The influence that made Lincoln a lawyer.

Jesse W. Fell, in a letter written to Judge David Davis, Dec. 15, 1865, on the occasion of the then recent death of Hon. John T. Stuart of Springfield, Ills., speaks warmly of his own obligations to Mr. Stuart for friendly advice and assistance in making his start in the legal profession on his arrival in Illinois in 1832.

Mr. Stuart was then already in high standing professionally, and became later one of the most eminent members of the Ill. bar. It was in the winter of 1834-5, when Mr. Stuart was a member of the legislature from Sangamon Co., and Mr. Fell had occasion to spend most of the winter at the state capitol, that Mr. Fell first made the acquaintance of Abraham Lincoln, who was also a member of that legislature from Sangamon Co., serving his first term. Mr. Fell in the cited letter says:

"Representing the same county, I found these two congenial spirits not only boarding at the same house but rooming and sleeping together. Socially and politically they seemed inseparable.

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It took no Solomon to find out they were born companions. Though nearly the same in Stature, there physically speaking, the similitude ended. The one was symmetrical, almost handsome, graceful, courteous, having all the adornments of a polished gentleman. The other raw boned, angular features deeply furrowed, ungraceful, almost uncouth, having little if any of that polish so essential in society life, and yet there was a magnetism and dash about the man that made him a universal favorite. Underneath that rough exterior it was easy to find out, dwelt a mind and a

heart of immense powers, as after years have fully shown.

I shall never forget the impression then made by this Magnus Apollo of coming events, who at that time was still living at New Salem, not yet having made up his mind to study law.

It was, however, about that time he arrived at that conclusion, and it is very questionable indeed whether he ever would have adopted this profession had he not been thus associated.

It is well known he had an exalted opinion of the life and

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and character of Washington and Franklin, and of the serviceable lives they rendered to the country and to mankind; and why not imitate one of these?

His friend John Calhoun had just taught him the art of surveying land, which was one step in the footsteps of his ideal man.

He doubted, too, at that time, his capacity to make the practice of law a success, and always had an instinctive aversion to the practice as too often followed burying the man in the advocate. To overcome doubt and remove obstacles it required just such a man as our friend Mr. Stuart, with his knowledge of the world, and of Mr. Lincoln and his surroundings; and

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the probabilities are he never rendered so important a service to his country and mankind as in this very matter". x x x

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Mr. Fell continued to be a warm personal and political friend of Mr. Lincoln, and a frequent and efficient co-worker with him, politically and otherwise, during their joint lives.

Both were active workers in the hot presidential campaigns of 1840 & 44 in Ill. In the latter year especially Mr. Lincoln, as candidate for elector canvassed the state diligently in behalf of Henry Clay. Mr. Fell also

who had a great admiration for Clay gave much time and labor to the work of the campaign.

The following brief letter hereto for unpublished has an interest as showing a continuation of the fellowship between these two -

Washington March 1 - 1848

Friend Fell:

Your kind letter of the 7th Feb., enclosing a petition for peace, was received a day or two ago. I shall present it at the proper time.

It now seems to be understood on all hands that

the war is over - that the treaty sent in will be ratified.

I will try to get the time to write you a longer letter soon; but I am really too much hurried to do so now.

Yours as ever -

A. Lincoln

J. W. Fell: Bayou, Ill.

Kansas Nebraska Controversy - 1854

I refer you to Oldroyd's Lincoln Memorial Album (p. 468 &c) for an account written by J. W. Fell, of the opening at Bloomington of the campaign of 1854 in Illinois, which resulted in the election of a legislature by which

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Lincoln was the favorite candidate for U. S. Senator, though ultimately set aside for another

" "

Lincoln in 1856

May 29th 1856 the first Republican Convention in Ill. was held in Bloomington. It was largely attended and characterized by the greatest enthusiasm and unanimity. John M. Palmer afterward governor and senator presided.

Mr. Lincoln on this occasion delivered a speech which is still spoken of by survivors who heard it, as one of the most powerful and eloquent, perhaps the very most so, ever made by him; and those who say so were

familiar with his greatest speeches, too. The Bloomington paper (Pantagraph) said of it at the time; "Several most heart stirring speeches were made during the convention; but without being invidious, we must say that Mr. Lincoln, on Thursday evening, surpassed all others — was himself. His points were unanswerable and the force and power of his appeals irresistible.

At this convention, Mr. Lincoln was named as a delegate to the National Convention at Phila. But being unable to attend, N. H. Frell (Brother of J. W. Frell) was as his alternate. Fremont and John McLean divided the vote for President; and the former was nominated. For Vice Pres., Hon John Allison of Pennsylvania nominated A. Lincoln, who received on the informal ballot

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one hundred and ten votes 25 (11
two hundred fifty nine for Clayton and
scattering votes for many others. On the
formal ballot, the Ill. delegation
withdrew Lincoln's name with an
intimation that they reserved him
for higher honors thereafter and
Mr. Clayton was nominated.

1858

As the time approached for the
election in '58 of a legislature in
Ill. which would again have to elect
a U. S. Senator, it became so evident
that the senatorship would be the real
object of the campaign that a sentiment
grew up in the Republican party in
favor of the unusual step of making a
nomination for senator at the
state convention by way of early
emphasizing the unanimous de-
termination of the party that Lincoln
and no other should be chosen in
case the legislature should be
Republican. It was understood
of course that Douglas would be (12
the Democratic choice.

In the McLean Co. convention
held early in June a resolution
offered by J. W. Fell declaring A.
Lincoln "our first, last and only
choice" for Senator was adopted
with great applause; and throughout
the state the sentiment manifested
was substantially the same.
The State convention met June 16th.
There were about six hundred regular
delegates, but some fifteen hundred
attended including alternates;
besides as many others as could
get into or near the hall.

A resolution was unanimously
adopted declaring Lincoln the
"first and only choice of the Republicans
of Ill." for senator. A banner which
had been brought in by the Chicago
delegation declaring "Cook Co. for
Abraham Lincoln" was" amended
on motion of an outside delegate
to read "Ill." instead of "Cook Co."

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At the evening meeting Mr. Lincoln delivered his celebrated speech "a house divided against itself."

July 9th '58 Mr. Douglas returning from Washington had a public reception at the Tremont House in Chicago at which he made an elaborate speech attacking the Springfield speech of Mr. Lincoln. The next day, in Chicago, Mr. Lincoln replied at length. July 16th Mr. Douglas on his way to Springfield stopped over at Bloomington and made an evening speech in the court house square. Mr. Lincoln was present and was called out by the crowd after Douglas closed; but he declined to speak at that time, as the meeting had been called by the friends of Douglas.

Next day July 17th Mr.

Douglas proceeded to Springfield by a special train, speaking at two or three points on the way, as well as at Springfield itself; and at Springfield the same evening Mr. Lincoln made a powerful reply to the former efforts of Douglas.

Some doubt having been expressed regarding the dates of these earliest speeches, these particulars have been deduced from a newspaper file of the time.

July 24th Mr. Lincoln wrote Mr. Douglas proposing the joint debates. After some correspondence an arrangement was made to address the same audiences in the seven congressional districts in which the two champions had not already spoken. (There were nine districts.)

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