

men rising in the next instant, from the rocks, charged with a shout upon the front and flanks of the foe. The Mexicans were unable to resist this sudden and impetuous assault, and after a short but ineffectual effort to hold their ground, gave way, and, like a loosened cliff, rolled headlong down the descent. Few of the fugitives paused to re-enter the castle; but "horse and foot" fled in dire confusion past the work, and, as their own historians confess, "penetrated to the interior of the city, spreading terror."*

The Americans pursuing, entered the castle. Its guns, together with Duncan's and Mackall's field-batteries, which, the road being now open, came up from the valley at a gallop, were discharged upon the retiring and confused masses that filled the avenue leading to the city. About thirty prisoners were taken in the fortress. Lieutenant Ayres of the 3d Artillery hauled down the gaudy standard of Mexico; and in the next moment, the unpretending flag of our glorious Union floated in triumph from the battlements. As it was unfurled by the evening breeze, and the "stripes and stars" flashed in the golden rays of declining day, shouts of joy burst forth from those who, on the north side of the city, had been attentively observing the tragic scenes enacted on the heights. Thus terminated on the evening of September 22d, the second act of the drama.

*The enemy committed, in my poor judgment of such matters, an egregious blunder in associating some squadrons of horse with the attacking column. The practice of mixing small bodies of infantry and cavalry together, is a bad one in all places, but especially so in that. Ground more unsuitable for the operations of mounted troops, I never beheld. The proud Lancers, it may be, concluded that the disgrace and humiliation of defeat could be no greater than that of serving on foot.

That night I was again on duty. A great number of prisoners, chiefly soldiers, but among them some of the vile scum of the chaparral, were in the camp, and had hitherto been under a special guard in the center of the grove. In consequence of the paucity of our troops, and the number of our wounded, it was determined to dispense with this detail, and to place the prisoners in charge of the main-guard. It was after dark when the order for their removal reached me, and it was found necessary to exercise great vigilance to frustrate attempts at escape, during their progress through the intricate paths and gloomy shades of the wood. On arriving at the guard station, and observing a large force drawn up under arms, the Mexicans gazed at each other with anxiety and alarm; and some of them, supposing they were about to suffer the cruel fate so often inflicted upon Texan prisoners by their own troops, broke forth in prayers and lamentations.* Our assurances that no harm was intended, uttered, it is true, not in the best Castilian, and interlarded with a little dog-latin, that seemed quite as comprehensible, allayed their fears, and they all quietly obeyed the order to sit down. The jeers of some of their own number contributed to the pacification of the most timid. An old man, clad in the garb of a citizen, was greatly alarmed,

* The Mexicans—naturally sanguinary, and debased by merciless civil wars—in their fitful efforts to subdue the revolted province of Texas, were strangely, madly, blind to the policy of humanity. They commenced the campaign of 1836, under a special act of the Mexican Congress, which provided that no prisoners should be taken. Yet they did accept prisoners of war, but only to violate the express terms of capitulation, and every sentiment of honor and justice, by murdering them in cold blood. The slaughter of Alamo, the massacre of Colonel Fanning's command at Goliad, and the decimation of the Mier captives, were act wholly unjustifiable, and which deserve to be held up to eternal execration.

and would have embraced my knees. He supplicated loudly for his release, declaring that he was not an enemy of the Americans, and had been captured while pursuing a journey of business. A promise that his case should be looked to as soon as leisure permitted, and a tender of some little comforts due to his gray hairs and misfortunes, elicited from him *muchos gracias*.

Early on the morning of Wednesday, September 23d, it was discovered by General Quitman's brigade occupying the Teneria, that the enemy had, during the night, evacuated fort Diabolo, and abandoned all their exterior works on the north, except the citadel.* General Taylor immediately ordered the troops to advance cautiously, and the batteries to

*The following account of the abandonment of these works is given by the Mexican historian, in the "Notes:"

"This unlucky event, the loss of the Bishop's Castle, infused a silent fear which comes before defeat. With few exceptions, the officers of corps felt this; and it infected the General-in-chief himself, who was not endowed with dispatch and energy. The possessors and disseminators of these sentiments, we are acquainted with, but whose names, from shame, we hastily dismiss.

"An order was sent to concentrate the army in the interior line, by abandoning all the works more advanced at the north, east, and west; and still preserving the citadel and a few works to the south on the bank of the river. These dispositions were executed at eleven at night, in the midst of a noisy confusion arising from the troops refusing to abandon their positions without fighting. The grumbling and discontented showed themselves openly, and the military morale suffering by it in a manner beyond description. On the commencement of the 23d, it was discovered that the enemy's column, attacking from the west, had occupied the Quinta de Arista, Campo Santo, and other contiguous positions. At the points we had abandoned in the night, in the midst of frightful disorder, some drunken soldiers still remained, discharging their pieces in the air, committing excesses, and giving a clear idea of the want of concert that prevailed. General Ampudia now issued from the cathedral, where he had remained during the action, and repaired to the defenses. The azoteas were topped with sacks, and various houses pierced for musketry. At ten in the morning, the enemy occupied the posts we had deserted, and at eleven invested with firmness, generalizing their fire, which grew warm. to the very houses on the principal plaza."

open a fire upon the central parts of the town. Colonel Wood's regiment of Rangers dismounted, and joined the attacking party. They were excellent marksmen, and their equipments were most suitable for the work in hand. The Americans, no longer annoyed by the Mexican artillery, seized upon the nearest houses, and mounting to the roofs or breaking through walls, slowly forced their way toward the heart of the beleaguered city. They were soon engaged, and now upon more equal terms, in a desperate conflict with the defenders. House after house, and square after square, were wrested from them. The Mexicans fought in sullen silence, while our men, assured of victory, made the welkin ring with their cheers.

In the meantime, General Worth, supposing from the heavy fire on our side of the town, that General Taylor was conducting a main assault, and that orders for his co-operation, having to travel a circuit of several miles, had miscarried, organized two column of attack, and descending from the Obispado, launched his steady and enthusiastic battalions once more upon the foe. Bragg's and Ridgely's light artillery were brought in on the east side, and Duncan's and Mackall's on the west side of the city. Sections of these batteries thundered simultaneously through the principal streets, advancing after every discharge. The enemy thus pressed between two fires, slowly retired, defending every wall and house-top with the heroic fortitude that has characterized their race in resisting sieges. Soon after midday, as if by mutual consent, both parties took a short breathing-spell, and a deathlike stillness pervaded the streets, which

a few moments before had resounded with the wild tumult of war. For about an hour the din of battle and fierce shouts of the combatants were hushed, and then were with greater violence renewed. The Mexicans, soldiers and citizens, animated with the energy of despair, boldly ascended to the *azoteas*, where, armed with heavy old English muskets, they were no match for our dextrous riflemen. If, as I am inclined to believe, our loss was greater than that of the enemy on the first day of the battle, the account was more than balanced on the third. The Americans being now as well sheltered as the Mexicans, took a more deliberate aim than when exposed in open ground to the fire of artillery. They availed themselves in this singular combat, waged as it were, in mid-air, of every possible stratagem to deceive or provoke the enemy into committing some fatal blunder or exposure. The Mexican who dared to show himself above the parapets challenged certain death. From every angle and aperture they showered their balls upon the enemy; and even the spouts, which in Mexican houses resemble the scuppers of a ship, poured forth streams of fire. Ampudia's troops continued to yield before the valor of our intrepid men. The Texans, whom the sight of a Mexican always inflamed to madness, were conspicuous and furious in their assaults. Driven back by inches, the enemy at nightfall found himself confined to the vicinity of the grand plaza, which had been barricaded for a final and desperate resistance.

In some of the newspaper narratives of the battle of the 23d, the women of Monterey are represented as actively participating in the defense, and hence the pen of fiction has

already interwoven many tender love scenes in the siege. But the only account of female heroism exhibited there, which possesses any claim to authenticity, may be found in the subjoined passage from the Mexican history to which we have previously had occasion to refer.*

In the afternoon of the 23d, General Quitman's brigade was relieved by that of General Hamer. Night once more compelled the contending forces to seek a respite from their sanguinary labors, and General Taylor now prepared to concert measures with Worth for a combined attack on the Plaza the next morning. The opposing troops lay so near to each other during the night,

"That the fixed sentinels almost received
The secret whispers of each other's watch."

Scattered through the streets and on the house-tops were the cold and bloody corpses of those killed during the day, while the gardens of the suburbs were "reeking with the smell of death." The mangled remains of those slain on the 21st, unburied and moldering where they had fallen, tainted the night air and threatened a pestilence. A few of our men, too, who had been wounded on the first day of the battle, were, as we subsequently discovered, still lying there,

* "At this time, sublime as the heroines of Sparta and of Rome, and beautiful as the tutelar deities of Grecian sculpture, the Senorita Dona Maria Josefa Zozaya, in the house of Senor Garza Flores, presented herself among the soldiers who fought on the *azotea*, to give them food and ammunition, and to teach them how to despise danger.

"The beauty and rank of this young lady *communicated new attractions*, and it was requisite to conquer to admire her, or to perish before her eyes to be made worthy of smiles. She was a lovely personation of the country itself. She was the beau ideal of heroism in all her movements, and with all her tender fascinations."

suffering agonies, their tongues swollen with thirst, and their gashed and festering flesh devoured by worms. Among these dead bodies and helpless, wounded men, now prowled the fierce, ravening wolves of the chaparral, tearing some, limb from limb, and perhaps lapping the warm blood of others "ere life be parted."

The mortar, which had proved so inefficient on the north side of the city, had been sent around to General Worth, and now, from the vicinity of the Campo Santo, played with no trifling effect upon the enemy crowded in the plaza mayor. Many of us had never before witnessed the operation of shell-firing at night, and found it a most interesting pyrotechnic exhibition; especially upon this occasion, when the excitement it produced within the enemy's lines assured us (as a brother officer, who lay on the ground at my side, remarked) that General Don Pedro de Ampudia was about "to cave." The first few bombs that were discharged, exploded high in the air, revealing the whole shadowy outline of the city and mountains in a ghastly glare that was quickly swallowed up in darkness. A slight increase of the projecting charge deposited them in the Grand Plaza, with an explosion that shook the city, and a blaze that for an instant obscured the stars, and caused the heavens to blush upon the scene. The service of this battery during the night was admirably managed by Major Munroe, and exercised a decided influence upon the final result. It is a noticeable fact, that Ampudia's proposal to evacuate the city, is dated within an hour after the mortar opened its fire. And there can be no question but that the same proposition would have been

made early on the first day of the battle had we possessed guns of sufficient weight to reach the city from any point without the enemy's lines.

Thursday morning, September 24th, we were early on foot, and waited but for the dawn to renew the assault. About 3 o'clock, A. M., a bugle sounded the parley in front of the position held by our brigade, and soon afterward a small party under cover of a flag of truce was discerned advancing down the street. It proved to be Colonel Morino, of General Ampudia's staff, whose sad countenance at once explained to all the object of his mission. He bore from his commanding-general to General Taylor a proposition to surrender the town, which, together with Taylor's reply, is subjoined.*

* Copies of the notes of Generals Ampudia and Taylor preliminary to the capitulation of Monterey.

"Head-Quarters, Monterey,

"September 23, 1846; 9 o'clock at night.

"General: As I have made all the defense of which I believe this city capable, I have fulfilled my obligation, and done all required by that military honor which, to a certain degree, is common to all the armies of the civilized world, and as a continuation of the defense would only bring upon the population distresses to which they have already been sufficiently subjected by the evils consequent upon war, and believing that the American government will appreciate these sentiments, I propose to your Excellency to evacuate the city and citadel, taking with me the personnel and material of war which is left, and under the assurance that no prosecution shall be undertaken against the citizens who have taken part in the defense. Be pleased to accept the assurance of my most distinguished consideration.

"PEDRO DE AMPUDIA.

"Senor Don Z. TAYLOR, General-in-chief of the American Army."

"Head-Quarters, Camp before Monterey,

"September 24, 1846; 7 o'clock, A. M.

"Sir: Your communication bearing date at 9 o'clock, P. M., on the 23d, has just been received by the hands of Colonel Morino. In answer to your proposition to evacuate the city and fort with all the personnel and material of war, I have to state that my duty compels me to decline acceding to it. A complete surrender of the town and garrison, the latter as prisoners of war, is now demanded. But such surrender will be upon terms, and the gallant defense of the place, creditable

The Colonel was introduced to General Hamer, who immediately provided him with an escort to head-quarters at San Domingo. I was with Hamer at the reception of Marino, and was surprised as well as pleased at the assumed indifference and tranquility maintained by all who were within ear-shot when he announced his business, though we were no sooner relieved of his presence than congratulations were joyfully exchanged.

A cessation of fire was agreed upon, while commissioners arranged the terms of capitulation, and we set about getting breakfast in the captured Forts Teneria and Diabolo. We were usually pretty well provided with provisions of some sort, but it must be confessed that the table of the St. Charles, in New Orleans, was rather better than ours on that particular morning. A tin cup full of a thick liquid facetiously called coffee, and made from the berry of that name, slightly bruised with the butt of a musket, a slap-jack, weighing a quarter of a pound to the square inch, and a crawfish, which had that morning been dashed upon the wall of the Teneria by the explosion of a shell in the ditch, constituted my repast. But the stomach of the soldier is not often dainty, and the appetite, which for some days past had been scarcely

alike to the Mexican troops and nation, will prompt me to make those terms as liberal as possible. The garrison will be allowed, at your option, after laying down its arms, to retire to the interior, on condition of not serving again during the war, or until regularly exchanged. I need hardly say that the rights of non-combatants will be respected. An answer to this communication is required by 12 o'clock. If you assent to an accommodation, an officer will be despatched at once, under instructions to arrange the conditions. I am sir, very respectfully your obedient servant.

"Z. TAYLOR, Major-General U. S. A., commanding.

"Senor Don PEDRO AMPUDIA, General-in-chief, Monterey."

felt in the rage of stronger passions, now returned with such strength, that we could have fallen upon whatever was offered, like "a priest, a shark, an alderman, or pike." The sounds of merriment that broke from the men as they gathered around the camp-kettles for breakfast, proclaimed the joy they felt at the prospect of a termination of the siege. A remarkably happy looking mess were observed sitting on the body of a dead mule, and talking, laughing, and sipping their coffee with evident gusto; occasionally placing their cups upon the animal's bloated side, while they helped themselves to the contents of a pan that simmered over a neighboring fire. After breakfast, fatigue parties were sent out to bury the dead. While engaged in that painful duty, they happily discovered a few men who had been wounded three days previous, and who were so much reduced by hunger, suffering, and the loss of blood, that their comrades could scarcely recognize them.

A long negotiation, lasting until late in the night of the 24th, resulted in the following

"ARTICLES OF CAPITULATION."

ARTICLE 1. As the legitimate result of the operations before this place, and the present position of the contending armies, it is agreed that the city, the fortifications, cannon, the munitions of war, and all other public property, with the under-mentioned exceptions, be surrendered to the commanding general of the United States forces now in Monterey.

ART. 2. That the Mexican forces be allowed to retain the following arms, to wit: the commissioned officers their side-

arms, the infantry their arms and accouterments, the cavalry their arms and accouterments, the artillery one field battery, not to exceed six pieces, with twenty-one rounds of ammunition.

ART. 3. That the Mexican armed forces retire, within seven days from this date, beyond the line formed by the pass of the Rinconada, the city of Linares, and San Fernando de Presas.

ART. 4. That the citadel of Monterey be evacuated by the Mexican, and occupied by the American forces to-morrow morning at ten o'clock.

ART. 5. To avoid collisions, and for mutual convenience, that the troops of the United States will not occupy the city until the Mexican forces have withdrawn, except for hospital and storage purposes.

ART. 6. That the forces of the United States will not advance beyond the line specified in the 3d article before the expiration of eight weeks, or until the orders or instructions of the respective governments can be received.

ART. 7. That the public property to be delivered shall be turned over and received by officers appointed by the commanding generals of the two armies.

ART. 8. That all doubts as to the meaning of any of the preceding articles shall be solved by an equitable construction, and on principles of liberality to the retiring army.

ART. 9. That the Mexican flag, when struck at the citadel, may be saluted by its own battery.

Done at Monterey, September 24, 1846.

Commissioners on the part of the
United States, { W. J. WORTH,
J. P. HENDERSON,
JEFF. DAVIS.

Commissioners on the part of Mexico, { T. RAQUENA.
ORTEGA,
M. M. LLANO.

Approved by { Z. TAYLOR,
P. AMPUDIA.

It will be seen that the terms granted the Mexican garrison were less rigorous than those first imposed by General Taylor. But the gallant defense of the town, and the fact of a recent change of government in Mexico, (the restoration of Santa Anna,) believed to be favorable to the interests of peace, induced the commission to concur in these articles, especially that for the temporary cessation of hostilities. It was said that our straight-forward old general, vexed by the caviling and arrogant demands of Ampudia's commissioners, was more than once about to break up the conference, and "let the tongue of war again plead for our interest." The camp was full of rumors of what took place in the council-chamber; among others, that General Taylor had at first peremptorily refused to allow the Mexicans to take off any artillery, declaring that he held the town, as if it was an orange in his hand, and that he would squeeze it to a pulp if terms more in accordance with the condition of affairs

were not speedily agreed upon. That thereupon the Mexican chief of artillery successfully appealed to the generosity and magnanimity of the stern old soldier, stating that arms and accouterments had been conceded to the infantry and cavalry, and declaring that he would rather die at his guns than see the artillery alone disgraced, by being compelled to march out without a single light battery. Certainly the capitulation was sufficiently honorable to our arms, and humiliating to the foe. Many mustang heroes and militia generals, both in and out of Congress, and even the Cabinet of Mr. Polk, have condemned General Taylor for acceding to it,—one of the most humane and politic strokes of war that distinguished the campaign. By its terms we gained all that could have been acquired from a further assault, save more blood, and a repetition of those horrors from which I have not attempted to raise the veil. It is one of the maxims of Napoleon, that “the keys of a fortress are well worth the retirement of the garrison, when it is resolved to yield only on those conditions. On this principle it is always wiser to grant an honorable capitulation to a garrison which has made a vigorous resistance, than to risk an assault.” But no more ample and satisfactory vindication of the convention can be desired, than that contained in the following letter of General Taylor, written in reply to the strictures of the Secretary of War, and to which the attention of the reader is earnestly invited.

*Head-Quarters, Army of Occupation,
Camp near Monterey, November 8, 1846.*

Sir: In reply to so much of the communication of the Secretary of War, dated October 13th, as relates to the

reasons which induced the convention resulting in the capitulation of Monterey, I have the honor to submit the following remarks:

The convention presents two distinct points: First. The permission granted the Mexican army to retire with their arms, etc. Second. The temporary cessation of hostilities for the term of eight weeks. I shall remark on these in order.

The force with which I advanced on Monterey was limited, by causes beyond my control, to about 6000 men. With this force, as every military man must admit who has seen the ground, it was entirely impossible to invest Monterey so closely as to prevent the escape of the garrison. Although the main communication with the interior was in our possession, yet one route was open to the Mexicans throughout the operations, and could not be closed, as were also other minor tracks and passes through the mountains. Had we, therefore, insisted on more rigorous terms than those granted, the result would have been the escape of the body of the Mexican force, with the destruction of its artillery and magazines; our only advantage being the capture of a few prisoners of war, at the expense of valuable lives, and much damage to the city. The consideration of humanity was present to my mind during the conference which led to the convention, and outweighed in my judgment the doubtful advantages to be gained by a resumption of the attack upon the town. This conclusion has been fully confirmed by an inspection of the enemy's position and means, since the surrender. It was discovered that his principal magazine, containing an immense amount of powder, was in the cathedral,

and completely exposed to our shells from two directions. The explosion of this mass of powder, which must have ultimately resulted from a continuance of the bombardment, would have been infinitely disastrous, involving the destruction not only of the Mexican troops, but of non-combatants, and even our own people, had we pressed the attack.

In regard to the temporary cessation of hostilities, the fact that we are not at this moment, within eleven days of the termination of the period fixed by the convention, prepared to move forward in force, is a sufficient explanation of the military reasons which dictated this suspension of arms. It paralyzed the enemy during a period when, from the want of necessary means, we could not possibly move. I desire distinctly to state, and to call the attention of the authorities to the fact, that with all diligence in breaking mules and setting up wagons, the first wagons in addition to our original trains from Corpus Christi, (and but 125 in number,) reached my head-quarters on the same day with the Secretary's communication of October 13th, viz: the 2d inst. At the date of the surrender of Monterey our force had not more than ten days' rations, and even now, with all our endeavors, we have not more than twenty-five. The task of fighting and beating the enemy is among the least difficult that we encounter; the great question of supplies necessarily controls all the operations in a country like this. At the date of the convention I could not, of course, have foreseen that the department would direct an important detachment from my command without consulting me, or without waiting the result of the main operation under my orders.

I have touched the prominent military points involved in the convention of Monterey. There were other considerations which weighed with the commissioners in framing, and with myself in approving, the articles of the convention. In the conference with General Ampudia, I was distinctly told by him that he had invited it to spare the further effusion of blood, and because General Santa Anna had declared himself favorable to peace. I knew that our government had made propositions to that of Mexico to negotiate, and I deemed that the change of government in this country since my last instructions, fully warranted me in entertaining considerations of policy. My grand motive in moving forward with very limited supplies had been to increase the inducements of the Mexican government to negotiate for peace.

Whatever may be the actual views of the Mexican rulers, or of General Santa Anna, *it is not unknown to the government that I had the very best reasons for believing the statement of General Ampudia to be true.* It was my opinion at the time of the convention, and it has not been changed, that the liberal treatment of the Mexican army, and the suspension of arms, would exert none but a favorable influence in our behalf.

The result of the entire operation has been to throw the Mexican army back more than 300 miles, to the city of San Luis de Potosi, and to open the country to us, if we choose to penetrate it, up to the same point.

It has been my purpose in this communication, not so much to defend the convention from the censure which I deeply regret to find implied in the Secretary's letter, as to