

gates of Mobile & withdrawing a considerable Army from Sherman's front at Chattanooga.

Sherman has asked for an extension from the 2nd to the 5th to complete his preparations ^{against} Dalton. He says that Thomas' and Schofield's Armies will be within one day's march of Dalton by tonight, and that McPherson will be on time.

A little after midnight as I was writing those last lines, the President came into the office laughing, with ^{a volume of} Hood's works in his hand to show Nicodemus the little caricature "An unfortunate Bering," seemingly utterly unconscious that he with his short shirt hanging about his long legs & sitting out behind like the tail feathers of an enormous ostrich was infinitely funnier than ^{anything} in the book he was laughing at. What a man it is. Occupied all day with matters of vast moment, deeply anxious about the fate of the greatest army of the world, with his own fame & future hanging on the events of the passing hour, he yet has such a wealth of simple bonhomie & good fellow ship that he gets

out of bed & perambulates the house in his shirt to find us that we may share with him the fun of one of poor Hood's queer letter conceits.

May April 5.

Last evening Grant telegraphed that he was across the Rappahannock dating 130 P.M. & wished Butler to be so informed. Butler said the evening before "I am ordered to move at 8 a.m., tomorrow & shall obey the order."

~~April~~ This evening while I was sitting in the parlour, came in Mr. Clay Smith & Ashley. They were talking about some matters & drifted into politics. Smith said nothing of but Lincoln. Ashley did not give in his adhesion, but denounced the Fremont. Cleveland movement as foolish and ruinous: he said that Fremont was in New York personally soliciting signatures to the Cleveland call: that he sent for him (Ashley) & he wd. not go to see him: that Fremont was an ass &c. That when he was a candidate in '56 at first no one imagined he was going to be elected: he was nominated because they did not want to damage a better man by leaving him beaten: but that before the canvass ended they feared F.