

howitzers, and one 10-inch mortar. We found the capital of this country fortified at all points, and armed with near one hundred cannon and thirty thousand men. Our march round the south side of Lake Chalco, and our battle of the 20th of August, and the armistice which followed, with a view to peace, brought no peace. I had no part in the battles of 20th of August, by which we increased our artillery by thirty-one pieces and large quantities of ammunition. I had Captain Drum's company and four pieces added to my siege train, and remained at Tacubaya during the armistice. When it was broken on the 6th, I got ready for the work. On the rather unfortunate day—the 8th of September—I was engaged with two 24-pounders. General Scott, after that, intended to attack the south side of the city, and moved troops, and my train, accordingly. On the 11th, he sent for me to consult about taking the castle of Chapultepec. It projected so far towards us as to impede our operations on the west side, and he found many difficulties of ground on the south side. I always was in favor of taking Chapultepec first, and encouraged the idea. All the engineers were out on the south side. He ordered Drum and myself to make the reconnoissance; ordered the troops up that night. We moved our heavy guns two miles, conducting the working parties with the engineers to the ground. Batteries were built; our guns were put in and opened at sunrise next morning. We cannonaded the place on the 12th, and from sunrise till 8, a. m., on the 13th. It was then carried by storm, and we rushed thence to the city gates, and took the batteries there (two of them) before dark. I then fired a few 24-pound shot, and threw fire-shells towards the centre of the city, just to let them to know we were there. We entered the city on the 14th.

I have been most fortunate in keeping my health, never being sick; and I have been able, with my slender means, to perform all required of me. I have labored very hard, and have been most ably assisted by my officers and men, to have all ready that was possible; but luck has favored me, so I must believe. We have been here these ten days. I have a grand arsenal at the citadel, and have been busy repairing damages to our carriages and arms, and collecting the captured property. We have taken about seventy pieces in the valley of Mexico. I have on hand very near two hundred barrels of powder, and an immense supply of ammunition. Major Talcott will, no doubt, write to you. He has suffered much from what seemed a slight wound on the shin, but is now getting over it. He received his wound at the attack on Molino del Rey, on the 8th of September. Callender is with me, shot in both legs; cannot walk at all; I have a chair on rollers, and he wheels about. Reno, shot through the arm; nearly quite well. Poor Drum and Benjamin, who were serving with me, are killed. Porter and Hagner touched, and Stone and myself untouched—the fate of our mess of six. Hagner and Stone deserve all that can be done for them. Laidley, who is a capital fellow, I had to leave at Puebla. If that place is attacked, as we hear it is, he no doubt will do handsomely. From Vera Cruz I hear and re-

ceive nothing. What has become of Gorgus, I know not. Our carriages stand well, generally. Our little mountain howitzers have done famously. Some 100 of Hale's rockets were fired on the 19th of August, and went well; I have never had time to fire any. My new fuses have answered perfectly.

Now, where is the end of all this? When are we to get back again—ever? I believe the war has just begun, and will not terminate this generation. Let my friends know I am safe, and ready for twice as big a fight, if it would only end the war.

Yours, ever.

J.

Major Turnbull's Letter.

[Extract of a very interesting letter, received in Washington.]

TACUBAYA, (IN FULL VIEW OF THE CITY OF MEXICO.)

August 24, 1847.

The army left Puebla on the 8th of this month, and, after a few days' march, reached Ayotla, immediately on the margin of the valley of Mexico. Between this place and the city, about four miles distant, we knew there was a strongly fortified position, called St. Pinon. It is a small, isolated mountain, surrounded by water, on one side of one of the principal causeways leading to the city. After spending a day or two in reconnoitring this place, and which it would have caused a great loss of life to have taken, it was ascertained that there was a practicable road south of Lake Chalco. The general determined to take this route, and put the army in motion, leaving our division to watch the enemy in our rear. The march was a dreadful one, it being the rainy season.

The road was, in many places—where it passes at the foot of the mountains, and on the margin of the lake or narrow causeway—nearly covered with water, and excessively muddy; at others, it was over rocky spaces of the mountains, and, in places, entirely obstructed by huge rocks, rolled down by the enemy; but nothing seemed to damp the ardor of the army; all obstacles vanished before them. In two or three days, when the whole army was in motion, they could be seen from the front, stretched out over a distance of seven or eight miles. On the 18th, the general reached a small town called St. Augustin, about twelve miles south of the city—the leading division having arrived there the day before. General Worth had placed his pickets in advance, for the arrival of the general. He ordered the whole division to advance, and take possession of a hacienda, within striking distance of a strongly fortified place, called San Antonio; and also that the reconnoitring parties should be pressed forward still in advance. The party was supported by a squadron of cavalry and a battalion of infantry. In passing to the front I found that a troop, which had been placed

as a picket, had gone forward; and, as I came up with it, it made a turn in the road which brought it in full view of the enemy's battery, which opened upon them.

The first fire killed Captain Thornton, mangling his body in the most horrid manner. The ball, a 16-pounder, afterwards struck the road, and literally covered me with mud and fragments of stone; one of which made a slight bruise on my right thigh. A guide was knocked from his horse, within five feet of me, with a shocking wound in the head by a piece of stone. It is thought he will recover, but with the loss of an eye. The reconnoissance was continued, right and left, with some hopes of storming the battery that afternoon; but night and the rain came on, and it was given up.

Very early the next morning, I discovered from the top of the house in which we were quartered in San Augustin, a large body of the enemy, some 12,000 or 15,000, on our left, about three miles distant. The general had ordered reconnoissances in that direction, towards San Angel, where I reported to him. He immediately ordered two divisions forward under Pillow and Twiggs, and followed soon after himself.

The enemy were found in an entrenched camp at a place called Contreras, with twenty pieces of artillery, some of them very heavy siege pieces. The attack commenced at noon, and the firing continued incessantly until dark, when it ceased on both sides, our troops maintaining their ground and occupying a village near by. During the afternoon, we watched the different movements of our troops with the most fearful anxiety, and could plainly see one of our columns resist a charge of a large body of cavalry, and the enemy falling from their saddles and taking to their heels, or rather to their horses' heels. During the whole of the fight, we could see on the right a body of at least 10,000 infantry and cavalry in reserve, towards the city; but they had not the courage to advance, although Santa Anna himself was said to be there.

The attack was ordered to be renewed at 3 o'clock next morning, and the General returned to San Augustin. He left at an early hour, taking with him General Worth's and one half of his division as a reinforcement; but *en route* he was met by an officer, who reported that the batteries had been carried by our troops in a most gallant style, Colonel Riley leading the assault. As he approached the scene of action, it seemed almost incredible how our men got over the ground to the attack. It was over immense masses of lava, thrown up in the roughest, sharpest possible shapes, and covered with dense brushwood. Streams had to be crossed, and deep ravines, and most of them having passed the night in a pelting rain without shelter, it appears almost incredible that they should be able to drive double their numbers from a battery of twenty three heavy guns. The scene on the arrival of the general was most exciting. The cheering of the troops left to protect the property taken, and their delight on seeing him was very gratifying. Many of the guns taken have been added to our siege train. The amount of ammunition taken exceeds by three times the whole which we brought from Vera Cruz, so that we are well provided.

But the greatest cause of exultation was the re-capture of two of our own guns, brought from Buena Vista, the last battle of General Taylor. When I saw the "U. S." on them, I felt like dismounting and embracing them. What is remarkable about their re-capture, it was made by the 4th artillery, to which regiment they formerly belonged. They, with other small captured pieces, were immediately fitted up as a light battery, and the captain (Drum,) who took them, in command of it. The general, when he received the intelligence of this victory, sent General Worth back to make a demonstration on San Antonio, whilst he, with the portion of the army which was pressing the enemy, should get in its rear. I will not stop to describe the scene on the field of battle.

On leaving it, the road was literally strewed with dead Mexicans, arms, broken carriages, &c. In passing a bridge, I looked over, and saw the bodies of at least twenty, piled one on the other, and the bank of the stream was strewed with them, and it was some distance before we got out of sight. Going on, we came to a church in which were confined seven hundred prisoners. The general halted a few minutes, and addressed the officers very kindly. Amongst them were four generals. He then hurried out to join the pursuing army. We came up with them at San Angel, where they had halted. As the general passed along the line, it was one continued shout. After a few minutes, we passed on to a village called Coyoacan, where we heard firing on our right, about two miles off, in the direction of San Antonio. The general immediately sent me, with Captain Kearny's troop, to ascertain the state of affairs. We galloped on, and on approaching the place, I found that Worth had turned the place by both flanks, and driven the enemy from it, and was in hot pursuit of them. I returned to the general as quickly as I had gone, and as I galloped along, I heard a brisk firing in front. When I reached him, I found that he was fiercely engaged with the enemy at another strongly entrenched position—San Pablo. This action lasted more than two hours, and the firing was more general and more continuous than any I had heard yet. The enemy's grape and canister flew like hail, and the fire of our infantry was one continued volley. Captain Taylor's battery was obliged to retire, being most sadly crippled—lost two officers, a great many men, and left the field with only two horses to a gun; but the enemy, although behind entrenchments, with heavy guns, could not withstand the impetuosity and valor of our troops. The place was carried by assault, and the whole armament and a great number of prisoners were taken; in the mean time, Worth, having hotly pursued the enemy, came up with him at another fortified place in advance of San Pablo, called Churubusco, and after an obstinate resistance carried it, made many prisoners, and drove the enemy before him. The dragoons pursued and followed him to the very gates of the city. Two officers are said to have been killed inside the entrenchments of the gateway. Thus ended the day; and I think you will agree with me that it was a *tolerably active* one, four distinct battles having been fought and won, and the enemy outnumbering us in

each at least three to four times. They acknowledge to have had thirty thousand men in the field on that day, and yet we drove them on every occasion, and in the end made more than twenty-three hundred prisoners, among them seven of their principal generals, and about forty pieces of cannon.

Our loss, I am sorry to say, as may be expected, has been very great; it may possibly reach one thousand killed and wounded; but the returns are not yet in, but enough is known to satisfy us that we have lost many very valuable officers. Among the prisoners taken, I was mortified to see between fifty and seventy deserters from our army, with the Mexican uniform on.

A court is in session to try them, and I trust that many of them will be punished. It is pretty well known from their position, in the battle of San Pablo, that a volley from them killed and wounded sixteen out of seventeen of the 2d infantry, including an officer, and leaving one officer (the adjutant of the regiment) standing.

There are many of our friends, I am sorry to say, among the killed and wounded; but I can hardly enumerate them now. Young Captain Hanson, of Washington, was killed; Colonel Butler, of the South Carolina regiment, was killed; Smith, badly wounded in the arm and thigh; hopes are entertained that his arm may be saved; Lieutenant Irons shot through the windpipe; slight hopes of his recovery; Captain Phil. Kearny lost his arm in the charge towards the gate of the city; he is doing well. There are others, no doubt, which I cannot recollect at this moment, but many that we are equally interested in are safe. Asgner and Galt are both safe.

The next morning, the general, leaving a hospital and a garrison in San Augustin, set off with a determination of reaching that place before night. Halting at Coyoacan a short time, to allow time for his various orders for the movement of the troops to be executed, he was met by a flag from the city, asking terms. After making his reply, the bearer of the flag, a general of engineers, very civilly proposed to the general, knowing his intention of coming here, that if he would halt a few hours longer, he would request his government to send word to the castle of Chapultepec not to fire on us as we approached; but the general replied that it was his intention to come here, and he would take the risk; and on he went. On approaching the town, the general sent me forward with an order to Colonel Harney, of the dragoons, to take possession of it, and make the necessary disposition of pickets, &c., and wait the arrival of General Worth, before unsaddling his horses.

We rode into town without molestation, but a troop, which had accompanied Captain Lee, in advance, had preceded us. It was lucky for us that Chapultepec did not fire upon us, for the town is in perfect range of the guns, and might have knocked us into a cocked hat. Worth's division did not arrive until near dark, and we had none but dragoons with us. The same evening another flag was received from the city. I will not pretend to give the objects. Several have been interchanged since, and I am happy

to say that an armistice was this day agreed upon, with the object of negotiating for a peace. The terms were dictated by the general, and every thing looks as favorable as may be.

The general, very magnanimously, and very discreetly, no doubt, too, did not ask a surrender of the city, as it is virtually under his control, and to have taken the army into it would have been productive of some trouble, as it would be next to impossible to control the troops. We are occupying the bishop's palace, a huge pile of buildings, with magnificent gardens attached, but as uncomfortable as can be, there being no furniture. The view from here, though, is beyond description. Chapultepec, a little on our left, looks frowning down upon us with its heavy guns, and the city, with its innumerable spires, nearly surrounded by water, is directly in front. But I have not space for further description.

K.

Captain R. E. Lee's Letter.

TACUBAYA, August 22, 1847.

***** We are now located in one wing of the archbishop's palace. Chapultepec, with its magnificent grove, is before us; and we overlook the great city, surrounded by its lakes, and embosomed in its mountains. I never realized the beauty of the valley of Mexico until I reached this spot. To see it now, lighted by the soft, bright moon, with every village, spire, hut and mountain reflected in its silver lakes, you would think it even surpassed the descriptions we read of it. There are also some stupendous works of art around us. But I can tell you nothing, for I have not yet been in the city, though I have knocked at its gates. In the absence, then, of something more interesting, I shall have to tell you of the operations of the army.

On the 7th instant General Twiggs's division left Puebla. It was followed, on the 8th, by General Quitman's; on the 9th by General Worth's, and on the 10th by General Pillow's. General Scott left on the 8th, and overtook General Twiggs that night at San Martin. Our march over the mountains was undisturbed, except by rumors of guerillas and resistance. Both disappeared as we approached, and we left their abandoned works as we found them. On the 11th General Twiggs encamped at Ayotla, fifteen miles from Mexico, on the direct road. The other divisions, on each succeeding day, came up in order, and took positions in the rear; General Worth occupying Chalco. The reconnoissances of the 12th and 13th satisfied us of the strength of the enemy's defences in our front. Their principal defence was at El Peñon, commanding the causeway between the lakes of Tezcuco and Chalco. The hill of El Peñon is about three hundred feet high, having three plateaus, of different elevations. It stands in the waters of Lake Tezcuco. Its base is surrounded by a dry trench, and its sides arranged with breastworks,