

THE ASSASSINATION OF LINCOLN.

IN connection with the celebration of Lincoln's birthday it will not be out of place to reproduce from the New York Herald a part of the description of his assassination given by the poet, Walt Whitman, who was present in Ford's Theater when the foul deed was done:

"There is a scene in the play ('Our American Cousin') representing a modern parlor, in which two unrepresented English ladies are informed by an 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.

"At this period came the murder of Abraham Lincoln. Great as was all its manifold train circling round it, and stretching into the future for many a century, in the politics, history, art, etc., of the New World—in point of fact the main thing, the actual murder, transpired with the quiet and simplicity of any common occurrence—the bursting of a bud or pod in the growth of vegetation, for instance.

"Through the general hum following the stage pause, with the change of position, came the muffled sound of a pistol shot, which not one-hundredth part of the audience heard at the time, and yet a moment's hush, somehow, surely, but vague startled thrill, and then, through the ornamented, draped, starred and striped space way of the President's box, a sudden figure, a man raises himself with hands and feet, stands a moment on the railing, leaps below to the stage, a distance of perhaps fourteen or fifteen feet, falls out of position, catching his boot heel in the copious drapery—the American flag—falls on one knee, quickly recovers himself, rises as if nothing had happened the really sprained his ankle, but unfelt then.

"And so the figure, Booth, the murderer, dressed in plain black broadcloth, bare headed, with full glossy, raven hair, and

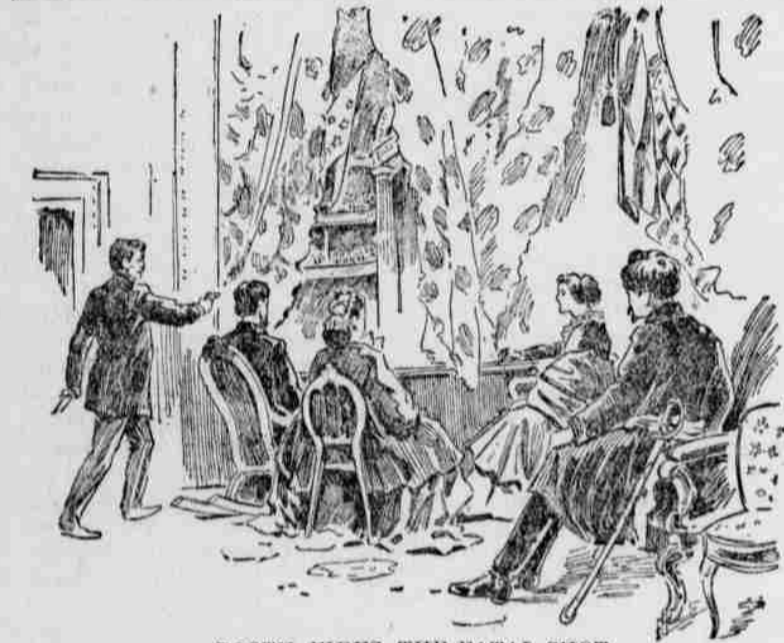
night before enough had been learned to warrant the belief that our candidate had been elected. We went nearly wild with joy, and congratulated Mr. Lincoln most heartily.

Someone saw the famous "stovepipe" in the hall, and, seizing it, threw it up to the ceiling. Another caught it, and then it went the rounds till it fell to the floor, when one gave it a kick, and then another, and another gave the hat a send-off, until it was so battered that it had lost all resemblance to its original shape. Mr. Lincoln looked on and smiled good-naturedly at the childish performance.—Philadelphia Record.



It has never been satisfactorily explained why the 14th of February is called St. Valentine's Day. It has been ascribed as being named after Valentine, who suffered martyrdom as a presbyter of the church, under Claudius, about 270, but nowhere in the history of his life can there be found the least incident connected with him that could possibly have given rise to the practice of that day, unless as some authorities claim, Valentine being a man possessed of great love and charity, his name was thus honored and revered, but this idea does not seem plausible.

Some authorities have given the supposition evidence that it is possibly derived from the custom practiced by the ancient Church of Rome, to choose on this day patrons for the ensuing year, and was perhaps taken up by gallantry after it was dropped by compulsion by the superstitious at the reformation, for since



BOOTH FIRES THE FATAL SHOT.

his eyes like some mad animal's, flashing with light and resolution, yet with a certain strange calmness, holds aloft in one hand a large knife, walks aloft, not much back from the footlights, turns fully toward the audience, his face of stately beauty, lit by those lustreless eyes, flashing with desperation, perhaps insanity, launches out in a firm and steady voice the words, 'Sic semper tyranni,' and then walks, with neither slow nor very rapid pace, diagonally across to the back of the stage, and disappears.

"A moment's hush, a scream, the cry of murder, Mrs. Lincoln leaning out of the box with ashy cheeks and lips, with involuntary cry, pointing to the retreating figure, 'He has killed the President!'

"And still a moment's strange, incredulous suspense—and then the chance—then that mixture of horror, noise, uncertainty—the sound somewhere back of a horse's burst through chairs and railings and break them up; there is inextricable confusion and terror; women faint; quite feeble persons fall and are trampled on; many cries of agony are heard; the broad stage suddenly fills to suffocation with a dense and motley crowd, like some horrible carnival; the audience rush generally upon it; at least the strong men do; the actors and actresses are all there in their play costumes and painted faces, with mortal fright showing through the rouge; the screams and calls, confused talk redoubled, trebled, two or three manage to pass up water from the stage to the President's box; others try to clamber up.

"In the midst of all this the soldiers of the President's guard, with others suddenly drawn to the scene, burst in—some 200 altogether; they storm the house, through all the tiers, especially the upper ones, inflamed with fury, literally charging the audience with fixed bayonets, muskets and pistols, shouting 'Clear out! Clear out!'

"Such the wild scene, or a suggestion of it rather, inside the playhouse that night. . . . And in the midst of that pandemonium, infuriated soldiers, the audience and the crowd, the stage and all its actors and actresses, its paint pots, spangles and gas lights, the life blood from those veins, the best and sweetest in the land, drips slowly down, and death's ooze already begins its little bubbles on the lips."

Football with Lincoln's Hat.

The favorite hat worn by Abraham Lincoln was a tall "stovepipe." It has been described as a foot high, with a brim almost as wide as a Southern sombrero. Many anecdotes are connected with that famous tall hat. In it Mr. Lincoln carried many valuable papers, the briefs of his law cases, and other documents.

On the night of Mr. Lincoln's election to the presidency several ladies who had gathered at the old homestead at Springfield testified their grief by using the hat as a football.

A few of us went over to assist Mrs. Lincoln about the supper which was to be given some gentlemen who had come in to hear the returns. It was after mid-

that time the custom of choosing valentines was a sport practiced by the English gentry as early as 1476 in their homes, but as all this is an uncertainty, we are left in the dark as to the true origin and purpose of St. Valentine's Day.

"It is a ceremony," said Bourne, "never omitted among the vulgar to draw lots, which they term valentines, on the eve before Valentine Day. The names of a select number of the sex are, by an equal number of another, put in some vessel; and after that everyone draws a name, which for the present is called their valentine, and is looked upon as a good omen of their being man and wife afterwards."

In some places, we are told, the custom was considered heathenish, and to abolish it the names of certain saints were written in billets and given, and this may have been the true reason why Valentine was chosen to be the saint for that day, but why the practice of sending or choosing valentines was any more heathenish than many another custom is not clear. They were all foolish, superstitious pastimes.

In 1770 a sport was indulged in during the month of February, when the girls burned a figure which they stole from the boys, and which they called "A Holly-Boy," and the boys stole a figure from the girls which they burned, calling it a "Tvy-Girl."

It is altogether probable that the custom of sending written love messages on that day originated at the time of Queen Catherine, consort of Henry IV., when Lydgate, the Monk of Bury, wrote the following lines in praise of the queen:

Seynte Valentine, of custom yeere by yeere Men have an usance in this region To loke and serche cupides kalenders, And chose theyr choyse, by grete affection.



SNAKES BY THE BUSHEL.

More than 200 Rattlers Killed by a Mowing Machine.

It is not necessary to go to the far West or South for up-to-date snake stories. One which is vouched for by reliable New York farmers comes from Hancock, Delaware County, and is made public by the Walton Reporter. Joseph Darrow, says this truthful newspaper, has a farm just below Hancock village. He employs as a farm hand Henry Vail. Henry is a native and to the manor born. He is not the least bit afraid of snakes, but since his experience of last week he has more respect for the reptiles that he had before.

After eating his dinner Friday he hitched up the team and started mowing around a meadow about sixty rods from the barn. It was a terribly hot day. The thermometer stood ninety in the shade and about two hundred in the sun. Henry had mowed about half a dozen times around the place, his horses taking a slow, steady gait, when all at once they pricked up their ears, and with a terrific snort sprang forward, throwing him from the machine. The same instant the knives stuck into a squirming, writhing ball of rattlesnakes, rolled tightly together and as large as a bushel basket.

The horses started full speed for the barn, and the heads and rattles flew in all directions. The horses, the mowing machine and the ground behind it were covered with snakes. Henry leaped to his feet as he struck the ground, and, seizing a stick, whacked right and left for his life. Wherever he struck he could not fail to hit a snake. He waded through the myriad of squirming serpents working his stick like a fall on a thrashing floor until he cleared the hissing mass, and then he ran with all the speed he could muster for the barn, which the horses had already reached.

The team were none the worse for the run, though it took some time to get the machine righted. It was literally covered with ground rattlesnakes. The heads and bodies of twenty-six rattlesnakes were counted, and Henry estimates that there must have been two hundred in the nest.

The next day thirty rattlers were killed up Gee Brook, about four miles from the village, and a big one on Beers' flat, near where Vail had his encounter.

LINCOLN AS A DOORKEEPER.

How Abe Pinned on the Badge and Did Duty for a Time.

James Elter is one of the oldest doorkeepers in the War Department at Washington, and has been stationed at the Seventeenth street entrance of the Winder Building for many years, occupying a chair in which President Lincoln sat while he acted as doorkeeper in place of Mr. Elter. Speaking of the incident, Mr. Elter said:

"One day a tall, lank gentleman came to the entrance and asked me if the Secretary was in, and I told him no, that it was too early for him. He then asked at what hour he would be likely to find him, and I told him. With a pleasant 'Thank you' (something we don't always get) he walked away. At the hour I told him the Secretary would be in he again walked up the steps and asked me if I would not go to the Secretary's room and tell him that he wished to see him. I told him I could not leave my post.

"Oh, that is all right. I am Mr. Lincoln, and I will keep your while you deliver my message. Tell him that I want to see him here in the lower hall! With this the President unpinned my badge, stuck it in his own coat, and took my chair. I hastened to the Secretary's room, and soon the two were together near me, but in quiet and earnest talk. I never did know why Mr. Lincoln did not want to go to the Secretary's room, but I know that I prize this chair. I call it Abe Lincoln. No doubt that was the only time a President ever acted as a doorkeeper."

A VALENTINE.

Dear little maid in the scarlet hood,
I know you're merry, I'm sure you're good;
Your little blue skirt is patched and frayed,
You've a shoe-striking bow on your towed braid.
Your shoes are stubby, and square, and old,
Your rattling mittens set in the cold;
But you pass each day when the school-bell rings,
Merrily making the best of things.

Hop-pity-skip-ping, I watch you come,
Arms entwined with a giggling chum,
Borne on the crest of a wave of girls,
A motley tossing of hoods and curls,
Friends behind you and round cheeks before,
Surging in shouts to the schoolhouse door—
Homely and happy, and shabby and proud,
The laughing queen of the chattering crowd.

Wise little maid of the hundred friends,
Cheerily taking what fortune sends,
Your nose is snub and your mouth is wide
(I've seen a cookie tucked whole inside!)
And fresh all over your round cheeks lie
Like cinnamon sprinkled on pumpkin-pie;
But your eyes are gay, and your laugh is sweet,
As you hop-pity-skip down the dingy street.

Dear little maid in the scarlet hood,
I am your friend, and will you be mine?
I know you're merry, I'm sure you're good,
And I'd like you, please, for my valentine.
—Youth's Companion.

LINCOLN'S BIRTHPLACE.

Poverty and Desolation Wafted on the Famous Baby.

Abraham Lincoln, the great war President, was born in Larue (then Hardin) County, Kentucky, in a rude little log cabin, says St. Nicholas. This cabin has recently been restored and so far as possible made exactly as it was eighty-eight years ago, when a little baby boy was born to Thomas and Nancy Lincoln, or "Linkhorn," as the name was then spelled—humble "settlers," who had moved to the neighborhood from Washington County four years before.

The few living people who remember Thomas Lincoln, the father, say that he was a rather improvident man, not working long at any one thing. He was a hard worker, but was a poor manager, and the little family was often without more than the simplest necessities of life. Thomas Lincoln cleared a few acres around his cabin and raised a small crop of corn and grain. Then he became a carpenter and tinker, working at such odd jobs as he could find among the pioneer neighbors. He was away at work at the time Abraham was born.

The neighbors heard that Mrs. Lincoln was in the cabin all alone with the little baby and had little to eat except corn and potatoes. They at once visited the Lincoln cabin, taking such delicacies as their houses afforded. The father returned in a few days and the baby was named Abraham Lincoln, after his grandfather, who had been killed by the Indians when Thomas Lincoln was a little boy.

A St. Valentine's Tea.

A St. Valentine's tea may be easily made a very charming little festivity. The guests should consist of a few bright young people, and the whole affair should be conducted in a spirit of fun and informality. A sentimental quotation should be written on the name card at each plate, taking care that it has some appropriateness to the guest. The prevailing colors in flowers or other table decoration should be pink and white. All the dishes should be suitable to the occasion, at least in name, and each one accompanied by a suggestive couplet, to be read aloud by the server.

A Good Postman.

If I were a postman
I'd learn how to lose
The letters that vex
And that carry bad news,
But I'd pack such a stack
In my bag, 'twould be queer
If you didn't have valentines
Twelve times a year.

Where Royal Bones Repose.

The kings and queens of France are buried in an old church at St. Denis, which was founded by King Dagobert in the year 630. In this church the Maid of Orleans laid down her arms in 1429, and there, in 1810, Napoleon was married to the Archduchess Marie Louise. The effigies of all the monarchs from Dagobert to Louis XVIII. lie on their backs on marble slabs in rows like bodies in a morgue. The father and mother of Charlemagne are there, and many old chiefs whose existence to us seems mythical.

The kings and queens of England are buried in Westminster abbey and in the chapel of St. George at Windsor.

The dead emperors of Russia sleep in white marble tombs, without ornament, decoration or inscription, in the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, in the citadel that guards the Neva river. At the foot of each a Cossack's soldier stands on guard night and day continually.

Women barbers will never become popular with men. They can't forget the scrape Samson got into by going to a woman for a hair-cut.

A BEGGING VALENTINE.

Illustration of a woman in a dress holding a valentine card, with a small figure of a child nearby.

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