The Associated Literary Press.
McClure's Magazine.

S. S. McCLURE, President.
JOHN S. PHILLIPS, Treasurer.
ALBERT B. BRADY, Secretary.

S. S. McClure, Limited,

30 Lafayette Place, New York City.

CABLE ADDRESS, "Alddecamp, New York."

LONDON OFFICE:
Robert McClure, Manager,
33 BEDFORD ST., COVENT GARDEN.

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Copy New York, July 10, 1896.

My dear Miss Boice:

I have "sat down and considered" as you directed, and you will forgive me for writing by dictation. I have sommany things to do to-day I do not want to take time to write you by hand so long a letter as I am going to.

I had made up my mind that I would not undertake any such public lecturing as you suggest, but various things have happened since I talked with you which make me feel that it is best to change my mind, and if you are satisfied with the subject which I am going to propose, why, I will go next February. I suppose the lecture is to be in the hall of the new Century Club where we heard the Southern elocutionist, is it not? That did not seem to formidable to me when I looked at it.

Now for the explanation. You know I am to go on with this Lincoln work for two or three years--perhaps for the rest of my life; I don't know. Mr. Mc Clure has been very anxious that I prepare a series of articles suitable for colleges and clubs on Lincoln. From many points of view you can easily see it would be an excellent advertisement for the magazine and would be a good thing for me financially. I was invited once or twice last winter to do something of the sort and refused, although Mr. Mc Clure urged me to the contrary. But I refused this because I was overworked and felt that one more straw might spoil everything. Mr. Mc Clure has urged me to get up a popular lecture. This, I don't see my way to yet, though I have the course of talks pretty well in mind.

Now, one thing that I would like to do would be to prepare a lecture on the literary quality of Abraham Lincoln. I think that is not the "putting" but that is the idea; I will think of a good title and write you. But let me explain what I mean by that.

I should like to show, in the first place, that Lincoln had an appreciation of the best qualities of literature; show how he got it; then show some of the remarkable examples of these literary qualities in his letters and speeches. I should put great stress upon the fact that there is really an original quality in all Lincoln ever wrote or spoke; that is, a quality which makes any one know at once that this is Lincoln's work and nobody else's. I have some capital illustrations of this that are not familiar to the public. I should show his quaintness of illustrations and of expression; I should dwell very largely on the clearness and simplicity of his style, qualities which were due not to the fact that he was struggling for literary expression, but that he was struggling to make people to understand and feel some truth which had taken possession of his soul. You know there are some stunning things in the speeches of the last five years of his life, nothing greater in American literature. If I could read like you can, I could bring down your house with his farewell speech to his

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New York,

Springfield friends, his first inaugural and Gettysburg speeches; but those things are so great to me that I do not believe I could control myself well enough to read them to a public audience; I should go blubbering off the stage before I got half through with his farewell address to his Springfield friends. It is mighty good!

Now, my dear Frances, that is the scheme. If you think that will do for your distinguished audience, all right. I fancy I can get out a few aristocratic Philadelphians who have been helping me on my Lincoln work, on the strength of the subject, and that may be a good thing for the School of Physical Expression. If you are satisfied with this I will go in this summer for its preparation, and I won't stop until I have got the thing in good shape. Mr. Mc Clure is not here, so I have not talked with him about this plan, but I know nothing I could do that would please him better. From what he has said to me, he would be perfectly willing to give me a month or two of time in which to prepare such a speech, I think, for as long as we are going on with the Lincoln work nothing could be a better advertisement for the magazine, and of course, I am quite as anxious to boom the little magazine as to earn stray dollars for myself. Tell me what you think. I will evolve a good title between now and Monday morning and send it to you on a postal card.

I cannot go down to Philadelphia with my father, who is coming next week. I wish we could, but I have to get away from this place by the end of July. I have taken board for August at Marblehead. I find I have too many things on hand to dare to run off. I wish I were going to Europe with you; I am always postponing my voyage for six months hence, but some day I may be able to take it.

Faithfully,

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