

Senator John M. Palmer
See JUST LIFE, II, 185-6.

"Our great struggle," says Senator Palmer, "was to prevent Lincoln's nomination for the Vice Presidency. The Seward men were perfectly willing that he should go on the tail of the ticket. In fact, they seemed determined that he should be given the Vice Presidential nomination. We were not troubled so much by the antagonism of the Seward men as by the overtures they were constantly making to us. They literally overwhelmed us with kindness. Judge David Davis came to me in the Tremont House, greatly agitated at the way things were going. He said: 'Palmer, you must go with me at once to see the New Jersey delegation.' I asked what I could do. 'Well,' said he, 'there is Judge Hornblower, a grave and venerable judge, who is insisting that Lincoln shall be nominated for Vice President--and Seward for President. We must convince the judge of his mistake.' We went; I was introduced to Judge Hornblower, and we talked about the matter for sometime. Judge Hornblower praised Seward, but he was especially effusive in expressing his admiration for Lincoln. He thought that Seward was clearly entitled to first place, and that Lincoln's eminent merits entitled him to second place. I listened for sometime and then said: 'Judge Hornblower, you may nominate Mr. Lincoln for Vice President, if you please; but I want you to understand that there are 40,000 Democrats in Illinois who will support this ticket if you give them an opportunity; but we are not Whigs, and we never expect to be Whigs. We will never consent to support two old Whigs on this ticket. We are willing to vote for Mr. Lincoln with a Democrat on the ticket; but we will not consent to vote for two old Whigs.' I have seldom seen Judge Hornblower's

indignation equalled. Turning to Judge Davis he said: 'Judge Davis, is it possible that party spirit so prevails in Illinois that Judge Palmer properly represents public opinion?' 'Oh,' said Davis, affecting some distress at what I had said; 'oh, my God, Judge, you can't account for the conduct of these old Loco-focos. Will they do as Palmer says? Certainly. There are 40,000 of them, and, as Palmer says, not a d---d one of them will vote for two Whigs.' We left Hornblower in a towering rage. When we were back at the Tremont House I said: 'Davis, you are an infernal rascal to sit there and hear Hornblower berate me as he did. You really seemed to encourage him.' Judge Davis said nothing, but chuckled as if he greatly enjoyed the joke. This incident is illustrative of the kind of work we had to do. We were compelled to resort to this argument, - that the old Democrats then ready to affiliate with the Republican party would not tolerate two Whigs on the ticket - in order to break up the movement to nominate Lincoln for Vice President. The Seward men recognized in Lincoln their most formidable rival, and that was why they wished to get him out of the way by giving him second place on the ticket. #

Interview with Senator Palmer made for this Magazine.