

Much of this chapter is in chapter xx
of The Life of Abraham Lincoln.

MR. LINCOLN AND THE CAMPAIGN OF 1860.

On May 19, 1860, an evening train from Chicago brought to Springfield, Ill., a company of distinguished-looking strangers. They were expected evidently, for as they stepped from their coach cannon were fired, rockets set off, bands played, and enthusiastic cheering went up from a crowd of waiting people. A long and noisy procession accompanied them to their hotel and later to a modest two-storied house in an unfashionable part of the town. The gentlemen whom the citizens of Springfield received with such demonstration formed the committee, sent by the Republican National Convention to notify Abraham Lincoln that the day before he had been nominated as its candidate for the Presidency of the United States.

The delegation had in its number some of the most distinguished workers of the Republican party of that day:- Mr. George Ashmun, Samuel Bowles, and Governor Boutwell of Mass., William M. Evarts of New York, Judge Kelley of Pennsylvania, Mr. Carrter of Ohio, Francis P. Blair of Mo., the Hon. Gideon Wells of Conn., Amos Tuck of New Hampshire, Carl Schurz of Wisconsin. Only a few of these gentlemen had ever seen Mr. Lincoln and to many of them his nomination had been a bitter disappointment.

Since Washington's day there had never, in their judgment, been a time when a great man was so much needed to lead a political party. The convention which had just nominated Mr. Lincoln had adopted a platform declaring that the normal condition of all the territory of the U. S. is that of freedom, and

denying that the authority of Congress, of a territorial legislation, or of any individual could give legal existence to slavery in such territory. This principle was in direct opposition to that held in the Southern states, and the South did not hesitate to declare that if the Republicans succeeded in electing a president who would enforce their platform that it would leave the Union. The vital importance of the principle at stake, the confusion and struggle sure to arise from the party's success, made it important that a great statesman be nominated. The party believed it had one such statesman in Wm. H. Seward of New York; but Mr. Seward had been defeated in the convention, and Mr. Lincoln, a man of almost no experience in Federal affairs and of no reputation outside of his state--save for a series of able speeches on the slavery question, had been chosen. What could this untried man do in leading them in their fight to re-establish the principles of the Declaration of Independence and to prevent the breaking up of the Union?

As the committee filed into Mr. Lincoln's simple home there was a sore misgiving in more than one heart, and as Mr. Ashmun, their chairman, presented to him the letter notifying him of his nomination and with it the platform which the Convention had adopted, they eyed their candidate with critical keenness. He was tall, 6 feet 4 inches, with huge hands and feet and a peculiar lankness of limb. His shoulders drooped as he stood, giving his form a look of irresolution. His smooth shaven face seemed of bronze as he lis-

But one more formality now remained to complete the ceremony of Abraham Lincoln's nomination to the presidency,- his letter of acceptance. This was soon written. The candidates of the opposing parties all sent out letters of acceptance in 1860 which were almost political platforms in themselves. Lincoln decided to make his merely an acceptance with an expression of his intention to stand by the party's declaration of principles. He held himself rigidly to this decision, his first address to the Republican party being scarcely 150 words in length. Though so short he prepared it with painstaking attention,

* Interview with Dr. Newton Bateman, of Galesburg, Ill.

even carrying it when finished to a Springfield friend, Dr. Newton Bateman, the State Superintendent of Education for correction.

In 1859 every Northern state in which an election had been held, save four (California, Oregon, New York, and Rhode Island) had gone Republican.

gave was far from uncertain. With the tables of the popular vote since 1856 before him he reckoned his chances. 24 States out of the 33 which then formed the Union had taken part in the Chicago convention.

These 24 States held of the 303 electoral votes to be cast. On how many of them could he depend? In 1856 the first time the party had appeared in a presidential contest it had secured for Fremont

11 States, * * The States which went for Fremont in 1856 were Connecticut, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio, Rhode Island, Vermont, Wisconsin, 114 electoral votes.

On these Lincoln felt he still could count. But that was not enough, nor was it all the Republicans claimed. The growth of the party had been steady and vigorous since 1856, and the whole country saw that if the Chicago convention chose a presidential candidate acceptable to New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Indiana and Illinois, those States would certainly go Republican. Lincoln added their votes to the 114 of the certain States. It gave him 169 - a respectable majority of the 303 which the electoral college would cast.

The tables were in his favor; but that was not all in the situation which encouraged him. ~~His opponents~~ ^{strongly opposed} ~~among his opponents~~ ^{had fallen to disagreeing}. Lincoln saw that as his nomination in Chicago had been largely the result of disagreement among the Republicans so there was a possibility of his election being the result of quarrels among the Democrats. The situation in

~~the Democratic party at that moment was in fact~~
~~fatal to success.~~ The national convention had met
in Charleston, South Carolina, on April 23. From
the opening, the sessions were stormy. They wrangled
~~over seats, over rules, over the platform, over can-~~
~~didates.~~ One vital difference divided the body.
The South was determined that a platform should be
adopted stating unequivocally that slaves would be
carried into the Territories and that neither Con-
gressional nor Territorial legislation could inter-
fere with them. The Democracy of the North was de-
termined to adopt a platform in which Douglass's
doctrine of popular sovereignty was the central
plank. The time had been when the South had been
thoroughly satisfied with the Douglas theory; that
it was not so now was due largely to Lincoln
himself. He had discovered that Douglas in present-
ing his attractive dogma that the people of the
States should be left to regulate their domestic
concerns in their own way subject only to the Con-
stitution gave one interpretation in the South, an-
other in the North. Knowing that Illinois would
never consent to the doctrine as the South understood
it, nor the South to the Northern notion, Lincoln
forced Douglas in 1858 in a Debate at Quincy, Il-
linois, * to explain his meaning. Illinois was sat-

isfied with the explanation but the South saw the deceit. From the day of the Quincy Debate Douglas's power in the South declined. When the Charleston Convention met the Southern Democrats were fully determined to defeat the man who had so nearly persuaded them to a doctrine which he interpreted according to the prejudices of the section in which he spoke. When a Douglas platform was adopted by the Convention they withdrew. The upshot of this secession was that the two factions called fresh conventions to meet in Baltimore in June. There the Northern Democracy nominated as its candidates Douglas and Johnson. A few days later the Southern Democrats named Breckinridge and Lane.

Thus when Lincoln was nominated his ^{opponents} enemies were divided. The opposition to him was still further weakened by the appearance of a sporadic party the Constitutional Union which in a vague and general platform shirked the very precise and vital question at issue and declared finally for "the Constitution of the country, the Union of the States and the enforcement of the laws. This party had nominated ^{on Fall} Bell and Everett, known as the "Kangaroo Ticket" because "the hind part was the stronger."

The tables were in his favor. If his own party stood by him, he felt sure of his election. There was every sign that it would. "So far as I can learn" he wrote his friend Washburne a few days after the Convention, "the nominations start well everywhere; and, if they get no back-set, it would

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seem as if they were going through."

The "start" of the nominations had in fact been very good. Nothing more jubilant could have been conceived than the reception given Lincoln's name in the Northwest. "There won't be a tar barrel left in Illinois tonight," said Douglas then in Washington to his senatorial friends who asked him when the news of the nomination reached him "Who is this man Lincoln anyhow?"^x Douglas was right. Not only the tar barrels but half the fences and gates of the State went up in the fire of rejoicing.

The demonstrations in the Middle States and in the East were hardly less exultant. There was a striking difference in them, however. In the Northwest it was the candidate, in the rest of the country the platform and the probability of its success which inspired the popular outbursts. And this was inevitable, so little was Lincoln known outside of his own part of the country. The orators at the ratification meetings of the East found it necessary to look up his history to tell their audiences who he was. The newspapers printed biographical sketches, and very meagre ones they were; for up to this time almost no details of his life had been published. These facts filled many a serious-minded Republican with dismay. To them there seemed but one explanation for the choice of Lincoln over the heads of so many more experienced and distinguished men--it had been a political trick born of the sentiment "Anything to beat Seward." "I remember," says a Republican of 1860, "that when I first read the news on a bulletin

^x Interview with Senator H. L. Dawes.

board as I came down street in Philadelphia that I experienced a moment of intense physical pain, it was as though some one had dealt me a heavy blow over the head, then my strength failed me. I believed our cause was doomed."

The opposition press found in Lincoln's obscurity abundant editorial material. He was a "third-rate country lawyer, poorer even than Mr. Pierce," said the New York Herald. Of course, he would be a "nullity" if he were elected. How could a man be otherwise who had never done anything but deliver a few lectures and get himself beaten by Douglas in the campaign of '58. They hooted at his "coarse and clumsy jokes," declared that he "could not speak good grammar," and that all ~~for which~~ he was really distinguished was rail-splitting, running a "broad-horn," and bearing the sobriquet of "honest old Abe." The snobbishness of the country came out in full. He was not a gentleman; that is, he did not know how to

wear clothes, perhaps sat at times in shirt sleeves, tilted back his chair. He could quote neither Latin nor Greek, had never travelled, had no pedigree.

The Republicans ^{miss} took up the gauntlet. To the charge that he would be a "nullity" the Tribune replied "A man who by his own genius and force of character has raised himself from being a penniless and uneducated flat boatman on the Wabash River to the position Mr. Lincoln now occupies is not likely to be a nullity anywhere." And Bryant answered all the sneering by a noble editorial in which he claimed Mr. Lincoln to be "A Real Representative Man." Innumerable articles headed "Honest Old Abe" were published and the flat-boat, the log-cabin, the rail were held aloft valiantly as emblems of which to be proud.

Nevertheless the eagerness with which the Republican press hastened to show that Lincoln was not the coarse backwoodsman the Democrats painted him showed how much they winced under the charges. Reporters were sent West to describe his home, his family, and his habits, in order to prove that he did not live in "low Hoosier style." They told with great satisfaction that he wore daily a broadcloth suit "almost elegant," they described his modest home as a "mansion" and "an elegant two-story dwelling," they never failed to note that Mrs. Lincoln spoke French fluently and that he had a son in Harvard College.

When they could with reasonable certainty con-

nect him with the Lincolns of Hingham, Mass., they heralded his "good blood" with pride and marshalled the Lincolns who had distinguished themselves in the history of the country.

Among the common people of the country the jeers that Lincoln was but a rail-splitter was a spur to enthusiasm. Too many of the solid men of the North had swung an axe, too many of them had passed from log hut to mansion, not to blaze with ^{sympathetic} indignation ~~sympathy~~ when the party was taunted with nominating a backwoodsman. The rail became their emblem and their rallying cry, and the story of the rail fence Lincoln had built a feature of every campaign speech and every country store discussion. In a week after his nomination two rails declared to have been split by Lincoln were on exhibition in New York and certain zealous Pennsylvanians had sent to Macon, Ill., asking to buy the whole fence and have it shipped East. It was the rail which decorated campaign medals, inspired campaign songs, appeared in campaign cartoons. There was something more than a desire to "stand by the candidate" in the enthusiasm. At bottom it was a popular vindication of the American way of making a man.

More important to Lincoln than any popular enthusiasm was the ratification given his nomination by the rival candidates. What would they do? The whole party held its breath until Seward was heard from. ^{other} No man (however) could have taken a crushing

defeat more nobly. He was at his home in Auburn, New York, on May 18, the day of the nomination, and when the news of Lincoln's success was brought him, his informer told him that there was not a Republican to be found in town who had the heart left to write an editorial for the Daily Advertiser approving the nomination. Seward smilingly took his pen and wrote the following paragraph, which appeared that evening:-

"No truer exposition of the Republican creed could be given, than the platform adopted by the Convention contains. No truer or firmer defenders of the Republican faith could have been found in the Union, than the distinguished & esteemed citizens on whom the honors of the nomination have fallen. Their election, we trust by a decisive majority, will restore the Government of the U. S. to its Constitutional & ancient course. Let the watch-word of the Republican party be 'Union & Liberty,' & onward to victory,"

A few days later he went to Washington where a number of disappointed and rebellious Republicans called upon him to ^{offer} ~~extend~~ their condolence. "Mr. Seward," they said, "We cannot accept this situation. We want you to bolt the nomination and run on an independent ticket."

Mr. Seward smiled: "Gentlemen," he said, "Your zeal outruns your discretion. There are many of you giving this advice now, say perhaps 300. Two weeks hence there would be 150 and the next week fifty. After that only William H. Seward. No, gentlemen, the Republican party was not made for William H.

Seward but Mr. Seward if he is worth anything for the Republican party and I believe I have still work to do, I must therefore decline to accept your advice. I have had some experience of this kind.

I ran once as a candidate for the nomination to the Governorship of New York; I was defeated; my friends wanted me to bolt and run independently, but I declined. My opponent who had received the nomination, was defeated in the election. I would have been defeated. Another year I did receive the nomination and I was elected, but if I had consented in the first place to bolt the regular nominee I would never have received the nomination regularly a second time and so would never have been Governor of New York." *

He wrote Lincoln very soon congratulating him and promising support. So did the other leading rivals. The letters were grateful to Lincoln "Holding myself the humblest of all those whose names were before the Convention," he wrote Chase, "I feel in special need of the assistance of all; and I am glad - very glad - of the indication that you stand ready."

With these congratulations and promises of support from his rivals came others from men not less known. Joshua Giddings wrote Lincoln an admirable

* Senator H. L. Dawes in interview corrected by him and published with his permission.

many of their mementos were purely fantas-
tic like a family-maid.

A great many fantastic movements were
~~introduced~~ adopted by them one of the most popular
being a peculiar zig-zag march, an imitation
of the popular emblem - the rail fence.
Numbers of the clubs were ~~strongly drilled~~
by military men, their manners & dress
adopted. The rules & drill

Adopted the rules & drills
of the Chicago ^{Militia} ~~marks~~ ^{under Col Ellsworth} the most popular ~~the~~ ^{regiment}
military ~~the~~ organization of the Day. Col
Ellsworth ~~the~~ ^{was} ~~form~~ and they were stimulated
when the summer of 1840 Col Ellsworth
brought his marks east on a tour of the
principal cities the wide awake movement
was greatly stimulated more men joined than
ever.

Subject placed over shoulders with to ground
- because - almost as difficult as

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letter on ^{May 19} ~~May 26~~:

"Dear Lincoln: You're nominated. You will be elected. After your election, thousands will crowd around you, claiming rewards for services rendered. I, too, have my claims upon you. I have not worked for your nomination, nor for that of any other man. I have labored for the establishment of principles; and when men came to me asking my opinion of you, I only told them, 'Lincoln is an honest man.' All I ask of you in return for my services is, make my statement good through your administration. Yours,
GIDDINGS."

Lincoln soon saw not only that the strong men of his party were supporting him, but that they were working harmoniously in an excellent organization. The Republicans all agreed with the Tribune that "the election of Mr. Lincoln though it could not be accomplished without work was eminently a thing that could be done," and they set themselves vigorously to do it. As the party was composed largely of young men who felt that the cause was worthy of their best efforts, great zest and ingenuity ^{were} was thrown into the campaigning. Arrangements were immediately made for a systematic stumping of the whole country. The speakers engaged were of a very high order, among them being Sumner, Seward, Chase, Cassius M. Clay, Greeley, Stevens. Many of the speeches were of more than usual dramatic interest. Such was Sumner's great speech at Cooper Institute, July 11, on "The Origin, Necessity & Permanence of the Republican Party." It was the first speech Sumner had made in public since the attack on him in the Senate in 1856, and attracted immense attention. Seward made ^{a five weeks} an extended trip through the West ^{often} speaking ~~(sometimes)~~ several times a day ~~(for five weeks.)~~ No one worked harder than Carl Schurz. "I began speaking shortly after the Convention," Mr. Schurz writes in answer to an inquiry, "and continued until the day of the election, making from one to three speeches, with the exception of about ten days in September when I was so fatigued that I had to stop for a little while. I spoke in both English and German, under the auspices of the National Committee and not only in the larger towns but frequently also in country districts." No

advising you to "vote for the rail-splitter," the reverse to buy somebody's soap, or tea, or wagons.

Hundreds of trivial little objects aided in keeping Lincoln before the people. Thus there was a Lincoln canned tomato, an Old Abe chewing tobacco, and numbers of patriotic cards and envelopes. One of the best of the latter was decorated across the top and left side with a rail-fence along which was inscribed "The fence that Abe built."

Campaign songs set to familiar airs were sung on every hand. Many of these never had more than a local vogue, but others were sung generally. One of the most ringing was E. C. Stedman's "Honest Abe of the West" sung to the air of "Star Spangled Banner."

"Then on to the holy Republican strife!
And again, for a future as fair as the morning,
For the sake of that freedom more precious than
life,
Ring out the grand anthem of Liberty's warning!
Lift the banner on high, while from mountain
and plain,
The cheers of the people are sounded again;
Hurrah! for our cause--of all causes the best!
Hurrah! for Old Abe, Honest Abe of the West!"

One of the campaign songs which will never be forgotten was Whittier's The Quakers are Out:-

"Give the flags to the winds!
Set the hills all aflame!
Make way for the man with
the Patriarch's name!
Away with misgiving -- away
with all doubt,
For Lincoln goes in when the
Quakers are out!"

In many of the states great rallies were held at central points, at which scores of Wide Awake clubs and a dozen popular speakers were present. The most enthusiastic of all these was held in Mr. Lincoln's own home, Springfield, on August 8. Fully 75,000 people gathered for the celebration, by far the greater number coming across the prairies on horseback

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or in wagons. A procession eight miles long filed by Mr. Lincoln's door. ~~It could not have been monotonous, for each delegation had its feature, some of them comically ingenious.~~ Then the Springfield Woolen Mills sent out on a wagon a power loom run by steam which during the procession wove several yards of jean cloth and made it up into a pair of trousers, which were presented to Mr. Lincoln at the end of the celebration.

Mr. E. B. Washburne, who was with Mr. Lincoln in Springfield that day, says of this mass meeting: "It was one of the most enormous and impressive gatherings I had ever witnessed. Mr. Lincoln, surrounded by some intimate friends, sat on the balcony of his humble home. It took hours for all the delegations to file before him, and there was no token of enthusiasm wanting. He was deeply touched by the manifestations of personal and political friendships, and returned all his salutations in that off-hand and kindly manner which belonged to him. I know of no demonstration of a similar character that can compare with it except the review by Napoleon of his army for the invasion of Russia, about the same season of the year in 1812."

From May until November the work for the ticket went on steadily and ardently. Mr. Lincoln during all this time remained quietly in Springfield. The conspicuous position in which he was placed made almost no difference in his simple life. He was the same genial, accessible, modest man as ever, his habits as unpretentious, his friend-

liness as great. The chief outward change in his daily round was merely one of quarters. It ~~was~~ seemed to his friends that neither his home nor his dingy law office was an appropriate place in which to receive his visitors and they arranged that a room in the State House which stood on the village green in the center of the town be put at his disposal. He came down to this office every morning about 8 o'clock almost always stopping on his way in his old cordial fashion to ask the news or exchange a story when he met an acquaintance. Frequently he went to the post-office himself before going to his office and came out his arms loaded with letters and papers.

He had no regular hours for visitors; there was no ceremony for admittance to his presence. People came when they would. Usually they found the door open; if it was not, it was Mr. Lincoln's own voice which answered, come in, to their knock. These visitors were a strange medley of the curious, the interested and the friendly. Many came simply to see him to say they had shaken hands with him; numbers to try to find out what his policy would be if elected, others to wish him success. All day long they filed in and out leaving him some days no time for his correspondence which every day grew larger. He seemed never to be in a hurry never to lose patience though his table was piled high with mail, his room crowded with visitors. He even found time to give frequent sittings to the artists sent from

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various parts of the country to paint him. Among those who came in the summer after the nomination were Bary, of Boston, Hicks, of *New York*, Conant, of St. Louis, Wright, of Mobile, Brown * of Philadelphia, Jones, of Cincinnati. Mr. Lincoln took the kindest interest in these men, and later when President did more than one of them a friendly turn, thus in *March* 1865 he wrote to Seward in regard to Jones and Piatt, that he had "some wish" that they might have "some of those moderate sized consulates which facilitate artists a little in their profession." They in their turn never forgot him and nowhere do we get pleasanter pictures of Mr. Lincoln in this period than from their journals. *Sitting over their easels by the hour in the corner of his office assigned them they can get many glimpses into the man's great heart. "No matter how gravely occupied he might be" says Mr. A. Jasper Conant who in August of 1860 painted Mr. Lincoln's portrait, "when children approached he was a child himself again. One afternoon, when none but ourselves were present, he busy with his correspondence and I with my work, a ragged, barefooted boy crept softly up the stairs, and, peering timidly around the edge of*

*Almoad of Philadelphia
(see letter to Davis)
Napoleon's war
2 corresponding mts.
He knew nothing of art
The purpose was strategy
to live - compromise
with Hicks -*

*Insert here
copy III*

* See McClure's Magazine for
* * "My Acquaintance with Abraham Lincoln" printed in the Liber
Scriptorium.

Original Image, 2011. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College-Pelleter Library

Copy III
Insert in page 19

To those who observed him ~~carefully~~ closely ~~as~~ as
as he received his guests visitors
nothing was apparent, he always
remained master of the con-
versation, while his visitors told
him a great deal, they ~~scarcely~~ ~~scarcely~~
learned nothing from him &
while he did not wish to give
the following observation of a
cavalier called out in the autumn
of 1861 illustrated very well what
happened almost every day in
his office

various parts of the country to paint him. Among those who came in the summer after the nomination were Barry, of Boston, Hicks, of New York, Conant, of St. Louis, Wright, of Mobile, Brown,^H and Atwood, of Philadelphia, Jones, of Cincinnati. Mr. Lincoln took the kindest interest in these men, and later when President did more than one of them a friendly turn; thus in March 1865 he wrote to Seward in regard to Jones and Piatt, that he had "some wish" that they might have "some of those moderate sized consulates which facilitate artists a little in their profession." They in their turn never forgot him. Sitting over their easels by the hour in the corner of his office assigned them they can get many glimpses into the man's great heart, and nowhere do we get pleasanter pictures of Mr. Lincoln in this period than from their journals.

To those who observed Mr. Lincoln closely as he received his visitors one thing was apparent: he always remained master of the ^{interview} conversation. While his visitors told him a great deal, they learned nothing from him which he did not wish to give. The following observation of a casual caller late in the autumn of 1861 illustrates very well what happened almost every day in his office:

"While talking to two or three gentlemen and standing up, a very hard looking customer rolled in and tumbled into the only vacant chair and the one lately occupied by Mr. Lincoln. Mr. Lincoln's keen eye took in the fact, but gave no evidence of the notice. Turning around at last he spoke to the odd specimen, holding out his hand at such a distance that our friend had to vacate the chair if he accepted the proffered shake. Mr. Lincoln quietly resumed his chair. It was a small matter, yet one giving proof more positively than a larger event of that peculiar way the man has of mingling with a mixed crowd.

"He converses fluently on all subjects, illustrates everything by a merry anecdote, of which arti-

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cle he has an abundant supply. I said on all subjects. He does not talk politics. He passes from that gracefully the moment it is introduced. Hundreds seek him every week to get his opinion on this or that subject. He has a jolly way of disposing of that matter by saying, 'Ah! you hav'n't read my speeches. Let me make you a present of my speeches.' And the earnest inquirer finds himself the happy possessor of some old documents.' " ■

Among his daily visitors there were usually men of eminence from North or South. He received them all with perfect simplicity and always even on his busiest days found a moment to turn away from them to greet old friends who had known him when he kept grocery in New Salem or acted as deputy-surveyor of Sangamon county. One day as he talked to a company of distinguished strangers an old lady in a big sun-bonnet, heavy boots and short skirts walked into the office. She carried a package wrapped in brown paper and tied with a white string. As soon as Mr. Lincoln saw her he left the group, went to meet her and

shaking her hand cordially inquired for her "folks." After a moment the old lady opened her package and taking out a pair of coarse wool socks she handed them to him. "I wanted to give you somethin'", Mr. Linkin," she said, "to take to Washington, and that's all I hed. I spun that yarn and knit them socks myself." Thanking her warmly, Mr. Lincoln took the socks and holding them up by the toes, one in each hand, he turned to the astonished celebrities and said in a voice full of kindly amusement, "The lady got my latitude and longitude about right didn't she, gentlemen?"

The old lady was not the only one, however, who gave Mr. Lincoln something to carry to Washington. From the time of his nomination gifts streamed in on him. Many of these came in the form of wearing apparel. Mr. George Lincoln, of Brooklyn, who in *January* carried a handsome silk hat to Lincoln the gift of the New York hatter said that in receiving the hat, Mr. Lincoln laughed heartily over the gifts of clothing he was receiving and remarked to Mrs. Lincoln,

"Well, wife, if nothing else comes out of this scrape, we are going to have some new clothes, are we not."

To those who observed Mr. Lincoln superficially in this period, it might have seemed that he was doing nothing of any value to himself or to his party. Certainly he was taking no active part in the campaign. He was making no speeches - writing no letters - giving no interviews. This policy of

silence he had adopted at the outset. The very night of his nomination his townspeople in serenading him had called for a speech. Standing in the doorway of his house he said to them that he did not suppose the honor of such a visit was intended particularly for himself as a private citizen, but rather to the representative of a great party; that as to his position on the political questions of the day he could only refer them to his previous speeches, and he added:- "Fellow citizens and friends: The time comes upon every public man, when it is best for him to keep his lips closed. That time has come upon me."^H When in August the monster mass meeting was held in Springfield every effort was made to persuade Mr. Lincoln to speak. All he would consent to do was to appear and in a few words excuse himself. Up to the time he left for Washington to be inaugurated, he kept his resolve.

Nor would he write letters explaining his position, or defending himself. So many letters were received asking his political opinion that he found it necessary soon after his nomination to prepare a form of reply to be sent out by his secretary:-

"Dear Sir: Your letter to Mr. Lincoln of -----, and by which you seek to obtain his opinions on certain political points, has been received by him. He has received others of a similar character, but he also has a greater number of the exactly opposite character. The latter class beseech him to write nothing whatever upon any point of political doctrine. They say his positions were well known when he was nominated, and that he must not now embarrass the canvass by undertaking to shift or modify them. He regrets that he cannot oblige all, but you perceive it is impossible for him to do so.

Yours, etc.,

JNO. G. NICOLAY."

To one gentleman who asked him to write some-

thing disclaiming all intention to interfere with

* Private letter to author from Herbert Post, Fort Worth, Texas. Mr. Post was in the crowd which serenaded Mr. Lincoln.

slaves or slavery in the States, he wrote, "I have already done this many many times; and it is in print and open to all who will read. Those who will not read or heed what I have already publicly said would not read or heed a repetition of it. If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

And to another correspondent who suggested that he set forth his conservative views, he wrote:-

* * * "I will not forbear from doing so merely on punctilio and pluck. If I do finally abstain, it will be because of apprehension that it would do harm. For the good men of the South - and I regard the majority of them as such - I have no objection to repeat seventy and seven times. But I have bad men to deal with, both North and South; men who are eager for something new upon which to base new misrepresentations; men who would like to frighten me, or at least to fix upon me the character of timidity and cowardice. They would seize upon almost any letter I could write as being an 'awful coming down.' I intend keeping my eye upon these gentlemen, and to not unnecessarily put any weapons in their hands."

Nor would he defend himself against the "campaign stories" which appeared in numbers. One of which his enemies made which was that he had received \$200.00 for the Cooper Union speech in February 1860. They claiming that as it was a political speech in his own interest it was contrary to political ethics to accept pay. Lincoln explained the affair in a letter to a gentleman who had been disturbed by it and added:-

"I have made this explanation to you as a friend but I wish no explanation made to our enemies. What they want is a squabble and a fuss, and that they can have if we explain; and they cannot have it if we

don't." Another foolish tale which caused Lincoln's partisans unrest was that when he was a member of Congress he had charged several pairs of boots to his stationery account and that they had been paid for out of public funds. One of Lincoln's friends took the trouble to examine stationery account for the Thirtieth Congress and to publish a certified denial of the story.

Lincoln's silence and inactivity were merely external. As a matter of fact no one was busier than he. No one was following more intently and thoughtfully the gradual development of the situation and the daily fluctuation of opinion. By correspondence, from the press, through his visitors many of whom came to Springfield at his request, he kept himself informed of how the campaign was going from Maine to California. Whenever he feared a break in the ranks he put in a word of warning or of advice. An example of this is the following letter - one which has never before been given to the public:-

"Springfield, Aug. 15, 1860.

"Dr. Wm. Fithian--

"My Dear Sir--

"I understand there is trouble in old Vermillion about its next Representative to the Legislature. I have learned nothing as to the grounds of the difficulty; but I will be greatly obliged if you will find a way of so adjusting it that we do not lose that member. To lose Trumbull's re-election next winter would be a great disaster. Please do not let it fall upon us. I appeal to you because I can to no other with so much confidence. *

"Yours, as ever,

"A. LINCOLN."

* The original of the letter is owned by Dr. P. H. Fithian of Springfield, Ill., son of the addressee.

He warned Thurlow Weed that Douglas was "managing the Bell element with great adroitness." He cautioned Hannibal Hamlin against a break the latter feared in Maine, "Such a result as you seem to predict in Maine" - - - he wrote, "would, I fear, put us on the down-hill track, lose us the State elections in Pa. & Indiana, & probably ruin us on the main turn in November."

While he gave the strictest attention to the progress of the elections all over the country he managed to keep above local issues and to hold himself aloof from the personal contests and rivalries within the party. His management of this kind of case, many of which it is certain came to him is shown in the following new letter:-

"Private.

"Springfield, Ill.

"Aug. 31, 1860.

"Hon. John -----,

"My dear Sir:

"Yours of the 27th is duly received. It consists almost exclusively of a historical detail of some local troubles among some of our friends in Pennsylvania, and I suppose its object is to guard me against forming a prejudice against Mr. McC. I have not heard near so much upon that subject as you probably suppose; and I am slow to listen to criminalities among friends, and never expose their quarrels on either side. My sincere wish is that both sides will allow bygones to be bygones and look to the present and future only. "

"Yours very truly,

"A. LINCOLN."

* The original of this letter is owned by Mr. Charles Roberts, of Philadelphia.

The reference in this letter is to Mr. A. K. McClure of Philadelphia who, as chairman of the State Committee and leader of the more radical portion of the Republican party of the state, was opposed by the Cameron faction. Lincoln received many warnings against McClure. He took his own way to find out about him and his work, as McClure himself tells:- "Some time toward mid-summer, when the campaign in Pennsylvania was well under way, Davis and Swett entered my headquarters together and handed me a letter from Lincoln, in which he said that these gentlemen were greatly interested in his election--that they were on East looking into the contest generally, and he would be pleased if I would furnish them every facility to ascertain the condition of affairs in the State. I was very glad to do so, and they spent two days at my headquarters, where every information was given them and the methods and progress of the organization opened to them without reserve. They saw that for the first time in the history of Pennsylvania politics the new party had been organized by the State Committee in every election district of the State, and that everything that could be done had been done to put the party in condition for a successful battle.

"After Davis and Swett had finished their work and notified me of their purpose to leave during the night, they invited me to a private dinner at which none were present but ourselves. During the course of the dinner Swett informed me that they were very happy now to be able to tell me the real purpose of their mission--that had their information been less

satisfactory they would have returned without advising me of it. He said that they had been instructed by Lincoln to come to Pennsylvania and make personal examination into the condition of affairs, especially as to the efficiency of the party organization of the State, and that his reason for doing so was that he had been admonished that the direction of the campaign by the State Committee was incompetent and likely to result in disaster. They added that, inasmuch as their answer to Lincoln must be that the organization was the best that they had ever known in any State, they felt entirely at liberty to disclose to me why they had come and what the result of their inquiry was."

In fact Lincoln kept in perfect touch with the progress of his party from May to November and was able to say at any time with accuracy just what his chances were in each State. He seems at no time to have had any serious fear that he would be defeated. ^{should}

There was a tragic side to this very certainty of election which Lincoln felt deeply. In the Convention which had nominated him, 9 States of the Union had not been represented. ^{should be} If he were elected these States would have ^{had} no voice in his choice. He knew that he was pledged to a platform whose principles these States stigmatized as "deception and fraud" and that if elected he must deny what they claimed as rights. He knew that in at least one State, Alabama, the legislature two months before his nomination had pledged itself by an almost unanimous vote in case of his election to call a convention to consider what should be done for "the protection of their rights, interests and honor." He knew that numbers of influential Southern men were repeating daily with Wm. L. Yancey, "I want the cotton states precipitated in a revolution," or declaring with Mr. Crawford of Georgia, "We will never submit to the inauguration of a Black Republican President." ~~He saw repeated evidence~~ From May to November he watched anxiously for every sign that the South was preparing to make good the threats with which its orators were inflaming their audiences, which a hostile press reiterated day by day, which teemed in his mail, and which brought scores of timorous men to Springfield to advise and warn him. How serious was it all? He did his utmost to discover;

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cover; even writing in October to an army officer to find out how much truth there was in the report of disaffection in a Western fort. His letter which has only recently come to light is an excellent example of his quiet method of getting at the facts in a situation.*

"Private & Confidential

"Springfield Ills. Oct 26, 1860.

"Maj. David Hunter:

"My Dear Sir:

"Your very kind letter of the 20th was duly received, for which, please accept my thanks. I have another letter from a writer unknown to me, saying the officers of the Army at Fort Kearny, have determined, in case of Republican success, at the approaching Presidential election, to take themselves, and the arms at that point, South, for the purpose of resistance to the government. While I think there are many chances to one that this is a hum-bug, it occurs to me that any real movement of this sort in the army would leak out and become known to you - In such case, if it would not be unprofessional, or dishonorable (of which you are to be judge) I shall be much obliged if you will apprise me of it.

"Yours very truly

"Maj. David Hunter, "A. LINCOLN."

"Fort Leavenworth,

"Kans."

In spite of all that Lincoln knew of the temper of the South, in spite of his close study of events there through the summer of 1860, he did not believe secession probable. "The people of the South have too much good sense and good temper to attempt the ruin of the government rather than see it administered as it was administered by the men who made it. At least so I hope & believe," he wrote a correspondent in August, and in September he said to a

* This letter to Maj. Hunter is one of several to the same officer which have recently come into the possession of the War Department, and which have never been published.

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There was a tragic side to this very certainty of election which Lincoln felt deeply. In the Convention which had nominated him, 9 States of the Union had not been represented. If he were elected these States would have no voice in his choice. He knew that he was pledged to a platform whose principles these States stigmatized as "deception and fraud" and that if elected he must deny what they claimed as rights. He knew that ⁱⁿ at least one State, Alabama, the legislature 2 months before his nomination had pledged itself by an almost unanimous vote in case of his election to call a convention to consider what should be done for "the protection of their rights, interests and honor." ~~That all over the South men were pledging themselves to resist his inauguration and that throughout the North were many good and wise men who believed his election would surely be followed by disunion and civil war.~~ From May to November he watched anxiously for every sign that the South was preparing to make good the threats with which its orators were inflaming their audiences, which a hostile press reiterated day by day which teemed in his mail and which brought scores of timorous men to Springfield to advise and warn him. How serious was it all? He did his utmost to dis-

Copy 26
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of a Black Republican President"
He saw repeated evidence brought
out during the campaign that the
disunion sentiment had even had,
even in 1856, a kind of organization
under Mr. Wise, and again in
1858 in the movement known as
the League ^{of} ~~of~~ the South with its
motto "A Southern Republic our
only safety"

He knew that throughout the
North many good & wise men be-
lieved this election would be follow-
ed by disunion and civil war. He
heard himself called constantly a
revolutionary abolitionist and
accused of a wilful desire to
destroy the Union.

visitor, "There are no real disunionists in the country." *

There were reasons for this confidence. In every State of the South there was a Union party working to meet the crisis which Lincoln's election was sure to produce; many of the members sent him cheering letters. In acknowledging such a letter in August, Lincoln wrote: "It contains one of the many assurances I receive from the South, that in no probable event will there be any very formidable effort to break up the Union."

Then, too, Lincoln had heard this threat of secession for so long that he had grown slightly indifferent to it. ~~It seemed to him a cry of "Wolf."~~ He remembered that in the Fremont campaign it had been employed with even more violence than now. Again in 1858 the clamor of disunion had risen. He believed that now much of the noise about disunion was merely political, raised by the friends of Breckinridge, Douglas, or Bell, to drive voters from him. The leading men of the party sustained Lincoln in this belief. Seward and Schurz both confidently assured Republicans in their speeches that they might vote for Lincoln without fear, and Bryant, in the ^{NY} Evening Post, laughed at the

* Unsigned letter to N. Y. Evening Post, Sept. 8, 1860.
 ** Evening Post for Sept. 7, 1860.

"conservative distresses" of those who supposed that Lincoln's election would cause secession and war; reminding them that when Jefferson was candidate it was said his election would "let loose the flood-gates of French Jacobinism" and that Henry Clay had declared that "nothing short of universal commercial ruin" would follow Jackson's election. Lincoln was sustained not only by the assurances of the Union party of the South ~~but~~ by the buoyant hopefulness of the Republicans of the North. ~~He~~ had a powerful moral support in his own conviction that no matter what effort the South made to secede the North could and would prevent it. He was and had been for years perfectly clear on this subject. In the Fremont campaign he had said in reply to the threat ^{of secession} "No matter what our grievance - even though Kansas shall come in as a slave State; and no matter what theirs - even if we shall restore the compromise - we will say to the Southern Disunionists we won't go out of the Union and you sha'nt." * He had less terror now in facing disunion efforts because he believed that however strenuous they might be they would never succeed.

It was then with the belief that he was going to be elected and that while his election would produce a serious uproar in the South, that no successful resistance would follow, that Lincoln approached election day. He had grown materially in the esti-

* Lost Speech, - see McClure's Magazine for

looks for the election of Lincoln by the people and would prefer him to Douglas. Our most ultra Southern men seem to respect him and to have confidence in his honesty, fairness & conservatism. They concede that he stands on a modern platform, that his antecedents are excellent, & that he is not likely to invade the rights of any one; but they can't go for him because he holds opinions relative to the rights of slavery in the territories directly opposite to the southern view, still he is an open & candid opponent, & therefore commands southern respect."^M

"Some of the most interesting interviews which Mr. Lincoln has had," wrote some one to the "Baltimore Patriot,"^M "have been with extreme Southern gentlemen, who came full of prejudice against him, and who left satisfied with his loyalty to all the constitutional rights of the South. I could tell you of some most interesting cases, but it is enough to know that the general sentiment of all Southern men who have conversed with him is the same as that publicly expressed by Mr. Goggin of Virginia, Mr. Perry of South Carolina, Mr. McRae of North Carolina, and many others, who have not hesitated to avow their intention of accepting Mr. Lincoln's election and holding him to the constitutional discharge of the Presidential office"

^M N. Y. Evening Post, August 17, 1860.

^M Illinois State Journal, Sept. 26, 1860.

The most significant element in the estimate of Lincoln which the country formed between May and November was the respect and affection which was awakened among the common people. There sprang up all over the country among plain people a feeling for him not unlike that which had long existed in Illinois. The general distribution made of his speeches had something to do with this. There was published in 1860 in Columbus, Ohio, an edition of the Lincoln and Douglas Debates of 1858 which was used freely as a campaign document.* Lincoln himself gave away scores of these books to his friends and to persons who came to him begging for an expression of his views. Today copies bearing his autograph are to be seen treasured volumes in the libraries of many public men. The Cooper Union speech was

published

published by the Young Men's Republican Club of New York and circulated widely. To the hard-working farmer, mechanic, store-keeper, who thought slowly but surely and whose sole political ambition was to cast an honest vote, these speeches were like a personal face-to-face ^{with} appeal. The argument was so clear, the illustration so persuasive, the statement so colloquial and natural that they could not get away from them. "Lincoln's right" was the general verdict among masses of people who hesitating between Republicanism and Popular Sovereignty read the speeches as a help to a decision.

While Lincoln's speeches awakened respect for and confidence in his ability, the story of his life stirred something deeper in men. * Here was a man who had become a leader of the nation by the labor of his hands, the honesty of his intellect, the uprightness of his heart. Plain people were touched by the hardships of this life so like their own, inspired by the thought that a man who had struggled as they had done, who had remained poor, who had lived simply, could still be eligible to the highest place in the nation. They had believed that it could be done. Here was a proof of it. They told the story to their boys. This, they said, is what American institutions make possible, not glitter or wealth, trickery or demagoguery ^{is} ~~are~~ necessary, only honesty, hard thinking, a fixed purpose. Affection and sympathy for Lincoln grew with respect. It was the beginning of that peculiar sympathetic relation

* Campaign lines scattered widely. Evening Post of May 19 announced 5 - Tribune Tracts

between Lincoln and the common people which was to become one of the controlling influences in the great drama of the Civil War.

2 ~~Thus, when November arrived, Abraham Lincoln held a far higher and more secure place in the Republican Party than he held when nominated in May.~~

7 Election day in 1860 fell on the 6th of Springfield, although a town of strong Democratic sympathy, realized the importance of the occasion, and by daylight was booming away with cannon; before noon numbers of bands which came, the citizens hardly knew from where, were playing on the corner of every street.

Mr. Lincoln, as was his custom, came down to his room at the State House by eight o'clock. ~~He went~~ *and where went* over his big mail as coolly as if it were not Election Day and he a candidate for the Presidency of the United States. He had not been there long before ~~(numbers of)~~ his friends began to flock in. *in* They ~~came from every direction. There was even two or~~ *very* three gentlemen from New York, to whom Mr. Lincoln politely suggested that it might have been better if they were at home voting. Such numbers came into his room that it was proposed that the doors be closed and he be allowed to remain by himself, but he said he had never done such a thing in his life as to close the door on his friends and that he did not intend to begin now, and so the day wore away in the entertaining of visitors.

It had not been Mr. Lincoln's intention to vote, the obstacle which he found in the way being that

his own name headed the Republican ticket and that he did not want to vote for himself. One of his friends suggested that his name might be cut off and he vote for the rest of the ticket. He fell in with this suggestion, and late in the afternoon, when the crowd around the polls, which were just across the street from his office, had subsided somewhat, he went over to cast his ballot. He was recognized immediately and his friends were soon about him, cheering wildly and contending good-naturedly for an opportunity to shake his hand. Even the Democrats, with their hands full of documents which they were distributing, joined in this enthusiastic demonstration and cheered at the top of their voices for their beloved townsman.

No returns were expected before seven o'clock, and it was a little later than that when Mr. Lincoln returned from his supper to the State House. The first despatches that came were, of course, from different parts of Illinois, the very first being from Decatur, where a Republican gain was announced. Soon after, Alton, which was expected to go for Douglas, sent in a majority of twelve for Lincoln. There was a tremendous sensation in the company, and Mr. Lincoln asked that the despatch be sent out to the "boys," meaning the crowd which had gathered in and about the State House. After an hour or more news began to come from Missouri. "Now," said Mr. Lincoln, "they should get a few licks back at us." But to everybody's surprise, there was more good news

What was the result?
Lincoln
He was
the
winner

from Missouri than had been expected. Towards midnight news began to come from Pennsylvania.

"Allegheny Co. 10,000 majority for Lincoln"; "Philadelphia 15,000 plurality, 25,000 majority over all"; then a telegram from Simon Cameron, "Pennsylvania 70,000 for you. New York safe. Glory enough."

This was the first news from New York and since 10 o'clock the company had been waiting impatiently for it. The fusion ticket it was feared might go through and if it did the disaster to the Republicans would be serious.

While waiting anxiously for something definite from New York, a delegation of Springfield ladies came in to invite Mr. Lincoln and his friends to a hall near by, where they had prepared refreshments for all the Republican politicians of the town. The party had not been there long before there came a telegram announcing that New York had gone Republican. Such a cheering was probably never heard in Springfield before. The whole hall full of people, beside themselves with joy, began a romping promenade around the tables, singing at the top of their voices the popular campaign song "Ain't you glad you joined the Republicans?" Here at intervals now further telegrams came from New York, all announcing large majorities. The scene became one of the wildest excitement, and Mr. Lincoln and his friends soon withdrew quietly to a little telegraph office on the square, where they could receive reports more at their leisure. Up to this time the only anxiety Mr.

Lincoln had shown about the election was in the returns from his State and town. He didn't "feel quite easy," as he said, about Springfield. Towards morning, however, the announcement came that he had a majority in his own precinct. Then it was that he showed the first emotion, ~~for he gave~~ a jubilant chuckle, ^{Down after the} and remarked cheerfully to his friends, that he guess'd he'd go home now, which he did. But Springfield was not content to go home. Cannon banged until daylight, and on every street corner and in every alley could be heard groups of men shouting at the top of their voices, "Oh, ain't you glad you joined the Republicans?"

24 hours later and the full result of that Tuesday's work was known. Out of 303 electoral votes, Lincoln had received 180. Of the popular vote he had received 1,866,452 - nearly a half million over Douglas, a million over Breckinridge, a million and a quarter over Bell. It was a victory, but there were facts about the victory which startled the thoughtful. ¹⁵ States of the Union gave ^{him} no electoral votes to Lincoln, and in 10 States he had not received a single popular vote, ^{Lincoln} while if ~~he~~ had more votes than any one opposing candidate, they together had ~~a plurality of~~ nearly 1,000,000 over him.

Mr. Lincoln's Tact.

foot. note
*From the "State Journal" November 26, 1860:

"We often hear of the readiness with which the President-elect reads men and adapts his intercourse to their peculiarities. This is well illustrated by a gentleman who recently visited Springfield and had an opportunity to see Mr. Lincoln in his reception room. The writer says:

"While talking to two or three gentlemen and standing up, a very hard looking customer rolled in and tumbled into the only vacant chair and the one lately occupied by Mr. Lincoln. Mr. Lincoln's keen eye took in the fact, but gave no evidence of the notice. Turning around at last he spoke to the odd specimen, holding out his hand at such a distance that our friend had to vacate the chair if he accepted the proffered shake. Mr. Lincoln quietly resumed his chair. It was a small matter, yet one giving proof more positively than a larger event of that peculiar way the man has of mingling with a mixed crowd.

"He converses fluently on all subjects, illustrates everything by a merry anecdote, of which article he has an abundant supply. I said on all subjects. He does not talk politics. He passes from that gracefully the moment it is introduced. Hundreds seek him every week to get his opinion on this or that subject. He has a jolly way of disposing of that matter by saying, 'Ah! you hav'n't read my speeches. Let me make you a present of my speeches.' And the earnest inquirer finds himself the happy possessor of some old documents."

copy

looks for the election of Lincoln by the people and would prefer him to Douglas. Our most ultra Southern men seem to respect him and to have confidence in his honesty, fairness & conservatism. They concede that he stands on a modern platform, that his antecedents are excellent, & that he is not likely to invade the rights of any one; but they can't go for him because he holds opinions relative to the rights of slavery in the territories directly opposite to the southern view, still he is an open & candid opponent, & therefore commands southern respect." *

Note sent me to the
Illinois Patriot *

* N. Y. Evening Post, August 17, 1860.

* Illinois State Journal Sept 26, 1860

Then, too, Lincoln had heard this threat of secession for so long that he had grown slightly indifferent to it. It seemed to him a cry of "Wolf." He remembered that in the Fremont campaign it had been employed with even more violence than now.

Again in 1858 the clamor of disunion had risen. Repeatedly through the summer of 1860 the Republican press rehearsed the disunion efforts of the past; of Gov. Wise and his friends in 1856, of the "Leaguers of the South" with their motto of "A Southern Republic our only safety" and they freely declared their belief that there was no serious danger that the South would ever secede. The leading men of the party sustained Lincoln in this belief. Seward and Schurz both confidently assured Republicans in their speeches that they might vote for Lincoln without fear and Bryant in the Evening Post ^{xx} laughed at the

* Unsigned letter to N. Y. Evening Post Sept. 8, 1860.

** Evening Post for Sept. 7, 1860.

Lincoln and His Southern Visitors.

Extract from the Baltimore "Patriot"(a letter from Springfield)
reproduced in the "State Journal", Sept. 26, 1860:

"Some of the most interesting interviews which Mr. Lincoln has had ~~has~~ been with extreme Southern gentlemen, who came full of prejudice against him, and who left satisfied with his loyalty to all the constitutional rights of the South. I could tell you of some most interesting cases, but it is enough to know that the general sentiment of all Southern men who have conversed with him is the same as that publicly expressed by Mr. Goggin of Virginia, Mr. Perry of South Carolina, Mr. McRae of North Carolina and many others, who have not hesitated to

—Nomn to Depr.

vow their intention of accepting Mr. Lincoln's election and holding him
to the constitutional discharge of the Presidential office. . . ."