



MR. LINCOLN IN 1857.

The original of this picture is an ambrotype owned by C. F. Gunther of Chicago, who bought it from W. H. Somers of El Cajon, California. Mr. Somers bought the original directly from the artist, a Mr. Alschuler of Urbana, Illinois. In a recent letter he explains why he bought the picture: "At the time I was clerk of the circuit court, and was about as well acquainted with Mr. Lincoln as with most of the forty-odd lawyers who practised law in the circuit. Of course I was then quite a young man, and the fall term of 1857 was my first term as clerk. On the opening day of court, which was always an interesting occasion, largely because we were curious to see what attorneys from a distance were in attendance, while sitting at my desk and watching the lawyers take their places within the bar of the court-room, I observed that Mr. Lincoln was among them; and as I looked in his direction, he arose from his seat, and came forward and gave me a cordial hand-shake, accompanying the action with words of congratulation on my election. I mention this fact because the conduct of Mr. Lincoln was so in contrast with that of the other members of the bar that it touched me deeply, and made me, ever afterwards, his steadfast friend."

Mr. J. O. Cunningham, who was present when the picture was taken, writes us as follows of the circumstances: "One morning I was in the gallery of Mr. Alschuler, when Mr. Lincoln came into the room and said he had been informed that he (Alschuler) wished him to sit for a picture. Alschuler said he had sent such a message to Mr. Lincoln, but he could not take the picture in that coat (referring to a lined duster in which Mr. Lincoln was clad), and asked if he had not a dark coat in which he could sit. Mr. Lincoln said he had not; that this was the only coat he had brought with him from his home. Alschuler said he could wear his coat, and gave it to Mr. Lincoln, who pulled off the duster and put on the artist's coat. Alschuler was a very short man, with short arms, but with a body nearly as large as the body of Mr. Lincoln. The arms of the latter extended through the sleeves of the coat of Alschuler a quarter of a yard, making him quite ludicrous, at which he (Lincoln) laughed immoderately, and sat down for the picture to be taken with an effort at being sober enough for the occasion. The lips in the picture show this."