of sadness shivered faintly through the chords, then grew into an audible undertone, and at last became the pervading mood. In his tuneful retrospect he saw his own life and hers spread out before him, and his passionate repentance of the wrong he had done her became an inspiring force, and gave fervor and grandeur to its utterance.

The "immortal sonata" was completed. He arose slowly; the drowsy logs in the fireplace flared up with a sudden crackling. He went to the bed and stooped down.

"Anastasia *mia*," he said, in an affectionate whisper, "let us rest now, and to-morrow we will begin our life anew. We have conquered the past, and laid it behind us."

He listened, but there came no reply.

She lay as in deep, happy repose. His music had lulled her into the eternal slumber.

Hjalmar Hjorth Boyesen.

PLOTTERS AND PIRATES OF LOUISIANA.

BY GEORGE W. CABLE,

Author of "Old Creole Days," "The Grandissimes," etc.

I.

NEW ORLEANS IN 1803.

NEW ORLEANS had been under the actual sway of the Spaniard for thirty-four years. Ten thousand inhabitants were gathered in and about its walls. Most of the whites were Creoles. Even in the province at large these were three in every four. Immigrants from Malaga, the Canaries, and Nova Scotia had passed on through the town and into the rural districts. Of the thousands of Americans, only a few scores of mercantile pioneers came as far as the town—sometimes with families, but generally without. Free trade with France had brought some French merchants and the Reign of Terror had driven here a few royalists. The town had filled and overflowed its original boundaries. From the mast-head of a ship in the harbor one looked down upon a gathering of from twelve hundred to fourteen hundred dwellings and stores, or say four thousand roofs—to such an extent did slavery multiply outhouses. They were of many kinds, covered with half-cylindrical or with flat tiles, with shingles, or with slates, and showed an endless variety in height and in bright confusion of color and form—verandas and balconies, dormer windows, lattices and belvederes. Under the river bank, "within ten steps of Tchoupitoulas street," where land has since formed and been covered with brick stores for several squares, the fleets of barges and flat-boats from the West moored and unloaded, or retailed their contents at the water's edge. Farther down, immediately abreast of the town, between the upper limits and the Place d'Armes, lay the shipping—twenty or more vessels of from 100 to 200 tons burden, hauled close against the bank. Still farther on, beyond the Government warehouses, was the mooring-place of the vessels of war. Looking down into the streets—Toulouse, St. Peter, Conti, St. Louis, Royale, Chartres—one caught the brisk movements of a commercial port. They were straight, and fairly spacious, for the times; but unpaved, ill-drained, filthy, poorly lighted, and often impassable for the mire.

The town was fast becoming one of the chief sea-ports of America. Already, in 1802, 158 American merchantmen, 104 Spanish, and 3 French, registering 31,241 tons, had sailed from her harbor, loaded. The incoming tonnage for 1803 promised an increase of over 37 per cent. It exported of the products of the province alone over $2,000,000 value. Its imports reached $2,500,000. Thirty-four thousand bales of cotton; 4500 hogsheads of sugar; 800 casks—equivalent to 2,000 barrels—of molasses; rice, peltries, indigo, lumber, and sundries, to the value of $500,000; 50,000 barrels of flour; 3000 barrels of beef and pork; 2000 hogsheads of tobacco; and smaller quantities of corn, butter, hams, meal, lard, beans, hides, staves, and cordage, had passed in 1802 across its famous levee.

Everywhere the restless American was conspicuous, and, with the Englishman and the Irishman, composed the majority of the commercial class. The French, except a few, had subsided into the retail trade or the mechanical callings. The Spaniards not in military or civil service were generally humble Catalans, keepers of shops, and of the low cabarets that occupied almost every street corner. The Creole was on every side,—handsome, proud, illiterate, elegant in manner, slow, a seeker of office and military commission, ruling society with fierce exclusiveness, looking upon toil as the slave's proper badge, lending

money now at twelve and now at twenty-four per cent., and taking but a secondary and unsympathetic part in the commercial life from which was springing the future greatness of his town. What could he do? The American filled the upper Mississippi valley. England and the Atlantic States, no longer France and Spain, took its products and supplied its wants. The Anglo-Saxon and the Irishman held every advantage; and, ill-equipped and uncommercial, the Creole was fortunate to secure even a third or fourth mercantile rank in the city of his birth. But he had one stronghold. He owned the urban and suburban real estate, and presently took high rank as the seller of lots and as a *rentier*. The confiscated plantations of the Jesuits had been, or were being, gradually laid out in streets. From 1801, when Faubourg St. Mary contained only five houses, it had grown with great rapidity.

Other faubourgs were about springing up. The high roofs of the aristocratic suburb St. Jean could be seen stretching away among their groves of evergreen along the Bayou road, and clustering presently into a village near where a "Bayou bridge" still crosses the stream, some two hundred yards below the site of the old one. Here gathered the larger craft of the lake trade, while the smaller still pushed its way up Carondelet's shoaled and neglected, yet busy canal.

Outwardly the Creoles of the Delta had become a graceful, well-knit race, in full keeping with the freedom of their surroundings. Their complexion lacked color, but it was free from the sallowness of the Indies. There was a much larger proportion of blondes among them than is commonly supposed. Generally their hair was of a chestnut, or but little deeper tint, except that in the city a Spanish tincture now and then asserted itself in black hair and eyes. The women were fair, symmetrical, with pleasing features, lively, expressive eyes, well-rounded throats, and superb hair; vivacious, decorous, exceedingly tasteful in dress, adorning themselves with superior effect in draperies of muslin enriched with embroideries and much garniture of lace, but with a more moderate display of jewels, which indicated a community of limited wealth. They were much superior to the men in quickness of wit, and excelled them in amiability and in many other good qualities. The more pronounced faults of the men were generally those moral provincialisms which travelers recount with undue impatience. They are said to have been coarse, boastful, vain; and they were, also, deficient in energy and application, without well-directed ambition, unskillful in handicraft—doubtless through negligence only—and totally wanting in that community feeling which begets the study of reciprocal rights and obligations, and reveals the individual's advantage in the promotion of the common interest. Hence, the Creoles were fonder of pleasant fictions regarding the salubrity, beauty, good order, and advantages of their town, than of measures to justify their assumptions. With African slavery they were, of course, licentious, and they were always ready for the dueling-ground; yet it need not seem surprising that a people so beset by evil influences from every direction were generally unconscious of a reprehensible state of affairs, and preserved their self-respect and a proud belief in their moral excellence. Easily inflamed, they were as easily discouraged, thrown into confusion, and overpowered, and they expended the best of their energies in trivial pleasures, especially the masque and the dance; yet they were kind parents, affectionate wives, tractable children, and enthusiastic patriots.

II.

FROM SUBJECTS TO CITIZENS.

LITTLE wonder that it is said the Creoles wept as they stood on the Place d'Armes and saw the standard of a people, whose national existence was a mere twenty-years' experiment, taking the place of that tricolor on which perched the glory of a regenerated France. On that very spot some of them had taken part in the armed repudiation of the first cession. The two attitudes and the two events differed alike. The earlier transfer had come loaded with drawbacks and tyrannous exactions; the latter came freighted with long-coveted benefits and with some of the dearest rights of man. This second, therefore, might bring tears of tender regret; it might force the Creole into civil and political fellowship with the detested *Américain*; but it could not rouse the sense of outrage produced by the cession to Spain. O'Reilly, the Spanish Captain-General, had established a government whose only excellence lay in its strength; Claiborne came to set up a power whose only strength lay in its excellence. His task was difficult mainly because it was to be done among a people distempered by the earlier rule, and diligently wrought upon by intriguing Frenchmen and Spanish officials. His wisest measures, equally with his broadest mistakes, were wordily resented. His ignorance of the French language, his large official powers, Wilkinson's bad habits, a scarcity of money, the introduction of the English tongue, and of a just proportion of American appointees into the new

TOMB OF GOVERNOR CLAIBORNE'S FAMILY.

courts and public offices, the use of bayonets to suppress disorder at public balls, a supposed partiality for Americans in court, the personal character of officials, the formation of American militia companies and their parades in the streets—all alike fed the flames of the Creoles' vehement indignation.

In March, 1804, Congress passed an act dividing the province into two parts on the present northern boundary of Louisiana, giving each a distinct government, and to the lower the title of the territory of Orleans. This act, which was to take effect the following October, interdicted the slave-trade. Then, indeed, anger burned. Insurrectionary sentiments were placarded on the street corners, crowds copied them, and public officers attempting to remove them were driven away. But that was all. Claiborne—young, like Bienville and like Galvez, but benevolent, wise, and patient—soon saw it was not the Government, but only some of its measures, that caused so much heat. The merchants, who in 1768 had incited revolt against legalized ruin, saw, now, on the other hand, that American rule had lifted them out of commercial serfdcm, and that, as a port of the United States, and only as such, their crescent city could enter upon the great future which was hers by her geographical position. But we have seen that the merchants were not principally Creoles.

Although the Creoles looked for a French or Spanish re-cession, yet both interest and probability were so plainly against it that they were presently demanding impatiently, if not imperiously, the rights of American citizens as pledged to them in the treaty. They made no appeal to that France which had a second time cast them off; but at three public meetings, in June and July, petitioned Congress not to rescind the cession but to leave Louisiana undivided, and so hasten their admission into the Union. This appeal was fruitless, and the territorial government went into operation, Claiborne being retained as governor. The partition, the presidential appointment of a legislative council instead of its election by the people, the nullification of certain Spanish land-grants, and an official re-inspection of all titles, were accepted, if not with patience, at least with that grace which the Creole assumes before the inevitable. But his respect was not always forthcoming toward laws that could be opposed or evaded. "This city," wrote Claiborne, "requires a strict police: the inhabitants are of various descriptions; many highly respectable, and some of them very degenerate." A sheriff and posse attempted to arrest a Spanish officer. Two hundred men interfered; swords were drawn, and resistance ceased only when a detachment of United States troops were seen hurrying to the rescue. Above all, the slave-trade—"all-importance to the existence of the country"—was diligently plied through the lakes and the inlets of Barataria.

The winter of 1804–05 was freer from bickerings than the last had been. The intrigues of Spanish officials who lingered in the district were unavailable, and the Governor reported a gratifying state of order. On the 2d of March, with many unwelcome safeguards and limitations, the right was accorded the people to elect a House of Representatives, and "to form for themselves a constitution and State government so soon as the free population of the territory should reach sixty thousand souls, in order to be admitted into the Union."

For a time following there was feverishness rather than events. Great Britain and Spain were at war; Havana was open to neutral vessels; the commerce of New Orleans was stimulated. But the pertinacious lingering of Casa-Calvo, Morales, and others,—whom Claiborne at last had to force away in February, 1806,—the rumors they kept alive, the fear of war with Spain, doubts as to how the

Creoles would or should stand, party strife among the Americans in New Orleans, and a fierce quarrel in the Church between the vicar-general and the famed Père Antoine, pastor of the cathedral, kept the public mind in a perpetual ferment. Still, in all these things there was only restiveness and discord, not revolution. The Creoles had at length undergone their last transplanting, and taken root in American privileges and principles. From the guilt of the plot whose events were now impending the Creole's hand is clean. We have Claiborne's testimony:

IN RUE DU MAINE.

"Were it not for the calumnies of some Frenchmen who are among us, and the intrigues of a few ambitious, unprincipled men whose native language is English, I do believe that the Louisianians would be very soon the most zealous and faithful members of our republic."

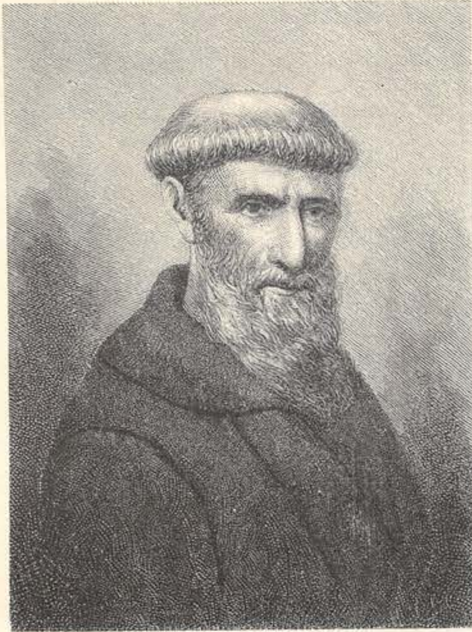
On the 4th of November, 1811, a convention elected by the people of Orleans Territory met in New Orleans, and on the 28th of the following January adopted a State constitution; and on the 30th of April, 1812, Louisiana entered the Union.

III.

BURR'S CONSPIRACY.

On one of those summer evenings when the Creoles, in the early years of the century, were wont to seek the river air in domestic and social groups under the willow and china trees of their levee, there glided around the last bend of the Mississippi above New Orleans "an elegant barge," equipped with sails and colors, and impelled by the stroke of ten picked oarsmen. It came down the harbor, drew in to the bank, and presently set ashore a small, slender, extremely handsome man, its only passenger. He bore letters from General Wilkinson, introducing him in New Orleans, and one, especially, to Daniel Clark, Wilkinson's agent, stating that "this great and honorable man would communicate to him many things improper to letter, and which he would not say to any other." Claiborne, the young Virginian whom President Jefferson had made Governor of Louisiana, wrote to Secretary Madison, "Colonel Burr arrived in this city on this evening."

The date was June 26, 1805. The distinguished visitor, a day or two later, sat down to a banquet given to him by the unsuspecting Governor. He was now in full downward career. Only a few years before, he had failed of the presidency by but one electoral vote. Only a few months had passed since, on completing his term, he had vacated the vice-presidency. In the last year of that term Alexander Hamilton had fallen by his hand. Friends and power, both, were lost. But he yet had strength in the West. Its people were still wild, restless, and eager for adventure. The conquest of "Orleans" was a traditional idea. Its banks were full of specie. Clouds of revolution were gathering all around the Gulf. The regions beyond the Red and Sabine rivers invited conquest. The earlier schemes of Adams and Hamilton, to seize Orleans Island and the Floridas for the



PÈRE ANTOINE.

United States; that of Miranda, to expel the Spanish power from the farther shores of the Gulf; the plottings of Wilkinson, to surrender the West into the hands of Spain—all these abandoned projects seem to have cast their shadows on the mind of Burr and colored his designs.

The stern patriotism of the older States had weighed him in its balances and rejected him. He had turned with a vagueness of plan that waited for clearer definition on the chances of the future, and, pledged to no principle, had set out in quest of aggrandizement and empire, either on the Mississippi or among the civilizations that encircle the Gulf of Mexico, as the turn of events might decree. In the West he had met Wilkinson, and was now in correspondence with him.

The Governor who had feasted him moved much in the gay society of the Creoles. It was not giddiness, but anxious thought and care that pushed him into such scenes. Troubles and afflictions marked his footsteps; his wife and child stricken down by yellow fever, her young brother-in-law rashly championing him against the sneers of his enemies, fallen in a duel—but it was necessary to avoid the error—Ulloa's earlier error—of self-isolation. He wisely studied the social side of the people, and so viewed public questions from behind.

The question ever before him—which he was incessantly asking himself, and which he showed an almost morbid wish to be always answering to the heads of departments at Washington—was whether the Creoles over whom he was set to rule were loyal to the government of the nation. It was a vital question. The bonds of the Union, even outside of Louisiana, were as yet slender and frail. The whole Mississippi valley was full of designing adventurers, suspected and unsuspected, ready to reap any advantage whatever of any disaffection of the people. He knew there were such in New Orleans.

The difficulty of answering this question lay in one single, broad difference between Claiborne himself and the civilization which he had been sent to reconstruct into harmony with North American thought and action. With him loyalty to the state meant obedience to its laws. The Creole had never been taught that there was any necessary connection between the two. The Governor's young Virginian spirit assumed it as self-evident that a man would either keep the laws or overturn them. It was a strange state of society to him, where one could be a patriot and yet ignore, evade, and override the laws. "Occasionally, in conversation with ladies," —so he writes—"I have denounced smuggling as dishonest, and very generally a reply, in substance as follows, would be returned: 'That is impossible, for my grandfather, or my father, or my husband was, under the Spanish Government, a great smuggler, and he was always esteemed an honest man.'" They might have added, "and loyal to the king."

With some men Claiborne had had no trouble. "A beginning must be made," said Poydras, a wealthy and benevolent Frenchman; "we must be initiated into the sacred duties of freemen and the practices of liberty." But the mass, both high and low, saw in the abandonment of smuggling or of the slave-trade only a surrender of existence—an existence to which their own consciences and the ladies at the ball gave them a clean patent. These, by their angry obduracy, harassed their governor with ungrounded fears of sedition.

In fact, the issue before governor and people was one to which the question of fealty to government was quite subordinate. It was the struggle of a North American against a Spanish American civilization. Burr must have seen this; and probably at this date there was nothing clearly and absolutely fixed in his mind but this, that the former civilization had cast him off, and that he was about to offer himself to the latter. Now events were to answer the Governor's haunting question, and to give a new phase to the struggle between these two civilizations in the Mississippi valley.

Colonel Burr remained in New Orleans

ten or twelve days, receiving much social attention, and then left for St. Louis, saying he would return in October. But he did not appear.

During the winter the question of boundaries threatened war with Spain, and the anger of Spain rose high when, in February, 1806, Claiborne expelled Casa Calvo and Morales, her agents, from the territory. Her governor stopped the transmission of the United States mails through Florida. Outside, the Spaniards threatened; inside, certain Americans of influence did hardly less. The Creoles were again supine. Père Antoine, the beloved pastor of the cathedral, was suspected — unjustly — of sedition; Wilkinson with his forces was unaccountably idle. "All is not right," wrote Claiborne; "I know not whom to censure; but it seems to me that there is wrong somewhere."

The strange character of the Creole people perplexed and wearied Claiborne. Unstable and whimsical, public-spirited and sordid by turns, a display of their patriotism caused a certain day to be "among the happiest of his life"; and when autumn passed and toward its close their enthusiasm disappeared in the passion for money-getting, he "began to despair." But, alike unknown in the Creole town — to money-getters and to patriots — the only real danger had passed. Wilkinson had decided to betray Burr.

Late in September the General had arrived at Natchitoches, and had taken chief command of the troops confronting the Spanish forces. On the 8th of October, one Samuel Swartwout brought him a confidential letter from Colonel Burr. He was received by Wilkinson with much attention, stayed eight days, and then left for New Orleans. On the 21st, Wilkinson determined to expose the plot. He dispatched a messenger to the President of the United States, bearing a letter which apprised him of Colonel Burr's contemplated descent of the Mississippi with an armed force. Eight days later, the General arranged with the Spaniards for the troops under each flag to withdraw from the contested boundary, leaving its location to be settled by the two governments, and hastened toward New Orleans, hurrying on in advance of him a force of artificers and a company of soldiers.

Presently the people of New Orleans were startled from apathetic tranquillity into a state of panic. All unexplained, these troops had arrived, others had reënforced them; there was hurried repair and preparation; and the air was agitated with rumors. To Claiborne, the revelation had at length come from various directions that Aaron Burr was plotting treason. Thousands were said to be involved with him; the first outbreak was expected to be in New Orleans.

Wilkinson had arrived in the town. In the bombastic style of one who plays a part, he demanded of Claiborne the proclamation of martial law. Claiborne kindly, and with expressions of confidence in the General, refused; but the two met the city's chamber of commerce, laid the plot before it, and explained the needs of defense. Several thousand dollars were at once subscribed, and a transient embargo of the port recommended, for the purpose of procuring sailors for the four gun-boats and two bomb-ketches lying in the harbor.

There were others in whose confidence Wilkinson held no place. The acting-governor of Mississippi wrote to Claiborne: "Should he [Colonel Burr] pass us, your fate will depend on the General, not on the Colonel. If I stop Burr, this may hold the General in his allegiance to the United States. But if Burr passes the territory with two thousand men, I have no doubt but the General will be your worst enemy. Be on your guard against the wily General. He is not much better than Catiline. Consider him a traitor and act as if certain thereof. You may save yourself by it."

On Sunday, the 14th of December, a Dr. Erick Bollman was arrested by Wilkinson's order. Swartwout and one Ogden had already been apprehended at Fort Adams, and were then confined on one of the bomb-ketches in the harbor. On the 16th, a court-officer, armed with writs of *habeas corpus*, sought in vain to hire a boat to carry him off to the bomb-ketch, and on the next day, when one could be procured, only Ogden could be found.

He was liberated, but only to be re-arrested with one Alexander, and held in the face of the *habeas corpus*. The court issued an attachment against Wilkinson. It was powerless. The Judge — Workman — appealed to Claiborne to sustain it with force. The Governor promptly declined, the Judge resigned, and Wilkinson ruled.

One of Burr's intimates was General Adair. On the 14th of January, 1807, he appeared in New Orleans unannounced. Colonel Burr, he said, with only a servant, would arrive in a few days. As he was sitting at dinner, his hotel was surrounded by regulars, an aide of Wilkinson appeared and arrested him; he was confined, and presently was sent away. The troops beat to arms, regulars and militia paraded through the terrified city, and Judge Workman, with two others, were thrown into confinement. They were released within twenty-four hours; but to intensify the general alarm, four hundred Spaniards from Pensa-

cola arrived at the mouth of Bayou St. John, a few miles from the city, on their way to Baton Rouge, and their commander asked of Claiborne that he and his staff might pass through New Orleans. He was refused the liberty.

All this time the Creoles had been silent. Now, however, through their legislature, they addressed their governor. They washed their hands of the treason which threatened the peace and safety of Louisiana, but boldly announced their intention to investigate the "extraordinary measures" of Wilkinson and to complain to Congress.

Burr, meanwhile, with the mere nucleus of a force, had set his expedition in motion, and at length, after twenty years' threatening by the Americans of the West, a fleet of boats actually bore an armed expedition down the Ohio and out into the Mississippi, bent on conquest.

But disaster lay in wait for it. It failed to gather weight as it came, and on the 28th of January the news reached New Orleans that Burr, having arrived at a point near Natchez with fourteen boats and about a hundred men, had been met by Mississippi militia, arrested, taken to Natchez, and released on bond to appear for trial at the next term of the Territorial Court.

This bond Burr ignored, and left the Territory. The Governor of Mississippi offered $2000 for his apprehension, and on the 3d of March the welcome word came to New Orleans that he had been detected in disguise and re-arrested at Fort Stoddart, Alabama.

About the middle of May, Wilkinson sailed from New Orleans to Virginia to testify in that noted trial which, though it did not end in the conviction of Burr, made final wreck of his designs, restored public tranquillity, and assured the country of the loyalty not only of the West, but also of the Creoles of Louisiana. The struggle between the two civilizations withdrew finally into the narrowest limits of the Delta, and Spanish American thought found its next and last exponent in an individual without the ambition of empire, —a man polished, brave, and chivalrous; a patriot, and yet a contrabandist; an outlaw, and in the end a pirate.

IV.

THE WEST INDIAN IMMIGRATION.

Between 1804 and 1810, New Orleans doubled its population. The common notion is that there was a large influx of Americans. This was not the case. A careful estimate shows not more than 3100 of these in the city in 1809, yet in the following year the whole population, including the suburbs, was 24,552. The Americans, therefore, were numerically feeble. The increase came from another direction.

Napoleon's wars were convulsing Europe. The navies of his enemies fell upon the French West Indies. In Cuba large numbers of white and mulatto refugees who, in the St. Domingan insurrection, had escaped across to Cuba with their slaves, were now, by hostilities between France and Spain, forced again to become exiles. Within sixty days, between May and July, 1809, thirty-four vessels from Cuba set ashore in the streets of New Orleans nearly fifty-eight hundred persons,—whites, free mulattoes, and black slaves in almost equal numbers. Others came later, from Cuba, Guadaloupe, and other islands, until they amounted to ten thousand. Nearly all settled permanently in New Orleans.

The Creoles of Louisiana received the Creoles of the West Indies with tender welcomes. The state of society in the islands from which these had come needs no description. As late as 1871, '72, and '73, there were in the island of Guadaloupe only three marriages to a thousand inhabitants. But they came to their better cousins with the ties of a common religion, a common tongue, much common sentiment, misfortunes that may have had some resemblance, and with the poetry of exile. They were reënforcements, too, at a moment when the power of the Americans—few in number, but potent in energies and advantages—was looked upon with hot jealousy.

The Americans clamored against them, for they came in swarms. They brought little money or goods. They raised the price of bread and of rent. They lowered morals and disturbed order. Yet it was certainly true the Americans had done little to improve either of these. Some had come to stay; many more to make a fortune and get away; both sorts were simply and only seeking wealth.

The West Indians had not come to a city whose civilization could afford to absorb them. The Creole element needed a better infusion, and yet it was probably the best in the community. The Spaniards were few and bad, described by one as capable of the vilest depredations, "a nuisance to the country," and even by the mild Claiborne as "for the most part * * * well suited for mischievous and wicked enterprises." The free people of color were about two thousand, unaspiring, corrupted, and feeble. The floating population was extremely bad. Sailors from all parts of the world took sides, according to nationality, in bloody street riots and night brawls; and bargemen, flat-boatmen, and raftsmen, from the wild banks of the Ohio, Tennessee, and Cumberland, abandoned themselves at

the end of their journey to the most shameful and reckless excesses. The spirit of strife ran up into the better classes. A newspaper article reflecting upon Napoleon all but caused a riot. A public uprising was hardly prevented when three young navy officers released a slave girl who was being whipped. In September, 1807, occurred the "batture riots." The *batture* was the sandy deposits made by the Mississippi in front of the Faubourg St. Marie. The noted jurist, Edward Livingston, representing private claimants, took possession of this ground, and was opposed by the public in two distinct outbreaks. In the second, the Creoles, ignoring the decision of the Supreme Court, rallied to the spot by thousands, and were quieted only by the patient appeals of Claiborne, addressed to them on the spot, and by the recommittal of the contest to the United States Courts, in whose annals it is so well-known a cause. Preparations for war with Spain heightened the general fever. Claiborne's letters dwell on the sad mixture of society. "England," he writes, "has her partisans; Ferdinand the Seventh, some faithful subjects; Bonaparte, his admirers; and there is a fourth description of men, commonly called *Burrites*, who would join any standard which would promise rapine and plunder." These last had a newspaper, "La Lanterne Magique," whose libels gave the executive much anxiety.

Now, into such a city — say of fourteen thousand inhabitants, at most — swarm ten thousand white, yellow, and black West India islanders; some with means, others in absolute destitution, and "many * * * of doubtful character and desperate fortune." Americans, English, Spanish, cry aloud; the laws forbid the importation of slaves; Claiborne adjures the American consuls at Havana and Santiago de Cuba to stop the movement; the free people of color are ordered point-blank to leave the country; the actual effort is made to put the order into execution; and still all three classes continue to pour into the streets, to throw themselves upon the town's hospitality, and daily to increase the cost of living and the number of distressed poor.

They came and they staid, all too readily dissolving into the corresponding parts of the native Creole community, and it is easier to underestimate than to exaggerate the silent results of an event that gave the French-speaking Louisianians twice the numerical power with which they had begun to wage their long battle against American absorption.

V.

THE PIRATES OF BARATARIA.

THE whole Gulf coast of Louisiana is an immense, wet, level expanse, covered everywhere, shoulder-high, with marsh-grasses, and indented by extensive bays that receive the rivers and larger bayous. For some sixty miles on either side of the Mississippi's mouth, it breaks into a grotesquely contorted shoreline and into bright archipelagoes of hundreds of small, reedy islands, with narrow and obscure channels writhing hither and thither between them. These mysterious passages, hidden from the eye that overglances the seemingly unbroken sunny leagues of surrounding distance, are threaded only by the far-seen white or red lateen-sail of the oyster-gatherer, or by the pirogue of the hunter stealing upon the myriads of wild fowl that in winter haunt these vast green wastes.

To such are known the courses that enable them to avoid the frequent *culs-de-sac* of the devious shore, and that lead to the bayous which open the way to the inhabited interior. They lead through miles of clear, brown, silent waters, between low banks fringed with dwarf oaks, across pale distances of "quaking prairie," and at length, under the solemn shades of cypress swamps, to the near neighborhood of the Mississippi, from whose flood the process of delta-growth has cut the bayou off. Across the mouths of the frequent bays that indent this marshy coast-line stretch long, slender keys of dazzling, storm-heaped sand — sometimes of cultivable soil.

About sixty miles south from the bank of the Mississippi, opposite New Orleans, lies Grande Terre, a very small island of this class, scarce two miles long, and a fourth as wide, stretching across two-thirds of the entrance of Barataria Bay, but leaving a pass of about a mile width at its western end, with a navigable channel. Behind this island the waters of the bay give a safe, deep harbor. At the west of the bay lies a multitude of small, fenny islands, interwoven with lakes, bays, and passes, named and unnamed, affording cunning exit to the bayous La Fourche and Terre Bonne and the waters still beyond. Northward the bay extends some sixteen miles, and then breaks in every direction into lakes and bayous. Through one of these — the bayou Barataria, with various other local names — a way opens irregularly northward. Now and then it widens into a lake, and narrows again, each time more than the last, until near its head a short canal is entered on the left, and six miles farther on you are stopped abruptly by the levee of the Mississippi. You mount its crown, and see opposite the low-lying city, with its spires peering up from the sunken plain; its few wreaths of manufactory smoke, and the silent stir of its winding harbor. Canal street, its former upper boundary, is hidden two miles and a half away

down the stream. There are other Baratarian routes, through lakes Salvador or Des Allemands, and many obscure avenues of return toward the Gulf of Mexico or the maze of wet lands intervening.

In the first decade of the century the wars of France had filled this gulf with her privateers. Spain's rich commerce was the prey around which they hovered, and Guadaloupe and Martinique their island haunts. From these the English, operating in the West Indies, drove them out, and when in February, 1810, Guadaloupe completed the list of their conquests, the French privateers were as homeless as Noah's raven.

They were exiled on the open Gulf, with the Spaniards lining its every shore, except one, where American neutrality motioned them austerely away. This was Louisiana. But this, of all shores, suited them best. Thousands of their brethren already filled the streets of New Orleans, and commanded the sympathies of the native Creoles. The tangled water-ways of Barataria, so well known to smugglers and slavers, and to so few beside, leading by countless windings and intersections to the markets of the thriving city, offered the rarest facilities for their purposes. Between this shelter and the distant harbors of France there could be no question of choice.

Hither they came, fortified Grande Terre, built store-houses, sailed away upon the Gulf, and re-appeared with prizes which it seems were not always Spanish. The most seductive auctions followed. All along this coast there are high, probably natural, heaps of a species of small clam-shell. The aborigines, mound-builders, used them for temple-sites. A notable group of these mounds on one of the islands of Barataria became the privateers' chief place of sale and barter. There was no scarcity of buyers from New Orleans and the surrounding country. Goods were also smuggled up the various bayous, especially La Fourche. Then the captured vessels were burned or refitted, sails were spread again and prows were pointed toward the Spanish Main. The Baratarians had virtually revived, in miniature, the life of the long-extinct buccaneers.

Their fame spread far and wide; and while in neighboring States the scandalous openness of their traffic brought loud condemnation upon Louisiana citizens and officials alike, the merchants and planters of the Delta, profiting by these practices, with the general public as well, screened the contrabandists and defended their character.

Much ink has been spilled from that day to this to maintain that they sailed under letters of marque. But certainly no commission could be worth the unrolling when carried by men who had removed themselves beyond all the restraints that even seem to distinguish privateering from piracy. They were often overstocked with vessels and booty, but they seem never to have been embarrassed with the care of prisoners.

There lived at this time, in New Orleans, John and Pierre Lafitte. John, the younger, but more conspicuous of the two, was a handsome man, fair, with black hair and eyes, wearing his beard, as the fashion was, shaven neatly back from the front of his face. His manner was generally courteous, though he was irascible and in graver moments somewhat harsh. He spoke fluently English, Spanish, Italian, and French, using them with much affability at the hotel where he resided, and indicating, in the peculiarities of his French, his nativity in the city of Bordeaux.

The elder brother was a sea-faring man and had served in the French navy. He appears to have been every way less showy than the other; but beyond doubt both men were above the occupation with which they began life in Louisiana. This was the trade of blacksmith, though at their forge, on the corner of St. Philip and Bourbon streets, probably none but slave hands swung the sledge or shaped the horseshoe.

It was during the embargo, enforced by the United States Government in 1808, that John Lafitte began to be a merchant. His store was in Royal street, where, behind a show of legitimate trade, he was busy running the embargo with goods and Africans. He wore the disguise carelessly. He was cool and intrepid and had only the courts to evade, and his unlawful adventures did not lift his name from the published lists of managers of society balls or break his acquaintance with prominent legislators.

In 1810 came the West Indian refugees and the Guadaloupian privateers. The struggle between the North American and the West Indian ideas of public order and morals took new energy on the moment. The plans of the "set of bandits who infested the coast and overran the country" were described by Government as "extensive and well laid," and the confession made that "so general seemed the disposition to aid in their concealment, that but faint hopes were entertained of detecting the parties and bringing them to justice."

Their trade was impudently open. Merchants gave and took orders for their goods in the streets of the town as frankly as for the merchandise of Philadelphia or New York. Frequent seizures lent zest to adventure without greatly impairing the extravagant profits of a commerce that paid neither duties nor first cost.

John and Pierre Lafitte became the commercial agents of the "privateers." By and by they were their actual chiefs. They won great prosperity for the band; prizes were rich and frequent, and slave cargoes profitable. John Lafitte did not at this time go to sea. He equipped vessels, sent them on their cruises, sold their prizes and slaves, and moved hither and thither throughout the Delta, administering affairs with boldness and sagacity. The Mississippi's "coasts" in the parishes of St. James and St. John the Baptist were often astir with his known presence, and his smaller vessels sometimes pierced the interior as far as Lac des Allemands. He knew the value of popular admiration, and was often at country balls, where he enjoyed the fame of great riches and courage, and seduced many of the simple Acadian youth to sail in his cruises. His two principal captains were Beluche and Dominique You. "Captain Dominique" was small, graceful, fair, of a pleasant, even attractive face, and a skillful sailor. There were also Gambi, a handsome Italian, who died only a few years ago at the old pirate village of Chenière Caminada; and Rigoult, a dark Frenchman, whose ancient house still stands on Grande Isle, the island next to Grande Terre on the west. And yet again Johnness and Johannot, unless — which appears likely — these were only the real names of Dominique and Beluche.

Expeditions went out against these men more than once; but the Government was pre-occupied and embarrassed and the expeditions seemed feebly conceived. They only harassed the Baratarians, drove them to the mouth of La Fourche in vessels too well armed to be attacked in transports, and did not prevent their prompt return to Grande Terre.

The revolution for the independence of the Colombian States of South America began. Venezuela declared her independence in July, 1811. The Baratarians procured letters of marque from the patriots in Carthagena, lowered the French flag, ran up the new standard, and thus far and no farther joined the precarious fortunes of the new states, while Barataria continued to be their haunt and booty their only object.

They reached the height of their fortune in 1813. Their moral condition had declined in proportion. "Among them," says the Governor, "are some St. Domingo negroes of the most desperate character, and no worse than most of their white associates." Their avowed purpose, he says, was to cruise on the high seas and commit "depredations and piracies on the vessels of nations in peace with the United States."

One of these nations was the British. Its merchantmen were captured in the Gulf and sold behind Grande Terre. The English more than once sought redress with their own powder and shot. On the 23d of June, 1813, a British sloop-of-war anchored off the outer end of the channel at the mouth of La Fourche and sent her boats to attack two privateers lying under the lee of Cat Island; but the pirates stood ground and repulsed them with considerable loss.

Spain, England, and the United States were now their enemies; yet they grew bolder and more outrageous. Smuggling increased. The Government was "set at defiance in broad daylight." "I remember," reads a manuscript kindly furnished the present writer, "when three Spanish vessels were brought in to Caillou Islands. They were laden with a certain Spanish wine, and the citizens of Attakapas went out to see them and purchased part of the captured cargoes. There were no traces of the former crews."

In October, 1813, a revenue officer seized some contraband goods near New Orleans. He was fired upon by a party under John Lafitte, one of his men wounded, and the goods taken from him. The Governor offered $500 for Lafitte's apprehension, but without avail.

The shell-mound where the Baratarians held their sales was called "the Temple." In January, 1814, four hundred and fifteen negroes, consigned to John and Pierre Lafitte, were to be auctioned at this place. An inspector of customs and twelve men were stationed at the spot. John Lafitte attacked them, killed the inspector, wounded two men, and made the rest prisoners.

Still he was not arrested. His island was fortified, his schooners and feluccas were swift, his men were well organized and numbered four hundred, the Federal Government was getting the worst of it in war with Great Britain, and, above all, the prevalence of West Indian ideas in New Orleans was a secure shelter. He sent his spoils daily up La Fourche to Donaldsonville on the Mississippi, and to other points. Strong, well-armed escorts protected them. Claiborne asked the legislature to raise one hundred men for six months' service. The request was neglected. At the same time a filibustering expedition against Texas was only stopped by energetic measures. The Federal courts could effect nothing. An expedition captured both Lafittes, but they disappeared, and the writs were returned "not found."

But now the tide turned. Society began to repudiate the outlaws. In July, 1814, a grand jury denounced them as pirates, and exhorted the people "to remove the stain that has fallen on all classes of society in the minds of the

good people of the sister States." Indictments were found against one Johnness and one Johannot for piracies in the Gulf, and against Pierre Lafitte as accessory. Lafitte was arrested, bail was refused, and he found himself at last shut up in the calaboza.

VI.

BARATARIA DESTROYED.

WEIGHING all the facts, it is small wonder that the Delta Creoles coquetted with the Baratarians. To say no more of Spanish American or French West Indian tincture, there was the embargo. There were the war-ships of Europe skimming ever to and fro in the entrances and exits of the Gulf. Rarely in days of French or Spanish rule had this purely agricultural country and non-manufacturing town been so removed to the world's end as just at this time. The Mississippi, northward, was free; but its perils had hardly lessened since the days of Spanish rule. Then it was said, in a curious old Western advertisement of 1797, whose English is worthy of notice:

> "No danger need be apprehended from the enemy, as every person whatever will be under cover, made proof against rifle or musket balls, and convenient port-holes for firing out of. Each of the boats are armed with six pieces, carry a pound ball, also a number of muskets, and amply supplied with plenty of ammunition, strongly manned with choice hands, and masters of approved knowledge."

Scarcely any journey, now, outside of Asia and Africa, is more arduous than was then the trip from St. Louis to New Orleans. Vagabond Indians, white marauders, Spanish-armed extortion and arrest, and the natural perils of the stream, made the river little, if any, less dangerous than the Gulf. Culbert and Maglibray were the baser Lafittes of the Mississippi, and Cottonwood Creek their Barataria.

And the labors and privations were greater than the dangers. The conveyances were keel-boats, barges, and flat-boats. The flat-boats, at New Orleans, were broken up for their lumber, their slimy gunwales forming along the open gutter's edge in many of the streets a narrow and treacherous substitute for a pavement. The keel-boats and barges returned up-stream, propelled now by sweeps and now by warping or by *cordelle* (hand tow-ropes), consuming "three or four months of the most painful toil that can be imagined." Exposure and bad diet "ordinarily destroyed one-third of the crew."

But on the 10th of January, 1812, there had pushed in to the landing at New Orleans a sky-blue thing with a long bowsprit, "built after the fashion of a ship, with port-holes in the side," and her cabin in the hold. She was the precursor of the city's future greatness, the *Orleans*, from Pittsburg, the first steam vessel on the Mississippi.

Here was a second freedom of the great river mightier than that wrested from Spain. Commercial grandeur seemed just at hand. All Spanish America was asserting its independence; Whitney's genius was making cotton the world's greatest staple; immigrants were swarming into the West; the Mississippi valley would be the provision-house of Europe, the importer of untold millions of manufactures; New Orleans would keep the only gate. Instead of this, in June, 1812, Congress declared war against Great Britain. Barataria seemed indispensable, and New Orleans was infested with dangers.

In 1813, Wilkinson, still commanding in the West, marched to the Mobile; in April he drove the Spaniards out of Fort Charlotte and raised a small fortification, Fort Bowyer, to command the entrance of Mobile Bay. Thus the Spanish, neighbors only less objectionable than the British, were crowded back to Pensacola. But, this done, Wilkinson was ordered to the Canadian frontier, and even took part of his few regulars with him.

The English were already in the Gulf; the Indians were growing offensive; in July seven hundred crossed the Perdido into Mississippi; in September massacred three hundred and fifty whites at Fort Mimms, and opened the Creek war. Within New Orleans bands of drunken Choctaws roamed the streets. The Baratarians were seen daily in the public resorts. Incendiary fires became alarmingly common, and the *batture* troubles again sprang up. Naturally, at such a junction, Lafitte and his men reached the summit of power.

In February, 1814, four hundred country militia reported at Magazine Barracks, opposite New Orleans. The Governor tried to force out the city militia. He got only clamorous denunciation and refusal to obey. The country muster offered their aid to enforce the order. The city companies heard of it, and only Claiborne's discreetness averted the mortifying disaster of a battle without an enemy. The country militia, already deserting, was disbanded. Even the legislature withheld its support, and Claiborne was everywhere denounced as a traitor. He had to report to the President his complete failure. Still, he insisted apologetically, the people were emphatically ready to "turn out in case of actual invasion." Only so patient a man could understand that the Creoles were conscientious in their lethargy. Fortunately the invasion did not come until the Creek war had brought to view the genius of Andrew Jackson.

In April, Government raised the embargo.

But the relief was tardy; the banks suspended. Word came that Paris had fallen. Napoleon had abdicated. England would throw new vigor into the war with America, and could spare troops for the conquest of Louisiana.

In August the Creeks made peace. Some British officers landed at Apalachicola, Florida, bringing artillery. Some disaffected Creeks joined them and were by them armed and drilled. But now, at length, the Government took steps to defend the South-west.

General Jackson was given the undertaking. He wrote to Claiborne to hold his militia ready to march—an order very easy to give. In September he repaired to Mobile, which was already threatened. The British Colonel Nicholls had landed at Pensacola with some companies of infantry, from two sloops-of-war. The officers from Apalachicola and a considerable body of Indians had joined him, without objection from the Spaniards.

Suddenly attention was drawn to the Baratarians. On the third of September an armed brig had appeared off Grande Terre. She fired on an inbound vessel, forcing her to run aground, tacked, and presently anchored some six miles from shore. Certain of the islanders went off in a boat, ventured too near, and, turning to retreat, were overhauled by the brig's pinnace, carrying British colors and a white flag. In the pinnace were two naval officers and a captain of infantry. They asked for Mr. Lafitte, one officer speaking in French for the other.

"He is ashore," said the chief person in the island boat, and received a packet addressed "To Mr. Lafitte, Barataria." The officers asked that it be carefully delivered to him in person. The receiver of it, however, induced them to continue on, and when they were plainly in his power revealed himself.

"I, myself, am Mr. Lafitte." As they drew near the shore, he counseled them to conceal their business from his men. More than two hundred Baratarians lined the beach clamoring for the arrest of the "spies," but Lafitte contrived to get them safely to his dwelling, quieted his men, and opened the packet.

There were four papers in it. First, Colonel Nicholls's appeal to the Creoles to help restore Louisiana to Spain; to Spaniards, French, Italians, and Britons, to aid in abolishing American usurpation; and to Kentuckians, to exchange supplies for money, and neutrality for an open Mississippi. Second, his letter to Lafitte offering a naval captain's commission to him, lands to all his followers, and protection in persons and property to all, if the pirates, with their fleet, would put themselves under the British naval commander, and announcing the early invasion of Louisiana with a powerful force. Third, an order from the naval commander in Pensacola Bay, to Captain Lockyer, the bearer of the packet, to procure restitution at Barataria for certain late piracies, or to "carry destruction over the whole place"; but also repeating Colonel Nicholls's overtures. And fourth, a copy of the orders under which Captain Lockyer had come. He was to secure the Baratarians' coöperation in an attack on Mobile, or, at all events, their neutrality. According to Lafitte, the captain added verbally the offer of $30,000 and many other showy inducements.

Lafitte asked time to consider. He withdrew; when in a moment the three officers and their crew were seized by the pirates and imprisoned. They were kept in confinement all night. In the morning Lafitte appeared, and, with many apologies for the rudeness of his men, conducted the officers to their pinnace, and they went off to the brig. The same day he addressed a letter to Captain Lockyer asking a fortnight to "put his affairs in order," when he would be "entirely at his disposal." It is noticeable for its polished dignity and the purity of its English.

Was this anything more than stratagem? The Spaniard and Englishman were his foe and his prey. The Creoles were his friends. His own large interests were scattered all over Lower Louisiana. His patriotism has been overpraised; and yet we may allow him patriotism. His whole war, on the main-land side, was only with a set of ideas not superficially fairer than his own. They seemed to him unsuited to the exigencies of the times and the country. Thousands of Louisianians thought as he did. They and he—to borrow from a distance the phrase of another—were "polished, agreeable, dignified, averse to baseness and vulgarity." They accepted friendship, honor, and party faith as sufficient springs of action, and only dispensed with the sterner question of right and wrong. True, Pierre, his brother, and Dominique, his most intrepid captain, lay then in the calaboza. Yet should he, so able to take care of himself against all comers and all fates, so scornful of all subordination, for a paltry captain's commission and a doubtful thirty thousand, help his life-time enemies to invade the country and city of his commercial and social intimates?

He sat down and penned a letter to his friend Blanque, of the legislature, and sent the entire British packet, asking but one favor, the "amelioration of the situation of his unhappy brother"; and the next morning one of the New Orleans papers contained the following advertisement:

$1000 REWARD

WILL be paid for the apprehending of PIERRE LAFITTE, who broke and escaped last night from the prison of the parish. Said Pierre Lafitte is about five feet ten inches height, stout made, light complexion, and somewhat cross-eyed, further description is considered unnecessary, as he is very well known in the city.

Said Lafitte took with him three negroes, to wit: [giving their names and those of their owners]; the above reward will be paid to any person delivering the said Lafitte to the subscriber.

J. H. HOLLAND,
Keeper of the Prison.

On the 7th, John Lafitte wrote again to Blanque,—the British brig and two sloops-of-war still hovered in the offing,—should he make overtures to the United States Government? Blanque's advice is not known; but on the 10th, Lafitte made such overtures by letter to Claiborne, inclosed in one from Pierre Lafitte —who had joined him—to M. Blanque.

The outlawed brothers offered themselves and their men to defend Barataria, asking only oblivion of the past. The high-spirited periods of John Lafitte challenge admiration, even while they betray tinges of sophistry that may or may not have been apparent to the writer. "All the offense I have committed," wrote he, "I was forced to by certain vices in our laws."

The heads of the small naval and military force then near New Orleans were Commodore Paterson and Colonel Ross. They had organized and were hurriedly preparing a descent upon the Baratarians. A general of the Creole militia was Villeré, son of the unhappy patriot of 1768. Claiborne, with these three officers, met in council, with the Lafittes' letters and the British overtures before them, and debated the question whether the pirates' services should be accepted. Villeré voted yea, but Ross and Paterson stoutly nay, and thus it was decided. Nor did the British send ashore for Lafitte's final answer; but lingered distantly for some days and then vanished.

Presently the expedition of Ross and Paterson was ready. Stealing down the Mississippi, it was joined at the mouth by some gun-vessels, sailed westward into the Gulf, and headed for Barataria. There was the schooner *Carolina*, six gun-vessels, a tender, and a launch. On the 16th of September they sighted Grande Terre, formed in line of battle, and stood for the entrance of the bay.

Within the harbor, behind the low island, the pirate fleet was soon descried forming in line. Counting all, schooners and feluccas, there were ten vessels. Two miles from shore the *Carolina* was stopped by shoal water, and the two heavier gun-vessels grounded. But armed boats were launched, and the attack entered the pass and moved on into the harbor.

Soon two of the Baratarians' vessels were seen to be on fire; another, attempting to escape, grounded, and the pirates, except a few brave leaders, were flying. One of the fired vessels burned, the other was boarded and saved, the one which grounded got off again and escaped. All the rest were presently captured. At this moment, a fine, fully-armed schooner appeared outside the island, was chased and taken. Scarcely was this done when another showed herself to eastward. The *Carolina* gave chase. The stranger stood for Grande Terre, and ran into water where the *Carolina* could not follow. Four boats were launched; whereupon the chase opened fire on the *Carolina*, and the gun-vessels in turn upon the chase, firing across the island from inside, and in half an hour she surrendered. She proved to be the *General Bolivar*, armed with one eighteen, two twelve, and one six-pounder.

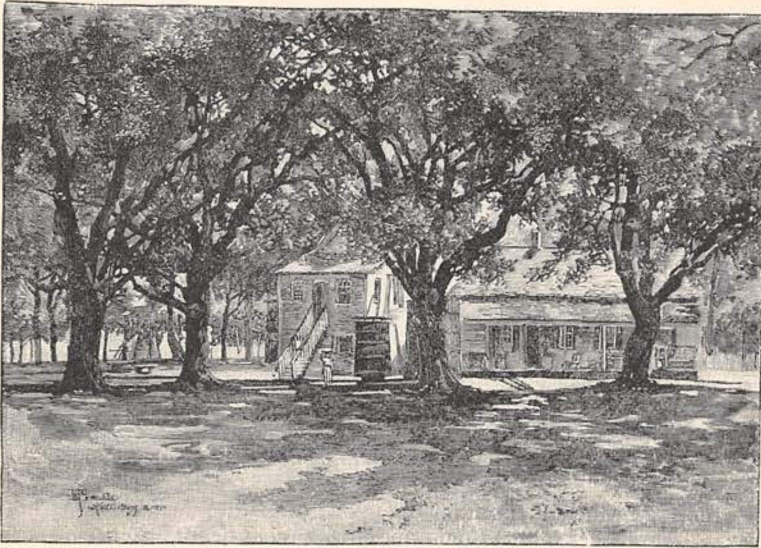
The nest was broken up. "All their buildings and establishments at Grande Terre and Grand Isle, with their telegraph and stores at Chenière Caminada, were destroyed. On the last day of September, the elated squadron, with their prizes,—seven cruisers of Lafitte, and three armed schooners under Carthagenian colors,—arrived in New Orleans harbor amid the peal of guns from the old barracks and Fort St. Charles.

But among the prisoners the commanding countenance of John Lafitte and the cross-eyed visage of his brother Pierre were not to be seen. Both men had escaped up Bayou La Fourche to the "German Coast." Others who had had like fortune by and by gathered on Last Island, some sixty miles west of Grande Terre, and others found asylum in New Orleans, where they increased the fear of internal disorder.

Paterson and Ross struck the Baratarians just in time. The fortnight asked of the British by Lafitte expired the next day. The British themselves were far away eastward, drawing off from an engagement of the day before, badly worsted. A force of seven hundred British troops, six hundred Indians, and four vessels of war had attacked Fort Bowyer, commanding the entrances of Mobile Bay and Mississippi Sound. Its small garrison had repulsed them and they retired again to Pensacola with serious loss, including a sloop-of-war grounded and burned.

Now General Jackson gathered four thousand men on the Alabama River, regulars, Tennesseeans, and Mississippi dragoons, and early in November attacked Pensacola with

great spirit, took the two forts,—which the Spaniards had allowed the English to garrison,—drove the English to their shipping and the Indians into the interior, and returned to Mobile. Here he again called on Claiborne to muster his militia. Claiborne convened the legislature and laid the call before it.



THE VILLERÉ PLANTATION HOUSE, HEAD-QUARTERS OF PACKENHAM.

It was easy to count up the resources of defense: Patterson's feeble navy, the weak Fort St. Philip on the river, the unfinished Fort Petites Coquilles on the Rigolets, Ross's seven hundred regulars, a thousand militia, mustered at last after three imperative calls, a wretchedly short supply of ammunition—nothing more. "Our situation," says La Carrière Latour, "seemed desperate." Twelve thousand chosen British troops were known to have sailed for Louisiana.

Measures of defense were pushed on. Forts and stockades were manned, new companies and battalions were mustered, among them one of Choctaw Indians and two of free men of color. Jails were emptied to swell the ranks.

And now John Lafitte, encouraged by Claiborne and the legislature, came forward again. Jackson, in one of his proclamations, had called the Baratarians "hellish banditti," whose aid he spurned. But now these two intrepid leaders met face to face in a room that may still be pointed out in the old cabildo, and the services of Lafitte and his skilled artillerists were offered and accepted for the defense of the city. All proceedings against them were suspended; some were sent to man the siege-guns of Forts Petites Coquilles, St. John, and St. Philip, and others were enrolled in a body of artillery under "Captains" Beluche and Dominique. One of the general's later reports alludes to the Baratarians as "these gentlemen." The battle was fought on the 8th of January.

New Orleans emerged from the smoke of General Jackson's great victory comparatively Americanized. Peace followed, or rather the tardy news of peace, which had been sealed at Ghent more than a fortnight before the battle. With peace came open ports. The highways of commercial greatness crossed each other in the custom-house, not behind it, as in Spanish or embargo days, and the Baratarians were no longer esteemed a public necessity. Scattered, used, and pardoned, they passed into eclipse—not total, but fatally visible where they most desired to shine. The ill-founded tradition that the Lafittes were never seen after the battle of New Orleans had thus a figurative reality.

In Jackson's general order of January 21st, Captains Dominique and Beluche, "with part of their former crew," were gratefully mentioned for their gallantry in the field, and the brothers Lafitte for "the same courage and fidelity." On these laurels Dominique You rested and settled down to quiet life in New Orleans, enjoying the vulgar admiration which is given to the survivor of lawless adventures. It may seem superfluous to add that he became a leader in ward politics.

In the spring of 1815, Jackson, for certain imprisonments of men who boldly opposed the severity of his prolonged dictatorship in New Orleans, was forced at length to regard the decrees of court. It was then that his "hellish banditti," turned "Jacksonites," did

OLD SPANISH COTTAGE IN ROYALE STREET, SCENE OF ANDREW JACKSON'S TRIAL.

their last swaggering in the famous Exchange Coffee-house, at the corner of St. Louis and Chartres streets, and when he was fined $1000 for contempt of court, aided in drawing his carriage by hand through the streets.

Of Beluche or of Pierre Lafitte little or nothing more is known. But John Lafitte continued to have a record. After the city's deliverance a ball was given to officers of the army. General Coffee was present. So, too, was Lafitte. On their being brought together and introduced, the General showed some hesitation of manner, whereupon the touchy Baratarian advanced haughtily and said, with emphasis, "Lafitte, the pirate." Thus, unconsciously, it may be, he foretold that part of his life which still lay in the future.

That future belongs properly to the history of Texas. Galveston Island had early been one of Lafitte's stations, and now became his permanent depot, whence he carried on extensive operations, contraband and piratical. His principal cruiser was the *Jupiter*. She sailed under a Texan commission. Under the filibuster Long, who ruled at Nacogdoches, Lafitte became governor of Galveston.

An American ship was robbed of a quantity of specie on the high seas. Shortly afterward the *Jupiter* came into Galveston with a similar quantity on board. A United States cruiser accordingly was sent to lay off the coast, and watch her maneuvers. Lafitte took offense at this, and sent to the American commander to demand explanation. His letter, marked with more haughtiness, as well as with more ill-concealed cunning than his earlier correspondence with the British and Americans, was not answered.

THE BATTLE-GROUND.

In 1818 a storm destroyed four of his fleet. He sent one Lafage to New Orleans, who brought out thence a new schooner of two guns, manned by fifty men. He presently took a prize; but had hardly done so, when he was met by the revenue cutter *Alabama*, answered her challenge with a broadside, engaged her in a hard battle, and only surrendered after heavy loss. The schooner and prize were carried into Bayou St. John, the crew taken to New Orleans, tried in the United States Court, condemned and executed.

Once more Lafitte took the disguise of a Colombian commission and fitted out three vessels. The name of one is not known. Another was the *General Victoria*, and a third the schooner *Blank* — or, we may venture to spell it *Blanque*. He coasted westward and southward as far as Sisal, Yucatan, taking several small prizes, and one that was very valuable, a schooner that had been a slaver. Thence he turned toward Cape Antonio, Cuba, and in the open gulf disclosed to his followers that his Colombian commission had expired.

Forty-one men insisted on leaving him. He removed the guns of the *General Victoria*, crippled her rigging, and gave her into their hands. They sailed for the Mississippi, and after three weeks arrived there and surrendered to the officers of the customs. The Spanish Consul claimed the vessel, but she was decided to belong to the men who had fitted her out.

Lafitte seems now to have become an open pirate. Villeré, Governor of Louisiana after Claiborne, and the same who had counseled the acceptance of Lafitte's first overtures in 1819, spoke in no measured terms of "those men who lately, under the false pretext of serving the cause of the Spanish patriots, scoured the Gulf of Mexico, making its waves groan," etc. It seems many of them had found homes in New Orleans, making it "the seat of disorders and crimes which he would not attempt to describe."

The end of this uncommon man is lost in a confusion of improbable traditions. As late as 1822 his name, if not his person, was the terror of the Gulf and the Straits of Florida. But in that year the United States navy swept those waters with vigor, and presently reduced the perils of the Gulf — for the first time in its history — to the hazard of wind and wave.

A few steps down the central walk of the middle cemetery of those that lie along Claiborne street, from Custom-house down to Conti, on the right-hand side, stands the low, stuccoed tomb of Dominique You. The tablet bears his name surmounted by the emblem of Free Masonry. Some one takes good care of it. An epitaph below proclaims him, in French verse, the intrepid hero of a hundred battles on land and sea; who, without fear and without reproach, will one day view, unmoved, the destruction of the world. To this spot, in 1830, he was followed on his way by the Louisiana Legion (city militia), and laid to rest with military honors, at the expense of the town council.

AT SEA.

One does not seem really to have got out of doors till he goes to sea. On the land he is shut in by the hills, or the forests, or more or less housed by the sharp lines of his horizon. But at sea he finds the roof taken off, the walls taken down; he is no longer in the hollow of the earth's hand, but upon its naked back, with nothing between him and the immensities. He is in the great cosmic out-of-doors, as much so as if voyaging to the moon or to Mars. An astronomic solitude and vacuity surrounds him; his only guides and landmarks are stellar; the earth has disappeared; the horizon has gone; he has only the sky and its orbs left; this cold, vitreous, blue-black liquid through which the ship plows is not water, but some denser form of the cosmic ether. He can now see the curve of the sphere which the hills hid from him; he can study astronomy under improved conditions. If he was being borne through the interplanetary spaces on an immense shield, his impressions would not perhaps be much different. He would find the same vacuity, the same blank or negative space, the same empty, indefinite, oppressive out-of-doors.

For it must be admitted that a voyage at sea is more impressive to the imagination than to the actual sense. The world is left behind; all standards of size, of magnitude, of distance, are vanished; there is no size, no form, no perspective; the universe has dwindled to a little circle of crumpled water, that journeys with you day after day, and to which you