



# THE KIND DEEDS MESSENGER

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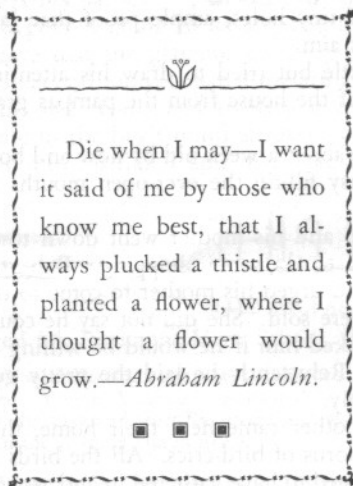


No. 64

## ABE LINCOLN'S ECHOING SHOT

MOLLIE CHADWICK WINCHESTER

Published by courtesy of DUMB ANIMALS



Die when I may—I want  
it said of me by those who  
know me best, that I al-  
ways plucked a thistle and  
planted a flower, where I  
thought a flower would  
grow.—*Abraham Lincoln.*



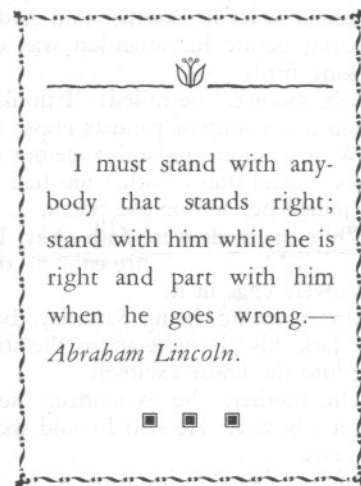
STEWART McCOSH, San Jose

By STEWART McCOSH

Latham Foundation Poster Contest

First Prize, Group 3

Jefferson School, San Jose, California.



I must stand with any-  
body that stands right;  
stand with him while he is  
right and part with him  
when he goes wrong.—  
*Abraham Lincoln.*



**A**BE LINCOLN made his first recorded "kill" in the winter of his eighth year. It was a mere feathered bit of forest life. The scene was staged far from the paths of thinking men, far from refining or cultural thought or influence, far off on a tiny clearing on the western horizon—the frontier—where Indian and pioneer stalked one and another with bullet and arrow, off where human souls counted for little and where wild life—the bird and beast of the forest—was never thought of as life at all. These swiftly moving creatures of fur and feathers were, to the woodsmen of the frontier, trifles of flesh whereon one might train the hunting eye, for poor marksmanship was the subject of scorn and sneer.

There, far away in that remote wilderness, in the somber forest, Abe Lincoln killed small game when a mere child of eight. The shot rang clear in the silence of the clearing, "Bang!" Then calm, deep, unbroken as before,

shrouded the woods and grassy plain. All was tranquil save the lad's conscience. And the echo of that single shot stayed in the boy's memory, moulding and indelibly stamping its effect on his whole life, for when Abraham Lincoln, the great-hearted, deeply understanding President of the United States, the national voice which cried "Free the Slave," stood at the height of his world-power and looked down through the years, he remembered the youthful shot, told sadly of the pain it had brought him, and added in gentle voice, that he had "never since pulled the trigger on any larger game."

It was a severe winter, that winter when Abe Lincoln was eight years old—young in years, old in soul and sympathy. His father had gone off on a trip, leaving the child sole protector of his ailing mother and elder sister,

(Continued on page 4)

# THE MOCKING BIRDS

HARRIET AMENT, Sonora, California

"Mother, will you buy me a bebe-gun?" asked Bob. "What would you do with a bebe-gun?" asked his mother.

"Why, shoot it, of course," answered Bob.

"What would you shoot at?" was her next question.

"Oh,—just anything, I guess."

"If you had a gun, would you always remember to point it down?"

"What! You mean to point it at the ground?" and Bob looked disgusted. He continued, "That's not what guns are for."

"I know that, but I want you to begin to think what guns are for," and Bob's mother looked soberly down at her eight-year-old son.

Bob studied over this a little while; then he said: "I guess guns were made to shoot at something or—or—somebody," and Bob looked slyly up at his mother as he walked slowly out on to the side porch. He was thinking about what his mother had said. It was not long, however, before his attention was drawn to a pair of mocking birds.

"Oh, mother," he called; "I think those birds have a nest in that clump of pampas grass; may I look?"

"Wait a minute and I'll come out and we'll both have a look." And Bob's mother finished what she was doing and joined her son on the porch.

While the birds were both away, Bob and his mother had a good look; and sure enough, there was a nest and four lovely eggs in it.

Next morning, being Saturday, Bob was out at play with Jack, his playmate across the street. He came running into the house excitedly.

"Oh, mother," he exclaimed, "see Jack's bebe-gun; isn't it a beauty? He said I could show it to you; here's Jack, now."

"Mother bought this for me, Mrs. Dean," and Jack grabbed it out of Bob's hand and exultantly held it up for her to see. He continued:

"And I can shoot at anything and mostly always hit it." And Jack marched proudly out of the house to show what he could do. Mrs. Dean followed him to the door.

"You'll be very careful not to shoot at the birds, won't you, Jack?" and she looked kindly at the little boy.

"Sure, I'll not hit any of the birds," and Jack walked away.

The mocking birds were so happy! Joyously the male bird sang to his mate in the early morning and late into the night. The mother-bird was content at home, keeping the eggs warm for hours at a time. Mother and Bob watched eagerly for the little birds to hatch. They made a tiny opening through the thick grasses on one side and

peeked through many times a day to see what was going on in the birds' home. They were careful never to disturb the happy neighbors.

One morning Bob came running into the kitchen with the exciting news that the birdlings were hatched. "I know they must be for I saw both birds carrying worms to the nest," Bob told his mother.

Sure enough! Four baby birds with wide-open mouths almost filled the nest. For the next two days father and mother mocking bird did nothing but dig and carry worms for the little ones. And such glad songs as the parents sang, night and morning, was melody one could never pay for; Bob and his mother listened and loved it.

Jack was getting bold with his gun. Not many things escaped his sure aim. When Mrs. Dean went out to her flower garden in the morning she would find some of the big flower-heads hanging; the big leaves of the catalpa tree would be full of tiny holes, ample proof that Jack was improving in his aim.

Mrs. Dean said little but tried to draw his attention to the opposite side of the house from the pampas grass and its occupants.

The nestlings were about a week old by now and both parents were kept busy filling the ever-open mouths of the baby birds.

It was Friday. Bob and his mother went down town late in the afternoon to do some shopping. Bob still wanted a bebe-gun and urged his mother to come to the counter where toys were sold. She did not say he could not have a gun but asked him if he would be willing to wait a week longer. Reluctantly he laid the pretty gun aside and did not reply.

As Bob and his mother came near their home, they were attracted by a chorus of bird-cries. All the birds in the neighborhood seemed to have gathered in and around Bob's yard. They were all chattering and screaming, flying here and there, apparently in distress over something. What could be the matter? Bob and his mother approached slowly, trying to find out what could cause such a commotion; they knew that something dreadful had happened; it was plain that the birds had a reason for this agitation. Within a few feet of the clump of pampas grass, they stopped and looked around, then down on the ground. At their very feet lay the mother-bird—dead! Jack's sure aim had hit the mark.

As Bob walked slowly up the steps of the side porch he said: "Mother, you don't have to buy me that bebe-gun; I guess 'most always something dreadful happens if you have one."

## REMEMBER !!

Remember that the essay contest closes March 1st this year. Contestants have a whole month to write and send essays to our office. We expect a splendid harvest this year in spite of the shorter period allowed for preparation, which is due to so much work at headquarters that otherwise we could not take care of it all, before the closing of the schools.

## STATISTICS

Statistics published by the Bureau of Census at Washington, in three years—1930, 1931, 1932—the deaths due to firearms were 31,147, exclusive of suicide. There is no record of the probably greater number of those wounded.

Out of this appalling number many shootings were due to irresponsible children given firearms for amusement.

## TRAINING FOR PEACE

(The following article by Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt appeared in the *Woman's Home Companion* for January. For years the Latham Foundation has promoted as one of its features "The Gunless Christmas Crusade" and Mrs. Roosevelt's excellent article emphasizes the lessons which it has been our wish to see realized in the attitude of parents and guardians.)

"I believe that we not only can encourage ingenuity and build up imagination in children by the device of toys and games and books that we provide them with, but I believe that we can also give them tastes and interests which will be helpful to them later on. I should like to see the nations of the world gradually do away with weapons of war. I know this must be done simultaneously and therefore I should like to begin with the children of today and teach them to do without toys which tend to make them think of war as a game. I do not believe that every little boy who plays with soldiers and stages his battles and shoots the opposition army down with peas is going to be an ardent militarist. But I do believe that the glamour of the gorgeously dressed toy soldiers and the variegated toy armies with different uniforms and cavalry and artillery and bands will somehow create in the boy's mind an excitement which will carry over into manhood and may lead him, when he hears

the military band play and sees uniforms and hears the rhythmic tramp of marching feet through the streets, to desire to join them.

"New attitudes of mind come gradually and why should we not suggest to toymakers the world over that they have a responsibility to future civilization; and that they might just as well make armies of young foresters and farmers, and model mines, with mills with model workmen, and model houses and model machinery? Such miniatures of real life would surely find equal favor in children's eyes, and at a time when we think primarily of children, perhaps because of the story of the Child who was born so many years ago in Bethlehem, we should think how we can thus train our children to follow in the Christ Child's footsteps.

"So, as we gather in our churches and around our trees to celebrate this most delightful time of all the year, let us not forget that everything which we do for children now may make an impression and count as an influence years later in their lives; and let us try to give them a chance to develop the qualities which will make it easy for them to live without greed and therefore without war, and to appreciate the joy of giving."

## THIS UNGUIDED GENERATION

By DONALD MCFARLAND

Aged 14, Piedmont High School, Piedmont, California.

(The following essay was submitted in the recent contest titled "Young America," sponsored by the Latham Foundation and the Oakland *Post-Enquirer*, and won "honorable mention" from the judging committee.)

Foundation, background! That's what the youth of today needs. The child follows the example set before him by his elders, and keeps on following the example until he has reached the stage when it is too late to change.

Habits formed in early youth can prove deadly as the child grows into manhood. Parents may think it "cute" to see Johnny playing bandit or gangster, but it isn't at all cute if he should turn into a bandit or gangster later on.

Do parents ever think of what a youngster is doing in his playtime? It isn't the child's fault if he is allowed to go to movies featuring racketeers and other evil influences. Nor is it his fault if he is given toy guns and encouraged to play "cops and robber" games.

Why do parents place pistols where children can get them? A boy of sixteen years of age shot and killed his father a few weeks ago. The boy was trying to protect his mother. But if the gun hadn't been handy, he would have gone for help or used some other method.

We see graft, also, all about us, in politics, in civic organizations and in almost every form of government.

If the grown people of today show the youth of the nation the force of a good example, of clean, honest living, a kind, humane attitude to man, woman and child, and to the dumb animals who cannot speak for themselves, youth will follow through and a rightly guided generation be the result.

### PRAYER AGAINST HUNTERS TO ST. FRANCIS

By MARION DOYLE

Little brown brother of the Umbrian hills,  
Child-like and pure, you surely are the one  
To hear a plea of pity for the ill  
Man visits on all helpless things that run,  
Or creep or fly beneath the stars and sun.

Guard them, I pray, from human lust and greed,  
The beautiful, the saucy, and the shy,  
And teach mankind to know wild creature's need  
Of confidence when human feet go by;  
A heart that almost bursts the walls of flesh,  
The frozen terror in a small black eye,  
Are plea enough for their immunity.

—By permission *New York Times*.

(Continued from page 1)

Sarah. The father had not intended staying so long, perhaps, but a journey was not easy when one had only rough, precarious trail of buffalo and deer for path through unbroken wilderness. So the winter days stretched into weeks. Abe's mother was ill. Ten-year-old Sarah did the simple household tasks, cooking their meager meals at the great log fire which blazed outdoors before the crude shelter, a windowless, doorless, floorless, log cabin, which was their frontier home. Small Abe kept the fire burning day and night, the long winter through, to keep off prowling animals, bears, panthers, wolves and other beasts that might slip under the flapping deer-skin which served as door to the log cabin. Often in the night time Abe and Sarah heard their stealthy pad, pad, pad, pad, as they searched hungrily for prey near the clearing. But more alarming than the howl and hungry teeth of famished forest beast, more alarming than the fangs of icy blasts which tore greedily through every crevice of the roughly constructed cabin, was the giant spectre of starvation which squatted as unbidden guest at every meal. Of course, there were some corn and a few potatoes, but as the days passed the supply grew dangerously low. The corn-dodgers which Sarah made grew smaller and smaller, and she urged Abe to bring large game to supplement the dwindling store.

Down to the deer-lick, where their father killed with ease, they went together when long shadows came down to shield the timid deer. Through the dusk the beautiful creatures came from all parts of the dark forest aisles to lick the salty ground or to sup the salty water that lay in shallow pools in the quiet glen. But as the little huntsman and his sister peeped out from behind the great trunks of the forest oaks, they only whispered of the soft eyes of the deer-mother as she caressed her white-spotted fawn, and they thought of their own mother's soft caress as she told them stories before the flickering, spice-scented blaze, and gently stroked their cheeks or brushed stray locks from childish brow. How closely the baby deer kept to its mother's soft side, as the mother passed to and fro, licking here and there for the salty flavor. How carefully the mother guarded her lovely fawn, sniffing, sniffing at the dusky shadows, lest lurking foe catch her unawares. Silently the hidden children watched. The loaded gun lay idle on Abe's knees.

A twig broke suddenly under Sarah's hand. Up went the deer-mother's head. A cry of alarm from the leader whose spreading horns proved him a worthy protector, and they were gone. Over thicket and brush they leaped, and soon only a crackling twig told where they had passed in their phantom-like flight.

Sarah said not a word as the airy, soft-eyed mother of the woods and the beautiful herd vanished, becoming one with the darkness, but when the first pink light of dawn brought the next day to the east, she crept to the pile of dried leaves, which was Abe's winter bed, and whispered that he come softly to the door.

There! Right before their own flapping entrance strutted a large flock of wild turkeys. How beautiful their bronze plumage flashed in the early light! Gold,

red, purple, blended to flash back the sun's first rays. Sarah nudged Abe's arm. How close they were, these plump birds! Almost to the very threshold they thronged. Surely a random bullet must hit two at once, so many and so closely they flocked. How near! The dawn was deep, silent; no ripple of sound stirred save the low, contented cooing of the turkey gobbler. No life was apparent save the turkey flock in the Lincoln clearing.

On tip-toes Abe crossed the cold dirt floor to take his father's gun from its peg. Breathlessly he and Sarah crept to a small crack in the log-wall. Silently the gun went through the hole. The wild birds were still picking, picking, here a worm, there a bit of corn-dodger and sometimes even a kernel of the corn. What a feast the hungry birds were enjoying! The little pullets ran gleefully hither and thither, pecking, pecking, cooing, joyously. The big, plump gobbler strutted proudly on the outer edge, master of the bronze hued brood.

"Bang!"

A little puff of smoke came from the hole in the side of the log cabin. A startled cry from many bird-throats. A whirr-r-r-r of wings. The peaceful feast was over. The flock flew fast and far into the forest—safe. All but one flew away. This one lay near the deer-skin door, fluttering. He shook his beautiful wings and tried to fly with his forest mates. There was a dark stain on the golden-bronze plumage. Now the feathers no longer trembled with fear and life. Abe stroked the dragging wing, softly, gently, tenderly. Here was the leader of the flock, who strutted so vainly but a few moments ago. Abe did not seem to hear Sarah, who was praising his fine marksmanship. His eyes were far away. With long, thoughtful strokes his fingers caressed the bruised side.

Sarah touched his shoulder and said she was glad of his fine luck, but when Abe raised his head she saw there were tears in his deep eyes, and he told her he was not glad but sorry that he had killed the fowl of the air, and said he would never kill any larger game. That was a big promise to make to oneself, but Abraham Lincoln made it and kept it.



#### OTHER GREAT SAYINGS OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

All that I am, or all that I hope to be I owe my angel mother.—*Abraham Lincoln.*

I feel that I cannot succeed without the Divine blessing, and on the Almighty Being I place my reliance for support.—*Abraham Lincoln.*

I do the very best I know how—the very best I can and I mean to keep doing so 'till the end. If the end brings me out all right, what is said against me won't amount to anything.—*Abraham Lincoln.*