

# A VALENTINE.

(Written by a married man.)  
 Into my presence came just now  
 A little child—I know not how.  
 Familiar, too, she seemed; and yet  
 I could not tell where we had met.  
 His mien was innocent and mild—  
 I never saw a fairer child—  
 And yet, in those sweet, earnest eyes,  
 He cocked one wicked eye at me.  
 I knew him then. The pretty boy  
 Took aim with the same silver toy  
 That plays its thousands. "Wait!" cried I;  
 "Don't shoot at me, my son, oh, lie!"  
 "For you forget it was your dart,  
 Sent once with your own matchless art,  
 That made me like the rest—a fool."  
 "Since then, alas, I've been at school!"  
 "For she, ah, yes! she still is fair;  
 Unchanged by gray her dusky hair.  
 Once she was loving; now you see  
 She rises the house, and she rules me."  
 He said no word, but just took aim.  
 Straight to my heart the arrow came.  
 "Forget me now, sir, if you dare!"  
 Cried Cupid, running down the stair.  
 Deep in my heart there is a pain—  
 Methinks I am in love again!  
 Sweet, sweet, my pen is not true;  
 Those foolish words I deeply rue.  
 I wonder if you are in league  
 With Cupid? Is it Love's intrigue?  
 I know not, care not, but I'll sign  
 Myself your humble Valentine.  
 —FUCK.

# MEG'S VALENTINE.

MEG was only one of the "hands" in the great factory of Weaver & Co., and with about the same regularity as the machinery she performed her daily tasks.  
 Nobody in the factory had ever given her so much as a sympathetic glance; the whirr of wheels, the grind of machinery, the everlasting hum of moving belts and singling of spindles did not encourage sympathy, and besides Meg was quiet, even timid, and her companions, after a first day of now and then a half curious, half critical inspection, paid no attention to her.  
 And yet Meg's "trouble" had been a romance; a sort of a flower which blooms sometimes along the hedgerows with the same beauty and sweetness as in the conservatory.  
 Born was all Meg knew about her origin; brought up, at first in a charitable institution, later as the chore girl in a boarding house, which always smelled of dirt and rancidity; and still later as a boarder at the same place, because it was more home to her after her long, hard day's work at the factory, where she had secured employment at the age of 15. Meg's life had been an uneventful one.  
 Meg was ignorant, her "schooling" having been encompassed by a six months' course at a grammar school in the neighborhood, and for which she had no advantage; she had toiled for the mistress of the boarding house until her health threatened to give way under the strain. But since somebody, back in the past of Meg's unknown ancestry, had sent a drop of ambitious blood flowing through her veins, within the six months she had learned to read easy words, both in print and writing, and she was proud of the fact.  
 She did glory in her power to read and spell; all the meaning of such cheap books as came in her way, "once, having watched a postman deliver a letter across the street, she was seized with a wish that she was somewhat akin to pain to receive a letter from somebody—just to see if she could frame an answer.  
 She had never received a letter and thinking it over from this standpoint, Meg felt that she was very lonely and she vaguely wondered how it all came about that nobody in all the thousands which made up the big city was Meg's world—had cared whether she lived or died.  
 Once a sweet little girl, who was walking with her nurse, had looked up into her face and with that free-fansy which knows nothing of rules and which has in it the element, nay, the very essence of fraternity, had pressed a tiny cluster of violets into her hand.  
 And so the days went on, to-day as yesterday, to-morrow as to-day, until one morning Meg overslept herself, by some method of calculation which did not consider time in the light of dollars and cents added to her income, and she went to her breakfast late. The landlady was usually pleasant when a boarder happened to be late at breakfast and, as became one in her exalted position, she made an offense of this kind on Meg's part an affair of great importance.  
 Not that Meg in all the years she had worked for Weaver & Co. had been late to breakfast more than three or four times, but the landlady never quite forgot that Meg had at one time been her willing slave and any dereliction on her part which was savored of independence was not a thing to be lightly passed over.  
 On the morning in question, the landlady, much to Meg's surprise, greeted her in an affable manner and her grim mouth quivered with something which might, under favorable conditions, have been mistaken for a smile, but which had had

A TINY CLUSTER OF VIOLETS.  
 no little practice that it merely succeeded in being a grimace, as she told her to take her seat at the table and then proceeded to introduce her to a new boarder who had just paid a month's board in advance.  
 Meg acknowledged the introduction, and after the landlady had gone out ventured to look at her vis-a-vis, and discovered that he was a tall young man with a bronzed complexion and a pair of brown eyes which met hers frankly, and seemed to look right down into her foolishly beating heart, and after the tough steak had been served and he had gallantly filled a glass of water for her Meg made up her mind that he was different from those whom she constantly met beneath that roof, and was undeniably "nice."  
 The young man, whose name was Atwood—"Mr. Thomas Atwood," as he was called by the landlady—was disposed to talk as he went on eating his breakfast, and as Meg was the only one at the breakfast table he naturally talked to her, and she soon learned that he was head brakeman on one of the trains which rolled out of the city on the iron rails belonging to a great railway line, and that his home was in an Eastern city. She told him that she also belonged to the tolling masses, and before breakfast was finished they became very well acquainted, and Meg, as she phoned her veil down close over her plain little hat, thought Mr. Atwood the very nicest gentleman whom she had ever met.

# ABRAHAM LINCOLN.



On the 12th of February, 1809, in the wilderness, in La Rue County, Kentucky, was born one of the best and greatest men that ever lived—Abraham Lincoln. His father was a poor farmer, and in the rude life of the backwoods his entire schooling did not exceed three months. His first knowledge of the law, in which he afterwards became a specialist, was gained by reading the statutes of Indiana, lent to him by a constable, and he obtained a tolerable knowledge of grammar, also from a borrowed book, studied by the light of burning shavings in a cooper's shop, after his family had, in 1830, emigrated to Illinois. In 1834 he was elected to the Illinois Legislature—was three times re-elected—was admitted to practice law in 1836, and then removed to Springfield, Ill. In 1846 he was elected to Congress, where he voted against the extension of slavery, and in 1854 was a recognized leader in the newly-formed Republican party. In 1860 he was nominated for the Presidency, received a majority of votes over any of the other candidates, and was installed in the President's chair March 4, 1861. His election was followed by the secession of eleven Southern States and a war for the freedom of the Union. As a military measure he proclaimed Jan. 1, 1863, the freedom of all slaves in the seceding States, and was re-elected to the Presidency in 1864. The war was ended by the hand of an assassin. Thus, when he died, the great President passed to his rest. Twice elected to his high office, he was torn from it in the moment of triumph, to be placed side by side with Washington, the one the father, the other the savior of the Union; one the founder of a republic, the other the liberator of a race.

And so Meg's love-story began, and as the time flew away it was apparent to everybody that she was growing absolutely pretty—happier having much power in this direction—and that the time was approaching when the honest young brakeman and herself would cease to be lovers and become husband and wife. Indeed, they had talked it all over, and Meg had told Tom that she had saved \$100 from her meager salary, and Tom had confessed that "before he had known her he had spent all his earnings, but since that time he had begun to put by a little, and now he had \$300, and that he meant to work hard and get promotion, so that they could one time have a home of their own," etc., just as humble, happy lovers always have done and always will do, and then they decided that they would put the \$100 and the \$300 to good use, and as that was the 1st of February, they would get married Feb. 14—a "valentine wedding," as Tom said, and then, when she said "she never had had a valentine," he laughed out of a heart just bubbling over with sweetness, and, taking out a piece of paper, he told her "he would be her valentine and she would be his," and then he kissed her, and Meg was in such a state of delight that she forgot she ever had been lonely, and she wouldn't have changed places with a queen, even if the latter had insisted upon it.

As the time drew near for the wedding Meg had a pretty new dress made and somewhat softened by the love affair which had gone forward directly under her supervision, the landlady had made preparations for a wedding supper which was to outdo any previous effort of the kind in the neighborhood. Indeed, she had resolved that for once she would be extravagant, and she got out several ancient receipts, which were headed "Bride's Cake," and set to work beating eggs and weighing sugar in a way which made the kitchen seethe with declaration, in a confidential manner, to the garbage man, that "Missus" "peared to be a little teched in her upper story," and gave as her reason for her conclusion that "She was a-nakin' into to be a teched girl."

A few days before the time set for the wedding the weather, which had been in that condition known as "muggy," turned cold, and when Tom came around to bid Meg good-bye before going out on his run for the day he claimed her as his bride, he had a powder of snow on his collar and that strange, indescribable smell of cold on his clothing which made Meg snuggle up to him and say she "was sorry he had to go out in the cold," and then, she kissed him in that motherly way that comes natural to women who love, she asked him to "be very careful and watch his footing as he ran across the tops of the cars, which were sure to be slippery because of the snow," and at last, she let him go.

St. Valentine's morn dawned clear and bright, although snow lay like bleached linen wherever a heavy team or an early pedestrian had not marred its purity, and Meg arose light of heart and light of foot to make the final preparations for her union with the man she loved. She had told the foreman on the previous evening that she would not return to the factory, and that hiring of men, who considered humanity of her kind as merely adjuncts to money getting, had declined to say in an introductory fashion: "Going to get married, hey?" Meg did not answer, but she felt such delight at leaving the huge building, where she had been merely as a piece of the machinery, that it seemed to her she had never known freedom and vaguely wondered if it really were she. Meg—who walked on air and was so happy that now and then she caught at her heart lest it should beat aloud.  
 No, 207, which was Tom's train, would be in at 3:20 o'clock, and at 6, in the presence of only one or two of the boarders, the ceremony was to be performed. Meg watched the clock, but when the hands pointed to 4:30 she concluded that the train was an hour late and she would don the pretty gown so as to be all ready when Tom came. She smiled at her image in the glass as for the twentieth time she shook out her rustling skirt and then ran hastily down to again look at the clock. It was 5 o'clock now, and still Tom had not come, and all at once something like a cold hand grasped Meg's heart and she trembled as one with

WHERE ABE PRACTICED LAW.  
 Old Courthouse at Lincoln, Ill., Has Connection with the Martyr.  
 The city of Lincoln, Ill., still contains one building in which Abraham Lincoln was known as a lawyer for forty years ago. It is known as the "Postville" courthouse, although that village was long ago absorbed by the present city.  
 The first county seat of Logan County was Postville, and the old court house, which still stands in the western part of the city, was occupied as such from 1839 to 1848. In the latter year the courts were removed twelve miles south to Mount Pulaski, which village was the county seat until 1855. At almost every term of court from the time of the organ-

ization of the county as a separate local district, and until his nomination for the presidency, Mr. Lincoln was one of the lawyers in attendance, and that he was a favorite with the people of the county is evidenced by the fact that the city bears his name. His stories are yet repeated by surviving pioneers who were county

officials at that time, and his legal services in many of the trials of those times are still remembered.  
 When the Chicago and Alton Railroad was built through the county it did not pass through the new county seat, Mount Pulaski, nor the old one of Postville, but it did pass within a mile of the latter town. At this point a new town was founded and named in honor of Mr. Lincoln, who was a friend of the men who were its founders.  
 At the sale of lots in the new town on Aug. 28, 1853, Mr. Lincoln was present and expressed his regrets at having no money with which to buy some of the town lots. However, two lots opposite the block set aside as the court house square were given to him by Messrs. Gillet, Hickox and Latham as an attorney fee for services in the work of securing the charter and deeds for the new city. These lots Mr. Lincoln owned until his death and were not sold by his heirs until about seven years ago.

Lincoln as a Laborer.  
 He Did Farm Work in Indiana for 25 Cents a Day.  
 By this time Abraham had become an important member of the family. He was remarkably strong for his years, and the work he could do in a day was a decided advantage to Thomas Lincoln, says McClure's Magazine. The ax which had been put into his hand to help in making the first clearing had never been allowed to drop; indeed, as he says himself, "from that time until the day of his death he was almost constantly handling that most useful instrument." Besides, he drove the team, cut down the elm and linden brush with which the stock was often fed, learned to handle the old shovel plow, to wield the sickle, to thrash the wheat with a flail, to fan and clean it with a sheet, to mill and turn the hard-earned grain into flour; in short, he learned all the trades the settler's boy must know, and well enough so that when his father died he need not hire him to the neighbors. Thomas Lincoln also taught him the rudiments of carpentry and cabinet-making, and kept him busy some of the time as his assistant in his trade.  
 There are houses still standing in and near Gentryville on which it is said he worked. The families of Lamar, Jones, Crawford, Gentry, Turnham and Richardson claim the honor of having employed him. For his services he was paid so many cents a day that he became one of the strongest and most popular "hands" in the vicinity, and much of his time was spent as a "hired boy" on some neighbor's farm. For 25 cents a day—paid to his father—he was a hostler, plowman, wood chopper and a general helper of the women with the "chores." For his services he was paid so many cents a day that he became one of the strongest and most popular "hands" in the vicinity, and much of his time was spent as a "hired boy" on some neighbor's farm. For 25 cents a day—paid to his father—he was a hostler, plowman, wood chopper and a general helper of the women with the "chores." 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