

SATURDAY, APRIL 3, 1897, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH.

New Stories of His Last Days, When He Conquered Fortune With Death at His Elbow.

A Chat With Grant's Confidential Secretary—How Mark Twain Got His Contract and His Unwonted Profits—The Unknown Man Who Helped Grant and How He Was Treasured at Mount McGregor—Senae Romero and His Thousand Dollar Clerk—Grant's Love of Silvery Mailers and How He Used His Wealth to Buy Salaries—How Grant Wrote His Memoirs, His Papers and How He Cared for Them—His Home Life—What Mrs. Grant Thought of Him—His Last Photograph—His Talks About Himself—Discusses the Last of Life of His Campaign—And Gives the True Story of His Alleged Drunkenness at the Battle of Shiloh.

Assigned, BY: Frank N. Carpenter,
Special Correspondent of the News

WASHINGTON, D. C. March 24th, 1915.

HE true story of General Grant's greatest battle has never been published. It was not fought during the bloody years between 1862 and 1865.

These last days, General Grant meets friends. His name is N. E. Dawson.

He has told the confidential secretaries of General Nelson, of the Army, that he will publish the confidence of nearly great nations and today he has the secret history of a score of famous historical events associated with his distinguished name given to him by the great Generals, with the understanding that the matter is not to be published until after his death.

General Grant, said he, "never told

aged during his stay in 1899 in the White House, but at the same time during the last few months of his life, when bankrupted and much penniless by the villain Ward, when racked with pain and when he was in the last stages of the face of death, and wrote the book which made his widow and his family wealthy. No other good book has ever been written under such circumstances as this. It is a book which every reader will read as well. The language is so simple as that of *Pilgrim's Progress* or *Robinson Crusoe*, and the story is of thrilling interest from beginning to end. To you, my dear friend, I think that much of it is written in the style of a whippersnapper, and that the thought came forth from a brain surrounded by nerves which were ever twitching with agonized pain. Two books have had no greater success than this. One has sold over a million and a half copies, and the other, *Mr. Grant*, not long ago, told me that her sales were over a million. The book which made money, and it will be a standard work, was written by a man who was

Much of the real story of this great work I am able to tell you today.

made him to write his book. The Century Company made him the first proposition, but Mark Twain, who had known Grant, having met him at dinners and elsewhere, made him a better offer.

"I don't see how it could be other wise," replied Mr. Dawson. "The publishers of subscription books usually make enormous profits. The book sold at first for \$1.50 in cloth, or 75¢ for the set. There was an edition in morocco and two cloth editions for \$2.50 a set."

and the probability is that the population made two or three times as much as General Grant out of the sales. It is possible that the two men who represented Mack Tandy, two good business men. It was claimed at the time that it was their work which made the Grants' fortune. The story is told thus: When shown that it was General's book that made their reputation and that helped them, rather than their "helping Grant," in the words, he said, "they said, 'What's in it for them?'"

"Was General Grant really penniless at the time of his failure?"

"Yes," replied Mr. Dawson. "If he had been a millionaire, he would not have been in the war had he been so rich. He was in the war had he been so rich and deposited with Grant and Ward."

"How about that money that he was

"He got nothing from Vanderbilt at the lecture. He borrowed \$25,000 from the day before he failed, but seven cents of this went to Ward and was swallowed up. I understand that all he has left at the time was about five in his pocket and five in cash belonging to Mrs. Grant. His friends at once offered him their help, but it was some time before he accepted anything, and when he did take came from a comparatively obscure source."

"The gifts of assistance came from all parts of the country," replied Mr. Dawson. "Many sent him a note telling they could loan him money, send him a horse, or get out a building, etc., etc." From Lumberton, N. C. a note came about four days after the failure of Grant and Ward. It was from a man who General Grant had never seen. He wrote the general that he had made some money out of his business and that he had saved a few thousand dollars. This he said he would like to loan to the general in his extremity. He enclosed a check for \$500, making it possible

able on account of his return there. Grant's services ending in April, 1865, in his letter he told the general he could draw upon him for more until his surplus was used up, and that he would pay him when he got ready. He told the general he would lend him \$5,000 at once for his mare at twelve months without interest, with the option of renewing the same rate. This affected General Grant very much. He accepted it cheerfully and used it. After the govern-

GRANT NEVER FORGOT A FAVOR: Charles Francis Adams, Jr., a Bostonian, gave him his pension; he paid it money back as soon as he could."

Mr. Dawson went on, "and he released this man to the day of his death. I was present when he met him some time after that. It was during the last days of Grant's illness. There were many famous men waiting at the hot springs to see Grant, but they had been turned away again and again because I was not well. When this man's name came in Grant ordered that he be admitted at once. He received him and shook him in to prison."

"But did not some of Grant's friends offer him money at that time, Mr. Dawson?" I asked.

"I don't know that there were many personal offers of assistance," replied Mr. Damann. "His richest friends were full of suggestions and plans for raising large sums, but I don't know that there were any offers of money or property. Still there were many and things done and many offers made which were not accepted. I remember one case was that of Senator Rogers, the present minister from Mexico. He had the honor of being elected to New York and called on Mr. Grant. After he left a check for \$5,000 payable to Grant, was handed on a table where he was sitting. Mr. Rumson refused to loan him money, and Mr. Grant refusing to accept, the check was

"When did Grant first realize that was going to die, Mr. Dayson?"

"It was before I went to witness a boxing game between a black man and a white man. I was sitting on an amphitheater, and the crowd was cheering. I thought I told him that whenever I really needed him that I would come back to him. He had already been in the hospital for a long time. In the first half of the first volume, I ended this with his own hand, and then he realized that death was staring him in the face. I think that's why the book is better written than the rest. It is more freely told. As he went with the work, he saw his strength in him, and after he learned that he had been given the order to go, he thought me that he had started the most of the book and he wrote very little else since."

"What kind of a man was Grant? He was a very good man," I said. "I remember, in those last days," I asked. "General Grant was always the one of simplicity," I replied. "I thought, 'You would never imagine that I thought himself a great general or a noble man. I doubt whether he is that; he was so. There was an air of simplicity about him. He was very much over on the same standing, with his wife and his children, and he was never acted as though he thought he was better than others.' He was just a man, that's all. During his last days he was the greatest of pain, but he never showed it. He was very kind to his negroes, and he was very kind to his friends. I remember during our dictation book I suddenly at times and finding his life connected with pain. As soon as I was told that I was looking he could not

not permit his family to know how
was feeling. He loved his family
much as any man I have ever known

of his boys. He liked to have a family about him, and it was the greatest comfort of his last days that they were with him. I have a photograph which was taken of General Grant and his family at this time. Copies of it were made for the family, and when the general gave me mine nearly all the family were present, and I had them all write their autographs upon it. This was during the very last days of Grant's life, and others seeing this photograph would think that Grant should write similar autographs for them. He was too weak, however, to do so, and so I have

"How did General Grant work?"

"His work was varied," replied J. Dawson. "When I first came to him he was a great deal and wrote some of the best of papers which he gave to me to copy. As he grew weaker he had to let his dictation early in the morning, was at that time that he felt strong. At the last he seldom dictated more than an hour at a sitting. This continued until the last. As he grew weaker and dearer each hour, he wrote through weaker and weaker, till he moved closer and closer to his end."

[illegible]

"Yes," replied Mr. Dawson, "I thought clearly and wrote easily. I dictated well. He could say what he thought in the simplest language as I could. The simple language was his strength. He was a great writer."

worried, you know, that no one could

and private papers about him while he was working at the bank?"

"He had some military papers, but private letters. He did not keep them. It was his custom to read letters and then direct me to say so and to reply, not fully dictating, but all well. After the letters were answered they were burned. He was very careful to his private matters. It was difficult, however, as to public papers. Everything connected with the army, was of fully kept. His orders had to be kept perfect, and his clerical force had seen them all."

"Did he have the satisfaction of
ing any part of his work in print be-
fore this?"

"No, he saw only the proof of
Century, edit. He did not see
the book, but did the rough, un-
finished manuscript it was to be,
manuscript was copied entirely by
him before going to the printer, Col-
umbia. He wrote everything connected
with it, and every scrap that the gen-
eral public has seen has been
his." "Had he any idea of the enormous
amount of money it would bring to
himself?"

"I think not. He saw before him
that it would net a fortune, but
that it would serve for ever, and that
would have been his only aim."

[illegible]

"Yes, he did," replied Mr. Dawson, "but he had a general idea of the value of the things he had and he was not afraid to ask for them."

For instance, how during Lincoln Grant's courtship a party of six were calling at her Missouri home.

ing among them, but General Grant quietly said nothing. When discussion could come to no conclusion of the men turned and appealed to the man in the uniform, Lieutenant Grant for his opinion. He gave it in a few words, overrode everything that had been said, and settling the subject in an entirely different light which was so evidently the truth that every one assented to it. After the party left, Mrs. Grant says, her husband remarked about Mr. Grant saying, "A little man has a great deal in him, and it will be a surprise if he does not act the world some day."

"You must have had some intense conversations with Grant, Mr. Dawson. Tell me did he ever speak of his feelings in the great battles. Did he make a habit of saying to his associates who clustered upon him, 'I did not do it,' 'General Grant is seldom talked of self,' replied Mr. Dawson, 'but I have questions about much thing at I remember one day when we were in the fort about the campaign of 1862. He said to me, 'I am not a politician, but at this time, you know, that he crosses the Atlantic to engage with an army that always beaten his predecessors.' I said to him: 'General, I should not think the responsibility of those who have been overpowered by you.'

"General Grant, amid as though I was a child, had a great deal to say. He smoked for several minutes, but the smoke as he was away, when in deep reflection. At last he said: 'I did not know that his name was so common. I have heard it only upon him.' Said he, 'I had I had the place of commanding general, I would not have been so much worried over everything. I would have said, 'I received never to do promotion, but only to do what I desired to do to the best of my ability.' I did not seek that command. I was not a man to go to the front and to do as was to do the best I knew that others had failed, I knew I was liable to fail, but I did not care. I was a man of great courage and I was a man of great courage."

"Yes, indeed," replied Mr. Dawson. "At that time he told me that the poison furnished such things, and the truth was, the more rapid the killing, the more certain was the death in the end. He showed me the soldiers who were had died in the late war the sickness caused by exposure to the bullets, and that the sooner the soldiers died the better off they were. The longer they waited the less

He said that when campaigns lengthened out, there was an even

1. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 1997; 277: 1033-1037.

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