January 30, 1922

Mr. George Hambrecht,
Madison, Wisc.

Dear Mr. Hambrecht:

I was wrong about the date of your address, had counted on it for the 12th of February. I have been so busy that I have been putting off everything. I hope the following will not come amiss:

There are many things that one might say of Abraham Lincoln, suitable as a message of greeting to such a body as the Loyal Legion of Wisconsin. Indeed almost anything of his or about him, if it is true, is dear to honest Americans. What is it that he has to give us most worth while in a period of distration and disorganization such as we are going through? I hear people asking constantly, what would Licoln have done in our place? Constantly backing up argument with quotations from his letters and speeches. There seems not to be a cause which does not try to strengthen itself through him.

It is a conscious tribute to the faith that people have in him. But many of us who quote him fail to get from him the real help he has to give. It is not his opinion on a particular subject, not his wit and wisdom as expressed in his letters and speeches which are his great contribution; it is from the temper with which he approached his problems, the methods by which he handled them that we can learn most. His life was a call to self-training - of training of the mind until it can form sound-workmanlike, trustworthy conclusions, training of the moral nature to justice and rightness - training of the will until it can be counted on to back up the conclusions of the mind and heart. It is a call to openness of mind, willingness to learn.

His method is a constant lesson in liberality towards others, to a recognition that there may be something to be said of the other man's point of view as well as of yours, that you no more see all the truth than he does, and that if what each of you see can be fused, a larger amount of truth will result. Above all, his method is a revelation of what a man can make out of himself if he will. Indeed I am sometimes inclined to feel that the greatest service Lincoln has done this country was to demonstrate what could be made of a mind by passionate, persistent effort. What moral heights the nature would rise to if dealt with in perfect candor,

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Taking him all in all, it is doubtful if this country or any country has produced a man so worthy of our studying and following as is Abraham Lincoln.

I hope, my dear Mr. Hambrecht, that the above is somewhere near what you want. Of course you are entirely at liberty to cut it or not to use it if it does not fit your purpose.

With many regrets for my delay, believe me,

Very sincerely yours,

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