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Saml A. Rice

BRIG-GEN SAMUEL A. RICE.

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BRIGADIER GENERAL SAMUEL A. RICE, OF IOWA.

BY L. D. INGERSOLL.

HIS BIRTH AND EARLY LIFE—EDUCATION—BECOMES A LAWYER
—REMOVAL TO IOWA—HIS PROFESSIONAL AND POLITICAL
CAREER—HIS CAREER AS A SOLDIER—COLONEL OF THE 33D
IOWA VOLUNTEERS—BATTLE AT HELENA—THE LITTLE ROCK
CAMPAIGN—EXPEDITION TO SOUTHWESTERN ARKANSAS—
BATTLE OF JENKINS' FERRY—HIS DEATH AND CHARACTER.

Among the eminent men of Iowa whose patriotic impulses carried them away from home, to battle in the field for the Union and for freedom, in the war still being waged, so righteously on the one side and with such unmixcd wickedness on the other, there were but very few more generally known or more highly esteemed than SAMUEL A. RICE. I greatly doubt whether any State sent to the field a man, not older than Gen. Rice, who had before him so bright a promise of usefulness and reputation in the civil service, or who performed more honorable deeds for the country during the period in which he was engaged as a soldier. He had filled one of the most important positions within the gift of the people of his State,

with great credit to himself and satisfaction to his constituency; he had been prevented from filling another public office of still greater importance only by reason of his own magnanimity and the customary but not honorable machinations of scurvy politicians; he made his regiment one of the most efficient even of Iowa regiments; his brigade, one of the best in the service; he successfully commanded a Division during an important campaign; he fought hotly-contested engagements, and won victories over superior numbers.

I have thought that a fuller sketch of his life than has yet appeared would be acceptable to the people of Iowa.

SAMUEL ALLEN RICE was born in the village of Olean, Cattaraugus county, New York, January 27th, 1828. He was the sixth of a family of eight children. When Samuel was a year old, the family removed to Smithport, Pennsylvania. "The child is father to the man." The boy was hardly two years old when he had acquired the title of "Major" from a certain knack of ruling and disciplining the other boys which he so early exhibited. In about three years, the family removed to Portage, on the head waters of the Susquehanna, where the father was engaged in the salt business. But educational advantages were here limited indeed, and in 1834, the family again moved, this time going to the city of Pittsburgh. It was here the boy first went to school. He had at Portage, however, learned the alphabet on as near the self-teaching plan as possible, and had taught himself to read. He spent the winter of 1834-5 at Wheeling, Va., visiting an elder sister. Here, this boy of seven years read the Bible through from beginning to end. I have often heard him recur to the Scriptural lessons he there read with his sister, in words of affectionate kindness, and with the asseveration that they were as fresh in his mind as the events of yesterday. In the spring of 1835 he returned to Pittsburg. Here he went to school for two years, learning with great rapidity. At the end of this period, the family again moved, going to Martinsville, Ohio, now called Martin's Ferry. Here several members of the family still reside, intelligent and influential citizens.

Here Samuel entered a select school, at once took the highest standing as an apt and diligent pupil and kept it throughout. In the spring of 1839 he accompanied his father, going thither with lumber, to St. Louis. Having returned, he went up to Pittsburgh, with the object of getting employment on a trip to New Orleans, thinking he might thus make money enough to enable him to prosecute his studies continuously. In this the lad had to suffer disappointment. His visions of the sunny south, of the money he should make, and of the books he should study, vanished before the reality of no employment to be had that way. So the large-headed young "Major" did the best thing he could. He went to Philadelphia on a canal boat, making such a bargain for his services that he earned his passage and money enough for his expenses while in the Quaker city. There he remained a week, being most attracted by the public libraries and book stores of which he had much to say on his return home. Shortly afterwards, he entered an excellent seminary at Wheeling, then under the charge of a divine of the Associate Reform church, and there prosecuted his studies with great energy and success. It was here that he commenced the study of the classics, in which he made rapid progress. His graduating oration, so to say, from the academy, was altogether superior to the usual school-boy essays, evincing a depth of thought and beauty of sentiment rarely exhibited by one so young. In the year 1844, in company with his father and four brothers, he made a trip down the Ohio and Mississippi as far as Memphis, spending the winter there. On their way home, the father was taken sick, and never recovered from the attack. He died, May 2d, 1845.

It may be gathered from the facts which have already been stated, that the death of his father did not result in an independent fortune to him. The world was all before him, where to choose his place, and that, as has been the case with so many eminent men of our country, was about all the choice he had. Happily, he had a kind friend in a brother-in-law, who was able to assist him, and who proposed to lend him such pecuniary aid as would enable him to complete his stud-

ies, and prepare himself to enter upon the profession he might choose. He accepted the offer, and at once entered college, at the State University of Ohio, Athens, where he was graduated in regular course. He then attended Union College, at Schenectady, New York, which had been for more than forty years under the presidency of the distinguished Dr. Eliphalet Nott, and still was. Here he was graduated in 1849. His choice of a profession was that of Law, in which he was seconded by Dr. Nott. Whilst he was a student in Union college, Henry Clay visited the institution. Mr. Rice was chosen by the students to deliver before the great orator their address of welcome. He attended Fowler's Law School, and afterwards read law in the office of Z. Jacobs, Esq., at Wheeling, Virginia.

Having acquired a sufficient knowledge of law to enter upon his profession with credit, he went to Iowa, in 1850, and commenced the practice, at Fairfield, in Jefferson county. Here he also edited, or assisted in the editing of a journal which advocated the principles of the whig party. He did not, however, remain very long in Fairfield. In 1852 he went to Oskaloosa, then a small village, and made that place his home. Here he entered into partnership with the Hon. E. W. Eastman, now Lieutenant Governor of Iowa, and speedily gained an honorable position at the bar and a lucrative practice. In 1854, he paid a visit to his old home in Ohio, and was married to a daughter of the Rev. James Alexander.

It was during that year that the Democratic party lost the political control of the State of Iowa. Mr. Rice was an "anti-Nebraska Whig," and of course rejoiced at the success of his party. He was also an anti-slavery man, both by feeling and education. Upon the formation of the Republican party, he at once heartily identified himself with the new organization. He was known to be an effective public speaker and a skilful political manager. It is quite certain he was as effective a speaker as any man of his age in the State, and, I think, a more skilful political manager than any. He was known also to be a well read lawyer, unusually successful at the bar.

These were the considerations which secured him the nomination of his party for the office of Attorney General, in 1856. He was elected by a large majority, was again nominated and again elected, in 1858. During both these campaigns he made many public speeches in different parts of the State, whereby he largely augmented the strength of his party and his own reputation. Though only thirty years of age when a candidate for the second time, he was universally regarded as among the most talented men of Iowa, and Iowa then had within her borders not a few whose talents in journalism, in the national councils, and in warfare, have won the plaudits of the country. He performed the duties of his office with conscientious rectitude and with ability. He had the regards and the personal friendship of the judges of the Supreme Court and of his professional brethren who met him before that honorable jurisdiction. His opinions to the Legislature were given in simple language, with no attempt at a display of learning. They were clear, logical, generally sound, and never tinged with flippancy. His arguments before the Supreme Court were almost always very brief and very comprehensive.

During all this time, and up to 1862, Mr. Rice was, to less or more extent, an active politician; all the time, he was a studious reader, both of works pertaining to his profession and general literature; all the time, he conducted a large and increasing practice, adding year by year to the wordly means, whereby his loved ones at home might be supported; all the time, he was rendering that dear place his home—as dear to him as was ever home to man—more and more comfortable, more and more tatseful; all the time, by the kindly amenities of social life, which he knew so well how to practice, bringing nearer and nearer to him the friends who had his respect and affection. He was all the time adding to his mental stature. The Samuel A. Rice of 1862 was much greater than the Samuel A. Rice of 1856. His mind grew wonderfully. What is more, and what is strange—what is passing strange in a politician—his heart grew with his mind, and he became less and less selfish every year. In fact, it was his unselfishness which

caused his defeat for the nomination as candidate for Congress, in 1862. Had he asked the instructions of his own county in his favor, which he could have had for the asking, he would have had a clear majority in the convention. He declined doing this, declined attending the convention, and after a long struggle, characterized by the warfare usual on such occasions was defeated by a bare majority. There were small politicians who had "grudges," and perhaps thought they had a right to have grudges, against Mr. Rice, and they were able to compass his defeat, thinking it a small matter. For my own part, and having as just an appreciation of the honor, talents and patriotism of the successful candidate as any man, I thought at the time, and yet think, that defeat was a calamity to the District, a calamity to the State, and a calamity to the country.

Mr. Rice was not the only defeated candidate for congressional nomination who received from the Governor the solace of a commission in the army. Indeed, it seems his excellency must have made up his mind that in all such cases, he would pour the military balm of Gilead upon the politically wounded heads, to prevent them, as they say, from remaining "sore." Certainly it was not needed in the case of Samuel A. Rice, but by the application of the general prescription he was commissioned Colonel of the 33d Iowa Infantry, August 10, 1862. Within a few days, three or four companies were in quarters at Oskaloosa, and within a month the regiment was fully organized. The patriotism of the people was at that time in a fine flow of enthusiasm; men sprang to arms almost as wonderfully as the Highlanders of Roderic Dhu, especially throughout the Northwest; it was no trouble to get troops in Iowa. Nevertheless, there were many parents who had long known Col. Rice, who advised their sons to enlist with him, on account of which the regiment was so speedily filled, almost entirely from his own and two adjoining counties. His own friends and neighbors, and their sons, composed the command.

He now had upon him great responsibilities, and before him an entirely new field of action. He devoted himself conscientiously and assiduously to the study of military affairs and of

warfare as a science. He read all the military works he could find with nearly as much zest as Byron ever read novels. Nor did he confine himself to the perusal of the cheap treatises which have teemed from all the brains of all the martinets, since the breaking out of the rebellion. He pursued a thorough course of study, similar to that pursued at our national military academy. He studied the history of the great captains of the world. In fine, he put his mind diligently to the task of thoroughly understanding all that a commander ought to know, not being deterred either by dry details, or the broad scope of the science in which he had been called to act. He did more. He learned the manual of arms, just as though he had been an enlisted man. At the time Col. Rice received permission to raise a regiment, John F. Lacey (now Capt. and A. A. Gen. in the army, and a gallant soldier) was studying law with him. He enlisted in one of the companies of the regiment and was appointed Sergeant Major. He had already served some time in the army, and was expert in the use of arms. He and the Colonel spent many a night, while the the Regiment remained in quarters at Oskaloosa, drilling in manual with a couple of old Harper's Ferry muskets, their only spectators being the now laid-aside law books in the office. It was by thus studying and thus practising that Col. Rice made himself a soldier.

His regiment was mustered into the service of the United States on the first day of October, and in about a month and a-half left the State for the front, arriving at St. Louis on the 22d day of November, where it attracted marked attention, and received special encomiums from Major-Gen. Curtis, commanding the Department. It remained there, performing Provost Guard duty about a month. The rebel Forrest, meantime, had cut off Gen. Grant's communications in Kentucky and Tennessee, and was said to be marching on Columbus, whither Col. Rice was ordered, and reached that place the day before Christmas, his command spending the Hollidays in the trenches. The Regiment remained here and at Union City some two weeks more, and then embarked for Helena, Arkan-

sas, with the view of joining Gen. Gorman's expedition to the mouth of White River, which was prevented, however, by order of Col. Bussey, then commanding at Helena, and who expected an attack upon that post. From this time till August 10th, Col. Rice was most of the time on garrison duty at Helena. Not all the time, however, for he went with several expeditions of less or more importance, in all of which there was skirmishing now and then but nothing approaching the dignity of an engagement. Among these was that of Gen. Washburn down the Yazoo Pass, to open that umbrageous route "to the rear of Vicksburg;" the famous Yazoo Pass expedition itself; one to the vicinity of Cotton Plant, Arkansas, in which large quantities of rebel supplies were destroyed; and one or two more of less note. Col. Rice's regiment had been in the brigade of Gen. Fisk. About the 10th of June, Gen. Fisk departed for the north, and Col. Rice assumed command of the brigade (and the post of Helena,) and here ended forever his command of the 33d Iowa, as its direct superior officer. His command included that regiment, which he loved, and which loved him, but it included much more.

Thus far, the military career of Col. Rice had been comparatively tame. He had been in no battle. He had all the while continued his studies, and practically performed his military duties in such way as to call forth the hearty approval of his superior officers and to merit the regards of the officers and men under his command. It was yet to be seen whether he would behave right manfully in actual battle. It was not long till he had an opportunity of showing his qualities in face of the enemy and under his fire.

The 4th of July, 1863, was as memorable for its great events as the 4th of July, 1776, was memorable for great ideas. The surrender of Vicksburg to Gen. Grant, and the defeat of the rebel Lee by the Potomac Army, made capable of victory by General Hooker, brought out all the enthusiasm of the country. There never was, perhaps, a greater national jubilee. It was because of the importance, the grandeur of these event, that the battle of Helena, fought on the memorable day, did not

receive the *eclat* which it otherwise would have received. Nevertheless, it was a battle bravely fought by the rebels, and admirably performed by the Union forces. The enemy, 15,000 strong, under Holmes, Price, and Marmaduke, attacked our lines, posted advantageously on the bluffs back of Helena, and extending from the left of the Little Rock road, leading westward, to the Sterling road, leading northward. The battle raged from 4 o'clock in the morning till nearly noon, when the enemy were repulsed at all points, and soon in full retreat upon Little Rock. They suffered a loss, in killed, wounded, and prisoners, of about 2500, the Union loss being about 250. Col. Rice's brigade consisted of the 29th, 33d, 36th Iowa, and 33d Missouri Volunteers, and held position on the centre and right of the line. The Colonel exhibited the best qualities of a commander—courage, coolness, quick decision, keen observation. His brigade lost, in killed, wounded, and prisoners, 171, or more than two-thirds of the entire casualty. In fact, it did the larger share of the fighting, and by universal testimony was handled with great skill and judgment. Here it was that his brigade acquired the name of "Rice's Brigade," and retained it, whether the same organization or not, until his death. Here it was that many of the rank and file, looking at the actual fighting, and without casting any reflections upon the skill of Gen. Salomon, directing the movements, declared, with military bluntness, it was "Sam. Rice's battle." Here it was that all the troops under him and officers over him learned that he had all the qualities of an excellent commander. Here it was, indeed, that he won, and most fairly won, the promotion which he soon received.

On the 10th of August, Gen. Steele, with an army numbering 12,000 of all arms, commenced his march upon Little Rock, Col. Rice, in command of a Division, marching toward Clarendon on the White river, with orders to reconstruct the bridges which had been destroyed by the rebels, and to repair the roads, which were in bad condition. It was thus just one year from the day on which Col. Rice received his commission that, as acting general, he took command of a division of troops. It

was the division theretofore commanded by Gen. Salomon, now north on leave of absence. It performed arduous labors during the campaign, and had considerable heavy skirmishing with the enemy at different times, especially at Bayou Metoe, a deep and miry stream about midway between Brownsville and the capital of Arkansas. But the entire loss of Gen. Steele's whole command, throughout the campaign, did not exceed a hundred. It was more remarkable for its labors, its marches, and its important results than for its fighting. Gen. Steele, by an admirable plan, admirably executed, "re-possessed Little Rock," on the 10th of September, it being the very day on which Gen. Burnside's "re-possessed" Knoxville, Tennessee. Col. Rice received his commission as Brigadier General of Volunteers, while on the march to Little Rock, and accepted it on the 18th of August.

Gen. Rice continued in command of the division, which he had led from Helena to Little Rock until the return of Gen. Salomon, in the month of October, when he resumed command of his old brigade, now consisting of the 29th and 33d Iowa, and 28th Wisconsin regiments. In the latter part of October Gen. Rice, in command of his own and another brigade was sent out to intercept Marmaduke, who, having made an attack on Pine Bluff and been most handsomely repulsed by Col. Clayton, was reported to be retreating toward Arkadelphia. The gallant Lieut.-Col. Clay H. Caldwell, of the 3d Iowa Cavalry, made excellent time in pursuit of the flying rebels, but was unable to come up with the main body. He performed a very hard march, his heroic men being three whole days without a ration and without a murmur. There seems to have been a misunderstanding of orders on the part both of the cavalry and infantry. At any rate, Marmaduke marched down to Camden and got away, whilst our troops marched back to Little Rock, with many mules, a good deal of confederate money, and nothing whatever to eat.

In December, Gen. Rice took his first leave of absence since entering the service, and made a short visit to his family in Oskaloosa. Before returning to his command, he proceeded

to Washington city under orders from the War Department. It was here that I last met him. We passed down Pennsylvania Avenue together, from the Treasury Department to the Capitol, a distance of one mile, stopping in at every book store on the way. He bought some half dozen volumes, all of them being works of a military character. "I know nothing about books now," he said, "except soldier-books." He remained in the city a day or two and then returned to his command in Arkansas. From this time till the organization of what turned out to be the "Camden Expedition," he was constantly engaged in the line of his military duties, trying to bring his brigade up to the standard of perfection. Whether he entirely succeeded or not, it is certain that "Rice's Brigade," consisting of 2100 men, was the flower of Gen. Steele's army—remarkable for its fine appearance, admirable discipline, skill in evolutions, and general efficiency.

Gen. Banks, having danced enough during the winter at New Orleans, started out on his expedition of cotton, disaster, and death, early in the year 1864. In my deliberate judgment, he richly deserved to be placed upon a drum head and shot for his conduct of that expedition. The campaign, which ought to have resulted in the entire recovery to the Union of all the territory then and now under insurgent control between the Mississippi and the Rio Grande rivers, actually resulted in the evacuation of large portions which had before been re-possessed, a fearful waste of blood and property, in wholesale disaster following wholesale disaster so rapidly, that one cannot think yet of the campaign without a shudder. In the plan of wresting the southwest entirely from the dominion of the insurgents, Gen. Steele was to perform a secondary but important part. The failure of Banks, his defeat at Mansfield, Louisiana, necessarily interfered with the movements of Gen. Steele, and at last resulted in his retreat upon Little Rock, only less disastrous than the retreat of Banks, but leaving no reproach upon the commanding general or the officers and soldiers under him. In the march of the Army of Arkansas and upon its retreat till he received the wound from the effects of which he died, Gen.

Rice certainly performed as honorable a part as any officer in the command.

The expedition left Little Rock on the 23d of March, proceeding in a southwesterly direction toward Arkadelphia on the Washita, and finding the enemy in small force all along the line. The country had previously been scoured by both Union and rebel forces, and it was necessary that an immense supply train should accompany Gen. Steele's column. This train, after the column reached Arkadelphia, was placed in charge of Salomon's Division, in which was Rice's Brigade. On the 2d of April, the gallant 29th Iowa, with two pieces of artillery, forming the rear guard, was attacked by Shelby, with 1500 men, near the hamlet of Terre Noir, some eighteen miles southwest of Arkadelphia. The enemy made several attacks, but were each time handsomely repulsed. The fighting continued at intervals, Gen. Rice, having reinforced the 29th by two other regiments, repulsing the enemy and then closing up with the train, from an hour before noon till after dark, meantime marching a distance of not less than eight miles. Our loss in this affair was about sixty men, that of Shelby, reinforced just before dusk by Cabell's brigade, much greater. It was called the battle of Terre Noir from the village and creek of that name. Gen. Rice marched into camp at 11 o'clock at night, with drums beating and banners flying, being greeted everywhere by the huzzas of the troops who had been gratified by his admirable conduct on the open field.

Two days afterwards he was again under fire and in command at Elkins' Ferry, on the Little Missouri river. McLean's brigade had crossed the river, and was "marching on," when it was attacked by Marmaduke with a largely superior force, and driven back on the river. Gen. Rice, with the 29th Iowa and 9th Wisconsin, was ordered over to support McLean. Reaching the scene of action, he assumed command, and reformed the lines. He was enthusiastically received by the troops as he rode along the lines, and the enemy opened their artillery on the man "on the iron-gray horse," so that he

passed through a shower of canister. As he rode by the 36th Iowa, a ball from a canister passed through his cap, severely contusing his head, so that the blood flowed profusely over his shoulders. Borrowing a cap of a soldier, he rode on, paying no further attention to his wound till the enemy had been driven from the field. The wound was painful, but did not cause the General to relinquish his command. I know several "heroes" who have been honorably discharged in consequence of less severe hurts, and have, besides, received offices in consequence of their fleshly martyrdom.

The enemy remained at Elkin's Ferry a short time awaiting reinforcements from Fort Smith. On April 10th, it moved out to attack the enemy, reported in heavy force on Prairie de Anne. There was a beautiful moonlight artillery duel from dark till the moon went down at 11 o'clock, but, like artillery duels generally, it was chiefly sound and fury signifying nothing. On the 11th, there was skirmishing all day, and on the 12th the army moved to assault the enemy's works on the opposite side of the prairie. This movement of the whole army across Prairie de Anne, formed a grand sight. The prairie is a large rolling field, fourteen miles long, and eight miles wide. Into this, more than 12000 men, cavalry, artillery, and infantry, deployed and marched across it, the whole force being in view at once. As if by instinct, or as having caught the inspiration of the scene, the different organizations marched proudly forward as though under review. Except as a display, however, the movement amounted to nothing, for the rebels had evacuated their works during the night. At Prairie de Anne, Gen. Steele learned of the discomfiture of Banks, and changed his course from toward Shreveport, La., to Camden, Arkansas. In the march on Camden, Gen. Rice had the van, going ahead of the main body, in light marching order, and skirmishing with the enemy less or more heavily till within a few miles of the town, when the rebels took a by road to the south, and did not further dispute our entrance.

Why he did so, I know not, but Gen. Steele remained at Camden some ten days. On the 24th, Gen. Kirby Smith ar-

rived with his army, and made a feint attack upon the south side of the town, his real object being the capture of our train, in which he succeeded on the following day. Capitulation or retreat, that retreat being necessarily on short rations through a desolate country, was the alternative presented to Gen. Steele. On the night of the 26th all the stores and property set down as "surplus" in those convenient calculations which can make abundance out of deficiency, were destroyed, and the retreat ordered. It was commenced in secrecy, and the Washita placed between Steele and Kirby Smith before the latter knew that Camden had been evacuated.

In that part of the State embracing the line of this retreat, the Washita, Saline, and Arkansas rivers flow parallel to each other toward the southwest, the Saline being about midway between Camden and Little Rock, and about forty-five miles from either as the crow flies. Pine Bluff is considerably nearer Camden than Little Rock is, and, in order that he might retreat upon the one or the other as circumstances should dictate, Gen. Steele deflected somewhat from the main road but not any from the direct course to Little Rock, and crossed the Saline at Jenkins' Ferry. It was here that the bloody battle of that name, fought by Gen. Rice, took place; here that he received the wound which caused his death.

On the 29th of April, the army reached the river, and on the same day Kirby Smith came up with the rearguard, with which he had a brisk skirmish, lasting till the main army had gone into camp on Saline bottom. It rained heavily during the afternoon and poured down in torrents all the live long night. The creeks and bayous, so abundant in Arkansas, were swollen by the flood, and the mud was actually awful. The crossing was delayed by the inauspicious circumstances, and day dawned on the 30th with half our artillery and wagons still on the right bank of the river. A fight for the passage was inevitable. That secured, and Gen. Steele could retreat either to Pine Bluff or Little Rock in comparative ease and security.

Gen. Rice's brigade was placed in the rear to cover the passage of the river, his original regiment, the 33d Iowa, forming

the extreme rear guard. Shortly after daylight this regiment was attacked, and a severe action ensued. The General sent up the 50th Indiana to support the 33d, and directed a new line to be formed half a mile nearer the river, by the 29th Iowa and a Wisconsin regiment. This new position was one of natural strength, being behind a field full of dead trees, protected on the right by a creek and on the left by a swamp. The line having been formed the rear guard fell back under its cover. In a few minutes, the enemy renewed his attack with great impetuosity. A whole division, that of Churchill, was massed and hurled upon this gallant rear guard of one brigade, and that whole division was overthrown and hurled back again by that single brigade. At this juncture, Col. Engelmann, commanding a brigade consisting of the 40th Iowa, and two other regiments, reinforced Gen. Rice, who posted the fresh troops advantageously and awaited attack. Parson's division now assailed him, and at first with seemingly more success than had attended Churchill's efforts. The left of the 33d Iowa was flanked and rolled back, but a detachment of the 40th Iowa, and a Kansas regiment, belonging to Thayer's Division, which had opportunely just come up, drove back the rebels and restored the line. While this was going on upon our left, the enemy brought up a section of artillery in the open field on our right, and opened on the 29th Iowa and a Kansas colored regiment. Gen. Rice promptly ordered a charge, and these two regiments of white men and black men, rushed forward with a shout, captured the guns, and triumphantly brought them off the field, through the deep mud. The roar of musketry which had been almost deafening for some time now ceased. Presently a new division of rebel troops—Walker's "Texas Division"—deeming themselves the heroes of Mansfield and Pleasant Hill, were brought into the action, making a feint against the right, but the real attack against our left centre, held by the 33d Iowa and 50th Indiana. Gen. Rice, who was at the time on the right, put spurs to his horse and dashed down the line toward the scene of this last charge of the enemy. As he passed by the 9th Wisconsin, a minnie ball

pierced his right foot, driving into his flesh a portion of his spur. He reeled in his saddle, and growing dizzy from the shock of the wound, dismounted. The ground where he lay was strewn with dead, and musket balls were whistling around in all directions. Capt. Lacy came up, assisted him to remount, and led his horse from the field. Meantime the fight went on for thirty minutes more with increased fury. Walker's yelling Texans charged again and again, and were again and again repulsed. The four brigades composing that division surged up like a tide against our little army, and were each time driven back with fearful slaughter, and at length left the field in our possession.

They had been terribly punished. Three of their generals, Randall, Scurry and Waul, had fallen, and they acknowledged a total loss of 2300. Our own loss was 700, in killed, wounded and missing. To account for the great disparity, the rebels manufactured the atrocious falsehood that we threw our dead into the Saline river. It is properly accounted for by two facts—first the rebels massed their forces and hurled them in compact bodies against our lines, so that every volley of our musketry told a fearful tale of slaughter; and, secondly, Gen. Rice handled his men with consummate skill, and care, and used every advantage of his position to the best effect. It is hardly too much to say that he inflicted the most possible damage upon the enemy with the least possible damage to his own troops. He constantly rode along the lines, encouraging the men not only, but bringing up fresh regiments at the right moment, strengthening the line where the attack became strong, putting in troops with cartridge boxes full of ammunition to take the place of others whose boxes were becoming exhausted, and in all ways personally caring for his command and directing the battle.

It was a great victory, considering the odds against us, and filled the hungry army with enthusiastic satisfaction, which was mingled, however, with gloomy forebodings on account of the general's wound. A foot wound, the soldier knows, is a dangerous thing. We left the General as he was being slowly

taken from the field. He was placed in an ambulance with Lt.-Col. Hays of the 12th Kansas, whose mangled thigh was held by one arm of the kind-hearted Capt. Lacey, who also held in his lap the foot of his beloved general, himself sitting the while in a pool of blood. The General gave no heed to his wound, which, but for his mental excitement, must have been excessively painful. He was altogether concerned about the issue of the contest, which was not decided till he reached the river. The next morning the army continued its retreat to Little Rock, the enemy having been too severely punished to follow. The victory of Jenkins' Ferry had saved the Army of Arkansas.

Gen. Rice remained at Little Rock several weeks and then proceeded by easy stages, making frequent stoppages on the way, to his home in Oskaloosa. Everywhere on his journey, especially in Iowa, he received the devoted attention and tender sympathies of hosts of those who knew him personally as well as of those who had known him by reputation. By all classes at his own home he was received almost like an only child. It was not known that his wound must prove mortal till a comparatively short time before his death. But the virus of the wound had permeated his system, poisoning the vital fluids. Surrounded by his beloved family, and friends who loved him scarcely less dearly than they, in the entire possession of his mental faculties, and with unfaltering trust in Christ, he died, on Wednesday, July 6, 1864. On the Friday following he was buried with Masonic honors, a clergyman of the Presbyterian church, in which he was a communicant, performing the religious ceremonies. A vast concourse of people from town and country came to look upon his form for the last time and to follow it to the narrow house. The business houses of the town were closed, and the citizens universally manifested their sorrow.

The press of the State, without exception so far as I know, expressed deep regret at his untimely death, and almost all of them published the kindly and appreciative sketch of his life and character by Dr. Beardsley, of the *HERALD*. The troops

who had served with him and under him, gave expression to their grief by touching resolutions. Gen. Steele, commanding the Department of Arkansas, issued a most eloquent and just general order upon the subject, directing the flag to be displayed at half mast at each military post within the department from sunrise until sunset; half-hour guns to be fired from the principal fort of the post at Little Rock; and the colors "of the several regiments of Rice's Brigade" to be draped in mourning for a period of thirty days. The Iowa Association at Washington City, and the State Convention of the political party to which he had belonged, passed resolutions of sorrow. In fine, all who had known him living, proposed to themselves to honor his memory, now that he was dead.

Dr. Beardsley, in the article to which I have referred, says that Gen. Rice was not a genius. Genius is a something hard to define. It is surely much varied in its manifestations. It sometimes exhibits majestic strength and power, as in "Lear," and "Paradise Lost;" sometimes, an almost airy beauty and loveness, as in "The Raven," and "Christabel;" sometimes, prodigious might, as in Napoleon's Austerlitz and Wagram; and sometimes a power like that of the subtle agencies of chymistry, as in Plato's dialogues and Tallyrand's diplomacy. Among practical men, it has likewise been exhibited in ten thousand ways, from the making pins out of a single piece of wire, to the establishment of great states and empires. I think Andrew Jackson had genius—the genius of a mighty will. I think the man who fought the battle of Jenkins' Ferry within twenty months from the time he learned his military A. B. C's., had something as good as genius, call it by whatsoever name you choose. Gen. Rice had a ponderous brain, not easily aroused to activity. In his mental organization he resembled Joseph Marshall, the greatest and the laziest man Indiana ever produced. Gen. Rice was not indolent, but it took much to fully wake up his intellect. It was in consequence of this, that he sometimes failed both at the bar and on the hustings. He only used, so to say, a corner of his mind. But he never failed when fully aroused, and it is cer-

tain that some of his political speeches, some of his addresses to juries, and some of his arguments before the Supreme Court were the best we have ever had in Iowa. Moreover, his failures were a good deal better than many men's successes. Had Gen. Rice stimulated his brain with a quart of fourth-proof brandy a day, I think he would have been looked upon as a genius no less brilliant than Tom Marshall, of Kentucky, and would probably have become a deplorable sacrifice to the gutter, instead of ending his honorable and temperate life in the fine flames of patriotic martyrdom.

Gen. Rice had strong common sense, a powerful will, energy, ambition, cunning, which amounted to sagacity on emergency, great powers of application, and a good but not unerring and not rapid, judgment of men. It is a coarse word, but I must say he had the least possible "gab." He was as reticent of private matters as any man who ever lived, and could keep a secret as well as Aaron Burr himself, or a corpse. Not the best friend on earth, not the most dexterous and cunning course of questioning, or "pumping," could wring it from him. One might as well have tried to pump the grave. It was these qualities which enabled Gen. Rice to succeed so well in everything he undertook—in his profession, in politics, in the army. He was an affectionate husband, a kind father, an amiable, genial man, with no stain upon his personal character. It is within the bounds of truth to say, that by his death Iowa lost one of her most eminent citizens, one of her most successful lawyers, one of her most sagacious politicians, one of her bravest, best soldiers.

NOTE.—The orthography of the foregoing article is that of the manuscript, by express directions of the author.—PROOF READER.

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