

Stricker, who was born in Westphalia, Germany. Six children have been given to them, as follows: Minnie (Mrs. August Bridwell), Annie (Mrs. Lloyd P. Criss), Carrie (Mrs. Charles Kishmer), William (who married a Miss Wagner, of Galveston), and Mary (Mrs. P. Brady), all of whom reside in the city of Galveston. Mr. and Mrs. Rodefeld have eight grandchildren.

WILLIAM R. BAKER.—No reader of the biographical literature of this country can have failed to note the fact that the qualities of mind and the training obtained by them in winning the higher grades of success in business, are available for other uses than those of commerce. It is not an unfrequent thing to see a successful merchant become the projector of some enterprise of large proportions, ably fill a position requiring a high order of executive ability, amassing wealth all the while, and then round out his career by a few terms in the law-making bodies, either of his State or the nation. To thus develop ability with circumstances, and turn one's hand readily to opportunities offered by the tides of fortune, seems to be the especial gift of the American character, and there are examples, in plenty, in all the avenues of trade, finance and legislation—in all the departments of industrial development—which go to confirm and emphasize the truth of this statement.

William Robinson Baker, who was for more than a half century a prominent figure in the history of the city of Houston, and who left, in a full measure, the imprint of his talents and character on the industries and interests of this place, was born in Baldwinsville, Onondaga county, New York,

on the 21st day of May, 1820. His parents were Asa and Hannah Robinson Baker, who were born, the father in Cheshire county, New Hampshire, and the mother in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Asa Baker was a son of Alden S. Baker, a Revolutionary soldier, and himself a Captain in the war of 1812, the family coming originally of English stock. Asa Baker married Hannah Robinson, a daughter of William Robinson, a prominent merchant and importer of Philadelphia, and settled, sometime between 1815 and 1820, in Onondaga county, New York, where he followed his calling as a civil engineer for a number of years, and was interested, at different times, in a small way, in the mercantile business. He died in that county in 1851. His widow survived many years, dying at the home of her daughter, Mrs. T. M. Bagby, in the city of Houston, June 24, 1889.

William R. Baker was reared mainly in his native place, and his educational advantages were of the best for the times, particularly so with respect to his home training, his father being a man of superior mental attainments, the benefits of which were bestowed without stint on the son. At the age of twelve he began the serious duties of life for himself, and his earnings, meagre as they were, formed at this time the basis of his subsistence. He was industrious in habits, and managed, by hard application and the economical use of time, to acquire some knowledge of books, particularly bookkeeping and surveying. He had a natural turn for mathematics, and the mastery of any branch of this science was comparatively easy for him. In 1837 he came to Texas, and located at Houston.

During the first year of his residence here he was bookkeeper for the Houston Town

Company. Then, in 1838 he engaged in the mercantile business in a small way, and was so engaged until February, 1841, when he became a candidate for the office of County Clerk, was elected to this office, and held it by successive re-elections for sixteen years. While in this position he began to trade in lands, at which he was very prosperous, acquiring a large amount of real estate and an extensive knowledge of the business. In 1852, when the Houston & Texas Central Railway was organized, he interested himself in it, became one of its board of directors, and, in connection with a number of other capitalists of Houston, built that road. This was no unimportant undertaking for those days, for railroad building then was in its infancy in Texas. The obstacles met were great, and to most other men these obstacles would have been insurmountable. Mr. Baker was identified with the road from its inception until its future was assured, and in fact until it became one of the chief railway properties in the State. He served successively as secretary, vice-president, president, and again vice-president and general manager, severing his connection with the road in 1877, only when he sold his interest in it for the purpose of retiring from active business pursuits.

Mr. Baker was always a Democrat, and took active interest in politics. In 1874 his friends saw fit to have him placed in the field as a candidate for the State Senate, and, after a spirited contest, he was elected. His career as a member of that body was marked by his sterling common sense, his broad and liberal views and the business-like manner in which he dispatched matters falling into his hands for attention. From 1880 to 1886 he served as Mayor of the city of Houston, being called to this position and

retained in it by the general consent of the citizens who were anxious for a vigorous administration of the city's affairs. An authority says, "He took hold of Houston when it was in the mud and darkness, and soon inaugurated a system of public improvements which now stand as a monument to his worth. He brought order out of chaos, reduced the city's indebtedness, paved the streets, and set on foot the movement which resulted in the present electric-light system."

In 1883 he purchased an interest in the Houston Post, which he retained for six years, and while connected with this paper spared neither money nor effort to make it what it really became, one of the best papers in the South. He was also president of the City Bank of Houston at the time of its failure, and on account of the collapse of that institution suffered very heavily in his private means, though justice to his memory requires the statement that he was an innocent victim in that disaster. The bank was in the worst possible condition at the time he was induced, by misrepresentation, to take stock in it.

On the 15th day of December, 1845, Mr. Baker married Miss Hester Eleanor Runnels, a daughter of Hosea R. Runnels, of Mississippi, and a niece of ex-Governor Hiram G. Runnels, of that State, in whose family Mrs. Baker was reared after her father's death. The issue of this union was one child, a daughter, Lucy, born July 13, 1848. She became an accomplished lady, and on the 15th, of June, 1869, was married to Captain E. P. Turner, of Houston. She died June 2, 1873, leaving an infant son, William Baker Turner. On the 14th of February, 1880, Mrs. Baker died.

Having satisfied his sense of duty to his

fellow-citizens by his six years' service as their chief executive, with ample means to gratify all his wants, and with a sincere desire to pass the remainder of his life on earth in peace, Mr. Baker retired from active business pursuits and was living in the enjoyment of his well-earned repose at the time of his death. He died April 30, 1890, almost without warning, being stricken with cerebral effusion about the hour of nine one evening, from the effects of which he expired about the hour of six the next evening. News of his death was received with deep regret not only by the people of this city in which he had so long lived, but also by the people throughout this entire section of the State to whom his career was well known and with whom he had had intimate business and social relations.

Mr. Baker was a member of the Masonic fraternity for more than fifty years, and was a devout believer in the teachings and practices of that most ancient and honorable order. His religion was that of the nineteenth century; full faith in the principles of morality as taught by Christianity, but entertaining an honest doubt in the authenticity of the Scriptures as interpreted by the various religious denominations.

Five feet, ten inches in height, and weighing between 170 and 180 pounds, of dark complexion, brown eyes, high, intellectual forehead, and a clear, untroubled countenance, he was a man whom one would notice in an assembly of a hundred men and would easily remember for his distinct individuality. While he was strong in his likes and dislikes, clear-cut and forceful in the expression of his views, he meant to accord to every one the same privileges which he claimed for himself, and was at heart kind and affectionate. He is spoken of in terms

of sincere affection by those who knew him long and intimately. One of the most marked tributes to his memory, as indeed it is one of the most marked tributes that can be paid to the memory of any man, is the oft-repeated statement made by his associates, that he was very rarely ever known to speak unkindly of others.

HON. JAMES ROANE MASTERSON—The principal State of the American Union where family influence and the potency of family name have been most strongly felt is undoubtedly Virginia; and from this State have come some of the brightest intellects, some of the bravest and worthiest men who have ever figured in the history of this country.

To the "Old Dominion" the subject of this sketch makes acknowledgment for the American origin of his ancestry. His parents, Thomas G. Masterson and Christiana Irby Roane, were natives of Tennessee, but their parents were Virginia-born. His maternal grandmother was a Miss Washington, a niece of President George Washington. His mother was a daughter of Dr. James Roane, son of Governor Archibald Roane of Tennessee, in honor of whom a county of that State was named, and a grandniece of Governor Spencer Roane, of Virginia, who was at one time United States Senator from that State, and of David Roane, who was appointed by President Jefferson United States District Judge for the State of Kentucky, and a cousin of Governor John Roane, of Arkansas. The maternal grandmother of James R. Masterson was a Miss Irby, of Virginia, a relative of President John Tyler. One of her sisters was the mother of John

he did not identify himself with it. He joined the Methodist Church in this city, and, in connection with the late Judge Charles Shearn and the late T. W. House, he was for years one of the chief financial stays of this congregation. For twenty-five years before his death, he was a Trustee in this church, and took an active part in all church work.

Judge McGowen married Mrs. Sarah Christopher, of Houston, in 1841, and by this union had eight children, all of whom became grown, but only two of whom,—a daughter, Mrs. Kate Brashear, and a son, Edmond F. McGowen,—are now living. On the 14th day of July, 1873, Mrs. McGowen died, and, some two years after her death, Judge McGowen married Miss Florence Abbey, to which union one son was born, Walter McGowen.

Judge McGowen died on the 26th day of December, 1893, after a brief illness. News of his death fell with universal sorrow on the community in which he had so long lived, and every possible mark of respect was shown to his memory. The Commissioners' Court and the bar each passed appropriate resolutions, all the courts then in session in the city adjourned, and a large concourse of citizens attended his funeral and followed his remains to their last resting place at old San Felipe cemetery.

In the formative era of a new State like Texas, it is hard to estimate the influence for good exerted by a man like Judge McGowen. First impulses last long, and when those impulses are given in the right direction they are the source of incalculable good. Of such an one it may be said with all truth and reverence, that, though dead, he yet liveth.

THOMAS M. BAGBY, deceased, who stood in his lifetime as a highly honored citizen of Houston, having been one of the early merchants of this place, was a native of Virginia, where he was born on May 18, 1814. His parents, Daniel and Lucy Bagby, were also Virginians by birth, migrating from their native State about the year 1822, when Thomas M. was a lad of eight, to west Tennessee, settling in Montgomery county. In that county Thomas M. was mainly reared, receiving only such slender educational advantages as the then sparsely settled condition of the country afforded. He began doing for himself while still young, entering a store at Clarksville, the principal trading point in that locality, and here he picked up considerable knowledge of the mercantile business. In 1837 he came to Texas and located at Houston, where he soon secured employment, and subsequently engaged in business for himself. He was engaged in active business pursuits in this city up to the time of his death, some thirty years later, thus going through all of the early growth and development of the place, in which he took an active and effective part. He was engaged in the general commission business, receiving and forwarding goods, and later in handling cotton. He had partnerships at different times with H. D. Taylor and Samuel L. Allen, and was also alone for a considerable time. He was widely known throughout interior Texas, as Houston was in those days the trading point for all of the up-country, and wherever known he was respected for his honorable business methods. Mr. Bagby did not rank as a man of great shrewdness. He was rather distinguished for his industry, conservatism and plain straightforward

business methods. He never indulged in speculation or sought to make unreasonable profits out of anything he handled. He was content with small profits and believed in giving free and full meaning to the old saying, "live and let live." Ambition, except of that kind that prompts a man to do well what he undertakes, he had none. He was never in politics, never sought public favor of any kind, and never manifested any overweening desire for wealth. He was at one time a member of the Board of Aldermen, but he never held any county or State offices and never showed any more interest in public matters than such as might be expected of one who wished to see the laws enforced, and order and good government maintained. He was an associate, however, of many of Texas' leading men, by whom he was held in high esteem, among them being General Houston, whom he numbered as one of his warmest personal friends, and whose political fortunes he watched with much interest throughout the General's entire career.

On February 23, 1848, in the city of Houston, Mr. Bagby married Marianna Baker, a daughter of Asa and Hannah Baker, and a sister of William R. Baker, who was for many years a prominent citizen of this place. The offspring of this union was six children: William G.; Emily G., now Mrs. F. C. Usher; Eleanor B., now Mrs. W. J. Hancock; Lucy B., now Mrs. R. E. Tankersley; Mary B., wife of Andrew B. Richardson, both now deceased; and Bessie B., now also deceased. The widow and three surviving children are residents of Houston. Mrs. Bagby is numbered among the oldest citizens of the city and is a most estimable lady. She comes of pioneer ancestry, her people helping to settle the New

England and Eastern States, and she and her brothers and sisters settling in Houston when it was only a primitive patch in the wilderness. Her two brothers, William R. and George, died here, as did also her mother, while three of her sisters, Mrs. Emily Taylor, Mrs. Julia W. Clark and Mrs. Harriet M. Szabo, have resided here for more than forty years.

In this city, while still a young man, Mr. Bagby was made a Mason, joining Holland Lodge, No. 1., and from that time on, as long as he lived, he took great interest in the order. He was also a member of the Presbyterian Church, the pioneer organization of this city, and was zealous in the discharge of his Christian duties. He was a man of even temper, quiet tastes, devoted to his home and family, strong in his friendships and thoroughly loyal to all the interests of his adopted State. He died May 12, 1868.

HON. ISAAC WRIGHT BRASHEAR, for many years a resident of Houston, being one of the early settlers of this city, was a native of Guilford county, North Carolina, where he was born in the year 1811. His parents, who were also natives of North Carolina, moved from that State about the year 1815, to middle Tennessee and settled in Rutherford county. In this county Isaac W. was reared. His early lot was by no means an easy one, for his father died when Isaac W. was as yet a child, and the family being left in straitened circumstances, he was early thrown on his own resources. He began the serious duties of life for himself at the age of twelve, finding a home among the farmers of Rutherford county, for whom he worked

that time was one of the wardens of the port.

He was not in active service during the late war, but his sympathy and moral support went to the Confederacy, and he spent both his time and money in providing for the families of the soldiers in the field, and in guarding public and private property.

Captain Lufkin was a man of fine business qualifications and keen, practical insight. He possessed strong individuality of character, and was watchful and aggressive where his interests were at stake. Though never a candidate for public favors, he was popular with a large class of people, who recognized in him all the elements of a good citizen, being a successful man of business, kind friend and good neighbor, alert, enterprising and possessing sound intelligence, coupled with strict morality.

Captain Lufkin died, after a brief illness, on April 24, 1887. He left surviving him a widow and two sons,—Theodore D. and Walter E.,—and a daughter, Mrs. A. A. Van Alstyne,—all residents of Galveston.

HORACE DICKINSON TAYLOR, deceased.—A glance at the interesting genealogy of the Taylor family shows that Horace Dickinson Taylor comes of people who have become distinguished in the annals of the country, and who have, by their upright, straightforward course through life, kept their names unspotted and honored in the sight of God and man. He was born at Sunderland, Massachusetts, and traced his ancestry back to the first families of New England. The worthy pair from whom he sprang on the paternal side was Rev. Edward Taylor and Ruth (Wylllys) Taylor. The former was

born in Leicestershire, England, in 1642, and was educated for the ministry among the Dissenters. Owing to the persecution of his people, he abandoned his native country, and in 1668 came to America. He was well connected in England, and on coming to this country brought letters of introduction to a number of prominent people. Finishing his education at Cambridge in 1671, he subsequently became pastor at Westfield, Connecticut, four years before the breaking out of King Philip's war, and from that time on for many years was the spiritual adviser and physician for the large area of country adjacent to that place. In the year 1674 he married Miss Elizabeth Fitch, who died in 1689, leaving eight children. In the year 1692 he married Miss Ruth Wylllys, of Hartford, Connecticut. This lady was the daughter of Samuel Wylllys, who was born in the year 1632, and who for over thirty years was a State Senator. Her grandfather, John Haynes, was Governor of Massachusetts in 1635, but two years later removed to Hartford, Connecticut, where, in 1639, he was elected Governor of that State. Every alternate year he was elected to that position until about 1654.

He owned in Hartford the property upon which stood the famous Charter Oak. From Rev. Edward and Ruth (Wylllys) Taylor were descended some of the foremost men of New England, among them legislators, jurists, physicians, college presidents and ministers of the gospel. The Taylor family seems especially prolific in ministers. The father of the subject of this notice, Rev. James Taylor, was a minister of the Congregational Church, and was a native of Sunderland, Massachusetts, born in 1787. He was married there to Miss Elizabeth Taylor, a native of that place, who was born in

1789, and who died in 1832, following her husband, who had passed away in 1831. They were the parents of eleven children, of whom Horace Dickinson Taylor, of this article, was sixth in order of birth. He was born January 8, 1821, and was not yet eleven years of age when he was left an orphan. After the death of his parents he was sent South to an older brother, James, who was then living in Charleston, South Carolina, and there he made his home for several years (probably five or six), until he came to Texas, in company with an older brother, Edward Wyllys Taylor. The brothers first settled at Independence, in Washington county, Texas, but in 1848 came to Houston, where they engaged in the cotton commission business, in partnership, H. D. Taylor subsequently purchasing his brother's interest. For a short time after this he was in partnership with Thomas M. Bagby, and later established the house of H. D. Taylor & Sons, of which he was the head until his death, and which still continues under the original firm name. From the first Houston has always been the chief cotton market of Texas, and is now the largest in the world. Mr. Taylor bought and sold immense quantities of this staple, and in this way, and to the extent of his opportunities, helped to establish the reputation of the city in this respect. A man of strict integrity and high moral sense, he was always regarded as one of the solid, reliable men of the city, and gave weight and importance to every enterprise with which he was connected, and to every body in which he held membership. In few ways was he an aspirant for political favor, as the turmoil and intrigue of the political arena were not at all to his taste. He served, however, as Mayor of the city one term, and also held

the office of Alderman of his ward, filling both positions in a creditable and satisfactory manner.

On the 1st of December, 1852, Mr. Taylor married Miss Emily Baker, then of Houston, but a native of Baldwinsville, New York, and the daughter of Asa and Hannah Baker. Mr. and Mrs. Taylor's married life was blessed by the birth of five children, as follows: Mary, wife of Julian Robertson, of Calvert, Texas; Edward Wyllys, senior member of the firm of H. D. Taylor & Sons, of Houston; Horace Dickinson, also a member of the firm mentioned; William Baker, of the firm; and Emily B. As may be seen, the sons are wide-awake, progressive men, and are conducting successfully the business founded by the father. Mr. Taylor was quite domestic in his taste, took a great interest in his family, and made every reasonable provision for them. He left them an ample fortune, but, what was much better, a name honored and respected by all. Descended from an honorable ancestry, he was endowed by nature with such gifts as characterize true manhood in all that the word implies. For many years he was a member of the Presbyterian Church, and for twenty years previous to his death was Elder in the same. He was over six feet in height, weighed about 140 pounds, and had dark hair and eyes. He was a very genial and pleasant man to meet. Although his character was positive, and he was a thoroughly self-reliant man, at the same time he was quiet and unobtrusive, and "pursued the even tenor of his way," without interfering with the affairs of others and with no desire for public preferment. Especially did he take a strong interest in religious and temperance movements, and none were allowed to fail for want of support on his part.