

army and Washington, bearing slanders to induce his removal before he took Vicksburg; in Chattanooga, when the soldiers were stealing the corn of the starving mules to satisfy their own hunger; at Nashville, when he was ordered to the "forlorn hope" to command the army of the Potomac, so often defeated — and yet I never saw him more troubled than since he has been in Washington, and been compelled to read himself a "sneak and deceiver," based on reports of four of the Cabinet, and apparently with your knowledge. If this political atmosphere can disturb the equanimity of one so guarded and so prudent as he is, what will be the result with one so careless, so outspoken as I am? Therefore, with my consent, Washington never.

As to the Secretary of War, his office is twofold. As Cabinet officer he should not be there without your hearty, cheerful consent, and I believe that is the judgment and opinion of every fair-minded man. As the holder of a civil office, having the supervision of monies appropriated by Congress, and of contracts for army supplies, I do think Congress, or the Senate by delegation from Congress, has a lawful right to be consulted. At all events, I would not risk a suit or contest on that phase of the question. The Law of Congress of March 2, 1867, prescribing the manner in which orders and instructions relating to "Military Movements" shall reach the army gives you, as Constitutional Commander-in-Chief, the very power you want to exercise, and enables you to prevent the Secretary from making any such orders and instructions, and consequently he cannot control the army, but is limited and restricted to a duty that an auditor of the Treasury could perform. You certainly can afford to await the result. The executive power is not weakened, but, rather, strengthened. Surely

he is not such an obstruction as would warrant violence or even a show of force which could produce the very reaction and clamor that he hopes for, to save him from the absurdity of holding an empty office "for the safety of the country."

With great respect,

Yours truly,

W. T. SHERMAN.

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION
OF THE MISSOURI,
ST. LOUIS, Mo., Feb. 14, 1868.

TO THE PRESIDENT:

Dear Sir: It is hard for me to conceive you would purposely do me an unkindness, unless under the pressure of a sense of public duty, or because you do not believe me sincere.

I was in hopes, since my letter to you of the 31st of January, that you had concluded to pass over that purpose of yours, expressed more than once in conversation, to organize a new command for me in the East, with headquarters in Washington; but a telegram from General Grant of yesterday says that "the order was issued ordering you" (me) "to Atlantic division"; and the newspapers of this morning contain the same information, with the addition that I have been nominated as "Brevet General." I have telegraphed to my own brother in the Senate to oppose my confirmation, on the ground that the two higher grades in the army ought not to be complicated with brevets, and I trust you will conceive my motives aright. If I could see my way clear to maintain my family, I should not hesitate a moment to resign my present commission and seek some business wherein I would be free from those unhappy complica-

tions that seem to be closing about me, spite of my earnest efforts to avoid them; but necessity ties my hands, and I must submit with the best grace I can, till I make other arrangements.

In Washington are already the headquarters of a department, and of the army itself, and it is hard for me to see wherein I can render military service there. Any staff-officer with the rank of Major could surely fill any gap left between those two military offices; and by being placed in Washington I shall be universally construed as a rival to the General-in-Chief, a position damaging to me in the highest degree. Our relations have always been most confidential and friendly, and if, unhappily, any cloud of difficulty should arise between us, my sense of personal dignity and duty would leave me no alternative but resignation. For this I am not yet prepared, but I shall proceed to arrange for it as rapidly as possible, that when the time does come (as it surely will if this plan is carried into effect), I may act promptly.

Inasmuch as the order is now issued, I cannot expect a full revocation of it, but I beg the privilege of taking post at New York, or any point you may name within the new military division other than Washington.

This privilege is generally granted to all military commanders, and I see no good reasons why I, too, may not ask for it; and this simple concession, involving no public interest, will much soften the blow which, right or wrong, I construe as one of the hardest I have sustained in a life somewhat checkered with adversity.

With great respect, yours truly,

(Signed) W. T. SHERMAN,
Lieutenant-General.

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSOURI,
ST. LOUIS, Feb. 14, 1868.

Dear Brother:

I am again in the midst of trouble, occasioned by a telegram from Grant saying that the order is out for me to come to the command of the military division of the Atlantic Headquarters at Washington. The President repeatedly asked me to accept of some such position, but I thought I had fought it off successfully, though he again and again reverted to it.

Now, it seems, he has ordered it, and it is full of trouble for me. I wrote him one or two letters in Washington which I thought positive enough, but have now written another, and if it fails in its object I might as well cast about for new employment. The result would be certain conflict resulting in Grant's violent deposition, mine, or the President's.

There is not room on board of one ship for more than one captain.

If Grant intends to run for President I should be willing to come on, because my duties would then be so clearly defined that I think I could steer clear of the breakers,—but now it would be impossible. The President would make use of me to beget violence, a condition of things that ought not to exist now.

He has no right to use us for such purposes, though he is Commander-in-Chief. I did suppose his passage with Grant would end there, but now it seems he will fight him as he has been doing Congress. I don't object if he does so himself and don't rope me in. . . .

If the President forces me into a false position out of seeming favor, I must defend myself. It is mortifying, but none the less inevitable.

Affectionately,
W. T. SHERMAN.

[TELEGRAM.]

WASHINGTON, Feb. 14, 1868,
FROM ST. LOUIS, Feb. 14, 1868.

TO GENERAL U. S. GRANT,
Commander U. S. Army:

Your despatch informing me that the order for the Atlantic Division was issued, and that I was assigned to its command, is received.

I was in hopes I had escaped the danger, and now, were I prepared, should resign on the spot, as it requires no foresight to predict such must be the inevitable result in the end.

I will make one more desperate effort by mail, which please await.

(Signed) W. T. SHERMAN,
Lieutenant-General.

[TELEGRAM.]

DATED, ST. LOUIS, Feb. 14, 1868.

RECEIVED AT HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, Feb. 14th.

TO HON. JOHN SHERMAN:

Oppose confirmation of myself as Brevet General on ground that it is unprecedented, and that it is better not to extend the system of Brevets above Major-General. If I can't avoid coming to Washington, I may have to resign.

W. T. SHERMAN,
Lieutenant-General.

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSOURI,
ST. LOUIS, Mo., Feb. 17, 1868.

Dear Brother:

I have not yet got the order for the Atlantic Division, but it is coming by mail, and when received I must act.

I have asked the President to let me make my headquarters in New York instead of Washington, making my application on the ground that my simply being in Washington will be universally construed as rivalry to General Grant, a position which would be damaging to me in the extreme.

If I must come to Washington, it will be with a degree of reluctance never before experienced. I would leave my family here on the supposition that the change was temporary. I do not question the President's right to make the new division, and I think Congress would make a mistake to qualify his right. It would suffice for them to nonconfirm the Brevet of General. I will notify you by telegraph when the matter is concluded.

Affectionately,
W. T. SHERMAN.

[TELEGRAM.]

RECEIVED, WASHINGTON, Feb. 20, 1868.
FROM ST. LOUIS, Mo., Feb. 20, 1868.

TO GENERAL U. S. GRANT:

The President telegraphs that I may remain in my present command. I write him a letter of thanks through you to-day. Congress should not have for publication my letters to the President, unless the President himself chooses to give them.

(Signed) W. T. SHERMAN,
Lieutenant-General.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE UNITED STATES,
WASHINGTON, Feb. 21, 1868.

Dear Sir: By General Grant's direction I enclose a copy of a despatch from General Sherman, seeming to

indicate his preference that the correspondence in question should not now be made public.

Respectfully yours,
C. B. COMSTOCK., B.B.S.

HON. JOHN SHERMAN,
United States Senate.

A few days after this, General Sherman went to Washington in response to the President's order, and while there had several interviews with the President relating to the change of his command. He objected very strongly, as has been seen, to any such change, because he felt that he could not hold a command in Washington without interfering with Grant's interests, and because he had a rooted objection to living in Washington in the midst of the turmoil of politics. These objections were embodied in three letters which General Sherman wrote and showed to Grant before he sent them to the President. One of them found its way into the public press, and created a disturbance which called forth the following letters.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE UNITED STATES,
WASHINGTON, D.C., Feb. 22, 1868.

HON. J. SHERMAN,
United States Senate.

Dear Sir: The "National Intelligencer" of this morning contains a private note which General Sherman sent to the President whilst he was in Washington, dictated by the purest kindness and a disposition to preserve harmony, and not intended for publication. It seems to me the publication of that letter is calculated to place the General in a wrong light before the public, taken in connection with what correspondents have said before, evidently getting their inspiration from the White House.

As General Sherman afterwards wrote a semi-official note to the President, furnishing me a copy, and still later a purely official one sent through me, which placed him in his true position, and which have not been published, though called for by the "House," I take the liberty of sending you these letters to give you the opportunity of consulting General Sherman as to what action to take upon them. In all matters where I am not personally interested, I would not hesitate to advise General Sherman how I would act in his place. But in this instance, after the correspondence I have had with Mr. Johnson, I may not see General Sherman's interest in the same light that others see it, or that I would see it in if no such correspondence had occurred. I am clear in this, however: the correspondence here enclosed to you should not be made public except by the President, or with the full sanction of General Sherman. Probably the letter of the 31st of January,¹ marked "confidential," should not be given out at all.

Yours truly,
U. S. GRANT.

The following letter was addressed to the "National Intelligencer," a Washington newspaper.

UNITED STATES SENATE CHAMBER,
WASHINGTON, Feb. 22, 1868.

Gentlemen: The publication in your paper yesterday of General Sherman's note to the President, and its simultaneous transmission by telegraph unaccompanied by subsequent letters withheld by the President because they were "private," is so unfair as to justify severe

¹ See General Sherman's Memoirs.

censure upon the person who furnished you this letter, whoever he may be. Upon its face it is an informal private note dictated by the purest motives,—a desire to preserve harmony,—and not intended for publication. How any gentleman receiving such a note could first allow vague but false suggestions of its contents to be given out, and then print it, and withhold other letters because they were “private,” with a view to create the impression that General Sherman in referring to ulterior measures suggested the violent expulsion of a high officer from his office, passes my comprehension. Still I know that General Sherman is so sensitive upon questions of official propriety in publishing papers, that he would rather suffer from this false inference than to correct it by publishing another private note; and as I knew that this letter was not the only one written by General Sherman to the President about Mr. Stanton, I applied to the President for his consent to publish subsequent letters. This consent was freely given by the President, and I therefore send copies to you and ask their publication.

These copies are furnished me from official sources; for while I know General Sherman’s opinions, yet he did not show me either of the letters to the President, during his stay here, nervously anxious to promote harmony, to avoid strife, and certainly never suggested or countenanced resistance to law—or violence in any form. He no doubt left Washington with his old repugnance to politics, politicians, and newspapers very much increased by his visit here.

JOHN SHERMAN.

UNITED STATES SENATE CHAMBER,
Feb. 23, 1868.

Dear Brother: I received your letters and telegrams, and did not answer because events were moving so rapidly that I could say nothing but might be upset before you got the letter.

Now you can congratulate yourself upon being clear of the worst complications we have ever had. Impeachment seems to be a foregone conclusion so far as the House of Representatives is concerned, based upon the alleged forcible expulsion of Stanton. No one disputes the right of the President to raise a question of law upon his right to remove Stanton, but the forcible removal of a man in office, claiming to be in lawfully, is like the forcible ejection of a tenant when his right of possession is in dispute. It is a trespass, an assault, a riot, or a crime, according to the result of the force. It is strange the President can contemplate such a thing, when Stanton is already stripped of power, and the courts are open to the President to try his right of removal. The President is acting very badly with respect to you. He creates the impression that you acted disingenuously with him. He has published your short private note before you went to Annapolis, and yet refuses to publish your formal one subsequently sent him, because it was “private.” The truth is, he is a slave to his passions and resentments. No man can confide in him, and you ought to feel happy at your extrication from all near connection with him. . . . Grant is anxious to have your letters published, since the note referred to was published. I will see Grant and the President this evening, and if the latter freely consents, I will do it informally; but if he doubts or hesitates, I will not without your expressed directions. In these times of loose

confidence, it is better to submit for a time to a wrong construction, than to betray confidential communications. Grant will, unquestionably, be nominated. Chase acquiesces, and I see no reason to doubt his election. . . .¹

Affectionately,
JOHN SHERMAN.

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION
OF THE MISSOURI,
ST. LOUIS, Mo., Feb. 25, 1868.

Dear Brother:

I am in possession of all the news up to date, — the passage of the impeachment, resolution, etc., — but I yet don't know if the nomination of T. Ewing, Senior, was a real thing or meant to compromise a difficulty.

The publication of my short note of January 18th, is nothing to me. I have the original draft which I sent through Grant's hands, with his endorsement back to me. At the time this note must have been given to the reporter, the President had an elaborate letter from me, in which I discussed the whole case, and advised against the very course he has pursued, but I don't want that letter or any other to be drawn out to complicate a case already bad enough.

You may always safely represent me by saying that I will not make up a final opinion till called on to act, and I want nothing to do with these controversies

¹ The trouble which President Johnson had been having with Mr. Stanton ended in the appointment of General Lorenzo Thomas as Secretary of War *ad interim*. This resulted in the articles of impeachment and trial of the President before the Senate. The final vote showed less than two-thirds for conviction, and so the President was acquitted. Mr. Stanton resigned, and General Schofield was made Secretary of War.

until the time comes for the actual fight, which I hope to God may be avoided. If the Democratic party intend to fight on this impeachment, which I believe they do not, you may count 200,000 men against you in the South. The negroes are no match for them. On this question, the whites there will be more united than on the old issue of Union and Secession. I do not think the President should be suspended during trial, and if possible, the Republican party should not vote on all side questions as a unit. They should act as judges, and not as partisans. The vote in the House, being a strictly party vote, looks bad, for it augurs a prejudiced jury. Those who adhere closest to the law in this crisis are the best patriots. Whilst the floating politicians here share the excitement at Washington, the people generally manifest little interest in the game going on at Washington. . . .

Affectionately yours,
W. T. SHERMAN.

UNITED STATES SENATE CHAMBER,
WASHINGTON, March 1, 1868.

Dear Brother: Your letter of the 25th is received. I need not say to you that the new events transpiring here are narrowly watched by me. So far as I am concerned, I mean to give Johnson a fair and impartial trial, and to decide nothing until required to do so, and after full argument. I regard him as a foolish and stubborn man, doing even right things in a wrong way, and in a position where the evil that he does is immensely increased by his manner of doing it. He clearly designed to have first Grant, and then you, involved in Lorenzo Thomas' position, and in this he is actuated by his recent revolt against Stanton. How easy it would have been, if he

had followed your advice, to have made Stanton anxious to resign, or what is worse, to have made his position ridiculous. By his infernal folly we are drifting into turbulent waters. The only way is to keep cool and act conscientiously. I congratulate you on your lucky extrication. I do not anticipate civil war, for our proceeding is unquestionably lawful, and if the judgment is against the President, his term is just as clearly *out* as if the 4th of March, 1869, was come. The result, if he is convicted, would cast the undivided responsibility of reconstruction upon the Republican party, and would unquestionably secure the full admission of all the States by July next, and avoid the dangerous questions that may otherwise arise out of the Southern vote in the Presidential election. It is now clear that Grant will be a candidate, and his election seems quite as clear. The action of North Carolina removed the last doubt of his nomination.

Affectionately yours,
JOHN SHERMAN.

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION
OF THE MISSOURI,
ST. LOUIS, March 14, 1868.

Dear Brother: I don't know what Grant means by his silence in the midst of the very great indications of his receiving the nomination in May. Doubtless he intends to hold aloof from the expression of any opinion, till the actual nomination is made, when, if he accepts with a strong Radical platform, I shall be surprised. My notion is that he thinks that the Democrats ought not to succeed to power, and that he would be willing to stand a sacrifice rather than see that result. . . . I notice that you Republicans have divided on some of the side ques-

tions on impeachment, and am glad you concede to the President the largest limits in his defence that are offered. I don't see what the Republicans can gain by shoving matters to an extent that looks like a foregone conclusion.

No matter what men may think of Mr. Johnson, his office is one that ought to have a pretty wide latitude of opinion. Nevertheless the trial is one that will be closely and sternly criticised by all the civilized world. . . .

Your brother,
W. T. SHERMAN.

At this time John Sherman writes from Washington:

You notice the impeachment proceedings have commenced. As a matter of course, I have nothing to say about them. It is strange that they have so little effect on prices and business. The struggle has been so long that the effect has been discounted. . . .

The President was very anxious to send you to Louisiana, and only gave it up by reason of your Indian command. He might think that your visit to Europe now was not consistent with the reason given for your remaining at St. Louis. Still, on this point you could readily ask his opinion, and if that agrees with Grant's, you need feel no delicacy in going. No more favorable opportunity or time to visit Europe will likely occur. . . .

And General Sherman responds:—

I hardly know what to think of the impeachment. Was in hopes Mr. Johnson would be allowed to live out his term, and doubt if any good will result by a change for the few months still remaining of his term. A new

Cabinet, and the changes foreshadowed by Wade's friends, though natural enough, would have insufficient time to do any good. I have a private letter from Grant as late as March 18, but he says not a word of his political intentions. So far as I know, he would yet be glad of a change that would enable him to remain as now. . . .

IX

A new Indian Commission—Condition of the Navajos—The Impeachment vote—Removal of the Sioux—The canvass of 1868—Election of General Grant—The question of resumption of specie payments—The country too much governed—General Sherman's Southern trip in 1869—Succeeds General Grant as General of the Army—Necessity of arriving at a specie basis—Trip West to the Pacific—Declines vigorously all political office—Unsatisfactory administration of army matters—Trip abroad on the *Wabash*—Re-election of Senator Sherman—Italian days—From Constantinople to Paris—Removal to St. Louis—Use of the army in the South—General Sherman's Memoirs

In July, 1867, the President approved an act providing for the establishment of a commission empowered to visit the different Indian tribes then at odds with the Government, to listen to their grievances and to make treaties of peace with them. General Sherman was appointed on this commission, and spent the spring of 1868 visiting these different tribes. His letter of June 11th is written from New Mexico, and that of the 17th from Denver, while on this duty.

St. Louis, April 26, 1868.

Dear Brother: I notice the Indians are getting restless.

This is natural, for the department has been unable to fulfil any of the promises we held out to them of ploughs, seed, cattle, etc., to begin their new life of peace.

I feel reluctant to go further in these naked promises, as I fear our Government is becoming so complicated, that it is very venturesome to make promises in advance. I have the written guarantee of the Secretary of the Inte-