

## LINCOLN

O captain. My captain.  
Our fearful trip is done;  
The ship has weathered every rack, the prize we sought is won;  
The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,  
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring:  
But O heart! Heart! Heart!  
Leave you not the little spot,  
Where on the deck my captain lies,  
Fallen cold and dead.

O captain. My captain.  
Rise up and hear the bells;  
Rise up--for you the flag is flung--for you the bugle trills;  
For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths--for you the shores a-crowding;  
For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning;  
O captain. Dear father.  
This arm I push beneath you;  
It is some dream that on the deck,  
You've fallen cold and dead.

My captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still;  
My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor win:  
But the ship, the ship is anchor'd safe, its voyage closed and done;  
From fearful trip, the victor ship, comes in with object won:  
Exult O shores, and ring, O bells.  
But I with silent tread,  
Walk the spot the captain lies,  
Fallen cold and dead.

--Walt Whitman.

## LINCOLN

As Washington stands to the Revolution and the establishment of the government, so Lincoln stands as the hero of the mightier struggle by which our Union was saved. He was born in 1809, ten years after Washington, his work done had been laid to rest at Mount Vernon. No great man ever came from beginnings which seemed to promise so little. Lincoln's family, for more than one generation, had been sinking, instead of rising, in the social scale. His father was one of those men who were found on the frontier in the early days of the western movement, always changing from one place to another, and dropping a little lower at each remove. Abraham Lincoln was born into a family who were not only poor, but shiftless, and his early days were days of ignorance, and poverty,

and hard work. Out of such inauspicious surroundings, he slowly and painfully lifted himself. He gave himself an education, he took part in an Indian war, he worked in the fields, he kept a country store, he read and studied, and, at last, he became a lawyer. Then he entered into the rough politics of the newly-settled State. He grew to be a leader in his county, and went to the legislature. The road was very rough, the struggle was very hard and very bitter, but the movement was always upward.

At last he was elected to Congress, and served one term in Washington as a Whig with credit, but without distinction. Then he went back to his law and his politics in Illinois. He had, at last, made his position. All that was now needed was an opportunity, and that came to him in the great anti-slavery struggle.

Lincoln was not an early Abolitionist. His training had been that of a regular party man, and as a member of a great political organization, but he was a lover of freedom and justice. Slavery, in its essence, was hateful to him, and when the conflict between slavery and freedom was fairly joined, his path was clear before him. He took up the antislavery cause in his own State and made himself its champion against Douglas, the great leader of the Northern Democrats. He stumped Illinois in opposition to Douglas, as a candidate for the Senate, debating the question which divided the country in every part of the State. He was beaten at the election, but, by the power and brilliancy of his speeches, his own reputation was made. Fighting the anti-slavery battle within constitutional lines, concentrating his whole force against the single point of the extension of slavery to the Territories, he had made it clear that a new leader had arisen in the cause of freedom. From Illinois his reputation spread to the East, and soon after his great debate he delivered a speech in New York which attracted wide attention. At the Republican convention of 1856, his name was one of those proposed for vice-president.

When 1860 came, he was a candidate for the first place on the national ticket. The leading candidate was William H. Seward, of New York, the most conspicuous man of the country on the Republican side, but the convention, after a sharp struggle, selected Lincoln, and then the great political battle came at the polls. The Republicans were victorious, and, as soon as the result of the voting was known, the South set to work to dissolve the Union. In February Lincoln made his way to Washington, at the end coming secretly from Harrisburg to escape a threatened attempt at assassination, and on March 4, 1861 assumed the presidency.

No public man, no great popular leader, ever faced a more terrible situation. The Union was breaking, the Southern States were seceding, treason was rampant in Washington, and the Government was bankrupt. The country knew that Lincoln was a man of great capacity in debate, devoted to the cause of antislavery and to the maintenance of the Union. But what his ability was to deal with the awful conditions by which he was surrounded, no one knew. To follow him through the four years of civil war which ensued is, of course, impossible here. Suffice it to say that no greater, no more difficult, task has ever been faced by any man in modern times, and no one ever met a fiercer trial and conflict more successfully.

Lincoln put to the front the question of the Union, and let the question of slavery drop, at first, into the background. He used every exertion to hold the border States by moderate measures, and, in this way, prevented the spread of the rebellion. For this moderation, the antislavery extremists in the North assailed him, but nothing shows more his far-sighted wisdom and strength of purpose than his action at this time. By his policy at the beginning of his administration, he held the border States, and united the people of the North in defense of the Union.

As the war went on, he went on, too. He had never faltered in his feelings about slavery. He knew, better than any one, that the successful dissolution of the Union by the slave power meant, not only the destruction of an empire, but the victory of the forces of barbarism. But he also saw, what very few others at the moment could see, that, if he was to win, he must carry his people with him, step by step. So when he had rallied them to the defense of the Union, and checked the spread of secession in the border States, in the autumn of 1862 he announced that he would issue a proclamation freeing the slaves. The extremists had doubted him in the beginning, the conservative and the timid doubted him now, but when the Emancipation Proclamation was issued, on January 1, 1863, it was found that the people were with him in that, as they had been with him when he staked everything upon the maintenance of the Union. The war went on to victory, and in 1864 the people showed at the polls that they were with the President, and reelected him by overwhelming majorities. Victories in the field went hand in hand with success at the ballot-box, and, in the spring of 1865, all was over. On April 9, 1865, Lee surrendered at Appomattox, and five days later, on April 14, a miserable assassin crept into the box at the theater where the President was listening to a play, and shot him. The blow to the country was terrible beyond words, for then men saw, in one bright flash, how great a man had fallen.

Lincoln died a martyr to the cause to which he had given his life, and both life and death were heroic. The qualities which enabled him to do his great work are very clear now to all men. His courage and his wisdom, his keen perception and his almost prophetic foresight, enabled him to deal with all the problems of that distracted time as they arose around him. But he had some qualities, apart from those of the intellect, which were of equal importance to his people and to the work he had to do. His character, at once strong and gentle, gave confidence to every one, and dignity to his cause. He had an infinite patience, and a humor that enabled him to turn aside many difficulties which could have been met in no other way. But most important of all was the fact that he personified a great sentiment, which ennobled and uplifted his people, and made them capable of the patriotism which fought the war and saved the Union. He carried his people with him, because he knew instinctively, how they felt and what they wanted. He embodied, in his own person, all their highest ideals, and he never erred in his judgment.

He is not only a great and commanding figure among the great statesmen and leaders of history, but he personifies, also, all the sadness and the pathos of the war, as well as its triumphs and its glories. No words that any one can use about Lincoln can, however, do him such justice as his own, and I will close this volume with two of Lincoln's speeches, which show what the war and all the great deeds of that time meant to him, and through

which shines, the great soul of the man himself. On November 19, 1863, he spoke as follows at the dedication of the National cemetery on the battle-field of Gettysburg:

Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battle-field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate--we cannot consecrate--we cannot hallow--this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note or long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who have fought here, have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us--that from the honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

On March 4, 1865, when he was inaugurated the second time, he made the following address:

Fellow-Countrymen: At this second appearing to take the oath of presidential office, there is less occasion for an extended address than there was at the first. Then a statement, somewhat in detail, of a course to be pursued, seemed proper. Now, at the expiration of four years, during which public declarations have been constantly called forth on every point and phase of the great contest which still absorbs the attention and engrosses the energies of the nation, little that is new could be presented. The progress of our arms, upon which all else chiefly depends, is as well known to the public as to myself; and it is, I trust, reasonably satisfactory and encouraging to all. With high hope for the future, no prediction in regard to it is ventured.

On the occasion corresponding to this four years ago, all thoughts were anxiously directed to an impending civil war. All dreaded it--all sought to avert it. While the inaugural address was being delivered from this place, devoted altogether to saving the Union without war, insurgent agents were in the city seeking to destroy it without war--seeking to dissolve the Union, and divide effects, by negotiation. Both parties deprecated war; but one of them would make war rather than let it perish. And the war came.

One eighth of the whole population were colored slaves, not distributed generally over the Union, but localized in the southern part of it. These slaves constituted a peculiar and powerful interest. All knew that this interest was, somehow, the cause of the war. To strengthen, perpetuate, and extend this interest was the object for which the insurgents would rend the Union, even by war; while the government claimed no right to do more than to restrict the Territorial enlargement of it. Neither party expected for the war the magnitude or the duration which it has already attained. Neither anticipated that the cause of the conflict might cease with, or even before, the conflict itself should cease. Each looked for an easier triumph, and a result less fundamental and astounding. Both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God; and each invokes his aid against the other. It may seem strange that any man should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces; but let us judge not, that we be not judged. The prayers of both could not be answered that of neither has been answered fully.

The Almighty has his own purposes. "Woe unto the world because of offenses, for it must needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh." If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offenses which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through his appointed time, he now wills to remove, and that he gives to both North and South this terrible war, as the woe due to those by whom the offenses come, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to him? Fondly do we hope--ferently do we pray--that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, "The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."

With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan--to do all which may achieve and cherish a just, a lasting, peace among ourselves and with all nations.