SPEECHES AND LETTERS
OF
ABRAHAM LINCOLN


9th March 1832.

Fellow-Citizens: Having become a candidate for the honourable office of one of your representatives in the next General Assembly of this state, in accordance with an established custom, and the principles of true republicanism, it becomes my duty to make known to you—the people whom I propose to represent—my sentiments with regard to local affairs. . . .

Upon the subject of education, not presuming to dictate any plan or system respecting it, I can only say that I view it as the most important subject which we as a people can be engaged in. That every man may receive at least a moderate education, and thereby be enabled to read the histories of his own and other countries, by which he may duly appreciate the value of our free institutions, appears to be an object of vital importance, even on this account alone, to say nothing of the advantages and satisfaction to be derived from all being able to read the scriptures and other works, both of a religious and moral nature, for themselves. For my part, I desire to see the time when education, and by its means morality, sobriety, enterprise, and industry, shall become much more general than at present, and should be gratified to have it in my power to contribute something to the advancement of any measure which might have a tendency to accelerate the happy period.

With regard to existing laws, some alterations are thought to be necessary. Many respectable men have suggested that our estray laws—the law respecting the issuing of executions, the road law, and some others—are deficient in their present form, and require alterations. But considering the great probability that the framers of those laws were wiser than myself, I should
prefer not meddling with them, unless they were first attacked by others, in which case I should feel it both a privilege and a duty to take that stand, which in my view might tend most to the advancement of justice.

But, fellow-citizens, I shall conclude. Considering the great degree of modesty which should always attend youth, it is probable I have already been more presuming than becomes me. However, upon the subjects of which I have treated, I have spoken as I thought. I may be wrong in regard to any or all of them; but holding it a sound maxim, that it is better to be only sometimes right, than at all times wrong, so soon as I discover my opinions to be erroneous, I shall be ready to renounce them.

Every man is said to have his peculiar ambition. Whether it be true or not, I can say for one that I have no other so great as that of being truly esteemed of my fellow men, by rendering myself worthy of their esteem. How far I shall succeed in gratifying this ambition is yet to be developed. I am young and unknown to many of you. I was born and have ever remained in the most humble walks of life. I have no wealthy or popular relations to recommend me. My case is thrown exclusively upon the independent voters of this county, and if elected they will have conferred a favour upon me for which I shall be unremitting in my labours to compensate. But if the good people in their wisdom shall see fit to keep me in the background, I have been too familiar with disappointments to be very much chagrined.¹ Your friend and fellow-citizen

Letter from the postmaster of New Salem, Illinois, to a patron.

1st July 1834.

Mr Spears: At your request I send you a receipt for the postage on your paper. I am somewhat surprised at your request. I will, however, comply with it. The law requires newspaper postage to be paid in advance and now that I have waited a full year you choose to wound my feelings by insinuating that unless

¹ Lincoln was not elected, but a promising political career was indicated by the fact that he received 277 of the 300 votes cast in the New Salem precinct, where he lived.
you get a receipt I will probably make you pay it again. Respectfully

Received of George Spears in full for postage on the Sangamo Journal up to the first of July, 1834.

A. LINCOLN, P.M.

Statement of political principles: communicated to the ‘Sangamo Journal.’

New Salem, 13th June 1836.

To the Editor of the Journal:

In your paper of last Saturday I see a communication over the signature of ‘Many Voters,’ in which the candidates who are announced in the Journal are called upon to ‘show their hands.’ Agreed. Here’s mine!

I go for all sharing the privileges of the government who assist in bearing its burdens. Consequently I go for admitting all whites to the right of suffrage who pay taxes or bear arms (by no means excluding females).

If elected, I shall consider the whole people of Sangamon my constituents, as well those that oppose as those that support me.

While acting as their representative I shall be governed by their will, on all subjects upon which I have the means of knowing what their will is; and upon all others, I shall do what my own judgment teaches me will best advance their interests. Whether elected or not, I go for distributing the proceeds of the sales of the public lands to the several states, to enable our state, in common with others, to dig canals and construct railroads, without borrowing money and paying interest on it.

If alive on the first Monday in November, I shall vote for Hugh L. White\(^1\) for President. Very respectfully

*Letter to Robert Allen, a political opponent.*

New Salem, 21st June 1836.

Dear Col.: I am told that during my absence last week, you passed through this place and stated publicly that you were in

\(^1\) United States Senator from Tennessee.
possession of a fact or facts, which, if known to the public, would entirely destroy the prospects of N. W. Edwards¹ and myself at the ensuing election; but that, through favour to us, you should forbear to divulge them.

No one has needed favours more than I, and generally, few have been less unwilling to accept them; but in this case, favour to me would be injustice to the public, and therefore I must beg your pardon for declining it. That I once had the confidence of the people of Sangamon is sufficiently evident, and if I have since done anything, either by design or misadventure, which if known would subject me to a forfeiture of that confidence, he that knows of that thing and conceals it is a traitor to his country's interest.

I find myself wholly unable to form any conjecture of what fact or facts, real or supposed, you spoke; but my opinion of your veracity will not permit me for a moment to doubt that you at least believed what you said.

I am flattered with the personal regard you manifested for me, but I do hope that on more mature reflection you will view the public interest as a paramount consideration, and therefore determine to let the worst come.

I here assure you that the candid statement of facts on your part, however low it may sink me, shall never break the tie of personal friendship between us.

I wish an answer to this, and you are at liberty to publish both if you choose. Very respectfully


Letter to Mary S. Owens, to whom Lincoln had proposed marriage.

Springfield, 7th May 1837.

Friend Mary: I have commenced two letters to send you before this, both of which displeased me before I got half done, and so I tore them up. The first I thought wasn't serious enough, and the second was on the other extreme. I shall send this, turn out as it may.

This thing of living in Springfield ² is rather a dull business

¹ Like Lincoln, a Whig candidate for the legislature.
² Lincoln had moved to Springfield from New Salem on 15th April, and had started to practise law with John T. Stuart, an established lawyer.
after all, at least it is so to me. I am quite as lonesome here as
I ever was anywhere in my life. I have been spoken to by but
one woman since I’ve been here, and should not have been by
her, if she could have avoided it. I’ve never been to church yet,
nor probably shall not be soon. I stay away because I am
conscious I should not know how to behave myself.
I am often thinking about what we said of your coming to live
at Springfield. I am afraid you would not be satisfied. There
is a great deal of flourishing about in carriages here, which it
would be your doom to see without sharing in it. You would
have to be poor without the means of hiding your poverty.
Do you believe you could bear that patiently? Whatever woman
may cast her lot with mine, should any ever do so, it is my
intention to do all in my power to make her happy and contented;
and there is nothing I can imagine that would make me more
unhappy than to fail in the effort. I know I should be much
happier with you than the way I am, provided I saw no signs of
discontent in you. What you have said to me may have been in
jest, or I may have misunderstood it. If so, then let it be for-
gotten; if otherwise, I much wish you would think seriously
before you decide. For my part I have already decided. What
I have said I will most positively abide by, provided you wish it.
My opinion is that you had better not do it. You have not been
accustomed to hardship, and it may be more severe than you
now imagine. I know you are capable of thinking correctly on
any subject; and if you deliberate maturely upon this, before you
decide, then I am willing to abide your decision.

You must write me a good long letter after you get this. You
have nothing else to do, and though it might not seem interesting
to you, after you had written it, it would be a good deal of
company to me in this ‘busy wilderness.’ Tell your sister I
don’t want to hear any more about selling out and moving.
That gives me the hypo whenever I think of it. Yours, etc.

To Mary S. Owens: a second letter on marriage.

Springfield, 16th August 1837.

Friend Mary: You will, no doubt, think it rather strange that
I should write you a letter on the same day on which we parted;
and I can only account for it by supposing that seeing you lately
makes me think of you more than usual, while at our late meeting
we had but few expressions of thoughts. You must know that
I cannot see you or think of you, with entire indifference; and
yet it may be that you are mistaken in regard to what my real
feelings towards you are. If I knew you were not, I should not
trouble you with this letter. Perhaps any other man would
know enough without further information; but I consider it my
peculiar right to plead ignorance, and your bounden duty to
allow the plea. I want in all cases to do right, and most particu-
larly so in all cases with women. I want at this particular time,
more than anything else, to do right with you, and if I knew it
would be doing right, as I rather suspect it would, to let you
alone, I would do it. And for the purpose of making the matter
as plain as possible, I now say that you can now drop the subject,
dismiss your thoughts (if you ever had any) from me forever,
and leave this letter unanswered, without calling forth one
accusing murmur from me. And I will even go further and say
that if it will add anything to your comfort or peace of mind
to do so, it is my sincere wish that you should. Do not under-
stand by this that I wish to cut your acquaintance. I mean no
such thing. What I do wish is that our further acquaintance
shall depend upon yourself. If such further acquaintance would
contribute nothing to your happiness, I am sure it would not to
mine. If you feel yourself in any degree bound to me, I am now
willing to release you, provided you wish it; while on the other
hand, I am willing and even anxious to bind you faster if I can
be convinced that it will in any considerable degree add to your
happiness. This, indeed, is the whole question with me. Noth-
ing would make me more miserable than to believe you miserable
—nothing more happy than to know you were so.
In what I have now said I think I cannot be misunderstood;
and to make myself understood is the only object of this letter.
If it suits you best not to answer this—farewell—a long life
and a merry one attend you. But if you conclude to write
back, speak as plainly as I do. There can be neither harm nor
danger in saying to me anything you think, just in the manner
you think it.
My respects to your sister. Your friend
To Mrs Orville H. Browning: A letter about himself and Mary S. Owens.

Springfield, 1st April 1838.

Dear Madam: Without apologizing for being egotistical, I shall make the history of so much of my own life as has elapsed since I saw you the subject of this letter. And by the way, I now discover that in order to give a full and intelligible account of the things I have done and suffered since I saw you, I shall necessarily have to relate some that happened before.

It was, then, in the autumn of 1836, that a married lady of my acquaintance, and who was a great friend of mine, being about to pay a visit to her father and other relatives residing in Kentucky, proposed to me, that on her return she would bring a sister of hers with her, upon condition that I would engage to become her brother-in-law with all convenient dispatch. I, of course, accepted the proposal; for you know I could not have done otherwise, had I really been averse to it; but privately between you and me, I was most confoundedly well pleased with the project. I had seen the said sister some three years before, thought her intelligent and agreeable, and saw no good objection to plodding life through hand in hand with her. Time passed on, the lady took her journey and in due time returned, sister in company sure enough. This stomached me a little; for it appeared to me that her coming so readily showed that she was a trifle too willing; but on reflection it occurred to me that she might have been prevailed on by her married sister to come without anything concerning me ever having been mentioned to her; and so I concluded that if no other objection presented itself I would consent to waive this. All this occurred upon my hearing of her arrival in the neighbourhood; for, be it remembered, I had not yet seen her, except about three years previous, as before mentioned.

In a few days we had an interview, and although I had seen her before, she did not look as my imagination had pictured her. I knew she was oversize, but she now appeared a fair match for Falstaff; I knew she was called an 'old maid,' and I felt no doubt of the truth of at least half of the appellation; but now, when I

1 The wife of Orville H. Browning of Quincy, Illinois, a lawyer and Whig member of the Illinois legislature.
beheld her, I could not for my life avoid thinking of my mother; and this, not from withered features, for her skin was too full of fat to permit its contracting into wrinkles; but from her want of teeth, weather-beaten appearance in general, and from a kind of notion that ran in my head that nothing could have commenced at the size of infancy and reached her present bulk in less than thirty-five or forty years; and, in short, I was not [at] all pleased with her. But what could I do? I had told her sister that I would take her for better or for worse; and I made a point of honour and conscience in all things to stick to my word, especially if others had been induced to act on it, which in this case I doubted not they had, for I was now fairly convinced that no other man on earth would have her, and hence the conclusion that they were bent on holding me to my bargain. Well, thought I, I have said it, and, be consequences what they may, it shall not be my fault if I fail to do it. At once I determined to consider her my wife; and this done, all my powers of discovery were put to the rack in search of perfections in her, which might be fairly set off against her defects. I tried to imagine she was handsome, which, but for her unfortunate corpulency, was actually true. Exclusive of this, no woman that I have seen has a finer face. I also tried to convince myself that the mind was much more to be valued than the person; and in this she was not inferior, as I could discover, to any with whom I had been acquainted.

Shortly after this, without attempting to come to any positive understanding with her, I set out for Vandalia, where and when you first saw me. During my stay there I had letters from her which did not change my opinion of either her intellect or intention; but on the contrary, confirmed it in both.

All this while, although I was fixed 'firm as the surge repelling rock' in my resolution, I found I was continually repenting the rashness which had led me to make it. Through life I have been in no bondage, either real or imaginary, from the thraldom of which I so much desired to be free.

After my return home I saw nothing to change my opinion of her in any particular. She was the same and so was I. I now spent my time between planning how I might get along through life after my contemplated change of circumstances should have taken place; and how I might procrastinate the evil day for a
time, which I really dreaded as much—perhaps more—than an Irishman does the halter.

After all my suffering upon this deeply interesting subject, here I am, wholly unexpectedly, completely out of the 'scrape'; and I now want to know if you can guess how I got out of it. Out clear in every sense of the term; no violation of word, honour, or conscience. I don't believe you can guess, and so I may as well tell you at once. As the lawyers say, it was done in the manner following, to wit. After I had delayed the matter as long as I thought I could in honour do, which by the way had brought me round into the last fall, I concluded I might as well bring it to a consummation without further delay; and so I mustered my resolution, and made the proposal to her direct; but, shocking to relate, she answered, No. At first I supposed she did it through an affectation of modesty, which I thought but ill became her, under the peculiar circumstances of her case; but on my renewal of the charge, I found she repelled it with greater firmness than before. I tried it again and again, but with the same success, or rather with the same want of success. I finally was forced to give it up, at which I very unexpectedly found myself mortified almost beyond endurance. I was mortified, it seemed to me, in a hundred different ways. My vanity was deeply wounded by the reflection that I had so long been too stupid to discover her intentions, and at the same time never doubting that I understood them perfectly; and also, that she whom I had taught myself to believe nobody else would have, had actually rejected me with all my fancied greatness; and to cap the whole, I then, for the first time, began to suspect that I was really a little in love with her. But let it all go. I'll try and outlive it. Others have been made fools of by the girls; but this can never be with truth said of me. I most emphatically, in this instance, made a fool of myself. I have now come to the conclusion never again to think of marrying; and for this reason: I can never be satisfied with anyone who would be blockhead enough to have me.

When you receive this, write me a long yarn about something to amuse me. Give my respects to Mr Browning. Your sincere friend
To William Butler, friend and political associate.

Vandalia, 1st February 1839.

Friend Butler: Your letter enclosing one to Mr Baker was received on yesterday evening. There is no necessity for any bad feeling between Baker and yourself. Your first letter to him was written while you were in a state of high excitement, and therefore ought not to have been construed as an emanation of deliberate malice. Unfortunately, however, it reached Baker while he was writhing under a severe toothache, and therefore he at that time was incapable of exercising that patience and reflection which the case required. The note he sent you was written while in that state of feeling, and for that reason I think you ought not to pay any serious regard to it. It is always magnanimous to recant whatever we may have said in passion; and when you and Baker shall have done this, I am sure there will no difficulty be left between you. I write this without Baker's knowledge; and I do it because nothing would be more painful to me than to see a difficulty between two of my most particular friends. . . .

No news here now. Your friend as ever

To John T. Stuart, Lincoln's law partner, now in Washington as a member of Congress.

Springfield, 23rd December 1839.

Dear Stuart: Dr Henry will write you all the political news. I write this about some little matters of business. You recollect you told me you had drawn the Chicago Musick money and sent it to the claimants. A d——d hawk-billed yankee is here, besetting me at every turn I take, saying that Robt Kinzie never received the $80 to which he was entitled. Can you tell anything about the matter?

Again old Mr Wright, who lives up South Fork somewhere, is teasing me continually about some deeds which he says he left with you, but which I can find nothing of. Can you tell where they are?

The legislature is in session, and has suffered the Bank to forfeit its charter without Benefit of Clergy. There seems to be but very little disposition to resuscitate it. Whenever a letter comes from you to Mrs Stuart I carry it to her, and then I see Betty. She is a tolerably nice fellow now. Maybe I will write again when I get more time. Your friend as ever

P.S. The Democratic giant ¹ is here; but he is not now worth talking about.

Letter to William G. Anderson, a political opponent.

Lawrenceville, Illinois, 31st October 1840.

Dear Sir: Your note of yesterday is received. In the difficulty between us, of which you speak, you say you think I was the aggressor. I do not think I was. You say my ‘words imported insult.’ I meant them as a fair set-off to your own statements, and not otherwise; and in that light alone I now wish you to understand them. You ask for my ‘present feelings on the subject.’ I entertain no unkind feeling to you, and none of any sort upon the subject, except a sincere regret that I permitted myself to get into such an altercation. Yours, etc.

To John T. Stuart.

Springfield, 20th January 1841.

Dear Stuart: I have had no letter from you since you left. No matter for that. What I wish now is to speak of our post office. You know I desired Dr Henry ² to have that place when you left; I now desire it more than ever. I have, within the last few days, been making a most discreditable exhibition of myself in the way of hypochondriaism and thereby got an impression that Dr Henry is necessary to my existence. Unless he gets that place he leaves Springfield. You therefore see how much I am interested in the matter.

We shall shortly forward you a petition in his favour signed by

¹ Stephen A. Douglas, whom Stuart had narrowly defeated in the Congressional election.
² Anson G. Henry, Springfield physician and Whig politician. On 1st January 1841 Lincoln's engagement to Mary Todd had been broken, leaving him afflicted with the deepest melancholia.
all or nearly all the Whig members of the Legislature, as well as other Whigs.

This, together with what you know of the Dr's position and merits, I sincerely hope will secure him the appointment. My heart is very much set upon it.

Pardon me for not writing more; I have not sufficient composure to write a long letter. As ever yours

From a letter to John T. Stuart.

Springfield, 23rd January 1841.

... For not giving you a general summary of news, you must pardon me; it is not in my power to do so. I am now the most miserable man living. If what I feel were equally distributed to the whole human family, there would not be one cheerful face on the earth. Whether I shall ever be better I cannot tell; I awfully forebode I shall not. To remain as I am is impossible; I must die or be better, it appears to me. The matter you speak of on my account, you may attend to as you say, unless you shall hear of my condition forbidding it. I say this because I fear I shall be unable to attend to any business here, and a change of scene might help me. If I could be myself I would rather remain at home with Judge Logan. I can write no more. Your friend, as ever

To Mary Speed after a visit to the Speed home near Louisville, Kentucky, at the invitation of her brother Joshua, former Springfield store-keeper.

Bloomington, Illinois, 27th September 1841.

My Friend: Having resolved to write to some of your mother's family, and not having the express permission of any one of them to do so, I have had some little difficulty in determining on which to inflict the task of reading what I now feel must be a most dull and silly letter; but when I remembered that you and I were something of cronies while I was at Farmington, and that, while there, I once was under the necessity of shutting you up in a room to prevent your committing an assault and battery upon me, I instantly decided that you should be the devoted one.
LINCOLN'S SPEECHES AND LETTERS

I assume that you have not heard from Joshua and myself since we left, because I think it doubtful whether he has written. You remember there was some uneasiness about Joshua's health when we left. That little indisposition of his turned out to be nothing serious; and it was pretty nearly forgotten when we reached Springfield. We got on board the steamboat Lebanon, in the locks of the canal, about twelve o'clock m. of the day we left, and reached St Louis the next Monday at 8 p.m. Nothing of interest happened during the passage, except the vexatious delays occasioned by the sand-bars be thought interesting. By the way, a fine example was presented on board the boat for contemplating the effect of condition upon human happiness. A gentleman had purchased twelve Negroes in different parts of Kentucky and was taking them to a farm in the South. They were chained six and six together. A small iron clevis was around the left wrist of each, and this fastened to the main chain by a shorter one at a convenient distance from the others; so that the Negroes were strung together precisely like so many fish upon a trot-line. In this condition they were being separated forever from the scenes of their childhood, their friends, their fathers and mothers, and brothers and sisters, and many of them, from their wives and children, and going into perpetual slavery where the lash of the master is proverbially more ruthless and unrelenting than any other where; and yet amid all these distressing circumstances, as we would think them, they were the most cheerful and apparently happy creatures on board. One, whose offence for which he had been sold was an over-fondness for his wife, played the fiddle almost continually; and the others danced, sung, cracked jokes, and played various games with cards from day to day. How true it is that 'God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb,' or in other words, that He renders the worst of human conditions tolerable, while He permits the best to be nothing better than tolerable.

To return to the narrative. When we reached Springfield, I stayed but one day when I started on this tedious circuit where I now am. Do you remember my going to the city while I was in Kentucky to have a tooth extracted, and making a failure of it? Well, that same old tooth got to paining me so much that about a week since I had it torn out, bringing with it a bit of the jawbone; the consequence of which is that my mouth is now so sore that I
can neither talk nor eat. I am literally 'subsisting on savoury remembrances'—that is, being unable to eat, I am living upon the remembrance of the delicious dishes of peaches and cream we used to have at your house.

When we left, Miss Fanny Henning \(^1\) was owing you a visit, as I understood. Has she paid it yet? If she has, are you not convinced that she is one of the sweetest girls in the world? There is but one thing about her, so far as I could perceive, that I would have otherwise than as it is. That is something of a tendency to melancholy. This, let it be observed, is a misfortune not a fault. Give her an assurance of my very highest regard, when you see her.

Is little Siss Davis at your house yet? If she is kiss her 'o'er and o'er again' for me.

Tell your mother that I have not got her 'present' with me; but that I intend to read it regularly when I return home. I doubt not that it is really, as she says, the best cure for the 'blues' could one but take it according to the truth.

Give my respects to all your sisters (including 'Aunt Emma') and brothers. Tell Mrs Peay, of whose happy face I shall long retain a pleasant remembrance, that I have been trying to think of a name for her homestead, but as yet cannot satisfy myself with one. I shall be very happy to receive a line from you, soon after you receive this; and, in case you choose to favour me with one, address it to Charleston, Coles County, Illinois, as I shall be there about the time to receive it. Your sincere friend

_to Joshua Speed, beset by doubts about his forthcoming marriage._

_Springfield, [3rd? January 1842]._

My dear Speed: Feeling, as you know I do, the deepest solicitude for the success of the enterprise you are engaged in, I adopt this as the last method I can invent to aid you, in case (which God forbid) you shall need any aid. I do not place what I am going to say on paper, because I can say it any better in that way than I could by word of mouth; but because, were I to say it orally, before we part, most likely you would forget it at the very time when it might do you some good. As I think it reasonable that you will feel very badly some time between this and the

\(^1\) Speed's future wife.
final consummation of your purpose, it is intended that you shall read this just at such a time.

When I say it is reasonable that you will feel very badly yet, is because of three special causes, added to the general one which I shall mention.

The general cause is that you are naturally of a nervous temperament; and this I say from what I have seen of you personally, and what you have told me concerning your mother at various times, and concerning your brother William at the time his wife died.

The first special cause is your exposure to bad weather on your journey, which my experience clearly proves to be very severe on defective nerves.

The second is the absence of all business and conversation of friends, which might divert your mind and give it occasional rest from that intensity of thought, which will sometimes wear the sweetest idea threadbare and turn it to the bitterness of death.

The third is the rapid and near approach of that crisis on which all your thoughts and feelings concentrate.

If from all these causes you shall escape and go through triumphantly, without another 'twinge of the soul,' I shall be most happily, but most egregiously, deceived.

If, on the contrary, you shall, as I expect you will at some time, be agonized and distressed, let me, who have some reason to speak with judgment on such a subject, beseech you to ascribe it to the causes I have mentioned, and not to some false and ruinous suggestion of the Devil.

'But,' you will say, 'do not your causes apply to everyone engaged in a like undertaking?'

By no means. The particular causes, to a greater or less extent, perhaps do apply in all cases; but the general one, nervous debility, which is the key and conductor of all the particular ones, and without which they would be utterly harmless, though it does pertain to you, does not pertain to one in a thousand. It is out of this that the painful difference between you and the mass of the world springs.

I know what the painful point with you is, at all times when you are unhappy. It is an apprehension that you do not love her as you should. What nonsense! How came you to court

\(^1\) Miss Fanny Henning.
her? Was it because you thought she desired it; and that you had given her reason to expect it? If it was for that, why did not the same reason make you court Ann Todd, and at least twenty others of whom you can think, and to whom it would apply with greater force than to her? Did you court her for her wealth? Why, you knew she had none. But you say you reasoned yourself into it. What do you mean by that? Was it not that you found yourself unable to reason yourself out of it? Did you not think, and partly form the purpose, of courting her the first time you ever saw or heard of her? What had reason to do with it, at that early stage? There was nothing at that time for reason to work upon. Whether she was moral, amiable, sensible, or even of good character, you did not, nor could not then know; except perhaps you might infer the last from the company you found her in. All you then did or could know of her was her personal appearance and deportment; and these, if they impress at all, impress the heart and not the head.

Say candidly, were not those heavenly black eyes the whole basis of all your early reasoning on the subject?

After you and I had once been at her residence, did you not go and take me all the way to Lexington and back, for no other purpose but to get to see her again, on our return, in that seeming to take a trip for that express object?

What earthly consideration would you take to find her scouting and despising you, and giving herself up to another? But of this you have no apprehension; and therefore you cannot bring it home to your feelings.

I shall be so anxious about you, that I want you to write me every mail. Your friend

*To Joshua Speed, whose fiancée was critically ill.*

Springfield, 3rd February 1842.

*Dear Speed: Your letter of the 25th Jany. came to hand to-day. You well know that I do not feel my own sorrows much more keenly than I do yours, when I know of them; and yet I assure you I was not much hurt by what you wrote me of your excessively bad feeling at the time you wrote. Not that I am less capable of sympathizing with you now than ever; not that I am*
less your friend than ever; but because I hope and believe that your present anxiety and distress about her 1 health and her life, must and will forever banish those horrid doubts which I know you sometimes felt, as to the truth of your affection for her. If they can be once and forever removed (and I almost feel a presentiment that the Almighty has sent your present affliction expressly for that object), surely nothing can come in their stead to fill their immeasurable measure of misery. The death scenes of those we love are surely painful enough; but these we are prepared to, and expect to see. They happen to all, and all know they must happen. Painful as they are, they are not an unlooked-for sorrow. Should she, as you fear, be destined to an early grave, it is indeed a great consolation to know that she is so well prepared to meet it. Her religion, which you once disliked so much, I will venture you now prize most highly.

But I hope your melancholy bodings as to her early death are not well founded. I even hope that ere this reaches you she will have returned with improved and still improving health; and that you will have met her and forgotten the sorrows of the past in the enjoyment of the present.

I would say more if I could; but it seems I have said enough. It really appears to me that you yourself ought to rejoice and not sorrow at this indubitable evidence of your undying affection for her. Why, Speed, if you did not love her, although you might, not wish her death, you would most calmly be resigned to it. Perhaps this point is no longer a question with you, and my pertinacious dwelling upon it is a rude intrusion upon your feelings. If so, you must pardon me. You know the hell I have suffered on that point, and how tender I am upon it. You know I do not mean wrong.

I have been quite clear of hypo 2 since you left, even better than I was along in the fall.

I have seen Sarah but once. She seemed very cheerful and so I said nothing to her about what we spoke of.

Old Uncle Billy Herndon is dead; and it is said this evening

1 Miss Fanny Henning.
2 Hypochondria, or hypochondriasis, meaning, roughly, a state of depression bordering on the abnormal. It seems to have been a fairly popular affliction in the western United States a century or so ago.
that Uncle Ben Ferguson will not live. This I believe is all the news, and enough at that unless it were better.
Write me immediately on the receipt of this. Your friend, as ever

To Joshua Speed, just married.

Springfield, 13th February 1842.

Dear Speed: Yours of the 1st inst. came to hand three or four days ago. When this shall reach you, you will have been Fanny's husband several days. You know my desire to befriend you is everlasting—that I will never cease, while I know how to do anything.
But you will always hereafter be on ground that I have never occupied, and consequently, if advice were needed, I might advise wrong.
I do fondly hope, however, that you will never again need any comfort from abroad. But should I be mistaken in this—should excessive pleasure still be accompanied with a painful counter-part at times, still let me urge you, as I have ever done, to remember in the depth and even the agony of despondency, that very shortly you are to feel well again. I am now fully convinced that you love her as ardently as you are capable of loving. Your ever being happy in her presence, and your intense anxiety about her health, if there were nothing else, would place this beyond all dispute in my mind. I incline to think it probable that your nerves will fail you occasionally for a while; but once you get them fairly graded now, that trouble is over forever.
I think if I were you, in case my mind were not exactly right, I would avoid being idle; I would immediately engage in some business, or go to making preparations for it, which would be the same thing.
If you went through the ceremony calmly, or even with sufficient composure not to excite alarm in any present, you are safe, beyond question, and in two or three months, to say the most; will be the happiest of men.
I hope with tolerable confidence that this letter is a plaster for a place that is no longer sore. God grant it may be so.
I would desire you to give my particular respects to Fanny, but perhaps you will not wish her to know you have received this,
lest she should desire to see it. Make her write me an answer to my last letter to her at any rate. I would set great value upon another letter from her.

Write me whenever you have leisure. Yours forever

To Joshua F. Speed, who has confessed that his marriage has brought him happiness.

Springfield, 25th February 1842.

Dear Speed: I received yours of the 12th written the day you went down to William's place, some days since; but delayed answering it till I should receive the promised one of the 16th, which came last night. I opened the latter with intense anxiety and trepidation—so much, that although it turned out better than I expected, I have hardly yet, at the distance of ten hours, become calm.

I tell you, Speed, our forebodings, for which you and I are rather peculiar, are all the worst sort of nonsense. I fancied, from the time I received your letter of Saturday, that the one of Wednesday was never to come; and yet it did come, and what is more, it is perfectly clear, both from its tone and handwriting, that you were much happier, or, if you think the term preferable, less miserable, when you wrote it, than when you wrote the last one before. You had so obviously improved, at the very time I so much feared you would have grown worse. You say that 'something indescribably horrible and alarming still haunts you.' You will not say that three months from now, I will venture. When your nerves once get steady now, the whole trouble will be over forever. Nor should you become impatient at their being even very slow in becoming steady. Again, you say you much fear that the Elysium of which you have dreamed so much is never to be realized. Well, if it shall not, I dare swear it will not be the fault of her who is now your wife. I now have no doubt that it is the peculiar misfortune of both you and me to dream dreams of Elysium far exceeding all that anything earthly can realize. Far short of your dreams as you may be, no woman could do more to realize them than that same black-eyed Fanny. If you could but contemplate her through my imagination, it would appear ridiculous to you that anyone should for a moment think of being unhappy with her. My old Father used to have a
saying that ‘If you make a bad bargain, hug it the tighter’; and it occurs to me that if the bargain you have just closed can possibly be called a bad one, it is certainly the most _pleasant one_ for applying that maxim to, which my fancy can, by any effort, picture.

I write another letter enclosing this, which you can show her if she desires it. I do this because she would think strangely perhaps should you tell her that you receive no letters from me; or, telling her you do, should refuse to let her see them.

I close this, entertaining the confident hope that every successive letter I shall have from you (which I here pray may not be few, nor far between), may show you possessing a more steady hand and cheerful heart than the last preceding it. As ever, your friend

_To Joshua F. Speed, for his wife’s eye._

_Springfield, 25th February 1842._

Dear Speed: Yours of the 16th inst. announcing that Miss Fanny and you ‘are no more twain, but one flesh,’ reached me this morning. I have no way of telling how much happiness I wish you both; tho’ I believe you both can conceive it. I feel somewhat jealous of both of you now; you will be so exclusively concerned for one another that I shall be forgotten entirely. My acquaintance with Miss Fanny (I call her thus, lest you should think I am speaking of your mother), was too short for me to reasonably hope to long be remembered by her; and still, I am sure, I shall not forget her soon. Try if you cannot remind her of that debt she owes me; and be sure you do not interfere to prevent her paying it.

I regret to learn that you have resolved to not return to Illinois. I shall be very lonesome without you. How miserably things seem to be arranged in this world. If we have no friends, we have no pleasure; and if we have them, we are sure to lose them and be doubly pained by the loss. I did hope she and you would make your home here; but I own I have no right to insist. You owe obligations to her, ten thousand times more sacred than any you can owe to others; and, in that light, let them be respected and observed. It is natural that she should desire to remain
with her relatives and friends. As to friends, however, she could not need them anywhere; she would have them in abundance here.

Give my kind remembrance to Mr Williamson and his family, particularly Miss Elizabeth—also to your mother, brothers, and sisters. Ask little Eliza Davis if she will ride to town with me if I come there again.

And, finally, give Fanny a double reciprocation of all the love she sent me. Write me often, and believe me Yours forever

From a letter to Joshua F. Speed in which Lincoln reveals his own torment.

Springfield, 27th March 1842.

Dear Speed: Yours of the 10th inst. was received three or four days since. You know I am sincere when I tell you the pleasure its contents gave me was and is inexpressible. As to your farm matter, I have no sympathy with you. I have no farm, nor ever expect to have; and, consequently, have not studied the subject enough to be much interested with it. I can only say that I am glad you are satisfied and pleased with it.

But on that other subject, to me of the most intense interest, whether in joy or sorrow, I never had the power to withhold my sympathy from you. It cannot be told how it now thrills me with joy to hear you say you are ‘far happier than you ever expected to be.’ That much I know is enough. I know you too well to suppose your expectations were not, at least sometimes, extravagant; and if the reality exceeds them all, I say, enough, dear Lord. I am not going beyond the truth when I tell you that the short space it took me to read your last letter gave me more pleasure than the total sum of all I have enjoyed since that fatal first of Jan. ’41.1 Since then, it seems to me, I should have been entirely happy, but for the never-absent idea that there is one still unhappy whom I have contributed to make so. That still kills my soul. I cannot but reproach myself for even wishing to be happy while she is otherwise. She accompanied a large party on the railroad cars to Jacksonville last Monday; and on her return spoke, so that I heard of it, of having enjoyed the trip exceedingly. God be praised for that.

1 The date on which Lincoln’s engagement to Mary Todd was broken.
LINCOLN’S SPEECHES AND LETTERS

You know with what sleepless vigilance I have watched you, ever since the commencement of your affair; and altho’ I am now almost confident it is useless, I cannot forbear once more to say that I think it is even yet possible for your spirits to flag down and leave you miserable. If they should, don’t fail to remember that they cannot long remain so.

The sweet violet you enclosed came safely to hand, but it was so dry and mashed so flat that it crumbled to dust at the first attempt to handle it. The juice that mashed out of it stained a place on the letter, which I mean to preserve and cherish for the sake of her who procured it to be sent. My renewed good wishes to her, in particular, and generally to all such of your relatives as know me. As ever

From a letter to Joshua F. Speed on the writer’s own irresolution.

Springfield, 4th July 1842.

Dear Speed: Yours of the 16th June was received only a day or two since. It was not mailed at Louisville till the 25th. You speak of the great time that has elapsed since I wrote you. Let me explain that. Your letter reached here a day or two after I started on the circuit; I was gone five or six weeks, so that I got the letter only a few days before Butler started to your country. I thought it scarcely worth while to write you the news, which he could and would tell you more in detail. On his return he told me you would write me soon; and so I waited for your letter. As to my having been displeased with your advice, surely you know better than that. I know you do; and therefore I will not labour to convince you. True, that subject is painful to me; but it is not your silence, or the silence of all the world, that can make me forget it. I acknowledge the correctness of your advice too; but before I resolve to do the one thing or the other, I must regain my confidence in my own ability to keep my resolves when they are made. In that ability, you know, I once prided myself as the only, or at least the chief, gem of my character; that gem I lost—how, and when, you too well know. I have not yet regained it; and until I do I cannot trust myself in any matter of much importance. I believe now that, had you understood
my case at the time, as well as I understood yours afterwards, by
the aid you would have given me I should have sailed through
clear; but that does not now afford me sufficient confidence to
begin that, or the like of that, again.

You make a kind acknowledgment of your obligations to me
for your present happiness. I am much pleased with that
acknowledgment; but a thousand times more am I pleased to
know that you enjoy a degree of happiness worthy of an acknowl-
dgment. The truth is, I am not sure there was any merit,
with me, in the part I took in your difficulty; I was drawn to it
as by fate; if I would, I could not have done less than I did. I
always was superstitious; and as part of my superstition, I
believe God made me one of the instruments of bringing your
Fanny and you together, which union, I have no doubt, He had
fore-ordained. Whatever he designs, he will do for me yet.
'Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord' is my text just now.
If, as you say, you have told Fanny all, I should have no objection
to her seeing this letter, but for its reference to our friend here.
Let her seeing it depend upon whether she has ever known any-
thing of my affair; and if she has not, do not let her.

I do not think I can come to Kentucky this season. I am so
poor and make so little headway in the world that I drop back
in a month of idleness as much as I gain in a year's rowing. I
should like to visit you again. I should like to see that 'Sis' of
yours, that was absent when I was there; tho' I suppose she would
run away again, if she were to hear I was coming. . . . Ever

yours

To Joshua Speed, on an epidemic of duelling fever—and experience
of marriage.

Springfield, 5th October 1842.

Dear Speed: You have heard of my duel with Shields,\(^1\) and I
have now to inform you that the duelling business still rages in
this city. Day before yesterday Shields challenged Butler, who
accepted, and proposed fighting next morning at sun-rising in

\(^1\) James Shields, Illinois State Auditor, whom Lincoln had lampooned
in a communication to the Sangamo Journal. Shields had sent a challenge,
which Lincoln accepted, but the two men composed their differences on
the duelling ground.
Bob Allen's meadow, one hundred yards distance with rifles. To this, Whitesides, Shields' second, said 'No' because of the law. Thus ended duel No. 2. Yesterday, Whitesides chose to consider himself insulted by Dr Merryman, and so sent him a kind of quasi challenge inviting him to meet him at the Planter's House in St Louis on the next Friday to settle their difficulty. Merryman made me his friend, and sent W. a note inquiring to know if he meant his note as a challenge, and, if so, that he would, according to the law in such case made and provided, prescribe the terms of the meeting. W. returned for answer that if M. would meet him at the Planter's House as desired, he would challenge him. M. replied in a note that he denied W.'s right to dictate time and place; but that he, M., would waive the question of time, and meet him at Louisiana, Missouri. Upon my presenting this note to W. and stating verbally its contents he declined receiving it, saying he had business at St Louis, and it was as near as Louisiana. Merryman then directed me to notify Whitesides that he should publish the correspondence between them with such comments as he thought fit. This I did. Thus it stood at bed time last night. This morning Whitesides, by his friend Shields, is praying for a new trial, on the ground that he was mistaken in Merryman's proposition to meet at Louisiana, Missouri, thinking it was the state of Louisiana. This Merryman hoots at, and is preparing his publication—while the town is in a ferment and a street fight somewhat anticipated.

But I began this letter not for what I have been writing, but to say something on that subject which you know to be of such infinite solicitude to me. The immense suffering you endured from the first days of September till the middle of February you never tried to conceal from me, and I well understood. You have now been the husband of a lovely woman nearly eight months. That you are happier now than you were the day you married her I well know; for without, you would not be living. But I have your word for it too; and the returning elasticity of spirits which is manifested in your letters. But I want to ask a closer question—'Are you now, in feeling as well as judgment, glad you are married as you are?' From anybody but me this would be an impudent question not to be tolerated; but I know you will pardon it in me. Please answer it quickly as I feel impatient to know.
I have sent my love to your Fanny so often that I fear she is getting tired of it; however, I venture to tender it again. Yours forever

To James S. Irwin, a client of Logan & Lincoln, on fees.

Springfield, 2nd November 1842.

Owing to my absence, yours of the 22nd ult. was not received till this moment.

Judge Logan ¹ and myself are willing to attend to any business in the Supreme Court you may send us. As to fees, it is impossible to establish a rule that will apply in all, or even a great many cases. We believe we are never accused of being very unreasonable in this particular; and we would always be easily satisfied, provided we could see the money—but whatever fees we earn at a distance, if not paid before, we have noticed we never hear of after the work is done. We therefore are growing a little sensitive on that point. Yours etc.


Springfield, 11th November 1842.

Dear Sam: Yours of the 10th Oct. enclosing five dollars was taken from the office in my absence by Judge Logan who neglected to hand it to me till about a week ago, and just an hour before I took a wife. Your other of the 3rd inst. is also received. The Forbes and Hill case, of which you speak, has not been brought up as yet.

I have looked into the Dorman and Lane case, till I believe I understand the facts of it; and I also believe we can reverse it. In the last I may be mistaken, but I think the case at least worth the experiment; and if Dorman will risk the cost, I will do my best for the ‘biggest kind of a fee’ as you say, if we succeed, and nothing if we fail. I have not had a chance to consult Logan since I read your letters, but if the case comes up, I can have the use of him if I need him.

I would advise you to procure the record and send it up

¹ Lincoln entered into a law partnership with Stephen T. Logan in the spring of 1841.
immediately. Attend to the making out of the record yourself, or most likely the clerk will not get it all together right.

Nothing new here, except my marrying,¹ which to me is matter of profound wonder. Yours forever

To Richard S. Thomas, a Whig residing in Lincoln’s congressional district.

Springfield, 14th February 1843.

Friend Richard: . . . Now if you should hear anyone say that Lincoln don’t want to go to Congress, I wish you as a personal friend of mine would tell him you have reason to believe he is mistaken. The truth is, I would like to go very much. Still, circumstances may happen which may prevent my being a candidate.

If there are any who be my friends in such an enterprise, what I now want is that they shall not throw me away just yet. Yours as ever

From a letter to Joshua F. Speed announcing a political reversal.

Springfield, 24th March 1843.

. . . We had a meeting of the Whigs of the county here on last Monday to appoint delegates to a district convention, and Baker² beat me and got the delegation instructed to go for him. The meeting, in spite of my attempt to decline it, appointed me one of the delegates; so that in getting Baker the nomination, I shall be ‘fixed’ a good deal like a fellow who is made groomsman to the man what has cut him out, and is marrying his own dear ‘gal.’ About the prospect of your having a namesake at our house, can’t say, exactly yet.

From a letter to Joshua F. Speed.

Springfield, 18th May 1843.

Dear Speed: Yours of the 9th inst. is duly received, which I do not meet as a ‘bore,’ but as a most welcome visitor. . . .

In relation to our congress matter here, you were right in

¹ Lincoln and Mary Todd were married on 4th November 1842.
² Edward D. Baker. See p. 10n.
supposing I would support the nominee. Neither Baker nor I, however, is the man; but Hardin.\(^1\) So far as I can judge from present appearances, we shall have no split or trouble about the matter; all will be harmony. In relation to the ‘coming events’ \(^2\) about which Butler wrote you, I had not heard one word before I got your letter; but I have so much confidence in the judgment of a Butler on such a subject, that I incline to think there may be some reality in it. What day does Butler appoint? By the way, how do ‘events’ of the same sort come on in your family? Are you possessing houses and lands, and oxen and asses, and men-servants and maid-servants, and begetting sons and daughters? We are not keeping house; but boarding at the Globe tavern, which is very well kept now by a widow lady of the name of Beck. Our room (the same Dr Wallace occupied there) and boarding only costs four dollars a week. Ann Todd was married something more than a year since to a fellow by the name of Campbell, and who, Mary says, is pretty much of a ‘dunce’ though he has a little money and property. They live in Boonville, Missouri; and have not been heard from lately enough to enable me to say anything about her health. I reckon it will scarcely be in our power to visit Kentucky this year. Besides poverty, and the necessity of attending to business, those ‘coming events’ I suspect would be somewhat in the way. I most heartily wish you and your Fanny would not fail to come. Just let us know the time a week in advance, and we will have a room provided for you at our house, and all be merry together for awhile. Be sure to give my respects to your mother and family. Assure her that if I ever come near her I will not fail to call and see her. Mary joins in sending love to your Fanny and you. Yours as ever

*To Williamson Durley, a friend and supporter who lived in the strongly anti-slavery town of Hennepin, Putnam County, Illinois.*

Springfield, 3rd October 1845.

Friend Durley: When I saw you at home, it was agreed that I should write to you and your brother Madison. Until I then saw you, I was not aware of your being what is generally called

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\(^1\) John J. Hardin, a popular Whig of Jacksonville, Illinois.
\(^2\) Robert Todd Lincoln was born 1st August 1843.
an abolitionist, or, as you call yourself, a Liberty-man; though I well knew there were many such in your county. I was glad to hear you say that you intend to attempt to bring about, at the next election in Putnam, a union of the Whigs proper, and such of the Liberty-men as are Whigs in principle on all questions save only that of slavery. So far as I can perceive, by such union, neither party need yield anything, on the point in difference between them. If the Whig abolitionists of New York had voted with us last fall, Mr Clay would now be president, Whig principles in the ascendant, and Texas not annexed; whereas by the division, all that either had at stake in the contest was lost. And, indeed, it was extremely probable, beforehand, that such would be the result. As I always understood, the Liberty-men depre
cated the annexation of Texas extremely; and, this being so, why they should refuse to so cast their votes as to prevent it, even to me seemed wonderful. What was their process of reasoning, I can only judge from what a single one of them told me. It was this: 'We are not to do evil that good may come.' This general proposition is doubtless correct; but did it apply? If by your votes you could have prevented the extension, etc., of slavery, would it not have been good and not evil so to have used your votes, even though it involved the casting of them for a slaveholder? By the fruit the tree is to be known. An evil tree cannot bring forth good fruit. If the fruit of electing Mr Clay would have been to prevent the extension of slavery, could the act of electing have been evil?

But I will not argue further. I perhaps ought to say that individually I never was much interested in the Texas question. I never could see much good to come of annexation; inasmuch as they were already a free republican people on our own model; on the other hand, I never could very clearly see how the annexation would augment the evil of slavery. It always seemed to me that slaves would be taken there in about equal numbers, with or without annexation. And if more were taken because of annexation, still there would be just so many the fewer left, where they were taken from. It is possibly true, to some extent, that with annexation some slaves may be sent to Texas and continued in slavery that otherwise might have been liberated. To whatever extent this may be true, I think annexation an evil. I hold it to be a paramount duty of us in the free states, due to
the Union of the states, and perhaps to liberty itself (paradox though it may seem) to let the slavery of the other states alone; while, on the other hand, I hold it to be equally clear that we should never knowingly lend ourselves directly or indirectly to prevent that slavery from dying a natural death—to find new places for it to live in, when it can no longer exist in the old. Of course I am not now considering what would be our duty, in cases of insurrection among the slaves.

To recur to the Texas question, I understand the Liberty-men to have viewed annexation as a much greater evil than I ever did; and I would like to convince you if I could, that they could have prevented it, without violation of principle, if they had chosen.

I intend this letter for you and Madison together; and if you and he or either shall think fit to drop me a line, I shall be pleased. Yours with respect

To Robert Boal, a Whig of Marshall County, Illinois.

Springfield, 7th January 1846.

Dear Doctor: Since I saw you last fall, I have often thought of writing you as it was then understood I would, but on reflection I have always found that I had nothing new to tell you. All has happened as I then told you I expected it would—Baker’s declining, Hardin’s taking the track, and so on.

If Hardin and I stood precisely equal—that is, if neither of us had been to Congress, or if we both had—it would only accord with what I have always done, for the sake of peace, to give way to him; and I expect I should do it. That I can voluntarily postpone my pretentions, when they are no more than equal to those to which they are postponed, you have yourself seen. But to yield to Hardin under present circumstances seems to me as nothing else than yielding to one who would gladly sacrifice me altogether. This I would rather not submit to. That Hardin is talented, energetic, usually generous and magnanimous, I have, before this, affirmed to you, and do not now deny. You know that my only argument is that ‘turn about is fair play.’ This he, practically at least, denies.

If it would not be taxing you too much, I wish you would write me, telling the aspect of things in your county, or rather your
district; and also send the names of some of your Whig neighbours, to whom I might with propriety write. Unless I can get someone to do this, Hardin with his old franking list will have the advantage of me. My reliance for a fair shake (and I want nothing more) in your county is chiefly on you, because of your position and standing, and because I am acquainted with so few others. Let this be strictly confidential, and any letter you may write me shall be the same if you desire. Let me hear from you soon. Yours truly

To Andrew Johnston, of Quincy, Illinois: a poem.

Springfield, 24th February 1846.

Dear Johnston: Feeling a little poetic this evening, I have concluded to redeem my promise this evening by sending you the piece you expressed the wish to have. You find it enclosed. I wish I could think of something else to say; but I believe I cannot. By the way, how would you like to see a piece of poetry of my own making? I have a piece that is almost done, but I find a deal of trouble to finish it.

Give my respects to Mr Williams, and have him, together with yourself, to understand that if there is anything I can do in connection with your business in the courts, I shall take pleasure in doing it, upon notice. Yours forever

'MY CHILDHOOD-HOME I SEE AGAIN'

My childhood-home I see again,
And gladden with the view;
And still as mem'ries crowd my brain,
There's sadness in it too.

O memory! thou mid-way world
'Twixt Earth and Paradise,
Where things decayed, and loved ones lost
In dreamy shadows rise.

And freed from all that's gross or vile,
Seem hallowed, pure, and bright,
Like scenes in some enchanted isle,
All bathed in liquid light.

1 'Mortality,' by William Knox—beyond question, Lincoln's favourite poem.
2 From 1816 to 1830 Lincoln had lived in Spencer County, Indiana. See pp. 124, 139.
As distant mountains please the eye,
   When twilight chases day—
As bugle-tones, that, passing by,
   In distance die away—
As leaving some grand waterfall
   We ling'ring, list its roar,
So memory will hallow all
   We've known, but know no more.

Now twenty years have passed away,
   Since here I bid farewell
To woods, and fields, and scenes of play
   And schoolmates loved so well.
Where many were, how few remain
   Of old familiar things!
But seeing these to mind again
   The lost and absent brings.

The friends I left that parting day—
   How changed, as time has sped!
Young childhood grown, strong manhood grey,
   And half of all are dead.
I hear the lone survivors tell
   How nought from death could save,
Till every sound appears a knell,
   And every spot a grave.

I range the fields with pensive tread,
   And pace the hollow rooms;
And feel (companions of the dead)
   I'm living in the tombs.

And here's an object more of dread,
   Than ought the grave contains—
A human-form, with reason fled,
   While wretched life remains.

Poor Matthew! Once of genius bright,—
   A fortune-favoured child—
Now locked for aye, in mental night,
   A haggard mad-man wild.

Poor Matthew! I have ne'er forgot
   When first with maddened will,
Yourself you maimed, your father fought,
   And mother strove to kill;

And terror spread, and neighbours ran,
   Your dang'rous strength to bind;
And soon a howling crazy man,
   Your limbs were fast confined.
How then you writhed and shrieked aloud,
    Your bones and sinews bared;
And fiendish on the gaping crowd,
    With burning eyeballs glared.

And begged, and swore, and wept, and prayed,
    With maniac laughter joined—
How fearful are the signs displayed,
    By pangs that kill the mind!

And when at length, tho' drear and long,
    Time soothed your fiercer woes—
How plaintively your mournful song,
    Upon the still night rose.

I've heard it oft, as if I dreamed,
    Far-distant, sweet, and lone;
The funeral dirge it ever seemed
    Of reason dead and gone.

To drink its strains, I've stole away,
    All silently and still,
Ere yet the rising god of day
    Had streaked the Eastern hill.

Air held his breath; the trees all still
    Seemed sor'wing angels round.
Their swelling tears in dew-drops fell
    Upon the list'ning ground.

But this is past, and nought remains
    That raised you o'er the brute.
Your mad'ning shrieks and soothing strains
    Are like forever mute.

Now fare thee well: more thou the cause
    Than subject now of woe.
All mental pangs, but time's kind laws,
    Hast lost the power to know.

And now away to seek some scene
    Less painful than the last—
With less of horror mingled in
    The present and the past.

The very spot where grew the bread
    That formed my bones, I see.
How strange, old field, on thee to tread,
    And feel I'm part of thee!
A handbill replying to charges of infidelity.

31st July 1846.

Fellow-Citizens: A charge having got into circulation in some of the neighbourhoods of this District, in substance that I am an open scoffer at Christianity, I have by the advice of some friends concluded to notice the subject in this form. That I am not a member of any Christian Church, is true; but I have never denied the truth of the Scriptures; and I have never spoken with intentional disrespect of religion in general, or of any denomination, of Christians in particular. It is true that in early life I was inclined to believe in what I understand is called the ‘Doctrine of Necessity’—that is, that the human mind is impelled to action, or held in rest by some power over which the mind itself has no control; and I have sometimes (with one, two, or three, but never publicly) tried to maintain this opinion in argument. The habit of arguing thus, however, I have entirely left off for more than five years. And I add here, I have always understood this same opinion to be held by several of the Christian denominations. The foregoing is the whole truth, briefly stated, in relation to myself, upon this subject.

I do not think I could myself be brought to support a man for office whom I knew to be an open enemy of, and scoffer at, religion. Leaving the higher matter of eternal consequences between him and his Maker, I still do not think any man has the right thus to insult the feelings, and injure the morals, of the community in which he may live. If, then, I was guilty of such conduct, I should blame no man who should condemn me for it; but I do blame those, whoever they may be, who falsely put such a charge in circulation against me.

31st July 1846.               A. LINCOLN.

From a letter to Joshua F. Speed.

Springfield, 22nd October 1846.

... I should be much pleased to see you here again; but I must, in candour, say I do not perceive how your personal presence would do any good in the business matter.

1 The charge was circulated by Lincoln's Democratic opponent, Peter Cartwright, famed as a Methodist circuit-rider.
LINCOLN'S SPEECHES AND LETTERS

You, no doubt, assign the suspension of our correspondence to the true philosophical cause, though it must be confessed, by both of us, that this is rather a cold reason for allowing a friendship such as ours, to die by degrees. I propose now that, on the receipt of this, you shall be considered in my debt, and under obligation to pay soon, and that neither shall remain long in arrears hereafter. Are you agreed?

Being elected to Congress, though I am very grateful to our friends for having done it, has not pleased me as much as I expected.

We have another boy, born the 10th of March last.¹ He is very much such a child as Bob was at his age—rather of a longer order. Bob is 'short and low,' and, I expect, always will be. He talks very plainly—almost as plainly as anybody. He is quite smart enough. I sometimes fear he is one of the little rare-ripe sort, that are smarter at about five than ever after. He has a great deal of that sort of mischief that is the offspring of much animal spirits. Since I began this letter a messenger came to tell me Bob was lost; but by the time I reached the house, his mother had found him, and had him whipped—and, by now, very likely he is run away again.

Mary has read your letter, and wishes to be remembered to Mrs S. and you, in which I most sincerely join her. As ever Yours

The lone Whig Representative from Illinois to his law partner.²

Washington, 8th January 1848.

Dear William: Your letter of 27th December was received a day or two ago. I am much obliged to you for the trouble you have taken, and promise to take in my little business there. As to speech-making, by way of getting the hang of the House I made a little speech two or three days ago on a post-office question of no general interest. I find speaking here and elsewhere about the same thing. I was about as badly scared, and no worse, as I am when I speak in court. I expect to make one within a week or two, in which I hope to succeed well enough to wish you to see it.

¹ Edward Baker Lincoln, who died 1st February 1850
² Lincoln had formed a partnership with William H. Herndon in December 1844.
LINCOLN'S SPEECHES AND LETTERS

It is very pleasant to learn from you that there are some who desire that I should be re-elected. I most heartily thank them for their kind partiality; and I can say, as Mr Clay said of the annexation of Texas, that 'personally I would not object' to a re-election, although I thought at the time, and still think, it would be quite as well for me to return to the law at the end of a single term. I made the declaration that I would not be a candidate again, more from a wish to deal fairly with others, to keep peace among our friends, and to keep the district from going to the enemy, than for any cause personal to myself; so that, if it should so happen that nobody else wishes to be elected, I could not refuse the people the right of sending me again. But to enter myself as a competitor of others, or to authorize anyone so to enter me, is what my word and honour forbid.

I got some letters intimating a probability of so much difficulty amongst our friends as to lose us the district; but I remember such letters were written to Baker when my own case was under consideration, and I trust there is no more ground for such apprehension now than there was then. Remember I am always glad to receive a letter from you. Most truly your friend

From a letter to Usher F. Linder, an Illinois Whig who had criticized Lincoln for opposing the Mexican War.

Washington, 22nd March 1848.

... Towards the close of your letter you ask three questions, the first of which is 'Would it not have been just as easy to have elected Genl. Taylor without opposing the war as by opposing it?' I answer, I suppose it would, if we could do neither—could be silent on the question; but the Locofocos¹ here will not let the Whigs be silent. Their very first act in congress was to present a preamble declaring that war existed by the act of Mexico, and the Whigs were obliged to vote on it—and this policy is followed up by them; so that they are compelled to speak and their only option is whether they will, when they do speak, tell the truth, or tell a foul, villainous, and bloody falsehood. But, while on this point, I protest against your calling the condemnation of Polk 'opposing the war.' In thus assuming that all must be opposed

¹ A slang term applied to the Democratic party by its opponents.
to the war, even though they vote supplies, who do not endorse Polk, with due deference I say I think you fall into one of the artfully set traps of Locofocoism.

Your next question is 'And suppose we could succeed in proving it a wicked and unconstitutional war, do we not thereby strip Taylor and Scott of more than half their laurels?' Whether it would so strip them is not matter of demonstration, but of opinion only; and my opinion is that it would not; but as your opinion seems to be different, let us call in some others as umpire. There are in this H. R.¹ some more than forty members who support Genl. Taylor for the Presidency, every one of whom has voted that the war was 'unnecessarily and unconstitutionally commenced by the President,' every one of whom has spoken to the same effect, who has spoken at all, and not one of whom supposes he thereby strips Genl. [Taylor] of any laurels. More than this: two of these, Col. Haskell and Major Gaines, themselves fought in Mexico; and yet they vote and speak just as the rest of us do, without ever dreaming that they 'strip' themselves of any laurels. There may be others, but Capt. Bishop is the only intelligent Whig who has been to Mexico that I have heard of taking different ground.

Your third question is 'And have we as a party, ever gained anything by falling in company with abolitionists?' Yes. We gained our only national victory by falling in company with them in the election of Genl. Harrison. Not that we fell into abolition doctrines; but that we took up a man whose position induced them to join us in his election. But this question is not so significant as a question, as it is as a charge of abolitionism against those who have chosen to speak their minds against the President. As you and I perhaps would again differ as to the justice of this charge, let us once more call in our umpire. There are in this H. R. Whigs from the slave states as follows: one from Louisiana, one from Mississippi, one from Florida, two from Alabama, four from Georgia, five from Tennessee, six from Kentucky, six from North Carolina, six from Virginia, four from Maryland, and one from Delaware, making thirty-seven in all, and all slave-holders, every one of whom votes the commencement of the war 'unnecessary and unconstitutional' and so falls subject to your charge of abolitionism! . . . Very respectfully

¹ House of Representatives of U.S. Congress.
To Mary Todd Lincoln, visiting her family in Lexington, Kentucky.

Washington, 16th April 1848.

Dear Mary: In this troublesome world we are never quite satisfied. When you were here, I thought you hindered me some in attending to business; but now, having nothing but business—no variety—it has grown exceedingly tasteless to me. I hate to sit down and direct documents, and I hate to stay in this old room by myself. You know I told you in last Sunday's letter, I was going to make a little speech during the week; but the week has passed away without my getting a chance to do so; and now my interest in the subject has passed away too. Your second and third letters have been received since I wrote before. Dear Eddy thinks father is 'gone tapila.'\(^1\) Has any further discovery been made as to the breaking into your grandmother's house? If I were she, I would not remain there alone. You mention that your uncle John Parker is likely to be at Lexington. Don't forget to present him my very kindest regards.

I went yesterday to hunt the little plaid stockings, as you wished; but found that McKnight has quit business, and Allen had not a single pair of the description you give, and only one plaid pair of any sort that I thought would fit 'Eddy's dear little feet.' I have a notion to make another trial to-morrow morning. If I could get them, I have an excellent chance of sending them. Mr Warrick Tunstall of St Louis is here. He is to leave early this week, and to go by Lexington. He says he knows you, and will call to see you; and he voluntarily asked if I had not some package to send to you.

I wish you to enjoy yourself in every possible way; but is there no danger of wounding the feelings of your good father by being so openly intimate with the Wickcliffe family?

Mrs Broome has not removed yet; but she thinks of doing so to-morrow. All the house—or rather, all with whom you were on decided good terms—send their love to you. The others say nothing.

Very soon after you went away, I got what I think a very pretty set of shirt-bosom studs—modest little ones, jet, set in gold, only costing 50 cents apiece, or $1.50 for the whole.

Suppose you do not prefix the 'Hon.' to the address on your

\(^1\) Probably a child's attempt to say 'to the capitol.'
letters to me any more. I like the letters very much, but I would rather they should not have that upon them. It is not necessary, as I suppose you have thought, to have them to come free.

And you are entirely free from headache? That is good—good—considering it is the first spring you have been free from it since we were acquainted. I am afraid you will get so well, and fat, and young, as to be wanting to marry again. Tell Louisa I want her to watch you a little for me. Get weighed, and write me how much you weigh.

I did not get rid of the impression of that foolish dream about dear Bobby till I got your letter written the same day. What did he and Eddy think of the little letters father sent them? Don't let the blessed fellows forget father.

A day or two ago Mr Strong, here in Congress, said to me that Matilda would visit here within two or three weeks. Suppose you write her a letter, and enclose it in one of mine; and if she comes I will deliver it to her, and if she does not, I will send it to her. Most affectionately

To Mary Todd Lincoln.

Washington, 12th June 1848.

My dear wife: On my return from Philadelphia, yesterday, where, in my anxiety, I had been led to attend the Whig convention, I found your last letter. I was so tired and sleepy, having ridden all night, that I could not answer it till to-day; and now I have to do so in the H. R. The leading matter in your letter is your wish to return to this side of the mountains. Will you be a good girl in all things, if I consent? Then come along, and that as soon as possible. Having got the idea in my head, I shall be impatient till I see you. You will not have money enough to bring you; but I presume your uncle will supply you, and I will refund him here. By the way, you do not mention whether you have received the fifty dollars I sent you. I do not much fear but that you got it because the want of it would have induced you to say something in relation to it. If your uncle is already at Lexington, you might induce him to start on earlier than the first of July; he could stay in Kentucky longer on his return, and so make up for lost time. Since I began this letter, the H. R. has passed a resolution for adjourning on the 17th
July, which probably will pass the Senate. I hope this letter will not be disagreeable to you; which, together with the circumstances under which I write, I hope will excuse me for not writing a longer one. Come on just as soon as you can. I want to see you, and our dear—dear boys very much. Everybody here wants to see our dear Bobby. Affectionately

To William H. Herndon: a letter from a man 'old' at the age of thirty-nine.

Washington, 10th July 1848.

Dear William: Your letter covering the newspaper slips was received last night. The subject of that letter is exceedingly painful to me; and I cannot but think there is some mistake in your impression of the motives of the old men. I suppose I am now one of the old men—and I declare on my veracity, which I think is good with you, that nothing could afford me more satisfaction than to learn that you and others of my young friends at home were doing battle in the contest, and endearing themselves to the people, and taking a stand far above any I have ever been able to reach, in their admiration. I cannot conceive that other old men feel differently. Of course I cannot demonstrate what I say; but I was young once, and I am sure I was never ungenerously thrust back. I hardly know what to say. The way for a young man to rise is to improve himself every way he can, never suspecting that anybody wishes to hinder him. Allow me to assure you that suspicion and jealousy never did help any man in any situation. There may sometimes be ungenerous attempts to keep a young man down; and they will succeed too if he allows his mind to be diverted from its true channel to brood over the attempted injury. Cast about, and see if this feeling has not injured every person you have ever known to fall into it.

Now, in what I have said, I am sure you will suspect nothing but sincere friendship. I would save you from a fatal error. You have been a laborious studious young man. You are far better informed on almost all subjects than I have ever been. You cannot fail in any laudable object, unless you allow your mind to be improperly directed. I have some the advantage of you in the world's experience, merely by being older; and it is this that induces me to advise.... Your friend, as ever
From a speech ridiculing Lewis Cass, of Michigan, Democratic candidate for the Presidency. In the House of Representatives.

27th July 1848.

... But in my hurry I was very near closing on the subject of military tails before I was done with it. There is one entire article of the sort I have not discussed yet; 'I mean the military tail you Democrats are now engaged in dovetailing on to the great Michigander. Yes sir, all his biographers (and they are legion) have him in hand, tying him to a military tail, like so many mischievous boys tying a dog to a bladder of beans. True, the material they have is very limited; but they drive at it, might and main. He invaded Canada without resistance, and he outvaded it without pursuit. As he did both under orders, I suppose there was, to him, neither credit or discredit in them; but they are made to constitute a large part of the tail. He was not at Hull's surrender, but he was close by; he was volunteer aid to Gen. Harrison on the day of the Battle of the Thames; and, as you said in 1840, Harrison was picking huckleberries two miles off while the battle was fought, I suppose it is a just conclusion with you to say Cass was aiding Harrison to pick huckleberries. This is about all, except the mooted question of the broken sword. Some authors say he broke it, some say he threw it away, and some others who ought to know, say nothing about it. Perhaps it would be a fair historical compromise to say, if he did not break it he didn't do anything else with it.

By the way, Mr Speaker, did you know I am a military hero? Yes sir; in the days of the Black Hawk war, I fought, bled, and came away. Speaking of Gen. Cass's career reminds me of my own. I was not at Stillman's defeat, but I was about as near it as Cass was to Hull's surrender; and, like him, I saw the place very soon afterwards. It is quite certain I did not break my sword, for I had none to break; but I bent a musket pretty badly on one occasion. If Cass broke his sword, the idea is, he broke it in desperation; I bent the musket by accident. If Gen. Cass went in advance of me in picking huckleberries, I guess I surpassed him in charges upon the wild onions. If he saw any live, fighting Indians, it was more than I did; but I had a good many bloody struggles with the mosquitoes; and, although I never fainted from loss of blood, I can truly say I was often very hungry.
Mr Speaker, if I should ever conclude to doff whatever our Democratic friends may suppose there is of black cockade Federalism about me, and thereupon they shall take me up as their candidate for the Presidency, I protest they shall not make fun of me, as they have of Gen. Cass, by attempting to write me into a military hero.

To John D. Johnston, Lincoln's stepbrother.

Washington, 24th December 1848.

Dear Johnston: Your request for eighty dollars, I do not think it best to comply with now. At the various times when I have helped you a little, you have said to me 'We can get along very well now' but in a very short time I find you in the same difficulty again. Now this can only happen by some defect in your conduct. What that defect is, I think I know. You are not lazy, and still you are an idler. I doubt whether since I saw you, you have done a good whole day's work, in any one day. You do not very much dislike to work; and still you do not work much, merely because it does not seem to you that you could get much for it. This habit of uselessly wasting time is the whole difficulty; and it is vastly important to you, and still more so to your children, that you should break this habit. It is more important to them, because they have longer to live, and can keep out of an idle habit before they are in it, easier than they can get out after they are in.

You are now in need of some ready money; and what I propose is, that you shall go to work 'tooth and nails' for somebody who will give you money for it. Let father and your boys take charge of things at home—prepare for a crop, and make the crop; and you go to work for the best money wages, or in discharge of any debt you owe, that you can get. And to secure you a fair reward for your labour, I now promise you that for every dollar you will, between this and the first of next May, get for your own labour, either in money or in your own indebtedness, I will then give you one other dollar. By this, if you hire yourself at ten dollars a month, from me you will get ten more, making twenty dollars a month for your work. In this I do not mean you shall go off to St Louis, or the lead mines, or the gold mines, in
California, but I mean for you to go at it for the best wages you can get close to home in Coles county. Now if you will do this, you will soon be out of debt, and what is better, you will have a habit that will keep you from getting in debt again. But if I should now clear you out, next year you will be just as deep in as ever. You say you would almost give your place in heaven for $70 or $80. Then you value your place in heaven very cheaply for I am sure you can with the offer I make you get the seventy or eighty dollars for four or five months' work. You say if I furnish you the money you will deed me the land, and, if you don't pay the money back, you will deliver possession. Nonsense! If you can't now live with the land, how will you then live without it? You have always been kind to me, and I do not now mean to be unkind to you. On the contrary, if you will but follow my advice, you will find it worth more than eight times eighty dollars to you. Affectionately your brother

To William B. Warren and others, Illinois Whigs.

Springfield, 7th April 1849.

Gentlemen: In answer to your note concerning the General Land-Office I have to say that if the office can be secured to Illinois by my consent to accept it, and not otherwise, I give that consent. Some months since I gave my word to secure the appointment to that office of Mr Cyrus Edwards, if in my power, in case of a vacancy; and more recently I stipulated with Col. Baker that if Mr Edwards and Col. J. L. D. Morrison could arrange with each other for one of them to withdraw, we would jointly recommend the other. In relation to these pledges, I must not only be chaste but above suspicion. If the office shall be tendered to me, I must be permitted to say 'Give it to Mr Edwards, or, if so agreed by them, to Col. Morrison, and I decline it; if not, I accept.' With this understanding, you are at liberty to procure me the offer of the appointment if you can; and I shall feel complimented by your effort, and still more by its success. It should not be overlooked that Col. Baker's position entitles him to a large share of control in this matter; however, one of your number, Col. Warren, knows that Baker has at all times been ready to recommend me, if I would consent. It must
also be understood that if at any time, previous to an appointment being made, I shall learn that Mr Edwards and Col. Morrison have agreed, I shall at once carry out my stipulation with Col. Baker, as above stated. Yours truly

To Joseph Gillespie, a Whig lawyer of Edwardsville, Illinois.

Springfield, 13th July 1849.

Dear Gillespie: Mr Edwards\(^1\) is unquestionably offended with me in connection with the matter of the General Land Office. He wrote a letter against me, which was filed at the Department. The better part of one’s life consists of his friendships; and, of these, mine with Mr Edwards was one of the most cherished. I have not been false to it. At a word, I could have had the office any time before the Department was committed to Mr Butterfield—at least Mr Ewing and the President say as much. That word I forebore to speak, partly for other reasons, but chiefly for Mr Edwards’s sake. Losing the office that he might gain it, I was always for; but to lose his friendship by the effort for him would oppress me very much, were I not sustained by the utmost consciousness of rectitude. I first determined to be an applicant, unconditionally, on the 2nd of June; and I did so then upon being informed by a telegraphic dispatch that the question was narrowed down to Mr B. and myself, and that the Cabinet had postponed the appointment three weeks for my benefit. Not doubting that Mr Edwards was wholly out of the question, I nevertheless would not then have become an applicant had I supposed he would thereby be brought to suspect me of treachery to him. Two or three days afterwards a conversation with Levi Davis convinced me Mr E. was dissatisfied; but I was then too far in to get out. His own letter, written on the 25th of April, after I had fully informed him of all that had passed up to within a few days of that time, gave assurance I had that entire confidence from him which I felt my uniform and strong friendship for him entitled me to. Among other things it says ‘whatever course your judgment may dictate as proper to be pursued, shall never be excepted to by me.’ I also had had a letter from Washington, saying Chambers of the Republican had brought

\(^1\) Cyrus Edwards, of Edwardsville, Illinois.
a rumour then that Mr E. had declined in my favour, which rumour I judged came from Mr E. himself, as I had not then breathed of his letter to any living creature.

In saying I had never before the 2nd of June determined to be an applicant *unconditionally*, I mean to admit that before then I had said substantially I would take the office rather than it should be lost to the state, or given to one in the state whom the Whigs did not want; but I aver that in every instance in which I spoke of myself, I intended to keep, and now believe I did keep, Mr E. ahead of myself. Mr Edwards's first suspicion was that I had allowed Baker to overreach me, as his friend, in behalf of Don. Morrison. I knew this was a mistake; and the result has proved it. I understand his view now is that if I had gone to open war with Baker I could have ridden him down, and had the thing all my own way. I believe no such thing. With Baker and some strong men from the Military tract, and elsewhere for Morrison; and we and some strong men from the Wabash and elsewhere for Mr E., it was not possible for either to succeed. I believed this in March, and I *know* it now. The only thing which gave either any chance was the very thing Baker and I proposed—an adjustment with themselves.

You may wish to know how Butterfield finally beat me. I cannot tell you particulars now, but will when I see you. In the meantime let it be understood I am not greatly dissatisfied. I wish the office had been so bestowed as to encourage our friends in future contests, and I regret exceedingly Mr Edwards's feelings towards me. These two things away, I should have no regrets—at least I think I would not.

Write me soon. Your friend, as ever

To George W. Rives, of Edgar County, Illinois, a disgruntled office-seeker.

Springfield, 15th December 1849.

Dear Sir: On my return from Kentucky I found your letter of the 7th of November, and have delayed answering it till now for the reason I now briefly state. From the beginning of our acquaintance I had felt the greatest kindness for you, and had supposed it was reciprocated on your part. Last summer, under circumstances which I mentioned to you, I was painfully
constrained to withhold a recommendation which you desired; and shortly afterwards I learned, in such way as to believe it, that you were indulging open abuse of me. Of course my feelings were wounded. On receiving your last letter, the question occurred whether you were attempting to *use* me, at the same time you would *injure* me, or whether you might not have been misrepresented to me. If the former, I ought not to answer you; if the latter I ought, and so I have remained in suspense. I now enclose you a letter which you may use if you think fit. Yours etc.

*To Abram Bale, of Petersburg, Illinois.*

Springfield, 22nd February 1850.

Dear Sir: I understand Mr Hickox will go, or send to Petersburg to-morrow, for the purpose of meeting you to settle the difficulty about the wheat. I sincerely hope you will settle it. I think you *can* if you *will*, for I have always found Mr Hickox a fair man in his dealings. If you settle, I will charge nothing for what I have done, and thank you to boot. By settling, you will most likely get your money sooner; and with much less trouble and expense. Yours truly

*Notes for a law lecture.*

[1st July 1850?]

I am not an accomplished lawyer. I find quite as much material for a lecture in those points wherein I have failed, as in those wherein I have been moderately successful. The leading rule for the lawyer, as for the man of every other calling, is diligence. Leave nothing for to-morrow which can be done to-day. Never let your correspondence fall behind. Whatever piece of business you have in hand, before stopping, do all the labour pertaining to it which can then be done. When you bring a common-law suit, if you have the facts for doing so, write the declaration at once. If a law point be involved, examine the books and note the authority you rely on upon the declaration itself, where you are sure to find it when wanted. The same of defences and pleas. In business not likely to be litigated—ordinary collection cases, foreclosures, partitions, and
the like—make all examinations of titles and note them, and even draft orders and decrees in advance. This course has a triple advantage; it avoids omissions and neglect, saves your labour when once done, performs the labour out of court when you have leisure, rather than in court when you have not. Extemporaneous speaking should be practised and cultivated. It is the lawyer's avenue to the public. However able and faithful he may be in other respects, people are slow to bring him business if he cannot make a speech. And yet there is not a more fatal error to young lawyers than relying too much on speech-making. If anyone, upon his rare powers of speaking, shall claim an exemption from the drudgery of the law, his case is a failure in advance.

Discourage litigation. Persuade your neighbours to compromise whenever you can. Point out to them how the nominal winner is often a real loser—in fees, expenses, and waste of time. As a peacemaker the lawyer has a superior opportunity of being a good man. There will still be business enough.

Never stir up litigation. A worse man can scarcely be found than one who does this. Who can be more nearly a fiend than he who habitually overhails the register of deeds in search of defects in titles, whereon to stir up strife, and put money in his pocket? A moral tone ought to be infused into the profession which should drive such men out of it.

The matter of fees is important, far beyond the mere question of bread and butter involved. Properly attended to, fuller justice is done to both lawyer and client. An exorbitant fee should never be claimed. As a general rule never take your whole fee in advance, nor any more than a small retainer. When fully paid beforehand, you are more than a common mortal if you can feel the same interest in the case, as if something was still in prospect for you, as well as for your client. And when you lack interest in the case the job will very likely lack skill and diligence in the performance. Settle the amount of fee and take a note in advance. Then you will feel that you are working for something, and you are sure to do your work faithfully and well. Never sell a fee note—at least not before the consideration service is performed. It leads to negligence and dishonesty—negligence by losing interest in the case, and dishonesty in refusing to refund when you have allowed the consideration to fail.
LINCOLN'S SPEECHES AND LETTERS

There is a vague popular belief that lawyers are necessarily dishonest. I say vague, because when we consider to what extent confidence and honours are reposed in and conferred upon lawyers by the people, it appears improbable that their impression of dishonesty is very distinct and vivid. Yet the impression is common, almost universal. Let no young man choosing the law for a calling for a moment yield to the popular belief—resolve to be honest at all events; and if in your own judgment you cannot be an honest lawyer, resolve to be honest without being a lawyer. Choose some other occupation rather than one in the choosing of which you do, in advance, consent to be a knave.

To John D. Johnston, stepbrother.

Springfield, 12th January 1851.

Dear Brother: On the day before yesterday I received a letter from Harriett, written at Greenup. She says she has just returned from your house; and that Father is very low and will hardly recover. She also says you have written me two letters; and that, although you do not expect me to come now, you wonder that I do not write. I received both your letters, and although I have not answered them, it is not because I have forgotten them or been uninterested about them—but because it appeared to me I could write nothing which could do any good. You already know I desire that neither Father or Mother shall be in want of any comfort either in health or sickness while they live; and I feel sure you have not failed to use my name, if necessary, to procure a doctor, or anything else for Father in his present sickness. My business is such that I could hardly leave home now, if it were not, as it is, that my own wife is sick abed. (It is a case of baby-sickness, and I suppose is not dangerous.) I sincerely hope Father may yet recover his health; but at all events tell him to remember to call upon, and confide in, our great, and good, and merciful Maker, who will not turn away from him in any extremity. He notes the fall of a sparrow, and numbers the hairs of our heads; and He will not forget the dying man, who puts his trust in Him. Say to him that if we could meet now, it is doubtful whether it would not be more painful
than pleasant; but that if it be his lot to go now, he will soon have a joyous meeting with many loved ones gone before; and where the rest of us, through the help of God, hope ere long to join them.¹

Write me again when you receive this. Affectionately

From a letter to John D. Johnston.

Springfield, 4th November 1851.

Dear Brother: When I came into Charleston day before yesterday I learned that you are anxious to sell the land where you live and move to Missouri. I have been thinking of this ever since; and cannot but think such a notion is utterly foolish. What can you do in Missouri better than here? Is the land any richer? Can you there, any more than here, raise corn, and wheat and oats, without work? Will anybody there, any more than here, do your work for you? If you intend to go to work, there is no better place than right where you are; if you do not intend to go to work, you cannot get along anywhere. Squirming and crawling about from place to place can do no good. You have raised no crop this year, and what you really want is to sell the land, get the money and spend it—part with the land you have, and my life upon it, you will never after own a spot big enough to bury you in. Half you will get for the land you spend in moving to Missouri, and the other half you will eat and drink, and wear out, and no foot of land will be bought. Now I feel it is my duty to have no hand in such a piece of foolery. I feel that it is so even on your own account; and particularly on Mother's account. The eastern forty acres I intend to keep for Mother while she lives—if you will not cultivate it; it will rent for enough to support her—at least it will rent for something. Her dower in the other two fortiess she can let you have, and no thanks to me.

Now do not misunderstand this letter. I do not write it in any unkindness. I write it in order, if possible, to get you to face the truth—which truth is, you are destitute because you have idled away all your time. Your thousand pretences for not getting along better are all nonsense—they deceive nobody but yourself. Go to work is the only cure for your case. . . .

¹ Thomas Lincoln died in Coles County, Illinois, on 15th January 1851.
To Charles R. Welles: a letter in behalf of William Florville, Lincoln's Negro barber.

Bloomington, Illinois, 27th September 1852.

Dear Sir: I am in a little trouble here. I am trying to get a decree for our 'Billy the Barber' for the conveyance of certain town lots sold to him by Allen, Gridly & Prickett. I made you a party, as administrator of Prickett, but the Clerk omitted to put your name in the writ, and so you are not served. Billy will blame me if I do not get the thing fixed up this time. If, therefore, you will be so kind as to sign the authority below and send it to me by return mail, I shall be greatly obliged, and will be careful that you shall not be involved, or your rights invaded by it. Yours as ever

Fragment on government.

[1st July 1854?]

Government is a combination of the people of a country to effect certain objects by joint effort. The best framed and best administered governments are necessarily expensive; while by errors in frame and maladministration most of them are more onerous than they need be, and some of them very oppressive. Why, then, should we have government? Why not each individual take to himself the whole fruit of his labour, without having any of it taxed away, in services, corn, or money? Why not take just so much land as he can cultivate with his own hands, without buying it of anyone?

The legitimate object of government is 'to do for the people what needs to be done, but which they cannot, by individual effort, do at all, or do so well, for themselves.' There are many such things—some of them exist independently of the injustice in the world. Making and maintaining roads, bridges, and the like; providing for the helpless young and afflicted; common schools; and disposing of deceased men's property, are instances.

But a far larger class of objects springs from the injustice of men. If one people will make war upon another, it is a necessity with that other to unite and co-operate for defence. Hence the military department. If some men will kill, or beat, or constrain
others, or despoil them of property, by force, fraud, or non-compliance with contracts, it is a common object with peaceful and just men to prevent it. Hence the criminal and civil departments.

_Fragment on slavery._

[1st July 1854?]

If A. can prove, however conclusively, that he may, of right, enslave B.—why may not B. snatch the same argument, and prove equally that he may enslave A? You say A. is white, and B. is black. It is _colour_, then; the lighter having the right to enslave the darker? Take care. By this rule, you are to be slave to the first man you meet with a fairer skin than your own.

You do not mean _colour_ exactly? You mean the whites are _intellectually_ the superiors of the blacks, and therefore have the right to enslave them? Take care again. By this rule, you are to be slave to the first man you meet with an intellect superior to your own.

But, say you, it is a question of _interest_; and, if you can make it your _interest_, you have the right to enslave another. Very well. And if he can make it his interest, he has the right to enslave you.

_To John M. Palmer, a Democrat disturbed by his party's sponsorship of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill._

_Springfield, 7th September 1854._

Dear Sir: You know how anxious I am that this Nebraska measure shall be rebuked and condemned everywhere. Of course I hope something from your position; yet I do not expect you to do anything which may be wrong in your own judgment; nor would I have you do anything personally injurious to yourself. You are, and always have been, _honestly_ and _sincerely_ a democrat; and I know how painful it must be to an honest sincere man to be urged by his party to the support of a measure which on his conscience he believes to be wrong. You have had a severe struggle with yourself, and you have determined _not_ to
swallow the wrong. Is it not just to yourself that you should, in a few public speeches, state your reasons, and thus justify yourself? I wish you would; and yet I say 'don't do it if you think it will injure you.' You may have given your word to vote for Major Harris,¹ and if so, of course you will stick to it. But allow me to suggest that you should avoid speaking of this; for it probably would induce some of your friends, in like manner, to cast their votes. You understand. And now let me beg your pardon for obtruding this letter upon you, to whom I have ever been opposed in politics. Had your party omitted to make Nebraska a test of party fidelity, you probably would have been the Democratic candidate for Congress in the district. You deserved it, and I believe it would have been given you. In that case I should have been quite happy that Nebraska was to be rebuked at all events. I still should have voted for the Whig candidate; but I should have made no speeches, written no letters; and you would have been elected by at least a thousand majority. Yours truly

*From a speech in reply to Senator Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois, sponsor and defender of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill.*

Peoria, 16th October 1854.

... We have before us the chief material enabling us to correctly judge whether the repeal of the Missouri Compromise ² is right or wrong.

I think, and shall try to show, that it is wrong; wrong in its direct effect, letting slavery into Kansas and Nebraska—and wrong in its prospective principle, allowing it to spread to every other part of the wide world, where men can be found inclined to take it.

This declared indifference, but as I must think, covert real zeal for the spread of slavery, I cannot but hate. I hate it because of the monstrous injustice of slavery itself. I hate it because it deprives our republican example of its just influence in the

¹ Thomas L. Harris, Democratic candidate for Congress.
² The Kansas-Nebraska Act specifically repealed the Missouri Compromise (1820), by which, after the admission of Missouri as a state, slavery was to be prohibited in the remainder of the Louisiana Purchase north of the line of 36° 30'.
world—enables the enemies of free institutions, with plausibility, to taunt us as hypocrites—causes the real friends of freedom to doubt our sincerity, and especially because it forces so many really good men amongst ourselves into an open war with the very fundamental principles of civil liberty—criticizing the Declaration of Independence, and insisting that there is no right principle of action but self-interest.

Before proceeding, let me say I think I have no prejudice against the southern people. They are just what we would be in their situation. If slavery did not now exist amongst them, they would not introduce it. If it did now exist amongst us, we should not instantly give it up. This I believe of the masses north and south. Doubtless there are individuals, on both sides, who would not hold slaves under any circumstances; and others who would gladly introduce slavery anew, if it were out of existence. We know that some southern men do free their slaves, go north, and become tip-top abolitionists; while some northern ones go south, and become most cruel slave-masters.

When southern people tell us they are no more responsible for the origin of slavery than we, I acknowledge the fact. When it is said that the institution exists, and that it is very difficult to get rid of it in any satisfactory way, I can understand and appreciate the saying. I surely will not blame them for not doing what I should not know how to do myself. If all earthly power were given me, I should not know what to do as to the existing institution. My first impulse would be to free all the slaves and send them to Liberia—to their own native land. But a moment's reflection would convince me that whatever of high hope (as I think there is) there may be in this in the long run, its sudden execution is impossible. If they were all landed there in a day, they would all perish in the next ten days; and there are not surplus shipping and surplus money enough in the world to carry them there in many times ten days. What then? Free them all, and keep them among us as underlings? Is it quite certain that this betters their condition? I think I would not hold one in slavery, at any rate; yet the point is not clear enough for me to denounce people upon. What next? Free them, and make them politically and socially our equals? My own feelings will not admit of this; and if mine would, we well know that those of the great mass of white people will not. Whether this
feeling accords with justice and sound judgment is not the sole question, if indeed it is any part of it. A universal feeling, whether well or ill founded, cannot be safely disregarded. We cannot, then, make them equals. It does seem to me that systems of gradual emancipation might be adopted; but for their tardiness in this, I will not undertake to judge our brethren of the south.

When they remind us of their constitutional rights, I acknowledge them, not grudgingly, but fully and fairly; and I would give them any legislation for the reclaiming of their fugitives, which should not, in its stringency, be more likely to carry a free man into slavery than our ordinary criminal laws are to hang an innocent one.

Equal justice to the south, it is said, requires us to consent to the extending of slavery to new countries. That is to say, inasmuch as you do not object to my taking my hog to Nebraska, therefore I must not object to you taking your slave. Now I admit this is perfectly logical if there is no difference between hogs and Negroes. But while you thus require me to deny the humanity of the Negro, I wish to ask whether you of the south yourselves have ever been willing to do as much? It is kindly provided that of all those who come into the world only a small percentage are natural tyrants. That percentage is no larger in the slave states than in the free. The great majority, south as well as north, have human sympathies, of which they can no more divest themselves than they can of their sensibility to physical pain. These sympathies in the bosoms of the southern people manifest in many ways their sense of the wrong of slavery, and their consciousness that, after all, there is humanity in the Negro. If they deny this, let me address them a few plain questions. In 1820 you joined the north, almost unanimously, in declaring the African slave-trade piracy, and in annexing to it the punishment of death. Why did you do this? If you did not feel that it was wrong, why did you join in providing that men should be hung for it? The practice was no more than bringing wild Negroes from Africa, to sell to such as would buy them. But you never thought of hanging men for catching and selling wild horses, wild buffaloes, or wild bears.

But one great argument in the support of the repeal of the Missouri Compromise is still to come. That argument is 'the
sacred right of self-government.' It seems our distinguished Senator has found great difficulty in getting his antagonists, even in the Senate, to meet him fairly on this argument; some poet has said

- 'Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.'

At the hazard of being thought one of the fools of this quotation, I meet that argument—I rush in, I take that bull by the horns.

I trust I understand and truly estimate the right of self-government. My faith in the proposition that each should do precisely as he pleases with all which is exclusively his own, lies at the foundation of the sense of justice there is in me. I extend the principles to communities of men, as well as to individuals. I so extend it, because it is politically wise, as well as naturally just: politically wise in saving us from broils about matters which do not concern us. Here, or at Washington, I would not trouble myself with the oyster laws of Virginia, or the cranberry laws of Indiana.

The doctrine of self-government is right—absolutely and eternally right—but it has no just application as here attempted. Or perhaps I should rather say that whether it has such just application depends upon whether a Negro is not or is a man. If he is not a man, why in that case he who is a man may, as a matter of self-government, do just as he pleases with him. But if the Negro is a man, is it not to that extent a total destruction of self-government to say that he too shall not govern himself? When the white man governs himself that is self-government; but when he governs himself, and also governs another man, that is more than self-government—that is despotism. If the Negro is a man, why then my ancient faith teaches me that 'all men are created equal'; and that there can be no moral right in connection with one man's making a slave of another.

Judge Douglas frequently, with bitter irony and sarcasm, paraphrases our argument by saying 'The white people of Nebraska are good enough to govern themselves, but they are not good enough to govern a few miserable negroes!'

Well I doubt not that the people of Nebraska are, and will continue to be, as good as the average of people elsewhere. I do not say the contrary. What I do say is, that no man is good enough to govern another man, without that other's consent. I
say this is the leading principle—the sheet anchor of American republicanism. Our Declaration of Independence says:

'We hold these truths to be self evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.'

I have quoted so much at this time merely to show that according to our ancient faith the just powers of governments are derived from the consent of the governed. Now the relation of masters and slaves is, pro tanto, a total violation of this principle. The master not only governs the slave without his consent; but he governs him by a set of rules altogether different from those which he prescribes for himself. Allow all the governed an equal voice in the government, and that, and that only, is self-government...

The Missouri Compromise ought to be restored. For the sake of the Union, it ought to be restored. We ought to elect a House of Representatives which will vote its restoration. If by any means we omit to do this, what follows? Slavery may or may not be established in Nebraska. But whether it be or not, we shall have repudiated—discarded from the councils of the Nation—the Spirit of Compromise; for who after this will ever trust in a national compromise? The spirit of mutual concession—that spirit which first gave us the constitution, and which has thrice saved the Union—we shall have strangled and cast from us forever. And what shall we have in lieu of it? The South flushed with triumph and tempted to excesses; the North, betrayed, as they believe, brooding on wrong and burning for revenge. One side will provoke; the other resent. The one will taunt, the other defy; one aggresses, the other retaliates. Already a few in the North defy all constitutional restraints, resist the execution of the fugitive slave law, and even menace the institution of slavery in the states where it exists.

Already a few in the South claim the constitutional right to take to and hold slaves in the free states—demand the revival of the slave trade; and demand a treaty with Great Britain by which fugitive slaves may be reclaimed from Canada. As yet they are but few on either side. It is a grave question for the lovers of
the Union, whether the final destruction of the Missouri Compromise, and with it the spirit of all compromise, will or will not embolden and embitter each of these, and fatally increase the numbers of both.

But restore the compromise, and what then? We thereby restore the national faith, the national confidence, the national feeling of brotherhood. We thereby reinstate the spirit of concession and compromise—that spirit which has never failed us in past perils, and which may be safely trusted for all the future. The South ought to join in doing this. The peace of the nation is as dear to them as to us. In memories of the past and hopes of the future, they share as largely as we. It would be on their part a great act—great in its spirit, and great in its effect. It would be worth to the nation a hundred years' purchase of peace and prosperity. And what of sacrifice would they make? They only surrender to us what they gave us for a consideration long, long ago; what they have not now asked for, struggled or cared for; what has been thrust upon them, not less to their own astonishment than to ours.

But it is said we cannot restore it; that though we elect every member of the lower house, the Senate is still against us. It is quite true, that of the senators who passed the Nebraska bill, a majority of the whole Senate will retain their seats in spite of the elections of this and the next year. But if at these elections, their several constituencies shall clearly express their will against Nebraska, will these senators disregard their will? Will they neither obey, nor make room for those who will?

But even if we fail to technically restore the compromise, it is still a great point to carry a popular vote in favour of the restoration. The moral weight of such a vote cannot be estimated too highly. The authors of Nebraska are not at all satisfied with the destruction of the compromise—an endorsement of this principle, they proclaim to be the great object. With them, Nebraska alone is a small matter—to establish a principle, for future use, is what they particularly desire.

That future use is to be the planting of slavery wherever in the wide world, local and unorganized opposition cannot prevent it. Now if you wish to give them this endorsement—if you wish to establish this principle—do so. I shall regret it; but it is your right. On the contrary, if you are opposed to the principle—
intend to give it no such endorsement—let no wheedling, no sophistry, divert you from throwing a direct vote against it.

Some men, mostly Whigs, who condemn the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, nevertheless hesitate to go for its restoration, lest they be thrown in company with the abolitionist. Will they allow me as an old Whig to tell them good humouredly that I think this is very silly? Stand with anybody that stands right. Stand with him while he is right and part with him when he goes wrong. Stand with the abolitionist in restoring the Missouri Compromise; and stand against him when he attempts to repeal the fugitive slave law. In the latter case you stand with the southern disunionist. What of that? you are still right. In both cases you are right. In both cases you oppose the dangerous extremes. In both you stand on middle ground and hold the ship level and steady. In both you are national and nothing less than national. This is good old Whig ground. To desert such ground, because of any company, is to be less than a Whig—less than a man—less than an American. . . .

Little by little, but steadily as man's march to the grave, we have been giving up the old for the new faith. Near eighty years ago we began by declaring that all men are created equal; but now from that beginning we have run down to the other declaration, that for some men to enslave others is a 'sacred right of self-government.' These principles cannot stand together. They are as opposite as God and mammon; and whoever holds to the one must despise the other. When Pettit, in connection with his support of the Nebraska bill, called the Declaration of Independence 'a self-evident lie' he only did what consistency and candour require all other Nebraska men to do. Of the forty odd Nebraska senators who sat present and heard him, no one rebuked him. Nor am I apprised that any Nebraska newspaper, or any Nebraska orator, in the whole nation, has ever yet rebuked him. If this had been said among Marion's men, southerners though they were, what would have become of the man who said it? If this had been said to the men who captured André,1 the man who said it would probably have been hung.

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1 Major John André, adjutant-general of the British Army in North America during the Revolution, was the go-between between British headquarters and the American traitor, Benedict Arnold. André was captured in civilian clothes and hanged as a spy on 2nd October 1780.
sooner than André was. If it had been said in old Independence Hall, seventy-eight years ago, the very door-keeper would have throttled the man, and thrust him into the street.

Let no one be deceived. The spirit of seventy-six and the spirit of Nebraska are utter antagonisms; and the former is being rapidly displaced by the latter.

Fellow countrymen—Americans south, as well as north, shall we make no effort to arrest this? Already the Liberal party throughout the world express the apprehension 'that the one retrograde institution in America is undermining the principles of progress, and fatally violating the noblest political system the world ever saw.' This is not the taunt of enemies, but the warning of friends. Is it quite safe to disregard it—to despise it? Is there no danger to liberty itself in discarding the earliest practice and first precept of our ancient faith? In our greedy chase to make profit of the Negro, let us beware, lest we 'cancel and tear to pieces' even the white man's charter of freedom.

Our republican robe is soiled, and trailed in the dust. Let us repurify it. Let us turn and wash it white, in the spirit if not the blood of the Revolution. Let us turn slavery from its claims of 'moral right,' back upon its existing legal rights, and its arguments of 'necessity.' Let us return it to the position our fathers gave it; and there let it rest in peace. Let us readopt the Declaration of Independence, and with it the practices and policy which harmonize with it. Let north and south—let all Americans—let all lovers of liberty everywhere—join in the great and good work. If we do this, we shall not only have saved the Union; but we shall have so saved it as to make, and to keep it, forever worthy of the saving. We shall have so saved it that the succeeding millions of free happy people, the world over, shall rise up and call us blessed, to the latest generations.

To Joseph Gillespie.

Springfield, 1st December 1854.

My dear Sir: I have really got it into my head to try to be United States Senator; and if I could have your support my chances would be reasonably good. But I know, and acknowledge, that you have as just claims to the place as I have; and therefore I do not ask you to yield to me, if you are thinking of
becoming a candidate yourself. If, however, you are not, then I should like to be remembered affectionately by you; and also, to have you make a mark for me with the Anti-Nebraska members, down your way. If you know, and have no objection to tell, let me know whether Trumbull intends to make a push. If he does, I suppose the two men in St Clair and one or both in Madison will be for him.

We have the Legislature clearly enough on joint ballot;¹ but the Senate is very close; and Calhoun told me to-day that the Nebraska men will stave off the election if they can. Even if we get into joint vote, we shall have difficulty to unite our forces.

Please write me, and let this be confidential. Your friend as ever

From a letter to William H. Henderson, on being defeated for the Senate.

Springfield, 21st February 1855.

... The election is over, the session is ended, and I am not Senator. I have to content myself with the honour of having been the first choice of a large majority for the fifty-one members who finally made the election. My larger number of friends had to surrender to Trumbull's smaller number, in order to prevent the election of Matteson, which would have been a Douglas victory.² I started with 44 votes and T. with 5. It was rather hard for the 44 to have to surrender to the 5—and a less good-humoured man than I, perhaps, would not have consented to it—and it would not have been done without my consent. I could not, however, let the whole political result go to ruin on a point merely personal to myself.

Your son kindly and firmly stood by me from first to last; and for which he has my everlasting gratitude. Your friend as ever

¹ The reader must remember here, and in connection with Lincoln's campaign against Douglas in 1858, that prior to the adoption of the Seventeenth Amendment in 1913 Senators were elected by state legislatures.
² Lyman Trumbull was an Anti-Nebraska Democrat; Joel A. Matteson, then Governor of Illinois, a Democrat who supported the Nebraska policy of his party.
To George Robertson, professor of law in Transylvania College at Lexington, Kentucky.

Springfield, 15th August 1855.

My dear Sir: The volume you left for me has been received. I am really grateful for the honour of your kind remembrance, as well as for the book.¹ The partial reading I have already given it has afforded me much of both pleasure and instruction. It was new to me that the exact question which led to the Missouri Compromise had arisen before it arose in regard to Missouri; and that you had taken so prominent a part in it. Your short but able and patriotic speech upon that occasion has not been improved upon since by those holding the same views; and, with all the lights you then had, the views you took appear to me as very reasonable.

You are not a friend of slavery in the abstract. In that speech you spoke of 'the peaceful extinction of slavery' and used other expressions indicating your belief that the thing was, at some time, to have an end. Since then we have had thirty-six years of experience; and this experience has demonstrated, I think, that there is no peaceful extinction of slavery in prospect for us. The signal failure of Henry Clay and other good and great men, in 1849, to effect anything in favour of gradual emancipation in Kentucky, together with a thousand other signs, extinguishes that hope utterly. On the question of liberty, as a principle, we are not what we have been. When we were the political slaves of King George, and wanted to be free, we called the maxim that 'all men are created equal' a self-evident truth; but now when we have grown fat, and have lost all dread of being slaves ourselves, we have become so greedy to be masters that we call the same maxim 'a self-evident lie.' The fourth of July has not quite dwindled away; it is still a great day—for burning firecrackers!!!

That spirit which desired the peaceful extinction of slavery has itself become extinct, with the occasion, and the men of the Revolution. Under the impulse of that occasion, nearly half the states adopted systems of emancipation at once; and it is a significant fact that not a single state has done the like since.

¹ A collection of Robertson's speeches and papers entitled Scrap Book on Law and Politics, Men and Times.
So far as peaceful, voluntary emancipation is concerned, the condition of the Negro slave in America, scarcely less terrible to the contemplation of a free mind, is now as fixed, and hopeless of change for the better, as that of the lost souls of the finally impenitent. The Autocrat of all the Russians will resign his crown and proclaim his subjects free republicans sooner than will our American masters voluntarily give up their slaves.

Our political problem now is 'Can we, as a nation, continue together permanently—forever—half slave, and half free?' The problem is too mighty for me. May God, in his mercy, superintend the solution. Your much obliged friend, and humble servant

To Joshua F. Speed.

Springfield, 24th August 1855.

Dear Speed: You know what a poor correspondent I am. Ever since I received your very agreeable letter of the 22nd of May I have been intending to write you in answer to it. You suggest that in political action now, you and I would differ. I suppose we would; not quite as much, however, as you may think. You know I dislike slavery; and you fully admit the abstract wrong of it. So far there is no cause of difference. But you say that sooner than yield your legal right to the slave—especially at the bidding of those who are not themselves interested—you would see the Union dissolved. I am not aware that anyone is bidding you to yield that right; very certainly I am not. I leave that matter entirely to yourself. I also acknowledge your rights and my obligations, under the constitution, in regard to your slaves. I confess I hate to see the poor creatures hunted down, and caught, and carried back to their stripes, and unrewarded toils; but I bite my lip and keep quiet. In 1841 you and I had together a tedious low-water trip on a steamboat from Louisville to St Louis. You may remember, as I well do, that from Louisville to the mouth of the Ohio there were, on board, ten or a dozen slaves, shackled together with irons. That sight was a continual torment to me;¹ and I see something like it every time I touch the Ohio, or any other slave-border. It is

¹ Compare this verdict with Lincoln's description of the same incident in his letter to Mary Speed, p. 13.
hardly fair for you to assume that I have no interest in a thing which has, and continually exercises, the power of making me miserable. You ought rather to appreciate how much the great body of the northern people do crucify their feelings, in order to maintain their loyalty to the constitution and the Union.

I do oppose the extension of slavery, because my judgment and feelings so prompt me; and I am under no obligation to the contrary. If for this you and I must differ, differ we must. You say if you were President, you would send an army and hang the leaders of the Missouri outrages upon the Kansas elections; still, if Kansas fairly votes herself a slave state, she must be admitted, or the Union must be dissolved. But how if she votes herself a slave state unfairly—that is, by the very means for which you say you would hang men? Must she still be admitted, or the Union be dissolved? That will be the phase of the question when it first becomes a practical one. In your assumption that there may be a fair decision of the slavery question in Kansas, I plainly see you and I would differ about the Nebraska law. I look upon that enactment not as a law, but as violence from the beginning. It was conceived in violence, passed in violence, is maintained in violence, and is being executed in violence. I say it was conceived in violence, because the destruction of the Missouri Compromise, under the circumstances, was nothing less than violence. It was passed in violence, because it could not have passed at all but for the votes of many members, in violent disregard of the known will of their constituents. It is maintained in violence because the elections since clearly demand its repeal, and this demand is openly disregarded. You say men ought to be hung for the way they are executing that law; and I say the way it is being executed is quite as good as any of its antecedents. It is being executed in the precise way which was intended from the first; else why does no Nebraska man express astonishment or condemnation? Poor Reeder is the only public man who has been silly enough to believe that anything like fairness was ever intended; and he has been bravely undeceived.

That Kansas will form a slave constitution, and, with it, will ask to be admitted into the Union, I take to be an already settled question; and so settled by the very means you so pointedly condemn. By every principle of law ever held by any court, north or south, every Negro taken to Kansas is free; yet in utter
disregard of this—in the spirit of violence merely—that beautiful legislature gravely passes a law to hang men who shall venture to inform a Negro of his legal rights. This is the substance and real object of the law. If, like Haman, they should hang upon the gallows of their own building, I shall not be among the mourners for their fate.

In my humble sphere I shall advocate the restoration of the Missouri Compromise, so long as Kansas remains a territory; and when, by all these foul means, it seeks to come into the Union as a slave-state, I shall oppose it. I am very loth, in any case, to withhold my assent to the enjoyment of property acquired, or located, in good faith; but I do not admit that good faith, in taking a Negro to Kansas, to be held in slavery, is a possibility with any man. Any man who has sense enough to be the controller of his own property has too much sense to misunderstand the outrageous character of this whole Nebraska business. But I digress. In my opposition to the admission of Kansas I shall have some company; but we may be beaten. If we are, I shall not, on that account, attempt to dissolve the Union. On the contrary, if we succeed, there will be enough of us to take care of the Union. I think it probable, however, we shall be beaten. Standing as a unit among yourselves, you can, directly and indirectly, bribe enough of our men to carry the day—as you could on an open proposition to establish monarchy. Get hold of some man in the north, whose position and ability is such that he can make the support of your measure—whatever it may be—a Democratic party necessity, and the thing is done. Apropos of this, let me tell you an anecdote. Douglas introduced the Nebraska bill in January. In February afterwards, there was a call session of the Illinois legislature. Of the one hundred members composing the two branches of that body, about seventy were Democrats. These latter held a caucus, in which the Nebraska bill was talked of, if not formally discussed. It was thereby discovered that just three, and no more, were in favour of the measure. In a day or two Douglas's orders came on to have resolutions passed approving the bill; and they were passed by large majorities!!! The truth of this is vouched for by a bolting Democratic member. The masses too, Democratic as well as Whig, were even nearer unanimous against it; but as soon as the party necessity of supporting it became apparent,
the way the Democracy began to see the wisdom and justice of it was perfectly astonishing.

You say if Kansas fairly votes herself a free state, as a Christian you will rather rejoice at it. All decent slave-holders talk that way; and I do not doubt their candour. But they never vote that way. Although in a private letter, or conversation, you will express your preference that Kansas shall be free, you would vote for no man for Congress who would say the same thing publicly. No such man could be elected from any district in any slave-state. You think Stringfellow and Co. ought to be hung; and yet, at the next presidential election, you will vote for the exact type and representative of Stringfellow. The slave-breeders and slave-traders are a small, odious, and detested class among you; and yet in politics they dictate the course of all of you, and are as completely your masters as you are the masters of your own Negroes.

You inquire where I now stand. That is a disputed point. I think I am a Whig; but others say there are no Whigs, and that I am an abolitionist. When I was at Washington I voted for the Wilmot Proviso as good as forty times, and I never heard of anyone attempting to unwhig me for that. I now do no more than oppose the extension of slavery.

I am not a Know-Nothing. That is certain. How could I be? How can anyone who abhors the oppression of Negroes be in favour of degrading classes of white people? Our progress in degeneracy appears to me to be pretty rapid. As a nation, we began by declaring that 'all men are created equal.' We now practically read it 'all men are created equal, except Negroes.' When the Know-Nothings get control, it will read 'all men are created equal, except Negroes, and foreigners, and Catholics.' When it comes to this I should prefer emigrating to some country where they make no pretence of loving liberty—to Russia, for instance, where despotism can be taken pure, and without the base alloy of hypocrisy.

Mary will probably pass a day or two in Louisville in October. My kindest regards to Mrs Speed. On the leading subject of this letter, I have more of her sympathy than I have of yours.

And yet let me say I am Your friend forever.
To Isham Reavis, on studying law.

Springfield, 5th November 1855.

My dear Sir: I have just reached home, and found your letter of the 23rd ult. I am from home too much of my time for a young man to read law with me advantageously. If you are resolutely determined to make a lawyer of yourself, the thing is more than half done already. It is but a small matter whether you read with anybody or not. I did not read with anyone. Get the books, and read and study them till you understand them in their principal features; and that is the main thing. It is of no consequence to be in a large town while you are reading. I read at New Salem, which never had three hundred people living in it. The books, and your capacity for understanding them, are just the same in all places. Mr Dummer is a very clever man and an excellent lawyer (much better than I, in law-learning); and I have no doubt he will cheerfully tell you what books to read, and also loan you the books.

Always bear in mind that your own resolution to succeed is more important than any other one thing. Very truly Your friend

To George P. Floyd, hotel keeper of Quincy, Illinois.

Springfield, 21st February 1856.

Dear Sir: I have just received yours of 16th, with check on Flagg and Savage for twenty-five dollars. You must think I am a high-priced man. You are too liberal with your money.

Fifteen dollars is enough for the job. I send you a receipt for fifteen dollars, and return to you a ten-dollar bill. Yours truly,

To Julian M. Sturtevant, president of Illinois College at Jacksonville, Illinois.

Springfield, 27th September 1856.

My dear Sir: Owing to absence yours of the 16th was not received till the day before yesterday. I thank you for your good opinion of me personally, and still more for the deep interest you take in the cause of our common country. It pains
me a little that you have deemed it necessary to point out to me how I may be compensated for throwing myself in the breach now. This assumes that I am merely calculating the chances of personal advancement. Let me assure you that I decline to be a candidate for Congress on my clear conviction that my running would hurt, and not help the cause. I am willing to make any personal sacrifice, but I am not willing to do what in my own judgment is a sacrifice of the cause itself. Very truly Yours

From a speech in Chicago, after Republican defeat in the presidential election of 1856. 10th December 1856.

Our government rests in public opinion. Whoever can change public opinion can change the government, practically just so much. Public opinion, or any subject, always has a 'central idea,' from which all its minor thoughts radiate. That 'central idea' in our political public opinion, at the beginning was, and until recently has continued to be, 'the equality of men.' And although it was always submitted patiently to whatever of inequality there seemed to be as matter of actual necessity, its constant working has been a steady progress towards the practical equality of all men. The late presidential election was a struggle, by one party, to discard that central idea, and to substitute for it the opposite idea that slavery is right, in the abstract, the workings of which, as a central idea, may be the perpetuity of human slavery, and its extension to all countries and colours. Less than a year ago the Richmond Enquirer, an avowed advocate of slavery, regardless of colour, in order to favour his views, invented the phrase, 'State equality,' and now the President, in his message, adopts the Enquirer's catch-phrase, telling us the people 'have asserted the constitutional equality of each and all the states of the Union as states.' The President flatters himself that the new central idea is completely inaugurated; and so, indeed, it is, so far as the mere fact of a presidential election can inaugurate it. To us it is left to know that the majority of the people have not yet declared for it, and to hope that they never will.

All of us who did not vote for Mr Buchanan, taken together, are a majority of four hundred thousand. But, in the late
contest we were divided between Fremont and Fillmore. Can we not come together, for the future? Let everyone who really believes, and is resolved, that free society is not, and shall not be, a failure, and who can conscientiously declare that in the past contest he has done only what he thought best—let every such one have charity to believe that every other one can say as much. Thus let bygones be bygones. Let past differences, as nothing be; and with steady eye on the real issue, let us reinaugurate the good old ‘central ideas’ of the Republic. We can do it. The human heart is with us—God is with us. We shall again be able not to declare, that ‘all states as states, are equal,’ nor yet that ‘all citizens as citizens are equal,’ but to renew the broader, better declaration, including both these and much more, that ‘all men are created equal.’

From a speech on the Dred Scott decision in reply to Stephen A. Douglas.

Springfield, 26th June 1857.

Fellow-Citizens: I am here to-night, partly by the invitation of some of you, and partly by my own inclination. Two weeks ago Judge Douglas spoke here on the several subjects of Kansas, the Dred Scott decision, and Utah. I listened to the speech at the time, and have read the report of it since. It was intended to controvert opinions which I think just, and to assail (politically, not personally) those men who, in common with me, entertain those opinions. For this reason I wished then, and still wish, to make some answer to it, which I now take the opportunity of doing. . . .

And now as to the Dred Scott decision.¹ That decision declares two propositions—first, that a Negro cannot sue in the U.S. courts; and secondly, that Congress cannot prohibit slavery in the territories. It was made by a divided court—dividing differently on the different points. Judge Douglas does not discuss the merits of the decision; and, in that respect, I shall follow his example, believing I could no more improve on McLean and Curtis than he could on Taney.

¹ Decided by the Supreme Court of the United States on 6th March 1857. Although all seven majority judges wrote opinions, that of Chief Justice Taney is usually accepted as the opinion of the Court. Justices McLean and Curtis dissented.
He denounces all who question the correctness of that decision, as offering violent resistance to it. But who resists it? Who has, in spite of the decision, declared Dred Scott free, and resisted the authority of his master over him?

Judicial decisions have two uses—first, to absolutely determine the case decided, and secondly, to indicate to the public how other similar cases will be decided when they arise. For the latter use, they are called 'precedents' and 'authorities.'

We believe, as much as Judge Douglas (perhaps more) in obedience to, and respect for, the judicial department of government. We think its decisions on constitutional questions, when fully settled, should control, not only the particular cases decided, but the general policy of the country, subject to be disturbed only by amendments of the Constitution as provided in that instrument itself. More than this would be revolution. But we think the Dred Scott decision is erroneous. We know the court that made it has often overruled its own decisions, and we shall do what we can to have it to overrule this. We offer no resistance to it.

Judicial decisions are of greater or less authority as precedents, according to circumstances. That this should be so accords both with common sense and the customary understanding of the legal profession.

If this important decision had been made by the unanimous concurrence of the judges, and without any apparent partisan bias, and in accordance with legal public expectation, and with the steady practice of the departments throughout our history, and had been in no part based on assumed historical facts which are not really true; or, if wanting in some of these, it had been before the court more than once, and had there been affirmed and reaffirmed through a course of years, it then might be, perhaps would be, factious, nay, even revolutionary, to not acquiesce in it as a precedent.

But when, as it is true, we find it wanting in all these claims to the public confidence, it is not resistance, it is not factious, it is not even disrespectful, to treat it as not having yet quite established a settled doctrine for the country....

Three years and a half ago, Judge Douglas brought forward his famous Nebraska bill. The country was at once in a blaze. He scorned all opposition, and carried it through Congress.
Since then he has seen himself superseded in a presidential nomination, by one indorsing the general doctrine of his measure, but at the same time standing clear of the odium of its untimely agitation, and its gross breach of national faith; and he has seen that successful rival constitutionally elected, not by the strength of friends, but by the division of adversaries, being in a popular minority of nearly four hundred thousand votes. He has seen his chief aids in his own state, Shields and Richardson, politically speaking, successively tried, convicted, and executed, for an offence not their own, but his. And how he sees his own case, standing next on the docket for trial.

There is a natural disgust in the minds of nearly all white people to the idea of an indiscriminate amalgamation of the white and black races; and Judge Douglas evidently is basing his chief hope upon the chances of being able to appropriate the benefit of this disgust to himself.

This very Dred Scott case affords a strong test as to which party most favours amalgamation, the Republicans or the dear Union-saving Democracy. Dred Scott, his wife and two daughters, were all involved in the suit. We desired the court to have held that they were citizens so far at least as to entitle them to a hearing as to whether they were free or not; and then, also, that they were in fact and in law really free. Could we have had our way, the chances of these black girls ever mixing their blood with that of white people would have been diminished at least to the extent that it could not have been without their consent. But Judge Douglas is delighted to have them decided to be slaves, and not human enough to have a hearing, even if they were free, and thus left subject to the forced concubinage of their masters, and liable to become the mothers of mulattos in spite of themselves—the very state of case that produces nine-tenths of all the mulattos—all the mixing of blood in the nation.

Of course, I state this case as an illustration only, not meaning to say or intimate that the master of Dred Scott and his family, or any more than a percentage of masters generally, are inclined to exercise this particular power which they hold over their female slaves.
I have said that the separation of the races is the only perfect preventive of amalgamation. I have no right to say all the members of the Republican party are in favour of this, nor to say that as a party they are in favour of it. There is nothing in their platform directly on the subject. But I can say a very large proportion of its members are for it, and that the chief plank in their platform—opposition to the spread of slavery—is most favourable to that separation.

Such separation, if ever effected at all, must be effected by colonization; and no political party, as such, is now doing anything directly for colonization. Party operations at present only favour or retard colonization incidentally. The enterprise is a difficult one; but 'when there is a will there is a way'; and what colonization needs most is a hearty will. Will springs from the two elements of moral sense and self-interest. Let us be brought to believe it is morally right, and, at the same time, favourable to, or, at least, not against, our interest, to transfer the African to his native clime, and we shall find a way to do it, however great the task may be. The children of Israel, to such numbers as to include four hundred thousand fighting men, went out of Egyptian bondage in a body.

How differently the respective courses of the Democratic and Republican parties incidentally bear on the question of forming a will—a public sentiment—for colonization, is easy to see. The Republicans inculcate, with whatever of ability they can, that the Negro is a man; that his bondage is cruelly wrong, and that the field of his oppression ought not to be enlarged. The Democrats deny his manhood; deny, or dwarf to insignificance, the wrong of his bondage; so far as possible, crush all sympathy for him, and cultivate and excite hatred and disgust against him; compliment themselves as Union-savers for doing so; and call the indefinite outspreading of his bondage 'a sacred right of self-government.'

The plainest print cannot be read through a gold eagle; and it will be ever hard to find many men who will send a slave to Liberia, and pay his passage, while they can send him to a new country, Kansas, for instance, and sell him for fifteen hundred dollars, and the rise.
To Jedidiah F. Alexander, editor of the Greenville, Illinois, Advo-
cate.'

Springfield, 15th May 1858.

My dear Sir: I reached home a week ago and found yours of the 1st inviting me to name a time to meet and address a political meeting in Bond county. It is too early, considering that when I once begin making political speeches I shall have no respite till November. The labour of that I might endure, but I really cannot spare the time from my business.

Nearer the time I will try to meet the people of Bond, if they desire.

I will only say now that, as I understand, there remains all the difference there ever was between Judge Douglas and the Republicans—they insisting that Congress shall, and he insisting that Congress shall not, keep slavery out of the territories before and up to the time they form state constitutions. No Republican has ever contended that when a constitution is to be formed, any but the people of the territory shall form it. Republicans have never contended that Congress should dictate a constitution to any state or territory; but they have contended that the people should be perfectly free to form their constitution in their own way—as perfectly free from the presence of slavery amongst them as from every other improper influence.

In voting together in opposition to a constitution being forced upon the people of Kansas, neither Judge Douglas nor the Republicans has conceded anything which was ever in dispute between them. Yours very truly

Speech at Springfield accepting the Republican nomination for the United States Senate in opposition to Stephen A. Douglas, Democrat.

16th June 1858.

Mr President and Gentlemen of the Convention: If we could first know where we are, and whither we are tending, we could then better judge what to do, and how to do it.

We are now far into the fifth year since a policy was initiated with the avowed object, and confident promise, of putting an end to slavery agitation.

Under the operation of that policy, that agitation has not only not ceased, but has constantly augmented.
In my opinion, it will not cease until a crisis shall have been reached, and passed.

'A house divided against itself cannot stand.'

I believe this government cannot endure, permanently half slave and half free.

I do not expect the Union to be dissolved—I do not expect the house to fall—but I do expect it will cease to be divided.

It will become all one thing, or all the other.

Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in course of ultimate extinction; or its advocates will push it forward till it shall become alike lawful in all the states, old as well as new—north as well as south.

Have we no tendency to the latter condition?

Let anyone who doubts, carefully contemplate that now almost complete legal combination—piece of machinery so to speak—compounded of the Nebraska doctrine and the Dred Scott decision. Let him consider not only what work the machinery is adapted to do, and how well adapted; but also, let him study the history of its construction, and trace, if he can, or rather fail, if he can, to trace the evidences of design, and concert of action, among its chief bosses from the beginning.

But, so far, Congress only had acted; and an indorsement by the people, real or apparent, was indispensable to save the point already gained, and give chance for more.

The new year of 1854 found slavery excluded from more than half the states by state constitutions, and from most of the national territory by congressional prohibition.

Four days later commenced the struggle which ended in repealing that congressional prohibition.

This opened all the national territory to slavery; and was the first point gained.

This necessity had not been overlooked; but had been provided for, as well as might be, in the notable argument of 'squatter sovereignty,' otherwise called 'sacred right of self-government,' which latter phrase, though expressive of the only rightful basis of any government, was so perverted in this attempted use of it as to amount to just this: That if any one man choose to enslave another, no third man shall be allowed to object.
That argument was incorporated into the Nebraska bill itself, in the language which follows: 'It being the true intent and meaning of this act not to legislate slavery into any Territory or state, nor exclude it therefrom; but to leave the people thereof perfectly free to form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, subject only to the Constitution of the United States.'

Then opened the roar of loose declamation in favour of 'Squatter Sovereignty,' and 'Sacred right of self-government.'

'But,' said opposition members, 'let us be more specific—let us amend the bill so as to expressly declare that the people of the territory may exclude slavery.' 'Not we,' said the friends of the measure; and down they voted the amendment.

While the Nebraska bill was passing through Congress, a law case, involving the question of a Negro's freedom, by reason of his owner having voluntarily taken him first into a free state and then a territory covered by the congressional prohibition, and held him as a slave, for a long time in each, was passing through the U.S. Circuit Court for the District of Missouri; and both Nebraska bill and lawsuit were brought to a decision in the same month of May 1854. The Negro's name was 'Dred Scott,' which name now designates the decision finally made in the case.

Before the then next presidential election, the law case came to, and was argued in the Supreme Court of the United States; but the decision of it was deferred until after the election. Still, before the election, Senator Trumbull, on the floor of the Senate, requests the leading advocate of the Nebraska bill to state his opinion whether the people of a territory can constitutionally exclude slavery from their limits; and the latter answers, 'That is a question for the Supreme Court.'

The election came. Mr Buchanan was elected, and the indorsement, such as it was, secured. That was the second point gained. The indorsement, however, fell short of a clear popular majority by nearly four hundred thousand votes, and so, perhaps, was not overwhelmingly reliable and satisfactory.

The outgoing President, in his last annual message, as impressively as possible echoed back upon the people the weight and authority of the indorsement.

The Supreme Court met again; did not announce their decision, but ordered a re-argument.

The presidential inauguration came, and still no decision of
the court; but the *incoming* President, in his inaugural address, fervently exhorted the people to abide by the forthcoming decision, *whatever it might be.*

Then, in a few days, came the decision.

The reputed author of the Nebraska bill finds an early occasion to make a speech at this capitol indorsing the Dred Scott decision, and vehemently denouncing all opposition to it.

The new President, too, seizes the early occasion of the Silliman letter to *indorse* and strongly *construe* that decision, and to express his *astonishment* that any different view had ever been entertained.

At length a squabble springs up between the President and the author of the Nebraska bill, on the *mere* question of *fact,* whether the Lecompton constitution was or was not, in any just sense, made by the people of Kansas; and in that squabble the latter declares that all he wants is a fair vote for the people, and that he *cares* not whether slavery be voted *down* or voted *up.* I do not understand his declaration that he cares not whether slavery be voted down or voted up, to be intended by him other than as an *apt definition* of the *policy* he would impress upon the public mind—the *principle* for which he declares he has suffered much, and is ready to suffer to the end.

And well may he cling to that principle. If he has any parental feeling, well may he cling to it. That principle is the only *shred* left of his original Nebraska doctrine. Under the Dred Scott decision 'squatter sovereignty' squatted out of existence, tumbled down like temporary scaffolding—like the mould at the foundry served through one blast and fell back into loose sand—helped to carry an election, and then was kicked to the winds. His late *joint struggle* with the Republicans, against the Lecompton *Constitution,* involves nothing of the original Nebraska doctrine. That struggle was made on a point, the right of a people to make their own constitution, upon which he and the Republicans have never differed.

The several points of the Dred Scott decision, in connection with Senator Douglas’s 'care not' policy, constitute the piece of machinery, in its *present* state of advancement. This was the third point gained.

The *working* points of that machinery are:

First, that no Negro slave, imported as such from Africa, and no descendant of such slave can ever be a *citizen* of any state, in