UNTOLD HISTORY.

With a New and Authentic Story About Lincoln and Stanton.

In an interesting article entitled "Washington in Lincoln's Time," in the October *Century*, the writer, speaking of the members of the cabinet, says:

"Lincoln appeared to have had not only a great respect for Secretary Stanton's abilities, but a certain diffidence about any attempt to thwart the secretary in any way."

An old and well known citizen of St. Louis, whose attention was called to this statement by a representative of the Sunday *Post-Dispatch*, said:

"I can confirm it, to my entire satisfaction, if not to yours; and if you are willing to listen, I will tell a true story.

"Some ten years ago, while making a brief visit to Old Point Comfort I met the late Isaac R. Diller. Though it was not our first meeting, I had known him well by reputation during my long residence in Illinois. He was then living in Springfield, prominent in social and business circles there, and as chairman of the democratic state central committee, known to all the leading politicians of both parties from Cairo to Chicago. He was United States consul at Bremen under Buchanan's administration, and held the same position at Florence during a part at least of Cleveland's first term. He was a gentleman in every sense of the word, and his character for honor, honesty and truthfulness has never, to my knowledge, been questioned. It is really his story, and not mine, that I am to tell, and I shall use his own words as nearly as memory serves.

"'I was, as you know,' said Mr. Diller, 'an old-time resident of Springfield, when it was smaller than it is now, and knew nearly everybody in it—Mr. Lincoln among the rest, of course. We were near neighbors and personal friends, though always on opposite sides in politics. My appointment to Bremen took me away early in 1857, and I missed the great campaign which ended in the election of Mr. Lincoln. As soon as possible after his inauguration in March, 1861, I forwarded my resignation to the state department, and made preparations for return to America. To my great surprise I received a letter from Secretary Seward, saying that the resignation had been duly received and communicated to the president, but that he had declined to accept it, and instructed him (Seward) to notify me of his desire that I should retain the office I held. I again wrote to the department expressing my high appreciation of this evidence of the president's confidence in and esteem for me; but at the same time saying that business affairs made my return home imperative, and that I could only retain the office until my successor arrived.

"I reached New York in the autumn of '61, and after short visits elsewhere went with my wife to Washington, where we remained for most of the time during the war. As soon as convenient I paid my respects to Mr. Lincoln, who gave me the cordial reception he always extended to his old friends from Illinois. He knew I was no office-seeker, for myself or others, and he seemed to be more than glad to see some one to whom he did not have to talk politics or patronage. When I took leave he urged me so strongly to call again and often, that I soon got into the habit of dropping into the White House every few days, and having a friendly chat with the president.

"'During the climax of Pope's disastrous campaign in 1862 the excitement in Washington was intense among all classes, and greatly increased when straggl-

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ers from the retreating army began to pour into the city. The air was full of the worst rumors, and hoping to get some definite news from the front, I went over one evening to the White House, where I had not been for some little time. The servants had instructions to admit me whenever I came, so I had no difficulty on that score. I found Mrs. Lincoln in the east room alone, walking backward and forward, wringing her hands and weeping. I consoled her as best I could, and then went on up stairs to the president's private office, where I found him alone, and in more depressed spirits than I had ever seen him before. I asked him for the latest news. "Bad enough," said he, "and likely to be worse. Pope has been whipped, the army is falling back on Washington in more or less disorder, the enemy is advancing and I should not be surprised if we had to get out of here soon." After a short interval of silence he inquired how things looked in the city, and I told him the unpleasant truth about it. He listened attentively, was silent for a little while, and then said very earnestly: "Diller, what do you think I had better do?" Astonished at such a question from him to me, I was dumb for a moment. Then I replied, "well, Mr. President, I can only say that the soldiers I have talked to seem to have the greatest confidence in McClellan, and declare that with him in command of the army they can drive the rebels back even now. Why not re-appoint McClellan? I don't see that there is anything else you can do as matters stand now." Mr. Lincoln evidently thought so himself, for he said at once: "Diller, I believe you are right; but how can I fix it up with Stanton? You know how he hates McClellan." I replied very quickly and emphatically: "Mr. President, by virtue of your office, as you know, you are commander-in-chief of the army and navy. Stanton is merely your Secretary of War, whose business it is to obey your orders." "You are right, Diller, of course; and if you will walk over with me I will go and see Stanton about it now." I did walk over with him, and leaving him at the door of the War office, went home—and I was not surprised to hear the newsboys next morning crying: "McClellan commanding the army again!"

"This is history, but history that will probably never be written. You can make your own comments."—St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*.

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