




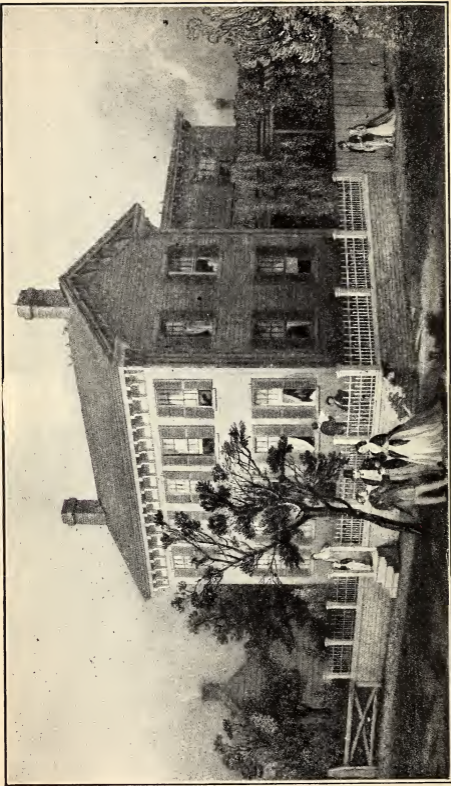
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THE LINCOLN HOME IN SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

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THE WORKS OF
ABRAHAM LINCOLN

EARLY SPEECHES

1832—1856

Introductions and Special Articles by

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PREFACE

IN the present volume are contained Lincoln's public addresses ranging from his first recorded speech, the modest announcement of his candidacy for the Illinois State Legislature, about March 1, 1832, to the famous "Lost Speech" delivered at the first Republican State convention at Bloomington, May 29, 1856. This speech made him a figure in national politics, as indicated by his receiving one hundred and ten votes, the second largest number cast, for Vice-President in the Republican national convention of that year. Here are to be found his speeches in the State Legislature and in Congress. The volume also contains such resolutions as the protest against certain slavery resolutions in the Illinois House of Representatives—the first of such protests recorded in the minutes of any State Legislature—and the unanswerable anti-Mexican War resolutions, known as the "Spot Resolutions" from the quaint phraseology used by Lincoln in persistently pressing upon the weak and tender "spot" in President Polk's justification of the unhappy conflict. Besides speeches on slavery and allied subjects, the volume includes arguments for internal improvements, a protective tariff, and other policies of the Whig party, of which, from the beginning of his public career, Lincoln was a leading figure in Illinois politics. He was the only Whig Representative from his State in the Twenty-ninth Congress.

As a sociologist, Lincoln is presented in speeches dealing with capitalism ("Perils of Mobocracy"); mob rule ("The Perpetuation of Our Political Institutions"); and temperance ("Charity in Temperance Reform"). His style as a popular lecturer is exhibited in his rather commonplace notes for an address on "Niagara Falls"; and the legal habit of his mind is shown in his sound and practical notes for a law lecture. A eulogy of Henry Clay, delivered on the death of that popular idol, is a rather perfunctory performance, since the future emancipator had already divined the coming of a nobler order of statesmanship than that represented by the author of the compromises of 1850.

In Congress Lincoln served as a member of the Committee on the Post-Office and Post-Roads. In this capacity he made various reports, some of which, as dealing with special cases involving no principle, have been omitted from the present collection.

Likewise, for similar reasons, formal calls for Whig conventions, signed by Lincoln with others, and an opinion on the Illinois election law, signed by him as member of a committee, have been omitted.

INTRODUCTION

Lincoln and National Unity.

BY THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

IN his second inaugural, in a speech which will be read as long as the memory of this nation endures, Abraham Lincoln closed by saying:

“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 do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations.”

Immediately after his reëlection he had already spoken thus:

“The strife of the election is but human nature practically applied to the facts of the case. What has occurred in this case must ever recur in similar cases. Human nature will not change. In any future great national trial, compared with the men of this, we shall have as weak and as strong, as silly and as wise, as bad and as good. Let us, therefore, study the incidents of this as philosophy to learn wisdom from, and none of them as wrongs to be revenged. . . . May not all having a common interest reunite in a common effort to save our common country? For my own part, I have striven and shall strive to avoid placing any obstacle in the way. So

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