

delight is in this fine body of troops, without whom, we can never sleep in the Halls of the Montezumas, or in our own homes." The word was caught up by some of the rank and file, marching abreast, and passed rapidly to the front and rear of the column, each platoon, in succession, rending the air with its acclamation.

CHAPTER XXX.

ADVANCE ON THE CAPITAL—HALT AT AYOTLA—RECON-
NAISSANCES—SAN AUGUSTIN—CONTRERAS.

AT length reinforcements began to approach. Lieutenant-Colonel McIntosh with some eight hundred men, escorting a large train, was checked and delayed by the enemy in the march near Jalapa; but being soon joined by Brigadier-General Cadwallader, with a portion of his brigade and a field battery, the enemy was swept away and the two detachments arrived in safety at Puebla. Major-General Pillow followed with another detachment of a thousand men, and finally came Brigadier-General Pierce (August the 6th) with a brigade of two thousand five hundred.

About this time, when General Taylor had more troops than he could employ, and yet clamored for reinforcements—I was obliged, by paucity of numbers, to call up the garrison from Jalapa, under Colonel Childs, to make up my entire force at Puebla including the late reinforcements, to about fourteen thousand men, of whom two thousand five hundred were sick in hospital (mostly diarrhoea cases), and about six hundred convalescents, yet too feeble for an ordinary day's march. The latter, and an equal number of effective troops were designated as the garrison, under Colonel Childs, of the important city of Puebla—the whole route to Vera Cruz and all communications with home, being, for the time, abandoned. We had to throw away the scabbard and to advance with the naked blade in hand.

The composition of the army in its march from Puebla to Mexico was as follows:

GENERAL STAFF.

Lieutenant-Colonel Hitchcock, Assistant Inspector-General.
 Captain H. L. Scott, Acting Adjutant-General.
 First Lieutenant T. Williams, Aide-de-Camp.
 Brevet First Lieutenant G. W. Lay, Aide-de-Camp.

Composition of the Army.

Second Lieutenant Schuyler Hamilton, Aide-de-Camp.
 Major J. P. Gaines, Volunteer Aide-de-Camp.

ENGINEER CORPS.

Major J. L. Smith, Chief.
 Captain R. E. Lee.
 Lieutenant P. G. T. Beauregard.
 " Isaac I. Stevens.
 " Z. B. Tower.
 " G. W. Smith.
 " George B. McClellan.
 " J. G. Foster.

ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT.

Captain Benjamin Huger, Chief, with Siege Train.
 First Lieutenant P. V. Hagner.
 Second Lieutenant C. P. Stone.

TOPOGRAPHICAL ENGINEERS.

Major William Turnbull, Chief.
 Captain J. McClellan.
 Second Lieutenant George Thom.
 Brevet Second Lieutenant E. L. F. Hardcastle.

QUARTERMASTER'S DEPARTMENT.

Captain J. R. Irwin, Chief.
 " A. C. Myers.
 " Robert Allen.
 " H. C. Wayne.
 " J. McKinstry.
 " G. W. F. Wood.

Captain J. Daniels.

" O'Hara.

" S. McGowan.

SUBSISTENCE DEPARTMENT.

Captain J. B. Grayson, Chief.

" T. P. Randle.

PAY DEPARTMENT.

Major E. Kirby, Chief.

" A. Van Buren.

" A. G. Bennett.

MEDICAL DEPARTMENT.

Surgeon-General Thomas Lawson.

Surgeon B. F. Harney.

" R. S. Satterlee.

" C. S. Tripler.

" B. Randall.

" J. M. Cuyler.

Assistant-Surgeon A. F. Suter.

" " J. Simpson.

" " D. C. DeLeon.

" " H. H. Steiner.

" " J. Simons.

" " J. K. Barnes.

" " L. H. Holden.

" " C. C. Keeney.

" " J. F. Head.

" " J. F. Hammond.

" " J. M. Steiner.

Assistant-Surgeon C. P. Deyerle.

" " E. Swift.

Surgeon J. M. Tyler, Volunteer.

" McMillan, "

" C. J. Clark, "

" W. B. Halstead, "

Assistant-Surgeon R. Hagan, Volunteer.

" " H. L. Wheaton, "

Surgeon R. Ritchie, 1st Volunteers.

" J. Barry, "

" Edwards, "

" L. W. Jordan, "

" R. McSherry, "

" Roberts, "

CORPS.

COLONEL HARNEY'S BRIGADE.

Detachment of 1st Light Dragoons, under Captain Kearny.

" 2d " " Major Sumner.

" 3d " " Major McReynolds.

I.—BREVET MAJOR-GENERAL WORTH'S DIVISION.

1. COLONEL GARLAND'S BRIGADE.

2d Regiment of Artillery, serving as Infantry.

3d " " " "

4th " of Infantry.

Duncan's Field Battery.

2. COLONEL CLARK'S BRIGADE.

5th, 6th and 8th Regiments of Infantry.
A Light Battery.

II.—BREVET MAJOR-GENERAL TWIGGS'S DIVISION.

1. BREVET BRIGADIER-GENERAL P. F. SMITH'S BRIGADE.

Rifle Regiment.
1st Regiment of Artillery, serving as Infantry.
3d Regiment of Infantry.
Taylor's Light Battery.

2. COLONEL RILEY'S BRIGADE.

4th Regiment of Artillery, serving as Infantry.
1st Regiment of Infantry.
7th " "

III.—MAJOR-GENERAL PILLOW'S DIVISION.

1. BRIGADIER-GENERAL G. CADWALLADER'S BRIGADE.

Voltigeurs.
11th and 14th Infantry.
A Light Battery.

2. BRIGADIER-GENERAL PIERCE'S BRIGADE.

9th, 12th, and 15th Infantry.

IV.—MAJOR-GENERAL QUITMAN'S DIVISION.

1. BRIGADIER-GENERAL SHIELDS'S BRIGADE.

New York Volunteers.
South Carolina Volunteers.

2. LIEUTENANT-COLONEL WATSON'S BRIGADE.

A Detachment of 2d Pennsylvania Volunteers.
Detachment of United States' Marines.

It has been seen that the last body of recruits (Pierce's brigade) arrived August 6, 1847. The army commenced its advance, by divisions, on the 7th—Twiggs's division first, with Harney's brigade of cavalry leading, and the siege train following. The other three divisions successively followed on the 8th, 9th, and 10th—each of the four divisions making but a half day's march at the beginning. So that no division (even the leading or rearmost one) was ever separated more than seven or eight miles from support, or rather half that distance, by means of a double movement—one division advancing and the other falling back. By similar means, three divisions might easily have been united in little more than two hours, in the case of a formidable attack upon an interior division.

This concatenation of the advancing corps was deemed prudent inasmuch as President Santa Anna had now had nearly four months (since the battle of Cerro Gordo) to collect and reorganize the entire means of the Republic for a last vigorous attempt to crush the invasion. A single error on our part—a single victory on his, might have effected that great end.* His vigilance and energy were unquestionable, and his powers of creating and organizing worthy of admiration. He was also great in administrative ability, and though not deficient in personal courage, he, on the field of battle, failed in quickness of perception and rapidity of combination. Hence his defeats.

We had confidently expected to meet him, at the latest, in the defiles of Rio Frio; but he preferred remaining in coil about the city in the midst of formidable lines of defence both natural and artificial.

August 10, the leading division, with which I marched, crossed the Rio Frio range of mountains, the

* The Duke of Wellington, with whom the autobiographer was slightly acquainted, took quite an interest in the march of this army from Vera Cruz, and at every arrival caused its movements to be marked on a map. Admiring its triumphs up to the basin of Mexico, he now said to a common friend: "Scott is lost. He has been carried away by successes. He can't take the city, and he can't fall back upon his base."

highest point, in the bed of the road between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

Descending the long western slope, a magnificent basin, with, near its centre, the object of all our dreams and hopes—toils and dangers;—once the gorgeous seat of the Montezumas, now the capital of a great Republic—first broke upon our enchanted view. The close surrounding lakes, sparkling under a bright sun, seemed, in the distance, pendant diamonds. The numerous steeples of great beauty and elevation, with Popocatepetl, ten thousand feet higher, apparently near enough to touch with the hand, filled the mind with religious awe. Recovering from the sublime trance, probably, not a man in the column failed to say to his neighbor or himself: *That splendid city soon shall be ours!* All were ready to suit the action to the word.

Report No. 31.

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY, SAN AUGUSTIN,
ACAPULCO ROAD, NINE MILES FROM MEXICO, }
August 19, 1847.

SIR:

Leaving a competent garrison in Puebla, this army advanced upon the capital, as follows: Twiggs's divi-

sion, preceded by Harney's brigade of cavalry, the 7th; Quitman's division of volunteers, with a small detachment of United States' Marines, the 8th; Worth's division, the 9th, and Pillow's division, the 10th—all in this month. On the 8th, I overtook, and then continued with the leading division.

The corps were, at no time, beyond five hours, or supporting distance, apart; and on descending into the basin of the capital (seventy-five miles from Puebla) they became more closely approximated about the head of Lake Chalco, with Lake Tescuco a little in front and to the right.

On the 12th and 13th, we pushed reconnaissances upon the Peñon, an isolated mound (eight miles from Mexico) of great height, strongly fortified to the top (three tiers of works) and flooded around the base by the season of rain and sluices from the lakes. This mound close to the national road, commands the principal approach to the city from the east. No doubt it might have been carried, but at a great and disproportionate loss, and I was anxious to spare the lives of this gallant army for a general battle which I knew we had to win before capturing the city, or obtaining the great object of the campaign—a just and honorable peace.

Another reconnaissance (which I also accompanied) was directed the (13th) upon Mexicalcingo, to the left of the Peñon, a village at a fortified bridge across the outlet or canal, leading from Lake Jochimilco to the capital—five miles from the latter. It might have been easy (masking the Peñon) to force this passage; but on the other side of the bridge, we should have found ourselves four miles from this (San Augustin) road, on a narrow causeway, flanked on the right and left by water or boggy ground.

Those difficulties, closely viewed, threw me back upon the project, long entertained, of turning the strong eastern defences of the city, by passing around south of Lake Chalco and Jochimilco, at the foot of the hills and mountains, so as to reach this point (San Augustin), and hence to manœuvre, on hard ground, though much broken, to the south and southwest of the capital, which has been more or less under our view, since the 10th instant.

Accordingly, by a sudden inversion—Worth's division, with Harney's cavalry brigade, leading—we marched on the 15th instant. Pillow's and Quitman's divisions followed closely, and then Twiggs's division, which was left till the next day at Ayotla, in order to

threaten the Peñon and Mexicalcingo, and to deceive the enemy as long as practicable.

Twiggs, on the 16th, marching from Ayotla toward Chalco (six miles), met a corps of more than double his numbers—cavalry and infantry—under General Valencia. Twiggs halted, deployed into line, and by a few rounds from Captain Taylor's field battery, dispersed the enemy, killing or wounding many men and horses. No other molestation has been experienced except a few random shots from guerilleros on the heights; and the march of twenty-seven miles, over a route deemed impracticable by the enemy, is now accomplished by all the corps—thanks to their indomitable zeal and physical energy.

Arriving here, the 18th, Worth's division and Harney's cavalry were pushed forward a league, to reconnoitre and to carry, or to mask, San Antonio on the direct road to the capital. This village was found strongly defended by field works, heavy guns, and a numerous garrison. It could only be turned by infantry, to the left, over a field of volcanic stones and lava; for, to our right, the ground was boggy.

It was soon ascertained by the daring engineers, Captain Mason and Lieutenants Stevens and Tower,

that the point could only be approached by the front, over a narrow causeway, flanked with wet ditches of great depth. Worth was ordered not to attack, but to threaten and to mask the place.

The first shot fired from San Antonio (the 18th) killed Captain S. Thornton, 2d Dragoons, a gallant officer, who was covering the operations with his company.

The same day, a reconnaissance was commenced to the left of San Augustin, first over difficult grounds, and farther on, over the same field of volcanic matter which extends to the mountains, some five miles from San Antonio, toward Magdalena. This reconnaissance was continued to-day by Captain Lee, assisted by Lieutenants Beauregard and Tower, all of the Engineers; who were joined in the afternoon by Major Smith of the same corps. Other divisions coming up, Pillow's was advanced to make a practicable road for heavy artillery, and Twiggs's thrown farther in front, to cover that operation; for, by the partial reconnaissance of yesterday, Captain Lee discovered a large corps of observation in that direction, with a detachment of which his supports of cavalry and foot under Captain Kearny and Lieutenant-Colonel Graham, respectively, had a successful skirmish.

By three o'clock this afternoon, the advanced divisions came to a point where the new road could only be continued under the direct fire of twenty-two pieces of the enemy's artillery (most of them of large calibre) placed in a strong intrenched camp to oppose our operations, and surrounded by every advantage of ground, besides immense bodies of cavalry and infantry hourly reënforced from the city, over an excellent road beyond the volcanic field, and consequently beyond the reach of our cavalry and artillery.

Arriving on the ground an hour later, I found that Pillow's and Twiggs's divisions had advanced to dislodge the enemy, picking their way (all officers on foot) along his front, and extending themselves toward the road from the city and the enemy's left. Captain Magruder's field battery, of 12 and 6-pounders, and Lieutenant Callender's battery of mountain howitzers and rockets, had also, with great difficulty, been advanced within range of the intrenched camp. These batteries, most gallantly served, suffered much in the course of the afternoon, from the enemy's superior weight of metal.

The battle, though mostly stationary, continued to rage with great violence until nightfall. Brevet Briga-

dier-General P. F. Smith's and Brevet Colonel Riley's brigades (Twiggs's division), supported by Brigadier-Generals Pierce's and Cadwallader's brigades (Pillow's division), were more than three hours under a heavy fire of artillery and musketry along the almost impassable ravine in front and to the left of the intrenched camp.

Besides the twenty-two pieces of artillery, the camp and ravine were defended closely by masses of infantry, and these again supported by clouds of cavalry at hand, hovering in view. Consequently no decided impression could be made by daylight on the enemy's most formidable position, because, independently of the difficulty of the ravine, our infantry, unaccompanied by cavalry and artillery, could not advance in column without being mowed down by the grape and canister of the batteries, nor advance in line without being ridden over by the enemy's numerous cavalry. All our corps, however, including Magruder's and Callender's light batteries, not only maintained the exposed positions early gained, but all attempted charges upon them, respectively—particularly on Riley, twice closely engaged with cavalry in greatly superior numbers—were repulsed and punished.

From an eminence, soon after arriving near the

scene, I observed the church and hamlet of Contreras (or Ansalda) on the road leading up from the capital through the intrenched camp to Magdalena, and seeing, at the same time, the stream of reinforcements advancing by that road from the city, I ordered (through Major-General Pillow) Colonel Morgan with his regiment, the 15th, till then held in reserve by Pillow, to move forward and to occupy Contreras (or Ansalda)—being persuaded, if occupied, it would arrest the enemy's reinforcements and ultimately decide the battle.

Riley was already on the enemy's left, in advance of the hamlet. A few minutes later, Brigadier-General Shields with his volunteer brigade (New York and South Carolina regiments—Quitman's division) coming up under my orders from San Augustin, I directed Shields to follow and sustain Morgan. These corps, over the extreme difficulties of ground—partially covered with a low forest—before described, reached Contreras, and found Cadwallader's brigade in position, observing the formidable movement from the capital, and much needing the timely reinforcement.

It was already dark, and the cold rain had begun to fall in torrents upon our unsheltered troops; for the

hamlet, though a strong defensive position, could only hold the wounded men, and, unfortunately, the new regiments have little or nothing to eat in their haversacks. Wet, hungry, and without the possibility of sleep; all our gallant corps, I learn, are full of confidence, and only wait for the last hour of darkness to gain the positions whence to storm and carry the enemy's works.

Of the seven officers despatched since about sundown, from my position opposite to the enemy's centre, and on this side of the volcanic field—to communicate instructions to the hamlet—not one has succeeded in getting through these difficulties increased by darkness. They have all returned. But the gallant and indefatigable Captain Lee, of the Engineers, who has been constantly with the operating forces, is (eleven o'clock P. M.) just in from Shields, Smith, Cadwallader, etc., to report as above, and to ask that a powerful diversion be made against the centre of the intrenched camp toward morning.

Brigadier-General Twiggs cut off as above, from the part of his division beyond the impracticable ground, and Captain Lee are gone, under my orders, to collect the forces remaining on this side with which

to make that diversion at about five o'clock in the morning.

And here I will end this report, commenced at its date, and in another, continue the narrative of the great events which now impend.

I have the honor to be, etc., etc.,

WINFIELD SCOTT.

HON. WM. L. MARCY, *Secretary of War.*

CHAPTER XXXI.

VICTORIES OF CONTRERAS—SAN ANTONIO—CHURUBUSCO.

Report No. 32.

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,
TACUBAYA, AT THE GATES OF
MEXICO, *August 28, 1847.* }

SIR:

My report, No. 31, commenced in the night of the 19th instant, closed with the operations of the army on that day.

The morning of the 20th opened with one of a series of unsurpassed achievements, all in view of the capital, and to which I shall give the general name—*Battles of Mexico.*

In the night of the 19th, Brigadier-Generals Shields,