

"ABE" LINCOLN'S YARNS AND STORIES

BY

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"On this occasion the theatre was crowded, many ladies in rich and gay costumes, officers in their uniforms, many well-known citizens, young folks, the usual cluster of gas lights, the usual magnetism of so many people, cheerful with perfumes, music of violins and flutes - and over all, that saturating, that vast, vague wonder, Victory, the nation's victory, the triumph of the Union, filling the air, the thought, the sense, with exhilaration more than all the perfumes.

"The President came betimes, and with his wife, witnessed the play from the large stage boxes of the second tier, two thrown into one, and profusely draped with the national flag. The acts and scenes of the piece - one of those singularly witless compositions which have at the least the merit of giving entire relief to an audience engaged in mental action or business excitements and cares during the day, as it makes not the slightest call on either the moral, emotional, esthetic or spiritual nature - a piece in which among other characters, so called, a Yankee - certainly such a one as was never seen, or at least like it ever seen in North America, is introduced in England, with a varied fol-de-rol of talk, plot, scenery, and such phantasmagoria as goes to make up a modern popular drama - had progressed perhaps through a couple of its acts, when, in the midst of this comedy, or tragedy, or non-such, or whatever it is to be called, and to offset it, or finish it out, as if

in Nature's and the Great Muse's mockery of these poor minics, comes interpolated that scene, not really or exactly to be described at all (for on the many hundreds who were there it seems to this hour to have left little but a passing blur, a dream, a blotch) - and yet partially described as I now proceed to give it:

"There is a scene in the play, representing the modern parlor, in which two unprecedented ladies are informed by the unprecedented and impossible Yankee that he is not a man of fortune, and therefore undesirable for marriage-catching purposes; after which, the comments being finished, the dramatic trio make exit, leaving the stage clear for a moment.

"There was a pause, a hush, as it were. At this period came the death of Abraham Lincoln.