

INTERVIEW with Mr. Rosewater, of the Omaha Bee. - *March 21-1898*

Mr. Rosewater tells me that when Lincoln was nominated in 1860, he was living in Alabama. That he saw the contest between those who desired to remain in the Union and those who desired to go out. Heard many of the debates at Montgomery. Saw the first appearance of the Confederate cockade, which was made like the French cockade, save that the center was a cotton ball, a frill of red-white and blue ribbon surrounding it. From Alabama Mr. Rosewater went to Nashville to put up telegraph wires for the government, was there at the time of mob; saw Mayor on steps of court-house with a Derringer in each hand, attempting to quell the people. Came to Washington in September of 1862, was in War department at time of Antietam. Saw the gradual disgust of Lincoln with McClellan; says that Lincoln stood by McClellan to the date of his telegram that he could not move because the tongues of the cavalry horses were swollen; says that was the straw that broke the camel's back. Received telegrams during the entire battle of Fredericksburg on Sunday, the last day of the battle, says that he came to work about half past seven in the morning; at about 8 Mr. Lincoln appeared in carpet slippers; that he did not leave the room until 8 o'clock in the evening. Stanton, Major Eckert, Captain Fox and himself were the only ones present beside Lincoln. They followed the course of the battle in that little room almost as closely as Burnside was doing from his headquarters a ove Fredericksburg. (Locate Burnside's headquarters on that day.) They had nothing to eat until late when Stanton sent a pitcher across the street to a restaurant; it was brought back full of beer and with it some cheese and crackers, and this was the only refreshment that the little

company had. Mr. Rosewater says that in his judgment Lincoln was never the same man after that battle. That he felt he had pushed Burnside to it when he did not want to move; that he seemed to him older from that day.

Mr. R. explains his view of emancipation proclamation. It was not Mr. Lincoln's intention to free the slaves by proclamation. The document did not do that. The warning on September 22d, told the people of the South that if they did not lay down their arms in a hundred days, that he should be obliged to free their slaves; this was purely a war measure. In his address to Congress in December, Mr. Lincoln advocated gradual emancipation by purchase; when he issued the proclamation on January 1, 1863, it freed no slaves in the Border States, nor in those districts where arms had been laid down, nor in the District of Columbia. It simply confiscated slaves of the rebels and this was purely and simply a war measure.

In describing Lincoln's appearance, Mr. R. says, that he had the most wonderful eyes that he had ever seen; that they were remarkable because so luminous; that in a dark room they shown with a phosphorescent quality like the eyes of a Newfoundland dog in the dark. Thinks the way that Lincoln developed through the war is one of the most remarkable things in his case. Considered Stanton a very great man, one of his chief qualities was his ability to decide immediately what to do and what not to do; a man of much greater experience than Lincoln when he entered the War Department. Says, that apropos of the emancipation proclamation, in his judgment, the slaves themselves did not consider themselves freed; that on January 1, 1863, no colored man ~~was~~ came to the White House to thank Lincoln for what he had done.

Apropos to Lincoln's stories; says that he experienced a great shock at what seemed to him a flippancy of the President and his Cabinet. Barnum's Circus came to town (says that there was ^{also} a permanent circus ^{in Washington} at the same time) Tom Thumb was with Barnum; he drove in his royal carriage to see the President. The President and Cabinet spent a long time talking with them. This, to Mr. Rosewater's disgust, who said, Here the country is in the midst of the civil war, yet the heads of the government are amusing themselves with a miserable little dwarf from a common circus. Says he understands now that some such relaxation was necessary or they would have died.