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Lincoln and the Youth of Illinois

Lawyer Lincoln had just come home for dinner - a little late as usual - Springfield, Ill., dined at noon in the 50's. Wives expected their men folks on time and fretted if they were not. Today, however, Mary Lincoln had other worries. The children were "up to something out in the barn." They didn't come when they were called. He better go out and see about it. Mr. Lincoln went on the instant - it took her mind off his own delinquency - collecting a barrel stave as he ran. He knew boys, he knew what the whole town was talking about and may have suspected what they were up to. He was not wrong in his suspicions. He caught them in flagrante delicto!

There had been a hanging in Springfield - a great day, that of a hanging seventy years ago, for the dreadful business was public! Robert Todd Lincoln, possibly ten years old at the time, and a group of his friends had been so stirred by what they had heard that they decided to stage a hanging of their own - puppies and kittens to be the sacrifice to their curiosity. The young barbarians had gathered in Mr. Lincoln's barn and were in the full swing of preparation for their murderous undertaking when their host's father swept down on them, barrel stave in hand.

The would-be hangmen fled, smarting with punishment. I imagine their chief feeling, however, was not repentance but consternation that they had roused the wrath of one whom they knew to be their friend - the best friend they had in town, their fathers aside, many of them lived to say. He could be that, for Lincoln was one of those rare persons who never lose the memory and the feel of their own youth. Most of us prefer to forget our period of callowness, vanity, unmorality, and to pretend to ourselves that we were always controlled and dignified and wise. It is hard on the young. How can they give their confidence to one in whom they discover no sign of an understanding of their own predicament, one who carries himself so aloof from their miseries or follies or revolts that they cannot conceive that he ever went through any such phase of living. Lincoln carried his youth in his heart. Boys divined it - unconsciously - and accepted him without knowing why.

A strong bond was that he really liked the things they liked and did not hesitate to say so - the circus, for instance. He not only took his own boys but children of the neighbors, not neglecting little girls. In one of those stately old houses, set in a wide, elm-filled square, a garden of lilacs and iris and peonies to the rear, which one still finds in Illinois towns untouched by what is called "progress" there was living until recently a beautiful

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lady, well to eighty, who remembered as clearly as anything in her childhood one of the circus parties of ~~Mr. Lincoln's~~. She had lost her mother and had been sent to Springfield to live with an aunt, a neighbor of the Lincolns.

An orphan always appealed deeply to Mr. Lincoln, for his own sorrow as a boy of nine over the death of his mother had never ~~completely~~ faded from his heart. He never failed to speak to this little girl when he met her, to pat her on the shoulder, and make her some little present. "There was something so good about him" the fine old lady would always comment in telling her recollections of Springfield. Particularly did she love to recall the day that he came over to her aunt's to say that there was "a menagerie in town" and wouldn't she let Libby go with him and the boys.

"A menagerie" was of course a diplomatic ~~use of language~~ word. If he had said "circus" there would have been a prompt "No" from Libby's aunt. You could go properly to menageries for animals were educational, so educational that there seemed to be a conviction that the elephant and the kangaroo would prevent the contamination of "the girl on the flying trapeze" and the clown in his powder and paint.

Libby's aunt hesitated - the child was in black, her mother so recently dead, but Mr. Lincoln and Libby begged hard and finally consent was given.

They were modest affairs, the circuses which travelled

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Illinois in those days - one big tent, which would seem very small to us today, two or three little ones for side shows, a dozen wagons, gay with gold and crimson in the spring, though badly battered and stained by fall - a tousled, sleepy lion, one or two elephants. The caravan travelled generally on foot, and there was not a boy in Lincoln's part of Illinois but what had been thrilled by the adventures of the travelers - the time when the roads were so heavy the elephants pushed the wagons; the time the lion escaped and the country barricaded itself until he was caught; the time the big boss was sick and they stayed in one town until every boy for miles around had watered the elephants, talked with the bare-backed rider, listened to the clown. If Abraham Lincoln was within traveling distance of those great events, however serious his legal or political errand, you may be sure he joined the boys.

Libby, seventy years after, could tell you how Mr. Lincoln lost himself as completely as she did in the sights of the show. That was what made him so perfect a host at his circus parties; he enjoyed it all, wondered at it all, was even known to have tried to imitate a wonder, such as the strong man's weight-lifting.

What talks they must have had after they came home, sitting

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on the steps of Mr. Lincoln's house, probably drinking lemonade that Mary Lincoln provided for them, for no mother was more hospitable to her children's friends. Her kindness had an element of excitement because now and then it ended in one of her sudden and picturesque outbursts of temper, scattering them swiftly but leaving them with a thrill which was almost enjoyable. The man who lived to tell the story of the hanging which Mr. Lincoln broke up with a barrel stave told, too, of a candy pull which Mrs. Lincoln gave to the sufferers the even of that dire day, to prove that they were forgiven, probably - a candy pull which ended in disaster, for the molasses boiled over and Mrs. Lincoln in a rage dumped the contents of the pot on the grass.

Sometimes these quick flares of temper resulted in acts that remained in boyish minds as tragic injustice. There is still a story whispered in Springfield, remembered longer probably because it was Bob who suffered - Bob her favorite child, her first born, named for her own father, and to the end of his days "more a Todd than a Lincoln."

It was a period when boys made largely all the tools of their games. Ball bats were made from slats or broom sticks; fish lines from strings carefully hoarded; and hooks from pins or bits of wire. Bob Lincoln had somehow acquired a "store" bat, a "store" reel, line and hook. The whole crowd was proud of knowing a boy with such precious possessions. But one day Bob's equipment disappeared. It was a neighborhood tragedy, for if you properly

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manoeuvred and had something to offer which Bob desired, you might occasionally borrow that bat or fish line. And now it had disappeared.

Soon a story leaked out, came to be believed and has been repeated for seventy years, that Mary Lincoln in a sudden temper over something that Bob had done - tracked in mud, perhaps - had seized bat, fish line and hook and burned them before his eyes.

It was not easy for any mother, however loved, to live down such a deed, but if anyone would ever honestly try to do so, we can believe it would be quick-tempered Mary Lincoln for, whatever her flare-ups, they were sure to be followed by repentant kindness - more and bigger parties, more lemonade, more candy pulls, more popcorn than ever.

The circus was the chief though not the only amusement of Illinois to which Mr. Lincoln might treat his young friends. There were the itinerant players, and one finds no mean names among them. It is not at all improbable that Abraham Lincoln saw Sol Smith Russell playing in "Pizarro" at $6.00 a week, playing the whole Spanish army as well as several other minor parts!

There were other entertainments that he always patronized, with or without the boys. There were the travelling magicians, working wonders with crude electric and chemical apparatus. There was the sleight-of-hand man, who could cut off a man's head, lay it a yard away from his body, later join the two members, and resurrect the dead man - at least that is what his circular said; there were mind-readers, finding hidden articles, telling your name; mesmerists - all black magic to boys and endlessly fascinating. And what great stuff to discuss with Mr. Lincoln. Men of his own age laughed

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at his fondness for these traveling fakers. He told one of them once, a little pathetically, that it was only to make up for that lack of a chance at an education that he didn't have when he was a boy. There was no doub. that he as well as the boys got something out of it.

Springfield was not the only town where a crowd of boys gathered instinctively about Abraham Lincoln wherever he appeared. The rambling, leisurely life of an Illinois lawyer and politician, traveling his circuit in the 40s and 50s favored acquaintanceship. Everybody knew everybody or at least about everybody. When the ~~law, the~~ bar and bench and the politician appeared the whole community gathered about ~~them~~, youth included.

The court room, the political meeting played a big part in the education of pioneer boys. Love of exditement, curiosity, led them to worm their way into every gathering of men. They went to see what a murderer looked like, to know if it was true that the thief caught hung his head, to hear what the judge said to the drunkard, the man who had beaten his wife. They came away filled with curious awakening ideas about good and evil, crime and punishment. They learned about men in these gatherings, and most of them had their likes and dislikes. The mixture of candor and humor, shrewdness, earnestness and melancholy in Lincoln made up what was to the average

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boy a compelling personality. Then they liked his simple, understandable language. He was natural, "never put on", was never mean nor sneering, and then he was generous. Many of them heard their fathers laughing over the indignation of Lincoln's fellow lawyers because his fees were always so low, at his returning a part of a fee and even taking none at all when people were very poor or in trouble. They liked that kind of a man.

Best of all did the boys love to hang to the skirts of the little group sure to gather about Lincoln when he was off duty. Frequently he had a favorite rendezvous, a place where he was almost sure to be found - whittling, story telling, discussing. His propensity to drop into a familiar corner in his hours of idleness showed itself when he first appeared in Illinois - a hand in a logging camp, building a flat boat. Here his chosen retreat was a log -"Abe's log", the men called it; and here they gathered about him to listen to his stories.

Years later, become a valued member of the Illinois bar and one of the State's leading Whigs, his liking for his own seat persisted. Sunny days it was under a tree on the court house square, or on a shady corner of the Court House portico. In cold weather it was by a stove in a place where men collected, where he was sure of a welcome. He even had his own chair, vacant until he appeared; or, if occupied on his arrival, immediately given up. ~~There was a Lincoln's chair in Diller's drug store in Springfield, in Duncan's~~

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drug store in Knoxville.

Great talk centered about Lincoln's chair, and famous story telling, so the boys discovered, and in every town there were those who manoeuvred to get a place where, unnoticed, they might listen - possibly pretending inattention lest voices be lowered, tales edited.

They loved his gusto in story-telling as well as the stories themselves. The early settler who remembered Abe's Log in the lumber camp on the Sangamon river, never failed to tell you how when he reached the climax of a yarn he would "whoop and roll off." His dignity was greater now and, instead of rolling over, he would spring to his feet, turn completely around, and slap his thigh.

His repertoire of stories was so vast that his admirers loved to pit him against famous local story tellers. There was one in Knoxville - Uncle Billy Sanborn - an habitué of Duncan's drug store, [illegible] here boys found their way when Mr. Lincoln was in town, to hear the two compete.

There was no age limit in Lincoln's association with youth. A matchless grown-up playmate of boys, he was a natural and accepted companion of young manhood. He was more fatherly with them than with the youngsters. He talked of books, life, men. The young law students on his circuit, the clerks in the stores, the boys on the farms - all found themselves at home with him.

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He had served his term at all their trades, could talk cattle-breeding, crop planting with one; keeping store with another, studying law with a third. He was one man in their world of universal interest and experience. He had tried it all. They felt his understanding and did not fear him - facts that made his rebukes and his counsels far reaching. That is, he became unconsciously a mentor to those who came his way, and when he found them in danger of defying one of the few verities to which he held, he was as hard with them as with the boys staging their hanging.

He had plenty of material on which to work. The lawyer in a pioneer community has for clients, opponents, witnesses, many a young would-be desperado, careless of decency, quick with the gun, a hard drinker, quite willing to live without work. He was relentless with them. There is a story ~~which more than one of his biographers have repeated in one or another form~~, of a boy witness for a defendant in a case where Mr. Lincoln was for the plaintiff. He suspected the lad knew things which he did not want to tell - things not to his credit. He knew he might lie. Mr. Lincoln pushed him to a point in examination where he must tell and shame himself or lie in self-protection. He told the truth. After the trial was over, Mr. Lincoln looked up the shame-faced lad. Years later the boy became a respected Judge and used to repeat what his inquisitor had said to him: "I did not like to make you tell these things you

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wanted to hide, but you wouldn't lie and I am proud of you for it."

He was hard on youth that came to him for help in taking advantage of others. "Go to work and earn the money - it will be worth more to you than what you will get by suing," was the gist of his advice to those who sought the help of the law in what seemed to him unnecessary, unjust, tricky or hard-hearted cases. "Work, work, work!" was his counsel always to youth, whether it was the farm, the shop, or the law. That to his mind was the democratic road to success. He had a Jeffersonian contempt for idleness - a biblical severity for those who ate bread they did not earn. His speeches, after he began his long fight to prevent the system of slavery spreading beyond its legal boundaries, are sprinkled with interesting reflections on labor. He had no patience with the idea that he who is once a hired laborer is fatally fixed in that condition for life - that notion was what he called the "mud sill" theory -- but it was not the way democracy worked. On the contrary, a prudent man labored for wages, saved until he had a surplus with which he could buy a farm or tools, set up on his own account, hiring a beginner to help him. This, he contended, was the course of "free labor - the just and generous system" which opened the way for all. If a man failed to rise from the position of a hired laborer, it was not the fault of the system but because he was dependent by nature, was imprudent,

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foolish, or singularly misfortunate.

When it came to applying his philosophy of labor to the procession of youth that was always asking his help or advice, he never let them down easy. He had years of annoyance with a step-brother whose ruling economic passion was to turn into cash any property in which he had even a small interest, and spend the cash seeking new fields. He was settled in Illinois but wanted to move to Missouri.

"What can you do in Missouri better than here," argued the irritated Lincoln, in reply to a request that he be allowed to sell the land in Illinois in which he had an interest and on which Lincoln had a mortgage to its full value, "What can you do in Missouri better than here? Is the land any richer? Can you there any more than here, raise corn and wheat and oats without work? Will anybody there any more than here do your work for you? If you intend to go to work, there is no better place than right where you are; if you do not intend to go to work, you cannot get along anywhere. Squirming and crawling about from place to place can do no good."

And so on and on - a series of blunt letters equal to those of "Poor Richard".

It was the legal student, the boy ambitious for college, the newly admitted attorney that sought his help most frequently. Some of them no doubt had played ball with him as

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boys, heard him tell stories at the firesides of their homes. They had complete confidence in him, coupled with ease in his presence. They could talk out with him whatever troubled them, tell him their ambitions, their difficulties. "No young lawyer ever practiced in the courts with Mr. Lincoln," said one of them, "who did not in all his after life have a regard for him akin to personal affection." Another, become a distinguished judge, recalls with what confidence he always went to him because, as he says, "I was certain he knew all about the matter and would most cheerfully help me."

A feature of his counsel to boys ambitious to study law, rare enough in men who have not had academic training or who have read law in the orthodox fashion, was the emphasis he put on individual effort, purpose, responsibility. He would not admit that there was magic in college - in the place or man you read with.

"I didn't read law with anyone," he wrote one youth. "Get the books, and read and study them until you understand them in their principal features, and that is the main thing. It is of no consequence to be in a large town when you are reading. I read at New Salem, which never had more than 300 people in it. The books and your capacity for understanding them are just the same in all places."

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And here is a precious bit of counsel for those who would achieve, whether it be character, knowledge, usefulness:

"Always bear in mind that your resolution to succeed is more important than any other one thing."

The youths to whom he had acted even as a casual mentor, always remained in his mind. Once that he knew something of their habits, their efforts, he liked to keep track of them. Their failures, set-backs hurt him, and he always wanted, if he could, to do something about it. There are plenty of intimations of the warmth and permanency of his interest. There is no better evidence of the way he made their cases his own than in a letter recently made public.

The moment at which this letter was written as well as the text itself, reveals the man, for it is dated July 22, 1860; that is, when his campaign for the presidency was in full swing, when he was giving hours of time to listening to visitors from every corner of the country and war over-run with correspondence of as serious and alarming a nature as ever has flooded a nominee for the presidency of the U. S.

He had received a letter the night before, which had brought him deep satisfaction. It was from his son Bob and told him that he had passed his examination for Harvard College. It is good to know that his pride in his son which he felt that day never received a shock. Bob entered Harvard in September of 1860, following

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the usual course - philosophy, forensics, political economy, mathematics, elocution, science, the classics, - and graduated in June 1864 with honors. At that time two honor lists were published on the commencement program, and Robert Todd Lincoln's name appears on both lists - the 32nd in one and the 30th in the other, which, Harvard authorities tell me was at that time equivalent to present day honors.

But the letter which brought him pride brought him distress for from it he learned that a boy in whom he was interested had failed to pass.

Whatever was in the wind that July morning, and there was plenty, nothing mattered for the moment but counselling his young friend. The opening sentence of the letter which he wrote probably puts his feeling none too strongly:

> "I have scarcely felt greater pain in my life than learning yesterday from Bob's letter, that you had failed to enter Harvard University.
>
> "And yet there is very little in it, if you will allow no feeling of <u>discouragement</u> to seize, and prey upon you. It is a <u>certain</u> truth, that you <u>can</u> enter, and graduate in, Harvard University; and having made the attempt, you <u>must</u> succeed in it. <u>Must</u> is the word --
>
> "I know not how to aid you, save in the assurance of one of mature age, and much severe experience, that you <u>can</u> not fail, if you resolutely determine that you <u>will</u> not. . . . . .

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"In your temporary failure there is no evidence that you may not yet be a better scholar, and a more successful man in the great struggle of life, than many others, who have entered college more easily --

"Again I say let no feeling of discouragement prey upon you, and in the end you are sure to succeed."

Intimate and helpful as Lincoln's relations with the youth of Illinois were in the first period of his active professional life, it is doubtful if he ever stirred the depths of their minds or spirits. What he constantly and almost unconsciously did was to help them feel the importance of - perhaps to desire - a few things which he had gradually discovered to be necessary if a man was to extract from the confusion of life satisfaction for himself as well as give satisfaction to those with whom his life is interwoven! - ~~verities that he had discovered, such as~~ the control of over desires, non-interference with others, doing your part in the world's work, seeing far enough ahead and behind him to feel humility and reverence. These things he communicated, but he knew that below and beyond these things there was in his own nature a depth that he had not reached. He undoubtedly sensed untouched depths in many of the youths he loved, but he knew that he would never stir those depths until he had found his way to the bottom of his own nature. But how descend there? Was he to content himself with the program of decent activities, of upright action, of

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friendly relationships that he had worked out for himself and which he was holding up to youth as essential to successful living? He was following his program faithfully. In time his success might stifle his tormenting sense of something greater possible to him and to the youth about him.

He was forty-five years of age, his time and strength given to the law, political ambitions laid aside when the path opened to that valley of anguish, sorrow and strife where he was ~~to make his fight~~, to lay hands on the greater things that had haunted him.

Under the leadership of Stephen Douglas, Illinois' most brilliant citizen, the man who had first made the state known to the nation, the one she expected to bring to her the honor of furnishing a president to the United States - an attempt was suddenly sprung to extend slavery into free territory. The first act in that attempt brought Lincoln to his feet. Throwing aside every hindering obligation, every counsel of prudence, he plunged headlong into a fight against the extension of slavery - a fight so well sustained that in six years it made him president of the United States.

From the start he was a new man, one obviously struggling to drag from himself his own deepest convictions. The solemnity with which he took hold of the problem involved aroused many a youth who listened to him, more powerfully than anything that

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ever touched him in all his life. Men are still living in Illinois whose first impression of Abraham Lincoln as a man different from the me ~~him~~ they had known came to them with the first speech that they heard him make in his arguments against slavery as an iniquity, a contradiction not only to the faith of the land but to the core of ~~their own~~ Man's spiritual being.

They will tell you, these men, then boys, how they had wormed their way to the edge of the platform where he was to speak, or stood swaying their long legs from a house top or the branches of a tree if the speech was out of doors, as so often happened in the four years that he was campaigning. Bits of personal experience give veracity to their stories: the impression of the boy who, seeing Lincoln rise for the first time, thought he would never get through getting up. The boys who will tell you they felt sorry for him because his face was so gloomy, it was so hard for him to get started. They repeat jokes: "Hold my coat while I stone Stephen" or describe sudden outbursts of anger when he thought his opponent was not playing fair. Many of them will confess to you that they didn't know very well what it was all about, only that he had reached something in them that they didn't know existed.

Here was this companion of their games transformed, revealing himself in strange and solemn earnestness, calling them to consider things so big that they dwarfed all that hitherto had seemed serious in life. He was turning up new soil in them. They sensed

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that he was touching reality beyond their experience - reality infinitely more desirable than they had ever felt or thought. Out of his words there came to many of them their first thirst for righteousness, their first hate of evil. They began to see the enslavement of human beings as an iniquity, not as heretofore a mere matter of business and politics. It was a matter of right and wrong; and right and wrong under Lincoln's handling assumed proportions of which they had never dreamed.

As the four years' struggle went on, youth was the first to realize that Lincoln's sombre shadow was growing in size, in depth, in definiteness of outline. It was dimming, engulfing Douglas - their dazzling Douglas who for years now had been coming to them as a conquerer, who had always been and who expected to remain a conquerer - thanks to their suffrage.

With the clarity of unspoiled minds and with the new spiritual understanding which Lincoln had awakened in them they began to see as the months went on that Douglas was very like other men they knew. His ways were the ways of the "richest man in town" only more polished; his eloquence had the sound of local orators only more rotund, more magnificent, still it was like that of the men they knew as orators. I have heard a man of eighty tell how Lincoln's sombre earnestness awed him.

"And Douglas?" I asked.

"Oh, Douglas was an orator."

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It was not alone the youth that had known him in Springfield and on the circuit that he stirred. Slowly but surely all Illinois was permeated by the profound thought and feeling that Lincoln was revealing. He was a strange new light in the heavens - a voice calling in the wilderness; and when, almost at the end of his long struggle Donati's comet illumined the Heavens, many an awe-struck settler on the prairie of Illinois interpreted it as a sign from the Lord, warning them of both the truth and the tragedy in Lincoln's teachings.

It is from the son of one of these settlers who had felt Lincoln's power without seeing or hearing him until the very end of the great debate, that we have the most penetrating analysis of the man's power that the time produced.

Southwest from Springfield, far from a town an Englishman and his wife with one son settled in the 50s. Their name was Grierson - the boy was called Francis. They were people of fine breeding, lofty nature, glad to throw their fortunes into opening a new land. With slavery they had no sympathy and when they discovered that the majority of their scattered and generally uneducated neighbors were strong Abolutionists, even running a station of the Illinois underground railway by which so many negroes were helped to Canada and to freedom they gladly did their part in aiding them. They came to feel with their neighbors that Lincoln was a man sent by God to

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Southwest from Springfield, far from a town, an Englishman and his wife with one son settled in the 50s. Their name was Grierson - the boy was called Francis. They were people of fine breeding and courage, glad to throw their fortune into opening a new land. With slavery they had no sympathy and when they discovered that the majority of their scattered and generally uneducated neighbors were strong Abolutionists, even running a station of the Illinois underground railway by which so many negroes were helped to Canada and to freedom, they gladly did their part in aiding them. They came to feel with their neighbors that Lincoln was a man sent by God to lead the country to freedom. To young Francis Grierson the name was, like the comet, a mysterious omen from on High.

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lead the country to freedom. To young Francis Grierson the name became a symbol of all that was noble and inspiring.

The struggle of the Griersons with the raw prairie proved too much for their strength and resources. They gave up the wild for the town of Alton. And here, soon after their moving, the boy saw a great crowd gathering. Among them were men he knew to have come from the country they had just left. "What does it mean?" he asked, and his father replied, "To-morrow is the great day."

To-morrow was the 15th of October 1858 - the day when the four years' struggle ended with the last of the great Debates between Stephen Douglas and Abraham Lincoln. The boy heard the two men and years later set down his impressions. Here is Abraham Lincoln as he saw him on that "great day."

> "And now Abraham Lincoln rose from his seat, stretched his long, bony limbs upward as if to get them into working order, and stood like some solitary pine on a lonely summit, very tall, very dark, very gaunt, and very rugged, his swarthy features stamped with a sad serenity, and the instant he began to speak the ungainly mouth lost its heaviness, the half-listless eyes attained a wondrous power, and the people stood bewildered and breathless under the natural magic of the strangest, most original personality known to the English-speaking world since Robert Burns. There were other very tall and dark men in the heterogeneous assembly, but not one who resembled the speaker. Every movement of his long, muscular frame denoted intensity, earnestness, and a something issued forth, elemental and mystical, that told what the man had been, what he was, and what he would do in the future. There were moments when he seemed all legs and feet, and again he appeared all head and neck; yet

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The struggle of the Griersons with the raw prairie proved too much for their strength and resources. They gave up the wild for the town of Alton. And here, soon after their moving, the boy one day saw a great crowd gathering. "What does it mean?" he asked, and his father replied, "Tomorrow is the Great Day."

Tomorrow was the 15th of October 1858 - the day when Lincoln's four years' struggle ended with the last of his joint debates with Stephen Douglas. The boy heard the two men, and here is Abraham Lincoln as he saw him on that "Great Day:"

> "And now Abraham Lincoln rose from his seat, stretched his long, bony limbs upward as if to get them into working order, and stood like some solitary pine on a lonely summit, very tall, very dark, very gaunt, and very rugged, his swarthy features stamped with a sad serenity, and the instant he began to speak the ungainly mouth lost its heaviness, the half-listless eyes attained a wondrous power, and the people stood bewildered and breathless under the natural magic of the strangest, most original personality known to the English-speaking world since Robert Burns. There were other very tall and dark men in the heterogeneous assembly, but not one who resembled the speaker. Every movement of his long, muscular frame denoted inflexible earnestness, and a something issued forth, elemental and mystical, that told what the man had been, what he was, and what he would do in the future.

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every look of the deep-set eyes, every movement of the prominent jaw, every wave of the hard-gripping hand, produced an impression, and before he had spoken twenty minutes the conviction took possession of thousands that here was the prophetic man of the present and the political saviour of the future. Judges of human nature saw at a glance that a man so ungainly, so natural, so earnest, and so forcible, had no place in his mental economy for the thing called vanity.. . . . .

"What thrilled the people who stood before Abraham Lincoln on that day was the sight of a being who, in all his actions and habits, resembled themselves, gentle as he was strong, fearless as he was honest, who towered above them all in that psychic radiance that penetrates in some mysterious way every fibre of the hearer's consciousness.

"The enthusiasm created by Douglas was wrought out of smart epigram thrusts and a facile, superficial eloquence, his weight in the political balance was purely materialistic; his scales of justice tipped to the side of cotton, slavery, and popular passions, while the man who faced him now brought to the assembly cold logic in place of wit, frankness in place of cunning, reasoned will and judgment in place of chicanery and sophistry. Lincoln's presence infused into the mixed and uncertain throng something spiritual and supernormal. His looks, his words, his voice, his attitude, were like a magical essense dropped into the seething cauldron of politics, reacting against the foam, calming the surface and letting the people see to the bottom."

Three weeks after the Alton debate, Lincoln's long effort to arouse Illinois to the wickedness of slavery ended in his apparent defeat. The campaign which gave him his hearing was for a United States senatorship. Douglas won. He had done his best and he returned to his law more deeply satisfied than he

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Three weeks after the Alton debate, Lincoln's long effort to arouse Illinois to the wickedness of slavery ended in his apparent defeat. The campaign which gave him his hearing was for a United States senatorship. Douglas won. He had done his best and he returned to his law more deeply satisfied than he had ever been in his life. He had come nearer to the naked truth than ever before and he knew that more men were with him now than when he began. That was his reward. He would go back to his law.

But the youth he had carried with him had other plans for him. There was a young Ohio reporter, David R. Locke, who came out to the Alton debate which so stirred Francis Grierson, to see for himself if this Lincoln whose voice and

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personality were spreading steadily eastward from the prairie, stood the test of a close view. He feltin him what Francis Grierson felt and went home to help engineer, if not inaugurate, the first public demonstration ever made for Lincoln as President of the United States, that at Mansfield, Ohio, on November 6, 1858. Later he threw himself into the fight as a political satirist - one of the most successful of his day - Petroleum V. Nasby was the name he was known by.

There was a whole regiment of Illinois youngsters who had followed Lincoln and Douglas from one end of the State to the other, and who came to feel that Lincoln, as they said, "got it right." They were quick on Locke's heels in declaring he was their candidate for the presidency in 1860. Their efforts to nominate and afterward to elect him make a brave story of young reporters, young lawyers, young business men, young farmers, uniting with their elders in the joyous effort only possible where there is absolute faith in a leader and the cause he has espoused.

They elected him, and as soon as they saw it was no longer a question of ballots but of bullets, seized their guns, many of them lied about their ages, and went out to help save the Union.

As the struggle went on the man they followed took on larger and larger proportions to these youth. More and more

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had ever been in his life. He had come nearer to the naked truth than ever before and he knew that more men were with him now than when he began. That was his reward.

But the youth he had carried with him would not let him go. There was a boy from Ohio - a young reporter who came to the Alton debate which so stirred Francis Grierson, to see for himself if this Lincoln whose voice and personality were spreading so steadily eastward from the prairie stood the test of a close view. He felt in him what Francis Grierson felt and came home to help engineer, if not inaugurate, the first public demonstration ever made for Lincoln as President of the United States, that at Mansfield, Ohio on November 6, 1858. And later he threw himself into the fight as a political satirist - one of the most successful of the day - Petroleum V. Nasby was the name he was known by.

There was a whole regiment of youngsters who had followed the two debaters from one end of Illinois to the other, and who had come to feel that Lincoln had, as they said, "got it right."

The supreme service men render their kind is arousing in them a sense of the overwhelming importance and beauty of that which is true, and those who have been thus aroused to feel for the first time the grandeur of any essential moral thing never forget him through whom that experience came to them. These Illinois youth, aroused by Lincoln, would hear now of nothing but that he be the

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he became to them a man of mysterious might and power. His death and all the disillusionment of reconstruction did not dim him in their eyes. The supreme service men render to youth is arousing in them a sense of the overwhelming importance and beauty of that which is true, and those who have been thus aroused to feel for the first time the grandeur of any essential moral thing never forget him through whom that experience came to them. These Illinois youth could not forget. So long as they lived, they could never hear enough of him. Their fathers, their grandfathers had known Lincoln well in his youth. They could tell intimate and humorous things of him, and loved to do it, their sons and grandsons listening avidly, filling their minds with the homely naturalness of the man, who had opened to them the greatest things they had known in life.

The more they heard the more they revered. Everything that concerned him became sacred to them. Nothing was trivial, they treasured what men remembered of his looks, his ways, his words. They gathered up the rude possessions of his youth and manhood - his maul, his saddlebags, his wooden office chair, the few books in which he had signed his name. Particularly did they treasure his written words. The fullness of the records we have on Abraham Lincoln's life is due largely to the deep and

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candidate for the presidency in 1860 of the new Republican party. The story of their efforts to nominate and afterward to elect him has never been connectedly told, but it is a brave story of young reporters, young lawyers, young business men, young farmers, uniting with their elders in the joyous effort only possible where there is absolute faith in a leader and the cause he has espoused.

He was elected, and soon they saw it was no longer a question of ballots but of bullets, but wherever he called they went, serving as there was need, and with them many a boy, aroused like young Grierson, who now seized a gun, lied about his age, went out to help save the Union.

As the struggle went on the man took on larger and larger proportions to these youth. More and more he became to them a man of mysterious might and power. His death and all the disillusionment of reconstruction did not dim him in their eyes. So long as they lived they could never hear enough of him. Their fathers and their grandfathers in many cases had known Lincoln well in his youth. They could tell intimate and humorous things of him, and loved to do it. Indeed, it was not an unusual thing for men of Illinois who had known Lincoln as a boy to spend half a night talking of him, sons and grandsons of theirs listening avidly, filling their minds with the homely naturalness of the man, and the more they heard the more they revered.

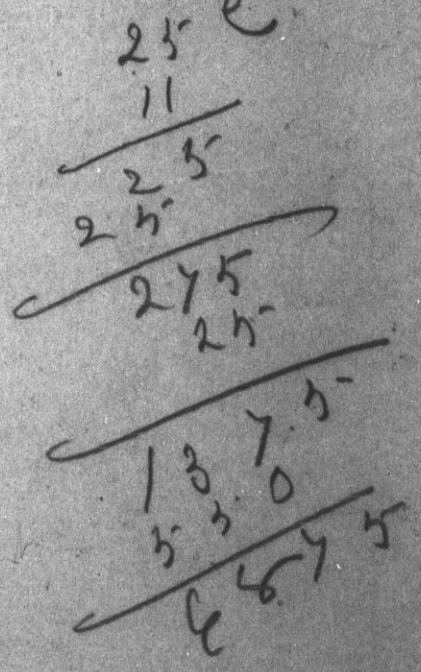
Many a one of them has tried in one way or another to

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many Nights cause to feel a compelling desire to pass in the Man as the Cad from whom I had suffered the Mal-treatment of.

— Everything that concerned him became sacred — Nothing was trivial — They treasured a Match-box he remembered & his Rods — His Grips his Cards — particularly did they treasure his Pocket Book, and turned up at the rude Inventory of his Pocket & Purse Contents a Visiting Card bearing his name — The following of the records in A. A.'s Life as she called to the deep & unfathomable Well of Love

~~page on to the youth of today something of the spiritual awakening~~ and who loved to hear him ~~that he experienced under Lincoln's leadership.~~ They have felt it as part of their obligation for ~~what he had experienced for them~~ to do what they might to preserve him for those who come after us a great living, spiritual force - one of those rare beings in a nation's life that drag it from its preoccupation with the forces of materialism and convince it beyond all argument that the great experience for them as well as the great hope of the world lies in understanding and following not material but spiritual forces.



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unforgetable hold he had on those who knew him in their youth, and felt it a sacred obligation to do what they might to preserve him for those who came after, - a great living, spiritual force - one of those rare beings in a nation's life that drag it from its preoccupation with the forces of materialism and convince it beyond all argument that the great experience for men as well as the great hope of the world lies in understanding and following not material but spiritual things.

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