

No better close for a chapter like this can be found than the letter which General Grant wrote and handed to Dr. Douglass twenty days before his death. It is a perfect mirror of his thoughtfulness for his family and patriotic love for his country. It runs:

"I ask you not to show this to any one, except the physicians you consult with, until the end. Particularly I want it kept from my family. If known to one man the papers will get it and they (the family) will see it. It would only distress them almost beyond endurance to know it, and, by reflex, would distress me. I have not changed my mind materially since I wrote you before in the same strain. Now, however, I know that I gain strength some days, but, when I do go back it is beyond where I started to improve. I think the chances are very decidedly in favor of your keeping me alive until the change of weather towards winter. Of course, there are contingencies that might arise at any time that might carry me off very suddenly. The most probable of these is choking. Under the circumstances life is not worth the living.

"I am very thankful to have been spared this long because it has enabled me to practically complete the work in which I take so much interest. I cannot stir up strength enough to review it, and make additions and subtractions that would suggest themselves to me and are not likely to suggest themselves to others.

"Under the above circumstances I will be the happiest the most pain I can avoid. If there is to be any extraordinary cure, such as some people believe there is to be, it will develop itself. I would say, therefore, to you and your colleagues, to make me as comfortable as you can. If it is within God's providence that I should go now, I am ready to obey His call without a murmur. I should prefer going now to enduring my present suffering for a single day without hope of recovery.

"As I have stated, I am thankful for the providential extension of my time to enable me to continue my work. I am further thankful, and in a much greater degree