

success the operations of the cavalry column under Generals Stoneman, Burbridge, and Gillem, that penetrated into southwest Virginia and paralyzed the efforts of the enemy to disturb the peace and safety of east Tennessee. Instead of being put on the defensive, we have at all points assumed the bold offensive, and completely thwarted the designs of the enemies of our country.

By Order of Major General,

W. T. SHERMAN.

VII

Enthusiasm over the capture of Savannah and the victory of Nashville—Lee's sorrow—The terms to Johnston—Stanton's motives in the controversy—Difficulties of reconstruction—Ordered to command the Division of the Mississippi at St. Louis—Letter of General Cox on negro suffrage—Stanton's interference with army discipline—John Sherman's views on reconstruction—General Sherman on the submission of the Southern people—Effect of the war on the ideas of leading capitalists—The new oath of allegiance—Grant's report—The march north from Savannah—Re-election of Senator Sherman—Dangerous policy of Sumner and Stevens—The burning of Columbia—Grant's political ambition—Letter from Superintendent Boyd

THE enthusiasm created in the North by the capture of Savannah and the victory at Nashville occasioned much talk of General Sherman's promotion, and even some political rumors concerning the use of his name in future elections. On Jan. 22, 1865, he writes from Savannah, touching upon these rumors.

I start to-day for the advance of my army at Pocatigo, but we have had such storms and rains that the whole country is under water, but we will be off as soon as possible. No one is more alive to the importance of time than I am.

I wrote you that I deem it unwise to make another Lieutenant-General, or to create the rank of General. Let the law stand as now. I will accept no commission that would tend to create a rivalry with Grant. I want him to hold what he has earned and got. I have all the rank I want. . . .

If you ever hear anybody use my name in connection with a political office, tell them you know me well enough

to assure them that I would be offended by such association. I would rather be an engineer of a railroad, than President of the United States, or any political officer. Of military titles I have now the maximum, and it makes no difference whether that be Major-General or Marshal. It means the same thing. I have commanded one hundred thousand men in battle, and on the march, successfully and without confusion, and that is enough for reputation. Next, I want rest and peace, and they can only be had through war. You will hear of me, but not from me for some time.

Affectionately your brother,
W. T. SHERMAN.

The next letter from General Sherman is a short and hurried one of April 6th from Goldsboro after he had completed the last and most difficult part of his march; i.e. 425 miles from Savannah to Goldsboro, through marshy land, during much rainy weather, following Johnston's retreating army, and with five large navigable rivers, with their bridges burned, to cross. He says:—

Railroads work well, our supplies are well up, and we shall march next Monday, April 10. The next two months will demonstrate whether we can manoeuvre Lee out of Richmond and whip him in open battle.

In a note of April 11th, John Sherman, writing from Ohio, says of Lee's surrender: "The news from Grant is so glorious that the whole country is wild with joy."

The terms of General Johnston's surrender, in which General Sherman believed he was fulfilling Mr. Lincoln's instructions, were disapproved at Washington, General Grant was sent to supersede him in command, and General Halleck issued orders to Sherman's generals

"to pay no regard to any truce or order of General Sherman's."¹ These harsh measures, which General Sherman believed to be quite unnecessary, inasmuch as the terms of surrender awaited the approval of authority at Washington before they could be acted upon, deeply wounded him, as the following letters show.

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION
OF THE MISSISSIPPI,
AT SEA, April 8, 1865. Steamer *Russia*.

Dear Brother: We are now running in from Cape Henry Light and expect to reach Old Point by ten o'clock to-night. The ship vibrates so I can hardly write, but I must give you a few items. I have been to Savannah, Charleston, Wilmington, and Morehead City, closing up certain matters, whilst my army is marching up from Raleigh to Richmond. I will look for the advance at City Point by the 11th, and hope we will be ordered on to Washington to be mustered out. The South is whipped and submissive, and if any statesmanship is displayed will be the last part of our country to rebel again. Thirty thousand surrendered at Goldsboro, and other scattered bands are surrendering at Tallahassee, Macon, Augusta, and different posts, that will swell the number to 50,000. We might as well have had Taylor's army in Alabama, and Smith's in Texas, but of that hereafter. On my way up the coast I met the New York papers of the 24th and 28th, which were dead against me. Of course I expected that, but I did not expect Halleck and Stanton. They *suppressed* everything, save parts that by context with matters I never saw made a plausible case, but when I make my official report of the whole you will appreciate the game they have attempted. I met Mr. Chase at Morehead City, and even he was sur-

¹ See Memoirs of General W. T. Sherman.

prised to learn what I knew and told him, and I have from him the clue to the whole, which I must suppress for the time being.

Grant at Raleigh got his eyes opened also. I expect to spend the summer in Ohio, and we can discuss everything with my books and records before you; but in the meantime do not commit yourself to any plan of reconstruction, but let Stanton try his hand and watch the consequences. My belief is that to force the enfranchised negroes, as "loyal" voters at the South, will produce new riot and war, and I fear Sumner, Wilson, and men of that school will force it on the Government or prolong the war *ad infinitum*. My army won't fight in that war. The slaves are free, but are not yet voters. The time has not yet come. Such a course will alienate a strength your party cannot spare. Don't fear me turning politician. Nothing changes my unalterable resolution, and you may so announce it. . . .

Yours,

W. T. SHERMAN.

John Sherman spent the spring of 1865 in Ohio, and was there when he heard of his brother's arrangement with General Johnston. He writes of this in the two following letters.

MANSFIELD, OHIO, May 2, 1865.

My Dear Brother: Since my return home I have been constantly and often painfully engaged. I spoke at a general jubilee at Columbus on the day of Mr. Lincoln's assassination. This tragic event suspended business, and cast a general gloom over all things. . . .

The universal topic of conversation and of discussion in the newspapers was your arrangement with Johnston, and it is fair to say it was generally disapproved. The

stipulation to secure to the rebels their property was construed to mean slaves, — an impossible condition after we had induced them to enter our service by promise of freedom. It was felt also that to give them the benefit of their state organizations with all their political power would be unjust to those who have been friendly to us, especially in the border States, and would inevitably lead to a renewal of the war. But while the arrangement was disapproved, the manner in which Stanton and Halleck treated it, and especially the gross and damnable perversions of many of the papers and their arraignment of your motives, was more severely condemned than your arrangement. The conduct of Grant is deserving of the highest praise. I shall always feel grateful to him. What you were reported to have said about the effect of a single mistake proved literally true. For a time, you lost all the popularity gained by your achievements. But now the reaction has commenced, and you find some defenders, but many more to denounce the base and malicious conduct of a gang of envious scamps, who seized upon this matter as a pretext for calumny. What to make of Stanton, I don't know. I was beyond measure surprised at his conduct. He telegraphs me that he has written me in full. I still think he only gave away to passion, and not to envy or malice. If you have time, I hope to have some explanation from you. I suppose the war is about over, and you will, I trust, come to Ohio.

Affectionately,

JOHN SHERMAN.

MANSFIELD, OHIO, May 16, 1865.

Dear Brother: Your letter of the 8th is received this morning, and at the same moment I hear through K. W.

that you will be in Lancaster to-day. I wrote you some days ago about public opinion as to your arrangement with Johnston, but presume you did not get it. It is now manifest that many high officials seized upon that arrangement to ruin you, and you will not be wise if you allow them to do it. Especially don't ever think of resigning. Your position is too high and valuable to be drawn from it by temporary hostile political power. Remember the case of Scott after the Mexican War. The mystery to me is that Stanton acted as he did. If his motive was malicious, he is certainly the worst devil I ever read of. He manifested and assumed the intensest kindness for you, and certainly showed it to me. I still think that with him it was mere anger,—the explosion of a very bad temper,—and if so, I sincerely trust no breach will be made. With Halleck I was not disappointed. Has Johnson any enmity to you? I have not seen him since his elevation, and have feared he was at the bottom of the business. It is also manifest to me, that the bitter hostility shown you springs partly from political jealousy,—a fear of the future. Much of this is aimed at me. I have observed that every man who is opposed to me is eager to assail you, while my personal friends, even among the Radicals, have defended you. . . . Chase, you know, is in favor of negro suffrage, and Jay and Henry Cooke are old Republicans, yet they have uniformly, in public and in social circles, sustained you. So with the newspapers. The feeling has so subsided and reacted that you can afford to be calm and cautious. Grant is a jewel. I hope two things,—that you will have no controversy with him, and never resign.

It was my purpose to go to-morrow to Washington, but I will now delay it until Friday or Saturday. I

suppose you will soon return to Washington. I may be there some days, and hope to meet you there. . . .

Now as to your arrangement with Johnston. I think the judgment of unprejudiced men has settled upon the conviction that your terms were too liberal. The recognition of the rebel state organizations, now completely in the hands of the worst men of the South, will not answer. They could perpetuate their sway, and we should inevitably have new difficulties. Lincoln first recognized the Legislature of Virginia, but after full reflection abandoned it. Why did not Stanton and Halleck denounce Lincoln? And why suppress the fact that you were acting in accordance with that precedent? Still I think it was not advisable to recognize the state officials. In my opinion, it would have been wise for you to have insisted upon the recognition of the emancipation proclamation, at least until the courts passed upon it. It would be very wrong to let these rebels enjoy again the unpaid labor of their slaves. Both these questions are past.

As to negro suffrage, I admit the negroes are not intelligent enough to vote, but some one must vote their political representation in the States where they live, and their representation is increased by their being free. Who shall exercise this political power? Shall the rebels do so? If yes, will they not now in effect restore slavery?

Will they not oppress the negroes? Is it not hard to turn these negroes over to the laws made by the very men who endeavored to overthrow the Government? After all, how much more ignorant are these slaves than the uneducated white people down South? I assure you, that while I will not commit myself on these matters, I feel sorely troubled about them, and would be glad to talk with you in respect to them. . . .

Affectionately yours,

JOHN SHERMAN.

The letters of the years following the war treat entirely of the difficulties of reconstruction. John Sherman, while firmly attached to the Republican party, endeavored through all these troubles to be moderate and conciliatory. But he believed it necessary to extend suffrage to the negroes, and was intensely opposed to Mr. Johnson and his policies. General Sherman, on the other hand, never acknowledged allegiance to any party, and resented all appearance of such allegiance. He opposed universal suffrage, and believed that extending it to negroes was but adding to an existing evil.

After the Grand Review at Washington, May 24, 1865, General Sherman was ordered to St. Louis to command the Military Division of the Mississippi, and writes from there on Aug. 3, 1865.

Cox's letter on the subject of negro suffrage is a new bombshell in your camp. He has thought for himself, and come to a conclusion different from the new creed of the East, and will in my judgment be sat upon and badgered, but he is as near right as he can get. Negro equality will lead to endless strife, and to remove and separate the races will be a big job; so any way we approach the subject it is full of difficulty. But it is better to study the case and adapt measures to it, than to lay down the theory or force facts to meet it. . . .

I think I will make that trip,¹ and that is all this year. I did think of coming to Detroit to see Ord, but am bothered by people in travelling so much that I prefer to be quiet till the people run after new gods. In a short time new issues will drop us out of memory.

Affectionately,

W. T. SHERMAN.

¹ To the West.

And again, after a few days, from Ohio, where he passed part of that summer, he writes:—

LANCASTER, OHIO, Aug. 9, 1865.

Dear Brother: After I get fixed in St. Louis, I will cast about for some chance to be independent of our Government, for I feel there is a desire to be rid of me. Stanton, in Grant's absence, has ordered one of my chief staff-officers away from me, Beckwith, without as much as "by your leave." Now this was never done save by Jeff Davis when he was Secretary of War, for orders to the army officers always should go by command of the commander-in-chief, but Stanton orders about as though it was his lawful prerogative. I would resist publicly, but don't want to bring on another controversy. Of course, if my staff-officers are taken away without my being consulted, they will feel little dependence on me, and my influence will subside. But that is a small matter compared with turning the army into a machine auxiliary to politics. If the War Department is to give orders direct to the army below us and not through us, you can see that we are dissolved from all control, responsibility, or interest. The true way is for the War Department to indicate to us what the Administration wants done, and then hold us responsible for the means used. But if the Secretary handles the army behind us, how can we take an interest? My own opinion is the Administration will either break itself down or drive us out. Grant is so anxious for harmony that he will not interfere until it is too late, when he will find somebody else commands instead of him.

I think the agitation of the suffrage question now before the people has got far enough advanced to show how they (the negroes) can make a living, and will give

trouble, but we hope still that even that question will be allowed to rest until the forms and shapes of the States South are adjusted. . . . I fear you will all have a burden to carry in the form of Military Governments South, which are awkward and expensive. My command¹ only embraces Arkansas, and there things seem quiet, though I know but little of the actual state of affairs. In no other point of my command do these questions arise.

Yours affectionately,
W. T. SHERMAN.

And a few days later he writes from St. Louis:—

We cannot keep the South out long, and it is a physical impossibility for us to guard the entire South by armies; nor can we change opinions by force; nor can the President pass on the merits of all pardons, but must delegate it, when the power will be corrupted or gradually embrace all exempts, for the class exempted is the vital part of the South. I would have used it and had it subservient to the uses of Government. The poor whites and negroes of the South have not the intelligence to fill the offices of governors, clerks, judges, etc., etc., and for some time the marching of state Governments must be controlled by the same class of whites as went into the Rebellion against us. . . .

John Sherman passed the summer of 1865 in Mansfield, Ohio, from whence he writes on August 13th, concerning the autumn elections:—

¹ General Orders No. 118 of June 27, 1865, divided the whole country into nineteen departments and five military divisions, the second of which was the military division of the "Mississippi," afterwards changed to "Missouri." This division embraced the Departments of the Ohio, Missouri, and Arkansas, and was to be commanded by General Sherman, with headquarters at St. Louis.

MANSFIELD, OHIO,
Aug. 13, 1865.

Dear Brother:

The Press of Ohio have generally denounced the combination in Washington against me, and the nominations now being made are generally friendly. My conviction is that I shall be elected, but still the contest will be bitter and unpleasant, and all political movements are proverbially uncertain. Men that I have heaped favors upon desert me. I have had an unusual share of good luck, and but for the name of the thing would cheerfully retire. My interests would be greatly advanced by doing so. I have now tempting offers from large corporations able to pay, but I prefer to fight this contest out and then settle myself in some permanent home.

Affectionately yours,
JOHN SHERMAN.

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION
OF THE MISSISSIPPI,
ST. LOUIS, MO., Sept. 21, 1865.

Dear Brother: I got your letters by Mr. Kinneard, and spent a whole day with him and his party,¹ first in a steamboat going up and down the river, then in carriages, and finally at a banquet. The whole party seemed much pleased with the courtesies shown them, and to me were sufficiently complimentary. General Grant was here also, and they expressed themselves more than usually pleased at the opportunity to see us

¹ A party of Englishmen with letters of introduction from John Sherman.

together. In Europe they are settling down to the conviction that Grant and I accomplished the military problem, and now they look to you to bring order, system, and prosperity out of the wreck. I am well satisfied at the course things are taking. No matter what change we may desire in the feelings and thoughts of people South, we cannot accomplish it by force. Nor can we afford to maintain there an army large enough to hold them in subjugation. All we can, or should, attempt is to give them rope, to develop in an honest way if possible, preserving in reserve enough military power to check any excesses if they attempt any. But I know they will not attempt any, and you may look for outbreaks in Ohio quicker than in Georgia or Mississippi. You hardly yet realize how completely this country has been devastated, and how completely humbled the man of the South is. Of course editors and talkers may express opinions we don't like, but they will take good care not to reduce those opinions to acts.

Affectionately,

W. T. SHERMAN.

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION
OF THE MISSISSIPPI,
ST. LOUIS, NOV. 4, 1865.

Dear Brother: Ever since my return from my trip in Iowa, Nebraska, and Kansas, I have been so busy that I have neglected to write to you. We are now most comfortable in our new house, and I am settling down into a kind of routine that looks like old banking times. I see a great many people, and get any quantity of letters with all sorts of invitations, but I decline all save a few here in the city. I think I will go to see Henry Sherman¹ at his commencement at Dartmouth next spring,

¹ His eldest brother's elder son.

and that will carry me to Boston, where I expect to be besieged. Strange to say, I receive more strong feeling of favor from that quarter than any other, spite the attempt made to put me in antagonism to their special hobbies. I shall not go near Washington this year, nor take part in the reorganization of the new army until ordered to do so officially. I have the report for the Committee on the conduct of the war nearly done, and will send it by a staff-officer to Mr. Wade before the meeting of Congress.

It will contain much detailed and original matter which has never seen the light, and will make the great campaigns as clear as possible, being composed wholly of letters which passed at the time between me and all the officers above and below me. It is more voluminous than I intended, and I will curtail it all I can, but as it is now it is very interesting. I will also accompany it with a map which is very valuable, and I want it engraved on metal. I know Congress will appropriate for proper maps, and not insult us with such lithographs as have heretofore been customary. I may have to get you to help me in this, as I have expended vast labor on this map and want it done *right*.

I notice that foreigners are very anxious to see me, and all who come here come to call. I shall be here all winter, and if you want anything I can do it. I hope you are sure of your re-election. I have many inquiries as to your prospects, and cannot answer them. I think you have more influence and reputation out of Ohio than any man of the State. . . . You observe that Mr. Johnson is drifting toward my terms to Johnston. He cannot help it, for there is no other solution. Any plan will have objections, but that least of all.

Affectionately,

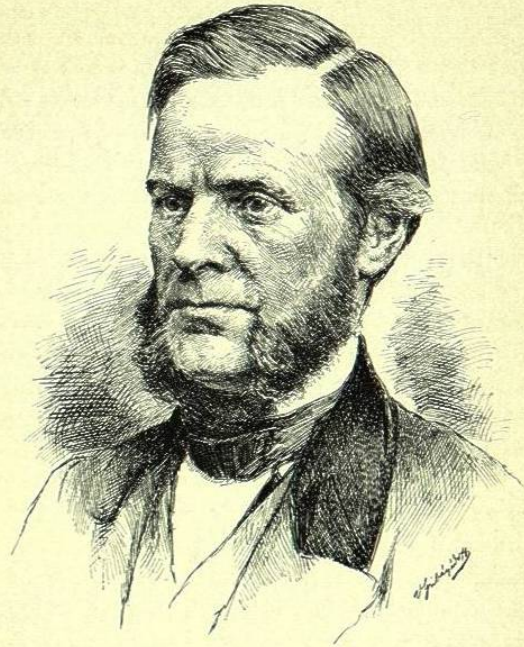
W. T. SHERMAN.

John Sherman, having returned to Washington for the winter, writes from there:—

UNITED STATES SENATE CHAMBER,
WASHINGTON, NOV. 10, 1865.

Dear Brother: Your note of the 4th is received. I am glad to hear you are settled, and from all accounts delightfully. You deserve quiet and repose after five years of change and labor. When in New York the other day, I found that party of English capitalists were delighted with their visit with you, and seemed especially polite to me on that account. I got for two of them Bowman and Nichols' works,¹ which they wanted to take home. But for my political employment I could have received from them very lucrative employment in the prosecution of their vast railroad schemes. Even as it is, if they, within six months, show their ability to execute their plans, I will identify myself much more with them. The truth is, the close of the war with our resources unimpaired gives an elevation, a scope to the ideas of leading capitalists, far higher than anything ever undertaken in this country before. They talk of millions as confidently as formerly of thousands. No doubt the contraction that must soon come will explode merely visionary schemes, but many vast undertakings will be executed. Among them will be the Pacific R. R. and extensive iron works, like some in England. Our manufactures are yet in their infancy, but soon I expect to see, under the stimulus of a great demand and the protection of our tariff, locomotive and machine shops worthy of the name. I do not fear, whatever may be the result of the senatorial election, but I can find enough to do, and without lowering the position I have occupied. As for the chances, from all the information I can gather,

¹ Lives of General Sherman.



affectionately yours
John Sherman