

#### ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

There are things, ideals, institutions, so interwoven with our national existence that the mere mention of the word "American" brings them to vivid and conscious life: "liberty," "charity for all," "progress," "attainment," "unity." So, too, are there men who so conducted themselves, who lived to such great ends, with spirit so flaming, that to mention "Americans" brings them, also, to life and they walk beside us, though their bodies long ago have been taken back by the dust of which they sprang.

February 12 is the birthday of Abraham Lincoln, a humble man and one who was greatly loved. So close was he to the people, so much a part of each man's life during the period in which he lived, that they called him in their hearts by that great title, "friend." He died and they called him "martyred." For a few years they termed him "the great Lincoln" and used other words and phrases and then, as time gave more clearly a perspective, they abandoned the needless adjectives and called him by his name, "Abraham Lincoln."

No man is given to know what Abraham Lincoln has meant to this young nation, nor what power his life has today in moulding hearts and careers and decisions. Phrases, word pictures, bits of speech and incident sink deep into the human mind, there to grow and give strength to purpose and beauty to ideals or fester and stain the life they help to build.

The Lincoln we know from printed page, from record of boyhood, manhood and in power has been rich in incident, word picture, speech and phrase, and they have found lodgement in countless thousands of minds. And from them could grow only certain things, for has it not been written that "a fountain

can not send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?"

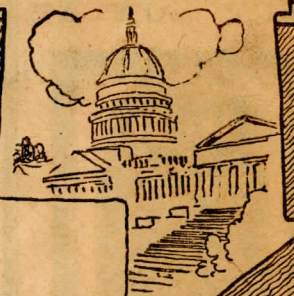
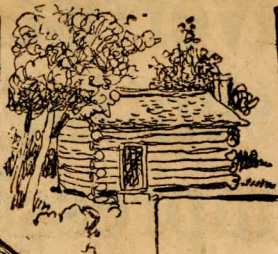
Lincoln taught and lived charity, love, forgiveness, freedom, courage, democracy, tenacity of purpose, and also his life was an eternal sermon preached from a single text: "Love ye one another." They said of him that he was "awkward" until he showed the grace of strength; they said he was "ugly" until they saw his soul shining in his eyes and then they said of him that he was "beautiful." They said of him that he was ill-educated until the beauty of words such as rang out in the Gettysburg speech made them say of him, "He is a master."

Nearly 63 years have passed since he became memory. Wars and rumors of wars have rocked the world and nations have fallen into the dust. His country has faced problems whose solution spelled death to many, temptations have strewn the path of those who followed him in high places, the fate of human progress has rested on the right thinking of the few. It is given to wonder how firm was the spirit hand of Abraham Lincoln in guiding those who came after him, how deep in their hearts grew his example, how wide the mantle of his charity, whose folds they fain would wear.

Lincoln loved life—and gave it. He loved freedom and he won it, not for himself but for others, the humble, the friendless, the down-trodden. He loved justice and served it. He loved mankind and served it, too, not as a master but as a living thing sorely in need of service.

There must be scarce a day on which, in this land of ours, there is not some boy, poor, perhaps ragged, living in humble environment, who does not stand with his face to the sun and say in his heart, "I'm going to do as Abraham Lincoln did."





*A. Lincoln*  
1809 - 1865

