

How can this sudden military transition—this sublime spectacle of military preparation—be accounted for? It arose only from the perfect freedom of our institutions, the equality of our laws, and from the determined spirit of the American character. The insults of a quarter of a century, repeated injuries and spoliations of the property of American citizens, had aroused a peaceful and quiet people, and changed them, as it were, into a nation of soldiers, determined to avenge themselves, and to chastise the insolence of the Republic of Mexico.

MATAMORAS,

ON THE NIGHT OF THE NINTH OF MAY, 1846. ✓

WHILE the battle was raging at Resaca de la Palma, thousands of people lined the shores of the Rio Grande, listening to each burst of artillery with breathless suspense. News of victory had reached them the preceding day, but no conquerors had returned in triumph to the city. And now the dread roar of cannon, swelling louder, and fiercer, and nearer—what did it portend? The fire of the city was abandoned, and the cheering suppressed; and pale, anxious faces, gazed in racking silence in the direction of battle. Soon the dread reality was disclosed; infantry and cavalry burst madly from the thicket, dashing aside garment and weapon, as they swept toward the river. Then a cry—one of anguish

and horror—went up from that living mass; and its hollow tones told tales of poverty and wretchedness for the future. Crowd on crowd of terrified soldiers now came from the chapparal, and rushed toward the city. Soon dense masses filled to sinking the little flat provided for their conveyance. The next moment they were hurled into the river by the reckless cavalry, who in their turn were swept away. Mules loaded with wounded and dying were plunged in, and numbers were precipitated from the shore. It was an awful scene. Horse trampled over horse, crushing their riders to earth, and trailing their bridles and furniture along the ground; the river was foaming with life, while plunge after plunge announced the sad fate of numbers more; the shouts of officers, curses of soldiery, yells of the wounded, and shrieks of the drowning, were appalling. Wretched beings grasped the flat in agony, only to be murdered by those upon it; and scores of mules, and hundreds of soldiers, clenched in each other's embrace, sunk to a watery grave.

Yet dreadful as was this scene, it was but the shadow of what Matamoras witnessed during the night. Mules were continually entering the city, laden with wounded, whose piercing shrieks, as their wounds poured afresh at each step, rose above the din and hurry of trampling armies. All discipline or order was at an end, and thousands of infuriated soldiers poured along the streets for rapine and plunder. Women fled to the ball-rooms where preparations for victory had been made, and tore the wreaths and ornaments from the walls. Scarcely had they done so, when hordes of lawless rancheros burst

upon them, in the hurry of uncontrolled passion. Crime and debauchery revelled that night in the halls of Matamoras.

Most of the inhabitants expected an assault by General Taylor, and therefore seized a few of their most valuable things and fled into the country. But the evil spirit was there also; and the unfortunate exiles were robbed and murdered in the plains, or passes of the mountains. Matamoras suffered more that day from her own citizens than from the sword of the enemy.

Such were the scenes in Matamoras on the 9th of May. What a comment upon war! American soldiers had gained a victory. But where was their advantage? Were they morally, physically, or intellectually better, or was their country and its rulers richer or happier? They had won the title of invincible; and glory, military renown, was theirs. But *what is glory?* Who of all that lay down weary and wounded that night, could have defined the advantages of *glory*? And another class—those over whom the wolves and eagles were battenning—how were they enriched by glory? But when we turn from them to the scenes we have been attempting to describe—when we hear the wailings of the widowed mother, the groans of the mangled, the shrieks of injured innocence, and the shouts of unbridled passion,—then comes a solemn whisper, *Is THIS glory?* A field after battle is dreadful; where death arbitrates between man and man, and unites foes in silent harmony. But war—its advantages and glories—must be learned at the soldier's home.

PALO ALTO AND RESACA.

A NEW SONG FOR THE FOURTH OF JULY, 1846.

The following, which we find in the Southern Patriot, will be recognized by its excellence as the work of no hand unaccustomed to the chords. It will be sung on the day for which it was written from one end of the Union to the other:

Now while our cups are flowing
With memories born to bloom,
And filial hands are throwing
Their wreaths o'er valor's tomb;
While lips exulting shout the praise
Of heroes of the past, that stood
Triumphant 'mid old Bunker's blaze,
And proud in Eutaw's field of blood;—
Do not forget the gallant train,
That lifts your name in Mexic war—
One cup for Palo Alto drain,
One mighty cheer for Resaca!

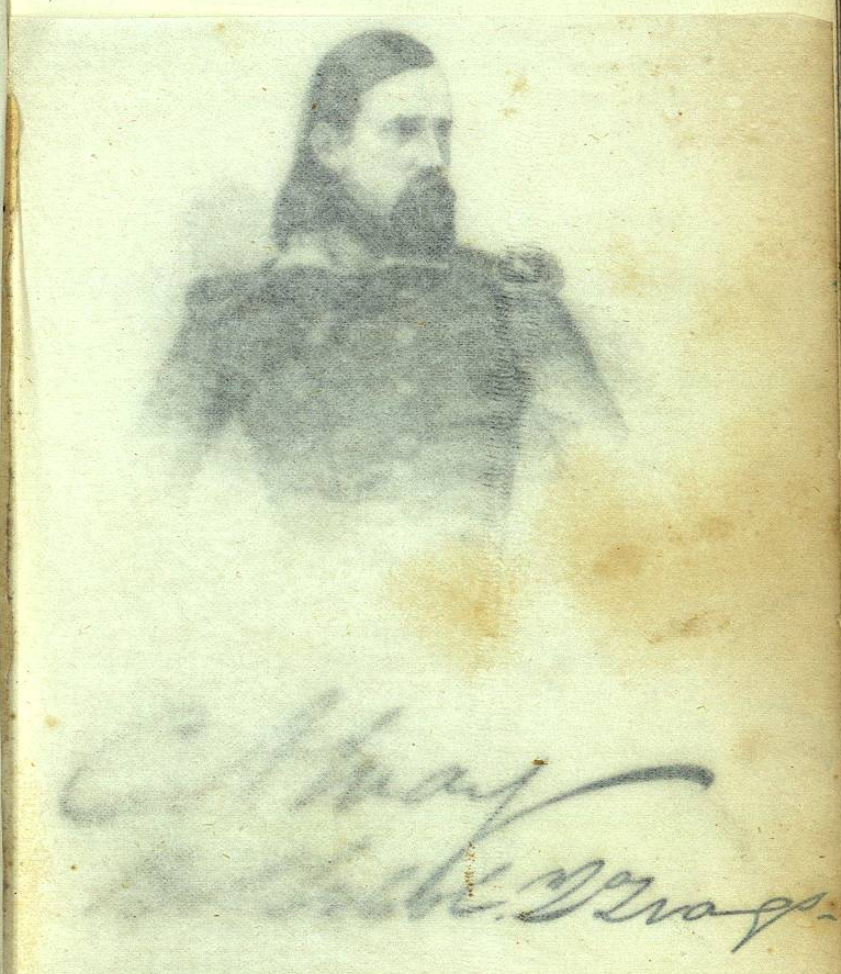
For Taylor—"Rough and Ready,"
True son of truest sires;—
For May, who swift and steady,
Trode down La Vega's fires;
For all who in that day of strife,
Maintain'd in pride the stripes and stars—
The dead, who won immortal life,
And they who live for other wars—
For these, who with their victory,
New wreaths to grace our laurel bring—
A health that drains a goblet dry,
A cheer that makes the welkin ring!

Nor, though even now we falter
 With thoughts of those who died,
 And at our festive altar,
 Grow silent in our pride,
 Yet in the heart's most holy deep,
 Fond memory shrine the happy brave,
 Who in the arms of battle sleep
 By Palo's wood and Bravo's wave ;
 Nor in our future deeds forgot,
 Shall silent thought forbear to bring,
 Her tribute to that sacred spot,
 Where Ringgold's gallant soul took wing.

Fill to our country's glory
 Where'er her flag is borne ;
 Nor, in her failing story,
 Let future ages mourn !
 Nor let the envious foreign foe,
 Rejoice that faction checks her speed,
 Arrests her in the indignant blow,
 And saddens o'er the avenging deed !
 Fill high, though from the crystal wave,
 Your cup, and from the grape be mine ;
 The marriage rites, that link the brave
 To fame, will turn each draft to wine.

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C. A. May
 Col. 1st Regt. Dragoons.

the colonel was born. All we know of his youth is, that he was active and healthy, but of the precocious feats which are generally chronicled of military scions we are of him told nothing. During the Seminole war he entered the army as lieutenant of the 2d regiment of dragoons, and was immediately ordered to Florida. Here he passed through some of the most trying scenes of that distressing war, and on one occasion, succeeded in capturing Philip, an Indian chief.

It has been reserved for the present war to develop the talents of May, and place him in the rank of an energetic and able officer. In the march from Corpus Christi, he performed efficient service, in scouring the country with his dragoons, and preparing the road for the main army. While Taylor remained at Point Isabel, during the bombardment of Fort Brown, May was sent to escort Captain Walker in his effort to open a communication between the two places. This he performed on the night of the 3d of May, but not being able to effect a re- junction with Walker, he returned toward Point Isabel, galloping round the army of the enemy, by way of reconnaissance.

About twelve miles from the American position, he was opposed by more than one hundred lancers, whom he charged, broke, and drove three miles. His horses were so worn down by long exposure that he found it impossible to keep up with the enemy, or he might have completed his victory by the capture of many. Fearing therefore that his useless labor might only terminate in his being surprised, he returned to Point Isabel.

At Palo Alto, the nature of the movements in both

armies deprived May of any opportunity to signalize himself. Just before the fall of Ringgold, he was ordered to advance his squadron for the purpose of diverting the heavy fire of the enemy from the American infantry, and, if possible, to charge the Mexican cavalry. The enemy were in such force, however, that the latter operation was impracticable; and during the remainder of the day, May remained but a passive spectator.

When the obstinate resistance of the enemy at Resaca de la Palma, made it evident that a charge must be made, before the victory would be complete, General Taylor ordered May to capture the Mexican batteries. This was the opportunity which that brave officer had been anxiously looking for, and riding to the front of his horsemen, he called out to them to *follow*. The next moment they were sweeping toward the enemy. Before being perceived by them, May was stopped by Lieutenant-colonel Ridgeley, who was just on the point of firing, in order to draw the shot of the enemy. When this was done, May again dashed forward, and in a few minutes, was by the muzzles of the cannon. Suddenly, a tremendous discharge poured forth along the ranks of the intrepid horsemen, and horses and men rolled headlong on the ground. But nothing could stop the survivors. They leaped over the cannon, and drove the artillerists from their positions, at the point of the sword. The fiercest struggle of that day, was the resistance to this charge. The Mexican batteries were defended by the celebrated regiment of Tampico Veterans, who were regarded as invincible. They threw themselves furiously between their guns, and with their

swords and bayonets, fought hand to hand with the cavalry. One by one they sunk beneath the weapons of their adversaries, and even when their regiment was broken and crushed, one of them endeavored to sustain its honor by wrapping its flag about him in order to bear it away. Had their last discharge been aimed a little lower, they would have swept the entire command of Colonel May.

In this charge, General la Vega was captured, and safely conveyed to the American camp. The distinguished prisoner received much attention from both officers and men, and when subsequently conducted through different parts of our country, he was every where treated as a gallant soldier and a gentleman. When captured, he was in the act of applying an ignited match to one of the pieces; Captain May charged forward and commanded him to surrender. The general asked, "Are you an officer?" and being answered in the affirmative, he delivered his sword, with the remark: "General la Vega is a prisoner."

After the battle May's troops were pushed forward in pursuit of the Mexicans, and succeeded in capturing many prisoners.

This has been the most brilliant military feat in the career of Colonel May. He was at Monterey, and was serviceable in reconnoitering the positions of the enemy, and keeping in check their dragoon parties. He remained with Taylor, after the reduction of his army by order of General Scott, and at Buena Vista he supported Shaw's artillery during a charge of the Mexicans, and covered by turns, almost every battery on the field. His

dragoons are the most excellently disciplined of any in the army.

May's personal appearance is somewhat whimsical. His hair reaches down to his shoulders, and his beard is of equal length, so that when riding at the head of his command, his *hair* is the most conspicuous object about his person. He is tall in stature, of powerful frame, and his charges are irresistible. In battle, he is perfectly cool, and his only fault appears to be, that his bravery too often approaches to recklessness. This is a national censure upon almost all the officers of the present war, and presents a spectacle unknown to European warfare.

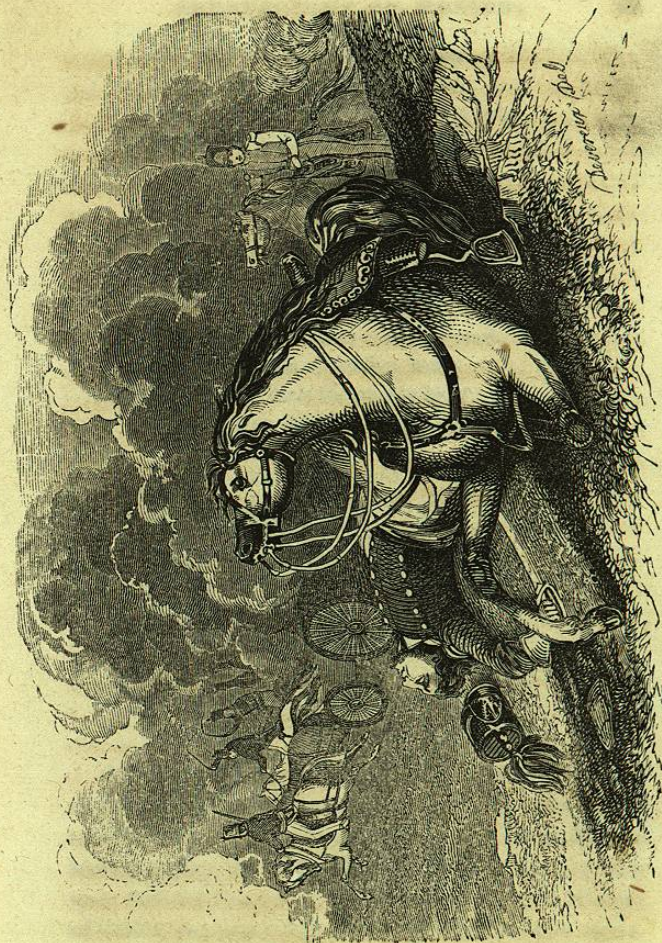
Colonel May has lately visited different sections of the United States, and was every where received with the honor and enthusiasm due his distinguished merit.

THE DEATH OF MAJOR RINGGOLD.

BY MRS. J. A. BEVERIDGE.

HE died, as brave men still should die,
A soldier's calmness in his eye ;
He breathed the Patriot's latest vow,
With Victory's laurel on his brow.

A grateful country mourns his fall,
Who, foremost stood at Honor's call,
Upheld her cause, in battle's strife,
And for her glory, perilled life.



Death of Major Ringgold.

His word was onward : on the day
When warriors met in stern array,
And brave men followed, where he led,
Secure in valor's path to tread.

Wo to the direst of his foes,
Who dared the hero's arm oppose,
Where mid the thickest of the fight,
His sabre flash'd its deadly light !

But Death still " loves a shining mark,"
And mid the din of conflict, hark !
The cannon deals the mighty blow
That lays the dauntless soldier low !

He fell !—but the fair hand of Fame,
On her high altar graved his name,
And Liberty's bright genius, wept,
Above the bier, where Ringgold slept !

REFLECTIONS ON MEXICO.

MEXICO is full of objects calculated to inspire serious speculation in the contemplative mind. Her future, it is true, is dark and repulsive ; but the past abounds with lessons worthy the study of every nation. An acquaintance with the history of Aztec as it was at the invasion of Cortez, compared with a view of her condition subsequent to that period, must convince every one, of the humbling truth, that she has gained nothing from Eu-