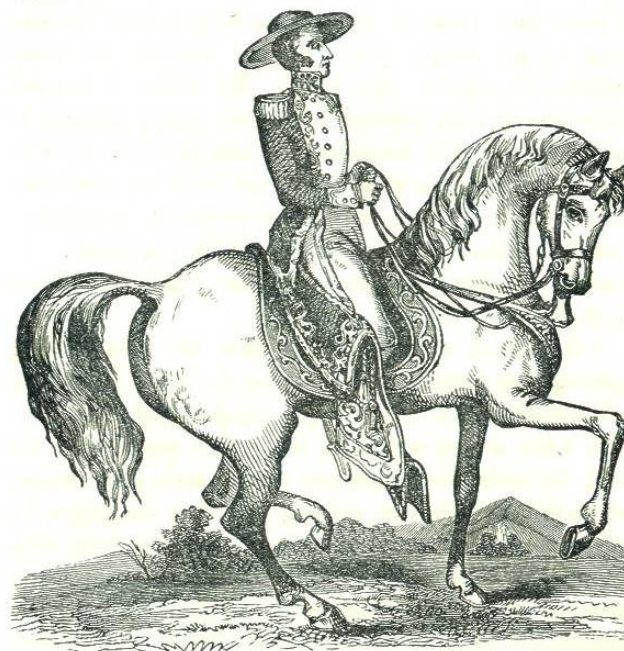


Santa Anna lands at Vera Cruz.

army, and each breathing implacable hostility to the United States. In the mean time a party had arisen favourable to the recall of Santa Anna, who had been exiled in 1844, and was living at Havana. A proclamation was issued at Mexico, inviting the return of all Mexicans faithful to their country, Santa Anna being named as one, and appointed general-in-chief; and calling for a meeting of a congress of representatives to be chosen according to the repudiated constitution of 1824, under which Mexico was a federal republic, similar to that of the United States. This was the production of General Salas, who was the avowed supporter of Santa Anna, and who had been elevated to the presidency.

On the 16th of August, Santa Anna landed at Vera Cruz, having been allowed to pass the American blockading squadron, in the British mail steamer Arab. On the 14th of September, when he had reached Ayotla, he received and accepted a commission appointing him supreme dictator. On the next day he entered the capital and was received with every demonstration of joy and confidence. He issued a proclamation calling upon the people to support him in defending the country. The American government had refused to sanction the conditional armistice of eight weeks, provided for by one of the articles of capitulation at Monterey, and directed General Taylor to resume hostilities. That officer therefore addressed a letter to Santa Anna notifying him of the renewal of hostilities, and making a request for the release of certain prisoners at San Luis Potosi. Santa Anna acknowledged the receipt of the letter in a courteous and dignified manner, acquiesced in the conclusion of the armistice, and complied in a liberal manner with

Taylor marches to Victoria.



Santa Anna.

the request concerning the prisoners. He soon found himself at the head of an army of twenty thousand men, who regarded him as invincible.

Meanwhile, the Americans were not idle. General Worth had moved with fifteen hundred men upon Saltillo and taken it, and Parras had fallen into the hands of Général Wool. In December, General Santa Anna threatened to attack the American forces in Saltillo, and General Urrea was reported to be in the vicinity of Victoria. General Taylor marched to the latter place, which he reached on the 30th of December. Here he received



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Taylor's address to his soldiers.

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a letter from General Scott, requesting a large detachment of his troops, which was to increase the army destined to capture Vera Cruz. No soldier could feel more keenly than General Taylor the disappointment to which he was thus subjected: to lose the veterans who had won for him so great glory, and be at the same time reduced from a victorious position to one of comparative inaction. Yet he cheerfully obeyed the command. At parting with his troops he issued the following address to them:

"It is with deep sensibility that the commanding general finds himself separated from the troops he so long commanded. To those corps, regular and volunteer, who have shared with him the active services of the field, he feels the attachment due to such associations, while to those who are making their first campaign, he must express his regret that he cannot participate with them in its eventful scenes. To all, both officers and men, he extends his heartfelt wishes for their continued success and happiness, confident that their achievements on another theatre will redound to the credit of their country and to them."

After they had left him, he again established his headquarters at Monterey, where he remained until February. In that month, his force was raised to nearly five thousand, by the arrival of a considerable number of volunteers. He then marched from Monterey to Agua Nueva, a place eighteen miles below Saltillo.

He retired, however, on the approach of Santa Anna, to Buena Vista, a strong position a few miles south of Saltillo. Here he was attacked by Santa Anna, on the 21st of February. That general seems to have been for

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Santa Anna's address.

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a considerable time wavering as to the course he should pursue; at one time threatening to march to Vera Cruz, then turning to quell an insurrection at the capital, and again manœuvring in the vicinity of Saltillo. At length he issued an address to his companions in arms, which contained his real intentions. We quote a specimen of it.

"Soldiers! the entire world observes us, and will expect our acts to be heroic as they are necessary. Privations of all kinds surround us, in consequence of the neglect shown towards us for more than a month, by those who should provide your pay and provisions. But when has misery debilitated your spirits, or weakened your enthusiasm? The Mexican soldier is well known by his frugality and patience under suffering, never wanting magazines in marches across deserts, and always counting upon the resources of the enemy to provide for his wants. To-day we shall undertake to march over a desert country, without succour or provisions. But be assured, that we shall be immediately provided from those of the enemy, and with them you will be sufficiently reimbursed. My friends, we go to open the campaign. What days of glory await us! What a flattering future for our country! How satisfactory, when we contemplate that we have saved its independence! How the world will admire us! How the nation will bless us! And when in the bosoms of our families we shall relate the risks and fatigues which we have endured, the combats with and triumphs over a daring and presumptuous enemy; and hereafter, when telling our children that we have saved our country a second time, the jubilee will be complete, and the sacrifices will then



appear to us as nothing. Soldiers! Hurry forth in the defense of your country. The cause we sustain is a holy one; never have we struggled with more justice, because we fight for the honour and religion of our wives and children! What sacrifice, then, can be too great for objects so dear? Let our motto be—'CONQUER OR DIE!' Let us swear before the great Eternal, that we will not wait an instant in purging our soil of the stranger, who has dared to profane it with his presence. No treaty, nothing which may not be heroic and proud."

We give the distinct and explicit account of the operations which followed, from the official report of General Taylor, reserving, as before, our notices of individual gallantry for another portion of the work.

"The information which reached me of the advance and concentration of a heavy Mexican force in my front, had assumed such a probable form, as to induce a special examination far beyond the reach of our pickets, to ascertain its correctness. A small party of Texan spies, under Major McCulloch, despatched to the hacienda of Encarnacion, thirty miles from this, on the route to San Luis Potosi, had reported a cavalry force of unknown strength at that place. On the 20th of February, a strong reconnoissance under Lieutenant-Colonel May was despatched to the hacienda of Heclionda, while Major McCulloch made another examination of Encarnacion. The result of these expeditions left no doubt that the enemy was in large force at Encarnacion, under the orders of General Santa Anna, and that he meditated a forward movement and attack upon our position.

As the camp of Agua Nueva could be turned on either flank, and as the enemy's force was greatly superior to

our own, particularly in the arm of cavalry, I determined, after much consideration, to take up a position about eleven miles in rear, and there await the attack. The army broke up its camp and marched at noon on the 21st, encamping at the new position a little in front of the hacienda of Buena Vista. With a small force I proceeded to Saltillo, to make some necessary arrangements for the defense of the town, leaving Brigadier-General Wool in the immediate command of the troops.

Before those arrangements were completed, on the morning of the 22d, I was advised that the enemy was in sight, advancing. Upon reaching the ground it was found that his cavalry advance was in our front, having marched from Encarnacion, as we have since learned, at eleven o'clock on the day previous, and driving in a mounted force left at Agua Nueva to cover the removal of public stores. Our troops were in position, occupying a line of remarkable strength. The road at this point becomes a narrow defile, the valley on its right being rendered quite impracticable for artillery by a system of deep and impassable gullies, while on the left a succession of rugged ridges and precipitous ravines extends far back toward the mountain which bounds the valley. The features of the ground were such as nearly to paralyze the artillery and cavalry of the enemy, while his infantry could not derive all the advantage of its numerical superiority. In this position we prepared to receive him. Captain Washington's battery (4th artillery) was posted to command the road, while the 1st and 2d Illinois regiments, under Colonels Hardin and Bissell, each eight companies, (to the latter of which was attached Captain Conner's company of Texas volun-



teers,) and the 2d Kentucky, under Colonel McKee, occupied the crests of the ridges on the left and in rear. The Arkansas and Kentucky regiments of cavalry, commanded by Colonels Yell and H. Marshall, occupied the extreme left near the base of the mountain, while the Indiana brigade, under Brigadier-General Lane, (composed of the 2d and 3d regiments, under Colonels Bowles and Lane,) the Mississippi riflemen, under Colonel Davis, the squadrons of the 1st and 2d dragoons, under Captain Steen and Lieutenant-Colonel May, and the light batteries of Captains Sherman and Bragg, 3d artillery, were held in reserve.

At eleven o'clock, a summons to surrender at discretion was received from General Santa Anna, which was declined. The enemy still forebore his attack, evidently waiting for the arrival of his rear columns, which could be distinctly seen by our look-outs as they approached the field. A demonstration made on his left caused me to detach the 2d Kentucky regiment and a section of our artillery to our right, in which position they bivouacked for the night. In the mean time the Mexican light troops had engaged ours on the extreme left, (composed of parts of the Kentucky and Arkansas cavalry dismounted, and a rifle battalion from the Indiana brigade, under Major Gorman, the whole commanded by Colonel Marshall,) and kept up a sharp fire, climbing the mountain side, and apparently endeavouring to gain our flank. Three pieces of Captain Washington's battery had been detached to the left, and were supported by the 2d Indiana regiment. An occasional shell was thrown by the enemy into this part of our line, but without effect. The skirmishing of the light troops was kept up



Battle of Buena Vista.