

through the cross-bars. At length sleep overcame us, and our troubles were forgotten.

Early the following morning our door was unlocked, and we were permitted to go into the yard. It was not large, yet it was sufficiently so to afford us good exercise. It also contained a well, and a large vat or tub, made for washing. At an early hour more provisions were brought for us, and our breakfast was soon prepared. At the moment the door was first opened, the soldier of whom I had on the previous evening bought the blanket came in, walked up to me, and coolly took it. I resisted, and was in the act of taking it from him, when he drew his sword, I suppose to frighten me. I at the same time drew a large pocket-knife that I had, having a blade about six inches long. Some of my comrades interfered, and forced me to give up the blanket. Had they not done so, I know not how the affair would have ended. But I gave it up; and when Don Juan came in, I told him of it. He called the soldier out, and reported him to the captain, who made him return the blanket, and gave him a severe flogging.

We remained at this place two days; and on the morning of the third we were awakened long before day, and ordered to turn out, cook our breakfast, and prepare for a march. About daybreak we were ready, and on we started, passing the massive gateways that held us confined like so many cattle.

Our march to-day was very rough, and over a distance of eighteen leagues; water was to be had but twice on the route. Our guard hastened us on at a rapid pace, as though anxious to hurry us from the

place where we had, for the first time since our capture, received any thing like good treatment. Our route was along the foot of the mountains, and consequently rough, barren, and uninhabited.

Scenes of cruelty (some of which I can not put on these pages) occurred on this day, one or two of which I will relate. One of our company was sick, and unable to keep up. He fell behind, and was found by an officer, who was not attached to our guard, who whipped him with his sword until he could scarcely stand, and was utterly disabled from moving. His hands were then tied together, and by them he was hung on the pommel of the saddle of this gallant official, and dragged along some three miles. From this intolerable and excruciating position he was at length relieved by the commanding officer, placed on a mule, and carried to the town whither we were going. As the day advanced it became excessively hot, and, having no water, our thirst was very great. Toward noon our eyes were gladdened with a stream; but imagine our disappointment when, instead of being allowed to drink, orders were given to move on. All our entreaties were of no avail; *they* had enough, and their hearts were deaf to our appeals. With sad forebodings we pressed onward. Not a word of complaint escaped our lips; for it was our firm resolve to bear all that they could inflict on us, and show them that, as American soldiers, we could suffer adverse fortune as well as achieve glory with our arms. We were proud of our situation, as no disgrace was entailed on us in our defeat, our force being thirty, and theirs one thousand.

About two o'clock we came to a hacienda or large farm-house, where we rested a while, and procured some water and a little provision. Orders were soon given to move on, and again we were picking our way through the chapparal. This was the first house we had seen since we left Mont Morales, and it was the last we should see until our arrival at Linares, a distance of near ten leagues. But *on, on* we traveled, occasionally cheered by the sight of a drove of wild horses, of which there were plenty.

At length we came to another stream, where we were allowed to rest a while—a favor as acceptable as a meal of victuals could have been at other times. Soon we started onward, and, ascending a high hill, we had a view of the place where we were destined to pass the night. We had still a great distance to travel before we could hope for rest, yet the sight infused fresh vigor into our limbs; the burning sun and the clouds of dust that rolled up before us no longer served to depress our spirits, and we cheerfully obeyed the orders to quicken our march. At last the sun, whose heat had scorched our bodies for two thirds of the day, went down, and a deep gloom succeeded, but the atmosphere was cool and invigorating. By the faint glimmerings of lights, the outline of a town could now be discerned, and at length we reached the suburbs. There we met a large concourse of citizens, who came out to gaze on men belonging to the armies which had gained such signal victories over them. The populace became excited, and an attempt was made to break the guard and massacre us; but, by the vigilance of the officers and the exertions of

our guard, we were saved from destruction. In this attempt several Mexicans were wounded severely; and from the curses and execrations with which we were greeted as we passed along, it was evident that they were highly exasperated against us; but we arrived safely at the quarters assigned us. Here, also, we found provisions awaiting us, but we were so tired and exhausted that we could hardly move. Some lay down on the ground and went to sleep; others, who were more hardy, prepared some coffee, meat, and tortillas. After eating we immediately lay down, and soon forgot that we were prisoners.

Several of our men had been wounded seriously when we were captured, and their wounds were dressed but once since they were taken. I was now called to go and dress them, as it was known that I had spent some time in the study of medicine and surgery. On the march they had been allowed to ride, and to mess with our officers; so they got on quite comfortably. Some materials were procured, which I proceeded to use to the best of my ability. Their wounds, I found, were in a very bad condition, owing to neglect and the warm weather; but, as they were now dressed daily, they healed rapidly, and in the course of four weeks they were completely healed.

Our quarters at this place were superior to any we before had. The town is large and regularly built; the houses are generally but one story high, and, like all other Mexican towns, they have flat roofs, with battlements. Of our treatment at this place we were not disposed to complain; we had plenty to eat and drink; and though we lay on the cold, hard

ground, yet, as prisoners of war, what better could we expect at the hands of this barbarous people? While here, we were joined by eight more prisoners, making our present number eighty; these informed us of the victories of our arms at Mariné and Cold Water. Bad as was our condition, we heartily rejoiced over these successes; for, from the time of our capture, the Mexican officers were continually telling us that they were going to retake all the towns occupied by the Americans; that Santa Anna was going to Saltillo with 22,000 men; that Taylor and all his army would soon be prisoners; that 40,000 choice troops were going to Vera Cruz; 20,000 were going to California, &c. They told us a thousand stories of this kind—that a storm was gathering, and about to burst on our victorious arms, the substance of which was, that they would come on us as an avalanche, armed with irresistible power, and with one mighty stroke hurl us from our lofty height, crush us, and consign us to eternal oblivion. All this gasconade served only to amuse us, and beguile the many weary hours which passed; for we well knew that the reverse was the case, and all their boasting gave us no uneasiness.

We stayed here two days, and then started for San Luis Potosi, a distance of thirty days' march. Our first day's march was short (only fifteen leagues), but unusually rough, dreary, and fatiguing. The country was uninhabited and uncultivated; the mountains in front, and a dense chapparal on our sides, was all the eye could see. The sun was intensely hot; the dust rolled up in clouds above us; no wa-

ter was to be had, and our sufferings were extreme. Our guard had plenty of water, but from them none could be had. On, on they pressed us, like so many beasts, perfectly regardless of our sufferings.

At night we stopped at a large hacienda, at the foot of the mountains. There were few buildings of any sort, and but one which deserved the name of house. In this one we were quartered. It was situated in a gap of the mountains, through which we were to pass on the morrow. In the rear and in front were mountains of immense height, the former rising gradually, the latter almost perpendicularly to a height not greater than that of the others; and the scene was both grand and sublime. After partaking of a scanty supper of half-roasted meat, we were paraded in front of the place destined for our lodging. Then our interpreter came and said that we must all give up our knives, adding that they would be given to us on our arrival at San Luis. He added, that we must also submit to be searched. All our pockets were accordingly rummaged, and knives, money, and every thing else was taken. Some had valuable papers, which were also taken. This, I have good reason to suppose, was done by authority of the officers. What reason they had for so doing, I know not; but we certainly expected that we must now quietly submit to have our throats cut, having been repeatedly told, since our capture, that such was to be our fate, notwithstanding their many assurances that we should be protected. We remembered the fate of the prisoners of the Alamo, and of Fanning and his brave comrades on the bloody fields of Texas. But it was our

firm resolve that, if we had to die, we should do so with arms in our hands; we should have turned on our guard, seized some of their arms, and dealt death at every blow around us to the utmost of our power.

After this act of official robbery, we were ordered to our rooms, counted as we passed in, and then locked up. Then did the comforts we once enjoyed around our fathers' firesides present themselves before us in bold relief—in striking contrast to our present situation: a captivity to which we saw no end, and a combination of miseries to which we saw no bounds, save death.

The next morning we were awakened early, and immediately ordered to fall into line and move onward, which we accordingly did. We were now to go through one of the passes, of which there are so many in these mountains. It was, most of the way, narrow, and extremely rough and rocky; now climbing steep precipices, then descending into deep defiles, and then proceeding along sharp ledges of rock. The thorny bushes which hemmed us in on each side proved destructive to our clothes; and the craggy rocks were fast destroying the last remnants of our shoes, and none of us could boast of a sufficiency of covering to protect us from the heat of the day and the chilling blast of night.

Our path was cheered by an occasional hut, occupied by shepherds; and we saw large flocks of sheep and goats grazing on the mountains.

A sharp turn in the road brought us in view of one of the most magnificent scenes I ever saw. We came into a sort of narrow lane, about twenty feet

wide, and about as many rods long, and perfectly level on the bottom. On each side, a perpendicular rock, smooth as mason-work, rose to an immense height. One of our number, who was a surveyor, said that, in his opinion, it could not be less than one thousand feet in height. At the further end of this wall, a perfect arch was formed over the road. Here we halted a moment, and gazed with wonder and admiration on this specimen of Omnipotent power. One of our number at length remarked that the Almighty must have done his best here in creating this stupendous scene.

Orders now were given to march, and we passed on through this arch. We began again to climb, and then descend mountains. Not unfrequently we came to a chasm, deep and dark, over which we were forced to leap, there being no other way by which to pass it; and, fortunately, we all passed them safely. About sunset we arrived at a small town, having traveled but eight leagues that day; but, as might be expected, we were excessively wearied.

At this town good quarters were provided for us, and very good fare; the people we found to be kind and generous, as they voluntarily gave us many things of which we stood in great need, and which we had no means to get. This was the first time that we had received any favor from the inhabitants; and we were informed by our interpreter that we would find them more favorably disposed toward us as we advanced into the country. We were also told that henceforth there would be a great scarcity of water, and that our marches would consequently be much

longer, averaging from fifteen to twenty leagues per day. How the people here supported themselves is to me a mystery, as the land is not capable of irrigation, being altogether too broken and hilly; and I saw no cultivated land but a few small patches, that appeared to be garden spots. They might, however, have been engaged in mining among the mountains through which we had passed. These are said to be abundantly supplied with the precious metals. Be this as it may, the town is a neat, thrifty-looking place.

The next day we marched twenty leagues, nothing having occurred worthy of note, except that we lost our way by the carelessness of our guide, which caused us some extra traveling. Between a burning sun, clouds of dust, raging thirst, and hungry stomachs, this was aggravating enough; but we were hurried along, without even once stopping until after dark, when, more dead than alive, we dragged our weary limbs, as best we could, into the quarters assigned us.

We passed a weary and almost sleepless night; and early the next morning we were aroused, and ordered to get breakfast, and prepare for a long march. This was more tedious than the preceding day's, on account of the extreme dustiness and heat, but still no one gave out until toward night, when three fell down, utterly parched for want of water, and completely disabled from proceeding. I was one of the number. Well do I remember the agony of that moment, when death stared us in the face, and we expected to bid a long farewell to friends, home, and

comrades. We were suddenly aroused by the voice of one of the officers, ordering us onward; but our attempts to rise were vain, until he drew his sword and severely flogged us. We eventually succeeded in reaching camp, but in a condition not to be envied. Just before reaching our quarters, in passing along a street, I saw a woman giving water to some of our men. I started to go and get some also; but the guard again drew his sword, and forced me on. The woman, seeing this, filled her gourd, and hastily brought it to me. I drank it off, and would have drunk more, could it have been got. For this generous act I could only return my thanks. But, had I been possessed of the wealth of the Indies, I would have relinquished it to her. As our general treatment was bad, I take great pleasure in recording such marked instances, where we were treated as human beings in distress.

Wherever we found a village we usually saw a large tank, which would fill during the rainy season, and afford them a sufficient supply of water for the dry season. As for springs and streams, none were to be seen, although we were in the midst of hills and mountains.

In addition to want of water, our sufferings were increased from the fact that what little clothing we had left us was now wearing out. Many had no shoes, others had no hats, few had coats, and *none* had clothing sufficient to make them comfortable, and we were many times forced to sleep out of doors, exposed to the chilling blasts of the mountain winds.

About this time we heard of the great battle of

Buena Vista; our interpreter merely told us that Santa Anna was forced to retreat. This we guessed; for none would believe that the one-legged chieftain, with his 22,000 choice troops, could cope with the hero of Palo Alto and Monterey, with his five thousand volunteers. We were encouraged by this news to hope for a speedy exchange.

At last San Luis Potosi, the long-wished-for place, hove in sight; it was a long way off, but there we were to rest. In the joy of the moment, our fatigues were forgotten, and we hurried on, anxious to behold the second city of Mexico both in population and wealth. We arrived at the city, but could see nothing, as we were hurried at a rapid pace to the quartel, escorted by a band of music, and saluted with the shouts of the citizens, and the gibes and jeers of the soldiers. After marching us through several streets like a drove of cattle till their curiosity was satisfied, they at last took us to our quarters.

## CHAPTER IV.

Mexican Army return from Buena Vista.—Hard Treatment of the Prisoners.—March southward.—Rich Mexican.—Appearance of the Country.—Hospitality of the People.—Escorted toward Mexico by a Division of the Army.—Condition of the Mexican Forces.—Mineral Wealth.—Arrive at Queretaro.—Our Condition there.—Relieved by the Charity of some Citizens.—Description of the Town.—Aqueducts, Squares, Market, and Convent.—Religious Festival.—Our Liberty abridged.—The Cause.—Attempt to Escape.—It Fails.—The Result.—Sickness.—Depart for Mexico.—I am left at San Juan del Rio.—Delirium and Insensibility.—Recovery.—Sad Condition.—Kindness of Visitors.—Hospitality of the Doctor.—He becomes my Instructor in Spanish, and learns English of me.—He makes a surprising Discovery.—Introduced to a Priest and several Citizens of the higher Classes.—Different Conduct of the lower Classes.—Difficulties with them.—Generosity of the Priest.—Short Rations.—Learn a Trade and commence Work.—Discouraging Result.—Debarred from proceeding with other Prisoners.—Description of San Juan del Rio.—Domestic Arrangements of the People.—Generous Offer.—A Ball.—Religious Discussion.—Mexican Generals.—Santa Anna.—Account of Captain Gonzalez.—The San Patricio Company.—Various Views regarding the War.—Dismay and Rejoicing.—Results of the Capture of Mexico.

THE Mexican army had just returned from Buena Vista, and from some deserters from the American army, who had fought with the Mexicans, we learned that Santa Anna had been totally routed, and in killed, wounded, and deserters, had suffered a loss of near one half of his army; also that he was now raising new forces, and endeavoring to collect a still larger army, determined to overwhelm General Scott. A part of the army was quartered in the same quartel with us, though they were separated from us.