

Shelbyville Ill.

Nov. 22nd 1852.

His Excellency,

A. C. French,

Gov. of the State of Ill.

Sir,

John A. S. Brackett was, at the Nov. term, 1852, of the Circuit Court of Moultrie county, convicted of manslaughter, and sent to the Penitentiary for two years. I have seen said Brackett, several times, and have conversed with a number of persons, about him, who have known him, from his boyhood. I was present, at his trial in Moultrie county; and I came, to the conclusion, from the testimony, produced, at the trial, that Brackett is almost, if not quite, an idiot. It appeared, from the proof, that, though the father of the prisoner had used every effort to have his son taught, yet he had never learned the multiplication table, nor to spell. It was further proved, that he never could be taught, to work, with any system or judgment. Though he seem disposed to succeed, yet, when alone, he never could lay off corn ground. Sometimes the rows would be too close, and sometimes ten feet apart. When he was using two horses, he would most frequently go, to the field, with only one. Very often he would go to the field, to plough, and leave his harness, at the stable. A number of witnesses testified

that they have seen Brackett, very frequently, alone, in the field, standing by his plough, or with a hoe, in his hands, and gazing at vacancy, for a half of an hour, and an hour, when there was nothing to attract his attention. It was proven, that, though 26 years of age, he had never manifested any fondness for the Society of men; but rather a distaste; and that his conversation and association had always been with children. Witnesses, to the number of ten or more, who had known him, from his boyhood, expressed the opinion, that he had very little, if any reason; and that upon the slightest excitement, they were satisfied, he was not conscious of right and wrong.

It does seem to me, from the testimony, at the trial, that it would be cruel and inhuman, to inflict punishment upon such a man.

I have carefully examined four petitions, marked A. B. C. & D., presented to me, by Elliott Brackett, the father of the unfortunate young man. I am personally acquainted, with most of the signers. They reside, in Shelby, Cole and Mouthier Counties.* I recognize, among them, a number of our most respectable and moral citizens; and a number of them are Mr. Brackett's neighbors, and have known his son, from his infancy. I also recognize, among the signers a reputable physician of Cole County

* His father's residence is near where the three counties, join —

who has attended upon young Brackett. Four of the jury, who sat upon the case, as well as the clerk and Sheriff of Moultrie county, and nearly all the prominent citizens of Sullivan, including the merchants and a physician, have signed the petition, marked A.

The father of young Brackett will present this to you. John Brackett is now, in the custody of the Sheriff of Moultrie county, until the 1st of December.

If consistent with the discharge of the duties of your Excellency, you can grant a pardon to this young man, you would not only render a favor, to a large number of your fellow-citizens, but to the cause of humanity.

Respectfully yours
Wm. L. Garrison
Anthony Thornton.

I assisted in the defence of J. A. S. Brackett; and, of course, heard and noted the evidence; and I concur generally with the statement of Mr. Thornton, above. I think him, most clearly, a proper subject of the Executive clemency—
A. Lincoln—

His Excellency,
A. C. Ince,
Springfield,
Ill.