PHIL. SHERIDAN.

Personal Recollections of the Close of His Command.

[From the Scribner's Monthly Tales of Co. Sch.]

One sultry day, while Sheridan, seated upon a log by the roadside, was absently observing the passing column, a puff of ice-water near him attracted the notice of a trooper trudging along on foot. Wiping the perspiration from his bronzed forehead with his coat-sleeve, he brusquely accosted the General, omitting even the customary salute: "Can I have a drink of that ice water?" Remembering the severe exertion which officers of the regular army were wont to surround themselves, I feared the soldier might meet with a rebuff. "Certainly, Sir," said Sheridan; "certainly," at the same time handing him a draught and adding a word of encouragement, which caused the tired soldier to go on his way rejoicing. Thus did he endear himself to those in whom he had ultimately to rely in the carrying out of his plans and winning of his victories. Wherever he had occasion to reprimand a soldier for any dereliction of duty, his reproof was always couched in the most courteous language, and never savored of harshness. If a trooper, tempted by a stream of running water, left the column for the purpose of filling his canteen or watering his horse, and afterward urged the plea that he was great a speed in endeavoring to overtake the same, Sheridan had only to say to him the mildest manner, "Walk your horse, Sir; walk your horse," to prevent a recurrence of the offence. It became proverbial that to pass the column while in motion, he never crowded nor jostled any one, but would be very careful along the flank on that famous "black" which afterward rendered him such good service on the road from Winchester to Cedar Creek. Incidentally we may add that his animal was a remarkable one of its kind, possessing wonderful powers of endurance. Scarcely one of the horses of Sheridan's staff could keep pace with him for more than a walk, without striking the trot.

Any service which contributed to the general comfort of his command did not regard, even to the Commanding General. Thus, for hours I have seen Sheridan, on a cold day, holding an insecure plank in its place until all his cavalry had pass over the bridge. On another occasion, while watching the movements of a party engaged in destroying a lock of the James River Canal, I noticed the sympathetic inclination of his body corresponding to the oscillations of the gate as it yielded to the pressure of the destroying party. His fertility of resources in overcoming obstacles was remarkable. Every emergency was met independently should have attached to it an officer of the Corps of Engineers. I do not remember that Sheridan had such an officer on his staff. In the spring of '65, an officer having been sent out from Washington, with a pontoon train for the purpose of bridging the Dan and Staunton rivers, in order to facilitate the movements of Sheridan's troopers in the direction of North Carolina, reported that, in some unaccountable manner, Sheridan had got across both rivers, and only availed himself of the pontoons on his return.

In regard to contemplated movements Sheridan was extremely reticent; with the exception of his Chief of Staff he seldom confided his plans to any one, and, as a consequence, they were seldom divulged.

While roaming across the country he moved his command with so much celerity that it was almost impossible for the rebel authorities to keep informed of his whereabouts. Thus, in the Spring of 1865, while he was reported in Richmond as moving on Lynchburg, on the following morning dwellers by the river side would be astonished by the sight of his advance guard, sixty miles nearer Richmond!

The affection existing between Sheridan and the men never, under him was unbounded and reciprocal. In allusion to his mounted corps, he always used the expression, "my cavalry." In his report of the battle of Five Forks, he speaks of the Sixth Corps as "my brave and the Sixth Corps, which served under him in the Shenandoah Valley, with him in the cavalry, and I can bear testimony to the His influence over the soldiers, under prosperous or adverse circumstances, was marvelous beyond comprehension. I believe I do not overrate in saying that his appearance on the field was equivalent to the reinforcement of 10,000 muskets.

At the commencement of the battle of Winchester he rode along in front of the infantry lines, talking familiarly with the men, encouraging them in the performance of their duty, and adding, in a confidential tone, "We are going to whip them, boys."

Whenever Grant despatched Sheridan upon any special service, he had the satisfaction of knowing in advance that, if within the range of possibility, his instructions would be carried out, for Sheridan never allowed himself to be disheartened by the most untoward event; and when disasters accumulated and defeat seemed imminent, he was only stimulated to new birth still greater efforts. I never saw him wear a perturbed look except at Twyman's Station, in the Summer of 1864, he routed the enemy's cavalry on the first day, only to encounter a larger force with infantry and artillery on the morrow, and he had occasion to reprimand a soldier for his conduct on the occasion. When