

# 1800—The Lincoln Centenary—1909 Democracy of Lincoln

Loved the Common People and Was One of Them. Using an Enemy—"Public Opinion Baths"

By James A. Edgerton

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**R**EAL greatness needs no trappings to make itself seem great. Thus the most noble and kingly souls have been most common and mean in their outer guise. Homer begged his bread. Buddha threw away his crown and became a mendicant. Socrates went barefooted. Jesus consorted with poor people and publicans. Savonarola wore a patched habit. Franklin was a printer, wrote mottoes for common folks and wore plain clothes at court. Robert Burns was a plowman. Abraham Lincoln throughout his life remained one of the plain people.

This was in no sense condescension on the part of the great souls. In many cases it arose from bitter necessity. In others it was their method of proclaiming themselves one with the most numerous class of men. It was their method of preaching the gospel of equality. It was their manner of showing contempt for outer distinctions, the trappings of show that small natures prize so much.

Democracy is a spiritual thing. Men are not equal in outer ways. They differ in talents, education, bodily form, heredity, wealth and all externals. They are only equal in fundamental manhood, in being children of a common Father. God is no respecter of persons. His rain falls on the just and unjust. His law—natural law—treats all the same. Human law must be modeled on this eternal law and thus must show no favoritism, must treat all alike, must be based on fundamental equality. Whenever it departs from that even by a hair it does violence to the divine and eternal plan.

Of those who attain the kingdom immortal the newest comer is equal to the oldest archangel. This is the model for all democratic institutions. They have their origin in the spiritual nature of things. They approximate the unerring and impartial justice of the sunshine and the attraction of gravitation.

Jesus was the first democrat. Lin-

coln did not feel himself better than others, but felt himself just as good as any man on the planet. This was the quality in him which has scarcely been analyzed, but which so endeared him to the mass of men. In his life he changed democracy from a theory to a practice. He incarnated it, so that all the world might see. His upholding of the plain people was not a pose. It was his method of building a government of the plain people through all the years that are to be. It was his method of recognizing mass against class, his profound plan of making the lowest strata of society better by thinking them better and so inducing them to think themselves better.

Small minds affect to despise the common. Great souls behold in that which is most common that which is most universal and therefore most divine. Herein is the deep philosophy of Lincoln's remark about God's love for the common people.

What is more common than the grass, yet what is more beautiful? Hills, mountains, rivers, forests, oceans—these are seen of all men, yet they are the most enchanting things of life. What flower is so common, yet so beautiful, as the rose?

So it is in men. That which is greatest in any mind is that which it has in common with all other minds. Genius is the power of stating fully and adequately what everybody else thinks. He is greatest who is most universal, who includes most of what is in others. If man is made in the image of God, then all men are made in the image of God, and he includes what is in all men. The more, therefore, that we can include of what is in others the more godlike we become. This is one part of the philosophy of democracy, a phrase so amply and happily illustrated in the life of Lincoln.

But this divinity of the common is not all there is of democracy, nor all that Lincoln embodied of it. It is best for people to govern themselves.

from the littleness of class into the biggest of the mass. He knew the worst enemy of man is that very habit of separating ourselves from others because we think we are better than they. Because of conduct or convention or blood or dollars or some other purely external or accidental thing we exclude somebody. By so doing we exclude God, who is universal and has all in his image. By so doing we exclude our own complete and higher natures, for in us is a correspondence to all other beings. Caste is a prison to those in it and an insult to all others. It dwarfs the individual and divides the state. It is artificial and denies the universality of God's love. It is doomed to die with the other lies of an outworn age. Such souls as Lincoln have given the race a new and broader outlook. We now see he is greatest not who is most exclusive, but who is most inclusive. He is highest who has most completely and adequately what is in all other men. Common sense thus becomes the most precious kind of sense. It is the wisdom derived from all experience. That which is most common is most universal and that which is most universal is most divine. If we get deep enough into this philosophy, we shall have explained the homely anecdotes, the unassuming clothes and manners and the democratic attitude of Abraham Lincoln, likewise his love for the plain people. We have not had democracy as yet. He was the prophet of the democracy that is to be.

A kindred trait in Lincoln is likewise illuminative. He saw the clear distinction between private and public. He was most charitable to private faults while he fought public ones. With the first he had little or no concern. They were none of his business. With the last he had every concern, for, he being a part of the state, the public faults to that extent were his faults. He was responsible for them, along with all other citizens. This attitude he carried through life. Rigidly opposing every public wrong, he was most lenient and merciful to the individual wrongdoer. He pardoned such whenever he could do so without injury to society.

The same tendency was shown in another way and brought on Lincoln criticism from his old Illinois friends and relatives. He refused for the most part to appoint them to office, holding that the private attachments of Lincoln the individual should in no wise influence the acts of Lincoln the president. He believed his old friends and neighbors to be incompetent for the offices they asked for. However much he wanted to accommodate them, however much their ill feeling would hurt him, he could not allow personal feelings of this nature to govern his acts as a public official. That would be akin to treason to the state. Nepotism was impossible to this pure minded man, and graft, private gain at public expense, would have seemed the greatest of crimes because a crime against society.

Just as he would not appoint his friends to office if he thought them incompetent, so he would not refrain from appointing his enemies if he thought the state needed their services. A conspicuous example is found in the naming of Edwin M. Stanton for secretary of war, at the time the most important place in the government second to that of the president himself. Stanton had been criticizing Lincoln in the most persistent and offensive fashion. He had called him ape and other names quite as uncomplimentary. Once in a lawsuit in Cincinnati he had snubbed Lincoln and hurt him cruelly. But Stanton was a Union man and one of great energy and acknowledged ability. Mr. Lincoln believed him the man to place at the head of the war department. Notwithstanding Stanton's irascible temper and other faults the step has been approved by history. What other president, with the possible exception of Washington, was great enough to place a personal enemy in his official family on the sole ground that the nation needed him? Where was there ever a more perfect example of dividing private from public concerns?

On the circuit Lincoln rode at first an old horse and afterward drove a dilapidated looking buggy. He carried a faded umbrella and wore for the most part a hat that had seen better days. He was one of those neck and uncomplaining men that landlords and other like important personages imposed on. In the presidency he was open to access by everybody. His desire to meet people amounted to a passion with him all his life. He would stay out on the circuit Sundays or wander around the streets of evenings to meet people and tell stories. He called his receptions in Washington his "public opinion baths." He genuinely loved all kinds and conditions of men. What wonder that they love him!

Mr. Lincoln's typical democracy is happily illustrated by a story: A German lieutenant who had been galled by admission to Lincoln and made such a favorable impression that he was given a commission in a cavalry regiment. Thinking to impress the president still more, he recounted that he belonged to one of the oldest and noblest houses in Germany. "Oh, never mind that," said the common people's president. "You will not find that an obstacle to your advancement."

The martyred president's name and fame are now familiar in all lands. The hearts of human beings are touched by the same emotions and respond to the same human call on whatever curve of the earth they beat. Liberty and democracy are growing in all nations, and that being true, the fame of their apostles must likewise grow. Of these Abraham Lincoln was by no means the least.



Valentine, Valentine, speed thee away  
Straight unto her who my heart holds, I pray.  
Swiftly return then to me, Valentine,  
Bringing her heart back, a hostage for mine.

## Indians and St. Valentine.

By JAMES A. EDGERTON.

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**N**O one would suspect the noble red man of stooping to send frivolous Valentines through the mails. Yet there is a case recorded in Washington of some wealthy Osage Indians doing this very thing. It was Chief Jim Bigheart and three of his braves who bought the delicate creations and sent them to leading government officials. Perhaps the chief's name had something to do with his liberality. Indian names are bestowed because of qualities and not at haphazard, as with us. So "Bigheart" may have meant that Chief Jim was that kind of an Indian.

This happened a few years ago when some of the Osages were in Washington to see the "great father." One day the chief with his braves, dressed in all of their finery, with red blankets, blue trousers trimmed with por-



"HEAP VALENTINES!"

cupine quills and hats with silver ornaments, stalked into a Washington department store. "Valentines! Heap Valentines!" said Chief Jim. When conducted to the counter and some of the cheaper ones were shown him he repeated "Heap Valentines!" with much emphasis. So, with a wink, the clerk trotted out one worth \$5. "Me take," said Chief Jim right off the bat, or whatever is the Indian equivalent of that expression. Then he was shown forty more of the same expensive pattern. "Me take," was the laconic expression of Chief Jim in each case. Finally the store was ransacked from cellar to garret and every high priced Valentine in the house was produced, the Indians grunting approving "Ughs!" and adding "Me take!" until the bill reached \$520. The chief never latted an eye as he was informed of the amount, but paid it from an immense roll of bills. Then he asked that the Valentines be sent out for him. The manager kindly offered to mail them from the store. Asking the names of the ladies to whom they were to be directed, he was interrupted by Bigheart:

"Injun ladies no get Valentines. Injun ladies work. Squaw! Ugh!" Then Chief Jim rattled off the names of senators, representatives and leading men in all parts of the country, even sending one to the president of the United States.

## Pagan Origin of Valentine's Day.

It would seem that Cupid should choose for his particular festival a day commemorative of some joyful event. St. Valentine's day is the anniversary of the putting to death of an early bishop of the Roman church named Valentine, who suffered martyrdom for his faith on Feb. 14, 270 A. D. However, as most young men are willing to swear that they will die if need be for the love of their maids and as St. Valentine died for the love of his bride, the Christian faith, there is no great incongruity in using Feb. 14 as the day for the more or less anonymous expression of tender regard.

It is not altogether—perhaps not at all—the fact of St. Valentine's martyrdom that has caused the choosing of his death anniversary as the day for exchanging tinted, scented missives between young men and maidens. There was an ancient belief that birds began mating on Feb. 14. This belief antedated Christianity. St. Valentine's day, therefore, so far as it is observed by modern youth, is of pagan origin. In "A Midsummer Night's Dream" Shakespeare alludes to this belief in the mating of birds thus:

St. Valentine is past;  
Begin these wood birds but to couple now.  
In his "Hesperides" the tender Herrick sang:  
Oft have I heard both youth and virgins say  
Birds choose their mates and couple, too,  
this day.  
But by their flight I never can divine  
When I shall couple with my valentine.

**Love's Supremacy.**  
Love refreshes all the soul, quickens the cockles of the heart and purifies the murky currents of the blood.  
Love forgives ere it is asked, seeks but good in all, is forever blind to evil, condemns not nor in aught would judge.  
It knows not sinner nor sinner, for to it all hearts that hold the hidden jewel for which it seeks are sacred caskets, hallowed by the breath of God.

### CARDINAL NEWMAN'S VALENTINE.

Little maiden, dost thou pine  
For a faithful Valentine?  
Art thou scanning timidly  
Every face that meets thine eye?  
Art thou fancying there may be  
Fairer face than thou dost see?  
Little maiden, cease to pine,  
Wouldst thou have a Valentine?  
Go and ask my little child,  
Ask the Mother undried:  
Ask, for she will show thee near  
And will whisper in thine ear—  
Valentine! The name is good,  
For it comes of lineage high  
And a famous family,  
And it tells of gentle blood,  
Noble blood and noble still.  
For its owner freely poured  
Every drop there was to spill  
In the quarrel of his Lord.

Valentine! I know the name,  
Many martyrs bear the same,  
And they stand in glittering ring  
Round their warrior God and King,  
Who before and for them bled,  
With their robes of ruby red  
And their swords of cherub flame.

Yes, there is a plenty there,  
Knights without reproach of fear;  
Such St. Denys, such St. George,  
Martin, Maurice, Theodore  
And a hundred thousand more;  
Guerdon gained and war-are o'er.  
By that sea without a surge  
And beneath the eternal sky  
And the beatific sun  
In Jerusalem above,  
Valentine is every one.  
Choose from out that company  
Whom to serve and whom to love.

### Harrison & Robinson Win Ribbons.

At the stock show at Denver last week, Harrison & Robinson's fine herd of Aberdeen Angus cattle made a fine show and brought back many ribbons, winning four firsts, five seconds, three thirds, one fourth and one fifth prize. This was the greatest number of prizes won by any Angus herd in Nebraska and only one less than the Miller herd of Iowa, the leading herd of the state.

### ORDER OF HEARING AND NOTICE OF SETTLEMENT OF ACCOUNT.

In the County Court of Red Willow county, Nebraska.  
State of Nebraska, Red Willow county, ss.  
To May J. Redding, Grace V. Short, William H. Short, Annie N. Short and Charles W. Short, sole heirs of, and all persons interested in the estate of James H. Short, deceased.  
On reading the petition of Lena L. Ghering, praying a final settlement and discharge of her account filed in this Court on the 26th day of January, 1909, and for assignment of homestead and dower to her as widow of the deceased, and for the distribution of said estate, it is hereby ordered that you and all persons interested in said matter may, and do, appear at the County Court to be held in and for said County, on the 13th day of February, A. D. 1909, at One o'clock P. M., to show cause, if any there be, why the prayer of the petitioner should not be granted, and that notice of the pendency of said petition and the hearing thereof be given to all persons interested in said matter by publishing a copy of this order in the Tribune, a weekly newspaper printed in said county, for three successive weeks prior to said day of hearing.  
J. C. McCOOK,  
County Judge.

### NOTICE OF SUIT.

Nellie Smith, Ann Smith, John D. Smith, Lizzie Smith, Isaac Fells, George Arthur S. Dodge, Frank Reel, John H. Reel, Julia F. Reel and Helen Marguerite Reel take notice that on the 23rd day of January, 1909, Charles E. Smith filed his petition in the District Court of Red Willow county, Nebraska, against said defendants, the object and prayer of which are that the defendants, and each and all of them, be required to set forth the interest they and each of them, claim in the northeast quarter and the north half of the southeast quarter of section 21, town 3, N. range 24, W. of the 6th P. M., in Red Willow county, Nebraska; that the plaintiff be decreed to be the owner in fee simple, of an undivided two-thirds interest in said land; that the defendants, John D. Smith and Rosa Fells Dodge, each be decreed to be the owner of an undivided one-third interest therein; and that each of the defendants, Frank Reel, John H. Reel, Julia F. Reel and Helen Marguerite Reel, be decreed to be the owner in fee simple, of an undivided one-thirty-sixth interest in said premises; that a judgment be had, confirming the shares of the parties as hereinbefore set forth, and for the partition of said premises according to the rights of the respective parties therein; and if said real estate cannot be equitably divided, that the same be sold and the proceeds of such sale be distributed among the parties according to their respective rights; and for such other and further relief as may be just and equitable.  
You are required to answer said petition on or before the 8th day of March, 1909.  
Dated this 27th day of January, 1909.  
I-29-14. CHARLES E. SMITH, Plaintiff.  
Cordell & McCarl, Attorneys for Plaintiff.

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Lincoln Riding His Circuit.

coln was the most natural and unassuming democrat seen in modern times. It must be understood that this term is used in its original and fundamental, not its derived and partisan sense. I have no desire to arouse partisan clamor in seeking to convey an idea. Some things in partisan Democracy are as remote from real democracy as some things in institutional Christianity are remote from the teachings and life of the Nazarene.

There is more than a pleasantry in Lincoln's remark that "God must love the common people, he made so many of them." Like most of his humorous quips, that will bear serious study. Lincoln also said that nothing could be inherently wrong which most of the people practiced, or something to that effect. I am not so sure about that doctrine, but it shows the great liberator's attitude. It grew out of his overwhelming desire to make himself one with his fellow men, especially the poorest of his fellow men. He had not in his makeup one shred of the "holier than thou." He was the furthest removed from the Pharisee. He saw clearly the fundamental difference between democrat and aristocrat. He not only perceived this, but lived it.

because they thus develop their powers and bring out their inherent possibilities. One of the worst things about a monarchy is that the people learn to depend on the king to do for them what it would be better for them to do for themselves. By depending on another their own faculties become atrophied through lack of use. Thus the best one man government is worse than the worst popular government. If the masses lean on one or on a few all their own higher powers which are called forth in government remain dormant. Men are as good and as great for the most part as they think themselves. They can do what they are compelled to do. The reason that government is best which governs least is that it makes the individual do for himself. Use makes for growth. The man who has to use his will, his judgment and his inventiveness develops his will, his judgment and his inventiveness. Centuries of popular government, popular education, universal self respect, equality and freedom breed a race worthy of all these high attributes of the full grown man.

Lincoln knew these things, and what is better, he practiced them every day of his life. He wanted to get away