

December 18, 1929.

Dear Miss Tarbell:

I am very glad to send you my two volumes on Abraham Lincoln. They end with his inauguration, March 4, 1861. There will be two more volumes covering the period of his Presidency.

You are so thoroughly well informed that it would be useless for me to try to explain my method. I have not been writing personal biography, except in one or two chapters. I have been dealing, rather, with American politics, and have made my first volume a study of the political conditions and problems in association with which Lincoln made his growth as a public man.

The second volume is the one that I think will seem to you the more original in its construction. Lincoln's chances to be President, and therefore to render his immortal services to the country and to the world, were depending upon the political conditions of the year 1860; and for my purpose it is quite as important to describe the break in the Democratic ranks as to tell about the Chicago convention and the rise of the Republican party. Furthermore, we should have had no Lincoln (for the purposes of biography and history) but for the circumstances that prevented the nomination of Seward, and those that put Douglas and Breckinridge in the field as rivals. I have therefore made the second volume the story of one rounded year, namely, the last year of Buchanan's Administration.

The illustration scheme will be clear enough on its face. There are more than half a thousand pictures in these two volumes, and some of the cartoons have never been seen, while I have rescued others from complete obscurity.

I must apologize to you for the index, which was imperfectly made without my assistance or knowledge. It is being revised and will be, I hope, suitable in future editions. Your portrait is indexed, but various references to your work and quotations from your biography are not cited in the index. This is equally true of a number of other writers whose names ought to be duly found in the index. I could not have the corrections made in time for the first edition; but we are hoping that the demand may permit us to print the books again with a corrected index in the near future.

2. Miss Tarbell.

I should greatly like it if you should find these books worth while; and, of course, if you are impelled to say so in a note to me, after you have had an opportunity to really give them some attention, I should feel myself not only encouraged, but rewarded ! It is not always easy to keep my editorial work up and at the same time do a stunt like this one.

Believe me with great regard,

Sincerely yours,

Albert Shaw.

Miss Ida M. Tarbell
120 East 19th Street,
New York City.