

## OPEN LETTERS.

## The Works of Lincoln as a Political Classic.

**D**URING the academic year 1894-5, at the University of Pennsylvania, perhaps for the first time in this country, the "Speeches, State Papers, and Miscellaneous Writings" of Abraham Lincoln were made the basis of a special course for graduate students in the constitutional history of this country, from the repeal of the Missouri Compromise in 1850 to the adoption of the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution in 1870. Of the course of American government, commonwealth and national, during this period, relatively far less is known than of its course during the entire preceding period of our history. Nor is this strange. The political ideas of our earlier statesmen, Washington, Franklin, Adams, Jefferson, Hamilton, Marshall, and of their immediate successors, Webster, Calhoun, Clay, Benton, have been accessible in their published works. But of the ideas of the succeeding generation of our public men but little is now known. After 1850 the histories of the United States become military records: the evolution of American government is imperfectly traced in the best of them. Military history has little place in a course of study outside of a military school. There is not at present a constitutional history of the United States during the most critical period of our history — from 1850 to the close of the era of reconstruction. There is, however, a vast mass of material comprising the documentary record of American government, commonwealth and national, during this period, in the various departments — legislative, judicial, executive, and administrative. This material, comprising about thirty thousand volumes, has never been collected in one library, and it is impossible for any other than the wealthiest universities to possess even a portion of it. Most American schools, in the courses in American history and government which they offer, must be satisfied to use the works of American statesmen and the treatises prepared by specialists.

During this critical period of our nineteenth-century history, Abraham Lincoln bears a part and serves a function comparable only to Washington's in the eighteenth century. The publication of the complete works of Lincoln by The Century Co. in 1894 is the most important contribution of our times to a just conception of the evolution of American democracy during this period. In the debates with Senator Douglas, Lincoln is the voice of American democracy. He is not then the Lincoln whom we now know; he is the Lincoln of political debate, not the Lincoln of national administration. He grew in thought as the people grew. In his state papers this growth is recorded; and it is undoubtedly true that in no other records of the time is the course of public opinion in America so accurately traced as in the speeches, in the state papers, and in the miscellaneous writings of this man. His political ideas are, in our day at least, authoritative and classic, and the exhaustive study of them is the natural course for any person who expects to understand the political evolution since his death. Aside from the fascinating character of the man

himself, the study of his notions of representative government, in correlation with the course of events in which his was individually the leading mind, is an equipment for American citizenship; and such equipment was never more needed than at the present time.

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA. *Francis N. Thorpe.*

## Zachariah Chandler in Lincoln's Second Campaign.

MR. NOAH BROOKS, in his admirable article on "Two War-Time Conventions," in the *MARCH CENTURY*, dwells on the intense depression that was felt during the summer months preceding President Lincoln's reelection, and especially on the Wade-Davis manifesto, which, coupled with Frémont's nomination, represented the hostility of the radical Republicans. It is now evident that Mr. Lincoln would have been reelected in spite of the Frémont-Cochrane movement and the Wade-Davis defection; but all writers agree that the uncertainties of that summer of 1864 were such as to imperil the chances of success for the Republican party.

It is known that later in the campaign Senator Wade took the stump for Mr. Lincoln; that Henry Winter Davis suddenly dropped his destructive pen; and that General Frémont, forgetting his former biting criticisms, withdrew from the contest, and came out in favor of the Baltimore ticket. It is also known that during the campaign Mr. Lincoln asked for the resignation of his postmaster-general, Montgomery Blair. That all these changes came about as the result of negotiations undertaken by Senator Chandler of Michigan is not generally known; and so far as I can discover, none of the biographers of Lincoln has undertaken to connect the resignation of Blair with the withdrawal of Frémont and the conversion of Senator Wade and Representative Davis.

Zachariah Chandler had been one of a trio (Cameron and Wade being the others) who, before the war, had agreed to take up one another's quarrels in case of an insult from a Southern senator; and the knowledge of this combination had secured a considerable degree of respect on the part of the Democratic majority in the Senate prior to 1861. As a result of this early friendship, Mr. Chandler was in a position to appeal to Wade to withdraw his opposition to Mr. Lincoln. Moreover, the two men were much alike, both being quick-tempered, rough-spoken, and aggressive. The interview took place at Mr. Wade's home, near Ashtabula, Ohio; and Mr. George Jerome of Detroit, who accompanied Mr. Chandler, describes the meeting as rather titanic in its nature. Mr. Wade finally gave as his ultimatum the withdrawal from the cabinet of Montgomery Blair, whom the entire radical faction of the Republican party believed to be at heart a Democrat, and against whom they had worded one of the planks in the Baltimore platform.

Going directly from Mr. Wade to the President, Mr.



Chandler secured from Mr. Lincoln the pledge that if the negotiations he had undertaken should prove successful, Mr. Blair would be retired—a move Lincoln had twice before declined to make. Going next to Mr. Davis at Baltimore, Mr. Chandler persuaded that gentleman to fall in with the large plan of withdrawing all the elements of opposition.

Next, Mr. Chandler turned his attention to the withdrawal of the Frémont-Cochrane ticket, and with this end in view established headquarters at the Astor House, New York, in September, 1864. In a talk with General Frémont, on March 4, 1889, I learned from him that his confidence in the patriotism of Mr. Chandler, and his reliance on Mr. Lincoln's promise to retire Montgomery Blair (General Frémont explained at length the feud between his family and the Blairs), led him to consent to withdraw, provided Mr. Chandler could arrange matters with the supporters of the movement. Hon. E. O. Grosvenor of Jonesville, Michigan, who was a guest at the Astor House during the negotiations, says that he had daily knowledge of the progress made, and that the utmost delicacy and firmness were required in order to handle the disaffected elements that had kept the Frémont ticket in the field as a rallying-point for nominating General Grant, and thus forcing Lincoln out of the contest, if possible. In these negotiations George Wilkes, of the "Spirit of the Times," who had already made a reputation as a war correspondent, developed marked diplomatic and political abilities as Mr. Chandler's sole assistant.

On September 22, Mr. Chandler, accompanied by Mr. David H. Jerome, afterward governor of Michigan, had a private interview with Mr. Lincoln, to announce the complete success of his labors. That afternoon the Washington papers contained Frémont's card of withdrawal; and on the 23d Mr. Lincoln asked for and received the resignation of Montgomery Blair.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

*Charles Moore.*

#### Reforestation Michigan Lands.

I HAVE read with great interest the articles upon Prof. Sargent's plan for the preservation of the public forests by military control, but have seen no communication from Michigan, a State which has been the greatest pine-producer in the Union, and still has immense quantities to come to market. I am impressed with the necessity of including in the whole scheme a systematic policy of reforestation in the several States.

Michigan owns hundreds of thousands of acres of land which were formerly covered with pine, but which, having been denuded, have been allowed by their owners to revert to the State, not being considered worth the taxes assessed against them. Mr. Austin Carey of Bangor, Maine, special expert in the employment of the Agricultural Department, has been engaged during the past winter in inspecting the denuded regions in this peninsula, with a view to the possibility of replanting them with pine. After carefully going over the whole ground, taking into consideration the conditions of soil and climate, measuring the annual growth of trees of known age, etc., Mr. Carey has come to the conclusion that white and Norway pine can be easily and readily grown on the lands from which they have been cut, and that nothing is necessary but to

guard the young shoots carefully from fires and from the ravages of sheep and cattle. His figures show that the denuded pine lands can be reforested with a pine growth that in forty years will yield merchantable timber.

Here, then, is an opportunity. We have at Lansing perhaps the best agricultural college in the United States, where young men are being trained in arboriculture. Let a special branch of forestry be established, and let the State make the experiment of planting each year a specific acreage of denuded lands with white and Norway pine. Let the students in the forestry branch be required to make reports on the growth of these trees from year to year, with special reference to soil, climatic conditions, humidity, etc. In this way a fund of information on this subject would be gathered that would soon be invaluable. Should the experiment prove a success, it would induce individual owners of cut lands to begin planting trees, and in a comparatively short time our peninsula would be in as good condition as ever as regards forest growth.

MANISTEE, MICHIGAN.

*A. R. Ferguson.*

#### The Tool-house at Home.

I WISH to present a plea for a "tool-house" at home for the young people, and one well stocked with the best tools. A great deal of creditable work has doubtless been done with a jack-knife and an old cross-cut saw, reinforced, possibly, with a half-worn-out smoothing-plane, a rusty bit or two, and, perhaps, a chisel; and a certain amount of ingenuity has unquestionably been developed by the adaptation of these tools to the work in hand. But, after all, the best that can usually be said of such work is that it is very well done considering the means. The edges are rarely square and true, the joints are rarely well made, and the time consumed on the "job" is apt to be unduly prolonged, so that the work, if intended for something more than a mere makeshift, becomes wearisome before it is completed. A necessary consequence is that the boy (or girl, for there is no reason why a girl should be ignorant of the use of tools) becomes discouraged with his work, and decides that his forte is in some other direction. If, on the other hand, a boy once becomes familiar with the use of good tools,—tools such as an artisan would use for the same work,—the knowledge stands by him, and is a source of constant pleasure and often of some profit. When a boy can "square up" the edges of two boards, each ten feet long and an inch thick, so that on laying these edges snugly together the line of contact is visible only on close examination, he has got his eye and hand under such control that he can do a workmanlike piece of carpentry at any time. But a true straight edge cannot well be made with a short smoothing-plane. To forestall a remark sometimes heard, let me add here that the boy who can make a good joint with a fore-plane will, if circumstances compel, do better work with a smoothing-plane than can be done by the boy who has never made a good joint at all. I do not think it true, as is often implied, that a knowledge of good tools makes a man less ingeniously effective in cases where good tools are not to be had. I have seen a man exert considerable energy, and exercise some ingenuity, in searching for a board of the proper width to piece out the cover to a