

Lincoln family moved to Indiana, I was prevented by circumstances from bidding goodbye to either of the children. And I never saw them again."*

All the young people went to school, Abraham chiefly to be a companion to his sister on her long walk, so the traditions say. The schools of that day in the West were hap-hazard affairs, depending upon whether some vagrant man, with nothing better to do for the moment, wandered into the country, and offered his services. The terms were irregular, their length being decided by the time the settlers felt able to board the master and pay his small salary. The chief qualification for a schoolmaster seems to have been enough strength to keep the "big boys" in order, though one great authority affirms that pluck went "for a heap sight more'n sinnoo with boys."

Many of the itinerant masters were Catholics—strolling Irishmen from the colony in Tennessee, or French priests from Kaskaskia. Lincoln's first teacher, Zachariah Riney, was a Catholic, though there is no record that he tried proselyting among his pupils. Of the second master to whom he went in Kentucky, Caleb Hazel, we know even less than of Riney. However, they

* Unpublished MS. of an interview with Austin Gollaher, by D. J. Thomas.

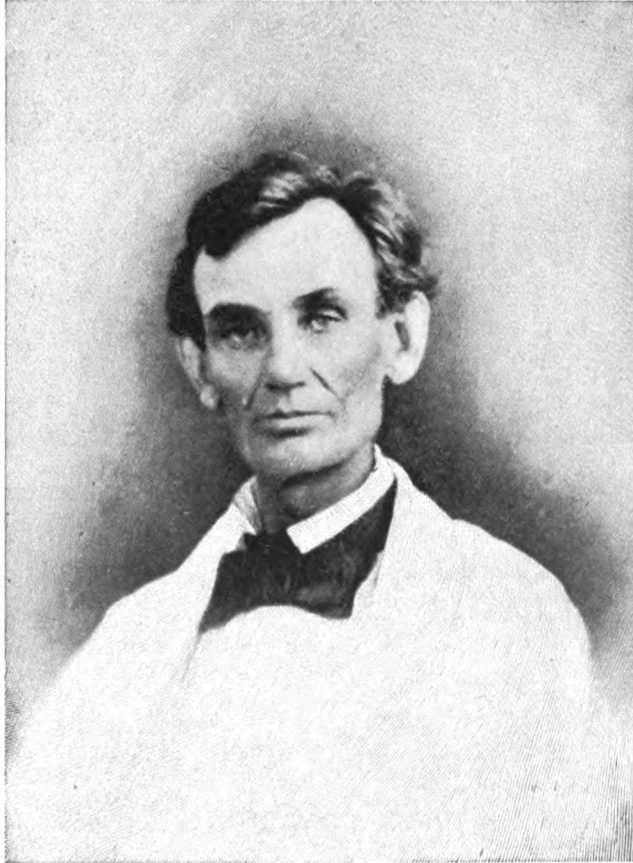
succeeded between them, in the few months Lincoln was their pupil, in teaching him to read and write. Mr. Gollaher testifies that Abraham Lincoln, in those days when he was his schoolmate, was "an unusually bright boy at school, and made splendid progress in his studies. Indeed, he learned faster than any of his schoolmates. Though so young he studied very hard.

He would get spice-wood brushes, hack them up on a log, and burn them two or three together, for the purpose of giving light by which he might pursue his studies. It was not a good light, but the best he could obtain."

Probably the boy's mother had something to do with the spice-wood illuminations. Tradition has it that Mrs. Lincoln took great pains to teach her children what she knew, and at her knee they heard all the Bible lore, fairy tales, and country legends she had been able to gather in her poor life.

It is not impossible that she did try to devise a means of lighting her cabin at night, when her work was ended, that she might read to her children.

Besides the "A B C schools," as Lincoln called them, the only other medium of education in the country districts of Kentucky in those days was "preaching." Itinerants like the schoolmasters, the preachers, of whatever denomination, were generally uncouth



LINCOLN IN 1858.

After a faded ambrotype of Mr. Lincoln, now in the Lincoln Monument collection at Springfield, Illinois. All that is known of it is that it was taken at Beardstown in 1858. Mr. Lincoln wore a linen coat on the occasion. The picture is regarded as a good likeness of him as he appeared during the Lincoln-Douglas campaign.