

were the officers elect of the Houston Company of Santa Fé Pioneers, and cordially invited me to mess with them as a "guest" on the expedition. Although reluctantly compelled to decline their invitation, I could still appreciate the kind motives which induced them to proffer it.

Frank Combs and myself, with one or two others also on their way to Austin, left Houston late in the afternoon. The weather was hot and sultry, and dark clouds in the southwest gave every indication of a heavy shower before nightfall. The house that had been recommended to us to stop at over night was some twelve miles distant, inducing us to gallop rapidly along with the hope of reaching our resting-place before the coming down of the shower. As we cleared the pine woods by which Houston is environed, and struck out into the prairies, we met a party of ladies and gentlemen on horseback. They, too, were pressing their nags to the utmost, evidently to reach shelter before the heavy black clouds should commence discharging their torrents; and the loud and merry laugh of the ladies, as they gayly and swiftly passed along, showed that they were perfectly at home on horseback, and heedless of any break-neck risks they might be running.

After a closely-contested race, of an hour's duration, with the shower, during which it was almost impossible to say which would come out ahead, we finally reached our stopping-place neck-and-neck—in racing parlance, made a "dead heat" of it. No sooner had we thrown ourselves from our jaded animals and hastily stripped them of their saddles, than the large and widely-scattered raindrops, which usually precede a shower, gave place to a perfect avalanche of water. Our log-house quar-

ters, however, were closely "chinked and daubed,"\* and we passed a dry and comfortable night.

The heavens were still overhung with clouds on the ensuing morning, although the rain had nearly subsided. After partaking of a warm breakfast, we resumed our journey across the gently undulating and fertile prairies to be found between all the many streams which water Texas. Although not yet June, the corn was nearly as high as a man's head, and gave goodly token of a most abundant harvest. The following day we crossed the Brazos at San Felipe de Austin, formerly a place of some little note, but now falling to decay. Another day, after two or three tolerably severe drenchings from the almost hourly showers that were falling, carried us through Bastrop to a noted stopping-place for travelers, within some twenty miles of Austin. The proprietor of this plantation, with his brother or son-in-law, and a few others, had settled upon it long before the revolution, and in the most troublous Indian times. Frequent and bloody were the encounters between the whites and their savage neighbours, in which the former generally came off victorious, although at times they lost some one of their number. On taking seats at the dinner-table, in the house I have just mentioned, I noticed, with some little surprise, that one of the male members of the family sat down with his hat on. I thought him guilty of great rudeness or forgetfulness; but before we left, the mystery was explained. In one of the early encounters with the Indians he had been shot down, tomahawked, and scalped by his brutal enemies, and then left for dead. After remaining senseless for some time, the wounded

\* The process of filling, with clay, the interstices between the logs of all houses in the new countries—for there all the houses are at first made of logs—is called "chinking and daubing."

man revived. He had bled much from several wounds, and was suffering extremely from pain; yet he had strength and resolution to crawl first to a spring of water, and then to his log-shanty, a distance of several miles. He suffers to this day from nervous headache, and, I believe, always wears his hat closely drawn down. He is the second person I have seen who has survived the barbarous process of scalping, and may be looked upon as a living witness of what the honest Hibernian *said* was a fact, namely, "that a man is not always dead when he is killed!"

On arriving at Austin, I was introduced to Colonel William G. Cooke and Doctor R. F. Brenham,\* two of the commissioners appointed by General Lamar to treat with the inhabitants of New Mexico. They informed me that the expedition would not leave under a week at least—probably not under ten or twelve days. This delay I did not much regret, as it would give me an opportunity of visiting San Antonio, by far the most interesting place in Texas, not only from the beauty of its location and the old Spanish missions in its neighbourhood, but from its being the spot where some of the fiercest battles in the early part of the Texan Revolution were fought.

At Austin I first became acquainted with Mr. Falconer, a young English gentleman of high literary and scientific attainments, mild and agreeable manners, and

\* Poor Brenham! He passed safely through all the perils, hardships, and sufferings of the Santa Fé expedition, to be again taken prisoner at the sanguinary battle of Mier, fought in the early part of the past year, 1843. While again on his march as a prisoner to the city of Mexico, Brenham induced his fellow-prisoners to join him in an attempt to escape. He led the attack upon the guards, had already killed two of them, and severely wounded a third, when he stumbled and fell directly upon the bayonet of his falling enemy. Thus died Brenham, and in him Texas lost one of her bravest and most generous spirits.

what is rare among his countrymen when away from home, extremely sociable and companionable qualities from the first. Your English traveller, unless he is an old stager, has seen much of the world, and has learned to take the many discomforts he is sure to encounter with composure, is prone to grumble. Nature has made him a most excellent growler, but not a traveller; and he cannot combat against her arbitrary laws. Meet him in a stage-coach, a steamboat, or a railroad car, and as far as his dress goes—for no man knows better how to dress, while travelling, than an Englishman\*—all is right; but attempt to draw him into conversation, and he will wrap a *hauteur* about him more impenetrable than his rough overcoat. He will answer your question, it is true, but in such a way that you think he wishes to shut the gate against your asking another. His *yes* is short and quick, like the breaking of a pipe-stem; his *no* comes snappingly from him, like the growl of a hyena when punched through the bars of his cage with a long pole. Yankee ingenuity tries, but in vain, to find out his name, his place of residence, his business—in short, *who* or *what* he is—and all this while the close observer may detect a half smile of self-satisfaction on the round and ruddy face of John Bull, as he cruelly, yet successfully puzzles his indefatigable interlocutor.

Yet, with all his coldness and unapproachability, one cannot help admiring the English traveller. There is nothing assumed or studied in his formality—all is nat-

\* How different with the American traveller. He must needs, on starting on a journey, array himself in his "Sunday-go-to-meeting" dress. He makes his toilet with the greatest care, alike regardless of rain, dust, or sparks from locomotives. The Englishman laughs at him, and with good show of reason; for a more absurd custom could not well be devised. I have been pleased to observe, of late, that my countrymen are gradually dropping this foolish habit.

ural. He never asks questions—never, therefore, gives you an excuse for addressing questions to him. You think him unsocial and distant, from the coldness of his answers: he thinks you impertinent and forward, from the boldness of your questions. Both, to a certain degree, are right—and both are wrong. Could a medium rule of conduct be adopted, I am not certain that the ethics of those little sovereignties—the stage-coach, the car, and the steamboat—would not be greatly improved.

I have said that the Englishman is not “cut out” for a traveller; nor is he. With all the comforts of home about him, he will still find something to grumble at—but when he leaves it, everything goes wrong. The roads over which he travels are bad, the landlords of the houses where he may chance to stop are unaccommodating, the seryants are inattentive, the beef is overdone, the mutton is tough and unsavoury. All this may be true, to a certain extent, for your traveller cannot find everything to his liking or taste away from his own homestead; but where your American good-humouredly cracks a hyperbolic joke at the expense of the landlord; where your Frenchman shrugs his shoulders, and grins and bears it; where your German resorts to his pipe or cigar for consolation, your Englishman “makes a muss” about it, and growls his dissatisfaction in looks and in words. While in the stage-coach, should your only companion by chance be an Englishman, you would be led to think that a sentence to six months’ imprisonment on the “silent system” would be neither punishment nor bore to him; but set him down to his dinner, at a common roadside tavern, and, like Billy Bottom in the old play, he will “roar you like any lion.” But in the social circle, or in the drawing-room, where the formalities of a regular introduction have been gone

through, there our friend John is a different sort of personage—there an English gentleman *is* a gentleman in every sense of the word. Having now left our Englishman in comfortable quarters, where he is enjoying himself, I will return to my friend, Mr. Falconer.

He informed me that he had some little business at San Antonio, and that he should start on the ensuing day, in company with one or two friends, for that city. Here was just the opportunity I wished for. The distance from Austin to San Antonio is some eighty miles, without a single human habitation on the route. Parties of hostile Indians are continually hovering about in the vicinity of the road, ready to attack any party they may think themselves able to overcome. The bones of many unfortunate white men are now bleaching upon the prairies, between the two cities, where the travellers were waylaid and killed. At one time the wayfarer is shot at by a party of foot Indians from some cover or ambuscade; at another, he is attacked upon the open prairies by a superior number of mounted Camanches—a tribe that appear to live, move, and have their being, or, in other words, to eat, sleep, work and fight, on horseback.

Mr. Falconer’s little party consisted of himself, a Kentuckian named Mat Small, and a Canadian Frenchman named Gramont. Small had received the first rudiments of a hunter’s education in Kentucky, and had finished it in Texas. An experience so extensive, and formed upon such excellent models, had rendered him somewhat noted the country round for his science and skill as a finished borderer. Gramont, on the contrary, had been educated at Trois Rivieres for the priesthood, but had never taken holy orders. He was now, instead of selling masses and hearing confessions at so much

apiece, quietly pursuing the calling of a surveyor in the country of San Patricio, to which point he was on his way. This was Mr. Falconer's entire force, and with this he had made all his arrangements for the journey; but he was now re-enforced by myself and Frank Combs, the latter having made up his mind to join the party. We thus mustered five strong, all well armed and equipped for a trip that is set down as extra-hazardous.

Wishing to give my horse every chance to gain flesh and strength before starting for Santa Fé, I left him with a livery-stable keeper at Austin, and hired a little, rough-looking Mexican mountain pony in his stead. The latter was considerably advanced in years, disposed to take every advantage, and shirk from everything in the shape of hard work. He moreover had a huge pair of *mustaches* on his upper lip, appendages which belong, I believe, almost exclusively to horses from his particular section and of his particular species; at all events, I have never seen them worn by other nags. He was tough, however, as wrought iron, and although one hour's riding would bring on a lazy fit, ten would not tire him; a fact of which I had most abundant evidence afterward.

## CHAPTER II.

Leave Austin for San Antonio.—Prospects of a Shower.—Singular Conduct of Mat Small.—A regular Soaking.—Crossing the Colorado.—No Bottom for short-legged Animals.—Venison for Supper.—More of Mat Small.—Damp Lodgings.—Serenade of Wolves.—Meeting with old Friends.—The St. Mark's.—Head Springs.—Disturbance at Night.—Arrival of Friends from Austin.—Journey towards San Antonio renewed.—Colonel Cooke in search of a Short Cut.—Encounter with a Texan War Party.—Hostile Indians about.—A Texan killed.—Mr. Falconer's Portrait taken while sitting upon a Mule.—Amusing Adventure.—More scared than hurt.—The Guadalupe.—The Salado.—Night Entry into San Antonio.—Yelping Curs.—Fun at a Fandango.—A Mexican Dance.—Monté.—Getting the Hang of the Game.—Return to Lodgings.—Comparative Merits of Floors.—Difference between Plank, Stone, and Earth.—Rough Life in Perspective.—Nothing after getting used to it.

THE morning of the day on which we were to start for San Antonio was unusually hot and sultry, with hardly a breath of air stirring. We had determined upon leaving Austin late in the afternoon, riding about twelve miles, and then encamping for the night on the banks of a small creek. This plan is generally adopted by persons travelling between the two places, although they are obliged, in consequence, to "camp out" two nights instead of one; but as starting early in the morning makes two long and tiresome days' marches, the former plan is deemed the most feasible and agreeable.

After dinner, while we were saddling our horses and making preparations for departure, a black cloud about the size of a buzzard was seen in the southwest. Before we were ready to mount, this cloud had spread over the whole quarter of the sky where it made its first appearance. The distant rumbling of thunder was