Sept. 25, 1858.

It is astonishing how deep an interest in politics this people take. Over long, weary miles of hot and dusty prairie, the processions of eager partisans come---on foot, on horseback, in wagons drawn by horses or mules; men, women and children, old and young; the half sick, just out of the last "shake;" children in arms, infants at the the maternal fount, pushing on in clouds of dust and beneath a blazing sun; settling down at the town where the meeting is with hardly a chance for eating sitting, and even less opportunity for eating, waiting in anxious groups for hours at the places of speaking, taking, discussing, litigious, vociferous, while the roar of artillery, the music of bands, the waving of banners, the huzzas of the crowds, as delegation after delegation appears; the cry of peddlers, vending all sorts of wares, from an infallible cure for "agur" to a monstrous watermelon in slices to suit purchasers---combining to render the occasion one scene of confusion and commotion. The hour of one arrives, and a perfect rush is made for the grounds; a column of dust rising to the heavens and fairly deluging those who are hurrying on through it. Then the speakers come, with flags, and banners, and music, surrounded by cheering partisans. Their arrival at the ground and immediate approach to the stand is the signal for shouts that rend the heavens. They are introduced to the audience amid prolonged and enthusiastic cheers; they are interrupted by frequent applause, and they sit down finally amid the same uproarious demonstrations. The audience sit or stand patiently throughout, and as the last word is spoken, make a break for their homes, first hunting up lost members of their families, gathering their scattered wagon loads together, and as the daylight fades away, entering again upon the broad prairies and slowly picking their way back "to the place of beginning."

These demonstrations are in the main alike, but this at ~~Springfield~~ Charleston has been in some particulars in advance of others. The display of banners and mottoes was unusually large. Across the main street were suspended three flags, bearing Lincoln's name, and a huge white banner; on one side the words, "Coles County for Lincoln,"

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and on the other an immense painting representing a man in a wagon driving a team of six horses. This was "Abe, as he appeared thirty years ago," when he drove a wagon across this country; then a poor teamster, unnoticed and unknown; now the object of almost idolatrous devotion from the people of the same country. Innumerable other banners and devices, expressive of a like feeling, were carried in the crowd.

Mr. Lincoln spent the night at Mattoon, ten miles distant, and was escorted thence by the entire town in wagons. From Charleston, there went forth to meet him a large delegation, and with it the pleasantest feature of the occasion: a large wagon, covered with a canopy, was decorated with blue and white cloth, festoons of leaves and wreaths of flowers. Inside were thirty-one young ladies, dressed in white, on their heads blue velvet caps, with wreaths of green and a silver star. Each young lady waved a white banner, with the name of a state upon it. Behind was a young lady on horseback, bearing the banner, "Kansas---I will be free"---(I may remark, in passing, an unfortunate declaration for a young lady). Following her were thirty-one young men on horseback. The wagon containing the young ladies had upon one side the words, "Lincoln, Oglesby, Marshall, Craddock;" on the other,

> "Westward the Star of Empire takes its way.
> The girls link-on to Loncoln, as their mothers did to Clay."

As the procession arrived and made its way through the dense crowd, the young ladies were greeted with immense cheers, to which they responded by the waving of their banners. Mr. Lincoln, in his reception speech, gracefully alluded to these this pretty spectacle as "a basket of flowers." Mr. Douglas, too, spent the night at Mattoon and came over with his friends. A wagon with thirteen young ladies met him in procession and these were followed by thirty-one ladies on horseback, attended by as many gentlemen. Oh! how fearfully dusty candidates and cavalcades were when they arrived in front of the hotels. The two wagongs I have mentioned were drawn upon the grounds, where the most intense enthusiasm was manifested at their appearance.

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