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Mary Mann to Abraham Lincoln, Wednesday, April 20, 1864 (Reply to Lincoln's note of April 5)

Abraham Lincoln Papers at the Library of Congress. Transcribed and Annotated by the Lincoln Studies Center, Knox College. Galesburg, Illinois.

Mary Mann to Abraham Lincoln, Wednesday, April 20, 1864 (Reply to Lincoln's note of April 5)

From Mary Mann to Abraham Lincoln [With Endorsement by Lincoln]¹, April 20, 1864

Concord, Mass. April 20th

1864

My dear Sir,

It was wholly without my knowledge that my name was sent to you in connection with the petition of persons under eighteen in Concord -- praying you to free all slave children -- but I cannot regret it, since it has given me this precious note from your hand. I have been connected with some of the noblest most self-sacrificing & best informed women of the North, in endeavors to assist the suffering Freedmen, whose claims & touching aspirations for knowledge come nearer to my heart than those of any other earthly sufferers, and I assure you that there is no promise to us for the future welfare of our country which we value as we do the words for freedom wh occasionally fall from your lips -- for we consider its well-being inextricably interwoven with justice to the Slave. We often wish you could breath the atmosphere of N. England long enough to catch the spirit which would bring swift relief to every one of those long-suffering, hoping, trusting souls. I have always known many of the best colored people both in my own free State & in enslaved Cuba, & I love their natures, warm, loving, religious, patient.-- Thank you for your good words to the people of Maryland.² They were the best celebration we could have had for the 19th of April, a great day in Concord. We intend immediately to scatter fac-similes of your sweet words to the children like apple blossoms all over the Country -- and we look with more hope than ever for the day when perfect justice shall be decreed, wh-- shall make every able bodied colored man spring to the rescue of the nation which it is plain the white man alone cannot save. You who can hasten it must be the happiest of men, for in saving the colored man you will feel that you are doing equal service to the white man.

With the highest respect & affection -- I speak in the name of many--

Your friend,

Mary Mann.

[Endorsed on Envelope by Lincoln:]

Mrs Mann.

[Note 1 Mary Mann was the widow of Horace Mann (1796-1859), one of the leading advocates in the movement for education reform. Lincoln had received a petition from the children of Concord, Massachusetts that urged him to free all the slave children. The petition indicated that it was organized by Mrs. Mann and Lincoln wrote to her on April 5, 1864. See Concord, Massachusetts Children to Lincoln, [April, 1864] and Lincoln to Mary Mann, April 5, 1864.]

[Note 2 Lincoln addressed the Baltimore Sanitary Fair on April 18. A draft fragment of his speech is in this collection. For the complete text, see *Collected Works*, VII, 301-03.]

