

THROUGH TEXAS.

A Visit to the Only Survivor of the Bold Buccaneers.

The Veteran Cronea's Recollections of Service with the Pirates.

Lafitte and His Favorite Lieutenant—The Freebooter's Camp on Snake Island.

The Mutiny on the Privateer—A Graphic Version of San Jacinto—Four Generations on One Porch—Bolivar Peninsula Phenomena—The High Islands—The Oil Ponds.

Special Correspondence of the Globe-Democrat.

ROLL OVER, BOLIVAR PENINSULA, TEX., August 25.—At the age of 87, Charles Cronea remembers the name of the street and the number of the house in which he was born in a town of the South of France. He is the last living link with the days of Lafitte and the bold buccaneers of the Gulf. Seventy-one years ago he was a cabin boy on a pirate ship. He sailed these waters with Campbell, who had been Lafitte's lieutenant. He saw many a chase at sea. He was there when the "Long Tom," mounted on a pivot, sent the huge 18-pound ball across the bow of the doomed merchantman. He saw the torch applied to the prize, and the choicest part of the cargo brought aboard the privateer. After a mutiny he waited for the cutlass to fall across his neck, and then lived to see ninety-two children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. The scenes of those days come back to the old man with wonderful freshness. He talks freely, stopping now and then to explain that it was "an ugly scrape," and that when he got out of it he had "had enough of that kind of thing to last him all his life."

A strip of land runs down the Texas coast from near the Louisiana line. That is Bolivar Peninsula. It terminates in Bolivar Point. Five miles across a channel from "the point" Galveston Island begins and the City of Galveston has its site. About midway of its length Bolivar Peninsula narrows until upon the map it is only a black line. That is Roll Over. Upon Roll Over is the home of Charles Cronea. When the Gulf is angry its spray is dashed against the old man's front door. From his back door stretches the great Galveston Bay. The veteran is as near to the salt water as he can get without being afloat.

To Roll Over was a journey not soon to be forgotten. It began an hour before daylight. When the sun came up out of the bosom of

the Gulf the White Wings, best of the Galveston yacht fleet, was speeding with well-filled sails straight for the tall white and black ringed light-house on Bolivar point. Bolivar once had a boom. "The point" was staked off and town lots were put upon the market. With that the boom ended. There are not enough people living at the point now to occupy the houses which the Government built when it was constructing jetties on the mattress plan. A small boat yard, where the craft which ply the bay can be hauled out and



MR. CRONEA AT 87.

repaired, is the point's only industry. Broadway and the town lots are unsettled save by mosquitoes, remarkable for numbers, size and aggressiveness.

When Mr. Pettit, of Galveston, a friend of the old veteran, learned of the intended visit, he said: "I'd advise you to wait a week. The mosquitoes are awful bad on Bolivar just now. There has been rain and the wind has blown from the north. That always means mosquitoes."

Mr. Pettit's warning could not be heeded. It was well remembered. The early morning sail was magnificent. The ride across the flat from the point to the light house was misery. Mr. Crockett, the light-house keeper, came out with a serious face.

"Last night," said he, "Was the worst of theseason. We had to keep smudge fires going all night long to save the horses. If you take the beach I expect you can get along. But I wouldn't advise you to try the ridge road."

The light-house keeper cut a mosquito-bar in two, and, like a good Samaritan, saw that heads and faces were well covered. He brought out gloves and stockings to be drawn over the hands. He furnished a bottle of coal oil. Then the battle with the mosquitoes of Bolivar began. It lasted until the beach was reached. Before, behind and on both sides of the wagon went the mosquitoes. They made no noise. These Bolivar mosquitoes are not singers. They are too full of business to waste time on music. There was one honorable way out of the contest. The son of the lighthouse man, who accompanied us as guide,



WHITE WINGS.

philosopher and friend, knew that way. By the shortest cut he made for the beach and drove down to the water's edge, where the light surf coming in washed the wheels. And thus he followed the water line hour after hour. The mosquitoes were outwitted. Before the damp salt breeze they fell back. It was a great relief, the full measure of which was appreciated every time a little excursion was made inland. Ten thousand cattle were strung along the surf line, hugging it closely to escape the mosquitoes. They, too, had discovered the only possible relief.

The light-house man's boy is an authority on mosquitoes. He pointed out a section of the peninsula where he confidently asserted mosquitoes live the year round. Bolivar is famous for its climate. Lying between the

waters of gulf and bay, it is a region of almost perpetual vegetation. Frost is of the rarest occurrence. Oranges and pomegranates thrive, and the "early vegetables" antedate Florida's crop. There may be beaches equal to that along Bolivar peninsula. There can be none better. As the tide goes out it leaves a stretch of white sand, pounded by the surf as hard as asphalt. The wheels make a mark, but cut no impression. So slight is the dip toward the sea that the beach seems a dead level. And this roadway of nature can be followed straight as the crow flies hour after hour.

The origin of the name of Roll Over is interesting. Some people will tell you that by reason of the narrowness of the peninsula at this point the high waves of the Gulf have been known to roll over the neck and into the bay. But the old inhabitants have an entirely different explanation. They say that the smugglers and pirates used to bring their plunder from the Gulf to this place. The smugglers could quickly roll over the casks of brandy and the bales of goods from the Gulf side to the bay, and thus reach inland waters and their market without detection. Old Mr. Cronea, with a laugh, said he reckoned the theory of the smuggling use of Roll Over was about right. "That is the way I think it got the name," he said.

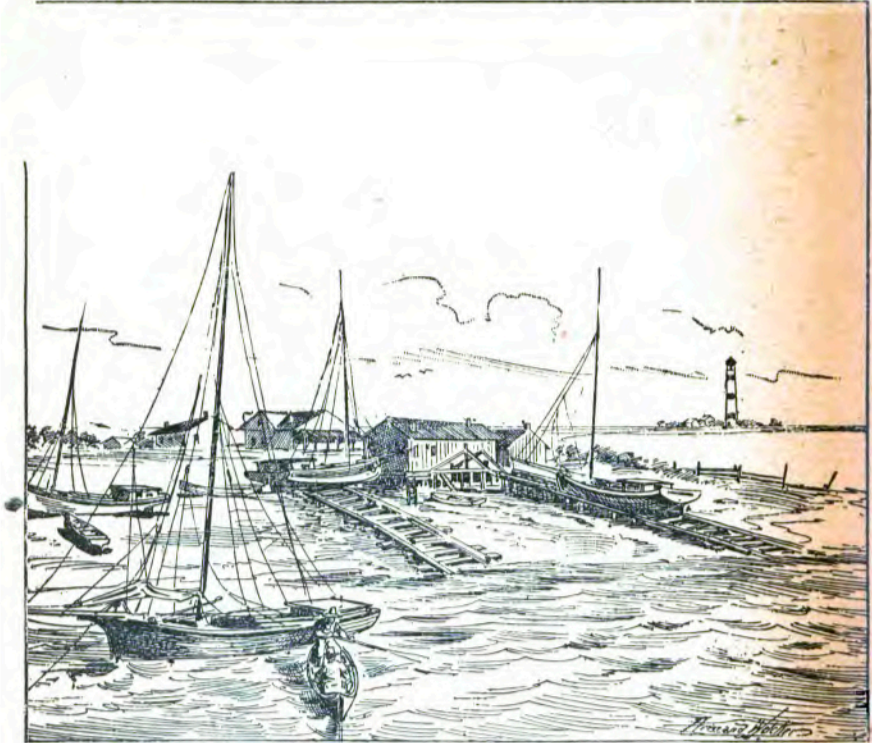
The veteran was born in 1805, on the 14th of January. He was only a boy when he found himself in the pirate service, but his recollections are clear. Some of the places he mentions have faded almost out of memory, or have new names. To some of his words the old man gives a pronunciation which has a distinctly piratical flavor. Cutlasses he always calls "cut-lash-es." The bayonet is always "the bagnet." And occasionally he "swears like a pirate," in the gentlest of voices.

Hanging on the wall of the Roll Over home is a picture of the old man taken at 70. It shows that he comes well by his remarkable preservation. He shakes his head half mournfully and says "you should have seen my legs and arms a few years ago. My arms were so big and as hard as iron. Now feel them" The eyes are hazel. They were as black as the sloe-like windows of the soul through which the great grandson looks wonderingly to-day. The veteran's hair is long, wavy, thin and silvery. It was thick, bushy and jet black. But the mind has outlived the body. The old man speaks quickly and decidedly. He is at no loss for words or ideas. He talked for two hours without any apparent feeling of fatigue and then he said: "There, that's all I can tell you." But a question started a fresh train of reminiscences. The stock was almost inexhaustible.

Before he was 12 years old Charles Cronea was on a French frigate. He served awhile on the coast of Africa, and then left without waiting for the formalities. He reached New York and shipped as cabin boy on a vessel going to Charleston. His captain took on a load of cotton. To his consternation the boy learned that the destination was Havre de Grace. This meant capture and the penalty for the French leave he had taken of the frigate.

came to us. His ship was there at anchor. He talked to us awhile and we went on board his ship and served with him. I was too young to be one of the crew. He made me a cabin boy."

That was young Cronea's introduction to the buccaneers. During his service he saw many ships taken, plundered and burned. "Capt. Campbell," said Mr. Cronea, "was a good man. He would not kill any of the crews. He always made them prisoners, took



BOLIVAR POINT.

"I left the ship," continued the old man, "and went on board one going to Liverpool. That was what Capt. Lambert said, but when we got outside of Charleston harbor a man who called himself Jones came aboard and said he wanted some of us to go with him. Our captain seemed perfectly willing. I suppose it was well understood between him and our captain. Fifteen of us agreed to go with Jones. There was one Catalonian in the party. The rest of us were French. We went with Jones and he sailed away for the Gulf of Mexico. When he arrived off Corpus Christi he landed us on an island and left some food with us. After awhile Capt. Campbell

them to some point near the coast and put them in small boats so that they could get ashore. Most of the vessels we captured were in the trade between Tampico and the Island of Cuba."

"Didn't you have some fighting to make the captures?"

"Oh, no. They always gave up. It wasn't any use to resist."

"You were prepared to fight if it was necessary?"

"Yes, we had pistols, the old-fashioned one-barreled kind, with flints. We also had cut-lash-es. They were big things, as keen as a razor. They weighed about five pounds

When one of those knives came down it was good-bye Coly."

"What sort of a crew did you have, pretty rough?"

"We had the same discipline as on board a man-of-war. We couldn't have done what we did if it hadn't been so. Any man who misbehaved was punished."

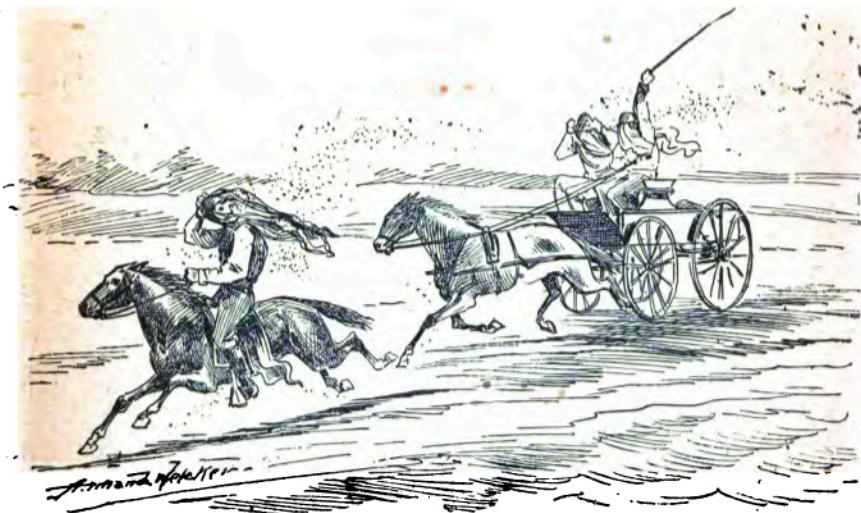
"Did you sail under the black flag?"

"Oh, no! We hoisted the flag of Carthage."

Both Lafitte and Campbell were particular to observe the forms of legitimate warfare. They hoisted on their vessels the flag of a struggling republic, and the letters of marque under which they plundered right and left,

and the fore mast had the square sails of the brig. This gave speed and it also permitted of the peculiar armament. The big gun was mounted in front of the mast and it could be wheeled to point in almost any direction except in the rear.

The old man's eyes twinkled as he told of some of the feats of the clipper from Baltimore. "Campbell's ship," said he, "could sail fourteen miles an hour on a close haul. There wasn't anything that could get away from her. Once we took after the mail boat between Tampico and New Orleans. We overtook her in about two hours and spoke her. As soon as Capt. Campbell learned that she was an American vessel he let her go."



A MOSQUITO CHASE.

were more or less regular. Lafitte was a blacksmith to begin with in New Orleans. He adopted smuggling, which was very popular on the Louisiana coast, and when afterwards he set up his establishment on Galveston Island, he had a fleet and a thousand followers.

John Quincy Adams in his diary tells of a visit he made to Baltimore. Upon investigation he discovered that the merchants of that city were engaged quite generally in fitting out vessels to engage in privateering on the Gulf of Mexico. He says it inspired a peculiar feeling to find that his entertainers were in this strange business. Mr. Cronea says that the vessel on which he served under Capt. Campbell was from Baltimore. The craft was known as an hermaphrodite brig. She had two masts. The rear mast was sloop-rigged

Campbell, like his chief, Lafitte, would never interfere with an American ship. That was the unwritten law of the pirates of the gulf. Lafitte always considered himself an American. In the State Capitol at Baton Rouge hangs a large oil painting commemorative of the battle of New Orleans. In the very thickest of the fight, directing the work of a battery, is a gigantic figure which is pointed out to the visitor as that of Lafitte, the pirate. It is history that Lafitte fought most bravely under Gen. Jackson in that decisive battle of the War of 1812, and that a pardon was issued to him for it. Before that a price had been set upon Lafitte's head, and his brother had been thrown into prison by the American Governor of Louisiana. The commander of the British forces approaching the mouth of the Mississippi sent to the chief of the smugglers, then hav-

ing his headquarters at Barataria, an offer of \$30,000 to join him. He added this message: "I call upon you, with your brave followers, to enter the service of Great Britain, in which you shall have the rank of captain. Lands will be given you all, in proportion to your respective ranks, on peace taking place, and I invite you upon these terms. Your ships to be placed under the commanding officer of this station, but I guarantee their full value at all events."

Lafitte, keeping up the form of negotiations, wrote a member of the Louisiana Legislature: "Though proscribed by my adopted country I will never let slip any occasion of serving her. Of this you will see convincing proof."

To the Governor who had put a price on his head the pirate sent this message:

"I am a stray sheep, wishing to return to the sheep fold. If you were thoroughly acquainted with the nature of my offenses, I should appear to you much less guilty and still worthy to discharge the duties of a good citizen. I have

sent a message to the pirate that he must move from Barataria or behave. On that warning Lafitte with his followers broke up the old headquarters, sailed down the Texas coast, and settled on the island which is now the site of Galveston. There the leader ruled a colony of buccaneers and there Campbell joined him.

Lafitte lived in a red house which he built near what is now the foot of Fifteenth street, in Galveston. He threw up breastworks around the house and mounted some cannon. The colony grew until a thousand men made their homes on the island and acknowledged allegiance to no living person save Lafitte. The ships of these buccaneers preyed on the Spanish commerce of the whole Gulf of Mexico. Mr. Adams need have had no such squeamishness over the fact that his Baltimore hosts were the silent partners of Lafitte. The goods which the buccaneers captured and smuggled into the United States were handled by many Boston merchants who were not



THE YOUNG IDEA IN BOLIVAR.

never sailed under any flag but the Republic of Carthage, and my vessels are perfectly regular in that respect. If I could have brought my prizes into the ports of this State I should not have employed the illicit means that have caused me to be proscribed. I decline saying more on the subject until I have the honor of your Excellency's answer. Should you not answer favorably to my ardent desires I declare that I will instantly leave the country to avoid the imputation of having cooperated toward an invasion which can not fail to take place, and rest secure in the acquittal of my conscience."

That is good language for a pirate. A committee of safety ignored the proceedings of the Governor against Lafitte, and assured him immunity for his past. Gen. Jackson gave the Baratarian leader a post of great danger. To the work which the pirate band did with their guns history attributes much of the credit for that victory on the 8th of January. The promise of immunity was kept. Lafitte's past and that of his followers was condoned. But of long afterwards the United States Govern-

above being "fences" for pirates. Lafitte had his agents in New Orleans; they went on "Change daily, and orders were given them openly for the goods which they had to dispose of. Boston, Baltimore and other commercial centers were ready "partakers."

When the freebooters' camp on Galveston Island was at the height of its glory Lafitte was a man of about 40. He was over 6 feet in height, strongly built, handsome of features, hazel eyes and black hair. In manner he was very polite. It was a motley gathering of outlaws, but Lafitte ruled them in the same free and easy way that Robin Hood did his merry men. There was always a square divide of the prize money, and contentment reigned on the island. Several miles down the island, below the suburbs of Galveston, is a grove of live oaks visible a long way out on the water. This is known as Lafitte's Grove. Tradition has it that the pirates often assembled under the shade to divide their booty.

The freebooters were not without a form of government on the island. They called themselves subjects of the republic under the flag of which they sailed. They elected one freebooter "Judge of the Admiralty," another "Administrator of the Revenue," a third "Secretary of the Public Treasury," a fourth "Marine Commandant," and so on. But Lafitte was king pirate, and his word was law. The man who held the high-sounding office of "Judge of the Admiralty," had occasion, years afterward to make a statement about this colony. It was to the effect that "the sole view and object of the persons comprising the colony was to capture Spanish vessels and property, without any idea of aiding the revolution in Mexico or that of any other of

hang him. With many promises Brown set sail. Several days afterward Brown and his crew, half starved, appeared at Bolivar Point and signaled for help. They were conveyed to the freebooters' camp and Lafitte examined the men. He learned from them that Brown had robbed an American vessel near Sabine Pass. A revenue schooner had pursued. Brown had beached his boat, and had walked down the peninsula. Without any delay Lafitte had Brown hung in chains. He left the body suspended for the buzzards to feed upon. The revenue schooner sailed to the freebooters' camp. The commander went ashore and demanded the fugitives. Lafitte at once surrendered the crew, and pointing toward the swinging figure in iron said: "You will find the captain over there."



LAFITTE.

Occasionally Lafitte's vessel captured slavers. Some who paid allegiance to the pirate king were in the slave trade. Upon the arrival of a cargo of human chattels at Snake Island a curious scene was witnessed. Louisiana planters were notified and came to the market. The negroes were sold by weight. The ruling rate in the freebooters' camp was \$1 a pound. The planters drove the negroes they purchased to the frontier of the United States. There they delivered them into the hands of a customs officer, becoming informers. Under the law the informer was entitled to half of the amount realized on the seized property. The negroes were sold at auction by the United States Marshal. They were bid in by the original purchasers and informers, who thus obtained a clear legal title and the right to take their property where they pleased as the reward for their observance of the technicalities. One Louisiana slave dealer boasted of making \$65,000 in a short time by thus smuggling slaves from Lafitte's camp into the United States.

the revolted Spanish colonies." The freebooters called their town Campeachy. The island went by the name of Snake Island because of the number of serpents.

When the light-house rig stopped in front of the Cronea homestead a brilliantly colored rattlesnake lay coiled up in the sand beside the wheel.

To show how perfect was Lafitte's power over his followers the story of Capt. Brown is told. Brown came to the island and sought permission to cruise under Lafitte's auspices. Lafitte suspected Brown, and when he gave him his orders told him that if he molested the commerce of the United States he would

The time came when the United States determined that the freebooters' camp must go. An American vessel was plundered and scuttled in Matagorda Bay. In spite of the pirate king's orders his followers did not always stop to inquire as to the nationality of a victim. Representatives of foreign powers complained at Washington about the ravages of Lafitte's fleet. A United States brig was sent to break up the camp. Lafitte went out to meet the commanding officer and escorted him over the bar. He entertained him handsomely at "the red house." The naval officer communicated his orders. Lafitte said he would obey. In the presence of the representative of the United States there was a grand distribution of prize money. The organization was disbanded. The torch was applied to the buildings and the fire burned until the camp was in ruins. Then the fleet of pirate ships was brought

together. Lafitte's favorite ship—The Bride—was put in readiness. Those freebooters who wished went with Lafitte. The others scattered. The king pirate in his flagship, with the fleet following, sailed away. He never returned to Texas. He settled on the coast of Yucatan, where he was given a concession of land for his "services on behalf of Mexican independence," and "where he lived in peace till he died." In his old age he reformed. So did many of his followers. Years afterward, when Galveston was settled by Americans who came there to lead honest lives, there was a character about the wharves who went by the name of Ben Dolliver. Ben had a brother named Jim.



MR. CRONEA AT 70.

It was the common understanding of the Galveston people that Ben and Jim Dolliver were sons of a New England minister, and that they had been pirates under Lafitte. Ben was a little bit of a dried-up fellow with a cock eye. On a certain occasion there sailed into Galveston harbor a war vessel from some Central American nation. The captain's name was Cox. He wore a splendid uniform, had an elegant sword and looked like a grandee. Commander Cox was received with distinction. One day he was on Tremont street conversing with some of the first citizens of Galveston. Ben Dolliver came rolling by. He lurched up in front of the big commander in gold lace and sword, and after close scrutiny called out in his squeaky voice:

"I know you. You're a d—d pirate."

With a terrible oath the commander drew his sword and ran at Ben. The little fellow jumped out in the middle of the street, shoved his hand into one of his wide-topped boots he wore and pulled a murderous looking knife. It was the big commander's turn to run, and he made good time until a saloon door sheltered him. Ben had recognized an old comrade of the freebooting days.

One of old man Cronea's most thrilling stories is of the mutiny which occurred on

Campbell's privateer. Next in command to Capt. Campbell was Lieut. Duvall. This trouble occurred shortly before the breaking up of the crew.

"Duvall's idea," said Mr. Cronea, "was to put to death the captain and the old crew, and take possession of the vessel with the fifteen who joined the force when I did. I don't know what he meant to do after that. I knew there was going to be a mutiny, but I didn't know it was going to take place that night. The men that Duvall got to go into the mutiny were French, except one; he was the Catalanian. The old crew were all Americans. Duvall hauled up a cask of brandy and gave it to the men. If it hadn't been for that he might have succeeded, but the brandy spoiled it all. The men Duvall had were on watch when the attack was made. The others and the captain were below. Duvall and his men could have called up the captain and killed him or made him a prisoner. Then they could have got the arms which the captain always kept in the cabin and could have killed the others as fast as they came on deck. They made the attack just about night. I was looking out of the cabin and saw it all. Campbell went on deck and the mutineers surrounded him. But they were drunk and didn't have any plan. Some wanted to kill the captain right there. Others were for letting him go or making him a prisoner. While they were quarreling about what they would do with him he put out his arms, just so, brushed them to both sides of him, made one jump and landed in the cabin. By that time the Americans, who were not in the plot, came up on deck. The captain handed out the arms and the mutineers didn't last any time. The whole fourteen of them were killed. The Catalanian was the only one who made a good fight. He had a knife in each hand. He jumped in between two of the



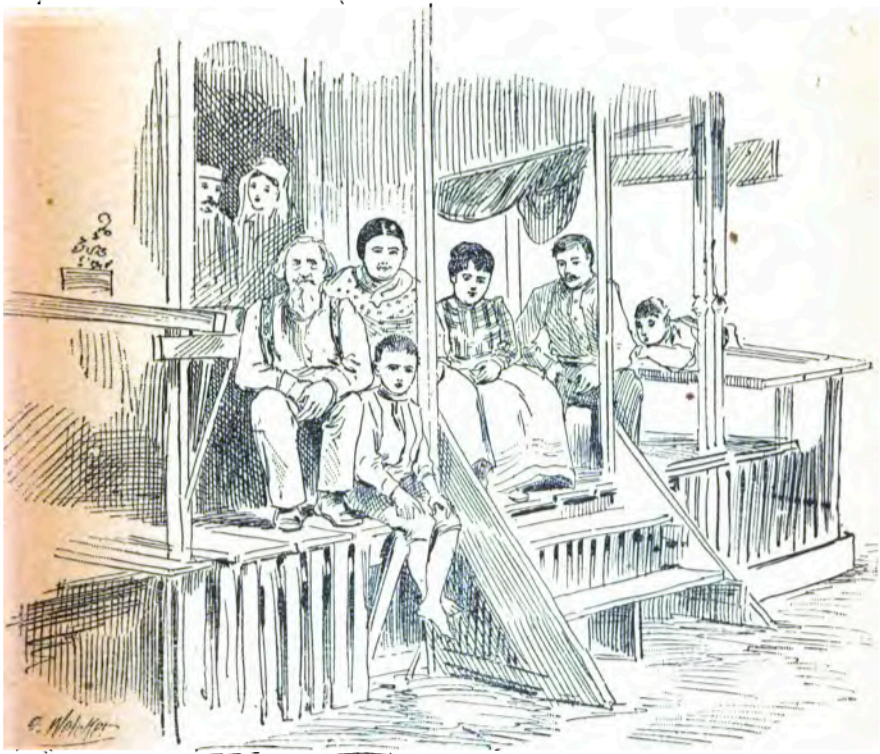
MOTIVE POWER ON BOLIVAR PENINSULA.

Americans and struck at both of them at the same time, killing them. Those were the only Americans who were killed. The Catalanian didn't get a chance to do any more. His head was taken off with a cutlash. Duvall was the only one of the mutineers who wasn't killed. They had a trial on board and condemned him to be shot, but Campbell interfered and saved his life. When the ship was off Galveston Island the captain put Duvall into a boat and sent two men with instructions to land him

and come back. - There was a ship at Galveston and we couldn't tell what she was. The captain was afraid to go in. While the two men were gone with Duvall we saw a large yawl coming out toward us. The captain got the crew together and asked them what they thought had better be done. They agreed that it was dangerous to take any chances, for we were very short-handed. Half of the crew had been killed in the mutiny. So the captain ordered the ship under way and we left without waiting for the two men who had gone with the small boat to land Duvall. We never heard of them again."

was in that desperate business," Mr. Cronea said. "The morning after the mutiny the Americans wanted to kill me. They said I was one of the party of Frenchmen and must have known of the plotting. They got around me and raised the outlashes over me and were going to cut my head off, when Capt. Campbell interfered. He told them I was in the cabin and didn't know anything about it. Then they let me off."

Campbell was Lafitte's right-hand man. He came from Maryland. His parents lived on Chesapeake Bay, near Baltimore, and he was brought up as a sailmaker. In 1812 the young



FOUR GENERATIONS ON ONE PORCH.

"I don't think Campbell made a great deal out of the business," said Mr. Cronea, in reply to a question. "I remember once that he loaded up a vessel with goods that had been taken, put some of the men aboard and started it off somewhere. They didn't tell me where it was to go. But no word ever came back from it that I heard. After he quit he lived very quietly."

Mr. Cronea describes Campbell as a man of 6 feet, well built, with dark mustache and a Celtic face. "He was a very brave man, and he didn't like to see life taken, although he

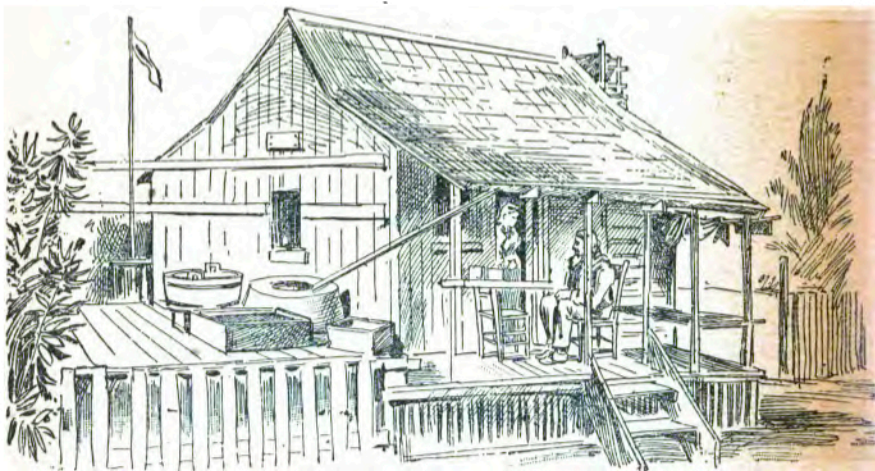
sailmaker joined the United States navy. In the battle of Lake Erie Campbell was on the Lawrence with Perry. When the Commodore was forced to leave the Lawrence and take his flag to the Niagara, Campbell was one of the crew that rowed the boat in which Perry stood holding the flag half a mile under heavy fire. After the war Campbell went back to Baltimore, but only to start out on a roving expedition which took him to New Orleans. There, with his knowledge of sea life, he soon got into the smuggling business. There was nothing strange about that. Half of the mer-

chants in New Orleans were taking goods from smugglers regularly. When Gov. Claiborne, of Louisiana, attempted to create public sentiment against this kind of vocation, he had a queer experience. Writing of it on one occasion to the Attorney General of the United States, the Governor said: "In conversation with ladies I have denounced smuggling as dishonest, and the reply was: 'That is impossible, for my grandfather, or my father, or my husband was under the Spanish Government a smuggler, and I am sure he was an honest man.'"

After Mexican independence was acknowledged, Campbell determined to give up privateering, Mr. Cronea says. There was, in

admit he had ever seen me before. He wouldn't talk about what he had done. He wouldn't admit he had been on a privateer."

His service as cabin boy on the pirate ship was not the only exciting chapter in the old man's history. Charles Cronea was in the war of Texan independence from beginning to end. He is the only survivor of the bold buccaneers of the Gulf, and he is one of the few still living who "remembered Fannin's men and the Alamo" at San Jacinto. Santa Anna had wiped out the defenders of the Alamo at San Antonio to a man. He was crowding Sam Houston and the remnant of the Texan army eastward, determined not to



THE VETERAN AT HOME.

fact, nothing else for him to do. The letters of marque which gave his commerce destroying a show of legitimacy were revoked. He sailed to a point near the coast of Louisiana where there was a famous hackberry tree. There he burned the ship and disbanded the crew.

"A good ship like that couldn't be bought for \$10,000," said Mr. Cronea. "It was to burn her. What else could he do? He couldn't go anywhere else. Peace had been declared."

"On the ship," continued Mr. Cronea, "the captain always went by the name of Carroll—Charles Carroll. He never used the name of Campbell. But after he burned the ship and settled on shore he took his right name. From the day we separated at the hackberry tree I have never seen any of the crew. Capt. Campbell I met once, years afterward. Campbell moved from place to place. I never saw him until he settled at Morse's Bluff. I heard he was living there, and went over to see him. He treated me mighty nicely, but he wouldn't

stop until he had driven them across the Sabine, entirely off Texas soil, and had occupied Galveston.

"There were only 800 of us left," Mr. Cronea said. "I was in Capt. David Garner's company. After the fall of the Alamo we retreated. Santa Anna was moving eastward. We must have fallen back more than 200 miles. The Mexicans had over 2000 men. They were two to one of us, and they had cannon. I don't believe Houston would have fought, only some of the boys got tired of retreating and went to him. They said if there wasn't going to be any fightin' they would quit and go home.

"Boys," said Houston, 'if fightin' is what you want, you shall have plenty of it. Get your dinners.'

"That was the way the battle of San Jacinto came about. We had two companies that had muskets and bagnets. The balance of us had old Kentucky flint rifles. It took about ten minutes to load 'em. But we made every shot count. We waited till 2:30 o'clock

The d—d Mexicans always sleep after dinner, you know. And by— we were on them before they knew it. They never got a chance to fire their cannon but once. We dropped when we saw the smoke of their guns and then jumped up and went on. They were on one hill and we were on another. From the time we broke camp we never stopped till we were right among them. I bet you we made a lot of them drop the first time we fired. When we got into close quarters every man drew his bowie-knife. Just before we started Houston gave us the word. 'Remember Fannin's men and the Alamo,' he said. Then when he saw the slaughter he rode in among us and cried out, 'Have mercy, men! For God's sake have mercy!' But he couldn't stop us. Nothing could stop us. The Mexicans threw away their guns and stopped fighting. One would drop on his knees and hold up his hands and say, 'Me no Alamo! Me no Alamo!' Off went his d—d head! They thought we were killing them because they had killed our men at the Alamo and they wanted to say they were not there."

"Were the Mexicans well armed?"

fighting done in the War of Texas Independence was almost without parallel in losses. At the battle of the Mission, south of San Antonio, the Mexicans had forty killed and sixty wounded, while the Texas loss was one killed and one wounded. A few days later, in the Battle of the Grass, the Mexican loss was fifty and the Texas loss was one. A little later, at the Alamo, of 170 Texans not one escaped Mexican vengeance. And then came San Jacinto, wiping out an army. Santa Anna, by all the rules of Texan warfare, should have perished at San Jacinto, Mr. Crona thinks.

"One of the men in my company, Solomon Cole, captured Santa Anna," said the old veteran. "He found him hiding in the grass, took him back to San Jacinto and delivered him to Houston. If it hadn't been that Santa Anna was a Mason his hide wouldn't have held shucks. He ought to have been shot. But Santa Anna and Sam Houston were both high Masons, and Houston and the other Masons got him off in disguise. Seven of our men followed him as far as Calcasieu, in Louisiana. If they had overtaken him he wouldn't have got back to Mexico."



ROLL OVER.

"Their guns were 'scopets,' big-mouthed things, of no account. But they had bagnets and swords, and they ought to have cut us down when we got close, but they didn't. By —," the old man exclaimed, "they just broke like turkeys, and we cut 'em down right and left with our knives. We were right among them, and every one of us was killing."

"How many Mexicans were killed, Mr. Crona?"

"Between 1600 and 1700. We took only 300 prisoners, and there was nothing left of Santa Anna's army."

"How many Texans were killed?"

"We lost just twelve men. There is a monument to them on the San Jacinto battle-field a few miles above Houston."

The skeptical may think the old man draws the long bow a little on his figures of losses. History, well authenticated, shows that the

"We had two scouts," the old man continued, "who kept right along close to the Mexicans all of the time during that retreat, and we always knew just where Santa Anna's army was and what it was doing. They were mighty brave men. One of 'em was Bob Dunham. I'll tell you what Bob done. Right this side of Buffalo Bayou he was all alone when he came on fifteen Mexican soldiers. He made a motion with his gun and looked back as if he was giving some order. By—the whole fifteen threw down their muskets with the bagnets sticking in the ground and surrendered. He formed 'em in line and marched 'em into camp. Bob was one of the old cowboys. The devil couldn't scare him."

During the battle of San Jacinto one body of fugitives took to the river. They mired in the muddy bottom. The Texans, coming to the bank in pursuit, stood there picking off

the Mexicans in the mud and water. It was butchery. The commander of the Texans gave the order again and again to stop shooting, but the men kept on. The thirst for blood could not be satisfied, it seemed. That cry, "Remember the Alamo!" kept ringing out. At last the commander of the Texans seized a gun from one of his men and leveled it. He swore he would shoot the next man who fired upon the pleading prisoners, and then the slaughter ceased.

The battle of San Jacinto didn't last an hour, Mr. Cronea says. As one of the incidents he mentions that thirty-two Mexicans were killed at the breech of a cannon they attempted to defend. So rapid was the advance the cannon was fired only once. San Jacinto established Texan independence. Mexico did not formally acknowledge this condition, but after the loss of Santa Anna's army she let this great State go as if by default, and the United States annexed it.

"We could never have succeeded in the end," said Mr. Cronea, "if the United States had not come forward and taken up our fight. There were only 800 of us under Houston. We wiped out Santa Anna's army, it is true, but do you suppose a country as large as Mexico would have allowed 800 men to take away such a piece of territory as Texas? It isn't reasonable. We would have been crushed sooner or later if Texas had not been taken into the United States."

There was trouble from the earliest times between the Americans who had settled in Texas and the Mexican local authorities. But the open hostilities which led to the series of battles ending with San Jacinto, Mr. Cronea says, started in 1832 with the release of three Americans. These Americans were Monroe Edwards, Patrick Jack and Travers. They had been locked up by the Mexicans at the old fort of Anahuac. A company of Americans, of whom Mr. Cronea was one, was formed to release the three men and did it. After that came the battles. One of the last incidents of the Texan war took place at the home of those three men. Following San Jacinto a party stopped for the night with Monroe Edward's family. There was a young lady in the family. Her name was Susannah. Now, Susannah had a well-trained parrot. This bird had the freedom of the house during the day, but at night was retired to a cage by his young mistress. On the evening of the arrival of the visitors there was a good deal of confusion. Everybody was talking of the great battle. Miss Susannah forgot her charge, and the parrot remained out long after the usual retiring hour. At length his green-feathered Majesty's patience became exhausted. He suddenly called out "S'sannah." One of the guests sprang to his feet and looked in the direction of the sound. Then, seeing the

parrot, he sat down and tried to laugh it off. The action created some curiosity at the time. But it was not till long afterward that the Edwards family learned that they had entertained Santa Anna in his disguise and on his way out of Texas under friendly escort of the Masons, in whose care Houston had placed the prisoner. Santa Anna had mistaken the parrot's call for his own name.

"Mr. Cronea, how do you account for your long life and good health?" the old man was asked as he concluded his story of the battle.

"Oh, I don't know," he replied with a hearty laugh.

"I'll tell you, sir," said a jolly, plump woman with a rich olive complexion, not a wrinkle in it, and with snapping black eyes. She came forward from the domestic regions, where she had overheard the question. "I'll tell you," she said. "It's living in the country on good healthy food—corn bread, beef and potatoes. That has given father long life and good health."

"I expect that's it," the old man added with a nod. "That is what I raised my family on. Many of my children never saw wheat flour until after they were grown."

"I think the rich food city people eat—the preserves and such things—has a good deal to do with the sickness and short lives," said the jolly lady. "I am 56 years old. Yes, sir; I own up to it. I was born the next year after the war of Texan independence. That makes me 56, and I can tell you I was 26 years old before I ever had a headache. Perhaps I wouldn't be so free to tell my age if I hadn't so many grandchildren."

The lady laughed until she shook, while the old gentleman, taking up the theme, said: "I was married to her mother after I quit the Texas army. I have now ninety living children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. I did have ninety-two, but two have died. Seven of them are my children. The others are grandchildren and great-grandchildren. I can't begin to tell you how many are grandchildren and how many are great-grandchildren. That would be too much trouble, but there are ninety of them altogether."

The old man chuckled, while the daughter remarked: "That's all father does. He just sits on the porch and laughs."

"I'm as contented as if I was worth a million," the old man added. And then he said, "but I wish my pension was a little larger. The State allows me a pension for my part in the war of Texan independence. The amount is \$12.50 a month. I have been told I was entitled to a land warrant, but I never got it."

"You must have begun voting pretty early, Mr. Cronea?"

"I cast my first vote for Andrew Jackson, the second time he ran. It was in 1824,

wasn't it. Seems as if that was the year. I was living in Plaquemine at the time. They had a law that allowed only tax-payers to vote. When I went up, the judge of the election asked me if I was a tax-payer. I threw down a piece of money and said, 'Here is two-bits. Now I'm a tax-payer.' The judge raised some question. I knew him and knew that all of his property was in his wife's name. So I said to him, 'Judge, do you pay any taxes?' With that he said, 'Oh, come on; give us your vote.'"

The conversation turned again upon the ninety descendants. Mr. Cronea affirmed, with considerable pride, that all of them were born in three counties in Texas, and also that all of them are now living within the State for which he fought so valiantly. At a suggestion, four generations of the Cronea family were assembled upon the porch. The old gentleman, aged 87, sat at the head of the line. Next to him was his daughter, Mrs. Matilda Stough, aged 56. Mrs. Stough's daughter, Mrs. Artemis Wilrycx, aged 34, sat beside her mother. Mrs. Wilrycx was a widow until a week ago. She came over from a neighboring house leaning upon the arm of a new husband, and the pleasantries of her relatives prompted her to assume a rather abashed demeanor. The son of Mrs. Wilrycx, Emile Andres, aged 10, sat on the edge of the porch near his great grandfather. As Mr. Cronea viewed the assembling of his clan, he remarked with a smile that it wasn't his fault there were not five generations instead of four lined up on the porch. He said he had three or four great-granddaughters who were old enough to be wives and mothers. While the four generations faced the artist, other members of the family stood about and offered more or less hilarious suggestions. Good humor is one of the strong traits of the Cronea descendants. They are all healthy, happy and handsome. Texas has no better people than the cabin-boy pirate and his ninety descendants.

Bolivar Peninsula is a queer place. This long, low-lying strip of land between Gulf and Bay possesses two physical phenomena which have puzzled scientific gentlemen. One of these is known as "the High Islands." The peninsula is quite level, being in the center only a little higher than along the beaches. Well toward the upper end of the peninsula the traveler comes to a collection of knolls, which rise sharply from the general level. These knolls can be seen from a great distance. In comparison with the almost dead level of sand and water on all sides of them they loom up like mountains. In reality the elevation is only 85 feet. Nothing like the soil of which the High Islands are composed can be found for many miles. This soil is a clay. On top of the knolls is a table-land several miles in extent. People have

farms and live on the High Islands. Springs gush from the summits. Some of the springs are fresh water and some are salt. In one place a fresh spring and a salt spring come from the ground less than 2 feet apart. By digging down into the clay well water can be had. There are various theories as to how these High Islands came to be located away out on the flats of the Texas coast. From all of the conditions it would appear that a great section of a bluff country must have been cut off somewhere and carried down hundreds of miles and deposited on the Gulf front. A great glacier may be responsible for the strange freak.

Off Bolivar lie "the Oil Ponds." They are places in the Gulf where the breakers cease and the surf is at rest. In the very roughest weather there is some movement, but ordinarily the ponds are still, while all around them the ocean rolls. The natives of Bolivar say "the Oil Ponds" are what the name implies—collections of oil upon the surface of the water. But they do not call it oil. They call it sea wax. Within the memory of the oldest inhabitants of the peninsula the oil ponds have doubled in size. They seem to be growing. They cover many acres of water. Altogether they are fifteen miles long and two miles wide. The source of this collection of oil on the surface of the Gulf of Mexico, off Bolivar, is as mysterious as the origin of the High Islands.

W. B. S.

THROUGH TEXAS.

The Story of What One Potato Did for Colorado City.

A Tomato and a Town Site—Midland's Inspiration—Rise and Fall of the Barrens—Every Man His Own Irrigator—Abilene's Versatile Decade.

Special Correspondence of the Globe-Democrat.

ABILENE, TEX., August 29.—"Abilene!" Not a Winchester pops. Not a cowboy whoops. Queer ups and downs and ups again this Western Texas country has seen since 1882, just ten years ago. There are men in St. Louis and forty-nine other cities outside of Texas, who can shiver a little in August over investment memories of Abilene, of Sweetwater, of Colorado City, of Midland. What booms those were! The Texas and Pacific Railway had just gone through. The Comanche had just made room for the cowman. The man with a branding iron was bigger than the man