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Editor

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

It is said that Thomas Lincoln, on the occasion of a visit to a friend, saw an old, soiled copy of Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress", and at once thought how Abraham would enjoy it. He was able to borrow it, and upon showing it to his son upon his return, the boy was so delighted that: "His eyes sparkled, and that day he could not eat, and that night he could not sleep."

Authors seem to be in agreement that this book was one of the earliest ones to which Lincoln had access.

This series of articles on books which Lincoln used as a youth seems to call for a brief comment just here. There have been discussed thus far; the Bible, Dilworth's Speller, Aesop's Fables, Weem's Washington, Ramsay's Washington, and Pike's Arithmetic. With this monograph on Pilgrim's Progress there concludes a group of the books most often associated as influencing Lincoln's primary efforts to acquire knowledge.

Possibly there are others such as Murray's English Reader which should be included in this library of Lincoln's childhood, but the seven texts above named have been most often listed as the first volumes to find a place in the Lincoln home.

The group that follows may be considered as furnishing source material for his secondary education, but the more difficult parts of Pike's Arithmetic would certainly be used in this latter period in Indiana.

We may not be able to trace with so much detail just what portions of Pilgrim's Progress made their greater appeal to Lincoln, but with the system of theology then in vogue Pilgrim's Progress visualized the Biblical panorama of that day.

If we knew just what edition he used we might proceed with this review more intelligently.

An old volume printed in London in 1678, "For Nathaniel Ponder at the Peacock in the Poultry near Cornhill," in addition to the title has the added paragraph:

Wherein is Discovered
The Manner of His Setting Out
His Dangerous Journey and Safe
Arrival at the Desired Country

The title page of an edition appearing in 1828 informs the reader that the volume contains besides the narrative the story of Bunyan's life.

If other earlier editions of Bunyan's book contained his life also, it is possible that the volume which Lincoln's father borrowed from a neighbor was such an edition. The life

GENUINE EDITION WITH NOTES

THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

FROM THIS WORLD

To

THAT WHICH IS TO COME

DELIVERED UNDER
THE SIMILITUDE OF A DREAM

COMPLETE IN TWO PARTS

By JOHN BUNYAN

AUTHOR OF "THE HOLY WAR", AND SEVERAL OTHER
WORKS

WITH COPIOUS NOTES, &
BY THE REV. J. NEWTON, DR. HAWKER, AND
OTHERS

"I have used similitudes." Hosea, XII, 10

BOSTON

PUBLISHED BY ISAIAH THOMAS, JUN.
E. MERRIAM & CO., PRINTERS, 1817

story of Bunyan himself would have been almost as dramatic as the experiences of Christian.

In this series of studies of the books Lincoln used as a youth, it has been the purpose of the editor to use editions which are dated previous to the time Lincoln is supposed to have used them. This makes us choose a copy dated in 1817 as one of the possible publications to which he had access. As there is no positive proof about the contents of the Lincoln copy other than the text itself it may be wise to confine the discussion to the argument of the story rather than its notes or biographical sketches.

Lincoln must have greeted the book with a greater show of credulousness than most of us are apt to, because of its close connection with the Bible, which every child in those days learned early to revere.

Christian's fight with the fiend, Apollyon, and the fire and brimstone that poured from the mountain side's short cut to Hades, were better stimulants to a child's fear of God, than a score of birch rod arguments.

At night when storms howled through the pioneer forests, the small boy who could not sleep must have peopled the dark with exciting adventures; foes to be met, monsters to conquer, innocents to rescue.

Where "Aesop's Fables" had morals scattered through them with profusion, nevertheless, these lessons were illustrated by means of animals and elements not human. The latter tendency in "Pilgrim's Progress" would serve to drive home its meanings with greater force.

Surely with the psychology of small boys, he, Lincoln, in turn, was the Greatheart who slew the giant, the martyred Faithful, and the triumphant Christian. By reason of the faultless examples of these heroes, his personal difficulties could have been met with greater courage and ease, and the simple food and clothes to which he was accustomed, objects to be desired rather than resented.

Few of us realize what a tremendous influence old books, and especially the classics may have on our lives. We may outgrow them and laugh at them, but they are not forgotten.

Anyone remembering the imprisonment of Christian and Hopeful in Doubting Castle, could imagine the picture which probably thrust itself into Lincoln's mind as he observed the chained and submissive slaves in the New Orleans market, with no key of Promise by which to gain freedom.

Aside from the moral influence of Pilgrim's Progress over Abraham Lincoln the style of the literature and the diction used was an excellent supplement to the Bible, Aesop's Fables, Weem's Washington and Ramsey's Washington. It would be difficult for one to find five early books which illustrated so well the types of literature of that day. Both the moral and literary influence of this book left their mark on Abraham Lincoln.