

**THE WORDS OF  
ABRAHAM LINCOLN,  
FOR USE IN SCHOOLS**

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The Words of Abraham Lincoln, for Use in Schools by Abraham Lincoln & Isaac Thomas

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ABRAHAM LINCOLN

FOR USE IN SCHOOLS

SELECTED, ARRANGED AND ANNOTATED

BY

ISAAC THOMAS, A.M. (YALE)  
PRINCIPAL OF THE HIGH SCHOOL, BURLINGTON, VT.

"Utterances of wonderful beauty and grandeur."—CARL SCHURZ

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## PREFACE.

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This book is not a biography, nor was it intended to be. Its main purpose is to put within the reach of our youth a collection of Lincoln's words which, in themselves, will be a source of inspiration to all that read them and will serve as models of good English to the schools, and to make known his words as they ought to be known by all good Americans.

It is impossible to lay too much stress upon these qualities of Lincoln's words: their inspiring power, their terseness and vigor, and their worthiness to be studied and known by his countrymen. The editor, therefore, asks the special attention of the readers of this book to what has been said upon this matter by the writers quoted.

A second purpose of the book is to gather together into such form as will make them easily accessible to the young, those speeches, letters and state papers of Mr. Lincoln that most clearly reveal what sort of patriot, statesman and man he was. It has in it, therefore, no connected or detailed account of Mr. Lincoln's boyhood or early manhood. It begins with him where his national life may be said to begin, in the middle of the year 1853, giving some of his deeds and words from that time to his death. What he did and said before 1853, though important as a preparation for his larger work, were almost entirely local in their character, and have, therefore, a limited interest to the young people

of to-day, who can know him in an historical way only. But in what he was and in what he did the last seven years of his life, he belongs to his country and to all the world.

In choosing examples of Mr. Lincoln's work the limits of the book allowed the choice of only a certain amount of material, so that the editor was compelled to exercise self-denial to a very high degree. And since he was thereby precluded from much interesting matter, the greater care had to be taken in order that the speeches, state papers, etc., chosen, might be representative of their author in the highest and best sense. This task was made a good deal easier by the fact that Lincoln's public life and service mainly centered in the struggle against, and for the extinction of, slavery in the United States.

The speeches that have been chosen include nearly all, if not quite all, the arguments Mr. Lincoln used in the discussion of slavery and the other questions of his day, if, indeed, there can be said to have been other questions. And to the reader of all his great speeches, it is astonishing how few those arguments were.

The state papers, messages and proclamations and the public letters all bear upon the same subject—the salvation of the Union with the extinction of slavery. In the choice of these, the editor has been guided by his desire to present connectedly Mr. Lincoln's progress to the perception that the extinction of slavery was necessary to the salvation of the Union. In these is shown also his wonderful political sagacity in refusing to move forward faster than the support of the people would warrant, and in knowing just the right time for the next move.

The letters are of two sorts, public and private. In

the public letters Mr. Lincoln defends, explains or vindicates his public action. Written to private individuals, to committees, and to men in public position, they are in reality addressed to the public, to the people, to debate with them questions of public importance and to prepare their minds for his next action. In the purely private letters Mr. Lincoln is seen in another light entirely. His sympathy, his thoughtfulness, his kindness, his gentleness and his fidelity to his duty all come before us. All his speeches, state papers, letters and addresses are so plain, so simple, as to need only a reading to be understood. The editor, therefore, has been careful to add a note here and there only.

In addition to Mr. Lincoln's own words, some of the best things that have been written about him and his words have been put into the book. These serve (1) to present a view of him not possible to be obtained from his own writings, given, as it is, by his contemporaries; (2) to call attention to some special characteristic of his speeches, letters and papers, and in this way to make clearer their object and the nature of the work which he was doing; (3) to show to the youth of our schools what friends, eminent public men, and poets have said of him; (4) to bind together the book into a connected whole and so give a more nearly complete portrait of Mr. Lincoln; and (5) to induce both teacher and pupil to read more widely and study more carefully the words of the "first American."

In the arrangement of the material selected, the greatest care has been taken so that the picture might grow as the reading proceeded from the beginning to the end. The editor believes this part of his work will commend itself to any who will examine it carefully.

Lastly, the purpose of the book is to present a con-



nected piece of history covering the question of slavery in the United States as only Mr. Lincoln has covered it, and giving an exposition of the war for the Union made by a master hand. The words and example of Lincoln, rightly understood by our young people, cannot fail of good in bringing them to see more clearly what true patriotism is as set forth in the sayings and deeds of "the kindly-earnest, brave, foreseeing man," who gave his life also to the cause for which so many others died, "that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

I. T.

BURLINGTON, Vt., September, 1898.

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**PUBLISHERS' NOTE.**

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