

Herndon
or Arnold

You may show these letters to as many men
as you please. The word suspicion does Mr.
Arnold injustice. The word is ~~fear~~ ^{fear}. Don't
publish. Any one may copy, though not to
be published - Herndon

Springfield, Ills., Nov. 26th, 1866.

Friend Hart,

My dear Sir:

I have just returned from
Chicago; and now wish to say a word or two to
you. Enclosed is a copy of a letter which I
wrote to the Hon. J. W. Arnold of Chicago, who
is writing a life of Mr. Lincoln. He is a
good man, but I do not think he is a man
of much nerve; he is an honest man, yet
I think he is a timid man. My first two
lectures, as you are aware, were attempts to
analyze Mr. Lincoln's mind. My third lecture
was to show his Patriotism, and Statesmanship.
My second and third lectures were attempts to
show the practical application of that mind
to things so, while I analyze it &c.. My fourth
lecture is an attempt to show external influences
on it - material - and mental - matter and mind
on mind. My 5th lecture is to be on his
infant and boyhood education - the means - meth-
ods; and struggles of it - his mind - to know
and to develop itself. When these things
shall be done - connected - annotated &c., I

think I shall have rendered mankind some 5 cents worth of service. Possibly they will so hold. When these things are done mankind could spare me well, I giving them the Record which I have made of the man - worth one million of dollars to the race.

So much for an introduction. After having read Arnold's letter - my letter to him, you will prick up your ears. However - you will now begin to detect a purpose in my fourth - late, lecture, not guessed at before; and it is this - : Mrs. Lincoln must be put properly before the world. She hates me - yet I can and will do her justice; She hates me on the same ground that a thief hates a policeman, who knows a dangerous secret, about him.

Mrs. Lincoln's domestic quarrels in my opinion sprang from a woman's revenge which she was not strong enough to resist. Poor woman! the world has no charity for her, and yet justice must be done her - being careful not to injure her husband. All that I know ennobles both, and their difficulties sprang from human nature - a philosophy, if you please. You must have faith in me. I am willing to live by, and to die by my letter to Arnold. The composition I care nothing about - is its artistic beauty, but the substance and spirit

I do care for.

Mr. Arnold is afraid that is the word - that I shall drop some necessary truths that Lincoln's enemies will use to unholy purposes. I am not responsible for the misapplication - misappropriation, or other wrong use of a great necessary truth in Mr. Lincoln's life. I have a sublime faith in the triumph and eternity of truth - of humanity - man and God; they will put Arnold - you, and myself just where we belong. Is any man so insane as to suppose that any truth concerning Lincoln, or in relation to his thoughts - acts and deeds, will be hid and buried out of human view? Pshaw! Folly! The best way is to tell the whole truth, and let it by its very presence and eternity crush and burn up all lies. Let it "burn to ashes what it lights to death."

I propose as one of Mr. Lincoln's friends to meet the slumbering facts - deny them where I can; and modify where I cannot absolutely deny them. In my judgment, and I appeal to mankind in the future, is that if the matter is talked over now that the subject will be dropped in a hundred years or less from to-day. My judgment is - poor as it may be, that if these facts are concealed from mankind by his - L's - biographers now, that they will grow

and develop into a huge ever discussed lie,
bothering and fretting mankind forever. I
know human nature; hide a mouse in a
crack, and chafe it, it will in the minds
of men - grow and expand into an Elephant.
So curious is the human mind. This is my
judgement; and I'll risk it during all
coming time. I think I know what I am
doing. The friends of Mr. Lincoln had better
sift the questions now and here while there
are living witnesses on the globe and living
friends ready and willing to see and to have
fair play. Mr. Lincoln can stand
unstaggeringly up beneath all necessary
or other truths. Timid men would rob
Mr. Lincoln of his crown and cross, and
steal the opinions - the philosophy - the reason
of mankind by the robbery of their judg-
ment and logical faculty through a sugges-
tion of falsehood or the suppression of the
necessary facts of a great man's history.
Please keep these letters safe till I go
hence -

Your Friend

W. H. Wendell

