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February 21, 1932.

Miss Ada M. Tarbell,  
120 E. 19th St.,  
New York City, N. Y.

Dear Miss Tarbell:

In the literary section of the Cincinnati Inquirer for February 14, of the current year, I find you quoted as follows regarding the religion of Abraham Lincoln:

"Lincoln was profoundly religious. He had a deep faith in God, in a divine Providence, which guided one, and, in the end, triumphed. He was not an orthodox churchman, but he went to church and prayed".

I can congratulate you upon the fact, that you, as well as other recent writers on Lincoln have omitted the old-time myths about him, particularly that he was orthodox. Properly understood, I do not take exception to any statement quoted from you in the Inquirer, except when you say that he went to church and prayed. That he accompanied Mrs. Lincoln to church at times is well established, but that he prayed, I have never seen good evidence to support.

If you will turn to the article on Lincoln in the 14th edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica, you will see by his own words that he did not believe in prayer as a means of changing the purpose of God. You have no doubt read this statement yourself. I have seen what purported to be evidence of him praying, but it is of a doubtful character. You know there is a mythical literature, and a large one, about Lincoln's religious belief.

I would like to have good evidence of Lincoln praying if you have it. If he did, it would not be inconsistent with his known religious views, for he was a Deist, and some Deists pray. Thanking you in advance, I remain,

Cordially yours,

*Franklin Steiner*