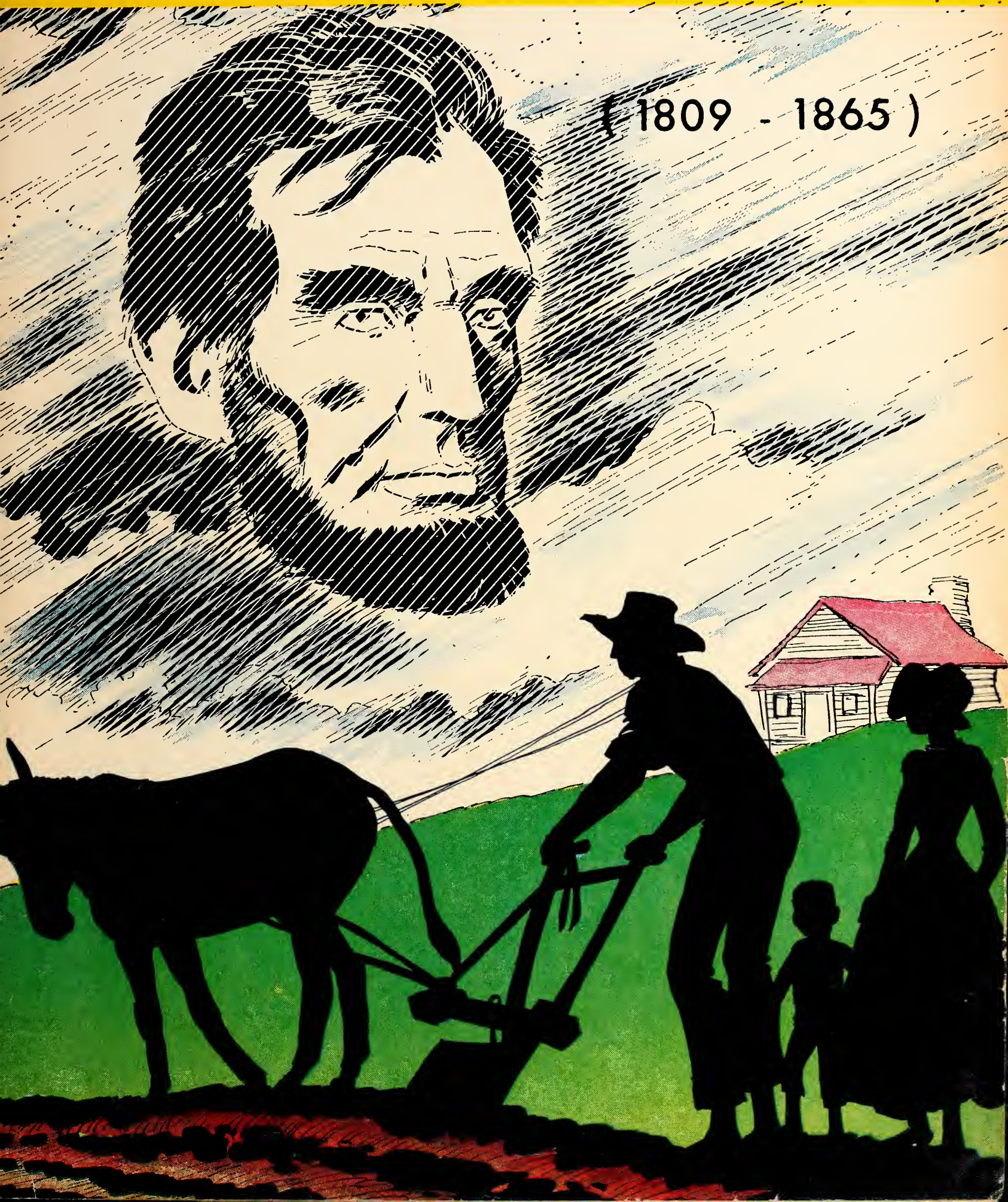
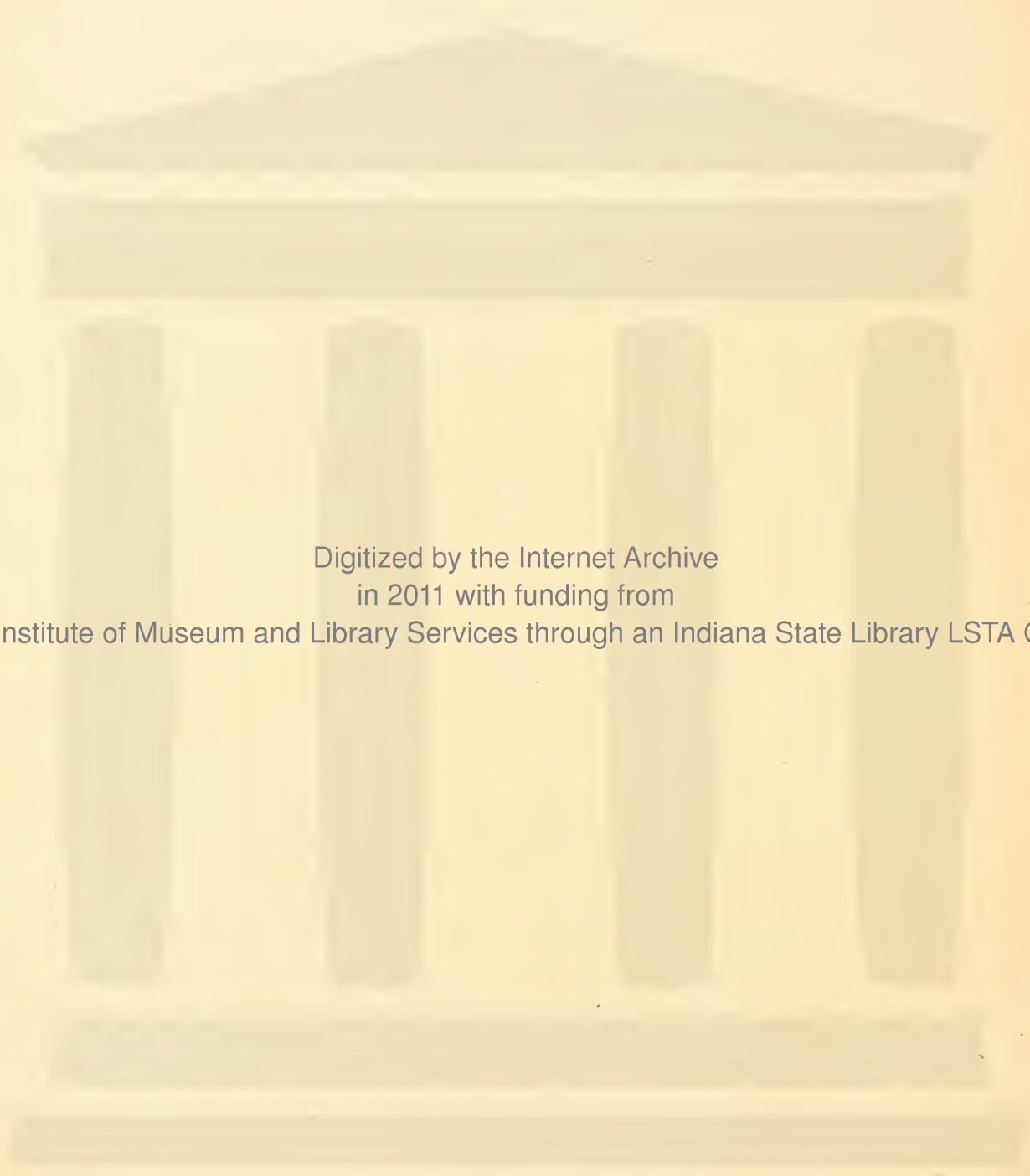


ABRAHAM LINCOLN

(1809 - 1865)





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Abraham Lincoln

(1809 - 1865)

**16th President
of**

**The United States
of
America**

Lincoln's Gettysburg Address

President Lincoln spoke the following words in 1863, soon after the battle of Gettysburg during the Civil War, when the battlefield was dedicated as a national cemetery. They will endure forever as an expression of the spirit of the United States of America.

"FOUR SCORE and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

"Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battle-field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

"But, in a larger sense, we can not dedicate—we can not consecrate—we can not hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

A BRAHAM LINCOLN. — By his essential humaneness and his patience, his love for the common man and his devotion to government of, by and for the people, and by the manner of his life and death, Abraham Lincoln, 16th President of the United States, holds a unique place in the history of mankind.



DESTINY.—In 1809, when Lincoln was born, slavery existed in America. Abraham Lincoln seemed destined to become an illiterate farm worker; certainly not the one to abolish this slavery, making all Americans free and equal and himself one of mankind's greatest figures. In his life lies the true meaning of democracy, human rights and dignity of the individual.



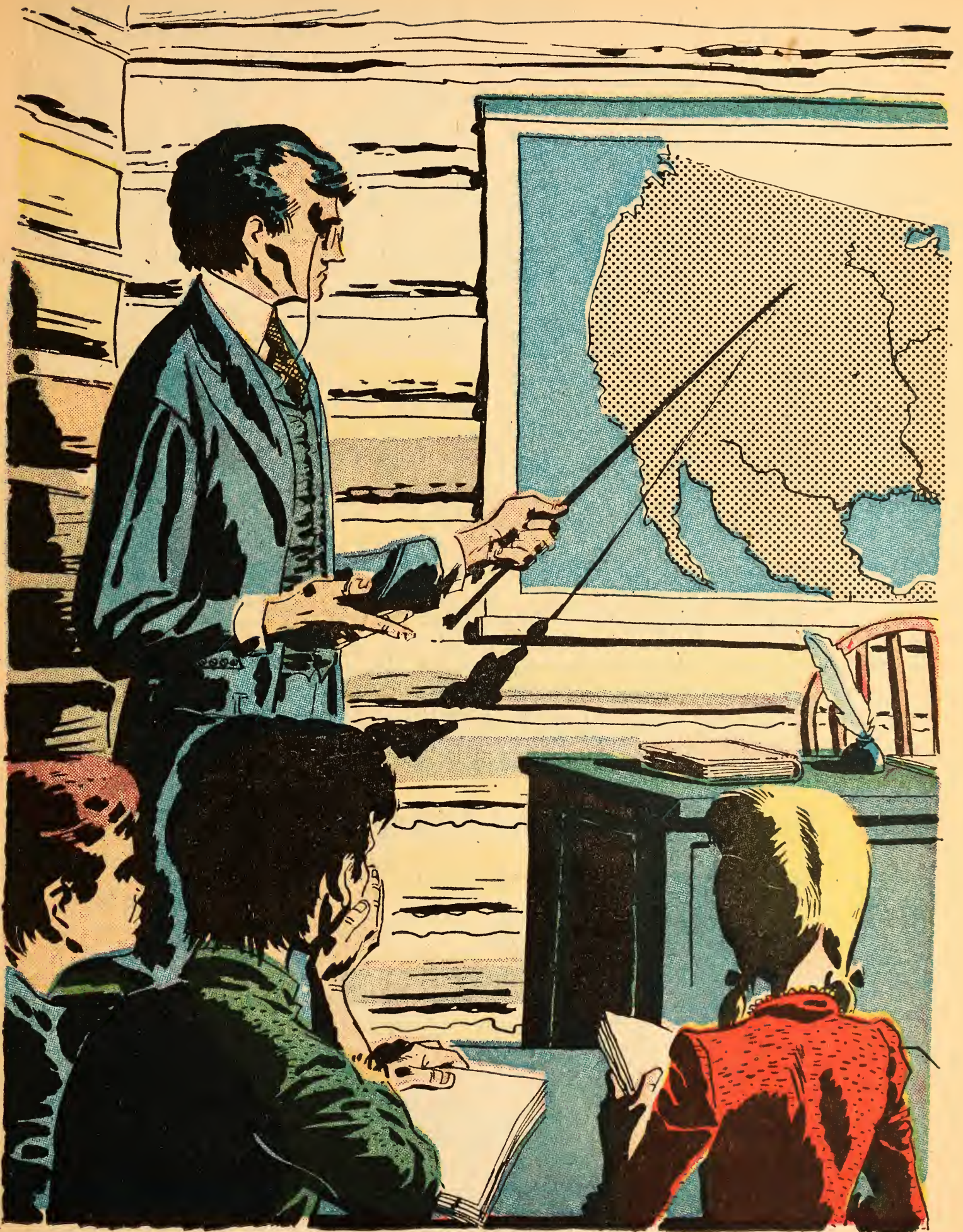
AMERICA. — The America of the early 1800's was young and expanding, having won its independence barely a quarter of a century before. Slavery had carried over from the Colonial days. Pioneers were pushing from the settled east to the trackless west. It was in this raw new country that Abraham's father was trying to eke out a living.



FAMILY. — The elder Lincoln was a carpenter, but he was forced to spend long periods in the forest hunting game to feed his family. To the kind mother, Nancy Hanks Lincoln, was left the care of Abe, his sister and the farm. To her Abe credited the incentive of his life. “God bless my mother,” he said. “All that I am or ever hope to be, I owe to her.”



SCHOOL.—When a log schoolhouse was opened in the neighborhood, Mrs. Lincoln sent young Abe and his sister to learn the alphabet and master the spelling book. “You must learn to read and write,” she impressed upon them, “You must get knowledge, so that when you grow up you will be wise and good.” Abe always remembered these words.



INDIANA. — When Abraham was seven years old, his father moved the family to a farm in Indiana, then too almost a wilderness. Here, in the late autumn, the Lincoln family set to work clearing the woods for their new home. Winter was almost upon them, and with more haste than care they built a log house. There was no school here and Abe worked on the farm.



TRAGEDY. — In the autumn of 1818 a strange sickness broke out over the countryside, killing many people and cattle. Abe's mother was one of those stricken. She died in less than a week. Abe helped his father build a rough pine coffin for the one who had loved and served them so well.



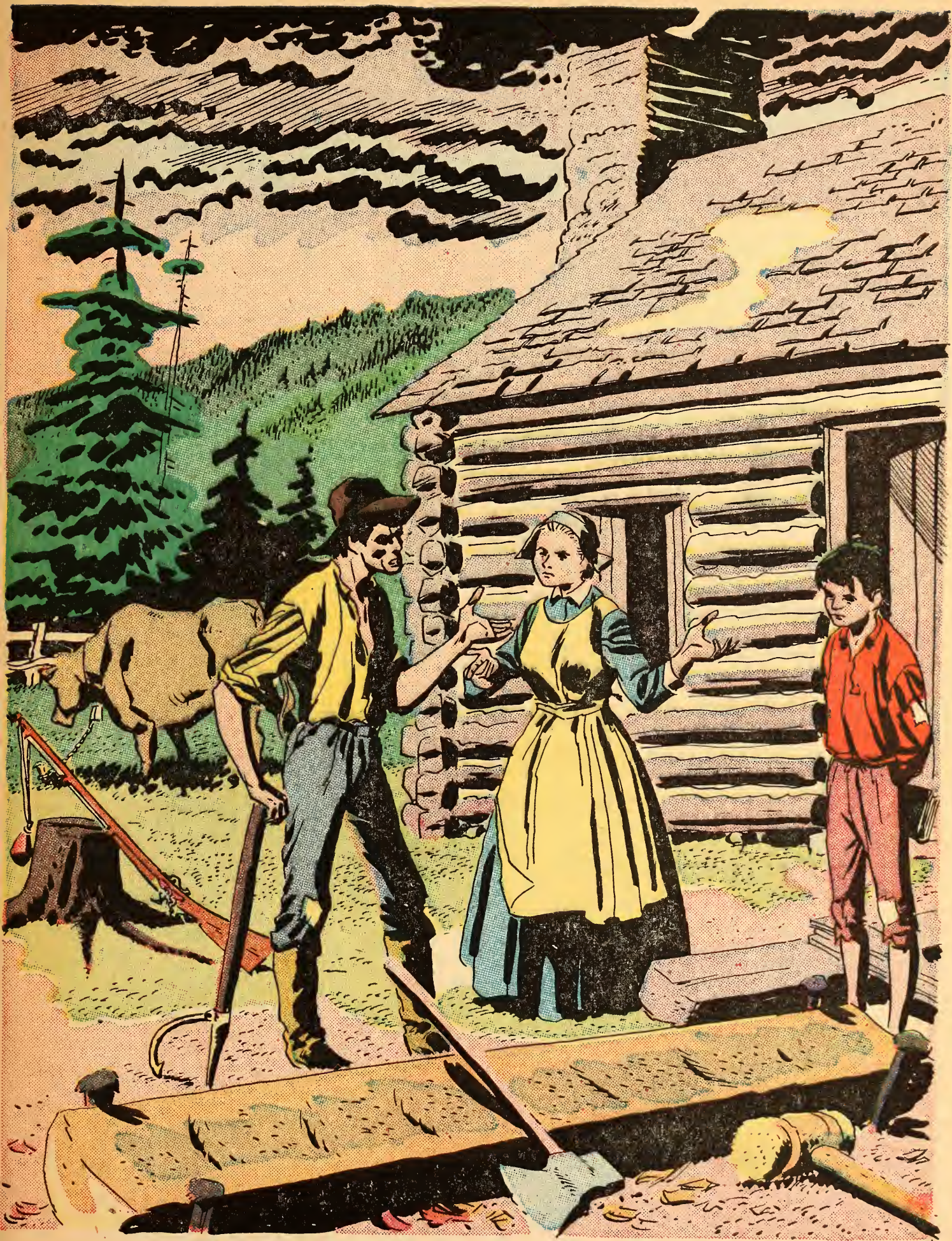
LONELINESS. — A winter of dismal loneliness descended upon the Lincoln family. The children missed their mother piteously. Their father was forced to continue hunting the forest for food, leaving them alone for long periods in the cabin in the wilderness. Nine-year-old Abe comforted his sister on the lonely nights.



NEW LOVE. — It was a happy day when their father brought home a new mother, a widow with a son and two daughters. The new Mrs. Lincoln was a strong capable woman and it was not long before she had the disorderly cabin shining again. Soon the place was once more filled with the wholesomeness of family love.



QUESTION. — When Abraham was 11 years old, a school was built near the Lincoln farm, and the question arose whether he should be allowed to attend. His father contended that a big, able-bodied boy like Abe was of more use on the farm than he could ever be at school. Mrs. Lincoln thought he should go to school.



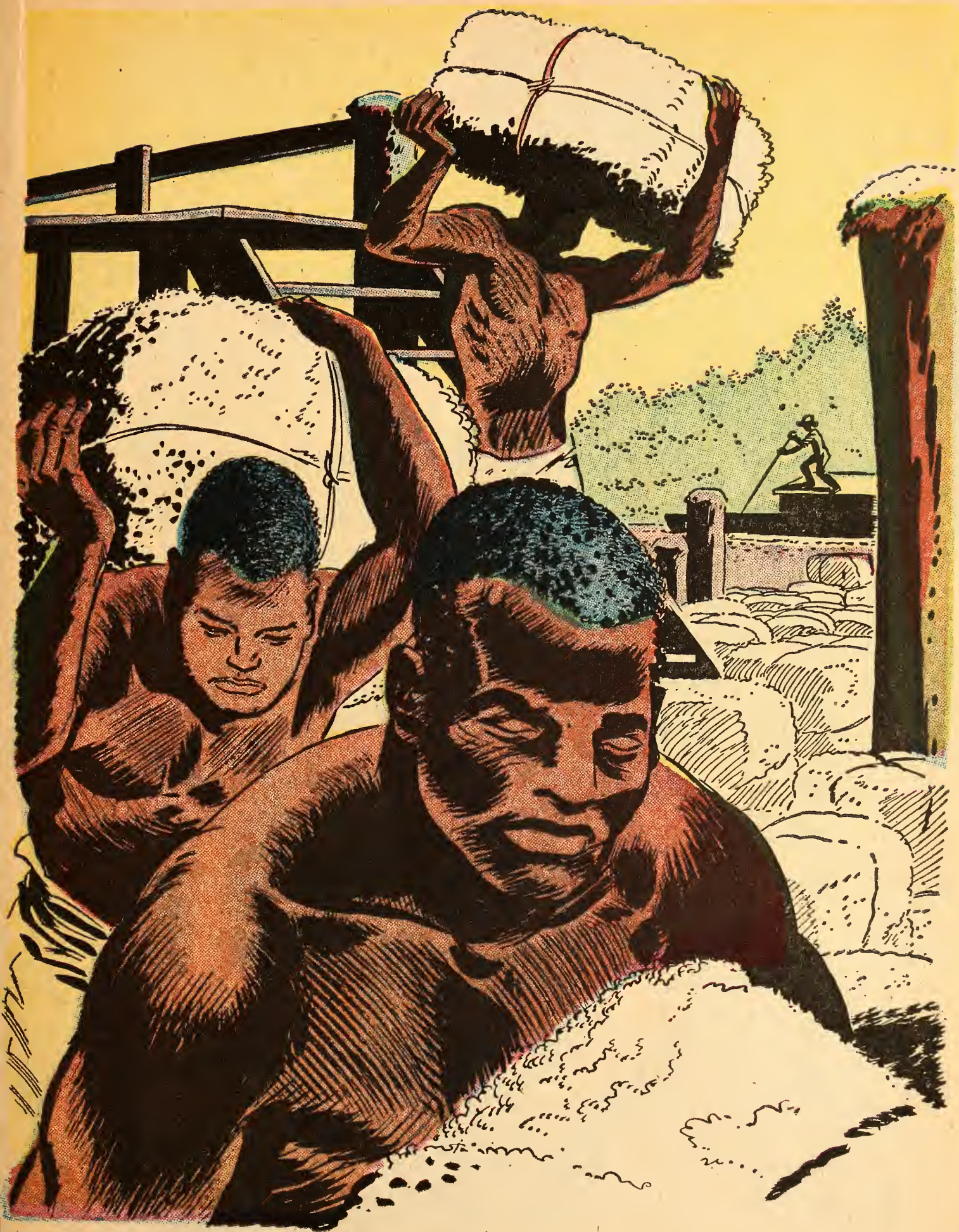
BOOKS.—Abe's stepmother persisted and he went to school. This was the beginning of his love for books. But his school life was irregular, for he was needed on the farm. He attended hardly more than a year, but he read everything he could find, whenever he could, walking miles to borrow or return a book.



STUDY.—After his day's work in the fields, Abe would read by the light of glowing coals in the cabin fireplace, writing compositions on a wooden shovel with bits of charcoal. When the shovel's surface was covered he would scrape off the first part of his writing to make room for the next.



SLAVERY.—At nineteen, Lincoln made a trip in a flatboat down the Mississippi River to New Orleans. Here he had his first contact with slavery. It repelled him. It was not long after this that the Lincoln family once more started on the westward trail. They moved to Illinois and again cleared land and built a cabin.



CLERK.—At 22 Lincoln became a clerk in an Illinois frontier store. His depth of thought and feeling, his honesty and gentle humor and kindness drew people to him. In addition to being a clever story teller and debater, he was an ardent student of government. Friends encouraged him to run for office in the Illinois State legislature.



LEGISLATURE.—Lincoln was 25 when he entered politics. He was a tall, gawky-looking fellow, wearing a wide-brimmed hat, a homespun shirt and a claw-hammer coat, and trousers that did not reach his shoes. Looking at him, strangers felt “this man is a clown.” But when he spoke, all consciousness of his uncouth appearance vanished. He was elected to the Illinois legislature in 1834.



LAW.—While in the State legislature, Lincoln managed to study law in the few spare moments when he was not serving the people. He was re-elected to the legislature three times. In 1836 he was admitted to law practice. Often he took farm produce when his clients were unable to pay his fees.



ROMANCE.—Lincoln had fallen in love with Ann Rutledge. But she died shortly before they were to be married. He was brokenhearted. To cover his hurt, he plunged deeper into work and serving others. Several years later, while still a struggling lawyer, he met Mary Todd. They were married in 1843. Lincoln's friends wanted him to run for the U. S. Congress.



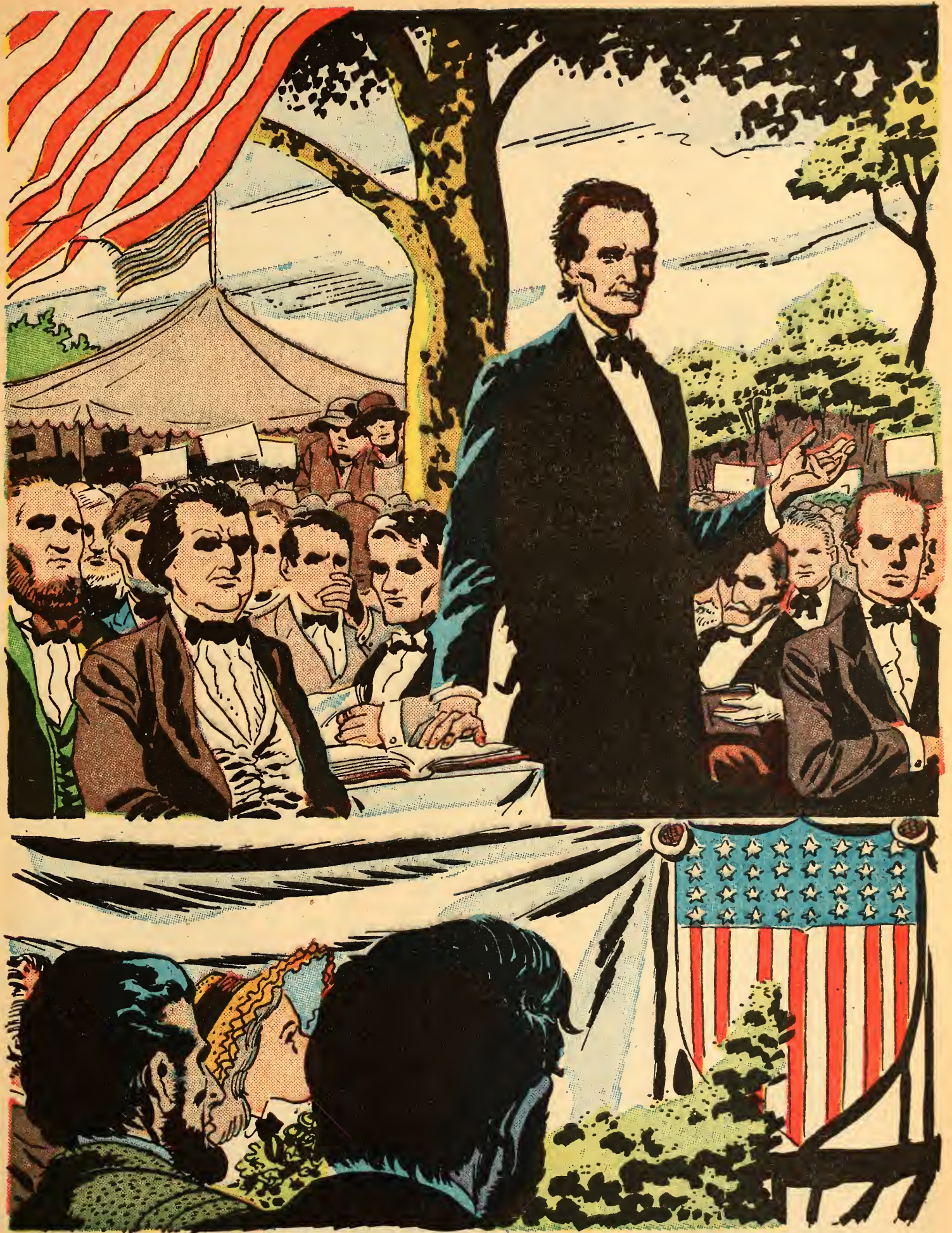
CONGRESS.—At the age of 37, Lincoln entered the national political scene and was elected for a term in the House of Representatives, the lower house of the Congress. His record in this office was one of unwavering opposition to slavery and its spreading to new States and territories.



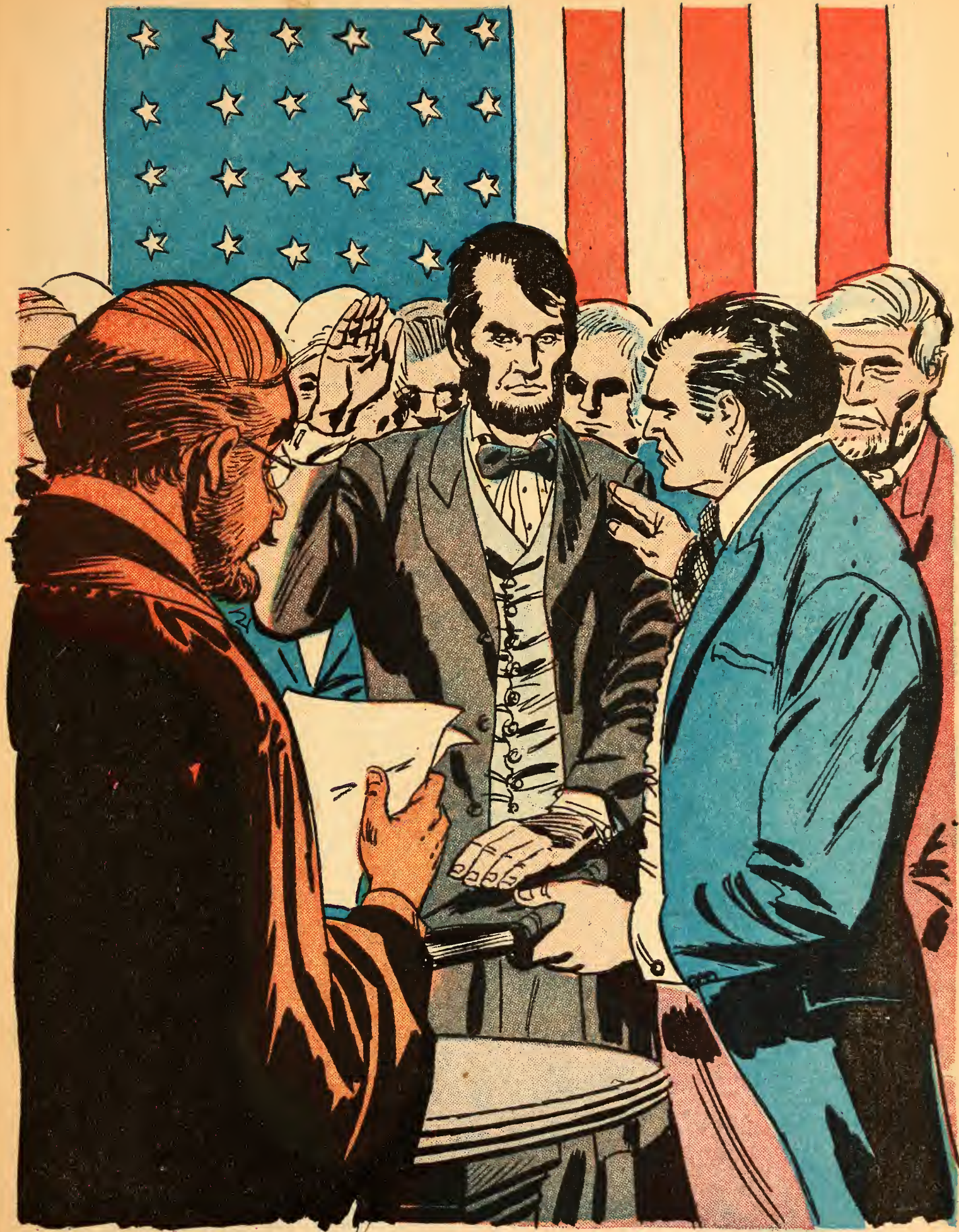
DIVIDED. — Negroes, who had been brought to America from Colonial days on, were used as slaves. Now the country was divided bitterly over the issue. Lincoln cried out against the practice of one man enslaving another in a free land. He believed and preached “it is the eternal and sacred right of every man to be free.”



DEBATES. — In 1854, when it appeared slavery would spread further in the U.S., Lincoln left his law practice and campaigned again for the U. S. Congress, this time as a Senator. His campaign developed into a series of debates with his opponent Stephen A. Douglas. Douglas was elected, but, though controversial, Lincoln had won a great national reputation.



PRESIDENT.—Undaunted, Lincoln continued his fight against slavery. And in 1860, amid bitter controversy, he was elected President of the United States. The country seethed with unrest. Upon his election, the long-expected division of the Nation over the slavery question occurred. Eleven southern States seceded from the Union, withdrawing their allegiance to the U. S. and forming the Confederate States of America.



WAR. — After much bickering, and despite Lincoln's efforts for unity and peace, the Confederates fired on a Union fort, plunging the young Nation into a bloody civil war (1861-65). Humanity-loving Lincoln was grief-stricken. Not only did the slavery he despised continue, but his fellow Americans were fighting each other, with the Union forces taking heavy losses.



PURPOSES. — Lincoln now had two purposes in life—reunite his torn Nation and free the slaves. As a humanitarian and commander in chief of the Union forces his task was complicated by bitter critics. Lincoln prayed deeply for peace, and clung steadfastly to his purposes. Then the war turned in the favor of the Unionists.



EMANCIPATION. — Finally, in 1863, in the midst of war, came one of history's great documents. Lincoln issued his Emancipation Proclamation, freeing the slaves. And with his heart bleeding for countrymen who were dying on battlefields that were once peaceful farms, he concentrated on bringing about peace and reuniting the Union.

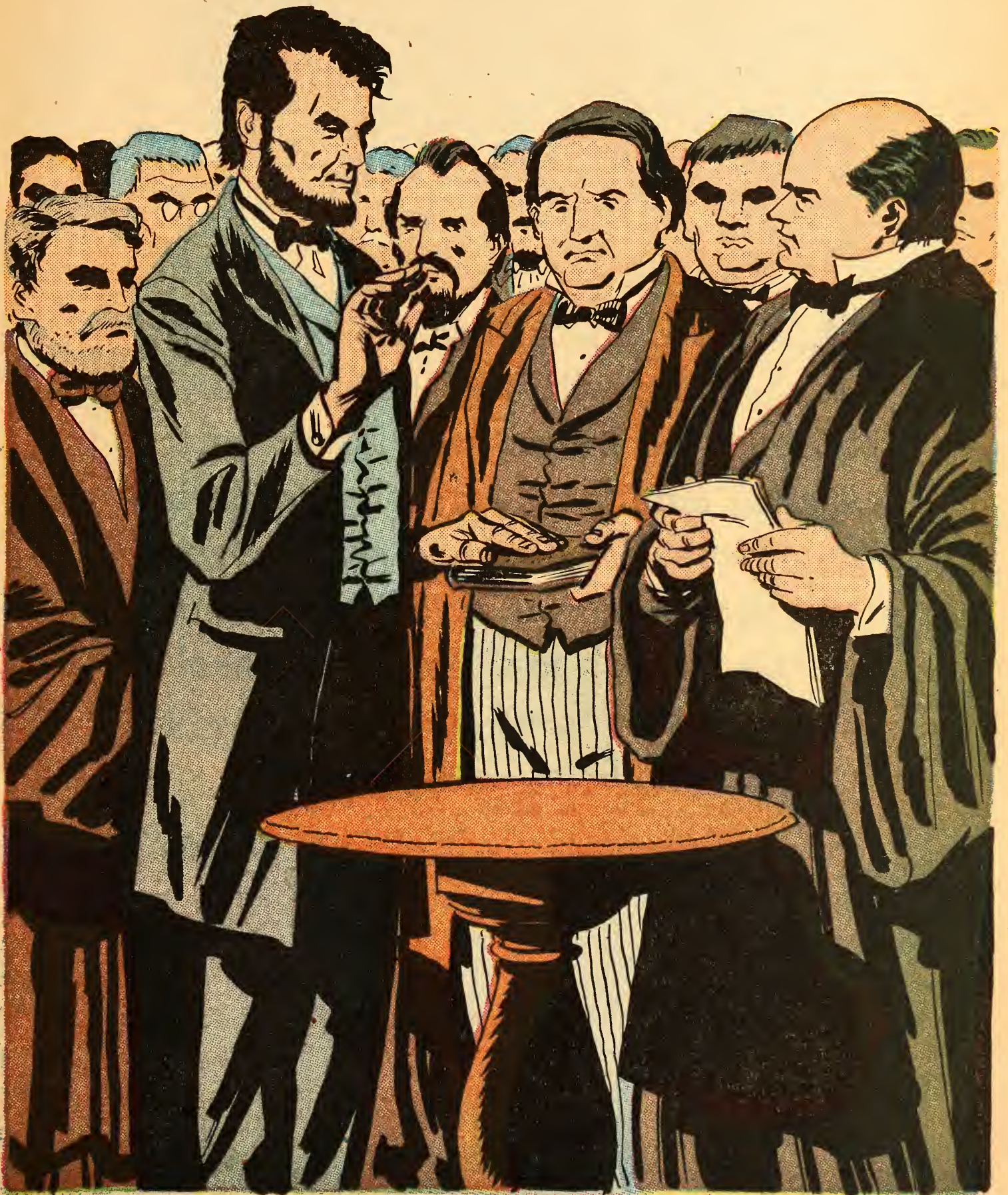


GETTYSBURG ADDRESS. —

Later in 1863, Lincoln delivered the speech that has become one of the most famous in history. Dedicating a battlefield cemetery at Gettysburg, he spoke the immortal words which so classically expresses the democratic ideal "... government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."



RE-ELECTION. — Though his popularity had suffered greatly in the early days of his first term, Lincoln was re-elected to the Presidency in 1864. Many blamed him for the rift between the States, and for the reverses suffered by the Union forces in the early phases of the war. But his Emancipation Proclamation, plus new Union victories, boosted his standing in the North.



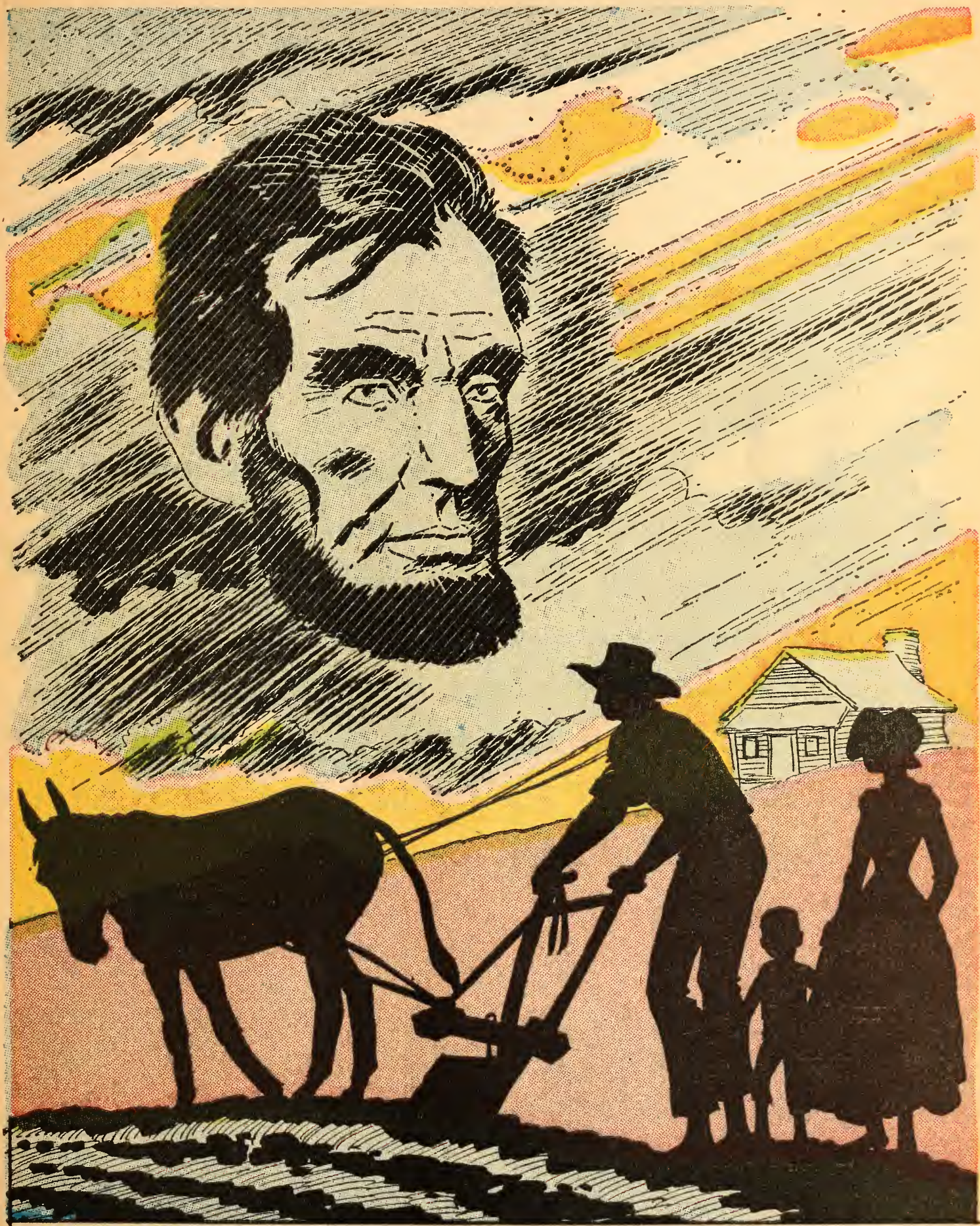
PEACE.—In 1865, the war finally ended with the Union forces victorious. No longer was family pitted against family. The tragedy had lasted four years. Freedom and peace reigned, and the Union was saved. The country went wild with joy. Prayers of thanksgiving were offered up in churches all over the land.



ASSASSINATION. — Lincoln did not live to see his plans for peace and unity realized. Just five days after he had laid down the burden of war, as he sat in a Washington theater, he was shot in the head by a Southern fanatic, actor John Wilkes Booth. Lincoln died a few hours later. His great work was done.

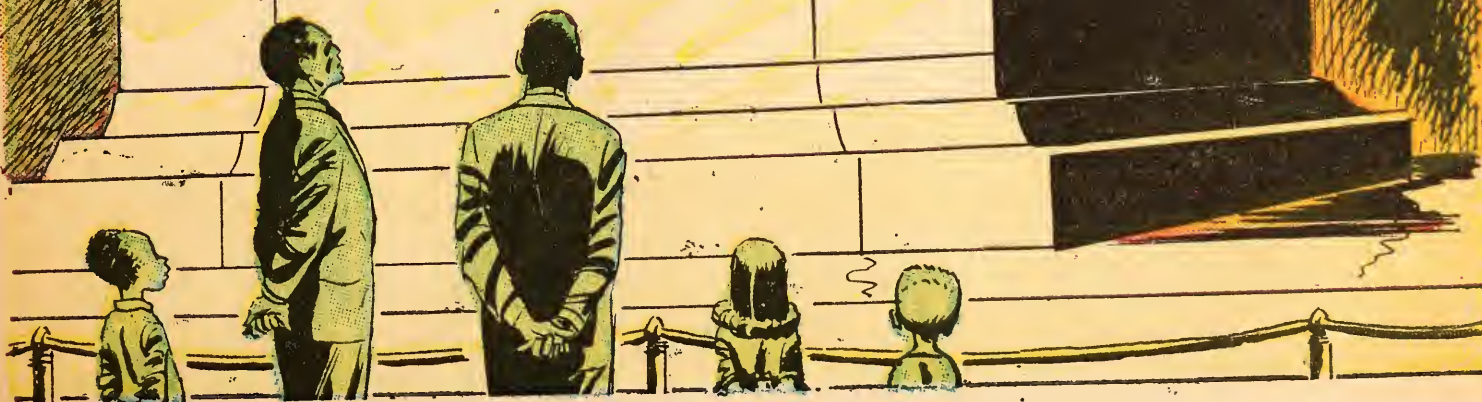


HUMANITY. — Lincoln's plans for peace bespoke his wisdom and humanity. He did not agree that the rebellious southern States should be punished for starting the war. He spoke these words: "With malice toward none . . . with charity for all . . . let us bind up the Nation's wounds."



HERITAGE.—To Americans and to the peoples of many nations, Abraham Lincoln is the beloved symbol of humanity and democracy. His faith in people, in freedom, in the goodness of man is the very core of America's creed. To study the life of Lincoln is to reach out and touch the soul of a nation.

IN THIS TEMPLE
AS IN THE HEARTS OF THE PEOPLE
FOR WHOM HE SAVED THE UNION
THE MEMORY OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN
IS ENSHRINED FOREVER





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