point best suited for an advance to the former πver. By the middle of August Taylor had selected a position at Corpus Christi, on the west bank of the Nueces and within the disputed territory, and here he remained until the following spring. Upon the definite refusal of the Mexican government under Paredes to resume with the United States the diplomatic relations broken off by the annexation of Texas, Taylor was ordered to advance to the Rio Grande for the purpose of anti­cipating any hostile incursion from Mexico. He himself favoured such a movement if the United States was to main­tain its claim as regards the boundary. In obedience to his instructions he left Corpus Christi on the 12th of March 1846, fortified Point Isabel as a base of supplies, and took up his position on the disputed river, opposite the Mexican town of Matamoras. Here he began to construct Fort Texas, after­wards called Fort Brown, upon the present site of Brownsville. The commander of the Mexican Army of the North, Ampudia, immediately summoned him to retire behind the Nueces under the threat of interpreting his advance as an invasion of Mexican territory. Taylor not only disregarded this summons, but within the following week proceeded to blockade the Rio Grande. Hostilities were then unavoidable, and the first passage at arms occurred on the 24th of April 1846, when a large force of Mexicans on the east hank of the Rio Grande ambushed and captured a small party of American dragoons under Captain Seth B. Thornton (1814-1847). The news of this event led President Polk, on the 11th of May, to recom­mend a formal declaration of war on the ground that it existed “ by the act of Mexico herself,” for that power “ has passed the boundary of the United States, has invaded our territory and shed American blood upon American soil.” This state­ment was incorporated in the bill declaring war, and although severely criticized during the Senate debate, passed both houses of Congress by overwhelming majorities.

Meanwhile Taylor had strengthened his base of supplies at Point Isabel, where he was reinforced by militia from Texas and Louisiana, and during the return march from this post was fiercely attacked at Palo Alto (about 8 m. N.E. of Browns­ville, Texas) on May 8th, by the Mexicans under Arista. The latter was easily driven from the field, but on the following day threatened Taylor’s advance in a much stronger position, Resaca de la Palma (about 4 m. N. of Brownsville). A brilliant charge by the dragoons under Captain May decided this contest, which Taylor followed up by a pursuit of the Mexican general to the Rio Grande. After relieving Fort Brown, which had been besieged since the 3rd of May, Taylor himself crossed the river, and on the 18th of May occupied Matamoras, from which Arista had already retreated to Monterrey.

As it was the intention of the administration to wage war for the purpose merely of bringing Mexico to negotiate, Taylor did not immediately advance southward from the Rio Grande. When, however, Mexico persisted in her refusal to treat, Polk decided to conquer her northern provinces. Taylor formed a new base of operations at Camargo, farther up the river, and from this point, in August began an advance towards Monterrey, the capital of Nuevo Leon. After hard fighting he occupied this city in the latter part of September (see Monterrey). The truce with which he followed up this success was unaccept­able to the administration, and upon receiving notice to resume hostilities, he occupied Saltillo, the capital of Coahuila, and Victoria, the capital of Tamaulipas, thus completing the con­quest of the north-eastern states of Mexico. By this time Taylor had been reinforced by some 3000 troops which had marched under Gen. John E. Wool from San Antonio directly towards Chihuahua, but which had been deflected at Monclova to join his “ army of occupation.” During the war he was breveted major-general (May 1846), and Congress thrice passed votes of thanks and ordered the presentation of commemorative gold medals. President Polk distrusted Taylor because of his supposed Whig views, and now began to express his dissatis­faction with the general’s failure to take full advantage of his victories and his hesitancy to suggest a plan for the future conduct of the war. Taylor was unwilling to lead his own army farther into the desert interior of Mexico and remained non-committal upon the projected attempt from Vera Cruz. When Polk finally determined upon the latter campaign, he selected Gen. Winfield Scott, although the latter was personally unacceptable to himself, as its leader, and despite Taylor’s vigorous protests detached most of bis experienced troops to join Scott’s command. Meanwhile through the connivance of the American authorities, Santa Anna returned from his Cuban exile, and, as the newly elected Mexican president, disregarding his pledges to aid Polk in bringing about a satisfactory peace, prepared to wage a more effective war against the American invaders. Learning of the weakened condition of Taylor’s force he made a sudden advance to the northward, with some 20,000 troops, and on the 22nd of February 1847 encountered Taylor with one-fourth that number at Buena Vista, a few miles beyond Saltillo. The all-day battle in the narrow mountain pass was the most stubbornly contested of the whole war, and the brilliant victory of Taylor over such odds made “ Old Rough and Ready,” as he was called by his troops, the hero of the hour. With this encounter the serious work of his “ army of occupation ” ended, although he was later joined by Gen. Alexander W. Doniphan’s troops, who had marched from New Mexico *via* Chihuahua. Taylor’s brilliant victory, won when he was so greatly handicapped by Polk, emphasized the popular discontent which that president’s policy had already aroused, and suggested him to the political leaders as a presidential possibility. The general, however, had passed his mature years wholly in military service and had never voted, much less strongly allied himself, with any political party. Nevertheless when Taylor meetings became the fashion and newspapers began to advocate his nomination, party lines threatened to disappear despite the frantic efforts of the old- time chiefs of the two leading organizations to stem the tide against the popular favourite. The Democratic party with its more efficient machinery prevented a stampede of its rank and file, but the Whigs were less successful. Within a month after his victory over Santa Anna a Whig convention in Iowa nomi­nated him for the presidency, and public meetings in Kentucky, Ohio, Virginia, Pennsylvania and elsewhere quickly took similar action, in many cases without regard to party lines. Taylor first adopted a course of discouraging these suggestions and emphasized his non-partisan attitude, but later gave way to the pressure, and issued a statement that proved satisfactory to the majority of the Whig politicians. Yet it required four ballots in the national convention to overcome the reluctance of Webster’s, Clay’s and Scott’s followers and secure the party nomination. The disaffection of these leaders was more than counterbalanced, however, by the split of the New York Democrats over the slavery question, which assured Taylor of the vote of that state. His residence in Louisiana, his ownership of a large plantation with its slaves, and his family connexion with Jefferson Davis (who had married his daughter), rendered him more acceptable to many of the Southern Demo­crats than their party candidate, Lewis Cass, an advocate of “ squatter sovereignty ” and the representative of the demo­cracy of the free North-west. As a result Taylor carried eight slave states while his opponent secured seven, but in the free states the conditions were exactly reversed. He received a majority of electoral votes on each side of the Mason and Dixon line and was confirmed in his preconceived opinion that he was to be the president of the whole people. Both parties had attempted to avoid the burning slavery issue,—the Whigs by adopting no platform whatever and the Democrats by trusting to the well-known views of their candidate, but the political leaders in Congress could not escape the many definite questions presented by the possession of the territory newly acquired from Mexico. The Wilmot Proviso and the bill to organize the territory of Oregon had already aroused both sections and had given occasion for Webster and Calhoun to state their respective views upon the constitutional questions involved. The three weeks’ contest over the election of a