J. McCAN DAVIS,
ATTORNEY AT LAW
OFFICE:
ILLINOIS NAT'L BANK BLDG.

SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS, Oct.5, 1898.

My Dear Miss Tarbell:

Mr.Brown saved me a trip to Berlin by coming to town today and bringing his little scrap-book with him. I have examined it with great care and enclose herewith a description which I think will enable you to determine its value and to readily identify the extracts which it contains. Mr.Brown took the book back home with him,and I agreed to write him as soon as I should hear from you.

I regard the book as being of great value,since it sets forth,in the most authoritative manner,Lincoln's views on the subject of"negro equality",and contains practically all he had said on that question up to Oct.18, 1858. The letter,by a very slight reduction, could be reproduced in fac-simile on two pages of the magazine;while the whole thing,including letter,extracts and comments,could be gotten on six or seven pages,~~xxxfxxx~~ all in fac-simile,or merely the written portion in fac-simile,with a resetting of the printed extracts. This, of course, would make a complete article "By A.Lincoln."

I could not get Mr.Brown to name a price for the book,and of course I did not express any opinion as to its commercial value. He is well aware,however, that it is very valuable,and is not certain that he will sell more than the use of it for magazine purposes. He has never attempted to sell it,although he has Mr.Gunther in mind as a possible purchaser in case he decides to sell. Mr.Gunther,by the way, knows nothing of the book. I have assured him that the publication of the letter in the magazine will not in the least injure,but on the other hand may enhance, the salable value of the book.

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I find that Mr.Brown is not at all "hard up",so that he will not be forced to sell the book at present. He and his brother jointly own something like a thousand acres of good land. I was unable to identify him when you were here, but upon seeing him recognized him at once as the "Ben" Brown I used to see in town quite frequently.

Under the circumstances,I make no recommendation as to the price to be offered,but would suggest that you tender whatever you think the thing would be worth to the magazine. Mr.Brown,I know,has the idea that it will be worth considerable. He said he felt sure the Century would buy it, but I assured him that McClure's,being particularly interested in the subject just now,would pay him as much as any other magazine. Possibly you might induce Mr.Lambert or Mr.Gunther to buy the book on the understanding that you have the liberty to use such portion as you desire.

I will write you further tomorrow on other matters.

Very sincerely yours,

J. McCan Davis.

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