

ria with the two Illinois regiments and the Tennessee regiment of cavalry. General Taylor ordered General Wool with his command to Parras, where he arrived on the 5th of December. Parras is situated to the east of Saltillo. It is described as a beautiful place, and the country under rich cultivation. *Parra* means a vineyard; hence its name, the country in the vicinity being a succession of vineyards. At this place large quantities of the native wine and brandy are made; the wine is a fair article, and the brandy, excepting its peculiar taste, is quite good.

Brigadier-general Thomas L. Hamer expired on the night of the 2d of December, after a very short illness. Ever since the battle he has been in bad health, but no fears were entertained of his recovery. On the 1st of December he was seized with an alarming attack of dysentery, which resulted in almost immediate death. It cast a gloom over the army. He was universally esteemed by us. He was a man of unpretending manners, of sound judgment, and of fearless independence. He was a conspicuous member of the Democratic party, and had just been elected to Congress from his native state (Ohio). His whole political career has been marked by devotion to his country and state. He never descended to the low trickery of party, and often fearlessly advocated and voted for measures to which a majority of his party were warmly opposed. Ohio lost in him one of her favorite sons, the country one of her sound and good men, and the army one of its warmest admirers and supporters. He had made it his particular study to inform himself of our condition, of our wants, and the changes which a ruinous system demanded. A *Retired List*, from its vital necessity to the well-being

and efficiency of the service, he had repeatedly promised to urge with all the influence his high talents and character commanded. As a general, without making the least pretensions, his good judgment and sound common sense invariably led him to correct conclusions, and his firmness enabled him to execute them. His bereaved family and friends have the consolation of knowing he *died beloved by all who knew him*. His funeral took place at ten A.M. on the 4th of December. His escort consisted of the 1st Regiment of Kentucky Volunteers, commanded by Major Shepherd, Captain Graham's company of Dragoons, and two pieces of Bragg's battery. The 1st Regiment of Ohio Volunteers attended as mourners, and all the officers of the army off duty swelled the mournful procession. General Quitman commanded the escort. The remains of this great man, the balance-wheel of the volunteer force, were deposited in the cemetery of the 3d Infantry, and, after reading the service for the dead, three volleys were fired over his grave, and he was left to rest beside the honored dead of the 3d. It was the first funeral of a general officer I ever attended. The serpentine course of the procession, its way through the deep, dark woods of St. Domingo, the gurgling stream beside whose banks we marched, combined with the recollection of our great loss, made it a funeral of unusual solemnity.

On the 11th of December General Taylor reorganized the brigades of the 1st Division, preparatory to their march for Victoria. The 2d Dragoons, Bragg's battery, 2d and 3d Infantry, constitute the 3d Brigade, commanded by Colonel Harney. The 3d will unite with the 2d Infantry at Montemorelos. The 1st Infantry, 7th Infantry, Rifles, and Captain Sherman's



battery, at present commanded by Lieutenant Thomas, constitute the 4th Brigade, commanded by Colonel P. F. Smith. The 4th Infantry is to be left, and stationed at the citadel. The Baltimore Battalion is attached to General Quitman's Brigade, which will move with our column.

I have almost forgotten to mention we have had, for two or three weeks, a circus in full blast. The head of the company is a Mr. Hamblin. They have been in this country nearly four years. They take the native horses, and break them to the ring; the horses are very tractable. Some of their ponies are beauties. We Americans are a great nation! whip the Mexicans one day, and offer them the amusements of a circus the next.

At 10 A.M. on the 11th of December, the funeral of Lieutenant Hoskins, of the 4th Infantry, and brevet first Lieutenant Woods, of the 2d Infantry, took place. A company of the 3d was their escort, and the 4th followed as mourners. They were buried in the cemetery of the 3d Infantry. It is proper and appropriate that such should be their burial-place. The two regiments served together at Jefferson Barracks, moved together to Corpus Christi, and, since our arrival in this country, have been brigaded to this date. We are now to be separated; and it was grateful to the feelings of all that, just before our departure, the 3d should perform the last sad rites to their brothers of the 4th. Lieutenant Hoskins was the adjutant of his regiment, a whole-souled, noble fellow; all who knew him loved him. Lieutenant Woods, just prior to the battle, was promoted to the 2d Infantry. As a brevet second lieutenant, he particularly distinguished himself in the battle of the 9th of May, and for his gallant-

ry was brevetted a first lieutenant. Both these gallant young officers fell in the charge of the two companies of the 4th Infantry against Battery No. 1, on the morning of the 21st.

The order for the march was issued on the 12th of December. The 1st Division moves to-morrow at daybreak.

On the 12th I took my last evening stroll to the cemetery; my heart was sad—filled to overflowing. The innumerable happy hours spent with those whose existence is now only marked by a cross and grave rose vividly before me. Oh that I could recall you, my noble, my dear old friends! But, alas! 'tis vain to wish. Your fate, ere this, is sealed; and if the good and brave are granted happiness hereafter, surely a full measure has been accorded to you! A departure is always more or less attended with melancholy, for there is hardly that spot on earth where we have not formed some warm ties; where we have not received some acts of kindness; where some friend, in anticipation of our loss, has not exclaimed, "I'm sorry—very sorry you are going!" where some bright eye of woman has not been dimmed with departure's tear; but *this spot*, can any of us leave without feelings of the saddest nature? And yet, why should we grieve? Have not our brother officers and the gallant men, by their blood freely shed in storming the cannon's dreadful fire, added another page to the glory of American arms, and consecrated one of the loveliest spots upon which the eye ever rested?

Sweet and gloriously brilliant was our last sunset at Monterey. From the rear of the cemetery could be seen the Saddle Mountain; it was thrown into a deep, dark shade; its lofty peak appeared to be kissed by a



dove-colored cloud, which anon extended itself and formed a delicate bridge across the saddle. Turning to the west, the sky was all brilliancy; the ragged peaks of the Mitre Mountain were illuminated by a golden light, and the distant outline of the Sierra Madre, fringed with lofty pines, looked proudly down upon the quiet scene. But a soldier has no right to be sad; his duty is to tramp, tramp, fight, fight, not to brood over misfortunes. Farewell to the romantic city! Farewell to the scenes never to be effaced from memory! Farewell to you, graves of my brother officers! would that you were with us! The memory of your noble deeds will nerve us in future battles. Thank God! the cross protects your precious remains from desecration.

In one of my late visits to the city, I attended high mass at the Cathedral. I was induced to visit it to hear the organ. It is one of very fine tone, and the organist was a finished performer; he played two or three exquisite pieces, some from our favorite operas. I left, struck with regret at the small congregation. I do not think there were twenty souls present; and they, in the immensity of the Cathedral, were hardly noticed. War has caused its solemn aisles to be deserted. The inhabitants have left the city, and must kneel at other altars than those of their childhood. May peace soon enable them to return to those, so intimately and beautifully associated with their every feeling, from the first wondering gaze of admiring childhood, to the holy associations and impulses of maturer years.

And now let us, for a while, contemplate the deeds of the navy, still engaged in blockading Mexican ports. The brig Truxton, commanded by Commander Carpenter, was unfortunately run aground on the 15th of

August, on the bar off Tuspan. Lieutenant Berryman left in a boat to communicate the intelligence to the squadron. On the 17th she was abandoned by all the officers and men, except Lieutenant Hunter with a boat's crew. The latter succeeded in reaching a vessel of the squadron, and the former surrendered themselves prisoners of war. They were treated kindly by the enemy, and were eventually exchanged for General La Vega, and the officers who accompanied him to New Orleans. Upon the reception of the news, the Princeton was immediately dispatched to the scene of the disaster, and finding it impossible to save the vessel, she was burned.

On the 15th of October a second attempt was made to capture the town of Alvarado. Commodore Connor was in command. The attacking force consisted of steamers Vixen and M'Lane, three gun-boats, and schooners Nonata and Forward, and steamer Mississippi, Commodore Perry. It was thought the latter vessel could be brought near enough to command the passage of the bar, but the water was too low. There was a battery at the mouth of the river mounting seven guns. The first division, consisting of the Reefer and Bonita, towed by the Vixen, crossed the bar and became engaged with the battery. The second division, consisting of the Nonata, Forward, and Petrel, towed by the M'Lane, were prevented crossing by the grounding of the steamer. Commodore Connor finding it would be folly to proceed with the first division, withdrew the vessels, and the attempt was abandoned.

On the 16th of October Commodore Perry sailed from the squadron to attack the town of Tobasco. He took with him the steamer Vixen, Captain Sands; schooners Bonita, Benham; Reefer, Sterret; and Nonata, Haz-



ard; schooner Forward, Captain Nones; and steamer M'Lane, Captain Howard, both of the Revenue service. Captain Forest had a command of some two hundred marines and sailors. On the 23d he crossed the bar, and took, without resistance, the small town of Frontera, capturing all the vessels in port; among the number, two steamers. Tobasco is seventy-four miles from Frontera. On the morning of the 24th Commodore Perry commenced the ascent of the river. The captured steamer Petrita towed the Forward and the barges, and the Vixen the Bonita. On the morning of the 25th arrived in sight of Fort Aceachappa, which commanded a difficult pass of the river. The enemy deserted the fort, and the commodore ordered the guns spiked. About noon all the vessels anchored in front of the town. The town was summoned and refused to surrender. In the mean time the boats captured five merchant vessels. The town was fired upon by the vessels, and, in the afternoon Captain Forest, with his command, were ordered to take a position in the city. After a sharp little engagement, they were ordered back at night. The town was spared at the earnest solicitation of the foreign merchants.

On the morning of the 26th preparations were made to leave with their prizes; one of them, under the command of Lieutenant Parker, grounded, and was immediately fired upon by the enemy. The vessel was gallantly defended by Parker, with the loss of one man killed and two wounded. The vessel was got off. In conveying an order to Lieutenant Parker, Lieutenant Morris was wounded; he died, from the effects of the wound, on the 1st of November. He was a gallant young officer, beloved in the service, and his loss will be severely felt. The expedition returned to Fron-

tera, and, leaving the mouth of the river blockaded, sailed for the anchorage of the squadron.

On this expedition were captured and sent in two steamers and seven sail vessels; four sail vessels were burned. All the vessels in the river were captured or destroyed; and no doubt a check was put to a commerce by which supplies of munitions were introduced from Yucatan into Mexico.

On the 12th of November Commodore Connor sailed for Tampico with a large proportion of his squadron, and on the 14th the city surrendered unconditionally, without any resistance. The navy held possession of it until relieved by the arrival of troops from the Brasos.

On the 20th of November, Lieutenant Parker, with Midshipman Rogers and Hynson, with a small boat and crew of six men, in the darkness of night, rowed in and succeeded in burning the bark Creole, anchored under the guns of San Juan d'Ulloa. It was a gallant and daring act, reflecting great credit upon the heroic lieutenant and his associates. On the 5th of December, Midshipman R. Clay Rogers, Doctor I. W. Wright, and John G. Fox, a seaman of the Somers, went ashore for the purpose of reconnoitering one of the enemy's magazines, and ascertaining the practicability of destroying it. The party had gone some distance from the boat, when they were surrounded by seven Mexican soldiers. Doctor Wright made his escape. Midshipman Rogers and the seaman were made prisoners.