

# Rice Profs Note Two Centennials

By MALCOLM BUTLER

Tuesday evening two capable representatives of the Rice History Department, Dr. Francis L. Loewenheim and Dr. Frank A. Vandiver, presented a revolutionary twin bill to an overflow crowd in Fondren Lecture Lounge.

Both professed a desire to celebrate an occasion of profound importance to the Nineteenth Century. Those who had escaped advance billing, understandably unnerved by such open agreement among historians, were reassured by the announcement that Drs. Vandiver and Loewenheim had in mind different events.

**ABRAHAM LINCOLN** obligingly chose to issue the Emancipation Proclamation on the same date that Otto von Bismarck accepted appointment as Minister-President of Prussia.

Introductions by Dr. Donald MacKenzie opened an evening which proved both enjoyable to the curious and satisfying to the concerned. Dr. Vandiver, Rice's Champion of Lost Causes (the Confederacy), led off. After predictably venting a little Southern steam, he moved on to find the Emancipation Proclamation a success as an added war aim to bolster sagging Northern morale, as a plan for reconstruction, and as a propaganda piece to discourage British recognition.

**STEPPING** completely out of his characteristic role as a "foot-noter of futility," Vandiver ended his presentation with a sincere tribute to Lincoln's humanitarian ideals.

Dr. Loewenheim seemed to address his talk more to the concerned. After putting Bismarck's accession to power in the proper historical perspective, he went on to draw a vivid picture of the stymied Kaiser Wilhelm standing back to allow Bismarck to move beyond the Constitution and finally harness surging liberalism to the cause of German nationalism. He also deplored the narrow connotations of brutality imposed on nationalism by "blood and iron."

**BOTH VANDIVER** and Loewenheim sparkled in the short open discussion that followed. Loewenheim commented on the "Lincoln Myth" which his "senior colleague" seemed to have accepted; Vandiver protested at being attacked with "blood and irony."

Doubtless many of the listeners went home wondering just how future historians would commemorate the night on which Abraham Lincoln was granted diplomatic recognition by Southern history.