Abraham Lincoln
Quotations & Sayings
Spurious
“Prohibition Will Work a Great Injury to the Cause of Temperance”

Excerpts from newspapers and other sources

From the files of the
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection
THE LINCOLN CIRCULAR.

The National Temperance Society has published a facsimile of the circular by which the recent local election in Atlanta was lost. The Society calls it an "Infamous Whiskey Forgery." It bears as a heading, in large type, the words:

"FOR LIBERTY.
ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S PROCLAMATION."

Below these lines is a picture of Lincoln with one hand grasping that of a kneeling Negro, and the other pointing upward. One foot is on the shackles which have fallen from the slave, whose wife and children are standing near. Below the picture are these words, attributed to Mr. Lincoln:

"Prohibition will work great injury to the cause of temperance. It is a species of intemperance within itself, for it goes beyond the bounds of reason, in that it attempts to control a man's appetite by legislation and in making crimes out of things that are not crimes. A prohibitory law strikes a blow at the very principles on which our Government was founded. I have always been found laboring to protect the weaker classes from the stronger, and I can never give my consent to such a law as you propose to enact. Until my tongue be silenced in death, I will continue to fight for the rights of man."

Then follows the appeal:

"Colored voter, he appeals to you to protect the liberty he has bestowed upon you. Will you go back on his advice? Look to your rights! Read and act! Vote for the Sale!"

The last three sentences were in large display type. The Independent.

No device could have been better adapted to reach and move the colored vote. Those who could not read could, as the late William Tweed said of the caricatures of the Tweed Ring, get the meaning of the picture at a glance. They all know the figure of Lincoln, and his very name casts a spell over them. If Lincoln had spoken thus against Prohibition in defense of the "rights of man," they must be doing right in voting "For the Sale."

Did Mr. Lincoln ever use the words attributed to him? The National Temperance Society says No; they are a "base forgery"; but it does not give the ground of its denial. It simply makes denial and gives some extracts from one of Mr. Lincoln's addresses, in which he speaks of the slavery of intemperance as viler than African slavery, and looks forward to the day when there shall be neither "slave nor drunkard on the earth." The language is utterly inconsistent, as indeed were Mr. Lincoln's personal habits, with friendship for the Saloon; but it is, nevertheless, possible that he might have used this language and still be opposed to the application of the principle of Prohibition, as a method of manumitting the slave of the cup. This is possible, we say, and therefore the address is not conclusive proof that the paragraph attributed to him by the Atlanta
**THE NEW VOICE**

**SLANDERING LINCOLN**

Liquor Dealers of Texas Perpetuate the Fraud Invented by the Saloon Men of Atlanta--A Foul Prostitution of the Memory of the Great Emancipator

**THE GREAT STATESMAN'S REAL POSITION**

Dallas, Texas, July 17.—(Special correspondence.)—The liquor dealers of Texas are flooding the country with a circular containing fake denunciations of Prohibition and arguments for its license. The circular is headed, "Read the Truth about Prohibition", and presents such startlingly valuable witness as the notorious Governor Boies of Iowa, Lewelling of Kansas, together with a miscellaneous assortment of saloon supporters among politicians and preachers. One column is given to the opinions of men, the most of whom are supposed to have been statesmen, Samuel J. Tilden and Horatio Seymour being quoted there with their well-known views against "sumptuary legislation". At the head of this column appears an opinion attributed to Abraham Lincoln reading as follows:

Prohibition will work great injury to the temperance cause. It is a species of intemperance within itself, for it goes beyond the bounds of reason in that it attempts to control a man's appetite by legislation, and in making crimes out of things which are not crimes. A Prohibition law strikes a blow at the very principles on which our government is founded. I always have been laboring to protect the weak against the strong, and I can never give my consent to such a law as you propose to enact. Until my tongue shall be silenced in death I shall continue to fight for the rights of man.

The antique fake which, as shown in the above correspondence, the liquor dealers of Texas are again working upon the people of that state is one that has already been repeatedly exposed by The Voice and The New Voice. Abraham Lincoln never uttered a word of the statement here attributed to him. Not the first fragment of proof has ever been presented to indicate that any of the ideas are such as were held by him upon the subject. The pretended testimony is a fabrication, pure and simple.

**The Falsehood's Origin**

The falsehood first appeared as a part of the campaign of villainy of the liquor men in the local option contest in Atlanta some thirteen years ago. A flaming poster was distributed representing Lincoln in the act of striking the shackles from the slave and presenting this wretched nonsense quoted above as a statement made by him. The result was the securing of a large number of negro votes for the liquor interests. Later the same falsehood was spread broadcast in Dakota, being published in such papers as the Sioux City Leader for the purpose of influencing the people in the Prohibition contest in that state. Still later it was used by the liquor men of Nebraska in their racist and criminal campaign for the preservation of the saloon in that state, and was spread broadcast by the notorious Omaha Bee.

Refuted by Nicolay .

In 1889 The Voice submitted the statement to Mr. John G. Nicolay, one of Mr. Lincoln's private secretaries during his Presidency and the joint author with Mr. Hay, now Secretary of State, of the ten-volume Life of Lincoln. Mr. Nicolay in a letter which was published in The Voice on August 15, 1889, declared the statement spurious and further asserted that in all the vast collection of the speeches and sayings of Mr. Lincoln which he and Mr. Hay had gathered together there was not any where "any speech, letter, document, or reported conversation by him on the subject of Prohibition".

**Lincoln's Temperance Views**

A failure on Mr. Lincoln's part to say anything denielle upon the subject of Prohibition might readily be attributed to the fact that almost his whole public life was occupied with the consideration of the slavery question and that the Prohibition question as such was something upon which he was never called to take action. However, his views concerning the drink habit and the drink traffic are well-known. His famous Washington's birthday speech has been frequently quoted and was given by The New Voice to its readers only a few months ago. In that speech, delivered at Springfield, Ill., on February 22, 1842, before the Washingtonian Society at a meeting held in the Second Presbyterian church, Mr. Lincoln said:

> Whether or not the world would be vastly benefited by a total and final banishment from it of all intoxicating drinks, seems to me not an open question. Three-fourths of mankind confess the affirmative with their tongues; and, I believe, all acknowledge it in their hearts. Ought any, then, to refuse their aid in doing what the good of the whole demands?

To all the living, everywhere, we cry, "Come, sound the moral trumpet, that these may arise and stand up an exceeding great army! Come from the four winds, O breath and breathe upon these slain, that they may live!" If the relative grandeur of revolutions shall be estimated by the great amount of human misery they allege, and the small amount they inflict, then, indeed, will this be the grandest the world shall ever have seen.

On an earlier occasion, meeting a gathering of his neighbors at a bridge building bee, Mr. Lincoln was asked to take a drink from a barrel of whisky. With an exhibition of his marvelous strength he lifted the barrel and took a mouthful of the liquid from the bung. Being asked by getting the liquor from his mouth, he set down the barrel and said, as quoted in Dr. Brown's "Abraham Lincoln and the Men of His Times":

My friends, you will do well and the best you can with it to empty this barrel of liquor on the ground as I threw the little part of it out of my mouth. It is not on moral grounds alone that I am giving you this advice but you are strong, healthy, and rugged people. It is as true as that you are now that you can not remain so if you do not against habit and people. It is as true as that you are now that you can not remain so if you do not against habit and you lose them, neither you nor your children are likely to regain them. As a good friend, without counting the distresses and weeken and doing it away from your lips.

**Lincoln Endorses Prohibition**

In at least one place Mr. Lincoln's views regarding Prohibition are upon record. On January 23, 1853, while Mr. Lincoln was living at Springfield, Ill., the Rev. Dr. James Smith delivered an address in that city, in which he said:

The liquor traffic is a cancer in society, eating out its vitals and threatening destruction; and all attempts to regulate it will not only prove abortive but aggravate the evil. No, there must be no more attempts to regulate the cancer; it must be eradicated; not a root must be left behind, for until this be done all classes must continue exposed to become the victims of strong drink, and the worse it the text must abuse be put to him that give them to enjoy bottle a little, that butt the bottle to a limb ... The most effectual would be the passage of a law altogether abolishing the liquor traffic, except for mechanical, chemical, medicinal and sacramental purposes, and so framed that no principle of the Constitution of the state or of the United States be violated. If, however, the form of such a law cannot now be obtained, still let every friend of temperance follow upon all efforts at regulating the cancer. Any license law, however stringent, must eventually increase the evil. Much better to leave the liquor-seller to the freedom of his own will and to conduct the traffic at his own hazard, but hold him responsible for the evil that he does.
On the next day, January 24, 1853, there was written to Dr. Smith in the city of Springfield a letter which read:

The Rev. James Smith, D. D.
Sir:—The undersigned, having listened with great satisfaction to the discourse on the subject of temperance delivered by you last evening, and believing that if it were published and circulated among the people it would be productive of good, would respectfully request a copy thereof for publication.

One of the signatures appended to this letter is the immortal "A. Lincoln", so well known afterward upon the state documents of the United States.

The address, together with the letter, was published in a little sixteen page pamphlet at Springfield in 1853. Inasmuch as there was at that time no small discussion of the Prohibition question in Illinois, the presence of the name of Lincoln in this document is testimony to the position occupied by him upon the subject of Prohibition.

Of course it is entirely useless to expect that the liquor interests will cease to misrepresent and slander the great statesman whose memory they are thus prostituting to the service of the devil; but with these facts in hand the people of Texas ought to be able to successfully combat the fraud.

*Extract from an address approved by Abraham Lincoln January 24, 1853.*
To the Editor of the New York Times:

In your issue of April 8, appears an article from Charles Taber Stout concerning my article on Lincoln in your paper of March 12. Mr. Stout recites in substance only what I had stated concerning Mr. Lincoln's motion to lay a certain amendment on the table, and therefore contributes nothing to the question in dispute. Does Mr. Stout intend to convey the impression that in making the motion referred to or at any other time or place Mr. Lincoln used the language attributed to him? If so, will he name the time and place and state definitely where such quotation may be found in any authoritative or reliable record of Mr. Lincoln? This is such a simple, definite question that it can be answered in very few words. I publicly challenge Mr. Stout or any else to show in the manner here requested that Mr. Lincoln ever said "Prohibition will work great injury to the cause of Temperance, etc.,"

Charles Scanlon. Pittsburgh, Pa., April 18, 1922.

them to vote against Prohibition.

"That the Rev. Sam Jones, Henry W. Grady, this affiant and many other speakers then openly denounced the purported words of Abraham Lincoln to be a flagrant forgery, defied discovery of them in any reported utterances of Lincoln, and offered a reward for proof of their genuineness but no one offered such proof. Nevertheless the negroes believed them at the time and voted almost unanimously for the wet cause and gave it the very small majority it obtained.

"That some time after the excitement of the campaign had disappeared this affiant in conversation with Col. John B. Goodwin, who had been the director of the Anti-Prohibition forces in said campaign, was told by Col. Goodwin that he himself devised the circular in question, composed the alleged words of Lincoln so as to attract the adhesion of the colored voters and had done so because to win them was the forlorn hope of the wets, the county at that time being under a Prohibition law.

"Col. Goodwin was subsequently mayor of Atlanta and Grand Sire of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows and then Grand Scribe of the same, located in Baltimore where he died in a very recent year."

The above affidavit signed by Sam W. Small was made before Notary Alan B. Prosper in the county of Arlington, Va., June 6, 1922.

Dr. Milnner says that Col. Small in sending the affidavit stated: "I did not realize until our conversation that the rectification of that roarback was so important as it now appears to be."

This ought forever to kill this contemptible lie that has been so persistently circulated by the booze interests. However, they have so little regard for truth that the probabilities are that they will continue to repeat it. Those who revere the name of Lincoln whenever they see this fake Anti-Prohibition statement published or whenever they hear it repeated should promptly refute it with the true facts.

Let it be known that it was written and put in circulation by the campaign manager of the wets, Col. John B. Goodwin, in a local option fight in Atlanta, Ga., 1887.
AUTHORSHIP OF ANTI-PROHIBITION SCREED CREDITED TO LINCOLN IS ADMITTED BY GEORGIA WET LEADER

Statement Attributed to Great Emancipator Widely Circulated by Liquor Advocates in Wet and Dry Campaigns; Challenged Repeatedly for Proof Which Could Not be Produced

FORMER MAYOR OF ATLANTA, CAMPAIGN LEADER FOR WETS WROTE SCREED TO WIN THE NEGRO VOTE IN LOCAL FIGHT

It Saved the Day for Booze in That Battle and Wets Have Given It World-wide Circulation; Efforts to Prove Lincoln Author Failed; Drays Have Positive Evidence of Origin of Fake

SAM SMALL MADE AFFIDAVIT OF AUTHOR'S CONFESSION OF DECEPTION

Dr. Duncan C. Milner, of Chicago, Lincoln Student, Makes Affidavit Public and Thus Exposes One of the Most Infamous Deceptions Ever Perpetrated On the Public

The liquor interests and their friends for a number of years have been circulating an Anti-Prohibition declaration credited to Abraham Lincoln. The most common version of this declaration is as follows:

"Prohibition will work great injury to the cause of temperance. It is a species of intemperance itself for it goes beyond the bounds of reason in that it attempts to control man's appetite by legislation and in making crime out of things that are not crimes. A prohibitory law strikes a blow at the very principles on which our government was founded. I have always been found laboring to protect the weaker classes from the stronger and I can never give my consent to such a law as you propose to enact. Until my tongue be silenced in death I will continue to fight for the rights of men."

Given Wide Publicity

The Association Against the Prohibition Amendment has been particularly active in circulating this fake. They have reprinted it in their circular letters. Their speakers have repeated it from the platform and occasionally some one of the more prominent of the members will quote it in newspaper interviews. Bishop Gallow recently did this and thereby this base slander on the name of Lincoln was given nation-wide circulation through the press.

Wets Could Never Produce

The booze interests have been challenging repeatedly to prove the authenticity of this Anti-Prohibition declaration. Of course they have never succeeded in doing this for the simple reason that Lincoln never said it or wrote it. Recently it was explained by a prominent wet leader that Lincoln made the statement in the Illinois Legislative when a Prohibition measure was before that body in 1839 and at which time he voted against the proposed Prohibition law. The following letter from the assistant librarian of the Illinois State Historical Library under date of June 30, 1922, is fairly good evidence that the booze apologists made a poor guess.

Illinois State Historical Library,
Springfield.
June 30, 1922.
Dr. Albert Porter,
Westerville, Ohio.
Dear Sir:

Your letter addressed to the Clerk of the House of Representatives was by him referred to this department for reply. I beg to advise that we can find no record of the quotation "Prohibition will work great injury." in any of the newspapers or published speeches of Abraham Lincoln. In the House Journal of 1839-40 there is a mere record of the vote on the Murphy bill, no speeches being given, nor is there anything published in the Springfield papers of that date.

The Anti-Saloon League and others have had representatives go over the files in this office and also the House Journals of that date but as above stated none of the material in this library that we have gone over do we find any record of this quotation.

Yours very truly,
Georgia L. Osborn
Assistant Librarian, Illinois State Historical Library.

Drays Find Real Author of Wets Creed

The Great Emancipator hated the liquor traffic. He himself was a total abstainer and the authenticity of his numerous pronouncements against the traffic and in favor of total abstinence can not be questioned. But where the outlawed liquor interests have failed either purposely or otherwise in running this vicious libel to earth an aggressive Prohibitionist and student of Lincoln's life and writings, Dr. Duncan C. Milner of Chicago, has succeeded and has produced documentary evidence that this so-called Anti-Prohibition statement of Lincoln's was written by a friend of the license system. It has been known that the statement made its first appearance in a local option campaign in Georgia a number of years ago. Dr. Milner's evidence squares with this hitherto one known fact in connection with the case.

SAM SMALL MAKES AFFIDAVIT

Dr. Milner in reporting his findings to American Issue says:

"Not long ago I met Col. Sam W. Small, the noted editor, evangelist and lecturer, and asked him if he could not furnish information on the subject." He said he was in the campaign in Atlanta where the speech was first used and he would make an affidavit to the facts. Dr. Small's affidavit is as follows:

"This in 1887 I was residing in the city of Atlanta, Ga., and engaged actively in the Fulton county local option campaign of that year as an advocate of 'no sale' of intoxicating liquors; that during the latter days of that campaign a circular was issued by the Anti-Prohibition campaign committee purporting to quote Abraham Lincoln in the following words, to wit:

FOR LIBERTY—ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S PROCLAMATION

(A picture of the statue of Lincoln striking off the shackles
of a kneeling negro man.)

"Prohibition will work great injury to the cause of temperance. It is a species of intemperance itself for it goes beyond the bounds of reason in that it attempts to control man's appetite by legislation and in making crimes out of things that are not crime. A prohibitory law strikes a blow at the very principles on which our government was founded. I have always been found laboring to protect the weaker classes from the stronger and I can never give my consent to such a law as you propose to enact. Until my tongue be silenced in death I will continue to fight for the rights of man!"

(Then an appeal as follows:)

"Colored voter! He appeals to you to protect the liberty he has bestowed upon you. Will you go back on his advice? Look to your rights! Read! Vote for the sale!

"That circular was lavishly distributed among the colored people of the city and had powerful effect in determining them to vote against Prohibition.

"That the Rev. Sam Jones, Henry W. Grady, this affiant and many other speakers then openly denounced the purported words of Abraham Lincoln to be a flagrant forgery, defied discovery of them in any reported utterances of Lincoln, and offered a reward for proof of their genuineness but no one offered such proof. Nevertheless the negroes believed them at the time and voted almost unanimously for the wet cause and gave it the very small majority it obtained.

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the colored voters and had done so because to win them was the forlorn hope of the wets, the county at that time being under a Prohibition law.

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This ought forever to kill this contemptible lie that has been so persistently circulated by the booze interests. However, they have so little regard for truth that the probabilities are that they will continue to repeat it. Those who revere the name of Lincoln whenever they see this fake Anti-Prohibition statement published or whenever they hear it repeated should promptly refute it with the true facts.

Let it be known that it was written and put in circulation by the campaign manager of the wets, Col. John B. Goodwin, in a local option fight in Atlanta, Ga., 1887.
DENIES LINCOLN HIT PROHIBITION

Speaker Refutes Views Attributed to Him by Anti-Dry Factions.

Two myths surrounding the public life and acts of Abraham Lincoln were exploded by speakers last night at the forty-fourth anniversary dinner of the Military Order of the Loyal Legion at the New Willard Hotel.

Declaring that the entire thought of the phrases attributed to Lincoln on the subject of prohibition were far from Lincolnesque, Capt. Sam W. Small, commander of the Naval and Military Order of the Spanish-American War, said the Civil War President never uttered the words he is quoted with saying regarding prohibition. The saying attributed to Lincoln has been used within the last few days by advocates of moderation of the Volstead Act, and according to Capt. Small, originated in the mind of Col. John B. Goodwin in 1887 in Atlanta, where a bitter political contest was being waged over the prohibition question.

The phrases attributed to Lincoln, which he never uttered, Capt. Small said, were as follows: "Prohibition will work great injury to the cause of temperance. It is a species of intemperance within itself, for it goes beyond the bounds of reason, in that it attempts to control a man's appetite by legislation and in making crimes out of things that are not crimes. A prohibitory law strikes a blow at the very principles on which our Government was founded."

Denies U. D. C. Charge.

Capt. Small denied that the proclamation of emancipation was prompt by a desire of President Lincoln to incite the negroes of the South to revolt. "Recently," he said, "that estimable lady who is president general of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, crediting some author of misinformation, charged that President Lincoln's emancipation proclamation was designed to instigate insurrection by the Southern negroes, the outraging by them of the helpless women of the South, thereby forcing the abandonment of the battlefield by the Southern soldiers to go to the protection of their women folks.

'Fortunately no shred of basis for this charge against Lincoln can be found anywhere in his character, his words or his acts. It cannot but wither before these words that he wrote into the emancipation proclamation: 'And I hereby enjoin upon the people so declared to be free to abstain from all violence, unless in necessary self-defense; and I recommend to them that, in all cases when allowed, they labor faithfully for reasonable wages.'"
Lincoln 89 Years Ago Said Saloons Would be Outlawed

Dispute Exists as to His Views on Prohibition Question

EIGHTY-NINE years ago Abraham Lincoln predicted the time when there would be neither a slave nor a legal saloon in the land. The emancipator lived to see the time when his first prophecy was fulfilled, but it was not until 56 years after the abolition of slavery that intoxicating liquors were prohibited by amendment to the federal constitution.

In a speech before the Washington society of Springfield, Ill., on Feb. 22, 1842, Lincoln is reported to have declared: "Whether or not the world would be vastly benefited by a total banishment from it of all intoxicating drinks seems not now an open question. Three-fourths of mankind confess the affirmative with their tongues, and I believe all the rest acknowledge it in their hearts. Ought any, then, refuse their aid in doing what the good of the whole demands?"

The Other Side

On the other hand, "debunkers" of Lincoln as a prohibition enthusiast have recently unearthed an excerpt from another address, in which Lincoln was reported to have expressed strong sentiment against prohibition. This excerpt is quoted as follows:

"Prohibition will work great injury to the cause of temperance. It is a species of intemperance within itself, for it goes beyond the bounds of reason, in that it attempts to control a man's appetite by legislation and makes a crime out of things that are not crimes. A prohibition law strikes a blow at the very principles on which our government was founded."

Whether Lincoln actually spoke these words is a matter of great doubt, according to George P. Hambrecht, Madison, noted collector of Lincolniana.

Mr. Hambrecht points out that in "Wet Slanders of Abraham Lincoln Reported," Albert Porter says that Nicolay and Hay, Lincoln's biographers, have never been able to trace the quotation in any of Lincoln's letters, speeches or documents, and that prominent liquor journals, on challenge, have failed to produce any verification of the alleged utterance.

Used in Campaign

Investigation by Mr. Hambrecht has revealed that the statement attributed to Lincoln was printed in 1887 in Atlanta, Ga., during an exciting campaign to close the saloons. Hand bills were headed in large letters, "FOR LIBERTY, ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S PROCLAMATION." Underneath was a picture of a Negro kissing Lincoln's hand, which was shown striking off the Negro's shackles. Below this was printed the quotation in which Lincoln was reported as denouncing prohibition. In his book, "Abraham Lincoln, an Apostle of Temperance and Prohibition," Samuel Wilson refers to the statement as "malicious forgeries." The Rev. William P. Crispin, another biographer, also refers to it as "a spurious paragraph." Perhaps the strongest proof that Lincoln did not speak the words attributed to him, Mr. Hambrecht points out, is found in an article printed by the New York Times on March 14, 1926. An explanation of the affair is made in the following excerpt from that article:

"Col. John B. Goodwin, a man of influence and standing, and several times mayor of Atlanta, was a director of the wet forces and there are affidavts extant that he has since stated that he himself devised the circular and composed the alleged words of Lincoln, so as to secure the adhesion of the colored voters and had done so because to win them was the forlorn hope of the week."
LINCOLN ON PROHIBITION.

In 1840 he called it "a species of intemperance within itself."

To the Editor of The New York Times:

A majority of the people of our country are convinced that the Eighteenth Amendment was a mistake and that national prohibition must be abandoned. Wisely the President has gone beyond his party platform in recommending that the liquor question be turned back to the States. In due time we may expect the necessary legislation to be written by the Congress and approved by the States.

But it will be a misfortune if this sad adventure is not taken to heart by the American people; first, that prohibition is to be abandoned, not merely because it failed to prohibit, but because it is contrary to the fundamental principles of free government; and, secondly, that we were led into this morass by men whose intentions were good but whose thinking was crooked.

Nearly a century ago the relation of prohibition to our government was set forth by one who thought as straight as any man this country has produced. In 1840, in the Illinois Legislature, Abraham Lincoln said:

Prohibition will work great injury to the cause of temperance. It is a species of intemperance within itself, for it goes beyond the bounds of reason in that it attempts to control a man's appetite by legislation, and makes a crime out of things that are not crimes. A prohibition law strikes a blow at the very principles upon which our government was founded. (Journal of the House of Representatives, 1840, p. 136.)

The millions of words printed on this subject in the last twelve years add little to this clear statement.

The wise years sift both causes and men. Lincoln grows in stature with the passing of time. For not only did he think straight, but his conclusions and his efforts were not made futile by countervailing weaknesses. And in this lies the distinction between men of the first order and those of the second. Since his day other men in our nation have shown great qualities, only too often sterilized by great weaknesses—ambition, vanity, prejudice, subservience to the counsel of weak friends. In our first line of great Americans George Washington stands alone. It is worth while, even in our day, to test our theories by the measure of their thinking.

Abraham Lincoln's thoughts about government and prohibition are still a better guide than are those of Henry Ford!

HENRY S. PRITCHETT.

Bad Nauheim, Germany, Aug. 30, 1932.
March 17, 1933

Mr. Samuel Untermyer
30 Pine Street
New York City

Dear Mr. Untermyer:

The copy of your address "Hobson's Choice Between Government Ownership and Bankruptcy of the Railroads," which you kindly had addressed to this Company, found its way to my desk. I want to thank you for sending it and to congratulate you for your frankness in discussing a very vital subject.

I am particularly interested in your quotation on Page 13 of what is purported to be a statement of Abraham Lincoln. A year ago last December Congressman Louis T. McFadden of Pennsylvania used this same quotation in a speech before the House. One of his colleagues afterward claimed that Lincoln never made the statement. Mr. McFadden wrote to Dr. Warren, Director of our Lincoln Historical Research Foundation, and was advised that this purported statement was not from a Lincoln letter and does not appear to be an expression of Abraham Lincoln. As Dr. Warren says, "It is not Lincoln's way of putting things. It does not sound like him." I pass this along to you with the thought that it may be of special interest.

Yours very truly,

F.J. Travers

Manager-Investment Research Division
8 May 1944

Dr. Louis A. Warren,
Lincoln National Life Foundation,
Fort Wayne, Indiana

Dear Doctor Warren:

Let me thank you for your kindness in sending with your note of the 5th a photostat positive of the Currier & Ives print, also a negative of the quotation from the New York Independent of 19 January 1888, and copies 494 and 552 of Lincoln Lore.

They are helpful and I am grateful.

If you ever succeed in getting any more tangible or reliable connection between the poster distributed during the Atlanta election campaign of 1887 and the Small affidavit of 1922 I shall be happy to hear of it.

An affidavit made in 1922 - granting the complete good faith and the complete command of memory and other faculties - about a statement made "some time after the excitement of the campaign" (but at no specified time) that dated thirty-five years before is worthy of consideration. But I doubt if it would normally be accepted as proof conclusive.

I'm none the less appreciative of your interest and of the help you've given.

Gratefully yours,

F.M. Lydenberg
"Prohibition will work great injury to the cause of Temperance. It is a species of intemperance within itself, for it goes beyond the bounds of reason, in that it attempts to control a man's appetite by legislation, and in making crimes out of things that
Voice of the People... 

Called "Sacrilegious..."

To the Editor of the Daily News:

May I solicit space in your popular paper for the following?

After teaching United States history to young people, and viewing their reaction of how highly they esteemed the life and character of our revered President Abraham Lincoln, I found it sacrilegious to see in your paper last election a picture of a log cabin and printed beneath, a glaring quotation accredited to Abraham Lincoln, concerning liquor. In substance, the quotation attempted to prove that Abraham Lincoln was against prohibition—the liquor interests appropriating the common meaning of this word—and that the use of liquor was with his approval.

Feeling the statement to be both misleading and untrue, I questioned the signer as to its source. This was two years ago. I was told it was taken from an old magazine, now lost. When the familiar quotation appeared this year, I again sought another signer for its origin. Promptly and emphatically my request was denied.

Recently, from a reliable source, I am able to enlighten your readers how it came about. The American Business Man's Research Foundation in Chicago investigated the quotation and discovered that Colonel Goodwin, a wet leader, originated the remark and admitted doing so to Hon. Sam Small, a famous Atlantic Journalist. It was in the year 1887, when Colonel Goodwin first used the quotation portraying falsely Abraham Lincoln's views on liquor.

The liquor interests immediately seized upon this saying and have used it all these 59 years. It was kept in their files to be brought forth as occasion demanded. The truth of the statement appears never to be verified. As previously stated, the American Business Man's Research Foundation uncovered the error.

Carl Sandburg has written an outstanding life of Abraham Lincoln, called "Prairie Years." By its fidelity to known history, as well as its poetic style, critics consider it one of the best—if not the most-excellent biography of Lincoln yet written. In the chapter entitled, "The Vogue of Liquor" an occasion is cited when Lincoln was addressing a temperance meeting. His law partner Bill Herndon and a hard drinker, was one of the audience. Mr. Lincoln said in his address, "There seems ever to have been a prominence in the brilliant and warm-blooded to fall into this vice—the demon of intemperance ever seems to have delight in sucking the blood of genius and of generosity." Abraham Lincoln's object in life was to injure no man but to bless all mankind; not to sponsor enslavement, but freedom.

FANNY L. WALTONT
December 31, 1946

Lincoln Life Insurance Company
Fort Wayne, Indiana

Dear Sirs:

I am enclosing a copy of a statement attributed to Abraham Lincoln. We intend using it in a pamphlet to circulate publicly, and would like to know if it is authentic.

As far as we can determine, it is alleged to be a forgery.

We would appreciate an opinion from you as to its authenticity. If it isn't too much trouble, we would like to hear as soon as possible as the pamphlet is being held up pending word from you.

Thanking you for your kindness in this matter, I remain

Very truly yours,

F. L. Miller
Research Department
January 3, 1947

Mr. F.L. Miller
155 Montgomery Street
San Francisco, California

Dear Mr. Miller:

The quotation attached has been looked upon by all Lincoln students as a forgery and the copy of Lincoln Lore enclosed will indicate where it originated. Mr. John Hay, Lincoln's secretary, was approached with respect to this forgery and this is his comment, as I copy it from a letter before me:

"Neither Mr. Nicolay nor I have ever come across this passage in Mr. Lincoln's works, which we have spent several years compiling." Very truly yours,

John Hay."

I trust this is the information you are seeking.

Very truly yours,

LAW:EB
Enos.

Director
Dear Dr. Warren:

Thank you very much for your quick response to my question as to the authenticity of the prohibition statement mentioned.

I shall mail a copy of your letter and of the prohibition paragraph of the copy of Lincoln Lore which you enclosed to Mr. Schmidt at Olympia, Washington, and will do what I can in my next monthly bulletin to stop the use of the statement in this state.

Sincerely,

Henry E. Siebenmark
Executive Manager

June 25, 1948
"PROHIBITION WILL WORK GREAT INJURY TO THE CAUSE OF TEMPERANCE. IT IS A SPECIES OF INTEMPERANCE WITHIN ITSELF FOR IT GOES BEYOND THE BOUNDS OF REASON, IN THAT IT ATTEMPTS TO CONTROL A MAN'S APPETITE BY LEGISLATION AND MAKES A CRIME OUT OF THINGS THAT ARE NOT CRIMES. A PROHIBITION LAW STRIKES A BLOW AT THE VERY PRINCIPLES ON WHICH OUR GOVERNMENT WAS FOUNDED."—ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

THIS WAS A PART OF A SPEECH MADE BEFORE THE ILLINOIS LEGISLATURE IN 1840; THE OCCASION BEING THE DEBATE OF THE MURPHY STATE-WIDE PROHIBITION BILL WHICH WAS DEFEATED BY A VOTE OF 78 TO 8.
"Prohibition will work great injury to the cause of temperance. It is a species of intemperance within itself, for it goes beyond the bounds of reason, in that it attempts to control a man's appetite by legislation and in making crimes out of things that are not crimes. A prohibitory law strikes a blow at the very principles on which our Government was founded. I have always been found laboring to protect the weaker classes from the stronger, and I can never give my consent to such a law as you propose to enact. Until my tongue be silenced in death I will continue to fight for the rights of man."

Colored voter, he appeals to you to protect the liberty he has bestowed upon you. Will you go back on his advice
AN INFAMOUS WHISKEY FORGERY.

The anti-prohibitionists of Atlanta sent out a cartoon among the colored people of the city just before the election, representing Abraham Lincoln striking off the shackles from the slave, and giving a pretended extract from one of his addresses, warning them against prohibition. We give a facsimile of the picture and reading-matter, photographed from the original.

It is needless to say to our readers that the so-called "advice" of Lincoln was a base forgery, and that he never uttered any such sentiment. On the contrary, he was a consistent total abstainer and an avowed enemy of the saloon. This only shows the infamous nature of the traffic, and the desperate measures its minions resort to in order to defeat the onward march of prohibition. The negroes honor and revere the very name of Lincoln. His sentiments are law and gospel to them. Surely he who was the instrument in God's hands of delivering them from the bondage of slavery, would not lend them into another bondage worse than death. They had no means to disprove the pretended "advice," and almost in a mass they worked and voted against prohibition, which would "take away their liberties." But Mr. Lincoln was not against prohibition. He was the outspoken friend of temperance. He looked forward to the day when there should not be a dram-shop in the land. Here is an extract from one of his addresses:

"Of our political revolution of 1776 we are justly proud. It has given us a degree of political freedom far exceeding that of any other nation of the earth. In it the world has found a solution of the long-mooted problem as to the capability of man to govern himself. In it was the germ which has vegetated, and still is to this very day one commercial metropolis of the State. It is dotted all over with little hamlets, each one having its post-office for the accommodation of the people in them. The post-offices of the county are thirty-three in number, and about two-thirds of them are kept by saloon-keepers—not enough to go around in a section where there are more saloons than schools and churches combined, but far more than ought to be in such places. It seems that this class of people were far more successful in their quest of post-offices than any other class. There is, from a political point of view, some reason for this. The saloon is a very important factor in the political field of the county. I am told that no headway can be made herein running or office unless the greater part of the work is done in the saloons."

The writer speaks of a drunken row of which he was the unwilling witness in one of these saloon post-offices on his arrival in the town. He says:

"The bar from which liquor is sold and the boxes of the post-office are in the same room, and only a few feet apart. Aside from the personal danger to everyone in the room during the continuance of the quarrel, the stench arising from liquor, tobacco, and foul stomachs, and the volleys of profanity and obscene epithets were unendurable."

Then follow descriptive notes of a large number of post-offices located in saloons in close proximity to the bars, and kept by the saloon-keepers, by authority of the United States as postmasters. We have not space for the details, but they reveal a most disgraceful state of affairs, with beer-kings and mail-bags, bars and letter-boxes, with drinkers, smokers, obscenity, and profanity intermingling, and into the midst of which women, children, and reputable men are obliged to go to obtain the mail matter. Such a state of affairs in connection with the United States Post-office Department is a scandal to
RESURRECTING A DEAD LIE.

All remember how in the Atlantic campaign, hundreds of negro votes were gained to the "wets" by a canard about Lincoln. The lie was at once nailed, but the following extract from the Pittsburg Dispatch shows that it was made to do duty again in the Pennsylvania campaign. Here is the paragraph:

Considerable indignation exists among the amendment workers in regard to a placard issued by the Anti-Prohibition Committee, containing the quotation attributed to Abraham Lincoln: "Prohibition will work great injury to the cause of temperance." Secretary Leslie and others at amendment headquarters said they doubted whether Lincoln ever uttered such words. Persons familiar with his speeches had been unable to recall such an utterance anywhere.

At the anti-amendment headquarters the statement was made that the words had been spoken by Lincoln in a speech made while he was a member of the Illinois Legislature. The quotation is printed on the back of the cards scattered all over town yesterday announcing Miss Kate Field's lecture. Miss Field was asked if she could give the time and place where Lincoln used the words. She said she could not do so here, but was sure she could do it readily if she had her books and papers with her.

Here is what Abraham Lincoln, speaking of the triumph of temperance, did actually say:

By it no orphans starving, no widows weeping; by it none wounded in feeling, none injured in interest—even the dram-maker and dram-seller will have glided into other occupations so gradually as never to have felt the change, and will stand ready to join all others in the universal song of gladness.

This is a quotation from his first public address, which, it rejoices our heart to know, was a temperance speech. Any one wishing to verify this quotation can secure the speech entire by sending ten cents to Mrs. G. C. Smith, Springfield, Ill. It would be well to send it to Kate Field, that she may no more plead ignorance concerning the sentiments of the man who would not offer wine in his house, even when brought there by friends to celebrate his nomination to the presidency.
"Law must protect and conserve right things, and punish wrong things, and if there is any evil in this land that threatens society or individuals more than another, it is the liquor traffic. -- 1853"

"After reconstruction, the next great question will be the overthrow of the liquor traffic --
April 13, 1865"