

### ADDITIONAL CHAPTER.

Causes of the present war—Mexican spoliations—Annexation of Texas to the United States—Palo Alto—Resaca de la Palma—Monterey—Buena Vista—Vera Cruz—Cerro Gordo.

ALMOST from the commencement of the Mexican republic, outrages on the persons and property of American citizens have been committed in Mexico, and redress has always been either positively refused, or so delayed that both there and in the United States the idea became current that such violations of the laws of nations were to be overlooked and unpunished.

This course on the part of Mexico was especially disgraceful, as the United States had been the first nation to recognise her separate existence, and American citizens had fought well in more than one of the battles of her revolution. The many changes of the executive brought no change of policy, and our countrymen began to look on the state of things as hopeless.

Often trivial pretexts were made use of to justify these acts, and a shadow of provocation sometimes found in the adventurous character of American merchants and seamen, who, altogether unused to civil war at home, could not be brought to respect blockades where both parties fought under the same flag, and were equally loud in their professions of love to a common country.

This state of things was endured patiently by the

government and people of this country, because both the one and the other were unwilling to add to the burdens of Mexico, and hoped that a calmer day would break over the sister republic, and a season of peace at home enable her to attend to her foreign obligations.

On the 5th of April, 1831, a treaty of amity and navigation was concluded between the republics; but almost before the ink on the parchment was dry, fresh outrages were perpetrated, so that within six years after that date, General Jackson, in a message to Congress, declared that they had become intolerable, and that the honor of the United States required that Mexico should be taught to respect our flag.

He declared that war should not be used as a remedy "by just and generous nations confiding in their strength for injuries committed, if it can be honorably avoided;" and added, "it has occurred to me that considering the present embarrassed condition of that country, we should act with both wisdom and moderation, by giving to Mexico one more opportunity to atone for the past, before we take redress into our own hands. To avoid all misconception on the part of Mexico, as well as to protect our national character from reproach, this opportunity should be given with the avowed design and full preparation to take immediate satisfaction, if it should not be obtained on a repetition of the demand for it. To this end I recommend that an act be passed authorizing reprisals, and the use of the naval force of the United States, by the executive, against Mexico, to enforce them in the event of a refusal by the Mexican government to come to an amicable adjustment of the matters in controversy between us, upon another demand thereof, made from on board of one of our vessels of war on the coast of Mexico."



Both houses of congress coincided with him; but the senate recommended, the house of representatives concurring, that another demand be made, which, should it be disregarded, would justify the United States in taking into their own hands the redress of the many injuries they had received.

Immediately, a special messenger was despatched to Mexico, to make a final demand for redress; and on the 20th of July, 1837, the demand was made. The reply of the Mexican government on the 29th of the same month, contains assurances of the "anxious wish" of the Mexican government, "not to delay the moment of that final and equitable adjustment which is to terminate the existing difficulties between the two governments;" that "nothing should be left undone which may contribute to the most speedy and equitable determination of the subjects which have so seriously engaged the attention of the American government;" that the "Mexican government would adopt, as the only guides for its conduct, the plainest principles of public right, the sacred obligations imposed by international law, and the religious faith of treaties;" and that "whatever reason and justice may dictate respecting each case will be done." The assurance was further given, that the decision of the Mexican government upon each cause of complaint, for which redress has been demanded, should be communicated to the government of the United States by the Mexican minister at Washington.

These solemn assurances, in answer to demands for redress, were never fulfilled. By making them, however, Mexico obtained further delay.

During the whole administration of Mr. Van Buren a similar state of affairs existed, and though the presi-

dent urged the adoption of decisive measures, yet from feelings of forbearance, and a disposition to avoid the presentation to the civilized world, of the two greatest republics of the universe, following the example of monarchical rulers, wrangling in forgetfulness of their true interest, congress hesitated.

On the 11th of April, 1839, a joint commission was appointed, which, however, was not organized until August 11th, 1840. The powers of the commission by the act creating it, terminated in February, 1842, and Mr. Polk, in his last annual message, thus characterizes its conduct:

"Four of the eighteen months were consumed in preliminary discussions on frivolous and dilatory points raised by the Mexican commissioners; and it was not until the month of December, 1840, that they commenced the examination of the claims of our citizens upon Mexico. Fourteen months only remained to examine and decide upon these numerous and complicated cases. In the month of February, 1842, the term of the commission expired, leaving many claims undisposed of for want of time. The claims which were allowed by the board, and by the umpire authorized by the convention to decide in case of disagreement between the Mexican and American commissioners, amounted to two millions twenty-six thousand one hundred and thirty-nine dollars and sixty-eight cents. There were pending before the umpire when the commission expired additional claims which had been examined and awarded by the American commissioners, and had not been allowed by the Mexican commissioners, amounting to nine hundred and twenty-eight thousand six hundred and twenty-seven dollars and eight cents, upon which he did not decide, alleging that his authority had ceased



with the termination of the joint commission. Besides these claims, there were others of American citizens, amounting to three millions three hundred and thirty-six thousand eight hundred and thirty-seven dollars and five cents, which had been submitted to the board, and upon which they had not time to decide before their final adjournment.

"The sum of two millions twenty-six thousand one hundred and thirty-nine dollars and sixty-eight cents, which had been awarded to the claimants, was a liquidated and ascertained debt due by Mexico, about which there could be no dispute, and which she was bound to pay according to the terms of the convention. Soon after the final awards for this amount had been made, the Mexican government asked for a postponement of the time of making the payment at the time stipulated. In the spirit of forbearing kindness towards a sister republic, which Mexico has so long abused, the United States promptly complied with her request. A second convention was accordingly concluded between the two governments on the 30th of January, 1843, which upon its face declares, that 'this new arrangement is entered into for the accommodation of Mexico.' By the terms of this convention, all the interest due on the awards which had been made in favor of the claimants under the convention of the 11th of April, 1839, was to be paid to them on the 30th of April, 1843, and the 'principal of the said awards, and the interest accruing thereon,' was stipulated to 'be paid in five years, in equal instalments every three months.' Notwithstanding this new convention was entered into at the request of Mexico, and for the purpose of relieving her from embarrassment, the claimants have only received the interest due on the 30th of April, 1843, and three of the

twenty instalments. Although the payment of the sum thus liquidated, and confessedly due by Mexico to our citizens as indemnity for acknowledged acts of outrage and wrong, was secured by treaty, the obligations of which are ever held sacred by all just nations, yet Mexico has violated this solemn engagement by failing and refusing to make the payment. The two instalments due in April and July, 1844, under the peculiar circumstances connected with them, have been assumed by the United States and discharged to the claimants, but they are still due by Mexico. But this is not all of which we have just cause of complaint. To provide a remedy for the claimants whose cases were not decided by the joint commission under the convention of April the 11th, 1839, it was expressly stipulated by the sixth article of the convention of the 30th of January, 1843, that "a new convention be entered into for the settlement of all claims of the government and citizens of the United States against the republic of Mexico which were not finally decided by the late commission, which met in the city of Washington, and of all claims of the government and citizens of Mexico against the United States."

"In conformity with this stipulation, a third convention was concluded and signed at the city of Mexico on the 20th of November, 1843, by the plenipotentiaries of the two governments, by which provision was made for ascertaining and paying these claims. In January, 1844, this convention was ratified by the senate of the United States with two amendments, which were manifestly reasonable in their character. Upon a reference to the amendments proposed to the government of Mexico, the same evasions, difficulties, and delays were interposed which have so long marked the policy of that government towards the United States. It has not even



yet decided whether it would or would not accede to them, although the subject has been repeatedly pressed upon its consideration."

By failing to carry out the stipulations of this last convention, Mexico again outraged the government of the United States.

This long series of outrages was no doubt a reason for war, but it may be doubted if it produced the existing hostilities with Mexico. It has ever been the policy of the United States to recognise all governments existing *de facto*, a rule which induced Mr. Monroe to recommend the institution of diplomatic intercourse with Mexico, and all the South American republics, as soon as they had exhibited to the world their capacity to defend themselves. Mexico should not complain that the United States pleased to recognise Texas as free and independent, since it followed as a corollary from the conduct of the same government towards herself. On the 21st day of April, 1836, Santa Anna had been defeated by Houston, since when a Mexican soldier has never been in Texas; and in May, 1836, the president of Mexico, in a solemn treaty, recognised the independence of that republic. It is not pretended that that treaty is binding on Mexico, which never ratified it, except so far that it estops her from complaining if other nations follow the example of the chief magistrate of Mexico, and look on the rebel province as a sovereign state.

On the 29th day of December, 1845, Texas was admitted into the North American Union, as the government understood it, embracing all the territory ceded to Spain by the Florida treaty of 1819, and also that territory beyond the Neuces over which the republic of Texas had exercised sovereign rights.

Mr. Polk, in his message, thus defines the pretensions of the United States:

"The congress of Texas, on the 19th of December, 1836, passed 'an act to define the boundaries of the republic of Texas,' in which they declared the Rio Grande, from its mouth to its source, to be their boundary; and by the said act they extended their 'civil and political jurisdiction' over the country up to that boundary. During a period of more than nine years, which intervened between the adoption of her constitution and her annexation as one of the states of the Union, Texas asserted and exercised many acts of sovereignty and jurisdiction over the territory and inhabitants west of the Neuces. She organized and defined the limits of counties extending to the Rio Grande. She established courts of justice, and extended her judicial system over the territory. She established a custom-house, and collected duties, and also post offices and post roads, in it. She established a land office, and issued numerous grants for land, within its limits. A senator and a representative residing in it were elected to the congress of the republic, and served as such before the act of annexation took place. In both the congress and convention of Texas, which gave their assent to the terms of annexation to the United States proposed by our congress, were representatives residing west of the Neuces, who took part in the act of annexation itself. This was the Texas which, by the act of our congress of the 29th of December, 1845, was admitted as one of the states of our Union. That the congress of the United States understood the state of Texas which they admitted into the union to extend beyond the Neuces, is apparent, from the fact that on the 31st of December,



1845, only two days after the act of admission, they passed a law 'to establish a collection district in the state of Texas,' by which they created a port of delivery at Corpus Christi, situated west of the Neuces, and being the same point at which the Texas custom-house, under the laws of the republic, had been located, and directed that a surveyor to collect the revenue should be appointed for that port by the president, by and with the advice and consent of the senate. A surveyor was accordingly nominated, and confirmed by the senate, and has been ever since in the performance of his duties. All these acts of the republic of Texas, and of our congress, preceded the orders for the advance of our army to the east bank of the Rio Grande. Subsequently congress passed an act 'establishing certain post routes,' extending west of the Neuces."

It is not unlikely there would have been no war, at least immediately, had not the United States occupied the country west of the Neuces, which was done by General Taylor, who encamped at Corpus Christi in August, 1845, where the army remained until March 1846, when it moved westward to the east bank of the Rio Grande, opposite Matamoras. While these movements were being made, an agent of the United States, Mr. Slidell, was in Mexico insisting on being received as a plenipotentiary, while Mexico would only recognise him as a commissioner, a circumstance which produced much acrimonious discussion in both republics.

On the 4th of March, Paredes, then president, through his secretary of war ordered the Mexican general on the Texan frontier to attack the army of the United States.

General Arista at once obeyed his orders by rendering

it no longer doubtful that the two armies were in a state of hostility. After several skirmishes, in one of which Captain Thornton was captured with a squadron of dragoons, in another, Lieutenant Porter, of the fourth infantry, was killed, and a gallant officer of Texas troops had a narrow escape, Fort Brown, a strong work thrown up by General Taylor opposite Matamoras, was attacked by a powerful force under cover of the ordnance of the city, and a strong battery erected by the Mexicans during the night of the 4th. The bombardment lasted during the 6th (when the commander of the fort, Major Brown, was killed); and during the 8th, when under the command of Major Hawkins, the garrison continued to make good their defence. They were successful; and during the day the firing told them General Taylor was engaged with the main Mexican army.

During the events which transpired in front of Fort Brown, both armies had been busy, General Taylor having gone to the assistance of Point Isabel, which was menaced by the Mexican force, and from which he expected to obtain supplies for the rest of his troops. The force of the American general was small; but rarely has any commander led better troops to battle than Taylor, on the 8th of May, arrayed in front of the opposing force; on the right was the light artillery of Ringgold, a battalion of fifth and third infantry, on the left another light battery, commanded by Duncan, and battalions of the fourth and eighth infantry, all veteran troops, which, during the war in Florida, had undergone the baptism of fire, and been subjected to all the ordeals incident to a partisan war. The cavalry was held in reserve.

The enemy numbered six thousand men. The first prominent movement they made was an attempt to pass



around the *chapparal* which protected the right of the American forces, and attack the train with supplies. This effort was foiled by the fifth foot, which wheeled into square, received the charge of the Mexican lancers, and sent them to the right-about with a volley which did no little execution. The lancers were, however, again rallied and brought to the attack, when the third infantry, in column of divisions, met them. They immediately retired after receiving the fire of a section of light artillery commanded by Lieutenant Ridgely, which had been detached from Ringgold's battery.

The left of the enemy was mowed down by the American artillery, though the eighth foot suffered much from the Mexican fire. The result of the day was that the American right occupied the ground on which the enemy had originally stood. This was the result of the battle of Palo Alto.

On the 9th of May, Gen. Taylor collected his own and the enemy's wounded into one hospital, among whom were many gallant officers; and moved in pursuit of the retreating enemy towards Resaca de la Palma.

This battle was essentially one of the bayonet and sabre, assisted by the artillery. Here it was that May made his famous charge, which already has become celebrated as the deeds of Cromwell's ironsides, and the assaults of Lee's legion. He lost at least one-half of his men, but was lucky enough to take the battery he assaulted, and with it the Mexican General Romulo de la Vega. The enemy subsequently retook this battery; but, at the end of the day, it was in possession of the fifth regiment of United States infantry, which captured it at the point of the bayonet, a second time.

The following are General Taylor's despatches, giving an account of these battles:—

HEAD-QUARTERS ARMY OF OCCUPATION, }  
Camp at Palo Alto, Texas, May 9, 1846. }

SIR: I have the honor to report that I was met near this place yesterday, on my march from Point Isabel, by the Mexican forces, and after an action of about five hours, dislodged them from their position and encamped upon the field. Our artillery, consisting of two eighteen pounders and two light batteries, was the arm chiefly engaged, and to the excellent manner in which it was manœuvred and served, is our success mainly due.

The strength of the enemy is believed to have been about 6000 men, with seven pieces of artillery, and 800 cavalry. His loss is probably at least one hundred killed. Our strength did not exceed, all told, twenty-three hundred, while our loss was comparatively trifling—four men killed, three officers and thirty-seven men wounded, several of the latter mortally. I regret to say that Major Ringgold, 2d artillery, and Captain Page, 4th infantry, are severely wounded. Lieutenant Luther, 2d artillery, slightly so.

The enemy has fallen back, and it is believed has re-passed the river. I have advanced parties now thrown forward in his direction, and shall move the main body immediately.

In the haste of this report, I can only say that the officers and men behaved in the most admirable manner throughout the action. I shall have the pleasure of making a more detailed report when those of the different commanders shall be received.

I am, sir, very respectfully,  
Your obedient servant,

Z. TAYLOR,

*Brevet Brigadier-General U. S. A., Commanding.*

The ADJUTANT-GENERAL, U. S. Army, }  
Washington, D. C. }



HEAD-QUARTERS ARMY OF OCCUPATION,  
Camp at Resaca de la Palma, 3 miles from  
Matamoras, 10 o'clock, P.M., May 9, 1846.

SIR: I have the honor to report that I marched with the main body of the army at two o'clock to-day, having previously thrown forward a body of light infantry into the forest which covers the Matamoras road. When near the spot where I am now encamped, my advance discovered that a ravine crossing the road had been occupied by the enemy with artillery. I immediately ordered a battery of field artillery to sweep the position, flanking and sustaining it by the 3d, 4th, and 5th regiments, deployed as skirmishes to the right and left. A heavy fire of artillery and of musketry was kept up for some time, until finally the enemy's batteries were carried in succession by a squadron of dragoons and the regiments of infantry that were on the ground. He was soon driven from his position, and pursued by a squadron of dragoons, battalion of artillery, 3d infantry, and a light battery, to the river. Our victory has been complete. Eight pieces of artillery, with a great quantity of ammunition, three standards, and some one hundred prisoners have been taken; among the latter, General La Vega, and several other officers. One general is understood to have been killed. The enemy has recrossed the river, and I am sure will not again molest us on this bank.

The loss of the enemy in killed has been most severe. Our own has been very heavy, and I deeply regret to report that Lieutenant Inge, 2d dragoons, Lieutenant Cochrane, 4th infantry, and Lieutenant Chadbourne, 8th infantry, were killed on the field. Lieutenant-Colonel Payne, 4th artillery; Lieutenant-Colonel McIntosh, Lieu-

tenant Dobbins, 3d infantry; Captain Hooe and Lieutenant Fowler, 5th infantry; and Captain Montgomery, Lieutenants Gates, Selden, McClay, Burbank, and Jordan, 8th infantry, were wounded. The extent of our loss in killed and wounded is not yet ascertained, and is reserved for a more detailed report.

The affair of to-day may be regarded as a proper supplement to the cannonade of yesterday; and the two taken together, exhibit the coolness and gallantry of our officers and men in the most favorable light. All have done their duty, and done it nobly. It will be my pride, in a more circumstantial report of both actions, to dwell upon particular instances of individual distinction.

It affords me peculiar pleasure to report, that the field work opposite Matamoras has sustained itself handsomely during a cannonade and bombardment of 160 hours. But the pleasure is alloyed with profound regret at the loss of its heroic and indomitable commander, Major Brown, who died to-day from the effects of a shell. His loss would be a severe one to the service at any time, but to the army under my orders it is indeed irreparable. One officer and one non-commissioned officer killed, and ten men wounded, comprise all the casualties incident to this severe bombardment.

I inadvertently omitted to mention the capture of a large number of pack-mules left in the Mexican camp.

I am, sir, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

Z. TAYLOR,

*Brevet Brigadier-General U. S. A. Commanding.*

The ADJUTANT-GENERAL of the Army, }  
Washington, D. C. }



In the interim Fort Brown had been summoned, and the garrison been informed that Taylor was defeated. The lie was, however, unproductive, as both officers and men knew better, having served with Taylor in the everglades, and knew he was emphatically one of those who might die, but never surrender.

The following is the bulletin of the Mexican commander to his superior, a strange contrast to the simplicity and terseness of the successful general:

GENERAL-IN-CHIEF,

**MOST EXCELLENT SIR:** Constant in my purpose of preventing General Taylor from uniting the forces which he brought from the Fronton of Santa Isabel, with those which he left fortified opposite Matamoras, I moved this day from the Fanques del Raminero, whence I despatched my last extraordinary courier, and took the direction of Palo Alto, as soon as my spies informed me that the enemy had left Fronton, with the determination of introducing into his fort wagons loaded with provisions and heavy artillery.

I arrived opposite Palo Alto about one o'clock, and observed that the enemy was entering that position.

With all my forces, I established the line of battle in a great plain, my right resting upon an elevation, and my left on a slough of difficult passage.

Scarcely was the first cannon fired, when there arrived General Pedro de Ampudia, second in command, whom I had ordered to join me after having covered the points which might serve to besiege the enemy in the forts opposite Matamoras.

The forces under my orders amounted to three thousand men, and twelve pieces of artillery; those of the

invaders were three thousand, rather less than more, and were superior in artillery, since they had twenty pieces of the calibre of sixteen and eighteen pounds.

The battle commenced so ardently, that the fire of cannon did not cease a single moment. In the course of it, the enemy wished to follow the road towards Matamoras, to raise the siege of his troops; with which object he fired the grass, and formed in front of his line of battle a smoke so thick, that he succeeded in covering himself from our view, but by means of manœuvres this was twice embarrassed.

General Taylor maintained his attack rather defensively than offensively, employing his best arm, which is artillery, protected by half of the infantry, and all of his cavalry—keeping the remainder fortified in the ravine, about two thousand yards from the field of battle.

I was anxious for the charge, because the fire of cannon did much damage in our ranks, and I instructed General D. Anastasio Torrejon to execute it with the greater part of the cavalry, by our left flank, while one should be executed at the same time by our right flank, with some columns of infantry, and the remainder of that arm [cavalry].

I was waiting the moment when that general should execute the charge, and the effect of it should begin to be seen, in order to give the impulse on the right; but he was checked by the fire of the enemy, which defended a slough that embarrassed the attack.

Some battalions, becoming impatient by the loss which they suffered, fell into disorder, demanding to advance or fall back. I immediately caused them to charge with a column of cavalry, under the command



of Colonel D. Cayetano Montero; the result of this operation being that the dispersed corps repaired their fault as far as possible, marching towards the enemy, who, in consequence of his distance, was enabled to fall back upon his reserve, and night coming on, the battle was concluded—the field remaining for our arms.

Every suitable measure was then adopted, and the division took up a more concentrated curve in the same scene of action.

The combat was long and bloody, which may be estimated from the calculations made by the commandant-general of artillery, General D. Thomas Requena, who assures me that the enemy threw about three thousand cannon-shots from two in the afternoon, when the battle commenced, until seven at night, when it terminated—six hundred and fifty being fired on our side.

The national arms shone forth, since they did not yield a hand's-breadth of ground, notwithstanding the superiority in artillery of the enemy, who suffered much damage.

Our troops have to lament the loss of two hundred and fifty-two men, dispersed, wounded, and killed—the last worthy of national recollection and gratitude for the intrepidity with which they died fighting for the most sacred of causes.

Will your excellency please with this note to report to his excellency the president, representing to him that I will take care to give a circumstantial account of this deed of arms; and recommending to him the good conduct of all the generals, chiefs, officers, and soldiers under my orders, for sustaining so bloody a combat, which does honor to our arms, and exhibits their discipline.

Accept the assurances of my consideration and great regard.

God and Liberty!

HEAD-QUARTERS, PALO ALTO, *in sight of the enemy*, May 8, 1846.

MARIANO ARISTA.

MOST EXCELLENT SIR,  
Minister of War and Marine. }

Many were the incidents of humanity which occurred and relieved the sternness of the battle-field, but which it scarcely belongs to our plan to relate.

The result of these battles was, that Matamoras surrendered, and General Taylor having been reinforced was enabled to march to Monterey, which he reached on the 19th of October, encamping at the Walnut Springs, within three miles of the city.

The attack was made, and after four days' continual fighting, General Ampudia, on the 24th of October, sent a commission proposing to surrender; and finally terms were agreed on by the representatives of the two generals, as follows:

*Terms of capitulation of the city of Monterey, the capital of Nuevo Leon*, agreed upon by the undersigned commissioners, to wit: General Worth, of the United States army, General Henderson, of the Texan volunteers, and Colonel Davis, of the Mississippi riflemen, on the part of Major-General Taylor, Commander-in-chief of the United States forces, and General Requena and General M. Llano, Governor of Nuevo Leon, on the part of Señor General Don Pedro Ampudia, commanding in chief the army of the north of Mexico.

ARTICLE I. As the legitimate result of the operations before this place, and the present position of the con-



tending armies, it is agreed that the city, the fortifications, cannon, the munitions of war, and all other public property, with the undermentioned exceptions, be surrendered to the commanding general of the United States forces now at Monterey.

ARTICLE II. That the Mexican forces be allowed to retain the following arms, to wit: the commissioned officers their side-arms, the infantry their arms and accoutrements, the cavalry their arms and accoutrements, the artillery one field battery, not to exceed six pieces, with twenty-one rounds of ammunition.

ARTICLE III. That the Mexican armed forces retire, within seven days from this date, beyond the line formed by the pass of Rinconada, the city of Linares, and San Fernando de Parras.

ARTICLE IV. That the citadel of Monterey be evacuated by the Mexican and occupied by the American forces to-morrow morning at ten o'clock.

ARTICLE V. To avoid collisions, and for mutual convenience, that the troops of the United States will not occupy the city until the Mexican forces have withdrawn, except for hospital and storage purposes.

ARTICLE VI. That the forces of the United States will not advance beyond the line specified in the 3d article, before the expiration of eight weeks, or until orders or instructions of the respective governments can be received.

ARTICLE VII. That the public property to be delivered, shall be turned over and received by officers appointed by the commanding generals of the two armies.

ARTICLE VIII. That all doubts as to the meaning of any of the preceding articles, shall be solved by an equitable construction, or on principles of liberality to the retiring army.

ARTICLE IX. That the Mexican flag, when struck at the citadel, may be saluted by its own battery.

Done at Monterey, Sept. 24, 1846.

W. J. WORTH,

*Brigadier-General United States Army.*

J. PINKNEY HENDERSON,

*Major-General commanding the Texan Volunteers.*

JEFFERSON DAVIS,

*Colonel Mississippi Riflemen.*

MANUEL L. LLANO,

T. REQUENA,

ORTEGA.

Approved,

Z. TAYLOR,

*Major-General United States Army, commanding.*

PEDRO AMPUDIA.

Rarely has it ever happened that any surrender has been made with which so much fault has been found. For yielding up Monterey, General Ampudia has been arraigned, and virtually suspended from command, because he did not properly support the interests of Mexico, while a large party in the United States have sought to censure General Taylor, and have by implication, done so, because he did not insist on an unconditional surrender. The probability is that injustice was done to both generals.

For want of troops and supplies, General Taylor was long detained at Monterey.

In the mean time the general-in-chief of the army had been ordered to assume the command of a large force prepared for the purpose of attacking Vera Cruz and the powerful fort of San Juan de Ulloa, with orders from Washington city to withdraw from General Taylor the regulars under his command, who had fought so gal-



lantly at Monterey and in the previous battles, the number of which was six hundred men. General Taylor, somewhat chagrined at the circumstance, immediately detached General Worth with them to join General Scott, and having learned that an attempt was about to be made to cut off his communication with Matamoras, he determined to advance and meet the Mexican president. On the 20th of February he was encamped at Agua Nueva, about eighteen miles south of Saltillo, where he learned that Santa Anna, at the head of twenty thousand men, was about twenty miles from him.

The American general at once fell back to an admirable position about seven miles from Saltillo, called Buena Vista.

On the 22d the American troops were in position with the Mexican cavalry in front of them.

General Taylor thus describes it: "Our troops were in position, occupying a line of remarkable strength. The road at this point becomes a narrow defile, the valley on its right being rendered quite impracticable for artillery by a system of deep and impassable gullies, while on the left a succession of rugged ridges and precipitous ravines extends far back toward the mountain which bounds the valley. The features of the ground were such as nearly to paralyze the artillery and cavalry of the enemy, while his infantry could not derive all the advantage of its numerical superiority. In this position we prepared to receive him. Captain Washington's battery (4th artillery) was posted to command the road, while the 1st and 2d Illinois regiments, under Colonels Hardin and Bissel, each eight companies (to the latter of which was attached Captain Conner's company of Texas volunteers), and the 2d Kentucky, under Colonel McKee, occupied the crests of the ridges on the left and

in rear. The Arkansas and Kentucky regiments of cavalry, commanded by Colonels Yell and H. Marshall, occupied the extreme left near the base of the mountain, while the Indiana brigade, under Brigadier-General Lane (composed of the 2d and 3d regiments, under Colonels Bowles and Lane), the Mississippi riflemen, under Colonel Davis, the squadrons of the 1st and 2d dragoons, under Captain Steen and Lieutenant-Colonel May, and the light batteries of Captains Sherman and Bragg, 3d artillery, were held in reserve."

At eleven o'clock, Santa Anna sent the following summons to General Taylor, which, with the reply, is subjoined:

*Summons of General Santa Anna to General Taylor.*

You are surrounded by twenty thousand men, and cannot, in any human probability, avoid suffering a rout, and being cut to pieces with your troops; but as you deserve consideration and particular esteem, I wish to save you from a catastrophe, and for that purpose give you this notice, in order that you may surrender at discretion, under the assurance that you will be treated with the consideration belonging to the Mexican character, to which end you will be granted an hour's time to make up your mind, to commence from the moment when my flag of truce arrives in your camp.

With this view, I assure you of my particular consideration.

God and Liberty. Camp at Encantada, February 22d, 1847.

ANTONIO LOPEZ DE SANTA ANNA.

To General Z. TAYLOR,  
Commanding the forces of the U. S. }



HEAD-QUARTERS ARMY OF OCCUPATION, }  
Near Buena Vista, February 22, 1847. }

SIR: In reply to your note of this date, summoning me to surrender my forces at discretion, I beg leave to say that I decline acceding to your request.

With high respect, I am, sir,

Your obedient servant,

Z. TAYLOR,

Major General U. S. Army, Commanding.

SEÑOR GEN. D. ANTONIO LOPEZ DE SANTA ANNA, }  
Commander-in-Chief, La Encantada. }

At night-fall many brave men had fallen. General Taylor was in possession of the field, and when morning came the enemy had retreated.

Among the dead none were more lamented than Captain George Lincoln, of the army, an assistant adjutant-general, and Colonels Hardin, McKee, and Yell, and lieutenant-colonel Clay, of the volunteers.

Santa Anna retreated, but he contrived to raise a report which represented him as victorious, too curious to be omitted. Even the Mexicans, however, did not believe it. The extracts which follow will suffice to show its tenor:

"On the 26th, after I had ordered General Minon to follow the movement, the army commenced its retreat with the view of occupying the first peopled localities, where resources might be obtained, such as Vanegas, Catorce, El Cadral, and Matehuala, as also Tula; but I doubt if in those places proper attention can be given to the sick and wounded—or the losses we have sustained in those laborious movements be remedied.

"The nation, for which a triumph has been gained at the cost of so many sufferings, will learn that, if we

were able to conquer in the midst of so many embarrassments, there will be no doubt as to our final success in the struggle we sustain, if every spirit but rallies to the one sacred object of common defence. A mere determined number of men will not, as many imagine, suffice for the prosecution of war; it is indispensable that they be armed, equipped, disciplined, and habituated, and that systematized support for such an organized force be provided. We must bear in mind that we have to combat in a region deficient of all resources, and that everything for subsistence has to be carried along with the soldiery: the good-will of a few will not suffice, but the co-operation of all is needed; and if we do not cast aside selfish interests and petty passions, we can expect nothing but disaster. The army, and myself who have led it, have the satisfaction of knowing that we have demonstrated this truth.

"Your excellency will be pleased to report to his excellency, the vice-president of the republic, and to present to him my assurance of respect.

"God and Liberty! Rancho de San Salvador, February 27th, 1847.

(Signed)

ANTONIO LOPEZ DE SANTA ANNA.

To His Excellency, the MINISTER OF WAR AND MARINE."

Santa Anna was beaten shamefully, and was glad to take advantage of a pronunciamiento, to quell which he went to Mexico.

In the mean time General Scott, aided by the naval forces, had landed his men, and after a bombardment of six days the city of Vera Cruz surrendered, with the castle of San Juan and all other dependencies, to his arms. The Mexican troops, commanded by Generals



Landero and Morales, laid down their arms and were paroled, and the American flag was raised over the city which never before had been in the power of an invader.

General Worth was appointed temporary governor of Vera Cruz, from which General Scott at once set out towards Mexico. On the 17th of April he approached the defile of Cerro Gordo, always reputed impregnable, and defended by Santa Anna with twenty thousand men, to oppose whom were twelve thousand Americans.

The following orders and despatch express the events of this day better than any other account or description can, and will place General Scott at the head of the great commanders of the age.

HEAD-QUARTERS OF THE ARMY, }  
Plain Del Rio, April 17, 1847. }

(General Orders, No. 111.)

The enemy's whole line of intrenchments and batteries will be attacked in front, and at the same time turned early in the day to-morrow—probably before ten o'clock, A. M.

The second (Twiggs's) division of regulars is already advanced within easy turning distance towards the enemy's left. That division has orders to move forward before daylight to-morrow, and take up position across the National Road to the enemy's rear, so as to cut off a retreat towards Jalapa. It may be reinforced to-day, if unexpectedly attacked in force, by regiments—one or two taken from Shields's brigade of volunteers. If not, the two volunteer regiments will march for that purpose at daylight to-morrow morning, under Brigadier-General Shields, who will report to Brigadier-General Twiggs on getting up with him, or the general-in-chief, if he be in advance.

The remaining regiment of that volunteer brigade will receive instructions in the course of this day.

The first division of regulars (Worth's) will follow the movement against the enemy's left at sunrise to-morrow morning.

As already arranged, Brigadier-General Pillow's brigade will march at six o'clock to-morrow morning, along the route he has carefully reconnoitred, and stand ready as soon as he hears the report of arms on our right—sooner, if circumstances should favor him—to pierce the enemy's line of batteries at such point—the nearer the river the better—as he may select. Once in the rear of that line, he will turn to the right or left, or both, and attack the batteries in reverse, or if abandoned, he will pursue the enemy with vigor until further orders.

Wall's field battery and the cavalry will be held in reserve on the National Road, a little out of view and range of the enemy's batteries. They will take up that position at nine o'clock in the morning.

The enemy's batteries being carried or abandoned, all our divisions and corps will pursue with vigor.

This pursuit may be continued many miles, until stopped by darkness or fortified positions towards Jalapa. Consequently, the body of the army will not return to this encampment, but be followed to-morrow afternoon, or early the next morning, by the baggage trains for the several corps. For this purpose, the feebler officers and men of each corps will be left to guard its camp and effects, and to load up the latter in the wagons of the corps.

As soon as it shall be known that the enemy's works have been carried, or that the general pursuit has been commenced, one wagon for each regiment, and one for the cavalry, will follow the movement, to receive, under