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"LIBERTY AND MY NATIVE SOIL."

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CHARLES H. ALLEN,
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From the New Orleans Delta.

The Battle of Cerro Gordo.

On the arrival of the other Divisions of the army at the encampment of General Twiggs, on the 16th of April, Gen. Scott, after taking a reconnaissance of the enemy's works, determined to storm them. The position occupied by the enemy was regarded by them as impregnable, and truly, to any other than American soldiers it must have appeared an insurmountable and impracticable undertaking to carry it by storm, or turn it by strategy.

The road from Vera Cruz, as it passes the Plan del Rio, which is a wide, rocky bed of a once large stream, is commanded by a series of high cliffs, rising one above the other, and extending several miles, and all well fortified. The road then debouches to the right, and curving around the ridge, passes over a high cliff, which is completely enfiladed with forts and batteries. This ridge is the commencement of the *Terra Templada*, the upper or mountainous country. The high and rocky ravine of the river protected the right flank of the position, and a series of most abrupt and apparently impassable mountains and ridges covered their left. Between these points, running a distance of two or three miles, a succession of strongly fortified forts bristled at every turn, and seemed to defy all bravery and skill. The Cerro Gordo commanded the road on a gentle declivity, like a glacier, for nearly a mile an approach in that direction was impossible. A front attack must have terminated in the almost entire annihilation of our army. But the enemy expected such an attack, confiding in the desperate valor of our men, and believing that it was impossible to turn their position to the right or to the left. General Scott, however, with the eye of a skilful general, perceiving the trap set for him, and determined to avoid it. He therefore had a road cut to the right, so as to escape the front fire from the Cerro and turn his position on the left flank. This movement was made known to the enemy by a deserter, from our camp, and consequently a large increase of force under Gen. Vega was sent to the fort on their left. General Scott to cover his flank movements, on the 17th of April, ordered forward General Twiggs against the fort on the steep ascent, in front and a little to the left of the Cerro. Col. Harney commanded this expedition, and at the head of the Rifles and some detachments of infantry and artillery carried this position under a heavy fire of grape and musketry. Having secured this position in front and near the enemy's strongest fortification, and having by incredible labor elevated one of our largest guns to the top of the fort, Gen. Scott prepared to follow up his advantages. A demonstration was made from this position against another strong fort in the rear, and near the Cerro, but the enemy were considered too strong, and the undertaking was abandoned. A like demonstration was made by the enemy.

On the 18th, Gen. Twiggs moved forward from the position he occupied against the fort which commanded the Cerro. Simultaneously an attack was made on the enemy's left, by Generals Shields' and Worth's division, who moved in separate columns, whilst General Pillow advanced against the strong forts and difficult ascents on the right of the enemy's position. The enemy fully acquainted with Gen. Scott's intended movement had thrown large bodies of men into the various positions to be attacked. The most serious enterprise was that of Twiggs, who advanced against the fort that commanded the Cerro. No can be conceived more difficult than this undertaking. The steep and rough character of the ground, the constant fire of the enemy in front, and the cross fire of the batteries which enfiladed our lines, made the duty assigned to Gen. Twiggs surpassing difficulty. Nothing precious men from being utterly destroyed by the steepness of the ascent under the enemy's shelter. But they sought shelter, and onward rushed against a

hailstorm of balls, led by the gallant Harney, whose noble bearing elicited the applause of the whole army. His conspicuous and stalwart frame at the head of his brigade, his long arm waving his men on to the charge, his sturdy voice ringing above the clash of arms and din of conflict, attracted the attention and admiration alike of the enemy and of our own army. On, on, he led the columns, whose front lines melted before the enemy's fire like snow flake in a torrent, and staid not their course until leaping over the rocky barriers and bayoneting their gunners, they drove the enemy pell mell from the fort, delivering a deadly fire in their ranks, from their own guns, as they hastily retired. This was truly a gallant deed, worthy of the Chevalier Bayard of our army, as the intrepid Harney is well styled, Gen. Scott, between whom and Col. Harney there had existed some coolness, rode up to the Colonel after this achievement, and remarked to him, "Col. Harney, I cannot adequately express my admiration of your gallant achievement, but at the proper time I shall take great pleasure in thanking you in proper terms." Harney, with modesty of true valor, claimed the praise as due to his officers and men. Thus did the division of the gallant veteran Twiggs carry the main position of the enemy occupy the fort which commanded the road.—It was here the enemy received their heaviest loss, and their General, Vasquez, was killed. A little after, General Worth having, by great exertions, passed the steep and craggy heights on the enemy's left, summoned a strong fort in the rear of the Cerro, to surrender. This fort was manned by a large force under General Pinzon, a mulatto officer of considerable ability and courage, who seeing the Cerro carried, thought prudent to surrender, which he did, with all his force. Gen. Shields was not so fortunate in the battery which he attacked, and which was commanded by General La Vega. A heavy fire was opened on him, under which the fort was carried with some loss, by the gallant Illinoisians, under Baker and Bennett, supposed by the New Yorkers, under Burnett. Among those who fell under this fire was the gallant General, who received a grape shot through his lungs, by which he was completely paralyzed, and at the last accounts was in a lingering state. On the enemy's right, Gen. Pillow commenced the attack against the strong forts near the river.

The Tennesseans, under Haskell, led the column, and the other volunteer regiments followed. This column unexpectedly encountered a heavy fire from a masked battery, by which Haskell's regiment was nearly cut to pieces, and the other volunteer regiments were severely handled. General Pillow withdrew his men, and was preparing for another attack when the operations at the other points having proved successful, the enemy concluded to surrender.—Thus the victory was complete, and four Generals and 6,000 men were taken prisoners by our army. One of their principal Generals and a large number of other officers killed. The Mexican force on this occasion certainly exceeded our own. The Mexican officers admitted that Santa Anna had 8,000 men in the lines, and 6,000, including 2,000 lancers, outside of the entrenchments. General Scott's force was about 8,000, Gen. Quitman's brigade not having arrived in time to take part in the engagement. Gen. Ampudia was second in command of the Mexicans, and superintended the operations of the enemy. When the Cerro was carried he was seen retreating on a fine white charger, his hat falling off as he galloped away. Many of the Mexicans made their escape by a bye path which runs off from the main road between the Cerro and the fort carried by General Worth. As to Santa Anna and Canalizo, they retreated in time to escape by the main road. Their conduct was regarded as most cowardly. Some of the Mexican officers who were taken prisoners, do not hesitate to attribute their defeat to the cowardice or corruption of Santa Anna. The force of the enemy was composed of the best soldiers. The infantry that fought so well at Buena Vista, all the regular artillery of the republic, including several able naval officers, were present. Some of the officers whom Gen. Scott released at the capitulation of Vera Cruz, without extorting the parole on account of their gallantry, were found among the killed and wounded.

A gallant young officer named Halzinger, a German by birth, who extorted the admiration of our army, in the bombardment of Vera Cruz, by seizing a flag which was cut down by our balls, and holding it up in his hand until a staff could be prepared, had been released by General Scott without a parole. He was found among the desperately wounded at Cerro Gordo. The enemy's loss (in killed and wounded) was about as large as our own. But in addition to this, the loss of 6,000 prisoners and some of their best officers. Our army captured about thirty pieces of beautiful brass cannon of large calibre and mostly manufactured at the Royal Foundry of Seville. A

large quantity, of fixed ammunition of very superior quality, was also taken. The private baggage and money chest of Santa Anna, containing \$20,000, was also captured. The latter was delivered over to the Pay Department. The volunteers who were employed in carrying the specie into camp cracked many a joke over the prospect of being soon paid off in Mexican coin and free of expense to Uncle Sam.

When our forces had carried the various positions of the enemy and the road was cleared, Gen. Twiggs started in hot pursuit of the fugitive Santa Anna, and pressed close upon his heels. A strong position, five miles west of Cerro Gordo, fortified and defended by a fine battery of long brass guns was abandoned by the enemy and occupied by our troops, General Twiggs bivouacked within three miles of the lovely town of Jalapa.

Approach to the City of Mexico.

VERA CRUZ.—The city of Vera Cruz is walled round, with a fort at each extremity of the water front; the walls on the land side are loop-holed for musketry. Parapet guns have been recently mounted on the walls. The city walls are very thick, of coral rock; the walls of the houses are usually two and a half feet thick, and the roofs are flat. Each house has a cistern or cisterns of rain water. The city is well paved.

FROM VERA CRUZ TO MEXICO.—About ten miles from Vera Cruz is a stream two hundred yards wide, crossed at a ferry in scows, or by swimming horses over. The next stream about thirty miles from Vera Cruz, is fordable, and is also spanned by a wooden bridge called *Puente del Rey* (the King's Bridge), and also the national bridge. Near it on the right, is an eminence of about fifty feet, on which is a fort, completely commanding the approach and bridge.

Between these bridges and Jalapa, the road passes near several heights, from which the natives can annoy invaders on the road.

CITY OF JALAPA.—This city stands on very elevated ground, yet for many miles the ascent is quiet gradual. From this city Vera Cruz is visible, as is also, the sea, ninety miles distant. The city itself is upon a high hill—highest in the centre, so that the streets incline considerably, so much so, that no wheeled vehicle can pass along any of them except the main street or road, which has a considerable rise and descent. The city is surrounded by a wall, and has a strongly built church near the western gate, which could be converted into a citadel. The streets are paved. The houses, as in other Mexican towns, are of stone, with flat roofs and iron barred windows.—Opposite the city, on the left of the road, is a hill from which the road might be annoyed and shells thrown into the town.—For the distance of six or seven miles before reaching the town, the road is a handsome and substantial structure of chequered pavement, and must have been very costly.

PEROTE.—At the base of a high mound bearing the same name, some distance from the road on the left is a cluster of houses, with a church, called Perote.

CASTLE OF PEROTE.—Opposite, on the right of the road, and commanding it in every direction, stands the castle. It is upon a flat sandy plain, strongly built of stone and encircled by a deep dry fosse or ditch. The main entrance is by going over a *chev aux de frize* by a stile, descending some twenty-five or thirty stone steps to the bottom of the fosse and crossing it to the gates, which are on a level with the bottom.

CITY OF PUEBLA.—This city is walled and fortified. It is built of stone and the streets are well paved. Contains about one hundred thousand inhabitants. Here water is abundant, but from the national bridge to this city no water can be obtained, the natives substituting on *pulque* as a beverage.

From Jalapa to Puebla there are occasional heights near the road, which, if fortified, might annoy invaders. In fact, from Vera Cruz to Puebla this is the case—the travel being alternately over broad, unobstructed roads and narrow passes, commanded by heights. The road passes through Puebla. The *Pueblanos* have a peculiar character; they are cunning and courageous, and the most expert robbers and assassins throughout Mexico, where there is no lack of such. If an offender is brought before an Alcalde, anywhere else, and is known or ascertained to be a *Pueblano*, his condemnation is sure.

CORDOVA.—A small walled and garrisoned town, through which the road passes. Beyond Puebla the road is good till it reaches the mountain of Cordova, about midway between the former and the city of Mexico, where the ascent is very rugged and steep, though without defiles. Near the road at the foot of this mountain, passes the *Rio Frio*, or Cold River, which has its rise in the neighboring mountain of Pococatapete, seventeen thousand feet above the level of the sea. A work on some of the heights of Pococatapete would command the road.

After leaving the mountain of Cordova the road is good and unobstructed, with

plenty of water to the city of Mexico. For several miles before reaching that city the road is delightful, passing between parallel canals and rows of Lombardy poplars.

THE LAKE OF TEZUCO.—This lake commences on the right of the road, near the city into which its waters are carried by a canal, the latter serving also to drain the gutters, &c., into the lake. The so-called lake is a large, long and very irregularly shaped basin, shallow and containing numerous small islands and covered by myriads of wild ducks. The depth of water varies with the season; in the rainy months the basin is filled, and then it assumes the appearance of a large lake. Being the receptacle of all the drainage from the city it is very filthy. The canal from the city passes through it, fed by its waters, five or six miles in a south-east direction to the small fort of Chalco, at the extreme margin of the basin in that direction. This canal is used for transporting produce into the city and for pleasure excursions in gondolas, &c.

CITY OF MEXICO.—Like all other Mexican cities this has walls and houses of stone, with flat roofs, &c. It is well paved; a gutter four feet wide passes through the centre of each street, covered by broad flag stones, removable at pleasure. All the gutters are drained into the canal or lake. The city has many large and strong churches and other great buildings, easily converted into fortresses. If its walls were repaired and mounted with cannon, and well garrisoned, it could make a formidable resistance to besiegers.

During the festival days, which are very numerous, the haciendas for twenty or thirty miles around send into the city not less than ten thousand mounted peasantry of the better class, most expert horsemen. They are courageous, and skilful in the use of the lance, lasso and machete, which is a large and heavy knife. Nothing more would be necessary than for the *padres* to go forth into the streets of the principal cities, particularly Puebla and Mexico, elevate their crosses, and appeal to the bigotry of the population, to rally an immense force of bold, active and desperate men, who would make fierce resistance to an invasion. And if invaders should force their way in assassinations, by the hand of so many expert murderers, would soon make fearful inroads on their numbers.—*Ex.*

Correspondence of the Picayune.

JALAPA, May 4th, 1847.

Orders and counter orders. This morning General Quitman's brigade of volunteers was to take up the line of march towards Puebla, and to-morrow Col. Campbell was to move; but as the time for which many of the volunteers enlisted has nearly transpired, and as General Scott has ascertained positively that but few of them will re-enlist, he has determined upon disbanding them here, and will send them all home. This will of course not only delay, but alter his whole plan of operations, and the impression with many is that he will go no further than Puebla with his present force. You in the United States may think that he has an overwhelming power with him, and that he is fully able to run at will over the country; but the truth is, that in the first place he did not have half men enough to advance upon the capital of Mexico, nor half transportation enough even for what he had.

The Volunteers going home are the Georgia, Alabama, and 1st and 2d Tennessee Regiments. No one can blame them for this movement. Not only is their time out, but they are out of clothing and out of the comforts which make even a camp life bearable. They have seen service, too, enough to satisfy any body of men not intending to make military life a business, and now are retiring to their homes to see their wives, children, families and friends, and tell long tales of what they have seen and what they have suffered.

Had General Scott a force sufficient to leave garrisons and keep up a regular communication, with his rear, and then march directly upon Mexico with a fighting force even of 6 or 8,000 men, the war would be ended in one month's time, at least so far as this country would be able to make farther resistance of any moment; but such a force he has not on his command just now. He may still go on to the capital, even with what he has, for there are not Mexicans enough in arms to arrest him; yet whether such a course would be prudent, or whether such are his intentions or not, is more than any one can say who is not thoroughly into his secrets. Had our government laid out a few extra dollars and called but a few more men in the outset, this war would have been over by this time; but greatly to our cost the "penny wise and pound foolish" system of economy must prevail, and millions are added to the national debt as a consequence.

There is a rumor that Santa Anna with a large force intends attacking the next upward train, which will have a heavy amount in specie. It will be a costly experiment

to him, for the wagons will be guarded sufficiently to keep off every firelock in Mexico.

This letter goes by the diligencia, and I must tell you that it is considered any thing but a safe conveyance.

Yours, &c.

G. W. K.

From the Vera Cruz Eagle of the 3d inst. Midshipman Rogers.

Lieutenant Semmes, of the frigate *Raritan*, left the city yesterday evening with an escort of twenty men, for the headquarters of General Scott, intending to obtain from him means for communicating with the Mexican Government, in regard to Midshipman Rogers, who has been transferred from the Castle of Perote to Puebla, and perhaps farther into the interior. It is certain, however that he was sent to Puebla.

The government of the United States is determined to compel Mexico to treat Mr. Rogers as a prisoner of war; and Lieutenant Semmes is authorized, we understand to make such representations to the Mexican Government, and that, in case of the failure on their part to comply with the demand, a retaliatory course will henceforth be pursued by our Government towards prisoners falling into our hands.

THE DRAGOONS.—One would think from the fact that the dragoons were not noticed in our last, that they did no service in the late battle. Such an inference would be highly erroneous, for the service they rendered were of infinite importance. Not only were they actively engaged before and after the action, but they pursued the retreating foe until many of their horses dropped dead from under them.

Captain Hardie's squadron reached En-cerro late on the evening of the 18th, and with Captain Blake, who was in command of the 2d Dragoons, intended, notwithstanding the condition of their horses, to follow up the enemy.—But General Patterson prudently ordered them to halt. They had taken many prisoners during the time.

Major Beall commanded all the cavalry, including the first dragoons under Captain Kearney.

General Bravo, with the whole or a part of the garrison of Puebla, was met going up to the city of Mexico.—Canalizo was met this side of Puebla by the courier. He had cavalry force with him. Some say that Santa Anna has fallen back upon Oajaca, but nothing certain of him is known.

General Patterson's brigade, which is to march in a day or two, has been reduced to two brigades instead of three, the 1st under Colonel Campbell of Tennessee, and the 2d under General Quitman. Col. Haskell's regiment of Tennesseans is to remain here as part of the garrison. The 2d and 4th Illinois Regiments under Cols. Forman and Baker, have been joined to General Quitman's brigade.

A surgeon dentist, named Kingsberry, was found this morning, most horribly cut to pieces, on the road to Cerro Gordo. His groans first attracted the attention of some volunteers who were passing, and they found him with little life and completely fly blown, although it is thought he may recover with proper attention. This is the commencement of the guerilla system. He had been attacked by three Mexicans, and robbed of \$500. The appearance of the volunteers who brought him in did not indicate any great indulgence to such Mexicans as might fall in their power.

Col. Bolden will leave for the United States to-morrow and by him I will send a large package of letters.

Yours in haste,

G. W. K.

APPEARANCES AFTER DEATH.—When the coffin containing the body of Burns was opened in 1815, there lay the remains of the great poet, to appearances nearly entire, and retaining various traces of vitality, or, rather, exhibiting the features of one who had recently sunk into the sleep of death—the lordly forehead, arched and high, and the teeth perfectly firm and white. The scene was so imposing that most of the workmen stood bare and uncovered, as did Dr. Geogery, at the exhumation of the hero of Bannockburn, and at the same time felt their frames thrilling with some undefinable emotion, as they gazed on the ashes of him whose fame is as the world itself. But the effect was momentary; for when they proceeded to insert a shelf or case below the coffin the head separated from the trunk, and the whole body, with the exception of the bones, crumbled into dust.

Lord Nugent, on opening the coffin containing the body of John Hampden, found it perfect after a burial of 200 years; even his features were preserved.

When the body of Gen. Wayne, which had been buried at Erie, Pa., was disinterred, forty years after his death, the corpse had undergone so little change as to be readily recognized by those who were familiar with the General in his lifetime. Its perfect preservation was attributed to the character of the soil, in which was argillaceous earth, strongly impregnated with alumina.