GEORGE B. ORLADY, PRESIDENT JUDGE.
WILLIAM D. PORTER, JUDGE.
JOHN J. HENDERSON, JUDGE.
FRANK H. TREXLER, JUDGE.
WILLIAM H. KELLER, JUDGE.
WILLIAM B. LINN, JUDGE.
ROBERT S. GAWTHROP, JUDGE.

THE SUPERIOR COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA
JUDGES' CHAMBERS

Meadville, Pa., June 23, 1924.

Dear Miss Tarbell:

I have never written my war-time recollections as so much has been written on the general subject that there seems little space for additions.

With respect to your inquiry: I have a decided belief that the quotation attributed to Booth, at the time of the assassination of the President, was not uttered by him. The seats occupied by Major Ashley, Lieutenant McKelvy and myself were near enough to the President's box and the theater stage to have permitted us to hear if the words you quote had been used. Ashley and I had spent some years in the study of Latin and were familiar with the words referred to. When the report appeared in the papers the next morning giving an account of the tragedy, Ashley and I compared our observations and both thought that an imaginative reporter had supplied the quotation for dramatic effect. I am quite sure that we would both have recognized the language if it had been used.

Digital Image, 2009. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library

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There was no turning to the audience by Booth. In alighting on the stage, he made the movement which gave the impression that he was bending his knees to break the force of the fall, but his departure from the stage was very rapid and without any demonstration. It was not observable as he disappeared that he had broken one of his ankles in jumping onto the stage, and his disappearing movement was alert, but in no way dramatic.

I am quite in accord with your observations with respect to Dr. Beiler. I do not often see him, but when the opportunity is presented, I shall give him my views in regard to the purpose of establishing the Biblical course and the results aimed at as to the scope and method of the teaching.

Very sincerely yours,

John J. Henderson

JJH/MWS

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