

FROM THE MOUNTAIN TOP.
THE CONQUEST OF MEXICO—The Mexicans
in Arms—The Spaniards are driven from
the City.

The news of the hostile armament from Cuba, filled Cortes with the greatest anxiety. To await his enemies in the city, when he felt sure that the whole population would join him, was a course which he could not pursue. He divided his force into two parts, to divide his force into two parts, to divide his force into two parts...

train. Montezuma was wounded and carried senseless from the spot. The unhappy prince lingered a few days and then died. For several days the war went on. Spaniards, though pressed with hunger and worn with unrelenting toil, were still undaunted. They had burned more than six hundred houses and slain an uncounted number, and they hoped to find the natives somewhat subdued by these losses. Cortes accordingly invited the enemy to a parley. He represented to them the folly of resistance, that their deaths were multiplied in the dust, their dwellings were in ashes, and their warriors were falling on every side. "Return to your obedience," said he, "and I will forget the past; but if you do not, I will make your city a heap of ruins, and leave not a soul to mourn over it."

Cortes did not comprehend the character of his foe. If he thought to intimidate them, the superstitious reverence with which they had at first regarded the Spaniards had entirely disappeared, and given place to the most deadly hatred. The lawless and insatiable thirst for blood, which was now their only motive, killed a fiercer desire for revenge. "We are content," they replied, "as long as every thousand Mexicans slain, we can shed the blood of a single white man. The bridges are broken down and your cannot escape." Cortes conferred on each other with looks of anxiety and dismay. The streets and canals were built in the lake and intersected by frequent canals, which afforded a passage for the divided waters. The bridges were all destroyed. They must leave the city or perish from hunger; but how were they to escape? The circumstances so appalling, which had paralyzed a common mind, but they only drew forth the energy of the Spanish commander. Calculating the difficulties of his position, he fixed his plan of action. The bridges were to be cut down, but he would build a new one with the stones of the ruined houses. To communicate this perilous work the troops were immediately sent forth. It proved a work of great toil and danger, for the Mexicans opposed them at every step, and it occupied two days. The old historians refer their final success to the watchful care of their patron saint, who was seen carrying on his milk white steed at the head of the Christian squadrons, his sword flashing lightning; while a lady, robed in white, supposed to be the Virgin, was distinctly seen by his side, steering that in the eyes of the soldiers. The work was at last completed and the general had the satisfaction to find a communication opened through the great avenue to the point where the street touches on the causeway. The bridges were placed under strong guard, and the galleons and troops returned to their quarters. This attempt must be made to leave the city. At midnight they were under arms, and ready to commence the march. They had prepared a portable bridge to cover the breach in the causeway, and they hoped to succeed in their attempt, by making their escape without opposition. The night was dark and rainy. Silently and unobserved, they passed along the deserted street, till the van of the army emerged on the open causeway. Here they were observed by several Indian sentinels who fired on them. The priests kept a vigilant watch in the temples caught the firing. The great drum dedicated to the god of war sent forth its solemn sounds, vibrating through every part of the city. The Spaniards saw they had no time to lose. The bridge was fitted to the first breach in the causeway, and the army began to delve across the narrow passage. The van had scarcely passed when the Indians fell upon them, hurling a cloud of arrows and stones, and sending the heavens with their cries. The Spaniards pushed onward through this arrowy shower, till the last files had reached the opposite beach. Here they halted, smothering the while under the unrelenting volleys from the enemy. The army had passed over the bridge, but when they attempted to raise it, that it might be carried forward to the second breach, they found it wedged so firmly to the stones and earth, as to defy all their efforts to move it. In vain they strained every nerve, and when the attempt was abandoned in despair, a cry of agony arose, which for a moment drowned the noise of the conflict. Scarcely a hope was left. Order and organization were at an end. The confusion increased as the leading files, crowded them to the brink of the gulf. Then ensued a scene of terror and ruin indescribable. Men and horses, artillery and baggage, were crowded on and thrown together into the dark chasm. Some succeeded in reaching the shore, but many, too heavily loaded with the spoils of the Aztecs, which they could not consent to leave behind them, were buried with it in the floods of the lake. All along the causeway the carnage raged fearfully. The Mexicans would leap from their canoes upon the decks and grapple with the Spaniards, till both would roll together down the side into the water. Meanwhile the opening in the causeway was filled up, with the wrecks were forced into it, men and horses, piles of rich stuffs, chests of solid gold or precious jewels, heavy arms and accoutrements, till over the side into the rear were able to clamber for the other side. But their perils were not over. There was another breach, wide and deep as that which they had passed, and then ensued another scene of terror and carnage, which was not less bloody and desperate, while all along the shore, the combatants struggled in deadly conflict, till the earth seemed to tremble and reel as in an earthquake. The gray light of the morning began to dawn, but the shattered remnants of the Spanish army emerged from the beach. The Spaniards were driven from the beach, and the Mexicans would leap from their canoes upon the decks and grapple with the Spaniards, till both would roll together down the side into the water.

bleeding wound. The sight was too much even for the stern heart of the conqueror, and he covered his face with his hands and wept. The Mexicans made no attempt to follow them, and their allies, now reduced to an fourth number which entered Mexico, began their toilsome march towards Tlascala. Slowly and wearily they held on their way, their only food the wild berries of the woods, or fortuitously an ear of corn now and then, which the Indians had left unplucked. The enemy hovered continually on their rear, and to the west, who, overcome with fatigue, or in his eagerness for food, lagged behind his fellows. On the seventh morning, the army overtook the mountain innkeeper, which overlooked the plains of Otumba. As they turned the crest of the sierra, they saw a sight which must have made the stoutest heart beat. A mighty host was spread out before them, filling all the valley. Far as the eye could reach were to be seen shields and waving banners, forests of pikes, spears and guns, and a host of men, thick as locusts. They must advance and cut their way through that mighty host or perish in the attempt. The commander hastily marshaled his troops and gave them his commands. Then, having earnestly commended the cause to the aid of God and the Virgin, they descended boldly into the plain, to be swallowed up, as it seemed, in the ocean of their enemies. Long and terrible was the battle. Both armies fought with the energy of despair. The sun rode high in the heavens, and shed an infernal glare over the plain. In a few moments, weakened by previous suffering, and faint with loss of blood, began to give way. At seemed lost. At this critical moment, Cortes caught sight of the national banner floating over the head of the Mexican general. Turning quickly to the cavaliers as he called to them, he exclaimed, "Follow and support me!"—Then uttering his war cry, and striking his iron helmet on his horse, he plunged headlong into the thickest of the press. On they swept with the fury of a thunderbolt, striking their path with the fury of the storm. The Spaniards, who were in the presence of the Indian commander, and Cortes overturning his guard, with one stroke of his lance brought him to the ground, and the imperial standard was taken. This was the work of a moment, but it decided the fate of the battle. When the standard disappeared, the Spaniards, seized with the universal panic, fled with the greatest consternation. The Spaniards and Tlascalans, forgetting their fatigue and wounds, in their eagerness for vengeance, followed up their flying foe, dealing death at every stroke. The slaughter continued till nightfall. The plain was estimated at twenty thousand. After gathering rich spoils from the bodies of the dead, they continued their march towards Tlascala. There they were received with the utmost hospitality, and their wants, being cheerfully supplied by the Tlascalans, they rested for several days, enjoying an interval of rest, which was extremely necessary for healing their wounds, and recruiting their exhausted strength. Any man but Cortes, after such appalling reverses, would have abandoned the enterprise in despair; but he does not seem to have been affected by the disaster. He looked around him for the means of retrieving his fallen fortune. "He was resolved," he said, in a letter at this time to Charles the Fifth, "not to descend to the coast, but at all hazards, to retreat his steps, and bear his enemy again in the capacity of a free man. He then appointed a governor of Cuba sent out a ship, freighted with artillery and military stores for the army of Narvaez who he supposed was in possession of the coast. These were seized by the officer who commanded at Vera Cruz, and fell into the hands of Cortes. A hundred and eighty Tlascalans arrived about the same time who were soon persuaded to join his standard. These men were well armed and twenty of them were mounted. Thus reinforced, as soon as his men were fit for service, he commenced active operations. After some hard fought battles and hairbreadth escapes he brought several of the surrounding tribes under his control. These tribes had been subject to the emperor of Mexico, but having experienced the power of the Spaniards, they very readily transferred their allegiance to them. Cortes by his exertions had multiplied his army, and he soon acquired an abundant supply of money over their council. He knew the importance of conciliating these new allies, for it was only by their co-operation that he could hope to succeed in his meditated attack on the capital. COLUMBIANA.

THE DEMOCRAT.
The Largest Circulation in Northern France.
N. B. & E. B. CHASE, EDITORS.
MONTROSE, PA.
Thursday, December 28, 1850.

THE WEATHER.—The week was ushered in with one of the most terrific storms of rain, hail and snow that has visited us for years. From New York we learn that much damage was done to the shipping in the harbor. The Evening Post says, there has not been such a season in East River as the last ten years. From Buffalo, Albany, Boston and Baltimore, the storm has been unparalleled. Further north the storm was still more severe. The mails are wholly destroyed as far as we can learn.

THE REV. DANIEL V. McLEAU, D. D., has tendered a formal acceptance of the office of President of La Fayette College, located at Easton. The Rev. George Burrows has also accepted the office of Professor of Languages.

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