

## CONQUEST OF THE SOUTHWEST

local sources of water supply shall have been exhausted—and in some places they have not been touched—some genius, some heaven-sent benefactor, with a Moses-rod, will smite the rock and flood the thirsty land which gives forth its life so abundantly when it has half a chance. Or perhaps from the air or from the sea the water will be drawn. Come it must, and come it will, and teeming millions of the future will occupy the now deserted spaces.

Well may Mexico think sadly of what she lost, well may the United States be thankful for the terrible expiation of national wrong that was required and paid for in 1861-65; and, with a hope that the slate has been wiped clean, that the score has been settled, with chastened soul and kindly heart essay to do better in the future. "What doth the Lord require of thee, O people, but to do justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God" among men and nations, great or small, forever?

## CHAPTER XIV

### WHAT IT COST—A CHEAPER WAY

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I SAID in the beginning of this book that the Conquest of the Southwest added the largest increment of territory to the original boundaries of the United States which the country has ever received.

There is a prevalent opinion that the Louisiana Purchase included a greater area than the transaction under discussion. I wrote to the General Land Office to settle the question and received the following reply sustaining my contention.

*"WASHINGTON, D. C., August 4, 1904.*

"Complying with the request contained in your letter of June 20, 1904, and reiterated July 28, 1904, I have to state that the areas of the cessions to the United States by Mexico and France, which you designate as 'The Conquest of the Southwest,' and the Louisiana Purchase territory as delimited by the treaty of 1819 with Spain, have been carefully estimated by this office, as appears below:



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"Area of Louisiana Purchase, excluding the territory abandoned by treaty of 1819 with Spain.....		825,715 sq. mi.
Texas annexed in 1845.....		389,795 sq. mi.
Ceded by Mexico, in 1848....		530,049 "
Gadsden Purchase, 1853....		29,964 "
Total.....		949,808 "
Difference in favor of territory designated as 'The Conquest of the Southwest' over Louisiana Purchase, delimited by treaty of 1819.....		124,098 sq. mi.

"The Louisiana Purchase from France in 1803, as delineated by red border line on the General Land Office map of the United States of 1903, is 905,760 square miles.

"The fact that France, in 1803, ceded territory which in 1819 was abandoned to Spain by the United States, should not deprive the Louisiana Purchase of any fraction of the 905,760 square miles last noted above, and, on the other hand, the portion delimited by that treaty should very properly be considered as a part of the territory ceded by Texas in 1845; so that the area through 'The Conquest of the Southwest,' amounting to 949,808 square miles, is greater than the Louisiana Purchase of 1803, amounting to 905,760 square miles, by 44,048 square miles.

"The area of territory ceded by France in 1803,

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and in 'The Conquest of the Southwest,' is 1,775,523 square miles.

"Very respectfully,

"JOHN H. FIMPLE,

"Acting Commissioner."

It will be seen that even crediting France with that portion of the territory lying south of the Arkansas River and west of the hundredth meridian, which was afterward released to Spain by the treaty of 1819, the Conquest of the Southwest is greater by forty-four thousand square miles, and disregarding the portion mentioned by one hundred and twenty-four thousand square miles.

As to population the balance is greatly in favor of the Louisiana Purchase, as is shown by the following letter from the Acting Director of the Department of Commerce and Labor:

"WASHINGTON, August 24, 1904.

"I have to acknowledge the receipt of your favor of the 13th instant, in which you request an estimate of the population of the Louisiana Purchase, and 'The Conquest of the Southwest.' In reply thereto, I take pleasure in enclosing you herewith



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my estimate of the population June 1, 1900, in the accessions of territory described by you, and as outlined on the Land Office map of 1902. You will note that the population in the strip of territory bounded by the Mississippi river, the Perdido river, and the 31st parallel of latitude, is given separately, and may be added to my estimate of the Louisiana Purchase, if desired. This is the territory commonly referred to as 'in dispute with Spain.'<sup>1</sup>

"Trusting that the estimates enclosed will answer your purpose, I am

"Very respectfully,

"EDWARD McCAULEY,

"Acting Director."

Estimated population, Louisiana Purchase, in 1900:

Including the complete States of Arkansas, Indian Territory, Iowa, Missouri, and Nebraska, and portions of the States of Colorado, Kansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Montana, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, and Wyoming:

13,439,721.

<sup>1</sup> This has nothing to do with the question under discussion and I have disregarded it.

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NOTE.—This estimate does not include the territory in Louisiana, Alabama, and Mississippi bounded by the Mississippi river on the west, the Perdido river on the east, and south of the 31st parallel of latitude, and referred to as the "Territory in dispute with Spain." The estimated population in 1900 of this area is 252,590.

Estimated population, "The Conquest of the Southwest," in 1900:

Including the complete States of California, Nevada, New Mexico, Texas, and Utah, and portions of Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Wyoming:

5,263,272.

With this knowledge of the extent and population of "The Conquest of the Southwest" it will be interesting to determine as nearly as may be just what the territory cost us. We assumed and paid the claims of our citizens against Mexico to the amount of over three millions of dollars. We paid fifteen millions indemnity by the Treaty of Peace. We added ten millions to the Mexican exchequer by the Gadsden Purchase. We gave Texas ten mil-



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lions for the relinquishment to the United States of her extravagant claims to the westward of the present boundary line. I estimate the military expenses of the war as at least eighty millions and the naval as ten millions more. I arrived at these figures for the army and navy by a comparison between the military and naval appropriations for two years prior to the war and the actual amount expended during the war and for one year after, all figures being taken from the official reports of the Secretary of War. I followed the same process with regard to the navy, and think the figures resulting, as shown in the following table, which I have given above in round numbers, are sufficiently accurate:

Appropriation for the United States	
Army for the year of 1844.....	\$3,123,433.00
Appropriation for the United States	
Army for the year of 1845.....	3,909,766.30
	2) \$7,033,199.30
	\$3,516,599.65 av. 1844-45
	4
Amount for four years under ordinary conditions.....	\$14,066,398.60

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Appropriation for the United States	
Army for the year 1846.....	\$6,778,082.67
Appropriation for the United States	
Army for the year 1847.....	32,478,461.38
Appropriation for the United States	
Army for the year 1848.....	46,975,439.62
Appropriation for the United States	
Army for the year 1849.....	10,612,371.94
Total war expenses.....	\$96,844,355.61
Average four years.....	14,066,398.60
Excess over average.....	\$82,777,957.01
Appropriation for the United States	
Navy for the year 1844.....	\$6,134,757.63
Appropriation for the United States	
Navy for the year 1845.....	5,224,660.66
	2) \$11,359,418.29
	\$5,679,709.14 av. 1844-45
	4
Amount for four years under ordinary conditions.....	\$22,718,836.56
Appropriation for the United States	
Navy for the year 1846.....	\$6,501,703.16
Appropriation for the United States	
Navy for the year 1847.....	7,495,694.70
Appropriation for the United States	
Navy for the year 1848.....	9,075,330.10
Appropriation for the United States	
Navy for the year 1849.....	10,570,608.71
Total navy expenses.....	\$33,643,336.67
Average four years.....	22,718,836.56
Excess over average.....	\$10,924,500.11



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The Pension Commissioner informs me that up to July 1, 1904, we have paid the enormous sum of over thirty-five millions for service pensions on account of this war. To this sum may be added an amount which I estimate as between three and four millions for disability pensions. These items may be summed up as follows:

Claims of Mexico—assumed and paid.....	\$3,208,374.96
Amount of indemnity awarded by the Treaty of Peace .....	15,000,000.00
Interest on deferred payments .....	1,800,000.00
Gadsden Purchase.....	10,000,000.00
Paid Texas for the relinquishment of her western claims .....	10,000,000.00
Army expenses.....	80,000,000.00
Navy expenses.....	10,000,000.00
Pensions.....	38,662,130.35
Total.....	\$168,670,505.31

As will be seen by the foregoing table the total of these several amounts is over one hundred and sixty-eight and a half millions of dollars. It will be safe to call it one hundred and seventy millions of dollars. In other words, we paid about one hundred and eighty dollars

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for each square mile of territory, or thirty-two dollars for each member of the population to-day.<sup>1</sup>

Suppose, convinced that we must have this territory to round out and complete our national domain, that we had gone to Mexico and offered her twenty-five, fifty, seventy-five, or even one hundred millions of dollars? We would have been greatly the gainer from a financial point of view even if she had demanded the highest figure, and as a matter of opinion, I do not believe there would have been any hesitation on her part in eagerly agreeing to the lowest figure. Even if she had taken advantage of our evident desire, to insist upon as much as one hundred and seventy millions we would still have been the gainer if we had paid it rather than have gone to war. The loss

<sup>1</sup> It has been estimated that the cost of the Revolution was upward of one hundred and seventy millions of dollars. We paid France for the Louisiana Purchase fifteen millions of dollars. The price of Alaska was seven million two hundred thousand dollars, and the Philippines cost us twenty millions in cash to Spain, besides the enormous expenses of the war.



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of life in the war on our side was considerable. The disorganization of various sections of our people was still greater and it is impossible to state in definite terms what other consequences, deleterious and harmful to us either as individuals or a people, ensued from this national buccaneering enterprise. Certainly we would not have stained our otherwise reasonably clean escutcheon with the ineffable blot of injustice and oppression. Yet the individual who should have proposed to satisfy the land-grasping spirit of the United States, and at the same time secure the peaceful cooperation of Mexico by paying what would be considered such an extravagant sum as fifty millions of dollars, to say nothing of the larger amounts, would have been laughed to scorn. All this goes to show how much cheaper almost any settlement is than war. There are times when nations apparently must fight, but they should realize when they do fight that they are indulging in a luxury, and that they are attempting to adjudicate their differences by the

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most costly of all methods. This is a material argument for peace which is not without weight. Nations may do well to ponder upon it before they have recourse to arms.

To complete this statistical chapter I subjoin a letter from the Military Secretary of the War Department, courteously sent me in answer to a letter of inquiry which I had addressed to him:

*"WASHINGTON, July 23, 1904.*

"In compliance with the request, contained in your letter of the 21st instant, for information relative to the number of men who enlisted and served in the Mexican War, and the number of casualties among them, I am directed by the Acting Secretary of War to advise you as follows:

"It appears from a report of the Adjutant General, dated December 3, 1849, and published in Executive Document No. 24, House of Representatives, 31st Congress, 1st Session, with certain additions compiled from the official records on file in this office, that there were 74,188 volunteers and 26,922 regulars, making a total of 101,110 officers and men received into the service of the United States during the War with Mexico. This does not include the strength of the regular army (7,365



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officers and men) at the commencement of the war.

"From the sources indicated above it has been ascertained that the 74,188 volunteers were enlisted for terms of service as follows:

"For three months.....	1,390	officers and men
For six months (held for three months only).....	11,211	" "
For twelve months.....	27,063	" "
During the war with Mexico.....	34,524	" "

"It is shown by the report of the Adjutant General referred to above that 844 of the twelve-months volunteers were reenlisted, or 'remustered,' and, consequently, are counted twice in that report. There is no doubt but that some of the 1,390 three-months volunteers, and also some of the 11,211 six-months volunteers, and probably more than 844 of the 27,063 twelve-months volunteers were subsequently enlisted 'for the war,' and, consequently, are counted twice in the tables. But their numbers can not be ascertained and, therefore, the number of individuals received into the military service of the United States during the War with Mexico can not be definitely determined.

"It also appears, from the same sources, that the losses sustained by the army of the United States during that war were as follows:

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NATURE OF CASUALTIES.	Volunteers.	Regulars.	Total.
Died, total.....	7,078	5,818	12,896
Killed in action.....	514	530	1,044
Died of wounds.....	100	405	505
Ordinary deaths.....	6,272	4,714	10,986
Accidental deaths.....	192	169	361
Discharged, total.....	9,220	3,036	12,256
For disability.....	7,200	2,549	9,749
By civil authority.....	206	77	283
By order.....	1,814	410	2,224
Resigned.....	327	129	456
Wounded in action.....	1,318	2,075	3,393
Deserted.....	3,976	2,849	6,825

"It is stated in the report of the Adjutant General, referred to above, that 'It is believed that many who died of wounds are reported as cases of ordinary deaths.' It is also stated that 'The discharges on account of disease or disability, and the number of ordinary deaths reported to the Adjutant General's Office, and exhibited in the table, must be much less than the actual loss, owing to missing muster-rolls and returns, which could never be obtained, although repeatedly written for to commanders of regiments and corps.'

"Very respectfully,

"F. C. AINSWORTH,

"The Military Secretary."



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I am informed by letter from the Secretary of the Navy that similar figures for the Navy are not available. There were in all probability, however, about eight thousand seamen and marines in the service of the country, of whom probably not more than two hundred and fifty were killed in action.

There are still on the pension roll of the United States the surprising number of thirteen thousand pensioners of the Mexican War. Five thousand of these are survivors, the rest widows. The number of pensioners is diminishing at the rate of about eight hundred a year, mostly among the survivors. Owing to the pernicious practice, at one time widely prevalent, and which perhaps still obtains to some degree, of young women marrying old veterans on the verge of the grave, for the sake of a dependent widow's pension, the number of widows on the roll is apt to show little decrease for some time. And we will probably still be paying pensions on account of this costly experiment in unrighteousness for twen-

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ty years to come, or three-quarters of a century after the war was terminated!<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The last report of the Commissioner of Pensions shows three widows of Revolutionary soldiers, one survivor of the War of 1812, and nine hundred and eighteen widows of soldiers who fought in that war, still on the rolls and drawing pensions!