June 28, 1928

Milton H. Shutes, M.D.
Oakland, Calif.

My dear Dr. Shutes:

I have your letter of June 18, telling me that you are interested in making a study of Abraham Lincoln's interest in health and medicine, and asking me if I can give you any specific information on the subject.

I am sorry to say that I cannot. You say he had smallpox while President. If I ever read that it entirely escaped my attention. When was it? Will you not be good enough to let me know where you found the account? He probably did have chills and fever in his early days in Illinois, almost everybody had a touch of that.

I know nothing of the story that you tell about his going to Indiana for a "mad stone" for one of his sons.

No, I don't suppose he was more superstitious in matters of health than the people of his time. He had so much good commonsense that I should judge he would be less so than the average man.

If I were in your place I should read Herndon's, Lehman's, Whitney's and Nicolay & Hay's biographies of Lincoln. You will find that the last attributes his melancholy to indigestion, caused by th poor food of his early days.

I should think it would be necessary, to get any very clear idea on the subject, to study the health conditions of Indiana and Illinois at the time that he lived there, as well the character of the physicians and the domestic remedies. If you should write anything on this subject I should be very glad to have a copy.

Regretting that I can be of no more use to you, believe me

Sincerely yours

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