

THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION.

The First Draft—Mr. Blair's and Mr. Seward's Objections to it—the Last Sentence Supplied by Mr. Chase.

A recent allusion in the *Independent* to the fact that Mr. Secretary Chase's pen supplied the concluding sentence of the Emancipation Proclamation has been received with a surprise indicating a less general knowledge on the subject than might have been expected. When the final draft of the Proclamation was presented by the President to the Cabinet, it closed with a paragraph stating that the slaves if liberated, would be received into the armed service of the United States. Mr. Chase objected to the appearance of a document of such momentous importance without one word beyond the dry phrases necessary to convey its meaning, and finally proposed that there be added to the President's draft the following sentence:—

"And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the Constitution, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind, and the gracious favor of Almighty God."

Mr. Lincoln adopted the sentence as Mr. Chase wrote it, only interlining after the word "Constitution," the words "upon military necessity," and in that form the Proclamation went to the world, and history. The President originally resolved upon the policy of issuing this Proclamation in the summer of 1862. As he has expressed it himself, everything was going wrong; we seemed to have put forth about our utmost effort; and he really did not know what more to do, unless he did this. Accordingly, he prepared the preliminary proclamation, nearly in the form in which it subsequently appeared, called the Cabinet together, and read it to them.

Mr. Montgomery Blair was startled. "If you issue that Proclamation, Mr. President," he exclaimed, "you will lose every one of the fall elections."

Mr. Seward, on the other hand, said: "I approve of it, Mr. President, just as it stands. I approve of it in principle, and I approve the policy of issuing it. I only object to the time. Send it out now, on the heels of our late disasters, and it will be construed as the convulsive struggle of a drowning man. To give it proper weight, you should reserve it all till after some victory."

The President assented to Mr. Seward's view, and it was withheld till the fall, when it was issued almost precisely as originally prepared. The one to which Mr. Chase applied the concluding sentence was the final Proclamation issued on the subsequent 1st of January.