

A DIARY OF THE RECONSTRUCTION PERIOD¹

BY GIDEON WELLES

VIII. GRANT JOINS THE RADICALS

Thursday, July 11, 1867.

Some discussion in the House to-day, followed by votes, indicates a division in the House on the subject of impeachment. There is no cause, excuse, or justification for the long, labored, and shameful proceeding on this subject. The President differs with the radicals, and justly and properly views their course with abhorrence. He sometimes expresses his burning indignation against measures and men that are bringing untold calamities upon the country.

Friday, August 2, 1867.

I have no animosity towards Sheridan, who is a brave soldier, and whose gallantry and services I honor; but he is unjust and made vain by his military successes, and absolutely spoiled by partisan flattery and the encouragement of the conspirators. The more he defied the President, and the greater the outrages on the people of Louisiana and Texas, the more would he be praised by bad men who were imposing on his weaknesses.

From the tame, passive course which has been pursued, the administration has lost confidence and strength. It has to-day no positive, established successful policy, displays no executive power and energy, submits to insults, and we are now discussing no measure of the administration, and it is assumed that we ought to have none, that we

must suppress our convictions, abdicate our duty, and in our helplessness trust to division among the radicals, who have a policy, and who by their presumption and our submission have crippled the executive, encroached on his prerogative, and deprived him of his constitutional rights.

Randall became excited and advocated turning 'the little fellow'² out. The President warmed up under my remarks; his eyes flashed. 'What have we to expect [said he] from long keeping quiet? Will the Republicans, the conservative portion of them, come into our views? They are always promising, but they never perform. It may be said this will enrage them and that they will then go forward and impeach me. If they would impeach me for ordering away an officer, who I believe is doing wrong — afflicting and oppressing the people instead of protecting and sustaining them — if I am to be impeached for this, I am prepared.'

I asked the President if he had any information from those States as to the sentiments and feelings of the people; whether anything but the removal of the Governor of Texas and the overthrow of the municipal government in New Orleans had come to his knowledge. It would not be advisable to move in so important a matter without cause. There was sufficient [cause], but

² General Sheridan.

weeks ago the same acts had been committed as regards the Governor of Louisiana, Attorney-General, Judge, etc. The President said there was nothing additional now, but there was universal complaint of disorganization, confusion, insecurity, and oppression.

McCulloch said he should deprecate the removal of Sheridan, because he was exceedingly popular, and it would bring down violence on the administration. He had [had] a talk with Wilson of Iowa before he left for home, who said if the President did nothing rash and (alluding to this very movement) would not disturb Sheridan, all would go well, and the extreme radicals would be defeated. A division would certainly take place.

'What,' said I, 'if Sheridan should proceed to hang some of the prominent and best men in Louisiana who differ from him? Would Wilson expect, or you advise, that he should still be continued?'

The President was called into the adjoining room, and McCulloch turning to me said he was afraid my remarks would produce great harm. To do our duty will produce harm! 'How,' I exclaimed, 'are we subdued and humbled!'

Saturday, August 3, 1867.

I called on the President as McCulloch requested and had a free conversation with him. Said to him that while Sheridan deserved rebuke and removal, I would not be obstinate but defer to him. It might be, as things were now, impolitic or inexpedient to make the removal; that it would undoubtedly lead to a violent assault upon him; that the conspirators — extreme radicals — would avail themselves of the act to be more vindictive and ferocious, and the timid would be more cowed and submissive to them; that while I had an inherent confidence in the great principles of right as the rule

of action, there was no doubt it often tried the most resolute, and required moral courage and steady persistency to make the right prevail.

'What,' said the President, 'have I to fear, what to gain or lose, by keeping this man who delights in opposing and counteracting my views in this position? It is said that the weak radicals, the conservative ones, will join the ultras to impeach me. If Congress can bring themselves to impeach me, because, in my judgment, a turbulent and unfit man should be removed, and because I, in the honest discharge of my duty to the country and the Constitution, exercise my judgment and remove him, let them do it. I shall not shun the trial, and if the people can sanction such a proceeding, I shall not lament the loss of a position held by such a tenure.'

I remarked that Sheridan was really but a secondary personage after all in this business. He would never have pursued the course he has if not prompted and encouraged by others, to whom he looked, from whom he received advice, if not orders. Little would be attained, if only he were taken in hand.

The President said there was no doubt of that, and he was giving the subject attention. He said he had had a long interview with General Grant, in which interview they had gone over these subjects; but Grant was hesitating. He then went to his desk and brought me a letter of Grant's, elicited by the conversation which had passed between them. Grant deprecated the removal of Sheridan, who he says possesses immense popularity; thinks it is not in the power of the President to remove the Secretary of War since the passage of the Tenure-of-Office Bill, and that it would be unwise as well as inexpedient to make these movements just when Congress has adjourned.

The letter was not such as I should have at one time expected from Grant, was not discreet, judicious, or excusable even from his standpoint. If not disingenuous, he has, without perhaps being aware of it, had his opinions warped and modified within a year. I remarked as I finished reading the letter, 'Grant is going over.'

'Yes,' said the President, 'I am aware of it. I have no doubt that most of these offensive measures have emanated from the War Department.'

'Not only that,' said I, 'but almost all the officers of the Army have been insidiously alienated from your support by the same influences. If you had been favored with an earnest and sincere supporter of your measures in the War Department, the condition of affairs in this country would, this day, have been quite different. It is unfortunate, perhaps, that you did not remove all of the Cabinet soon after your administration commenced; certainly some who have made it a business to thwart and defeat your measures ought to have been changed.'

He assented, with some emotion, to the last remark, but expressed a doubt whether he could have got rid of Stanton. It would, he said, be unpleasant to make the attempt and not succeed. He presumed Grant had communicated the conversation which had taken place, and that the suggestion came from Stanton himself.

I doubted if Stanton would persist in holding on as an adviser, when he understood the President wished him away, or he was requested to relinquish his office, although it was obvious he was very tenacious of his place, and clung to it from personal association. Yet I was not sure but things had about reached the point when he was prepared to leave. He was in close fellowship with the radicals [and] had the control of Congress, through that faction,

was as much a favorite of the conservatives as of the extreme radicals. Congress having taken the whole government into its keeping and he being a favorite, [he] might think it would conduce to his benefit to be dismissed and compelled to leave. They would be dissatisfied to have him retire. Seward and Holt would oppose it, — and probably Grant also, now, though he had at one time favored it.

Sunday, August 4, 1867.

In the matter of Sheridan, I do not get any sufficient cause for moving now, that has not existed for weeks and months. The removal of Throckmorton¹ is following out the first step, — the removal of Wells. The insulting letter has got cold, still I have not a word for Sheridan.

Monday, August 5, 1867.

I asked the President about the Sheridan case, remarking that I was glad, as things are, that he was giving the subject deliberate thought. He said he had dropped Sheridan for the present and gone to the fountain-head of mischief, — that he had this morning sent a note to Stanton requesting him to resign. 'It is impossible,' said he, 'to get along with such a man in such a position, and I can stand it no longer. Whether he will send in his resignation is uncertain. What do you think he will do?'

'I think he will resign,' I replied, 'and not intrude himself upon you, and longer embarrass you, yet his friends are the ones who have tried to tie your hands.'

'Yes, and he instigated it. He has, I am satisfied, been the prolific source of difficulties. You have alluded to this, but I was unwilling to consider it, — to think that the man whom I trusted was plotting and intriguing against me.'

¹ Governor of Texas.

'Well,' said I, 'it is better, if you are to act, that this course should be taken. Sheridan is only a secondary man in these matters, and to smite him would only aggravate and excite, without accomplishing any good beyond punishing insolence to you, and wrong to the people over whom he has been placed. He has been sustained and encouraged by other minds.'

I do not see how Stanton can do otherwise than resign, and yet it will not surprise me if he refuses. Should he refuse, the President may be embarrassed, for Stanton has contrived, I suspect, to get a controlling influence over General Grant. Judge Carter¹ is a creature of Stanton, and his court is under subjection to the same influence. The President has, against all admonitions and warnings, been passive, and impenetrable, until he is powerless. I do not perceive any benefit to himself by removing Stanton at this time. One year ago it would have been effective, and he would have retained Grant and the army; he would have had a different Congress; the country was then with him, and would have continued so. But the conspirators and intriguers have bound him, hand and foot. He has permitted his prerogative to be despoiled, the Executive authority and rights to be circumscribed, until he is weak and powerless.

Stanton may defy him, and shelter himself under the Tenure-of-Office Bill, which contains a clause in relation to Cabinet officers, introduced by his friends and for the special purpose of retaining him in place. When this subject was before the Cabinet, no one more strongly reprobated this flagrant abuse or more strongly declared that the law was unconstitutional than Stanton. He protested with ostenta-

¹ Chief Justice of the District Court at Washington.

tious vehemence that any man who would retain a seat in the Cabinet, as an adviser, when his advice was not wanted, was unfit for the place. He would not, he said, remain a moment. I remember his protestations, for I recollected at the time he had been treacherous and faithless to Buchanan. I know, moreover, he has since, as well as then, betrayed Cabinet secrets.

Tuesday, August 6, 1867.

Before the session of the Cabinet commenced this morning, the President invited me into the library and informed me that he had a note from Stanton refusing to resign. I was a good deal astonished, though since yesterday my doubts in regard to his course have increased. His profuse expressions of readiness to resign, declarations that any gentleman would decline to remain an intruder, etc., etc., when the Tenure-of-Office Bill was under consideration, were mere pretences to cover his intrigues. The President had requested Seward, Stanton, and myself to prepare a veto on that bill. Neither of them consulted me further than to send to me for information concerning the debates.

The President asked if he had better communicate the correspondence to the Cabinet at this time. I advised it by all means.

All the Cabinet except Stanbery were present. When the correspondence was read a good deal of surprise was manifested, and felt, not only with the invitation but the refusal. Stanton did not attend, and considers himself, it would seem, not of the Cabinet.

Seward immediately enquired when Stanbery would be back. The Tenure-of-Office Bill was examined and commented upon. Doubts were expressed whether the President could remove a Cabinet officer. Seward thought it indispensable that Stanbery should be

here. It was a question of law, and the law officer was the proper person to expound it.

The President seemed embarrassed how to act. As the law is, in the opinion of the whole Cabinet, including the Attorney-General, unconstitutional, I said there was a political as well as a legal question; that the Chief Magistrate could select and remove his advisers, that the legislative department could not take away the constitutional rights of the Executive, that the power of removal belonged to the President of right, that there has been too much concession to legislative usurpations. I do not consider that the President is under obligations to be an instrument in these violations of the constitution, to [allow] the Executive Department [to be crippled] by a fragment of Congress.

After an hour and more of discussion the subject was postponed.

Friday, August 9, 1867.

Stanton's course and what is to be done with him was discussed. Seward is extremely anxious to get the opinion of the Attorney-General who is absent, before coming to any conclusion. Some one remarked that it was reported, one of Mr. Lincoln's Cabinet, who is now of Mr. Johnson's, sympathized with Stanton, and might resign if he did. I told them I had not heard the rumor, but they were at liberty to say to any and to all, that I was not the man to leave the Cabinet for that reason, but if the President ever invited me I should not decline his invitation to leave.

The debates in the Senate on the Tenure-of-Office Bill and Senator Sherman's strong declarations were quoted. I remarked that they were not stronger than the declarations of Stanton himself to us at this board, as they would all remember. He had, with Mr. Sew-

ard, prepared the veto of the Tenure-of-Office Bill, but that was much milder than his declarations of the unconstitutionality as well as impolicy of that bill.

Seward said but little, and Randall was reserved. Perhaps there was no reason to sharpen my suspicion; but it is evident they are not forward in the measure or in efforts to encourage the President. The removal of Stanton was undoubtedly a surprise and disappointment to Seward, who had sustained him.

Things have taken a turn which disappoints both Seward and Weed. Seward has thought of fishing for the Presidency and supposes Chase one of the obstacles. Neither of them stands any more chance of reaching the Presidency than of being created Sultan of Turkey. After the others had gone out I had half an hour with the President who requested me to stay. Advised him to remove Holt with Stanton. It would be more effective and proper to remove the two together. I looked upon both as conspirators.

Sunday, August 11, 1867.

Saw the President this P. M. He tells me he has seen General Grant and had a pleasant, social, and friendly interview. They had come to a mutual understanding. The President wished to know if there was any alienation, or substantial difference between them. Grant replied there was not, except that he had not last fall concurred in the President's opposition to the constitutional amendment.

The President assured him that Stanton must leave the War Department, and he desired him, *ad interim*, to discharge the duties. Grant said if Stanton's removal was decided upon he had nothing further to say on that point. As regarded himself, he always obeyed orders. He seemed pleased with

the proposed arrangement, and withdrew.

The President thinks he had better suspend Stanton without reference to the Tenure-of-Office Bill, and he perhaps is right under the existing embarrassments.

Tuesday, August 20, 1867.

The President showed me the correspondence between himself and Grant, relative to the removal of Sheridan. Grant objects to the removal, thinks it contrary to the wishes of the American people. The President responds, compliments the soldierly qualities of Sheridan, but thinks he has not the calm judgment, civil qualities, and ability of General Thomas for such a position; and as to the wishes of the people he is not aware that they have been expressed.

There is no doubt but that the radical politicians will bellow loud over the removal of Sheridan, whose fighting qualities and services are great. Their editors and speakers have undertaken to control the course of the government as regards Sheridan; and Grant, if not a participant with, has been led away by them.

Thursday, August 22, 1867.

Had this A. M. an hour's conversation, or more, with General Grant. It was the first time I had met him in the War Department since he entered upon the duties of Secretary, and I congratulated him on his new position. He thought he ought to decline receiving congratulations on that account, but they were obviously acceptable. I begged to differ from him and enquired why he should decline congratulations on a change which had been so well and favorably received by the whole country.

'Well,' he said, 'I did not know about that.' These changes that were

going on, striking down men who had been faithful through the war, he did not like. 'So far as the War Department is concerned,' said I, 'the country on all hands believes that as good and faithful a war man is in the place as we have had at any time.' He disclaimed alluding to that change. 'If,' said I, 'you have Sheridan and Thomas in your mind, there is no denying that Thomas is in every respect as good a war man, with better administrative powers than Sheridan, whom I would by no means disparage.'

With this opening, we went into a general discussion of the condition of the country and the affairs of the government. It pained me to see how little he understood of the fundamental principles and structure of our government, and of the Constitution itself. On the subject of differences between the President and Congress, and the attempt to subject the people to military rule, there were, he said, in Congress, fifty at least of the first lawyers of the country, who had voted for the reconstruction law; and were not, he asked, the combined wisdom and talent of those fifty to have more weight than Mr. Johnson, who was only one to fifty? Congress had enacted this law, and was not the President compelled to carry it into execution? Was not Congress superior to the President? If the law was unconstitutional, the judges alone could decide the question. The President must submit and obey Congress until the Supreme Court set the law aside.

I asked him if Congress could exercise powers not granted, powers that the States, which made the Constitution, had expressly reserved? He thought Congress might pass any law and the President and all others must obey and support it, until the Supreme Court declared it unconstitutional.

'You do not mean to say, General,

that Congress may set aside and disregard all limitations, all barriers that are erected to guide and control their action.'

He did not know who could question their acts and laws until they came before the court.

'The Constitution,' said I, 'prescribes that the President and Senate shall appoint ministers, consuls, etc., but Congress may, by law, confer inferior appointments on Judges, Heads of Departments, or on the President alone; but it nowhere authorizes Congress to confer on Generals the appointing power.'

'It authorizes Congress to confer appointments, you say, on the Heads of Departments. Are not those districts under General Sickles and other Generals Departments?' said Grant.

'Not in the meaning of the Constitution,' said I, 'and you can hardly be serious in supposing the provision of the Constitution alluded to had reference to military districts, or any particular territory, parcelled out, and called Departments.'

He did not know, he said. He was not prepared to say about that. The will of the people is the law in this country, and the representatives of the people made the laws.

'The Constitution gives the pardoning power to the Executive. Do you suppose that Congress can usurp that power, and take it from the President where the Constitution placed it?'

To this he replied, that President Johnson once remarked in the Senate, in regard to talk about the Constitution, that it was well to spot the men who talked about it. It was, he said, just before the war, when the secessionists talked about the Constitution.

'The remark,' said I, 'was opportune, and well put at the men and the times. The secessionists claimed, and

many of them honestly believed, that their States had the right to secede, that there was no constitutional power to prevent them. So feeling and so believing, they searched the Constitution and appealed to it for any prohibition against secession. The appeal was absurd, according to your and my views, because the Constitution would not and could not have a clause empowering a fragment, a single State, to destroy it. Secession was a delusion which had had its run, yet the men were generally scrupulous to observe in other respects the organic law, and, while meditating and preparing for the overthrow of the government, their persistent appeals to the Constitution provoked the remark of Mr. Johnson to which you allude.

'While, however, the secessionists professed to, and generally did regard the Constitution, the radicals openly trample upon it, and many express their contempt for it. The secessionists claimed that they violated no principle, or power, or limitation, in their act of secession. The radicals do not claim, or pretend to regard any principle, or power, or limitation, of the Constitution when they establish military governments over states of the South and exclude them from their rights.

'When President Johnson made his remark, it was to contrast their appeals to the Constitution in all other respects, while secession itself was destructive of the Constitution which they held in reverent regard.'

'Would you,' said he, 'allow the rebels to vote and take the government of their States into their own hands?'

I replied that I knew not who were to take the government of those states in hand but the intelligent people of the states respectively to whom it rightfully belonged. The majority

must govern in each and every State in all their local and reserved rights — other sections are not to govern them. A majority of the voters (and they decide for themselves who shall be voters) is the basis of free government. This is our system. Georgia must make her own laws, her own constitution, subject to the Constitution of the United States, not to the whim or will of Congress. Massachusetts has no power to prescribe the form of government of Georgia, or to govern the people of that State as a State. Nor is Georgia to give government to Massachusetts.

Grant said he was not prepared to admit this doctrine. It was something of the old State rights doctrine — and he could not go to the full extent of that doctrine. He looked upon Georgia and the other states South as territories, like Montana and other territories. They had rebelled, been conquered, and were to be reconstructed and admitted into the Union when we felt that we could trust them. It was for Congress to say who should vote, and who should not vote, in the seceding States as well as in Territories, and to direct when and how these States should again be admitted.

That I told him was not only a virtual dissolution of the Union, but an abandonment of our Republican federal system. It was establishing a central power, which could control and destroy the States, — a power above and beyond the Constitution, — and I trusted he was not prepared to go that length, but if he was, I hoped he would avow it. For my part I clung to the old system, the Constitution and the Union, and favored no radical theories of central power.

‘Well,’ he said, ‘he did not believe we could either convince the other, and we had better dispose of our business.’

I remarked that one of us was right

and one wrong, and that it should be the object of each to put himself right, regardless of all partisanship, commitments, or preconceived opinions. This he admitted most fully.

There were other points which in this hasty memorandum written immediately after its occurrence, I have not penned, but the essential points I have sketched, and have as far as I could used the very words. On the whole, I did not think so highly of General Grant after as before this conversation. He is a political ignoramus.

General Grant has become severely afflicted with the Presidential disease, and it warps his judgment, which is not very intelligent or enlightened at best. He is less sound on great and fundamental principles, vastly less informed than I had supposed possible for a man of his opportunities. Obviously he has been tampered with, and flattered by the radicals, who are using him and his name for their selfish and partisan purposes.

Saturday, August 31, 1867.

Had a pleasant talk with the President this evening. He has great capacity, is conversant with our public affairs beyond most men, has much experience, possesses great firmness, sincere patriotism, a sacred regard for the Constitution, is humane and benevolent. Extreme men and extreme measures he dislikes; secession and exclusion are alike repugnant. The radicals accuse him of being irritable and obstinate, but the truth is he has been patient and forbearing, almost to infirmity, under assaults, intrigues and abuse. Had he been less yielding, less hesitating, more prompt and decided, had he met radical error and misrule at the threshold, checked the first innovations on his prerogative, dismissed at once faithless public officers, he would have saved himself and the country many difficulties.

It is one of his greatest weaknesses that he has no confidants, and seeks none. No man should hold such a position without tried and trusty friends to whom he can unbosom himself, and with whom he can consult and advise freely on all questions. To me, perhaps, he has been as free and as communicative as to any one, and yet there has been constant reserve. Many of his most important steps have been taken without the knowledge of any of his Cabinet, and I think without the knowledge of any person whatever. He has wonderful self-reliance and immovable firmness in maintaining what he believes to be right, is disinclined to be familiar with men in prominent positions, or to be intimate with those who fill the public eye. There are around him too many little busy-bodies, almost all of whom are unreliable and often intentionally deceive him. It is a misfortune that he permits them to be so familiar; not that he means they shall influence him on important questions, but in appointments they sometimes have influence and mislead him. He does not make these fellows his confidants any more than greater men, but they are intrusive, glad to crowd around him, when men of mind and character will not intrude uninvited, and he invites none. Yet he willingly listens, receives information and suggestions, but without reciprocating.

Coming into the Presidency under peculiar circumstances, he has hoped to conciliate Congress and those who elected him, without making proper discriminations as regards men, and the conflicting views of his supporters on fundamental questions. Many of the Republican members were kindly disposed towards him and believed in the Lincoln policy which he adopted. These he could and should have detached from the extremists. They were not leaders — not radicals at the be-

ginning — like himself, they were sincere Republicans, but not having the faculty of receiving and giving confidence, these passive men were treated coolly, as were the radicals who constituted the positive element opposed to him as well as to Mr. Lincoln before him. Stanton who conformed to this policy in Mr. Lincoln's time has been a constant intriguer with the radicals to thwart the President. Seward and Weed undertook, with Raymond and partisans of this school, to make a division, but Raymond was so uncertain and unreliable that the really honest and worthy men, while acknowledging his genius, despised his pusillanimity. Like Seward himself, Raymond became a source of weakness, a positive injury. For a time he assumed, under Seward's management and givings-out, to be the organ of the administration on the floor of the House; but under the irony and sarcasm of Thaddeus Stevens, who ridiculed his conscientious scruples, he soon stood alone. The President really had no organ or confidential friend in the House, no confidant who spoke for him and his policy among the Representatives. Seward and Weed, to whom he listened, alienated the Democrats and almost all of his friends.

Monday, September 2, 1867.

General Grant has issued an order forbidding the District Commanders from reinstating through other courts any of the removed civil officers displaced by themselves or their predecessors. This order is in bad taste and in a bad spirit, prompted without doubt by radical advisers. The manifest intention is to keep Sheridan and Sickles appointees in place, to antagonize the President, to defeat his intentions, provided he thinks it proper and correct for the public interest to reappoint one or more of the local State

officers who may have been unfairly displaced.

Tuesday, October 8, 1867.

An application from Mr. Siddons of Richmond for a pardon was presented by the Attorney-General. Siddons says he had opposed extreme measures, was in retirement when invited to the War Department of the Confederacy, did what he could to mitigate the calamities of war while in that position, made himself unpopular thereby, had taken the Union oath, etc., etc. Seward thought it best to postpone the subject until after the election, when it might be well to grant the pardon, for Siddons was a harmless old man, and undoubtedly true to the Union.

I said that I had no spirit of persecution in me, that two and a half years had passed since the rebellion was suppressed and I thought it unwise and unjust to continue this proscription. I was, therefore, ready at any time to consider favorably such an application as Mr. Siddons'.

General Grant said very curtly and emphatically, that he was opposed to granting any more pardons, for the present at least. This seemed to check the others, who expressed no opinion. I remarked, if as a matter of policy it was deemed expedient to delay three or four weeks until the November elections had passed, I would not object, but I thought the time had arrived for the display of some magnanimity and kindly feeling.

A year since General Grant expressed to me very different views from those he now avows. Said he was ready to forgive the rebels and take them by the hand, but would not forgive the Copperheads. He is pretty strongly committed to the radicals, is courting and being courted.

After the Cabinet adjourned, Stanbery, Browning, and myself remained

with the President and had twenty minutes talk on the condition of affairs. Browning said that Governor Cox was spoken of as a suitable man for Secretary of War, provided he would take the place. Stanbery said he had not before heard Cox's name, but he thought it would be an excellent selection. Grant being *ad interim*, it was important the change should take place and Stanton be removed. Cox would hold on to the close of the session. I enquired if he was firm and reliable, and if he would stand by the President against Congress and General Grant, if they resorted to revolutionary measures, which from certain indications are not improbable. On that point neither of them was assured. I named Frank Blair as a man whom Grant respected and Stanton feared, who had courage and energy to meet any crisis, and who would be a fearless and reliable friend of the President and of sound constitutional principles. Browning responded favorably, Stanbery said nothing.

The President, after the others left, expressed himself favorably to Blair. I urged the point farther. Told him Seward would be likely to object, but that, I thought, ought not to influence his action. I did not hesitate to tell him my apprehensions of Sherman, that if Grant opposed the administration Sherman would be likely not to support it.

Something had been said of Tom Ewing, senior, for a Cabinet officer. He is too old for such a period as this; but I thought him right on present questions, and if here, he might have influence with Sherman, who married his daughter. I doubted, however, whether he would detach Sherman from Grant. The President spoke of Sherman's intellect as being superior to Grant's. I acknowledged that he had more genius and brilliancy, but had

not the firmness, persistency, and stubborn will which are the strong points of Grant, who is not a very enlightened man. Whenever the two are associated, Grant's obstinacy will make his the master mind, and if there were to be antagonism with Grant, the President might have to depend on some other man than Sherman.

The President said that Grant had gone entirely over to the radicals, and was with Congress. I told him that was my opinion, and I was fearful he was so far involved that he could not be withdrawn from mischievous influences. The elections of to-day may have their influence however in this matter.

Saturday, October 19, 1867.

Time has been wanting for some days to enter occurrences. The President informs me that he called on General Grant in pursuance of my advice. He went to the War Department last Saturday, a week to-day, and consulted in a friendly way with General Grant, — told Grant he could not be ignorant of the schemes and threats that were made, and must be aware that it was his (the President's) duty to be prepared to vindicate the rights of the Executive, to maintain the Constitution, and resist invasions and usurpations.

Should an attempt be made to depose or arrest him before trial or conviction, if impeachment were attempted, he desired to know if he would be sustained and whether officers in high position would obey his orders.

He says Grant met him frankly; seemed to appreciate fully the question and the object of his enquiry; said he should expect to obey orders; that should he, Grant, change his mind he would advise the President in season, that he might have time to make arrangements.

Under these declarations the Presi-

dent thought he might rely on General Grant. He could, after this avowal, press the point no farther.

In this, I think he was correct. Grant will make good his word, and act, I have no doubt, in good faith. I so said to the President, and expressed my gratification that the interchange of views had taken place. At the same time I requested him to continue and increase his intimacy with Grant, who though not intelligent seems to be patriotic and right-minded, but the radicals of every description are laboring to mislead him. Defeated in the recent elections, and with public opinion setting against the obnoxious measures, the scheming intriguers begin to rally around Grant, speak of him as their candidate for President; not that they want him, but they are fearful he will be taken up by the Democrats.

Wednesday, October 23, 1867.

Randall says that Boutwell disavows any intention of arresting, or attempting to arrest the President before impeachment and conviction. Says it cannot be done, and does not favor the scheme of Stevens to that purpose. If this is so, the conversation of the President with General Grant is already having its effects. Boutwell is a fanatic, a little insincere — violent, and yet has much of demagogic cunning. He has been, and is, for making Grant the radical candidate for President. He has the sagacity to see that with Grant opposed to them, the radicals would be annihilated. Grant had, therefore, I infer, admonished Boutwell that he cannot be a party to any movement for arresting the President before trial and conviction, and will not be an instrument in such a work. This accounts for Boutwell's declarations to Randall. I so stated to the President this afternoon, and he seemed struck with my explanation.

Saturday, November 30, 1867.

A long and serious illness has prevented me from recording some important events. Yesterday, though weak and debilitated, I for the first time in four weeks attended a Cabinet meeting. When last at the Council room I was quite ill, came home and went on to my bed which I did not leave for twenty-one days, except once, on the 7th, for a few moments, which did me no good. Thanks to a good God, my health is restored, for which I am indebted to the faithful nursing of the best of wives, and the kind attention of my physician.

Little of interest was done in Cabinet yesterday. The President and all the Cabinet manifested great pleasure on seeing me. Each of them has been friendly in calling during my illness, the President sometimes twice a day.

To-day the President laid before us his annual Message. A sound, strong, good document.

After its perusal, and running criticism, he submitted a letter addressed to the Cabinet, stating the condition of affairs, the proposed impeachment, and the proposition to suspend the President, or any officer when impeached, until after his trial and judgment by the Senate. There was great uncertainty of opinion on the subject in the discussion.

That the President should submit to be tried if the House preferred articles, was the opinion of all. That he should consent to, or permit himself to be arrested or suspended before conviction, was in opposition to the opinion of each and all.

General Grant said it would be clearly *ex post facto* to pass a law for suspension in the case of the President, and unless the Supreme Court sustained the law, it ought not to be submitted to. If Congress should pass a law directing that officers should be suspend-

ed whenever the House impeached the officer, that would be a different thing. Then it would be the law, known in advance.

I agreed with General Grant that a law in the President's case would be *ex post facto* and therefore to be resisted, if attempted. But I went further and denied that Congress had authority to suspend the President — the Executive — a coördinate branch of the government on the mere party caprice of a majority of the House of Representatives.

Mr. Randall was very emphatic in denouncing such a movement as destructive to the government.

General Grant said he thought a mere law of Congress would not justify suspension or authorize it, but that there should be an amendment of the Constitution to effect it.

We all assented that if the Constitution so ordered, submission was a duty, but not otherwise.

A few days since, the Judiciary Committee, who have been engaged by direction of the House to search the Union, ransack prisons, investigate the household of the President, examine his bank accounts, etc., etc., to see if some colorable ground for impeachment could not be found, made their several reports. A majority were for impeachment. Until just before the report was submitted, a majority were against, but at the last moment, Churchill, a member from the Oswego, N. Y., district, went over to the impeachers. Speculators and Wall Street operators in gold believed that a resolution for impeachment would cause a sudden rise in gold. Unfortunately for them, no rise took place, but there was a falling off. If Churchill was influenced by the speculators, as is generally supposed, his change did not benefit them, and in every point of view was discreditable to him.

Boutwell, who made the report to the House, is a fanatic, impulsive, violent — an ardent, narrow-minded partisan, without much judgment, not devoid of talents, with more industry than capacity, ambitious of notoriety, with a mind without comprehension and not well-trained; an extreme radical, destitute of fairness where party is involved. The report was drawn up by Thomas Williams of Pittsburg, a former partner of Stanton's, a rank disorganizer, a repudiator, vindictive, remorseless, unscrupulous, regardless of constitutional obligations and of truth as well

as fairness, [who] was put upon the Committee because he had these qualities. The other three gentlemen of the majority may be called smooth-bores, men of small calibre, but intense partyism. The report and its conclusions condemn themselves, and are likely to fail even in this radical House. Whether such would have been their fate had the election gone differently, is another question. The voice of the people¹ has cooled the radical mania, and checked their wild action.

¹ The recent elections in Ohio and Pennsylvania.

(To be continued.)

IN THE RAINY SEASON

BY WILLIAM DAVENPORT HULBERT

ACROSS Vancouver harbor the mountains loomed dimly blue in the deepening twilight. High up on the steep, rocky slope was a big brushwood fire, and its warm, red glow was reflected, pastel-like, in the clouds above and the quiet water below. Down on the shore of the inlet a heap of sawmill refuse was burning, and between us and the blaze towered a tall square-rigged ship — a black network of spars and ropes against the glare. Cityward a huge white shape, a little ghostly in the dusk, but graceful even now, told where the Empress of India lay in her berth at the Canadian Pacific wharf. Pushing hard against the swift incoming tide, we swung round the point, threaded the Narrows, and struck out upon the broad, dark, lonely waters of the Gulf of Georgia.

By morning we were in a land of granite and sandstone, where the islands rose steeply out of the sea in lofty hills and mountains, with no level shores, no sandy or pebbly beaches, no green meadows or grassy intervals. The sky was gray and gloomy, and the wind that came down the channels was looking for the marrow of one's bones — and found it. There were spurts and dashes of rain, and torn shreds of mist went trailing along the hillsides or climbed slowly up the forest-clad slopes to join the heavy clouds that hung low overhead. In the higher ravines the tops of tall trees stood up out of snowdrifts fifty or a hundred feet deep.

A day or two later we sat in a hand-loggers' shack on the shore of a small, land-locked bay, where, under the shadow of the hills, our launch lay at