

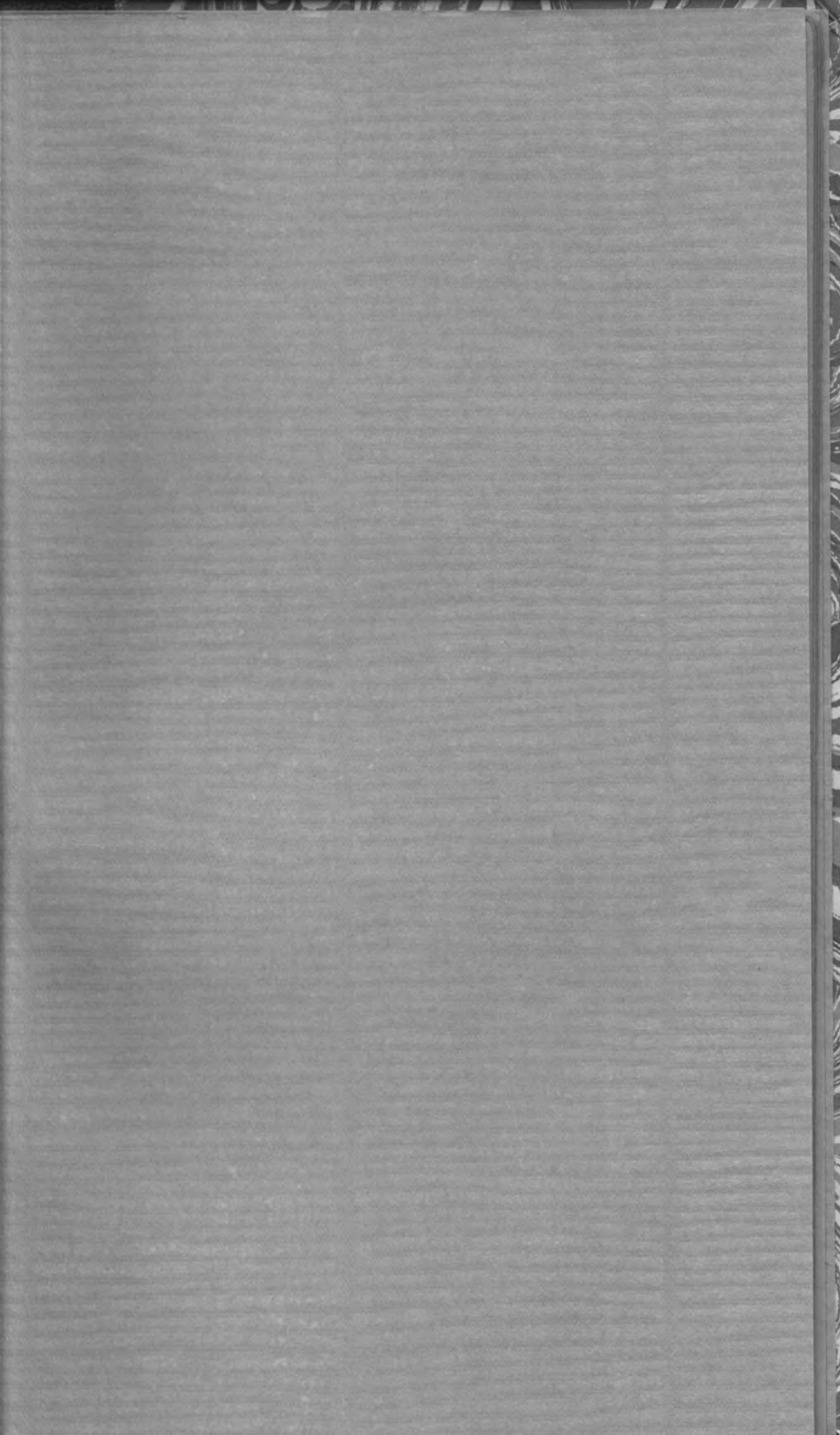
2521

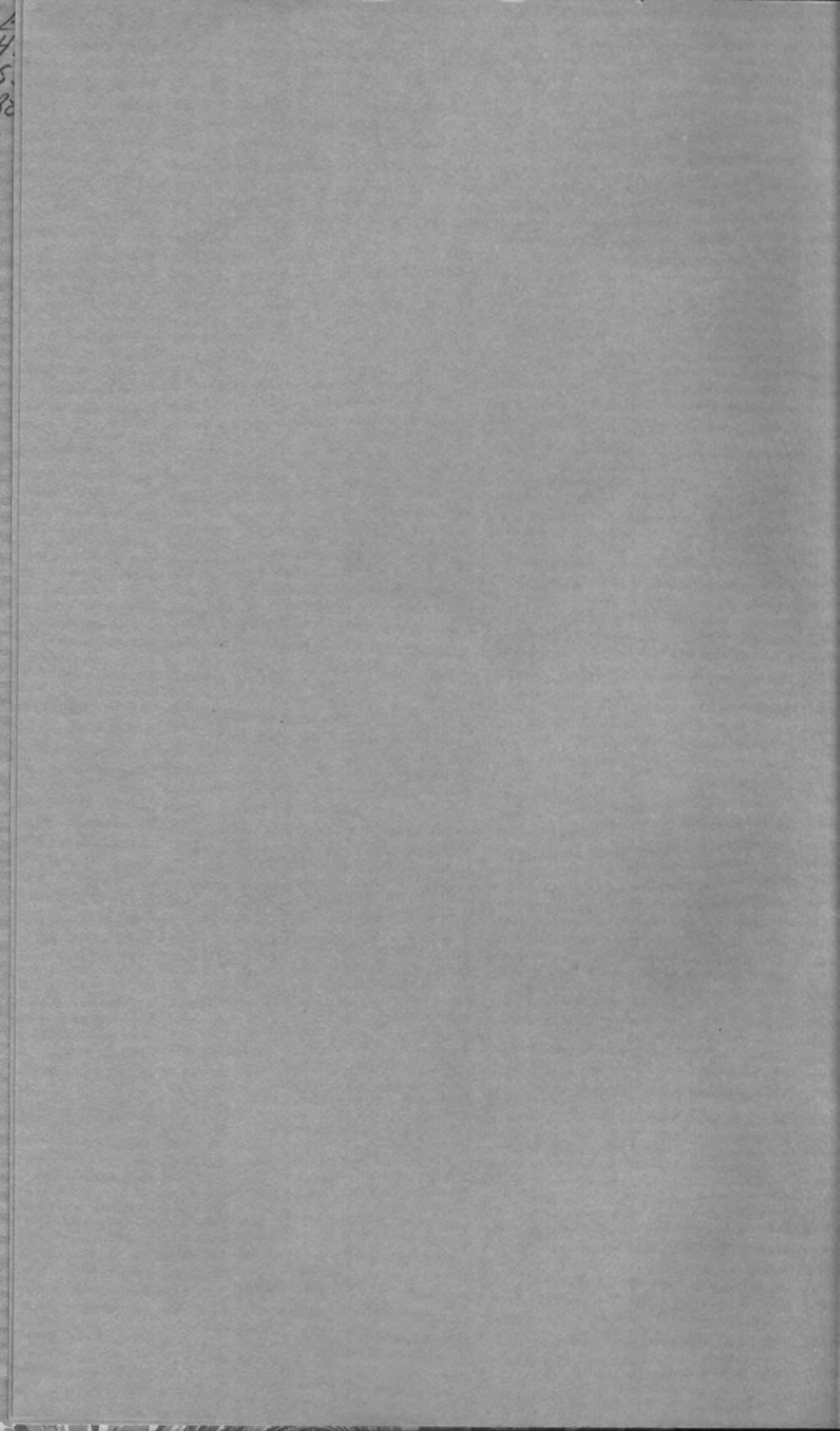
E  
415  
535  
BAYD

PF

2

F  
413  
53  
B81





# ADDRESS

TO THE

## PENNSYLVANIA VOLUNTEERS

RETURNED FROM MEXICO.

DELIVERED JULY 24, 1848,

AT PHILADELPHIA.

BY

JOHN M. SCOTT.

---

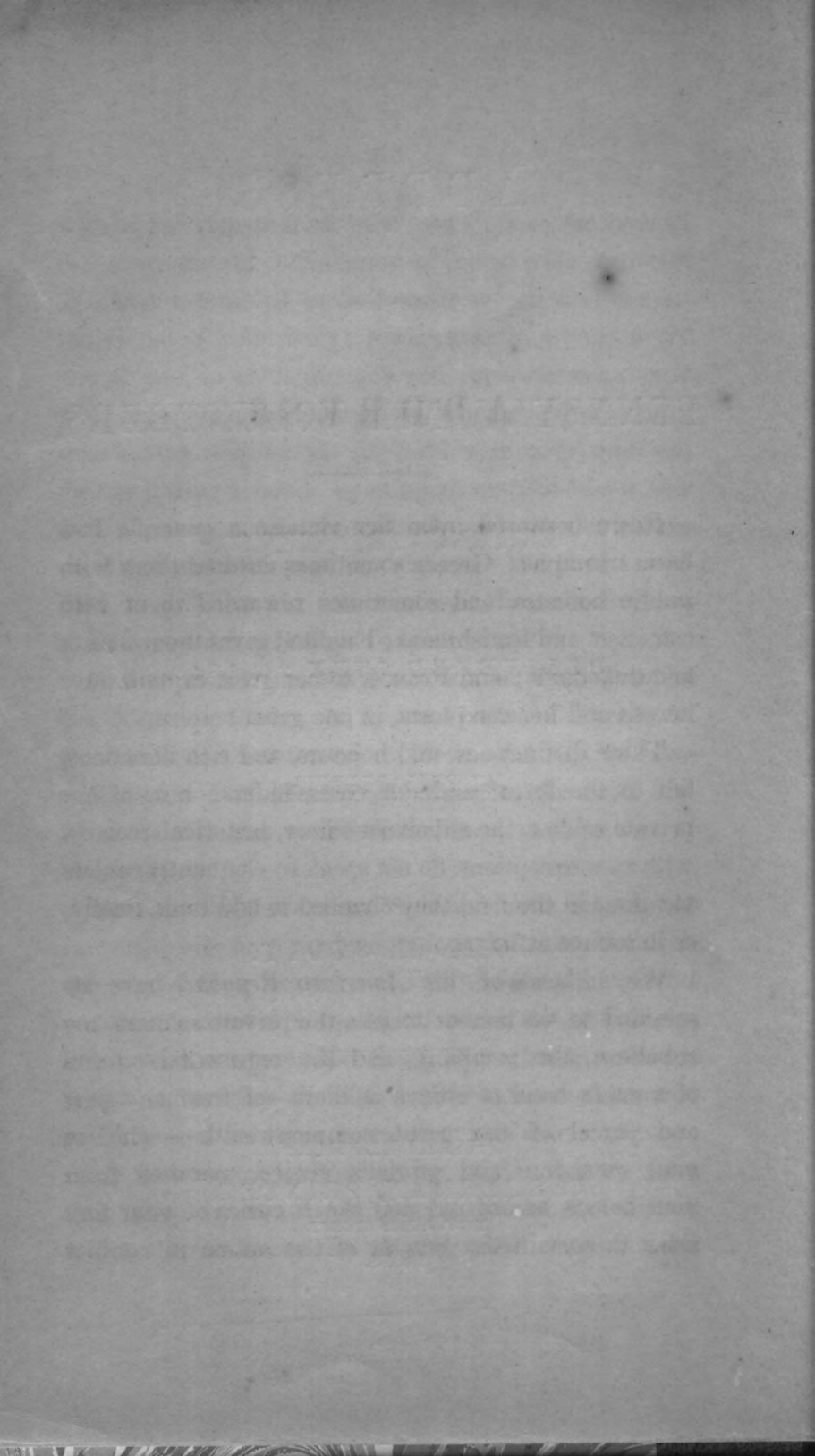
PHILADELPHIA:

C. SHERMAN, PRINTER,

19 ST. JAMES STREET.

1848.







## A D D R E S S .

---

ROME bestowed upon her victorious generals barbaric triumphs ; Greece sometimes covered them with public honours, and sometimes rewarded them with ostracism and banishment ; England gives them wealth and dukedoms ; and France, to her great captain gave herself and her conquests, in one great empire.

These distinctions, and honours, and rich donations, fell to the lot of eminent commanders ; but, of the private soldier, the subaltern officer, historical records, with rare exceptions, do not speak so eloquently, unless to valour in the field they chanced to add rank, family, or influence at home.

We, citizens of this *American Republic*, have assembled to do honour to *you*, the private soldiers, the subaltern, the company, and the regimental officers of a noble band of citizen soldiers—of freemen—part and parcel of our great commonwealth — who, of your own free and glorious choice, marched from your homes, and abandoned the luxuries of your fire-sides, to sustain the honour of the nation in conflict

with a foe remote from your own shores; far beyond the most distant boundaries of your wide country. We have assembled to do honour to *you*, and to each individual of your body; recognising in all and every one of you, in each distinct and separate member of your regiments and companies, a man and a citizen, who having perilled his life for his country, and won for her lasting renown, is as much entitled to our love and admiration, to our gratitude and thanks, as the most eminent leaders of our armies. We have assembled to *welcome the return* of our brave volunteers to their country and their families.

Gather round me, then, ye men of Vera Cruz, of the National Bridge, of Cerro Gordo, of Puebla, of Contreras, of Churubusco, of Molino del Rey, of Chapultepec, and of Mexico, and listen to the brief sentences of welcome your fellow-citizens have instructed me to utter.

Yes, my brothers, they welcome your return, not in cold words or formal salutations, but from the deep recesses of their hearts; not with the simple, cheerful welcome, extended to the friend from a distant journey, but with the grave, and deep, and solemn welcome, which it becomes them to bestow upon men rescued and restored to them from the desolations of war; upon men saved by the bounty of Providence from that death by the bullet, by the sword, by disease, which during every day of your absence, you faced

for your country's sake, and which subdued and laid in the soldier's grave so many of your companions, who with you went forth from among us, full of life, and hope, and bold resolve.

Our welcome is one of joy for the living, tempered with sadness for the dead; and made sacred by the spirit of thankfulness to that Power which has restored you to your country. Such welcome, brave volunteers, your ancient friends and companions, your fellow-citizens, your brethren of the good old commonwealth of Pennsylvania tender to you.

To this *welcome*, we claim the right to add the meed of *praise*. We know well the modesty of the brave soldier, who is willing to suffer, to bleed, if need be, to die; but who shrinks with quick sensitiveness from the applause which his deeds extort. But it is due to your country, that you submit to be told of your country's admiration. The incentive may be useful to future generations; and may warm the blood of your children and your grandchildren, when the republic shall hereafter claim their services against her foes. They will then remember the deeds of their forefathers, and the laurels which were scattered along their homeward path; and they will burn to emulate those deeds and to reap those bright rewards. And, to the world, the open proclamation of your sacrifices and your gallant actions, will be a

salutary lesson of the working of our republican institutions.

After more than thirty years of peace, our country, in the spring of 1846, became again involved in war: not with her ancient and accustomed enemy, whose fleets would meet us on the ocean, and whose armies would land on our shores, but with a sister republic, of our own Continent, young, vigorous, and inured to arms, whom to conquer, it was necessary to invade. Our army was composed of a few thousand men, well disciplined and admirably officered. Of this army, a portion was near the Rio Grande, which we claimed as our boundary; and upon its approach to the waters of that river was encountered by the numerous and well-appointed array of the enemy. Then were fought the splendid fields of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma. The results of these engagements, so disastrous to Mexico, ought to have been received by her as certain prognostics of her ultimate fate, if she persevered in hostilities. But the obstinacy of her character was understood; it was plain that there was work to be done which would demand the best efforts of many times the number of men composing our military establishment. They were required for instant action. Under the authority conferred upon him by Congress, the President of the United States, appealed to the Country for volunteers. They rushed at his call to the scene of battle. The terrible

storming of Monterey, on the 21st and 22d of September, followed; in which superb achievement citizen soldiers drawn from other sections of the Union largely participated and profusely shed their blood. Peace did not ensue—the offered Olive Branch was not accepted.—Further and more bitter lessons were necessary to subdue the pride of the enemy, and terrible indeed were the lessons in reserve for him. On the 22d of February, 1847, the birthday of Washington, began, and on the 23d terminated, in victory, the great battle of Buena Vista. The Mexican army numbered twenty thousand men, while the whole strength of ours engaged in the battle was three hundred and thirty-four officers, and four thousand four hundred and twenty-five men, and of this small number, only two squadrons of cavalry and three batteries of light artillery, making not more than four hundred and fifty-three men, were composed of regular troops. The rest were *volunteers*, and there too they fought, and bled, and died, bravely, profusely, and freely, for their country.

In this brilliant series of actions, the volunteers of Pennsylvania did not participate. *Their* turn had not yet come. Their hands were ready and their hearts were there, but their offered services had not yet been accepted. On the 19th of May, 1846, the President requested the Governor of this Commonwealth to cause to be enrolled and held in readiness

for service, *six* regiments of volunteer infantry, each to consist of ten companies, to serve for twelve months or to the end of the war unless sooner discharged. On the 23d of May the Governor issued a general order announcing this call upon the patriotism of Pennsylvania. It was hailed with acclamations from all parts of the Commonwealth, and on the 15th of July the Governor had the gratification of transmitting to the war department, offers sufficient to fill *nine* regiments. More than five thousand of the stalwart sons of Pennsylvania presented themselves to their country, ready to sustain her honour and avenge her wrongs. If any of these six regiments had then been mustered into service, *our* volunteers *might* have partaken of the glories of Monterey, and would certainly have been upon the field of Buena Vista. The capture of Monterey was succeeded by an armistice, and peace was once more the universal hope and expectation. This hope soon proved to be delusive, and the Administration determined to strike at the heart of Mexico, since she refused to receive with salutary prudence the broad hints which had been given to her border provinces. The prospect of actual service then *first* opened upon the volunteers of Pennsylvania. In November the Government called for one of her regiments, and in December for another. Then came the rush and the pressure for *acceptance*; the stern joy of those who were received, the disappointment of

those for whom there was no place. Every portion of the Commonwealth pressed for the field. It was the hard duty of the Governor to choose from among the brave men who loudly urged their right to fight for their country. The first regiment was filled by six companies from the City and County of Philadelphia, one from Pottsville, one from Wilkesbarre, and two from Pittsburg. In the second, the fortunate lot fell to one company from Philadelphia, one from Reading, one from Mauch Chunk, one from Harrisburg, one from Danville, two from Cambria County, one from Westmoreland, one from Fayette, and one from Pittsburg. The first regiment was mustered into service on the 15th December, 1846, and the second at Pittsburg early in January, 1847. They were both destined for employment in the great campaign which was to begin at Vera Cruz, and to end in the Palace of the Montezumas.

Had the *six* regiments from Pennsylvania been called into service, not a county or a town would have been unrepresented; and it is worthy of remark that to those which went to the seat of war, every art, trade, occupation, and profession of our active population contributed its share. All were mingled in the general mass of patriot volunteers, here, and in the other states of the Union; and the necessary result was that in the ranks of the privates, was to be found the same skill, the same intelligence, the same cultivated in-



telleet, that adorned the ranks of the officers. This is a feature which constitutes a most important difference between an army of volunteers and an army of regulars. In the combination of the two—adding to the individual zeal, to the personal dignity and intelligence of the volunteer,—the long-enforced, steady, obedient discipline of the regular soldier; is perhaps to be found the best composition for an army the world can afford; unquestionably the best for a republican people. About twenty-eight thousand such men, men who volunteered their services, served their country during the war with Mexico. They were raised, armed, equipped, transported to the seat of war; with the regular army effected the complete conquest of the enemy; and have returned to their respective homes, within little more than two years from the commencement of the contest. Is not this in itself an imposing view of the resources of our country? Is it not a plain intimation to foreign nations which they cannot disregard, that while we utterly reject as incompatible with our institutions, the expensive and dangerous machinery of a large standing army, we possess in the bravery of our people, in their aptitude for war, in our small but admirably trained regular force, in our accomplished officers, in the military skill disseminated throughout the land by the graduates of our great military institution, and above all in the love of each individual for the country and the government in

which he is himself a part of the sovereignty, resources capable of instantaneous development; making us a dangerous enemy to those who do not treat us with proper respect, and a powerful friend to such as observe and regard our rights.

Well do we of Philadelphia remember the day of the departure of our troops; well does Reading, and Harrisburg, and Pittsburg, and Pottsville, and Wilkesbarre, and Mauch Chunk, and Danville, and Cambria, and Westmoreland, and Fayette, retain the same recollection. Well do we remember the prayers and the blessings, the tears and the bitter sobbings of parents, and wives, and sisters, and friends, which accompanied every step, and the deep despair which spread over many a countenance and paralysed many a limb, as the cars hurried away their sons, and husbands, and brothers. Gloomy was the season, long was the journey on which they were bound; distant, far distant were the fields on which they were to exert their prowess. New to them, and full of ghastly fever was the climate; cruel and exasperated was the enemy; and many were the chances that the loved one on whom the eye then rested, would never bless that eye again. It was not the merry

“Strike your tents and march away”

of the practised soldier, whose home was the tent,

and whose social life was the life of the camp ; it was the solemn outgoing of a band of devoted men, every one of whom left a domestic hearth, and abandoned household gods, and resigned the calm enjoyment of a life of peace and industry for the tumults, and the dangers, and the hardships of war, in a foreign land ; where sickness would consign to a military hospital, where wounds would fester into death, where, at best, hardships would break down the constitution, and embitter all future life. And all these dangers were well known and fully appreciated by the families and friends of the departing volunteer, and by the volunteer himself. Yet did he freely, gallantly, voluntarily encounter them all. If he had gone to meet an invading enemy, to defend his own household, to save his own wife and children, this devotion would not have excited wonder ; but he went to seek a foe two thousand miles distant from his home—a home safe from all aggression, from all possibility of danger. What motive then could have induced this great sacrifice of self ? It was the ardent love of the freeman for the republic of which he was a member ; not the mere love of the soil on which he was born, of the trees which had shaded him, and the fields which he had tilled ; but the love of the republican institutions which gave to that soil its value, to the roof which sheltered him its sanctity, to the property which his industry earned its security, to himself and

to the members of his family their personal dignity, their perfect equality with the most eminent in the land. It was not the patriotism of a serf, but the intelligent, reflecting patriotism of the thinking, reasoning, free member of a land of freedom. *His* country—the country in which he held a stake, just as large as his own talents and his own exertions might choose to make it; *of* which *he* might, as well as any other man in it, become in due time the chief magistrate—called him; and he went forth unhired, unenlisted, emphatically a volunteer; with his life in his hand, to defend the honour and assert the rights of that country. While the republican institutions of our country remain unimpaired, and its *union unshaken*, a similar call will ever be followed by the same result; and should we ever be involved again in a *defensive* war, the whole land would rise up as a single man, and buckle on its armour.

Believe me, these things are “observed, set in a note book, learn’d and conn’d by rote” by other nations, whose regards are fixed with friendly or unfriendly eye upon this great republic.

Thus, then, went forth our Pennsylvania volunteers to take their share in that hardfought and brilliant, most brilliant campaign, which has shed such undying lustre upon our arms. To me it seems to resemble, not in the magnitude of the forces engaged, but in other particulars, some of those great campaigns in

which Napoleon struck at the capitals of his enemies, mastered *them*, and then dictated his own terms of peace. It was prepared with consummate skill in the art of war, conducted with thorough military science, with unwavering confidence in results, with remarkable daring and bravery in execution, and was marked throughout with daily recurring instances of individual gallantry in the officer of every grade, and in the private, marking with excessive brightness innumerable spots upon the shining surface of its glory. Its success was absolute, complete, triumphant—gaining the object aimed at, in the manner predicted, with the means calculated. What more than this can the most consummate military skill effect? What greater result can the ablest master of the art of war hope to accomplish?

It has been attempted abroad to undervalue the magnitude of our triumphs by aspersions upon the bravery and upon the military skill of the Mexicans. The aspersion is unjust to them, and unjust to their conquerors. Those same thirty years which were to us years of peace, our swords rusting in their scabbards, have been to them years of war, of turmoil, of anarchy, of revolution, of intestine discord—but for these very reasons, *years of war*, preparing them to encounter with skill, and with military science, and with practised bravery, an invading army. They sustained in the contest with us defeat after defeat without being

disheartened; and they did not submit to be defeated in any engagement until a heavy loss of men had proved the obstinacy of their resistance and the necessity for retreat. When they did retreat, or were dispersed and driven away in confusion, they rallied again, and re-appeared at the next available point of defence. The complaint in our army was, that the very men who were taken prisoners in one battle, and discharged on parole, would be found in arms against us on the next field of contest.

The numbers lost in the battles in Mexico by the victors and the vanquished were, in proportion to the numbers engaged, as great as in most European engagements. At the great battle of Ligny, between the French under Napoleon and the Prussians under Blucher, which immediately preceded the battle of Waterloo, and was contested with the utmost skill on the part of those great captains, and with the bitterest animosity on the part of the combatants, Napoleon, who was the victor, out of 71,200 men lost, according to the English accounts, between 7 and 8000, or from ten to eleven out of every hundred. The French accounts do not admit so great a loss, and the English calculation includes a small loss in the movements of the preceding day. At Buena Vista the American force actually engaged numbered, officers and men, 4759; and the killed and wounded were 723, being a fraction more than fifteen out of every hundred.

At the battle of Waterloo, the last great battle of Napoleon, where he encountered the Duke of Wellington, the Anglo-allied army numbered 67,655, all told, with 156 guns, and the army of Napoleon 71,947 men and 246 guns. The allied army obtained the victory and dethroned Napoleon, at the cost of about 15,430 officers, non-commissioned officers and privates killed wounded and missing, being about twenty-three out of every hundred. This was one of the most murderous battles ever fought, which Napoleon did not yield until he had exhausted every possible effort to gain the victory and to save his crown.

At El Molino del Rey, the American force engaged was 3251, and the loss in killed and wounded 789, or nearly twenty-six in every hundred.

From the 7th of August, 1847, when the army numbering 10,738, rank and file, took up its march from Puebla, to the 14th of September, when it gave our glorious flag to the breeze from the National Palace in the City of Mexico, its losses were in killed, wounded and missing, 383 officers and 2320 men:—total loss, 2703—about one-fourth of the whole army. It is clear, therefore, that although this gallant army did beat their enemy in his own strongholds, and against the odds of at least three to one, and did by a series of extraordinary achievements capture his capital and subdue the nation, yet it did not do all this without hard fighting, without bitter and determined resist-



ance, nor without laying down on the altar of patriotism heavy sacrifices of life and limb. That the Mexicans fought bravely, is attested by General Quitman, who, speaking of the storming of Chapultepec in his report to the commanding general, uses this emphatic language:—"The storming parties, led by the gallant officers who had volunteered for this desperate service, rushed forward like a resistless tide. The Mexicans behind their batteries and breastworks stood with more than usual firmness. For a short time the contest was hand to hand: swords and bayonets were crossed and rifles clubbed. Resistance, however, was vain against the desperate valour of our brave troops. The batteries and strong works were carried, and the ascent of Chapultepec on that side laid open to an easy conquest."

No, brave men, it will not do to attempt to lessen *your* fame, by speaking contemptuously of the enemy you have conquered. In their dying struggle around their Capital, in every fort, at every battery, on every hill, in their gateways, and at their castles, *they* fought and bled and died to keep *you* out, but could not. They yielded their Capital and their country, not because they were not good men and true, but because you were better and bolder men than they.

Yes, brave volunteers, that superb campaign which began by the landing on the shores of Vera Cruz, and the masterly reduction of that city and its far-famed fortress of St. Juan d'Ulloa, which was followed up by

the storming of the frowning heights of Cerro Gordo, by the capture and preservation of Puebla, and which terminated in the subjugation of the far-famed City of Mexico—the city of romance beyond all other cities of the earth, whose very name stirs the blood with mysterious imaginings of unknown ages and races,—that superb campaign, has taken its rank in martial history, on a level with the brightest achievements upon the records of war. Each of you can say, and will be envied for the power of saying, “*I was there.*” Yes, gentlemen, there at Lobos and Vera Cruz began *your* campaign, and there at Mexico, where “peace was conquered,” did it end.

In due time, publications innumerable will record, and more solemn history will perpetuate, not only the general aspect of this Mexican war, but the countless instances of individual gallantry which have signalized its progress from the Atlantic to the Pacific shores. The files of the war department, including the reports of the Commander-in-Chief, the general and regimental officers, and the officers of companies, are replete with such details—a rich mine for the exploration of the historian. And in the letters home from the privates in the ranks, in every part of our country, will be found minute and graphic narrations, as well as in the letters and diaries of the officers. It is indeed a feature peculiar to our country, and growing out of our institutions, that the skill of the officer, the pen of

the scholar, and the sound judgment of the statesman, are not incompatible with the duty of bearing the musket on the shoulder. All these sources of information, in time, will be developed to our view, and then the just award of fame to *individual* merit will be made. Of individuals, of any rank, on such an occasion as this, it is not right to speak.

Does not our country, then, owe to her volunteers a debt of gratitude; and how shall that debt be paid?

The debt of gratitude *is* due to those who survive, and to the bereaved families of those who have perished, for the entire and unreserved sacrifice of self, made at the call of their country upon the altar of their country. This is a debt incapable of measurement.

It is due, in return for the benefits which that sacrifice has purchased.

The volunteers of the United States, in harmonious conjunction with our small but well-appointed and superbly officered regular army, and with our far-famed navy, have, in a conflict spreading over many degrees of latitude and of longitude, in the desert, before fortified towns, in the heart of populous cities, on the waters of two oceans, avenged the wrongs and asserted the rights of their country. They have thus, and by the great results of this conflict, taught the nations of the earth, that these United States, while their policy is peace, their desire is peace, have the

will and the power to demand and obtain redress for injury, by force of arms.

They have secured for their country an acquisition of territory of immense extent, and of resources and capabilities as yet undeveloped, enlarging greatly our coast upon the Pacific, and bringing us in near proximity, by the aid of navigation, with those Eastern nations, whose commerce the world has so long coveted. It is well and right, and it is accordant with our free government, that among ourselves we should consider and discuss the advantages and the disadvantages of such additions. But we may well believe, that on the eastern shores of the Atlantic this increase of *territory* to the young republic is looked upon as an ominous increase of her *power*; as one step further, and a broad one too, towards priority of rank among the great powers of the earth.

They have gained for us great renown in arms. This war is the fourth, (exclusive of our Indian warfare,) which the United States have sustained since they became independent. The first was with France—a state of short hostility rather than of declared war; the second with Tripoli, a severe chastisement of a barbarous and piratical foe by our young navy, which on the waters of the Mediterranean earned for itself that magnificent reputation which it has ever since sustained; the third with Great Britain, fully developed, nobly sustained, in which brave spirits bore

aloft our banner to victory, who have again in this last war struck nobly for their country with all their former courage, and with superadded skill.

But the memory of these past achievements had begun to wane. New generations of men had covered the face of Europe. Their own wars, conducted on scales of most enormous magnitude, had obliterated the recollection of ours, or reduced them, in consideration, to mimic representations of the art. This war with Mexico, breaking forth while the world was at peace, was a startling phenomenon, and caused the gaze of the monarchies of Europe to be turned keenly upon the struggle of the two republics. And there were not wanting in the daily or in the periodical press abroad, sarcasms at our supposed inefficiency, or predictions of our failure, in what was to us a new and an unwished-for trial of our arms, in a war of invasion. The result has changed the tone of these learned writers, and now they are content to descant upon the assumed impotency of Mexico, and the ambition of the North American republic. This renown in arms, thus purchased by the combined exertions of the army, the navy, and the volunteers of the Union, is a possession of great price. While as a republican people, and as a Christian people, it is our duty to cultivate peace with all nations, we may be assured that one of the best guarantees for its continuance, will always be renown in arms, ac-

quired not in wars of aggression, but in wars in defence of our rights.

They have confirmed the truth of the cherished theory of our people, that a large standing army is not necessary to preserve either the honour of our country, or the integrity of our soil; that armed men will at all times spring up from the soil ready to defend either, against all assaults; that in every homestead and under every roof, hands are ready and weapons are bright, to defend the country of our love, and the institutions which make our happiness, against every danger; that it is better to rest upon these defences, than to follow in the footsteps of Europe, where millions of armed men, year after year, and age after age, have been, and still are, sustained, to the utter downtreading of the people, and to the suppression of all diffused and general happiness.

They have obtained for us, peace—an honourable peace. Peace is dear to the American heart. Its return is always hailed by the acclamations of the nation. It is essential to the preservation of the principles of republican government; it enlarges and secures the rewards of industry; it preserves unbroken, domestic ties and domestic purity; it is favourable to the extension of sound morals; and it is the condition of a nation most in accordance with the spirit of the Gospel.

While, therefore, it is the duty, the sacred duty at all

times, of every American, when his country is at war, to sustain her with all his energies, by every required sacrifice, and at all hazards, it is his privilege and his pleasure, deeply to feel, and loudly to proclaim, his joy at the return of peace.

How then is this debt of gratitude to be paid to our volunteers? The proceedings of this day are, in common with many similar demonstrations, but evidences of its acknowledgment. It will remain for the people to discharge it, through a long course of years, by the bestowal of their favour, the appropriation of their treasures, and their zealous care of the families of the fallen. The conquered territories will furnish many a rich and beautiful appanage for the soldier; the periodical elections throughout the land will be mindful of him; his return to the pursuits of industry will be sustained by increase of friends; and where misfortune presses, and contribution is required for relief, or endowments to guard against casualties for relief, or endowments to guard against casualties are proposed, the appeal will be freely met.

Volunteers of Pennsylvania, once more do we welcome, loudly and from our hearts welcome, your return.

“ Now are your brows bound with victorious wreaths,  
Your bruised arms hung up for monuments,  
Your stern alarums changed to merry meetings,  
Your dreadful marches to delightful measures.

Grim-visaged war hath smoothed his wrinkled front.”



Your families demand you—the arms of your parents and wives and a thousand friends are outstretched to embrace you. May the joys and the blessings which belong to those who have so nobly served their country, be yours, now and ever.

ot

