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L I F E

OF THE

NOTORIOUS DESPERADO

Cullen Baker,

FROM HIS CHILDHOOD TO HIS DEATH,

WITH A FULL ACCOUNT OF ALL THE
MURDERS HE COMMITTED.

THOS. ORR, Editor.

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Life of Cullen Baker.

CHAPTER I.

BIRTH OF CULLEN BAKER—BIRTH AND MARRIAGE OF HIS MOTHER—HIS FATHER REMOVES TO TEXAS AND SETTLES AT SPANISH BLUFFS, ON RED RIVER—ROSE AND POTTER RULE THE COUNTRY—DEATH OF ROSE AND POTTER—CULLEN'S FATHER REMOVES TO SULPHUR COUNTY—CULLEN'S FIRST FIGHT, HE WHIPS A BOY AT MILL.

CULLEN MONTGOMERY BAKER, the great man slayer, Federal fighter and negro killer, of the south-west, and, indeed, the unsurpassed desperado of modern times, was born in Weekley County, Tennessee, on the 22nd day of June, 1835. His mother, who was a descendant of one of the best families in Tennessee, was born and raised near the town of Winchester, Franklin County. She was married in 1832, at the age of 19, to John Baker, Cullen's father, and gave birth to seven children—three boys and four girls. The oldest, Mahala, a highly respected woman, is the second wife of Mathew Powell, a much esteemed citizen of Davis county, Texas.

Cullen was the second child and oldest son. During his infancy nothing of any extraordinary note occurred which would be of interest to the general reader. We will be contented with picturing him as a lovely child, fondling around a pious mother who never dreamed that her helpless babe would become the great arch-demon of the sunny south.

For four years Cullen was a resident of the State of Tennessee, during which time he was kindly nourished by the best of parents, whose whole desire was to see their child an ornament to the country. In the latter part of 1839 John Baker, like many others, began to plan his fortunes in the

far west, and soon took up the line of march for the rich Red river country, in the blooming State of Texas. In consequence of the very inferior traveling facilities, it was not until late in the season that they arrived at Spanish Bluffs, Bowie county, Texas.

The line of their march to the far west might be pictured with many interesting scenes. But the family will be represented as traveling in a very ordinary style,—no railway cars, no costly vehicles, no flow'ry decked steamboats, were seen transporting the humble family to its western home, but a small wagon drawn by an inferior team served the purpose of conveying the family, together with their goods and chattels. Late in the month of December they succeeded in reaching the western shore of Red river, which country at that time was almost an entire wilderness. The deep forests abounded in many wild and voracious beasts that were not afraid of being seen by human beings.

At that time but few settlers had ventured to peril their lives in a country which had so recently been evacuated by the savage Indians, and still under the control of one or the other of two powerful parties, known as the Regulators and Moderators. The origin of these parties might be traced back a few years and found to have originated from the capricious desires of two western heroes—Potter and Rose. The former being a great tyrant, though a pretended lover of peace, was the first to raise a band under the pretext of keeping the country in quiet submission; but his futile acts were so aversive to the desires of a moral, though contumacious people, that other armed forces were soon seen parading the dense forests in pursuit of their enemies, the former party. For weeks and months these smaller parties were seen to hover in secret and remote places, seeking opportunities to combat the more powerful party known as the Regulators, headed by Potter.

The smaller parties soon organized themselves into a command known as the Moderators, headed by Rose.

Each chieftain sallied forth over the sparsely inhabited country of north-eastern Texas with a band of several dozen at his command. Occasionally the rivals would meet in general combat, when a brief, though sanguinary fight, would ensue. Soon one or the other party would quit the scene of action to seek a hiding place, or perhaps to encounter a weaker branch of the enemy's outfit, which by accident may have been lingering in some remote portion of the country, partly for plunder and partly to shun a general engagement which was contemplated between those fearless and blood-thirsty chieftains.

Within the short space of a few years the unsettled condition of the country and the insatiable thirst for human blood placed a large portion of the citizens of the Red river country, either directly or indirectly, under the command of one these tyrants. The old, the young, and the middle aged, were alike subject to the maltreatment of an armed and lawless force, which had enlisted for various purposes—some for the mistaken purpose of avenging wrong, others for plunder and profit, and not a few because of their inability to resist a powerful foe.

While the excitement of partyism was running extremely high, and the terror of the parties was extending to every portion of the inhabited country, a bloody conflict ensued between the unscrupulous rivals, which resulted in the death of Potter, Chief of the Regulators, and almost a complete annihilation of his party. But the few survivors, with renewed energy and a determined spirit, gathered together the fragments of their once powerful band and began operations against a greatly superior force, which terminated with the capture of the latter and remaining chief and the death of several of his men.

The country was now rid of two powerful tyrants, who had kept the citizens in terror for years, and they having no special successors, their forces were scattered to the four winds of the earth, and the country was permitted to breathe free and live in peace once more, rejoicing at the happy thought that the weapons of a relentless foe had fallen to molder in the dust.

Cullen was yet too young to take part with any public affair, but was noted for his shrewd, quick-witted and noticeable character, which far surpassed that of other boys who were growing up to manhood with him. He possessed a natural relish for frontier life, and usually devoted his leisure hours in the forest with no other companion than his favorite rifle, pursuing various species of wild game which was found in almost any portion of the Red river country.

Cullen's father, after remaining at Spanish Bluffs a few years, removed some forty miles, in a Southern direction, and settled on the South bank of the Sulphur Fork of Red river, a few miles west of the Arkansas line, in a County then known as Cass, now known as Davis.

Cullen's parents were very lenient toward him in his younger days, consequently his opportunities for sporting and gaming were unsurpassed by any boys of his age. At the time of his father's removal to the Sulphur country, Cullen might be pictured as a delicate, sallow-faced and independent looking chap, contented with the part of a suit

of very inferior apparel, barely sufficient to hide his nakedness; scarcely ever known to wear either coat or shoes except in the coldest of weather, and then they were usually made of the roughest material, and a coarse woolen hat, to retard the progress of the penetrating rays of a meridian sun, which had given him light and life for about half a score of years.

Soon after the family arrived in Cass County, Texas, Cullen's father had occasion to send to mill, Cullen being a boy of great courage, and always ready to go abroad, was dispatched on the errand. When he arrived at the mill in a more than ordinarily coarse garb, several boys about his size began to chirp around him in a most sportive manner, observing very carefully and speaking rather abruptly of his indifferent suit. He very carelessly observed their rude and unrefined manner of introducing themselves until they began to select one of their heroes to raise a difficulty with the rustic backwoods-man, and as quick as lightning, and without any warning, Cullen sprung with great fury upon their most robust chap and gave him an unwarrantable flogging. Ever after this, Cullen was known among the boys of the neighborhood as the master spirit of his age, always remembering and repaying homages done him by his companions, and never forgetting to retaliate for injuries received from his associates; always ready with both purse and hands, if perchance he should have a few pence, to extend assistance to a distressed friend, and with an arm forever raised against those who had the misfortune of doing him an imaginary wrong.

His mother was among the most pious of women, a devoted member of the Presbyterian Church, always whispering good advice into the ears of a beloved son, whose heart had become dumb to her soft and motherly language, as the hearts of the antediluvians were to the divine preachings of Father Noah. No pains were ever spared by her to endow her son with that love of knowledge and truth which would distinguish him from the unlearned countryman; but no knowledge could be stored where the faculties were permitted to stray away upon present enjoyment, no worthy motives in view for the future, no ladder of science to be climbed, no given point of refinement to be reached, all love for the natural arts were passed and forgotten as rapidly as the wings of time would glide him into the future. Sometimes his father would intrust him to the care of an instructor, but it was of very little practical advantage, except in penmanship, for which he appeared to possess a natural talent.

But that beautiful harmony of sounds peculiar to orthography, and the many rules and examples which have been so accurately prepared by eminent scholars to facilitate the progress of education, could never be learned by him. Those pleasant rules, which are so indispensable to a good elocutionist, banished before his memory as the feeble dew shrinks and melts into vapor before the beaming rays of a summer's sun. No persuasion by either teacher or parents, no rehearsal of anecdotes of the rise and progress of learned and distinguished men, could ever arouse his memory or brighten his ideas upon the subject of the importance of an education. But, to the contrary, his thoughts were running afar off in some remote region, tracing the wild deer, the buffalo or the panther, through his meandering path, and, in his imagination, creeping through some dense forest, or awaiting at some well known pass-way, for the approach of some monster, that he might gain the reputation of being the noted marksman of the age.

He would not only permit his imagination to stray away off after the unseen objects, but would himself quit the silent abode of his father's house and wander away into the solitary regions, surrounded by nature's own productions, where the fowls of the air were heard to whistle their wild notes to the listening trees and echoing hills, where nature lives through all its wanton wildness, cautiously, though rapidly, would he glide along through the underbrush, seeking some remote prominence, or a marked and solitary spot, where he could prostrate himself upon the green carth, where he could enjoy nature's purest smiles and sleep a dreamless night, till the full dawn of another day. He did not thus wander away as did Socrates, Frier or Sir Isaac Newton, to improve himself in the art of proper articulation, to watch the various movements of the bodies which compose the planetary system, or to gain a more accurate knowledge of the laws of attraction and demonstrate the great and fundamental principles by which bodies are drawn in contact with each other, but to be alone in solitary amusement, to shut himself out from the finite world, and to be the retired subject of a strange, mysterious and retired life. To Cullen's imagination the view appeared sublime, like giant castles with lofty towers. The feelings of danger would never steal upon him as he cast his eyes toward the wild forest. The mightyners of nature and the grandeur of her works could never humble his heart. The half-finished black bear fled at his approach, only stopping at a distance to look back, and then redouble his steps.

CHAPTER II.

CULLEN GROWS DISSIPATED, QUARRELS AND FIGHTS WITH HIS COMPANIONS—HE MARRIES MISS JANE PETTY—REFORMS TO SOME EXTENT—GROWS WORSE AGAIN—KILLS MR. BAILY.

A few more years and we view Cullen Baker passing from boyhood to the riper years of maturity. He may now be pictured as a stalwart lad of sixteen with but little refinement of manners, barely surpassing the unlettered rustic of the torrid regions of South America. He was desirous of being regarded as the hero of his settlement, and he had so far gained this title that every boy in his neighborhood had learned to shun him through fear.

About the time now represented, 1851, two small villages had sprung up within a few miles of Cullen's father's house, by some merchants, and named respectively Courtland and Forest Home. For several years they served as places of resort and public amusement for those who were fond of sporting, and among that class of people Cullen was one of their most frequent visitors. At an early age he learned to imbibe too freely that deadly poison which has been the ruin of thousands of the human race. He was never so busily engaged that he could not lay aside his business for a few hours sport at either of these places, no matter how important the neglected business might be.

So well skilled was he in the art of sporting that very few of his comrades were ever known to surpass him in any game. He was marked as the unsurpassed rifleman of his neighborhood, and the most successful hunter of his age.

He did not change his boyish freaks as he grew into riper years of maturity, but might still have been seen wearing his copperas homespun suit hanging carelessly about him, supported by a single suspender connected with his pants by pegs instead of buttons, not from any neglect on the part of his mother or sisters, for they never failed to do their duty, but from a strange and natural desire to be odd, with a slouch hat, coat and shoes, if the weather required them, usually composed his clothing even at the age which he is now represented.

By the time Cullen had become eighteen years of age, he had grown exceedingly quarrelsome and disagreeable, even with his old associates, with whom he would have difficulties.

On a certain occasion while on a spree at Forest Home, he turned his part of the fun to an old gentleman, who by acci-

dent happened to be the unfortunate victim of his sport. After harrassing the old man in every perceivable manner, merely for his own sport, he procured a rod, some say, "with a bug on the end of it," and undertook to drive the old man home. At first the crowd was greatly amused at the idea of a boy driving an old man from town. But Cullen was not easily discouraged; the blood flashed to his face, his temper rose beyond his control, his eyes flashed like fire, and the harsh words streamed from his mouth in sentences too imperative to be misunderstood. His actions showed that he was in earnest, and the by-standers twisted their faces into different shapes when they saw him begin to force his subject to strike a trot, and allow him to neither accelerate nor retard his motion, but to keep up a continuous and uniform movement of his feet while he was catching his horse and preparing to leave town. His disposition was so well known by all his acquaintances that none dared to approach him upon the subject of his maltreatment of the old gentleman, for fear of sharing the same or perhaps a worse fate.

A short time after the above difficulty occurred he got into a row with some of the most fearless and intrepid subjects of the country, and a general fight ensued. Several persons were engaged on either side; knives, pistols and tomahawks were drawn; the cry of "victory or death" might have been heard from various parts of the enraged crowd; the clashing of knives and the firing of pistols broke forth upon the silence of an evening twilight, and caused the cry of murder to be heard in the surrounding country.

Cullen, by accident, happened to get his man singled off to himself, and was pelting him on every side. About the time Cullen was going to abandon his subject and shout over his victory, or perhaps assist a friend to subdue a foe, he was suddenly surprised at being attacked by a stalwart double-fisted representative of the human race who had just conquered his man, and seeing Cullen's success he determined to make it a dear thing, and bounding upon him like a hawk upon a chicken, and after clubbing him for some time like a giant would a boy, he seized a tomahawk which had been twisted from some poor wretches hand and gave Cullen a blow upon the head which brought him almost lifeless to the ground, where he remained, bleeding very freely, until the fight was over, when his friends removed him to a neighboring house where he received the necessary domestic and medical attention. In a few weeks he was again able to be up, but it was several months before his wounds were entirely cured.

During his affliction his past life and disorderly conduct

weighed heavily upon his mind—the many dangers he had barely escaped were brought fresh upon his memory, and he was not long in deciding that like Obidah he had taken the wrong path in the morning of his life, and was being led far into the dismal deserts of an unprofitable existence, and to retrace his steps was impossible; but, perhaps, thought he, there may be a kind of by-way which will finally lead into the right path, and when once found should never be forsaken.

After prostrating himself and commending his case to the God of Troubles and Affliction, (for he had hitherto known no other), he determined to look out for a new and plainer path. For a time the shackles of tyranny and heroism were thrown aside, his parents were proud to see him abandon the company of such characters as had long been his delight, and seek new associates from the better families of the country. Early in the month of January, 1854, he was married to Miss Jane Petty, a young lady, seventeen years of age, with whom he had been acquainted many years. His parents being exceedingly well pleased with his choice took great pains to settle him in life. For eight months after his marriage he lived a quiet and peaceable life. His head, which was bandaged at the time he was married, from wounds received a few months before, had by this time entirely healed.

Just at the time when his friends and the best people of the country were beginning to have unbounded confidence in his reformation, he began to forget his solemn vows, to keep bad company, and visit places of amusement. It was not long before he was again engaged in other difficulties. He met his old associates at Forest Home, and he soon became quarrelsome and dissipated. He endeavored to carry his point with that vim of power which placed him in a position to be a strong friend or a deadly foe to every one with whom he was acquainted.

On a certain occasion, when at Forest Home, under the influence of intoxicating spirits, in order to show his unsurpassed power over the human race, he alternately mounted old men and boys and made them carry him through the street, pecking them upon the head with a knife or pistol, and guided them by his own command. So great was their fear of him that none dared to oppose him, but would quietly submit to his will until his desires (for he had no conscience) were fully gratified, when they were permitted by him to go in peace.

It was not long before he got into another and a very serious difficulty with an orphan boy by the name of Stallcup. In the month of August, 1854, he met the boy in Forest

Home, when he took down a leather whip from Mr. Moore's store and whipped the boy, not only severely, but unmercifully, in the presence of several persons, many of whom are still living and can testify to the fact. Some parties being highly displeas'd with this outrage persuaded the boy to have him arrested and arraigned before the civil authorities; which the boy did with the assistance of some of the leading characters of the country. Others, who viewed the future more care'fully, and fearing that bad enough would be made worse, persuaded the boy to withdraw his suit and leave the settlement until Cullen's anger was cooled down; which the boy promised to do; but others who believed in a strict enforcement of the law, begged him to prosecute the case and have the accused brought to justice.

When the day of trial came on several witnesses, who had been previously summoned, appeared at the court house, and among them was Mr. Baily, a highly esteemed citizen, an aged man, and the head of a large family. He was brought upon the stand as a witness against the defendant, and gave in his testimony accordingly.

After the court adjourned Mr. Baily returned home, and was soon busily engaged about his domestic affairs, perhaps not thinking anything about the case which had been on hand that day. But Cullen did not so easily forget it. The determination to seek revenge was weighing heavily upon his mind, and if he could not obtain it from one source he would from another.

About one hour after Mr. Baily arrived home Cullen rode up to him in the lot where he was feeding his horses, for it was then twilight, and accosted the old gentleman, telling him that he was going to shoot him. This declaration alarmed the family and caused the wife and children to run out of the house to see what was the matter. Mr. Baily having no chance to get away, placed himself behind a small post for protection, and begged Cullen not to shoot him. Cullen told him he did not intend to kill him, he only wanted to shoot him in the legs to see him jump, and ordered him to step from behind the post and submit to the sentence which had been passed against him; and upon Mr. Baily's refusal to do as he was ordered, Cullen threatened to shoot him through the head.

This threat brought Mr. Baily from behind the post, and placed him in full view of the villian, who raised his fowling-piece with as much solicitude as if he had been going to shoot a beef; and with great accuracy discharged a double-load of shot and ball, which lodged in the lower extremities of his poor victim, who fell prostrated upon the ground.

in the midst of his distressed family. Mr Baily's son, who happened to arrive in the yard about that time, and seeing the disaster, ran into the house and procured a gun, but upon his return to the scene of action, he found that Cullen Baker had fled, leaving behind him a sack of meal which he was taking home.

The young man followed some distance, but he being a foot and Cullen a horse-back, the latter gained on him so fast that he soon abandoned the pursuit, and returned home to take care of his father whom he found mortally wounded, and knowing that he could not live long remained at home and waited on him till he died, which was only two or three days after he was shot. which occurred October 8th, 1854.

As soon as Mr Baily was buried, his son procured the services of a friend and started in search of Cullen who was still in the settlement, keeping himself concealed; but upon learning that Mr Baily was dead and he was being pursued, he left the country and traveled westward, followed by the parties before mentioned.

They traveled for several days and finally arrived in the same settlement where Cullen was stopping, but upon hearing of his pursuers he left, without leaving any track or trail by which he could be followed. And thus ended the conquest.

CHAPTER III.

CULLEN RETURNS AND TAKES HIS WIFE TO PERRY COUNTY, ARKANSAS,—SHE DIES JULY, 2ND, 1860,—HE KILLS MR. WARTHAM—MARRIES HIS SECOND WIFE—ENTERS THE CONFEDERATE ARMY—KILLS A NEGRO WOMAN IN SEVIER COUNTY—KILLS A NEGRO BOY IN LAFAYETTE COUNTY—KILLS A NEGRO MAN IN LITTLE ROCK—LEAVES LITTLE ROCK, AND IS CAPTURED BY THE JAYHAWKERS—HE BECOMES ONE OF THEIR NUMBER.

Cullen did not return home until the fall of 1856, having been absent about two years, during which time none of the family, nor any one else in the neighborhood, knew anything of his whereabouts, though it was generally supposed that he remained in North-west Texas during the entire time. As soon as he arrived in the old settlement again the authorities were in pursuit of him, but did not succeed in arresting him, for he left the country very soon and fled to parts unknown.

After another absence of two years he returned home again, took his wife and went to Perry County, Arkansas, where (as it was afterwards ascertained) he remained during the second two years of his absence. It was not even at this time publicly known where he was, the greater portion of the community was still in ignorance as to his place of destination. He and his wife lived in Perry County about one and a half years, when the latter died, leaving an only child, a daughter, about three years of age. According to the record obtained, she died July 2nd, 1860.

Soon after she was buried, Cullen took his daughter and returned to the Sulphur country, and left her with Mr. Hubbard Petty, her grandfather, who was living near Line Ferry. As soon as he got rid of his daughter he returned to Perry County, where he became connected with some very serious difficulties. On a certain occasion he got drunk and went to Mr. Wartham's with the intention of whipping Mrs. Wartham, but upon arriving at the house he found no person at home, and supposing the lady, the object of his search, to be at his uncle's, Thomas Young, he proceeded to go there, procuring several good switches on the way. When he arrived at Mr. Young's he found the lady standing on the gallery, and stepping up to her he plainly intimated his business. Her husband, Mr. Wartham, who was in the yard, a few paces from the gallery, hearing his threats, informed him that he could not whip his wife without first whipping him, and immediately started to his wife's assistance. When Mr. Wartham arrived on the edge of the gallery, Cullen pushed him off, telling him that he might as well be quiet, for he intended to whip his wife at all hazards. Mr. Wartham being a resolute, though quiet and well-disposed, gentleman, mounted the gallery the second time in defense of his wife, but was again pushed to the ground with a drawn pistol at his breast. When the pistol was drawn the family scattered, Mr. Johnson and wife started to the opposite side of the house, while Mr. Young's daughter, who was grown, took the children, her brothers and sisters, and left the place. Mrs. Wartham ran into the house, Cullen returned his pistol to the scabbard and pursued her, with a full determination to punish her severely. Her husband followed them into the house, still trying to protect his wife, he seized Cullen just when he was beginning to whip her, and being a stouter man than Cullen held him, and would not allow him to strike her any more, telling Cullen that he did not wish to hurt him, he only asked him to abandon his evil intentions and leave the place.

Cullen would not agree to leave without whipping the lady;

he struggled and tried to get loose ; he also made an effort to get his pistol again, but Mr. Wartham being the stouter man would not allow him to have it. After a considerable contest, Cullen remembered a dirk which had been carefully concealed about his body, and his enemy not suspecting danger from any other source endeavored only to keep him from obtaining his pistol. As soon as an opportunity favored, he drew the deadly weapon from its resting place, and, in an instant, with all the power that he could command drove the blade into the body of his antagonist.

The point entered his vitals. The laws of nature are fixed and death was inevitable. His hands let loose the strong grip upon Cullen's body, and fell motionless by his side, the blood gushed from the wound in a stream too large to be subdued, his eyes were sunk in their sockets, and death stared him in the face. He ran out of the house and fell dead upon the ground.

The civil authorities were informed of this outrage, and used every means in their power to arrest him and have him brought to justice, but it all amounted to nothing, he was on the alert, and to take him when he was aware of their intentions was almost impossible. As soon as he could partially arrange his individual matters, he left Perry County, Arkansas, and returned to his old home in Cass County, Texas.

This was more than six years after the murder of Baily, whose family and relations had scattered abroad, and Cullen was permitted to remain in the country where he had committed such an outrage without being molested by either civil officers or private citizens. For about two years he lived a very quiet, peaceable and industrious life. He frequently spoke of his past career, which he called his misfortunes, in a light that would have caused the most obstinate hearts to sympathize with him. During this time, the civil portion of his life, he associated with the better class of people, and had to some extent gained their confidence and esteem.

About the first of July, 1862, Cullen was married to his second wife, Miss Martha Foster, oldest daughter of William and Elizabeth Foster.

Soon after this, his second marriage, he entered the ranks of the Confederate army as a private soldier, and it is from this period that the second great era of his life was commenced. The author of the *Days Doings*, in romancing upon the bloody deeds of this noted and mysterious subject, represents his character from boyhood to the fatal hour when grim-visaged war stalked into our country, as being unexceptioned; but a careful perusal of the preceding pages, the

correctness of which is beyond doubt, thows a different coloring upon his earlier life. He further adds, "when the shrill trumpet sounded to arms the braves of the south, Cullen Baker fired by a true patriotic devotion to the land of his birth, forsook the pursuits of civil life, and promptly shouldered his musket in the ranks, side by side with the young men who grown up to manhood with him," The date of his entering the army, will plainly convince the intelligent reader, that it was the "Conscript Act," and no love for his bleeding and bed-ridden country that forced him into ranks.

Cullen, very bravely, marched with his command to the city of Little Rock, when he began to "play out," as the soldiers expressed it, when a man commenced trying for details, or failed to work well in ranks. Neither did he bother himself much about details, when he wanted to leave the command he mounted his horse and rode away in the presence of his officers.

He went home several times during the year; after remaining there a few days he would return to the command and report for duty, without being molested.

On a certain occasion, while in Sevier County, and on his way home from Little Rock, he met some emigrants that were travelling in a wagon, and among them was a negress whose looks he did not much admire, and without any hesitation or threats, he raised his gun and shot her dead, and rode away, leaving her in the wagon where he killed her, without making any apologies to her master, who was greatly mortified at his loss. Cullen, fearing that he would be pursued, rode all the following night; he swam Little River, Red River and Sulphur, arriving at home by sun-up the next morning.

Cullen did not return to the army any more, but remained at home and made a crop that year, which was 1863. Early in the summer he became offended at a negro boy belonging to the estate of Ira Pugh, and according to the dictates of his passions, he went to Mr. Walters, where the boy was employed, caught and tied him, and proceeded to the forest to get some hickories to whip him. While he was gone the negro unloosed himself and ran away. When Cullen returned to where he left him tied he was not there, but could be seen in the distance making tracks as fast as possible. Cullen drew his pistol and shot at him three or four times, but without any effect; he could not hit him, neither could he make him come back, consequently he was forced to abandon the pursuit and return home, acknowledging that he had been completely out-generated.

Mr. Walters fearing that Cullen would attack the negro again, took him across Sulphur into another settlement.

and left him in the care of a relative. It was not long before Cullen heard where he was gone, and started in pursuit of him. When he arrived in the settlement where the negro was stopping, he inquired about him, and upon learning where he was employed, started there in great haste. Just before arriving at the house he saw the negro and a white boy coming along the road, driving an ox-wagon. As soon as the negro saw Cullen and recognized him, he dismounted from the wagon and ran into the woods. Cullen followed close at his heels, and as soon as he overtook him he shot six balls into his body, leaving him upon the ground a mangled corpse.

During the fall and winter the enrolling officers got after the conscripts so closely, that Cullen and several others were forced into Sulphur bottom to keep from being captured and put into the army. He kept himself concealed for several months without being discovered by either the authorities or the cavalry, and the latter were riding day and night in search of deserters and conscripts. Cullen roughed it out until the spring of 1864, when he was pursued so closely that he was forced to leave the country or be captured, and of course he chose the former.

In the month of March he mounted his black steed, with a supply of arms and ammunition, bid the little Confederacy adieu, and bravely rode through the enemies' lines to Little Rock, which was in possession of the Federal authorities. When he arrived there he took the oath of allegiance, and got employment as overseer of freedmen. Soon after he commenced business in his new sphere of life, he became offended at one of the negroes under his care, and without any consideration he drew a six-shooter and shot the negro dead. Knowing that the Federal authorities would attend to his case if he remained there, he took advantage of the first opportunity to leave, which was between dark and daylight. He went directly to his uncle, Thomas Young, in Perry County, the same identical place where he killed Mr. Wartham a few years before.

One day shortly after his arrival in Perry County, while he was riding out with his uncle, they were suddenly and unexpectedly overhauled by a military squad, styling themselves "Independent Rangers." Cullen was accused by them of being a Federal, and it was not without much pleading that he escaped being shot. They guarded him very closely for several days, when he concluded to enlist with them and become one of their number, to which the captain consented and had him duly initiated, but he was closely watched for sometime, and not permitted to be absent from the company without an attendant, whose duty was to watch him lest he might take fright and run away. But he was so punctual and attentive that all fears

of his escape were quickly forgotten, and he was soon acknowledged by them as being their most successful jayhawker. It is far beyond the power of man to record the many bloody deeds committed by him during the few months that he remained with this lawless band. He was so well pleased with his new situation that nothing could induce him to leave the command. His desire for plunder had grown so great that home and all its enjoyments were soon forgotten.

CHAPTER IV.

CULLEN MURDERS SOME PARTIES ON SALINE RIVER—KILLS SEVERAL PERSONS—CAPTURES AN IMMENSE BOOTY—STARTS SOUTH WITH HIS PRIZE—IS PURSUED—PROPERTY RETAKEN—RETURNS TO DAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS—STARTS AGAIN FOR THE MOUNTAINS—CULLEN'S WIFE GOES TO PERRY COUNTY IN SEARCH OF HER HUSBAND—THEY RETURN TO LAFAYETTE COUNTY AFTER THE SURRENDER—CULLEN RETURNS PROPERTY TAKEN BY HIS CONFEDERATES.

About the month of October, 1864, several persons left Perry County to emigrate south in order to get out of the jayhawking country. When Cullen heard that they were leaving he took a squad and pursued them to Saline River, and reached the bank as they were embarking to cross. He hailed the leader and ordered him to surrender. He refused to do it, at the same time demanding his authority for stopping him upon the highway. Cullen drew his authority from his scabbard and shot him dead in the boat. The others surrendered, were marched back and most brutally murdered.

This, and a few other brutish exploits, gained Cullen a reputation that placed him at the head of the command, the principal object of which was to plunder, capture and confiscate property and persons, regardless of politics, race, color or previous condition. Every man who owned a good mule, or a fat horse was a Union man, so-called, or a "secesh," as the case might be, for they were either according to circumstances.

Soon after the great massacre just spoken of, Cullen with a small squad of men, whose characters were far below any comparison, most of whom are now dead, captured and killed five or six of the best citizens of that country, after which they burned their houses and drove innocent women and children from their homes late in the fall when the frost had stripped the forest of its green foliage.

and left the poor victims without any shelter from the bleak storms that so frequently visit the mountainous portion of the south-west, not allowing them even to take a second suit of clothing made by their own fair hands.

When the thieves succeeded in killing or driving from their homes the best citizens of the country, they captured all the wagons, mules and other stock that they could find, and after loading them with various kinds of goods, chattels and produce, besides a quantity of clothing belonging to women and children that had fled to the woods for safety. They started with all their immense stores and rich spoils to the south, known by them as the land of Dixie.

The caravan with all its luxuries moved to the south as rapidly as circumstances and the condition of the country would admit, scarcely stopping to camp at night. But soon the rear-guard and pickets brought in the unwelcome intelligence that they were being pursued by a strong and superior force, and would, in all probability, be overtaken. Knowing their inability to stand a general engagement, which would be likely to ensue if they failed to surrender or return the property, the thieves made use of the first opportunity to save themselves. They did not consult long what course to pursue. They were so panic-stricken that they fled in various directions, leaving the mules and wagons, with all their immense stores to be retaken by the proper owners, carrying off only such goods as they could hastily pack on their saddle-horses. The affrighted party traveled in various directions, some north, some south, some east, and some west, almost regardless of roads, every man endeavoring to get out of that country where thieves were no longer permitted to remain.

Cullen, with three or four companions, set out for the Sulphur country. They arrived in the old settlement where Cullen was raised, within a few days. It was now Davis County, instead of Cass, the name having been changed during the rebellion. Shortly after their arrival in Texas the news of their conduct followed them. When Mathew Powel, Cullen's brother-in-law, heard of his crimes in the mountains, as that portion of the country was commonly designated where Cullen operated, he was so completely disgusted with him that he determined to sever all connection with him and his notorious clan; and remarked that "Cullen would be a disgrace to him and all his connection." When Cullen heard of this remark he threatened to "throw a chunk of lead against his old bald head."

Mr. Powell fortified himself and awaited an attack, well prepared to defend himself against a score or more of his cowardly associates. Cullen's stay in Davis and La Fayette Counties was brief and unpleasant. He visited only the

most remote and obscure portions of the country; his conduct did not meet the approval of his old neighbors; he received a cordial welcome from none, except a few of his scouting associates. Cullen returned to the mountains again about the month of December, 1864, and made an effort to reorganize his old command, but did not succeed until January or February, 1865. About this time Cullen's wife, who was still living with her father near Line Ferry, heard that her husband had been captured and taken to Little Rock, where he would be court-martialed, and in all probability shot. She was a determined and resolute woman, under nineteen years of age, and in fine health. Her education was quite limited, but her natural facilities and unsurpassed demeanor placed her high in the circle of female accomplishments. She did not stay at home and mourn over the sad condition of her unfortunate husband, as many women of better means and far greater traveling facilities would have done, but mounted a favorite animal, one of the swiftest since the days of Claude Duval's bonnie Black Bess, and left her father's house on the 5th of February, telling her mother that she was going to a neighboring house to spend the night. The evening was cloudy and cold; the sky was already overwhelmed with vaporous clouds that threatened to pour out torrents of rain almost instantly. To prevent any suspicions of her intentions, she wore a suit of very ordinary homespun clothes, and, owing to the inclemency of the weather, which, no doubt, she had an eye to, her mother advised her to take her cloak to which she very readily consented. As soon as she was out of sight of her father's house she could no longer yield to what she knew to be her parent's wishes, but permitted the volcano of love for her husband to send forth its lava in such fullness, that she could no longer remain at home with the thought that her husband was in a Federal prison awaiting his trial for murder. With one gentle movement of the reins she turned her steed in the direction of Little Rock, and within half an hour she was swiftly gliding through the wild and pathless deserts of Sulphur bottom. The forked lightning was beginning to flash in every direction, followed by loud peals of thunder, which appeared to change the elements into nothing but fire and noise. Many a woman of far more experience would have declined the trip, and endeavored to retrace her steps to her father's house for shelter, while she pushed forward through the angry storm and beating rain, although night had already overtaken her, and she was yet several miles from any habitation. It was not until a late hour that she stopped for refreshment and sleep. Very early next morning she directed her course towards Centre Point, where she had some friends who could probably give her some

information about her unfortunate husband. But upon arriving at Centre Point she could not learn anything about him except that he passed through there a few weeks before on his way to the mountains to reorganize his command. She was not yet satisfied to return without further information from her husband, and supposing that Mr. Young, who resided in Perry County, might know more about him she started for his house. By this time the rain had ceased, or rather turned into a violent snow-storm, and she was compelled to travel over a deserted and desolated country for many miles, which had been laid waste by one or the other of the contending armies, and the remaining spoils taken by a band of thieves and jayhawkers. Nothing but cold and desolation stared her in the face; but she pushed forward with renewed energy and a determined spirit. Nothing could daunt her undertaking. For thirty-six hours she traveled without being able to obtain any refreshments for either herself or horse; when night came on with all its gloom, and in a strange land she tied her favorite animal to a post and consigned herself to the frozen earth, which was covered with snow, with no bedding except her cloak and saddle-blanket, which she spread upon the ground by a pine-knot fire which she had made, and carefully guarded herself and horse until morning when she again proceeded on her journey. A few more days' ride brought her to Mr. Young's, in Perry County, a distance of over two hundred miles from her father's house, and here she heard from Cullen, and to her great satisfaction he was in the immediate neighborhood, and had never been captured by the authorities.

When Cullen came to his uncle's and saw his wife, he was much displeased at her coming, and remarked to her in the presence of the family: "I wish you had been so sick when you started that you could not move hand or foot, and maybe you would have stayed at home, where you ought to be." She told him to let her have a horse and she would return, but he would not consent to it. She remained at Mr. Young's several months while Cullen was scouting through the mountains. He partially reorganized his command during the latter part of the winter, and in the spring made several raids upon other scouting parties, and frequently attacked the outposts of the main armies. Several of his best men, according to his own account, were either captured or killed during the spring campaign, but he still commanded a force sufficient to stand his ground.

Shortly after the army of the trans-Mississippi department surrendered, Cullen and his wife then mounted their horses and rode to their homes on the Sulphur, a distance of two hundred miles. A few days after Cullen arrived at

home some of his associates returned to their homes in Davis County, having been lost from the command several weeks.

About the month of July, 1865, Cullen was going to Jefferson, Texas, in company with some of his neighbors, when he met some of his mountain companions who were driving some horses and cattle. He did not question them about the stock, but supposing that they had been duly captured, he rode on without making any inquiry. When he arrived at Mrs. Drew's farm, near Jefferson, he stopped for some purpose, when he was informed that some parties had that very morning taken several head of stock from the farm, calling themselves Cullen Baker, but some members of the family being personally acquainted with Cullen contended that he was not with the party; and when Cullen himself rode up he was instantly recognized, and very readily informed of the outrage that had been committed upon them by the highway robbers, styling themselves Cullen Baker. Cullen expressed himself displeaséd with their conduct, and promised to see that the property was returned, for which services the proprietors agreed to compensate him well. Pleased with the prospect of a liberal reward, and a chance to regain his character to some extent, he went immediately to the rogues, took the property in possession, cursed them for stealing on his credit, and returned it to the proper owners.

This act gained Cullen a reputation that was not easily broken down. It was so contradictory to his former acts that many people were forced to stop and reflect whether or not it was the same Cullen Baker, whose daring deeds and insatiable thirst for human blood had gained him such a notoriety in the south-west. But, perhaps, some think he is not so bad as represented; if the truth could go abroad with all its flowery comments, he might be a generous man. But not so: this is the same identical Cullen Baker, whose lawless acts have, for more than a half score years, gained him an appellation as imperishable as time.

CHAPTER V.

CULLEN ENDEAVORS TO ESTABLISH A FERRY AT MUSH ISLAND, BUT FAILS—HE MOVES TO LIXE FERRY—HIS SECOND WIFE DIES—HE TRIES TO MARRY AGAIN—HAS A DIFFICULTY WITH THOS. ORR—STEALS TWO CHAIRS FROM A SCHOOL-HOUSE—A COMMITTEE VISITS HIM TO KNOW HIS FUTURE INTENTIONS.

Late in the fall of 1865, Cullen moved on Mush Island, a body of land entirely surrounded by the waters of Sulphur.

which lies some ten miles above Line Ferry. He endeavored to establish a ferry at that point, but was soon taken sick and gave up the undertaking as a bad job, and returned with his wife to Mr. Foster's, where they remained until about January 10th, 1866, when they removed to Line Ferry, a distance of four miles in low water, and took charge of the ferry at that place.

About the first of March following Cullen's wife died, after a short illness, and was buried in the family graveyard near their residence. In that grave he appeared to bury his senses, his reason, and his remaining respect for the human race. A few weeks after her death he dressed her in effigy, and stood the figure upon the floor in his house. It represented his wife so perfectly that his neighbors, upon first beholding the image, almost sank under the astonishment and fear that the grave had opened and the dead come to live. And it was some time before his neighbors could induce him to take it down.

Two months and seven days after his wife died he visited Mr. Foster, and proposed marriage to his sister-in-law, Miss Bell Foster, a girl sixteen years of age. No sooner was the proposition made than it was rejected by her, and this was the beginning and the end of their courtship. A full chapter might be written upon his conduct and treatment of his second wife; however that will be omitted, but if parents ever rejoiced at the death of their child; it must have been when Cullen's wife died.

About the first of June, Thomas Orr, a young man who was boarding with Mr. Foster and teaching school in the settlement, had occasion to cross the Sulphur at Line Ferry. He had been stopping at Mr. Foster's about four months, having gone into that neighborhood at Cullen Baker's request about the last of January, while he was prospecting for a school. Cullen Baker and Thomas Orr had met on several occasions, at various times and places, since their first acquaintance, which the latter represents in his card concerning the difficulties between himself and that noted character, as being January 26, 1866. He further states that Cullen treated him with great kindness, for a stranger, requesting him to come and stay with him when not otherwise employed. On the second day of June, Thomas Orr rode up to the south bank of Sulphur, at Line Ferry, for the purpose of crossing. Cullen being absent, having gone to a grocery that morning, John Herring and freedman who were in his employ, came to the boat landing to ferry him across. The boat had not got more than half across when Cullen arrived on the north bank with a jug of whiskey, minus what he had already consumed, and waited there till the boat landed, when he asked Thomas Orr to drink with him, which he very kindly refused, and

upon further solicitation to drink he told his friend (for such he considered him) that he never used it, which Cullen very well knew, but wanted an excuse for a difficulty. He tried to force him to drink with him, but did not succeed. He then accused him of talking about him, telling him that he had heard of his saying that he did not like whisky, nor any one who drank it. Orr denied using the latter expression, and demanded of Cullen his authority, which he refused to give, but said in very angry terms that he had it from a reliable source, and knew it to be so, at the same time seizing his antagonist by the throat and throwing him upon the ground, telling him he had said it and he would make him acknowledge it. The contest continued for several minutes, and Cullen was getting the best of it, for he was a large, stout, healthy man, while his opponent was exactly the reverse, with the additional misfortune of a deformity of the right hand, caused by rheumatism, which rendered it almost useless; but he did not make him acknowledge to what he knew to be false, though he afterwards boasted of making him own it, but Mr. Herring, who was present, tells a different tale which is universally believed to be correct. After a considerable tussel Cullen struck Orr on the head with a pine limb which brought him to the ground, Cullen ran aboard the boat and rowed away, leaving his victim on the bank of Sulphur bleeding. But he soon recovered, mounted his steed, the same little bay mare that Cullen's wife rode to the mountains, then belonging to Mr. Foster, and went to Dr. Oats' where he had his wounds dressed and received the necessary medical attention. His feelings concerning a difficulty so unnecessary as that was cannot easily be imagined. He was a stranger in the country, having been there but a few months, and during that time kept close at his occupation, making but few acquaintances outside of his school dominion. Previous to this time he knew nothing of Cullen's character as a desperado, but soon the history of this noted character was opened to him, and many hidden things brought to light. No wonder he should tremble at the thoughts of being an enemy to a person who was but little better than the great arch-demon of the infernal regions. He was astonished at a civil community for allowing such an outlaw to reside among them. But after hearing of all his midnight assassinations and unscrupulous outrages upon innocent women and children, he was not willing to leave the subject thus unsettled, and without even knowing why the difficulty occurred. He procured a pistol with the intention of returning by the same route, but was persuaded by friends to return by a different ferry. About one month after the

unfortunate affair, Cullen Baker and Lee Barnes went to the school-house where Thomas Orr was teaching. Cullen demanded the amount of ferryage due him, which he did not wait to receive at the time of their difficulty. After receiving the money he used a great deal of very abusive language, telling the teacher in the presence of the school that he had told three thousand lies about their difficulty, and if he heard of his telling any more he might leave the country or prepare for death, and if he ever caught him on the mare again he would "shoot his head off smooth with his shoulders."

As soon as this occurred, two young men, George Couch and John Nichols, who professed great friendship toward Cullen, quit school and went to live with him. He had for some time been persuading them to quit school but did not succeed until he had a difficulty with the teacher, and, perhaps, made them believe that he would either kill him or drive him from the country.

Toward the latter part of July the following letter was received, per George Couch, and is given *verbatim et literatim*.

LINE FERRY, ARK., July 20, 1866.

THOAS ORR SIR If you Wish to Teach your School you had bitter Bea At It every Day I here of you Beeing fishing My Lad you Don't No that my Gizzard is Grinding on Dam Lies that you told over the River Dont Let me here of you Beaing Absent from that School Any more for It Is all that I Can Do to keep from giving you another & good call & if I find one thing to Bee So you May Look for me I am Sir yours as Mad as Hell till Death.

CULLEN M. BAKER.

Thoas Orr at Home I Dont Want the friendship Any one that you Can turn Against me.

Govner Orr at Home.

Many persons were once very fond of boasting on Cullen's scholarship, representing him as being a man of great refinement, a good scholar, with great business qualifications; but the above letter, which is a true copy of the original, does not display more genius than two well-bred lawyers ought to possess. By this time Cullen's conduct had become so desperate, that civil and well disposed citizens could not stand it any longer. The justice of the peace was consulted but to no effect, for none dared approach him upon the subject of his conduct. The good citizens of the country and patrons of the school assembled in mass, and began to devise some plan to settle his conduct or his person, they did not care much which. But a single individual opposed harsh means, an old and much esteemed gentleman, whose head

was blossoming for the grave; and strange as it may appear, but none the less true, that he was the first one of that assembly who fell a victim to this unscrupulous murderer. Perhaps the intercession of a single individual spared the life of that noted personage, who lived to murder him who begged for his life.

A committee went to Line Ferry to see him, and to try and get some idea of his future intentions, and intimated to him that the citizens had met *en masse*, and had come to the conclusion not to submit to such conduct any longer. He made some very heavy threats upon being informed of certain transactions, but afterwards became reconciled, and forwarded a note, of which the following is a true copy:

LINE FERRY, ARK., July 27, 1866.

I here By sertify to the Neighbors of Hiett's Bind that I will In No Manner Interrupt Nor Bother one Thos Orr further more I Consider my word as good as any Body's or as good as the word of Jesus Christ I witness my hand.

C. M. BAKER.

The reception of the above had the desired effect upon some parties, while others knew him too well to place any confidence in his promises. Some time afterwards, on a Sunday night, Cullen went to the school-house where his opponent was teaching, and stole two chairs. Some person was with him, but his name is not remembered at present. It was not known who took the chairs until he told it publicly that he was the person, and other parties need not be accused of it.

About the first of August William Foster received per Samuel Couch, one of Cullen's frequent visitors, the following letter:

LINE FERRY, ARK., July 29, 1866.

MR. FOSTER Dear Sir Dear Father as I should say for you have Bin a father to me So has Mrs. Foster Bin a Mother But I Recken you Both have Resind to Bec any more therefore I think It In vain to Ever Look for Either of you here any more and Whereas I have Bin Requested to Inform you of a Matter Concerning some Pills that the Old Man Bevel Requested you to take In Charge some years ago that he had Left with some one Near Bright Star he Wanted you to send the Money for them here to me So he Could get It or Leave Word What you Done about them as he will be here Soon again.

Mr. Foster It Is very hard for me to Bear and how Is It that one Can throw away an old friend for a New one Mrs Foster has surely here tofore held Me as a friend But she is now Laboring under a wide Mistake or Wanting me to put

on that that Dont fit me and wear It In Behalf of that Damd Orr She Cannot think that I am mistaken In a matter of that kind that had such an impression on my Mind as that Did If I had Killed Jesus Christ It would Not Raised half the Excitement this matter has I hope and Pray to Live the ten months out and Keep my Same mind for I am not a Negro Neither am I bound In this Country I No that I am a Liar a Drunkard and a Devil But I never tell Lies on my friends.

the matter Raised Between us the other Day has give Me No Little Trouble But as I sayd In a Note to Orr I dont Want the friendship of any One that he In any manner Can turn against Me I commenced in trouble and End In the same Hoping to see the 15th day of December

C. M. BAKER.

Wm. Foster Hyettes Bend, Arks

The above letters require no comments. A little explanation and reflection will be sufficient, and only a little of the former will be necessary. It appears that in his first difficulty with Mr. Orr he plainly insinuated, though he did not positively say, that Mrs. Foster was the person who informed him of a slanderous report, which the accused denied circulating. When Mrs. Foster went to see him about it, he told her that John Nichols told him of it, when Mr. Foster went to see John Nichols about it, he knew nothing concerning it. He supposed the school to end December 15th, but in this he was mistaken, ten scholastic months from January 28th would end November 2d, the time that the school closed.

CHAPTER VI.

CULLEN BAKER GOES TO MR. FOSTER'S TO KILL THOMAS ORR, BUT FAILS—THOMAS ORR GOES TO DAY'S CREEK BRIDGE TO KILL CULLEN BAKER BUT DOES NOT SUCCEED—CULLEN BAKER VISITS ARKANSAS AND KILLS AND WOUNDS SEVERAL DOGS—CULLEN BAKER KILLS MR. ROWDEN AND SOME FREEDMEN IN DAVIS COUNTY—THE FEDERALS GO IN PURSUIT OF HIM.

Cullen could not wait until December 15th, the time set apart by him, according to the last chapter, to perform his bloody deed; but on November 3d he concluded that his competitor had lived long enough, and he would put an end to his existence. He accordingly armed himself *cap-a-pie*,

and started for Mr. Foster's alone, except his body guard, which consisted of five large mastiffs. On nearing the house he deployed his skirmishers and sent out an advance guard, which consisted of a detail carefully selected from his body guard, while he and the balance of the dogs brought up the rear. When his command was turned into the yard, they surrounded the house in great haste, particularly the pantry and kitchen, closely followed by Cullen, who, after being fully satisfied that his competitor was not at home, proceeded to make diligent search in and about the premises, after which he blowed his horn, called off his dogs and quit the drive without the loss of a single veteran.

School closed the evening before, and Mr. Orr having no further business there, had left that morning and gone to where his services were required. But upon learning what took place on the day previously mentioned, he proceeded to lay his complaint before a justice of the peace, and also the sheriff of the county, and upon being denied assistance by both parties, he hastened to make the best of it that he could. He went to Day's creek bridge, four miles from Line Ferry on the Rond's road, where he expected Cullen would pass about December 30th, on his way to Lewisville to rent Line Ferry. He remained there until the afternoon, when he was discovered by some of Cullen's friends who were going in that direction, and being satisfied that his whereabouts would be made known to Cullen, considered it unnecessary to remain there any longer. Cullen, however, did not hear of it as soon as was expected, and within fifteen minutes after the bridge was evacuated, Cullen crossed on it and went to Mr. Mayes' and spent the night. Early next morning Thomas Orr heard that Cullen was at Mr. Mayes,' and proceeded there expecting to meet him, but he was gone. He told Mr. Mayes' daughter, a young lady whom he was trying to court, that he might be expected there again on Wednesday night; his competitor hearing of it went there and remained until a late hour, but Cullen did not come; he spent the night somewhere else and returned to Line Ferry by a different route. While at Lewisville he undertook to create a disturbance, but not succeeding in this, he got ashamed of himself, went to the grocery, treated the crowd, and then left town.

He failed to get Line Ferry, it being bid off by another party. He threatened to run it anyhow, and went to Linden, Texas, to procure license. He defied any man to bring a boat to that place; but, after due consideration, he concluded that he was laboring under a mistake. It may be he was not as brave as he anticipated; and, perhaps, it might

be as well for him to evacuate Line Ferry and fall back to a more secure place, which he found seven miles in the interior of the great State of Texas.

His competitor, also, backed two or three miles further into the State of Arkansas, and took charge of another school, but never ventured to school, or anywhere else, without a double-barreled gun and a six-shooter; while, on the opposite side, like weapons were carried daily into the farm where he was employed. Shortly after his return from Lewisville, and perhaps before he left Line Ferry, one George W. Barron, who had for some time been trying to make himself very conspicuous by professing great friendship for Cullen Baker, took great pains to inform his esteemed confederate of everything that might, perchance, give rise to disorder; and, among them, informed Cullen of his very narrow escape from a conspiracy on or about December 30, 1866. Cullen having far more confidence in his friend than his neighbors had, did not hesitate to believe that every sentence he uttered was as true as Holy Writ. The last spark of kindness that had for years been nourished in his bosom could no longer survive, but was swept away as a lighted taper before a prairie norther, to give place for its more powerful rival, the desires of his passions. He swore vengeance against the race of people that he had so unfortunately become a member of. He was heard to exclaim: "Men have called me bad, but I will show them that I have not done anything compared with what I will do." And, in the rashest of terms, exclaimed: "If I could sink this whole country into hell by stamping upon the ground, I would stamp with all my power, and send it and every living creature, with myself, into the infernal regions." These are only a few of the many similar sentences uttered by him during his spasms of rage. To describe his conduct and manner of demeanor is far beyond the power of man. The greatest display of eloquence could in no manner compete with the conduct of this character, who had long before thrown off the shackles of civil government, and was, to use a western expression, "going it alone."

He had not only severed all his allegiance from the government, but departed from all self-control, giving himself over as a victim to strong drink and the follies of his race. Good citizens were fortifying against him, their houses served them as breastworks, and the cracks they used for port-holes. So desperate was this character becoming that good men feared his company, even dreading to speak of him in the mildest terms lest he might hear of it and become insulted, and visit upon them a most horrible rain of buck and

ball. Many an innocent man could not help his blood running cold at hearing the horrible name of "Cullen Baker."

About April 15th Cullen ventured to make another visit into Arkansas. At a late hour in the night he arrived at Mr. Foster's, and hitching his mule some distance from the house, proceeded into the horse lot on foot. After prowling about among the horses for some time, he was discovered by two large dogs, whose duty it was to keep watch over the horses as well as the house. As soon as the dogs discovered him they brought on an attack, which terminated very unsuccessfully on their part; one of them fell on the field of action from a well aimed shot from his enemy's gun, while nobly defending his master's property. When his companion saw the fatal result he fled from the scene of action, leaving his comrade lifeless upon the field, and seeking refuge under the house awoke his master, whose gruff voice startled the thief from the lot only to secure a safe retreat, from which he might with safety shell the house. In another instant was heard the loud clatter of shot upon the roof, which was barely sufficient to shield the family from destruction, but would not have been had he not been so cowardly as to seek a stand at such a remote distance. After discharging a considerable number of loads at the house, the marks of which may be distinctly seen to this day, he mounted his mule and went to Mrs. Pugh's, and killed her dogs. Not being satisfied with killing dogs, he proceeded to try his pluck upon a lame goose which had not been able to get out of his way. It is unnecessary to add that dumb brutes as well as human beings would shrink from his voice with a kind of instinct, that taught them to avoid such a monster as the greatest pest of modern times. After leaving Mrs. Pugh's he went to Mrs. Smith's, and shot about the house several times, killing one dog and wounding another. He then went to Mrs. Matthews, a very old, infirm and penniless widow, and killed her dog, the only guard she had. From thence he went to Mr. Hooper's, and after killing his dog he left the State for Texas, which was only a few steps from the house.

The next thing worthy of notice is a letter copied from the Jefferson, (Texas,) *Jimplecute*, it fully explains itself:

APRIL 27, 1867.

MR. CULLEN BAKER, SIR: I have written to you before, but have not received any answer. It may be possible that you did not receive the note. I, therefore, embrace the present opportunity of writing again. I suppose, (or at least I have heard,) that you say you have nothing against me. I

would be glad to know that it was a fact. I have also heard that you said you had understood that I had threatened your life. As to your having heard it, of course, I cannot deny, as I am not accountable for lies told by others. All that I can ask for a man to be produced who ever heard me make any such assertion.

It would be a great pleasure to me if our difficulty could be settled, and we were, or could become, as we once were. If I had, or could be convinced, that I have any acknowledgments to make, I would do it with pleasure; but I don't consider that I ever gave you any reason for treating me as you have, and I am not aware of giving you any cause for even being mad at me; besides, I am not apprised of what you got mad about. I want to go over the river occasionally and I have been compelled to put myself to much trouble and inconvenience, and have been deprived of the pleasures and comforts of life to keep out of your presence, and to prevent the execution of what I have feared to be your intentions. I hope to hear from you soon. Yours respectfully.

THOMAS ORR.

It is only necessary to say that the above letter was received, though no answer was ever returned.

About the first of June, 1867, Cullen Baker, in company with a companion of his kind, went to a grocery store on the Jefferson and Line Ferry road; the proprietor, Mr. Rowden, being absent, they demanded the keys from his wife, and went into the store, destroyed and carried off a considerable quantity of goods. When Mr. Rowden returned home and was informed of the misfortune, he went to see the parties, who very willingly agreed to pay the damages which had been assessed against them as soon as they could control the means.

A few nights after this affair Mr. Rowden and family were sitting in their house, when some one called to him from the gate. Mrs. Rowden and daughter recognizing the voice to be that of Cullen Baker, insisted upon the husband and father not to go out, still remembering the harsh language used by him a few days before. Mr. Rowden, who feared no danger, ventured out in spite of their entreaties, and found Cullen Baker standing within a few steps of the door, with a shot-gun in his hand. Cullen immediately accused Mr. Rowden of having spoken disrespectfully of him, and upon his denial of the charge, Cullen raised his gun and shot him in the left side, he then turned around and walked out of the yard, leaving his victim bleeding on the ground; he only lived long enough to tell his family that Cullen Baker was the man who killed him, and no one else need be accused of

it. This is one of his cowardly acts and midnight assassinations that needs no comment; the truth of it is too well known to require another word.

About the same time, perhaps a few days afterwards, Cullen attempted to make some freedmen go and live with some parties, and upon their refusal to comply with his orders he shot them dead.

These lawless acts caused some disturbance among the citizens, who began to devise some plans to capture him. Cullen hearing of this, issued a proclamation, denying the charge alledged against him of killing Rowden, and asserting, further, that he would kill every man who accused him of it. The Federal commander at Jefferson, Texas, seeing that the citizens and civil authorities would not bring him to justice, sent a squad in pursuit of him, which forced him to leave the State to keep from being captured.

CHAPTER VII.

CULLEN RETURNS TO TEXAS—THE CAVALRY STILL PURSUE HIM—CULLEN MEETS THE TROOPS AT PETTY'S FERRY, BUT ESCAPES THEM—HE FOLLOWS THEM TO BOSTON—HAS A FIGHT WITH THEM—HE KILLS ONE MAN, AND RECEIVES A WOUND IN THE ARM—HE LEAVES TOWN WITHOUT BEING CAPTURED.

Cullen Baker returned to the State after a few days, well armed and equipped. He bid defiance to the Federal authorities, and rode over the country *ad libitum*. The Federals traveled from place to place, making diligent search for him, but it was all in vain. He knew all the by-ways and hiding places in Sulphur bottom, he having hunted them out during the late war to keep from being captured by the Confederate troops. It now become necessary for him to return to them to keep from being taken by the Federal cavalry. He did not care anything about roads; his home was in the forest. He camped wherever night overtook him, and tied his horse to a tree, or turned him loose to graze upon the fine grass that clothes the western country in verdure. There, in the wild of Sulphur bottom, he would strike camp by himself, no superior to reverence, no inferior to give orders to; none but himself, perhaps no human being within seven miles of him. Like the illustrious Alexander, he might well have considered himself the sole monarch of all that he surveyed. The lonesome forest, the tall pines and stately oaks:

the thickest of holly, myrtle and bay, as well as the immense amount of brushwood, shrubbery, and pasturage, all appearing to be at his own command, and for his safety and protection from the enemy who sought his whereabouts.

The bare earth served him as a seat instead of a chair, and against the trunk of a tree was his resting place. His rations, which consisted of a luncheon of cold bread and raw meat, or such other scraps of provisions as he could obtain, were hastily devoured by a voracious appetite, without table, plate, knife or fork. After quenching his thirst with the pure and colorless fluid that trickled along the winding brook, or, perhaps, with the muddy and foul water that is found in the filthy ponds of the western forest, and then a big draught of spirits from his canteen, which was rarely ever empty, and his repast was over. Then came a few moments for reflection upon the past, and consideration for the future. As his memory mounted the wings of time and wafted back to former years, he could behold, in his own imagination, the forms and figures of the many victims that he had sent to their graves. The distressing cries of the widows and orphans were ringing in his ears. The blood of his victims, and the tears of the distressed and heart-broken companions of the slain were streaming before him in torrents too plain not to be perceptible.

After these imaginations pass from his mind, and he becomes sensible of his situation, he begins to plan for the future. Perhaps the idea enters his mind that he will abandon the country, and go to a land of safety on other shores; but his craving and blood-thirsty appetite is not satiated—he has not preyed long enough on his fellow beings—there yet remains a few more persons whom he wishes to deprive of life. He has not caused enough of grief, pain and sorrow—he must show his cloven foot a few more times—he must add a few more murders to the many already alledged against him. Now he is far advanced upon the highway of crime, but his thirst for plunder and bloodshed remains unsatisfied; the more depredations he commits the more he becomes discontented. He reflects upon his perilous situation; he is aware that he is in open rebellion against the United States of America—that country which so many nations have tried to overthrow, but have as often failed. Now what conclusions could our hero have drawn from such various basis of operations? Could he for one moment have entertained the idea of trampling the United States government under foot, and planting his flag upon the capitol at Washington; thereby accomplishing what hundreds of thousands of well disciplined soldiers, accompanied by the best generalship in

aginable have failed to do? His conclusions had not, at this time, fully developed themselves, his present intentions were only to escape justice at the option of a military commission, and become more skillful in the pursuit of a lawless life. He is now overwhelmed in the thoughts of his future plans. His mind is greatly troubled, he finds no relief, he concludes to retire for the night; but he has no soft couch to receive him; no, not a cabin to shelter him from the night air and morning dews. A blanket spread upon the naked earth served him as a place of repose, and his saddle or a pine knot was used as a substitute for a pillow. No human being was with him, no one to keep him company, but the lonesome cry of the forest owl, and the shrill noise of the whip-poor-will. No human voice was in hearing; man had retired to his quiet home for refreshment and sleep. The wild animals were now rising from their dens to seek their nightly prey. The lonesome howl of the wolf, and the distressing cry of the panther might have been heard in the distant grove. While every other living creature appeared happy and contented with its lot, he alone must have been miserable. Soon he would fall asleep, but it was only to dream of the many miserable creatures that he had sent to an untimely grave, and the many that he anticipated on sending whenever an opportunity occurred. He cared for nothing but to subdue his foes. He slept with his armor around him; started at every strange noise, and was frequently aroused by the roaring of the wind or the howling of the wild beasts of the forest. Being accustomed to rising early, the light had scarcely broken upon the eastern horizon when he would be on his steed galloping through the woods or seeking a hiding place among the cliffs and ravines that border on the southern bank of Sulphur. For many days and nights he roamed over the wild western forests, fearing to be seen by any one except his best friends. It was rarely that he traveled the public roads for fear of meeting the Federal cavalry, which were traversing the country in all directions. He went to his friends during the night and got rations, or else they would take them to him in the woods.

After spending many days and nights in the swamps, he became bolder and less fearful, and ventured to travel the by-ways and unfrequented roads. He procured the best arms and ammunition the country afforded, and changed horses very often, using none but the best. Always going at full speed, no person dared to halt him or inquire where he was going, or what was his business. Many days passed off and the troops were still scouting the country in pursuit

of him. They knew, or at least supposed, him to be in the country, but they could not find him. The citizens now began to make sport of the soldiers for allowing Cullen Baker to out-general them, but they were not easily discouraged, and continued to scout over the country and to travel the unfrequented paths and settlement roads.

Days and weeks passed away and he became so bold and fearless that he began to travel the public road, and had but little hesitation in intimating his stopping places to his friends, and, indeed, to many persons with whom he was but slightly acquainted. Knowing that a large number of the citizens of the South had a kind of enmity towards the Federal troops, he felt assured that very few, if any, would intimate his whereabouts, but in this he was mistaken. It was not long before a small squad met up with him at Petty's ferry, on the Sulphur. He had been scouting in Bowie county, and was returning to Davis, when he was suddenly overhauled at the place above mentioned by the advance guard of a squad that was in pursuit of him. When the advance guard, which was composed of two or three men, rode up to the ferry-boat, he was there, having just crossed Sulphur. They rode within a few feet of him, and began to engage him in conversation. They asked him his name, he replied "My name is Johnson—what in the hell makes you so particular?" "We thought," said the sergeant, "from your arms and dress that you might be Cullen Baker, the man whom we are in search of." As the last words fell from the sergeant's lips, Cullen raised his gun, leveled it at him and pulled the trigger, expecting to see him fall from his horse a mangled corpse; but he did not fall, neither did the gun fire, the cap only snapped. He still held the loaded gun in his hand, but it was useless to him at that time. Before he could have drawn a pistol from his scabbard they could have shot him dead. Many thoughts rushed into his mind, but they disappeared as rapidly as they entered it. He knew not what to do; death, with all its terrors, was staring him in the face. The only possible chance for escape was by flight, and he was not long in deciding to attempt it, although it would be a narrow escape should he succeed. Scarcely had he lowered his piece when he was seen forcing his way through the undergrowth, which almost seemed to divide itself and make an opening for him at his approach. His adversaries shot at him, but he dodged them and escaped. Soon the scouting party itself came up, and upon learning what had taken place, the troops were deployed and sent in search of the great and daring outlaw, who was now known to be Cullen

Baker. Believing that he would be pursued, he rushed deeper and deeper into the swamp, and did not stop until he had gone several miles. After winding along the southern bank of the Sulphur for a considerable distance, he came to a shallow place that was well known to him, for there were very few places on Sulphur that he was unacquainted with, and pushed into the stream and soon landed in Bowie county again. The troops searched for him in every place that he might possibly have secreted himself, but he was many miles away, laughing how easily he had escaped their clutches. After becoming fully satisfied that he had not stopped in some thicket, as was supposed, they crossed Sulphur and started off in the direction of Boston. Again were Cullen and the Federals on the same side of the river, but neither knew it. Reports say that Cullen also went in the direction of Boston, and coming to a cross-road stopped and secreted himself in the bushes for some unknown purpose; after remaining there a short time he saw the Federal troops coming, and prepared to give them a scare. He had escaped them once, and felt satisfied that he could do it again. When the troops came up to the cross-roads, he shouted in a very imperative tone "Charge them, boys! Charge them!" The troops believing the woods to be full of Cullen's men, did not wait to form a line of battle, but left in great haste, without waiting to see how many they had to fight. After the troops had left the place, Cullen took charge of the battle ground and captured an officer's hat. He had now gained a great victory; his fears had entirely left him, and he had the utmost confidence in himself. He believed he could whip the entire Federal force, and was not satisfied until he gave them another trial. (This legend was circulated only to gain him a character.) He followed the main squad to Boston, and shortly after entering the town was called on to surrender, which he refused to do.

Another opportunity was now presented for him to display his skill and ingenuity. The attack was brought on by a score or more of well-disciplined soldiers, who fired on him several times. Cullen discharged both barrels of his gun at the same time, and then resorted to smaller arms, discharging three or four six-shooters. After driving the Federals from their position, he mounted his mule and left the town. The Federals lost one man killed, and Cullen received a slight wound in the right arm. He fell back a distance of two miles and took another stand. The troops did not follow him, having no idea that he would stop within their jurisdiction.

CHAPTER VIII.

CULLEN CAPTURES A GOVERNMENT WAGON AND TEAM,
AND KILLS THE TEAMSTER—TERRIBLE MASSACRE AT
HOWELL SMITH'S—SEVERAL FREEDMEN KILLED AND
WOUNDED—ONE WHITE MAN KILLED.

The incidents and fights narrated in the last chapter excited the animosity of the Federal officers to such an extent, that they determined to have him regardless of time and expense. A courier was dispatched immediately for reinforcements; they arrived in due time, and were sent abroad into every portion of the country. The news spread from place to place, almost at telegraphic speed, that Cullen Baker had evaded the Federal army and achieved a great victory. His friends, many of whom were much smarter and wiser than he could possibly be, did not spare any time in acquainting the public with his noble and patriotic deeds, as they were wont to call them. But few of his friends hesitated to add a number of fictitious occurrences to his bloody deeds, thereby attempting to justify him in everything that he had ever done. Thousands of southern men who were strong rebels during the late war, still hated the name of Federal, and this many persons conceived to be an excellent thing to lay the foundation and build up an everlasting fame for the great "yankee killer," or "Bowie county hero," as he was frequently called.

The name of Cullen Baker soon sounded throughout the south and west as the only survivor of the "lost cause." He was known as a strong rebel, who had determined not to submit to the powers that be. He was known to the public (beyond the sphere of his personal acquaintances,) as a man of considerable refinement, whose education was scarcely surpassed by any southerner. His judgment, merit and talents were said to be equaled by few and surpassed by none. He was looked upon by the mass of the people as a perfect genius, and his name was becoming a general pass word for the country. Many persons were not contented with merely adding a few fictitious occurrences to his real deeds, but turned from the truth entirely, and circulated many barefaced falsehoods that were not founded on any real facts. A great many of his desperate acts were not generally known, merely because people were afraid to combat public opinion. His numerous host of friends were continually engaged in circulating the many false and romantic deeds that had been attributed to him; they caught at every incident that might possibly add laurels to the name which

he had already achieved in the estimation of persons who had been laboring under erroneous statements regarding his unprincipled career. These were not the only persons who praised the name of the unscrupulous murderer. Many who were personally acquainted with the great arch-demon denounced every evil and ruthless act charged to him, saying they were utterly false, but, at the same time, endeavoring to impress false reports concerning his so-called unstained character, and palm them off on the public as undeniable facts.

His fame was spreading abroad to every portion of the south and west as rapidly as the wings of time could convey it. It was not entirely confined to these limits, for his name was uttered and re-echoed again and again by the inhabitants of almost every State in the Union. It occupied an important place in the leading papers of the country, and did not go unnoticed by the press of the eastern cities. So terrible did he become that troops were ordered from various posts throughout the Union to eastern Texas, to assist in capturing one noted desperado—Cullen M. Baker. But while the troops were assembling, and manœuvring in regular army and battle style, he was cautiously winding his way through the dense forests of Sulphur, reconnoitering the familiar plains and ravines that had so often served him as hiding places in days gone by. So well had he become acquainted with the woods that he could visit any friend or enemy in the night as well as in the day, without traveling the most remote path or being perceived by any person, except those whom he especially desired to see. When he wished to have some provender for his horse he would pay a visit to some neighboring cornfield, and if the proprietor should happen not to be in that part of the farm, he would not go in search of him for fear of disturbing him, but would go calmly into the field, and after procuring a sufficient quantity, would return without leaving the price thereof. A few weeks more and the Federals gave up the chase as fruitless, and returned to Jefferson.

About the 10th of October, 1867, Cullen, in company with a friend, was riding along the Linden and Boston road, when he very suddenly and unexpectedly met a government wagon going in the direction of Boston. After passing by the team he became aware of how easily he might have captured it, and finally decided that it was not yet too late. As quick as thought he turned his horse and started off on his bloody expedition. He got ahead of the wagon, and secreted himself on the roadside. When the wagon came up he fired at the driver, who fell from his mule a mangled corpse. The

guards, which consisted of three or four soldiers, fired at Cullen and then fled, leaving him unhurt, but in possession of a wagon and team loaded with quartermaster and commissary stores. Cullen took his immense stock into Sulphur bottom and kept it concealed. When the guard returned to Jefferson and reported the above facts, a large force was sent in pursuit of him, but returned unsuccessful. The military commander then offered a reward of one thousand dollars for his apprehension.

On several occasions this great arch-demon met persons on the highway who were not acquainted with him personally, and before separating he would inform them who he was, and would frequently show them his wounds to convince them that they were actually in the presence of the great hero of the west, at the sound of whose voice man, the noblest work of creation, would tremble with fear. He appeared to be exceedingly proud of his career, and desired that all should become personally acquainted with him, for at this time he rarely supposed that any person could find any fault with his conduct, though he was almost daily committing depredations of the grossest character.

During the remainder of the autumn he rode over the country unmolested, and spent the greater portion of his time in Arkansas. On Christmas day he went to Bright Star, where he met the most of his associates, besides a large number of young men whom he had never collocated with. He bought several gallons of whiskey, and treated every man to as much as he would drink. After they had become somewhat intoxicated, he led them off in the direction of Sulphur. They arrived at Mr. Howell Smith's about two hours after dark. Mr. Smith had very recently employed a family of freedmen, who were occupying one room of the dwelling until a cabin could be erected. When Cullen and his squad, which numbered two or three dozen persons, arrived at Mr. Smith's, they dismounted, went into the yard, and commenced shooting through an open door at the freedmen who were quietly seated around the fire. After shooting a great many times, killing several freedmen and wounding others severely, Cullen received a flesh wound in the right thigh which brought him to the ground. As he fell he exclaimed: "Charge them, boys! charge them! Kill the last one of them, and set the house on fire!" As the last words fell from his lips the crowd scattered in all directions; some started towards home, others ran off in the opposite direction, some left their horses, some mounted the first horse they came to, some left their hats, others lost them on the way, and many ran into the woods and did not reach

home that night. Only two or three, out of as many dozen, attempted to obey the command. These ran into the room that Mr. Smith and his two daughters were occupying, and commenced beating them with bottles, pistols, clubs or anything that they could get hold of. They made several attempts to shoot the young ladies, but their pistols failed; they finally resorted to their knives, and succeeded in inflicting several desperate wounds upon their persons. They then scattered fire over the floor and on the beds, and ran off, leaving their chief lying in the yard alone and badly wounded. When Cullen found that no one was coming to his assistance, he crawled out of the yard to the hitching post to look for his horse, but no horse was to be seen, some body else had rode him off. Presently he heard a noise in the bushes, and crawling in that direction, found a mule that once belonged to him. He caught it without any difficulty, but was unable to mount. He crawled and led his mule into the yard where the two young ladies, being able to walk only from excitement, were attempting to drag their brutally murdered father from the house that was already submitted to the flames. Cullen accused them of rendering assistance to a negro. This they denied, contending that it was their father, and proposed to get a light to prove it to him. After becoming satisfied that the person was their father, he ordered the girls to assist him in mounting and he would leave them. As he rode off he said to them: "If any of my company come back here to-night, tell them I said not to do you any more harm, but to go over on the sand-hill, for I am going over there to die." He did not stop on the sand-hill but went over to Mr. Foster's, a distance of one mile, and calling him up, told him not to be afraid of him as he was badly wounded and needed assistance. As Mr. Foster helped him into the house, he told him what had occurred at Mr. Smith's, and told him to give them assistance, which he immediately did. When he arrived there he found the dead and wounded negroes in one room, while the greater portion of the bedding and furniture in the other room had already been consumed, and the flames were already rushing up the walls. If water had not been handy and plenty Mr. Foster would not have succeeded in quenching the fire. A few yards from the house, Mr. Smith, an old gentleman who had seen more than sixty winters, was lying prostrate, senseless and almost naked upon the cold earth. The girls were also badly bruised and stabbed several times with knives. No other members of the family were at home, Mrs. Smith and the two small children having gone to spend the night with a married son who lived two miles distant.

A courier was immediately dispatched to Jefferson, Texas, for a Federal scout. Captains Scott and Allen, of Davis county, Texas, raised a volunteer company of citizens to go in pursuit of him. Cullen remained at Mr. Foster's until Saturday morning, about sixty hours after the terrible massacre, when his friends removed him to the woods. On the evening of the same day Capt. Scott arrived in Arkansas with his company of Texans, and was joined by several citizens who went with him in search of Cullen Baker. On the same evening Gen. McGlofin, of the eastern military department of Texas, arrived with his command of regulars; but, through a misunderstanding, a portion of the troops missed their way and went to Bright Star, where they were met by some persons who circulated the news, which reached Cullen in a few hours. The troops and citizens met at Mr. Smith's late in the afternoon. A war-council was now held to determine whether to bring on the attack that night or wait until the morning. It was decided that he could not possibly escape that night, and as the troops and a majority of the citizens were unacquainted with the woods, it would in all probability be best to wait until morning.

CHAPTER IX.

THE FEDERALS AND CITIZENS GO IN SEARCH OF CULLEN BAKER. BUT HE ESCAPES THEM—HE LEAVES THE COUNTRY. BUT RETURNS THE NEXT FALL—HE KILLS CAPTAIN KIRKMAN ALSO WILLIS AND ANDREWS, AND SEVERAL FREEDMEN—HE KILLS JAMES SALMON—COMPROMISES WITH THE CITIZENS AND PUBLISHES A LETTER IN THE "JIMPLECUTE."

At an early hour on the following day, which was Sunday, the troops and citizens were conducted to his camp, which they surrounded before the first rays of twilight had made their appearance in the eastern horizon. Every man sat with a silent tongue, listening ears and open eyes, to catch the first sound that might issue forth from the camp. "At last the great blood-thirsty villain must be taken in," no doubt, rolled through the minds of poor citizens who had been living in fear for many months, as they sat impatiently awaiting the approach of the first rays of light to rid the country of the greatest pest of modern times. At last the light broke forth upon a silent and evacuated camp. The outlaws were gone. The pursuers could scarcely believe

their own eyes. All appearances of a recent camp, which had been vacated but a few hours, was exposed to their view. When the morning rays beamed down through the forest, which had been stripped of its green foliage by the bleak December winds, and made the more minute things visible to the naked eye, their horses tracks were distinctly seen leading in the direction of Sulphur bottom.

Another council of war was held, and they concluded to follow them. Scouts were deployed and sent out to reconnoiter, and the main army followed on as rapidly as possible. They had not gone on more than two miles, guided by the horse-tracks, when they came in full view of the new camp. As soon as the advance scouts caught the first glimpse of it, the glorious news was shouted and re-echoed from tongue to tongue, until the entire command became familiar with the sound. The troops and citizens all rushed forward, the firing commenced from every quarter, the camp was soon evacuated, and no one was hurt. The villains had mounted their horses, which stood saddled, and rode away through the dense forest. They left their pack mule, ammunition, blankets, shot-guns and six-shooters, all of which was captured.

The troops continued to search for him for several days, and many good citizens turned out to assist them, so that by the first of January more than three hundred persons were traveling under arms in search of him, and, perhaps, twice that number at home well armed and awaiting his arrival. During the search several arrests were made, among them were Mat. Kirby, an Irishman, and John R. Rames *alias* Seth Rames. The former left Bright Star with Baker on the evening of the 25th of December, but did not reach the residence of Howell Smith, the scene of the terrible massacre, having become too much intoxicated to travel, he fell from his horse about a half mile of Mr. Smith's, where he lay until the next morning. He was an entire stranger. No one knew him, though his countenance plainly indicated him to be a bad man, yet the charges were not sufficient to justify his captors in executing him. He was released from captivity and put in charge of a gun, but he deserted the first opportunity, and went in search of Cullen to become his disciple again.

The latter (Rames) was not with Cullen at Mr. Smith's neither was he with him at any time during the day, but he was accused of being with him on several other occasions, and of acquainting him with the arrival of the Federal troops on the night of the 28th of December. These and other things were brought into consideration, and it was decided that he deserved death, and was accordingly executed.

A few more words about the Smith family before closing. Rumors were immediately circulated by Baker's friends, stating that the family was of a low grade; that they were having a negro party at the house, and the girls were taking a part in the dance. But the statements were false; no negroes were there except those employed, and they were very quietly seated around their fire, which was full fifty feet from where the Miss Smith's was sitting in company with two neighboring girls, who had come to spend the night, but ran off when the shooting commenced and lay in the woods all night. The girls had a good reputation, both being members of the Missionary Baptist Church, and in good standing. Mr. Smith lived only one week, and the girls were kept to their beds for some time, but finally recovered. Some of the wounded negroes recovered and others died. Chapters might be written upon this horrible massacre, but the above will be sufficient to give the reader an idea of what might be termed the beginning of the third era of his life.

Cullen then left the country, and did not return again until about the first of October. Soon after his return he went to Boston, Texas, and assassinated Capt. Kirkham, the bureau agent. About this time Gov. Clayton offered a reward of one thousand dollars for his apprehension for murdering one J. Smith, on September 25th, 1868. About November 1st he crossed Red River with a small force numbering fifteen or twenty men, and committed several depredations in Sevier and Little River counties, Arkansas. Among his victims were Andrews and Willis, two government officers, who were on duty at Paraclyta; also some freedmen on Mrs. Sarah Taylor's farm.

By this time Gov. Clayton had called to arms the militia of the State, and sent a large force under command of Gen. Catterson to capture Cullen Baker and his notorious band. Upon the approach of the militia, Cullen recrossed Red river, stopped at Dr. Jones' farm and represented himself as being a militia officer in search of Cullen Baker, and asked the freedmen to go with him, which several of them did. After decoying them off some distance, he drew them up in line directly in front of his men, whom he ordered to fire upon them. Six were instantly killed and others badly wounded. He then rode away, leaving them upon the field. Next he went to Mr. Jones' farm, a short distance away, and killed one freedman, after which he crossed Sulphur into Davis county. Having recruited his force while in Arkansas, he now controlled a large company. Immediately he went to Mr. James Salmon's, arriving there about two hours before daylight. He surrounded the house and called up Mr. Salmon, telling him

that the Federals were there and wanted to see him. Mr. Salmon, not fearing the Federal authorities, arose from his bed and opened the door, when Cullen and his blood-thirsty clan rushed into the house, seized Mr. Salmon and tied a rope around his neck, and his hands behind his back, all in the presence of his wife and mother. A guard was then placed over him, while the infuriated crowd instituted a general carnival of plunder and robbery. Trunks were bursted open and searched for money, arms and ammunition; beds were plundered; out-houses ransacked, and everything of value to them was taken, including a very fine saddle-mule, rifle-gun, saddle-bags, saddle, bridle, etc., and a small quantity of money. They remained there, no longer than the captured property could be got together, when they left, taking Mr. Salmon with them, tied as before. They accused him of assisting the Federals when they were hunting for him—Cullen Baker—some months before. They also accused him of being implicated in the murder of Seth Rames, but of this he must have been entirely innocent. They took him about four hundred yards from his house and shot him dead, leaving him lying in the road, where he was found next morning by his friends who went to look for him.

After killing Mr. Salmon they went directly to Mr. Scarborough's, arriving there about daylight, and calling Mr. Scarborough requested him in a very rough manner to come out, as they wanted to see him. This he refused to do, but asked them who they were, and what was their business. He was informed that their leader was Cullen M. Baker, who desired to question him concerning some arms and ammunition, and also about a coat which Cullen feigned had been left there by some parties. Mr. Scarborough would not surrender to the outlaws until Cullen Baker assured him the third time that he should not be hurt. Cullen then ordered the house to be searched, and during that time questioned Mr. Scarborough on many things too tedious to mention. He inquired about Captain Scott and others who run him so close about ten months before, saying that he did not wish to hurt some of them if they would compromise with him, but if they refused to do it, he would burn every house within forty miles of the place. Mr. Scarborough promised to see Captain Scott and others, and, if possible, bring about a compromise. Cullen and his clan next went to Parson Jessee Dodd's, captured him and kept him in custody nearly all day, and intimated to him a compromise which he promised to assist in.

Several of the leading citizens now met and consulted, and decided that it was the best policy to pursue. A day

was set apart for all persons interested to meet at Scott's Mill's, Davis county, Texas, for the purpose of having a general compromise. Cullen agreed to give a bond of two hundred thousand dollars, with the best security that Bowie County afforded, for his good behavior. The glorious news spread far and near, and when the day arrived hundreds of persons assembled at the mills to receive a general amnesty. Cullen, however, did not appear in person, as many expected, but requested Parson Dodd to state that he excepted three persons, Williams, Jackson and Dunlap, whom he intended to have, if they remained on earth, but no one else he intended "to interfere with. Nothing was said about the bond. It must be stated that while the compromise was being effected he killed two negroes at Mr. Scarborough's and one at Parson Dodd's.

About this time a committee of citizens was sent out from Jefferson, Texas, to consult him and learn his future intentions. He was found in Bowie County. The following, which was written by a friend, with his consent, was published in the *Jimplecute*, fully explains itself:

BOWIE COUNTY, TEXAS, Nov. 14, 1868.

EDITORS JEMPLECUTE: Permit me to publish a statement in your paper in order to place myself right before the government and the people of the country. Various rumors have obtained circulation through the country in regard to my course of conduct, and many persons are committing offences against law and good order on my credit; hence I deem it necessary to declare my sentiments and intentions for the future. It is rumored that I have said that no civil officers should perform the duties of their offices in the country where I stay. To this report I have to say that I am strictly in favor of the enforcement of the civil laws of the country by the legitimate authorities, and I now declare that it shall be my steady purpose to protect the quiet citizen and his laborers, either white or black, in the pursuit of their avocations. I also request all good citizens to inform me of all depredations committed by other parties and charged to have been committed by me. This is my native country, and my interests are identical with that of other citizens of the country, and I hope to remain in the counties of Davis, Bowie, Marion and the adjacent counties in Eastern Texas. And I further declare that it will not be my purpose to make war upon the good and peaceable citizens or laborers of this or any other section; nor do I intend to interfere in any way with the powers that be. The white man and the black man will be perfectly safe in my hands, so long as he lets me alone and pursues his peaceful and lawful business.

In conclusion I have to say that I am not the great man

slayer that scandal has made me—killing white and black wherever found—and I am determined in the future to do all the good I can for the peaceable and quiet citizens in the country where I stay. I shall in the future publish the causes which led me into my present difficulties, and satisfied that I shall not be deemed by a just community wholly to blame for my action in the past. I am now and have ever been willing to submit the whole of my conduct to a decision of unbiased men of my country, and abide by their just verdict.

Your obedient servant,

CULLEN M. BAKER.

CHAPTER X.

CULLEN CROSSES RED RIVER AND COLLECTS ALL THE MEN HE CAN—RETURNS TO DAVIS COUNTY AND COMMITS NUMEROUS DEPREDATIONS—HANGS HIS BROTHER-IN-LAW, THOS. ORR—HIS MEN LEAVE HIM BECAUSE HE IS TOO CRUEL—HE LEARNS THAT THOS. ORR IS NOT DEAD—HE "GOES FOR HIM" AGAIN—BAKER AND KIRBY ARE BOTH KILLED JANUARY 6, 1869.

Some mention must be made in this chapter of Thomas Orr, who continued teaching school in Lafayette County, eight miles north-east of Line Ferry, until the fall of 1868, when he and his wife, formerly Miss Bell Foster to whom he had been married about one year, went to Mr. Foster's, four miles south-east of Line Ferry, to spend the winter. Cullen and he had not met in more than two years, neither had there been any compromise except the general compromise at Scott's mills, which included everybody the three before mentioned, but Thomas Orr having no confidence in his promise, had not yet laid down his arms.

About November 20th Cullen paraded all the men that he could command, and took up the line of march in the direction of Little Rock. After crossing Red River he circulated the report that he was pursuing the militia for the purpose of recapturing property, and seeking revenge for imaginary wrongs inflicted upon the citizens of Sevier and the surrounding counties. This report induced some persons to flock to him through hopes of obtaining revenge, when in reality they had not been wronged.

When he collected all the men that he could in that portion of the country, he faced about and recrossed Red River, telling his men that he must go into Lafayette, Bowie, and Davis counties for the purpose of collecting

the balance of his force, saying that he could command the entire country.

The militia, which had started back in the direction of Little Rock, hearing of his raid into Sevier County, faced about and started in pursuit of him the second time. They did not stop at Centre Point this time, but proceeded through both Sevier and Little River counties and halted at Red River.

When Cullen reached the vicinity of Scott's Mills, he told his men that it was necessary to kill a few "abolitionists," as he called his enemies, before leaving the country to pursue the militia. He called at Mr. Robert Spell's near Scott's Mills, on the evening of December 7th, but he was not at home. He captured a Mr. Heggs, an entire stranger, and threatened him with hanging if he did not tell where Mr. Spell could be found. He then proceeded to Scott's mills, where he caught his old friend, G. W. Barron; from thence to Mr. Jackson's, but found no one at home. Mr. Jackson having gone to Mr. Johnson's, Cullen proceeded there, but found no person. Messrs. Jackson and Johnson hearing that he was in the settlement, left the house about three minutes before he arrived, which was almost a miraculous escape, for had they been captured, nothing less than death would have sufficed the bloody thirsty villain. He proceeded to search the house for guns and ammunition, and before leaving he called for some paper and wrote a note to Mr. Johnson ordering him to take his family and leave the State within ten days, and not stop in Arkansas. After leaving Mr. Johnson's he captured a Mr. Murphy, and made him carry the keg of powder: they then proceeded in the direction of Arkansas. After dark they crossed the State line, and surrounded Mr. Dempsey's house, several of the desperadoes rushed into the house and searched it, expecting to find Mr. Dempsey, but he was not there. They searched very diligently for guns, money and ammunition, and took all they found. They threatened to kill Mr. Dempsey and several of his neighbors; and Cullen, in order to prove to Mrs. Dempsey that he was actually the notorious Cullen M. Baker, the hero of the west, rolled his pants above his knee, and showed her the wound he received at Mr. Smith's nearly a year before, saying that he was shot from the house, when he was shot by some one of his own clan. Soon after leaving Mr. Dempsey's they arrived at his son's house, which was about half a mile distant. Hearing them coming, he and his wife ran into the woods. The desperadoes searched the house, took his gun and ammunition and killed his dog. By this time they had more guns than they could conveniently carry on horseback.

When they arrived at Mrs. Roberts' they left all their surplus guns in the corner of her yard. They then went to Mr. Foster's where they arrived about ten o'clock, soon after the family had gone to bed. They surrounded the house and broke down the door, at the same time demanding a surrender. Baker ordered his men in a very imperative tone to keep their posts, and to set the house on fire if a single shot was shot. The men, a company of savage Indians, as he called them on that occasion, were heard all around the house and in the yard. Several of the cowardly villains rushed into the house with cocked pistols and guns, threatening to kill every one and burn the house to ashes if any resistance was made. Mr. Foster arose from his bed and demanded the cause of this untimely visit, but was only answered by threats and oaths that could not be excelled by all the demons of the infernal regions. They called for Thomas Orr, and ordered him to surrender, which he did, after having the assurance from Baker himself that he should not be hurt. Thomas Orr states himself that he had no confidence in his pledge, but for the sake of saving the women from destruction he surrendered. No sooner had Cullen full control of them than he tied their hands behind them, put ropes around their necks and tied them together. They fed their horses, and remained there until morning, keeping the prisoners closely confined. Soon after daylight Cullen sent a detail after Mr. Davis, an old gentleman living in the settlement. About sun-up Cullen with his band and the three prisoners started off in a westerly direction. Thomas Orr rode behind a boy who was introduced as Cullen's cousin, by the name of Baker, but was really no relation to him, his true name being Alf. Elliot. The prisoner was still tied, and Baker held one end of the rope himself. After traveling about half a mile, Cullen tied his end of the rope to a dogwood limb and Alf. Elliot rode out, leaving the victim suspended by the neck between the heavens and earth.

A council was now held to see whether or not the other prisoners should be put to death, and it was decided that Mr. Davis should suffer the same fate. They having no surplus rope, Cullen ordered the executed wretch to be cut down and dragged out of the way, to make room for the second victim, but the interference of one of the party saved the second, though he had been suspended from the limb. Cullen hastened away as rapidly as possible, leaving his victim upon the frozen ground. He went directly to Bright Star and procured a fresh supply of whisky. He released his prisoners during the evening, but captured more. He went to Rondo the next day, committing numerous depre-

dations on the way. When he arrived at Rondo he found that the citizens had organized, and two companies were then in line. He supposed that they had organized to fight the militia, but in this he was mistaken; they having organized under orders from Gen. Catterson. Several thousand troops were raised about this time in the south-western counties, all for the purpose of opposing Cullen M. Baker, who commanded a squad consisting of a score or more outlaws.

On the following day, December 10th, Cullen crossed the line into Texas, taking with him a few of his most desperate men, the majority of them becoming so disgusted with his conduct that they left him never to associate with him again. He went westward as far as Mt. Pleasant, accompanied only by Mat. Kirby, the same Irishman who was captured and released by the citizens about one year before.

About December 20th he returned to Davis County, and came very near being captured, his companion, Kirby, was shot on this occasion. This gave them such a fright that they retreated across the Sulphur, perhaps with the intention of recruiting. About January 1st, 1869, the Federal troops abandoned the country and returned to Jefferson, Texas. On January 4th Cullen recrossed Sulphur at Muck Island, and spent the night with Mr. Bell, an old resident of Sulphur bottom. He reconnoitered the next day, and finding that the troops were gone, ventured as far as Mr. Haynes, the same place where he killed Mr. Baily in 1854. He camped near the house and kept Mr. Haynes with him during the night, and asked him if he knew anything about Thomas Orr. "I suppose he is dead," answered Mr. Haynes, "I heard that you hung him about a month ago." "Yes," said Cullen, "I hung him but he is not dead. I heard from him since; but one of us have got to die, and that before long." "Yes," said Kirby, "and that before to-morrow's setting sun; say it, Cullen, say it."

Cullen was not mistaken, his competitor was not dead: he was left by Cullen, apparently, a lifeless form, but had recovered, and was still living. Very early on the following morning, January 6th, Baker and Kirby mounted their horses and started for Arkansas. Two and a half hours ride brought them to the State line, and soon after crossing it they saw Mr. Forshe in the woods some distance from them. Baker, in a very imperative mood, said "Come here, sir." Mr. Forshe, trembling, walked up and saluted him in the best manner possible. Baker very kindly introduced his friend, Kirby, and ordered him to draw his bottle, after which he inquired about his victim who had come to life.

They proceeded directly to Mr. Foster's. Thomas Orr was in the house and saw them coming, and supposing others to be close at hand, left the house and started for Mr. Lamar's, where he knew several persons had assembled for the purpose of butchering hogs, and believing that Baker would go there, he hastened to inform the neighbors, and make some preparation for his reception. He started on foot and in an opposite direction to prevent being seen by his opponent. When he reached there he found that Baker and Kirby had beat him, having come the direct route and at full speed, and in the presence of eight men, all citizens of the settlement, rode off again taking with them William Foster, the oldest man in the crowd. When Thomas Orr arrived and learned what had taken place, he called upon the crowd to know how many would follow him, at the same time adding: "If we allow them to escape this time, I hope that God Almighty will sink this country below the level of the ocean." As the last words fell from his lips, three persons proposed to go with him. Baker and Kirby supposing there to be no danger, stopped within a mile to rest and take some refreshments, when their pursuers were upon them, and in immediate succession discharged about a half dozen pieces, which killed both Baker and Kirby almost instantly.

Baker had about his person one very large double-barrelled shot-gun, four six-shooters, three deringers, several dollars in specie, twenty-seven door, trunk and satchel keys, of various kinds and sizes, five or six pocket knives, and a copy of the *Louisville Courier Journal*, dated December 16, 1868. From the column of "Southern News," the following extract is taken, very carefully marked with a pencil, perhaps some of our readers remember it:

"Cullen M. Baker, the Arkansas brigand, and his band, have left the State to join the Cuban expedition. If Clayton's militia could be induced to go to Cuba, Halifax or any place else, the State would enjoy peace and prosperity."

Also a manuscript paper which read thus:

"I, of my own free will and accord, and in the presence of Almighty God, do solemnly swear or affirm that I will never reveal to any one not a member * * by any nitis, motion, sign, sintol, word or act. or in any other manner whatever, any of the secret signs, grips, passwords, or mysteries or purposes of the * * and that I am not a member of the same; or that I know any one who is a member, and that I will abide by the prescripts and edicts of * * So help me God.

C. M. BAKER."

Kirby had about his person one double-barrelled shot-gun, two six-shooters, a pocket-knife, some ammunition, and an empty pocket-book.

Bought at Little Rock
by Geo Alfred Townsend
Sep. 1872

L I F E

OF THE

NOTORIOUS DESPERADO

Cullen Baker,

CONTAINING

A COMPLETE HISTORY OF ALL THE MURDERS
COMMITTED BY HIM.

THOMAS ORR, Editor.

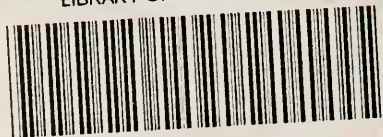
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