J O H N H. S U R R A T T

HIS STORY OUT AT LAST

CURIOUS LECTURE ON A CURIOUS SUBJECT

J.H.S. SPEAKS TO THE PEOPLE OF ROCKVILLE, (Md.) C. 1869

HE UNFOLDS THE ABDUCTION AND ASSASSINATION PLOTS

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Lewis Weichmann, Judge Fisher and Edwin H. Stanton Denounced

The Wanderers of the Fugitive - Escape to Canada

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John H. Surratt told his story night before last to an audience of villagers at Rockville. The assassination of President Lincoln will never lose its terrkble fascination for the American people, and as Surratt was credited with knowing more than any other man living about the actors and the tragedy, his lecture stands among the remarkable stories of the time.

The residents of the neighborhood manifested their appreciation by crowding the court-room where the lecture, took place. The number of ladies present formed a conspicuous feature of the occasion.

In appearance, he is still the John H. Surratt of trial days; his weight somewhat greater and his dress even plainer than then. His delivery was quite simple and easy, but not without a certain force and warmth that added tone to some of the passages. His voice was always pleasing and winning, so that in listening to him it was not difficult for his auditors to fall into his own current of thought and emotion, and admit, for the time at least, all the fallacies of his offense. He spoke quickly, but, in alluding to his mother, lowered his tone of voice and showed considerable emotion. The following is his lecture:

Ladies and Gentlemen: Upon entering that door a few moments ago the impression on my mind was so strong as to vividly recall scenes of three years ago. I am not unacquainted with court-room audiences. (Sensation) I have stood before them before; true, not in the character of a lecturer, but as a prisoner at the bar, arrainged for the high crime of murder. In contrasting the two positions I must confess I felt more ease as the prisoner at the bar than I do as a lecturer. Then I felt confident of success; now I do not. Then I had gentlemen of known ability to do all my talking for me; now, unfortunately, I have to do it myself; and I feel illy capable of performing the task; still I hopw you will all judge me kindly. I am not here to surprise you by any oratorical effort - not at all - but only to tell a simple tale. I feel that some explanation - perhaps, indeed, an apology - is due you for my appearance here.this evening. In presenting this lecture before the public I do it in no spirit of self-justification. In a trial of sixty-one days

I MADE MY DEFENCE TO THE WORLD

and I have no need or desire to rehearse it; nor do I appear for self-glorification. On the contrary I dislike notoriety, and leave my solitude and obscurity unwillingly. Neither is it an itching for notoriety or fame. My object is merely to present a simple narrative of events as they occurred. I stand here through the force of that which has obliged many other men to do things quite as distasteful - pecuniary necessity, for the supply of which no more available channel presented itself. This is a reason easily appreciated. So you will take it kindly, I trust, and the ground we will have to go over together will guarantee sufficient interest to repay your kind attention. In this my first lecture I will speak of my introduction to J. Wilkes Booth, his plan - its failure - our final separation - my trip to Richmond, and thence to Canada - then

MY ORDERS TO ELMIRA -

what was done there - the first intimation I had of Mr. Lincoln's death - my return to Canada and concealment there, and final departure for Europe. At the breaking out of the war I was a student at St. Charles College in Maryland, but did not remain long there after that important event. I left in July, 1861, and, returning home, commenced to take an active part in the stirring events of that period. I was not more than eighteen years of age, and was mostly engaged in sending information regarding the movements of the United States Army stationed in Washington and elsewhere, and carrying dispatches to the Confederate boats on the Potomac. We ran a regularly established line from Washington to the Potomac, and I being

THE ONLY UNMARRIED MAN

on the route I had most of the hard riding to do. (Laughter) I devised various ways to carry the dispatches - sometimes in the heel of my boots, sometimes between the planks of the buggy. I confess that never in my life did I come across a more stupid set of detectives than those generally employed by the United States Government. They seemed to have no idea whatever how to search men. In 1864 my family left Maryland and moved to Washington, where I took a still more active part in the stirring events of that period. It was a fascinating life to me. It seemed as if I could not do too much or run too great a risk. In the fall of 1861 I was

1864

INTRODUCED TO JOHN WILKES BOOTH

who, I was given to understand, wished to know something about the main avenues leading from Washington to the Potomac. We met several times, but as he seemed to be very reticent with regard to his purposes, and very anxious to get all the information out of me he could, I refused to tell him anything at all. At last I said to him, "It is useless for you, Mr. Booth, to seek any information from me at all; I know who you are and what are your intentions." He hesitated some time, but finally said he would make

known his views to me provided I would promise secrecy. I replied, "I will do nothing of the kind. You know well I am a Southern man. If you cannot trust me we will separate." He then said,

"I WILL CONFIDE MY PLANS TO YOU;

but before doing so I will make known to you the motives that actuate me. In the Northern prisons are many thousands of our men whom the United States Government refuse to exchange. You know as well as I the efforts that have been made to bring about that much desired exchange. Aside from the great suffering they are compelled to undergo, we are sadly in want of them as soldiers. We cannot spare one man, whereas the United States Government, refuse to exchange. let their own soldiers remain in our prisons because she has no need of the men. I have a proposition to submit to you, which I think if we can carry out will bring about the desired exchange." There was a long and ominous silence, which I at last was compelled to break by asking, "Well, sir, what is your proposition?" He sat quiet for an instant, and then, before answering me, arose and looked under the bed, into the wardrobe, in the doorway and the passage, and then said, "We will have to be careful; walls have ears." He then drew his chair close to me and in a whisper said, "It is to kidnap President Lincoln, and carry him off to Richmond." "Kidnap President Lincoln!" I said. I confess that I stood aghast at the proposition, and looked upon it as a foolhardy undertaking. To think of successfully

SEIZING MR. LINCOLN IN THE CAPITAL

of the United States, surrounded by thousands of his soldiers, and carrying him off to Richmond looked to me like a foolish idea. I told him as much. He went on to tell with what facility he could be seized in various places in and about Washington. As for example, in his various rides to and from the Soldier's Home, his summer residence. He entered into the minute details of the proposed capture, and even the various parts to be performed by the actors in the performance. I was amazed - thunderstruck - and in fact, I might also say, frightened at the

unparalleled audacity of the scheme. After two days reflection I told him I was willing to try it. I believed it practicable at that time, though I now regard it as a foolhardy undertaking. I hope you will not blame me for going thus far. I honestly thought an exchange of prisoners could be brought about could we have once obtained possession of Mr. Lincoln's person.

AND NOW REVERSE THE CASE

Where is there a young man in the North, with one spark of patriotism in his heart, who would not have, with enthusiastic ardor, joined in any undertaking for the capture of Jefferson Davis and brought him to Washington? There is not one who would not have done so. And so I was led on by a sincere desire to assist the South in gaining her independence. I had no hesitation in taking part in anything honorable that might tend towards the accomplishment of that object. (Tremendous applause) Such a thing as the assassination of Mr. Lincoln I never heard spoken of by any of the party. Never! (Sensation) Upon one occasion, I remember, we had called a meeting in Washington for the purpose of discussing matters in general, as we had understood that the Government had received information that there was a plot of some kind on hand. They had even commenced to build a stockade and gates on the navy-yard bridge - gates opening toward the south, as though they expected danger from within, and not from without.

At this meeting I explained the construction of the gates, etc. and stated that I was confident the Government had wind of our movement, and that the best thing we could do would be to throw up the whole project. Everybody seemed to coincide in my opinion, except Booth, who sat silent and abstracted. Arising at last and bringing down his fist upon the table, he said: "Well, gentlemen, if the worst comes to the worst, I shall know what to do." Some hard words and even threats passed between him and some of the party. Four of us then arose, one saying: "If I under-

stand you to intimate anything more than the capture of Mr. Lincoln I for one will bid you good-bye." Every one expressed the same opinion. We all arose and commenced to put our hats on. Booth, perceiving probably that he had gone too far, asked pardon, saying that he "had drank too much champagne." After some difficulty

EVERYTHING WAS AMICABLY ARRANGED

and we separated at 5 o'clock in the morning. Days, weeks, and months passed by without an opportunity presenting itself for us to attempt the capture. We seldom saw one another owing to the many rumors afloat that a conspiracy of some kind was being concocted in Washington. We had all arrangements perfected from Washington for the purpose. Boats were in readiness to carry us across the river. One day we received information that the President would visit the Seventh Street Hospital for the purpose of being present at an entertainment to be given for the benefit of the wounded soldiers. The report reached us only about three quarters of an hour before the appointed time, but so perfect was our communication that we were instantly in our saddles on the way to the hospital. This was between one and two o'clock in the afternoon. It was our intention to sieze the carriage, which was drawn by a splendid pair of horses, and to have one of our men mount the box and drive direct for Southern Maryland via Benning's bridge. We felt confident that all the cavalry in the city could never overhaul us. We were all

MOUNTED ON SWIFT HORSES

besides having a thorough knowledge of the country, it being determined to abandon the carriage after passing the city limits. Upon the suddenness of the blow and the celerity of our movements we depended for success. By the time the alarm could have been given and horses saddled, we would have been on our way through southern Maryland towards the Potomac river.

To our great disappointment, however, the President was not there, but one of the Government officials - Mr. Chase, if I mistake not. We did not disturb him, as we wanted a bigger chase (laughter) than he could have afforded us. It was certainly a bitter disappointment, but yet, I think, a most fortunate one for us. It was our last attempt. We soon after this became convinced that we could not remain much longer undiscovered, and that we must abandon our enterprise. Accordingly,

A SEPARATION FINALLY TOOK PLACE

and I never saw any of the party except one, and that was when I was on my way from Richmond to Canada on business of quite a different nature - about which presently. Such is the story of our abduction plot.

Rash, perhaps foolish, but honorably, I maintain, in its means and ends; actuated by such motives as would under similar circumstances be a sufficient inducement to thousands of Southern young men to have embraced in a similar enterprise. Shortly after our abandonment of the abduction scheme, some dispatches came to me which I was compelled to see through to Richmond. They were foreign ones, and had no reference whatever to this affair. I accordingly

LEFT HOME FOR RICHMOND,

and arrived there safely on the Friday evening before the evacuation of that city. On my arrival I went to Spotswood Hotel, where I was told that Mr. Benjamin, the then Secretary of War of the Confederate States, wanted to see me. I accordingly sought his presence. He asked me if I would carry some dispatches to Canada for him. I replied,"yes." That evening he gave me the dispatches and $200 in gold, with which to pay my way to Canada. That was the only money I ever received from the Confederate government or any of its agents. It may be well to remark here that this scheme of abduction was concocted without the knowledge or the assistance of the

Confederate government in any shape or form.

BOOTH AND I OFTEN CONSULTED

together as to whether it would not be well to acquaint the authorities in Richmond with our plan, as we were sadly in want of money, our expenses being very heavy. In fact the question arose among us as to whether, after getting Mr. Lincoln, if we succeeded in our plan, the Confederate authorities would not surrender us to the United States again, because of doing this thing without their knowledge or consent. But we never adquainted them with our plan, and they never had anything in the wide world to do with it. In fact, we were jealous of our undertaking, and wanted no outside help. I have not made this statement to defend the officers of the Confederate government. They are perfectly able to defend themselves. What I have done myself, I am

NOT ASHAMED TO LET THE WORLD KNOW.

I left Richmond on Saturday morning, before the evacuation of that place and reached Washington the following Monday at 4 o'clock p.m. April 3, 1865. As soon as I reached the Maryland shore, I understood that the detectives knew of my trip South, and were on the lookout for me. I had been South several times before for the secret service, but had never been caught. At that time I was carrying the dispatches Mr. Benjamin gave me, in a book entitled,

"THE LIFE OF JOHN BROWN."

During my trip, and while reading that book, I learned, to my utter amazement, that John Brown was a martyr, sitting at the right hand of God. (Uproarious laughter) I succeeded in reaching Washington safely, and in passing up Seventh street met one of our party, who inquired what had become of Booth. I told him where I had been; that I was then on my way to Canada, and that I had not seen or heard anything of Booth since

our separation. In view of the fact that

RICHMOND HAD FALLEN

and that all hopes of the abduction of the President had been given up, I advised him to go home and go to work. That was the last time I saw any of the party. I went to a hotel and stopped over that night, as a detective had been to my house inquiring of the servant my whereabouts. In the early train next morning, Tuesday, April 4, 1865, I left for New York, and that was the last time I ever was in Washington, until brought there by the United States Government

A CAPTIVE IN IRONS.

All reports to the contrary notwithstanding, the United States, as you will remember, tried to prove my presence in Washington on the 15th of April, the day on which Mr. Lincoln met his death. Upon arriving in New York, I called at Booth's house, and was told by the servant that he had left that morning suddenly, on the ground of going to Boston to fulfill an engagement at the theatre. In the evening of the same day I

TOOK THE CARS TO MONTREAL

arriving there the next day. I put up at the St. Lawrence hotel, registering myself as "John Harrison," such being my two first names. Shortly afterward I saw General Edward G. Lee, to whom the dispatches were directed, and delivered them to him. Those dispatches we tried to introduce as evidence on my trial, but his honor Judge Fisher ruled them out, despite of the fact that the Government had tried to prove that they had relation to the conspiracy to kill Mr. Lincoln. They were only accounts of some money transactions - nothing more or less. A week or so after my arrival there

GEN. LEE CAME TO MY ROOM

and told me he had a plan on foot to release the Confederate prisoners then in Elmira, New York. He said he had sent many parties there, but they always got frightened, and only half executed their orders. He asked me if I would

go there and take a sketch of the prison, find out the number of prisoners also minor details in regard to the number of soldiers on guard, cannon, small arms, etc. I readily accepted these new labors, owing to the fact that I could not return to Washington for fear of the detectives. The news of the evacuation of Richmond did not seem to disturb the General in his plan, as he doubtless thought then that the Confederacy wanted men more than ever, no one dreaming that it was virtually at an end. I was much amused at one expression made use of by an ex-reb with regard to the suddenness of its demise: "D--n the thing. It didn't even flicker but went right out." (Laughter and applause.) In accordance with Gen. Lee's order, I went to Elmira, arriving there on Wednesday, two days before Mr. Lincoln's death, and registered at the Brainard house, as usual.

AS "JOHN HARRISON."

The following day I went to work and made a complete sketch of the prison and surroundings. About 10 o'clock on Friday night I retired, little thinking that on that night a blow would be struck which would forever blast my hopes, and make me a wanderer in a foreign land. I slept the night through, and came down next morning little dreaming of

THE STORM THEN BREWING

around my head. When I took my seat at the table, about 9 o'clock a.m. a gentleman to my left remarked: "Have you heard the news?" "No, I've not," I replied. "What is it?" "Why President Lincoln and Secretary Seward have been assassinated." I really put so little faith in what the man said that I made a remark that it was too early in the morning to get off such jokes as that. "It's so," he said, at the same time drawing out a paper and showing it to me. Sure enough there I saw an account of what he told me, but as no names were mentioned, it never occurred to me for an instant that it could have been Booth or any of the party, for the simple reason that I had

NEVER HEARD ANYTHING REGARDING ASSASSINATION

spoke of during my intercourse with them. I had good reason to believe that

there was another conspiracy afloat in Washington. In fact, we all knew it. One evening as I was partially lying down in the reading-room of the Metropolitan Hotel, two or three gentlemen came in and looked around as if to make sure that no one was around. They then commenced to talk about what had been done, the best means for the expedition, etc. It being about dusk, and no gas-light, and partially concealed behind a writing desk, I was an unwilling listener of what occurred.

I TOLD BOOTH THIS

afterward, and he said he had heard something to the same effect. It only made us all the more eager to carry out our plans at an early day for fear some one should get ahead of us. We didn't know what they were after exactly, but we were well satisfied that their object was very much the same as ours. Arising from the table I thought over who the party could be, for at that time no names had been telegraphed. I was pretty sure it was none of the old party. I approached the telegraph office in the main hall of the hotel for the purpose of ascertaining if J. Wilkes Booth was in New York. I picked up a blank and wrote, "John Widkes Booth," giving the number of the house. I hesitated a moment and then tore the paper up, and then wrote one, "J.W.B." with directions which I was led to do from the fact that during our whole connection we rarely wrote or telegraphed under our proper names, but always in such a manner that no one could understand but ourselves. One way of Booth's was to send letters to me under cover to my quondam friend, Louis J. Weichman.

Doubtless you all know who Louis J. Weichman is. They were sent to him because he knew of the plot to abduct President Lincoln. I proclaim it here and before the world that Louis J. Weichman was a party to the plot to abduct President Lincoln. He had been told all about it, and was constantly importuning me to let him become an active member. I refused, for the simple reason that I told him he could neither ride a horse nor shoot a pistol, which was a fact. (Laughter)

These were two necessary accomplishments for us. My refusal nettled him some so he went off, as it afterwards appeared from his testimony, and told some Government clerk that he had a vague idea that there was a plan of some kind on hand to abduct President Lincoln. This he says himself: that he could have spotted every man in the party.

WHY DIDN'T HE DO IT?

Booth sometimes was rather suspicious of him and asked me if I thought he could be trusted. Said I, "Certainly he can. Weichman is a Southern man," and I always believed it until I had good reason to believe otherwise, because he had furnished information for the Confederate government, besides allowing me access to the Government records after office hours. I have very little to say of Louis J. Weichman. But I do pronounce him a base-born perjurer, a murderer of the deepest hue. Give me a man who can strike his victim dead, but says me from a man who

THROUGH PERJURY

will cause the death of an innocent person. Double murder! Hell possesses no worse fiend than a character of that kind. (Applause) Away with such a character. I leave him in the pit of infamy, which he has dug for himself, a prey to the lights of his guilty conscience (Applause)

I telegraphed Booth thus:

"J.W.B., in New York:

"If you are in New York, telegraph me.

"John Harrison, Elmira, N.Y."

The operator, after looking over it, said:"Is it J.W.B.?" to which I replied, "Yes." He evidently wanted the whole name, and had scarcely finished telegraphing when a door was pushed open, and I heard some one say, "Yes there are three or four brothers of them, John, Junius Brutus, Edwin, and J. Wilkes Booth." The whole truth flashed on me in an instant, and I said to myself, "My God, what have I done?" The dispatch was still lying before me and I reached over and took

it up for the purpose of destroying it, but the operator stretched forth his hand and said, "We must file all telegrams." My first impulse was to tear it up, but I pitched it back and walked off. The town was in the greatest uproar, flags at half mast, bells tolling, etc. Still I did not think that I was in danger, and determined to go immediately to Baltimore to find out the particulars of the tragedy. But here I wish to say a few words concerning the register of the Brainard House. When my counsel, by my own direction, went to seek that register, it could not be found. Our inability to produce it on the trial naturally cast a suspicion over our alibi. For weeks, months, did we seek to find its whereabouts, but to no purpose. Every man who was connected with the hotel was hunted up and questioned. Every register of the hotel before and after the one which ought to contain my name was to be found, but The most important one of all was gone.

Now the question is, What became of that register? The United States Government, by one of its witnesses - Dr. McMillan - knew in November 1865, that I was in Elmira at the time of the assassination. They knew it, and they naturally traced me there to find out what I was doing. That some of the Government emissaries abstracted that register I firmly believe, or perhaps it is stored away in some of the other Government vaults, under charge of some judge high in position. But this is only a surmise of mine. But the circumstance involves a mystery.of villainy which the All-seeing God will yet bring to light.

THE DISPATCH I SENT TO BOOTH

also from Elmira it was impossible to find. We had the operator at Washington during my trial, but he said the original was gone, though he had a copy of it. In telegraph offices they are compelled to keep all dispatches filed. Of course we could not offer this copy in evidence, because the original alone would be

accepted and that had been made away with. So sure was the Government that they had destroyed all evidence of my sojurn in Elmira that in getting me in Washington in time for Mr. Lincoln's death they brought me by way of New York City, but so completely were they foiled in this that, in their rebutting testimony, they saw the absolute necessity of having me go by way of Elmira, and they changed their tactics accordingly. This was enough to damn my case in any man's mind. This is a strange fact, but nevertheless true, that the Government, having in its possession this hotel register, as well as my dispatch to Booth, and knowing moreover, by one of its witnesses, that I was in Elmira, yet tried to prove that I was in Washington on

THE NIGHT OF MR. LINCOLN'S DEATH

giving orders and commanding in general, as they were pleased to say. The gentlemen in Elmira, by whom I proved my alibi, were men of the highest standing and integrity, whose testimony the United States Government could not and dare not attempt to impeach. I left Elmira with the intention of going to Baltimore. I really did not comprehend at that time the danger I was in. As there was no train going South that evening I concluded to go to Canandaigua and from there to Baltimore, by way of Elmira and New York. Upon arriving at Canandaigua on Saturday evening I learned, to my utter disappointment, that no train left until the Monday following, so I took a room at the Webster House, registering myself as "John Harrison." The next day I went to church; I remember it being Easter Sunday. I can here safely say that the United States Government had not the remotest idea that I stopped anywhere after I left Elmira. They thought when I left there I

WENT STRAIGHT THROUGH INTO CANADA.

It was a fortunate thing for me that I could not leave Canandaigua. Now, mark, ladies and gentlemen, if you please, my name was signed midway of the hotel register, with six other parties before and after. There was no doubt as to the genuineness of my signature, because the very experts

brought by the United States to swear to my signature in other instances, swore also that that was my handwriting. After all this the register was ruled out by Judge Fisher, because he was well aware if he admitted it my case was at an end. I could not be in two places at once, though they tried to make me so. Listen to his reason for so ruling: "The prisoner might have stepped down from Canada to Canandaigua during his concealment and signed his name there for the purpose of protecting himself in the future." It was a likely idea that the proprietor of a hotel would leave a blank line in the register for my especial benefit. Need I say that the ruling was a most infamous one, and

OUGHT TO DAMN THE JUDGE

who so ruled as a villian in the minds of every honest and upright man. (Loud and prolonged applause.) Had Judge Fisher been one of the lawyers for the prosecution, he could not have worked harder against me than he did. But, thanks to him, he done me more good than harm. His unprincipled and vindictive character was too apparent to every one in the court-room. I could not help smiling at the time to think of the great shrewdness and foresight he accorded me by that decision. At times, really, during my trial, I could scarce recognize any vestige of my former self. Sometimes I would ask myself,

"AM I THE SAME INDIVIDUAL?"

Am I really the same John H. Surratt? When that register was produced in court, the Hon. Judge Pierrepont, the leading counsel for the United States , became exceeding nervous, especially when Mr. Bradley refused to show it to him, and he tore up several pieces of paper in his trembling fingers.

He evidently saw what a pitiful case he had, and how he had been made the dupe of his precious, worthy friend, Edwin M. Stanton. At the time of my trial, the proprietor of the Webster House in Canandaigua, could not find the cash book of the hotel, in which there should have been an entry in favor of "John Harrison," for so much cash. When he returned to

Canandaigua, my trial being then ended, he wrote Mr Bradley that he had found the cash book, and sent it to him. It was then too late.

MY TRIAL WAS OVER.

If we had had that cash book at the time of my trial, it would have proved beyond a doubt that I was in Canandaigua, and not in Washington city.

On Monday, when I was leaving Canandaigua, I bought some New York papers. In looking over them, my eye lit on the following paragraph, which I have never forgot, and don't think I ever will. It runs thus:

"The assassin of Secretary Seward is said to be John H. Surratt, a notorious secessionist of Southern Maryland. His name, with that of J. Wilkes Booth, will forever lead

THE INFAMOUS ROLL OF ASSASSINS."

I could scarcely believe my senses. I gazed upon my name, the letters of which seemed sometimes to grow as large as mountains, and then to dwindle away to nothing. So much for my former connection with him, I thought. After fully realizing the state of the case, I concluded to change my course, and go direct to Canada. I left Canandaigua on Monday, 12 M, going to Albany, arriving there Tuesday morning in time for breakfast. When I stepped on the platform at the depot,

AT ST. ALBANS,

I noticed that one of the detectives scanned every one, head and foot, myself as well as the rest. Before leaving Montreal for Elmira, I provided myself with an Oxford cut jacket and a round-top hat, peculiar to Canada at that time. I knew my trip to Elmira would be a dangerous one and I wished to pass myself off as a Canadian, and I succeeded in so doing, as was proved by my witness in Elmira. I believe that costume guarded me safely through St. Albans. I went in with others, and moved around with the detectives, standing there most of the time looking at us. Of course I was obliged to talk as loud as anybody about the late tragedy. After taking a

hearty meal I lighted a cigar and walked up town. One of the detectives approached me, stared me directly in the face, and I looked him quietly back. In a few minutes I was speeding on my way to Montreal, where I arrived at two o'clock in the afternoon, going again to St. Lawrence Hotel. Soon after I called on a friend, to whom I explained my former connections with Booth, and told him I was afraid the United States Government would suspect me of complicity in

THE PLOT OF ASSASSINATION.

He advised me to make myself scarce. I immediately went to the hotel, got my things, and repaired to the room of a friend. When my friend's tea-time came I would not go to the table with him, but remained in the room. The ladies wanted to know why he didn't bring his friend to tea with him. He replied that I didn't want any. One of the ladies remarked, "I expect you have got Booth in there." (Laughter) "Perhaps so," he answered, laughingly. That was rather close guessing. (Laughter) At nightfall I went to the house of one who afterwards proved to be a most devoted friend. There I remained until the evening of the next day, when I was driven out in a carriage with two gentlemen, strangers to me. One day I walked out and I saw Weichman on the lookout for me. He had little idea I was so near. One night about 11 o'clock, my friend, in whose house I was, came to me and said, in a smiling way - "The detectives have offered me $20,000 if I will tell them where you are." "Very well," said I, "give me one half, and let them know." They suspected this gentleman of protecting me and they had really made him the offer. One day about twelve o'clock I was told they were going to search the house, and that I must leave immediately, which I did. They searched it before morning. This gentleman was a poor man with a large family, and yet money could not buy him.(Applause) I remained with this gentleman until I left Montreal, within a week or so afterwards.

The detectives were now hunting me very closely, and would have doubtless succeeded in capturing me, had it not been for a blunder on the part of my friend Weichman. He had, it appears, started the detectives on the wrong track, by telling them that I had left the house of Mr. Porterfield in company with some others, and was going north of Montreal. Soon that section was swarming with detectives. I was not with that party, but about the same time, I too,

LEFT MONTREAL IN A HACK,

going some eight or nine miles down the St. Lawrence river, crossing that stream in a small canoe. I was attired as a huntsman. At 3 o'clock Wednesday morning we arrived at our destination, a small town lying south of Montreal. We entered the village very quietly, hoping no one would see us.

It has been assereed over and over again and

FOR THE PURPOSE OF DAMNING ME

in the estimation of every honest man that I deserted her who gave me birth in the direst hour of her need. Truly would I have merited the execration of every man had such been the case, When I left Montreal there was no cause for uneasiness on my part, and upon my arrival in the country I wrote to my friends in Montreal to keep me posted in regard to the approaching trial, and to send me the newspapers regularly. I received letters from them frequently, in all of which they assured me there was no cause of anxiety; that it was only a matter of time, and it would all be well. After a while papers did not come so regularly, and those that did, spoke very encouragingly. A little while afterwards, when they came, sentences were mutilated with ink and pen.

I protested against such action, and for some time I received no papers at all. I became very uneasy, and wrote for publication an article signed by myself, which I sent to Montreal to be forwarded for publication

in the New York World. It is needless to say it never went. Things continued in this way for some time, until

I COULD STAND THE SUSPENSE NO LONGER.

I determined to send a messenger to Washington for that purpose, and secured the services of an intelligent and educated gentleman. I started him off immediately, I paying all expenses. I gave him a letter to a friend of mine in Washington, with instructions to say to him to put himself in communication with the counsel for the defence, and to make a correct report to me as to how the case stood; if there was any danger and also, communicate with me if my presence was necessary, and inform me without delay, with an urgent request that he would see and inquire for himself how matters stood. He left me, and

GOD ALONE KNOWS

the suspense and anxiety of my mind during the days of his absence. I imagined and thought all kinds of things, yet I was powerless to act. At last he returned, and so bright and cheerful was his countenance that, I confess, one half of my fears were dispelled. He represented everything as progressing well, and brought me this message from the gentleman in Washington to whom I had sent him:

"Be under no apprehension as to any serious consequences. Remain perfectly quiet, as any action on your part would only tend to make matters worse. If you can be of any service to us, we will let you know, but keep quiet."

These were the instructions I received from my friend in Washington, in whom I felt the utmost reliance, and who I thought would never deceive me. He also sent me copies of the National Intelligencer, containing evidence of the defence. I certainly felt greatly relieved, though not entirely satisfied. This news reached me sometime in the latter part of June, just before

the party of gentlemen of whom I have spoken arrived. They, too, assured me there was no cause for fear. What else could I do but accept these unwavering assurances? Even had I thought otherwise, I could not have taken any action resulting in good.

Just on the eve of my departure to join a party of gentlemen

ON A HUNTING EXCURSION,

while I was waiting at the hotel for the train, the proprietor handed me a paper, and said: "Read that about the conspirators." Little did the man know who I was, or how closely the paragraph bore upon me or mine. That paper informed me that on a day which was then present, and at an hour which had then come and gone, the most hellish of deeds was to be enacted. It had been determined on and carried out even before I had intimation that there was any danger. It would be folly for me to attempt to

DESCRIBE MY FEELINGS.

After gazing at the paper for some time I dropped it on the floor, turning on my heel and going directly to the house where I had been stopping before. When I entered the room I found my friend sitting there. As soon as he saw me he turned deadly pale, but never uttered a word. I said, "You doubtless thought you were acting a friend - the part of a friend - towards me, but you have deceived me. I may forgive you, but I can never forget it." "We all thought it for the best Charley," he commenced to say, but I did not stay to hear more. I went to my room and remained there until dark, and then signified my intention fo leave the place immediately. I felt reckless as to what should become of me.

AFTER VISITING QUEBEC

and other places, with the reward of $25,000 hanging over my head, I did not think it safe to remain there, and so I concluded to seek an asylum in foreign lands.

I had nothing now to bind me to this country, save an only sister, and I knew she would never want for kind friends or a good home. For myself, it mattered little where I went, so that I could roam once more a free man. I then went on a venture, and now, ladies and gentlemen, I go forth again on a venture. Gladly would I have remained hidden among the multitude; but the stern necessities arising from the blasting of my earthly prospects have forced me to leave my solitude and to stand again before the public gaze as the historian of my own life. One mitigation to its distastefulness in this and my first attempt, however, is the kindness with which I have been received and the patience with which I have been listened to, for which I return you, ladies and gentlemen, my sincere and heartfelt thanks. (Applause)

Here the lecturer finished. The air of "Dixie" was given, and for some time, Surratt, among the ladies, was the observed of all observers.