

# Democratic Banner.

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## TERMS

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## THE CAMP,

AND THE BATTLE-FIELD;  
OR, TALES OF THE MEXICAN WAR.

THE MYSTERIOUS PERSONAGE OF MARIN AND MONTEREY.

Between Seralvo and Monterey are the towns, or, still more properly, places—of Callas, Ramas, Marin, and Estancia. They are not important places, but in the line of march, proved highly useful to a three-mile column of soldiers, all of whom were fond of an occasional tortilla, a bumper of pulque, or a cup of new milk, which the women of the village would convey to them without the knowledge of their lords and masters. In this march, I had the honor and pleasure to be included, keeping the most of the time in the twelve hundred Texan cavalry who were with us, but riding out of the column and in all directions, as occasion, opportunity, and inclination dictated. In the early part of the day, myself, Frank Meyer, and a little Frenchman, of whom I have spoken of in another sketch, attempted to ford the stream St. Juan, near Marin. It was waist deep with the infantry, and persons who were mounted did not escape a modicum of wetting. Frank and myself were well mounted, but, strange to us, our horses became frightened, and, pitching about a little more than was convenient, soused us head and ears. As I scrambled to an upright position, and bubbled out a few words not over indicative of good temper, a fair—but not white—face was thrust in to mine, and a musical voice said in Spanish—'Let me help you to the shore!'

The man that spoke was at least six feet high, and had a figure the perfect impersonation of grace and proportion. He wore the costume of a Mexican priest, and was gentlemanly and intellectual in his language and deportment. Where he had come from, or how he had got among us, was a mystery I could not fathom. He was under protection, he said, and was going to Monterey. By-the-way, if you have never seen the bat of a Mexican priest you cannot imagine why I envied the man his, because the weather was intensely warm, and the way as dusty as a disturbed ash-hole. A hat worn by one of these gentry, has a rim not over eighteen inches wide, which acts as an umbrella to keep off sun and rain, and serves as a decoy for all the atoms that seek a resting place about your head and shoulders.

We had forded the stream, and train and all were on the other side. The priest remained by me, having procured a sleek, strong mule, where, or by what method, I did not ask him. He thought I would converse with him, as he pertinaciously rode by my side, and I commenced by saying—

'We are surrounded by mountains, and yet the ground which we now stand upon, and which at present seems like a fruitful and delightful plain, this morning bore evidence of being also mountains. We have hardly known the ascent.'

'Ah!' replied he, in tolerable English, and with a meaning glance, 'there are many things deceptive in Mexico: All are not your enemies who appear so.'

'Well,' I replied, 'as to that, I do not know; but it seems to me that every male native of this country is opposed to us.—At Marin, the inhabitants were brutally robbed, whipped, and otherwise maltreated, a day or two since, by Torrejon's troop, and yet they manifested no love for us, charging the most exorbitant prices for wines and other articles of service and luxury. I paid two dollars for a bottle of Muscat.'

'I can sell you one for a dollar!' said he, drawing one from beneath his garment.

Meyer looked wistfully at the coveted fluid, and the little Frenchman bought it. I continued as follows:—

'These people also tried to assassinate our stragglers, and did murder one.'

'Did you see the murderer?' inquired the priest.

'Yes!'

'Did he look like me?'

'Yes; now that I observe, he did, except that his hair was very long, and his beard entirely unshorn.'

'Thank Heaven, he escaped!' exclaimed the priest, fervently.

'Why, thank Heaven? Are you an enemy so bitter, and here under protection?'

'Alas, senior, he was my brother! I am a native of Marin.'

'Indeed! Where did you learn to speak English?'

'In the city of Mexico, where I served the President while I pursued my studies. There I became acquainted with a gentleman who came from your country in an official capacity, and travelled about the country with him to show him its antiquities. He taught me to speak your language partially. Further intercourse with your people has improved me wonderfully.'

'You are—'

'What my countrymen would call a renegade, if they knew me,' said he somewhat bitterly.

'Can we take Monterey?' I inquired, abruptly.

'Yes, but you must fight for it, it is strongly fortified and well guarded.—Farewell! I will see you again.' Saying which, he urged his mule forward, and I lost sight of him.

Two hours after this, when between Marin and Estancia, a party of us, with privilege, straggled into a house belonging to a large and elegant hacienda, or plantation of sugar and corn—the second crop of the latter of which was in full growth nearly. There was nothing in particular to attract us. The men were off to look at our troops, the women said. They offered the never failing tortillas and milk, of which my comrades availed themselves, while I stood at the door viewing the prospect. It was grand. Peaks of mountains appeared to rise about me in every direction. The face of the undulating ground spread out before me, was smiling in verdure. Beautiful specimens of the romantic mood of nature were numerous. Flowers of splendor and variety were dotted about here and there lending an air of supreme softness to what would otherwise have been a refinement of ruggedness, if I may so express myself. As I stood viewing the scene, and listening to the merriment of my thoughtless comrades, my eye caught the glimpse of a figure moving through the corn at my left.—Had it not been for the change of dress, from a priest to that of a gay farmer, tricked out in bells and ribands and gaudy colored cottons, the moustache and hair, and other accessories, I could have sworn I saw my Mexican friend, who had helped me to ford the St. Juan. He noticed my glance and drew back, as he thought, unobserved, among the corn, and was lost to my sight. I felt uneasy, and at once instinctively guessed that danger and treachery were abroad. I entered the house, plucked a blossom from a cactus growing before the window, and considered whether I should speak out or call off Meyer, and communicate with him. I chose the latter course. Frank laughed, said the ladies were entertaining, and that if we remained a few minutes longer we would reach the column in less than an hour. I yielded, and lingered with them. We drank three bottles of Muscat, which cost us four dollars and a half, (I wish I had them now!) and, twenty minutes after I had warned Meyer, started off, listening to the 'adios' of the girls as long as we were within hearing. We rode until near Estancia, passing several other haciendas, and feasting our eyes with the elegancies of nature, and all in the best of spirits.

'Ma foi!' exclaimed the Frenchman, rising in his stirrups and looking about him, 'this is *magnifique*—this pays! I would like to live here forever.'

'So would I, Meyer. Talk of the hardships of a soldier's life! He went on in substance, as in a sort of wine-excitement—this is a glorious thing, and I revel in it.'

'Just look at that, and push on for the column as fast as you can, or in five minutes your hearts will be hanging on the bushes!' said an old Texan.

We looked, and saw a body of Mexican cavalry bearing across a level plain towards us at full gallop. They were so near that we could hear the words of the leader urging his men to secure us. There was something in the tones of the officer's voice, and in the contour of his frame, that, despite my will, attracted my attention. A dozen against at least two hundred was rather too much odds, and away we went, dashing over every thing, regardless of consequence, like so many Gileps. Their infernal 'Haltos' thundered in our ears, and their declarations that they would slay all the 'Hijos de la grande Republica del Norte!' that is, 'the sons of the great republic of the North'—were entirely palpable. They gained upon us, and I got one pretty fair sight of the officer, who was really very enthusiastic in the chase. I felt satisfied that he was the man I had recently seen crawling through the corn; he was now a fine soldier in full uniform. When the chances were altogether in their favor, and our fate appeared settled, a turn in the road brought us in view of the rear of our army, or the trains, &c., about the tenth of a mile distant. We dozen fugitive set up a howl of delight, and drove our spurs rowel deep, while the enemy turned around and fled, first firing at us without effect. Once more under 'condulto,' or military protection, we thanked our stars for our lucky escape, and covered with dust, we quietly—that is, as quiet as grins and jeers and sharp looks permitted—took our old places. The Texan couldn't get over having had to run for those they called their natural enemies.

'D—n their black-eyed women, their wive, and their infernal victuals—I wish I knew nothing of either!' exclaimed the one who took the unceremonious retreat most to the heart.

'Bless their scenery, their star and moonlight, their clear air with the singular refraction of light it exhibits, and their pretty, generous, heroic women!' exclaimed I mentally—for had I done so aloud I should have lost friends.

'That night we encamped about twelve miles from Monterey, or less than five hours march, at San Francisco. It is a

place requiring no description, having the Agave, orange tree, the chapparal, prickly pear, convolvulus, citron, etc., to some extent, in spots where Mexican indolence has permitted the face of the land to show a well-to-do condition, so far as cultivated fruits are concerned.

It was, enthusiastically speaking, a jolly bivouac. Such a preparation of arms and handling knapsacks, and so many brave fellows saying:—'We were to move at sunrise in the morning, and consequently slept pretty much as we could, not making any remarkable preparation. The party with me in the afternoon spread their blankets on the grass and sat down, some to discuss a trifling quantity of contraband drinkables, and three of us to eat a little prized dry ham, which we seasoned with mustard taken from an old powder horn, and black as night. Towards midnight we fell asleep. I slept one hour, about, to be awakened by the Frenchman, who averred that a Mexican had endeavored to steal his knapsack, and had been otherwise tormenting him like a nightmare.'

'Why didn't you shoot him, or call the guard, eh?'

'Sacre! When I came wide open awake, he gone!'

'Get out, you simpleton. You've dreamed what you tell me.'

'Ah, ha!' exclaimed he, with a true Gallic shrug, as he rolled over in his blanket again, 'I suppose so, for how could the devil come here in our camp?'

And we both returned to the arms of slumber.

'Thunder and lightning, what a mosquito!' roared a Texan friend next to me, which aroused me a second time.

'D—n your mosquitoes?—can't you make less noise?' growled another, and for the third time I dozed.

'Christopher Columbus!' yelled I, in less than five minutes, as bold upright, that must have been a gigantic gallinipper, with a cross-cut saw bill!

Either mosquitoes were unusually large and energetic, or somebody was indulging in camp jokes, I thought, and I lay awake, but perfectly still. Presently I saw a figure feeling around a train wagon opposite my feet, and making headway stealthily. It may be Rough and Ready, or some other officer, I reflected, or it may not. Here goes!—and I caught the figure by the right arm in the twinkle of an eye.

'Que es esta?'—(What is the matter?)—asked a voice in a careless tone.

'Who the devil are you, and what are you doing here?' I interrogated angrily.

'Oh!' replied the individual, in the broken but not bad English I had heard the priest make use of—'it is me. I am about my own business.'

I was overcome by astonishment. Detaining him, I rehearsed to him a miraculous likeness I had seen of him in different characters.

'That is not wonderful,' he replied, with an air of the utmost discomposure; 'there are three brothers of us who look alike. One is little better than a leprosy—him you saw as an assassin, and another lives on his hacienda near Marin. It might have been him with the soldiers. He does those things sometimes.'

I was not satisfied by the explanation; there was evidently something wrong; but the priest was there under the protection of those who knew and would do their duty, so I relinquished my hold, and with a 'good night!' retired again to the grass and blanket. Between that time and sunrise nobody complained of 'gallinippers.'

I saw no more of the priest for some days.

There I was in the city of Monterey—a beautiful city, with one side (east) open to a lovely plain; and on the other three, bounded by high and sublime mountains, such meeting, as it were, in the bosom of a valley. It has stone walls in the old Spanish style, and is like a real representation of old Castile.

I had been with the Mississippi and Tennessee troops, and the dismounted Texans, under Generals Henderson and Quitman. We had fought through the houses, having entered the street and covered our advance from the fire of the crowds on the flat roofs, and in the houses, by cutting our way, from square to square, through the partition walls, and driving the enemy from their snug positions like rats before us, not without trouble. It was a terrific time, and altogether beyond description.—Batteries were at work from heights and forts—death whistled through the air in all directions. Yells, screams, shouts, groans and reports almost deafened one, and the confusion that reigned was utterly chaotic. Streets had been barricaded and fortified, and even churches had been used for defence. I had fought, in common with many others, for twenty-four hours, with nothing to eat but a little dried corn. Think of that!—and of gasches, gore and demoralized destruction; and talk of laurel wreaths and glory, will you, dearest reader? My feet were blistered, too, and my face burned to a genuine 'crisp.' The women were here, there, every where, although all that could be done had done so. I saw Bravot Muth with his sword, Major General Butler, Captain Allen, Lieutenant Putnam of the Tennesseeans, and Lieutenant Hall of Ohio, fall—the last three, poor fellows, were killed. I also saw Capt. McNeven fall while advancing against the foe. He was shot through the body by a ball weighing nine

pounds, and died without speaking a word.

On the last day of the fight previous to the surrender, while rushing to enter a breach in a door of the Bishop's palace made by a howitzer, I saw on the top of one of the houses—only one story in height—looking over the breast work or parapet, a face marvellously like my mysterious priest, but habited like an *arrero* or carrier. He was pelting his lead among us with zeal, and doing no little damage. An hour after that, a party of us crushed through a partition wall into a house one square from the grand plaza. The first room we entered contained nobody. A side apartment was secured from common-place intruders by a heavy lock. The butts of two muskets soon removed that difficulty. The picture presented to our sight was what the manager of an American theatre would call a 'grand tableau.' On the floor lay two of the American troops dead and cold.—Seated flat on the floor was my mysterious friend, holding a girl, aged ten years or thereabouts, close to his bosom. He was wounded in the cheek.

'Ah, ha! friend priest. How are your brothers?' says I.

'No ha!', said he, sullenly.

'Ah, you have none, eh? Then you were a spy!'

'Not upon you or yours, but upon a couple of spies and deserters from this place. I dogged them to their destruction—Holy Virgin, receive my thanks!—they now rot in the air. Of what I saw in your camp, no word passed my lips. I sought the traitors, and I found them.'

'You have managed to change your appearance quickly and often, and do it well. You are a strange person.'

'Ah, senior, practice makes perfect. I have long been in the habit of indulging in that sport. But leave me.'

'Oh, no! Here lies two comrades killed by you, (he nodded in the affirmative,) & you must not escape retributive treatment.'

'I am wounded and bleeding to death,' said he, imploringly. 'Mordre de Dios, who shall protect me! Leave me here with this child: you can secure the doors and windows so that I cannot be enlarged. This is the daughter of one of the spies I slew, and I would say something of importance to her alone.'

'Very well. In half an hour expect us.'

'The houses are like fortresses, and we found no difficulty in making all modes of egress fast. I felt uncommon interest in the man, and determined he should not get off until I knew more of his strange disguise and unexampled movements—so I mounted guard near the door. Perhaps twenty minutes had elapsed when I heard the child uttering screams of terror and anguish, and the voice of the man trying to calm her. I called out to him. There was no answer, and giving vent to a little short and peculiar cry, the girl also became silent. I told him we could waste no more time.'

'Patience, Senores—caballeros,' cried he, 'and I will soon be ready. Five minutes and I will be quite ready.'

The time was up, and we undid the fastenings of the door and entered. The body of the girl was there, the throat cut from ear to ear, and the bloody weapon in the hands of the murderer, who was squatting upon his haunches.

'Thus perish the race of traitors who sell their country!' exclaimed the cruel wretch, whose eyes almost illegally shot fiery rays into our faces. 'Death to them all—children, infants—all!'

'D—d dog!' exclaimed a Tennesseean at my side—'take that!' as he aimed a blow at his head with a clubbed musket.

'Maldito!' yelled the fellow, as he sprang like a cat from his sitting posture and darted through the door. He was off like a rocket, and as we say of a flea, when we put our hands on him he was not there. A hundred rods off, one of our men, seeing him with a bloody knife in his hand, brought him down with a sergeant's short sword, and we coming up, dragged his body into a door way, while a few scattered shots fell from the pierced shutters on the opposite side of the street. I grasped at his head and pulled off a wig: the scalp was shaven as bare as my hand. I saw at once through all his mysterious doings.—He had imposed on our people by some skillful story, and performed the part of an active spy and bitter enemy. We hid the body in the house! the next day, when the city was delivered into our hands, I took an old Mexican, Jose, with me to view the corpse, after relating to him the whole story.

'Dios gracious!' said Jose, looking at the swollen and disfigured face of the unresisting clay—'it is General Ampudia's right hand retainer—one who has done all his hard work. I knew him well. You have killed the most dangerous man that could be put on duty. He has been a devil among all his own people for five years or more, and was rich, owning three large haciendas. It is from such guerrillas you have most to fear in this contest. Nobody will mourn for his death.'

He spurned the body with his foot and then followed me forth. That night I slept in the Cathedral, which had been used as a powder magazine, and dreamed until morning of the mysterious man of Marin and Monterey. Let this may be thought highly colored, I will state that it falls short of the truth, if any thing.

## ADDRESS

OF THE  
State Central Committee.  
To the People of Pennsylvania:

FELLOW CITIZENS—The members of the State Central Committee of the Democratic party, appointed by the 4th of March Convention, deem it a duty, in the fulfillment of the object of their appointment, to address you in relation to the present condition of the country, and to call your attention to the importance of the approaching election.

Never at any period since the commencement of our history have the people at large, and especially the Democratic party had more cause to congratulate each other upon the progress of free principles in improving the condition and extending the happiness of man. The people of these United States are all, without respect to party or sect, in the full and peaceful enjoyment of the most enlarged civil and religious rights, which are not only secured by constitutional provisions, but by that which is much stronger, the good sense and sound judgment of an enlightened and liberal community. It also gives us unfeigned pleasure to join in congratulations upon the general prosperity which pervades all the business and pecuniary relations of the people. Notwithstanding the predictions of our leading Federal opponents of the ruin and desolation which was to follow the election of the Democratic candidates in 1844, our prosperity has been onward ever since, and at no period of our existence as a people, have all the departments of industry—agricultural, mechanical, commercial and manufacturing, been in a more healthy and prosperous condition, and labor more in demand at fair rates of compensation than at the present time. It is when labor commands its just reward that an honest and industrious community is always the most happy.

This condition of things we have reason to believe rests on a substantial basis, and is the result, in a great degree, of a sound and liberal system of policy founded upon just principles of commercial intercourse and reciprocity, in connexion with a constitutional system of finance on the part of the general government, calculated to prevent excessive issues of paper money, and to maintain a sound currency.

Our Federal friends, however, would have you believe that all our present prosperity results from the scarcity of provisions in Europe, and the consequent high prices in this country. That the scarcity in Europe of breadstuffs has tended to raise prices in this country, we will not deny. Every man of common sense knows that to be a fact. But every person of intelligence and candor is also bound to admit that the reduction of the duties on our flour and grain in the English ports, with the modification of our own tariff on their productions, is calculated to enlarge the trade between the two countries, and increase the export of our grain and flour permanently; and as this will increase the ability of our citizens to purchase and consume manufactures, it will add to the prosperity of every branch of industry in the country. In regard to the iron and coal interests, they will be especially benefited by the demand for iron to make railroads to carry the products of agriculture to market and to supply the wants of an enlarged internal as well as external commerce. In fact, we regard our domestic manufactures as so well established that with moderate but certain duties properly arranged they can withstand the competition of the world; and in this opinion we are confirmed by the judgment of practical men who are engaged in enlarging old, and building new establishments under the present tariff, without any reasonable hope of immediate change.

Our opponents, however, having been driven by the experience of the country from all their old positions in regard to a Bank of the United States, a high protective tariff, and their opposition to the Independent or Constitution Treasury, now seek to find cause of opposition to the Democratic party in the war with Mexico. In regard to the Bank they told the people that it was indispensable to their prosperity, and that the country could not exist without it. They even excited their partisans to madness and encouraged a revolutionary spirit amongst the people by denouncing General Jackson as a tyrant and an usurper, for his opposition to a monster bank which sought to place itself above the constituted authorities of the nation, and to control the government. A distinguished member of the Federal party on this occasion addressed the populace of Baltimore, on Sunday, and by way of encouraging and justifying their conduct, declared 'that in revolutionary times there were no Sabbaths.' Now 'the same partisans say that a Bank of the United States "is an obsolete idea."

Before the modification of the tariff of 1842, they declared that if the act of 1846 became a law, that nearly all the furnaces, forges and manufactories of the country would have to stop; that men would have to be turned out of employment to starve; and that the productions of the farmer would rot on his hands for want of a home market.

How these predictions have been verified let the present condition of the country