the hill and clearing the open valley, two miles to the nearest cover. It was a perilous descent, for at the approach of night it was the custom of Pico to draw a double chain of sentinels around the hill, and to patrol the valley with mounted lancers—precautions more vigilantly enforced since he learned from the captured men that Carson was on the hill. "Be on the, alert," he said to his men—"Carson is there;" and applying to Kearny's command one of the figurative expressions so common in the Spanish language—*se escapara el lobo;* the wolf will escape the hunters if you do not watch him close. The descent was perilous and painful, all done by crawling; for the upright figure of a man could not be exhibited where the horizon was watched for all that appeared above it. Shoes were pulled off to avoid cracking a stick or making a sound which the ear of the listener pressed upon the ground could catch, and the naked feet exposed to the prickly pear. They passed between sentinels, waiting and watching their time to move an inch. They heard them whisper and smelled the smoke of the cigarito. At one time Beale thought it was all over with them. Pressing Carson's thigh to get his attention, and putting his mouth upon his ear, he whispered into it: "We are gone; let us jump and fight it out." Carson said: "No; I have been in worse places before, and Providence saved me." His religious reliance encouraged the sinking hopes of Beale. The hill cleared, two miles of prairie in the open valley, all covered with prickly pears, remained to be crawled over, for no one could stand upright without detection where the mounted vedette and the horizontal view of the recumbent sentinel observed every object that rose above the level plain. Clear of the valley, and gaining the first woods, they travelled all night without shoes, having lost them in the dark. Rocks, stones, pebbles, prickly pears, there of exuberant growth, were their carpet. At daylight they took a gorge of a mountain, and laid by, for movement by day was impossible to them; the whole country was on the alert, animated to the highest by the success over Kearny, and all on the search for fugitives. At nightfall the expedition was resumed and within twelve miles of San Diego the three adventurers separated, each to take his chance of getting in, and thus multiply chances for getting relief to Kearny; for San Diego also was surrounded and invested, and Stockton had not a horse (having sent all to Kearny) to scour the country a furlong in front of his infantry pickets. The Indian got in first, Beale next, Carson third, all in a state of utter exhaustion; and Beale only getting into town by the help of the men (picket guard) who carried him, and with injuries from which he has not yet recovered. They found Stockton's relief in the act of setting out.

On the 12th day of December Lieutenant Gray, with General Kearny and what remained of his party, were reported in sight from the fort on the hill at San Diego. It is illustrative of a sailor's habitual disuse of his legs that in his report of Kearny's arrival Commodore Stockton makes pointed notice of the fact that there was no horse for him to ride, because he had sent them all with Captain Gillespie to General Kearny, but that he walked out to meet them. General Kearny and his officers were received with all the kindness and attention that their situation demanded, and given the best quarters that the town afforded. After General Kearny had been made welcome and comfortable in his quarters, Commodore Stockton offered to make him commander-in-chief over his entire force and go with him as his aide-de-camp. He said no. That the force was Stockton's, and that he would go as his aide-de-camp, or accompany him. This offer was a few days afterward formally repeated in presence of all the officers that could be spared from duty, and again declined. Commodore Stockton wished Kearny to understand that he was willing to waive all question of the right to the chief command, in the circumstances, and give all power into his hands. Subsequently, and whilst still at San Diego, General Kearny inti-

mated to Stockton that he thought he ought to be the governor of the territory, under his instructions. Surprised at this demand, the commodore reminded Kearny that he had more than once offered to place him at the head of affairs in California, but that he had as often refused. The subject was argued between them upon the point of right, General Kearny relying upon his instructions. To this Commodore Stockton replied that the language of the instructions was, "Should you conquer the country, you will establish a civil government;" but that he had conquered the country; that he had established a civil government therein, which government was in successful operation at the moment throughout the territory, except at Santa Barbara and Los Angeles, where it had been interrupted, temporarily, by the insurgents; that all that the Government had ordered to be done had already been accomplished; that nothing remained to be done; that he had informed the Government of these things; and that he had stated to the Government that he intended to appoint Major Frémont governor of the territory and Captain Gillespie the secretary. The argument ended without, apparently, disturbing the amicable relations of the two officers, but the refusal to recognize his claim to be governor rankled in Kearny's mind and guided his conduct.

About the 22d of December Captain Hensley arrived, by land, with a convoy of horses and cattle, which he succeeded in driving into San Diego through the insurgent parties that were still engaged in cutting off communication from the town with the interior. After some ineffectual attempts to land, he had disembarked at San Domingo, about two hundred and forty miles down the coast of Lower California. In landing, two boats were swamped, with the loss of seven or eight rifles, several pistols, blankets, and clothing of the men. They succeeded in getting about one hundred and forty head of horses and mules, some saddles, and three hundred head of cattle, which belonged to Señor Bandini, to whose instructions Hensley was indebted for any success at all.

These supplies met the absolute necessities of the hour, and Commodore Stockton set vigorously to work in his preparations for the march towards Los Angeles. In the disposition of the horses Captain Turner was offered his choice for the dragoons, but after looking them over he replied as follows:

SAN DIEGO, December 23, 1846.

COMMODORE: In compliance with your verbal instructions to examine and report upon the condition of the public horses turned over to me, for the use of C Company, First Dragoons, I have the honor to state that, in my opinion, not one of the horses referred to is fit for dragoon service, being too poor and weak for any such purpose; also, that the company of dragoons under my command can do much better service on foot than mounted on those horses.

I am, sir, with high respect, your obedient servant,

H. S. TURNER,

*Captain First Dragoons, Commanding Company C.*



Meanwhile Commodore Stockton continued his preparations for the march towards Los Angeles. About this time he received the following letter:

SAN DIEGO, December 22, 1846.

DEAR COMMODORE: If you can take from here a sufficient force to oppose the Californians now supposed to be near the Pueblo and waiting for the approach of Lieutenant-Colonel Frémont, I advise you to do so, and that you march with that force as early as possible in the direction of the Pueblo, by which you will either be able to form a junction with Lieutenant-Colonel Frémont or make a diversion very much in his favor.

I do not think that Lieutenant-Colonel Frémont should be left unsupported to fight a battle upon which the fate of California may, for a long time, depend, if there are troops here to act in concert with him. Your force, as it advances, might surprise the enemy at the Saint Louis Mission, and make prisoners of them.

I shall be happy, in such an expedition, to accompany you, and to give you any aid, either of head or hand, of which I may be capable.

Yours truly,

S. W. KEARNY, *Brigadier-General.*

*To Commodore Stockton,*
*Commanding United States Forces, San Diego.*

To which Commodore Stockton replied as follows:

HEADQUARTERS, SAN DIEGO, December 23, 1846.

DEAR GENERAL: Your note of yesterday was handed to me last night by Captain Turner, of the dragoons.

In reply to that note, permit me to refer you to the conversation held with you yesterday morning at your quarters. I stated to you distinctly that I intended to march upon St. Louis Rey as soon as possible with a part of the force under my command, and that I was very desirous to march on to the Pueblo to co-operate with Lieutenant-Colonel Frémont; but my movements after, to St. Louis Rey, would depend entirely upon the information that I might receive as to the movements of Colonel Frémont and the enemy. It might be necessary for me to stop the pass of San Felipe, or march back to San Diego.

Now, my dear General, if the object of your note is to advise me to do anything which would enable a large force of the enemy to get into my rear and cut off my communication with San Diego, and hazard the safety of the garrison and the ships in the harbor, you will excuse me for saying I cannot follow such advice.

My purpose still is to march for St. Louis Rey as soon as I can get the dragoons and riflemen mounted, which I hope to do in two days.

Faithfully, your obedient servant,

R. F. STOCKTON,

*Commander-in-Chief and Governor of the Territory of California.*

*To Brigadier-General S. W. Kearny,*
*United States Army.*

This letter brought the following:

SAN DIEGO, December 23, 1846.

DEAR COMMODORE: I have received yours of this date, repeating, as you say, what you stated to me yesterday, and in reply I have only to remark that, if I had so understood you, I certainly would not have written my letter to you of last evening.

You certainly could not for a moment suppose that I would advise or suggest to you any movement which might endanger the safety of the garrison and the ships in the harbor.

My letter of yesterday's date stated that "if you can take from here," etc., of which you were the judge, and of which I knew nothing.

Yours truly,

S. W. KEARNY, *Brigadier-General.*

*Commodore R. F. Stockton,*
*Commanding United States Navy, etc., San Diego.*

The troops were about starting for San Luis Rey and Commodore Stockton, as he himself described the occasion, was about mounting his horse when General Kearny came to him and inquired who was to command the troops. In reply the commodore told him that Lieutenant Rowan, first lieutenant of the *Cyane*, commanded them. General Kearny gave him then to understand that he would like to command the troops himself; and after some further conversation Commodore Stockton agreed to give him the command which he asked for. Lieutenant Rowan was sent for, and the officers near at hand assembled and informed that the commodore had appointed General Kearny to command the troops, but that he himself retained his own position as commander-in-chief. Accordingly, under this arrangement the troops moved out of the town and took up the line of march for San Luis Rey, about forty miles distant from San Diego.

Leaving them on their march, I return to myself and my ship, which I left shut out of sight in the fog, boggling her uncertain way along the rocky coast.

This happened to be one of the severe winters on the western coast. The snow fell deep in the mountains, and in the low country travelling in large bodies of men was made hard and difficult by prolonged easterly storms, during which cold rains flooded the country. This was the winter of the Donner disaster; snows had already barred the passes of the Sierra Nevada, when that party reached the pass at the head of the Salmon Trout River.

I had left a large band of horses and some artillery in the Sacramento valley. These I sent for, and I commissioned Mr. William H. Russell, who had arrived in August from Missouri with a party of emigrants, and was a man of standing in that State, to return into the valley with the purpose of enlisting men for the battalion. Originally from Kentucky, he had served in its Legislature, and was an active friend of Henry Clay. Having been United States Marshal in Missouri and several times in its Legislature, he had a large acquaintance with its people. He had served in the Florida war, and had been on a board of visitors to West Point, appointed by President Van Buren, and was in many ways well qualified to be successful among the emigrants, to most of whom he was personally known. Meantime, the resources of Monterey and the neighborhood were exhausted in procuring material for the equipment of the battalion.



Among the residents of Monterey, to whom I was indebted for much useful aid, was Mr. William Swasey. He was a young American of education and handsome presence; at this time consular secretary to Mr. Larkin, and from the knowledge his position gave him he was able to be of unusual service. He had become familiar with the personal history of many Californians and with the resources of the locality where he lived, which came to me now in direct aid; and when he was on my staff as assistant commissary of subsistence his activity and steady good temper smoothed out many a difficulty. He rendered to the country in that time the willing service which young men give to the cause which excites their enthusiasm, and to me he has always been a loyal friend.

Since the outbreak at Los Angeles the northern country had remained quiet. Don Manuel Castro, the former Prefect of Monterey, had broken his parole, and had been appointed by Flores commander-in-chief in the north, with Don Francisco Rico and Don Jesus Pico as his lieutenants. Flores' plan of campaign was to confine our naval forces strictly to the seaports which they held under the guns of their men-of-war; the Californians meanwhile to hold possession of their whole interior country, leaving the fate of California, as an integral part of the Mexican territory, to be decided by negotiation between the two governments at the close of the war. This was the mode of settlement referred to by Admiral Sir George Seymour in his instructions to the English consuls, and of which he gave notice to Commodore Sloat. The plan which Flores adopted was well considered and naturally suggested by the circumstances of the country where the business was stock-raising and all the men herdsmen and horsemen. His intention was, to make it impossible for the Americans to move from their ships, by driving all the stock into the interior; and to secure this end he adopted stringent measures, which otherwise were easily carried into effect in the midst of a friendly population, themselves most deeply concerned in having it done.

Against the naval force only, his plan would have been easily successful, but it became impossible when in addition he had against him the active force of my command, which cut his plan at the root and turned it against himself. I had at my back the constantly increasing emigrant force, and the mountains, which I knew better than himself.

At Monterey Governor Alvarado and some other officers had stood to their parole. Don Pablo Noriega, who was among the most influential and far the most able of the Northern Californians, had been unreasonably imprisoned in order to paralyze his influence. He had been educated in the United States and had too much intelligence to engage in an attempt which he knew to be fruitless of good consequences, in any possible issue of the war. Don Manuel Castro had been drawing together any force possible

under the circumstances, with the object, probably, of getting in a stroke in some unguarded spot, but beyond uncertain and contradictory rumors, I had heard nothing of him. In the night of the 16th Tom Hill and another Delaware from the Columbia River arrived at Monterey, with news from the San Juan valley. Charles Burroughs, in command of some thirty-five men, enlisted for the battalion and having in charge the fine band of horses, for which I had sent, had reached the San Juan Mission the day before, followed shortly after by another party of about equal strength. Their arrival with the horses was quickly reported to Castro, who was moving from Soledad. On the night of the 15th his scouts had found Mr. Larkin at the house of Don Joaquin Gomez, at the foot of the Gavilan peak. That day the consul had left Monterey for San Francisco, and had halted for the night at the house of Gomez, where he was captured by this party during the night and taken to Castro, who was encamped on the Monterey River. Through the capture of Larkin, Captain Burroughs learned of the neighborhood of the Californian troop, and in the morning of the 16th sent a squad of men over into the Salinas valley to ascertain its strength and position. This reconnoitring party was of ten men, two of them emigrants, George Foster and James Hayes; of the eight, six were Wallawallah Indians and the remaining two Delawares, Tom Hill and James Salmon—all from the Columbia River. I give the names as far as I know them, for their signal bravery against heavy odds deserves it.

Meanwhile, Castro was cautiously advancing, having his scouts well spread out in order to be instantly advised of any movement by Burroughs from San Juan, or by me from Monterey. In the afternoon they came upon Burroughs' scouts, some eight of whom retreated to cover in the Encinal—a low ground covered with oaks—the other two riding back to let Burroughs know of the Californians' approach. These eight brave men for a full hour held their ground in the Encinal against the whole Californian force, numbering about one hundred and thirty men. Mr. Larkin, who had been brought along and was present during this unequal encounter, writes of it that he "was several times requested, then commanded to go among the oaks and bring out his countrymen, and offer them their lives on giving up their rifles and persons. He at last offered to go and call them out, on condition that they should return to San Juan, or go to Monterey with their arms; this being refused, he told the commanding officer to go himself." At this, an officer crept on his hands and knees in the grass to get a fair view, but instead received a ball in his body and was carried off on a horse by a companion. At the end of an hour Burroughs, with his available force of about fifty men, came in sight and with his appearance relieved the brave men who were beleaguered in the Encinal. Burroughs' men were new to discipline and not properly subordinate, so



that he lost the benefit of their rifles and gave the advantage to the Californians by a disorderly charge.

My gray horse, Sacramento, was with the band I had sent back for, and Captain Burroughs was mounted on him when the charge was made, and was shot through the body at the outset, but the horse wheeled from an attempt to seize him and carried his rider back among his own men. The fight lasted less than half an hour, the Californians dropping out of it in small parties, until the Americans only remained on the field. They had lost Captain Burroughs, and two others killed, and several wounded. Captain Foster was killed in the Encinal. The Californians lost three killed and seven wounded. Their small loss shows how heedlessly the action was fought on our side.

In the morning after Hill's arrival I marched out of Monterey across the Salinas plain to San Juan, where I made my camp, to wait for the reinforcements from the valley and get otherwise ready for the march to Los Angeles. I scoured the country in search of any remaining parties of Castro's force, but they had all taken flight and settled down again on ranchos around about, or in the mountains.

I have dwelt a little on this action in the Salinas plain, partly because it is due to the men who fought it and to those who fell, and partly to show what good fighting material the emigrants made. The men who took to the cover of the oaks in the Encinal were mountaineers and woodsmen. Fearless, and accustomed to rely on their good rifles, knowing how to fight and to take advantage of ground, they stood off, for more than an hour, the whole Californian force of one hundred and thirty men.

I defer, for the present, giving the roll of my battalion, but I pause to say that only in the emergencies which call out the best men could any four hundred be collected together among whom would be found an equal number of good, self-respecting men as were in the ranks and among the officers of the companies and of the staff of this corps.

Many of the men in my command were splendid fighters, and, handling them as I knew how to fight them and giving them the advantage of ground as I had learned how to do it, the reader can judge how much reason there was in Kearny's fear that I too would be defeated, or how much I needed a sailor's advice how to manage my woodsmen. There was no point on the line which I chose for my march from San Juan to San Fernando—no camp by night—where I could have been taken at disadvantage. The advantage of ground was always on my side. I had always the timber, or the brush, or the broken ground of the hills; and in an encounter the defeat of the Californians was easily certain, and at great loss to them. A good commander spares his men. He fights to win, and to do this his head is the best weapon at his command. The plan of Flores was