

and surrounded the city. On the night of the 18th of March the trenches were opened, and the army gradually closed around the city, in a nearer and more fatal embrace. On the 22d, General Scott, having now completed his preparations for his attack, and having offered a free conduct out of the city of all non-combatants, sent his summons to the governor of Vera Cruz to surrender. The governor refused, and the batteries opened their destructive fire upon the devoted city; while the ships commenced their fearful broadsides upon the castle. The scene was magnificent and terrible. During three days and nights an incessant discharge from the brazen mouths of mortars and cannon, was kept up with unflagging zeal and irresistible power. Our heavy Paixhan guns sped their crushing masses of metal upon the enemy with overwhelming energy. The mortars and howitzers vomited forth their deadly missiles with desolating fury. An iron tempest covered sea and land. Its ravages were pitiless, its fierce grasp unrelenting. Night heightened the scene. The darkness was illuminated by blazing shells filling the air.

#### Scott's Departure for the City of Mexico.

Scott now prepared to advance upon the city of Mexico. With only 8,000 men, he at once pressed forward upon the road to the capitol. Passing over sixty miles of level country he came upon the first of the ascending slopes, over which extends the road to

The sea gleamed with the broadsides of the ships. Fired with extraordinary skill, the bombs converged upon the besieged town with a horrid accuracy. The heavy fall of the descending shot and shells was heard along our lines. The domes of the churches reverberated beneath explosions that shook the ground, and lighted up the heavens with a fierce glare. The full power of modern military skill, and the destructive arts of war, were here exhibited in all their potency, without intermission, during three days and nights. On the 25th, an application for a truce was made by the enemy, which was refused, and a surrender demanded. Accordingly, on the following morning overtures for a surrender were made, and the city and fortress fell into our hands. The stars and stripes floated in triumph, for the first time, on the battlements of the castle of San Juan de Ulloa, and waved their victorious folds over the walls of Vera Cruz. Among the fruits of this victory were 5,000 prisoners, and 500 pieces of artillery. Our loss was but six killed, and sixty wounded.

the table-land upon which the city of Mexico stands, at an elevation of 7,600 feet above the level of the waters of the Gulf. The road at this point passes over a stream, and winds among the gorges of precipitous hills.

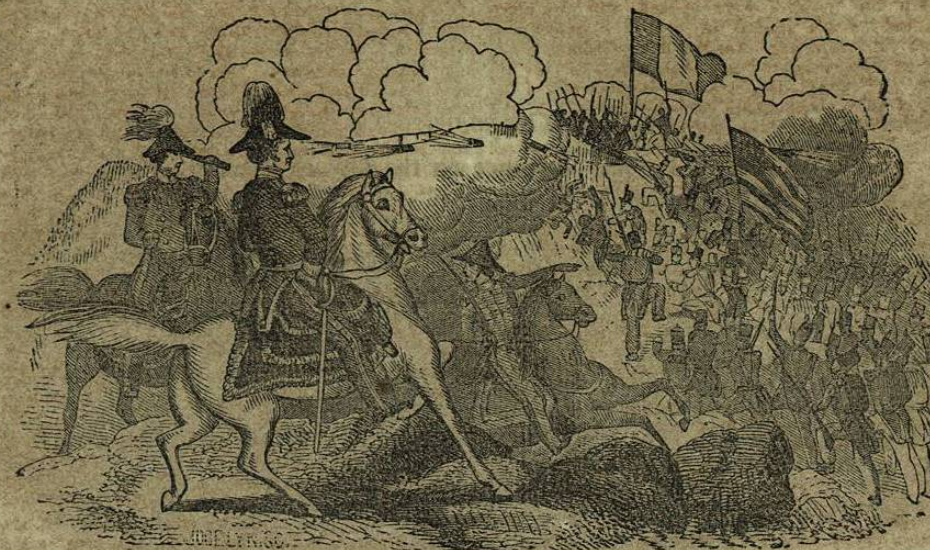
#### Storming of Cerro Gordo.\*

Santa Anna, who had just returned from the field of Buena Vista, had here collected all the forces he could muster, and was posted upon these heights. Cannon were placed in battery on all the commanding eminences on both sides of the road. Highest above them all rose the bristling hill of Cerro Gordo, strongly fortified, and protected at its base by heavy stone defences. On these heights, thus defended by thirty-nine pieces of artillery, the Mexican general had entrenched himself at the head of 15,000 troops. The attack upon this apparently impregnable position was planned by General Scott with masterly skill. He determined upon assaulting it in flank and rear as well as in front; and to accomplish this object he opened a road, over a country almost impassable from rocks and chapparal, for a distance of several miles. A heavy force under General Twiggs had penetrated by this road, the day before the main attack, and captured, after a severe struggle, a commanding height in the neighborhood of Cerro Gordo. The position was, however, maintained by our troops with great difficulty. The Mexicans made three desperate attempts to dislodge our force, but each time they were repulsed with heavy loss. On the next morning, the 17th of April, the attack on the whole of the enemy's position was ordered. The defence was determined and bloody. But our troops, animated by the presence of, and feeling the fullest confidence in their dis-

tinguished leader, advanced under a terrific fire against the enemy. They rapidly flocked up the heights, and intrepidly surmounted every obstacle that the ingenuity of Santa Anna had added to the natural defences of his position, displaying the most sturdy resolution and invincible impetuosity. The Mexicans were forced from their guns at the point of the bayonet, and driven with resistless energy from their securest defences. The hill of Cerro Gordo was assaulted in front by Colonel Harney, who, with his men, performed prodigies of valor. Santa Anna was here in person, and barely escaped by flying on one of the mules attached to his carriage. General Scott, who was close at hand in all the conflicts of the day, and often exposed to imminent danger, met Colonel Harney on the height of Cerro Gordo, just at the time of his gallant achievement, and publicly expressed his admiration of the spirit and courage displayed by him in leading the assault. The officers spoke with enthusiasm of the calm and soldierly bearing of their gallant commander, during all the dangers of the furious and unintermitting discharges of the artillery from the heights while the battle raged. By twelve o'clock the enemy was driven from his position, totally routed, and was in full flight along the road to Jalapa, whither our troops followed in close pursuit. In this action, one of the most remarkable of the war, Scott captured 3,000 prisoners, 4,000 stand of arms, 43

\* General Scott's order of battle on this occasion, which we regret we have not room to publish, is a monument of his military skill and prescience. He detailed in advance every movement of the troops during the at-

tack, and even prescribed the exact movements of the various detachments after the battle should have been won; and the whole order was executed to the letter.



Battle of Cerro Gordo.

pieces of artillery, and a large quantity of ammunition. Santa Anna's carriage, containing his wooden leg and a large sum of specie, also fell into the hands

of the victors. The loss of the Americans in killed and wounded was 431. That of the Mexicans was computed at 1,000 to 1,200.

#### Capture of Jalapa and Surrender of Perote.

General Scott continued his rapid march with his small, but conquering army, and on the 19th the advanced corps, under General Patterson, entered the city of Jalapa, 30 miles from Cerro Gordo. On the 2d of April, Worth's division advanced upon

Perote, 40 miles distant, whose celebrated fortress, with its powerful armament, surrendered at discretion. This surrender covered 66 pieces of cannon, 16,000 cannon-balls, 14,000 bombs and hand-grenades, and 500 muskets.

#### City of Puebla Taken.

Santa Anna escaped to Puebla with the remnant of his army, now scattered in all directions by the force of the blow struck at Cerro Gordo. Worth's division was again pushed on until it came within 15 miles of Puebla. Here it was menaced by Santa Anna, who reappeared at the head of 3,000 cavalry. This troop was soon dispersed, however, by a few well-directed

rounds from our batteries. The discomfited foe fled to Puebla, but could make no stand, and evacuated it on the following day. On the morning of the 15th of May the American troops entered Puebla, a city of 60,000 inhabitants, without resistance, where they halted, and proceeded to fortify the neighboring heights.

#### American Army at Puebla.

On the arrival of the advance corps of the army at Puebla, General Scott was overtaken by Mr. N. P. Trist, who had arrived from Washington with power to negotiate with the enemy for peace. Mr. Trist arrived at Jalapa on the 14th of May. The army accordingly lay in their quarters, while the dispatch brought by the envoy was forwarded to the city of Mexico. General Scott's available force had now been reduced to 6,000 men. He was in the heart of an enemy's country, numbering 8,000,000 of souls, and occupying a city of 60,000 inhabitants. In his rear lay the road to the Gulf, whose waters were 200 miles distant, and the way infested by robbers and guerrilla parties in untold numbers. In front lay the Mexican army, under Santa Anna, the great body of the Mexi-

can population, and in the midst of all, the city of Mexico, with its 200,000 inhabitants, and protected by natural and artificial defences of the strongest kind.

There was a sublimity of daring in this position of the American army seldom paralleled. Yet its commander occupied it with unconquerable self-reliance; steadily contemplating, all the while, the still more hazardous experiment of an advance upon the city of Mexico.

General Scott availed himself of the delays of the negotiation to collect information in regard to the routes to the capital, the character of its defences, and otherwise to prepare for the perilous enterprise he had undertaken. Meantime, reinforcements were pushed up from Vera Cruz under great difficulties.

The succors were annoyed by the incessant attacks of the strong guerrilla parties that hovered on the road. In addition to these, the Mexican General Valencia, had come up from San Louis Potosi with 4,000 troops, and 10 pieces of artillery, to assail our rear, and intercept our supplies. The roads were blockaded, the bridges blown up, and parties of the enemy lay in

#### From Puebla.—Advance on the City of Mexico.

The negotiations of Mr. Trist having failed, General Scott determined to break up his camp at Puebla, and advance at once on the city of Mexico, 90 miles distant. He issued his orders accordingly, and on the 7th of August the columns of General Twiggs, headed by Scott in person, were put in motion. The divisions of Quitman, Worth, and Pillow, followed at intervals of a day each. The whole army of General Scott, thus moving upon the great road to the capital, numbered 10,700 men. With this small force did he attempt, and accomplish, the conquest of Mexico. Colonel Childs was left at Puebla, as governor, with 3,000 men, almost two-thirds of whom were in the hospitals. All military connection with the coast was now broken; all chance of retreat cut off, and Scott advanced on the Mexican capital, relying solely on his

#### Scott arrives in Sight of the City of Mexico.

Within a week after leaving Puebla, our army lay upon the crest of the hills that surround and overlook the city of Mexico, which lies within this circular barrier as in the bottom of a basin. The picturesque appearance of the city, the novelty and beauty of the circumjacent country, the extraordinary circumstances and hazards of our position, created in every breast an

#### Position of Scott's Army before the City of Mexico.

On the 18th of August Scott had, by a difficult and skilful movement, abandoned the road by which he came from Puebla, and on which Santa Anna had planted some of his strongest defences, and had thrown his army around the shores of the lake, upon the great western road leading from the Pacific to the capital. Here, at San Augustine, nine miles from Mexico, General Scott established his head-quarters. The city was surrounded by two exterior lines of fortifications of great strength, and defended by Santa Anna, at the head of a well-appointed army, 30,000 strong.

Immediately in front of our army, lay the fortified village of San Antonio. To the left, was the hill of Contreras, fortified by batteries. Nearer to the city, on the road by which our troops were approaching, lay the village of Churubusco. These points were all strongly garrisoned, and defended by sixty-one pieces of artillery. The 17th, 18th, and 19th of August had been passed in laborious efforts to acquire

#### Battle of Contreras.

The attack on Contreras had been admirably planned by the commander-in-chief, and on the morning of the 20th, at three o'clock, it was assailed in front and rear. The position was defended by General Valencia, commanding 7,000 of the veteran troops of Mexico. But so effectively had our forces been disposed, and so sudden and vehement was the attack, that the enemy was driven headlong from his intrenchments in an in-

ambush under every cover, encountering our forces, and attacking our trains, at every point that afforded an opportunity for assault. But the fearless intrepidity, and dashing gallantry of our men, overcame all the difficulties of the long and dangerous march, and by the 1st of August the army at Puebla had been reinforced by the arrival of 5,500 men.

own skill and the invincibility of his troops. In reference to this daring and heroic movement, GENERAL CASS shortly afterward pronounced the following eloquent eulogium in the Senate of the United States: "The movement of our army from Puebla was one of the most romantic and remarkable events which has ever occurred in the military annals of our country. Our troops voluntarily cut off all communication with their own country, advanced with stout hearts, but feeble numbers, into the midst of a hostile people. The eyes of twenty millions of our countrymen were fixed upon this devoted band. They were lost to us for fifty days. But the cloud that hid them from our view at length broke, and disclosed to us our glorious flag waving in the breezes that drifted over the valley of the city of Mexico."

indescribable conflict of emotions, as the scene burst upon the view. The bracing atmosphere came in aid of the natural excitement of the occasion and the spectacle, and filled all with an exhilaration of spirit that vastly enhanced the interest with which they looked down upon the city they had come to conquer.

a full knowledge of the enemy's position, and lay the foundations for an effective attack. The 19th especially had been passed in severe exertions of the officers and men. Several skirmishes had taken place, and an action of three hours with the force on the hill of Contreras had been terminated without any marked result. The troops had worked and suffered prodigiously. To add to the discouragement of the day, the rain began to fall, and the night closed chill, wet, and dreary. It was passed in suffering and deep anxiety. The troops got no rest, but stood crowded together, drenched and benumbed, waiting for daylight. The officers met at the quarters of General Scott.

There was despondency and apprehension. "But," says an eye-witness, "the confidence of all was restored by the great coolness and steadiness of the commander-in-chief. As the officers came in from the field, wet, fatigued, and weary, he made them all partake of a cheerful repast. His bearing was most noble. It exalted the spirits of all present."

credibly short space of time. In this engagement, 4,500 of American troops drove 7,000 Mexicans out of their strongholds, and pursued them with immense slaughter. The results of the battle were gigantic. Seven hundred of the enemy were killed, and eight hundred taken prisoners. Twenty-two pieces of artillery were captured, besides seven hundred mules, and an immense quantity of small arms, shot, shells,



Battle of Contreras.

and ammunition. But the chief brilliancy of the achievement consisted in the superior skill and strategy displayed by General Scott in planning and exe-

cuting it. The loss of the Americans was but sixty killed and wounded.

#### Fall of San Antonio.

The storming of Contreras enabled our troops to turn the enemy's rear at San Antonio, and opened the way to the village of Churubusco, five miles distant. The garrison of San Antonio, instead of awaiting an

attack, immediately evacuated their position, after witnessing the capture of Contreras, and hastened to fall back upon Churubusco.

#### Great Battle of Churubusco.

The scattered forces of the enemy, driven from Contreras and San Antonio, had concentrated themselves upon Churubusco, in aid of that strong and important position. Other troops had also flocked to it, and Santa Anna's entire disposable force was intrenched in and near that village. At least twenty-five thousand Mexicans, strongly posted, here awaited the onset of our army. As the American troops moved to the attack, a most terrific fire was opened upon them both by infantry and artillery, along the whole extended line of the enemy. Several of the advanced companies of artillery, being precipitated upon a principal point of the defence (San Pablo), were almost entirely swept away by the tremendous cannonade they had to encounter. Torrents of flame rolled down from the enemy's fortifications, ravaging our ranks with a deluge of slaughter. For more than three hours was the great tide of battle successfully resisted by the enemy. Their murderous fire was, however, returned by our troops with unflagging energy and desperate resolution. The attack was at length pressed with such impetuosity that the Mexican left began to waver. Lieutenant-colonel Scott, heading two regiments of infantry, here made a furious assault upon the strongest of the enemy's works (the tête-du-pont), and carried it at the point of the bayonet, after

a most obstinate conflict. The main body of the Mexican infantry soon after gave way before the assailants.

Still one portion of the field was contested with fierce determination. But all resistance finally succumbed before the irresistible valor of our troops. As the last stronghold of the enemy yielded, General Scott, who had been wounded in the action by a grape-shot, made his appearance in that quarter, and was greeted with deafening cheers by his brave troops, now triumphant at all points. This memorable battle began soon after noon, and did not end till sunset. The loss of the Americans in killed, wounded, and missing, was 1,056. That of the Mexicans was 4,000 in killed and wounded, and 2,637 prisoners. It is conceded by the best military authorities, that this decisive victory was chiefly owing to the prompt and masterly arrangements of the commander-in-chief, both before and during the engagement, and that to him, therefore, belongs the principal credit of this most glorious achievement of the American arms. But besides the military skill exhibited on the whole of this bloody day, ending with this terrible battle, General Scott displayed all the fire and heroic temper of his youth. The brilliant genius and courage that impelled his great efforts at Chippewa and Lundy's Lane, here blazed out afresh, with renewed lustre. The conta-



Battle of Churubusco.

gion of his example of lofty courage and impetuous enthusiasm, spread through and fired the whole army. Never did General Scott's noble appearance and conduct produce a greater influence upon his men than on this memorable day. Mounted on a fiery charger, in the midst of his conquering troops, directing in person all the brilliant evolutions of the various divisions of the army, dashing from column to column amid the pitiless peltings of the iron hail, and the ringing

shouts of the victors, and dispatching his orders in all directions with unparalleled celerity; the illustrious commander-in-chief, covered with the smoke and dust of battle, and wounded in the desperate strife, was regarded by all as the guardian genius of the hour, the protecting aegis of the army, the unconquerable hero who was never vanquished, whose banners never trailed in defeat, but the sword of whose mighty arm always led the way to triumphant victory.

#### Scott grants an Armistice.

General Scott, by his brilliant initial and strategic movements before the city of Mexico, and by his subsequent decisive victories at Contreras and Churubusco, had displayed all the qualities of a gallant officer and a great military commander. He had opened the way to the city, and could have entered it sword in hand on the evening of the victory on the bloody field of Churubusco. But he now exhibited all the noble qualities of a generous and magnanimous mind. He refrained from pursuing the manifest advantages he had gained, and granted an armistice to the enemy.

He desired to save the further effusion of blood, and the city from the horrors of assault.

Santa Anna, however, with characteristic perfidy, only made use of General Scott's forbearance to strengthen the defences of the city, and to arouse the people to arms.

On the 6th of September, General Scott, having failed in his humane efforts to prevent the further waste of life, gave notice that the armistice would terminate on the following day, and made preparations to attack the city.

#### Battle of Molino del Rey.

Santa Anna had now stationed himself with his remaining forces on the outskirts of the city, at or near the hill of Chapultepec. This hill was very strongly fortified, and commanded the city, as well as several of its principal approaches. Its sides were craggy and precipitous, excepting the ascent from the city. On its summit stood a stone fortress of immense size and strength, called the castle. At its foot were strong defences. Among them was the "King's Mill" (Molino del Rey), a large stone building with thick and high walls, and towers at the ends. About 400 yards distant stood another thick-walled stone building,

called the *Casa de Mata*. Strongly posted at and about these two points, and between them, lay the army of Santa Anna, 14,000 strong. General Scott discerning that the "King's Mill" was employed as a foundry for the purpose of casting cannon, to be used in the defence of the city, determined to attack and destroy it, and break up the enemy's position preparatory to the storming of Chapultepec. The assault was intrusted to General Worth, who accomplished it in the most gallant manner on the 8th of September, but not without frightful loss. The positions at the King's Mill and *Casa de Mata* were defended with obstinate



Battle of Molino del Rey.

bravery, and only yielded at length to the desperate valor of our troops, who poured in under a hideous tempest of bullets and sulphur, and carried the works.

The victory, glorious as it was, was purchased at a ruinous sacrifice. It was, next to Lundy's Lane, one of the bloodiest battles recorded in American history. Nearly one-fourth of Worth's whole corps were either

killed or wounded. The American force engaged was 3,447, to 14,000 of the enemy. The Americans lost of their devoted band, in killed and wounded, 787.

Having accomplished his purpose, General Scott withdrew his troops to their quarters, and prepared to finish the reduction of the city by the capture of Chapultepec, the site of the ancient palaces of the Mexican monarchs.

#### Bombardment and Storming of Chapultepec.



Storming of Chapultepec.