

THE EDITORS' MAIL BAG

LINCOLN AND DOUGLAS OPPONENTS BUT FRIENDS

MAY I be permitted to add a little to the interesting reminiscence of the Lincoln-Douglas debate at Toulon, Illinois, by Garrett Newkirk? I was present both days.

Girls representing the States made a large wreath of beautiful flowers. This they intended to throw over Lincoln's head as he came to the fair ground from the north. When the advance agent made this known to him, he vetoed it, on the ground that "the contrast would be too striking." At first, this was a little wounding to the ladies' pride, but after obtaining a good view of him they concurred in his judgment.

He, however, accepted the wreath with thanks and tenderly placed it under the seat of his vehicle.

Spoon River history has failed to record his final disposition of that wreath.

Douglas spoke the day following, and came in the evening of Lincoln's speech. From some cause Lincoln did not leave until the next morning. During the evening they walked about town, arm in arm. This terribly exasperated some of both sides; they could not understand how two could be such bitter enemies politically and yet be personal friends.

The next morning, before leaving, Lincoln walked up to the hotel clerk and asked the amount of his bill. He was told that it had been settled.

When speaking, Douglas impressed me as being a man of polish and a fine orator.

Lincoln impressed me as being an earnest, sincere man, firmly believing every word he uttered, and, had I so wished, I could not have forgotten what he said. (Mrs.) E. S. MINER.

Oberlin, Kansas.

THE MEAT BILL AND THE LITTLE BUTCHER

YOUR article by Sherman Rogers "The Nation's Meat Bill" does not tell us why, when live pork was five cents per pound, the "little butcher" sold us his best bacon for twenty cents per pound, and the "little butcher" did not save everything but the "squeal."

The "little butcher" made the pork into bacon for fifteen cents per pound, and to-day the packers charge three times as much for making eight-cent pork into bacon.

Any little butcher will tell you that he made as much money in those days as he does to-day, and some of them made more than they do to-day.

Mr. Rogers fails to call our attention to the great evil of the packers in the past, when they obtained control of the distribution. He fails to review their methods to obtain the control. Have the packers turned to "saints"? Are they so big that they cannot publicly acknowledge that they were unfair in their past?

Not one of the packers is sufficiently

THE MAN
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PONKAPOG PAPERS.

developed so that he can hold the control of distribution and not abuse it. It is the control of the distribution that is the evil.

When the packers undersold the "little butcher" long enough to make the little butcher quit, were the methods that they employed economically sound? Is any human being developed so that he can be trusted with control of any food or material for the human family? I confess I am not. I might become a despot. Take the control of the supply from the packers, and you have taken what every one wants. Give the control to the people.

A good many of us are like the farmer's "five-dollar hog;" we are full of two-dollar corn. I will agree with what Mr. Rogers says if he will add that the packers abused, and are abusing, the control which they enjoy. We want the five-cent pork made into twenty-cent bacon by our "little butcher" or the control changed. Food is God-given. Let's distribute it more economically without the evil of control.

H. CLAY EVENSON.

La Crosse, Wisconsin.

A LETTER FROM A STRANDED WHALE

Dear Sir:

How does it happen that a paper as well known as The Outlook can be so careless with its illustrations? You have in the number of February 2 what is described as a ship under studding-sails and skysails. (Page 177.) The vessel in question has neither a studding-sail nor yet a skysail, and not even a spar to hang them on. She is described as the clipper "Breeze from the West"—and yet, a clipper ship, she can only make a passage of 172 days from New York to 'Frisco. Why not write a sea story that is fit for some one beside the lubbers? A passage of 172 days from New York to 'Frisco would be poor for a Norway wooden bark—let alone a clipper ship.

Lest I seem to speak of what I know not, I may perhaps state that before I attained my growth I was six times around the Horn under square sail; and

that I made the run from Antwerp to Portland, Oregon, in 117 days. We were 53 days to the Horn, 22 more to the line coming up. And then, after crossing the Columbia bar, we were halted by a fool of a boy who killed a sea bird. And the wind was in our teeth from half an hour after that, or we would have made port in less than a hundred days. This sounds like a lie, a fable, a wind from the sea. But it is the truth. And the ship was the four-mast bark (Clyde built) Silberhorn, out of Liverpool, now for some twelve years lost—missing at sea between Newcastle, New South Wales, and Iquique.

And yet after twenty years ashore (God help poor sailors!) I do at times wake to harken to the voice of old Reuben Sweeny, who is standing "fore-hand" at the maintopsail halyards and rousing a chantey as we set the upper topsails, with the Diegos upon the beam and a breeze coming fair at last, after three weeks off old Stiff.

Away up No'th an old woman did dwell,

To me way hay yo ya

Away up No'th an old woman did dwell

Oh—a long time ago.

She'd one pretty daughter whose name it was Nell.

To me way hay yo ya

She'd one pretty daughter whose name it was Nell.

Oh, a long time ago.

But as the mate yells "Belay!" and the ship reels like a girl in a dance upon the fiddle-driven floors of Barbary—alas! I awaken full; and the moon is shining upon the snows of the Sierras above me and the good deep seas are very far away.

What do you know of the feelings of an old stranded whale? Nothing at all, or you would not be putting a lot of flab-dab stuff about stuns'ls and skys'ls and things as isn't there at all for his blinking eyes to stare at. Would you now?

Faithfully yours,

B. M. ADAMS.

(But, after all, I collared the old woman's pretty daughter, so it's not so bad as it might be.)

[Captain Adams's letter brought a breath of salt air into the Outlook office which quite made us forgive him for going at us with a belaying-pin. We are the more ready to forgive him because our consciences are clear even if our caption under our illustration was not.

We intended our picture to represent the view which met the eyes of the skipper of the Breeze from the West when he entered San Francisco Bay. The illustration was taken from an old painting of that very locality.

The passage of the Breeze from the West from New York to San Francisco was by no means a fast one, but there were many ships which did not make the journey around the Horn in much better time. Between June 26 and July

25, 1850, thirty-three vessels arrived in San Francisco from New York and Boston whose passages averaged one hundred and fifty-nine days. The best records ever made from New York to San Francisco by sailing vessels were made by the Flying Cloud and the Andrew Jackson. They took eighty-nine days from Sandy Hook to the Golden Gate. These figures are taken from Arthur H. Clark's "The Clipper Ship Era," a volume to which Mr. Minnigerode gratefully acknowledges his debt for much of the historical background of his story.

We confess, however, that there was an anachronism in the picture which Captain Adams, sea-dog though he may be, quite overlooked. The ship in the center of our picture carried double topsails, and double topsails did not come into use until a few years after the period of Mr. Minnigerode's tale.—THE EDITORS.]

LENITY FOR DEBS

I TRUST I am a reasonably law-abiding and patriotic citizen, but I cannot qualify under your editorial this week

(page 245), for I hope that Harding will show his magnanimity by releasing Debs. I rather think he will.

Not, as you know very well, because I agree with Debs. I was with you in the American rights defense league that helped prod us into the war, in which we started too late and quit too soon.

Not because it was not a good thing to have shut him up. I had a long talk with the man who prodded the Government into taking action in the Debs case. He had a hard job and did good work.

But—

Because democratic government depends for its success on free speech—that is, on the permission both verbally and by passive resistance to oppose (as the abolitionists did the fugitive slave laws) what one believes to be a good government, even in improper fashion, provided one does not advocate other than orderly processes of change, except in national emergencies, such as war.

Because Lincoln gained strength by his calm, great-minded, not vindictive treatment of Vallandigham (I spent part of Lincoln's Birthday reading some of Lincoln's letters), who was, as near

as I can judge, a worse and more dangerous man than Debs. Harding, coming from Vallandigham's country, will, I think, learn the lesson from Lincoln.

Because I remember that Debs, in a famous debate with that employer of murderers "Big Bill Haywood," was against sabotage, and, so far as I know, has not favored Bolshevism-proletariat dictatorship.

Because in his Anti-Selective Service Bill action he did not go beyond a lot of radical ministers, who have not been touched.

Because many of the conscientious objectors who followed his teaching have been released with back pay!

Because, therefore, his continued imprisonment will look like political persecution.

Because amnesties for political prisoners, made so under the stress of war, are common and wise near its close.

Because I do not think enough of his principles or party to want them to gain the credit that will come from his "martyrdom." "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church!"

ALFRED C. LANE.

MORE CONTEST LETTERS

A FABLE FROM A STUDIO



As you have invited me to express my opinion of The Outlook, and not wishing to enter the contest for a prize, I submit this fable:

An artist, though he had gained great renown for skill in depicting things he saw about him, was

not content, and asked the public to give further proof of their approval.

He fastened by a string a piece of chalk to one of his finest canvases with a placard requesting the passer-by to make a mark on any part of the picture he found faulty.

The next day showed the entire picture obliterated by chalk.

Sponging off the chalk, he changed the placard to read, "Place a mark on any part of this canvas you may find good."

The next morning the picture was, as before, entirely obliterated by chalk.

And I, dear Outlook, since I am your judge, do cover your page with chalk.

Your constant reader,

GEORGE INNESS, JR.

Tarpon Springs, Florida.

NEEDED—SQUIRREL PAGES

FIRST off, we wish to hand you a bouquet, for, although we have been hearing mags. pat themselves on the back for twenty-five years, this is the first time a mag. has come forward and

offered to give away good money to some one who could deal it a Solar Plex. But we are inclined to think also that a mag. that will pass out fifty bucks for a knock must be subconsciously aware that something is wrong. You remind me of the woman who went to church in her apron—she knew something was wrong the way people looked at her.

Now, Outlook, we ain't got no call to criticise you at all. You are honest; you are sane; you are careful; you are well edited and every number is a masterpiece. BUT—that is just the trouble! You are too darn careful; too well edited; too sane! My wife, who has been a consistent reader of your pages for seventy-eight years, is beginning to lose her good opinion of you; and the other evening, when I tried to defend you, she cried out:

"That's just the trouble with them! They're always right!"

There you are. You are ceasing to be human, and must come down off the pedestal somewhere and MIX! Look at Wilson—eight years and not a single break! Never once did he slip and sit down in a puddle! Not once did an egg spatter when he broke it! He never even sat down in a chair that had just been removed! OdeerOdeer. 'Twas awful!

You may win fifty dollars if you enter The Outlook's Prize Contest Number Two. Turn now to the announcement on page 440 of this issue.

Now, Mr. Dry-as-dust, what we want you to do is call the Staff around the Official Table, and say,

"Gentlemen: We have made an egregious error in supposing that people wish to be informed, to be fed little lumps of undiluted truth. They don't—not altogether. The Human Mind is so constituted that it craves a contrast—so we come to the inevitable conclusion that somewhere in our pages we have got to throw discretion to the winds and go crazy. Pursuant with that discovery, we will hereinafter set aside page Number 23 to be known as the Squirrel Page, Nutty stuff only. The nuttier the better. See, therefore, that you look out for such material in the future. I thank you."

It ought to be dead easy, for I am sure you are daily returning MSS. that would be of the highest value on such a page. Also instruct your Editors to contribute, as I can imagine no more facetious animal than an Editor with the strings cut. Free verse would go great—if not too well done—and a canvass of your waste-basket would probably produce much valuable copy.

Now, Outlook, rush this through, as I wish to get the Cotton taste out of my mouth, and give my brain a Holiday. Wax facetious! Let yourself go! Loosen up! And oblige,

Yours almost seriously,

KETCH. (M. B. KETCHAM).

Indianapolis, Indiana.

P. S. Do not return this MS. if not accepted, as I know no other mag. it would fit. K.

Enclosed find self-addressed envelope for the fifty bucks. KETCH.