

Santa Anna. It is said he throws the fault on Valencia, accusing him of disobedience of orders.

\* \* The only news we have at present is, that it appears that we intend to defend the capital, and that we expect every moment that the enemy will begin to bombard it. If this should happen, you can figure to yourself how much would be suffered by this beautiful city and its inhabitants; and, in the end, we shall have to suffer the humiliation of witnessing the entrance of our conquerors, for I do not perceive the smallest hopes of a triumph. We have no artillery, we have no troops, we have nothing. Our army ran at the first. We suffered yesterday a complete defeat, and still talk about making resistance! I do not disapprove of it, for it is necessary to defend the capital at its last entrenchments, because the national decorum requires it; but I repeat that it is useless.

This is the situation at present of the Mexicans, I had better say of those that unhappily are Mexicans. It is not difficult to see the future; a nation of eight millions of souls domineered over by twenty thousand vandals. If, at any time, we have deserved compassion among nations, we now merit opprobrium. I am a Mexican, and, if God does not deprive me of life, I shall have to outlive this humiliation, and witness to-morrow, *perhaps* to-morrow itself, the destruction of one-half of the capital, and the occupation by our conquerors; and, not to be permitted to fight for its defence, for fear of another ignominy. This is a most desperate situation! It is three years, the 11th of the present month, since I entered public life, and I have suffered all that you are aware of, but I did not know what it was to suffer till now. Who can doubt that this is a chastisement from Heaven! It is rare that the Host is exhibited, but in the fight of the 19th, and until 9 o'clock at night, the Divine Host was shown in the church of Mexico. The temples were full of Mexicans, praying to God for a triumph of our arms. The day following, from 7, a. m., to 9, p. m., it was entirely a different spectacle; the streets were full of soldiers, bathed in blood, who were continually rending the air with their cries and lamentations, mingled with words of insolence for their bad fortune, as they crawled to their doors or the hospitals. Carts might be seen, with litters, carrying the severely wounded who could not travel on foot, and from their beds of anguish was heard the most heart-rending complaints, which were mingled with the shrieks of women who, like demented people, straggled about the streets without any particular object, lamenting the fate of their friends, of whose fate they were ignorant. The church steeples, and most elevated points, were crowded by numbers of people, who still remained in their positions, after witnessing the issue of the combat, their countenances the pictures of consternation. During the combat, some were immoveably transfixed, others were violently startled by cannon; soldiers were seen running without muskets, and Polkas (national guards) wrapped in their blankets, their heads covered with slouched hats. What gave the last sad coloring to this picture, was the retiring of soldiers to their barracks in the evening, about one-eighth of their original number, some with-

out cartridge boxes, some without arms, and all bedaubed with mud from head to foot. The night before, prayers were offered up in behalf of each soldier in particular, and for the nation in general; but the following day we witnessed the catastrophe. How painful to say this! what human power can oppose such a plague?

When I saw the Divinity exposed the previous night, I conceived hopes, because I saw we looked to help more powerful than any recourse of the enemy. I have seen the result, and this forces me to believe that it is nothing less than the chastisement of Heaven, and this is my reason for saying, as I have said, that all resistance is useless, although I judge it necessary for the decorum of the nation.

The description which I have attempted to give, though sorrowful in the extreme for a Mexican, is nevertheless exact; and I have given it against my will, for I would have wished to save you pain, but you requested the exact truth, and I will continue to advise you of what may happen. To-day all is tranquil; I hope in God that this calm may not be followed by a storm.

JUAN G.

MEXICO, August 21, 1847.

\* \* \* \* \* I likewise send you a diary of the events from the 19th to this date, by which you will see the pitiable situation in which we are placed, if not by bad faith, at least by the most visible incapacity. Santa Anna is now the object of public execration. The general opinion is, that his enemy, Valencia, is the cause of the death of so many who died by the side of that general, upon whom Santa Anna throws the blame of all, and has even said that wherever he finds him he will have him shot.

Those that were in the camp complain that nothing was done but by order of Santa; that he would not allow the least deliberation, from which it resulted that Bravo would not offer even advice, and gave no orders in the matter, so the disorder became frightful.

Unhappy country! unhappy ourselves! if, in the end, we have to receive in this capital our vanquishers. One idea gives me consolation. According to what I have been told, there are only six thousand Yankees left, and, although we yet have more than twelve thousand, I will be content to lose another battle, if we have one, as we shall lose, for our soldiers will run; but two thousand more Yankees will be killed, only four thousand will remain, and with these order cannot be kept in Mexico. We are in the last struggles of the drowned. What a shame!

MIGUEL M.

*Diary of the war.*

August 19, at 9, a. m., a dense cloud of smoke was seen in the hacienda of San Antonio, caused by the fire of our artillery, di-

rected against a column of the enemy who were coming against them. The enemy retreated and took the route by San Angel. Valencia is situated with his division on the hills of Contreras, [i. e. the route by San Angel,] and at about 1 o'clock, p. m., he commenced firing his artillery, and continued without ceasing until half-past 6, sometimes so rapidly that we counted eight shots per minute, although more commonly only four or five. At 6, p. m., some unfavorable rumors came to the city; it was said that the enemy had taken six pieces of artillery from Valencia, a matter impossible to believe, because, from the roof of the house, we could see that, far from retreating, our troops had charged upon the enemy, who was situated in a lower position, and, to appearance, in a hollow, and was not at first to be seen, and the position was only known by the smoke of his firing.

20th. Between 6 and a quarter after, a. m., the firing commenced in the same place as yesterday, the artillery slowly, but the musketry sharply, very sharply. It was heard perfectly well in the main plaza, and sounded like the rattle of a drum. At 10, a. m., we received the news that General Valencia's brigade, which had sustained itself the previous day, had been flanked and attacked in front and on both sides, after first cutting off his retreat, and of consequence he was completely routed and dispersed, except two hundred and fifty prisoners, who remained in the hands of the enemy, and twenty-three pieces of cannon.

[NOTE.—There were over a thousand prisoners.]

At 11 o'clock, the dispersed began to arrive, all covered with mud, some with their uniform and muskets, others without them, and from that time till about 1, p. m., the wounded continued to arrive, some in litters, asking mercy of Heaven, and others on foot, with their corpse-like countenances still dropping blood.

As soon as Santa Anna received notice of the defeat of Valencia, (whom, it is said, he might have aided to advantage, but did not, because he said he had not ordered Valencia to engage in fight,) he ordered the camp at San Antonio to be raised, and began the retreat on Mexico. Here the disorder began, the soldiers in some corps were altogether without chiefs, and only employed themselves in taking away the cannon from the batteries. The enemy, who was observing all our movements from the hacienda of Coapan, detached a column of about three thousand men on our left wing, with the object of flanking us and afterwards besieging San Antonio, but we pushed the movement of our troops in spite of the confusion, so that the enemy only gained his object in a very small degree, intercepting a small portion of our troops and capturing two pieces of spiked cannon that were left in the hacienda, where, in a very few moments after the battalions of Hidalgo and Victoria had left it, there were heard the musketry of the enemy, not of the column that had been detached, but of another body that came directly down the road, and soon took the place.

Following the retreat of our troops, we came to the bridge, where

Santa Anna was found fortifying himself with activity, and where we were united with the brigade of Perez, and we heard the firing at Churubusco, which point was defended by the battalions of Independence and Bravo, who gave up very soon and probably are prisoners. The enemy advanced against the bridge, where the firing was maintained about an hour, but in the end we lost, with a great sacrifice of men and an immense quantity of ammunition, there and at Churubusco. From this till half-past 2, the battalions of Hidalgo and Victoria arrived, sun-burnt, tired and hungry; their feet all blistered and in desperation, as they had brought in their guns as they had carried them out.

[All Mexican accounts agree that these two battalions did not fire a shot.]

They had an opportunity not only to annoy the enemy but to repulse him; but they never received an order to fire at all.

Our troops were at night at the gates of La Viga, Candalaria and Nino Perdido. Some have gone to Chapultepec, others to their barracks.

The enemy remained in possession of the haciendas Portalis, Santanita, and other towns of the neighborhood.

It is said that our loss in killed, wounded and prisoners, is about four thousand men. The loss of the enemy is said to be five thousand; we will see the truth in time.

[NOTE.—The American loss was, altogether, a little over one thousand.]

August 21.—This is a day of the most complete confusion; friends are looked for—some are found, some are not; of course affliction and tears are universal. It is said there is an armistice for forty-eight hours, for the purpose of burying the dead and collecting the wounded, and there is some talk about propositions of peace. Some battalions have retired from the gates to their quarters, and although I understand nothing, I understand this less.

The fault is generally laid upon Santa Anna; all are incensed, mad against him, even his most admitted friends. I believe the devils will take everything, and now I have not a doubt the Yankees will enter the city, although it is said they have only six thousand men.

*Doings and results on Thursday and Friday, 19th and 20th August.*

On Thursday General Valencia, to impede the progress of the enemy, took a position with his division on the hills of the hacienda Alsado, [alias Magdalena—Contreras, &c.,] where he fought until dusk. Valencia had twenty or twenty-five pieces of artillery, and the Americans four mountain pieces. General Santa Anna went to the aid of Valencia between four and half-past four in the afternoon, with four or five thousand men, but he advised Valencia

to avoid a fight; but he, thinking his position advantageous, and wishing to encounter the Americans, disregarded the advice. During the combat, which commenced at about two o'clock in the afternoon, the forces under the command of Valencia were separated from those brought down by Santa Anna for his relief, but they had means of communication still open, and Valencia asked assistance of Santa Anna, in order to resist a new attack from the enemy. General Santa Anna retired with his division to San Angel, [four or five miles,] quite satisfied, as he expressed himself, that he had saved the republic, for which he was cheered by the troops, who remained at San Angel; but he, not finding a convenient bed at San Angel, continued on and slept at Churubusco. On Friday morning, quite early, a new attack was made on Valencia, whose camp was carried by the bayonet, and he lost his artillery, and his division was either killed, taken prisoners or dispersed—but Valencia, of course, saved himself. Santa Anna left San Angel so late in the morning, to return to Valencia, that he heard of Valencia's defeat on his way there to him. Every one agrees that Valencia committed a great fault in not obeying the orders of the commander-in-chief, but Santa Anna should have united all his disposable force to assist Valencia, in order to destroy the common enemy. Various reflections occur upon the conduct of Santa Anna, who has given orders that Valencia shall be shot wherever he may be found. It is said that Valencia answered the order to retire or avoid a fight with the enemy—that he thought his position advantageous, and as a Mexican and as a soldier he could not obey the orders of a traitor and a coward, &c., &c. About noon a division of the enemy approached, which, it is supposed, was under the order of Scott himself, to attack San Antonio. Santa Anna ordered the few pieces of heavy ordnance he had there to be spiked, and retired with the light pieces to Churubusco, where a bloody engagement took place, and it is said that the Americans lost a great many men. Santa Anna directed the defence of that point with the brigade of Perez, (the 1st, 3rd, and 4th light infantry, and the 11th of the line,) the battalions of National Guards, Independence and Bravo, the picquet of St. Patrick and various other corps. The picquet of St. Patrick, it is said, was almost totally destroyed.

[This picquet, so called, was composed of deserters from the American army, and about 80 of them were taken prisoners, and are now under trial for their lives.]

It is not known where the battalions of Independence and Bravo are. The light infantry and the 11th regiment kept up at the commencement a heavy fire; but, on the approach of the enemy, within pistol shot, they fled. Nothing is known of Perez. At about 5 o'clock in the afternoon Santa Anna entered this place with a large body of cavalry, and with nearly all the brigade of Perez, the battalions of National Guards, Hidalgo and Victoria, which never burnt a single cartridge, and various other corps.

Santa Anna went to the palace and the troops to their quarters. The result of the actions of this day, has been the loss of 45 pieces of artillery; of the dead, wounded, prisoners and dispersed, we have no certain information. An army of twenty thousand men and more than 50 pieces of artillery (I speak of those that were used) has been routed by another of nine or ten thousand, without artillery, and without knowing the ground, and while we had the advantage of selecting our positions. It is then clear that our army does not deserve the name of soldiers, and it were better that it did not exist. The incapacity of our generals is astonishing, but even more so their cowardice, and that of the greater part of the soldiers; although they are very brave in the commission of brutalities. It is said, among other things, that an unfortunate American officer on horseback, approached too close to one of the batteries, against his will, his horse having ran away; when within pistol shot he was wounded in the foot and fell, crying out that he surrendered; but this did not avail him, he was murdered without being able to oppose resistance.\* If we compare the deeds of our soldiers with their boasting and fanfaronades, as they are daily published, even in the government journal, one is ashamed, and the few Mexicans who are abroad will hide their faces.

Well, then, we now have the valiant general-in-chief, president of the republic, &c., &c., &c., again in the palace, and a great many troops in their quarters. We will see what he intends to do with the remainder of the army, without *morale*, without honor or valor, but yet with a great many ignorant generals, officers and leaders, corrupt and cowards on the field of battle, but great talkers and boasters, only fit to dress for show in their gaudy uniforms.

MEXICO, August 21, 1847.

MY NEVER-FORGOTTEN AND BELOVED CATITA: Yesterday there was a great fight with the Yankees, which cost a heavy loss to those accursed enemies; nevertheless, the division of Valencia was routed. To-day, who knows what will happen! In order that you may not be alarmed, I take advantage of these moments to write by to-day's mail, that you may not miss a letter, and grieve over it. The Great Being must hate us.

One of my feet has been hurt, and for that reason I have remained in my quarters; but you need not fear, as it is not of importance, my ankle being only strained as my horse fell with me.

In consequence of the blow which the greater part of Valencia's division has suffered, it is thought that trouble is coming, but I think the Mexicans are still in good resolution. Although the Yankees will enter Mexico, it does not follow that they will be the conquerors of the Mexican nation. Through the misfortune, we will be obliged to abandon the capital, and these bad men will remain masters of the territory they tread, and the whole nation will rise in a mass and destroy them.

\* This was Major Mills, 15th regiment of infantry.

Catita, God permits things to go to a certain point in order to undeceive us, but he afterwards sends consolation to the afflicted. This eternal and incomprehensible Being will protect us and send us comfort. I only beg you will not afflict yourself, and pray Him to favor me and preserve me. Salute all my relatives and friends, and you and my children receive the love I always have for you.  
C.

P. S. Say to Señora Petra that Andrew escaped in safety, and that the troop to which Francisco belonged did not fight, and also to pray to God for them and for me; also the troops of Morelia did not go into action, and so far they are all well and God will favor us. Do not afflict yourself, Catita, God protects the just and will bring us through in safety.

*Private.*—(This was written on a separate slip.)

Catita—I will do everything not to expose myself to danger, and if permitted, I will try to find means to go to La Piedad or C—. Be prepared to send for your uncle. Do not show this little piece of paper to any one. Destroy it, and keep this to yourself alone. But if you wish to see me, I will send for you from the place to which I may go. Be prepared, and I will write to you under the name of G. P., or under that of my god-mother, Da. M., for so I proposed to you.

(This letter shows the confidence of the Mexicans before the fight.)

MEXICO August 19, 1847.

\* \* \* Judging from the enthusiasm and positions of our troops, and our good fortifications, we hope for a complete triumph for the Mexicans, as the enemy's force is much inferior to ours in numbers.

(From a member of Congress.)

MEXICO, August 21, 1847.

LOVED FRIEND: The 19th and 20th of August have been to Mexico days of mourning and ignominy, as we have lost a great many valiant Mexicans, and our immense army has been routed by a handful of adventurers. We are all choking with grief at such a catastrophe, and we fear the sad consequences of the triumph of the enemy. The enemy has not yet entered the city, but they are at our very gates, awaiting the answer of our government, who has already entered into negotiations for peace. What will follow this negotiation, God knows! What does the United States want, who knows? Congress cannot assemble, nor will it assemble; therefore I shall go to you in a few days, as I am anxious to see

you and my family. Work for your country. Do not cease your labor. Do what you can to protect the public institutions, the arts, sciences, industry, and agriculture.

L. B.

(To E., a member of Congress.)

MEXICO, August 20, 1847.

MUCH RESPECTED AND ESTEEMED FRIEND: To-day, after the complete rout of the brilliant northern division under the command of Valencia, who was posted in the tower of San Geronimo, (Contreras,) I hastened to the city to see what I should do with my house. During the day I heard of the death of Guadalupe Pedrigan. The battalions of Victoria and Hidalgo abandoned San Antonio without entering into the fight, but those of Independence and Bravo sustained themselves well at Churubusco until they were abandoned. The enemy is now at the hacienda Portalis. The division under Rangel was formed this morning in the plaza, and ordered to march and take possession of a place called La Viga. General Tornel, with many staff officers, have gone to the same place. Gen. Santa Anna just passed here with General Lombardini. The troops have been ordered to their quarters, but have left the cannons at the garitas, prepared to meet an attack in the morning. \* \* \*

\* The invaders will certainly enter the city on Monday.

(Another letter, of 21st August, says:)

The brilliant and selected division under General Valencia, who occupied an advantageous position on the hills near San Angel, near the factory of Magdalena, had a skirmish with some of Scott's troops, who attempted to force their way to Tacubaya on Thursday last. The fire was sustained well on our part until dark, without losing an inch of ground. But on Friday morning the Americans, who were keen, attacked Valencia in the front and on both flanks, forced their way into his camp, routing him completely, and remained in possession of his artillery and all his munitions of war. I cannot account for this result, and I do not give you any further facts, for I prefer to ignore them. \* \* \*

\* \* \* The battalions of Victoria and Hidalgo abandoned St. Antonio, and were not in the fight. They arrived in the city without loss, only suffering from fatigue. General Salas, Pedrigan, and Frontera are prisoners.

Santa Anna sustained a heavy fire in his retreat, causing the enemy great injury, but thereby protected the retreat of the troops. It is also said that General Rincon is prisoner.

\* \* \* We have yet a respectable body of troops in Mexico, but General Scott has allowed an armistice, in order to allow Congress to meet and consider the subject of peace. There is no telling what will happen to-morrow.

MEXICO, August 21, 1847.

R. L.—MY DEAR UNCLE: My heart is oppressed with grief, and I can give you but a very slight sketch of the unfortunate results of the battles of the 19th and 20th, and of the misfortunes of our Mexican nation.

General Valencia was pushed near the factory of Magdalena, where he was attacked by 10,000 Americans on the 19th, who endeavored to force their passage that way against 4,000 Mexicans, and had not General Perez came to the assistance of Valencia, taking position on his left flank, the same results would have occurred that day which happened the morning following. The enemy, yesterday morning, by a decided and bold attempt, took possession of Valencia's camp near Magdalena, completely routing him and taking possession of the greatest part of his artillery. But you must bear in mind that had the troops which came to his assistance the day previous been there, the result would have been different. Magdalena, once in possession of the Americans, they immediately proceeded and attacked our main body of unconquerable Mexicans, who were in their fortifications, and only listened to the musketry of the enemy, as they had no artillery with them. We only waited for two discharges of their musketry, and our troops were put to flight in terrible confusion, and it is remarkable what a state of fear extended throughout our entire army. This circumstance enabled the Americans to take possession of our fortifications with the greatest ease, and more so as the National Guards [Polka's] whose name is so renowned, behaved with an ignominy lamentable to relate.

(Of the reported armistice, the writer says :)

It is supposed that it will be favorable to peace, but you must be well aware that, should it be effected, of which I have no doubt, it will be a disgrace to the Mexican people.

E. C.

MEXICO, August 21, 1847.

MY DEAR YOUNG LADY: Yesterday I arrived at home without accident, having escaped the dangers of the fight by privilege, or because the Yankees took pity on us, for, on leaving our camp, such was the disorder and confusion, that if the enemy had attacked us with whips, not a single one of us would have been left. The generals gave orders and the camp-women screamed, the mules would not pull, the soldiers did not wish to retreat without fighting, and General Bravo, our commander, would not allow it, and at last we escaped, saving some part of our munitions, but losing much, which could not be removed. The Yankees undertook to outflank us, but meeting with the division, they commenced a fire. We stood on the defence, and they certainly through pity took the other road, all the time accompanying us on the left. Hardly had we

reached the bridge at Churubusco, when the artillery fire was commenced at that place. General Santa Anna arrived there at the moment we passed, and he ordered such of the artillery as was convenient should be turned upon the enemy, and that we should continue [to retreat!] On the way we met the division of General Perez, which afterwards engaged the enemy, and while the action continued we reached the city. We found Mexico in the greatest consternation, perhaps more for our sakes than for the events of the morning; for I saw that our presence produced the greatest joy, and we were even cheered when it was seen that we had not met with any loss.

It seems impossible that, in the space of six hours, eight thousand men should have been destroyed, of which not the eighth part were killed. But our troops scarcely saw a movement of the enemy before they fled, and that without the possibility of stopping them. The battalions of Bravo and Independence were attacked in the convent of Churubusco and taken prisoners, and it is thought that Gorostiza is of the number.

To-day about five thousand of the dispersed have been collected, and we have now about twelve thousand men in arms. An armistice, &c., &c., &c.

SENORITA DÑA, M. DE J. M.

August 21, 1847.

OLD MAN: Although I am a regidor, (a civil officer,) still I resolved to go to the fight, as I could no longer remain in the city taking care of disorderly women and drunkards, I determined to see the fate of my unfortunate country; consequently, on Tuesday last, I received an order from the minister of war and government directing me to join General Alcorta, as his aid-de-camp; and on Wednesday morning I went to the Penon, resolved to endure all the privations of a campaign, and to see in what I could serve my country. The enemy presented himself on Thursday morning before us, in order to allow their engineers to make a reconnoissance of our position, but he did not like the *patato*, and on Sunday night Santa Anna heard that the enemy had certainly taken the route towards Tlalpam, (San Augustin.) On Monday morning, at 9 o'clock, we commenced our march towards the same place, (by the city,) and on Tuesday, after an examination of the place, we saw we could not make resistance there, and it was resolved that we should take up our position at San Antonio. That same afternoon the Yankees arrived at San Augustin at 2, p. m. We proceeded with the greatest activity to make preparations for resistance, and ordered the heaviest pieces of ordnance to be brought from Penon to San Antonio, and we protected our right flank as much as possible, fearing that the enemy might take advantage of us in that quarter. We made ditches and redoubts, and General Perez's brigade, composed of 4,000 infantry and 700 horse, of the hussars, who were at Jalapa, was ordered to go around towards Coyoacan, (near San Angel.) The 5th brigade, composed of