

family feeling that may exist in churches, or to interfere with social cliques and "sets," or to break down any walls between classes. We talk now only of the general social and intellectual life which brings people together in common high pursuits, and gives a village its character and influence. It is only from this life that a strong and efficient public spirit can come. A village must hold a vigorous general life outside of sects and cliques and parties, before it can make great progress, and it is astonishing how quickly this life may be won by the right leading.

We write this article simply to call the attention of that resident, or those residents, of any village who will naturally read it, to their own duty in this matter. The chances are that they live in a village whose life is split into petty fragments, and devoted to sel-

fish, or frivolous, or brutal pursuits. We assure them that all the people need is good leading, and that there must be one among them who has the power in some good degree of leading, organizing, and inspiring a united and better life. It is not an office in which personal ambition has any legitimate place,—that of social leadership. Any man who enters upon it with that motive mistakes his position, and hopelessly degrades his undertaking. But wherever there is a sluggish social life, or none at all that is devoted to culture and pure and elevating pursuits, somebody—and it is probably the one who is reading this article—is neglecting a duty, from which he is withheld, most probably by modesty. We assure him that if he is really fit for his work, he will find an astonishing amount of promising material ready and waiting for his hands.

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### COMMUNICATIONS.

#### Origin of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.

IN the very able "Recallings from a Public Life," in SCRIBNER'S MONTHLY for October, the distinguished author (Robert Dale Owen) omitted, perhaps necessarily, the origin of the *projet* of treaty intrusted to Nicholas Trist, as an agent of this government, in April, 1847.

Inasmuch as the preparation of that afterward consummated treaty forms one of the most remarkable chapters in the secret-service history of our country, and as the causes which have hitherto rendered absolute silence in regard to it strictly imperative, have disappeared, I find myself not unwilling to communicate some of the more interesting and leading facts thereof. But, in the brief space and in the limited time now at my disposal, I cannot complete the narrative. That can be done, however, within a month, and upon the collection of long neglected data which are not, at this moment, within easy reach.

The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was born in Monterey, baptized in the City of Mexico, and sent, complete in all its members, to the President of the United States (James K. Polk) during the opening months of 1847. By him, and by nearly every member of his cabinet, it was joyfully adopted, and, through Mr. Trist, it was remitted to Mexico as the basis of an acceptable peace. It was a most welcome ray of light at the darkest hour of our war with Mexico, and, had it not been unwarrantably shorn of some essential elements before execution, it would have ranked among the most brilliant diplomatic successes which the world has known.

While the American Army of the Rio Grande was preparing to "storm home the towers of Monterey,"—the Mexican general, Santa Anna, being then an exile, and his enemies in power,—there came to ex-President Lamar, of Texas (then in the field with the Lone Star Contingent, as it was called), the

knowledge that a Mexican plot, of deadly significance to our commerce, was in actual progress. The plot was to proclaim the Duke of Montpensier Emperor of Mexico. This son of Louis Philippe and husband of the Infanta of Spain would, at the then crisis of affairs, have carried a very strong party among the Mexican people. All the foreign merchants, most of the great land-holders, and a powerful section of the higher priesthood, would have stood loyally by this branch of an ancient line of royalty. Señor Munoz, the brother-in-law of Queen Christina by her left-handed marriage with the Duke of Rianzares, was engaged in this work at the Mexican capital; and the plot had ripened almost to completion when the secession from it of a distinguished prelate and two high officials gave a sudden turn to the whole matter.

It is scarcely possible to estimate the damaging consequences to the commerce and interests of the United States, had this plot for making a Franco-Spaniard the king of Mexico been successful, at that stage of the war. The ports of France and Spain would thereupon have been open to letters of marque commissioned to prey upon our commerce. Cuba and Porto Rico would have sent them forth by hundreds. Every maritime state in Europe then had ships for sale which might speedily have been rendered suitable for such service. The West Indian chain of islands were all European dependencies, except Hayti. That was African, and its policy—so far as it had one—was opposed to that of the United States because, if for no other reason, of the existence of our slave system. Taken together, these islands may be said to have fronted and commanded every port and outlet of our coast commerce—for our Pacific States then had no existence. Nor had we power of reprisal. Mexico offered no rich merchantmen as prizes for our cruisers, while ours whitened every sea.

During the political battle over the annexation of Texas, in 1845,—a battle waged and won in the newspaper field primarily in the columns of "The Sun,"—a strong personal attachment had developed between ex-President Lamar, of Texas, and Moses Y. Beach, the proprietor of that journal.\* It was through this personal friendship that Mr. Beach became informed—in 1846—of the monarchical plot already alluded to, and, later, of the progress of Mexican-Texas political affairs, in which he manifested a profound interest. He promptly and personally communicated the plot to the President, and thenceforth, as he gathered information which he deemed of importance to the government, he communicated it, personally or by letter, to the President or the Secretary of State (James Buchanan). No phase of the subject in which either of the three countries—United States, Mexico, or Spain—could have interest, escaped his observation. The cabinet was immediately summoned, and the revelations which Mr. Beach had made were the subject of instant discussion. The result of the conference was the nearly or quite unanimous decision that the return of Santa Anna to power was the sole and perfect remedy for the dreaded disaster. By a silent and wonderfully rapid movement on the part of President Polk's cabinet, this return was successfully accomplished. The leading monarchists in Mexico were paralyzed and scattered by the sudden advent of Santa Anna, and the plot for a monarchy was completely frustrated.

But the work was not yet ended. A peace with Mexico was now to be conquered, and it remained to be known upon what basis such a peace could be obtained. On the ruins of the monarchical power in Mexico a peace party of no insignificant pretensions had reared itself, and this it was evidently the policy of our government to foster and sustain. The "Santanistas" had been communicated with, and had promised, as the reward for the return of their chief, to recognize the claim of Texas to the territory as far as the Rio Grande, New Mexico included. In other words, they yielded the whole of the Texan claim, out of which the war originated. Certain of the Mexican leaders, and these of the higher classes, fearing that the prolongation of the war would result in the conquest and absorption of their entire country, proposed "to stay the land-devouring voracity of the Northern barbarians," by granting them what they considered as the barren wastes of California and Arizona, in return for a cancelment of the claims of American citizens against the Mexican government, and the protection of the proposed new frontier from

\* Ex-President Lamar wrote to Mr. Beach, whose advocacy of the annexation of Texas commenced in 1842, as follows:

"WASHINGTON CITY, Jan. 26th, 1845.

"MOSES Y. BEACH, Esq.:

"Dear Sir:—I congratulate you on the realization of your favorite hope. You were among the first to enter the list for the annexation of Texas, and may fairly rejoice on the almost certain success of that great and American movement. The bill has passed the House of Representatives, in a form which, I have no doubt, will be readily accepted by the people of Texas.

"MIRABEAU B. LAMAR."

Indian incursions, then the greatest terror of all border settlements.

It was through the industry and perseverance of Mr. Beach, and the facilities which he enjoyed for confidential correspondence with leading men in Mexico, that these facts were made known to the American government; and when he further communicated to the President and the Secretary of State the startling information that peace was attainable upon conditions more favorable than any of which they had previously conceived, he was at once—but *unofficially*—requested to make a personal visit to the country in the furtherance of such private interests as he might have in hand, and while there, by conferring with the leaders of the peace party, verify the conclusions to which he had arrived. The commission was one which involved an almost unlimited confidence in his faithfulness and discretion.—a confidence which, to the last day of his life,\* was strictly merited. It was, moreover, a commission, the execution of which not only demanded the sacrifice of exceedingly important private affairs, but also the taking of his own life in his hand, by the fact of entering the capital of his country's enemy. But with him thought was action, and his country's welfare was second to no personal consideration. With no shadow of hesitation he accepted the duty, and set himself wholly to its accomplishment.

Of the means by which that duty was performed, of the perfect success which attended it to its very end, and of some of the exciting incidents which marked its progress, it will be my pleasure to speak in another paper.

M. S. BEACH.

#### Takigraphy.

NEW YORK, Oct. 4, 1878.

EDITOR OF SCRIBNER'S MONTHLY:

Dear Sir:—Doubtless many persons will thank you for the article on "Neophonography," in the October number. It contains many judicious observations, and treats of a subject of such immense and growing importance, that it cannot fail to attract very general attention. I desire, however, to correct the wrong impression which the author conveys regarding Takigraphy, which is quite different from the other systems, and has been found entirely practical for all the purposes of writing.

Takigraphy is not open to the objections charged against it by Mr. Richardson, but meets fully every reasonable requirement of a practical script. It provides an alphabet that is a "complete and sufficient key to the writing." Takigraphers do not, however, deem it necessary to distinguish between the vowel sounds in *bat* and *bale*, nor between those in *boat* and *bold*, though such distinctions can be made in Takigraphy, if any writer chooses to make them, just as easily and just as philosophically as in Mr. Richardson's system. In Takigraphy, each vocal element *does* "have one, and only one, distinct sign, absolute in value." Each character is made by "a single impulse of the pen." The writing *does*

\* His death occurred in 1869.

show us your judgments based upon them. Agree among yourselves. We, the people, don't care for your private tastes and notions. We care a great deal more about our own. We are not at all interested in yours. What we want of you is instruction in sound principles of art, which will enable us to form judgments and to understand the basis of yours. Your prejudices, and piques, and whims are not of the slightest value to anybody, and your publication of them is a presumptuous and impertinent performance, growing more and more presumptuous and impertinent every year, while the people are growing rapidly more competent to judge of these matters for themselves.

In the present jumble of art criticism in this country, consisting of great contrariety of sentiment and opinion, much injustice is necessarily done to artists and schools of artists; and injustice, meted out in the unsparing doses that are often indulged in, is a poison that greatly injures all who receive

it. It takes immense pluck and strong individuality to stand up against it. There are some painters who possess these qualities, but not many, so that the consciousness of unjust treatment at the hands of public criticism is a positive damage to them and their art. There have been cruelties and discourtesies indulged in which only a raw-hide could properly punish, and for which there was no valid excuse and whose only influence was bad.

We are growing in this country in all that relates to art, except in this matter of art criticism. People are becoming educated in art, and a new spirit seems to have taken possession of the American people. Let us hope that those who undertake to guide the public judgment may meet the new requirements of the day by a most decided improvement among themselves, so that we may have something more valuable from them than the airing of pet notions and a public show of their sympathies and antipathies.

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COMMUNICATIONS.

**A Secret Mission to Mexico.**

ORIGIN OF THE TREATY OF GUADALUPE HIDALGO.—II.

EDITOR OF SCRIBNER'S MONTHLY:

DEAR SIR—The unlooked-for interval since the publication of my first letter (SCRIBNER for December, 1878) on the treaty which put an end to the Mexican war, renders desirable a brief glance at its contents. Its purport was a general statement that, at the commencement of the war with Mexico (1846), there existed a plot for the proclamation of the Duke of Montpensier as Emperor of Mexico, which it was the evident policy of the United States government to suppress. The means by which this plot was communicated to President Polk and his Cabinet, and the decision thereupon,—culminating in the return of Santa Anna to power through their instrumentality, and the complete frustration of the monarchical design,—were also stated. Beyond this was given a rapid glance at the facilities for information in reference to Mexican affairs enjoyed by the late Moses Y. Beach, and somewhat of his association with the movement for the annexation of Texas, upon which the Mexican war was, at least nominally, predicated. Hence appeared the motives of the President and the Cabinet in selecting Mr. Beach as the confidential agent of the government for negotiating, as he did, the basis of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.

It is the writer's present intention to enter—so far as space will permit—somewhat into detail as to the exact origin of the treaty, and to review some of the incidents connected with Mr. Beach's perilous undertaking,—the holding personal conference with leading men of the "opposition," in the enemy's capital city, during the progress of actual war.

In the opening paper appeared this statement:

"The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was born in Monterey, baptized in the City of Mexico, and sent, complete in all its members, to the President of the United States."

The treaty was, primarily, the suggestion of one of Mexico's most (and most deservedly) trusted military leaders, whose name must be withheld for obvious reasons. He was an ardent patriot; but he was also a man of wide and varied information. He knew the military power of the United States far more accurately than did his superiors in rank; and he knew, too, the fatal weakness of his own nation. Reasoning that the result of a long and stubborn war could be nothing less than the entire absorption of Mexico, he set before himself the task of planning a peace acceptable to the United States, and so shorn of repulsive features that it would be listened to by the better informed Mexicans. With exceeding tact he discussed the subject with one and another prominent official in the Church, and with friends in private life, until a little circle of kindred minds had been gathered. By them the subject was gradually formulated and condensed, and, in after days, received title as the "Three Points." These conditions of peace, in their briefest form, were:

1. The "occupation" by the United States of California and of all territory north of 26°, with defence by them (as the necessary result of such occupation) of the new frontier, from Indian incursions.

2. The payment by the United States of the demands held by its citizens against the Mexican nation, and the payment, in addition, of three millions of dollars, all as compensation for the territory thus occupied.

3. The restoration to Mexico, without destruction, of the fortifications and public buildings and prop-

erty taken by the United States during the war; and the refraining by the United States from any levies or forced loans upon the Mexican people.

These "three points" were intended to, and did, rally all Mexicans who favored an honorable peace,—the Church, because any immediate peace would save its property from the inevitable confiscations of war; the people, because they restored the quiet which is inseparable from mercantile successes and personal enjoyments, and the patriot, because they saved, and, by cutting off an uninhabited and almost uninhabitable territory, strengthened, his country. It was the aim of their originators to present such points as might be firmly and steadily insisted upon by the United States, coupled with an avowal, at the outset, that no reduction or change in them would, at any time, be considered. By thus closing the door to all discussion, they hoped not only to shorten the struggle, but, while saving their country to itself, to save it also from an impending monarchy, which they regarded as more ruinous than conquest and absorption by their republican neighbors.

Their first communications with the enemy were made to Generals Lamar and Cazneau, with whom some of their number had previously held intimate personal relations. Arrangement was made for the "capture" by the American forces of certain dispatches then expected from the Mexican capital, and care was taken to place with these dispatches some remarkable memoranda in which the names of persons well known in church and state affairs were connected, for an obvious purpose, in an apparent discussion of the proposed "three points." The "capture" was successfully effected by General Cazneau, and the two generals, after consultation, deemed it wise to place the matter before the American public as a means of forming an "opinion" which it would become the duty of the administration to follow.

To this end General Lamar advised his friend Beach of the peace possibilities, sending him an abstract of the terms on which it might be based. General Cazneau conveyed the same information, through a friend in New York, to the then Catholic Bishop—afterward Archbishop—Hughes. As each of these persons was advised of the communication made to the other, they immediately conferred together as to the more desirable method of action. Bishop Hughes urged forbearance from any publication until the authorities at Washington had been consulted, and this course was adopted. Their messenger returned bearing from Secretary Buchanan an urgent request that Mr. Beach should visit Washington, and bring with him the original letters, with the least possible delay.

The personal interview with the President and the Secretary, which was long, was especially satisfactory to Mr. Buchanan; its conclusions being that action by the government would hinge upon the possibility of conferences with leading men in Mexican affairs, and with the clergy of that country; by whose approval and aid the proposed peace could be accomplished. His strong faith in the possibility of such

conferences led Mr. Beach to yield to a request, urged by both the President and the Secretary, that he would accept the duty personally.

In addition to a letter of instructions,\* Mr. Beach was provided with a general letter of introduction to the military and naval commanders with whom he might have occasion to communicate, and this was supplemented by complimentary orders issued to these commanders. That Bishop Hughes took a warm interest in the mission needs not be said. He counseled with Mr. Beach at much length, and commended him strongly to the higher clergy in Havana, and, through them, to the clergy in Mexico.

To the end that his mission might more effectually be concealed, and that it might be prefaced by a personal interview with a trusted representative of the Mexican government whom he had long known, and with the aid of whose advice he proposed to fix a definite route and plan of operations, Mr. Beach became a passenger to Charleston, S. C., on the steamer *Southerner* which left New York during the latter part of November, 1846. In further concealment of his plans he was accompanied by his daughter, who, at the age of twenty-six, entered into his plans with a zeal second only to his own. And that his trip might appear yet more strongly as one of mere pleasure and observation, a lady friend was induced to join the party as companion to his daughter. Fond of adventure for adventure's sake, a mature woman of wide experience, familiar not only with the Spanish language, but also with the customs and habits of the Central American peoples by whom that language is generally adopted, this lady became an invaluable assistant in the com-

\* The following letter of instructions to Mr. Beach is, throughout, in the handwriting of Secretary Buchanan :

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,  
WASHINGTON, 21 November, 1846.

TO MOSES V. BEACH, Esquire :

SIR—The President, having learned that you are about to visit the City of Mexico, on your own private business, and reposing full confidence in your patriotism, ability and discretion, has thought proper to appoint you as a Confidential Agent to the Republic of Mexico.

You are well aware that the President had resorted to every honorable means to avoid the existing war; and whilst prosecuting it with vigor, he has been anxious, ever since its commencement, to make peace on just and honorable terms. It is known that you entertain the same desire; and, in all your conduct and conversation in Mexico, you ought to keep this object constantly in view.

The trust thus confided to you is one of great delicacy and importance. In performing the duties which it imposes, great prudence and caution will be required. You ought never to give the slightest intimation to any person, either directly or indirectly, that you are an agent of this Government, unless it be to Mr. Black, our Consul in Mexico, or to some high officer of that Government, and to the latter only after you shall have clearly discovered that this may smooth the way to peace. Be upon your guard against their wily diplomacy, and take care that they shall obtain no advantage over you.

You will communicate to this Department, as often as perfectly safe opportunities may offer, all the useful information which you shall acquire. Should you have any very important intelligence to transmit, it may be sent through Mr. Black to the Commander of our Naval forces off Vera Cruz, who, upon his request, will doubtless despatch it to Pensacola.

Your compensation—[Here follow the business details, stated with the minuteness characteristic of Mr. Buchanan's well-known habits.]

I am, Sir, very respectfully,  
Your obedient servant,  
JAMES BUCHANAN,  
Secretary of State.

plications which resulted from the novel mission.\* The route chosen from Charleston was purposely circuitous. The three companions were the only and the quite unnoticed passengers on a small schooner which sailed thence, early in December, 1846, for Matanzas; and they reached Havana from that port, by the regular coast steamer. It was an essential part of Mr. Beach's plan to interest the influential members of the Cuban clergy in the object of his mission, and, to avoid attracting attention, this must be accomplished deliberately. By day, therefore, the little party abandoned themselves to amusement and sight-seeing, while the shades of evening found Mr. Beach active in meeting appointments alike with the clergy and with other friends who were supposed to hold influence in the cause of an early peace. Not unfrequently, and not accidentally, Mr. Beach encountered some member of the clergy in his chosen temple of worship, that the object of their interview might the more perfectly be concealed. From all these friends of peace he learned of, and obtained introductions to, prominent Mexicans with whom he might have occasion to hold subsequent converse; but in every case in which the possession of such an introduction might compromise either himself or the party for whom it was intended, the letter became one of information and was forwarded under the seal of a friendly consul and by the usual course of mail.

As the day for the sailing of the monthly steamer to Vera Cruz approached, the attitude to be assumed by Mr. Beach became the absorbing question. He was urged not to trust his life without the protection of a passport as the citizen of a nation with whom Mexico was at peace; and the consul of one such power cheerfully offered to waive ordinary formalities and provide him with such a protection. On full consideration Mr. Beach determined to go in his own proper name, but accepted appointment as bearer of dispatches for the consul alluded to.

\* It had been the intention of the writer to omit mentioning the name of the lady here alluded to, but the abrupt ending of her life, since the preparation of this paper, has removed all objection to its publicity. At the period spoken of she was known as Jane M. Storm, widow of William Storm. She subsequently married General William L. Casneau, whose widow she was at the time of her death. She was one of the passengers on the ill-fated steamer, *Emily B. Souder*, which left New York for Hayti, December 7th, 1878, and, three days thereafter, foundered at sea. An imperfect sketch of her personal history appeared in "The Tribune" December 31st, 1878. The writer has since obtained a letter from the late N. P. Trist (the then Assistant-Secretary of State; whose name was closely associated with the treaty the origin of which is now being considered) to Mrs. Storm, a part of which, with explanatory interlinations, made at about the period of its receipt by Mrs. Storm, will be read in this connection with some interest:

"MY DEAR MRS. STORM: \* \* \* \* \*

The prophet [Mr. Beach] was to see me an hour or two ago. Is he not a wonderful man? And in more than one respect, too. Was there ever such a *hoper* before? He has forgotten all about the New York Convention already; and now 'tis *Congress* (at this very session, too) that are *cornered*, and will be compelled to act, *volens volens*, upon rational principles. [Occupy and annex Mexico, or so much of it as is needful to secure a direct route to the Pacific, for the good of the world.] They *are* the rational principles, though; and they must go on, gaining and gaining ground until we occupy the whole of it; [Occupation and Annexation of Mexico.] but this is not to be in his day, nor in yours, nor in that of

"Yours, with great esteem and cordiality, N. P. TRIST.

"Nov. 24, '46."

The few credentials which he deemed it prudent to keep about his person were inclosed under the consulate seal and became the "dispatches" of which he was the bearer. Thus prepared, he left Havana, on one of the early days of January, 1847, for Vera Cruz. To his very great surprise he found, in the person of a fellow-passenger, Señor La Granja, who had for many years been the representative of the Mexican government at New York. The two gentlemen were not strangers to each other, and concealment, however desirable, was impossible.

Mr. Beach was, at that time, the holder of a controlling interest in two banks of issue and, for the purpose of providing a business venture which could be used, if needful, to divert suspicion from his real mission, he carried with him a considerable sum in the notes of these banks. Under the shadow of this supposititious venture Mr. Beach now presented himself. Señor La Granja had long known his reputation for enterprise, and also his connection with the banking business, and was willing to countenance his proposed venture so far as refraining from revelations in respect to his citizenship, which might cause him and his party very serious difficulty.

Yet another surprise awaited his arrival at Vera Cruz. Scarcely had he located in his hotel when he received the Governor's card, which was followed, quite unceremoniously, by the appearance of that personage in his rooms. The haste and abruptness of the call seemed to indicate some species of treachery. But there was no retreat. Assuming that the manifestation was one of simple courtesy, Mr. Beach accepted the task of entertaining the Governor with his best grace. A long and animated conversation ensued, at the close of which he was severely catechized by the Governor as to his political opinions, antecedents and objects. Apparently impressed by the unhesitating frankness of his reception, the Governor finally took his leave with many expressions of regard. Later in the day Mr. Beach learned that his visitor had been attended by a military guard, who held possession of the premises during the interview, and seized and closely examined the baggage of his party.

While waiting opportunity to leave Vera Cruz, Mr. Beach secured an interview with a Mexican resident of some prominence, to whom he had received introduction. In the conversation which ensued, the gentleman seemed, without saying so, to know perfectly the object of his visit to Mexico, and very warmly assured him of sympathy and support from sources quite unexpected.

At Perote Mr. Beach and his party were openly threatened with arrest. While at table at the hotel, a guard filed into the dining-room, closing and holding all the doors. An officer thereupon seated himself in such manner as directly and closely to watch every movement of the party. Far from betraying trepidation or consciousness of danger, Mr. Beach devoted himself to his food so assiduously and so effectually as apparently to disarm whatever of suspicion had previously existed, and before his meal was finished the guard withdrew as silently as it had come. Meanwhile, however, the baggage had

again been seized, the locks forced and every article thoroughly ransacked.

At Puebla, where Mr. Beach tarried for the purpose of gaining the acquaintance of leading men to whom he had been commended, he was the subject of another, and to him, for a time, a more serious surprise. While walking the street in company with the two ladies, he was suddenly accosted by a stranger and abruptly requested to enter an adjoining house for conversation. With a feeling that he could add no danger to his position by compliance with any request, he excused himself to the ladies and accompanied the stranger. He was ushered into a room in which he found several gentlemen who evidently waited his coming. One of their number, after an apology for their apparent trap,—explained by the statement that privacy was the only security for their own lives,—stated that they had been apprised in advance of his visit and its object by ex-President Lamar, by a Mexican commander then in the field, and by other Mexicans named, who were his correspondents and friends; and that they were present to advise with him in regard to the "three points," and the most desirable mode of procedure in his present mission. In the course of the interview, Mr. Beach learned that the threats of arrest and the examinations of his baggage had been directly instigated in their and his behalf, as a means of preventing similar proceedings at times and in places beyond their control. He was advised, too, of the church-property-protest then recently (January 10th) issued; of the civil revolution imminent at the capital, and of other important events of recent or prospective occurrence.

On arrival in the city of Mexico he engaged spacious furnished apartments, over which he could exercise absolute control, and at once communicated with those to whom he had been commended. He refused, when the question was raised, to permit any concealment. He received those who called upon him openly and frankly, and by his "open house" disconcerted the spies who, he was informed, were lurking about.

Necessarily he held many conferences with men of leading position in the government, as also with leading members of the Mexican Congress, and with high officials of the Church; but these were each so carefully arranged that no more than a suspicion of them could be fixed. No record of anything that occurred was made,—the names only of such men as were deemed true to the cause of peace on the basis of the "three points," being carefully remembered. The American consul—Black\*—whose very long residence and kind disposition endeared him so strongly to Mexicans with whom he had intercourse, that he was not only permitted

but urged to remain at the capital during the war—proved of the greatest service in arranging these interviews, and, in other ways, promoting the negotiations.

These interviews and negotiations covered many weeks' time. They were persisted in during the civil revolution proclaimed by Canalozo, February 27th, and continued until a sufficient number in the executive departments of the government and of leaders in Congress had, by pledging their support of the measures proposed, given to the treaty the baptism to which I have heretofore alluded. The condition precedent to these pledges was that the United States forces should first demonstrate their superior power by the capture of Vera Cruz, and by full preparation for a march upon the capital. Upon this accomplishment the peace party would declare in favor of honorable terms, and compel the immediate acceptance of the treaty.

The verbal acceptance, upon understood conditions, of this *projet* of peace—the task undertaken by Mr. Beach—was now fully accomplished. It remained only to transmit the names of the persons who might be relied upon to carry the "three points" into effect, and to do this without in any manner compromising them. This was accomplished by the skillful use of a circular of arrangements for a grand ball, then about to take place. In this circular appeared the names of leading men of every shade of politics and social position. Only those who corrected the printer's final proof were aware that the names which occurred in a certain numerical order were the names of persons who had given assent to the "three points." Copies of this ball-programme were easily forwarded; but safely to deliver the key to General Scott and to the official representative of the United States, whom Mr. Beach momentarily expected, was more difficult.

Meanwhile the attack on Vera Cruz was commencing, and Mr. Beach was becoming impatient for the appearance of the long-promised commissioner. It seemed important that communication should be opened with General Scott to the end that he might be prepared for the promised early peace, and Mrs. Storm undertook the performance of that duty. Fleeting citizens of many nationalities were then the only passengers by diligence to Vera Cruz, and among these she was enrolled. One day early in March she presented herself to General Scott. The redoubtable military leader was slow to accept her statements, and uttered an epithet regarding her, which, had it found its way to the public press, would have become not less a by-word than was, at that very time, the general's "hasty plate of soup."

The days of March were passing. Scott was storming Vera Cruz, and Mr. Beach was wearily waiting the appearance of the promised envoy. Santa Anna, released from his forced attentions to General Taylor, had returned to the capital. At last came the announcement:

"Washington, March 8th.—General Benton will leave on Thursday. He goes to the seat of war as plenipotentiary and

\* Soon after the close of the war, Consul Black made a long-deferred visit among his relatives and friends in the United States. While on his return, and in the neighborhood of Puebla, certain opponents of the peace which his exertions had greatly aided, caused him to be dragged from the diligence in which he was traveling, taken to the woods, tied to a tree, and cruelly flogged. He was thereafter released and completed his journey; but he never recovered from the violence and exposure. A fatal fever followed the lacerations, and his life soon paid the penalty of his patriotism.

envoy extraordinary, with power to draw at sight on the treasury at New Orleans for three millions of dollars. The naval and military forces will act in concert with him, but no armistice will be granted except upon the conclusion of a treaty of peace, duly ratified in Mexico."

But even this tardy action—two months later than it was promised to Mr. Beach—was to be discontinued. The very next announcement was :

"Washington, March 12th.—Benton has declined because, to make his service effective, he would need an appointment superseding the authority of General Scott, and this was refused by the Senate."

While this was passing at Washington, a messenger from the Palace appeared at Mr. Beach's lodgings with an invitation to that gentleman to wait upon the Mexican President—Santa Anna. With a confidence in his good star, based upon his previous experiences with Mexican officials, he prepared for immediate compliance. Fortunately for himself, perhaps, he tarried to renew his toilet, and during the interval Consul Black entered his rooms, as was his wont, unannounced. Observing Mr. Beach's movements, the white-haired old man kindly asked his destination.

"Going to get my treaty signed—look at that!" and he pointed to the open invitation.

Scarcely had Consul Black glanced at its contents before he sprang to his feet with an emphatic

"No! No!! No!!!"

With a life's experience in Mexican treachery he declared that *such* an invitation at such a time, could have but one interpretation.

"Your life," said he, "is, from this moment, in imminent peril. Take your daughter and join the company who leave for Tampico this very night. I will send horses and a guide to your door. Say to your landlord that you have accepted the hospitalities which he knows have been tendered you by Señor —, whose hacienda is ten leagues away. Do not disturb your trunks or effects. Say nothing about this invitation from the Palace: I will answer for that."

With cheerful compliance Mr. Beach and his daughter mounted their horses, and started in the darkness upon their long ride. The night start, being one of the usual customs of the country, was quite unnoticed. The appointed place of rendezvous was distant some few miles from the city, and there, during the night and early morning, the company, in which many nationalities were represented, gradually gathered. For ten days the generally monotonous travel continued, and then, with hearts relieved, they entered the American lines. A government transport immediately conveyed Mr. Beach and his daughter to Vera Cruz, where they joined Mrs. Storm. The gruff old soldier, General Scott, listened to Mr. Beach's narrative, and concluded the interview with a jocular caution never to send messages of such importance by a "plenipotentiary in petticoats."

The middle of April had come, but there was yet no envoy from Washington with the official seal upon the "three points." Learning of disaster in some of his personal affairs, and full of mental malediction upon "red tape" in general and this instance

of it in particular, Mr. Beach abruptly retreated. He reached New Orleans April 22d, 1847, at about the same time as the long-delayed negotiator (the late N. P. Trist) who was then on his way to Mexico. But the two gentlemen were each ignorant of the other's near presence. To the President and the Secretary of State, Mr. Beach made a full personal report of the service he had rendered, and received from each the warmest encomium for the prudence, skill and steadfastness which he had conspicuously manifested.

It is unnecessary, perhaps, to recall the after-history of the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo; but this narrative will in some measure explain the indignation of President Polk and his Cabinet at the unauthorized change in the basis of the negotiations, and at the undue influence which the British minister was suffered to exercise in the transaction; as also their dissatisfaction with General Scott for granting an armistice in the face of explicit instructions to the contrary. The bitter opposition made by Senators Houston and Douglas and other supporters of the Administration, to a ratification of the treaty, will also be better understood. Had simple, straightforward perseverance in the course of action predetermined by the President and Cabinet, and made an important feature in the original preparation of the "three points," been adhered to, the war would have been shortened by months and millions would have been saved, while the territory subsequently purchased at large cost, with much more, would have been added, without payment of any kind, to the domain of the American republic.

M. S. BEACH.

#### A Note from C. B. Chlapowski.

TO THE EDITOR OF SCRIBNER'S MONTHLY:

DEAR SIR—The highly complimentary article in your March number on my wife (Mme. Modjeska) contains some personal errors, not important to the American reader, but of great weight to me. I hope, therefore, you will not refuse me the favor of inserting the following few lines intended to rectify them.

First, the author mentions my uncle, General Chlapowski, as having commanded in the campaign of Moscow a wing of the French army, as well as having been Polish commander-in-chief during the insurrection of 1830-1. This is a mistake, which has originated, I suppose, from the similitude of name with General Chlopicki, who had an important command in the campaign of Moscow, and later was Polish Dictator, in 1830-1. My uncle took part in the campaign of Moscow only as an *officier d'ordonnance* attached to the person of the Emperor Napoleon, and later, during the Polish war, was not commander-in-chief, but commander of a separate corps, sent to Lithuania for a diversion. As he performed his duties in a way which reflects honor upon his name, I think it an injustice to him to adorn him with a rank that he did not hold.

The second error concerns myself. The article