ALMOST A BATTLE

Interesting Event in Connection with the Career of General Sheridan when He Was a Second Lieutenant at Old ort Yamhill.

Some members of the Statesman's big family have read the "Personal Memoirs of P. H. Sheridan," but for such as have not the following incident of his soldier life while he was a Second Lieutenant at old Fort Hamhill will prove intensely interesting, and no doubt those who have seen it before, or heard it, will be glad to re-read it. The date of the incident was the early part of 1857, probably May or June or July of that year:

"Captain Russell assigned to me the special work of keeping up the police control, and as I had learned at an early day to speak Chinook (the "court language" among the coast tribes) almost as well as the Indians themselves, I was thereby enabled to steer my way successfully on many critical occasions.

"For some time the most troublesome element we had was the Rogue River band. For three or four years they had fought our troops obstinately, and surrendered in the end in the belief that they were merely overpowered, not conquered. They openly boasted to the other Indians that they could whip the soldiers, and that they did not wish to follow the white man's ways, continuing consistently their wild habits, unmindful of all admonitions. Indeed, they often destroyed their household utensils, tepees and clothing, and killed their horses on the graves of the dead, in the fulfillment of a superstitious custom, which demanded that they should undergo, while mourning for their kindred, the deepest privation in a property sense. Everything the loss of which would make them poor was sacrificed on the graves of their relatives or distinguished warriors, and as melancholy because of removal from their old homes caused frequent deaths, there was no lack of occasion for the sacrifices. The widows and orphans of the dead warriors were of course the chief mourners and exhibited their grief in many peculiar ways. I remember one in particular which was universally practiced by the near kinsfolk. They would crop their hair very close, and then cover the head with a sort of hood or plaster of black pitch, the composition being clay, pulverized charcoal, and the resinous gum which exudes from the pine tree. The hood, nearly an inch in thickness, was worn during a period of mourning that lasted through the time it would take nature, by the growth of the hair, actually to lift from the head the heavy covering of pitch after it had become solidified and hard as stone. It must be admitted that they underwent considerable discomfort in memory of their relatives. It took all the influence we could bring to bear to break up these absurdly superstitious practices, and it looked as if no permanent improvement could be effected, for as soon as we got them to discard one, another would be invented. When not allowed to burn down their tepees or houses, those poor souls who were in a dying condition would be carried out to the neighboring hillsides just before dissolution, and there abandoned to their sufferings, with little or no attention, unless the placing under their heads of a small stick of wood—with possibly some laudable object, but doubtless great discomfort to their victim—might be considered such.

"To uproot these senseless and monstrous practices was indeed most difficult. The most pernicious of all was one which was likely to bring about tragic results. They believed firmly in a class of doctors among their people who professed that they could procure the illness of an individual at will, and that by certain incantations they could kill or cure the sick person. Their faith in this superstition was so steadfast that there was no doubting its sincerity, many indulging at times in the most trying privations, that their relatives might be saved from death at the hands of the doctors. I often talked with them on the subject, and tried to reason them out of their superstitious belief, defying the doctors to kill me, or even make me ill; but my talks were unavailing, and they always met my arguments with the remark that I was a white man, of a race wholly different from the red man and that that was the reason the medicine of the doctors would not affect me. These villainous doctors might be either men or women, and any one of them finding an Indian ill, at once averred that his influence was the cause, offering at the same time to cure the invalid with a fee, which generally amounted to about all the ponies his family possessed. If the proposition was accepted and the fee paid over, the family, in case the man died, was to have indemnity through the death of the doctor, who freely promised that they might take his life in such event, relying on his chances of getting protection from the furious relatives by fleeing to the military post till time had so assuaged their grief that matters could be compromised or settled by a restoration of a part of the property, when the rascally leeches could again resume their practice. Of course the services of a doctor were always accepted when an Indian fell ill; otherwise the invalid's death would surely ensue, brought about by the evil influence that was unpropitiated. Latterly it had become quite the thing, when a patient died, for the doctor to flee to our camp—it was so convenient and so much safer than elsewhere—and my cellar was a favorite place of refuge from the infuriated friends of the deceased.

"Among the most notable of these doctors was an Indian named Sam Patch, who several times sought asylum in my cellar, and being a most profound diplomat, managed on each occasion and with little delay to negotiate a peaceable settlement and go forth in safety to resume the practice of his nefarious profession. I often hoped he would be caught before reaching the post, but he seemed to know intuitively when the time had come to take legbail, for his advent at the garrison generally preceded by but a few hours the death of some poor dupe.

"Finally these peculiar customs brought about the punishment of a noted doctor of the Rogue River tribe, a woman who was constantly working in this professional way, and who had found a victim of such prominence among the Rogue Rivers that his unlooked for death brought down on her the wrath of all. She had made him so ill, they believed, as to bring him to death's door notwithstanding the many ponies that had been given her to cease the incantations, and it was the conviction of all that she had finally caused the man's death from some ulterior and indiscernible motive. His relatives and friends then immediately set about requiting her with the just penalties of a perfidious breach of contract. Their threats produced her instant flight toward my house for the usual protection, but the enraged friends of the dead man gave hot chase, and overtook the witch just inside the limits of the garrison, where, on the parade-ground, in sight of the officers' quarters, and before any one could interfere, they killed her. There were sixteen men in pursuit of the doctress, and sixteen gun-shot wounds were in her body when examined by the surgeon of the post. The killing of the woman was a flagrant and defiant outrage committed in the teeth of the military authority, yet done so quickly that we could not prevent it. This necessitated severe measures, both to allay the prevailing excitement and to preclude the recurrence of such acts. The body was cared for, and delivered to the relatives the next day for burial, after which Captain Russell directed me to take such steps as would put a stop to the fanatical usages that had brought about this murderous occurrence, for it was now seen that if timely measures were not taken to repress them, similar tragedies would surely follow.

"Knowing all the men of the Rogue River tribe, and speaking fluently the Chinook tongue, which they all understood, I went down to their village the following day, after having sent word to the tribe that I wished to have a council with them. The Indians all met me in council, as I had desired, and I then told them that the men who had taken part in shooting the woman would have to be delivered up for punishment. They were very stiff with me at the interview, and with all that talent for circumlocution and diplomacy with which the Indian is gifted, endeavoring to evade my demands and delay my conclusion. But I was very positive, would hear of no compromise whatever, and demanded that my terms be at once complied with. No one was with me but a sergeant of my company, named Miller, who held my horse, and as the chances of an agreement began to grow remote, I became anxious for our safety. The conversation waxing hot and the Indians gathering close in around me, I unbuttoned the flap of my pistol holster, to be ready for an emergency. When the altercation became most bitter I put my hand to my hip to draw my pistol, but discovered it was gone—stolen by one of the rascals surrounding me. Finding myself unarmed, I modified my tone and manner to correspond with my helpless condition, thus myself assuming the diplomatic side in the parley, in order to gain time. As soon as an opportunity offered, and I could, without too much loss of self-respect, and without damaging my reputation among the Indians, I moved out to where the sergeant held my horse, mounted, and crossing the Yamhill river close by, called back in Chinook from the farther bank that "the sixteen men who killed the woman must be delivered up, and my six-shooter also." This was responded to by contemptuous laughter, so I went back to the military post somewhat crestfallen, and made my report of the turn affairs had taken, inwardly longing for another chance to bring the rascally Rogue Rivers to terms.

"When I had explained the situation to Captain Russell, he thought that we could not, under any circumstances, overlook this defiant conduct rf the Indians, since, unless summarily punished, it would lead to even more serious trouble in the future. I heartily seconded this proposition, and gladly embracing the opportunity it offered, suggested that if he would give me another chance, and let me have the effective force of the garrison, consisting of about fifty men, I would chastise the Rogue Rivers without fail, and that the next day was all the time I required to complete arrangements. He gave me the necessary authority, and I at once set to work to bring about a better state of discipline on the reservation, and to put an end to the practices of the medicine men (having also in view the recovery of my six-shooter and self-respect), by marching to the village and taking the rebellious Indians by force.

"In the tribe there was an excellent woman called Tighee Mary (Tighee in Chinook means chief), who by right of inheritance was a kind of queen of the Rogue Rivers. Fearing that the insubordinate conduct of the Indians would precipitate further trouble, she came early the following morning to see me and tell me of the situation. Mary informed me that she had done all in her power to bring the Indians to reason, but without avail, and that they were determined to fight rather than deliver up the sixteen men who had engaged in the shooting. She also apprised me of the fact that they had taken up a position on the Yamhill river, on the direct road between the post and village, where, painted and armed for war, they were awaiting attack.

"On this information I concluded it would be best to march to the village by a circuitous route instead of directly, as at first intended, so I had the ferry-boat belonging to the post floated about a mile and a half down the Yamhill river and there anchored. At 11 o'clock that night I marched my fifty men out of the garrison, in a direction opposite to that of the point held by the Indians, and soon reached the river at the ferry-boat. Here I ferried the party over with little delay, and marched them along the side of the mountain, through underbrush and fallen timber, until, just before daylight, I found that we were immediately in rear of the village, and hence in rear, also, of the line occupied by the refractory Indians, who were expecting to met me in the direct road from the post. Just at break of day we made a sudden descent upon the village and took its occupants completely by surprise, even capturing the chief of the tribe, "Sam," who was dressed in all his war toggery, fully armed and equipped, in anticipation of a fight on the road where his comrades were in position. I at once put Sam under guard, giving orders to kill him instantly if the Indians fired a shot; then forming my line on the road beyond the edge of the village, in rear of the force lying in wait for a front attack, we moved forward. When the hostile party realized that they were completely cut off from the village, they came out from their stronghold on the river and took up a line in my front, distant about sixty yards, with the apparent intention of resisting to the last.

"As is usual with Indians when expecting a fight, they were nearly naked, fantastically painted with blue clay, and hideously arrayed in war bonnets. They seemd very belligerent, brandishing their muskets in the air, dancing on one foot, calling us ugly names, and making such other demonstrations of hostility, that it seemed at first that nothing short of the total destruction of the party could bring about the definite settlement that we were bent on. Still, as it was my desire to bring them under subjection without loss of life, if possible, I determined to see what result would follow when they learned that their chief was at our mercy. So, sending Sam under guard to the front, where he could be seen, informed them that he would be immediately shot if they fired upon us, and aided by cries and lamentations of the women of the village, who deprecated any hostile action by either party, I soon procured a parley.

"The insubordinate Indians were under command of 'Joe,' Sam's brother, who at last sent me word that he wanted to see me, and we met between our respective lines. I talked kindly to him, but was firm in my demand that the men who killed the woman must be given up and the six-shooter returned. His reply was he did not think it could be done, but he would consult his people. After the consultation, he returned and notified me that fifteen would surrender and the six-shooter would be restored, further, that we could kill the sixteenth man, since the tribe wished to get rid of him anyhow, adding that he was a bad Indian, whose bullet no doubt had given the woman her death wound. He said that if I assented to this arrangement, he would require all of his people except the objectionable man to run to the right of his line at a preconcerted signal. The bad Indian would be ordered to stand fast on the extreme left, and we could open fire on him as his comrades fell away to the right. I agreed to the proposition, and gave Joe fifteen minutes to execute his part of it. We then returned to our respective forces, and a few minutes later the fifteen ran to the right flank as agreed upon, and we opened fire on the one Indian left standing alone, bringing him down in his tracks severely wounded by a shot through the shoulder.

"While all this was going on, the other bands of the reservation, several thousand strong, had occupied the surrounding hills for the purpose of witnessing the fight, for as the Rogue Rivers had been bragging for some time that they could whip the soldiers, these other Indians had come out to see it done. The result, however, disappointed the spectators, and the Rogue River naturally lost caste. The fifteen men now came in and laid down their arms (including my six-shooter) in front of us as agreed, but I compelled them to take the surrendered guns up again and carry them to the post, where they were deposited in the block-house for future security. The prisoners were ironed with ball and chain, and made to work at the post until their rebellious spirit was broken; and the wounded man was correspondingly punished after he had fully recovered. An investigation as to why this man had been selected as the offering by which Joe and his companions expected to gain immunity, showed that the fellow was really a most worthless character, whose death even would have been a benefit to the tribe. Thus it seemed that they had two purposes in view—the one to propitiate me and get good terms, the other to rid themselves of a vagabond member of the tribe.

"The punishment of these sixteen Indians by ball and chain ended all trouble with the Rogue River tribe. The disturbances arising from the incantations of the doctors and doctresses, and the practice of killing horses and burning all worldly property on the graves of those who died, were completely suppressed, and we made with little effort a great strida toward the civilization of these crude and superstitious people, for they now began to recognize the power of the Government."

NATURAL BOXERS

Are Kittens and Cats. Just Try and See.

A cat is a natural boxer. If you watch two kittens rolling and tumbling about the floor you will occasionally see spirited passages of arms between them. They will "lead," "counter," "block," "duck" and "rush," "sidestep," and, in fact, do all things that your big brother does with his boxing instructor at the gymnasium. The kittens will do it a great deal better, too, for they are much quicker and more graceful. It may seem odd at first for a boy or girl to box with a cat, but just tap her quietly with your index finger. You may tap her once, but not the second time, for she will very nearly block your second attempt with her paw. You must use only one finger of each hand, and be very careful to just barely touch the cat. Then you must stroke her back occasionally at first, to show that you are only playing with her, and not angry. The cat will understand very quickly that you are only in fun and do not intend to hurt her, and will keep her claws cut of sight, so as not to scratch you, unless she is a cranky old cat with a very sour temper, and if she is you had better leave her alone.

Of course, you do not know much about boxing, but you will learn a great deal from the cat if you watch the manner in which she will handle her paws. After the cat understands that it is only a game, and you have learned how to lead and counter from watching her, you can have some pretty bouts, which will amuse the whole family and greatly help to shorten a rainy day.

THE ODD CENT.

Analyists of human nature vainly seek an adequate explanation of the species of mesmerism that odd cent prices exercise on buyers. Department stores have long used them to whet the proverbial feminine appetite for bargains, but the custom is now so widespread among clothiers and dealers of all kinds as to merit consideration. What are the caricatures and penny-a-liners, who have poked no end of fun at the gentle sex for yielding to the subtle fascination of 98 cents and $1.48, to do when men's suits are offered for $9.99, hats for $1.67, and ties for 23 cents? Alas for the manufacturers of humor, cruelly deprived of one of their chief sources of revenue! Seriously, however, the spread of the odd cent idea is to be deprecated. Fixed prices in round numbers accord best with dignified methods of selling goods.

THE MENELEYS COMING TO SALEM IN TWO WEEKS.

Will Be Present at the Prohibition Convention on April 1st, and Help Make It a Success.

The Meneleys will be in Salem Tuesday, April 1st, at the First M. E. church at 8 p. m.

The Marion county Prohibition convention will be held at Salem, in the W. C. T. U. hall on Tuesday, April 1st, at 1 o'clock, for the purpose of placing a full county ticket in the field. Every Prohibitionist in the county is urged to attend.

The Meneleys will be in attendance and help to make the convention a splendid success. E. O. Miller, state secretary, writes that he is planning to be present.

WILLAMETTE UNIVERSITY

Over Thirteen Thousand Dollars Is Secured

FOR THE PAYMENT OF THE DEBT OF THE PIONEER SCHOOL OF THE NORTHWEST.

What Amount Salem Ought to Raise for the Settlement of the Indebtedness of the Old School—More Needed for the Endowment.

(From Sunday's Statesman.)

The subscriptions to the fund for the payment of the $35,000 debt of Willamette University now amount to $12,850, exclusive of the $200 subscribed at Woodburn.

So the total of subscriptions up to date is over $13,000.

This is all to be credited to Salem except the Woodburn subscription. There is not a great deal of work yet to be done here to reach the $15,000 that is expected from the Capital City—and this is $5000 more than was originally apportioned to this city.

But Salem ought to bring her amount up to $20,000, and then she should give $20,000 more towards the endowment fund, and another $20,000 for new buildings. This would make $60,000 for Salem. It is a considerable sum. But it is not larger than was given by the people of Walla Walla to Whitman College—and Walla Walla is not nearly as rich a city as Salem.

The money put into the funds of Willamette University now and in the future is in the nature of a permanent investment. The school is to live and to grow into a large institution of learning. The fiat of the great patronizing church has gone forth, and it will not be recalled or altered in the least.

PERSONAL AND GENERAL.

There was more politics talked on the streets of Salem yesterday than for at least two years—probably more than for four years.

ooo

The Booth-Kelly Company will rebuild the Springfield sawmill and double its capacity. This is growing to be a giant among Oregon's industrial concerns.

ooo

"The disease is more scattered than ever and is becoming general. It behooves every person to take more precautions against infection."—Portland Evening Telegram. This paragraph appeared in the Telegram last night, after a great deal of smallpox news. While Salem and vicinity are practically free from smallpox, it is a wise idea for every one who has not been vaccinated to do so at once. That is the way to keep it out.

ooo

The new rules for the examination of applicants for positions in taking care of the forest reserves are evidently designed for the purpose of giving the jobs to the graduates of Eastern colleges, and more especially to the graduates of Cornell, where forestry is taught. No one who has not taken such a course as is provided there can answer the necessary questions, unless his training and experience have been very peculiar and unusual.

ooo

A Toast.

St. Patrick was a gentleman
Who, through strategy and stealth
Drove all the snakes from Ireland;
Here's a bumper to his health.
But not too many bumpers,
Lest we lose ourselves, and then—
Forget the good St. Patrick
And see the snakes again.

Feed a good cow liberally with fresh, palatable feeding stuffs. Do not change these suddenly. Provide water, pure but not too cold, in abundance.

ACROSS THE MOUNTAINS

The Wagon Road from Detroit to Prineville

ADVOCATED BY THE RESIDENTS OF MINTO AND THE REASONS GIVEN.

Why the Road Should Be Built Across the Cascades to Connect Eastern Oregon With the Willamette Valley

(From Sunday's Statesman.)

Bearing on the question of a wagon road from the east end of the C. & E. Railroad across the Cascade mountains to Prineville, as suggested in the letter of the Alko Club, of Linn county, to the Greater Salem Commercial Club, a letter received a few days ago by Hon. John Minto, of this city, from several residents of Minto, on the eastern end of the C. & E. Railroad, is right in point. The letter states that the road is not only a possibility, but would be a great convenience, and would open up a line of settlements, connecting the settled portion of the Willamette Valley, with the inhabited portions of Eastern Oregon, and drawing the two sections closer together. The letter is signed by W. H. Davis and W. H. Hesseman, and the text of it is as follows:

"We, of this valley, who have traveled over the route across the Cascade mountains, and are familiar with the intervening country, have been discussing the proposition or the advisability of making an effort to have set off by the government a strip of land three or six miles wide on each or either side of the C. & E. Railroad, across the Cascade Reserve, or let it follow the road to the neighborhood of the Sulphur Springs, at Bowman's Ranch, thence eastwardly along the old trail to the Metolis, or any other route through, that might appear most feasible.

"There are many tracts of open grass lands besides considerable quantities of good agricultural lots which would in the near future invite settlement, thus uniting in some degree the two sections of country.

"You know it is said mountains and rivers make enemies of men when separating them, and, politically, I think we are ralizing this condition at the present time.

"We shall, perhaps, at no distant date, have railroad and telegraph communication over this route with Eastern Oregon, but those things do not conform to nor assimilate interest as do continuuousu settlement and neighborship. And now on account of your personal knowledge of the country through which this strip may be thrown open for settlement, and being cognizant of your influence and interest in any worthy object having in view the advance or upbuilding of the country, we would be glad to enlist your co-operation in this project and that you suggest some plan of procedure that may seem likely to accomplish the desired result."

W. H. HESEMAN.

BILL BOARDS.

Flaunting Vice and Virtue, A Strange Mixture.

The bill boards of a city are its educators in either vice or virtue. They should be sharply scrutinized by the proper authorities, lest demoralizing posters appear upon them. It is surely folly, when ordinances are in force repressive of indecency, to permit a scarce-veiled vice to flaunt itself upon the bill boards, as in the case of numerous theatrical posters, and there is a kind of grim irony of contradiction to the fact that while policemen stand at almost every corner ready to restrain outbreaks of violence, posters within a few feet of them exhibit assaults, discharge of fire-arms, and all kinds of scenes of misrule calculated to impress the callow youth who look on with open-mouthed wonder with thoroughly false ideals of life. Such pictures it is to be feared very frequently awaken in boys a secretly-nourished desire to emulate the course of some blood-thirsty villian who is wrongfully made out by the flaring cuts to be heroic. Society should be consistent with itself along these lines. If the policeman clubs the evil-doers, let him remove the causes which tend to create the class of evil-doers.