THE

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Austin, Texas

TEXAS.

BY

JAMES D. LYNCH,

Author of "Heroes of the South," "Kuklux Tribunal," "Clock of Destiny," "Kemper County Vindicated," "The Bench and Bar of Mississippi."

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'Tis not in mortals to command success, but
We'll do more, Sempronius, we'll deserve it.

—ADDISON'S CATO.

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J. W. THROCKMORTON.

James W. Throckmorton, ex-Governor of Texas, was born in Sparta, Tennessee, on the 1st day of February, 1825. His father, Dr. William E. Throckmorton, was a physician of high standing and an excellent gentleman, and, having removed to Texas, was one of the first settlers of Collin County, where he died in 1843. The county of Throckmorton was named in commemoration of his virtues.

The subject of this sketch received a good common school education, and removed to Texas in 1841. In 1844 he began the study of medicine at Princeton, Kentucky, under the supervision of his uncle, Dr. James E. Throckmorton, and, having prepared himself for the medical profession, he returned to Texas and enjoyed for a number of years an extensive practice and the reputation of being a skillful physician. During the war with Mexico he volunteered his services to the army, and was made surgeon of Major Chevallie's Texas Rangers. He afterwards resumed his practice in Collin County, and pursued the duties of his profession with success until the year 1859, when, in consequence of failing health induced by the exposure and irregularity attending an extensive medical practice, he determined to follow the dictates of a natural taste and prepare himself for the bar, and, having thoroughly studied the general principles of law, he entered upon a successful legal career.

In 1851 he was elected a member of the Legislature, and was re-elected in 1853 and 1855. His efficiency as a legislator gained him popular favor and reputation, and in 1857 his services were further recognized in his election to the State Senate for a term of four years.

During his career in the Legislature he exerted himself particularly for the protection of the frontier settlements;

for procuring the adoption of measures for quieting land titles throughout the State, and especially those pertaining to Peter's Colony, which had been for some time unsettled and endangered; for the encouragement of the construction of railroads, and for the establishment and endowment of a munificent system of public schools. In his vigorous and able advocacy of these measures he stamped his genius and his name upon the cradle of the remarkable growth and prosperity of Texas, which has since that time spread her lap and her history before the world.

He had been reared a Whig in politics and was one of the electors of Texas on the Scott ticket in 1852, but on the dissolution of that party at the end of the campaign, spurning the doctrine of the Know-Nothings, which was then urged in opposition to Democracy, he affiliated with the party of Jefferson, which he believed to be the only palladium left of American liberty and of the principles upon which the American government was founded, and it was as a Democrat that he was elected to the Texas Legislature.

While he was conscious and sensitive of the wrongs, both actual and prospective, both perpetrated and threatened upon the Southern people by the advent of the Republican party to power in 1861, he was firmly opposed to secession as the proper mode and measure of the redress of Southern grievances, and, in this respect, harmonizing with General Houston and other eminent Texans, he was elected, while a Democratic member of the State Senate, as a Union man to the Secession Convention, in which he employed his best efforts to retain the allegiance of Texas to the Union and for the adoption of measures for maintaining its rights under the national flag. He was earnest and conscientious in his views. He was one of the seven members who voted against the ordinance of secession, and it is said that when he announced his vote some one hissed in the crowded galleries, upon which he rose to his feet and addressing the chair said: "Mr. President, the rabble may hiss while patriots tremble." Yet he announced that if the ordinance was adopted and ratified by the people, he would maintain the honor of his State and defend her action to the utmost of his ability. This attitude, if it did not attract respect to

his views, gained him great personal popularity. It acquired respect for his integrity and the purity of his motives, and he was applauded.

Texas withdrew from the Union with the voice of an overwhelming popular majority. Mr. Throckmorton had plighted his fidelity to her wishes, and, like Gen. Jubal B. Early, immediately buckled on his armor for her defense. He commanded a company in one of the first regiments organized in the State, and participated in the capture of Forts Washita and Arbuckle, on the Texas frontier, which was accomplished without bloodshed by the boldness and celerity of the expedition. He was afterwards captain of a company in the famous Sixth regiment of Texas cavalry, and rendered important service in the Missouri campaign. He led his company with distinguished gallantry in the Indian fight at Chustennallah and in the two day's battle at Elkhorn.

In the latter part of 1862 he was transferred to Corinth, Mississippi, where his command was reorganized, and, declining re-election to the captaincy in consequence of broken health, he returned to Texas, where he was for sometime disabled by disease for active duty. He afterwards performed efficient service in the campaign in Louisiana, and his health again failing, he retired once more, and was afterwards appointed by the Governor of Texas to the command of State troops, with the rank of brigadier-general, in which position he acquitted himself with honor and efficiency. He was soon afterwards elected to another term of four years in the State Senate, and as soon as the session of that body was over he resumed his command in the field.

During the last year of the war he was sent by Gen. E. Kirby Smith, the commander of the Trans-Mississippi Department, to treat with the Indian tribes inhabiting the Texas border, who had assumed a threatening attitude seriously endangering the safety of the frontier settlements. He succeeded in effecting the pacification of the Comanches, Arapahoes, Kiowas, Lipans, Cheyennes, and other fierce tribes, which required great tact and caution.

At the close of the war he returned to his home and resumed the practice of his profession. He quietly accepted the situation, and bent his energies towards the re-establishment of peace and order in conformity with the policy of the President. In 1866 he was elected a member of the reconstruction convention assembled under President Johnson's proclamation, and was chosen president of that body. In June, of the same year, he was elected Governor of Texas, under the new Constitution, by a large majority, and was inaugurated on the 8th of August. As Governor, his course was wise and conservative. His efforts were directed to the building up of the waste places scourged by the besom of civil war, and to the restoration of peace and friendship between the dissevered and discordant sections of the country. But his efforts were soon thwarted by the partisan and revengeful process of reconstruction adopted by the Federal Congress, which superseded the more pacific and just designs of the President. On the 9th of August, 1867, he was deposed by a missile containing three lines from an officer of the United States Army at New Orleans, who was temporarily in command of the military district of Louisiana and Texas.

On being thus forbidden to exercise the functions of his office, to which he had been peaceably elected by three-fourths of the Texan people, Gov. Throckmorton retired to his home in Collin County, where, disfranchised in common with thousands of his fellow-citizens, he remained in private life, watchful of the progress of events, yet unable to stay, even so much as by his vote, the tide of vengeance that rolled over his State.

In 1874, on the restoration of the ballot-box to the people, he was elected to a seat in the United States Congress by a large majority of the voters of his district, and was re-elected in 1876. At the expiration of his latter term, in 1879, he declined a re-election, and retired permanently to private life, in which, in spite of the pains of physical debility, he has enjoyed the reward of duty conscientiously performed, and the highest respect of his fellow-citizens.

Ex-Governor Throckmorton is a man of versatile genius and varied attainments. His reading has been extensive and his mind has been trained to those habits of calm reflection and steady contemplation which lead to a practical view of things. While he is naturally a man of quick impulses and vehement sensibilities his actions are controled by a sound judgment and tempered by a serene discretion. He is a fluent and interesting speaker, enthusiastic in the advocacy of his views, and strikes straight at the crest of opposition. Yet he is plain and terse in his elocution and avoids all efforts at ornation or display.

He is a man of strong and sincere attachments, and few men have more or warmer personal friends. He was married while he was a young physician, to Miss Annie Ratten, whose father emigrated at an early day from Illinois — a lady full worthy of all he could bestow.