

ness affairs, appear to believe that a lawyer is justifiable in resorting to any kind of falsehood and trickery to gain *their* cases. Such men can do more to elevate the morals of the profession by employing none but such as they believe to be honest — of whom there are as many as in any other calling, with perhaps one exception — than can be done in any other way. So long as lawyers are employed because they are regarded as being dishonest, so long will the profession be subject to reproach because it has bad men in its ranks.

That persons outside of the profession begin to think seriously of assisting to rid it of such lawyers is a good indication, and their efforts should receive every encouragement.

John D. Works.

A Letter of Lincoln.

THE remarkable popular interest in everything that throws light upon the character of Abraham Lincoln, which the serial publication of his life in *THE CENTURY MAGAZINE* in part finds and in part creates, emboldens me to believe that a recent discovery of my own bearing on the matter may be accepted by many readers as a contribution not without its value to the growing public fund of Lincoln *memorabilia*. I use the word "discovery," although that word may seem not fit, when I say, as I must, that what I discovered was already public enough to be seen framed and hanging on one of the interior walls of the fine State Capitol in Nashville, Tennessee. The documents to which I refer are now no longer to be seen where I saw them, they having, since my visit to Nashville a few years ago, been removed to a much less frequented place of custody in the same city. Through the intervention of a friend I lately found them again, though not without trouble, and here show them for the examination of the curious.

They consist of two letters, one written to, and the other written by, Abraham Lincoln. How they came into public keeping, and with what history, in the case of the illustrious writer of one of the letters, they may be associated, I have sought in vain to learn. But the letters happily explain themselves. Perhaps the enterprising authors of the biography now being published in the magazine may be able to bring these letters into their proper setting in the circumstances of Lincoln's life.

One thing was very noteworthy in the autograph letter of Lincoln, and that was its immaculately neat and correct mechanical execution. The manuscript had the physiognomy and air of one produced by an habitually fastidious literary man. The handwriting was finished enough to be called elegant; the punctuation, the spelling, the capitalizing, were as conscientious as the turn of the phrase may be seen to be.

It is a Mr. W. G. Anderson who writes a covertly threatening letter to Lincoln — little dreaming at the moment that it was an historic document that he was so seriously inditing. The date is Lawrenceville, October 30, 1840. The address is stiffly, meant perhaps to be even formidably, formal. It is "A. Lincoln, Esqr.; Dear Sir." Mr. Anderson straitly says:

"On our first meeting on Wednesday last, a difficulty in words ensued between us, which I deem it my duty to notice further. I think you were the aggressor. Your words imported insult; and whether you meant them

as such is for you to say. You will therefore please inform me on this point. And if you designed to offend me, please communicate to me your present feelings on the subject, and whether you persist in the stand you took."

And Mr. Anderson sternly signs himself, "Your obedient Servant."

There now was a chance for Mr. Abraham Lincoln. How will he meet it? Will he chaff Mr. Anderson? Will he give him stiffness for stiffness? There will surely be an interesting revelation of character. The actual fact is, if Abraham Lincoln had known, in writing his reply, that he was writing it much more for the whole world and for all future generations, than simply for his personal friend Mr. Anderson, to read, I do not see how he could have written it better for the advantage of his own good fame. Here is his reply:

LAWRENCEVILLE, Oct. 31st, 1840.

W. G. ANDERSON.

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

Yours etc.

A. LINCOLN.

What more satisfactory light on the manly and gentlemanly spirit of the future President could one wish for than that? It certainly lacks nothing — unless it be a grace of distinctively Christ-like winningness, such as Paul could have given it.

I will venture to hope that when the Lincoln biographers come to publish the biography in book form, they may secure a facsimile reproduction of the original of this interesting letter.

William C. Wilkinson.

The Life of Lincoln — a Letter from General G. W. Smith.

IN their discussion of the battle of Seven Pines, in *THE CENTURY MAGAZINE* for October last, the biographers of President Lincoln have fallen into several errors, some of which will be briefly specified. They say, in substance:

1. That General Johnston made his plans without any reference to the possible initiative of General McClellan, with no thought of an offensive return, and that Johnston's purpose was put in action with great decision and promptitude.

2. That it had been the duty of the forces under G. W. Smith to strike the right flank of the Union army as soon as the assault of Longstreet and Hill became fully developed.

3. That if General McClellan had crossed his army, instead of one division, at the time that Johnston's entire force was engaged at Seven Pines, the rout of the Southern army would have been complete and the way to Richmond would have been a military promenade.

4. That it is hardly denied by the most passionate of McClellan's partisans that the way was open before him to Richmond on the afternoon of the first day; that being McClellan's greatest opportunity.

5. That there was great confusion and discouragement in the rebel councils after General Johnston was wounded and the command had devolved by seniority upon General G. W. Smith.

6. That the Union troops south of the Chickahominy, though wearied by death and wounds, had yet suffered no loss of *morale*; on the contrary, their spirits had been heightened by the stubborn fight of Saturday and the easy victory of Sunday.

7. That the Confederates had thrown almost their whole force against McClellan's left wing (Keyes and Heintzelman), and on the second day were streaming back to Richmond in discouragement and disorder.

8. Messrs. Nicolay and Hay approvingly quote from an official report made by General Barnard in 1863: "We now know the state of disorganization and dismay in which the rebel army retreated. We now know that it could have been followed into Richmond."

Occupying the second place in command, I was in a position to know that:

(1) General Johnston did not make his plans without providing for the possible initiative of General McClellan and the probability of an offensive return, as the disposition of the troops fully indicates; and his purpose was not "put in action" with promptitude.

(2) Instead of it being the duty of the forces under G. W. Smith to strike the right flank of the Union troops as soon as the assault of Longstreet and Hill became fully developed, it was their duty to guard against a possible advance of McClellan's right wing.

(3) Owing to the swelled condition of the Chickahominy it was physically impossible for General McClellan to have "crossed his army, instead of one division." And, owing to the fact that only a small portion of Johnston's force was engaged at Seven Pines, if the other Federal corps could have crossed the Chickahominy after Sumner, they would have found themselves confronted on the field by nine Confederate brigades that were not in action the first day. Besides, there were three divisions on our left then covering Richmond. The way to that city, through and over all these forces, in addition to the five brigades that had beaten McClellan's left wing (Keyes and Heintzelman), and the four brigades that checked Sumner, would have been no easy "military promenade."

(4) The way to Richmond was not open to McClellan on the afternoon of the first day.

(5) There was no "confusion in the rebel councils" when the command devolved upon me. It is true there was a lack of information in regard to the condition of affairs on the Williamsburg road, but as soon as I heard that a large portion of General Longstreet's forces had not been engaged there, I ordered him to renew the attack as early as practicable the next morning (June 1).

(6) A very large portion of the Union troops that were beaten on the first day (May 31) suffered great "loss of *morale*." The so-called "easy victory of Sunday" consisted in the repulse of six Confederate regiments that attacked the Federal lines on the second day, and the repulse — by another Confederate brigade — of the Federals who pursued the beaten six regiments.

(7) On the first day the Confederates attacked McClellan's left wing with but five brigades. So far from streaming back to Richmond in discouragement and disorder, they remained in possession of the captured works, on the Williamsburg road, nearly twenty-four hours after the fighting ended; and on the Nine-mile road closely confronted Sumner's corps, at Fair Oaks, for several days thereafter.

(8) Ten of the eighteen Confederate brigades which took part in these operations returned to their former positions, covering Richmond, the day after the fighting ended, and eight brigades remained on or near the battlefield.

The theory that at Seven Pines "the Confederates attacked in full force, were repulsed, retreated in disorganization and dismay, and might easily have been followed into Richmond," is refuted by the official records and by indisputable facts and proofs elsewhere published.

Gustavus W. Smith,
Late Major-General C. S. A.

The Mother's Right.

AMONG the many "rights" which women are demanding and exercising to-day, the mother's right to forestall "reform" and make "criminal legislation" unnecessary runs the risk of being overlooked. Our public-spirited women are doing, in many directions, good and noble work for fallen man; but it is a serious question with the thoughtful observer whether the average mother is not guilty of more corruption in the nursery than can be reformed by her sisters from the public platform.

That the smallest infant has hereditary tendencies from ancestors near and remote, whose influence precedes all exercise of a mother's power, none will deny. A father's strong influence, for good or evil, all will acknowledge. The subsequent benumbing atmosphere of "society" cannot be forgotten. But closer than all these has throbbled the mother's heart, and in those earliest and only years in which man entertains absolutely unquestioning faith in human teaching, it is his mother who represents to him the law of life.

It would probably startle the great mass of well-meaning mothers to have the adult errors of their sons explained as were those of the Hebrew king, "For his mother was his counselor to do wickedly"; and yet, let us see what close observation of the home rule of a large proportion of even so-called "Christian women" reveals.

While the writer was visiting the relatives of a celebrated clergyman, the distinguished man, who had not been in that part of the country for years, accepted an invitation to meet several friends informally. The seven-year-old son of the family, given to loud roaring whenever his wishes were crossed, was allowed to sit up and was thus exhorted: "Now, Tom, you must behave well; for your uncle is a celebrated man, and I want him to admire you." Result: Tom the most perfect of imitation gentlemen for that evening, while roaring and kicking as lustily as ever at breakfast the next morning; the conviction remaining with him that to seem and not to be is the important thing in life.

A mother, an active and prominent member of various public societies for "liberalizing thought" and