

# HILLSBOROUGH RECORDER.

UNION, THE CONSTITUTION AND THE LAWS—THE GUARDIANS OF OUR LIBERTY.

Vol. XXIII.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1847.

No. 1410.

We extract the following interesting descriptions of Jalapa and Puebla, in Mexico, from a letter of a young Officer in the Army, from this country, dated the 2d of September, 1847.

## JALAPA.

The city of Jalapa itself you would not admire much. It is extremely antique in its appearance, the smallness of its houses singularly contrasting with the air of room and comfort about more modern structures. The streets too are very narrow, and in short there is nothing American about it. But upon the surrounding country, where man has been almost inactive, Nature has stamped the seal of beauty. It is a second Eden. It might not suit the taste of all who have been accustomed to large fields fenced and made luxuriant by the hand of industry—but to one capable of appreciating the wisdom and power of that Being who presides over all, it presents a wide field for admiration. The lazy Aztec, who reclines under his own olive tree, and plucks from nature's own vineyard the food that sustains him, raises the voice of gratitude to no higher power than that of a corrupt priesthood, has no higher aim than self-aggrandizement or sensual gratification. How often have I thought that if the sacred truths of divine revelation could once find their way here, if the lamp of knowledge could once be lighted among these heathen, or if in fact this country could be filled with the Anglo Saxon race, what a country it would be. To give you some idea of the laziness prevalent among these people, the statement of a single fact will be sufficient.

Irish potatoes, which require a little labor, are sold to you by the bowl full, while you can purchase for a bit, almost a half bushel of oranges. Indeed it is a degenerate race, the descendants of the Montezumas; still men of great physical vigor, have become the slaves of the emel and degenerate Spaniard, who, in his turn, yields, fanatic like, to the power of religious persecution, the effect of a state of extreme ignorance. Then the amalgamation is most horrible; there are a few, 'tis true, among whom the pure Castilian is undiluted, and they form of course a distinct class; but the larger portion are a mixture of the Indian and negro. To show you how little color is regarded, I was sitting last Sunday morning, (which you must know is the largest market day in Mexico,) in front of my quarters which overlook the market square, amusing myself with the heterogeneous mass, when suddenly a very pretty Spanish girl emerged from the crowd taking a stroll round the square accompanied by a negro girl as black as—

But this same market is a curiosity, be assured. On Sunday morning it contains, I suppose, between three and four thousand people, buyers, sellers, and idle spectators. Hence too, much of the beauty of the city is to be seen; for you must know, the ladies, young and old, visit the market. It seems to be a perfect gala day. The ladies dress very neatly, their shawls especially surpass any thing of the kind that I ever saw, some of them costing from 75 to 100 dollars. Then the fruits and vegetables of every description under the sun. Even the English walnut which we consider a great delicacy, and the Pine apple, are as common as the hickory nut and peach in our own favored land. Then the solemn toll of the church bells, and the eager throng which rushes in respectful silence to what they consider its hallowed shrine, all wear to us an air of novelty; but ah! how different the effect produced by the observance of this holy day from that in our christian and enlightened land!

## PUEBLA.

You would like to hear something about Puebla. It is one of the most beautiful cities I have ever seen, situated in a beautiful valley, overlooked by the snow-capped summit of Popocatepetel, containing 80,000 inhabitants, regularly and beautifully built, it is an exception to every thing Mexican that I have ever yet seen. Some of its houses are elegant. There is a beautiful walk between my quarters and the city, covered with trees and filled with beautiful round basins of clear water, this part really reminded me at first of what I have read of Paris.

**Dead Sea.**—An exploration of the Dead Sea is about to be undertaken by the Government of the United States. The object chiefly had in view is thus set forth by an officer of the navy:

“One great object of investigation will be to ascertain whether this sea and its shores are of volcanic or non-volcanic origin, and to refute the position of infidels philosophers with regard to its formation. The elucidation of this subject is a desideratum to science, and would be most gratifying to the whole Christian world. It is a mystery which has remained impenetrable since the awful moment when the waters of that wondrous sea first rose above the smouldering ruins of the vale of Siddim. The configuration of one-half of its shores, and its very extent, are unknown. Its waters, of a petrifying quality, and limpid as the mountain stream, doubtless hold within their bosom, and holding will reveal, those ruins upon the

non-existence of which the unbelieving states his incredulity.”

Strabo, Diodorus, Pliny, and Josephus, among the ancients, and Mascardet, Ponce, Abbe Martine, Chateaubriand, La marine, Stephens, and Robinson, among the moderns, all differ as to the extent and many of the peculiarities of this sea.—Considerable streams are said to empty into it, the very names of which are unknown. Some have heard the gambolings of fish upon its surface, while others deny that any animated thing whatever can exist within its dense and bitter waters. Fruits, luscious to the eye but of mucous taste and crumbling in the grasp, are said to be found upon its shores. Many travellers deny the existence of all vegetation, and Chateaubriand asserts that he found branches of the tamarind tree strewn upon the beach. Its southern coast is said to consist of masses of solid salt; while as far as the eye can reach from its northern extreme, it beholds only the washed and barren hills of Judea on one side and those of Arabia Petrea on the other. All is vague, uncertain, and mysterious.

The N. Orleans Bulletin states that the Rifle regiment, which landed in Mexico 700 strong, is now reduced to only 250 men fit for duty. Voltigeur regiment, under Col. Andrews, landed 650, of whom only 280 can now be mustered. The South Carolina regiment, which numbered upwards of 900, is almost destroyed, and can muster but 150. Death, wounds, and disease, account for the remainder. Other regiments have suffered severely.

**Donations to Ireland.**—It appears from a statement in the American Almanac, that the amount of donations sent from this country to the relief of the destitute in Ireland considerably exceeds a million of dollars. The ports from which the contributions were shipped, and the amounts, are stated to be as follows: Boston, \$174,847 00; Philadelphia, 80,284 38; New York, 182,450 13; Baltimore, 21,090 00; Washington, 10,300 00; Richmond, 15,000 00; New Orleans, 50,000 00; Louisville, 9,670 14; Cincinnati, 30,385 00; Providence, R. I. 6,377 00; Salem, Mass., 3,438 97; New Bedford, Mass., 3,847 60; Nantucket, Mass., 2,180 69; Vigo county, Indiana, 1,441 65—total \$591,313 29. Add the contributions transmitted from Pittsburg and Charleston, not included in the above, 60,398 50—total \$651,712 09.

The returns are not yet complete. The whole amount is exclusive of the private remittances from the United States, which, from our Irish citizens alone, reached the aggregate of \$536,058, between November, 1, 1846, and October 1, 1847. Including all the donations, in kind and money, private and public, for the year, the total value cannot fall far short of a million and a half of dollars.

**The Cotton Crop.**—A New Orleans letter in the New York Commercial Advertiser says that no frost had been seen at that vicinity up to the 22d ultimo, at which time the weather was mild and most delightful. This had favored the growing cotton crop, which will be fully equal in quantity, it is said, to the yield of any former year. The entire crop of the South is variously estimated by interested parties in New Orleans at from 2,200,000 to 2,500,000 bales. The writer of the letter alluded to above is of the opinion that the crop will reach 2,375,000 bales, and the remark made by him that his estimates for ten years past have always been very close to the actual yield, gives to his opinion considerable weight.

**The Sugar Crop.**—The same writer says: “I think we shall receive full 250,000 hogshades of sugar against 120,000 last year. The new sugar received thus far is as good in quality as we received last year two months later, and prices range from 3½c. to 5½c., and will go lower. Molasses will be equally abundant and cheap. Prices now rule at 20 to 21c., but I expect to see it down to 14c. in bbls., and 10 to 11c. on plantation before the season is over.”

**Movements in South Carolina.**—In the Legislature of S. Carolina, Mr. Black has offered the following proposition:

Resolved, That in the event of the adoption by the Congress of the United States of any law or resolution by which the citizens of slave holding States are to be excluded from a full, perfect and equal enjoyment of all the rights and privileges in any territory which may be acquired from Mexico, or any other power, by the prohibition of the introduction of slave property into such territory, that the Governor of this State, for the time being, convene immediately the Legislature thereof, that they may take such action as they may deem necessary and becoming. And that His Excellency be further desired and requested, during the interval between the summoning and the assembling of the Legislature, to correspond and consult with the constituted authorities of other States, with a view to harmonious action on this important subject.

## MESSAGE

of

The President of the United States,

December 7, 1847.

(Continued.)

Immediately after information was received of the unfavorable result of the negotiations, believing that his continued presence with the army could be productive of no good, I determined to recall our commissioner. A despatch to this effect was transmitted to him on the sixth of October last. The Mexican government will be informed of his recall; and that, in the existing state of things, I shall not deem it proper to make any further overtures of peace, but shall be at all times ready to receive and consider any proposals which may be made by Mexico.

Since the liberal proposition of the United States was authorized to be made in April last, large expenditures have been incurred, and the precious blood of many of our patriotic fellow citizens has been shed in the prosecution of the war. This consideration, and the obstinate perseverance of Mexico in protracting the war, must influence the terms of peace which it may be deemed proper hereafter to accept.

Our arms having been everywhere victorious, having subjected to our military occupation a large portion of the enemy's country, including his capital, and negotiations for peace having failed, the important questions arise, in what manner the war ought to be prosecuted? and what should be our future policy? I cannot doubt that we should secure and render available the conquests which we have already made; and that, with this view, we should hold and occupy, by our naval and military forces, all the ports, towns, cities, and provinces now in our occupation, or which may hereafter fall into our possession; that we should press forward our military operations, and levy such military contributions on the enemy as may, so far as practicable, defray the future expenses of the war.

Had the government of Mexico acceded to the equitable and liberal terms proposed, that mode of adjustment would have been preferred. Mexico having declined to do this, and failed to offer any other terms which could be accepted by the United States, the national honor, no less than the public interests, requires that the war should be prosecuted with increased energy and power until a just and satisfactory peace can be obtained. In the meantime, as Mexico refuses all indemnity, we should adopt measures to indemnify ourselves, by appropriating permanently a portion of her territory. Early after the commencement of the war, New Mexico and the California were taken possession of by our forces. Our military and naval commanders were ordered to conquer and hold them, subject to be disposed of by a treaty of peace.

These provinces are now in our undisputed occupation, and have been so for many months; all resistance on the part of Mexico having ceased within their limits. I am satisfied that they should never be surrendered to Mexico. Should Congress concur with me in this opinion, and that they should be retained by the United States as indemnity, I can perceive no good reason why the civil jurisdiction and laws of the United States should not at once be extended over them. To wait for a treaty of peace, such as we are willing to make, by which our relations towards them would not be changed, cannot be good policy; whilst our own interest, and that of the people inhabiting them, require that a stable, responsible, and free government under our authority should, as soon as possible, be established over them. Should Congress, therefore, determine to hold these provinces permanently, and that they shall hereafter be considered as constituent parts of our country, the early establishment of territorial governments over them will be important for the more perfect protection of persons and property; and I recommend that such territorial governments be established. It will promote peace and tranquility among the inhabitants, by allaying all apprehension that they may still entertain of being again subjected to the jurisdiction of Mexico. I invite the early and favorable consideration of Congress to this important subject.

Besides New Mexico and the California, there are other Mexican provinces which have been reduced to our possession by conquest. These other Mexican provinces are now governed by our military and naval commanders, under the general authority which is conferred upon a conqueror by the laws of war. They should continue to be held as a means of coercing Mexico to accede to just terms of peace. Civil as well as military officers are required to conduct such a government. Adequate compensation to be drawn from contributions levied on the enemy should be fixed by law for such officers as may be thus employed. What further provision may become necessary, and what final disposition it may be proper to make of them, must depend on the future progress of the war, and the course which

Mexico may think proper hereafter to pursue.

With the views I entertain, I cannot favor the policy which has been suggested, either to withdraw our army altogether, or to retire to a designated line, and simply hold and defend it. To withdraw our army altogether from the conquests they have made by deeds of unparalleled bravery, and at the expense of so much blood and treasure, in a just war on our part, and one which, by the act of the enemy, we could not honorably have avoided, would be to degrade the nation in its own estimation and in that of the world.

To retire to a line, and simply hold and defend it, would not terminate the war. On the contrary, it would encourage Mexico to persevere, and tend to protract it indefinitely. It is not to be expected that Mexico, after refusing to establish such a line as a permanent boundary, when our victorious armies are in possession of her capital, and in the heart of her country, would permit us to hold it without resistance. That she would continue the war, and in the most harassing and annoying forms, there can be no doubt. A border warfare of the most savage character, extending over a long line, would be unceasingly waged. It would require a large army to be kept constantly in the field, stationed at posts and garrisons along such a line to protect and defend it. The enemy, relieved from the pressure of our arms on his coasts and in the populous parts of the interior, would direct his attention to this line, and, selecting an isolated post for attack, would concentrate his forces upon it. This would be a condition of affairs which the Mexicans, pursuing their favorite system of guerrilla warfare, would probably prefer to any other. Were we to assume a defensive attitude on such a line, all the advantages of such a state of war would be on the side of the enemy. We could levy no contributions upon him, or in any other way make him feel the pressure of the war, but must remain inactive and await his approach, being in constant uncertainty at what point on the line, or at what time, he might make an assault. He may assemble and organize an overwhelming force in the interior, on his own side of the line, and, concealing his purpose, make a sudden assault upon some one of our posts so distant from any other as to prevent the possibility of timely succor or reinforcements; and in this way our garrison would be exposed to the danger of being cut off in detail; or if, by their unequalled bravery and prowess every where exhibited during this war, they should repulse the enemy, their numbers stationed at any one post may be too small to pursue him. If the enemy be repulsed in one attack, he would have nothing to do but to retreat to his own side of the line, and, being in no fear of a pursuing army, may reinforce himself at leisure, for another attack on the same or some other post. He may, too, cross the line between our posts, make rapid incursions into the country which we hold, murder the inhabitants, commit depredations on them, and then retreat to the interior before a sufficient force can be concentrated to pursue him. Such would probably be the harassing character of a mere defensive war on our part. If our forces, when attacked, or threatened with attack, be permitted to cross the line, drive back the enemy, and conquer him, this would be again to invade the enemy's country, after having lost all the advantages of the conquest we have already made, by having voluntarily abandoned them. To hold such a line successfully and in security, it is far from being certain that it would not require as large an army as would be necessary to hold all the conquests we have already made, and to continue the prosecution of the war in the heart of the enemy's country. It is also far from being certain that the expenses of the war would be diminished by such a policy.

I am persuaded that the best means of vindicating the national honor and interest, and of bringing the war to an honorable close, will be to prosecute it with increased energy and power in the vital parts of the enemy's country. In my annual message to Congress of December last, I declared that “the war has not been waged with a view to conquest; but having been commenced by Mexico, it has been carried into the enemy's country, and will be vigorously prosecuted there, with a view to obtain an honorable peace, and thereby secure ample indemnity for the expenses of the war, as well as to our much-injured citizens, who hold large pecuniary demands against Mexico.” Such, in my judgment, continues to be our true policy—indeed, the only policy which will probably secure a permanent peace.

It has never been contemplated by me, as an object of the war, to make a permanent conquest of the republic of Mexico, or to annihilate her separate existence as an independent nation. On the contrary, it has ever been my desire that she should maintain her nationality, and, under a good government adapted to her condition, be a free, independent, and prosperous republic. The United States were the first among the nations to recognise her

independence, and have always desired to be on terms of amity and good neighborhood with her. This she would not suffer. By her own conduct we have been compelled to engage in the present war. In its prosecution, we seek not her overthrow as a nation; but, in vindicating our national honor, we seek to obtain redress for the wrongs she has done us, and indemnity for our just demands against her. We demand an honorable peace; and that peace must bring with it indemnity for the past, and security for the future. Hitherto Mexico has refused all accommodation by which such a peace could be obtained.

Whilst our armies have advanced from victory to victory, from the commencement of the war, it has always been with the olive-branch of peace in their hands; and it has been in the power of Mexico, at every step, to arrest hostilities by accepting it. One great obstacle to the attainment of peace has, undoubtedly, arisen from the fact, that Mexico has been so long held in subjection by one faction or military usurper after another, and such has been the condition of insecurity in which their successive governments have been placed, that each has been deterred from making peace, lest, for this very cause, a rival faction might expel it from power. Such was the fate of President Herrera's administration in 1845, for being disposed even to listen to the overtures of the United States to prevent the war, as is fully confirmed by an official correspondence which took place in the month of August last, between him and his government, a copy of which is herewith communicated. “For this cause alone, the revolution which displaced him from power was set on foot” by General Paredes. Such may be the condition of insecurity of the present government.

There can be no doubt that the peaceable and well-disposed inhabitants of Mexico are convinced that it is the true interest of their country to conclude an honorable peace with the United States; but the apprehension of becoming the victims of some military faction or usurper may have prevented them from manifesting their feelings by any public act. The removal of any such apprehension would probably cause them to speak their sentiments freely, and to adopt the measures necessary for the restoration of peace. With a people distracted and divided by contending factions, and a government subject to constant changes, by successive revolutions, the continued successes of our arms may fail to secure a satisfactory peace. In such event, it may become proper for our commanding generals in the field to give encouragement and assurances of protection to the friends of peace in Mexico in the establishment and maintenance of a free republican government of their own choice, able and willing to conclude a peace which would be just to them, and secure to us the indemnity we demand. This may become the only mode of obtaining such a peace. Should such be the result, the war which Mexico has forced upon us would thus be converted into an enduring blessing to herself. After finding her torn and distracted by factions, and ruled by military usurpers, we should then leave her with a republican government, in the enjoyment of real independence and domestic peace and prosperity, performing all her relative duties in the great family of nations, and promoting her own happiness by wise laws and their faithful execution.

If, after affording this encouragement and protection, and after all the persevering and sincere efforts we have made, from the moment Mexico commenced the war, and prior to that time, to adjust our differences with her, we shall ultimately fail, then we shall have exhausted all honorable means in pursuit of peace, and must continue to occupy her country with our troops, taking the full measure of indemnity into our own hands, and must enforce the terms which our honor demands.

To act otherwise, in the existing state of things in Mexico, and to withdraw our army without a peace, would not only leave all the wrongs of which we complain undressed, but would be the signal for new and fierce civil dissensions and new revolutions—all alike hostile to peaceful relations with the United States.

Besides, there is danger, if our troops were withdrawn before a peace was concluded, that the Mexican people, wearied with successive revolutions, and deprived of protection for their persons and property, might at length be inclined to yield to foreign influences, and to cast themselves into the arms of some European monarch for protection from the anarchy and suffering which would ensue. This, for our own safety, and in pursuance of our established policy, we should be compelled to resist. We could never consent that Mexico should be thus converted into a monarchy governed by a foreign prince.

Mexico is our near neighbor, and her boundaries are coextensive with our own, through the whole extent across the North American continent, from ocean to ocean. Both politically and commercially, we have the deepest interest in her regeneration and prosperity. Indeed, it is impos-

sible that, with any just regard to our own safety, we can ever become indifferent to her fate.

It may be that the Mexican government and people have misconstrued or misunderstood our forbearance, and our objects, in desiring to conclude an amicable adjustment of the existing differences between the two countries. They may have supposed that we would submit to terms degrading to the nation; or they may have drawn false inferences from the supposed division of opinion in the United States on the subject of the war, and may have calculated to gain much by protracting it; and, indeed, that we might ultimately abandon it altogether, without insisting on any indemnity, territorial or otherwise. Whatever may be the false impressions under which they have acted, the adoption and prosecution of the energetic policy proposed must soon undeceive them.

In the future prosecution of the war, the enemy must be made to feel its pressure more than they have heretofore done. At its commencement, it was deemed proper to conduct it in a spirit of forbearance and liberality. With this end in view, early measures were adopted to conciliate, as far as a state of war would permit, the mass of the Mexican population; to convince them that the war was waged not against the peaceful inhabitants of Mexico, but against their faithless government, which had commenced hostilities; to remove from their minds the false impressions which their designing and interested rulers had artfully attempted to make, that the war on our part was of conquest; that it was a war against their religion and their churches, which were to be desecrated and overthrown; and that their rights of person and private property would be violated. To remove these false impressions, our commanders in the field were directed scrupulously to respect their religion, their churches, and their church property, which were in no manner to be violated; they were directed also to respect the rights of persons and property of all who should not take up arms against us.

Assurances to this effect were given to the Mexican people by Major General Taylor, in a proclamation issued in pursuance of instructions from the Secretary of War, in the month of June, 1846, and again by Major General Scott, who acted upon his own convictions of the propriety of issuing it in a proclamation of the eleventh of May, 1847.

In this spirit of liberality and conciliation, and with a view to prevent the body of the Mexican population from taking up arms against us, was the war conducted on our part. Provisions and other supplies furnished to our army by Mexican citizens were paid for at fair and liberal prices agreed upon by the parties. After the lapse of a few months, it became apparent that these assurances, and this mild treatment, had failed to produce the desired effect upon the Mexican population. While the war had been conducted on our part according to the most humane and liberal principles observed by civilized nations, it was waged in a far different spirit on the part of Mexico. Not appreciating our forbearance, the Mexican people generally became hostile to the United States, and availed themselves of every opportunity to commit the most savage excesses upon our troops. Large numbers of the population took up arms, and, engaging in guerrilla warfare, robbed and murdered in the most cruel manner individual soldiers, or small parties, whom accident or other causes had separated from the main body of our army; bands of guerrillas and robbers infested the roads, harassed our trains, and, whenever it was in their power, cut off our supplies.

The Mexicans having thus shown themselves to be wholly incapable of appreciating our forbearance and liberality, it was deemed proper to change the manner of conducting the war, by making them feel its pressure according to the usages observed under similar circumstances by all other civilized nations.

Accordingly, as early as the 23d of September, 1846, instructions were given by the Secretary of War to Major Gen. Taylor, to “draw supplies” for our army “from the enemy, without paying for them, and to require contributions for its support,” if in that way he was satisfied he could “get abundant supplies for his forces.” In directing the execution of these instructions, much was necessarily left to the discretion of the commanding officer, who was best acquainted with the circumstances by which he was surrounded, the wants of the army, and the practicability of enforcing the measure.

Gen. Taylor, on the 26th of October, 1846, replied from Monterey, that “it would have been impossible hitherto, and is so now, to sustain the army to any extent by forced contributions of money or supplies.” For the reasons assigned by him he did not adopt the policy of his instructions, but declared his readiness to do so “should the army in its future operations reach a portion of the country which may be made to supply the troops with advantage.” He continued to pay