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THE END OF FOREIGN DOMINION IN LOUISIANA.

I.

SPANISH NEW ORLEANS.

IN Jackson Square, New Orleans—the old Place d'Armes—one may yet stand on the spot where, in 1765, a motley throng of townsmen and planters, the Creoles of the Mississippi Delta, repudiated the barter of their country and their persons to the King of Spain. They were few in number and straitened in purse; but for years they had given their French rulers frown for frown, and in 1768 they took up arms against Spain's feeble show of authority, and drove it into the Gulf. They were the first people in America to make open war distinctly for the expulsion of European rule. But it was not by this episode that the Creoles were to become an American State.

In the following year they were overawed by the heavy hand of Spain, and bowed to her yoke. Ten years later, under her banner and led by the chivalrous Galvez, at Manchac, at Baton Rouge, at Mobile, and at Pensacola, they struck victoriously and "wiser than they knew" for the discomfiture of British power in America and the promotion of American independence and unity. But neither was this to bring them into the union of free states. For when the United States became a nation the Spanish ensign still floated from the flag-staff in the plaza of New Orleans where "Cruel O'Reilly" had hoisted it, and at whose base the colonial council's declaration of rights and wrongs had been burned. There was much more to pass through, many events and conditions, before the hand of Louisiana should be unclasped from the hold of distant powers and placed in that of the American States.

Through all, New Orleans continued to be the key of the land and river and of all questions concerning them. A glance around the old square, a walk into any of the streets that run from it north, east, or south, shows the dark imprint of the hand that held the town and province until neither arms, nor guile, nor counterplots, nor bribes, could hold them back from a destiny that seemed the appointment of nature.

For a while, under Unzaga and Galvez, the frail wooden town of thirty-two hundred souls, that had been the capital under French domination, showed but little change. But 1783 brought peace, Miró's able administration, new trade, new courage, "forty vessels [in the river] at the same time," and, by 1788, an increase in number to fifty-three hundred. In the same year came the great purger of towns—fire.

Don Vicente José Nuñez, the military treasurer, lived in Chartres street, near St. Louis, and had a private chapel. On Good Friday, the 21st of March, the wind was very high and from the south, and, either from a falling candle of the altar, or from some other accident or inadvertence, not the first or the worst fire kindled by Spanish piety flared up and began to devour the inflammable town. The people were helpless to stop it. The best of the residences, all the wholesale stores, fell before it. It swept around the north of the plaza, broadening at every step. The town hall, the arsenal, the jail—the inmates of which were barely rescued alive—the parish church, the quarters of the Capuchins, disappeared. In the morning the plaza and the levee were white with tents, and in the smoldering path of the fire the chimneys of eight hundred and fifty-six fallen roofs stood as its monuments. The buildings along the

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immediate river-front still remained; but nearly half the town, including its entire central part, lay in ashes.

Another Spanish name stands as the exponent of a miniature renaissance. Don Andreas Almonaster y Roxas was the royal notary and *alferez real.* As far back as 1770 the original government reservations on either side the plaza had been granted the town to be a source of perpetual revenue by ground-rents. Almonaster became their perpetual lessee, the old barracks came down, and two rows of stores, of two and a half stories height, with broad, tiled roofs and dormer-windows, and bright Spanish awnings, became, and long continued to be, the fashionable retail quarter of the town.

Just outside the "Rampart," near St. Peter street, the hurricane of 1779—Galvez's hurricane, as we may say—had blown down the frail charity hospital which the few thousand livres of Jean Louis, a dying sailor, had founded in 1737. In 1784–86 Almonaster replaced it with a brick edifice costing $114,000. It was the same institution that is now located in Common street, the pride of the city and State.

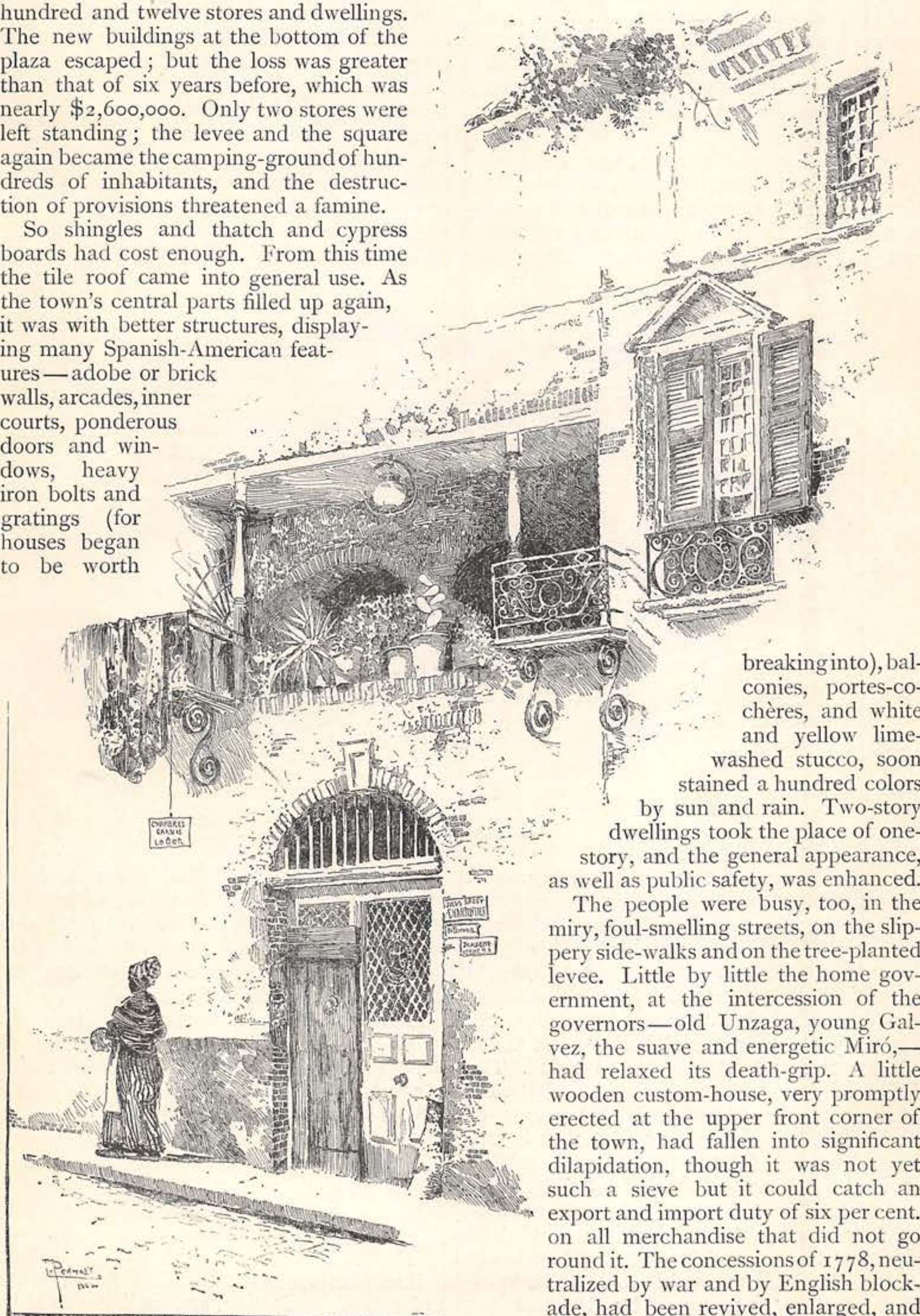
In 1787 he built of stuccoed brick, adjoining their convent, the well-remembered, quaint, and homely chapel of the Ursulines. And now, to repair the ravages of fire, he in 1792 began, and in two years completed sufficiently for occupation, the St. Louis Cathedral, on the site of the burned parish church. Louisiana and Florida had just become a bishopric separate from Havana. All these works had been at his own charge. Later, by contract, he filled the void made by the burning of the town hall—which had stood on the south side of the church, facing the plaza—erecting in its place the hall of the cabildo, the same that stands there still, made more outlandish, but not more picturesque, by the addition of a French roof. The Capuchins, on the other side of the church, had already replaced their presbytery by the building that now serves as a court-house. The town erected, on the river-front just below the plaza, a *halle des boucheries*—the "old French market." But, except for these two structures, to the hand of the old *alferez real*, or royal standard-bearer, belongs the fame of having thrown together around the most classic spot in the Mississippi Valley, the most picturesque group of façades, roofs, and spires in picturesque New Orleans.

But fate made room again for improvement. On the 8th of December, 1794—the wind was this time from the north—some children, playing in a court in Royale street, too near an adjoining hay-store, set fire to the hay. Governor Carondelet—Colonel

THE OLD BASIN, CARONDELET.

François Louis Hector, Baron de Carondelet, a short, plump, choleric Fleming of strong business qualities, in 1792, when he succeeded Miró, had provided, as he thought, against this contingency. But, despite his four *alcaldes de barrio*, with their fire-engines and firemen and axmen, the fire spread; and in three hours—for the houses were mere tinder—again burned out of the heart of the town two hundred and twelve stores and dwellings. The new buildings at the bottom of the plaza escaped; but the loss was greater than that of six years before, which was nearly $2,600,000. Only two stores were left standing; the levee and the square again became the camping-ground of hundreds of inhabitants, and the destruction of provisions threatened a famine.

So shingles and thatch and cypress boards had cost enough. From this time the tile roof came into general use. As the town's central parts filled up again, it was with better structures, displaying many Spanish-American features—adobe or brick walls, arcades, inner courts, ponderous doors and windows, heavy iron bolts and gratings (for houses began to be worth breaking into), balconies, portes-cochères, and white and yellow lime-washed stucco, soon stained a hundred colors by sun and rain. Two-story dwellings took the place of one-story, and the general appearance, as well as public safety, was enhanced.



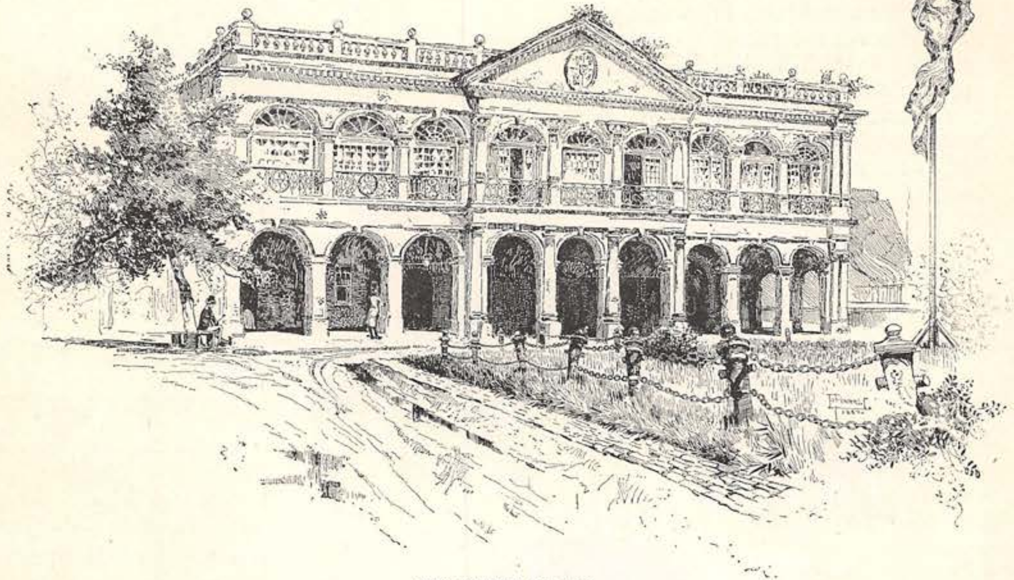
A FAÇADE.

The people were busy, too, in the miry, foul-smelling streets, on the slippery side-walks and on the tree-planted levee. Little by little the home government, at the intercession of the governors—old Unzaga, young Galvez, the suave and energetic Miró,—had relaxed its death-grip. A little wooden custom-house, very promptly erected at the upper front corner of the town, had fallen into significant dilapidation, though it was not yet such a sieve but it could catch an export and import duty of six per cent. on all merchandise that did not go round it. The concessions of 1778, neutralized by war and by English blockade, had been revived, enlarged, and extended ten years. Moored against

the grassy bank of the brimming river, the black ships were taking in hides and furs, bales of cotton, staves, and skins of indigo for the Spanish market, box-shooks for the West Indian sugar-makers, and tobacco, bought by the Government; and were letting out over their sides machinery and utensils, the red wines of Catalonia, and every product of the manufacturer,—besides negro men and women, girls and boys, for sale singly or in lots on the landing.

On the other side of town, also, there was, by and by, no little activity. A lake and bayou business was asking room and a question of sanitation was demanding attention, and in 1794–96 the practical Carondelet gathered a large force of slaves, borrowed from their town and country owners, and dug with pick and shovel in the reeking black soil just beyond the rear fortifications of the town, the "Old Basin" and canal that still bear his name. The canal joined the Bayou St. John, and thus connected ten thousand square yards of artificial harbor with Lake Pontchartrain and the sea-coast beyond. The lands contiguous to this basin and canal were covered with noisome pools, the source of putrid fevers, and, some years later, as Carondelet had urged from the first, the cabildo divided them into garden lots and let them out at low ground-rents to those who would destroy their insalubrity by ditching and draining them into the canal. They began soon to be built on, and have long been entirely settled up; but their drainage can hardly be considered to have been thorough and final, as, during an inundation eighty years afterward, the present writer passed through its streets in a skiff, with the water as high as the gate-knobs.

By such measures it was that the Spanish king sought "to secure to his vassals the utmost felicity." This was much more than the possession of Louisiana afforded the king. The treaty of peace, signed in 1783 by Great Britain, the United States, France, and Spain, had made the new American power his rival. The western boundary of the States was fixed on the Mississippi from the great lakes to a point nearly opposite the mouth of Red River, and the fortified points along that line, which had fallen so short a time before into the hands of Galvez, were required to be yielded up. Such was the first encroachment of American upon Spanish power in the great basin.



THE CABILDO OF 1792.

Another influence tending to turn the scales in favor of the States was a change in the agricultural products of the Delta, giving to the commerce of New Orleans a new value for the settlers of the West and the merchants of the Atlantic sea-ports.

II.

SUGAR.

THE planters of the Delta, on their transfer to Spanish domination, saw indigo, the chief product of their lands, shut out of market.

THE CABILDO OF TO-DAY (NOW THE SUPREME COURT).

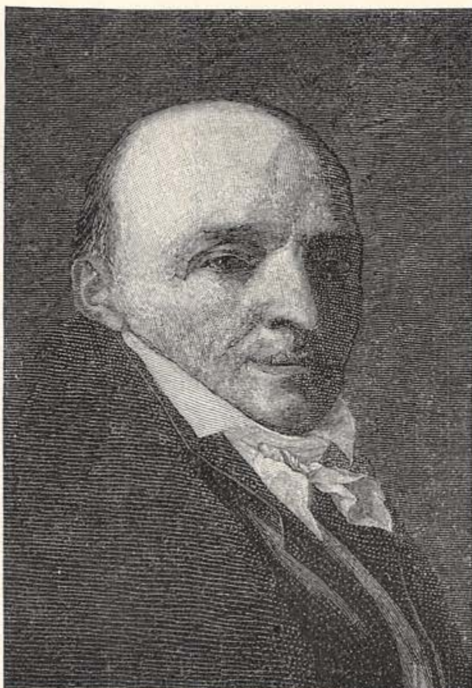
French protection was lost and French ports were closed to them. Those of Spain received them only into ruinous competition with the better article made in the older and more southern Spanish colonies. By and by kinder commercial regulations offered a certain relief; but then new drawbacks began to beset them. Season after season was unfavorable, and at length an insect appeared which, by the years 1793–94 was making such ravages that the planters were in despair. If they could not make indigo they knew not what to do for a livelihood.

They had tried myrtle-wax and silk, and had long ago given them up. Everybody made a little tobacco, but the conditions were not favorable for a large crop in the Delta. Cotton their grandfathers had known since 1713. The soil and climate above Orleans Island suited it and it had always been raised in moderate quantity. M. Debreuil, a wealthy townsman of New Orleans and a land-holder, a leading mind among the people, had invented a cotton-gin effective enough to induce a decided increase in the amount of cotton raised in the colony. Yet a still better mode of ginning the staple from the seed was needed to give the product a decided commercial value. There was some anticipation of its possible importance, and certain ones who gave the matter thought had, in 1760, recommended the importation of such apparatus as could be found in India. In 1768 cotton had become an article of export from New Orleans, and in the manifesto with which the insurgents banished Ulloa it is mentioned as a product whose culture, "improved by experience, promised the planter the recompense of his toils."

At the time of the collapse in the indigo production, the Creoles were still experimenting with cotton; but the fame of Eli Whitney's newly invented cotton-gin had probably not reached them. There must have been few of them, indeed, who supposed that eight years later the cotton-crop of Louisiana and export from New Orleans would be respectively 20,000 and 34,000 300-pound bales. They turned for a time in another direction. The lower Delta was a little too far south for cotton as a sure crop. They would try once more, as their fathers had tried, to make merchantable sugar.

On a portion of the city's present wholesale business district, near Tchoupitoulas street, this great staple had been first planted in Louisiana by the Jesuit fathers in 1751. They had received their seed, or rather layers, from St. Domingo. It had been grown in the town's vicinity ever since, but there only, and in trivial quantity. Nothing more than syrup, if even so much, was made from it until in 1758 M. Debreuil, the same who had experimented with cotton, built a sugar-mill on his plantation—now that part of the third district adjoining the second, on the river front—and endeavored to turn a large crop of cane into sugar.

Accounts of the result vary. Sugar, it



ETIENNE DE BORÉ. FROM A PICTURE IN THE POSSESSION OF HON. C. GAYARRÉ.

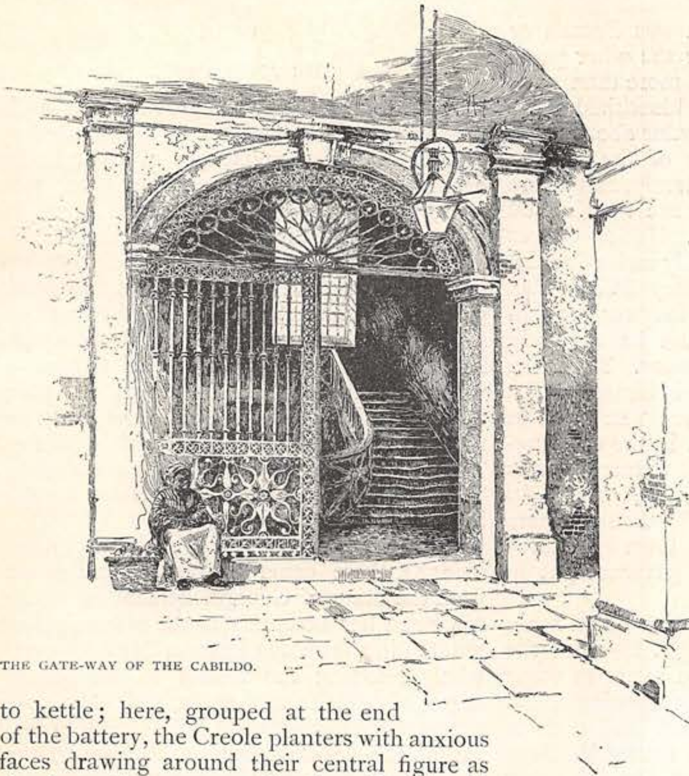
seems, however, was made, and for a time the industry grew. But the sugar was not of a sort to ship to the world's markets; it was poorly granulated and very wet, and for several years was consumed entirely within the province. In 1765 the effort was at length made to export it to France; but half the first cargo leaked out of the packages before the vessel could make port.

Then came the cession to Spain, and with it paralysis. The half-developed industry collapsed. But in 1791 the blacks of St. Domingo rose in rebellion. Refugees flew in every direction. A few found their way to Louisiana. They had been prosperous sugar-makers, and presently the efforts that had ceased for twenty-five years came again to life. Two Spaniards, Mendez and Solis, in that year erected on the confines of New Orleans, the one a distillery and the other a battery of sugar-kettles, and manufactured rum and syrup.

Still the Creoles, every year less able than the year before to make rash experiments, struggled against the misfortunes that multiplied around the cultivation of indigo, until 1794 found them without hope.

At this juncture appeared Etienne de Boré. He was a man of fifty-four, a Creole of the Illinois district, but of a distinguished Norman family; he had lived in France from the age of four to thirty-two, had served with the king's *mousquetaires*, had married a lady whose estate was in Louisiana near New Orleans, and had returned with her to the province, and had become an indigo planter. The year 1794 found him face to face with ruin. His father-in-law, Destréhan, had in former years been one of the last to abandon sugar-culture. His wife and friends warned him against the resolution he was taking; but he persisted in his determination to abandon indigo, and risk all that was left to him on the chance of a success which, if achieved, would insure deliverance and fortune to himself and the community. He bought a quantity of canes from Mendez and Solis, planted on the land where the seventh district (late Carrollton) now stands, and while his crop was growing erected a mill, and prepared himself for the momentous season of "grinding."

His fellow planters looked on with the liveliest—not always with the most hopeful—interest, and at length they gathered about him to see the issue of the experiment in which only he could be more deeply concerned than they. In the whole picturesque history of the Louisiana Creoles few scenes offer so striking a subject for the painter as that afforded in this episode: The dark sugar-house; the battery of huge caldrons, with their yellow juice boiling like a sea, half hidden in clouds of steam; the half-clad, shining negroes swinging the gigantic utensils with which the seething flood is dipped from kettle


THE GATE-WAY OF THE CABILDO.

to kettle; here, grouped at the end of the battery, the Creole planters with anxious faces drawing around their central figure as closely as they can; and in the midst the old *mousquetaire*, dipping, from time to time, the thickening juice, repeating again and again his simple tests, until, in the moment of final trial, there is a common look of suspense, and instantly after it the hands are dropped, heads are raised, the brow is wiped, and there is a long breath of relief—"it granulates!"

The people were electrified. Etienne de Boré marketed $12,000 worth of superior sugar. The absence of interdictions that had stifled earlier trade enabled him to sell his product to advantage. The agriculture of the Delta was revolutionized; and, seven years afterward, New Orleans was the market for 200,000 gallons of rum, 250,000 gallons of molasses, and 5,000,000 pounds of sugar. The town contained some twelve distilleries—probably not a subject for unmixed congratulation—and a sugar refinery which produced about 200,000 pounds of loaf sugar; while on the other hand the production of indigo had declined to a total of 3000 pounds, and soon after ceased.

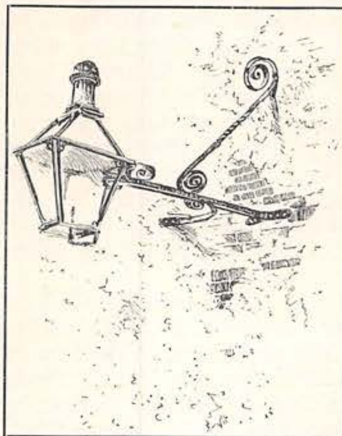
III.

THE CREOLES SING THE MARSEILLAISE.

The Spanish occupation never became more than a conquest. The Spanish tongue, enforced in the courts and principal public offices, never superseded the French in the mouths of the people, and left but a few words naturalized in the corrupt French of the slaves. To African organs of speech *cocodrie*, from *cocodrilo*, the crocodile, was easier than *caiman*, the alligator; the terrors of the calaboza, with its chains and whips and branding irons, were condensed into the French trisyllabic *calaboose;* while the pleasant institution of *ñapa*,—the petty gratuity added, by the retailer, to anything bought—grew the pleasanter, drawn out into Gallicized *lagnappe*.

The only newspaper in the town or province, as it was also the first, though published under the auspices of Carondelet, was the "Moniteur de la Louisiane," printed entirely in French. It made its first appearance in 1794.

Spanish Ursulines, sent from Havana to impart their own tongue, had to teach in French instead, and to content themselves with the feeble achievement of extorting the Spanish catechism from girls who recited with tears rolling down their cheeks. The public mind followed—though at a distance—the progress of thought in France. Many Spaniards of rank cast their lot with the Creoles. Unzaga married a Maxent; Galvez, her sister,—a woman, it is said, of extraordinary beauty and loveliness; Gayarré wedded Constance de Grandpré; the intendant Odvardo, her sister; Miró, a de Macarty. But the Creoles never became Spanish; and in society balls where the Creole civilian met the Spanish


IN THE CABILDO.

military official, the cotillon was French or Spanish according as one or the other party was the stronger, a question more than once decided by actual onset and bloodshed. The Spanish rule was least unpopular about 1791, when the earlier upheavals of the French revolution were regarded distantly, and before the Republic had arisen to fire the Creole's long-suppressed enthusiasm. Under Galvez in 1779–82 they rallied heartily under Spanish colors against their hereditary British foe. But when, in 1793, Spain's foe was republican France, Carondelet found he was only holding a town of the enemy. Then the Creole could no longer restrain himself. "La Marseillaise! La Marseillaise!" he cried in his sorry little theater; and in the drinking-shops—that were thick as autumn leaves—he sang, defiantly, "*Ça ira, ça ira, les aristocrates à la lanterne*," though there was not a lamp-post in his town until three years later, when the same governor put up eighty.

Meantime Spain's hand came down again with a pressure that brought to mind the cruel past. The people were made to come up and subscribe themselves Spaniards, and sundry persons were arrested and sent to Havana. The baron rebuilt the fortifications on a new and stronger plan. At the lower river corner was Fort St. Charles, a five-sided thing for one hundred and fifty men, with brick-faced parapet eighteen feet thick, a ditch, and a covert way; at the upper river corner was Fort St. Louis, like it, but smaller. They were armed with about twelve eighteen and twelve-pounders. Between them, where Toulouse street opened upon the river front, a large battery crossed fires with both. In the rear of the town were three lesser forts, mere stockades, with fraises. All around from fort to fort ran a parapet of earth surmounted with palisades, and a moat forty feet wide and seven deep. "These fortifications," wrote Carondelet, "would not only protect the city against the attack of an enemy, but also keep in check its inhabitants. But for them," he said, "a revolution would have taken place."

This was in 1794. The enemy looked for from without was the pioneers of Kentucky, Georgia, etc. The abridgment of their treaty rights on the Mississippi had fretted them. Instigated by Genet, the French minister to the United States, and headed by one Clark and by Auguste de la Chaise, a Creole of powerful family, who had gone to Kentucky for the purpose, they were preparing to make a descent upon New Orleans for its deliverance; when events that await recital arrested the movement.

IV

THE AMERICANS.

CARONDELET had strengthened the walls that immured the Creoles of New Orleans; but, outside, the messenger of their better destiny was knocking at the gate with angry impatience. Congress had begun, in 1779, to claim the freedom of the Mississippi. The treaty of 1783 granted this; but in words only, not in fact. Spain intrigued, Congress menaced, and oppressions, concessions, agressions, deceptions, and corruption lengthened out the years. New Orleans—"Orleens" the Westerners called it—there was the main difficulty. Every one could see now its approaching commercial greatness. To Spain it was the key of her possessions. To the West it was the only possible breathing-hole of its commerce.

Miró was still governing *ad interim*, when, in 1785, there came to him commissioners from the State of Georgia demanding liberty to extend her boundary to the Mississippi, as granted in the treaty of peace. Miró answered wisely, referring the matter to the governments of America and Spain, and delays and exasperations continued. By 1786, if not earlier, the flat-boat fleets that came floating out of the Ohio and Cumberland, seeking on the lower Mississippi a market and port for their hay and bacon and flour and corn, began to be challenged from the banks, halted, seized, and confiscated. The exasperated Kentuckians openly threatened and even planned to descend in flat-boats full of long rifles instead of breadstuffs, and make an end of controversy by the capture of New Orleans. But milder counsels restrained them, and they appealed to Congress to press Spain for the commercial freedom which they were determined to be deprived of no longer.

Miró, and Navarro, the intendant, did well to be alarmed. They wrote home urging relief through certain measures which they thought imperative if New Orleans, Louisiana, the Floridas, or even Mexico, was to be saved from early conquest. "*No hay que perder tiempo*"—"There is no time to be lost." They had two schemes: one, so to indulge the river commerce that the pioneers swarming down upon their borders might cross them, not as invaders, but as immigrants, yielding allegiance to Spain; the other, to foment a revolt against Congress and the secession of the West. These schemes were set on foot; a large American immigration did set in, and the small town of New Madrid still commemorates the extravagant calculations of Western grantees.

There had lately come to Kentucky a cer-

tain man whose ready insight and unscrupulous spirit of intrigue had promptly marked the turn of events. This was General James Wilkinson, of the United States service, a man early distrusted by President Washington, long suspected by the people, and finally tried for treasonable designs and acquitted for want of evidence which the archives of Spain have since revealed. This cunning schemer and speculator, in June, 1787, sent and followed to New Orleans a large fleet of flat-boats loaded with the produce of the West, and practicing on the political fears of Miró, secured many concessions. By this means, he made way for a trade which began at once to be very profitable to New Orleans, not to say to many Spanish officials. But it was not by this means only. At the same time, he entered into a secret plot with Miró and Spain for that disruption of the West from the East which she sought to effect. "The delivering up of Kentucky into his Majesty's hands, which is the main object to which Wilkinson has promised to devote himself entirely,"—so wrote Miró to the Spanish Secretary of State, January 8, 1788, and Wilkinson's own letters, written originally in cipher, and now in the archives of Spain, reduced to the Spanish tongue, complete the overwhelming evidence. "When this is done, * * * I shall disclose so much of our great scheme," etc. "Be satisfied, nothing shall deter me from attending exclusively to the object we have on hand." "The only feasible plan"—this was a year later—"* * was * * * separation from the United States, and an alliance with Spain." Such was the flat-boat toll paid by this lover of money and drink.

But, neither for the Kentuckian nor the Creole was an export trade more than half a commerce. Philadelphia partly supplied the deficiency, though harried by corrupt double dealings. Miró and Navarro favored and promoted this trade; but Gardoqui, the Spanish minister at Philadelphia, not sharing in the profits, moved vigorously against it, and there was dodging and doubling,—all the subterfuges of the contrabandist, not excepting false arrests and false escapes. The fire of 1788 gave Navarro excuse to liberate a number whom fear of the king had forced him to imprison, and to give them back their confiscated goods. Such was one branch of the academy that, in later years, graduated the pirates of Barataria.

The scarcity of provisions after the fire was made to help this Philadelphia trade. Miró sent three vessels to Gardoqui (who was suddenly ready to coöperate) for 3000 barrels of flour, and such other goods as the general ruin called for. And here entered Wilkinson, and in August, 1788, received through his agent, Daniel Clark, in New Orleans, a cargo of dry goods and other articles for the Kentucky market, probably the first boat-load of manufactured commodities that ever went up the Mississippi to the Ohio. Others followed Wilkinson's footsteps in matters of trade, and many were the devices for doing one thing while seeming to do another. A pretense of coming to buy lands and settle secured passports for their flat-boats and keel-boats, and the privilege of selling and buying free of duty. A profession of returning for families and property opened the way back again up the tortuous river, or along the wild, robber-haunted trails of the interior.

So the Creoles, in their domestic commerce, were striking hands with both the eastern and western "American." As to their transatlantic commerce, the concessions of 1782 had yielded it into the hands of the French, and there it still remained. "France," wrote Miró in 1790, "has the monopoly of the commerce of this colony." It suited him not to mention Philadelphia or the Ohio. But war presently brought another change.

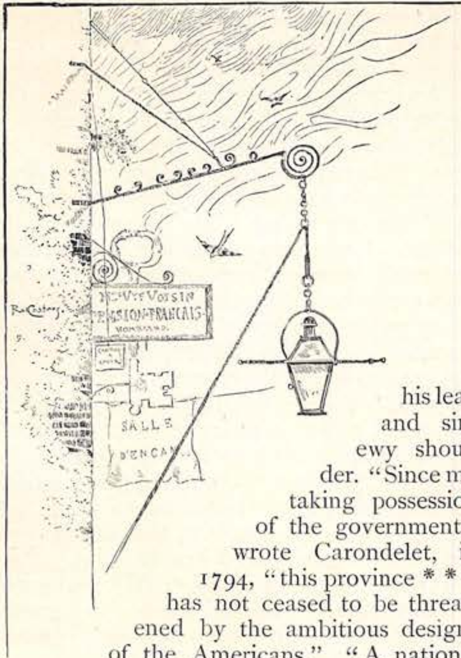
V.

SPAIN AGAINST FATE.

The port of New Orleans was neither closed nor open. Spain was again in fear of Great Britain. The United States minister at Madrid was diligently pointing to the possibility of a British invasion of Louisiana from Canada, by way of the Mississippi; to the feebleness of the Spanish foothold; to the unfulfilled terms of the treaty of 1783; to the restlessness of the Kentuckians; to everything indeed, that could have effect in the effort to extort the cession of "Orleans" and the Floridas. But Spain held fast, and Miró, to the end of his governorship, plotted with Wilkinson and with a growing number of lesser schemers equally worthy of their country's execration.

Difficulties were multiplying when, at the close of 1791, Miró gave place to Carondelet. Some were internal; and the interdiction of the slave-trade with revolted St. Domingo; the banishment of Yankee clocks branded with the goddess of liberty; the baron's fortifications, etc., were signs of them, not cures. In February, 1793, America finally wormed from Spain a decree of open commerce, for her colonies, with the United States and Europe. Thereupon Philadelphians began to establish commercial houses in New Orleans.

On the side of the great valley, the Kentuckian was pressing with all the strength of



A CORNER.

his lean and sinewy shoulder. "Since my taking possession of the government," wrote Carondelet, in 1794, "this province * * * has not ceased to be threatened by the ambitious designs of the Americans." "A nation," as Navarro had earlier called them, "restless, proud, ambitious, and capable of the most daring enterprise." Besides them, there were La Chaise, also, and Genet, and the Jacobins of Philadelphia.

It was to President Washington's vigilance and good faith that the baron owed the deliverance of the province from its dangers; not to his own defenses, his rigid police, nor his counter-plots with Thomas Power and others. These dangers past, he revived the obstruction and oppression of the river trade, hoping, so, yet to separate the Western pioneers from the union of States, to which they had now become devoted.

But events tended ever one way, and while Carondelet was still courting Wilkinson through Power, a treaty, signed at Madrid October 20, 1795, declared the Mississippi free to the Americans. New Orleans was made a port of deposit for three years, free of all duty or charge, save "a fair price for the hire of the store-houses." The privilege was renewable at the end of the term, unless transferred by Spain to some "equivalent establishment" on the river bank.

Still Carondelet held the east bank of the river, temporizing with the American authorities through his colleague, General Gayoso de Lemos, the Spanish commissioner for making the transfer. He spent bribes freely, and strengthened his fortifications, not against Federal commanders only, but against the western immigrants who had crowded into the province, and against the renewed probability of invasion from Canada.

The Creoles, save a little patriotic singing and shouting, that cost six of them twelve months each of Cuban exile, remained, through all, passive. We have seen how they passed through an agricultural revolution. But they were no more a writing than a reading people, and what tempests of emotion they may have concealed while war was being waged against France, while the Gulf was being scoured by French privateers, and when one of these seized, and for eight days held, the mouth of the Mississippi, may only be conjectured. We know that Etienne de Boré escaped arrest and transportation only by reason of his rank and the people's devotion to him as a public benefactor.

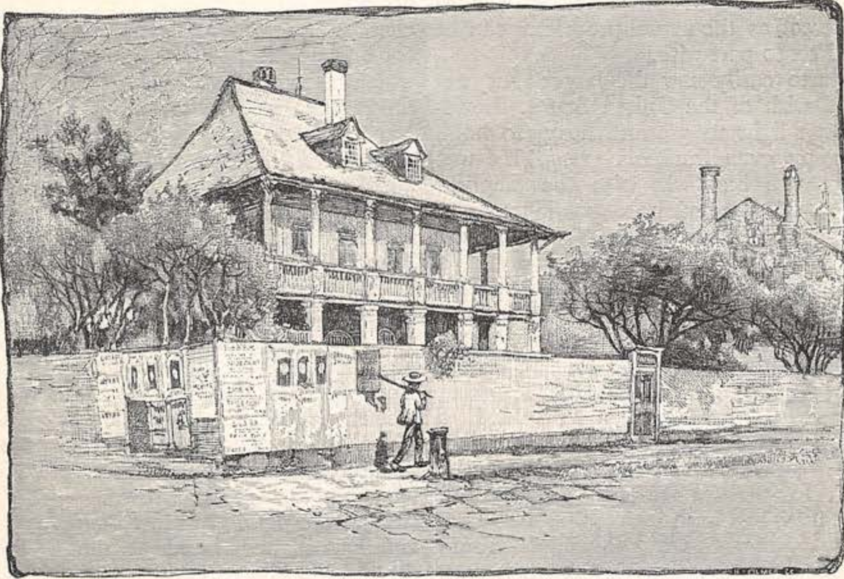
Two years more passed. Carondelet gave place to Gayoso de Lemos. Wilkinson, who was in chief command of the American forces in the West, grew coy and cold. The encroachments of the double-dealing general's subordinates could be resisted by the Spaniard no longer, and in March, 1798, he abandoned by stealth, rather than surrendered, the territory east of the Mississippi, so long unjustly retained from the States.

All the more did the Creole city remain a bone of contention. On the close of the

IN THE CALABOOSE.

three-years' term named in the treaty of 1795, the intendant, Morales, a narrow and quarrelsome old man, closed the port, and assigned no other point to take its place.

But the place had become too important, and the States too strong for this to be endured. The West alone could muster twenty thousand fighting men. John Adams was President. Secret preparations were at once set on foot for an expedition against New Orleans in overwhelming force. Boats were built, and troops had already been ordered to the Ohio, when it began to be plain that the President must retire from office at the close of his term, then drawing near; and by and by Spain disavowed her intendant's action and re-opened the closed port.



THE MARIGNY HOUSE, WHERE LOUIS PHILIPPE STOPPED IN 1798.

Meanwhile another eye was turned covetously upon Louisiana, and one who never moved slowly was about to hurry her fate to a climax.

VI.

NEW ORLEANS SOUGHT — LOUISIANA BOUGHT.

"FRANCE has cut the knot," wrote Minister Livingston to Secretary Madison. It is the word of Bonaparte himself, that his first diplomatic act with Spain had for its object the recovery of Louisiana. His power enabled him easily to outstrip American negotiations, and on the 1st of October, 1800, the Spanish King entered privately into certain agreements by which, on the 21st of March, 1801, Louisiana, vast, but to Spain unremunerative and indefensible, passed secretly into the hands of the First Consul in exchange for the petty Italian "kingdom of Etruria." When Minister Livingston wrote, in November, 1802, the secret was no longer unknown.

On the 26th of March, 1803, M. Laussat, as French Colonial Prefect, landed in New Orleans, specially commissioned to prepare for the expected arrival of General Victor with a large body of troops, destined for the occupation of the province, and to arrange for the establishment of a new form of government. The Creoles were filled with secret consternation. Their fields, and streets, and dwellings were full of slaves. They had heard the First Consul's words to the St. Domingans: "Whatever be your color or your origin, you are free." But their fears were soon quieted, when Laussat proclaimed the design of their great new ruler to "preserve the empire of the laws and amend them slowly in the light of experience only." The planters replied that "their long-cherished hope was gratified, and their souls filled with the delirium of extreme felicity"; and the townsmen responded: "Happy are the colonists of Louisiana who have lived long enough to see their reunion to France, which they have never ceased to desire, and which now satisfies their utmost wish."

Governor Gayoso had died of yellow fever in 1799,—it is said shortly after a night's carousal with Wilkinson. He had been succeeded by the Marquis of Casa Calvo, and he, in 1801, by Don Juan Manuel de Salcedo. The intendant Morales had continued to hate, dread, and hamper American immigration and commerce, and in October, 1802,

had once more shut them out of New Orleans until six months later again discountenanced by his king.

In Congress debate narrowed down to the question whether New Orleans and the Floridas should be bought or simply swept down upon and taken. But the executive department was already negotiating; and, about the time of Laussat's landing in Louisiana, Messrs. Livingston and Monroe were commissioned to treat with France for a cession of New Orleans and the Floridas, "or as much thereof as the actual proprietor can be prevailed on to part with."

Bonaparte easily saw the larger, but unconfessed wish of the United States. Louisiana, always light to get and heavy to hold, was slipping even from his grasp. He was about to rush into war with the English. "They have," he exclaimed passionately to his ministers, "twenty ships of war in the Gulf of Mexico. * * * I have not a moment to lose in putting it [his new acquisition] out of their reach. They [the American commissioners] only ask of me one town in Louisiana; but I already consider the colony as entirely lost." And a little later, walking in the garden of St. Cloud, he added to Marbois — whom he trusted rather than Talleyrand — "Well! you have charge of the treasury; let them give you one hundred million francs, pay their own claims, and take the whole country." When the minister said something about the rights of the colonists, "Send your maxims to the London market," retorted the First Consul.

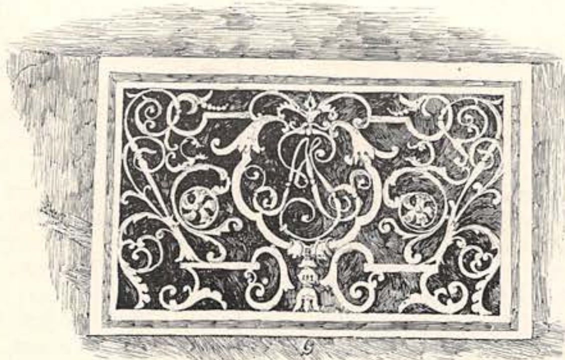
The price finally agreed upon was eighty million francs, out of which the twenty million francs of American citizens' claims due by France were to be paid, and Louisiana was bought. Monsieur Marbois and Messrs. Livingston and Monroe signed the treaty on the 30th of April, 1803. As they finished, they rose and shook hands. "We have lived long," said Livingston, "but this is the noblest work of our lives."

About the last of July, when Casa Calvo and Salcedo, Spanish commissioner and governor, had proclaimed the coming transfer to France, and Laussat, the French prefect, was looking hourly for General Victor and his forces, there came to New Orleans a vessel from Bordeaux with the official announcement that Louisiana had been ceded to the United States.

On the 30th of November, with troops drawn up in line on the Place d'Armes, and with discharges of artillery, Salcedo, fitly typifying, in his infirm old age, the decaying kingdom which he represented, delivered to Laussat, in the hall of the cabildo, the keys of New Orleans; while Casa Calvo, splendid in accomplishments, titles, and appearance, declared the people of Louisiana absolved from their allegiance to the king of Spain. From the flag-staff in the square the Spanish colors descended, the French took their place, and the domination of Spain in Louisiana was at an end.

On Monday, December the 20th, 1803, with similar ceremonies, Laussat turned the province and the keys of its port over to Commissioners Claiborne and Wilkinson. The French tricolor, which had floated over the Place d'Armes for but twenty days, gave place to the stars and stripes, and New Orleans was an American town.

Within a period of ninety-one years Louisiana had changed hands six times. From the direct authority of Louis XIV. it had been handed over, in 1712, to the commercial dominion of Anthony Crozat. From Crozat it had passed, in 1717, to the Compagnie de l'Occident; from the company, in 1731, to the undelegated authority of Louis XV.; from him, in 1762, to Spain; from Spain, in 1801, back to France; and at length, in 1803, from France to the United States, finally emancipated from the service and bargainings of European masters.



TRANSOM OVER DOOR-WAY OF PONTALBA BUILDING.