

THE GRANT ADMINISTRATIONS

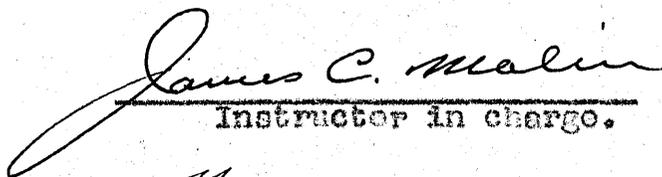
John Sherman's Position in the Political System.

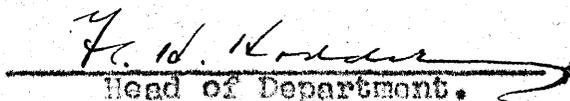
by

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THE GRANT ADMINISTRATIONS

John Sherman's Position in the Political System.

Chapter I. Introduction.

This problem is one of a series of problems dealing with the administration of President Grant. From this series of problems the individual members of the Seminar in American History conducted during the summer months of nineteen-twenty-nine selected their subjects for research. The major emphasis in this investigation has been placed upon the events which occurred between 1865 and 1874. This period of time comes within the third quarter of the nineteenth century so the subject matter of this investigation is interwoven with many other intensely interesting problems which arose during the period in the history of this country which followed the Civil War.

The nineteenth century is noteworthy in the history of mankind for the many contributions to the material aspects of life. It was the period when the rising tides of democracy and nationalism were spreading throughout the western portion of the world. The middle of the nineteenth century was marked by a series of revolts which occurred in every country in Europe. The organization of governments changed rapidly. The interest of the people in government was intense. Popular uprisings were frequent. All of the people from the rulers down to the lowly workingmen seemed concerned in the movements towards democracy. These many movements were approaching

their culminations during the second quarter of the nineteenth century and finally reached their climax in the third quarter of the same century. Germany and Italy achieved national unity. Hungary obtained a position of greater influence in the Dual Monarchy and the *Augsleich*, a form of constitution, was granted by the Hapsburg rulers. The Third Republic was established in France. The working people gained new privileges in England. Japan threw off the deadening influence of feudalism.

The social and political life of the United States was undergoing a change. The causes of this change were chiefly economic in character. The frontier and the Western lands; the railroads; the rising factory system; new inventions and discoveries all were forcing a change in the policies and practices of our social and political life. The slavery question, which was the fuse that set the various forces to moving towards sectionalism and separation, was not of great importance, but it was a question which was well adapted to propaganda and exploitation. The slave power had entrenched itself strongly in the nation. The leaders of the dominant party were from the South and west. The South had controlled the nation for a long period of time. To the people of the South the agitation against slavery was merely a phase of the attempt on the part of the northern leaders to bring the South into a subordinate position. The uniting of the North under Lincoln was regarded as the last straw. The Civil War followed. It was a severe strain upon the nation

and in its course there were sown the seeds of trouble which ripened during the Reconstruction period. An important by-product of the War was the creation of the military myths which surrounded the figures and personalities of some of the successful leaders. The most important of this group was the myth which surrounded General Grant. If the Civil War had not been fought it is not likely that the name of Ulysses S. Grant would have reached the high position which it occupies at the present time. Grant was truly the product of his times. The times were war-times and as a result he became a great military hero.

John Sherman represents a different type of leadership. His career was not a product of accident. He grew to manhood during the period in which economic affairs were becoming more and more important. The United States was beginning to feel the effects of the Industrial Revolution. John Sherman was a product of an industrial or economic environment and it was natural that his chief interests during his public career should lie in the fields of finance and public economy. He rose to a position of pre-eminence among the financial authorities of his day as a result of his close application to work plus his ability to diagnose the currents of thought among the people in such a way that he could adapt his present purposes to the achievement of some future end. A brief survey of Sherman's life prior to his relations with Grant will be of value in explaining his activities in public life.

John Sherman came from an old English family which he said could be traced back to the sixteenth century.<sup>1</sup> Some

members of the family were quite important in the political affairs of England.<sup>2</sup> Their connection with the Puritan Church caused them to fall into disfavor with Charles I and so they decided to migrate to Boston.<sup>3</sup> One of the members of a collateral line of Shermans was Roger Sherman of Revolutionary War fame. There is numbered among his descendants such men as William M. Evarts, George F. Hoar, and Chauncey M. Depew.<sup>4</sup>

John Sherman's father was born in Connecticut. He received a good education during his youth, studied law for a vocation and was admitted to the bar in 1810. In the same year he married Mary Hoyt and to this union were born eleven children of which number, John was the eighth. He was born at Lancaster, Ohio, on 10 May, 1823. His father died while he was still quite young. The account of the early school days of Sherman suggests that he was a very difficult pupil from the point of view of both studying and discipline. At fourteen he became a junior rodman with a surveying company. Three years later he began to work in the law office of Judge Parker.<sup>5</sup> While studying law he lived in the home of his oldest brother, Charles Taylor Sherman, who later in life caused him to become involved in an alleged corrupt bargain concerning the Wall Street Exchange.<sup>6</sup> John Sherman was admitted to the bar in Ohio in May, 1844.<sup>7</sup> He was taken into partnership by his brother Charles and so began the practice of law as a life profession.<sup>8</sup> In the political world he was a Whig and in 1852 he was a member of the national Whig Convention.<sup>9</sup> On the last day of the same year he

was married to Margaret Cecillie Stewart, only child of Judge Stewart of Mansfield, Ohio.<sup>10</sup>

In discussing his political tendencies, Sherman said in his Recollections, "I was by inheritance and association a Whig boy, without much care or knowledge of parties or political principles. No doubt my discharge from the Engineer Corps by a Democratic Board of Public Works strengthened this bias. I shouted for Harrison in the campaign of 1840. In 1842 I was enthusiastic for 'Tom Corwin, the wagon-boy', the Whig candidate for governor of Ohio... I took but little part in the campaign of 1844, when Mr. Clay was a candidate for president, but I then made my first political speech to a popular audience and cast my first vote. ...At that time I had but two definite ideas with respect to the policy of the United States. One was a hearty belief in the doctrine of protection to American industries, as advocated by Mr. Clay, and second, a strong prejudice against the Democratic party which was more or less committed to annexation and the extension of slavery!"<sup>11</sup>

In 1848 Sherman was appointed a delegate to the national Whig convention, held in Philadelphia. He said he accepted the appointment the more readily because it gave him an opportunity to see his future wife who was in school near Philadelphia.<sup>12</sup>

Mr. Sherman thoroughly approved of General Taylor as President, In 1852 he supported General Scott and began a thorough study of the political topics of the day. He was classed as a conservative Whig and supported the Compromise of 1850 not on its merits, but as the best obtainable solution. He was a delegate-

at-large to the National Whig convention in 1852 and campaigned actively for Scott in the canvass which followed the convention.<sup>13</sup> When the Kansas-Nebraska bill came up Sherman studied it carefully and decided to oppose it.<sup>14</sup> Sherman became a candidate for Congress in 1854 on the platform that slavery should not gain advantages through broken compromises.<sup>15</sup> He was successful in his campaign even in carrying his own county which had gone Democratic in every election previous to 1854.<sup>16</sup> In 1855 Sherman was elected chairman of the Republican State Convention which was composed of all the elements hostile to Pierce.<sup>17</sup> In 1856 Sherman was appointed on a committee to investigate the troubles in Kansas, and in the same year he was reelected to his position in the House of Representatives. In discussing the annual message sent to Congress by President Pierce on the 2 December 1856, Sherman stated his political ideas in the following words: "If I had my voice, I would not have one single political Abolitionist in the Northern States. I am opposed to any interference by the northern people with slavery in the slave states; I act with the Republican party, with hundreds of thousands of others, simply because the Republican party resists the extension, but does not seek the abolition of slavery."<sup>18</sup> On 27 May 1858, Sherman made his first speech on the finances of the national government. Previous to this time, he had devoted most of his time to the question concerning Kansas.<sup>19</sup> Sherman was elected to the House for the third time in July 1858.<sup>20</sup> In this session the long, protracted struggle over the speakership

was waged. Sherman was the candidate of the Republican party. Probably the fact that he had inadvertently signed a recommendation for 'Helper's Impending Crisis' caused him to lose the contest. The man who was elected as speaker appointed Sherman chairman of the Ways and Means committee, then as now, the most important committee in the House.<sup>21</sup> In 1860 for the fourth successive time Sherman was elected to the House. He was very active against the Buchanan policies during the short session of Congress. In 1861 following the appointment of Chase as Secretary of the Treasury one of the senatorships from Ohio became vacant. Although Sherman did not seek the honor, he was elected to the Senate by the State Legislature in March, 1861.

It is difficult to form an idea or opinion as to the true character of John Sherman because he was so much of a partisan that contemporary writers either maligned him or praised him. One of his biographers credits him with all of the virtues of mankind, and insists that he had no faults. Other writers create an impression which is exactly the opposite. It is almost certain that he was aloof and reserved by nature; not much given to making friends and not at all inclined to make confidants of his associates. To his intimate friends he was cordial and hospitably disposed. In the Senate, particularly towards the latter part of his career, he was inclined to be arrogant and proud. He would refuse to yield the floor to a fellow senator even though he expected that favor when he was pressing an important bill to a successful conclusion. He would continually advise his associates as to the best way of getting a certain bill passed,

but he did not seem to appreciate similar advice when others gave it to him. He was firm and tenacious and almost stubborn when he was working hard to get his bills before the Senate and approved by that body. He was a self-appointed moderator of the Senate and frequently criticised his fellow senators severely for wasting time in debate. He frequently demanded decisions either adversely or favorably towards certain measures when it seemed that they were blocking the legislative procedure. He seemed to possess a strong sense of duty in paying attention to the needs and demands of the people at large. He was rarely absent from the Senate and was always present when important measures were being discussed. He frequently opposed adjournments over holiday seasons and even opposed adjournment on the occasion of the death of former President Fillmore. Sherman was keenly alert in debate. He was not an eloquent orator, rather he convinced his audience by accumulating a mass of evidence to substantiate his arguments.

The views of the contemporaries of Sherman illustrate the diversity of opinion concerning his character. The opinion of Gideon Welles, Secretary of the Navy under President Lincoln, was far from complimentary to Sherman. On the occasion of the vote on the removal of Stanton by President Johnson, Welles said in his Diary, "a few may dodge like Sherman... who are committed in speeches which they made on the tenure of Office bill. It would matter little with Sherman, who often makes an argument and then votes against it." He continued to say, "He is not steadfast in principle; he lacks stability and is unreasonably partisan

in his votes."<sup>22</sup> In the same connection Welles said, "Sherman has not self-reliance and strength of mind enough to do his duty."<sup>23</sup> In connection with the concurrent resolution excluding the southern representatives from Congress, Welles said that Sherman finally voted for it in spite of his own delivered opinion and conviction.<sup>24</sup> Welles continued his remarks concerning Sherman and asserted that his vote for the resolution illustrated the all-powerful party discipline in Congress. Another occasion upon which Welles mentioned Sherman was in connection with the vote on the impeachment of President Johnson. Mr. Sherman voted for impeachment on the second article, and Welles accounted for his action by saying that Sherman and other equivocal Senators were whipped into line by the Radicals.<sup>25</sup> In some other connections Welles referred to Sherman as a Senator who was partisan to an unreasonable degree and that he sometimes followed the dictates of the Republican party rather than his own convictions. In an ordinary case allowance would have to be made for this criticism of a Republican leader by a man, who if anything was a Democrat, but in this case the opinion that Welles held with respect to Sherman himself coincides almost exactly with the opinion of Sherman himself as expressed in his Recollections. He says, "In a retrospect of my six years as a member of the House of Representatives, I can see, and will freely admit, that my chief fault was my intense partisanship."<sup>26</sup> He gives four reasons for this characteristic: (1) The conviction which he held that the repeal of the Missouri Compromise was an act of dishonor and an insult to the North. (2) The impressions which he gained

while investigating affairs in Kansas. (3) The subserviency of the President and the Supreme Court to the slave power as evidenced by the political feebleness of the President and the Dred Scott Decision. (4) The gross injustices directed at him personally and the irritating language of the Southern members of the House during the Speakership controversy.<sup>27</sup> Perhaps this confession which Sherman made in his Recollections referred just to his period of service as a member of the House of Representatives during the trying period which immediately preceded the Civil War, but it is unreasonable to believe that he lost the trait completely after his service in the House ended.

George W. Julian, a contemporary of Sherman, made the following comment in his Memoirs, "Sherman was wiry, shrewd and diplomatic, but gave little promise of the career that he has since attained through ambition, industry and favoring conditions."<sup>28</sup>

Following the passage of the resumption act in 1876, Sherman was the object of a great deal of calumny and abuse. The following letter is typical of many which Sherman received: "Few men have been more active in public affairs during the last thirty years... not with the sword, but with the purse... by your movements on the financial chessboard you have paralyzed the energies and murdered the activities of a great nation. In my judgment more than any other man you have been more responsible for the enforced idleness and consequent destitution, beggary, starvation, and death of millions of innocent children... You did this maliciously and perhaps for gain."<sup>29</sup> The writer of

this letter continued in the same vein and said that before resumption the nation was rich, after resumption it became poor; that before Sherman was a Senator he was very poor and after serving several years he became very rich; that when Sherman was poor he favored the income tax, but after he became wealthy he opposed it.<sup>30</sup>

Another contemporary of Sherman and a man who had opportunity to know him well was James A. Garfield of Ohio. Sherman was in public life several years before Garfield entered politics. One of the earliest comments made by Garfield concerning Sherman was in connection with the incident of Sherman enlisting and going to the front to serve as a volunteer aid to General Patterson. Garfield said, "Sherman's enlisting in the ranks was done for buncombe, and is an unmanly piece of demagogism."<sup>31</sup> When the Ku Klux bill was before the Senate, Sherman tried to amend it by making local units such as cities and counties pecuniarily responsible for the violent acts of outlaws within their bounds. Referring to this attempt on the part of Sherman, Garfield said, "I have never been more disgusted with Sherman, ... he is conservative for five years and then radical for one and his radical year always comes just before the Senatorial elections."<sup>32</sup> The opinion of Sherman held by Garfield at the time when the politicians were trying to get him to oppose Sherman for the senatorship is very interesting. Garfield explained his refusal to run as follows: "I have not done this because I believe in John Sherman's special fitness for the place, though he is a man of fair abilities, much industry and considerable influence, I freely admit, but the fact

that he has studied the popular attitude and floated with the tide and drifted with the wind of popular opinion is undeniable. Three years ago I keenly felt the need of support when I was resisting almost alone, the Greenback doctrines of Pendelton, which threatened to debase and destroy our public credit and felt that the Republican Senator from Ohio should have stood firmly against that miserable business, but he floated with the tide until Pendelton was beaten and then turned square around."<sup>33</sup> It should be noted here that Garfield changed his opinion with regard to Sherman later in his career and came to have more respect for him.

An editorial in Harper's Weekly (23 Dec. 1871) sheds some light on the character of Sherman. The writer of the editorial said in part, "as a debater, parliamentarian and a practical man in committees he is one of the most able and indefatigable men in the Senate."<sup>34</sup> Another editorial in the same magazine two years later said that Sherman was one of the most prominent national legislators.<sup>35</sup> A very severe criticism of Sherman is mentioned in his Recollections in connection with his statement that he did not escape the general criminations which surrounded the Grant administrations. The criticism referred to was published in the Cincinnati Enquirer during the early part of March, 1871, and suggested that the Southern railroad bill would have passed the Senate, if Senator Sherman had had a financial interest in it. In a letter written on 12 March 1871, to the editors of the paper Sherman explained that he had advocated the bill, that in fact he had introduced the bill, but could not get it passed because it

became lost in the press of the last minute consideration of appropriation bills. He denied categorically that he had ever had a pecuniary interest in any measure, and in another letter to the same editors written on 20 March he denied that he had entered the Senate a poor man and was at that time a rich man and invited the editors to inspect his properties and investigate the methods by which he had procured them.<sup>36</sup> In commenting on the letters which Sherman had written to the Enquirer the Shield and Banner, a Democratic paper published in Mansfield, Ohio, the home town of Sherman, said that they did not have any sympathy for the political views of Sherman, but went on to say that he was an honorable and highminded man.<sup>37</sup>

This last estimate is probably very close to the truth in a general way, and there is no good evidence to support a theory that John Sherman was dishonest or dishonorable in his public career.

The outstanding facts concerning the life of General Grant are so generally known that it will not be necessary to give more than a brief account of his early life prior to the time that he played such an important part in the Civil War. Ulysses S. Grant was born on 27 April 1822, at Point Pleasant, Ohio. His parents were Jesse Root Grant and Hannah Simpson Grant. His was a typical pioneer family. His ancestors first came to this country in 1630, about the same time that the ancestors of John Sherman arrived on the shores of America. The father of General Grant was a tanner by trade and became quite successful in his work. He moved about quite a bit as was the fashion among pioneering folks. General Grant was the oldest child in the family. When he

was a year old the family moved to Georgetown, Ohio. It was in Georgetown that he grew to boyhood and received his early education. In the year 1836-37 he attended the Maysville Seminary, at Maysville, Kentucky. In 1838, his father who was always anxious to give his son a good education, sent him to a boarding school at Ripley, Kentucky. He attended this school until appointed to West Point in the following year. At West Point he was not a good scholar, but he managed to satisfy all of the requirements for graduation. After graduation he was commissioned as a brevet second lieutenant and was assigned to the Fourth United States Infantry. He spent eleven years in the Army and served at many widely scattered places. He saw service in the Mexican War, and although cited for bravery on one or two occasions he did not obtain any great military prestige. While on duty at St. Louis before the Mexican War, Grant met Julia Dent, daughter of a typical Southern family. They were married in August, 1848. In 1852, after some garrison duty in Michigan, he was sent to California. He remained there until 1854 when an incident occurred which forced his resignation. Grant was paying off his company while under the influence of liquor. His superior officer heard about this breach of good conduct and gave him the choice of resigning or standing charges. Grant resigned and with the aid of some borrowed money, returned to New York, and by borrowing more money there he was able to get to St. Louis and rejoin his family. He tried various kinds of business enterprises and after making a failure in several his family helped him out. He was getting a fair start in the leather business at Galena, Illinois when the War broke out.<sup>38</sup>

A preliminary survey of some of the outstanding characteristics of General Grant will be of value in interpreting many of the events which will be discussed later. There was, until recently, a great deal of uniformity among biographers with respect to the interpretation placed on the character of Grant. His tremendous popularity made it imperative that the character sketches of Grant coincide with the popular hero worship. With few exceptions the magazine articles and discussions were very complimentary to Grant. Quite naturally the reputations of the contemporaries of Grant, particularly those who opposed his policies, suffered in comparison.

One of the extravagant characterizations of Grant will serve as an introduction to the general treatment of his character. The following material was written in connection with a review of his Memoirs. It was written after his death. This particular writer said that Grant had more to do with war than any other American since Washington; that he kept his balance although his rise to fame was rapid; that he was simple, free from rancour, firm, resolute, sympathetic, frank, loved justice, unostentatious and modest; that he did not hold grudges nor was he boastful. All together the writer said he was a man of lovable and noble character.<sup>39</sup> Another reviewer of the Memoirs of Grant said that there was no boasting or pleading in the Memoirs and that they were written in simple, direct style. W.F.G. Shanks, in an article in Harper's Magazine, made some rather surprising comments concerning the character of Grant. He admitted that Grant did not meet the physical requirements of the popular

idea of a general, but went on to say that he was quiet, reserved, sleepy-looking, strong and reticent. He said further that Grant seldom asked advice; that he possessed the ability to manage a large army well, but the most amazing statement is that his ability to manage his subordinates contributed to the success of Grant.<sup>41</sup> The same writer at an earlier date had written an even more complimentary sketch of Grant. At that time he said that Grant was one of the noblest characters that the war had produced. He further said that Grant was original, energetic, deliberate, cool, pertinacious and persistent. He did not point out, however, that Grant did not make an effective or dramatic picture because he was not dignified in appearance. With this brief omission the writer went on to say that Grant possessed an inventive faculty and that he was not easily discouraged and reached his climax by saying that he was modest, unselfish, unambitious, practical, systematic, magnanimous, undemonstrative, simple and closed by saying that he would live forever as a good honest man.<sup>42</sup>

In order to give variety to this character analysis the opinions of Gideon Welles will be given next. Definite expressions of opinion concerning Grant by Welles date from approximately July 1864. During that month the Confederate troops were making raids which came close to Washington at times. On the occasion of one such raid, Welles said that there was neglect, ignorance, folly, and imbecility to the last degree. He continued his remarks at this juncture by saying that the Confederates might easily have taken Washington and that Stanton, Halleck and Grant must be asleep or dumb.<sup>43</sup> The last statement is somewhat different from

a previous statement made by Welles in which he expressed the belief that Grant enjoyed the confidence of the people in Washington and the country at large.<sup>44</sup> Again in the summer of 1864 Welles remarked that Grant had an immense force which was being reinforced daily and with it he could push to any objective, but he added, "he seems destitute of skill and strategy."<sup>45</sup> On another occasion Welles remarked that Grant was dull and heavy, possessed no originality, but did not give up easily.<sup>46</sup> The next two remarks made by Welles are very suggestive. He said that his confidence in Grant was not very great,<sup>47</sup> and that Grant was reticent and less able than was supposed.<sup>48</sup> In his next comment Welles made a statement which he frequently reiterated: "Grant relies upon others, but does not know men, he cannot discriminate. He continued by saying that he did not think that Grant was equal to his task."<sup>49</sup> At a somewhat later date Welles made the comment that it was unfortunate that Grant permitted Butler to dominate him and Welles added as an after-thought the statement that Fox said that, "Grant occasionally gets drunk."<sup>50</sup> The next comment made by Welles was an elaboration of the idea that Grant could not discriminate. He said he was apprehensive that, "General Grant has not discriminative powers as regards men and fails in measuring their true character and adaptability to particular service. He has some weak and improper surroundings and does not appreciate the strong and particular points of character, but thinks what one man can do another can achieve also."<sup>51</sup> Welles did admit that Grant had some good points when he discussed the work of Grant in closing up the Rebellion. He said that Grant

showed talent and that he must be conceded some ability as a general. He suggested in addition that Grant was slow and utterly destitute of genius, but that his final movements were masterly. He also repeated a common criticism that Grant was careless with the lives of his men.<sup>52</sup>

One characteristic that critics of Grant frequently accuse him of possessing is the trait of jealousy. Welles apparently believed that Grant was jealous. In a footnote on page 285 of the second volume of his Diary, Welles commented that the first time he had noticed Grant's jealous nature was the occasion of the difference of opinion between him and Lincoln over the battle of Stony Ridge. Welles said that he was jealous of Thomas and McClelland.<sup>53</sup> The idea of jealousy as a trait in the character of Grant was remarked upon by Welles at a later date when he said that Grant struck the final blows at Richmond in order to keep Sherman from getting all of the credit for the successful prosecution of the War.<sup>54</sup> Aside from merely personal traits Welles did not think much of the ability of Grant as a politician. He said that Grant did not have any reverence for the Constitution; that he had no intelligent ideas concerning constitutional government; and furthermore, that he did not have any political principles.<sup>55</sup> In a conversation with Welles, Blair said he considered Grant a shrewd man. Welles said he considered that the popularity of Grant was due to his military record and that he was stolid, stubborn, apparently simple-minded and perhaps honestly disposed. He also suggested that Grant was insincere, very ambitious, possessed cunning of a low order, and that he was unreliable, and perhaps untruthful.<sup>56</sup> The idea that Grant was magnanimous to an

exaggerated degree is refuted by two references which Welles made in his Diary. One concerned the birthday party of President Johnson which Grant would not permit his children to attend,<sup>57</sup> and the other was the conditional acceptance by Grant of an invitation to dinner given by the New York Bar Association in honor of Evarts. Grant said that he would not attend if Welles, Randall and McCulloch were going to be there and his friends went so far as to arrange another banquet in New York in order that Grant would have a legitimate excuse for refusing to attend the banquet in honor of Evarts if the three above-mentioned Secretaries were there.<sup>58</sup> Welles remarked that everyone was disgusted with the attitude of Grant.<sup>59</sup> That Grant was not so simple and modest is shown by his attitude on his trip around the world, during which he demanded royal honors although he pretended to be a common citizen. He nearly caused trouble in England at a court function when he insisted upon taking precedence over the foreign diplomats.<sup>60</sup> George W. Julian visited Grant at City Point in his capacity as a member of the Congressional Committee on the Conduct of the War. He said that Grant impressed everyone by his common sense, but that he drank too much.<sup>61</sup> Logan, in his Political Recollections, quoted Lincoln as follows, "We have now at the head of the Armies a man in whom all the people have confidence."<sup>62</sup> Whereas Welles called Grant a "Political Ignoramus",<sup>63</sup> the writer of an editorial upon the 'Intellectual Character of Grant' paid high tribute to the intellectual capacity of Grant. The latter writer enumerated several characteristics of Grant as follows: reserved and self effacing, avoids display, firm, simple, patient, energetic, magnanimous, and honest. He went on to say that the firmness of Grant was notorious,

but that it did not seem to be sheer stubbornness, but based upon judgment. He continued by saying that in little things Grant let others have their way. The writer also stated that Grant had a remarkable insight into character and a keen insight into the immediate motives of people. He added that Grant could detect flattery and cajolery very easily and that his faculties were brightest in a crisis.<sup>64</sup>

It can be readily seen that a definite conclusion with regard to the character of Grant cannot be reached on the basis of the material in hand. The different viewpoints have been suggested and many diverse conclusions may be drawn from them. The thing that stands out as one of the greatest defects in the character of Grant was his habit of indifference towards matters of minor importance. His practice of ignoring the minor things and letting other people handle them opened the way for a lot of questionable dealing for simply by minimizing something, an unscrupulous individual would be free from interference by Grant. The question of the character of Grant is so involved and complicated that only a brief discussion can be presented in this investigation.

## Chapter II. The Civil War Period.

John Sherman became a member of the Senate of the United States in March 1861, succeeding Salmon P. Chase, who had resigned to become Secretary of the Treasury in the Cabinet of President Lincoln. He took his place in the Senate chamber of 23 March.<sup>65</sup> His first reaction was one of deep humiliation that the Southern men should be permitted to continue in the Senate after their state had seceded. He considered that immediate expulsion was the only wise course.<sup>66</sup>

Early in his career Sherman turned his attention to financial matters and it was in the general field of finance that he became recognized as one of the outstanding authorities on his day. During the early days of the Civil War Sherman took an active part in framing the revenue measures which authorized the raising of money to carry on the War. He was instrumental in the passage of the Legal Tender Act and also of the National Banking Act.<sup>67</sup> Fessenden, a veteran Senator from Maine and the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Finance at the time that Sherman entered the Senate, said that Sherman made the most effective speech in favor of the legal tender clause. Sherman argued that Congress had the power to create legal tenders and that the necessity for it existed but he also pointed out that it was a temporary measure and would not dare to be repeated.<sup>68</sup> Sherman was elected to more terms in the Senate than any Ohioan had received prior to and including his official career. His work in the Senate was so outstanding that he was suggested for the Presidency in 1876 and again in 1880. His work was largely in the field of finance, but he did not confine

himself to one single field. He interested himself in many other fields of legislative activity, chiefly in railroads. On the basis of his legislative record Sherman should be accorded a place among the foremost legislators of his time.

Sherman did not take an active part in the debates of the first session of the Senate after he became a member. His most outstanding comment upon the affairs of the nation is contained in a letter which he wrote to his brother on 12 April 1861. In this letter he made the following prediction which history proved to be accurate: "Let me now record a prediction. whatever you may think of the signs of the time, the government will rise from this strife greater, stronger and more prosperous than ever. It will display energy and military power. The men who have confidence in it, and do their duty by it, may reap whatever there is of honor and profit in public life, while those who look on merely as spectators in the storm will fail to discharge the highest duty of a citizen, and suffer accordingly in public estimation..."<sup>69</sup> That Senator Sherman was willing to go to any lengths to win the War and preserve the Union is shown by a speech that he made in the Senate early in the course of the War. He said, "I would stake the last life, the last dollar, the last man, upon the prosecution of the War. Indeed, I cannot contemplate the condition of my country if it shall be dissevered and divided... No, Mr. President, rather than allow this war to terminate except upon the restoration of the Union intact in all its breadth and length, I would sacrifice the last man and see the country itself submerged."

"Rather than yield to traitors or the intervention of foreign powers, rather than bequeath to the next generation a broken Union, and an interminable Civil War, I would light the torch of fanaticism and destroy all that the labor of two generations has accumulated. Better to desert and universal poverty than disunion. Better the war of the French Revolution than an oligarchy founded upon the labor of slaves... If we conquer a peace by preserving the Union, the Constitution, our nationality, all our ample territories, the rebound of prosperity in this country will enable a single generation easily to pay the national debt, even if the War is protracted until desolation is written upon every rebel hearthstone."<sup>70</sup> This opinion is significant in view of the fact that some critics of Sherman said that he did not support a uniform policy, towards the South, and that he was inclined to be erratic in his attitude towards the War. One can not read the above quotations without feeling that Mr. Sherman was willing to fight until a complete victory was obtained and then be ready to support such measures as would guarantee a firm Union free from Southern domination.

The activities of Sherman during the early part of the struggle were along the same line as those of other public men. He became so interested in the military operations that he seriously considered resigning from the Senate to accept a commission in the Army.<sup>71</sup> After the adjournment of the special session of Congress in the summer of 1861, Sherman organized "Sherman's Brigade", a body of troops consisting of two regiments of infantry, a battery of artillery and a squadron of cavalry.<sup>72</sup> Garfield said that these

moves on the part of Sherman were just done for buncombe (see page 11) but it is to be doubted that that statement is a whole truth. Sherman might have been animated by a desire to obtain a reputation which would be more national in extent, but he was probably motivated in large part by patriotic motives and a feeling that he ought to be doing his part. It is probably a fortunate thing that John Sherman did not participate in the military phases of the War to any greater extent than he did for if the general was lost, the financier was saved and in war, money is of equal importance with military strategy.

It is quite evident that John Sherman did not approve wholeheartedly of the program of the men who were in authority in Washington. His biographer said, "Sherman yielded gracefully to the Administration often abandoning his own judgment on executive recommendations because of his appreciation of the dreadful emergency, and his reluctance to do anything which might in any way embarrass the prosecution of the War by those in control."<sup>73</sup> In this same connection Sherman wrote to his brother: "I cannot respect some of the constituted authorities, yet I will cordially support and aid them while they are authorized to administer the government."<sup>74</sup> It cannot be stated positively and without qualification that he agreed with and submitted to the Administration for at times he criticized the conduct of the War and even severely criticized Lincoln for lack of vigor and for seeming irresolution.<sup>75</sup> It is known from the Memoirs of Fessenden that Sherman was a strong advocate of the Harris Resolution of 17 December 1862, which suggested the advisability of appointing a committee to investigate the desirability of recommending some cabinet changes.

In this connection Sherman said he didn't think that the resolution ought to be so broad as to include all of the Cabinet members for he thought that Chase was a very able Secretary of the Treasury, and he doubted if changing the Cabinet would remedy the evil. He continued his argument by saying that the real difficulty was with the President himself. He said that the President had neither dignity, order or firmness and suggested going to the President directly and telling him of his faults.<sup>76</sup> Thus it is seen that Sherman criticised the President and his Administration quite severely in spite of his tendency to support them through thick and thin.

It wasn't on the field of battle that John Sherman aided the North in winning the War, but in the Committee room of the Finance Committee of the Senate and in the halls of the Senate itself where he defended the sound financial measures which were proposed to furnish the means for financing it. Although the second youngest Senator at the time, he was a member of the committee on Finance and according to his own modest admission in his Recollections he was second only to Fessenden, the chairman, in bearing the burden of the work.<sup>77</sup> One great piece of work was his success in retaining the legal tender clause in the Currency Bill of 5 February 1862. In advocating the legal tender clause Sherman had to oppose Fessenden, the chairman of the committee, and many other leading senators. Fessenden, himself, admitted that Sherman made the most effective speech in favor of the legal tender clause. (cf. pages 22 and 23) In answering the arguments against the bill as a whole Sherman said that he disliked to vote for it, that he preferred gold to paper, but added that there

was no other choice. It was either paper money or a fractured government.<sup>78</sup> There is one characteristic of the financial policy advocated by Sherman which is outstanding and interesting in view of the emphasis placed by recent Republican leaders upon the same item. Mr. Sherman favored economy at all times during the War, but his efforts were rendered almost void of effect by the grinding necessity of the times. Through out his entire career economy was the keynote of his policy.

Mr. Sherman was also very instrumental in pressing the National Banking act to a successful conclusion. In all matters relating to finance he was consulted and although his views differed considerably from those held by Chase, the latter often depended upon Sherman for advice and legislative support. Their chief point of difference was with respect to financing the War. Mr. Chase believed that loans should furnish the principal revenue and Mr. Sherman believed that taxation should be made to yield as much as possible. It is sufficient to say that Sherman did a great deal to aid the North in achieving ultimate victory by participating in the framing and passing of the many financial bills which provided the funds for prosecuting the War.

The military phases of the struggle attracted the interest of Sherman quite early. His military ideas were influenced a great deal by those of his brother, William Tecumseh Sherman. It is with respect to the military phases of the War that John Sherman first expressed an opinion of Grant. It is a generally accepted fact that there was a deep friendship between Grant and W.T. Sherman. It is also true, though not so well known, perhaps,

that there existed a great deal of real comradeship between W.T. Sherman and John Sherman. Their correspondence dates back to the days when W.T. Sherman was in the military school at West Point, and it continued through out their lives with the exception of the years in which they lived in the same city. They were constantly advising each other. W.T. Sherman, during his stay in Louisiana, where he was the head of a military school, wrote frequently to John, advising moderation concerning the southern views and institutions. John, on his part, advised W.T. Sherman concerning his course after the latter left Louisiana. Their letters suggest that there was perfect accord between the two brothers. Such being the case it was only natural that John Sherman should share some of the views of W.T. Sherman concerning Grant. Furthermore W.T. Sherman and Grant were co-workers in so many enterprises that John Sherman could not criticise Grant without criticising his brother at the same time. The attitude of John Sherman towards Grant during the early part of the War was best expressed by a speech made in Congress shortly after the battle of Pittsburg Landing in April, 1862. Coolidge, in his biography of Grant, said, "John Sherman in the Senate, alone dared to come to Grant's defense, drawing to himself the angry protests of Harlan of Iowa against the attempt to bolster up the reputation of Grant."<sup>79</sup> Sherman probably had two other motives in his speech. One is clear and that is that he was defending the Ohio troops against the imputation that they did not do their part in the battle. The other motive is not clear on the surface, but the circumstances seem to indicate that he was defending W.T. Sherman who was suffering from newspaper abuse just as much as Grant.

With these added motives the defense of Grant by Sherman can be discounted as far as throwing any light on the relations existing between John Sherman and General Grant.

Before turning to a consideration of the activities of Grant during the Civil War period a brief discussion of the views of Sherman towards slavery might prove interesting and valuable. On 11 February, 1861, Sherman introduced the following resolution in the House, "Resolved, That neither the Congress of the United States, nor the people or governments of the slaveholding states have the constitutional right to legislate upon or interfere with slavery in any of the slaveholding states in the Union."<sup>80</sup>

Blaine in his Recollections commented upon the fact that Sherman favored legislation which would entrench slavery in the states where it already existed.<sup>81</sup> Sherman did not recommend abolition nor any extreme measures with respect to the South. During the period which followed the War Sherman was a moderate from the point-of-view of the North and a radical from the point-of-view of the South. It is probable that Sherman was merely following the guide of his own personality for he seemed by nature to be a conservative. He was willing to accept the situation as it was to avoid a conflict, but once roused, he was determined that his views should prevail.

While Sherman was serving in the Senate, Grant was serving on the battlefield. The struggle of Grant to get back into the Army was a long one and filled with many disappointments. Just prior to the breaking out of the War, Grant was in favor of a middle-course policy, and it is quite likely that he would have voted for Douglas instead of for Lincoln if he could have qualified

for the right to vote in Illinois. When the War finally broke out there was no doubt in the mind of Grant as to which side he should help. The big question that confronted him was how to get back into the regular army. He began in an inauspicious fashion by organizing the Illinois militia and volunteer soldiery. After completing this work he tendered his services to the War Department, but his letter was lost and was not found until after the War was over. He tried to get an appointment to the staff of General McClellan, but did not succeed. He was called back to Illinois, to take command of the Twenty-first Illinois as a Colonel of volunteers. He saw service first in various parts of Missouri and was then transferred to Cairo, Illinois. His rapid rise and his ultimate promotion to the rank of lieutenant-general resulted in a great deal of hero-worship which tended to make a fictitious Grant, who attained a vast amount of political prestige. His popularity among the people made him a desirable asset to any political group or party that had ambitions of getting control of the government.

The popularity of Grant was not confined to the North, but extended to the South where his magnanimous treatment of Lee and his surrendered army made his name a household word in many homes in the South. This popularity was increased by the more or less moderate course which Grant advocated concerning the rehabilitation of the South and his insistence that the terms of his agreement with Lee be held inviolate. There appears, then, in the post-war period, the spectacle of a man, unversed in political ways; without a definite anchorage of personal opinion and policy; unused to the ways of politicians and party leaders; unsuspecting of those who

claimed to be his friends and unmindful of the way in which his popularity was used. The politicians of the day were principally interested in the popularity of Grant and not the man himself. The Republican party, anxious to consolidate and maintain its newly gained supremacy could not afford to overlook the vast military prestige of Grant in casting about for ways and means to retain their grip on the national government.

The relations of Sherman and Grant during this period can be summed up very briefly. Sherman was a staunch supporter of the Republican; he was a severe critic of the Democratic party and particularly of Buchanan, whom he regarded as a traitor. Grant, on the other hand, did not take any interest in politics and his political leanings can only be judged from the slight information that he voted for Buchanan in 1856. If that is accepted at its face value and if the further bit of information that he would have voted for Douglas in 1860 had he been eligible to vote is accepted also it can be seen that his leanings were towards the Democratic party and that in fact he was a Democrat, if he was anything at all. How Grant became a Republican and therefore a member of the same party that Sherman belonged to is the story of the Reconstruction period and will be outlined in the next chapter.

### Chapter III. The Reconstruction Period.

The place Mr. Sherman occupied in the great maelstrom of reconstruction was briefly set forth by Burton in his biography of Sherman. In introducing his chapter on the Reconstruction Period, Burton said, "It was unfortunate that the bloody years of the Civil War should be followed by the stormy period of Reconstruction. This period does not present a picture pleasant to contemplate. It was characterized by angry clashes between the executive and legislative, which rendered a dispassionate solution of the pending problems impossible. In this contest Senator Sherman probably found more that was distasteful to him than in any other portion of his political career. He was by nature a conservative, but was also a very strong party man and above all things reluctant to break from those who had been his associates in the political and financial measures of the great struggle. It was impossible, after the bitter contest in which success had been achieved with so much difficulty to take a moderate view of the situation. The returning soldiers in each of the two sections dominated public opinion. Neither could so soon forget."<sup>82</sup> Sherman has been frequently accused of adopting inconsistent courses on various topics. He did change in his attitude toward President Johnson but this may have been due to his conscientious attempts to follow the dictates of his own conscience which prescribed moderation and conciliation and, at the same time, to stay in line with those who were his political friends and supporters. If he wavered, it was about the central line and not from one extreme to the other.

Mr. Sherman was on very friendly terms with Johnson. For two years they sat side by side in the Senate and during the presidential campaign of 1864, Sherman accompanied Johnson to Indiana where the latter made patriotic speeches to great audiences. Sherman remarked in his Recollections that the arraignment by Johnson of the autocracy of slaveholders in the South was very effective.<sup>83</sup> The only other direct reference which Sherman made to Johnson in his Recollections was with regard to the condition of Johnson at the time of his inauguration. He said that Johnson was plainly intoxicated and that he made a rambling, maudlin, stump speech in the Senate immediately after taking the oath of office.<sup>84</sup>

In view of the fact that President Johnson has been so severely arraigned by historians, and the laity at large through the influence of historians, it is essential that the explanation by Mr. Sherman of the conduct of Johnson prior to the opening of Congress in the fall of 1865, be introduced at this point. Mr. Sherman in his Recollections laid part of the blame upon Mr. Lincoln for his refusal to approve the Wade-Davis Bill. He said, "I have always thought that Mr. Lincoln made a serious mistake in defeating a measure, which, if adopted, would have averted many if not all of the difficulties that subsequently arose in the reconstruction of the Rebel states."<sup>85</sup> The closing session of Congress in 1865 failed to enact any legislation to guide the President in reconstructing the states. Sherman said in that connection, "Thus by the disagreement between Congress and President Lincoln, which commenced two years before the close of the War, there was no law upon the statute books to guide either the

President or the people of the Southern states in their efforts to get back into the Union."<sup>86</sup> It is significant to note that Sherman does not blame Johnson for the trouble so much as Lincoln. He suggested that Johnson's hands were tied, and went on to say that he had to do something and the something that he did was to follow out the plan of reconstruction as outlined by Lincoln.<sup>87</sup> The foregoing statements made by a man who was close to the center of affairs add to the growing mass of evidence that Johnson was not wholly to blame for the reconstruction trouble. If the attitude of Sherman is analyzed the conclusion cannot be escaped that the legislative-executive quarrels did not begin with the death of Lincoln and the succession of Johnson to the Presidential chair, but at least one year before that time. If these quarrels began at such an early date and if Lincoln erred in refusing to approve the Wade-Davis Bill and if Johnson merely followed out the plan of his dead chief, then the position that Johnson was responsible for the whole of the reconstruction troubles becomes untenable. Sherman went even farther in furnishing material for the recasting of the history of this period. He plainly approved of the plan of reconstruction as outlined by Lincoln and followed by Johnson. In his Recollections Sherman said, "After this long lapse of time I am convinced that Mr. Johnson's scheme of reorganization was wise and judicious. It was unfortunate that it had not the sanction of Congress and that events soon brought the President and Congress into hostility."<sup>88</sup> Sherman went on to say that Lincoln and Johnson were substantially right in going ahead with their own plans; that these plans safeguarded the rights of the freedmen

and that Congress was to be made the judge of the time when the Southern states were to be represented again; that they conceded to Congress the right to change, alter or modify the acts of the President; that he, Johnson, fairly and fully executed every act passed by Congress with or without his assent.<sup>89</sup>

Furthermore, Sherman said that all of the acts of Johnson and his proclamations prior to the meeting of Congress were wise and expedient. He attributed the difficulty between Congress and Johnson to the personal conduct of Johnson, particularly his treatment of Congress and leading Congressmen.<sup>90</sup> In the controversy between Congress and the President, Sherman tried to act as peacemaker,<sup>91</sup> and it was thought for a time that he would be able to bring about a reconciliation between them.<sup>92</sup> Sherman regarded the unreasoning pugnacity of Johnson as the greatest defect in his character.<sup>93</sup>

In his self-appointed role of peacemaker, Sherman made a long speech in the Senate on 26 February 1866, four days after the violent attack by Johnson upon certain members of Congress. In this speech Sherman called attention to the fact that Johnson was following out the reconstruction policy of Lincoln and that the Cabinet was in full accord with him.<sup>94</sup> He expressed confidence that Johnson would not turn the government in the Southern states back to those who had provoked the War.<sup>95</sup> The following quotation illustrates the opinion held by Sherman of Johnson prior to his shift to the more radical group of senators. He said, "We have duties to perform to the business interests of the country, in which we need the assistance of the President. We have every motive for harmony with him and with each other, and for a

generous and manly trust in his patriotism. If ever the time shall come when I can no longer confide in his devotion to the principles upon which he was elected, I will bid farewell to Andrew Johnson with unaffected sorrow. I will remember when he stood in this very spot, five years ago, repelling with unexampled courage the assaults of traitors. He left in their hands wife, children, property, and home, and staked them all on the results. I will remember that when a retreating general would have left Nashville to its fate, that again, with heroic courage, he maintained his post. I will remember the fierce conflicts and trials through which he and his fellow-compatriots in East Tennessee maintained our cause in the heart of the Confederacy. I will remember the struggles he had with the aristocratic element of Tennessee, never ashamed of his origin and never far from the hearts of the people."

"...Time, as he tells you in his message, is a great element of reform, and time is on your side. ...so I say to all who doubt Andrew Johnson, or who wish to move more rapidly than he can, to block up awhile to consolidate their great victory with the certainty that reason and the Almighty will continue their work. All wisdom will not die with us. The highest human wisdom is to do all the good you can, but not to sacrifice a possible good to attempt the impracticable. God knows that I do not urge harmony and conciliation from any personal motive. The people of my native state have intrusted me with a position here extending four years beyond the termination of the President's term of office. He can grant me no favor."

"If I believed for a moment that he would seek an alliance with those who, by either arms or counsel or even apathy, were

against their country in the recent war, and will turn over to them the high powers intrusted to him by the recent Union party, then, sir, he is dishonored, and will receive no assistance from me; but I will not force him into that attitude. If he shall not prove false to the declaration made by him in his veto message, that his strongest desire was to secure to the freedmen the full enjoyment of their freedom and property, then I will not quarrel with him as to the means used. And while, as he tells us in the same message, he only asks for states to be represented which are presented in the attitude of harmony and loyalty and in the persons of representatives whose loyalty cannot be questioned under any constitutional or legal test, surely we ought not to separate from him until, at least we prescribe a test of their loyalty, upon which we are willing to stand. We have not done it yet. I will not try him by new creeds. I will not denounce him for hasty words uttered in repelling personal affronts."

"I see him yet surrounded by the cabinet of Abraham Lincoln, pursuing Lincoln's policy. No word from me shall drive him into political fellowship with those who, when he was one of the moral heroes of the war, denounced him, spit upon him, and despitefully used him. The association must be self-sought, and even then I will part with him in sorrow, but with the abiding hope, that the same Almighty power that has guided us through the recent war will be with us still in our new difficulties until every state is restored to its full communion and fellowship, and until our nation purified by war, will assume among the nations of the earth the grand position hoped for by

Washington, Clay, Webster, Lincoln and the hundreds of thousands of unnamed heroes who gave up their lives for its glory."<sup>96</sup> Thus did Sherman defend Johnson and assert that he would continue to work with him, but unfortunately the events of the next few weeks intensified the feeling against Johnson. It seemed to Sherman that Johnson had abandoned the Republican party and Sherman then joined heartily with his political associates in the measures to assure loyal reorganization of the state governments. The loyalty of Sherman to Johnson persisted until Johnson vetoed the Civil Rights bill. The opinion of Johnson as expressed by Sherman on the very eve of the veto of the Civil Rights bill indicates that he expected Johnson to approve the measure. Sherman expressed this opinion in a speech made at Bridgeport, Connecticut, on 17 March, 1866. In this speech he informed the people that there was no need for alarm over the differences between Congress and the President. He said: "Let me tell you, as the solemn conviction with which I address you tonight, that Andrew Johnson never will throw the power we have given him into the hands of the Copperhead party of the United States..."

"I have many reasons for this faith. One is that no nomination has ever been sent by Andrew Johnson to the Senate of the United States of any man of that stripe of politics. No flattery, no cajolery can draw him from that line. He is a man who fights his own battles, and whether they are old friends or foes that assail him he fights them with equal freedom, and boldness, and sometimes perhaps, indiscreetly; but that is a fault in his character which need excite no uneasiness

in the minds of the people."<sup>97</sup> Sherman went on to say that the Congress had sent the Civil Rights bill to the President on the day that he had left Washington and asserted his belief that the President would sign it.<sup>98</sup> Mr. Sherman was very much disappointed when the President vetoed the Civil Rights bill and voted with the majority to pass the bill over the veto. From this time on he was openly opposed to the President not only on matters of reconstruction, but also upon appointments and financial questions. Another reason why Sherman changed his attitude towards the mild reconstruction policy of the President was the feeling that the Ku Klux outrages were sponsored by men who were unfit to live and ought to be suppressed immediately. Furthermore he considered that the Southern legislatures were responsible for the harsh treatment accorded to the freedmen. The change in the attitude of Sherman towards the President can be dated from the time of the veto of the Civil Rights bill or approximately on 27 March 1866. It can be stated with certainty that he was definitely opposed to and suspicious of Johnson by 8 July 1866, because on this date he wrote a letter to his brother W.T. Sherman, from the Senate Chamber in which he advised W.T. to refrain from giving expression to any political opinions. He also criticised Congress for what it failed to do and not for what it did do. With respect to the President, he said, "As to the President, he is becoming Tylerized. He was elected by the Union party for his openly expressed radical sentiments, and now he seeks to rend to pieces this party. There is a sentiment among the people that this is dishonor. It looks so to me. What

Johnson is, is from and by the Union party. He now deserts it and betrays it. He may varnish it up, but after all, he must admit that he disappoints the reasonable expectations of those who entrusted him with power. He may, by a coalition with the Copperheads and rebels, succeed, but the simple fact that nine-tenths of them who voted for him do not agree with him, and that he only controls the other tenth by power entrusted to him by the Union party, will damn him forever. Besides, he is insincere; he has deceived and misled his best friends. I know he led many to believe he would agree to the Civil Rights bill, and nearly all who conversed with him until within a few days believed he would acquiesce in the amendments, and even aid in securing their adoption. I almost fear he contemplates civil war. Under those circumstances you, Grant and Thomas ought to be clear of political complications. As for myself, I intend to stick to finance, but wherever I can, I will moderate the actions of the Union party, and favor conciliation and restoration."<sup>99</sup> In January 1867, he criticised the President severely for keeping rejected appointees in office, and a little later he disclaimed any unkind feelings towards Johnson, but said that he had no right to turn men out of office purely for political differences with the Administration.<sup>100</sup> In February of the same year, he said, that, "The whole revenue system had been upturned to reward partisans and betray a party."<sup>101</sup>

It is difficult to arrive at any satisfactory conclusions with respect to the change in the attitude of Sherman towards Johnson. The reasons that he gave for his action have been given. It cannot be said that Sherman was motivated by partisan

considerations, but when it is considered that by his own admission Sherman was strongly partisan; that his whole political future as well as the success of his financial ideas depended upon his maintaining his connection with the majority in Congress; that Sherman was an astute observer of the trend in public opinion, and that his state furnished many radical leaders in Congress, it seems a logical conclusion that Sherman sank his own views in order to stay on top, politically. Frequently his natural conservatism asserted itself and he found himself classed with the group that was opposing the radical program.<sup>101</sup> In the interplay of events connected with the working out of the radical program and accumulating the support necessary to make it function the popularity of Grant was brought into the whole question. The involving of Grant in the question of reconstruction naturally brought him and John Sherman into the same sphere of activity.

Following the War Grant came to Washington to establish his headquarters as general-in-chief of the Army. The comment which Sherman made concerning Grant when the latter first came to Washington to take command of the armies during the War is very interesting. Sherman said that he did not recall when he first met Grant, but was confident that it was before he came to Washington in March, 1864. He went on to say that his arrival in Washington was not generally known until he entered the dining hall of the Willard Hotel.<sup>102</sup> Sherman described his first recorded meeting with Grant as follows: "He came alone, and was modestly looking for a vacant seat when I recognized him and went to him and invited him to a seat at my table. He quietly accepted, and

then the word soon passed among the many guests at the tables, that Grant was there and something like an ovation was given him."<sup>103</sup> Edmonds, in his *Life of Grant*, describes this visit Grant to Washington in more detail. The occasion of the visit was the receipt of the commission as Lieutenant-General and position as commander-in-chief of the Army. Edmonds said that, "Grant had approached Washington with the soldier's dread of politics and politicians."<sup>104</sup> Grant was lionized at the Capital and many of the political leaders of the time took occasion to register their opinion of him. Among those who did this was John Sherman, who in a letter to his brother said, "his will and common sense are the strongest features of his character. He is plain and modest, and so far bears himself well."<sup>105</sup>

Immediately after the surrender of Lee at Appomattox Courthouse, Grant hurried to Washington to curtail enlistments and the heavy expenses which were piling up at the rate of four millions of dollars a day. The general outlines of the activities of Grant prior to the assassination of Lincoln are well known, as is the fact that Grant narrowly missed being a member of the fatal party. The activities of Grant and Lincoln in bringing the war to a close quite naturally brought them into close relationship, but when Johnson came into office the relationship between the Executive and the popular General is not so definitely known.

The earliest contacts which Grant had with Johnson came at the time that Johnson was military governor of Tennessee and Grant was conducting the Chattanooga campaign.<sup>106</sup> In his capacity

as military governor, Johnson had won a large measure of deserved popularity due in large part to his energy and intense patriotism. He did not agree with the military authorities on many occasions, once protesting the appointing of W.T. Sherman to the Department of the Cumberland on the grounds that the people wanted Thomas, and again addressing a strong argument to the President in favor of retaining Granger in a command from which Grant had removed him.<sup>107</sup> These events happened in the spring of 1864.

Grant used a great deal of tact in straightening out the Sherman-Johnson peace terms and was of great service to the Administration in many other ways. While the reconstruction question was in a confused state and Congress had not legislated upon it, the sympathies of Grant were with Johnson.<sup>108</sup> When Johnson first succeeded Lincoln, the relations of Grant with him were of the most cordial nature. At first the only difference between them was the fact that Grant was more lenient than Johnson, but when Johnson changed his attitude, Grant was more in accord with Johnson than with Stanton.<sup>109</sup> In December, 1865, Grant made a trip through the South and on his return reported to Johnson, "I am satisfied that the mass of thinking people of the South accept the present situation of affairs in good faith."<sup>110</sup> Welles in his Diary said that Grant reported that the people were loyal and said that every consideration called for the early reestablishment of the Union.<sup>111</sup> This was certainly support for Johnson's plan of reconstruction and indicated that prior to this time Grant was in full accord with Johnson. A little later while on the 'swing around the circle' Grant told Welles that their views on reconstruction coincided and that he favored immediate

reestablishment of the Union and immediate representation of the states.<sup>112</sup> Such a statement indicates that he still favored the plan of reconstruction which was being advocated by Johnson.

Johnson on his part did not overlook the immense political advantage which would result from an intimate connection between Grant and the Administration. He took every possible means of establishing connections between himself and Grant. He wrote him personal notes on many occasions, sometimes more than once in a single day. It is alleged by Badeau that he tried to appear in public with Grant as much as possible and in many other ways he tried to create the impression that they were as one on the many problems which affected the nation. He went so far as to invite Grant to a reception in honor of the committee appointed by a convention in Philadelphia that had met to endorse the Presidential policy.<sup>113</sup> This angered Grant and was one of the forerunners of the break that came later.<sup>113</sup> Grant approved of the course of Johnson in vetoing the bill granting negro suffrage in the District of Columbia,<sup>114</sup> but the incident was just a minor break in the growth of strained relations between Johnson and Grant. Grant became suspicious when Johnson tried to send him on a diplomatic mission to Mexico and refused pointblank to go.<sup>115</sup> In August 1867, Johnson suspended Secretary of War Stanton and made Grant, Secretary ad interim. The open break between Grant and Johnson came early in the spring of 1868 when Grant turned the office back to Stanton instead of Johnson. The latter alleged that Grant had promised to turn the office back to

him. This episode provoked the open enmity between Johnson and Grant and ended with the impeachment proceedings which will be discussed as a separate phase of this problem.

This critical episode involves the question of Grant's relation with the Radicals. Grant was a very popular man with the many groups of politicians because his name added prestige to any movement. Johnson tried to keep on his side and the Radicals were trying to win him over to their side. The latter succeeded, partly due to the blunders of Johnson himself, and partly due to the fact that Grant realized that his political future would best be assured by connection with the more numerous group. Perhaps this is unfair to Grant, but it is difficult to escape the fact that he approved of the policy advocated by Johnson first and then within a year changed to an attitude of open hostility after having come into intimate contact with the Radical leaders in Congress during the intervening time. In discussing the attitude of Grant towards the Radicals the Diary of Gideon Welles will be followed because it contains a more or less connected account of the gradual deflection of Grant from the President to the Radical group. In using the Diary of Welles it must be remembered that several factors may have operated in such a way that it is not absolutely authentic from the historical point of view. It has been suggested that perhaps a portion of the Diary was written several years after the events occurred, if such is the case a great deal of allowance must be made for the frailty of the human memory. It is a known fact that Welles was an intensely loyal supporter of Johnson, but he was in reality

a Democrat and that his whole career was such that he naturally opposed the whole Radical program.

One of the first references that Welles made to Grant being tampered with by the Radicals was dated 6 April 1866. The occasion for the comment by Welles at this particular time was the last reception of the season given by General and Mrs. Grant. Welles said that the Radicals had had a preunderstanding to attend and appropriate General Grant or at least appropriate his name and influence to themselves.<sup>116</sup> Welles continued to say that Stevens and the other Radicals were very much discomfitted to find that Alexander H. Stephens was there.<sup>117</sup> If these statements made by Welles can be taken at their face value then it leads to the conclusion that the change of attitude on the part of Grant was occurring at approximately the same time that John Sherman changed his attitude. One inference from such a conclusion is that the winter and spring of 1866 must have been a period of great activity on the part of the Radicals to whip into line every available man of any influence. The next reference is to an event which occurred several months after the one just mentioned above. After Congress adjourned Johnson with a group of selected aides went on the famous or infamous as the case may be, 'swing around the circle' in an attempt to swing the congressional elections of the following autumn into his column. He detailed Grant to accompany him together with Admiral Farragut, some cabinet members including Seward and Welles, and several of his personal friends. Welles made the comment that Grant disliked Stanton very much and clung to the

President for at least the first half of the journey.<sup>118</sup>

At about the same time Welles made the statement that the Radicals were trying to use Grant to offset against the President; that he received louder cheers than the President, but also, that he behaved very discreetly.<sup>119</sup> In the same connection he stated that Grant understood the partisan motives and designs of the Radicals, but did not obviously permit them to move him from his proper course for a week or ten days,<sup>120</sup> and it was at this stage in the developments that Grant assured Welles that their views on reconstruction coincided and in addition he told Welles that he could forgive some of the Rebels but never the Copperheads.<sup>121</sup> The Radicals must have made progress slowly in their attempts to win over Grant. This is shown by the next reference which Welles made to Grant. He said that at first at Detroit, then Chicago, than at St. Louis and finally at Cincinnati it became obvious that Grant was listening to the arguments and appeals of the Radicals.<sup>122</sup> Perhaps one thing which influenced Grant to move into the Radical camp was the fact that he disliked some of the men with whom Johnson associated on the trip. Welles stated that Grant disliked being introduced by Hogan at St. Louis.<sup>123</sup> Hogan was a good friend of Johnson and was regarded as belonging to the Copperheads. It is interesting to notice that Welles said that the influence of Grant's father carried him into the Radical group.<sup>124</sup> It would be a still more interesting question to determine if that statement is true and if the baneful influence of the relatives of Grant upon him began that early in his career.

Following the 'swing around the circle' Grant left the Radical ranks on one occasion. He emphatically opposed the bill giving the negroes the right to vote in the District of Columbia, but denying that right to those who had helped the Rebels, not because it disenfranchised the whites, but because he thought it contemptible business for states who excluded negroes from voting at home to give them the right to vote in the District.<sup>125</sup> Welles commented at about the same time that Grant was influenced by Stanton and Washburne to urge the Southern states to accept the amendments.<sup>126</sup> The next statement by Welles throws the whole problem into an entirely different light. He said that the Radicals distrusted Grant, but were courting him assiduously. In the same connection he said that no one knew what he would do in a crisis, and hence did not dare to confide in him. The relations between Grant and Stanton are very confusing. It is difficult to believe that as much as Grant disliked Stanton openly, he would permit Stanton to dictate his policy for him, but Welles asserted that in the matter of selecting military governors in the South Grant was influenced by Stanton. Welles continued to say that Grant might have been influenced by Stanton, but that Grant was rightly disposed although there were some things which indicated subtlety and duplicity.<sup>127</sup> From this point on the evidence, such as it is, points towards the possibility of a doublecrossing policy by Grant. Within the space of a few days Welles made two comments which indicate two entirely different policies on the part of Grant. The two comments are dated in March, 1867. The first one suggested that in a conversation with General Dick Taylor Grant approved the policy of

Johnson, but added that he ought to get rid of Stanton.

Welles added that Stanton heard of the comment which Grant had made and tried to sacrifice Seward to save himself.<sup>128</sup> Later Welles made the comment, "It is stated freely that Grant was with Stanton on the floor of both houses urging Congress not to adjourn till next winter and leave the government to the President." Welles commented further that he thought that the rumor was true.<sup>129</sup>

If the account that Welles gave is accurate and can be relied upon then the next few comments which he made reveal the crux of the whole problem and the reason for the Radical Group-Grant negotiations. He said that Grant had party cunning and would try to run on a sort of non-partisan ticket.<sup>130</sup> He said further that the Radicals did not want him, but they couldn't help themselves for they needed him to succeed and he added that Grant couldn't help himself, but he really preferred the Democrats to the Republicans.<sup>131</sup> This period of time marked the definite change in the policy pursued by Grant for Welles commented that Grant had changed his views and furthermore blamed the change upon the deliberate efforts of Stanton and Holt. He went on to suggest that Johnson knew about it and permitted it to go on.<sup>132</sup> Welles did not go so far as to suggest that Grant was in the intrigue to cripple the President but he did think that Grant had been used, perhaps willingly used by the intriguers.<sup>133</sup> According to Welles the first man to come out and openly back Grant for the Presidency was Boutwell, whom he described as a fanatic and a person full of demagogic cunning.<sup>134</sup> Welles was fully convinced by December 1867,

that Grant was committed to the Radicals.<sup>135</sup> He also suggested that Thurlow Weed was supporting Grant for the presidency.<sup>136</sup>

The Secretary of War incident has been purposely left out of the above events in order to handle it as a separate problem. It was apparent to all who had any knowledge of the situation that Stanton was working at cross purposes with the President. After a long period of time in which the policy of Johnson suffered because of the intrigues of Stanton, he determined to suspend him from office. This he did in August 1867, and he immediately appointed Grant Secretary of War ad interim. In the sober light of history it seems that Johnson made two distinct mistakes in this connection, the first in not removing Stanton at least a year sooner and the second in appointing Grant to take his place. It is not necessary to take the word of Welles as a final authority upon the secret machinations of Grant against the President. In addition to the account which Welles gives which is severely critical of Grant, there is the book "Grant at Peace", by Adam Badeau, which is a justification of Grant in the most extreme sense. Badeau in his book seems to have operated on the theory that whatever Grant did was righteous and so he did not take any pains to cover up any of the activities of Grant. He seems to narrate with a great deal of relish the fact that during the summer of 1866, Grant was still obeying the orders of the President and was openly in accord with the President, but secretly and in reality he was doing more than all the country to thwart the designs of Johnson.<sup>137</sup> Badeau said that the course which Grant followed was his own and was not dictated by anyone else.<sup>138</sup>

The sequence of events as traced by Badeau are as follows and indicate that prior to March, 1867, Grant was in complete accord with Congress,<sup>139</sup> and by the summer of 1867, he was in open conflict with the President.<sup>140</sup> This takes the narration of events up to the removal of Stanton again. When Grant was appointed he protested against the removal of Stanton, but accepted the office just the same.<sup>141</sup> It is granted by students of the period that Grant was very successful as a Secretary of War and he did make many worthwhile reforms, but it is evident that he used the position as a good vantage point from which to carry on his work of undermining the President and of ingratiating himself in the good graces of a larger number of people. Welles summarized his opinion of Grant in a footnote on the bottom of page 175 in the third volume of his Diary. He said that Grant influenced Sheridan to follow the course which he did in Texas; that he protested to Johnson when Sheridan was removed; that Grant sent secret telegrams to the military governors sometimes countermanding orders and instructions sent out by the President; that Grant was in collusion with Stanton whom he disliked, and the other chief Radical conspirators; that Grant with great duplicity and vulgar cunning deceived the President and the rest of them; that Grant until the fall of 1866, was a decided supporter of the Administration and of the Lincoln-Johnson policy of Reconstruction, but flattered by attention began to have aspirations for political promotion. Welles said that Grant had very little political intelligence and no political experience. Welles went on to say that some men of both parties, though aware of his incapacity and unfitness for office, thought his military record would make

him available for the presidency, but Welles added that sensible men who came in contact with him were aware that he was destitute of all aptitude and experience to qualify himself for the position and declined to commit themselves to the intrigues of his elevation. Welles emphasized the Radical viewpoint again when he said that the Radicals were desperate, and believed that they could mold Grant to their wishes and views. Furthermore he suggested that the indifference and ignorance of Grant concerning civil and political affairs made him all the more acceptable to the Radicals. Welles said that the break between Grant and the Administration came after a period of hesitancy during which time Grant contrived while he was secretly dealing with the Radicals to deceive the President, to receive his confidences and an office from him. During the time that Johnson was advising with Grant, Grant was secretly writing to the generals countermanding the orders of the President.<sup>142</sup> Grant did not want his political aspirations published and did his best to keep them quiet, but he had fallen into Radical hands although he himself might have been rightly disposed. When Grant took over the office of the Secretary of War, he promised Johnson that he would let him know if he decided to give it up and thus give him time to choose another.<sup>143</sup> This promise was not kept by Grant and gave rise to the famous "question of veracity". The question was, "Who was telling the truth?" Of the two parties, Johnson had the stronger case because four members of the Cabinet testified to his version of the case and Welles said that the correspondence between Grant and Stanton which was brought to light as a result

of a Senate call for information, showed that Grant had played a false part, indeed a treacherous part with the President through out the whole proceedings.<sup>144</sup> He added that it had been a study with Grant to deceive the President; that he virtually admitted that he had lied to the President and deceived him. Welles further said that the Radicals were using Grant and Grant was using the Radicals.<sup>145</sup> Welles also said that Grant was callous with lives during the War and was equally as callous as to sympathies and moral obligations which make society clean, and in closing he suggested that Grant might have been trying to establish a military dictatorship.<sup>146</sup> In a direct comment upon the Secretary of War episode, Welles said that the manner of Grant at the Cabinet meeting following the event, showed that he had acted with duplicity, and that he acted humbly, was abject and hesitating.<sup>147</sup> The only inference that can be derived from the testimony which Welles recorded is that Grant was guilty of culpability in the episode of the removal of the Secretary of War and his own appointment, and that he had broken a promise to the executive. If this point of view is adhered to it leads to the logical conclusion that Grant deliberately prevaricated and denied that he had promised to deliver the office back to the President in case he decided to give it up. The whole question certainly turns upon the 'question of veracity'. Either Johnson or Grant gave a wrong account of the problem for their versions of the event vary so radically that they both cannot be right. Passing over the question of 'who told the truth?', for it is not material in this discussion, the effects of the event

must be emphasized. It is important simply because it led to the wide open break between Grant and Johnson which was never healed and the whole episode was one of the preliminary events that preceded the impeachment trial of the President.

The relations of Sherman and the Radicals has been suggested in part in the account of his relations with Johnson. His statement that after the veto of the Civil Rights bill he joined heartily with his political associates in providing for the reorganization of the South on a loyal basis, has already been mentioned. (cf. page<sup>37</sup>) The fact that he occasionally permitted his naturally conservatism to come to the surface and cause him to oppose certain features of the Radical program has also been mentioned. (cf. page<sup>40</sup>) The impression that is created by a study of the attitudes of Sherman and of his background, is that he was not in Radical company because he wanted to be there, but because there was not any other place that he could go and still be a vital factor in political life. A little information concerning the early attitude of Sherman towards the Radical reconstruction program is derived from a speech made by Senator Sumner in the Senate on the second of April, 1862. Sumner said in commenting upon a speech made by Sherman in which he opposed a part of the Reconstruction program (probably negro suffrage without restrictions) that, "This is not the first time that the Senator from Ohio, (Mr. Sherman) has set himself against the fundamental propositions of reconstruction."<sup>148</sup> In this connection it is interesting to note that Sherman also opposed Sumner's plan of taxing the slaves.<sup>149</sup> Sherman also opposed the resolution

introduced by Sumner declaring that the seceded states had forfeited all of their rights under the Constitution, and that therefore slavery ceased to exist and that Congress ought to assume jurisdiction over the vacated territory and ought to proceed to establish republican forms of government therein. This resolution was introduced into the Senate on February, 1862, and was the first mention of the subject of reconstruction in that body. In opposing the resolution, Sherman went so far as to say that it acknowledged the right of secession and that he could see no difference between the resolutions and the doctrines of Jefferson Davis.<sup>150</sup> Sherman also opposed Sumner on the question of freeing colored soldiers and their families.<sup>151</sup> Sumner made this suggestion in July 1864. During the early part of 1867 Sherman opposed the amendment proposed by Sumner to the bill providing for the admission of Nebraska. The amendment contemplated granting equal suffrage to all irrespective of race and color. Sherman said that it was not just to forbid a discrimination in Nebraska which was established in many existing states.<sup>152</sup> Sherman briefly stated his own change in attitude on the question of reconstruction in the Senate on 11 March 1867, when the subject of the representation of the states was being considered. He said, "A year ago I was not in favor of extending enforced negro suffrage upon the Southern states". The reason which he gave for this change of attitude was the rejection by the South of the Fourteenth amendment.<sup>153</sup> This explains how he reconciled his part in the preparation of the general reconstruction measure of March 1867 which required the southern states to grant negro suffrage.

Sherman opposed Sumner again on the series of resolutions proposed by him on 8 March 1867, in which provision was made for the completion of reconstruction by providing for schools, homesteads, and governments. Sherman did not oppose the resolutions on principle, but on the grounds that coming so soon after the first reconstruction act they would be regarded as mere declarations of opinion.<sup>155</sup> From the several examples that have been given, Sumner was apparently justified in accusing Sherman of opposing the Radical reconstruction program on several occasions.

From this general account of the attitudes of Sherman and Grant towards the Radicals, several conclusions can be drawn. In the first place it is apparent that both Sherman and Grant supported Johnson and approved of his policies during the first half of his administration. Sherman changed his attitude towards the President first. The veto of the Civil Right's bill, which occurred in March 1867 provoked his change in attitude. The episode of the suspension of Stanton and the ad interim appointment of Grant ad interim which began in August 1867 and culminated in the 'question of veracity' dispute in the spring of 1868, provoked the open change in the attitude of Grant towards Johnson. It is quite probable that Grant had been drifting away from the President for several months prior to the open break between them. In the second place there seems to be a similarity in the motive which caused Sherman and Grant to change their attitudes towards Johnson. These motives were in their essence political and not entirely dictated by the minds and consciences of the men involved. Sherman changed from his conservative tendencies to radical tendencies on

occasions when it was necessary for him to do so in order to keep on the good side of his political associates. Grant changed from a Democrat, therefore a conservative to a Radical and incidentally a Republican, because he had the most to gain in the end by so doing. That Grant was not overly pleased with his bedfellows is manifested in his comment to General Dick Taylor, in which he discredited the judgment of Johnson, expressed his dislike for Stanton, and revealed the fact that he distrusted the Senatorial group with which Stanton was associated.<sup>156</sup>

That Sherman did not agree consistently with his newly chosen associates is revealed by his relations with Sumner and the record of his opposition to some fundamental reconstruction propositions. In the third place both Sherman and Grant were conservatives. Most of the comments upon the character of Sherman point towards a characteristically conservative attitude. His attitude of mind influenced as it was by economic considerations would naturally tend towards conservatism. It is probable that, in the cases in which Sherman adopted a course other than a conservative one he was influenced by considerations beyond his control. If Grant was anything he was a conservative. He had to be. If he had any political ambitions he was aware of the fact that the great mass of people do not support radicalism or radical ideas in any field upon a moment's notice. He had to be cautious and this would undoubtedly lead to conservatism. Furthermore he maintained that his views on reconstruction were conservative, that he tried to follow a middle course.<sup>157</sup> One of his biographers maintains that he was sincerely the friend of the South

and genuinely in favor of restoring promptly the full rights of citizenship to the conquered states.<sup>158</sup> The discussions of the reconstruction question as it involved Grant and Sherman and the conclusions already set forth lead logically to the fourth and last conclusion, and that is, that Grant and Sherman agreed substantially in both their attitudes and expressed convictions during this period, but differed immensely in the activities which resulted from their attitudes. This difference can be explained on the basis that the background of Grant was military and he was not accustomed to politics and politicians whereas the background of Sherman was economic and political which enabled him to shift his course without leading him into serious controversy.

A great deal has been said about Radicals and Conservatives, but when it comes to designating certain men as Radicals and certain men as Conservatives that is an entirely different question. It has been said that Sherman was a Conservative. If that is taken for granted, then who were some of the other conservatives and what did they hope to accomplish? These questions will be answered in part by quoting a letter written by Gazaway B. Lamar from the Ebbitt House in Washington, to Howell Cobb. The letter is dated 15 May, 1868, and is as follows: "I take the liberty to give some idea of the recent developments here in politics. You are aware that feelers have been out in favor of Mr. Chase ever since his party put him aside for General Grant. What progress they made I never could ascertain because (I presume) that I insisted that he should repudiate negro suffrage or at least refer that to the white voters of the States.

Afterwards I was not consulted."

"Now, since the defection in the Senate on the impeachment amounting to twelve Senators of the Radicals, it is said that a coalition had been formed between Chase and Seward to institute a new party-"the Conservative"."

"My informant who is a moderate (illegible) Radical, tells me that they rely on President Johnson and such of the Democrats as he can lead, and they either have Belmont, the Chairman of the National Democratic Committee, or calculate on his adhesion because of the financial doctrines-- a resumption of specie payments and the payment of the bonds in gold--which are to form a plank in the new platform to catch all business men everywhere and New York City especially. These are the outlines and they are anxious to ascertain how the South will go. I could not give any opinion-but I told them I thought the name of Mr. Seward would be repulsive to the South in every section."

"Unless they can get the Democratic nomination on 4 July this new creation will divide the strength of both the old organizations and probably throw the election into the House next February--when the present Congress will elect Grant. The Senators who are to leave the Radicals are Anthony, Fessenden, Fowler, Grimes, Henderson, Trumbull, Wiley, Sprague, Ross, Frelinghuysen, Sherman and Van Winkle. Anthony and Sprague consolidate Rhode Island; Fessenden, Grimes, Fowler, Trumbull, Frelinghuysen and Sherman divide their states respectively and West Virginia is consolidated. I have no idea of the effect upon the House members as to who or how many may follow. I think it best to adhere to Pendleton and Hancock, though my

faith is very weak in Northern Democrats."<sup>159</sup>

The entire meaning of the above letter cannot be obtained just by reading the lines for there is not enough material to use in interpreting the ideas that are suggested. If the letter can be relied upon then it is definitely known that Sherman was a member of a partially organized political group called the Conservatives. It is also known that his plans at this time must have been in opposition to those of General Grant. The reason for his action may be deep and obscure, but it is almost a certainty that among the motives which prompted him was the fact that he wanted to insure his political future by keeping in partial contact with different political groups. The letter illustrates more definitely the disposition of Sherman to play safe even though he had to do his playing below the level of public knowledge.

The question of impeachment was deliberately left out of the foregoing discussion because it is possible to get a clear cut view of the ideas of the two men who are involved, whereas in the preceding account it was necessary to depend upon general facts and statements and follow them with general conclusions.

The opinion of Grant with respect to impeachment underwent a change coinciding naturally with his change in attitude towards Johnson. According to Badeau, Grant was originally opposed to impeachment.<sup>160</sup> He went on to say that the change in Grant's attitude did not come until after Johnson had removed Stanton and placed General Lorenzo Thomas in charge of the War Department. After that event, Badeau continued, Grant was heartily in favor

of the idea, and often expressed the opinion that Congress was justified. He even went so far as to talk to many Senators, at the behest of those in charge, urging them to vote for impeachment.<sup>161</sup>

Badeau asserted that Grant actually called upon Senator Frelinghuysen at his home and not only urged him to vote for impeachment, but actually was responsible for the vote of Frelinghuysen in the affirmative.<sup>162</sup>

When impeachment failed, Mr. Grant was very much disappointed although later he decided that on the whole it was much better that it did fail.<sup>163</sup>

Badeau made the very interesting comment that Benjamin Wade, who would have become President in case Johnson was convicted, had interviewed Grant with respect to the members of his Cabinet.<sup>164</sup>

The attitude of Senator Sherman upon the question of impeachment is not very clear. A study of the situation results in the impression that Sherman voted for conviction, because he considered it an obligation that he owed to his party. He justified his vote in a formal opinion which was filed with the record. He acted like a man who had been compelled to do an unseemly thing and then was forced to make a public defense in order to give his action a plausible appearance. The assertion of Welles that Sherman was whipped into line along with the other equivocal senators by the force of party discipline wielded by the Radical senators has been mentioned in an earlier chapter.<sup>165</sup>

It is a well known fact that the Radical supporters of the impeachment charges put a great deal of pressure upon all of their senatorial associates to get them to vote for impeachment and there isn't any reason to assume that Sherman escaped this

general practice. Welles made a rather sarcastic comment upon the attitude of Sherman in his Diary. He said that Sherman declared himself opposed to the first article, but would vote for the second, which in substance meant that Johnson could discharge Stanton, but could not appoint anyone to fill the vacancy. The attitude of Sherman if it would have had any effect upon the situation would have created an anomalous situation. A President could discharge an advisor, but could not get another one to fill his place. This simple point indicates that Sherman was trying to weave good opinion out of scanty material. It is frequently necessary for a politician to make sound bricks out of poor and insufficient straw. Sherman in his Recollections contributed some evidence in support of the foregoing hypothesis. After he had explained his opinion that he thought Johnson deliberately wanted to control the War Office by making an 'ad interim' appointment even though the Senate was in session he concluded with the following words: "It is difficult to convey by extracts, a correct idea of a carefully prepared opinion, but this statement shows my view of the case, and entertaining it, I felt bound, with much regret, to vote 'Guilty' in response to my name, but I was entirely satisfied with the result of the vote, brought about by the action of several Republican Senators. There was some disposition to arraign these Senators and to attribute their action to corrupt motives, but there was not the slightest ground for these imputations. Johnson was allowed to serve out his term, but there was a sense of relief when General Grant was sworn into

office as President of the United States,"<sup>166</sup> Mr. Sherman gave a more complete account of his attitude towards the impeachment trial in a letter which he wrote to W.T. Sherman from the Senate Chamber on 1 March, 1868. In this letter he said, "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 the wrong way, and in a position where the evil he does is immensely increased by his manner of doing it."<sup>167</sup> After the impeachment trial had begun Sherman wrote frequently to W.T. Sherman expressing his attitude towards impeachment. When he wrote his Recollections, he summarized his attitude as follows: "In the trial of this impeachment I wished to be and think I was, absolutely impartial. I liked the President personally and harbored against him none of the prejudices and animosity of some others. I knew he was bold and rash, better fitted for the storms of political life than the grave responsibilities of the chief magistrate of a great country. ...I know some of my associates were already against the President, and others were as decided in his favor. I resolutely made up my mind, so far as human nature would admit, to fairly hear and impartially consider all the evidence produced and all the arguments made."<sup>168</sup>

Notwithstanding Mr. Sherman's own account of his feelings at the time, written from perspective of thirty years after the event, there is grounds for the assumption that while he may have wanted to be absolutely impartial, in reality he was moved by some

other force when he wrote the opinion which he filed. Portions of this opinion are in reality political attacks, and not constitutional attacks upon the President. The following quotation from his opinion illustrates the point, "The great offense of the President consists in his opposition, and thus far successful opposition, to the constitutional amendment proposed by the Thirty-Ninth Congress (1865-1867) which approved by nearly all of the loyal states, would if adopted, have restored the rebel states, and thus had strengthened and restored the Union convulsed and torn by civil war. Using the scaffoldings of civil governments formed by him in those states without authority of law, he has defeated this amendment; has prolonged civil strife; postponed reconstruction and reunion; and aroused again the spirit of rebellion overcome and subdued by war. He, alone, of all the citizens of the United States, by the wise provisions of the Constitution, is not to have a voice in adopting amendments to the Constitution; and yet he, by the exercise of a baleful influence and unauthorized power, has defeated an amendment demanded by the result of the War. He has obstructed, as far as he could, all the efforts of Congress to restore laws and orders to the rebel states. He has abandoned the party which trusted him with power, and the principles so often avowed by him which induced their trust."<sup>169</sup>

The above extract, particularly the last sentence sounds like a campaign argument rather than a legal opinion on an impeachment case. It sounds like, and possibly it was, an attempt to explain his vote on impeachment without supporting the full impeachment program.

In comparing the views of Sherman and Grant upon the question of the impeachment of President Johnson there are several points which are of value. The first of these is that Grant did not favor impeachment at first, but later developed into an ardent supporter of the idea, whereas there is nothing to indicate that Sherman ever favored it very heartily. The second point is that Grant was very much disappointed when Johnson was acquitted, whereas Sherman was entirely satisfied. It is to be noted, however, that Grant later adopted the same view of the result as that held by Sherman. The last point of significance is that there was a sense of relief when General Grant became President and there is every reason to believe that Sherman shared this sense of relief.

There are two minor problems upon which it is possible to get the views of Sherman and Grant. They belong in the Reconstruction period, but do not have any definite relation to the Reconstruction Problem. The first problem related to the feasibility of an Interoceanic Canal across the Isthmus of Panama. Grant favored the idea and promoted it. Sherman was opposed to the idea and voted against an appropriation to make a survey possible.<sup>170</sup> The other problem concerned a national system of education in the South at public expense. Grant favored the idea, but Sherman opposed it.<sup>171</sup>

The one general conclusion which is justified by the material in the chapter on the Reconstruction Period is that prior to the nomination for and election of Grant as President, Sherman and Grant were in virtual agreement. With this statement the

investigation turns to the nomination and election of Grant and his relations with Sherman during his first administration. This period will be the subject of the next chapter.

## Chapter IV. The Campaign of 1868.

The nomination of General Grant for the Presidency on the Republican ticket was the logical conclusion of the series of events with which he was connected during the years which followed the Civil War. It is a difficult problem to specify a time when Grant first began to have presidential ambitions, and it is equally as difficult to designate the one who first suggested him as a potential presidential candidate. It was possible that he was given consideration from the time that his participation in the War had given him outstanding popularity. He was suggested in 1864 by the people who were casting about for a man to use against Lincoln. Either the time was not propitious or Grant had too much political judgment or too much sense of responsibility to run at that time.

The unreasoning regard on the part of the public for a great military hero has been demonstrated many times not only in the history of the United States, but also in the history of the world at large. The politicians of the Reconstruction period must have been aware of that fact. Contemporary comments upon the activities of the Radicals concerning Grant create the impression that they regarded the support of Grant as essential to the success of their program. If that is the case then, Grant was probably looked upon very early in the period as a potential candidate. An attempt will be made in the next paragraphs to trace the growth of the Grant boom which resulted in his election

in 1868, both from the internal and external angles. That is from the point of view of Grant himself, and from the point of view of the folks who helped to elect him.

The first reference made by Welles in his Diary to the candidacy of General Grant was dated 24 December, 1866. On this occasion the cabinet discussed the letter which Grant had written to a certain General Hillyer, a member of his staff and an old friend, rebuking him for suggesting that Grant would be a presidential candidate at the next election. In this letter Grant had said that neither he (Hillyer) nor anyone else was authorized to speak for him upon political questions.<sup>172</sup> In the same connection Senator Doolittle said that the letter of rebuke sent by Grant to Hillyer was intended for the father of Grant who had been induced by the Radicals to write a weak party letter.<sup>173</sup> This was another example of the influence of the relatives of Grant upon him. Truly Grant was embarrassed by his relatives, who handicapped him in many ways and on occasion actually did him harm politically. The next reference which Welles made to Grant as a possible presidential candidate was in connection with the District of Columbia suffrage bill. Grant was opposed to the bill on the grounds that it violated the Constitution by punishing rebels with an ex post facto law, but he did not mention or disapprove the fact that they were to be condemned with a trial by jury. Welles commented, "Yet General Grant will very likely be the next President of the United States. I do not think that he intends to disregard the Constitution, but he has no reverence for it. He has no political principles,

no intelligent ideas of constitutional government, and it is a day when the organic law seems to be treated as of less binding authority than a mere resolution of Congress."<sup>174</sup> On 22 August 1867, Welles commented upon the attitude of Grant towards the reconstruction question. He said, "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, 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."<sup>175</sup> After recounting the trend of the interview in some detail Welles again commented upon the Presidential aspirations of Grant, as follows, "It appears to me he was somewhat excited and stirred up by appeals of the Radicals and fears that he might lose their good will. None but Radicals, and the most mischevious of them, are hounding and stimulating and cautioning him. Anxious, as I am satisfied he is becoming, for the Presidency, he fears to fall out with them. Hence, believing, as he does, that a majority of the country which is represented in Congress, he is rather vexed, dissatisfied and somewhat confused, has listened to Radical fallacies and is strangely ignorant of the true character of men as well as of the real principles at issue."<sup>176</sup> A few days later (26 August 1867) Welles commented upon a discussion between Montgomery Blair and himself, in which Blair had informed Welles that he was intending to write an article of the New York World

in favor of Grant for the Presidency.<sup>177</sup> In response to Blair, Welles said that he didn't think that Grant had any of the qualifications that a Presidential candidate should possess and added that the Radicals had the start on Blair in suggesting Grant for the Presidency. After Welles finished, Blair agreed to give up the idea. Welles responded to this decision by saying, "I am unwilling to give him wholly up if there is any good in him. Let him have a chance to retrieve himself if he will, not that I would make him President."<sup>178</sup>

A day after the interview summarized in the preceding paragraph. Welles was at an interview between Grant and the President relative to the letter which Grant had written concerning his position upon the question of the Secretaryship of War. It will be best to quote the words of Welles' narrative.

He said, "In the course of our conversation, the President informed Grant that he (Mr. Johnson) was not a candidate for the Presidency. Grant replied that he was not."<sup>179</sup> Welles did not comment again upon Grant in connection with the Presidency until after the October elections in which the Radicals suffered many defeats. Then he commented that Grant was not intelligent, but he seemed to be patriotic and rightminded and that the Radicals were trying to mislead him. He continued by saying, "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 that he will be

taken up by the Democrats."<sup>180</sup> This view of the matter gives support to the theory that Grant was 'shopping around', trying to place his bet on the horse that was most likely to win. On the other hand the Radicals were openly courting him because his candidacy was their chief hope for success and they did not intend to pass up their favorable opportunity.

A little of the inside story of the nomination of Grant for the Presidency is given in the entry which Welles made in his Diary on 23 October 1867. He said, "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 effect. Boutwell is a fanatic, a little insincere, violent and yet has much of the 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."<sup>181</sup> The uneasiness of Grant during the months which followed the Radical defeats in October is revealed in a discussion by Welles of the relative strength of Chase and Grant as presidential candidates. In the latter part of December, 1867, Welles was of the opinion that although Chase had support in certain quarters, he did not have the support of the Radicals. He said that the

conservative element of the Republican party favored Grant, and since they are in the majority they will control party action much to the disgust of the Radicals, who, however, do not dare to oppose the movement. Welles continued to say that, "Grant himself is not only willing but daily grows more and more anxious; his aspirations, although he strives to conceal them, are equal to and even surpass those of the Chief Justice. His reticence is all a matter of calculation; he fears to commit himself lest he should lose votes. But popular opinion moves him. A year since he believed that the country was fully committed to Radicalism, and under that conviction he became identified with the Radicals, changing his previously expressed opinions and acting with them until the recent fall elections. Those results astonished no man more than Grant and he has felt uneasy over his hasty committals while trying to be reserved. Stanton, whom he dislikes, has managed to get him committed, which he would not have done had Grant better understood public sentiment."<sup>182</sup>

The struggle for the nomination for the presidency was submerged in the general interest in the impeachment trial and so it was not until 19 May, 1868, that Welles mentioned the presidential candidates again. On that date he commented that at the Chicago convention Grant was assured of the nomination for the presidency and that the struggle was over the nomination of a vice-presidential candidate.<sup>183</sup> This comment concludes the sequence of events which led up to the nomination of Grant as Welles interpreted them. The next problem is to trace the attitudes of Sherman towards the nomination of Grant and bring light on any information which might explain the subsequent relations of Grant and Sherman.

In the discussion of the attitude of John Sherman towards the nomination of Grant, the attitude and opinions of W.T. Sherman cannot be neglected, for frequently they indicated what was in the mind of John Sherman at times when he did not wish to comment upon the trend of events. A careful study of the Sherman Letters reveals the fact that the possibility of Grant as a candidate for the presidency was not commented upon by either John or W.T. Sherman until 5 April 1864. On this occasion W.T. wrote to John Sherman and in the last paragraph of his letter he said, "I care no more for the squabbles about the Presidency than I do for the causes of the Schleswig-Holstein difficulty and Grant cares less."<sup>184</sup> The first reference made by John Sherman to the presidential ambitions of Grant was made in the latter part of March 1866, in a letter to W.T. Sherman. He said: "It is also evident that Grant has some political aspirations and can, if he wishes it, easily attain the Presidency..."<sup>185</sup> This comment is of unusual interest coming as it did at least nine months before Welles suggested that Grant might have political aspirations. It is also significant in that John Sherman must have been in close contact with the political leaders in order to comment so assuredly upon the political future of Grant. The Sherman brothers did not mention the presidential possibilities in the year and a half which followed the comment quoted above. John Sherman wrote a letter to W.T. Sherman from Mansfield, Ohio on 9 August 1867, setting forth his opinion concerning the respective merits of Chase and Grant. It is important to know the attitude of John Sherman at this time for it explains his later

attitude. He said, "It is becoming extremely important to know precisely what Grant wants in connection with the Presidency. If he has really made up his mind he would like to hold that office, he can have it. Popular opinion is all in his favor. His position is the rare one of having that office within his easy reach, and yet it is clear that his interest is against his acceptance. The moment he is nominated, he at once becomes the victim of abuse; and even his great services will not shield him. Our politics for years will be a maelstrom, destroying and building up reputations with rapidity. My conviction is clear that Grant ought not to change his present position to that of President; and if he declines, then by all odds Chase is the safest man for the country... he (Chase) is not a partisan, scarcely enough for his own interests; still if Grant wishes to be President, all other candidates will have to stand aside. I see nothing in his way unless he is foolish enough to connect his future with the Democratic party. That party cannot dictate the next President. They would deaden any man they praise. Even Grant could not overcome fellowship with them... The strength is with the Republicans. Not of the Butler stripe, but with just that kind of men who would be satisfied with the position of Grant."<sup>186</sup> In reply to the above letter, W.T. Sherman wrote from Omaha on 12 September 1867, and among other things he said that Grant wrote to him in unreserved confidence and had never said a word so far that sounded like wanting the office of president.<sup>187</sup> It is evident that Grant was not telling W.T. Sherman everything for on 1 November, John Sherman wrote to W.T.

and in the course of the letter made the following comment, "Grant, I think, is inevitably a candidate. He allows himself to drift into a position where he can't decline if he would, and I feel sure he doesn't want to decline. My judgment is that Chase is better for the country and for Grant himself, but I will not quarrel with what I cannot control."<sup>188</sup> The attitude of John Sherman is a studiously cautious one; it is the attitude of a man who was not at all sure of his political position. At that time Sherman was not certain that he was going to have an easy time getting reelected to the Senate. His letter of 13 August 1865, suggested that there were some combinations in Washington opposed to his reelection at that time and that he expected a bitter and unpleasant contest.<sup>189</sup> If such was the case Sherman could not afford to risk any commitments to any one man to such an extent that the failure of that man would mean his own failure. Sherman was merely playing good politics; he was not in a position to retrieve a mistake in supporting a certain man too early in the campaign. John Sherman made a very definite prediction with respect to Grant as a presidential candidate in a letter written from the Senate Chamber, on 23 February 1868, to W.T. Sherman. The letter was written chiefly as a comment upon the Grant-Sherman-Johnson episode but was concluded with the following prediction, "Grant will unquestionably be nominated. Chase acquiesces, and I see no reason to doubt his election..."<sup>190</sup> He followed this definite statement with another even more definite on 1 March 1868. When in another letter to W.T. Sherman he said,

"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."<sup>191</sup> The action by North Carolina refers to the decision made in a convention held in North Carolina against supporting a conservative presidential candidate and platform. The material which was obtainable on this subject was confusing and insufficient. The comment noted above is the last comment made by either of the Shermans prior to the nomination of Grant. Both John and W.T. Sherman took it for granted that Grant would be nominated and in their earlier comments upon the subject both were equally sure that it was not for the best interests of Grant himself to be nominated.

John Sherman in his Recollections made some very brief references to the actual nomination of Grant at the Chicago convention in May, 1868. He remarked that "Grant was the representative Union soldier of the War, and that Seymour was the special representative of the opponents of the War."<sup>192</sup> As to the campaign itself he mentioned the fact that he assumed that Grant would be elected, and even invited him to stop and visit at Mansfield on his way from Galena to Washington. This Grant declined because of the large party and the desire to get to Washington as soon as possible.<sup>193</sup> He also mentioned the fact that he gave Grant his cordial and active support, by speaking in his favor in many states.<sup>194</sup>

Following the nomination of Grant the Sherman Letters do not contain any references to him until 11 June 1868, when W.T. Sherman made the following comment in a letter to his brother: "Of course I have noticed Grant's acceptance. I

take it for granted that he will be elected, and I must come to Washington. I shall not, however, commit myself to this promotion until he is not only elected but until he vacates and I am appointed and confirmed."<sup>195</sup> This is an expression of a firm policy on the part of W.T. Sherman not to get embroiled in the politics of Washington. From St. Louis, W.T. wrote in July that Grant was sure to be elected and that he had travelled with him for two weeks, and the people were so anxious to see him that both his and Grant's patience was exhausted.<sup>196</sup> In September, John Sherman wrote to W.T. from Philadelphia and said, "Grant will surely be elected. If not, we shall have the devil to pay, and shall have to fight all our old political issues over again."<sup>197</sup> In the same spirit he wrote from Washington a little later, reiterating the conviction expressed in the last quotation but in stronger terms. The idea was expressed in the following words: "I resume at once the canvass and am working very hard. The election of Grant seems our only salvation from serious trouble."<sup>198</sup> But with all these expressions of well-wishing and hard work in favor of Grant there are some very slight grounds for the inference that Sherman might be working for the Republican party and that the fear of the Democrats coming into power was a stronger motive in the campaigning by Sherman, than his desire to see Grant in the Presidential Chair. The only basis for such a slight inference are the earlier remarks by Sherman in which he favored Chase and his later remarks when he suggested that the election of Grant meant the salvation of the country. The question is fruitful as a source for speculation,

perhaps Sherman thought that he could control or aid in the control of the policies of Grant. It is quite certain that he would have to support Grant quite cordially in order to expect such a favored position. On 14 October, 1868, John Sherman wrote to W.T. Sherman and said that the election of Grant was a foregone conclusion and that Grant was much stronger in Ohio than the state or Congressional tickets.<sup>199</sup> On 30 October, W.T. Sherman said that he had written to Grant offering to adjust his plans to the interests of Grant.<sup>200</sup> W.T. Sherman took it for granted that he would succeed Grant as head of the Army. All of the letters indicate a close connection between Grant and the Sherman brothers. This indication is important in the light of Sherman as a Senator in relation to Grant as President.

The first comment by W.T. Sherman following the election is very interesting and suggestive of more than appears in the lines. On 23 November he wrote to John Sherman saying in part, "I know that Grant esteems you highly and will respect anything that you ask. He may offer you the Treasury Department, but I think not. He will think that you are more valuable in the Senate, as the Governor of Ohio and the Legislature would fill your vacancy with a Democrat. Don't approach Grant in person if you want anything. Put it in plain writing so emphatic that he will know you are in earnest and not yielding to personal importunity."<sup>201</sup> Two things are of special importance in this letter. In the first place the suggestion that 'Grant will respect anything that you may ask' carries with it the idea that Sherman had a right to ask for something and was going to do it. It would be interesting

to know what Sherman asked for and if he got it or not, but the mere fact that W.T. Sherman who was very close to Grant should make that remark is a pretty sound basis for the idea that there was every reason to expect that John Sherman would exercise a considerable amount of influence upon the policies of Grant. The assumption by W.T. Sherman that Grant would regard John Sherman in the Senate as of more help to him than John Sherman in his Cabinet is of special significance. The position of John Sherman in the Senate was that of one of its great leaders is attested to by most of the writers who comment upon his career, and it would be only natural that Grant would want a strong friend of long standing in the Senate to support his policies. The idea cannot be suppressed that the friendship of Grant for W.T. Sherman plus his high opinion of John Sherman plus his recognition that the latter was a power in the Senate equals considerable influence by John Sherman upon the policies of Grant at least in the field of finance where he was predominant. One other factor in the quotations is significant in the light of the character of Grant. It has been mentioned in discussing the character of Grant that he had a tendency to let his subordinates or his friends and advisors have their way in small things and to a certain extent permitted them to dominate his policies. Later in his career Logan and Conkling were very influential. Throughout most of his career the shadow figure of Butler appears. Boutwell was one of his intimates, and there were a few others. If Grant esteemed John Sherman highly and if he ran true to his character then it is quite likely that Sherman had considerable

liberty of action and therefore influence upon Grant. This idea is supported by a comment made by John Sherman later in his career. In commenting upon the personal nature of the policy of Grant, he said, "I was the chairman of the Committee on Finance in the Senate during Grant's administrations, and had to act upon all questions of taxation, debt, banking or finance, and had occasion to talk with the President upon such measures, but he rarely expressed any opinion or took any interest in them."<sup>202</sup> It is fair to conclude that the financial policy pursued by Grant was dictated by someone and among the very few who could have dictated it, the name of John Sherman is most prominent.

The reply of John Sherman to the suggestion by W.T. Sherman, that Grant might make him Secretary of the Treasury shows that he did not want the job at that time. He said, "I never expected to be appointed Secretary of the Treasury, as you suggest he might, for if he thought of it, I could not accept by reason of the political complication of the Ohio Legislature. I should be gratified with the offer and the opportunity to decline, but I suppose in this matter he will not choose to deal in compliments."<sup>203</sup> The attitude of Sherman towards the nomination and election of Grant has been summarized in the course of the discussion of the movement. The conviction that was held by the Shermans that Grant was going to be nominated was arrived at prior to the date that Welles arrived at the same conclusion. The discussion also indicates that Welles was right when he asserted that the conservative element of the Republican

party had taken charge of the candidacy of Grant following the Radical defeats in the fall elections of 1867. One letter written by W.T. Sherman that has not been referred to thus far throws some light upon the silence of Grant following the defeat of the Radicals in the elections of 1867. On 14 March he wrote to his brother from St. Louis and the very first sentence in his letter referred to Grant. It was as follows, "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."<sup>204</sup> W.T. agreed with Welles that Grant was holding aloof for no published reason, but he does not agree with Welles as to the motive for holding aloof. However, he did suggest that he had some reason to believe that Grant wouldn't accept on a 'strong Radical platform' which might indicate that Grant had backtracked a little and was pursuing a course of watchful waiting to see which way he ought to jump. The general conclusion which a study of the situation seems to suggest is that Grant and Sherman were pursuing the same course in a different way. Both wanted to put their political eggs in the right market basket. Grant had risked his fortunes once by a premature declaration in favor of the Radicals and therefore he was cautious about doing it a second time. Sherman was innately cautious and

because of his more or less precarious position in the Senate he had to be doubly sure that he was travelling with the right crowd and so naturally after committing himself to Grant he had no other reasonable course to pursue than to pitch in and help elect him.

In order to bring the whole question to a more complete state the ideas of Welles and Julian will be examined. In a previous chapter the analysis of the Diary of Welles had been carried up to the middle of the summer of 1868. Welles supported Seymour in the campaign so his comments are more colored with respect to Grant than they were previous to the campaign. Welles disliked Seymour personally, but positively opposed the Radical connections which Grant had made. Welles attributed the Radical victory in large part to the mistakes of the Democratic party.<sup>205</sup> He summed up the whole situation by saying that, "There is no love for Grant; there is positive dislike of Seymour."<sup>206</sup> Here again it is seen that there is a wide application of the idea that the success of Grant was not due to the fact that the people and leaders loved Grant more, but actually it was due to the fact that they loved his opponents less. Throughout his discussions, Welles harped on the fact that the Democrats could have won if they would have nominated a good candidate. He attributed the success of Grant to poor management on the part of the Democrats. He thought that the Democrats could have won if they had nominated General Hancock because Seymour was so unpopular with the soldiers, and Hancock would have counterbalanced the military prestige of Grant.<sup>207</sup> He went further and said that the nominations

of Seymour raised the war issue, which was substantially the same idea that John Sherman expressed in his Recollections. Welles also said that there was no enthusiasm for Grant until Seymour was nominated.<sup>208</sup> After the election of Grant, Welles confined himself to criticising Grant, particularly during the time that Grant was selecting his Cabinet. These criticisms are of little value in this connection, but they may be used to furnish a different point of view on some subsequent phases of the problem.

If the statements and suggestions made by Welles referred to in the preceding paragraph can be taken at their face value, they shed a new light upon the motives which prompted and guided Grant and Sherman during the period preceding the nomination and election of Grant. Welles maintained that Grant did not have any widespread popularity and that a good Democratic candidate would have defeated him easily. If that was true then Grant had very good reasons for being worried about the success of his presidential aspirations. Furthermore, if the Republicans were going to have such a hard campaign ahead, then there were ample reason why John Sherman should campaign so vigorously in so many states to such an extent that he was completely worn out at the close of the campaign. If one proceeds upon the theory that a Republican victory was assured with Grant as the candidate how can the earnest campaign efforts of the Republicans be justified? The material seems to indicate that the expressions of the Sherman brothers were a little too sanguine. W.T. Sherman would naturally get the impression that the success of Grant was assured through

his contacts with military men who naturally favored Grant. If such was the case it would have been possible for John Sherman to get an erroneous idea of the situation from his brother.

George W. Julian, a member of Congress from Indiana, was very much opposed to the candidacy of Grant on the Republican ticket because he thought that Grant was intemperate and politically a Democrat; he had no civil training whatever and could not be considered as a statesman.<sup>209</sup> He went further and said that the military record of Grant was the deciding factor and that the Republicans nominated him because they were afraid the Democrats would if they did not. He creates the impression that Grant was not very enthusiastic about being a candidate, and that his consent was won only by cautious and timely diplomacy and the promise of a second term.<sup>210</sup> The idea that Julian had that Grant lacked enthusiasm for the Republican nomination for the presidency is partially substantiated by the letter of W.T. Sherman in which he expressed surprise that Grant was so silent concerning the nomination. Grant must have realized that the selection of his future political association had to be made cautiously and therefore pursued a studied reticent attitude towards the whole affair.

In concluding this phase of the problem it is important to remember that Sherman gave Grant active and cordial support in the campaign and that this support was of such nature that W.T. Sherman felt that Grant would respect anything that John Sherman

would ask for. This close relationship between Sherman and Grant furnished the background for the events of the presidential administrations of Grant, which will be discussed in the remainder of this paper.

Chapter V. The Grant Administration:  
Sherman and the Political System.

The handling of a problem which concerns a multitude of bills and covers both a wide range of subjects and a span of eight years presents some very difficult problems from the point of view of organization. Chronological handling of the topics and bills would result in a confused and complicated mass of details with little opportunity for correlation of the separate bills with the general tendencies which were apparent during the Administrations of Grant, and the interpretation placed upon each bill would be of little value. The topical method is followed, insofar as it is possible. This method permits a wider latitude in handling the bills as a group and at the same time allows for more pointed interpretations as to the relation of the group to the whole field of legislation.

The method of research which was used in assembling the material for this phase of the problem is open to serious criticism inasmuch as the only bills that will be discussed are those in which Sherman took enough interest to discuss and openly register an opinion concerning their merits and defects, and on the other hand, all of the bills which Grant did not veto, or approve, or permit to become a law without his approval, were eliminated as it would be difficult to ascertain the attitude of Grant on a particular measure unless he did one of the three things mentioned above. In view of this restriction it is evident that the material hereinafter discussed is not the sum total of what could be obtained.

The material is sufficient to indicate in a general way, however, and sometimes in a specific way, the attitude of Grant and Sherman upon the same measures or policies. In many cases the vote of Sherman upon a bill and the approval of Grant are considered sufficient indications of their respective attitudes.

The interests of John Sherman in the Senate were many and varied. He was rarely absent and was always present when an important measure was under consideration. Although Sherman did have varied interests, he also had a very particular interest in matters relating to finance. This interest dated back to his services in the House of Representatives, where in 1860 he was Chairman of the committee on ways and means. In 1861 following his election to the Senate he became a member of the Senate committee finance and in 1867, he became chairman of that important committee, a position that he held throughout the administration of Grant. The committee on finance charged as it was with the duty of considering methods of supplying funds for the running of the government, was naturally very closely connected with the Senate committee on appropriations which supervised the expenditure of the funds. Sherman realized the necessity of keeping in touch with all of the appropriation measures. Many of the characteristics which Sherman manifested as a legislator and politician were illustrated by his attitude towards the different appropriation bills which were brought forward by the committee on appropriations.

One of the characteristics possessed by Sherman which appeared in connection with the appropriation bills was his tendency towards economy. Usually Sherman was quite willing to

accept the recommendations of the committee on appropriation, but sometimes he offered amendments to the proposed measures. It is safe to say that the majority of these amendments were offered in the spirit of economy. If the economy legend which has surrounded the Republican party during recent years had been extant during the lifetime of Sherman it is not inconceivable that he would have occupied a position comparable to that of Coolidge in our own times. Sherman was particularly anxious to keep down the sums in the Indian appropriation bills. One instance when Sherman was working very definitely in the interests of economy was in connection with the Legislative, Executive and Judicial appropriation bill (H.R. 974) of the Forty-First Congress (1869-1871). As examples of this he voted against amendments providing: \$500,000 for a new secretary of state building,<sup>211</sup> \$13,000 for a building at the London exposition,<sup>212</sup> an increase of salaries for the chief clerks in the Department of the Navy,<sup>213</sup> an increase of salaries for women clerks,<sup>214</sup> \$100,000 for an Arctic expedition,<sup>215</sup> for the establishment of a branch mint at Carson City, Nevada<sup>216</sup> and he voted for an amendment providing for economies in clerk hire.<sup>217</sup>

Another episode which illustrated the desire for economy by Sherman and in addition showed in part the working of his mind occurred in connection with the bill which was to provide money for the settlement of the Virginian question. In discussing the bill Sherman said, "I am not disposed to find fault with the Secretary of the Navy, or with the President of the United States for expending four millions dollars under the circumstances which

grew out of the Virginus affair. Having thus disclaimed any intention of criticising, Sherman went on to say that he did not think that there was a need for a demand upon the Executive to observe due economy and reduce expenses, but he did think that the Senate ought to require the Executive to perform his duty. He went further and suggested that he would not object if the minority forced economy upon the administration.<sup>218</sup>

This is an interesting comment because it suggests the political shrewdness of Sherman. As a member of the majority he could not oppose the administration appropriation measures without putting himself in opposition to the administration, but he was quite willing to have the minority pull his financial chestnuts out of the fire by forcing the rigid economy upon the administration which he advocated so frequently. In continuing the discussion of the bill he said, "While I shall vote for this appropriation measure, I, for one as a member of the dominant party here, feeling myself responsible with all the others of that party for the expenditures of our government, shall deem that my duty is not performed unless I examine with the utmost scrutiny and with the utmost care every proposed expenditure."<sup>219</sup> The illustrations that have been given seem to indicate that that economy was a matter of policy with Sherman. The last illustration also indicates a keen sense of party and individual responsibility inasmuch as Sherman felt that the blame for ill advised expenditures would rest upon the Republican party since it was the majority party and upon himself personally if he did not do his full duty in considering the various items in appropriation measures.

Another characteristic of Sherman which was manifested when appropriation bills were being discussed was his policy of accepting the recommendations of the proper authorities as his guide for action. The proper authorities included the President, the Cabinet official who was most directly interested in a proposed measure; the committee in charge of a measure and particularly the chairman of the committee, and the men in the Senate or House who was the recognized authority on the subject. This characteristic appeared when the Army appropriation bill (H.R. 3717) was under consideration in the Congress. In commenting on the bill Sherman said that the one circumstance which induced him to vote for the measure was the fact that the gentleman in the House who had framed the measure had consulted with the Secretary of War and the bill represented the combined views of the Secretary of War and the House committee.<sup>220</sup> The tendency to support a bill if the administration favored it might be taken as an indication that Sherman was a strong supporter of the administration. This tendency is illustrated by the attitude of Sherman on the deficiency appropriation measure which was introduced in the first session of the Forty-First Congress. In discussing the bill Sherman said that in accordance with the wishes of the Secretary of the Treasury he desired to attach a provision to substitute new banknotes for worn out ones and also to provide for expense of printing them.<sup>221</sup> A third illustration of the tendency of Mr. Sherman to adopt the recommendations of the executive departments was in connection with the bill which referred to the building of a bridge over the Ohio river at

Evansville, Indiana. Morton, of Indiana, wanted to amend the bill, but Sherman protested against the amendment on the grounds that the bill ought to be left in the form that was recommended by the War department.<sup>221</sup> A little farther along in the debate Sherman again suggested that the bill came from a department that was experienced in bridge building and it ought to be left just as it was.<sup>223</sup> An illustration of the tendency of Mr. Sherman to accept the report of the committee which framed measures and sponsored them on the floor of the Senate was in connection with the bill to perfect the revision of the statutes. Sherman in commenting upon the bill said that he was willing to take the judgment of the committee on the revision of laws, that the bill was all right.<sup>224</sup> This particular bill was vetoed by the President because of one minor section which referred to advertising by the departments.<sup>225</sup> The examples that have been given are sufficient to illustrate the fact that Sherman usually accepted the opinions of the men who were recognized authorities in a given field if a bill was under consideration which affected that field. He seemed to have a great deal of respect for the opinions of men who were reputed to be experts in their particular line of work. This attitude might be attributed to two motives. In the first place, he could not cover the entire field of legislation and become thoroughly informed on all phases of the work of the Senate so he concentrated his attention upon the field of finance. Since he was considered an expert in his field he naturally had respect for the opinions of men who were considered experts in their particular fields. The other motive is an ulterior one.

Perhaps Mr. Sherman thought that if he permitted himself to be guided by recognized experts in matters pertaining to their particular fields, they in turn would permit him to guide them when the matter under discussion was a question of finance. If an idea like that worked it would be an immense help in getting support for his financial measures.

A third characteristic which Sherman displayed when the various appropriation measures were under discussion was in connection with the practice of transferring excess appropriations from one phase of work in a department to another phase of work in the same department. Sherman believed that a sum of money directly appropriated for a specific purpose was spent illegally if it was spent for another purpose. The practice of transferring funds had grown up during the troublous times of the Civil War when Congress resorted to a variety of expedients to meet the financial demands of the war. During the latter part of administration of President Johnson, Sherman had been instrumental in getting a law enacted by Congress to prohibit transfers. The abuses of the system had led to the opposition which Sherman manifested towards it. Under the system of transfers there was no direct accounting of the funds appropriated for a given purpose. If there was a surplus it might be transferred to another phase of work and spent and Congress would be none the wiser. In connection with the particular bill in question, Sherman said that the Navy Department had exceeded their appropriations and had gone on to contract expenditures to more than double the amount which had been appropriated on the theory that a new navy was necessary. He continued to say that not only was this exceeding

of the appropriation without authority of law and without the consent of Congress, but that it was a plain and palpable violation of the appropriation law enacted by Congress at a previous session. Sherman went on to say that the Secretary of the Navy did not know that a law had been enacted prohibiting the transfer of funds.<sup>226</sup> Davis, of Kentucky, interrupted Sherman, with the purpose of pinning him down to a personal and direct criticism of the Secretary of the Navy, by suggesting that Sherman had admitted that the Navy Department had been administered in utter ignorance of the laws which regulated the disbursements of the department and that the Secretary of the Navy had shown himself entirely incompetent to administer the affairs of the Department. At this point, blank statement of his ideas by a Democratic Senator, Sherman backed up and restated his views in a milder way, but containing the same essential idea.<sup>227</sup> The last part of the above discussion illustrates another characteristic which was possessed by Sherman. Because of his vast knowledge of financial affairs he could detect errors in the administration of the finances which other senators with less information of the finances would overlook. The incident described above showed that Sherman was willing to criticize the Administration, but it also showed very clearly that he was willing to retract a part of his criticism rather than have the Democrats take him up and use his criticism for political purpose.

The debates in connection with the various appropriation bills brought out still another characteristic of Sherman.

It is more definitely political in character therefore more important than some of the preceding ones, at least as far as this investigation is concerned. It refers to the attitude of Sherman towards Grant and centers around the fact that Sherman felt it incumbent upon him to defend Grant and the Administration on many occasions in the halls of the Senate against the attacks of the Democrats. An incident which provoked the defense of Grant by Sherman occurred during the first session of the Forty-third Congress and concerned the deficiency appropriation bill. The point on which the discussion turned was a provision limiting the amount of money spent to the amount appropriated. Sherman said that he did not know of any instance wherein the President had withdrawn money from the Treasury without an appropriation by law. This statement provoked the following dialogue:

Sargent: "Does the Senator (Sherman) say that he knows of  
no instance where the President himself has taken  
the responsibility of ordering the expenditure of  
money where there was no appropriation?"

Sherman: "If he does, he does it at his own risk."

Sargent: "I can show you where President Grant has done so."

Sherman: "In what case?"

Sargent: "In the case of Indian disturbance on the plains,  
where he has ordered extraordinary supplies for  
the Indians, there being no appropriation, he did  
it by express order."

Sherman: "There can be no case of that kind for the furnishing

of these supplies I do not believe that General Grant violated the Constitution in this particular in his life."

Sargent: "I do not say that General Grant violated the Constitution or violated his duty, but I say that he did just the thing that I have stated."

Sherman: "If General Grant took money from the Treasury of the United States, without the authority of law he did violate the Constitution; and I do not believe that he did. He is too careful; too watchful..."<sup>228</sup>

The quotation is valuable inasmuch as it indicates that Sherman thought it necessary to defend Grant in such strong terms on this occasion. It indicates support of Grant at a time when his first administration was about to end, which inference may be taken to mean that nothing had happened throughout the first administration of Grant to cause Sherman to deviate from the line of support which he had taken when Grant was nominated for the presidency. It is a question why Sherman would specifically state that "he did not believe that Grant ever violated the Constitution in this particular in his life." Of course the phrase does not have concrete meaning, it is merely a negative suggestion that he might have violated the Constitution in other respects.

Another characteristic of Sherman, which might be appropriately classed as a corollary of the one just discussed was his tendency to defend the Republican party. The best example of this tendency developed while the deficiency bill which passed

Congress on 3 August 1876, was being considered. Sherman spoke time and again when the measure was being debated, but he never spoke on the bill itself. The whole discussion was a studied effort on the part of Sherman to defend the Republican party against the charges of corruption which were being insinuated by their opponents.<sup>229</sup> The reason for this defense is apparent when the date is considered. This particular session of Congress lasted throughout the whole summer, during which time the presidential campaign was being conducted and the whole discussion was permeated by political and partisan motives.

The characteristic of Sherman which will be discussed last in this series is a very general one and therefore not so important. It simply indicates that Sherman as well versed in political methods. Sherman was shrewd enough to know that he could not have his way all the time and that it would not be wise to do so even if he could. In keeping with this principle he frequently accepted the decisions of conference committees on points in dispute between the House and the Senate. Sherman probably had two motives in accepting the reports of conference committees. In the first place their reports usually represented the attitude of the majority in both houses of Congress towards a given question. If harmony was to prevail between the members of the majority party in the House and Senate, and during this period the majority party was usually the Republican party, then the party leaders in each House were almost bound to accept reports of conference committees. The second motive for this policy by Sherman might have been influenced by the fact that he was usually the chairman of the

Senate conferees on bills relating to finance, and is the same motive that influenced him to accept the opinions of experts, namely the fact that he expected others to permit him to guide them in finance if he permitted them to guide him when the question pertained to some other field. Two cases in which Sherman favored the adoption of the report of the conference committee were the bill providing for the decennial census in 1870,<sup>230</sup> and the consular and diplomatic appropriation bill (H.R. 1594) which was approved by the President on 15 August 1876.<sup>231</sup>

Another phase of this last characteristic is the fact that it was the policy of Sherman to let other senators obtain the passage of their bills, even though he did not thoroughly approve of them, provided they would let him do likewise. He was willing to give and take in the political arena as long as the stakes were not too large and as long as other senators did not encroach upon his particular field. In summarizing the list of characteristics possessed by Sherman the one general conclusion which can be made is that they were largely of a political nature and that he was well adapted to play the part which he had to play in the Senate: that of staying on good terms with the administration and at the same time managing to get some of his constructive financial policies into force. In this discussion of the political situation of Sherman the bills that have been cited as examples are chiefly appropriation measures and minor bills from several different fields. Since finance plays such a large part in government and the developing of a financial policy by an administration is so much the result of political manoeuvring it was

considered appropriate and desirable to unite the discussion of the political position of Sherman with the discussion of some selected appropriation measures. While Sherman was a strong fighter in the political arena he was at the same time a sincere believer in the efficient administration of the finances of the federal government. Critics of Sherman may say that he adopted his financial policies and attitudes with one eye to political promotion in the form of a higher office, but it must be granted that his policies were essentially sound and well thought out. The quality of the political ability of Sherman was demonstrated by the fact that he was able to accomplish a great deal even though he was handicapped by the necessity of playing politics. A less able man or a weaker character would not have been able to surmount the check placed upon Sherman by the fact that he owed his position to the party and was responsible to the party. Sherman on many occasions showed that he was a great statesman as well as a party leader.

The measures which referred to financial problems, reconstruction problems, the Cuban and Dominican questions, the railroads, the public lands, the Indian policies, pensions and the problems connected with civil service reform were deliberately omitted from the previous discussion in order that a complete analysis of each of these great problems might be given in the proper place.

Chapter VI. The Grant Administrations:  
Legislative Policies (Except Public Finance).

One of the major problems in the Administrations of Grant was the question of Civil Service Reform. Whether Grant was in entire sympathy with the Civil Service Reform movement or not does not enter into the discussion of this problem. All that is attempted here is to show the attitude of Sherman towards Grant in this respect. On 18 January 1872, Sherman declared himself in favor of civil service reform.<sup>232</sup> A little later on the same day he rebuked Carpenter of Wisconsin, for suggesting that the President had abandoned attempts at civil service reform. In connection with that point he said that he had inquired to see if any change had been made in the policy of the administration towards civil service reform and had been informed that the only change was an additional rule to postpone operation of the law until Congress had appropriated the necessary money to put it into effect.<sup>233</sup> He also remarked, "I believe that some good will yet come from the discussion of civil service reform. Still I believe that the abuses of the present system are grossly exaggerated."<sup>234</sup> He continued his remarks by criticising the members of the Commission. He said that the members of the Civil Service Commission had had no practical experience in government and that they were products of the abuse which existed. Furthermore he said that they were not prepared to issue broad statements and that they were just clerks in a department. Sherman argued that the chief part of the abuses

of the civil service had grown out of the attempts on the part of members of Congress to control the Executive.<sup>235</sup>

He summed up his attitude as follows: "I have made up my mind for one, to see the system fairly and fully tried; and to sustain the President and executive authorities in giving it a fair trial... I will vote the requisite money and requisite men for the Board that are required to give it a fair trial."<sup>236</sup>

A little later in the session when the legislative appropriation bill was before Congress an amendment to it was proposed appropriating, "\$50, 000 to enable the President of the United States to perfect and to put into force such rules regulating the civil service as may be adopted from time to time by him." Carpenter of Wisconsin moved to substitute for the amendment the following, "that all laws or parts of laws under which the present Civil Service Commission is appointed by the President be, and the same hereby are repealed." Trumbull of Connecticut, moved to lay the substitute on the table and Sherman voted yea on the motion of Trumbull which prevailed 29-21.<sup>237</sup> The vote of Sherman upon the motion which was made by Trumbull indicated that Sherman did not want the civil service act repealed. When the question turned upon the amount of appropriation to carry on the work, Sherman said that he thought \$50,000 might be excessive. He said, "Sir, I do believe in civil service reform, but this should be confined to our great cities."<sup>238</sup> In this last remark he was referring to the idea of maintaining examining boards in various parts of the country. He continued to argue that Washington and New York were the two places that needed them most. In this connection, he remarked, "This is about the extent to which I believe any

civil service reform can be carried out... If they go beyond that, the thing will break down of its own weight. At all events, the President by attempting to carry out Civil Service Reform and Congress by passing the law a year ago have committed themselves to a fair trial of this experiment."<sup>239</sup> The sentence which is particularly significant is the last one. Did Sherman wish to manufacture achievements for the Republican party in March 1872, with a view to the election which would take place in the following November by suggesting that both the President and the Congress had done all in their power to obtain Civil Service Reform? And did Sherman desire to go just far enough to create that impression, "by giving it a fair trial" and at the same time retain control by Congress over patronage? It would be valuable to give a definite answer to these questions, but the material does not justify any basic conclusions of that nature. In the course of the discussion Sherman suggested that \$25,000 would be sufficient and moved an amendment to that effect, but withdrew it a little later on 11 March 1872, voted against a motion to adjourn which was designed to cut off the civil service appropriation, and then voted yea on the passage of the original amendment which provided for an appropriation of \$50,000. The amendment carried 25-21, 27 not voting.<sup>240</sup> It is clear that Sherman favored giving the civil service reform idea a fair trial, but his motive in desiring the fair trial is not as clear. A little later in the same week Sherman voted to pass the resolution introduced by Conkling of New York, which provided for an investigation into patronage in New York, Missouri, Illinois and

Nebraska. Sherman said that he voted for the resolution in order that information might be obtained which would vindicate Conkling of the accusation that he was abusing the patronage of New York.<sup>241</sup> The only significance that can be attached to this remark is the fact that Sherman wanted Conkling vindicated, which considering the relation of Conkling to the administration might be suggestive. The only general conclusion that can be drawn from the discussion of the attitude of Sherman towards civil service reform is that he was a supporter of the President and of the administration, and was moved to adverse action only when he considered that the appropriation was excessive.

The question of Cuba occupied a prominent place in the minds of a large group of politicians when Grant began his service as president. An insurrection in Cuba was already in progress when Grant became President, and Spain was trying to suppress it. The people in New York were particularly active in supporting the Cubans. The most ardent supporter of the Cubans in political life was Rawlins, Secretary of War under Grant. His close relations with General Grant enabled him to conduct his negotiations and intrigues from a favorable vantage point and almost enabled him to succeed with his plans. Grant was strongly in favor of recognizing the belligerency of the Cubans as a step towards recognizing their independence, and notwithstanding the pressure of Fish, his Secretary of State, in the opposite direction he carried out his policy as far as he was able.<sup>242</sup> Edmonds, in his biography of Grant, says emphatically that Grant desired to recognize the Cuban rebels as belligerents.<sup>243</sup> The attitude

of Sherman on the question of the recognition of the Cubans as belligerents is not clear. Sherman did introduce a resolution in the Senate calling for the recognition of Cuba. On that occasion Fish advised him to prepare for increases in the public debt to meet the increased appropriations for the Army and Navy.<sup>244</sup> On 17 June 1870 a special message was sent to Congress emphasizing the necessity of refraining from recognition. This message was written by Fish and signed reluctantly by Grant.<sup>245</sup> In the course of the debate which followed a resolution was introduced empowering the President to remonstrate against the barbarous character of the war. This resolution was amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting a resolution in five sections denouncing the violence of the war and slavery.<sup>246</sup> Sherman said that he would vote for it.<sup>247</sup> A short time later he said that he was very much in favor of the resolution, but would not yield the floor to enable further consideration of it to take place.<sup>248</sup> Sherman does not mention the Cuban question of 1869-1870 in his Recollections and there isn't a single reference to it in the Sherman letters so there is no accurate source of information as to why Sherman introduced the resolution, looking to the recognition of Cuba.

The alphabetical order which has been followed thus far in considering the various groups of legislation will be set aside for the time being in order to consider the Dominican question. The Dominican question and the Cuban question are logically part of the same general group which might be termed foreign relations, but the attitudes of Grant and Sherman vary somewhat more widely

on the Dominican question than they did on the Cuban question. The best introduction to the story of the Dominican question is the following quotation from the annual message of President Grant which was sent to Congress in December 1870. He said:

"The acquisition of Santo Domingo is an adherence to the Monroe Doctrine; it is a measure of national protection; it is asserting our just claim to a controlling influence over the great commercial traffic soon to flow from west to east by way of the Isthmus of Darien; it is to build up our merchant marine; it is to furnish new markets for the products of our farms, shops, and factories. It is to make slavery insupportable in Cuba and Porto Rico... it is to settle the unhappy condition of Cuba... it is to provide an honest means of paying our honest debts without overtaxing the people; it is to furnish our citizens with the necessaries of life at cheaper rates than before; and it is in fine, a rapid stride towards that greatness which the intelligence, industry and enterprise of the citizens of the United States entitles this country to assume among nations."<sup>249</sup> This extract indicates the strong leanings which Grant possessed towards the annexation of Santo Domingo. In 1869, General Babcock, one of his private secretaries went to the island and conducted negotiations for its annexation.<sup>250</sup> The treaty which resulted pledged the President to use all of his influence in getting the treaty ratified.<sup>251</sup> There is no question but what Grant did his part to get it ratified. He summoned many of the senators to the White House. He camped out in the President's room at the Capitol and begged senator after senator personally to support the treaty. The

last was a very unusual procedure and some writers saw fit to compare the tactics which Grant used on this occasion to the tactics which Johnson used when he was president. Despite all of the work of Grant the committee reported adversely on 15 March, 1870.<sup>252</sup> Two days after the adverse report of the committee, Grant summoned fourteen senators to meet him in order to discuss the matter with them.<sup>253</sup> On the day before the vote in the committee he had sent a message asking favorable action.<sup>254</sup> He sent another message on 31 May, but all his efforts were in vain and the treaty was rejected on 30 June 1870, by a vote of 23-28.<sup>255</sup> Sherman did not participate to any great extent in the debates which concerned the treaty for the annexation of Santo Domingo. On the day when the final vote was taken, Sherman was in his seat but did not vote.<sup>256</sup> Neither Sherman nor the biographer of Sumner attempt to explain why Sherman did not vote when the President so earnestly desired the ratification of the treaty. One conclusion that might be given is that he opposed the treaty to such an extent that he did not want to vote against it since the President wanted it so badly. It may have been one of those cases where sacrifice for the party was too great. The message of the President from which an extract was quoted at the beginning of this discussion reopened the question in December 1870. On the sixth day of the session, Morton, following a suggestion made by the President, introduced a resolution for a commission to investigate the Dominican question and report to Congress. Sherman favored the commission. The question was debated without reference to a committee on 20 December 1870.<sup>257</sup> Sherman wanted to get

the sugar bill up for consideration, but Morton would not give way informally. Upon his refusal to give way informally Sherman said he would make the motion formally. He went on to say: "I want to see whether or not this Senate will take up a matter of political discussion which will lead to a long debate and end in nothing at all, or whether they will take up that which they are distinctly informed by the officers of the Government ought to be acted upon before 1 January."<sup>258</sup> This does not indicate very much respect for the Dominican project inasmuch as he relegates it to the category of political questions, but he went farther than that in the following comment which he made, "I have never been able to magnify this little island into the great importance that other Senators have..."<sup>259</sup> Here he relegates it to the category of the insignificant or at least the unimportant in his eyes. After Sumner finished with his criticism of the resolution and of Grant incidentally, Sherman cut off Morton, who was about to reply to Sumner, by moving to take up the sugar bill.<sup>260</sup> Sherman voted yea on the passage of the resolution, on the 21 December, 1870. It was approved by Grant on 13 January 1871. The attitude of Sherman during the two days of debate and during the whole controversy was one of lack of interest in Santo Domingo. He was willing to let his colleagues talk all they wanted to just so he could get his measure through on scheduled time. It is quite evident that he did not oppose the Administration in an important way for the sugar bill which he was trying to get passed before 1 January was a measure especially desired and recommended by the Secretary of the Treasury. He might have

desired to protect Sumner by cutting off the reply by Morton, but he certainly reversed himself on 17 March when he invoked a point of order and had it sustained against Sumner who was reading a petition on the Dominican question. The point of order silenced Sumner and forced him to resume his seat.<sup>261</sup> Two events, connected with the political aspects of the question were provoked by the Dominican question. The first and briefest of these, although by no means the simplest and best understood, was the question of the sudden and unexpected request by Grant for the resignation of Attorney-General Hoar from the Cabinet. The general impression is that this was done in order that one state (Massachusetts) might not have two Cabinet members (Hoar and Boutwell) Coolidge in his life of Grant says that the removal was made by Grant in order to appoint a Southern man in his stead and thus get Southern support for his Dominican project.<sup>262</sup>

The second event created a great deal more stir at the time. It was the removal of Sumner from the Chairmanship and from the Committee on Foreign Relations, a position that he had held for twelve years. The removal was made by the republican caucus at the insistence of Grant. It followed the differences of opinion between Sumner and Grant and the supporters of the latter over the Dominican question, Cuban question and the Alabama claims controversy with Great Britain. The removal of Motley, a personal friend of Sumner, from his post as ambassador to Great Britain preceded the removal of Sumner and may have contributed to the causes of it. The whole question seems to turn upon another question of veracity. Grant maintained that

on the occasion when he called upon Sumner to get his support for the treaty annexing Santo Domingo, Sumner promised to support it. On the other hand, Sumner maintained that he merely promised to consider it. Sumner criticised the administration program with respect to Santo Domingo frequently and sometimes even violently and as a result after the Forty-first Congress had expired and the new Congress was to be organized a republican caucus was held to select the majority members of the various committees. Sherman was a member of the committee on committees. He was regarded as favorable to Sumner and proved to be favorable to the idea of retaining him as chairman of the committee on foreign relations. The majority of the committee was against Sherman, so Sumner was given the chairmanship of a new committee, the committee on privileges and elections, and Cameron of Pennsylvania, was made chairman of the committee on Foreign relations. Sherman voted in favor of retaining Sumner and spoke in his favor, but the caucus voted 21-26 against retaining him.<sup>263</sup> Sherman thought that Sumner ought to be left where he was and transfer another senator who would be in harmony with the views of the majority of the committee. He considered that that would be the most polite and just course.<sup>264</sup> The attitude of Sherman as expressed in the caucus is somewhat stronger than the account which he gives in his Recollections. The account in the Memoirs and Letters of Sumner is so interesting that it can be profitably quoted in full. The quotation is as follows, "Sherman felt bound by the action of the Caucus; but he recorded his deliberate conviction that it was an unwise proceeding, made without sufficient

cause. He said, 'But sir, as we have been drawn into this debate, in justice to myself,--and I call other Senators to witness the truth of it, --I do here repeat what I have said in other places, that I regard this change as unjustifiable, as impolitic, as unnecessary, and that no reason has been given which ought in my judgment, to induce this change.' There was no Senator on the floor whose opinion, in view of his consistent interest in public interest and his judicial temperament was worth, so much as that of the Senator from Ohio. Indeed, hardly any Senator in our history has kept his balance so perfectly in the midst of controversy. He spoke without partiality, not being an intimate friend of Sumner, or of the same type of public men."<sup>265</sup> This is an extremely significant comment upon Sherman. It emphasized the fact that he opposed Grant on this particular matter for Grant earnestly desired the removal of Sumner, and it also points to Sherman as a man of remarkable political characteristics. Some weight must be allowed for the author being partial because of the support of Sumner by Sherman, but he does not say the same of other senators who defended Sumner even more strongly perhaps than Sherman. Sherman did possess remarkable balance to travel a middle course so evenly. In those throublous times it must have been a doubly difficult task. Sherman regarded himself as bound by the decision of the caucus and abided by it. Pierce in his work on the Memoirs and Letters of Sumner says that the southern republican senators were swayed by their weak position at home and the expectancy of executive favor.<sup>266</sup> The same author says that there was great joy at the

executive mansion and at the State Department, but goes on to say that the principal prosecutors of the case fared badly in the political future.<sup>267</sup> The significance of this incident is the open refusal by Sherman to follow orders from the President which indicates that he was not willing to compromise himself in order to curry favor with the President.

The next group of bills that will be considered is composed of several minor bills all relating to the government and management of the District of Columbia in which Sherman was vitally interested. That was only natural since Washington was practically his home from 1854 until the time of his death. He had travelled some in Europe and had visited many of the capitals of the great European countries and was impressed by the beauty of the well planned cities. He was very much in favor of carrying on the work of beautification and construction of public works in Washington. As far as the respective attitudes of Sherman and Grant upon bills that dealt with Washington were concerned there was almost complete unanimity of opinion. Some of the bills which Sherman advocated or approved and Grant signed were: a bill providing for poor relief;<sup>268</sup> a bill authorizing the city to set aside a certain portion of the streets as parks;<sup>269</sup> a bill providing for the salaries of the school teachers in the District;<sup>270</sup> and a bill providing for the paving of Pennsylvania Avenue.<sup>271</sup> It would be interesting to follow out the Shepherd incident throughout its various phases, but that is foreign to this topic. It isn't possible to make an

estimate of the influence of politics upon the bills mentioned above. If some of the scandals which involved officials in the District of Columbia indicate anything it is that politics played a large part in legislation which affected the District. Sherman seemed very sincere in his support of the different bills for the betterment of the seat of government. There is one minor incident which affected Sherman alone which ought to be mentioned here as it throws some light on his business interests. In a letter to the Cincinnati Enquirer in which he denied the allegation that he had made money out of his position as a legislator he said in part, "The only enterprise in which I ever engaged, which rests upon an act of Congress, is that in 1862, after the bill passed authorizing the construction of a street railway in this city, I, with others, openly subscribed stock, and undertook to build it in pursuance of the act of Congress."<sup>272</sup> Sherman is frank concerning this investment. The letter was written from Washington, on 20 March 1871, and it did not indicate that he had alienated his interest in the street railway, so it wouldn't have been human if this interest in the economic life of Washington did not affect him and thus his attitude upon legislation.

There has been a great deal of literature or at least material written on the subject of the Indian policy of Grant. In former years it was taken for granted that Grant instituted an entirely new Indian policy, but of late years historians have not been unanimous in supporting such a theory. Again it is not the main object of this investigation to enter into a full discussion of a problem that is foreign to the scope of this paper

except as it called forth expression of opinion from Sherman and Grant.

The course of Sherman with respect to measures relating to the Indians was not wholeheartedly in agreement with the administration policy, but in fairness it must be stated that Sherman was influenced more by considerations of economy than by any conscientious objection to the policy itself. This can be substantiated by the fact that he usually voted in the affirmative on the passage of a bill although he frequently set himself against any items appropriating money. The first bill relating to the Indian policy that will be considered was the one which was introduced into the third session of the Forty-first Congress (1869-1871). It was customary Indian appropriation measure and carried as one of its items a provision for an increase in salary for the Indian agents.<sup>273</sup> Sherman in commenting upon the bill made the following remarks, "I never dreamed that the clergymen or the preachers who are acting as Indian agents would be asking for an increase in salary within the first year of their appointment." And again he said, "I think they (clergymen) are doing a great deal of good work; I think they will probably do more to keep peace and comfort among the Indians than all the agents sent before them."<sup>274</sup> The first remark seems to be just a protest against the raising of the salaries and the second seems to give partial approval to one phase of the Indian policy of Grant. A later comment reveals the fact that Sherman was lukewarm in his attitude towards the Indian policy. He said that he had thought well of the new Indian policy until the managers of it commenced

to attempt raises in salaries for the Indian agents.<sup>275</sup> In accordance with that idea and consistent with his constant attempts to curtail expenditures Sherman voted to cut the items in the appropriation bill throughout its course in the Senate. On the final vote he voted in the affirmative.<sup>276</sup> Grant signed the measure which indicated agreement in a general way.<sup>277</sup>

The attitude of Sherman upon the Indian appropriation bill which came before the third session of the Forty-second Congress (1871-1873) was not clear. The only concrete point that can be derived from the part which Sherman played in the legislative career of this particular bill is the fact that he both spoke and voted against the proposal to move the Indians westward.<sup>278</sup>

His attitude on the bill introduced into the next session of Congress was quite clear. While discussing the bill Sherman severely criticised the whole Indian peace policy of supplying food and clothing to the Indians. He said emphatically, "I do not believe it."<sup>279</sup> He continued, "For the last eight years I have voted steadily against every Indian appropriation bill.

If I had the power I would defeat this bill now and compel the adoption by Congress of some other policy, but I have not. I merely call the attention of the Senate to it."<sup>280</sup> Sherman manifested opposition to one of the phases of the Indian policy when he voted for an amendment to strike out an appropriation of \$5,000 to pay the expenses of the Indian delegations to Washington. The bill passed by a no record vote and was approved by the President.<sup>281</sup> It is quite clear from the attitude of Sherman towards the various Indian appropriation bills that he

was opposed to the entire scheme of handling the Indians which had been developed in this country. His remark that he had voted against every Indian appropriation for the last eight years indicated that he was out of sympathy with the Indian policy of the government long before Grant became President. The statement also indicates something else in a vague general way and that is that the Indian policy under Grant was not so different from the Indian policy of previous administrations that it could win over a consistent opponent of the previous policy. Sherman did not believe in the Indian policy of Grant. He believed that the Indians should be given an opportunity to become self-supporting. He referred many times to the Wyandotte Indians who had become thoroughly used to the ways of the white man by that time. It must be noted that the opposition which Sherman manifested was not personal. He was not criticising the policy of the present more than the policy of the past. He wanted something totally different. W.T. Sherman on several occasions when called before various committees criticised the Indian policy very severely. Perhaps the Sherman brothers had what they considered a better Indian policy in mind, but did not have the support to put it into force. The fact that John Sherman and Grant differed on the Indian question is not sufficient indication that Sherman did not approve of the policies of Grant in a general way.

The next section of this paper will be devoted to the discussion of a variety of bills and incidents that could only be grouped under the ambiguous head of Miscellaneous matter.

The first of these refers to the case of Stewart, who had been appointed Secretary of the Treasury by Grant. Two days

after his confirmation it was discovered that he was ineligible under law of 1789 which prohibited an importer of foreign goods from occupying that post in the Cabinet. He offered to place his business in trust and give the proceeds to charity during his term of office. Grant recommended that a special resolution be passed exempting him from the operation of the law.<sup>282</sup> In accordance with this suggestion, Sherman introduced a bill to that effect. It was read twice and then laid on the table following an objection by Senator Sumner to its immediate consideration. It was printed and referred to a committee on 8 March 1869; the President withdrew his request on 9 March, and on the 12, the bill was postponed indefinitely.<sup>283</sup> The incident simply indicated that at the beginning of the presidential term of Grant, Sherman was quite willing to help Grant solve a difficulty which he, Grant, had created by his ignorance of the law. It certainly indicated that Sherman was a good administration man at the time.

The next incident happened a little later and it pointed in the opposite direction. Grant had appointed a certain Mrs. Evans as postmistress at Ravenna, Ohio, at the request of his father. Garfield was very much displeased with the appointment and all the more so because he had not been consulted for the town was in his district, so he wrote to Sherman to persuade him to use his influence to get the nomination defeated. In the letter he stated that he had called on Grant and after explaining the matter, Grant had informed him that he was very sorry and would not have appointed Mrs. Evans if he had known the circumstances. Garfield went on to say that Grant had requested him to see Sherman

and that if Sherman saw fit to suspend the action on the case and advised the President to withdraw the nomination, he would do so, but he did not like to withdraw it upon his own motion. Garfield commented, "Sherman was not inclined to assist Grant so he did nothing."<sup>284</sup> This incident might indicate that Grant was willing to accept help from Sherman to get out of a disagreeable situation, and that Sherman was not so much in favor of Grant that he was willing to give the help.

The bills in this group will be summarized briefly. In the case of the bill providing for a Biennial Register Sherman favored the bill,<sup>285</sup> and Grant approved it.<sup>286</sup> The same was true of the bill which referred to the census and provided for paying the loyal citizens who had taken the census in the South in 1860,<sup>287</sup> and of the bill relating to the construction of a crib in Lake Erie at Cleveland.<sup>288</sup> Agreement between Sherman and Grant was also true of two bills which referred to the Centennial Exposition. The one was passed and approved in 1874,<sup>289</sup> the other in 1876.<sup>290</sup> Other bills which belong in this class are: (1) a bill to prevent the extermination of furbearing animals in Alaska;<sup>291</sup> (2) the Glenwood Cemetery Bill;<sup>292</sup> (3) the joint resolution to send a delegate to the International Congress on Penitentiary and Reformatory Discipline;<sup>293</sup> (4) a bill affecting the jurisdiction in Ohio Courts;<sup>294</sup> (5) a joint resolution admitting photographs for exhibition purposes free from duty;<sup>295</sup> (6) a bill to furnish money for the completion of the Washington monument;<sup>296</sup> and (7) a bill to provide for the ventilation of the halls of Congress.<sup>297</sup>

There was one bill in this group on which Grant and Sherman definitely disagreed. This bill was the one which related to the Electoral Commission. Sherman opposed the bill as wrong in method of approach and wrong in the method of selecting the members. He also criticised the bill for delegating legislative powers, and advocated the ordinary procedure in counting the ballots.<sup>298</sup> Sherman voted nay on the final passage of the bill, but the yeas had it 47-17.<sup>299</sup> The bill was approved by the President on 29 January 1877.<sup>300</sup> With respect to this bill, Coolidge says that Sherman strongly opposed the bills on the basis of constitutionality, but really was afraid that it would harm Hayes. Sherman regarded it as a Democratic measure.<sup>301</sup> With respect to this bill Sherman might have been the astute politician and Grant either was not swayed by political considerations or he was not sharp enough to interpret the bill as Sherman understood it. If fate had not intervened the diagnosis of the effect of the bill by Sherman would have been correct. Sherman was shrewd enough to use the unconstitutionality argument as a blind for his real purpose. Another factor in the situation might have been the fact that Sherman was more interested than Grant in the success of Hayes.

One bit of legislation which passed just before the expiration of the first term of President Grant was the bill providing for the increase in the salaries of the Congressmen, and other officials, the increase to take effect at the beginning of the term which the Congressmen were serving at the time the bill was passed. Sherman voted against the 'Salary Grab Act' when it

was passed.<sup>302</sup> When in the following year, due to the pressure of public opinion, there was a bill introduced to repeal the 'Salary Grab', Sherman committed himself openly as favoring repeal on the basis that the retroactive feature of the law made it unconstitutional.<sup>303</sup> On 7 January 1874, Sherman voted to keep the repeal bill in the form in which it was reported.<sup>304</sup>

Five days later the repeal bill passed the Senate, Sherman voting yea.<sup>305</sup> On 22 January the repeal act was signed by the President.<sup>306</sup> A very interesting conversation developed between

Sherman and Tipton of Nebraska, when the repeal bill was under consideration. The background of the conversation was as follows: On 7 January, Sherman declared himself in favor of repealing the part of the bill which referred to congressmen but wanted to leave the rest of the bill which referred to the Justices and to the President just as it was. He said that too much attention had been given to the bill already and since the public demanded the old salary for congressmen he was in favor of restoring it.<sup>307</sup>

Two days later he voted against the Pratt amendment to make the salary of congressmen \$5,000 for each session, and a little later he said he would vote for the next amendment, which Pratt offered providing for a salary of \$7,500 for the year ending March 3, 1874, and a salary of \$2,500 for the year ending on 3 March 1875, because he could stand the smaller salary as well as any Senator could.<sup>308</sup>

In reply to the last remark Tipton said that Sherman could afford to take the reduced salary because he was rich. He then produced a document stating that Sherman had come to Congress poor and now he was rich. The document was a speech made by

Morris H. Day, before the Grangers of Illinois. In reply Sherman said he was not a millionaire, but wished that he was one, and further he said, "I can say before man and before God, and defy the whole world, or any individual in the world, to show that I have received directly or indirectly, since I have been a member of Congress, a dollar except by pay and I can show that I have sacrificed my private interests."<sup>309</sup> Tipton disclaimed any intention of accusing the Senator from Ohio and the affair was dropped. This affair brings up the question concerning the wealth of Sherman which is a very interesting one. He maintained throughout his career that his property was such that everyone could see it and that he could account for it in a perfectly legal and legitimate way. The frequency of the accusations against Sherman that he became rich in congress makes one wonder if there was some truth in the allegation. Sherman, himself, admitted that he received tempting offers from large corporations. In a letter written from Mansfield, Ohio, on 13 August 1865, to W.T. Sherman, he discussed his chances of being reelected. The portion of the letter which affects our problem will be quoted in full, and is as follows: "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."<sup>310</sup> In 1865, Sherman was just in the early part of his rise as a leader in the Senate. If he was receiving tempting offers then, how much more tempting offers would he receive later when he became one of the outstanding men in the political life of the country. Two months after the letter quoted above, John Sherman wrote another letter to W.T. Sherman which throws a little more light upon the question. It is written from the Senate Chamber and dated 10 November 1865. It reads as follows, ...

"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... But for my political employment I could have received some 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... I do not fear, whatever may be the result of the Senatorial elections, but I can find enough to do, and without lowering the position which I have occupied. As for the chances, from all the information that I can gather, there is but little doubt a majority of the Legislature is for me. Still I know enough of the shifts and dangers in a new body of men like a Legislature not to be over sanguine. Since I am in the contest I will do all I can for success, and hope my friends will do likewise, but if defeated will bear it patiently. In a short time, I will send you a list

of the members who are from the military service, in the hope that you may know some of them well enough to influence some of them. You can feel perfectly easy in doing this, as my opponents use to the uttermost against me any prejudice against you. This election over, I think, I shall be very willing to say goodbye to politics, and will then seek to settle myself comfortably in some part of Ohio where I can engage in railroads, banking or manufacturing. The law in this country is now useful as the pathway to other pursuits."<sup>311</sup> This letter indicated the interest which Sherman had in railroads and in other lines of economic pursuits; whether he became identified with any of them during his terms in congress is not a matter of knowledge just at present. It is known that he was connected with some railroad companies but that phase of the problem will be discussed in connection with the material on railroads.

The pension bills constitute a minor group of legislation. A summary of the bills relating to pensions reveals the fact that Grant approved all of the bills that Sherman supported. The different bills included specific grants of pensions to Clark Hall,<sup>312</sup> Mary Lincoln,<sup>313</sup> and to Andrew Evartz.<sup>314</sup> The other bill in the group was one that related to the consolidation of the pension laws. Another group of bills of minor importance is the groups which related to the problem of the public lands. This question was beginning to assume a great deal of importance as the westward movement tended to bring under cultivation all of the more desirable tracts of lands, which resulted in the rapid decrease in the size of the public domain. In addition to that

phase of the question the discharged soldiers had to be absorbed into civil life again and the proposition of giving them a favored position with respect to the distribution of the public lands was recommended as one method of aiding in accomplishing a solution to the problem. In addition to the foregoing problems there was the very grave problem of enacting some law to untangle the confusion which resulted from overlapping land titles arising from a variety of laws. A bill was introduced into Congress designed to protect the rights of settlers on the public lands. That was during the early part of the first administration of President Grant. Sherman supported the bill and after it was passed it was signed by Grant.<sup>316</sup> All the other bills in this group that were investigated were supported by Sherman and approved by Grant. The Soldiers' Homestead Bill might be considered an exception to the above general statement for during the debate on it Sherman objected until the bill was changed to suit his objections,<sup>317</sup> and then he said that although he approved the bill he thought that the tariff bill ought to be considered and passed first.<sup>318</sup> The President approved the bill 4 April 1872.<sup>319</sup> The other bills in this group which Sherman supported and Grant approved were a bill providing for the redemption and sale of lands held by the United States under acts levying direct taxes,<sup>326</sup> and a bill to confirm preemption and homestead entries of public lands within the limits of railroad grants.<sup>321</sup>

Again the only general conclusion that can be drawn from the bills that were examined in this group is that there was a general agreement between the attitude of Grant and the attitude

of Sherman on the question of the public lands.

The group of bills which will be discussed next contain the measures that provided for grants of aid by Congress to companies engaged in constructing railroads. The construction of railroads had been begun in earnest before the Civil War and many short lines had been built. The construction of a transcontinental line had been projected at least a decade before the Civil War broke out. The construction of a transcontinental railroad involving as it did a vast outlay of capital and protection from the Indians, was not within the resources of any one man or within the resources of a group of men unless they received aid from the federal and state governments. The question of granting federal aid to companies naturally threw the whole subject of the railroads into politics, and into Congress where it has remained since that time. Before the Civil War the question of slavery so befogged the minds of men that they did not perceive the real importance of the railroad question. The Kansas-Nebraska bill is an example of a measure that was said to have originated in the desire of its sponsor, Stephen A. Douglas to make enticing concessions to the slave power so that it in turn would make him president of the United States. The real motive of Douglas was to so becloud the issue that he could get the organization of two territories, Kansas and Nebraska, so that the two proposed routes for western railways in Illinois, the northern through Chicago and the southern one through St. Louis would have an equal chance for aid and development. This arrangement would also assure of an even break and protect the economic interests of Douglas in that city.

If only one territory was organized the people would settle in the Southern part and the railroad west from St. Louis would have the advantage, but with two territories and two capitals, thus two centers of population the Chicago route would have an equal chance.<sup>322</sup> Thus we have the spectacle of a man juggling the problems and interests of a great nation in a way that would benefit his personal interests if it was not for that purpose. It is seen then that the question of the railroads was a national one even before the Civil War.

Sherman was reared in an environment that was charged with interest and excitement over railroads. He took a very active interest in the question shortly after entering public life. It is not known just how much interest Sherman had financially in railroads, but he had some is known for sure. One of his earliest acts as a lawyer was to secure the condemnation of the land for a right-of-way for the Sandusky and Mansfield railroad.<sup>323</sup> It is also known that he was the law partner of his brother, Charles T. Sherman, who was during the latter part of the partnership the general-attorney for the Pittsburg, Fort Wayne and Chicago railroad.<sup>324</sup> This road was one of the most valuable railroads in Ohio and was connected with the Pennsylvania system.<sup>325</sup> It is also known that Sherman was a director of the Pennsylvania company throughout his public career.<sup>326</sup> Sherman in his Recollections, related the reason why the law firm of which he was a member became interested primarily in railroads. Previous to 1846 the chief business of the firm had been the task of collecting debts for eastern commercial interests, but the

establishment of a large number of state banks under the law of 1846 caused this lucrative practice to gravitate to the banks. That this loss in business did not make the law practice any less profitable is clear from the following quotation from the Recollections of Sherman in which he said, "This loss was however more than made good by our employment as attorneys for the several railroads through Tichland county."<sup>327</sup> Thus it is clear that John Sherman developed an interest in railroads early in his career, and probably developed an attitude of mind of looking at a question involving railroads from the point of view of the railroad proprietor. Reference has already been made in this paper to the visit of the English capitalists to this country and the fact that they offered Sherman employment. The significant statement in this quotation is the one in which he says that he would identify himself more closely with them if they were to make sufficient progress with their plans. It is known that W.T. Sherman was connected with a railroad prior to the war. John Sherman made a trip to the Pacific coast and return as a guest of Thomas A. Scott, the President of the Pennsylvania railroad company.<sup>328</sup> The trip was made while he was a Senator and he commented frequently upon the fact that the conveniences and accommodations on the trip were very comfortable. Mr. Sherman made one comment on the trip that is suggestive of something valuable. It was as follows, "All this rapid development did not satisfy the desire of Colonel Scott and Mr. Walters (another member of the group) Their minds were occupied with vast railroad projects, some of which were

accomplished before their death. I also had my dreams, but they related to public policies rather than internal improvements and some of them have been realized."<sup>329</sup> There is no foundation for any assumption that Sherman was corruptly influenced by this association with railroad men or by his legal contract with railroad interests, but there is room for the possibility that a journey of a month with men interested in railroads who dreamed of 'vast projects' might have influenced Sherman indirectly. The investigation of several railroad bills might suggest something which would be of value in connection with this point as well as with the problem of the relations between Grant and Sherman.

The first bill in the railroad group referred to legislation to fix the point of terminus of the Union Pacific and the Central Pacific railroads. The discussion on this bill brought out one unusual feature and so it is given in some detail. Sherman offered an amendment to the joint resolution authorizing the President to fix the point of junction.<sup>330</sup> Howard wanted to amend the joint resolution so as to provide for a committee of the following men to fix the point of junction: Sheridan, Thomas, McDowell, Halleck and Gram.<sup>331</sup> Sherman objected and said that the President ought to be made responsible for the appointment of the commission.<sup>332</sup> This bill is not valuable except as it indicated that Sherman had confidence enough in Grant to authorize him to select a committee to settle a very controversial point. The remaining seven bills in this group will be given briefly. Of the seven Sherman favored six

of them and opposed the other one and Grant approved them all. The six bills which Sherman approved are as follows: (1) a bill providing for an extension of time for the Baltimore and Ohio railroad to complete the construction of its line;<sup>333</sup> (2) a bill to fix the terminus of the Union Pacific and Central Pacific railroads,<sup>334</sup> (3) a bill relating to the Northern Pacific railroad;<sup>335</sup> (4) a bill to grant land to a company that was going to construct a railroad from Portland to Astoria;<sup>336</sup> (5) a bill referring to the Texas and California Railroad;<sup>337</sup> (6) and a bill providing for another time extension for the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad company.<sup>338</sup> The bill which Sherman opposed concerned certain land grants to railroads in Minnesota.<sup>339</sup> Another bill received only lukewarm support from Sherman. It concerned land grants to a railroad company in Florida.<sup>340</sup> The study of the above bills does not throw very much light upon the question of the relations of Sherman with the railroad interests. It is true that he favored nearly every bill that involved aid to a railroad, but that in itself does not indicate more than the attitude of a progressive man who looked at problems from the economic point of view. With respect to the problem of Sherman's Grant relations this group of bills does not indicate anything except that Sherman was an administration man on measures referring to railroads just as he was on other problems.

The next group of bills is made up of the various reconstruction measures which were passed to draw the question

of reconstruction to a close. The different problems which had to be solved were a heritage from the Johnson Administration. During an earlier discussion of the reconstruction problem it was noted that Sherman and Grant held practically the same views on the general phases of the problem. It will be interesting to discover if this agreement continued throughout the period after Grant became President. The important bills in this group will be given in some detail, and the comparatively short and unimportant measures will be summarized briefly.

The first measure which produced something of value for this discussion was a resolution introduced by Sherman designed to suppress the Ku Klux Klan. In this resolution Sherman specifically provided that the committee on the Judiciary should report a bill authorizing the President and the law courts to execute the laws. This resolution passed the Senate by an almost straight administration vote.<sup>341</sup> This resolution indicated that Sherman had enough confidence in the ability of Grant to authorize him to handle an important part of the reconstruction problem.

The next problem of importance which brought forth an expression of opinion from Sherman was connected with the controversy in Louisiana. Two rival governments had proclaimed themselves the legal and legitimate state government in that state. Grant recognized the one established by Kellogg as the proper one. In commenting on this stand by the President Sherman said, "The President has recognized the Kellogg

government and rightfully recognized it." <sup>342</sup>

The most complete and wholehearted approval and support of the President delivered by a Senator when the Louisiana controversy was raging was delivered by Sherman. Sherman was speaking on the resolution concerning necessary legislation by Congress to secure to the people of Louisiana their rights of self-government. Mr. Sherman said: "Mr. President, the first matter I wish to bring to the attention of the Senate is the gross injustice that has been done to the President of the United States, to General Sheridan and I may say to the Republican party... (He then quoted Bayard's denunciation of Sheridan). So, my honorable friend in the heat of the excitement of this debate has arraigned the President of the United States in language scarcely less severe. He says, 'There is not in that state one case of abuse of power, of peculation, of robbery, of filthy dishonesty with which the history of its government is filled in the last two years, in which his displeasure has ever been signified by the removal of an improper official, not one word of rebuke.' Again Sir, he says, 'The President of the United States was advised of it; he was kept well informed of it, and his semi-official utterances made known to the people, were that no matter what frauds should be accomplished by this Board, they should be maintained at every cost, or that "somebody would be hurt", in case interference was attempted with their nefarious proceedings... .' What has the President done that was illegal or wrong? What act or

order of his is complained of? What power has he exercised that was not plainly, palpably his duty? He ordered some of the troops to New Orleans to preserve the public peace and to suppress domestic violence. This was done upon the legal requisition of the Governor of Louisiana. He was ignorant as we were ignorant of what was done there. He gave no order or direction which contemplated what was done there. He sought to avoid the use of troops in Louisiana, and in August last, withdrew them. The result was an armed and treasonable overthrow of the government of one of the States. By the general approval of the people of the people of the United States he suppressed that rebellion and restored the state government and that without shedding a drop of blood. The troops were left there to preserve the public peace and were appealed to and relied upon by both parties. Such was his offending and no more, and for this he was arraigned upon false information by honorable Senators, governors and citizens. For this he is compared with Sulla and all the brutal tyrants of ancient and modern times."<sup>343</sup> This defense of Grant certainly indicates that Sherman was a strong supporter of the Administration. Of course his motive is not known but there is every reason to believe that it was an honest and sincere one. It is also within the realm of possibility that Sherman was trying to cover up the Louisiana troubles of the Administration with a political eye to the presidential campaign which was only a year away.

Sherman again came to the defense of Grant following the Hamburg riots which occurred even closer to election time. The riots occurred while the presidential campaign was going on and the speech which Sherman made in defense of Grant and the administration was evidently delivered with the idea of having some effect upon the country at large. The first part of the speech is a general defense of Grant in which Sherman defends Grant against "vague inuendoes" and against the "common garbage of the street" which Sherman said were repeated in the speech of Wallace of Pennsylvania.<sup>344</sup> The next and important part of his speech was given over to a defense of the course of the Republican party upon the subject of specie payments. Sherman said, "General Grant recommended that this Congress do precisely what Governor Tilden says they have not done. They assail General Grant every day of their lives with the vilest calumny-- a man who carried our banner through its dangers in battle, whose life is distinguished by heroism and whose name will be remembered with honor and veneration long after all of us have disappeared from the memory of time. He is arraigned as Washington was arraigned like a common criminal, but this thing that he asked Congress to do, this House to do, is what Tilden says now ought to be done. Governor Tilden yet has the heart to arraign General Grant. General Grant recommended as President, precisely what Tilden says he would recommend..."<sup>345</sup> The conclusion which must be reached as a result of the study of the reconstruction measures is unavoidable. The conclusion that Sherman was a consistent, and loyal supporter of President Grant which can be safely inferred from the foregoing material is strengthened by the fact

that Sherman agreed with Grant on the bill to admit Virginia to representation in Congress;<sup>346</sup> on the bill which provided for the reconstruction of Georgia;<sup>347</sup> on the bill which provided for the admittance of Texas;<sup>348</sup> on the bill to admit Georgia to representation;<sup>349</sup> on the resolution to administer the oath of office to H.V.M. Miller, Senator elect from Georgia;<sup>350</sup> and on the bill to enforce the fourteenth amendment.<sup>351</sup>

The last group of measures that will be considered in this section of the paper are those that may be classified as relief bills. They were all of a private nature and each had a different set of circumstances upon which the bill or claim was based. There are thirteen bills in the group. Of these thirteen nine were approved by both Sherman and Grant, one was supported by Sherman and vetoed by Grant, and two were opposed by Sherman and approved by Grant. The margin in favor of agreement is so great that the conclusion is inescapable that Sherman was a strong supporter of the administration even upon comparatively insignificant private bills. There was one interesting and unique feature in this group of legislation and that was the fact that it contained the only bill which Grant vetoed and Sherman voted to pass over his veto. The particular bill was the Rollin White relief bill and pertained to certain patents on a rifle. Grant seemingly was moved more by military considerations than by fairness, when he vetoed the bill.<sup>352</sup>

In the bills that have just been discussed Sherman was just one of the group of administration senators. In the group of bills which come under the general heading of finance he was

the outstanding leader. The activities of Sherman in the field of finance will constitute the subject matter of the next chapter.

Chapter VII. The Grant Administrations:  
Public Finance.

The group of bills which will be discussed in this chapter includes the various financial bills which were debated during the two administrations of Grant, and which come within the scope of this investigation. Since the measures relating to finance are by far the most important measures with which Sherman came in contact, a brief discussion of the background of his life will be presented which will explain in part his interest in affairs pertaining to economics and finance.

The writing of history from the economic point of view is essentially the product of the recent period in historiography. Historians of the older schools were content to relate a mass of details relating to political and military events primarily, and consider it a history of the particular area or movement that they were discussing. This viewpoint towards history is not so difficult to explain if it is considered that events in the economic world, seventy-five or even fifty years ago, were small in comparison to the events which happen in the economic life of the present time. The smallness of the scope and the effect of economic events prior to the last half century barred them from consideration when history was in the process of being written. The opening of the West and the rise of corporate industry, particularly the railroads, operated to change the attitude of the people towards movements, events, education, professions and practically all the other elements that contributed to the making

up of the economic and material world. The far reaching effect of the railroads, for instance, upon the mental attitudes of the legislators and politicians from about the middle of the nineteenth century to the present time, cannot be overestimated. Consciously or unconsciously, directly or indirectly, the growth of huge corporations affected the attitude of mind which men in public life manifested towards questions of public interest. The economic phases of a question became the real matter of interest to people interested in the activities of the every day world.

John Sherman entered public life at the time when the transition towards emphasis upon the economic phases of questions was developing. Early in life he manifested the fact that he was in harmony with the spirit of the times. At fourteen he set out to make his own living. A year or so later he tried to make some money by speculating in salt.<sup>353</sup> When he was sixteen it was decided that he should enter the law office of Judge Parker in Mansfield, Ohio.<sup>354</sup> This law office was not essentially a place of legal activities. The banking system in Ohio, as elsewhere, was very bad, and the local banks were not trusted by the larger firms in the East, particularly by those in New York, with the handling of their financial interests. Because of this situation the handling of local accounts for the eastern banks and merchants was one of the profitable activities of a good lawyer. After Mr. Sherman was admitted to the bar in Ohio, in 1844, he was taken in as an equal partner in the lucrative business of his brother Charles Taylor Sherman, who was substantially the banker in Mansfield and in the surrounding counties for eastern

bankers and merchants.<sup>355</sup>

In his Recollections, Sherman discussed the change in the legal profession that occurred about the time that he started the practice of law. He mentioned the fact that the simplification of the codes of law and methods of pleading caused the legal profession to lose ground, but he made the following significant statement concerning the way in which the lost ground was regained: "While these causes were operating against lawyers, agents of nature, hitherto unknown, undiscovered and wonderful, were being developed, which were to completely revolutionize the methods of travel, the transportation of goods, and the modes of production, thus opening new fields for the employment of lawyers. Instead of assault and battery cases, suits for slander, and the collection of debts, the attention of lawyers was directed to the development of railroads, banking institutions and other corporations."<sup>356</sup> Right after this discussion Sherman made the remark that has already been quoted in another connection that after the better banks were organized and the lawyers lost their profitable activity of collecting debts for eastern banks and merchants they turned to the field of railroads in which they were employed as attorneys. Charles Taylor Sherman with whom John Sherman was in partnership, became the general attorney for the Pittsburg, Fort Wayne and Chicago railroad in 1846 and gradually withdrew from the active practice of law.<sup>357</sup> John Sherman was a director in the same railroad at a later date and retained that office until 1877.<sup>358</sup> The above items are related to indicate the close connection which Sherman had established with the economic

phases of the times prior to his entrance into public life. He was also associated with a certain Jacob Emminger, in the manufacturing of doors, blinds and other building materials. Together they acquired valuable pine lands in Michigan and transported the lumber to Mansfield where it was manufactured.<sup>359</sup> Sherman retained his law practice and his association with Emminger until 1877, or until he was appointed Secretary of the Treasury. Sherman was an able business man and seemed quite capable of managing his own affairs very efficiently. By 1847 he had been able to accumulate in property and money more than ten thousand dollars, which was quite a considerable sum for a young man to earn and save before he was twenty-five years old. It would be a very considerable sum for a young man of the present generation to accumulate at a time when money is more plentiful and its purchasing power somewhat less, but to accumulate that sum during the forties when money was much more scarce indicates that he was a shrewd business man as well as an able lawyer.

The preceding paragraphs are intended to reveal the economic background of John Sherman's career. It is impossible to consider Sherman with any degree of accuracy unless two things are taken into consideration. These two factors are, first, his intimate connection with, and widespread interest in affairs of the economic world; second, his absolute dependence upon partisan politics after he had attained a position fairly high in party circles. The first of these factors will be discussed in this section of the paper, the second has been discussed in connection with his general legislative and political career.

When Sherman was elected to Congress for the first time in 1854, he took with him into the legislative halls his interest in economic activities. It is true that he did not interest himself in matters of finance until three years after he had been elected the first time, but that can be explained on the basis of his interest in the affairs of Kansas and in the struggle to limit the extension of slavery. It would have been impossible for Sherman to have put aside his interest in business when he entered Congress. He had engaged in the practice of law for ten years and the most important part of his business at that time concerned railroads, banking interests and corporations. After ten years of association with these interests, could he have forgotten them and not permitted them to influence his subsequent career? It does not look reasonable that such could be the case and his legislative career shows that he was still primarily a man who viewed things from their effect upon business and who was concerned with fostering business enterprises in every way possible. With this brief introduction and account of the early connection of Sherman with economic interests the next topic to be considered relates to the interest of Sherman in finance, his financial policy and his financial activities with emphasis in the case of the latter upon the two administrations of Grant.

The conditions of business resulting from the Panic of 1857 led Sherman to begin his study of the general topic of finance. The first speech which Sherman made on the general topic of finance was made on 27 May 1858.<sup>360</sup> Mr. Sherman explained that during

the previous Congresses he had devoted all of his time to the struggle in Kansas, but that with the meeting of the Thirty-Fifth Congress (1857-1859) he naturally turned to the study of the finances of the government since that topic was the chief matter of interest in the country, and especially in Ohio. His first speech was the result of a great deal of labor and attracted so much attention that Sherman thought it led to his transfer to the Committee of Ways and Means in the Thirty-Ninth Congress (1865-1867).<sup>361</sup>

The first speech by Sherman on finance revealed the attitude towards financial affairs which he held at that time. He set forth the increase of expenditures and the decrease in revenues. He said that the government was not making any provision for the payment of the treasury notes in coin.<sup>362</sup> Right at the beginning of his expressed interest in finance Sherman emphasized provision for redemption of paper money. He also cited many abuses in the matter of appropriating money, calling attention to the practice of diverting specific appropriations to purposes made for one purpose to purposes not authorized by law, but in the same department; to the spending of appropriations before they were made, and to the practice of loading down an appropriation measure with all sorts of amendments containing matter extraneous to such a measure.<sup>363</sup> Mr. Sherman consistently opposed the above abuses throughout his career.

The attempts at organization by the Thirty-Sixth Congress (1859-1861) were responsible in an indirect way for Sherman becoming Chairman of the Ways and Means committee in February, 1860.

He had been the Republican candidate for the speakership, but his inadvertent signing of a recommendation for Helper's Impending Crisis, contributed to his defeat and he was made chairman of the Ways and Means Committee as a sort of consolation prize. Sherman did not like the position at the time for he realized that such a position meant a lot of work. His position as chairman of the Ways and Means committee gave him a commanding position in the House, second only to that of the Speaker. He could practically control the order of business and was generally recognized as the leader of the House.<sup>364</sup> If Sherman had been elected Speaker he probably would not have become so intensely interested in finance at least during his term as Speaker, on the other hand his position as chairman of the Ways and Means committee united the two tendencies which controlled his entire congressional career. His position with respect to financial bills made it necessary for him to study the whole field of economics very carefully, not only the contemporary problems but also those of the past. His position as leader of the House was a political one. He owed it to the party organization. Naturally he had to conform to the policy of the majority. In this accidental position as chairman of the Ways and Means committee are found the roots of all of the political activities of Sherman and the key to his attitude towards legislation in general.

Mr. Sherman made his first speech on the subject of the tariff on 7 March 1860. The bill that was under consideration at the time was the Morrill tariff bill. Sherman supported the bill and one of the reasons that he gave for his support was

given in the following quotation. He said he would like to have the bill passed and gave his reason as follows: "Because it is framed upon the idea that it is the duty of the government, in imposing taxes, to do as little injury to the industry of the country as possible; that they are to be levied so as to extend reasonable protection to all branches of American industry. I think that it is right... I believe that it will give a reasonable fair protection, for the great industries of agriculture manufacture, and commerce, which lie at the basis of the prosperity of this country."<sup>365</sup> Thus Sherman reaffirmed the conviction that he was primarily interested in promoting industry, in making favorable conditions for business enterprises. He believed that the only way to get a fair tariff, that would not be influenced by local interest would be to turn the framing of tariff measures over to an impartial commission.<sup>366</sup> This is probably a conviction gained later in life and incorporated in his Recollections to suggest his views upon the tariff at a convenient point. Certainly Mr. Sherman did not hesitate to get his share for his local interests when tariffs were being framed by politicians. The problems and crises of the Civil War transferred the focus of attention in financial affairs from the tariff and other phases of the question to the immediate problem of getting money to carry on the war.

Emergency measures were needed at once. The program which Sherman suggested contained four parts: "First, increase largely the revenue from customs duties to be paid in coin; second, impose all forms of internal taxes authorized by the Constitution;

third, create a national currency redeemable in coin, with no fixed time for redemption, but made a legal tender for all debts, public and private except customs duties; fourth, borrow any money needed on the most favorable terms possible."<sup>367</sup>

Salmon P. Chase, one of the United States senators from Ohio, was chosen Secretary of the Treasury by Mr. Lincoln, which left a vacancy in the Senate from Ohio. Sherman was reasonably sure of being elected Speaker of the House when the new congress met and organized and he desired very much to stay in the House in order to receive a position that he felt that he had been unfairly deprived of in the previous Congress... However, he was urged as a candidate for the senatorship, and was elected by the Legislature of Ohio. As a member in the Senate he had no right to expect important committee assignments, but the withdrawal of the southern members made a rearrangement of the committees necessary, and as a result he was assigned to the committee on Finance and to the committee on Naval affairs. At that time the committee on Finance was particularly important a committee for it had charge of all appropriation bills, all tax and revenue bills, all coinage bills, all loan bills and generally speaking, all bills which related to the Treasury Department and to the finances of the government. The former position of Sherman in the House coupled with his close personal connections with Secretary Chase led to his taking a very prominent part in financial legislation which was in fact, considered his specialty.<sup>368</sup>

The first lengthy speech which Sherman made in the Senate was in support of the legal tender clause in the currency bill of

1862. He justified the legal tender upon the basis of hard necessity, and constitutional authorization.<sup>369</sup> The legal tender act was passed and became a law on 25 February 1862.

Mr. Sherman claimed that "the passage of the legal tender act was the turning point in our physical and financial history."<sup>370</sup>

He said that it put the finances of the country on a sound basis and enabled the Government to utilize the wealth of the country in prosecuting the war. He further claimed, that the passage of this act and the subsequent improvement in the financial condition of the country was responsible for the shift in the Border states from a pro-Confederate attitude to a pro-Union attitude.

He attributed the turn in the tide towards the Union to the favorable impression made by the passage of the legal tender act and the public conviction that the North meant to utilize its great resources in winning the war.<sup>371</sup>

Mr. Sherman was very strongly opposed to the local and state banknotes and was very much in favor of taxing them out of existence and substituting for them a national currency issued through a system of national banks. A bill to that effect finally passed the Senate in January 1863. Mr. Sherman cited as advantages of the bill, the fact that it furnished the people with a national currency which was an element of union. He maintained that the currency was safe, uniform and convertible, limited in amount, restrained and governed by law, checked by the power of visitation and by the limitation of liabilities, and convertible in every part of the United States.<sup>372</sup> The legal tender act and the national banking act constituted the two main contributions

of Sherman to the finances of the Civil War. Naturally he was very much interested in all of the other financial legislation relating to loans, currency and to the great group of financial measures which were necessary to carry on the war. He was opposed to the variety of bond issues that were made and to the high interest rates which some of them carried. During this period, Sherman in common with a large group of public men were forced to forego their own ideas of what was sound and beneficial in the long run, and concentrate their attention on emergency requirements. The succession of emergencies naturally led to a great deal of confusion in the monetary system. The confused and complicated status of the monetary and financial system which was apparent at the close of the Civil War, was the problem to which Sherman together with men of all degrees of financial ability and opinions applied themselves in the decade which followed the War.

The activities and policies of Sherman which aided in the solution of this problem, together with his relations with Grant will constitute the material which will make up the remainder of this section. The discussion of the relations between Sherman and Grant will be prefaced with a brief discussion of the relations between Sherman and McCulloch, who was Secretary of the Treasury during the administration of Johnson. The briefest statement of the essential points of difference between Sherman and McCulloch is in the summary which Sherman gave in his Recollections. Sherman said: "At this time there was a wide difference of opinion between Secretary McCulloch and myself as to the financial policy of the government in respect to the public debt and the

currency. He was in favor of a rapid contraction of the currency by funding it into interest bearing bonds. I was in favor of maintaining in circulation the then existing volume of currency as an aid to the funding of all forms of interest-bearing securities into bonds redeemable within a brief period at the pleasure of the United States, and bearing as low a rate of interest as possible. Both of us were in favor of specie payments, he by contraction and I by the gradual advancement of the credit and value of our currency to the specie standard. With him specie payments was the primary object, with me it was a secondary object, to follow the advancing credit of the government. Each of us was in favor of the payment of the interest of bonds in coin. A large proportion of national securities were payable in lawful money, or United States money. He, by contraction, would have made this payment more difficult, while I, by retaining the notes in existence, would induce the holders of currency certificates to convert them into coin obligations bearing a lower rate of interest."<sup>373</sup>

Sherman summarized the financial condition in the country on 31 October 1865 as follows: Total debt of the United States, \$2,808,549,437.55, of which \$1,200,000,000 was payable at the option of the Secretary of the Treasury within a brief period. The amount of Treasury notes outstanding was then \$428,160,569 and the amount of fractional currency was \$26,057,469. "All of this money was in circulation, liked by the people, worth in use as much as the national bank notes and rapidly rising in value compared to coin."<sup>374</sup> Sherman opposed the bill authorizing

the retirement of the United States notes at the rate of \$48,000,000 a year or \$4,000,000 each month. The bill passed in spite of a lengthy argument by Sherman against it. Sherman said that from a distance of thirty years the bill was by far the most injurious and expensive financial measure ever enacted by Congress because it compelled the United States to pay a large rate of interest for many years postponed resumption until 1879.<sup>375</sup> Sherman introduced a funding bill later in the session, but could not get any action on it because of the political excitement of the time. He said that that the Greenback party gained its power as a result of the contractionist policy of Secretary McCulloch. Sherman was just as much opposed to the contractionist policy as the leaders of the Greenback party, but from a different motive. It is within the realm of reason that Sherman in permitting the Greenback party to develop without strong opposition from him was only permitting the Greenback leaders to pull his 'financial chestnuts' out of the fire for him. If such was his motive, he was playing good politics. For he did not antagonize the leaders of the Greenback movement and so could hope for their support for his financial policy at some later date, and at the same time his silence did not lay himself open to the charge of opposing his colleagues and favoring the Greenback party program. His course left him in a strategic position with respect to the solution of financial problems. The views on financial questions varied widely. One extreme was represented by those who wanted to pursue a 'let alone' policy and permit the commercial developments to solve the problems of resumption. The latter

group also wanted to keep the greenbacks in circulation in order to help finance the various projects which were a part of the reconstruction program and the general growth of the country. Sherman belonged to this group and was particularly a strong advocate of the refunding of the debt at a low rate of interest. A third group headed by McCulloch wanted gradual but sure retirement of the greenbacks and a fourth group of men wanted immediate resumption of specie payments. Of these four groups the idea of the last was impractical considering the scarcity of coin, the contractionist program of McCulloch had met popular disapproval as expressed by the Greenback party which was also too extreme. The group of which Sherman was a member, advocating as it did a "let alone" policy which is usually popular no matter what field of activity is concerned, were in a position when Grant came into office to go ahead with their plans and carry them to completion provided they could win over and hold the President to their views. If this is a correct analysis of the financial situation considered from a political standpoint, then Sherman had to remain on good terms not only with the administration group, but also had to pursue such a course with relation to legislation which the Administration wanted so that it would appear that he was a staunch supporter of the Administration.

The time was opportune for a group or groups to try to get the ear of the President and influence him to support their plans, for Grant did not have any particularly strong financial views when he came to the Presidency beyond feeling that the debt was sacred and ought to be paid at some time. Sherman

confessed that he was troubled with respect to what course to pursue after the election of Grant. In a letter to his brother from the Senate Chamber at Washington written on 24 December 1868, he made the following statement of his situation, "I am in real embarrassment about questions that I must act upon now. My conviction is that specie payments must be resumed, and I have my own theories as to the mode of resumption but the process is a very hard one, and will endanger the popularity of any man or administration that is compelled to adopt it. Our party has no policy, and any proposition will combine all other plans in opposition to it..."<sup>376</sup> Mr. Sherman predicted the course of events correctly for his plan when presented did meet with opposition from every quarter. The very fact that Sherman admitted that he did not know what to do is indicative of the latent trouble which would develop if the issue were pushed. To a student of the problem the minimum requirements for success would be support from the man who had been elected President by such a large majority as Grant had received. It would seem logical that Sherman would try to influence Grant and get his support for the financial policy which he (Sherman) had formulated and desired to see in effect. In March 1867, Sherman succeeded to the Chairmanship of the Committee upon Finance. This was a favorable and strategic position for the coming struggle over the solution of the financial problems which would inevitably arise within a short time. While the chairman of the Finance committee was a very powerful force in the Senate, the tenure in the position was dependent upon the whims and policies of

the majority in the Senate and politics was and still is a very uncertain game. That the position as chairman of a powerful committee in the Senate was beyond the control of the Executive is not substantiated by the removal of Sumner from the chairmanship of the committee on Foreign Relations. Sherman realized the precariousness of a position that he owed to party favor and he probably realized that he had to model his policy in such a way that he at least stayed within the good graces of the Administration most of the time.

The first Congress under Johnson (1865-1867) did not enact any financial measures of much value, but it did discuss and debate a great many bills which related to finance. Sherman charged that the abortive efforts of the Congress were due in part to the fact that Johnson favored repudiation of the national debt and his Secretary of the Treasury was trying to bring about the adoption of a specie standard by retiring United States notes, and in part to the fact that neither the President nor the Secretary had very effective support in Congress for their respective plans. The chief subjects for debate were financial in character and pertained to such things as the contraction of the currency, the refunding of the public debt, the payment of the United States notes in coins and the revision of the internal revenue and customs laws.<sup>377</sup> During the session of Congress, Sherman favored the bill depriving the Secretary of the Treasury of the authority to retire and cancel United States notes.<sup>378</sup> He reported a bill for the funding of the national debt and for a conversion of the notes of the United States.<sup>379</sup> Sherman wanted to fund the some

twenty different forms of liabilities into a series of bonds running from twenty to thirty years and bearing a low rate of interest and redeemable by the government after five or ten years.<sup>380</sup> The Finance committee under the guidance of Sherman also recommended that both the notes and the bonds should be received in exchange for the refunding bonds, and that the notes should be reissued for coin and maintained at par with coin. This meant resumption.<sup>381</sup> At first Sherman proposed to have the government redeem the bonds in legal tenders, but later changed his mind and said they ought to be redeemed in coin, which is substantially his attitude throughout the whole currency struggle.<sup>382</sup> Sherman excused his change of opinion on the grounds that "it was more important to be right than consistent".<sup>383</sup> Sherman said that the debate on the refunding bill was participated in by nearly every senator and was the most comprehensive and instructive debate on financial questions for many years.<sup>384</sup> The only thing settled in the two years of the Fortieth Congress (1867-1869) with respect to financial matters was that no further contraction of the currency should occur. It was also understood that no question should be made as to the payments of bonds in coin.<sup>385</sup> This Congress unimportant as it is in point of financial bills passed and financial questions settled, nevertheless contributed one real item to the eventual solution of the question. It did serve as a clarifying experience for the various financial ideas and as a result definite plans for the basis of the future financial policy were formulated by different groups.

The efforts on the part of each group to get its particular plan adopted and the inter play between members of groups produced a large number of financial bills during the administrations of Grant. One quite natural consequence of the variety of ideas which existed was the fact that compromises were frequently necessary because one group did not have the support to force the adoption of their plan. In this confused period Sherman showed that he was a master politician. He was adept in the political practice of reconciling widely divergent views and suggesting a solution upon which men with ideas which were very dissimilar could agree. He was sensible to the necessity of considering the views of those on whom he depended for support of his measures. This ability or characteristic probably explains why he was able to exercise such a large amount of influence upon the financial problems of this country throughout a period covering more than twenty years. The measures upon which it was possible to get an idea concerning the attitudes of Sherman and Grant will be classified and handled in three groups. The plan of classification was suggested by the attitude of Sherman upon various bills and is as follows: 1. Bills which Sherman opposed and Grant approved; 2. Bills which Sherman supported at the request of some Cabinet member; and approved by the President; 3. Bills which Sherman favored of his own accord which were later approved by the President; and 4. the bill which Sherman opposed and Grant vetoed. The sum total of finance bills upon which it was possible to get an expression of opinion by both Sherman and Grant were forty-three in number. The forty-three bills are distributed in the

following manner: four in the first group, five in the second, thirty-three in the third and one in the fourth. The bills in the first group were of minor importance, the ones in the second group indicate that Sherman was willing to work with the various members of the cabinet particularly, the Secretary of the Treasury who was cited most frequently. The third group of bills indicates general agreement between Grant and Sherman and the last group indicates general agreement in a negative way, since both Grant and Sherman opposed the only bill in the group.

A summary of the bills which made up the third group reveals some valuable and interesting facts. The bills are distributed between the four Congresses as follows: the Forty-First Congress, nine bills; the Forty-Second Congress, seven bills; the Forty-Third Congress, eleven bills and the Forty-Fourth Congress five bills. The large number of bills in the Forty-Third Congress can be explained on the basis that it lasted from 1873 to 1875 or during the period of recovery. from the Panic of 1873 when Congress was faced with the necessity of doing something definite towards solving the financial problems of the country.

Another interesting point in the discussion of finance bills is the fact that on some occasions Sherman felt called upon to defend the President. One of the occasions was the discussion of the income tax measure in the Forty-First Congress (1869-1871) Sherman was supporting it at this time and one of the things which was causing the trouble was the report that General Pleasanton, the commissioner of Internal Revenue had remarked that the income tax was unnecessary and that he would like to see it

revealed and furthermore it was said that the newspapers stated he was speaking on the part of the President. Sherman in commenting upon the report said, "That certainly cannot be true. The President of the United States has two methods of communicating with us, either directly by his Secretary, or indirectly through the Secretary of the Treasury, and he never undertook, and never did, I am quite sure, seek to influence Congress or any committee, by his private opinion conveyed in this informal way, and no man was authorized to speak for him in that way."<sup>386</sup>

This quotation illustrates the fact that Sherman thought that Grant would act through the proper agencies and also points out the fact that Sherman regarded a request from a cabinet member for certain legislation as tantamount to a request from the President himself.

Another interesting item which illustrates the character of Sherman is the fact that he asked for the immediate consideration of more than half of the measures which make up the finance group. Sherman was very tenacious in getting the bills that he favored through the Senate. There was a very good reason for this. His knowledge of matters of finance was admittedly greater than most of his colleagues, consequently he could explain a bill, discuss its technical features and ask for immediate consideration without having to contend with any well prepared speeches in opposition to the particular measure which he desired to have passed. He frequently spoke extemporaneously on financial matters, which was an accomplishment which very few Senators could perform. If this is taken into consideration it is not surprising that the

members of the Cabinet frequently asked him to get a bill passed by a certain time for they were aware of his ability in getting bills passed in a short length of time.

The most significant thing in this group of bills is the fact that throughout the period of time covering eight years, Sherman and Grant did not disagree on more than four measures. Such a state of agreement, almost approaching unanimity could not have been mere chance. Grant with his superficial views on problems that required a great deal of thought and careful consideration could not have agreed with Sherman, the acknowledged expert on financial affairs, by mere accident. It is not reasonable to suppose that Grant would have sound personal opinions upon matters of finance when he did not have them on matters much less complicated and involved. The statement by Sherman that Grant did not take any interest in financial affairs has already been quoted.<sup>387</sup> If he did not take any interest in financial affairs, why did he and Sherman agree so well upon matters of finance? The answer to this question can only be postulated; it cannot be asserted as a proven fact. It is safe to say that the answer lies somewhere in the political ramifications of the period. When it is considered that Sherman owed his position to the political party of which he was a member; that he was a powerful figure in the Senate; that he was a good debater, a skilled parliamentarian and a staunch supporter of his party; and that he supported administration measures throughout the whole period, then a logical conclusion is that Sherman was permitted to guide the financial policies of the Administration at least

during its legislative phases. Could it be that Sherman received this privileged position with respect to financial affairs, in return for support of other Administration policies? The answer to the question is difficult to find. Again the quotation that has already been made to the effect that Sherman said Grant did not interest himself in discussions which Sherman had with him with respect to financial affairs and was even indifferent suggests the answer, but also raises the question: if Grant was not interested in Sherman's discussions of matters relating to finance and was indifferent to them, who did formulate the financial policies of the Grant administrations? The answer to the last question may be sought indirectly in the approval which Grant gave to the financial measures of Sherman, but this would preclude other possibilities, chief among whom was Boutwell, the Secretary of the Treasury, but it does not preclude the fact that Sherman advocated the measures that were later approved by Grant. Whether Grant or Boutwell or some other person formulated the financial policies of the Administration the fact remains that Sherman was an almost one-hundred per cent administration man on financial measures as well as upon measures in other fields.

The financial views of Sherman have been indicated, but in brief, he believed in the resumption of specie payments as a means, but not an end in itself. The end or purpose was the appreciating of the value of the United States notes to par with gold coin through the process of refunding the debt into a single series of low interest bearing bonds. He contemplated the exchange of the notes as well as the bonds into the refunding bonds and

then reissuing them for gold coin. This in general was the financial policy of Mr. Sherman. The financial policy of President Grant as expressed in the annual message which he sent to Congress in December 1872, was a very sound one. Of course it is not known that Grant wrote his own message, but in the absence of proof to the contrary it must be assumed that he did. It is extremely unfortunate that the associates of Grant during the period which is under consideration were so miserly when it came to corresponding or if they did correspond in preserving their correspondence. They might have been too much occupied with other affairs to write letters and keep diaries, or they might have been too unschooled to do so, or they might have had such intimate contacts with each other that writing was not necessary and it might have been that they did not wish any records preserved that would indicate the type of work that they were doing. Another possibility is that the relatives or the people who have the correspondence in their possession if there was any, have not seen fit to publish it. The above digression is simply to point out the fact that there is very little supplementary material from which to derive any conclusions concerning the authorship of the public documents of President Grant. With this limitation in mind the following quotation from the annual message mentioned above must be taken as an indication of the financial policy of the President: "The preservation of our national credit is of the highest importance, next in importance to this solemn duty to provide a national currency of fixed unvarying value as compared with gold, and as soon as practicable, having due regard for

the interests of the debtor class and the vicissitudes of trade and commerce, convertible into gold at par."<sup>388</sup>

In order to understand the background of the currency question it is necessary to sketch briefly the question of the reissue by Secretary of the Treasury Richardson, of the United States notes that had been taken out of circulation by Secretary of the Treasury McCulloch during the last few years of the Johnson administration. The retirement of the notes was authorized by a bill which passed Congress and became a law on 12 April 1866. The original bill provided for the retirement of United States notes not to exceed \$10,000,000 during the first six months following the passage of the bill, and then not more than \$4,000,000 during any one month thereafter. The bill as passed provided for the retirement of notes not to exceed \$4,000,000 a month, or \$48,000,000 a year.<sup>389</sup> The bill permitted the Secretary of the Treasury to exchange refunding bonds for the legal tenders and then keep them in his possession without cancellation.<sup>390</sup> The only member of the Senate Finance committee who opposed the bill was Mr. Sherman and he expressed his opposition in a forceful and vigorous manner. He later regarded the bill as the most expensive bill ever enacted by Congress because it compelled the government to pay large war rates of interest for many years and postponed specie payments for several years.<sup>391</sup> McCulloch proceeded with the retirement of the United States notes and in December 1866, in his annual report he requested that the maximum be increased to \$10,000,000 monthly.<sup>392</sup> The retirement of the United States notes finally led to such a stringency, or at least in some

quarters it was thought to have created a stringency in the business world that Congress repealed the authorization of the retirement of United States notes on 4 February 1868.<sup>393</sup> The report of the Secretary of the Treasury which set forth the financial statistics for 1 December 1867, showed that there was at that time the sum of \$356,212,473 of United States notes in circulation.<sup>394</sup> The amount in circulation remained substantially at that figure until 1873.

At some time prior to 15 January 1873, Richardson began the practice of reissuing notes in place of a portion of the \$44,000,000 retired by McCulloch under the act of 12 April 1866. Richardson eventually reissued these notes to the amount of \$26,000,000 partly as a result of the panic of 1873.

Sherman had not approved the retirement of the United States notes and neither did he approve their reissue by Richardson without specific authorization of law. In this connection the majority of the Finance committee, Sherman included, reported the following resolution: "That in the opinion of the Senate, the Secretary of the Treasury has not the power under existing laws to issue United States notes for any portion of the \$44,000,000 of United States notes retired and cancelled under the act approved on 12 April, 1866."<sup>395</sup> Ferry and Wright made a minority report which read as follows: "That Assistant Secretary of the Treasury Richardson acted in good faith and in the belief that the law permitted and the interests of the country or at least of the Administration demanded the reissue of the \$5,000,000 which he made."<sup>396</sup> These resolutions were reported on 14 January 1873.

It is significant to note that the majority report if adopted would place the Senate on record as opposed to the course which Richardson had taken and that the minority report if adopted would place it on record as condoning it.

Two days after the resolutions mentioned above, Sherman made a speech in the Senate on senate bill number 1313, which dealt with the currency and specie payments. On this occasion Sherman said, "The restoration of our currency to a specie standard is an object of primary importance. The present condition of our currency governs and controls all other questions of political economy and until we make it to conform to and be the equivalent of money-of gold coin the recognized standard of nations, we cannot rest upon a solid basis for any kind of business or for public or private credit."<sup>397</sup> He continued his argument for specie payments in a speech which filled four pages in the Globe and concluded with an appeal for a definite stand for specie payments. The New York Tribune commented very favorably on both the speeches of Sherman and the bill which he introduced. In an editorial of the issue for Saturday, 18 January, the following suggestive material occurs: "Mr. Sherman stands at the head of the Finance Committee in the United States Senate. His position in that body and his relations to the President, give special significance to his bill for the resumption of specie payments... The bill undoubtedly represents the views of the Finance Committee and probably of the Administration; and his speech will be accepted as the compact expressions of the views of both. In one word, then, the fixed purpose of the President, and of the Finance

Committee of the Senate, is seriously to undertake placing the finances of this country on a par with those of the other great nations of Christendom. The President's well known tenacity in pursuing a line of policy once resolved upon should therefore be a timely warning to every business man having large outstanding engagements to pursue a conservative policy."<sup>398</sup> The above quotation is only the opinion of the editor of the New York Tribune but it is the only suggestion that has been found that indicates definitely that Sherman was advocating the administration financial policy. The fact that the editor of the Tribune considered that Sherman was the spokesman of the Administration as far as finance was concerned is very important in determining the source of the financial policy of Grant. Another indication that Sherman was formulating the financial policy of the Administration is found in the fact that there is a marked similarity between the statements with regard to finance in the messages of Grant and in the speeches of Sherman. The similarity indicates that Sherman and Grant were in complete agreement. Now if two personalities agree almost exactly in their spoken opinions of a specific thing, it is almost a certainty that one of them is thinking for the other one, and in this case it would be absurd to think that Grant dictated the financial policy of Sherman. If he did the question arises as to the source of knowledge of Grant with respect to finance and since that question is still in the realm of speculation it will be passed by for the present.

The debate on the measure which Sherman introduced lasted

almost a month and finally resulted in defeat for the measure. The New York Tribune for 6 February carried the following editorial comment upon the defeat of the bill: "The defeat of Senator Sherman's bill postpones indefinitely the day of resuming specie payments. A combination of interests seems to have been formed against the measure and we are once more assured that, notwithstanding their claims for resumption, there are many public men who really desire nothing of this sort. This is a miserable conclusion to a long debate. Shall our promise to pay be forever dishonored?"<sup>399</sup>

An interesting though valueless fact from our point of view is the fulfillment of the prediction which Sherman made in a letter to his brother in December 1868, that any plan for the resumption of specie payments which would be suggested would combine all other plans against it. It is to be wondered why the Republican leaders chose to postpone the presentation of a definite plan for resumption until after the election of 1872, Perhaps the reason lies in the fact that it took that much time to get enough backing to hold out a promise for success, or perhaps it was because the Republicans did not want to stir up such a controversial question which might split their ranks until Grant was assured of a second term and they had time to pass the bill and mend the breaks in the party before the next election. The last idea coincides exactly with the analysis which Bronson makes of the character of Sherman in his Life and Public Services of John Sherman. Bronson continually refers to the fact that Sherman had a pronounced tendency to

'mend the fences'. Perhaps there is some connection between the postponement of the currency problem until after the election of 1872 and the tendency of Sherman to 'mend the fences'.

After the failure of resumption in the spring of 1873 the question was not brought up again until the opening of Congress in December. In the meantime the Panic of 1873 had begun in September and as a result of it many and varied schemes were suggested for the improvement of the finances of the nation and the relief of the sufferers from the panic.

In his annual message to Congress in December 1873, Grant made the following suggestions: "My own judgment is that however much individuals may have suffered, one long step has been taken towards specie payments, and we can never have a permanent prosperity until a specie basis can be reached and maintained. To increase our exports, sufficient currency is required to keep all the industries of the country employed. Undue inflation on the other hand, while it may give temporary relief, would only lead to inflation of prices, the impossibility of competing in our own markets for the products of home skill and labor, and repeated renewals of present experiences. Elasticity of our circulating medium, and just enough of it to transact the legitimate business of the country and to keep all industries employed, is what is most desired. The exact medium is specie, the recognized medium of exchange the world over. That obtained, we shall have a currency of an exact degree of elasticity. If there be too much of it for the legitimate purposes of trade and commerce it will flow out of the country. If too little

the reverse will result. To hold what we have and to appreciate the currency to that standard is the problem deserving the most serious consideration by Congress."<sup>400</sup>

The various suggestions for financial relief were referred to the committee on Finance where they were carefully considered. The practical and obvious result of the conferences by the Committee members were two resolutions. The majority resolution read as follows: "Resolved, That it is the duty of Congress during its present session to adopt definite measures to redeem the pledge made in the act approved 18 March 1869, entitled, 'An act to strengthen the public credit, as follows: And the United States also pledges its faith to make provision at the earliest practicable period, for the redemption of the United States notes in coin;' and the committee on finance is directed to report to the Senate, at as early a day as practicable such measures as will not only redeem this pledge of public faith, but will also furnish a currency of uniform value, always redeemable in gold or its equivalent, and so adjusted as to meet the changing wants of trade and commerce."<sup>401</sup> Ferry, Logan and Morton reported a minority resolution which read as follows: "That the committee on finance is directed to report to the Senate at as early a date as practicable, such measures as will restore commercial confidence and give stability and elasticity to the circulating medium through a moderate increase of currency."<sup>402</sup>

In presenting the resolution of the majority of the Committee, Sherman said, "If now in this time of temporary panic we yield one inch to the desire for paper money in this country,

we shall cross the Rubicon and there will be no power in Congress to check the issue."<sup>403</sup> Mr. Sherman made a long speech in favor of the majority resolution on 16 January 1874. The New York Tribune through its editorial page said that the speech which Sherman made, attracted considerable attention, was well spoken of and was a good history of currency legislation and contained some very good able arguments against expansion.<sup>404</sup> The majority resolution was eventually adopted and Sherman and his colleagues set to work to prepare the bill. Many conferences of the Republican members of Congress were held in order to arrive at a bill and a policy which they would support. At the end of three months of study and debate Sherman reported a bill to fix the maximum limit of the United States notes at \$382,000,000 which would have legalized the notes which Richardson had reissued. It also provided for the gradual payment of these notes in coin or in five per cent bonds at the option of the Secretary of the Treasury on 1 January 1876.<sup>405</sup> Sherman made a rather lengthy speech in support of the bill on the 23 March 1874, or upon the day after it was reported. He was very careful to convey the idea that the bill was a compromise measure, and that every member of the committee had the right to offer any amendments or oppose the bill if they wanted to. He justified the length of time that it took to prepare the bill on the grounds that the committee considered over sixty different proposals and that the difference in opinion among the members of the committee made it necessary to discuss each one thoroughly. He suggested that the committee was divided into three groups: those who wanted to take a positive and

definite step towards the resumption of specie payments; those who wanted an inflation of the currency and those who were willing to increase the amount of bank notes in circulation, and settle the question of the legal tenders, but they also wanted a definite step taken towards the resumption of specie payments. Sherman said that the bill proposed to legalize the reissue of the retired United States notes without any reference to the legality of their reissue, and also that the limit should be definitely set at \$382,000,000.<sup>406</sup> The second section of the bill set 1 January 1876, as the redeeming day for United States notes. They were to be redeemed in either gold or five per cent bonds. Sherman explained each section of the bill and then yielded the floor for debate. On the first day of debate Sherman said that it was a moral duty to redeem the United States notes and if a provision for redemption was made he would be in favor of free banking.<sup>407</sup>

On the second day of debate or on 25 March, Schurz, of Missouri, moved to amend the bill to fix the maximum limits of United States notes at \$356,000,000.<sup>408</sup> This motion would have had the effect of failing to recognize or legalize the notes that had been reissued by Richardson. Immediately Senator Bogy, the colleague of Schurz, moved to amend the amendment by inserting \$400,000,000 as the maximum limit of United States notes instead of \$356,000,000.<sup>409</sup> This amendment would have had the effect of not only legalizing the retired notes that had been reissued. On 26 March, Sherman voted against Schurz amendment to fix the limit at \$356,000,000. It failed of passage by a vote

of 18-40.<sup>410</sup> On the same day Sherman voted against the Wright amendment to raise the maximum to \$400,000,000, but the amendment carried 31-26.<sup>411</sup> The course of Sherman on the bill thus far indicates that he was trying to be a good administration man. He justified the limit of \$382,000,000 which would have legalized the \$26,000,000 of retired notes already reissued, but he would not vote for the legalizing of the remaining \$18,000,000. It will be recalled that Sherman opposed the law which provided for the retirement of the notes which was passed in April 1866. Now if he opposed the original retirement of the notes why did he not support the proposal to legalize them and give the Secretary of the Treasury the right to reissue the full amount? It does not seem reasonable that the motive for his action lies on the surface of the question, that is that he was opposed to an increase of \$18,000,000 in the currency when a few years before he thought that the whole amount should have been maintained. Neither does it seem reasonable that he would have opposed an increase of \$18,000,000 when he had already placed himself on record as favoring the increase of \$26,000,000. The New York Tribune in an editorial comment upon the failure to restore the maximum of \$356,000,000 said that Sherman and others did not have backbone enough to put the currency where it was before Richardson had illegally reissued reserve.<sup>412</sup>

On 27 March Sherman protested against the activities of the so-called 'paper money trinity': Logan, Ferry and Morton. He said that Logan's amendment to Merrimon's amendment would have the effect of allowing free banking without limitation or

restriction upon note issues or provision for redemption in any form.<sup>413</sup> It is apparent that the question was getting beyond the control of Sherman and three days later it was definitely beyond his control. The bill was being handled by Logan, Ferry and Morton. Sherman was provoked (seemingly at least) at having nominal charge of a bill that had actually passed into other hands. He said: "This is the first time in my experience in the Senate when I have ever seen the sharp tactics of cutting off all amendments to a pending proposition (Morton's motion to strike out the second section of the bill and insert a clause repealing all previous reductions of the amount of notes in circulation)... Here is a problem involving questions of the greatest magnitude, and by Parliamentary legerdemain we are prevented from amending it so that those who are in favor of the principle of it may vote for it. Now a proposition is offered to strike out this section under circumstances which prevent our offering an amendment..."<sup>414</sup> Sherman went on to argue that the reissue of the \$26,000,000 of the reserve had decreased the purchasing power of the entire amount \$6,000,000.<sup>415</sup> Sherman presented figures to prove his contention and made a plausible argument for it. He next engaged in a lengthy controversy with Ferry over the rules. Sherman contended that the Senate had permitted amendments to the third degree to be offered and voted upon. The Chair ruled against Sherman which effectively cut him off from changing the bill because the whole thing had been amended by the opposition to such an extent that Sherman could not get an amendment before the Senate to alter the bill so that it would contain some of the principles he

desired and at the same time obtain enough votes for passage.

Sherman voted nay on the motion to strike out the second section of the bill, but the motion prevailed by a vote of 28-23.<sup>416</sup> The striking out of the second section removed the redemptive features of the bill, which had been as important part of the original measure. Immediately after the motion to strike out had prevailed, numerous substitutes for it were offered. The first of these was an amendment by Scott of Pennsylvania. It set the date for redemption, smaller denominations were made eligible for redemption and when redeemed the notes were to be reissued either for bonds or coin.<sup>417</sup> Sherman voted for this substitute but the nays had it 6-36, 36 not voting.<sup>418</sup>

Frelinghuysen then offered another substitute providing for authorization of the Secretary of the Treasury to use the surplus revenues to accumulate gold coin and also to permit the Secretary of the Treasury to use his discretion in purchasing coin for bonds not to exceed \$50,000,000. The fixing of the date for redemption was to be left up to the President and the Secretary of the Treasury.<sup>419</sup> Sherman voted for this substitute, but the nays prevailed 14-29, 29 not voting.<sup>420</sup> Then Morton moved to strike out the fourth section of the bill. Sherman called for the yeas and nays and said in explanation of his move, "I design now, as the Senate see that this ruling of the Chair has embarrassed us, to move to strike out a word in the fourth section, for the purpose of taking the judgment of the Senate as to whether it is possible to conduct the business of the Senate within this restrictive rule now established for the first time in the Senate

of the United States."<sup>421</sup> (The ruling referred to the decision of the Chair that amendments in the third degree were out of order) Sherman then moved to perfect the fourth section and harmonize it with the first section by inserting \$400,000,000 instead of \$382,000,000. Ferry, Logan and Morton fought this move. In the course of the debate Sherman said: "I have a very sad view of the measure that is being adopted today. I believe we are dishonoring the public faith, dishonoring the promises of the nation, dishonoring the promises of the Republican party as claimed at the outset of the Administration of President Grant... I have been outvoted... I concede that the Inflationists are in the majority and can pass any bill that they choose."<sup>422</sup> The next day Sherman criticised the opposition again. He said, "You voted down the mode of accumulating gold; you voted down the mode of providing for the redemption of notes in bonds, and now you propose to issue your bank currency without any reduction whatever in the amount of Greenbacks in circulation, but with an actual increase in the amount of Greenbacks. While we are willing to inflate the currency under the compulsion that a majority of the Senate put us to, yet you are not willing to provide against the expansion that will inevitably follow by the increase of both kinds of paper money. That is the condition in which we are placed."

"Senators must pause at some time. There is some limit, they cannot go beyond a certain tether without utter destruction. I appeal to them now to pause. They have the responsibility. Our hands are washed clean. We are no longer responsible for this measure. As it now stands I will not vote for it. I throw upon

them the responsibility of making the necessary safeguards against the inflation of the currency. I shall aid them and aid every Senator here on every measure that looks to making guards against the inflation and depreciation of our paper money, but the responsibility for those guards is no longer with us. It is with those who have defeated the mode and manner pointed out by us to prevent inflation. They must take the responsibility. All that we can do is to aid them, and I appeal to them, as now responsible for the fate of this measure, not to lose sight of the necessity of providing for some mode of redemption."<sup>423</sup> From that time on the currency bill, or as it is called, the Inflation bill, was out of the control of Sherman. Just why Sherman should have lost his usual working majority at this critical juncture is a matter of speculation. Certainly it was the only time thus far in his career in the Senate that he advocated a measure with such force and persistency and then was forced to admit that he could not control the situation. The answer to the question probably lies in the motives which moved Logan, Morton and Ferry to act as they did. If those motives could be uncovered a key to the solution of the Inflation bill puzzle might be found.

On 31 March, Sherman voted against the amendment requiring that Greenbacks be retired to the extent of ninety per cent of the bank notes issued. The motion failed 20-37, 15 not voting.<sup>424</sup> The vote of Sherman reveals the fact that he was not among those who wanted to have a whole victory out of the controversy. He was willing to compromise and take all that he could get, but was not disposed to force the other side to give in completely.

After the failure of the bill under discussion Sherman reluctantly consented to a bill providing for only seventy percent retirement of Greenbacks upon the issue of bank notes. On the same day Sherman voted against striking out the fourth section of the bill, but the motion prevailed 29-27, 16 not voting.<sup>425</sup> Sherman voted yea on Buckingham's amendment to provide for redemption in coin or bonds, but it failed 7-39, 26 not voting.<sup>426</sup> Buckingham renewed his amendment a few minutes later in a slightly different form. Sherman voted yea on the altered amendment but it also failed, the vote being 21-30, 21 not voting.<sup>427</sup> On the first of April Sherman remarked that Morton had taken charge of the bill and was intent upon striking out all of its provisions.<sup>428</sup> Morrill, of Vermont, wanted to limit fractional currency to \$40,000,000 and Sherman voted for his proposal to that effect, but it failed 19-30, 23 not voting.<sup>429</sup> Following this futile attempt Sherman announced that he was waiting for a majority on sections two and four, if that was not obtained he said he would move to restore the fourth section and insert fifty per cent retirement of greenbacks when currency was issued instead of seventy per cent in the hope that some additional votes would be obtained for at least a diminution of the greenbacks to the amount of fifty per cent of the additional bank notes issued.<sup>430</sup> This step by Sherman seems to have marked the beginning of a change in his policy. Hitherto he had been uncompromising in his opposition to the plans of the Inflationists, but his last statement seems to indicate that he would have grasped at any straw which would have assured him of a partial victory. Mr. Sherman was not

in an enviable position. He was chairman of the Finance committee of the senate by grace of the Republican majority, and he had been forced to witness a bill which had started out under his guidance effectively snatched out from under his control and then was subjected to the further humiliation of seeing his opponents proceed to the striking out of sections of the bill which had been in part his handiwork. He had seen the inflationist movement supported by the most intimate friends and counselors of Grant. He had seen the consequences of determined resistance to the wishes of the President, and his intimates in the case of Sumner. Logically he should have been afraid for his political existence. Whether he was or not is another question. To supplement his proposed motion to reinsert the fourth section Sherman proposed to amend the second section, to fix the time of redemption one or two years farther away or any date just so some definite time was set, and then move to reinsert the section. In this connection he said: "I will not vote for free banking except with coin redemption."<sup>431</sup> This was the same position as Grant had taken on the subject of free banking. Now it is a question as to which one originated the idea.

Following the announcement of his new policy on the bill, Sherman voted in favor of the motion by Davis to transfer \$55,000,000 of the already authorized currency to the south and west rather than increasing the amount of currency by \$46,000,000. The motion failed 20-31, 21 not voting.<sup>432</sup> Next Sherman voted in favor of a motion which provided for the issuance of \$46,000,000 to the south and west on the basis of the act of 12 July 1870.

This motion carried 33-19, 20 not voting.<sup>433</sup> This last act by Sherman might be interpreted as the second concession that he had made to the Inflationists, but on the other hand it is more likely that it was a concession to the senators from the south and west in order to get their support for his plans a little later on. The next step was an attempt on the part of Frelinghuysen to get a provision for the use of the surplus revenues for the purpose of accumulating coin for purposes of redemption, back into the first section. Sherman suggested an amendment to the motion, which Frelinghuysen accepted, and then voted for it, but it was rejected 18-31, 25 not voting.<sup>434</sup>

On 6 April, Conkling proposed to reinsert the phrase, "that nothing in this act shall be construed to authorize any increase of the principal of the public debt of the United States." Sherman voted for the motion, but it failed 24-28, 20 not voting.<sup>435</sup> Howe then proposed an amendment providing for a system of redemption. Sherman voted yea on it, but it also failed 22-30, 20 not voting.<sup>436</sup> Sherman then offered his substitute for the entire bill which embodied a scheme of redemption, but it failed 23-28, 21 not voting.<sup>437</sup> Just a little later the vote was taken on the final passage of the bill. It passed 29-24, 19 not voting, and Sherman voting against its passage.<sup>438</sup>

It cannot be argued that Sherman did not pursue a consistent course on the so-called inflation bill for every motion that he voted for was designed to provide for redemption or curb

inflation and every motion and amendment that he voted against was designed to prepare the way for more bank notes without coin redemption or a curb upon free banking. If Sherman was playing a part, he played it well. If he was acting sincerely then he must have known that he was in a precarious position. If the whole procedure was artificially produced then Sherman was in possession of the facts as to why it was produced and the procedure that was to be followed.

Following the natural course of events the bill went to the House of Representatives. While the senate bill was being debated at such length in that body the house had under consideration a bill on the same subject, but differing in many of its detailed provisions. In general the house bill did not go to such extreme lengths in the matter of issuing currency without a sufficiently large reserve as the senate bill. In order to successfully consummate their plans the little group of representatives who were supporting the senate bill had to dispose of the house bill at a time when its disposal would automatically bring the senate bill up for consideration. The man who engineered the manoeuvres which accomplished the desired end was Benjamin B. Butler, a representative from Massachusetts. He skillfully managed the campaign in the house so that the house bill was tabled and the senate bill immediately brought up, considered and passed.<sup>439</sup> The very active support which Butler gave to the senate bill adds a new complication to an already complex problem. His congressional record is open to a variety of interpretations for all along the way there appear incidents in which the shadowy figure of Butler seems to be the guiding genius.

It is unfortunate for the purpose of this discussion that the shadow has not been brought out into the daylight and explained.

The passage of the so-called Inflation bill precipitated a great volume of discussion and speculation. There were those who confidently believed that Grant would sign the bill simply because the men who supported the bill in both houses of Congress were his intimate friends and associates. It must be admitted that the conviction of those who reasoned in that way was amply justified. Ferry, Logan, Butler and their group were the intimate advisors of the President. Surely the approval of the bill was not to be denied. There was active campaigning in favor of the President vetoing the bill and there was active campaigning in favor of the President approving the bill and frequently it happened that rival groups would be present at the White House at the same time. On such occasions it appeared that the President favored the delegations that favored the bill. The newspapers and periodicals were full of editorials, some denouncing inflation in violent terms and some denouncing redemption in equally violent terms. In order to get the viewpoint of the press during the consideration of the bill it will be necessary to drop back in point of time to the place where active interest in the bill was manifested by the editors of the paper.

The editor of the Nation in an editorial (2 April 1874) said that there was a very close connection between inflation and the government mismanagement of the Treasury and Customs-houses. He went on farther and said that the President was playing the part of an active reformer on paper and the part of a very patient witness or even a perpetrator of abuses in practice and that he

avored specie payments, but allowed the Treasury to be used in the interests of inflation.<sup>440</sup> A week later the same editor expressed grave doubts that any chance existed for a veto of the Inflation bill.<sup>441</sup> Two weeks later he listed Sherman among the defenders of honor and common sense.<sup>442</sup>

If there is anything in the idea that a connection did exist between so-called Inflation bill and the scandals in the Treasury Department then the problem becomes more intricate. It is known that the two major phases of each problem were timed so as to be placed before the public at precisely the same time. The Inflation bill came before Congress during the last few days of March, just at the time when the Sanborn investigations were revealing the fact that the Secretary of the Treasury and other major officials in the Treasury Department were responsible in large part for the various frauds that were perpetrated in connection with the collection of the internal revenue. The editor of the New York Tribune commented editorially on this point on 1 April 1874, and expressed the opinion that the men who were under investigation in Brooklyn were acquitted because legally they had a right to do what they did for they proved that by their contracts received from the Treasury Department they had a right to retain fifty per cent of the proceeds of their collecting activities. When this and related facts were brought to light the investigation was focused upon the higher-up officials in Washington.<sup>443</sup> Thus the investigation at Washington and the consideration of the Inflation or Expansion bill commenced almost precisely at the same time.

If press-agents had been guiding the courses of governmental officials and particularly those in the Treasury Department, and that of the Executive, it would not be difficult to believe that the so-called Inflation bill was a bit of publicity material, a smokescreen, or in less common parlance a "red-herring" that was dragged across the trail to nullify the effects and influences of the investigations of the Treasury Department in the public mind. Congressional elections were close at hand, preparations for the next presidential elections were being made and thus it was not a propitious time for the people to seize upon the Treasury investigations alone and develop 'mental sets' against the Republican party. The so-called Inflation bill and the furor that it aroused probably served as a good antidote even if that was not its specific purpose. Speculation along the line that its specific purpose was to divert attention from the investigations of the Treasury is tempting. The linking together of circumstantial evidence might lead to the conclusion that the clever politicians who revolved about the White House adopted a clever ruse to throw the public off of the track. The historical facts that appear on the surface of the question are so ridiculously different from what one would expect that the effect is unreal. The testimony of Sanborn which seriously implicated Secretary Richardson in the frauds was given during the forenoon and afternoon of the day on which the Inflation bill passed the Senate in the evening. Thus it can be seen that not only did the introduction of the bill and the beginning of the investigation in Washington occur at approximately the same time, but it is also true that a high point in the career of the bill was reached

within a few hours after dangerous evidence had been presented against Richardson.

The New York Tribune furnished some interesting and important day to day comments upon the progress of the so-called Inflation bill. On 3 April the editorial is very complimentary to Grant. In substance it said that no one in public life had watched with more interest the financial debates in Congress than the President. It went on to say that he had examined carefully each plan and had reached the conclusion that expansion was dangerous and that specie payments would be of great benefit to the country; and that he also believed that inflation was a step backward and he would not help any movement in any way, nor favor any increase in the amount of the legal tenders.<sup>444</sup>

On 6 April the Tribune lists among its news articles the interesting fact that the Inflationists were becoming less confident of success; that Morton and Logan had called upon the President and had received the intimation that he (the President) would not sign a bill that provided for expansion to any great extent.<sup>445</sup> On the same page another news item contained the idea that the wild inflation measure would still be defeated by a combination led by Senator Sherman and supported by other administration senators.<sup>446</sup>

Again there is the suggestion that Sherman was an administration senator. Sherman kept up his fight for redemption until the bill passed, but was unsuccessful. Following the passage of the bill in the Senate the Tribune took a poll of various newspapers in the country to determine the sentiment of the country on the question of a veto or approval for the bill in case it passed the House. The

Chicago Journal reminded Grant and the Republican party of their campaign promises and asked for a veto; the Cincinnati Enquirer wanted approval; the Boston Journal of Commerce wanted a veto; other papers that wanted a veto were the Worcester Spy, the Chicago Tribune, the Troy Whig, the Boston Journal, and the Hamburg Patriot.<sup>447</sup>

The views of the President as interpreted by the reporters and editorial staff of the New York Tribune are confusing because they are so contradictory. On the 14 April, the Tribune reported that the President believed that an early return to specie payments was desirable and that inflation was the wrong thing for the country.<sup>448</sup> The latter part of this opinion is open to at least two interpretations: either the President did not consider that the senate bill was an inflationist measure which perhaps it was not or he was opposed to the bill as a whole. The first of these interpretations would give rise to another train of speculative thought along the line that the folks who were supposed to be informed concerning financial affairs did not consider that inflation was the primary object of the bill. If inflation was not the goal which the supporters of the bill were trying to win and if it was not the bugbear which the opponents of the bill were fighting what then was the reason for the controversy? Two days later or on 16 April, the Tribune reported that the bill was not exactly what Grant wanted, but the same item indicated that it was a certainty that Grant would sign the bill. It also suggested that Grant was not concerned about the \$400,000,000 maximum, and went on to say that he opposed the house bill because

it did not provide for resumption. The article said that the plan which Grant had in mind was to provide for the redemption of the legal tenders in banknotes and then provide for ultimate redemption of the banknotes in specie.<sup>449</sup> In an editorial in the same paper on the same date the information was given out that the President would probably sign the bill.<sup>450</sup> The contemporary opinion seems to have held almost universally to the idea that the President would sign the bill.

A curious incident happened in connection with the visit which a delegation of New York merchants paid to the White House to persuade Grant to veto the bill. While they were talking to the President, Butler came rushing into the room unannounced, took Grant by the arm and off to one side of the room and talked to him for quite a time. A little later while the members of the delegation were making their speeches Logan, Ferry of Michigan and Carpenter came in and conversed with the President.<sup>451</sup> Mr. Grant told the members of the New York delegation that he was opposed to expansion without redemption and also that he was opposed to inflation, but he also intimated that there were other considerations which forced him to view the question from a different angle. What the other considerations were is not known, but it is almost sure that they had at least a remote connection with the political world.

The bill was submitted to the Cabinet upon 17 or 18 April and a few days later a rumor was abroad that there was a possibility for a Presidential veto.<sup>452</sup> On the same day the information was published that Secretary of State Fish might keep Grant

from signing the bill.<sup>453</sup> In an editorial on the 22 of April entitled "Secretary Fish and Inflation" the New York Tribune suggested that Fish was the only man who could keep Grant from signing the bill.<sup>454</sup> A news article in the same paper suggested that the only Cabinet members who opposed inflation were Fish and Richardson, but that it was a general belief that Grant would sign the bill.<sup>455</sup> It is hardly conceivable that Richardson would oppose the signing of a bill which would legalize his illegal reissues of greenbacks. The only human course for him to take would be to favor approval of the bill and thus dispose of one of the many burdens which his mismanagement if not his misdeeds had brought upon him. This last idea is substantiated by Thayer in his book 'From Tannery to the White House' in which he quotes Creswell, the Post-master General, directly as saying that he (Creswell) and Fish were the only two Cabinet members who opposed approval.<sup>456</sup> The correct solution of this particular problem is only one of the many phases of this question which puzzle the student.

The most reliable source of information on the question would logically be the words of Grant himself as recorded by John Russell Young, in the second volume of his work, "Around the World with General Grant". The full quotation follows: "I hear a good deal in politics about expediency", said the General one day. "The only time I ever deliberately resolved to do an expedient thing for party reasons, against my own judgment, was on the occasion of the expansion or inflation bill, I never was so pressed in my life to do anything as to sign that bill, never. It was represented to me that the veto would destroy

the Republican party in the West; that the West and South would combine and take the country, and agree upon some even worse scheme of finance; some plan that would mean repudiation. Morton, Logan and other men, friends whom I respected, were eloquent in presenting this view. I thought at last I would try and save the party, and at the same time the credit of the nation from the evils of the bill. I resolved to write a message, embodying my own reasoning and some of the arguments that had been given to me, to show that the bill, as passed, did not mean expansion or inflation, and that it need not affect the country's credit. The message was intended to soothe the East, and satisfy the foreign holders of bonds. I wrote the message with great care, and put in every argument I could call up to show that the bill was harmless and would not accomplish what its friends expected from it. Well, when I finished my wonderful message, which was to do so much good to the party and country, I read it over and said to myself: 'What is the good of all this? You do not believe it. You know it is not true.' Throwing it aside I resolved to do what I believed to be right--veto the bill. 'I could not,' said the General smiling, 'stand my own arguments.' While I was in this mood and it was an anxious time with me, so anxious that I could not sleep at night, with me a most unusual circumstance--the ten days were passing in which the President must sign or veto a bill. On the ninth day I resolved inflexibly to veto the bill and let the storm come. I gave orders that I would not see anyone, and went into the library to write the message. Senator Edmunds came to the White House and said that he only wanted to say one word. He came in looking very grave and anxious. He

said he wanted to speak of the inflation bill, to implore me not to sign it. I told him that I was just writing a message vetoing it. He rose a happy man, and said that was all he wanted to say and left. When the Cabinet met, my message was written. I did not intend asking the advice of the Cabinet, as I knew that a majority would oppose the veto. I never allowed the Cabinet to interfere when my mind was made up. When the Cabinet met, I said that I had considered the inflation bill. I read my first message, the one in which I had tried to make myself and every one else believe what I knew was not true, the message which was to save the Republican party in the West and save the national credit in the East and in Europe. When I finished reading, I said that as this reasoning had not satisfied me, I had written another message. I read the message of veto, saying that I had made up my mind to send it in. This prevented a debate which I did not want, as the question had passed beyond debate. There was only one word changed, on the suggestion of Mr. Robeson. I said, if I remember, that 'no patent medicine scheme' of printed money would satisfy the honest sentiment of the country. Robeson thought the 'patent medicine' allusion might be unnecessarily offensive to the friends of inflation. So I changed it, although I wish I had not. The country might have accepted the word as a true definition of the inflation scheme. The message went in, and to my surprise, I received no warmer commendations than from the West. I remember one long dispatch from James J. Wilson, of Iowa, a glowing enthusiastic dispatch. Bristow also sent me a warm dispatch and it was that dispatch, by the way, as much as

anything else, that decided me to offer Bristow the Treasury. The results of the veto, which I awaited with apprehension, were of the most salutary character. It was the encouragement which it gave to the friends of honest money in the West that revived and strengthened them in the West."<sup>457</sup>

This quotation does not throw much light on the problem, One-half of an answer is suggested. The statement that the attitude of Bristow towards the veto message was the thing which influenced Grant to offer him the Treasury post shows that the successor to Richardson was appointed because of his opposition to the bill. Now if it were definitely known that Richardson resigned because of his precarious position as a result of the veto of the bill then a portion of the problem would be reduced to a solvable equation. The article in the New York Tribune which suggested that Richardson and Fish were the only Cabinet members who opposed inflation is open to at least two interpretations: either Richardson was sincerely opposed to inflation and therefore opposed the bill or he was sincerely opposed to inflation, but did not favor a veto because he did not consider that the bill was really an inflationist measure. If the statement attributed by Thayer to Creswell is taken at its face value then Richardson was among the group of Cabinet members who favored approval of the bill. If all the bits of evidence are linked up, it is possible to conclude that Richardson opposed the veto and that there was at least a remote connection between the Inflation bill and the affairs of the Treasury Department during the regime of Richardson.

The veto message was so short that it is quoted in full.

Some editors declared that the message was one of the best state papers since the days of Lincoln. It was received with approbation in most quarters, but severely condemned in others. The message reads as follows: "Herewith I return Senate Bill No. 617 entitled 'An Act to fix the Amount of United States Notes, and the circulation of National Banks, and for other purposes,' without my approval."

"In so doing I express my regret at not being able to give my assent to a measure which has received the sanction of a majority of the legislators chosen by the people to make laws for their guidance, and I have studiously sought to find sufficient argument to justify such assent, but unsuccessfully."

"Practically, it is a question whether the measure under discussion would give an additional dollar to the irredeemable paper currency of the country or not and whether by requiring three-fourths of the reserves to be maintained by the banks and prohibiting interest to be received on the balance, it might not prove a contraction. But the fact cannot be concealed that theoretically the bill increases the paper circulation \$100,000,000 less only the amount of reserves restrained from circulation by the provisions of the second section. The measure has been supported on the theory that it would give increased circulation. It is a fair inference, therefore, that if, in practice, the measure should fail to create the abundance of circulation expected of it, the friends of the measure, particularly those out of Congress, would clamor for such inflation as would give the expected relief. It is a fair inference,

therefore, that if, in practice, the measure should fail to create the abundance of circulation expected of it, the friends of the measure, particularly those out of Congress, would clamor for such inflation as would give the expected relief.

"The theory, in my belief, is a departure from the true principles of finance, national interests, national obligations to creditors, congressional promises, party pledges on the part of both political parties and of personal views and promises made by me in every annual message sent to Congress and in every inaugural address."

"In my annual message to Congress in December, 1869, the following passage appears:

"Among the evils growing out of the Rebellion and not yet referred to is that of irredeemable currency. It is an evil which I hope will receive your most earnest attention. It is duty and one of the highest duties of government to secure to a citizen a medium of exchange of fixed unvarying value. This implies a return to a specie basis, and no substitute for it can be devised. It should be commenced now, and reached at the earliest possible moment consistent with a fair regard to the interests of the debtor class. Immediate resumption, if practicable would not be desirable. It would compel the debtor class to pay beyond their contracts the premium on the gold at the date of their purchase, and would bring bankruptcy and ruin to thousands. Fluctuations, however, in the paper value of the measure of all values (gold) is detrimental to the interests of trade. It makes

the man in business an involuntary gambler; for in all sales where future payment is to be made both parties speculate as to what will be the value of currency to be paid and received. So I earnestly recommend to you, then such legislation as will insure a gradual return to specie payments and put an immediate stop to fluctuations in the of currency."

"I still adhere to the views then expressed"

"As early as December 4, 1865, the House of Representatives passed a resolution, by a vote of 144 yeas to 6 nays, concurring, 'in the necessity of a contraction of the currency, with a view to as early a resumption of specie payments as the business interests of the country will permit,' and pledging, 'cooperative action to this end, as speedily as possible. 'The first act passed by the Forty-First Congress on the 18th day of March, 1869, was as follows:

"An Act to strengthen the public credit of the United States, Be it enacted, etc. that in order to remove any doubt as to the purpose of the government to discharge all of its obligations to the public creditors, and to settle conflicting questions and interpretations of the law, by the virtue of which such obligations have been contracted, it is hereby provided and declared that the faith of the United States is solemnly pledged to the payment in coin, or its equivalent, of all the interest bearing obligations of the United States, and of all the interest bearing obligations expressly provided

that the same may be paid in lawful money, or in other currency than gold or silver, but none of the said interest-bearing obligations not already due shall be redeemed or paid before maturity, unless at such times as the United States notes shall be convertible into coin at the option of the holder, or unless at such times bonds of the United States bearing a lower rates of interest than the bonds to be redeemed can be sold at par in coin. And the United States also solemnly pledges its faith to make provision at the earliest practicable period for the redemption of the United States Notes in coin.'

"This act still remains as a continuing pledge of faith of the United States,' to make provision at the earliest practicable period for the redemption of the United States notes in coin.'

"A declaration contained in the act of June 30, 1864, created an obligation that the total amount of the United States notes issued, or to be issued, should never exceed \$400,000,000. The amount in actual circulation was actually reduced to \$356,000,000 at which point Congress passed the act of February 4th, 1868, suspending the further reduction of currency. The forty millions have ever been regarded as a reserve, to be used in case of emergency, such as has occurred on several occasions, and must occur when, from any cause revenues suddenly fall below expenditures; and such a reserve is necessary, because the fractional currency, amounting to fifty millions, is redeemable in legal tenders at call."

"It may be said that such a return of fractional currency for redemption is impossible. But let steps be taken for a return to specie payment, and it will be found that silver will take the place of fractional currency as rapidly as it can be supplied, when the premium on gold reaches a sufficiently low point. With the amount of United States notes to be issued permanently fixed with proper limits, and the Treasury so strengthened as to be able to redeem them in coin on demand, it will then be able to inaugurate a system of free banking with such provisions as to make compulsory redemption of the circulating notes the bank in coin or in United States notes themselves redeemable and made equivalent in coin."

"As a measure preparatory to free banking or for placing the government in a condition to redeem its notes in coin' at the earliest practicable moment,' the revenues of the country should be increased so as to pay current expenses, provide for the sinking fund required by law, and also a surplus to be retained in the Treasury in gold."

"I am not a believer in any artificial method of making paper money equal to coin when the coin is not owned or held ready to redeem the promises to pay; for the paper money is nothing more than promises to pay, and is valuable exactly in proportion to the amount of coin that it can be converted into. While coin is not used as a circulating medium, or the currency of the country is not convertible into it at par, it becomes an article of commerce as much as any other product.

The surplus will seek a foreign market as will any other surplus. The balance of trade has nothing to do with the question. Duties on imports being required in coin creates a limited demand for gold. About enough to satisfy that demand remains in the country. To increase this supply I see no other way open but by the government hoarding through the means above given, and possibly by requiring the national banks to aid."

"It is claimed by the advocates of the measure herewith returned that there is an unequal distribution of the banking capital of the country. I was disposed to give great weight to this view of the question at first; but, one reflection, it will be remembered that there still remains \$4,000,000 of authorized bank note circulation assigned to states having less than their quota not yet taken. In addition to this the states having less than their quota of bank circulation have the option of twenty-five millions more to be taken from those states having more than their proportion. When this is all taken from those states having more than their proportion. When this is all taken up, or when specie payments are fully restored, or are in rapid process of restoration, will be the time to consider the question of more currency."<sup>458</sup>

The veto message came as an unexpected gift to the country from the President. It seemed that everyone was prepared for the worst. The veto was received with

with jubilation in many parts on the country and with approbation in most of parts of the remaining sections. The direful effects of a veto as predicted by the leading advocates of the bill did not materialize. The financial and economic phases of the life of the country were not ruined. The Republican party did lose out in the Congressional elections in the following fall to such an extent that it lost control of the House of Representatives, but who could predict what would have happened had the bill been signed and the commercial interests of the east making up a part of the opposition. The bill was not enough of an inflation measure to satisfy the extreme inflationists and yet it had been called an inflationist bill so it was not favored by the creditor class. It is extremely doubtful that the bill if passed would have resulted in inflation to any great extent. If the whole thing contained no more meaning than a mere piece of legislation then Grant was in a puzzling situation. His best friends favored the bill and yet he seemed to see in the bill the fact that it would not satisfy the group that wanted inflation and on the other hand it would arouse as much opposition as if it was a really inflationist measure. A veto was the only safe way out.

There is another fact in connection with the veto message which it is worthwhile to mention. There is a great deal of similarity between the arguments of Sherman in his speeches upon the bill and of Grant in his veto message both in context and in manner of constructing the argument. Both men went back to the beginning of the history of the legal tenders and carried the history to the inflationist controversy by quoting from the various acts which pertained to the subject. In their arguments both

Sherman and Grant emphasized the fact that resumption should not be consummated in such a way that it would interfere with business enterprises or would seriously affect the best interests of the debtor class. They also emphasized the fact that resumption was an obligation which the United States, the Republican party, the Congress, the Republican leaders and the President himself had promised to the country. There is such a marked similarity between the veto message and the speeches which Sherman made on the bill in the Senate that it is tempting to conclude that Sherman had something to do with the writing of the message, but there is not enough evidence to justify such a conclusion so it must be left as a possibility.

The effect of the veto upon the advocates of the bill in Congress was of a violent character. Whether real, or feigned, the anger and disappointment of the leaders was manifested in their acts and attitudes. Logan was one of the first Congressmen to get the news. He was also one of the most intemperate ones in his abuse of the Administration for vetoing the bill. It was said that he got black with rage when he first heard the news.<sup>459</sup> The same account stated that Ferry's face got red, Morton scowled, and Merrimon looked sorrowful and disappointed.<sup>460</sup> All the inflationists joined in predicting dire results for the country and for the Republican party in particular. Very soon after the veto message was received the vote was taken on the question of passing the bill over the veto of the President. The result was 34 yeas and 30 nays, eight not voting. Sherman voted in the negative.<sup>461</sup> With this vote the legislative career of the so-called Inflation bill ended. It may be classed with the many other historical events

which produced effects that were diametrically opposed to the probabilities.

Many of the different phases of the course of the Inflation bill are inexplicable when considered from the ordinary legislative and economic viewpoint. The explanations are not on the surface. The biggest question is 'Why did Grant veto the bill against the apparent wishes of his most intimate advisors and friends?' The answer to this question would most likely suggest the key which would unlock the explanation of the many other ramifications of this interesting problem.

One other phase of the matter remains to be discussed. It is the question of the Treasury and whether or not the veto of the Inflation bill and the inflation bill itself had some direct connections with the subsequent events in the Treasury Department. One of the first hints that there might be a change in the Treasury Department was made about 10 April, when the New York Tribune carried a story on the front page to the effect that the Massachusetts Senatorial crisis would be solved by making Dawes, Secretary of the Treasury,<sup>462</sup> The Republicans in Massachusetts were divided into two camps: the one led actively by Butler, the other under the leadership of Charles Francis Adams and his associates. The death of Senator Sumner had created a vacancy in one of the senatorship from Massachusetts and the struggle for the position was under way at approximately the same time as the controversy in the Treasury Department was raging. The rumor that the dispute was to be settled in the above manner was not correct for nothing came of it. The figure of Mr. Butler played an important in the background of this period. The New York Tribune

for 8 April, contained the suggestion that perhaps Butler played an important part in the Sanborn contracts case.<sup>463</sup>

The issue of the same paper for 11 April, contained an article which stated directly that some people believed that Butler was forcing Grant to keep Richardson in the Treasury Department.<sup>464</sup>

The same idea was conveyed by the Washington correspondent for the Springfield Republican and in connection with the statement that some people believed that Butler was forcing Grant to keep Richardson, it was recounted that there wasn't any doubt that some of the President's worst mistakes were instigated by Butler or Conkling and that if Butler wanted Richardson in the Treasury Department the country would have to accept him until a new President was elected.<sup>465</sup>

The Tribune for 11 April contained two references to the report that Grant had offered the position as Secretary of the Treasury to A.J. Drexel, of Philadelphia. It was known that Grant had called upon Mr. Drexel and it was also rumored that Drexel had refused for business reasons.<sup>466</sup> The uncertainty of the people with respect to what Grant was going to do is shown in the report of progress in the Sanborn case in the Tribune for 13 April. After discussing the humiliating position in which the administration and the country had been placed by the Treasury Department scandals, the writer went on to say that the prayers and the petitions of the people for a change in the Department were not having any effect upon President Grant. The President seems to have vacillated between asking for Richardson's resignation and letting him stay, for the writer said that at times Grant threw out hints that Richardson would be asked to resign

and Mr. Delano would be promoted in his place, only to have him contradict such statements or hints in a few hours or a day or two later.<sup>467</sup> Again in an issue a few days later it was suggested that there were many rumors in Washington that Grant was going to remove Richardson and equally as many rumors that his confidence in him was unimpaired and that he could stay as long as he liked.<sup>468</sup> On 18 April it was rumored that Grant had offered the position to Lieutenant Beele, an old Army friend from Philadelphia.<sup>469</sup> By 5 May the editor of the New York Tribune was thoroughly disgusted and wrote: "We do not imagine for a moment that General Grant will turn out a Secretary of the Treasury who happens to suit him merely because he has been proven unfit for the place... Grant's custom is to promote them or give them a good recommendation."<sup>470</sup> A few days later the same paper reported that the rumors that Richardson would retire very soon had not been denied by either the President or the members of the Cabinet and that the position had been offered to Washburne.<sup>471</sup> A week later the customary reversal of form was forthcoming and it was reported that the President had declared that, "Nothing had happened to shake his confidence in Mr. Richardson and he shall remain at the head of the Treasury as long as he chooses to stay there."<sup>472</sup> This was followed by another report that a Cabinet member had said that Richardson would retire of his own accord as soon as he could do it gracefully.<sup>473</sup>

On 20 May, Richardson was censured by the Ways and Means Committee of the House of Representatives,<sup>474</sup> and from that time on events moved rapidly. On 29 May it was announced that Bristow of Kentucky, would be the new Secretary of the Treasury and on

1 June Richardson's resignation and the probable appointment of Bristow were announced.<sup>475</sup>

Was the resignation of Richardson connected in any way with the veto of the Inflation bill? This question is difficult to answer in a positive way, but it is certain that his successor was appointed because he favored the veto of the bill, and it was also stated by the editor of the New York Tribune that the veto compelled a new Secretary of the Treasury not because Richardson was so much unsound but because he was unfit. He went on to say that the Sanborn contracts showed something more than incompetence.<sup>476</sup> The tenor of the editorial seemed to indicate that the outcome of the inflation bill had some effect upon the status of Richardson. It seems ridiculous that the Legislative and Executive Department of the United States should have staged such a grand display of pyrotechnics just to relieve the strain on an incompetent and perhaps dishonest Secretary of the Treasury, but when it is considered that it was not the fate of Richardson alone, but also the fate of the Republican party that hung in the balance the problem takes on a different meaning. There were many different elements to be reconciled. There were many sources of open criticism to be stopped up. There were many critics who had to be pacified or placated. A simple piece of legislation could not have furnished the means to obtain the varied ends. It was necessary for the Republican party leaders to have some source of political material from which they could draw an answer to the group that wanted inflation and it was

also necessary that they could delve into the same source and bring forth something to placate those who were violently opposed to inflation. It was necessary that some Congressmen could go home and say "I did my best to get inflation for you, but somehow my efforts failed. If you elect me again I will surely put it over." It was also necessary that some could go home and say, "Look what I did for you. I saved you from the evils of inflation, isn't that worth another term?" A close inspection of the votes on the different amendments shows that at least fifteen and sometimes as many as twenty-one failed to vote. Perhaps it was essential that these could go home and say, "Didn't you see how I maintained my balance on such an absurd question and spent my time working on things that were really necessary and beneficial? Don't you think that my neutral course shows that I am entitled to another term?"

It was necessary that Grant and the Administration leaders should have some material with which to counteract the evil effects of the Sanborn investigations and many other irregularities in the Treasury Department. An ordinary piece of legislation would not have accomplished the purpose. The reputation of the financial leader of the Senate had to be kept clean so that the party could go ahead with its financial program. The climax would have to be such as would attract a considerable amount of attention. A quick veto or an approving message would not have served the purpose. The full ten days were absorbed in the task of considering the question.

During that time the country was getting quite excited about the ultimate decision of the President. The unexpectedness of the President's veto capped the climax sufficiently to indicate Grant as the Savior of the country and control by the Republican party as the guarantee of permanent prosperity.

The above analysis of the situation may be valueless as far as suggesting a solution of the problem, but it does accomplish one purpose. It points out the amazing complexity of the situation. It illustrates the fact that the answer cannot be found in anyone place not can it be confined to any one person. The complexity of the problem is the only fact that can be proven and the rest must be left until the time when more material is available and a wider viewpoint attained.

The motives of the two men about whom this investigation centers are not clear. If the conduct of Grant in this case can be inferred from legislative events then it can be said that with a fair amount of certainty that his conduct was influenced by others. The motives of Sherman are not clear at all and there isn't any avenue of approach which is tenable when based upon the material available at the present time. Sherman was an expert upon financial affairs. He was a powerful figure in politics. Prior to the Inflation bill it was his custom to have his way even though he had to resort to compromise and political bargaining. His strong character and his seemingly strong political position were balanced by the fact that he owed the latter to the party organization.

The strength or weakness of his position depends upon whether or not he was more dependent upon the party or the party upon him. It has been suggested that he said that Grant was indifferent to financial affairs. If Grant was indifferent to financial affairs who dictated his financial policy and composed his state papers upon finance? It has been suggested that Sherman might have been the chief financial advisor to Grant. Proof in opposition to this suggestion can be offered, but the question still is present: if it wasn't Sherman, who was it; and if it wasn't Sherman how did it happen that the financial views of Sherman and Grant were so similar and their attitudes towards financial bills so nearly identical? The connections of Grant with the Sherman family and it may be that John Sherman was to Grant in finance as W. T. Sherman was to Grant in War. When the unknowns in this proportion are solved the relationships between Grant and John Sherman will be clear.

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