

# "ABRAHAM LINCOLN"

ADDRESS DELIVERED BY  
CLARK E. CARR *at* ALTON, ILLINOIS,  
*on the* SEMI-CENTENNIAL ANNIVER-  
SARY *of the* LINCOLN-DOUGLAS DE-  
BATE, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15, 1908.



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# LAST OF THE HISTORIC ANNIVERSARIES.

St. Louis, Oct. 15.—Thousands of St. Louisans are today participating in the celebration at Alton, Ill., of the semi-centennial anniversary of the last great history-making debates between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas, "the little giant," which took place at that town on October 15, 1858.

The semi-centennial program at Alton today completes the anniversary exercises. Many men of prominence took part in today's meeting at Alton.

Old citizens of this city, who attended the famous debate at Alton fifty years ago, recall many of the incidents that marked the verbal clash between the oratorical giants. Political excitement was at a white heat in Alton that day.

Alton had been the home of Elijah P. Lovejoy, editor of a free soil paper, who was shot and killed by a mob in that city after the marauders had demolished his printing office and thrown his presses into the Mississippi river.

A platform for the speakers had been erected days in advance on the east side of the City Hall, and seats for the women were fitted up in the second story of the structure, which still is the City Hall of Alton.

Lincoln and Douglas arrived in the city before daylight, coming down the river together from Quincy. Their rooms were thronged early in the day by admirers. Mr. Lincoln, according to the Alton "Courier" of that day, was received at the Franklin House and Judge Douglas at the Alton, but Mr. S. Pitts, whose father was then proprietor of the Franklin House, says that both speakers were guests of that hostelry.

Among the newspaper men present at the debate were:

Mr. Fashal of the St. Louis "Republican," Mr. Griscom of the St. Louis "Evening News," Messrs. R. R. Hitt and Horace White of the Chicago "Press and Tribune," Mr. Beaman of the Boston "Traveler," Mr. Dewey of the New York "Evening Post."

Mr. Hitt was Lincoln's private stenographer. He subsequently entered the diplomatic service and was for many years a representative in Con-

gress from Illinois. In 1900 he was endorsed by the Illinois Republican convention for the vice-presidency, but declined to be a candidate.

Of the notables present in Alton on the day of the debate, four became aspirants for the presidency: Lincoln and Douglas in 1860; Judge Trumbull in the Liberal Convention of 1873, but defeated by Horace Greeley, and Palmer as the leader of the gold Democrats in 1896.

## CLARK E. CARR, Orator.

Hon. Clark E. Carr delivered a notable oration. It was listened to with profound attention. The following is a full report of Mr. Carr's semi-centennial address. His subject was

## ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

"A house divided against itself cannot stand, I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free."

On the 16th of June, 1858, before the Republican State convention which nominated him for United States Senator as a candidate against Senator Douglas, whose second term was about to expire, Abraham Lincoln made this startling declaration.

In all the previous history of the government there is no record of any such sentiment having been proclaimed. Slavery had existed in the colonies long before the government was formed and was permitted in most of the States at the time of the adoption of the constitution. This system of labor was not suited to conditions in the northern States and was gradually discontinued, but on account of climatic conditions proved to be profitable in the South, and was gradually adopted. Finally all of the Northern States became free and all of the Southern States became slave States. The parallel which separated them was known as Mason and Dixon's line. The people of the Northern States gradually became more and more opposed to slavery until most of them came to look upon it with abhorrence, while to the people of the south it became their most important domestic institution upon which in a large degree the industrial and social fabric was build-

The development of the resources of that region, the cultivation of the land and domestic service, depended upon slave labor.

In the South where had grown up great patriarchial families, slavery came to be regarded as the natural and proper condition of the negro. The founders of the government regarded slavery as a great moral evil and only tolerated it because it existed and could not easily be done away with, but they set their faces against the African slave-trade and fixed a day after which it should no longer be permitted, and they dedicated all the territory we then possessed to freedom. England emancipated the slaves in all her colonies. After the other nations of the civilized world had come to regard slavery as a great moral evil, our Southern States still continued to regard it with favor, and beneficial to both the white and the black races.

#### **Conflict Between North and South.**

As the slave and free territory became separated and divided upon sectional lines, a conflict arose between the North and the South which, as new States were formed, gradually increased in intensity until the two sections were arrayed against each other. The conflict culminated in 1820 when Missouri sought admission into the Union as a slave State. The North earnestly protested against this, while the South as earnestly favored her admission. The conflict became bitter, but when the relations between the sections had become strained to the utmost, a compromise was effected by which the question was for the time amicably adjusted. It was upon the basis of mutual concession. By this compromise, Maine was admitted into the Union as a free State and Missouri as a slave State. But a very important feature of this compromise was that a certain portion of new territory should be forever dedicated to freedom—that in all of the region north of the parallel of thirty-six degrees and thirty minutes neither slavery nor involuntary servitude should ever be permitted. This was a solemn compact between the North and the South, known as the Missouri Compromise, which remained inviolate for a third of a century. Every statesman of the country so regarded it, as may be attested by their innumerable

declarations upon the subject. Senator Douglas himself, in speaking of this Missouri compromise line, declared that "it is canonized in the hearts of the American people and no ruthless hand will dare to disturb it." When the vast region to the west was acquired through the war with Mexico, he sought to extend that compromise line to the Pacific ocean.

#### **Conflict Hindered Development of the Country.**

But the conflict between the North and the South, while kept in abeyance, did not cease. It would not down. It was the skeleton in the closet of the Republic. It appeared in every legislative hall, in every counting house, on the bench, in the pulpit, and made cowards of us all. The jealousy and bitterness between the North and the South kept us from development, which could not be accomplished while it continued. Had it continued to this day we could not have built great highways to the Pacific ocean and have organized vast empires west of the Missouri. But for the jealousy of the South we would have acquired the vast region washed by the Pacific ocean clear up to Alaska, then known as the Oregon country. The jealousy of the North came very near preventing us from acquiring, through the war with Mexico, California, and the vast region lying between that great State and the western boundary of the Louisiana purchase. But for this we would never have entered into the Clayton-Bulwer treaty which has ever since embarrassed the government in its relations with the Central American States. Had this conflict continued we could never have built the Panama Canal and become a world power.

#### **Talleyrand, Macaulay and DeToqueville.**

In those days of doubt and uncertainty incident to the jealousy between the North and the South, Talleyrand, speaking of the great Republic, said, "It's a giant without bones;" Macaulay said, "It's all sail and no anchor! It cannot survive the century." DeToqueville said, "There is no central point of patriotism. If a State should attempt to secede there is no power that can prevent it. It would not be attempted."

The conflict again reached a most critical juncture when, in 1850, Cali-

California sought admission as a free State. The war with Mexico was precipitated in the interest of slavery. The South believed that, should we succeed in acquiring the northern territory of Mexico which included California, Arizona, and New Mexico, it must necessarily, from its geographical position, become slave territory; but the discovery of gold in California causing the migration to that territory of tens of thousands of hardy pioneers from the North who were themselves workmen, made slavery there impossible. California was admitted as a free State and Arizona and New Mexico were organized as territories, the South demanding and receiving as a salve for her disappointment the Fugitive Slave Law.

With the settlement and admission of California migration to Kansas and Nebraska began, and many hardy pioneers were making their way to those territories. The conflict upon the all-pervading question then again confronted Congress, where it was apparent that it must be fought out to the bitter end.

Senator Douglas was chairman of the committee on territories. In order to take the question out of Congress he introduced a bill providing that the great question should be left to the people of the territories themselves, "Neither to legislate slavery into a territory, nor to exclude it therefrom, but to leave the people perfectly free to form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, subject only to the Constitution of the United States."

#### **Repeal of the Missouri Compromise.**

Kansas and Nebraska were north of the Missouri Compromise line. In order to leave the people to decide the question for themselves that line must be done away with, and so Senator Douglas provided in his bill that it be abrogated.

Territory that had been forever dedicated to freedom was thus opened to slavery upon one important condition—that the people of the territory should want it. The South then looked upon Senator Douglas as their champion committed to making the territories slave States, and lauded him to the skies.

But the people of Kansas did not want slavery. Notwithstanding that a vast majority were opposed to having it, an attempt was made through

a constitution they had repudiated to force it upon them.

#### **Heroism of Douglas.**

Then Senator Douglas appeared more majestic than ever before. Then the South, then the whole world came to realize how great and strong and brave he was.

Proclaiming that, had the people voted in favor of slavery he would have just as earnestly fought to carry out their will, he fought the greatest forensic battle of his life to keep slavery from being forced upon them. Committed unqualifiedly to the South, the administration of his own party, which he had done more than any other to place in power, tried to coerce him, but he stood by the principle of popular sovereignty. Then the whole south turned against him. Every friend he had was removed from office. Every thing possible was done by the administration to defeat him for re-election, and keep him out of Congress. He did not falter. He continued the fight until the infamous slave constitution for Kansas was buried out of sight.

#### **Douglas the Foremost American Statesman.**

Senator Douglas had the broadest views of any American statesman then in public life.

John C. Calhoun died in 1850 and both Daniel Webster and Henry Clay died in 1852. From the time these intellectual giants passed away Stephen A. Douglas was the foremost American statesman. He was the ablest debater in the United States Senate. Neither in the Senate nor throughout the country had appeared any man who could cope with him.

He was then in the zenith of his fame. As has been said, his second term in the Senate was about to expire.

On account of his gallant fight against the Lecompton Constitution Horace Greeley recommended to the Republicans of Illinois that they should make no nomination of a Senator, but let Douglas be re-elected by a unanimous vote. This was the general consensus of opinion among Republicans in other States.

#### **Illinois Republicans Would Not Support Douglas.**

But Douglas had declared that, had the people of Kansas so desired, he would just as earnestly have championed a slave constitution. He had

said that he "cared not whether slavery was voted down or voted up." He had been the means of abrogating the Missouri Compromise line which in itself prohibited slavery in those territories.

Besides all this, the Republicans of Illinois had a man in whom they relied, a man who was opposed to any further extension of slavery, a man who did care whether slavery was voted down or voted up, a man who would never have consented to the repeal of the Missouri Compromise.

#### Lincoln's Power of Analysis.

It may be doubted whether any other man that ever lived has been endowed with such power of analysis as was Abraham Lincoln. He would take up a proposition or a problem and separate and divide it into its component parts, as a skilled chemist would separate the component parts of a solid or a fluid and weigh each individual substance and ascribe to each so much or so little importance as it merited. This thorough analysis was made with deliberation and he was able to come to such a conclusion as was scarcely ever wrong. Through this power of analysis he was able to see clearly what had been and to form an opinion of what would be, "looking before and after," as Shakespeare expresses it.

Mr. Lincoln's life had been one of comparative obscurity. He was ambitious, had been several terms a member of the Illinois legislature, was for one term a member of the lower house of Congress, with no possibility of reelection. His life had been full of disappointments. He was past fifty years old.

#### Outside of Illinois Mr. Lincoln Then Unknown.

Great as was the fame of Senator Douglas, Mr. Lincoln outside of the boundaries of Illinois was almost entirely unknown.

Throughout all those years of obscurity and disappointment, passed much of the time in poverty, Abraham Lincoln had been a student and an observer. While he was denied the privilege of taking a part in and directing public affairs, moved by the most intense feelings of patriotism, his interest in them was so profound and absorbing that every question was by him thoroughly considered and in-

vestigated. As the sequel proved, Mr. Lincoln was better able to canvass and consider problems of government than would have been possible had he, like the great senator, been a conspicuous actor in them.

#### Douglas Confident of an Easy Victory.

Fresh from the mighty contest in the Senate, a contest waged between the greatest men in public life, in which he had been the victor, with the prestige of having vindicated the principle of popular sovereignty which he had promulgated for the territories, Senator Douglas came home to Illinois. Tens of thousands of people turned out with glad acclaim to welcome him. Surely there would be no question as to his return to a deliberative body in which he had gained so many laurels. His vindication of the right of the people of Kansas to govern themselves must carry him triumphantly back to the Senate. Before he reached home he read the sentiment which we have heretofore quoted.

"A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe that this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free."

To this was added

"I do not expect the union to be dissolved—I do not expect the house to fall—but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing or all the other."

Although, as has been said, slavery had existed in the country almost from the time of the first settlement of the continent, no such sentiment had ever before been proclaimed. Through all the state papers of Madison and Hamilton and Jay, through all the voluminous writings of Jefferson, through all the opinions of Chief Justice Marshall, through all the addresses of Webster and Clay and Calhoun, one will look in vain for such a sentiment.

It remained for a comparatively unknown but profound lawyer, after a lifetime of observation and reflection, to come to this conclusion. When the proposition was once stated its correctness was so apparent that it became axiomatic. The sentiment that, "This government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free—it must become all one thing or all the other," sent a thrill through the hearts of men from Maine to California. As men reflected and recalled the mighty strug-

gles for supremacy through which the two sections had passed, that of 1820, that of 1830, that of 1850, and that which was then culminating, it became more and more apparent to them that this Illinois lawyer was right and that the only hope and the last hope of saving the nation was in its becoming all slave or all free.

#### Emerson and Draper.

Emerson said that "to believe your own thought, to believe what is true for you in your private heart, is true for all men, that is genius. Speak your latent conviction and it shall be the universal sense; for always the inmost becomes the outmost and our first thought is rendered back to us by the trumpets of the last judgment. Familiar as the voice of the mind is to each, the highest merit we ascribe to Moses, Plato, and Milton is that they set at nought books and traditions, and spoke not what men thought but what they thought." Abraham Lincoln believed his own thought and expressed it.

John W. Draper said, "An idea may possess supreme political influence. A sentiment expressed by a few words may break up nationalities venerable for their antiquity, rearrange races of men, and revolutionize the world."

In the annals of history very few examples can be found of "a sentiment expressed by a few words," that "possessed such supreme political influence" as that we have quoted from Abraham Lincoln.

Before proclaiming the doctrine Mr. Lincoln consulted personal friends. They advised him against publishing it. He again reflected, but the more he considered it the more he was satisfied that he was right, and as was always the case with him, when convinced that a thing was true and ought to be proclaimed, he was inexorable. He always sought the opinions of others and frequently acted upon the judgment of friends, was frequently slow in forming his opinion, but after patiently hearing others and looking at all sides of a question he acted upon his own judgment, and when a conclusion was reached no power could restrain him from so acting.

After stating this proposition and as corollary to it, Mr. Lincoln proceeded to argue that a most gigantic combination had been formed to make the country "all slave"—that every

department, legislative, and judicial was engaged in the conspiracy.

#### Lincoln Dictated the Issue of the Campaign.

The great senator came home to enter upon his campaign with perfect confidence that, by his splendid achievement in overwhelming the administration through defeating the Le-compton constitution he had dictated the issues upon which his campaign for re-election was to be fought. He found that this Springfield lawyer had already dictated the issue, and placed him from that day forward upon the defensive.

In his great speech at Chicago, where tens of thousands turned out to welcome him, Senator Douglas was confronted with this sentiment. It had not then reached the ear of the general public. Uttered by one who was scarcely known beyond the limits of Illinois, it had attracted little attention throughout the country at large. But that lawyer was the opposing candidate for the place held by the great senator, and what he said could not be ignored.

Senator Douglas read the sentiment to his audience and tried to answer it. Every word he uttered was read everywhere, and when he quoted it, it arrested the attention of the whole country. Then men in other States began to ask, "Who is this man Lincoln?" "Why have we not heard from him before?"

#### Senator Vainly Tried to Answer Mr. Lincoln's Declaration.

The senator devoted much of that great Chicago address to an attempt to refute the declaration of his adversary. He spoke again at Bloomington before a vast assemblage, again at Springfield, and from day to day throughout the State. In every speech he made he quoted this sentiment and vainly tried to answer it.

#### Lincoln Challenges Douglas to Joint Debates.

Finally Mr. Lincoln challenged the senator to joint debate. There were seven of these joint debates when these two great men met face to face. They were held successively at Ottawa, Freeport, Jonesboro, Charleston, Galesburg, Quincy, and here at Alton, this being the last.

In everyone of those debates Senator Douglas quoted this sentiment of

Abraham Lincoln and tried to answer it. He opened his address in the final debate here at Alton by quoting it and trying to answer it. The more he struggled to refute it the more conclusive did its truth appear. Before the sentiment that, "This government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free, it must become all one thing or all the other," this "idea that possessed supreme political power" this "sentiment expressed by a few words," went down forever all the machinations of the politicians, all the compromises, all the time servers, whose only stock in trade had been to bring the country to a crisis and finally a compromise or some other scheme to save the Union. And, although temporarily successful, the great senator himself was finally engulfed in the maelstrom of public opinion which it aroused.

Thoughtful and wise as he was, there can be no doubt but, notwithstanding the government was then entirely in control of the slave power, Mr. Lincoln had become convinced that if the question were brought to such a direct issue as that the very existence of the government depended upon its becoming "all one thing or all the other," it must become "all free," and that this prompted him to proclaim the sentiment.

Mr. Lincoln clearly discerned the signs of the times. He saw that the spirit of the age was tending toward freedom, against which a sordid and venal lust for gain was contending, and that if his countrymen could be awakened to the consciousness that the government was in peril, and that the only possible hope of its being able to "endure permanently," was in making it "all one thing or all the other" it would become "all free," and that if they should be convinced that the existence of the government depended upon the policy to be adopted in that crisis, there would be no more slave States. With this view of the matter the mere question of the status of one territory upon which Senator Douglas so ably contended sank into insignificance.

#### Lincoln's Modesty.

There is nothing more remarkable in the great debates than the modesty with which Mr. Lincoln entered into them.

We find him at the opening declar-

ing: "Senator Douglas wants to keep me down. Put me down, I should not say, for I have never been up."

In speaking of when he and Douglas first met, he said, "We were both young then—he a trifle younger than I. Even then we were both ambitious—I perhaps as much as he. With me the race of ambition has been a failure—a flat failure; with him it has been one of splendid success. His name fills the nation and is not unknown in foreign lands. I affect no contempt for the high eminence he has reached. . . . I would rather stand on that eminence than wear the richest crown that ever pressed a monarch's brow."

#### Douglas Attempts to "Damn Lincoln With Faint Praise."

While Senator Douglas in conversation expressed the highest appreciation of Mr. Lincoln's character and abilities, he in his speeches sought to "damn him with faint praise." We find him speaking of Mr. Lincoln as "a quiet, amiable, intelligent gentleman". Telling of how as a young man he was "then just as good at telling an anecdote as now. He could beat any of the boys wrestling or running a foot race, in pitching quoits or tossing a copper; could ruin more liquor than all the boys of the town together; and the dignity and impartiality with which he presided at a horse race or fist fight excited the admiration and won the praise of everybody that was present and participated. I sympathized with him because he was struggling with difficulties and so was I. Mr. Lincoln worked with me in the legislature of 1836, when we both retired, and he subsided, or became submerged, and he was lost sight of as a public man for some years."

Modest and self-deprecating as he was, it must not be inferred that Mr. Lincoln hesitated in assailing the public acts and utterances of Senator Douglas and in showing what would be their effects, or in calling him to account for them.

#### Example of Lincoln's Style of Argument.

In his Springfield speech from which we have quoted Mr. Lincoln argued that there was a combination in which Senator Douglas was one of the chief actors to make the country "all



slave," in which the then late President Franklin Pierce in his last message to Congress, the President at that time, Mr. Buchanan, in his zeal upon the Kansas question, the chief justice of the United States, Judge Roger B. Taney, in his Dred Scott decision, which Douglas indorsed, and Senator Douglas himself in his Nebraska bill were component parts. After arguing that these measures so entered into would if carried into effect result in nationalizing slavery, he said:

"We cannot absolutely know that all of these exact adaptations are the result of preconcert. 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—Stephen, Franklin, Roger, and James, for instance—and when we see these timbers jointed together and see them exactly make the frame of a house or a mill, all the tenons and mortices exactly fitting, and all the lengths and proportions of the different pieces exactly adapted to their respective places—and not a piece too many or too few—not omitting even the scaffolding—or, if a single piece be lacking, we see the place in the frame exactly fitted and prepared yet to bring such piece in—in such a case, we find it impossible not to believe that Stephen, Franklin, Roger, and James all understood one another from the beginning, and that all worked upon a common plan or draft drawn up before the first blow was struck."

By the names given, Mr. Lincoln clearly indicated Stephen A. Douglas, Franklin Pierce, Roger B. Taney, and James Buchanan.

In the time allotted it is impossible to quote in full the argument made to prove how perfectly all the component parts of the combination to make the country all slave were fitted to each other, but the statement of the proposition is as perfect as can be found in Euclid.

Mr. Lincoln showed that under the Dred Scott decision which Senator Douglas approved, slavery was already lawful in all the territories, and that by going one step more the court could make it lawful in all the States. His argument was clear and convincing and conclusive that under the Dred Scott decision, so far as the naked question of law was concerned, slavery was already legalized in all the

territories, and that as Mr. Douglas indorsed the Dred Scott decision he was committed to this proposition. The senator was not slow to realize that unless this was answered in some way the public would become convinced that, notwithstanding the defeat of the Le-compton constitution, slavery already existed and must continue to exist in Kansas and that all his opposition to that constitution was of no avail.

#### **Douglas Proclaims at Bloomington the Doctrine of "Unfriendly Legislation" and "Police Regulation."**

Senator Douglas was not slow to realize that he was placed in an awkward position, and at Bloomington a few days later, Mr. Lincoln being present, sought to extricate himself from the dilemma by showing that slavery could not, notwithstanding the decision of the Supreme court, "exist one day or one hour in any territory against the unfriendly legislation of an unfriendly people. I care not how the Dred Scott decision may have settled the abstract question. If the people of a territory want slavery, they will encourage it by passing affirmatory laws and the necessary police regulations, patrol laws, and slave code; if they do not want it they will withhold that legislation, and by withholding it, slavery is as dead as if it was prohibited by a constitution prohibition."

Often and many times it has been stated that Senator Douglas was "driven into a corner" at Freeport by Mr. Lincoln and forced to make this declaration notwithstanding the fact that six weeks before the Freeport debate at Bloomington he voluntarily made it. This is proof of how sometimes "the truth of history" is misleading. He made a similar declaration at Springfield on the next day after speaking at Bloomington, which was published at the time in the Illinois "State Register."

#### **Real Issues of the Campaign.**

Mr. Lincoln frequently declared that the sentiment in the Declaration of Independence, "All men are created equal," applied to the negro as well as to the white man. Senator Douglas denied this and declared that because Mr. Lincoln so believed he wanted to go into the South and set the slaves free—that he favored negro equality and wanted to have the negroes vote

and hold office and intermarry with the whites. Lincoln showed the absurdity of all this, of, as he expressed it, the absurdity of "that false logic which assumed that because he did not want a black woman for a slave, he did want her for a wife."

Judge Douglas frequently asserted that ours is a "white's man's government made for white men and their posterity" and that the negro had no part nor lot in it, and he sought to commit Mr. Lincoln to the doctrine of the extreme abolitionists—of interfering with slavery in the States.

In all of the debates and in all of his speeches Mr. Lincoln, while expressing his hatred of slavery, was as positive that we should not interfere with it in the States. So strictly did he always adhere to the constitution that when he issued the Emancipation Proclamation he excepted from its operation all the territory whose people were not in rebellion. Mr. Lincoln always believed and asserted that the Fugitive Slave law was constitutional and should be enforced.

#### **Intense Interest in the Great Debates.**

Never in Illinois was there such interest in public meetings as in those when Lincoln and Douglas met face to face. There was plenty of time to give notice, and all the people within a radius of fifty miles of the places where each debate was held were aroused. The fact that the masses of both political parties assembled insured a vast crowd. Organizations were made by both parties at every town and hamlet to get up processions and insure the largest possible attendance. Some of their processions were more than a mile long. All the debates were held in the open air.

#### **The Great Crowds and the Appearance of the Champions.**

It was a curious sight to look upon, when the vast crowd of earnest men of both parties were wedged in together before the grand stand. There was the usual jostling and crowding to get good places. There was taunting and jeering between the representatives of both parties, but very few breaches of the peace. When the speaking began there was almost perfect order. If the pent-up feelings of either party caused an angry demonstration, their representative on the platform would rise and beg his

friends to desist. When they applauded a speaker he would beg them to cease, as it would be taken out of his time.

It was striking to see the two champions ascend the platform, usually together, Lincoln so tall and angular, and Douglas so short and sturdy. There was a presiding officer who introduced the speaker, but the meeting was to a great degree controlled by the timekeepers, who were made up from both parties.

#### **The Timekeepers.**

These timekeepers were inexorable. The speakers alternated in opening and closing at the different places. At the moment the time for the opening arrived the first speaker must begin. A speaker was given an hour for his opening, then his competitor had an hour and a half and he who opened was given half an hour to close. Time was called at the moment when the speaker was to conclude, and he could only finish the sentence he was upon, and was not permitted to begin upon another.

#### **Douglas as He Appeared on the Platform.**

In speaking Douglas stood firm upon his feet, moving very little. He was, although so short, dignified and stately. Small as he was, he seemed sometimes majestic. Had he been so large in stature, his figure would have been as imposing as was that of Webster. One writer in describing him has said that the expression of his face suggested the infinite.

His voice was a deep bass, and had a great carrying power, by which he was able to reach a vast multitude. Each word, distinctly uttered, was projected out from his deep chest as if fired from a Columbiad. He was positive, bold and aggressive, and assertive.

#### **Douglas Asserted.**

Lincoln declared that the government must become all free or all slave; therefore, Lincoln was sectional and favored a war of extermination. He expected that the government would become all one thing or all the other; therefore, he insisted upon uniformity, that the same laws and conditions should rule in every State; therefore, he was for the overthrowing of State rights, and of mak-

ing every community conform to the customs of every other community! Lincoln refused to obey the mandate of the Supreme Court in the Dred Scott case, therefore, Lincoln sought to bring the people into a feeling of contempt for the courts and to break down our system of jurisprudence. Lincoln believed that the sentiment "all men are created equal" was intended to apply to the negro; therefore, Lincoln favored negroes above white men, favored amalgamation and miscegenation with the negro.

#### Lincoln as He Appeared.

Lincoln was angular and raw-boned, his limbs long. He was gaunt of body, his neck long, his cheek-bones high, his features irregular, his arching eyebrows overshadowing. He was regarded as a very homely man, but upon occasions when he arose to the full apprehension of a subject in which he was interested all the rugged inequalities of his frame and features combined to make his appearance majestic and even sublime.

His voice was keyed upon rather a high pitch, clear but not shrill, and his ringing tones reached even more than did the deeper notes of Douglas.

#### Lincoln Reasoned and Appealed.

He was, until he warmed into his subject, apologetic. He seemed frequently to have misgivings as to whether he was a proper man to be pitted against the distinguished senator, and that he could only bring himself to attempt to answer him by his appreciation of the importance of the questions involved. His whole manner indicated candor and sincerity. He appealed to his hearers, asking them questions and apparently taking them into his confidence, seeming to consult and advise with them, all the time giving the impression that he had doubts as to whether, after all, the senator was not right, and if upon discussing the question under consideration it should appear that he himself was in the wrong he would be the first to acknowledge it. He would, as the lawyers say, file a demurrer, the best definition of which is: "What of it?"—that is, suppose that this declaration of the senator is true, what does it all amount to? And then he would reason it out and show how little there was in it.

Every assertion of Senator Douglas was tested in the crucible of the analy-

sis of Mr. Lincoln, and when it came out it was estimated at precisely what it was worth and no more.

#### No Ornaments of Rhetoric.

Curiously, one will look in vain through all the debates for a high-sounding period. There were no ornaments of rhetoric, no passages that are sought for repetition or declamation. In these regards those speeches bear no comparison with those of Burke or Pitt or Fox or Brougham, or with those of Webster and Everett and Phillips and Ingersoll. But, in close reasoning, in the logic that leads to irresistible conclusions, the speeches of Lincoln and Douglas surpass any that have ever been promulgated.

#### Debates Finally Attracted Attention and Were Read from Ocean to Ocean.

When the debates were first entered upon, men outside of Illinois asked, "Who is this man Lincoln?" and marveled that he could have the temerity to attempt to meet such a colossal character as the great Senator. At first his speeches were only published in the Illinois papers. As the debates went on the nation became intensely interested, and the speeches of both were telegraphed to all the leading journals of the country and were taken up with avidity and read from ocean to ocean. In every house and store and shop and mill, men were found reading and discussing them.

"Did you see how Lincoln turned the tables on 'the Little Giant' with the Dred Scott decision?" asked one. "Read it! Read it aloud!" was the response. "See how Douglas answered him," cried another, and it was read. "The 'Little Giant' is too much for your Springfield lawyer," said one. "The 'Little Giant' has found his match," another responded. "It's all very well for Lincoln to talk his abolition sentiments in Northern Illinois," said the Douglas men, after the Ottawa and Freeport debates. "You just wait until the 'Little Giant' trots him down into Egypt and you'll laugh out of the other side of your mouth."

#### Douglas Re-Elected to the Senate.

The interest in the discussions became so great that men forgot what position the two champions were contending for. The immediate result of the campaign was that, while Lincoln carried the State on the popular vote

Douglas carried a majority of the legislature. Douglas was elected and, as he had done so many times before, Mr. Lincoln went back to his law office.

It is curious that midway between the organization of the Republican party and its final triumph, the two ablest men in the country should have before the whole people discussed the issues upon which their weal or woe depended.

From the first Mr. Lincoln seemed to have a higher conception of the contest than that it merely related to the disposition of the office for which each contended. With him it was a contest between civilizations. To him the great question of human rights was supreme. While Senator Douglas stated the issue to be simply whether the people of the territories should or should not have the right of self government, Mr. Lincoln declared that the issue was "Whether slavery was wrong, and should not, therefore, be extended into new territory, or whether it was not wrong."

While he could not be driven into a position that would lead to a violation of the constitution, Mr. Lincoln sought to so arouse the public mind to the enormity of human slavery as to confine it to the States where it existed, and by so doing finally put an end to it. To use his own language, "Place it where the public mind would rest in the belief of its ultimate extinction."

After he had to such a degree ar-

rested attention that what he said was read throughout the land with just as much earnestness and avidity as the utterances of the great senator, the positions and arguments of each had as great influence beyond the limits of Illinois and throughout the Union as in our own State.

### Lincoln Finally Triumphed.

Two years later, in 1860, the final verdict was rendered by the American people at the polls. It was not until then that the final results of the Lincoln-Douglas debates appeared. Mr. Lincoln himself and Senator Douglas were the leading candidates for the presidency. The American people decided that there should be no more slave States—that slavery should be placed where the "public mind should rest in the belief of its ultimate extinction" and thus finally make the government "all free," and elected the ablest advocate of those principles to the chief executive office to force them. This was Mr. Lincoln's final triumph in the great debates.

### Grandeur of the Great Debates.

It may be said of the Lincoln-Douglas debates that the ablest men in the nation were the champions, that the great prairies were the audience room, that the whole American people was the audience, that the constitution of the United States was the platform, and that, upon the elucidation and final solution of the problems involved, depended the fate of a continent.