

near Seralvo is about thirty miles wide; and as it runs parallel with the mountains, its length I can not state. It is mostly covered with chapparal, and only in one place is timber of any value to be seen, and that is in the grove of San Domingo. There are a few hills and gentle undulations in the land, and occasionally a rancho and a small cultivated field may be seen. These are all the objects that attract the eye or break the monotony of the scene. About ten miles from Monterey is a large rancho, called *San Francisco*; and five miles further is another, called *Agua Frio*, at which place we encamped that night. Only one house in the place looked fit to be inhabited, and that was the Dueño's or master's. This was very large and commodious, and constructed of dobies, an article made of mud in the form of brick, only larger, and dried in the sun. After being laid into wall, it is plastered both inside and outside. For the roof, poles were hewn square, and placed about six inches apart; on these were placed burned brick, and then plastered over. Those of the poorer classes of the people are made by means of poles driven into the ground close together, and the crevices closed with moss, grass, or mud. The roof is usually thatched with the leaf of the bayonet-tree. There is generally only one room, and in this they sleep, cook, eat, and drink. We encamped in the Plaza, on a high bluff bank by the side of the river. At dark we posted our sentinels and stretched ourselves in the open air for a night's sleep, and soon our troubles were all forgotten. During the night I began to dream; several things flitted across my troubled

brain. Just at this juncture the mules were kicking and stamping about, and the idea came into my head that the Mexicans were on us. I immediately yelled at the top of my voice, "Turn out! the enemy is on us!" The cry awakened all my comrades; and by this time I too was awake, and found myself in a standing position. I soon began to realize where I was, and by the jokes and laughter of the others, was soon made sensible of what I had done, and quietly turned in for another nap. We arose early in the morning, and were soon ready for a start.

During the night two travelers had joined us, who were going below. One was Captain Henry, of the Texan Rangers; the other was merely a camp-follower. Captain Henry told us that he was with the Kentucky cavalry, and was taken with them, traveled with them four days, gained all the information possible relative to the force of the enemy, and also the strength of the army that was yet coming. So important was it considered by the officers who were prisoners that this news should reach General Taylor before their arrival, that a plan was concocted for him to make his escape. He was further induced to do so from this fact. During the Texan war, this same Captain Henry was taken by the Mexicans, carried to San Luis Potosi, and kept there two years, after which they let him go, on condition of his taking an oath never to bear arms against the republic again, which he did. He came a second time with the army, was taken, and recognized; and it was their intention to shoot him on their arrival at San Luis. This he knew; and, therefore, he determined to make his

escape. All the officers who were taken were allowed horses, and all those above the rank of captain were allowed to retain their own. The others were furnished with Mexican ponies. On the fourth day, previous to starting, he changed his horse with a Major G., who had a fine blooded animal. At night, when they had arrived at their camping-ground, he was ordered by the officers of the guard to form the prisoners into a line, for the purpose of counting them. He did so; and while he was riding up and down the line, he selected a place to make a break. The guard were very strong, three and four deep all around them. He soon made a desperate rush for the lower end of the line, where three horses were standing abreast. On coming near, the high-spirited horse made a desperate leap, cleared one, knocked the two others down, and swiftly fled from them. So sudden was this movement that they could not possibly prevent its being successful. A shower of balls was sent after him, and a pursuit commenced, but all was of no avail. Before coming up with us he had been attacked by some rancheros. They fired at him, and he was wounded just under the point of the chin. A pursuit was made, but, having the fleetest horse, he soon left them. We were inclined to disbelieve this report, it looked so like an impossibility; but, on our arrival in San Luis afterward, we saw two men who were taken prisoners at that time, and they told us the same story that Captain H. did.

We at this place found a few of the mules that we were to go down with; the rest were coming into the main road at Mariné, all having been hired of the

Mexicans. The escort mounted on some of the mules and started for that place, distant ten miles. The road nearly all the way was very level, and only a few houses were to be seen. The soil is rich, and would, with proper cultivation, support a dense population. We arrived at Mariné early in the afternoon, where we found some more of the mules that had been engaged by Captain C. That night they all came in, accompanied by that gentleman. This is a small but beautiful place, considering that it is a Mexican town. There is a fine Plaza, church, &c.; the houses are all neatly built, and in every respect it has the appearance of a thriving and industrious place. It is situated on a hill, which affords an extensive view of the surrounding country.

The road toward Seralvo is level, and mostly open for some distance, but it afterward becomes quite hilly, winding through ravines; and the scenery assumes a more wild and romantic aspect, and a thick and impenetrable chapparal forms a wall on each side of the road. At some distance in front and on one side rose the cloud-capped mountains. Toward night we reached Papagaya, a rancho, but it had been burned down. Here we encamped; and the next morning we made an early start, determined to reach Seralvo that night. Soon after starting, some of the boys thought that they would ride, and accordingly procured a mule. I also caught a mule, and mounted him. He soon began to rear, kick, and plunge; and, as I had no bridle on him, I could neither govern nor guide him; and there being no help for it, of course, I tumbled off. I was considerably hurt.

This excited the mirth of the Mexicans, who exclaimed "*Mucho bueno*" (very good). This was adding insult to injury, and was more than poor human nature could bear; so I determined to resent it, and, picking up a stone, threw it at him with all my might. This had the desired effect, as it not only silenced him, but also all the rest. It also brought on me the censure of the lieutenant, to which, however, I paid little attention. Our road now became rough and rocky. The passage through the mountains was any thing but an easy and pleasant task; but on we marched, and soon came in sight of Seralvo, which place we reached about sunset. Here we met the train-wagons (105 in number), just coming in from Camargo, under the command of Captain Smith, with an escort of the second Ohio regiment.

We remained here only one night, and in the morning turned to go back with the train to Monterey, the Ohioans returning to Camargo with the mules. This was the 21st of February, 1847. By sunrise we were under way, and that day went ten miles, nothing of any note having occurred. The next morning, a short time after we had started, we met an express from Monterey, who brought orders to Lieutenant B. not to leave Seralvo, as the immediate proximity of a large force of the enemy would render it impossible for him to bring the train, or even come through safely with the guard. The lieutenant, as we were only twenty miles from Mariné, where three companies of the second Ohio regiment were stationed, determined to push forward to that place, and detail what was necessary to go with us to Monterey. We that

night encamped at a rancho called Ramos, in a kind of square, and placed our wagons in a circle, the mules on the inside. Within this we built our campfires and cooked our supper. Some of the men took a stroll among the houses, in very few of which was to be seen an inhabitant. This at the time struck us as something remarkable; but the next day's events solved the problem. In addition to the train of wagons, there were with us some merchants going to Monterey and Saltillo. The gentleman from the latter place was an Irishman. He had with him his only daughter, just arrived from Ireland, having been separated from him fifteen years. He had hired some Mexicans with their mules to carry his goods to that city, and thus far had kept company with us. When within three miles of Ramos, the Mexicans refused to proceed further that night. All expostulations were vain; and they proceeded to unload their mules. He then came into our camp, made a statement of the case to the lieutenant, and also his fears for the safety of his daughter, and requested the lieutenant to give him a guard of men to force the muleteers to bring in his goods: this the lieutenant could not do, as he was not connected with the army, nor was he a citizen of the United States. But, he added, if any of the men would volunteer, he would make no objections. Four men offered their assistance, procured horses, and proceeded with him. They soon brought the refractory drivers to their senses, who, on seeing the appearance of the guard, quickly reloaded their mules and came on to our camp.

On the morning following we made an early start.

Our road for a short distance was level, and then descended a large and steep hill. On account of the alarms of the day before, the guard was placed in front; we slowly wended our way along the winding path, frequently stopping to let the wagons close up. We had proceeded in this manner about five miles, by which time the train had descended the hill, and were slowly moving forward on the level plain below, when we were suddenly startled by the cry of "*The lancers are on us!*" On looking to our right, we saw their lances glistening in the sun, and a horrid yell rang in our ears. A heavy charge was made on us by a large body of them, who fired their escopetas at us, which, however, did no execution. We were thrown into confusion, fired a few guns, and retreated into the chapparal, where we formed, and came out with the determination to protect the train, when we saw that the entire line had been attacked at one and the same time. The teams were scattered in every direction. The charge was made with demoniac fury, and volley after volley was fired on the defenseless teamsters, of whom they made a dreadful slaughter. Captain S., seeing that it was useless to attempt saving the train, proposed to Lieutenant B. to go to Mariné, and bring out the troops to assist them in saving it. But the road, we soon found, was guarded strongly by their cavalry; seeing which we struck off into the bushes, and took a circuitous route, hoping to elude their vigilance. We frequently saw bodies of their cavalry prowling around us, but they made no attack, and fled to another position as we approached. After a tedious march of near four hours,

we came in sight of the so-much-wished-for place, but only to encounter fresh troubles; for, as we issued from the dense chapparal into the level, open plain, there stood the enemy formed ready for a charge. They were but a short distance from us, and we could plainly see their officers riding up and down their ranks. They numbered at least one thousand men, and our number only twenty-three, the rest being back among the wagons. Captain S., seeing the utter hopelessness of a resistance against such a force or a successful retreat, proposed to the lieutenant to surrender, as a refusal would be at the cost of all of our lives. The desperate situation in which we were placed induced us to comply. A call was then made for a white handkerchief, to be used as a flag, but none could be found. A white shirt, however, was worn by one of the men, and a part of this was put in requisition, and stuck on a bayonet. Captain S. rode in front a short distance with it, when a Mexican officer rode up and received his arms, having done which they shook hands. We could not but notice his fear and trepidation; so great was his hurry that he was in some measure rude, as he did not wait to have them delivered, but took them, and that not in the most genteel manner possible. By this time General Urrea, commander of the Mexican forces, came up, accompanied with his staff, with whom Lieutenant B. had some conversation relative to the terms of our surrender, treatment, &c. He assured us that we would receive kind usage. At this juncture a large number of their cavalry came up at a full gallop. The lieutenant, supposing that they were going to

charge on us, stepped back, and spoke to General Urrea in these terms: "Keep back your cavalry, G—d d—n you!" This was repeated several times; then turning to us, he said, "Should they make a charge, fire on the officers in front of you, and let the men alone." The cavalry were ordered back, and we were ordered to lay down our arms. As we saw no advantage in further parley, we quietly did so.

There was with us the teamster that went down with us, who had been badly wounded, in the first attack, and had followed us in our meandering course. By this time he had become weak from loss of blood, and unable to proceed any further; so he was carried, by order of the general, to the quarters of the surgeon, and two of our men were ordered to go with him into the town. After resting a few moments, we were marched off to a large rancho about nine miles distant. On our arrival we saw a large number of women, who followed the army. The colonel that commanded the escort asked the ranchero for some pilonci (a kind of sugar) and some tortillas for us to eat: he said he had none. The wily Mexican understood it; for he pulled a dollar from his pocket, gave it him, when forthwith an abundance of provisions were brought out. Here we were in as tight a place as man can well get into, and with no prospect of liberation, and in the power of a most barbarous nation, who would not scruple, on the slightest pretext, to put us all to death. The example of Fanning's massacre, and the fall of Mier, rose vividly to mind, and we all expected to be shot, more particularly as we were volunteers, and had heard that it is

a practice of this government to kill all volunteers, and take none prisoners. At all events, we looked for the most cruel treatment, and we were not disappointed.

Having arrived at this point, it will be proper to take a short glance at some circumstances that took place. The Irish gentleman, to whom we had given assistance the night before, was near the escort when it was attacked, and had a carriage drawn by one horse. In this carriage his daughter rode; and at the first onset of the enemy he was shot dead. Two soldiers came up to it, and saw the young lady; one leveled his gun to shoot her, but the other would not permit it. She got out, and with such haste that she left her bonnet and shoes, and started for the chaparral. Another soldier saw her running, pursued her with his horse, poised his lance, and was in the act of throwing it, when he was shot by one of our men, and thus she was rescued from a horrid death. Her carriage was plundered of all her clothing, money, and jewels. She remarked that she was reduced from wealth to poverty, having lost several hundred pounds of her own money, besides that of her father. She performed the march with us through the woods and thorny bushes with the greatest fortitude. Toward the last one of our men pulled off his own shoes, and gave them to her to wear. We afterward heard that General Urrea gave her twenty dollars, and sent her to Monterey. Several more of our men were coming in all the while, and bringing horrid accounts of the state of affairs. They said that the enemy were riding over the field, killing those who might be wound-

ed, and murdering those who might yet be found. No cries for mercy were of any avail; the groans of the wounded were heard with savage delight. After a long time, our two comrades, who had gone with the wounded teamster, returned, stating that they saw about fifteen hundred soldiers in and around the town. Captain S. was retained with the Mexican general, and did not join us for two or three days.

CHAPTER III.

Treatment of the Prisoners.—Marched to Caterita.—Saddle Mountain.—A Row.—Petty Plundering.—Plan of Escape.—Arrive at Urrera's Head-quarters.—Hard Treatment.—Don Juan.—Kindness of the Mexican Guard.—Occurrences round Mariné.—Proceedings at Head-quarters.—High expectations of the Enemy.—Addition to our Number.—Marched to Mont Morales.—Incidents.—Great change at Morales.—Quarrel with a Soldier.—Depart for San Luis Potosi.—Cruel Treatment.—Arrive at a Town.—Hostility of the Inhabitants.—Wounded Prisoners.—Statements of Mexican Officers.—Suffer from Heat and Dust.—Mountain Passes.—Our Persons searched.—Gloomy Surmises.—Appearance of the Country.—Remarkable Scene.—Receive kind Treatment from the People.—Great Scarcity of Water.—Severe Sufferings.—Generous Conduct of a Woman.—Means of procuring Water.—News of Buena Vista.—Arrival at San Luis Potosi.—Our Reception.

THE people at the rancho treated us kindly, especially the women. Our captors certainly were very much elated with what they termed this important capture. The soldiers appeared to be a sullen, savage-looking set. Frequently they would draw their hands across their throats, to intimate that we were to be thus put to death, saying, "Poco tiempo" (in a little time). This did not alarm us, as we were expecting just such treatment. At last they prepared to march us forward. We were formed into two ranks, and numbered about sixty. A strong guard was placed over us, well mounted and armed. No information was given as to where we were going; but on, on they marched at a rapid pace. At length