

already been killed, and a number of commanders and distinguished officers wounded, among whom were General Lombardini, Lieutenant-Colonels Brito, Galoso, and others. Among the slain were Lieutenant-Colonels Asonos, Berra, and other meritorious officers, whose loss the country will ever lament. The enemy maintained his ground with the utmost obstinacy, inso-much that some of our troops faltered in their attacks, and many of the raw recruits dispersed. This, however, ought to exalt the merit of those whose intrepidity was never paralyzed, and may also be cited to show how hotly contested was the action.

"Things were in this situation when I concluded to make the final effort. With this view I ordered that battery of twenty-four pounders should be mounted; that the column of attack then posted on our left flank, where it had no object of operation, should be transferred to our right, and there be joined by the remains of the Eleventh regiment, the battalion of Leon, and the reserves, all under the command of Brevet-General Don Francisco Perez. I executed this in person, and afterwards sent for General Mora y Villamil, and made him acquainted with my final disposition. I had already directed Generals Perez and Pacheco, each with his command, to be prepared for an extreme struggle, and had ordered the battery of eight-pounders to advance and take the enemy's line in flank. The charge was made with daring valor, and was resisted with animated vigor, with a fire so heavy and rapid as to cause admiration; but the Americans could not sustain themselves—they were driven back and overcome, with the loss of three pieces of cannon and as many stands of colors. I sent two of the latter to the government with my last dispatch; the other, which I

then omitted to notice, will be presented to the honorable congress of the state of San Luis Potosi, as a testimonial of the army's gratitude for the patriotic services they had rendered, and the generous sacrifices they had made for its benefit. We moreover captured a travelling forge, and some smaller articles, which I will not enumerate. Our cavalry, which so bravely executed the order to charge, reached the enemy's rearmost positions; but, owing to the nature of the ground and the fatigue of the men and horses, I did not think it prudent to attempt to dislodge them from those. The battle closed at six in the evening, our troops being then formed on the ground which the Americans had occupied. Our last effort would have been decisive, if General Minon had done his part by attacking the enemy in the rear; but he omitted to do it, and I am under the painful necessity of subjecting his conduct to a court-martial, that he may explain it. An action thus contested necessarily involved considerable loss. Ours in killed and wounded amounted to more than fifteen hundred men, and that of the enemy was much greater, for we had time to take a view of the great number of their dead.

"The plans of these two actions, and of the route from Agua Nueva to Saltillo, and the reports of the generals of division and brigade, which I send with this to your excellency, will give the supreme government an idea of such details as I have not dwelt on without making this report more diffuse; but this will still serve to attest the bravery of our troops, and the glory acquired by the nation during these days of action.

"In the order of the day, I expressed, as in duty bound, my satisfaction with the conduct of the officers,

commanders of corps, and generals, and gave them thanks for it in the name of the republic. I could wish to announce in this report the names of many commanding officers, that their memory may be engraved on the gratitude of the nation, not only for their resolute and honorable deportment in both actions, but for the constancy with which they have overcome so many privations, sufferings and fatigues, and given therein an example both of civic and military worth. Anxious to do this justice, I adopt, as my own, the authorship of those eulogies which the generals of brigade and division have bestowed on their subordinates. I would moreover, place in view of the government, the merit manifested by the director-general of engineers, Don Ignacio Mora y Villamil, who fulfilled, to my entire satisfaction, all the duties I assigned to him, for which

consider him worthy of the highest praise, and of such remuneration as the supreme government may be pleased to award to his distinguished services. General Ampudia, to whom, from the favorable opinion which I had of him, I intrusted the command of the four light battalions, acquitted himself with gallantry. General Lombardini, who commanded the First division of infantry, conducted himself with valor, and was wounded. General Pacheco, commanding the Second division of infantry, came up to my orders and his duties, and fought to my satisfaction. General Juvera comported himself honorably, and had his horse killed under him. Brevet General Torrejon received a contusion, and General Guzman displayed the gallantry for which he was already distinguished, and was wounded. Brevet-General Micheltorena, as head of the staff, duly performed all that belonged to his station; and I also confided to his special charge the battery of

eight-pounders, which was the most in advance. General Perez acted as might be expected from his accustomed gallantry, and for this I intrusted to his command the troops I have before mentioned, with which he contributed to disorder the line of the enemy at five in the evening. I would also commend General Ortega, who commanded the Third division of foot, and performed his duties to my satisfaction, as also Brevet-General Uruga, and Generals Parrodi, Portilla, Vasquez, Jau-regui, Terres, and Sanchez.

"It is entirely due to the commanding general of artillery, Don Antonio Corona, that I should commend him for carrying out my dispositions, as might be expected from him, and for laboring assiduously at San Luis, in the heaviest duties of his branch of service; and it is a pleasing duty for me to laud the merit acquired by Colonel Banencli, and Colonel Brito, who was wounded; Colonel Aldrede, of the hussars, who to my satisfaction, evinced his usual bravery; Colonel S. Blanco, who commanded a column of attack on the left, and acted well, and Colonel M. Blanco—both of the last being of the engineers—as also Colonel Obando, of the flying artillery, and Colonel Garay.

"The report of the killed and wounded, which I also send, will show what has been our loss. I should be lacking in justice, and not express my own feelings were I not most earnestly to request that attention be paid, as is by law provided, to the cases of the widows, orphans, and such of the wounded as may be permanently disabled.

"The formidable position which the enemy occupied, was all that saved him; the victory would otherwise have been decisive, notwithstanding his obstinate resistance. Still this triumph will have favorable results to

the national cause, as it will show to every one what can be accomplished when all hearts are united, and with one aim.

"The army has done more than could be expected under the laws of nature. It had just been formed, and as yet had not acquired discipline or military habits; yet in marching to the combat, it overcame difficulties which might have subdued the stoutest heart. After a march of twenty leagues, sixteen of them without water, and without other food than a single ration, which was dealt out at Encarnacion, I endured the fatigue of combat for two days, and finally triumphed. With all this its physical powers were exhausted. My knowledge of this, and the duty I felt in attending to such a number of wounded, constrained me, after remaining a few hours on the field of battle, to fall back upon Agua Nueva, for the relief and refreshment of the troops.

"From the impression we had made on the enemy, he did not appear before us for three days. The bearer of a flag of truce, however, arrived with a proposition from General Taylor for an exchange of prisoners, and for our sending for the wounded who had remained on the field. He also expressed to me the desire which the Americans felt for the re-establishment of peace. I replied, in order that he might say the same to his general, that we sustained the most sacred of causes—the defence of our territory, and the preservation of our nationality and rights; that we were not the aggressors, and that our government had never offended that of the United States. I observed that we could say nothing of peace while the Americans were on this side of the Bravo, or occupied any part of the Mexican territory, or blockaded our ports; and that we were

resolved to perish or vindicate our rights; that fortune might not be always favorable to the enemy, and their experience of the 22nd and 23rd should convince them that it could change; I added, that the Americans waged against us a war of vandalism, whose excesses outraged those sentiments of humanity which one civilized nation ought to evince towards another; and that if he would go outside of the apartment he would still see smoking, which was the fact, the dwellings of Agua Nueva, recently a flourishing, though a small settlement; that the same vestiges of desolation marked the route of his retreat; and that if he would go a little further on, to Catana, he would hear the moans of the widows and orphans of innocent victims who had been sacrificed without necessity.

"With respect to the wounded, whom I was invited to send for, I replied that there could be none save those who had been too much hurt to rise from the field, or those most in the advance, who had remained in the ravines; and that as I had not means for their conveyance, the enemy might take them to Saltillo, under the protection of the laws of nations. As for the prisoners which he offered to exchange, I told him I did not know who they could be, unless it were some of our dispersed troops, or some who, from the fatigue of the two previous days, had remained asleep when we moved. In answer to the courtesy the enemy's general had shown with respect to our wounded, I consented, in the name of the nation, to release all the prisoners we had—those taken both in the battle and at Encarnacion. At the same time I allowed the bearer of the flag, who was a superior officer, of prepossessing appearance and manners, to take the bandage from his eyes, and informed him that it was for him personally

that the honor of this concession was meant. I did it also that he might see our camp and our troops.

"As I have said in the preceding paragraph, we remained at the hacienda three days; but the only supply we could obtain was ninety beeves, and these were consumed on the 25th. The horses were also without forage, and notwithstanding all the efforts or provisions that I could make, many of the wounded had been but once attended to, and some not at all. From the rigor of the climate, the badness and scantiness of the sustenance, the entire want of bread, and the bad quality of the water used in our former bivouacs, a bowel complaint had broken out in the army, and rendered ineffective at least one-half of it. I knew that a retrograde movement to our former positions had become inevitable; but though everything around me proclaimed this necessity, my feelings revolted against it, solely because I foresaw that from ignorance, malice, or presumption, the countermarch would be condemned, and that those who did not witness our situation would imagine the possibility of the army's continuing its operations.

"Six days before, when the troops had not suffered so much, nor fought for two successive days, nor been embarrassed with sick and wounded, but were still sound in morale and in health, I had not deemed it prudent to augment the labors and difficulties of the army by moving to the right or to the left; how then would it have been possible to go on operating after all that subsequently occurred? But let detractors say what they will, the army as well as myself will always answer by an appeal to our conduct, our wishes, and the notorious impossibility of carrying them out. Notwithstanding my conviction, I wished to hear the opinion of the gen-

erals and some of the commanders of corps, and to ascertain if they could point out any resource which had not occurred to me; without disclosing my own ideas on the subject I listened to theirs, and they all unanimously, and each one, by his opinion separately expressed, showed and demonstrated in various ways, that however good their will to remain, the countermarch of the army had become indispensable, but that this necessity was not forced upon us by the enemy. It was not till I had heard their opinions that I announced my own accordant resolution, and the proceedings of the council being drawn up, I had the honor of remitting them to your excellency on the 25th.

"On the 26th, after I had ordered General Minon to follow the movement, the army commenced its retreat with the view of occupying the first peopled localities, where resources might be obtained, such as Vanegas Catorce, El Cadral and Matehuala, as also Tula; but I doubt if in those places proper attention can be given to the sick and wounded—or the losses we have sustained in those laborious movements be remedied.

"The nation, for which a triumph has been gained at the cost of so many sufferings, will learn that, if we were able to conquer in the midst of so many embarrassments, there will be no doubt as to our final success in the struggle we sustain, if every spirit but rallies to the one sacred object of common defence. A mere determined number of men will not, as many imagine, suffice for the prosecution of war: it is indispensable that they be armed, equipped, disciplined, and habituated, and that a systematized support for such an organized force be provided. We must bear in mind that we have to combat in a region deficient of all resources, and that everything for subsistence has to be

carried along with the soldiery: the good will of a few will not suffice, but the co-operation of all is needed; and if we do not cast aside selfish interests, and petty passions, we can expect nothing but disaster. The army, and myself who have led it, have the satisfaction of knowing that we have demonstrated this truth."

The following heart-stirring description of the battle of Buena Vista will be read with absorbing interest by every American. Captain Pike is a poet of no mean reputation, and he proved by his daring and chivalrous conduct on the bloody field he so well describes, that if his commanding general can "*write* as well as *fight*," he can *fight* as well as *write*. Captain Pike commanded a company of Arkansas cavalry in the engagement.

BUENA VISTA

From the Rio Grande's waters, to the icy lakes of Maine,
Let all exult for we have met the enemy again:
Beneath their stern old mountains we have met them in their pride,
And rolled from Buena Vista back the battle's bloody tide:
Where the enemy came surging, like the Mississippi's flood;
And the reaper, Death, was busy with his sickle red with blood.

Santa Anna boasted loudly, that before two hours were past,
His lancers through Saltillo should pursue us thick and fast:
On came his solid infantry, line marching after line;
Lo! their great standards in the sun like sheets of silver shine!
With thousands upon thousands, yea, with more than four to one,
A forest of bright bayonets gleamed fiercely in the sun!

Lo! Guanajuato's regiment!—Lo! Puebla's boasted corps!—
And Guadalajara's chosen troops!—all veterans tried before;
And galloping upon the right, four thousand lances gleam,
Where, waving in the morning light, their blood-red pennons stream:
And there, his stern artillery climbs up the broad plateau—
To-day he means to strike at us an overwhelming blow.

Now hold on strongly to the heights!—for lo! the mighty tide
Comes thundering like an avalanche, deep, terrible, and wide;
Now, Illinois! stand ready!—Now, Kentucky, to their aid!
For a portion of our line, alas! is broken and dismayed;
A regiment of fugitives is fleeing from the field,
And the day is lost if Illinois and brave Kentucky yield.

One of O'Brien's guns is gone!—on, on their masses drift,
And their infantry and lancers now are passing round our left—
Our troops are driven from the hills, and flee in wild dismay,
And round us gathers, thick and dark, the Mexican array.
Santa Anna thinks the day is gained;—and riding yet more near,
Minon's dark cloud of lancers sternly menaces our rear.

Now Lincoln, gallant gentleman! lies dead upon the field,
Who strove to stay those men that in the storm of bullets reeled.
Now, Washington! fire fast and true!—Fire, Sherman! fast and far!
Lo! Bragg comes thundering to the front, to breast the adverse war!
Santa Anna thinks the day is gained—on, on his masses crowd,
And the roar of battle rises up more terrible and loud.

Not yet!—our brave old general comes to regain the day.
Kentucky, to the rescue!—Mississippi, to the fray!
Now charge, brave Illinoisans! Gallant Davis drives the foe,
And back before his rifles the red waves of lancers flow;
Upon them yet once more my braves! The avalanche is stayed;
Back rolls the Mexique multitude, all broken and dismayed.

Ho! May!—to Buena Vista! for the enemy are near,
And we have none there who can stop their vehement career:
Still swelling, downward comes the tide; Porter and Yell are slain!
Marshall before him drives a part; but still they charge in vain;—
And now, in wild confusion mixed, pursuers and pursued,
On to Saltillo wildly drifts a frantic multitude.

Upon them with your squadrons, May!—Out leaps the flashing steel
Before his serried column, how the frightened lancers reel!
They flee amain.—Now to the left, to stay their triumph there,
Or else the day is surely lost in horror and despair:
For their hosts are pouring swiftly on, like a river in the spring—
Our flank is turned, and on our left their cannon thundering.

Now, brave artillery! Bold dragoons!—Steady my men, and calm!
Through rain, cold, hail, and thunder;—now nerve the gallant arm!

What though their shot falls round us here, still thicker than the hail!
We'll stand against them, as the rock stands firm against the gale.
Lo!—their battery is silenced now: our iron hail still showers:
They falter, halt, retreat!—Hurra! the glorious day is ours!

In front, too, has the fight gone well, where upon gallant Lane,
And on stout Mississippi, the bold lancers charged in vain.
Ah! brave Third Indiana! ye have nobly wiped away
The reproach that, through another corps, befell your state to-day:
Like corn before the tempest crushed, before your storm of fire,
Santa Anna's boasted chivalry a shattered wreck retire.

Now charge again, Santa Anna! or the day is surely lost;
For back, like broken waves, along our left your hordes are tossed.
Still louder roar two batteries—his strong reserve moves on;—
More work is there before you, men, ere the good fight is won;
Now for your wives and children stand! steady, my braves once more
Now for your lives, your honor, fight! as you never fought before

Ho! Hardin breasts it bravely!—McKee and Bissell there,
Stand firm before the storm of balls that fills the astonished air
The lancers are upon them, too!—the foe swarms ten to one—
Hardin is slain—McKee and Clay the last time see the sun;
And many another gallant heart, in that last desperate fray,
Grew cold, its last thoughts turning to its loved ones far away.

Still sullenly the cannon roared—but died away at last;
And o'er the dead and dying came the evening shadows fast,
And then above the mountains rose the cold moon's silver shield,
And patiently and pityingly looked down upon the field;—
And careless of his wounded, and neglectful of his dead,
Despairingly and sullen, in the night Santa Anna fled.

And thus, on Buena Vista's heights, a long day's work was done
And thus our brave old general another battle won;
And still our glorious banner waves unstained by flight or shame,
And the Mexicans among their hills still tremble at our name.
So honor unto those that stood! Disgrace to those that fled!
And everlasting honor to the brave and gallant dead!

The annexed description of the same battle, is at
tributed, whether truly or not it is difficult to say, to
Don Jose Ho Ace de Saltillo, a Mexican of some celeb

riety. It may be proper to state that the poet calls his
own country Aztec, its ancient name, while he gives to
the Americans the name of Alleghan or Alleghanian.
The "sun" of Aztec and the "stars" of Alleghan are
the banners of the respective combatants. The "pa-
triot chief" is Santa Anna, the President of the Mexi-
can Republic, and commander of the Mexican troops:

We saw their watch-fires through the night,
Light up the far horizon's verge;
We heard at dawn the gathering fight,
Swell like the distant ocean surge—
The thunder-tramp of mounted hordes
From distance sweeps a boding sound,
As Aztec's twenty thousand swords
And clanking chargers shake the ground.

A gun!—now all is hushed again—
How strange that lull before the storm!
That fearful silence o'er the plain—
Halt they their battle-line to form?
It booms again—again—again—
And through its thick and thunderous shock
The war-scream seems to pierce the brain,
As charging squadrons interlock.
Columbia's sons—of different race—
Proud Aztec and brave Alleghan,
Are grappled there in death-embrace,
To rend each other, man to man!

The storm-clouds lift, and through the haze,
Dissolving in the noontide light,
I see the sun of Aztec blaze
Upon her banner, broad and bright!
And on—still on, her ensigns wave,
Flinging abroad each glorious fold:
While drooping round each sullen stave
Cling Alleghan's but half unrolled.

But stay! that shout has stirred the air
I see the stripes—I see the stars—

O God ! who leads the phalanx there,
 Beneath those fearful meteor bars ?
 "OLD ZACK"—"OLD ZACK"—the war-ry rattles,
 Amid those men of iron tread,
 As rung "Old Fritz," in Europe's battles,
 When thus his host great Frederick led !

And where, O where is Aztec ?—where,
 As now the rush of Alleghan
 Resistless tramples to despair
 The ranks of our victorious van ?
 Still charging onward, ever—ever,
 They shatter now our central might,
 Where half our bravest lances shiver,
 Still struggling to maintain the fight

Still struggling, from the carnage dire
 To snatch our patriot chief away—
 Who, crushed by famine, steel and fire,
 Yet claims as his the desperate day ;
 That day whose sinking light is shed
 O'er Buena Vista's field, to tell
 Where round the sleeping and the dead,
 Stalks conquering TAYLOR'S sentinels.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Dark Features of War.—General Taylor's Order.—Letter to Mr Clay and Governor Lincoln.—His private Letter to E. G. W. Butler.—His Reference to the Presidency.—Particulars of the Battle of Buena Vista.—Notice of Clay, Hardin, McKee and Yell.—Anecdotes of General Taylor.—Incidents of the Battle.—Character and Personal Appearance of General Taylor.

ALTHOUGH the triumph of our arms over an enemy four times more numerous than the forces under Taylor, was received with universal enthusiasm by all parties and classes throughout the country, yet it was purchased at a sacrifice of life that filled the land with mourning, and brought desolation and despair to the homes and hearts of hundreds and thousands of wives, and parents, and children, and brothers, and sisters. Many of the noblest spirits of the nation fell a sacrifice on that blood-stained field, and the reflection that so much misery and heart-rending distress was spread over the land with the news that another glorious victory had crowned our arms, moderated the joy, and subdued the feelings which otherwise would have filled every breast. None felt more keenly this dreadful sacrifice to the country than the heroic Taylor himself. Everything that a kind and humane heart could suggest to soothe the afflictions of those whose friends had fallen in the battle, was done. His order to the army upon the result of this victory, and his letter to Mr. Clay,