the rate of 200,000 miles per hour.—There is no central body around which it is moving, as the planets move around the sun; but, like the earth and moon and the lunary stars, it is moving around a centre of gravity. That centre is in the constellation Orion in the Milky Way. To complete its revolution around this centre 18,200,000 years are required. In half this period the sun will be on the other side of this centre, when the eye will see the constellation projected on the opposite side of the Heavens.

FROM THE ARMY.

Gen. TAYLOR'S DESPATCHES.

Head-Quarters Army of Occupation,
Camp on the field of battle, Buena Vista,
Mexico, Feb. 24, 1847.

Sir—I have the honor to report that, having become assured on the 20th inst., that the enemy had assembled in very heavy force at Encarnacion, thirty miles in front of Agua Nueva, with the evident design of attacking my position, I broke up my camp at the latter place on the 21st, and took up a strong line in front of Buena Vista, seven miles south of Saltillo. A cavalry force left at Agua Nueva for the purpose of conveying the removal of supplies was driven in during the night and on the morning of the 22d the Mexican army appeared immediately in front of our position.

At 11 o'clock A. M. a flag was sent bearing from General Santa Anna a summons of unconditional surrender. To which I immediately returned a negative reply. The summons and my reply are herewith inclosed. The action was commenced late in the afternoon between the light troops on the left flank, but was not seriously engaged until the morning of the 23d, when the enemy made an effort to force the left flank of our position. An obstinate and sanguinary conflict was maintained, with fluctuating interest, during the result being that the enemy was repulsed from our lines. An attack of cavalry upon the ranchito of Buena Vista and a demonstration upon the city of Saltillo itself were likewise handsomely repelled. Early in the night the enemy withdrew from his camp and fell back upon Agua Nueva, a distance of 12 miles.

Our own force engaged at all points in this action fell somewhat short of 5,400 men, while that of the enemy, from the statement of General Santa Anna, may be estimated at 20,000. Our success against such great odds is a sufficient encomium on the good conduct of our troops. In a more detailed official report, I shall have the satisfaction of bringing to the notice of the government the conspicuous gallantry of particular officers and corps. I may be permitted here, however, to acknowledge my great obligations to Brig. Gen. Wool, the second in command, to whom I feel particularly indebted for this valuable services on this occasion.

Our loss has been very severe, and will probably not be short of 700. The Mexican loss was immense. I shall take the earliest opportunity of forwarding a correct list of the casualties of both armies.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant, Z. TAYLOR.

Maj. Gen. U. S. Army, Commanding.

To Gen. Z. Taylor, commanding the forces of the United States.

Head-quarters Army of Occupation,
Camp on the field of battle, Buena Vista,
Feb. 23, 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.

Maj. Gen. U. S. Army, commanding.

Señor Gen. D. Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, Commander-in-Chief, La Encontada.

Head-quarters Army of Occupation,
Saltillo, Feb. 25, 1847.

Sir—I have respectfully fallen back that the main Mexican force is at Agua Nueva. Our troops hold the positions which they have so well defended, and are prepared to receive the enemy, should he venture another attack.

An arrangement has been made with General Santa Anna for an exchange of prisoners, by which we shall receive all, or nearly all, of those captured from us at different times, besides the few taken in the action of the 23d. Our wounded as well as those of the Mexicans which have fallen into our hands, have been removed to this place, and are rendered comfortable.

Our loss in the recent actions, so far as ascertained, amounts to 264 killed 450 wounded and 26 missing. One company of the Kentucky cavalry is not included in this statement, its casualties not being yet reported. I respectfully inclose a list of the killed and wounded of the regiments mentioned, embracing many names of the highest merit.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant, Z. TAYLOR.

Maj. Gen. U. S. Army, commanding.

Adj. General of the Army, Washington D. C.

Head-quarters Army of Occupation,
Agua Nueva, March 1, 1847.

Sir—I have the honor to report that the troops of my command occupied their original camp at this place on the 27th of February, the last of the Mexican army leaving on the morning of that day in the direction of San Luis. It is ascertained that the enemy is in full retreat, and in a very disorganized condition; the men deserting and dying of starvation in great numbers. I despatch a command this day as far as Encarnacion to harass his rear, and secure whatever military supplies may be found there.

From the statements of Mexican officers, and the activity of the medical staff left to succor the wounded, there seems to be no doubt that their loss in the recent action is moderately estimated at 1,500, and may reach 2000 men, killed and wounded; besides 2000 or 3000 deserters. Many officers of rank were lost. I enclose a list of our killed and wounded, made as correct as practicable at this time. One regiment (Kentucky cavalry) is not included, its return not being rendered.

The enemy had fully reckoned upon our total rout, and had made arrangements to intercept our retreat and cut off the army, stationing for that purpose corps of cavalry, not only immediately in our rear, but even below Monterey. I regret to report that they succeeded near the village of Marin in destroying a train of supplies, and killing a considerable number of the escort and teamsters. Col. Morgan, the Ohio regiment, on his march from Cerralvo to Monterey, was invested by the Mexican cavalry, with which he had several rencontres, but finally dispersed them with great loss on his own part. Capt. Graham, A. Q. M., volunteer service, was mortally wounded in one of these affairs.

I have no doubt that the army of Buena Vista will secure our line communication from further interruption, but I still propose in a few days to change my head-quarters to Monterey, and to make such further arrangements as may be necessary in that quarter.

The dispositions made to harass our rear, vindicate the policy and necessity of defending a position in front of Saltillo, where a defeat has thrown the enemy far back into the interior. No result so decisive could have been obtained by holding Monterey, and our communications would have been constantly in jeopardy.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant, Z. TAYLOR.

Maj. Gen. U. S. Army, Commanding.

The Adj't. Gen. of the Army, Washington.

Later from the Brazos.

Retreat of Santa Anna to Matehula—Arrival of Gen. Taylor at Cerralvo—Flight of Urrea—Consumptions Reestablished.

The steamship Telegraph arrived at N. Orleans the same morning from Brazos Santiago, which she left on the 23d ult.—No positive intelligence had been received from Gen. Taylor's camp. Rumors had been brought by Lieut. Crittenden, but from the best information that could be obtained, it appears that Santa Anna had retired to Matehula, where he was endeavoring to collect forces.

An officer arrived at Brazos from Matamoras just as the Telegraph was casting off, with information that Gen. Taylor had arrived at Cerralvo with a command cavalry in pursuit of Urrea, who fled in the direction of Victoria as soon as he heard of Taylor's approach. The communication between Camargo and Monterey was re-established.

The Massachusetts regiment was ordered to garrison Matamoras.

INTERESTING DESCRIPTION OF THE Battle of Buena Vista.

Description of General Taylor's position—Cannonading on the 21st—General Taylor's exposed situation—His white horse—Battle of the 22d of February—Death of Lols. M'Kee, Clay, Hardin, Adjutant General Lincoln, Col. Yell, and Capt. Willis—Colonel Marshall's charge—The gallant Mississippians—General Taylor's left flank turned—Demand to surrender—Killed and wounded—Minor's discomfiture.

We copy from the New Orleans Delta of the 9th inst. the following interesting narrative of the battle of Buena Vista. It contains incidents of the most thrilling interest:

We had the pleasure of an interview yesterday with Maj. Coffee, of the army, who brought over Gen. Taylor's despatches. This gallant officer—son of the distinguished general who fought so bravely on the plains of Chalmette, and in various other battles by the side of the immortal Jackson—acted as the aide of General Taylor in the bloody fight at Buena Vista. We are indebted to him for many particulars of this hard-fought battle.

Taylor had fallen back, in love, at first sight, with the position at which he finally made his stand—at Buena Vista. His movement towards Agua Nueva was merely a ruse to decoy the enemy into the field which he had selected for his battle-ground. As soon as M'Culloch's men, who are invaluable scouts, informed him of Santa Anna's approach to Agua Nueva, Gen. Taylor ordered his whole baggage train, and all upon his first love—Buena Vista. This position was admirably chosen. It was at the foot of a mountain, or rather of two mountains, between which ran the road through a narrow valley. On his right there was a deep ravine, which protected that flank more effectually than a dozen regiments could have done. The left of Gen. Taylor's line rested on the base of a mountain. The road in the centre was entrenched and defended by artillery. In front the ground was uneven—broken into hills and deep ravines—well adapted to the mode of fighting suiting our volunteers, and by its peculiarities supplying disadvantage of a great inferiority of numbers.

On the 21st the enemy were descried, approaching over the hills. At their appearance the volunteers raised a great shout and gave three tremendous cheers. Their engineers and officers were seen flying over the field, and dragging their cannon about to get them into position; but the nature of the ground did not favor the undertaking, and it was late in the day before the guns began to open.

The enemy had with them thirty-two cannon, mostly of large calibre. Their fire, though kept up pretty briskly, generally well manned, did so little execution in our ranks that it was not considered necessary to return their fire. Our cannon were posted on the whole of the line. Eight or ten killed and wounded were the extent of the casualities sustained by our army on the 21st.

During the day an officer approached our lines with a flag of truce, and requested to be shown to Gen. Taylor. The brave old man was sitting quietly on his old white charger, with his leg over the pommel of the saddle, watching the movements of the enemy, when the Mexican officer was presented. In a very courteous and graceful manner the officer stated that he had been sent by his Excellency Gen. Santa-Anna, to his Excellency Gen. Taylor, to inquire what he (Gen. Taylor) was waiting for? From the silence of Gen. Taylor's features, and the quiet manner in which he received Santa Anna's terrific cognonading, the Mexican supposed he was asking a very pertinent question, to which, however, old Rough and Ready gave the very pertinent reply that "he was only waiting for Gen. Santa Anna to surrender."

The Mexican returned hastily to his lines. The message proved to be a *ruse* to ascertain where Gen. Taylor's position was, for after the return of the Mexican officer to his own ranks the whole battle-array seemed to open upon Gen. Taylor's position, and the balls flew over and about him like hail. Utterly indifferent to the perils of his situation, there sat the old chief, on his conspicuous white horse, peering through his spy glass at the long lines of Mexican troops that could be seen at a great distance on the march. This demonstration of his side could not induce him to abandon his favorable point for observation, nor give up his old white horse. To the suggestion of his staff that old white was rather too conspicuous a charger for the commander, he replied "that the old fellow had missed the fun at Monterey, on account of a sore foot, and he was determined he should have his share this time."

At sunrise on the 22d February, the battle began in earnest. The Mexicans were drawn out in immense numbers. The dark columns of infantry extended as far as the eye could reach, and the cavalry seemed to cover the whole view with their interminable lines. At intervals between the infantry and cavalry, there was a strongly protected by a large artillery force, kept up an incessant cannonade against our lines. Their forces were soon in motion. Our artillery was thrown forward to meet them, supported by the volunteers. Gen. Wool led the main body in person, and was seen every where, rallying and encouraging the volunteers, who last heard from. The chivalrous Lieut. Col. M'Clung was prevented from doing his share of the battle that day. In a fight by the grievous wound received at the battle of Monterey, which still confines him to his bed, and from which it is much feared by his best friends he will never recover.

Col. Humphrey Marshal's splendid regiment of Kentucky cavalry were impatient for an opportunity of showing their mettle, and avenging the capture of their brethren, then in the hands of the enemy. They were soon favored with the desired opportunity, by the approach of a force of more than 2000 Lancers and Huzzars who gallantly charged them. The Kentuckians stood their ground with im moveable steadiness, and receiving the enemy with a fire from their carbines, charged in the most gallant style through the column—hair light, and wheeling, fell on their left, dispersing and killing a great many of them. A lie charge was made by Col. May, at the head of a squadron of dragoons and one of Arkansas cavalry, against a large body of the enemy's cavalry, with like results.

During the engagement on the right, Santa Anna, seeing that Gen. Taylor's force was not well protected on the left flank, sent a large force of cavalry around that point, and out-flanking Gen. Taylor, succeeded in throwing 2,500 men in his rear. But Gen. Taylor immediately sent Capt. Bragg, with his artillery, against this force, who succeeded in cutting them off from the main body. Lieut. Crittenden was despatched with a flag of truce, to demand the immediate surrender of this force. The Mexican officer, pretending not to understand the character of his mission, insisted that he should be blindfolded, according to the rules of war, and thus lead the Lieutenant carried into the camp of Santa Anna himself. This was a ruse to get time to extricate the Mexican cavalry from their dangerous position, and pending this truce they were all drawn off by a different road from that by which they had gained them.

Lieut. Crittenden was conducted blindfolded to the tent of the Mexican general-in-chief, a long distance from the battle-field, and he thinks he thought the safest place he had been in during the whole day. As he approached Santa Anna's tent he was greeted with a tremendous flourish of trompets, which might have been heard a mile off, producing no very great terror in the breast of the gallant Kentuckian. His blind was taken off, and he found himself in the presence of the famous Mexican chief surrounded by a brilliant staff of uniformed, gilded and moustached officers. Santa Anna apologized to the lieutenant for the act of his officers, in hastily and rudely depriving him of his eyes, so far from having any desire to conceal his situation, he was desirous of exhibiting to Gen. Taylor the utter folly of attempting a peaceful surrender by as he had under his command.

To which the Lieut. replied, that his simple message was to demand his (Santa Anna's) immediate surrender to Gen. Taylor. When this extraordinary demand was translated to the Mexican General, he raised his hands and eye-brows in utter astonishment at the temerity and presumption of such a message, and replied, that he would expect General Taylor to surrender in an hour or he would destroy all his forces. Lieut. Crittenden's reply, which we have already given—"*Gen. Taylor never surrenders!*"—terminated the interview, and the battle recommenced, and was continued until night.

Santa Anna took three more pieces of our artillery, which, under Lt. O'Brien, had been posted too far in advance to be covered by our infantry. All the gunners were shot down, and when the guns were captured there was not a soldier left to man them. One of these pieces was an old Texan gun, founder, which during the Texan Revolution, had done good execution among the Mexican ranks—it was the first gun fired against them, and it was very probably mere company markers, which were dropped on the field and picked up by valiant Mexicans. His Excellency Gen. Santa Anna, to whom Santa Anna has sent these trophies, will no doubt be sorely disappointed in the size, texture and beauty of the Mexican ordnance, and be easily satisfied when such feeble mementoes of their prowess and valor as these console them for so ignominious a defeat.

All the officers on our side in this hard-fought battle, distinguished themselves, and many of their names are confined to Gen. Wool, who nobly justified the confidence of his commander and brotherhood of veterans, by the most distinguished and gallant conduct. Throughout the whole action he was constantly engaged in the disposition of our forces and in rallying them to the point. It was a miracle that he escaped the thick-flying balls which thinned the ranks he was marshaling. There was but one complaint made against him and that was that he exposed himself too much. Brig. General Lane, also, showed himself to be a brave and able officer. Although wounded early in the action he kept his horse until it closed, and never for a moment left his post.

The old General-in-Chief remained at his original and much exposed position, superintending the movements of his army, and being unable to walk, was borne up and carried some distance by some of his men, but owing to the steepness of the hill, the men finding it very difficult to carry him, and the enemy in great numbers pressing upon them, the gallant Lieutenant Colonel begged them to leave him and take care of themselves. Forced to leave him on the field, the last that was seen of this noble young officer he was lying on his back, fighting with his sword the enemy, who were stabbing him with their bayonets. The veteran Capt. Walker, of the Texan regiment, at the head of his company, with three stalwart sons who fought at his side, was badly wounded, but still continued the fight until he was overcome with the loss of blood.

In the meantime, the Indiana brigade, who were drawn out to charge the enemy, were seized with a panic, and displaying some hesitation, Assistant Adjutant General Lincoln rushed to their front, and whilst upbraiding them for their cowardice, was shot, several balls passing through his body. In justice to this brigade it should be stated that they subsequently rallied, and redeemed their reputation by the most gallant and effective fighting.

Col. Hardin led the Illinoisians in very handsome style, and the sturdy suckers fought like lions. Their intrepid Colonel fell wounded, and experienced the fate of Colonels M'Kee and Clay, and was killed by the enemy—not, however, before he had killed one of the cowardly miscreants with a pistol, which he drew whilst lying on the ground.

Col. Yell led, the foremost man, a charge of his mounted volunteers against a large body of lancers, and was killed by a lance, which entered his mouth and tore off one side of his face.

The Mississippians, the heroes of Monterey, after doing a hard duty as skirmishers, were ordered into line to receive a charge of cavalry, which they did with their rifles, delivering at the same time a most destructive fire among the crowded columns of cavalry. The enemy were completely repulsed. The distinguished colonel of this regiment, the nephew of Col. Jefferson Davis, was badly wounded a ball in one leg passed pretty nearly through his leg. He was, however, doing well when the accounts were published.

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