

Commodore Stockton had now one hundred and eighty volunteers added to the force with which he had before captured Los Angeles; but doubtless hearing of Captain Mervine's defeat, entered the harbor of Monterey about the 24th of October, after being *about twelve days at sea*, and landed Major Fremont and his volunteers in order that the battalion should be recruited, and organized on a larger scale.

From this time until January, 1847, when General Kearny had arrived, the Californians were in little disturbed possession of the country, save the three ports,—San Francisco, Monterey and San Diego.

Major Fremont was taking measures to collect volunteers, and to mount the battalion, in order to march to the south. November 15th, Mr. T. O. Larkin, U. S. Consul at Monterey, was captured and maltreated by a large force of Californians, about twenty miles north of that town; who also the same day attacked a party of Americans who were driving four hundred horses to Major Fremont's camp at Monterey, killing and wounding six of the party; but eight others took refuge in a grove, and defended themselves for an hour, against one hundred and thirty Californians; when, being joined by a

party of fifty immigrant volunteers, the insurgents gradually drew off.

However, they still kept rallying, and firing now and then a musket at the Americans, until eleven o'clock at night, when "one of the Walla-Walla Indians offered his services to come into Monterey and give Colonel Fremont notice of what was passing. Soon after he started he was pursued by a party of the enemy. The foremost in pursuit drove a lance at the Indian, who, trying to parry it, received the lance through his hand; he immediately, with the other hand, seized his tomahawk, and struck a blow at his opponent, which split his head from the crown to the mouth. By this time the others had come up, and with the most extraordinary dexterity and bravery, the Indian vanquished two more, and the rest ran away. He rode on towards this town as far as his horse was able to carry him, and came in on foot." *

Major Fremont marched from Monterey as soon as he heard of this skirmish, but did not meet with the Californians; he then camped at the Mission of

* "Californian" newspaper, Monterey, Nov. 21st.

San Juan, waiting the arrival of volunteers from the north.

He marched ten miles south, Nov. 28th, and in camp there the reorganization of the battalion was completed. It consisted of four hundred and twenty-eight men, including a few Indians, and was divided into eight companies of mounted men, with three officers to each; officers and privates were armed with rifle and holster pistols; besides a bowie knife and in some cases a brace of pistols in waist belts. Attached were two pieces of artillery, under command of Louis McLane and John K. Wilson, both of the navy.

Besides mules for packing baggage, five or six hundred horses, for remounts, were driven with the battalion.

The battalion marched ten miles November 30th; finding no cattle in the vicinity of the camp, a party was sent back to the Mission, who returned with one hundred head. These were driven for future use.

There was much rain, and the grass was young and tender; these causes together produced constant failure and exhaustion in the horses. The march was resumed December 3d; and eleven days

averaged eleven miles a day. Other rations exhausted, the battalion consumed an average of ten pounds a day of fat beef.*

The Mission San Miguel, on the heads of the Salinas River, was passed December 10th. "Under the administration of the *padres* it was a wealthy establishment, and manufactures of various kinds were carried on. They raised immense numbers of sheep, the fleeces of which were manufactured by the Indians into blankets and coarse cloths. Their granaries were filled with an abundance of maize and frijoles, and their store rooms with other necessities of life from the ranchos belonging to the mission lands in the vicinity. Now all the buildings, except the church and principal range of houses contiguous, have fallen into ruins, and an Englishman, his wife and one child, with two or three Indian servants, are the sole inhabitants. The church is the largest I have seen in the country, and its interior is in good repair. . . The Englishman professes to have purchased the mission and all the lands belonging to it for \$300."*

"December 12th.—To relieve our horses, which

* "What I saw in California."

are constantly giving out, the entire battalion were ordered to march on foot, turning their horses with the saddles and bridles upon them, into the general *caballada*, to be driven along by the horse guard. An Indian, said to be the servant of Tortorio Pico, was captured here by the advance party. A letter was found upon him, but its contents I never learned."

December 13th.—"Mr. Stanley, one of the volunteers, and one of the gentlemen who so kindly supplied us with provisions on Mary's River, died last night. . . He was buried this morning, . . and the ashes of a braver or a better man will never repose in the lonely hills of California."

After the funeral the battalion was marched a short distance to witness another scene. The Indian captured at the rancho yesterday was condemned to die. He was tied to a tree. Here he stood some fifteen or twenty minutes, until the Indians from a neighboring rancheria could be brought to witness the execution. A file of soldiers was then ordered to fire upon him. He fell upon his knees and remained in that position several minutes without uttering a groan, and then sank upon

the earth. No human being could have met his fate with more composure, or with stronger manifestations of courage. It was a scene such as I desire never to witness again.*

Next day the battalion reached the mission of San Luis Obispo, and remained there two rainy days.

A party was sent, and captured Tortorio Pico, a conspicuous revolutionist. On the 16th he was brought before a court martial, and tried for forfeiture of parole and sentenced to death.

December 17th.—"While standing in one of the corridors this morning, a procession of females passed by me, headed by a lady of fine appearance and dressed with remarkable taste and neatness, compared with those who followed her. Their *rebosos* concealed the faces of most of them, except the leader, whose beautiful features, I dare say, she thought (and justly) required no concealment. They proceeded to the quarters of Colonel Fremont and their object . . . was to petition for the . . . pardon of Pico . . . whose execution was expected to take place this morning. Their intercession was

* "What I saw in California."

successful, as no execution took place, and in a short time all the prisoners were discharged.”*

December 24th, the battalion ascended the St. Inez Mountains, and there camped. There, they overlooked the beautiful plain of Santa Barbara. “With the spy glass, we could see in the plain far below us, herds of cattle quietly grazing upon the green herbage which carpets its gentle undulations. The plain is dotted with groves, surrounding the springs and belting the small water-courses, of which there were many flowing from this range of mountains. Ranchos are scattered far up and down the plain, but not one human being could be seen stirring. About ten or twelve miles to the south, the white towers of the Mission Santa Barbara raise themselves. Beyond is the illimitable waste of waters.” † On the mountain the shrubbery was in bloom.

But next day, Christmas, came a great rain storm, and the three miles of descent was scarcely

* Being an officer of the battalion, Mr. Bryant makes no comment upon the different fates of the principal, and his ignorant tool, the brave Indian, who had no beautiful friend. And yet irrespective of the question of the criminality of the Indian, would it not be impossible to discover any sanction or human authority for his trial

† “What I saw in California.”

accomplished, even in the night following; the cannon and some baggage were left,—to be sent for next day,—and about one hundred horses lost their lives (the loss in the month had been about seven hundred).

December 27th, they camped a half mile from Santa Barbara. About a hundred miles to the south the final battles were impending; they were fought about two weeks later. Californians visited the camp, and the prize schooner *Julia* came into port, and landed a piece of artillery for the battalion. But the battalion lay at Santa Barbara a week.

New Years day was celebrated by the Indians of the mission and town by a procession, music, etc. They marched through the streets of the deserted town to the tune of Yankee Doodle.

The weather for that week was the April of the Middle Atlantic States; the thermometer ranged from fifty to seventy degrees.

The battalion marched ten miles January 3d, 1847. Next night, after a march of six miles they for a capital offence, and his execution by this “battalion” of volunteers, who did not have a single commission or legal appointment among them?

camped on the beach in the Rincon, where they apprehended opposition; but the *Julia* lay in sight to cover the passage; and on the 5th they reached the mission of San Buenaventure, and camped at two o'clock. Soon after a small party of Californians were seen on a hill; the battalion was called to arms, the cannon were fired, and "they scampered away like a flock of antelopes."

Only a few Indians were found at the mission; the white population had abandoned it at the approach of the battalion.

January 6th, having marched six or seven miles, a party of sixty or seventy mounted Californians showed themselves in front; a Delaware and a California Indian in advance beckoned and shouted to the battalion to come on, but in vain; it was turned into, and followed far, a cañon, until it was impracticable for the artillery to follow; it had to retrace its ascent; * the Californians were prancing and waving banners and arms; but the two brave Indians rode towards them, and exchanged some shots, when the Californians soon disappeared. The battalion went into camp.

*"What I saw in California."

This California detachment, having accomplished their probable object, no doubt returned to take part in the battles of January 8th and 9th.

Next day the battalion again marched but seven miles.

On the 8th, twelve miles were marched; horses and men had lately fared well; forage, beans and vegetables having become plentiful. Besides the regular guard, one-fourth of the battalion were kept under arms during the night.

Next morning early, Captain Hamley arrived in camp with dispatches from Commodore Stockton: he had landed at Santa Barbara, and followed the battalion. The battalion marched twelve miles.

On the 10th, a few Californians, supposed to be the same who had stopped the march on the 6th, showed themselves, having had time to return from the battles of the Mesa of Los Angeles. The battalion camped, having marched ten miles.

On the 11th of January it took quarters at the mission of San Fernando, at 1 o'clock P. M.

There were found thousands of bushels of corn, noble gardens, roses in bloom, oranges, lemons, figs,

olives in full bearing, large herds of cattle and sheep grazing on the luxuriant plain.

Having followed, to its last ominous pause, the slow* march of this battalion, (which had little or no effect upon the enemy or the war, and resulted in unprecedented official demoralization, but fortunately in no other serious injury to the public service) let them be left in such good quarters, while the reader turns to trace the fortunes,—until they culminate in peace and order to California—of that veteran and proved public servant, General Kearny. He was left deceived as to the subjugation of California, and entering, with only an escort, the unknown mountains of the Gila River.

GENERAL KEARNY'S MARCH TO THE PACIFIC.

General Kearny was left turning westward from the Rio Grande, October 15th, 1846; among his staff were Captain H. S. Turner, First Dragoons, Lieutenant W. H. Emory, Topographical Engineers, and Captain A. R. Johnston, First Dragoons A. D. C.; his escort was 100 men of First Dragoons commanded by Captain Ben. Moore and Lieutenant T. C. Hammond, and mounted on mules; also two

* Three hundred and fifty miles in forty-three days.

mountain howitzers in charge of Lieut. J. W. Davidson, First Dragoons. The baggage was packed on mules.

They first passed over high plains, intersected by several bold streams; their richness and admirable fitness for grazing are extolled. On the 18th they reached the old copper mines on the second branch of the Mimbres. "They are said to be very rich, both in copper and gold, and the specimens obtained maintain this assertion. We learn that those who worked them made their fortunes; but the Apaches did not like their proximity, and one day turned out and destroyed the mining town, driving off the inhabitants. There are remains of twenty or thirty adobe houses, and ten or fifteen shafts sinking into the earth."*

October 19th.—The country passed over in the first part of the day was beautiful; it was a succession of high, rolling hills.

Thirteen miles from the copper mines was passed the sulphur spring of San Lucia, in a beautiful valley, and that night camp was made after dark on Night Creek, the mire of which was very distur-

* "Notes of a military reconnoissance, by Lieutenant-Colonel W. H. Emory."

ing under the circumstances. Here had been appointed a meeting with Apaches, for the purpose of trade for mules. They came early, headed by Red Sleeve. He said "the road was opened forever, one white man could pass in safety." The trade was a failure, the Indians being extravagant in their demands. "At length the call of 'boots and saddles' was sounded. The order, quickness and quietude of our movements seemed to impress them. One of the chiefs, after eying the General with great apparent admiration, broke out in a vehement manner, 'you have taken New Mexico, and will soon take California, go then and take Chihuahua, Durango and Sonora. We will help you. You fight for land, we care nothing for land; we fight for the laws of Montezuma and for food. The Mexicans are rascals, we hate and will kill them all.' There burst out the smothered fire of three hundred years! Finding we were more indifferent than they supposed to trade, . . . they became at once eager for traffic . . . My packs were made. One of the gentlest mules at that moment took fright, and went off like a rocket, on the back trail, scattering to the right and left all who opposed him. A

large, elegant looking woman, mounted a-straddle, more valiant than the rest, faced the brute and charged upon him at full speed. This turned his course back to camp, and I rewarded her with half-a dozen biscuits, and through her intervention, succeeded in trading two broken-down mules for two good ones, giving two yards of scarlet cloth in the bargain. By this time a large number of Indians had collected about us, all differently dressed, and some in the most fantastical style. The Mexican dress and saddles predominated, showing where they had chiefly made up their wardrobe. One had a jacket made of a Henry Clay flag, which aroused unpleasant sensations, for the acquisition no doubt cost one of our countrymen his life. Several wore beautiful helmets, decked with black feathers, which with the short shirt, waist belt, bare legs and buskins, gave them the look of pictures of antique Grecian warriors. Most were furnished with the Mexican cartridge box. . . .

"These men have no fixed homes. Their houses are of twigs, made easily and deserted with indifference. They hover around the beautiful hills that overhang the Del Norte, between the 31st and 32d

parallels of latitude, and look down upon the states of Chihuahua and Sonora, and woe to the luckless company that ventures out unguarded by a strong force. Their hills are covered with luxuriant grama, which enables them to keep their horses in fine order, so that they can always pursue with rapidity and return in safety. . . . We wended our way through the narrow valley of Night Creek. On each side were huge stone buttes shooting up into the skies. At one place we were compelled to mount one of these spurs, almost perpendicular . . . a pack slipped from a mule, and although not shaped favorably for the purpose, rolled entirely to the bottom of the hill, up which the mules had climbed."*

October 21st was a bad day, the steep ascents and descents causing the packs to cut the animals' backs; the howitzers did not reach camp; one of them, in the dark, with its mule, rolled down into a steep ravine, but without injury.

October 23d, they passed one of the famous ruins; but the only evidences of handicraft remaining were immense quantities of broken pottery, extending for two miles along the river.

* Notes of a Military Reconnoissance.

Deer and beaver, the blue quail, teal, etc., were found on the Upper Gila.

October 25th.—"We were now in the regions made famous in olden times, by the fables of Friar Marcos, and eagerly did we ascend every mound, expecting to see in the distance what I fear is but the fabulous 'Casa Montezuma.' Once, as we turned a sharp hill, the bold outline of a castle presented itself, with the tops of the walls horizontal, the corners vertical, and apparently one front bastioned. My companion agreed with me that at last we beheld this famous building; restless for the show, I drew out my telescope, when to my disappointment a clay butte, with regular horizontal seams, stood in the place of our castle; but to the naked eye the delusion was complete. The Indians here do not know the name Aztec; Montezuma is the outward point in their chronology,—a name at this moment as familiar to every Indian, Pueblo, Apache and Navajo, as that of our Savior or Washington is to us. In the person of Montezuma they unite both qualities of divinity and patriot.

"We passed to-day the ruins of two more villages similar to those of yesterday. The foundation of

the largest house seen yesterday was sixty by twenty feet; to-day, forty by thirty; the stone forming the supposed foundations was round and unhewn; and some cedar logs were also found about the houses, much decayed, bearing no mark of an edged tool." *

A cactus, first seen there, but common further south, was well described as "eighteen inches high, and eighteen inches in its greatest diameter, containing twenty vertical volutes, armed with strong spines." They contain much water.

The next day was very severe upon the party; they were eight and a half hours passing over a rough mountain, several thousand feet above the river; they named it "Devil's turnpike;" twelve or fifteen mules were lost. Opposite this day's journey, three small rivers enter the Gila, through cañons; they are called the Black, the Blue, and the St. Charles. The howitzers got to camp in the afternoon of the next day. (These weigh only two hundred pounds; the wheels are three feet apart, and about three feet four inches in diameter.)

Next day, soon clear of the mountain, there was a march of twenty miles along the Gila valley,

* Notes of a Military Reconnoissance.

and the night camp was opposite Mount Graham. Along almost the whole distance were found the remains of houses such as before mentioned; traces of circular enclosures of four hundred yards in diameter; the foundations of houses from twenty to one hundred feet front; but no marks of edged tools, no utensils except the remains of pottery of immense amount, and the rude corn-grinder used by the Indians of to-day. "I do not think it improbable that these ruins may be those of comparatively modern Indians, for Vanegas says, 'The Father, Jacob Sedelmayer, in October, 1744, set out from his mission, (Tubutama) and, after travelling eighty leagues, reached the Gila, where he found six thousand Papagos, and near the same number of Pimos and Maricopas;' and the map which he gives of this country, although very incorrect, represents many Indian settlements and missions on the river. His observations, however, were confined to that part of the Gila River near its mouth." *

October 29th, they marched twenty-one miles in the Gila bottom grounds; the whole plain, from three to six miles wide, within reach of irrigation; and

* Notes of a Military Reconnoissance.

the scarce and crisp vegetation and plenteous pottery indicated that irrigation must have been used. "The crimson tinted Sierra Carlos skirted the river on the north side the whole day, and its changing profiles formed subjects of study and amusement. Sometimes we could trace a Gothic steeple; then a horse; now an old woman's face, and again a veritable steamboat; but this required the assistance of a light smoky cloud, drifting to the east, over what represented the chimney stack."

Near this camp were very large ruins, judged to have been the abode of five or ten thousand souls.

Next day a drove of the Mexican wild hogs, (peccary) found also in Texas, was chased, but without success. Several Indians appeared on a hill; they were spoken to "but they could not be induced to come into camp; they have been dealt with by Americans in the employment of Chihuahua; who have hunted them at fifty dollars a scalp, as we would hunt wolves; and one American decoyed a large number of their brethren in rear of a wagon to trade, and fired a field-piece among them. It is no wonder then, that two parties of God's creatures, who never knew each other before, should meet in a

desert, and not approach near enough to shake hands."*

October 31st, after a short march camp was made opposite the mouth of the San Francisco River. Carson with a party went on to explore, as in coming from California he was sixty miles without water, cut off from the river by impassable cañons. The mules were fast failing; and the appearance of three well mounted Apaches on a hill was very welcome. The Apaches could supply them. They would only suffer themselves to be approached by one person; after a long parley by signs and gestures they announced that their chief was near with mules which he would bring in; but none came.

Next day there was no alternative, the jornada must be begun; when the river could no longer be followed, they grazed the animals a short time on luxurious grama, filled every possible vessel with water, and commenced the ascent; but, seven miles up the hills, converging trails were observed, and they led to a fine spring, with cottonwood trees and some poor grass; there they camped, but the howitzers did not arrive.

* Journal of Captain A. R. Johnston, First Dragoons.