became necessary, therefore, to capture Velasco before proceeding to the siege of Anáhuac.

Early in the morning of June 26, 1832, the attack was begun. After a day's lively firing, in which the *Brazoria*, protected by bulwarks of cotton bales, and the two famous guns bore leading parts, the Mexican ammunition was exhausted, and the garrison surrendered. The casualties on both sides were serious, considering the small numbers engaged.[1]

Without any further fighting, the seven prisoners at Anáhuac were released a week later, and on July 13 that post also was evacuated by the Mexicans. The fall of Anáhuac, however, was not by any means due solely to dread of the Texan riflemen. An unusually well-planned and well-executed revolt against Bustamante's administration had broken out at home, and under the lead of General Santa Anna was evidently gaining strength. The prospect of the early success of this rising and the consequent overthrow of the national administration exercised a powerful influence over the minds of the officers of all the little Mexican garrisons, who naturally wished to be on the winning side, and some account of Santa Anna's exploits during the year 1832 is necessary before the later events in Texas can be related.

[1] On the Mexican side there were five killed and sixteen wounded; on the Texan, seven killed, fourteen wounded.—(*Tex. Hist. Quar.*, VI, 292.) The official report of Lieutenant-Colonel Ugartechea, the Mexican commander, is summarized by Filisola, *Guerra de Téjas*, I, 199–209. The schooner *Brazoria* was so much damaged in the attack that her owners abandoned her to the underwriters, who claimed over seven thousand dollars from the Mexican government for a total loss.—(McLane to Butler, Dec. 31, 1833; H. R. Doc. 351, 25 Cong., 2 sess., 115.)

CHAPTER IX

SANTA ANNA IN CONTROL

THE irritating question of Texas had not been the only source of anxiety to President Bustamante and his cabinet, for from the very commencement of his administration there had hardly been a day when some ambitious leader was not heading an open revolt against the government.

Trouble had broken out first in the south, where vigorous but intermittent fighting went on through most of the year 1830. In October of that year the ex-President, Guerrero, emerged from his hiding-place and joined the southern insurgents, but was defeated early in January, 1831, by his old rival, Bravo, who had been pardoned and allowed to return from exile. A few days later Guerrero was taken, apparently by a contemptible piece of treachery, underwent a form of trial by court-martial, and was sentenced and executed.

Outbreaks in various parts of the country continued, but were put down without serious difficulty. But on January 2, 1832, a much more serious mutiny than most of such affairs broke out in Vera Cruz. The garrison "pronounced" against the government, and issued a proclamation inviting General Santa Anna to join them and put himself at the head of a movement which they proposed to carry forward, with a view to effecting an entire change in Bustamante's cabinet. The movement was only the usual attempt to turn out one set of office-holders in order to put in another. No change in the form of government was proposed as a justification for the revolution; and indeed the movement was announced as one intended to support and enforce the federal Constitution.[1]

[1] Suarez, *Historia de México*, 263–265.

Santa Anna, who had been living quietly at his hacienda since he had defeated the Spaniards at Tampico in 1829, accepted the invitation to head the revolt, put all the money in the custom-house at Vera Cruz into his pocket, and wrote a very respectful letter advising the Ministers of Foreign Relations and of War to resign. These men, "hard of heart," says Santa Anna in his memoirs, "and well satisfied with the offices they occupied, were annoyed" ("*se molestaron*") at this request, and even exhibited some degree of warmth in their refusal to comply with his modest advice.[1] A civil war followed, which was prosecuted more or less vigorously through several states, and lasted until December, 1832, when Bustamante abdicated.

The plans of the opponents of the government had become enlarged during the progress of the struggle. They were no longer content with merely dismissing Bustamante's cabinet, but insisted also on getting rid of Bustamante himself and of installing Pedraza in his place, although the latter had resigned his claims to the office of President four years before, and had left the country. He was now brought back and was willing to serve for the short remainder of the term for which he had once been elected. This arrangement being finally agreed to by the military commanders on both sides, Pedraza took the oath of office as President on December 26, 1832, and served without molestation until the first of April following.

The existence of a state of civil war had prevented the election of a new President in September, as required by the Constitution; and it was therefore agreed, as part of the plan of settlement, that on the first day of March, 1833, the several state legislatures should vote for President and Vice-President; that the votes should be opened on March 26; and that the result of the election should be announced on or before March 30. On that day the Congress, which seems to have been an obedient tool in the hands of the army, declared that Santa Anna and Gómez Farias had received the largest number of votes, and had

[1] *Ibid.*, 266; Santa Anna, *Mi Historia*, 26.

been duly elected President and Vice-President, respectively.

Antonio López de Santa Anna, who was destined for the next fifteen years to play the most conspicuous part in the affairs of his country, was a native of Jalapa, where he was born February 21, 1795. When fifteen years old he had obtained the place of gentleman cadet in the infantry regiment of Vera Cruz, having furnished the proof of gentle birth (*hidalguía*) then required. For the next five years he served in the King's troops in Texas and Nuevo Santander. Thenceforward, during the war of independence, he served in the neighborhood of Vera Cruz, and was principally engaged in trying to suppress such guerilla chiefs as Victoria and Guerrero. He gradually rose through the various grades, and near the end of the war was promoted by the viceroy Venadito to the rank of lieutenant-colonel, receiving at the same time the cross of the order of Isabel la Católica.[1]

When the plan of Iguala was proclaimed Santa Anna hastened to join Iturbide, and took an active part in the final struggle against the Spanish troops; but nevertheless he was not well regarded by Iturbide. As he considered himself slighted, Santa Anna was among the first to proclaim the republic. Under Victoria's administration he was given command in Yucatan, and later was made governor of the state of Vera Cruz. He headed, as we have seen, the first rising against Pedraza, but was very nearly defeated. In 1829 Guerrero put him in command of the forces which opposed the Spanish invasion, and his success on that occasion naturally brought him into popular favor.

Santa Anna was shrewd enough to retire at that time from active service, waiting till an opportunity offered of getting something really worth while. All through his career he showed himself curiously unwilling to take up the ordinary duties and routine of public life. These he left to others. For himself he preferred the spectacular. He cared little for the growth and prosperity of his country.

[1] Santa Anna, *Mi Historia*, 1-3.

For his own wealth and aggrandizement he was always deeply concerned.

In person he was of a good height, about five feet ten inches, slight, with an intelligent and expressive countenance. His hair was dark; his complexion was described as "olive"; his manners were excellent and, at least in later years, he wore an habitual expression of placid sadness. He had little education, and no taste for letters; and he neither read nor spoke any language but his own.

He loved luxury and public display. As far as he could he lived a life of pleasure, and his pleasures were not refined. He valued money for what it procured him, and he was never particular as to how the money came. He was ambitious, not for love of power, far less from a desire to benefit Mexico, but for the simple reason that high office was in his case the shortest and surest road to wealth. Offices, contracts, and concessions yielded him a handsome revenue, and so long as the stream flowed on he was content to let his associates attend to the public business.

He could be enormously energetic on occasion, and when he thought it needful to strike he struck hard. He thoroughly understood his countrymen, and he therefore always stood for the cause of the army, and generally for the cause of the church. He realized perfectly that it was necessary, on occasion, to fight in order to maintain his prestige; but he did not fight because he loved fighting. He fought at first in order to bring himself into notice, and afterward in order to keep himself in power, for unbroken success against all recurring military mutinies was an essential condition of his retaining the presidency; and the presidency, with its opportunities for money-making, was essential to his enjoyment of life.

He was not a good general. As an organizer his talents were unrivalled in Mexico, owing to his fiery energy and the hold he had on the imagination of his countrymen. But he knew little of strategy, and, owing perhaps to want of sustained diligence and attention to details, such plans as

he made constantly miscarried. He was almost always defeated in serious warfare.[1]

He had no political principles. Those which he professed at any moment were invariably capable of instant change. He was true, as Lowell said of Caleb Cushing, to one party, and that was himself; but he so managed his affairs as to command, for long periods of time, the enthusiastic support of those who created public opinion in Mexico.

Gómez Farias, the new Vice-President, differed in every respect from Santa Anna. Most of the principal Mexican officials had held high military rank. Farias had never been in the army. He had been bred a physician, and had devoted himself seriously to the practice of his profession. He had taken no active part in the revolution against Spain; he seems never to have figured in politics until the reign of Iturbide; and he never held any important office until he became Secretary of the Treasury on the fall of Bustamante, at the end of the year 1832.

If Santa Anna had no political principles, Farias had only too many. He was a philosophical radical, whose system, says his enemy Alaman, was formed on the study of Diderot and other writers of the eighteenth century.[2] He had a considerable following in both houses of Congress, who represented a reaction from Bustamante's despotic government, and who set to work with great energy, as soon as Congress met, to pass laws regulating anew all the affairs of the nation, and correcting every abuse that occurred to them. Santa Anna carefully avoided taking any part in their activities. If the measures which the reformers passed proved popular, it would be time enough to come forward and claim credit for them. If they proved unpopular, he could easily denounce the folly of Congress.

The Texan colonists naturally saw in Santa Anna merely the leader of a vigorous revolt against the arbitrary acts

[1] The "love of idleness, tempered by the aptitude for violent action," and the disinclination for "sustained and detailed labor," according to a philosophical traveller, are typical Spanish traits. See Ellis, *The Soul of Spain*, 37.

[2] *Defensa del ex-Ministro D. Lúcas Alaman*, Mexico, 1834, Introd., xx.

of Bustamante's ministers, and therefore a welcome ally. They probably knew very little of his real character or antecedents; but it was quite enough for them that he was fighting against Bustamante, and that he loudly supported the federal Constitution. It is therefore not at all surprising to find the Texan insurgents, in their camp before Anáhuac, passing resolutions in which they expressed their approval of "the firm and manly resistance which is made by the highly talented and distinguished chieftain General Santa Anna," and pledged their "lives and fortunes in the support . . . of the distinguished leader who is now so gallantly fighting in defence of civil liberty." [1]

At the time when these resolutions were adopted (June, 1832) Santa Anna's success appeared to be assured; and this meant to the Texans the downfall of their enemy General Terán, who had honestly and steadfastly supported the administration of Bustamante against serious odds.[2] On May 13, 1832, Terán had been disastrously defeated by Santa Anna's followers at Tampico, and on the same day the government forces, who had been besieging Santa Anna in Vera Cruz, were compelled to retreat. Four days later Bustamante had accepted the resignation of his ministers.

The influence of this turn in affairs upon the garrisons in Texas was very marked. The settlers were declaring for Santa Anna, and any officer who opposed Santa Anna's friends ran a very great risk of finding himself on the wrong side politically. Some of the officers were in favor of siding with the colonists and boldly declaring for Santa Anna and the plan of Vera Cruz; others were for a more pru-

[1] "The Disturbances at Anáhuac," in *Tex. Hist. Quar.*, VI, 287. This declaration, according to an old settler, was not because the Texans liked Santa Anna particularly, "for we had no more confidence in one Mexican than another. . . . The fact is, we were determined to protect ourselves from insult and injury."—("Reminiscences of Henry Smith," *Tex. Hist. Quar.*, XIV, 44.)

[2] He had advised Bustamante, when Santa Anna's revolt first began, that the ministry ought to resign at once, as they would be compelled to do so sooner or later. He was, however, opposed, on principle, to all military revolutions, and had invariably declined to take part in them.—(Filisola, *Guerra de Téjas*, I, 573.)

dent line of policy, and among the latter was Colonel Piedras, the commander at Nacogdoches.

On May 31, 1832, more than a fortnight after his defeat at Tampico, Terán had ordered Piedras to go from Nacogdoches to Anáhuac and to "take suitable measures to pacify the disturbances." The order does not seem to have reached Piedras until after the attack had been made on the fort on the ninth of June and following days. At any rate, he did not leave Nacogdoches until near the end of the month. On the way he was captured by the Texans, but was immediately released upon giving his word that Bradburn's seven prisoners should be surrendered.

Piedras finally arrived at Anáhuac on the first day of July, and on the next day he took over the command from Bradburn. Within a week he had given up the seven prisoners, settled affairs in the garrison, and was on his way back to his post. He had effectually allayed the local excitement by yielding all the causes of it.

Bradburn, however, had refused to resume command of the post, and Piedras left with him a sort of certificate of character which throws a clear light on the difficulties experienced by the Mexicans in dealing with the rough and energetic settlers whom they were trying to bring under control.

"There is no doubt," wrote Piedras, "that the Texan colonists have plans for separating from the Mexican government, which are encouraged and promoted by Austin's men; and that as this opinion is not yet generally held, they avail themselves of pretexts to put it forward and prepare the minds of all. As the political situation of the government is excessively critical, and as it is exhausted by internal convulsions, the troops not occupied in the present revolution of Santa Anna are left without money, and no hope is afforded us of receiving early aid of any kind. And considering also the dangerous situation in which the military detachments in this department are placed—wanting in supplies and men, and scattered at such enormous distances that it is not feasible, even if they should make the greatest efforts, to give each other support—it is proper, according to my way of thinking, for us to conduct ourselves in the present circumstances with the most cautious policy" ("*la mayor política*").[1]

[1] Filisola, I, 213.

Piedras then went on to explain his idea of a cautious policy. He proposed to give the colonists fair words, to grant all their requests, to keep on building forts, and to urge the government to send such reinforcements and supplies as might enable the Mexican troops at last "to chastise the insolence of the colonists, who now prevail by force of numbers, and are trying to withdraw themselves from obedience to the laws." [1]

He had, however, hardly started on his return to Nacogdoches before the Anáhuac garrison "pronounced" in favor of Santa Anna and decided to leave Texas. They found no difficulty in chartering two schooners, and the greater part of the force sailed away on July 13, 1832, leaving behind them Bradburn and some other officers, together with the few cavalrymen who formed a part of the garrison. Those who were left marched peaceably off toward Matamoros; all but Bradburn, who, believing his life in danger, made his way in disguise overland to the United States. On the road he met a great many Americans, who told him they were going to help their brethren "throw the Spaniards out of Texas"; and he was assured that it would be easy to enlist four thousand men in Louisiana alone for such an enterprise.[2] He reached New Orleans without adventure, and ultimately returned to Mexico.

As the garrison of Anáhuac sailed out over Galveston bar they met two armed Mexican schooners with four or five transports coming in and bringing a body of some two hundred and fifty troops under the command of Colonel José Antonio Mejía, an adherent of the plan of Vera Cruz. As all were now on the same side in the revolution, the new invaders put to sea again, and the united forces made sail for Tampico to give their support to the victorious cause of Santa Anna.

Mejía had left Tampico about the middle of June, with the object of reducing the towns on the coast of Tamaulipas, and had occupied Matamoros on June 29. At Matamoros he learned of the events in Texas and of an armistice just

[1] *Ibid.*, 214.

[2] See his report, *ibid.*, 218–224.

signed between the contending forces near Vera Cruz. The small garrison of government troops which had abandoned Matamoros on Mejía's approach had not retreated far, and on July 6 an agreement was arrived at between the respective commanders, under which Mejía undertook to restore the town to the government and to relieve the beleaguered posts at Velasco and Anáhuac, upon condition that the government officials should furnish him with all needed supplies. In the meantime the *status quo* was to be maintained in Matamoros.

It so happened that Stephen F. Austin was then in Matamoros on his way back from attending a session of the state legislature. He had been trying with some success to induce the Mexican authorities to send pacific orders to the troops in Texas. News had just come of Terán's suicide, induced partly by his military reverses and partly, it would seem, by some family difficulties.[1] Austin's best chance of securing peace was obviously to go with Mejía to Velasco, which he did; and the whole expedition reached the Brazos River about July 16, 1832. The Mexican garrison from Velasco was at that moment actually on the march to Matamoros, and the relief expedition had come too late.

Mejía and Austin were, however, received with enthusiasm by the colonists. An address was presented to the former, assuring him that the late rising had been solely directed against the "arbitrary and unconstitutional measures of the administration of Bustamante," as evidenced by the acts of Terán and Bradburn. A dinner was given at which many patriotic toasts were proposed in the fashion of the day. And delegates from the neighboring ayuntamientos adopted resolutions declaring their adherence to the principles of Santa Anna's party, their desire to co-operate heartily in the glorious work of political regeneration

[1] Filisola believed that he had been murdered.—(*Guerra de Téjas*, I, 184, 249.) "Terán," says Rivera, "was one of our notable men, whether considered as a politician, a soldier, or a man of science. . . . He loved glory, but did not believe in it when it rested on domestic revolts—a business he abandoned to vulgar ambitions. . . . He always obeyed the recognized government, and asserted that public convulsions are very rarely the means of progress."—(*Historia de Jalapa*, III, 90.)

in which he was engaged, and their readiness to take up arms in defence of the independence of their adopted country and the integrity of its territory.[1] No wonder Mejía became convinced that he was not needed in Texas.[2] He went from Velasco to Galveston, and thence sailed back, as we have seen, to Tampico.

There now remained on Texan soil only the garrisons at Béxar and Nacogdoches, the former a small body of presidial troops living quietly in the midst of a Mexican population and giving no annoyance to the American colonists.

At Nacogdoches, the case was different. Piedras, the commanding officer, seems to have been, on the whole, popular with his neighbors,[3] but he was opposed to Santa Anna; and the inhabitants of the district finally decided that he must either declare himself on that side or go. It is to the colonel's credit that his ideas of a cautious policy did not go so far as to lead him to abandon his colors without a struggle. The colonists, however, were quite ready to show their strength. A sharp skirmish followed, in which Piedras was worsted, and on August 2 he evacuated the place. He was at once pursued by the Texans, who brought him to bay about twenty miles south of Nacogdoches. After an exchange of shots Piedras resigned the command to his major, who was prompt in declaring for Santa Anna, whereupon the whole force was allowed to march off to the southwest and so out of Texas.[4]

By September, 1832, and for nearly three years afterward, there was not a Mexican soldier in Texas except the inoffensive little troop at Béxar. The collectors of customs

[1] See the text of these documents in Edward's *Hist. of Texas*, 184–190.

[2] Austin wrote two years later that Mejía's expedition was a miracle, and the expression was not far wrong. See his letter of Aug. 25, 1834, in Edward's *Hist. of Texas*, 214.

[3] Filisola accuses Piedras of being engaged in business in Nacogdoches, and of monopolizing all the most lucrative import trade from New Orleans, which, he says, produced local discontent. But Filisola disapproved of Piedras.—(*Guerra de Téjas*, I, 262.)

[4] The report of John W. Bullock, "Colonel commanding" dated Nacogdoches Aug. 9, 1832, begins, "I have the pleasure to announce to you that this post *surrendered to the Santa Anna flag* on the 5th inst."—(Brown, I, 192.)

also departed, unable, as they said, to endure the untamable spirit (*los genios díscolos*) of the inhabitants.[1] But although almost all the visible signs of Mexican domination had been thus got rid of, there were serious questions remaining, to which it behooved the colonists to find an answer.

What was to be the future of Texas? Was it to remain a province of Mexico, subject to the hazards of an ill-defined, not to say arbitrary, jurisdiction, by military officers? Should it seek to become an independent nation? Or should it go further and try to secure incorporation into the United States? One thing at least was certain, and that was that the existing chaotic condition of things could not long endure.

It is not easy at this day to form a satisfactory judgment as to what was then the general public opinion in Texas in relation to these questions. Piedras, Bradburn, Terán, Filisola, and other Mexican officers, who had good opportunities for observation, were unanimous in reporting that there was a strong sentiment in favor of separation. Doubtless that was true. There could have been no genuine loyalty felt toward Mexico on the part of the settlers from the United States, and there were hot-headed people on both sides of the American boundary line who were loud in proclaiming that Texas was strong enough to defend herself against the whole power of Mexico, and that she might well declare her independence. But such loose talk could hardly have influenced those who had anything like a sober appreciation of the apparent relative strength of Mexico and Texas. Texas was weak in numbers, poor, without credit, and possessed hardly a semblance of organized government. Every consideration of expediency seemed, therefore, at that time to be against an attempt to force a separation. The public utterances of all the organs of public opinion continued to be in favor of adhering to Mexico, and the evidence seems, on the whole, to show that in the autumn

[1] Filisola, I, 301. One amiable collector continued for some time at Copano, but declined to examine the effects of settlers.—(Kennedy, II, 34.)

of 1832 there was a decided sentiment in Texas against independence.[1]

If the support of the United States government could have been assured it would have been another matter; but there is a total want of evidence to show that there was the smallest idea in any responsible quarter of giving aid to a revolution. It was known that both Adams and Jackson had expressed a desire to buy Texas; but it is as clearly proved as any negative can be that neither of them had resorted to any underhand means of attaining their object. Adams did indeed, in later years, accuse Jackson of having secretly encouraged a projected filibustering expedition from Arkansas in 1830; but the accusation was rather absurd on its face, and has since been effectually disproved.[2]

In this condition of their affairs, the best hope of securing some satisfactory government seemed to the colonists to lie in having Texas constituted a separate state of the Mexican republic. Many of them looked forward to the establishment of a vigorous and efficient local government, in which the common law of England would be administered, and in which the immunities guaranteed by the bill of rights would form the basis of individual freedom.

The procedure for effecting the establishment of a new state was perfectly familiar to the inhabitants of the Mississippi valley, where precedents were abundant. In particular, the case of Kentucky was almost precisely in point, for she had sought her separation from Virginia upon grounds that were in all important respects identical with those upon which Texas now sought her separation from Coahuila. The methods then successfully adopted were closely followed.

The first step was the holding of a general convention, which met at San Felipe on Monday, the first of October, 1832, upon the call of the alcaldes of San Felipe, and which sat until the following Saturday. Fifty-six delegates as-

[1] See *Tex. Hist. Quar.*, XIII, 261; *ibid.*, VIII, 247. *Revue des Deux Mondes*, April 15, 1840, 4 ser., XXII, 227.

[2] The subject is disposed of in E. C. Barker's "President Jackson and the Texas Revolution," *Amer. Hist. Rev.*, XII, 788 *et seq.*

sembled, representing pretty much all the English-speaking districts except Goliad, and the delegates from Goliad, who arrived after the convention finally adjourned, concurred unreservedly in all that was done.

A number of subjects were discussed. It was agreed to petition for separate statehood, for the settlement of land titles, for the creation of a new ayuntamiento in the region between the San Jacinto and the Sabine rivers, and for the grant of lands to support schools. "In view of the exposed condition of the country to Indian depredations," a provisional regulation for the militia was agreed to. But the most urgent matters appeared to the members of the convention to be the reform of the customs tariff and the repeal of the law which prohibited citizens of the United States from becoming settlers.

As to the tariff, it was agreed to petition the Mexican Congress to permit the importation free of duty for three years of such necessary articles as provisions, machinery, tools, cotton bagging, clothing, shoes and hats, household furniture, powder, lead and shot, medicines and books.

> "The foregoing articles," said a proposed memorial, "include the principal imports made use of and wanted by the inhabitants of Texas. Many of them are prohibited, and on those which are allowed to be introduced the duties are so high that they amount to prohibition. The trade of Texas is small and the resources limited, but if fostered by a liberal policy on the part of the general government, it will, in a few years, yield a revenue of no small importance."

On the question of the repeal of the law against American settlers, another memorial, long and rhetorical, was unanimously adopted. The law of 1830, it was declared, implied an unwarranted suspicion of the fidelity of the settlers to the Mexican Constitution. The lands of Texas, which had been given them, were in no true sense a gratuity; for these were granted on condition that they should be redeemed from a state of nature, a condition which could only be fulfilled by toil and privation, patience and enterprise, and loss of life from Indian hostilities. The only portion of the