



Abraham Lincoln and the Union: A Chronicle of the Embattled North

Nathaniel W. Stephenson

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In spite of a lapse of sixty years, the historian who attempts to portray the era of Lincoln is still faced with almost impossible demands and still confronted with arbitrary points of view. It is out of the question, in a book so brief as this must necessarily be, to meet all these demands or to alter these points of view. Interests that are purely local, events that did not with certainty contribute to the final outcome, gossip, as well as the mere caprice of the scholar—these must obviously be set aside. The task imposed upon the volume resolves itself, at bottom, into just two questions: Why was there a war? Why was the Lincoln Government successful? With these two questions always in mind I have endeavored, on the one hand, to select and consolidate the pertinent facts; on the other, to make clear, even at the cost of explanatory comment, their relations in the historical sequence of cause and effect. This purpose has particularly governed the use of biographical matter, in which the main illustration, of course, is the career of Lincoln. Prominent as it is here made, the Lincoln matter all bears in the last analysis on one point—his control of his support. On that the history of the North hinges. The personal and private Lincoln it is impossible to present within these pages. The public Lincoln, including the character of his mind, is here the essential matter. The bibliography at the close of the volume indicates the more important books which are at the reader's disposal and which it is unfortunate not to know.

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