

principles, happy in his family, and active in the discharge of local duties; and to political men as an honest, industrious and sensible member of parliament."

Richard Baxter, author of the "Saint's Rest" declared that one of the pleasures he hoped to enjoy in heaven was the society of John Hampden. What a tribute to the simple but yet compelling influence of a manly heart! How many men of corrupt life—a life spent in plundering wherever there was a chance of succeeding without discovery—would not willingly barter on their deathbed the "winnings" and the patronage of a life-time to secure from one single soul the love that followed Hampden to his tomb?

Burns's last interview with his dying father is one of the most touching incidents in human history:

"He bade me act a manly part
Tho' I had ne'er a farthing;
For without an honest manly heart
No man was worth regarding."

Now the world has heard a lot about Burns' "weaknesses," but what is there in the inheritance of nations that is comparable to the compelling influence of that one man's expressed thoughts, especially those of them that appeal to man's better nature? From the very depths of his great soul he loathed the creeping sycophant. From every pore of his nature there gushed out a holy contempt for "the little tyrant of his fields." The simple message of his matchless life was to tell the world that

"The Rank is but the guinea stamp
The man's the gowd for a' that."

and that whatever emoluments are in the gift of the "patron"—

"A man o' independent mind
Is King o' men for a' that."

What does not American life at home and American prestige the world over owe to the simple purity of the life of Abraham Lincoln? Was ever a man of any of the great races of the earth greater in the simple directness of his public career and in his private life? At home, in the senate or when towering undefeated and undismayed above the most nerve shattering tempest of difficulty that ever beset a man's life, back of it all and above it all was the "still small voice" of his unpolled life. Lincoln stood on the bed rock of his integrity among the friends of his choice, more firmly than anointed monarch ever stood on the steps of his throne surrounded by an armed host of steel clad warriors.

There is no more remarkable tribute in the history of nations to the power of a straight-forward life, plowing its course through the turmoil of government with no other lever or weapon than

simple integrity. What an army of splendidly cultured minds and dandified statesmen were the contemporaries of "Honest Abe!" How was it that this gaunt, ungainly, homespun backwoodsman outstripped them all in the affections and esteem of the people? He never purchased a vote and there isn't a shred of all that has been preserved of his memory that breathes the suspicion that he ever "sought or shunned" a position by any promise or favor bestowed on one whom he did not believe intrinsically fitted and entitled to hold that office or receive that assistance.

"A figure entered with loose, shambling gait, tall, lank, with stooping shoulders and long pendulous arms. The hands were of extraordinary size, the feet still larger. In his ill-fitting, wrinkled black suit he looked like a London undertaker's mute. A rope of black silk surrounded his neck, knotted in front into a bulb,

with flying ends. The turned-down collar revealed a sinewy, yellow neck, surmounted by a strange, quaint face; this nestled in a mass of coarse, bristling black beard, stiff, like mourning pins. The head was thatched with wild republican hair, which did not conceal large, widely projecting ears; the nose stood out prominent; the eyes, beneath shaggy brows, were deep-set, penetrating, almost tender; the mouth was stern but amiable, the features generally full of kindness, sagacity and awkward bonhomie."

Such was "Bull Kun" Russell's description of Abraham Lincoln, the greatest "genius for doing the right thing" that America ever knew, perhaps all things considered, that the world ever knew in the seats of the mighty. He reminds us of one of whom it was said, "He had no form of comeliness or beauty," and yet! He held the hearts of the people and strange to say an almost infallible mother-wit at the same time commanded the homage and complete confidence of those elect spirits who are said to have in-

herited administrative capacity.

"Example is the great school of mankind and they will be taught in no other," but when the heroes of by-gone days are held up as guiding lights or examples, men fling up their hands in despair and bewail their helplessness. "These men were abnormal," they say, "altogether removed from the crowd of struggling mediocrity to which we belong, and their 'attainments' set a mark far too high for us to reach."

But what was the common badge of their greatness and the power they wielded among men? Nothing more than the common virtues that we preach about occasionally but which they lived out in their daily intercourse with men. They still had their "weaknesses" and herein is our hope. Lord Rosebery with his usual sagacity put it in these words in speaking of Burns lately:

"Had we nothing before us in our futile and halting lives but saints and the ideal, we might well fail altogether. When we see that the greatest and choicest images of God have had their weakness like ours, their temptations, their hours of darkness, their bloody sweat, are we not encouraged by their lapses and catastrophes to find energy for one more effort, one more struggle."

Now it seems to us that the politician who goes in, pledged to devote himself to the public service need not find it an "effort or a struggle" to keep absolutely straight with regard to the public funds and to the disposal of contracts, positions and all else that involves the expenditure of the public money. As we write, the very last development in the rottenness of our political machinery is seen in the fact that one of this country's most responsible administrators at this crisis is made the storm centre of both parties because he dared to step over the "patronage list" to reach the men he conscientiously believed to be best fitted and the material his judgment believed to be most suited for the great pur-

pose in hand.

But there is one splendid reflection the country can take to its heart with some comfort, and that is that the very worst of the vituperative language that is being directed against this public servant does not allege one brown cent of graft. Mistakes (and at such a moment, too) are to be expected but mistakes are capable of being rectified. There is nothing in the grasp of human genius, however, that can deal with the subterranean hunter whose quarry is graft, and there is no calamity that may happen to a country that may not be expected at any moment while its affairs are in any department at the disposal of men whose first and last thought is themselves and their political friends.

The Royalty of Character

Character is property. It is the noblest of possessions. It is an estate in the general good-will and respect of men, and they who invest in it—though they may not be rich in this world's goods—will find their reward in esteem and reputation fairly and honorably won. And it is right that in life good qualities should tell—that industry, virtue and goodness should rank the highest—and that the really best men should be foremost.

Said Sir Benjamin Rudyard in his impassioned address in the debate on the Petition of Right in 1628: "No man is bound to be rich or great—no, nor even to be wise; but every man is bound to be honest." "Moral principles," said Hume the great Commoner, "are social and universal. They form, in a manner, the party of human kind against vice and disorder, its common enemy."

When a man can be rated as an honest man, the only criterion after that for the public service is just what would be the criterion for private employment—efficiency. How many business houses (even in Canada) enquire into a man's politics when they are considering the fitness of a new "hand" to fill any position?

Let us stop preaching and get down to solid living. Thank God our national history is not wanting in the very greatest living models of what is needful in any sphere of employment, and the very memory of these men is surely sufficient at this particular crisis to fire the soul of every man who really has an interest in his country's welfare.

These men and their like are the "salt of the earth" in death as well as in life; what they did once their descendants have still and always a right to do after them and their example will live in their country a continual stimulant and encouragement for him who has the soul to adopt it.



ABRAHAM LINCOLN

ABRAHAM LINCOLN: "A king of men whose crown was love, whose throne was gentleness; a man, by all the measurements of man; a martyr at his post, triumphant earth wears on its breast no higher decoration than his dust."—William J. Lampton.