

Abraham Lincoln
by friend and foe



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Lincoln
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ABRAHAM LINCOLN

From a pen portrait by Wyatt Eaton
and engraved by Timothy Cole
for the *Century Magazine* in 1877

Lincoln

by Friend and Foe

NOAH BROOKS
Democratic Manual of 1864

Edited by Robert J. Cole

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To my Father and Mother

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Lincoln, by Friend and Foe

A FRIEND—NOAH BROOKS

I.

THE biography of Abraham Lincoln is scattered through some thousands of books, pamphlets and magazine articles. No single work affords a complete view of the subject. Perhaps none could. But if I were asked, after years of reading in this field, to name the most helpful testimony by a single witness, I should name that of Noah Brooks.

The paper selected for this volume was written for Harper's Magazine in 1865, while the facts were fresh in the author's mind. He wrote other articles, later, for Scribner's and a series for the Century, which was afterwards published in book form. All these are good, far more spirited and full of anecdote than his formal life of Lincoln.

Brooks himself wrote me, years ago, that the *Century* Papers, republished in the volume "Washington in Lincoln's Time," were the fullest record of his days with the President. From them I have quoted the vital passage relating to the composition of the Gettysburg address.

But the single article in Harper's will always have a unique place in Lincoln material. It has been often quoted, but never, so far as I know, reprinted completely in any book.

Noah Brooks went from Maine to Illinois, where he met Lincoln in the Fifties. Then he moved west to Kansas and finally to California. There he established a paper in Marysville and when the war broke out he was sent to Washington as correspondent of the *Sacramento Union*. Lincoln was quick to renew the old acquaintance and Brooks had a better right than most men to claim that he knew Lincoln. My father had met Brooks in Marysville and he used to say to me as we talked of Civil War days:

"Noah Brooks was one of the few men

about the President who never asked anything for himself, and Lincoln rewarded him by giving the best gift he had to offer—his friendship.”

They met almost daily, at the White House, about the offices of the government departments, on a river trip. I think one of the reasons underlying their intimacy was the fact that Brooks had lost his wife and child, as Lincoln had lost his sweetheart, Ann Rutledge. Brooks never refers to this.

If Lincoln had lived he would have appointed his friend private secretary, to replace Nicolay. After the war Brooks went to the *New York Tribune*. John Hay was on the staff during that period. One day the author of “Little Breeches” noticed his comrade hurrying through the room with an armful of volumes from the library. Instantly he cried,

“‘Books in the running Brooks!’”

I think that deserves to go down in history along with Charles Lamb’s quotation of Campbell’s line when somebody asked who was falling downstairs—

“ ‘ ’Tis I ser, rolling rapidly! ’ ”

It was Brooks who saw, with Ike Bromley, the street-car placard, which the two newspaper men reduced to verse—almost no change was needed.

“Punch, boys, punch with care!
Punch in the presence of the pass-
ingare,
A blue trip slip for an eight-cent fare,
A buff trip slip for a six-cent fare,
A pink trip slip for a three-cent fare,
All in the presence of the passingare.”

Mark Twain wrote a successful piece about it, called “A Literary Nightmare.” But Brooks and Bromley were the ones who started that popular jingle. Is it any wonder that the fun-loving Lincoln enjoyed the company of one who was both intelligent enough to see clearly the great issues of the war and also capable of relaxing into such boyish foolery?

II.

THE GETTYSBURG ADDRESS

Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth upon this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But in a larger sense we 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 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, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

It has often been stated that Lincoln composed the Gettysburg address on the train as he was going to the ceremony. Mrs. Andrews in her beautiful story, "The Perfect Tribute," accepts this detail. But the testimony of Noah Brooks is clear as to an earlier origin. In his "Washington in Lincoln's Time," Brooks declares:

“One November day—it chanced to be the Sunday before the dedication of the National Cemetery at Gettysburg—I had an appointment to go with the President to Gardner, the photographer, on Seventh Street, to fulfill a long-standing engagement. Mr. Lincoln carefully explained that he could not go on any other day without interfering with the public business and the photographer’s business, to say nothing of his liability to be hindered by curiosity seekers “and other seekers” on the way thither. Just as we were going down the stairs of the White House, the President suddenly remembered that he wanted a paper, and after hurrying back to his office, soon rejoined me with a long envelope in his hand. When we were fairly started, he said that the envelope held an advance copy of Edward Everett’s address to be delivered at the Gettysburg dedication on the following Tuesday. Drawing it out, I saw that it was a one-page supplement to a Boston paper, and that Mr. Everett’s address nearly covered both sides of the sheet. The President expressed his ad-

miration for the thoughtfulness of the Boston orator, who had sent this copy of his address in order that Mr. Lincoln might not traverse the same lines that the chosen speaker of the great occasion might have laid out for himself. When I exclaimed at its length, the President laughed and quoted the line,

“‘Solid men of Boston, make no long orations,’ which he said he had met somewhere in a speech by Daniel Webster. He said that there was no danger that he should get upon the lines of Mr. Everett’s oration, for what he had ready to say was very short, or, as he emphatically expressed it, ‘short, short, short.’ In reply to a question as to the speech having been written, he said that it was written, ‘but not finished.’ He had brought the paper with him, he explained, hoping that a few minutes of leisure while waiting for the movements of the photographer and his processes would give him a chance to look over the speech. But we did not have to wait long between sittings, and the President, having taken out the envelope and laid it

on the little table at his elbow, became so engaged in talk that he failed to open it while we were at the studio. A disaster overtook the negative of that photograph, and after a very few prints had been made from it no more were possible. In the copy which the President gave me, the envelope containing Mr. Everett's oration is seen on the table by the side of the sitter."

This is too circumstantial to be doubted. The evident fact is this: Lincoln thought out and probably made some note of his Gettysburg address the week before it was delivered. On the train he copied or wrote from memory the matter already composed, making some additions or changes, it may be, as he did so.

This correction of a popular error is not so unimportant as it may appear. For the characteristic Lincoln method was to prepare in advance even so brief an address as the dedication. Brooks' testimony proves that the most famous of the war President's public utterances was carefully planned days before the

event and not left, as so many have assumed, to the chances of a railroad journey.

A. H. Nickerson, who was wounded near the spot where Lincoln delivered his Gettysburg address, recovered in time to be present on that occasion. In an article printed in Scribner's magazine he pays tribute to the finished and impressive oration of Edward Everett and then goes on:

"It seemed as though the subject had been exhausted and there was absolutely nothing more to be said. When, therefore, Mr. Lincoln arose in obedience to the announcement that the President would now pronounce the dedication, every one felt sorry for him. To say that Mr. Lincoln arose can only be appreciated by those who have been near him when he got up to speak. But he had never before seemed to me to be as tall as he did on this occasion. He appeared to continue to arise, as it were, until when he finally stood up I thought he was the tallest and most awkward man I had ever seen."

“I think he had a card or a strip of paper the size of a visiting card in his hand. He did not, however, look at or refer to it in any way. Others have differed as to the immediate effect of his remarks. In this, also, I give the impressions received at the time, which were also identical with those of all with whom I spoke. I thought then and still think it was the shortest, grandest, speech, oration, sermon, or what you please to call it, to which I ever listened. It was the whole matter in a nutshell, delivered distinctly and impressively, so that all in that vast concourse could hear him. My own emotions may perhaps be imagined when it is remembered that he was facing the spot where only a short time before we had had our death grapple with Pickett’s men, and he stood almost immediately over the place where I had lain and seen my comrades torn in fragments by the enemy’s cannon-balls.

“Think, if you please, how these words fell upon my ears: ‘we are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that

field as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But in a larger sense we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our 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.'

"If at that moment the Supreme Being had appeared with an offer to undo my past life; give back to me a sound body, free from the remembrance even of sufferings past, and the imminence of those that must necessarily embitter all the years to come, I should have indignantly spurned the offer, such was the effect upon me of this immortal 'dedication.'"

ABRAHAM LINCOLN IN 1865

BY NOAH BROOKS

IT IS natural that friends should tenderly and frequently talk of the loved and lost, descanting upon their virtues, narrating the little incidents of a life ended, and dwelling with minute particularity upon traits of character which, under other circumstances, might have remained unnoted and be forgotten, but are invested now with a mournful interest which fixes them in the memory. This, and the general desire to know more of the man ABRAHAM LINCOLN, is the only excuse offered for the following simple sketch of some parts of the character of our beloved Chief Magistrate, now passed from earth.

All persons agree that the most marked characteristic of Mr. Lincoln's manners was his simplicity and artlessness; this immediately impressed itself upon the



Photo by Brady

Lincoln and his son "Tad"

observation of those who met him for the first time, and each successive interview deepened the impression. People seemed delighted to find in the ruler of the nation freedom from pomposity and affectation, mingled with a certain simple dignity which never forsook him. Though oppressed with the weight of responsibility resting upon him as President of the United States, he shrank from assuming any of the honors, or even the titles, of the position. After years of intimate acquaintance with Mr. Lincoln the writer can not now recall a single instance in which he spoke of himself as President, or used that title for himself, except when acting in an official capacity. He always spoke of his position and office vaguely as "this place," "here," or other modest phrase. Once, speaking of the room in the Capitol used by the Presidents of the United States during the close of a session of Congress, he said, "That room, you know, that they call"—dropping his voice and hesitating—"the President's room." To an intimate friend

who addressed him always by his own proper title he said, "Now call me Lincoln, and I'll promise not to tell of the breach of etiquette—if you won't—and I shall have a resting-spell from 'Mister President.'"

With all his simplicity and unacquaintance with courtly manners, his native dignity never forsook him in the presence of critical or polished strangers; but mixed with his angularities and *bonhomie* was something which spoke the fine fibre of the man; and, while his sovereign disregard of courtly conventionalities was somewhat ludicrous, his native sweetness and straightforwardness of manner served to disarm criticism and impress the visitor that he was before a man pure, self-poised, collected, and strong in unconscious strength. Of him an accomplished foreigner, whose knowledge of the courts was more perfect than that of the English language, said, "He seems to me one grand gentilhomme in disguise."

In his eagerness to acquire knowledge of common things he sometimes surprised his distinguished visitors by inquiries

about matters that they were supposed to be acquainted with, and those who came to scrutinize went away with a vague sense of having been unconsciously pumped by the man whom they expected to pump. One Sunday evening last winter, while sitting alone with the President, the cards of Professor Agassiz and a friend were sent in. The President had never met Agassiz at that time, I believe, and said, "I would like to talk with that man; he is a good man, I do believe, don't you think so?" But one answer could be returned to the query, and soon after the visitors were shown in, the President first whispering, "Now sit still and see what we can pick up that's new." To my surprise, however, no questions were asked about the Old Silurian, the Glacial Theory, or the Great Snow-storm, but, introductions being over, the President said: "I never knew how to properly pronounce your name; won't you give me a little lesson at that, please?" Then he asked if it were of French or Swiss derivation, to which the Professor replied that it was partly of each. That led to

a discussion of different languages, the President speaking of several words in different languages which had the same root as similar words in our own tongue; then he illustrated that by one or two anecdotes, one of which he borrowed from Hood's "Up the Rhine." But he soon returned to his gentle cross-examination of Agassiz, and found out how the Professor studied, how he composed, and how he delivered his lectures; how he found different tastes in his audience in different portions of the country. When afterward asked why he put such questions to his learned visitor he said, "Why, what we got from him isn't printed in the books; the other things are."

At this interview, it may be remarked in passing, the President said that many years ago, when the custom of lecture-going was more common than since, he was induced to try his hand at composing a literary lecture—something which he thought entirely out of his line. The subject, he said, was not defined, but his purpose was to analyze inventions and discoveries—"to get at the bottom of

things"—and to show when, where, how, and why such things were invented or discovered; and, so far as possible, to find where the first mention is made of some of our common things. The Bible, he said, he found to be the richest store-house for such knowledge; and he then gave one or two illustrations, which were new to his hearers. The lecture was never finished, and was left among his loose papers at Springfield when he came to Washington.

The simplicity of manner which shone out in all such interviews as that here noticed was marked in his total lack of consideration of what was due his exalted station. He had an almost morbid dread of what he called "a scene"—that is, a demonstration of applause such as always greeted his appearance in public. The first sign of a cheer sobered him; he appeared sad and oppressed, suspended conversation, and looked out into vacancy; and when it was over resumed the conversation just where it was interrupted, with an obvious feeling of relief. Of the relations of a senator to him he said, "I

think that Senator ——'s manner is more cordial to me than before." The truth was that the senator had been looking for a sign of cordiality from his superior, but the President had reversed their relative positions. At another time, speaking of an early acquaintance, who was an applicant for an office which he thought him hardly qualified to fill, the President said, "Well, now, I never thought M—— had any more than average ability when we were young men together; really I did not"—a pause.—"But, then I suppose he thought just the same about me; he had reason to, and—here I am!"

The simple habits of Mr. Lincoln were so well known that it is a subject for surprise that watchful and malignant treason did not sooner take that precious life which he seemed to hold so lightly. He had an almost morbid dislike for an escort, or guard, and daily exposed himself to the deadly aim of an assassin. One summer morning, passing by the White House at an early hour, I saw the President standing at the gateway, looking anxiously down the street; and, in

reply to a salutation, he said, "Good-morning, good-morning! I am looking for a news-boy; when you get to that corner I wish you would start one up this way." There are American citizens who consider such things beneath the dignity of an official in high place.

In reply to the remonstrances of friends, who were afraid of his constant exposure to danger, he had but one answer: "If they kill me, the next man will be just as bad for them; and in a country like this, where our habits are simple, and must be, assassination is always possible, and will come if they are determined upon it." A cavalry guard was once placed at the gates of the White House for a while, and he said, privately, that he "worried until he got rid of it." While the President's family were at their summer-house, near Washington, he rode into town of a morning, or out at night, attended by a mounted escort; but if he returned to town for a while after dark, he rode in unguarded, and often alone, in his open carriage. On more than one occasion the writer has gone through the

streets of Washington at a late hour of the night with the President, without escort, or even the company of a servant, walking all of the way, going and returning.

Considering the many open and secret threats to take his life, it is not surprising that Mr. Lincoln had many thoughts about his coming to a sudden and violent end. He once said that he felt the force of the expression, "To take one's life in his hand;" but that he would not like to face death suddenly. He said that he thought himself a great coward physically, and was sure that he should make a poor soldier, for, unless there was something in the excitement of a battle, he was sure that he would drop his gun and run at the first symptom of danger. That was said sportively, and he added, "Moral cowardice is something which I think I never had." Shortly after the presidential election, in 1864, he related an incident which I will try to put upon paper here, as nearly as possible in his own words:

"It was just after my election in 1860,

when the news had been coming in thick and fast all day, and there had been a great 'Hurrah, boys!' so that I was well tired out, and went home to rest, throwing myself down on a lounge in my chamber. Opposite where I lay was a bureau, with a swinging-glass upon it"—(and here he got up and placed furniture to illustrate the position)—"and, looking in that glass, I saw myself reflected, nearly at full length; but my face, I noticed, had *two* separate and distinct images, the tip of the nose of one being about three inches from the tip of the other. I was a little bothered, perhaps startled, and got up and looked in the glass, but the illusion vanished. On lying down again I saw it a second time—plainer, if possible than before; and then I noticed that one of the faces was a little paler, say five shades, than the other. I got up and the thing melted away, and I went off and, in the excitement of the hour, forgot all about it—nearly, but not quite, for the thing would once in a while come up, and give me a little pang, as though something uncomfortable had happened. When I went

home I told my wife about it, and a few days after I tried the experiment again, when [with a laugh], sure enough, the thing came again; but I never succeeded in bringing the ghost back after that, though I once tried very industriously to show it to my wife, who was worried about it somewhat. She thought it was 'a sign' that I was to be elected to a second term of office, and that the paleness of one of the faces was an omen that I should not see life through the last term."

The President, with his usual good sense, saw nothing in all this but an optical illusion; though the flavor of superstition which hangs about every man's composition made him wish that he had never seen it. But there are people who will now believe that this odd coincidence was "a warning."

If Mr. Lincoln's critics may be trusted, he had too much goodness of heart to make a good magistrate. Certain it is that his continually-widening charity for all, and softness of heart, pardoned offenders and mitigated punishments when

the strict requirements of justice would have dealt more severely with the criminal. It was a standing order of his office that persons on matters involving the issue of life and death should have immediate precedence. Nor was his kindness confined to affairs of state; his servants, and all persons in his personal service, were the objects of his peculiar care and solicitude. They bore no burdens or hardships which he could relieve them of; and if he carried this virtue to an extreme, and carried labors which others should have borne, it was because he thought he could not help it.

He was often waylaid by soldiers importunate to get their back-pay, or a furlough, or a discharge; and if the case was not too complicated, would attend to it then and there. Going out of the main-door of the White House one morning, he met an old lady who was pulling vigorously at the door-bell, and asked her what she wanted. She said that she wanted to see "Abraham the Second." The President, amused, asked who Abraham the First might be, if there was a

second? The old lady replied, "Why, Lor' bless you! we read about the first Abraham in the Bible, and Abraham the Second is our President." She was told that the President was not in his office then, and when she asked where he was, she was told, "Here he is;" Nearly petrified with surprise, the old lady managed to tell her errand, and was told to come next morning at nine o'clock, when she was received and kindly cared for by the President. At another time, hearing of a young man who had determined to enter the navy as a landsman, after three years of service in the army, he said to the writer, "Now do you go over to the Navy Department and mouse out what he is fit for, and he shall have it, if it's to be had, for that's the kind of men I like to hear of." The place was duly "moused out," with the assistance of the kind-hearted Assistant-Secretary of the Navy; and the young officer, who may read these lines on his solitary post off the mouth of the Yazoo River, was appointed upon the recommendation of the President of the United States. Of an application for of-

fice by an old friend, not fit for the place he sought, he said, "I had rather resign my place and go away from here than refuse him, if I considered only my personal feelings; but refuse him I must." And he did.

This same gentleness, mixed with firmness, characterized all of Mr. Lincoln's dealings with public men. Often bitterly assailed and abused, he never appeared to recognize the fact that he had political enemies; and if his attention was called to unkind speeches or remarks, he would turn the conversation of his indignant friends by a judicious story, or the remark, "I guess we won't talk about that now." He has himself put it on record that he never read attacks upon himself, and if they were brought persistently before him he had some ready excuse for their authors. Of a virulent personal attack upon his official conduct he mildly said that it was ill-timed; and of one of his most bitter political enemies he said: "I've been told that insanity is hereditary in his family, and I think we will admit the plea in his case." It was noticeable

that Mr. Lincoln's keenest critics and bitter opponents studiously avoided his presence; it seemed as though no man could be familiar with his homely, heart-lighted features, his single-hearted directness and manly kindness, and remain long an enemy, or be any thing but his friend. It was this warm frankness of Mr. Lincoln's manner that made a hard-headed old "hunker" once leave the hustings where Lincoln was speaking, in 1856, saying, "I won't hear him, for I don't like a man that makes me believe in him in spite of myself."

"Honest Old Abe" has passed into the language of our time and country as a synonym for all that is just and honest in man. Yet thousands of instances, unknown to the world, might be added to those already told of Mr. Lincoln's great and crowning virtue. He disliked innuendoes, concealments, and subterfuges; and no sort of approach at official "jobbing" ever had any encouragement from him. With him the question was not, "Is it convenient? Is it expedient?" but, "Is it right?" He steadily discounten-

anced all practices of government officers using any part of the public funds for temporary purposes; and he loved to tell of his own experience when he was saved from embarrassment by his rigid adherence to a good rule. He had been postmaster at Salem, Illinois, during Jackson's administration, William T. Barry being then Postmaster-General, and resigning his office, removed to Springfield, having sent a statement of account to the Department at Washington. No notice was taken of his account, which showed a balance due the Government of over one hundred and fifty dollars, until three or four years after, when, Amos Kendall being Postmaster-General, he was presented with a draft for the amount due. Some of Mr. Lincoln's friends, who knew that he was in straightened circumstances then, as he had always been, heard of the draft and offered to help him out with a loan; but he told them not to worry, and producing from his trunk an old pocket, tied up and marked, counted out, in six-pences, shillings, and quarters, the exact sum required

of him, in the identical coin received by him while in office years before.

The honesty of Mr. Lincoln appeared to spring from religious convictions; and it was his habit, when conversing of things which most intimately concerned himself, to say that, however he might be misapprehended by men who did not appear to know him, he was glad to know that no thought or intent of his escaped the observation of that Judge by whose final decree he expected to stand or fall in this world and the next. It seemed as though this was his surest refuge at times when he was most misunderstood or misrepresented. There was something touching in his childlike and simple reliance upon Divine aid, especially when in such extremities as he sometimes fell into; then, though prayer and reading of the Scriptures was his constant habit, he more earnestly than ever sought that strength which is promised when mortal help fail-eth. His address upon the occasion of his re-inauguration has been said to be as truly a religious document as a state-paper; and his acknowledgment of God

and His providence and rule are interwoven through all of his later speeches, letters, and messages. Once he said: "I have been driven many times upon my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go. My own wisdom and that of all about me seemed insufficient for that day."

Just after the last presidential election he said: "Being only mortal, after all, I should have been a little mortified if I had been beaten in this canvass before the people; but that sting would have been more than compensated by the thought that the people had notified me that all my official responsibilities were soon to be lifted off my back." In reply to the remark that he might remember that in all these cares he was daily remembered by those who prayed, not to be heard of men, as no man had ever before been remembered, he caught at the homely phrase and said: "Yes, I like that phrase, 'not to be heard of men,' and guess it's generally true, as you say; at least I have been told so, and I have been a good deal helped by just that thought." Then he

solemnly and slowly added: "I should be the most presumptuous blockhead upon this footstool if I for one day thought that I could discharge the duties which have come upon me since I came into this place without the aid and enlightenment of One who is wiser and stronger than all others."

At another time he said, cheerfully, "I am very sure that if I do not go away from here a wiser man, I shall go away a better man, for having learned here what a very poor sort of a man I am." Afterward, referring to what he called a change of heart, he said that he did not remember any precise time when he passed through any special change of purpose or of heart; but he would say that his own election to office, and the crisis immediately following, influentially determined him in what he called "a process of crystallization," then going on in his mind. Reticent as he was, and shy of discoursing much of his own mental exercises, these few utterances now have a value with those who knew him which his dying words would scarcely have possessed.

No man but Mr. Lincoln ever knew how great was the load of care which he bore, nor the amount of mental labor which he daily accomplished. With the usual perplexities of the office—greatly increased by the unusual multiplication of places in his gift—he carried the burdens of the civil war, which he always called “This great trouble.” Though the intellectual man had greatly grown meantime, few persons would recognize the hearty, blithesome, genial, and wiry Abraham Lincoln of earlier days in the sixteenth President of the United States, with his stooping figure, dull eyes, careworn face, and languid frame. The old, clear laugh never came back; the even temper was sometimes disturbed; and his natural charity for all was often turned into an unwonted suspicion of the motives of men, whose selfishness cost him so much wear of mind. .Once he said, “Sitting here, where all the avenues to public patronage seem to come together in a knot, it does seem to me that our people are fast approaching the point where it can be said that seven-eighths of them

were trying to find how to live at the expense of the other eighth."

It was this incessant demand upon his time, by men who sought place or endeavored to shape his policy, that broke down his courage and his temper, as well as exhausted his strength. Speaking of the "great flood-gates" which his doors daily opened upon him, he said, "I suppose I ought not to blame the aggregate, for each abstract man or woman thinks his or her case a peculiar one, and must be attended to, though all others be left out; but I can see this thing growing every day." And at another time, speaking of the exhaustive demands upon him, which left him in no condition for more important duties, he said, "I sometimes fancy that every one of the numerous grist ground through here daily, from a Senator seeking a war with France down to a poor woman after a place in the Treasury Department, darted at me with thumb and finger, picked out their especial piece of my vitality, and carried it off. When I get through with such a day's work there is only one word which can

express my condition, and that is—*flabbiness*.” There are some public men who can now remember, with self-reproaches, having increased with long evening debates that reducing “flabbiness” of the much-enduring President.

Mr. Lincoln visited the Army of the Potomac in the spring of 1863, and, free from the annoyances of office, was considerably refreshed and rested; but even there the mental anxieties which never forsook him seemed to cast him down, at times, with a great weight. We left Washington late in the afternoon, and a snow-storm soon after coming on, the steamer was anchored for the night off Indian Head, on the Maryland shore of the Potomac. The President left the little knot in the cabin, and sitting alone in a corner, seemed absorbed in the saddest reflections for a time; then, beckoning a companion to him, said, “What will you wager that half our iron-clads are at the bottom of Charleston Harbor?” This being the first intimation which the other had had of Dupont’s attack, which was then begun, he hesitated to reply, when the

President added, "The people will expect big things when they hear of this; but it is too late—*too late!*"

During that little voyage the captain of the steamer, a frank, modest old sailor, was so much affected by the care-worn appearance of the President, that he came to the writer and confessed that he had received the same impression of the Chief Magistrate that many had; hearing of his "little stories" and his humor, he had supposed him to have no care or sadness; but a sight of that anxious and sad face had undeceived him, and he wanted to tell the President how much he had unintentionally wronged him, feeling that he had committed upon him a personal wrong. The captain was duly introduced to the President, who talked with him privately for a space, being touched as well as amused at what he called "Captain M——'s freeing his mind."

The following week, spent in riding about and seeing the army, appeared to revive Mr. Lincoln's spirits and to rest his body. A friend present observed as much to him, and he replied, "Well, yes,

I do feel some better, I think; but, somehow, it don't appear to touch the tired spot, which can't be got at." And that, by-the-way, reminded him of a little story of his having once used that word, spot, a great many times in the course of a speech in Congress, years ago, so that some of his fellow-members called him "spot Lincoln," but he believed that the nickname did not stick. Another reminiscence of his early life, which he recalled during the trip, was one concerning his experience in rail-splitting. We were driving through an open clearing, where the Virginia forest had been felled by the soldiers, when Mr. Lincoln observed, looking at the stumps, "That's a good job of felling; they have got some good axemen in this army, I see." The conversation turning upon his knowledge of rail-splitting, he said, "Now let me tell you about that. I am not a bit anxious about my reputation in that line of business; but if there is any thing in this world that I am a judge of, it is of good felling of timber, but I don't remember having worked by myself at splitting rails for

one whole day in my life." Upon surprise being expressed that his national reputation as a rail-splitter should have so slight a foundation, he said, "I recollect that, some time during the canvass for the office I now hold, there was a great mass meeting, where I was present, and with a great flourish several rails were brought into the meeting, and being informed where they came from, I was asked to identify them, which I did, with some qualms of conscience, having helped my father to split rails, as at other odd jobs. I said if there were any rails which I had split, I shouldn't wonder if those were the rails." Those who may be disappointed to learn of Mr. Lincoln's limited experience in splitting rails, may be relieved to know that he was evidently proud of his knowledge of the art of cutting timber, and explained minutely how a good job differed from a poor one, giving illustrations from the ugly stumps on either side.

An amusing yet touching instance of the President's preoccupation of mind occurred at one of his levees, when he was

shaking hands with a host of visitors, passing him in a continuous stream. An intimate acquaintance received the usual conventional hand-shake and salutation; but, perceiving that he was not recognized, kept his ground, instead of moving on, and spoke again; when the President, roused by a dim consciousness that something unusual had happened, perceived who stood before him, and seizing his friend's hand, shook it again heartily, saying, "How do you do? How do you do? Excuse me for not noticing you at first; the fact is, I was thinking of a man down South." He afterward privately acknowledged that the "man down South" was Sherman, then on his march to the sea.

Mr. Lincoln had not a hopeful temperament, and, though he looked at the bright side of things, was always prepared for disaster and defeat. With his wonderful faculty for discerning results he often saw success where others saw disaster, but oftener perceived a failure when others were elated with victory, or were temporarily deceived by appear-

ances. Of a great cavalry raid, which filled the newspapers with glowing exultation, but failed to cut the communications which it had been designed to destroy, he briefly said: "That was good circus-riding; it will do to fill a column in the newspapers; but I don't see that it has brought any thing else to pass." He often said that the worst feature about newspapers was that they were so sure to be "ahead of the hounds," outrunning events, and exciting expectations which were sure to be disappointed. One of the worst effects of a victory, he said, was to lead people to expect that the war was about over in consequence of it; but he was never weary of commending the patience of the American people, which he thought something matchless and touching. I have seen him shed tears when speaking of the cheerful sacrifice of the light and strength of so many happy homes throughout the land. His own patience was marvelous; and never crushed at defeat or unduly excited by success, his demeanor under both was an example for all men. Once he said the keenest blow of

all the war was at an early stage, when the disaster of Ball's Bluff and the death of his beloved Baker smote upon him like a whirlwind from a desert.

It is generally agreed that Mr. Lincoln's slowness was a prominent trait of his character; but it is too early, perhaps, to say how much of our safety and success we owe to his slowness. It may be said, however, that he is to-day admired and beloved as much for what he did not do as for what he did. He was well aware of the popular opinion concerning his slowness, but was only sorry that such a quality of mind should sometimes be coupled with weakness and vacillation. Such an accusation he thought to be unjust. Acknowledging that he was slow in arriving at conclusions, he said that he could not help that; but he believed that when he did arrive at conclusions they were clear and "stuck by." He was a profound believer in his own fixity of purpose, and took pride in saying that his long deliberations made it possible for him to stand by his own acts when they were once resolved upon. It would

have been a relief to the country at one time in our history if this trait of the President's character had been better understood. There was no time, probably, during the last administration, when any of the so-called radical measures were in any danger of being qualified or recalled. The simple explanation of the doubt which often hung over his purposes may be found in the fact that it was a habit of his mind to put forward all of the objections of other people and of his own to any given proposition, to see what arguments or counter-statements could be brought against them. While his own mind might be perfectly clear upon the subject, it gave him real pleasure to state objections for others to combat or attempt to set aside.

His practice of being controlled by events is well known. He often said that it was wise to wait for the developments of Providence; and the Scriptural phrase that "the stars in their courses fought against Sisera" to him had a depth of meaning. Then, too, he liked to feel that he was the attorney of the people, not

their ruler; and I believe that this idea was generally uppermost in his mind. Speaking of the probability of his second nomination, about two years ago, he said: "If the people think that I have managed their case for them well enough to trust me to carry up to the next term, I am sure that I shall be glad to take it."

He liked to provide for his friends, who were often remembered gratefully for services given him in his early struggles in life. Sometimes he would "break the slate," as he called it, of those who were making up a list of appointments, that he might insert the name of some old acquaintance who had befriended him in days when friends were few. He was not deceived by outside appearances, but took the measure of those he met, and few men were worth any more or any less than the value which Abraham Lincoln set upon them.

Upon being told that a gentleman upon whom he was about to confer a valuable appointment had been bitterly opposed to his renomination, he said: "I suppose that Judge ——, having been disap-

pointed before, did behave pretty ugly; but that wouldn't make him any less fit for this place, and I have a Scriptural authority for appointing him. You recollect that while the Lord on Mount Sinai was getting out a commission for Aaron, that same Aaron was at the foot of the mountain making a false god, a golden calf, for the people to worship; yet Aaron got his commission, you know?" At another time, when remonstrated with upon the appointment to place of one of his former opponents, he said: "Nobody will deny that he is a first-rate man for the place, and I am bound to see that his opposition to me personally shall not interfere with my giving the people a good officer."

The world will never hear the last of the "little stories" with which the President garnished or illustrated his conversation and his early stump speeches. He said, however, that as near as he could reckon, about one-sixth of those which were credited to him were old acquaintances; all of the rest were the productions of other and better story-tellers

than himself. Said he: "I do generally remember a good story when I hear it, but I never did invent any thing original; I am only a retail dealer." His anecdotes were seldom told for the sake of the telling, but because they fitted in just where they came, and shed a light on the argument that nothing else could. He was not witty, but brimful of humor; and though he was quick to appreciate a good pun, I never knew of his making but one, which was on the Christian name of a friend, to whom he said: "You have yet to be elected to the place I hold; but Noah's *reign* was before Abraham." He thought that the chief characteristic of American humor was its grotesqueness and extravagance; and the story of the man who was so tall that he was "laid out" in a rope-walk, the soprano voice so high that it had to be climbed over by a ladder, and the Dutchman's expression of "somebody tying his dog loose," all made a permanent lodgment in his mind.

His accuracy and memory were wonderful, and one illustration of the former

quality may be given in the remarkable correspondence between the figures of the result of the last presidential election and the actual sum total. The President's figures, collected hastily, and partially based upon his own estimates, made up only four weeks after the election, have been found to be only one hundred and twenty-nine less in their grand total than that made up by Mr. McPherson, the Clerk of the House of Representatives, who has compiled a table from the returns furnished him from the official records of all the State capitals in the loyal States.

Latterly Mr. Lincoln's reading was with the humorous writers. He liked to repeat from memory whole chapters from these books, and on such occasions he always preserved his own gravity though his auditors might be convulsed with laughter. He said that he had a dread of people who could not appreciate the fun of such things; and he once instanced a member of his own Cabinet, of whom he quoted the saying of Sydney Smith, "that it required a surgical operation to get a joke into his head." The light

trifles spoken of diverted his mind, or, as he said of his theatre-going, gave him refuge from himself and his weariness. But he also was a lover of many philosophical books, and particularly liked Butler's Analogy of Religion, Stuart Mill on Liberty, and he always hoped to get at President Edwards on the Will. These ponderous writers found a queer companionship in the chronicler of the Mackerel Brigade, Parson Nasby, and Private Miles O'Reilly. The Bible was a very familiar study with the President, whole chapters of Isaiah, the New Testament, and the Psalms being fixed in his memory, and he would sometimes correct a misquotation of Scripture, giving generally the chapter and verse where it could be found. He liked the Old Testament best, and dwelt on the simple beauty of the historical books. Once, speaking of his own age and strength, he quoted with admiration that passage, "His eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated." I do not know that he thought then how, like that Moses of old, he was to stand on Pisgah and see a peaceful land which he was not to enter.

Of the poets the President appeared to prefer Hood and Holmes, the mixture of fun and pathos in their writings being attractive to him beyond any thing else which he read. Of the former author he liked best the last part of "Miss Kilmansegg and her Golden Leg," "Faithless Sally Brown," and one or two others not generally so popular as those which are called Hood's best poems. Holmes's "September Gale," "Last Leaf," "Chambered Nautilus," and "Ballad of an Oysterman" were among his very few favorite poems. Longfellow's "Psalm of Life" and "Birds of Killingworth" were the only productions of that author he ever mentioned with praise, the latter of which he picked up somewhere in a newspaper, cut out, and carried in his vest pocket until it was committed to memory. James Russell Lowell he only knew as "Hosea Biglow," every one of whose effusions he knew. He sometimes repeated word for word, the whole of "John P. Robinson, he," giving the unceasing refrain with great unction and enjoyment. He once said that originality and daring

impudence were sublimed in this stanza of Lowell's:

“Ef you take a sword and dror it,
An' stick a feller creetur thru,
Gov'ment hain't to answer for it,
God'll send the bill to you.”

Mr. Lincoln's love of music was something passionate, but his tastes were simple and uncultivated, his choice being old airs, songs, and ballads, among which the plaintive Scotch songs were best liked. “Annie Laurie,” “Mary of Argyle,” and especially “Auld Robin Gray,” never lost their charm for him; and all songs which had for their theme the rapid flight of time, decay, the recollections of early days, were sure to make a deep impression. The song which he liked best, above all others, was one called “Twenty Years Ago”—a simple air, the words to which are supposed to be uttered by a man who revisits the playground of his youth. He greatly desired to find music for his favorite poem, “Oh, why should the spirit of mortal be

proud?" and said once, when told that the newspapers had credited him with the authorship of the piece, "I should not care much for the reputation of having written that, but would be glad if I could compose music as fit to convey the sentiment as the words now do."

He wrote slowly, and with the greatest deliberation, and liked to take his time; yet some of his dispatches, written without any corrections, are models of compactness and finish. His private correspondence was extensive and he preferred writing his letters with his own hand, making copies himself frequently, and filing every thing away in a set of pigeon-holes in his office. When asked why he did not have a letter-book and copying-press, he said, "A letter-book might be easily carried off, but that stock of filed letters would be a back-load." He conscientiously attended to his enormous correspondence, and read every thing that appeared to demand his own attention. He said that he read with great regularity the letters of an old friend who lived on the Pacific coast until he received a letter

of *seventy pages* of letter paper, when he broke down, and never read another.

People were sometimes disappointed because he appeared before them with a written speech. The best explanation of that habit of his was his remark to a friend who noticed a roll of manuscript in the hand of the President as he came into the parlor while waiting for the serenade which was given him on the night following his re-election. Said he: "I know what you are thinking about; but there's no clap-trap about me, and I am free to say that in the excitement of the moment I am sure to say something which I am sorry for when I see it in print; so I have it here in black and white, and there are no mistakes made. People attach too much importance to what I say any how." Upon another occasion, hearing that I was in the parlor, he sent for me to come up into the library, where I found him writing on a piece of common stiff box-board with a pencil. Said he, after he had finished, "Here is one speech of mine which has never been printed, and I think it worth printing. Just see

what you think." He then read the following, which is copied *verbatim* from the familiar handwriting before me:

"On Thursday of last week two ladies from Tennessee came before the President, asking the release of their husbands, held as prisoners of war at Johnson's Island. They were put off until Friday, when they came again, and were again put off until Saturday. At each of the interviews one of the ladies urged that her husband was a religious man. On Saturday, when the President ordered the release of the prisoners, he said to this lady: 'You say your husband is a religious man; tell him when you meet him that I say I am not much of a judge of religion, but that, in my opinion, the religion that sets men to rebel and fight against their Government because, as they think, that Government does not sufficiently help *some* men to eat their bread in the sweat of *other* men's faces, is not the sort of religion upon which people can get to heaven.'"

To this the President signed his name at my request, by way of joke, and added

for a caption, "The President's Last, Shortest, and Best Speech," under which title it was duly published in one of the Washington newspapers. His Message to the last session of Congress was first written upon the same sort of white paste-board above referred to, its stiffness enabling him to lay it on his knee as he sat easily in his arm-chair, writing and erasing as he thought and wrought out his idea.

The already extended limits of this article will not permit any thing more than a mention of many of the traits of Mr. Lincoln's peculiar character, many of which are already widely known by his published writings and speeches, and by the numerous anecdotes which have been narrated by others who have been ready to meet the general desire to know more of the man whose life was so dear to the people. His thoughtfulness for those who bore the brunt of the battles, his harmonious family relation, his absorbing love for his children, his anxiety for the well-being and conduct of the emancipated colored people, his unwav-

ering faith in the hastening doom of human slavery, his affectionate regard for "the simple people," his patience, his endurance, his mental sufferings, and what he did for the Nation and for Humanity and Liberty—these all must be left to the systematic and enduring labors of the historian. Though he is dead, his immortal virtues are the rich possession of the nation; his fame shall grow with our young Republic; and as years roll on brighter lustre will adorn the name of Abraham Lincoln.

THE DEMOCRATIC CAMPAIGN MANUAL OF 1864

The three selections that follow are taken from a rare volume made up of nineteen "Campaign Documents" bound together. Some of them were evidently arguments prepared at the opposition headquarters. "To Whom It May Concern" is of this kind, written as an answer to a letter of the President's in which Lincoln had made it plain that slavery could not be restored.

The other selections are from reports of campaign speeches. Oakey Hall's violent harangue is quoted as a curiosity in political annals. The mass of voters did not sympathize with such views, as Lincoln's overwhelming victory proved.

Aside from the merely partisan abuse, the opposition aimed its attacks chiefly at Emancipation. It should be remembered that a few years earlier Lincoln had been as savagely assailed by the extreme anti-

slavery group for waiting so long as he did.

The Abolitionists had not given consideration enough to those border States which remained loyal to the Union but refused to let their slaves go. By keeping these few States in line Lincoln held the balance of power long enough to save the Union.

There was not real "usurpation" in the act that freed the bondmen. It was justified by military necessity. Later, the Confederate Secretary of State suggested that negroes be freed to strengthen the Southern army. He recognized the same principle. In any case, slavery could not have survived the disorganization of war. The firing on Fort Sumter was a preliminary emancipation proclamation.

Lincoln simply chose the right moment for beginning the nation's adjustment to a fact that had to be faced sooner or later. He was moved neither by the urgency of the radicals nor the protests of the conservatives. Read his own letters and addresses for the best statement of the whole case. He saw all sides and his one purpose was to be just to all.

Col. A. K. McClure declares that years after the war Jefferson Davis told him, in effect, that next to the fall of the Confederacy the death of Lincoln was the South's greatest misfortune.

“TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:”

It is impossible to overrate the importance of President Lincoln's letter to the Niagara commissioners. It is a public announcement by the Chief Magistrate of the nation that he has abandoned, finally, all pretence or appearance of waging a constitutional war for the restoration of the territorial integrity of the Union, and the supremacy of its fundamental laws; and on open declaration that hereafter it shall be waged for the destruction of slavery. His policy has long tended in this direction, but he has concealed its real purport by double-faced acts and specious language. He has looked one way and rowed another. Now he avows his purpose. Now he declares his long-concealed policy. He has been assiduously prostituting the war for



THE OVERDUE BILL

Mr. South to Mr. North : "Your 'ninety days' promissory note isn't taken up yet, sirree !"

— From *Punch*, September, 27, 1862

the Union into a war for the abolition of slavery. Now he avows this prostitution and glories in it.

Mr. Lincoln did not write his "To whom it may concern" letter without a purpose. He is a buffoon, but he is no fool. His purpose was a personal one. It was to recover the radical vote and support in time for the next November election. The radicals have distrusted him. The most honest and sincere anti-slavery men among them have long had no confidence in Mr. Lincoln's moral integrity, and therefore no confidence in his avowal of anti-slavery sentiments. They have therefore deserted the Republican party, nominated a candidate, and laid down a platform of their own. They threatened to divide the Republican vote, and so insure the success of the Democratic candidate. Mr. Lincoln hoped to recover their confidence and their support in the coming election by an avowal which would satisfy the most exacting.

Mr. Lincoln, therefore, seized the very first occasion, a fitting one for his purpose, the first overtures of peace by men

high in the confidence or employ of the Confederate government, and declared that "the abandonment of slavery" must be the condition *sine qua non* of any peace propositions from the political and military chiefs of the rebellion. He repudiates every public declaration which he has hitherto made regarding the purposes of the war and the means of its conclusion, openly and with an utter moral shamelessness. He was pledged to other plans and other principles by every official oath, private avowal, and public declaration which could be framed to constrain the conscience or determine the acts of a man, a partisan, or a magistrate. He has broken his oaths and repudiated these avowals with never so much as a regretful or explanatory or condoling allusion.

The Republican Convention at Chicago, which nominated Mr. Lincoln, passed this resolution:—

Resolved, That the maintenance inviolate of the rights of the States, and especially the right of each State to order

and control its own domestic institutions according to its own judgment exclusively, is essential to that balance of power on which the perfection and endurance of our political fabric depend, and we denounce the lawless invasion by armed force of the soil of any State or territory, no matter under what pretext, as among the gravest of crimes.

In his Niagara letter, Mr. Lincoln declares that the control over the domestic institutions of the States, confirmed to them in our Constitution and in the Confederate Constitution not less explicitly, shall be assumed by "an authority that can control the armies now at war against the United States," and transferred to him who now controls the armies and navies of the United States, and that otherwise he will not listen to overtures of peace.

In his inaugural, President Lincoln quoted from one of his own speeches, and reiterated this declaration:—

"I have no purpose, directly or indi-



"Sinbad Lincoln and the old man of the sea,
Secretary of the Navy Welles."—From *Frank
Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*. May 3, 1862

rectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so. I now reiterate these sentiments, and in doing so I only press upon the public attention the most conclusive evidence of which the case is susceptible that the property, peace, and security of no section are to be in any wise endangered by the now incoming administration."

Mr. Lincoln now justifies the rebels in disbelieving these solemn asseverations, by proving that they were false. He now does what he then declared he had no lawful right to do, and, for the sake of re-election, confesses the inclination which he then disavowed.

In his first message to Congress, at the extra session in the summer of 1861, Mr. Lincoln said:

"Lest there be some uneasiness in the minds of candid men as to what is to be the course of the government toward the Southern States after the rebellion shall have been suppressed, the executive

deems it proper to say it will be his purpose then, as ever, to be guided by the Constitution and the laws; and that he probably will have no different understanding of the powers and duties of the Federal Government relatively to the rights of the States and the people, under the Constitution, than that expressed in the inaugural address. He desires to preserve the government that it may be administered for all, as it was administered by the men who made it. Loyal citizens everywhere have the right to claim this of their government, and the government has no right to withhold or neglect it. It is not perceived that, in giving it, there is any coercion, any conquest, or any subjugation, in any just sense of those terms."

Now, avowing that the abandonment of slavery shall precede the acceptance of overtures of peace, Mr. Lincoln's message can be interpreted only as the confession that he is doing what "loyal citizens" have a right to protest against his doing, and what he violates the Consti-

tution and the laws of the United States in doing.

In August, 1862, Mr. Lincoln wrote to Mr. Greeley:—

“My paramount object is to save the Union, and not either save or destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it; if I could save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that. What I do about slavery and the colored race, I do because I believe it helps to save the Union; and what I forbear, I forbear because I do not believe it would help to save the Union. I shall do less whenever I shall believe that what I am doing hurts the cause; and I shall do more whenever I believe doing more will help the cause.”

Mr. Lincoln's last letter to Mr. Greeley declares two objects of the war, without which it shall not cease, “the integrity of the whole Union, and the abandonment of slavery.” He does not base the latter



Long Abraham Lincoln a little longer."— From *Harper's Weekly*, November 26, 1864.

upon the former, as effect upon cause. Each is the coequal and co-ordinate of the other. His paramount object is not now to "save the Union, and either to save or destroy slavery." He avows openly that slavery must be destroyed as well as the Union saved. The salvation of the Union is not even professed to be the exclusive and paramount object.

In his preliminary "Proclamation of Freedom," issued September, 1862, Mr. Lincoln said:—

"That hereafter, as heretofore, the war will be prosecuted for the object of practically restoring the constitutional relation between the United States and each of the States and the people thereof, in which States that relation is or may be suspended or disturbed."

Mr. Lincoln now avows that hereafter the war shall be prosecuted for the object of practically compelling "the abandonment of slavery," even after the integrity of the Union may be restored, for even the Chicago platform declared that

in a "constitutional relation," freedom was national and slavery sectional, and even Mr. Lincoln will not pretend that to compel "the abandonment of slavery" is to "restore the constitutional relation between the United States and each of the States and the people thereof."

On December 12, 1862, Mr. Lincoln wrote to the Hon. Fernando Wood:—

"Understanding the phrase in the paragraph above quoted, 'the Southern States would send representatives to the next Congress,' to be substantially the same as that 'the people of the Southern States would cease resistance, and would inaugurate, submit to, and maintain the national authority within the limits of such States, under the Constitution of the United States,'—I say that in such case the war should cease on the part of the United States; and that, if within a reasonable time 'a full and general amnesty' were necessary to such end, it would not be withheld."

At the very first overture of peace from any people of the Southern States, Mr. Lincoln is now so far from being inclined to a full and general amnesty that he imposes a new and impossible condition of peace. An impossible condition, we say, not merely because it is impossible for us with all our armies to compel the abandonment of slavery, but because it is much worse than impossible for those who "control the armies now at war" with us to assume to themselves and then transfer to Mr. Lincoln the control of a subject over which neither of them has the least authority either in the federal or rebel constitutions. Instead of that professed approval of an amnesty, he now spurns the very first lisplings of peace.

A little more than a year ago Mr. Lincoln seized the occasion of the meeting of the Republican Convention at Springfield to declare himself, still more emphatically than ever, as waging the war exclusively to save the Union. He had been charged with waging it for abolition purposes, and his reply was:—



THE AMERICAN DIFFICULTY

President Abe: "What a nice White House this would be if it were not for the blacks."

—From *Punch*, May 11, 1861

“You say you will not fight to free negroes. Some of them seem willing to fight for you. But no matter; fight you then exclusively to save the Union. I issued the proclamation on purpose to aid you in saving the Union. Whenever you shall have conquered all resistance to the Union, *if I shall urge you to continue fighting, it will be an apt time then for you to declare you will not fight to free negroes.*”

President Lincoln has now justified the declaration that the Northern people will not fight to free negroes. He makes abolition the yoke-fellow of Union, and does urge the continuance of fighting for other purposes than the only one which is lawful or attainable. He thus falsifies every pledge, disregards every declaration, and violates his official oath.

Collate this “To whom it may concern” letter with Mr. Lincoln’s past declarations and avowls, and it will be difficult to restrain within decorous language the sense of moral indignation which arises in contemplating its unblushing and

shameless perjury. Lighter terms do not fit. His first official act was an oath, a solemn oath, calculated to bind the conscience of an honorable man and restrain the acts of a dishonorable one. Many times has Mr. Lincoln violated his oath. Let the political casuists defend him. Now he violates his oath openly and publishes his shame. His own words in past time, denying to himself any such purpose as he is now accomplishing, are all that is necessary to convict him of perjury. Other commentary is needless. Political opponents can afford to be dumb. Out of his own mouth is the President condemned. . . .

The *coup d'etat* does not show a more shocking political immorality. Other Presidents have been inconsistent, contradictory, and illogical. Mr. Lincoln is the first President who has dared to do that which, when charged upon him, he had before repudiated, branded as lawless, as a perjury, and as a crime. Louis Napoleon shed some blood to get power, violated some oaths, broke some pledges. But he broke not half so many as Abra-

ham Lincoln has confessedly broken, and where the present Emperor shed rills of blood, the present President will pour rivers, if thirty millions of people are to be kept waging the bloodiest and most gigantic of the world's civil wars until the South surrenders its property, its prejudices, and its local self-government.

The Baltimore Convention, which re-nominated Mr. Lincoln, resolved:—

“That we approve the determination of the government of the United States not to compromise with rebels, or to offer any terms of peace except such as may be based upon an unconditional surrender of their hostility, and a return to their first allegiance to the Constitution and laws of the United States; and that we call upon the government to maintain their position and to prosecute the war with the utmost possible vigor to the complete suppression of the rebellion, in full reliance upon the self-sacrificing patriotism, the heroic valor, and the undying devotion of the American people to their country and its free institutions.



From *Harper's Weekly*,
September, 17, 1864.

Even the Convention “of office-holders and contractors,” as they were dubbed by one of his own organs; even the men of corruption and of shoddy who renominated Mr. Lincoln, made but one condition to peace—“the unconditional surrender of hostility,” which can only mean the restoration of the authority and integrity of the Union. To this single condition Mr. Lincoln subjoins “the abandonment of slavery.” And the *Times*, his own organ, confesses that the people will not sustain him in demanding that ultimatum. Indeed, they will not. What right has the President to plant an insurmountable barrier in the paths of peace?

SPEECH OF GOV. SEYMOUR

I WOULD not say one unkind word of the President of these United States,—I would speak of him respectfully as the head of the Government; but neither Mr. Lincoln nor his cabinet have now control over national affairs. I believe most sincerely that if it was in the power

of Abraham Lincoln and the members of his cabinet to undo the past, they would cheerfully wipe it out. I believe if they were able to resume again their private stations, and felt themselves safe from an injured, outraged, and deceived community, if they felt that the laws they had violated would not be used against them, they would with joy leave the places of power, and give the Government into other hands. Why was Mr. Lincoln nominated at Baltimore, against the judgment of three-fourths of his own party; against the judgment of almost all the Republican members of the Senate? They were opposed to the nomination of any man who had identified himself with illegal arrests, and with violations of constitutional law. I ask you this question, my Republican friends, and I ask it with all respect and sincerity. God knows my heart,—that in this sad moment I cherish no resentments; I wish for nothing but the good of my country, and the salvation of its liberties. (Tremendous outbursts of applause. The chairman proposed three cheers for Gov-

ernor Seymour, and the audience rose *en masse* and gave them, with waving of hats and handkerchiefs, and with the wildest enthusiasm.) In their private conversations they freely acknowledged that they preferred some other man than Mr. Lincoln. It was natural, of course, that those who held place under him should desire his nomination. But the great operating cause that produced his nomination was this, that there were men in the army and others surrounding him who did not dare to let him go into private life; who did not dare to be brought back under the jurisdiction of the laws of the land, the judgment of their peers. (Cheers.) The nomination was made because men who had enriched themselves by unworthy means from the treasury of the country feared to be brought to that account to which they will be brought when our Government is restored and our Union reinstated. (Cheers.) Mr. Lincoln and his administration will not repeal the law that denies you any remedy against wrongs done by them to our person or property, because they know that



to do this is to bring themselves to judgment. They will not pursue a course that will give us a restored Union, because a restored Union reinstates the authority of law, and there would be an investigation of the frauds and failures that, in an unusual degree, have marked the conduct of affairs during the last three and a half years.

I do not mean to say that the administration is to be condemned because, under circumstances so unusual as those which have existed during this war, bad men have taken advantage of the confusion in affairs to do acts of wrong, but I do complain that when these wrongs are done the Government deliberately passes laws that protect the doer and thus makes wrong-doing its own act. Moreover, in an election like this, when the Government is spending such an enormous amount of money, and the liability to speculation is so great, the administration that will say to contractors, as has been openly said in circulars, "You have had a good contract, out of which you have made money, and we expect you to

use a part of that money to assist to replace us in power," renders itself a partner in fraud and corruption. The "contractor will say to this Government, 'You shall not make a peace that shall put an end to all my profits. You called upon me to give my money, in violation of the laws of the land, to put you in power, you called upon me to do that which every great man has said is subversive of constitutional liberty and good order; and now, when you have gained your share of the triumph, you shall not turn around and cheat me of my share of the spoils,' (Laughter and applause.) Has the administration, under these circumstances, the power to stop this plunder, and this drain upon the people of the country? They cannot do it; they have placed themselves in the power of men who can bring them before a grand jury and punish them as criminals for their acts. They cannot retrace their steps. It is impossible for them to restore the Union and bring back the South to her former fraternal relationship without saying that all they have done for the last three years

has been wrong. Suppose there is a victory, and you call upon Mr. Lincoln to give us again peace, prosperity, and national happiness,—to do the work of pacification, by assuring the people of the South that if they return they shall have again at least the security of their homes. Mr. Lincoln lifts his manacled hand and says, “I cannot; there is the confiscation law, which I must obey.” We beg him that at least he will allow them to live under their own State governments, so that we may be relieved of the taxation necessary to maintain a military government. Again, Mr. Lincoln lifts a manacled hand, and says, “I cannot; there is my proclamation; I stand before the country shackled by proclamations and shackled by acts of Congress; I can do nothing to pacify the South.” He is powerless unless he can induce Congress to undo all that it has done; he cannot disregard the wishes of those who have become his masters—for one man makes another his master when he enters into an arrangement with him that will not bear the inspection of the world, or the

investigation of the laws of the land. (Loud cheering.) The Democratic party can restore the Union, and I believe it will. (Great applause.) If that is true, then I appeal to my Republican friends if they are not bound to give the Government into our hands.

SPEECH OF A. OAKLEY HALL

I COME to arraign for high political crimes and low partisan misdemeanors, the village politician who is Commander-in-Chief of the armies and navy of the United States. At this grave crisis of public affairs, we might lose sight of individuals were it not that in the instance before us it is the individual who originates measures. We might indeed forget the accumulation of his individual treacheries toward the Constitution were he about to retire of his own accord to private life. But being a candidate for re-election, the country being in danger of yet newer and more astounding treacheries at his hands, it would be the part of mawkish sensibility to refrain from

discussing the candidate as he deserves to be discussed. It is, therefore, more the candidate whom I arraign than the President.

I arraign candidate Lincoln upon a presentment substantially filed in the high electoral court by the grand-juries of the Democratic party, against two political criminals. It is a joint indictment—against Jefferson Davis and Abraham Lincoln. The law of bullets under Grant and Sherman are trying Davis; of them and him we have nothing to say to-night. We are content to let those tribunals alone. But the law of ballots under the Constitution is to try the other criminal on the eighth of November. That is the law for us and for our discussion.

If the jury is not tampered with, I have no fears but the setting sun of that day will record in letters of fire this verdict: *“Abraham Lincoln has been guilty of such high political felonies and low partisan misdemeanors, that he shall be forthwith condemned to be for ever after disqualified from holding any place of*

public trust or emolument under the Constitution which he has trampled upon and defied!"

I shall take the offences of my arraignment by degrees, from the gravest to the meanest. There are, as you will find, sixteen in all, from treason to thimble-rigging.

When the first overt act of treason was committed, there was destroyed an era of good feeling. From April, 1861, to September, 1862, the Democratic party, subscribing to the Crittenden resolution of a war to defend the integrity of the Union, had laid upon the altar of patriotism ancient traditions and prejudices, and were supporting the government. The great thirty-five thousand Democratic majority city of New-York had poured out, through its Democratic Mayor, and councils, and bankers, treasure and soldiers. The North was united. The South was divided. The fell overt act reversed the position. It divided the North. It united the South. In the abstract, the proclamation was a piece of folly. Of course, slave property, like

horse property, changed hands wherever military force captured it. We were all content with that. But the Democracy rightfully said, this is an entering wedge—this proclamation. It is the first act of giving aid and comfort to abolition enemies. It will be followed by others. It was so followed. Davis was exclaiming: "No peace without secession." Lincoln was vociferating: "No peace without abolition." Democracy said: "We are for peace with Union. Let secession and abolition perish together." And so went on the contest, until Lincoln sums up his treason in the "To-whom-it-may-concern," and McClellan summed up his fidelity to his country in his watchword of "Union at all hazards." Time will not permit me to argue this count of the arraignments. You must argue it for yourselves on an hundred other facts.

I arraign candidate Lincoln for homicide; the homicide by culpable negligence, as defined by old lawyers—a form of manslaughter, indeed. Every soldier slain in the campaign to vindicate "my plan" of an overland march from the

Rapidan to the James; every soldier killed in the Florida campaign to win a State government and a representative to the Baltimore Convention; each soldier who lies buried on the margins of the Red River, where General Banks led his cotton-gathering veterans; all soldiers sacrificed to the blunders of a civilian general who

——“never set a squadron in the field,
Nor the division of a battle knows
More than a spinster;”

and, alas! every brave Union volunteer who has been famished or fevered into a grave beside a Southern prison—each and all should have written upon the rude head-stone above him: “Slain by the culpable negligence of Abraham Lincoln.” Because what profit even of subjugation, to say nothing of a profit toward restoring the Union, did the “my-plan” march, or the other campaigns, evolve? There was the most profitless slaughter in each. Victories! Ay! the bulletins said so. Accept them! There

have, then, been bulletin victories enough; but how worthless is glory without results! The war, as one of desolation, of geographical occupation, of subjugation, of approximate annihilation, has been a dreadful success. But (in the spirit of the Chicago platform, so shamefully perverted by the press and pulpit) as a war to restore the Union, it has been an experiment in the hands of Abraham Lincoln, and a diplomatic failure upon the valor of the slain.

“But, what good came of it at last?”

Quoth little Peterkin;

“Why, that I cannot tell,” said he;

“But ’twas a famous victory!”

Yes, we have had victories enough; but where has been, and where save under McClellan will be, the statesmanship to turn them to account?

In 1861 he wanted money and sent Chase to the New-York banks. The loans thus obtained saved Washington and the national credit. The money was given on the faith of a war for the Union.

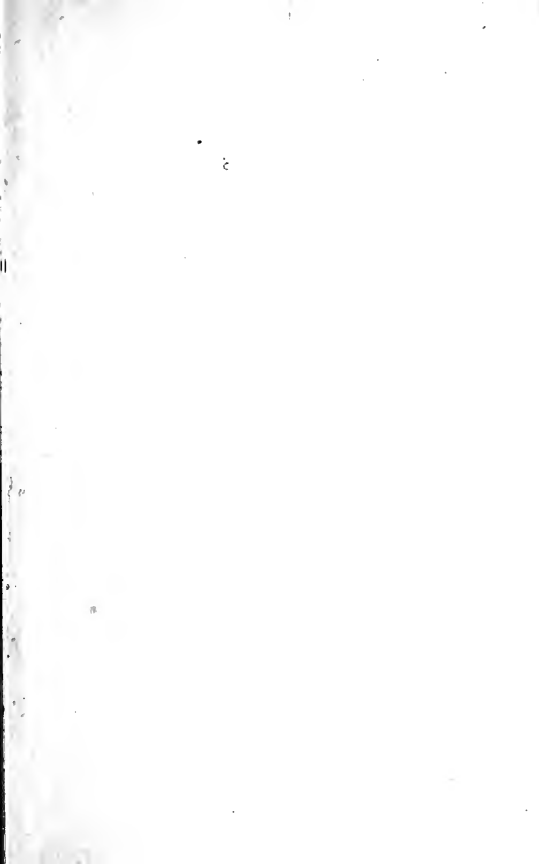
Lincoln not only broke faith in the matter with the moneyed interests, by changing the war into one of abolition, desolation, extermination, and subjugation, but he inaugurated treacherous attacks on these very banks by establishing national pet institutions and annoying the State banks by vexatious taxations. Lincoln, in 1863, levied a tax of three per cent on incomes of that year ending December. Six months after the year had passed, (and the tax had been collected and incomes adjusted, or perhaps surplus spent upon the faith of prior representations,) a retro-active tax of five per cent additional is added for the same time. Was not the three per cent collected under false pretences? Have you ever compared the backs of the two issues of postage currency? Upon the first you find, "Receivable for all dues less than five dollars;" upon the last issue is added the words, "except customs." Well, by true construction of language, the additional words created an exception which did not previously exist. Yet, although the currency first obtained popularity be-

cause receivable for fractional custom-house dues, and at first so taken, it was shortly disallowed, and faith broken. I call all these things the obtaining of money and credit by false pretences and tokens!

I arraign Lincoln for forgery. One class of forgery is the alteration of figures, accounts, and statistics of a pecuniary nature in order to deceive creditors. Who so great a debtor in the world as these United States? Who has so shamefully taxed upon the credulity of creditors by falsifying, from time to time, the figures of the national debt account, as Abraham Lincoln? Nor will I stop to argue this, because the newspapers and money-articles of the press have anticipated me fully.

Were the policies of Mr. Lincoln's party ever so pure and certain, ever so sure of beneficial results, and I approved them, I would not trust them four years longer in his hands after the experience of the past three years. There has been no such cunning trickster since the days of Burr; and Burr was at least a gentle-

man and a scholar! Not even Tyler was so inordinately vain of power. He exercises it as recklessly as Bomba did! He is surrounded by more dangerous men that ever haunted the ante-rooms of the imbecile Louis XIII.! I profoundly pity the rebels under the despotism of Davis. Yet that is at least an educated, intelligent, and respectable despotism. It acts within the forms of law and constitutions. The despotism of centralized power which Lincoln is establishing is a vulgar and debasing despotism—one which appeals to the fears of the pocket for its supremacy; and relies upon purse and sword as a usurpation over free ballot and Constitution.





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