Washington, D.C. July 21, 1866

My dear,

The more I examine the portrait of Mr. Lincoln which you were so kind as to present for the adornment of the Speaker's Room, the more I am struck with its excellence both as a likeness and a work of art. Our beloved but murdered President, as always seemed to me, had what may be called a flexible face, reflecting on its surface the deep feelings both so often struggled within him. I cannot tell at a glance when I met him, whether he had...
received bad news a while ago and was calm within. This flexibility of feature causes the slight difference observable in the many excellent portraits of him before the public. You have caught his expression when he was calm but grave, and the most casual observer can see that it is the face of one whose heart was full of kindness, even when his will was stern & inflexible in obeying the demands of Duty. The picture reminds me of him as he looked the evening before the Inauguration Ball of 1865, when the Rebel Armies were still in the field, & he spoke so sadly of the long years of bloody sacrifices of the Man, not the sacrifice of the means by which certain Providence had in store for us. You can imagine the more highly I appreciate & value it. Respectfully, Charles Coolidge