My dear Mr. Leveek,

It is known, that the life one leads in the Army in Mexico tends greatly to blunt the sensibilities of the heart; but, there are very few whose feelings are not affected by the remembrance and attention of friends at home. My emotions upon reading your letter—your closing paragraph—Claude's postscript—were more thanpleasurable, and I should fail in attempting to describe my surprise and happiness as if it was re-folded & placed in my pocket. I might blame myself for not having invited a correspondence with you; but, omitting the fact of your being barely employed in settling your mercantile affairs, I presume you would not care to read the thoughts of one whose profession and mode of life were so widely different from any you admire, and I did not, therefore, ask what (I always desired indeed) you have so kindly done of your own accord. In thanking you for your letter, which was as full of interest as one could have desired, let me ask that you will write frequently, and I will endeavor to repay your attention in this and subsequent communications, although I fear the material has been so oft worked up for other vietables, that nothing new can now be fished out of it.

In former letters I have described much of this country and many customs of the people, and will continue to add but little more of either, lest you have cause to charge me with repetition. The position of our present encampment, being very little above the elevation of the waters of the gulf, is neither so favorable to health nor so romantic and beautiful as other adjacents to it. There are points around and near near us, which rise up two or three hundred feet from their base, where the sea breaks in both and from which objects at a long distance are perceptible to the naked eye. These heights are very precipitous, and upon two of them are forts constructed many years since for the defence of the inhabitants of the village against the invasions of hostile factions, which are now occupied by the guards of our regiment. Yesterday I was upon one of these and could clearly see...
tinguishable from his own country, and also naval, under sail, steering into that port. The view of the surrounding country was not greatly dissimilar to that which we met when travelling through the high lands of Virginia—hills, covered with trees of small growth, running back for a long distance, into valleys between each of orange, lemon, plantain, cocoa and other tropical trees, and all varying their appearance with the sun-light or the passing cloud. All were rude, wild and even savage aspects; for it is only when you ascend into the valleys and follow the streams in their windings, that you find a few acres only of cleared land, cultivated in corn or sugar cane. In this, in appearance and natural habits, these people bear a striking resemblance to our North American Indians, now in the U.S. They will, for instance, carry burdens of immense weight upon their backs, suspended by a leather rein from their foreheads, and in this manner I saw one carrying a woman, whom he had borne from the city of Mexico in the same way—they eat with their fingers, wear sandals and go bare-legged. They also have the power of enduring fatigue and abstaining from food in like degree with the Indian. A few days since, I was one of a hunting party, and when we wished to return to the encampment—it was necessary for us to have a guide. It was about 12 o'clock at night when we started with me and I had frequent cause to lament his rapid step, and for surprise, at his knowledge of the country. His step was as light as if it were the无声, and so quickly did he pass over ground you might reasonably imagine he had wings, feet. There was no road for our return and he followed a "blind path," imperceptible to any other than an Indian's eye, with astonishing celerity and certainty. I volunteered to go with my friend, Capt. Stark, upon the expectation alluded to, because it was a novel to me and some engagement with guerrillas was anticipated. Frequent robberies had been committed between our camp and that of Pan de Azúcar, fifteen miles from our camp, and this party was ordered out to suppress them. We saw several, who kept out of the way, between this point and the "Robber's Bridge"—Paso de los Osos, the Mexicans call it—while we halted and remained quick for an hour or more, when a guerrilla came into the road, whom we wished to take prisoner, but endeavoring to make his escape by a road de que, he was fired upon by four or six of the men and killed. The incident is to be of the latter class of Mexican from his dress, wearing a cloth, with a
sword mounted with silver, and had more than $50. in gold and other coin in his pocket. As I regarded his fixed and glazed eye, I could not avoid thinking, how unhappy was the condition of a country, where a foreign force was demanded to protect citizens against each other, and how dear had been the forfeits of the guerrillas, before me for the number of soldiers committed by him. I learned, in conversation with our guide, that Padre Inocente, who has been called to the main body of the Mexican troops, had resigned his command to Cervantes, who had twenty or more guerrillas, and that another chief, named Don, as many as one hundred. These move from point to point along the road, and overlook from the heights, what passes; if a train be approaching, they conceal themselves in the brush until the rear comes up, when they fire into it, at random, and retreat precipitately, with security, or should a traveller of their own nation be riding the road, he is robbed of everything, and told, he is fortunate in escaping with his life! For two or three days, as many as twenty persons have been deprived of their goods and had their mules taken by these fellows. . . . . . . The health of the Regiment is by no means good—five of our officers are prostrated with Cholera, and an average of one man out of every two, is reported sick and unfit for duty. The great mortality prevailing alarms those who become ill, and the disease increases with depression of spirits, until medicine ceases to have the desired effect, and the patient sinks. Our Surgeons seem to have learned nothing from observation and experience, and the same prescriptions which operated as sure cures to the grave four or five months ago, are now made for those who have similar diseases to those who died under them. Col. Eckels, who had never had a day's illness until he came to Mexico, is now lying at the brink of death—his disease Cholera—and but little hope is entertained of his surviving two days more, while other officers are gradually sinking under the combined effects of the same disease and medicine. Dr. Malone, our best Surgeon, has returned home, and I wish to have some one appointed for our Regiment, who is known to be a scientific and skillful physician. In the range of my acquaintance, amongst those who would be likely to accept the office, upon Dr. Maloney's resignation being accepted, I know none whom it would suit better and no one who would please one so well, as Dr. Robertson. We want physicians, not those lacking Principle, rather than quacks, who have the name of men.
I trust, among my friends at home, some speedy action may be taken in this matter, that we may no longer be a prey to disease and mal-practice of so styled Surgeons. I have already lost as many as thirteen men by death, have had two discharged, and near have twenty men confined unfit for duty! If our Regiment could be moved to a place where there was greater equilibrium of temperature, the health of the troops might be improved, but so long as we have chilling nights here and intense heat during, as is the case here, the dead march will be heard as often as revellie. In this extremity, for both, we do not let us be imposed upon by the appointment of Dr. Love, or any other new man, if it can be avoided.

Since the illness of our Col. the duties of Company officers have greatly increased, by reason of orders issued by the Major, for more drill, and also for opening a school of instruction for officers. The regular routine of duties in Camp is as follows: Barracks drill at 3 o'clock A. M. School of Instruction and Guardmounting at 9 o'clock. Company drill at 4 o'clock R. M. Dress parade at 5 o'clock, exclusive of many other Company & Camp duties not mentioned. Now will imagine, very correctly from this, that little time for play or recreation is given one in command of a company. We have no books, and our best amusement is that which conversation around the mess table furnishes us. The officers of each company meet with their Captain, and one of the number acts as captain, during the space of 2 months, who is considered responsible for the fare given; and if there be a prospect ahead of half rations, it becomes his duty to buy and burn—until the latter he well supplied. Having lived upon less than half rations for more than ten days at once, we have become wise and ask upon selfish principle, necessarily. Occasionally, we get fruits & have good meals, when finds increase in number and flock around the table. We all have been gone some time, and have had little knowledge of what transpires in the States, from which it may be reasonably concluded, that “bogging out in Mexico” is not quite so agreeable as Texas weather, who remain at home, and have the young chivalrous & patriotic label. I think enough has been written to give you an idea of the life we lead, and I shall reserve the remaining space for other matters..... &c. &c. &c.

Within is at Salasa, but it is believed she will leave here. Patterson's Division and go with the train which will be connected to the City of Mexico in about two weeks. At this time. As treatment of me was as kind as one should wish. I must say his conduct does not by any means please Col. &c. and other officers of his Command. Such complaints are made against his ignorance & tyranny, and they do not seem unfounded. It is that charges will be preferred against him, for his march to Salasa, placing the troops with his orders when half rations, allowing but one ass to a company, he taking as much ammunition for his own use as &c. &c. He has two letters written him, who will blame his conduct to the people of the U.S. in most flattering language, but he has only adopted the example of Master, who had Kendall as his Ensign, and fellow, who is the 1st, has been written into a political & military adept. By Montgomery &c. &c. I fear, I have already written much more than will entertain you, and conclude by asking