

LAW OFFICES OF
B. G. FOSTER
PATENT AND TRADE MARK CAUSES
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WASHINGTON, D. C.
TELEPHONE, MAIN 3894

August 18, 1927.

Miss Ida M. Tarbell,
c/o The Macmillan Company,
New York.

Dear Madam:

It is not without some hesitation that I trespass on your time because I expect you are very busy, but in as much as you are an outstanding authority on Abraham Lincoln, I am very anxious to ascertain, and possibly accept, the challenge of the president of "The Southern Churchman" relative to a story appearing in that publication under date of July 30, 1927. It is, of course, from southern sources, and the authority is hardly an unbiased one. I can not send you the original, but enclose a typewritten copy of the published letter. This will be self-explanatory.

I am particularly interested in the challenge appended to the letter of the Rev. Mr. Cooke signed "L. M. Williams" who is president of The Southern Churchman Company.

I may say that I have just had a talk with Colonel O. H. Oldroyd, who as you know, has made a wonderful collection of Lincoln items that are in the house in which the president died, and he tells me that he knows of no such work or episode as stated by Mr. Cooke and by Mr. Williams.

Other authorities (particularly at the Library of Congress) are not just now available. I have not as yet had an opportunity to examine your work which I have at home.

I am wondering, however, if you can throw some light on these allegations.

May I have the pleasure of what knowledge you have?

Yours very truly,

BF:RS



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(copy)
A Matter of History

Mr. Editor:

I have read with much pleasure the Rev. W. G. Lee's excellent sermon on "Perils" in the Southern Churchman of the sixteenth instant. But I beg to differ from him when he says: "Abraham Lincoln loved it"--the Bible. "Lamon, his intimate friend," tells in detail of the writing and the burning of a "little book" written by Lincoln with the purpose to disprove the truth of the Bible, and the divinity of Christ, and tells how it "was burned without his consent by his friend Hill, lest it should ruin his political career before a Christian people".

"Herndon (his friend and law partner) describes the essay or book as an argument against Christianity, striving to prove that the Bible was not inspired, and therefore not God's revelation, and that Jesus Christ was not the Son of God." "Lamon Gives (page 480) a letter of Nicolay, his senior private secretary throughout his administration, which states that he perceived no change in Lincoln's attitude toward religion after his entrance on the Presidency."

The above is copied from "The Real Life of Lincoln", pages 27-28, by Minor, a copy of which Dr. Lee can secure, at small cost, from "The Confederate Veteran", Nashville, Tenn. May I also object to the learned doctor's quoting: "The Pilgrim Fathers" adventure in crossing the ocean in sixty days, when as an act of justice, he might have quoted the adventure of crossing the ocean thirteen years before the Pilgrim Fathers by the good old parson Hunt of the Church of England, and his cavalier companions, landing at Jamestown on the thirteenth of May, 1607. With these two exceptions I commend to your readers, Mr. Editor, the excellent sermon on "Perils", by the Rev. W. G. Lee, Ph. D.

Respectfully yours,
(Rev.) Giles B. Cooke.

(Only surviving officer of General Robert E Lee's staff.)

Mathews C. H., Virginia.

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To the best of our knowledge and belief, Major Giles B. Cooke is entirely correct in the above statement; and we would like to ask any one who is not in accord with this statement, whether it is true that a book called by some such name as "The Gospel According to Ruben", written by Abraham Lincoln, had to be suppressed because of its vulgarity.

L. M. Williams