CHAPTER II

Captain John Minor Maury's Active and Adventurous Life — Personal Traits of Matthew Fontaine Maury — His Character and his Scientific Achievements — At the University of Virginia — Shakespeare Caldwell's Career — A Cadet at West Point — Incidents of the Life there — Anecdotes of Grant, McClellan, Jackson, and Others

IN 1824, my father, Captain John Minor Maury, while serving as flag captain of Commodore David Porter's fleet against the pirates of the West Indies, died in the twenty-eighth year of his age. He had been an officer of the Navy since his thirteenth year, and had led a most active and adventurous life; and at the time of his death he was the highest ranking officer of his age in the service. Some years previously he sailed with Captain William Lewis as first officer of a ship bound for China. They had both obtained furloughs for this voyage. Maury, with six men, was left on the island of Nokaheeva to collect sandal-wood and other valuable articles of trade against the return of the ship.

The war with England broke out, and Captain Lewis was blockaded in a Chinese port. Maury and his men were beset by the natives of one part of the island, though befriended by the chief of that portion where ships were accustomed to land, and at last all of the party save Maury and a sailor named Baker were killed by the savages. These two constructed a place of refuge in the tops of four cocoanut trees which grew close

enough together for them to make a room as large as a frigate's maintop. A rope ladder was their means of access. Here they were one day, when their eyes were brightened by the sight of a frigate bearing the American flag. It proved to be the *Essex*, Captain David Porter commanding, which had touched at the island for fresh water. Captain Porter had with him a very fast British ship which he had just captured. He named her the *Essex Junior*, and armed her as his consort, placing Lieutenant Downs in command, with Maury as first lieutenant. After refitting they sailed away to Valparaiso, where the British ships *Cherub* and *Phœbe*, under Captain Hilliard, fought and captured them.

Maury's next service was with McDonough in the battle of Lake Champlain, whence he wrote to a friend in Fredericksburg: "We have gained a glorious victory. I hope the most important result of it will be to confirm the wavering allegiance of New York and Vermont to the Union. They have been threatening to secede unless peace be made with England on any terms!" This was in 1815.

About 1822, Porter organized his fleet for the extinction of the pirates of the West Indies. He was allowed to select his officers, and his first choice was of John Minor Maury to be his flag captain. After serving with distinction on that expedition, he died of yellow fever on his homeward voyage, and was buried almost within sight of Norfolk harbor, where his young wife and two little children were anxiously awaiting his coming.

After my father's death his younger brother, Matthew Fontaine Maury, became practically the guardian of my brother, William Lewis Maury, and myself. My brother died at the age of twenty, of heart disease, a victim to the barbarous medical practice of the day.

He was a very handsome, attractive young fellow, and a great favorite in society. The doctors subjected him to the "moxa," a cruel invention of that time. A spot as large as a half dollar was burned into the flesh over his heart. He was bled frequently. It was proposed to bleed him periodically. For several years he ate no meat, and for the last year of his life was kept in bed. Our uncle protested vainly against this practice, which he realized was killing my brother, but the highest medical authorities of the day upheld this system of depletion. At last, after ever increasing torture, he was released from a life which had dawned full of brightness and promise for him, and had become one of continued suffering.

After my brother's death my uncle's interest centred in me, and no son ever had a more tender and sympathetic father than I. As long as he lived this mutual confidence and affection existed unimpaired. He was the most lovable man I ever knew, and he won the confidence of all who came within his gentle influence. He ever used cordial praise and approbation as an incentive to endeavor, and if admonition were needed, he gave it in a manner which left no sting. Oftentimes a playful jest would serve the purpose of his correction. From my earliest boyhood I went to him for counsel and for comfort in all my troubles, and always left him with renewed purpose and self-respect. When I came to him from West Point he said to me, "Well, Dab, how did you come out?"

"Very poorly, Uncle Matt. I graduated thirty-fifth."

He looked sorry he had asked me, but suddenly taking heart he inquired, "How many were in the class?"

"There were sixty of us."

"That was first-rate. You beat me all hollow. I

was twenty-seventh, and there were only forty in my class."

This was truly encouraging. He had a pleasant greeting for every one, but was especially kindly in his way of treating the mechanics and workmen with whom his business brought him in contact. He made them feel he was learning from them, while he never failed to leave with them something instructive about their own branch of work. He was thus learning and teaching all of his time.

In his youth he read Scott and other English classics, and was very fond of Shakespeare, and all his life he read and studied the Bible. I do not think he ever read any novels after he began to develop the great thoughts with which his brain was teeming. His power of concentration was wonderful. Writing upon the subject in which he was interested, in the midst of his family, he would pause, pen in hand, to laugh at some jest or say a word *apropos* of the question under discussion, and return in an instant to his work. He wrote his "Navigation" and many strong papers on Naval Reform, which first attracted attention to him, before he was thirty years old. Mr. Calhoun said of him, "Maury is a man of great thoughts"; and Mr. Tyler was urged and desired to make him Secretary of the Navy.

In 1853–54 I was spending the winter in Philadelphia, when he wrote to me to go and see Mr. Biddle, who had charge of the annual report of the National Observatory, and deliver to him a message relative to it. After our business was ended, Mr. Biddle said to me: "This uncle of yours is a strange man. Here he is publishing, as an official report, the materials for the most valuable and interesting book of science ever produced.

You may tell him from me, that if he does not utilize it, he will have the chagrin of seeing some Yankee bookmaker steal his thunder and reap a fortune from it."

I sat down in Mr. Biddle's office and wrote to him. He replied by next mail that he would take Biddle's advice, and the "Physical Geography of the Sea" was soon published by the Harpers. It created a world-wide interest, and before the war broke out eleven editions had been issued. He used to say to me, "Dab, that is your book."

At the outbreak of the war, he was at the height of his great scientific career, in the most desirable position possible for the exercise of his talents. But he did not hesitate a moment as to his action, but promptly gave up all of his prospects in life for his people's sake, and calmly faced the uncertainties and anxieties of a new career. When his decision became known, the Emperor of Russia, and a little later the Emperor of France, invited him in the most generous terms to come to them and pursue in tranquillity, and in luxurious comfort and ease, those investigations which were for the benefit of all mankind, until peace should once again enable him to resume them at home. He replied, gratefully acknowledging the invitations, but stating that his presence might be of service to his own people, and in their hour of need he could not desert them.

At the age of seventeen I entered the University of Virginia, and enjoyed the life of freedom from home surveillance, and the great pleasure of association with men well reared and educated, matured in their purposes, and studying earnestly in the fine professional schools which then, as now, were recognized as among the highest in the country. Johnson Barbour, Randolph Tucker, Robert Withers, John S. Barbour, Stage Davis,

Winter Davis, Hunter Marshall, George Randolph, Confederate Secretary of War, Honorable Volney E. Howard, R. L. Dabney, and many another who made his mark in life and has gone over the river, were there then.

After leaving the University, where I was in the junior law class, I continued the pursuit of that most exacting study in Fredericksburg. There were twenty-six of us in the class of that year, and our instructor was the venerable and learned Judge Lomax, distinguished alike for his legal attainments and the courteous dignity of his bearing. I fear he realized from the first that I would not prove a bright and shining light in my adopted profession, for he used always to select the easiest questions and present them to me for solution. One day he inquired of me, "Mr. Maury, does ignorance of the law justify the commission of an offence?"

"Certainly, sir," I promptly replied. I noticed that he looked at me with a kind of hopeless forbearance, and as I had by that time begun to have grave misgivings of my own as to my legal qualifications, I went to him and told him that I had decided not to pursue further so inexorable and unjust a profession as that of law.

Of all our class, "Shake" Caldwell was *facile princeps* in his studies, as he was our "glass of fashion and mould of form." He was the son of Mr. James Caldwell of New Orleans, and the beautiful Widow Wormley of Fredericksburg. They were near neighbors of ours, and my relations with Shakespeare were warm and affectionate till the day of his death. He was one of the handsomest and most elegant gentlemen I have ever known, as he was one of the ablest men of his day. He was so handsome, so charming, so witty, that many people credited him with being a society man only; but, while brilliant in social life, he was steadfast and strong in

his affections and duties, with a great capacity for business, so that when he died he was probably the richest man in Virginia, and he used his great wealth as a trust confided to him for the good of his people.

After we parted,— I to go to West Point, and he to seek his fortune, — I knew nothing of his career for six years until he told me of it himself. He went to Mobile to enter upon the practice of law. After a year of almost hopeless waiting for business, his father, who had by that time successfully established the gas works of New Orleans, resolved to undertake similar works in Mobile, and wrote to his son that if he would take charge of the new enterprise, he would give him $750 per annum, which was more than his law practice brought him. After two years of successful management in Mobile, Mr. James Caldwell decided to establish gas works in Cincinnati, and offered Shakespeare the management of these at $2000 per annum. This property so increased in value in a few years that Mr. Caldwell, enriched by the business in Mobile and New Orleans, transferred to his son, for his sister and himself, all of his interests in Cincinnati. Soon after this, having acquired a handsome estate, Shakespeare became attached to a brilliant young girl of Louisville, one of the illustrious Breckinridge family. She was an orphan and an heiress, and had many suitors. His own property was worth about half a million. Their happy married life was only ended by her early death. In 1874 his sister, who had meanwhile become Mrs. Dean, died, and save for a few minor legacies left him her entire fortune, and at his own death his estate was estimated at $ 3,000,000.

When she was young, Shakespeare's sister numbered among her suitors Bob Waring, a member of a wealthy

family living in the Northern Neck. As Bob was not very well equipped in his upper story, he was put to work in a dry-goods store in Fredericksburg, where he speedily lost his heart to Sophy Caldwell. About this time Ole Bull came to town to make some music for us, and Bob decided to invite his lady love to enjoy the concert in his company; so he presented himself before her with a request that she would go with him "to hear the old gentleman." She was at first quite at a loss to apprehend his meaning, but finally discovered, from his blushes and hesitating utterances, that he did not consider it proper to pronounce in her divine presence the name of the great virtuoso! Bob and his lady love and the fiddler have gone long ago where I hope they are each enjoying eternal harmonies.

About 1872, Shakespeare established in Louisville an asylum for indigent men who were cared for, without regard to religious creed, by the Little Sisters of the Poor.

In 1875 he came to Richmond, to undertake and organize a similar institution there for the poor of Richmond and Fredericksburg. The endowment of $250,000 was to be under the administration of the Bishop of Richmond, now Cardinal Gibbons. On the day that the Virginia Legislature granted the charter, he was stricken with paralysis, but he soon recovered his mental faculties, and earnestly desired to complete the good work he had so much at heart. But Bishop Gibbons would not permit him to be troubled with business under such circumstances. After two or three months he suffered a relapse, and died in New York city in his fifty-fourth year. He left his great estate to his two daughters, and his generous intentions to his church have been carried out by one of them, who has richly endowed the Catholic University now being erected at Washington.

On relinquishing my arduous pursuit of legal learning, I left Fredericksburg to enter West Point, where I was immured for four years, the only unhappy years of a very happy life, made happy by the love of the truest people, whose interest in me has followed me until this day. One hundred and sixty-four boys entered the class with me, of whom few had received either social or educational advantages of a very high order. McClellan was a notable exception to this, being under sixteen years of age when he entered the Academy. He went at once to the head of the class and remained there until the end, enjoying the while the affection and respect of all.

After six months came the first examination, which pronounced a score or more "deficient," leaving Jackson at the foot of the class and McClellan at the head. Jackson was then in his nineteenth year, and was awkward and uncultured in manner and appearance, but there was an earnest purpose in his aspect which impressed all who saw him. Birket Fry, A. P. Hill, and I were standing together when he entered the South Barracks under charge of a cadet sergeant. He was clad in gray homespun, and wore a coarse felt hat, such as wagoners or constables — as he had been — usually wore, and bore a pair of weather-stained saddle-bags across his shoulders. There was about him so sturdy an expression of purpose that I remarked, "That fellow looks as if he had come to stay." As the sergeant returned from installing him in his quarters, we asked who the new cadet was. He replied, "Cadet Jackson, of Virginia." That was enough for me, and I went at once to show him such interest and kindness as would have gratified others under the circumstances. But Jackson received me so coldly that I regretted my friendly

overtures, and rejoined my companions, rebuffed and discomfited.

His steady purpose to succeed and to do his duty soon won the respect of all, and his teachers and comrades alike honored his efforts and wished him God-speed. His barrack room was small and bare and cold. Every night just before taps he would pile his grate high with anthracite coal, so that by the time the lamps were out, a ruddy glow came from his fire, by which, prone upon the bare floor, he would "bone" his lesson for the next day, until it was literally burned into his brain. The result of this honest purpose was that from one examination to the next he continually rose in his class till he reached the first section, and we used to say, "If we stay here another year, old Jack will be head of the class."

"*In medio tutissimus*" was my motto, and the most valued relic of my many years' study of the humanities; for it kept me safe from disgrace in the examinations, except in those especial accomplishments of the soldier, in all of which I was *facile princeps*. Old Jack was very clumsy in his horsemanship and with his sword, and we were painfully anxious as we watched him leaping the bar and cutting at heads. He would do it, but at the risk of his life. It is to be regretted that any of his biographers should claim for him skill and grace as a horseman, when they have with truth so much of real greatness to tell of him.

In the corps of cadets of that time were many who have become famous beside Jackson and McClellan. There was Grant, a very good and kindly fellow whom everybody liked. He was proficient in mathematics, but did not try to excel at anything except horsemanship. In the riding-school he was very daring. When

his turn came to leap the bar, he would make the dragoons lift it from the trestles and raise it as high as their heads, when he would drive his horse over it, clearing at least six feet.

Hancock and Franklin were with us too, and although association of the cadets of one class with those of another was rare, I was much with them, and was intimate with Barnard Bee, that noble South Carolinian who, upon the fatal field on which he bravely fell, gave the name of "Stonewall" Jackson to our hero.

Bee was one of the most admirable young soldiers of that day. Six feet in stature, he was every inch a soldier, and as gentle as he was brave. He was distinguished always for his delicate consideration for others, as for his manly and noble bearing in personal danger. He served with distinction in the Mexican War, and upon the far western frontier, to fall at Manassas in the very moment of our first victory there. About the close of Bee's second year at the Academy, he was court-martialed for some infraction of the regulations, and was meanly sentenced to remain one day behind his classmates, who went off for the biennial furlough. He had the sympathy of all of us in this peculiar punishment, which struck at him through his affections, and I especially strove to cheer and console him. The class notified Bee that as the steamboat passed Gee's Point he must be there, for they would throw over to him a bottle of cocktail to comfort him in his loneliness. Bee liked cocktail, but couldn't swim. I, having promised my mother not to drink while at the Academy, swam for that bottle for love of Bee. For more than an hour I went up and down the Hudson and nearly across it, in vain search for it. It probably broke from its buoy and went down. Poor Bee was in sorry luck that day.

After I had been at West Point a year, my uncle, seeing how my mother pined for me, and being in high favor with the Administration, procured for me a three-weeks' leave of absence. I joined my mother at the Observatory, and we were all very happy there together. We had then, for commandant, a huge Tennesseean, whose chief aim seemed to be to keep the cadets' hair cropped close. When I presented myself before him on my return from this leave of absence, he looked at me disapprovingly, and said, "Go and get your hair cut, sir, and report to me." Joe, our barber, could cut hair quicker and shorter than any living man. I stepped into his tent, and he ran his shears around my head, nearly scalping me. In two or three minutes I was back and stood attention.

"Well, sir," said the commandant, "what's the matter now?"

"You ordered me to have my hair cut and report to you, sir."

"Ah! That's very well indeed, sir."

That evening, at dress parade, I was published a corporal.

The course of study of the second class at West Point was the most difficult. Bartlett's "Optics" was a fearful book, and the most formidable discussion in it was that called "optical images." It was a general bugbear to the class; and only the men of the first section were expected to be able to demonstrate it. The January examinations were close at hand, and all of the men below me had been found deficient save the "immortal section." I was thoroughly aroused, and being pretty good at a spurt, I made myself master of the course. The "optical images" received my especial attention, for if that were well demonstrated I should be safe. The

week before the examinations Professor Bartlett came into our section, and Lieutenant Deshon of the Ordnance Corps, who was our instructor, ordered, "Mr. Maury will go to the board, and demonstrate the 'optical images.'"

It was a complete success, a perfect demonstration. Professor Bartlett and Deshon were both satisfied, and I got "max" on that fortunate effort of mine, and went up seventeen files in my standing. My classmates, who seemed as delighted as I was, said as the section was dismissed, "Peri, you are safe." I had been called "Peri" since my first arrival at the Academy, in consequence of my inability to accomplish anything in the musical line save that plaintive ditty commencing, "Farewell, farewell to thee, Araby's daughter." I may as well confess that it constitutes my sole repertory unto this day.

Deshon was a very amiable and able man. After the Mexican War we were stationed together at the Academy. He "got off" on religion, and in our rides together used to try to convince me of the truth of his new-found convictions as to transubstantiation, etc. I told him he would end by being a Jesuit, and so he did, having long ago become a member of the great Church of Rome. A purer Christian never lived than he.

CHAPTER III

Graduated at West Point and off for the Mexican War — Operations of the Campaign under General Scott and General Taylor — Anecdotes of these Commanders — Other Officers who became Eminent in the Civil War — The Capture of Vera Cruz — Wounded at Cerro Gordo — In the Hospital — The Journey to Jalapa

IN June, 1846, I was graduated, and was attached as second lieutenant to the Mounted Rifles, now the Third Cavalry. General Taylor's victories of the 8th and 9th of May had aroused the enthusiasm of our country, and we listened with intense interest to the letters and reports which came pouring in from that army, — how, when Charley May came trotting up with his squadron of dragoons to capture the Mexican guns, young Randolph Ridgely cried out from his battery, "Hold on a minute, Charley, till I draw their fire"; and how young Kirby Smith, known as Seminole Smith, leaped astride of a Mexican cannon as he sabred the gunners. These and scores of similar incidents we heard as we were girding ourselves to join these glorious fellows. It was then that the Chief of Artillery at West Point, Captain Keyes, came to me and urged me to accept the position of Instructor of Artillery during the ensuing summer encampment. The offer, though kindly pressed, was as firmly declined, as it might cause delay in reaching the scene of active preparations, and I hastened home to make my farewell visit to my mother.

Orders came shortly for me to go to Baltimore and report to Captain Stevens Mason, commanding a squadron of Mounted Rifles about to sail in the brig *Soldana* for the army of General Taylor on the Rio Grande. There were eight commissioned officers and one hundred and sixty men who embarked in this unseaworthy craft of about two hundred tons. All are gone now save the sad old writer of these lines. As we sailed down Chesapeake Bay a gale arose, which compelled all shipping, numbering probably a hundred sail, to harbor in Hampton Roads. The skipper of the *Soldana* was Captain Stubbs, of Maine, well named. Full of the importance of his trust, his ambition moved him to make sail for Mexico before the gale was over. The *Soldana* was the first and only vessel to leave the Roads for the heaving Atlantic on this September morning, and about two A.M. of that same night she rolled her rotten mainmast out and floated a wretched wreck.

Her best hope seemed to make for Charleston, or some other port, and repair damages; but Stubbs went to work with great energy, and rigged up a jury mast, and on the thirty-second day of her voyage, after many storms and calms, having been long reported "lost with all hands," we landed at Point Isabel, every man of us safe and well. The news of Taylor's capture of Monterey had just come in, and the hope of participating in that action, which had induced this squadron of the Rifles to move without waiting for horses, was disappointed.

The Rifles moved on up the Rio Grande to Camargo, whence our colonel, Persifer Smith, then in Monterey, and a soldier of reputation, had us ordered to Monterey as escort to some siege pieces which, under the personal efforts of young Stonewall Jackson, were moving to that city. He worked at them in the muddy roads as he

used to do at West Point, and ever did in his great career, and they had to move along. In Monterey were the heroes of the campaign, and some of the War of 1812 and of many an Indian fight.

General Zachary Taylor, a simple and unpretending gentleman, may have been Jackson's model; for he had more of the silent, rapid, impetuous methods, which Jackson practised later on, than any American general save Forrest.

Monterey was a pleasant place for the month or two of our stay there. Grant was then Quartermaster of the Fourth Infantry. I had been badly wounded while hunting near Camargo, so as to disable me from duty while in Monterey, and Grant being also, by the duties of his office, free to go when and where he pleased, we were much together and enjoyed the association. Grant was a thoroughly kind and manly young fellow, with no bad habits, and was respected and liked by his brother officers, especially by those of his own regiment.

In the course of a few weeks news came that General Scott had arrived in the country, and assumed command of the army; that he had changed the line of operations; and that General Taylor's forces would in large part be drawn off to Scott. This caused much talk among us, for Taylor had won the unbounded confidence and love of all of us, while Scott was sneered at as "Old Fuss and Feathers." The expectation was that we should forthwith have an order to trim our hair and beards according to the regulations of the army. With us was General David Emanuel Twiggs, a grand-looking old man, six feet two inches in stature, with long, flowing white hair, and a beard which hung over his broad breast like Aaron's. As I passed his tent one morning early, he was outside of it taking a sponge bath, stripped to the waist.

I had never seen a grander subject for an artist's study. A few days after I saw him again, shorn of his hoary locks, hair and beard close cropped, in anticipation of orders which were never issued; for Scott addressed himself to the serious work of the Mexican campaign, which has ranked him so high among the world's great captains.

General Taylor was ordered to move down to Victoria with his available forces, where Scott would meet him. Our route lay along the base of the Sierra Madre Mountains, amid beautiful scenery and through orange groves and fields of sugar-cane, and was crossed by clear, cool mountain streams, in which we bathed after our long and dusty marches. The country people supplied us with poultry, vegetables, and fruit, and we greatly enjoyed our march. At Victoria we did not meet General Scott, but were joined by troops from Camargo. Among those who returned with General Taylor towards Monterey were Colonel Jeff Davis and his famous regiment of Mississippi Rifles, who, two months later, turned the tide of battle in Taylor's famous victory at Buena Vista. With them, too, went Bragg's battery. In that battery I met George H. Thomas, an enthusiastic Virginian then and till the very moment, many years later, when he drew his sword against our dear old State. Attached to the battery also was Lieutenant Bob Wheat, afterwards a distinguished soldier. Wheat has been somewhat lightly spoken of as an adventurer in wars, but there was earnest feeling in him. In all his long and dangerous services he bore in his bosom the little prayer-book his mother gave him when he first left home, and on the morning of his last battle (I believe he fell in the fierce fight at Gaines Mill), when he had formed his battalion he said, "Boys, before we move into this fight I will read you something from

this little book." He was listened to with great feeling, and a few hours later he fell dead in the very prime of his career.

We were quiet for some days at Victoria, where no event of interest disturbed us save the stealing of General Taylor's horse, "Old Whitey." Whereupon the general promptly arrested the Alcalde of the town as hostage for the safe and early restitution of "Old Whitey," who was restored next day. Just previous to this Charley May had been sent with his squadron to explore a certain route through the mountains. He rejoined us at Victoria, reporting that he had been beset in a wild gorge by the Mexicans, who fired upon them from the cliffs, and rolled great rocks down on them. He had lost his rear guard under Lieutenant Sturgis, whom he arrested, and who was court-martialed at Victoria. Bragg volunteered to act as counsel for Sturgis, who was entirely acquitted, and came out of the affair with more credit than any one concerned in it. We young fellows, as well as the old ones, were all for Sturgis, who seemed to have been made a scapegoat of.

It was during this march that one of our young officers, Richie, just from West Point, was lassoed and murdered while passing through a Mexican village. We all liked him, and ample vengeance befell that village.

At Tampico we met General Scott and some thousands of troops assembling for the descent upon Vera Cruz. In all there were over 14,000, of whom but few were veterans. All had flint-lock muskets save the Rifles and some artillery companies.

The plains about Tampico afforded ample ground for drill, and here we had, for the first time, drilling by General Scott in the evolutions of the line. As soon as all the transports had arrived with troops and equipments,

our whole force sailed for the rendezvous off Lobos Island, whence we sailed for Vera Cruz. More than a hundred men-of-war and transports made up the fleet, which landed at the island of Sacrificios for the attack upon the city. Bee and I were in the same transport, and on the day before the debarkation we paid a visit to a friend of Bee's, the captain of a gunboat. When I was introduced to him he said: "Are you a son of Captain John Minor Maury? Captain Tatnell, who has just left me, declared him to be the finest officer in the United States Navy." To hear this on the eve of my first battle filled me with emotion, and with the desire to be worthy of such a father, and with honest pride that the tribute should be paid in the presence of so noble a friend as Bee.

Our army landed at Vera Cruz, 14,000 strong, in four divisions. The landing was made in whale-boats rowed by the sailors of the fleet. In each boat were from fifty to sixty soldiers, and it was a glorious sight to see the first division, under General Worth, move off at 2 P.M. at the signal from the flag-ship. The fifty great barges kept in line, until near the shore, when General Worth himself led the way to make the landing first of all, and being in a fine gig he accomplished this, and was the first man of the army to plant the American flag upon that shore of Mexico. The Mexicans made no resistance, and the boats rapidly returned for the second division, under Twiggs, which was as quietly transported to the shore. Then the volunteers came, and soon after dark Scott had his whole army in battle order about three miles from Vera Cruz.

Early next morning we moved around the city till we came to the great national road, built by the Spaniards, from Vera Cruz to the city of Mexico. The Mounted

Rifles led in this investment, and C Company was in front when we came out upon the great Camino del Rey, over which at that moment a train of mules, laden with wine and escorted by a troop of Mexicans, was passing. We debouched into the road and fired a few shots at the Mexican dragoons, who fled back to Vera Cruz, firing at us over their shoulders as they ran. When our work for that day was done, we had completed the investment of Vera Cruz. We were very hungry and thirsty. So our Texas guide lassoed a fat beef, a keg of sherry was broached, and we bivouacked upon the northern beach of Vera Cruz, just beyond cannon range of the city, and remained there until, after two or three weeks' bombardment, Vera Cruz surrendered.

While lying there our scouts brought in word that a considerable body of Mexican guerillas had closed up to a bridge two or three miles in our rear. C Company was ordered to go and look after them. We found several hundred of them. They demanded our surrender, and were so defiant and aggressive that we sent a runner back to camp to report the situation. Meantime, we took up a defensive position till our express returned, guiding General Smith and five or six companies of the Rifles. Our company was in advance, and we moved to the attack in company front, occupying the whole breadth of the road. The Mexicans had formed and were awaiting us in ambuscade, and fired a volley at us. They were not thirty yards distant, yet not one of our men was touched. We sprang forward, charged and routed them, chased them half a mile, and marched back in great delight over our first affair. Sergeant Harris, of Winchester, Virginia, was the only man seriously wounded. I won my first compliment in special orders for good conduct.

While we were still bombarding Vera Cruz the news of

General Taylor's victory over Santa Anna's army at Buena Vista was received. General Scott published it to the army, congratulating us "upon this great victory of the successful General Taylor." It was Taylor's fourth decisive victory since May, and was fought with only 4500 men against 23,000. There is every reason to believe that, had not his forces been diverted to Scott, Taylor would have captured the city of Mexico at as early a date as the latter.

After Santa Anna's defeat at Buena Vista, a serious revolt was organized against him in the city of Mexico. He moved at once to the capital, restored order, and marched up rapidly with his army to relieve the siege of Vera Cruz. Before his arrival Vera Cruz had fallen, and Scott was prepared to advance upon the city of Mexico.

When the white flag was shown by Vera Cruz we were overjoyed and greatly comforted, for we had been nearly three weeks in the sand hills without change of raiment, our opportunities for bathing were very limited, and the fleas swarmed over us. I have never seen anything like those Vera Cruz fleas. If one were to stand ten minutes in the sand, the fleas would fall upon him in hundreds. How they live in that dry sand no one knows. They don't live very high, for they are ever ready for a change of diet. The engineer officers, G. W. Smith, and McClellan, slept in canvas bags drawn tight about their necks, having previously greased themselves all over with salt pork. Perhaps the fleas did not partake of them, but they made up for it by regaling themselves on us of the line who had no canvas bags.

At the sight of the white flag all was gaiety along our lines; work and anxiety gave place to pride and comfort. Our servants brought us fresh clothes from the fleet, and never had we enjoyed them more. Commissioners were

appointed to arrange terms of surrender, and General Scott selected Captains Joseph E. Johnston and Robert E. Lee to represent us, and nobly they did so. This selection gave great satisfaction throughout the army. In rich uniforms, superbly mounted, they were the most soldierly, as they were the ablest, men in the army. We young Virginians were proud that day to see them, and to know that our two victorious armies were led by two great Virginia generals.

We did not linger long at Vera Cruz, for Scott was eager to press on and capture the capital, and Santa Anna was already preparing to dispute his passage at Cerro Gordo, a strong position three or four days from us. Santa Anna first took position a few days' march from Vera Cruz, near Plan del Rio, on the great national road. Here he entrenched himself, and here we attacked him on the 17th of April, 1847. The Rifles marched at the head of the army, and early in the evening, as we were lying by the side of the road, word came from Lieutenant Gardner, who had been sent up with an infantry picket, that the enemy was advancing to attack us. "Send up the Rifles!" shouted General Harney, and up we moved, and in a few minutes were warmly engaged with the Mexican advance. We drove them steadily back to their fortifications on the high telegraph hill. Our line was halted in the edge of the timber which covered the hill we had just occupied. The Mexican skirmishers rallied and formed in line of battle, just below their fortifications on the opposite hill, whence they kept up a dropping fire upon any of our men who showed themselves. Santa Anna himself, in citizen's dress and mounted on a superb gray horse, was riding about the field, ordering the movements of the troops. He was an able general and a game soldier. Several of my men fired

at him, but at such long range as forbade accurate shooting. We were in the undergrowth which crowned the hill, and from here I observed a little body of Rifles, who under Lieutenant Gibbs, had ensconced themselves in a sheltered spot rather nearer to the enemy than our own, and who were in no little danger of being cut off.

I called upon my men to follow, and went down the slope, believing they were behind me; for as I advanced the Mexican battalion fired very actively. Before I had gone a hundred yards a ball shattered my left arm, and turning I found myself alone on that bare hillside. The hill was very steep, and as I turned they opened a rapid file fire upon me, but I managed to reach the cover of the brush, faint and suffering severely. As I did so, a rifleman sprang from behind the only tree affording shelter, and ran to the rear for help. This quickly came in the person of Sergeant Bob Coleman, a gallant soldier and an old schoolmate. He assisted me to a surgeon, who cheerfully said, "You've a very bad arm; I shall have to cut it off."

I replied: "There's a man over there whose leg is worse than my arm. When you are ready for me you will find me behind that big rock down the hill." On reaching the rock I found a negro boy, a servant of Lieutenant Stuart, whose horse he had in charge. I mounted it, and set out for Plan del Rio, five miles in the rear, where I knew there were surgeons and all proper accommodations for the wounded. Dr. Cuyler fixed me as comfortably as possible, and said, "We can save that arm, Maury"; to which I replied, "Do it at all risks. I will die before I will lose it, and I assume all responsibility."

Next morning the battle raged fiercely, but soon came the cheerful strains of "Yankee Doodle" from our band escorting the Mexican prisoners. Scott had won a great

victory, and our cavalry was pursuing the flying Mexicans towards the city of Mexico. The Rifles had borne an active part in the battle. Captain Mason and Lieutenants Ewell and Davis were killed; I was severely, and three other officers slightly, wounded. In the long and active service of that famous regiment, every Virginian who entered it was killed, except myself, and I was crippled for life. Generals Jeb Stuart, William E. Jones, and Chamblis, who fell long afterward, were of this number. Loring, our colonel, lost his arm at the gate of Mexico, but that never abated his wonderful activity in many Indian campaigns, in the war between the States, and in the Egyptian campaign against Abyssinia. He served with distinction in the Egyptian wars, and after his return published one of the most interesting books on that country ever written. To the very last his impetuous courage was unabated, and he was one of the most generous of men. He had borne an active part in the Texan war of independence and in the Seminole wars in Florida, having gone from Florida to Texas as a volunteer at sixteen years of age.

While I was being borne from the field, Colonel Sumner, a rough old dragoon who had been temporarily put in command of the Rifles in the absence of our colonel, Persifer Smith, met me, and learning what was going on in front hastened forward, and was almost immediately knocked over by a glancing ball upon his head. As soon after being carried to the rear as he could walk, he came to me and spoke very kindly to me, calling me "my brave boy," which compensated for all the wound and pain and for some previous roughness of manner to me. When we reached Jalapa, Generals Harney, Twiggs, and Riley came to see me, and made me proud and happy by the assurance that good reports of their boy would glad-

den the hearts of my dear mother and uncle far away in old Fredericksburg.

On the evening of the 17th, as I was making my escape from that bloody-minded surgeon who was so bent upon cutting off my arm, I was a sorry spectacle, covered with blood, pale and faint, one man leading my horse, while Tom, the negro, glad enough to get off from that field, kept close to me with a flask of brandy, and when he saw me about to faint he would set me up with a pull at it. We met General James Shields at the head of his brigade, marching rapidly to go in the fight. He was a fine, manly-looking fellow, and showed me much kindly interest and sympathy. Next morning, in storming a battery, a grape shot struck him fair in the breast, and passed out at his back. Dr. Cuyler said to me, "Maury, I assure you, you can double up your fist and pass your arm through his body." Yet he got well very soon, was severely wounded again at the city of Mexico, and lived to play an important part in making the fame of Stonewall Jackson, and to claim a victory over him at Kernstown. He died several years ago, greatly honored by his people, who might have made him President but for his foreign nationality. I never saw him after that memorable meeting, but have always remembered gratefully his warm and manly sympathy for me.

On the morning of the next day after being wounded, I was removed from the tent to a spacious reed house in the village, quite airy and comfortable. Captain Joe Johnston, just promoted to Lieutenant-Colonel of one of our new regiments, was lying there. He had been badly shot six days before in a daring reconnaissance. During the day Captain Mason was brought in, and lay in one of the rooms opening upon the main hall, where I was. A cannon-ball had torn off his leg, but he was very bright

and game. He and I often talked of the fine times we would have at the Virginia Springs in the coming summer. Poor fellow! He never saw them again. Two or three weeks later blood poison set in, and he died soon after being taken to Jalapa. His history was a sorrowful one. The only son of Armstead Mason, who fell in a duel with his kinsman, Colonel McCarthy, Stevens Mason inherited his father's fine estate of Selma, in Loudon County, where he lived extravagantly. A few years before his death he married; his wife died within a year, and after that all went ill with Mason. When his property was all gone, he procured a captaincy in the Rifles, and died bravely, a representative gentleman of the old times.

A few days after being placed in the house, Dr. Cuyler said to me: "Maury, there's a young fellow, Derby, across the street, lying wounded among the volunteers, who says he is a classmate of yours and wishes to come over here. I would not agree to it without consulting you, for he is a coarse fellow; but I don't like him to be among the volunteers." In that war the volunteers were not regarded as they were in the great war between the States.

Of course I cheerfully agreed to his being brought over, and his cot was placed in the hall beside mine. The partitions of the rooms were of reeds wattled together, so that conversations could be heard from one room to the other. John Phœnix Derby was an incessant talker, and uttered a stream of coarse wit, to the great disgust of Joe Johnston, who endured it in silence, till one day he heard Derby order his servant to capture a kid out of a flock of goats passing our door, when he broke out, "If you dare to do that, I'll have you court-martialed and cashiered or shot!"

In about ten days General Scott, having chased Santa Anna out of the road, established himself at Jalapa, a lovely little town on the slope of the mountains, looking down towards the sea, some ninety miles distant. Scott sent litters and a strong escort to move us up into that delicious climate. We took two days to make the trip. All of the second day's march was a race between my litter and that of a volunteer officer. We frequently passed each other and had some pleasant chat. Two of my three relays were short men, all of his were long-legged fellows, so that he could pass my short men, and I could close up when my tall ones came. His were all good-natured volunteers from Tennessee, I believe. I said, "I fear you'll beat me; you have the legs of me."

"Ah, you can't say that," and the poor fellow held up the stump of his amputated leg. I had not known before the nature of his wound. I privately told my men I would give them a gold piece or two, if they would get me into Jalapa first, and so they did. Mason, Derby, and I were quartered in an elegant house, where, in a short time, poor Mason left us. I went to the Springs without him.

After Captain Mason's death, from blood poison, the doctors discovered symptoms of it in me; but happily they passed away, and I was permitted to walk about the city and enjoy the beautiful scenery, the luxurious baths, the fruits, and the flowers, and nowhere had I seen more pretty faces than were found among the women of Jalapa.

Every day I went to see my friend, Colonel Joe Johnston, still ill of his grievous wounds. He was affectionately tended by his nephew, Preston Johnston, who was dear to him as a son. He was a bright and joyous young fellow, full of hope and courage, and worthy of the great race

from which he sprung. He fell a few months later while working his gun against Chapultepec. Only a few weeks before General Johnston died, he spoke to me of the death of this bright young lad, who had been so dear to him. He said, "When Lee came to tell me of Preston's mortal wound, he wept as he took my hand in his."