

taking formal possession, sold it the following year, as we have seen, to the United States. As soon as it was understood that Texas was in the possession of the United States, colonization from the States east of the Mississippi began, and within fifteen years there were nearly ten thousand white people settled there.

But in the year 1819 the residents of Texas awoke one morning to learn that the United States in purchasing Florida from Spain had given up Texas to that country in part payment therefor. They had supposed (they stated in a vigorous protest made to the government at Washington) themselves safe under the protection of the government of the United States, and now they found themselves suddenly "abandoned to the dominion of the crown of Spain, and left a prey to all those exactions which Spanish rapacity is fertile in devising," by a treaty to which they were no party. Their protest was, of course, in vain.

In 1821 Moses Austin, a native of Connecticut, but who had become a Spanish subject by residence in New Orleans while that city was under Spanish rule, obtained from the Spanish Viceroy in Mexico, Juan Ruiz de Apodaca,

"the Unfortunate," a grant of a large tract of land having a frontage of one hundred miles along the Gulf coast, and extending a greater distance into the interior of Texas. He was to induce three hundred families to colonize there and develop the country. Each family was to receive a square league of land, and for every hundred families he succeeded in colonizing, Austin was to receive a snug little farm of *five square leagues*. Moses Austin died in less than five months after obtaining this grant, leaving Stephen F. Austin, his son, to carry out his schemes for colonization.

It was two months after he had signed the contract with Austin that the career in Mexico of Apodaca "the Unfortunate" closed. In the preceding pages the reader has seen the changes which took place in rapid succession in "the party of the first part" in that transaction, from a tottering colonial government, to a weak empire, and then to an unstable republic. When, upon the death of his father, Stephen F. Austin went to the city of Mexico to obtain a confirmation of the grant, the government was in its transition state from the empire to the republic. It required months of negotiations to obtain what he wanted. In the course of these negotiations

he received the title of "**E**mpresario" (from the Spanish *empresa*, an enterprise), and was vested with civil jurisdiction over his colonists.

Returning to Texas, Austin set out with energy to accomplish the difficult task he had undertaken. He laid out the town—now the capital of the State and bearing his name—then known as San Felipe de Austin. In 1825, having fully complied with the terms of the original contract, he obtained a second grant, and in 1827 and 1828 he secured yet others. He was thus the means of introducing over fifteen hundred colonists into the country. There were rival *empresarios* by this time, and one of them got into trouble with the Mexican government, and led his colonists to declare their independence and organize the "State of Fredonia," intending to include nearly the whole of Texas. This came near involving all the colonists in war with Mexico, which must have proved disastrous to Austin's colonies as well as the others. But Austin's colonists proved their loyalty to Mexico by aiding in putting down the rebellion.

In 1830 the white population of Texas was estimated at forty thousand; but instead of being provided with a separate State govern-

ment, the Texans were within the jurisdiction of the State of Coahuila, south of the Rio Grande, and peopled entirely by Mexicans. It was in that year that the tyrannous rule of Bustamente began in Mexico. His attitude toward the colonists was far from encouraging. He repealed laws by which they had been protected, forbade citizens of the United States to hold lands in Mexico, and, worst of all, to enforce his new laws he stationed troops at various points in Texas, and built forts at the most thriving towns of the colonists. He also extended the jurisdiction of his military courts over Texas in the place of the civil authority conferred upon the *empresarios*. The colonists were not the kind of men to submit tamely to such tyranny, and to all these measures of Bustamente they opposed themselves most vigorously. An encounter took place at Fort Velasco, one of the forts built by Bustamente, and garrisoned by over two hundred Mexicans. After an engagement lasting eleven hours the Mexicans were forced to surrender, and were disarmed by a body of Texas volunteers (June, 1832). Nacogdoches was likewise taken by the Texans, and thus the clouds of war blew over for a time. But it was deemed best on the part

of the Texans that their country, having a population composed almost wholly of Americans, should be separated from Coahuila, and erected into a distinct State. A constitution was accordingly prepared, in form resembling that of most of our States, though of course adapted to Mexican laws; and Stephen F. Austin was sent to the city of Mexico to petition the erection of Texas into a State.

Gomez Farias was at the head of affairs at the time, and Austin found him unfriendly to the cause of Texas. After long and tedious delays, Austin wrote to the Texans advising them to organize "a local government for Texas as a State of the Mexican Confederation, under the law of the 7th of May, 1824, even should the Mexican government finally refuse its consent," and soon afterwards set out on his return to Texas. His letter fell into the hands of Farias, who fancied he saw treason therein. Austin was overtaken and carried back to the Mexican capital a prisoner. For nearly two years he remained a prisoner, a part of the time in solitary confinement. He was finally allowed to return to his home in September, 1835. Besides this insult to a commissioner sent to treat with the Mexican government upon matters

pertaining to the welfare of his State, other grounds were furnished for the revolt of Texas.

Santa Anna, at the head of the army of Barragan, in April, 1835, set out to reduce certain rebellious districts to submission, and while avowing the strongest friendship for Texas, began to make inroads upon the rights and liberties of the colonists. The inhabitants of the town of Góliad were disarmed, many were impressed into his army, and finally notice was given that Mexican troops were to be quartered upon the town. A spirit of resistance to such acts of despotism grew up in Texas. It needed but one more decisive act of tyranny to bring on the trouble that had long been threatening. Late in September, 1835, an armed force of one hundred and fifty Mexicans was sent to Gonzales to secure a cannon used by the inhabitants of that town to defend themselves against the attacks of the Indians. A company of Texan volunteers, at first only eighteen in number, but increased to about one hundred and sixty in the course of a day or two, met the Mexicans, and after deciding to take the initiative in the war then clearly seen to be pending, drove them back (Oct. 2, 1835). This was

to Texas what Concord and Lexington were to the United States. The whole country arose. The Texans rallied around the little company at Gonzales; it grew into a regiment, elected officers, and was the nucleus of the army that fought for and won the independence of Texas. A few days later fifty Texans attacked and captured the Mexican garrison at Góliad, took twenty-five prisoners, and arms and military stores to the value of \$10,000, and in a few weeks the forts on the Nueces River fell into the hands of the Texans.

In November, 1835, some of the leading Texans met in council and adopted a declaration which admirably expressed the relations existing between the Texan colonies and the Mexican government. It stated that the federal institutions of Mexico had been overthrown, and the social compact existing between Texas and the other members of the Mexican confederacy dissolved; the people of Texas availing themselves of their natural rights had taken up arms in defence of their homes and liberties, both threatened by the encroachments of military despots, and also in defence of the Mexican Constitution of 1824, so rudely set aside by the Congress of

1835, which under Santa Anna's manipulation had seated Barragan. Support was offered to such Mexican States as would take up arms against military despotism. The right of the then nominal authorities of Mexico to govern Texas was denied. War was declared against the usurpers of the Mexican government so long as their troops remained in Texas, and the right of Texas to withdraw from the Union during the disorganization of the federal system and the reign of despotism was stoutly maintained. And having assumed this manly position, the Texans formed a temporary government, elected a governor, appointed Gen. Sam Houston commander-in-chief of their army to be raised, and sent Austin to the United States to secure aid for them in the struggle then begun, and likely to be prolonged.

The army of which General Houston was thus appointed commander never numbered more than ten thousand men, was never well organized nor well equipped. The arms were mostly rifles and hunting-knives, and written history has never done full justice to the events following the Texans' declaration of war. The wresting of their territory from a nation having a population of eight millions

and an excellent standing army, and the establishment of a republic of their own in the face of many obstacles, belong properly to the history of our own country, and are entitled to a high and honorable place therein.

The town of San Antonio had been occupied and fortified by Mexican troops under Gen. Martin Cos, sent by Santa Anna to restrain the rising spirit of independence in Texas. On the 5th of December, 1835, the place was assaulted and taken by about three hundred Texans. By the terms of their surrender the Mexicans were to retire beyond the Rio Grande and not to oppose in any way the re-establishment of the Constitution of 1824.

In his efforts to obtain aid from the United States, Austin found that it would be necessary for the Texans to declare their independence definitively. This was accordingly done on the 2d of March, 1836. A constitution was likewise prepared and adopted, and the republic of Texas began its existence. Upon the very first page of its history is recorded one of the most heroic incidents of modern times.

Santa Anna was himself advancing upon Texas with an army, intending to subjugate

the new republic. In February, 1836, he arrived with one division of his army before San Antonio. Col. W. B. Travis, a young Texan officer, with about one hundred and fifty men withdrew to the Alamo, a mission located there in 1744 and named after the cottonwood trees growing in the vicinity. It had ceased to be used as a parish church in 1793, and since that time had become the fortress of San Antonio. The events then about to transpire within the walls of the old Spanish mission made the Alamo the battle-cry in the war of Texas Independence, and have given the name of "The Alamo City" to San Antonio, the flourishing metropolis of Western Texas. Travis had fourteen cannons of different sizes, and he raised the flag of the temporary government of Texas,—the Mexican colors, red, white, and green, with the figures "1824" in place of the Mexican Eagle on the white stripe. Santa Anna in person conducted the siege of the Alamo. In sending for reinforcements (which never came) Travis wrote, "I shall never surrender or retreat;" and upon the tenth day of the siege, when he wrote to hasten the reinforcements he stated that he was surrounded by a force variously estimated at from fifteen hun-

dred to six thousand men. Cannon-balls were falling among his men all the time, yet he was prepared to hold the place against the enemy until relief came, or *perish in its defence*. He kept his word. To those within the fortress he announced the desperate position they were all in, but declared his intention to sell life as dearly as possible. Almost to a man they agreed to stand by him.

It was at four o'clock in the morning of Sunday, March 6, that the final assault was made and the Alamo fell into the hands of Santa Anna. But the little band fought to the last. Travis fell early in the action, sabred by a Mexican, but not before he had plunged his own sword into the body of his antagonist, both dying at the same time. It had been agreed that when the whole case seemed utterly hopeless to the garrison a match was to be applied to the powder magazine. The Texan appointed to perform this final act was killed with the match in his hand. The whole garrison was put to the sword. Of the brave defenders of the Alamo not one was spared. "Thermopylae had her messengers of defeat, but the Alamo had none."

The same month another fearful tragedy

was enacted at Góliad. In the advance of the other division of the Mexican army, San Patricio had fallen into the hands of the Mexicans, and two separate bodies of Texans had been attacked and badly handled. Col. James W. Fannin, in command of four hundred men at Góliad, deemed it necessary to evacuate that place and hasten to Victoria. On the way, at Colita, he encountered the Mexicans, and a fight ensued, lasting all day and resulting in a loss of fourteen Texans killed, and sixty (including Fannin) wounded. In the night the Mexicans received reinforcements, and when morning dawned the Texans found themselves completely surrounded, and with no course open but to surrender on the best terms they could make. The terms accepted were these: they were to be treated as prisoners of war, *according to the usages of civilized nations*; . . . they were to be sent to Copano and thence in eight days, to the United States, the officers on parole. Upon being taken back to Góliad they were joined by a party sent out from that place, which had also fallen into the hands of the Mexicans. On the morning of Palm Sunday, March 27, they were all taken out under pretext of starting on their journey home, and

*every one of them was shot.* This is what a Mexican officer in Góliad wrote to a friend at home: "At six o'clock this morning the execution of 412 American prisoners was begun and continued until eight o'clock, when the last of the number was shot. At eleven began the operation of burning their bodies. . . . They were all young men (the oldest not more than thirty) and of fine, florid complexions."

Houston had with him near Gonzales less than four hundred raw recruits when he learned of the massacre of the Alamo garrison, and at the same time that three thousand Mexicans were in pursuit of him under the command of Santa Anna himself. Retreating before this overwhelming force the Texan soldiers had to take the families of the colonists along with them; for to escape butchery at the hands of the Mexicans they were willing to suffer death by any other means. On the retreat the news of the slaughter of Fannin and his men reached the Texan commander, and he felt that the time had come to decide the fate of the new republic. The brave words of Travis at the Alamo inspired him to similar utterances. "If only three hundred men remain with me," he said, "I

shall die with them or conquer our enemies." He gathered up all the available troops, and then had less than seventy cavalry, about seven hundred infantry, and two small pieces of artillery. Upon reviewing this meagre army, Houston remarked, "With these we must conquer or die."

The decisive battle was fought on the banks of the San Jacinto River on the 21st of April, 1836. It secured to the Texans the object of all their struggles. Opposed to them were fifteen hundred Mexicans under General Cos, despite his parole upon his capture at San Antonio the year before. The Texans lost eight killed and seventeen wounded. The Mexicans lost officers of every rank, and over six hundred privates killed and two hundred wounded. Seven hundred Mexicans fell into the hands of the Texans as prisoners, and among them were Santa Anna and his staff. Santa Anna acknowledged the Independence of Texas and was after a time allowed his liberty, and going first to the United States, eventually returned to Mexico. His subsequent plea in regard to Texas was that his acknowledgment of its independence had been extorted from him under duress of imprisonment.

The independence of Texas thus secured, the republic was recognized by the United States, France, England, and Belgium. For eight years it maintained its separate existence, coming into the American Union in 1844 as the twenty-eighth State.

## CHAPTER IX.

### MORE PRESIDENTS, MORE REVOLUTIONS, AND THE WAR WITH THE UNITED STATES.

Bustamente again President. — The French "Pie Claim." — Santa Anna Regains his Popularity. — Election of 1843, under a New Constitution. — Santa Anna Exiled to Cuba. — José Joaquin de Herrera. — Mariano Paredes y Arrillaga. — His Monarchical Tendencies. — Nicolas Bravo. — Mariano Salas. — Return of Santa Anna. — Invasion of Mexico by United States Troops. — Causes of the War. — Disputed Territory Occupied by Gen. Zachary Taylor. — Battles of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma. — Capture of Monterey and Battle of Buena Vista. — General Frémont and the American Navy secure California. — Arrival of General Scott off Vera Cruz. — Capture of the City. — Battle of Cerro Gordo. — Jalapa and Puebla Taken. — Puente Nacional. — Battle of Pedregal. — Casa Mata and Molino del Rey. — Chapultepec Taken. — Grant at San Cosme. — Occupation of the Capital. — Flight of Santa Anna. — Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo. — Its Peculiarities. — Resting-place of American Soldiers.

**S**URPRISING as it may at first seem, — though nothing that occurs in Mexican history should occasion surprise, — in the year 1837 Acting-President Corro was succeeded by Gen. Anastasio Bustamente, who, returning from his exile, became president of Mexico for the second time by the election of Congress. Belonging to a party opposed to Gomez Farias, he set out to