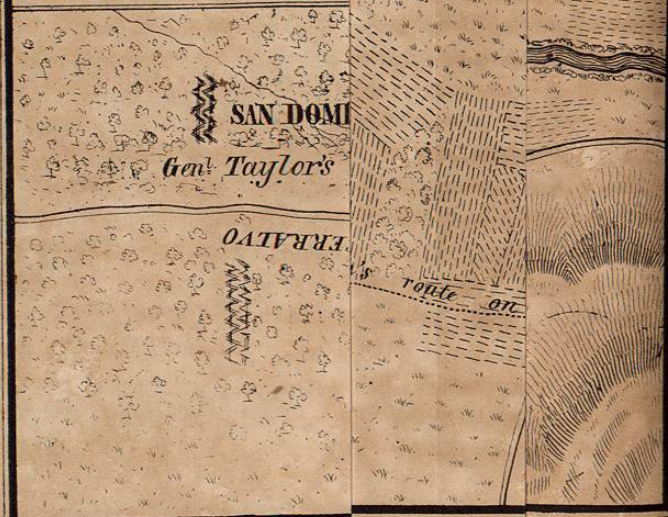


- EXPLANATION**
- A Mexican Ambuscade, afternoon
 - B Yard into which Mexicans fire
 - C Charge of Mexican Lancers on
 - D Position of 2^d Division on 21st
 - E Height stormed by Col. Childs on
 - F Bishop's Palace carried on 22^d
 - G Height stormed by Capt. Smith
 - H Redoubt stormed by Gen. Smith
 - I Arista's house and garden
 - J Church and cemetery, with loop
 - K Plazuela de Carne
 - L Small Plaza
 - M Grand Plaza
 - N Citadel
 - O Mortar.
 - PQR Positions occupied by our troops
 - 1 Tienari, a Redoubt of 4 guns at
 - of the 21st by 1st & 3^d Division
 - 2 El Diablo, a Redoubt of 3 guns.
 - 3 & 4 Breast work.
 - 5 Tête de Point
 - 6 Redoubt of 4 guns
 - 7 Redoubt of 3 guns
 - aaa Line of barricades
 - Buildings of different kinds
 - === These lines show the position of Chaparral.



From a map drawn by Lieut. Be

air's, Lith. Phila.

OUR ARMY AT MONTEREY.

CHAPTER I.

Movement towards Reynoso—Col. Wilson's command—Preaching in Mexico—The town of Reynoso—Canales—Steamers on the Rio Grande—Independence of Northern Mexico—High-water—4th of July celebration—Volunteer camp—City of Matamoros.

THE first movement that was made in demonstration of penetrating into the interior of Mexico, by American troops, which followed the events immediately connected with the battles of the "8th and 9th," 1846, occurred on the 5th of June, 1846, when Lieut. Col. Wilson, with the first regiment of U. S. Infantry, Capt. Thomas's Artillery, and Capt. Price's Texan Rangers, took up his line of march for Reynoso, a small town between sixty and seventy miles above Matamoros, on the Rio Grande. A few days previous to this event, the Alcalde and several important citizens of that town had waited on Gen. Taylor, offering a surrender of the place, and expressing a desire to come under the protection of the American flag. The Mexicans departed on their way homeward, evidently delighted with their visit to the Americans, but unfortunately for their happiness and longevity, they fell into the hands of Canales, who robbed them of their valuables, and, it is reported, showed his enthusiasm in the cause of his native land, by murdering the Alcalde.

This movement of Col. Wilson was the first step towards Monterey, the possession of which city Gen. Taylor considered important, as it commanded the passes in the mountains, that connected northern Mexico with the capital. On the Sabbath pre-

ceding the movement of Col. Wilson, Capt. R. A. Stewart, of the Andrew Jackson regiment of Louisiana Volunteers, a minister of the Methodist Episcopal church, preached at the head-quarters of Gen. Worth, on the west side of the Rio Grande. His congregation was composed of the officers and men of the regular army, and a few civilians. This sermon was the first preached by a Protestant clergyman in Mexico, and in the history of the religious movement in that country, will ever be one of interest.

Col. Wilson, with his command, arrived at Reyonoso, after a hot and fatiguing march of four days and a half, and immediately despatched the news to Gen. Taylor, stating that he had met with no resistance to his march.

The town was found to be situated on the west side of the river; it was built upon a solid limestone rock, and contained between eight hundred and a thousand inhabitants. The buildings presented quite a substantial appearance, and gave evidence of its having been in former times a place of some business activity. The inhabitants of the country generally were found to have abandoned their residences and removed into the interior. This was caused by proclamations from Monterey and elsewhere, notifying the inhabitants that they should be treated as "traitors" if they held any intercourse with the "invaders of the soil."

Col. Wilson, on his arrival at Reyonoso, was authorized to throw up intrenchments and fortify the place, but finding the *plaza* surrounded by heavy stone buildings, he occupied it, and without much trouble put it in such a state of defence, that he was relieved from all anxiety with respect to assault from the enemy.

The country through which our army passed was exceedingly beautiful, a mixture of chaparral, prairie, and rich land. The farm-houses looked miserable and in ruin. Every thing of nature's creation smiled; but man's work seemed to be under a curse, the curse of a miserable government, and of besotted ignorance among the people.

The establishment of Col. Wilson at Reyonoso was followed by the return of the inhabitants to their homes, who expressed a lively degree of pleasure that the Americans had arrived among

them for their protection. It seemed that Canales, who had been compelled to retire with his marauders, represented a class of worthies, (answering to the "cow-boys," of our Revolutionary history,) who preyed on the weak of either side; and that his proclamations against our advance were only issued to form groundwork for plundering his unoffending countrymen. Of this man it is said, that he joined Gen. Anaya, in 1839, with a colonel's command, in an attempt to revolutionize northern Mexico. With about five hundred Texians, he penetrated the country as far as Saltillo, and in the midst of storming that place, deserted the Texians, joined the "centralists," and thus defeated the object of the expedition.

Soon after the occupation of Reyonoso, steamers began to ply merrily upon the Rio Grande, much to the astonishment of the original inhabitants, and which, joined with the long wagon trains that were constantly moving up the country, gave every thing a bustling appearance. In earlier times, when Stephen Austin (so much identified with the early history of Texas) first received his immense grant of land from the Mexican government, he introduced a small steamer upon the river. It soon began to drive a most profitable trade, purchasing from the inhabitants many things before valueless for want of transportation; the muleteers, the "regular carriers," became alarmed, and petitioned the central government to abolish "the innovation;" they were successful, and the commerce of the river was thus checked in its advance towards prosperity.

The country was still unsettled; rumours constantly reached Reyonoso, that the Mexicans were preparing to attack that place. Carrabijol, a follower of Canales, was known to be scouring the country for horses, in order to organize a cavalry force.

There is foundation for believing, that at the very time our troops moved towards the Rio Grande, there was a concerted plan among the inhabitants of northern Mexico, to declare themselves independent of the central government, and this Carrabijol visited Gen. Taylor's camp at Corpus Christi, on a mission connected with this subject, but received no encouragement from the stern

old soldier. Arista was reputed among his own countrymen, for a long time, to be favorable to such a movement. He was a powerful citizen, and much dreaded by the government; his appointment to supersede Ampudia in the command of the northern army created much surprise, and, probably, awakened in Arista's breast a new ambition, for he believed that in crushing Gen. Taylor, who seemed to be within his grasp, he should not only be able to lead in the northern provinces, but extend his sway to the capital itself.

Although it was now drawing towards the end of June, and always considered "the dry season" in Mexico, the country was deluged with rain. The San Juan poured out its waters into the Rio Grande, as if all the fountains of the Sierra Madre had been broken up. The Rio Grande gradually rose over its banks, leaving but little part of the country above the flood. The green fields and rolling landscape, so recently dotted over with white tents, disappeared, leaving but a few small islands on which soldiers could cluster. Fort Brown became half filled with water, the ravine of the battle-field of Resaca de la Palma bore a rolling flood, which extended over Palo Alto and the surrounding prairies, quite cutting off all communication with Point Isabel. Enormous cat and gar-fish were seen floundering over the battle-fields, their voracious maws becoming the graves of the unburied dead.

A hot tropical sun poured down its fierce rays upon our troops, a large portion of whom were without proper tents; and many slept in the open air, surrounded with water; mosquitoes, and innumerable noxious insects of immense size, filled the air, and at night murdered sleep. In the midst of all these evils, as might have been expected, bilious and other fevers began to make their appearance among the soldiers. Volunteers, under the requisition of Major Gen. Gaines, continued to pour in from many of the United States. The means of transportation being unequal to the demand, Gen. Taylor found it impossible to make prompt movements towards the interior, in doing which, while prosecuting the war, he could have chosen healthy locations for the troops under his command.

The approach of our National Anniversary was hailed on the Rio Grande with unusual enthusiasm, and preparations were made to celebrate it with becoming splendour and appropriateness. The military array, the firing of the heavy cannon and other arms, so recently engaged in deadly strife; the active part taken by the heroes, whose laurels still proudly crowned their brows, made the circumstances under which it was to be commemorated peculiarly imposing. At daylight on the 4th of July, the spirit-stirring drum beat the *reveille* at daylight, at the various encampments, with unusual vivacity. The heavy eighteen pounders from Fort Brown, that had slumbered so profoundly since the "8th," announced, along the Rio Grande, that the anniversary of our glorious independence had returned; the heavy booming sounds were answered back from "Paredes," while Ridgely's, Duncan's, and Bragg's batteries added to the universal roar. Beneath the stars and stripes that waved over the head-quarters of Gen. Taylor, were heard the soul-inspiring strains of "Hail, Columbia," interrupted with repeated cheering from ten thousand Americans.

The principal point of attraction was in the camp opposite Matamoros, composed of two regiments of Louisiana volunteers, and the head-quarters of Gen. P. F. Smith, commanding the volunteer brigade; the mention of the ceremonies of which will serve as a type of the whole.

Breakfast fairly dispensed with, the troops met on full parade, and marched to head-quarters, where Gen. Taylor had already arrived to participate in the celebration. By particular request the Rev. W. H. Crenshaw, Chaplain to the Andrew Jackson Regiment, opened the ceremonies with an elegant and appropriate prayer, after which Wolman Nichols read the Declaration of Independence, followed by O. N. Ogden, who pronounced the oration,—these gentlemen being attached to Gen. Smith's staff. Gen. Taylor then reviewed the two regiments, and the multitude assembled to partake of the dinner prepared for the occasion.

The manner of serving it up is worthy of notice: it was characteristic of the time and place. The total want of timber in

Mexico makes plank almost impossible to obtain, it was therefore necessary to provide for a table in other than the usual manner. A piece of ground was accordingly marked out, sufficiently long and wide for the "hospitable board," on each side of which a trench was dug fifteen inches wide, and sufficiently deep to afford a comfortable seat. Upon the "præemption" appropriated for the table were laid matting and the "flags" of tents, and then the eatables and drinkables that were to be consumed in this novel and patriotic dinner. Precisely at noon, a national salute was again fired from the head-quarters of each regiment, on both sides of the river, when the officers of the regular and volunteer divisions of the army took their seats at the table.

The city of Matamoras presented a strange spectacle: all was bustle and confusion; advertisements on the fronts of the different houses announced "fourth of July dinners," and *fandangos* in "honour of the day." A company of mountebanks paraded the streets, and cut their fantastic tricks in the *Plaza*. After passing "their hat" around for remuneration, they struck up their rude music, which consisted of a bass drum and primitive clarionet. Decked in their feathers and gew-gaws, and headed by a little girl who stood upon the bare back of a mule, bearing a little flag on which was emblazoned *Compania del Norte*, they would for awhile thread the principal streets previous to another "grand performance."

At noon, to the surprise of the Americans, the cathedral bell commenced ringing, and the "sacred cannon" belonging to the church gave a salute; this was looked upon as a most cordial joining in of the natives, in the festivities of the day, as had previously been noticed in the universally gay attire of the citizens of the town, and the festival preparations in the grand plaza; but, upon inquiry, it was learned that the 4th of July was some "saint-day" in the Mexican calendar, that required these demonstrations.

CHAPTER II.

Movement of the Seventh Regiment—Paredes—Catholic clergymen arrive at Matamoras—Romance of the country—La Gran Quevira—Capt. Thornton's defence—Camargo—Amusing incident—Indians—Capt. Vinton—Mier—Description of it—Mier prisoners—The battle of the Texians—Evidences of the contest.

THE river was now slowly retiring within its banks, and the summer heat became unusually oppressive for the season, which bore heavily upon our soldiers.

On the 6th of July, the Seventh regiment, under command of Capt. Miles, left the walls of Fort Brown, which it had so long and so gallantly defended, and started for Camargo, *via* Reynoso.

The news of the election of Paredes to the Presidency of Mexico on the 12th of June, reached Matamoras. His address to Congress and the people of Mexico, and his asking leave to head the army against the "invaders of the North," revived the idea that the Mexicans would make a decided resistance. The war excitement began to prevail anew, and Monterey was looked forward to with increasing interest, because it was understood that there the enemy would probably make their first great demonstration in hostile array.

On the 8th day of July, two clergymen, the Rev. Messrs. McElroy and Rey, of the Roman Catholic church, appointed chaplains to the U. S. Army, for the soldiers belonging to that church, arrived in Matamoras.

A curious story was repeated along the Rio Grande about this time, which was remarkable for its romantic novelty, and for its evident intent, *viz.*: the invasion of the country. It was reported that in the interior there was buried treasure of immense amount. The idlers and hangers-on about the camps caught up the idea of seeking for it, and the prospect for a time was, that a party of as wild adventurers as the world ever saw, would be banded to-