

PRACTICAL ENGLISH III.

THE RELIGION OF LINCOLN.

All the chief biographers of Lincoln declare him to have been profoundly religious. in 1842 he wrote to his friend speed, referring to his own troubled heart, "whatever he designs he will do for me. yet, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, is my text just now." shortly after he decided to settle permanently in springfield, his father fell dangerously ill. Lincoln, in writing to his half brother, said "I sincerely hope father may recover his health, but at all events tell him to remember to call upon and confide in our great and good and merciful maker who will not run away from him in his extremity. he notes the fall of the sparrow and numbers the hairs of our heads, and he will not forget the dying man who puts trust in him."

Lincoln's Wisdom

Lincoln advocated temperance and proclaimed the gospel of health. "do not worry, eat three square meals a day, say your prayers, be courteous to your creditors, keep your digestion good, exercise, go slow, and go easy. maybe there are other things that your special case requires to make you happy, but, my friend, these I reckon will give you a good lift."

His Temperance Record

During the washingtonian movement Mr. Lincoln took an active interest in the temperance reform and made addresses in its behalf. one speech made in the second presbyterian church of springfield feb. 22, 1842, on the anniversary of the washingtonian society, has become memorable. it is an earnest and eloquent plea for moral suasion and shows much of the spirit of the man who taught malice toward none and charity to all.

He plead for the continuance of the work of reforming drunkards, and also for the efforts of those who were not immediate sufferers. he urged the duty of people who did not drink to take the pledge and give every moral support to the habitual drunkards who would try to reform and said, "let us make it as unfashionable to withhold our names from the temperance pledge as for husbands to wear their wives' bonnets to church." to those who would say, "we are no drunkards and we shall not acknowledge ourselves such by joining a 'drunkards' society,'" he replied, "surely no christian will adhere to this objection." he then followed this with an eloquent plea from the example of Jesus, who came in the form of sinful man to die an ignominious death, that, in like manner, if needs be, men should suffer to help their weak and erring fellow-creatures.

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"Stop Your Boat -- I've Lost My Apple!"

One day a farmer from the backwoods came to President Lincoln to tell him that the soldiers had stolen some of his hay, and he wanted his claim paid at once.

"Why, my good sir," said Lincoln, "if I should attempt to consider every such individual case, I should find work for twenty presidents, and to illustrate the point he told the following story:

"In my early days I knew one Jack Chase, who was a lumberman on the Illinois, and when steady and sober, the best raftsman on the river, it was quite a trick twenty five years ago to take the logs over the rapids, but he was skillful with a raft, and always kept her straight in the channel, finally a steamer was put on, and Jack, he's dead now, poor fellow, was made captain of her, he always used to take the wheel going through the rapids, one day, when the boat was plunging and wallowing along in the boiling current, and Jack's utmost vigilance was being exercised to keep her in the narrow channel, a boy pulled his coat-tail and hailed him with, 'say, mister captain, I wish you would just stop your boat a minute, I've lost my apple overboard,'"

Daniel Webster's Dirty Hands

One of the most amusing of mr. lincoln's stories was that of daniel webster's hands.

"One day daniel had done something very naughty in school and was called up by the teacher to be punished, the form of punishment being the old fashioned ferruling of the hands, his hands happened to be very dirty and, out of a sense of personal shame, on the way to the teacher's desk he spit upon the palm of his right hand and rubbed it on his pantaloons.

"Give me your hands, sir," said the teacher very sternly.

Out went the right hand, partly cleansed, the teacher looked at it a moment and said:

"Daniel, if you will find another hand in this school as filthy as that I will let you off this time."

Instantly from behind his back came the left hand, 'here it is, sir,' was the ready reply.

"That will do," said the teacher, "for this time you may take your seat, sir."