief Magistrate, chafed with his narrow escape from the assassins of the railroad journey from Baltimore. Said Mr. Dodge:

“It is for you, Mr. President, to say whether the whole nation shall be plunged into bankruptcy (the slaves were valued as property at two thousand million dollars!); whether the grass shall grow in the streets of our commercial cities.” (The balance of trade against the South to the manufacturing and supplying North was stupendous.)

“Then, I say, it shall not,” replied Lincoln; “if it depends upon me, the grass will not grow anywhere, save in the fields and meadows.”

Mr. Dodge persisted in his sordid and businesslike errand.

“Then you will not go to war on account of slavery?”

“I do not know what my acts may be in the future, beyond this: The Constitution will not be preserved and defended until it is enforced and obeyed in every part of every one of the United States. It must be so respected, obeyed, enforced, and defended—let the grass grow where it will!”

## THE PEACE-AT-ANY-PRICE PARTY.

“If there were a class of men who, having no choice of sides in the contest, were anxious to have only quiet and comfort for themselves while it rages, and to fall in with the victorious side at the end of it, without loss to themselves, their advice as to the mode of conducting the contest would be precisely such as his.”— (*His* —Mr. Thomas Durant, who, in 1862, wrote a letter on behalf of the conservatives, asking to be let alone.)

“He speaks of no duty—apparently thinks of none—resting upon Union men. He even thinks it injurious to the Union cause that they should be restrained in trade and passage without taking sides. They are to touch neither a sail nor a pump—live merely as passengers (deadheads, at that!)—to be carried snug and dry through the storm, and safely landed right side up! Nay, more—even a mutineer is to go untouched lest these sacred passengers receive an accidental wound.”—(Letter to C. Bullitt, July 28, 1862.)

## THINGS WERE TOPSY-TURVY ALOFT, TOO.

One evening, when Mr. Hall, astronomer, was working in the Naval Observatory, Washington, on the great equatorial telescope, he was startled to have his sanctum invaded by the gaunt, extenuated figure of the President. He was made welcome, of course, and the varied mechanism explained to him. As the crowning "treat," he was given a peer through the celebrated instrument. It was leveled at the moon, or, rather, arranged to have that orb in its focus at the time. The visitor was appalled, as well as wondering at the view, and slowly withdrew by the trap-door. But when the astronomer resumed his observations and calculations he was interrupted by the same sedate and absorbed caller. He returned, perplexed, as, on glancing up at the moon with unhindered vision, he saw it in another position to that presented in the spy-glass.

Mr. Hall made it clear to him that, as the telescope was pointed, not at the satellite but at its image in a mirror, he saw its reflection and consequently the reverse of the face we observe. The President went away with the satisfaction of a man wanting every novelty demonstrated.

## HITCHING TO THE MOON.

Lincoln came to Washington,  
To view the situation;  
And found the world all upside down,  
A rumpus in the nation.  
*(Topical song, 1860.)*

## A RED FLAG TO HIM.

A most remarkable prelude to the war was the performance through the Northern States of the Chicago Zouaves. The name came from the irregular regiment in the French Algerian service, composed of men worthy of being drummed out of the regular corps; they dressed like the Arabs in the small bolero jacket and baggy red, trousers familiar since. They drilled gymnastically, not to say theatrically. Ellsworth, a clerk in the Lincoln & Herndon law office, had a martial turn, and hearing daily in that quasi-political vortex of the impending crisis, determined to be forearmed in case of the differences coming to blows. He raised, uniformed *a la Zou-zou*, a score of young men like himself and proceeded to give exhibitions at home and then in the East. The writer retains a vivid memory of the odd and fantastic show, which, however, was regarded as “not war, though magnificent.” But Captain Ellsworth was in earnest. Mustered in with his company, he started the Zouave movement which led to two or more regiments being formed. His being the first volunteers at the fore, he claimed the right of the reconnoitering force sent out in May, against Alexandria, to break up railroads held by the rebels. Seeing a rebel flag on a hotel top, he entered the building, and was shot by the landlord in coming down from cutting it away. He was slain instantly, and the like fate befell the murderer, the host, from Ellsworth's guard. Apart from four men killed at Sumter and two in the Baltimore riots, the Chicago Zouave was the first victim of the rebellion. But the position was regained by the secessionists, and the rebel flag replaced the removed one, to the grief of President Lincoln. He could see it from his residence, and Murat Halstead, without knowing the melancholy association of the young officer, being a familiar in his office, reports seeing him dwell with spyglass bent on the flag, for hours.

Elmer Ellsworth, in his last speech, made to the men he was leading out to the front, proves that he imbibed Lincoln's humanity with legal precepts in the office: “Show the enemy that I want to kill them with kindness.”

## **“FLY AWAY, JACK!”**

At the end of 1860, South Carolina took the lead in seceding, and in the opening of the next year six other Southern States allied themselves with her. The timid feared hasty acting would precipitate the marshaling of the waverers under the same flag. To a committee urging a pause to see “how the cats would jump,” the President observed:

“If there be three pigeons on the fence, and you fire and kill one, how many will there be left?”

The voices said: “Two.”

“Oh, no,” he corrected; “there would be none left; for the other two, frightened by the shot, would have flown away.”

As a truth, the firing on Fort Sumter welded the seceders into their Union; at the same time as it likewise fused the Northerners into consistency.

The President said to General Viele: “We want to keep all that we have of the Border States—those that have not seceded and the portions we have occupied.”

## HIS *PEN* WANTED TO KEEP THEIR HOGS SAFE.

Just after the call for seventy-five thousand ninety-day men to subdue the outbreak after Sumter was cannonaded, a deputation of loyal Virginians waited upon the President. They expounded on this levy that the fair fields of the South would be overrun by the ragamuffins of the Northern cities, and the hen-roosts and pig-houses ravished, etc.

“But what would you have me do?” asked Lincoln, who did not then foresee his having to conduct the military movements.

“Mr. President, if you would only lend us your pen a moment—“ meaning, of course, that he should write a line to calm the rising storm.

But the other pretended to misunderstand him, saying: “Lend my pen! my *pen*? What would you do with that?—keep your hogs safe with that?”

**“HURRAH FOR YOU!”**

At the Chicago reception, a little boy came into the room, with his father. No doubt he had been instructed to behave with decorum in the august presence; but he no sooner saw the tall, prominent figure than he shouted: “Hurrah for Mist' Lincoln!”

The crowd laughed, and still the more as the object of the ovation caught up the little fellow, gave him a toss to the ceiling, and, while he was in the air, shouted out lustily:

“Hurrah for Mister You!” and, catching him, lowered him, red and panting, to the floor.



**“PUT YOUR FEET RIGHT AND STAND FIRM!”**

Giving a lift in his carriage to two ladies, to the Soldiers' Home, the horses were splashing and sliding after a shower in the mire, when Mr. Lincoln assisted the frightened women to alight. He set three stones for stepping-stones in the mud, and assisted them to firm ground. He had cautioned them in making the passage:

“All through life be sure you put your feet in the right place, and then stand firm!”

Looking down on his muddy boots (Lincoln as a Westerner always stuck to leg-boots, and was never seen in the effeminate “Congress gaiters,” by the bye), he added: “I have always heard of 'Washington mud,' and now I shall take home some as a sample!”

## **GET THEIR GRAVES READY!**

In April, 1861, a deputation of sympathizers with secession had the boldness to call on President Lincoln and demand a cessation of hostilities until convening of Congress, threatening that seventy-five thousand Marylanders would contest the passage of troops over their soil.

“I presume,” quietly replied Mr. Lincoln, “that there is room enough in her soil for seventy-five thousand graves?”—(Peterson's “Life of Lincoln.”)

## MR. LINCOLN'S OPINION OF GENERAL McCLELLAN.

In the first stage of the war, when the President was commander-in-chief of the forces by virtue of his office, he played the part of the elevated boy in "The King of the Castle." Every one of his colleagues, who ought to have been his loyal supporters, until some firm stand was attained under the batteries of Richmond, civil and military, warred against him, underhandedly and haply openly. All aimed, in Cabinet and on the staff, to be ruler. The understrappers of aged General Scott upheld all that concurred with warfare, set and obsolete, of the European strategists, overthrown by the great Napoleon. The principal practiser of these tactics, the *summum bonum*, or "good thing," of the "West Pointers" was General McClellan, "the Little Mac" of his worshipers and "the Little Napoleon" of the dazzled crowd. He was, like Cassio, "a great arithmetician, who had never set a squadron in the field or the division of a battle knew," etc. Seeming utterly to ignore that the enemy was composed of men trained by their life and "genteel" occupations to shoot true, to ride like Comanches or Revolutionary Harry Lee's Light-horse, used to lying outdoors under skies genial to them, and subsisting on game and corn-cake as Marion on sweet potatoes, he expected to foil such guerrillas as "Jeb" Stuart, Mosby, and Quantrell by earthworks, which they probably would have leaped their horse over if they wanted to reach their spoil in that way. It was in allusion to this adherence to Vauban that the President, who eyed the aspiring Hotspur as Henry V. his heir, the sixth Henry, trying on his crown, observed shrewdly, when the general kept silence:

"He is entrenching."

## A “STATIONARY” ENGINE.

Lincoln said of the much-promising General McClellan: “He is an admirable engineer, but he seems to have a special talent for a *stationary* engine.”

He also cited him as a scholar and a gentleman.

Nevertheless, as the education lavished on the Army of the Potomac to make it earn foreign military critics' praise at reviews, was not thrown away, but made sound soldiers which in time were invaluable to General Grant, Lincoln did him justice by quaintly, but earnestly, saying:

“I would like to borrow *his* arm if he has no further use for it.”

(General Franklin heard this.)

But “Little Mac” had no design on the dictatorship, being surely a lover of the Union, too.

## **SHOVELING FLEAS.**

On account of the looseness and corruption attending the raising of soldiers at the first, the President, noting the difference between the number of men forwarded to General McClellan for the Army of the Potomac, and the number reported arrived, said:

“Sending men to that army is like shoveling fleas across a barn-yard—half of them never get there.”

## **THE GEORGIA COLONEL'S COSTUME.**

“On account of this sectional warfare,” Senator Mason, of Virginia, announced his resolve to wear homespun, and dispense with Yankee manufactures altogether. That made Lincoln laugh, and say: “To carry out his idea, he ought to go barefoot. If that's the plan, they should begin at the foundation, and adopt the well-known Georgian colonel's uniform—a shirt-collar and a pair of spurs!”—(In, speech, New England tour, 1860.)

## COARSE FEED FIRST!

Secretary Whitney wrote: “In July, 1861, I was in Washington, where I merely said to President Lincoln: 'Everything is drifting into the war, and I guess you will have to put *me* in the army.' (He was in the Indian service at the time.)

“The President looked up from his work, and said good-humoredly:

“I'm making generals *now*! In a few days I will be making quartermasters, and then I'll fix you.”

## “AIN'T I GLAD TO GIT OUT O' DE WILDERNESS!”

In the summer of 1862, just when the North was lulled to repose by the note from General McClellan's newsmongers, that the people would have a great surprise on the Fourth of July, Colonel J. E. B. Stuart, Confederate cavalrist, took about two thousand picked riders and performed a dash within the hostile lines, which achieved a world-wide admiration. It is necessary to premise that the country was inimical to the defenders of Washington, and the farmers kept the secessionists clearly informed on the Federal movements. Besides, the first duty of keeping Washington engrossed all the Union commanders. If, by any unexpected movement, the rebels occupied the capital long enough to set up their government, Europe would have recognized the stars and bars, and raised the blockade on the cotton ports. Washington was stupefied and terror-stricken when the news came in from the *North* that rebel cavalry were “cavortin” within McClellan's lines. Communication was cut off with him, and the President was heard to say in the general dumbness of consternation:

“There is no news from the Army of the Potomac. I do not even know that we have an army!”

He was himself filled with the universal alarm. His hope was that a bright morning would follow the dark hour, but his faith and belief that God would safely lead them “*out of the wilderness*” was not widely shared.

The allusion was to the popular army song, taken from the negro camp-meeting repertoire: “Ain't I glad to git out o' de Wilderness,” which a clergyman had encouragingly chanted awhile before. This wilderness was metaphorically spiritual, but all applied the figure to the Wilderness of Virginia, where the battles were fought.



## **WITH TWO GUNS, HOLD OFF AN ARMY.**

One Irish artilleryman was left behind, with one gun of his battery, on the wrong bank of the Potomac, when the Union Army retreated before Lee. This gunner actually telegraphed direct to the President as his commander-in-chief that:

“I have the whole rebel army in my front. Send me another gun, and I assure your honor that they shall not come over!”

This pleased the President greatly, who answered that the new Horatius was to take counsel with his officer—if he could find him!

## BREAKING UP THE LITTLE GAME.

In 1862, Washington was full of talk “and no hard cider.” There was the laugh talk of the gossips, who would chatter under fire, the chaff talk of the press men taking things farcically, and the staff talk of the officers envying one another and scheming for places. Too many were still “carrying water on both shoulders,” and would have welcomed a speedy reconciliation. The President heard that some of the latter voiced the petulant complaint of those weary of the gainless military movements, that the intention was to shift the two armies about till both were exhausted, and, like the peace-at-any-price men, and the still sympathizing pro-slavery “tail,” a compromise could be effected and slavery saved. He summoned the parties in this public unbosoming before him. Major Turner said that Major John J. Key, staff-officer to General McClellan, was asked why the Unionists had not *bagged* the rebel army soon after the battle of Sharpsburg, whereupon he replied:

“That was not the game! We should tire ourselves and the rebels out; that was the only way that the Union could be preserved; then we would come together fraternally, and slavery will be saved.”

Major Key did not deny the words, but stoutly maintained his loyalty. As McClellan's staff-officer, he must have known his leader's policy—no confiscation, and no Emancipation Act—for McClellan hoped, like thousands of conservatives, to bring about reaction in the South.

But the President sharply said with some of his sempiternal humor:

“Gentlemen, if there is a game even among Union men, to have our army not take any advantage of the enemy it can, it is my object to break up that game!”

## **“THE BOTTOM WILL FALL OUT.”**

General McClellan's delayed advance being, in 1862, not upon Manassas, but on Yorktown, filled the less enthusiastic of his henchmen with consternation. To the general eye he seemed to have pitched on the very point where the enemy wanted to meet with all the gain in their favor. This direct route to Richmond they had tried to make impregnable. The President, whom McClellan openly thwarted with unconcealed scorn for the “civilian,” was in profound distress. He called General Franklin into his counsel and inquired his opinion of the slowness of movements.

“If something is not soon done in this dry rot, the bottom will fall out of the whole affair!” This was his very saying.

The Confederates evacuated Yorktown, but a series of actions ensued, culminating in the massacre at Fair Oaks, where both sides claimed the victory. Soon after, Lincoln took matters in hand, relegating McClellan to one army, and, as commander-in-chief, ordering a general advance. The bottom had fallen out with a vengeance!

**“MASTER OF THEM BOTH.”**

“General McClellan's attitude is such that in the very selfishness of his nature he cannot but wish to be successful, and I hope he will! And the secretary of war (Stanton) is in precisely the same situation. If the military commanders in the field cannot be successful, not only the secretary of war, but myself, for the time being master of both, cannot but be failures.”—(Speech, August 6, 1862, at Washington.)

## “THE SKEERED VIRGINIAN.”

A reviewing-party, of which the President was the center, was stopped at a railroad by Harper's Ferry, to let a locomotive pass, and look at the old engine-house where John Brown, the raider, was penned in and captured. The little switching-engine ran past with much noise and bustle, the engineer blowing the ludicrous whistle in salute to the distinguished visitors. Lincoln referred to the recollections of the scene, where old “Pottowatomie” thrilled the natives with panic lest he raised the negroes to revolt, and remarked, as the engine flew away:

“You call that 'The Flying Dutchman' do you? They ought to call that thing 'The *Skeered* Virginian!’”—(By General O. O. Howard, a hearer.)

**“HE WHO FIGHTS AND RUNS AWAY—“**

Shortly after the scandalous rout of Bull Run, the participants in the panic began to try to palliate the disgrace. The President, listening with revived sarcasm to the new perversion, remarked:

“So it is your notion *now* that we *licked* the rebels and then ran away!”

## **NO SUNDAY FIGHTING.**

As the first Battle of Bull Run, a sanguinary defeat to the Unionists, was fought on the Sabbath day, the President forbade in the future important movements on the day desecrated. But with singular inconsistency in a sage so clear-headed, he did not see that the Southerners chuckled, "The better the day, the better the deed," in their victory.

## LET A GOOD MAN ALONE!

General Howard, in taking command before Washington, incurred the hostility of certain officers of the convivial, plundering, swashbuckling order, who objected to his piety and orderliness. They tramped off to badger the President with their censure. But he who had appreciated the new leader in a glance, reproved them, saying:

“Howard is a *good* man. Let him alone; in time he will bring things straight.”

That was what caused the general to reverence him and love him.



## THE “BLONDIN” SIMILE.

One of the universal topics of the early sixties was the feats of the acrobat Blondin. This daring rope-walker crossed the waters by Niagara Falls on a slack wire. On one occasion he carried a man on his back, to whom he imparted the caution, “grappling as with hooks of steel”:

“If you upset me with trembling, I shall drop you! I shall catch the rope and be safe! As for you, inexperienced one—*pfitt!*“

The chain of defeats and “flashes in the pan” attending the opening of the campaign beginning as a march upon Richmond, [Footnote: Some Northern newspapers kept a standing head: “On to Richmond!”] but eventuating in a defense of Washington, humiliating as was this reverse, promoted all sorts and conditions of men, moneyed, well-grounded, and investing in the new government securities, fluctuating like wildcat stock, to pester the President with Jeremiads and counsel. To one deputation from his home parts he administered this caustic rebuke in such illustration as was habitual to him:

“Gentlemen, suppose all the property you were worth was in gold, and you had put it in the hands of Blondin, to carry across the Niagara River on a rope, would you shake the cable, or keep shouting out to him:

“Blondin, stand up straighter! Blondin, stoop a little more! go a little faster! *lean a little more to the North!* to the South?”

“No; you would hold your breath as well as your tongue, and keep your hands off all, until he was safe over.

“The government [Footnote: Lincoln always used “Government” and “U. S.” as nouns carrying a plural verb.] are carrying an immense weight. Untold treasures are in their hands. They are doing the very best they can. Don't pester them! Keep silence, and we will get you safe across.”

## THE PIONEER'S LAND-TITLE.

Judge Weldon was appointed United States attorney, acting in Illinois. Being at Washington, some speculators, knowing he was an old friend of the President, engaged him for their side. They wanted to get cotton permits from the treasury, which was feasible, but made sure that the military would recognize these passes—no doubt, if the President would countersign them. Otherwise the army officers acted often without regard to trade desires. On broaching the subject to the potentate on whose lips so much hung at the epoch, the latter brightened up and, in his branching-off manner, said:

“By the way, what has become of your friend Robert Lewis?”

Lewis was the clerk of the court in Illinois, and at home, well and thrifty.

“Do you remember,” continued the President, “his story about his going to Missouri to look up some Mormon lands belonging to his father?”

Whereupon, as Weldon said that he had forgot some details, the story-teller related with unctious:

“This Robert Lewis, on coming of age, found papers in his father's muniments, entitling him as heir to lands in northeastern Missouri, where the Mormons had attempted settling before their enforced exodus. There was no railroad, so Lewis rode out to that part and thought he had located the land. For the night he stopped at a solitary log house. A gruff voice bade him come in, not very hospitably. The owner was a long, lanky man about eleven feet high, 'Bob' thought. He had a rifle hanging on its hooks over the fireplace, also about eleven feet long, Bob also reckoned. He was interrupted in 'necking' bullets, for they were cast in a mold and left a little protuberance where the run left off.

“This first comer had been there some time and seemed to know the section, but was rather indifferent to the stranger's inquiries about the site of *his* lands. Teased at this unconcern, so opposite to the usual feeling of settlers who like a neighbor in the lonesomeness, Lewis hastened to lay down the law:

“He was looking up the paternal purchase. Here were the titles,' spreading out the papers. 'That is *my* title to this section. You are on it. What is yours?’

“The other had shown some slight interest in the topic by this time. He paused in his occupation and pointed with his long arm to the long rifle, saying:

“Young man, do you see that gun? That is *my* title, and if you do not git out o' hyar pretty quick, you will feel the force of it!’

“Lewis crammed his papers into his saddle-bags and rushed out to bestride his pony—but said that the man snapped his gun at him twice before he was out of range.

“Now,” resumed Mr. Lincoln, “the military authorities have the same title against the civil ones—the guns! The gentlemen themselves may judge what the result is likely to be!”

Mr. Weldon reported to his employers, at Willard's Hotel, and they laughed heartily at the illustration, but they did not proceed with the cotton *speck*, understanding what would be the Administration's policy as well as if a proclamation were issued.—(By Judge Weldon.)

## **“CHEERS NOT MILITARY—BUT I LIKE THEM!”**

After the disarray of the first Bull Run battle, the President drove out to the camps to rally the “boys *in the blues*.” General Sherman was only a colonel, and he had the rudeness of a military man to hint to the visitor that he hoped the orator would not speak so as to encourage cheering and confusion. The President stood up in his carriage and prefaced his speech with this exordium:

“Don't cheer, boys; I confess that I rather like it, myself; but Colonel Sherman, here, says it isn't military, and I guess we had better defer to his opinion.” With his inimitable wink, which would have been an independent fortune to a stage comedian.

## NUMBERING THE HAIRS OF HIS—TAIL!

A Congressional committee selected to examine and report upon a new cannon, produced so voluminous a tome that Lincoln, reviewing it, dropped it in disgust and commented:

“I should want a new lease of life to read this through! Why can't a committee of this kind occasionally exhibit a grain of common sense? If I send a man to buy a horse for me, I expect him to tell me his points, not how many hairs there are in his tail!”—(Authenticated by Mr. Hubbard, member of Congress of Connecticut, to whom the remark was addressed.)

## **AN UNCONVENTIONAL ORDER.**

On going over the minor orders, riders, and corrections of the President, it will be seen that he never succumbed to conforming with the stale and set phrases of the civil-service documents. For an instance of his unquenchable humor read the following discharge:

Two brothers, Smiths, of Boston, had been arrested, held, and persecuted for a long period by a military tribunal. The charge was defrauding the government. The hue and cry about the cheating contractors called for a victim. But the Chief Executive on perusing the testimony concluded that the defendants were guiltless. He wrote the subsequent release:

“Whereas, Franklin W. and J. C. Smith had transactions with the Navy Department to the amount of one and a quarter millions of dollars; and, whereas, they had the chance to steal a million, and were charged with stealing twenty-two hundred dollars—and the question now is stealing a hundred—I don't believe they stole anything at all! Therefore, the record and findings are disapproved—declared null and void—and the defendants are fully discharged.”

## **“IT OCCURS TO ME THAT I AM COMMANDER!”**

To the prairie man the climate of Washington would be almost tropical. Nevertheless, it participates of American meteorological variability, as “Old Probability” would admit.

One night, Lincoln, coming out of his rooms at the Executive Mansion to make his nocturnal round, finishing with the call for the latest despatches at garrison headquarters, noticed as the fierce gale shook him and scourged him with sleet, that a soldier was contending with the storm just outside the outer door.

“Young man,” said he, turning sharply to him, “you have got a cold job to-night. Step inside and guard there.”

The soldier stoutly contended—for the colloquy became an argument by Lincoln's delight in debate. He persisted that he was posted there by orders and must not budge save by a superior countermand.

“Hold on, there!” cried Lincoln, pleased at the arguer supplying him with a decisive weapon; “it occurs to me that I am commander-in-chief! and so, I order you to go inside!”

## **COMPLIMENTS IS ALL THEY DO PAY!**

A paymaster introduced to the President by the United States district marshal, remarked with independence noticeable in the sect: "I have no official business with you, sir—I only called to pay my compliments!"

"I understand," was the retort; "and from the soldiers' complaints, I think that is all you gentlemen do pay!"

## **BAIL THE POTOMAC WITH A SPOON.**

There is as pathetic a picture as the old sated Marquis of Queensberry (Thackeray's Steyne and history's "Old Q.") murmuring as he gazed from his castle window on the unsurpassed view of the Thames Valley, "Oh, this cursed river running on all the day!" in President Lincoln watching the broad Potomac where all was so quiet, and yet the hidden and watchful enemy lined the other bank. A petitioner hemmed him in a corner of the room with this sight, and poured on him the bucket of his woes. The at last irritated worm turned on him, and cried:

"My poor man! go away! do go away! I cannot meddle in your case. I could as easily bail the Potomac with a teaspoon as attend to all the details of the army!"



**“WE SHALL BEAT THEM, MY SON!”**

George W. Curtis, New York editor, called on the President in the first winter of the war, with the Illinoisian's friend, Judge Arnold. He said that the official wore a sad, weary, and anxious look, and spoke with a softened, touching voice. But he added to his good-by at the door in shaking hands, with paternal kindness and profound conviction:

“We shall beat them, my son! we shall beat them!”

**“LITTLE FOR SO BIG A BUSINESS.”**

Before the war the museums of the Eastern States were regaled by an “Infant Drummer.” This lad, Harry W. Stowman, at the age of seven or eight, was a proficient on the drum. He was seen by this editor, executing solos of great difficulty, and accompanying the orchestra with variations on his unpromising instrument, which musicians praised and in which he avoided monotony with precocious talent. Grown up, still a rare drummer, he was attached to the Germantown Hospital as post drummer. At the first inauguration he was with the band and noticed by the President. With his habit of applauding the young, the latter spoke to him, commended his playing, and remarked:

“You are a very little man to be in this big business!” He took him up, kissed him, and paternally set him down, drum and all.

Mr. Stowman lived to the age of forty with this pretty memory.

## NOT “SHOULDER–STRAPS,” BUT HARDTACK.

At a military function when Lincoln presented a new commander to a legion, one of the soldiers burst out with that irreverence distinguishing the American volunteer:

“It is not shoulder–straps (the officers' insignia), but hardtack that we want!”

Hardtack was the nickname for the disused ship bread turned over to the army by remorseless contractors.

\* \* \* \* \*

“MARYLAND A GOOD STATE TO MOVE FROM!”

Thurlow Weed, prominent “wire–puller,” presented as a preferable puppet to Montgomery Blair his choice, Henry Winter Davis, upon which the President said:

“Davis? Judge David Davis put you up to this. He has Davis on the brain. A Maryland man who wants to get out! Maryland must be a good State to move from. Weed, did you ever hear, in this connection, of the witness in court asked to state his age? He said sixty. As he was on the face of it much older, but persisted, the court admonished him, saying:

“The court knows you to be older than sixty!”

“Oh, I understand now,’ owned up the old fellow. ‘You are thinking of the ten years I spent in Maryland; that was so much time lost and did not count!’“

## DON'T SWAP HORSES CROSSING A STREAM.

The setting up and the bowling over of the generals commanding the army defending Washington from McDowell at Bull Run to Meade at Gettysburg, resembles a grim game at tenpins. The President, who tried to find a professional captain to relieve him of his responsibility as nominally war-chief of the national forces, therefore smiled sarcastically when the ninety-ninth deputation came to suggest still another aspirant to be the new Napoleon, and said to it:

“Gentlemen, your request and proposition remind me of two gentlemen in Kentucky.

“The flat lands there bordering on the rivers are subject to inundations, so the fordable creek becomes in an instant a broad lake, deep and rapidly running. These two riders were talking the common topic—in that famous Blue Grass region where fillies and *fill-es*, as the *voyageur* from Canada said in his broken English, are unsurpassable for grace and beauty. Each fell to expatiating upon the good qualities of his steed, and this dialogue was so animated and engrossing they approached a ford without being conscious of outer matters. There was heavy rain in the highlands and an ominous sound in the dampening air. They entered the water still arguing. Then, at midway, while they came to the agreement to exchange horses, with no 'boot,' since each conceded the value of the animals, the river rose. In a twinkling the two horses were floundering, and the riders, taken for once off their balance, lost stirrup and seat, and the four creatures, separated, were struggling for a footing in the boiling stream. Away streaked the horses, buried in foam, three or four miles down, while the men scrambled out upon the new edge.

“Gentlemen,” concluded the President, drawing his moral with his provoking imperturbability, “those men looked at each other, as they dripped, and said with the one voice: 'Ain't this a lesson? Don't swap horses crossing a stream!'”—(Heard by Superintendent Tinker, war telegrapher.)

**“NO PLACING THORNS IN THE SIDE OF MY WORST ENEMY!”**

The Free Constitution of Maryland was the work of Lincoln. His and its supporters made a party to go to Washington and congratulate the President on the victory. They had a band and serenaded him in the White House until he came forth. But he said, to the dampening of their ardor, when the cheering had subsided:

“My friends, I appreciate this honor very highly, but I am very sorry to see you rejoice over the defeat of those opposed to us. It is furthest from my desire to place a thorn in any one's side, though he be my worst enemy.”—(Recited by Mr. Hy. G. Willis, Baltimore, in the *Sun* of that city.)

## THE LINCOLN PLAN OF CAMPAIGN.

This historical document promised at one time to be a problem like the Sibilline Leaves or Czar Peter's will. But Secretary H. C. Whitney declares that it existed as he had it laid before him by the strategist.

“Running his long forefinger down the map of Virginia, he said: 'We must drive them away from here (Manassas Gap, where indeed were fights over the keystone), and clear them out of this part of the State, so that they cannot threaten them here (Washington) and get into Maryland.' (Unfortunately, the rebels did threaten Washington right on and entered Maryland and Pennsylvania, as late as July, 1863, and by a cavalry raid, a year later.)

“We must keep up a good and thorough blockade of their ports. We must march an army into East Tennessee and liberate the Union sentiment there. (This was not finally done till the end of 1864.)

“Finally, we must rely on the (Southern) people growing tired, and saying to their leaders: “We have had enough of this thing, and will bear it no longer.”“

In 1862, a year after, Lincoln says to McClellan: “We have distinct and different plans for a movement of the Army of the Potomac: yours to be down the Chesapeake, etc.; mine, to move directly to the point on the railroads southwest of Manassas. (He hugs his original idea.)... In case of disaster, would not a retreat be more difficult by your plan than mine?” You see the prudence in him esteemed ignorant and consequently blindly rash. All this amounted to nothing when the President trusted fully to Grant as his lieutenant.

## **THE COMMANDER SHOULD OBEY ORDERS.**

The President at Fort Stevens was the mark for a rebel battery. A colonel in command was diffident about ordering the superior about, but he was averse to letting the "dare" bring on a fatality, as the sharpshooters had an easy butt in the Lincoln exceptional figure. So he took the advice of Mr. Registrar Chittenden, on the staff, and bade the President retire, or he would move him by a file of men.

"And you would do quite right, my boy!" acquiesced the chief. "I should be the last man to set an example of disobedience."

## **THE IDLERS EQUALED THE EFFECTIVES.**

During a review of General Howard's corps on the Rappahannock, in April, 1863, President Lincoln noticed, whether his eyes were "unmilitary or not," that a very numerous mass of men were spectators, though wearing a semisoldierly look and clothes. They were, in fact, the inevitable hangers-on of an army, the more in number, as the escaped slaves were welcomed by the soldiers, as they made them do their dirty work. The commanding general explained that they were "the cooks, the bottle-washers, and the nigger waiters." They had come out to see the President.

"That review yonder," returned Lincoln gently, as he smiled, "is about as big as ours!"—(By General O. O. Howard.)



## **REST!**

Sitting before his desk in his office, at the White House, Lincoln quaintly uttered: "I wish George Washington or some of those old patriots were here in my place so that I could have a little rest."—(Heard by General Viele.)

## **“I CAN BEAR CENSURE, BUT NOT INSULT!”**

An army officer appeared before the President with a statement of his defense against a sentence of cashiering. He was told that his own paper did not warrant the superior interference. But he showed up twice more, repeating the plea and the version of his own preparation.

At the continued repulse he blurted out:

“I see, Mr. President, that you are not disposed to do me justice!”

If Lincoln was the embodiment of any one virtue it was justice to all. At this slur he sprang up and put the fellow out of the door by a lift of his collar, saying:

“Never show yourself in this room again! I can bear censure, but not insult!”

## A BATTLE OF ROSES.

At every reverse to the Unionists, the more or less secret sympathizers with the seceders reiterated the cry that gentler measures should be used against "our erring brothers." To one such pleader, the President severely, but humorously, responded, in writing:

"Would you have me drop the war where it is, or would you prosecute it in future with elder-stalk squirts charged with rose-water?"

Mr. Lincoln may or may not have said this and thus—but he certainly *wrote* it, for which see his letter to C. Bullitt, July 28, 1862. Guns of elder squirts are mentioned by his dear Shakespeare.

## “HELP ME LET GO!”

The year 1862 had its gold in the victories of Murfreesboro and Perryville in the West, but in the neighborhood of the capital General Burnside's defeat at Fredericksburg, while his supporters counted on his justifying his superseding McClellan, clouded all Washington. The staff-officer [Footnote: An account says it was Governor Curtin in person.] who brought the painful news saw that the President was so saddened that he faltered an apology for the nature of his mission.

“I wish, Mr. President, that I might be the bearer of good instead of bad news—I wish I brought the intelligence by which you could conquer or get rid of these rebellious States!”

His hearer smiled at the essay to cheer him, who believed he would “never sleep again,” and related, with a view to enliven him also, the story of “Help me let go.”

The version, circulating viva voce, ran as follows:

“That reminds me of the camp where a bear suddenly made his appearance and scattered the party. All save one shinned up trees, or got behind rocks, and that one meeting the animal head on, before he could turn, seized bruin by the ears and held on 'like grim death to a dead nigger.'

“Recovering from their fright the hunters came out of ambush and were unable to do anything but laugh at the fix their friend was in.

“You ain't mastered, are you?’ asked they.

“Not licked, but I want you to help me let go!”

Mr. Lincoln expressed himself when he said he was slow to learn and slow to forget; the two qualities are redeemed by his wonderful ease and quickness in remembering. To quote well is good, but to quote fitly is better. His intimates noticed that he would reecho a story—a simile or a tag—and so neatly apply it that it seemed fresh on the second use. He was an admirable actor, though not appreciated in that light; for he could reappear in the same part without palling. Hence one often meets his stories, as, for instance, this one. His life law partner, Herndon, tells it as used toward a petty judge, in Illinois, of inferior ability to Lincoln's. It was a murder case, and this bully on the bench kept ruling against Herndon and Lincoln. A material point was ruled adversely just at the refreshment recess. Lincoln withdrew sore, as he believed that the judge was personally controverting his positions. He avowed his own feelings, and announced:

“I have determined to *crowd* the court to the wall and regain my position before night.”

As Judge Herndon was a bystander, his account of the further proceedings must be as faithful as veracious:

“At the reassembling of court, Mr. Lincoln rose to read a few authorities in support of his position, keeping within the bounds of propriety just far enough to avoid a reprimand. He characterized the continuous rulings against him as not only unjust but foolish, and, figuratively speaking, peeled the court from head to foot.... Lincoln was alternately furious and eloquent, and after pursuing the court with broad facts and pointed inquiries in rapid succession, he made use of this homely incident to clinch his argument.”

(The tale is given as about a wild boar. In either phrase, the point is that the judge was attached to his Tartar and wanted to be let go!)

“The prosecution tried in vain to break Lincoln down,” concludes Mr. Herndon, “and the judge, badgered effectually by Lincoln's masterly arraignment of law and fact, pretended to see the error of his former position, and finally reversed his decision in his tormentor's favor. Lincoln saw his triumph and surveyed a situation of which he was master.”

## **SPLITTING THE DIFFERENCE.**

Upon the Western Virginia Stateship Bill passing in Congress, an opponent, Mr. Carlisle, ran to the President. He urged him to veto the bill.

“Well, I’ll tell you what I’ll do: I’ll split the difference and say nothing about it!”—(Frank Moore.)

## **IN THE INCA'S POSITION.**

Long after the President reconsidered his hasty surmise that the impending war was “artificial crisis,” Congress continued to waver, and no one put forward a definite and working policy for the head who avowed that he never had one. In his despondency and lonesomeness, he welcomed an old friend from his State, who, however, like the rest, had his frets and rubs to seek solace for.

“You know better than any man living that, from my boyhood up, my ambition was to be President. I am, at least, President of one part of the divided country; but look at me! With a fire in my front and one in my rear to contend with, and not receiving that cordial cooperative support from Congress, reasonably expected, with an active and formidable enemy in the field threatening the very life–blood of the government, my position is anything but on a bed of roses.”

## **“BLIND” FORTUNE.**

A soldier shot in the head so as to be deprived of sight in both eyes left the Carver Hospital, Washington, and blundered in crossing the avenue. At that very moment the President's carriage was coming along to the Soldiers' Home from the mansion. The coach alone would probably have not brought any casualty upon the unfortunate young invalid, but it was again surrounded by one of the cavalry detachments, which Lincoln insisted on being withdrawn, but it was replaced, for the time.

The soldier hearing this double clatter of hoofs became bewildered, and stood still in the midroad, or, if anything, inclined toward the thundering danger. The cavalry chargers, trained to avoid hurting men—for a rider might be thrown—eluded contact, and the coachman neatly pulled aside. In the next moment, in a cloud of dust, the President, leaning out of the window, to ascertain the cause of the abrupt stop, saw the poor young soldier by his side. Lincoln threw out a hand to seize him by the arm, and reassure him of safety by the vibrating clutch. Then, perceiving the nature of the affair, he asked in a voice trembling with emotion about the man's regiment and disablement. The man was from the Northwest—Michigan. Lumbermen—and they are of the woods woody out there—and Lincoln believed in “the ax as the enlarger of our borders”—are brotherly. The next day the soldier was commissioned lieutenant with perpetual leave, but full pay.—(By the veteran reservist, H. W. Knight, of the escort.)

## LITTLE DAVID AND THE STONE FOR GOLIATH.

In the spring, 1862, spies and foreign officers who had seen the rebel ram *Merrimac* being built at Norfolk, reported her as formidable. The United States *Galena*, our first ironclad, was a failure. There was no vessel of the kind to deal with the monster save Ericsson's floating battery, ready for sea in March, called the *Monitor*, as a warning to Great Britain, expected to interfere on behalf of the South and raise the blockade over the cotton ports. This craft with a revolving turret was just as much of a new idea as its prototype.

On March 8, the *Merrimac* came out of Norfolk and ran down the *Cumberland* sloop of war; blew the *Congress* to splinters, and compelled her being blown up to save her from the enemy; the *Minnesota* was run aground to prevent being rammed. The victor returned to her dock to make ready for a fresh onslaught. The effect was profound; it seemed no exaggeration to suppose that the irresistible conqueror would pass through the United States fleet at Hampton Roads and, speeding along the coast, reduce New York to the most onerous terms or to ashes.

On Sunday, the ninth, the *Monitor* arrived after a sea passage, showing she rode too low for ocean navigation. Though in no fit state for battle, no time was allowed her, as the *Merrimac* ran out to exult over the ruins of the encounter. The *Monitor* threw herself in her way, bore her broadside without injury, and her shock with impunity, but on the other hand hurled her extremely heavy ball in, under her water-line. The ram backed out, and, wheeling and putting on full steam, returned to her haven. She was, it appears, too low to cross the bar to go up to Richmond, and was not ocean-going; she was blown up when Yorktown was evacuated by the Confederates in May, 1862.

The President had said of her defeater, to some naval officers: "I think she will be the veritable sling with the stone to smite the Philistine *Merrimac*."



## LINCOLN'S CHEESE-BOX ON A RAFT.

There is a chapter yet to be published upon iron-clad war-ships, as introduced practically in the Civil War. To the Southerners is due the innovation on a fair scale, though the experiments were not at all profitably demonstrative. Upon rumors that the enemy were building the novelties of iron-cased vessels, the Federal government responded by voting money—and throwing it away upon a fiasco. Meanwhile, the others had razed a frigate, the *Merrimac*, and upon an angular roof laid railroad-iron to make her shot-proof. Stories of her likelihood to be a terror, especially as she was stated by spies to be seaworthy, inspired the Americanized Swedish naval engineer, Ericsson, to build a turret-ship. The Naval Construction Board unanimously rebuffed the innovator. Luckily, President Lincoln became interested as a flat-boat builder, in his youth. He took up the inventor and the design. He scoffed at the idea that the man had not planned thoroughly, saying, as to the weight of the armor sinking the hull:

“Out West, in boat-building, we figured out the carrying power to a nicety.”

His championship earned the *Monitor* the name of Lincoln's “cheese-box on a raft.”

The assistant secretary of the navy, knowing all the facts, observes:

“I withhold no credit from Captain John Ericsson, her inventor, but *I know* the country is principally indebted to President Lincoln for the construction of this vessel, and for the success of the trial to Captain Worden.”—(Captain Fox, Ericsson's adviser, confirms this credit.)

## NO "DUTCH COURAGE."

After the miraculous intervention of the Ericsson *Monitor*, the President took a party aboard to inspect the little champion which had saved the fleet and, perhaps, the capital, where the captain received them. He apologized for the limited accommodation, and for the lack of the traditional lemon and necessary attributes for a presidential visit. But the teetotaler chief merrily replied:

"Some uncharitable persons say that old Bourbon valor inspires our generals in the field, but it is plain that *Dutch courage* was not needed on board of the *Monitor!*"

**“IF I HAD AS MUCH MONEY AND WAS AS BADLY SKEERED——“**

In March, 1862, after her terrifying exploits, the *Merrimac* ram was reported to have escaped to sea and was seeking fresh prey to devour. The Eastern seaports were in a panic. A deputation of New York's merchant princes, bullion barons, and plutocrats generally, representing “a hundred millions,” was the rumor heralding their “rush” visit to the capital, arrived at the White House.

The spokesman faltered that the great metropolis was in peril, that treasures were involved by the apprehension, and that, in brief, the government ought to take measures to defend the Empire City from the spite of this irresistible ocean-terror.

At the conclusion, the patient hearer responded:

“Well, gentlemen, the government has at present no vessel which can sink this *Merrimac*. (They were not, for state reasons, to know what the sly fox had up his sleeve.) The government is pretty poor; its credit is not good; its legal-tender notes are worth only forty cents on your Wall Street; and we have to pay you a high rate of interest on our loans. Now, if I were in your place, and had as much money as you represent, and was as badly *skeered* as you say you are—I'd go right back to New York and build some war-vessels and present them to the government.”—(Authenticated by Schuyler Colfax, afterward vice-president under General Grant; and by Judge Davis, who presented the delegation.)

## “IT PLEASES HER, AND IT DON'T HURT ME.”

April, 1862, closed brilliantly for the Union, as New Orleans was captured. General Porter Phelps issued a proclamation which freed the slaves. As on previous occasions, when this bomb was brought out, the President had directed its being stifled and reserved for *his* occasion, there was wonder that he took no official notice of the premature flash. Taken to task by a friendly critic for his odd omission, he deigned to reply:

“Well, I feel about it a good deal like that big, burly, good-natured canal laborer who had a little waspy bit of a wife, in the habit of beating him. One day she put him out of the house and switched him up and down the street. A friend met him a day or two after, and rebuked him with the words:

“Tom, as you know, I have always stood up for you, but I am not going to do so any longer. Any man may stand for a bullyragging by his wife, but when he takes a switching from her right out on the public highway, he deserves to be horsewhipped.’

“Tom looked up with a wink on his broad face, and, slapping the interferer on the back with a leg-of-mutton fist, rejoined:

“‘Why, drop it! It pleases her and it don't hurt me!’“

## “LET HIM SQUEAL IF HE WORKS.”

One of the Northern war governors was admirably loyal and devoted to the reunion, but he was set on doing things his own way, and protested every time he was called on for men or material. Lincoln saw that he was willing, and was only like the lady who “methinks protests too much.” So he told Secretary Stanton, who laid before him the objections:

“Never mind! These despatches do not mean anything. Go right ahead. The governor reminds me of a boy I knew at a launching. He was a small boy, chosen to fit the hollow in the midst of the ways where he should lie down, after knocking out the king–dog, which holds the ship on the stocks, when all other checks are removed. The boy did everything right, but yelled as if he was being murdered every time the keel rushed over him in the channel. I thought the hide was being peeled from his back, but he wasn't hurt a mite.

“The shipyard–master told me that the boy was always chosen for the job, doing his work well and never being hurt, but that he *always* squealed in that way.

“Now, that's the way with our governor; make up your mind that he is not hurt and that he is doing the work all right, and pay no attention to his squealing.”

To his confidant, General Viele, the President said:

“We cannot afford to quarrel with the governors of the loyal States about collateral issues. We want their soldiers.”

## **BRIGADIERS CHEAP—CHARGERS COSTLY.**

The news was transmitted to the Executive that a brigadier-general and his escort of cavalry had been “gobbled up,” the current and expressive term, by rebel raiders, near Fairfax Court-house, close enough to resound the echoes of the affray.

“I am sorry of the loss of the horses,” deplored the President. “I mean that I can make a brigadier-general any day—but those horses cost the government a hundred and twenty-five to fifty dollars a head!”

## TO CURE SINGING IN THE HEAD.

The key to the trammels which bore upon the several generals of the Army of the Potomac is found in the fears of the inhabitants of the capital that at the least weakness in its defenders, there would be a shifting of the two governments, and the Richmond one would replace that at Washington. [Footnote: This seems unlikely now, but General Lee and many competent judges clung to the belief that, had his General Early held his position at Gettysburg, Jefferson Davis, and not Abraham Lincoln, would have occupied Washington's seat—for a time, anyway! But IF—the story of the Civil War is studded with “Ifs.”] But the navy was not considered in this relation. Hence, there was a proposition to draw the rebel forces from the North, by threatening the Southern seaports with naval attacks, and descents of the tars and marines. A deputation visited the President with this project. He listened to its unfolding with his proverbial patient attention, and rejoined:

“This reminds me of the case of a girl out our way, troubled with a singing in the head. All the remedies having been uselessly tried, a plain, common horse-sense sort of a fellow (he bowed to the deputation) was called in.

“The cure is simple,’ he said; ‘what is called by sympathy—make a plaster of psalm tunes and apply to the feet; it will draw the singing down and out!’”—(Repeated by Frank Carpenter's “Recollections.”)

## **BOWING TO THE BOY OF BATTLES.**

Congressman W. D. Kelley wished to procure the admittance of a youth into the Naval School. Though a lad he had "shown the mettle of a man" on two serious occasions, while belonging to the gunboat *Ottawa*. The President has the right to send three candidates to the school yearly, who have served a year in the naval service. Thrilled by the recital of the youth's heroic conduct, the President wrote to the secretary of the navy to have the boy put on the list of his appointees. But the subject was found short of the age required. He would not be fourteen until September of that year, and it was but July.

Lincoln had the hero appear before him. He admired him frankly and altered the order so as to suit the later date. He bade the boy go home and have "a good time" during the two months, as about the last holiday he would get. The President had reconsidered his first impression that the "disturbance" was but "an artificial excitement."

"And that's the boy who did so gallantly in those two great battles!" he mused; "why, I feel that I should bow to him, and not he to me."—(Authority: Congressman W. D. Kelley; the person was Willie Bladen, U. S. N.)



## WHEN WASHINGTON WAS ALL ONE TAVERN.

As men wining with Mars expect to sup with Pluto, the drinking at the capital during the war was horrifying. The bars were overflowing with officers, and while, as “Orpheus C. Kerr” was saying of the civil-service corps, that spilling red ink was very different from spilling red blood, the novices in uniform were staining their new coats with port. Coming out of the West with the unique recommendation, “This gentleman from Kentucky never drinks,” President Lincoln had only the American standby, the ice-water pitcher, on his sideboard. And up to the last, even when the jubilation upon the war's close made many a stopper fly out of the tabooed bottle, he could say: “My example never belied the position I took when I was a young man.” So he could reply to a New England women's temperance deputation, probably believing the caricaturists who pictured “Old Abe” mint-juleping with the eagle.

“They would be rejoiced if they only knew how much I have tried to remedy this great evil.” Indeed, he was still “meddling” when he wrote and spoke against drunken habits in the army, especially among the officers.

**“BREAK THE CRITTER WHERE SLIM!”**

Lincoln's letters to his generals would be a revelation of character if it were not already famed. He warns “Fighting Joe” Hooker, in June, 1863, “not to get entangled on the Rappahannock, like an ox jumped half over a fence and liable to be torn by dogs, front and rear, without a fair chance to give one way or kick the other.” Later: “Fight Lee, too, when opportunity offers. If he stays where he is, fret him—and fret him!” Finally: “If the head of Lee's army is at Martinsburg, and the tail on the plank road between Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville, the critter must be slim *somewhere*; could you not break him there?”

## HOW GET HIM OUT?

During the avalanche of plans to conduct the suppression of the rebellion, a genius proposed what afterward seemed a forecast for Sherman's march to the sea. But at the time, Lincoln saw in it merely a desperate venture which would detail a rescue-party much more important.

“That reminds me,” he said, with his whimsical smile, “of a cooper out my way, new at the trade and much annoyed by the head falling in as he was hooping in the staves around it. But the bright idea occurred to him to put his boy in to hold up the cover. Only when the job was completed by this inner support, the new problem rose: how to get the boy out?”

“Your plan is feasible, sir; but how are you to get the boy out?”

(The story was originally credited to a Chinese cooper, to whom modern caskmaking was a mystery.)

## “A PLEASURE TO PRESIDE, AT LAST!”

On the 4th of March, 1863, when Congress was closing the session, President Lincoln gave away the bride at a marriage ceremony held—by his invitation—in the House of Representatives' chamber. This seems a singular and high honor to the couple. Their preeminence and the function being acclaimed by all the notables connected with the field and the forum in the capital, was a characteristic testimonial to the comforters whose service to the soldier was inestimable. The pair were John A. Fowle and Elida Rumsey, the man from Boston, the lady from New York. They were both attendants on the hospitals at the front, when their acquaintance verged into community, and this eventful matrimony. Lincoln had met both, in his continuous calls at the hospitals, and offered the west wing of the Capitol building for the wedding. He gave away the bride, and in the records figure his name and those of the illustrious witnesses. He gave a huge basket of the finest flowers from the White House conservatory. He stayed to witness the dedication of the Soldier's Library, founded by Mr. Fowle, who had seen the arrant want of reading—matter by our soldiers—so few being illiterate. At the President's hint, Congress granted the ground for the library, but the Pension Office now occupies the site.

Sixty-three was a dark year, and the President might well say on this typical incident, during a time there was little marrying, it is for once a pleasure to *preside*.

**ON THE LORD'S SIDE.**

On a pastor assuring the President that “the Lord is on our side!” he replied:

“I am not at all concerned about that, for I know that the Lord is always on the side of the right. But it is my constant anxiety and prayer that I and this nation should be on the Lord's side.”

**“TO CANAAN!”**

This hymn plays quite a part in the music of the Civil War. There is a negro variation—“Canaan's fair and happy land,” given to the old hymn, “Canaan's happy shore,” which, better known by its chorus: “Say, brothers, will you meet us?” and turned by the soldiers into the grand “John Brown's body's moldering in the grave, but his soul is marching on,” was paraphrased by Julia Ward Howe into a “battle hymn.” And Holmes wrote “To Canaan,” relative to the first levy. And to top these, the Southerners had a parody on the “Old John Brown,” also called “Lincoln Going to Canaan.”

**“GOING TO CANAAN!”**

Although the South is a poetic country, no bard wrote any “Marseillaise Hymn” on that side. One of the few effusions bidding tolerably for publicity was “Lincoln Going to Canaan,” a parody on the numerous negro camp-meeting lays in which Lincoln was hailed as the coming Moses. This burlesque was laid before Mr. Lincoln, he taking the grim relish in hits at him, caricatures and sallies, which great men never spurn.

“Going to Canaan,” he (is reported to have) said. “Going to *cane* 'em, I expect!”

## THE FOX APPOINTED PAYMASTER.

The President came into the telegraph-office of the White House, laughing. He had picked up a child's book in his son "Tad's" room and looked at it. It was a story of a motherly hen, struggling to raise her brood to lead honest and useful lives; but in her efforts she was greatly annoyed by a mischievous fox. She had given him many lectures on his wicked ways, and—said the President: "I thought I would turn over to the finis, and see how they came out. This is what it said:

"And the fox became a good fox, and was appointed paymaster in the army.' I think it very funny that I should have appointed him a paymaster. I wonder who he is?"

Such inability to distinguish one officer as "good" does not speak highly for the eradication of the soldiers' prejudice for the gentry.—(Superintendent Tinker.)



## **RISKING THE DICTATORSHIP.**

Every one of the generals leading the Army of the Potomac was accused of the “longing for the Presidency,” which placed the occupant in a peculiar predicament. Of General “Joe” Hooker, it was said in the press and in the Washington hotels that he was the “Man on Horseback,” and would, at the final success of clearing out the rebel beleaguers, set up as dictator. Hence the letter which Lincoln wrote to him:

“I have heard in such a way as to believe it, of your recently saying that both the army and the government needed a dictator. Of course, it was not for this, but in spite of it, that I have given you the command of the Army of the Potomac. What I now ask of you is military success, and I will risk the dictatorship!”

It was April, 1863, Hooker issued the stereotyped address full of confidence on taking command, advanced, and withdrew his army after the repulse by Lee. All he scored was the death of “Stonewall” Jackson, Lee's right hand, and that was an accident. As Lee invaded Maryland, all hopes of Hooker's dictatorship were dispersed in the battle smoke penetrating too far North to be pleasant incense to fallen heroes.

## A STAGE IN THE CEASELESS MARCH ONWARD TO VICTORY.

Veterans will remember the peculiar effect, on a forced march, of the younger or less-enduring comrade falling asleep as to all but his eyes and the muscles employed, but stepping out and apparently sustained only by the touching of elbows in the lurching from the ruts in the obliterated road. On the night of the stunning news of the last conflict at Chancellorsville, Lincoln could derive no comfort from later intelligence. Late at night General Halleck, commanding the capital, and Secretary Stanton left him unconsolated. Then his secretary, as long as he stayed, heard the man on whom rested the national hopes—her very future—pace his room without pause save to turn. It was like the fisher on the banks who must keep awake for a chance at a grab at the chains of the ship that may burst through the fog and crush his smack like a coconut-shell. At midnight the chief may have stopped to write, for there was a pause—but a breathing-spell. Then the pacing again till the attache left at 3 A.M. When he came in the morning, not unanxious himself, he found his chief eating breakfast alone in the unquitted room. On the table lay a sheet of written paper: instructions for General Hooker to renew fighting although it only brought the slap on the other cheek—at Winchester—and still Lee pressed on into Pennsylvania till Harrisburg was menaced! But Meade supplanted “Fighting Joe,” and Gettysburg wiped out the shame of the later repulses.

(The private secretary was W. O. Stoddard.)

## WORKING FOR A LIVING MAKES ONE PRACTICAL.

The year 1863 was black-lettered in the North by disaster. General Hooker had been badly beaten by General Lee. The Confederate advance into Pennsylvania shook the strongest faith in the triumph of the Federal arms, and the victory of Gettysburg was attained at a bloody cost. The draft riots in New York excited a fear that the discontent with the colossal strife was deep-rooted. General Thomas, at Chickamauga, saved the Union Army from destruction, but the call for 300,000 three-years' men denoted that the end was not even glimpsed. Nevertheless, this latter feat of arms gladdened tremulous Washington, and among the exploits was cited to the President the desperate victualing of General Thomas' exhausted troops by General Garfield. He performed a dangerous ride from Rosencrantz to the beleaguered victor and brought him craved-for provisions.

"How is it," inquired President Lincoln of an officer, courier of the details, "that Garfield did in two weeks what would have taken one of your *West Pointers* two months to accomplish?"

The recollection was perfectly well understood by the regular, who thought the amateur commander "meddled too much" with the operations of the field.

"Because he was not educated at West Point," was the reply, but half in jest.

"No, that was not the reason," corrected the questioner; "it was because, when a boy, he had to work for a living."

He rewarded "the purveyor-general" with the rank of major-general.

**“HOLD ON AND CHAW!”**

While in July, 1863, General Grant was held at Vicksburg by the siege which he successfully prosecuted, the New York draft riots broke out. Without knowing from experience that a riot, however portentous, must cease when the mob are drunk or spent, the inevitable contingencies, in his alarm General Halleck, at Washington, begged General Grant to send reinforcements, that he might not weaken the capital defenses to any extent. The commander of the West declined and referred to the President. General Horace Porter was on Grant's staff and saw his smiles as he read the despatch from headquarters.

“The President has more nerve than any of his advisers,” observed he to his officers, for Lincoln did not agree with his Cabinet, as to the revolution in the rear; and the message was sent by the staff:

“I have seen your despatch, expressing your unwillingness to break your hold. Neither am I willing. Hold on with a bulldog grip, and *chaw* and choke as much as possible!”

## **THE GREAT NATIONAL JOB.**

“The signs look better. The Father of Waters again goes unvexed to the sea.... The job was a great national one, and let none be banned who bore an honorable part in it. And while those who cleared the great river may well be proud, even that is not all. It is hard to say that anything has been more bravely and well done than at Antietam, Murfreesboro, Gettysburg, and on many fields of lesser note. Nor must Uncle Sam's webfeet be forgotten. Not only on the deep sea, the broad bay, and the rapid river, but also up the narrow, muddy bay, and wherever the ground was a little damp, they have been, and made their tracks! Thanks to all—for the great republic!”—(Letter by President Lincoln, regretting inability to attend a meeting of unconditional Union men at Springfield, Illinois; dated August 26, 1863, to J. C. Conkling.)

## FOR FLAYING A MAN ALIVE.

A representative of Ohio, Alexander Long, proposed in the House a recognition of the Southern Confederacy. It must be borne in mind that, before the firing on the supply-steamers at Charleston, which was despatched surreptitiously not "to offend the sympathizers' susceptibilities," many good citizens, dwelling on the silence of the Constitution as to secession, said openly that they did not see why the States chafing under the partnership all the original thirteen made, should not withdraw peacefully. Long was not solitary in his unseemly proposition, which, however, could never have been otherwise than untimely after the first shot.

General Garfield met the issue with indignation. He called the act "treason!" and denounced the author as a second Benedict Arnold. He entreated loyal representatives:

"Do not believe that another such growth on the soil of Ohio deformed the face of nature and darkened the light of God's day!"

When this speech met the President's eye, he hastened to thank General Garfield for having "flayed Long alive."

## “ONE ON 'EM NOT DEAD YET!”

As communications were cut off with the North, intense anxiety was occasioned there by the situation in November, 1863, of General Burnside, packed in Knoxville, Tennessee, by Longstreet's dreaded veterans. At last a telegram reached the War Department, vaguely telling of “Firing heard in the direction of Knoxville.” The President reading, expressed gladness, in spite of the remaining uncertainty.

“Why,” said he to the group of officers and officials, “it reminds me of a neighbor of ours, in Indiana, in the brush, who had a numerous family of young ones. They were all the time wandering off into the scrub, but she was relieved as to their being lost by a squall every now and then. She would say: 'Thank the laws, there is one still alive!' That is, I hope *one* of our generals is in the thicket, but still alive and kicking!”

Indeed, Burnside resisted a night storming-party, and Longstreet was not “a lane that knew no turning,” but turned and retreated!

## THE SOUTH LIKE AN ASH-CAKE.

At the end of 1864, the Confederacy was scotched if not quite killed. Sherman had halved it by striking into Savannah. East Tennessee and southwest Virginia were cut by Stoneman. Alabama and Mississippi were traversed by Grierson and Wilson. In sum, the new map resembled that of a territory charted off into sections.

President Lincoln said that its face put him in mind of a weary traveler in the West, who came at night to a small log cabin. The homesteader and his wife said they would put him up, but had not a bite of victuals to offer him. He accepted the truss of litter and was soon asleep. But he was awakened by whispers letting out that in the fire ashes a hoe-cake was baking. The woman and her mate were merry over how they had defrauded the stranger of the food. Feeling mad at having been sent to bed supperless—uncommon mean in that part—he pretended to wake up and came forth to sit at the dying fire. He pretended, too, that he was ill from worry.

“The fact is, my father, when he died, left me a large farm. But I had no sooner taken possession of it than mortgages began to appear. My farm was situated like this——” He took up the loggerhead poker to illustrate, drawing lines in the ashes so as to enclose the ash-cake. “First one man got so much of it one side,” he cut off a side of the hidden dough. “Then another brought in a mortgage and took off another piece there. Then another here, and another there! and here and there”—drawing the poker through the ashes to make the figure plain—“until,” he said, “there was nothing of the farm left for anybody—which, I presume is the case with your cake!”

“And, I reckon,” concluded Mr. Lincoln, “that the prospect is now very good of the South being as cut up as the ash-cake!”—(Telegraph Manager A. Chandler.)



## **“I COUNT FOR SOMETHING!”**

The true lovers of the South were sorely wrung in 1864 by the Emperor Napoleon taking advantage of the “lockup” of the United States, to set a puppet in the Austrian Archduke Maximilian on the imperial throne— so called—of Mexico. It was said that the Cabinet of Lincoln were divided on the subject; whereon the Marquis of Chambrun, having the ear of the Executive, called on him, and inquired on the real state—would the United States intervene, if only by winking at a filibustering expedition from the South, with Northern volunteers accessory, to assist the natives against the usurper?

“There has been war enough,” was his rejoinder, with that sadness which Secretary Boutwell declares inseparable from him, but not due to the depression of public affairs. “I know what the American people want; but, thank God! I count for something, and during my second term there will be no more fighting!”

It was left for his successor, with the two armies disbanded, but still whetted for slaughter, to expel the French by the mere threat of their union to restore the republic.

**PASSES NO GOOD FOR RICHMOND.**

A person solicited the President for a pass to Richmond. But the other replied caustically:

“I should be happy to oblige you if my passes thither were respected; but I have issued two hundred and fifty thousand to go to Richmond, and not one man has got there yet!”

## THE MAYOR IS THE BETTER HORSE.

The Lowell *Citizen* editor participated in a presidential reception in 1864, just before the fall of Richmond. The usher giving intimation that the President would see his audience at once, all were ushered into the inner room. "Abraham Lincoln's countenance bore that open, benignant outline expected; but what struck us especially was its cheerful, wide-awake expressiveness, never met with in the pictures of our beloved chief. The secret may have been that Secretary Stanton—middle-aged, well-built, stern-visaged man—had brought in his budget good news from Grant." After saluting his little circle of callers, they were seated and attended to in turn.

First in order was a citizen of Washington, praying for pardon in the case of a deserter.

"Well," said the President, after carefully reading the petition, "it is only natural for one to want pardon; but I must in that case have a responsible name that I *know*. I don't know you. Do you live in the city?"

"Yes."

"Do you know—h'm! the mayor?"

"Yes."

"Well, the *mayor* is the better horse. Bring me his name and I will let the boy off."

The soldier was pardoned.

## THE REAL THING SUPERIOR TO THE SHAM BATTLE.

On the 25th of March, 1864, in honor of the President's renewal of office, a grand review had been fixed at City Point, outside the capital.

Whatever the opinion of the old military, the volunteers gave the civilian commander "the soldiers' vote." In imitation of the French soldiers dubbing Bonaparte "the Little Corporal," after his Italian victories, the Americans promoted Lincoln to be their "captain," as Walt Whitman worded it, after his repeated reinstatement. He was rapturously greeted by "his boys in blue." But the arrangements made at Washington in the undisturbed council were upset by General Lee. On that very morning he had attacked and taken Fort Stedman. To drive him out required a veritable action not terminating for several hours. Lincoln visited the scene of restoration after the carnage, and, on hearing regrets that the review—the chief *recreation* of the Washingtonians—he checked the light-souled attendants with:

"This victory is better than any review."

## THE TOOL TURNED ON THE HANDLE.

The scales having fallen from our sight and the figure of the greatest American standing out colossal and clean-cut for posterity to worship as without a blemish, it is hard to measure the conceit of the clique of politicians, pettifoggers, and office-seekers certainly assisting in the advancement of Abraham Lincoln from confined obscurity in the West to the choice of the Northern nation. That was not enough, but still gaging him with their tape they withheld justice from him, after he displayed his worth in meeting the impending crisis.

When on the heels of the call for 300,000 men in 1863, came in spring, 1864, another for 500,000, to fortify General Grant in his finishing maneuvers, a murmur was heard. Chicago, gallantly having done her part, thought it was pumping at a void. A deputation from Cook County, headed by Lincolnites, departed for the capital to object to the summons. It was thought by his friends and long supporters that "their own elect" could not resist their plea, or turn it off with a joke. This deputation fined down to three persons, as it was not a patriotic quest. One of them also wished to balk, being Joseph Medill, editor of the *Chicago Tribune*. As a matter of course, Secretary of War Stanton refused the indulgence, obdurate as he was. The President was likewise averse, but he did consent to go over the matter with Stanton. The result was the same. All was left solely to Lincoln, since the personal argument was implied by the mediums selected.

"I"—said Medill to Miss Tarbell—"I shall never forget how Mr. Lincoln suddenly lifted his head and turned on us a black and frowning face.

"Gentlemen," said he, in a voice full of bitterness, 'after Boston, Chicago has been the chief instrument in bringing this war on the country. The Northwest has opposed the South as New England opposed the South. It was you who were largely responsible for causing the blood to flow as it has. You called for war until we had it. You called for emancipation, and I have given it to you. Whatever you have asked, you have had.

"Now you come here, begging to be let off from the call for men which I have made to carry out the war you demanded. You ought to be ashamed of yourselves. I have a right to expect better things of you!

"Go home and raise your six thousand extra men—the Cook County rate. And you, Medill, you are acting like a coward! You and your *Tribune* have had more influence than any paper in the Northwest in making this war. Go home and send us those men!" They went home, and they raised and sent those men!

**“SOONER THE FOWL BY HATCHING THE EGG THAN SMASHING IT.”**

“Still the question is not whether the Louisiana Government, as it stands, is quite all that is desirable. The question is, Will it be wiser to take it as it is, and help to improve it, or to reject and disperse?... Concede that the new government is to what it should be as the egg to the fowl, we shall sooner have the fowl by hatching the egg than by smashing it. (Laughter.)”—(Speech by A. Lincoln, his last! in answer to a serenade at the White House, 11th April, 1865, amid illuminations for the victories.)

## TOO BUSY TO GO INTO ANOTHER BUSINESS.

There came into the presidential hearing a man of French accent from New Orleans. He was evidently a diffident person, not knowing how precisely to state his case. But the burden of it was that he was a real-estate holder in New Orleans, and, since the advent of military rulers there, he could not collect his rents, his living.

“Your case, my friend,” said the President, “may be a hard one, but it might be worse. If, with your musket, you had taken your chances with the boys before Richmond, you might have found your bed and board before now! But the point is, what would you have me do for you? I have much to do, and the courts have been opened to relieve me in this regard.”

The applicant, still embarrassed, said: “I am not in the habit of appearing before *big men*.”

“And for that matter,” it was quickly responded, “you have no need to change your habit, for you are not before very big men now;” playfully adding: “I am too busy to go into the rent-collection business.”

## **THE SCALE OF REBELS.**

When, at the finale, Lincoln reproved his own wife for using the hackneyed expression of rebels, suggesting Confederates, as officially accepted on both sides, a wit commented:

“The Southerners will be like the Jews. As a poor one is simply a Jew, a rich one a Hebrew, and a Rothschild an Israelite, so it will be rebels, Confederates, and our Southern brothers anew!”



## ONE WAR AT A TIME.

When the Austrian archduke, Maximilian, was foisted upon Mexico as its emperor by Napoleon III., the Southerners, who did not have their “bellyful of fighting” by 1864, more than hinted that they would range shoulder to shoulder with the Federals to try to expel him and the mercenary Marshal Bazaine. But the President returned sagaciously:

“One war at a time!”

It was under his successor, Johnson, that the expulsion was effected and the upstart executed by the exasperated Mexicans themselves.

(NOTE.—This was undoubtedly said, but Mr. Henry Watterson, in his lecture on Lincoln, dates it as at the commencement of the war, when Secretary Seward, to forestall possible European alliances in favor of the Confederate States, proposed waging war against France and Spain, already allied, and challenging Russia and England to follow.)

## “AGIN' THE GOVERNMENT.”

In the summer of 1864, the governor-general of Canada paid the President a visit, with a numerous escort. During the late unpleasantness, as much comfort as possible under the Neutrality Act was believed to have been given the raiders into the border towns, as witness the St. Alban's Bank steal and the outfitting of blockade-runners. But they were treated at Washington with perfect courtesy. The head of the British party, at the conclusion, said with some sarcasm in his genial tone:

“I understand, Mr. President, that everybody is entitled to a vote in this country. If we remain until November, can *we* vote?”

“You would have to make a longer residence, which I could desire,” politely replied the host; “only, I fear we should not gain much by that—for there was a countryman of your excellency, from the sister kingdom of Ireland, though, who came here, and on landing wanted to exercise the privilege you seek—to vote early and often! But the officials at Castle Garden landing-stage laughed at him, saying that he knew nothing about parties, to which he replied:

“Bother the parties! It is the same here with me as in the old country—I am agin' the government! You see, he wanted to vote on the side of the Rebellion! Your excellency would then be no more at a loss to decide on which side!”

## PLOWING AROUND A LOG.

A State governor came to Washington, furious at the number of troops headquarters commanded of him and the mode of collecting them.irate as he was, General Fry saw him bidding good-by to the Capitol with a placid, even pleased, mien. The general inquired of Lincoln himself how he had been so miraculously mollified.

“I suppose you had to make large concessions to him, as he returns from you entirely satisfied?” suggested the general.

“Oh, no,” replied the President, “I did not concede anything.

“You know how that Illinois farmer managed the big log that lay in the middle of his field? To the inquiries of his neighbors, he announced he had gotten rid of it.

“How did you do it?” they asked. ‘It was too big to haul away, too knotty to split, too wet and soggy to burn. Whatever *did* you do?’

“Well, now, boys, if you won't tell the secret, I'll tell you how. I just plowed 'round it!’

“Now, Fry, don't tell anybody, but I just plowed around the governor!”—(On the authority of General James B. Fry.)

## **NOT THE RIGHT “CLAY” TO CEMENT A UNION.**

In 1864, Horace Greeley, editor of the New York *Tribune*, and a great authority among the farming class and the extremists, consented to attend an abortive peace consultation with Southern representatives, George N. Sanders, Beverly Tucker, and Clement C. Clay, at Niagara Falls. Clay was so set upon Jefferson Davis being still left as a ruler in some high degree which would condone his action as President of the seceded States, the project, like others, was a “fizzle,” as Lincoln would have said. To our President, Henry Clay was the “beau-ideal of a statesman”; but it was clear that his namesake was not of the Clay to cement a new Union!

## “THE MAN DOWN SOUTH.”

In August, 1864, a painful absorption was noticed in the President's manner, growing more and more strained and depressed. The ancient smile was fainter when it flitted over the long-drawn features, and the eyes seemed to bury themselves out of sight in the cavernous sockets, too dry for tears. These withdrawing fits were not uncommon, but they had become frequent this summer, and at the reception he had mechanically passed the welcome and given the hand-shake. But then the abstraction became so dense that he let an old friend stand before him without a glance, much less the usual hearty greeting expected. The newcomer, alarmed, ventured to arouse him. He shook off his absence of mind, seized the hand proffered him, and, while grasping it, exclaimed as though no others were by, also staring and pained:

“Excuse me! I was thinking—thinking of a man—down South!”

He was thinking of Sherman—that military genius who “burned his ships and penetrated a hostile country,” like Cortez, and from whom no reliable news had been received while he was investing Savannah. Lincoln had in his mind been accompanying his captain on that forlorn march—“smashing things”—to the sea.

## THE DISMEMBERED “YALLER” DOG.

Toward the end of December, 1864, the news trickled in of the utter discomfiture of Confederate General Hood's army at Nashville, by General Thomas. An enthusiastic friend of the President said to him:

“There is not enough left of *Hood* to make a dish-rag, is there?”

“Well, no, Medill; I think Hood's army is in about the identical fix of Bill Sykes' dog (the application from Dickens is noticeable as showing Lincoln's eclectic reading) down in Sangamon County. Did you never hear it?”

As a Chicago man Mr. Medill might be allowed to be ignorant of Sangamon Valley incidents.

“Well, this Bill Sykes had a long, hungry *yaller* dog, forever getting into the neighbors' meat smokehouses, and chicken-coops, and the like. They had tried to kill it a hundred-odd times, but the dog was always too smart for them. Finally, one of them got a coon's *innards*, and filled it up with gunpowder, and tied a piece of punk in the nozle. When he see this dog a-coming 'round, he fired this punk, split open a corn-cake and *squoze* the intestine inside, all nice and slab, and threw out the lot. The dog was always ravenous, and swallowed the heap—kerchunk!

“Pretty soon along come an explosion—so the man said. The head of the animal lit on the stoop; the fore legs caught a-straddle of the fence; the hind legs kicked in the ditch, and the rest of the critter lay around loose. Pretty soon who should come along but Bill, and he was looking for his dog when he heard the supposed gun go off. The neighbor said, innocentlike: 'William, I guess that there is not much of that dog left to catch anybody's fowls?’

“Well, no,’ admitted Sykes; 'I see plenty of pieces, but I guess that dog *as a dog*, ain't of much account.’

“Just so, Medill, there may be fragments of Hood's army around, but I guess that army, *as an army*, ain't of much more account!”

(Joseph Medill was editor of the *Chicago Tribune*; he was one of the coterie who claimed to have “discovered” Abraham Lincoln, and surely added propulsion to the wave carrying him to Washington. Another version of this anecdote is applied to the breaking up of General Early's rashly advanced army in July; but it would seem, by Mr. Medill's name, that this is the genuine; the other is not told in the Western vernacular of Mr. William Sykes.)

## **THE METEOROLOGICAL OMEN.**

The second inauguration day was amid the usual March weather in the District of Columbia, like the fickle April in unkindler latitudes: smile and scowl. But as the President kissed the book there was a sudden parting of the clouds, and a sunburst broke in all its splendor. This is testified to by the newspaper correspondents, Frank Moore, Noah Brooks, and others. The President said next day:

“Did you notice the sun burst? It made me jump!”

## DID SHE TAKE THE WINK TO HERSELF?

Miss Anna Dickinson, lecturing by invitation in the House of Representatives' Hall, alluded to the sunburst which came upon the President on inauguration day, just as he took the oath of office. The illustrious auditor sat directly in front of the lady, so that he also faced the reporters' gallery behind her. Lincoln amiably glanced over her head, caught sight of an acquaintance among the newspaper men, and winked to him as she made the reference to the so-esteemed omen. Next day he said to this gentleman—Noah Brooks:

“I wonder if Miss Dickinson saw me wink at *you?*”



## GOING DOWN WITH COLORS FLYING.

All the wire-pulling of the many contestants for the presidential chair failed to get a prize upon it. It was held that there must be *in excelsis* no “swapping of horses in crossing the stream,” still turbid and dangerous. So the National Convention, held at Baltimore, purged by this time of its former treasonable activity, at the Soldiers' Fair, held there, the President had alluded to the time when he had to be whisked through as past a bed of vipers, and said:

“Blessings on the men who have wrought these changes!”

All the States voted for the incumbent save Missouri, which stood for General Grant, but the votes transferred to Lincoln, the opinion was unanimous. Within two months he was driven by circumstances to call out five hundred thousand men. His partizans regretted the necessity, and on the old story that the people were tired of the war declared it would prove injurious to his re-election. But it is undisputed that about half the levies never reached their mustering-point. The arts and wiles of the marplots were equaled only by the prodigality and persistency of the parents to save their sons from “the evils of camp life.” It is but fair to the Puritans to accept their plea that the loss of them fighting the country's battles did not so distress them. Lincoln replied to the political argument nobly:

“Gentlemen, it is not necessary that I should be re-elected, but it is necessary that our brave boys in the front should be supported, and the country saved.” (The hackneyed phrase had led to his party being nicknamed “the Union-savers.”) “I shall call out the five hundred thousand more men, and if I go down under the measure I will go down like the *Cumberland*, with my colors flying!”

(On the 8th of March, 1862, the Confederate iron-clad ram, *Merrimac*, ran into and sank the Union sloop of war, *Cumberland*, nearly all of the latter's company perishing. Acting-captain Morris refused to strike his flag.)

## **THERE MUST BE THE BELL–MULE.**

President Lincoln formally disavowed the desire erroneously attributed to him by military critics that he wished to die “with soldiers' harness on his back.” To quote General Grant, to whom he said in their first interview when the victor of the West was summoned to Washington to be made lieutenant–general, and given full command over all the national forces:

“Mr. Lincoln stated to me that he had never professed to be a military man, or to know how campaigns should be conducted, and never wanted to interfere with them; but that procrastination on the part of his commanders, and the pressure of people at the North, and of Congress, had forced him into issuing the 'executive orders.' He did not know but that they were all wrong, and did not know that some of them were.”

## “ROOT, HOG, OR DIE!”

In February, 1865, permission was requested from the National Government for three appointees on a peace commission to confer with the Executive. It was granted, but the parties were not allowed to enter Washington, as they wanted to do, to give more luster to the course. The interview of the President, Mr. Seward the “bottle-holder”—as it was facetiously said about this sparring-match for breath—was with Alexander Stephens, Hunter, and Campbell, of Alabama, on board of the *River Queen*, off Fort Monroe. The discussion lasted four hours, but, though on friendly terms, as “between gentlemen,” resulted in nothing. For the President held that the first step which must be taken was the recognition of the Union. As was his habit, he rounded off the parley with one of his stories apropos.

Mr. Hunter, a Virginian, had assumed that, if the South consented to peace on the basis of the Emancipation Proclamation, the slaves would precipitate ruin on not only themselves, but the entire Southern society.

Mr. Lincoln said to Henry J. Raymond, of the *Times*, New York, that:

“I waited for Seward to answer that argument, but, as he was silent, I at length said: ‘Mr. Hunter, you ought to know a great deal better about that than I, for you have always lived under the slave system. I can only say in reply to your statement of the case that it reminds me of a man out in Illinois, by the name of Case, who undertook to raise a very large herd of hogs. It was a great trouble to feed them, and how to get around this was a puzzle to him. At length he hit upon a plan of planting a great field of potatoes, and, when they were sufficiently grown, turned the whole herd into the field and let them have full swing, thus saving not only the labor of feeding the hogs, but also that of digging the potatoes. Charmed with his sagacity, he stood one day leaning against the fence, counting his hogs, when a neighbor came along.

“‘Well, well,’ said he; ‘this is all very fine, Mr. Case. Your hogs are doing very well just now, but, you know, out here in Illinois the frost comes early, and the ground freezes for a foot deep. Then, what are you going to do?’

“‘This was a view of the matter Mr. Case had not taken into account. Butchering time for hogs was ‘way on in December or January! He scratched his head, and at length stammered:

“‘Well, it may come pretty hard on their snouts, but I don’t see but it will be “Root, hog, or, die!”’”

The speaker had no need to draw this moral as to the fate of the South after the war, for black or white, from a *Case* in Illinois; the negro minstrel song was current then which supplied the apt allusion, and was called “Root, Hog, or Die.” It may well be that the sailors conveying the baffled commissioners to Richmond, or the soldiers about the “other government,” were chanting the instructive and prophetic chorus: “It doan’ make a bit of difference to either you or I, but Big Pig or Little Pig, it is Root, Hog, or Die.”

Mr. Raymond, in chronicling this anecdote, tells of the New York *Herald* giving the story in a mangled and pointless copy. But it was current in conversation. Mr. Lincoln was in hopes that “it would not leak out lest some oversensitive people should imagine there was a degree of levity in the intercourse between us.”

Quite otherwise, for the majority thought the illustration as good as any argument, and would have deemed the speaker prophet if they could have foreseen that the South would have to buckle down to hard work to redeem the losses.

## THE GRANT BRAND OF WHISKY.

Although a Kentuckian—orthodox jest—Lincoln was so known for his rare temperance convictions that no one carped at the buffet at his official house being clear of the decanters characterizing it in previous administrations. The total abstinence societies therefore hailed him as an apostle of their creed. Consequently, they had been pleased, on certain occasions, at his espousing and cheering their counsel. When General Grant was elevating himself by his string of solid victories in the West, it was object of caviling, by the adherents of the generals eclipsed and foreseeing his becoming lieutenant-general, and the slander circulated that “Philip sober” got the credit of “Philip drunk,” perpetrating his plans with the dram-bottle at his elbow.

Lincoln heard out this spiteful diatribe with his habitual patience, when, calmly looking at the chairman, he responded:

“Gentlemen, since you are so familiar with the general's habits, would you oblige me with the name of General Grant's favorite brand of whisky. I want so to send some barrels of it to my other generals!”

The deputation withdrew in poor order.

Major Eckert says that Mr. Lincoln told him he had heard this story. It was good, and would be very good if he had told it—but he did not. He supposed it was “charged to him to give it currency.” He went on to say:

“The original is back in King George's time. Bitter complaints were made against General Wolfe that he was mad. The king, who could be more justly accused of that, replied: 'I wish he would bite some of my other generals.'”

## **“A GENERAL, AT LAST!”**

Without disparaging the Lincoln generals, it may be said that they will never occupy a niche in Walhalla beside Napoleon's marshals and Washington's commanders. But Washington society liked them one with another for affording opportunities of outings to the grand reviews and parades. One—that to Bull Run—turned out a failure, and the Southerners chasing the fugitives had the pickings of the iced wines, game pies, and cold chicken which “Brick” Pomeroy saw strewing the road back. Grant's negligent and war-worn uniform did not remind any one of the gay and brilliant period of “Old Fuss and Feathers,” the veteran Scott. But Grant and the other Westerner, Lincoln, mutually pleased at their first meeting, the latter emerged from the interview exclaiming with joy:

“At last, we have a general!”

## A FIZZLE ANYHOW!

American dash was, in military matters as in others, opposed to the engineering schemes dear to the scientific officers fresh from West Point Academy. Among their projects was the Dutch Gap Canal at City Point. When Grant, as his lieutenant-general, was conducted by the President to see the forces and their positions, the guide made known his opinion of the undertaking in his frank manner, consonant with the new commander's bluntness.

“Grant, do you know what this reminds me of? In the outskirts of our Springfield, there was a blacksmith of an ingenious turn, who could make something of pretty nigh anything in his line. But he got hold of a bit of iron one day that he attempted to make into a corn-knife, but the stuff would not hold an edge, so he reasoned it would be a claw-hammer; but that would be a loss of overplus, and he tried to make an ax-head. That did not come out to a five-pounder; and, getting disgusted, he blew up the fire to a white heat around the metal mass, when, yanking it out with his tongs, he flung it into the water-tub hard by, and cried out:

“Well, if I can't make anything of you, I'll make a fizzle anyhow!”

“Well, general, I am afeared that that's what we'll make of the Dutch Gap Canal.”

**“FORGET OVER A GRAVE!”**

When the *Chronicle*, of Washington, had the noble courage to speak well of “Stonewall” Jackson, accidentally shot, as a brave soldier, however mistaken as an American, Lincoln wrote to the editor:

“I honor you for your generosity to one who, though contending against us in a guilty cause, was nevertheless a gallant man. Let us forget his sins over a fresh-made grave.”

## IF HE FELT THAT WAY—START!

Although Colonel Dana, of the private branch of the War Office Intelligence Department, might have claimed exemption from active service, he never spared himself, though such a messenger ran not only the common military dangers, but of the Johnnies treating him as a spy. During the battles of the Wilderness, acute was the trepidation in Washington, where no news had come since a couple of days—Grant having “cut loose” and buried himself in the midst of the foes. Nevertheless, Dana had a train at Maryland Avenue to take him to the front, and a horse and escort to see him farther; he came to take the President's last orders. But the other had been reflecting on the perils into which he would be sending his favorite despatch-bearer.

“You can't tell where Lee is, or what he is doing; *Jeb* Stuart is on the rampage pretty lively between the Rappahannock and the Rapidan. It is considerable risk, and I do not like to expose you to it.”

“But I am all ready; and we are equipped, if it comes to the worst, to run!”

“Well, now, if you feel that way—start!”—(E. P. Mitchell, from Dana.)



## FIGURES WILL PROVE ANYTHING.

Toward the finish of the Rebellion, Lincoln was asked to what number the enemy might amount. He replied with singular readiness:

“The Confederates have one million two hundred thousand men in the field.”

Astonishment being manifested at the precision, he went on, smiling:

“Every time a Union commander gets *licked*, he says the enemy outnumbered him three or four times. We have three or four hundred thousand, so—logic is logic! they are three times that; say, one million two hundred thousand.”

As a fact, at the grand review before the President (Johnson) the two armies of Grant and Sherman, May, 1865, two hundred thousand veterans filed past. Lincoln should have lived to see that glorious march past.

**“I DON'T WANT TO—BUT THAT'S IT IF I MUST DIE!”**

In the ferment, as the term of Lincoln's first office-holding was terminating, the old war fever returned by which “Little Mac (McClellan), Idol of the Army” was hailed as “the hope of the country.” Only this time the presage was that General Grant had only to secure that phantasm, the capture of Richmond, to be nominated and elected. This reached the President's ears through the “hanged good-natured friend,” as Sheridan—the wit, not the general—calls the stinging tongue.

“Well,” drawled Mr. Lincoln, “I feel very much like the man who said he did not particularly want to die, but, if he had got to die, that was precisely the disease he wanted to die of!”

## **BEST LET AN ELEPHANT GO!**

A rebel emissary, the notorious Jacob Thompson, was reported by the secret service as slipping through the North and trying to get passage to Europe on the Allan steamship out of Portland, Maine, or Canada. Brevet-general Dana, confidential officer to the War Department and the President, inquired if the fugitive was to be detained at Portland, where the provost-marshal thought he could capture him. Secretary Stanton wanted him apprehended.

“H'm,” said Lincoln, who was being shaved, “I don't know as I have any apprehension in that quarter. When you have an elephant on your hands, and he wants to run away, better let him run!”

(NOTE.—The “Unbeknownst” story has been applied to this tolerated “escape.”)

## **HISTORY REPEATS.**

There is a double echo in the Lincolnian saying, “No surrender, though at the end of one or a hundred defeats,” from General–President Taylor's reply at Buena Vista: “General Taylor never surrenders,” to its antecedent, not so well authenticated, of General Cambronne at Waterloo: “The Old Guard dies, but does not surrender.”

## **“NOT THE PRESIDENT, BUT THE OLD FRIEND.”**

In February, 1865, General Grant's plans were so well shaped that, with the reenforcement of General Sherman returned from his march to Savannah, he could count on crushing up Richmond, as an egg under trip-hammers. Before this the doom was registered, for the Southerners were at the end of their men, as before they had been at that of their means. Bridges burned or blown up, the rebel army was pouring out of their capital with the fear that their one or two ways of flight were already blocked by Sheridan or Sherman. The desperate attempt to arm the slaves against their coming deliverer was the “last kick.” Lee clung to Richmond in hope that his lieutenant, Johnston, would check the oncomer, but he was compelled to notify his President and colleagues that flight was their only resource when he could no longer fight.

Lincoln was at Petersburg at Grant's headquarters when, a few miles off, Davis received the fatal intelligence that Lee was being deserted so freely that there would not be a body-guard left him. He fled, to be ignominiously captured in female disguise. His lair was hot when Lincoln entered it, and made it his closet, whence he issued his orders.

Soon after this occupation the victor heard the name of Pickett announced to him. The Southern general, George Pickett, was a protege of his, as he smoothed his entry upon the West Point Military Academy book when he was a congressman. Without either knowing it, the hero was lying dead on a hard-fought field close by. But Lincoln ordered her admittance. She was accompanied by her little son. This alone would have prevailed over the President, but, as she formally addressed him as the authority, he interrupted:

“Not the President, but George's old friend!”

And beckoning the wondering boy to him with the irresistible attraction of men who love the young, and are intuitively loved by them, he said:

“Tell your father, rascal, that I forgive him for the sake of your mother's smile, and your own bright eyes.”

This reconciliation on the fall of the sword was a token of the forgivingness of the North toward the chastened foes.

**“CLOSE YOUR EYES!”**

The Marquis of Chambrun, a French volunteer, who entered the Lincoln circle, relates in a more elegant strain the above incident. He states that Thompson and Sanders were informed upon, and Stanton repeated the information to the President with a view of having them intercepted. But the other in his tender voice responded: “Let us close our eyes, and leave them pass unnoticed.”

## **DON'T JUDGE BY APPEARANCES.**

The President's recklessness seems incredible as to going about the capital, as far as he knew and wished, without escort, but his "browsing," to use his word, about the perilous front while the concluding actions were enveloping Petersburg preliminarily to the rush at Richmond, partake of the nature of a fanatic's daring. This is the support to the otherwise taxing story told by Doctor J. E. Burriss, of New York, then a volunteer soldier at the place. He states that Lincoln, so shabbily dressed as to be taken for a farmer or planter, was so treated by soldiery before a tobacco-warehouse under guard. They wanted tobacco, and begged him to allow some to be turned out. He approached a young lieutenant commanding the post, but the latter was insolent to the "old Southerner." The latter sent a soldier to General Grant, who himself rode up, post-haste, at the summons. The soldiers were given some of the Indian weed, and the donor, turning to the impertinent officer, who had thought him a converted reb, said:

"Young sir, do not judge by appearances; and for the future treat your elders with more respect."

**“NOTHING CAN TOUCH HIM FURTHER.”**

Returning to Washington from Richmond, Lincoln read twice to friends on the journey, from his pocket Shakespeare:

Treason has done his worst; nor steel nor poison,  
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing,  
Can touch him further.



## “WENT AND RETURNED!”

The last days of March, 1865, contained the three battles, closing with that of Five Forks, signaling the collapse of the Confederacy at Richmond. The President, at the front, sent the news of victories to the Cabinet at home. After the battles, the advance of the triumphing Unionists. On Monday morning Lincoln was enabled to telegraph the talismanic words so often dreamed of in the last agonizing years of fluctuating hope:

“*Richmond has fallen!* I am about to enter!”

Secretary Stanton, of the war office, immediately implored: “Do not peril your life!”

But in the morning he received this line from the most independent President known since Jackson:

“Received your despatch; went to Richmond, and returned this morning!”

Expostulated with by Speaker Colfax on the apparent rashness, for he had completed “the foolhardy act” by occupying President Jefferson Davis’ vacated house, he replied with the calm of a man of destiny:

“I should have been alarmed myself if any other person had been President and gone there; but *I* did not feel in any danger whatever.”

(NOTE.—Mark the analogy in great men. General Grant says of his first emotions in war—the Mexican—“If some one else had been colonel, and I had been lieutenant-colonel, I do not think I would have felt any trepidation.”)

## THE CLEAR FORESIGHT.

On the 2d of April, 1865, the President was at City Point, Grant's headquarters, until he started forth for the culminating series of ceaseless strokes. That morning, attack along the whole line had been commanded, and the President telegraphed to his wife, at the capital, during the raging battle. He knew that already the hostile lines had been pierced in one or more places, and that Sheridan's cavalry rush was supported by a division of infantry. He concludes foreseeing that at length "pegging away" was over and slugging begun:

"All is now favorable!"

In truth, on that same day, the rebel government at Richmond faded thence like a mirage, and, within one week, General Lee surrendered his enfeebled relic of a grand army.

## DO IT “UNBEKNOWNST.”

On April 7, 1865, General Grant had enveloped the enemy so that he could be assured that the rebel government, if it remained in Richmond as the “last ditch,” would be trapped. He notified the President close by, at Petersburg, and asked what should be done in the event of the game being bagged. The plan was, it seems, to have slain the ex-President and his Cabinet officers in a rout, and the charge would have been described as massacre abroad. The arbiter on this point of anguish replied in his characteristic manner:

“I will tell you a story. There was once an Irishman, who signed the Father Mathew's temperance pledge. But a few days afterward he became terribly thirsty, and finally went into a familiar resort, where the barkeeper was, at first, startled to hear him call for a 'straight' soda. He related that he had taken the pledge, so he hinted, with an Irishman's broadness of hint, 'you might put in some spirits *unbeknownst* to me!’“

(NOTE.—Another and later version—for the above was limitedly repeated at the time with gusto and appreciation of the subtlety—makes the hero a temperance lecturer at Lincoln's father's house. This is stupid, for Lincoln, a fervent temperance advocate, would not have decried the apostles of the doctrine for which he was also a sufferer.)

In course of time doubt has been cast on this anecdote by reason that the President would not have jested at such a juncture. But abundant confirmation was forthcoming at the time. Besides, we have so grave a general as Sherman alluding to the “Unbeknownst” in an official document.

## **ONE CANNOT DIE TWICE.**

In Lincoln's last interview with his rustic friends, Mrs. Armstrong repeated the fears many apprehended of evil being visited on the President-elect on his way to be inaugurated.

“Hannah, if they do kill me, I shall never die another death!” and laughed at her.

## **NO MORE INVIDIOUS NAME-CALLING.**

On returning from a carriage-drive into Washington, Mrs. Lincoln—who was not the Southern sympathizer the scandalous hinted—glanced at the city, and said aloud with bitterness:

“That city is full of our enemies!”

Had she a premonition on the fatal eve?

Right before the Marquis of Chambrun, their companion, the President serenely said:

“Enemies, Mary! Never speak of that!”

No wonder, when the dastardly taking off was bruited through the beaten but ever gallant South, they knew that they had lost “their best friend!” as General Pickett styled Lincoln.—(By the Marquis of Chambrun.)

**“THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA THE TREASURY OF THE WORLD.”**

As Schuyler Colfax was going West, Lincoln, in bidding him the *last* farewell, said foresightedly:

“I have very large ideas of the mineral wealth of our nation. Now that the Rebellion is overthrown, and we know pretty nearly the amount of our national debt, the more gold and silver we mine, we make the payment of that debt the easier. Tell the miners from me that I shall promote their interests to the best of my ability because their prosperity is the prosperity of the nation; and we shall prove in a few years that we are the treasury of the world.”

## “HANG ON—NOT HANG!”

On April 11, 1865, Mr. Lincoln spoke out of his study window to an immense and joyous crowd. There were rockets, and portfire, and a huge bonfire, while the President was serenaded. The finish of the Rebellion delighted all persons. His offhand speech was full of compassion and brotherly love. Louisiana was already being “reconstructed.” Mr. Harlan, who followed the chief, touched the major key: “What shall we do with the rebels?” To which the mob responded hoarsely:

“Hang them!”

Lincoln's little son, Tad, was in the room, playing with the quills on the table where his father made his notes. He looked at his father, and said, as one whose intimacy made him familiar with his inmost thoughts:

“No, papa; not hang them—but *hang on* to them!”

The President triumphantly repeated:

“We must hang on to them! Tad's got it!”—(By Mrs. H. McCulloch, present.)

## **LINCOLN'S LAST WISH.**

“Springfield! how happy four years hence will I be, to return there in peace and tranquillity!”—(To the Marquis of Chambrun, April, 1865.)



## **ASSASSINATION.**

At Springfield, immediately upon the election for President, Lincoln began to receive letters with lethal menaces. His friends took them as serious, and two or more carried weapons, and escorted him closely that no one with a dagger might reach his side. Calling on his stepmother for the farewell, she reiterated the general, and rising, fears. At Philadelphia, detectives and others whispered of a plot matured at Baltimore, and in his speech at raising the flag over Independence Hall he said pointedly:

“If this country cannot be saved without giving up this principle—liberty to the world—I was about to say I would rather be assassinated on the spot than surrender it.... I have said nothing but what I am willing to live by, and, if it be the pleasure of Almighty God, to die by.”—(Speech, Philadelphia, February, 1861.)

## **A PRESIDENT, NOT AN EMPEROR.**

The President said to Colonel Halpine as respected the life-guards, which he soon dispensed with around his person, often going out unawares so as to “dodge” the escort in waiting:

“It will never do for the President of a republic to have guards with drawn swords at his door, as if he fancied he were, or were trying to be, or were assuming to be, an emperor.”

## THE PLOT TO WAYLAY THE PRESIDENT (1860).

The dispute as to whether there was a foundation to the supposed plot to waylay and sequester President-elect Lincoln between Philadelphia and Washington is notable. From the later light and the letter from Wilkes Booth to his brother-in-law, Sleeper Clarke, the comedian, no doubt is left that to kidnap him was a plot dated very early when the foresighted slave-holders were certain that he was a greater enemy from consistency than the louder-voiced and openly violent Abolitionists. While Colonel Lamon doubted, and wished he had not been beguiled into aiding in the ignominious flight in disguise and secretly by train, Secretary Seward and General Scott gave it credence. The foreboding had touched Lincoln before he left his Illinois home. At Springfield his farewell speech is tinged with shade. At Philadelphia and Harrisburg he spoke of blood-spilling, and used the word "assassination" at the former. He took up the matter like a reasoner. Already the detective brothers, Pinkerton, had an inkling of the doings of the Knights of the Golden Circle, or some such secret society, designing regicide. So, as the Concordance is held as a proof from the variance of the witnesses to scenes, he argued that the story was founded. Otherwise he would not have heard of the criminal attempt from all sides. That was what made him yield his dignity to the safety of a person whom he felt was chosen for the crisis. The next morning he had concluded to pass through Baltimore at another than the arranged hour to foil the plot.

## **“I DON'T BELIEVE THERE IS ANY DANGER!”**

One night the President had been very late with the secretary of war at the latter's department. But, just the same, he insisted on his getting home by the short cut—a foot-path, lined and embowered by trees, then leading from the war office to the White House. But Stanton stopped him.

“You ought not to go that way; it is dangerous for you in the daytime”—it did lend itself to an ambuscade, and persons who knew Wilkes Booth assert having seen him prowling around—“it is worse at night!”

“I do not believe there is *any* danger there, night or day!” responded the President, with Malcolm's confidence that he stood “in the great hand of God.”

“Well, Mr. President,” continued Stanton, a stubborn man himself, “you shall not be killed returning from my department by that dark way while I am in it!”

And he forced him to enter his carriage to return by the well-lighted avenue.

Lincoln had previously consented to carry a cane. (By Schuyler Colfax.)

## WORRY TILL YOU GET RID OF THINGS.

On Colonel Halpine trying to make the chief see that even indoors there was danger, he debated about the two menaces—violence of “cranks” and of a political fanatic. He thought too well of the sense of the “people at Richmond,” some of whom had been colleagues of his in his first stay in Washington as congressman.

“Do you think that they would like to have Hannibal Hamlin—his first vice-president—here any better than myself?”

The story is repeated with his second Vice substituted for the first, with the more justification, as “Andy” Johnson was impeached for his incompetency. Detective Baker put it this way: “As to the crazy folks, I must take my chances. The most crazy people being, I fear, some of my own too zealous adherents.”

(He had the same idea as in an ancient Chinese proverb: “You may steal the captain out of his castle, but you cannot steal the castle.”)

“I am but a single individual, and it would not help their cause, or make the least difference in the progress of the war.” [Footnote: He might have said, as truly as his predecessor, John Tyler, reproached also for going about unguarded: “My body-guard is the people who elected me.”]—(Cited by F. B. Carpenter.)

## THE FEARLESSNESS OF THE GOD-FEARING.

Lincoln said that by the death of his son Willie he was touched; by the victory of Gettysburg made a believer. It is plain that, after this, a fortitude replaced the despondency stamping him. It may be due to this conviction of being one of the chosen, like Cromwell and Gordon, soldiers of Christ, that he met all adjurations for him to take care of his precious life with fanatical unconcern. He communicated to the Cabinet, at the close of the conflict, how he had appointed to confer alone and without guards to terrify the emissary, a noted Confederate. They were to discuss peace—and by that word, Lincoln was drawn to any one. He answered the cautions with the simple saying:

“I am but an individual, and my removal will not in any way advance the other folks in their endeavors.”

In fact, it was so—the misdeed was a double-edged blade which cut both ways. It will never be known, probably, how near a massacre followed the explosion of indignation at that maniac's murder of the Emancipator. Fortunately for the unsullied robe of Columbia, a hundred advocates of leaving retribution to Heaven echoed Garfield's appeasing address.

Lincoln met the intermediary, but the ultimate negotiation fell through, like the others all. He came home from City Point with sadness, but from his seed has outcome the Universal Peace Tribunal of The Hague. Professor Martens based his original plea of the czar's on the Lincolnian guide for the soldiers in our war.

## THE POISONING PLOT.

A servant at the White House testifies that he was approached by emissaries who offered him a sum almost preposterously large to put a powder in the milk for the Lincoln family's table. The agents knew that they were temperance followers, milk being as common as wine at previous tenants' table. This was laughed at before the shadow of Booth's patricide was cast ahead. But the Reverend Henry Ward Beecher publicly declares—and he was in the state secrets as deeply as any layman—that President-General Harrison, “Tippecanoe,” was poisoned that Tyler might fulfil the plan to annex Texas as a slave State. “With even stronger convictions is it affirmed that President-General Taylor was poisoned, that a less stern successor might give a suppler instrument to manage. Who doubts now that it was attempted Breckenridge in his room?”

## **NOTHING LIKE GETTING USED TO THINGS!**

The more evident it grew that the President, at whom the stupid jeers persisted through incurable density of his enemies, was the vital motor of the Union cause, than threats of violently removing him were continually sent him. So many such letters accumulated that he grimly packeted them together and labeled the mass: "Assassination Papers." It was a Damoclesian dagger of which he spoke lightly, because fear of death never awed him. When a man walks in the manifest path traced out for him by Heaven, he does not tremble. But friends, more concerned by the strain in watching over his safety, expressing surprise at his indifference, he tried to reassure them:

"Oh, there is nothing like getting used to things!"



## **MOST AFRAID OF A FRIENDLY SHOT.**

General Wadsworth, in his anxiety about the President's safety in Washington, swarming with insurgent agents, set a cavalry guard over the President's carriage. He went and complained to General Halleck, in charge of the capital, saying only partly facetiously:

“Why, Mrs. Lincoln and I cannot hear ourselves talk for the clatter of their sabers and spurs; and some of them appear to be new hands and very awkward, so that I am more afraid of being shot by the accidental discharge of a carbine or revolver than of any attempt upon my life by a roving squad of 'Jeb' Stuart's cavalry.”

(Since Stuart came twenty miles within the Union lines, he was the criterion of rebel raiders' possibilities.)

## THE ONE WORD HE HAD LEARNED.

A tale-bearer came to the President with a plot against him and the government, which was a cock-and-bull without any adherence, and all superficial. Lincoln heard him out, but then sharply returned:

“There is one thing that I have learned, and that you have not. It is only one word: 'Thorough!’” Then bringing his huge hand down on the table-desk, to emphasize his meaning, he repeated: “Thorough!”

## **NOT TO DISAPPOINT THE PEOPLE.**

The strictly religious went so far as to call the Lincoln assassination a judgment(!), as it happened in a playhouse on a Good Friday! It appears that the President had compunctions, and at the last moment was disinclined to go, though a party had been made up to oblige a young espoused couple; but General Grant, who was to be a feature of the commanded performance, was called away—no doubt escaping the knife the murderer had in reserve to his pistol. The President said that he must go, not to disappoint the people on this gala night, as the rejoicing was wide over the dissolution of the Confederacy.

## **NOTHING LIKE PRAYER—BUT PRAISE.**

In 1862, the President suffered “an affliction harder to bear than the war!” His son Willie (William, next to one that died in infancy) was carried off by typhoid fever, under the presidential roof; and another, “Tad,” (Thomas, who actually lived to be twenty and passed away in Illinois) was given up by the physicians. At this crisis Miss Dix, daughter of the general famous for his order: “If any one offers to pull down the American flag, shoot him on the spot,” recommended an army nurse, Mrs. Rebecca R. Pomeroy. She was a born succorer, pious and fortifying. She came reluctantly to the important errand, as she had to leave a wardful of wounded soldiers. She had lost many of her family, and was able to comfort from gaging the affectionate father's grief. She led him to pray in his double racking of bad war news and the domestic distress.

On next seeing him and that he was less grieved, for news of the Fort Donaldson surrender to General Grant arrived in the meantime, she hastened to say:

“There is nothing like prayer, Mr. President!”

“Yes, there is: Praise! Prayer and praise must go together!”

THE END.