Stowe Harriet Beecher

Men of Our Times. Or, Leading Patriots of the Day

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Содержание

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PREFACE

In these sketches of some of the leading public men of our times, the editor professes to give such particulars of their lives, and such only, as the public have a right to know.

Every such man has two lives, his public and his private one. The one becomes fairly the property of the public, in virtue of his having been connected with events in which every one has a share of interest; but the other belongs exclusively to himself, his family, and his intimate friends, and the public have no more right to discuss or pry into its details than they have into those of any other private individual.

The editor has aimed to avoid all privacies and personalities which might be indelicate in relation to family circles. She has indeed, in regard to all the characters, so far as possible, dwelt upon the early family and community influences by which they were formed, particularly upon the character and influence of mothers; but such inquiries relate for the most part to those long dead, and whose mortal history has become a thing of the past.

Whenever the means have been at hand, the family stock from which each man has been derived, has been minutely traced. The question of inherited traits is becoming yearly one of increasing interest, and most striking results come from a comparison of facts upon this subject. The fusion of different races is said to produce marked results on the characteristics of the human being. America has been a great smelting furnace in which tribes and nations have been melted together, and the result ought to be some new developments of human nature. It will always be both interesting and useful to know both the quality of the family stock, and the circumstances of the early training of men who have acted any remarkable part in life.

Our country has recently passed through a great crisis which has concentrated upon it for a time the attention of the civilized world. It has sustained a shock which the whole world, judging by past experience, said must inevitably shatter the republic to fragments, and yet, like a gallant ship in full sail, it has run down the terrible obstacle, and gone on triumphant, and is this day stronger for the collision.

This wonderful success is owing to the character of the people which a Christian Democracy breeds. Of this people we propose to give a specimen; to show how they were formed in early life, from the influences which are inherent in such a state.

We are proud and happy to know that these names on our list are after all but *specimens*. Probably every reader of this book will recall as many more whom he will deem equally worthy of public notice. There is scarcely one of them who would not say in reference to his position before the public, what Lincoln said: "I stand where I do because some man must stand there, but there are twenty others that might as well have been leaders as myself." On the whole, we are not ashamed to present to the world this list of men as a specimen of the graduates from the American school of Christian Democracy.

So far as we know, the American government is the only permanent republic which ever based itself upon the principles laid down by Jesus Christ, of the absolute equal brotherhood of man, and the rights of man on the simple ground of manhood. Notwithstanding the contrary practices of a section of the States united in the Union, and the concessions which they introduced into the constitution, nobody doubts that this was the leading idea of the men who founded our government. The declaration

of American Independence crystalized a religious teaching within a political act. The constitution of the United States still further elaborates these principles, and so strong was the logic of ideas that the conflict of opinions implied in the incidental concessions to opposite ideas, produced in the government of the country a continual and irrepressible discord. For a while it seemed doubtful which idea would triumph, and whether the accidental parasite would not strangle and wither the great original tree. The late war was the outcome of the whole. The fierce fire into which our national character has been cast in the hour of trial, has burned out of it the last lingering stain of compromise with anything inconsistent with its primary object, "to ordain justice and perpetuate liberty."

These men have all been formed by the principles of that great Christian document, and that state of society and those social influences which grew out of it, and it is instructive to watch, in their early life, how a Christian republic trains her sons.

In looking through the list it will be seen that almost every one of these men sprang from a condition of hard-working poverty. The majority of them were self-educated men, who in early life were inured to industrious toil. The farm life of America has been the nursery of great men, and there is scarce a man mentioned in the book who has not hardened his muscles and strengthened his brain power by a hand to hand wrestle with the forces of nature in agricultural life. Frugality, strict temperance, self-reliance and indomitable industry have been the lessons of their early days.

Some facts about these specimen citizens are worthy of attention. More than one-half of them were born and received their early training in New England, and full one-third are direct lineal descendants of the Pilgrim fathers. All, so far as we know, are undoubted believers in the Christian religion – the greater proportion of them are men of peculiarly and strongly religious natures, who have been active and efficient in every peculiarly religious work. All have been agreed in one belief, that the teachings of Jesus Christ are to be carried out in political institutions, and that the form of society based on his teachings, is to be defended at any sacrifice and at all risks.

There is scarcely a political man upon this list whose early efforts were not menaced with loss and reproach and utter failure, if he advocated these principles in the conduct of political affairs. For these principles they have temporarily suffered buffetings, oppressions, losses, persecutions, and in one great instance, Death. All of them honored liberty when she was hard beset, insulted and traduced, and it is fit that a free people should honor them in the hour of her victory.

It will be found when the sum of all these biographies is added up that the qualities which have won this great physical and moral victory have not been so much exceptional gifts of genius or culture, as those more attainable ones which belong to man's moral nature.

Taken as a class, while there is a fair proportion both of genius and scholarship among them, yet the general result speaks more of average talent and education turned to excellent account, than of any striking eminence in any particular direction.

But we regard it as highest of all that they were men of good and honest hearts – men who have set their faces as a flint to know and do the RIGHT. All of them are men whose principles have been tried in the fire, men who have braved opposition and persecution and loss for the sake of what they believed to be true, and knew to be right, and for this even more than for their bravery in facing danger, and their patience and perseverance in overcoming difficulties, we have good hope in offering them as examples to the young men of America.

In respect to one of the names on the list, the editor's near relationship, while it gives her most authentic access to all sources of just information, may be held to require an apology. But the fashion of writing biographies of our leading men is becoming so popular that the only way in which a prominent man can protect himself from being put before the public by any hands who may think fit to assume the task, is to put into the hands of some friend such authentic particulars as may with propriety be recorded. Mr. Beecher has recently been much embarrassed by the solicitation of parties, who notwithstanding his remonstrances, announce an intention of writing his life. He has been informed by them that it was to be done whether he consented or not, and that his only choice

was between furnishing these parties with material, or taking the risk of what they might discover in their unassisted researches.

In this dilemma, it is hoped that the sketch presented in this volume, as being undeniably authentic, may so satisfy the demand, that there may be no call for any other record.

H. B. STOWE.

Hartford, January, 1868.

CHAPTER I
ABRAHAM LINCOLN

The Men of our Time – Lincoln Foremost – The War was the Working-Man's Revolution – Abraham Lincoln's Birth and Youth – The Books he read – The Thirty Thousand Dollars for Tender – The Old Stocking of Government Money – A Just Lawyer; Anecdotes – His First Candidacy and Speech – Goes to Legislature and Congress – The Seven Debates and Campaign against Douglas in 1858 – Webster's and Lincoln's Language Compared – The Cooper Institute Speech – The Nomination at Chicago – Moral and Physical Courage – The Backwoodsman President and the Diplomatists – Significance of his Presidential Career – Religious Feelings – His Kindness – "The Baby Did It" – The First Inaugural – The Second Inaugural, and other State Papers – The Conspiracy and Assassination – The Opinions of Foreign Nations on Mr. Lincoln.

Our times have been marked from all other times as the scene of an immense conflict which has not only shaken to its foundation our own country, but has been felt like the throes of an earthquake through all the nations of the earth.

Our own days have witnessed the closing of the great battle, but the preparations for that battle have been the slow work of years.

The "Men of Our Times," are the men who indirectly by their moral influence helped to bring on this great final crisis, and also those who, when it was brought on, and the battle was set in array, guided it wisely, and helped to bring it to its triumphant close.

In making our selection we find men of widely different spheres and characters. Pure philanthropists, who, ignoring all selfish and worldly politics, have labored against oppression and wrong; far-seeing statesmen, who could foresee the working of political causes from distant years; brave naval and military men, educated in the schools of our country; scientific men, who helped to perfect the material forces of war by their discoveries and ingenuity – all are united in one great crisis, and have had their share in one wonderful passage of the world's history.

Foremost on the roll of "men of our time," it is but right and fitting that we place the honored and venerated name of the man who was called by God's providence to be the leader of the nation in our late great struggle, and to seal with his blood the proclamation of universal liberty in this country – the name of

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

The revolution through which the American nation has been passing was not a mere local convulsion. It was a war for a principle which concerns all mankind. It was the war for the rights of the working class of society as against the usurpation of privileged aristocracies. You can make nothing else of it. That is the reason why, like a shaft of light in the judgment day, it has gone through all nations, dividing the multitudes to the right and the left. *For* us and our cause, all the common working classes of Europe – all that toil and sweat, and are oppressed. *Against* us, all privileged classes, nobles, princes, bankers and great manufacturers, all who live at ease. A silent instinct, piercing to the dividing of soul and spirit, joints and marrow, has gone through the earth, and sent every soul with instinctive certainty where it belongs. The poor laborers of Birmingham and Manchester, the poor silk weavers of Lyons, to whom our conflict has been present starvation and lingering death, have stood bravely *for* us. No sophistries could blind or deceive *them*; they knew that *our* cause was *their*

cause, and they suffered their part heroically, as if fighting by our side, because they knew that our victory was to be their victory. On the other side, all aristocrats and holders of exclusive privileges have felt the instinct of opposition, and the sympathy with a struggling aristocracy, for they, too, felt that our victory would be their doom.

This great contest has visibly been held in the hands of Almighty God, and is a fulfillment of the solemn prophecies with which the Bible is sown thick as stars, that He would spare the soul of the needy, and judge the cause of the poor. It was He who chose the instrument for this work, and He chose him with a visible reference to the rights and interests of the great majority of mankind, for which he stood.

Abraham Lincoln was in the strictest sense *a man of the working classes*. All his advantages and abilities were those of a man of the working classes, all his disadvantages and disabilities those of the working classes, and his position at the head of one of the most powerful nations of the earth was a sign to all who live by labor, that their day is coming. Lincoln was born to the inheritance of hard work, as truly as the poorest laborer's son that digs in our fields. He was born in Kentucky, in 1809. At seven years of age he was set to work, axe in hand, to clear up a farm in a Western forest. Until he was seventeen his life was that of a simple farm laborer, with only such intervals of schooling as farm laborers get. Probably the school instruction of his whole life would not amount to more than six months. At nineteen he made a trip to New Orleans as a hired hand on a flat-boat, and on his return he split the timber for a log cabin and built it, and enclosed ten acres of land with a rail fence of his own handiwork. The next year he hired himself for twelve dollars a month to build a flat-boat and take her to New Orleans, and any one who knows what the life of a Mississippi boatman was in those days, must know that it involved every kind of labor. In 1832, in the Black Hawk Indian war, the hardy boatman volunteered to fight for his country, and was unanimously elected a captain, and served with honor for a season in frontier military life. He was very popular with his soldiers for two reasons; the first was his great physical strength; the second, that he could tell more and better stories than any other man in the army. Odd constituents for a commander's character; but like everything else in Lincoln's life, the fact shows how wonderfully he represented, and therefore suited, the people. Some time after the war, the surveyor of Sangamon county, being driven with work, came to him to take the survey of a tract off from his hands. True, he had never studied surveying, but what of that? He accepted the job, procured a chain and a treatise on surveying, and *did the work*. Do we not see in this a parallel of the wider wilderness which in later years he was to undertake to survey and fit for human habitation, *without* chart or surveyor's chain?

After this, while serving as a postmaster, he began his law studies. He took the postmastership for the sake of reading all the papers that came into the town, at the same time borrowing the law books he was too poor to buy, and studying by the light of his evening fire. He soon acquired a name in the country about as a man of resources and shrewdness. He was one that people looked to for counsel in exigencies, and to whom they were ready to depute almost any enterprise which needed skill and energy, or patience and justice. "He was in great request," says one of his biographers, "by thick-headed people, because of his clearness and skill in narration." It might well have been added, because also of his kindness, patience and perfect justness of nature in listening, apprehending and stating.

Mr. Lincoln was now about twenty-three. His life thus far may perhaps be considered as his education; at any rate, it is the part of his life which answers to the school years, college course, and professional studies of a regularly educated lawyer at the East. It included, of actual "schooling," only the six months total already mentioned. Even then it was his mother who had taught him to read and write. Of the use of books of any kind, this backwoods graduate had little enough. His course of reading was a very thorough illustration of the ancient rule to "read not many but much." He read seven books over and over. Of three of them, the Bible, Shakspeare and Æsop's Fables, he could repeat large portions by heart. The other four were the Pilgrim's Progress, the Life of Washington, the

Life of Franklin, and the Life of Henry Clay. It is a curious fact that neither then nor afterwards did he ever read a novel. He began Ivanhoe once, but was not interested enough to finish it. He was one of those men who have the peculiar faculty of viewing this whole world of men and things as a side spectator, and the interest of the drama of life thus silently seen at first hand, was to him infinitely more interesting than any second hand imitation. "My life is story enough," once said a person of this peculiar temperament, "what should I want to read stories for?" The interest he felt in human beings was infinitely stronger with him than the interest in artistic representation.

One of his biographers says that he "seldom bought a new book, and seldom read one," and he adds, with a good deal of truth, that "his education was almost entirely a newspaper one," and that he "was one of the most thorough newspaper readers in America."

But that which was much more the real essence of his self-education, was the never-ceasing and strenuous course of laborious thought and reasoning that he kept up, upon the meaning, the connection, the tendency, the right and wrong, the helps or remedies, of all the past facts he read of, or of the present facts that he experienced in life. And this education he not only began early and pursued effectively, but he never ceased it. All his life he maintained that course of steady labor after practical knowledge and practical wisdom. Whenever he could read a good book he did, and his practice for a long time was, after having finished it, to write out an analysis of it; a very fatiguing but very improving process. One of his companions while a young "hired man," described him in after years, as "the likeliest boy in God's world. He would work all day as hard as any of us, and study by fire-light in the log house half the night, and in this way he made himself a thorough practical surveyor." Another man described him as he saw him while working for a living, in 1830, or thereabouts, "lying on a trundle-bed, with one leg stretched out rocking the cradle containing the child of his hostess, while he himself was absorbed in the study of English grammar."

The world has many losses that mankind are not conscious of. The burning of the Alexandrian library was an irreparable loss, but a greater loss is in the silence of great and peculiar minds. Had there been any record of what Lincoln thought and said while he thus hewed his way through the pedantic mazes of book learning, we might have some of the newest, the strangest, the most original contributions to the philosophy of grammar and human language in general that ever have been given. They would have savored very much of Beethoven's answer when the critics asked him why he would use consecutive octaves in music. "Because they sounded well," said the scornful old autocrat; and Lincoln's quiet perseverance in a style of using the English language peculiarly his own had something of the same pertinacity. He seemed equally amused by the critical rules of rhetoric, and as benevolently and paternally indulgent to the mass of eager scholars who thought them important, as he was to the turbulent baby whom he rocked with one leg while he pursued his grammatical studies. But after his own quaint, silent fashion, he kept up his inquiries into the world of book learning with remarkable perseverance, and his friend and biographer, Mr. Arnold, says, became "thoroughly at home in all the liberal studies and scientific questions of the day." This is rather strongly put, and we fancy that Lincoln would have smiled shrewdly over it, but the specifications which Mr. Arnold adds are undoubtedly true. Mr. Lincoln "had mastered English, and made some progress in Latin, and knew the Bible more thoroughly than many who have spent their lives in its perusal."

But what book learning he obtained would never have made him a lawyer, not to say President. The education which gave him his success in life was his self-training in the ability to understand and to state facts and principles about men and things.

In 1836 our backwoodsman, flat-boat hand, captain, surveyor, obtained a license to practice law, and as might be expected, rose rapidly. One anecdote will show the esteem in which he was held in his neighborhood. A client came to him in a case relating to a certain land claim, and Lincoln said to him, "Your first step must be to take thirty thousand dollars and go and make a legal tender; it of course will be refused, but it is a necessary step." "But," said the man, "I haven't the thirty thousand dollars to make it with." "O, that's it; just step over to the bank with me, and I'll get it."

So into the bank they went, and Lincoln says to the cashier, "We just want to take thirty thousand dollars to make a legal tender with; I'll bring it back in an hour or two." The cashier handed across the money to "Honest Abe," and without a scratch of the pen in acknowledgment, he strode his way with the money, all in the most sacred simplicity, made the tender, and brought it back with as much nonchalance as if he had been borrowing a silver spoon of his grandmother.

It was after he had been practicing law some time, that another incident took place, showing him as curiously scrupulous about small sums as he was trusty and trusted about large ones. When he left New Salem and went to Springfield, he was still so poor that he even found it difficult to procure the necessaries of life. For some years he struggled forward, when one day there came a post-office agent, who in pursuance of the routine business of the department, presented to the almost penniless and still struggling ex-postmaster a regulation draft for the balance due to the Washington office, in all $17.60. Dr. Henry, a friend of Mr. Lincoln's, happening to fall in with the agent, went along with him, intending to offer to lend the money, as it was about certain that he could have no such sum as that at his command. When the draft was presented, Lincoln asked the officer to be seated, sat down himself a few moments, looking puzzled; then asked to be excused for a little, stepped out to his boarding house and returned. He brought with him an old stocking, untied it, and poured out on the table a quantity of small silver coin and "red cents." These they counted; they amounted to $17.60, the precise amount called for by the draft. More than that – it was *the very money* called for by the draft, for at leaving his postmastership, the punctilious officer had tied up the balance on hand, and kept it by him, awaiting the legal call for it. At paying it over, he remarked that he *never used, even temporarily, any money that was not his*. This money, he added, he felt belonged to the government, and he had no right to exchange or use it for any purposes of his own.

His honesty, shrewdness, energy and keen practical insight into men and things soon made him the most influential man in his state, both as lawyer and politician. Of this influence, and most especially of its depending upon his wonderfully direct plain common sense, and the absolute honesty and utter justness of his mind, there are many anecdotes. In politics and in law alike, both the strength of his conscientiousness and the kind of yearning after a rounded wholeness of view which was an intellectual instinct with him, forced him habitually to consider all sides of any question. "For fifteen years before his election to the Presidency," says one writer, in striking illustration of this habit in politics, "he subscribed regularly to *The Richmond Enquirer* and *The Charleston Mercury*. He grew slowly, as public opinion grew; and as an anti-slavery man, was a gradual convert." Thus it resulted that "while Rhett and Wise, with slavery in full feather, wrote every day the inviolateness of secession and the divinity of bondage, these two Illinois lawyers, (Lincoln and his partner, Herndon,) in their little square office, read every vaunting cruel word, paid to read it, and educated themselves out of their mutual indignations."

In like manner he was fair and impartial in legal investigations. "The jury" says one account, "always got from him a fair statement of any case in hand, and years later it was remarked by the Chief Justice of Illinois that when Lincoln spoke, he argued both sides of the case so well that a speech in response was always superfluous."

Mr. Lincoln's fellow lawyers used to say that he was in professional matters, "perversely honest." He could not take hold heartily on the wrong side. He never engaged in it, knowingly; if a man desired to retain him whose cause was bad, he declined, and told the applicant not to go to law. A lady once came to him to have him prosecute a claim to some land, and gave him the papers in the case for examination, together with a retainer in the shape of a check for two hundred dollars. Next day she came to see what her prospects were, when Mr. Lincoln told her that he had examined the documents very carefully, that she "had not a peg to hang her claim on," and that he could not conscientiously advise her to bring an action. Having heard this judgment, the lady thanked him, took her papers, and was about to depart. "Wait a moment," said Mr. Lincoln, "here is the check you gave me." "But," said

she, "Mr. Lincoln, I think you have earned *that*." "No, no," he answered, insisting on her receiving it, "that would not be right. I can't take pay for doing my duty."

He was quite as prompt and just in accepting unprofitable duty as in declining its profitable opposite. During all the early part of his legal practice in Springfield, it was considered an unpopular and politically dangerous business for a lawyer to defend any fugitive slave on trial for surrender to the South, and even the brave Col. Baker, in those days also practicing there, on one occasion directly refused to defend such a case, saying that as a political man he could not afford it. But the luckless applicant, having consulted with an abolitionist friend, went next to Lincoln, and got him. "*He's* not afraid of an unpopular case," said the friend; "when I go for a lawyer to defend an arrested fugitive slave, other lawyers will refuse me; but if Mr. Lincoln is at home, he will always take up my case."

On a few occasions after having even entered into the trial of a case, Mr. Lincoln would find that, as sometimes happens, he had been deceived by his own client, and that he really had not the right on his side. When this was the case, he could as it were be seen to wilt at once, and whatever further he might do in the case was only mechanical. In such a case, having an associate, and having refused to argue it, the associate argued the case *and won it*, and then offered to divide with Mr. Lincoln the fee of $900; but Lincoln would not take a cent. Once in defending a man sued for delivering lambs instead of sheep, the testimony clearly showed that such delivery had been made. Instead of trying to confuse the witnesses or becloud the evidence, Mr. Lincoln ascertained how many such lambs had been delivered, and quietly told the jury that they must give a verdict against his client. He simply cautioned them to be just in fixing the damages. When he had recovered a verdict against a railroad company, and a certain offset against his client was to be deducted, he interrupted the final decision just in time to have the offset *made larger* by a certain amount which he had just found out ought to be added to it. His careful and primitive scrupulousness was just as marked in dealing with any associates in a case. When he received a joint fee his invariable custom was to divide it properly, and tie up in a separate parcel each associate's part of *the very money received*, duly labelled and directed.

In 1841 Mr. Lincoln argued before the Supreme Court of Illinois, the case of Nance, a negro girl, who had been sold within the state. A note had been given in payment for her, and the suit was brought to recover upon this note. Mr. Lincoln, defending, proved that Nance was free, and that thus nothing had been sold; so that the note was void. The Court below had sustained the note, but the Supreme Court, in accordance with Mr. Lincoln's argument, reversed this judgment. The decision made Nance free, and put a stop to sales of human beings in Illinois.

Another remarkable case in which he was engaged, was, the defence of young Armstrong from a charge of murder. This Armstrong was the son of a man who had befriended and employed Mr. Lincoln in youth, and the present charge was, that he had killed a certain person who had unquestionably died from injuries received in a camp-meeting riot where young Armstrong was present. The father was dead, and the mother aged and poor; a chain of apparently perfectly conclusive circumstantial evidence had been forged, which had convinced the community of Armstrong's guilt; indeed, had he not been safely secured in a strong jail he would have been lynched. Neither the youth nor his old mother had any money. The people and the newspapers were furious against the prisoner; and his fate appeared absolutely certain even to himself, when Mr. Lincoln, hearing of the matter in some way, volunteered for the defence, and was gladly accepted. When the trial came on, the evidence for the prosecution was given, and constituted what appeared to the audience a perfectly conclusive proof of guilt. Lincoln cross-examined very lightly, only correcting up and ascertaining a few places and dates; and his own witnesses were only to show comparatively good previous character for the prisoner.

The prosecutor, sure of his prey, made only a short and formal argument. Mr. Lincoln followed for the defence. He began slowly, calmly, carefully. He took hold of the heart of the evidence for the state – that of the chief witness. He pointed out first one discrepancy, and then another, and then another. He came at last to that part of the evidence where this principal witness had sworn positively

that he had been enabled by the light of the moon to see the prisoner give the fatal blow with a slung shot; and taking up the almanac he showed that at the hour sworn to on the night sworn to *the moon had not risen*; that the whole of this evidence was a perjury.

The audience, gradually stirred and changed in the temper of their minds by the previous series of skilfully displayed inconsistencies, rising from hate into sympathy, flamed suddenly up at this startling revelation, and the verdict of "not guilty" was almost visible in the faces of the jury. But this was not all. Turning upon the infamous man who had sought to swear away another's life, Mr. Lincoln, now fully kindled into his peculiarly slow but intensely fiery wrath, held him up to the view of court and jury and audience, in such a horrid picture of guilt and shame that the miserable fellow, stunned and confounded, actually fled from the face of the incensed lawyer out of the court room. And in conclusion, Mr. Lincoln appealed to the jury to lay aside any temporary prejudices, and to do simple justice. And he referred to the motive of his own presence there, – to his gratitude for the kindness of the prisoner's father in past years, in a manner so affecting as to bring tears from many eyes. In less than half an hour the jury returned a verdict of not guilty, and the young man was set free, his life saved and his character restored.

When he went for the second time into public life, on the passage of the Nebraska Bill in 1854, he was becoming eminent in the difficult and lucrative department of patent law. But his fellow lawyers used to call his fees "ridiculously small." Indeed, he never took but one large fee, and that his friends insisted on his taking. This was $5,000 from the Illinois Central Railroad Company, one of the richest corporations in the country, and for very valuable services in a very important case. Once before this he had received what he thought a large fee, and he made a good use of it. The sum was five hundred dollars, and a friend who called to see him the next morning, found him counting it over and over, and piling it up on the table to look at. "Look here," he said, "see what a heap of money I've got from the – case! Did you ever see anything like it! Why, I never had so much money in my life before, put it all together!" Then he added, that if he could only get another $250 to put with it, he would at once buy a quarter-section of land, and settle it on his old step-mother. This was an odd use to make of a man's first important gains in money, and his friend, who at once loaned him the required additional amount, tried to make him give the land for the old lady's life only. But Lincoln insisted on his own plan, saying, "I shall do no such thing. It is a poor return at the best, for all the good woman's devotion and fidelity to me, and there isn't going to be any half-way work about it."

Mr. Lincoln was a great favorite at the bar, his good nature, his kindness, and his unfailing flow of stories, making him a most welcome guest on every circuit.

He never took technical advantages, but on the other hand often showed an adversary some error in matter of form, and suggested to him how to cure it. His forensic habits were excessively simple, but very effective. The most telling of all of them was *to be in the right*; for when juries know that a lawyer habitually refuses to be on the wrong side, habitually breaks down if on that side, simply from consciousness of the fact, and habitually makes strong and clear arguments if on the right side, they are prepossessed in favor of that lawyer before he says a word. He did not make speeches to the jury, he talked with them; often in warm weather taking off his coat for coolness, selecting some intelligent looking juryman, reasoning with him until convinced, then taking another, and so on. He did not browbeat witnesses, but kept them comfortable and good humored. In short, Mr. Lincoln was decidedly and deservedly a powerful as well as a successful lawyer. He must have been of great professional powers to maintain himself, and rise to the leadership of the bar, with the competitors he had. Among these were Mr. Douglas, Secretary Browning, Senator Trumbull, Governor Yates, Judge Davis of the U. S. Supreme Court, Col. Baker, Gen. Hardin, Gov. Bissell, Gen. Shields, Senator Washburn, N. B. Judd, Gen. Logan, and others. He became recognized by his fellow-citizens as "the first lawyer in Illinois," and one of the judges on the bench described him as "the finest lawyer he ever knew," and another as "one of the ablest he had ever known."

Like so many of his profession, Mr. Lincoln was very early a politician. Indeed, his devotion to politics interfered very considerably with his gains, and delayed his eminence in his profession. The value to his fellow-countrymen of the political results which he was the means of bringing to pass, is, however, so infinitely beyond any money value, that no regret can be felt at his ambition.

Mr. Lincoln's popularity among his neighbors, his assiduous study of the newspapers, his intense and untiring meditations and reasonings on the political questions of the day, brought him into the political field pretty early and pretty well prepared. It was in 1832, when he was twenty-three years old, that his first candidacy and his first speech took place. The story and speech all together are so short that they can be inserted here in full. On the day of election, then, Mr. Lincoln's opponent spoke first, and delivered a long harangue of the regular political sort. Lincoln, who followed him, completed his oration in just seventy-nine words – less than one minute's talking. This is what he said: "Gentlemen, fellow citizens: – I presume you know who I am; I am humble Abraham Lincoln. I have been solicited by many friends to become a candidate for the Legislature. My politics can be briefly stated. I am in favor of a national bank, I am in favor of the internal improvement system, and a high protective tariff. These are my sentiments and political principles. If elected I shall be thankful, if not, it will be all the same."

He was beaten, however, in spite of his terseness. But in his own district he received all but seven out of 284 votes; and he was never beaten again in any election by the people.

His actual political career, not counting this defeat, began in 1834, when he was chosen member of the State Legislature, and being too poor to afford a horse, *walked* over a hundred miles to Vandalia to take his seat. He remained a member for four successive terms of two years each. Mr. Douglas became a member two years after him, in 1836; the two men quickly became party leaders on their respective sides of the house, and thus their political courses and their political rivalries began almost together. At the two latter of his four legislative terms, Mr. Lincoln was the Whig candidate for Speaker, and once lacked only one vote of being elected. Mr. Lincoln's eight years' service in the State Legislature was busy and useful, and gave him an assured and high position in his party. The work done was usually of a local character, of course, its most important departments being that of the improvement of internal communication by railroad and canal, and that of education.

But even on the question of slavery, the one significant occasion for utterance which arose was promptly improved, and in such a manner as to show both the settled feelings and convictions of Lincoln's mind on the subject, and his characteristic practice of restricting his official utterances strictly to the exigencies of the case. His dislike of slavery was not only the consequence of his inborn sense of justice and kindly feelings, but was his direct inheritance from his parents, who left Kentucky and settled in Indiana expressly to bring up their family on free instead of slave soil. In March, 1839, some strong pro-slavery resolutions were passed by the Legislature of Illinois, and by large majorities in both houses. This, the few anti-slavery members could not prevent. But Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Dan Stone took the most decided stand in their power on the other side, by putting on record on the House journals a formal protest against the resolutions. In this protest, they declared views that would to-day be considered very conservative, about legal or political interference with slavery; but they also declared in the most unqualified manner, and in so many words, their belief "that the institution of slavery is founded on both injustice and bad policy."

At the end of his fourth term, Mr. Lincoln declined a further nomination, finding it absolutely necessary to devote more time than hitherto to his own private affairs. When he thus left the Legislature of his own accord, he was virtually the leader of his party in the State, having reached that creditable and influential though unofficial position by his own good qualities, in the eight years of his life ending with his thirty-fifth. It was a great achievement for a man no older, and so destitute of outside help.

For four years Mr. Lincoln now remained a hard-working lawyer, although he did a good deal of political work besides, particularly in "stumping" Illinois and Indiana in the Presidential canvass

of 1844. In this campaign Mr. Lincoln made many strong and effective speeches for Henry Clay, and though his candidate was beaten, his own reputation as a politician and speaker was much increased. In 1846 he was elected to Congress as a Whig, and his extreme popularity at home is shown by the fact that his own majority on this occasion was 1,511 in the Springfield district, while Mr. Clay's had been only 914.

During this congressional term, Mr. Lincoln met the grinding of the great question of the day – the upper and nether millstone of slavery and freedom revolving against each other. Lincoln's whole nature inclined him to be a harmonizer of conflicting parties, rather than a committed combatant on either side. He was firmly and from principle an enemy to slavery, but the ground he occupied in Congress was in some respects a middle one between the advance guard of the anti-slavery army and the spears of the fire-eaters. He voted with John Quincy Adams for the receipt of anti-slavery petitions; he voted with Giddings for a committee of inquiry into the constitutionality of slavery in the District of Columbia, and the expediency of abolishing slavery in that district; he voted for the various resolutions prohibiting slavery in the territories to be acquired from Mexico, and he voted forty-two times for the Wilmot Proviso. On one occasion, he offered a plan for abolishing slavery in the District of Columbia, by compensation from the national treasury, with the consent of a majority of the citizens. He opposed the annexation of Texas, but voted for the bill to pay the expenses of the war. He voted against paying for slaves as property, when that question came up in the celebrated Pacheco case, and thus recorded his denial of the right of owning men, or of its acknowledgment by the nation.

During this term of service in Congress, Mr. Lincoln was a laborious and faithful public servant; always present to vote, and always ready for business; and his speeches, homely and rough as they were, showed so much broad strong sense, natural rectitude, sincerity, and power of reasoning, as to give him a good position as a debater. He declined a re-election; tried for but did not obtain the commissionership of the Land Office at Washington; declined appointments as Secretary and as Governor of Oregon Territory; returned to his home and his work; was unsuccessful as candidate for the United States Senate in the Illinois Legislature of 1849–50; and labored industriously at his profession, until the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, the Kansas Nebraska Bill, and the violences and iniquities connected with them, called him once more into public life.

He now took the field, heart and soul against the plot to betray our territories into slavery, and to perpetuate the power of that institution over the whole country. Henceforth he was all his life a public man; first a prominent champion in the decisively important state of Illinois, and afterwards the standard bearer and the martyr of Freedom in America.

That contest in Illinois, in which the political doctrines of Mr. Douglas were the central theme of discussion, and in which he himself on one side and Mr. Lincoln on the other, were the leading speakers and the controlling minds, was an important act in that great drama of emancipation which culminated in the Rebellion. In Mr. Lincoln's life it was if possible still greater in comparative importance; for his debates with Douglas determined his reputation as a speaker and a public man, and lifted him to the position from which he stepped into the presidential chair.

During other previous and subsequent portions of his life, other traits of Mr. Lincoln's character were often and clearly exemplified. But at no time was he nearly as plainly and strikingly prominent as a power, as during his contest with that bold and energetic politician and remarkably ready and forcible debater, Stephen A. Douglas.

Their first great public duel, as it may be called, was at Springfield, in October, 1854, just after the passage of the Nebraska bill. The country was all aflame with excitement. Every fibre of justice, honor, honesty, conscience that there was in the community was in that smarting and vibrating state which follows the infliction of a violent blow, and Douglas had come back to his own state to soothe down the irritation and to defend his wicked and unpopular course before the aroused tribunal of his fellow citizens.

He was to defend his course and conduct to a great audience assembled at the State fair, and Mr. Lincoln was to answer him.

Never was there a greater contrast between two men. Douglas might be called a brilliant impersonation of all the mere worldly forces of human nature. He had a splendid physique, with all the powers of the most captivating oratory, the melody of a most astonishing voice which ran with ease through every gamut of human feeling, grave, gay, pathetic, passionate, enthusiastic; now rising with irresistible impetuosity, now mocking with gay and careless defiance, and with this voice and this person, he was master of all those shadings and delicacies of sophistry by which the worse can be made to appear the better reason. He knew well how to avoid answering a telling argument by a dazzling glitter of side issues – to make a plain man believe he had got his difficulty solved, when he had been only skilfully bewitched, and made to forget where it was. In a popular audience he had something for every one. Gaiety, gallantry and compliments for ladies, assured confidence for doubters, vehement assertions for timid people, stormy brow-beatings, and lion roars of denunciation, to finish with a grand sweep the popular impression which his sophistries and assertions had begun. Of truth, he made that very sparing use which demagogues always do. A little blue line of steel makes a whole heavy headed iron axe go through the wood, – and so Douglas just skilfully and artistically tipped the edges of heavy masses of falsehood with the cutting force of some undeniable truth.

Of moral sensibility Douglas had not enough in his nature, even to understand that kind of material in others, and to make allowance for it. Nothing could be more exactly the contrary of Lincoln's scrupulous careful self-education, in pure questions of the right and the wrong of things, than Douglas' glittering, careless, reckless, defiant mode of treating all these subjects. Lincoln had trained himself always to ask, What is it right to do? Douglas, What *can* I do? Lincoln, to enquire What course *ought* they to take? Douglas, What course can I make them take? Lincoln, to ask, What is the truth – Douglas, What can be made to *seem* truth. His life question was an inquiry, pure and simple, how much can I get, how much can I do, without losing my hold over men and being turned out of society?

The pure moral aspects of political questions, he flouted and scoffed at as unworthy the attention of a practical politician. The rights of human beings, the eternal laws of rectitude, he treated as a skilful conjurer treats so many gaily painted balls, which he throws up and tosses and catches, simply to show his own agility; he played with them when they came in his way, just as he thought he could make them most effective for his own purposes.

But if he did not understand or care for eternal principles, he was perfect master of all the weak and low and petty side of human nature. He knew how to stir up all the common-place, base and ignoble passions of man; to bring his lower nature into lively exercise.

The first day in the fair, the multitude was given up to him, and he swept and played on them as a master musician sweeps a piano, and for the hour he seemed to be irresistible, bearing all things in his own way.

Lincoln had this advantage, when his turn came, that he represented that higher portion of human nature, of which Douglas had little knowledge, and which his mode of treatment had left almost wholly untouched. We have spoken of the vast legal influence which Lincoln had gradually acquired in his own state, by the intense pertinacity with which he identified himself in every case with right and justice, so that the mere fact that he had accepted a cause was a strong reason in advance for believing it the true one.

The people had been excited, amused, dazzled and bewildered, and were tossing restlessly as the sea swells and dashes after a gale – when that plain man without outward "form or comeliness," without dazzle of oratory, or glitter of rhetoric, rose to give them in a fatherly talk, the simple eternal RIGHT of the whole thing.

It was, he felt, an hour of destiny, a crisis in the great battle to be fought for mankind for ages to come, and an eye witness thus describes the scene: "His whole heart was in the subject. He

quivered with feeling and emotion; the house was as still as death." And another account describes how "the effect of this speech was most magnetic and powerful. Cheer upon cheer interrupted him, women waved their handkerchiefs, men sprung from their seats and waved their hats in uncontrollable enthusiasm." Mr. Douglas was present at this speech, and was the most uneasy auditor there. As soon as Mr. Lincoln had concluded, Mr. Douglas jumped up and said that he had been abused, "though," he added, "in a perfectly courteous manner." He went on with a rejoinder, and spoke for some time, but without much success. In fact, he was astounded and disconcerted at finding that there was so much to be said against him, and that there was a man to say it so powerfully. The self-confident and even arrogant tone in which he had opened the debate was gone. At closing, he announced himself to continue his remarks in the evening, but he did not do it. He had received a blow too tremendous even for his immense vigor, and from which he could not so quickly recover.

A little while afterwards, Douglas spoke again and Lincoln answered him again, at Peoria, and with a similar result. The vast positive will of the "Little Giant" could not stand up against the still loftier power with which Mr. Lincoln assailed him from the height of a moral superiority that irresistibly carried with it the best convictions of the whole community, and cowed the defiant wrong-doer. Mr. Lincoln was *right*. Mr. Douglas felt himself vanquished by a power incomprehensible to himself, and of which none of his political calculations ever took account.

But as regards the struggle at this time in Illinois, the fact that he felt himself over-weighted, was sufficiently proved by his declining, after the two duels at Springfield and Peoria, to proceed, as Mr. Lincoln invited him, with a series of such debates in other parts of the State.

Mr. Lincoln, having thus publicly shown himself far stronger than the strongest of his opponents, proceeded to show himself a man of kindly self-command, by foregoing the Republican nomination to the U. S. Senate, and giving it to Hon. Lyman Trumbull, in order to save the risk of admitting Matteson, the pro-slavery candidate. Unquestionably this conduct coincided with the shrewdest selfishness; but very few are the politicians from whom a selfishness small and near would not conceal the larger and further one. It was by earnest and assiduous personal influence that Mr. Lincoln secured Mr. Trumbull's election.

It is said of a certain great diplomatist, that he was so accustomed to dealing with men as knaves that when he had to do with an honest man he always blundered. Douglas' mistake and defeat were precisely of this kind. He had so little sense of conscience or moral feeling himself that he was perfectly unprepared for the uprising of these sentiments on the part of the people, and astonished at the power which a man might wield simply from addressing a class of sentiments which he habitually ignored.

So in Congress, when the petition of the three thousand clergymen was presented against the Kansas and Nebraska bill, he was in a perfect rage, and roared like a lion at bay. That this contemptible question of right and wrong should get up such an excitement and seriously threaten such a brilliant stroke of diplomacy as he meditated, seemed to him, in all sincerity, perfectly ridiculous – he could not sufficiently express his hatred and contempt.

Mere power as a debater, either in parliamentary assemblies or before popular meetings, has often existed, without any share of the calmer, and larger, and profounder, and more reflective abilities of the statesman. Mr. Lincoln possessed both, and in both, his methods were alike of an intuitively practical, and remarkably direct, simple and effective nature. Doubtless he had often given proofs of skill in practical politics, during his consultations of the preceding twenty years, with the leaders and managers of his party in Illinois. Obscure operations of local party organizations seldom make any record, or become visible at all on the surface of history. But the man who in an adverse hour, when all other counsellors have failed, can unite discordant elements into a new party, must be confessed to have statesmanlike skill. This is more peculiarly so when this party must be founded on a moral principle, and must be bounded and circumscribed in its working by moral rules and restraints. While

unprincipled men can help themselves by any and all sorts of means, men of principle are confined to those within certain limits, and the difficulties of organization in such cases are vastly greater.

When in 1856 the Illinois convention met to choose delegates to the National Convention that nominated Fremont, there was in the political ocean a wild chaos of elements. Free Soil men, Anti-Nebraska men, Liberty Party men, Native Americans, Old Whigs and Old Democrats, and newly arrived emigrants of no party at all, mixed up in heterogeneous confusion, tossing and tumbling blindly about for a new platform to stand on. After long and vain discussion, the committee on a platform sent for Mr. Lincoln and asked for a suggestion. All the sections of the Convention were opposed to slavery extension, but in no other current political question were they at one. There was imminent danger of discord and division. Their calm adviser quietly said, "Take the Declaration of Independence, and Hostility to Slavery Extension. Let us build our new party on the rock of the Declaration of Independence, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against us." Mr. Lincoln's profound and unfailing moral sense had seized upon the relation between the heart of the United States and eternal right. His suggestion embodied the only doctrine that could have won in the coming battle. What he advised was done, and the party, on this platform, revolutionized Illinois, made Mr. Lincoln President, extinguished slavery, and reorganized the nation.

At Philadelphia, the same question came up again, and was solved by adopting the same principle. It was on this occasion that Mr. Lincoln's high position and important influence in the northwest received the first acknowledgement that he was obtaining a national reputation. He obtained a vote of one hundred and ten for the Vice Presidency on the preliminary or informal ballot.

The great effort, however, which finally and firmly established Mr. Lincoln's reputation as a speaker and statesman, was in 1858, when he and Douglas once more were brought to a face encounter before the people of Illinois, as opposing candidates for the U. S. Senate.

During the months of August, September and October, according to the honest western custom, these two opposing candidates stumped the State together, and presented their opposing claims and views in a series of public gatherings. These meetings were in consequence of Mr. Lincoln's invitation, but Mr. Douglas in accepting adroitly contrived to name terms that gave him the opening and the closing turns, not only of the whole series, but of four out of seven of the meetings.

In the June and July preceding, Mr. Lincoln made three other speeches, two at Springfield and one at Chicago, which may be considered a sort of preface to the great debates. The first of these, at Springfield, June 17, 1858, was in some respects the most remarkable of Mr. Lincoln's oratorical productions. It was made at the close of the Republican State Convention which nominated Mr. Lincoln a candidate for the U. S. Senate; and its opening paragraph is so remarkable for style, so heavy with meaning, and so instinct with political foresight, that it is worth quoting entire. It is as follows:

"Mr. President, and Gentlemen of the Convention: – If we could first know where we are, and whither we are tending, we could better judge what to do, and how to do it. We are now far into the fifth year since a policy was initiated with the avowed object and confident promise of putting an end to slavery agitation. Under the operation of that policy, that agitation has not only not ceased, but has constantly augmented. In my opinion it will not cease until a crisis shall have been reached and passed. 'A house divided against itself cannot stand.' I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved – I do not expect the house to fall – but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction; or its advocates will push it forward, till it shall become alike lawful in all the States, old as well as new, North as well as South."

In this brief statement, Mr. Lincoln set forth the whole object of the southern and northern parties on the slavery question, and though he did not prophesy which way the contest would be decided, he did prophesy exactly the two alternatives to one of which the country was necessarily to advance. It is further noticeable here that Mr. Lincoln's statement includes exactly the same prophecy,

only not so classically worded, as Mr. Seward's famous phrase, in his speech at Rochester, the following October, of "an Irrepressible Conflict." And once more; the opening sentence, as a writer upon Mr. Lincoln has shown, is in like manner curiously coincident in thought with the first sentence of another still more famous speech – Daniel Webster's reply to Hayne. Mr. Webster said:

"When the mariner has been tossed for many days in thick weather, and on an unknown sea, he naturally avails himself of the first pause in the storm, the earliest glance of the sun, to take his latitude, and ascertain how far the elements have driven him from his true course. Let us imitate that prudence, and before we float further, refer to the point from which we departed, that we may at least be able to conjecture where we now are."

That is a stately and sonorous opening, majestic and poetical. Now compare it with Mr. Lincoln's synonym: "If we could first know where we are, and whither we are tending, we could better judge what to do, and how to do it." The thing could not have been said more shortly, more directly, more clearly, more strongly in English. As the writer observes from whom this parallel is taken, "Mr. Webster used eighty-two words, nearly a quarter of them having over one syllable; Mr. Lincoln only twenty-five, of which only three, or less than one-eighth, have more than one syllable. Counting still more closely, we find that Mr. Webster used 347 letters, to Mr. Lincoln's 88." In less than one-third the words, in just over one-fourth the letters, and without the least approach to a figure of speech, Mr. Lincoln said what Mr. Webster did. "This," to quote once more, "may seem a petty method of comparing orators; but it reveals a great secret of directness, clearness, simplicity and force of style; it goes far to explain how Mr. Lincoln convinced an audience."

"This speech," says Mr. Arnold, "was the text of the great debate between Lincoln and Douglas." It states the question in the United States as between slavery and freedom, with very great strength and plainness, and lays down the principles that apply to it with equal power. It had been carefully prepared beforehand, as a manifesto for which the times were ripe. For the first time it placed the speaker publicly upon advanced anti-slavery ground; and it is by no means improbable that in taking that ground, Mr. Lincoln had some secret conscious or half conscious feeling not only that he was marking out the place that his party must occupy in the coming struggle, but that in doing so he assumed the place of standard-bearer. He explained the doctrines of the Nebraska Act, and the Dred Scott decision; showed how the Democratic party had become ranged on the side of slavery; explained how the result of the Dred Scott decision, together with the indifferent policy so jauntily vaunted by Douglas, of "not caring whether slavery were voted up or down," must result in a final victory of slavery; and showed how Mr. Douglas' doctrines permitted and invited that final victory. And having thus showed "where we are, and whither we are tending," he ended with a solemn but cheering exhortation, "what to do and how to do it." "The result," he said, "is not doubtful. We shall not fail, if we stand firm we shall not fail. Wise counsels may accelerate, or mistakes delay it, but sooner or later, THE VICTORY IS SURE TO COME."

That is the language, not of a party politician, recommending expedient nostrums, but of a statesman who feels profoundly that his people are sound at heart, and will assuredly one day do full justice; who proclaims in advance the eternal victory of the right side, and boldly calls on all who hear him to advance up to the line of their own consciences.

Before delivering this speech, Mr. Lincoln locked himself into a room with his partner, Mr. Herndon, and read him the first paragraph of the speech. "What do you think of it?" said he. Herndon answered, "I think it is all true, but I doubt whether it is good policy to say it now." Mr. Lincoln replied, "That makes no difference; it is the truth, and the nation is entitled to it." This was both honest and politic; for if the ground of principle as against expediency had not been taken, there was none left to oppose the reasonings of Mr. Douglas, which were extremely adroit, and so far as expediency admitted, indeed unanswerable.

In the conduct of that remarkable campaign of 1858, Mr. Douglas was the advocate of expediency, Mr. Lincoln of principle. Mr. Douglas appealed to the prejudices of the white race against

the black, and argued in favor of present ease and selfish indifference to justice in our conduct as a nation. Mr. Lincoln incessantly appealed to the consciences of his audience, to all that part of human nature which is kindly, which is just, which is noble; to the broad doctrines upon which our national freedom was originally based. It is true that along with these main currents of debate numerous minor questions and side issues came up; but such was the pervading color, the chief drift of the discussion. Over and over and over again, there sounds out among the words of Douglas, "This is a white man's government; the negro ought not to vote." And even more constant is the lofty reply, "I stand by the Declaration of Independence, and the everlasting rights of humanity. The negro is a man, and he ought to have all the rights of a man!"

Mr. Lincoln's speech at Springfield, on June 17th, has been briefly described. Mr. Douglas, coming home to his own State, to justify his course, and receive his re-election, answered him in his Chicago speech of July 9th, and Mr. Lincoln rejoined next day. Douglas spoke again, at Bloomington on the 16th, and at Springfield on the 17th, and on the latter day Mr. Lincoln spoke also at Springfield. In this speech he set forth a curious and characteristic contrast between himself and his opponent, in a grotesque and sarcastic manner that must have told sharply upon his western audience, while its comic surface is underlaid with the usual solid basis of conscious adherence to justice and principle. Mr. Lincoln said:

"Senator Douglas is of world-wide renown. All the anxious politicians of his party, or who have been of his party for years past, have been looking upon him as certainly, at no distant day, to be the President of the United States. They have seen in his round, jolly, fruitful face, post-offices, land-offices, marshalships and cabinet appointments, chargeships and foreign missions, bursting and sprouting out in wonderful exuberance, ready to be laid hold of by their greedy hands. And as they have been gazing upon this attractive picture so long, they cannot, in the little distraction that has taken place in the party, bring themselves to give up the charming hope; but with greedier anxiety they rush about him, sustain him, and give him marches, triumphal entries, and receptions beyond what even in the days of his highest prosperity they could have brought about in his favor. On the contrary, nobody has ever expected me to be President. In my poor, lean, lank face, nobody has ever seen that any cabbages were sprouting out. These are disadvantages, all taken together, that the Republicans labor under. We have to fight this battle upon principle, and upon principle alone. I am, in a certain sense, made the standard-bearer in behalf of the Republicans. I was made so merely because there had to be some one so placed – I being in no wise preferable to any other one of the twenty-five – perhaps a hundred, we have in the Republican ranks. Then I say I wish it to be distinctly understood and borne in mind, that we have to fight this battle without many – perhaps without any – of the external aids which are brought to bear against us. So I hope those with whom I am surrounded have principle enough to nerve themselves for the task and leave nothing undone that can be fairly done, to bring about the right result."

Two years before, Mr. Lincoln had used even stronger terms in contrasting himself and his antagonist. In 1856 he said: "Twenty-two years ago, Judge Douglas and I first became acquainted; we were both young men – he a trifle younger than I. Even then we were both ambitious, I perhaps quite as much as he. With me, the race of ambition has been a failure – a flat failure. With him, it has been one of splendid success. His name fills the nation, and it is not unknown in foreign lands. I affect no contempt for the high eminence he has reached. *So reached that the oppressed of my species might have shared with me in the elevation*, I would rather stand on that eminence than wear the richest crown that ever pressed a monarch's brow."

Mr. Lincoln's exact position on the emancipation question at this time, is an interesting illustration of his firm adherence to principle, and at the same time of his extreme caution in touching established laws, and his natural tendency to give voice to the average public sentiment of his day, rather than to go beyond it, or to reprove that sentiment for not going further. He averred over and over again, that he was "not in favor of negro citizenship;" but he said "there is no reason in the world

why the negro is not entitled to all the rights enumerated in the Declaration of Independence – the right of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. In the right to eat the bread without the leave of anybody else, which his own hand earns, he is my equal, and the equal of Judge Douglas, and the equal of every other man."

The same primary granite substratum of moral right, of everlasting justice, underlies all these speeches. It crops out here and there, in passages, a specimen of which is worth quoting, not merely for the sake of their aptness then or now; but also as excellent patterns for the application of moral principles to political practices – a lesson peculiarly important in a republic, simply because its diligent employment is the sole possible basis of national strength and happiness. In the debate at Quincy, October 13th, Mr. Lincoln stated a whole code of political ethics, along with its application to the case in hand, in one paragraph, as follows:

"We have in this nation this element of domestic slavery. It is a matter of absolute certainty that it is a disturbing element. It is the opinion of all the great men who have expressed an opinion upon it, that it is a dangerous element. We keep up a controversy in regard to it. That controversy necessarily springs from difference of opinion, and if we can learn exactly – can reduce to the lowest elements – what that difference of opinion is, we perhaps shall be better prepared for discussing the different systems of policy that we would propose in regard to that disturbing element. I suggest that the difference of opinion, reduced to its lowest terms, is no other than the difference between the men who think slavery a wrong and those who do not think it a wrong. The Republican party think it wrong – we think it is a moral, a social and a political wrong. We think it is a wrong not confining itself merely to the persons or the States where it exists, but that it is a wrong in its tendency, to say the least, that it extends itself to the existence of the whole nation. Because we think it wrong, we propose a course of policy that shall deal with it as a wrong. We deal with it as with any other wrong, in so far as we can prevent its growing any larger, and so deal with it that in the run of time there may be some promise of an end to it. We have a due regard to the actual presence of it amongst us and the difficulties of getting rid of it in any satisfactory way, and all the Constitutional obligations thrown about it. I suppose that in reference both to its actual existence in the nation, and to our Constitutional obligations, we have no right at all to disturb it in the States where it exists, and we profess that we have no more inclination to disturb it than we have the right to do it. We go further than that; we don't propose to disturb it where, in one instance, we think the Constitution would permit us. We think the Constitution would permit us to disturb it in the District of Columbia. Still we do not propose to do that, unless it should be in terms which I don't suppose the nation is very likely soon to agree to – the terms of making the emancipation gradual and compensating the unwilling owners. Where we suppose we have the Constitutional right, we restrain ourselves in reference to the actual existence of the institution and the difficulties thrown about it. We also oppose it as an evil so far as it seeks to spread itself. We insist on the policy that shall restrict it to its present limits."

Still more sharply and strongly he stated the question in the last debate, at Alton, as simply this: Is Slavery wrong?

"That is the real issue. That is the issue that will continue in this country when these poor tongues of Judge Douglas and myself shall be silent. It is the eternal struggle between these two principles – right and wrong – throughout the world. They are the two principles that have stood face to face from the beginning of time; and will ever continue to struggle. The one is the common right of humanity and the other the divine right of kings. It is the same principle, in whatever shape it develops itself. It is the same spirit that says, "You work and toil and earn bread, and I'll eat it." No matter in what shape it comes, whether from the mouth of a king who seeks to bestride the people of his own nation and live by the fruit of their labor, or from one race of men as an apology for enslaving another race, it is the same tyrannical principle."

With equal force he often exposed and rebuked the moral levity shown by his opponent – his affectation of indifference to all principle, his supercilious dazzling contempt of moral distinctions.

In his last speech at Alton, he very fully reviewed the whole question, and Mr. Douglas' individual position before the country, with great breadth and power.

There was as striking a contrast between the externals of the two champions, as between their political doctrines. Douglas went pompously up and down the land, with special trains of railroad cars, bands of music, long processions, banners, cannon firing, and all the flourish and gaudy show of a triumphing conqueror; and he is said to have paid away half his fortune in securing this fatal victory. But Mr. Lincoln went about almost as frugally, as plainly, as quietly, as if he had been on one of his accustomed legal circuits, and reflected with a queer astonishment upon the trifling sum that he did actually expend. He said to a friend after the campaign was over, "I don't believe I have expended in this canvass one cent less than Five Hundred Dollars in cash!" He sometimes good humoredly alluded to these demonstrations. "Auxiliary to these main points," he says, "to be sure, are their thunderings of cannon, their marching and music, their fizzle-gigs and fire works; but I will not waste time with them, they are but the little trappings of the campaign." Mr. Townsend, a picturesque writer, thus contrasts the bearing of the two men: "Douglas was uneasily arrogant in Lincoln's presence; the latter, never sensitive nor flurried, so grew by his imperturbability that when he reached the White House, Mr. Douglas was less surprised than anybody else. The great senatorial campaign, in which they figured together, is remembered by every Springfielder. Douglas, with his powerful voice and facile energy, went into it under full steam. Lincoln began lucidly and cautiously. When they came out of it, Douglas was worn down with rage and hoarseness, and Lincoln was fresher than ever. He prepared all the speeches of this campaign by silent meditation, sitting or lying alone, studying the flies on the ceiling. "The best evidence of his superiority in this debate is the fact that the Republicans circulated both sets of speeches as a campaign document in 1860, but Mr. Douglas's friends refused to do so.

And Mr. Arnold, a personal friend of Mr. Lincoln's, attributes to Mr. Lincoln just that sort of superiority that comes from a consciousness of being on the right side and of having an antagonist in whose attitude there is reason for contempt. "He had one advantage," says Mr. Arnold, "over Douglas, he was always good humored; he had always an apt and happy story for illustration, and while Douglas was sometimes irritable, Lincoln never lost his temper." And Mr. Arnold says that when Lincoln and Douglas came to Chicago together just after the close of the seven debates, "Lincoln was in perfect health, his face bronzed by the prairie suns, but looking and moving like a trained athlete. His voice was clearer, stronger and better than when he began the canvass. Douglas was physically much broken. He was so hoarse that he could hardly articulate, and was entirely unintelligible in an ordinary tone."

But the circumstance that shows most clearly of all, how entirely Mr. Lincoln saw over, and through, and beyond his adversary, both as statesman and politician, how entirely he managed him, wielded him, used him, is the fearful grip into which he put the "Little Giant" on the question of the conflict between "Popular Sovereignty" and the Dred Scott decision. In return for a series of questions by Mr. Douglas, Mr. Lincoln, having answered them all categorically, prepared certain others to put to Mr. Douglas; and of these one was:

"Can the people of a United States Territory, in any lawful way, against the wish of any citizen of the United States, exclude slavery from its limits prior to the formation of a State Constitution?"

When Mr. Lincoln consulted a friend upon this set of questions, the friend remonstrated against this one; saying in substance, "In answer, Mr. Douglas must either accept the Dred Scott decision as binding, which would lose him the election to the Senate in consequence of the popular feeling in Illinois against it, or else that he must assert that his doctrine of "squatter sovereignty" would enable the territory to keep slavery out, by "unfriendly legislation," contrary to the Dred Scott decision. And this," urged the friend, "he will do; it will satisfy Illinois, and give Douglas the senatorship. You are only placing the step for him to rise upon."

"That may be," said Mr. Lincoln, with a shrewd look, "*but if he takes that shoot he never can be President.*" This meant, that while the doctrine of legislating slavery out of a territory might satisfy Illinois, it would be odious and inadmissible to the whole South, and that it would therefore render

Douglas' election to the Presidency impossible. And it came to pass exactly as Mr. Lincoln foretold at this time, and as he told "Billy" when he returned home at the end of the canvass. One of Mr. Lincoln's characteristic sentences afterwards summed all the contradiction of Douglas' position, in the statement that it was "declaring that a thing may be lawfully driven away from a place where it has a lawful right to go."

These seven debates were the most widely known of Mr. Lincoln's labors in this campaign, but he made about fifty other speeches in different parts of the State.

The result of this celebrated canvass was to return Douglas to the Senate, although the vote of the people was in favor of Lincoln. The Legislative districts in the State had been so arranged by the Democratic party as to secure their majority in the Legislature. But even if the popular majority had been with Douglas, Mr. Lincoln had won. He set out to lose the State; he set out to carry the nation; and he did it. It was the foresight of the statesman, contending with the cunning of the politician. It was part of the victory that he who really lost thought he had won. Mr. Herndon, Mr. Lincoln's law partner, told afterwards how Mr. Lincoln came home and said, "Billy, I knew I should miss the place, when I competed for it. *This defeat will make me President.*"

In the period between this canvass and the Presidential nomination at Chicago, Mr. Lincoln, while at work in his profession, did good service in the cause of freedom in several of the States, making a number of effective speeches in Ohio, Kansas, and particularly in New England and New York. His contest with Douglas had probably already made Mr. Lincoln the second choice of large numbers of Republicans for the nomination of 1860. His great speech at Cooper Institute in February, 1860, confirmed this choice, and enlarged those numbers.

The invitation which resulted in his great Cooper Institute speech was originally to give a lecture in Plymouth Church, in Brooklyn, and he was to receive $200 for it. After some delay, at last he agreed to speak on February 27th; but the three young men who had organized the course, thought the time late in the season, and began to fear that they would lose money. It sounds curious enough now, to think of a fear lest a speech by Mr. Lincoln should not refund $350 expenses, but so they thought. A political friend of his who had negotiated the engagement, at last assumed one fourth of the risk, and with a good deal of trouble, managed to have the speech at Cooper Institute, instead of Brooklyn. Attempts were vainly made to induce one and then another Republican club to assume the risk of the engagement. The New York Times, in announcing the lecture, kindly spoke of the speaker as "a lawyer who had some local reputation in Illinois."

The Cooper Institute speech was prepared with much care, and was a production of very great power of logic, history and political statement. It consisted of an exposition of the true doctrines of the founders of our nation on the question of slavery, and of the position of the two parties of the day on the same question. It was alive and luminous throughout with the resolute and lofty and uncompromising morality on principle, which had colored all his debates with Douglas, and made a very deep impression upon the audience present, and upon the far greater audience that read it afterwards.

Its close was very powerful. After showing that the demands of the South were summed up in the requirement that the North should call slavery right instead of wrong, and should then join the south in acting accordingly, he added:

"If our sense of duty forbids this, then let us stand by our duty, fearlessly and effectively. Let us be diverted by none of those sophistical contrivances wherewith we are so industriously plied and belabored – contrivances such as groping for some middle ground between the right and the wrong, vain as the search for a man who should be neither a living man nor a dead man – such as a policy of "don't care" on a question about which all true men do care – such as Union appeals, beseeching true Union men to yield to disunionists, reversing the Divine rule, and calling, not the sinners, but the righteous to repentance – such as invocations of Washington, imploring men to unsay what Washington said, and undo what Washington did. Neither let us be slandered from our duty by

false accusations against us, nor frightened from it by menaces of destruction to the Government, nor of dungeons to ourselves. Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith let us, to the end, dare to do our duty, as we understand it."

The words are singularly plain, they are nakedly homely. But the thoughts are very noble and very mighty.

At the close of the speech, the same friend who had engineered it, made a few remarks, in which he prophesied. He said, "One of three gentlemen will be our standard bearer in the Presidential contest of this year; the distinguished Senator from New York – Mr. Seward; the late able and accomplished Governor of Ohio, Mr. Chase, or the unknown knight who entered the political list, against the Bois Guilbert of democracy, Stephen A. Douglas, on the prairies of Illinois, in 1858, and unhorsed him – Abraham Lincoln."

The narrator adds, "Some friends joked me after the meeting, as not being a good prophet. The lecture was over; all the expenses were paid; I was handed by the gentlemen interested, the sum of $4.25 as my share of the profits." It is worth adding that Mr. Lincoln observed to the same gentleman, after his subsequent tour further eastward, "when I was East, several gentlemen made about the same remark to me that you did to-day about the Presidency; they thought my chances were about equal to the best."

The story of the nomination at Chicago, of the election, of the perilous journey to Washington, need not be repeated. While the nominating convention was sitting, Mr. Lincoln's friends telegraphed to him that in order to be nominated he needed the votes of two of the delegations, and that to secure these, he must promise that if elected the leaders of those delegations should be made members of his Cabinet. He telegraphed at once back again; "I authorize no bargains and will be bound by none." The adoption of those ten words as a rule would go very far to purify the whole field of political party action.

Little did the convention that nominated Abraham Lincoln for President, know what they were doing. Little did the honest, fatherly, patriotic man, who stood in his simplicity on the platform at Springfield, asking the prayers of his townsmen and receiving their pledges to remember him, foresee how awfully he was to need those prayers, the prayers of all this nation and the prayers of all the working, suffering common people throughout the world. God's hand was upon him with a visible protection, saving first from the danger of assassination at Baltimore, and bringing him safely to our national capital.

Perhaps the imperturbable cool courage of Mr. Lincoln was the trait in him least appreciated in proportion to his share of it. He promptly and unhesitatingly risked his life to keep his Philadelphia appointment on the way to Washington, filling his programme, because it was his duty, without any variance for assassins. It should be here recorded, by the way, that the story that he fled from Harrisburg, disguised in a Scotch cap and cloak, which made so much noise in the country at the time, was a forgery, devised by a disreputable reporter. Mr. Lincoln never used any disguises, and it would have required more than one "Scotch cap" to bring his six feet four down to an average height.

He was so kind-hearted, so peaceable, so averse, either to cause or to witness controversy or wrath, that only the extremest need would force him to the point of wrath and of fighting. But when the need was real, the wrath and the fight came out. Whether moral or physical courage, upon a real demand for it, it never failed. On his flat boat trip to New Orleans in his youth, he and his mate, armed only with sticks of wood, beat off seven negro marauders who attacked and would have robbed their boat. When clerk in a country store he seized, flung down and subdued a bully who was insolent to some women, and what is more, the beaten bully became his friend. He once, alone, by suddenly dropping from a scuttle down upon the platform, kept off a gang of rowdies who were about to hustle his friend Col. Baker off the stand. He and Baker once, with no others, escorted to the hotel, a speaker who was threatened with violence by a Democratic crowd whom he had offended. When some Irishmen at Springfield once undertook to take possession of the poll and restrict the voting

to their friends, Lincoln, hearing of it, stepped into the first store, seized an axe helve, and marched alone through the turbulent crowd up to the poll, opening the road as he went; and alone he kept the ballot-box free and safe until the foolish crowd gave up their plan. His anger sometimes – though very seldom – flamed up at ill usage of himself; but never so hotly as at ill usage to others. When a poor negro citizen of Illinois was imprisoned at New Orleans, simply for being a free negro from outside of Louisiana, and was about to be sold into slavery, to pay jail fees, Mr. Lincoln found that the Governor of Illinois could not help the poor fellow. When the fact became plain, he jumped up and swore, "By the Almighty," he said, "I'll have that negro back, or I'll have a twenty years' agitation in Illinois, until the Governor can do something in the premises!" Somebody sent money and set the man free; or else the twenty years' agitation would have begun, and finished too. An officer, a worthless fellow, after being dismissed and repeatedly trying to get back into the army, at last insolently told President Lincoln, "I see you are fully determined not to do me justice." Now this was just what he *was* determined to do him; and in righteous anger he arose, laid down his papers, collared the fellow, walked him to the door and flung him out, saying, "Sir, I give you fair warning, never to show yourself in this room again. I can bear censure, but not insult!"

In Mr. Lincoln's administration, the world has seen and wondered at the greatest sign and marvel of our day, to wit, a plain working man of the people, with no more culture, instruction or education than any such working man may obtain for himself, called on to conduct the passage of a great nation through a crisis involving the destinies of the whole world. The eyes of princes, nobles, aristocrats, of dukes, earls, scholars, statesmen, warriors, all turned on the plain backwoodsman, with his simple sense, his imperturbable simplicity, his determined self-reliance, his impracticable and incorruptible honesty, as he sat amid the war of conflicting elements, with unpretending steadiness, striving to guide the national ship through a channel at whose perils the world's oldest statesmen stood aghast. The brilliant courts of Europe levelled their opera glasses at the phenomenon. Fair ladies saw that he had horny hands and disdained white gloves; dapper diplomatists were shocked at his system of etiquette; but old statesmen, who knew the terrors of that passage, were wiser than court ladies and dandy diplomatists, and watched him with a fearful curiosity, simply asking, "Will that awkward old backwoodsman really get that ship through? If he does, it will be time for us to look about us." Sooth to say, our own politicians were somewhat shocked with his State papers at first. "Why not let *us* make them a little more conventional, and file them to a classical pattern?" "No," was his reply, "I shall write them myself. *The people will understand them.*" "But this or that form of expression is not elegant, nor classical." "*The people will understand it*," was his invariable reply. And whatever may be said of his State papers, as compared with the diplomatic standards, it has been a fact that they have always been wonderfully well understood by the people, and that since the time of Washington, the State papers of no President have more controlled the popular mind. And one reason for this is, that they have been informal and undiplomatic. They have more resembled a father's talks to his children than a State paper. And they have had that relish and smack of the soil, that appeal to the simple human heart and head, which is a greater power in writing than the most artful clerices of rhetoric. Lincoln might well say with the apostle, "But though I be rude in speech yet not in knowledge, but we have been thoroughly *made manifest among you* in all things." His rejection of what is called fine writing, was as deliberate as St. Paul's, and for the same reason – because he felt that he was speaking on a subject which must be made clear to the lowest intellect, though it should fail to captivate the highest. But we say of Lincoln's writings, that for all true, manly purposes of writing, there are passages in his State papers that could not be better put – they are absolutely perfect. They are brief, condensed, intense, and with a power of insight and expression which make them worthy to be inscribed in letters of gold. Such are some passages of the celebrated letter to the Springfield convention, especially that masterly one where he compares the conduct of the patriotic and loyal blacks with that of the treacherous and disloyal whites. No one can read this letter and especially the passage mentioned, without feeling the influence of a mind both strong and

generous. "Peace does not appear so distant as it did. I hope it will come soon and come to stay; and so come as to be worth the keeping in all future time. It will then have been proved that among freemen there can be no successful appeal from the ballot to the bullet, and that they who take such appeal are sure to lose their case and pay the cost. And then there will be some black men who can remember that with silent tongue, and clenched teeth, and steady eye, and well-poised bayonet, they have helped mankind on to this great consummation, while I fear there will be some white ones unable to forget that with malignant heart and deceitful speech they have striven to hinder it."

The lesson of Mr. Lincoln's career as President, is a manifold one. He was in a strangely full and close manner the exponent, the representative, the federal head, the voice, the plenary agent, of the people of the United States. As such, his life teaches what the war teaches, to wit; the strength and the magnificent morality of an intelligent people, trained in self-control, in thought, in the doctrines of justice and freedom, and in the fear of God.

As one man's life, the life of Mr. Lincoln after his election is simply the picture over again, on a gigantic scale, in stronger colors, in bolder relief, of the same courage, devotion, strength, industry, energy, sense, decision, kindness, caution, instinctive feeling of what was right and what was practicable, and deliberate execution of it, that had marked his career before, as the political leader in a great state controversy, and as a laborious lawyer at the bar. As he mounted upon a higher plane of action, his views became enlarged and elevated. Especially is it noticeable how as President, he was very much more open and specific in avowing an immediate dependence upon help higher than man's, in doing the work before him. Mr. Lincoln was naturally inclined to religious feelings. His habit of considering all the affairs of life from the religious point of view, at the tribunal of the laws of God, is clearly traceable in his private history and even in his political campaigns. He was not obtrusive nor unreasonable however in avowals of this feeling. It would have been out of place to request the prayers of his fellow citizens during the debates with Douglas, almost as much as to ask the prayers of the jury while arguing a case. But while placed at the head of his nation, during the vastest peril of its existence – while occupying the most prominent, the most powerful, the most responsible, the most difficult, and the most dangerous position upon the whole round world – while at the very front of the very vanguard of humanity in the great battle which was deciding whether good or evil should overcome – in such a position, no avowals of the need of Divine aid, no repetition of the consciousness of that need, no requests for the sympathy and the help of all good men's prayers, could be too frequent or too free. This profound sense of human weakness and of God's strength, and a distinct sentiment of mournful foreboding, give the whole coloring to the brief address in which he bade good bye to his neighbors at Springfield, at setting out for Washington in 1861.

This habit of religious feeling, and the avowal of it, remained a very marked one during all Mr. Lincoln's Presidency. Subordinate to this, the acts of his official life, his written and spoken utterances, and his personal conduct, were mainly marked by solicitous and extreme sense of duty, unfailing resolution, unerring tact and wisdom, and a kindness and patience entirely unparalleled in the history of governments. These traits were often hidden by his quaint modes of expression, by the wonderful flow of humorous anecdotes which he so constantly used in arguing, in answering, in evading, or for entertainment; and by his confirmed habit of arguing all questions against himself, against his own views, before coming to a conclusion. These externals often concealed him, often occasioned him to be misunderstood, distrusted, and opposed. It was only as time passed on, and his public acts gradually formed themselves into his history, that it was possible for those broad and massive characteristics to be seen in a just perspective. Now however, they are visible throughout all his life, whether traced in anecdote, in speech, in state papers, in cabinet debates, in intercourse with the representatives of bodies of the people, or in executive orders and acts.

Of all these traits, Mr. Lincoln's kindness was unquestionably the rarest, the most wonderful. It may be doubted whether any human being ever lived whose whole nature was so perfectly sweet with the readiness to do kind actions; so perfectly free from even the capacity of revenge. He could

not even leave a pig in distress. He once on circuit, drove past a pig, stuck fast in a mud hole. Having on a suit of new clothes, he felt unable to afford them for the pig, but after going two miles, he could not stand it, turned and drove back, made a platform of rails, helped out the pig, spoiled his new clothes, and then went contentedly about his business. He used to help his poor clients with money – a ridiculous thing in a lawyer. He was quite as helpless about traitors and deserters and criminals, as about pigs; even when pardoning or non-retaliation was actually doing harm. The beseechings and tears of women, the sight of a little child, even a skilful picture of the sorrow of a scoundrel's friends, was almost certain to gain whatever favor they sought. It really sometimes seemed as if he was tenderer of individual lives than of multitudes of them, so nearly impossible was it for him to pronounce sentence of death or to forbear the gift of life. His doorkeeper had standing orders never to delay from one day to another any message asking for the saving of life. He undoubtedly did harm by giving life to deserters, and thus weakening army discipline. He heard a child cry in his anteroom one day, and calling his usher, had the woman that carried the child shown in. She had been waiting three days, by some mischance. Her husband was to be shot. She stated her case; the pardon was at once granted; she came out of the office praying and weeping; and the old usher, touching her shawl, told her who had really saved her husband's life. "Madam," said he, "the baby did it."

One of his generals once urgently remonstrated with him for rendering desertion safe, though it was seriously weakening the army. "Mr. General," said Mr. Lincoln, "there are already too many weeping widows in the United States. For God's sake don't ask me to add to the number, for I won't do it." Even to put a stop to the unutterable horrors which were slowly murdering our brave men in the rebel prisons, he could not retaliate. He said, "I can never, never starve men like that. Whatever others may say or do, I never can, and I never will, be accessory to such treatment of human beings." Once, after the massacre at Fort Pillow, he pledged himself in a public speech that there should be a retaliation. But that pledge he could not keep, and he did not.

His perfectly sweet kindness of feeling was as inexhaustible towards the rebels as such, as towards dumb beasts, or the poor and unfortunate of his own loyal people, and it was shown as clearly in his state papers and speeches as in any private act or word. That sentiment, and one other – the unconditional determination to adhere to the doctrines of the Declaration of Independence and to do his sworn official duty – colored the series of speeches which he made on his way to Washington. At Philadelphia, where he was especially impressed with associations about the old Independence Hall, he said, speaking of that edifice, and standing within the old Hall itself:

"All the political sentiments I entertain have been drawn, so far as I have been able to draw them, from the sentiments which originated in and were given to the world from this hall. I have never had a feeling, politically, that did not spring from the sentiments embodied in the Declaration of Independence."

Then he referred to the doctrine of freedom in that instrument; and he said:

"But if this country can not be saved without giving up that principle, I was about to say I would rather be assassinated in this spot than surrender it. * * * I have said nothing but what I am willing to live by, and if it be the pleasure of Almighty God, to die by."

These references to assassination and death, were no casual flourishes of oratory. They were deliberate defiances of the fate which had already been denounced against the speaker, in public and in private, which continued to be threatened during all the rest of his life, and which finally actually befel him, but the fear of which never made him turn pale nor waver in his duty. He began as soon as he was nominated, to receive anonymous letters from the South threatening him with death. They became so frequent that he kept a separate file of them. They continued to come, up to the year of his death. The first one or two, he said, made him "a little uncomfortable;" but afterwards he only filed them. The train on which he left home for the East, was to have been thrown off the track. A hand grenade was hidden in one of the cars. An association was known to exist at Baltimore for the express purpose of killing him. When therefore he spoke as he did at Philadelphia, it was doubtless with a

feeling that some one concerned in these plans was probably hearing him, and understanding him. It was, no doubt, at the same time a sort of vow, taken upon himself under the feelings aroused by the birth-place of the Declaration which he had so often and so well defended. Whether a challenge, a vow, or a mere statement of principle, he kept his word. He lived by it, and he died by it.

The same mixture of firmness and kindness appears in the First Inaugural, and in this document there is also another most characteristic element; – circumspect adherence to the Constitution as he understood it, and most remarkable care and skill in the language used to interpret law, or to announce his own conclusions or purposes. Lover of freedom as he was, and believer in the rights of man, he had already been invariably careful not to demand from the masses of men whom he sought to influence, more than they could be expected to give. Now, he went even further. He expressly and clearly avowed his intention to execute all that he had sworn, even the laws most distasteful to any freeman. In speaking of the crisis of the moment, and after setting forth his doctrine of national sovereignty and an unbroken Union, he promised to maintain it as far as he could, and added:

"Doing this I deem to be only a simple duty on my part; and I shall perform it so far as practicable, unless my rightful masters, the American people, shall withhold the requisite means, or in some authoritative manner direct the contrary."

Then, as if to avert ill feeling if possible:

"I trust this will not be regarded as a menace, but only as the declared purpose of the Union, that it will constitutionally defend and maintain itself."

Then, with careful adherence to the mildest terms possible – could anything be a more peaceful assertion of national right than the simple "hold, occupy and possess"? – he says what the nation will do:

"In doing this there need be no bloodshed or violence, and there shall be none, unless it be forced upon the national authority. The power confided to me will be used to hold, occupy and possess the property and places belonging to the government, and to collect the duties and imposts; but beyond what may be necessary for these objects, there will be no invasion, no using of force against or among the people anywhere."

The remainder of the Inaugural is just such a kindly, homely, earnest, sincere, straight-forward appeal to the South, as he might have made in a country court-house in Illinois, "taking off his coat, leaning upon the rail of the jury box, and singling out a leading juryman and addressing him in a conversational tone." Having stated the case, and once more barely repeated that it was "his duty to administer the present government as it came to his hands, and to transmit it unimpaired by him to his successor," he then quietly but powerfully appeals to his own two life-long trusts, God Almighty, and the free people of America. He asks:

"Why should there not be a patient confidence in the ultimate justice of the people? Is there any better or equal hope in the world? In our present differences, is either party without faith of being in the right? If the Almighty Ruler of nations, with his eternal truth and justice, be on your side of the North, or on yours of the South, that truth and that justice will surely prevail, by the judgment of the great tribunal of the American people."

And the final paragraphs are sad and heavy with his unutterable longings and yearnings for peace; so that the words, plain and simple as they are, are full of deep and melancholy music:

"You can have no conflict without being yourselves the aggressors. You have no oath registered in heaven to destroy the government, while I shall have the most solemn one, to 'preserve, protect and defend' it.

I am loth to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic cord of memory, stretching from every battle-field and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature."

As the war went on, the same unwavering decision, the same caution and kindness marked the whole action of the Executive. Especially were these traits exhibited in his dealings with the main question at issue, that of slavery.

On this point he bore a pressure such as it is safe to say no mortal son of earth ever bore before or since. The interests of the great laboring, suffering classes that go to make up human nature, were all at this period of history condensed into one narrow channel, like that below Niagara where the waters of all the great lakes are heaped up in ridges, and seem, in Scripture language, to "utter their voices and lift up their hands on high." Like the course of those heavy waters the great cause weltered into a place where its course resembled that sullen whirlpool below the falls where the awful waters go round and round in blindly, dizzy masses, and seem with dumb tossings and dark agonies to seek in vain for a clear, open channel. In this dread vortex, from time to time are seen whirling helplessly the bodies of drowned men, fragments of wrecked boats splintered and shattered, and trees torn to ghastly skeletons, which from time to time dart up from the whirling abyss with a sort of mad, impatient despair.

So we can all remember when the war had struggled on a year or two – when a hundred thousand men, the life and light and joy of as many families, who entered it warm with hope and high in aspiration, were all lying cold and low, and yet without the least apparent progress towards a result – when the resistance only seemed to have become wider, deeper, more concentrated, better organized, by all that awful waste of the best treasures of the nation; then was the starless night – the horror of the valley of the shadow of death. Above, darkness filled with whisperings, and jibes, and sneers of traitor fiends; on one side a pit, on the other a quagmire, and in the gloom all faces gathered blackness, and even friends and partisans looked strangely on each other. Confidence began to be shaken. Each separate party blamed the other as they wandered in the darkness. It was one of the strange coincidences which show the eternal freshness of Scripture language in relation to human events, that the church lesson from the Old Testament which was read in the churches the Sunday after the attack on Sumter, was the prediction of exactly such a conflict:

"Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up:

Beat your plough-shares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into spears: let the weak say, I *am* strong.

Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord.

Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great.

Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision.

The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord *will be* the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God."

The repeated defeats, disasters, and distresses that had come upon the Union cause stirred the conscience of all the religious portion of the community. They remembered the parallels in the Old Testament where the armies of Israel were turned back before the heathen, because they cherished within themselves some accursed thing – they began to ask whether the Achan who had stolen the wedge of gold and Babylonish vest in our midst was not in truth the cause why God would not go forth with our armies! and the pressure upon Lincoln to end the strife by declaring emancipation, became every day more stringent; at the same time the pressure of every opposing party became equally intense, and Lincoln by his peculiar nature and habits, must listen to all, and take time to ponder and weigh all. In consequence there was a time when he pleased nobody. Each party was incensed at the degree of attention he gave to the other. He might say, in the language of the old prophet, at this

time, "Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me a man of strife, and a man of contention to the whole earth! I have neither lent on usury, nor men have lent to me on usury; *yet* every one of them doth curse me." He was, like the great Master whom he humbly followed, despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; we hid, as it were, our faces from him, he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Like the poor, dumb, suffering, down-trodden classes for whom he stood, he had no prestige of personal advantages, or of that culture which comes from generations of wealth and ease. His method of thought and expression had not the stamp of any old aristocratic tradition. He was a sign upon the earth – the sign and the leader of a new order of events in which the power and the prestige should be in the hands of the plain, simple common people, and not in those of privileged orders. But the time had not yet come, and now was their hour of humiliation, and while in England the poor operatives of Manchester bravely and manfully bore starvation caused by want of cotton, rather than ask their government to break the blockade and get it for them; while the poor silk weavers of Lyons, and the poorer classes all over Europe trembled, and hoped, and sympathised with the struggling cause and its unfashionable leader – all the great, gay, successful, fashionable world went the other way. Punch had his jolly caricatures of Lincoln's long, thin face, and anxious perplexities, and the caricatures of Paris were none the less merry. Even in America there was a time when some of his most powerful friends doubted his fitness for his position, and criticisms filled the columns of every newspaper. In Washington, every fop and every fool felt at liberty to make a jest at the expense of his want of dignity, and his personal awkwardness. He was freely called an ape, a satyr, a stupid blockhead, for even the ass can kick safely and joyfully at a lion in a net. Even his cabinet and best friends said nothing for him, and kept an ominous and gloomy silence.

Lincoln knew all this, and turned it over in the calm recesses of his mind, with a quiet endurance, gilded at times by a gleam of the grim, solemn humor peculiar to himself. "I cannot *make* generals," he said once, "I would if I could." At another, to an important man who had been pressing some of his own particular wisdom upon him, "Perhaps you'd like to try to run the machine yourself." Somebody gave him a series of powerful criticisms which a distinguished writer had just poured forth on him. "I read them all through," he said quaintly, "and then I said to myself, Well, Abraham Lincoln, are you a man, or are you a dog?"

No man in the great agony suffered more or deeper, but it was with a dry, weary, patient pain, that many mistook for insensibility. "Whichever way it ends," he said to the writer, on one occasion, "I have the impression that I shan't last long after it's over."

After the dreadful repulse at Fredericksburg, he is reported to have said, "If there is a man out of hell that suffers more than I do, I pity him." In those dark days, his heavy eyes and worn and weary air told how our reverses wore upon him, and yet there was a never failing fund of patience at bottom that sometimes rose to the surface in bubbles of quaint sayings or a story that forced a laugh even from himself. The humor of Lincoln was the oil that lubricated the otherwise dry and wiry machinery of his mind. The power of looking at men and things with reference to their humorous side, enabled him to bear without irritation many things in the political joltings and jarrings of his lot, which would have driven a more nervous man frantic. It is certainly a great advantage to be so made that one can laugh at times when crying will do no good, and Lincoln not only had his own laugh in the darkest days, but the wherewithal to bring a laugh from a weary neighbor. His jests and stories helped off many a sorry hour, and freshened the heart of his hearer for another pull in the galling harness.

He saw through other men who thought all the while they were instructing or enlightening him, with a sort of dry, amused patience. He allowed the most tedious talker to prose to him, the most shallow and inflated to advise him, reserving only to himself the right to a quiet chuckle far down in the depths of his private consciousness. Thus all sorts of men and all sorts of deputations saw him, had their talks, bestowed on him all their tediousness, and gave him the benefit of their opinions; not a creature was denied access, not a soul so lowly but might have their chance to bore the soul of this more lowly servant of the people. His own little, private, quiet, harmless laugh was his small comfort

under all these inflictions. Sometimes the absolute confidence with which all contending sides urged their opinions and measures upon him, seemed to strike him with a solemn sense of the ludicrous. Thus when Dr. Cheever, at the head of a committee of clergymen, had been making a vigorous, authoritative appeal to him in Old Testament language, to end all difficulties by emancipation, Lincoln seemed to meditate gravely, and at last answered slowly, "Well, gentlemen, it is not very often that one is favored with a *delegation direct from the Almighty*!"

Washington, at this time, was one great hospital of wounded soldiers; the churches, the public buildings all filled with the maimed, the sick and suffering, and Lincoln's only diversion from the perplexity of state was the oversight of these miseries. "Where do you dine?" said one to him in our hearing. "Well, I don't dine, I just browse round a little, now and then." There was something irresistibly quaint and pathetic in the odd, rustic tone in which this was spoken.

Even the Emancipation Proclamation – that one flag stone in the wide morass of despondency on which the wearied man at last set firm foothold, did not at first seem to be a first step into the land of promise.

It was uttered too soon to please some parties, too late to please others. In England it was received in the face of much military ill success, with the scoffing epigram that the President had proclaimed liberty in the states where he had no power, and retained slavery in those where he had. It is true there was to this the sensible and just reply that he only gained the right to emancipate by this war power, and that of course this did not exist in states that were not at war; but when was ever a smart saying stopped in its course by the slow considerations and explanations of truth?

The battle of Gettysburg was the first argument that began to convince mankind that Mr. Lincoln was right. It has been well said, that in this world nothing succeeds but *success*. Bonaparte professed his belief that Providence always went with the strongest battalions, and therein he expressed about the average opinion of this world. Vicksburg and Gettysburg changed the whole face of the nation – they were the first stations outside of the valley of the shadow of death.

The nation took new courage – even the weary clamorers for peace at any price, began to shout on the right side, and to hope that peace might come through northern victory, and so it *did* come, they did not care how.

Whereas a few months before, Lincoln was universally depreciated, doubted, scoffed and scorned, now he found himself re-elected to the Presidential chair, by an overwhelming majority. It was in fact almost an election by acclamation. When the votes were being counted in New York late at night, and this victory became apparent, the vast surging assembly at the motion of one individual, uncovered their heads and sang a solemn Doxology – an affecting incident which goes far to show what sort of feelings lay at the bottom of this vast movement, and how profoundly the people felt that this re-election of Lincoln was a vital step in their onward progress.

At this hour the nation put the broad seal of its approbation on all his past course. At this moment she pledged herself to follow him and him alone to the end.

Perhaps never was man re-elected who used fewer of popular arts – made fewer direct efforts. He was indeed desirous to retain the place, for though he estimated himself quite humbly, still he was of opinion that on the whole his was as safe a hand as any, and he had watched the navigation so far as to come to love the hard helm, at which he had stood so painfully. In his usual quaint way he expressed his idea by a backwoods image. Alluding to the frequent fordings of turbulent streams that are the lot of the western traveller, he said, "It is'nt best to swap horses in the middle of a creek."

There was something almost preternatural in the calmness with which Lincoln accepted the news of his re-election. The first impulse seemed to be to disclaim all triumph over the opposing party, and to soberly gird up his loins to go on with his work to the end.

His last inaugural has been called by one of the London newspapers "the noblest political document known to history."

It was characterized by a solemn religious tone, so peculiarly free from earthly passion, that it seems to us now, who look back on it in the light of what has followed, as if his soul had already parted from earthly things, and felt the powers of the world to come. It was not the formal state-paper of the chief of a party in an hour of victory, so much as the solemn soliloquy of a great soul reviewing its course under a vast responsibility, and appealing from all earthly judgments to the tribunal of Infinite Justice. It was a solemn clearing of his soul for the great sacrament of death:

"*Fellow Countrymen*– At this second appearing to take the oath of the Presidential office, there is less occasion for an extended address than there was at the first. Then a statement somewhat in detail of a course to be pursued seemed very fitting and proper. Now, at the expiration of four years, during which public declarations have been constantly called forth on every point and phase of the great contest which still absorbs the attention and engrosses the energies of the nation, little that is new could be presented.

The progress of our arms, upon which all else chiefly depends is as well known to the public as to myself, and it is, I trust, reasonably satisfactory and encouraging to all. With high hope for the future, no prediction in regard to it is ventured.

On the occasion corresponding to this four years ago, all thoughts were anxiously directed to an impending civil war. All dreaded it; all sought to avoid it. While the inaugural address was being delivered from this place, devoted altogether to saving the Union without war, insurgent agents were in the city seeking to destroy it without war – seeking to dissolve the Union and divide the effects by negotiation. Both parties deprecated war, but one of them would make war rather than let the nation survive, and the other would accept war rather than let it perish, and the war came.

One-eighth of the whole population were colored slaves, not distributed generally over the Union, but localized in the Southern part of it. These slaves constituted a peculiar and powerful interest. All knew that this interest was somehow the cause of the war. To strengthen, perpetuate and extend this interest, was the object for which the insurgents would rend the Union even by war, while the Government claimed no right to do more than to restrict the territorial enlargement of it.

Neither party expected for the war the magnitude or the duration which it has already attained. Neither anticipated that the cause of the conflict might cease with, or even before the conflict itself should cease. Each looked for an easier triumph, and a result less fundamental and astounding.

Both read the same Bible and prayed to the same God, and each invoke his aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces, but let us judge not, that we be not judged. The prayers of both could not be answered. That of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has his own purposes. 'Woe unto the world because of offences, for it must needs be that offences come: but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh.' If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of these offences, which in the providence of God must needs come, but which having continued through his appointed time, He now wills to remove, and that he gives to both North and South this terrible war as the woe due to those by whom the offence came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to Him? Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may soon pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid with another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago; so, still it must be said, 'The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.'

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 to finish 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 orphans, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and a lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

The words of Lincoln seemed to grow more clear and more remarkable as they approached the end. Perhaps in no language, ancient or modern, are any number of words found more touching and eloquent than his speech of November 19, 1863, at the Gettysburg celebration. He wrote it in a few moments, while on the way to the celebration, on being told that he would be expected to make some remarks, and after Mr. Everett's oration he rose and read it. It was as follows:

"Fourscore and seven years ago, our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now, we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation, so conceived and dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battle-field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives that the nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

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

The audience had admired Mr. Everett's long address. At Mr. Lincoln's few words, they cheered and sobbed and wept. When Mr. Lincoln had ended, he turned and congratulated Mr. Everett on having succeeded so well. Mr. Everett replied, with a truthful and real compliment, "Ah, Mr. Lincoln, how gladly I would exchange all my hundred pages, to have been the author of your twenty lines!"

Probably no ruler ever made a more profoundly and peculiarly *Christian* impression on the mind of the world than Lincoln. In his religious faith two leading ideas were prominent from first to last – man's helplessness, both as to strength and wisdom, and God's helpfulness in both. When he left Springfield to assume the Presidency, he said to his townsmen:

"A duty devolves on me which is perhaps greater than that which has devolved on any other man since the days of Washington. He never would have succeeded but for the aid of divine Providence, on which he at all times relied, and I feel that I cannot succeed without the same Divine aid which sustained him. On the same Almighty Being I place my reliance for support, and I hope that you, my friends, will pray that I may receive that Divine assistance, without which I cannot succeed, but with which success is certain."

Abraham Lincoln's whole course showed that he possessed that faith without which, St. Paul says, it is impossible to please God, for "he that cometh to God *must believe that He* IS, and that He is a *rewarder of those who diligently seek him*."

And now our Christian pilgrim having passed through the valley of the shadow of death, and slain and vanquished giants and dragons, at last had a little taste, a few days sojourn, in the land of Beulah.

Cheer after cheer rose up and shook the land as by one great stroke after another the awful convulsions of the conflict terminated in full, perfect, final victory.

Never did mortal man on this earth have a triumph more dramatic and astounding than Lincoln's victorious entry into Richmond. Years before, when a humble lawyer in Illinois, a man without prestige of person or manners or education, he had espoused what the world called the losing side, and been content to take the up-hill, laborious road. He had seen his rival, adorned with every external advantage of person, manners, eloquence and oratory, sweeping all prizes away from him, and far distancing him in the race of political ambition.

In those days, while confessing that he had felt the promptings of ambition, and the disappointment of ill success, there was one manly and noble sentiment that ought to be printed in letters of gold, as the motto of every rising young man. Speaking of the distinction at which Douglas was aiming, he said:

"So reached as that the oppressed of my species might have equal reason to rejoice with me, I should value it more than the proudest crown that could deck the brow of a monarch."

At this moment of his life he could look back and see far behind him the grave of the once brilliant Douglas, who died worn out and worn down with disappointed ambition, while he, twice elected to the Presidency, was now standing the observed of all the world, in a triumph that has no like in history. And it was a triumph made memorable and peculiar by the ecstacies and hallelujahs of those very oppressed with whose care years before he had weighted and burdened his progress. It was one of those earthly scenes which grandly foreshadow that great final triumph predicted in prophecy, when the Lord God shall wipe away all tears from all faces, and the rebuke of his people shall he utterly take away. A cotemporary witness has described Lincoln, calm and simple, leading his little boy by the hand, while the liberated blacks hailed him with hymns and prayers, mingling his name at each moment with ascriptions of praise and glory to Jesus the Great Liberator, whose day at last had come. Who can say of what ages of mournful praying and beseeching, what uplifting of poor, dumb hands that hour was the outcome? Years before, a clergyman of Virginia visiting the black insurrectionist, Nat Turner, in his cell before execution, gives the following wonderful picture of him: "In rags, in chains, covered with blood and bruises, he yet is inspired by such a force of enthusiasm, as he lifts his chained hands to heaven, as really filled my soul with awe. It is impossible to make him feel that he is guilty. He evidently believes that he was called of God to do the work he did. When I pointed out to him that it could not be, because he was taken, condemned, and about to be executed, he answered with enthusiasm, 'Was not Jesus Christ crucified? My cause *will* succeed yet!'"

Years passed, and the prophetic visions of Nat Turner were fulfilled on the soil of Virginia. It did indeed rain blood; the very leaves of the trees dripped blood; but the work was *done*, the yoke was broken, and the oppressed went free. An old negress who stood and saw the confederate prisoners being carried for safe keeping into the former slave pens, said grimly, "Well, de Lord am slow, but He am *sure*!"

As the final scenes of his life drew on, it seemed as if a heavenly influence overshadowed the great martyr, and wrought in him exactly the spirit that a man would wish to be found in when he is called to the eternal world. His last expressions and recorded political actions looked towards peace and forgiveness. On the day before his death he joyfully ordered the discontinuance of the draft. His very last official act was to give orders that two of the chief leaders of the rebellion, then expected in disguise at a sea port, on their flight to Europe, should not be arrested, but permitted to embark; so that he was thinking only of saving the lives of rebels, when they were thinking of taking his. If he had tried of set purpose to clear his soul for God's presence, and to put the rebels and their assassin champion in the wrong before that final tribunal, he could not have done better.

Mr. Lincoln seems to have had during his course a marked presentiment of the fate which had from the first been threatening him, and which the increasing pile of letters marked "Assassination," gave him constant reason to remember. In more than one instance he had in his public speeches professed a solemn willingness to die for his principles. The great tax which his labors and responsibilities made on his vitality, was perhaps one reason for his frequently saying that he felt that he should not live to go through with it. He observed to Mr. Lovejoy, during that gentleman's last illness, in February, 1864, "This war is eating my life out; I have a strong impression that I shall not live to see the end." In July following, he said to a correspondent of the Boston Journal, "I feel a presentiment that I shall not outlast the rebellion. When it is over, my work will be done."

Concerning the last painful history, there have been a thousand conflicting stories. From the mass of evidence the following brief account has been prepared, which sufficiently outlines the circumstances:

Who were the persons concerned in the assassination of President Lincoln, has never been judicially proved. Perhaps it never will be. The indictment against the conspirators named the following parties. David E. Herold, George A. Atzerodt, Lewis Payne, Michael O'Laughlin, Edward Spangler, Samuel Arnold, Mary E. Surratt, Samuel A. Mudd, John H. Surratt, John Wilkes Booth, Jefferson Davis, George N. Sanders, Beverly Tucker, Jacob Thompson, William C. Cleary, Clement C. Clay, George Harper, and George Young; and it added, "and others unknown." The assassin was John Wilkes Booth. And whether or no Jefferson Davis and his fellows in the rebel government were actually aiding and abetting in this particular crime, it has not been unjust nor unnatural to suspect them of it. For Mr. Davis certainly accredited Thompson, Sanders, Clay, and Tucker, as his official agents in Canada. These men in their turn, and acting in harmony with their instructions and the purposes of their government, gave a commission to that John A. Kennedy who was detected in attempting to kindle an extensive fire in the city of New York, and consulted with him about his proposed plans. This was the substance of Kennedy's own confession, and he and his accomplices did kindle fires in four of the New York hotels. It is completely proved, again, that Davis paid sundry sums, in all $35,000 in gold, to incendiaries hired by his government to burn hospitals and steamboats at the West, and that Thompson paid money to a person engaged in Dr. Blackburn's attempt to spread yellow fever in our cities.

But more: when one Alston wrote to Davis, offering his services to try to "rid my country of some of her deadliest enemies, by striking at the very heart's blood of those who seek to enchain her in slavery" – adding the very significant remark, "I consider nothing dishonorable having such a tendency," Mr. Davis caused this proposition not to be refused, nor passed over in silence, nor indignantly exposed; but to be "respectfully referred, by direction of the President, to the honorable Secretary of War." Still more: it has been proved that in 1863, John Wilkes Booth declared that "Abraham Lincoln must be killed." The rebel agents in Canada, six months before the assassination, specifically made the same declaration. In the summer of 1864, Thompson said that he could at any time have the "tyrant Lincoln," or any of his advisers that he chose, "put out of the way," and that Thompson's agents would not consider doing this a crime, if done for the rebel cause; and Clay, when he heard of this, corroborated the sentiment, saying, "That is so; we are all devoted to our cause, and ready to go any length – to do anything under the sun." Many other such utterances by rebel leaders are proved and have become uncontradicted matter of history. Besides; when Mr. Davis, at Charlotte, North Carolina, while fleeing from Richmond, received the telegram announcing the fate of Mr. Lincoln, he calmly read it aloud to the people present, and without a word of disapproval, uttered a cold comment: "If it were to be done, it were better it were well done." And when Breckinridge said he regretted it, (not because it was wicked or dishonorable, but because it was unfortunate for the South just then,) Mr Davis replied in the same tone of cold indifference or of concealed satisfaction, and using the same words: "Well, General, I don't know; if it were to be done at all, it were better that it were well done; and if the same had been done to Andy Johnson, the Beast (i. e. Gen. Butler), and to Secretary Stanton, the job would then be complete." Those are not the words of an honorable man, nor of a disapprover. But they are exactly natural to an accessory before the fact, who does not confess his part in it, and prefers to dissemble his joy. It is not at all unreasonable to suspect that the men who are proved to have done thus and spoken thus, before and after the deed, and who have openly hired and approved the perpetration of such other deeds, were concerned in the planning and execution of this deed too.

Booth was an actor, and the son of a well known actor; and the son had inherited, apparently, much of the reckless and occasionally furious temper of his father. He was also a very violent and bitter rebel. During the fall of 1864, he had been in Canada, consulting with the rebel agents there,

and mixed up with a number of other subordinate agents in the business of assassinating President Lincoln; and he was the most prominent candidate, so to speak, for the place of actual murderer. On November 11th, 1864, he was in New York, where, while riding with a companion in a street car, he dropped a letter which came into the possession of the government; it was a vigorous appeal to him to assassinate Mr. Lincoln. It said: "Abe must die, and now. You can choose your weapons, the cup, the knife, the bullet;" and again: "Strike for your home, strike for your country; bide your time, but strike sure." During the winter, Booth was engaging the assistance required for his scheme; and he had already fixed upon the scene of the murder; for, not later than January, he was urging one Chester to enter into the plan, and assuring him that all his part of it would be to stand at the back door of Ford's Theatre and open it. This was a safe calculation, for the President's enjoyment of dramatic performances was great, and enhanced by the difficulty of finding agreeable relaxations, and also by the awful pressure of his official duties and of the war, which intensified the need of relaxation.

The scheme as finally arranged, provided for the assassination of Mr. Lincoln, by Booth; of Mr. Johnson, by Atzerodt; of Mr. Seward, by Payne, (alias Powell); and of Gen. Grant, by O'Laughlin. For the President, an elaborate death trap was constructed in Ford's Theatre. The catches of the locks to all three doors of the President's box (one outer and two inner ones), were loosened by loosening their screws, and left so that a slight push would enable the assassin to enter even though the doors should be locked. A small hole was made through one of the two inner ones, to enable him to see before entering exactly how his victim sat, so that the final moves within the box could be laid out before entering it; and a wooden brace was prepared to set against the outer door (which opened inward) with one end, and with the other to fit a mortice cut in the wall behind, so that after entering, the assassin could fasten the door behind him sufficiently to prevent any interruption until his work was done. Arrangements were made for securing horses for the murderers to flee with. The stage carpenter or assistant, Spangler, was employed to be on hand and open and shut the back door of the theatre when wanted. Some scenes and miscellaneous matter that frequently impeded more or less the passage from the front of the stage to this back door, were piled up or otherwise put out of the way. A supply of weapons for the conspirators was provided. And a route for flight from Washington within the rebel lines was determined on. This route led southward from the city, over Anacostia Bridge, ten miles to Mrs. Surratt's house at Surrattsville, then some fifteen miles more to Dr. Mudd's house, then about twenty miles to a point where arrangements were made for crossing the Potomac and proceeding towards Richmond.

All being ready, Booth, about 9 P. M., on the 14th of April, 1865, went to the theatre. He first went to the back door, entered it and saw that all was prepared; left Spangler in charge, and left his horse to be held by another subordinate of the theatre. Then he went round to the front of the building, where three of the conspirators were waiting. It was now about half past nine. One act of the play, "Our American Cousin," – was nearly through. "I think he will come out now," remarked Booth. It is very usual for the spectators to leave the theatre between the acts, often to return; and if Mr. Lincoln had happened to feel too busy to remain longer and had left then, probably Booth would have attacked him there, trusting to be able to escape into the theatre in the bustle and so through his guarded door. But the President did not come. Booth went into a saloon close by and drank some whisky. The spectators had returned for the next act. Booth entered the vestibule of the theatre, and from it the passage that leads from the street to the stage and also to the outer door of the President's box. As he did so, one of his companions followed him into the vestibule, looked up to the clock and called out the hour. It was approaching ten. Three successive times, at intervals of several minutes, the companion thus called out the hour. The third time he called, in a louder tone, "Ten minutes past ten o'clock!" At this Booth disappeared in the theatre, and the three others walked rapidly away. Booth went straight to the outer door of the President's box, paused and showed a visiting card to the President's messenger, who was in waiting; placed his hand and his knee against the door, and pushing it open, entered. He then quietly fastened the door with the brace that stood ready; looked through the

hole in the inner door, and saw the President. Silently opening the door, he entered. Mr. Lincoln sat at the left hand front corner of the box, his wife at his right hand, a Miss Harris at the right hand front corner, and a Major Rathbone behind her. Mr. Lincoln was leaning forward and looking down into the orchestra. Booth stepped quickly up, and fired a pistol bullet into the President's head, behind and on the left side. The murdered man raised his head once; it fell back upon his chair, and his eyes closed. Major Rathbone, a cool, bold and prompt soldier, who had been absorbed in the play, now hearing the pistol-shot, turned, saw Booth through the smoke, and instantly sprang upon him. Booth, a nervous and strong man, expert in all athletic exercises, and a skillful fencer, wrenched himself free with a desperate effort, as he well needed to do. He had already dropped his pistol and drawn a heavy bowie knife, with which he made a furious thrust at his captor's heart. Rathbone parried it, but was wounded deeply in the arm and his hold loosed. Booth sprang for the front of the box; Rathbone followed, but only caught his clothes as he sprang over. Rathbone shouted "Stop that man!" and then turned to assist the President.

Booth leaped over the front of the box, down upon the stage, shouting as he went, "Revenge for the South!" His spur caught in the national flag as he descended; the entanglement caused him to fall almost flat on the stage as he came down; and either the wrench of tearing loose from the flag, or the fall, snapped one of the bones of his leg between knee and ankle. This fracture, though not preventing him at once from moving about, so far disabled him as probably to have been the occasion of his being overtaken and captured; so that it is scarcely extravagant to imagine the flag as having, in a sense, avenged the guilt of the crime perpetrated upon its chief official defender, by waylaying and entrapping the criminal in his turn, as he had done his victim. Booth instantly sprang up, turned towards the audience, and raising his bloody knife in a stage attitude, with a theatrical manner, vociferated the motto of the State of Virginia, "*Sic semper tyrannis!*" – a motto already turned into a discreditable satire by its contrast with the characteristic traffic of the great slavebreeding state, and even more effectually disgraced by the use now made of it, to justify assassination. It will be strange if some less dishonored words are not one day chosen for the device of Free Virginia.

Booth, thus vaporing for a moment, then rushed headlong across the stage, and darted by the side passage to the rear door. One man sprang from an orchestra seat upon the stage and shouted to stop him. One of the employes of the theatre, standing in the passage, was too much startled to stand aside, and the desperate fugitive struck him on the leg, cut at him twice, knocked him one side and darted on. The door was ready. He sprang out, and it shut behind him. Seizing the horse which was held in waiting for him, Booth, as if in a frenzy like that of the Malays when "running *amok*," struck the poor fellow who held it, with the butt of his knife, knocking him down; and then kicking him, sprang to the saddle, and after a few moments lost in consequence of some nervousness or fright of the animal, rode swiftly off. This was on the evening of Friday, the 14th; it was on Wednesday, the 26th, that Booth, after having been delayed by having his leg set, and crippled by it afterwards, was discovered in Garrett's barn, south of the Rappahannock, not far from twenty miles from the Potomac, and was surrounded, shot and taken.

The murdered President was quickly carried from the theatre to a house across the street and placed upon a bed. Surgical aid was at once obtained, but an examination at once showed that there was no hope of life. Mr. Lincoln's eyes had not opened, nor had consciousness returned at all, and they never did. The ball was a heavy one, from what is called a Derringer pistol, a short single-barreled weapon with a large bore. It had passed clear through the brain, and lodged against the bone of the orbit of the left eye, breaking that bone. It is almost certain that Mr. Lincoln suffered no pain after being shot, as the injury was of a nature to destroy conscious life. His exceedingly strong constitution and tenacity of life maintained respiration and circulation for a remarkably long time, but he died the next morning at about half past seven.

Of the particulars of that great national mourning which bowed the whole land, it is not needful to speak. Like many parts of that great history of which it formed a portion, there were often points

in it of a peculiar and symbolic power, which rose to the sublime. Such was the motto – "Be still, and know that I am God" – which spoke from the walls of the New York depot when amid the hush of weeping thousands, the solemn death car entered. The contrast between the peaceful expression on the face of the weary man, and the surging waves of mourning and lamentation around him was touching and awful.

Not the least touching among these expressions of national mourning was the dismay and anguish of that poor oppressed race for whose rights he died.

A southern correspondent of the New York Tribune, the week following the assassination, wrote: "I never saw such sad faces, or heard such heavy heart-beatings, as here in Charleston the day the news came. The colored people were like children bereaved of a parent. I saw one old woman going up the streets, wringing her hands, and saying aloud as she walked, looking straight before her, so absorbed in her grief that she noticed no one;

'O Lord! Oh Lord! O Lord! Massa Sam's dead! Massa Sam's dead!'

'Who's dead, Aunty?' 'Massa Sam's dead!' she said, not looking at me, and renewing her lamentations.

'Who's Massa Sam?' said I.

'Uncle Sam,' she said, 'O Lord! O Lord!'

Not quite sure that she meant the President, I spoke again:

'Who's Massa Sam, Aunty?'

'Mr. Lincum!' she said, and resumed wringing her hands, mourning in utter hopelessness of sorrow."

The poor negroes on the distant plantations had formed a conception of Lincoln, much akin to that of a Divine Being. Their masters fled on the approach of our soldiers, and this gave the slaves the conception of a great Invisible Power which they called Massa Lincum. An old negro exhorter once, rising in an assembly of them, was heard solemnly instructing his fellows in the nature of this great unknown: "Bredren," he said solemnly, "Massa Lincum, he be eberywhere. He knows ebery ting;" and looking up solemnly, "He walk de earf like de Lord."

To them the stroke was almost as if we could possibly conceive death as happening to the God we worship; a mingled shock of grief, surprise and terror.

No death of a public man ever entered so deep into the life of individual families, so as to seem like a personal domestic sorrow. The assumption of mourning badges and garments, the hanging out of mourning tokens, was immediate in thousands of families, each obeying the same spontaneous impulse without stopping to consult the other. It seemed almost as if the funeral bells tolled of themselves and without hands. Wherever the news travelled, so immediately and without waiting for public consultation, were these tributes of mourning given.

One fact alone, proves the depth and strength of these feelings more than volumes of description. It is, the vast extent of the publications in which the history of Mr. Lincoln's life and times, his individual biography and real or written utterances, or his personal appearance, were in one way or another commemorated. A gentleman who has begun a collection of such materials had some time ago gathered two hundred different books on Mr. Lincoln, a hundred and twenty-five portraits, besides badges, mourning cards, autographs and manuscripts, as he reports, "almost without number." And in the list of publications about the rebellion compiled by Mr. Bartlett, are enumerated three hundred and eighty books, sermons, eulogies or addresses upon his life or death.

There is an astonishing contrast between the perfect sweetness and kindness of Mr. Lincoln's sentiments and utterances, whether private or public, individual or official, in reference to the rebels and the rebellion, and theirs about him. Doubtless no loyal citizen of the United States was so uniformly kind in feeling and decorous and even courteous in expression, about the rebels; and doubtless no such citizen was so odiously bespattered with the most hateful and vulgar and ferocious insult and abuse, both public and private. To give the quotations to prove the point would be simply

disgusting. They were sprinkled through the newspapers and the public documents of the rebellion from beginning to end of it. A compend and a proof at once of the whole of them was that private bundle of letters threatening death, marked in Mr. Lincoln's own handwriting "Assassination," and kept in his private cabinet. And the assassination itself and the circumstances connected with it, constituted another proof and specimen, still more overwhelming. Never since the times of the Christian martyrs has history recorded a contrast more humiliating to humanity, between his kind words and kind intentions on the one hand, and infamous abusiveness and deliberate bloodthirsty ferocity in those who thus slew the best and kindest friend they had in the world.

Scarcely less striking was the contrast between the habitual tone of the foreign utterances about President Lincoln before his death and that of those after it; a change, moreover, whose promptness and evident manly good faith may in some measure atone for the unreasonable and even indecent character of many things said and printed in Europe. It is unnecessary to reproduce the offences: it is a more grateful task to quote a few specimens of the feelings and expressions with which the news of his death and of the manner of it was received abroad.

It may be premised, that some few persons of foreign birth and good position, had already discerned the truth of the character of Mr. Lincoln. A correspondent of the N. Y. Times wrote that paper from Washington, on one occasion, the following narrative:

"One day, as President Lincoln drove past a Washington hotel, sitting alone in his carriage, three gentlemen stood talking in front of the hotel. One of them, a foreigner of high cultivation and great distinction, with a gesture quite involuntary, raised his hat and remained uncovered until Mr. Lincoln had passed by. One of his companions, surprised at so much ceremony, observed, "You forget that you are in republican America and not in Russia." "Not at all, sir – not at all," was the reply, given with a certain indignation; "that is the only living ruler whom I sincerely reverence. I could not avoid showing the feeling, if I would. He is a patriot, a statesman, a great-hearted honest man. You Americans reverence nothing in the present." And after a few more sentences to the like effect, he ended by saying: "Not only your posterity, but the posterity of all the peoples which love honesty and revere patriotism, will declare that the part which President Lincoln was called to perform, required the exercise of as noble qualities as the 'Father of his Country' ever possessed. It is any thing but a credit to you that you do not better appreciate the man whom God has sent in these perilous times to rule the people of this republic."

The rebuke was received in silence. But such cases were very few. The general tone of foreign opinion about him was thoroughly unjust. Not so the obituary testimonials from across the sea.

On the first of May, 1865, Sir George Grey, in the English House of Commons, moved an address to the Crown, to express the feelings of the House upon the assassination of Mr. Lincoln. In this address he said that he was convinced that Mr. Lincoln "in the hour of victory, and in the triumph of victory, would have shown that wise forbearance, and that generous consideration, which would have added tenfold lustre to the fame that he had already acquired, amidst the varying fortunes of the war."

In seconding the same address, at the same time and place, Mr. Benjamin Disraeli said: "But in the character of the victim, and in the very accessories of his almost latest moments, there is something so homely and so innocent that it takes the subject, as it were, out of the pomp of history, and out of the ceremonial of diplomacy. It touches the heart of nations, and appeals to the domestic sentiments of mankind."

In the House of Lords, Lord John Russell, in moving a similar address, observed: "President Lincoln was a man who, although he had not been distinguished before his election, had from that time displayed a character of so much integrity, sincerity and straightforwardness, and at the same time of so much kindness, that if any one could have been able to alleviate the pain and animosity which have prevailed during the civil war, I believe President Lincoln was the man to have done so." And again, in speaking of the question of amending the constitution so as to prohibit slavery, he said:

"We must all feel that there again the death of President Lincoln deprives the United States of the man who was the leader on this subject."

Mr. John Stuart Mill, the distinguished philosopher, in a letter to an American friend, used far stronger expressions than these guarded phrases of high officials. He termed Mr. Lincoln "the great citizen who had afforded so noble an example of the qualities befitting the first magistrate of a free people, and who, in the most trying circumstances, had gradually won not only the admiration, but almost the personal affection of all who love freedom or appreciate simplicity or uprightness."

Professor Goldwin Smith, writing to the London Daily News, began by saying, "It is difficult to measure the calamity which the United States and the world have sustained by the murder of President Lincoln. The assassin has done his best to strike down mercy and moderation, of both of which this good and noble life was the main stay."

Senhor Rebello da Silva, a member of the Portuguese Chamber of Peers, in moving a resolution on the death of Mr. Lincoln, thus outlined his character: "He is truly great who rises to the loftiest heights from profound obscurity, relying solely on his own merits as did Napoleon, Washington, Lincoln. For these arose to power and greatness, not through any favor or grace, by a chance cradle, or genealogy, but through the prestige of their own deeds, through the nobility which begins and ends with themselves – the sole offspring of their own works. * * * Lincoln was of this privileged class; he belonged to this aristocracy. In infancy, his energetic soul was nourished by poverty. In youth, he learned through toil the love of liberty, and respect for the rights of man. Even to the age of twenty-two, educated in adversity, his hands made callous by honorable labor, he rested from the fatigues of the field, spelling out, in the pages of the Bible, in the lessons of the gospel, in the fugitive leaves of the daily journal – which the aurora opens, and the night disperses – the first rudiments of instruction, which his solitary meditations ripened. The chrysalis felt one day the ray of the sun, which called it to life, broke its involucrum, and it launched forth fearlessly from the darkness of its humble cloister into the luminous spaces of its destiny. The farmer, day-laborer, shepherd, like Cincinnatus, left the plough-share in the half-broken furrow, and, legislator of his own State, and afterwards of the Great Republic, saw himself proclaimed in the tribunal the popular chief of several millions of people, the maintainer of the holy principle inaugurated by Wilberforce."

There are some vague and some only partially correct statements in this diffuse passage; but it shows plainly enough how enthusiastically the Portuguese nobleman had admired the antique simplicity and strength of Mr. Lincoln's character.

Dr. Merle d'Aubigne, the historian of the Reformation, writing to Mr. Fogg, U. S. Minister to Switzerland, said: "While not venturing to compare him to the great sacrifice of Golgotha, which gave liberty to the captives, is it not just, in this hour, to recall the word of an apostle (1 John, iii: 16): 'Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren'? Who can say that the President did not lay down his life by the firmness of his devotion to a great duty? The name of Lincoln will remain one of the greatest that history has to inscribe on its annals. * * * Among the legacies which Lincoln leaves to us, we shall all regard as the most precious, his spirit of equity, of moderation, and of peace, according to which he will still preside, if I may so speak, over the restoration of your great nation."

The "Democratic Association" of Florence, addressed "to the Free People of the United States," a letter, in which they term Mr. Lincoln "the honest, the magnanimous citizen, the most worthy chief magistrate of your glorious Federation."

The eminent French liberal, M. Edouard Laboulaye, in a speech showing a remarkably just understanding and extremely broad views with respect to the affairs and the men of the United States, said: "Mr. Lincoln was one of those heroes who are ignorant of themselves; his thoughts will reign after him. The name of Washington has already been pronounced, and I think with reason. Doubtless Mr. Lincoln resembled Franklin more than Washington. By his origin, his arch good nature, his ironical good sense, and his love of anecdotes and jesting, he was of the same blood as the printer

of Philadelphia. But it is nevertheless true that in less than a century, America has passed through two crises in which its liberty might have been lost, if it had not had honest men at its head; and that each time it has had the happiness to meet the man best fitted to serve it. If Washington founded the Union, Lincoln has saved it. History will draw together and unite those two names. A single word explains Mr. Lincoln's whole life: it was Duty. Never did he put himself forward; never did he think of himself; never did he seek one of those ingenious combinations which puts the head of a state in bold relief, and enhances his importance at the expense of the country; his only ambition, his only thought was faithfully to fulfil the mission which his fellow-citizens had entrusted to him. * * * His inaugural address, March 4, 1865, shows us what progress had been made in his soul. This piece of familiar eloquence is a master-piece; it is the testament of a patriot. I do not believe that any eulogy of the President would equal this page on which he has depicted himself in all his greatness and all his simplicity. * * * History is too often only a school of immorality. It shows us the victory of force or stratagem much more than the success of justice, moderation, and probity. It is too often only the apotheosis of triumphant selfishness. There are noble and great exceptions; happy those who can increase the number, and thus bequeath a noble and beneficent example to posterity! Mr. Lincoln is among these. He would willingly have repeated, after Franklin, that 'falsehood and artifice are the practice of fools who have not wit enough to be honest.' All his private life, and all his political life, were inspired and directed by this profound faith in the omnipotence of virtue. It is through this, again, that he deserves to be compared with Washington; it is through this that he will remain in history with the most glorious name that can be merited by the head of a free people – a name given him by his cotemporaries, and which will be preserved to him by posterity – that of Honest Abraham Lincoln."

A letter from the well known French historian, Henri Martin, to the Paris Siècle, contained the following passages: "Lincoln will remain the austere and sacred personification of a great epoch, the most faithful expression of democracy. This simple and upright man, prudent and strong, elevated step by step from the artizan's bench to the command of a great nation, and always without parade and without effort, at the height of his position; executing without precipitation, without flourish, and with invincible good sense, the most colossal acts; giving to the world this decisive example of the civil power in a republic; directing a gigantic war, without free institutions being for an instant compromised or threatened by military usurpation; dying, finally, at the moment when, after conquering, he was intent on pacification, * * * this man will stand out, in the traditions of his country and the world, as an incarnation of the people, and of modern democracy itself. The great work of emancipation had to be sealed, therefore, with the blood of the just, even as it was inaugurated with the blood of the just. The tragic history of the abolition of slavery, which opened with the gibbet of John Brown, will close with the assassination of Lincoln.

And now let him rest by the side of Washington, as the second founder of the great Republic. European democracy is present in spirit at his funeral, as it voted in its heart for his re-election, and applauded the victory in the midst of which he passed away. It will wish with one accord to associate itself with the monument that America will raise to him upon the capitol of prostrate slavery."

The London Globe, in commenting on Mr. Lincoln's assassination, said that he "had come nobly through a great ordeal. He had extorted the admiration even of his opponents, at least on this side of the water. They had come to admire, reluctantly, his firmness, honesty, fairness and sagacity. He tried to do, and had done, what he considered his duty, with magnanimity."

The London Express said, "He had tried to show the world how great, how moderate, and how true he could be, in the moment of his great triumph."

The Liverpool Post said, "If ever there was a man who in trying times avoided offenses, it was Mr. Lincoln. If there ever was a leader in a civil contest who shunned acrimony and eschewed passion, it was he. In a time of much cant and affectation he was simple, unaffected, true, transparent. In a season of many mistakes he was never known to be wrong. * * * By a happy tact, not often so

felicitously blended with pure evidence of soul, Abraham Lincoln knew when to speak, and never spoke too early or too late. * * * The memory of his statesmanship, translucent in the highest degree, and above the average, and openly faithful, more than almost any of this age has witnessed, to fact and right, will live in the hearts and minds of the whole Anglo-Saxon race, as one of the noblest examples of that race's highest qualities. Add to all this that Abraham Lincoln was the humblest and pleasantest of men, that he had raised himself from nothing, and that to the last no grain of conceit or ostentation was found in him, and there stands before the world a man whose like we shall not soon look upon again."

In the remarks of M. Rouher, the French Minister, in the Legislative Assembly, on submitting to that Assembly the official despatch of the French Foreign Minister to the Chargé at Washington, M. Rouher remarked, of Mr. Lincoln's personal character, that he had exhibited "that calm firmness and indomitable energy which belong to strong minds, and are the necessary conditions of the accomplishment of great duties. In the hour of victory he exhibited generosity, moderation and conciliation."

And in the despatch, which was signed by M. Drouyn de L'Huys, were the following expressions: "Abraham Lincoln exhibited, in the exercise of the power placed in his hands, the most substantial qualities. In him, firmness of character was allied to elevation of principle. * * * In reviewing these last testimonies to his exalted wisdom, as well as the examples of good sense, of courage, and of patriotism, which he has given, history will not hesitate to place him in the rank of citizens who have the most honored their country."

In the Prussian Lower House, Herr Loewes, in speaking of the news of the assassination, said that Mr. Lincoln "performed his duties without pomp or ceremony, and relied on that dignity of his inner self alone, which is far above rank, orders and titles. He was a faithful servant, not less of his own commonwealth than of civilization, freedom and humanity."

By far the most beautiful of all these foreign tributes, was the very generous memorial of the London Punch. That paper had joined all the fashionable world in making merry at Lincoln's expense while he struggled, weary and miry, through the "valley of humiliation," – but it is not every one who does a wrong who is capable of so full and generous a reparation. We give it entire, because, apart from its noble spirit, it is one of the most truthful summaries of Lincoln's character:

You lay a wreath on murdered Lincoln's bier!
You, who with mocking pencil wont to trace,
Broad for the self-complacent British sneer,
His length of shambling limb, his furrowed face,

His gaunt, gnarled hands, his unkempt, bristling hair,
His garb uncouth, his bearing ill at ease,
His lack of all we prize as debonair,
Of power or will to shine, of art to please!

You, whose smart pen backed up the pencil's laugh,
Judging each step, as though the way were plain;
Reckless, so it could point its paragraph,
Of chief's perplexity, or people's pain!

Beside this corpse, that bears for winding-sheet
The stars and stripes he lived to rear anew,
Between the mourners at his head and feet,
Say, scurril-jester, is there room for *you*?

Yes, he had lived to shame me from my sneer —
To lame my pencil, and confute my pen —
To make me own this hind of princes peer,
This rail-splitter a true-born king of men.

My shallow judgment I had learned to rue,
Noting how to occasion's height he rose;
How his quaint wit made home-truth seem more true;
How, iron-like, his temper grew by blows;

How humble, yet how hopeful he could be;
How in good fortune and in ill the same;
Nor bitter in success, nor boastful he,
Thirsty for gold, nor feverish for fame.

He went about his work – such work as few
Ever had laid on head, and heart, and hand —
As one who knows where there's a task to do;
Man's honest will must Heaven's good grace command,

Who trusts the strength will with the burden grow,
That God makes instruments to work his will,
If but that will we can arrive to know,
Nor tamper with the weights of good and ill.

So he went forth to battle, on the side
That he felt clear was Liberty's and Right's,
As in his peasant boyhood he had plied
His warfare with rude nature's thwarting mights; —

The uncleared forest, the unbroken soil,
The iron bark that turn's the lumberer's axe,
The rapid, that o'erbears the boatman's toil,
The prairie, hiding the mazed wanderer's tracks,

The ambushed Indian, and the prowling bear —
Such were the needs that helped his youth to train:
Rough culture – but such trees large fruit may bear,
If but their stocks be of right girth and grain.

So he grew up, a destined work to do,
And lived to do it: four long suffering years'
Ill-fate, ill-feeling, ill-report, lived through,
And then he heard the hisses change to cheers,

The taunts to tribute, the abuse to praise,
And took both with the same unwavering mood;
Till, as he came on light, from darkling days,

And seemed to touch the goal from where he stood,

A felon hand, between the goal and him,
Reached from behind his back, a trigger prest —
And those perplexed and patient eyes were dim,
Those gaunt, long-laboring limbs were laid to rest!

The words of mercy were upon his lips,
Forgiveness in his heart and on his pen,
When this vile murderer brought swift eclipse
To thoughts of peace on earth, good-will to men.

The old world and the new, from sea to sea,
Utter one voice of sympathy and shame!
Sore heart, so stopped when it at last beat high!
Sad life, cut short just as its triumph came.

Lincoln must be looked upon in the final review of his character, as one of those men elect of God, whom he calls and chooses to effect great purposes of his own, and fashions and educates with especial reference to that purpose. As is usual in such cases, the man whom God chooses for a work is not at all the man whom the world beforehand would choose, and often for a time the world has difficulty in receiving him. There was great questioning about him in the diplomatic circles of Europe, when the war began, and there was great searching of heart concerning him at home. There have been times when there were impatient murmurs that another sort of man was wanted in his chair – a man with more dash, more brilliancy, more Napoleonic efficiency. Yet in the contest such a man might have been our ruin. A brilliant military genius might have wrecked the republic on the rock of military despotism, where so many good ships have gone down; whereas, slow, cautious, honest old Abe only took our rights of habeas corpus, and other civil privileges, as he did the specie of old, to make the legal tender, and brought it all back safe and sound.

Lincoln was a strong man, but his strength was of a peculiar kind; it was not aggressive so much as passive, and among passive things it was like the strength not so much of a stone buttress as of a wire cable. It was strength swaying to every influence, yielding on this side and on that to popular needs, yet tenaciously and inflexibly bound to carry its great end. Probably by no other kind of strength could our national ship have been drawn safely through so dreadful a channel. Surrounded by all sorts of conflicting claims, by traitors, by half-hearted, timid men, by border State men and free State men, by radical abolitionists and conservatives, he listened to all, heard all, weighed all, and in his own time acted by his own honest convictions in the fear of God, and thus simply and purely he did the greatest work that has been done in modern times.

CHAPTER II
ULYSSES SIMPSON GRANT

A General Wanted – A Short War Expected – The Young Napoleon – God's Revenge Against Slavery – The Silent Man in Galena – "Tanning Leather" – Gen. Grant's Puritan Descent – How he Loaded the Logs – His West Point Career – Service in Mexico – Marries and Leaves the Army – Wood-Cutting, Dunning and Leather-Selling – Enlists against the Rebellion – Missouri Campaign – Paducah Campaign – Fort Donelson Campaign – Battle of Shiloh – How Grant Lost his Temper – Vicksburg Campaign – Lincoln on Grant's "Drinking" – Chattanooga – Grant's Method of Making a Speech – Appointed Lieutenant-General – The Richmond Campaign – "Mr. Grant is a Very Obstinate Man" – Grant's Qualifications as a Ruler – Honesty – Generosity to Subordinates – Sound Judgment of Men – Power of Holding his Tongue – Grant's Sidewalk Platform – Talks Horse to Senator Wade – "Wants Nothing Said" – The Best Man for Next President.

When the perception of our late great military crisis first came upon us, and we found ourselves engaged in an actual and real war, our first inquiry was for our General.

For years and years there had been only peace talk and peace valuations in our market. There had, to be sure, been some frontier skirmishing – a campaign in Mexico, which drew off our more restless adventurers, and gave our politicians a little of a smart, martial air, in rounding their periods, and pointing their allusions. We had played war in Mexico as we read romances, and the principal interest of it was, after all, confined to our very small regular army of some twenty-five thousand men, where some got promotions in consequence of the vacancies made in this or that battle.

Gen. Scott won European renown and some laurels in this country. We created an office of Lieutenant General on purpose to do him honor; but the people, after all, laughed in their sleeves, and irreverently called our national hero "Old Fuss and Feathers;" a nickname which went far to show that whatever his talents in the field might be, he had not succeeded in establishing over the body of his countrymen the ascendency which strong minds hold over weak ones.

But when the hour of our trial came we had to look to him as our leader, and Gen. Scott accepted cheerfully the situation, whose reality and magnitude neither he nor we, nor any mortal living at that time, perceived, or could estimate. Seward smiled in his cabinet chair, and spoke of the affair as a little skirmish that would be over in ninety days. A battle or two, might occur, then an armistice, and then "We, Us and Company" would walk in with our red tape and circumlocution office, and tie up everything better than before. So Scott spread his maps and talked cheerfully, and the Washington cabinet congratulated one another. "This is to be my last campaign," said Scott, "and I mean it to be my best."

The country listened with earnest ears now to what our chief military man said. When the father of a family is lying between life and death, there is no more laughing at the doctor – and in the solemn hush that preceded *real* war, there was no more sneering at old Fuss and Feathers. People wanted to believe in him. They searched out his old exploits, talked of his old successes, that they might hope and believe that they had a deliverer and a leader in their midst.

Slowly, surely, it began to appear through many a defeat, many a disaster; through days and nights when men's hearts failed them for fear, and for looking for the things that were coming on the earth; through all such signs and wonders as usher in great convulsions of society – it began to be manifested that this nation was in a contest for which there were no precedents, which was to be as wide as from ocean to ocean, which was to number its forces by millions, and for which all former

rules and ordinances of war, all records of campaigns and battles, were as mere obsolete ballads and old songs. The inquiry began to grow more urgent: Who is to be our General?

General Scott professed that the work was too great for him, but he called to his right hand and presented to the nation one whom he delighted to honor, and who was announced with songs and cheerings as the young Napoleon of America.

The nation received him with acclamation. They wanted a young Napoleon. A young Napoleon was just what they needed, and a young Napoleon therefore they were determined to believe that they had; and for a while nothing was heard but his praises. Every loyal paper was on its knees in humble expectancy, to admire and to defend, but not to criticise. Mothers were ready to send their sons to his banner; millionaires offered the keys of their treasure chests for his commissariat; the administration bowed to his lightest suggestion, gave him all he asked, hung on his lightest word. Everywhere he moved amid victorious plaudits, the palms and honors of victory everywhere credited to him in advance by the fond faith of the whole nation.

We waited for victories. Our men were burning with enthusiasm – begging, praying to be led to the field, and yet nothing was done. "It takes time to create an army," was the first announcement of our chief. We gave him time, and he spent it in reviews, in preparations, in fortifications and entrenchments. The time he took gave the enemy just what they stood in perishing need of – time to organize, concentrate, drill, arrange with Europe, and get ready for a four years' conflict.

It was God's will that we should have a four years' war, and therefore when we looked for a leader he sent us Gen. McClellan.

It was God's will that this nation – the North as well as the South – should deeply and terribly suffer for the sin of consenting to and encouraging the great oppressions of the South; that the ill-gotten wealth which had arisen from striking hands with oppression and robbery, should be paid back in the taxes of war; that the blood of the poor slave, that had cried so many years from the ground in vain, should be answered by the blood of the sons from the best hearth stones through all the free States; that the slave mothers, whose tears nobody regarded, should have with them a great company of weepers, North and South – Rachels weeping for their children and refusing to be comforted; that the free States, who refused to listen when they were told of lingering starvation, cold, privation and barbarous cruelty, as perpetrated on the slave, should have lingering starvation, cold, hunger and cruelty doing its work among their own sons, at the hands of these slave masters, with whose sins our nation had connived.

General McClellan was like those kings and leaders we read of in the Old Testament, whom God sent to a people with a purpose of wrath and punishment.

Slowly, through those dark days of rebuke and disaster, did the people come at last to a consciousness that they had trusted in vain – that such a continued series of disasters were not exceptions and accidents, but evidences of imbecility and incompetence in the governing power.

Meanwhile the magnitude of this colossal war had fully revealed itself – a war requiring combinations and forces before unheard of, as different from those of European battles as the prairies of the West differ from Salisbury Plain, or the Mississippi from the Thames – and we again feverishly asked, Where is our leader?

We had faith that some man was to arise; but where was he? Now one General, and now another took the place of power, and we hoped and confided, till disaster and reverses came and threw us on our unanswered inquiry.

Now it is very remarkable that in all great crises and convulsions of society, the man of the hour generally comes from some obscure quarter – silently, quietly, unannounced, unheralded, without prestige, and makes his way alone and single-handed.

John the Baptist said to the awakened crowd, thrilling with vague expectation of a coming Messiah, "There standeth one among you whom ye know not," and the same declaration might amount

to a general principle, which would hold good in most cases when the wants of a new era in society call for a new leader.

When France lay convulsed after the terrible upheavings of the French revolution, there was one man strong enough to govern her, to bring back settled society, law and order – but he was doing duty in an obscure place as corporal of artillery; and in like manner when the American war broke out, the General who was to be strong enough, and wise enough, and energetic enough to lead our whole army to victory, was an obscure, silent, sensible man, who was keeping a leather and saddle store in Galena, Ill.

He was a man principally to be noted for saying little, and doing with certainty and completeness the duty he happened to have in hand. If he failed in any of the points required in a successful store-keeper in a Western town, it was in the gift of talking. He had no opinions on politics, no theories about the government of the country, to put at the service of customers. The petty squabbles of local politics he despised. When one endeavored to engage him in a discussion of some such matter, he is said to have answered:

"I don't know any thing of party politics, and I don't want to. There is one subject on which I feel perfectly at home. Talk to me of that and I shall be happy to hear you."

"What is that?"

"*Tanning leather.*"

Yet this quiet man, who confined his professions of knowledge entirely to the business he took in hand, was an educated man, who had passed with credit through the military academy at West Point, graduated with honor, been promoted for meritorious service in the Mexican war to the rank of captain, and whose powers of conversation, when he chooses to converse on any subject befitting an educated man, are said by those who know him best, to be quite remarkable.

In these sketches of our distinguished men, we have, whenever possible, searched somewhat into their pedigree; for we have firm faith in the old maxim that blood will tell.

It is interesting to know that there are authentic documents existing, by which Gen. Grant's family may be traced through a line of Puritan patriots far back to England.

A gentleman in Hartford, justly celebrated for his research in these matters, has kindly offered us the following particulars:

"On the first page of a thick little memorandum book which is now before me, well preserved in its original sheepskin binding, are the following entries, the obsolete spelling of which sufficiently attests their antiquity:

May the 29 16. 45, Mathew Grant and Susanna ware maried.

Mathew Grant was then three and fortey yeares of age, seven moneths and eyghtene dayes; borne in the yeare, 1601. October 27 Tuesdaye.

Susannah Graunt was then three and fourtey yeares of age seuen weeks & 4 dayes; borne in the yeare 1602 April the 5 Mondaye."

This, as appears, was a second marriage, and Susannah was widow of one William Rockwell; and immediately after the record, follow the names of the children of her first marriage, five in number. Ruth Rockwell, the second daughter of Susannah Grant, married Christopher Huntington, of Norwich, and their great granddaughter, Martha Huntington, married Noah Grant, a great grandson of Mathew.

From this marriage came a second Noah Grant, who was a captain in the old French war, and afterwards settled in Coventry, Conn. The third son of this Captain Noah Grant, who also bore the name of Noah, resided in Coventry, and had a son named for the Hon. Jesse Root, Chief Justice of the Superior Court of Connecticut from 1796 to 1807, and this Jesse Root Grant is the father of Ulysses S. Grant, the man whom this war anointed to be our leader and captain.

The Mathew and Susanna Grant whose marriage record is here given, came first to America in the Mary and John, in the company which settled Dorchester, Mass., in 1630. They sailed from Plymouth, in Devonshire, March 20th, and arrived at Nantasket, May 30th.

The style and spirit of these colonists may be inferred from the following words of Roger Clap, who was one of the passengers:

"These godly people resolved to live together; and therefore they made choice of these two reverend servants of God, Mr. John Wareham, and Mr. John Maverick, to be their ministers; so they kept a solemn day of fasting in the New Hospital in Plymouth, England, spending it in preaching and praying; where that worthy man of God, Mr. John White, of Dorchester, in Dorset, was present and preached unto us the Word of God, in the fore part of the day, and in the latter part of the day. As the people did solemnly make choice of and call those godly ministers to their office, so also the Rev. Mr. Wareham and Mr. Maverick did accept thereof, and expressed the same. So we came by the good hand of the Lord through the deeps comfortably."

Thus Mathew Grant and his brethren, even before leaving the old country, were gathered into church estate for the new, and the planters of Dorchester came thither as a Puritan church, duly organized, with their chosen and ordained pastor and teacher. In 1635–6, Mr. Wareham and a great part of his flock removed to Connecticut, and settled a new Dorchester, afterwards named Windsor. Mathew Grant was one of these earlier settlers, and was from the first a prominent man in the church and town. For many years he was the principal surveyor of lands in Windsor, town clerk and deacon, and the church records speak highly of his blameless life. He died in 1681, at the age of eighty.

Thus from the little body of men who assembled with fasting and prayer in Plymouth, to form themselves into a New England colony, descended in the course of time, a leader and commander that was to stay up the hands of our great nation in the time of its severest trial.

The genealogist who has traced the pedigree of Grant back to England, remarks, that in the veins of his family was, by successive marriages, intermingled the blood of many of the best old New England families.

Gen. Grant is a genuine son of New England, therefore to be looked on as a vigorous offshoot of the old Puritan stock. His father removed from Coventry, first to Pennsylvania, afterwards to Ohio, and finally to Illinois, where the Ulysses of these many wanderings received his classic name. He appears to be a man of no ordinary class for shrewdness and good sense. Gen. Grant's mother is one of those sedate, sensible, serious women, whose households are fit nurseries for heroes. Industry, economy, patience, temperance and religion, were the lessons of his early days. The writer of the "Tanner Boy" has embodied, probably on good authority, some anecdotes of the childhood of the boy, which show that there was in him good stuff to make a man of. One of these is worth telling:

"I want you to drive the team to such a spot in the woods," said the father, "where you will find the men ready to load it with logs, and you will then drive it home."

The boy drove to the spot, found the logs, but no men.

Instead of sitting down to crack nuts and wait, as most boys would, Ulysses said to himself, "I was sent to bring these logs, and bring them I must, men or no men," and so by some ingenious mechanical arrangements, he succeeded in getting them on to the cart alone, and drove home with them quietly, as if it were a matter of course.

"Why, my son," exclaimed his father, "where are the men?"

"I don't know, and I don't care," said the boy. "I got the load without them."

This boy was surely father to the man who took Vicksburg.

There are other anecdotes given of his fighting a schoolboy who traduced Washington; of his steady perseverance in his school studies; and of a school saying of his, that *can't* was never a word in his dictionary. His industry and energy caused his appointment to West Point, where the young tanner boy took rank with the scions of the so-styled Southern aristocracy. It is recorded in his new position that certain sneers on his industrial calling were promptly resisted, and that he insisted upon

the proper deference to himself and his order, as a boy of the working classes, and maintained it by a stalwart good right arm, which nobody cared to bring down in anger.

Grant graduated with respectable credit from West Point, in 1843. He is said to have been the best rider in his class, but not remarkable otherwise. In the same class were Gen. W. B. Franklin, Gen. I. T. Quimby, Gen. J. J. Reynolds, Gen. C. C. Augur, Gen. C. S. Hamilton, Gen. F. Steele, Gen. R. Ingalls, and Gen. H. M. Judah, all useful and a number of them eminent officers in the Union Army during the Rebellion. There were also in the same class several members who adhered to the rebel cause; R. S. Ripley, S. G. French, F. Gardner, who surrendered Port Hudson to Gen. Banks, E. B. Holloway, and one or two others. At his graduation, no second lieutenancy was vacant in the United States Army, and Grant therefore received a brevet commission as second lieutenant in the Fourth United States Infantry. With his regiment or detachments of it, he now served for a time on the western frontier, near St. Louis, up the Red River, and elsewhere. When in 1845, Gen. Taylor was ordered into Texas, the Fourth Regiment and Grant with it formed part of his force, and they continued in active service throughout the Mexican War. In this war, Lieutenant Grant showed great readiness, sense, and courage. He was in every one of its important battles except Buena Vista; to us the words of one of his eulogists, "in all the battles in which any one man could be." He was repeatedly mentioned in the reports of his commanding officers for meritorious conduct. He was appointed first Lieutenant on the field of battle, at Molino del Rey, for gallantry; and was breveted Captain for meritorious conduct in the battle of Chapultepec.

In 1848, after the end of the war, Capt. Grant married a Miss Dent, from near St. Louis, and for some years lived in the monotonous routine of the peace establishment; at Detroit, at Sackett's Harbor, and in Oregon. To this period of his life belongs a story that being a good chess player, and very fond of the game, he found while at Sackett's Harbor an opponent of superior force. With this champion our stubborn infantry captain used to play, and as regularly to get beaten. But he played on, and was accustomed to insist upon protracting the sitting until his opponent had actually become so tired that his mind would not work; when Grant would comfortably balance the account.

His full commission as captain reached him in August, 1853, but in 1854, having made up his mind that there was to be a long peace, he resigned his captaincy and set about establishing himself in civil life. His first attempt was, to manage a small farm to the southwest of St. Louis, where he used to cut wood and haul it to Carondelet, delivering it himself. He diversified his year during summer, with acting as a collector of debts in that region. But there is nothing to show that he enjoyed either wood cutting or dunning, and he certainly did not grow rich at them. In 1859, he tried in vain to get the appointment of county engineer; and he then went into the leather trade, in partnership with his father, at Galena. The firm quickly attained high standing for intelligence and integrity, and the business, at the breaking out of the war, was prosperous.

It is narrated that Grant's determination to enter the service against the rebellion was taken and stated along with the drawing on of his coat, instantly upon reading the telegram which announced the surrender of Sumter. He came into the store in the morning, read the dispatch, and as he took up his coat, which he had laid off, and put it on again, he observed in his quiet way, "The government educated me for the army, and although I have served through one war, I am still a little in debt to the government, and willing to discharge the obligation."

Grant, bringing with him a company of volunteers that he had enlisted, in a few days appeared in the council-chamber of governor Yates, of Illinois, and tendered his services to the country as volunteer. The governor immediately proposed to place him on his own staff, as mustering officer of volunteers. Grant expressed a wish for more active service, but was overruled for the time by the wishes of the governor, who represented that his military education and experience would be of great advantage in forming the raw material now to be made into an army.

In this comparatively humble sphere Grant began his second military career. He did with all his might whatever he did, and his exertions in obtaining volunteers were such that the quota of Illinois

was more than full at the appointed time, and at once set in the field. In June, 1861, he entered actual service, with the rank of colonel of volunteers; and took hold of work with such purpose and efficiency that he was almost immediately elevated to be Brigadier General.

The patriotic and energetic Governor Yates, gives the following account of the first months of Grant's services during the Rebellion.

"In April, 1861, he tendered his personal services to me, saying, that he 'had been the recipient of a military education at West Point, and that now, when the country was involved in a war for its preservation and safety, he thought it his duty to offer his services in defense of the Union, and that he would esteem it a privilege to be assigned to any position where he could be useful.' The plain, straightforward demeanor of the man, and the modesty and earnestness which characterized his offer of assistance, at once awakened a lively interest in him, and impressed me with a desire to secure his counsel for the benefit of volunteer organization then forming for Government service. At first I assigned him a desk in the Executive office; and his familiarity with military organization and regulations made him an invaluable assistant in my own and the office of the Adjutant-General. Soon his admirable qualities as a military commander became apparent, and I assigned him to command of the camps of organization at 'Camp Yates,' Springfield, 'Camp Grant,' Mattoon, and 'Camp Douglas,' at Anna, Union County. * * * "The Twenty-first regiment of Illinois volunteers, * * * had become very much demoralized under the thirty days' experiment, and doubts arose in relation to their acceptance for a longer period. I was much perplexed to find an efficient and experienced officer to take command of the regiment, and take it into the three years' service. * * * I decided to offer the command to Captain Grant, at Covington, Kentucky, tendering him the colonelcy. He immediately reported, accepting the commission, taking rank as colonel of that regiment from the 15th of June, 1861. Thirty days previous to that time, the regiment numbered over one thousand men; but in consequence of laxity of discipline of the first commanding officer, and other discouraging obstacles connected with the acceptance of troops at that time, but six hundred and three men were found willing to enter the three years' service. In less than ten days Colonel Grant filled the regiment to the maximum standard, and brought it to a state of discipline seldom attained in the volunteer service in so short a time. His was the only regiment that left the camp of organization on foot. * * * Colonel Grant was afterwards assigned to command for the protection of the Quincy and Palmyra, and Hannibal and St. Josephs Railroads. He soon distinguished himself as a regimental commander in the field, and his claims for increased rank were recognized by his friends in Springfield, and his promotion insisted upon, before his merits and services were fairly understood at Washington."

Grant's brigadier's commission reached him August 9th, 1861, and his first service under it was, a march to Ironton, in Missouri, for the purpose of preventing an attack from the rebel Jeff Thompson. Grant had already once declined a brigadiership when offered him by Gov. Yates, for the reason that he considered the appointment more properly due to another person; but though the youngest of the colonels in Missouri, he had been acting brigadier there.

Soon after this he was placed in command at the great central point of Cairo, which was the key of the West.

The country was full of confusion and disorder. Rebel sympathizers every where, openly and secretly, were embarrassing the Federal and assisting the rebel army. The professedly neutral State of Kentucky was used as the camping ground and retreat of these forces which thus annoyed our army. Grant quietly determined to command this dangerous territory. He took the town of Paducah, a strong post on the Ohio River, near the mouth of the Tennessee River, in Kentucky, by which he at once gained possession of interior navigable waters, which the traitors had been using for their own purposes. The strength and decision with which he took possession of the town intimidated all rebel sympathizers. He then issued the following address to the inhabitants, which is as good a specimen of condensed and effective military style as we have on record:

> "I am come among you, not as an enemy, but as your fellow-American; not to maltreat and annoy you, but to respect and enforce the rights of all loyal citizens. I am here to defend you against the common enemy, who has planted his guns on your soil, and fired upon you; and to assist the authority and sovereignty of your government. I have nothing to do with opinions, and shall deal only with armed rebellion and its aiders and abetters. You can pursue your usual avocations without fear. The strong arm of the government is here to protect its friends, and punish its enemies. Whenever it is manifest that you are able to defend yourselves, maintain the authority of the government, and protect the rights of loyal citizens, I shall withdraw the forces under my command.
> *U. S. Grant,*
> *Brig. Gen. Commanding.*

While in command at Cairo, Grant used to dress rather carelessly, very much after Gen. Taylor's fashion; he went about wearing an old "stove-pipe hat," and always with a cigar. Some one, it is said, once jeered about the "stove-pipe general" and his cigars, and was silenced by the reply that "such a bright stove-pipe might be excused for smoking."

The remainder of General Grant's military career must be narrated with a brevity which by no means does justice to the subject. It may be said to consist of five campaigns; those of Fort Donelson, Corinth and Iuka, Vicksburg, Chattanooga, and Richmond. Of these, each pointed out its commander as the best man for the next, until by simple upward gravitation of natural fitness, he rose to his present great military post of general of all the armies of the United States.

Grant's operations in Northern Missouri, his dash on Belmont, and his seizure of Paducah, though all creditable military services, were thrown into the shade by the brilliant Fort Donelson campaign, which opened the career of Union successes in the West.

The Fort Donelson expedition was intended to break in two the rebel defensive line, which stretched the whole length of the State of Kentucky, from Columbus on the Mississippi, through Bowling Green, to Cumberland Gap. On this line, the rebels, under General A. S. Johnston, stood looking northward with threatening and defiant aspect. Grant saw that if he could seize Forts Henry and Donelson, which had been built to shut up the Tennessee and Cumberland rivers, the Union gunboats could range up and down through the heart of rebeldom, and the Union armies with them, and that thus the great rebel defensive line, cut through in the middle, would be broken as a chain is when a link is destroyed. He therefore asked leave of his immediate superior, Halleck, to take the forts; received it, concerted his plan of attack with Admiral Foote, and moved from Cairo, February 2d, 1862. The success of this expedition is well known. It should be recorded, however, even in this short summary, that to Grant is due the credit of possessing the military tact and promptness that showed him when to make the decisive attack, and impelled him to do it. This time was after that considerable success of the rebel sally from Fort Donelson on Saturday, Feb. 15th, under Pillow, which drove away so large a portion of the Union army from its place, and indeed left room enough for the whole rebel force to walk out of the fort and escape, if they had so chosen. This was done while Grant had gone to consult with Admiral Foote. When he came back, and saw how his troops had been driven, to any common mind the case would have seemed a pretty bad one; but Grant really does not appear to have seen any bad side to any case he had charge of during the war. At Belmont, when he was told that he was surrounded, he simply answered, "Well, then, we must cut our way out." His own description, afterwards given to Gen. Sherman, at Shiloh, of the impression now made on his mind by seeing how his troops had been pounded and driven, was as follows: "On riding upon the field, I saw that either side was ready to give way if the other showed a bold front. I took the opportunity, and ordered an advance along the whole line." In both cases, the thing was done.

At daylight on Sunday, the 16th, Gen. Buckner, (whose two superior officers, Floyd and Pillow, had run away,) sent a flag of truce asking for commissioners to consider terms of capitulation. Grant replied by the bearer, in a letter, two of whose phrases have become permanent contributions to the proverbial part of the English language:

"Yours of this date, proposing an armistice, and appointment of commissioners to settle terms of capitulation, is just received. No terms other than unconditional and immediate surrender can be accepted. I propose to move immediately upon your works."

Buckner's reply was in a very disgusted tone, and it may be excused to him under the circumstances, that he used some very curious explanatory phrases, and that he called names. But he came down, though it was from an extremely high horse, rejoining:

"The distribution of the forces under my command, incident to an unexpected change of commanders, and the overwhelming force under your command, compel me, notwithstanding the brilliant success of the confederate arms yesterday, to accept the ungenerous and unchivalrous terms which you propose."

The correctness of Grant's estimate of this whole movement was well proved by its instantaneous result – the evacuation of Columbus at one end of the rebel line, and of Bowling Green in the middle, and the falling back of the whole rebellion down to the southern boundary of Tennessee. The first great victory since Bull Run, the first important campaign in the West, it encouraged and elevated the spirits of the whole North, and in equal measure it alarmed and enfeebled the South. It had flung back the rebellion two hundred miles, along the whole length of Kentucky, across that State and Tennessee. With soldierly promptitude and energy, Grant followed up his victory by pushing the enemy, according to the Napoleonic maxim, that "victory is, to march ten leagues, beat the enemy, and pursue him ten leagues more."

Immediately after Donelson, Grant was made major general of volunteers by commission dated on the day of the fall of the fort, and was placed in command of the "Military District of West Tennessee," consisting of a long triangle with its northern point at Cairo, its base at the south, on the Mississippi State line, and its sides the Tennessee and Mississippi rivers. Thus promoted, Grant had already pushed southward. Foote's gunboats ascended the Cumberland, the troops kept abreast of them; Clarksville, with twenty days' subsistence for Grant's whole army, was occupied on Feb. 20th, four days after the capture of Donelson; and on the 23d, the advance of Buell's army, operating in conjunction with Grant's, entered Nashville.

When the rebel military line already mentioned, running lengthwise of the State of Kentucky, was broken up by Grant's getting through and behind it at Fort Donelson, the rebel leaders sought to hold another east and west line, coinciding nearly with the southern line of Tennessee, along the important Memphis and Charleston Railroad, and their commander in the West, Albert Sydney Johnston, set about concentrating his forces at Corinth, on that road. Halleck, by this time commanding the whole Department of the Mississippi, now prepared to attack Corinth. It was with this design that Grant's army was sent up the Tennessee, and encamped at Shiloh. But the rebels did not wait to be attacked. They advanced themselves, with the bold and judicious design of beating the army at Shiloh, and then of marching northward, regaining all the ground they had lost, and retaliating by an invasion of the States north of the Ohio.

This hardy attempt was well nigh successful. The night before the battle of Shiloh, Beauregard, as the rebel council of war separated, had prophesied: "To-morrow night we sleep in the enemy's camp." The sudden and vehement assault of the morning, maintained with tremendous and pertinacious fury all day long, had steadily crushed the Union army backward towards the Tennessee river, until towards sunset it had been pounded into a heterogeneous, irregular line of desperate fighters, and behind them a great mass of terrified and disheartened runaways, hiding under the river bank. What the heathen called Fortune, what Christians recognize as an overruling Providence, caused a conjuncture of circumstances by which, between night and morning, the relative number

and spirits of the troops on both sides, and the result of the fight, were totally reversed. These circumstances were, the powerful resistance offered, at the end of the Sunday's disastrous fight, to the final charges of the rebels, by the artillery massed at the left end or key of the Union position, close to the river; by the further obstacle of a ravine stretching back from the river before the Union lines just at that point; by the powerful effect of the monstrous shells sent up this ravine and into the rebel lines from the two Union gunboats, Tyler and Lexington; and finally, by the coming upon the field of the advance of Buell's army. Beauregard's men slept in the Union camp, as he had said, but during the night Buell's troops and Gen. Lewis Wallace's division came upon the field. Monday morning, instead of last night's picture of 30,000 rebels, flushed with all day's victory, against at most 23,000 disorganized and all but overpowered Union troops, the daylight broke on a Union army of 50,000, being Grant's 23,000, somewhat refreshed and reorganized, and entirely inspirited; and 27,000 reinforcements, fresh and unbroken; while the rebel army, exhausted by its own efforts, had received no increase, had lost by stragglers, had rested ill in the cold rain, and had been all night long awakened every few minutes by the unwelcome reveillee of the great gunboat shells that were flung amongst them from the river. Weary and overweighted as they were, the rebels fought well, however, and it was not until four in the afternoon that they retreated, fighting still, and in good order, toward Corinth, whence they had set out.

When the rebels first attacked, Grant was at Savannah, seven miles down the river. Hastening back, he was on the field at the earliest possible moment, and did whatever could be done to withstand the tremendous force of the rebel advance. When Buell came upon the field toward night, the aspect of affairs so struck him that his first inquiry of Grant was, what preparations he had made for retreat.

"I have not despaired of whipping them yet," was the thoroughly characteristic reply. One account adds, that when Buell urged that a prudent general ought to provide for possibilities of defeat, and repeated his inquiry, Grant pointed to his transports and said, "Don't you see those boats?" "Yes," said Buell, "but they will not carry more than ten thousand, and we have more than thirty thousand." "Well," returned Grant, "ten thousand are more than I mean to retreat with."

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.