

was inconsiderable. we started on our return, and late in the afternoon rode into the station in triumph. There was a suspicious moisture in many an eye long since a stranger to tears, when the overjoyed mother clasped her only remaining treasure to her heart, and I could not help stealing a glance at Rohrer, and trying to imagine what his feelings would have been had not his gun refused to obey his murderous behests. The little one was too much dazed and bewildered by the many strange scenes through which it had passed so rapidly, to even know its mother.

Poor Rohrer; he was as brave a soul as ever drew the breath of life, but his excitable temperament rendered him as dangerous to friend as foe; in fact, I got to be more afraid of him than of the enemy, when we went into an engagement. He was finally ambushed and killed by an Indian in Thomas Moore's yard.

We went on up to our appointed station, where we built the old Tumlinson blockhouse, making it our headquarters till the invasion of Santa Anna necessitated our recall, after which it was burned by the Indians and never rebuilt. And, save this old dismantled hulk, there is not, to my knowledge, one of those old Tumlinson rangers now living.

CHAPTER IX.

Somewhere about the first of March we were called in to Bastrop. Santa Anna, with a large force, was marching upon the poorly protected frontier, and all advanced positions were ordered abandoned, and the forces to concentrate at Gonzales, whither every available man was urged to repair forthwith; thus leaving the frontier settlements exposed to both Mexicans and Indians. Families were gathering at Bastrop, preparatory to a general hegira before the ruthless invaders, who were said to be waging

a war of extermination, and we were ordered to cover their retreat, and afterwards join General Houston. Turning the command over to Major (Judge R. M.) Williamson, Captain Tunlinson and his first lieutenant, Jo Rodgers (afterward killed by Indians) went to remove their families to a place of safety.

People were poorly prepared for moving, and, in order to give them all the time possible, it was decided to put a picket guard out on the San Antonio road, beyond Plum creek, to give notice of hostile approach. A squad of eight men were detailed for this duty, of which I was given command. Taking supplies for a two-days' sojourn, we started on our mission; but, before we reached our station, a courier overtook us with an order to send all the men back but two.

The Alamo had fallen and its brave defenders been put to the sword. Houston was in retreat, and families fleeing for their lives. Here was a situation to try men's souls. I had no kith nor kin in the country, was young and active, well armed and mounted, and so didn't blame others, less fortunately circumstanced, for hesitating when I read the dispatch aloud and said: "Well, boys, you hear the order. I've got to stay. Now who is going to stay with me?" They looked blank, and some of them swore they weren't "going to stay there to be murdered." "Then up spoke brave Horatius" in the person of little Jim Edmunson, a lad not more than 16 years old. "By gunie, Cap, I ain't afraid to stay with you anywhere." "Very well, Jim," I said. "You can all go back, boys. Jim and I will keep watch."

We both had good horses, and I knew that, with a fair start, no Mexican plug could catch us; so we took leave of our companions, who, to do them justice, were reluctant to leave us to our perilous mission; for there was even

more danger from Indians, who were hovering on the outskirts, than from Mexicans who would come by the highway.

We kept a sharp lookout for Indian signs, but were relieved to find none. On reaching our station we carefully reconnoitered the country in every direction, selecting a position on a rise overlooking the road for several miles. We loosened our saddles without removing them, only slipping the bridle bits to allow our horses to eat corn we had brought with us. By that time it was growing dark, and, not daring to light a fire, we ate a cold bite. I then told Jim to lie down, and I kept watch with eye and ear all night long, unwilling, under such circumstances, to trust a growing boy to keep awake.

Morning came at last, and, no foe being in sight, we kindled a fire, made some coffee, attended to the needs of our horses, and then, instructing Jim as to his duties, I lay down and slept, but you may well imagine it was not a very sound slumber.

Thus another night and another day passed, and our lonely vigil was ended. There was no sign of a foe, so, late in the afternoon, we tightened up our saddle girths and set out on our return, going as far as Cedar creek, where we stopped for the night. The residents were all gone. There were chickens and eggs to make a preacher's mouth water, and we helped ourselves, feasting right royally, considering that we had earned the right to do so.

The next day we rode into Bastrop, which the brief interval of our absence had served to depopulate, excepting our company of twenty-two men. There being nothing more to detain us, we sunk all the boats and started down on the east side of the river, but had only gone about ten miles when we met a courier with orders for us to remain at Bastrop and get as many of the cattle over to the east

bank as possible. **So back we went.**

The river was up swimming and all the boats were sunk; but, as no Mexicans had appeared, we concluded that they were not coming that way, and, knowing that there was a dugout up at Webber's place, four of us went up for it. It proved to be a new one, unfinished, and very heavy and clumsy, but we hitched on to it with our lariats and snaked it down to the river, where we launched it, Ganey Crosby, otherwise known as "Choctaw Tom," and myself manning it, while the other boys took charge of the horses.

Our craft proved rather unmanageable, spilling us into the river and wetting our guns, which we hung on to, however, being good swimmers. We righted our boat, bailed it out with our hats, re-embarked and went on down to old Marty Wells' place, when, being hungry and wet and a cold norther blowing, we landed and tied up for the night. The place was, of course, deserted. So we took possession and made ourselves comfortable. There was plenty of provender, and we made a roaring fire in the kitchen, cooked a sumptuous supper, dried our clothes and laid down to sleep.

By and by we were aroused by a roar and glare; our first thought being that the Indians had crept upon us and were trying to cremate us. A second look assured us that it was only the old stick and mud chimney, which had succumbed to our fire. Tom ran out and, snatching a fence rail, thrust it between the house and the chimney, throwing the latter down. We scattered the blazing sticks around, throwing water on them, and then lay down and finished our nap.

Next morning we again set sail, and at Caldwell's place, lower down, found a better canoe, of which we availed ourselves, reaching Bastrop without further mishap.

There was no chance of getting any cattle across; but,

not knowing where our army was, and feeling no apprehension of the Mexicans coming that way, we stayed on, becoming so careless that we didn't even keep guards out, except one sentinel down at the ford. But one morning we woke up and saw the Mexicans, six hundred strong, on the opposite side of the river, they having captured our boat. We didn't "stand on the order" of our going, but went at once, and in such a hurry that we came near leaving the sentry, old Jimmy Curtice, on duty. We had got away when I happened to think of him, and rushing up to Major Williamson, said: "You ain't going to leave Uncle Jimmie on guard, are you, Major?"

"Good God! No; ride back and tell the old man to come on." I galloped back and found Uncle Jimmie sitting leaning against a tree, with a bottle of whisky beside him, as happy and unconscious of danger as a turtle on a log. "Hello, Uncle Jimmie," I cried, "mount and ride for your life. The Mexicans are on the other side and our men all gone." "The hell they are! 'Light and take a drink." "There's no time for drinking. Come—mount and let's be off. The Mexicans may swim the river and be after us any moment." "Let's drink to their confusion," he persisted, and, thinking it the quickest way to start him, I drank with him and we struck out.

"Well, we can say one thing; we were the last men to leave," said he, not in the least disturbed. He was one of the first white settlers in the colony and had had many brushes with the Spanish authorities.

We had two old men—old Andy Dunn and Jimmie Leach, who had lost their horses, and we younger men walked alternately, letting them ride our horses. The ground in the pine woods through which we were traveling was so boggy that we could not quit the road, and, thus hampered, our situation was not an enviable one. We

traveled on all night, and, as hungry and tired we floundered on through the mud, we heard a signal shot from the advance guard.

They had discovered two men in the road ahead, who, on being hailed, dropped their bundles and ran. We examined the contents of the packs and were satisfied the owners were only runaway negroes who would keep out of the Mexicans' clutches, and so give no information.

At that juncture, Major Williamson, "being a little lame," concluded not to wait on our enforced slow pace, and accordingly went on, accompanied by "Choctaw Tom" and old Jimmie Curtice. The command then devolved on Lieutenant George M. Petty, a man destitute of experience, and possessed of a large amount of that "discretion" which is popularly esteemed "the better part of valor."

For some reason the Mexicans did not pursue us. They probably didn't know how we were situated, and doubtless were all busy gathering up plunder, it being their first opportunity, Gonzales having been burned when Houston left. It was said they gathered up everything of value and stored it carefully away before they left, thinking to return and possess the land from which they thought the Texans were expelled for good. Their expectations were doomed to failure for more reasons than one. The Comanches came next, and after taking all they wanted, set fire to the town.


The desolation of the country through which we passed beggars description. Houses were standing open, the beds unmade, the breakfast things still on the tables, pans of milk moulding in the dairies. There were cribs full of corn, smoke houses full of bacon, yards full of chickens that ran after us for food, nests of eggs in every fence corner, young corn and garden truck rejoicing in the rain, cattle cropping the luxuriant grass, hogs, fat and lazy,

wallowing in the mud, all abandoned. Forlorn dogs roamed around the deserted homes, their doleful howls adding to the general sense of desolation. Hungry cats ran mewling to meet us, rubbing their sides against our legs in token of welcome. Wagons were so scarce that it was impossible to remove household goods, many of the women and children, even, had to walk. Some had no conveyance but trucks, the screeching of which added to the horror of the situation. One young lady said she walked with a bucket in hand to keep the trucks on which her mother and their little camping outfit rode from taking fire.

And, as if the arch fiend had broken loose, there were men—or devils, rather—bent on plunder, galloping up behind the fugitives, telling them the Mexicans were just behind, thus causing the hapless victims to abandon what few valuables they had tried to save. **There** were broken-down wagons and household goods scattered all along the road. Stores with quite valuable stocks of goods stood open, the goods on the shelves, no attempt having been made to remove them.

When we reached Cole's settlement (Brenham) we found a notice which Major Williamson had stuck on a tree, reporting the surrender and subsequent massacre of Fannin's men. We then understood the precipitate flight of the inhabitants, and realized the fate in store for us should we fall into the hands of the enemy.

There was an old fellow, John Williams, in our squad, who had been through several revolutions, from which he had derived a holy horror of Spanish methods of warfare, and he so worked upon the natural timidity of our commanding officer, that he saw a Mexican soldier in every bush. He actually tore up his commission, lest it be found on him, and condemn him to certain death. I



cursed him for a coward then; but, looking back at it now and remembering that Houston was bitterly denounced as a coward for pursuing the only course that could have saved Texas, I am fain to confess that what we hotheads sneered at as cowardice in Lieutenant Petty, was really commendable caution. Had Grant and Ward and King been of the same temperament, the lives of themselves and their followers would not have been so uselessly sacrificed. Ignorant of the whereabouts of either friend or foe, knowing that Gaona was behind us, and surmising that Santa Anna was between us and Houston, we had good reason to feel timid.

Two of us who had the best mounts, Felix W. Goff and myself, offered to go on to Washington and see who was there; but, that not being considered advisable, we made for the Brazos bottom above Washington, where we lay concealed till night, when we sent out scouts to reconnoiter. There was a full moon just rising, and by its rays the scouts discovered a large body of moving figures coming down the road to Washington, which they supposed, of course, was Gaona's division of the Mexican army. With two of our men flat afoot and several others not much better off, the enemy close upon us in the rear and the Brazos river booming full in front, there was nothing for us but to try and keep out of the way. The only course open was up the river, and this we accordingly took, going up to Tinixtitlan before we effected a crossing.

At that point we fell in with Colonel Bain and Captain Bob Childress, who, with their rangers, had been conveying the families from their district. They had two men without horses, who, with our two, constructed a raft and started down the river; poor old Andy Dunn and Jimmie Leach getting drowned on the way down. Thus rein-

forced we struck down the river in search of our army, the first intimation of its locality being conveyed to us by the guns of San Jacinto, while we were still some miles away. Uncertain what course to pursue, we halted, and soon a messenger came with the tidings of victory.

It was then my turn to swear; but, notwithstanding I had added the Spanish list to my vocabulary of "cuss words," I couldn't begin to "do the subject justice," especially when we learned that the Mexican army that had sent us racing off up to Tinoxtitlan, was only a drove of cattle, which had been abandoned and were roving over the prairie. I felt mean and ashamed to go on to Houston's camp, as if we ought to be drummed out; but, the battle was fought and won just the same without us, and, perhaps, had I been there, I might not now be writing the story of it.

If ever I did thirst for gore it was when we reached San Jacinto and found the army jubilating over the glorious victory, of a share in which only the timidity of our commanding officer had deprived us. The ferry at Washington having, by Major Williamson's order, been kept open for us, the way was absolutely clear.

The dead Mexicans lay in piles, the survivors not even asking permission to bury them, thinking, perhaps, that, in return for the butchery they had practiced, they would soon be lying dead themselves. The buzzards and coyotes were gathering to the feast, but it is a singular fact that they singled out the dead horses, refusing to touch the Mexicans, presumably because of the peppery condition of the flesh. They lay there unmolested and dried up, the cattle got to chewing the bones, which so affected the milk that residents in the vicinity had to dig trenches and bury them.

The battlefield bore testimony to the desperate hand-

to-hand struggle our men had maintained—rifles broken off at the breech, the stocks besmeared with blood and brains, told but too plainly how foes had met their death. One of the few Mexicans who escaped to carry the news of the disaster, accounted for their defeat on the hypothesis that “the Americans were all drunk.” He said the Mexicans had them whipped, when a boat loaded with whisky came up. The Americans then all filled up with corn juice, and, yelling “Alamo, Alamo,” made a wild rush for the Mexicans, falling upon them with clubs, and beat their brains out. The latter part of the statement was literally true, and it was equally true that many a poor wretch was brained while on his knees. But with the blood of relatives and friends butchered in the Alamo and at Goliad crying for revenge, the Texans did not stop to reflect that these abject creatures were only tools.

Old Jimmie Curtice had a son-in-law, Wash Cottle, slain in the Alamo, whom he swore to avenge. San Jacinto gave him his opportunity and he made the most of it. The boys said he clubbed his rifle and sailed in, in Donnybrook fair style, accompanying each blow with “Alamo! You killed Wash Cottle!”

The arms and ammunition captured were brought into camp. No one wanted the muskets, so they were stacked; and, as the cartridges wouldn't fit our guns, they were thrown into a heap. By some means fire got among them and there was a stampede, such as they never could have created shot from muskets in the hands of Mexicans. “Pop!” “Fizz!” “Bang!” The enemy was charging every point of the compass! The air was full of bursting shells! The proud victors of San Jacinto dropped their guns and fled. Trees were at a premium. The rout was complete. The blind enemy held possession of the camp until the last cartridge was exhausted.

We luckless wights who failed to get into the fight got no share of the spoils, which were quite considerable. Santa Anna's horse and accoutrements were, by common consent, given to General Houston, whose horse was shot under him in the fight. The saddle fairly glittered with gold, which Santa Anna said was solid and valued at \$600, but it was subsequently ascertained to be only plated. The horse, a magnificent black stallion, had been taken from Allen Vince, which, coming to Houston's knowledge, he promptly restored it to its owner.

There were said to have been a number of United States soldiers, from General Gaines' command, in the battle of San Jacinto. Deserters, they were called; but, after the battle, they all "deserted" back to the United States army, and no court martial ensued. General Gaines, it will be remembered, moved his command over to Nacogdoches, ostensibly to protect the families against the Indians.

The only one of our killed with whom I was acquainted was Lemuel Blakey, a boy about eighteen, whose father died of fever at Brazoria within a few weeks after setting foot in the promised land for which they left their old Kentucky home in 1832. Thus left with a large family, the older ones daughters, Mrs. Blakey went on up to Bastrop, "Austin's little colony" it was then called, locating her headright on the west side of the Colorado, where her descendants still reside. When Houston issued his call for volunteers, Edward, her oldest son, enlisted, but, when it became evident that the families would have to leave, his mother's claims were strongest, and his brother Lemuel went in his stead. Edward was afterward killed by the Indians in the battle of Brushy. Of the humble private, who falls at his post, history is oblivious; but, there were bitter tears mingled with the rejoicing, in that refugee camp over beyond the Trinity, for the son and brother

who would return no more. Their tears have all been shed, not one of all the family remaining to tell the story of that terrible flight, as indeed there are few now living who participated in it.

It was a time to try the souls of all, even the little children realizing something of the situation, which must have left such a vivid impression on their minds that time has not effaced it. Years afterward I was in Bastrop when a little Italian Jew came along playing on a hand organ. Old Sampson Connell, somewhat the worse for "booze," sat nodding in the sun outside a store. By and by he straightened himself up and said: "——— that thing, it makes me think of the runaway scrape. I had nothing but a pair of old trucks to get my family away on, and whenever they got dry they went 'cru-uchy, cru-uchy,' just like that thing does." The "runaway scrape" marked an epoch from which Texans were wont to date all events up to the time of the late war, which, of course, obliterated old landmarks, so that the rising generation probably knew but little about it; but, that they may know something of the hardships of those who wrested their heritage from the savage, I would that every survivor should lend his experience to swell the volume of history.

Though our loss at San Jacinto was trifling, we had paid dearly for our victory. Two hundred brave men who fell fighting with Travis, Bowie, and Crockett in the Alamo, 390 butchered in cold blood with Fannin at Goliad, and the parties of Grant, Ward, King and Johnson, about 150 in all, who perished with their leaders at Agua Dulce, Refugio and San Patricio; aggregating nearly as many men as fought under the Lone Star at San Jacinto. A needless sacrifice, too. Had the policy of Houston and Governor Smith been sustained, all of these tragedies might have

been averted. The defenders of the Alamo fought to the last gasp. All the other parties surrendered when the contest became hopeless, and were disarmed, marched out and shot to death, in violation of the rules of war. Such are the methods of Spanish warfare. And yet, Santa Anna alone is responsible for the atrocious deed, his officers pleading in vain for the lives of their prisoners. When General Urrea heard of the massacre at Goliad he exclaimed, with tears in his eyes: "Thank God, I had nothing to do with the murder of those brave men."

When the unfortunate men were being made to kneel, Fenner, having a presentiment of what was intended, sprang to his feet, calling to his comrades: "Turn! don't let us be shot in the back." With this warning some fell over on their faces and escaped the first volley, but it was only to prolong their agony. I personally knew one man who fell on his face and lay perfectly still. A Mexican came along and thrust a lance through his neck, leaving him for dead; but, after night he crawled away to a Mexican house where the mistress of it took him in and kept him concealed till he recovered.

When Santa Anna unfurled his black flag in front of the Alamo, Travis assembled his little band in the court and drawing a line across it with his sword requested all those who were resolved to die fighting to step across the line. There was a rush to get across; Jim Bowie, who lay helpless in bed, asking to be carried across, and, true to his word, he had his loaded pistols laid beside him, and, when the murderous fiends burst into the room, he opened fire on them and had the satisfaction of seeing several of his assailants fall before he himself was overpowered.

Though slightly acquainted with many of the victims of Santa Anna's barbarous policy, Bowie was the only one

for whom I entertained a personal regard. My relations with him dated back to 1828, when he made his appearance in San Felipe de Austin (about a year after the famous encounter which established his character as a fighter and made the reputation of the Bowie knife). The encounter referred to was a free-for-all fight on a sand bar in the Mississippi river fronting Natchez; the initial skirmish being a duel in which the principals, Major Wright and Dr. Maddux, after having vindicated their honor by the exchange of harmless shots, shook hands across the bloodless chasm.

This tame ending of an affair which had promised to be an exciting event, all the parties having come up from Louisiana, bred dissatisfaction among the crowd, which brought on a general engagement; and, when the smoke of battle cleared, there were two dead men and two wounded. The details of the fight as I remember them were that General Cuney, with Jim Bowie as his second, personally challenged Colonel Crane; whereupon, Crane whipped out two pistols, discharging them simultaneously, killing Cuney and wounding Bowie, after which he turned and ran. Bowie drew his knife—all the weapon he had—and started in pursuit but fell, and before he could rise Major Wright rushed up and attempted to stab him with a sword cane. Bowie caught the cane and, jerking Wright toward him, with a tremendous sweep of his knife cleft him clear through the abdomen to the back-bone, the mangled bowels pouring out upon Bowie, who was sitting on the ground. Seeing the horrible fate that had befallen his friend, Alfred Blanchard, also armed with a sword-cane, ran up to avenge him. Shooting out his long arm Bowie slashed Blanchard across the abdomen, disemboweling him.

The blood christened weapon which had saved its own-

er's life twice within a few seconds, was an ordinary affair with a plain wooden handle, but when Bowie recovered from his wound he had the precious blade polished and set into an ivory handle mounted with silver; the scabbard also being silver mounted. Not wishing to degrade it by ordinary use, he brought the knife to me in San Felipe to have a duplicate made. The blade was about ten inches long and two broad at the widest part. When it became known that I was making a genuine Bowie knife, there was a great demand for them, so I cut a pattern and started a factory, my jobs bringing all the way from \$5.00 to \$20.00, according to finish.

Bowie went on out to San Antonio where he married the daughter of ex-Governor Veremendi. I never met his wife, but was told that she was of a pure Castilian type and very handsome. I know that she had a deep hold on Bowie's affections. Strong man that he was, I have seen the tears course down his cheeks while lamenting her untimely death, which occurred while I was in Louisiana, where I again met him after his bereavement. In 1831 he again displayed his fighting qualities in an all-day fight near the old San Saba mission, which himself and brother Rezin with seven other white men and two negro boys maintained against 164 Indians, many of whom had firearms; the whites losing but one man, while the Indians lost a third of their number.

When I renewed my acquaintance with him in Louisiana he, with Rezin P. Bowie, his brother, were prosecuting a claim to a large amount of land in Louisiana under an old Spanish grant. The case was in all the courts and became celebrated as the "Bowie claim." They won their suit and had a fortune, but Jim was prodigal with his money, though he was no gambler, and soon let his share slip away from him. In the same way a fortune which he

was said to have made out of the slave trade, carried on in connection with Lafitte, filtered through his fingers.

As previously related, it was under his leadership that we fought the battle of Concepcion; after which I transferred my services to the rangers and we never met again. James Bowie was a fine specimen of physical manhood and by nature calculated to be a commander of men. Whatever faults he may have had, infidelity to friends was not one of them; he stood up to them right or wrong. There was a story told of him that, getting into a fracas in San Antonio, and failing to receive the support of a friend who was present, he afterwards called him to account for it. "Why, Jim," his friend exclaimed, "you were in the wrong." "Don't you suppose I know that as well as you do? That's just why I needed a friend. If I had been in the right, I would have had plenty of them," retorted Bowie.

Colonel Travis, who previous to the opening of hostilities was simply "Bill Travis" and lived below San Felipe, was a good fighter; but, had not the qualities necessary to a commander, else he never would have allowed himself to become penned up in the Alamo. He, however, made the same fatal mistake to which Col. Barnard E. Bee attributed the defeat of Santa Anna. In talking with Colonel Bee about the battle of San Jacinto, I asked him how he accounted for the utter rout. "Why, sir," said he, "Santa Anna despised his enemy. It's a dangerous thing to despise your enemy."

The fate of Fannin's command was due to his solicitude for the detachments under King and Ward whom he had despatched to Refugio to bring off the families; and for whom he waited three days after all was in readiness for retreat, not knowing that they had been cut off.

In striking contrast to the campaign just closed was

that of the previous fall in which we expelled the whole Mexican force from the territory, with a loss to the Texans not exceeding half a dozen men, all told. Among these latter was Ransome Graves, a youth about eighteen years of age, who lived with his widowed mother at Matagorda. Ransome did not thirst for glory, but was rather ambitious to shine with the girls; a weakness of which I took advantage to kindle a martial flame.

"Now," said I, "here's your opportunity. There is nothing a woman so despises as a coward; but, if you will go bravely to the front and fight for freedom, when you come back you will be a hero, and the girls will be proud of your attentions." Ransome remained silent for a moment as if contemplating the alluring picture.

"Yes," he dubiously interposed, "but what if your Uncle Fuller was to get thrust through?"

That was a proposition which I had no argument to combat. But when the test came, Ransome did not fail. He was among the first in the field and—was "thrust through."

It was a terrible baptism, that of the Lone Star republic; but, we had triumphed and it was to the future that our eyes were now turned.

Houston's ankle having been shattered by the ball that killed his horse, as soon as the treaty of peace was signed and the Mexican army in retreat, he turned over the command of the army to General Rusk (who, though secretary of war, had joined the army and bore a soldier's part in the battle of San Jacinto), and sailed for New Orleans for repairs.

Sam Houston made his debut on the stage of Texas politics in 1833, when, as the representative of Nacogdoches in the convention that convened at San Felipe to take measures to secure statehood, he, as chairman of

the committee on constitution, drew up the document which accompanied the petition to Mexico.

The convention having finished its labors, Houston disappeared from public view until 1835, when he again came to the front in the council which declared war and established the provisional government. Houston being elected commander-in-chief of the Texas army, his name thereafter is indissolubly intertwined with the history of the state. Though his peculiar bent did not incline toward the founding of a nation, every instinct of his nature prompted him to resistance when the life and liberties of the nation were threatened.

He was a living exponent of the natural law alluded to by him in Congress when the West Point Military Academy bill was under consideration. Said he, "You might as well take dung-hill fowl's eggs and put them in eagle's nests and try to make eagles of them, as to try to make generals of boys who have no capacity, by giving them military training."

With no previous military training, he enlisted as a private in the Creek war, from which he emerged with the rank of lieutenant; after which his military pursuits were limited to the militia. This was his military record up to the time he debouched on the field as commander of the Texas army.

Like the Duke of Wellington, Houston was great on retreat; his much anathematized retreat alone making possible the glorious victory of San Jacinto. With no adequate force to oppose the invading army, the only hope of success lay in dividing it and taking it in detail; a consummation that, whether Houston foresaw it or not, was practically attained when Santa Anna, finding the Texas army in retreat, sent General Gaona across by Bastrop, and General Urrea down along the coast to sweep the

country clean, while he himself hurried on after the retreating army, confident of his ability to annihilate it if only he could overtake it. Thus we find the Texans at bay at San Jacinto with less than one-third of the Mexican army confronting them; and while Santa Anna is snoozing away the time waiting for his scattered forces to rejoin him, the bridge behind him is burned, cutting off help and retreat alike, and the gallant little band is upon him dealing death to his surprised and routed army. He had not dreamed of attack. "Why," said he after his capture, "such a thing as assaulting breastworks without either bayonets or swords was never before known." The Texans had established a precedent, and, could the men have gotten hold of him after his identity was revealed, they would have established another one for him. "Why," he enquired of Houston, "didn't you attack me yesterday before General Cos came up?" "Oh," replied Houston, "I didn't think it worth while to make two bites of a cherry."

Nor was Houston's policy in dealing with Santa Anna as a prisoner productive of less happy results. Had the bloody wretch been hanged, as the army demanded and as he richly deserved, the Mexican army under General Filisola would have made a combined attack on the Texans and probably have overwhelmed them; but, with the president in hand, the Texans held the key to the situation. Like Washington, Houston proved himself equally as competent to guide the helm of the ship of state as to command its army.

Captain George Erath, one of San Jacinto's heroes, being a man of action, condensed the whole code of military tactics into one word. The marked success attending his campaigns against the Indians at the head of a company of minute men suggesting military training, he was

asked if he had not received a military training. "No," said he, "I knows but vone vord of command, und dot ish, 'Sharge, poys, sharge.'"

CHAPTER X.

When the Texas army, under General Rusk, moved up from San Jacinto to Victoria in the wake of the retreating Mexicans, the rangers were detailed to guard the baggage. The country being deserted, we helped ourselves to anything in the way of provisions we found lying around loose; but, the Mexican army having marched and countermarched through that section, there was little, except livestock, left to forage on. Camping for the night at Squire Sutherland's place on the Colorado, the only thing in the way of commissary we could find, was a number of fat hogs lying around the gin house. They jumped up and "booed" at us when we came up, and, our military honor forbidding us to allow such an affront to pass unnoticed, we charged upon the saucy porkers, bringing down a 200-pounder. Dressing our prize, we soon had pork chops to broil. The odor arising therefrom wasn't exactly what we could have wished; but, as we sniffed the air rather doubtfully, familiarity with the peculiar odor served to lull our suspicions, and by the time the meat was cooked, we had persuaded ourselves there was nothing unusual about it. One bite served to dispel the fond delusion. Having been fattened on cottonseed alone, the meat was so strongly impregnated with the flavor that it was impossible to eat it.

All danger from the Mexicans being over, our men were strung out across the prairie, sometimes a mile ahead of the wagons. The sedge grass, which in many places was waist high, was getting dry, furnishing material for a