

dued. I have never seen the lasso thrown more gracefully or to so good a purpose.

We reached Monterey on the 4th of January, in excellent health, after our forced marches; but sadly deficient in clothing and camp equipage.

CHAPTER IX.

MONTEREY garrisoned by our regiment.—The battalion of San Patricio.—How the monks of San Francisco diddled us.—A few words about volunteer troops.—Expedition against Vera Cruz.—Arrival of General Scott in Mexico.—His letter to General Taylor.—Its bearer, Lieutenant Richey, killed.—The divisions of Worth, Twiggs and Patterson sent back to the coast.—General Taylor returns to Monterey.—His letter to General Scott.—Scouting parties captured by the enemy.—Taylor joins Wool at Saltillo.—Changes his head-quarters to Agua Nueva.—Reasons for taking that position.—Advance of Santa Anna.—Taylor falls back to Buena Vista.—Sights and sounds at Monterey.—General Urrea moves from Tula upon our line.—He captures Lieutenant Barbour's train.—Besieges Lieutenant Colonel Irvin at Marin.—Attacks Colonel Morgan's battalion.—Glorious news from Buena Vista.

THE months of January and February passed rapidly away. We were comfortably quartered in town, and our old friends of the 1st Kentucky regiment held the citadel. The weather was temperate and serene, and the gardens and environs of the city rejoiced in the gay flowers and blossoms of spring. The citizens, beginning to appreciate the mild and respectful treatment they experienced, evinced a more friendly disposition; and the soldiers preserved a commendable deportment, although their position was not remarkably favorable to discipline. It had been supposed by many, that the volunteers were unfit for garrison duty; and that a life of comparative ease in a populous city would foster and strengthen the spirit of lawlessness and insubordination some of them had displayed. Hence the regular troops had generally occupied the towns, while the volunteers were com-

pelled to "rough it" in the chaparral. By this procedure, of which no experienced volunteer officer will ever complain, the enemy gained rather more than was expected, namely, the notorious battalion of *San Patricio*, made up of deserters from our regular army, who availed themselves of opportunities presented while in garrison, to abandon the service of "the model republic." More than fifty deserted at Monterey, during the period it was occupied by the regulars. These the enemy joyfully received and speedily enrolled in their ranks, where they served with a courage and fidelity they had never exhibited in ours. Doubtless, the humblest soldier of the battalion of Saint Patrick, was honored with much consideration by the Mexicans; and we may imagine that those distinctions were not lavished in vain upon the warm and enthusiastic nature of the Hibernian.

So far as I am informed not a single volunteer, either among the native or adopted citizens, went over to the enemy. There were some who, volunteering in haste and repenting at leisure, deserted their flag before leaving the United States and returned to their "anxious mammas." But was there one so faithless to his country, as to take up arms in the cause of faithless Mexico? * Nearly a third of our regiment were Catholics; and among them were seventy or eighty gallant Irishmen, some of whom, I have reason to know, were proof against the fascinating lures of an insidious foe. When stationed in Monterey, they more than once

* Since writing the above, I have been reminded that a lieutenant of a certain volunteer corps resigned with a view of joining the enemy. He left Monterey with the words of Cataline upon his lips,—“I held some slack allegiance till this hour, but now my sword's my own.”

informed their officers of the presence of Mexican emissaries and were unusually active in their detection. According to a preconcerted arrangement, a noted partisan was arrested by the very men to whom he had made liberal and flattering offers of money and rank. They were all Irishmen and never did ferrets pursue a rat more indefatigably, than did they their pretended friend. He was a wily rascal and scenting his danger, had, after many windings and turnings ensconced himself in a bake-oven, in one of the back yards of the city, whence he was finally dragged by the heels and lodged in the guard-house.

There can be no doubt but that the Mexican ecclesiastics,—monopolizing the wealth and intelligence of the country, fattening on the traffic in "indulgences," and many of them "wanton, more than well beseems men of their profession and degree,"—knowing that even the presence of an American army would be unfavorable to their interests, were our most bitter enemies. There are not wanting among them, especially in the obscure villages, truly pious priests whose unblemished lives aptly illustrate their holy teachings. But the greatest number are pampered and frantic friars,

"Such as do build their faith upon
The holy text of pike and gun."

They unblushingly announced to their people, that our object was to make war upon their religion; and spared no efforts to weaken our ranks or strengthen their own. They even availed themselves of the protection we always extended to their churches and other religious houses, to convert them into secret magazines for arming our enemies. A lieutenant

of our regiment, strolling on a pleasant morning in February, under the walls of the Franciscan convent in Monterey, was astonished at observing some gunpowder sprinkled upon one of the window-sills next the river-bank. The guard was immediately called and the building searched,—but too late. A few scattered cartridges alone were found. But the number of empty boxes which remained, satisfied us that a considerable quantity of arms and ammunition had been recently removed; perhaps to equip the guerrillas then assembling in the vicinity. The heavy tread of the guard in the corridors of the monastery, startled from their cells, some drowsy-looking individuals in flowing robes and skull-caps of silk; whose thoughts however, just then very conveniently, happened to be so intent upon the bliss or brimstone of another world, as to prevent them from accounting for the mysterious presence of the sublunary *saltpeter*.

In consequence of the limited number of the garrison, and the large details often required for escorts, and daily for guard, fatigue and patrol duty, the men were kept sufficiently busy. Yet would our position at Monterey have been more pleasant, had it not been for the unnecessary labors and petty annoyances imposed upon the troops by certain individuals in authority, who did not know how to wear very becomingly the greatness thrust upon them. Fortunately they were not in supreme command, and could do no great harm to the cause of their country. But the soldiers and subaltern-officers, whom they vexed and wearied by their thoughtless and ill-timed orders, were often induced thereby, to recall the more prudent conduct and bearing of the wise

and modest Hamer. Had the conceited and ambitious plotters at Washington, succeeded at that time in their ungenerous and shameful efforts to foist a political lieutenant-general upon the army, the spirit of discontent, already rife in consequence of the conduct of certain favorites of the President, would have been so inflamed as to threaten the efficiency, if not the very organization and existence of some divisions in the field. They err greatly, who suppose that the volunteers were anxious to hail any civilian as their general-in-chief. They valued the experience of their veteran leaders too highly to sigh for the authority of new men; and least of all, for that of those in whose selection they could have no voice. Political topics were rarely discussed in the army;—certainly I never heard the terms Whig and Democrat uttered by the rank and file; and notwithstanding recent political events, I do not doubt but that, if our government was now to call out a hundred thousand volunteers for a war with any European nation, at least ninety-nine thousand of them would prefer Winfield Scott as their leader to any living man.

When men stake their lives and reputations in war, they want a general of acknowledged military genius and capacity,—one who combines experience with patriotism, prudence with resolution, and wisdom with valor. They prefer a military to a political strategist, and look for proof of ability on hard-fought battle-fields rather than in long-winded Congressional debates. But while it will readily be admitted that the chief even of a volunteer army, should be a man trained to the profession of arms; it is questionable whether West Point officers would make the most successful regi-

mental or company commanders of citizen troops. This however would depend upon the amount of good sense, tact, and temper they might happen to possess. With the benefit of their experience and example, there can be no doubt but that our volunteers would soon be found superior to the best drilled automaton armies of Europe. *That* benefit may be obtained to some extent, by a union of our regular and citizen troops in the same armies, and causing them to march, encamp, and fight together. The American volunteer is a thinking, feeling, and often a capricious being. He is not and never intends to become a mere moving and musket-holding *machine*; and something more than the Tactics and Army Regulations is required for his instruction and government. His patriotism, pride, ambition, and enthusiasm, may be so controlled and directed, as to be rendered auxiliary to his arms. These, united with his native courage and intelligence and a proper degree of discipline, make him the most formidable soldier in the world.

The position of an officer of volunteers, elected from the ranks, as the majority of us were, is one of peculiar delicacy. While he should not allow himself to forget that he owes his rank and power to the kindness of those he commands, he must yet know how to maintain discipline and exact obedience. He should not be eager to assert his authority on light occasions; but be as ready to encourage as to find fault, and as mindful of the comforts as of the delinquencies of his men. He should know how to temper severity with indulgence, and mingle affability with authority, so as to retain a personal as well as an official influence over subalterns; and

thus govern as much through the affections as the fears. He should not attempt to enforce all the minutiae of military etiquette, but insist upon a complete observance of all the essentials of discipline. Above all things, he should know how to govern himself; and though mild and forbearing, yet be prompt and resolute, when occasion demands. He must set an example of submission, vigilance, and zeal, in his own person, if he would be respected and cheerfully obeyed. Volunteers are ever ready to regulate and justify their conduct by that of their officers; among them "a choleric word" is as "flat blasphemy" in the captain as in the soldier. Most men like a tranquil and even-minded officer; stern and severe if necessary, but firm and unchanging. Indeed, a respectable dog's life, would be preferable to that of a soldier who is continually subjected to the caprices of an insolent, ignorant and irascible officer, puffed up with a power he knows not how to exercise. Volunteers in taking the field, are apt to suppose that *courage* is the only essential quality to be desired in their leaders. Let them beware how they place themselves under the command of brainless bullies, whose vanity, arrogance, and overweening conceit, may be as fatal to their success and welfare as cowardice itself.

While we garrisoned Monterey, certain important military events transpired, which demand a passing notice in this rambling narrative. Our government at length perceived, from the hostile tone and attitude of Santa Anna and the Mexican Congress, that it would be necessary to carry the war to the gates of the enemy's capital ere a peace could be obtained: "*Jamais on ne vaincra les Romains que dans*

Rome!" That grand achievement was reserved for the commanding genius of Scott. It was accordingly determined to transfer the war from the northern to the eastern part of Mexico, and make Vera Cruz the *point d'appui* for future operations, to be directed by the masterly mind of the general-in-chief of the American army. As the request of that officer to be allowed to put his sword into the harvest of Mexican laurels, had previously been peremptorily refused by the President, some explanation of his employment at this period, may perhaps be found in the difficulty that had recently sprung up between General Taylor and the Secretary of War, and which resulted in a sharp controversy, now included in the documentary history of the times.

General Scott, hastening to execute the orders of the government, arrived at Brazos San Iago in the latter part of December. Being anxious to invest the city of Vera Cruz before the season of the deadly *vomito* should again occur; and finding that the ten additional regiments of regulars and new volunteer levies, which Congress had lately called into service, would not reach the scene of action in time to enable him to accomplish that object, he determined to supply himself with troops from the northern line. He accordingly wrote to General Taylor, revealing his plan of operations and requesting him to send at once to the coast, the regulars (Worth's and Twiggs' divisions) and enough volunteer troops to swell the force to 10,000. "With these forces," he concludes, "and adding three or five regiments of new volunteers, Providence may defeat me, but I do not believe the Mexicans can." Before this dispatch arrived at Monterey,

General Taylor had marched, as previously stated, to Victoria. It was immediately sent after that general; but its bearer, Lieutenant Richey of the 5th Infantry, a gallant and meritorious young officer, was unfortunately killed in discharging the hazardous duty, and the letter found its way to the hands of Santa Anna. General Scott however, had taken the precaution to communicate his wishes to General Butler also: and that officer, who, since the great *stampede* of December had remained in command at Saltillo, lost no time in the absence of Taylor, in putting Worth's division in motion for the rear. The regulars marched through Monterey about the middle of January *en route* for the Brazos, much to the satisfaction of the Mexican citizens, some of whom but ill concealed the pleasure caused by their departure. General Taylor, soon after his arrival at Victoria, having been advised of the orders of the general-in-chief, sent forward to Tampico the regulars of Twiggs and the volunteer brigades of Quitman and Pillow. Thus the entire force intended for the descent upon Vera Cruz was enabled to reach the general rendezvous behind the island of Lobos, before the end of February. General Taylor now, for the want of troops, was compelled to abandon his design of occupying the line of the Sierra Madre. He was not able to leave a garrison at that important point, Victoria; of which circumstance the Mexican corps of observation at the pass of Tula soon availed itself.*

* In a Mexican field-report, (for February) of Santa Anna's forces, the strength of this division of observation is given as follows,—

Infantry—of General Vasquez;	11 chiefs,	117 officers,	and 1655 privates.
Cavalry—of General Urrea;	8 do.	95 do.	2121 do.
Total of Division	19 do.	212 do.	3776 do.

On the 24th of January, General Taylor returned to Monterey, bringing with him the light artillery companies of Captains Bragg and Sherman, which he had fortunately reserved. Washington's and Webster's batteries had also been retained with General Wool's brigade at Saltillo. Without these, Buena Vista would not occupy the proud eminence it now does, in the column of American victories. Taylor encamped as usual in the grove of San Domingo, with a small quarter-guard. His presence again restored confidence; and all the uncomfortable apprehensions aroused by the departure of so large a portion of the army from our line, disappeared at his coming. Stripped of his veteran infantry, and left with a little band of volunteers to struggle with the twenty thousand Mexican troops, soon to be precipitated upon him; he was yet as calm and undismayed as if threatened only by a summer shower. He says in a letter to Major General Scott, written about this time,—“I feel that I have lost the confidence of the government, or it would not have suffered me to remain up to this time ignorant of its intentions, when so vitally affecting the interests committed to my charge. But however much I may feel, personally, mortified and outraged at the course pursued, unprecedented at least in our own history, I will carry out in good faith, while I remain in Mexico, the views of the government, though I may be sacrificed in the effort.”

There is no period in the history of General Taylor more interesting than this, replete, as his whole career is, with honorable deeds, and instructive examples of patriotic and self-sacrificing magnanimity. View him in his tent at San

Domingo, patiently bearing the burden of neglect and injustice, calmly submitting to the behests of his *official* superiors; and with a placid courage, and unshaken loyalty, preparing to take his place, “in the forefront of the hottest battle,”—and his character assumes a grandeur, which all his victories alone could not bestow. It was expected that he would now abandon his advanced post, Saltillo, and concentrate his few and scattered regiments within the strong walls of Monterey. But to have done so would neither have contributed to the honor of his arms or the interests of his country. A retreat generally proclaims weakness or timidity; and does not fail to encourage the enemy, while it disheartens the troops who are compelled to give ground.* General Taylor wisely decided to meet Santa Anna on the edge of the desert that stretches between San Luis de Potosi and the Angostura; and fight his exhausted troops before they could reach the granaries of Saltillo. Had the Mexicans been permitted to pass the mountains, the fruits of our victory at Monterey would have been lost. With their large cavalry force, and by the extraordinary rapidity of their infantry marches, they would have swept all the feeble posts on our line back to the Brazos.

General Taylor remained but a week at Monterey, after his return from Victoria, namely, from the 24th to the 31st of January. On the day last named, he changed his head-

* “At the commencement of a campaign, *to advance or not to advance*, is a matter for grave consideration; but when once the offensive has been assumed, it must be sustained to the last extremity. However skillful the maneuvers in a retreat, it will always weaken the *morale* of an army, because in losing the chances of success, these last are transferred to the enemy.”—*Napoleon's “Maxims of War.”*

quarters to Saltillo, in consequence of the startling intelligence received from General Wool, that two reconnoitering parties of the Kentucky and Arkansas cavalry under Majors Gaines and Borland, had been captured by the enemy. Soon afterward, on the 5th of February, in order to restore confidence among the troops, which had been a little shaken by the disasters just mentioned, he established his camp at Agua Nueva, a position eighteen miles in front of Saltillo. From that camp he wrote as follows to the government: "Although advised by Major General Scott to evacuate Saltillo, I am confirmed in my purpose of holding not only that point, but this position in its front. Not to speak of the pernicious moral effect upon volunteer troops of falling back from points which we have gained, there are powerful military reasons for occupying this extremity of the pass rather than the other. The scarcity of water and supplies for a long distance in front, compels the enemy either to risk an engagement in the field, or to hold himself aloof from us; while, if we fell back upon Monterey, he could establish himself strong at Saltillo, and be in position to annoy more effectually our flanks and our communications." The American army assembled at Agua Nueva consisted of the 1st and 2d regiments of Illinois, the 1st Mississippi, the 2d Kentucky, the 2d and 3d Indiana, of *Infantry*; two squadrons of regular Dragoons and the Kentucky and Arkansas *Horse*; together with four batteries of light artillery; comprising in all about 5000 men. Of these, but few had ever been in action; some too were undrilled, and many of the cavalry companies wretchedly mounted.

In garrison at Monterey, under General Marshall, were the 1st Kentucky and 1st Ohio regiments, mustering together an effective force of 800 men. Below Monterey, at the posts of Marin, Cerralvo, and Punta Aguada, was the 2d Ohio regiment, in detachments under its three field-officers. At Mier and Camargo, were the 3d Ohio and 1st Indiana regiments. Such were the positions of our troops on the 21st of February, 1847, when General Taylor was induced, by the information brought him by that trusty and accomplished scout, Captain McCulloch, to change his ground from Agua Nueva to the gorge of *Buena Vista*. As my object is not to write a history of the war, but simply to relate a few incidents of the campaign concerning which I have some personal knowledge,—introducing such others, as may be well authenticated and necessary to form a connected narrative;—I shall not presumptuously attempt to describe how 20,000 troops, the flower of the Mexican nation and assembled under the banner of their most popular chief, were disgracefully routed by the handful of men whom General Taylor set in battle array on that memorable field. The story has been often told at length, by the graphic and graceful pens of eye-witnesses and is yet fresh in the minds of American readers. I propose here, to give some account of minor cotemporary events, with which I claim to be more familiar.

General Santa Anna, well informed by his numerous spies, and the intercepted dispatches, of all the movements that had taken place on our line, did not, as many predicted he would, hasten to succor the menaced city of Vera Cruz; but anticipating an easy victory over Taylor, he issued a stirring

proclamation to his soldiers, and on the 28th of January marched from San Luis de Potosi toward Saltillo.* About the same time, the Mexican corps of observation was ordered to debouch from the pass of Tula, and at the proper moment fall upon our flanks, prevent the passage of supplies and reinforcements to the front, and be in position to cut off Taylor's *beaten and retreating battalions*. This division, as we have already shown from a field report, consisted of about

* I append the document, as a fair sample of the military papers of "the Napoleon" of Mexico. It is translated from a copy found in Monterey.

"*Companions in Arms*: The operations of the enemy require us to move precipitately on their principal line, and we are about to do it. The independence, the honor and the destinies of the nation depend on this movement and your decision. *Soldiers!* the entire world is observing us, and it is obligatory on you that your deeds should be as heroic as they are necessary. From the neglect with which you have been treated by those whose duty it is to aid you, privations of all kinds await you; but when has want weakened your spirits or debilitated your enthusiasm! The Mexican soldier is well known for his frugality and capability of suffering. Never does he need magazines or provisions, when about to pass the deserts; but he has always an eye to the resources of his enemy to supply his wants. To-morrow you commence your march through a thinly settled country, without provisions; but you may be assured that very quickly you will be in possession of those of your enemy, and his riches; and with them all your wants will be superabundantly gratified. *My friends!* we are about to open the campaign, and who can tell how many days of glory await us! What a perspective, so full of hope for our country! What satisfaction you will feel when you have saved our independence; when you shall be the objects of admiration for the whole world, and our own country shall shower blessings on your heads! When again in the bosoms of your families, you shall relate your dangers, your combats, and your triumphs over your daring presumptuous foe; when you tell your children that you have given them their country a second time, your jubilee will be complete. *Soldiers!* the cause we sustain is holy; our honor, our religion, our wives, our children! What sacrifices are too great for objects so dear? Let us conquer or die! Let us swear before the Eternal, that we will not rest one instant until we completely wipe away from our soil the vainglorious foreigner who has dared to pollute it with his presence. No terms with him. Nothing for us but heroism and grandeur!"

ANTONIO LOPEZ DE SANTA ANNA,
General-in-chief of the "Army of the North."

Head-Quarters, San Luis de Potosi,
January 27, 1847.

two thousand cavalry under General Urrea and sixteen hundred infantry under General Vasquez.* It was soon rumored at Monterey, that a large force had entered the valley, and was moving upon our line; but being unprovided with cavalry, we were unable to learn anything definite concerning its strength, position, or designs. The citizens, whose conduct at once underwent a change, could not be prevailed upon to disclose any particulars, and in their dealings with us, they assumed a less gracious air and bearing, as if preparing for our defeat. At one time it was rumored that Santa Anna's whole army had come through the Tula pass and were in rapid march upon Monterey. Our suspicions that some hostile movement was about to be executed, were confirmed by the continued departure of families from the town; the few schools it contained were broken up and the children removed to distant villages. Before the 22d of February, Monterey was like a city of the dead. I do not believe that there were ten Mexicans who remained within its walls. Not one was to be seen abroad in any quarter. Never was a city so rapidly and completely evacuated by its inhabitants of all classes. Every house was closed and the intense silence that reigned day and night over its empty streets and vacant plazas, was alone broken at intervals by

* I have never been able to ascertain with certainty, whether the infantry of Vasquez entered the *tierra caliente* with Urrea's brigade of cavalry. It was never displayed before any of our posts, and the probability is that it joined Santa Anna in his march to Buena Vista. An intercepted letter however, from a Mexican officer to his wife in Monterey, requesting her to leave the city, as it would soon be attacked by a column of 5000 men, caused some to infer that the entire division of observation, swelled to the number stated by rancheros, was at Montemorelas about the middle of February.

the firm tread of its determined little garrison. Beacon fires were nightly flaming on the lofty peaks of the Sierra Madre; a primitive mode of telegraphing for which the country is well adapted. The gloom of approaching danger was the more oppressive, because its position and extent were unknown. Every possible precaution was taken against surprise. A careful watch was maintained upon all the roads leading to the city, and the highest officers relieved each other in mounting guard at night. All the public stores were removed to the citadel, which fortress, under the superintendence of Captain Frazier of the Engineers, had been much strengthened since it fell into our hands. The 1st Kentucky regiment lay in the work, while ours remained in the town. For more than a week preceding the battle of Buena Vista, (23d of February,) and indeed for several days succeeding it, we did not take off our boots or clothes, but remained under arms day and night. Such restless vigilance was more harassing than bodily fatigue. *Stampedes* were of frequent occurrence; and at the first sound of the "long-roll," every man hastened to the post assigned him, either upon the house-tops or at the barricades of the *Plaza Mayor*, which quarter of the town alone, our force was sufficient to hold.

Up to the 24th of February, no very satisfactory information was received at Monterey, of the movements of the enemy. It was evident however, from the non-arrival of couriers, that our line of communication had been cut both above and below us. On the 23d, a lieutenant of our regiment who had gone to the summit of the mountain behind

the city, to reconnoiter the surrounding country, returned with the intelligence, that while in that elevated position he had heard two faint reports of artillery in the direction of Saltillo. As a sharp-eared sentinel at the citadel had also heard the same sounds, we were convinced that a battle was progressing in front. But General Taylor's position, at the last account, being distant at least eighty miles by the road, and perhaps fifty in an air line, many were disposed to entertain the painful belief, that he was retiring before the enemy toward La Rinconada.

About the same time, General Urrea, doubtless informed that Santa Anna had commenced operations in front, presented himself upon our line, with all his regular cavalry and a large body of rancheros under General Canales. He invested Marin, garrisoned by a part of the 2d Ohio regiment under Lieutenant-Colonel Irvin, with eight hundred horse: with as many more he fell upon one of our trains near Ramas, killing about fifty of the wagoners and capturing the escort, which consisted of thirty soldiers of the 1st Kentucky regiment under Lieutenant Barbour. A part of his force was also thrown between Colonel Morgan's detachment at Cerralvo and Major Wall's at Punta Aguada.

On the morning of the 24th of February, the painful uncertainty and suspense which had so long prevailed at Monterey were partially dispelled. A messenger arrived from Lieutenant-Colonel Irvin, stating that the enemy had been for some time in force around Marin; that the little garrison was much harassed by the close siege and desultory attacks of the foe; that their ammunition was failing rapidly and

that assistance would be acceptable. Colonel Ormsby of the 1st Kentucky regiment, who had recently assumed command at Monterey, promptly dispatched Major Shepherd of his regiment, with a mixed command of five companies and two field-pieces, to Irvin's relief.* Major Shepherd marched at noon, and reached Marin at 9 P. M., the enemy suffering him to enter the place without opposition. The next day (25th) the Mexican cavalry were withdrawn from the vicinity of the town, and the now united commands of Irvin and Shepherd started to return to Monterey. General Urrea, instead of opposing, would I suppose, cheerfully have hastened their departure; since he must have been advised of the advance of a smaller detachment under Colonel Morgan, which he could attack advantageously, only before it formed a junction with the American troops at Marin. Colonel Morgan, having been ordered to concentrate the 2d Ohio regiment, and march to Monterey, had called up Major Wall's command from Punta Aguada and set out from Cerralvo on the 24th of February. He marched that day and the following night with but few brief halts, and arrived at Marin soon after the departure of Lieutenant-Colonel Irvin, who, it seems, was unapprised of his approach.

Early on the 25th, a solitary Kentucky volunteer staggered into Monterey, nearly dead with fatigue and hunger. He brought us the first account of the capture of Lieutenant Barbour's train; stating that he believed he was the only soldier

* This detachment was composed of the following companies:—Captains Triplett's, Bullen's and Kearn's of the 1st Kentucky regiment; Captains Bradley's and Vandever's of the 1st Ohio regiment; a few files of Kentucky cavalry under Lieutenant Patterson; two four-pounders, with squads of volunteer artillerymen.

of the escort who had escaped, and that all the drivers had been massacred and horribly mutilated by the enemy. Shortly afterward a few teamsters came straggling in, breathless with terror and covered with wounds. They had been hunted far and hotly through the chaparral, by Urrea's men, and had escaped by avoiding the road and ranchos, and making a detour around Marin. In addition to these, it was afterward ascertained that twenty-five drivers and wagon-masters had succeeded in joining Colonel Morgan's advancing command. Among the fugitives was a negro-boy, who, with eyes protruding and wool almost "on end at his own wonders," narrated his hair-breadth escape. The Lancers had gashed him severely, or, to use his own very expressive words, "Dem Lanceers plugged into me, jes as if I was a green water-million."

Before dark on the 25th, Major Shepherd, attended by a score of officers and men, returned with the information that he had relieved Irvin, and that the remainder of the detachment were *en route* and would probably reach Monterey early that night. Fortunately, Lieutenant Colonel Irvin did not make such rapid progress as was anticipated, but bivouacked eight miles from town, not far from San Francisco; for scarcely had he resumed his march on the morning of the 26th, when he was overtaken by Lieutenant Stewart of his own regiment, who being well mounted had gallantly and successfully dashed through the enemy's line, with the information that Colonel Morgan with the remainder of the 2d Ohio regiment, was surrounded by Urrea's troops a short distance from Agua Frio. Irvin's command immediately

turned back, and with the aid of the artillery soon succeeded in extricating his Colonel (Morgan,) who in the course of his march from Marin had been repeatedly assaulted by the enemy. The intelligence was also forwarded to Monterey, and in less than ten minutes after its arrival, two hundred men of the 1st Ohio regiment set out for the scene of action. Being unincumbered with aught save their arms, and stimulated by the perilous condition of their friends of the 2d regiment, the men strode lightly and quickly forward; and marched to San Francisco (four leagues) in two hours. At that village, we met Colonel Morgan's regiment, and those of our own corps who had aided him in shaking off the pertinacious foe; among whom were distinguished Captain Bradley and Sergeant Howell,—the latter commanding one of the volunteer gun-squads. After exchanging hearty congratulations with our gallant friends of the 2d Ohio regiment, whom we had not seen for more than six months, we fell into the rear of the weary column and slowly retraced our steps to Monterey. The garrisons having been thus, with much peril and some loss, withdrawn from the three posts of Marin, Cerralvo and Punta Aguada, the enemy obtained temporary possession of the country between Monterey and Camargo.

It was not until after these affairs, just described, that we received the glad tidings of the battle and victory of Buena Vista; and over which we rejoiced and lamented by turns, as the messenger described each charge and repulse; and told how, for so many long hours the fortunes of our countrymen, who had been compelled to fight with the desperation of men, "whose only safety was in the despair of safe-

ty," had trembled in the balance. Every allusion to "Old Rough and Ready,"—from his heroic reply to Santa Anna's summons at the commencement of the action, to his memorable order, "A little more grape Captain Bragg," at its close, was received with shouts and tears of joy. We immediately fired salutes and rang the long silent bells of the city in honor of the glorious achievement. In a few days the citizens began to return to their homes and property, looking—much to our amusement—quite disappointed and crest-fallen.

After one of the most lamentable retreats recorded in history,—and in which the Mexican writers confess that he lost from desertion and death in every horrible form, ten thousand five hundred men,—General Santa Anna re-entered San Luis de Potosi on the 9th of March. We were soon afterward informed, by a person who traveled from San Luis to Monterey, that the dead were strewed along the road for sixty leagues. But while we may well exult in the heroism of our troops and skill of our officers, the impartial observer of these events, must also respect and admire the valor and patriotism with which our enemies, undismayed by a series of disastrous defeats, prepared to continue the war. Look for example at the alacrity and fortitude with which Santa Anna's shattered battalions, yet bleeding from the wounds of Buena Vista, hastened to meet the army of General Scott and to incur new disasters at Cerro Gorda.