

## CHAPTER IV.

THE MEXICAN WAR.—HIS JOURNAL OF THE MARCH FROM  
VERA CRUZ.

WHEN Franklin Pierce declined the honorable offer of the attorney generalship of the United States, he intimated that there might be one contingency in which he would feel it his duty to give up the cherished purpose of spending the remainder of his life in a private station. That exceptional case was brought about, in 1847, by the Mexican war. He showed his readiness to redeem the pledge by enrolling himself as the earliest volunteer of a company raised in Concord, and went through the regular drill, with his fellow-soldiers, as a private in the ranks. On the passage of the bill for the increase of the army, he received the appointment of colonel of the Ninth Regiment, which was the quota of New England towards the ten that were to be raised. And shortly afterwards, — in March, 1847, — he was commissioned as brigadier general in the army; his brigade consisting of regiments from the extreme north, the extreme west, and the extreme south of the Union.

There is nothing in any other country similar to what we see in our own, when the blast of the

trumpet at once converts men of peaceful pursuits into warriors. Every war in which America has been engaged has done this; the valor that wins our battles is not the trained hardihood of veterans, but a native and spontaneous fire; and there is surely a chivalrous beauty in the devotion of the citizen soldier to his country's cause, which the man who makes arms his profession, and is but doing his regular business on the field of battle, cannot pretend to rival. Taking the Mexican war as a specimen, this peculiar composition of an American army, as well in respect to its officers as its private soldiers, seems to create a spirit of romantic adventure which more than supplies the place of disciplined courage.

The author saw General Pierce, in Boston, on the eve of his departure for Vera Cruz. He had been intensely occupied, since his appointment, in effecting the arrangements necessary on leaving his affairs, as well as by the preparations, military and personal, demanded by the expedition. The transports were waiting at Newport to receive the troops. He was now in the midst of bustle, with some of the officers of his command about him, mingled with the friends whom he was to leave behind. The severest point of the crisis was over, for he had already bidden his family farewell. His spirits appeared to have risen with the occasion. He was evidently in his element; nor, to say the truth, dangerous as was the path before him, could it be

regretted that his life was now to have the opportunity of that species of success which—in his youth, at least—he had considered the best worth struggling for. He looked so fit to be a soldier, that it was impossible to doubt—not merely his good conduct, which was as certain before the event as afterwards, but—his good fortune in the field, and his fortunate return.

He sailed from Newport on the 27th of May, in the bark Kepler, having on board three companies of the Ninth Regiment of Infantry, together with Colonel Ransom, its commander, and the officers belonging to the detachment. The passage was long and tedious, with protracted calms, and so smooth a sea that a sail boat might have performed the voyage in safety. The Kepler arrived at Vera Cruz in precisely a month after her departure from the United States, without speaking a single vessel from the south during her passage, and, of course, receiving no intelligence as to the position and state of the army which these reënforcements were to join.

From a journal kept by General Pierce, and intended only for the perusal of his family and friends, we present some extracts. They are mere hasty jottings-down in camp, and at the intervals of weary marches, but will doubtless bring the reader closer to the man than any narrative which we could substitute.

"June 28. The vomito rages fearfully; and the

city every where appears like the very habitation of pestilence. I have ordered the troops to be taken directly from the transports to Virgara, an extensive sand beach upon the gulf, where there is already an encampment consisting of four or five hundred men, under the command of Major Lally. The officers are under much apprehension on account of the climate and the vomito, the statements with regard to which are perhaps exaggerated. My orders are to make no delay here, and yet there is no preparation for my departure. About two thousand wild mules had been collected; but through the carelessness of persons employed by the quartermaster's department, (a precious set of scoundrels, it being possible to obtain few but desperate characters to enter this service here at this season,) a stampede has occurred to-day, by which fifteen hundred have been lost. The Mexicans fully believe that most of my command must die of vomito before I can be prepared to march into the interior.

"July 5. Pitched my tent at Virgara, two miles from the city. Mornings close, and heat excessive. Fine breeze after eleven o'clock, with breakers dashing upon the smooth beach for three miles. Our tents are upon the sand, which is as hard as the beach at Lynn or Hampton. Heavy rains, and tremendous thunder, and the most vivid and continuous flashes of lightning, almost every night. Many of the officers and soldiers are indisposed; but as yet there is no clear case of vomito. The

troops are under drill every morning, the sun being too intense and oppressive to risk exposure at any other period of the day. I find my tent upon the beach decidedly preferable to any quarters in the city. Neither officers nor soldiers are allowed to go to the city except by special permission, and on duty.

"*July 6.* Mules and mustangs are being collected daily; but they are wild, unaccustomed to the harness, and most of them even to the bridle. Details from the different commands are actively engaged in taming these wild animals, and breaking them to harness.

"*July 7.* Last night, at ten o'clock, there was a stampede, as it is called in camp. The report of musketry at the advanced picket induced me to order the long roll to be beaten, and the whole command was at once formed in line of battle. I proceeded in person, with two companies, to the advanced picket, and found no ground for the alarm, although the sentinels insisted that a party of guerillas had approached within gun shot of their posts. I have ordered that, upon the repetition of any such alarm, the two companies nearest the picket shall proceed at once to the advanced post. The long roll will not be beaten until a report shall be sent in from the commanding officer of the detachment, who is to take with him a small detachment of cavalry as couriers. This will secure the quiet of the camp at night, and at the same time afford protection against surprise.

"*July 8.* Lieutenant T. J. Whipple, adjutant of the Ninth Infantry, was induced by curiosity to visit, with private Barnes of Manchester, the cemetery near the wall of the city — an imprudent act, especially as the audacity of the guerillas, and their daily near approach, have been well understood. That he should have gone with a single unarmed private, and himself without arms except his sabre, is astonishing. Lieutenant Whipple was attacked by six guerillas, and overpowered. Barnes escaped, and found me, within half an hour, at Governor Wilson's quarters. I immediately despatched a troop of cavalry in pursuit; but no trace of the miscreants has been discovered, and great alarm is felt for the safety of our gallant, but too adventurous, friend. There was in my command no braver man or better soldier than Whipple.

"*July 12.* Being informed that Adjutant Whipple's life had been spared, and that he was a prisoner with a band of guerillas about twelve or fourteen miles from my camp, I sent a strong detachment, by night, to surprise the rancho, and, if possible, to recover our valued friend. The village was taken, but the guerillas had fled with their prisoner. Captain Duff, the efficient and gallant commander of cavalry, attached to my command, having been greatly exposed in an excursion in search of Whipple, is dangerously sick of vomito.

"About eighty American horses have reached me

from New Orleans, and I shall put my command in motion to-morrow or the next day. I know not how long my delay might have continued, but for the activity of my officers generally, and especially if I had not secured the services of a most efficient staff, which has cheerfully rendered its aid in season and out of season. Major Woods, of the Fifteenth Infantry, a graduate of West Point, and an officer of great intelligence, experience, and coolness, kindly consented to act as my adjutant general. My aid-de-camp, Lieutenant Thom, of the Topographical Engineers, Lieutenant Caldwell, of the Marine Corps, brigade commissary, and Lieutenant Van Bocklin, of the Seventh Infantry, brigade quartermaster, have all, regardless of the dangers of the climate, performed an amount of labor, in pushing forward the preparations for our march, which entitles them not merely to my thanks, but to a substantial acknowledgment from government. Major Lally is dangerously sick of vomito. I have sent him in an ambulance, on my mattress, to Major Smith's quarters, in the city, to-day. Major Seymour is also sick, but is determined to go on with the command. I visited the gallant Captain Duff this morning, and have decided to send him to the hospital, in the city. His is an undoubted case of the vomito, and I fear that but slight hope of his recovery can be reasonably indulged. I feel his loss seriously; he was a truly brave and efficient officer.

"July 13. After a delay of nearly three weeks, in this debilitating and sickly climate, where I had reason to expect, before landing, a delay of not more than two days,—and after an amount of labor and perplexity more trying than an active campaign in the field,—the hum and clank of preparation, the strand covered with wagons, going to and returning from the city, laden with ammunition, subsistence, &c., sufficiently indicate that the long-deferred movement is at last to be made.

"July 14. Colonel Ransom, with the Ninth Infantry, and two companies of the Twelfth, under Captain Wood, left this morning, with about eighty wagons of the train. He will proceed to San Juan, twelve miles distant, on the Jalapa road, and there await my arrival with the remainder of the brigade. It would be almost certain destruction to men and teams, so long as we remain in *tierra caliente*, to march them between the hours of nine o'clock, A. M., and four, P. M. Colonel Ransom's command, therefore, struck their tents last night, loaded their company wagons, and bivouacked, in order that there might be nothing to delay an early start in the morning. Fortunately, it did not rain, and the advance moved off in fine order and spirits.

"July 15. It is impossible for me to move to-day, with the remainder of the brigade, on account of the deficiency of teams. Notwithstanding all

my exertions, I shall be compelled to rely on many mule teams, which, when I move, will be in harness for the first time. I have, however, sent off a second detachment, consisting of four companies of the Fourteenth and two companies of the Third Infantry, under the command of that accomplished and admirable officer, Lieutenant Colonel Hebert, of Louisiana.

"*July 16.* After much perplexity and delay, on account of the unbroken and intractable teams, I left the camp, this afternoon, at five o'clock, with the Fourth Artillery, Lieutenant Colonel Watson's Marine Corps, and a detachment of the Third Dragoons, with about forty wagons. The road was very heavy; the wheels sinking almost to the hubs in sand, and the untried and untamed teams almost constantly bolting, in some part of the train. We were occupied rather in breaking the animals to harness, than in performing a march. At ten o'clock at night, we bivouacked, in the darkness and sand, by the wagons in the road—having made but three miles from camp.

"*Camp near San Juan, July 17.* Started this morning, at four o'clock. Road still heavy, over short, steep hills; progress slow and difficult. Reached Santa Fé, eight miles from Vera Cruz, at eight o'clock, A. M. Heat exceedingly oppressive. Remained here till four, P. M. About twelve o'clock, two muleteers came to our bivouac in great agitation, to announce that five hundred

guerillas were on the Jalapa road, not five hundred yards distant, advancing rapidly. Lieutenant Colonel Watson, with the Marine Corps, is, by order, immediately under arms, and Major Gavet, with two pieces of artillery, in position to keep the road. No guerilla force approaches; and it is doubtful whether the muleteers, looking through the medium of terror, were not entirely mistaken. Still, it was our first alarm, and useful, as stimulating to vigilance and constant preparation for an attack.

"Resumed the march at four P. M., and reached San Juan about nine o'clock in the evening, in a drenching rain. The road from Santa Fé to this place is level and firm; no water, until the first branch of the San Juan is reached. The guerillas had attempted to destroy the bridge over the stream; but Colonel Ransom's advance was upon them before the work of destruction was complete, and New England strength and ingenuity readily repaired damages. The rain continued to pour, throughout that night, the next day, and the night following. The encampment being upon low, muddy ground, along the margin of the stream, officers and men were compelled to find their only repose, literally, in the mud and water; and I resolved to move, notwithstanding the heavy rain, which continued to pour until the evening of the 19th.

"*Telema Nueva, July 20.* My brigade, with the

exception of Lieutenant Colonel Bonham's command, left Camp Pierce, (a name given it before my arrival, by Colonel Ransom,) at San Juan, yesterday evening, and marched to this place, twenty-four miles from Vera Cruz. Several escopettes were discharged upon the detachment of dragoons, at the head of the column. These shots came from an eminence on the left of the road, a direct line to which was impracticable for cavalry. Lieutenant Deven, in command of the advanced detachment, dashed rapidly up the hill, along the road, to reconnoitre the position of the main body of the enemy, which, it was supposed, might be posted behind the eminence. Captain Ridgeley, of the Fourth Artillery, threw a few round shot in the direction from which the fire came; and in the mean time, I had despatched Captain Bodfish, of the Ninth Infantry, with the grenadiers and Company F., to take the enemy in flank. The duty was promptly and handsomely performed; but the enemy had fled before Captain B. had arrived within musket shot of his position.

"The march was continued about a mile, when mounted Mexicans could be discerned at distant points, evidently reconnoitring. This being the place where Colonel McIntosh's train had been attacked and sustained so much damage, I made dispositions for any such contingency. I detached Captain Larkin Smith, of the Eighth Infantry, with three companies of infantry and a party of

dragoons, by a path on the left of the main road, that debouched from an old Spanish fort, whence an attack was anticipated. A detachment of dragoons under Lieutenant Deven, Colonel Ransom with the Ninth Infantry, and Captain Ridgeley with three pieces of his battery, marched on the main road. Captain Smith, having traversed the route upon which he was directed, again intersected the main road, near the fort above referred to, a little in advance of the head of our column.

"In this position, as soon as Captain Smith's detachment had well extended upon the road, the enemy opened a brisk fire. They were concealed and strongly posted in the chapperal, on both sides of the road—the greater number on the right. The fire was promptly returned, and sustained on both sides for some minutes, when Captain Ridgeley unlimbered one of his pieces, and threw a few canister shot among them. This immediately silenced the enemy's fire, which had been nearly done by Captain Smith, before the artillery came up. Captain Bodfish, with three companies of the Ninth Infantry, was sent to attack the enemy in flank; but his flight was too precipitous for this detachment to come up with his main body.

"I could not ascertain the enemy's loss. The Mexican paper at Jalapa stated it at forty; which, I think, was an exaggeration. Our own loss was six wounded, and seven horses shot.

"I witnessed with pleasure the conduct of that

part of my command immediately engaged, on this occasion. The first fire of the enemy indicated a pretty formidable force, the precise strength of which could not be ascertained, as they were completely covered by the chapparral. It was the first time, on the march, that any portion of my command had been fairly under fire. I was at the head of the column, on the main road, and, witnessing the whole scene, saw nothing but coolness and courage on the part of both officers and men.

"*Puente Nacional, July 21.* The brigade resumed its march yesterday, at three o'clock, and reached Paso de Orejas, three miles distant, where we encamped for the night. The march was unobstructed by the enemy; and our advanced troops reached the place last named at an early hour. The rear, however, in consequence of our immense train, did not arrive till after dark. As it descended towards the camp, it was approached by guerillas; but they were kept at bay by a few discharges from a six pounder, left with Lieutenant Colonel Watson, in the rear. These parties had been seen during the day, on distant and elevated points, reconnoitring our line. The road, on this part of the march, is high and dry; no water except in small ponds or pools. Paso de Orejas is on the west side of a rapid and beautiful stream, spanned by a substantial and expensive bridge; and, judging from the spacious buildings, it has evidently been a place of considerable business.

"We left Paso de Orejas at four o'clock in the morning, and pursued our course uninterruptedly, until we reached Puente Nacional. Anticipating, from rumors which had reached us upon the road, an attack at this place, and having no map of its defences, natural or artificial, I halted the entire command on the top of the long hill, which descends to the fork of the Antigua River. With a detail of two companies of the Twelfth Infantry, commanded by Captains Wood and Danvers, I proceeded in person, two or three hundred yards, to an elevation on the right of the road, from which, with my glass, I could command a view of the bridge, the village, and the enemy's positions. There were a few lancers in the village, riding rapidly from one position to another, flourishing a red flag, and occasionally, as if in defiance, coming up to the barricade which they had thrown across the bridge. The main body of the enemy, however, was posted behind a temporary breastwork, on a bluff, a hundred and fifty feet high, commanding the whole bridge, and overhanging, as it were, the eastern arch. Their position could not be turned, as the heights continue precipitous from the water's edge, for a long distance below.

"The tongue of land, dividing the fork referred to above from the main stream of the Rio del Antigua, rises to an immense height on the left; and on this eminence is a fortification, which, from the road, has the appearance of great strength. After

crossing the bridge, the road turns suddenly to the left. Having satisfied myself that this fort, on the left, was not occupied, I sent forward Captain Dobbins with his company, together with Company G, Fourth Infantry, and Company I, Voltigeurs, under Captain Archer, along the brow of the hill to the bank of the Antigua, opposite the village, with instructions, if possible, to cross the river above.

"The passage above, like that below, being found impracticable, I rode forward, with my aide-de-camp, Lieutenant Thom, to reconnoitre the enemy's works more closely, and to find on the left, if possible, a position for artillery. In this I was to a certain extent successful, and immediately ordered forward three pieces, two under the command of Captain Ridgeley, and one under Lieutenant Getty, of the Fourth Artillery. These were stationed on a piece of table land, perhaps an acre in extent, four or five rods from the west end of the main bridge, and thirty feet above it. The pieces swept the bridge, and dispersed the lancers from the village. Shots were also thrown at the heights, but, in consequence of the great elevation of the bluff where the enemy's main body were posted, without any other effect than to distract his fire from the advance, under Colonel Bonham, then awaiting my orders to cross. This portion of Colonel Bonham's command consisted of Company B, Twelfth Infantry, under Captain Holden, a

detachment of the same regiment under Lieutenant Giles, two companies of Pennsylvania volunteers under Captains Caldwell and Taylor, Company C, Voltigeurs, under Lieutenant Forsyth, and Company F, Eleventh Infantry, commanded by Lieutenant Hedges.

"Under the discharge of the artillery of the enemy's works, the command was given to Colonel Bonham to advance. It was admirably executed. Captain Holden's company, leading, rushed over the bridge with a shout; the captain, some paces in advance, leaped the barricade of brush and timber, his men following with great enthusiasm. Having crossed the bridge, he threw his company, under the cover of buildings, immediately beneath the bluff, and taking a narrow, steep path to the right, was in a few moments upon the summit, where the whole brigade greeted him with hearty cheers. The remainder of the command followed rapidly, and in good order. In the mean time, with a view to cut off the retreat of the foe, Captain Dupreau, of the Third Dragoons, had leaped the barricade, dashed through the village, and, almost simultaneously with Captain Holden, planted the colors of his company upon the breastwork, from which the plunging fire had so recently ceased. The guerillas and lancers could hardly have waited, after the first shout of Holden's company, to see the effect of their own fire; for, before our first detachment reached their works, they were in

full flight, beyond pursuit, in the dense chapperal of the mountains in their rear.

"Colonel Bonham's horse was shot near me, and I received an escopette ball through the rim of my hat, but without other damage than leaving my head, for a short time, without protection from the sun. The balls spattered like hailstones around us, at the moment the column advanced; and it seems truly wonderful that so few took effect. A large portion of them passed over our heads, and struck between the rear of Colonel Bonham's command and the main body of the brigade, two or three hundred yards behind, with the train; thus verifying what has so often been said by our gallant fellows, within the last forty days, that the nearer you get to these people in fight, the safer.

"The encampment was made in the village, for the night, thirty miles from Vera Cruz. Here General Santa Anna has a spacious and magnificent hacienda, in which I established my headquarters.

"July 22. I left the princely hacienda of Santa Anna, at the Natural Bridge, this morning at four o'clock. The moment our picket guards were withdrawn, the enemy appeared on all the surrounding heights, but at distances too respectful to provoke any particular notice. I proceeded on the march, without molestation, until we commenced the descent of the Plan del Rio, where Captain Dupreau's company of cavalry, a few hundred yards

in front of the column, was fired upon from the chapperal, and three horses wounded. Lieutenant Colonel Hebert, being next to the dragoons, threw out a company of skirmishers on either side, and, with the remainder, continued the march on the main road. Nothing more, however, was seen or heard of the enemy.

"An old Spanish fort stands on a high eminence at the right of the road, commanding it in all directions, and overlooking the bridge. A bridge, about four hundred yards west of the main stream, had been barricaded, evidently with the intention of defending it. But neither the fort nor the position beyond the barricade was occupied; the enemy, as we soon learned, having hit upon another expedient for checking our advance, which they evidently believed must cause several weeks' detention, and probably drive the command back upon the coast.

"Removing the barricade at the small bridge, and proceeding about four hundred yards, we came to the Plan del Rio, over which there had been a bridge similar to Puente Nacional. It was a magnificent structure of art, combining great strength and beauty, a work of the old Spaniards, so many of which are found upon this great avenue from the coast, fitted to awaken the admiration and wonder of the traveller. The fact that the main arch, a span of about sixty feet, had been blown up, first burst upon me as I stood upon the brink

of the chasm, with a perpendicular descent of nearly a hundred feet to the bed of a rapid stream, much swollen by the recent rains. As far as the eye could reach, above and below, the banks on the west side, of vast height, descended precipitously, almost in a perpendicular line, to the water's edge.

"This sudden and unexpected barrier, I need not say, was somewhat withering to the confidence with which I had been animated. The news having extended back along the line, my officers soon crowded around me; and the deep silence that ensued was more significant than any thing which could have been spoken. After a few moments' pause, this silence was broken by many short, epigrammatical remarks, and more questions. 'We have it before us now!' said Lieutenant Colonel Hebert. 'The destruction of this magnificent and expensive work of a past generation could not have been ordered, but upon a deliberate and firm purpose of stern resistance.' 'This people have destroyed,' said another, 'what they never will rebuild.' 'What is to be done with this train?' 'What do you purpose now, general?' 'To have it closed up,' I replied, 'as compactly as possible to-night, and to cross to-morrow with every wagon!' But, I confess, there was no very distinct idea, in my own mind, how the thing was to be accomplished.

"I ought to have mentioned that the Ninth

Infantry, under the gallant Colonel Ransom, which was that day in advance, on discovering that the bridge had been blown up, and supposing the enemy to be in force on the other side, immediately descended the steep banks, by the aid of trees and other supports, and forded the river. They then took possession of a church on the other side.

"A long hill descends from the west towards this river; the road is narrow, and there is no ground for an encampment or the packing of wagons. The wagons, therefore, having been closed up, were of necessity left in the wood, making a line of more than a mile and a half in length. Thus disposed, every precaution was taken for the protection of the train, and the brigade was left to bivouac.

"The growth, for miles around, was low and scrubby, affording no timber to reconstruct the arch; and it was perfectly apparent that no passage could be effected at the north. Lieutenant Thom, and two or three scientific officers with him, had been occupied from the time of our arrival in making a careful reconnoissance down the banks of the river, for two or three miles below. At dusk, they reported that the difficulties in that direction did not diminish, but that a road might probably be constructed down the bank, some hundred yards south of the bridge. Weary, and not in the most buoyant spirits, we all sunk to repose.

"Early the next morning, I sent for Captain

Bodfish, of the Ninth Infantry, an officer of high intelligence and force of character. He had been engaged for many years in the lumber business, and accustomed to the construction of roads in the wild and mountainous districts of Maine, and was withal a man not lightly to be checked by slight obstacles in the accomplishment of an enterprise. It occurred to me, therefore, that he was the very man whose services should, on this occasion, be put in requisition.

"Being informed of the object for which he had been called, he retired, and, returning in half an hour, said that he had examined the ground, and that the construction of a road, over which the train might safely pass, was practicable. 'What length of time,' he was asked, 'will necessarily be occupied in the completion of the work?' 'That,' said he, 'will depend upon the number of men employed. If you will give me five hundred men, I will furnish you a road over which the train can pass safely in four hours.' The detail was immediately furnished; and, at the end of three hours, this energetic and most deserving officer reported to me that the road was ready for the wagons. Fortune favored us in more respects than one. The water in the river, which, in the rainy season, is a rapid and unfordable stream, fell one and a half feet from the time of our arrival to the hour of the completion of the work. 'Bodfish's road' (unless this nation shall be regenerated) will be the road, at

that place, for Mexican diligences, for half a century to come.

"Without removing an article from a single wagon, the entire train had passed, without accident, before the sun went down on the evening of the 23d. Here, on the east side of Plan del Rio, where there are barracks and many ranchos, we are comfortably quartered for the night. The troops are in the highest spirits; and jokes innumerable are passing among our southern brethren upon the absurdity of Mexicans attempting to play such a trick on Yankees. The heat had been so excessive that I intended to remain one day at this place, for the refreshment of men and animals; but all are anxious to proceed, and we move in the morning. Thus the destruction of this very expensive work, instead of retarding my progress for a single hour, has added fresh confidence and enthusiasm to the command.

"*Encero, July 24.* Plan del Rio being within four miles of Cerro Gordo, and being apprehensive of a plunging fire on the trains, from the eminences, I despatched Lieutenant Colonel Bonham with five hundred picked men, at twelve o'clock, last night, to take possession of the heights, by the way of Twiggs's route, as it is called. An officer, in my command, was at the battle of Cerro Gordo, and supposed that he sufficiently understood the localities to act as guide. This military road of Twiggs turned off from the main road, four or five miles

from Plan del Rio. I went forward in person, with Captain Dupreau's company of cavalry. The rain poured in torrents; and the darkness was such that I could not see Dupreau's white horse, while riding by his side. In consequence of this extreme darkness, Captain Scantland was unable to find the route, and I returned with the cavalry to camp. The detachment rested upon their arms till morning, when the duty was handsomely performed, although the strongholds were found unoccupied.

"When our train left Plan del Rio, at early dawn, the Mexicans appeared on the heights, and discharged a harmless volley upon the rear guard. They evidently made a mistake. Not having calculated distances with their usual accuracy, Colonel Ransom, being in the rear with a six pounder, under the command of Lieutenant Welsh, threw a few canister shot among them. These undoubtedly took effect, as they scattered in all directions, without firing another gun. We reached this place at about two o'clock, where is another magnificent hacienda, owned by Santa Anna. There being large herds of cattle around us, but no owner of whom to purchase, I have sent out detachments to supply our immediate wants.

"Two or three of the young officers, desiring to participate in the chase of the cattle, left the camp without permission, and, in the excitement of the chase, wandered to a considerable distance. One of them has just been brought in with a dangerous

gun shot through the thigh — a very natural result of such imprudence. The only matter of surprise is, that they were not all killed or captured by the bands of guerillas, who are known to hang upon our rear by day, and about our camp by night. I am sorry for the officer, but trust the admonition may be salutary. We have here a delightful encampment, upon a green carpet that slopes gently to a fine stream of clear, pure water. Jalapa is only eight miles distant.

"*Camp near Jalapa, July 25.* We left the encampment at Encero at seven o'clock, not without regret, so pleasant was the situation, and so refreshing the pure stream that rushed sparkling by us. It reminded all New England men of their homes. Our march to Jalapa, which we reached at noon, was uninterrupted. The main road to Puebla passes outside of the city. I rode with twenty dragoons to the principal fonda, kept by an intelligent Frenchman, where I dined, and remained two or three hours, until the train and rear of the command had passed. In the hotel, I met and conversed, through an interpreter, with many persons in the garb of gentlemen. Full of compliments and professions of friendship, they quite stagger a blunt Yankee. The truth is, instead of being induced to take up my quarters on account of these protestations, I the earlier thought it time, with my true friend and aid-de-camp, Lieutenant Thom, and the twenty dragoons, to join the com-

mand. I hardly know why, amid pleasant conversation, this feeling came over me. It was instinct, rather than any legitimate deduction from what I either saw or heard; but, in this case, it proved better than reason, for, returning to the main road, I found the extreme rear halted, and in no little excitement. A colored servant of Lieutenant Welsh, having been sent to water a horse, not six rods from the road, had been stabbed, and the horse stolen. I stopped long enough to ascertain that no trace could be found of the robbers, and then proceeded to camp, two and a half or three miles distant.

"The encampment is by a fine stream, which drives the spindles of Don Garcia, a quarter of a mile below us. This factory has in some respects a New England aspect, but is destitute of the indications of New England enterprise and thrift.

"No trust is to be placed in this people. I have learned, beyond a doubt, that Jalapa is daily filled with guerillas, and that many of these bravos were about the fonda, while we were there.

"*Camp near Jalapa, July 27.* Several soldiers, while strolling to the city or the neighboring ranchos, in violation of general orders, have either deserted, been killed, or taken prisoners. Mr. N., a lawyer resident in New Orleans, but a native of Maine, having business in the interior of Mexico, was permitted to accompany my command from Vera Cruz. He seems to have been enjoying a

stroll in the streets of Jalapa, when he was seized by the guerillas, who are evidently in disguise in all parts of the city. He wrote me a note after his capture, stating that he had been offered his liberty, if I would send to the Alcalde of Jalapa a certificate that he was a private citizen, and in no way connected with the American army. This was, of course, promptly forwarded.

"The guerillas, I believe, have complete possession, or rather control, of Jalapa. The citizens, who dread them more than we do, and who suffer severely from them, dare not inform against nor resist them, so long as an uncertainty exists with regard to protection from the American forces. They stroll about the city in disguise, and, whenever an opportunity presents itself, they kill or carry off our stragglers, and steal and rob with impunity.

"*Camp near La Hoya, July 29.* We left our camp near Jalapa this morning at seven o'clock. The sick list, instead of diminishing, has increased, and now includes more than four hundred men. The principal cause is excessive indulgence in fruits, which it was found impossible to keep from the troops. We are now upon the margin of a stream, where are the remains of fires and other relics of a former encampment. The ground is low and level. The rain is pouring in torrents, and rushes through my tent, in a channel dug by the orderly, like a permanent, living brook.

"On arriving at San Miguel el Saldado, I re-

quired the Alcalde of that place, and another Mexican, to go forward with us as guides to the passes that turn the strong positions commanding the roads over which we shall pass to-morrow.

“*Camp near the Castle of Perote, July 30.* The whole command was under arms at dawn. Two regiments (the Ninth Infantry under Colonel Ransom, and detachments from various regiments under Lieutenant Colonel Bonham) were ordered to take the paths leading over the heights commanding the road, while the main body, with the train, should pass this strong defile. During the night, the Alcalde had furnished two guides, better acquainted with the paths than himself. One accompanied each of the flanking columns. This service, performed by Colonel Ransom and Lieutenant Colonel Bonham, was exceedingly arduous, although they occupied the heights without resistance. The train passed this gorge of the mountains, which furnishes the strongest natural defences, without molestation; the two flanking regiments making their appearance, every few moments, in the openings, and on the peaks of the surrounding summits.

“At Las Vegas, about four miles from Perote, we were met by Colonel Wyncoop, of the Pennsylvania volunteers, now in command of the castle, with Captain Walker's elegant company of mounted riflemen. Captain Walker is the same who gained (*earned* is the better word, for officers some-

times *gain* what they do not merit) such an enviable reputation on the Rio Grande. His company is in all respects worthy of their efficient, gentlemanly, modest, and daring commander.

“I reached the castle before dark, and Colonel Wyncoop kindly tendered me his quarters; but I adhered to a rule from which I have never deviated on the march—to see the rear of the command safely in camp, and where they pitched their tents to pitch my own. The rear guard, in consequence of the broken condition of the road, did not arrive until nine o'clock; when our tents were pitched in darkness, and in the sand, which surrounds the castle on all sides.

“*Camp under the Walls of the Castle of Perote, August 1.* We make a halt here of two or three days, to repair damages, procure supplies, and give rest to the troops. I have sent two hundred sick to the hospital in the castle, and received about the same number of convalescents, left by trains that have preceded me.

“While at the artillery quarters, to-day, in the village, Captain Ruff arrived, with his company of cavalry and the company of native spies, as they are called, now in our service, and commanded by the celebrated robber Domingues. Captain Ruff was sent forward by General Persifer F. Smith. The latter, in consequence of the rumors that had reached the commander-in-chief, in relation to the attacks made upon my command, had been sent

down as far as Ojo del Agua, with a view to ascertain my whereabouts and condition, and to afford support, if necessary."

General Pierce's journal here terminates. In its clear and simple narrative, the reader cannot fail to see — although it was written with no purpose of displaying them — the native qualities of a born soldier, together with the sagacity of an experienced one. He had proved himself, moreover, physically apt for war, by his easy endurance of the fatigues of the march; every step of which (as was the case with few other officers) was performed either on horseback or on foot. Nature, indeed, has endowed him with a rare elasticity both of mind and body; he springs up from pressure like a well-tempered sword. After the severest toil, a single night's rest does as much for him, in the way of refreshment, as a week could do for most other men.

His conduct on this adventurous march received the high encomiums of military men, and was honored with the commendation of the great soldier who is now his rival in the presidential contest. He reached the main army at Puebla, on the 7th of August, with twenty-four hundred men, in fine order, and without the loss of a single wagon.