

Lincoln In Indiana

(Continued)

By J. EDWARD MURR

LINCOLN A HOOSIER

"I am not afraid to die, and would be more than willing, but I have an irrepressible desire to live till I can be assured that the world is a little better for my having lived in it."

Although Mr. Lincoln was born in Kentucky, it is not possible by any proper method rightly to classify him as a Kentuckian in the sense that he stood forth as typical and representative of the citizenship of that great State. The extreme poverty of his parents, together with their utter lack of social standing with that dominant class usually regarded both in Kentucky as well as by those without as possessing those distinguishing traits that differentiated them from citizens of other States, makes any attempt to exalt one of Lincoln's class as typical or representative in any way of Kentucky, but little short of preposterous.

Kentucky, as has been stated, has not only produced many great sons, but has been especially fortunate in adopting others. It may be said to her credit that she has been quite as kind to the one as to the other, but the class whom she has delighted to honor has not been that one to which Lincoln belonged. Henry Clay, an adopted son, was more nearly representative of the genuine Kentuckian in the estimation of Kentuckians themselves, and certainly by those without the State, than any whom Kentucky has ever produced.

It it be true that in him were to be found those distinguishing traits more prominently than in others—traits which historians and writers generally have regarded as peculiarly differentiating—then it may be said that there are discerned

even today among the class to which he belonged these same marked traits; and being generally true as it is of her citizens, and so much so as to justify the pride they have in such a heritage, it would appear that but for the unprecedented fame of Lincoln there would have been great hesitancy to classify him as one of their number in view of the fact that he possessed nothing in common with the ruling portion of them. Certainly there was nothing in common between Lincoln and Henry Clay save their political predilections; for on the social side and in all that distinguished Clay in addition to his brilliant genius, Mr. Lincoln bore absolutely no resemblance. Lincoln was awkward, ungainly and homely to a marked degree; uneasy to the extent of being bashful in the presence of ladies; lacking culture, ease and grace; a total stranger to many of the conventionalities of polite society. And thus had he been destined to remain in the State of his birth, he would have more nearly represented the mountaineer type and such as they, rather than that other class so accustomed to such a man as Clay.

Clay was a Chesterfield in the drawing room, a Marlborough in dignity and bearing before public assemblies; so polished and refined in his manners, brilliant and fascinating in conversation, and so prepossessing in personal appearance as scarcely to have an equal; withal a statesman the peer of any and all of his day, and so persuasive, convincing and eloquent an orator, with a voice so charming as to awe vast assemblies, command listening senates and cause his one-time enemy, John Randolph of Roanoke, who sat in his invalid chair, to exclaim to his attendants: "Lift me up so that I may hear that voice once more." Henry Clay, and such as he, will ever be regarded as embodying those eminent traits bespeaking the genuine Kentuckian, rather than Abraham Lincoln, who would have been the last person to assert such a claim for himself.

Without, therefore, purposing to make invidious distinction against any, it cannot be justly charged that the claim degenerates to the level of a mere puerility when it is asserted that Abraham Lincoln was a typical Hoosier rather than a Kentuckian, and he was such not only during his residence in

Indiana, for one-fourth of his life, but it is further claimed that he remained a Hoosier throughout his great career.

State lines, of course, do not ordinarily mark the boundaries of racial characteristics or peculiarities in manners and customs of representatives of the same people, save perhaps in those instances where large rivers or mountain ranges form the boundary lines. Hence the change of residence of Mr. Lincoln to the Sangamon river country was not such as to occasion any difficulty in adjusting himself to the purely local manners, habits and customs of the people. But it is nevertheless true that there was a marked individuality and certain well-defined characteristics in speech and in habits of life typical of the Hoosier. These dominant traits of character which Mr. Lincoln acquired during a residence in Indiana of fourteen years, clung to him to the day of his death.

In his pronunciation (he began his Cooper Institute address by saying "Mr. Cheerman") his peculiar idioms, homely illustrations, figures of speech, his quaint humor and rare wit, his personal appearance, his refusal—at least failure—to readily conform to mere conventionalities in dress and many other things of that sort were pre-eminently characteristic of the pioneer Hoosier. Mr. Lincoln's hands had held the ax and maul so long as to prove rebellious when the conventionalities of men attempted to glove them. His custom was to carry his gloves on occasion, but he rarely wore them.

The genius and all that has made for fame in Indiana has in the main been south of the National Road, which runs through the State centrally from east to west. The Hoosier north of this line was as a rule an Eastern product—a Yankee—while the southern half of the State was peopled by Carolinians, Tennesseans, Virginians, Kentuckians, and a few Yankees, the latter class coming by way of the Ohio river. If there is apparent contradiction to the foregoing statement in the pride that the State of Indiana has had or now has in such men as General Lew Wallace, Senator John W. Kern and Vice-President Thomas R. Marshall and others, let it be remembered that their blood and lineage are wholly that of the southern Hoosier; the tide of emigration coming up from the South merely carried them somewhat farther north than it did others.

That there was marked illiteracy during the pioneer period goes without saying, and that there was a sad lack of refinement and culture is also quite true. But it seems to have escaped the earlier writers' notice for a time that the blood which peopled the southern portion of the State in particular was for the most part quite as good as any in the New World, and since it was this strain that was destined to produce the first typical American, Abraham Lincoln, there is the highest reason for asserting that it was of the best.

Prior to the Civil war the eastern portion of our country looked upon the West somewhat after the manner that Europe viewed the New World, in the matter of letters, up to the time of Washington Irving. The country had been accustomed to look to the Atlantic coast for leadership in substantially everything, and so strongly intrenched was this notion in the minds of the people generally that even the people of the West themselves were slow to realize that it was this section of our country that was to produce the typical American. During the formative period of our country's history the Atlantic coast was of necessity but Europe transplanted to the New World. So it became necessary to allow the tide of emigration to reach that region somewhat remote from these influences to bring forth "upon our new soil" this real dominant Americanism.

As great as was Mr. Lincoln in the estimation of the East, there are certain sections today that have never yielded the ancient notion of the East's own rightful leadership, and they refuse to allow that any good thing can come out of the West, which surpasses or even equals the East. Not that there is any vulgar opposition to the claim made by the West, so much as there is a dogged disposition to ignore the West to the point of thinking in terms of the East, and apparently not at all realizing that what we as a nation had been unconsciously striving for has been in fact consummated west of the Alleghenies.

That southern Indiana was of all places best suited to rear this great character destined to furnish the nations of the earth an example of the possibilities of the plain people is the position here taken. The odium, not to say the shame, of

being a Hoosier has, as heretofore indicated, undergone a marked change since Lincoln's time. While Mr. Lincoln was a resident of this portion of Indiana, or soon after his reaching Illinois, there were many domiciled in log cabins in this Indiana wilderness who were afterward to become famous.

It is significant that the private secretary to Mr. Lincoln, Major John Hay, who later became one of our greatest secretaries of State, was born a few miles north of where Lincoln lived; and in fifteen miles from the birthplace of Hay and a few miles to the east of Lincoln there lived Walter Q. Gresham, afterward an eminent jurist, a great soldier and also a secretary of State. Here resided Eads, of Eads jetties fame; and it was from this portion of the State that there came Generals Harrison, Hovey, Wallace, Burnside, Rosencranz and others of Civil war fame; the Lanes, James, Joseph and Henry S., and what shall we say of Generals Jefferson C. Davis, John Tipton, Governor Jennings and Joaquin Miller; of writers, jurists, orators, educators and statesmen, who subdued this wilderness, fought valiantly at Shiloh, Vicksburg, Antietam, Gettysburg, or marched with Sherman to the sea? Among such a people capable of producing and rearing these, and such as these, Mr. Lincoln spent those years between seven and twenty-one. If we may be permitted to assume that the Almighty desiring early to surround his destined leader through a terrible Civil war with those influences best calculated to bring about the deliverance of a people in bondage, as well as preserve the unity and continuity of a great nation, by taking him to a free State among a people who had strong convictions against human slavery, then we may see no departure from His ancient methods in dealing with His chosen.

Jefferson Davis, who was born in a slave State and within a few miles of Mr. Lincoln, and reared in the belief of the justice of such an institution, said by way of rejoinder to President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, in a message to the Confederate congress, that "it was the most execrable measure ever recorded in the annals of guilty man." Thus we may perhaps be allowed to surmise that had Lincoln continued to reside in Kentucky his attitude, if not favorable toward slavery, at least might have been so lenient as to have

eliminated him from leadership in the nation's crisis. The Indiana residence, while freeing Mr. Lincoln from that favorable inclination that seems usually to have prevailed with those reared under its sway, was at the same time in close juxtaposition, and thus permitted him to occasionally look in upon its cruelties. It is quite generally understood that Mr. Lincoln's first view of slavery after reaching maturity was on the occasion of his celebrated flatboat trip down the Mississippi river with Allen Gentry, this being when he was nineteen years of age.

The writer, while residing in Spencer county, Indiana, a number of years since, serving a church there in the capacity of minister, had in his congregation a number of elderly men and women who remembered very well that Lincoln, while a ferryman at the mouth of Anderson creek, accompanied their neighbor, Mr. Ray, a flat-boatman, down the Mississippi river some two years prior to the celebrated trip with Allen Gentry.

The circumstance and the occasion of the trip were as follows: Lincoln, while serving as ferryman at the mouth of Anderson creek, had cultivated a crop of tobacco on the site of the present little village of Maxville, some three-fourths of a mile below the town of Troy. The tobacco field had been planted and cultivated by Lincoln during the lull of business as a ferryman, and while the tobacco had ripened, had been cut, cured and otherwise prepared for the market, Mr. Ray, well known to Lincoln, "was building a flatboat up the mouth of Anderson" preparatory to making the southern trip. Accordingly Lincoln, thinking that he saw a way for marketing his "two hogsheads of tobacco", proposed to Ray that they "strike up a trade", and on Ray asking "what sort of a trade he meant", Lincoln replied: "I've got my tobacco crop cured up and ready for market and I've got no way to get it south unless I send it by boat, and it struck me you'll need hands. You and me might get together some way. I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll go along with you at the oar if you'll take my tobacco and then pay me the difference." This proposition appealed to Ray and the bargain was accordingly made, Lincoln going along as a hand "at the oar".

William Forsythe, for many years a business man in

Grandview, Spencer county, born and reared in the town of Troy, remembered "long Abe", the ferryman. He often related to the writer the circumstance of his having been "set across Anderson by Lincoln". He stated that the boys of Troy would frequently go down to the mouth of Anderson creek to hear "Long Abe talk and tell yarns." While he failed to recall any of "Long Abe's yarns," yet he stated that when the boys had "prowled about town" and time hung heavily on their hands, some one would at such times speak up and say: "Boys, I'll tell you what let's do. Let's go down to Anderson and listen at Long Abe talk." Usually this suggestion was acted upon and they would straightway repair to the ferry. When asked as to what "Long Abe" talked about, he replied: "He would just set down and the boys 'd all get around him and he'd say things that would make them all laugh." Forsythe often related the circumstance of Lincoln's making the flatboat trip down the Mississippi river with Ray. Jefferson Ray, a son of the flatboatman, was likewise a business man, and he, as was Forsythe, was officially connected with the church of which the writer was pastor. Thus these and many others—some having personal knowledge and others relating the circumstance as received from Ray—establish beyond any doubt that Lincoln looked in upon slavery at least two years earlier than we have been accustomed to suppose.

The fact that Lincoln thus had an earlier view of slavery than is generally believed is, of course, of no great moment in any effort made to establish his opposition to that institution. That he possessed a life-long conviction that all men should be free is indisputably true; but if he did in fact, as here recorded, make this flatboat trip south at such an impressionable age (that of seventeen), and it is as clearly established as anything could well be, then it does become more or less valuable not only as furnishing him a more extended view of the effects of slavery, but doubtless in no small measure served also as a preparation for the two later journeys south in more mature years; thus enabling him to profit during the interval by meditation and reflection such as must have necessarily arisen on the occasion of the journey made in the earlier period of his life.

In addition to the foregoing, the fact of Lincoln's having made this journey South should be told now since the earlier biographers have failed to record it, and the passing of all those who could supply data and subject matter precludes the possibility of any future historian being able to glean in a field which is of course now largely, if not wholly, barren.

It should perhaps be stated in this connection that the writer found no authentic account of any definitely expressed convictions by Lincoln, covering this period, on the question of African slavery. However, James Gentry, when interrogated as to this particular, exclaimed: "Why, Abe always was against slavery!" And then he added: "But Abe followed Henry Clay around wherever he'd go in mighty nigh everything, and old Harry's notions was responsible fer Abe a bein' so slow to send out his Emancipation Proclamation. Abe'd a done it long before he did, I reckon, if his head hadn't been so full of Henry Clay's notions."

That Henry Clay was Lincoln's political ideal and possessed marked influence upon him is true, and to no small extent justifies the conviction here expressed by his old boyhood friend and associate. Lincoln, naturally conservative and of the Clay school in politics, not only saved the border States to the Union during the Civil war, but on the other hand was able sufficiently to modify his Clay notion of gradual emancipation to issue finally the Emancipation Proclamation when it appeared to be warranted by military necessity.

ONE-FOURTH OF LINCOLN'S LIFE SPENT IN INDIANA

"I tell my Tad that we will go back to the farm where I was happier as a boy when I dug potatoes at twenty-five cents a day than I am now."

Mention has been made of the fact that in many instances those who have undertaken the task of writing extensively concerning the life and character of Mr. Lincoln have professed to see comparatively little which appeared to justify special treatment beyond a few anecdotes and stories in the events of his career prior to his becoming a resident of Illi-

nois. It is strange indeed that in this day, when educators are calling attention particularly to the adolescent period of youth, that there has not been some effort beyond that hitherto attempted to note particularly this period in the life of our martyred President.

The failure to do this, especially in more recent times, is doubtless attributable in part to the fact that those who have attempted to gather suitable data have generally made hasty journeys to this field, and meeting with comparatively little success, have yielded to the belief that this period was so elusive as not to warrant any extended effort.

In view of the fact that Lincoln is so generally regarded as a model in the higher reaches of statesmanship, politics, and morals, and possessing as he did substantially all of the cardinal virtues, so that writers and speakers, both on the platform and in the pulpit, editors of magazines, the press, educators in the great universities, the schoolmaster in the "little red schoolhouse", and the plain people in the highways and about the firesides in millions of homes, are accustomed daily to recount his virtues, laud and magnify his name, therefore, if it can be shown with any degree of certainty that the formative years had much to do in shaping Mr. Lincoln's unprecedented career, then it would appear that a somewhat extended investigation of this period of his life is not without considerable interest. Moreover, if these neglected years may be made to yield a fruitful harvest, then it is but just to the memory of Lincoln that this be done, especially since he reached the heights of fame from a lower level than any other great character in history.

The only great men in American history comparable to President Lincoln by reason of early disadvantages are Horace Greely, Henry Wilson and Benjamin Franklin. If in the judgment of some there be yet others, distinctively American, deemed worthy of such comparison, these named are at least representative. They were all born in a zone of alluring chance and opportunity as compared with Lincoln. Greely and Wilson were each within a three days' tramp of educational centers, while Franklin was born and lived in one. The beaten path of travel crossed their horizon. There was no

lack of incentive and inspiring examples of patriotic men prominent in public affairs, while Lincoln's youth was far remote from any and all of those influences calculated to uplift and inspire, things usually deemed so essential in attaining unto excellence.

Lincoln's poverty, like Franklin's and Wilson's, was exceedingly great, but was in his case more easily and contentedly endured than the more exacting thing of being deprived of a chance to quench his consuming thirst for knowledge. His youthful ambition to rise in the world was native, dominating and irresistible. Denied as he was the privileges of school, access to libraries, and the association of the educated and learned, it was left for him to demonstrate the possibility of going forth to conquer, unaided by artificial and external means, save a borrowed library of seven books and becoming as he did such a master of them as to enable him in turn to master men, cope with rising events and challenge the admiration of mankind. So great were his achievements and so enduring his fame that he staggers royalty on its road with burdens of oppression into soberness and justice, and provokes and inspires by his illustrious deeds along the path from the dust-covered floor of his wilderness cabin to the nation's capitol, the peasant's son to hope. The boy Lincoln needed no incentive to acquire knowledge. To know with him was from the first a passion. He did not wish so much for examples of what learning might accomplish or produce as he did for the necessary tools with which he might fashion the boy of his day-dreams—himself—into the man he really believed himself capable of becoming.

He early learned to believe in himself, implicitly, trustfully and overwhelmingly, and no one thing was more conspicuous throughout his entire career than this, save perhaps his honesty. No President of the United States ever received more advice and listened to it more patiently than he, but no man who ever sat in the executive chair of the nation needed it less or used it more sparingly. This was characteristic of him as a youth. He gave a patient hearing to all and then followed his own counsel. He was quite self-contained and abundantly resourceful, accustomed as he was in youth, and

later in his public career, to be much on the "stump", yet his caution was so great as to make him a rather poor extemporaneous speaker. He must first think it over and then he was ready without fear or favor. He never doubted his ability to meet any emergency or master any task, and he cared but little for precedent, although he established more precedents than any other President in American history. He wrote his first inaugural address without consultation with anybody, and read this "as if he had been delivering inaugural addresses all his life." He kept his own counsel. In mature years he rarely confided in his most intimate friends. He never did fully in any of them. In youth this trait was noticeable. He was diffident on occasions, and impressed all of his associates with the idea that what he said on any given subject was but little as compared to much that he could say. He never left any one in doubt, however, as to any position taken on any subject. From the day of his youthful opposition to intemperance down to the "house divided against itself" speech, and the famous letter to Horace Greely wherein he stated that his "paramount object was to save the Union", he stood out in the open. He rescued politics from the charge of trickery and double-dealing and restored it to a place of honor, and if it has at any time since sunk down into the "mud and scum of things", it is no fault of his.

What Lincoln purposed doing or saying in any given case he carried out to the letter. Where most others jumped at conclusions, he patiently reasoned his way, and when once reached no one could by any possibility, either by persuasion or force, move him. Mrs. Lincoln once said of him: "When he has made up his mind no one can change him."

As a youth his obstinacy would have passed for stubbornness but for the manifest fairness and justness of the position taken. This, together with the fact that his sense of justice and honesty ever caused him to make amends for any mistake in judgment which he made, caused him to be invariably chosen by his associates to adjudicate differences.

Any boyhood quarrel leading to fight ended by Lincoln's opponent becoming his friend. He "got mad", but was a stranger to malice. When he said in a great state paper—

his second Inaugural Address,—“with malice toward none, with charity for all,” he was not voicing a thing learned during the terrible four years’ war; he was but announcing to the world that his lifelong disposition to hold no malice, after having been tried in the fires of four years of civil war, had come out unchanged. Had General Andrew Jackson been in his stead and given utterance to such a sentiment, we would perhaps have deemed it so at variance with his accustomed manner as to call it hypocrisy. Jackson, however, would never have uttered this sentiment at the close of a great war for the preservation of the Federal Union. It may be doubted whether we have ever had any other President who would have done so.

Young Lincoln had a fight with William Grigsby when sixteen years of age, and not only did they “make up” and become friends, but during the Civil war on one occasion when party spirit ran high, a man in Gentryville was freely indulging in criticism of Lincoln and “Bill Grigsby hauled his coat off and made him take it back”. The Lincoln critic was a local bully, and after the trouble, when Lincoln’s honor had thus been saved by proxy, Grigsby exclaimed: “No man can talk about Abe around here unless he expects to take a lickin’.”

The great Lincoln lecturers, such as Bishop Charles Fowler, Vice-President Schuyler Colfax and Col. Henry Watterson, listened to with attention and great profit by multitudes, always placed the emphasis upon other periods in Mr. Lincoln’s life rather than upon the formative years. Indeed, it cannot escape the notice of the least observant that substantially all that has ever been said upon the platform concerning Mr. Lincoln’s youth, especially as pertaining to or influencing in any way his public career, has been very largely confined to those years (the first seven) spent in Kentucky, the State of his birth.

Some of his biographers, in desiring to have him secure the supposed benefits of a longer residence in his native State than it was his fortune to have, took some liberties with certain incidents transpiring at a later period and gave them a Kentucky setting. Two biographers at least distinctly as-

sert that Lincoln was called "honest Abe", while yet a resident of Kentucky; and some of them attribute to him the ability to read and write while a mere infant, making much of his schooling in that State, and otherwise making assertions that are incompatible with reliable testimony.

The boy Lincoln learned to read quite young, and while yet a resident of Kentucky. He was, however, indebted to his mother for this rather than to Riney or Hazel, his two teachers there. The attendance at the Riney school was at the age of four, only for a very brief time, and he went simply to accompany his sister Sarah. He was seven years old when he attended the next term. Evidently he was greatly profited and made rapid progress during this session.

Col. Henry Watterson in his great lecture on Lincoln, as well as in other public addresses where incidental reference to Lincoln is made, invariably speaks of him as the "great Kentuckian", making no mention whatever of that period in Mr. Lincoln's life spent in the State of Indiana. But as if fortifying himself against the possibility of this assertion being called in question, since the whole of that life save the first seven years was spent outside of Kentucky, he straightway asks: "For what was Springfield, Illinois, but a Kentucky colony?"

In view of the foregoing logic, what would be the claim in behalf of Henry Clay, who was a bearded man from the State of Virginia when taking up his residence in Kentucky? And to use the interrogatory of Colonel Watterson, and apply it to Mr. Clay, we may ask: "For what was Kentucky but a Virginia colony?" Again in the case of Gen. Albert Sidney Johnston of New England lineage, that great military captain who came so nearly planting the Stars and Bars on the banks of the Ohio river; does it follow that he was a Puritan when his impressionable years of training were spent among Cavaliers? And yet again, because the last remaining member of the old school of brilliant editors, Col. Watterson himself, honored as he is throughout the nation, and ever regarded as a truly great Kentuckian, because he himself happened to be born elsewhere than in the State of Kentucky, does it in the least lessen the just claim to such distinguished consider-

ation, since he like Mr. Clay is the very embodiment of all of those eminent traits bespeaking a Kentuckian?

When the bill before the United States Senate proposing to appropriate \$2,000,000 for the erection of a Greek memorial temple to the memory of Lincoln was under discussion, Senator Ollie James of Kentucky, in speaking in behalf of the measure and in opposition to the proposed substitute, that of erecting a memorial highway from Washington City to the battlefield of Gettysburg, spoke of Mr. Lincoln as "that great Kentuckian", and suggested that if it was deemed advisable to construct a Lincoln roadway anywhere, it would be more fitting to build one from Lincoln's birthplace in Kentucky to the State of Illinois. The presumption is that in that event this highway would pass through Indiana, although, as usual, no mention was made of that State.

Ex-Presidents Roosevelt and Taft both visited the birthplace of Mr. Lincoln in official capacity, and both of them in addresses on those occasions did not fail to note the fact (and very properly so) that Mr. Lincoln was a Kentuckian by birth, but no mention was made of the fact that when Illinois received him he was a bearded man, and when Kentucky dismissed him he was a mere child, departing with little more than a memory of his native State.

Colonel Roosevelt in particular spoke of Mr. Lincoln as "the great Kentuckian", and associated him with the Kentucky pioneers. Indeed, some of Mr. Lincoln's biographers have repeatedly denominated him as a Kentucky pioneer, whereas his parents were both Virginians; and while he was born in Kentucky, in leaving that State while yet so young it cannot rightly be claimed that he was in any sense a Kentucky pioneer. As Colonel Roosevelt asserts, he was associated with these pioneers, although but very briefly and merely as a child. However, some of his Indiana neighbors were Kentuckians.

A search through numerous addresses delivered on great public occasions, in lectures, periodicals and books reveals the unmistakable fact that but small space has been allotted to those years in the life of the great President spent in Indiana, but much has been said by the many concerning Mr. Lincoln's

birthplace, and a labored effort made to account for his greatness by the mere fact of his having had a Kentucky origin. The reasons for this are perhaps not difficult to ascertain, at least some of them.

Kentucky had the proud distinction of early producing or adopting many great men. Being the gateway to the North through which the emigrant tides poured to the newer States and Territories, she took toll of these, often selecting the best, but not always. Being a slave State and fostering an institution that materially contributed to the creation of a regime generally prevailing over a large portion of the State, although not all, there was in consequence lodged with this favored class all the political power, as well as the intellectual, financial and social prestige. It was this class that was met with and spoken of, and being especially fortunate in her adoption of Henry Clay, the world without readily came to regard Clay, and such as he, as typifying Kentucky as a whole.

Her mountaineers and poor whites did not at that time disturb averages as they now do. They were then content to enjoy their feudal fights. The currents of life swept around them. No John Fox, Jr., was at that period portraying their life and character, but whatever was said in song or story was of the other dominant and ruling class. So true was this that when Stephen Collins Foster from farther north looked in upon this scene he was induced to locate "The Old Kentucky Home" in the Blue Grass region with "darkies gay" and pickaninnies playing on the cabin floor.

Indiana was not so fortunate in some particulars. During the pioneer period of her history, and therefore while Lincoln was a resident of that State, the term "Hoosier" was given to her citizens, a name at that time, and for a considerable period thereafter, conveying the idea of, whatever else it may, inferiority, boorishness in manners, deplorable ignorance and crudity; and thus the name was indicative of that something bespeaking an inhabitant of a State whose community life was believed to be faithfully portrayed by Edward Eggleston in the *Hoosier School Master*. Although Eggleston perhaps never meant that his fictitious portraiture of the

early pioneers was to be taken so seriously, but, fiction though it was, and portraying as it did the life and character of the pioneer type of that day, not only in the State of Indiana but throughout the Middle West as well, no matter of fact history was ever more faithfully and literally received. It is believed that in remote sections of our country there are those today who still hold to the ancient belief, and apply it to the present generation of Hoosiers. Therefore, for one seeking to eulogize a great character, and particularly such a one as Lincoln, deficient as he was in the training of the schools, certainly anything else but polished in the manners and customs peculiar to the older and more settled communities, and above all, one who apparently by nature was so democratic in his tastes and appetencies, there is small wonder that the earlier historians and eulogists (all of whom save one were from without the State) studiously avoided the Hoosier period in Mr. Lincoln's life, save that in tracing his itinerary they bridged these formative years spent among Hoosiers with a few incidents and anecdotes of more or less interest, and briefly noted the beginnings of his career, then passing on to the more active years of his manhood in the State of Illinois.

At this late day when we are so far removed from those things once generally prevalent, when the title "Hoosier" has become quite as honorable as that borne by the citizens of any State in the Union, and more especially when we come to consider the life and services of such a world character as was Mr. Lincoln, some things may be justly asserted concerning the Hoosier period in his life with a reasonable expectation that adequate emphasis be allowed and it in consequence be placed in its proper relation.

Three States, Kentucky, Indiana and Illinois, had to do in producing, rearing and offering to the world this great character. It is a distinguished honor that the State of Kentucky has in being able to point with pardonable pride to the spot that gave birth to our greatest American. This spot has been highly and very fittingly honored by the expenditure of a vast amount of money in the erection of a suitable memorial building. This has caused Presidents, congressmen, govern-

ors of States, and multitudes of the plain people to make pilgrimages there and thus pay homage to his memory.

The prairie State of Illinois that twice offered Mr. Lincoln as her successful candidate for the presidency, and in whose soil his body now reposes beneath a costly and imposing monument, has just cause for pride. But if Kentucky gave Mr. Lincoln birth, it was as if she deemed that quite sufficient honor and speedily dismissed him at the tender age of seven to be received by the new State of Indiana with a pioneer's welcome. Here amid the heroic frontier hardships he reached his majority, spending fourteen years, or just one-fourth of his entire life on Indiana soil.

In an address to an Indiana regiment of Civil war soldiers President Lincoln said: "I was born in Kentucky, raised in Indiana, and now live in Illinois." Since it is particularly with these years spent in Indiana with which we have to do, the inquiry is here made: What period in the life of any man is of as much interest or ordinarily calculated to influence and shape the destiny as those years between seven and twenty-one? What happened during those formative years in Mr. Lincoln's life? Was his stay in Indiana a mere chance, one of the accidents in the fortune of a roving, nomadic father, or is there rather discerned a leading of Providence?

It may not be inappropriate here to raise the question, would his career have been what it afterward became had he spent these formative years elsewhere, even in the State of Illinois? Or, reversing the order of history, had he been born in Indiana, spending the first seven years there, removing to the State of Kentucky, remaining there until attaining his majority, and then going to Illinois as he did, would his career have been what it was? It is believed that certain influences would have produced marked changes in him, and so much so as to have prevented Lincoln from becoming the great anti-slavery advocate and leader. Moreover, it cannot be doubted that had he spent all of these fourteen formative years in Kentucky, even though born in Indiana, his greatness would have almost wholly been attributed to a residence and rearing among Kentucky pioneers, and the accident of his birth would have doubtless received somewhat less consideration than it

has. Unquestionably, had Mr. Lincoln been reared elsewhere than in Indiana, particularly in a slave State, the plans and purposes of his life might have been hindered or defeated altogether. In raising such questions we are not wholly in a field purely conjectural.

THE EVERY-DAY LIFE OF LINCOLN

I personally wish Jacob Freese, of New Jersey, appointed colonel of a colored regiment, and this regardless of whether he can tell the exact color of Julius Caesar's hair.

Many people have from time to time expressed a desire to know somewhat more in detail concerning the "every-day life of Lincoln's youth;" something as to his "manners, habits and customs;" whether he "possessed vicious tendencies;" whether he was "given to idleness or not," as has been alleged; whether he was "of a quarrelsome nature," and many other things of this sort, so that some adequate idea might be formed as to just what extent, if any, there was a basis for supposing him at that time making any preparation, however unconsciously, for the unprecedented career that awaited him.

A painstaking effort was made covering this field of inquiry, and it is believed that these repeated interviews with his former associates elicited information which will aid in reaching conclusions as to the influence some things transpiring in his youth had in shaping his destiny.

It should be stated first of all that Lincoln himself was accustomed to assert from his fifteenth year onward, in a sort of half jest, half earnest way, that "he didn't always expect to grub, dig and maul." When asked at such times what he expected to do he invariably replied: "I'll do something and be somebody," and often closed by saying: "I'll be President, I reckon." If Lincoln possessed visions of a future altogether different from the ceaseless round of menial toil, which did not particularly promise to better his condition since he failed to receive remuneration commensurate thereto, his boyhood associates in no single case asserted that they at any time anticipated the great career of Mr. Lincoln. As we now look back upon Mr. Lincoln's career and witness his rise to fame, it ap-

pears so utterly at variance with all that is deemed essential to achieve greatness as to occasion momentary doubts of the truthfulness of history. Had he lived in an earlier age his life story would have speedily passed into romance and fiction.

Contrary to the usual representation, a number of these boyhood friends, while not especially schooled, were quite well informed, and many of them had prospered until they possessed at least passing wealth. No better citizen could be found anywhere than the Gentrys, Larmars, Halls, Forsythes, Brooners, and others. These men asserted that "Lincoln as a boy was jokey and lively, entering into all of their boyish sports heartily." These sports and games consisted of jumping half hammon (now called hop, step and jump), the broad jump, running, slap jack, town ball, stink base, wrestling, I spy, etc.

On one occasion when quite a number of the young folks had gathered at the Lincoln cabin and were engaged in a game of "hide and go seek," Lincoln among them, Granny Hanks came to the door with a Bible in her hands, and calling to young Lincoln, said: "Abe, I want you to come in hyar and read a chapter for me out'n the Bible. I aint hearn it read fur a right smart spell." It should be stated that it is not certain just who this old lady was, but there was a lady called "Granny Hanks" who for a time at least, resided with the Lincolns. These pioneer neighbors of the Lincolns frequently alluded to her in conversation. No mention has ever been made of her by any of Mr. Lincoln's biographers, and it is quite immaterial for our purpose to establish the identity, save that there might arise the charge that this character was purely fictitious. That substantially all of the immediate relatives of Nancy Hanks followed her to Indiana is the statement made by the Hankses themselves, and thus there need be no scruples as to the identity of this particular lady.

We are accustomed to believe that in those days respect on the part of young folks for old age was especially characteristic. At any rate, in this case Lincoln immediately quit the game when so requested and went into the house followed by all the rest of the young folks. The future humorist and wit, who read a chapter from Artemus Ward to members of his

cabinet just before announcing his intention of publishing the Emancipation Proclamation, now gravely seated himself opposite the old lady and presently began thumbing the leaves of the book which had been handed to him in search of a suitable chapter. The young people had crowded into the room, some being seated on the backless bench, some two or three on chairs, and a number were standing about the room. Presently the reader began a chapter, presumably in the Prophecy of Isaiah, but he had not read very far until he began making use of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* and such other volumes as he was familiar with, all this time making solemn but ill-concealed sly observations as to just how this rendering was being received by Granny Hanks. After a number of verses (?) had been read the old lady's suspicion became aroused, and finally when the reader ventured to make a rather free translation she suddenly interrupted him by exclaiming: "Abe, I've hearn the Bible read a great many times in my life, but I never yit hearn them things in it afore." Lincoln, perceiving that he was fairly caught, threw off his make-believe solemnity and abandoned himself to guffaws of hearty laughter, at the same time lifting the book high above his head and occasionally striking his knees a resounding whack with the free hand. After indulging himself in this manner for a time and occasioning more or less merriment among the older boys and girls present, his laughter at length subsided and he remarked: "Granny, you caught me that time, didn't you?" He then began deliberately reading again, this time following the text.

The character of Lincoln's humor, and his disposition to make free use of it at the least provocation by associating it, as in this instance, with the more serious things of life, were apparently prominent enough at an early period readily to account for some of the surprises produced in the minds of cabinet officers and others high in authority during the days of his occupancy of the White House.

It is exceedingly difficult for those of this century and age of plenty, accustomed to the numerous conveniences of modern life, to appreciate adequately the social standing, self denial and lack of the many things once regarded as luxuries,

but now considered as necessities and which in many instances are now to be had merely for a trifle. Moreover, the early settlers, particularly in Lincoln's day, had to contend with some things which their descendants are free from altogether. In addition to the afflictions peculiar to the pioneer period, as well as the danger of being exposed to wild animals, there were many annoyances to which the people were subjected. They had the mosquito without the modern conveniences of meeting his attacks; the woods tick, still met with in certain sections; burrs, such as the "stick tights," "Spanish needles," cockle and "beggar's lice;" venomous serpents, such as the deadly rattlers and copper heads—the latter being, if not quite as venomous, certainly more treacherous—chiggers and numerous inconveniences. In addition to the foregoing there were the body and head lice, particularly the latter. It was Lincoln's favorite poet, Burns, who wrote a poem "on seeing a louse on a lady's bonnet." Had the Scotch bard been a resident of this section in the early days, he would have had occasion to witness the "crawlin beastie" again and again, for no term of school ever closed without a siege by this species of vermin.

Wesley Hall stated:

One morning bright and early Abe came to our home, and after being seated and asked by my mother in true neighborly fashion, "how are all the folks?" he replied: "They are all well, Mrs. Hall, but mother thinks the children have got the creepers, and she sent me over here this morning to borry your fine-tooth comb." When this information was imparted, Mrs. Hall threw up her hands and exclaimed: "My Lordy, Abe, d'ye reckon it's a fact?" Whereupon Abraham observed that "he reckoned they had, but not having a comb with teeth close enough together to ketch 'em, he had been dispatched on the hunt of one that would."

The accommodating possessor of this household article brought it forth and knowing that her own children, and Wesley in particular, had been at play with the Lincoln children, she suddenly suggested the possibility of the "creepers" having found lodgment on the heads of the younger members of her own household and desiring to verify her supposition, she put it to the test by proceeding to comb the head of young Wesley and found abundant evidence to justify all of her suspicions. After young Hall had been subjected to this rigid examination,

with Lincoln seated near, occasionally offering humorous remarks, Mrs. Hall made bold to suggest the possibility of the "creepers" being upon Lincoln's head; whereupon he acquiesced to the effect that there was a possibility of this being true. Then Mrs. Hall further pointedly suggested that she be privileged to make examination, and Lincoln getting down on his knees before her and bending his head over, facing a newspaper spread out on the floor, it was not long before all concerned were satisfied that the investigation was timely.

Lincoln was given to indulging himself in the sport of fishing, coon and opossum hunting at nights, but found sport distasteful if he had to stalk a deer cautiously, approach a flock of turkeys or sit quietly on the bank of a stream without a companion. Such distaste grew out of the fact that it divorced him from his companions or necessitated refraining from conversation. His enjoyment of the night-hunting was attributed to the fact that on such expeditions there was small need of refraining from hilarious conversation, and since it placed him in company of a goodly number of men and boys he engaged in this particular diversion quite frequently. His overmastering desire to be found in the company of others—the more, the better—led him to attend all social functions of the neighborhood such as weddings, corn-huskings, log-rollings and raisings. In fact, he could usually be found mingling with the crowd no matter what had called it together. His presence, therefore, on some of these occasions, was not due to any especial interest in the things done, but because he loved the fellowship of men. He frequented all horse races held in the settlement, and if a fight between two "bullies" was scheduled, he was invariably present. These horse races, of course, were nothing more than a test of speed of "brag horses" in that and adjoining neighborhoods, the owners having usually placed a bet and challenged one another to a test. They partook somewhat of the nature of Indian pony races rather than regular race track meets. The race was run on a straight-away, often a public road. Such gatherings afforded opportunity also to ascertain who was the champion "wrestler" and the best broad or half-hammon jumper. Foot races were indulged in; "town ball," "stink base," and "chicken" were played not only before

and after the races, but on many other occasions where crowds were gathered. Horseshoe pitching, throwing a heavy maul as a shot put, lifting a dead weight—usually a boulder or log—and many other such things tested physical endurance and prowess. In all feats of strength Lincoln excelled, such as throwing the maul and wrestling. Being exceedingly awkward, his movements, while surprisingly quick, were ludicrous and provoked more or less merriment. Fistic encounters were quite common, but resort to the use of a weapon such as a knife or gun was exceedingly rare. Men bearing any grudge against each other, or taking umbrage at any fancied slight or insult, would say: "I'll meet you Saturday at town and I'll settle with you there." Hence Saturday afternoon fights were numerous. Usually the fight was fair, that is, "no gouging or biting" was permitted and no interference on the part of the bystanders was suffered on penalty of a personal chastisement by a "backer." If the under man "hollered enough," that was usually satisfactory to both the victor and onlookers, but if in the heat of passion other punishment was still meted out, there was no lack of friends and sympathizers for the "under dog" in the fight, who speedily came to his rescue. Lincoln was much given to wrestling, but seldom fought. He was not averse to this, but his well-known strength for a youth—a minor—prevented difficulties with men; and since he reached his gigantic stature of six feet, four inches, when sixteen years of age, and possessing great strength, he was "too big to fight a boy and too young to fight a man." It should not be inferred by any of these remarks that Lincoln was quarrelsome or usually disposed to "pick a quarrel." Indeed, the very opposite was true of him, but in the phraseology of the day, "he allus toted his own skillet." When provoked and jeered at by the uninitiated because of his awkward appearance, he received the banterings at first quite good naturedly, and his tormentors were easily led into the belief that he was a coward. When forbearance ceased to be a virtue, Lincoln stood up for his honor and invariably "thrashed" his assailant.

Rothchild in *Master of Men*, in speaking of Lincoln during this period, said: "He was the shyest, most reticent, most uncouth and awkward appearing, homeliest and worst dressed of

any in the entire crowd." This characterization in some particulars is not in accordance with the facts as detailed by many of Lincoln's early friends. Young Lincoln was not shy of anything or any one, save that he manifested more or less uneasiness in the presence of ladies. This was certainly true of him while reading law at New Salem, Illinois, when it is related that he changed his boarding place because a number of strange ladies came there to take their meals. When called upon in Washington City to make an address before ladies, he stated that "he was not accustomed to the eulogy of women." Lincoln was not reticent at any time in life, and no more during his youth than at a later period, but if by reticence it is aimed to show that he could keep his own counsel and otherwise prevent encroachment upon his reserve, then no youth nor adult was any more reticent than he. But as a youth "he was a talker," and an incessant one, although he was a good listener. He was not dictatorial or inclined to monopolize conversation, but so incessant a talker was he that he was charged, and doubtless justly so, by his associates as being "vain about hearing his own voice." However, it should be said that this allegation was made, having in view his habit of "preaching" or "stump speaking."

Major John Hay, his private secretary, asserted that Lincoln's intellectual arrogance and unconscious assumption of superiority was the one thing that such men as Senator Sumner and Governor Chase could never forgive. Secretary Seward, that astute politician and sage of Auburn, after three months of the untried Lincoln in the White House, wrote his wife that "the President is more than a match for us all."

When Mrs. Lincoln early in the administration said to her husband that certain politicians were asserting that Secretary Seward would "run things," Lincoln calmly remarked:

I may not rule myself, but certainly Seward shall not. The only ruler I have is my conscience, following God in it, and these men will have to learn that yet.

Lincoln had a becoming respect for age—provided age set the example. A lady whom Lincoln had occasionally called on and accompanied to social gatherings, said:

One evenin' Abe and me wus standin' out in the yard at our house a talkin', and we heard a clatter of horses' hoofs comin' up the road that run past the house, and purty soon we seen who it was. It was a neighbor that wus always braggin' about his horses, a claimin' he had the fastest horse in all the country 'round, and he had a proud way of ridin' just to show off. So as I say, up he come, like as if he wus going after a doctor, and when he got opposite to us he stopped and begun as usual to brag about his horse, sayin' among other things that he could ride him in a lope all the way to Boonville and he'd never even draw a long breath, and a whole lot more things like that. Abe stood there and 'peared to listen to him like if 'twas the first time he'd ever heard him tell them things, and then when he finally got through Abe up and says: "I've heard you say that time and agin. In fact your always a braggin' on what you've got and what you c'n do or a goin' to do. Now suppose jest for once in your life you quit your braggin' and blowin' around and really do something. Strike out for Boonville, and when you git there, take a right good look and see if your brag horse aint fetchin' some mighty short breaths."

As to Lincoln's being "the worst dressed youth in the crowd," that is an overdrawn statement, for they were all dressed about as nearly alike as coon skin caps, hunting shirts or a blouse and buckskin breeches could make them. If there was any difference, it would be in Lincoln's favor on the score of cleanliness, for his mother frequently commented upon the fact of his being so careful with his clothing, and certainly no better evidence could be desired in such a matter than that of a mother. If the assertion that he was the worst dressed one in the crowd should be from the tailor's point of view, then there need be no difference of opinion concerning it. He appears to have always had more or less difficulty in obtaining garments large enough. His trousers were usually from five to twelve inches too short, and since he almost invariably wore moccasins or low topped shoes, there was an unprotected area between the ankle and the knee that was quite large. Lincoln himself, in speaking of this when accused of being associated with the well-to-do and prosperous, said that this part of his anatomy "had been exposed to the elements for so long that his shin bone was permanently blue"; and he submitted that "there was nothing about the circumstance indicating aristocracy."

As has been clearly indicated, Lincoln was often selected by the uninitiated as a target for sport, and his good nature was frequently regarded as an indication of cowardice. On one

occasion he was attacked as he stood near a tree, by a larger boy with a crowd of others at his back. It was supposed, of course, that the big awkward boy would run when the charge was made, but not so. Instead, Lincoln quickly laid out the first, second and third boy in rapid succession, and then placing his back against a tree, he turned tormentor, daring the remainder to make any further demonstration, and when they elected not to do so he taunted them for being cowards.

There was at least one instance when Lincoln yielded to the temptation to deviate from his accustomed fairness, yet it would appear that there was some extenuation in the matter. Colonel Lamon, in his biography of Lincoln, relates what purports to be the correct version of this circumstance, but that there are some statements in it wholly incompatible with the general deportment of Lincoln, as well as in the subject matter itself, is the assertion of a number of eye witnesses of the affair. Wesley Hall, James Gentry, Redmond Grigsby and Joseph Gentry were all living at the time that this incident was investigated by the writer. They were all present when the incident took place and were much given to relating this circumstance and for some cause reverted to it more frequently than any other that came under their observation during the early life of Lincoln.

A crowd of boys and young men had gathered, for no particular purpose, when Lincoln and William Grigsby, after a time, got into a dispute over the ownership of a certain spotted pup. Each alleged that a neighbor had promised to make him a present of this particular pup. The dispute finally assumed the proportions of a quarrel. Grigsby stepped squarely in front of Lincoln and angrily dared him to fight. Whereupon Lincoln said: "Bill, you know I can lick you, so what's the use of you making such a proposition?" Grigsby, whom it was generally asserted feared no man and was a great fighter, replied: "I know you c'n whip me, but I'll fight you for the dog jest the same." Finally Lincoln said: "I'll tell you what I'll do, Bill. Although I know that pup belongs to me, and you know it too, I'm willing to put up John Johnson here in my place. He's more your size, and whichever whips gets the pup." This was readily agreed to by Grigsby, and "hauling their coats off as

the boys formed a circle, they began the fight." They had not fought long until it became evident to all, and to Lincoln in particular, that Grigsby was having the best of the argument. Suddenly, without any warning, Lincoln stepped into the ring, seized Grigsby by the collar and trousers and bodily hurled him over the heads of the crowd. He then "dared the entire Grigsby crowd to come into him." There being no disposition to do so, Lincoln's anger subsided quickly and presently he was laughing and joking.

Hall and the Gentry brothers asserted that "Abe always acted fair," and they couldn't understand at first why he should interfere as he did in this instance, until it was ascertained subsequently that the pup had in fact been given to Lincoln, and Grigsby knowing this, had conceived this plan of obtaining it. Both of the Gentrys and Hall stated that this altercation took place on the exact site of the railroad depot at Lincoln City, which stands one hundred and fifty yards west of the Lincoln cabin site.

The assertion of Mr. Lamon in this instance, as well as in others, that "Lincoln drew forth a whiskey bottle and waived it dramatically above his head" on the defeat of Grigsby, or that he "was accustomed to take his dram," and such other similar statements, is not at all in accordance with any of the testimony given by Lincoln's early friends. They expressly stated that no such thing transpired during this fight as Lincoln exhibiting a bottle of whiskey, but they were unanimous in stating that Lincoln never at any time so much as tasted intoxicating liquor of any sort, nor did he use tobacco, either in chewing or smoking.

It was this same William Grigsby who later became such a warm friend of Lincoln that he offered during the Civil War to whip any man in Gentryville who was disposed to speak disparagingly of his old friend, "Abe Linkern." Amos Grigsby, brother of William, a short while after the fight, married Sarah Lincoln, sister of Abraham. At this time she was eighteen years of age and her brother was sixteen. While they were very much attached to one another, the Grigsbys did not like young Lincoln by reason of the affair with William, and the wedding was arranged to take place in the two-story log house

of the groom's father. In fact, there was to be a double wedding since one of the Grigsby girls was to be married at the same time. Young Lincoln was not privileged to be present and witness the marriage of his only sister in consequence of the trouble aforementioned. Lincoln meditated revenge for this slight in a manner quite unusual indeed and unheard of in this section. It was as follows:

Lincoln quietly sought an interview with a young man who he knew was an invited guest at the double wedding and requested that he do him a favor. "Certainly, Abe, I'll do anything for you. What is it?" "Well, you know I'm not to be at that wedding. It seems they don't care to have me around for some reason or other, and I've picked on you to look things over and somehow manage to do the honors of conducting the grooms to the bridal chamber." Careful and detailed instruction was given as to diplomatic procedure so that suspicions might not be aroused on the part of any. It appeared that these were carried out to the letter and worked admirably. When, according to the pioneer custom, the grooms were escorted up the perpendicular sassafras ladder in one corner of the room, which led up through a "scuttle hole" in the ceiling to the now darkened bridal chamber on the second floor, there resulted more or less confusion for a time in ascertaining identity just as Lincoln had planned.

Lincoln, considering this a clever practical joke, wrote an account of the affair in verse, calling the poem "The Chronicles." These verses as recited by Lincoln on the least provocation to all who would give him audience, gave the Grigsbys great offense. When Lincoln ascertained that they were aggrieved, he went to the Grigsby home and disclaimed having any purpose whatever of casting any aspersion upon their character or good name, stating that he only purposed having some fun. He closed by turning over to them the original manuscript containing the objectionable Chronicles, accompanying this action with the promise that so far as he was concerned nothing more would be said concerning them, a promise that he faithfully kept. This generosity of character so appealed to the offended Grigsbys that they all became his friends.

As a sequel to this incident, it may be stated that James

Gentry, when some reference was made by the writer to the "Chronicles of Reuben," laughed uproariously, and straightway began reciting certain portions of "Abe's poetry" in great glee. Gentry stated that "when Abe wrote his Chronicles they kicked up a big hulla-ba-loo, but finally it all got quiet when Abe handed them over to the Grigsbys."

Redmond Grigsby was yet living at the time of the interview with Gentry, and in the course of Mr. Gentry's remarks he incidentally mentioned the fact that only the day before this he had met Grigsby and "they fell to talking about this double wedding and the Chronicles in particular." Gentry remarked to Grigsby: "Red, everybody's dead now but you, by gum! I'd let 'em come out." (Meaning the publication of the Chronicles.) But Mr. Grigsby said: "Jim, there's plenty time fer that yet." It would appear from this remark that the original document was in the possession of Redmond Grigsby, a brother of Aaron. Mr. Grigsby died a short while after this, and what became of the Chronicles, if he did in fact have them in his possession, is not known.

LINCOLN'S HONESTY AND TRUTHFULNESS

With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on in the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan; to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.

All of the discussions of Lincoln's life make pointed reference to his uncompromising honesty and truthfulness. So prominent were these traits in his character as to induce his friends to denominate him "Honest Abe" while he was quite young.

Unfortunately, most of the emphasis has been so placed as to leave the impression upon the minds of our youth that Lincoln learned honesty some time after reaching maturity; leaving the implication that either this trait was not noticed during his youth; or, if so, no reliable and trustworthy evidence of it was obtained, justifying specific mention of it at any length. This attitude is not only unjustifiable, judging by the facts and

evidence testified to by his boyhood associates, but it is quite at variance with all the generally accepted standards and theories of life governing such matters.

It is, of course, not charged that dishonesty characterized Mr. Lincoln's youth save in the single accusation made by some of the earlier biographers against him in recounting the advice given his flatboat partner, Allen Gentry, to pass counterfeit money for genuine money. When all the circumstances connected with this transaction are known, the inference and implication of doubtful honesty proves to be groundless.

In the days when Lincoln and Gentry made their celebrated flatboat trip down the Mississippi river "wildcat" money was quite as common as any other, particularly along the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. Wildcat money was so frequently offered in payment in the smaller transactions at that time that it occasioned no more comment or concern than the depreciated "trade dollar," Canadian quarter or dime did later in this section. Thus, when Lincoln advised the passing of wildcat money received in the course of their bartering during the day, he was but following the custom practiced by the people of that time.

There never was any occasion for a revolution in Mr. Lincoln's character or a deviation in any particular from his youthful customs, as he did not at any time practice deception or dishonesty. It may be said that whatever he may have learned or acquired in the State of Illinois, certainly honesty was not learned there. If his associates in that State, noting his steadfast adherence to the old-fashioned trait of honesty, denominated him "Honest Abe," it is but an indication that his early training in the Indiana wilderness was so rooted and grounded in him that he could not only withstand the social, business and political temptations of life in Illinois as to challenge their admiration; but the inference is that he was much unlike most, if not all, other men in public life at that time.

Most men of mature years draw heavily upon the teachings of childhood and youth. To put it in a way calculated to meet with general acceptance, what a man becomes in morals and in the practice of the great principles of honesty and truthfulness is largely determined in childhood and young manhood. Never were these teachings better exemplified than in the life of Abraham Lincoln.

When Lincoln, a bearded man, walked down Sangamon river bottom, Illinois, for the first time, his character was already formed. He brought with him from Indiana his rare wit, humor and inexhaustible fund of anecdotes. He possessed no bad habits. His school days were over. It is true that he took a post-graduate course in Shakespeare and Burns, and when John Calhoun, of Lecompton fame, offered him the position as assistant surveyor, this graduate of the Indiana wilderness, fresh from his reading of the classics—the King James version of the Bible, Aesop's *Fables*, Lives of Franklin and Washington—reported to Calhoun in just six weeks for duty, having mastered this science in that incredibly short time, to the astonishment of his benefactor.

One of Lincoln's teachers in Indiana was a man by the name of Crawford. Lincoln was in his fourteenth year while in attendance upon this particular term. On one occasion the teacher observed that some liberties had been taken with the pair of antlers over the door of the school room, one prong having been broken, and on making this discovery he straightway instituted an inquiry to find the guilty culprit. Lincoln, being quite tall and seeing this prong presenting a temptation to swing upon it, yielded, with the result that the prong failed to support his weight and fell to the ground. When the irate teacher asked who was guilty, Lincoln stepped forth and quickly volunteered the information:

I did, sir. I did not mean to do it, but I hung on it and it broke. I wouldn't have done it if I'd a thought it'd a broke.

It is not at all necessary to suppose in attempting to show the honesty and truthfulness of Lincoln that there were no others in the school at that time who would have done as he did under similar circumstances. Indeed, in every little school-house of the land today there are those who would do this, but since this circumstance did transpire as here related it is important in that it sets forth the inherent trait at such a period in his life.

One of the neighbors of the Lincolns was Josiah Crawford, for whom young Abraham often worked as a "hired man" and his sister Sarah worked as "hired girl." "Old Cy Crawford,"

as he was usually called, was more or less given to certain peculiarities, being quite presumptuous and so penurious as to be called "tight" or "close" by his neighbors, but withal possessing many splendid traits. He was not an educated man, but being what was called "handy," he was able to do almost anything. He was a pioneer doctor and dentist, and in addition he was a farmer. In this latter capacity he frequently employed young Lincoln.

Crawford possessed a small library which, to some extent, accounted for whatever superiority he had over some of his neighbors. Lincoln borrowed all of these books, reading and re-reading some of them, one being Weem's *Life of Washington*. It was the custom of Lincoln to carry a book with him in the fields or in the "clearing," and this practice was not dispensed with even when laboring for a neighbor. At every opportunity, whether at the noon hour or rest, or permitting a "horse to breathe," he brought forth the book to read.

John Hanks, who lived with the Lincolns from 1823 to 1827, said, as recounted by Mr. Herndon:

When Abe and I returned to the house from work he would go to the cupboard, snatch a piece of cornbread and sit down and read. We grubbed, plowed, mowed and worked together barefooted in the fields. Whenever Abe had a chance in the field while at work, or at the house, he would stop and read. He kept the Bible and Aesop's *Fables* always in reach and read them over and over again.

He kept up his daily custom of carrying a book with him and reading as he walked, as well as reading until a late hour at night, until established in the practice of his profession. During his boyhood on securing a new book he frequently read until midnight. His artificial light for this purpose was made by gathering dry sticks and splinters and piling them beside the jambs so that when the fire died down he freely laid some of this tinder on the forestic and thus managed to read quite well. One night after having obtained the aforementioned copy of the *Life of Washington* from Crawford he read until quite late, and on retiring to the loft he laid the book between two of the logs—the "chinkin and daubin had worn away." While he was wrapped in sleep a rain storm came and greatly damaged the leaves and warped the cover. On making this dis-

covery the following morning Lincoln was mortified, and realizing the scarcity of books and keenly appreciating their value, he very naturally supposed that Mr. Crawford would be "put out" about it. Nevertheless, he took the damaged treasure home and related somewhat in detail the circumstances of the night before, proposing to do whatever the owner thought was right and proper to make amends for his carelessness. Mr. Crawford was not averse to driving a bargain, for it was his custom with Lincoln "to dock him" when he failed to begin his day's labor early enough or for any cause lost any time. In this instance he proposed that Lincoln "pull fodder for three days and they would call matters even." Lincoln entered no protest at the time and energetically went to work. In relating this circumstance to a gentleman in Rockport afterward, he stated:

At the close of the second day my long arms had stripped every blade off old Blue Nose's corn, and I reckon Cy ought to be satisfied; at any rate I am, but I think he was pretty hard on me.

We are indebted to Silas G. Pratt for an incident illustrative of Lincoln's mingled goodness, truthfulness and honesty:

One morning when Lincoln, with his ax over his shoulder, was going to work in the clearing, his step sister, Matilda Johnson, who had been forbidden by her mother to follow him, slyly and unknown to her mother crept out of the house and ran after him. Lincoln was already a long distance from the house among the trees following a deer path and whistling as he walked along. He, of course, did not know the girl was coming after him, and Matilda ran so softly that she made no noise to attract his attention. When she came up close behind, she made a quick spring and jumped upon his shoulders, holding on with both hands and pressing her knees into his back, thus pulling him quickly to the ground. In falling the sharp ax fell and cut her ankle very badly. As the blood ran out the mischievous Matilda screamed with pain. Lincoln at once tore off some cloth from the lining of his coat to stop the blood from flowing, and bound up the wound as well as he could. Taking a long breath he said: "Tilda, I am astonished. How could you disobey your mother so?" Tilda only cried in reply, and Lincoln continued: "What are you going to tell mother about getting hurt?" "Tell her I did it with the ax," she sobbed. "That will be the truth, won't it?" To which Lincoln replied manfully: "Yes, that's the truth; but it's not all the truth. You tell the whole truth, Tilda, and trust your good mother for the rest." So Tilda went limping home and told her mother all the truth. The good woman felt so sorry for her that she did not even scold her.

If, in speaking of honesty, we may make the term so broad as to include not only right dealings in mere money or business transactions, but fair-mindedness and an implied purpose and intentional disposition to be such under trying circumstances, there is much that may be said illustrative of the fact that Lincoln's life was the embodiment of truth and fair-dealing. The boyhood associates of Lincoln stated that his word was always considered good and that he could be depended upon to do what he agreed to do. He was generally trusted by his neighbors, and if necessity seemed to justify his asking credit, as was sometimes the case, this was granted.

It was pretty generally conceded, however, by the old neighbors of Lincoln and others who had personal acquaintance with members of the family concerned in one transaction, that there was one noted exception to the rule. The town of Gentryville was laid out by Mr. Gentry in the year 1824. Gentry was a North Carolinian who settled in this section in the year 1818, some two years after the coming of the Lincolns. He was a man of some means for that day, as evidenced in his entering twelve hundred acres of land and founding the town. He established a store, encouraged the purchasing of lots and the erection of houses, and offered certain inducements to artisans and trade-folks so that in a short while the little place became somewhat of a commercial center. Among those who had established themselves in business there was a certain Mr. Jones. On his proving to be prosperous and otherwise possessing advantages over Gentry, overtures were made to him and he accordingly disposed of his business to Gentry. In a short while thereafter he embarked in business again, locating this time a little distance from Gentryville, but near enough to cause the trade to follow him. On perceiving that the future of the town site was in jeopardy, Gentry proposed to Jones to move again to Gentryville. This he did, and it was his store that Lincoln frequented on Saturdays, rainy days and in the evenings. Jones was a man of large influence, politically and otherwise. He early professed a great liking for young Lincoln and freely prophesied on more than one occasion that Lincoln would yet be heard from in the world. He was thought to be rather extravagant in some of his assertions and prophesies, however,

and there is little wonder that the citizens should so think when they heard him venture to assert repeatedly that "Lincoln would some day be President of the United States." Jones was a man somewhat after the type of Denton Offut, the storekeeper with whom Lincoln was associated a few years later in Illinois. In fact, it appears that Lincoln's habit of frequenting these small stores invariably impressed himself so strongly upon the owners as to cause them to employ him. Lincoln drove a team for Jones, packed and unpacked boxes of goods, butchered and salted pork and at certain times performed some of the more menial services in the store proper such as the transfer of heavy and cumbersome wares from the cellar to the main floor. These labors, however, were not continuous, but merely occasional for a nominal sum as a wage—thirty cents per day being the usual price. Jones was regarded as somewhat of a politician, and was a pronounced Jackson Democrat. At one time he was the only subscriber to the *Louisville Journal* in this place, and Lincoln availed himself of the privilege of reading it aloud—a habit which became fixed in him as in many another who was brought up in what was termed "blab schools," where every scholar studied his lesson by reading aloud during "books."

In later life Lincoln's practice was to read aloud, and he had difficulty in grasping the meaning of the printed page unless his ears heard as well as his eyes saw.

The fact that young Lincoln became a "Jackson man" was largely due to the association and influence of storekeeper Jones, and it was from this man that he obtained the *History of the United States*, one of the few books that had so much to do in shaping his career. Just before the Lincolns left for Illinois and a short while prior to Lincoln's reaching his majority, he was in the store observing an extraordinarily large pair of shoes. They were so large as to cause him to think that they would "fit him," and being greatly in need of footwear he asked the privilege of trying them on. This, of course, was granted, and Lincoln found that they were just his size. He thereupon indicated his desire to purchase them, but stated that he did not have the money then and would not have it until a date which he specified. The storekeeper shook his head and refused the young man the desired credit.

Years went by and Lincoln was to be inaugurated President. Very naturally some of his Gentryville friends were desirous of witnessing these ceremonies, and a little party of five made the journey to Washington, among them being Jones, the storekeeper. No opportunity readily presenting itself to meet their old friend until after the inaugural ceremonies were over, they resolved to get in line and meet him at the general reception tendered. This suggestion was acted upon, and by a mere chance, not at all by design, the storekeeper Jones came last. As the first man of the little group approached, Lincoln, straightway recognizing him, greeted him with a beaming countenance, grasping the proffered hand in both of his and saying: "Howdy, Jim." He readily recognized each one as they approached, giving them a very cordial greeting, but when Jones approached he was greeted with silence, although Lincoln shook hands with him. The storekeeper going on the supposition that he was not recognized, exclaimed: "Mr. President, I'm from Gentryville also. My name is Jones. I reckon you don't remember me." Whereupon Lincoln inclined his body forward until his face was on the same level with the face of Jones, and whispered in the ear of his old friend: "O yes, Mr. Jones, I remember you very well, and I remember that shoe transaction also," smiling and otherwise giving him evidence of his old-time friendship. It is but just to say that a portion of this story was denied by Jones who said that he never refused Lincoln the shoes, but that they were turned over to him when Lincoln asked for credit. The supposition is that, on seeing his old friend approaching him, Lincoln hit upon this plan to have a bit of his old-time sport even if the occasion was an inaugural reception. The story, however, as here recorded, received general credence by the old friends of Lincoln, and that it took place substantially as here detailed is doubtless true.

"Nat" Grigsby and the storekeeper Jones later on during the Lincoln administration called on the President at the White House. We have the best authority for stating the fact, the occasion and the ludicrous results of that visit—the testimony of both Grigsby and Jones themselves. "Nat" Grigsby and "Blue Nose" Crawford had been caricatured by Lincoln in some

of his doggerel poetry called the "Chronicles of Reuben." Grigsby, long afterward, confessed that at the time this occasioned considerable feeling on his part against Abe, but after a time all was forgotten. That this was true and that Mr. Lincoln thought quite well of Grigsby is evidenced by a circumstance that transpired on the occasion of Lincoln's visit to Gentryville during the campaign of 1844. Lincoln made speeches both at Gentryville and at Carter's schoolhouse. It was at the latter place that Lincoln, in the midst of his address, recognizing Mr. Grigsby who came in late, exclaimed: "There's Nat." Whereupon he quit the speech and platform and went back to greet his old friend with the old-time warmth and boyish enthusiasm, then returned to the front to continue his speech. Whether it was this circumstance, or the numerous other evidences of Lincoln's partiality for him that induced him to believe Lincoln, as President, could and would appoint him to some federal position, it is immaterial for our purpose. At any rate, Grigsby was fully persuaded that he was amply competent to serve in some capacity (and he was a man of some ability). He very naturally presumed upon the old-time friendship of Lincoln, and accordingly called upon Jones and proposed that he accompany him to Washington on a similar mission in his own behalf. This met with hearty approval on the part of Jones, and preparations were made for the journey. They resolved to see the President in person rather than to make formal application for a place in some other way. At length the two old neighbors of the President appeared at the White House. Lincoln, being apprised of their presence, although many were in waiting, stepped into the room in which they were seated and greeted them quite as if he had met them at Carter's schoolhouse or Baldwin's blacksmith shop in Gentryville. Unmindful of who might chance to be in the room or what might be the construction placed upon his democratic demeanor, he said: "Howdy, Nat," and "Howdy, Bill," and otherwise by word and greeting conducted himself much as if he were oblivious of the fact that he was President of the United States.

Lincoln was never justly, at any time, accused of being hypocritical, but that he could act the part well calculated to

carry out his purpose is much in evidence in this as in other instances. Major John Hay asserted that Lincoln "was a trimmer the equal of Halifax, but he never trimmed his principles." There is discerned in this little circumstance with his boyhood associates an ability to manage men and deal with difficult situations in a way quite characteristic of him. After the warm greeting and hand-shaking with his old friends, accompanied by such familiarities as "the laying on of hands," and other evidences of appreciation of their visit, he requested that they both accompany him to an adjoining room. Going on the supposition that they were being taken to his private office where they could have the opportunity of presenting their claims, they quickly followed him, and were ushered into a large room where Mrs. Lincoln sat. Neither of them having ever met Mrs. Lincoln, they were accordingly introduced by the President, and at the same time dismissed or disposed of as follows: "Mrs. Lincoln, here are two of my boyhood friends from Gentryville, Indiana, Mr. Grigsby and Mr. Jones." Whether just at this point there was a sly wink, or some other signal known only to the secret code of the President's family, is, of course, purely in the realm of conjecture, but the preponderance of evidence is much in its favor, for he straightway said after the formal introduction:

Mary, you know I'm pestered and bothered continually by people coming here on the score of old acquaintance, as almost all of them have an ax to grind. They go on the theory that I've got offices to dispense with so numerous that I can give each one of them a place. Now here are two friends that have come to pay me a visit just because they are my friends, and haven't come to ask for any office or place. It is a relief to have this experience. You know the room's full of folks out here (pointing) waiting to see me about something or other, and I want you to see that "Nat" and "Bill" here have a good time while they are with us."

After the first Lady of the Land had given her promise to do as requested, Lincoln returned to his labors. It is not possible to know whether the President went to his private office and sought relief by giving way to unrestrained laughter or not, but he doubtless consoled himself with the fact that if in the field of diplomacy matters of great moment could always be disposed of as readily as was true in this particular instance,

he had reason to regard himself equal to any exigency that might arise. The two office-seekers, accustomed only to the dames and damsels of Gentryville, gowned in linsey-wolsey, and whose colloquial speech was quite their own, were suddenly found in the presence of a "fine lady," and there is no occasion for surprise when they asserted that both of them heartily agreed that discretion was the better part of valor and they accordingly beat a hasty retreat, returning to Indiana without so much as mentioning the real object of their visit to the Capital. When twitted about their failure by some of their neighbors, they both confessed that "Abe was too much for them," and especially after he had said what he did to Mrs. Lincoln about his old friends asking for office.

LINCOLN'S FREEDOM FROM BAD HABITS

In it we shall find a stronger bondage broken, a viler slavery manumitted, a greater tyrant deposed; and when there shall be neither a slave nor a drunkard on earth, how proud the title of that land which may truly claim to be the birthplace and cradle of both those revolutions that have ended in victory.

Lincoln as a youth was remarkably free from bad or vicious habits. He was in general good favor with all of his associates and was dutiful and obedient to his father and mother. His temperamental makeup was such as to win friends and to hold them. He, as has already been indicated, never at any time in his boyhood, used intoxicating liquors, although this custom was generally prevalent. Since Lincoln's habit was to frequent the grocery store in Gentryville in company with Dennis Hanks, where much drinking was indulged in, his refusal to drink intoxicants is somewhat remarkable. He professed to have a distaste for intoxicants of all sorts, and also abstained as a matter of principle. In later life he stated that "he had no desire for intoxicating liquors and did not care to associate with drinking men." His terrible arraignment of the liquor traffic before the Washingtonian society is familiar to all, and it is highly probable that his strong convictions expressed in later years on that subject were to some extent formed by noting, as he did while a resident at Gentryville, the evil effects of its use by many of his associates.

Wesley Hall stated that his father frequently employed both the elder Lincoln and his son Abraham to labor for him as carpenters as well as to perform work incident to the successful operation of a tanyard. Hall asserted that young Lincoln frequently pushed the plane at a workbench preparing planks for the father's use in the construction of cupboards and other pieces of household furniture. In this connection Hall laughingly recalled a boyish act of his. On one occasion when Abraham was laboring at the bench with the plane, Hall crawled beneath the long bench and lay down upon his back just opposite Lincoln's feet. He was peculiarly struck with the great length of the young carpenter's shoes, and reaching forth he selected a wooden ribbon and was busily engaged in measuring the foot when Lincoln noticed this performance and "yanked him out."

In the performance of the work connected with the tannery the elder Hall frequently employed a number of men, and it was the custom, when weather permitted, to take the noon meal in the grove near the tanyard rather than to go to the house. Hall stated that when the food had been made ready and spread out on a rude table, and dinner was announced, Abe invariably walked to a certain large forest tree whose roots had grown in such a manner as to form a sort of rustic bench. There seating himself, leaning back against the trunk, he drew forth from the folds of his loose fitting waumus or blouse a book and began to read, rather than go to the table as the other men did to eat. When asked if Lincoln did not also eat the noon meal, and why he did not do so with the others, he replied :

Certainly Abe et dinner, but don't you know he never drank, and them times the black bottle would be passed around purty often, so Abe would say to me "You see, Wesley, I don't drink and the rest of the men do, and if I was to eat when they do and not drink with them, they'd think may be I was smart, and so I jest hit upon this plan of bringing along my book with me and reading while they eat. I eat after they get through—in plenty time to go to work when they do, and that a way I git to read some and at the same time I don't go against a custom that they think is all right even if I don't.

A diligent inquiry among Lincoln's boyhood friends for everything characteristic or peculiar to him elicited the fact among other things that he did not indulge in intemperate

language. It might be alleged that there was an exception in the frequent use of the by-word "I jings," which seems to have followed him by way of Illinois to the White House.

That young Lincoln was extremely awkward and homely to a marked degree is evidenced by the testimony of all of his early friends. Being seated his stature did not impress itself, but a close observer would note that his lower extremities were of such proportions that a marble or ball placed upon his knee would roll toward the body. His gait was exceptional and peculiar to him. He made rather long strides as compared to many tall men who, in attempting to keep step, form the habit of a jerky, premature stride. Lincoln lifted his feet squarely from the ground and in like manner planted them, so that the foot did not bend at the toes or the weight of the body rest momentarily upon the heel; however, he was slightly pigeon-toed. His walk therefore, while not to say cunning, was stealthy, and possessing great bodily vigor he could walk long distances in a short while.

Mrs. Polly Agnew, whose maiden name was Richardson, and who was the mother of a number of children, some of whom became men of considerable local prominence—among whom was Doctor Mason, a physician well-known in his day throughout southern Indiana—often related a circumstance that took place on her arrival in Indiana, in which Lincoln bore a conspicuous part, and which furnishes a splendid field for a painter. The Richardsons were pioneers in Spencer county, floating down the Ohio river in a boat and landing at the site of the present beautiful town of Grandview. Their arrival was sometime after the coming of the Lincolns. The landing had been effected, and they desired to penetrate the interior some distance before locating. They had their ox-teams and wagon (save for the wheels), so the father and son felled a large gum tree, and sawing off blocks or circular slabs of such thickness as would prove suitable for wheels, they soon were ready to begin their journey through the unknown wilderness. No white man had as yet made settlement in this part of the country. The wagon was loaded with bedding, cooking utensils and such other things as they would at first need, and with the mother and daughter, Polly, the narrator of the inci-

dent, they started on their tedious way, leaving behind them many things in the boat for which they had to make a second trip. The choice of a farm location was by midday decided upon. In the midst of the great forest they came upon a cluster of trees so situated as to enable them by cutting brush and laying these on poles placed in forks to erect a brush lean-to or brush house, which would serve them temporarily. The mother and daughter were left in the midst of the great forest alone while the men returned to the boat for another load. A storm came up, nightfall was approaching, and the wagon had not returned. In the midst of their anxiety there suddenly appeared out of the forest a stranger of gigantic stature, dressed in coon-skin cap, hunting shirt and buckskin breeches, and bearing a gun. He came up smiling and, by way of explanation for his presence, stated that he lived a short distance north, and having just learned that a new family was moving into the community he had come down to render any service needed. When informed by Mrs. Richardson that the men folks had gone to the river for another load and were expected to return at any time, the stranger remarked: "Well, ladies, I'm quite sure they cannot get back tonight for the rain has interfered, and so I'll just stay with you and see that no harm comes to you during the night."

This information and proffered help was anything but reassuring to the frightened ladies. The tall stranger, acting upon his own suggestion, now stepped to a large tree fronting the lean-to, and seating himself with the gun placed across his lap, leaned against the trunk, thus evidencing his disposition to remain on guard. Seeing this, Mrs. Richardson stepped into the brush house and she and the daughter held a whispered consultation. It was agreed that while the stranger might prove to be more dangerous than any foe of the woods, yet the mother suggested that "he had a good face." After a few moments in conversation they observed that the stranger had laid down his gun and began dragging a large limb toward the brush house. The mother and daughter both ventured out near him and requested to know what he meant by such procedure. Whereupon he smiled and said: "Ladies, the woods around here are full of wolves and bears, and we've got to have a bon-

fire tonight or they might give trouble." When the mother remarked that they entertained no fear of wolves, the man laughed right heartily and said: "You just wait and we'll see if there isn't about two women around here somewhere that'll get pretty badly scared before long." With that remark he began the search for dry branches and limbs of fallen trees, and this he continued doing until there was collected quite a pile.

When darkness had settled down over them and the wagon had not returned as the stranger had ventured to prophesy, the ladies became more or less reconciled to the presence of the man. He accepted the food they prepared, but refused to go into the lean-to. An hour or so had passed, when the stranger, who all this time was watched from within with some remaining suspicion, called to them that they need have no fears of wolves who by this time were howling in the distance. Ere long these denizens of the night ventured quite near, and the ladies, thoroughly frightened, requested that he come into the lean-to. The stranger then approached the bonfire and requested Mrs. Richardson and her daughter to "step out and take a look at the green-eyes." This they did, and the daughter exclaimed in her fright: "Why, mother, there is a thousand of them. What would we have done alone?" The tall stranger laughed and said, addressing the young lady: "Miss, there is not more than a half dozen of the varmints, and every one of them is a coward. Now you just see if they are not." Taking a fire brand and waving it vigorously, the "green eyes" vanished and the howling was heard in the distance. The manifest danger confronting the ladies by the presence of such animals drew them nearer to their protector, and they acted on his suggestion to "go in and try and get some sleep while he kept watch." When morning broke the stranger announced his intention of returning home, saying as he started: "I'll find out today if your men folks get back all right, which I reckon they will, but if they don't, I'll be back here tonight and we'll keep the 'thousand pairs of green eyes' at a safe distance."

This was the introduction the Richardson family had to the future President, for the tall stranger who kept watch through the night was Abraham Lincoln. The Richardsons and the Lin-

colns became fast friends. It was William Richardson who stated that on one occasion when they were preparing to build a corn crib, and some heavy pieces of timber were to be put in place, the men engaged in doing this were making hand spikes with which to carry them. Lincoln chanced to come up and asked what they were going to do with hand spikes. When informed that they were being prepared to carry the heavy timbers Lincoln remarked that he could shoulder and carry the sticks himself, and at once acting upon the suggestion he actually performed the feat unaided. Richardson believed that it would have taken the combined strength of three or four men to do what Lincoln did.

It was this same Richardson who related another circumstance indicating the phenomenal strength of Lincoln. A chicken house was to be moved and some preparation was being made to do this when Lincoln picked it up bodily and carried it for some distance. Richardson thought that it "weighed at least six hundred pounds, and maybe more."

Whether it was this romantic meeting of Polly Richardson in the brush lean-to, or whether it was due to certain traits of character discerned in her by Lincoln, particularly her considerate kindness of heart in befriending him in certain ways, that attracted him, in any case he often "kept company with her." Aunt Polly, as she was generally called, was a lady of more than average intelligence. While she was not educated, yet in her use of language this was not particularly noticeable. She was never any more delighted than when surrounded by those who were anxious to know of some of her pioneer experiences, and particularly those pertaining to Lincoln. She often told of being accompanied by Lincoln to spelling bees, play parties, and to church, and even asserted that she was Lincoln's first sweetheart. If there be any reluctance on the part of anyone to accord this rather enviable distinction to the old lady who thus made the claim, it may be said in her behalf that her frankness in relating certain circumstances pertaining to this, and the regret occasioned by not having wisdom enough to foresee in her girlhood Lincoln's great career may to some extent plead more eloquently than any mere statement of fact by the writer.

Yes, I was Abe's first sweetheart,

He'd take me to spelling bees and play parties and to meetin' and the like, but still I can't say that I wanted him to go with me though. Still Abe was always mighty good, and I never found any fault with him excepting he was so tall and awkward. All the young girls my age made fun of Abe. They'd laugh at him right before his face, but Abe never 'peared to care. He was so good and he'd just laugh with them. Abe tried to go with some of them, but no sir-ee, they'd give him the mitten every time, just because he was as I say so tall and gawky, and it was mighty awkward I can tell you trying to keep company with a fellow as tall as Abe was. But still Abe was always so good and kind I never sacked him, but bein's I didn't have no other company them days when us young folks would all start to meetin' or somewhere else that away, I'd let Abe take me. I'd sometimes get right put out the way some of the girls treated him, a laughing and saying things, and so when we'd get off to ourselves I'd give them a piece of my mind about it. And then they'd all say that it is too bad the way we do, because Abe's so good, but they'd appear to forget all about it, for the very next time they'd do the same way. Abe wanted me to marry him, but I refused. I suppose if I had known he was to be President some day, I'd a took him.

The writer was once a schoolmaster, and was again and again made to think of Lincoln on daily seeing the children of the daughter of Colonel Lehmonowsky, one of Napoleon's old soldiers. The oldest son, Adam, was six feet and five inches in height; Charles, six feet and four inches; John, six feet and three inches; Anna, five feet and eleven inches; Sallie, five feet and nine inches, and Joseph, the baby, at fifteen years of age was six feet and six inches! This family was remarkable not only for their great stature, but were giants mentally as well. The extreme stature of the youngest member, his shuffling, shambling gait, and great good nature, with some degree of humor and wit, reminded one continually of Lincoln.

Not far from where Lincoln was reared there occurred a wedding some years since that made the story of Lincoln's first sweetheart seem all the more plausible, especially that part which relates to his great stature and awkwardness.

A veritable son of Anak, six feet and six inches in stature, married a diminutive little lady four feet and six tall. The nuptial bands were solemnized in a "meeting house" in the presence of the entire countryside. The wedding was quite simple throughout. There were no flower girls, no best man nor bridesmaids; no soloist sang "O, promise me," nor did the

bride reach the Hymeneal Altar leaning on the arm of her father, keeping step to the strains of Mendelssohn's Wedding March. Instead, at the appointed hour, which followed the sermon, the bride and groom came down the center aisle unattended; the groom making long, ungainly strides and the bride holding on to his arm akimbo with the tip of her fingers, while some wag in the choir who had a fine sense of appropriateness pitched the old time camp meeting hymn, "Leaning on the Everlasting Arms," and by the time the happy, but somewhat embarrassed couple reached the chancel, the choir lustily joined in the chorus.

While Lincoln was acting as ferryman at the mouth of Anderson creek, a corn husking took place in the neighborhood which he of course attended. At such times, as at log rollings and raisings, the work was divided equally into two parts and captains elected, who "chose up", thus dividing the crowd preparatory to a race. On the particular occasion above referred to, Lincoln while busily husking away, intent on making his side "beat", kept up a running fire of humorous remarks at the expense of the other side, directing his remarks toward one man. This individual, not possessing a temperamental make-up such as to endure this long, accordingly gave way to his anger and hurled an ear of corn at Lincoln across the rail that divided the pile of corn. Taking good aim he threw the hard, horny nub at Lincoln, striking him full in the breast and cutting such a gash as to leave a scar which Lincoln carried to his grave. Lincoln did not reply in kind against his assailant, but his anger arose.

There were some customs more or less peculiar to this part of the State in Lincoln's day, continuing for years thereafter, and among these was the celebration of the New Year. The ceremony, while lacking the refinement and more poetic sentiments usually supposed to have attended the Yuletide in northern Europe, yet considering that it was a backwoods custom during the holiday week the method of celebration possessed a sense of appropriateness. At the midnight hour, just as the old year was dying and the New Year about to be ushered in, large numbers of men and boys with firearms assembled before a farm residence, and without any warning a voice began re-

citing, rather stump fashion, a bit of crude verse which was called "the New Year's Speech." The person chosen to recite this was usually one possessing the gift of "oratory." Knowing that Lincoln was much given to public exhibitions and disposed to make addresses on numerous occasions, it was presumed that he frequently made the New Year's Speech. This fact, however, was not certainly established. Since the custom of the pioneers has passed away, with many other things peculiar to them, the New Year's Speech brought from the South is here given :

Awake! Awake! my neighbor dear
And to my wish pray lend an ear.
The New Year is now at your door,
The Old Year is past and comes no more;
And I for you wish a Happy Year
That you from bad luck may keep clear;
That your family, and all the rest
May with content be ever blest.
That you may be free and able
To feed the hungry at your table;
That your barns and all your cribs
May with much grain be stocked
Your fields and meadows handsomely flocked
And scarcity not be known.
But mind there is the Blessed Hand
Who gives and takes at His command.
But now before I make an end,
For too much time I cannot spend,
Shall I salute you with my gun,
Or would you wish the report to shun?

Just here the speaker paused and if granted permission to fire his gun, the speech was resumed as follows :

Now, since you gave me leave,
I do now here declare
The noise shall sound throughout the air,
Sausage and pudding will be right
To satisfy our appetite.
Whiskey Bounce or Apple Brandy,
Or any liquor that comes handy.
And we will receive it with thanks to thine
And this is the end and wish of mine.

Just as the speech was finished a volley or two was fired, and when ample justice had been done to sausage and pudding, as well as satisfying the thirst, the guns were reloaded and another house sought. This was kept up throughout the remainder of the night, the speech being repeated at each place.

LINCOLN'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THE CHURCH AND RELIGION

Nobly sustained as the government has been by all the churches, I would utter nothing which might in the least appear invidious against any. * * * God bless all the churches, and blessed be God who in this great trial giveth us the churches.

During Mr. Lincoln's early life he was disposed more or less toward fatalism, not that there was any one act of his, or any single utterance by which this fact could be established, so much as there was discerned an approach toward all undertakings in life with this conviction dogging his footsteps. These fatalistic beliefs were so general among the people of that day as to include practically all.

Lincoln seems to have yielded so far to the ultra Calvinistic teachings characterizing the pulpit efforts and emphasis of that day as to become more or less submissive to what was conceded to be the stern and inevitable decrees of Fate. This strange belief must not be confounded with that bold and open opposition to religious faith, as was the boast of some, but was in fact a religious and Christian interpretation of the teachings of the scriptures, especially peculiar to the primitive Baptists.

Lincoln was not a communicant of the Little Pigeon Baptist church, although his father, mother and sister were; likewise the Johnsons, his step-sisters and step-brother. His father and mother united with this church by letter, thus indicating their connection with the church in Kentucky.

While Lincoln was more or less indoctrinated with the fatalistic tendencies of a theology generally prevalent at the same time he was not at all disposed to accept the common literal interpretation of the Scriptures and in consequence he held aloof from formal union with the church.

That we may more fully appreciate to what extent some of these teachings influenced the parishioners, a circumstance may be detailed that transpired in this region where Lincoln reached his majority, although many years after; but it will perhaps serve quite well by way of illustration to show this same religious emphasis lingering many decades later, and for that matter may yet be found in this region as well as elsewhere.

An aged man, just two years younger than Lincoln (well known to the writer) who was much given to theological disputation, gave as his belief that "what is to be will be, even if it never comes to pass;" that "God had decreed and fore-ordained certain things," and they "were bound to come to pass;" that there was no use to flee from imminent danger since each one of us was to die in a certain way, at a certain time, and no effort on our part could possibly prevent this. If we were to be drowned, or shot, or die of disease, then no matter what might befall us prior to the appointed hour this event would eventually take place according to Divine appointment.

This particular gentleman was quite aged when the horse-power threshing machine was succeeded by the steam thresher. A large crowd had gathered to witness the strange engine, and while many of them were gathered about it the water began foaming. This circumstance alarmed the engineer who was anything else but expert, and he hurriedly indicated his fears by announcing his intention of reaching a point of safety. Acting upon his better judgment he started at a lively pace out into an adjoining field, and without any need of further urging when the crowd witnessed his flight they all joined in. The old brother of fatalistic beliefs brought up the rear, by reason of infirmities of age and not because of any wish to be found in the extreme rear. After a safe distance had been reached and sufficient time had elapsed to allow all danger to pass, the engineer ventured back to his post again and pretty soon he announced that the "Iron Horse was all right." Whereupon certain adherents of the Methodist faith, who had been again and again subjected to humiliation and defeat by the superior ability of the

old Baptist brother to argue, now turned upon him mercilessly. After a good-natured laugh had been indulged in at his expense, the old gentleman remarked: "I've got as good a Baptist heart in me as any man, but I've got a cowardly pair of Methodist legs and they run away with me."

Lincoln would have enjoyed the laugh at the old Baptist brother's expense but the fatalistic teachings so possessed him that he would have still found a lurking belief that all such events were predetermined, and that this grip of Fate possessed us all. Later in life he threw off the major portion of these beliefs, but not all of them.

He retained the basic principle of that theology which taught the wholesome doctrine that "the Almighty hath his purposes." Not only did he believe that "if we did not do right, God was going to let us go our own way to ruin," but expressed the belief that "the Almighty was going to compel us to do right in order that he might destroy slavery, give success to our arms, and maintain our unity as a nation." He further said:

I do not believe that He will do these things so much because we desire them as that they accord with His plans of dealing with this nation. I think He means that we shall do more than we have yet done in furtherance of His plans, and He will open the way for our doing it. I have felt His hand upon me in great trials and submitted to His guidance, and I trust that as He shall further open the way I will be ready to walk therein, relying on His Help and trusting in His Goodness and wisdom.

It is a small matter as to what particular creed or sect this theology might properly belong, as compared to the greater fact that he had thrown himself fully upon the Almighty, and in so doing he worthily took his place along side of Moses, Joshua and Paul.

His early theology made the heavens brass and the unchanging decrees made God stern, exacting and demanding justice. His later faith was so modified by sorrows and trials as to believe in the efficacy of prayer, and he came to see God's beneficence and mercy mingled with His justice. Lincoln's daily habit from early youth was to read the Scriptures and give himself to prayer. It would appear that this fact and the sentiment and spirit of some of his great State papers

would be quite sufficient to have prevented Ingersol and others possessing liberalistic views to assert, as they were accustomed to do, that he was an unbeliever.

That Lincoln, after reaching Illinois, passed through a period of religious doubt, even to the extent of questioning the authenticity of the Bible and denying the divinity and sonship of Christ, is undoubtedly true. However, there was nothing ever uttered by him either in any public manner or in private conversation while a resident of Indiana that even so much as indicated any liberalistic views or tendencies. He made no pretensions, however, of being a Christian during his youth; that is, he made no public profession, and was not regarded as such by his associates. Mr. Lincoln certainly was not a Christian in the orthodox sense until sometime after reaching the White House, if indeed he ever became such as measured by certain formulas. Herndon, Colonel Lamon and Major John Hay all stoutly maintained that he never changed his religious beliefs at all.

In making the simple statement that young Lincoln was not a Christian, nor so regarded by his associates, it would be altogether misleading unless it be properly understood. Their standards and his for presuming upon such a claim were of course measured by the practice of the local church in demanding the observance of certain forms and subscribing to certain tenets. It was, of course, not allowed that any one could be so presumptuous as to set forth the claim that he was a Christian, independent of these. Lincoln not having done this was, of course, not considered as being a Christian.

It may be truly said, without casting any aspersion upon the character and profession of some, that there were others, indeed many, who composed the membership of Little Pigeon Baptist church in Lincoln's day who possessed doubtful morality; certainly they failed to measure up to the requirements of Christian standards of living generally in vogue today. It is not charged that gross and flagrant wrongdoing characterized any one of them, but it is claimed that delinquencies in many matters were the rule.

The ministry themselves were often indeed quite generally given to dram drinking, and certainly this was true of

substantially all the parishioners—women as well as men. It will be seen, therefore, that these well-meaning pioneers hedged up the door of entrance into the kingdom by erroneous theological emphasis upon some matters by demanding of all who sought fellowship with them that they subscribe to these, but too often their own delinquencies and shortcomings were such as to be only too painfully apparent.

Lincoln, given to approaching any and all things along lines of reason, could not fail to note the inconsistencies in profession and practice. Possessing morals quite beyond most people, abstaining from the use of intoxicants and tobacco, temperate in speech and painstakingly honest and truthful, given to reading the Bible daily, and regarded as possessing such a wholesome amount of common sense and sound judgment as to be selected to adjudicate all differences arising among his fellows, it may therefore be seen that while Lincoln made no profession of religious faith in conformity to the standards of the time, yet his character was quite beyond that of others.

For this youth, who if not educated in the ordinary acceptance of the term, possessed more knowledge even then perhaps than most of us are ready to allow, and being acquainted for instance, as we know that Lincoln was, with the movement of the heavenly bodies, and then to hear in the Sunday sermon the maledictions of Heaven hurled at “edicated” folks who presumed to think that the earth was round, that it “revolved upon its axle tree,” and similar animadversions, one can deeply sympathize with a disposition to refrain from formal union with such a class.

Again, for young Lincoln to assemble with these worshippers in Little Pigeon church; the preacher and people to engage as they often did in a give and take sort of fashion in the coarse, crude jokes of doubtful propriety anywhere—much less in a place of worship—hurling at one another, albeit good-naturedly, hilarious repartee and scintillating witticisms better suited to the school house debates; and when the minister suggested that it was time for worship, for some old brother to start the hymn, “How Tedious and Tasteless the Hours,” pitching it in a strange key, putting in

an unconscionable number of quarter and half rests, and then for the leader, perhaps, at the close of the stanza to expectorate his ambler in a belated sort of manner, no matter where, preparatory to another effort; and when that was finished and the sermon was entered upon, with all of the vials of wrath poured forth, and anathemas heaped upon the heads of offenders (as was often the case) in such a fashion as to indicate enjoyment in anticipation, with a great deal of sound and little sense; therefore, for a youth of Lincoln's purity of character and sense of propriety, faculty of reasoning and freedom from such habits above referred to, to refrain from formal union with the church is after all not a thing to excite wonder or provoke harsh criticism.

In calling attention to some of the foregoing things peculiar to the pioneer days generally prevailing, and even today found in Kentucky and Tennessee, there is no disposition to excuse Mr. Lincoln from the mistake certainly chargeable to him of refraining from formal union with the church at a later period. It is hoped that the treatment here offered concerning the crude manner of worship and erroneous emphasis of the primitive Baptists will not be taken as an intentional slight upon that branch of the church. (The writer's forebears were of that faith.) While some justification for young Lincoln's attitude toward this class is here set forth, yet it is manifestly true that this particular church so generally prevalent in large sections of the country during the formative period, furnished the sole means of worship, and so administered to the spiritual needs of the people as abundantly to justify its existence.

The question of Mr. Lincoln's religious attitude later in life has provoked considerable discussion. Substantially all creeds, like all political parties, have claimed him. Those entertaining liberalistic views have been quite as free as any in asserting the claim that Lincoln was of their number. This was the boast of Colonel Ingersol, of agnostic fame. Mr. Herndon, his law partner, said that his religious faith was best represented by the teachings of Theodore Parker; and he and others possessing religious beliefs that classed them as deists were disposed to claim Mr. Lincoln as possessing a

like faith. This class in particular have challenged those who claim Mr. Lincoln as a Christian to point out in all of his utterances at any time a sentence where the name of Jesus Christ was used. This attitude is wholly unworthy of such men as Herndon, Lamon and others. Lincoln told his particular friend, Bishop Simpson, that he did pass through a period of doubt and distrust of the Scriptures, but that he later came to see the folly of such. It is a noteworthy fact, however, that Mr. Lincoln's language in reference to Deity was such as to give no offense to any faith or creed.

It is believed that no one today would be disposed to undertake the hopeless and thankless task of attempting to substantiate the claim that Mr. Lincoln was not a Christian in view of all the evidence at hand to the contrary. With a sincere purpose of doing the right as "God gave him to see the right," far removed as he was above the loose morality of strong partisan politics, refusing as he did repeatedly to be governed by notable examples of expediency, and mere conventionalities; absolutely unmindful of probable accusations in his departure from an age-long custom of indirection in diplomacy; implicitly trusting in the plain people; relying upon the "gracious favor of Almighty God," with no disposition at any time to substitute expediency for conscience; willing rather to lose popular applause or any mere temporary advantage than even to appear to take liberties with possible success by a firm adherence to the eternal principles of justice and truth; with a sublime patience and unexampled fortitude, he refused to be moved by the clamor of public opinion.

He was a statesman without craft; a politician without cunning; a great man with many virtues and no vices; a ruler without the arrogancy of pride and the bigotry of power; ambitious without mere selfish personal gratification, and successful without becoming vain-glorious. If that Hebrew lawgiver and leader, Moses, in that unprecedented wilderness march with a horde of newly liberated slaves, felt that faith was depleted or courage run low, he could and did betimes climb the mountain stairway and cry to the God of battles, and Jehovah came down "in trailing clouds of Glory;" or if he were harassed by the pursuing foe, or flanked by fiery

serpents, he could afford to be content, for was not the Almighty himself on the picket line in a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night? But not so this later liberator whose tall form was stooping under the terrible burdens, both North and South. What wonder that betimes we see him on his knees in the White House in prayer with Bishop Simpson, or, as when Lee flushed with victory on the gory fields of Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville turned his victorious legions north once more, Lincoln fell upon his face and cried to the God of Battles: "This is your war. The North can't stand another Chancellorsville. You stand by our boys at Gettysburg and I'll stand by you;" and he did.

YOUNG LINCOLN ON THE STUMP

My opinion is that no State can in any way lawfully get out of the Union. It is the duty of the President to run the machine as it is. I reckon that it will be some time before the front door sets up house keeping on its own account.

The boyhood friends of Lincoln were quite pronounced in stating that while Lincoln was ever ready to enter into all of their boyish sports, especially to accompany them to any place where there was a crowd, he could not be induced either to play, fish, or accompany them on any expedition of any character if he had in his possession a new book. Lincoln himself, in later life said that he borrowed all the books to be found for a radius of fifty miles. His habit was to commit to memory such portions as particularly pleased him, making copious notes on paper, if he had it, but if he did not (as was frequently the case) he made free use of boards, the wooden fire shovel or any smooth surface presenting itself. He was an omnivorous reader, devouring anything offered. He regularly borrowed the *Louisville Journal* from Jones, the storekeeper, and a temperance paper and religious publication from a neighbor by the name of Woods. Lincoln had strong convictions on the subject of temperance, and in reading the publication borrowed from Woods was encouraged to commit some of his own thoughts to paper. He took this to his old friend and was pleased when "Uncle Woods" said that

“for sound sense it was better than anything in the paper.” Woods in turn showed the manuscript to a Baptist preacher who was so delighted with it as to believe that it was beyond anything found in the temperance journal, and proposed sending it to the editor at some point in Ohio. It is said that this article was accepted and appeared in the paper, to the great delight of Lincoln as well as of his patron and friend, Woods.

Succeeding so well in this venture, he attempted a political treatment, taking as his theme, National Politics. The subject doubtless suggested itself to him on reading the Louisville paper. This manuscript was submitted to his old friend Woods, as before, who showed it to Judge John Pitcher, an attorney residing at Rockport. Pitcher on reading the article exclaimed: “The world can’t beat it.” This remark greatly encouraged young Lincoln, and he journeyed to Rockport to call upon Pitcher at his office. It is claimed that subsequently Pitcher loaned Lincoln law books, and showed him considerable attention, such as “drawing him out” in conversation on finding him a great talker and quite original in his ideas and methods of investigation.

The essay on National Politics, while not preserved entire, has been in part, and from these sentences some notion may be formed as to Lincoln’s ideas at that early period:

The American government is the best form of government for an intelligent people; it ought to be kept sound and preserved forever. * * * General education should be fostered and carried all over the country; and the constitution should be saved, the Union perpetuated and the laws revered, respected and enforced.

Lincoln’s plea for educational advantages is pathetic when his own disadvantages were so marked.

Among those pioneers in this section who, after attaining old age, were rich in the remembrances of former years, was Captain John LaMar. The LaMars were among the first settlers in this part of the State. Captain LaMar witnessed the killing of the last Indian by the whites in this region, there having been more or less trouble between the two races prior to the Battle of Tippecanoe as well as such minor engagements as the Pigeon Roost Massacre. However, by the time

the Lincolns settled here the Indians had nearly all left this section. The writer had as a parishioner in his church, Mrs. LaMar, a lady four years younger than Mr. Lincoln, and being a neighbor, of course knew him quite well. Captain LaMar, on one occasion, was riding to mill with his father along the road leading past the Lincoln cabin. They observed a boy perched upon the top of a staked-and-ridered fence, reading and so intently engaged that he did not notice their approach. The elder LaMar was so impressed with this fact that he remarked to his son :

John, look at that boy yonder! You mark my words, he will make a smart man out of himself. I may not see it, but you see if my words don't come true.

Captain LaMar lived to witness the fulfillment of his father's prophesy. He was present on the occasion of the unveiling of the Nancy Hanks monument in 1902.

"Nat" Grigsby said :

Lincoln was always at school quite early and attended to his studies diligently. He always stood at the head of his class and passed the rest of us rapidly in his studies. He lost no time at home, and when he was not at work he was at his books.

The schoolmates of Lincoln stated that he was never rude on the playground, and was usually made choice of when an arbiter was needed in adjusting difficulties between boys of his age and size. When his decision was given, it put an end to the trouble.

In an interview with Dennis Hanks by Mr. Herndon, the former said :

We learned by sight, scent and hearing. We heard all that was said, and talked over and over the questions heard, and wore them slick and greasy and threadbare. We went to hear political and other speeches, and to such gatherings as you do now. We would hear all sides and opinions and talk them over, discuss them, agreeing or disagreeing. Abe was a cheerful boy. Sometimes he would get sad, but not very often. He was always reading, scribbling, ciphering and writing poetry.

Miss Roby, who married Allen Gentry, the young man with whom Lincoln made the celebrated flatboat trip down the Mississippi river, said that she was at Gentry's Landing

while this boat was being loaded preparatory to making the southern journey. In speaking of Lincoln at this time she said: "He was long, thin and gawky, his skin having the appearance of being dried up and shriveled." One evening as they sat on the edge of the boat with their feet in the water, Miss Roby called attention to the sunset; whereupon Lincoln explained to her that the sun did not move in fact, but only appeared to do so; that it was the earth that went around the sun. The young lady laughed at the absurdity of such notions and thought him foolish, but later came to realize that young Lincoln was not foolish, but knew much more than anyone around there supposed.

It was this same young lady who related a circumstance that took place in the schoolroom when all the scholars were engaged on a Friday afternoon spelling match. This circumstance has been related by almost all of the earlier biographers of Mr. Lincoln. The schoolmaster, Crawford, had "given out" the word "defied," and the first one attempting it had said: "d-e-f-y-e-d;" the second "d-e-f-f-yed" and at length it came Miss Roby's turn. Not being certain she chanced to look across the room where Lincoln stood smiling. She notice him slyly placing his finger to his eye, and taking the hint she spelled the word correctly and went to the head of her class. Young Lincoln was ever regarded as a good speller, and particularly so by the time he reached his seventeenth year. In fact, he was easily the best speller in the neighborhood and was commonly supposed to know quite as much as his teachers, and more than some of them.

As late as the year 1880, in this section, if a young man excelled in spelling so that he could "take the floor" at spelling matches, and could "solve all the problems in the arithmetic," he was regarded as learned; and no one questioned his ability to teach school.

Lincoln especially liked argumentative bouts, and this caused him to be much in the company of his elders. This habit he later styled "practicing polemics." His ability to argue, and his particular enjoyment of it, seems to have been maintained during his occupancy of the White House. His secretaries are on record as saying that he spent more time

and greater pains with the famous Vallandigham letter than with any State paper.

As a youth he was quite inquisitive on almost any subject, and his habit was never to leave a subject, however difficult, until he had mastered it. He was a good listener, and appeared to know when to keep silent when in company of his elders. After hearing fireside discussions, if certain phases were not clear to him, he lay awake after retiring and beginning at the first of the argument he carefully reviewed it step by step until he had thoroughly satisfied his own mind of the certainty of conclusions reached. He often walked to and fro for considerable periods, repeating these arguments to himself, and after mastering them once he never forgot them. As he later put it, he "was not satisfied when on a hunt for an idea until he could bound it north and south, east and west." He was slow in reaching conclusions, but when once he announced his decision in any given matter, he could not be moved by the force of argument or any other pressure brought to bear.

Many of his well-known stories, anecdotes and "yarns" were of Indiana origin. He and Dennis Hanks usually spent their evenings at the Gentryville store, and on rainy days they might be found either at the store or at Baldwin's blacksmith shop. Baldwin was a great master at story telling, and it was his "yarns" afterward related by Lincoln that caused members of cabinets or Congress, and even representatives of foreign countries, to smile or laugh uproariously.

It was his custom, after reading the *Louisville Journal* at Jones' store to meditate upon what he had read, and then while at work in the fields he would often review some of these discussions for the benefit of his associates.

Lincoln has been accused of being lazy, and in support of this assertion more or less evidence has been offered. Mr. Romine, a near neighbor to the Lincolns and for whom Abraham often labored, is quoted as saying that "Lincoln was lazy." The writer did not know Mr. Romine, but Mrs. Romine was yet living when the data composing these pages were being obtained. In no single instance was this charge of laziness made against Lincoln by any of his early friends.

However, it is believed that some of them would have been inclined to this belief had they been approached earlier in life when it was the fashion to make the charge against any who spent time poring over books. For any chance passerby to see a youth lying beneath the shade of a tree, busily reading, was *prima facie* evidence that he was lazy and usually occasioned, as in Lincoln's case, some such remark as, "Old Tom's Abe'd ruther fool his time away a readin' out of a book than to work any day." Indeed, this disposition to criticise those who engage in purely mental labors while others were in the fields or shops is met with frequently even today.

Not long since in this very region, an artist spent some days on an eminence sketching a landscape, and he was subjected to severe criticism by the farm laborers, remarking that "he is doubtless the son of a bloated aristocrat and was not raised to work." Thus in Lincoln's time for one to have a day off and elect to spend it in reading, was regarded as indicating a lazy disposition. Had the day off been spent along the river bank with hook and line, or in the woods with the gun, it would have elicited no unfavorable comment. The major portion of Lincoln's early friends came to realize this, and where once might have been found carping criticism, at the time the writer was gathering data he found commendation.

The fact that Lincoln frequented the Gentryville store or blacksmith shop has been cited as evidence quite sufficient to establish the charge that he was lazy. There is a rule in logic that if too much is proven, then nothing is proved. Certainly, if the mere fact that Lincoln was often found at Gentryville is deemed sufficient evidence to prove his indifference to work, then substantially all of his neighbors were lazy, since Gentryville was a Saturday town or rainy day town for the surrounding neighborhood, just as many towns are today. As congressmen and senators frequent the cloakroom, smoking and indulging themselves in the pastime of story telling, so in like manner Lincoln frequented the pioneer cloakroom—Jones' store—thus gathering that fund of stories and anecdotes which he afterward related to his associates and White House visitors. Lincoln's boyhood friends indicated that "he

was ever ready to turn his hand at anything, no matter much what, and was always at work if there was any work to be had."

Joseph Gentry, a brother of Allen, told of hearing Lincoln make his first public address, apart from such efforts as the schoolhouse debates occasioned. The circumstances leading up to this were as follows:

Two neighbors each owned a flock of geese, and one evening when one of these flocks returned and was being housed for the night, it was ascertained that a certain grey goose was missing. The owner, knowing that his flock occasionally mingled with that of his neighbor, and very naturally supposing that it had strayed off with these, he accordingly went to the home of the owner of the other flock. On his arrival there he explained his mission, and at once pointed to a certain goose claiming it as his; whereupon the neighbor disputed the claim, and before long this occasioned a heated argument which came little short of a personal encounter. The two disputants made sundry threats on separating, each saying in effect that the matter was not settled, and the owner of the stray goose indicated that he would "bring the matter before the squire." Accordingly, attorneys were consulted and employed to prosecute and defend. The day was set for the trial, the court room being the schoolhouse about one mile east of the Lincoln cabin.

The difference between these two neighbors occasioning the litigation very naturally produced intense interest throughout the community, so much so in fact that when the day fixed for the trial came, a great crowd assembled. However, not all of these came merely to gratify curiosity, for both sides had subpoenaed a number of witnesses. Mr. Gentry stated that so far as to his having any personal interest or motive in attending, it was due solely to a boyish curiosity to witness these proceedings, and falling in with Lincoln, who was at that time in his seventeenth year, they walked together to the schoolhouse. Arriving early, they went well forward and sat down on a backless puncheon seat. Ere long the little house was crowded. The two litigants, together with members of their families and friends, were seated on

either side of the room. There was that characteristic stillness that foreboded a storm, and presently, without any warning whatever, Lincoln arose, and advancing quickly forward, faced the assembled crowd and began making an address. Gentry maintained that Lincoln had not previously indicated his purpose to him or to others of attempting such a thing, and when he thus stood forth and began the speech he (Gentry) was greatly surprised. It was, of course, not possible for Gentry to give the exact language of Lincoln on this occasion, but since the circumstances were indelibly fixed in his memory he found no great difficulty in setting forth the scene rather vividly, and it is believed that the following version of it is substantially what occurred:

Friends and neighbors, what means this great gathering of old neighbors? What is it that has called us together here? (up to this time the speaker's face being as serious as Lincoln's face could be) and then amid the painful silence his features changed, his eyebrows lifted, and irresistible humor beamed forth.) "What brings us together? Why—an—old—gray—goose!" A great roar of laughter greeted this ludicrous drawl, but not being interrupted in any way and doubtless encouraged to proceed by the volley of laughter, he continued (serious again), this time stating the case. "Mr. A., here (addressing him), has lost a goose and he asserts that his neighbor, Mr. B., here (pointing) has it. Although Mr. B. disclaims having in his possession any goose not his own, not being able or disposed to settle their difference between themselves, they have decided to go to law, and that's why we are all here." (Comical again.) "Mr. A. (addressing him), you say you have lost a gray goose, and that you know that Mr. B., here has it, and rather than lose it you have resolved to bring the matter to the court. Now you, Mr. A. (pointing and then quickly turning his face and body half about) and you Mr. B., after you've had your trial today, and no matter which way it goes, what have either of you gained? W-E-L-L, Mr. A., if you win your case you'll get back your old gray goose, and it-is-worth-say-about-two-bits! (great laughter). And you, Mr. B., if you win today, you'll get to keep your old gray goose that you claim has always been yours, and it's worth say-about-two-bits (laughter). Now you, Mr. A. (serious again), and you, Mr. B., if you win today you'll get back your goose or keep your goose as the case may be, but (very earnestly) I tell both of you that whichever one may win, he's going to lose! And lose what, you say? Well, you have both been neighbors, and you'll lose your friendship for one another for one thing; and not only that, it won't stop there. For what means this array of witnesses here? (pointing). It means your wives and family and friends will be at outs, and you've set up a commotion in the entire neighborhood, and what about? (exceedingly comical). Oh, w-e-l-l, all-on-account-of-an-

old-gray-goose! If I were in your place, men, I'd stop all this hair pulling and wool gathering. I'd get together here and now and settle this thing, make up and be friends.

The result was that just as the court and the two attorneys from the county seat town came through the little doorway, Lincoln had the two litigants shaking hands and smiling. Lincoln had thus laughed the matter out of court and won his maiden case which may not inaptly or inappropriately be called "The Gray Goose case."

Thoughtful consideration is invited by way of comparison of this circumstance with Lincoln's Cincinnati speech where he presumes to address his "friends across the river," as well as his famous Cooper Institute address, and above all his first inaugural where he stands as the nation's peacemaker, saying: "You of the North and you of the South, you can not fight always, and after you have fought with much loss on both sides with no gain * * * can aliens make treaties easier than friends can make laws?"

The method and manner, certainly the peculiar platform mannerisms, the skilful bringing together of humor and the setting forth of the serious side, were pre-eminently characteristic of young Lincoln so that when he sprang into the arena of debate later, he came fully armed to meet the "Little Giant" Douglass, if not with a shepherd's crook and sling, with weapons more formidable—the speech and faith of the plain people, appealing as he did "to the considerate judgment of mankind and invoking the gracious favor of Almighty God" in defense of a holy cause that had been repeatedly defied.

The unrivaled genius of Lincoln whose consummate art in statement enabled him to become such a wizard with the pen, and which flowered out on the prairies of Illinois, was budding forth in the morning of his life in the wilderness of Indiana, becoming, as he did in after years, "the greatest leader of all, he had the humblest origin and scantiest scholarship, yet he surpassed all orators in eloquence, all diplomats in wisdom, all statesmen in foresight and the most ambitious in fame."

(To be Continued)