PHILIP HENRY SHERIDAN must always be looked upon as one of the miracles of war—not so much from the result as the manner of his achievements. If he were neither a great strategist, like Sherman, nor a great tactician, like Thomas, nor both, like Grant, he would still be a successful leader. We have seen in former articles that the Lieutenant-General is, as a military leader, complete in himself, possessing all the attributes of general-
ship; while Sherman, embodying nervous intellectual force, and Thomas, representing physical power, are constituted by nature, as well as by the choice of Grant, to be his chief subordinate commanders. Sheridan, in character, is like neither of the others, but is an original genius, and a leader not unworthy to rank with Sherman and Thomas, or to hold position as the third subordinate commander of General Grant. He may be said to be an Inspiration rather than a General, accomplishing his work as much, not to say more, by the inspiring force of his courage and example as by the rules of war. He supplies to the army the passion and fire which is smothered in Grant and Thomas, and imperfectly developed in Sherman. He renders an army invincible more by the impartation to it of his own courage and fire than by any system of organization; and appears to accomplish by this imparted enthusiasm all that results under the leadership of the others from discipline. When the historian sums up his character, with all the facts now hidden hid profusely before him, he will hardly rank Sheridan with those who have carefully and wisely planned. He belongs rather to that class of our officers whose strong arms have boldly and brilliantly executed, and who have won the distinctive classification of "fighting generals."

The writer can find among all his recollections of Sheridan's career no development of any brilliant strategic ability, while in every battle in which he has been prominently engaged he has given brilliant examples of his courage, vigor, and skill, and as a quick, dashling, stubborn fighter. Stone River, Chickamauga, Chattanooga, Cedarr Run, and Five Forks are examples which illustrate the position which is taken in representing Sheridan as a representative "fighting general." It is in the light of the more familiar scenes of Cedar Run and Five Forks that the public have formed their idea of Sheridan, without knowing that in the other battles named he has displayed the same characteristics, while his entire career in private and public has shown him to be impetuous, passion-ate, bold, and stubborn. He was born a belligerent. His natural element is amidst the smoke, his natural position in the front line of battle. He fights vigorously and roughly, and when the tide of battle flows and ebbs most doubtingly he holds on most grimly. In private life his great energy is a little curt, and his fiery temper a little too quick, but his abruptness and belligerence are too honest and natural to excite censure; while his manner, when not excited or opposed, is distinguished by great courtesy, modesty, and pleasantness. A sketch of his life which, while illustrating these qualities and characteristics, gives an insight into his early career, will not be without interest.

Sheridan is descended from the same class of the north of Ireland emigrants which produced Andrew Jackson and Andrew Johnson. His parents, having settled on their arrival in this country in a more populous, thriving, educated, and free district, Ohio, were enabled to offer their son better educational advantages than were those of Jackson and Johnson, who had settled in the less civilized district of North Carolina; and hence young Sheridan became possessed of a good common school education in his native place, Perry County, Ohio, where he was born in 1831. From fourteen to fifteen he is remembered as a quick but careless student and rather wild and belligerent youth, fond of a frolic and a trick, sometimes thoughtless in wounding the feelings of others, but quick to generously heal when in fault. The necessities of his family early forced him to manual labor, and his seventeenth year beheld him employed in the town of Zanesville, Ohio, in driving a water cart, and in sprinkling the dusty streets of that old town. Before the year was finished, however, he resigned this "command" to enter West Point, having been unexpectedly appointed a cadet to that institution through the recommendation of the then Congressman of the district. The characteristics which had distinguished him at the humble school in his native town soon made him noted at West Point as the "best-natured and most belligerent cadet" in the Academy. He has often declared since his late successes that he had passed through West Point only by the "skin of his teeth." In fact his belligerent disposition re-tarded his advancement in youth and as a cadet as much as it has since advanced him. He fought so much at West Point, was so unruly and "so full of deviltry," that, despite his fine scholarly attainments, he graduated so low down in his class that he could only be commissioned in the lowest arm of the service. He required at the time of his graduation only "five points" more to his number of "black marks" to exclude him from the honors of graduation; and if he had not toward the close of the session, by skilful management and unusual control over his quick temper, won the good opinion of one or two of his tutors the future Major-General would have been forced to leave the Academy as he had entered it instead of Second Lieutenant of Infantry by Brevet. One of his instruct-ors, who had admired his generous character, employed the argument that a belligerent temperament was not a fault in a soldier, and this is said to have secured him the needed approval of the West Point staff of instructors and the honors of graduation. The argument was too powerful to be resisted by educated soldiers, and Sheridan was consequently sent forth fully authorized to be as great a belligerent in time of war as he desired.

Eight years of almost profound peace followed his graduation, and little opportunity was offered for advancement. In May and June, 1855, Lieutenant Sheridan was in command of Fort Wood, New York Harbor, but in the July following he was ordered to San Francisco in charge of a body of recruits. On arriving there he was detailed to command an escort of cavalry
intended for the protection and assistance of Lieutenant Williamson and the party engaged in the survey of the proposed branch of the Pacific Railroad from San Francisco to Columbia River, Oregon. An opportunity offering soon after for a fight Sheridan succeeded in getting himself detached from this command and ordered to join a battalion of dragoons under Major Rainey, of the Fourth Infantry, then on an expedition against the Yakima Indians. In this expedition he distinguished himself by gallantry at the "Battle of the Cascades," of the Columbia River (April 28, 1856). Although his action on the occasion is not described, it is not difficult to imagine it as of the same character as the later deeds of daring which have distinguished him. He was rewarded for his gallantry by being placed in command of the Indian Reservation of the Coast Range. Here he was engaged for a year in keeping the Conquillo Indians on Yakima Bay in proper subjection, and in building the military post and fort at Yamhill.

From this distant post he was recalled in 1861 to find himself promoted, by the resignation of large numbers of the Southern officers of the army, to a captaincy in what was then Sherman's regiment, the Thirteenth Infantry. He was ordered to join his regiment at Jefferson Barracks, and thus became attached to the Trans-Mississippi or Army of the Southwest, in which he saw his first service in the present war. Although this army had gone through a campaign under Lyon, and the preparations for another under Fremont, and was then under command of Halleck, it was so far from being organized that Sheridan could find no active duty, and was placed upon a military commission to inquire into certain alleged irregularities of the Fremont administration of Missouri affairs. About the time that Curtis, who had assumed command of the troops in the field, was ready to begin an active campaign Sheridan was appointed Acting Chief Quarter-master, with which the duties of Commissary were at that time blended. He was out of place, and his success as a quarter-master was very indifferent indeed. He used to laugh and say, many months after, when located at Murfreesboro, Tennessee, that providing "hard tack and sow-belly" wasn't in his line, and was very fond of relating, in connection with the remark, his first experience in restricting the contraband traffic in salt with the rebels.

As Chief Quarter-master it was his duty to take such steps as would not only provide for his own troops but deprive the rebels of contraband supplies. Hearing that Price, then at Springfield, was suffering for salt, he employed every means to stop the export of that article beyond our lines; and, congratulating himself on his success, used often to say, with a chuckle, that "the rebels were actually starving for salt." When the advance of the army took place, and Price was hastily driven out of Springfield, the only article left behind was, much to Sheridan's disgust, an immense quantity of salt. He ever afterward professed himself disgusted with his quarter-mastership, and fortunately some time after got himself under arrest and sent to the rear.

Officers generally look upon arrests as misfortunes. Sheridan's arrest was the turning-point in his fortunes, since it placed him, after a brief delay, on the staff of a rising Major-General and in the line of promotion. The circumstances of his arrest are not without interest, as showing one or two of his characteristics. Like many regular officers of the army, as organized in 1862, Sheridan was in favor of carrying on the war by striking hard blows at the organized armies of the rebels, and generously protecting the people who, while remaining at home under United States protection, furnished the men and material to the rebels. He has overcome this too delicate and nice consideration for the interests of rebel aiders and abettors, and, like the country, has been educated by war in the belief that treason is to be fought with fire. Feeling thus during the Pea Ridge campaign, and being a great stickler for military regularity and routine, Sheridan was particularly disgusted with the ravages committed by the regiment of Kansas Jay-Hawkers, and used often to denounce them in unmeasured terms. He was so much embittered against the regiment and opposed to their style of warfare, that, when General Blunt ordered him to impress a large amount of provender from the citizens, he rebelled in any thing but decorous terms, declining to execute the order, and intimated in conclusion that "He'd be damned if he was a Jay-Hawker." Blunt, of course, relieved him. Sheridan reported to Halleck. The letter was forwarded as evidence against him, and fell into Halleck's hands.

That officer, having a just appreciation of a good joke, laughed heartily over the letter; and, sharing Sheridan's prejudices against "Jay-Hawkers" and "bummers," he caused the charges to be withdrawn, and in May, 1862, ordered him to duty on his own staff as Acting Chief Quarter-master.

Halleck was then before Corinth, and thither Sheridan repaired to find himself suddenly and unexpectedly transferred from the regular to the volunteer service, as Colonel of the Second Michigan cavalry. Halleck had, with that wise appreciation which he has displayed in organizing the United States armies, noticed Sheridan's qualities, and placed him in the branch of the service for which he was best qualified. But even Halleck did not fully appreciate the admirable qualities of his young protégé, and failed, when intrusted shortly after with the absolute organization of the armies, to advance him to the position for which the quicker appreciation of Grant subsequently singled him out after observing his conduct in one battle only.

His promotion to Colonel aroused the ambition of Sheridan, who had before modestly hoped to eventually become a Major. He now had opportunities to distinguish himself, and immediately went to work to improve the opportunity,
determined to win rank and fame before the close of the war, which having now changed its character also gave promise of being long and adventurous, and full of occasions for one in his arm of the service.

His regiment was brigaded with that of Colonel Elliott, who as the ranking officer became brigade commander, and under his leadership Sheridan made his first campaign. It was the famous raid around Corinth and upon Beauregard's communications at Boonesville, which was noted at the time as one of the first and most successful adventures of our then rapidly improving cavalry, and won for its leader a reputation for dash that the loyal press, with very bad taste, continually compared to the daring of Stuart and Morgan in their bloodless raids against weak outposts and unguarded rear-lines. This irregular warfare of the rebel cavalry had not up to that time partaken of the bloody character which has since been given the cavalry encounters of the war; and Sheridan was one of the first to expose the fallibility and weakness of the boasted rebel cavalry when vigorously opposed.

The opportunity was offered him in July, 1862, at Boonesville, by an old class-mate at West Point, and one who subsequently won, under Bragg and Forrest, a character for belligerency similar to that now enjoyed by Sheridan. The rebel J. H. Chalmers has at all times been as ready to fight as Sheridan; but he has neither the perseverance nor personal daring of Sheridan. His complete readiness to fight was evinced to Sheridan's satisfaction on the occasion alluded to, and Sheridan's superior endurance and enterprise were made apparent to the rebel at the same time. This engagement, although of a minor character, served to illustrate his characteristics as a quick, dash- ing, stubborn fighter, as more brilliantly developed in Sheridan at the more important engagements already alluded to in this connection. Chalmers attacked his single regiment with a whole brigade of cavalry, evidently expecting little resistance. Sheridan was not required, by the importance of the post he commanded nor the position of the army whose front he covered, to hold his ground, and could have with propriety declined battle, and fallen back on the infantry line; but it was not in the heart of the "belligerent cader" to slight his old class-mate by refusing to meet him—nor, indeed, to decline an invitation to battle from any gentleman. He drew up his regiment in line, and received the attack in handsome style. Chalmers's first repulse taught him that he should have to proceed with his attack more systematically, and he brought up his line for a more regular and general assault. While he was thus engaged Sheridan, with perhaps more enterprise than sound discretion, in view of the insignificance of the stake for which he contended, sent a detachment on a detour to the rear of the rebel position. These, by strenuous exertions, succeeded in effecting this purpose, and made an attack from that direction, while Sheridan, attacking from the front, succeeded in defeating the rebels and driving them from the field in confusion.

It was this success which made Sheridan a Brigadier-General. It has always been an unfortunate feature of our army organization that there is no provision for the promotion of the deserving in the branch of the service in which they have won distinction, and for which they have evinced high qualifications. A colonel of cavalry shows himself eminently deserving of promotion by his services in that branch, and he is promoted to be brigadier-general of infantry, and not only taken from the line of the service for which he is best fitted, but, though promoted in rank, is sent to command an inferior arm of the service. By this fault of organization not only does the army lose the service of the person thus promoted out of his sphere, but often the promotion becomes the ruin of the recipient, who may be totally unfitted for this new line of duty. There are numerous examples of this. Among several of these failures, which have resulted from this cause, the writer can recall that of a captain of artillery who gained a great reputation for his successful handling of a number of massed batteries, and who was promoted to be a brigadier-general of infantry, to utterly fail and throw away his young life in his chagrin and desperation. A young staff-officer, who had graduated at the head of his class, and who had distinguished himself as an engineer, was promoted rapidly from captain to corps commander, to find himself totally unfitted for such duty, and in time to waste, by his inadaptation to infantry and a lack of decision, the rich fruits of a successful strategic march.

Sheridan's fate was not exactly the reverse of this; but when taken from the cavalry, for which he was eminently fitted, and made Brigadier-General of infantry, his success at first was not encouraging. He was placed in command in Kentucky of a division of raw troops, for the organization of which he was not so well fitted as for fighting them. The command was under General Nelson. Shortly afterward Nelson was killed, and the reorganization of his army and its incorporation with that of General Buell placed Sheridan in command of a division of partly disciplined and veteran troops. A short time subsequently the army was again reorganized by Rosecrans, and Sheridan was given a division and assigned to the corps of General A. M'D. M'Cook. Sheridan's Division suffered disaster at Stone River and Chickamauga. But amidst that disaster and defeat the fighting qualities of the "little cader" found illustrations as brilliant but not so familiar as that of Cedar Creek.

Stone River was a battle in which the endurance of the soldiers rather than the generalship of their leaders gave us possession of a field in which the enemy all the time retained the tactical and strategic advantage. Each corps, and even each division, "fought on its own hook."
Sheridan's Division was posted at the left of McCook's Corps, which, being struck in flank and rear, was very quickly and unexpectedly doubled up and thrown back upon Sheridan's Division, which was thus forced while fighting a division in its front to turn and form a defensive crotchet to the whole army, and thus was compelled to expose one or the other of its flanks. It was forced back by superior numbers until its line of battle described three sides of a square; and these being broken after a terrible resistance, it was forced to retreat through a dense forest of cedars, in which artillery could not be moved, to the line formed by the reserves. While the rest of the corps had been rapidly driven Sheridan's Division fought for hours desperately, losing all the brigade commanders, seventy other officers, and nearly one half his men killed and wounded. The other divisions were never rallied until they reached Nashville. Sheridan's fell back upon the line of reserves and fought for three days afterward. This result was entirely owing to the personal exertions, daring, and skill of Sheridan; and his conflict formed such a brilliant episode of that badly-managed battle, and his abilities shone so prominently in contrast with the delinquencies of others, that he was at once made a Major-General.

Chickamauga was only a repetition of this. The same corps, consisting then of Davis's, Sheridan's, and Negley's divisions, was again defeated. General Negley, very unfortunately for that gallant officer and gentleman, was taken from his division in the heat of battle and ordered to the command of a number of batteries, and the division suffered badly, while the other division, under General Jefferson C. Davis, was scattered in every direction. Sheridan, who had formed the extreme right, had a desperate fight, but, after being separated from the rest of the army, eventually cut his own way out, brought in his division about half organized, and took his place in the line to which Thomas fell back to Rossville.

On these two occasions Sheridan was a subordinate. The disaster to his division was general to his corps, and resulted from the failure of others and not his own bad management. He was powerless to avert, he could only partly retrieve the disaster. On both occasions he did so with a skillful hand, by the most strenuous exertions, and at great personal risk. In the dark cedars at Stone River and the narrow defiles of Chickamauga he kept his men together, when almost surrounded or entirely cut off, only by being at all times along the front line of battle with them; by well-directed encouragement to the deserving, and the blackest reproaches to the delinquents; by alternate appeals and curses, the latter being loud and deep and far more plentiful than the first. Rousseau, who commanded the reserves, and who pushed forward into the cedars at Stone River to cover the retreat of Sheridan and Negley through them, once said,

"I knew it was hell in there before I got in, but I was convinced of it when I saw Phil Sheridan, with hat in one hand and sword in the other, damning and swearing as if he were the devil incarnate, or had had a fresh indulgence from Father Tracy every five minutes." (Father Tracy was Rosecrans's chaplain, and often officiated at Sheridan's head-quarters. Sheridan is a member of the Roman Catholic Church.)

"The history of the combat in those dark cedars," wrote the only historian who has truly written of Stone River, Mr. W. S. Furay, of the Cincinnati Gazette, "will never be known. No man could see even the whole of his own regiment, and no one will ever be able to tell who they were that fought bravest or they who proved recrueant to their trust. It was left to Sheridan to stay the successful onset of the foe. Never did a man labor more faithfully than he to perform his task, and never was leader seconded by more gallant soldiers." When Sheridan had extricated his command from the forest and got in line with the reserves he rode up to Rosecrans and, pointing to the remnant of his division, said,

"Here is all that is left of us, General. Our cartridge-boxes contain nothing, and our guns are empty."

The Tullahoma campaign, which followed that of Stone River, offered few opportunities for the display of any other quality of the soldier in Sheridan than that of energy. The pursuit of Bragg, which formed the main feature of that campaign, required rapid marching but no fighting. After the expulsion of the rebels from Tullahoma and Winchester the general pursuit was abandoned, as the enemy had reached the mountains, and only Sheridan's Division and Stanley's cavalry received orders to pursue the enemy across the mountains to the Tennessee. Sheridan moved with great alacrity, hoping to reach the bridge over the Tennessee at Bridgeport in time to save it from destruction. He moved so rapidly that he reached the river before Stanley's cavalry did, and saved the greater part of the bridge. He used to tell with great glee that on reaching Bridgeport he found members of the rear-guard of Bragg's army sitting on the end of the bridge and asking his advance if "they were part of Stanley's cavalry." The infantry had moved so rapidly in pursuit that the enemy had all the while mistaken them for cavalry.

Sheridan has since displayed the same energy in moving, with better effect. The surrender of Lee was, without doubt, the effect of the admirable and vigorous execution by Sheridan of Grant's plan of operations from Five Forks to Burksville Junction. It will be remembered that Sheridan, by rapid movements, placed his forces at Jetersville before Lee had reached Amelia Court House, and thus cut off all retreat to Danville. His dispatches relating to those operations partake of the vigor of the actual movements, and handsomely illustrate his energy.
"I wish you were here yourself," he wrote to Grant—a compliment that the little Lieutenant-General may be proud to point to. "If things are pressed," he added, "I think Lee will surrender."

"Press things," was Grant's order. It needed no other. Sheridan pushed forward rapidly, struck right and left, punishing the enemy wherever found, and at last forcing Lee to surrender.

Chattanooga was the battle in which Sheridan caught the eye of Grant, who there selected him without hesitation for the important position which he subsequently filled. Sheridan's Division formed the right of the centre column which, in the battles at Chattanooga, November 23, 24, and 25, 1863, assaulted and carried Mission Ridge, and, breaking the rebel centre, won the victory. His men were kept in position waiting for the signal to assault for over thirty-six hours; and they and their leader had grown very nervous, half fearing the battle would be won too soon by the others, and the chance for glory stolen from them, when, at last, the wished-for signal came, and away went the assaulting columns. General T. J. Wood commanded the other, and he and Sheridan strove with a lofty ambition, in which there was nothing that a saint could condemn, to reach the summit first. Sheridan gloried in the deed. He could not contain himself, and yet he rode along the front line, half leading, half directing his men, as clear-headed as if the cross-fire of the twenty rebel batteries that opened upon his men were directed against charmed lives, and he knew them to be futile as against him. During the charge he took a canteen of whisky from his aid, Captain Avery, and filling a cup which he carried, raised it with a gesture toward Bragg's head-quarters, which were plainly visible on the mountain crest, saying, "How are you, Mr. Bragg?" Before he could drink the liquor a rifle-ball carried away cup and beverage. There was no time for more; and exclaiming, "That's damned ungenerous!" Sheridan spurred forward, and soon again formed part of his front line. His horse was killed under him, and he led the remainder of the assault on foot, reaching the summit with the first, and as horses were not plentiful on the ridge he sprang upon one of the fifty captured guns, swinging his sword over his head, and shouting for joy with his men, while, at the same moment, he poured invective after invective on the heads of the rebels whom he was unable to pursue. Before the battle was ended Grant, having left his head-quarters in Orchard Knob, rode along the summit of the ridge, and before the fire of the enemy had ceased he had marked Sheridan for future use. Chattanooga was the flood-tide of his fortunes, and, without knowing it at the time, he that day launched his bark anew. Henceforth his abilities were not to be lost by his being made subordinate to men of inferior calibre. He was henceforth to win great successes, not retrieve in some degree the great disasters of others.

Sheridan did not know for months after of his good fortune on that day. On the contrary, his friends soon after had reason to imagine that he was again under a cloud. It was but a few months after this memorable battle that Gordon Granger and Sheridan were relieved of their commands. It was generally known that Granger had offended Grant by his delay in moving with Sherman to Burnside's aid at Knoxville, and it was supposed that both he and Sheridan were "-----." Sheridan passed through Nashville without exactly knowing his destination, except that it was Washington City. The announcement was soon made, however, that he had been placed in command of all of Grant's cavalry on the Potomac, and those who knew him learned to appreciate more highly the clearness with which Grant read the characters of his subordinates. Returning Sheridan to the cavalry service was not by any means the least important of Grant's services to the country. If in the reorganization of the army which must soon follow the close of the late war Halleck is intrusted with the organization of the material and Grant with the selection of the personnel, the United States will very soon have an army which, when embracing such a general as Grant, such lieutenant-generals as Sherman, Thomas, Canby, and Sheridan, such major-generals as Hancock, Hooker, McDowell, Howard, Hunter, Burnside, Ord, Slocum, Stoneman, Reynolds, Meade, and many others who have won the rank, will be inferior to none in the world. The past four years of experience, and the imperative duty of the nation to provide for those who have so nobly served the country, as well as the necessity which must exist for the retention of a large force, will strongly suggest the reorganization of the army by the establishment of the ranks of general and lieutenant-general. Three corps of infantry, each twenty-five or even thirty-five thousand strong, under Sherman, Thomas, and Canby, and one of cavalry of the same strength under Sheridan, as lieutenant-generals, would be an army which even Grant as general might be proud to command. No people on the face of the globe can at this time furnish superior personnel for such an army.

It was not intended, in the scope of this article, to give a detailed statement of the events of Sheridan's life. The purpose was rather to make the public more familiar with his character than his history. The reference which has been made to his early career was thought necessary, as filling up a blank existing in the sketches which have been hitherto written of him. The prominent points of his late career are well known to all. His cavalry operations in Virginia, his assumption of the command in the Shenandoah Valley, known as the Middle Military Division, his brilliant battle at Winchester, and the wonderful effect of his presence at Cedar Run, as well as the later deeds at Five Forks and the pursuit of Lee, are tales too lately told to need repetition here. The affairs of Cedar Run and Winchester have been admirably described.
by Captain De Forest in this Magazine.* And it is to be regretted that he did not devote a page or two to the thorough analysis of the wonderful effect which Sheridan’s presence had upon his men during the rout at Cedar Run. It can not be accounted for on any theory, however philosophical, framed by a person who was not an eye-witness; while it might be comprehended in the light of a minute and graphic description of the manner of the General on that occasion. His success in restoring order, and then confidence, was doubtless due to his decisive manner; while the subsequent restoration of morale was owing to the promptness with which the offensive was resumed. The control which Sheridan then held over his men is certainly very remarkable, in view of the short time during which he had commanded them, and the condition in which he found them on this day. Absent at the beginning of the battle of Cedar Creek, it will be remembered that he pushed forward to the front to find his troops routed and retreating rapidly, and, although not pursued, much demoralized. His presence seemed to inspire the men with a new purpose, and in an incredible short space of time he had them reformed in line and ready to receive the onslaught of the enemy. But the enemy, intent on rifting the captured camps, had not pursued in force, and Sheridan found waiting in vain. The confidence of the troops had been restored by the presence of their leader, the facility with which he re-established the broken lines, and the cheering language and encouraging tone of his conversation and orders. He fully re-established the morale of the men when, finding the enemy failed to pursue, he ordered an advance. The fact that he did advance on the same day of the rout serves to show, among Sheridan’s other great qualities as a leader, his decision and daring. There are few generals, in our own or any other service, who would have conceived the idea, or for a moment entertained the purpose of immediately resuming the offensive. Two years before pursuit after a victory, not to mention pursuit after a defeat, was held to be impossible. The fact that Sheridan was able on this occasion to resume the offensive with complete success shows how absolute was the confidence of the men in this comparative stranger who had plead, entreated, cursed, and browbeat the flying army into order again. The magnificent ride from Winchester to the field, which at the time was made in all the accounts the salient feature of the battle, grows commonplace when compared to “Little Phil’s” ride among the routed masses of his corps. He may be said to have been every where at once, for his presence was felt in every battalion. His orders, so brilliantly illustrated and varied by his peculiar and numerous oaths, found their natural echoes in the cheers of the men in whose hearts his presence restored confidence. The rapidity with which he rallied his broken lines and brought order out of chaos is incredible even to those who have seen the “belligerent eadet” in the midst of battles; and to one who has never witnessed the singular effect which the reception of orders to attack have on men, it will still remain incredible how he so far restored the confidence and morale of his troops as to enable him on that occasion to snatch victory from defeat.

There was some occasion for the display of the same personal daring and the exercise of the same influence by example, on the part of Sheridan, at the battle of Five Forks. His presence on every part of that contested field, it is now generally conceded, had as much to do as generalship with the final result of that battle, where every thing depended on the persistence of the attack on the weak point which Sheridan had discovered. It is doubtful if success would have followed the efforts of a general who had been content to direct the battle. Sheridan led. He was in the front line, under the heaviest fire, at all times, waving his sword, encouraging his men, exhorting them to incredible deeds, and, as usual, swearing at a fearful rate, alternately at the enemy and his own skulkers. He is represented by those present as the “imposition of every thing soldiery.” He rode up and down the lines, under fire, continually waving his sword, commanding in person, exhorting them to seize the opportunity within their grasp, and sweep their enemies to destruction. It is related of him, and the story is characteristic enough to be true, that at the conclusion of the first day’s unsuccessful battle at Five Forks, while striding up and down in front of his field head-quarters, apparently absorbed in deep and calm thought, he suddenly startled his staff by breaking out in a series of horrible oaths, in which he swore he would carry the rebel lines the next day or “sink innumerable fathoms into hell.” Sheridan’s oaths are fearful; but one can easily find it in his heart to forgive them. They are merely the emphasis to his language. Oaths are said to be fools’ arguments. Sheridan throws them at one in a discussion not from a want of more forcible arguments, but from a lack of patience to await the slow process of logical conclusions. He heartily despises a council of war, and never forms part of one if he can avoid it. He executes, not originates plans; or, as Roscans once expressed it, “He fights—he fights.” Whatever is given Sheridan to do is accomplished thoroughly. He will not stop to criticise the practicability of an order in its details, but does not hesitate to vary his movements when he finds those laid down for him are not practicable. He does not abandon the task because the mole which has been ordered is rendered impossible by any unexpected event. If the result is accomplished Sheridan does not care whose means were employed, or on whom the credit is reflected. He grasps the result and congratulates himself, the strategist of the occasion, and the men, with equal gratification and every evidence of delight. His generous care for the reputation of his sub-

* January and February, 1865.
ordinates, his freedom from all petty jealousy, his honesty of purpose, and the nobleness of his ambition to serve the country and not himself, his geniality and general good-humor, and the brevity of his black storms of anger, make him, like Grant, not only a well-beloved leader, but one that the country can safely trust to guard its honor and preserve its existence. It is easy for one who knows either of the two—Grant and Sheridan—to believe it possible that, during all the period in which they have held such supreme power in our armies, not a single thought of how they might achieve greatness, power, and position, at the expense of country, has ever suggested itself to their minds. There is only one other character known in profane history of whom the same thing can be truly said.

Sheridan goes into the heat of battle not from necessity merely. The first smell of powder arouses him, and he rushes to the front of the field. It is related of him that when the engagement of Winchester began he stood off a little to the rear, as Grant would have done, and endeavored to calmly survey the field and direct the battle. But it was not in his nature to remain passive for a great while. When the fight warmed up and became general he could stand it no longer, and, drawing his sword, he exclaimed, "By God! I can't stand this!" and rode into the heat of the engagement.

The belligerent in Sheridan's organization is often aroused without the stimulus of the smell of gunpowder. In 1863, while Sheridan was encamped at Bridgeport, Alabama, he invited General George H. Thomas, then encamped at Deckerd, Tennessee, to examine the works erected at Bridgeport and the preparations going on for rebuilding the bridge. The writer, then at Deckerd, was invited to accompany the party to Bridgeport, and did so. At one of the way-stations the train halted for an unusually long time, and Sheridan, on asking the conductor, a great, burly six-footer, the reason, met with a somewhat gruff reply. Sheridan contented himself with replying his manner, and ordered him to proceed with the train. The conductor did not reply, and failed to obey. After waiting for a time Sheridan sent for the conductor, and demanded to know why he had not obeyed. The fellow answered, in a gruff manner, that he received his orders from the military superintendent only. Without giving him time to finish the insulting reply Sheridan struck him two or three rapid blows, kicked him from the cars and into the hands of a guard, and then ordered the train forward, acting as conductor on the down and return trip. After starting the train he returned to his seat near General Thomas, and, without referring to the subject, resumed his conversation with that imparturbable dignitary.

Sheridan will always be prominent among the Marshals Neys of the war for the Union—as the representative of that class of fighting generals in which Hancock, Rousseau, Hooker, and Logan are among the most distinguished. These generals have the same character among the men with whom they have served as Sheridan has throughout the whole country. General L. H. Rousseau was by far the most popular general who ever served with the army of the Ohio or Cumberland, and his popularity dated from the day of Shiloh, where he, like Sheridan, led, not directed, his men. Rousseau loves fighting as much, and is as naturally a belligerent, as Sheridan, fights in the same style, with equal exposure of person, equal personal daring, and with equal effect. "Fighting Joe Hooker" received his title from the same predisposition for fighting. At the first sound of battle Hooker springs nimbly to his saddle, and is off into the field at the head of his men. Rousseau and Hooker are both men of large, handsome, towering proportions, and have in the field the advantage in that respect of Sheridan. Logan is a man of Sheridan's own style in build and appearance, and is the same daring, enthusiastic, and vigorous fighter that Sheridan is. "Black Jack," as Logan is called by his men, in consequence of his very dark complexion, resembles Sheridan also in the freedom with which he indulges in the most desperate and original of oaths.

Sheridan's appearance, like that of Grant, is apt to disappoint one who had not seen him previous to his having become famous. He has none of the qualities which are popularly attributed by the imagination to heroes. "Little Phil" is a title of endearment given him by his soldiers in the West, and is descriptive of his personal appearance. He is shorter than Grant, but somewhat stouter built, and being several years younger and of a different temperament, is more active and wiry. The smallness of his stature is soon forgotten when he is seen mounted. He seems then to develop physically as he does mentally after a short acquaintance. Unlike many of our heroes, Sheridan does not dwindle as one approaches him. Distance lends neither his character nor personal appearance any enchantment. He talks more frequently and more fluently than Grant does, and his quick and slightly nervous gestures partake somewhat of the manner of Sherman. His body is stout but wiry, and set on short, heavy, but active legs. His broad shoulders, short, stiff hair, and the features of his face betray the Milesian descent; but no brogue can be traced in his voice. His eyes are gray, and being small are sharp and piercing and full of fire. When maddened with excitement or passion these glare fearfully. His age is thirty-four, but long service in the field has bronzed him into the appearance of forty.