

ACERVO DIGITAL FUNDAJ

Lincoln's world influence: remarks
of the Brazilian
ambassador, Mr. Joaquim
Nabuco, at the
Fourteenth Annual Banquet
of the Lincoln
Republican club and
the Yong Men's
Republican club of
Grand rapids, on
February 12th, 1906.

Fundação Joaquim Nabuco

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REMARKS OF THE BRAZILIAN AMBASSADOR,
MR. JOAQUIM NABUCO, AT THE FOURTEENTH
ANNUAL BANQUET OF THE LINCOLN REPUBLICAN
CLUB AND OF THE YOUNG MEN'S REPUBLICAN
CLUB OF GRAND RAPIDS, ON FEBRUARY 12TH, 1906



LINCOLN'S WORLD INFLUENCE

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LINCOLN'S WORLD INFLUENCE.

SIR, GENTLEMEN:

Your distinguished Representative, Mr. William Alden Smith, did not deceive us with his description of your annual Lincoln's feast. It is an intimate satisfaction for us all to join in its celebration and I thank him for having brought me here. The widest mark, however, of your kindness would be not to notice in my speech the dropping of any aitches. The Roman people used long ago to aspirate that letter, but the Latin races found they could utter the vowels with an economy of breath, and naturally gave way to what is known in the Science of Language as the law of the lesser exertion. This is a law, I am afraid, that does not sound well in this center of ever-increasing activity and competition, least of all on the present occasion, as Lincoln illustrates in History just the contrary law: that of the greatest effort.

Lincoln's name represents many things, one of which is the coming of the West to the front in American politics. But that subject Mr. Smith must have reserved for himself or for someone very much near him. The toast he called upon me to answer is *Lincoln's World Influence*.

I regret I can only give you features of that influence that present themselves at a glance to the common spectator.

I will deal first with his *direct* influence abroad.



Before anything else Lincoln represents to the World the spirit of national union against the spirit of local separatism, the right and duty of nations to fight disintegration in their midst. In that line of thought he embodies, secondly, the spirit of national greatness, which he seems to have made everywhere the spirit of his Century, and which is as yet a growing spirit. From it has sprung already after him more than one great nation and it seems to be brooding more than one great Empire from west to east. Thirdly, Lincoln's name brings at once to every mind, as he stood for Monroe's doctrine at its critical moment, the thought that but for him, with the breaking of the American Union, our continental system would now be divided between itself and rent perhaps in two different political poles. The fourth far-reaching effect of Lincoln's own personality is the magic of his name for all who have had, or who still have, to fight anywhere against Slavery.

I can give testimony of that inspiration for the Brazilian Abolitionists, and my friend, Señor Quesada although he only knows it by tradition, can give the same testimony for the Spanish and Hispano-American Abolitionists. Brazil and Cuba owe, especially, to Lincoln that a new great Power was not created in North America forty years ago, having African Slavery for its fighting spirit and as the principle of its national expansion. On the other hand, we, like the other American countries, owe to him that he made the leading country of our Continent a wholly free nation, settling in that way definitely the true character of American civilization.

These are the points I would at a glance indicate as Lincoln's *direct*, so to say, personal, influence beyond the borders of the United States. It is a deep one. As to his *indirect* influence, present and prospective, in History, it seems to me incalculable.

Thanks to him, you, the Americans, have no longer two national allegiances, the State and the Union, two fatherlands, but only one, and that the larger of the two. You do no longer contemplate the possibility of the greatest of national bodies dissolving by the right of secession into dozens or hundreds of corpuscles. Those who were imagining that, as in the Greek legend, the irreconcilable brothers would fight until killing each other, saw instead the tragedy end by the embrace of the twins of the Blue and the Gray.

The South, soon after the war was over, was seen counting anew the stars of the old flag to make sure that they were all there. Such a union could never have been forced upon Americans by conquest, and so the gigantic civil war only showed to the World, as nothing else could have shown, the indestructibility of your national cohesion. The universal certainty of that indestructibility which prevails since Lincoln is Lincoln's work and Lincoln's greatest achievement. He settled, so to say forever, your national destiny, he symbolizes your national good fortune, Lincoln's World Influence and the United States' World Influence are one and the same.

I will not attempt to measure such a mass of energy, of wealth, of labor, in a word, of human power. Could



you estimate President Roosevelt's World power? Even if you could, that would not be sufficient, you would have to estimate a larger sphere yet: that of American civilization in the present and in the future. "Add star upon star," Lincoln once said, "until their light shall shine upon five hundred millions of a free and happy people." That is the limit he traced in his own imagination to the greatness of your country, and those shall not be at all exaggerated proportions for what you call his World Influence.

I return, therefore, untouched to my friend, Mr. William Alden Smith, the great subject he gave me to treat before you to-night. It is too large, too wide, for me. I am sorry to disappoint you, yet I feel sure you will not complain of myself, but of your distinguished Representative who brought me here from so far, as for all failures in your expectations he is your natural, your elected scapegoat.

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