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ADVENTURES OF A FRENCH CAPTAIN.



This rather grotesque Ceremony cost the Colony several bottles of Rum.

THE ADVENTURES
OF A
FRENCH CAPTAIN,

AT PRESENT A PLANTER IN TEXAS, FORMERLY
A REFUGEE OF CAMP ASYLUM.

BY
JUST GIRARD.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

BY
THE LADY BLANCHE MURPHY.



NEW YORK, CINCINNATI, AND CHICAGO.
BENZIGER BROTHERS,
PRINTERS TO THE HOLY APOSTOLIC SEE.

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THE ADVENTURES OF A FRENCH CAPTAIN

Were related to us by the hero of the tale himself, on the occasion of his last visit to Paris. The interest we felt in them led us to hope that they would prove equally interesting to our young readers, and therefore we have worded them, as nearly as possible, in the Captain's own language.

In order to render the tale more intelligible and more useful, we have thought it well to preface it by a short topographical and geological notice of Texas.

INTRODUCTION.

TEXAS* is bounded on the north by New Mexico, Indian Territory, and Arkansas, on the east by Arkansas and Louisiana, on the west and south by Mexico, and on the south-east by the Gulf of Mexico. The Red River is its northern boundary, the Sabine its eastern, and the Rio Grande its western limits. Its shape is very irregular, but its extreme length from south-east to north-west is more than 800 miles, and its greatest breadth from east to west about 750 miles, including an area of 237,504 square miles.

This country, inclining to the south-east, is divided into three distinct zones or regions: that of the *mountains*, that of the *prairies*, and that of the *plains*. The mountainous zone covers the north-western part of the State, and

* It was once known as *Fredonia*, but its Indian name of Texas superseded the other.

includes the Sierra San Saba, a spur of the Sierra Madre, which is one of the great mountain-chains of Mexico.

Except toward their summits, which are barren and rocky, these mountains are covered with splendid forests of pine and oak, besides numerous shrubs, and broken by well-watered valleys that want nothing but the hand of man to make them yield their treasures readily.

The *prairie* region is the intermediate part of the country, and its undulating surface of tableland reaches from the foot of the mountains to the banks of the Red River, the northern boundary of Texas. Here the vegetation is rich and abundant.

The region of the plains follows the coast-line, but encroaches more or less on the interior; thus on the banks of the Sabine it is only forty-eight miles wide, while on the San Jacinto it is one hundred and twelve miles wide, and as much as one hundred and sixty on the Colorado. This zone is marvellously fertile.

Texas is one of the best watered countries in the world. The rivers are so deeply sunk

between high, rocky banks, that there is never any fear of those frequent floods which form swamps and perpetuate miasmatic diseases. Like most North American rivers, they are full of rapids, which, however, it would be easy to remove, should steam navigation be soon applied to all the watercourses. The principal rivers are the Rio Grande, which from its source to its mouth runs a course of nearly eighteen hundred miles; the Rio Nueces (or Nut River), about three hundred miles long; the Rio San Antonio two hundred and fifty, and the Guadalupe two hundred and seventy-five miles long; the Colorado River (which takes its name from the red deposit left by the rains coming in contact with the oxide of iron of the soil) is about eight hundred miles long. To judge by the government surveys, this river is navigable a distance of several hundred miles.

The Rio Brazos, called Rio Flores in the old maps, rises in the north-western part of the State and empties itself into the Bay of San Bernardo, after a course of five hundred miles. The Trinity River is at least four hundred miles long, though some explorers declare it is

more; it is certain, at any rate, that steam-boats can go up stream two hundred and forty miles. It was on the banks of this river that the French endeavored to found a colony in 1818. They named it Camp Asylum. We shall have occasion to speak of it later on. The banks of the Trinity River are high and well wooded; building timber especially abounds, and the land on both banks is rich and fruitful.

Lastly, there is the Sabine, the boundary between Texas and Louisiana, a river three hundred and fifty miles long, and navigable at all seasons for one hundred and fifty miles from its mouth. The coasts are much cut up by bays studded with islands and divided into lagoons. A little north of the mouth of the Rio Grande is the Laguna Madre, ninety miles long, and ending, at its northern extremity, in the bay of Corpus Christi, which is forty miles from north to south by twenty miles from east to west. At the entrance of the bay is a long island called Isla del Padre. Farther north is the bay of Aransas, from thirty to forty miles long and sixteen wide. The muddy, shallow bay of Espiritu Santo into which flow the San Antonio and the

Guadalupe, is partly formed by the island of Matagorda, which is ninety-six miles long and only ten wide. The bay of Galveston, into which flow the San Jacinto and the Trinity River, extends about thirty-five miles inland from the Gulf of Mexico in a direction nearly north. Ships drawing twelve feet of water can find easy anchorage in it. The coast-line is rounded off by the bay of the Sabine, so closed that it is almost like a huge lake, into which flows the river of that name.

The island of Galveston, formerly San Luis, which extends across the entrance of this bay, is nothing but a sand-bank accumulated by the strong tides. It is forty miles long and four wide, and rises only twelve yards above the level of the sea. Its surface is covered with tall, rank grass, a few mimosas and cactuses, and some marine plants. On this sand-bank the new city of Galveston has lately been built; it is an Episcopal See, and the most important seaport town in the State.

The climate of Texas is delightful. The region of the plains is the hottest; the temperature is about the same as in Louisiana, but infinitely healthier. The sea-breezes cool the

air a little in summer. As you proceed northward, the climate grows better still. In winter, from the 15th of November to the 15th of January, heavy rains fall incessantly, and moisten the earth to prepare it for the next ten months. Sometimes a little sprinkling of snow falls, but it never remains on the ground. The spring begins in February; the summer in April, and lasts till the end of September.

The three zones of Texas and the varied climates they afford are sufficient proofs of the existence of an equally rich and varied vegetation. To the south and south-west are magnificent forests, containing timber invaluable for ship-building. Among these trees, we may notice the oak, the Carolinas poplar, the ash, the cypress, the red cedar, the acacia, the chestnut, the linden, the pine, the sycamore, the sumach, the maple, the cherry-tree, etc., etc. In the heart of the virgin forests rises the beautiful *magnolia grandiflora*, often reaching a height of a hundred feet. The gum-tree and india-rubber tree grow abundantly on the banks of the Colorado, but their produce has been hitherto neglected.

Different varieties of the tea-shrub have been

cultivated on the banks of the San Antonio; they yield as good tea as that which comes from China. The mulberry grows well in Western Texas; cochineal and indigo have been tried with success; tobacco is of a superior quality, and the sugar-cane yields two harvests a year. The cotton-plant succeeds splendidly in Texas, and often grows to the height of five feet. This plant will doubtless become a source of great wealth to Texas, as it grows to a finer quality and more abundantly than on the most favored soils in the United States. An excess of its produce is the only danger to be feared.

The sugar-cane of the Tahiti species yields saccharine matter four or five months after planting, and gives two harvests annually. Corn grows here to perfection, and the great prairies round San Antonio de Bejar are peculiarly suited to the cultivation of wheat. Mulberry, indigo, and tobacco have all been successfully tried, and among the forest-trees, the live-oak may be mentioned as one of the best for ship-building.

The geological formation of Texas is very suitable for the raising of stock. The wide

prairies, covered with thick grass for six months in the year, harbor numberless flocks, which ramble at will through the unenclosed pastures, with nothing but the mark of their various owners to distinguish them.

If Texas has not mines of gold and silver, like Mexico, it has what is yet more important for civilization—*i.e.*, iron and coal. There are rich iron mines to the north of the Sabine, and all along the foot of the Ozark Mountains. The bed of the Rio Brazos yields iron ore, and the plains and cañons between the Brazos and the Colorado, granulated iron. Iron and coal must contribute to the prosperity of Texas, where, as in the States, railway communication is becoming the only means of transport for passengers and merchandise.

The great plantations and factories, and all the towns, whether old or new, or recently mapped out, are situated on the banks of the various rivers. There are Goliad, formerly Bahia, and Bejar, on the San Antonio, old Spanish towns, the latter of which retained its importance till very lately as an *entrepôt* between Louisiana and Upper Mexico. But

the principal towns are on the Brazos, the Colorado, and the Buffalo Bayou. Here are San Felipe de Austin, the cradle of Texan independence, a town of six thousand inhabitants; Houston, a city only twenty years old, but which is a standing witness of the growing prosperity, civilization, and luxury of Texas; Austin, the capital of the State, built on the banks of the Colorado, and which is now ahead of all the present settlements, and will soon become one of those cities, on a large scale and of beautiful proportions, which distinguish the States of North America.

Among the other important towns, whether old or new, we may mention Bonham, Castrovilla, Corpus Christi, Crockett, Fredericksburg, Hortontown, Indianola, Marshall, Nacogdoches, Palestine, Richmond, Washington, Victoria, Liberty, etc.

The Texans divided their republic into thirty-two counties when they first proclaimed their independence, but the present number of counties is one hundred and twenty-four. When the French refugees came, forty years ago, to found the colony of Camp Asylum, there were

not in all Texas ten thousand inhabitants of European descent. At present, there are nearly four hundred thousand.

PARIS, 1858.

NOTE.—The population of Texas, according to the census of 1870, was eight hundred and eighteen thousand eight hundred and ninety-nine.—TRANSLATOR.

ADVENTURES OF A FRENCH CAPTAIN.

CHAPTER I.

A SKETCH OF MY LIFE UP TO THE DATE OF
MY LANDING AT BALTIMORE.

I WILL speak but briefly of the first years of my life, and come to the point when circumstances occurred which made it advisable for me to leave France and seek a new home in America.

I was born at Paris in 1792, and was only seven years old when I had the misfortune of losing my mother. My father soon married again, and his new wife made me feel my loss more keenly still by her unkind conduct towards me. She absolutely hated me, and to please her my father sent me to school at St. Germain; for any school in Paris would have

been, to my step-mother's mind, too much of a substitute for home. I remained at school ten years, during which time I saw my father only two or three times, and was never allowed even to come to Paris. You see that I learned very early what it is to be an exile.

My education, such as it was, was finished in 1809. Napoleon I. was then in his greatest glory, and, like most young men of my age, I dreamed of nothing but military honors, so that when my father asked me, on my leaving school, what calling I should like to choose, I unhesitatingly said, "I wish to be a soldier." He was quite willing, and I enlisted the very same day. Next morning he took me to Versailles to join the depot for recruits for my regiment, and, having recommended me to my immediate officer, he thrust into my hand a purse containing twenty gold pieces. He embraced me affectionately enough, and left me to myself. I never saw him again.

His coldness cut me to the heart, and tears started to my eyes as I saw him go; then I vehemently anathematized my step-mother for having deprived me of my father's love. But at last my home sorrows were forgotten in the

new life, the varied occupations and constant drill of our camp. In a fortnight I was sent off with a detachment of recruits to join the main body of my regiment in Spain.

I remained in the Peninsula until our army was forced to evacuate it, and when I returned to France I had been promoted to a lieutenantcy, after going through every step leading to that grade.

Though my father had evinced so little affection for me, I nevertheless kept him *au courant* of my successive promotions. His answers to my letters were short and cold, and only one—that which I received on my promotion to the rank of commissioned officer—was different from the rest. Then, for the first time, he wrote affectionately and warmly, as became a father. I was deeply touched, and wrote back to tell him how his unexpected kindness filled my heart with love and gratitude; but, alas! he died before my letter reached him, and the sad news was communicated to me by the family solicitor, who wrote to me on business, asking my instructions as to the division of the property and my step-mother's dowry. Thus

I only learned to know my poor father just as I lost him forever.

Other troubles soon crowded upon me. The Anglo-Spanish army followed closely at our heels, and invaded the southern provinces of the empire, while the rest of the allied European forces overran the northern and eastern departments. After a last stand against the English under the walls of Toulouse, we learned the news of the emperor's abdication, the fall of his dominion, and the re-establishment of the Bourbon dynasty. I soon after heard from official sources that I had been placed on the half-pay list.

This was a blow that destroyed every hope of my heart, for I was fit for no career but the army. I had no home ties, no interest, even, to keep me in France, and my first idea was to leave a country which, according to my political opinions, I could no longer serve, and from which I could not expect any consideration. Filled with these thoughts, I went to Paris to take possession of whatever my parents might have left me, and to make arrangements for a departure for the New World.

In my ignorance and impatience, I thought

that all I should have to do would be to present myself at the solicitor's office and take immediate possession of my share of the inheritance; but I had reckoned without my host, or rather without my step-mother, who was such an adept at intrigue that the winding up of our family affairs was spun out over the space of ten months. All was not yet definitively settled, when we were startled by the news of Napoleon's landing at Cannes, his entrance into Grenoble, and his march on Lyons.

I gave up my projects at once, joined a few comrades, on half-pay like myself, and rushed to meet our emperor. We met him at Chalons, in the midst of a goodly army and an enthusiastic population, who hailed him as a deliverer. We accompanied him to Paris, and a few days later I formally took service under him as a captain. I was so happy at this new turn of affairs that I even showed myself most accommodating towards my step-mother, accepting proposals which a fortnight before I had peremptorily declined, and consenting at last to take but a third of what in reality was my own. My mother's fortune, of which my father had retained the use after his

second marriage, came to sixty thousand francs, while my share of my father's personal property was about twenty-eight or thirty thousand francs. I consented, however, to be put off with thirty thousand, all told, and gave a receipt for that sum, twenty-five thousand of which I left with my solicitor, taking five thousand to equip myself and to celebrate with my comrades the return of our beloved emperor.

We believed in nothing less, for at least two months, than in the most brilliant success. We should, doubtless, again begin that series of wonderful military expeditions which for twenty years had made Europe tremble and proved the superiority of our arms. I saw myself in imagination performing a heroic part in this drama of future conquests and unchecked successes, decorated with the successive degrees of the cross of the Legion of Honor, wearing the bullion epaulets of a colonel, then the starred ones of a general, and, who knows? wielding one day the *bâton* of a marshal of the Empire!

Amid these golden dreams, the campaign opened. My regiment was luckily engaged in

the very first battles; at Fleurus we bravely carried a position no less bravely defended by a Scottish regiment. I had pushed on first with my company, and for a moment we were surrounded by the brave Highlanders; the next, our regiment came to our rescue. But the emperor himself had noticed the feat, and, during the review that followed the battle, he called me to him, and gave me a decoration with his own hand. It is impossible to tell you how delighted, how proud, I was that day! My dreams were beginning to come true, and from that moment I never doubted the entire realization of them.

The wakening was abrupt and terrible. The fatal day of Mont Saint Jean came upon us, scattering our bright hopes and plunging me into a worse despair than had been mine six months before. I followed the army of the Loire in its retreat, and when it was disbanded, my thoughts turned again to my original plan of emigrating to America. Passing through Orleans, which was then in the hands of the Prussians, I got into a quarrel with some of the German officers in a restaurant; a duel would have been the conse-

quence, had not the French police interfered and carried me off to prison. I must say that my adversaries, the Prussian officers, did their best to obtain my release, but the royal officials spitefully brought me before the police court, upon a charge of illegally wearing the cross of the Legion of Honor. I had already sworn to the circumstances under which I had received this decoration. After a month of precautionary imprisonment, I was released, as having acted without malice, but I was recommended henceforth not to wear the cross illegally given me by the usurper, and no "brevet" of which could be found on the records of the chancery of the Legion of Honor.

This prohibition to wear a decoration so well deserved, and received from the very hands of the founder of the order, was more galling to me than an imprisonment of months or years could have been. But what could I do? The country was in a ferment, there was violent ill-will on the part of the government against all those who had in any way been connected with Napoleon's return from Elba, or who had helped to uphold his falling throne. Labadoyère and Marshal Ney had just been

shot. The lives of the Bonapartists were in danger, and those who had been lucky enough to escape the decree of proscription had gladly exiled themselves, in hopes of better times.

My resolve was soon taken. I left Orleans, spent just time enough in Paris to get my money together, and, having procured a passport, took my passage for England. In London I met many of my comrades in war and in misfortune, especially the colonel and two other officers of my old regiment. The former, as soon as he heard of my affair at Orleans, offered to write me a certificate, signed by himself and his brother-officers, setting forth, on the testimony of eye-witnesses, how my gallant conduct at the battle of Fleurus had been recognized and rewarded by the emperor himself. "This will perhaps supply the place of the missing 'brevet,'" he said, "and may even help you to obtain it some day. At any rate, you can wear your decoration in safety here; no one will dare dispute your right to do so."

I thanked him and gratefully accepted his offer. He was right; for this affidavit has helped me to obtain, since the Second Empire,

the regular brevet granted to all members of the order of the Legion of Honor.

Perhaps it may amuse you to see how much importance I attach to a bow of red ribbon, and you may think me foolish not to have given up such baubles after forty years' sojourn and citizenship in a republic where these distinctions are unknown. Well, there you are mistaken, for I think all the more of my decoration, not only because it is a glorious souvenir of my early life, but because it has been the means of securing me the friendly offices of many a savage tribe, and of heightening very considerably the esteem and love in which I am now held by my republican neighbors.

We took our passage on the first ship that sailed for the United States. The colonel, however, could not accompany us, as he wished to go straight to New Orleans, where he had some relatives living. Our ship was bound for Baltimore. For my part, I had no preference and would have gone to New York, Boston, or New Orleans as soon as to Baltimore, but we should have had to wait another month for the ship that went to Louisiana, and I confess

that I was in a hurry to leave the shores of Europe. We had a smooth passage, and landed safely at Baltimore, in the month of April, 1816.

I had begun to study English during my stay in London, and continued to do so during the passage, as I was sure that a knowledge of English would be indispensable in the United States; but though my friends and I had made some little progress, I fear we should have felt very homeless on our arrival in Baltimore, had we not found there a little French colony which another revolution had stranded in that city. They had formerly been colonists of San Domingo, and had been driven from that island by the negro insurrection in 1794-95, and had then sought shelter on the hospitable shores of the Union.

Most of them were in needy circumstances, very few comfortably off, but one and all received us most cordially and proffered us the most hearty welcome. We were only ten in all—six officers, two officials, compromised in the Lavalette affair, and two employés of the War Department, whose political creed had rendered them objects of suspicion to the French

Government. After a whispered consultation, ten of the principal colonists came forward, and each took one of us immigrants home.

A lucky chance, or, I should say, a special providence, gave me as a host a certain Monsieur Tournel, formerly a rich planter of San Domingo, now a small hardware merchant in Baltimore. To him and his prudent advice do I owe it that I escaped the lamentable fate which overtook the greater number of my comrades in exile and adversity, and later on I owed to his kindness in admitting me to his family circle all the prosperity and happiness which are now mine.

Before I go on with my story, I must give you a sketch of this truly patriarchal family, by which I was welcomed, on my arrival in the New World, not merely as a guest, but rather as an old friend, nay, even as a brother.

CHAPTER II.

THE TOURNEL FAMILY—MY STAY IN BALTIMORE.

MONSIEUR TOURNEL was a man about forty, of medium height and good proportions ; his complexion was of that creamy pallor peculiar to the West Indian creoles, for his family, of French origin, had been one of the oldest settlers in the island of San Domingo. They had owned the richest and largest plantations until 1794, when the revolt of the blacks entirely swept away their fortune ; the negroes burned their crops and sacked their house, nay, even massacred his mother and sister before his very eyes. He himself was wounded in defending his father, whom he succeeded, however, in rescuing alive from their hands. They both reached the coast, threw themselves into the first boat that they found, and cruised about until picked up by a Spanish ship, which carried them to Havana.

Here they remained three years, hoping that

France would re-conquer San Domingo, and that they themselves would be restored to their former position. The disastrous ending of General Leclerc's expedition soon blasted their hopes, and Monsieur Tournel, senior, unable to bear the shock of repeated mishaps, fell ill and died, leaving his son alone in the world.

While at Havana, they lived on a small sum that the elder Tournel had managed to save from the wreck of his former possessions. It was the equivalent of his wife's diamonds which, stored in a small casket, had been easily secreted and carried off, and which the widower had subsequently sold. The money had been deposited at a bank, and Tournel, accustomed to the luxury and recklessness of a creole's life, had unthinkingly drawn all he wanted without foreseeing the destitution that might come, and reckoning, as he did too confidently, on the chance of regaining his possessions.

After his death, his son received from the banker an account of his father's expenditures, with the intelligence also that not a dollar of their former little capital remained to him. Was the account a correct one? The poor youth had no means of verifying it. Here he was, utterly

penniless and friendless, in a foreign land! How should he live? He had never worked, nor learned any profession; his education had been neglected, as was often the case with the children of rich creole colonists. But he would not despair; he was twenty, and at that age, with perseverance and honesty, failure is impossible.

He first offered his services to some Havana planters as an overseer, but he was found too young for such a post; besides, this place rather belongs to a colored than to a white man. He next tried to get into a merchant's office, but he had not been brought up to trade, and knew nothing of book-keeping; here, too, he was foiled. At last he heard that a ship had touched at Havana and needed sailors; he immediately applied and was accepted.

It proved to be a whaling ship from Baltimore, bound for the fisheries of the Pacific. It is needless to tell you what hardships he underwent in this rough calling, which he followed for nearly four years; besides, the narrative of his adventures would carry me beyond bounds.

After a last cruise, when the crew were paid

off and the ship sold to another owner, Monsieur Tournel sought a temporary holiday, and thought of investing the twelve thousand francs he had made in his different expeditions, in some less dangerous venture than belonged to a seafaring life. He had made the acquaintance, during his frequent home-comings to Baltimore, of a French family, formerly settled in Acadia, and who, when that province was made over to England, had been, with all the French settlers of that neighborhood, sent into the then English colonies of America. This family, although for more than thirty years inhabitants of Baltimore, had kept up the traditions of the mother-country and the accents of the mother-tongue. The likeness of their fate to his had drawn Monsieur Tournel into intimacy with them. He had first made fast friends with the eldest son, who was a sailor on board the whaleship; then he had married his friend's sister, and again gone to sea, until he had amassed a modest capital, just sufficient to start a little shop. His wife was as steady, saving, active, and shrewd as himself. She had not brought him much as a marriage portion; but these qualities are in themselves better than

a rich dowry and a love of luxury and idleness, which are too often the characteristics of creole women.

With the small capital at their joint disposal they had opened a little hardware shop; Monsieur Tournel took good care not to run into any hare-brained speculations, but advanced slowly and surely, until at my arrival in Baltimore I found him at the head of a comfortable competency. I have already said that I was welcomed by him as a brother and a friend. When he introduced me to his wife and his mother-in-law, who since her husband's death had lived with her married daughter, they received me with such cordiality that I soon found myself quite at home. The children smiled on me; the youngest came up and kissed me, while the eldest, a girl of fourteen, held out her hand and blushed, and William, a boy of twelve, took my hand in his and shook it heartily, according to the American fashion. I had hardly been in the house an hour before the little boys of eight and ten years were mounted one on each knee, and William, who sat by me, was looking with curiosity at my cross of the Legion

of Honor (I now wore it fearlessly), and asking me a thousand questions.

“ Did you know the Emperor Napoleon ? and was it he who gave you this cross ? ”

“ Yes, my boy.”

“ Were you often in a fight ? ”

“ Yes, very often.”

“ Oh ! you must tell us all about it.”

“ I will, with pleasure.”

This innocent familiarity was very refreshing to me. Madame Tournel would fain have sent the children away, for fear of their prattle tiring me, but I opposed her wish, not through mere politeness, but with real meaning. Indeed, I, who had never known the joys of home, and who scarcely remembered my mother's caresses, was touched and delighted beyond measure at receiving these innocent marks of brotherly affection, which made me find, as it were, a family and a home three thousand miles away from my own native land.

These happy beginnings continued the same during all my stay, and you will learn in the course of this tale that my union with this family was only strengthened by the lapse of time. Nevertheless, the next day but one after

my arrival I nearly quarrelled with my host, and this was the subject of the dispute :

The prettiest room in the house had been assigned me, and a servant had been placed, at my orders, to bring my tea, coffee and chocolate every morning. I breakfasted comfortably at eleven, and took luncheon at four ; then only at night did I join the family at their evening meal. It was my only opportunity for seeing my hosts, whom their business always kept in or about the shop, which was distant some hundred yards from the house.

I did not intend to take advantage of such lavish hospitality beyond a few days at the most ; my own sense of what was right wouldn't have allowed me to do so. I still had about twenty thousand francs left, and could provide for myself until I should have found suitable employment. One evening, after dinner, I spoke of this to Monsieur Tournel, and begged him to settle some definite price for my board and lodging, if he still consented to let me live in his family. I had scarcely begun than he started in surprise ; then his looks met mine, as though he had not quite seized my meaning ; and when at last he could not help understand-

ing me, a flush rose to his cheeks, he was silent for a minute or two, and then said, in his usual serious and firm tone of voice :

“ If you knew me better, I should be inclined to think that you were insulting me. Know, monsieur, that I learned what hospitality was in my father’s house, and that, had I possessed the fortune that was once ours, my house should have been open not only to you, but to all your comrades ; indeed, I should not have allowed any one else to interfere with my right to harbor you *all*. Now that circumstances make it impossible for me to exercise fully a right which is as sacred as a duty to me, seeing that it is misfortune that has driven you from our common country, would you try to take from me the pleasure of exercising it within the narrow limits of my power ?”

The earnest tone of his voice showed that no answer was possible that did not coincide with his wish. I saw that I should only hurt him by insisting further, so I managed to make good my excuses by telling him that I had never doubted his generosity, and, had I been utterly penniless, would have accepted his kindness at once, and opened my heart to him.

But, I added, since I still have something of my own to depend upon, I thought it wrong to take advantage of an asylum which might with more propriety have been used in favor of some of my less fortunate comrades.

“And your resources,” he answered with a smile, “amount, as I think you told me, to twenty thousand francs, something like four thousand dollars, as we reckon here?”

“Yes, that is it.”

“And do you know that four thousand dollars in the United States do not count even as four thousand francs do at home? You would easily get through that sum in a year, and that without spending any thing out of the way. Take my advice and keep your money till you really want it, or rather put it in the State Bank of Maryland, where you can draw it as you want it, either in instalments or all at once.”

“I thank you with all my heart,” said I, “and I accept both your generous offer and your kind advice with the deepest gratitude. Still I cannot be idle forever; I should feel more in my own way than in yours could I do so; and, since you are kind enough to take an interest

in me, I wish you would point out some occupation which will enable me to earn my living honorably."

"Who wants you to be idle?" he answered. "Idleness is more looked down upon in the United States than anywhere else; indeed, in this country it is unknown. From the highest to the lowest, every man works. The thing is to find some occupation that will suit you; but the first step will be to learn English thoroughly, for without that I see nothing open to you. You already know something of the language, and will easily learn the rest; you might take lessons with my children, who have a master that comes here regularly every day, and as my wife and I will henceforth speak English to you, you will have the opportunity of learning the language practically. Once you know enough to be able to speak fluently, I will take you to a club where you will be heartily welcomed, and where you will catch the polishing you require in the English language."

I reiterated my heartfelt thanks to my kind host, and promised to abide by his advice.

“Very well,” he said, “that is settled. But I am going to ask a favor from you, and it is this : that while we thus learn English together, you will give an hour’s instruction in French to my children, who have never learned their mother-tongue grammatically. You may have noticed that they speak it with a bad accent and use obsolete expressions ; this comes from the fact of their mother, and especially their grandmother, belonging to one of those old Norman settler’s families that colonized Canada and Acadia, and who have kept not only a strong Norman accent, but certain expressions and turns of speech that date as far back as Louis the Thirteenth’s reign in France, or even Henry the Fourth’s.”

I eagerly caught at this proposal, which enabled me, though only in an infinitesimal degree, to cancel my obligations towards my generous host ; I was glad to think that this proof of confidence showed that I was not considered quite a useless and ornamental personage, and henceforth felt rehabilitated in my own esteem. I entered on my new duties the next morning and got on admirably. I cannot say the same

for my pupils, although their father—whether from indulgence or from inability to be judge in such a cause—thought that his children made remarkable progress. Thanks to these various interests and occupations, time passed quickly. We had no lessons on Sundays, as also no business, and I always accompanied the family to high mass at the Cathedral, for Baltimore has ever been one of the most Catholic cities in the Union, and was at that time the only Episcopal see in the country.

My religious education had been very much neglected, and I had never given religion a thought during my military life. Often had I heard my comrades laugh at it and denounce it as an invention of priests and old women, and I had found it more convenient to echo their silly sarcasms than to inquire into the truth of these statements. I had never set foot in a church, except when sent there on military duty, as sometimes happened; and when I first went to the Cathedral at Baltimore, it was chiefly through curiosity and a desire to please the Tournels, who, I saw, evidently expected me to accompany them.

I followed the mass rather listlessly, but was all attention when the sermon began; not, I must say, through respect for the truths uttered by the preacher, but through a wish to understand every word he pronounced, that I might know by experience what practical progress I had made in English. My experiment proved successful, for, with the exception of a sentence or two whose meaning escaped me, I could understand every word he said, and repeat the substance of his discourse when we reached home. Every one congratulated me on my rapid progress; Madame Tournel especially was quite delighted, as she piously attributed to a feeling of religion the great attention I had paid to the sermon, and was rejoiced to find herself mistaken as to the indifference with which she had secretly taxed me. This success encouraged me, and I renewed the experiment every following Sunday until I soon understood the Christian orator thoroughly, and could repeat in English, or translate into French, what I had heard in church. But this exercise of memory had a far more important result than I had anticipated. I not only learned English,

but began to understand a great part of the doctrine and discipline of the Church, and if I was not converted on the spot, seed was nevertheless implanted in my heart which was destined to bear fruit in good time. I had still, however, cruel trials to go through before that time.

CHAPTER III.

TROUBLES OF THE FRENCH REFUGEES—GRANTS OF LAND BY CONGRESS—SPECULATIONS OF AMERICAN CAPITALISTS—PROPOSED SETTLEMENT IN TEXAS—GENERALS LALLEMAND ADDRESS A PETITION TO THE COURT OF MADRID—SILENCE OF THE COURT—EXECUTION OF THE PLAN—MEETING OF THE REFUGEES AT PHILADELPHIA—MONSIEUR TOURNEL'S VIEWS—I DECIDE UPON THROWING IN MY LOT WITH THE TEXAS SETTLERS.

I HAD now been six months in Baltimore, and they had certainly been the happiest of my life. Those who had landed with me, though less fortunate than myself, had yet little to complain of, but the refugees who had gone to New York, Boston, and Philadelphia, or to other Northern cities of the Union, had not been so lucky. Among them were some of the most famous men of the old Imperial Guard, such as Marshal Grouchy, Generals Clausel, Vandemne, Lefebvre, Desnouettes,

Rigaud and the two brothers Lallemand, Colonel Gaubert, and many other superior officers no less distinguished by their military prowess than by the nobility of their character.

Unable to take to civil pursuits, they spent their time in vain efforts to gain an honest livelihood, or in unavailing regrets for a fatherland that had in some sort repudiated their help. The subaltern officers were even worse off, and at last all combined to present a petition to Congress, praying that land might be granted them to clear, swamps to drain, or any work of a kind which they were fitted to undertake. Congress awarded them one hundred thousand acres on the Mobile and Tombeckbee rivers, with the right of founding a settlement, each soldier to receive a piece of land proportionate to his military rank. Money was needed for the first necessities of the colony; but our countrymen, when they had reached America, had found themselves utterly destitute of the barest necessaries of life, so that after a few months' stay in the principal cities of the Union, they had not only not emerged from their penniless condition, but had contracted fresh pecuniary obligations towards the

persons who had harbored them. Those rich cities of the North had not been as hospitable to them as Baltimore to us; but worse was yet to come.

Seeing them thus utterly destitute, a few shrewd capitalists proposed to the immigrants to pay their debts for them, and even lend them a little money, on condition of their giving up to them all claims on the land granted them by Congress. The Frenchmen had no choice; necessity was their law, and the bargain was concluded. What was the result? Seven eighths of the new owners of the colony, instead of being Frenchmen, as had been intended, now turned out to be Americans; the plan of the settlement was thus abruptly changed, and the generals and superior officers who had a little money to invest in agricultural undertakings found themselves alone as strangers among strangers. They had expected to be surrounded by men of their own nation, and thus to taste some of the joys of home; but even this illusion was taken from them, as they now found neighbors whose language and customs were quite foreign to their own.

It was then that Generals Lallemand (the two brothers) and a few other enterprising officers proceeded to reconnoitre and explore the neighboring provinces, with a view to another settlement that might answer the purpose which they had contemplated at first Texas, on the Gulf of Mexico, seemed to offer the requisite advantages for a new colony. The soil was fruitful, the climate fine and healthy ; a few tentative settlements were made, and the plan was decided upon.

Texas was at that time a bone of contention between the Court of Spain and the United States Congress. The rights of the former seeming more solidly established than those of the latter, the brothers Lallemand drew up a petition addressed to the Court of Madrid, and forwarded it through the Spanish Legation at Washington. It was to this effect :

“ That it was their intention, as also that of the other French refugees in America, to found a colony in Texas ;

“ That since royal proclamations had invited colonists of all classes and nations to settle in the provinces of Spanish America, His Catholic

Majesty would doubtless see with pleasure a new settlement made in a desert land which only required industrious inhabitants to become one of the most fruitful and prosperous countries in the world ;

“ That the members composing the proposed colony were ready to recognize and do homage to the Spanish Government, to pay the legal taxes, and support their settlement by their own labor ; but they craved permission to live under their own laws, to be independent of any Spanish governor, and to organize their own military system ;

“ That, providing the Court of Spain would grant their petition, it might depend on their loyalty and their services, if required ;

“ That in case their petition was rejected, they would then hold themselves at liberty to use the right which nature grants to every man, and which none may dispute, of clearing and working vast tracts of unpeopled wilderness ;

“ That their rights in this regard were far better than those of the Spaniards themselves at the time of the Conquest, for while these had come to take by force a free and inhabited

country, they, on the contrary, only came to cultivate barren deserts ;

“ That, in short, come what would, they had determined to settle in Texas.”

The Generals Lallemand received no answer to this petition, and, judging from the arbitrary and threatening tone which they had infused into it, probably did not expect an answer. It was hardly to be supposed that Spain would have willingly welcomed a French military colony made up of old Bonapartist veterans on the extreme frontier of Mexico, whose population had long been striving to shake off the yoke of the mother-country, and whose efforts would very naturally appeal to the national sympathy—or antipathy—of the French. The two generals, nevertheless, were unremitting in their efforts to carry out their plan. They first secured the consent of Congress, who ratified the alienation of the land originally granted to the French settlers on the Mobile River, the emigration of the colony to Texas, and its establishment on that disputed territory. It even promised, if necessary, to waive its rights on the territory chosen by the French settlers.

Armed with this declaration, the Generals Lallemand appealed to all the French refugees scattered over the Union, and called a mass meeting at Philadelphia, to lay before them their intentions, their hopes, and the proposed means for a speedy realization of their dreams of success. I hastened to answer this appeal, and was accompanied by all of my comrades who had remained in Baltimore, for a few had gone to New Orleans. Monsieur Tournel and a few other old refugees from San Domingo wished to be of the party, for the generals had called upon them as well as upon us. I was rather astonished when my friend told me of his intention to join us.

“What!” I exclaimed, “you who have a snug little business ready in working order in Baltimore, would you run the risk of leaving it to go and clear land in Texas?”

“Why not?” he answered, with a laugh; but, resuming his usual grave demeanor, he added, “I wish, at any rate, to acquaint myself with the details of Messieurs Lallemand’s plan and their prospects of realizing it. If the plan seems a sound one to me, and has a reasonable chance of success, I shall be too glad to embark in this

undertaking, but I need not therefore leave my business in Baltimore. I can trust it to my partner, my brother-in-law, while I myself go to Texas and take up once more a planter's life, for which I was born and which I have always preferred to any other. Circumstances alone forced me to become a shopkeeper, just as they forced me to be a sailor; but I am no more made for climbing the rigging than I am for standing behind the counter. What I like, what I want, is an open-air life: the direction of plenty of men working in fields covered with cotton or sugar-cane; rides of many miles from one factory to the other; harvesting, and the sale of the harvest to some Liverpool or Havana ship-owner. Such are my dreams, and long ago I should have bought a plantation in Louisiana had I had the wherewithal. I wished to settle in some country where French was spoken and understood, and that is the reason why I never would buy land in Virginia, or the Carolinas, or any other State peopled solely by Anglo-Americans. That is why this Texas plan holds out a bait for me; the country is quite as fruitful as Louisiana and a great deal healthier. I have been there twice

during my seafaring life : we sailed up the Colorado and the Rio Trinidad, and I had an opportunity of noticing the beauty of the scenery, the fruitfulness of the soil, and the varied nature of the products. It is truly an earthly paradise ; but as my eyes feasted on the beauty of this land and I breathed its sweet, perfume-laden atmosphere, I could not help thinking sorrowfully of all this fertile tract given over to wild beasts, or to a race of men more wild and untamable yet. If this wilderness is now about to be peopled by Frenchmen who are honestly determined to make the most of its rich resources, I shall be too happy to join them, to work with them ; and while I hear my native tongue spoken around me, and see nearly the same crops cultivated as I cultivated myself in San Domingo, I shall believe myself transported to my own home and the days of my happy youth."

"I am delighted to hear of this," I said, "and only hope that your dreams may be realized ; for although I looked forward with great pleasure to a reunion with my old brother-officers, still I could not think of my separation from you without a thrill of pain. I can-

not tell you how happy I should be to see you too take part in this great undertaking, this foundation of a new France, which will embrace in one pale all exiles from the mother-country."

"Nay," said Monsieur Tournel, with a smile, "we must not judge of this too sanguinely. This plan in theory is as welcome to me as it is to you, but its realization requires a perseverance and a unity of views seldom found among so large a body of men. So, as I told you already, I do not mean to decide till after much reflection, and when I shall be morally certain of the success of the undertaking."

We started accordingly for Philadelphia. General Dominic Lallemand, the younger of the two brothers, received us with great heartiness on our arrival. He had just married one of the nieces and heiresses of Stephen Girard, at that time the richest merchant in the United States. Monsieur Girard had himself been a San Domingo colonist, and had been driven from his home by the negro insurrection. Monsieur Tournel only knew Girard by name, but he knew him to possess great business talents as well as a thoroughly honest and high-

mind nature. He was anxious to consult him on the undertaking headed by his nephew, and was sure that as a countryman of his he would give him sound and reliable advice. Monsieur Girard, however, was in New York at the time, and was not expected home for a month.

The French refugees flocked in from all sides, and soon reached the number of four to five hundred. In several consecutive meetings the general explained his plan, and promised to defray the expenses of those emigrants who should consent to go. The Comte de Survilliers (the King Joseph Bonaparte, eldest brother of the emperor), who was at that time in Philadelphia, fully approved of the plan of colonizing Texas, and contributed a large sum of money towards the incidental expenses of the expedition.

The general's eager and enthusiastic manner quickly won to his side all the subaltern officers, but among the generals, Rigaud alone acquiesced in the idea, the others declaring the whole thing immature, hazardous, and ill-timed. For my part, I was enthusiastically in its favor, and quite reprobated the generals'

opinion. I immediately put my name on the list of those who were ready to leave at once, and only regretted that our departure could not take place the very next day. Monsieur Tournel gravely and coolly tried to make me see things in a more reasonable light.

“ Without quite agreeing with some of your generals, who think the undertaking a *folly*, I yet think that we should not act too precipitately, else we might be disappointed. General Rigaud, who believes in the plan, would almost induce me to accept his presence as a guarantee of success, being as he is an old colonist of San Domingo, and therefore more fitted to judge of such a question and its chances of success. But I should have been glad if he had been the first to start with a few old families, old colonists who would have chosen proper spots for cultivation, and open the way for those who, having less experience, might easily make mistakes in the beginning of agricultural pursuits, to which they are less used than to a military career.”

“ I should be quite of your opinion,” I answered, “ if we were in a position to proceed with so much method, which in an undertak-

ing of this kind is certainly the surest gauge of success. But how can the greater number of our men wait to take such precautions? I do not speak of myself, who, thanks to you, have not squandered my little all, but of my comrades, who are nearly all of them absolutely penniless or sunk in forced idleness, which, except eating the bread of charity, is the most tormenting thing that can gall the human soul. Nothing is left them but a speedy departure for a land where their fate will be changed, or where, if their condition is not bettered, at least their noble efforts to leave their present irksome condition will be heard of and appreciated."

"You are right," said Monsieur Tournel, after a few moments' thought; "if I were placed in the same position as the generality of your comrades, I should act as they are acting; but you, who, as you said a little while ago, have got something left, and, I might add, friends who will be sorry to see you go, why are you in such a hurry? are you very anxious to leave us?"

"How can you think it!" I cried; "I have found under your hospitable roof more than

mere shelter ; I have found a family, for I look upon you as my father, your wife reminds me of my mother, your children are my brothers, and the memory of your kindness will never leave me to my dying day. Still I could not live forever with you, and if I put off my departure any longer I shall but render the inevitable separation more painful still. Besides, I have promised my old comrades in arms to be of their party, and they are all bound for the first ship that sails ; I cannot break my word. But I hope we shall all meet you there some day, for you do not mean to give up your plan of joining us in Texas, do you ?”

“ No, indeed I shall not give it up, and it was for that reason that I wished you to wait till I went ; but if you are bound to your old friends, of course you cannot break your word, and you shall not find me the man to advise you to do such a thing. After all, now I come to think of it, perhaps it is best so : you soldiers will march in the van and be our pioneers, and when you shall have securely got possession of the territory, agriculturists will follow peaceably in your wake to cultivate it.”

While the preparations for our departure

were being made at Philadelphia, I returned to Baltimore with Monsieur Tournel to take leave of my friends and settle my own affairs. I wanted to draw all my capital and take it with me, but, according to Monsieur Tournel's advice, I only took five hundred dollars to pay my part of the expenses of the journey and of the equipment of the ship. I left the rest in the bank. "You have enough for the present," said my provident friend, "and will find the rest all safe when you happen to need it, and then you will see how wise is the old saw, 'You should always leave one pear on the tree in case you might be thirsty again.'"

It was not without heartfelt emotion, nor without a promise to meet them again as soon as possible, that I left the kind and excellent family of my host.

CHAPTER IV.

DEPARTURE FROM PHILADELPHIA—ARRIVAL AT GALVESTON—TEMPORARY STAY ON AN ISLAND—THE PIRATE LAFITTE—THE RIO TRINIDAD—SETTLEMENT OF CAMP ASYLUM—FIRST TROUBLES—MILITARY ORGANIZATION OF THE SETTLERS—FORTS AND TRENCHES—MANIFESTO OF THE CAMP ASYLUM REFUGEES—ITS EFFECT IN EUROPE—SUBSCRIPTION FOR THE REFUGEES—OCCUPATIONS OF THE SETTLERS—MONSIEUR COLLIN—HIS PLANS—I GIVE HIM A LETTER TO MONSIEUR TOURNEL—CAMP LIFE—AMUSEMENTS—TREATY WITH THE INDIANS—GENERAL LALLEMAND CHOSEN “GREAT CHIEF”—BALL GIVEN TO THE INHABITANTS OF SAN ANTONIO DE BEJAR.

GENERAL LALLEMAND had chartered a schooner, which was provisioned for four or five hundred men. The cargo consisted of six guns, six hundred muskets, four hundred sabres, and twelve thousand pounds of powder, bought partly with the voluntary contributions of those

among us who yet had funds of their own, and partly with a donation of the king, Joseph Bonaparte. The emperor's brother had distributed, over and above his public gift, several sums of money intended to pay the debts of the subaltern officers, and free them from all annoyance. Thus was the ex-King of Spain solicitous for the honor of the French name, for he would not even have it said that the exiles had left debts behind them.

Our craft was an American schooner called the *Huntress*, and her cargo, as we have already hinted, seemed rather fitted for a military raid than for the settlement of an agricultural colony.

We left Philadelphia on the 17th of December, 1817, and on the 15th of January, 1818, we anchored off Galveston, our chosen *rendezvous*. We landed our stores on the island, and made a temporary camp, where we determined to await the arrival of General Lallemand the elder, who was at New Orleans buying agricultural implements, plants and seeds, provisions of a miscellaneous kind, etc. The island of Galveston, which now bears an important city, and is the Episcopal See of Texas,

was at that time only a barren, sandy wilderness, wholly without resources of its own. We built cabins of reeds and of the spars we found on the island, and dug a deep trench round the camp to protect it against the aggressions of the mainland Indians, or, in case of need, against the pirates, of whose disposition toward us we were yet ignorant, and who inhabited that part of the island in which they stored their booty.

The pirates were under the leadership of Lafitte, a French sailor who had distinguished himself during the war of the Empire by the number of prizes he had captured from the English. Since peace had been proclaimed in Europe, he had offered his services to the revolted Spanish colonies, and under their flag, and in the name of freedom, pillaged every Spanish craft that he fell in with. These filibusters, for such indeed they were, were gathered from among all the nations of the earth, and seemed determined to put in practice the traditions of the buccaneers of old. They gave themselves up to the most shameless debauchery and disgusting immorality, and only their chief, with his extraordinary strength of limb

and his indomitable resolution, had the slightest control over their wild and savage natures. Thanks to him, the pirates became harmless neighbors to the exiles, with whom they often interchanged marks of political sympathy, crying amicably, "Long Live Liberty!"

On the 20th of March, 1818 (this date is memorable), General Lallemand and a hundred more emigrants from New Orleans at last appeared before Galveston. He found his old comrades, though wearied, by no means discouraged, and eager to go on in their perilous undertaking.

On the 24th we took to sea again in ten large boats bought from the pirates. One of them, carried out to sea by a strong undercurrent, was swamped, and of her crew of six men, only Monsieur Chenet, formerly an infantry lieutenant in the Old Guard, was saved. It was a gloomy omen of the many misfortunes that awaited us!

We ascended the Rio Trinidad under the guidance of some Indians with whom we had already established friendly relations, thanks to a few bottles of rum and some knives and muskets. These Indians, who hated the Span-

iards, had a kindly remembrance of the French, whom they had known in the neighboring State of Louisiana. They seemed glad to be able to do us a service. After several days we landed on an immense uninhabited plain, several leagues in extent, and surrounded by a belt of woods down to the very edge of the river. A fruitful soil, an abundance of tropical plants and flowers, a river as wide as the Seine, but full of alligators, a sky as pure and a climate as temperate as that of Naples—such were the advantages of the place we had chosen, and which we now christened “Camp Asylum.”

Our first days here were not devoid of hardships. The colony was obliged to protect itself against wild beasts and reptiles, especially the rattlesnakes, which abound in those parts, while, as if to make things worse, the boats bringing the stores from Galveston to Camp Asylum were delayed on the road, so that we suffered all the torments of hunger for a whole week. At last the boats came safely to land, and the Choctaws and other tribes poured in to visit the camps. We Frenchmen are light-hearted beings, and soon merriment and hope regained the upper hand amongst us. We began to

believe in ourselves once more, and proceeded to organize our settlement. Three divisions were formed—infantry, cavalry, and artillery, for we thought nothing but a military government could be trusted to endure. Fortifications were built to protect the camp against the inroads of the Spaniards or Indians. They consisted of two little forts, called respectively Fort Napoleon and Fort Lallemand, each surrounded by a trench two yards deep, and communicating with one another by means of a covered way that effectually protected all the ground over which our settlement had spread.

While busy with these preliminaries, we often met in council before Generals Lallemand and Bigard to hear and discuss divers propositions as to our organization. Nothing was allowed to become law before we had all deliberated upon it. One of the first measures proposed was the publication of a manifesto setting forth our peaceable intentions, and our wish to open friendly intercourse with all our neighbors. This manifesto, translated into English and Spanish, was sent to the United States and to Europe, where it was copied into all the papers of the day. Here is an abstract of it :

“CAMP ASYLUM, TEXAS, May 11, 1818.

“Gathered together by a series of similar misfortunes, which have first driven us from our homes and then scattered us abroad in various lands, we have now resolved to seek an asylum where we can remember our misfortunes in order to profit by them. We see before us a vast extent of territory, at present uninhabited by civilized mankind, and the extreme limits of which are in possession of Indian tribes who, caring for nothing but the chase, leave these broad acres uncultivated. Strong in adversity, we claim the first right given by God to man—that of settling in this country, clearing it, and using the produce which nature never refuses to the patient laborer.

“We attack no one, and harbor no warlike intentions. We ask peace and friendship from all those who surround us, and we shall be grateful for the slightest token of their good-will. We shall respect the laws, religion, and customs of our civilized neighbors; we shall equally respect the independence and customs of the Indian tribes, whom we engage not to molest in their hunts or in any other exercise peculiar to them. We shall establish neighborly rela-

tions with all such as shall approach us, and also, if possible, trading relations. Our behavior will be peaceable, active, and industrious; we shall do our utmost to make ourselves useful, and to render good for good. But if it should appear that our settlement be not respected, and that persecution should seek us out, even in the wilds in which we have taken refuge, no reasonable man will find fault with us for resisting it. We shall be ready to devote ourselves to the defence of our settlement. Our resolve is taken beforehand. We are armed, as the necessity of our position requires that we should be, and as men in similar circumstances have always been. The land we have come to reclaim will either witness our success or our death. We wish to live here honorably and in freedom, or to find a grave which the justice of man will hereafter decree to be that of heroes. We have the right, however, to expect a more fortunate result, and our first care shall be to deserve general approbation by laying down the principles by which we mean to steer our bark.

“We shall call the new settlement *Camp Asylum*. This name, while it reminds us of

our misfortunes, will likewise express the necessity of providing for our future, of establishing new hearths and homes—in a word, of creating a new Fatherland. The colony, which will be purely agricultural and commercial in principle, will be military solely for its own protection; it will be divided into three companies, each under a chief, who will be bound to keep a register of the names of those forming this company. A general register, compiled from the three partial ones, will be kept at the central dépôt of the colony. The companies will each be gathered together in one place in order the better to avoid attacks from the outside, and to live peaceably under the eye of authority. A code of laws will be drawn up at once, which will secure personal liberty and the immunity of property, repress injustice, and maintain peace among the good, while it will make void the plans of the evil.”

This proclamation made a great noise in Europe, and, above all, in France, exciting the admiration of the liberals and the sneers of the opposite party. The *Minerva*, a fortnightly review of the day, immediately opened a subscription list for the settlers. A hundred

thousand francs were subscribed, of which not a penny ever reached us. In addition to this, there was the wrong produced by the sale of a pamphlet, by Monsieur Shiritiar, published by Ladrocat, which went through two editions, and was intended for the benefit of the refugees. Before the close of the subscription, Camp Asylum had been already broken up, and its members scattered to the four winds of heaven. What became of the money is a question that still remains unsolved. While party spirit in France now aided, now abused us, the people's poet, Béranger, sang of us in these words :

“ Noble wrecks of honor's field
Cultivate the field of shelter.”

What were we actually doing in distant Texas? Far from cultivating our fields, we were, alas! only digging trenches, and this barren work occupied the whole four or five months of our stay in Texas. We had no men among us with a taste for, or skilled in, agriculture ; above all, we had not men enough to undertake any thing on a large scale, so that we were unable to do any thing seriously tending toward

a permanent settlement. It is true that a few of the San Domingo colonists had joined our number, but many of them, either through incapacity or laziness, had long vegetated at Charleston or Mobile, and having only joined us in the forlorn hope of bettering themselves, were in such absolute destitution that, far from being any help to us, they were only a burden. Others had been employed by rich Americans on their sugar or cotton plantations in Louisiana or the Carolinas. The few of this category who had answered our appeal were indeed competent to direct profitable undertakings, but we lacked hands for the work, and most of these men, having assured themselves of the impracticability of our plan, left us at once and returned to their former employers.

I had made friends with one of these, who had known Monsieur Tournel at San Domingo. His name was Collin; he was manager of a plantation forty miles from New Orleans, and on the shores of the Mississippi, belonging to a rich Louisianian, himself of French extraction. His employer, who took a great interest in our undertaking, had not only consented to let Collin join us, but had promised,

in case of our possible success, to furnish negroes, mules, and implements, on condition of receiving a reasonable share of the profits of the new plantations.

Collin said to me one day, after a deliberate survey of the ground and a patient examination into our resources :

“I do not believe that there is under the sun a richer and more fruitful soil than this, and it would be a pity if through the incapacity of the settlers these advantages should be lost. I am convinced that something can be done, and I do not mean to give up the undertaking altogether, as many of my colleagues have done, believing in the impossibility of success. I shall go home to my employer, and if I succeed in finding a capable and honest partner, I shall return with means to make a proper settlement. If you like to join us, there is plenty of room for three to grow rich on such an enterprise as I have in my mind’s eye.”

I told him that I should very much like to do so, and at the same time recommended Monsieur Tournel as a fit partner. He acquiesced in my views, saying that Monsieur Tournel was a prudent man, perfectly well suited to

embark in such a partnership. He told me, moreover, that he would go direct to Baltimore and see Tournel in person, before he returned to his employer in Louisiana. I did my best to encourage him in this resolution, and gave him a letter for Monsieur Tournel, in which I begged my friend to give ear to Collin's proposal, and perform his promise to meet me as soon as possible. "Up to this," I wrote, "our settlement is altogether military and not agricultural, but it is quite capable of protecting the agriculturists who may come out to us. This assured safety is one of the most indispensable conditions of the success of a rural and industrial colony. Your example will determine others, and your experience will direct us in a road for which our former education and habits have till now unfitted us." I ended by asking him to draw all my money from the Maryland Bank, that it might serve as my contribution to the funds of our new settlement. Monsieur Collin left us the first week in June, promising to write as soon as possible.

I felt very lonely after his departure. We were all getting weary of inaction, and our

camp life was insufferably monotonous. We hardly allowed ourselves even the pleasure or excitement of a hunt, though game was abundant, and if we did, it was with the greatest circumspection or in large parties, as it was feared that the Comanches or the Pawnees would not have scrupled to scalp isolated individuals had any one ventured out alone with his gun. The camp was as severely guarded as it might have been in the days of the Empire. The battalion officers were but common officers according to their real grade, and the captains were lieutenants or sub-lieutenants for the nonce; those in their turn had become non-commissioned officers, while the quartermasters, sergeants, and other inferior officers had become privates. This was, to say the least, a disagreeable state of things.

As we had very little special knowledge outside our profession, we took to drill and military manœuvres as a pastime, after our work in the trenches was done. We had one common mess, and bivouacked as if we were in an enemy's country, except the generals, two or three superior officers, and the women, for whom we had built large and not uncomfort-

able cabins. A large fire was kept up all night to frighten away wild beasts, and round this we each spent part of the night, telling and listening to all kinds of tales. We called the fire the *Palais Royal*, and the gossippers the *humming-birds*. (The arcades of this building in Paris are the resort of all the loungers and gossippers of the town.) The French mind is always the same, under all circumstances, grave or gay! Sometimes General Lallemand would join the circle and entertain the veterans gathered under his sway with some scraps of his last conversations with the great emperor.

Often, under the influence of the general's eager talk, his hearers would indulge in the wildest dreams and imagine the most impossible combinations. At such times the settlement of Texas seemed far enough from their thoughts. They were eager to serve under the Mexican flag and help that country to throw off the Spanish yoke, after which they could easily persuade the Mexicans to give them a fast sailer, with which they would storm the island of St. Helena, carry off the emperor in triumph, and crown him Emperor of Mexico. . . . Thus, indeed, the burning imaginations

of these brave men would run away with them to that degree that it would be impossible to keep pace with their vagaries.

But even these amusements were interwrought to disguise from us the growing precariousness of our position. General Lallemand then thought of giving us an entertainment of his own invention. He had just concluded a treaty of alliance with the Indian tribes—the Choctaws, the Comanches, and others whose names I have forgotten. These tribes, some of which had been rather hostile to us at first, had gradually understood our peaceable intention, and often visited us now, selling us fruit and game for an equivalent in brandy or beads, etc. The treaty was solemnly ratified. We were armed *cap-a-pie* to do honor to the chiefs, who had donned their most ceremonial costume. They had added to their majestic red blankets helmets with nodding feathers, wampum belts, tin necklaces and breastplates, rings hanging from their necks, ears, and nose, and, disgusting to relate, their favorite trophies of scalps hanging from their girdle. Some idea may be formed of their

strange appearance when I say that besides this paraphernalia, their faces, arms, and chests were painted in odd patterns and staring colors.

A great deal of rum was distributed during the ceremony, and the Indians gradually got excited; their native gravity of demeanor gave place to eager protestations and warm declarations of esteem and good-will, and at last, in their spurious enthusiasm, they chose General Lallemand as their "great chief." He made no objection to accepting the dignity, and allowed himself very seriously to be invested with the appropriate insignia of his new honors. This rather grotesque ceremony cost us many bottles of rum, which the Indians daily came in to drink in honor of their new allies and brethren.

A few days later we enjoyed another entertainment, which we relished better than the Indian farce. We gave a ball on the occasion of Mademoiselle Bigard's birthday (the general's daughter), and invited the principal inhabitants of the neighboring town of San Antonio de Bejar, formerly the capital of the province. Every one, men and women, came

at our call. The gathering presented the most motley array of whites, half-breeds, and even Indians; this crew seemed to me a burlesque representation of the principle of equality. Our guests spoke nothing but Spanish, but as we had nearly all served in the Peninsula, we knew Spanish pretty well, and found no trouble in understanding them.

This ball was followed by two or three more, only less crowded. These gatherings were not mere pleasure parties; they also served a diplomatic end. The Texans of Bejar, Bohio, and Goliad, as of some other neighboring settlements, had long been dissatisfied with the Spanish yoke, which they had twice unsuccessfully endeavored to shake off. Beaten and conquered, they had seen this country given up to the tender mercies of Spanish garrisons quartered at Nacogdoches and other places. When we came among them, the Texans hoped that we should at least prove useful auxiliaries, and they gladly took the opportunity of making acquaintance with us, to learn our intentions and see if they could depend upon us. These friendly relations soon raised

suspicion in the minds of the Spanish authorities, and the Texan colonists received peremptory orders to cease their intercourse with our camp, under heavy penalties in case of disobedience.

CHAPTER V.

SAD CONDITION OF THE COLONY—MONSIEUR TOURNEL'S LETTER—TREATY BETWEEN SPAIN AND THE UNITED STATES—THE POLICY OF THE TWO GOVERNMENTS—EXPULSION OF THE FRENCH FROM CAMP ASYLUM—RETREAT TO GALVESTON—SUFFERINGS OF THE COLONISTS—SICKNESS—STORM IN THE GULF OF MEXICO AND INUNDATION OF THE ISLAND—DANGERS RUN BY THE SETTLERS—DEPARTURE OF THE SICK FOR NEW ORLEANS—I LEAVE WITH SOME OF THE SETTLERS, INTENDING TO REACH LOUISIANA BY LAND—FATE OF THOSE WHO HAD GONE BY SEA—MARENGO COUNTY AND EAGLESVILLE ON THE TOMBIGBEE—FINAL DISPERSION OF THE REFUGEES OF CAMP ASYLUM.

HERE we were once more left to ourselves, without amusements or occupations, without news either from Europe or from the States. To cap all, many fell sick, either of home-sickness or through their unaccustomed hardships and labors in this tropical clime.

We looked sadly and despondingly for the return of our comrades, which would have cheered us and given us new strength wherewith to fall to work and clear and cultivate our fields, but, like Sister Anne in the tale of "Blue Beard," we saw nothing coming. After a weary month, there came at last a boat sent by the pirate Lafitte, bringing us provisions of a different sort from what we had, and a large collection of European and American newspapers, besides letters. I got a letter from Monsieur Tournel, in answer to that which Monsieur Collin had taken to him from me. I need not say how I devoured it; I was in hopes of finding in it an echo of my own pleasant anticipations, but there was instead nothing but disappointment in store for me. I have never forgotten the following passages :

"Monsieur Collin has executed your commission and dwelt at length upon the plan of a threefold partnership of which I am to be a member, and which is to undertake a settlement in Texas. The idea has always been pleasant to me, and I was glad to see it adopted by a man of so practical a nature as Monsieur Collin. I had begun to think seriously

of his proposal and to calculate upon the means of carrying it out, when we were startled by most unexpected news. An article in one of the American papers gave out that a definitive treaty had been entered into by the United States and Spain, regulating the exact limits of their respective possessions. The Sabine River was henceforth to become the boundary between Louisiana and Texas, and the American Government formally gave up all claims to the latter province.

“ It follows that Camp Asylum is now in the midst of Spanish territory, and is at the mercy of the Spanish Government, while no clause of the treaty stipulates for the slightest immunity of the French refugees. They are not even mentioned, and the document would lead one to suppose that they were non-existent. Nevertheless, I am persuaded that it is they alone who have been the cause of this new treaty, and that although your name is purposely omitted in the terms of the alliance, a secret article has been prepared, which will serve to give you over to a hard fate.

“ It is known that your settlement, far from increasing by the influx of new bodies of im-

migrants, is daily dwindling into insignificance, and becoming less and less capable of resistance. Spain will send a sufficient force to dislodge you, and the American Government will officially notify you that, being out of their jurisdiction, they can do nothing to protect you; but that if you will return within the frontiers, they will give you land to clear at a proper distance from the Spanish settlements.

“ In a word, my dear friend, your settlement of Camp Asylum is doomed, and there is no hope of even a reprieve. You will ask me how can the United States Government so disgrace itself as to give up to Ferdinand VII. unoffending exiles whom it has sworn to protect ?

“ Know, then, that diplomacy ignores sentiment and is based upon interest, and that our young American Republic follows in the wake of the selfish old monarchical diplomacy of Europe.

“ Allow me to suggest that your chiefs are also somewhat to blame in the matter. They have found a suitable place for a colony; why could they not occupy it quietly without rousing the ill-will and suspicion of the Spanish authorities? But, instead of that, they address

a blustering note to the Court of Madrid, and, in spite of the ominous silence of the court, boldly carry out their plan and hardly reach their destination before they again publish a manifesto through whose fair words runs a thread of subdued hostility. Either they should not have perpetrated a ridiculous boast of this sort, or they should have been fully prepared to make it good.

“ Any man of common-sense would have foreseen what has happened in consequence. The noise produced by the manifesto in Europe, the formation of a military colony on the frontiers of a country already disaffected toward Spain, roused the suspicion of Ferdinand VII.'s government. They saw in your presence an additional thorn in their side, and have taken speedy measures to get rid of you.

“ The lands on which you had settled were claimed both by Spain and the United States. Negotiations had long been pending on the subject; Spain now hastened to clinch them, and has obtained, whether by commercial or other concessions I know not (since this belongs to the secret part of the treaty), the withdrawal of the equivocal claims of the United

States on this part of Texas, and the understanding that the Sabine River shall henceforth be the boundary between the two powers.

“Should you complain of this arrangement as a violation of the right of sanctuary, the American Government might easily reply thus : ‘In what have we violated your right? We offered, and still offer, to protect and harbor you, but only within the limits of our own States, not beyond our frontier. We did not wish or urge you to go to Texas, and your position as political exiles, sacred as it may be, cannot be used as a pretext for involving us in quarrels with our neighbors and allies.’

“Such is the position of affairs ; illusion is no longer possible, and the end will be attained by the time this letter reaches you. Let your generals know of this, if they have not already learned it, so that they may take the measures requisite under these circumstances, and, above all, may not offer a useless resistance, the responsibility of which would lay wholly at their doors.

“As for yourself, my dear friend, pray make haste to return to us ; we can easily find some suitable place for you, the hardships you have

undergone having disposed your friends more than ever in your favor. Monsieur Collin is still here, and cannot leave for Louisiana for a few days to come; he and I often speak of you. When he talks to me about Texas and of the resources of that beautiful country, I cannot help regretting the failure—or, let me say the adjournment—of our hopes; for, despite what has taken place just now, I do not despair of seeing our plans realized one of these days. But, in order to succeed, we will go to work differently from the unlucky founders of Camp Asylum.”

“P. S.—Under these circumstances I did not deem it advisable to draw your capital from the bank, and, accordingly, I send you a small loan of two hundred dollars, which we can settle for on your return to Baltimore.”

The newspapers accompanying this letter confirmed the discouraging news which it held. It was now known all through the camp; many of us had learned it through their correspondents, and, indeed, our generals had known it some days before, but had preferred to hold their tongues about it until it should be more definitely corroborated. As Monsieur Tournel

truly said, the end was near at hand. Our Indian allies and some inhabitants of Bejar came during the day to tell us that a Spanish detachment was already on its way to attack us. It consisted of twelve hundred infantry, three hundred cavalry, and several pieces of ordnance. It was rapidly nearing us. We had only two hundred men capable of bearing arms; the rest were sick or disabled, but, notwithstanding this disparity of numbers, we determined to repulse the foe, to fight them gallantly or *die like Frenchmen*, as General Lallemand pithily expressed it. The Spanish general, however, whether prevented by secret orders from taking the initiative, or determined to draw a *cordon* round us, merely camped his troops within three days' march of our camp, and waited till disease and discouragement should undermine our—not very formidable—body. This manœuvre could not but be successful in the long-run, and the Spanish general soon reaped its consequences.

Meanwhile no help came either from Europe or from the United States, and we could not fight an enemy that seemed determined not to attack us, and then we, on the other hand, were

too weak to attack. We were obliged to beat a retreat, which we accomplished in good order, experiencing no molestation at the hands of the Spaniards, and no remonstrances from the Indians, who, with supreme indifference, witnessed the departure of their "great chief," General Lallemand. The boats that we had were enough to take us down the river Trinidad as far as the island of Galveston, where we established ourselves for the second time.

The island, or rather sand-bank, was not as healthy as the shores of the river we had left behind us. We had scarcely landed when all the evils of those tropical climates—scurvy, dysentery, and fever—broke out amongst us, and gradually assumed a very serious character. General Lallemand was solicited by the *Great Council*, composed of twenty-four members, to go to New Orleans to buy medicine and provisions, as well as to beg for help. He left the following day with two aides-de-camp. Many of our number would have been too glad to accompany him, but there was only room for a few passengers, and we were obliged to restrain our impatience. The general kindly took our correspondence with him, and I took advan-

tage of this opportunity to write again to Monsieur Tournel.

A few days after the general's departure an awful calamity visited us. It was autumn, and the equinoctial gales were blowing; storms are very frequent in the Gulf of Mexico in that season. A fearful hurricane swept over the sea on the 28th of September, lashing the waves mountain-high and driving them over the island, so that our camp was speedily under water to the height of eight or nine feet. As the flood increased on the shore, we retired inland to the more hilly portion of the island, where two solid log cabins had been built. For three days and three nights we sat in these cabins entrenching ourselves against the fury of the elements. Our danger was imminent, and we owed our safety only to our unremitting efforts in keeping aloof, with oars and poles, the trunks of uprooted trees and spars of wrecks which the water flung up against our cabin. At last the storm subsided, the sea retired, and we were no longer in danger of drowning, but our slender resources were gone forever; our food and powder had all been swept away.

The pirate Lafitte again came to our aid, but all he could do was of little permanent good to us. Misfortune and idleness had done their work, and sowed dissension in our midst to such a degree, that I believe, had this state of things lasted much longer, we should have quarrelled among ourselves. After two months of agonizing suspense, we received news from General Lallemand to the effect that all hope of founding a colony in Texas was at an end, but that Congress had offered to give us a grant of land in Alabama, on the Tombigbee, and that we had better make haste and join him (the General) at New Orleans.

To leave our present shelter was sooner said than done, though every one was delighted at the idea of leaving the island. We required some means of transport, and this was just what General Lallemand had forgotten to send us. The pirate Lafitte came to our help once more. He sold us a small craft, unfortunately so small that it would only hold the sick; as for those in good health, it was settled that they should await the return of the little bark, unless they preferred starting for Louisiana overland, in which case Lafitte offered to take

them across to the mainland, which was only four miles distant.

Many of us, and myself among the number, gladly caught at this plan. We should have had to wait at least a month before we could expect the ship back from New Orleans, and even then all could not have been stowed on board at once. We should have been compelled to draw lots to see who would have the chance of being first, and, for my part at least, I infinitely preferred the risks and fatigues of an overland journey to the dismal prospect of two or three months' stay in this ill-fated island. About sixty of our number adopted the same determination, but as Lafitte could not take us all across at once, and as, besides, such a numerous caravan might have attracted too much attention on the part of the Spanish authorities, we settled to leave in two distinct bands, at some days' interval between the two.

I started with the first detachment, which numbered twenty-five men. Thanks to Lafitte's friendly relations with the Indians of the coast, we were able to procure horses and guides to take us to Nacogdoches, a military

post not far from our old settlement of Camp Asylum. But before I come to the history of my journey, I must tell you briefly what became of our comrades who had started by sea, and of those whom we left on the island of Galveston. The first, after a rough passage of more than a fortnight, landed at New Orleans, where the yellow fever was then raging. They had scarcely left the ship when nearly all fell victims to this terrible disease.

The rest arrived in the same city a month afterward. Some of them were cut down by the "black vomit;" others found opportunities of procuring a passage back to France, and a very few started together for the Tombigbee, where it was expected that a new attempt would be made to found a colony.

The ill-success of the Texan undertaking made General Lallemand shy of joining a new one, and, accordingly, General Lefebvre-Desnouettes took charge of the newly-organized expedition. The settlement was called the State, or, rather, county of Marengo. The ground-plan of a country town was laid out, and the place called Eaglesville, its principal streets being called after the

battles which refugees had helped to win. The town barely had any existence, save on paper. Most of the Frenchmen who settled in Maren-go County chose rather to live at Alabama and other hamlets of the neighborhood, and as soon as they could go home, they hastened to get rid of their land at the lowest prices, to pay their passage to France. The few who remained longest went home after the revolution of July, 1830. It is long since the memory of Camp Asylum has disappeared; the present generation scarcely knows its name. I now return to my own rather eventful journey.

CHAPTER VI.

JOURNEY FROM GALVESTON TO THE HEAD-
WATERS OF THE SABINE—MY COSTUME—
OUR LIFE ON THE MARCH—A BUFFALO
HUNT—THE NEW MAZEPPA.

OUR journey as far as Nacogdoches did not present a single interesting incident. We had chosen this route because two of our associates, formerly of San Domingo, had travelled this way when they had come from Louisiana to join us at Camp Asylum. Besides, we needed for such a long journey many things which we could only get at Nacogdoches, and, lastly, we wished to cross Texas as peaceable travellers, and were anxious to procure a safe-conduct from the Spanish authorities, that we might not be molested until we reached the frontier.

The Spanish commandant made no difficulty whatever, but granted us a pass on condition that we would only stop two days at Nacogdoches. This short time scarcely sufficed

for our shopping, for our costumes were woefully dilapidated, and we also needed horses or mules to carry our baggage. Our Louisianian friends suggested our putting on the costume of the country, as our French uniforms, or rather the remains of what had been uniforms, might draw unpleasant attention upon us. This dress was also much more suitable for travelling, and so we took this sensible advice, each one equipping himself, on his own account, in garments similar to those worn by the Mexican hunters and voyagers. I was able to procure a full and new Mexican suit, as I still had the greater part of the two hundred dollars sent me by Monsieur Tournel.

I remember my strange costume well. It consisted of a dressed buckskin hunting shirt, which was of a pale yellowish color, and whose cut resembled the tunic of the ancients far more than any modern article of dress. It was carefully sewn and even embroidered. There was a kind of hood attached to it, which hood, as well as the front of the tunic, was adorned with long fringes, while a pair of scarlet gaiters, called "save-alls," protected my

legs up to the very hips. Over these I wore strong pantaloons tucked into large boots with spurs. A colored under-shirt, a blue neck-tie, and a large Guayaquil hat completed my accoutrement. At the back of my saddle was strapped a scarlet cloak, rolled into a cylinder, and intended to do duty as a bed, a tent, or a mantle, as necessity might require. There was a small round hole in the centre, through which I could pass my head, and thus, in case of rain or cold, be protected from head to foot.

My companions were dressed pretty nearly the same as I was; some of them might have had a different colored cloak, or a little coarser shirt, or their habiliments on the whole might have been a little less new; but, allowing for these insignificant differences, we were all dressed alike. As we could all, or nearly all, talk Spanish fluently, it would have been difficult to guess that we were in reality French soldiers.

Our weapons, too, were nearly all alike. I was armed to the teeth. I had two horse-pistols at my saddle-bow, and two smaller ones at my belt, a long rifle slung over my shoulder, and a

large knife styled in Mexican *machete*, which I used indifferently for hunting, cooking, and eating purposes. My outfit consisted in a shot-bag, a powder-horn, a calabash, and a knapsack where were stored my rations. My comrades were nearly all equipped in the same way.

We were, however, very diversely mounted. Some had saddle-mules, and some horses of Spanish descent, called mustangs, most of them worn out by old age or hard labor, and, consequently, sold very cheap to our travelling party. Mine, which was young and strong, had cost thirty dollars, and was of the wild prairie race, the descendants of the Spanish horses introduced into Mexico at the time of the conquest. The Texan from whom I bought him assured me that he was very gentle, having been caught young, and well-trained, and that at present a child might lead him by a silken string. I needed these qualities in a horse, for, having always served in the infantry, I was far from being a good rider. True, I might have become one, for I had the first and most necessary quality of a good horseman—coolness; but this was not all, and I had reason to regret

later on that I had not added to this quality a knowledge of the rudiments of horsemanship.

We had five sumpter-mules to carry our baggage, besides the old horse that I had ridden as far as Nacogdoches, and which was only fit for a beast of burden. These six animals formed our baggage caravan, which was under the care of muleteers, Texan half-breeds whom we had hired at Nacogdoches for this purpose, as well as to act as guides to our party. We started early in the morning of the day fixed upon by the Spanish commandant.

There were but thirty-five or forty leagues, as the crow flies, between us and the first Louisianian settlements, but we could not go in a straight line, as we should have had to cross several deep rivers with very steep banks. We were obliged to steer north, as if we had been *en route* for Arkansas, intending there to cross the Sabine not far from its head-waters and where it was still fordable, and to strike about and reach Louisiana from the south-east.

This route would lengthen our journey by some four or five days' march; but this was indifferent to us, as the country we had to cross, though a wilderness, was very beautiful, and

abounded in game, while at the same time we knew that it would afford plenty of fodder for our cattle. The weather was the very best that could have been wished for, for a journey under this clime. It was now January, and the sun being less ardent than in summer, made it quite possible for us to march all day in comparative comfort. The nights were cold, but we scarcely perceived it, wrapped up as we were in our huge cloaks and stretched near the genial camp-fire. Sometimes toward sunrise the north or north-west wind would strew a slight frost on the ground, but the sun's first rays would speedily melt it under our eyes.

This journey across the Texan prairies was a real pleasure trip for us, who had so long undergone such cruel privations on the island of Galveston. We were in no hurry to reach our destination, and our days' marches were but short. We often spent our mornings in hunting, till at our noonday halt we would light a fire and cook a few venison steaks, reserving the rest of the game for the evening. Sometimes our meals were as luxurious as Belshazzar's feasts, and we banqueted on antelope or kid steak, roast partridge, quail, and wild duck, which we

washed down with the purest of water, and sometimes a little rum. True, we had neither bread, plates, nor spoons, but then we had *tortillas*, which may be called the bread of the Mexicans. Though kneaded of corn meal, they differ from the cakes made in the south of Europe and in the United States of the same material. The corn is not ground into flour, but simply bruised and boiled in a large earthen jar. It is then placed on a large flat stone and bruised with a roller, after which it becomes as white as snow. The dough is then kneaded by hand in the usual way, and made into cakes the size of a small plate, which are fried on a hot stone, or, better still, an iron sheet. This is the universal food of the poorer classes in Mexico. *Tortillas* are often used as bread, plate, and spoons. The meat is placed upon the *tortilla* in front of you, and you eat it with other smaller *tortillas* kneaded in the shape of spoons. Our dessert consisted of grapes, nuts, and apples. These meals seemed truly delicious to us, seasoned as they were with the sauce of a healthy appetite.

The aspect of the country grew more wooded as we advanced, and we sometimes went

through large woods of cottonwood trees, the commonest tree to be found on the prairies. This must not be mistaken for the cotton plant, which is but a small shrub; these cottonwood trees are so called because they bear a substance that closely resembles cotton, but is totally different in its nature. We avoided the virgin forests which we perceived in the distance, because they were too dense to offer an easy route, and we might have been lost in their depths; besides which, they were full of wild animals, and were the strongholds of the *Indios bravos*, who were yet more formidable. These were the Indians who had maintained their independence, and whom the Mexicans called by this name to distinguish them from those who submitted to European rule, the *Indios manjos*, or civilized Indians. One would have thought from this nomenclature that they were two different species of the same race of animals.

On the eighth day after our departure we had reached the basin of the upper Sabine, and sent our guides forward to search for the ford. We halted in the meanwhile on the borders of a swamp evidently well-stocked with game. Swamps are tracts of

land by the river-side, densely covered with evergreen trees and shrubs. The red laurel, the dark-leaved myrtle, the cistus, the honeysuckle, different kinds of aloe, the crimson-leaved sage, the dahlia, the gigantic helianthus, the delicate mentzelia, and the lovely magnolia—all mingle their colors and their perfumes in tangled luxuriance. Some of our party followed the guides to the river, others stayed in camp to look after their horses' harness or mend their own clothes. I thought I would take a turn on horseback round the swamp to see if I could find on its borders some game not beyond the power of my rifle to bring down.

I had been out about half an hour when I saw an enormous animal making its way out of a clump of willows fifteen hundred yards from where I stood. Presently another followed, and then another, until there were ten of them before me. I knew them to be buffaloes, and I supposed that they had come to drink at some spring that must be near the willow clumps.

Hitherto we had shot nothing larger than deer or antelopes, and, indeed, I am wrong in

saying *we*, for it was always my companions who had this luck, while I had never brought down any thing more important than a turkey or a duck. How proud I should be if I could contribute such noble game as buffalo to our mess! I drew near with great caution, laying myself almost on a level with my horse's neck; the tall grass and underbrush concealed my movements, and the wind being in my face, I was easily enabled to get within range, for buffaloes are very quick-scented, and snuff danger from a long distance.

Thus I reached a little group of cottonwood trees, where I placed myself in ambush. I could see the herd browsing a little way beyond, unconscious of the danger that threatened them. I could get no nearer without venturing into the open and alarming them, when they would of course have taken to their heels and gained the cover of the wood before I could hope to come up with them. I determined to wait, thinking that chance might befriend me, and I stood for nearly an hour in expectation of their coming my way. At last, one of the finest of the herd came toward me, browsing as he went. I raised my rifle and fired. The report scattered

the whole herd, and even the bull I had aimed at scampered off in the direction of the forest. I feared that I had missed him after all, and cursing my awkwardness, I reloaded my weapon, vowing to myself not to say any thing of my adventure at the camp. I was on the point of turning back to regain the camp, when, casting a parting glance at the herd, now in full retreat, I noticed that the bull I had aimed at followed the others at some distance and gave unmistakable signs of distress.

“He is wounded,” thought I, and off I was at once after him. Finding himself pursued, he gathered up his strength and fled nearly as swiftly as the rest. “Never mind,” thought I, “you will soon have to slacken your pace, and I shall come up with you in the long-run.” In another quarter of an hour the animal stumbled and bellowed as if in great pain. I made sure of victory now, and checked my horse to breathe him. The trail was easy to follow, as it was marked with blood. I had almost reached the dying bull, who was struggling in his last agony, and was considering how best to bring in my game to our camp, when I heard a neigh on my left. My horse pricked up his ears and an-

swered it at once ; then, before I had time to look about me, he started off at full gallop in the direction whence came the call.

In vain I tried to control him. The animal which I had been assured *a child might lead by a silken string* resisted all my efforts to stop his course. I soon saw the cause of his excitement. A herd of wild horses were feeding a little way off in the prairies, and at the approach of one of their former associates, had set up a neigh of recognition. Had he been alone and unsaddled, they would have received him at once as one of themselves, but seeing him ridden by one of those hunters (my dress of course heightened the deception) by whom they used to be pursued and lassoed, they took flight and made off at a gallop. My horse followed them at an equally break-neck pace, and no endeavors of mine could either stop or direct his mad course. With his neck outstretched, his mouth foaming, his nostrils inflamed, he flew rather than ran after the other horses, whose gallop sounded to me like the thunder of a cavalry charge.

Since I was unable to control him, I gave up my efforts to do so and let him run on, hop-

ing that he would exhaust himself, or, at least, slacken his speed through fatigue, when I should endeavor to regain my mastery of him. This, however, seemed less and less likely, and for a length of time which I could not define, but which seemed an eternity to me, I saw myself doomed, like Mazeppa, to be dragged along by a wild horse into unknown and savage regions. We had now entered one of those vast forests that covered the greater part of Texas at that time. The road chosen by the wild horses was more open than most forest paths, and my horse followed it without much trouble, but I was forced to lie as flat to his neck as I could to get out of the way of the hanging branches that interlaced above our heads.

To make things worse, night was coming on, and in these countries darkness falls almost as soon as the sun sinks behind the horizon. How should I get back to camp, when my horse should drop from sheer fatigue, as he must do sooner or later? I was probably at an immense distance from the bivouac at least, judging from the extent of ground which my runaway beast must have covered in his mad gallop of at least an hour's duration. How should

I find the way back at night and on foot, for I knew that my horse would be of no use, as his flanks rose and fell with ominous quickness, and the breath was almost out of his body? He might very likely fall dead from fatigue at any moment. I had hardly finished this train of thought when my horse suddenly fell under me, and I was thrown violently from my saddle, totally unconscious.

CHAPTER VII.

A SAD AWAKENING—I FALL INTO THE HANDS OF THE INDIANS—MY JOURNEY TO THE COMANCHE VILLAGE—I AM PRESENTED TO THE GREAT CHIEF—A NEW ACTOR ON THE SCENE—EFFECT PRODUCED BY MY DECORATION AND MY STANDING AS A FRENCH OFFICER—I AM CONSTITUTED THE GUEST OF THE TRIBE.

How long my swoon lasted I cannot tell. It was pitch dark when I came to myself. I tried to get up, but a sharp pain in my right foot compelled me to lie down again. I then found that my foot was still entangled in the stirrup, and that my horse was stretched lifeless by my side. I did not pause to wonder how my foot had remained entangled in the stirrup, while I had certainly felt as though pitched far over the horse's head. Indeed, the pain I felt, the fever that consumed me, and the burning thirst that tormented me, did not allow me to collect my thoughts just then. Mechanically I reached out my hand toward a gourd full of

rum that hung at my girdle. I drank a few mouthfuls and felt temporarily relieved, but giddiness soon seized me, and I sank into a lethargic slumber which again drowned in me the consciousness of my suffering and my danger.

It was broad daylight when I awoke; but what was my surprise when I opened my eyes and saw myself surrounded by half a dozen tall, copper-colored men with long, jet-black, straight hair, and wearing by way of cloaks either buffalo hides or crimson blankets! I knew them to be Comanche Indians, deemed the most bloodthirsty of all by the Spanish colonists of Texas. We shall see, later on, how this character was borne out.

As soon as I came to myself, I again experienced great pain, not only in my foot, but in every part of my body. I tried to rise, but found my arms firmly pinioned, so that I could barely turn my body round a little. The Indians, seeing my efforts and enjoying my helplessness, laughed long and derisively. I was half dead with fright, and fully believed that my last hour was at hand. I was going to be butchered, and perhaps eaten, for these savages were popularly believed to be cannibals.

This fear unmanned me worse than the anticipation of even a violent death. Had I not courted death in the midst of all kind of dangers? But to be tortured—for I knew the customs of the Indians—and then to know that my limbs would be cut up, roasted, and eaten—that was too terrible to think of. If only I could die defending myself! But I had been stripped of my weapons; besides, I should not have had the strength to use them, and I was bound hand and foot, like a sheep under the butcher's knife.

While these thoughts crowded on my mind, the Indians took no notice of me, but talked noisily among themselves, and passed my rum gourd from hand to hand. It was soon emptied. This done, the head of the gang came up to me and said, in tolerable Spanish:

“What did the Spanish pale-face mean to do in the hunting-grounds of the red man? Was it that he might reckon the number of our warriors, and learn the way to our wigwams, and then carry the news to the pale-faces?”

I saw that the Indians mistook me for a Spanish spy, and I began to hope once more. I answered that I was not a Spaniard, but a

Frenchman, and told them by what chain of circumstances I had been carried beyond the reach of my companions into the heart of the Indian country, without even suspecting where I was.

I do not know if my Indian friend understood Spanish well enough to take in all I said, but one thing seemed to strike him to the exclusion of all others, namely, that I was one of Napoleon's warriors lately settled in Texas. He asked me repeatedly if this was true, and how I came to be dressed like a Spaniard or a Mexican. After a renewed assurance that such was the fact, and a new explanation on the subject of my dress, he said to me, in less angry tones than he had used before :

“ If my brother has spoken truth, no harm will happen to him. The Comanches are not the foes of Napoleon, or of his warriors, or of the French. But my brother must come with us to our great chief, who alone can know the truth and administer justice.”

I willingly agreed to this, but told them that I could not go on foot, as my right foot hurt me too much. The Indian immediately untied my bonds, and I was able to sit up and

loosen the gaiter on my right leg. I found, to my great delight, that there were no bones broken, as I had feared there were, but that my ankle was badly sprained, totally unfitting me for walking.

The chief, meanwhile, made signs to one of his companions to examine my injuries. This man was smaller than the rest, and, to judge by his dress, belonged to a different tribe. I afterward found out that he was a Tankard, or Tankoway, of a tribe celebrated for its marvellous healing powers and superior medical knowledge. My copper-colored physician having felt my foot and ascertained that, besides the sprain, I had nothing worse to complain of than a few bruises about the body, bade the chief tell me that I should soon be well again. He then left me, but returned in a quarter of an hour with a handful of roots and herbs, which he sedulously chewed, and then applied as a plaster to every spot that gave me pain. This ceremony he supplemented by reciting charms intended to help and strengthen the healing virtue of the herbs.

He gave me a decoction of the herbs to drink, and told the chief to tell me that I must

rest and sleep till we should be ready to leave. Though I had not much faith in my savage Esculapius, I still followed his prescription, and whether it was the effect of the draught he had administered or the natural consequence of the unusual excitement and fatigue I had gone through, certain it is that I fell into a deep and refreshing slumber.

I was awakened about noon; and, indeed, had the order to start not been signified to me, I might have slept quietly on for hours. I was astonished, on awaking, to find myself almost free from pain, but my foot was still so benumbed that it was impossible for me to walk. This had evidently been foreseen and provided for, for another horse had been brought and decked out in the saddle, bridle, etc., of the unlucky animal who had brought me to this pass, and now lay stone dead a few feet from my side.

The chief was kind enough to offer me, before we started, a few slices of grilled buffalo meat, which I was glad enough to devour, as I had not eaten any thing for more than twenty-four hours, and the fever was making me ravenously hungry. When I had done, I was hoisted upon

my new horse, and we started on our journey, keeping Indian file all the way. My horse went a foot's pace, and two Indians, one in front and one behind me, walked as slowly as he did, while the rest of the troop went a little quicker at some distance ahead of us. My escort, consisting of my Tankoway doctor and an old, surly-looking Comanche, seemed to watch my every movement narrowly, as if fearing that I should try to make my escape or even attack them. Alas! both things were utterly out of my power, for I had trouble enough to balance myself on my horse, and, besides, the Comanches had taken good care to strip me of every weapon, even of a little pocket-knife, which contained besides the main blade two pen-knife blades and a cork-screw.

We marched on till nightfall, when we reached the camp prepared by the four Indians who had pushed on before. The fire was lighted, and the meat for the evening meal roasting. My surgeon again examined my injured foot, which was very much swollen; he then put on more poultices, gave me some meat, and finally ordered complete rest during the night.

I was still better the next day. We broke up camp early, and travelled all day long. I noticed that our route lay to the north-west, which was exactly the opposite direction from that which my comrades were to take after crossing the Sabine River. After three days' march, we reached a little valley through which flowed a pretty stream, and where were scattered many huts and wigwams of different shapes. It was the principal Comanche village. As the evening was far spent when we arrived, my presentation to the great chief was put off till the morrow, when he would settle what was to be my fate. My sprain was far less painful than such a long and fatiguing journey would have naturally rendered it. My Tankard doctor's remedies, which I diligently applied twice a day, seemed gifted with remarkable efficacy. I only needed a few days' rest to be quite myself again.

Early the next morning the chief of the little troop by whom I had been taken prisoner came with the doctor to take me to the great chief. The distance was but short, yet I should not have been able to get over it without help. My companions gave me their arms, and, with

this support, I limped along as best I could, till we got to where the chief was. He was seated in the public square of the village, his usual audience-chamber. He was squatting at the foot of a tree, smoking an immense pipe or *calumet* of red clay, and talking to ten other Indians, all squatted near him in a large half-circle. He seemed totally to disregard our arrival, and, puffing clouds of smoke, went on addressing his peers in short, grave sentences, while my companions made me sit down between them, so as nearly to fill up the vacant spaces between the horns of the half-circle. We thus formed almost a complete ring. I was right in front of the chief. I could scarcely have guessed his age, for his face was tattooed all over ; neither did his position allow me to judge of his height, although the length of his legs and the noble proportions of his body seemed to indicate an unusual stature. He was dressed much the same as the other chiefs, but his red blanket was thrown over his shoulders in a certain careless way that was not devoid of picturesqueness, and his long, black hair, reaching down to his waist, was plaited in several *queues*, two of which, brought forward

over each shoulder, fell in front of his chest and were adorned with several little silver plates, placed at equal distances.

I had ample time to make these observations, for a full quarter of an hour went by before any one took the slightest notice of me. The chief, shortly after our arrival, handed the calumet to his right-hand neighbor, who, having taken a few puffs in silence, passed it on to the next, and so on until it had reached my left-hand neighbor, the chief who had captured me. Having smoked silently for a few seconds, he did not pass the pipe to me, but began a long harangue of which I did not understand one word, and which was probably an account of how he had found and captured me. When he ceased speaking, the great chief, who had listened attentively, said a few words to one of his assistants. The man arose at once and went toward one of the huts of the village, coming back in a few moments and bringing with him another personage, who certainly was no Comanche, nor an Indian of any sort. He was a stumpy little man, evidently old, not to say decrepit. His dress, if dress it could be called, was as coarse as it was simple, consisting of a

rag which might once have been a hunting-shirt, and which had now become little more than an old leathern sack all over holes, and to which a pair of sleeves had been coarsely stitched. Its prevailing color was a dirty brown, but with patches of livelier color here and there, and dark grease-stains scattered over the front. There was no trace left of any fringe or other ornament. There must have been a hood to it long ago, but time and wear had wholly obliterated any trace of it. The gaiters and moccasins matched the tunic, and were probably of the same material ; they, too, were of a dirty brown, soiled, greased, and patched. Not meeting as they should have done, they left the knees and part of the legs uncovered, and these, too, seemed as brown as the leather itself. This singular figure wore a close-fitting cap, probably once of cat or fox-skin, but no fur remained upon it now, and it, too, was only a dirty, greasy bit of leather, in perfect keeping with the rest of the costume. The whole dress seemed never to have been taken off since the first day it was put on, and that must have been many a long year ago !

The man's face was that of a man of sixty,

with attenuated features, gray-blue eyes sparkling with intelligence, and gray hair cut rather close. His skin, tanned by sun and wind, had evidently been white, and it was easy to see that he was a European, but his face seemed rather French than Spanish or Anglo-American. He had no sooner made his appearance in the circle than the chief spoke a few words to him in Comanche. The new-comer answered in the same tongue, and turning to me, scanned me attentively for a few seconds, then said, in very correct French and with a magisterial tone :

“ Friend, the Comanche warriors have captured you as a Spaniard or a Mexican ; you pretend to be a Frenchman, and I have been deputed to inquire into the truth of your assertion. What proof can you give of your nationality ?”

As I listened to these words, delivered in an emphatic tone of voice, I was both glad to have found some one with whom I could speak in my own language, and amused at the grotesque importance assumed by my curious interrogator, and which reminded me of some old French game-keeper roughly demanding to

see the license of some stray sportsman. I hastened to set aside this laughable but hardly seasonable impression, and to express my delight at meeting a countryman of my own.

“I am glad to find you entrusted with the examination of my claims,” I said. “True, I have neither license nor passport [I was thinking of my game-keeper again !] to convince you of my identity, but you speak our mother-tongue too well for any one but a Frenchman, and I hope that the same token will be enough on my part to convince you of my nationality.” The poor man, who, as he told us later, had not heard a word of French for ten years, was deeply moved ; his face shone with delight, his eyes rested on me with unmistakable kindness and longing, no doubt the result of the compliment I had addressed to him, and he answered, in a very different tone from the haughty speech of a moment ago :

“O Monsieur, I don't doubt your word for an instant, but though of one stock we are not quite countrymen, for you are a real Frenchman, while I am only a French Canadian. Though I do not speak our language as well as you kindly intimated, I have been in many

places and talked with men of many nations, so that I can tell at once if a man is speaking his own mother-tongue or a foreign language, even though he might speak it with great fluency. Tell me now how you happened to wander into the hands of the Comanches, so that I can tell the *tatli*, as they call their great chief."

I told him briefly the principal events of my history, my motives for leaving home after the fall of Napoleon, our unlucky Texan scheme of colonization, the opposition of the Spaniards who had sent an army to expel us, our hasty retreat from Camp Asylum, our journey across the prairies, and, lastly, the incident which had separated me from my party and nearly cost me my life had I not been found and brought here by the Comanche warriors. As I spoke, the old Canadian translated my story to the Indians, who listened with breathless interest. When I had done, the chief inquired if the Spanish army that had lately entered Texas had come with no other object but the expulsion of our colony, and had not some ulterior designs on the Indians?

The appearance of such a large body of troops had alarmed the Indians of this country, who, conscious of having committed some depredations on the Texan and Mexican frontiers, had feared that this army was destined to punish them. For the purpose of observing its movements, they had sent out numerous scouting parties, one of whom had captured me, taking me for a Spanish spy, which supposition my language and my dress made natural enough.

I told the chief that, as far as I knew, the Spanish troops had come solely to drive the French out of Texas, and that I did not think any other operations likely, since after our departure most of the soldiers had been sent back to the Mexican frontier, or quartered at Nacogdoches, Bejar, or Goliad, where they seemed peaceably settled. I added that doubtless my explanation had satisfactorily proved that I was a Frenchman, and might hope, therefore, for kind treatment on the part of the Comanches, who had always been the friends of the Frenchmen of Louisiana, their neighbors, and who not long ago had made a special treaty of alliance with our chiefs at Camp Asy-

lum. This last communication, however, had no effect whatever, for they were not of the same tribe that had made a treaty with General Lallemand, and they knew nothing at all of that bond of friendship. The Comanches, who came to our camp, as I learned later on, were allies of the Pawnees, and were called Comanches of the Plain, while my present friends were Mountain Comanches, and allies of the Apaches.

The old Canadian translated my appeal, and added some warm eulogies of his own. I heard the name of Napoleon mentioned several times; it was the only word of his address which I understood. When he ceased speaking, the Indians deliberated gravely among themselves. The Comanches never decide upon any thing save after serious thought; indeed, they are even more remarkably gifted than the neighboring tribes, with good sense and mature judgment, but they are also very slow in coming to a decision.

While they were debating, the old Canadian sat down by me, and told me that they were well disposed in my favor, especially on hearing that I was one of Napoleon's soldiers, but that

one of them, who sat by the chief, was yet doubtful, because, said he, he had seen some pale-face officers, and they always wore, either on the heart or shoulder, some token of their rank and position.

“Do you happen to have,” said my friend, “your epaulets or belt, or any thing that would strike them and convince them of the truth? What is there in your valise?”

“No,” I answered, “those things, and every thing belonging to my uniform, were left behind among my baggage. I have nothing but my cross of the Legion of Honor, from which I never part, and which was given me by the emperor himself; but I fear to show it, and perhaps excite these men's cupidity. You will easily understand that I value that cross more than my very life.”

“I see; but there is nothing to fear. Put it on while these chiefs are debating; they will be a good quarter of an hour yet. I will answer for the consequences.”

I did as he advised me, and drew from my pocket a little box containing the cross, and a few silver coins stamped with the emperor's effigy

“I have an idea,” said the Canadian, as he saw the coins. “Of course you do not care for the money as you do for the cross; give them to the *tatli*, with those red ribbons of which I see you have a quantity. He will think they are some kind of decoration like the cross, for he will see that the same effigy is stamped on both, and I will provide rings by which to hang them on. I assure you that this courtesy will have a wonderful effect, and that you will be treated henceforth as a chief of the tribe.”

I agreed, and he fastened my cross on my tunic without being perceived by the Indians, who were now standing in a narrow circle, so that those nearest to us had their backs turned toward us. Then, taking the coins in his hand, he got up, and loudly said that he had something to communicate to the *tatli* on the part of the prisoner.

The circle opened wide, and the Canadian, going forward with all the dignity of an ambassador, began one of those long orations so much prized by Indians. I could follow his meaning by his gestures, and it was something to this effect :

“The chief seemed to doubt that the stran-

ger was really one of the great warrior-chiefs of the great Napoleon, because he did not openly wear the insignia of his high rank, but even the sun does not always show his full splendor, but when it pleases him, hides himself behind clouds ; so this French warrior did not choose to show to all eyes the shining proofs of his title and his bravery, but he has consented to let you see them at last, and if you will look you will perceive them shining on his breast."

He pointed to me, and all eyes were fixed on my cross. He then resumed his oration, which I shall not reproduce this time, though he himself translated it for me, and ended by offering on my behalf to give the chief a great decoration, with the name and effigy of Napoleon, like those on my own (it was a five-franc piece), and several others (pieces of two francs, one franc, and half a franc), to be distributed among the lesser chiefs, according to his will and pleasure.

Notwithstanding the proverbial impassibility of Indians, the chief's face lighted up with pride and joy at this proposition. The other warriors were equally pleased, and the debate

was closed. The great chief sent me the pipe of peace after he had first taken a few puffs, and desired the interpreter to tell me that I was henceforth to consider myself the guest of the tribe. A wigwam would soon be got ready for me, where I should be taken care of until I was quite well again, and that after my recovery I should stay with them as long as I pleased.

I was then taken to a hut carpeted with palm-matting, and fitted with a hammock, in which I lay down at once. My Tankoway doctor bandaged my ankle again, and left me to the nursing of the old Canadian, who took up his position by my side, declaring that if I had no objection to it he would devote himself wholly to my service. I gladly and gratefully accepted his offer, and after a slight meal, fell asleep in a natural way, which had not happened to me for several days.

CHAPTER VIII.

MICHAEL GOURNAY THE CANADIAN—MANNERS
AND CUSTOMS OF SOME OF THE INDIAN
TRIBES.

WHEN I awoke, I found the Canadian by my side, as watchful as a mother over her child. I looked round my room—if I may call it so—and noticed my saddle and bridle and my weapons, of which I had formerly been stripped, arranged on one side of the apartment, while on the other were a blanket, a kind of pack, or bale, bound with leather thongs, and an old gun. I saw that these things belonged to the Canadian, and I had hardly formed this conjecture before he himself confirmed it by saying :

“ You see, Captain,” for so he had called me since he knew of my having borne that title while in the army, “ I took the liberty of bringing my few belongings here, hoping it would

not annoy you, since you are so kind as to take me into your service."

I assured him I was not at all annoyed, and began to talk with him. He was all eagerness, for he did not often get the chance of a long talk. I was curious to hear his story, and to know something of the habits of the Comanches, as well as of our whereabouts and the chance I had of reaching Louisiana. This was what I cared most about, and it was the first question I put to my companion. He could only give me vague answers, totally unsatisfactory to my mind, for he had never been further in this direction than the spot where we now were, and had always entered Texas from the north, and across the Rocky Mountains, whenever he had joined this tribe of the Comanches, whose ordinary encampment was on the plateau beyond the Sierra San Saba, between the Rio Colorado and the Brazos River. The Canadian thought from what he had heard that we must be nearly ten or twelve days' march from the Louisiana frontiers, and that it was impossible to go that distance without guides, as the route lay across immense forests and wild mountain passes.

I thought this estimate slightly exaggerated, since we had only taken three days and a half to come from the spot where the Indians had found me to their present encampment, but of course I had no means of calculating what distance my horse might have covered in his mad flight. At any rate, I could not yet undertake so long and dangerous a journey. I must first get well and strong, and then see what means I could employ to further my end. My nurse whiled away the time pleasantly enough by telling me long stories of his adventures and the ups and downs of his checkered life. There was enough in those tales to furnish forth a volume, but I have no time to enter upon the recital, and will only relate how the little fellow had happened to be thrown among the Comanches.

He had been born in Upper Canada, and his name was Michael Gournay. His father was what is styled in Canada a *voyageur*—that is, a boatman employed on the lakes and rivers of that country to convey travellers or merchandise by water. He had followed his father's calling in his youth, but one day, coming down the Mississippi, their frail bark was

wrecked, and Michael alone reached the shore in safety. Among the remains cast up by the waters was a box containing the articles most necessary to a man in his position, namely, rifles, knives, hatchets, powder, and shot. Thanks to these, he was able to provide for his wants by shooting the abundant prairie game, a kind of life which so pleased him that he gave up being a boatman and became a prairie hunter. I may as well stop to tell you that a prairie means a vast tract of treeless land, and is always used in contradistinction to *forest*. Sometimes, however, the term is applied to tracts of land well covered with timber. Such, for instance, was the scenery that we had passed through on our way from Nacogdoches, and until I met my buffalo herd. But if the name of prairie is applied to such land, it is because, in spite of the woods scattered here and there, grass plains are the predominating element, and the trees only appear like clusters or islets in a sea of green pastures. They are often called islands or mounds. The territory between the Mississippi and the Rocky Mountains is called *par excellence* the great prairie; it is the home of the bison and the mustang,

and the chief hunting-ground of the remaining vestiges of the great Indian tribes—the Sioux, the Crows, Cheyennes, Pawnees, Arapahos, Blackfeet, Apaches, Wacos, Comanches, etc. Michael Gournay had found himself thrown on the prairie after his shipwreck, and for ten years had never left it, coming constantly in contact with one or other of these Indian tribes, and generally kindly welcomed by all. His uncertain flittings once brought him near the frontiers of his native land again, and he took service under a kind of corporation of trappers employed by a great English fur company. These hunters are known as trappers because; for the sake of the fur, they catch their game alive by means of traps.

He grew dissatisfied with the company he served, and his old instincts made any restraint irksome to him. He longed for the solitude of the plains, as do all those who have ever tasted this wild and adventurous life. The prairie-fever was upon him, and he left the company to go on trapping expeditions on his own account. It was at this period of his life that he experienced the strangest ups and downs of fortune. He had many a time been

possessed of a small fortune in furs, and as many times had he been robbed, sometimes by *bona-fide* thieves, sometimes by the dishonesty of those to whom he had sold the furs. They were always white men, so-called children of civilization. True he did not always find even the red men themselves too scrupulously honest, and once he had been in the hands of a cannibal tribe, from whose clutches he was just saved in the nick of time by the Comanches, who were at war with them. From that time he had linked his fate with that of his deliverers, who exercised toward him such hospitality and generosity as he had seldom found among Anglo-Americans or Spanish Mexicans.

He grew tired of the trapping business, which age and infirmity now made difficult to him, and became a *coureur des bois*. This is the name given to small peddlers who cross the prairie with an assortment of knives, pocket-mirrors, glass beads, vermilion dyes, tobacco, and other little trifles, which they exchange with the Indians for furs and peculiar Indian products. It is generally a dangerous trade, and not unfrequently leads to the murder of

the peddler for the sake of his little store of valuables. Gournay, however, had plied it in safety for ten years, no doubt powerfully protected by his friendly relations with the Comanches and Apaches, and other influential tribes scattered on the frontiers of Texas, New Mexico, and Sonora. "How is it," I asked, "that you met with nothing but kindness from these nations, which I always heard held up as monsters of cruelty, and utterly inaccessible to any generous feeling?"

"You heard the Spaniards say so, doubtless," said Gournay, "or perhaps the Anglo-Americans; and, indeed, the Comanches, Apaches, Navajos, and Pawnees, as well as many other nations I might name, hate the Spaniards with a relentless hatred, and practise the most abominable cruelties upon them. Sometimes they fall upon the *atajos*, or caravans, carry off the mules and horses, and massacre the *arrieros* without pity; or they burn farms and even whole villages of Spaniards, capture the women and children, and scalp the men, whose scalps become trophies of great price. But these cruelties are in their eyes legitimate reprisals for the cruelties of every kind

which the Spaniards have inflicted upon them ever since the conquest of Mexico. Their forefathers formerly lived in the beautiful valleys of the Rio del Norte and the other fruitful spots whence the Spanish invaders drove them out. And now that the power of the foreign foe is dwindling day by day, the independent Indians, which the Spanish Mexicans themselves significantly call '*Indios bravos*,' do not despair of finally reconquering their former country and driving out the intruders altogether. This is the reason of that implacable habit of theirs toward any man with Spanish blood in his veins—a hatred which would have been visited on you had you not made yourself known to them as a Frenchman. It is noticeable that of all white men, or pale-faces, as the Indians call them, the French have always been the favorites of the natives. From the great lakes of Canada to the mouth of the Mississippi, they have met with nothing but friendliness from the Indian races. The tribes of my native country still speak with infinite respect of the black robes (so they called the French missionaries) who had come to teach them how to worship the Great Spirit.

They regret their departure, and I am sure that if French missionaries could come back in our days, they would be welcomed with joy, and would do more for the civilization and conversion of these red-skinned races than any ministers of Protestant sects, who have always given up the task in despair.* Then these men are all Anglo-Americans, and scarcely less obnoxious to the Indians than the Spaniards themselves. They fear the Americans more, however, as being of a more hardy, energetic, enterprising race, which every day makes good fresh conquests, and presses more closely on the huts of the aborigines."

I asked him to tell me something of the Apaches, whom I had heard spoken of as one of the most formidable of Indian tribes.

"The Apaches," said Gournay, "are of a more roving nature than the Comanches. They live in no particular district, but are strewn over the Spanish frontiers from the Black Mountains to the confines of Chohahuila. Sworn enemies of the Spaniards, they hold

* This wish of old Gournay's has since been realized. Catholic missionaries, almost all French, have thoroughly evangelized what remains of these tribes in North America.

many districts in perpetual terror. The Mexican Government was never able to do more than conclude a short truce with them now and then, and though their numbers have been sadly lessened by war, famine, and disease, the Spaniards are still obliged to keep on hand a force of not less than two thousand mounted dragoons to escort the caravans, protect the villages, and ward off even renewed attacks. At first the Spaniards tried to enslave all those whom the fortune of war threw into their hands, but finding that they always escaped sooner or later, and fled back to their own fastnesses, they sent their prisoners to Cuba, where the sudden change of climate soon killed them all. The Apaches no sooner heard of this new plan than they obstinately refused to give or accept quarters. Hence their name for being the most ferocious of all red men.

“They are taller and better built than the Comanches. Their features are more intelligent; they have narrow foreheads, bright, black eyes, teeth of dazzling whiteness, thick, shining black hair, an olive-colored skin, and thin beards. No Indian nation is so little subject to bodily defects. A lame or hump-

backed man would be a curious rarity among them. Their senses are very acute, especially their sight, which age never impairs in the slightest degree. They are not subject to the common European ailments, but small-pox and yellow fever sometimes make fearful havoc among them. In all my trading relations with them, I have found them invariably honest, not to say engaging. They are generous and even disinterested when at peace, and with any friends or allies; but once on the war-path, they employ against their foes the utmost refinements of cruelty. I will say nothing of their weapons and manner of fighting; they are similar to those of the Comanches."

CHAPTER IX.

MY STAY WITH THE COMANCHES—WAR REJOICINGS—DEPARTURE OF THE WARRIORS ON THE WAR-PATH—I WISH TO LEAVE THE VILLAGE—THE INDIANS OPPOSE MY WISH—ATTACK ON THE VILLAGE BY A BODY OF SPANISH SOLDIERS—I GO BACK TO LOUISIANA WITH GOURNAY.

My sprained ankle kept me a prisoner for three weeks. Besides Gournay, I had other visitors—the great chief and the principal warriors, who came to have a chat with me now and then. They all knew a little Spanish, and we could easily converse in that language, or, when that failed, we had recourse to Gournay, who interpreted our meanings for us. The conversations, however, were not very lively; the Comanches are not naturally talkative. Their expression, on the contrary, is very thoughtful. They listen well to what is said, dwell long upon it after they have taken in its meaning,

and only answer with the greatest deliberation. In this they certainly have a great advantage over us Europeans, and, I will add it bravely, over Frenchmen in particular. They are also glad to learn, and show a great desire of increasing their knowledge on all occasions.

They often asked me questions on European nations, which I was at a loss how to answer. They were fond of having me speak of Napoleon, his warlike exploits, and especially his wars against the Spaniards. This was by no means surprising; for let me tell you, there is not a corner of the globe where that great man has not found an echo.

I was slowly recovering, and trying my strength every day, with the aid of a stick and of my good Gournay; then, later on, I trusted to my own legs, and found that I could use them as well as ever. As soon as I felt able to undertake another journey, I began to think of getting back to the United States and reaching Baltimore, or, at least, sending word of my whereabouts; but I had reckoned without my host, for the Comanche chief had determined to keep me with him longer than I had any wish to remain. As soon as I was perfectly

well, and made inquiries about returning to Louisiana, I was told that as yet I could have neither guide nor escort for so perilous a journey, because the Spanish troops were guarding the passes of the Sierra San Saba, which I should have to cross, but that as a strong detachment of Apache warriors was daily expected, and a joint expedition being planned, I was at liberty to join the expedition, and to take advantage of the opportunity thus afforded for reaching Louisiana in safety. I was obliged to be content with this answer and wait a few days. It was *three months* before the Apache warriors came, numbering about two hundred men. They were a remarkable body of men, and I was not sorry, though I had had so long to wait for their arrival, to have the chance of seeing so fine a specimen of the Indian race of North America.

On the third day after their arrival, a war-feast or review took place, at which the Comanche chief begged me to be present, as he was very proud to be able to show off his warriors' skill and his allies' prowess before an old veteran of Napoleon's wars. I accepted, and went with Gournay to see the tournament. I

had, of course, not expected to see any thing that could compare with European manœuvres, but I was struck not only with the strangeness, but with the grandeur and beauty of the evolutions going on before me.

Two hundred Comanche warriors had joined their Apache allies. Half of each troop fought on horseback, half on foot. These were armed with bows, arrows, and the dread tomahawk. Many also carried muskets taken in battle from the Spaniards, who certainly never *sold* them any weapons. Powder they buy in small quantities from the *coureurs des bois*, and the traffic in that article had long been Gournay's most lucrative business. Though they handle a musket or rifle with incredible skill, they still prefer the bow and arrows, because their aim is just as infallible with this weapon, while it is also much more expeditious than a gun that takes as much time to reload as would suffice for shooting off half a dozen arrows.

Their arrows are about a yard long, made of a long reed, in which is thrust a rod of hard wood tipped with iron, bone, or a sharp stone named obsidian. At three hundred yards' distance these warriors can transfix a man, so un-

erring is the Indian's aim. In drawing the arrow from the wound, the wood parts from the point, which remains in the body, and as it is generally poisoned, the wound most often proves mortal.

The horsemen had no muskets, and many were even destitute of bows. Their weapon was a long lance, or javelin, five yards long, which the Spaniards have long ago learned to respect. In charging the enemy, they hold this lance in both hands over their heads, directing their horses with the voice, and pressing his flanks with their knees. They wear a shield on the left arm. Nothing can equal the impetuous charge and the dashing of their steeds, while the deadly lance of the rider strikes like lightning before its attack can be parried.

The review began by various manœuvres. There was archery and rifle practice first, both kind of marksmen hitting their mark unerringly; but this was nothing to what was coming. A Comanche warrior had just picked up a little white shell, about the size of a watch. He passed by me holding it in his hands and showing it to Gournay as he bade him tell me to

look out that was going to take place. I watched the Indian, who was walking slowly forward.

"He is counting his steps," said Gournay.

"So I see; but what is he going to do with the shell?" I asked.

"You will see presently; it will be worth your while to watch him."

When the Indian had counted about sixty paces, he turned round facing us, and drawing himself up, brought his heels together with military precision; then he stretched out his arm horizontally till it was level with his shoulder. He held the shell between his fingers. I saw what was about to take place, and shuddered involuntarily at the thought.

Three Comanche warriors then came up to me and asked me to choose one of their number to fire upon this almost human mark. Gournay added in a whisper that this was an honor which I could not refuse to accept. I would willingly have done so, but chose the warrior at my right hand. He took three steps to one side, and called out to the man who held the shell to stand perfectly still. As his forefinger and thumb hid nearly half the shell, the actual

mark was scarcely as broad as a five-franc piece.

It was a terrible game, and I could not help shuddering as I looked on it. Luckily it did not last long. The marksman again called out in Indian a word that meant "Attention," and immediately levelled his rifle. There was a moment of breathless suspense, all eyes were fixed on the weapon—the shot was heard, and the shell flew in splinters. A thunder of applause followed this feat. The Indian who had held the mark stooped to pick up one of the fragments, and having examined it, brought it up to me, saying, "You see, he hit it right in the centre." And so it was, for the blue mark which the ball had made was visible on every fragment.

After this, came a tournament no less curious and interesting. There were all kinds of manœuvres and feats of horsemanship. Now the riders would stand with one foot only on their horses' backs, and while galloping at the utmost speed, throw lances and javelins that seldom failed to reach their aim. Others jumped from horse to horse, all the while riding at the top of their speed, or threw

themselves out of the saddle, and dexterously remounted in the twinkling of an eye. Others again made the most marvellous throws with the terrible lasso. Then came a sham fight, real jousts where the riders tried to unhorse one another like the knights of the Middle Ages. It was a magnificent sight, this desert amphitheatre and unequalled feats of agility. I could not choose but admire it; and as I gazed on these savages grown dexterous in the art of managing these fiery steeds, I thought of the days of Cortez, three hundred years ago, when the conqueror undertook to subdue the vast empire of Mexico with a few hundred men, only half of whom bore firearms, and a cavalry force of sixteen horse. But these horses and firearms were powerful adjuncts in the conquest, and struck a superstitious terror into the hearts of the Indians, and yet in our days the children of the conquered race are more at home than those of the conquerors in the use of these instruments of war. This gave me a fertile subject for meditation. Might not a wise and enlightened government—one alive to its true interests—have cultivated the remarkable qualities of this race, in order to civilize

and enlighten them, with the help of a religion of love and forgiveness, instead of grinding them down, enslaving them, and tyrannizing over them, and thus thrust them forever hopelessly beyond the pale of all possible civilization?

While these thoughts occupied my mind, the games came to an end, and the principal chiefs of both nations gathered together to debate the proposed expedition. Instead, however, of directing it toward Louisiana, as the Comanche chief had led me to suppose would be the case, it was decided to make a raid on the western frontier, toward New Mexico. The chief, when he communicated this decision, also told me that as soon as the expedition should return he would provide me with an escort as far as the Red River, whence I could easily reach Arkansas and then Louisiana. I made believe to acquiesce in his proposal, but inwardly determined to leave at once with Gournay, if he would go with me, as soon as the expedition had started.

The Indians left the following night, and when I awoke the next morning there were only the women and children and a few old men left in the village. I spoke of my plan

to Gournay, who coincided in it, and promised to go with me and do all in his power to help me. The first difficulty was to procure horses, for the Comanche warriors had taken all their animals with them for war purposes.

“ I know where I can find some,” said Gournay. “ I shall start to-day, and be back in four days with all we require.”

“ But suppose the Comanches come back ?”

“ There is no fear of that. Their raid will last at least three weeks, if not a month. They are gone in the direction of the Paso del Norte, and have to cross a wilderness of sand, and, besides that, they will be obliged to use all kinds of precautions to conceal their trail from the frontiersmen, who are brave and intelligent men, ever ready to repulse their turbulent neighbors.”

Gournay was on the point of starting, when two of the old men who had been left behind intimated to him that he must not leave the village until the return of the expedition. He came to tell me of this. “ What !” I cried, “ do they want to keep us prisoners ?”

“ No,” he answered, “ but they are afraid that we might fall in with some Spaniards and be-

tray to them the departure of the warriors, their numbers and destination, and thus ruin the success of the expedition. I think we can not do better than wait patiently a little longer, for it would be useless to try to start against their will. The whole population of the village would be at our heels—old men, women, and children, and it will be more prudent to avoid such annoyances.”

I was obliged to submit to this further delay, and began again impatiently to count the hours that seemed to pass so slowly, when an unexpected incident changed the aspect of affairs.

About a week after the departure of the expedition, I was awakened in the middle of the night by the most awful shrieks and yells and repeated rifle-shots. I jumped out of my hammock, and found Gournay listening attentively at the door of our hut.

“Monsieur,” he said, “some Spanish soldiers have attacked the village. Let us try not to get mixed up in the row, for, under these circumstances, quarter is seldom given, and friends and foes, white-skins and red-skins, run an equal chance of slaughter.”

Our hut was beyond the group of other wigwams whence came the din that had awakened us. I drew aside the palm-leaf mat that did duty both for door and window, and the red light of the burning village revealed one of those scenes of carnage so lamentably frequent in the annals of the American frontiers. Old men, women, and children fled from their burning homes, but were pursued and ruthlessly massacred in their helplessness.

On looking closer, I saw that the Spaniards did not kill indiscriminately every one who fell into their hands; those whom they could capture alive were taken as prisoners to a group of men standing in the principal square of the village, where they were then guarded by some of the soldiers. Not far from this group was a Spanish officer, wearing the insignia of a colonel of dragoons and mounted on a fine horse. He appeared as if directing the whole thing, and other officers constantly came up to him to take and convey his orders. I made up my mind at once. I left the hut with Gournay, holding a white handkerchief on high as a flag of truce. As he saw us drawing near, the colonel sent forward an officer to see what we wanted.

We told him that we wished to speak to the colonel.

The officer took us for Spaniards, and reported us accordingly to his chief, who beckoned to us to come near. In a few words I told him how I happened to be among the Comanches.

“Very good, señor,” he answered; “you can give me a longer explanation another time. Stay by me now until we have done our work.”

The horrid scene lasted all night, and by sunrise the village was nothing but a heap of ashes, in which bloody corpses were half-buried at short intervals. The colonel ordered his men to rest after their butchery, and I asked him to make my hut his headquarters. It was the only one in the village that had been spared, as the subaltern officer who had first spoken to us had prevented his men from sacking and burning it like the others. The colonel accepted my proposal, and while he was taking some refreshment I told him the whole of my story. As soon as I had mentioned that I was a Frenchman, he said:

“Well, then, speak to me in your own language; I understand it as well as my own.”

This was true. So thenceforth we conversed in French, which language he spoke very correctly, with a slight Southern accent, less marked, however, than that of many a Provençal or Languedoc man.

“You are lucky,” said he, when I had done, “to have been released by us, for the Comanches would never have allowed you to go back in peace to the States or to Mexico. They would first have tried to keep you away themselves by offering you all kinds of bribes and advantages to determine you to adopt their own mode of life; then, if that wouldn’t succeed, and they discovered the impossibility of making you give up your country and your faith, they would have got rid of you under some pretext or other, or without any pretext at all.”

The colonel’s asseverations only half convinced me, notwithstanding the incidents that had seemed lately to corroborate such a statement; but I made believe to be of his opinion, and expressed my gratitude to him for releasing me. I then asked him if he would add to his former kindness by helping me to continue my journey, already so unluckily interrupted.

“I think that will be easy,” he answered. “I

am going to send the prisoners to Texas under escort of my infantry. The cavalry and I will march to meet the Comanches and Apaches who left the village a fortnight ago, and who probably found some unexpected opponents on the road. They are probably flying before a detachment of troops who had previous information of their intended raid. We hope to place them between two fires, and have done, for a while at least, with these inveterate foes."

It was only then that I learnt that the Spanish corps sent to Texas to drive us out of Camp Asylum had been employed after our voluntary retreat in tracking the *Indios bravos* who infested the Spanish frontiers. The expedition of the Comanches and Apaches toward the Rio del Norte and the valley of New Mexico had been reported to the general, who had sent part of his troops to protect the points that expected to be attacked, and the other part to destroy the chief settlement of the Comanches, now known to be defenceless.*

* Marvellous bravery ! conduct truly worthy of a Christian and civilized nation !—TRANSL. NOTE,

This manœuvre of the Spanish general was perfectly successful for the nonce, as I afterward learnt. The Comanches and Apaches were thoroughly defeated that time; but the expedition consisted of a very small part of the two nations, and, far from taking their defeat as a warning, they only burned the more for a signal vengeance. They bravely took the field again soon after, and their reprisals were as bloody as the provocation. Who can blame them for it?

For my part, I accepted the Spanish colonel's offer, and secured two good horses from among the spoils captured by the dragoons, to whom I paid a reasonable equivalent for the animals. Gournay and I started with the prisoners and their escort. The two commanding officers, a lieutenant, and one prisoner, were the only ones of the party that were mounted. I kept close to them, and their conversation, which was not devoid of interest, whiled away the time on this tedious, slow march. Our days were very short, and we halted often. I was happy to be enabled sometimes to soothe the sufferings of the prisoners and restrain the excesses of the soldiery, and one day I was deputed to

announce to them through Gournay that they would soon be set free.

The Comanches, notwithstanding their ill-success, had managed to capture many prisoners. Finding themselves hotly pursued by the Spaniards, they decided to massacre the captives, but the Spanish commandant sent them word that he had in his power many prisoners of their nation, and that if they agreed to an exchange, hostilities would be suspended. After some hesitation, the Comanches yielded, and the treaty was concluded. The captain commanding our escort received the news by special messenger, and Gournay and I were chosen to take the good tidings to the prisoners. The poor Indians fell at our feet, and could not do enough to show us their gratitude. The lieutenant turned back the next day to escort the prisoners to the spot where the exchange was to take place, while the captain and the rest of the soldiers continued their road to the South. When we had reached the spot where to the best of my recollection I had parted from my comrades, the captain told me that we were not far from Louisiana, and that if I liked to pay a guide to lead us as far

as Natchitoches, one of his men would undertake to guide us. I was glad to accept his offer, so we shook hands and said God-speed to the Spaniards.

CHAPTER X.

WE REACH THE FRONTIERS OF LOUISIANA—
AN UNEXPECTED MEETING—A CARAVAN OF
AMERICAN EMIGRANTS—I MEET THE TOURNEL
FAMILY AND MONSIEUR COLLIN—NEW SCHEME
FOR COLONIZING TEXAS.

I WAS in high spirits, happy in having recovered my freedom, and in the thought of soon reaching a country where, instead of the life of the wilderness, I should see that of the farm and of civilization. I should be able soon to correspond with my friends. Gournay, however, took no share in my enthusiasm, and looked back sadly and fondly on the vast unpeopled prairie which he had crossed and recrossed for so many years, where he had experienced so many different emotions, and which now he might never see again; for the dear fellow had clung to me as if I had been a long-lost and recently-recovered son, whom he

had sworn never to leave as long as I should allow him to stay with me.

In all his long, adventurous life, Gournay had never attached himself to a human being, and this sudden affection for a stranger was quite extraordinary. It only proves that the isolation in which he had lived so long had not stifled natural affection in his heart, and that it wanted but an opportunity to blossom forth freely and fully. I was strangely touched by his uncommon devotion, and easily promised him that, as long as he still liked me, we should never live apart.

“Oh! at that rate,” he said, “I shall stay with you till I die; but never fear that I shall be a burden to you,” he added, after a few moments’ thought. “The old trapper,” he said in a whisper, that the guide might not hear him, “knows plenty of ways by which to provide for himself without costing another man any thing. Besides, it will not be for long; his joints are stiffer than of old, his sight is weaker, and the day is nigh when he will have to give up his accounts to the Great Spirit, as the Indians say.”

“Come, now, Father Gournay,” I said, “put

away those melancholy thoughts. You are hearty enough yet, and I hope we shall have many a hunt together in the future."

"Oh! yes, I may be able to hunt, as they do in civilized countries, with dogs, who pull down your game for you, or bring it right under your nose! I may be able to shoot a few hares and partridges; but that is not what I call hunting. For my part, to chase the buffalo, the elk, or the grizzly bear over the wide prairie, to set traps for the beavers on the shores of the great lakes, to cross mountains and forests, and spend whole months on the trail of the big game right into their furthest retreats—that is what *I* call hunting—real hunting; and I fear," he added, with a pathetic sigh, "that I shall never be fit for it again."

The time seemed less tedious as we spoke of the past and the future, and we had already crossed the frontier of Texas and entered Louisiana before I had noticed any change in the scenery. Everlasting plains before and behind, with nothing to break the monotony but herds of deer and antelope fleeing swiftly from our approach.

After one day's march on Louisiana terri-

tory, we began to meet a few settlers, then to pass plantations of various kinds, then farms and villages. The road was better and more distinguishable, and we were able to dismiss our guide. Toward evening we knocked at the door of a rather nice-looking house on the right of the road, and begged for hospitality. The owners welcomed us with great courtesy, for no people on earth are so thoroughly hospitable as the Louisianians. The husband was an American, a Mr. Brown; his wife was a French creole of New Orleans, and we felt at home with her directly. Gournay's queer costume excited the children's laughter at first; but I had no sooner explained my own story and my meeting with him, than they welcomed him as cordially as myself.

I slept that night in an excellent bed, a thing that had not happened to me ever since I left Baltimore, and slept soundly till Gournay came on the morrow to wake me up. We were to start early, so as to reach Natchitoches the same day. I had dismissed the guide, as he was on foot, and would only have delayed us, wishing as we did to press forward with our horses. Mr. Brown accompanied us

part of the way on horseback, and told us, when he turned back, that about twenty miles further we should find a delightful valley, where he advised us to make our mid-day halt.

We pressed forward, and after four hours' ride reached a little hill, whence we had a view of the valley which Mr. Brown had mentioned. But what was my astonishment to find in this place, which I expected would be a complete solitude, a town, or rather a camp, covering both shores of a pretty stream that flowed through the valley. Numerous tents were pitched along the shore, large covered wagons drawn up behind the tents, and herds of oxen and horses feeding near by, while slender smoke columns rose here and there, giving indications of as many impromptu kitchens in this city of tents. A crowd of negroes were gathered a little way off under a grove of poplars, where they were dancing with all their might. Their merry voices and the sound of their instruments the wind wafted across to us when we stood on the hill, while a few white men, coolly dressed in linen or nankeen, and with large straw hats, were standing by, cigar in mouth, watching the grotesque

dance. I hastened forward to enjoy this unaccustomed sight. Gournay said to me :

“ It is a caravan of American emigrants ; I have often met such in the western prairies.”

“ I am not sorry to have met one, too,” I answered. “ It must be very interesting,” and so saying I spurred forward and approached a group of men, who, having seen our horses, had stopped in apparent expectation of our greeting them. I drew near, took off my hat, and began to speak, when I was suddenly interrupted by the exclamation :

“ Good heavens ! It’s Captain ——, unless it’s his ghost.”

I glanced at the man who had just spoken, and who came forward with outstretched hands toward me. It was now my turn to exclaim.

“ What ! is this you, my dear Collin ?”

I jumped off my horse and rushed into his arms. After our first transport, Collin said :

“ So you are not dead after all ! We all thought you must have been devoured by cannibals or wild beasts ! How did you manage to escape ?”

“ I will tell you presently, but it is a long story.”

The other men stood round us in silence, watching this scene with the liveliest interest. One of them made a sign to Collin, who then took my hand, and, turning to his friends said :

“Allow me, gentlemen, to introduce my friend, Monsieur ——, formerly a captain in Napoleon’s army, then a settler in Texas, whom we all believed dead, and of whom you have often heard Monsieur Tournel and myself speak.”

He then named the gentlemen to me ; among them was Stephen Austin, of Missouri, whom I shall soon have to mention again. Having gone through this ceremony of introduction, as indispensable to the Anglo-American mind in the wilderness as in the drawing-room, I found Collin’s companions as full of courtesy as if they had been old friends welcoming me after a long absence. We all took the direction of the camp, while Gournay saw to the horses. As soon as the eagerness of my new friends allowed me to whisper a word to Collin, I said to him :

“You mentioned Monsieur Tournel just now. Is it long since you have seen him ?”

“Not more than an hour,” he replied, with a smile.

“An hour! Then he must be here! Take me to him at once.”

“We are on the road to him, but I wanted to surprise you, and now, by my inconsiderate speech, I let the cat out of the bag.”

“Let us make haste; I am so eager to see him again.”

“I believe we shall not have far to go, for I see him coming toward us as if to meet us.”

We were by him in an instant, and Collin said, addressing him:

“Let us see if you will know this truant again.”

Monsieur Tournel gazed at me for several minutes, then cried, in a heartfelt voice:

“Yes, I know him well, though he is sadly changed.”

And he opened his arms and took me to his heart like a father. I was so overcome that I could do nothing but take his hands and press them convulsively. As soon as I grew quieter I asked him after his family.

“They are all well,” he said, “but you shall judge for yourself presently.”

“What! is it possible Madame Tournel is here?”

“Certainly, and so are all the children except William, who stayed in Baltimore with his uncle to keep up our business.”

“And how is it that we thus meet in the midst of the wilderness, a thousand miles at least from your home?”

“I see that you do not yet understand the American character. We think nothing of any distance, but this would involve too long an explanation just now. Let us go to my wife, who was so sure of your death that she actually had masses said for the repose of your soul. We will have a talk later on.”

He took me to a commodious tent, which was his temporary home. Madame Tournel and the children greeted me with as much delight as astonishment. After the first few chaotic moments of mutual rejoicing, I had to tell my story from beginning to end. When I had done, I repeated my former question to Monsieur Tournel.

“Well, this is the beginning,” he said, “of the plan I often spoke of before, and which I should have undertaken in your company had

the scheme of General Lallemand seemed to me one likely to succeed. We are on our way to found a colony in Texas, only we have taken all the precautions and the means which your former chiefs neglected to take. It may be—it often is so in these cases—that their mistakes have made us wise, and shown us the true way of setting about our plan. When I say *our* plan, I must explain. I did not take the initiative in this undertaking, and even when I wrote to you that I had not given up all hope of settling in Texas, some day, I still looked upon that hope as a golden dream not likely to be realized. But it *was* realized just when I least expected it was to come to any thing. Mr. Moses Austin, of Missouri, the father of the young man who was with Collin when he met you, had the same hopes as I had, but, unlike me, he did not only make plans but he executed them. They are now in a fair way of becoming a prosperous reality. As soon as he heard of the treaty between the United States and Spain concerning the vexed question of the possession of Texas, he addressed a petition to the Court of Madrid for leave to collect from various States of the Union three hundred

Catholic families, to whom the Spanish Government was to grant suitable lands for the formation of an agricultural colony. Spain was quite willing to do so, and the only condition was that the new settlers were to be in *all* cases Catholics. Mr. Moses Austin went off at once to choose the place for the future settlement, while his son took a journey through Louisiana, Florida, the Carolinas, Virginia, and Maryland, collecting recruits, or rather partners, to assist in his father's scheme. Falling in with our friend Collin, he easily persuaded him to join, and Collin mentioned me, so that when Mr. Stephen Austin came to Baltimore he at once entered into negotiations with me. I knew his father by reputation, and knew that he had successfully worked both mines and plantations in his native State of Missouri, and also in Louisiana, and that he had proved his talent for organization in all these undertakings. Having carefully examined his plans and means of executing them, I saw that his scheme, so silently and unostentatiously begun, and so thoroughly lawful in all its details, had every chance of success. I did not hesitate to join my for-

tunes to his, and many heads of families, as you see, have done the same, and have started with us for the Promised Land."

"And can not I join you also?" I asked.

"How can you ask?" cried Monsieur Tournel. "Of course that is settled. Indeed, it was settled in my mind from the beginning, for, in spite of all rumors, I never believed that you were dead, and kept hoping against hope that some day I should see you again. When the report of your death reached Baltimore, the French consul proposed to draw your money from the bank for the use of your heirs, as he said, but I opposed him, as your *locum tenens*, declaring that you was not dead, and that until valid proof of your death should be adduced I should insist upon your money remaining in the bank. We had to go to law about it, but the verdict was in my favor, and your money quietly remained in the bank safes, whence you can draw it whenever you please, plus the interest accumulated since your departure."

"Many thanks, my dear friend," I answered; "but I think no time is as good as the present for drawing it, since I do not wish to enter into partnership with you empty-handed."

CHAPTER XI.

I JOIN THE EMIGRANTS, AND RETURN WITH THEM TO TEXAS—OUR SETTLEMENT ON THE RIO BRAZOS—THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE—THE PROSPERITY OF TEXAS.

OUR dispositions were soon taken. Monsieur Tournel introduced me to the rest of the emigrants, who welcomed me most heartily. We had a banquet that evening in honor of my admission to the society of the emigrants ; then followed a "tea," and a kind of improvised ball, for many of our companions, like Monsieur Tournel, had brought their wives and families with them. We broke up camp the following day, and once more I took the road toward Texas.

Old Gournay was delighted to return to his beloved solitudes. It was with many a sore misgiving that he had consented to follow me to a civilized country, where he feared that I meant to settle for good and all ; but now that

he was again going to see the country of his choice, where he could still sometimes hunt the buffalo or the elk, he seemed to feel at least ten years younger. Of course it may be supposed that in my history of my sojourn among the Indians the old Canadian had figured somewhat prominently, and from this day forward he became the special object of Madame Tournel and her children's solicitude. She called him her countryman, which flattered him immensely; and, not to be behindhand, he assured her that his grandfather had lived long in Acadia before he had settled in Upper Canada. And, in truth, certain ways of speaking, and their unmistakable Norman accent, betrayed the common origin of old Gournay and Madame Tournel.

Our progress was necessarily but slow, as we had such an immense train of possessions; we scarcely got over more than twenty or twenty-five miles a day, and every Sunday, and sometimes once a week besides, we made a whole day's halt. It was quite a month since I had met the caravan, when at last we reached the shores of the Rio Brazos; where Mr. Moses Austin was awaiting us, and where he had al-

ready mapped out our new settlement. Here we were, therefore, once more permanently domiciled, and though we had some rough days to get through, our perseverance was at length crowned with full success.

Not long after our arrival I married Eleanor, Monsieur Tournel's eldest daughter, whom I had first known at Baltimore as a girl of fourteen. This union strengthened the filial affection with which I had from the beginning regarded Monsieur and Madame Tournel. Collin's plantation was next to ours, and we worked both in common under the superintendence of my father-in-law and Collin, and the help of the latter's eldest son, who, as well as myself, soon learnt all that we needed to perfect us in our new calling. Many of our neighbor's plantations suffered from the inroads of the Indians during the first years of our colony. Our own always escaped, thanks to Gournay's inexhaustible vigilance. We called him our keeper-in-chief, and his services were really valuable; he often protected us from the Comanches' stratagems, or plainly intimated to them that it was in their interests to keep the peace with us. As

years went on, two of Monsieur Collin's daughters married Monsieur Tournel's two youngest sons, so that our families were, as it were, merged into one, whose amicable relations have since contributed powerfully to our continued prosperity.

We had the misfortune, some time after the settlement of the colony, to lose our head and founder, Mr. Moses Austin, but his sons, John and Stephen, bravely continued his work with that energy and perseverance which are always infallibly rewarded with success. We had hardly settled in Texas before Mexico definitively shook off the Spanish yoke and proclaimed their independence. The new government confirmed the grants made by the Spaniards to Mr. Austin, and new colonists from the United States soon came to swell our numbers or to people other parts of Texas. When Mexico constituted itself a republic, according to the pattern of the United States, Texas was not thought strong enough yet to become a separate State, so it was joined to the province of Chohahuila, and re-baptized the State of *Chohahuila-y-Texas*.

Before six years had gone by, our settlements

had prospered so well and our population had so rapidly increased that Texas was thrice as densely peopled as the province of Chohahuila, to which we had been annexed. We then claimed to be erected an independent State, but Mexico, instead of admitting us to her confederation, resorted to violence to force us to remain subservient to Chohahuila, or rather the government, as if ashamed of its fears, tried by stratagem to destroy our young colony. Under different pretexts, several small detachments of troops were sent into Texas, until, unknown to the Texans themselves, the strongest positions of the State were all in the hands of Mexican garrisons. The exactions of the Mexican authorities grew worse and worse, and excited such universal discontent that an open revolt soon broke out.

In the early part of the year 1832 a hundred and seventeen colonists took up arms, and, under the direction of John Austin, carried the fort of Velasco. Not long after, the colonists of Nacogdoches attacked the fort of that name, took it, and drove out the Mexican garrison. By the end of the year not a single Mexican soldier remained on Texan territory. Then we

held a convention in the rising city of San Felipe de-Austin, and drew up a petition to the Mexican Government, demanding separation from the State of Chohahuila. General Stephen Austin went to Mexico to present the petition and open negotiations. The negotiations lingered, and the General left Mexico for Texas. He was arrested when not a hundred miles from Mexico, taken back to the city and thrown into prison, where he remained till 1835. He was then restored to freedom because he was not supposed to be either sufficiently energetic to direct an insurrection, or influential enough to stop it.

His return to our midst, his calm and firm resolve, filled us all with strength and confidence. A general assembly met at San Felipe, and in eleven days determined upon all the measures necessary for the defence of the country. A solemn declaration was adopted, in which were set forth, in grave and well-weighed words, the grounds upon which the Texan people took up arms. Stephen Austin was sent to the United States to claim the help of the American Government, and the command of the troops was entrusted to

Samuel Houston, who chose me for his aide-de-camp.

The campaign was opened by one of those acts of heroic bravery which drive a nation wild with enthusiasm, and thus make it capable of the greatest victories.

The town of Bejar was in the hands of the Mexican general Cos, who had under him a garrison of fifteen hundred veterans. The Texans besieged him, but finding, after several ineffectual attempts, that they lacked the necessary war material with which to reduce a town defended by so numerous and well-disciplined a garrison, they determined to raise the siege. Just then one of those men whose heroism rises superior to all obstacles came forward and promised that if three hundred of his countrymen would stand by him to the death, he would engage to storm the town. This man was the intrepid Milans, whose bravery had already made him famous and popular. Three hundred men at once joined the forlorn hope, and with their help, Milans made good his promise. The town was taken by storm, even the citadel capitulated, and General Cos, with his fifteen hundred Mexicans, marched out past

Milans' victorious handful of men, half of whom had paid for their daring with their lives. Milans himself had found death in the midst of his glorious triumph. The Texans call him their Leonidas, and, in honor of his bravery, one of the thirty-two counties forming their Republic was called after him.

The Mexican president, Santa Anna, was greatly mortified at this insult offered the Mexican arms, and anxious to take signal vengeance for it, he entered the Texan territory on the 21st of February, at the head of an army of six thousand men, divided into three corps. Upon this the Texans again called a convention at Washington, on the Rio Brazos, and unanimously proclaimed Texan independence.

Santa Anna, in the meanwhile, attacked Bejar and retook the city from a garrison of a hundred and eighty men, who were all massacred in the *Alamo* fort, after having, during the siege, killed no less than fifteen hundred Mexicans.

“Another such *victory*, and we are undone!” Santa Anna was known to have said on this occasion. But these words were still more applicable in the case of the siege of Goliad,

for this town having capitulated after a prolonged and honorable resistance, Santa Anna, who was then at Bejar, treacherously broke the treaty, and ordered a wholesale massacre of the prisoners to the number of four hundred.

This horrible treachery aroused anew the courage of the colonists, and while Santa Anna thought us demoralized and unable to offer any resistance should he overrun our country, Houston's army suddenly confronted him on the plains of San Jacinto, on the 20th of April, 1836. Santa Anna, who had effected a junction with Cos, purposed to give us battle the next day; but we advanced to meet him, marching in the midst of a dead silence. When we got within a few hundred yards of the enemy, General Houston shouted: "Friends, remember *Alamo!*"

With this cry of vengeance a murderous fire was poured upon the Mexican troops, who gave way at once, and before they could rally we were upon them on all sides, charging them with our bayonets. The carnage was awful. In eighteen minutes we were masters of all the enemy's baggage, standards, and artill-

lery. Half the Mexican army remained on the field of battle. The other half laid down their arms.

Though I have seen many a fight during the seven years of my service under the Empire, I had never witnessed such wild excitement. I felt twenty years younger. Our Texans were real heroes, and what is most wonderful in this feat of a handful of volunteers, and proves that the enemy did not try to resist us, is the fact that we had only two soldiers killed and twenty-three wounded.

Santa Anna had fled at the beginning of the fight. He was found, the next day, hiding in the tall prairie grass. He humbly kissed the hand of the poor soldier who found him, and tried to bribe the others with unlimited gifts of gold and jewels. He wept when they resisted his offers, and when he was carried before Houston, he said to him, significantly :

“ You were born for great things ; you have conquered the *Napoleon of the West*.”

His conscience smote him about the massacre of Goliad, and he feared to be called to account for it, but still, from policy or from pity, General Houston promised to protect him.

Such was the war that assured Texan independence.

The victory of San Jacinto endowed Houston with a popularity that eclipsed that of Stephen Austin, the founder of Texan self-government, and he was elected president of the Republic in September, 1836, and his name was given to a city which was intended to become the capital of the Republic. The United States at once recognized Texas as an independent Republic. France followed their example in 1839: so did England, Holland, and Belgium.

In 1846, however, Texas voluntarily became a State of the Union, and this change in its destiny has materially contributed to increase its prosperity. The same applies to our settlement, founded by my friends Tournel and Collin, although we had our share of the losses and annoyances inseparable from such settlements in the first years of their existence. One of these losses was the death of Monsieur Tournel, my father-in-law, which took place a few days after the declaration of independence. And since misfortunes never come single, we soon had to mourn the death of Monsieur Collin, so that I was left alone in charge of the

plantations. Notwithstanding the experience I had gained in the management of the estate, the task would have been beyond my own personal powers had I not been assisted by my brother-in-law, Monsieur Collin's son-in-law. My eldest son was soon able to help, too, and for the last ten years has entirely taken my place.

I am now living like a country gentleman in a pretty house which I built on the banks of the Rio Brazos. My wife watches over the education of our grandchildren and our own younger children, for my eldest son is already married and the father of a family. My mother-in-law, Madame Tournel, though very aged, is still strong and healthy, and helps my wife to take care of the young people. We often talk of her countryman, dear old Gournay, whom she was very fond of, and who died about twenty years ago, leaving all his possessions to Madame Tournel, on condition that she would have masses said for the repose of his soul. The good old man's worldly possessions were more than any one had an idea of. They consisted of a little leather bag, from which he never parted, and which was found after his death to be full of gold dust, gathered during

his forty years' roving commerce, and valued at nearly five hundred dollars.

Madame Tournel, who by her kind advice had succeeded in winning the old trapper back to his religious duties and belief, and had caused him to receive the last sacraments before his death, accepted the legacy and minutely fulfilled the old man's wishes.

One of my mother-in-law's chief grievances during the first years of our settlement in Texas was the absence of any priest in our neighborhood. To hear mass it was necessary to undertake a long, and often dangerous, journey to San Antonio de Béjar, or Nacogdoches, the only two places where there were resident priests. Of course the injunction to bring our best Catholic families into Texas only held good for the first batch of colonists. Those who joined us since, from the States, belong to all the various sects of the Union. At last, after the declaration of independence, a body of French Lazarist missionaries settled near us. It was a great comfort to us all, especially to my wife and mother-in-law. I say to us all, because I had long wished seriously to speak to a priest. I had never forgotten the sermons I had heard

long ago in Baltimore, and since my marriage my wife and her mother had strongly urged me to practice the religion in which I had been born, but to which I had been heretofore as a stranger.

I happened to be in Houston in July, 1839, for the meeting of Congress, of which I was a member, when the two first French missionaries arrived. They were joyfully welcome, and one of them preached in the Capitol, in the Hall of Representatives, before both Houses of Congress. His discourse, which lasted an hour and a half, was generally liked, even by those of opposite beliefs. I went to see him after the sermon, and when he heard that I was a Catholic and a Frenchman, the good missionary embraced me with tears, and said:

“You are doubly my brother, then.”

It was he who heard my confession, and I should have been glad to keep him with us but his affairs made his presence necessary in New Orleans. I took him home, however, and he spent two days with us, where he was welcomed as a father returning to the bosom of his family. Other missionaries have come to Texas since then.

Galveston has been made a suffragan See of the Archbishopric of New Orleans, but the number of apostolic laborers is still very far from proportionate to the extent of the diocese, which is nearly as large as the whole of France, and has a large Catholic population, scattered in every direction.

We have built a chapel on our plantation, and every Sunday and holiday a French priest comes to say mass for our French and Catholic colony, for three or four other planters, our neighbors, are Lousiianians of French extraction, and our united families, though entirely Texan in sympathy, still retain a tender reverence for our mother country.

For my part, I could not bear to die before seeing France again, especially when I learnt that the Empire had been re-established, and the eagle, under whose auspices I had fought, again reinstated on our military standard. Now, that this wish of my heart has been fulfilled, I am on the point of returning to my new home, where I hope to end my days in peace in the bosom of my family.

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