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September 7, 1923.

Miss Ida M. Tarbell,
120 East 19th Street,
New York City.

Dear Miss Tarbell:-

I have been wanting to write you all summer, to tell you how much I have appreciated the splendid articles about Lincoln that have been syndicated throughout the country in the various newspapers. I was especially interested in the article appearing a few weeks ago in which tell the story of his Cooper Union address.

I heard, or read, some time ago, that this Cooper Union address has an interesting story attached to it, particularly interesting to those engaged in the work in which I am. It went something like this,- Lincoln's son, Robert, was east at some college and wanted his father to come and visit him at the Christmas holiday time. Mr. Lincoln wrote Robert to the effect that he feared he couldn't afford to come. Later, he wrote that some Lyceum Committee in New York (at that time the New York Lyceum was flourishing) had offered him $200.00 and his expenses, for a lecture, and that he had accepted and would plan to come and see Robert on the same trip. The story goes on to say that later this Lyceum Committee feared that it would have a deficit because the Committee felt that perhaps Mr. Lincoln wouldn't draw an audience, and, therefore, they wouldn't have the money to pay the fee, so a member of the Committee approached William Cullen Bryant, one of the important figures in Cooper Union, and induced Cooper Union to take over this engagement.

Now if the above recital can be established as fact, it would make a very interesting story from our standpoint, and I think it would be of great interest to the American people. I wonder if, in your researches, you have run across any papers or documents that would bear out any story such as I have given above. If my memory serves me right, a brief story such as I have outlined was printed a couple of years ago in the Outlook Magazine, and gave as its authority letters that were reported to be in the possession of Robert Lincoln.

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Ida Tarbell
9-7-23

If the above recital is substantially true, I wonder if you would care to write an article on the subject. Every now and then somebody like Albert Beveridge tells me it cheapens a man in public life to lecture; that only superficially-minded folks did it, and then he begins to talk a lot about one certain William Jennings Bryan. If Mr. Bryan is superficial, and many of us think he is, it wasn't lecturing that made him so. I'd like to have some ammunition to hand back to a man like Beveridge. Of course there are others besides Beveridge.

I find that some lecture engagements are being placed in this territory for you during the week of February 25 to March 1. Would you be available for lectures during the week of February 18 to 23rd? The Cleveland Advertising Club is anxious to have you on Wednesday, February 20th for a big Washington-Lincoln meeting, you to speak on Lincoln. This will be one of the important meetings for that club during the year.

Sincerely yours,

Louis J. Alber

President.

LJA:LAW

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