

It was evident from the moment the battery of the tete-de-pont opened upon us that our position was untenable. The Mexicans, with artillery and infantry strongly posted in front and flank, could and did fire from behind their walls, deliberately and without much exposure, while but few of our troops were sheltered from the storm. Yet it was gratifying to behold the obstinate courage with which these volunteers continued the fight, each one demeaning himself as if the issue of the conflict depended upon his individual efforts. The smoke was so thick that the small arms were discharged pretty much at random, and most of our balls must have fallen harmless from those solid stone walls. But the guns of the Purisima continued to sweep the streets furiously, while his Satanic Majesty, El Diabolo, blazed like a volcano. Yet our silken standard, the staff of which had been spliced since the commencement of the action, by the color-guard, still streamed like a rainbow o'er the cloud.*

The "noise and confusion" were indescribable, and the inhabitants of Monterey might well have supposed that all the embattled legions of Pandemonium were raging at their gates. Our position was just the one, it appears to me, in which any anxious candidate for popular favor, who cared

* At the organization of the 1st Regiment of Ohio volunteers, it was found that nearly all the companies possessed banners of various devices. These were laid aside for special occasions, and the flag of Captain Armstrong's excellent company, (E,) bearing simply the national "stars and stripes," was adopted as the regimental colors. It was attached to a Mexican lance before the close of the battle of the 21st of September, and borne on it through the campaign. Who of my fellow-soldiers is so fortunate as to possess this tattered and battle-scorched banner of our regiment? He would much gratify his comrades, I am sure, by depositing it in some public place, and I would suggest the new Capitol at Columbus, if assured that Ohio cared to count such relics among her treasures.

less for the reports of fire-arms than of the newspapers, less for the balls of the Devil than for the disciples of Dr. Faustus, might have ventured to express his opinions boldly and candidly on the subject of "River and Harbor Improvements," or upon any of the so-called delicate questions of the day. The loudest voice was lost in the wild uproar, and officers were often compelled to communicate orders pantomimically, even to those who were standing beside them. About noon the storm of battle was at its height, and the scene, as described by the reserve corps at the mortar battery, was intensely exciting and grand. The devoted city seemed to blaze at every portal. General Worth's division was just then storming the Federacion and Soldada on the right; the troops of Twigg and Quitman in the Teneria, reinforced by the howitzer battery of Captain Webster, was thundering on the left, and dashing their blows indiscriminately upon the Diabolo and the cathedral,* while our little regiment combated with the more central defenses of the town. Volumes of sulphurous smoke settled darkly and heavily over the streets, in which blazed flashes of musketry, and the ruddy flames of deep-toned artillery.

— "The swift and deafening peals
In countless echoes through the mountains ring;
Now swells the intermingling din, the jar,
Frequent and fearful, of the bursting bomb,
The falling beam, the shriek, the groan, the shout,
The ceaseless clangor, and the rush of men
Inebriate with rage!"

* In the cathedral, a large and massive stone edifice, occupying one side of the plaza mayor, (principal square,) General Pedro de Ampudia had established his head-quarters, and there remained during the battle. An immense quantity of ammunition was also deposited in the building. The Mexicans had, therefore, divested

General Butler and Colonel Mitchell having been borne wounded from the street, and the regiment being more than decimated, General Hamer decided to withdraw it to a less exposed position. Indeed there was no prudent alternative, as nothing could be gained by prolonging a contest with such odds. And since the capture of Fort Teneria, the ground was of no value to us, certainly it was not worth the lives it would have cost to maintain it.

Those persons who have read the official dispatches, are aware that General Butler at one time intended to storm Fort Diabolo with our regiment alone.* It was, however, wisely unattempted. Admitting the possibility of organizing a general assault by our scattered companies in the midst of the confusion which prevailed, it must yet have been the most hopeless of all forlorn hopes. I do not believe that

it of its religious character. It was most fortunate for the valiant General, who had thus hoped to sanctuarize himself, that the church was bomb-proof, for the accomplished Webster, aided by his brave and skillful Lieutenants, Donaldson and Bowen, visited it with a heavy and searching fire. The only damage it sustained, however, was in one of the towers, where a large bell was splintered into fragments.

* "A very slight reconnoissance sufficed to convince me that this (El Diabolo) was a position of no ordinary strength. Still, feeling its importance, after consulting with part of my staff as to its practicability, I had resolved to attempt carrying it by storm, and was in the act of directing the advance when I received a wound which compelled me to halt. Colonel Mitchell was at the same time wounded at the head of his regiment. The men were falling fast under the converging fires of at least three distinct batteries, that continually swept the intervening space through which it was necessary to pass. The loss of blood, too, from my wound, rendering it necessary that I should leave the field, and I had discovered at a second glance that the position was covered by a heavy fire of musketry from other works directly in its rear, that I had not seen in the first hasty examination. There is a possibility that the work might have been carried, but not without excessive loss, and if carried, I feel assured that it would have been untenable."—*Extract from Major General Butler's Report.*

thirty of the three hundred men whom we could perhaps have gathered for the charge, would have lived to reach the walls of the redoubt. The regiment must have been crushed by the weight of the converging fires of the enemy. The writer respectfully differs from the gallant General of his division, in thinking that there was even "a possibility that the work might have been carried," by so small a force as ours. Nothing less invulnerable than that celestial armor which so protected certain faithful Jews in the burning furnace of Babylon's king, that not even the smell of fire was on their garments, could have prevented the annihilation of the regiment in the rash attempt.

The battalion, now under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Weller, prepared to execute a retrograde movement under fire, the most difficult that new troops can be required to perform. From the character of the conflict, the companies had become so scattered and subdivided that it was found impossible to re-form the line with much precision. But the column retired from the town in good order, through a street several squares to the east of that by which we had entered. As we emerged from the suburbs upon the plain, we were charged by a strong corps of Lancers from the direction of the citadel. Fortunately, as the regiment had not then been instructed in the formation of the square, a brush fence happened to be near by. Behind it the men were at once drawn up, and every musket leveled upon the advancing squadrons.

The cavalry is a favorite, and very numerous corps in the army of Mexico. The infantry battalions are composed

almost exclusively of pure-blooded Indians, while in the mounted regiments the greatest number are of the Spanish and mixed races. The Lancers are graceful riders, and their chief weapon one which, I am inclined to think, is generally too much underrated. Until they import a larger breed of horses, however, they will not become very formidable troops; for, with all the aid of their heavy iron spurs, they can never impart that momentum to the "mustang," which in our cavalry tactics is considered of more consequence in a charge than the arms of the rider.

The troops that so suddenly assailed us were the 3d and 7th Lancers, under General Garcia Conde. The ground was favorable to the movement, and for some distance they advanced boldly and beautifully, their long lances gleaming brightly in the sun, and their whole line decorated with bandrol and flag. A great number of our soldiers who had been wounded by the enemy's artillery, were lying where they had fallen upon the field, and various members of the medical staff were at the time engaged in attending to them. When these were reached by the Lancers, we were compelled to witness one of the most savage and shameful spectacles which ever disgraced humanity. Surely the worst fiends of hell must have filled the actors in it, "from the crown to the toe, top-full of direst cruelty!" Not content with riding over and lancing, as they did at full gallop, those of our defenseless comrades who happened to lie in their track, large parties of those base and cowardly assassins, shunning an honorable combat with us, left their ranks and murdered indiscriminately all the wounded Americans in

that part of the field.* The surgeons and their assistants, flying from the fate of their patients, were hotly pursued by the enemy, from whom they made so narrow an escape, that we freely forgave their attempts to play upon our nerves by the rather unnecessary display of their tools in the morning.

The main body of the Lancers pressed on toward us in gallant style, but their speed instead of being increased was slackened as they approached. In vain did we caution our men not to fire until commanded. So excited and exasperated were they at the cruel butchery of their helpless friends, that most of them discharged their guns as they obtained a good aim, but when the enemy were too distant to secure the most satisfactory results. Had they waited but a few minutes, their vengeance would have been ample. The first volley, however, emptied several saddles, and put them to flight. A few of the Mexican officers still galloped forward in the hope of encouraging their followers to renew the charge. One of these fell mortally wounded within twenty paces of our line, and in dying threw his baleful eyes upon us, still flashing "with obdurate pride and steadfast hate." The breath had scarcely departed from his body, before Lieutenant H., of Company A, (who had lost his shoes in the ditch,) limping from the ranks, proceeded to appropriate the boots of the unfortunate Lancer. Drawing them over his own sore feet he returned to his place, remarking that "there never was a better fit." Many other little

*Such atrocities have often stained the annals of proud and *magnanimous* Mexico. Yet the cruelty of the Texan troops, who were perfect saints as compared with theirs, is a favorite subject of complaint and censure with the Mexican historians.

pieces of serio-comedy were played in the shifting scenes of the battle, but to rehearse which would too much delay the progress of our narrative.*

After the repulse of the Lancers, our regiment was moved to a new position near the Teneria, and within sustaining distance of Bragg's battery, where we remained for some

* It may be a satisfaction to the reader to peruse the subjoined Mexican account of the conflict between our regiment and the defenders of the tete-de-pont, and of the affair with the cavalry. It will be observed that the want of ammunition is again pleaded, and here, it would seem, unnecessarily. And yet, strangely enough, in almost the next sentence it is stated that the Mexican troops "increased their activity." How can we be expected to agree with an historian who does not agree with himself?

The "confounded and frantic charge," so classically described in the extract is a piece of pure romance, a fabrication more shadowy than the fabulous achievements of the deformed Tyrtæus, and to which the word "confounded," perhaps misused by the translator, might with more propriety be applied. The sortie must have been made, if at all, after the withdrawal of our regiment from the vicinity, of the Purisima. Unfortunately we knew not of it, for certainly after contending so long with concealed and inaccessible foes, there would have been no shrinking on our part from the "breast to breast, and arm to arm," conflict. They are welcome to the laurel! gained by charging the dead, and bayoneting the dying. From the passage quoted, it appears that the 3d regiment is entitled to the dishonorable distinction of lancing fifty of our wounded men.

"General Mejia was posted at the bridge of the Purisima. There revived the sanguinary contest, which was tenaciously prolonged with great carnage. When all the ammunition was exhausted, the troops asked General Mejia for the park, who answered that it was not necessary while they had bayonets. This reply was received with vivas of applause, and they increased their activity. Finally an impulse seized upon us, our soldiers leaped the parapets, and as Tyrtæus said in exhorting the Greeks, breast to breast, arm to arm, confounded and frantic ours charged, and over the ground they had gained, and over the dead bodies of the enemy, and amid the vapor of their foul reeking blood arose to heaven the victorious cry of—viva Mexico. The brave men who gained this laurel were commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Ferro.

"The Americans having fallen back, General Mejia believed a charge of cavalry proper. General Garcia Conde was ordered with the 3d and 7th, who were in the place, to charge the enemy in the rear, by the way of the citadel. Garcia Conde led the corps to the point where he should have charged, and there the 3d alone entered the action, lancing more than fifty men of various partisan enemies, and afterward withdrew to the city."—*Mexican "Notes of the War," page 74.*

hours unemployed, save as a target for the Mexican artillery. But our soldiers endured the harassing service with uncomplaining fortitude. Captain Hooker, 1st Artillery, of General Hamer's staff, and Colonel A. Sidney Johnson, of General Butler's, were constantly with our regiment, and by their professional skill and gallantry, rendered it valuable aid throughout the action.

At the approach of evening, all the troops were ordered back to camp, except Captain Ridgely's artillery, and the regular infantry of Twiggs' division, who, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Garland, were detailed as a guard for the captured redoubt during the night. One half of the 1st Kentucky regiment, which had been all day at the mortar battery, panting for the affray, was ordered forward to reinforce this command. The battalion approached Colonel Garland's position about twilight, under a heavy cannonade from the enemy. One of its officers, a tall, thorough-bred Kentuckian, and doubtless as brave a gentleman as any in the army, supposing that they were about to be led at once against the enemy, suddenly became disgusted with the small sword with which he had imprudently armed himself. It was scarcely larger than a fencing foil, and in his strong but unpracticed hand then seemed as useless as a bodkin. Scornfully throwing it away, and seizing upon two ponderous pieces of limestone, he marched confidently forward and entered the Teneria with one in each hand, ready and anxious for the fight. This incident was related to me by the major commanding the battalion, who jocularly added, that he thought of making a requisition upon the Ordnance

department for a supply of hand grenades, to be used by those of his subalterns who were not swordsmen. It will at once be presumed, by all who are familiar with the habits of American boys, that the officer thus "in league with the stones of the field," had but renewed a favorite alliance of his youthful days. How often has the writer, and you, reader, if ever a country boy, when "creeping like a snail, unwillingly to school," halted to pelt the unfortunate ground-squirrels and cat-birds encountered by the way; or, with pockets well crammed with stones, aided some truant troop in the bombardment of a hornet's nest.

Worn down by fatigue we returned slowly toward our beautiful camp at Santo Domingo. Now that the brazen throat of war had ceased to roar, the silence which had fallen with the darkness upon the valley, seemed unnatural, and was almost as appalling as the sudden thunders of the morning. Like that valorous Captain and veracious Chronicler, Bernal Diaz, after the three months' siege of Mexico, we felt "as if just released from a belfry." This quaint remark of the old Knight, reminds me that as we retired from the field, the Mexicans rang the bells of the city in merry chimes, that did not altogether harmonize with the groans of the wounded and dying. But their boastful and ill-timed rejoicing neither convinced us, nor themselves, that they were, in our Western phrase, "out of the wood." Though we had not been prepared to witness so pertinacious a spirit in the foe, yet with one of their works in our possession on the east side, and two on the west side of the town, captured the same day by Worth's division, as will be described, we knew

that they could not possibly maintain the town. The most intelligent among the defenders, too, must have felt that their fate was sealed, and even while their bells were pealing so joyfully, doubtless were "sorrowfully ruminating the morning's danger."*

The Mexicans, who always greatly exaggerated our loss, while they studiously avoided (even in official reports) any allusion to their own, stated that one thousand Americans were killed or wounded during the first day's operations at Monterey. Our loss was in reality but three hundred and ninety-four, including, however, some of the most promising officers in the army. But quite enough blood had been shed to satisfy some of our people that they had not properly estimated the military efficiency of the enemy. Yet in the condition of affairs on the evening of the 21st, we saw no cause for despondency at the prospect of victory. Indeed, in the events of the day, our troops found much to cheer and encourage them. If the snake had not been killed, it was at least scotched, and could not escape ultimate destruction.

As to our own regiment, though it does not vauntingly claim to have fought "beyond the mark of others," yet may Ohio, ever more boastful of the triumphs of peace than of

* The Mexicans have a happy faculty of passing off disasters for triumphs. Their historians confess that the battle of *Molino del Rey* was celebrated with music and bells, and that Santa Anna sent a proclamation by extraordinary couriers into all parts of the nation, stating that a victory had been gained, and that he had in person led the troops of the Republic, both of which "illusions," as they are mildly termed, "the inhabitants generally believe to this day."

The truth is, that when with the advantage of vastly superior numbers, and a remarkably strong position, as at Monterey and the Molino, they were not routed by the first charge, they considered they had made a lucky escape, and rejoiced accordingly.

arms, be permitted to point with pride to her share in the fight; and each of her hardy sons

"May stand a tiptoe when the day is named,
And rouse him at the name of"—*Monterey.*

What Major General Butler says in the latter part of the following extract, from his official report, of the situation and conduct of his brigadiers—Hamer and Quitman—may, with like propriety and justice, be said of the more humble soldiers of his division:

"It is with no little pride and gratification that I bear testimony of the gallantry and general good conduct of my command. Were proof wanting, a mournful one is to be found in the subjoined return of the casualties of the day. That part of my division properly in the field, did not exceed eleven hundred, of which number full one-fifth was killed or wounded. The fact that troops for the first time under fire should have suffered such loss without shrinking, in a continuous struggle of more than two hours, and mainly against a sheltered and inaccessible foe, finds but few parallels, and is of itself an eulogium to which I need not add.

"Of my brigadiers, it is proper that I should myself speak. General Hamer was placed in a position where nothing brilliant could be achieved, but which at every moment imperatively demanded prudence, and calm, unbending courage. It is but justice to him to say that I found him equal to the emergency. General Quitman had before him a field in which military genius and skill were called into requisition, and honors could be fairly won; and I but echo the general voice in saying that he nobly availed himself of the occasion."

Dismal indeed was the night of the 21st of September. "Darkness and the shadow of death obscured it; and no joyful voice came therein." The complexion of the elements as well as the aspect of our camp was peculiarly gloomy, and pressed heavily on the spirits. Many of the soldiers sank immediately to rest upon the ground, too much exhausted to prepare supper, and needing repose more than food. To add to the discomfort of those who had no tents, a drizzling rain set in and continued to fall mournfully through the trees, while the wailing night-winds sang a requiem in their trembling boughs. Nature herself seemed to weep and moan o'er the sad scene. In the dimly-lighted hospital-tents were to be seen and heard what I shall not attempt to portray. The surgeons, unremitting in their attentions to the wounded, were engaged the whole night in dressing wounds and amputating limbs, their duties, as General Taylor remarks in his report, being rendered uncommonly arduous by the small number serving in the field. The commanding general himself, though bred to the iron trade of war, yet possessing a heart ever ready to sympathize with its unfortunate victims, visited the hospitals and the quarters of all his wounded officers before retiring to rest.

In consequence of the many melancholy duties of the night, our mess did not assemble for supper until a very late hour. When at length we approached the board used for a table, and the bright light of a couple of lanterns was allowed to fall upon it, all gazed with as much amazement and disgust upon it as if the banquet of Tereus or a feast of the Anthropophagi had been spread before them. The table

was covered between the plates and cups with thin strips of human flesh and clots of gore, which the cooks, in the haste of preparation by the faint fire-light, had not perceived. Our surgeon, who evidently enjoyed the exclamations and denunciations which the spectacle elicited, stated in explanation that he had been compelled to use the mess-table at the hospital, and had "only cut off some legs and arms upon it." We insisted on having the bloody board turned upside down, and then seated ourselves around it with rather less satisfaction, as may be supposed, than we have experienced in placing our feet under the mahogany of certain friends at home. After supper, we wrapped ourselves in our wet blankets and vainly sought repose. The excitement of battle having subsided, we began to suffer from the extraordinary exertions which the body had almost unconsciously made during the day. Sinews that had been strained like bowstrings then relaxed, and the cramp racked every limb.

During the night, the fatigue parties continued to bring in the wounded, and one of them losing its way, and approaching the chain of sentinels from an unexpected direction, an alarm was spread rapidly over the camp. The "long-roll"* instantly resounded through the grove, and for a time all thought that the enemy were upon us. The weary and drowsy men flew to arms, and stumbling through the bushes, and over numberless obstacles, formed as good a line around the camp as the darkness would permit. Though the uproar was as complete as drums, bugles, and human voices could make it,

*The *long-roll* is the signal for getting under arms in case of alarm, or the sudden appearance of the enemy.

and attended by some scattering shots from a few startled soldiers of the guard, yet so great was the fatigue, and so deathlike the slumbers of some of my acquaintances, that they remained until the next morning in happy ignorance of the "stampede," when they were deeply mortified at not being at their posts. Returning to our quarters, we found the brave old surgeon of our regiment standing before his wounded colonel's tent, armed with a lance and pistols. Having, at the first sounds of alarm, hurriedly mustered the hospital attendants, servants, and other non-combatants, and placed in their hands such weapons as were within reach, he had determined to guard his patients to the death, and phlebotomize in a manner unknown to the faculty generally.

About midnight, a soldier wearing the uniform of the regular infantry, came to inform me that a wounded officer lying in the vicinity had expressed a wish to see me. I immediately desired him to lead the way, which he did, bearing a lighted candle in the socket of a bayonet, over which he held his cap to shield it from the rain. A short walk brought us to a small tent, which we entered. In the middle of it, and with only a single blanket between him and the damp turf, lay one, whom, as the light of the soldier's candle fell upon his face, I recognized as Lieutenant —, of the 1st Infantry. I had become acquainted with him a month previous at Camargo, under circumstances that contrasted strongly with this second most painful interview. But an active military life is made up of scenes as strange and varied, as ever bard or novelist created! Though pale from the loss of blood, Lieutenant —'s features were so calm

and his voice so firm, that I did not think him severely wounded, and was quite shocked when, after remarking that "I hoped he had not fared very ill in the battle," he replied by raising the blanket and exposing to view the stump of an amputated leg. After having his foot shot off by a cannon ball, he had been placed in a wagon and jolted back to camp. The tortures endured during that rough ride, he said, were indescribable, and from which death would have been a welcome relief. Unfortunately for such sufferers, there were at that time no ambulances with the army. The Lieutenant expired a few days afterward, under, I believe, the terrible second amputation, which it was found necessary to perform in many cases in that climate.

The 22d of September, Tuesday, passed without any active operations on the north and east of the city. The citadel and other works continued to fire at parties exposed to their range, and at the Teneria. The guard left in that redoubt the preceding night, was relieved at midday by General Quitman's brigade.

On the west side of the city, however, the battle raged with unabated fury. We have already mentioned the action of San Jeronimo, by which, on the morning of the 21st, General Worth had obtained possession of the Saltillo road. Between him and the city, were yet the strong hill forts we have heretofore described. The road, following the course of the river, ran through the valley between these, and was commanded by the guns of Forts Federacion and Soldada on the south, and of the Bishop's Castle and Independencia on the north. It was obviously necessary to dislodge the

Mexicans from these exterior positions before assaulting the west side of the town.

General Worth accordingly ordered three columns, under Captain C. F. Smith, Captain Miles, and Major Scott, successively, all under the immediate direction of Brigadier General P. F. Smith,* to storm the two batteries, Federacion and Soldada, crowning the heights south of the road and river. The attack was made at 12 M., in full view of the foe, who opened a plunging fire from both works upon our men as they waded the stream, and commenced to toil slowly up the steep, rugged, and bare acclivity. The light troops of the enemy, descending to favorable points on the slope, offered a vigorous resistance. Our troops steadily advanced, firing, and the Mexicans, gradually yielding, retired slowly up the hill. In the meantime, General Smith, discovering that the ground favored the movement, with his characteristic sagacity and promptness, rapidly marched the forces under Scott and Miles obliquely up and around the hill, with the view of taking the Soldada simultaneously with the Federacion. The last named fort was gallantly carried by the

* Those who carefully noted the progress of events in Mexico, can not have failed to observe the genius and military talent uniformly displayed by General Persifor F. Smith. The commencement of the war found him, I believe, a practitioner in the courts of New Orleans. At the suggestion of General Taylor, he was selected to command the six-month volunteers of Louisiana, sent to the Rio Grande. President Polk soon afterward appointed him to the Colonelcy of the new regiment of mounted riflemen, with which corps, however, he never served, having earned promotion before its arrival in the field. At the battle of Monterey, he commanded with distinguished ability a brigade in Worth's division. He subsequently gained an enviable fame in Scott's army, especially for the splendid victory of Contreras. By his recent judicious dispositions on the Indian frontier of Texas, he has effectually secured peace and confidence to that border. I hope the President-makers will ere long discover his worth and talents.

column attacking in front, under Captain C. F. Smith, composed of four companies of the artillery battalion, and six of Texan riflemen. Captain Smith immediately moved with his main body to participate in the assault of the second fort, Soldada, about five hundred yards distant, which was stormed at nearly the same moment by the troops of Scott and Miles, 5th and 7th Infantry, and Blanchard's company of Louisiana volunteers. Lieutenant Pitcher and the color-bearer of the 5th, were the first to enter the Soldada.

The guns captured in these two works were immediately brought to bear upon the opposite hill, a valley six hundred yards wide intervening, and which was guarded by the Bishop's Castle, about midway up the slope, and the Independencia, on its crest. The possession of these works was of controlling importance; especially of the latter, which overlooked and commanded the Castle. Night, however, attended by rain, closed in soon after the capture of Forts Federacion and Soldada and operations on the west ceased for the day, the 21st. Successes had been obtained by General Worth's division almost as important as the capture of the Teneria, and, owing to the comparative weakness of the enemy in that quarter, especially in artillery, at the loss of a very small number of men. Captain McKavett, of the 8th Infantry, was the only officer killed. The troops had been thirty-six hours without food, and constantly tasked to the utmost physical exertions. They spent the night under arms in a pelting storm, and at 3 A. M., on the 22d, prepared to attack the remaining works of the Obispado.

The redoubt, the capture of which is next to be mentioned,

was perched upon the highest point of a hill, eight hundred feet in high, and which from its steepness was almost inaccessible, save on the eastern side, where it gently descended toward the Bishop's Castle, and thence down to the street by which the Saltillo road enters the city. It was deemed by the enemy impregnable. I well remember the astonishment with which the Mexican officers, who were prisoners in our camp at San Domingo, received the intelligence that General Worth had carried the Independencia.

Lieutenant Colonel Childs was assigned to lead the storming party, which consisted of three companies of the artillery battalion, three companies 8th Infantry, and two hundred dismounted Texan Rangers. The command moved from its bivouac in the valley at 3 A. M., and was conducted to its point of ascent by Captain Sanders and Lieutenant Meade, of the Engineers. At the base of the hill, the force was divided into two parties, and silently commenced to climb the dark slopes. It required all the strength of the men to overcome the difficulties which nature had, at places, thrown in their way. Perpendicular ledges of rock and projecting crags were to be scaled, and thickets of stunted chaparral to be crept under. But "excelsior" was the motto of those invincible men who slowly and cautiously pressed up toward the lofty apex, then clothed with a thick mantle of mist. It was Night's last, still, and dark hour, always the most favorable for such enterprises.

The garrison of the work, having witnessed the mettle of our troops on the previous day, and warned by the loss of the Federacion and Soldada, were on the *qui vive*; yet such

was their confidence in the difficulties of the ground, that it was supposed no assault could be successful. At dawn the storming party had reached a point within one hundred yards of the redoubt, and where among the clefts of the rocks a body of the enemy had been posted in apparent anticipation of the attack. The flash and roar which announces the coming of a summer's rain, is not more sudden and terrific than the explosion which then burst upon our stormers. The deep-set rocks around them were scarcely more firm and unyielding than were our stout-hearted men in that crashing blast. Not a shot was returned—not a cheer raised! At the thrilling word, "charge," quickly repeated by the officers, the Americans rushed forward and forced the enemy back toward the redoubt at the point of the bayonet. The summit of the hill occupied by the Mexicans, blazed like a beacon, while in the dark cloud around it, the flashes of our guns soon formed an unbroken ring of fire. Rapidly and regularly that burning circle contracted, until it mingled with the fire of the foe. Then came the deadly struggle. Those red flames were suddenly extinguished, and instead of the rattle of musketry, the shouts and groans of a fierce hand to hand encounter, floated out from the peak of that cloud-capt hill. Our men fought with unwavering courage; the enemy, for a few minutes, made an obstinate but unavailing defense; but being forced over their walls, finally fled in wild confusion toward the Bishop's Castle. Among the few Americans killed in this assault was Captain Gillespie, a popular officer of the Texan Rangers.

The next piece in Worth's brilliant programme was the

Bishop's Castle; which was below, and about four hundred yards distant from the position last carried. No artillery was found in the redoubt, and Lieutenant Roland, of Duncan's battery, aided by fifty soldiers of the line, undertook the Herculean task of dragging or rather carrying a twelve-pounder howitzer up the rugged acclivity which the troops had climbed in the early morning. In two hours the labor was successfully accomplished; and the howitzer, covered by the epaulement of the captured work, commenced to play upon the castle. Meanwhile the 5th Infantry had been brought up by its gallant Major, Martin Scott, to reinforce the hight, while the troops of Major Vinton, and the Texans under Hays and Walker, advancing to covered positions on both sides of the ridge, invested the castle with a close and constant fire, which the enemy returned from the parapets and loop-holes of that massive edifice. This contest of sharpshooters continued for several hours, and with the fire of Roland's howitzer, produced a visible effect upon the garrison. At length the Mexicans conceived the desperate resolution of re-taking the hight, as the only means of saving the castle; and about 3 P. M., having received heavy reinforcements from the city, they made a vigorous sortie under Colonel Francisco Berra. This was a movement long anticipated, and for which the needful dispositions had been made by the accomplished strategist who commanded our troops. The enemy was allowed to advance, unmolested, for some distance up the ridge; and then, at a preconcerted signal, a general discharge from all arms was poured into his column, which caused it to reel and stagger back in dismay. Our