

Digital Images, 2011. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library.

Mr Lincoln's God.

"What's that?" Lincoln a Christian? Ben
reading Billy Herndon? I thought so
but it seems to me the paper one
to read on that - ^{subject} ~~paper~~ is Mr Lincoln
himself. He set down one place ^{another}
what he thought about religion. I'd
go to him that is unless you're
one of the history - ~~writers~~ that like to
make out things as they are and like to
be not as they was. Seems to me some times
people are quite deal more interested in
him in Lincoln's thought like they do
than like what he did. Billy Herndon's
like that and so is a lot of good
Christian people out here. All the fightin'
about what he believed. one side callin'
him an unbeliever. other side makin'
out he'd subscribed to all they read.

There's a good many roads to God. I
reckon Mr Lincoln's helped on Billy Herndon's
a while. Trying to make out the right one
had by any word he thought had some sense.
~~As~~ As on investigation, man. Allus lookin'
into things, curious. Not curious man?
ever know.

a man like him

you couldnt expect him not to look like a
Lixian.

If I didnt get much teachin' on that
subject ~~is~~ out here than I was a boy.
I know, I kind like him - was long
till him. Thought of the him. I take
it his mother was same kind of good
woman as his,

Tryin' to make a good way out me like I
mother did out of him. They read the Bible
to us. couldnt a lot ^{on} that. I remember
hearin' him till over him his mother
used to tell him Bible stories ^{night and Sunday} about the
very kind she knew I expect. Teach him
dada - he know more chapters - always gettin'
em. They had papers like we did, for
Thomas D. Lincoln was a paper man if I dont
have much education.

Thomas D. Lincoln

Nobody can grow up like I & me
did with a good paper Bible reading;
mother wouldnt havin' them ideas takin'
a whole a pretty strong word. you dont
forget em, cant. I Mr Lincoln you did.

But that aint sayin' he wasnt willin'
to listen to people who had figured it
different from Tom Lincoln and the
circumstances he heard preachin' hell-
fire and brimstone. you couldnt expect

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him to hold to that kind of religion allus. Won't
big enough for him or redemptive enough.

At times you kept like an infidel mighty young -
that the whole an infidel work. Well what let me
tell you something about that: You've got to

remember the way the boys grew up out
here. Pretty ways, pretty ways. The main
thing is apt to be fairly rich for a boy
anywhere and when he do it, there are
study more to civilize him than we did
his runnin' a fair show of join. Through a
spell when's his a boy and very charac-
ter - just animals. A lot of us was
like that out here. You ought to have
seen us at Camp meetings and revivals.
Teachin' the girls, gettin' the elders mad,
all sorts of devilry - anything to break
up the meeting.

Mr Lincoln never joined in that kind
of horse play. Didn't like it - stopped it.
When he could. And he had influence.
To request any there liked him. He'd get
up there leader once and you know
how that makes a young fellow despised.
He could lick every last one of us and
we knew it; but he never set himself
up above us on that account. No idea

at all. He behaved. But that ain't sayin'
that he took to hell-fire religion any more
than I did. It hit him different. Seemed
to make him ^{more} serious, and steady, he'd got
to readin' ' books - free thinkin' books.

and I don't think it was at all surprisin' that - considerin'
the kind of books that I circulated out here in those
days, he got to be pretty free thinkin'. 2 or 3
of these ^{my} books he read a lot - about in ~~that~~
there he took pretty tight hold on M.L. in ~~my~~
accordin' to my way of thinkin' - there was
Tom Parr - "Appeal to Reason". I don't think that

sure set a boy like Lincoln to thinkin'
hard - made him feel he'd got hold
of something better than the circuit-
riders had ever give him. And there
was another - Solomon's "Ruins" - I forgot
the name, Volney? Yes that's it - Volney's
Ruins.

Do you know 2 stories that book
took an awful hold of on him. ^{perhaps} It was
the first time he ever realized how big the
long the world's been pristin' - how many
lots of men has lived & fixed settled down
& built cities & how ~~times~~ time & time ago
they're all been wiped out. M.L. couldn't get

one that. In head bin talk about how old
 the world was time & time again & how
 nothing lasted - men - cities - nations - one set
 on top of another - much comm' along just
 as intended & they as we are in domi'
 strunge and then little by little all stuy
 done passin' away.

Joe was always speculatin' about that kind of stuy.
 I remember in when he came back
 from Cyprus he stopped to see Niagara & all. Well he
 when he got home he couldn't talk about anything else
 for days. ^{seemed to} pushed politics clean out of his mind. He'd
 sit there in that chair by the stove that winter &
 talk & talk about it. Talked just like it's printed in
 those books little passage Newey & his side pal
 from they got up. I never cared much myself
 for all those articles they wrote. ^{Why am I?} valuable? of course
 but want some of me Lincoln in em to start with.
 I wanted to know what he said about anything in
 his own words. But I tell you when I saw the
 books ^{things he had said and wrote} ~~he~~ all brought together
 & neat & one after another. I just let 'em look to that.
 He got in time in my desk - just used em and let
 of it seems just as natural - almost been born
 with it - just as if he was sittin' there by the stove.
 But how what he says about Niagara & the book
 is like that - just as if he was there - had about done.
 not loved. In fact I call up the indefinite part

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~~many people. How could the kind of God the
 help-free preacher who about the God that
 got mad at you & chased you into a corner
 & that now little children into a business
 take her because they of more kind of him.
 How could that kind of a God care for people
 & for a country -~~

God seemed to me as careless like as if
 he were clean & state. How could the car & do
 that. It made such a mile of a man - no
 better an ~~man~~ fly. I know a little
 can be felt. That's the way it felt - no where
 I just began to understand all the state
 more holds - also was - that I could not
 see my way & don't know now ~~is~~ how
 he can be so kind since now the only
 need with men in it. And if ~~there~~ ^{my} ~~there~~
 I stay now - riped out again like in 2

long you can read it: how when Columbus
 first landed here, when Christ suffered
 in the Cross - when Moses crossed
 dry land ~~was~~ through the Red Sea - even
 when Adam was first made. A Mayan
 has written away about. He'd talk just as
 it ~~is~~ is printed. But how the big
 beast - these bones they're found in
 mounds must have looked on the falls
 how it's older than them and older
 than the first race of men. They're all
 dead & gone - not end these bones of
 many of 'em ~~do~~ left & yet stone's
 beyond human' away ~~is~~ just as ever.

He used to give by stone ~~was~~ now
 the water had run far away the rocks that
 the world was at least (14 000) years old.
 a long spell - but folks tell me it ain't
 much 'n' to what it's been' estimated now.

makes a man seem pretty small don't it -
 God seems to wipe 'em out as careless like
 as if he were cleanin' a slate. How could
 he care and do that? It made such a
 mile of a man, no better'n a fly. That's what
 I think in Lincoln. I know how he felt -
 that's the way it hit me when I first began
 to understand all the stars were worlds
 like ours. What I couldn't see - and

can't now is how we can be so damn sure
we own it the only world with men on
and if they're others and they're wiped out
regular like us - well it knocked me
all of a heap at first - 'peared to me
mighty - unlikely that God know any-
thing about us.

I expect Mr Lincoln felt something
like that - when he ~~was~~ studied how old
the world was & how one set of ruins
was piled on top of another.

Then there was another thing. Lots of these old
cities & old nations were not Christian at all
and yet - ~~or~~ ^{was} ~~it~~ ^{it} - looked as if
the people ~~was~~ ^{was} just as happy, knew just as
much, had just as good plans as any
Christian nation now - some of them a
damned sight better - most was a long time
I. going to handle a problem like that - well
I spent for a time he handled it like the
man who ~~not~~ ^{not} about the ruins - ~~he~~ never

seemed queer to me he should have written
a few - thinking book after that kind of reading I
reckon he had to write something to get his
head clear. allus had to have things clear.

You know that story of course about
that book.

(?) First time I ever heard it was back
in 1846 when him & Peter Cartwright - was
running for Congress. you know about Cartwright -

(Half page space)

well, sir, he made ^{his} ~~that~~ campaign against
I an '76 or so ~~steps~~ ^{steps} not - in politics

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and had been years ago or ago - well, I don't
it knocked me all of a heap at first - what -
my the use thinking. And ~~no~~ knew anything
about - me.

Respect - in 4. felt something like
that - only more because he felt something
more of a bigger man than me. ~~the~~
~~I should not wonder if he Tom Paine did a~~
great deal to make him doubt the kind
of hell-fire Christianity he'd always heard
except if it never seemed ^{more} ~~like~~ to me
that he ~~was~~ should come into an ^{the story} ~~expected~~

on Paine

at all - made it on chargin' Mr Lincoln
with bein' an infidel, and the proof he
offered was the story of his mittin' a pie-
throwin' book. He didn't pretend he'd seen
it - of course - said the reason he hadn't
was that it was never printed only
mitten and that not many people were
did see it - because Sam Well the stov's
keeper down to New Salem.

When he was
a boy - but we
not much more
May 21 1822

think it might hurt Lincoln
and I deleted it away and ^{strove} ~~hid~~ it
the stov's ^{turned} it up. Now what do think
of that? A Well Rev. Cantnigt didn't
get elected - got beaten - beaten bad &
nobody around here ever talked about
bein' an infidel ^{Mr Garrison} then he was
running for President. That I ever
heard of - it was after he ^{was} dead
that they eaked up that story again.

that book

② of his friends did it: They was mitin' his history
- Wadd Lamson - knew Jim Well - used to
drop in here almost every time he was in town
and Billy Herndon. Of course I knew him.
He was Mr Lincoln's law partner. You can
see their office out of the window thers -
second floor - facin' the Court House.

I well as I was sayin' I had Larva
note a book about Mr Lincoln &

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~~Handwritten scribble in a circle~~

be put in that story about Sam Hill
turnin' up that book. It never made much
difference to me. I allus thought it likely
he had nite-somethin' alwy the time he
was readin' after. But s'pos

ain't you ayt / I seen the fur fly
down out here. All the clude people
my nite up and find it - want so
and Billy found it - lit in and
found it ~~was~~ so. They got all the
old individual of Sampson Comely -
now know in Liverpool to nite - letter -
familiar things! There ~~was~~ a lot of
people now said it wasn't a book at
all that Sam Hill snatched away
from Q. I burned up it - was of
letter of Hills that had somethin'
in about Sam Hill & some
xxx give to Lincoln to read.

write

one of the most interesting things according
to my copy of Thelby was a letter
that Currier got in from paper from
Munro Graham - Is old schoolmaster
I don't remember it exact - but ~~was~~
I can recall he said ~~the~~ ^{he} said I asked him
one day when he was in at his house

200?

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Scrupulous. Seemed to hate to think about
Mr Lincoln's God. I almost felt sometimes
as if they'd rather a man would say that
would be God, than that - than to admit
to make him out as Mr Lincoln did.

You can see how Minter Graham's
letter didn't settle it - for nobody. Billy Graham
wouldn't listen to anything but that
Mr Lincoln had right and infidel wrong.
Said everybody knew; said he knew Mr
Lincoln had an unbeliever and that
he ought to have put in the words
"he died an unbeliever".

The boys
 While some used to get to town about
 it in here some time around the store
 until 2 could ^{hardly} ^{keep} ^{up} ^{with} ^{it} ^{and} ^{my} ^{perceptions}.
 The furthest thing you ever heard was
 one night when they ^{were} ^{at} ^{it} and
 an old fellow ^{was} ^{who} ^{used} ^{to}
 live in New Salem dropped in, so they
 put it up to him - said he knew Lincoln
 he lived in New Salem in '33; ^{and} ^{said} ^{he}
^{was} ^{with} ^{him} ^{that} ^{Sam} ^{Hill} ^{burned} ^{up} ⁱⁿ
 the store in his store. The old fellow ^{then}
 thought without saying a word & when
 they was finished he said solemn
 like. Want no store - Sam Hill
 never had one. Case "Arldiv. happened"

Wanted to know
 if he
 ever heard

Well sir, you ought to see them jaws
 dropped. Just set ^{staring} ^{at} ^{him}. I
 thought I did a coffee - to see in collapse
 I walk in Lincoln and heard that
 old fellow "Want no store" - I can hear
 that he'd expressed that "Want no store"

But for all that - I never regarded
 that witness ^{over} ^{much} ^{of} ^{any} ^{value}.
 Sam Hill must ever had a store;
 wouldn't have been no place for folks
 to set around.

It wasn't the ^{thing} ^{that} ^{made} ^{me} ^{believe}
 in his a piece further that siled me at ^{that} ^{time} ^{and} ^{was} ^{the} ^{cause}

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What they said when you came back at Stein
 milli facti m all knew - how he & always was a
 regular church-goer after his by Eddie died -
 rented a pew in the First Presbyterian
 church over in - sheet - got a made and
 saw that how has shown it was true; - ~~how~~

how He always went to church every Sunday ^{in Washington} We
 used to see it in the paper. The Friend
 and Mr Lincoln occupied their pew in the
 New York Avenue Presbyterian I went around
 to see it that time I went down to Washington
 to visit him. Didn't seem to make
 any difference. They just laughed at you that;

Ward Lammie said in his book a Riley Henden
 said in a letter I said - When
 Lincoln went to church it was to mock & when
 he came away it was to mimic his very
 words. and Riley Henden went to Killee
 I heard him ^{speaking out} say that a lecture in his
 key town when the excitement on the war in
 both in the 30's that he'd heard Mr Lincoln
 joke & poke at Christianity in a
 way that would shock at Christian people
 there his words, and when I recollect
 I got up and left. I was glad though

what he had to say. It wrote me sometime to read ~~the~~ ^{the} paper & wanted to know
if you'd so stirred up I'd like to put it down - cancelled so
back until it curled off.

clean things

When I read that note I was ~~the~~ ^{the} mad -
never so mad in my life. He came in line
soon after I'd read it, wanted genuine
"no sure" I said "you can't buy genuine in this
line a nuttin' else - what's more you can't
stay in this line, I don't want no man
left what nite what you & did about.

Come in

In Lincoln, making him out a hypocrite.
You ought to know just as well as I do
I was in Lincoln that whatever Abraham
Lincoln believed & did it. When he
wants no support - how is that, you know
he want the kind to poke fun at -
and honest folks & honest folk, it want
little more. I don't want you in here."

Come come now

Brother "he said" - you don't mean
that. How could you know for sure I did

been with

Lincoln like I did. I handled with him
of all things the time in was in
Washington. I know what I'm talking
about.

see things

"Well in Lincoln I said" maybe you do -
maybe you think you do - but the trouble
is with you & Betty. The trouble is that you
don't know the meaning of things & you
mean. You ain't out to understand
man like in Lincoln. I won't sell to you & I
won't talk to you"

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I never did a thing like that - in my life
but I ain't ever been sorry. Sometimes when
I git to thinkin' about it - I'd give anything to
have a chance to do it again.

"I reckon that what they was thinkin'
of when they said Mr Lincoln poked
fun at Christian people was some of his
jokin' ~~from~~ ~~suchin'~~ perfectly innocent stuff
if you understand it. I've heard
him say the funniest things you ever
heard fit to tell about something that
had happened in church or to a minister
or something. God bless his soul for he saw
all the fun there was in everything - just
natural - he'd a seen it - at that moment.
But that was wasn't nothin' at all
necessary."

"I was speakin' about Peter Cartwright
a minute ago. Well sir, I heard him get
back at the elder right in church so
so that I can't still when I think of it in
your recollection I said Cartwright had
campaign or tried to in the case of
Mr Lincoln been an infidel. That's what
he was callin' a vivid picture. One day
Mr Lincoln was come in a set in the
back of the church. When it came time
to ask the sinners to come forward the elder

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Will be run
Copping in
he couldn't
put
out - and not

copy in 46

got pretty excited. He said "where be you going?
 To hold if you must report & come to this
 affair," & ^{at last} then he began to call on
 Mr Lincoln to come forward. Will you know
 they nobody likes to be called out like that
 out in front. Mr Lincoln didn't help
 just set there. The elder he said of Dept
 it up. Finally he shunked of Mr Lincoln
 said you, to report and go to the
 man is he going to intimate & suppose that
 he was headed for hell - Where be you
 going Mr Lincoln? he shunked

cluded
 budge

Well in at that - Mr Lincoln rose up and
 said quiet like

"I'm going to Congress"

For a minute you could a heard a pin
 drop & then. Well I just ^{shook} shunked - couldn't
 help it. ^{ma} was awful & exclaimed - said
 I ought to done it - right in middle
 but I couldn't help it. Just set there &
 shunk & shunk. The elder didn't
 make any more accusations to Mr Lincoln
 that time.

"Next day when he came in I said
 Mr Lincoln if you just served out the
 elder right last night - sent him up -
 I guess your right; you be going to Congress"

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almy come the Conductor and he lit
 into 'em and said he want you to
 any such performance in his car.

Well, you can believe guess that gave me
 a tip: He'd a man in that car fellin
 himself up with liquor half the night.
 just plain drunk & diandry. "I don't
 heard you makin' any loud Fyielms
 in the drinkin' party in this car &
 he says. "If you can stand that - I
 reckon you can. "If that don't do it
 the pease a little prayin' won't.
 and two or three passengers just chimed
 right in and said "That's so". So we
 all good if we had more prayin' &
 less drinkin'. Fact was I was quite
 popular rest of that trip.

Now I reckon some would a been
 shocked by what I done. Ma said
 when I told her "now you know William
 it won't that poter soul you was
 interested in half as much as I was
 gettin' a little fun out of him". Well
 maybe so. I reckon ^{don't} ^{mean} ^{any} ^{more} ^{than} ^{some} ^{men}
 chief in it. But it would a been shocked
 Mr. Lincoln, He'd understand. Albee seems
 a jily - I can't tell him about that. He'd
 enjoyed it so.

It's easier to understand than not seemin' his jokes than it is them callin' him a hypocrite - or best me makin' him out on. You see them a lot of facts for people to point to and want to make out Lincoln was orthodox, cause he went to church regular for years since Eddie died. He prayed and asked people to,

may for him - did it - again & again. "He read the Bible knew it - well and was always givin' from it. You can't read his letters & speeches without seein' that all things that will be done comin' God into court. One more time's

the kind of man he was. A God good man accordin' to Bible ideas as I see it.

Now if you can't call him a Christian I don't see much sense for the rest of us.

But they wouldn't leave it so. Ward Larny said none of these things meant he was a believer, said they meant

that he was saw that he could never get on in politics out here if people thought he was a pre-stitute - and so he took to goin' to church, to readin' the Bible & talkin' in Sunday Schools to deceive people. Called him a "shifty politician", said he was playing a sharp game in Christendom out here - like my words "playing a sharp game" on paper that had burned em since he was boy.

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Billy Herndon want no better in that lecture
 I told you about - me when I got up and
 left - I must soon he'd started because I
 couldn't stand it; I was real ^{mad} - in
 that lecture he called it ^{mad} ~~travels~~ ^{at} ~~quoting~~
 things Lincoln said when he was present
 to him he was a Christian. said he only
 said ^{that} ~~because~~ because he wanted to make people
 think he was like them - said he was
 nice in his little men it was necessary &
 vulgar when it was not - said he'd
 seen Ann Champ a thousand times
 from a postcard kind Christian like man &
 the same old unbelieve he always was.

Now I call that making out Lincoln a
 hypocrite - Preending to what he want. If
 he'd really been what they said he'd
 joined a church - ~~gone~~ But he wouldn't
 join because he couldn't swallow the
 Creed. There's where he stuck. Won't see
 God in the Bible nor Christ; so far as
 I ever could see but it's what men
 have made 'em out to be - what they
 read in the 'err. You take that Creed -
 they say the Apostles made it - and they
 ought to know. But - around to my
 reading of history that Creed in Latin
 didn't appear until the apostles
 had been dead some hundreds of years
 I reckon they settled that Creed some in
 settle things in corruption now. argue and
 argue and argue, each man trying to get
 his ~~own~~ ^{own} ~~thing~~ ^{thing} and finally the lot

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of them com-promising on something just
 to get things. in always ~~no~~ ^{re} honored ~~some~~
 was something like that wait in when
 they made the Creed. ~~Edw~~ Mr L. couldn't
 swallow it. ^{January 4} I know ^{to} a fact ^{that} he said
 me up in line ^{with} them & find a
 clause that will accept Christ's deity
 of the law & the ^{of} ^{the} ^{law} ^{and} ^{the} ^{law} ^{and} ^{the} ^{law}
 don't ask nothing of a man ^{to} ^{do} ^{that} ^{he} ^{can} ^{do}
 with all his heart & his power as ^{Christ}
 all you it. That's Christian unity for
 me & that's what ^{the} ^{law} ^{and} ^{the} ^{law} ^{and} ^{the} ^{law} ^{and} ^{the} ^{law}
 should ever say, it & so did ^{Mr} ^L
 & it was like this. (Anna)

swallow it.

don't ask nothing

also believe
a council

I suppose they'd say I was talking
 waddle. Maybe so, maybe so, but that's
 what I should say the way I see it.

As to his saying things in a Christian
 way just to be polite I don't think you can't
 stay strong the way he did unless you
 believe in. All the difference in the world.
 I know when we get a preacher who believes
 what he talks, means it; and I know when
 one is talking what he's heard or has
 learned. All the difference in the world.
 You read what he said when he was
 calling the country to pray or when he
 was thanking you, and you know he's saying

there's some
 you see
 said it -
 he was to
 it and

Digitized Image, 2011. The Rev. M. T. Barber Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College. Philadelphia, Pa.

What his thought - about and means

875 ?

417 - 2nd - 1843

417 - 1st - 1843

417 - 1st - 1843

Now here's this one - just read that out loud
 and it - sounds like him?

"The year that is drawing towards its close
 has been filled with the harvest of fruitful
 fields and healthful skies."

Do you think a man who could write that -
 just to be polite. No sir - The man who wrote
 that meant it. He'd dipped down into his
 own heart for that.

They'll tell you all his talk about -
 prayin' was just some humbug, some
 playin' a cheap game on churchin' paper.
 But I tell you any

~~just some humbug~~
 man who heard him askin' us here in
 Springfield to pray for him that night in '81
 when he left for Washin'gton - could not have
 no doubt about his interest in prayin' ^{for} 'em

it, believin' in it. He never changed -

reminded

I recollect - I'm not sure in a year after
 he went in he ~~told~~ a lot of ministers
 riding down in the White House, how
 at the very start he had asked for their prayers
 and he went on to say to them how he
 placed the whole dependence of the govern-
 ment in the favor of God - his very words -
 I can't make out that he ever changed
 except to learn more and more inclined
 to think more and more about his will
 and what ~~in creation~~ he was trying to
 work out through the war.

There is no kind of testimony to that effect
 right here in this book and there were
 the things along the same line that he
 said to different men. All of these men
 couldn't have understood and most
 of them weren't the kind to be easily fooled
 however it want like him to test the fool
 people. Mr Lincoln was an honest man.
 He always took pains.

to have people know what he thought no
 matter what it cost. May he might have
 beat Douglas ~~in~~ ^{rather} if he hadn't
 been so full-fred honest. For he made
 all the Republicans mad as they could
 be by settin' forth Douglas views in such
 a way that he was able to do
 them ~~mean~~ - for the time being
 Mr Lincoln knew what he was doing

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He knew if Lincoln didn't see that Douglas' doctrine meant the country would, and he told Seward it did, as you recollect.

Right-ally things the way he would set in motion, people understand. Risked his election in '44 he was so sure. Do you think that kind of a man - a man who said right-ally that he'd join any church,

That would call it a creed down to what Christ said you the law & the prophets - was the kind to go to church to read the Bible & teach people to pray, ^{in turn} simply because it was better than just saying reasonable & doing good with his character. He was a good man. Best man I ever knew.

Do you think he didn't mean it in that first speech of his when he was inaugurated when he said ^{the only way} Christianity was one of the things that the country had got to depend upon to pull it out of its trouble. Look in the book there and see exact what he said, would keep us out of war if we'd try it: -

Intelligence, patriotism, Chastity and
 a firm reliance on Him who has never yet
 forsaken this favored land, are still com-
 pletely & admirably in the best way all our
 present difficulties." Do you think he
 "was playin' & shufflin' some on Chuteam"
 then as Lamon said "they taint reason-
 able. Don't go with his character. He was a
 good man. Best man I ever knew. There are
 men you cant help knowin' God would
 like. Mr Lincoln was that kind - a God's
 man near as we get em. ~~Hyman~~
~~in a~~ ~~man~~ ~~of~~ ~~that~~ ~~kind~~" aint in a man of that
 kind."

"~~more~~ ~~he~~ ~~want~~ ~~to~~ ~~all~~ ~~find~~ ~~some~~ ~~kind~~
 Another thing also made me respect
 Mr Lincoln religion and made me feel pretty
 sure he was gettin' it right was that he
 was allus seekin' for me here see anybody
 so sot & undrayable as the pre-~~mi~~ ~~per~~
 out here were - Ouse ~~is~~ ~~Brother~~ ~~Calbright~~
 and that sayin' a good deal. Knew it
 all - couldnt be different from what they
 figured it out. I noticed frequent ap-
 p~~o~~ ~~int~~ ~~ment~~ ~~with~~ ~~em~~ - all kinds of pre-~~mi~~ ~~per~~
 religion includin' the pre-~~mi~~ ~~per~~ of whom
 we had a right smart sprinklin' at
 me time & in notice about em all

one what they
believed

very

a lot of pride. Seemed to think they'd
discovered last word. In Lincoln's nail-
stuck kind of a free-thinker. Dred to seem
to me more he knew the humbler
he got. Wanted to see all sides, seem
to make up his mind - willing to change
if you gave him the reasons.

He was ^{allure} singularly concerned for the
~~cept to be~~ ~~preserved~~ about squaring up
his views with God's views. Wanted to
be sure his purpose were pure he said
that he was proceeding in the line the
almighty - would sanction. One thing
he'd held fast out-line in all this in
all the argu. on slavery was that it
seemed to him it couldn't be according
to Daniel's that one man should make

a slave out of another man and if
you could say ever was billed
against anybody it was against
ministers and elders who upheld slavery
He didn't think it squared with the
teachings of the Bible. There ain't no doubt

some of the reason Billy Herndon was
so dead since Lincoln hadn't any real
use for Christians was what he'd
heard him say about ~~men~~ ^{men} people who
prayed loud ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~hard~~ ^{hard} bargains
and defended up held slavery, and all that.

1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library
Dred to seem to me more he knew the humbler he got.
Wanted to see all sides, seem to make up his mind - willing to change if you gave him the reasons.
He was singularly concerned for the ~~cept to be~~ ~~preserved~~ about squaring up his views with God's views.
Wanted to be sure his purpose were pure he said that he was proceeding in the line the almighty - would sanction.
One thing he'd held fast out-line in all this in all the argu. on slavery was that it seemed to him it couldn't be according to Daniel's that one man should make a slave out of another man and if you could say ever was billed against anybody it was against ministers and elders who upheld slavery. He didn't think it squared with the teachings of the Bible. There ain't no doubt some of the reason Billy Herndon was so dead since Lincoln hadn't any real use for Christians was what he'd heard him say about ~~men~~ ^{men} people who prayed loud ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~hard~~ ^{hard} bargains and defended up held slavery, and all that.

Because they think - different - must be they think -
better. But they stopped to serve. thinkers

"When he got to be president - he was
always asking himself whether he was
on God's side. Prayed him bad that
both sides thought -

God was with 'em. He pointed out some things
how the rebel soldiers was praying for victory just
as earnest as our - how the rebel people
got the same kind of help out of prayer that the
Union people did. And both couldn't be right.
God ever did."

There isn't any doubt - he was often
rattled out; ~~who~~ ~~whether~~ ~~did~~ ~~get~~ ~~it~~ ~~right~~;
Whether God agreed with his argument or
not, by the way things ^{showed} ~~showed~~. It was that
way about the ~~emancipation~~ Proclamation
You know how he thought about that for months
and for the most part kept it to himself. He
didn't want to do it that way, was dead
set on the North buying the slaves in leading
of taking 'em. But he had the Emancipation
Proclamation ready and he'd told God
he'd let it loose if God gave us a victory.
Sounds queer, huh? but that's what
he did. ~~They all~~ ~~was~~ ~~about~~ ~~it~~ - in
~~what~~ ~~they~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~White~~ He told the Cabinet so
and they told about it.

A little more superstitious ~~than~~, as some would say. But Mr Lincoln was a little superstitious. Interested in things like signs and dreams - especially dreams - seemed to feel he was getting the first - some ~~times~~ - they might be trying to give him a hint. Pretty safe after his boy Willie died down in Washington - he got interested in spiritualism. I should be surprised. He always talked out everything new that come along. Don't worry me if he did odd seances, you can be pretty sure they didn't fool him any and if he found something that way out of us don't see why I don't see but he had a right to it. Why should he interest himself in spiritualism if it was new to him. He talked out new kinds of powder, ~~new rifles~~.

As I was saying, there no doubt but he kept figuring things about ~~the~~ ~~way~~ ~~things~~ ~~went~~ by the way things went figuring on what God was trying to do by just remember how I told you once of William a long talk with him at night - that time I went down to Washington to see him. He was powerful disengaged just then for him.

Things was bad, awful bad. Country girl plow
 word out with war - come a time the war
 come pretty ^{of} to some men when they just
 was against it: Can't stand ~~anything~~ it -
 the blood-lettin', the sufferin' and the
 awful wickedness of it! There was a lot of
 that feelin' in '64. People willing to pick
 up anything - let the South go - let her
 keep the slaves do anything good to put
 an end to the killin'. I tell you a man
 has to keep his eye ahead ~~that~~ ~~all~~ in
 war - keep tellin' himself me and my white
 at ~~states~~ it all about. In Sweden, had to
 they me tathin' peace to him, sittin' about
 the draft, stirrin' up none kinds of
 words for him that he ever ~~to~~ know
 there was, I reckon, and he felt it - felt it
 bad and that night it seemed to do him
 good to talk it out, you see I come from home
 & I didn't have no connection with things
 down there and I was natural he'd open
 up to me as he couldn't to them on the
 ground and he did.

"I've studied a lot 'Billy' he said "whether
 this is God's

letter, which was the draft, seemed as if it had never
got to the end of it.

seek of this man. I've tried my best to figure it
 out - except and I can't see anything but that - he
 must be for us. But like low things is poor &
 sometimes can't believe God appears of slavery. I think
 my God don't - can't. The whole Bible teaches
 liberty - if it teaches anything I never could
 understand how men saw it ^{and they} ~~that~~ my. But
 good men - good serious men who profess
 as far as I can judge by as hard as I do
 to see what's the right thing, believe in my - that
 God's ^{on their side} ~~one~~ things seem all I can do is to
 follow what I think is right - whatever
 shall appear to be God's will I'll do.

There's quite a number of people who seem to
 think they know what God wants me to do.
 They come down every now and then and tell
 me so, I must say as Sir said to some of them
 that it's more likely if God is going to

reveal his will on a point ^{concerned} ~~concerned~~ with
 my duty, he'd naturally reveal it to me.

One thing I'm sure of that sorta pulls me
 along is that this war is logical enough.
 Seems to me to be accordin' to God's law,
 has all along. We've been wrong with my
 sorta about slavery. No use to blame it
 all on South. We've been in it too from
 start. If both sides had been willin' to
 give in a little we might a worked it out
 that is if we'd all been willin' to
 admit the thing was wrong and
 take our share of burden in pullin an
 end to it. It's because we wouldn't or
 maybe couldn't see the wrong that war
 has come.

"It's for ash' sake Billy. This war is. Now
 brought is on ourselves. And God ain't gonna
 to stop war because we ask him to. We
 got to fulfill the law. In hope the law and
 God wouldn't be sad as I see him if
 he didn't stand by his own laws and
 make us take all that comin' to us.
 I can't think we quit with the war. Seems
 to me that must be God's way but if
 we don't and the union is broken up and
 every part, well all it means accordin' to
 my notion of seein' things is that the law's
 still there. I don't feel yet that we ain't done
 our part. ^{that'll} be run into
 until the reason of noble men

That's the way it's been
 in the war from the start.
 We've come from the beginning
 and if we don't get out of here

Digital Image, 2011. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College's Esther L. Tibery.

It ~~was in the main is to keep~~. ~~There is trouble~~
 intended in ~~it~~ But I don't lay that off
 against God, Billy. What it seems to me
 His tryin to do in this world is to get ~~us~~
 to see that there can't be any peace or
 happiness on this world so long as
 there ain't fair to one another. God
 made us for court than a happy world
 unless you got a just world & slavery
 ain't just. It's got to go. I don't know
 man. It's always seemed to me a pretty
 durable struggle - did back in '58. but
 I didn't see anything so bad then as
 it's come to. But even if I'd known I couldn't
 have done different. Billy, even if we don't
 win this war, & the Confederates set up a
 country with slavery in it. That ain't
 my job and it's for me. I'll leave it to
~~you~~ ~~me~~ ~~and~~ ~~God~~ ~~mean~~ ~~I~~ ~~should~~

they

It later God a long time to militar-
 His the mil mil- men like us Billy - had
 men stupid men - separate men - But
 we know & know that one man men
 who see it clear that this is a war how
 to pass hard it is for people to rule themselves -
 men people determined government by the people
 shout praise from the earth - some people
 million' to admit that you can't have

even if we
 beat them a
 game

Digitized Images, 2011, The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Feltner Library.

peace when you got a thing like slavery
you can. That's something - That's you to
help when the next struggle comes.

You mustn't think I'm join' in Billy. I
amnt - but look how things are join' that
& in here the election & you must ad-
mit it looks now as if we would - That of
in here and a Copperhead Innuent make
peace - give the whole he down - let these
the erring sisters set up ^{in the name of} as
Bully call them ^{Confederacy}. I'm not to
think about that Billy & I seem to me I
can't bear the idea that all this blood shed
should end that way - that ~~is~~ for a kind
peace amnt in that set of circumstances
that means whole world with a methe
was again until we obey the law of God
and let our better men go free! ~~was~~

lasting

Always seemed to me that a man
who could talk that had a pretty big God
Always seemed to me something like a ~~of~~ crime
to talk about that man ~~not~~ believe in
~~the way to church preachers to be a Christian~~
to me set a people and mark at ~~the~~ duty
to answer. He is

And there amnt any doubt he felt that
my to the end - Ready to agree to what
to Good things set - set all round, ~~the~~

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'The judgments of the Lord are true &
righteous altogether'

I like to say that just like he said it:
Seems kinda like music. He was
that way sometimes - swung into that
sort of talk and made your heart
stop to listen; it was so sweet and
sovereign-like.

Now as I see that's the Old Testament -
whole thing tied down - and what he
ended up with seems to me the new -
just about as near what Christ taught
as any man ever got - just listen; -
"Will make toward none; do with

charity; in all; with firmness in the
right - as God gives us to see the right;
let us stir on to finish the work we are
in, to bind up the nation's wounds; to
care for him who shall have borne
the battle and for his widow & his orphan
- to do all which may advance a just
and lasting peace among ourselves
& with all nations."

"I can't help thinking that a man who
saw that way was about as near right
in his religion as any man ever gets."

If that ain't what Christ was lead us
mind then I don't read the Bible
right. I know that no God I ever
heard preached is so big in his ideas,
so fair-minded & so firm as
Abraham Lincoln's God