

BRAHAM LINCOLN



BACKWOODSMAN



Young man Lincoln



STATESMAN

THE birthday of Abraham Lincoln brings to every American citizen feelings of reverence such as perhaps arise on the natal day of but one other man who ever served the nation. Particularly in the west, which gave to the country the great statesman, whose patriotic services Americans will always remember with gratitude, should the day be an honored one. Reminiscences of the life of this most distinguished son of Illinois will be welcome reading now.

Vanquishing a Bully.

LINCOLN'S extended reputation as a wrestler and fighter frequently led him into combats which he would willingly have avoided. One of these encounters is thus described: Scarcely had Lincoln reached Coles County, and begun to think what next to turn his hand to, when he received a visit from a famous wrestler, one Daniel Needham, who regarded him as a growing rival, and had a fancy to try him a fall or two. He considered himself "the best man" in the country, and the report of Abe's achievements filled his big breast with envious pains. His greeting was friendly and hearty, but his challenge was rough and peremptory. Abe valued his popularity among "the boys" too highly to decline it and met him by public appointment in the "greenwood," at Wabash Point, where he threw him twice with so much ease that Needham's pride was more hurt than his body. "Lincoln," said he, "you have thrown me twice, but you can't whip me." "Needham," replied Abe, "are you satisfied that I can throw you? If you are not, and must be convinced through a threshing, I will do that, too, for your sake." Needham had hoped that the youngster would shrink from the extremity of a fight with the acknowledged "bully of the patch," but finding him willing, and at the same time magnanimously inclined to whip him solely for his own good, he concluded that a bloody nose and a black eye would be the reverse of soothing to his feelings, and therefore surrendered the field with such grace as he could command.

Lincoln as a Voyageur.

FLincoln's trip down the Mississippi on a flatboat innumerable tales have been told. Perhaps the best of these describes the voyage which he made in the employ of a merchant named Offutt. Loaded with barrel-pork, hogs, and corn, the boat set out from Sangamon town as soon as finished. Mr. Offutt was on board to act as his own supercargo, intending to pick up additions to his stock along the banks of the two Illinois rivers down which he was about to pass. On the 19th of April they arrived at New Salem, a little village destined to be the scene of the seven eventful years of Mr. Lincoln's life, which immediately followed the conclusion of the present trip. Just below New Salem the boat "stuck," for one night and the better part of a day on Rutledge's mill-dam,—one end of it hanging over the dam, and the other sunk deep in the water behind. Here was a case for Abe's ingenuity, and he exercised it with effect. Quantities of water were being taken in at the stern, the lading was sliding backwards, and everything indicated that the rude craft was in momentary danger of breaking in two, or sinking outright. But Abe suggested some unheard-of expedient for keeping it in place while the cargo was shifted to a borrowed boat, and then, boring a hole in that

part of the bottom extending over the dam, he "rigged-up" an equally strange piece of machinery for tilting and holding it while the water ran out. All New Salem was assembled on shore, watching the progress of this singular experiment—and with one voice affirm that Abe saved the boat; although nobody is able to tell us precisely how. The adventure turned Abe's thoughts to the class of difficulties, one of which he had just surmounted, and the result of his reflections was "an improved method for lifting vessels over shoals." Offutt declared that when he got back from New Orleans, he would build a steamboat for the navigation of the Sangamon, and make Abe the captain; he would build it for runners for ice,



and rollers for shoals and dams, for with "Abe in command, by thunder, she'd have to go."

Born Commander of Men.

AN incident, occurring during the Black Hawk war, well illustrates the character, manliness and chivalrous generosity of Mr. Lincoln. One day an old Indian found his way into the camp, weary, hungry and helpless. He professed to be a friend of the whites; and, although it was an exceedingly perilous experiment for one of his color, he ventured to throw himself upon the mercy of the soldiers. But the men first murmured, and then broke out into fierce cries for his blood. "We have come out to fight the Indians," said they, "and by God we intend to do it!" The poor Indian, now, in the extremity of his distress and peril, did what he ought to have done before; he threw down before his assailants a soiled and crumpled paper, which he implored them to read before his life was taken. It was a letter of character and safe-conduct from Gen. Cass, pronouncing him a faithful man, who had done good service in the cause for which this army was enlisted. But it was too late; the men refused to read it, or thought it a forgery, and were rushing with fury upon the defenceless old savage, when Capt. Lincoln bounded between them and their appointed victim. "Men," said he, and his voice for a moment stilled the agitation around him, "this must not be done; he must not be shot and killed by us." "But," said some of them, "the Indian is a damned spy." Lincoln knew that his own life was now in only less danger than that of the poor creature that crouched behind him. During the whole of this scene Captain Lincoln seemed to "rise to an unusual height" of stature. The towering form, the passion and resolution in his face, the physical power and terrible will exhibited in every motion of his body, every gesture of his arm, produced an effect upon the furious mob as unexpected perhaps to him as to any one else. They paused, listened, fell back, and then sullenly obeyed what seemed to be the voice of reason, as well as authority. But there were still some murmurs of disappointed rage, and half-suppressed exclamations, which looked toward vengeance of some kind. At length one of the men, a

little bolder than the rest, but evidently feeling that he spoke for the whole, cried out, "This is cowardly on your part, Lincoln!" Whereupon the tall captain's figure stretched a few inches higher again. He looked down upon these varlets who would have murdered a defenceless old Indian, and now quailed before his single hand, with lofty contempt. The oldest of his acquaintances, even Bill Green, who saw him grapple Jack Armstrong and defy the bullies at his back, never saw him so much "aroused" before. "If any man thinks I am a coward, let him test it," said he. "Lincoln," responded a new voice, "you are larger and heavier than we are." "This you can guard against; choose your weapons," returned the rigid captain. Whatever may be said of Mr. Lincoln's choice of means for the preservation of military discipline, it was certainly very effectual in this case. There was no more disaffection in his camp, and the word "coward" was never coupled with his name again. Mr. Lincoln understood his men better than those who would be disposed to criticize his conduct. He has often declared himself, that his life and character were both at stake, and would probably have been lost, had he not at that supremely critical moment forgotten the officer and asserted the man. To have ordered the offenders under arrest would have created a formidable mutiny; to have tried and punished them would have been impossible. They could scarcely be called soldiers; they were merely armed citizens, with a nominal military organization. They were but recently enlisted, and their term of service was just about to expire. Had he preferred charges against them, and offered to submit their differences to a court of any sort, it would have been regarded as an act of personal pusillanimity, and his efficiency would have been gone forever.

The Mother's Tribute.

THE debt which the great President owed to his step-mother for her tender care and constant love was always gratefully acknowledged. A pathetic picture of this gentle lady in her last days is given as follows: "Mrs. Lincoln was never able to speak of Abe's conduct to her without tears. In her interview with Mr. Herndon, when the sands of her life had nearly run out, she spoke with deep emotion of her own son, but said she thought that Abe was kinder, better, truer, than the other. Even the mother's instinct was lost as she looked back over those long years of poverty and privation in the Indiana cabin, when Abe's grateful love softened the rigors of her lot, and his great heart and giant frame were always at her command. 'Abe was a poor boy,' said she, 'and I can say what scarcely one woman—a mother—can say in a thousand. Abe never gave me a cross word or look, and never refused, in fact or appearance, to do anything I requested him. I never gave him a cross word in all my life. . . . His mind and mine—what little I had—seemed to run together. . . . He was here after he was elected President.' (At this point the aged speaker turned away to weep, and then, wiping her eyes with her apron, went on with the story. 'He was dutiful to me always. I think he loved me truly. I had a son, John, who was raised with Abe. Both were good boys; but I must say, both now being dead, that Abe was the best boy I ever saw, or expect to see. I wish I had died when my husband died. I did not want Abe to run for President; did not want him elected; was afraid somehow,—felt in my heart; and when he came down to see me, after he was elected President, I still felt that something told me that something would befall Abe, and that I should see him no more.' 'Is there anything in the language we speak more touching than that simple plaint of the woman whom we must regard as Abraham Lincoln's

mother? The apprehension in her 'heart' was well grounded. She 'saw him no more.' When Mr. Herndon rose to depart, her eyes again filled with tears; and, wringing his hands as if loath to part with one who talked so much of her beloved Abe, she said, 'Good-by, my good son's friend. Farewell.'"

Unique Stump Speech.

LINCOLN'S unique methods of campaigning are thus described by an eye-witness. This was on the occasion of his first nomination as a legislative candidate: "Mr. Lincoln's first appearance on the stump, in the course of the canvass, was at Pappsville, about eleven miles west of Springfield, upon the occasion of a public sale by the firm of Poog & Knap. The sale over, speech-making was about to begin, when Mr. Lincoln observed strong symptoms of inattention in his audience, who had taken that particular moment to engage in what Mr. James A. Herndon pronounces 'a general fight.' Lincoln saw that one of his friends was suffering more than he liked in the melee; and, stepping into the crowd, he shouldered them sternly away from his man, until he met a fellow who refused to fall back; him he seized by the nape of his neck and the stat of his breeches, and tossed him 'ten or twelve feet easily.' After this episode—as characteristic of him as of the times—he mounted the platform, and delivered, with awkward modesty, the following speech: "Gentlemen and Fellow Citizens, I presume you all know who I am. I am humble Abraham Lincoln. I have been solicited by many friends to become a candidate for the legislature. My politics are short and sweet, like the old woman's dance. I am in favor of a national bank. I am in favor of the internal-improvement system and a high protective tariff. These are my sentiments and political principles. If elected, I shall be thankful; if not, it will be all the same." "In these few sentences Mr. Lincoln adopted the leading principle of the Whig party—Clay's 'American System' in full. In his view, as we shall see by another paper from him when again a candidate in 1834, the internal-improvement system required the distribution of the proceeds of the sales of the public lands amongst the states. He says nothing of South Carolina, of nullification, of disunion; and on these subjects it is quite probable his views were like Mr. Webster's, and his sympathies with Jackson. The opinions announced in this speech, on all the subjects touched by the speaker, were as emphatically Whig as they could be made in words."

Lincoln's Great Heart.

IN cold winter day, Lincoln saw a poor fellow named "Ab Trent" hard at work chopping up "a house," which Mr. Hill had employed him to convert into firewood. Ab was barefooted and shivered painfully while he worked. Lincoln watched him a few moments and asked him what he was to get for the job. Ab answered "one dollar," and, pointing to his naked and suffering feet, said that he wished to buy a pair of shoes. Lincoln seized the axe, and, ordering the boy to comfort himself at the nearest fire, chopped up "the house" so fast that Ab and the owner were both amazed when they saw it done. According to Mr. Rutledge, "Ab remembered this act with the liveliest gratitude. Once he, being a cast-iron Democrat, determined to vote against his party and for Mr. Lincoln; but the friends, as he afterwards said with tears in his eyes, made him drunk, and he voted against Abe. Thus he did not even have an opportunity to return the noble conduct of Mr. Lincoln by this small measure of thanks."

RIGHT TO USE THE WATER.

State Board of Irrigation Overrules Motion for Rehearing Case. LINCOLN, Neb., Feb. 1.—The state board of irrigation overruled a motion for a rehearing of the case of the Farmers' and Merchants' Irrigation company of Lexington against the Gothenburg Water Power and Irrigation company. This action grew out of the extension of the canal owned and operated by the Gothenburg company. The contention was that the Gothenburg company had no right to use water under its original claim for purposes other than those specified in the grant. The extension was eighteen miles in length, and the company sought to turn the water from the old canal into the new one, instead of turning it back into the river. On a hearing several weeks ago the board decided that the company could use the allotted amount of water for irrigating purposes, even in the extension. In the case of Nicholas McCabe against Maude Hinman, appealed from Lincoln county, the board decided that the abandonment of an irrigating ditch forfeits all further rights for the appropriation of water. The Hinman ditch, which furnished water for approximately 4,500 acres of land near North Platte, was abandoned after it had been operated for several years, and subsequently an attempt was made to renew its operation.

HORSE DISEASE BREAKS OUT.

Forty-Seven Animals Succumb to Sickness in York County. COLUMBUS, Neb., Feb. 1.—The fatality among horses in the northern part of Platte county during the last ten days or two weeks has been quite alarming, the disease being something with which the veterinary surgeons seem wholly unable to cope. County Superintendent L. H. Leavy visited fourteen schools in the vicinity of Humphrey, Creston and Cornlea last week, in each district making inquiry among the farmers as to the loss of horses, and in this way learned that twenty-two men had had forty-seven fatalities from the strange disease, which manifests itself in at least some cases in blindness and loss of consciousness to pain or insanity, the animal plunging into barbed wire fences and not being repelled by severe cuts, but with the coming out of cold sweat quickly dying. One seemingly significant fact mentioned by a farmer and corroborated by Mr. Leavy's subsequent observation, is that the half dozen farmers in the county supplied with flowing wells are free, not only from this disease among horses, but have also been free during recent years from cholera among hogs.

BET SEED FOR THE WEST.

Omaha Becomes the General Distributing Point. OMAHA, Neb., Feb. 1.—Omaha has been designated the distributing point for all sugar beet seed that will be planted in the states west of the Mississippi river. Meyer & Raapke of this city are the distributing agents. All sugar beet seed planted in this country is raised in Germany. Already consignments for the crop of the coming season have begun to arrive in Omaha. It comes in bond and after reaching here is under the control of Collector Taylor of the customs house until it is taken out and sent to the factories, the managers of which supply the beet growers. To plant the western country with sugar beets requires thirty-five to forty carloads of seed. Ten carloads have come and another large lot is expected within the next few days. The seed is put up in sacks, containing 200 pounds each.

Large Acreage of Wheat in York.

YORK, Neb., Feb. 1.—The farmers of York county rejoice over the fine fall of snow which has covered the wheat fields in all directions. Over 50 per cent of cultivated acreage in York county is in winter wheat, which is the farmer's greatest mortgage-lifting crop, and if there is an average yield of 30 to 50 bushels an acre there will scarcely be a farm mortgage in York county next year.

To Discuss Land Leasing.

DENVER, Colo., Feb. 1.—The American Cattle Growers' association, composed of leading cattlemen of the west will meet in Denver March 4 to discuss public land leasing and other questions affecting the industry. The bill concerning land leasing now before congress will be a matter for special consideration. The call for the meeting was issued today.

Power from Niobrara.

LINCOLN, Neb., Feb. 1.—An application for permission to appropriate water from the Niobrara river for a power plant near Valentine was presented to the secretary of the state board of irrigation. It is proposed to construct a plant with a capacity of 8,000 electric horse power for operation twenty-four hours each day. All prior claims for the appropriation of water from the Niobrara river were withdrawn before Cornell filed.

TELLS HOW TO GROW FRUIT.

Nebraskan Gives Results of His Practical Experience. KEARNEY, Neb., Feb. 3.—At the second day's session of the Farmers' institute representatives of the various cream separators, six in number, had their innings right at the start and gave demonstrations of the points of superiority of their machines. Among the interesting exhibits was a collection of over forty varieties of farm and garden seeds grown in Buffalo county last year by H. C. Green of Kearney. S. A. D. Henlin also made an exhibit of seeds and samples of flavoring extracts. The subject of "Orcharding," by J. L. Brown, was particularly interesting, principally for the reason that he discarded the accepted theories and gave his own practical ideas regarding tree planting and fruit growing in central Nebraska, and particularly in Buffalo county. H. D. Watson entertained the large audience with a talk on "Alfalfa and Forage Crops." The afternoon session was especially interesting to stock growers because of the lecture of Dr. Peters of the university experiment station on "The Prevention of Animal Diseases." The lecture was confined to four heads of the subject, suggested by the audience, as follows: Cornstalk diseases in horses and cattle; blackleg in cattle; tuberculosis or consumption, and cholera or swine plague. Dr. Peters does not advance any theories, but gives the facts regarding these diseases as he has found them in his regular practice. "The Growing of Pork for Market" was handled by O. Hull of Alma.

Both Legs Frozen Stiff.

FREMONT, Neb., Feb. 3.—An aged man named John Fedora, who lives at Ottumwa, Ia., and his young son, Fred, had portions of their bodies frozen near Leavitt, several miles northwest of here. They were traveling to Wood Lake, Neb., where Mr. Fedora has a son and daughter. The two were to change cars from the Union Pacific to the Elkhorn at this point, but for some reason were carried past to Ames. They got off the train there, and as the hour was early, were forced to walk around with the temperature at thirteen degrees below zero in order to keep warm. The father was found lying helpless in a feed yard near Leavitt, some time later, both his legs having been frozen stiff. The boy was close by, and his ears had been bitten by the frost. Neither of the pair had been able to secure any shelter, as the depot was locked up and people were not yet astir for the day when they arrived at Ames.

Dairymen Are Interested.

LINCOLN, Neb., Feb. 3.—The dairymen of Nebraska as well as the dairymen of the entire country, are greatly interested in the new Grout bill, just reported by the committee on agriculture in the lower house of congress. A number of bills relating to this matter were before the committee, and there was considerable strife and ambition among the authors of the various bills as to which one should receive the approval of the committee. In fact it appeared as if there might be a quarrel among the representatives of the dairy interests and thus prevent any legislation in this direction. This has been averted and the bill reported favorably by the committee, 12 to 5, is entirely satisfactory to all interested in the dairy industry.

Farmers Have Much Money.

M'COOL JUNCTION, Neb., Feb. 3.—Banks of York county, owing to their not being able to secure any notes at public sales of farm property, consisting of horses, cattle, hogs, implements, grain and hay, have agreed to charge \$5 fee for clerking sales. The average York county farmer has become so prosperous that he has no need to give a note, and it frequently occurs that at sales amounting to from \$1,500 to \$3,000 there is not a note given.

Telephone Companies Consolidate.

HOOPER, Neb., Feb. 3.—The stockholders of the Hooper Telephone company decided to consolidate with the Farmers' Telephone company, now operating forty miles of line in the western part of the county.

Paroled Prisoner Rearrested.

FAIRBURY, Neb., Feb. 3.—Frank Ward, who was paroled from the penitentiary, where he was serving a three-year term, after disappearing from public view for several months, came back to visit his relatives here and was arrested.

Cold Snap Defies Game Laws.

SUPERIOR, Neb., Feb. 3.—A man who keeps tabs on such things says that fully 75 per cent of the quail were killed in the recent sudden storm. The storm came so quickly that they could not get to shelter.

Rural Telephone Company.

HUMBOLDT, Neb., Feb. 3.—A new stock company has been organized with a capital of \$2,500 to build a rural telephone line from Dawson to Middleburg.