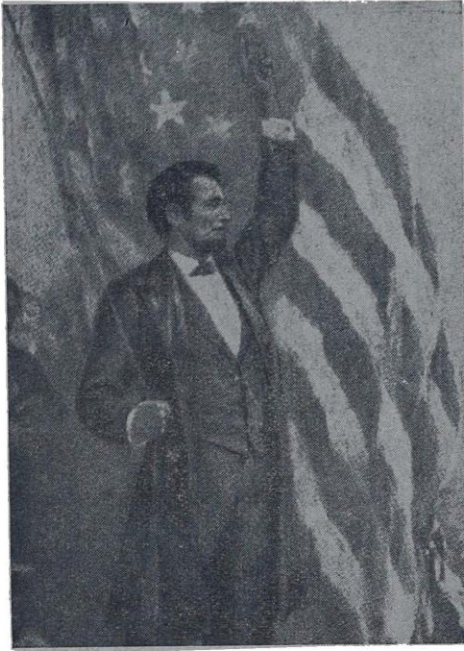


Lincoln, a Great-Hearted Man

By Pacifico Bernardo



IN the history of America there had been no man who started lower and climbed higher than Abraham Lincoln, considered by many as America's greatest president. Born in a log cabin in the wilderness of Kentucky, apart from civilization, amidst poverty and unfavorable surroundings, lacking in good looks but endowed with a burning ambition to raise himself and become somebody, he worked hard and struggled to overcome those difficulties till he finally succeeded.

Simple in his manners, careful in his speech, affectionate and full of wit and good common sense, he won the love and admiration of his fellowmen. But the outstanding trait which won for him undying fame was his being a "big hearted" man—a friend of the friendless and the champion of the oppressed. He was always ready to help and defend the weak and the helpless. Here is an instance where he showed both his bravery and kind-heartedness.

At one time, a poor, helpless and hungry Indian wandered into their camp. He claimed that he was a friend of the white men and begged for help and protection.

The soldiers, however, had come to fight the Indians, so they surrounded the poor fellow and proposed to kill him.

The Indian showed a letter of recommendation from General Cass, but they would not believe it and made a rush at the old man.

Captain Lincoln heard the noise and he dashed out just in time to protect the old Indian from the soldiers' brutality. He placed himself beside the Indian and shouted: "Men, this must not be done! He must not be shot and killed by us!"

"He's a spy! a spy!" shouted the soldiers.

The Indian crouched at Lincoln's feet, and the tall captain asked the angry men to move back and let the Indian go.

"O, Lincoln! you're a coward," shouted one of the soldiers.

Captain Lincoln knew the men he had to deal with. "Who says I'm a coward?" he demanded rolling up his sleeves.

The soldiers knew what that meant. They were afraid to come within the range of those long and brawny arms.

"That's not fair, Lincoln!" cried one, "you're larger and heavier than we are."

By military rules the captain could have ordered the arrest of the mutineers. But he knew that to do so would be considered by his men as taking advantage of his position and therefore, cowardly and tyrannical. So he offered, as was the rule in all backward settlements to fight it out with them, one after the other.

The men knew the uselessness of a wrestle with Lincoln. None of them dared try it; so the Indian was left under the captain's protection and no harm was done to him.

It was a small matter, but it proved his courage if any proof were needed, it proved that he was a friend of the friendless and was willing to fight in defense of the weak and the helpless. He was never afraid to

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stand up for anything that was right or just or honorable, even if it were unpopular.

That same trait was shown when he fought for the freedom of the slaves. It was a hard fight but he fought hard and long till he succeeded. His success in that fight made him immortal.