

mer, semi-deifying the man, albeit he was human like the rest of us. But our thought is of Lincoln. He was born 88 years ago today, Feb. 12, 1809. Gladstone was born in the same year, but in December. The great English statesman,—all things considered the greatest of the century the wide world over—is still with us, and quite vigorous, while Lincoln passed away well nigh five and thirty years ago. Our sainted father Bingham, who lies in his "Prophet's chamber," patiently but anxiously waiting for the summons, "Come up higher," was born two years earlier than these two historic heroes. These are the things I wish to say today about Lincoln.

His ancestry.—It was of the humblest, poor and obscure; practically wanting in all that the world regards as essential conditions of success and honor. The true aristocracy traces its ancestry back to the Norman conquest, in 1066, or the times of the Plantagenets, or the Tudors at least. But Lincoln had none. Born in Hardin county, Kentucky, some 40 to 50 miles south of Louisville, he sprang, as it were, out of the ground, unknown utterly to the world. His birth and childhood produced no more expectation or impression of any kind on the world than did that of the humblest child in all the world.

His poverty.—Not only did he not receive any help from his recognized pedigree, but in addition to his utter helplessness from this source, he was severely handicapped by the poverty of his home. Poverty is a weight that drags down, and hinders and burdens here in the north; but the moment you crossed, in those days, Mason's and Dixon's line, or the Ohio river, you entered the South land, where his kind was known as the "poor white trash"—and one needs to live in the south, catch its spirit, breathe its social atmosphere, study the operation of its unwritten, but fast-binding as with bonds of steel, social customs and class, to know what opprobrium and contempt, and crushing weight which is put into that epithet, "poor white trash." That burden largely lay on young

Lincoln. And it was not lifted to any great extent when the family moved to Indiana. Still I think there must have been among all who saw the child and uncouth lad, faint outlines of the grand possibilities of greatness which lay wrapped in the folds of his being; just as when Robert Walpole made his first speech in parliament against the bitter impeachment of the just Somers, in 1701; the old heads smiled, with ill-concealed contempt, but Mr. Mainwaring, who heard him, said he would one day make his mark in that body. Today Walpole is known alongside Chatham and Pitt and Palmerston and Gladstone as the ablest premiers of English history. But all the latent ability, undeveloped possibilities and regal manhood of Lincoln, were buried beneath the burden of this poverty. "Slow rises worth by poverty oppressed," said old Sam Johnson, or as the "Wise Man of Israel's glorious history puts it, "The destruction of the poor is his poverty."

His success.—In spite of lack of ancestry, in spite of poverty, in spite of want of education, Lincoln early saw, what Webster coined into form of human speech,—"There is room at the top," and bent every energy of body, soul and spirit, for long, weary, wearing years to reach the higher table lands of human achievement, where stand the great and the good. And he succeeded. But in winning that success, how much of obloquy and opposition: how many sneers and obstacles: how constant the nagging and persecution—but he reached the lofty pedestal with only one human figure beside; the Father of His Country; the invisible God, the creator, the inspirer and the crowner of both, makes up the trinity.

The Lesson.—Lincoln did succeed, so grandly and enduringly. What I want our school pupils to see and decide is how did he do it, for what purpose was his success, its inspiring cause, who helped, and how did he treat those who tried to hinder and baffle? What is his position in the hearts of the American people today and what will be his permanent position in the world's history?

THE GARMENT OF PRAISE.

"The garment of praise for the spirit of Heaviness."  
Isa. lxi. 3.

The wintry morn was dark with clouds, and dreary:  
And I had risen with heavy heart, and weary,  
Forgetting mercies past, each day repeated,—  
And mourning gifts withheld,—though oft entreated.  
Repining and ungrateful thus I pondered  
O'er past endeavors vain, and sadly wondered  
Why disappointment crossed my path so often,  
And irksome tasks,—with little change to soften;  
The things I would do seemed beyond my powers,  
And fruitless all the toil of tedious hours.  
When suddenly, my long-time-mute canary,—  
As if divinely taught my mood to vary,  
Essayed to sing, and from his treasures olden  
Brought forth his sweetest notes and measures golden.  
My eyes were opened, and the lesson, heeded—  
Gave to my burdened heart the balm it needed,  
My caged bird could sing—his thanks expressing  
For bread and water sure,—his daily blessing,—  
And I could "praise," in my small corner hidden,  
And do the little things my Lord had bidden.  
Highland Park, Ill. M. L. B.

DR. M'PHERSON'S LECTURE.

As a lecture, it was a fine thing, full of bristling points. The delivery was defective in that many complained of not being able to hear it all, his voice seemed to fall too low toward the close of some sentences. It was without manuscript, full of force and vigor and at times rose to eloquence. Perhaps it was a little above what some people wanted or expected, though we think the Park folks are rather brainy. The Doctor's general topic might be styled "Character Building," and he struck some sledge hammer blows. His description of the spirit and wisdom of the agnostics was superb, and the shallowness of mere negations was handsomely exposed.

We again commend in the highest terms, this course of lectures. The next one will be by Miss Jane Addams, of Hull house fame, a young woman who in a very few years has made for herself a world wide fame as a practical philanthropist. Her address will probably come March 9th. Prepare to hear Miss Addams and learn how to help your fellows.

There was an informal meeting Saturday evening at the Young Men's Club to discuss the Electric Railway, chiefly to help to help Sup. Fletcher to know what the people thought and wished about the road outside the city limits. Mr. Fletcher rightly wanted to know how the people felt before he went to the special supervisors' meeting the next day to decide on a franchise for the road by the county authorities. In other words, he proposes to know what the people want before he goes ahead.