body was paralyzed. Doctor Brenham, who was boarding at the same hotel, immediately called upon me and did everything in the power of a physician or surgeon. The next morning I was enabled to ascertain the extent of my injuries, which, though severe, were not so bad as at first supposed. My back was still weak, and pained me so much that I was unable to move without assistance; my ankle, in the mean time, was extremely swollen and entirely useless, and in addition gave me much pain. Yet my friends, one and all, said that I should be on my feet again in three or four weeks, as well as ever, and able to run down a buffalo bull on an open prairie. I could not feel quite as sanguine, but still thought that six weeks, or two months at farthest, would restore my bruised and shattered limb to its original strength. But even my expectations were wide of the mark, for some two months elapsed before I could even bear the least weight upon my lame foot, and it was three before I could walk without much pain.

Even to this day, and some two years have slipped away since I sustained the injury, the ankle is weak and far from being cured. Time was when I was able and willing to essay a cotillon with the sprightliest—when I could cut pigeon-wings and extras, and perform the double shuffle with no inconsiderable precision and activity; but those days are over now—the "jig is up." I still have one consolation, however, and one which I freely recommend to all who may be similarly situated; when a man breaks his leg he should always be thankful it is no worse—for instance, not his neck.

CHAPTER IV.

Visit from General Lamar.—Preparations for a Start.—Pleasant Anticipations.—Northers.—Bright Side of the Picture.—Speculations as to the Reception of the Expedition at Santa Fé.—No Thoughts of Fighting the New Mexicans.—Señor Navarro.—A Jersey Wagon provided.—Departure from Austin.—Adieu to Civilization.—A modern Athens.—Its sudden Rise, and more sudden Fall.—President Lamar in Camp.—Arrival at the Brushy.—General Joy among the Pioneers.—Reviewed by the President.—Order of March.—Tricks of young Oxen.—Upsets.—Arrival at the San Gabrielle.—Camp Stories.—Opossum Creek.—Scene of a Fight with the Camanches.—Anecdote of two Brothers.—A night Storm.—Buffalo in Sight.—Petrifactions.—Stories of Buffalo.—A Youngster caught.—Methods of Hunting the Buffalo.—A regular Chase.—Buffalo on every Side.—Fitzgerald, and his Zeal.—Falconer among the Buffalo.—Returns of Killed and Wounded.—Arrival at Little River.—Buffalo Calves in Camp.—Manner of taking them.

The day succeeding my unfortunate accident, I was visited, at my room, by crowds of friends, among whom was the President, General Lamar. The only topics discussed had some relation to the expedition. Preparations were going on in every quarter. The merchants were packing their goods, and mending and strengthening the heavy wagons upon which they were to be transported. Volunteers were cleaning and preparing their arms, as we were to enter an Indian and buffalo range almost immediately—in a word, all was hurry, bustle, and excitement. Every one was anticipating an exciting, a glorious frolic, the wild gossiping tales of old hunters and campaigners tending, not a little, to increase the fever of impatience to be upon the road. Not a word was said of the hardships, the dangers, the difficulties we were to encounter—the biting "north-

ers,"* the damp and dreary bivouac, the intolerable thirst, the gnawing hunger—these were the dark sides of the picture, and were never exhibited.

As to our reception on reaching Santa Fé but little was said. Texas claims, as I have before stated, to the Rio Grande; and as Santa Fé is situated some fourteen miles from that stream, on the eastern or Texan side, no invasion of the territory of Mexico was thought of. It is true Texas had never been able to exercise jurisdiction over that section, because of its isolated position and the immense wilderness that separates it from the other portions of the Republic; but this was no reason why she should not, at some time, assert her claims. The universal impression in Texas was, that the inhabitants of Santa Fé were anxious to throw off a yoke, which was not only galling, but did not of right belong to them, and rally under the "lone star" banner; and events which have since transpired, and which I shall refer to hereafter, have convinced me that such was the feeling with the larger part of the population. Should any opposition be made to the peaceable entry of the Texan pioneers, it was thought it would come from the few regular troops always stationed at Santa Fé by the government of Mexico; and this force would easily have been put down if a large majority of the residents were in favour of such a course. As for having anything like a regular battle, or forcibly subduing the country should the inhabitants be found hostile, such events were neither intended nor talked of. Invading armies, when hard fighting is anticipated, seldom take merchandise with them to sell to their enemies. The

* The prairies of Texas are visited, every season, by cold rains and winds from the north, called "*norther*s." The winds have full sweep directly from the mountains, and not only animals, but men have frequently perished during their continuance.

merchant, who sends a "venture" to some distant and barbarous shore, anticipates, on reaching his destination, either losing all or reaping a rich harvest of profit. The Texans looked for danger on the road across the prairies—nothing more. Safely arrived in New Mexico, their perils were all passed—they had, with the hopes and expectations offered them, no farther risks to incur. But adverse circumstances stepped in to thwart their bright dreams of commercial success—they were robbed of all, property and liberty—and after drinking thus deeply of the bitter cup of misfortune, have been held up, by those who knew neither the men nor their intentions, as a "gang of marauders," a "horde of land pirates."

But what, the reader will ask, induced so large a body of young men to start upon an expedition of this kind? What objects could they have in view? The answer is easy enough. They were actuated by that love of adventure, which is inherent in thousands of our race; they were anxious to participate in the excitements ever incidental to a prairie tour. What induced Washington Irving and his companions to make a trip to the prairies west of the Osage hunting-grounds? Why did the Honourable Charles A. Murray spend a summer with the buffaloes and the Pawnees? And why does Sir William Drummond Stewart, year after year, leave wealth and title, to say nothing of the comforts and honours in their train, and pass his summers among the Indians high up on the waters of the Missouri and its tributaries? To our party, the incentives were unusually strong and exciting. We were to pass over a portion of country entirely unknown to the white man, and might reasonably expect to meet with a larger share of adventure than usually falls to the lot of the

Western travellers. We felt confident that we should meet with large bands of Indians, known to live directly on our path, who were hostile alike to Texas and Mexico, and with whom we should have an occasional "skrimmage." We should see the American Indian, too, in his primitive and unhunted retreat. Thus fraught with adventure, the tour promised to be one of unusual interest.

While lying confined to my bed at Austin, I received, from Mr. Roberts, then acting Secretary of State, a letter written at the request of General Lamar, inviting me to join the expedition as a "guest." I was to be subject to no control, civil or military; I was free to remain with the expedition so long as it suited my convenience, and to leave it when I pleased—in short, I had no connexion, other than that of a stranger who happened to be travelling the same road, with the men whom I accompanied, or with the objects in which they were engaged. In the same letter I was kindly invited to mess with the commissioners, or civil branch of the expedition, an invitation I gladly accepted. This letter, with my passport, and other papers of importance as defining the relation in which I stood to the expedition, I placed in a secure parcel, and always kept about my person. I was determined, by no act of mine, to forfeit my claim to American protection any farther than by accompanying the expedition across wild and unknown prairies; and considering these papers the best proofs I could have to sustain me should difficulties, which I certainly did not anticipate, arise on my reaching New Mexico, I was careful in preserving them. The obligations I considered myself under to the officers of the expedition were these: to obey all general orders for the well-being and safety of the men, and if we were

attacked by Indians on the march, or met with any opposition from them, to take an active part with my friends. Here my obligations ceased. I had started with the intention of making the entire tour of Mexico, and could not compromise myself so far as to take any part in the events which might occur on reaching the settlements of New Mexico, whether these events should be pacific or hostile. But to continue my narrative of the movements of the expedition.

The 18th of June arrived, and with it the time for the departure of the pioneers. It was now three days since I had met with my unfortunate accident, and I was still unable to move without assistance. A few of my friends endeavoured to dissuade me from going; but I was blessed, or cursed, as the case may be, with strongly-developed organs of self-will, obstinacy, and "go-aheadity," and made up my mind to go even if I had to be carried. "I will go it if I lose a leg," is a common yet not very classical remark among a certain class of Western men, when they have fully made up their minds to do a thing. I determined upon starting for New Mexico although I had already as good as lost a leg, at least for all present purposes, and it is now too late to regret that I did so.

Among the Texan Commissioners was José Antonio Navarro, Esq.,* who, like myself, was unable to walk. For our accommodation, General Lamar provided a neat Jersey wagon, drawn by two mules, and covered so as to protect us from the sun and rain during the long marches.

* Mr. Navarro is the only member of the Santa Fé pioneers still retained a prisoner. He is a Mexican by birth, was once a senator in the Congress of that Republic, is a man of no inconsiderable abilities and influence, and has been punished with unusual severity. I found him a kind-hearted, gentlemanly man, and regret that he was not liberated with the rest of the prisoners.

As I have stated above, it was on the 18th of June that the last detachment of the expedition left Austin. This was at least one month later than it should have been, on account of both water and grass; but unavoidable delays had arisen in getting everything in readiness, and even as it was, General McLeod, the commander of the military portion, was obliged to march unprovided with many necessaries. The main body of the expedition had been lying encamped for some time on the Brushy, a small stream about twenty miles from Austin. As far as this point General Lamar accompanied the last party. I was assisted into the wagon on leaving, but still bade adieu to civilization, its comforts and enjoyments, in good spirits.

At Austin we left the last tokens of a settlement—beyond, all was in a state of wild, uncultivated nature. Singular as it may appear, the then capital of Texas was the extreme frontier town, and what may appear still more strange, daring bands of hostile Indians have frequently been known to enter the principal streets, run off with horses tied to the very doorposts of their owners, and in some instances have even murdered the inhabitants within a few hundred yards of the government-house.

From Austin to the Brushy the road—for here there is an old military road—runs over rolling and beautiful prairies, occasionally relieved by the slight skirting of timber which fringes the margins of the small streams, or by a small grove of timber so regularly planted by nature that it would almost seem the hand of man had assisted in its production.

To the left of the road, at the distance of some mile and a half or two miles, is a high and delightful situation, which some visionary speculator, years since, endeavoured to convert into a stirring town.

In the first place, he purchased a beautiful site for a city—lacking only all the essentials to support a large population. Highly-coloured plans were got out, and on paper, at least, a more flourishing place never existed. There were colleges and squares, city halls and penitentiaries, public walks and public houses—and, looking at the engravings, so well were they executed, a man could almost imagine he heard the carriages rattling over the pavements, and the busy hum which denotes the large and thriving city.

The name by which it was known on the plans—it cannot be found on the map of Texas—was *Athens;* and so firmly did the visionary who planned it believe in his speculation, that he built a house and made some other and expensive improvements on the premises. While engaged in digging a well, assisted by some two or three negroes, he was attacked by a roaming party of Camanches and driven off, narrowly escaping with his life. The person who gave me this information said that the man never returned, and that everything remained just as he had left it. Thus fell a modern Athens.

We made a short stop, during the heat of the day, at a cool grove. Near it was a fine spring of water, and under the shade of the over-arching boughs a plain dinner was prepared. Every man appeared to be his own cook, President Lamar as well as the rest. I also observed that his excellency unsaddled and staked his own horse on a small plot of grass near by. There was a specimen of Republican simplicity—the chief magistrate of a nation cooking his own dinner and grooming his own horse! In all my intercourse with General Lamar I ever found him a courteous and honourable gentleman, possessing a brilliant intellect, which has been highly cultivated; and if Texas ever had a warm and untiring friend, it was and is Mirabeau B. Lamar.

It was late in the afternoon when we reached camp, a beautiful and romantic situation on the Brushy, near several large springs of cool and most delicious water. The camp was all animation on our arrival, as it was a token that the expedition was soon to be on the march. Many of the volunteers had been stationed at this place three or four weeks, and had become impatient of the delay; now that it was rendered certain that they were soon to be on the move to Santa Fé, all was joy, activity, and life.

General Lamar was accompanied by the Honourable Mr. Chalmers, Secretary of the Treasury, and several other gentlemen, who all "roughed it" upon the ground at night with the volunteers—a single blanket forming each man's bed. The next morning the different companies were reviewed, a neat and appropriate address was delivered by the President, after which himself and party returned to Austin.

Two days were now passed on the Brushy in reloading the wagons, and making the necessary arrangements for the long journey we had before us. Here I would state, that never since the discovery of America had such a journey been undertaken. Years before the first wagon started from St. Louis for Santa Fé every inch of the country was well known and the route that was to be taken clearly defined; all that was known in our case was, that Austin was in such a latitude and longitude and Santa Fé in another—of the principal part of the country between the two points not a man among us knew anything. That deep rivers were to be crossed, that ravines were to be encountered, that salt and dry prairies were to be met—in short, that innumerable obstacles would be found in our path, were things that every one expected: of the nature and extent of these obstacles all were alike ignorant. Yet in the face of difficulties which seemed almost insurmountable the expedition started, and after toil almost incredible they were overcome—twenty-four wagons were taken in safety over nearly a thousand miles that never had been trodden before except by the savage. At starting it was known that the direct course was almost northwest; but as it was feared there might be a scarcity of water by taking a straight line, it was deemed prudent to follow the course of the Brazos, cut through the celebrated Cross Timbers before reaching Red River, and then follow up that stream, the course of which was supposed to be nearly east and west. By this route we made nearly a right angle, and the journey was much longer, and probably more difficult.

On the morning of June 21st, the expedition finally took up the line of march from the fertile valley and cool springs of the Brushy. Two companies, numbering some eighty men, were detailed to go forward as an advanced guard; then came the wagons, in single file, and the beef cattle that were to furnish us with meat. One company was also detailed for fatigue duty—driving the cattle and cutting away the banks of creeks, or removing any obstacles that might obstruct the passage of the wagons. This was the most irksome and laborious duty of all, and was performed by the companies in turn. The rear-guard brought up the long procession, and consisted of three companies, there being six in all. These companies were commanded by Captains Caldwell, Sutton, Houghton, Hudson, Strain, and Lewis, the latter commanding the artillery company, which had one brass six-pounder. The number of volunteers doing duty was two hundred and seventy. In addition, there were about fifty persons attached to the expedi-

tion in some way, being General McLeod and his staff, the commissioners, merchants, tourists, and servants. None of these, except the first named, did military or guard duty.

The long train of wagons moving heavily forward, with the different companies of volunteers, all well mounted and well armed and riding in double file, presented an imposing as well as an animating spectacle, causing every heart to beat high with the anticipation of exciting incidents on the boundless prairies. On the first day many of the young oxen, "critters" that had never been yoked before, performed divers unseemly antics, diverting enough to themselves in all probability, but by no means pleasing to the drivers. The consequence was that a number of the wagons were upset, occasioning delays which made it near night before we reached our camping ground on the San Gabriel. The road this day was over beautiful rolling prairies, the land rich, and susceptible of cultivation.

The San Gabriel is a picturesque stream running into the Brazos. A few miles above our camp, on its banks, a settlement had formerly been made by one or two families; but they had been attacked by Indians, and those who were not killed driven off. The stream abounds with trout, perch, and catfish, as do nearly all the watercourses in this section of Texas. Some of our party, who were first in, amused themselves by fishing, and shooting alligators, the latter being too plentiful for any useful purposes.

On the arrival of the beef cattle, one of them was selected, shot, and dressed with the greatest expedition, and then followed the cooking and eating of both dinner and supper. We had made no stop during the day, which necessarily brought both meals together and good appetites to do them justice.

Our fare was simple enough—roasted or broiled beef, cooked on sticks or ramrods before the fire, with salt, coffee, and sugar. No breadstuffs were provided, unless a small quantity of rice can be dignified with that title; but the appetites we contracted during our long ride across the high, dry, and bracing prairies served us instead of bread and dessert, and a more hearty meal it has seldom been my lot to partake of.

Our meal over, knots of the volunteers would congregate, here and there, around the camp fires, telling stories of the marvellous and spinning long yarns about border forays, buffalo hunts, and brushes with the Indians of the prairies. The stories of buffalo hunting, in particular, were eagerly listened to, as it was known that in ten days we should be in the best range for these animals in Texas.

An hour or two would be whiled away in this manner, and then preparations would be made for *retiring* to sleep—a very simple process upon a campaign. A person has only to pick out a soft place upon the ground, roll himself up in his blanket, and take immediate possession of his bedroom; and though people who have never lived "out of doors" may picture anything but comfort with such lodgings, sounder, sweeter, and more refreshing sleep never visited the downiest couch than can be found upon the earth on one of our western prairies. Should any of my readers ever undertake a tour of the kind, and find any difficulty in getting to sleep, I can recommend a plan to bring about that desirable object which has never been known to fail in a single instance: *just count the stars.*

As the days were now extremely warm, early morning starts were recommended and adopted. Accordingly, at daybreak on the 22d of June, we were awa-

kened by the cheering notes of the *reveille.* We had a small but tolerably well-organized band with us, including some two or three clarionets, a horn and bugle, besides fifes and drums. To the latter instruments was assigned the task of waking us in the morning; and at first there was something so inspiriting in the lively notes of the *reveille* breaking the deep stillness of the early dawn, that with me farther sleep was uncared for. I was heartily tired of it before the campaign was half over.

Notwithstanding our early start, we made but twelve miles this day, encamping on Opossum Creek, as there was no water beyond within several miles. During this day we passed the scene of an Indian fight which took place a year or two previous, and in which Major Howard, having drawn a party of Camanches into an ambuscade, gave them a severe drubbing. His men were fortunate enough to discover the Indians before these had seen their white enemies, giving the latter every advantage. Knowing, full well, that he never could come up with the Camanches in a chase, or provoke them into an open fight on the prairies, for in numbers the two parties were nearly equal,* Major H. resorted to a stratagem. Secreting his men in a thick grove of timber, he started off alone, well mounted, in the direction of the enemy. The moment the Indians saw him they considered his scalp as certain as though it was already hanging at their saddle-skirts, and with frightful yells gave chase. The gallant officer trusted to his steed, at a time when a stumble would have been inevitable destruction to both. The Texans, in their covert, could plainly hear the distant whoops

* The Camanches, even on the prairies, never attack the whites unless they greatly outnumber them.

of the savages, and hugged still closer the trees behind which they were sheltered. With almost lightning speed the pursued and pursuers scoured across the prairie, the former leading the savages directly within range of his own men. When at a point opposite the Texans, and within a few yards' distance, a well-directed volley tumbled seven of the Camanches dead from their horses. So sudden and unexpected was this reception, that the Indians turned their horses and made a precipitate retreat. One only remained behind, whose heroic conduct deserves a passing remark. Among the dead was his brother, and in endeavouring to save the body from the hands of the Texans the savage lost his own life. He dismounted, and absolutely succeeded in packing his lifeless brother upon his horse amid a shower of bullets; but while mounting, a well-directed rifle-ball pierced him to the heart, and the brothers came together to the ground. Not one of Major Howard's men was injured.

In the night we passed at Opossum Creek we were visited by a tremendous storm of thunder, lightning, and wind, although but little rain fell; our tent had been pitched, and, as we thought, securely; but the first heavy gust of wind carried it completely from its fastenings, and the rest of the night, to quote the expression of one of our men, we "took plain without kiver."

Our next day's travel carried us across rolling prairies, not a tree being in sight in any direction. Here and there, in the distance, small gangs of buffaloes could be seen scampering off, the scouting parties, it would seem, of the immense herds we were soon to encounter. Several of the huge animals were run down and killed during the day by some of our hunters, and that night, for the first time, I made a meal of buffalo meat—one

of those killed being a fat cow, and her flesh of fine texture and delicious sweetness. Two buffaloes had also been killed on the previous day; but they were old and poor, and nothing but their tongues was brought in.

Large numbers of petrifactions, some of them uncommonly perfect, were found in the vicinity of our camp on Deer Creek. Although the distance must be some three hundred miles from the seacoast, we still found fossil specimens of oysters and other shell-fish in abundance, and in good preservation. I remember one oyster, in particular, the shell of which, on being forced open, displayed the edible part of that delicate luxury in form and colour so natural that I could not help thinking of pepper, salt, vinegar and a fork, at once.

The stories this night in camp were all in relation to buffalo, the abundance of "sign" in the shape of tracks, and places where the grass had been eaten close, plainly denoting that we were in the vicinity of a large herd. The old campaigners, and there were many among us, told stories of the immense number they had seen at a time, while the harum-scarum youngsters of the camp would listen eagerly to their tales, manifesting, at the same time, a restless impatience to be among the huge monarchs of the prairies.

"How many buffalo did you ever see at one time?" asked a young man, whose greatest achievement had been the bringing down a fat buck, addressing one of the oldest backwoodsmen in camp.

"Can't say, exactly—probably between two and three million!" replied the old one, with a cool, matter-of-fact indifference, as much as to say that he was keeping as near the truth as possible.

I was an attentive listener to this conversation, and could not but remark the singular expression on the

countenance of the young man. At first, he partially closed his left eye, and opening his right to its utmost width, gazed intently in the face of the old hunter with a look half comic, half incredulous. Then, as if thinking he might not have fully understood the answer to his question, he turned his head to one side, somewhat after the manner of a hog in an oak grove listening for the fall of an acorn, and curving his left hand into the form of a half-moon and placing it behind his ear, so as to be certain of hearing every word, he again addressed his older and more experienced friend with "Perhaps I mistook your answer—*what* number of buffalo did you say you had seen at one time?"

"Between two and three million!" repeated the old one, with a countenance as immovable as though it had been made of cast iron.

"Y-e-s," drawled the youngster, with that peculiar tone and expression which signify that one neither believes nor disbelieves a story, or in other words, intimating that while he did not wish the old campaigner to think he altogether discredited the number, he was at the same time anxious to avoid being considered over credulous by entirely swallowing a story which might possibly be intended as a quiz. As for myself, I did not believe a word the old hunter said, but rather thought he was indulging an appetite for which all of his class are notorious, that of "stretching" their stories far beyond the line between the probable and incredible. Since then, however—in fact the very next day—I "saw sights" which induced me to alter my mind, and to give the aged borderer more credit for keeping within the bounds of probability than I was at first willing to accord him. I do not say that I have seen "between two and three million" at the same time; but