



**U.S.G FIRST IN WAR FIRST IN PEACE AND FIRST IN THE HEARTS
OF HIS COUNTRYMEN**

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to

The Illustrious Soldier,

GENERAL ULYSSES S. GRANT,

President of The United States from March 4, 1869,

THE ONLY MAN

WHO HAD THE MENTAL POWER, THE MORAL FORCE, THE MILITARY GENIUS TO SUPPRESS

THE GREAT REBELLION,

THE MIGHTIEST THE WORLD EVER SAW;

THE MAN WHOM,
FIRST IN WAR,
AND
FIRST IN THE HEARTS OF HIS COUNTRYMEN,
THE NATION WILL SOON ACKNOWLEDGE TO BE
FIRST IN PEACE,
This Volume
IS ADMIRINGLY AND ENTHUSIASTICALLY
DEDICATED.

PREFACE.

In this volume my friend Captain Galligasken has been permitted to tell his story very much in his own way. As I fully and heartily indorse his positions, fully and heartily share in his enthusiasm, my task has consisted of nothing more than merely writing the book; and I assure the reader that I have enjoyed quite as much as my friend the captain the pleasant contemplation of the brilliant deeds of the illustrious soldier. There is something positively inspiring in the following out of such a career as that of General Grant; and when I declare that the enthusiasm of Captain Galligasken is nothing more than just and reasonable, I do it after a careful examination of the grounds on which it is based; after a patient, but exceedingly agreeable, study of the character of the man whom we have jointly eulogized; and after instituting a critical comparison between the general and the mighty men of the present and the past. I have twice read all that I have written, and I find no occasion to add any qualifying words, and no reason to

moderate the warm enthusiasm of the captain.

As the candidate for the presidency of the dominant party in the land, all of General Grant's sayings and doings will be subjected to the closest scrutiny by his political opponents. All that he has said and all that he has done will be remorselessly distorted by savage critics. Partisan prejudice and partisan hatred will pursue him into the privacies of life, as well as through every pathway and avenue of his public career; but Captain Galligasken joins me in the confident belief that no man has ever been held up to the gaze of the American people who could stand the test better; hardly one

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who could stand it as well. In his private life the general has been pure and guileless, while in his public history he has been animated by the most noble and exalted patriotism, ever willing to sacrifice all that he was and all that he had for the cause in which he embarked.

The study of the illustrious hero's motives and character has been exceedingly refreshing to me, as well as to my friend Captain Galligasken, as we analyzed together the influences which guided him in his eventful experience. We were unable to find any of those selfish and belittling springs of action which rob great deeds of more than half their glory. We could see in him a simplicity of character which amazed us; a strength of mind, a singleness of heart, which caused us to envy Sherman and Sheridan the possession of such a man's friendship. Unlike most eminent men, whose very greatness has induced them to shake off more or less of the traits of ordinary humanity, our illustrious soldier is a lovable man—an attitude in which we are seldom permitted to regard great men. He stands in violent contrast with the bombastic heroes of all times—modest, gentle-hearted, and always approachable. There is none of the frigid reserve in his manner which awes common people in the contemplation of those exalted by mighty deeds or a

lofty position. Captain Galligasken says all this upon his honor as a soldier and an historian; and from my own personal stand-point I cordially indorse his opinion, which, in both instances, is derived from actual experience.

Captain Galligasken was somewhat afraid of the politicians, and not a little nervous at the possible manner those of the party to which he never had the honor to belong might regard his enthusiasm. I have taken the liberty to assure him that his enthusiasm is legitimate; that he has never manifested it except on suitable occasions; that the fact always specified in connection with the glowing eulogy amply justifies his praise. I was willing to go farther, and to insist that it was impossible for the politicians of his own or any other party to resist the conclusions, or withhold the homage, after the facts were admitted.

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And this matter of facts, the unclothed skeleton of reliable history and biography, is a point on which my friend Captain Galligasken is especially sensitive. Our library of reference in the agreeable task we have jointly performed included all the works bearing on the subject now extant in the country. We have used them liberally and faithfully, and, animated by a desire to set forth "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth" in regard to the illustrious soldier, the Captain feels entirely confident that he has produced a reliable history of all the important phases in his life. He has plentifully besprinkled his pages with anecdotes, some of which have never been related before, for they are the most telling illustrations of individual character.

We jointly acknowledge our indebtedness to General Adam Badeau's "Military History of Ulysses S. Grant," at once the most interesting and exhaustive work on the subject which has yet been issued, and which Captain Galligasken insists that every patriotic lover of the truth should read; to "Ohio in the War;" to "Grant and his Campaigns," by Professor Coppée, who had peculiar facilities

for the performance of his task; to Howland's "Grant as a Soldier and a Statesman;" to Swinton's "Army of the Potomac;" to General Shanks's "Personal Recollections of Distinguished Generals;" and, in a less degree, to other volumes. Captain Galligasken is especially desirous of acknowledging his obligations to his friend Pollard, author of "The Lost Cause,"—though he thinks Grant is the chief author of the *lost* cause,—not only for the citations he has taken the liberty to make from the book, but also for some of the heartiest laughs he ever had in his life. We tender our personal thanks to those kind friends—whose names we are not even permitted to mention—for facts, suggestions, and anecdotes.

When our enterprising and discriminating publishers insisted upon just this Life of General Grant,—which I should not have been willing to undertake without the indispensable aid of my cheerful friend the captain,—we gladly accepted the agreeable task; but I noticed that Captain Galligasken appeared to be disturbed in his mind about something. I asked

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him what it was. He replied by asking me what possible excuse a humble individual like himself could offer for inflicting upon the patient, much-enduring community another Life of General Grant, who was even then more fortunate than a cat, for he had more than "nine lives." I bade him tell the reason, and he did.

"Because I can't help it," he replied; "because I desire to have the people of the United States see General Grant just as I see him. He has been nominated by the National Republican party as its candidate for the presidency, on a platform which every patriot, every Christian, heartily indorses, and which is the sum total of the general's political creed. I wish, if I can, to do something for his election; and I am fully persuaded that all the people would vote for him if they understood the man. I am no politician, never held an office, and never expect to hold one; but I believe in Grant

above and beyond all party considerations. I respect, admire, and love the man. I glory in his past, and I am confident of his future. I honestly, sincerely, and heartily believe every word we have written. Nothing but the election of Grant can save the nation from the infamy of practical repudiation, from the distractions which have shaken the land since the close of the Rebellion, if not from another civil war and the ultimate dissolution of the Union. I hope the people will read our book, think well, and be as enthusiastic as I am."

It affords me very great pleasure, again and finally, to be able to indorse my friend Captain Galligasken. He is sincere; and before my readers condemn his enthusiasm, I beg to inquire how they can escape his conclusions. All we ask is a fair hearing, and we are confident that the people who sustained Grant through the war will enable him to finish in the presidential chair the glorious work he began on the battle-fields of the republic.

Oliver Optic.

Harrison Square, Mass., July 11, 1868.

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**Our Standard-Bearer; OR,
THE Life of General Ulysses S.
Grant.**

CHAPTER I.

Wherein Captain Galligasken modestly disparages himself, and sets forth with becoming Enthusiasm the Virtues of the illustrious Soldier whose Life he insists upon writing.

W

ho am I? It makes not the least difference who I am. If I shine at all in this veritable history,—which I honestly confess I have not the slightest desire to do,—it will be only in the reflected radiance of that great name which has become a household word in the home

of every loyal citizen, north and south, of this mighty Republic; a name that will shine with transcendent lustre as his fame rings along down the grand procession of the ages, growing brighter and more glorious the farther it is removed from the petty jealousies of contemporaneous heroes, statesmen, and chroniclers.

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What am I? It does not make the least difference what I am. I am to chronicle the deeds of that illustrious soldier, the providential man of the Great Rebellion, who beat down the strongholds of Treason by the force of his mighty will, and by a combination of moral and mental qualifications which have been united in no other man, either in the present or the past.

What was Washington? God bless him! A wise and prudent statesman, a devoted patriot, the savior of the new-born nationality.

What was Napoleon? The greatest soldier of the century which ended with the battle of Waterloo.

What was Andrew Jackson? The patriot statesman, who had a will of his own.

What were Cæsar, Wellington, Marlborough, Scott? All strong men, great soldiers, devoted patriots.

What is the Great Captain, the illustrious hero of the Modern Republic? He is all these men united into one. He has held within the grasp of his mighty thought larger armies than any other general who is worthy to be mentioned in comparison with him, controlling their movements, and harmonizing their action throughout a territory vastly larger than that comprised in the battle-grounds of Europe for a century.

Washington was great in spite of repeated defeats. Grant is great through a long line of brilliant successes. Napoleon won victories, and then clothed himself in the scarlet robes of an

emperor, seated himself on a throne, and made his country's glory only the lever of his own glory. Grant won victories not

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less brilliant, and then modestly smoked his cigar on the grand level of the people, diffidently accepting any such honors as a grateful people thrust upon him.

As I yield the tribute of admiring homage to Washington that he put the Satan of sovereign power behind him when he was tempted with the glittering bait, I am amazed that Grant, the very idol of a million veteran soldiers, permitted his sword to rest in its scabbard while his recreant superior, by the accident of the assassin's bullet, dared to thwart the will of the people whose ballots had elevated him to power. I can almost worship him for his forbearance under the keenest insults to which the sensitive soul of a true soldier can be subjected, that he did not smite his cunning traducer, and did not even appeal to the people.

Who am I? If I am seen at all in this true narrative of a sublime life, I beg to be regarded as the most humble and least deserving of Columbia's chosen sons, but standing, for the moment, on a pedestal, and blushing to point to the historic canvas, whereon is delineated the triumphal career of the Great Man of the nineteenth century; the successful General, towering in lofty preëminence above every other man, who in the days of darkness struck a blow for the redemption of the nation; the fledged Statesman, who, without being a politician, apprehended and vitalized the chosen policy of the sovereign people. I am nothing; he is everything.

I am an enthusiast!

Is there nothing in The Man, sublimated by glorious deeds, elevated by a conquering will far above his

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fellows, almost deified by the highest development of godlike faculties,—is there nothing in The Man to quicken the lazy flow in the veins of the beholder? Can I, who marched from Belmont to Appomattox Court House, by the way of Donelson, Vicksburg, Chattanooga, Spottsylvania, Petersburg, and Five Forks, who have, since the collapse of the rebellion, gazed, in common with the Senators and Representatives in Congress, the Governors of the states, the President, and the heads of the departments of state, the sovereign people, with friends and with foes of the regenerated country,—can I, who have gazed with the most intense interest at the little two-story brick building in the nation's capital, where smoked and labored the genius of the war, to see what that one man would do, to hear what that one man would say,—can I gaze and listen without realizing the throb which heaves the mighty heart of the nation? I felt as they felt, that there was only one man in the land. It mattered little what senators and representatives enacted in the halls of Congress, if he did not indorse it. It mattered little what the Nation's Accident vetoed, if he but approved it. It was of little consequence what rebels north or rebels south planned and plotted, if only this one man frowned upon it. Reconstruction could flourish only in his smile. If a department commander ambitiously or stupidly belied his war record, and attempted to bolster up with this diplomacy the treason which he had put down with his sword, the howl of the loyal millions was changed into a shout of exultation, if the one man in the little two-story brick building in Washington only nodded

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his disapproval of the course of the recreant. That man has been the soul of the people's policy of reconstruction. Conscious that he was its friend, it mattered not who was its enemy; for foes could delay, but not defeat it.

Can I be unmoved while I look at The Man? When I behold a huge steamship, the giant of the deep, threading its way through

night and storm over the pathless ocean, from continent to continent, herself a miracle to the eye, I wonder. When I see the electric telegraph, flashing a living thought from farthest east to farthest west, and even along its buried channel in the depths of the storm-tossed ocean, I wonder. Can I gaze unmoved upon the Man, the Fulton, the Morse, from whose busy brain, lighted up by an inspiration from the Infinite, which common men cannot even understand, came forth the grand conception of these miracles of science?

I am an enthusiast. I cannot gaze at the spectacle of a nation rent and shattered by the most stupendous treason that ever fouled historic annals, restored to peace and unity, without a thrill of emotion. I cannot follow our gallant armies in imagination now, as I did in reality then, in their triumphal march from the gloom of Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville to the glorious light and sunshine of Vicksburg and Five Forks, from death at Bull Run, to life at Fort Donelson, without having my heart leap with grateful enthusiasm.

In the ghastly midnight of disaster, when the nation's pulse almost ceased to beat in dread and anxiety for the fearful issue, we had men—hundreds of thou

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sands, millions of men, the bravest and truest soldiers that ever bore a musket. Thousands and tens of thousands of them sleep beneath the bloody sod of Antietam, in the miry swamps of the Chickahominy, and under the parching soil of the southern savannas, where they sank to their rest with the field unconquered above them. There they slumber, each of them a willing sacrifice, if his death brought the nation but one hair's breadth nearer to the final redemption, or could add one ray to the flood of light which the peace they prayed for would shed upon the land beloved.

There was no lack of men, and pure patriots prayed for a

leader. They sighed for a Washington, a Napoleon, a Wellington, to guide their swelling masses of ardent warriors from the gloom of disaster to the brightness of victory. Chiefs, mighty in battle, pure in purpose, skilful in device and execution, reared their banners successively at the head of the valiant hosts, then drooped and fell, as the hot blast of jealousy swept over them, or they became entangled in the silken meshes of adulation. In none of these did the soldiers find their true leader, though they fought fiercely and fell in horrid slaughter under all of them.

It was only when the soul of the mustered hosts was fired by the sublime fact of a worthy leader, and their muscles nerved by the will of a mighty champion, that the thundering march of victory commenced, and the triumphal car of the conqueror swept like a whirlwind through the war-stricken South. Then treason trembled, tottered, few. Then the infatuated

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leaders of rebellion wailed in terror, and fled from the halter that dangled over their heads. Then the one man of the war towered like a giant above his fellows. Then he stood forth as the nation's savior, and a generous people placed the laurel on his brow.

I am an enthusiast as I review the history of my country from 1862 to the present time. I watched with McClellan in the oozy swamps of Virginia, when he feared to risk his popularity by striking an avenging stroke at the exposed foe, and I joined in singing the pæan of victory with Grant after Five Forks, when the final blow had been given to the rebellion. Therefore am I enthusiastic.

The people acknowledged the greatness of Grant's military genius, the tremendous power of his will, and the unflinching earnestness of his patriotism. Then, while salvos of artillery throughout the loyal land proclaimed the victory to the astonished

nations, we hailed Grant as our standard-bearer.

If I am enthusiastic, so are the people, to their honor and glory be it said. I shall only ask to be their mouthpiece, assured that I cannot exceed their estimate of the hero. What he was in the storm of battle, he is in the calm pursuits of peace. What he was among the soldiers, he is among the citizens. As he possessed the unlimited confidence of the "boys in blue," so has he the unlimited confidence of the people. They are full of gratitude to him for the past, full of trust in him for the present, and full of hope in him for the future. In a tone more enthusiastic, and a voice more united than ever before since the days of Washington, the people have declared that

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Grant shall still be our standard-bearer, and I am more enthusiastic than ever.

Presumptuous as it may be in one so humble and little deserving as I am to intrude himself upon the public eye, I insist upon giving my views of the life of General Grant. I claim to know all about the distinguished subject of my story—which is no story at all, inasmuch as every word of it, so far as it relates to the general, is only the living truth, as I understand it. Even if my kind and courteous readers should deem me a myth, I shall only have won the obscurity I covet, and succeed in concentrating their attention upon the illustrious man whose immortal name I reverently utter, and whose undying deeds I seek to illustrate.

I wish to say in the beginning, that I hold it to be the sacred duty of the historian to tell the truth; so far as in him lies. For this reason I have taken the trouble, in this initial chapter of my work, to explain at some length the grounds of my individual enthusiasm in speaking and writing of the illustrious subject of this memoir.

The fact, and my view of the fact, are two essentially different things. I shall state facts as I find them; and whatever view my indulgent reader may entertain in regard to me and my views, I assure him, on the honor of an historian, that all my statements are true, and worthy of the utmost credit.

Others may not be willing to agree with me in all respects in my estimate of particular events or incidents in the life of my illustrious subject, though I am

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persuaded there can be no essential difference in our view of the sum-total of the general—that he must stand unchallenged as the greatest man and the greatest soldier of the nineteenth century, if not of all time. A proper regard for the sacred truth of history compels me to make this declaration, which I do without the fear of a denial.

I have been very much pained to observe that my friend, Mr. Pollard, author of "The Lost Cause," has arrived at an estimate of the merit of our distinguished general, which is, in some respects, different from my own. Perhaps my valued contemporary was unable to derive the necessary inspiration from his subject to enable him to do full justice to the shining abilities of some of the heroes who, unfortunately for The Lost Cause, were on the other side of the unpleasant controversy. Doubtless Mr. Pollard meant well; but it is painful to find that he has, in some cases, exhibited symptoms of prejudice, especially towards General Grant, who does not seem to be a favorite general with him. I notice also on his pages a degree of partiality towards General Lee which greatly astonishes me. After a careful examination of Mr. Pollard's voluminous work, I am surprised and grieved to find that he actually regards Lee, in the matter of soldier-like qualities and in generalship, as the superior of Grant!

I confess my surprise at his singular position; but in view of the

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