

The American Greatheart.

By Rev. R. G. MacBeth, M.A.

No properly conducted monthly magazine in any civilized country should miss in its February number some notice of the birthday anniversary of that American Greatheart, Abraham Lincoln. He was born in a famous year the "annus mirabilis" during which those other great figures, the statesman Gladstone and the poet Tennyson, first saw the light. The two latter were more "to the manor born" and had less struggle to make their way in the world. But it is difficult to apportion credit in these matters. Young lads who have some reasonable expectation of competency without their own exertion, do not always exert themselves and hence both Gladstone and Tennyson, especially the former, deserve high respect because they refused to become victims of the truth contained in the saying that "the prosperity of the parents is the destruction of their children." On the other hand one can hardly conceive of circumstances giving less promise of producing a great man than the poverty and the almost hopelessness into which Lincoln came in that half-faced camp in the backwoods of Kentucky. His mother died when he was only nine but she gave him the sound advice and religious impetus which he felt all through his years "All that I am," he said in the great days that came later, "all that I am I owe under God to my sainted mother." Silver and gold she had none but such as she had she gave to her little son who crying like to break his heart, knelt on the mud floor of that cabin beside her deathbed as she commended him to the keeping and care of God. There is tremendous efficacy in a real mother's prayer. Could this mother have foreseen the future she would have beheld that half-faced camp widening into the splendors of the Capitol; she would have heard a million prayers converging on the life of her son, and mingled with these the voice of the bondmen and bondwomen he was to set free, sweeping around him in a wondrous chorus of gratefulness and blessing as the ages of time unfolded.

Tennyson's Prophecy.

Not concerning Lincoln but another, did Tennyson write in his "In Memoriam," the outline of his dream concerning the rise to greatness, but the very year when Tennyson gave his peerless poem as a whole to the world, the backwoods boy in America was fulfilling these famous lines as no mere man ever did before or since.

"Dost thou look back on what hath been,
As some divinely gifted man,
Whose life on low estate began
And on a simple village green;

"Who breaks his birth's invidious bar,
And grasps the skirts of happy chance,
And breasts the blows of circumstance,
And grapples with his evil star;

"Who makes by force his merit known
And lives to clutch the golden keys,
To mould a mighty state's decrees,
And shape the whisper of the throne;

And moving up from high to higher,
Becomes on Fortune's shining slope
The pillar of a people's hope
The centre of a world's desire."

Study and Work.

It is rather startling to us to realize in this day when so much education is being heaped upon young people, that Abraham Lincoln was not in school for a year all told during his life-

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