"Tremendous waves of enthusiasm were surging about him as the Rail-splitter"

MY RECOLLECTIONS OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

By Gibson William Harris

A Law Student in Lincoln and Herndon's Office From 1845 to 1847

EDITOR'S NOTE—Breaking the silence of more than fifty years, Mr. Harris has consented to furnish the Woman's Home Companion a series of personal reminiscences that will be found decidedly unique, the writer's viewpoint having the advantage of absolute novelty. They cover a period of the great Emancipator's life with which, notwithstanding the amount of Lincoln literature already printed, the most of readers are little familiar. The series will comprise four articles, of which this is the introductory one. The author of these papers, a lineal descendant of Elder William Brewster, of "Mayflower" fame, since 1883 has resided at Holly Hill, Florida. The second instalment of these Recollections, to appear in the December number, will describe Mr. Lincoln's office habits and personal traits, and give an account of his successful candidacy, in 1846, for a seat in the Thirtieth Congress. During this campaign Mr. Harris acted as Lincoln's confidential clerk and amanuensis.

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He Shared the Common Lot

ABRAHAM LINCOLN, when I knew him, seldom spoke of his early life unless questioned about it. His biographers delight to remind us he was never ashamed of his lowly origin, but of the fact that he never assumed superiority because of the height to which he finally rose above it, they have made small account.

Yet here his native greatness, founded on a rarely balanced self-judgment and true humility, was strikingly displayed. He had ambitions, and high ones, but he never sought their attainment through self-glorification or other cheap-john methods so readily occurring to men of common mold. In the family of

GIBSON WILLIAM HARRIS
Author of "My Recollections of Abraham Lincoln"

the pioneer, poverty and privation were the common lot, and childhood had no exemption. No one better understood this than Abraham Lincoln. He disdained to warp the hard and narrow life he had shared with a million, more or less, of other young men into a claim

of special merit for himself. It is true that, years after my intimacy with Mr. Lincoln as his law clerk and amanuensis, tremendous waves of enthusiasm were surging about him as the Rail-splitter. But it was not his behest that put them in motion. The rail-carrying in the extraordinary campaigns of 1858 and 1860 was the happy thought of politicians overjoyed to have something so concrete, so object-teaching, around which to rally the toiling masses of the North.

We Were Poor and Happy Boys

The Lincoln family was living near Gentryville, in Spencer County, Indiana, and Abraham was still in his teens, when I first saw the light at Albion, in Edwards County, Illinois. The two localities are sixty miles apart. In 1830, the year in which the future Emancipator came of age, his father removed to Illinois, and the family again settled about sixty miles from Albion, this time to the north of it, instead of east as formerly. Familiar with their surroundings in both states, and especially so with those in Indiana, through repeated visits to relatives living at no great distance from Gentryville, I feel safe in saying the young people in Thomas Lincoln's household passed through very much the same experiences that we children did in my boyhood home. Abraham Lincoln and I did not know that we were poor, and we were happy boys.

It is well-nigh impossible for the first quarter of the twentieth century to understand the first quarter of the nineteenth, because there is lacking a common standard, or set of standards rather, for the two epochs. The make-up of human nature remains the same, but within eighty, and even within sixty, years the externals of American life have changed enormously. When Lincoln and I were boys there were no millionaires west of the Allegheny Mountains, and only three in the United States. There were no railroads, no telegraphs, no telephones, no sun-pictures. The only means of artificial light, other than the blazing logs in the chimney-back, were tallow candles, and the melted fat of various animals stored in shallow vessels and having a cotton rag thrust into it for a wick. Matches to light our wood-fires, our candles or our lamps there were none. When these light-dispensers went out, or were put out, and it came to kindling them anew, resort was had to a flint, a piece of steel of some kind and a little tinder, three requisites that every family aimed to have always on hand. Sometimes the powder bought for our flint-lock guns had to take the tinder's place, unless a neighbor's kindness could be turned to account in begging a few live embers, which would be hurried home bedded in some ashes in the bottom of a pan. This emergency errand, we may be sure, was a familiar one to the boy Abraham Lincoln.

Log-Cabin Life

This was the era of the pioneers. The backwoodsmen had nearly all gone further west, and with them had disappeared buckskin suits and moccasins. But in winter, town and country boys alike affected a preference still for the once invariable fur cap, home-made from the skin of the otter, mink, coon or some similar animal. The women and girls all wore bonnets (hats were a later innovation), sunbonnets ruling half the year. Powder, shot, lead and tobacco were prime necessities in every home.

The pioneer mothers, many of them, were famous cooks. All used a long-handled frying-pan, iron skillet, and iron oven with iron lids. Tea-kettles and pots were likewise all of iron. In the pots were boiled such meats as were not reserved for baking in the iron oven or roasting at the fire. Our food was of the best. Game abounded; for the shooting or trapping a family could enjoy all it wished of venison, bear meat, wild turkeys, partridges, prairie-chickens, quail, rabbits and squirrels. In addition we had home-grown beef, mutton and pork in plenty. Every house had a vegetable garden, larger or smaller, at the rear or off to one side. Bread from wheat-flour was customarily at the command of whoever fancied it, but the great majority liked corn-bread better. Roasting-ears lasted throughout a season of several weeks, hominy the year round. The fruits and nuts to be had for simply gathering them included wild strawberries (sweeter and more luscious than any cultivated variety I ever tasted), blackberries, plums and grapes, walnuts, pecans, and hickory, hazel and beech nuts. Home-made drinks were much in vogue, especially wild-grape, elderberry and blackberry wines, and a delicious mead made with honey. Plates, cups without handles and saucers were almost invariably of common earthenware. Our steel knives were paired

THE EARLIEST PORTRAIT OF LINCOLN
From a daguerreotype taken in 1846 by N. H. Shephard, a roommate of the author of these Recollections, who says in a private letter: "The negative has evidently been highly touched up, and the wart on Mr. Lincoln's cheek, as also the wrinkles, been removed. The result is a face quite too youthful, but aside from this it is a good likeness of Abraham Lincoln as he was in the middle 40's."

with two-tined steel forks; a table set with three-tined forks invited criticism as aping aristocracy.

No one ever thought of any other material for them than loose straw or shredded corn-husks, except as the thrifty housewife topped them, when winter came, with a bed of feathers. Clothing, home-made and commonly of jeans (which Abraham Lincoln habitually wore up to within two years of his marriage), was adapted to the varying seasons, and amply warm in winter. The stores were stocked with powder, shot and lead, besides the miscellany one finds in country "general stores" to-day. They nearly all sold liquors.

"This emergency errand was a familiar one to the boy Abraham Lincoln"

Schoolmasters and Books

Schools were few and far between in the settlements that dotted, more numerously each year, the new states of Indiana and Illinois. In our village the masters, as they were known by a perpetuated English usage, were rather better educated than, from all accounts, they had been in Lincoln's experience. Some were men of marked ability and force of character. My first teacher, A. C. French, in later life served two terms as governor of Illinois, while another, the one who loaned his copy of Byron to Abraham Lincoln under circumstances soon to be recited, was a highly educated Englishman, a portrait-painter of genuine talent, who had come to America and sought a home on the ont-skirts of civilization in order to gratify his passion for hunting. He lived in the forest or on the prairie when not in the school-room; his wife often joined in his outings, for she, too, was an excellent shot.

Books were few, compared with their present bewildering profusion, but they were to be had. If one could not buy, he could readily borrow, and as, in addition, it was customary, in most families, to subscribe for at least one weekly newspaper, mental pabulum was by no means lacking.

The Boy Abraham Lincoln

Amid environments such as I have attempted to describe—rude, but not nearly so barren as they have commonly been represented—Abraham Lincoln grew to manhood. He could and did perform physical labor. He felled trees, chopped cord-wood and split rails, storing his mind the while with a wealth of forest lore that gave him pleasure to the end of his life. He plowed the fields and sowed them with grain, and when the time came he helped to gather the harvest. But he never took to the routine drudgery of farm life. While a sense of duty made him a faithful "hand," physical labor was distasteful to the strapping youth, nor, in truth, did it grow less so with the years.

He had tasted of the Pierian spring, and resolved to drink more deeply. Naturally, in times when strength of body and physical endurance passed as the highest of endowments, people thought of them first. Lincoln, large, lithe and sinewy, became the champion on whom his associates relied to meet and defeat any boastful wrestler who chanced to come along. It is noteworthy that he rarely, if ever, volunteered for such bouts, being simply pressed into the service by friends. From a lad his ambition had been reaching out in far other directions. In the *debating clubs* of his boy associates he was an acknowledged and willing leader.

Books he craved with a longing that never flagged. Books he borrowed from acquaintances near and far. At Rockport, the county-seat of Spencer County, Indiana (then a bustling and ambitious shipping-point on the Ohio River), lived Judge Pitcher, who was the enviable possessor of what passed in those days for an ample library, without counting its goodly number of law-books. Like every one else who knew young Lincoln, the Judge took a fancy to him, and allowed him to borrow almost at will from the library shelves.

Pivotal Years in Lincoln's Life

Thus it came about that when Lincoln, at the age of twenty-one, accompanied his father's family to Illinois, the self-tutored youth had already gained more than a smattering of the principles of common law. Already, too, he was feeling his way in the political field. Two years later—in 1832—after his captaincy of a company of volunteers in the Black Hawk War, he was an unsuccessful candidate for representative in the Illinois legislature. At the end of another two years he renewed his candidacy, and this time he was elected. Having now struck a road to his liking, he was beginning to travel it with a firm step.

He took up the law as a means of livelihood, but his heart was in politics. Not the paltry play of mingled selfishness and sycophancy which the sadly degraded word so often synonymizes in this day, but, predominantly, politics as "the science and the art of government; in other words, the theory and practice of obtaining the ends of civil society as perfectly as possible." In this finer sense politics was Lincoln's native element. He delighted, he reveled in it, as a fish does in water, as a bird disports itself on the sustaining air. And it was politics which in due time circled his still enlarging orbit within the range of my boyish ken.

The First Time I Saw Abraham Lincoln

The presidential campaign of 1840 was in full blast, the famous campaign of "Tippecanoe and Tyler, too."

MADE BY LINCOLN WHEN A YOUNG MAN

This ox-yoke is in the possession of the University of Illinois (Champaign, Illinois). It is kept in an oak cabinet in the rotunda of the Library Building.

Abraham Lincoln was on the Whig ticket as a district presidential elector, and for the fourth time was elected that year to the state legislature. The Democratic nominee for presidential elector for the same district was Isaac Walker, an able man, who afterward removed to Iowa, and from that state went to the United States Senate. Both nominees were actively stumping a considerable part of Illinois, and at Albion, on a certain afternoon in mid-autumn, they were to hold a joint debate. Mr. Walker in his early days had lived in our village, and Lincoln, who had the opening speech, was naturally desirous of circumventing what he felt sure would be his opponent's endeavor to make capital of the fact. The opening lines of Byron's "Lara" occurred to him as suitable for his purpose, but he could recall only a portion of them. So, about the middle of the forenoon on the day of the debate, there came into the log school-house, where I sat among other pupils in their early teens, a remarkably tall young man, ungainly and plain-appearing, dressed in a full suit of blue jeans. Approaching the master, he gave his name, apologized for the intrusion, and said: "I am told you have a copy of Byron's works. If you could oblige me, I would like to borrow it for a few hours." But the book was at the master's house, and would have to be sent for. It so happened that the teacher's wife was present, the Diana before referred to, and she offered to fetch it. The distance being considerable, the visitor demurred to her return on this sole errand, and insisted on going with her. With thanks and a good-day to the master, and a smile such as I have never seen on any other face, a smile that was flashed over the room to take in all of us lads and lassies, the tall, gaunt presence passed out.

Lincoln's Tilt That Afternoon With Isaac Walker

We boys had previously given little thought to the political meeting, but there was something about the visitor that aroused in me, as I found it had in my chums, a strong desire to see him again and hear him speak. Several of us petitioned for and were granted a half-holiday. Mr. Lincoln was at this time thirty-one years old, and had begun to attract attention as a lawyer. His style of speaking even then was remarkably direct and forcible. At the meeting in question almost the first thing we heard, when the debate opened, were these lines:

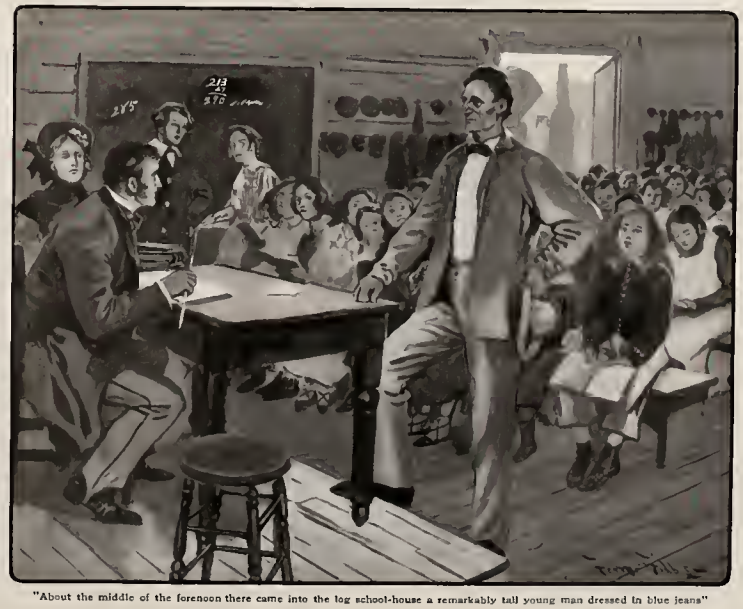
"He, their unhoped but unforgotten lord,
The long self-exiled chieftain, is restored;
There be bright faces in the busy hall,
Bowls on the board, and banners on the wall.
He comes at last, in sudden loneliness,
And whence they know not, why they need not guess;
They more might marvel, when the greetings o'er,
Not that he came, but *why came not before.*"

In vain did Mr. Walker's rejoinder ring the changes on auld lang syne. Lincoln's sallies on "why came not before" had taken the wind out of his opponent's sails completely, while his command of pure, sententious English and the correctness of his diction were, I distinctly remember, favorably commented on by some of our best citizens. Albion's large proportion of educated men gave this appraisal real significance.

A Week of Waiting and a New Friend

In September, 1845, through the kindness of our then state senator, Mr. Charles Constable, it was arranged that I should enter the law office of Lincoln and Herndon, at Springfield, as student and clerk. From Albion it took me three days to reach Springfield by stage, the only means of transportation available other than private conveyance, though the distance can now be covered by rail in four hours. Repairing to the law-firm's office, I met Mr. Herndon, and learned from him that the senior partner was traveling the circuit, and would not be home for several days. I left without disclosing my identity, preferring to await the return of Mr. Lincoln.

Early in the tedious days that followed, I made the acquaintance at the hotel of a young man from Syracuse, New York, named N. H. Shephard, a daguerreotypist who was about opening a gallery in Springfield. Photographs were as yet unknown, and dagnerreotyping was considered, as it actually was, a marvelous advance in the art of portraiture.

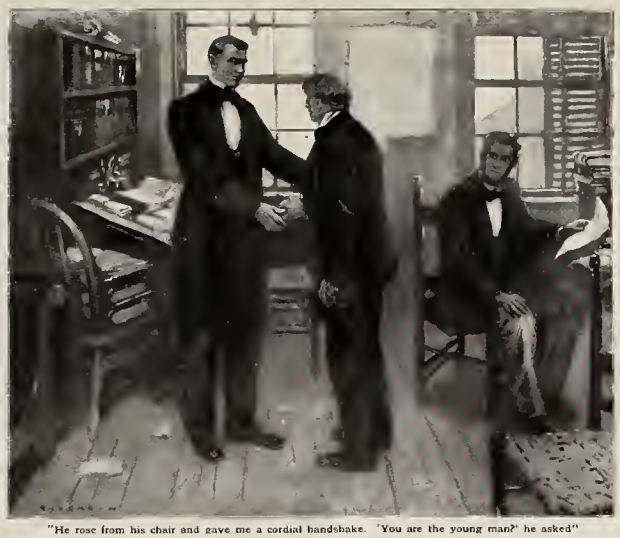


"About the middle of the forenoon there came into the log school-house a remarkably tall young man dressed in blue jeans"

Together we two, Shephard and I, looked up a boarding-place, where we became room-mates, remaining such throughout my stay in Springfield. He was among the very first in his line to come as far west as Illinois, and we were warm friends to the end. In the latter part of 1848 he wrote me (at Albion) that he was about to start for California, and promised to write again in a few weeks or months; but further word never came from him, and I have always believed that, like so many others, he was lost on the overland trail.

In one of Miss Tarbell's Lincoln articles, published a few years ago in a current magazine, I noticed a portrait of Lincoln with the statement annexed that it was from a daguerreotype, but giving the reader to understand that it could not be ascertained when and by whom the likeness was taken. Later, the same portrait appeared in the *Century Magazine*, but still unidentified. I feel confident I am not mistaken in recognizing the portrait as the work of my friend Shephard, before whose camera I know Mr. Lincoln sat once or oftener. The claim repeatedly made for it of being the earliest portrait of Abraham Lincoln remains, as far as I know, an undisputed fact.

Learning in due time that Mr. Lincoln had returned, I again went to the law office, and this time he was in. He rose from his chair and gave me a cordial handshake.



"He rose from his chair and gave me a cordial handshake. 'You are the young man?' he asked"

My Installation in Lincoln's Office

"You are the young man Mr Constable spoke to me about?" he asked, and then introduced me to Mr. Herndon. Next, motioning toward the office bookcase, he remarked, "You will need what that contains. Make yourself at home," which I proceeded to do by taking a chair, he resuming his at the same time. El-

MRS. ABRAHAM LINCOLN IN 1845

evating his feet to a level with his head, literally sitting on his backbone, he began making inquiries about different persons in and around Albion. The extent of his acquaintance with them surprised me, but the surprise wore off when I found, as I did in time, there was not a county in Illinois in which he did not know a number of the leading citizens, men whose voice had weight in public affairs. He seemed not only to know just how much influence each had politically, but likewise their noted peculiarities, their whims and fancies.

I did no reading that day. Mr. Lincoln was taking a rest after his tour of the circuit, and was in a chatty mood; above all, I was a new subject for his mental apparatus to investigate. If any mind was ever governed in its activities by the maxim, "The proper study of mankind is man," it was Abraham Lincoln's. During my stay in his office I was the only student and only clerk in it. I can truthfully say I gave to my duties of both kinds the most diligent attention of which I was capable, and was soon made to feel the senior partner's kindly interest in me personally. Simultaneously the less pleasing fact dawned upon me that Mr. Lincoln was not an assiduous instructor in the technics of law (which, indeed, were always more or less irksome to him, his mind dwelling rather on its principles), and reluctantly I began to turn to Mr. Herndon for such explanations as I needed, or, as opportunity offered, discussed what to me were knotty points with various younger members of the local bar. But, while these developments could not but be a damper to the ardent youth unsatisfied till he could enter Mr. Lincoln's office, I never thought of admiring him less.

The Personality of Mrs. Lincoln

When I came into his office, Mr Lincoln had been married about three years, having won the hand of Mary Todd, a reigning belle, in rivalry, as was said, with Stephen A. Douglas. Their wedding took place on November 4, 1842. As a frequent visitor I was made welcome at the Lincoln home, and on two different occasions, at the instance of Mr. Lincoln, he being unable to attend, I became Mrs. Lincoln's escort to a ball, where I danced with her. I always found her most pleasant-mannered. She was a bright, witty and accomplished young woman, naturally fond of fun and frolic, but very staid and proper when it was in order to be so. I was impressed with her brilliant conversational powers, and the superior education she constantly evinced. She spoke French with the same fluency as her mother-tongue. Her sportive title for me, in familiar converse, was "Mr. Mister," while Mr. Lincoln always addressed me by my first name.

The duel (that never came off) between Lincoln and General Shields, on the future Mrs. Lincoln's account, was never referred to in my hearing, either at the office or elsewhere, during my whole stay in Springfield. Not even Mr. Lincoln's second, Doctor Merriman, once mentioned it, though I became well acquainted with him through a close intimacy with his son, before the latter enlisted in the Mexican War.

Mrs. Lincoln never visited the office. She was a member of the First Presbyterian Church, which early in 1903 celebrated the seventy-fifth anniversary of its organization, bringing out, among other reminiscences, Mr. Lincoln's promptness in paying pew rent. The statement that he attended the church on nearly or quite three fourths of the Sundays he was in Springfield may have been true of later years, but to predicate it of the middle 40's would be an exaggeration.

Mr. Lincoln's Consideration for His Wife

Mr. Lincoln showed great consideration for his wife, which I noticed the more, perhaps, because, for some reason, Mr. Herndon cherished a strong dislike for her, and of this fact made no secret to the office-clerk. She was unusually timid and nervous during a thunder-storm, and whenever one threatened, her husband made it a point to leave whatever he was engaged upon, if it was a possible thing, and go home, to stay with her until it passed over. When called to Chicago, to be gone several days, he nearly always took her with him. If there was no love between them, as the world has been so persistently exhorted to believe, I must say they had a strange way of showing it, a way that hoodwinked me completely.

All that I saw or knew of them leads me to accept as entirely authentic the favorite tradition that when

LINCOLN'S SADDLE-BAGS AND OFFICE TABLE IN 1846
The rocking-chair, according to Mr. Harris, was a luxury that came later

the dispatch announcing his nomination for the presidency was handed to Mr. Lincoln in the Illinois State House, he folded it up, with the quiet remark, "There is a little woman down on Eighth Street who will be glad to see this; I must take it to her."

Equally in keeping with my impressions is the pathetic account of their last drive together, in the course of which Mr. Lincoln said: "Mary, we have had a hard time of it since we came to Washington; but the war is over, and with God's blessing we may look for four years of peace and happiness, and then we will go back to Illinois and pass the rest of our lives in quiet." Eleven hours later came the assassination.

Lincoln as Senior Partner

Twice a year Mr. Lincoln followed the itinerary of the Circuit Court in his district, and frequently in adjoining districts, also. Springfield, being the state capital, was exclusively honored with the sessions of the Supreme Court, then composed of the nine Circuit Judges, and when this august body was sitting he attended its sessions almost daily. So long as these various courts were grinding, the law-firm's student was left to his own resources in mastering the details of the profession, with practically no variation of thought or interest except the tiresome duty of copying abstracts of cases, to be used in the Supreme Court, one abstract for each of the nine judges.

Mr. Herndon was a young lawyer of some repute for care and painstaking in office-work when Mr. Lincoln took him into partnership, and it was he who drew up the pleas and other papers to be used in the District Court, the senior partner's share being to do

"'He looked so comical,' said Mr. Lincoln"

the talking. When, however, a case reached the Supreme Court, the required abstract was invariably drafted by Mr. Lincoln. These abstracts were models of condensation, and even the law-clerk's untrained mind was impressed with their clearness and grasp.

Mr. Lincoln's courtesy to young practitioners was little less than proverbial, and it was never more gracious than when he was the opposing counsel. He had a happy knack of setting them at ease and encouraging them to put forth their best efforts. In consequence they all liked him.

An Adventure of Master Bob's

Mr. Lincoln sometimes told at the office the sayings or doings of his children. One such account I remember as well as if I had heard it last week. He came in, an hour or so after dinner, smiling beyond even his wont, and said he was lying down at home, having left his boots in the second-story hallway, when all at once he heard a tremendous clatter on the stairs. He jumped up, hurried to the head of the stairs, and looking down, saw Bob (Robert Todd Lincoln, aged three) getting up on all fours from the floor of the hallway below, unhurt but sadly bewildered. "The youngster had got into my boots," he said, "and in trying to walk around in them had fallen down-stairs. You ought to have seen him, Gibson—he looked *so* comical with the boot-legs reaching clear up to his little body." He laughed heartily, and more than once during the afternoon he broke out in laughter again, as the incident kept coming to his mind afresh.

"'Gibson, I should like very much to go to Congress; but unless I can get there by fair means I will stay at home'"

MY RECOLLECTIONS OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

By Gibson William Harris

A Law Student in Lincoln and Herndon's Office From 1845 to 1847

EDITOR'S NOTE—This is the second in a series of four articles that was begun in the Woman's Home Companion for November. The next paper will treat of Lincoln's masterful mentality, and will describe his methods in dealing with clients, especially as illustrated by some interesting law-cases of which Mr. Harris was personally cognizant. Still more interesting to the majority of readers will be its presentation of Mr. Lincoln as not only an admiring and effective reciter of Burns, Shakespeare, Byron and Poe, and of the now famous poem "Mortality," but in the role of a poet himself.

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A Born Gentleman

MR. LINCOLN, as I remember him, had a quaintness of manner that strongly individualized him in any place or any company. His cousin Dennis Hanks was only voicing the general opinion in a vernacular idiom when he said, "There was always something *peculiarsome* about Abe." In his intercourse with others his simplicity and unaffectedness were most engaging. I never heard him use an oath or make a vulgar remark, and never knew of his doing an improper thing. He was the purest man, both in speech and action—I make the statement deliberately—of all the men I have known on intimate terms. He made one feel that it was good to be with him.

There was nothing conventional in his regard for the feelings of all with whom he dealt. It was part of his being, coming as natural to him as it was to breathe. He never browbeat a witness or juggled the statements of one. He never quizzed an acquaintance. That his clerk's development was yet in the callow stage must have been instantly apparent to him, but not once did he remind me of it; on the other hand, he encouraged me in many ways. Once, and only once, did I succeed in drawing from him an opinion derogatory of another, and that related to a certain attorney of very showy parts, yet capable of only feeble and disconnected arguments. After expressing myself quite freely, I bluntly asked him whether my estimate was not correct. The felicitous answer was, "Well, I consider him rather a *shot-gun lawyer*." Thousands of times Abraham Lincoln has been written up as awkward, ungainly, ugly, but to me he had the kindliest eye, the sweetest smile and the most pleasing face I had ever known, and it is no stretch of the truth to say I have always thought about him as of a personality most attractive, if not actually handsome.

Mr. Lincoln's Physical Traits

The antithesis of features and expression was very pronounced in Abraham Lincoln. The expression not merely relieved the plainness of his features; it transformed, on occasions transfigured, them. The look of patient benignity which became the abiding memory that callers at the White House carried away during the dreadful days of the Civil War was a familiar one, even in the 40's, to those who had any dealings with him. But to strangers his appearance was not prepossessing. While his six feet and four inches gave him a commanding stature, he was loosely built, gauntly spare in flesh, flat-chested and inclined to stoop. The impression of angularity given at first sight was heightened by his length of arms and legs, and that of awkwardness by the size of his hands and feet. His complexion was sallow and his cheeks sunken, both which items were the more noticeable from the fact that he wore neither beard nor whiskers (nor did he ever do so till after his election to the presidency). The prominent nose and square chin betokened strength, but they were not modeled on lines of beauty. The blue-gray eyes when in repose were rather dull-looking. Nevertheless, to see how they kindled the moment he began addressing you or became interested in a subject under discussion was wonderful; it resembled the uprushing waves of light in a winter sky when an aurora borealis is on.

In walking his step was such that his foot came down flat on the ground. I can see him now, in memory, as he daily appeared on the streets of Springfield, his arms slowly swinging, his head and body bent slightly forward, his whole aspect that of a man in deep thought, from which, however, he was easily roused, never failing to make hearty acknowledgment of a salutation, whether from friend or stranger. He was slow, or more properly, deliberate, in his movements. I cannot recall ever having seen him walk briskly, much less run, though his long limbs carried him over the ground with more speed than one was apt to realize at first. While possessing great physical strength, he was sparing in its use.

"Back would go his head, and he would laugh as unrestrainedly as any of his auditors"

His Indifference to Dress

He manifested no concern for his personal appearance, so far as dressiness went. Provided his clothing was clean and comfortable, the cut of it did not trouble him in the least. The blue jeans in which he was clad when I first saw him, in 1840, had been discarded in favor of broadcloth some time before his marriage. The day I entered his office, in 1845, he had on a black suit—coat and trousers of cloth, vest of satin, and the buckram stock about his neck was covered with black silk. Mrs. Lincoln, as was generally known in Springfield, wished him to "spruce up" more, and perhaps this had something to do with the adoption of the buckram stock, forcing him, as it did, to carry his head more erect than would an ordinary tie. In summer he was accustomed to wear shoes of what was known as the Wellington style, but in winter he wore boots. His hat was a regulation "stove-pipe," the same as it was when he filled the presidential chair.

One anecdote that passed current in those days derived almost as much point from his disregard of style in dress as from his well-known character as a humorist. A friend, passing him on the sidewalk one day, exclaimed, "Abe, your coat is too short in the waist!" Lincoln looked up with a twinkle in his eye, and quick as a flash, retorted, "Never mind; it will be long enough before I get another!" Whether or not the same *bon mot* is with justice credited to a witty English bishop I do not know, but its attribution to Lincoln is strictly correct.

Lincoln Miscellanies

Mr. Lincoln's indifference respecting dress was equaled by his indifference respecting money. His wants were few and simple, and as long as he had enough to supply them for the present he seemed to

have no use for money, except to give it away or lend it, often with no expectation of return, to those in need of it. He preferred plain food, and a very moderate amount satisfied him. Of liquor he often said he did not know the taste, nor did he use tobacco in any form.

He had a decided fondness for chess and checkers, though no games of any kind were permitted at the office. In playing either, his method was to act on the defensive until the game had reached a stage where an aggressive policy was clearly indicated. He liked ten-pins also, and occasionally indulged in them. Whatever may have been his youthful tastes in regard to hunting and fishing, at this period both sports were ignored.

From his mother, a woman of superior endowments, he inherited a melancholy that was ineradicable, though it became less marked after his marriage. The angle of incidence is the same as that of reflection; day and night, taking the year through, divide the twenty-four hours equally. Lincoln was gifted with an extraordinary sense of humor, and necessarily he must know its counterpart of gloom. It was my good fortune to see in him very much more of the bright side than the dark. When in repose or in deep contemplation, his face even then wore a sad, or more correctly a far-away, expression, that made one long to wake him up, as it were, and bring him back to his accustomed geniality and winning smile. I never heard his partner or any one else in Springfield refer to his occasional blue spells, and am very sure he got altogether more of merriment than of moping out of life. It took me no great time to learn that a very slight thing would break up his brooding.

He liked to read the Bible, and in his way he was a religious man, though not a church-member. At the period in question his position seemed to be that he shrank from subscribing in full to any of the creeds that were known to him; he would not make a pretense of doing that, and could not force himself to it as a duty. His character as a total abstainer being well known, he was often called on to make temperance addresses, yet he did not join any temperance society. It is significant that he never belonged to a fraternal order, nor to a secret society of any kind.

"In this attitude he would digest the mental food he had just taken"

In Conversation and in Story-Telling

In conversation Mr. Lincoln was always instructive, always entertaining, and almost always amusing. He seemed never to talk without some definite aim in view. The few stories I heard him relate were told in each instance to illustrate some well-defined point. He was rather disposed, in ordinary cases, to claim the larger share of time in conversation, but he was not only a good listener, but in general an animated questioner, whenever there was information to be gained. His aptitude for assimilating the facts of any subject in which he was interested was only less remarkable than the faculty he had for retaining them in his memory.

When telling a story, he had a mannerism peculiarly his own. If he was seated in a chair or on a dry-goods box (it was generally one or the other), his feet would be planted flat upon the floor or ground, until near the story's end, at which juncture his eyes would begin to sparkle and his right leg be seen to raise slowly; suddenly, at the instant the climax was reached, the right leg would be thrown across the left, back would go his head, and he would laugh as unrestrainedly as any of his auditors. There was never any straining for effect; the heartiness and spontaneity of it all delightfully enhanced the story's effectiveness.

Lincoln's humor was a wellspring of pleasure to his acquaintanceship, which practically included all Springfield. One specimen of it that has become famous I am able to locate. Loafing on one of the street-corners next to the public square, several men were wrangling one day over the ideal length, in proportion to the body, for a man's leg. Lincoln came sauntering along, and to his decision the gang of loafers agreed to submit the point. "Abe," called out one of them, "how long ought a man's legs to-be?" "Well, gentlemen," was the prompt reply, "I don't pretend to know *exactly*, but it seems to me they should be long enough to reach from his body to the ground!"

The Race for Congress in 1846

Illinois was long a Democratic state, but it contained one Congressional District almost as stanchly Whig as Daniel Webster's own state of Massachusetts. This was the so-called Sangamon District, which in the 40's contained more than an ample supply of congressional timber, including John J. Hardin, afterward killed in the Mexican War; Edward D. Baker, who fell at Ball's Bluff, in the Civil War; Abraham Lincoln, a recognized leader; and Judge Stephen D. Logan. Lincoln's law partner from 1841 to 1843—all men of ability and all Whigs. To avoid strife, they agreed among themselves that if elected each should serve but one term and leave the field open for the next, and each became, in the order above mentioned, the Whig nominee. The conferences of these and other Whig leaders, when not mere casual street meetings, were generally held in the Law Library rooms in the State House; none of them (unless it was Hardin, who resided in Jacksonville) had an office with chairs enough to accommodate the most modest caucus.

When Mr. Lincoln, in 1846, made up his mind to stand for the nomination, the duty fell to me of writing letters, at his dictation, to influential men in the different counties, down to even obscure precincts. Finding the task not only burdensome, but slow, I suggested the use of a printed circular letter, but the proposal was vetoed offhand. A printed letter, he said, would not have nearly the same effect; a written one had the stamp of personality, was more flattering to the recipient, and would tell altogether more in assuring his good-will, if not his support. So for several days the clerk was kept busy in writing more letters. Young and inexperienced as I was, I could not help noticing how shrewdly they were put together, no two exactly alike. He approached each correspondent in a different way, and I soon reached the conclusion that the necessity he felt for doing this was his weightiest reason, after all, for discarding type.

Discussing one day the chances for his nomination, I expressed myself with some warmth to the effect that, as rival aspirants were using so much unfairness, there was small encouragement for us to proceed any further unless we were willing to adopt similar tactics. Without the least sign of disconcertment, he replied, "Gibson, I *want* to be nominated. I should like very much to go to Congress; but unless I can get there by *fair* means I shall not go. If it depends on some other course, I will stay at home." That settled it, of course.

Lincoln a Congressman

Lincoln received the nomination, and when the time came was elected by a majority of more than fifteen hundred (three times the usual Whig majority of the district), and great was the rejoicing in our office. Lincoln's opponent in this campaign was the noted pioneer preacher, Peter Cartwright. I never saw the two men together, nor do I recall any stump-speaking incident of more than passing interest. The last time I saw Peter Cartwright he was exchanging confidences, in his peculiar fortissimo, with one of his late partisans, both of them berating one Wright for being an Abolitionist. I remember the desire was expressed to slap Wright's jaws, with the avowed intention to do just that thing if the chance ever offered.

Mrs. Lincoln and the two children went to Washington with the Sangamon representative for the first, or long, session of the Thirtieth Congress, which assembled in December, 1847. Meantime the Mexican War had come on. In common with the Whig leaders in general, Lincoln regarded the war as unjustifiable, and so declared himself, thereby alienating many political friends and bringing him many faultfinding letters. Nor was this all. Dissatisfaction with his course on this question entailed defeat on his friend, Judge Logan, who became the Whig nominee in 1848. Opposed though he was to the Mexican War, on principle, Lincoln never withheld his vote from measures for the support of the United States forces in the field, a record which later stood him in excellent stead.

Routine Life in Lincoln's Office

Lincoln and Herndon's office consisted of one large room on the second floor of the building in which was the post-office. Across the hall, and directly over the post-office, the clerk of the United States District Court held forth. The furniture, nearly all of it in a more or less dilapidated condition, comprised one small desk and a table, both of them quite plain, a sofa, or lounge, with raised head at one end, and half a dozen wooden chairs. Over the desk a few shelves had been inclosed; this was the office bookcase, holding a set of Blackstone, Kent's Commentaries, Chitty's Pleadings and a very moderate number of other books. There was a fine law library in the Capitol Building, and to this the attorneys of the city enjoyed free access at all times. The floor in our office was almost never scrubbed, and the sweeping was done by the clerk.

As was the case with all the Springfield lawyers of any note, nearly all of Lincoln's practice as an advocate was on the circuit. This was before the days of railroads and great corporations. Suits of magnitude were unknown, and fees were small. Late in his career as a practising attorney, Mr. Lincoln is said to have received one fee of two thousand dollars; if so, the case, which concerned a patent on the McCormick reaper, must have been very much the most lucrative one that he ever had. In the office, where lay my little round of duties, it was usually such petty work as the drawing up of unimportant deeds, mortgages and contracts. To be actually present at a trial was a rare treat for any Springfield law student.

The prevailing notion seems to be that Lincoln spent a large part of his time in spinning yarns. Undoubtedly he did tell a great many stories, with never a poor one among them. But they were not told in the office. An attorney's "den" is about the last place for genial humor; for, except to peculiarly constituted minds, the law is a dry and uninteresting study. In a lawyer's office, moreover, the tendency to believe in total depravity is depressingly strong, such is the somber light in which human nature frequently shows itself in the confidings of client to counsel. It was on the circuit—at the hotels, or sometimes in the court-room itself—that Lincoln's stories were usually gotten off. At the office we heard less of them than did the street gamins outside. There the talk ran on points of law, mankind in general, current politics, and little else.

RESIDENCE OF GIBSON W. HARRIS, HOLLY HILL, FLORIDA

His Days of Leisure, and How They Were Passed

When the courts were not in session the senior partner spent more time out of the office than in it. A likely place to find him was some street-corner, there discussing with others at their ease the topics of the day. He chummed with everyone, Whig or Democrat, and particularly with the young men, a class among whom he was especially popular. He was hail-fellow with them all. From the time of his mature manhood Lincoln learned more, as I believe, from contact with his fellow-men than from books. "Honest Old Abe" was a colloquialism familiar to all Springfield before he was thirty-seven. Strange to say, he deemed himself old, and took undisguised pleasure in fathering many of us younger persons, including some already in their thirties.

It would not be fair to speak of Lincoln as an idler save in his aversion to bodily labor. His brain was a singularly active one—seemed never to rest, never to tire. Yet as a formal student Lincoln struck me as actually lazy. Days of leisure came frequently, and on such he might sometimes be seen sitting in his chair, with his feet on the office table, reading the office copy of Burns or Byron. He would read for an hour or more, then close the book and stretch himself at full length on the office lounge, his feet projecting over the end of it, hands under his head and eyes closed, and in this attitude would digest the mental food he had just taken, not merely thinking over what he had read, but seeking to reproduce it in his mind. But weeks might pass before this would be repeated. He read but little at the office, and I have never imagined there was much burning of the midnight oil at his home.

The truth is, unless I am greatly mistaken, Abraham Lincoln never studied hard at any period of his life. He did not need to study *hard* With him a single reading was sufficient to afford a clear insight into any ordinary subject. It almost seemed as if, in a previous existence, he had acquired a knowledge of things, and in this life needed only to refresh his memory, now by reading and now by colloquy with others.

"As the prosecuting attorney arose to address the jury, Wilson was brought into the court-room alive"

MY RECOLLECTIONS OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

By Gibson William Harris

A Law Student in Lincoln and Herndon's Office From 1845 to 1847

EDITOR'S NOTE—These Recollections were begun in the November number, the present article being the third of the series. The fourth and concluding paper appears next month, when Mr. Harris will describe two notable interviews with Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln, in 1859 and February, 1861, respectively. Mrs. Harris taking an interesting part in the former one. It will also touch on Lincoln's devotion to the Union, the ripening of his views on the slavery question, and his personal relations with Stephen A. Douglas.

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A Masterful Mentality

NO CHARACTER in American history surpasses Abraham Lincoln in force of intellect. His mind was an X-ray for penetration. The readiness with which he pierced to the core of any subject engaging his attention impressed me deeply. Without an effort he would strip a statement or an argument of all enswathing verbiage, and hold up to plain view the ultimate analysis of it, so that one could not help seeing the underlying thought just as he had seen it from the first. To this mental quality, I am persuaded, was due his scarcely disguised impatience with the multiplication of pleas and replications so common in legal practice; the premium they put on the faculty of "how not to say it" tantalized and disgusted him. He explored, as by intuition, the mysteries of hidden things, as well in plant and tree as in human nature. Originality characterized him here, as everywhere. I remember hearing him remark that a tree divested of its foliage was, if anything, more interesting to him than the same tree in its full array of green. The skeleton, he said, was then exposed to view in all its beauty of curved lines or its ugliness of knots and gnarls, and it was easy to decide whether it was worthy of one's admiration or not.

His independent cast of mind and his self-reliance were alone sufficient to stamp him as no ordinary man. I cannot recall a single circumstance tending to show that he was influenced in his judgment or his conduct by any of his associates. On the other hand, I continually saw other men influenced by him, sometimes to the complete reversal of opinions previously formed. Mr. Herndon's account of how he tolled Mr. Lincoln into the anti-slavery camp is drawn out beyond credibility, though for that matter, it would not surprise me if at certain times the junior partner found it possible to believe he had made the senior not only an Abolitionist, but a statesman and President.

One striking example of Lincoln's independent thinking has been turned to account by Winston Churchill in his novel "The Crisis," in connection with the Freeport debate with Senator Douglas. Another is not so generally known. Though never making a hobby of it, Mr. Lincoln candidly avowed his belief in the justice of woman suffrage. As early as 1837 he took decided ground in favor of extending the franchise to unmarried women who were taxpayers, holding that these could claim it by a double right—a property right, in addition to the natural one.

Mr. Lincoln's Literary Tastes

He greatly enjoyed Burns and Shakespeare, and was partial also to Byron and Poe. I heard him repeat many passages from them, particularly from Burns, whose "Cotter's Saturday Night" and "Epistle to a Young Friend" I think he memorized entire, though the poem he quoted from in my hearing oftenest of all (usually mere snatches) was "Tam O'Shanter." "The Raven" was published in the same year that took me to Springfield. It strongly attracted Mr. Lincoln, as did any well-written composition in the line of the sad or the weird and mysterious. Poe's prose writings, especially "The Gold Bug" and "The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar," caught his fancy almost equally with the same author's verse. First and last, I heard him repeat quite a number of poems, mostly short ones, picked up from the newspapers or the few magazines of that day. This fugitive was his favorite of favorites, the poem commencing:

Oh! Why should the spirit of mortal be proud?
Like a swift-fleeting meteor, a fast-flying cloud,
A flash of the lightning, a break of the wave,
Man passes from life to his rest in the grave.

PRESIDENT LINCOLN

This portrait, so familiar to Americans, was chosen by Hon. Robert T. Lincoln on one occasion as the best in a collection of fifty photographs of his martyred father

Many a time at the office did he recite this poem, in whole or in part; for a while I actually thought he had written it, so nearly did it resemble, in tone and meter, one of several compositions of his own that I had found in the office desk. One day I asked him for a copy of it. "All right," he said; "get pen, paper and ink, and you can take it down as I repeat it." I still have the copy, fourteen stanzas, thus made. At that time he did not know who wrote the piece; I asked him point-blank. Since 1865 the name of William Knox, a Scotch poet, has been so linked with his in this connection as to have become familiar to Americans. Even at this distance of time—upward of fifty-seven years—I can see him, as he sat opposite me at the office table; see his kindly, patient face, and hear his pleasant voice, modulated to the pensiveness of the poem, as he slowly dictated line after line, broken only by his deliberate answers to the questions I was obliged to put from time to time, to make sure of getting the words correctly.

My Find of Original Lincoln Poems

By accident I made the interesting discovery that Mr. Lincoln himself wrote poetry, and, so far as I was capable of judging, poetry above the mediocre. In arranging the books and papers in the office one morning, I came across two, or it may have been three, quires of letter-paper stitched together, lying inside the office desk, and on turning the leaves I saw they were covered with stanzaed effusions in Mr. Lincoln's neat running-hand, all evidently original. As I remember, they were all, or nearly all, iambics and pensive in tone. When he came in, I went to the desk, drew out the manuscript, and held it up, with the unnecessary and possibly impertinent inquiry whether the poems were his. He simply said, "Where did you find it?" took the manuscript out of my hand, rolled it up, and stuffed it in his coat-tail pocket. It was never seen afterward. My impression is that when he went home that noon the roll was incontinently stuck in the fire.

Mentioning my discovery to Mr. Herndon, I was told, "Yes, he has sometimes scribbled verses, I believe, but he seems unwilling to have it known." What interest, what priceless worth these selfsame scribblings would have were they extant to-day!

He Wrote by Ear, He Said

"Education deficient," wrote Abraham Lincoln of himself when he was President. Nevertheless he possessed an unerring ear for the proper and the musical in verbal expression. On several occasions he handed me to read, or read to me himself, articles that he had written for the newspapers, and with his customary directness and avoidance of quizzing asked me to criticize their grammatical construction; but I think I never found criticism possible. I well remember asking him how it came that he was able to write so correctly, if he had never studied the rules of grammar. "I write by ear," he said. "When I have got my thoughts on paper, I read it aloud, and if it sounds all right I just let it pass."

"As he sat opposite me at the office table, and slowly dictated line after line of the poem"

How unsatisfactory the product of writing by ear ordinarily is I doubt not legions of worn and weary editors stand ready to testify. But in this respect also Abraham Lincoln was a law unto himself. In all literature is there a finer gem than his letter to Mrs. Bixby, an obscure woman living in Boston? It has been engrossed and framed, and hung in the library of one of the venerable colleges of Oxford University as a model of pure English. Already printed many times, it is sure to be printed many times more:

DEAR MADAM:—I have been shown on the file of the War Department a statement of the Adjutant-General of Massachusetts that you are the mother of five sons who have died gloriously on the field of battle. I feel how weak and fruitless must be any words of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the great grief of a loss so overwhelming; but I cannot refrain from tendering to you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the Republic they died to save. I pray that our Heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavements, and leave only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom.

Yours Very Sincerely and Respectfully,
ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

Whence Lincoln's Command of English?

How did Lincoln attain his almost matchless command of English, the only tongue he knew? That his familiarity with the Bible and with Shakespeare, Burns, Byron and Poe not only enriched his vocabulary, but greatly aided him in acquiring that mastery of style which was his ambition from childhood, cannot be doubted. His boyish habit of rhyming must likewise have supplied valuable training. Yet the question remains, How came he to know the correct pronunciation and exact meaning of so many words far removed from ordinary pioneer usage, if his knowledge of them depended wholly on his reading? He went to school, it is said, only six months all told; and as for his associations, they were nearly all with unlettered persons until after he was twenty-two. Since the fact is well established that home is where a child learns the mother-tongue, it is a hobby of mine that Lincoln's English ancestors must have been persons of at least fair education, and his purity of style largely a family inheritance. Thomas Lincoln, the father, was an orphan at six years of age, and under the old law of primogeniture the small patrimony all went to Mordecai Lincoln, who was the eldest brother. Little wonder that the youngest "grew up literally without education;" the boy had all he could do to make a living at work for the scantiest of wages. Yet, so far as I have been able to learn, Thomas Lincoln habitually used clear, idiomatic English in conversation. My conviction is strong that the biographers have overdone the alleged ignorance and uncouthness of the Lincoln stock, if not of the pioneers as a body.

AUTOGRAPH IN TENTH YEAR

In this connection, as well as in others, Lincoln's boyish signature that is still preserved inside the front lid of the family Bible is certainly interesting. In point of legibility, and approximate correctness in forming the letters, it would pass as very creditable in the lower grades of a grammar-school even at this day, when every lad is privileged to give several years, instead of six months, to the three R's.

His Method with Clients

Any statement made to him by a client Mr. Lincoln held as sacred. No secret of the confessional was ever more jealously guarded. Remembering how frequently I heard him tell clients that his clerk could be depended on for the same reticence, and therefore no hesitancy need be felt about stating the facts exactly as they were, I have never felt at liberty to discuss certain criminal cases that I became familiar with at the office. In all of them Mr. Lincoln succeeded, I believe, in bringing about a settlement outside the courts, making no charge for his services; but where the wrongdoing was an aggravated one the guilty party never got off without a severe lecture. At times these tongue-lashings of his were terrible to hear, for on occasion he could prove himself a master of invective.

From personal knowledge I can corroborate the statement often printed that under no circumstances would he consent to appear for a side he knew was in the wrong. He spared no pains to get at the truth before accepting a retainer. In going to law, a man's instinct is the same as in courting—he is sure to put his best foot foremost. Lincoln would say to the litigant: "Don't give me your strong points; they will take care of themselves. Tell me your weak points, and after that I can advise what is best to be done."

I believe it literally true that by his counsel more cases were settled without trial than through litigation. He never asked a fee for bringing about such a termination, and when I took the liberty once of saying it would be no more than fair for him to make *some* charge, he laughed good-naturedly, and said, "They won't care to pay me; they don't think I have earned a fee unless I take the case into court and make a speech or two." In case the dispute was of so trivial a nature as to render it unlikely that it would go any further than a magistrate's office, his habit was to refer the party to some one or other of the young attorneys, for whom he always had a good word ready.

The Famous Bill Armstrong Trial

I have already expressed the belief that the details of his law practice were frequently irksome to Mr. Lincoln, and suggested a probable reason for it. At the same time, when his heart was enlisted in a case he was a powerful advocate. His simple statement of the facts often had more weight with the jury than the sworn testimony of the witnesses. The celebrated Bill Armstrong trial, so dramatically set forth in Edward Eggleston's novel, "The Graysons," furnished a fine example of Lincoln's power before a jury when fully aroused. As it came off eleven years after I left Springfield, I have no knowledge of it personally, but feel very sure the young man—who was the son of a woman Lincoln had boarded with twenty years before, and whom, when a baby, he had many times rocked to sleep, to help the overworked mother—was not cleared by sharp practice. Some years since a nameless Bohemian gave wide currency to the account of a manipulated almanac, by means of which Lincoln broke down the testimony of the main witness for the prosecution and hoodwinked judge and jury alike. Whether this yarn germinated in or out of the said Bohemian's brain is of small importance; the point is, it was utterly impossible for a man of Lincoln's rigid integrity to concoct or even consent to any such trick.

An Amusing Case

Now and then Mr. Lincoln's abounding sense of humor would find play even in the dry-as-dust items of his profession. One such case has been a source of perennial amusement to me and mine. A crack-brained attorney, Urquhart by name, lived in Springfield, supported mainly by the helping hand of other lawyers of the place. He contracted a debt of two dollars and fifty cents to a wealthy citizen of the county, a new-comer, who, after several futile attempts to make collection, came to the office one day clearly in "a state of mind" to arrange for bringing suit. Guardedly yet circumstantially Mr. Lincoln explained to the man Urquhart's mental and financial condition, and as the obligation was so small advised that the matter be dropped. But Mr. Smith's temper was up. He insisted on prosecuting the case. In his calm and friendly way Mr. Lincoln again sought to dissuade the man.

"You cannot possibly make it off him," I finally heard him say; "and even if you could, the suit would cost you more than we should be bringing it for."

"But I want to show him I am not to be trifled with. His behavior is outrageous, and I don't intend to put up with it. Mr. Lincoln, if you are not willing to take the case, say so, and I will go elsewhere."

"Of course, Mr. Smith, if you insist on it, I shall consider it an honor to act for you, and there is no doubt we can get judgment. But I think it only right to tell you beforehand my charge will be ten dollars."

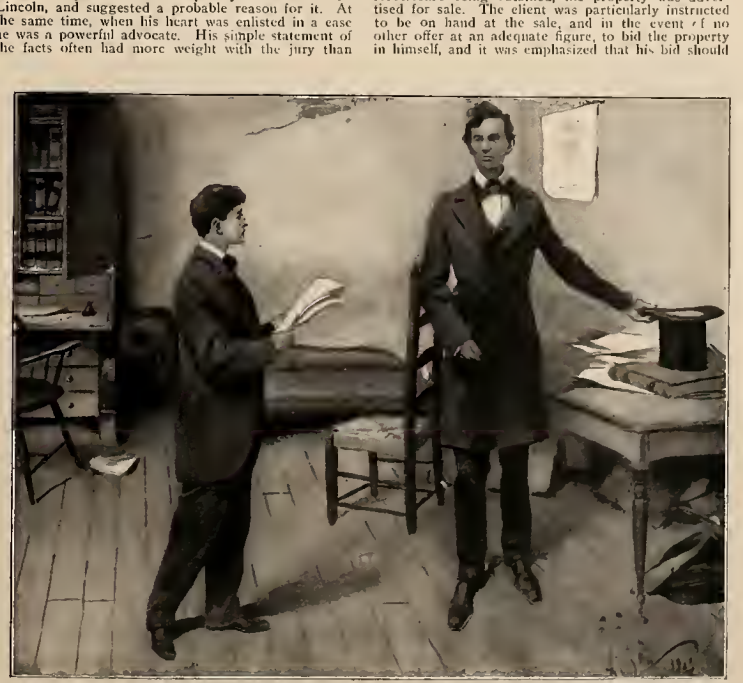
"All right, here it is."

Laying down a ten-dollar bill, the man gave peremptory instructions to sue poor Urquhart that very day, and on Mr. Lincoln's assurance this should be done, he left apparently satisfied. In a few minutes Mr. Lincoln picked up his hat and went out. When he came back, rather more than an hour later, I noticed an amused expression playing over his features.

"You heard what Smith said," he remarked. "Well, I kept my promise—went over and sued Urquhart, hunted him up and told him, handed him a five-dollar bill, and got him to go to the squire's office with me. He confessed judgment and paid the bill. I couldn't see any other way of making things satisfactory to Mr. Smith and all concerned."

Another Client Who Overreached Himself

A well-to-do citizen of Springfield loaned a business acquaintance a few hundred dollars, the security being a mortgage on a piece of real estate. After a time Mr. Lincoln was engaged to foreclose the mortgage. The usual procedure was followed, and a decree of foreclosure being obtained, the property was advertised for sale. The client was particularly instructed to be on hand at the sale, and in the event of no other offer at an adequate figure, to bid the property in himself, and it was emphasized that his bid should



"He simply said, 'Where did you find it?' and took the manuscript out of my hand"

be high enough to cover the indebtedness. The sale passed off very quietly. After it was over the client came into our office chuckling not a little over the fact that he had got the land, and, what was more, had got it at much less than the claim, thus enabling him to still hold an unpaid balance of nearly three hundred dollars as an additional sum he expected to get later.

"You greedy simpleton!" exclaimed Mr. Lincoln. "You knew that your mortgage covered the value of the loan, you knew that he owned no other property, you knew the remaining creditors could get nothing by suing him, and you knew that under the law every mortgager has a certain time in which to claim his right of redemption. Now what have you done? Some other creditor will bring suit and get judgment against him, and if at the end of the legal time he fails to redeem the land the judgment creditor will step in and do it. Then you will get simply the amount of your bid, no more, and the other creditor will hold the land."

The situation thus revealed to him in its true light, the client's chuckle changed to a whine. He begged Mr. Lincoln to help him out of his predicament, and in the end got his full claim, and along with it some sound advice on the subject of greed.

A Sensational Murder Trial

Some time in the middle 40's Mr. Lincoln served as attorney for the defense in a murder trial of the most sensational nature, and not long after I came to the office he received a letter from a newspaper publisher in Quincy, Illinois, requesting an authoritative account of the case, for the satisfaction of the wide-spread interest it had excited. Mr. Lincoln complied, and after reading aloud what he had written, handed the sheets to me to read. His report was almost as terse as an abstract to be laid before the Supreme Court, being substantially as follows:

"Two brothers, with a friend named Wilson, came to visit a third brother living in Springfield. In due time they left, or were supposed to have left, for their respective homes in another part of the state. Several weeks later a letter was received asking the whereabouts of Wilson. Next came detectives, who reported that Wilson was missing, and it was feared he had been murdered for his money, a considerable amount of which, in gold, he was known to have carried on his person. Their investigations developed the fact that the third (the Springfield) brother had recently paid off some old debts in gold; when questioned, the young man frankly admitted the fact, but claimed he had borrowed a limited amount from Wilson, to secure relief from the pressure of certain creditors. The detectives did not accept this explanation, and having satisfied themselves that Wilson had last been seen in the company of the three brothers, they caused the arrest of all three, and had them placed in the Sangamon County jail. Their next step was to prove, if possible, that the missing Wilson had been made away with. Failing in every effort in this direction, they had the brothers separated and examined individually, in the hope of obtaining a confession from one or more of them.

"One of the brothers was weak-minded, and to him misrepresentations were made as to what the other two had said, with strong intimations they had told on him. He was informed that if he would give the true story he should have exemption from trial, but otherwise was sure to be hung. Wrought upon in this and other ways, he was induced to turn state's evidence, and to say that, on their last day in Springfield, the three brothers and Wilson had gone for a walk on the road leading to Hickox Mill; that they killed Wilson and hid the body in a hazel-patch by the roadside until after dark, when they went out with a buggy, got the body, and sank it in the mill-pond. The pond was dragged without result, though wheel-tracks into the pond were noted, as also the trampled condition of the hazel-patch. Then it was argued the body might have been removed and buried by the Springfield brother; at any rate, the failure to find it could not affect the case, as the confession met fully every requirement of the law.

Lincoln's Account Concluded—The Denouement

"The attorney for the defense," continued Lincoln's account, "gave no credence to the confession. He believed Wilson to be still alive. He had ascertained that the missing man was subject to spells of insanity, and while in that condition had twice before wandered long distances from home. He caused searching-parties to be sent out. The day of trial came, but still no Wilson. The brother who had confessed told his story on the witness-stand, and in rebuttal the defense could only introduce testimony to the previous good character of the accused. The trial was short. As the prosecuting attorney arose to address the jury, he was delayed by a commotion at the door. Wilson was brought into the court-room alive. Acquittal of the two brothers followed without question."

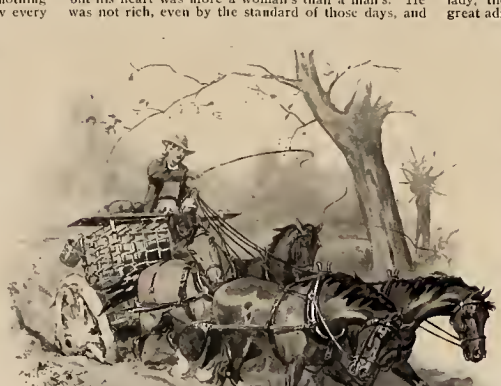
This report would scarcely have passed muster with a managing editor of to-day, so many were the "catchy" points left out. It made no mention of how like bedlam the court-room became, nor how the attorney for the defense was cheered; nor how the two defendants rushed into each other's arms and wept like children; nor how the sheriff, fearing for the safety of the perjured brother, conducted him swiftly out and double-locked him inside the jail; nor yet how Mr. Lincoln, as was generally believed, had defended the two men without price, and not only so, but out of his own means had defrayed all the expenses of the searching-parties.

Wilson, when fully restored to health, substantiated everything the Springfield brother had said about the borrowed money. As for the weak-minded state's evidence, he escaped without punishment, the court sharing the general opinion that, considering his mental infirmity, he was more sinned against than sinning.

Lincoln's Charities of Heart and Hand

Mr. Lincoln's mind was logical to the last degree, but his heart was more a woman's than a man's. He was not rich, even by the standard of those days, and his benefactions, compared with the amounts some of the great capitalists of to-day occasionally set aside for benevolence, would seem absolutely insignificant. But in proportion to his means his giving was munificent, and best of all, his heart went with it. However, he never talked about these things, nor did his manner, in carrying out the most generous purpose, ever show the slightest self-consciousness; he seemed to regard everything of this kind as a matter of course.

He was, by habit, the friend of the widow and the fatherless, and while, at this distance of time, it would not be practicable to particularize his charities, I well remember Mr. Herndon's oft-repeated murmurings on this score. "Lincoln wouldn't have a dollar to bless himself with," he used to say, "if some one else didn't look out for him. He never can say 'No' to any one who puts up a poor mouth, but will hand out the last dollar he has, sometimes when he needs it himself, and needs it badly." So far, however, from Mr. Lincoln's kindness being inconsiderate, it was a thoroughly regulated principle. His judgment and his unswerving integrity alike stood guard over it. Several times during the Civil War this was brought home to me afresh in conversations with a customer of mine in Cincinnati, a Kentucky lady nearly related to Mrs. Lincoln. This lady, though of ardent secession sympathies, was a great admirer of President Lincoln, and well she might be, for he had repeatedly favored her family in a protective way, yet always in such manner as to avoid injury to the Union cause.



A MAIL EXPRESS OF SEVENTY-YEARS AGO

Side-Lights on Traveling the Circuit

Mr. Lincoln was not given to complaining. As I look back over it, the equanimity with which he accepted the rougher features of traveling the circuit seems astonishing. Chief among these features were the wretched hotel accommodations. The taverns, invariably so called, were almost always cheerless and uncomfortable. All sold whisky and other liquors at a bar alongside the rude office. The food, though commonly of good material, was often badly cooked and poorly served. The "transient" of those days could not be sure of finding his hostelry so much as waterproof; more than once I have slept with tiny eddies of snow drifting in upon my bed. The furniture in the guest-chamber rarely comprised more than the bedstead, one or two split-bottom chairs, and possibly a spittoon. The bedding was usually abundant, perchance the bedbugs superabundant. The guests performed their ablutions in a tin basin on the back porch, or on a bench out by the well in the yard, using soft soap, if any soap at all, and wiping on a crash towel that late risers were sure to find too wet for effective service. I distinctly remember washing at the well one morning when the thermometer was thirty degrees below zero, the water freezing on the basin-side as it dropped from my hands. It was either this or postponing the rite to another day. As might be expected, tavern charges were ridiculously low.

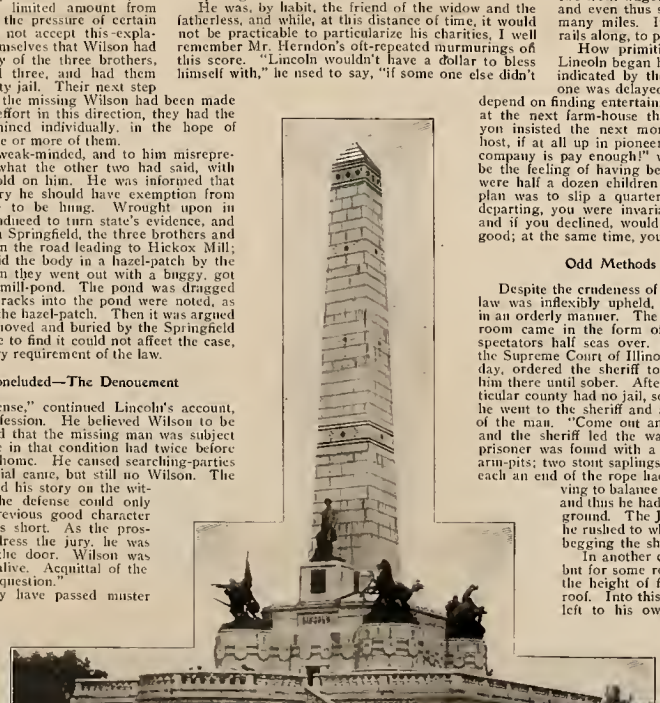
During spring thaws the roads throughout a large part of Illinois and Indiana became practically impassable. Along the trace road between Louisville and St. Louis, following the old buffalo and Indian trail across the Wabash bottoms, I have seen the mail carried in a queensware-crate mounted on the axle of two front wagon-wheels with four horses hitched to it, and even thus sixteen hours were spent in making as many miles. It was common for wagoners to take rails along, to pry their wheels out of the mud.

How primitive rural society was when Abraham Lincoln began his circuit rounds is well and pleasingly indicated by the then prevailing hospitality. In case one was delayed, and no tavern within reach, he could depend on finding entertainment for himself and feed for his horse at the next farm-house that he came to. All was free, unless you insisted the next morning on making payment, when the host, if at all up in pioneer etiquette, would say, "Stranger, your company is pay enough!" while on your part there would indeed be the feeling of having been pumped dry. Nearly always there were half a dozen children scampering about the house, so your plan was to slip a quarter into the hand of the nearest. On departing, you were invariably asked to take a drop of whisky, and if you declined, would be told you did not know what was good; at the same time, your declination never gave offense.

Odd Methods with Court Disturbers

Despite the crudeness of pioneer civilization, the majesty of the law was inflexibly upheld, and its processes gone through with in an orderly manner. The most common annoyance in the court-room came in the form of loud talking and braggadocio from spectators half seas over. Judge Wilson, later Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Illinois, having such a case to deal with one day, ordered the sheriff to place the offender in jail, and keep him there until sober. Afterward the Judge remembered that particular county had no jail, so immediately on adjournment of court he went to the sheriff and asked what disposition had been made of the man. "Come out and see, Judge," was the laconic reply, and the sheriff led the way to the woods close by, where the prisoner was found with a rope around his body just under the arm-pits; two stout saplings had been bent over, and to the top of each an end of the rope had been fastened, the man's weight serving to balance the uplifting power of the two saplings, and thus he had been left, his feet resting lightly on the ground. The Judge ordered him released, whereupon he rushed to where his horse was tied, and started off, begging the sheriff not to let his wife know about it.

In another county a jail of logs had been planned, but for some reason had been left unfinished when at the height of five or six feet, with neither door nor roof. Into this pen a similar offender was hoisted and left to his own meditations. On his way to the tavern for supper Judge Wilson happened to pass by, and was surprised to hear some one calling, "Jedge, oh, Jedge!" Turning about, he recognized the infractor of the court's dignity perched on the topmost log at one corner of the pen. "I want to get home," pleaded the man. "Don't you think I have been here long enough, Jedge?" "Yes, you can get down and 'git.'" This was language the backwoodsman understood; down he clambered, and struck out for horse and home. He had really been free to make his escape from the moment he was sober enough to undertake it; but, rough as he was, he felt he was justly under the ban of the law, and he made it a point of honor not to shirk the punishment.



THE LINCOLN MAUSOLEUM SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS
Rebuilt by the State of Illinois in 1901

"Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln, sitting before a grate fire, were alone in their room, and they greeted me most pleasantly"

MY RECOLLECTIONS OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

By Gibson William Harris

A Law Student in Lincoln and Herndon's Office From 1845 to 1847

EDITOR'S NOTE—In this issue of the Woman's Home Companion Mr. Harris concludes his series of four articles begun in the November number. Naturally, these unique contributions to Lincoln literature have attracted much attention.

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A Change of Plans—Fulfilled Predictions

MR. LINCOLN'S chief interest in his law student pertained to the young man as an individual. But he could not well ignore my studies altogether, and at the end he put me through a course of examination that was searching enough as to the principles of law, but noticeably lax on pleading and rules of evidence—for which I was thankful. Having received my diploma and experienced the satisfaction of knowing that my name had been enrolled on the list of attorneys for the state of Illinois, I went home. This was in April,

STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS

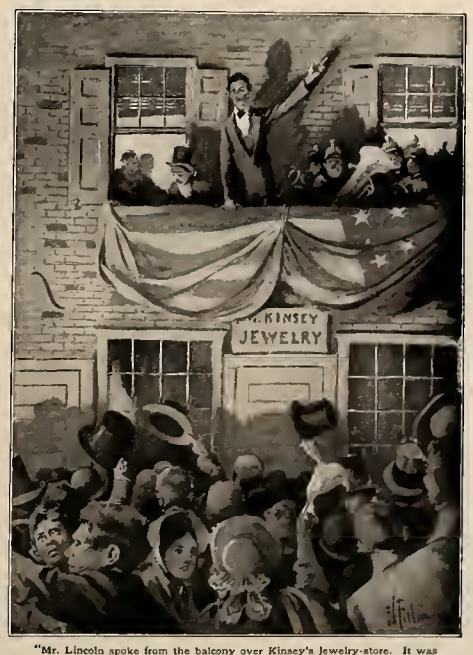
1847. The reason for the premature return to Albion was the illness of my father. By May he was confined to his bed; he died the following December, after having obtained a promise from me, as the eldest of a large family, that I would remain with my mother until a younger brother could take my place.

My father was born and reared in Connecticut, whence he rode on horseback to Vincennes, Indiana, there joining a brother who had preceded him. The two brothers were in the employ of the government as land-surveyors, and during the next few years a considerable portion of Indiana was surveyed and mapped by them.' In view of the common but mistaken impression that the perpetuity of the Union was not regarded as mootable until immediately before the Civil War, it may be pertinent to mention that my father in his last illness discussed this very matter repeatedly. The struggle for its existence, he told me, though not to come in his time, would come in mine; slavery would be the cause, but he had an abiding faith that that institution would be done away with, the government be preserved, and the country grow mightily in power and grandeur. Abraham Lincoln was only one among many holding similar opinions. I doubt whether in any section of the country such views gained earlier or more extensive currency than they did in Illinois.

Lincoln's Love for the Union

Mr. Lincoln's devotion to theUnion was a fixed habit of thought long before the War of Secession. It was part and parcel of his consciousness. But it was not the Union as merely a convenient political adaptation that he loved. He loved it because he was bed-rocked in the conviction that only through the Union could be realized his heart's ideal of "a government of the people, by the people, for the people." More than once I heard him say our form of government was the nearest perfection of any he knew of, in the extent to which it represented and protected the masses; in fact, the government was the people's—in their hands to make or mar.

The first public intimation Lincoln gave of his position on slavery was in 1837, while a member of the Illinois Legislature. Resolutions were carried through that body strongly censuring the formation and the teachings of Abolition Societies,and affirming not only "that the right of property in slaves is sacred to the slave-holding states by the Federal Constitution, and they cannot be deprived of that right without their consent," but "that the general government cannot abolish slavery in the District of Columbia against the



"Mr. Lincoln spoke from the balcony over Kinsey's Jewelry-store. It was on Saturday night, and the assemblage was immense"

consent of the citizens of said district, without a manifest breach of good faith." Abraham Lincoln and Daniel Stone, both from Sangamon County, entered a formal protest and caused it to be spread on the journal of the House. In this protest they expressed the opinions that "the institution of slavery is founded on both injustice and bad policy, but that the promulgation of abolition doctrines tends rather to increase than abate its evils. They believe that the Congress of the United States has no power under the Constitution to interfere with the institution of slavery in the different states. They believe that the Congress of the United States *has* the power under the Constitution to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, but that the power ought not to be exercised unless at the request of the people of the district."

Slowly Ripening Views

Read in the light of after events the foregoing expressions seem tame enough; but in reality the step that Lincoln took was a bold one. Not only was he the son of a slave state, not only had he spent his whole life either in Kentucky or in those sections of Indiana and Illinois which had been predominately settled by Kentuckians, but practically all these people believed in the "peculiar institution," and it was to them he owed his seat in the legislature. Slowly yet surely his views continued to ripen. In the closing days of his terms in Congress, in 1849, he introduced a resolution for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, but of course nothing came of it.

The Whig party died. Throughout the Know-Nothing turmoil that followed Lincoln remained in his tent, but not to sulk, and when he emerged it was to take a prominent part in the building up of a new party fundamentally opposed to slavery extension.

That Abraham Lincoln at any period of his life was influenced in his course respecting slavery by any of his fellows I disbelieve absolutely. He was a born leader, with profound convictions of right and wrong, and a judgment so keen that no sophistry could blind it. The repeal of the Missouri Compromise, in 1854, roused his whole nature. The world knows the rest.

Personal Relations of Lincoln and Douglas

Stephen A. Douglas lived in Chicago after the early 40's, hence I saw but little of him, though, as being a student in Lincoln's office, I was honored with an invitation to the ball that he gave on his first election to the United States Senate. Lincoln and he were personal friends, or at least treated each other as such. I never heard Mr. Lincoln speak an ill word of Judge Douglas (nor, for that matter, of any one else).

As early as the time when I first knew Mr. Lincoln, it was undoubtedly true that in the fireside discussions with such minds as Douglas, Calhoun, Logan, Lamborn and Baker—all men of note—he was easily the first. Judge Douglas grew restive under it, and on one or two occasions challenged Lincoln to public debate, relying on his own magnetic eloquence to carry the day and floor his rival. Mr. Lincoln never sought and never shunned these encounters. Throughout Illinois Lincoln came to be considered the abler for close-knit logic, Douglas as the more eloquent and flowery. When the time came that men were willing to give much and anxious thought to pondering the issues whereon these two were pitted against each other, Abraham Lincoln was inevitably the gainer.

ANNUAL PILGRIMAGE OF THE LINCOLN ASSOCIATION, ST. LOUIS, TO THE TOMB OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

A Call on Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln in 1859

The joint debates of 1858 carried Lincoln's fame far beyond his own state. In the autumn of the year following (by which time I had become well established in business in the Queen City), he was called to Cincinnati, to answer an impassioned Squatter Sovereignty address Senator Douglas had recently delivered there. Mr. Lincoln spoke from the balcony over Kinsey's jewelry-store, on the north side of what was then the Fifth Street Market Space, but is now the open space adjoining the beautiful Fountain and Esplanade. It was on Saturday night, and the assemblage was immense. The meeting over, I elbowed my way to the door by which he must come out from the hallway to the street, and when he appeared, called him by name and extended my hand, which he clasped heartily. Almost dragging me through the surging crowd to where his carriage was in waiting, he said: "Gibson, get in; Mary is with me. She is at the hotel, and you must come down to see her." As it was already eleven o'clock, I told him it was too late, but if it would suit their arrangements I would call the next morning. With this understanding we parted, and when I called at the Burnet House (on Sunday forenoon) I was cordially welcomed, but by Mrs. Lincoln was as cordially scolded for not having brought Mrs. Harris. "I will be here this afternoon," she insisted; "you must be sure to bring her then."

The first and only meeting of the two ladies accordingly ensued. Tad Lincoln was with his mother, but Mr. Lincoln had been taken possession of by a bevy of politicians and carried off somewhere. The ladies were very soon on confidential terms. I was ignored, but I distinctly heard Mrs. Lincoln remark: "You are fortunate in having a husband who is not in politics. A politician is owned by everybody, and his wife has many lonely hours."

In the deadly strife of the Civil War several members of Mrs. Lincoln's family sided actively with the Confederates, while her husband, she well knew, had some deadly enemies North as well as South. The strain of such a situation must have been intense, and it is no wonder if she showed the effects of it.

An Incident of the Campaign

A peculiar incident of the presidential campaign of 1860 interests me still—the account that a New York gentleman gave me of a call he had made on Mr. Lincoln. "I was in Chicago," he said, "on the day the convention got through, and while I am a Democrat, I felt a great curiosity to see the man that everybody seemed to be going wild over. I made it my business to go to Springfield and call at Lincoln's law office, but he was not in. Then I went to his house, and was told I would probably find him in the Capitol Building, where a room had been set aside for his use during the campaign. I found the room easily, rapped on the door, and it was opened by a tall man, spare of build and homely featured. I told him I had come to see Mr. Lincoln. He asked me my name, took me by the arm, and introduced me to half a dozen gentlemen who were in the room with him. Then, as simple as a child, he said, 'My name is Lincoln.' In ten minutes I felt as if I had known him all my life. He has the most wonderful faculty for making a person feel at ease of any person I ever met. I came away with the feeling he was an extraordinary man, and I'm going to vote for him; more than that, I intend to influence all that I can to do the same."

A Social Hour With the President-Elect

Mr. Lincoln, in the character of President-elect *en route* to Washington, spent twenty-four hours in Cincinnati. The date was February 12, 1861, being his fifty-second birthday. After witnessing the parade of the afternoon and the handshaking at night, I went to the Burnet House, where Mr. Lincoln was again quartered, and sent up my card by a bell-boy, who promptly returned and bade me follow him. Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln, sitting before a grate fire, were alone in their room, and they greeted me most pleasantly. The boys, Will and Tad, were out watching the crowds. I asked about Bob, and Mr. Lincoln said he was being dined by some of the young men of the city, and added that he was taking a course at Harvard, and was doing well there, though regretting to say his handwriting was miserable. The latter item, I knew, was

[CONCLUDED ON PAGE 24]

"'He took me by the arm, and introduced me to half a dozen gentlemen who were in the room with him' "

My Recollections of Abraham Lincoln

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11]

not meant for a slur; Mr. Lincoln did not indulge in slurs, and was really proud of his oldest son, as well as fond of all his children. For nearly an hour we chatted without interruption, the time passing delightfully for us in reviving old memories and gaining the latest information respecting former friends in Springfield. Mrs. Lincoln took the lead, as was natural, social affairs being more directly in her line.

Before I left, Mr. Lincoln inquired whether I was satisfied with what I was doing, evidently intending it as an opening wedge. I did some fast thinking, and answered, "Yes." I had no claim upon him that would be recognized by the hungry horde of office-seekers who would soon be hounding him; the outlook, too, was for greater and deeper troubles, and to these I would not add. Did I wish afterward that I had answered Mr. Lincoln differently? Yes and no. At least two thirds of my business was with the South, mostly on four months' time and upward. When the Civil War broke out, private debts owing to Northern creditors were confiscated by the Confederate government, leaving us to whistle for our money. To make matters worse, business in Cincinnati, as throughout the greater part of the North, was virtually paralyzed. For ten months I had almost nothing to do. Then the tide turned. I made a successful bid on some government work, and was able to follow it up with others; a general revival of business came in 1862, and the answer I had given Mr. Lincoln entailed no more regret.

Negro Dolls for the President-Elect

Near the close of the above-mentioned interview with the President-elect, on February 12, 1861, Judge William M. Dickson, of Cincinnati (twenty years later killed in an accident on one of the railroads there), whose wife was a cousin of Mrs. Lincoln's, was announced. The greetings over, the Judge got off some rapid-fire questions, a number of which, as also the answers they elicited, I remember distinctly.

"Have you received any threatening letters, Mr. Lincoln?"

"Yes, quite a number—anonymous, of course."

"Have you no fear of possible attempts to execute these threats?"

"Oh, no. I reason that any one who threatens another man's life, yet lacks the courage to sign his name, is too cowardly to act."

Mr. Lincoln laughed, and added, "You ought to see the things, besides letters, that have been sent me." He mentioned some of them in a vein of pleasantry, but I cannot recall the particulars further than that negro dolls were the most numerous, though to him the most amusing was a whistle made from a pig's tail!

"What did you do with them?"

"I packed them in a trunk (or he may have said a box), to look them over with my friends when we get back to Springfield."

But he was never in Springfield again, in life.

Mistaken Portraitures of Abraham Lincoln

In closing these papers, with their chatted survey of "auld lang syne," I feel impelled to warn younger readers against accepting some of the latter-day presentations of the character and personality of Abraham Lincoln. For example, a recent article in a metropolitan daily pictures him as a political boss, than which hardly anything could be falser. Never in his life did he seek to attain a political end by a personal trick, and as for organizing a "machine," that would have been as far from his conception of practical politics as the east is from the west. He ever leaned upon the plain people for support; there was never the slightest attempt to round them up, as the unscrupulous manager of to-day prides himself on doing. He led them, it is true, but it was by virtue of his transcendent fairness, ability and courage. In weighing thoughtfully the appeals he made to their judgment and conscience his countrymen honored themselves, but no more than he had first honored them.

"Another Lincoln anecdote" has just fallen under my notice, vouched for by a journal of high reputation. It concerns a chimney, a mule and a plow; Abraham Lincoln leads the mule, while the older brother holds the plow. The story it is amusing enough, but—Mr. Lincoln's older brother was a sister! The only brother he ever had was a half-brother younger by many years. Why the fourth estate, so vigilant in many things, permits itself to be so grossly imposed upon in the way of Lincoln stories as it does is indeed a conundrum.

There, too, is the historical novel. It needs to be taken with many a grain of salt by whoever would get a true idea of the man Abraham Lincoln. One highly successful production in this department of literature points the moral for all its class. Though extremely interesting in its word-painting of life and conditions on the Ohio and the Southwest immediately before and during the Civil War, it is sadly misrepresentative in its laboured portraiture of Lincoln. I record my earnest, serious protest against its putting "By Jing!" in the Martyr President's mouth, and even calling it "a favorite expression of his"; I cannot make myself believe that Lincoln ever used the phrase, or anything like it. Of all the men I have known well he was the least given to expletives.

The hotel scene with which the work in question introduces Lincoln to the reader is a gross caricature, despite the forced eulogies that interlard it; and the interview between the Southern heroine and the Abolition President, near the end of the story, is equally misleading. Mr. Lincoln never in the world could have called the young lady "Jinny," the word would have choked him. If her name was Jane it would be "Miss Jane" with him; if Virginia, unfailingly "Miss Virginia." So far as this whom went he was a thorough Southerner. But the book's final word rings true. Abraham Lincoln did love the South, as well as the North.

How Rose Valente Achieved Fortune

An Interesting Story of How a Young Woman Succeeded in Business—A Chance for Others to do so, too.

A young lady of Medina, New York, has recently had an experience which has made her envied by all her friends. She is Miss Rose Valente, of 142 Center Street. When asked for the facts, she modestly consented to discuss the matter, and simply showed the following letter, which she wrote to a prominent educator, and which fully explains her story:

"I write you this letter as a statement of my success after taking your instruction in bookkeeping

MISS ROSE VALENTE

and to inform you how pleased I am with the position you secured for me.

"When I first wrote to you I had no idea that bookkeeping could be learned so thoroughly and so easily by correspondence. My friends laughed at the idea, and I had always thought it necessary to attend a business college to learn bookkeeping, but such is positively not the case. I devoted from one half hour to an hour to the study each evening, and in three weeks' time I had a much better knowledge of bookkeeping than the average student who attends a business college during the same period. I know this to be true, because I questioned a young man who was taking a course in a first class business college, and he did not begin to have the practical information I had.

"As soon as I finished the course, I accepted a position that you gave me. I went to work with a great deal of nervousness. After the first day this passed away, because I quickly found out that the practical hints which you taught me enabled me to take hold at once, and by the second week I had charge of a set of books which would stagger many experienced bookkeepers. The fact that my employer has raised my salary twice within the past three months is the best proof that my work has been satisfactory. I advise any one who anticipates taking a course in bookkeeping to take your course. It would be impossible for any one to attend a business college and get the same attention that you give your students. I have learned that if one attends a business college he is filled full of a lot of fancy theories that amount to nothing when he begins practical work. Your course covers the entire field. When I accepted this position I seemed to have just exactly the knowledge I required.

"The advantage in taking a course by correspondence is that when you wish to refer to it you always have it handy, while in taking a personal course you must depend upon memory. During the first few days I was compelled to refer to the course. After I did this a few times I had no trouble.

"I inclose an express money order to pay my tuition. Your offer is certainly a fair one. I should like to know the business college that will allow its students to pay their tuition after the college places them in a position. They do not do this.

"You must pardon me if I appear too enthusiastic, but several of my friends treated this matter as a joke when I decided to take it up, and the joke is now on them. Had I gone to a business college I would not be through yet, and would have spent a great deal. As it now stands, I have a nice position, and did not have to pay a cent for instruction until you placed me in a position.

"Again thanking you for what you have done for me, I am very gratefully yours,

"ROSE R. VALENTE."

Our free book, "How to Succeed in Business," started Miss Valente on the road to success. It tells you how you can learn bookkeeping and pay your tuition after we place you in a position. It tells you about the most wonderful system of accounting ever discovered. It contains information that more than anything else will help you succeed in life.

We have a limited number of these books that will be sent absolutely free to ambitious persons who sincerely desire to better their positions and add to their income. Send us your name and address on a postal card to-day, and receive the book by return post. Address Commercial Correspondence Schools, 124 D Schools Bldg., Rochester, N. Y.