

LINCOLN'S "MUST"

THE ONE STRIKING WORD THAT COWED THE IMPERIOUS STANTON.

Original Lincoln Stories by George T. Ferris, Who Spoke From the Same Platform as Lincoln—John Wilkes Booth's Blazing Eyes.

By George T. Ferris in Columbian Magazine.

Nicolay and Hay, the most authentic biographers of Abraham Lincoln, have taken assiduous pains to minimize as far as possible the impression as to his utter lack of physical comeliness. Nicolay said of the great war president's personal appearance: "President Lincoln was of unusual stature, 6 feet 4 inches, and of spare but muscular build; he had been in youth remarkably strong and skillful in the athletic games of the frontier, where, however, his popularity and recognized impartiality often made him an umpire than a champion. He had regular and repressing features, prominent cheek bones, deep set eyes, and bushy black hair turning to gray at the temples as he grew old."

As a young man, scarcely more than a boy, recently emancipated from the foisters of an eastern college, saw him for the first time in 1859, this description seems in memory a little highly colored. The tall gaunt figure was somewhat round shouldered and bent, possessing the great stature, the face set regular in outline though bold and alert in features with a crag-like forehead. The mouth large with rather thin lips and sunken cheeks, their lean, strong jaw certainly did not complete an ensemble which may be called "good looking," in its conventional meaning. But the eyes were magnificent and would have redeemed a much plainer face. Large, bluish-gray, deep set under the cliff-like brows, softly brilliant as those of a stag, and centered with a piercing light, their irradiation was magical, especially when he smiled. A scrawny neck, all shewn; large, bony hands and big feet were accented by great carelessness. A habit of under the chin, which Mr. Lincoln in the days of his anchored greatness was never graduated.

On the occasion referred to the man, whose rising fame was beginning to make the west clamorous and the east equally inquisitive, was garbed in a New York macaroni suit. Large, baggy trousers that did not come well down over the instep, an alpaca coat, rather short sleeved, with nankeen waistcoat and a white collar exposing the brown, corded neck, certainly did not alleviate what at crude glance was an ungainly exterior. How in later conversation, in which the writer took a very humble part, Mr. Lincoln slipped easily into a transfiguration which stripped from him everything of the commonplace, was like the effect of an enchanter's wand. This did not so much appear at that time in his platform talk as in the familiar touch-and-go conversation with a group of friends, when the individuality of the man gleamed at so many facets and prism. It is impossible to recall details of what was said on an occasion more than a half century since, but the impression left was intensely vivid.

It was at an independence day festival at an Illinois town in 1859 that the writer first saw "Old Abe," as the man encased in that homely crystalline festined soon to burst into immortal fame was generally known to the people of the state. Hon. Owen Lovejoy, the congress representative from the district and an intimate friend of Mr. Lincoln, had been scheduled as the orator. But impending illness prevented, and Mr. Lovejoy had persuaded his good natured friend to take his place, a change which was more than welcomed. Mr. Lovejoy's brother had been killed and his printing press destroyed the year before at an "Egyptian" town by an angry "pro-slavery" mob. The natural radicalism of temperament and conviction inherent in Mr. Lovejoy's mental habit had been embittered into gall by this political time, and some of the more prudent republicans had dreaded a firebrand touch in his Fourth of July talk. When it was known that Mr. Lincoln was coming, the feeling of satisfaction was something like a relief, for the republicanism of that day was tentative and believed in making haste slowly. Lincoln's wonderful public debate with the "little giant" the year before had set him in the limelight, as one who embodied the terms of an inexorable logic with an illuminating force, which was also tolerant and fair minded. If any one ever united the "suaviter in modo" with the "fortiter in re," it was that glorified "country bumpkin," as many of his opponents were in the habit of calling him.

The audience numbered some thousands who had streamed in from the contiguous portions of three counties, for there was to be a grand barbecue after the platform exercises, and the beautiful green was alive with happy folk attired in all styles from broadcloth to jeans and cowhide boots, with their women folk in progeny. Horses and mules picketed at a great cordon

of Conestoga wagons lent their accent to the human din.

When Mr. Lincoln upheaved his awkward length from the chair where he sat coiled up, it was with a tense and active spring and a face beaming with smiles which transfused it. Through the general clamor hundreds of voices cried "Howdy—Abe" with a more specialized welcome. The speaker's voice at the outset was a shrill falsetto, that cut like a knife; but after talking a few minutes—for indeed it was rather an informal talk than an oration—it steadied into a strident, compelling tone that, never ceasing to be a little harsh, obsessed attention and transmuted dissonance into a more subtle music. One could wish to have remembered and quoted, for the address bristled with homely epigrams and telling stories. But a half century obliterates detail in such matters, and only two little episodes stand out clear. Though the speech was largely non-political, addressed to familiar every day interests as they had grown out of the evolution of the nation for three-quarters of a century, he made some pregnant allusions to Senator Douglas, many



ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

of whose admirers were in the audience. Just at this time some restless mules began to bray. There was a laugh at the interruption, and a loud voice shouted satirically "That's your answer Abe." "Very well!" responded the orator. "It seems to me the mule's heehaw is about the only answer that can be given to the four-square truth. 'Steve' tried to do it last year and couldn't." The audience roared.

An illustration that Mr. Lincoln used stuck fast in memory. Farmers were everywhere then sinking artesian wells in a state where good water was a problem. "That's the way," said he, "that the plain people of the country will meet their troubles: drill down to where the truth stands on a steady level unchanged by rain or shine, winter or summer. We don't want any more supply from the surface." Everybody, of course, recognized the illusion to the doctrine of "Squatter Sovereignty"—that shallow and delusive panacea

which had been the main issue in the great battle which Lincoln had fought with Stephen A. Douglas, the year before. More came out on this fascinating subject after the speaking exercises were over and the baroque side of the celebration with its jovial noise and free chat ruled the roost.

"Abe"—thus was Mr. Lincoln addressed by some of the group among whom the writer was standing—said one of them, "I wish you had told us more about that 'Freeport speech of yours last year.' The readers of to-day may be reminded that in that speech Mr. Lincoln put the query to his brilliant antagonist, the answer to which proved in its effect to have had as much to do in precipitating the civil war as did the John Brown raid. The Lincoln question was whether on the 'popular sovereignty' theory the legal possession of slaves in a territory could be averted by any possible means. His friends adjured him not to put that proposition; that if Douglas answered it to the satisfaction of Illinois audiences, he would be elected to the Senate and Lincoln defeated in his effort to obtain the prize. Mr. Lincoln insisted and flung out that challenge. He justified it on the ground that the answer might secure the senatorship; but that almost certainly it would defeat the candidacy of Douglas for the presidency at the next general democratic convention, and that that was by far the more important object. The fertile mind of Douglas had at once found a solution. Whatever the theory and conditions of territorial government, the police power of that government could meet any exigency, was the marrow of his answer.

"We should like to know more about your reasons," Mr. Lincoln's friend went on, "for believing that you had put Steve Douglas betwixt the devil

and the deep sea." "Because," said he, "the slave democracy next year will have no use for a candidate who dares to carry water on both shoulders, and the party will be rent to the bottom, as the northern fragment will accept no other man but Douglas." With that he abruptly changed the subject, and no one ventured to press it further. With all his free and familiar geniality there was that in Lincoln which at once imposed silence and deference when he chose. Such, in substance, are the main incidents which the writer recalls.

The firmness and resolution that lay under the tender sympathies and kindness of Mr. Lincoln's temperament were abundantly illustrated during that wonderful four years which made him such a salient figure in modern history. Such a characteristic can be displayed in trifles as well as in critical affairs. It is such a trifle that came authentically within the writer's ken. It had indeed more quality in its revealing than many in more touching big events. It was the experience of a near relative, who had official business at the White House in 1863.

He had been appointed by the governor of his state to act as its legal representative in straightening out a certain tangle, relating to the state apportionment of troops under the conscription of that year. There had been much correspondence with the war department in which the imperious temper of Secretary Stanton, who always tended to ride rough shod over all opposition, and who resented what seemed to be the slightest interference with his will, had been almost insolent. It had indeed been a little, but he refused to permit any adjudication or compromise of the issue; refused even to discuss it. Governor Buckingham's instructions to his commissioners were to refer the whole question directly to the president. Mr. Lincoln's strong sense of equity was widely recognized. It was also believed that no man in the cabinet had so much influence over his chief as the great minister, and it was with some misgiving that the two impressions were balanced in the scales. The truth seems to have been, as shown by all the memoirs of the war period, that President Lincoln saw in Stanton the man of men in a most onerous position to do things, and to get them done by others; a man, who had no patience with failure; a human dynamo who never ran down, and kept the immense war machinery humming with his own electric energy. Such an invaluable instrument as this was permitted so much license, sometimes verging on insolence, that other officials who looked on sometimes marveled at the president's patience with the American "Louvain." But if Lincoln knew Stanton, Stanton also knew Lincoln.

The state commissioner was most courteously received by Mr. Lincoln, who was satisfied with the elucidation of the affair. He endorsed his opinion on the papers, and Mr. E., with a card of introduction, proceeded with them to the war department. He made his



The Lincoln Cabin.

business known with its latest credentials, but Secretary Stanton burst into a furious tirade against his chief for interposing in matters whereof his knowledge was nil, stormed up and down his office for half an hour, and metaphorically kicked his visitor out with a curt refusal. A second call at the White House etched a stern wrinkle over the president's habitually kind eyes, now, however, with a little blaze in them, as he received the report of that sinister reception; but in a moment he laughed. Snatching a pen he wrote one short word, "Must," underscored three times, and signed "A. Lincoln" on the document envelope.

"Perhaps Mr. Secretary will be a little more civil this time. Come back again and let me know. I'll tell you a story then, which Stanton knows all about," he said, with a squeeze of vice-like knuckles.

The secretary glanced at that one word, and at once stoned all resentment from his face, which became one of fascinating complacency. He had come down from his perch like "Captain Scott's Coon." The necessary business was adjusted in 10 minutes. The writer's relative, however, missed the Stanton story over which Mr. Lincoln had chuckled, as circumstances prevented another interview with the president.

The last living vision of Abraham Lincoln was the most vivid and thrilling of all. It is strangely linked in memory by a sinister trifle with that final glimpse of the murdered body as it lay in the capitol, around which surged the threnody, "the noise of the lamentation of a mighty nation," which cried:

"O, fallen at length, that tower of strength,
Which stood four square to all the winds that blow."

The re-elected president towered before a vast throng of hushed and reverent listeners in the delivery of his second inaugural, that masterpiece, which in its exaltation was almost lyrical, charged like the immortal Gettysburg speech with the highest tension of human emotion. This was the figure, as of some mighty archangel, trumpeting a message of grief-dashed triumph which was heard around the world, resonant above all the clamor of that world's events and still ringing in the pages of history.

Who, then, would have thought of the arch-joker, who seven years before, at an Illinois barbecue, had rallied a friend in the writer's hearing with "John, here is the ugliest man in the state, with the exception of myself, and my only advantage is that I wear a bigger hatband." Yet these antipodes lay in that strangely complex nature.

As the rapt audience hung spell-bound on the rapt speaker and solemn words, another face, a short distance away, and not 50 yards from the president, expressed a different kind of emotion. Those wonderful words were making the air one great electric throb; as they came with sustained passion of utterance, "Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet if God wills that it will continue all the wealth piled by the bondsman's 250 years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn by the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword; as was said 3,000 years ago, so still it must be said now, that the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."

That face was distorted with rage, hate and fury, making the handsome features almost demonic as the man muttered and scowled. It was the face of one whom the writer had seen a few weeks before in New York, and "Mark Anthony" with his two brothers, at Winter Garden theater for the Shakespearean fund benefit, and who had wrung from the audience greater plaudits than the others by the fiery genius of his acting. It was John Wilkes Booth, who a little less than six weeks later was to imbue his assassin's hand with the blood so sacred to the nation, and go down in chronicle as the most detestable criminal of the century. Perhaps at that time this crazed fanatic was debating whether he should not pistol the president from that present coign of vantage and make his escape through a dazed and dense

press. But the histrionic in the man craved, perhaps a more spectacular stage-setting as well as a surer mark. It was a passing fact which at the time stirred no second thought, but which in the relation of things to come, loomed full of tragic import.

John Wilkes Booth struck a far more disastrous blow at the south than at the north when he shot down the man who, alone of his generation, could have brought the sections together in heartfelt reunion, without the strife and tragedy, the dishonor and abasement which attended reconstruction. So far as Lincoln gave indications of his purpose and plans for bringing the vanquished south back to loyalty and fraternity, and "binding the nation's wounds," there is ground for believing that his policy would not have been different in any essential degree from that of Andrew Johnson. But the great and signal difference would have directed the restoration of peace and unity with all the prestige, the hold on the popular heart amounting almost to idolatry that Lincoln possessed and Johnson did not. That which in Johnson seemed encroachment and usurpation, in Lincoln would have been accepted as the natural and logical exercise of a judgment tried and tempered and purified in the fiery crucible of a four-years' struggle to save the nation's very life. Johnson, the petty white of a border state, vainly attempted to wear Lincoln's boots and clothes. It was as if Richard Cromwell, instead of seeking the retirement for which he was best fitted, had sought to command the Ironsides.

Johnson meant well. Looking back at his course from the clearer atmosphere of today it is easy to perceive that Johnson was animated by the best motives in his attitude toward the tremendous problems which confronted him and that the success of the impeachment proceedings would have been a blot upon our national history. The problems and the position were too big for him—like the sword of Wallace in the hands of an average man.

It may be added that John Wilkes Booth represented a class with whom the real fighters of the south had no fellow-feeling—the "copperheads" who had not the courage to risk their lives for the cause with which they professed sympathy, who set fire to hotels and spread contagion, who shot and stabbed in the dark. That the former confederates had no responsibility for the crime of Booth and that they were overwhelmed with horror and dismay when they heard of it is an undisputed fact, and it is also well known that Abraham Lincoln has today no warmer admirers than the survivors and descendants of those who, 50 years ago, hated his very name.

The spectacle witnessed in Washington, in December, when Edward Douglas White, a former confederate soldier, was sworn in as chief justice of the United States by his associate justice, John Marshall Harlan, a former colonel in the Union army, was typical of the effacement of civil war animosities and of the spirit of harmony which prevails among the citizens of our common country. That complete reunion is the greatest monument to the labors, sacrifices and achievements, life and death of Abraham Lincoln.

Pennsylvania's New Provost.

From the Philadelphia North American. Dr. Josiah H. Penniman, for many years dean of the college of the University of Pennsylvania, has been elected vice-provost of that institution to succeed Edgar Fahs Smith. The selection of Dr. Penniman is a popular one. He is an alumnus of the university and professor of English at the institution. He was born, July 20, 1858, in Concord, Mass., and was graduated from the college department of the university in 1880. He is a member of many educational organizations.

Another Mistake.

From the Galveston News. "I hope I'm no chronic kicker," so illoquized Adam when he waked up and missed his rib, "but if they had to remove something I don't see why they didn't take my appendix."

An Evening Prayer.

Tonight I lay the burden by,
As one who rests beside the road,
And from his weary back unbends
The whelming load.

I kneel by hidden pools of prayer—
Still waters from the healing power
In God's green pastures I abide
This longed-for hour.

I know that day must bid me face
Courageously my task again,
Serving with steady hand and heart
My fellow-men.

To hold my sorrow in the dark,
To fight my fear, to hide my pain,
And never for one hour to dream
The toil is vain—

This be tomorrow; now, tonight,
Great, pitying father, I would be
Forgiven, uplifted, renewed,
Alone with Thee.
—Grace Duffield Goodwin.

TWO ANECDOTES OF LINCOLN.

A Story Told in Old Wyandotte—Reply to Rival Candidate.

Recorded by David Morgan Edgerton in the Century.

In June, 1887, at a dinner given by David M. Edgerton, formerly president of the Kansas Pacific railroad, at Wyandotte, Kansas, Mr. Usher, secretary of the interior under Lincoln, said: "When the war broke out, I knew that the railroad from Baltimore to Harrisburg, the Northern Central of Pennsylvania, was bound to be good property, for soldiers and people devoted to the preservation of the union traveling to Washington would necessarily be transported over it. The stock was then worth only a few cents on the dollar. I knew that from the necessity of the case it would advance in value to par or nearly so. I bought large blocks of it, and told Mr. Lincoln that if he would give me \$10,000 I would make him all the money he wanted."

Being asked if Mr. Lincoln was inclined to do it, Mr. Usher said no. He himself considered the investment proper, but evidently Lincoln thought otherwise.

Another anecdote related by Mr. Usher ran as follows: "While yet a young lawyer, Mr. Lincoln concluded to run for the state legislature, and in those days anyone who desired to run for office had only to announce himself a candidate in the papers or at a public meeting. Mr. Lincoln rode to an adjoining town, where a political meeting was to be held."

"As he rode along the street, his attention was attracted to a new house more pretensions than its neighbors. Erected upon the roof he noticed pointed iron rods. At the tavern he inquired their purpose, and learned that they were lightning rods."

"At the meeting he found the person then speaking to be the owner of this house and his rival. The latter made so much sport of Mr. Lincoln that Lincoln's friends became discouraged and desisted. But as the meeting was about to break up, Mr. Lincoln rose and said that he would like to say a few words."

"Beginning modestly, he soon engaged and held attention until, as he concluded, he added: 'My friends, I am a young man, and whether I shall live a few years or many I do not know, but I hope that while I do live I shall so conduct myself that it will not be necessary for me to put a lightning rod on my house to save me from the vengeance of Almighty God.' He had struck the key note, and he was carried from the meeting by his friends, and was elected."

Helen Taft, Debutante.

From Harper's Bazar.

When Miss Taft forsook her studies at Byrn Mawr college in her sophomore year in order to become one of this season's recruits in official society, some surprise was occasioned to persons who had taken it for granted that she was to continue there until graduation. However, Miss Taft's close friends recalled that she had announced two years ago, before entering college, that she might remain there only two years. Indeed, in her forthright, she even went so far as to map out a special list of studies that she could cover in two years. The plan was tentatively at that time, but since then an unexpected factor made its appearance to urge upon Miss Taft a return home. The new turn of affairs arose through the nervous attack suffered by Mrs. Taft a few months after her entry into the White House, which has kept her a patient ever since that time. With her health thus impaired she naturally longed more than ever for the presence at home of her only daughter. Miss Taft will be able to take her mother's place as hostess at many formal occasions, thus relieving Mrs. Taft's sisters, one of whom has acted as mistress pro tem, of the White House much of the time during the past two years.

How a Senator is Elected.

From the New York World.

The election of a United States senator is controlled by federal law, not by state law. The act of 1866 carefully defines the procedure.

On the second Tuesday after its meeting and organization the legislature is to convene for the purpose of electing a senator. "Each house shall elect, by a viva voce vote of each member present, name one person for senator in congress from such state." The following day the two houses convene in joint session at noon, and if the same person has received a majority of all votes in each house he shall be declared senator. Otherwise the joint assembly shall proceed to choose "by a viva voce vote of each member present, a person for senator, and the person who receives a majority of all the votes of the joint assembly, a majority of all members elected to both houses being present and voting, shall be declared duly elected." If there is no majority the joint assembly is required to meet each succeeding day during the session and take at least one vote until a senator is elected.

Miss Taft's Characteristics.

From Harper's Bazar.

Miss Helen Taft, at 19, is a wholesome, attractive girl, with never a trace of pose or affectation in manner or conversation. She possesses a sufficient sense of humor, inherited from her father, to prevent her head being turned by the attentions she has received. Most of the intimate friends of the Taft family are wont to declare that in features as well as in temperament, Miss Helen favors her father, but there is no doubt that the daughter of the house has many of her mother's traits as well.

To suppose that just because Miss Taft has always been an inveterate reader, and won a scholarship at Byrn Mawr and all sorts of prizes at school, she must necessarily be a bookish sort of person, is to do the young lady a distinct injustice. Although she each summer indulges in a wide range of outdoor athletics.

An Encouraging Sign.

From the St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

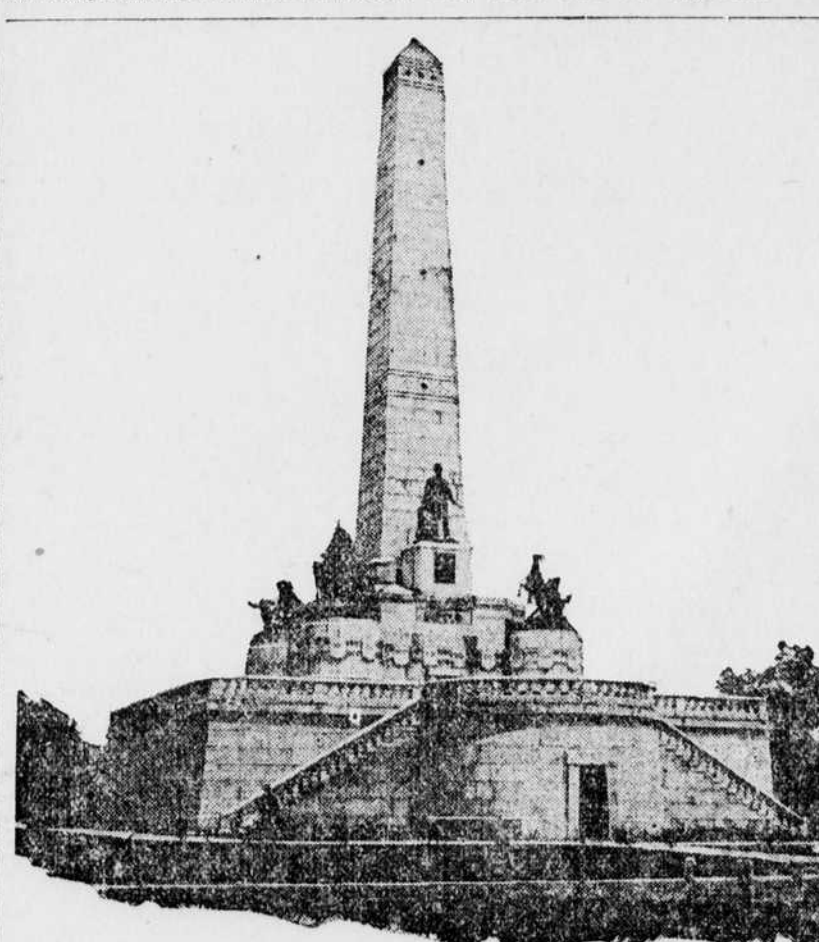
The purchase of senatorial seats is no longer a conventional crime. This is a high sign of reform.

Hear It.

From Harper's Bazar.

Ball—What is secreted in the school hall—The college yell of the school of experience.

Abraham Lincoln Taking the Oath at His Second Inauguration, March 4, 1865.



Tomb of Abraham Lincoln, Springfield, Ill.