

CHAPTER II.

Occurrences after the Capitulation of Monterey.—American Volunteers killed.—Mexican shot.—Course of General Taylor.—Mexican Outrages renewed.—Mode in which they were stopped.—Army advance to Saltillo.—A small Guard left at Monterey, of which I am One.—We start for Saltillo.—Adventures on the Way.—Haciendas.—Remarkable Spot.—False Alarm.—Saltillo.—The Cathedral.—Mier Prisoner.—Brigade return to Monterey.—Occupy the Citadel.—Occurrences at Monterey.—Start for Camargo, in a Guard, accompanying a Train of Mules.—Scenes and Occurrences by the Way.—Adventures of Captain Henry.—Meet a Train of Wagons at Seralvo, and return with them toward Monterey.—Fellow-travelers.—Attacked at Ramos by a strong Force under General Urrea.—The Escort taken Prisoners.—Many of the Teamsters killed.—Fate of a Fellow-traveler.—His Daughter.

AFTER the capitulation of Monterey, order and peace were quickly restored. The Mexicans were soon ready to leave, and they marched out in regular order; and very frequently was to be seen in their ranks one who had formerly been a soldier in the American army. How changed was his condition! Then he was well fed, well clothed; and if he was sick, good care was taken of him; but now, how different! He was ragged and dirty, not half paid, and still worse fed, with base and degraded associates. In a short time the city was cleared of the Mexican troops, and the army proceeded to take their regular camping ground. General Worth and his division remained in the city. General Taylor, with the rest of the army, went to the woods and the springs before alluded to. Here

was abundance of wood and water. The inhabitants of the surrounding country soon became quite familiar with us, and a regular market was established, where bread, meat, and many fruits of tropical climates could be purchased at a cheap rate. For a long while all went on smoothly, nothing occurring to alarm us. At length, as though tired of this state of things, the Mexicans began to kill some of the volunteers, whom they found away from the camp alone. Several had thus been made away with, till at last a Mexican was shot. At this General Taylor became very angry, and made inquiry who it was that shot him. He was told that it was done by the Kentucky regiment; he became at once still more excited, and hastily ordered us to prepare to march to the rear of the army. A letter of remonstrance was sent to him, begging that a court of inquiry be ordered, and find out who was guilty, that he might be punished, and not punish an entire regiment for the crime of one individual. It was done; the man was found, and he received a dishonorable discharge. But on the part of the Mexicans this murdering system continued. At last one belonging to our regiment was brought in completely cut to pieces. This produced some murmuring and great dissatisfaction because effectual measures were not taken to prevent a repetition of them. Few words were spoken, but a deep feeling of vengeance pervaded all the companies. It only wanted a little more aggravation on their part to produce vengeance on ours; and this was not long wanting; for in a few days afterward, one belonging to the ninth company was found with his throat cut from ear to ear, and

otherwise horribly mutilated. This was enough. But now a difficulty presented itself. Immediately after the trial above alluded to, an order had been issued forbidding any man to pass out of his lines with his gun; therefore it now became their study in what manner to get their arms out with them. But a scheme was soon devised and executed in this manner. The soldiers were allowed to go to the stream, which was about ten rods from the line, to wash out their guns; they were not slow in taking advantage of this liberty. Those who were going would take their guns apart; one would put his lock in his pocket, and walk out with the barrel to wash it; another would put on a blanket, hide the stock under it, and follow after. In this manner some twenty guns were taken away; and as we were allowed to go where and when we pleased, the absent persons were not missed or suspected. A number of Mexicans were killed, and the next day still more, making in all about twenty. No inquiry whatever was made as to who the perpetrators were, but no more volunteers were killed. The Mexicans doubtless considered this a sufficient warning.

We were lying here in idleness and inactivity, amusing ourselves the best way we could, some by card-playing, others by trying feats of strength; all were anxious to return home, being heartily tired of camp life. But before this time, General Worth, with his command, had gone to Saltillo, and was fortifying it. We also heard of the return of General Santa Anna to Mexico. This was an important occurrence, as he would either make peace or prosecute the war

with greater vigor. In either case, it would be far better than the present state of suspense. But we did not long remain in doubt, for soon information was received that he was moving on Monterey with a large body of men. In the month of December, an express came into camp about two o'clock in the morning, and went to the quarters of the commanding officer. He delivered his message, and proceeded down to Camargo, without loss of time, to order up fresh troops from below. Major Sheppard, who was then in command, sent for the drummer to beat the long roll, but the drummer could not be found. He then came out on the parade ground, and with a loud voice cried, "*Turn out! turn out!*" several times. The alarm quickly spread, and soon from every quarter of the brigade was heard the cry, "*Turn out! turn out!*" We formed on the parade ground, and a motley-looking set we were. Rising from our warm beds and going into the cold air, all began to shiver as though suffering from an attack of the fever and ague; but into line we went, some appearing without hats, others without coats, and nearly all without shoes; so great was the confusion that these could not be found. We were ordered to cook our breakfast as soon as possible. We were to leave Monterey by daybreak for Saltillo, as the Mexicans were advancing on that point under the command of the one-legged chieftain, and report said with some thirty thousand men.

Our camp-fires were soon briskly burning, our coffee was boiling, and meat was frying; soon all was ready, and we fell to eating. A small guard was left to take care of the sick and camp equipages that

were left behind, until teams were sent from the town to take them in. Those teams that were going to Saltillo with us soon came out and quickly loaded, and before the dawn of day began to move off. I was one of those who remained; there were in all some sixty persons. We expected the train would come that day; but the day passed away, and still it had not come, and we remained there alone that night. The next morning about ten o'clock it came; we loaded the teams with the provisions, tents, and camp-kettles, and the sick, and left this now deserted spot. There were fourteen of us together. Where the rest of the guard were I can not tell, and they were not to be found. By this time it was nearly night, and we could not go until the day following. Those articles which we did not want we sold, such as candles, soap, coffee, sugar, &c., carrying nothing but bread and meat; these we could easily carry in our haversacks. We started about twelve o'clock the next day; but, before leaving, some of our comrades left us, and were not to be found. As we had in our possession their rations, we searched a long time for them, but as it proved unsuccessful, we had to go without them. We were only five in number, a rather small number to travel safely through an enemy's country sixty miles. We had a horse between us that carried our baggage and provisions. The first day we went twelve miles, slept at a rancho, where, with our own provisions and those we purchased of the rancheros, we made a hearty supper. We kept good watch for fear of some treachery on the part of our host; but before we went to sleep we made a great display of our rifles and

muskets, examined the loading, &c., simply to inform the rancheros that we were ready to meet them should they make any hostile attempt. Nothing, however, was said or done; whether they were restrained through fear or feelings of respect, I can not say, but, at all events, morning found us safe. When they had arisen we bespoke a breakfast for all, which we obtained by nine o'clock, being thus late on account of some chickens and other fresh meat that we had purchased. We determined beforehand that we would live well while on this march, and purchase as long as money lasted, and then forage on the natives.

At length we made a start: the distance was eighteen miles to the nearest water and house. The road lay between two high ranges of mountains; the valley was about two miles wide; the soil was rich, but little cultivated, and large herds of cattle were seen grazing on it. We pursued our way over hills and through valleys, and had made about one half of our day's journey, when, on a small hill before us, a heavy cloud of dust was seen to rise. In a few moments a body of horsemen came in view: being so far from us, their uniform was undistinguishable, and we calmly made up our mind that, should they prove to be Mexicans, our chance was small; but on their coming nearer, we discovered them to be Colonel May's dragoons. The colonel himself was along, who informed us that there was no fighting to be done yet at Saltillo, and furthermore said that he doubted whether Santa Anna was near that place. He also told us that it was necessary for us to keep a sharp look-out, as the inhabitants were very hostile toward our sol-

diers. That night we arrived at the hacienda, about midway between the two cities. Here was plenty of water, cool and pure, running from the mountains, and as we had nothing to drink during the day, we went to the beautiful stream and slaked our thirst. We then went and inquired for the master of the house. A young man, genteelly dressed, said he was the man. We then inquired if we could sleep in his house that night. He readily answered yes, and led us to a room where we stacked our arms. There were two of them, brothers, with fine features, and of a noble and commanding appearance. We soon found that they had music in the house, and they were kind enough to play some for us on a guitar and violin. I also found an American magazine, from New York. The music that was found in it made one of their favorite pieces.

In the morning, after eating breakfast, we bid adieu to our kind host, and proceeded on our journey. Our road took a turn round a very high mountain, through a long, narrow pass, and ascended to a great height. The pass was just about wide enough for four horses abreast. At length we arrived at the top of the hill, where we saw a number of fortifications that had been commenced after the surrender of Monterey, in violation of the treaty. It was admirably selected, and only required a few works and a few good soldiers to stop a large army. There being only this one way of passing, and that a narrow road, all their batteries could be brought to bear. But information of these works coming to General Taylor, General Worth was sent to Saltillo; and the Mexi-

cans fled on the approach of this commander, leaving the road clear and unobstructed. Being alone, and traveling at leisure, we took a little time to view this spot, which is noted for what occurred here during the revolution against the Spaniards. The Spanish army was retreating through this place, when they were met by a large body of the Mexicans, and forced to fall back. In their rear was another body pursuing them, and to break through either was found to be utterly impossible. Thus hemmed in by the impassable mountains on two sides, and infuriated and vindictive foes on the other, and cut off from all supplies both of provisions and water, their situation soon became intolerable. Some perished by the sword, and the rest by starvation, and, as report says, none escaped to tell the tale.

We saw some four or five places where batteries had been recently thrown up, but evidently not completed. By this time the sun had become excessively hot, and our water giving out, admonished us to push forward, as it was three miles more before any could be had. The road was now descending; and in about an hour we reached a small stream, where we quenched our thirst and filled our canteens. We had now come nearly four leagues. Some of our company, thinking that this was a very good day's march, proposed stopping for the night with some of the rancheros; but this was overruled; and, after resting a while, on we started. About two miles further we came to another hacienda, where serious objections were made to going further that day by some who were anxious to enjoy their liberty a little longer, as

we were then only nine miles from our camp. But, on further consideration, we concluded to go to the next farm-house, which, they told us, was only one league further. To that place we went; but on the road two of our companions determined to go on to the camp that day, and accordingly left us, proceeding at a rapid rate, and we taking our time. On we jogged, seeing little worthy of notice, and meeting occasionally a Mexican traveler. One of these, being a talkative personage, detained us a short time in conversation. On parting, he gave us a good drink of brandy and some cigars; and after a courteous adieu, each party pursued his way. At length we came in sight of the house where we wished to stop, and thought it as long a league as well could be. On arriving there, we asked permission of the proprietor to stop that night. He evidently did not like to give it, neither did he think it safe to refuse; and, after some deliberation, he consented. It was then about five in the afternoon. Our horse was fed, supper ordered, and a room given us where we were to sleep, and in which we placed our baggage, arms, &c. We saw here a number of rancheros, a black and savage-looking set of fellows. They were evidently unfriendly to us; but this mattered not. We asked for supper: they said they had nothing for us to eat. Being only four in number to five or six, we knew not what to do. At last, after some consultation, we told the proprietor that some coffee must be made in half an hour; and, as we had plenty of meat and bread, we did not wish for those articles. But if that thing called coffee was not forthcoming, we would levy a

contribution on some of the poultry and pigs that we saw running round the door. Furthermore, we told them that it was not our intention to rob them, but to pay for all we had of them. These remarks had the desired effect, and in an incredibly short space of time our evening meal was prepared; and it was astonishing to see how changed this man was: he was no longer crabbed and surly, but polite, affable, and attentive. In the evening he came into our room, accompanied by his wife and some other members of his family. They conversed with us some time, and, as the evening was somewhat advanced, then retired, and we, after having locked the doors, spread our blankets and went to sleep. Early in the morning we were awakened by our pliant host, who came with another dish of coffee. We partook of our breakfast, paid the honest Mexican, and took our leave.

The distance from here to the camp was five miles. We went on slowly, stopping to shoot hares, birds, and almost every thing else that we could see; but, notwithstanding our slow pace, the camp at last loomed in view, at which we arrived near twelve o'clock. We found our old companions and messmates as they had left us, well and hearty. As we were so long coming, they had ceased to expect us; as yet, they had had no fight, neither was it certain that they would have one.

The nights were colder than any I had before experienced in this country. We lay about five miles from the town, but the intervening ground being level, it was plainly seen. This was near the last of December, 1846. All was quiet and calm until the

morning of the first of January—a day long to be remembered by our brigade and all the soldiers that were in the city.

We had just mounted guard when a horseman was seen coming to our camp at the height of his speed; soon he came up and delivered his message to the commanding officer, when another was seen coming, and yet another. Affairs certainly appeared to be pressing. Major Sheppard, who commanded the brigade, ordered the guard called in and the regiment under arms, to appear on the parade ground. It was done. He then said that Santa Anna, with thirty thousand men, had come to within sight of General Wool's camp, about twenty miles from Saltillo, and that teams would immediately be sent from town to fetch up the tents and camp equipage, and that in one hour's time we must be ready to march to Saltillo. We saw a tremendous cloud of dust rising, caused by the teams coming on a full run to our camp. The sun by this time had become hot; but still on they came, as though their lives were at stake. Soon they arrived, the beasts foaming and sweating, the drivers whipping and cursing them. In a very short space of time every thing was loaded up, when we took our arms and marched off at very quick time. In about one hour and a half we reached Saltillo; the streets were crowded with people, who seemed frightened out of their wits, and looked like so many ghosts. We passed the quarters of some of the regulars, who were under arms and paraded in the streets; on marching past them, one long, tremendous shout rent the air; it was echoed back and sent forth again.

The greatest excitement prevailed among the citizens as well as the soldiery; drums were beating, colors flying, cannons were paraded, and the greatest exertions were made to prepare for an immediate forward march to repel an expected attack on the division commanded by General Wool, situated some ten miles from the city. We halted in the Plaza and stacked our arms, to await further orders. Soon an express came in with intelligence that it was a false alarm. Toward night another came with a true statement of the case. It seems that one of the picket guards of General Wool in the morning saw a heavy cloud of dust rising from the level open road before them, and as there were many reports that the Mexicans were coming, thirty thousand strong, and day by day expected, it was inferred on these grounds that this supposed body was the advance guard of this army. A carrier was sent below with information and a call for assistance. This is what brought us into town in such haste, and this was the cause of the extraordinary bustle that we saw—but now for the solution of the problem. This cloud of dust was caused by a drove of cattle that the Mexicans were driving to our army to sell, and this was all there was of the enemy being near us at that time.

We took up our quarters in the town for near two weeks. It is built on the side of a hill, and laid out in regular squares; the streets that run parallel with the range of the hill are made on a level with the roofs of the houses on the side below; and if, as is sometimes the case, buildings are on both sides of the streets, the space intervening between these and

the houses below is occupied as gardens, in many of which are some beautiful fountains. There are two plazas; one is used as a market, which is thronged from morning until evening to overflowing. This is the principal mercantile point in the city; in the other there are very few stores, as nearly all the buildings are used for public purposes and private dwellings. They are built in such a manner and furnished in such a style that they would do credit to a more civilized nation. On one side, occupying an entire square, is the Cathedral. It is a very large building; its appearance on the outside is not very imposing, but inside it is trimmed in a most gorgeous and brilliant manner: it has some four or five splendid chandeliers, richly ornamented. The works of gold and silver are numerous and costly, and its paintings are remarkably beautiful. Meetings were held every day; and often did we go there to admire and discover new beauties. On one side of the town is a splendid garden, profusely planted with shade-trees; there are numerous walks, all leading to the center, where are many stone seats, made in a circular form. The fences are made of the century plant, which is of spontaneous growth in this country. The city is plentifully supplied with water, and in its immediate vicinity are several very extensive and rich silver mines.

I at this place became acquainted with a gentleman who was practicing medicine, and was formerly a surgeon in the Texan army. He was taken prisoner at Mier, and was brought to this place after having suffered extreme hardships on the road. Here

he was taken sick, and left in the hospital. When he recovered, he was put to all kinds of drudgery, such as carrying lumber, brick, and water around the city, and received worse treatment than would have been given to a slave. In this state they kept him two years, when a new suit of clothes was given him, and he was set to practicing medicine. He had been engaged in his profession here ten years when I saw him. He stated that he had made several efforts to sell his property there, and go back to Texas. But a sharp eye was kept on him, as they were fully determined never to let him go. But he remarked that he should now close his business, sell his property, and go with the Americans.

Our brigade stayed here two weeks; and as there was nothing to detain us longer, we prepared to go back to Monterey, and went to our old camping ground, to be ready for an early start in the morning. We were awakened in the morning by the beating of the reveillé, and were soon ready for starting. The word forward was given as the rays of the sun were just peering over the distant horizon, which, being thrown on the dew-decked leaves, presented a most beautiful scene. We had gone but a short distance before we met with several companies of recruits, who had just come from the States, and were going to join the regular infantry at Saltillo. Soon afterward we met the first Indiana regiment, who appeared to be much disappointed at the news of there being no fight; but they afterward had it, to their hearts' content, at Buena Vista. We that day went ten miles, and made an early encampment. The next morning, about two

o'clock, we resumed our march, and that day made seven leagues. We were four days on the march, and arrived in Monterey toward the evening of the fourth. We proceeded at once to the wood of San Domingo, on the ground formerly occupied by General Taylor, one mile above our old place, and remained there a few weeks, when we moved into town, to take charge of the citadel, or, as it was more commonly called, *The Black Fort*.

As rumors were in circulation that the Mexicans were coming here also, it was thought advisable to make some improvements in its works of defense, and also to bring into it all the forces in or around Monterey. This was near the first of February, 1847. The operations that had been commenced were carried on vigorously, and the fort was made almost impregnable. At length it became evident that there was some truth in the reports we had heard; citizens were leaving in great numbers; and bodies of armed horsemen were reported to have been prowling about us at a respectful distance. But the dragoons were not with us at this time, having gone away with General Taylor to Victoria; and having no cavalry, we could not scour the surrounding country. Picket guards, however, were sent out every night. About this time we heard of a great misfortune that befell our arms at Agua Nueva. A portion of the Kentucky and Arkansas cavalry were sent from Saltillo on a scout. One night they were surrounded by an immensely superior force, and being unable to withstand them, they surrendered themselves prisoners of war. This, instead of producing feelings of dismay,

only excited those of revenge, as it was reported that they were massacred. There was now no doubt that a battle was near, and the enemy were said to be hovering around, concealing themselves in the mountains for a favorable moment to strike a blow.

At this time Captain C. was going to Camargo with a train of mules and a guard of thirty men, and one commissioned and three non-commissioned officers were detailed to go with this train, to guard the wagons going and returning. This order was issued by Brigadier-general Marshall, then commanding at this point. When we consider the state of affairs at this time, it is a matter of wonder that a larger detail was not made, as it could not reasonably be expected that so small a body could make a successful resistance, and also give protection to an entire train of either wagons or mules. But so it was; and on the 18th of February, about ten in the morning, we took leave of the regiment; we were accompanied by a wagon to carry our provisions, knapsacks, &c.; Lieutenant Barber, of the eighth company, was in command of the escort. Our comrades, whom we left behind us, bid us a cheerful adieu. Just as we were starting, we saw that preparations were making to hoist the regimental colors. We halted until they were up, gave three cheers, and gayly went on our way, little thinking that we were to see them no more. We were in high spirits, and full of fun, rejoicing in the prospect of being for a few days released from the irksomeness of camp life. Our road for a considerable distance was level. The valley between the mountains at Monterey and those