The Return to Generals Sheridan and Sickles.

WASHINGTON, Sept. 21.—Thousands of persons, white and black, collected at Willard's Hotel tonight, on the occasion of the serenade to Major-General Sheridan. About half-past nine o'clock General Sheridan the Grand Army of the Republic, the members of the Department of the Potomac, belonging to the regiment, with a full band of music, arrived in strong force, with a full band of music. The platform in front of the hotel was illuminated, with the word "union" in large letters and underneath a large circle was formed of blazing gas jets. After several airs had been played there were repeated cheers for Sheridan, and when he appeared the shouts in his honor were repeated.

N. P. Chipman, the commander of the department, introduced General Sheridan.

General Sheridan said:

Gentlemen: I sincerely thank you for this very earnest welcome. I shall always recollect the occurrences of this night; the music that will ever give me a great deal of pleasure and pride. I feel that you are greatly honored me, and I feel especially honored, as a large portion of this assemblage is composed of many gallant officers and soldiers of the army. I return you my thanks.

The serenadge repeatedly cheered as he bowed and retired from the stand. As he passed to the parlor many ladies sought an introduction, while a number of men pushed forward to shake hands with him.

The crowd then proceeded to the Ebbett House, in the immediate vicinity. The front of the hotel was profusely hung with Chinese lanterns. The band played several times, and many thousands "Rally Round the Flag," many persons joining with their voices in the chorus. Thousands patient calls for General Sickles. General Farnsworth came forward and made the following speech, by way of introduction:

Soldiers and Citizens: I recognize one in the crowd suggested that he add sailors—laughter—Well, soldiers, sailors and citizens—every man, every woman [laughter]. My personal acquaintance with the distinguished hero of this night began in the House of Representatives. He was a Democrat and a Republican, but I guess he was a Union man. [Applause.] He plays his country above party—A voice—Hurrah! and through the struggle in Congress which preceded the war, General Sickles was at all times on the side of the Union.

In the winter of 1859 and 1861, when the galleries of Congress were thronged with the friends of traitors, when treason was spoken on the floor of that hall (a voice—Speak up!) I remember the rebuke General Sickles administered to these men. When they threatened to secede and they did, I told them that if they began in Charleston, it would end with Gettysburg. Gentlemen, General Sickles went out of Congress, and immediately commenced making speeches and using his influence in every manner possible to excite a more patriotic feeling amongst the people.

When the war commenced General Sickles, by his own individual efforts, raised a brigade of fine regiments—I don't like to say "brigade" for brigade of discourteous soldiers, who fought like veterans. He brought them to the vicinity of Washington, to the Army of the Potomac. Few gathered before him such a force as this, or such a brigade. Wherever the battle raged the fiercest Sickles was in the thickest of the fight—first at the head of a brigade; next at the head of a division, and then at the head of a corps.

At the battle of Gettysburg he began the fight and received the first shock of the army, and thereby lost one of his limbs. This was in July. Three months after he returned to the city of Washington with his mutilated stump not yet healed, and offered his services again, and asked to be put at the head of his corps. At that moment the city of Washington was threatened with a fight which was expected almost before the very walls of the Capitol.

Gentlemen, General Sickles, not yet able to endure the fatigue and hardships of a field campaign, was sent by President Lincoln, who regarded him with confidence and trust, to the Southwest, to counteract upon the minds and cries of "Old oak" and others with directions from the President.

Returning from this mission, his duties fulfilled perfectly, he was ordered to proceed on a mission to South America by Mr. Lincoln. Performing his trust to the entire satisfaction of the government, he was, in the fall of 1865, sent to Charleston, S. C., to command a military department.

With the sheer intimation of a call to Washington in his ears, he arrived in the district of South and North Carolina ever since he went there. When the time came for the reconstruction when all was chaos and disorder, when Northern life, or property, or liberty, or freedom, or rights were unsafe, he put in practice what was secured by the Civil Rights bill, and by the Constitution of the United States.

It had taken some time to convince that it had to be forcibly taken out like an old cancer. It had to be removed by the roots. Every ground that he eradicated, and every wound cauterized, but under the administration of Gen. Sickles he made, as Governor Orr says, every man in the state of military government as light upon the people of South Carolina as it was possible under the circumstances.

He has returned to all their rights, and attended to and advanced their material prosperity, and by his order created the first school fund, he has secured to the laboring men fair wages, and to the producers of the soil what they had not received for years, namely,—protection for their labor (cries, "Hear, hear!" and "Good!") secured every poor man his five or ten dollars, which would have otherwise been used up in costs and lawyers fees, and the large profits left in store for the support of his family until harvest.

By his administration the law of Congress passed for the purpose of reconstructing the Southern States of view there is no reason to complain of the manner in which he has completed the registration, and left nothing for his successor to do in that district but to see that there is a fair and just election by the people. (Applause.) General Sickles, the statesman and soldier, we greet you here, we are glad to meet you. I take pleasure greater than I ever before felt, in presenting you to the large body of citizens, who called on us at Washington.

Repeated applause greeted General Sickles as he appeared. He came to the front of the platform, and said:

Countrymen: I am glad to meet you again, and thank you for this proof of your regard. Among the