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LINCOLN IN THE FUTURE.**WHAT WILL THE PHILOSOPHIC HISTORIANS OF THE FUTURE SAY?**

We Cannot Forecast the Verdict of Pos-
terity with Certainty, but We May Be
Sure That the View Will Be Different
from Ours—The Growth of Mind.

The career of Abraham Lincoln seems
destined to serve as an unfailing store-
house from which certain classes of
writers may draw their material. The
humorist not only retails authentic jokes
and gives them new applications, but in-
vents new ones and gives them a Lin-



LINCOLN'S STEPMOTHER.

colnesque tone which insures popular
acceptance. The sentimentalists draw
inspiration from those passages in which
the Liberator fairly rivaled the Hebrew
prophets, while the imaginative writer
finds in that progress from the cabin to the
White House a series of incidents with
all the charms of romance and all the
convenience of reality.

The jurist and statesman, the orator,
the philanthropist and the enthusiastic
social reformer find in Lincoln's state
papers and speeches passages of strange
portent, weighty prophecies of the issues
which were to come, hints at the solution
of the problems of capital and labor and
taxation. The student of mind develop-
ment has not yet been heard from, yet I venture to predict that the Herbert
Spencer or Bacon of the next generation
will find in Lincoln's advance a splendid
and luminous illustration of the laws of
intellectual growth. He will have this
tremendous advantage, he can admit many
charges now denied and proceed
with confidence on this axiom: One
may fall into many errors, yet rise above
and profit by them all if his primary aim
be correct and his moral nature sound.

Just now we look at the Liberator
through the blaze and smoke of the
heroic age. For twenty-seven years an
army of poets and orators have been in-
dustry engaged in stripping away
the human lineaments and spreading a
golden halo about the martyr's homely
features. He looks down upon us out
of a cloud and enveloped by an aureole.
The apotheosis is at last complete; the
Abraham Lincoln of Kentucky, Indiana
and Illinois is banished from history,
and the Abraham Lincoln of patriotic
song and eulogy is scarcely more a real
historical personage than Romulus or
Agamemnon. The reaction has, how-
ever, set in. Herndon's book marks the
beginning of a new era. The coming
generation will not be satisfied with a
steel portrait and a flight of eulogistic
oratory. It will insist upon having the
real man.

The philosopher will then find that the
career of Abraham Lincoln naturally
divides itself into five clearly defined
stages. Sprung from the very rudest
and poorest class in the border south,
Lincoln had all the rude humors and
gestures of the untutored man of that
type. It has been proved that the Lin-
coln family, early in the Eighteenth
century, possessed some substance and held
at least a middle rank, but thereafter the
decline was so rapid that in the person of
Thomas Lincoln and in the Kentucky
hovel the family had, at the date of the
hero's advent, reached the lowest point.
The standard of the region was certainly
not high, but the Lincolns and their
congeners sank below it.

The boyhood of the Liberator was a
tragedy and can only be treated as such.
A few gleams of humor broke its melancholy
monotony here and there, and the
riots of the new west sometimes
tortured mirth even out of misery; still
it was a tragedy and a dark and gloomy
one. Yet out of that abyss came occasional
flashes of intellect which showed
that the strain of the older Lincoln was
again to show itself by that mysterious
law which scientists call atavism, but
which the common people explained long
before Darwin by saying of such one
that he "takes back"—that is, from a
remote ancestor. In proof of the foregoing
summary it is necessary to cite but one
fact: When Thomas Lincoln married
Nancy Hanks his friends and relatives
remarked with a sort of surprise that she
could read and write and was "a real
smart woman."

The woeful childhood of Lincoln ended
suddenly when he was eleven years old
and his stepmother arrived; from that
date the mental philosopher can trace
with ever increasing interest the rapid
development of his mind. All at once,
apparently, as if it were in a day, he
ceased to be the forlorn and neglected
child and became the "smart boy of the
neighborhood." In three years he was
noted; in five more he was notorious.
The usual results of being the "smart
boy" of a country neighborhood had fol-
lowed. It is extremely difficult to find
any one who remembers anything about
him previous to 1820; it is altogether too
easy to find many in southern Indiana
who remember many things he did after
1825; for there is no doubt that his "smart-
ness" had, for want of a better field, taken
a turn for queer ways and that he was,
as the people said, "up to some mighty
mean tricks."

This stage of effervescence ended almost
as suddenly as his woeful childhood had
done, and in Illinois in 1831-2 Abraham
Lincoln became an ambitious young man.
A trip to New Orleans and a few trials
as hired laborer while still in Indiana
appear to have excited in him a fierce
ambition to "get ahead in the world."
And in this stage of his career the future
philosopher will find the first unquestionable
evidences that he looked forward to a
time when he should be an honored
citizen. Unquestionably the Abraham
Lincoln of 1831-2 did, in some mysterious
way, arrive at the conclusion that this
world had for him something far higher
than the position of neighborhood joker,
champion wrestler or prize woodchopper.

His conception of his future was, however,
such as now excites a smile. He
seems to have felt certain that he could
acquire a competency, that he could go
to the legislature, that he could be a
leading man and successful lawyer, and
in time go to congress and be a great
political oracle in his district, and beyond
that—well, that was the extent of his
dream. And in this mind he remained,
as far as all the evidence shows,
for twenty years. In all that time there
is on record but one utterance which
can even be tortured into a personal
forecast of his great mission. That was
the oft quoted remark to his cousin in
regard to slavery as he had seen it on
his last southern trip, viz.: "My God,
John, if I ever get a chance to hit it
institution I'll hit it hard."

Nevertheless, he was growing. Indeed,
this is the one prominent fact in Abraham
Lincoln's life—he never ceased
growing. As captain in the Black Hawk
war, as candidate for the legislature
(defeated), as storekeeper, postmaster,
surveyor and law student, he was always
growing. The future philosopher
will find rich materials for mental
science in contrasting his utterances year
by year after 1832. His experience in
the reckless legislation of the "wild cat"
era of 1834-7 may be profitably contrasted
with his conservatism in later life,
but his votes on the Mexican war
and his casual utterances on slavery
show that the germ of the future Libera-
tor was there.

His intimate associates have by com-
mon consent set the year 1840 as the date
when he entered his fourth stage, as a
party leader, yet that year was the first
of an era in which Lincoln appears as
his very worst. He was ambitious, yet
timid.

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LINCOLN AS A HUMOROUS SPEAKER.

painfully sensitive as to his personal
deficiencies, ardent in his admiration of
female loveliness and extravagantly anxious
to form a matrimonial alliance favor-
able at once to happiness and worldly
success, and yet so wildly erratic in his
pursuit of these objects that his best
friends then feared for his sanity, and
at this day his course is beyond explana-
tion. Suffice it that he married, became
a member of congress, returned to the
practice of the law and sank into a con-
dition which, as to political matters,
seems to have been one of comparative
apathy, till the repeal of the Missouri
compromise in 1850 roused him like a
trumpet call to his last and most glori-
ous struggle.

In 1854 the fifth and last stage began;
the Abraham Lincoln of history was born.
All his biographers agree that it
was a new man who "took the stump"
that summer. He had long been a popular
speaker; his speeches were "racy of
the soil." But now, say Messrs. Nicolay
and Hay: "Men were surprised to find
him imbued with a new and unwonted
seriousness. They heard fewer anecdotes
and more history. Careless listeners
who came to laugh at his jokes sat spell-
bound by the strong current of his reasoning
and the flashes of his earnest eloquence,
and were lifted by the range and tone
of his argument into a fresher and purer atmosphere. The question touched
the very bedrock of primary human
rights. Such a subject furnished material
for the inborn gifts of the speaker,
his intuitive logic, his impulsive patriotism,
his pure and poetical conception of
legal and moral justice."

And here this attempt to forecast the
verdict of the Twentieth century philos-
opher appropriately ends. It is the
glory of Abraham Lincoln that he went
on growing to the last. Nothing could
be more idle than to pronounce positively
as to what his position would have
been on reconstruction or subsequent
issues from what he had previously said.
His eulogists have often proclaimed that
in the dark winter of 1860-1 he fore-
saw the bloody days at hand and mentally
prepared for them. At such a
statement the philosopher of 1960-1 will
smile. Such foreknowledge would have
been more than human.

There is not a particle of evidence that
the Abraham Lincoln of January, 1861,
had formed any conception of the great
struggle at hand, and there is conclusive
evidence that after his inauguration he
still indulged the hope of reconciliation
without war. Abraham Lincoln was
not a god, but a man. His greatness
consisted in the fact that he made many
mistakes and rose above them. The
inspiration of his example consists in the
proof it furnishes that the true, manly
man rises to the occasion, and that, as
he expressed it, the great heart of the
nation is sound.

ONE FOREVER.**The History of a Timepiece That Is Founded on Fact.**

It was at the time when the leaves were
beginning to turn in November that
Henry Smith made the startling discovery
that his watch had stopped.

He wound it up, tapped it gently with
his knuckles and then shook it, but it only
ticked a few times in a sickly way, and then
it stopped again.

"It needs cleaning and a new balance
staff," said the watch doctor to whom he
took it.

"You may do the work," Henry said.
"How long will it take?"

"About a week," replied the watch-
maker. "In the meantime you may carry
this watch," and he handed out a small
silver timepiece which wound with a key.

One week from that day Henry Smith
again sought the shop of the watchmaker
to get his watch. The proprietor of the
shop assured him smilingly that the work
was not yet completed, and told him to call
around in three or four days. When the
longer time had elapsed Henry Smith
called again and was told that the watch
had been very busy—so busy, in
fact, that he hadn't done Mr. Smith's work.
Another time was named for the completion
of the cleaning and the replacing of the
balance staff.

Days became weeks; weeks rolled into
months, and still Henry Smith with lamb-
like patience continued to call for his
watch at stated intervals. He always re-
ceived the same answer, unblushing given,
"Not quite done." Christmas time
came and went and the old year was ticked
out by a small, silver, key wind watch
which reposed in the pocket of Henry
Smith.

He engaged in the practice of his profes-
sion. Success rewarded his efforts. He
was much sought after and had multi-
tudinous engagements, all of which were
faithfully kept on time recorded by a small
key wind watch with a silver case. But
in the midst of the press of his professional
duties he still found time to call periodically
for his watch. It was never done. And the months rolled into years.

Upon the occasion of one call he had
been favored by getting a glimpse of his
own timepiece. It had looked at him with
its white face like some ghost of the dead,
dead past, and he had hurriedly turned
and gone out.

Time wheeled on. Gray hairs began to
appear among Henry Smith's locks, and
still he continued to call at the watch-
maker's with ironical persistency.
Occasionally, about this time, he was accom-
panied by one or another of his chil-
dren. Year succeeded year, and finally his
grandchildren led the hoary-headed, tot-
tering old man on his ever fruitless mission.

There is no need to trace this sad nar-
rative to the last excruciating details. Suffice
it to say that there was a denouement.
An affair must necessarily be serious
if one of those.

There was also a moral. A small silver
watch, that wound with a key, was in it to
the last too.—Minneapolis Tribune.

A Hidden Mystery.

"Ain't dat ridiculous?"
"Who's dat?"
"Why, dat Miss Sue dancin on de flo'
all by herself."



"Yo's made'r mistake. Jes' wait till
she turns around. Dar! She's dancin wid
dat sawed off jockey!"—Life.

A Sorrowful Answer.

Scene at a Registrar's (enter a peasant
with his daughter). Peasant—I have come
to publish the banns between my daughter
Margaret and Michel Obernik."

Registrar—Very good; but where is the
bridegroom?

Peasant—Well, sir, you see the case is
rather peculiar. Michel doesn't care to
have her, and so I thought as how, if you
wouldn't mind posting his name up here
for three weeks, he would somehow feel
compelled like to marry her.

Registrar (sorrowfully)—Ah! my good
friend. If matters could be arranged in that
fashion, do you think I should have five
marriageable daughters on my hands now?

—Humoristische Blätter.

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price for yourselves and if you were getting them on your own terms. Another buyer's
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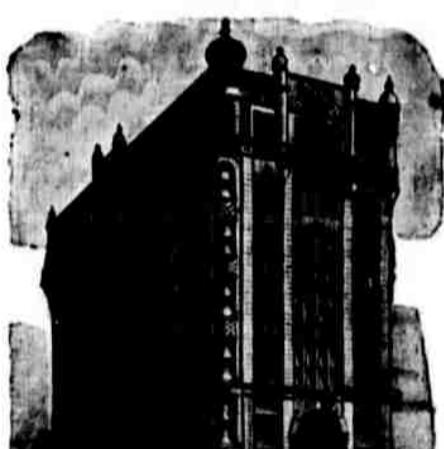
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