





*A. Lincoln*

# G E M S

FROM

# ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

---

*BORN FEBRUARY 11th, 1809,*

IN HARDIN COUNTY, KY.

*DIED APRIL 15th, 1865,*

AT WASHINGTON, D. C.

---

PUBLISHED BY DERBY & MILLER, 5 SPRUCE ST.,

AND

TRENT, FILMER & CO., 37 PARK ROW,

New York.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1865,

By TRENT, FILMER & CO.,

In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the Southern  
District of New York.

A THOROUGHLY digested biography or analysis of the character of President Lincoln, though of infinite value to the future student of history, would scarcely supply the demand for a personal memento of the great man whose successful administration so lately ended in martyrdom. A ring worn, or a cane carried, would better remind us of a dear friend than any thing less personal, though more valuable. These "Gems of Thought" bring ABRAHAM LINCOLN back to us in very presence. Thrown off by the camera of language, the thoughts are ever and only ABRAHAM LINCOLN, the courageous, consistent, trustful Christian statesman. The mere reading of the speech on leaving Springfield, the Emancipation Proclamation, the Second Inaugural, and the sadly beautiful poem recited to Mr. Carpenter, reveal Mr. Lincoln's character, and conclusively prove that the well-grounded affection of the people was not misplaced when placed on ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

## Patriotic Sentiments of President Lincoln.

---

In December, 1839, a political discussion took place between Mr. Lincoln, who was then a Whig leader, and Messrs. Douglas and Sanborn, who were Democrats. It will be remembered that that was the commencement of the enthusiastic campaign of 1840, and which resulted in the defeat of Martin Van Buren for the presidency. We copy from the concluding part of Mr. Lincoln's speech, the following eloquent outburst of patriotism and devotion to principle. Said he:—

“ Many free countries have lost their liberties, and ours may lose hers; but if she shall, may it be my proudest plume, not that I was the last to desert her, but that I never deserted her. I know that the great volcano at Washington, aroused and directed by the evil spirit that reigns there, is belching forth the lava of political corruption, in a current broad and deep, which is sweeping with frightful velocity over the whole length and breadth of the land, bidding fair to leave unscathed no green spot or living thing; while on its bosom are riding, like demons on the waves of hell, the imps of the evil spirit, and fiend-

ishly torturing and taunting all those who dare resist its destroying course with the hopelessness of their efforts; and knowing this, I cannot deny that all may be swept away. Broken by it, I too may be; bow to it, I never will. The probability that we may fall in the struggle ought not to deter us from the support of a cause which we deem to be just. It shall not deter me. If ever I feel the soul within me elevate and expand to those dimensions not wholly unworthy the Almighty Architect, it is when I contemplate the cause of my country deserted by all the world besides, and I, standing alone, hurling defiance at her victorious oppressors. And here, without contemplating consequences, before High Heaven and in the face of the whole world, I swear eternal fidelity to the just cause, as I deem it, of the land of my life, my liberty, and my love. And who that thinks with me, will not adopt the oath that I take? Let none falter who thinks he is right, and we may succeed. But if, after all, we shall fall, be it so. We shall have the proud consolation of saying to our conscience, and to the departed shade of our country's freedom, that the course approved by our judgments and adored by our hearts in disaster, in chains, in torture, and in death, we never faltered in defending."

# Farewell Speech

To his Springfield Friends on setting out for Washington.

MY FRIENDS:

No one not in my position can appreciate the sadness I feel at this parting. To this people I owe all I am. Here I have lived more than a quarter of a century; here my children were born, and here one of them lies buried. I know not how soon I shall see you again. A duty devolves upon me which is, perhaps, greater than that which has devolved upon any other man since the days of Washington. He never would have succeeded except for the aid of Divine Providence, upon whom he at all times relied. I feel that I cannot succeed without the same Divine aid which sustained him, and on the same Almighty Being I place my reliance and support; and I hope you, my friends, will all pray that I may receive that Divine assistance, without which I cannot succeed, but with which success is certain. Again I bid you all an affectionate farewell.



# Proclamation of Emancipation,

By the President of the United States.

---

Whereas, On the twenty-second day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two, a Proclamation was issued by the President of the United States, containing, among other things the following, to wit:

“That on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as Slaves within any State or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforth, and FOREVER FREE, and the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authorities thereof, will Recognize and Maintain the Freedom of such persons, and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them, in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom.

“That the Executive will, on the first day of January aforesaid, by proclamation, designate the States and parts of States, if any, in which the people thereof respectively shall then be in rebellion against the United States, and the fact that any State, or the people thereof shall on that day

be in good faith represented in the Congress of the United States by members chosen thereto at elections wherein a majority of the qualified voters of such State shall have participated, shall, in the absence of strong countervailing testimony, be deemed conclusive evidence that such State and the people thereof are not then in rebellion against the United States."

Now, Therefore, I, ABRAHAM LINCOLN, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, by virtue of the power in me vested as Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States in time of actual armed Rebellion against the authority and government of the United States, and as a fit and necessary war measure for suppressing said Rebellion, do, on this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and in accordance with my purpose so to do, publicly proclaimed for the full period of one hundred days from the day of the first above-mentioned order, and designate, as the States and parts of States wherein the people thereof respectively are this day in rebellion against the United States, the following, to wit: Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana (except the Parishes of St. Bernard, Plaquemines, Jefferson, St. John, St. Charles, St. James, Ascension, Assumption, Terre Bonne, La Fourche, St. Mary, St. Martin, and Orleans, including the city of New Orleans), Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia (except the forty-eight counties designated as West Virginia, and also in the counties of Berkeley, Accomac, Northampton, Elizabeth City, York, Princess Ann, and Norfolk, including the cities of Norfolk and Ports-

mouth), and which excepted parts are for the present left precisely as if this Proclamation were not issued.

And by virtue of the power and for the purpose aforesaid, I do order and declare that ALL PERSONS HELD AS SLAVES within said designated States and parts of States are, and henceforward SHALL BE FREE! and that the Executive Government of the United States, including the Military and Naval Authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons.

And I hereby enjoin upon the people so declared to be free, to abstain from all violence, unless in necessary self-defence, and I recommend to them that in all cases, when allowed, they labor faithfully for reasonable wages.

And I further declare and make known, that such persons of suitable condition will be received into the armed service of the United States, to garrison forts, positions, stations, and other places, and to man vessels of all sorts in said service.

And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the Constitution, upon military necessity, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind, and the gracious favor of Almighty God.

In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my name, and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the City of Washington, this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and of the [L. s.] Independence of the United States the eighty-seventh.

A. LINCOLN.

BY THE PRESIDENT,  
WM. H. SEWARD,  
SECRETARY OF STATE.

## SPEECH

### At Independence Hall, Philadelphia, in Response to Mr. T. Cuyler.

February 21st, 1861.

---

MR. CUYLER:—I am filled with deep emotion at finding myself standing here in this place, where were collected together the wisdom, the patriotism, the devotion to principle from which sprang the institutions under which we live. You have kindly suggested to me, that in my hands is the task of restoring peace to the present distracted condition of the country. I can say in return, sir, that all the political sentiments I entertain have been drawn, so far as I have been able to draw them, from the sentiments which originated in and were given to the world from this hall. I have never had a feeling, politically, that did not spring from the sentiments embodied in the Declaration of Independence. I have often pondered over the dangers which were incurred by the men who assembled here, and framed and adopted that Declaration of Independence. I have pondered over the toils that were endured by the officers and soldiers of the army who achieved that Independence. I have often inquired of myself what great principle or idea it was

that kept this Confederacy so long together. It was not the mere matter of the separation of the Colonies from the mother-land, but that sentiment in the Declaration of Independence which gave liberty, not alone to the people of this country, but, I hope, to the world, for all future time. It was that which gave promise that, in due time, the weight would be lifted from the shoulders of all men. This is the sentiment embodied in the Declaration of Independence. Now, my friends, can this country be saved upon that basis? If it can, I will consider myself one of the happiest men in the world if I can help to save it. If it cannot be saved upon that principle, it will be truly awful. But if this country cannot be saved without giving up that principle, I was about to say, *I would rather be assassinated on this spot than surrender it.* Now, in my view of the present aspect of affairs, there need be no bloodshed or war. There is no necessity for it. I am not in favor of such a course, and I may say, in advance, that there will be no bloodshed unless it be forced upon the Government, and then it will be compelled to act in self-defence.

My friends, this is wholly an unexpected speech, and I did not expect to be called upon to say a word when I came here. I supposed it was merely to do something towards raising the flag—I may, therefore, have said something indiscreet. I have said nothing but what I am willing to live by, and, if it be the pleasure of Almighty God, die by.

# President Lincoln's Reply to Hon. Horace Greeley.

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, Aug. 22d, 1862.

HON. HORACE GREELEY :

DEAR SIR—I have just read yours of the 19th instant, addressed to myself through the *New York Tribune*.

If there be in it any statements or assumptions of fact which I may know to be erroneous, I do not now and here controvert them.

If there be any inferences which I may believe to be falsely drawn, I do not now and here argue against them.

If there be perceptible in it an impatient and dictatorial tone, I waive it in deference to an old friend whose heart I have always supposed to be right.

As to the policy I "seem to be pursuing," as you say, I have not meant to leave any one in doubt. I would save the Union. I would save it in the shortest way under the Constitution.

The sooner the national authority can be restored the nearer the Union will be—the Union as it was.

If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time save slavery, I do not agree with them.

If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time destroy slavery, I do not agree with them.

*My paramount object is to save the Union, and not either to save or destroy slavery.*

If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it—if I could save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it—and if I could do it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that.

What I do about slavery and the colored race, I do because I believe it helps to save this Union, and what I forbear, I forbear because I do not believe it would help to save the Union.

I shall do less whenever I shall believe what I am doing hurts the cause, and I shall do more whenever I believe doing more will help the cause.

I shall try to correct errors when shown to be errors, and I shall adopt new views so fast as they shall appear to be true views.

I have here stated my purpose according to my views of official duty, and I intend no modification of my oft-expressed personal wish that all men everywhere could be free.

Yours,

A. LINCOLN.

# Address at Gettysburg,

NOVEMBER 19, 1863.

---

Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth upon 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 are met to dedicate a portion of it as the final resting-place of 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 can not dedicate, we can not consecrate, we can not hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor 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 that they have thus far so nobly carried on. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to the cause for which they here gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that the dead shall not have died in vain—that the nation shall, under God, have a new birth of freedom, and that the Government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth.



# President Lincoln's Letter to Mr. Hodges.

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, *April 4th 1864.*

A. G. HODGES, Esq., Frankfort, Ky.:

MY DEAR SIR—You ask me to put in writing the substance of what I verbally said the other day, in your presence, to Governor Bramlette and Senator Dixon. It was about as follows:

“I am naturally anti-slavery. If slavery is not wrong, nothing is wrong. I cannot remember when I did not so think and feel, and yet I have never understood that the Presidency conferred upon me an unrestricted right to act officially upon this judgment and feeling. It was in the oath I took that I would to the best of my ability preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States. I could not take the office without taking the oath. Nor was it my view that I might take an oath to get power, and break the oath in using the power. I understood, too, that in ordinary civil administration this oath even forbade me to practically indulge my primary abstract judgment on the moral question of slavery. I had publicly declared this many times, and in many ways. And I aver that, to this day, I have done no official act in mere deference to my abstract judgment and feeling on slavery. I did understand, however, that my oath to preserve the Constitution to the best of my ability, imposed upon me the duty of preserving, by every indispensable

means, that government—that nation, of which that Constitution was the organic law. Was it possible to lose the nation and yet preserve the Constitution? By general law, life *and* limb must be protected; yet often a limb must be amputated to save a life; but a life is never wisely given to save a limb. I felt that measures, otherwise unconstitutional, might become lawful, by becoming indispensable to the preservation of the Constitution, through the preservation of the nation. Right or wrong, I assumed this ground, and now avow it. I could not feel that, to the best of my ability I had even tried to preserve the Constitution, if, to save slavery, or any minor matter, I should permit the wreck of government, country, and constitution, altogether. When, early in the war, General Fremont attempted military emancipation, I forbade it, because I did not then think it an indispensable necessity. When, a little later, General Cameron, then Secretary of War, suggested the arming of the blacks, I objected, because I did not yet think it an indispensable necessity. When, still later, General Hunter attempted military emancipation, I again forbade it, because I did not yet think the indispensable necessity had come. When in March, and May, and July, 1862, I made earnest and successive appeals to the border States to favor compensated emancipation, I believed the indispensable necessity for military emancipation and arming the blacks would come, unless averted by that measure. They declined the proposition, and I was, in my best judgment, driven to the alternative of either surrendering the Union, and with it, the Constitution, or of laying strong hand upon the colored element. I chose the latter. In choosing it, I hoped for

greater gain than loss, but of this I was not entirely confident. More than a year of trial now shows no loss by it in our foreign relations, none in our home popular sentiment, none in our white military force; no loss by it any how, or anywhere. On the contrary, it shows a gain of quite a hundred and thirty thousand soldiers, seamen and laborers. These are palpable facts, about which, as facts, there can be no cavilling. We have the men; and we could not have had them without the measure.

“And now let any Union man who complains of the measure, test himself by writing down in one line, that he is for subduing the rebellion by force of arms; and in the next, that he is for taking these one hundred and thirty thousand men from the Union side, and placing them where they would be, but for the measure he condemns. If he cannot face his cause so stated, it is only because he cannot face the truth.”

I add a word which was not in the verbal conversation. In telling this tale, I attempt no compliment to my own sagacity. I claim not to have controlled events, but confess plainly that events have controlled me. Now at the end of three years' struggle, the nation's condition is not what either party, or any man devised or expected. God alone can claim it. Whither it is tending seems plain. If God now wills the removal of a great wrong, and wills also that we of the North, as well as you of the South, shall pay fairly for our complicity in that wrong, impartial history will find therein new causes to attest and revere the justice and goodness of God.

Yours, truly,

(Signed)

A. LINCOLN.

# To Whom It May Concern.

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, D. C., *July 18th, 1864.*

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:—

Any proposition which embraces the restoration of peace, the integrity of the whole Union, and the abandonment of slavery, and which comes by and with an authority that can control the armies now at war against the United States, will be received and considered by the Executive Government of the United States, and will be met by liberal terms on other substantial and collateral points, and the bearer or bearers thereof shall have a safe conduct both ways.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

THE INAUGURAL ADDRESS  
OF  
President Abraham Lincoln,  
DELIVERED IN THE NATIONAL CAPITOL,  
March 4th, 1865.

---

FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN :

At this second appearing to take the oath of the 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 very fitting and 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 avoid 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 the effects by negotiation.

Both parties deprecated war; but one of them would make war rather than let the nation survive, and the other would accept 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 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, 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 men 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 should not be answered. That of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has His own

purposes. Woe unto the world because of offences, for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh. If we shall suppose that American Slavery is one of these offences—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 offence came—shall we discern there is any departure from those Divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to Him? Fondly do we hope, fervently 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 by the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said that 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 wound, to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and orphans; to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.

## A Poem Recited by Mr. Lincoln.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE EVENING POST:

I have been urged by several friends to send you the enclosed poem, written down by myself from Mr. Lincoln's lips, and although it may not be new to all of your readers, the events of the last week give it now a peculiar interest.

The circumstances under which this copy was written are these: I was with the President alone one evening in his room, during the time I was painting my large picture at the White House, last year. He presently threw aside his pen and papers, and began to talk to me of Shakespeare. He sent little "Tad," his son, to the library to bring a copy of the plays, and then read to me several of his favorite passages, showing genuine appreciation of the great poet. Relapsing into a sadder strain, he laid the book aside, and leaning back in his chair said:—

"There is a poem which has been a great favorite with me for years, which was first shown to me when a young man by a friend, and which I afterwards saw and cut from a newspaper and learned by heart. I would," he continued, "give a great deal to know who wrote it, but I have never been able to ascertain."

Then half closing his eyes he repeated to me the lines which I enclose to you. Greatly pleased and interested, I told him I would like, if ever an opportunity occurred, to write them down. He said he would some time try to give them to me. A few days afterwards he asked me to



accompany him to the temporary studio of Mr. Swayne, the sculptor, who was making a bust of him at the Treasury Department. While he was sitting for the bust I was suddenly reminded of the poem, and said to him that THEN would be a good time to dictate it to me. He complied, and sitting upon some books at his feet, as nearly as I can remember, I wrote the lines down, one by one, as they fell from his lips.

With great regard, very truly yours,

F. B. CARPENTER.

### ○ why should the Spirit of Mortal be Proud ?

O why should the spirit of mortal be proud ?—  
Like a fast-flitting meteor, a fast-flying cloud,  
A flash of the lightning, a break of the wave,  
He passes from life to his rest in the grave.

The leaves of the oak and the willow shall fade,  
Be scattered around and together be laid ;  
And the young and the old, and the low and the high,  
Shall moulder to dust and together shall lie.

The child, that a mother attended and loved ;  
The mother, that infant's affection that proved ;  
The husband, that mother and infant that blest,—  
Each, all, are away to their dwelling of rest.

The maid on whose cheek, on whose brow, on whose eye,  
Shone beauty and pleasure—her triumphs are by;  
And the memory of those that loved her and praised,  
Are alike from the minds of the living erased.

The hand of the king, that the sceptre hath borne,  
The brow of the priest, that the mitre hath worn,  
The eye of the sage and the heart of the brave,  
Are hidden and lost in the depths of the grave.

The peasant, whose lot was to sow and to reap,  
The herdsman, who climbed with the goats to the steep,  
The beggar, that wandered in search of his bread,  
Have faded away like the grass that we tread.

The saint, that enjoyed the communion of heaven,  
The sinner, that dared to remain unforgiven,  
The wise and the foolish, the guilty and just,  
Have quietly mingled their bones in the dust.

So the multitude goes—like the flowers and the weed,  
That wither away to let others succeed;  
So the multitude comes—even those we behold,  
To repeat every tale that hath often been told:

For we are the same things our fathers have been:  
We see the same sights that our fathers have seen;  
We drink the same stream, and we feel the same sun,  
And we run the same course that our fathers have run.

The thoughts we are thinking, our fathers would think ;  
From the death we are shrinking from, they too would  
shrink ;

To the life we are clinging to, they too would cling—  
But it speeds from the earth, like a bird on the wing.

They loved—but their story we cannot unfold ;  
They scorned—but the heart of the haughty is cold ;  
They grieved—but no wail from their slumber may come ;  
They joyed—but the voice of their gladness is dumb.

They died—ay, they died—and we, things that are now,  
Who walk on the turf that lies over their brow,  
Who make in their dwellings a transient abode,  
Meet the changes they met on their pilgrimage road.

Yea, hope and despondence, and pleasure and pain,  
Are mingled together in sunshine and rain ;  
And the smile and the tear, and the song and the dirge,  
Still follow each other, like surge upon surge.

'Tis the twink of the eye,—'tis the draught of a breath,  
From the blossom of health to the paleness of death ;  
From the gilded saloon to the bier and the shroud ;—  
O why should the spirit of mortal be proud !

[The author of the above poem was WILLIAM KNOX, a young Scottish poet, who died in 1825.]