

Dr. A. A. Brill's paper on Abraham Lincoln as a Humorist is less formidable in its terminology and connotations than we usually get from scientific gentlemen. It is lively, interesting and understandable. I am not a psychologist, so not competent to + deal with his interpretations of evidence, but as a long standing student of Lincoln's life I certainly should qualify somewhat certain evidence on which he depends. Take the question of the character of the stories Lincoln told. Were they obscene? Dr. Brill is right in saying that at the worst they were extremely tame in comparison to what we <sup>now hear</sup> on the stage and in drawing rooms. His stories undoubtedly were the type told in his time in the primitive and rather gross society from which he sprang. That should be expected. Probably they changed little throughout his life for Lincoln really was never at home in a society which had been subjected to the restraints and refinements imposed by what we call cultivation. He was too <sup>na</sup> natural and honest <sup>a</sup> human being easily to curb his tongue or change his ways.

It should be remembered too, that in the Civil War it was the habit to <sup>his name onto</sup> tack all kinds of jokes and stories, even to publish collections gathered from right and left under the name of "Old Abe."

I have never been able to trace to him with evidence worth accepting a story I could not repeat - to a decent minded listener. I think it quite possible that when Dr. Holland said that the whole West was full of his gross stories ~~that~~ he was really saying that every ancient and obscene yarn re-told was begun to give it freshness - "Here is a new Lincoln story."

