

Chapter Fourteen

That Presidential Grub Gnaws Deep:

Pursuing the Republican Nomination (1859-1860)

“No man knows, when that Presidential grub gets to gnawing at him, just how deep in it will get until he has tried it,” Lincoln remarked in 1863.¹ That grub began seriously gnawing at him after the 1858 campaign. His astute friend Joseph Gillespie believed that the debates with Douglas “first inspired him with the idea that he was above the average of mankind.” That was probably true, though Lincoln pooh-poohed any talk of the presidency, telling a journalist during the canvass with the Little Giant: “Mary insists . . . that I am going to be Senator and President of the United States, too.” Then, “shaking all over with mirth at his wife’s ambition,” he exclaimed: “Just think of such a sucker as me as President!”² In December, when his friend and ally Jesse W. Fell urged him to seek the Republican presidential nomination, he replied: “Oh, Fell, what’s the use of talking of me for the presidency, whilst we have such men as Seward, Chase and others, who are so much better known to the people, and whose names are so intimately associated with the principles of the Republican party.” When Fell persisted, arguing that

¹ Comment made to J. Russell Jones, in “Lincoln and Grant in 1863,” statement of Jones to J. McCan Davis, 10 December 1898, typescript, Ida M. Tarbell Papers, Allegheny College. See also James Harrison Wilson, “Reminiscences of General Grant,” *Century Magazine* 30 (October 1885): 954; James B. Fry in Allen Thorndike Rice, ed., *Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln by Distinguished Men of His Time* (New York: North American, 1886), 390.

² Joseph Gillespie to [Martin Hardin], Edwardsville, 22 April 1880, Hardin Family Papers, Chicago History Museum; Henry Villard, *Memoirs of Henry Villard, Journalist and Financier: 1838-1900* (2 vols.; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1904), 1:96.

Lincoln was more electable than Seward, Chase, and the other potential candidates being discussed, Lincoln agreed: “I admit the force of much of what you say, and admit that I am ambitious, and would like to be President. I am not insensible to the compliment you pay me . . . but there is no such good luck in store of me as the presidency.”³ The following spring, when Republican editors planned to endorse him for president, he balked. “I must, in candor, say I do not think myself fit for the Presidency,” he said. “I certainly am flattered, and gratified, that some partial friends think of me in that connection; but I really think it best for our cause that no concerted effort . . . should be made.”⁴ When William W. Danenhower told Lincoln that his name was being seriously considered by Republican leaders for the presidency, he laughingly replied: “Why, Danenhower, this shows how political parties are degenerating, you and I can remember when we thought no one was fit for the Presidency but ‘Young Harry of the West,’ [i.e., Henry Clay] and now you seem to be seriously considering me for that position. It’s absurd.”⁵

But it was not absurd, for the race for the nomination was wide open. Seward seemed to be the front runner, but many thought him as unelectable as Chase. Other names being tossed about – John McLean, Nathaniel P. Banks, Edward Bates, Lyman

³ Statement by Jesse W. Fell, Normal, Illinois, 1882, in Osborn H. Oldroyd, ed., The Lincoln Memorial: Album Immortelles (New York: G. W. Carleton, 1882), 473-76.

⁴ Thomas J. Pickett to Lincoln, Rock Island, 13 April 1859, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress; Lincoln to Thomas J. Pickett, Springfield, 16 April 1859, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:377. To an Ohio politician, he repeated this humble self-estimate. Lincoln to Samuel Galloway, Springfield, 28 July 1859, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:395.

⁵ Seth Eyland, The Evolution of a Life (New York: S. W. Green’s Son, 1884), 293.

Trumbull, Jacob Collamer, Benjamin F. Wade, Henry Wilson – were all long shots at best. As Schuyler Colfax noted in December 1858, “there is no serious talk of any one.”⁶

Despite his modesty, Lincoln between August 1859 and March 1860 positioned himself for a presidential run by giving speeches and corresponding with party leaders in several states, among them Iowa, Ohio, Wisconsin, New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, and Kansas.⁷ At the same time, he labored to keep Republicans true to their principles by having them steer a middle course between the Scylla of Douglas’s popular sovereignty and the Charybdis of radical abolitionism. Only thus could he and his party capture the White House.⁸ And only thus could a lesser-known Moderate like himself lead the ticket.

Lincoln took encouragement from the ever-widening rift in the Democratic party over such issues as a federal slave code for the territories and the reopening of the African slave trade. To Herndon and others he said, in substance: “an explosion must come in the near future. Douglas is a great man in his way and has quite unlimited power over the great mass of his party, especially in the North. If he goes to the Charleston Convention [of the national Democratic party in 1860], which he will do, he, in a kind of spirit of revenge, will split the Convention wide open and give it the devil; & right here is our future success or rather the glad hope of it.” Herndon recalled that Lincoln “prayed for this state of affairs,” for “he saw in it his opportunity and wisely played his line.”⁹

⁶ Colfax to Charles M. Heaton, Sr., Washington, 20 December 1858, Colfax Papers, Northern Indiana Center for History, South Bend.

⁷ William Eldon Baringer, “Campaign Technique in Illinois – 1860,” Transactions of the Illinois State Historical Society 32 (1932): 209.

⁸ Don E. Fehrenbacher, Prelude to Greatness: Lincoln in the 1850’s (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1962), 141-61.

⁹ Herndon to Horace White, Springfield, 25 April 1890, White Papers, Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield.

LAW PRACTICE

Before turning his attention fully to politics, Lincoln had to restore his depleted coffers. Two weeks after the 1858 election, he told Norman B. Judd: “I have been on expences so long without earning any thing that I am absolutely without money now for even household purchases.”¹⁰ Making matters worse, he was expected to help pay off the party’s \$3000 debt.¹¹ He pledged \$250 which, he said, “with what I have already paid . . . will exceed my subscription of five hundred dollars. This too, is exclusive of my ordinary expences during the campaign, all which being added to my loss of time and business, bears pretty heavily upon one no better off in world’s goods than I; but as I had the post of honor, it is not for me to be over-nice.”¹² To Mark W. Delahay he lamented that “this long struggle has been one of great pecuniary loss.”¹³ “It is bad to be poor,” he told a friend in Iowa. “I shall go to the wall for bread and meat, if I neglect my business this year as well as last.”¹⁴

So Lincoln grudgingly devoted himself once again to the law. After the intense

¹⁰ Lincoln to Judd, Springfield, 16 November 1858, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:337.

¹¹ Norman B. Judd to Ozias M. Hatch, Chicago, 9 November 1858, Hatch Papers, Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield. In this letter, Judd stated that he did not want to dun Lincoln “except as a last resort.”

¹² Lincoln to Judd, Springfield, 16 November 1858, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:337. According to O. M. Hatch, Lincoln chipped in \$500 to the campaign, as did Hatch and Dubois. O. M. Hatch to Jonas & Asbury, Springfield, 22 November 1858, Henry Asbury Papers, Chicago History Museum. Later, Hatch stated that Lincoln and Dubois each paid \$300 to help cover its costs and that he himself had contributed \$275 for the same purpose. Hatch to Lyman Trumbull, Springfield, 14 July 1860, Lyman Trumbull Papers, Library of Congress.

¹³ Lincoln to Mark W. Delahay, Springfield, 1 February 1859 and 16 March 1860, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:355, 4:32.

¹⁴ Lincoln to Hawkins Taylor, Springfield, 6 September 1859, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:400.

excitement of a long canvass, he found it difficult to return to legal work. “Well,” he told a friend, “I shall now have to get down to the practice. It is an easy matter to adjust a harvester to tall or short grain by raising or lowering the sickle, but it is not so easy to change our feelings and modes of expression to suit the stump or the bar.”¹⁵ He was especially reluctant to execute judgments by selling land. In the fall of 1858, a disgruntled client, Samuel C. Davis and Company of St. Louis, whom Herndon called “excellent merchants,” complained that Lincoln and Herndon had neglected their interests by failing to collect money won in a court judgment. (Lincoln and Herndon had represented the company twenty-seven times in federal court.)¹⁶ Angrily Lincoln told his client that, as he had earlier explained, the money was to be raised by the sale of land owned by the defendant, that “under our law, the selling of land on execution is a delicate and dangerous, matter; that it could not be done safely, without a careful examination of titles; and also of the value of the property.” To carry out this task “would require a canvass of half the State.” When Davis and Company gave “no clear instructions” about how to proceed, Lincoln and Herndon hired a young man to conduct such a canvass. When that tedious chore was finished, the results were forwarded with the request that Davis and Company state what they wanted done. The company did not answer. Heatedly Lincoln declared: “My mind is made up. I will have no more to do with this class of business. I can do business in Court, but I can not, and will not follow executions all over the world. . . . I would not go through the same labor and vexation again for five hundred

¹⁵ Charles S. Zane, “Lincoln As I Knew Him,” Sunset 29 (October 1912), reprinted in the Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society 14 (1921-22): 76.

¹⁶ Herndon to “Mr. Smith,” Springfield, 22 November 1866, Lincoln Collection, Brown University; Martha L. Benner and Cullom Davis et al., eds., The Law Practice of Abraham Lincoln: Complete Documentary Edition, DVD-ROM (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000), hereafter cited as LPAL.

[dollars].” Davis and Company, he said, should turn the matter over to the attorney who had examined the titles for Lincoln and Herndon.¹⁷

Other clients were also growing impatient with Lincoln & Herndon.¹⁸ Peter and Charles Ambos of the Columbus Machine Company expressed disappointment at Lincoln’s neglect in pressing a claim.¹⁹ Exasperated by what he called an “annoyance” and a “disagreeable matter,” Lincoln told Charles Ambos in June 1859, “I would now very gladly surrender the charge of the case to anyone you would designate, without charging anything for the much trouble I have already had.”²⁰ Samuel Galloway assured Lincoln that Ambos and his colleagues resembled most clients in that they were “disposed to make their Attorney – a scape-goat to carry off their Sins.”²¹

In the late summer of 1859, Lincoln tried one of his few murder cases, defending Peachy Quinn Harrison, a grandson of his former political adversary, Peter Cartwright.²² Harrison had been indicted for allegedly stabbing to death a young attorney named Greek Crafton. Since both the Crafton and Harrison families were well-known in Sangamon

¹⁷ Lincoln to Samuel C. Davis and Company, Springfield, 17 and 20 November 1858, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:338, and Roy P. Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, First Supplement, 1832-1865 (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1974), 35. A good overview of Lincoln’s problems with S.C. Davis and Company can be found in Mark E. Steiner, An Honest Calling: The Law Practice of Abraham Lincoln (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2006), 161-65.

¹⁸ See Sanford B. Perry to Lincoln and Herndon, Chicago, 11 January 1859; S. Littler to Lincoln, Urbana, 11 January 1859, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress.

¹⁹ Peter Ambos to Lincoln, Columbus, Ohio, 5 January, 3 and 17 February 1859, 21 January and 1 February 1860, and Charles Ambos to Lincoln, Columbus, 20 April 1859, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress; Lincoln to Samuel Galloway, Springfield, 27 July 1859, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:393-94.

²⁰ Lincoln to Charles Ambos, Springfield, 21 June 1859, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:387. See Steiner, An Honest Calling, 164-66.

²¹ Samuel Galloway to Lincoln, Columbus, 10 August 1859, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress.

²² People v. Harrison, LPAL, case file # 04306; Robert Bray, “The P. Quinn Harrison Murder Trial,” Lincoln Herald 99 (1997): 59-79; Robert Bray, Peter Cartwright: Legendary Frontier Preacher (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2005), 245-51; Gary Ecelbarger, The Great Comeback: How Abraham Lincoln Beat the Odds to Win the 1860 Presidential Nomination (New York: St. Martins Press, 2008), 54-58.

County, the lengthy, complicated, and tedious trial became a cause célèbre. The case was, Herndon recalled, “ably conducted on both sides; every inch of ground was contested, hotly fought. All the points of the law, the evidence, practice, and general procedure were raised and discussed with feeling, fervor, and eloquence.”²³ As Lincoln sought to defend his client, he was thwarted by adverse rulings from the bench. When he objected, citing authorities that clearly sustained his argument, the judge, Edward Y. Rice, overruled him. According to Herndon, Lincoln grew “so angry that he looked like Lucifer in an uncontrollable rage.” Careful to stay “within the bounds of propriety just far enough to avoid a reprimand for contempt of court,” he was “fired with indignation and spoke fiercely [and] strongly” against the ruling of the judge, whom “he pealed . . . from head to foot.” He “had the crowd, the jury, the bar, in perfect sympathy and accord.” The turning point of trial came when Peter Cartwright testified that Crafton, while dying, told him that he forgave his killer and urged that Harrison not be held responsible. Cartwright’s hearsay testimony, which amazingly was allowed to stand, helped sway the jury. In his closing speech, Lincoln urged the jurors to heed Cartwright’s lachrymose account of Crafton’s dying plea, which they did, finding Harrison innocent. It was, Herndon reported, “a proud day for Lincoln,” who was “an imposing figure that day.”²⁴

²³ William Herndon to Jesse W. Weik, Springfield, 20 November 1885, Herndon-Weik Papers, Library of Congress.

²⁴ William H. Herndon’s interview with George Alfred Townsend, Springfield correspondence, 25 January, New York Tribune, 15 February 1867; Herndon, “Analysis of the Character of Abraham Lincoln,” lecture delivered at Springfield, 26 December 1865, Abraham Lincoln Quarterly 1 (1941): 429; William Herndon to Jesse W. Weik, Springfield, 20 November 1885, Herndon-Weik Papers, Library of Congress; William H. Herndon and Jesse W. Weik, Herndon’s Lincoln, ed. Douglas L. Wilson and Rodney O. Davis (1889; Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006), 204-205. The court crier recollected that Lincoln “roared like a lion suddenly aroused from his lair.” W. S. Kidd, “The Court Crier,” excerpts of a lecture, Ida Tarbell Papers, Allegheny College.

COMBATING “DOUGLASISM” AND HEALING DIVISIONS WITHIN THE RANKS

Surveying the political landscape in late 1858, Lincoln anticipated that Douglas might once again bolt the Democratic party as he had done over the Lecompton Constitution; this time his rebellion might be against a federal slave code for the territories. The Little Giant could, Lincoln thought, “claim that all Northern men shall make common cause in electing him President as the best means of breaking down the Slave power.” If that should happen, Lincoln predicted, “the struggle in the North will be, as it was in Illinois last summer and fall, whether the Republican party can maintain it’s identity, or be broken up to form the tail of Douglas’s new kite.” In December 1858, he bitterly remarked to Lyman Trumbull that “Some of our great Republican doctors will then have a splendid chance to swallow the pills they so eagerly prescribed for us last Spring. Still I hope they will not swallow them; and although I do not feel that I owe the said doctors much, I will help them, to the best of my ability, to reject the said pills. The truth is, the Republican principle can, in no wise live with Douglas; and it is arrant folly now, as it was last Spring, to waste time, and scatter labor already performed, in dallying with him.”²⁵

In January 1859, a Pennsylvanian called Lincoln’s attention to a Republican editor who “has lately taken it into his head that there is ‘no good’ in any body but ‘Anti-Lecompton Democrats,’” including Douglas. In reply, Lincoln was emphatic: “All dallying with Douglas by Republicans, who are such at heart, is, at the very least, time, and labor lost; and all such, who so dally with him, will yet bite their lips in vexation for

²⁵ Lincoln to Lyman Trumbull, Springfield, 11 December 1858, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:345.

their own folly.” Since the Little Giant and President Buchanan both supported the Dred Scott decision, since they both remained indifferent to the moral wrong of slavery, since they both viewed the slavery issue as a matter of economics, and since they both accepted the principle that the peculiar institution must exist in the South, to support either of those Democrats “is simply to reach the same goal by only slightly different roads.”²⁶

In March 1859 at Chicago, Lincoln made the same point, reminding a Republican audience that the fight against slavery expansion was a struggle against slavery itself, indirect though it may be: “Never forget that we have before us this whole matter of the right or wrong of slavery in this Union, though the immediate question is as to its spreading out into new Territories and States.” Let us not lower our standard, he counseled: “If we do not allow ourselves to be allured from the strict path of our duty by such a device as shifting our ground and throwing ourselves into the rear of a leader who denies our first principle, denies that there is an absolute wrong in the institution of slavery, then the future of the Republican cause is safe and victory is assured.” He insisted that his listeners had to “keep the faith, to remain steadfast to the right, to stand by your banner. Nothing should lead you to leave your guns. Stand together, ready, with match in hand.”²⁷

Lincoln offered similar advice to the Republicans of Kansas, who were about to adopt a platform: “the only danger will be the temptation to lower the Republican Standard in order to gather recruits,” either from the Douglas’s supporters or from his Southern opponents. Such a tactic “would open a gap through which more would pass out

²⁶ W. H. Wells to Lincoln, Waynesburg, Pennsylvania, 3 January 1859, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress; Lincoln to W. H. Wells, Springfield, 8 January 1859, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:349.

²⁷ Speech in Chicago, 1 March 1859, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:369-70.

than pass in.” Do not compromise on the main Republican principle, he urged: “the preventing the spread and nationalization of Slavery. This object surrendered, the organization would go to pieces.” If a coalition with Democrats could be formed by ignoring the slavery issue, “it will result in gaining no single electoral vote in the South and losing ev[e]ry one in the North.”²⁸ When the American party leader Nathan Sargent, his former messmate at Mrs. Sprigg’s boarding house in Washington, suggested that the Republicans coalesce with the Douglas Democrats on a platform opposing the resumption of the African slave trade and calling for “eternal hostility to the rotten democracy,” Lincoln predicted that such an alliance might carry Maryland, but no other state: “Your platform proposed to allow the spread, and nationalization of slavery to proceed without let or hindrance, save only that it shall not receive supplies directly from Africa,” he told Sargent. “Surely you do not seriously believe the Republicans can come to any such terms.” Alluding to Southern congressmen who had won election as opponents of the Democracy, Lincoln added: “From the passage of the Nebraska-bill up to date, the Southern opposition have constantly sought to gain an advantage over the rotten democracy, by running ahead of them in extreme opposition to, and vilification and misrepresentation of black republicans. It will be a good deal, if we fail to remember this in malice, (as I hope we shall fail to remember it;) but it is altogether too much to ask us to try to stand with them on the platform which has proved altogether insufficient to sustain them alone.”²⁹

²⁸ Lincoln to Mark W. Delahay, Springfield, 14 May 1859, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:379.

²⁹ Josiah M. Lucas to Lincoln, Washington, 13 June 1859, and Nathan Sargent to Lincoln, Washington, 13 June 1859, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress; Lincoln to Nathan Sargent, Springfield, 23 June 1859, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:388.

To Massachusetts Republicans who were organizing a festival honoring Thomas Jefferson, Lincoln appealed in more idealistic terms, criticizing the Democratic party for its abandonment of Jefferson's egalitarianism. In a public letter, he argued that the current Democratic party held "the liberty of one man to be absolutely nothing, when in conflict with another man's right of property. Republicans, on the contrary, are for both the man and the dollar; but in cases of conflict, the man before the dollar." Jefferson's principles as spelled out in the Declaration of Independence, which Lincoln called "the definitions and axioms of free society," were now denied and evaded by Democrats, who refer to them as "glittering generalities," "self-evident lies," and principles applying "only to 'superior races.'" Such expressions "are identical in object and effect – the supplanting the principles of free government, and restoring those of classification, caste, and legitimacy. They would delight a convocation of crowned heads, plotting against the people. They are the van-guard – the miners, and sappers – of returning despotism. We must repulse them, or they will subjugate us." Forcefully he maintained that "This is a world of compensations; and he who would be no slave, must consent to have no slave. Those who deny freedom to others, deserve it not for themselves; and, under a just God, can not long retain it." Jefferson should be revered for the "coolness, forecast, and capacity to introduce into a merely revolutionary document, an abstract truth, applicable to all men and all times, and so to embalm it there, that to-day, and in all coming days, it shall be a rebuke and a stumbling-block to the very harbingers of re-appearing tyranny and oppression."³⁰ (Lincoln had nothing to say about Jefferson's agrarianism, his devotion to states rights, his hostility to industrialization, urbanization, banks, tariffs and

³⁰ Lincoln to Henry L. Pierce and others, Springfield, 6 April 1859, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:375-76.

other matters where he disagreed with the Sage of Monticello. Lincoln was a Jeffersonian only in his devotion to the principles of the Declaration of Independence as well as the antislavery sentiments embodied in both the Northwest Ordinance of 1784 and in Jefferson’s later remark, often quoted by Lincoln: “I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just: that his justice cannot sleep for ever.”³¹ This statesmanlike letter impressed the Springfield, Massachusetts, Republican, which said that “as a literary document” it was “one of the most remarkable we ever met.”³² Another admirer was Lincoln’s shrewd friend, Nathan M. Knapp, who detected in Lincoln’s letter honoring Jefferson “more of old ’76 Republicanism” than any other Republican aspirant for the presidency displayed.³³

Another potential threat to Republican chances was the heterogeneity of the party. As an Indiana politico put it, “Jack Falstaff never marched through Coventry with a more motl[e]y crowd than will be gathered under the Republican banner,” including “Abolitionists died in the wool, know Nothings, [and] Maine Liquor Law men.”³⁴ The most ominous source of disunity was the antagonism between former Whigs and former Democrats. As a southern Illinoisan wrote in March, “There is a disturbing element in the Rep. party in this State which I fear will produce mischief. It is that we have not forgotten our former party prejudices. And whigs and democrats retain altogether too much

³¹ The quote comes from Jefferson’s only book, Notes on the State of Virginia, ed. Merrill D. Peterson (1781-82; New York: Library of America, 1984), 289. The misguided notion that Lincoln was a full-fledged Jeffersonian was championed by James G. Randall. See Randall, Lincoln the Liberal Statesman (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1947), 175-206. On the differences between Lincoln and Jefferson, see Allen C. Guelzo, Abraham Lincoln: Redeemer President (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1999), 3-14.

³² “Lincoln, the Candidate,” Springfield (Massachusetts) Republican, 13 July 1860.

³³ Nathan M. Knapp to O. M. Hatch, Winchester, Illinois, 12 May 1859, Hatch Papers, Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield.

³⁴ John Law to Richard W. Thompson, Evansville, 27 February 1860, Richard W. Thompson Collection, Lincoln Museum, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

hostility against each other to be good Republicans.”³⁵ When Lyman Trumbull informed Lincoln that John Wentworth was trying to create ill-will between former Whigs and former Democrats (notably, between the Illinois senator and Lincoln), Lincoln responded sharply. “Any effort,” he told Trumbull, “to put enmity between you and me, is as idle as the wind.” Promising to sustain Trumbull in his reelection bid in 1860, Lincoln assured him that there was little danger “of the old democratic and whig elements of our party breaking into opposing factions. They certainly shall not, if I can prevent it.”³⁶

Yet another threat to Republican solidarity emerged in the spring of 1859 when the Massachusetts legislature passed an amendment to the state constitution requiring immigrants to wait two years after naturalization before becoming eligible to vote or hold office. Germans throughout the country were indignant at the Bay State Republicans and demanded that the party repudiate the so-called two-years amendment.³⁷ “You know we are powerless here without the Protestant foreign vote,” Charles Henry Ray warned Massachusetts Governor N. P. Banks; “no party which cannot command it in the next Presidential election has the ghost of a chance of success.” If the amendment were adopted, Ray said, Republicans would “go into the contest of 1860 with the certainty of

³⁵ John Olney to Lyman Trumbull, Shawneetown, 12 March 1860, Lyman Trumbull Papers, Library of Congress.

³⁶ Lyman Trumbull to Lincoln, Washington, 28 January 1859, Judd Stuart Collection, Huntington Library, San Marino, California; Lincoln to Trumbull, Springfield, 3 February 1859, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:355-56. Judd had informed Trumbull of Wentworth’s machinations: “Lying and detraction is the order of the day with him – attempting to create discord and enmity amongst friends – He hates both yourself and Lincoln, although his policy is to conceal his dislike of Lincoln.” Judd to Trumbull, Chicago, 26 December 1858, Trumbull Papers, Library of Congress.

³⁷ Herman Kreismann to N. P. Banks, Chicago, 2 April 1859, Banks Papers, Library of Congress; Gustave Koerner to Lincoln, Belleville, 4 April 1858, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress; Thomas J. McCormack, ed., Memoirs of Gustave Koerner, 1809-1896 (2 vols.; Cedar Rapids, Iowa: Torch Press, 1909), 2:74-76; William G. Bean, “Puritan versus Celt, 1850-1860” New England Quarterly 7 (1934): 86-89.

defeat.”³⁸ Lincoln bemoaned the shortsightedness of the Bay Staters: “Massachusetts republicans should have looked beyond their noses; and then they could not have failed to see that tilting against foreigners would ruin us in the whole North-West.”³⁹ When Theodore Canisius, the German-American editor of the Springfield Illinois Staats-Anzeiger, asked his opinion of the Massachusetts amendment, Lincoln replied: “I am against its adoption in Illinois, or any other place where I have a right to oppose it.” Tactfully disclaiming any authority to tell Massachusetts citizens how they should vote, he nevertheless condemned the animus behind the two-years amendment. Because “the spirit of our institutions” is “to aim at the elevation of men, I am opposed to whatever tend to degrade them. I have some little notoriety for commiserating the oppressed condition of the negro; and I should be strangely inconsistent if I could favor any project for curtailing the existing rights of white men, even though born in different lands, and speaking different languages from myself.” As for Canisius’s query about whether Republicans should ally with other opponents of the Democrats (like Know-Nothings), he said: “I am for it, if it can be had on Republican grounds; and I am not for it on any other terms. A fusion on any other terms . . . would lose the whole North, while the common enemy would still carry the whole South. The question of men is a different one. There are good patriotic men and able statesmen in the South whom I would cheerfully support, if they would now place themselves on Republican ground, but I am against letting down the Republican standard a hair’s breadth.”⁴⁰ Democrats complained that Lincoln showed timidity in saying that he had “no right” to advise Massachusetts “in her policy” while

³⁸ Ray to N. P. Banks, Chicago, 2 April [1859], Banks Papers, Library of Congress.

³⁹ Lincoln to Schuyler Colfax, Springfield, 6 July 1859, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:391.

⁴⁰ Lincoln to Canisius, Springfield, 17 May 1859, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:380.

simultaneously criticizing slavery in the fifteen states where it existed.⁴¹ In the Bay State, the Springfield Republican praised Lincoln’s letter as “an apple of gold in a picture of silver.”⁴²

Lincoln did more than merely write to Canisius; in May 1859, to help secure the German vote, he bought a printing press and gave it to Canisius with the understanding that it would be used to publish a German-language, pro-Republican paper in Springfield through the election of 1860.⁴³ Lincoln encouraged friends to find subscribers for the Springfield Staats-Anzeiger.⁴⁴ (Democrats alleged that Lincoln helped James Matheny establish a very different newspaper, the Springfield American, a “quasi American journal” which was to serve “a bridge for old whigs to cross to black republicanism.”)⁴⁵

While resisting conservative Republicans in Massachusetts and elsewhere, Lincoln also combated the threat posed by radical Republicans in Ohio, who adopted a platform calling for the repeal of “the atrocious Fugitive Slave Law.” Alarmed, Lincoln told Salmon P. Chase that their stand was “already damaging us here. I have no doubt that if that plank be even introduced into the next Republican National convention, it will explode it. Once introduced, its supporters and it’s opponents will quarrel irreconcilably. .

⁴¹ Quincy Herald, n.d., copied in the Illinois State Register (Springfield), 12 June 1860.

⁴² “Lincoln, the Candidate,” Springfield (Massachusetts) Republican, 13 July 1860.

⁴³ Contract with Theodore Canisius, [30?] May 1859, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:383. Canisius had been unable to pay the \$400 he owed his landlord, who became owner of the paper by default. Lincoln purchased the title from the landlord and gave it to Canisius. Lincoln owned it until 6 December 1860, when he certified that Canisius had fulfilled his end of the bargain. Canisius borrowed \$400 from Charles F. Herman of Springfield to repay Lincoln, who as president appointed Canisius to a consular post. William E. Barton, The Life of Abraham Lincoln (2 vols.; Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1925), 1:422-23; A. E. Zucker, “Dr. Theodore Canisius, Friend of Lincoln,” German-American Review 16 (1950), 13-15, 38.

⁴⁴ Lincoln to Frederick C. W. Koehnle, Springfield, 11 July 1859, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:391; Lincoln to Daniel A. Cheever, Springfield, 19 August 1859, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, First Supplement, 41.

⁴⁵ Illinois State Register (Springfield), 26 June 1858.

. . . I enter upon no argument one way or the other; but I assure you the cause of Republicanism is hopeless in Illinois, if it be in any way made responsible for that plank.”⁴⁶ When Chase suggested that the statute was unconstitutional, Lincoln demurred, citing the Constitution’s provisions that fugitive slaves “shall be delivered up” and that Congress had the power to pass all laws “necessary and proper” to carry out its responsibilities. But, he added, that was irrelevant; the main point was that a platform calling for the repeal of the Fugitive Slave Act would jeopardize Republican unity.⁴⁷ Lincoln also wished that Congressman C. C. Washburn had not denounced the proposed constitution of Oregon because of its clause excluding free blacks.⁴⁸

To another Ohioan, Samuel Galloway, Lincoln emphasized the danger of flirting with popular sovereignty, as some Republicans were doing, among them Illinois Congressman William Kellogg, Ohio political leader Thomas Corwin, Massachusetts Congressman Eli Thayer, and the editors of the Chicago Press and Tribune.⁴⁹ Lincoln warned that “no party can command respect which sustains this year, what it opposed last.” Dalliance with the Little Giant’s “humbug” enhanced its author’s reputation and provided him bargaining chips to use in wooing Southern support, Lincoln argued. He also maintained that widespread acceptance of popular sovereignty would not only pave the way for nationalizing slavery but also for revival of the African slave trade. “Taking

⁴⁶ Lincoln to Chase, Springfield, 9 June 1859, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:384.

⁴⁷ Chase to Lincoln, Columbus, Ohio, 13 June 1859, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress; Lincoln to Chase, Springfield, 20 June 1859, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:386. See also Lincoln to Samuel Galloway, Springfield, 28 July 1859, ibid., 3:394-95.

⁴⁸ Lincoln to E. B. Washburne, Springfield, 29 June 1859, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:351.

⁴⁹ Speech of Eli Thayer on a bill to abolish polygamy in Utah, 3 April 1860, Illinois State Register (Springfield), 14 April 1860; Robert W. Johannsen, Stephen A. Douglas (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), 706; William H. Herndon to Lyman Trumbull, Springfield, 21 January 1859, Trumbull Papers, Library of Congress; William H. Herndon to Theodore Parker, Springfield, 23 November 1858, Herndon-Parker Papers, University of Iowa; Tracy E. Strevey, “Joseph Medill and The Chicago Tribune During the Civil War Period” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1930), 53-54.

slaves into new ter[r]itories, and buying slaves in Africa, are identical things – identical rights or identical wrongs – and the argument which establishes one will establish the other. Try a thousand years for a sound reason why congress shall not hinder the people of Kansas from having slaves, and when you have found it, it will be an equally good one why congress should not hinder the people of Georgia from importing slaves from Africa.”⁵⁰

Turning from Ohio to Indiana, Lincoln urged Schuyler Colfax to avoid divisive issues which might split the party: “The point of danger is the temptation in different localities to ‘platform’ for something which will be popular just there, but which, nevertheless, will be a firebrand elsewhere, and especially in a National convention.” Everywhere, Lincoln counseled, “we should look beyond our noses; and at least say nothing on points where it is probable we shall disagree.” He appealed to Hoosier Republicans to avoid “these apples of discord.” Colfax agreed, though he acknowledged that uniting conservatives and radicals was a “great problem” and declared that whoever solved it was “worthier of fame than Napoleon.”⁵¹

LINCOLN-DOUGLAS DEBATES CONTINUED IN OHIO

Through the winter, spring, and summer of 1859, Lincoln declined invitations to speak by pleading poverty.⁵² Yet in September he did agree “to make a flying trip” to

⁵⁰ Lincoln to Samuel Galloway, Springfield, 28 July 1858, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:394-95.

⁵¹ Lincoln to Colfax, Springfield, 6 July 1859, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:390-91; Colfax to Lincoln, South Bend, Indiana, 14 July 1859, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress.

⁵² Lincoln to John A. Kasson, Springfield, 21 September 1859, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, First Supplement, 46. He was asked to speak in New Hampshire, New York, Kansas, Pennsylvania, and

Ohio, where Douglas would be speaking and where voters would elect a governor and legislators who would in turn choose a U.S. senator.⁵³

The Little Giant had just published in Harper's Magazine a lengthy, turgid, repetitious article, written with the help of historian George Bancroft, on "The Dividing Line between Federal and Local Authority: Popular Sovereignty in the Territories," which in effect continued his debate with Lincoln and with Southerners who denounced the Freeport Doctrine. Ignoring the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 and the Missouri Compromise of 1820, the Little Giant argued that historically the people of the territories had been empowered to regulate "all things affecting their internal polity – slavery not excepted" without congressional interference. He alleged that it was a basic principle which Congress had endorsed in the Compromise of 1850, which the major parties had accepted in 1852, and which the Supreme Court had upheld in the Dred Scott decision, as well as in the Kansas-Nebraska Act. Overlooking the crucial Supreme Court decision in Barron v. Baltimore (1833), he mistakenly argued that the Bill of Rights in the Constitution limited the power of states as well as the federal government.⁵⁴ Upon

elsewhere. C. P. Danforth to Lincoln, Nashua, N.H., 28 January 1859; Joshua Giddings to Lincoln, Buffalo, 12 September 1859; Mark W. Delahay to Lincoln, Leavenworth City, Kansas, 8 February 1859; Martin F. Conway to Horace White, Lawrence, Kansas, 18 February 1859; Russell Errett to Lincoln, Pittsburgh, 13 September 1859, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress. One exception was speech he gave in Iowa in mid-August, which a hostile local paper described as "a lengthy and ingenious analysis of the 'nigger' question." Speech at Council Bluffs, 13 August 1859, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:396.

⁵³ Lincoln to Peter Zinn, Springfield, 6 September 1859, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:400; Peter Zinn to Lincoln, Cincinnati, 2 September 1859, and William T. Bascom to Lincoln, Columbus, 1 and 9 September 1859, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress; Daniel J. Ryan, "Lincoln and Ohio," Ohio Archaeological and Historical Quarterly 32 (1923): 22.

⁵⁴ Don E. Fehrenbacher, The Dred Scott Case: Its Significance in American Law and Politics (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 514-23; Robert W. Johannsen, "Stephen A. Douglas, 'Harper's Magazine,' and Popular Sovereignty," Mississippi Valley Historical Review 45 (1959): 606-31; Johannsen, Douglas, 707; Harper's Magazine 14 (September 1859): 519-37. Douglas's article is reprinted in Harry V. Jaffa and Robert W. Johannsen, eds., In the Name of the People: Speeches and Writings of Lincoln and Douglas in the Ohio Campaign of 1859 (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1959), 58-125. Douglas also received help in researching this article from Ninian W. Edwards. Ninian Edwards to Douglas, Geneseo, Illinois, 11 July 1859, Douglas Papers, University of Chicago.

reading this article, Lincoln was “greatly roused.” He burst into Milton Hay’s law office and, “without a salutation, said: ‘This will never do. He puts the moral element out of this question. It won’t stay out.’”⁵⁵

On September 7 at Columbus, Douglas delivered a speech repeating arguments from the previous year’s debates and summarizing his article in Harper’s.⁵⁶ This constituted “the opening manifesto of the Presidential canvass,” declared the New York Times, which carried it in full.⁵⁷ When Lincoln announced that he would reply to Douglas, the Cincinnati Enquirer observed that “the Illinois fight is to be gone over again in Ohio.”⁵⁸ As he had done the previous year, Joseph Medill urged Lincoln to be aggressive: “Go in boldly, strike straight from the shoulder, – hit below the belt as well as above, and kick like thunder.”⁵⁹

In a two-hour address at the Ohio capitol on September 16, Lincoln took a gentler approach than the one that Medill recommended.⁶⁰ Calling Douglas’s magazine article “the most maturely considered” of his opponent’s “explanations explanatory of explanations explained,” he challenged it on historical and constitutional grounds, citing the Northwest Ordinance of 1787. The contention that the Revolutionary generation adopted popular sovereignty in dealing with slavery, Lincoln said, “is as impudent and

Allan Nevins justly called Douglas’s article “labored, pedantic, and dull.” Nevins, “Stephen A. Douglas: His Weaknesses and His Greatness,” Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society 42 (1949): 393.

⁵⁵ John Hay, “The Heroic Age in Washington,” lecture of 1871, in Michael Burlingame, ed., At Lincoln’s Side: John Hay’s Civil War Correspondence and Selected Writings (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2000), 115-16.

⁵⁶ Jaffa and Johannsen, eds., In the Name of the People, 126-72.

⁵⁷ New York Times, 8, 9 September 1859. Two days later Douglas delivered essentially the same speech in Cincinnati.

⁵⁸ Cincinnati Enquirer, 11 September 1859.

⁵⁹ Medill to Lincoln, Chicago, 10 September 1859, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress.

⁶⁰ Ohio State Journal (Columbus), 17 September 1859.

absurd as if a prosecuting attorney should stand up before a jury, and ask them to convict A as the murderer of B, while B was walking alive before them.” Popular sovereignty, in essence, meant that “if one man chooses to make a slave of another man, neither that other man nor anybody else has a right to object.” Similarly, he reduced the Freeport Doctrine to a simple proposition: “a thing may be lawfully driven away from where it has a lawful right to be.” The fundamental question, Lincoln maintained, was whether Douglas was correct in regarding slavery as a minor matter: “I suppose the institution of slavery really looks small to him. He is so put up by nature that a lash upon his back would hurt him, but a lash upon anybody else’s back does not hurt him.” The Little Giant’s popular sovereignty doctrine would, he predicted, pave the way not only for a new Dred Scott decision but also for the reopening of the African slave trade and for a federal slave code in the territories.⁶¹

Lincoln also dealt with the charge, made by the Ohio Statesman, that he supported black voting rights. Quoting from his statements at Ottawa and Charleston in the debates of the previous year, he denied the allegation. (After the speech, David R. Locke asked him about his support for a ban on interracial marriage, to which he responded: “The law means nothing. I shall never marry a negress, but I have no objection to any one else doing so. If a white man wants to marry a negro woman, let him do it – if the negro woman can stand it.”)⁶²

One reporter covering the speech described Lincoln as “dark-visaged, angular, awkward, positive-looking,” with “character written in his face and energy expressed in

⁶¹ Speech at Columbus, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:400-25.

⁶² David R. Locke in Rice, ed., Reminiscences of Lincoln, 446-47.

his every movement.”⁶³ Another observed that “Lincoln is a dark complexioned man, of a very tall figure, and so exceedingly ‘well preserved’ that he would not be taken for more than thirty eight, though he is rising of fifty years of age.”⁶⁴ The following year, Simon P. Hanscom of the New York Herald remarked, “I do not see why people call him Old Abe. There is no appearance of age about the man, excepting the deeply indented wrinkles on his brow, and the furrow ploughed down his bare cheeks, hairless as an Indian’s; you can hardly detect the presence of frost in his black, glossy hair.” Another reporter concurred, saying that “he certainly has no appearance” of being fifty-one, for his hair was “hardly touched with gray, and his eye is brighter than that of many of his juniors.” A friend of Lincoln’s protested that the sobriquet “Honest Old Abe” did not accurately describe the candidate: “The term ‘old’ is hardly as applicable as the epithet honest, for he is in the full vigor of life, with a powerful constitution, and no symptoms of decay, mental or physical.”⁶⁵

The Chicago Press and Tribune praised Lincoln’s “new and fatal discovery among the maze of Douglasisms,” namely that the Little Giant had “dropped the ‘unfriendly legislation’ dodge and commenced prating about the right to control slavery as other property. . . . It is patent as sunlight that Popular Sovereignty is abandoned by the great popular sovereign himself.”⁶⁶ Frank Blair called Lincoln’s speech “the most complete overthrow Mr Douglass ever received.”⁶⁷ The Democratic Ohio Statesman of

⁶³ Cincinnati Enquirer, 18 September, quoted in the Cincinnati Commercial, 19 September 1859.

⁶⁴ Cincinnati Commercial, 17 September 1859.

⁶⁵ Springfield correspondence, 16 October, New York Herald, 20 October 1860; Springfield correspondence, 6 November, New York Tribune, 10 November 1860; letter by a Springfield resident to a prominent Philadelphian, Springfield, 4 June 1860, New York Tribune, 11 June 1860.

⁶⁶ Chicago Press and Tribune, 19 September 1859.

⁶⁷ Francis P. Blair, Jr., to Lincoln, St. Louis, 18 October 1859, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress.

Columbus was less complimentary, declaring that Lincoln “is not a great man – very, very far from it,” and calling his speech “very inferior.”⁶⁸

That evening, Lincoln spoke briefly at the Columbus city hall, and the following day he delivered a version of his Columbus speech at Dayton, where the local Democratic paper complimented him as “a very seductive reasoner” whose diction was “choice” and whose logic was “clear.”⁶⁹ A lawyer in Dayton was also impressed, noting that Lincoln’s speech “was a perfect surprise to everyone – a close, logical argument without anecdote or illustration and yet so clear and intensely interesting that although the audience stood upon the Courthouse steps and the pavement, not one person left until he closed.”⁷⁰ (Lee complimentary was a Dayton Democrat who briefly listened to Lincoln and remarked that the Illinois visitor had “a thin, weak voice” and was “by no means an eloquent or forcible speaker.”)⁷¹ At Hamilton, Lincoln and his traveling companion, the diminutive Congressman John A. Gurley, stopped briefly to allow the Illinoisan to address a crowd, which was mightily amused by the appearance of such a tall man as Lincoln standing next to such a short man as Gurley. “‘My friends,’ said Lincoln, ‘this is the long of it,’ pointing to himself, then, laying his hand on Gurley’s head, ‘and the short of it.’”⁷²

That night in a speech at Cincinnati, Lincoln took a different tack from the one he

⁶⁸ Ohio Statesman (Columbus), 17 September 1859.

⁶⁹ Dayton Daily Empire, 19 September 1859, in John H. Cramer, “Lincoln in Ohio,” The Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Quarterly 54 (1945): 155.

⁷⁰ Reminiscences of attorney Lewis B. Gunkel, in Lloyd Ostendorf, Mr. Lincoln Came to Dayton: A Centennial Account of Abraham Lincoln's Visit to Dayton, Ohio, 1859 (Dayton: Otterbein Press, 1959), 25.

⁷¹ Carole Rauch Medlar, ed., The Gentleman and the Artist: A Journal of D. L. Medlar, September 1, 1859-April 30, 1862, Dayton, Ohio (Dayton: Dayton Metro Library, 2007),*

⁷² Bert S. Bartlow, William H. Todhunter, et al., eds., Centennial History of Butler County, Ohio ([n. p.]: B. F. Bowen, 1905), 123.

had used in Columbus, aiming his remarks primarily at residents of Kentucky, just across the Ohio River from the Queen City. Some Republicans hoped that the visitor would “not give a too strictly partisan cast to his address,” but Lincoln began by candidly acknowledging that he was a “Black Republican.”⁷³ At length he argued that Southerners should support Douglas, for the senator had promoted the interests of slavery and, unlike candidates from below the Mason-Dixon line, he could possibly win the presidency. Republicans, he added, had no plans to invade the South or tamper with slavery there: “We mean to leave you alone, and in no way to interfere with your institution, to abide by all and every compromise of the Constitution, and, in a word, coming back to the original proposition, to treat you . . . according to the examples of those noble fathers – Washington, Jefferson, and Madison. We mean to remember that you are as good as we; that there is no difference between us other than the difference of circumstances. We mean to bear in mind always that you have as good hearts in your bosoms as other people, or as we claim to have, and treat you accordingly. We mean to marry your girls when we have a chance – the white ones I mean – and I have the honor to inform you that I once did have a chance in that way.” How would you Southerners react if the Republicans were to capture the White House? he asked. Would you secede? How would that help you? Would you go to war? You may well be at least as gallant and brave as Northerners, but you would nonetheless lose because we outnumber you, he argued.

Turning his gaze from Kentucky back to Ohio, Lincoln appealed to its Republicans to support only those candidates embracing the party’s basic principle: unyielding opposition to the spread of slavery. In discussing the evils of slavery, Lincoln

⁷³ Rutherford B. Hayes to Addison Peale Russell, Cincinnati, 14 September 1859, in Charles Richard Williams, The Life of Rutherford Burchard Hayes, Nineteenth President of the United States (2 vols.; Columbus: Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society, 1928), 1:110.

employed one of his favorite metaphors in a new form: “I hold that if there is any one thing that can be proved to be the will of God by external nature around us, without reference to revelation, it is the proposition that whatever any one man earns with his hands and by the sweat of his brow, he shall enjoy in peace. I say that whereas God Almighty has given every man one mouth to be fed, and one pair of hands adapted to furnish food for that mouth, if anything can be proved to be the will of Heaven, it is proved by this fact, that that mouth is to be fed by those hands, without being interfered with by any other man who has also his mouth to feed and his hands to labor with. I hold that if the Almighty had ever made a set of men that should do all the eating and none of the work, he would have made them with mouths only and no hands, and if he had ever made another class that he had intended should do all the work and none of the eating, he would have made them without mouths and with all hands. But inasmuch as he has not chosen to make man in that way, if anything is proved, it is that those hands and mouths are to be co-operative through life and not to be interfered with.”⁷⁴

An abolitionist clergyman in the audience recalled that when Lincoln exclaimed “slavery is wrong!” he was hissed. “Your hisses will not blow down the walls of justice,” he replied. “No political arrangement with slavery will ever last which does not deal with it as a great wrong.”⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Lincoln had used similar imagery the previous year. His speech at Petersburg in October, according to an attendee, “was a fine one” in general, “but what thrilled the audience was his apostrophe to Liberty, Concluding with the Expression ‘God gave me these hands (holding them up to the vast audience) to feed this mouth (putting his hands to his mouth). This expression . . . was more than Convincing; it literally Electrified them and Carried the Crowd with him as if the people were caught up in a Cyclone.’” James Miles, interview with William Herndon, 16 July 1888, Douglas L. Wilson and Rodney O. Davis, eds., Herndon’s Informants: Letters, Interviews, and Statements about Abraham Lincoln (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 716.

⁷⁵ Moncure D. Conway, “Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln,” Fortnightly Review 1 (May 1865): 56.

Lincoln defended the free labor system against critics who maintained that slaves were better off than hired laborers. Alluding to his own experience, he denied the existence of a permanent laboring class in the North. Men like himself might start off with no capital and thus be forced to work for others, but in time they could, if “industrious,” accumulate capital and hire others to work for them. “In doing so they do not wrong the man they employ, for they find men who have not their own land to work with, or shops to work in, and who are benefited by working for others, hired laborers, receiving their capital for it. Thus a few men that own capital, hire a few others, and these establish the relation of capital and labor rightfully. A relation of which I make no complaint.” No man is locked into the position of hired laborer forever “unless he be of that confiding and leaning disposition that makes it preferable for him not to choose that course, or unless he be a vicious man, who, by reason of his vice, is, in some way prevented from improving his condition, or else he be a singularly unfortunate man.” The free institutions of the country were designed to promote social and economic mobility. “This progress by which the poor, honest, industrious and resolute man raises himself, that he may work on his own account, and hire somebody else, is that progress that human nature is entitled to, is that improvement in condition that is intended to be secured by those institutions under which we live, is the great principle for which this government was really formed. Our government was not established that one man might do with himself as he pleases, and with another man too.”⁷⁶

The Cincinnati Commercial reported that Lincoln’s “strong and peculiar speech” had “commanded the attention of a large body of citizens for more than two hours. He

⁷⁶ Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, First Supplement, 44-45; Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:438-62.

was clear headed and plain spoken, and made his points with decided effect.” The peculiar feature of his address was the speaker’s “odd wit that takes the crowds immensely.”⁷⁷ Moncure D. Conway, a prominent Unitarian minister, remembered the event vividly. Lincoln, he said, called to mind Robert Browning’s “description of the German professor, “Three parts sublime to one grotesque.”” His “face had a battered and bronzed look, without being hard. His nose was prominent and buttressed a strong and high forehead; his eyes were high-vaulted and had an expression of sadness; his mouth and chin were too close together, the cheeks hollow.” All in all, “Lincoln’s appearance was not very attractive until one heard his voice, which possessed variety of expression, earnestness, and shrewdness in every tone. The charm of his manner was that he had no manner; he was simple, direct, humorous. He pleasantly repeated a mannerism of his opponent, – ‘This is what Douglas calls his gur-reat perrinciple.’”⁷⁸

Rutherford B. Hayes considered Lincoln an unusual speaker, “so calm, so undemonstrative, but nevertheless an orator of great merit.” Comparing him to Kentucky Senator John J. Crittenden, Hayes added: “It is easy to contrast him after the manner of Plutarch, but his like has not been heard in these parts. His manner is more like Crittenden’s, and his truth and candor are like what we admire in the Kentuckian, but his speech has greater logical force, greater warmth of feeling.”⁷⁹ Hayes, who met with Lincoln and had a long chat, thought to himself: “Here is Henry Clay all over again.”⁸⁰

Some papers ran excerpts of the speech and referred to its author as “Abe the Giant

⁷⁷ Cincinnati Commercial, 19, 17 September 1859.

⁷⁸ Moncure D. Conway, Autobiography: Memories and Experiences (2 vols.; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1904), 1:317.

⁷⁹ Williams, Life of Hayes, 1:111.

⁸⁰ Hayes, “Our Two Greatest Presidents,” interview, ca. 1892, in Ari Hoogenboom, Rutherford B. Hayes: Warrior and President (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1995), 108-9.

Killer.”⁸¹

The Democratic press was less enthusiastic. “He makes no pretension to oratory or the graces of diction,” observed the Cincinnati Enquirer, “but goes directly to his point, whatever it may be, bent upon uttering his thought, regardless of elegance or even system, as best he can.” His pronunciation “puzzles the ear sometimes to determine whether he is speaking his own or a foreign tongue.”⁸²

Republicans distributed over 75,000 copies of Lincoln’s Ohio speeches throughout the Buckeye State. In the South, several pro-Douglas papers quoted the Cincinnati address, and the following year, Douglas’s friends sent reprints of it to Southern Democrats to prove that the Little Giant was their friend. “If Lincoln would go South and ‘kill Douglas’ a little more, he would doubtless obtain Douglas’ eternal gratitude,” declared the Chicago Times.⁸³ A correspondent of the Washington Star protested that “a more villainously abolition incendiary document than this same was never essayed to be scattered broadcast throughout a slaveholding State.”⁸⁴

After delivering his Cincinnati speech, Lincoln returned to his hotel, where he relaxed by telling stories to friends, including former Whig Congressman Thomas Corwin and Judge Alfred G. W. Carter. “I had heard of Mr. Lincoln as a story-teller,” the

⁸¹ Josiah M. Lucas to O. M. Hatch, Washington, 7 October 1859, Hatch Papers, Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield.

⁸² Cincinnati Enquirer, 18 September 1859, in Herbert Mitgang, ed., Abraham Lincoln: A Press Portrait (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1971), 140.

⁸³ Chicago Press and Tribune, 29 March, 23 February 1860; Ecelbarger, Great Comeback, 82-83. The copies of Lincoln’s speech distributed in the South were sent out under the frank of Congressmen John A. Logan and Philip B. Fouke.

⁸⁴ Illinois State Journal (Springfield), 12 March 1860.

judge reported, “but I never heard that he was such a serious, sincere, earnest, funny one as he showed himself that night.”⁸⁵

The next morning, a caller asked Lincoln: “how would you feel if we nominated you for President?”⁸⁶ Talk of such a possibility among Ohioans was not unprecedented. The previous evening, Corwin had remarked: “Well, Mr. Lincoln, the people begin to talk about you as a candidate for the presidency.”⁸⁷ Hours after Lincoln had spoken in Dayton, former Whig Congressman Robert C. Schenck told a crowd that “if an honest, sensible man was wanted” to head the 1860 Republican national ticket, “it would be well to nominate the distinguished gentleman from Illinois.” (Lincoln regarded Schenck’s remarks “as the first suggestion of his name for that office before any large assembly, or on any public occasion.”)⁸⁸

In 1860, the management of the Cincinnati hotel sent Lincoln an invoice which it claimed had not been paid. Lincoln, who had been told when checking out that the bill was settled, asked his friend William M. Dickson to investigate the matter. He thought the price “a little steep” and inaccurate. “I can and will pay it if it is right; but I do not wish to be ‘diddled![]’”⁸⁹

En route home, Lincoln stopped in Indianapolis, where he delivered a speech denying Douglas’s claim that Indiana and the other states of the Northwest were free not because of the 1787 Northwest Ordinance but because the soil and climate of that region

⁸⁵ Janesville, Wisconsin, Gazette, 8 August 1879, in Ecelbarger, Great Comeback, 78.

⁸⁶ J. H. Jordan to Lincoln, Cincinnati, 4 July 1861, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress.

⁸⁷ Janesville, Wisconsin, Gazette, 8 August 1879, in Ecelbarger, Great Comeback, 78.

⁸⁸ Whitelaw Reid, Ohio in the War: Her Statesmen, Her Generals, and Soldiers (2 vols.; Cincinnati: Moore, Wiltach & Baldwin, 1868), 1:727

⁸⁹ Lincoln to William M. Dickson, Springfield, 7 June 1860, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 4:72. Dickson paid the bill. Dickson to Lincoln, Cincinnati, 9 June 1860, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress.

were unsuited for plantation agriculture. Lincoln noted that parts of Indiana and Ohio lay south of the northern boundary of Kentucky, where slavery flourished, and that Illinois abutted Missouri, a slave state whose soil and climate resembled those of the Prairie State. He also attacked Douglas's oft-repeated observation "that in all contests between the negro and the white man, he was for the white man, but that in all contests between the negro and the crocodile, he was for the negro." The Little Giant evidently meant to imply "that you are wronging the white man in some way or other, and that whoever is opposed to the negro being enslaved is in some way opposed to the white man." Lincoln said that "was not true. If there were any conflict between the white man and negro he would be for the white man as much as Douglas. There was no such conflict. The mass of white men were injured by the effect of slave labor in the neighborhood of their own labor." Another implication of the Little Giant's remark was, Lincoln asserted, "that there is a conflict between the negro and the crocodile." Lincoln "did not think there was any such struggle. He supposed that if a crocodile . . . came across a white man, he would kill him if he could! And so he would a negro. The proposition amounted to something like this – as the negro is to the white man, so is the crocodile to the negro, and as the negro may treat the crocodile as a beast or reptile, so the white man may treat the negro as a beast or reptile."⁹⁰

A Democratic paper said of the speech that "for deep thought, historical research and biting criticism, it has not been equaled by any Republican orator in the West, or the East either."⁹¹ A Republican auditor described Lincoln as "a plain commonsense man

⁹⁰ Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:463-70; Indianapolis Daily State Sentinel, 20 September 1859.

⁹¹ Indianapolis Daily State Sentinel, 26 September 1859, quoted in Elmer Duane Elbert, "Southern Indiana Politics on the Eve of the Civil War, 1858-1861" (Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University, 1967), 103-4.

without much polish [–] Evidently a backwoods man.”⁹² Another Hoosier noted that Lincoln was so “Careless of his attire” and “ungraceful in his movements,” that he though “as he came forward to address the audience that his was the most ungainly figure I had ever seen upon a platform. Could this be Abraham Lincoln whose speeches I had read with so much interest and admiration -- this plain, dull-looking man the one who had successfully encountered in debate one of the most gifted speakers of his time? The question was speedily answered by the speech. The subject was slavery -- its character, its incompatibility with Republican institutions, its demoralizing influences upon society, its aggressiveness, its rights as limited by the Constitution ; all of which were discussed with such clearness, simplicity, earnestness, and force as to carry me with him to the conclusion that the country could not long continue part slave and part free -- that freedom must prevail throughout the length and breadth of the land, or that the great Republic, instead of being the home of the free and the hope of the oppressed, would become a by-word and a reproach among the nations.”⁹³

Douglas did not respond to Lincoln’s telling arguments but he did offer an indirect rejoinder by attacking Attorney General Jeremiah Black’s widely-circulated criticism of his Harper’s Magazine article.⁹⁴

Back in Springfield, Lincoln penned a note to Salmon P. Chase expressing regret that they had been unable to meet during his brief foray into Ohio. Having warned Chase earlier to avoid radicalism, he now counseled Buckeyes to give no “encouragement to

⁹² Gayle Thornbrough, ed., The Diary of Calvin Fletcher (8 vols.; Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1972-81), 6:412 (entry for 19 September 1859).

⁹³ Hugh McCulloch in Rice, ed., Reminiscences of Lincoln, 152.

⁹⁴ Douglas’s speech at Wooster, Ohio, 16 September 1859, Jaffa and Johannsen, eds., In the Name of the People, 200-30.

Douglasism. That ism is all which now stands in the way of an early and complete success of Republicanism; and nothing would help it or hurt us so much as for Ohio to go over or falter just now. You must, one and all, put your souls into the effort.”⁹⁵

On October 13, Lincoln rejoiced at the news that Republicans had won control of the Ohio legislature, paving the way for the election of David Tod to replace Democrat George Pugh in the U.S. senate. The Republican gubernatorial candidate, William Dennison, bested his opponent by 13,000 votes. “Is not the election news glorious?” Lincoln asked rhetorically.⁹⁶ On October 15, in a speech at Springfield, he “referred to the recent glorious victories achieved by the Republicans in Ohio and other States as clearly indicative that the good old doctrines of the fathers of the Republic would again prevail.”⁹⁷

The Ohio result damaged Douglas. As a correspondent for the New York Times had observed shortly before the election, “If the Democrats do not gain largely; nay, if they do not positively succeed, it will be proof positive in the minds of candid men that the Douglas dogma has brought no strength to the party, even in the Northwest.”⁹⁸ The Chicago Press and Tribune was still premature, however, in concluding that the “necessity of warring upon Douglas seems to be at an end. The October elections in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Iowa, Indiana and Minnesota, resulting in the overthrow of the Democracy, have, by destroying whatever remaining chances he may have had for the Charleston nomination, sealed his fate.”⁹⁹

⁹⁵ Lincoln to Chase, Springfield, 21 September 1859, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:470-71.

⁹⁶ Lincoln to Mark Delahay, Springfield, 17 October 1859, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:490.

⁹⁷ Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:489.

⁹⁸ Correspondence dated The Beeches, Ohio, 22 September, New York Times, 4 October 1859.

⁹⁹ Chicago Press and Tribune, 19 October 1859.

On the other hand, the results enhanced Lincoln's prospects. "We all think your visit aided us," Samuel Galloway wrote him from Columbus, "and we are grateful for your services. You have secured a host of friends among Republicans – and the respect of the better portion of the Democracy." Galloway urged him to run for president: "Your visit to Ohio has excited an extensive interest in your favor." Though admiring Salmon P. Chase's "eminent abilities," Galloway believed that "his nomination as our Candidate for the Presidency would sink us," for he had aroused too much "embittered feeling."¹⁰⁰

Lincoln clubs sprang up in the Buckeye State. On October 31, Charles H. Ray asked Lincoln: "Do you know that you are strongly talked of for the Presidency – for the Vice Presidency at least."¹⁰¹ Less than a month later, the Paris, Illinois, Beacon noted that "there are a great many influential journals, not only in the west but also in the middle and eastern states, who have expressed themselves in favor" of Lincoln for president, a sentiment the Beacon endorsed.¹⁰² William O. Stoddard of the Central Illinois Gazette in West Urbana, Illinois, followed suit. (Stoddard would later serve in the White House as an assistant to Lincoln's two personal secretaries.) In Baltimore, the German Turnzeitung declared that if "on the score of expediency we pass Mr. Seward by, then will Mr. Lincoln be the man."¹⁰³

In November, Mark W. Delahay of Kansas advised Lincoln to "discard a little modesty and not distrust your own Powers, and strike boldly and for the next 6 months cease to be a modist man." You could win the presidential nomination, said Delahay, for

¹⁰⁰ Galloway to Lincoln, Columbus, 13 October 1859, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress. Cf. William T. Bascom to Lincoln, Columbus, 13 October 1859, ibid.

¹⁰¹ Charles H. Ray to Lincoln, Chicago, [20 October 1859], Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress.

¹⁰² Paris, Illinois, Beacon, 30 November 1859, in Donald G. Richter, Lincoln: Twenty Years on the Eastern Prairie (Mattoon, Illinois: United Graphics, 1999), 241-42.

¹⁰³ Baltimore Turnzeitung, n.d., copied in the Chicago Press and Tribune, 2 May 1860.

William Henry Seward had been discredited by the setback that New York Republicans had just suffered at the polls; American party supporters would like Lincoln's Whig antecedents; and his championship of the tariff over the years would please Pennsylvanians. "You have always distrusted your own ability too much," Delahay scolded. The "only advantage Douglas ever possessed over you was that of impudence."¹⁰⁴ Prophetically Delahay added: "this is the most important period of your political life."¹⁰⁵

Similarly, the perceptive Nathan M. Knapp wrote that Lincoln "has not known his own power – uneducated in youth, he has always been doubtful whether he was not pushing himself into situations to which he was unequal, and has often been startled at looking down from his own elevation, which by the way he acquired by what seemed to him no great effort, but a sort of natural, perhaps clumsy, step."¹⁰⁶

The victorious Ohio Republicans wanted to publish the 1858 Lincoln-Douglas debates, which Lincoln had unsuccessfully attempted to bring out a year earlier in Illinois. Those debates and his Ohio speeches they regarded as "luminous and triumphant expositions of the doctrine of the Republican Party . . . of great practical service in the approaching Presidential contest."¹⁰⁷ On his September visit, Lincoln had brought along a carefully assembled scrapbook containing the Chicago Times' account of Douglas's speeches and the Chicago Press and Tribune's version of his own remarks, as well as

¹⁰⁴ Mark W. Delahay to Lincoln, Leavenworth, Kansas, 14 November 1859, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress.

¹⁰⁵ Delahay to Lincoln, Leavenworth, Kansas, 15 November 1859, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress.

¹⁰⁶ Nathan M. Knapp to O. M. Hatch, n.p., 12 May 1859, Hatch Papers, Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield.

¹⁰⁷ Republican Party of Ohio to Lincoln, Columbus, 7 December 1859, and George M. Parsons et al. to Lincoln, Columbus, 7 December 1859, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress.

addresses they had each delivered in Chicago, Bloomington, and Springfield. He evidently showed it to the Ohio Republican leaders with a view to having them publish it. Lincoln noted that he had made a “very few . . . small verbal corrections” in the text of his own speeches and none in Douglas’s. “It would be an unwarrantable liberty for us to change a word or a letter in his,” he explained.¹⁰⁸ (Douglas later complained that his own stenographers had inaccurately reported his words.) Lincoln entrusted the scrapbook to young John G. Nicolay to deliver to Columbus, where the firm of Follett, Foster and Company, which had been lobbied by Samuel Galloway, agreed to publish the volume. Chase’s friends, motivated by fear and envy, contrived to delay publication.¹⁰⁹

A week before the Republican national convention met at Chicago in mid-May, Lincoln received his first copies. The New York Tribune reported selling hundreds before then. This 268-page volume would be circulated widely in the presidential campaign, during which Lincoln himself delivered no speeches, in keeping with the custom for presidential candidates. In August 1860, when asked his views on the issues of the day, he replied: “my published speeches contain nearly all I could willingly say.”¹¹⁰ During the canvass, Republicans taunted Democrats about the debate volume. “We took the speeches of both of them [Lincoln and Douglas] and sent them over the country as an electioneering document,” said Cassius M. Clay of Kentucky. “And what do you

¹⁰⁸ Lincoln to George M. Parsons et al., Springfield, 19 December 1859, and to James W. Sheahan, Springfield, 24 January 1860, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:510, 515.

¹⁰⁹ Samuel Galloway to Lincoln, Columbus, 24 January 1860; Richard P. L. Baber to Lincoln, 25 January 1860, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress. It is impossible to say just when the book was actually available to the public. It may not have been till late April or early May. Ernest J. Wessen, “Debates of Lincoln and Douglas: A Bibliographical Discussion,” Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America, 40 (1946): 101-2. Follett and Foster claimed that it was published early in March. Follett and Foster to Benjamin F. Wade, Columbus, 20 March 1860, Wade Papers, Library of Congress; Follett and Foster to Stephen A. Douglas, Columbus, 16 June 1860, Chicago Press and Tribune, 21 June 1860.

¹¹⁰ Lincoln to T. Apolion Cheney, Springfield, 14 August 1860, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 4:93.

Democrats do? You go away into some cellar and read them and then burn the book, lest any one else should see them.”¹¹¹

STUMPING WISCONSIN

After spending a week in Springfield, Lincoln departed for Wisconsin to fill three speaking engagements. To the Wisconsin Agricultural Society in Milwaukee he delivered an ostensibly non-political speech attacking the proslavery argument and vindicating free labor ideology. Candidly Lincoln told his audience that he presumed he was not expected to engage “in the mere flattery of farmers, as a class. My opinion of them is that, in proportion to numbers, they are neither better nor worse than other people. In the nature of things they are more numerous than any other class; and I believe there really are more attempts at flattering them than any other; the reason of which I cannot perceive, unless it be that they can cast more votes than any other.” (Among other things, Lincoln’s unwillingness to pander to farmers reflected his alienation from the world of his father.) After recommending steps to improve agricultural productivity, deploring “mammoth farms,” and speculating on the possible introduction of “steam plows,” he reiterated his analysis of the advantages of free labor and refuted what he called “the ‘mud-sill’ theory” propounded by Southerners like George Fitzhugh and James H. Hammond. Labor, he argued, “is prior to, and independent of, capital,” for “capital is the fruit of labor” and therefore “labor is the superior – greatly superior – of capital.” The free labor system, in which the “prudent, penniless beginner in the world, labors for wages awhile, saves a

¹¹¹ New York Times, 13 July 1860.

surplus with which to buy tools or land, for himself; then labors on his own account another while, and at length hires another new beginner to help,” is “the just and generous, and prosperous system, which opens the way for all – gives hope to all, and energy, and progress, and improvement of condition to all.” He also extolled “cultivated thought” (i.e., education) which would help promote efficient agriculture.¹¹²

(Two years later, Lincoln expanded on this theme. He deplored “the effort to place capital on an equal footing with, if not above labor, in the structure of government. It is assumed that labor is available only in connexion with capital; that nobody labors unless somebody else, owning capital, somehow by the use of it, induces him to labor. This assumed, it is next considered whether it is best that capital shall hire laborers, and thus induce them to work by their own consent, or buy them, and drive them to it without their consent. Having proceeded so far, it is naturally concluded that all laborers are either hired laborers, or what we call slaves. And further it is assumed that whoever is once a hired laborer, is fixed in that condition for life. Now, there is no such relation between capital and labor as assumed; nor is there any such thing as a free man being fixed for life in the condition of a hired laborer. Both these assumptions are false, and all inferences from them are groundless.

“Labor is prior to, and independent of, capital. Capital is only the fruit of labor, and could never have existed if labor had not first existed. Labor is the superior of capital, and deserves much the higher consideration. Capital has its rights, which are as worthy of protection as any other rights. Nor is it denied that there is, and probably always will be, a relation between labor and capital, producing mutual benefits. The error is in assuming

¹¹² Speech of 30 September 1859, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:471-82.

that the whole labor of community exists within that relation. A few men own capital, and that few avoid labor themselves, and, with their capital, hire or buy another few to labor for them. A large majority belong to neither class—neither work for others, nor have others working for them. In most of the southern States, a majority of the whole people of all colors are neither slaves nor masters; while in the northern a large majority are neither hirers nor hired. Men with their families—wives, sons, and daughters—work for themselves, on their farms, in their houses, and in their shops, taking the whole product to themselves, and asking no favors of capital on the one hand, nor of hired laborers or slaves on the other. It is not forgotten that a considerable number of persons mingle their own labor with capital—that is, they labor with their own hands, and also buy or hire others to labor for them; but this is only a mixed, and not a distinct class. No principle stated is disturbed by the existence of this mixed class.

“Again: as has already been said, there is not, of necessity, any such thing as the free hired laborer being fixed to that condition for life. Many independent men everywhere in these States, a few years back in their lives, were hired laborers. The prudent, penniless beginner in the world, labors for wages awhile, saves a surplus with which to buy tools or land for himself; then labors on his own account another while, and at length hires another new beginner to help him. This is the just, and generous, and prosperous system, which opens the way to all—gives hope to all, and consequent energy, and progress, and improvement of condition to all. No men living are more worthy to be trusted than those who toil up from poverty—none less inclined to take, or touch, aught which they have not honestly earned. Let them beware of surrendering a political power which they already possess, and which, if surrendered, will surely be used to close the

door of advancement against such as they, and to fix new disabilities and burdens upon them, till all of liberty shall be lost.”)¹¹³

The turnout in Milwaukee was disappointingly small, both at this event and in the evening, when he was scheduled to speak from the balcony of a hotel. Seeing few people assembled in the street, Lincoln asked local officials in charge of his visit: “we can’t call that crowd, can we?” His face wore a “pathetic look of suffering sadness.” He cheered up, however, when the organizers arranged for an impromptu address in the hotel lobby.¹¹⁴ The next day at Beloit and Janesville, Lincoln resumed his overtly political campaigning with speeches repeating earlier arguments.¹¹⁵

Lincoln’s listeners in the Badger State praised him as “a clear reasoner and a popular orator” who had “few superiors in the nation.” One Milwaukee newspaper declared that his “countenance is pleasing and attractive, and significant both of a high degree of intelligence and goodness, while as a speaker he is dignified and impressive. He is plainly one of the leading men of the country.” In Beloit, an editor remarked that Lincoln was “neither a fluent nor a graceful speaker, but analyzes closely, and drives sharper points into the political dogmas of the democracy than any other speaker we have heard, and through the whole runs a vein of humor.” The Janesville Gazette described Lincoln’s oratory as “plain and unpretending” and “his gesticulations sometimes awkward.” His speaking style was nonetheless effective: “You are compelled to revolve

¹¹³ Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 5:51-53.

¹¹⁴ Reminiscences of Charles Caverno, dated March 1902, typescript, William E. Barton Papers, University of Chicago; Henry J. Peterson, “Lincoln at the Wisconsin State Fair as Recalled by John W. Hoyt,” Lincoln Herald, vol. 51, no. 4 (December 1949): 6-10.

¹¹⁵ Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:482-86.

his ideas over and over in your mind (whether you will or not). No one can forget Mr. Lincoln, his manner or his logic.”¹¹⁶

GROWING SUPPORT FOR LINCOLN’S CANDIDACY

Having bolstered his reputation in Iowa, Ohio, Indiana, and Wisconsin, Lincoln focused on Pennsylvania, one of the key swing states that the Republicans needed in order to win the 1860 presidential election. (In 1856, Frémont had lost Illinois, Indiana, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey.) Two Pennsylvanians were mentioned for the presidency: Simon Cameron, the state’s leading Republican politico, and Judge John M. Read of the state supreme court. Cameron’s supporters insisted that no one but their man could carry the Keystone State.¹¹⁷ In addition, Massachusetts Governor Nathaniel P. Banks, who had become a household name in 1855-56 when he won a protracted battle for the speakership of the U.S. House of Representatives, sought the Republican presidential nomination. Read, Cameron, and Banks all approached Lincoln as a possible running mate. In late October, Joseph Medill reported this news to his preferred candidate, Salmon P. Chase. Medill added that those feelers “set Lincoln’s friends to talking of him for the first place on the ticket, on the grounds that he is a stronger and more available man than either Cameron or Reed – even in Pa. We have had several visits from Pittsburg[h,] Harrisburg, Lancaster & Phila. to negotiate for C[ameron] or R[e]ad with L[incoln]. A Pittsburger is here now.”¹¹⁸ Cameron’s organ in Harrisburg championed a

¹¹⁶ Ecelbarger, Great Comeback, 86-89.

¹¹⁷ S. J. Levering to “Dear Sir,” Leverington, Pennsylvania, 28 April 1860, Lincoln Collection, Brown University.

¹¹⁸ Medill to Chase, Chicago, 30 October 1859, Chase Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. On Medill’s preference for Chase, see Medill to Chase, Chicago, 8 June 1859, John Niven, ed., The Salmon P. Chase Papers (5 vols.; Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1993-1998), 3:13; Strevey, “Joseph Medill

Cameron-Lincoln ticket and copied stories from other papers endorsing that combination.¹¹⁹ In Chicago, Charles Leib established a Cameron and Lincoln club.¹²⁰ Other Cameron backers in the Prairie State included E. M. Haines, James Matheny, and Charles V. Dyer.¹²¹ Some favored a Lincoln-Cameron ticket.¹²²

In November, Lincoln acknowledged to one of Cameron's emissaries: "It certainly is important to secure Pennsylvania for the Republicans in the next presidential contest, and not unimportant to also secure Illinois. As to the ticket you name [Cameron and Lincoln], I shall be heartily for it after it shall have been fairly nominated by a Republican national convention; and I cannot be committed to it before. For my single self, I have enlisted for the permanent success of the Republican cause; and, for this object, I shall labor faithfully in the ranks, unless, as I think not probable, the judgment of the party shall assign me a different position. If the Republicans of the great State of Pennsylvania, shall present Mr. Cameron as their candidate for the Presidency, such an indorsement of his fitness for the place, could scarcely be deemed insufficient. Still, as I would not like the public to know, so I would not like myself to know I had entered a

and The Chicago Tribune During the Civil War Period," 61-65; Chicago Press and Tribune, 21 March 1860; Medill to Archibald W. Campbell, 30 October 1859, Wheeling (West Virginia) Register, 1 May 1932. James H. Van Alen of New York suggested a ticket of Banks and Lincoln. Samuel Bowles to Banks, n.p., 28 March [1860], Banks Papers, Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield.

¹¹⁹ Harrisburg Telegraph, 13 October, 15 November, 2, 5, 22 December 1859.

¹²⁰ Chicago Press and Tribune, 14 November 1859, 24, 27 January 1860; Rodney O. Davis, "Dr. Charles Leib: Lincoln's Mole?" Journal of the Abraham Lincoln Association 24 (2003): 27-28.

¹²¹ Letter by "Occasional," Chicago, 19 December 1859, in the Central Illinois Gazette, 4 January 1860; E. M. Haines to Cameron, Springfield, 4 February 1861, Cameron Papers, Library of Congress.

¹²² C. D. Hay to Lyman Trumbull, Newton, 11 March 1860, Trumbull Papers, Library of Congress.

combination with any man, to the prejudice of all others whose friends respectively may consider them preferable.”¹²³

When asked by a Pennsylvanian whether he supported protective tariffs (the “all absorbing question” in that state), Lincoln cautiously replied that he was “an old Henry Clay tariff whig. In old times I made more speeches on that subject, than on any other. I have not since changed my views. I believe yet, if we could have a moderate, carefully adjusted, protective tariff, so far acquiesced in, as to not be a perpetual subject of political strife, squabbles, charges, and uncertainties, it would be better for us. Still, it is my opinion that, just now, the revival of that question, will not advance the cause itself, or the man who revives it. I have not thought much upon the subject recently; but my general impression is, that the necessity of a protective tariff will, ere long, force it’s old opponents to take it up; and then it’s old friends can join in, and establish it on a more firm and durable basis. We, the old whigs, have been entirely beaten out on the tariff question; and we shall not be able to re-establish the policy, until the absence of it, shall have demonstrated the necessity for it, in the minds of men heretofore opposed to it.”¹²⁴

In December, Jesse W. Fell urged Lincoln to supply a Pennsylvania journalist with an autobiographical sketch. Lincoln complied, saying: “There is not much of it, for the reason, I suppose, that there is not much of me. If anything be made out of it, I wish it to be modest, and not to go beyond the material. If it were thought necessary to incorporate anything from any of my speeches, I suppose there would be no objection. Of

¹²³ Lincoln to William E. Frazer, Springfield, 1 November 1859, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:491.

¹²⁴ William M. Reynolds to Lincoln, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 25 July 1860, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress; Lincoln to Edward Wallace, Clinton, 11 October 1859, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:486-87. For a discussion of the divisiveness of the tariff issue among Republicans, see Thomas M. Pitkin, “Western Republicans and the Tariff in 1860,” Mississippi Valley Historical Review 27 (1940): 401-20.

course it must not appear to have been written by myself.”¹²⁵ The brief document was forwarded to Joseph J. Lewis, who used it to write a long article about Lincoln that appeared in the Chester County Times of West Chester, a Philadelphia suburb, on February 11, 1860, and was widely copied in the Republican press. Lewis described Lincoln as “a consistent and earnest tariff man from the first hour of his entering public life,” a statement endearing the potential candidate to Pennsylvanians.¹²⁶ Lincoln noted in his autobiographical piece that his formal schooling had been brief in boyhood and adolescence. Modestly he added, “The little advance I now have upon this store of education, I have picked up from time to time under the pressure of necessity.”¹²⁷ A year earlier, in conversation with a young clergyman, Lincoln had “remarked how much he felt the need of reading, and what a loss it was to a man not to have grown up among books.”

“Men of force can get on pretty well without books,” the cleric replied. “They do their own thinking, instead of adopting what other men think.”

Lincoln agreed, but added that “books serve to show a man that those original thoughts of his aren’t very new, after all.”¹²⁸

In October, Joseph Medill wrote to a Virginia editor, making a strong case for Lincoln as a candidate able to win the doubtful states, for he was a native of Kentucky, a long-time resident of Indiana, a Henry Clay supporter, and a protectionist. Rhetorically Medill asked, “Is there any man who could suit P[ennsylvani]a better? . . . On the

¹²⁵ Lincoln to Fell, Springfield, 20 December 1859, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:511.

¹²⁶ Lewis to Fell, West Chester, 30 January 1860, Fell Papers, Library of Congress; West Chester Chester County Times, 11 February 1860.

¹²⁷ Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:511.

¹²⁸ New York Tribune, n.d., copied in Pennsylvania School Journal, January 1898, 309-10.

hypothesis that the four States lost by Fremont should name the candidate, has not ‘Old Abe’ more available points than any man yet named?’¹²⁹ In the columns of the Chicago Press and Tribune, Medill kept Lincoln’s name before the public throughout the fall and winter of 1859 and the spring of 1860.¹³⁰

Meanwhile, other papers mentioned Lincoln as a candidate for president or vice president. One of the first to do so was the Clinton, Illinois, Central Transcript. In late October, it suggested that he be named to head the Republican ticket in 1860.¹³¹ Three weeks later, the Aurora Beacon said Lincoln “has every element of popularity and success.” Lincoln proudly showed that editorial to his friends, who recalled that he was “very much pleased.”¹³² Young Whitelaw Reid, who was to become one of the nation’s premier journalists, suggested that Lincoln combined better than any other aspirant “the requisites of earnest Republicanism, fitness and availability.”¹³³ In January, the Illinois State Journal endorsed its fellow townsman enthusiastically as “a man for the times,” a “conservative National Republican,” and “a tower of strength to the party whose leader he is now regarded.”¹³⁴ When a newspaper editor from Ohio said he would support

¹²⁹ Joseph Medill to Archibald W. Campbell, 30 October 1859, Wheeling (West Virginia) Register, 1 May 1932.

¹³⁰ Privately he recommended that if Lincoln proved unacceptable to Pennsylvania, a ticket of McLean and Trumbull would be ideal. Medill to Trumbull, Chicago, 16 April 1860, Lyman Trumbull Papers, Library of Congress.

¹³¹ Clinton, Illinois, Central Transcript, 20 October 1859, in Ecelbarger, Great Comeback, 93.

¹³² J. Wainwright Ray to John G. Nicolay, Washington, 18 October 1886, Nicolay Papers, Library of Congress. Ray, editor of the Beacon, heard this from Ward Hill Lamon, who was one of the friends to whom Lincoln expressed his pleasure.

¹³³ Xenia, Ohio, News, n.d., copied in the Illinois State Journal (Springfield), 28 March 1860. Just after the Chicago convention, Reid wrote a highly laudatory editorial about Lincoln, though he grew disenchanted with him in time. Royal Cortissoz, The Life of Whitelaw Reid (2 vols.; London: Thornton Butterworth, 1921), 1:54; Bingham Duncan, Whitelaw Reid: Journalist, Politician, Diplomat (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1975), 24.

¹³⁴ Illinois State Journal (Springfield), 14 January 1860.

Lincoln for president or vice president, he replied: “Well, I think either office will be big enough for me.”¹³⁵

To Republicans, the October electoral victories were sweet, but their euphoria was short-lived. On the 16th of that month, the abolitionist firebrand John Brown led an abortive raid on the federal arsenal at Harper’s Ferry, Virginia, sending shock waves throughout the South. His goal was to seize arms and provide them to slaves for an uprising. Republicans understandably feared that Brown’s act might injure them at the polls.¹³⁶ “We are damnably exercised about the effect of Old Brown’s wretched fiasco in Virginia, upon the Moral health of the Republican party!” exclaimed Charles H. Ray. “The old idiot– The quicker they hang and get him out of the way, the better.”¹³⁷ In Sangamon County, Lincoln worried that John M. Palmer, running as a Republican for the seat vacated by the death of Congressman Thomas L. Harris, was in trouble. Lincoln urged his neighbors and friends to exert themselves for Palmer, “a good and true man,” but all was in vain; on election day, Democrat John A. McClernand triumphed over him.¹³⁸ “I reckon the Harpers Ferry affair damaged Palmer somewhat,” Lyman Trumbull speculated plausibly.¹³⁹

That affair also damaged other Republicans, especially those known as radicals,

¹³⁵ Reminiscences of C. C. Brown, Chicago Times-Herald, 25 August 1895.

¹³⁶ Timothy Davis to William Pitt Fessenden, Boston, 6 January 1860, Fessenden Papers, Clements Library, University of Michigan.

¹³⁷ Ray to Lincoln, Chicago, [20 October 1859], Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress.

¹³⁸ Lincoln to P. Quinn Harrison and to Jesse A. Pickrell, Springfield, 3 November 1859, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:492, 493. See also Joseph Medill to Salmon P. Chase, Chicago, 30 October 1859, Chase Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; William Herndon to Richard Yates, Springfield, 2 November 1859, L. U. Reavis Papers, Chicago History Museum.

¹³⁹ Trumbull to Lincoln, Washington, 23 November 1859, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress. Joseph Medill thought that Palmer’s defeat was a direct result of the Harpers Ferry raid. Medill to S. P. Chase, Chicago, 30 October 1859, Chase Papers, Library of Congress.

like William Henry Seward, the front-runner for the presidential nomination. His service as governor of New York and senator from that state had earned him respect, especially in advanced antislavery circles. But he had acquired an unmerited reputation as an extremist for his declaration in 1850 that there was a “higher law” than the Constitution and for an 1858 speech in which he alluded to an “irrepressible conflict” between North and South, a statement which was widely misrepresented as a call for civil war.¹⁴⁰ That speech also irritated former Democrats in the Republican coalition who resented Seward’s implication that the Jacksonian Democracy was always partial to slavery.¹⁴¹ Many Republicans thought of Seward as “a brilliant comet, with fiery tail and dragon claws, rushing through the political heavens to burn up” and destroy everything in its path.¹⁴² Some frowned on Seward’s transparent eagerness for the presidency. In the spring of 1860, Maine Senator William P. Fessenden said that the New Yorker, who “already puts on the airs of a President in his intercourse with friends,” would “die if he is not nominated. He has forgotten every thing else, even that he is a Senator, & has duties as such.” Seward’s “friends appear so utterly indifferent to any result except his nomination, or any consequences which may follow that I am getting disgusted with the whole concern,” Fessenden confided to his son.¹⁴³ “Since the Humbug insurrection at Harpers Ferry, I presume Mr Seward will not be urged,” a Pennsylvanian told Lincoln.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁰ Senate speech, 11 March 1850, Rochester speech, 25 October 1858, George E. Baker, ed., The Works of William H. Seward (5 vols.; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1884), 1:51-93, 4:289-302.

¹⁴¹ John Niven, Gideon Welles, Lincoln’s Secretary of the Navy (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), 284.

¹⁴² Jacob R. Freese to Seward, Trenton, N.J., 30 April 1860, Weed Papers, University of Rochester.

¹⁴³ William P. Fessenden to Elizabeth Warriner, Washington, 16 March and 1 April 1860, and to his son William, Washington, 19 March 1860, Fessenden Family Papers, Bowdoin College.

¹⁴⁴ William E. Frazer to Lincoln, Cookstown, Pennsylvania, 12 November 1859, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress.

The influential journalist James Shepherd Pike “had a very strong belief in Mr. Seward[’]s nomination till since Mr. Brown visited Virginia. That little incident has thrown a new cloud over the presidential tack and I think obscured Mr. Seward[’]s prospects not a little.”¹⁴⁵ More emphatically, Joseph Medill declared that Brown’s raid “has killed Seward stone dead.”¹⁴⁶ Horace Greeley, who thought that the raid “will probably help us to nominate a moderate man for Pres[iden]t,” was convinced that an “Anti-Slavery man per se cannot be elected; but a Tariff, River-and-Harbor, Pacific Railroad, Free-Homestead man may succeed although he is Anti-Slavery.”¹⁴⁷

The Tribune editor favored Edward Bates, a colorless Missouri politician far too conservative for most Republicans.¹⁴⁸ Some questioned Bates’s bona fides as a Republican, for he had been a leader of the American party in 1856.¹⁴⁹ His prim personality led some to refer to him as “old Madame Bates.”¹⁵⁰ Others deemed him “a man of very gentle, cordial nature, but not one of extraordinary brilliancy.”¹⁵¹ In Iowa, a Republican leader observed of the Missourian: “I go in for electing; but why go into the

¹⁴⁵ James Shepherd Pike to Israel Washburn, New York, 29 January 1860, Washburn Family Papers, Washburn Memorial Library, Norlands, Maine.

¹⁴⁶ Joseph Medill to Salmon P. Chase, Chicago, 30 October 1859, Chase Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Cf. same to same, Chicago, 30 November 1859, Chase Papers, Library of Congress.

¹⁴⁷ Horace Greeley to Schuyler Colfax, New York, 24 October 1859, Greeley Papers, New York Public Library; Greeley to Mrs. Rebekah M. Whipple, [April 1860], Jeter Allen Isely, Horace Greeley and the Republican Party, 1853-1861: A Study of the New York Tribune (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947), 266.

¹⁴⁸ Isely, Greeley and the Republican Party, 268-70.

¹⁴⁹ W. G. Coffin to Henry S. Lane, Washington, 13 February 1860, typed copy, Lane Papers, Indiana University; Andrew J. Stevens to E. D. Morgan, Des Moines, 28 February 1860, Edwin D. Morgan Papers, New York State Library, Albany; Marvin R. Cain, Lincoln’s Attorney General: Edward Bates of Missouri (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1965), 100-5.

¹⁵⁰ New York Herald, 16 May 1860.

¹⁵¹ Charles A. Dana, Recollections of the Civil War: With the Leaders at Washington and in the Field in the Sixties (New York: D. Appleton, 1898), 171.

bowels of Niggerdom for a Candidate.”¹⁵² A Minnesotan warned that nominating “an old ‘granny’ like McLean or Bates will be a perfect wet blanket to all our zealous, working, reliable Republicans.”¹⁵³

A more obvious beneficiary of John Brown’s raid was Lincoln, who seemed acceptably moderate compared to Seward and acceptably radical compared to Bates. Samuel Galloway told a Pennsylvania congressman that “Lincoln is the best man for us in the West, as all the elements of the opposition can be more fully united upon him than upon Bates.” Galloway said that while he personally “could go cordially for Bates,” some “strong Anti-Slavery men” in Ohio would not, “and we could not compensate for that loss, by accessions from the Democracy.” The “ultra class will vote for Lincoln, although they do not like what they term his too liberal views in regard to the Fugitive Slave law.”¹⁵⁴

CAMPAIGNING IN KANSAS

In the late autumn, Lincoln expanded his political horizons with a week-long visit to Kansas.¹⁵⁵ Upon arriving at Elwood after a long journey across Missouri a week before the scheduled December 6 election in that territory, he expressed relief that he was no longer in a Slave State: “I am indeed delighted to be with you,” he told his hosts. “I can

¹⁵² Fitz-Henry Warren to James Shepherd Pike, Burlington, Iowa, 2 and 20 February 1860, Pike Papers, University of Maine.

¹⁵³ George A. Nourse to Lyman Trumbull, St. Paul, 13 May 1860, Trumbull Papers, Library of Congress.

¹⁵⁴ Samuel Galloway to John Covode, Columbus, 10 March 1860, Covode Papers, Western Pennsylvania Historical Society, Pittsburgh.

¹⁵⁵ On Lincoln’s brief sojourn in Kansas, see Carol Dark Ayers, Lincoln and Kansas: Partnership for Freedom (Manhattan, Kansas: Sunflower University Press, 2001); Fred W. Brinkerhoff, “The Kansas Tour of Lincoln the Candidate,” Kansas Historical Quarterly 13 (1944-45): 294-307; and Charles Arthur Hawley, “Lincoln in Kansas,” Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society 42 (1949): 179-92.

now breathe freely.”¹⁵⁶ He gave speeches there and at Troy, Doniphan, Atchison, and Leavenworth, all located in a heavily Democratic region along the Missouri River.¹⁵⁷ In Elwood, he spoke informally to a crowd at the local hotel, even though he was “fatigued from the journey, and somewhat ‘under the weather.’” Alluding to the bloody history of Kansas over the past five years, he said that “both parties had been guilty of outrages,” that “he had his opinions as to the relative guilt of the parties, but he would not say who had been most to blame.” The mayhem was a direct result of the popular sovereignty doctrine applied to federal territories. As for John Brown, who in 1856 had achieved notoriety in Kansas by cold-bloodedly murdering five settlers in retaliation for proslavery attacks, he observed: “We have a means provided for the expression of our belief in regard to Slavery – it is through the ballot box – the peaceful method provided by the Constitution.” Referring to the October raid on Harper’s Ferry, he continued: “John Brown has shown great courage, rare unselfishness. . . . But no man, North or South, can approve of violence or crime.”¹⁵⁸

Wrapped in a buffalo robe to protect him from fierce cold winds that “rocked the crazy buildings, and cut the faces of travelers like a knife,” Lincoln traveled to Troy, a hamlet consisting of “a shabby frame court-house, a tavern, and a few shanties,” where he spoke to a meager crowd of forty. A journalist described the event: “With little gesticulation, and that little ungraceful, he began, not to declaim, but to talk. In a conversational tone, he argued the question of Slavery in the Territories, in the language

¹⁵⁶ Leavenworth, Kansas, correspondence, 18 August, New York Tribune, 30 August 1860.

¹⁵⁷ Brinkerhoff, “Kansas Tour of Lincoln,” 304.

¹⁵⁸ Elwood Free Press, 3 December 1859; speech at Elwood, 30 November or 1 December 1859, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:496; reminiscences of Daniel W. Wilder, Kansas City Star, 11 February 1909.

of an average Ohio or New York farmer.” He said that whenever “he heard a man avow his determination to adhere unswervingly to the principles of the Democratic party,” he was reminded of a lad in Illinois busily plowing. When he asked his father where to strike the next furrow, he was told: “Steer for that yoke of oxen standing at the further end of the field.” Just as the boy began to follow this instruction, the oxen started to move. The boy, in obedience to paternal instructions, followed them around the field and wound up plowing a circle rather than a straight line. A prominent slaveholder generously called Lincoln’s speech “the most able” and the “most logical” address he had ever heard, though he disagreed profoundly with its conclusions. The journalist Albert D. Richardson recalled that even though the speech was not “rhetorical,” “graceful,” or “eloquent,” it was nonetheless “very fascinating.”¹⁵⁹

On December 2 at Atchison, Lincoln spoke from a church pulpit about Southern threats to secede, declaring “that any attempt at secession would be treason.” John J. Ingalls recalled that “none who heard him can forget the impressive majesty of his appearance as he drew himself up, and, leaning forward with his arms extended, until they seemed to reach across the small auditorium, said: ‘If they attempt to put their threats into execution we will hang them as they have hanged old John Brown to-day.’”¹⁶⁰ After his speech, when told that a river in Nebraska was called “Weeping

¹⁵⁹ Albert D. Richardson, The Secret Service, the Field, the Dungeon, and the Escape (Hartford: American, 1865), 313-15; Brinkerhoff, “Kansas Tour of Lincoln,” 305.

¹⁶⁰ Reminiscences of Senator John Ingalls, Washington Post, 29 June 1890; reminiscences of Frank A. Root, Atchison Globe, 12 February 1914, quoted in Ayers, Lincoln and Kansas, 90. There is no contemporary account of Lincoln’s speech in Atchison because John A. Martin, the editor of the only newspaper in town, the Champion, “hated Lincoln.” As a strong supporter of Seward, he “could not brook the thought of any encouragement or countenance given by the people of Atchison to a rival candidate.” Reminiscences of Ed Howe, New York Times, 16 December 1923; reminiscences of Franklin G. Adams, Transactions of the Kansas State Historical Society 7 (1901-02): 539-40; Brinkerhoff, “Kansas Tour of Lincoln,” 306.

Water,” Lincoln made one of his cornier puns: “You remember the laughing water up in Minnesota, called Minnehaha. Now, I think, this should be Minnebohoo.”¹⁶¹ Later, in conversation with the pro-slavery leader Benjamin F. Stringfellow, Lincoln said: “one of the arguments you Democrats used to present why Kansas should be a slave State was that no one but a ‘nigger’ could turn up the tough prairie sod. Now, in my time I have broken many acres of prairie sod, and under this argument the question recurs whether I am a white man or a ‘nigger.’”¹⁶² (Stringfellow allegedly considered Lincoln’s address “the greatest antislavery speech he ever heard.”)¹⁶³

The following day in Leavenworth, Lincoln again addressed the case of John Brown: “Old John Brown has just been executed for treason against a state. We cannot object, even though he agreed with us in thinking slavery wrong. That cannot excuse violence, bloodshed, and treason. It could avail him nothing that he might think himself right. So, if constitutionally we elect a [republican] President, and therefore you undertake to destroy the Union, it will be our duty to deal with you as old John Brown has been dealt with. We shall try to do our duty. We hope and believe that in no section will a majority so act as to render such extreme measures necessary.”¹⁶⁴ Still in Leavenworth two days later, he called any “attempt to identify the Republican party with the John Brown business” an “electioneering dodge.” A reporter noted that in “Brown’s

¹⁶¹ “Humors of the Day,” Harper’s Weekly, 28 April 1860; Reminiscences of Frank A. Root, Atchison Globe, 12 February 1914, quoted in Ayers, Lincoln and Kansas, 90; Richardson, Secret Service, 320. A similar version of the pun was given by Nebraska governor Alvin Saunders, Chicago Times-Herald, 20 October 1895.

¹⁶² John James Ingalls, “A Forgotten Chapter of History: Abraham Lincoln in Kansas in 1859,” New York Sun, 31 May 1891. Franklin A. Root recalled that Lincoln made these remarks in his speech at Atchison. Atchison Globe, 12 February 1914, quoted in Ayers, Lincoln and Kansas, 90.

¹⁶³ John A. Martin claimed that Stringfellow said this. Daniel Webster Wilder to George W. Martin, 22 April 1902, in Kansas State Historical Society Transactions 7 (1901-02): 536-37n.

¹⁶⁴ Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:502.

hatred of slavery the speaker sympathized with him. But Brown's insurrectionary attempt he emphatically denounced. He believed the old man insane, and had yet to find the first Republican who endorsed the proposed insurrection." Slave revolts were caused by slavery itself, Lincoln maintained; the Nat Turner uprising of 1831 could hardly be blamed on Republicans. The Democrats' complaint that Republicans would grant citizenship to blacks he scouted by arguing that the Democracy consisted of two elements, "original and unadulterated Democrats" and "Old line and eminently conservative Whigs." In the two states which Democrats cited to prove their case (New Hampshire and Massachusetts), laws enfranchising blacks were passed by Old Whigs and Democrats. The Wyandotte constitution, written by Kansas Republicans and ratified two months earlier, granted the suffrage to whites only.¹⁶⁵

Henry Villard, who had written so scathingly of Lincoln the year before, called this effort "the greatest address ever heard here."¹⁶⁶ Democrats objected to Lincoln's exclusive focus on slavery. "Is there no other issue in this wide country, but that of 'nigger'?" asked the Leavenworth Herald, which described the Illinoisan as "an imbecile old fogy of one idea; and that is – nigger, nigger, nigger."¹⁶⁷

Although Kansas Republicans were overwhelmingly pro-Seward, there was some talk of Lincoln for president. At Leavenworth, the Republican leader Abel Carter Wilder grabbed the speaker by the hand and announced, "Here comes the next President of the

¹⁶⁵ Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:503-4.

¹⁶⁶ Villard's dispatch quoted in A. B. MacDonald, "Lincoln Gave His 'Most Important Speech' in Kansas," Kansas City Star, 10 February 1929. Lincoln had encountered Villard by chance on a Kansas road. Villard, Memoirs, 1:134-35.

¹⁶⁷ Leavenworth Weekly Herald, 10 December 1859.

United States.”¹⁶⁸ Wilder, along with Daniel Anthony (brother of feminist leader Susan B. Anthony) and William Tholen, spent a cold evening with Lincoln in a room with a stove but no wood. When they resorted to some thick patent office reports for fuel, one of his companions asked Lincoln: “when you become President will you sanction the burning of government reports by cold men in Kansas territory?”

“Not only will I not sanction it, but I will cause legal action to be brought against the offenders,” Lincoln jested.¹⁶⁹

At dinner in the home of Mark Delahay, who had urged Lincoln to visit Kansas, the host announced to his half-dozen guests, “Gentlemen, I tell you Mr. Lincoln will be our next President.” Lincoln replied, “Oh, Delahay, hush.” Delahay protested: “I feel it, and I mean it.”¹⁷⁰ (At the Delahay home, Lincoln discussed Hanks family genealogy with his hostess, *nèe* Louisiana Hanks; they concluded that they were third cousins.)¹⁷¹

Lincoln remained in Kansas for the election on December 6. As he left Leavenworth for home, he seemed dispirited by the success of that town’s Democrats, who increased their majority over the last election despite his two speeches there. A Kansan sought to comfort him with the assurance that the Democrats’ margin of victory in Leavenworth County (1,404 to 997) would have been much larger “had he not aroused

¹⁶⁸ Unidentified clipping, reproducing the Washington correspondence by Ward Burlingame, n.d., *Kansas City Star*, [18 May 1893?], Lincoln Museum, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

¹⁶⁹ “Early Days of a War Eagle,” reminiscences of Daniel Anthony, *Kansas City Star*, 23 February 1902.

¹⁷⁰ Mary E. Delahay, “Judge Mark W. Delahay,” typescript, p. 5, William E. Barton Papers, University of Illinois. Earlier in the year Lincoln had turned down invitations to speak there and to intervene in the contest for the U.S. senatorship. Mark W. Delahay to Lincoln, Leavenworth, 8 February 1859, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress; Lincoln to Mark W. Delahay, Springfield, 4 March, 14 May and 17 October 1859, Basler, ed., *Collected Works of Lincoln*, 3:378-79, 489-90.

¹⁷¹ Letter by a daughter of Louisiana Hanks to [Caroline Hanks Hitchcock?], n.p., n.d., copied in “Hanks Family Notes,” vol. 1, p. 39, unpublished typescript, Hanks Family Papers, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston.

his sluggish, slumbering Abolition brethren.”¹⁷² He may have derived solace from the Republicans’ triumph in the territory as a whole.

Lincoln’s efforts in frigid, primitive Kansas testified to his devotion to the Republican cause. As a resident of Leavenworth observed, “There are but few statesmen who could have been forced to do the work in which Abraham Lincoln volunteered. In dead of Winter he left the comforts of an attractive home to couple his energies with those of a young people in a distant Territory battling for the RIGHT.” Speaking at small towns before audiences no larger than 200, he “paid the kindest deference to all inquiries, and seemed gratified at any interruptions that indicated interest in his ‘talk,’ as he was pleased to term his able and eloquent efforts.” Referring to those small crowds, he said: “I never stop to inquire as to the character or numbers of those likely to hear me. To accomplish a little good is more gratifying to me than to receive empty applause.” He refused all offers of compensation, saying that the organizers’ “satisfaction was more than a sufficient return for the little he had done.”¹⁷³

The Leavenworth Times sent Lincoln home with a verbal bouquet: “His short stay in Kansas has been full of significance. He has met a reception that would be extended to but few in the nation, and he has sown seed that cannot but be productive of great good.”¹⁷⁴ But six months later those seeds did not sprout into votes at the Republican national convention, where every Kansas delegate backed Seward on all ballots. Lincoln was “considered by the younger and more radical men as a conservative republican,”

¹⁷² St. Joseph correspondence by William H. Gill, 8 December, Leavenworth Weekly Herald, 10 December 1859.

¹⁷³ Leavenworth, Kansas, correspondence, 18 August, New York Tribune, 30 August 1860.

¹⁷⁴ Leavenworth Times, 7 December 1859, copied in the Leavenworth, Kansas, correspondence, 18 August, New York Tribune, 30 August 1860.

partly because his candidacy was championed by Delahay, “who came as near being a conservative democrat of that day as he could be, and remaining in affiliation with the republican party.”¹⁷⁵ A prominent Kansas historian believed that if Lincoln “had remained another week, he would have had the entire vote” of the Kansas delegation at the Chicago convention.¹⁷⁶ In March 1860, when asked for advice about where to settle, Lincoln told a friend: “If I went West, I think I would go to Kansas – to Leavenworth or Atchison. Both of them are, and will continue to be, fine growing places.”¹⁷⁷

COMBATTING FACTIONALISM AMONG ILLINOIS REPUBLICANS

Upon returning to Illinois, Lincoln found himself drawn into a nasty quarrel between two leading Republicans, Norman B. Judd and Long John Wentworth, a contretemps that threatened to endanger the party’s chances in 1860. Wentworth, a spiteful marplot, accused Judd of behaving treacherously toward Lincoln by supporting Trumbull in the senatorial contest of 1855, by bungling the campaign in 1858, and by championing Trumbull’s presidential bid in 1860. He also charged that Judd had misspent party funds and abused his power as state chairman in order to boost his own

¹⁷⁵ Reminiscences of Richard J. Hinton, Chicago Times-Herald, 17 November 1895. Hinton then worked for the Leavenworth Times. Delahay in fact had been an “ultra pro-slavery Democrat” in Alabama, then a Douglas Democrat upon moving to Kansas in 1855; later that year, in response to the depredations of the Missouri border ruffians, he became a convert to the free-state cause. John F. Snyder, “Hon. Mark W. Delahay,” manuscript dated Virginia, Illinois, 1 December 1903, Snyder Papers, Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield; Mary E. Delahay, “Judge Mark W. Delahay,” typescript, p. 2, William E. Barton Papers, University of Illinois.

¹⁷⁶ William E. Connelley to William E. Barton, Topeka, 10 February 1930, Barton Papers, University of Illinois.

¹⁷⁷ Lincoln to James W. Somers, Springfield, 17 March 1860, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 4:33. The previous year he praised Kansas to a Democratic editor in that territory. St. Joseph correspondence by William H. Gill, 8 December, Leavenworth Weekly Herald, 10 December 1859.

chances for the gubernatorial nomination.¹⁷⁸ (Other aspirants for the governorship included the bibulous Richard Yates, who was successful, and Leonard Swett. Judd lost in part because former Whigs, who dominated the party, resented his failure to support Lincoln for senator in 1855.)¹⁷⁹ When Lincoln’s close friends like David Davis and William H. Herndon echoed these charges, Judd grew angry. “I have slaved for L[incoln] . . . and that I should today be suffering amongst his friends by the charge of having cheated him, and he silent[,] is an outrage that I am not disposed to submit to,” he complained.¹⁸⁰ On December 1, Judd wrote Lincoln protesting his failure to refute those allegations and asking him to write a vindication.¹⁸¹ Lincoln denied that he had neglected to combat such gossip and said that Judd’s letter “has a tone of blame towards myself which I think is not quite just.” After all, Lincoln observed, you did vote for Trumbull in 1855, though “I think, and have said a thousand times, that was no injustice to me.” Lincoln added: “As to the charge of your intriguing for Trumbull against me, I believe as little of that as any other charge I do not understand Trumbull and myself to be rivals. You know I am pledged not to enter a struggle with him for the seat in the Senate now occupied by him; and yet I would rather have a full term in the Senate than in the Presidency.”¹⁸²

Wentworth’s anger at Judd evidently spilled over onto Lincoln. In Long John’s

¹⁷⁸ Don E. Fehrenbacher, Chicago Giant: A Biography of “Long John” Wentworth (Madison, Wisconsin: American History Research Center, 1957), 162-75; Don E. Fehrenbacher, “Lincoln and the Mayor of Chicago,” in Fehrenbacher, Lincoln in Text: Collected Essays (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987), 33-43.

¹⁷⁹ David Davis to [John Wentworth], Bloomington, 25 September 1859, O. M. Hatch Papers, Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield.

¹⁸⁰ Judd to Lyman Trumbull, Chicago, 1 and 6 December 1859, Trumbull Papers, Library of Congress.

¹⁸¹ Judd to Lincoln, Chicago, 1 and 11 December 1859, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress.

¹⁸² Lincoln to Judd, Springfield, 9 December 1859, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:505.

newspaper, the Chicago Democrat, no account of Lincoln's Ohio speeches appeared, though the Press and Tribune published them. David Davis urged Wentworth to run those addresses, explaining that in central Illinois, opponents of Judd "love Lincoln very much and wish to see him elevated." To achieve that elevation, he needed help, for his friends knew "that Lincoln has few of the qualities of a politician and that he cannot do much personally to advance his interests. They know him to be a guileless man and they think with many of the qualifications and talents for a statesman." Such friends were upset with Wentworth for failing to print Lincoln's September speeches.¹⁸³

On December 14, Lincoln wrote a defense of Judd, full of praise but cautiously worded so as not to antagonize Wentworth: "I have been, and still am, very anxious to take no part between the many friends, all good and true, who are mentioned as candidates for a Republican Gubernatorial nomination, but I can not feel that my own honor is quite clear, if I remain silent, when I hear any one of them assailed about matters of which I believe I know more than his assailants." He authorized publication of the letter, which appeared in late January 1860.¹⁸⁴

This was not Lincoln's only gesture as a peacemaker. When threatened by Judd with a libel suit, Wentworth asked Lincoln to represent him; he declined, offering instead to mediate the dispute.¹⁸⁵ He suggested that Wentworth withdraw charges impugning Judd's character and state that "I have made no reflection upon Mr Judd, morally,

¹⁸³ David Davis to [John Wentworth], Bloomington, 25 September 1859, Ozias M. Hatch Papers, Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield.

¹⁸⁴ Lincoln to George W. Dole, Gurdon S. Hubbard, and William H. Brown, Springfield, 14 December 1859, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:507-8; Chicago Press and Tribune, 30 January 1860. At Lincoln's suggestion, Judd had enlisted these three men to write Lincoln asking about the charges against Judd. Dole, Brown, and Hubbard to Lincoln, Chicago, 12 December 1859, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress.

¹⁸⁵ Wentworth to David Davis, Chicago, 19 February 1860, Davis Papers, Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield.

socially, pecuniarily, professionally, and in no other way, save politically, and if I have used any language capable of different construction I have not intended it & now retract it.” At the February meeting of the Republican State Central Committee in Springfield, Lincoln vainly tried to get the two antagonists together, recommending that they stop their press attacks on each other.¹⁸⁶ Judd complied, withdrawing his suit and supporting Wentworth’s successful bid for the Chicago mayoralty.¹⁸⁷ On the heels of that victory in March, Trumbull optimistically speculated that Wentworth’s opposition to Judd “would cease since the magnanimous support he has just rec[eive]d from Mr. Judd’s friends.”¹⁸⁸ But in fact, Long John, who resented Lincoln’s attempt to please all parties, fought fiercely and successfully to deny Judd the gubernatorial nomination.¹⁸⁹ David Davis found him “insane almost on the subject of Judd.”¹⁹⁰ The vindication may have pleased Judd but, Lincoln ruefully remarked: “Some folks are pretty bitter towards me” on account of it, for they interpreted it as an endorsement of Judd’s candidacy for the governorship.¹⁹¹

In late January 1860 at Springfield, Judd and Lincoln attended a caucus of leading

¹⁸⁶ Lincoln to Wentworth, Springfield, 9 February 1860, Roy P. Basler and Christian O. Basler, eds., Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln, Second Supplement, 1848-1865 (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1990) 18-19; Lincoln to Wentworth, Springfield, 13 February 1860, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, First Supplement, 48; David Davis to Lincoln, Bloomington, 21 February 1860, Davis Papers, Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield.

¹⁸⁷ Fehrenbacher, Chicago Giant, 174-75; Fehrenbacher, Prelude to Greatness, 150-51.

¹⁸⁸ Trumbull to Lincoln, Washington, 26 March 1860, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress.

¹⁸⁹ Fehrenbacher, Chicago Giant, 176-78; Wentworth to David Davis, Chicago, 25 and 27 February 1860, Davis Papers, Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield; Wentworth to Lincoln, Chicago, 21 April 1860; David Davis to Lincoln, Urbana, 23 April 1860, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress.

¹⁹⁰ David Davis to Lincoln, Danville, 5 May 1860, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress.

¹⁹¹ Lincoln to Judd, Springfield, 5 February 1860, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:516; James J. Ferree to Lincoln, Lebanon, Illinois, 21 February 1860; Samuel C. Parks to Lincoln, Lincoln, Illinois, 20 April 1860, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress.

Republicans who wished to boost Lincoln’s vice-presidential candidacy.¹⁹² Few of them thought he had a chance to head the national ticket, for, as Governor Bissell explained: “Lincoln is every thing that we can reasonably desire in a man, and a politician. Still, I do not suppose that many of our friends seriously expect to secure his nomination as candidate for the Presidency. In fact they would be very well satisfied, probably, if he could secure the 2d place on the ticket.”¹⁹³ (A Peoria Republican prophesied that with Lincoln as his vice-presidential running mate, Seward would be unbeatable.)¹⁹⁴ “Of course I sh[oul]d like it, if Lincoln could be nominated,” David Davis confided to a friend, “but I am afraid that is a foregone conclusion,” since “it would either be Mr Bates or Gov Seward.”¹⁹⁵ Some supporters believed it best to run him for governor in 1860, for the U.S. senate in 1864, and for president in 1868.¹⁹⁶

Throughout southern Illinois, Lincoln’s candidacy was regarded skeptically. Ben L. Wiley from Anna called Lincoln “a good, amiable and talented gentleman,” though not “the man for the times.”¹⁹⁷ Less flattering was an assessment from A. M. Blackburn of Jerseyville, who thought Lincoln “will not do at all. He has been twice beaten for

¹⁹² Accounts of this meeting differ. Whitney, who claims to have been in attendance, states that it occurred in January 1859. Henry C. Whitney, Life on the Circuit with Lincoln, ed. Paul M. Angle (Caldwell, Idaho: Caxton Printers, 1940), 98-99. A careful student of Lincoln’s life in this period concluded that it took place a year later. Baringer, Lincoln’s Rise to Power, 142-43; Baringer to Paul M. Angle, 22 July 1936, in Whitney, Life on the Circuit, ed. Angle, 99n. There is good reason to believe that Whitney was mistaken, though not every historian agrees with that assessment. See, for example, Ecelbarger, Great Comeback, 12-15.

¹⁹³ William H. Bissell to Salmon P. Chase, Springfield, 4 February 1860, Chase Papers, Library of Congress.

¹⁹⁴ George C. Bestor to O. M. Hatch, Peoria, 13 March 1860, Hatch Papers, Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield.

¹⁹⁵ David Davis to [Henry E. Dummer], Bloomington, 20 February 1860, David Davis Papers (Small Collection 374), Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield.

¹⁹⁶ Jeriah Bonham, Fifty Years’ Recollections (Peoria: J. W. Franks & Sons, 1883), 178-79; J[eriah] B[onham], “Recollections of Abraham Lincoln,” Chicago Tribune, 12 May 1895.

¹⁹⁷ Wiley to Lyman Trumbull, Anna, 10 January 1860, Lyman Trumbull Papers, Library of Congress.

Congress – He is not available – Nor do I think he has talent or standing for the place. Why he is named I cannot see.”¹⁹⁸ In March, Henry Barber, who chaired the Washington County Republican convention, said that “no one expects Lincoln to get the nomination.”¹⁹⁹ In December 1859, when Horace Greeley asked several leading Republicans in Quincy whom they supported for president, only one said Lincoln.²⁰⁰

The foremost spirit at the January meeting in Springfield, Jackson Grimshaw of Pittsfield, had been organizing Cameron-Lincoln clubs throughout Illinois and intended to win more backing for that effort. Judd “strongly opposed this action, saying the proper and only thing to do was to claim the Presidency for him [Lincoln] and nothing less.”²⁰¹ Judd was evidently persuasive, for Grimshaw asked Lincoln “if his name might be used at once in Connection with the Coming Nomination and election.” With “characteristic modesty,” Lincoln expressed doubt “whether he could get the Nomination even if he wished it and asked until the next morning to answer . . . whether his name might be announced as one who was to be a candidate for the office of President.” Leonard Swett accosted him, saying: “Now, see here, Lincoln, this is outrageous. We are trying to get you nominated for the presidency, and you are working right against us. Now you must stop it, and give us a chance.” Lincoln “laughed, and said it wasn’t serious enough to make any fuss about, but he promised he wouldn’t interfere if we were bound to put him

¹⁹⁸ A. M. Blackburn to Lyman Trumbull, Jerseyville, 3 February 1860, Lyman Trumbull Papers, Library of Congress.

¹⁹⁹ Henry Barber to Lyman Trumbull, Osborn, 5 March 1860, Lyman Trumbull Papers, Library of Congress.

²⁰⁰ Henry Asbury to K. K. Jones, Quincy, Illinois, 2 October 1882, copy, files of the Abraham Lincoln Association, Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield. In late December, Greeley, on his annual winter lecture tour, visited Quincy, where he discussed politics with Browning, Jonas, Wood, and others. A. Jonas to Lyman Trumbull, Quincy, 26 December 1859, Trumbull Papers, Library of Congress.

²⁰¹ Judd, interview with John G. Nicolay, Washington, 28 February 1876, Michael Burlingame, ed., An Oral History of Abraham Lincoln: John G. Nicolay’s Interviews and Essays (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1996), 46.

forward.” The following day he agreed to his friends’ request, but when they inquired if they might push for his nomination as vice president in case the presidential bid failed, he demurred, saying: “My name has been mentioned rather too prominently for the first place on the ticket for me to think of accepting the second.”²⁰² (Mary Lincoln shared her husband’s view of the vice presidency. When he told a friend that Iowa delegates to the Chicago Convention would cast most of their votes for him as president and all of them for him as vice president, “Mrs. Lincoln spoke up in a hard, bitter manner and said: ‘If you can not have the first place, you shall not have the second.’”)²⁰³ In the spring of 1859, when Elijah M. Haines, a Cameron supporter, informed him that friends might be able to win him the second place on the national ticket, Lincoln answered with a statement implying that the vice-presidency “was scarcely big enough for one who had aspired to a seat in the Senate of the United States.”²⁰⁴

Having authorized friends to promote his candidacy, Lincoln avoided offending his rivals or their supporters. On the evening of February 8, after the Republican State Central Committee had met, he conferred with Orville H. Browning, who opined that Edward Bates of Missouri would be the strongest Republican presidential candidate. Lincoln tactfully replied that “it is not improbable that by the time the National convention meets in Chicago he [Lincoln] may be of [the] opinion that the very best thing

²⁰² Reminiscences of Swett in New York correspondence by “Jerome,” 6 February, Indiana Journal (Indianapolis), 10 February 1879; Jackson Grimshaw to William H. Herndon, Quincy, 28 April 1866, Wilson and Davis, eds., Herndon’s Informants, 247; reminiscences of Thomas J. Henderson, Princeton, Illinois, 28 October 1895, Ida M. Tarbell Papers, Allegheny College.

²⁰³ Hawkins Taylor, “Early Reminiscences,” Peoria Weekly Journal, 1895, in Emma Siggins White, Genealogy of the Descendants of John Walker of Wigton, Scotland ([Kansas City, Mo.]: Tiernan-Dart, 1902), in Rufus Rockwell Wilson, ed., Intimate Memories of Lincoln (Elmira, N.Y.: Primavera, 1945), 11; Andrew J. Stevens to E. D. Morgan, Des Moines, 27 March 1860, Edwin D. Morgan Papers, New York State Library, Albany.

²⁰⁴ Reminiscences of E. M. Haines, in Francis Fisher Browne, The Every-Day Life of Abraham Lincoln (New York: N. D. Thompson, 1886), 326-27.

than can be done will be to nominate Mr Bates.” Browning added that Richard Yates and David L. Phillips “also think Mr Bates stronger in this State than any other man who has been named.”²⁰⁵ (In fact, Yates preferred the Missourian to Lincoln, as did some other residents of Jacksonville, one of whom reported in December 1859 that “there is an almost unanimous feeling in this county at present in favor of Bates” and that the “movement in favor of Lincoln, which is strong at Springfield, finds no response at all here.”²⁰⁶ From Charleston, Lincoln’s friend Thomas A. Marshall acknowledged that “Bates can get 100 votes in this county more than Lincoln can.”²⁰⁷ Browning told a Bates operative that “prominent men who are for Mr. Bates as their ‘First Choice’ are still inclined to give Lincoln a complimentary vote on the first ballot, and this may occur. I hope not. It is childish and may do a great deal of harm.”²⁰⁸

Alarmed by his conversation with Browning, Lincoln the next day wrote to Judd: “I am not in a position where it would hurt much for me not to be nominated on the national ticket, but I am where it would hurt some for me to not get the Illinois delegates. What I expected when I wrote the letter [vindicating Judd]. . . is now happening. Your discomfited assailants are most bitter against me; and they will, for revenge upon me, lay to the Bates egg in the South, and to the Seward egg in the North, and go far towards

²⁰⁵ Theodore Calvin Pease and James G. Randall, eds., The Diary of Orville Hickman Browning (2 vols.; Springfield: Illinois State Historical Library, 1925-33), 1:395. Browning’s reasons for supporting Bates are spelled out in his diary entry for 17 May 1860, ibid., 1:407-8.

²⁰⁶ Jack Nortrup, “Lincoln and Yates: The Climb to Power,” Lincoln Herald 73 (1971): 252; H. J. Atkins to Lyman Trumbull, Jacksonville, 28 December 1859, Trumbull Papers, Library of Congress.

²⁰⁷ Marshall to Lyman Trumbull, Charleston, 17 February 1860, Lyman Trumbull Papers, Library of Congress.

²⁰⁸ Browning to Charles Gibson, Springfield, 8 February 1860, in Ecelbarger, Great Comeback, 122.

squeezing me out in the middle with nothing. Can you not help me a little in this matter, in your end of the vineyard?”²⁰⁹

Judd was willing to help in many ways. A week after Lincoln wrote him, the Chicago Press and Tribune, to which Judd had close ties, abandoned its neutrality by heartily endorsing Lincoln for president.²¹⁰ The paper lauded him as “the peer of any man yet named,” a “gentleman of unimpeachable purity in private life” and “great breadth and great acuteness of intellect,” with “executive capacity,” who was “more certain to carry Illinois and Indiana than any one else” and had political antecedents that would “commend him heartily to the support of Pennsylvania and New Jersey.”²¹¹ Shortly thereafter Judd asked Lincoln: “You saw what the Tribune said about you – was it satisfactory?”²¹² In April 1860, Judd suggested to Lyman Trumbull that “a quiet combination between the delegates from New Jersey Indiana and Illinois be brought about – including Pennsylvania.” Together they could stop Seward, but they must maintain a low profile. “It will not do to make a fight for delegates distinctly Lincoln,” but he could get at least the unanimous backing of the Illinois delegation.²¹³ Judd and other friends of Lincoln thought it best not to promote his candidacy vigorously but rather to let the supporters of Seward, Chase, Bates, and Cameron fight among themselves; then at the proper time, when a strong push was to be made, he would face no embittered

²⁰⁹ Lincoln to Judd, Springfield, 9 February 1860, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:517.

²¹⁰ Alfred L. Lorenz, Jr., “Lincoln, Medill and the Republican Nomination of 1860,” Lincoln Herald 68 (1966): 199-205.

²¹¹ Chicago Press and Tribune, 16 February 1860.

²¹² Judd to Lincoln, Chicago, 21 February 1860, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress.

²¹³ Judd to Trumbull, Chicago, 2 April 1860, Trumbull Papers, Library of Congress.

opponents.²¹⁴

Echoing the Press and Tribune's editorial, a Washington dispatch dated February 20 by Joseph Medill speculated that Lincoln would be more electable than the conservative Bates or the radical Seward: "Does not common sense whisper in every man's ear that the middle ground is the ground of safety?" Medill heard "the name of Lincoln mentioned for President in Washington circles, ten times as often as it was one month ago. The more the politicians look over the field in search of an available [i.e., electable] candidate, the more they are convinced that 'Old Abe' is the man to win the race with. If the States of the Northwest shall unite upon him, and present his name to the Chicago Convention, there is a strong probability that he will receive the nomination, and as certain as he is nominated he will be President."²¹⁵ This article, Medill recalled, annoyed the New York senator, who "'blew me up' tremendously for having disappointed him – 'gone back on him' – and preferring that 'prairie statesman,' as he called Lincoln." Seward considered the article "a personal insult" and boasted "that he was the chief teacher of the principles of the Republican party before Lincoln was known other than as a country lawyer of Illinois."²¹⁶ (Medill was not the only target of Seward's ire; shortly before the Chicago Convention, the New Yorker complained to Massachusetts Senator Henry Wilson: "You have done more against my nomination than any member of the Senate.")²¹⁷

²¹⁴ Koerner, Memoirs, 2:80.

²¹⁵ Washington correspondence, 20 February, Chicago Press and Tribune, 27 February 1860.

²¹⁶ Joseph Medill to Frederic Bancroft, n.p., 18 February 1896, Frederic Bancroft, The Life of William H. Seward (2 vols.; New York: Harper and Brothers, 1900), 1:531n.

²¹⁷ F. B. Sanborn, Recollections of Seventy Years (2 vols.; Boston: Gorham Press, 1909), 1:26.

Seward's men tried to thwart Lincoln's chances by puffing him for the vice presidency and by arguing that since both men were equally radical, the more prominent and long-serving Seward should head the ticket.²¹⁸ They also warned that if Seward were passed over, radical Republicans in New York and New England might bolt the party and thus doom its chances.²¹⁹

When not quarrelling with Wentworth, Judd was busy trying to persuade his colleagues on the Republican National Committee to hold the party's convention in Chicago. It was Lincoln's good fortune to have a man like Judd aiding his cause. Known as a shrewd manager, "fertile in expedients," "sly, cat-like, and mysterious," he "was jovial, companionable, and popular with the boys who looked after the primaries and nomination conventions."²²⁰

Lincoln was more concerned about the timing than the location of convention. In mid-December, he told Judd that "some of our friends here, attach more consequence to getting the National convention in our State than I did, or do. Some of them made me promise to say so to you. As to the time, it must certainly be after the Charleston fandango [i.e., the Democratic national convention scheduled for April]; and I think, within bounds of reason, the later the better."²²¹ Judd found the National Committee divided: Seward's men wanted the convention held in New York, Chase's men argued for

²¹⁸ Mark W. Delahay to Lincoln, Leavenworth, Kansas, 19 April 1860; Lyman Trumbull to Lincoln, Washington, 24 April 1860, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress.

²¹⁹ James Harlan to Samuel J. Kirkwood, Washington, 12 February 1860, Kirkwood Papers, Iowa State Archives, Des Moines.

²²⁰ Horace White, The Life of Lyman Trumbull (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1913), 149.

²²¹ Lincoln to Judd, Springfield, 14 December 1859, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:509.

Cleveland, and supporters of Bates insisted on St. Louis.²²² Slyly Judd suggested that since Illinois had no prominent candidate for the presidency, Chicago should be chosen as a neutral compromise site.²²³ On December 21, aided by George G. Fogg of New Hampshire, Judd was able to persuade the rest of the committee to accept his proposal, thus improving Lincoln's chances for the nomination.²²⁴ "The friends of Lincoln are highly pleased with the selection of Chicago as the place for holding the Republican National Convention," reported the New York Herald. "Many of them now declare that his nomination is a foregone conclusion."²²⁵ An Iowa newspaper called Chicago's designation as the convention site "a stroke of policy" by Lincoln's allies and predicted that it "will doubtless place him upon the ticket for Vice President."²²⁶ In February, the committee rescheduled the opening of the convention, originally slated for June 13, to May 16 in order to allow more time for organizing the campaign.²²⁷ They believed that a whole month "is entirely too long to allow the enemy to be in the field without striking a blow."²²⁸ Seward's Illinois supporters objected to changing the time of the convention,

²²² St. Louis came within one vote of being chosen. Charles Gibson, typescript of an autobiography, p. 37, Gibson Papers, Missouri Historical Society.

²²³ Koerner, Memoirs, 2:80.

²²⁴ George G. Fogg to Lincoln, Washington, 2 February 1861, draft, Fogg Papers, New Hampshire Historical Society; Baringer, "Campaign Technique in Illinois," 209-10; Koerner, Memoirs, 2:80; James A. Rawley, Edwin D. Morgan, Merchant in Politics (New York: Columbia University Press, 1955), 104-5.

²²⁵ Chicago correspondence, n.d., New York Herald, n.d., copied in the Illinois State Journal (Springfield), 18 January 1860.

²²⁶ Sioux City Register, 31 December 1859.

²²⁷ James T. Sherman to E. D. Morgan, Trenton, 10, 20, 30 January 1860, Edwin D. Morgan Papers, New York State Library, Albany; E. D. Morgan to Gideon Welles, Albany, 26 January, 23, 28 February 1860, Welles Papers, Library of Congress; New York Tribune, 29 February 1860.

²²⁸ John Law to Richard W. Thompson, Evansville, 27 February 1860, Richard W. Thompson Collection, Lincoln Museum, Fort Wayne, Indiana. E. D. Morgan received many letters urging this change. See, for example, Lucius B. Cornius and several other Bostonians to E. D. Morgan, Boston, 24 January 1860, Edwin D. Morgan Papers, New York State Library, Albany.

arguing that the proposal was designed to thwart the New York senator and improve the prospects of Chase and other potential nominees.²²⁹

COOPER UNION SPEECH

Improving Lincoln's chances even more was an opportunity to speak in New York and thus become better known in the East. One day in October 1859, he rushed into his office brandishing an invitation to lecture at Plymouth Church in Brooklyn, where the renowned minister, Henry Ward Beecher, presided.²³⁰ The topic could be virtually anything. An organizer of the lecture series explained to William H. Bailhache, co-editor of the Illinois State Journal, that Lincoln "must come. We want to hear a speech from him, such a one as he delivered in Cincinnati [in September] would be perfectly satisfactory. He may speak on any subject . . . the utmost latitude may be observed."²³¹

Some of Lincoln's friends, among them Jesse K. Dubois, urged him to decline, arguing "that the contrast of his sledge hammer style with the polished language of the best Eastern orators would be disastrous." Lincoln, who shared such misgivings, said: "I don't know whether I shall be adequate to the situation; I have never appeared before such an audience as may possibly assemble to hear me." But Bailhache maintained "that the people were weary of polished platitudes and many were ready and wishing for strong

²²⁹ S. L. Baker, E. S. Williams, George Schneider, and Charles L. Wilson to E. D. Morgan, Chicago, 14 January 1860, and S. L. Baker to Morgan, Chicago, 1 February 1860, Edwin D. Morgan Papers, New York State Library, Albany.

²³⁰ Wilson and Davis, eds., Herndon's Lincoln, 273; James A. Briggs to Lincoln, New York, 12 October 1859, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress.

²³¹ S. M. Pettingill to William H. Bailhache, New York, 12 October 1859, Lincoln Collection, Brown University.

meat.”²³² Seconding Bailhache was Herndon, who opined that he “could see the meaning of the move by the New York men, [and] thought it was a move against Seward.”²³³ (In fact, a leading Chase operative, James A. Briggs, had extended the invitation, and Chase men, eager to stop Seward or any other rival of their hero, had earlier talked of boosting Lincoln as a way to head off a Bates movement. Seward was told that “Mr. Lincoln was brought to New York to divide your strength.”)²³⁴

Months later, Lincoln said that he had intended “to give a lecture on some other than a political subject, but as the time approached he could not find leisure to prepare a satisfactory discourse, and took up with politics, as being a topic with which he was more familiar.”²³⁵ So Lincoln proposed to Briggs that in late February he give a political address.²³⁶ That was too late for the lecture series, which ran in October and November,

²³² Lawrence Weldon, in Rice, ed., Reminiscences of Lincoln, 207; William H. Bailhache to John Hay, Los Angeles, 4 April 1887, copy, Hay Papers, Library of Congress.

²³³ Herndon to Ward Hill Lamon, Springfield, 6 March 1870, Lamon Papers, Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

²³⁴ James A. Briggs to Lincoln, New York, 12 October 1859, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress; James M. Ashley to Salmon P. Chase, New York, 26 August 1859, Chase Papers, Library of Congress; Thurlow Weed Barnes, Memoir of Thurlow Weed (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1884), 269. Briggs had been asked by Joseph H. Richards (brother of Mrs. Theodore Tilton), S. M. Pettingill, and S. W. Tubbs to invite Thomas Corwin and Lincoln to participate in a series of lectures to be given that winter at Plymouth Church. S. M. Pettingill to William Bailhache, New York, 26 May 1860, copy, Abraham Lincoln Association files, Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield; S. M. Pettingill to William Bailhache, New York, 12 October 1859, Lincoln Collection, Brown University; James A. Briggs to the editor, Saco, Maine, 13 August, New York Evening Post, 16 August 1867. Briggs allegedly had suggested to Richards et al. that they invite Lincoln. Edwin A. Studwell, “As I Remember Lincoln,” Mount Pleasant News, North Tarrytown, N.Y., 10 February 1899, copy, Truman H. Bartlett Papers, Boston University. Henry C. Bowen claimed that he had suggested the name of Lincoln to Richards, his business associate. Lincoln had done legal work for Bowen. Henry C. Bowen to John Hay, New York, 13 November 1890, Hay Papers, Brown University. While Briggs preferred Chase, he was for any man with strong antislavery credentials, including Wade, Seward, or Lincoln. Briggs to Benjamin F. Wade, New York, 22 February 1860, Wade Papers, Library of Congress. In 1864, Briggs enthusiastically backed Chase. Briggs to Chase, New York, 8 June 1864, Chase Papers, Library of Congress.

²³⁵ Springfield correspondence, 4 September, New York Evening Post, 8 September 1860.

²³⁶ Briggs to Lincoln, New York, 1 November 1859, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress; Lincoln to Briggs, Danville, 13 November 1859, and to Cornelius F. McNeill, Springfield, 6 April 1860, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:494, 4:38.

so the organizers approached the New York Republican Executive Committee. After the group showed no interest, Briggs offered to help underwrite Lincoln's appearance.²³⁷

Later, Briggs and his friends, fearing that they would not be able to cover expenses (\$350), turned Lincoln's appearance over to the Young Men's Republican Union of New York.²³⁸ Anti-Seward forces in that organization – whose advisory board included the poet-editor William Cullen Bryant, William Curtis Noyes, Hamilton Fish, and Horace Greeley – were employing the Union as a forum to showcase alternatives to Seward. Frank Blair, who was championing Bates, and Cassius M. Clay, a long-shot presidential hopeful, had already addressed it.²³⁹

In preparation for his New York appearance, Lincoln conducted thorough research in order to rebut Douglas's Harper's Magazine article more systematically than he had done the previous year in Ohio.²⁴⁰ Assiduously he pored over his copy of Jonathan

²³⁷ S. M. Pettingill to the editor, Brooklyn, 15 August, New York Tribune, 30 August 1889. Pettingill, along with S. W. Tubbs and Joseph H. Richards, had organized the lecture series.

²³⁸ Charles C. Nott to Lincoln, New York, 9 February 1860, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress; S. M. Pettingill to the editor, Brooklyn, 15 August, New York Tribune, 30 August 1889; Charles C. Nott to Cephas Brainerd, Washington, 16 March 1896, Gilder-Lehrman Collection, New-York Historical Society; undated memo (a few years before 1872) by James A. Briggs, enclosed in Briggs to Ward Hill Lamson, New York, 20 March 1872, in Ward Hill Lamson, Recollections of Abraham Lincoln, 1847-1865, ed. Dorothy Lamson Teillard (2nd ed.; Washington: the editor, 1911), 300-302. At first reluctant, the Union agreed to sponsor the event if Briggs would help pay the bill in case the admission charge of 25¢ failed to raise enough money to cover it. James A. Briggs to the editor, Saco, Maine, 13 August 1867, New York Evening Post, 16 August 1867; undated letter to the editor of the New York Evening Post, unidentified newspaper clipping [ca. 1887], Lincoln Museum, Fort Wayne, Indiana. The Plymouth Committee declined a proposition to buy 400 tickets at 25¢ each and have the Republican Union cover the expenses. So it was decided to charge an admission fee of 25¢ to cover expenses. Letter to the editor by a member of the committee of the Plymouth Course, n.p., n.d., New York Times, 2 December 1861. Briggs said he offered to pay one quarter of the shortfall if the ticket receipts did not cover expenses. As it turned out, the receipts exceeded expenses by \$1. Annotation by Briggs in volume 2, p. 188, of the Briggs Scrapbooks, Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland.

²³⁹ Charles C. Nott to John P. Hale, New York, 8 March 1860, Hale Papers, New Hampshire Historical Society; Cephas Brainerd to Benjamin F. Wade, New York, 20 and 27 February 1860, Wade Papers, Library of Congress; Reinhard H. Luthin, The First Lincoln Campaign (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1944), 55-58, 114-16; Allan Nevins, The Emergence of Lincoln (2 vols.; New York: Scribner's, 1950), 2:183.

²⁴⁰ Nevins, Emergence of Lincoln, 2:184.

Elliot's Debates on the Adoption of the Federal Constitution, and at the Illinois State Library he consulted numerous volumes of political history and congressional proceedings. Despite his painstaking efforts, he left Springfield for New York with some trepidation, which his friends shared.²⁴¹

Accompanying him on the train journey was his neighbor, Mrs. Stephen Smith and her baby, to whom Lincoln “was utterly devoted.” She had been planning to visit her family in Philadelphia and, at Lincoln’s request, delayed her trip so that they could travel together. The infant, according to a friend of the Smiths, “satisfied something which he [Lincoln] was always shy about explaining.” In Springfield he often “would hoist the youngster over his shoulder and carry him . . . so gently that he slept almost continuously, with his head against Lincoln’s neck.” On the way to New York, Lincoln seemed “engrossed within himself,” but whenever the train paused at stations, he would snap out of his preoccupied state, eagerly take up the child in his arms, and walk him about the platform. He would return to the car “refreshed, only to drop again into reveries that clouded his face.”²⁴²

En route from Philadelphia to New York, Lincoln was surprised to read in a newspaper that he would be speaking at the Cooper Institute in New York instead of the Plymouth Church in Brooklyn.²⁴³ Feeling the need to revise his speech to suit the audience of New York’s “better, but busier citizens,” who “generally attend lectures and rarely ever attend political meetings” (also described as “intelligent but inert individuals

²⁴¹ Wilson and Davis, eds., Herndon’s Lincoln, 274.

²⁴² Interview with Mrs. Stephen Smith, Bloomington Pantagraph, 19 February 1895; Elizabeth Irons Folsom, “New Stories of Abraham Lincoln,” The American Magazine 96 (July 1923): 47, 120-22.

²⁴³ G[eorge] B. L[incoln] to the editor, n.p., n.d., New York Tribune, 15 June 1860; Lincoln to Cornelius F. McNeill, Springfield, 6 April 1860, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 4:38.

usually called ‘respectable citizens’” and as “the best sort of citizens”), Lincoln devoted himself to that task.²⁴⁴ He turned down the offer of merchant Henry C. Bowen to stay at his home, explaining that “he was afraid he had made a mistake in accepting the call to New York, and feared his lecture would not prove a success. He said he would have to give his whole time to it, otherwise he was sure he would make a failure, in which case he would be very sorry for the young men who had kindly invited him.” The following day, after the two men had attended services at Plymouth Church, Bowen repeated his offer of hospitality, and once again Lincoln declined, saying: “I am not going to make a failure at the Cooper Institute to-morrow night, if I can possibly help it. I am anxious to make a success of it on account of the young men who have so kindly invited me here. It is on my mind all the time Please excuse me and let me go to my room at the hotel, lock the door, and there think about my lecture.”²⁴⁵

On Monday, February 27, Lincoln’s Illinois friend Mason Brayman, who was visiting New York on business, reported that he and Lincoln were lodging at the same hotel and had “spent much time together.” At dinner that day, Lincoln “was waited upon by some admirers,” including William M. Evarts, to whom he introduced Brayman “as a Democrat, but one so good tempered that he and I could ‘eat out of the same rack without

²⁴⁴ Charles C. Nott to Lincoln, New York, 9 February 1860, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress, and to John P. Hale, New York, 8 March 1860, Hale Papers, New Hampshire Historical Society; Richard C. McCormick’s reminiscences, New York, 29 April, New York Evening Post, 3 May 1865; Cephas Brainerd to N. P. Banks, New York, 2 March 1860, Banks Papers, Library of Congress.

²⁴⁵ Bowen in William Hayes Ward, ed., Abraham Lincoln, Tributes from His Associates: Reminiscences of Soldiers, Statesmen, and Citizens (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1895), 28-29; recollections of Bowen’s son Clarence, given to D. E. Wheeler, in Wheeler to Truman H. Bartlett, New York, 18 April 1908, Bartlett Papers, Boston University; Stephen M. Griswold to D. E. Wheeler, Brooklyn, 15 May 1908, ibid.; Newell Dwight Hillis to D. E. Wheeler, Brooklyn, 10 April 1908, ibid.; interview with Stephen M. Griswold in “Lincoln at Plymouth,” unidentified, undated newspaper clipping, Lincoln Museum, Fort Wayne, Indiana; Francis B. Carpenter, Six Months at the White House with Abraham Lincoln: The Story of a Picture (New York: Hurd and Houghton, 1867), 134. George B. Lincoln allegedly accompanied Lincoln on his visit to Plymouth Church. Richard C. McCormick’s reminiscences, New York, 29 April, New York Evening Post, 3 May 1865.

a pole between us.’’²⁴⁶ At the restaurant, Lincoln asked his waiter to translate the French menu. Even in English, the names of the dishes were unfamiliar to him; finally, when the waiter mentioned beans, “Lincoln’s face brightened and he made a quick gesture. ‘Hold on there, bring me some of those – some beans. I know beans.’”²⁴⁷ After their meal, Richard C. McCormick and George B. Lincoln called “to take him up Broadway ‘to show him the fine buildings.’”²⁴⁸ (Lincoln may have been startled by the hustle and bustle of Broadway, so different from Springfield. “The great characteristic of New York is din and excitement,” according to The Stranger’s Guide for the City of New York. “Everything is done in a hurry. All is intense anxiety. It is especially noticeable in the leading thoroughfare of Broadway where the noise and confusion caused by the incessant passing and repassing of some 18,000 vehicles a day, render it a Babel scene.”)²⁴⁹ After this sightseeing interlude, there “came a delegation from Patterson and Orange, in New Jersey, begging him to go over and make speeches in those places.” Brayman told a friend, “you perceive the fame of Ancient Abraham has extended even into foreign lands.’’²⁵⁰

Later, members of the Young Men’s Republican Union visited Lincoln, who was wearing a black suit “which must have had 5,000 wrinkles in it.” Lincoln received them

²⁴⁶ Mason Brayman to W. H. Bailhache, New York, 27 February 1860, Lincoln Collection, Chicago History Museum; Ada Brayman Bailhache to Truman H. Bartlett, Coronado, Colorado, 3 August 1912, Bartlett Papers, Boston University.

²⁴⁷ Undated reminiscences of Mrs. Theodore Gowdy (nèe Mary Brayman), daughter of Mason Brayman, Ida M. Tarbell Papers, Allegheny College; undated, unidentified newspaper clipping, Lincoln Scrap Books, Judd Stewart Collection, Huntington Library, San Marino, California (perhaps “Venerable Men at Dinner” in an undated issue of the Kansas City Star.)

²⁴⁸ Richard C. McCormick’s reminiscences, New York, 29 April, New York Evening Post, 3 May 1865.

²⁴⁹ The Stranger’s Guide for the City of New York, 1860 ed., quoted in Andrew A. Freeman, Abraham Lincoln Goes to New York (New York: Coward-McCann, 1960), 18.

²⁵⁰ Mason Brayman to W. H. Bailhache, New York, 27 February 1860, Lincoln Collection, Chicago History Museum.

“cordially, apologizing for the awkward and uncomfortable appearance he made in his new suit, and expressing himself surprised at being in New York. His form and manner were indeed very odd,” and they “thought him the most unprepossessing public man we had ever met.” (Lincoln said that the day of the speech “was one of the loneliest days of his life.” He “was perfectly conscious that the club committee who came to see him at the Astor House & took him around to see the sights, were over[ly] critical of his entire appearance.” He felt the same way “when on the platform of the hall before he spoke.”)²⁵¹ He visited the studio of Mathew Brady, who took his photograph. Lincoln called it his “shadow.” As Brady recalled, “I had great trouble in making a natural picture. When I got him before the camera I asked him if I might not arrange his collar, and with that he began to pull it up.”

“‘Ah,’ said Lincoln, ‘I see you want to shorten my neck.’

“‘That’s just it,’ I answered, and we both laughed.”²⁵²

The resulting three-quarter-length portrait is remarkable. Years later Truman H. Bartlett, a noted sculptor, wrote that the photo captures “Lincoln’s tall & well made body, vivified by his kind & undemonstrative nature that enables him to stand with perfect ease, unconscious & dignified force, making this portrait one of unique distinction.” Bartlett

²⁵¹ Charles C. Nott told this to Truman H. Bartlett. Bartlett to Charles L. McLellan, Chocorua, New Hampshire, 26 August 1908, Lincoln Collection, Brown University. Lincoln told Herndon that “for once in his life he was greatly abashed over his personal appearance. The new suit of clothes which he donned on his arrival in New York were ill-fitting garments and showed the creases made while packed in the valise; and for a long time after he began his speech and before he became warmed up, he imagined that the audience noticed the contrast between his western clothes and the neat-fitting suit of Mr. Bryant and others who sat on the platform.” Wilson and Davis, eds., Herndon’s Lincoln, 274n. Henry C. Whitney wrote that Lincoln’s suit “did not fit him – no ready-made suit ever did – so, in order to make the trousers appear long enough they were loosely braced, with the result of bagginess about the waist and thighs. In order that the waist of the coat should be near the right place, a garment was chosen in which the tails were too short, and the rest of it was too full.” Henry C. Whitney, Lincoln the Citizen (New York: Current Literature, 1907), 280.

²⁵² Roy Meredith, Mr. Lincoln’s Cameraman, Mathew B. Brady (New York: Scribner’s, 1946), 59.

was sure that “no monarch ever stood with more natural grace & dignity.” To the sculptor’s eye, it produced “the extraordinary effect so often described by the one word, ‘presence,’” illustrating what one observer called Lincoln’s “unassuming air of superiority,” and which “gave a character to his personality such as that possessed by no other man.” Bartlett detected in Lincoln a “self-protective reserve” and concluded that the “expression of the face is so different from any other of the beardless portraits that unless one is very familiar with their uniform boney construction one would almost hesitate to assert that they were of the same person.” Lincoln’s eyes had “an especially dreamy, strange certainty” and “a self-reliant expectation,” while the face and body radiated “a touch of a sense of superiority” as if “to say, ‘I am easily the master of the occasion.’” To Bartlett, the photo was “a perfect representation of unpretentious, manly confidence, noble in the grace & strength of simplicity.”²⁵³

Lincoln allegedly declared that the Brady photograph made him president, but the source of that quote is highly suspect. Moreover, as one of his leading supporters noted, the “pictures of Lincoln were most wretched affairs and the less said about them the better. I do not think or know that they helped to elect him in any way. The campaign had far more important interests at stake.”²⁵⁴ It is also doubtful that the speech made him president, for he was much better known for his 1858 debates with Douglas than for his oratory in New York.

²⁵³ Several undated notes by Bartlett, Bartlett Papers, Boston University.

²⁵⁴ Truman H. Bartlett, typescript “The Cooper Institute Portrait of Abraham Lincoln,” p. 7, Bartlett Papers, Boston University. This is a draft of his article, “An Old Likeness of Lincoln: An Analysis of the Man as He Appears in the Cooper Institute Portrait,” Harper’s Weekly, 10 February 1912, 9-10, which does not contain this quote.

And yet, as a friend of his remarked, “Lincoln was by no means indifferent to the value” of photographs. Indeed, his awareness of their utility helps “explain why so many sunlight pictures were made of him” in the 1850s. It was “one of the innumerable ways by which he got close to the ‘plain people.’ I am sure that Mr. Lincoln knew that his face had a peculiar power and that it was worth while to have it known in this quiet but unforgettable way. Remember that Mr. Lincoln was always looking ahead, thought often appearing very indifferent, to what, in ordinary judgment was important, and he never missed an occasion, however slight, that was likely to affect his future. His attention to little things, especially those of a kindly nature, can never be overestimated, and nothing, however trivial, escaped his notice. One could almost say that his whole life was made up of details that definitely affected him.”

Since the early 1850s Lincoln had been accommodating to photographers. At that time, as a friend recalled, “itinerant maker of tintypes and ambrotypes first began to travel in the west, going from town to town in a large covered vehicle much like an old-fashioned horse car.” Lincoln “met these traveling picture makers constantly as he journeyed over his law circuit, and his admirers and friends, (for he made them every step he took) were quick to take advantage of the chance to get his picture.” At first, Lincoln “was very sensitive” about having his picture taken, for “he was very well aware that he was regarded as an awkward and dreadfully homely man, and this made him extremely timid, if not painfully bashful, causing him to fear that he would be judged by his outside appearance.” In time, however, “he became certain that his odd looks and actions were not the standard by which he was judged and esteemed.” Then “he would sit for his picture as a pleasure to himself, as well as to gratify any friend who wanted it, and he

followed this habit as long as he lived.” But “he never ceased to wonder why any one should want ‘my homely face.’”²⁵⁵

At Brady’s gallery Lincoln met the worldly historian George Bancroft, a model of sophistication compared with the “bluff and awkward” Lincoln, whose “every utterance [was] an apology for his ignorance of metropolitan manners and customs.” He told the eminent author that he was on his way to New England to visit his son, “who, if report be true, already knows much more than his father.”²⁵⁶ Lincoln also met the famous attorney Joseph H. Choate, who recalled that “as he talked to me before the meeting he seemed ill at ease, with that sort of apprehension which a young man might feel before presenting himself to a new and strange audience, whose critical disposition he dreaded.”²⁵⁷

In urging its readers to attend Lincoln’s speech, the New York Tribune said the Illinoisan’s addresses were characterized by “clearness and candor of statement, a chivalrous courtesy to opponents, and a broad genial humor.”²⁵⁸ Fifteen hundred New Yorkers took the Tribune’s advice, filling about two thirds of the Cooper Institute’s seats. There William Cullen Bryant, the distinguished poet and editor, introduced Lincoln as “a gallant soldier of the political campaign of 1856” and the man who had almost defeated Douglas in 1858. “I have only to pronounce the name of Abraham Lincoln of Illinois [loud cheering]. I have only to pronounce his name to secure your profound attention.”

²⁵⁵ Truman H. Bartlett, typescript “The Cooper Institute Portrait of Abraham Lincoln,” Bartlett Papers, Boston University.

²⁵⁶ Richard C. McCormick’s reminiscences, New York, 29 April, New York Evening Post, 3 May 1865; Lincoln to Harvey G. Eastman, Springfield, 7 April 1860, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 4:39.

²⁵⁷ Choate, “The Career and Character of Abraham Lincoln,” lecture given on 13 November, New York Times, 14 November 1900.

²⁵⁸ New York Tribune, 25 February 1860.

(Lincoln, a devotee of poetry, said it was “well worth a journey from Illinois to New York to make the acquaintance of such a man as Mr. Bryant.”)²⁵⁹

One of the organizers of the event described Lincoln as a “plain man, an ungainly man; unadorned, apparently uncultivated, showing the awkwardness of self-conscious rusticity.” His clothing “was the most unbecoming that a fiend’s ingenuity could have devised for a tall, gaunt man – a black frock coat, ill-fitting and too short for him in the body, skirt and arms – a rolling collar, low-down, disclosing his long, thin shriveled throat uncovered and exposed.”²⁶⁰ A journalist thought Lincoln resembled “a Connecticut deacon.”²⁶¹ Cornelius A. Runkle, legal counsel of the New York Tribune, felt “pity for so ungainly a man” who was not only ill-dressed but “angular and awkward.”²⁶² As Lincoln started to speak, he fiddled with his suspenders.²⁶³ He made “no pretensions to oratory” and stuck closely to his notes.²⁶⁴ His Kentucky accent grated on cultivated Eastern ears. (He addressed Bryant as “Mr. Cheerman.”) He started “in a low, monotonous tone,” with “slow and emphatic” enunciation. His voice had “a tendency to dwindle into a shrill and unpleasant sound,” causing Runkle to think, “Old fellow, you won’t do; it’s all very well

²⁵⁹ New York correspondence by J[ames] A. B[riggs], 4 April 1860, unidentified clipping [probably from the Cleveland Morning Leader], James A. Briggs Scrapbooks, vol. 2, p. 47, Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland.

²⁶⁰ Charles C. Nott, quoted in Henry B. Rankin, Intimate Character Sketches of Abraham Lincoln (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1924), 188-89.

²⁶¹ New York correspondence by Burleigh [Matthew Hale Smith], 28 February, Boston Journal, 29 February 1860.

²⁶² [Reminiscences of Cornelius A. Runkle], Noah Brooks, Abraham Lincoln and the Downfall of American Slavery (New York: Putnam’s, 1894), 186. Runkle’s identity as Brooks’ informant is disclosed in Noah Brooks to Truman Bartlett, Newark, N.J., 28 May 1892, Bartlett Papers, Boston University. According to Brooks, Runkle “wrote out his impressions of Lincoln for me at my request and I afterwards put it in the book.”

²⁶³ Recollections of General Stewart L. Woodford as recalled by Truman H. Bartlett. Bartlett to Charles L. McLellan, Boston, 4 October 1908, Lincoln Collection, Brown University.

²⁶⁴ New York correspondence by Burleigh [Matthew Hale Smith], 28 February, Boston Evening Journal, 29 February 1860.

for the wild West, but this will never go down in New York.”²⁶⁵ Others felt a disquieting fear “that the man that had so successfully wrestled with the little giant . . . would not satisfy the citizens of New York.”²⁶⁶ As time passed, however, things improved; Lincoln “straightened up, and made regular and graceful gestures.” His “quaint but clear voice rang out boldly and distinctly enough for all to hear.” The audience, which at first found his manner “very strange,” came to think of it as “captivating.” Even the “occasional repetition of his text never failed to provoke a burst of cheers and audible smiles.” One “peculiar characteristic of his delivery was a remarkable mobility of his features, the frequent contortions of which excited the merriment which his words alone could not well have produced.” His “face lighted as with an inward fire; the whole man was transfigured.” He “held the vast meeting spell-bound, and as one by one his oddly expressed but trenchant and convincing arguments confirmed the soundness of his political conclusions.”²⁶⁷

Mason Brayman found it “somewhat funny” that Lincoln’s podium manner in New York differed so markedly from his style in Illinois. Brayman reported that “Abraham was a little straightened” because he “was aware that much was expected of him, and that much significance was attached to his words; and he talked like a man who was aware that his talk would be talked about by all people on the morrow.” Instead of speaking “in so familiar a way, walking up and down, swaying about, swinging his arms,

²⁶⁵ [Cornelius A. Runkle’s reminiscences in] Brooks, Lincoln and the Downfall of American Slavery 186.

²⁶⁶ Edwin A. Studwell, “As I Remember Lincoln,” Mount Pleasant News, North Tarrytown, N.Y., 10 February 1899, copy, Truman H. Bartlett Papers, Boston University.

²⁶⁷ New York Tribune, 28 February, 6 March 1860; New York Herald, 28 February 1860; [Cornelius A. Runkle’s reminiscences in] Brooks, Lincoln and the Downfall of American Slavery, 186-87; Browne, Every-Day Life of Lincoln, 316. Cf. George Haven Putnam, George Palmer Putnam: A Memoir (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1912), 274; George Haven Putnam, “The Speech that Won the East for Lincoln,” The Outlook 130 (8 February 1922): 220-23; speech in Springfield, Illinois, 12 February 1927, Illinois State Journal (Springfield), 13 February 1927.

bobbing forward, telling droll stories and laughing at them himself,” he stood “stiff and straight, with his hands quiet, pronouncing sentence after sentence, in good telling english, with elaborate distinctness, though well condensed, and casting at each finished period, a timid, sidelong glance at the formidable array of Reporters who surrounded the table close at his elbow, as if conscious, that after all the world was his audience, on whose ear his words would fall from the thousand multiplying tongues of the Press; and that for the time being, these little busy fellows were the arbiters of his fate.”²⁶⁸

Anticipating that he might not be heard throughout the hall, Lincoln arranged with Brayman that the latter would “sit well back in the house and if Mr. Lincoln’s voice was not heard perfectly clear and distinct,” his friend “was to raise on a cane, his ‘stove-pipe’ hat, high enough to be seen from the platform by the speaker. The hat was not raised.”²⁶⁹

In the opening portion of the address, Lincoln elaborately refuted Douglas’s article in Harper’s Magazine on “The Dividing Line between Federal and Local Authority,” though it was not referred to specifically. (Lincoln did, however, repeatedly speak of the “line dividing local from federal authority.”) It constituted the final installment of his epic debates with Douglas over the slavery issue, debates which had begun six years earlier. In a brilliant piece of historical research and analysis, he examined the views of the thirty-nine signers of the Constitution as manifested in votes on the Northwest Ordinances of 1784 and 1787, a 1789 bill to enforce the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, a 1798 bill forbidding the importation of slaves into the Mississippi

²⁶⁸ Mason Brayman to William Bailhache, New York, 28 February 1860, Bailhache-Brayman Papers, Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield.

²⁶⁹ Undated reminiscences of Mrs. Theodore Gowdy (nèe Mary Brayman), daughter of Mason Brayman, Ida M. Tarbell Papers, Allegheny College; undated, unidentified newspaper clipping, Lincoln Scrap Books, Judd Stewart Collection, Huntington Library, San Marino, California (perhaps “Venerable Men at Dinner” in an undated issue of the Kansas City Star.)

Territory from abroad, an 1804 statute regulating slavery in the Louisiana Territory, and the Missouri Compromise of 1820. On those measures, twenty-three of the thirty-nine signers expressed an opinion through their votes; of those twenty-three, twenty-one indicated their belief that Congress could regulate slavery in the territories; two did not. Among the sixteen signers whose opinion could not be inferred from voting records were leading critics of slavery, including Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, and Gouverneur Morris. The first Congress, which passed the bill implementing the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, also passed the fifth and tenth amendments, cited by those who denied that Congress had the power to regulate slavery in the territories. If the men who passed those amendments really believed that the Constitution did not empower the federal government to regulate slavery in the territories, why would they have voted to implement the Ordinance of 1787? It would be “presumptuous,” nay “impudently absurd,” to maintain that the authors of those statutes and amendments were acting inconsistently. Lincoln then chastised Douglas (without naming him) for “substituting falsehood and deception for truthful evidence and fair argument.”

In the second section of his hour-and-a-half speech, Lincoln addressed Southern whites, who would not respond to Republicans except “to denounce us as reptiles” and as men “no better than outlaws.” Lincoln urged them to stop their insults and to deal rationally with their opponents’ arguments. Would you break up the Union if the Republicans won the 1860 election? he asked. Such a rule-or-ruin approach was unjustified, for Republicans were hardly depriving the South “of some right, plainly written down in the Constitution.” Indignantly he said of Southern threats to secede: “you will not abide the election of a Republican President! In that supposed event, you will

destroy the Union; and then, you say, the great crime of having destroyed it will be upon us! That is cool. A highwayman holds a pistol to my ear, and mutters through his teeth, ‘Stand and deliver, or I shall kill you, and then you will be a murderer!’” Lincoln denied that the Republican party could be held responsible for John Brown’s raid, which he likened to attempted assassinations of monarchs. “An enthusiast broods over the oppression of a people till he fancies himself commissioned by Heaven to liberate them. He ventures the attempt, which ends in little else than his own execution.”

The final segment of the speech was directed to Republicans, urging them to remain forbearing in the face of Southern extortion and other provocations. “It is exceedingly desirable that all parts of this great Confederacy shall be at peace, and in harmony, with one another,” said Lincoln. “Let us Republicans do our part to have it so. Even though much provoked, let us do nothing through passion and ill temper. Even though the southern people will not so much as listen to us, let us calmly consider their demands, and yield to them if, in our deliberate view of our duty, we possibly can.” But what would placate the Southerners? Only if we “cease to call slavery wrong, and join them in calling it right.” As proof, he cited Douglas’s proposed statute virtually outlawing criticism of slavery.²⁷⁰ Southerners would eventually demand the repeal of Free State constitutions forbidding slavery, Lincoln predicted. Republicans must stand fast by their determination to halt the spread of the peculiar institution.

In a mighty crescendo, Lincoln concluded: “Let us be diverted by none of those sophistical contrivances wherewith we are so industriously plied and belabored –

²⁷⁰ In a speech on January 23, Douglas called for a statute to suppress and punish conspiracies or combinations in any state to invade, assault, or molest the inhabitants, property, or institutions of any other state. This was interpreted by Republicans as a “sedition law,” “gag law,” and “white man’s slave code.” Johannsen, Douglas, 723-25; Douglas’s speech of 23 January 1860, Congressional Globe, 36th Congress, 1st session, 552-55; Chicago Press and Tribune, 1, 3, 6 February, 8 March 1860.

contrivances such as groping for some middle ground between the right and the wrong . . . – such as a policy of ‘don’t care’ on a question about which all true men do care – such as Union appeals beseeching true Union men to yield to Disunionists, reversing the divine rule, and calling, not the sinners, but the righteous to repentance – such as invocations to Washington, imploring men to unsay what Washington said, and undo what Washington did. Neither let us be slandered from our duty by false accusations against us, nor frightened from it by menaces of destruction to the Government nor of dungeons to ourselves. Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith, let us, to the end, dare to do our duty as we understand it.”

During these closing remarks, the audience “could hear the gentle sizzling of the gas-burners. When he reached a climax, the thunders of applause were terrific.” Cornelius A. Runkle shouted like a “wild Indian” and proclaimed Lincoln “the greatest man since St. Paul.”²⁷¹ Richard C. McCormick of the New York Evening Post said he “never saw an audience more thoroughly carried away by an orator.”²⁷² The “vast assemblage frequently rang with cheers and shouts of applause, which were prolonged and intensified at the close.”²⁷³

After delivering the speech, Lincoln joined the event’s organizers for an informal supper. They were well pleased; James A. Briggs wrote that the “lecture is one of the best ever delivered, and on the slavery question, is one of the most masterly expositions of the

²⁷¹ [Cornelius A. Runkle’s reminiscences in] Brooks, Lincoln and the Downfall of American Slavery, 186.

²⁷² Richard C. McCormick’s reminiscences, New York, 29 April, New York Evening Post, 3 May 1865.

²⁷³ New York Tribune, 28 February 1860.

creed of the Republican party.”²⁷⁴ Lincoln then returned to the Astor House, accompanied part way by Charles Nott, who recalled that the orator “seemed sad and lonely.”²⁷⁵

The next day Lincoln was doubtless cheered by laudatory press accounts. Not since the era of Clay and Webster had a man “spoken to a larger assemblage of the intellect and mental culture of our City.” Lincoln was “one of Nature’s orators, using his rare powers solely and effectively to elucidate and to convince, though their inevitable effect is to delight and electrify as well.” The printed version of the speech was eloquent, “yet the tones, the gestures, the kindling eye and the mirth-provoking look, defy the reporter’s skill.” No speaker “ever before made such an impression on his first appeal to a New-York audience.” The Tribune called Lincoln’s speech “probably the most systematic and complete defense yet made of the Republican position with regard to Slavery. We believe no speech has yet been made better calculated to win intelligent minds to our standard.”²⁷⁶

William Cullen Bryant, who thought Lincoln’s address “was the best political speech he ever heard in his life,” singled out for special praise the Illinoisan’s analysis of the Founders’ views on slavery expansion and his closing argument about the unreasonable demands of the “arrogant innovators” in South. Though there was little new in the speech, Bryant remarked, “it is wonderful how much a truth gains by a certain

²⁷⁴ New York correspondence by J. A. B., 29 May, 1860, Cleveland Morning Leader, 2 June 1860, clipping in the James A. Briggs Scrapbooks, vol. 2, p. 48, Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland.

²⁷⁵ Introduction to a revised edition of Charles C. Nott and Cephas Brainerd, eds., The Address of the Hon. Abraham Lincoln: In Vindication of the Policy of the Framers of the Constitution and the Principles of the Republican Party, Delivered at Cooper Institute, February 27th, 1860 (pamphlet; New York: G. F. Nesbitt, 1860).

²⁷⁶ Brooks, Abraham Lincoln and the Downfall of American Slavery, 186-87; New York Tribune, 28 February, 6 March 1860.

mastery of clear and impressive statement.”²⁷⁷ Another poet, Edmund C. Stedman, wrote that “no public man has so ably commended himself to the respect of his hearers in a first appearance before the New York public. I heard a leading politician and able critic say, the next morning, that it was by far the ablest effort made in the Cooper Institute since its erection two years ago. This is high praise, when ’tis remembered that such men as Cassius M. Clay and Thomas Corwin have spoken within its walls.”²⁷⁸ “There was not a word in it of vulgar stump speaking – not a word of the ‘spread eagle’ style of oratory – not a word of claptrap,” said the New York Independent; “it was straight-forward argument on the great questions of the times, and was as able as it was honest.”²⁷⁹ In Boston, Republican editors declared that the “completeness with which popular sovereignty and its progenitor were used up has rarely, if ever, been equaled,” and praised Lincoln for being “clear in his style, with no pretensions to oratory, but apt and forcible.”²⁸⁰ Horace Greeley, who watched Lincoln attentively throughout the speech instead of closing his eyes as he usually did at such events, called it “the very best political address to which I ever listened – and I have heard some of Webster’s grandest.”²⁸¹

Clergymen also lauded the speech. “A more solid, statesmanlike Mss, we have

²⁷⁷ John Bigelow to William Hargreaves, n.p., 30 July 1860, Bigelow Papers, New York Public Library; New York Evening Post, 28 February 1860; Charles H. Brown, William Cullen Bryant (New York: Scribner, 1971), 411.

²⁷⁸ New York correspondence by “Launcelot,” 3 March 1860, Chicago Press and Tribune, n.d., clipping in scrapbook # 11, Edmund C. Stedman Papers, Columbia University.

²⁷⁹ New York Independent, n.d., copied in the Chicago Press and Tribune, 4 June 1860.

²⁸⁰ Boston Atlas and Daily Bee, 29 February 1860; Boston Journal, 29 February 1860, in William Francis Hanna, “Abraham Lincoln and the New England Press, 1858-1860,” (Ph.D. dissertation, Boston College, 1980), 47-48.

²⁸¹ Horace Greeley “Greeley’s Estimate of Lincoln: An Unpublished Address by Horace Greeley,” Century Magazine 42 (July 1891): 373; reminiscences of a Mr. Erving, recounted to D. E. Wheeler, in Wheeler to Truman H. Bartlett, New York, 27 April 1908, Bartlett Papers, Boston University.

not had from any quarter,” said Henry W. Bellows, a leading Unitarian divine in New York. “It proves what others simply grasp at, or abstract.” Bellows considered it superior to the speeches of Seward, whom he admired.²⁸² A prominent antislavery minister was even more extravagant in his praise: “The Cooper Institute speech is one of the purest specimens of composition in Saxon words to be found in the English language.”²⁸³

Three weeks after the speech’s delivery, James A. Briggs reported that as “a powerful vindication of the Republican faith and practice, it has not been excelled.”²⁸⁴ Indeed, the Republican Congressional Document Committee mailed out a large pamphlet edition, and several papers ran the full text.²⁸⁵ A Washington correspondent reported that “Republicans here, from all sections of the Union, are loud in their praises of Lincoln’s magnificent speech in New York. It has stamped him as one of the leaders of the progressive thought of the age, and has caused his claims as a Presidential candidate to be fully discussed among many men who had not previously given them much consideration. A Senator, a well-known Seward man, said to me a few days since, ‘I don’t know but we shall have to nominate Lincoln at Chicago.’”²⁸⁶

Lincoln provided the New York Tribune with the manuscript of his speech and

²⁸² Henry W. Bellows to Eliza Schuyler, 5 March 1860, Bellows Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society, in Walter Donald Kring, Henry Whitney Bellows (Boston: Skinner House, 1979), 216.

²⁸³ Leonard Bacon in Whitney, Life on the Circuit, ed. Angle, 154.

²⁸⁴ New York correspondence by J. A. B., 17 March 1860, unidentified clipping [probably from the Cleveland Morning Leader], James A. Briggs Scrapbooks, vol. 2, p. 46, Western Reserve Historical Society.

²⁸⁵ New York Tribune, 24 May 1860; Lincoln to John Pickering, Springfield, 6 April 1860, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 4:38-39; Lyman Trumbull to Lincoln, Washington, 26 March 1860, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress; Washington correspondence, 18 May, Chicago Press and Tribune, 23 May 1860. Among the papers publishing the speech were the New York Times, Chicago Press and Tribune, Illinois State Journal (Springfield), New York Herald, New York Tribune, and Concord, New Hampshire, Independent Democrat.

²⁸⁶ Washington correspondence, n.d., Rock Island, Illinois, Register, n.d., copied in the Illinois State Journal (Springfield), 26 March 1860.

carefully examined the galleys with the proofreader, who threw away the document when he was finished. Lincoln, according to the proofreader, “was curiously careless about his manuscripts, being utterly indifferent to their fate after he had read from them or after they had been printed.”²⁸⁷ (The New York Herald alleged that Lincoln had interspersed his speech with “radical republican sentiments” that did not appear in the published version, but no other source corroborates this dubious claim.)²⁸⁸

In September, a reprint of the speech was published with elaborate notes by Cephas Brainerd and Charles C. Nott, who ransacked several New York libraries to track down Lincoln’s sources.²⁸⁹ Nott offered a perceptive appraisal of the speech’s scholarly merits: “No one who has not actually attempted to verify its details can understand the patient research and historical labor which it embodies. The history of our earlier politics is scattered through numerous journals, statutes, pamphlets, and letters; and these are defective in completeness and accuracy of statement, and in indices and tables of contents. Neither can any one who has not traveled over this precise ground appreciate the accuracy of every trivial detail, or the self-denying impartiality with which Mr. Lincoln has turned from the testimony of ‘the Fathers,’ on the general question of slavery, to present the single question which he discusses. From the first line to the last –

²⁸⁷ The proofreader for the Tribune was Amos J. Cummings, later a congressman from New York. Reminiscences of Cummings in E. J. Edwards, “The Proofreader who Threw Away a Priceless Manuscript,” St. Louis Globe-Democrat, 2 June 1910; “Impressions Lincoln Made on Others,” unidentified, undated clipping, Lincoln Museum, Fort Wayne, Indiana; Rankin, Intimate Character Sketches of Lincoln, 190-91. Lincoln had carefully inspected the proofs of his speech in Leavenworth, Kansas, which was published in the Leavenworth Register. Unidentified clipping, reproducing the Washington correspondence by Ward Burlingame, n.d., Kansas City Star, [18 May 1893?], Lincoln Museum, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

²⁸⁸ New York Herald, 25 June 1860.

²⁸⁹ Cephas Brainerd to Joseph B. Oakleaf, New York, 6 April 1907, Oakleaf Papers, Indiana University; Richard C. McCormick’s reminiscences, New York, 29 April, New York Evening Post, 3 May 1865. Brainerd and Nott also consulted with George Bancroft, Richard Hildreth, and William Goodell. Brainerd to George Haven Putnam, New York, 18 August 1909, in George Haven Putnam, Abraham Lincoln: The People’s Leader in the Struggle for National Existence (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1909), 212.

from his premises to his conclusion, he travels with swift, unerring directness which no logician ever excelled – an argument complete and full, without the affectation of learning, and without the stiffness which usually accompanies dates and details. A single, easy, simple sentence of plain Anglo-Saxon words contains a chapter of history that, in some instances, has taken days of labor to verify and which must have cost the author months of investigation to acquire.”²⁹⁰ Lincoln declared that “no act of his New York friends had pleased him so much” as the publication of this pamphlet.²⁹¹

The Democratic press was generally unenthusiastic. The New York Herald called Lincoln’s speech a “hackneyed, illiterate composition” and “unmitigated trash, interlarded with coarse and clumsy jokes,” while the Boston Post objected to Lincoln’s alleged misrepresentation of James Madison’s views.²⁹² The Illinois State Register, however, deemed the address “a more maturely conceived effort than any of his speeches during the Douglas campaign,” though it deplored Lincoln’s acceptance a speaker’s fee of \$200 for a political speech.²⁹³ Several other Democratic papers echoed the Register’s criticism of that honorarium.²⁹⁴ Privately, Lincoln responded to the attacks, but refused to enter into a public controversy.²⁹⁵

²⁹⁰ Charles C. Nott and Cephas Brainerd, eds., The Address of the Hon. Abraham Lincoln: In Vindication of the Policy of the Framers of the Constitution and the Principles of the Republican Party, Delivered at Cooper Institute, February 27th, 1860 (pamphlet; New York: G. F. Nesbitt, 1860), reproduced in Putnam, Lincoln, 233-88 (quote on 233-34). Nott and Brainerd consulted Lincoln about their annotations and corrections, which Lincoln went over carefully. Lincoln to Nott, Springfield, 31 May 1860, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 4:58.

²⁹¹ Richard C. McCormick’s reminiscences, New York, 29 April, New York Evening Post, 3 May 1865.

²⁹² “The Republican Nomination for the Presidency,” New York Herald, 19 May 1860; Boston Post, n.d., copied in the Chicago Daily Times, 4 March 1860.

²⁹³ Illinois State Register (Springfield), 3 and 19 March 1860.

²⁹⁴ Ecelbarger, Great Comeback, 158-159.

²⁹⁵ Lincoln to Cornelius F. McNeill, Springfield, 6 April 1860, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 4:38.

STUMPING NEW ENGLAND

Lincoln's success at Cooper Institute led to many speaking invitations from Republicans in New England, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. He had originally intended to visit his son Robert at Phillips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire and then return to Springfield promptly, but he agreed to take to the stump in the Granite State, in Rhode Island, and in Connecticut, where state elections were scheduled that April.²⁹⁶ The race in Connecticut was especially important, for Democrats believed that their popular candidate, Thomas Seymour, could capture the governorship, thus breaking the Republican hold on New England and inspiring Democrats everywhere.²⁹⁷ During the next two weeks, Lincoln gave hastily-scheduled addresses in Providence and Woonsocket, Rhode Island; Manchester, Exeter, Concord, and Dover, New Hampshire; and Hartford, New Haven, Bridgeport, Norwich, and Meriden, Connecticut.²⁹⁸ In the midst of that whirlwind tour, he complained to his wife: "I have been unable to escape this toil. If I had foreseen it I think I would not have come East at all. The speech at New-York, being within my calculation before I started, went off passably well, and gave me

²⁹⁶ Robert Todd Lincoln to George Haven Putnam, July 1908, in Putnam, Lincoln, 48.

²⁹⁷ John Niven, Connecticut for the Union: The Role of the State in the Civil War (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), 26.

²⁹⁸ Percy Coe Eggleston, Lincoln in New England (New York: Stewart, Warren, 1922), 5-32; Hanna, "Abraham Lincoln and the New England Press, 1858-1860," 51-83; Elwin L. Page, Abraham Lincoln in New Hampshire (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1929), 8-114; Nelson R. Burr, Abraham Lincoln: Western Star over Connecticut (Canton, Connecticut: Lithographics, 1984), 1-16; Concord, New Hampshire, Independent Democrat, n.d., copied in the Illinois State Journal (Springfield), 16 March 1860.

no trouble whatever. The difficulty was to make nine others, before reading audiences, who have already seen all my ideas in print.”²⁹⁹

Most of Lincoln’s talks resembled his Cooper Institute address, but in Connecticut he added a new element: a discussion of laborers’ right to strike. At Hartford on March 5, in what a local newspaper called “the most convincing and clearest speech we ever heard made,” he attacked Douglas “man-fashion” for condemning a strike by Massachusetts shoemakers.³⁰⁰ “I am glad to know that there is a system of labor where the laborer can strike if he wants to!” Lincoln exclaimed. “I would to God such a system prevailed all over the world.” If the encroachments of slavery were not resisted, “instead of white laborers who can strike, you’ll soon have black laborers who can’t strike.”³⁰¹ The next day in New Haven, he elaborated on this theme: “I am glad to see that a system of labor prevails in New England under which laborers CAN strike when they want to, where they are not obliged to work under all circumstances, and are not tied down and obliged to labor whether you pay them or not! I like the system which lets a man quit when he wants to, and wish it might prevail everywhere.” He reiterated his faith in the free labor system which leaves “each man free to acquire property as fast as he can. Some will get wealthy. I don’t believe in a law to prevent a man from getting rich; it would do more harm than good. So while we do not propose any war upon capital, we do wish to allow the humblest man an equal chance to get rich with everybody else.” Ringingly he declared: “I want every man to have the chance – and I believe a black man is entitled to it – in which he can better his condition – when he may look forward and hope to be a hired laborer

²⁹⁹ Lincoln to Mary Todd Lincoln, Exeter, N.H., 4 March 1860, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, First Supplement, 49.

³⁰⁰ Hartford Courant, 6 March 1860.

³⁰¹ Speech at Hartford, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 4:7, 12.

this year and next, work for himself afterward, and finally to hire men to work for him! That is the true system. Up here in New England, you have a soil that scarcely sprouts black-eyed beans, and yet where will you find wealthy men so wealthy, and poverty so rarely in extremity?”³⁰² A Yale professor of rhetoric found Lincoln’s speech so impressive that he lectured his class on its merits, and a student from the South, who had come to jeer him, remarked at the close: “That fellow could shut up old Euclid himself, to say nothing of Steve Douglas.”³⁰³ Another undergraduate recalled that Lincoln “never paused for a word nor for an idea” and that he “gave a western intonation” to a few words.³⁰⁴

At Hartford, Lincoln decried the opposition’s charge that Republicans had incited John Brown to raid Harper’s Ferry. Scornfully he predicted that “if they think they are able to slander a woman into loving them, or a man into voting with them, they will learn better presently.” Of white Southerners he sarcastically remarked: “If a slave runs away, they overlook the natural causes which impelled him to the act; do not remember the oppression or the lashes he received, but charge us with instigating him to flight. If he screams when whipped, they say it is not caused by the pains he suffers, but he screams because we instigate him to outcrying.” Senator James M. Mason of Virginia, who wore homespun clothes to protest Northern criticism of slavery, received a blast of Lincoln’s ridicule: “To carry out his idea, he ought to go barefoot! If that’s the plan, they should

³⁰² Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 4:25.

³⁰³ “A Talk with Abraham Lincoln,” Rev. John P. Gulliver, New York Independent, 1 September 1864; reminiscences of Edward Goodman Holden, Chicago Tribune, 12 February 1900. According to a gentleman who was a Yale freshman at the time, the professor’s name was William A. Larned. Reminiscences of Horace Bumstead, The Congregationalist, 30 January 1913. Cephas Brainerd thought the professor was Chauncey A. Goodrich. Richard W. Gilder to John G. Nicolay, New York, 26 May 1887, Nicolay Papers, Library of Congress.

³⁰⁴ Reminiscences of Alfred Hemenway, enclosed in Hemenway to Albert J. Beveridge, Boston, 11 November 1925, Beveridge Papers, Library of Congress.

begin at the foundation, and adopt the well known ‘Georgia costume’ of a shirt-collar and a pair of spurs!”³⁰⁵ In the Connecticut capital, Lincoln’s down-to-earth style and appearance “made him at once a favorite with the audience, who felt that he was indeed a man of the people.”³⁰⁶

In nearby Meriden, a heckler interrupted Lincoln, asking whether the Republicans would be able to inaugurate a president if they should win the November election. Lincoln replied, to the delight of his audience: “I reckon, friend, that if there are votes enough to elect a Republican President, there’ll be men enough to put him in.”³⁰⁷ The turnout for his speech was exceptionally large. “Not since the time when [Anson] Burlingame spoke in the open air, has there been such an audience and such enthusiasm,” reported the Hartford Courant.³⁰⁸

In New Haven, Lincoln chided Douglas for going “into hydrophobia and spasms of rage” when discussing Seward’s “irrepressible conflict” speech. There he also used a metaphor that he had tried out a few days earlier in New Hampshire. In describing the danger presented by the expansion of slavery into the territories, he said: “If I saw a venomous snake crawling in the road, any man would say I might seize the nearest stick and kill it; but if I found that snake in bed with my children, that would be another matter.” To strike at the snake in the bed might injure the youngsters or provoke the snake to bite them. On the other hand, “if I found it in bed with my neighbor’s children, and I had bound myself by a solemn compact not to meddle with his children under any

³⁰⁵ Speech at Hartford, 5 March 1860, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 4:7, 8, 12.

³⁰⁶ Daniel D. Bidwell, “Lincoln in Hartford,” Ward, ed., Lincoln: Tributes from His Associates, 183.

³⁰⁷ John P. Bartlett to the editor, n.d., Century Magazine 54 (July 1897): 475.

³⁰⁸ Hartford Courant, 9 March 1860.

circumstances,” then he would leave it alone. “But if there was a bed newly made up, to which the children were to be taken, and it was proposed to take a batch of young snakes and put them there with them, I take it no man would say there was any question how I ought to decide!”³⁰⁹

At a different seat of learning – Exeter, New Hampshire – Lincoln also impressed his audience. The town “was full of people of culture,” recalled Marshall Snow, then a student at Phillips Exeter Academy. “The audience was one of educated, cultivated people,” who (according to another student) were initially taken aback by some of his “Western sayings,” which “sounded very odd to the precise easterlings.” During his presentation he threw out questions; receiving no answer, he remarked: “You people here don’t jaw back at a fellow as they do out West.” Despite his unusual style, Lincoln “captured all of us,” Snow remembered, even those who had found his appearance uncouth. When Lincoln first took the stage, one boy whispered, “Don’t you feel kind of sorry for Bob?” A girl remarked, “Isn’t it too bad Bob’s got such a homely father?” But after his speech, there “was no more pity for our friend Bob; we were proud of his father.”³¹⁰ Robert then accompanied Lincoln on trips to Concord, Manchester, and Dover, where he impressed audiences favorably.³¹¹ In Dover, he won praise for eschewing any

³⁰⁹ Speech of 6 March 1860, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 4: 23, 18; Manchester, N. H., Union Democrat, 6 March 1860; Page, Lincoln in New Hampshire, 39, 49, 50, 83, 103, 143.

³¹⁰ Marshall Snow and Albert Blair, in Walter B. Stevens, A Reporter’s Lincoln, ed. Michael Burlingame (1916; Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 55-56, 95-96; Marshall S. Snow, “Abraham Lincoln: A Personal Reminiscence,” Washington University Bulletin, vol. 4, no. 5 (March 1909): 11-14. At Dover, Lincoln made a similar observation about jawing back. Dover Enquirer, 8 March 1860, copy, Truman Bartlett Papers, Boston University.

³¹¹ Robert Todd Lincoln to [Richard Watson Gilder?], 27 December 1907, typescript of an excerpt, Richard Watson Gilder Papers, New York Public Library; Dover Enquirer, 8 March 1860, copy, Truman Bartlett Papers, Boston University; Concord Statesman and Manchester Mirror, n.d., copied in the Boston Atlas and Bee, n.d., copied in the Chicago Press and Tribune, 8 March 1860.

“attempt to raise a laugh by stale jokes” or “to ‘stir up the groundlings’ by story telling.”³¹²

On the rainy afternoon of March 1 in Concord, Lincoln spoke to a hastily-assembled crowd, which included George G. Fogg, whose “heart sank within him” when he heard the speaker’s “halting and awkward first sentences.” Called aside briefly during the speech, Fogg was astonished when he returned to see “this hesitating and almost grotesque speaker commanding the audience by his tones and his gestures, and holding them as completely in his power as the graceful [Wendell] Phillips or the majestic [Daniel] Webster could have done.”³¹³ The audience leapt to its feet to cheer the stirring peroration, and Fogg’s newspaper praised Lincoln’s effort as “one of the ablest, most closely reasoned and eloquent speeches ever listened to in Concord.”³¹⁴

Calvin C. Webster was so impressed by Lincoln’s oratory that he predicted to a newspaper editor: “That man will be the next president of the United States.” When Webster made the same prophesy to Lincoln, the Illinoisan “replied that a good many men wanted to be president.”³¹⁵ Sharing Webster’s view was the New Hampshire State Republican Chairman, Edward H. Rollins, who introduced Lincoln at Concord.³¹⁶ Rollins, who a few weeks later would play a key role at the Republican National Convention in Chicago as chairman of the New Hampshire delegation, predicted that if Lincoln were to campaign for three more weeks in the Granite State, “we should triumph

³¹² Dover Enquirer, 8 March 1860, copy, Truman Bartlett Papers, Boston University.

³¹³ Fogg told this to Frank Sanborn. Sanborn, Recollections of Seventy Years, 1:25.

³¹⁴ New Hampshire Statesman (Concord), 3 March 1860, copy, Truman Bartlett Papers, Boston University; Concord Independent Democrat, 8 March 1860.

³¹⁵ Henry McFarland, Sixty Years in Concord and Elsewhere: Personal Recollections of Henry McFarland, 1831-1891 (Concord: Rumford Press, 1899), 204.

³¹⁶ James O. Lyford, Life of Edward H. Rollins: A Political Biography (Boston: Dana Estes, 1906), 100.

by ten thousand majority.” In reporting his speech at Concord, Rollins described Lincoln as “a unique specimen of the human family. Long, lank, and awkward, he presents the picture of a real Yankee. His voice is pitched on a high key and is anything but musical, but these oddities and peculiarities which would seem to detract from the efficiency of an orator all go to gain the sympathy of his hearers and to make his speeches what they are.”³¹⁷ Rollins earnestly promoted Lincoln’s candidacy after hearing him speak.³¹⁸ The New Hampshire Statesman reported that Lincoln’s speech contained “not a single word which tended to impair the dignity of the speaker, or weaken the force of the great truths he uttered.”³¹⁹

In Manchester, the Illinoisan’s talk was frequently interrupted by an abolitionist, Elder Foss, whom the audience tried to hush. Lincoln, however, said: “No! I want you to jaw back. This is the man I want to meet here. What did you say, sir?” When Foss declared that he preferred disunion to a continued alliance with slaveholders, Lincoln asked: “Had you not better remain with us and help make the whole country free?” By the end of the evening, Lincoln had won over Foss, who hurried to the platform to offer his congratulations.³²⁰ A reporter noted that although Lincoln “is far from prepossessing in personal appearance” and his voice “is disagreeable,” he nevertheless “wins your attention and good will from the start. He indulges in no flowers of rhetoric, no eloquent passages; he is not a wit, a humorist, or a clown; yet, so great a vein of pleasantry and

³¹⁷ Coos Republican (Lancaster, N.H.), 6 March 1860, quoted in Lyford, Rollins, 99.

³¹⁸ Lyford, Rollins, 103.

³¹⁹ New Hampshire Statesman (Concord), 3 March 1860, copy, Truman Bartlett Papers, Boston University.

³²⁰ Ben: Perley Poore and F. B. Eaton, Sketches of the Life and Public Services of Frederick Smyth of New Hampshire (Manchester, N.H.: John B. Clarke, 1885), 99; Manchester, N. H., Union Democrat, 6 March 1860; reminiscences of General Henry A. Farrington, unidentified clipping, Truman H. Bartlett Papers, Boston University.

good nature pervades what he says, gliding over a deep current of practical argument, he keeps his hearers in a smiling mood with their mouths open ready to swallow all he says.” While speaking, he “seems to forget all about himself” and “to be entirely engrossed in the welfare of his hearers, trying to convince them that they have only one political course to pursue. He does not try to show off, to amuse those of his own party, but addresses all his arguments in a way to make new converts.” Like his presentation before a jury, Lincoln’s speech began with concessions to the opposition, but after half an hour he started to lead his listeners off, “little by little, cunningly, till it seemed as if he had got them all into his fold.” Because he “is never offensive,” he therefore “steals away willingly into his train of belief persons who were opposed to him.”³²¹ Another journalist reported that “Lincoln exhibited less . . . energy than was expected.”³²² He was doubtless fatigued, having given a talk in Concord that afternoon.

At Manchester, Mayor Frederick Smyth introduced Lincoln as the next president. After his talk, when Lincoln skeptically asked Smyth if meant his prediction seriously, the mayor replied that if the Illinoisan “had made the same impression in the other States where he had spoken that he made that day on the people of New Hampshire, he would certainly receive the presidential nomination.” Lincoln replied, “No! No! That is impossible. Mr. Seward should and will receive the nomination. I do not believe that three States will vote for me in the convention.” Earlier he had told Smyth that Seward’s February 29th senate speech, in which the New Yorker sought to portray himself as a

³²¹ Manchester Daily Mirror, 2 March 1860, reprinted in the Manchester Weekly Mirror, 10 March 1860.

³²² Manchester American, 2 March 1860, quoted in Lucy Lowden, “The People’s Party: the ‘Heirs of Jackson’ and the Rise of the Republican Party in New Hampshire, 1845-1860” (M.A. thesis, Western Illinois University, 1971), 91.

Moderate rather than a Radical, would make him the next president.³²³ (In that address, the senator disclaimed any desire “to introduce negro equality,” much to the dismay of abolitionists.)³²⁴ Months later, Smyth boasted to Lincoln that he was “the first man in N. Hampshire who advicated your nomination to the highest office in the world and having successfully labored for more than a year to convince my Republican friends that you were the man for the times.”³²⁵

In Rhode Island, Lincoln impressed political opponents as well as friends. The editor of a Democratic paper called his speech in Providence “the finest constitutional argument for a popular audience that I ever heard.”³²⁶ A Republican observed that Lincoln “made a decided hit & left a good impression” with his “plain, able and argumentative” address, which came “directly from the heart.”³²⁷ (Not everyone agreed. After the election, in which the Republicans suffered a reverse, a Bostonian claimed that Lincoln’s speech in the Rhode Island capital “is the very reason that Providence has by such an overwhelming majority repudiated the party of which Mr. Lincoln is a leader.” A resident of Newport wrote Douglas that “we all know his [Lincoln’s] antecedents in Illinois, and his interference with Rhode Island affairs has a bad odour and will only strengthen the conservative cause.”)³²⁸

On his return trip to Illinois, Lincoln stopped over in New York where, on March

³²³ Poore and Eaton, Smyth, 98-100; Page, Lincoln in New Hampshire, 47.

³²⁴ Theodore Tilton to Wendell Phillips, New York, 1 March 1860, Phillips Papers, Harvard University.

³²⁵ Frederick Smyth to Lincoln, 5 November 1860, Smyth Letterbooks, New Hampshire Historical Society, quoted in Lowden, “The People’s Party,” 90.

³²⁶ James B. Angell, The Reminiscences of James Burrill Angell (New York: Longmans, Green), 1912), 117. The editor was Welcome B. Sayles.

³²⁷ G. W. Jackson to James F. Simmons, Providence, 2 March 1860, James F. Simmons Papers, Library of Congress.

³²⁸ John W. Mahan to Stephen A. Douglas, Boston, 10 April 1860; George Howland to Douglas, Newport, 14 March 1860, Douglas Papers, University of Chicago.

11, he attended Henry Ward Beecher's church with James A. Briggs. A gallery usher recalled that as Beecher spoke, "Lincoln's body swayed forward, his lips parted, and he seemed at length entirely unconscious of his surroundings, frequently giving vent to his satisfaction, at a well-put point or illustration, with a kind of involuntary Indian exclamation, 'ugh!' not audible beyond his immediate presence, but very expressive!"³²⁹ Lincoln told the Rev. Dr. Henry M. Field of New York that "he thought there was not upon record, in ancient or modern biography, so productive a mind, as had been exhibited in the career of Henry Ward Beecher."³³⁰

Afterwards, accompanied by Briggs and Hiram Barney, a pro-Chase lawyer, Lincoln visited the Five Points House of Industry School in one of the poorest districts of New York.³³¹ When a teacher asked him to address the children, he at first declined, saying: "I am not used to speaking in religious meetings." At the youngsters' insistence, however, he finally spoke to them, saying: "the way was open to every boy present, if honest, industrious, and persevering, to the attainment of a high and honorable position." When he tried to cut short his remarks, the lads clamored for more, and he obliged them.³³²

³²⁹ Nelson Sizer told this to Francis B. Carpenter. Carpenter, Six Months at the White House, 134-35.

³³⁰ Ibid., 135. Carpenter claimed that he heard Lincoln say this.

³³¹ Richard C. McCormick's reminiscences, New York, 29 April, New York Evening Post, 3 May 1865; James A. Briggs to Salmon P. Chase, New York, 17 March 1860, Chase Papers, Library of Congress.

³³² Monthly Record of the Five Points House of Industry 8 (May 1865): 1-3; "Lincoln Among the Children," New York Tribune, 30 May 1860; Patrick McCarty and several other boys enrolled in the charity school at the Five Points House of Industry to Lincoln, New York, 16 October 1863, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress; Edward Eggleston in Browne, Every-Day Life of Lincoln, 322-23; F. Lauriston Bullard, "When Lincoln Was Taken for 'a Western Clergyman,'" Lincoln Herald 46 (1944): 23-25.

According to Briggs, Lincoln “was very much pleased with Mr. Barney.”³³³ Barney’s sister-in-law, Julia Tappan, daughter of the philanthropic abolitionist Lewis Tappan, had tea with Lincoln and was at first put off by his “awkwardness of manner, homeliness of feature, and not over clean hands.” But quickly she “forgot the disagreeable in admiration of his intelligence and heartiness and wit.”³³⁴

Briggs had predicted that Seward, Chase, or Lincoln would win the Republican presidential nomination.³³⁵ (Marshall Brayman reported that the “New-Yorkers really regard him [Lincoln] as one of the strongest of the Republicans – and treated him accordingly.”)³³⁶ Now Lincoln told Briggs that during his tour of New England, “several gentlemen made about the same remarks to me that you did . . . about the Presidency; they thought my chances were about equal to the best.”³³⁷ Among them was James G. Blaine, a rising star in the political firmament of Maine. Blaine resolved to work for Lincoln’s nomination.³³⁸ Connecticut journalist Gideon Welles, with whom Lincoln visited during his stay in Hartford, heaped praise on him: “This orator and lawyer has been caricatured. He is not Apollo, but he is not Caliban. He was made where the material for strong men is plenty, and his huge, tall frame is loosely thrown together. He

³³³ James A. Briggs to Salmon P. Chase, New York, 17 March 1860, Chase Papers, Library of Congress.

³³⁴ Julia Tappan to William Barney, New York, 25 March 1860, in James N. Adams, “Lincoln and Hiram Barney,” Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society 50 (1957): 345.

³³⁵ New York Herald, 28 February 1860; Briggs, undated letter to the editor of the New York Evening Post, unidentified newspaper clipping [ca. 1887], Lincoln Museum, Fort Wayne, Indiana. Briggs reported to Chase that Lincoln had warm feelings for the Ohio governor. “I was pleased with him, & paid him all the attention I could. Went with him to hear Mr Beecher & Dr Chapin.” Briggs to Chase, New York, 17 March 1860, Chase Papers, Library of Congress.

³³⁶ Mason Brayman to William Bailhache, New York, 28 February 1860, Bailhache-Brayman Papers, Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield.

³³⁷ James A. Briggs to the editor, Saco, Maine, 13 August 1867, New York Evening Post, 16 August 1867.

³³⁸ After hearing Lincoln speak in 1858, Blaine became an ardent admirer of the Springfield attorney and championed his candidacy in the newspaper he edited. Gail Hamilton, Biography of James G. Blaine (Norwich, Conn.: Henry Bill, 1895), 128.

is every way large, brain included, but his countenance shows intellect, generosity, great good nature, and keen discrimination. When he is called a great stump orator, people think of bellowing eloquence, and clownish stories. He is an effective speaker, because he is earnest, strong, honest, simple in style, and clear as crystal in his logic.”³³⁹ (Lincoln found Welles “one of the clearest headed men he had ever met” and a year later would name him secretary of the navy.)³⁴⁰ In New Haven, Lincoln so impressed the editor of the Palladium, James Babcock, that he endorsed the Illinoisan for the presidency and persuaded two delegates to the national convention to vote for him.³⁴¹ In response, Lincoln told Babcock: “I do not envy the man who shall stand at the helm of this great Ship of State during the next four years.”³⁴² After his talk in Norwich, Lincoln and local Republican leaders conferred at the Wauregan Hotel, where one gentleman suggested that their guest of honor might be a candidate for vice president. “Sir,” interjected Amos W. Prentice, “we want him at the other end of the Avenue.” This observation “was applauded to the echo and was re-applauded.”³⁴³

The tour of the East, during which Lincoln delivered a dozen speeches in less than two weeks, dramatically enhanced his presidential chances. James A. Briggs declared that the addresses “have done great good ‘Down East.’” Lincoln’s “mind is singularly clear

³³⁹ Niven, Welles, 289; “Mr. Lincoln,” Hartford Evening Press, 6 March 1860, in Hanna, “Abraham Lincoln and the New England Press, 1858-1860,” 75.

³⁴⁰ James F. Babcock to Gideon Welles, New Haven, 3 February 1868, Abraham Lincoln Collection, Beinecke Library, Yale University.

³⁴¹ Babcock had been Lincoln’s host for two days, during which he “gave him two Astor House dinner parties.” New Haven Palladium, 18 March 1860; James F. Babcock to Mark Howard, New Haven, 29 December 1860, Mark Howard Papers, Connecticut Historical Society; Niven, Welles, 291; James F. Babcock to Gideon Welles, New Haven, 3 February 1868, Abraham Lincoln Collection, Beinecke Library, Yale University.

³⁴² Babcock to Lincoln, New Haven, 22 February 1864, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress.

³⁴³ Charles E. Dyer to John G. Nicolay, Norwich, Connecticut, 26 August 1887, Nicolay Papers, Library of Congress.

and logical. He uses the Kentucky rifle, and snuffs the candle every time.”³⁴⁴ One of New England’s most influential journals, the Springfield, Massachusetts, Republican, declared that his “visit East has added greatly to his reputation among the republicans of this section, and they will be readily reconciled to any use of his name which the Chicago convention may propose in its selections for the national ticket.”³⁴⁵ An Illinois paper concurred: “The enthusiasm which his presence raised in the East is an earnest of that which would be excited by his nomination for the Presidency. There seems to be a strong feeling in favor of nominating Mr. Lincoln in case Douglas is the Democratic candidate; it being generally conceded that he is the strongest candidate against Douglas.”³⁴⁶ A newspaper in Machias, Maine, predicted that “Lincoln on the Republican Presidential ticket second, if not first, will give it strength and prestige all over the Union.”³⁴⁷ A pro-Seward lawyer in Poughkeepsie said Lincoln would do better than the New York senator not only in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Indiana, and Illinois, but also in the Empire State. Lincoln, said this attorney, “is emphatically a man of the people, and he will run like a wild-cat.”³⁴⁸ Another New Yorker, who preferred Seward, admitted that Lincoln “would make the strongest Republican candidate.” When visiting Springfield in the winter of 1860, this Empire State resident had asked a Douglas supporter what effect Lincoln’s nomination would have on the Little Giant’s chances. “It would be devilish bad for us,”

³⁴⁴ New York correspondence by J. A. B., 17 March 1860, unidentified clipping [probably from the Cleveland Morning Leader], James A. Briggs Scrapbooks, vol. 2, p. 46, Western Reserve Historical Society.

³⁴⁵ Springfield (Massachusetts) Republican, 3 March 1860.

³⁴⁶ Menard Index (Petersburg), n.d., copied in the Chicago Press and Tribune, 28 March 1860. Ohio delegates were disposed to back Lincoln if the Democrats should nominate the Little Giant. J. F. Dewey to John Sherman, Norwalk, Ohio, 5 March 1860, Sherman Papers, Library of Congress; New York Independent, 26 April 1860.

³⁴⁷ Machias, Maine, Republican, n.d., copied in the Illinois State Journal (Springfield), 19 March 1860.

³⁴⁸ Chicago Press and Tribune, 21 March 1860.

came the reply.³⁴⁹

His success encouraged Lincoln's friends, including Samuel Galloway, who wrote him saying: "I . . . congratulate you, upon the Kind and complimentary reception, which you experienced in your recent visit to the East. You could not have ever anticipated a more cordial and favorable welcome than you received."³⁵⁰ Lyman Trumbull concurred: "You have made a great many friends by your Eastern trip. Have not heard a single man speak of your speeches but in the highest terms."³⁵¹ C. D. Hay told Lincoln: "I have been highly delighted at seeing the perfect success of your tour East. It is very evident that nothing has transpired recently to so much advance your interest and elevate you in the minds of the people, as that short trip." Hay expressed regret that Lincoln had not spoken in Pennsylvania or New Jersey; indeed, it is curious that he turned down invitations from those swing states.³⁵² (En route to New York he was invited to meet with Simon Cameron and David Wilmot when stopping briefly in Philadelphia; he tried to avail himself of the offer, but could not connect with those gentlemen.)³⁵³ Also mysterious is his declining an invitation to address the Massachusetts Republican convention on March 7.³⁵⁴ Evidently he believed that the Bay Staters were so strongly pro-Seward that he could win no support among them.³⁵⁵ In addition, the lack of a

³⁴⁹ Letter by L. B. G. [George B. Lincoln], Sandovel, Illinois, 9 January 1860, Chicago Press and Tribune, 12 January 1860.

³⁵⁰ Galloway to Lincoln, Columbus, 24 March 1860, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress.

³⁵¹ Trumbull to Lincoln, Washington, 26 March 1860, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress.

³⁵² C. D. Hay to Lincoln, Newton, Illinois, 27 March 1860, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress. He evidently had urgent business engagements at home that required him to cut short his trip. Illinois State Journal (Springfield), 15 March 1860.

³⁵³ Lincoln to Cameron, New York, 26 February 1860, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 3:521.

³⁵⁴ New York Tribune, 6 March 1860.

³⁵⁵ James Schouler, "Lincoln at the Tremont Temple," Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, new series, 2 (1908-9): 83.

gubernatorial contest in Massachusetts made a visit there less urgent than in other states holding elections that spring.³⁵⁶ Edward H. Rollins told him that the “Connecticut people need you more,” for the party “is strong in Massachusetts & Connecticut is suffering.”³⁵⁷ (In the Nutmeg State, Republicans were in trouble because they were “stiff people who undertake to abolish niggers and lager beer at the same time,” according to Herman Kreismann. Connecticut Germans resented the “foolish persecution of the lager beer saloons” by Republican prohibitionists.)³⁵⁸

As Lincoln left New Hampshire, the Concord Independent Democrat, edited by the influential Republican leader George G. Fogg, said that the “blessings and hopes of many thousands who have seen and heard him for the first time, will go with him.”³⁵⁹ Fogg, who served on the Republican National Committee, would play an important role at the Chicago Convention a few weeks later.³⁶⁰

Upon returning to Springfield in mid-March, Lincoln found his friends delighted with his success in the East. “No inconsiderable portion of your fellow citizens in various portions of the country have expressed their preference for you as the candidate of the Republican party for the next Presidency,” Milton Hay told him on behalf of the capital’s Republican Club. “There are those around you sir who have watched with manly interest and pride your upward march from obscurity to distinction. There are those here who know something of the obstacles which have lain in your pathway. Our history is prolific

³⁵⁶ Hanna, “Abraham Lincoln and the New England Press, 1858-1860,” 72.

³⁵⁷ Rollins to Lincoln, Concord, N.H., 2 March 1860, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress.

³⁵⁸ Herman Kreismann to E. B. Washburne, Hartford, 30 March 1860, Washburne Papers, Library of Congress.

³⁵⁹ Concord Independent Democrat, 8 March 1860.

³⁶⁰ Lyford, Rollins, 102-3.

in examples of what may be achieved by ability, perseverance and integrity . . . but in the long list of those who have thus from humble beginnings won their way worthily to proud distinction there is not one can take precedence of the name of Abraham Lincoln. . . . When in 1854 sectional strife and controversy were invited into the councils of the nation, a betrayed people began to see in your eloquent denunciations of that wanton act, and in your able vindication of the principles and policies thereby infracted, more high qualities and that true statesmanship which demonstrated their possessor to be well worthy of the highest office and honor within their gift – well worthy of the Presidency itself. We feel well assured that we shall look in vain amongst the high names of the Republic for the man combining in himself, in his record, and in his history more of those elements which fit the man for the time, the occasion and the place than yourself.”³⁶¹

Back in Illinois, Lincoln declined most invitations to speak, explaining that: “I am not personally very prepossessing” and that virtually everything he had to say was already printed, and therefore potential audiences “have seen all my thoughts on paper.”³⁶² One exception was a request from Republicans in Bloomington, where on April 10 he attacked popular sovereignty from a new angle. A bill criminalizing polygamy, which had passed the U.S. House of Representatives five days earlier, prompted Lincoln to charge Illinois Democrats with hypocrisy. For Congress to outlaw polygamy in the Utah Territory would violate the principle of popular sovereignty, yet to allow it would be unpalatable to the voters of Illinois. Therefore, said Lincoln, Congressman John A. McClernand had proposed a compromise measure, which would

³⁶¹ Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society, 44-45 (1951-52):171.

³⁶² Lincoln to T. C. Moore, Springfield, 1 May 1860, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, First Supplement, 52-53.

have divided up Utah among other territories. But, asked Lincoln: “If you can put down polygamy in that way, why may you not thus put down slavery?” Lincoln “said he supposed that the friends of popular sovereignty would say – if they dared speak out – that polygamy was wrong and slavery right; and therefore one might thus be put down and the other not.” To undermine thus the principle of popular sovereignty, Lincoln argued, would be like saying: “If I cannot rightfully murder a man, I may tie him to the tail of a kicking horse, and let him kick the man to death!”³⁶³

Lincoln turned down suggestions to use money to help line up delegates. His friend Mark W. Delahay had complained to him that Seward spent freely to win support in Kansas and that “we, your friends, are all very poor,” and hinted that “a very little money now would do us and you a vast deal of good.” Lincoln would have none of it: “I can not enter the ring on the money basis – first, because in the main, it is wrong; and secondly, I have not, and can not get, the money.” Yet, he added, “for certain objects, in a political contest, the use of some, is both right, and indispensable.” So saying, he agreed to give Delahay \$100 to enable him to attend the Chicago convention, assuming that he would be chosen a delegate. In fact, Delahay and all other Lincoln supporters in Kansas were defeated. Upon learning of this development, Lincoln advised Delahay not to stir the Seward delegates “up to anger, but come along to the convention, and I will do as I said about expenses.”³⁶⁴ The following day, Lincoln told a correspondent who had proposed some scheme involving the expenditure of \$10,000: “I could not raise ten

³⁶³ Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 4:41-42; Bloomington Statesman, n.d., copied in the Illinois State Register (Springfield), 17 April 1860.

³⁶⁴ Delahay to Lincoln, Lawrence, Kansas, 17 February 1860, and Leavenworth, Kansas, 7 April 1860, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress; Lincoln to Delahay, Springfield, 16 March and 14 April 1860, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 4:32, 44.

thousand dollars if it would save me from the fate of John Brown. Nor have my friends, so far as I know, yet reached the point of staking any money on my chances of success.”³⁶⁵

Lincoln was delighted that the Republicans won in Connecticut and in New Hampshire.³⁶⁶ Connecticut Democrats had unsuccessfully beseeched Douglas to come and counteract Lincoln’s efforts.³⁶⁷ His refusal to do so probably enabled the Republicans to prevail, for Governor William A. Buckingham won reelection by only 541 votes out of 90,000. Lincoln deemed the result in Rhode Island a “quasi defeat,” for the Republican gubernatorial candidate, the radical Seth Padelford, lost to the wealthy William Sprague, who ran as an independent and allegedly spent \$75,000 bribing voters (the average cost of a vote being \$50). The Democrats had fielded no candidate. The Rhode Island setback and the close call in Connecticut sent Seward’s stock plunging while bolstering Lincoln’s chances and increasing his appetite for the ever-more-attainable nomination.³⁶⁸ “We only

³⁶⁵ Lincoln to E. Stafford, Springfield, 17 March 1860, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 4:33. No letter from Stafford is in the Lincoln Papers at the Library of Congress.

³⁶⁶ Lincoln to James F. Babcock, Springfield, 14 April 1860, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 4:43; Mark W. Delahay to Lincoln, Leavenworth, 7 April 1860, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress. Ichabod Goodwin won the New Hampshire governor’s race by a margin of 4500 votes out of 72,000.

³⁶⁷ Thomas Lawton to Douglas, New Haven, 7 March 1860; Arthur W. Bacon to Douglas, Middletown, 5 March 1860; J. M. Scofield to Douglas, Hartford, 4, 10, 14 March, 8 April 1860; R. I. Ingersoll to Douglas, New Haven, 13 March 1860; William Easton and Henry C. Deming to Douglas, Hartford, 17 March 1860; E. C. Marshall to Douglas, Meriden, 21 March 1860; Minott A. Osborn to George W. Sanders, New Haven, 20 March 1860, enclosed in Sanders to Douglas, New York, 21 March 1860; Sanders to Douglas, New York, 26, 30 March 1860; R. B. Connolly to Douglas, New York, 26 March 1860, Douglas Papers, University of Chicago.

³⁶⁸ John A. Gurley to Friedrich Hassaurek, Washington, 16 April 1860, Hassaurek Papers, Ohio Historical Society; James L. Huston, “The Threat of Radicalism: Seward’s Candidacy and the Rhode Island Gubernatorial Election of 1860,” Rhode Island History 41 (1982): 87-99; Lincoln to Mark W. Delahay, Springfield, 14 April 1860, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 4:44; Mark W. Delahay to Lincoln, Leavenworth, Kansas, 7 April 1860; Herman Kreismann to Joseph K. C. Forrest, Washington, 14 April 1860, copy; Hawkins Taylor to Lincoln, Keokuk, Iowa, 15 April 1860, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress; James S. Pike to Salmon P. Chase, Washington, 7 April 1860, Chase Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Joseph H. Barrett to Chase, Cincinnati, 9 April 1860, Chase Papers, Library of Congress; Herman Kreismann to E. B. Washburne, Boston, 4 April 1860, Washburne Papers, Library of Congress; William P. Fessenden to Elizabeth Warriner, Washington, 11 April 1860, Fessenden Family Papers,

saved Connecticut by the skin of our teeth, and lost Rhode Island,” observed an Indiana Republican. “A radical man cannot be elected.”³⁶⁹

To Lyman Trumbull, Lincoln confided on April 29: “The taste is in my mouth a little.”³⁷⁰ His strategy was simple: “If I have any chance, it consists mainly in the fact that the whole opposition would vote for me if nominated. . . . My name is new in the field; and I suppose I am not the first choice of a very great many. Our policy, then, is to give no offense to others – leave them in a mood to come to us, if they shall be compelled to give up their first love. This, too, is dealing justly with all, and leaving us in a mood to support heartily whoever shall be nominated.” He was particularly eager to avoid offending Chase, for “he gave us sympathy in 1858, when scarcely any other distinguished man did.”³⁷¹

This strategy made sense, for the front-runners might well knock each other out of contention. In April, a supporter of the dark horse potential nominee John M. Read of Pennsylvania said he had never seen “so many candidates before an ‘opposition’ convention with fair chances. The result it seems must not be in favor of either one of the three having the most strength now.”³⁷² (Presumably he was referring to Seward, Bates, and Chase.)

Lincoln also wished to keep on the good side of other presidential aspirants, including Bates, Seward, and Cameron. When asked about their chances to carry Illinois,

Bowdoin College; Mark Delahay to Henry S. Lane, Leavenworth, 10 April 1860, typed copy, Lane Papers, Indiana University; New York Tribune, weekly edition, 14 April 1860.

³⁶⁹ Fort Wayne Daily Times, 18 April 1860.

³⁷⁰ Lincoln to Trumbull, Springfield, 29 April 1860, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 4:45.

³⁷¹ Lincoln to Samuel Galloway, Chicago, 24 March 1860, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 4:33-34.

³⁷² Henry C. Baird to John M. Read, Philadelphia, 23 April 1860, Lincoln Collection, Brown University.

he tactfully observed that “Mr. Seward is the very best candidate we could have for the North of Illinois, and the very worst for the South of it. The estimate of Gov. Chase here is neither better nor worse than that of Seward, except that he is a newer man.” Bates “would be the best man for the South of our State, and the worst for the North of it. If [seventy-five-year-old] Judge McLean was fifteen, or even ten years younger, I think he would be stronger than either, in our state, taken as a whole; but his great age, and their recollection of the deaths of Harrison and Taylor have, so far, prevented his being much spoken of here. I really believe we can carry the state for either of them, or for any one who may be nominated; but doubtless it would be easier to do it with some than with others.”³⁷³ More candidly, he told Trumbull: “I think neither Seward nor Bates can carry Illinois if Douglas shall be on the track; and either of them can, if he shall not be. I rather think McLean could carry it with D. on or off,” though McLean’s age told against him. Seward’s nomination would, Lincoln said, make it difficult to win the Illinois legislature.³⁷⁴

To reduce conflict within the state party, Lincoln urged Trumbull to “write no letters which can possibly be distorted into opposition, or quasi opposition to me. There are men on the constant watch for such things out of which to prejudice my peculiar friends against you. While I have no more suspicion of you than I have of my best friend living, I am kept in a constant struggle against suggestions of this sort. I have hesitated some to write this paragraph, lest you should suspect I do it for my own benefit, and not

³⁷³ Richard M. Corwine to Lincoln, Cincinnati, 24 March 1860, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress; Lincoln to Richard M. Corwine, Springfield, 6 April 1860, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 4:36. Bates had been gathering support in southern and central Illinois. Joseph Medill to Salmon P. Chase, Chicago, 30 August 1859, Chase Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

³⁷⁴ Lincoln to Trumbull, Springfield, 29 April and 1 May 1860, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 4:45-46, 47.

for yours; but on reflection I conclude you will not suspect me.”³⁷⁵ Wentworth and others were alleging that Trumbull angled to outstrip Lincoln in the race for the vice presidential nomination.³⁷⁶ When Long John advised “You must do like Seward does – get a feller to run you,” Lincoln replied that “events, and not a man’s own exertions in his behalf, made presidents.”³⁷⁷ Wentworth spoke warmly of Lincoln but urged the nomination of Seward.³⁷⁸ Similarly, though expressing support for Lincoln, Trumbull favored McLean.³⁷⁹

As the date for the Republican national convention (May 16) drew near, Lincoln expressed guarded optimism, predicting that only the Illinois delegation would unanimously support him, though Indiana “might not be difficult to get.” In the other states, “I have not heard that any one makes any positive objection to me.”³⁸⁰ The clear implication was that if Seward did not win, Lincoln might well do so, especially since most delegates would support a candidate who could carry Illinois, Indiana, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. The shrewd Mark W. Delahay had told him that Seward was unacceptably radical to delegates from those swing states; that Connecticut was also “a doubtful state” and therefore chary of Seward; that Ohio would go for any Republican and therefore Chase “can claim nothing in the way of availability”; that Bates was

³⁷⁵ Lincoln to Trumbull, Springfield, 29 April 1860, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 4:46.

³⁷⁶ Wentworth to Lincoln, Chicago, 21 April 1860; David Davis to Lincoln, Urbana, 23 April 1860, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress.

³⁷⁷ Michael Burlingame and John R. Turner Ettliger, eds., Inside Lincoln’s White House: The Complete Civil War Diary of John Hay (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1997), 26 (entry for 17 October 1861); Whitney, Life on the Circuit, ed. Angle, 153.

³⁷⁸ Fehrenbacher, Chicago Giant, 179.

³⁷⁹ Trumbull to Lincoln, Washington, 24 April 1860, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress; Trumbull to John McLean, Washington, 21 April 1860, McLean Papers, Library of Congress.

³⁸⁰ Lincoln to Richard M. Corwine, Springfield, 2 May 1860, Basler, ed., Collected Works of Lincoln, 4:47-48.

unacceptable to the Germans and to the radicals and could not carry his own state; and that Cameron, known as a corrupt wheeler-dealer, was unable to win the nomination.³⁸¹ (Cameron’s sobriquets – “The Great Winnebago Chief” and “Old Winnebago” – referred to his conduct in 1838 when he, acting as a claims commissioner, had allegedly cheated the Winnebago Indians by paying them \$66,000 in wildcat currency, issued by his own Pennsylvania bank, which could not be cashed or used to purchase anything in their territory. One Pennsylvanian remarked acidly: “If Cameron had his deserts, he would be serving out a sentence in the penitentiary instead of serving in the U. S. Senate.” A New York Herald correspondent called him “a shrewd, unscrupulous and selfish manager.”)³⁸² Delahay’s astute analysis was echoed by many of Lincoln’s correspondents and jibed with his own understanding.³⁸³

One disadvantage that Chase and Seward suffered from was their prominence; having been in the spotlight for many years, they had made enemies. David Wilmot believed that Old Line Whigs would not back them, though those Whigs “would support other men of equally advanced republican positions, but who had not been held up before them for years, in so unfavorable a light.”³⁸⁴ That description fit Lincoln, who looked good by comparison, for he was, as Horace Greeley pointed out, “unencumbered by that

³⁸¹ Delahay to Lincoln, Leavenworth, Kansas, 26 March and 4 May 1860, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress.

³⁸² Erwin Stanley Bradley, Simon Cameron, Lincoln’s Secretary of War: A Political Biography (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1966), 36-39; John A. Morton to Richard W. Thompson, n.p., 26 March 1860, Thompson Papers, Lincoln Museum, Fort Wayne, Indiana; Washington correspondence, 1 August, New York Herald, 9 August 1859.

³⁸³ C. D. Hay to Lincoln, Newton, Illinois, 27 March 1860; James F. Babcock to Lincoln, New Haven, Connecticut, 8 April 1860; Nathan Geer to Lincoln, Peoria, 9 April 1860; Hawkins Taylor to Lincoln, Keokuk, Iowa, 15 April 1860; Lyman Trumbull to Lincoln, Washington, 24 April 1860; A. S. Seaton to Lincoln, Winona, Minnesota, 24 April 1860; Richard M. Corwine to Lincoln, Cincinnati, 30 April 1860; Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress.

³⁸⁴ Wilmot to Lincoln, Towanda, Pennsylvania, 11 July 1860, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress.

weight of prejudice, and that still heavier responsibility for the sins of others, sure to be fastened upon the shoulders of every man who occupies for a long time the position of a political leader.”³⁸⁵ Lincoln was also more likable than the vain, hyper-ambitious Chase and the “fretful, dictatorial” Seward.³⁸⁶ Both Cameron and Chase were crippled by a lack of unanimity in their home state delegations.³⁸⁷ In addition, the overconfident Ohioan had ineptly organized his presidential bid, appointing no one to serve as his manager at Chicago, where his free trade views did not sit well with the crucial Pennsylvania delegation.³⁸⁸

Complicating the picture was the stalemate reached by Democrats at their national convention in Charleston, which opened on April 23 and adjourned on May 3 without having chosen a candidate.³⁸⁹ Along with most other observers, Lincoln had expected Douglas to win there, and the Little Giant’s failure to do so improved Seward’s prospects to become the Republican standard bearer.³⁹⁰ (In 1859, when asked about Douglas’s chances to win at Charleston, Lincoln replied: “Well, were it not for certain matters that I know transpired, which I regarded at one time among the impossibilities – I would say he stood no possible chance. I refer to the fact that in the Illinois contest with myself, he had the sympathy and support of Greeley, of Burlingame and Wilson of Massachusetts, and

³⁸⁵ “The Republican Candidate,” New York Tribune, 23 May 1860

³⁸⁶ Joseph R. Hawley to Charles Dudley Warner, Chittenango Station, N.Y., 11 May 1860, typescript, “Letters of Joseph R. Hawley,” Connecticut Historical Society.

³⁸⁷ John W. Bell to Cameron, Chicago, 19 May 1860, Cameron Papers, Dauphin County Historical Society, Harrisburg. At the Chicago Convention, Chase was to receive only thirty-four of the state’s forty-six votes on the first ballot and fewer on subsequent tallies.

³⁸⁸ John Niven, Salmon P. Chase: A Biography (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 217-22; Frederick J. Blue, Salmon P. Chase: A Life in Politics (Kent: Kent State University Press, 1987), 120-28.

³⁸⁹ Roy F. Nichols, The Disruption of the American Democracy (New York: Macmillan, 1948), 288-309.

³⁹⁰ William P. Fessenden to his son William, Washington, 7 May 1860, Fessenden Family Papers, Bowdoin College.

other leading Republicans; that at the same time he received the support of Wise and Breckinridge, and other Southern men; that he took direct issue with the Administration, and secured, against all its power, 125,000 out of 130,000 Democratic votes cast in the State. A man that can bring such influences to bear with his own exertions, may play the devil at Charleston.”³⁹¹ In mid-June at Baltimore, the Democrats were to resume their deliberations and, it was assumed, choose Douglas. That would strengthen Lincoln’s chances for the Republican nomination, for he was regarded as the most likely choice to defeat the Little Giant.³⁹²

Meanwhile, conservative ex-Whigs, mostly pro-slavery Southerners, had met in Baltimore to form the Constitutional Union Party, which nominated a ticket of John Bell of Tennessee and Edward Everett of Massachusetts and adopted a platform calling simply for support of the Union and the Constitution and for the enforcement of the laws.³⁹³ They hoped to preempt the Republicans and force them to endorse their nominee.³⁹⁴ This move enhanced Lincoln’s prospects, for it was feared that moderate Republicans might vote for Bell if the Chicago Convention chose a candidate like Seward or Chase, widely viewed as antislavery radicals.³⁹⁵

ILLINOIS STATE REPUBLICAN CONVENTION

³⁹¹ In December 1859, Lincoln told this to William H. Gill, editor of the Leavenworth, Kansas, Herald. St. Joseph correspondence by Gill, 8 December, Leavenworth Weekly Herald, 10 December 1859.

³⁹² Salmon P. Chase to James A. Briggs, Columbus, 23 April 1860, Chase Papers, Library of Congress.

³⁹³ John V. Mering, “The Slave-State Constitutional Unionists and the Politics of Consensus,” Journal of Southern History 43 (1977): 395-410.

³⁹⁴ Richard W. Thompson to “My Dear Sir,” Terre Haute, Indiana, 24 January 1860, Richard W. Thompson Collection, Lincoln Museum, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

³⁹⁵ Chicago correspondence by Samuel Bowles, 14 May, Springfield (Massachusetts) Republican, 16 May 1860; Richard C. Parsons to Salmon P. Chase, Washington, 12 May 1860, Chase Papers, Library of Congress.

Lincoln's prediction of unanimous support from the Illinois delegation proved accurate, though there was some pro-Bates sentiment in the central and southern sections of the state, and in the north, Seward had many admirers.³⁹⁶ On May 9 and 10 at Decatur, 645 Republican delegates gathered in a hastily erected structure to choose a gubernatorial candidate and adopt a platform.³⁹⁷ With John Moses and Nathan M. Knapp, Lincoln arrived a day before the convention and spent the night at the Junction House hotel, where Lincoln and Knapp shared a bed. According to Moses, "soon after retiring, either of them being rather long for the bedstead, an attempt to turn over by one of them resulted in letting them down on the floor. On jumping up Knapp exclaimed 'Well, Lincoln, I guess we shall have to reconstruct our platform!' which pleased 'Old Abe' very much. He told it to a great many the next day as a good thing."³⁹⁸

Shortly after the convention opened, the "tall, massive, handsome" Richard J. Oglesby, a rising political star from Decatur who would eventually be elected governor of Illinois three times as well as U.S. senator, interrupted the proceedings by announcing: "I am informed that a distinguished citizen of Illinois, and one of whom Illinois ever delight to honor, is present, and I wish to move that this body invite him to a seat on the stand."

The 3000 auditors in the makeshift 900-seat convention center impatiently waited for this

³⁹⁶ Herman Kreismann to E. B. Washburne, Chicago, 1 and 7 May 1860, Washburne Papers, Library of Congress; James H. Reed to William Bailhache and E. L. Baker, Aledo, 5 March 1860, copy, Bailhache Papers, Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield; Jackson Grimshaw to O. M. Hatch, Carthage, 16 March 1860, Hatch Papers, *ibid.*

³⁹⁷ Official proceedings of the convention, Illinois State Journal (Springfield), 12 May 1860; Decatur correspondence, 10 and 11 May, Missouri Democrat (St. Louis), 11 and 12 May 1860; Wayne C. Temple, "Delegates to the Illinois State Republican Nominating Convention in 1860," Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society 92 (1999): 289-98.

³⁹⁸ Moses's reminiscences, Winchester, Illinois, Independent, n.d., copied in the Illinois State Journal (Springfield), 27 October 1879.

man to be identified. Oglesby, “as if knowing that an outburst would follow . . . seemed purposely to delay mentioning any name, as if to tease expectation to the verge of desperation.” When he finally shouted, “Abraham Lincoln,” the crowd roared its approval and tried to jam Lincoln, who had been sitting in the rear of the hall, through the densely packed crowd to the stage. Frustrated by their failure to penetrate the throng, they hoisted him up and passed him “kicking scrambling – crawling – upon the sea of heads between him and the Stand.” When he reached that destination, half a dozen delegates set him upright. “The cheering,” reported an observer, “was like the roar of the sea. Hats were thrown up by the Chicago delegation, as if hats were no longer useful.” Lincoln, who “rose bowing and blushing,” appeared to be “one of the most diffident and worst plagued men I ever saw.” With a smile, he thanked the crowd for its expression of esteem.³⁹⁹

After the aspirants for governor had been placed in nomination but before the voting began (which saw Yates defeat Swett and Judd), Ogelsby once again interrupted, announcing that “an old Democrat of Macon county . . . desired to make a contribution to the Convention.” The crowd yelled, “Receive it!” Thereupon Lincoln’s second cousin, John Hanks, accompanied by his friend Isaac D. Jennings, entered the hall bearing two fence rails along with a placard identifying them thus: “Abraham Lincoln, The Rail Candidate for President in 1860. Two rails from a lot of 3,000 made in 1830 by Thos. Hanks and Abe Lincoln – whose father was the first pioneer of Macon County.” (The

³⁹⁹ Indianapolis correspondence by Charles A. Page, 30 April 1865, in Charles A. Page, Letters of a War Correspondent, ed. James R. Gilmore (Boston: L. C. Page, 1899), 376; Mark A. Plummer, Lincoln’s Rail-Splitter: Governor Richard J. Oglesby (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 41-42; _____ Johnson to William Herndon, [1865-66], Wilson and Davis, eds., Herndon’s Informants, 462-63; “Viator” to the editors, Decatur, 4 May, Illinois State Journal (Springfield), 7 May 1860. See also Jewell H. Aubere, “A Reminiscence of Abraham Lincoln: A Conversation with Speaker [Joseph] Cannon,” World’s Work 13 (1907): 8528-29.

sign painter was wrong about Hanks’s first name and about Thomas Lincoln’s status as an early settler in Illinois.) Oglesby’s carefully staged theatrical gesture, conjuring up images of the 1840 log-cabin-and-cider campaign, electrified the crowd. “One spontaneous burst of applause went up from all parts of the ‘wigwam,’ which grew more and more deafening as it was prolonged, and which did not wholly subside for ten or fifteen minutes after,” according to a journalist. “The cheers upon cheers which rent the air could have been heard all over the adjacent county.” In response to those thunderous outbursts and calls of “Lincoln,” the candidate-to-be rose, “looking a little sheepish,” examined the rails, then told the crowd: “Well, gentlemen, I must confess I do not understand this: I don’t think I know any more about it than you do.” He added jocularly that the rails may have been hewn by him, “but whether they were or not, he had mauled many and many better ones since he had grown to manhood.”⁴⁰⁰ (Another witness recalled Lincoln’s words slightly differently: “My old friend here, John Hanks, will remember I used to shirk splitting all the hard cuts. But if those two are honey locust rails, I have no doubt I cut and split them.”)⁴⁰¹ Once again the crowd cheered Lincoln, whose sobriquet “the rail-splitter” was born that day.⁴⁰²

According to Noah Brooks, Lincoln “was not greatly pleased with the rail

⁴⁰⁰ _____ Johnson to William H. Herndon, [1865-66], Wilson and Davis, ed., Herndon’s Informants, 462-63; Illinois State Journal (Springfield), 11 May 1860; Henry Asbury to K. K. Jones, Quincy, Illinois, 2 October 1882, copy, files of the Abraham Lincoln Association, Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield; Plummer, Oglesby, 42; statement given by Oglesby to J. McCan Davis, 1899, in Davis, How Abraham Lincoln Became President (Springfield: Illinois Co., 1909), 55-59; J. McCan Davis, “Origin of the Lincoln Rails as Related by Governor Oglesby,” Century Illustrated Magazine 60 (June 1900): 271-75; Wayne C. Temple, Lincoln the Railsplitter (La Crosse, Wisconsin: Willow Press, 1961), 7-12.

⁴⁰¹ “Republican History, Some Reminiscences of the Decatur Convention of 1860,” Illinois State Journal (Springfield), 26 May 1879.

⁴⁰² Plummer, Oglesby, 41-43.

incident,” for he disapproved of “stage tricks.”⁴⁰³ Still, Lincoln was rather proud of his rail-splitting talent. Brooks reported that while visiting Union troops at the front in 1863, Lincoln noticed trees that they had chopped down. Scrutinizing the stumps, he said: “That’s a good job of felling; they have got some good axemen in this army, I see.” When Brooks asked about his expertise in rail splitting, the president replied: “I am not a bit anxious about my reputation in that line of business; but if there is any thing in this world that I am a judge of, it is of good felling of timber.” He “explained minutely how a good job differed from a poor one, giving illustrations from the ugly stumps on either side.”⁴⁰⁴

A few days before the Decatur Convention met, Oglesby, who had been seeking ways to emphasize Lincoln’s humble origins (to justify something like Henry Clay’s cognomen, “the mill boy of the slashes”) had asked Hanks what Lincoln had been good at as a young settler in Illinois. “Well, not much of any kind but dreaming,” replied Hanks, “but he did help me split a lot of rails when we made a clearing twelve miles west of here.” Intrigued, Oglesby urged Hanks to show him the spot. They rode out, identified some rails that Lincoln and Hanks may have split three decades earlier, and carried away two of them. When Oglesby proposed to some friends that the rails be introduced at the Decatur convention, they told him to go ahead, for it could do no harm and might do some good.⁴⁰⁵ He was not the only Illinois Republican to think the rail splitter image would help Lincoln. In March, Nathan M. Knapp had told a friend: “I want Abe to run;

⁴⁰³ Brooks, Lincoln and the Downfall of American Slavery, 184.

⁴⁰⁴ Noah Brooks, “Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln,” Harper’s New Monthly Magazine, July 1865, in Michael Burlingame, ed., Lincoln Observed: Civil War Dispatches of Noah Brooks (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 213-14.

⁴⁰⁵ Jane Martin Johns, “The Nomination of Abraham Lincoln to the Presidency, an Unsolved Psychological Problem,” Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society 10 (1917-18): 564-65; Plummer, Oglesby, 41-42.

then I want a picture of him splitting rails on the Sangamon Bottom, with 50 cts per hundred marked on a chip placed in the fork of a tree nearby. I think it will win.”⁴⁰⁶

It is not entirely clear if Lincoln was surprised by the appearance of the rails. Oglesby allegedly reported that Lincoln “hunted up the rails himself, tied them together, and made sure they were ready for that scene in the convention.”⁴⁰⁷ The delegates may also have been prepared for the presentation of the rails; the Illinois State Journal had a day earlier informed readers that “[a]mong the sights which will greet your eyes will be a lot of rails, mauled . . . thirty years ago, by old Abe Lincoln and John Hanks.”⁴⁰⁸

After the ovations for Lincoln, George Schneider, an ardent Seward supporter, presciently remarked that his favorite “has lost the Illinois delegation.”⁴⁰⁹

The next day, when John M. Palmer introduced a resolution “that Abraham Lincoln is the first choice of Illinois for the Presidency, and that our delegates be instructed to use all honorable means for his nomination by the Chicago convention, and to cast their votes as a unit for him,” Thomas J. Turner, a leading champion of Seward’s candidacy, objected. He and Palmer “engaged in rather a bitter strain of remarks.”⁴¹⁰ Palmer “paid his respects to Mr. Turner, in a decidedly personal manner, reviewed his past record, and to use the language of an intense Lincoln man, ‘took the hide off him completely,’” asking if Turner were “so blind and deaf . . . that he cannot see and hear that this Convention is literally sitting on a volcano of its own enthusiasm for Abraham

⁴⁰⁶ N. M. Knapp to Ozias M. Hatch, Winchester, Illinois, 12 March 1860, Hatch Papers, Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield.

⁴⁰⁷ Joseph Fifer told this to Carl Sandburg. Notes of an interview with Fifer, n.d., Sandburg-Barrett Collection, Newberry Library, Chicago. Oglesby and another delegate to the convention were Fifer’s informants.

⁴⁰⁸ “Viator” to the editors, Decatur, 4 May, Illinois State Journal (Springfield), 7 May 1860.

⁴⁰⁹ Ida M. Tarbell, The Life of Abraham Lincoln (2 vols.; New York: McClure, Phillips, 1902), 1:340.

⁴¹⁰ Decatur correspondence by B., 9 May, Missouri Democrat (St. Louis), 10 May 1860.

Lincoln, and just aching to give three cheers and a tiger for Old Abe?” In response, the convention “went wild with enthusiasm” and passed the resolution. Lincoln, who “was visibly affected,” spoke a few words of thanks with a “benignant expression” which, according to delegate Richard Price Morgan, “disclosed to every man in that multitude the affectionate gratitude of his heart.”⁴¹¹

In selecting four at-large delegates, the committee charged with that duty asked Lincoln’s advice.⁴¹² The previous day, he had discussed that question with Judd, who recalled: “I told him I had no influence in that Convention, but that if he had any desires in relation to the matter I would do my best to have them brought about. He then told me that he wished but one thing done, and that was that Judge Davis should be sent as one of the delegates. And, he added, ‘Judd you ought to go.’”⁴¹³ In keeping with Lincoln’s wishes, both Davis, who was to act as Lincoln’s manager at Chicago, and Judd were named at-large delegates. (They did not particularly like each other but cooperated to promote Lincoln’s candidacy.)⁴¹⁴ The two other at-large delegates, also selected by Lincoln, were Gustave Koerner, an obvious choice to please the crucial German vote, and Orville H. Browning, a Bates supporter with close ties to the Old Whigs.⁴¹⁵ Lincoln ignored Davis’s plea to have John Wentworth named a delegate. Some of Lincoln’s friends, including Oglesby and Nathaniel G. Wilcox, insisted that appointing Browning

⁴¹¹ Chicago Herald, 12 May 1860; “Republican History, Some Reminiscences of the Decatur Convention of 1860,” Illinois State Journal (Springfield), 26 May 1879; “Lincoln at the Decatur Convention,” speech by Richard Price Morgan, delivered in Pontiac, Illinois, 12 December 1909, in Isaac N. Phillips, ed., Abraham Lincoln by Some Men Who Knew Him (1910; Chicago: Americana House, 1950), 65.

⁴¹² Isaac N. Arnold, The Life of Abraham Lincoln (Chicago: Jansen, McClurg, 1885), 163.

⁴¹³ Judd, interview with Nicolay, Washington, 28 February 1876, Burlingame, ed., Oral History of Lincoln, 46.

⁴¹⁴ Whitney, Life on the Circuit, ed. Angle, 100.

⁴¹⁵ Maurice Baxter, Orville H. Browning, Lincoln’s Friend and Critic (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1957), 95-97; Koerner, Memoirs, 2:83.

would be “putting the child into the nurse[']s arms to be strangled.”⁴¹⁶ Lincoln replied, “I guess you had better let Browning go.” He explained: “I know that old Browning is not for me . . . , but it won’t do to leave him out of the convention,” for he “will do more harm on the outside than he could on the inside.” Lincoln was “satisfied that Bates has no show. When Orville sees this he’ll undoubtedly come over to me, and do us some good with the Bates men.”⁴¹⁷ (Indeed he would, as events turned out.) Of the eighteen delegates chosen by congressional district, a few were pro-Seward, but operating under the unit rule, all would vote for Lincoln.⁴¹⁸ “Our delegation will stick to Lincoln as long as there is a chance to prevent Seward getting any votes from us at all,” Herman Kreismann predicted.⁴¹⁹ The Illinoisans were prepared to work hard for Lincoln’s nomination, but they did not really expect him to win.⁴²⁰ A reporter speculated that the Illinois delegates “will cast a complimentary vote for Lincoln” then turn to some other

⁴¹⁶ Plummer, Oglesby, 43; Henry Asbury to K. K. Jones, Quincy, Illinois, 2 October 1882, copy, files of the Abraham Lincoln Association, Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield.

⁴¹⁷ Ida Tarbell to John S. Phillips, Bloomington, Illinois, 16 November 1922, recounting a conversation with Oglesby’s friend Joseph Fifer, Tarbell Papers, Allegheny College; Nathaniel G. Wilcox to Lincoln, Frederick, Illinois, 6 June 1864, Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress; obituary of David Davis, Chicago Times, 27 June 1886; Carl Sandburg’s notes of an interview with Joseph Fifer, n.d., Sandburg-Barrett Collection, Newberry Library, Chicago. Oglesby and another delegate to the convention were Fifer’s informants.

⁴¹⁸ Leonard Swett asserted that eight delegates were pro-Seward. Swett to Josiah H. Drummond, 27 May 1860, Portland, Maine, Evening Express, n.d., copied in the New York Sun, 26 July 1891. Some of the Seward supporters were German-Americans. Joseph K. C. Forrest to Thurlow Weed, Chicago, 10 March 1860, Weed Papers, University of Rochester; Joseph Medill to Ida M. Tarbell, Chicago, 9 June 1896, Tarbell Papers, Allegheny College.

⁴¹⁹ Kreismann said that “Only three or fo[u]r Seward men were elected” delegates to the Chicago Convention. One was from the first congressional district; another was from Chicago; Grove of Peoria was also for Seward. “McLane is the choice of the majority of our delegates next to Lincoln.” Judd and Cook were leaning toward Wade. Kreismann to E. B. Washburne, Chicago, 13 May 1860, Washburne Papers, Library of Congress. Simon Whiteley told Cameron that only four strong Seward men were chosen at Decatur. If Lincoln faltered, they would go for the New Yorker; the other eighteen would back the candidate most likely to win. Of those eighteen, half a dozen were inclined to support the Pennsylvanian. Whiteley to Cameron, Decatur, 10 May 1860, Cameron Papers, Library of Congress.

⁴²⁰ William Jayne to Lyman Trumbull, Springfield, 20 May 1860, Lyman Trumbull Papers, Library of Congress.

candidate.⁴²¹ Above all else they wanted to stop Seward, whose nomination would make it impossible for Republicans to win the legislature, which was to choose a U.S. senator in 1861. They dreaded the prospect of having a Democrat replace Trumbull.

Francis Lou and James M. Ruggles, delegates who were staying at the same Decatur hotel as Lincoln, invited the rail-splitter to accompany them to Chicago for the national convention. “I should like to go,” he replied, “but possibly I am too much of a candidate to be there – and probably not enough to keep me away – on the whole I think I had best not go.” Enthusiastically they declared, “as to that, Mr. Lincoln, we are going to nominate you,” and boarded a train for the Windy City.⁴²²

Lincoln was not so sure. When Richard Henry Morgan asked him about his chances at Chicago, he guessed that he might receive around 100 votes. “I have a notion that will be the high mark for me,” he predicted.⁴²³ In March, Henry C. Whitney told Lincoln that he could win the presidential nomination; in reply Lincoln modestly brushed aside his friend’s speculation, saying: “It is enough honor for me to be talked about for it.”⁴²⁴ Around that time he told a student in his law office, “I haven’t a chance in a hundred.”⁴²⁵ To William Bross, who suggested that he should be preparing his acceptance speech, “for the Republicans will nominate you for President,” Lincoln cautiously

⁴²¹ Decatur correspondence by B., 9 May, Missouri Democrat (St. Louis), 10 May 1860.

⁴²² J. M. Ruggles, “Reminiscences of the Pekin Convention and of Abraham Lincoln,” undated manuscript, Ida Tarbell Papers, Allegheny College. Lincoln told Leonard Swett and William N. Coler the same thing. New York correspondence by “Jerome,” 6 February, Indiana Journal (Indianapolis), 10 February 1879; Whitney, Life on the Circuit, ed. Angle, 102.

⁴²³ Morgan, “Lincoln at the Decatur Convention,” 68.

⁴²⁴ Whitney, Life on the Circuit, ed. Angle, 102.

⁴²⁵ Reminiscences of John H. Littlefield, Every Where, February 1902, in Joseph Fort Newton, Lincoln and Herndon (Cedar Rapids, Iowa: Torch Press, 1910), 251.

replied: “Well, it does look a little that way; but we can never be sure about such things.”⁴²⁶

⁴²⁶ William Bross to John G. Nicolay, Chicago, 25 January 1887, Nicolay Papers, Library of Congress.