Interview with R. E. Williams of the law firm of Williams and Capen at Bloomington. Mr Williams came to B. in June '56 - after Convention of May 29. Was lawyer [illegible] with A. L. for 4 or 5 years he said a great deal of Lincoln. Thought him a strange man - full of grand conceits. Told a story which Judge Weldon told him, of how one day Weldon, then a young man was puzzled over a case and took it to L. "Jim never been a boy" said Mr Williams "if you don't know every boy does or must have seen at any rate a peg for the suspenders from the clothes come off. Well when Weldon came to Lincoln that was what he went up to W. explained what he wanted A. L. said "just wait a moment Weldon until I put a peg for my galluses and then I'll go at it like a dog at a root." ("He dogged that does it")

Mr Capen joined in after this story and told me of an old man named Hodge who had known L. well and talked much of him. This H. was shrewd, uneducated

read little out tonight - I discussed much
he had heard the speech of May 29 ½ c & his char-
acterization of it - was it was "ernest". Mr Caper
heard this speech also and that - was the
impression it made on him - earnest.
Then Mr H. said Lincoln never indulged in
fun when he had a ~~that~~ case - one which
he believed ~~would~~ was right - then he
argued simply but if his case was weak
he would tell stories, cover his opponent,
the witness etc with ridicule, keep
court & jury shrieking with laughter but
when he was sure - he was grave.

Mr Williams proposes to tell me a story
but Mr Caper says - "I never did like
that". Mr W. thinks - the real evil - lies
in people at all - was published in
Harpers Drawer & is all right - & he
begins.

When the prosecuting attorney was out
in the court yard & Lincoln the seat
of his trousers split - the seam
burst"

"I don't think I'd tell" any more put in Mrs.
"It's all right" declared Mr W.

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Of course I did but under the circumstances I simply said - "I'll leave that to your judgment"
"Well I'll tell it" he said obligingly

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He went into court and it was early before everybody saw the petition and some member of the court started a paper.

"We the undersigned promise to contribute so much each to put a palate in the prosecuting attorneys mouth"

It was passed to Mr Wallace who put down his name & handed it to Mr Lincoln. Who was just beginning to wear spectacles. He put on his glasses & squinted at the paper & then wrote-

"Can't contribute anything to the end in view" & passed it:- "Then said Mr W. he [illegible]

Judge David Davis was fond of Lincoln but tried hard to preserve order in the court. Frequently L. would keep the lamps laughing in a hotel beside him & then Judge would say: "Lincoln you must behave" but in a few minutes the judge would call a lawyer to him & say:-

What was that L. was telling just now.

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