

THE SCENES OF CABLE'S ROMANCES.

WHEN I first viewed New Orleans from the deck of the great steam-boat that had carried me from gray north-western mists into the tepid and orange-scented air of the South, my impressions of the city, drowsing under the violet and gold of a November morning, were oddly connected with memories of "Jean-ah Poquelin." That strange little tale had appeared in this magazine a few months previously; and its exotic picturesqueness had considerably influenced my anticipations of the Southern metropolis, and prepared me to idealize everything peculiar and semi-tropical that I might see. Even before I had left the steam-boat my imagination had already flown beyond the wilderness of cotton-bales, the sierra-shaped roofs of the sugar-sheds, the massive fronts of refineries and store-houses, to wander in search of the old slave-trader's mansion, or at least of something resembling it—"built of heavy cypress, lifted up on pillars, grim, solid, and spiritless." I did not even abandon my search for the house after I had learned that Tchoupitoulas "Road" was now a great business street, fringed not by villas but by warehouses; that the river had receded from it considerably since the period of the story; and that where marsh lands used to swelter under the sun, pavements of block stone had been laid, enduring as Roman causeways, though they will tremble a little under the passing of cotton-floats. At one time, I tried to connect the narrative with a peculiar residence near the Bayou Road—a silent wooden mansion with vast verandas, surrounded by shrubbery which had become fantastic by long neglect. Indeed, there are several old houses in the more ancient quarters of the city which might have served as models for the description of Jean-ah Poquelin's dwelling, but none of them is situated in his original neighborhood,—old plantation homes whose broad lands have long since been cut up and devoured by the growing streets. In reconstructing the New Orleans of 1810, Mr. Cable might have selected any one of these to draw from, and I may have found his model without knowing it. Not, however, until the last June CENTURY appeared, with its curious article upon the "Great South Gate," did I learn that in the early years of the nineteenth century such a house existed precisely in the location described by Mr. Cable. Readers of "The Great South Gate" must have been impressed

by the description therein given of "Doctor" Gravier's home, upon the bank of the long-vanished Poydras Canal,—a picture of desolation more than justified by the testimony of early municipal chronicles; and the true history of that eccentric "Doctor" Gravier no doubt inspired the creator of "Jean-ah Poquelin." An ancient city map informs us that the deserted indigo fields, with their wriggling amphibious population, extended a few blocks north of the present Charity Hospital; and that the plantation-house itself must have stood near the juncture of Poydras and Freret streets,—a region now very closely built and very thickly peopled.

The sharp originality of Mr. Cable's description should have convinced the readers of "Old Creole Days" that the scenes of his stories are in no sense fanciful; and the strict perfection of his creole architecture is readily recognized by all who have resided in New Orleans. Each one of those charming pictures of places—veritable pastels—was painted after some carefully selected model of French or Franco-Spanish origin,—typifying fashions of building which prevailed in colonial days. Greatly as the city has changed since the eras in which Mr. Cable's stories are laid, the old creole quarter still contains antiquities enough to enable the artist to restore almost all that has vanished. Through those narrow, multicolored, and dilapidated streets, one may still wander at random with the certainty of encountering eccentric façades and suggestive Latin appellations at every turn; and the author of "Madame Delphine" must have made many a pilgrimage into the quaint district, to study the wrinkled faces of the houses, or perhaps to read the queer names upon the signs,—as Balzac loved to do in old-fashioned Paris. Exceptionally rich in curiosities is the *Rue Royale*, and it best represents, no doubt, the general physiognomy of the colonial city. It appears to be Mr. Cable's favorite street, as there are few of his stories which do not contain references to it; even the scenery of incidents laid elsewhere has occasionally been borrowed from that "region of architectural decrepitude," which is yet peopled by an "ancient and foreign-seeming domestic life." For Louisiana dreamers, Mr. Cable has peopled it also with many delightful phantoms; and the ghosts of Madame Délicieuse, of Delphine Carraze, of 'Sieur George, will surely continue to haunt it until of all the dear

old buildings there shall not be left a stone upon a stone.

From the corner of Canal street at Royal, —ever perfumed by the baskets of the flower-sellers,—to the junction of Royal with Bien-ville, one observes with regret numerous evidences of modernization. American life is invading the thoroughfare,—uprearing concert-halls, with insufferably pompous names, multiplying flashy saloons and cheap restau-

arabesque work in wrought iron,—graceful tendrils and curling leaves of metal, framing some monogram of which the meaning is forgotten. Much lattice-work also will be observed about verandas, or veiling the ends of galleries, or suspended like green cage-work at the angle formed by a window-balcony with some lofty court-wall. And far down the street, the erratic superimposition of wire-hung signs, advertising the presence



MADAME JOHN'S LEGACY.

rants, cigar stores and oyster-rooms. Gambling indeed survives, but only through metamorphosis;—it is certainly not of that aristocratic kind wherein Colonel De Charleu, owner of "Belles Demoiselles Plantation," could have been wont to indulge. Already a line of electric lights mocks the rusty superannuation of those long-disused wrought-iron lamp frames set into the walls of various creole buildings. But from the corner of Conti street,—where Jules St. Ange idled one summer morning "some seventy years ago,"—*Rue Royale* begins to display a picturesqueness almost unadulterated by innovation, and opens a perspective of roof lines astonishingly irregular, that jag and cut into the blue strip of intervening sky at every conceivable angle, with gables, eaves, dormers, triangular peaks of slate, projecting corners of balconies or verandas,—overtopping or jutting out from houses of every imaginable tint: canary, chocolate, slate-blue, speckled gray, ultramarine, cinnamon red, and even pale rose. All have sap-green batten shutters; most possess balconies balustraded with elegant

of many quiet, shadowy little shops that hide their faces from the sun behind slanting canvas awnings, makes a spidery confusion of lines and angles in the very center of the vista.

I think that only by a series of instantaneous photographs, tinted after the manner of Goupil, could the physiognomy of the street be accurately reproduced,—such is the confusion of projecting show-windows, the kaleidoscopic medley of color, the jumble of infinitesimal stores. The characteristics of almost any American street may usually be taken in at one glance; but you might traverse this creole thoroughfare a hundred times without being able to ordinate the puzzling details of its perspective.

But when the curious pilgrim reaches the corner of Royal and St. Peter streets (*Rue Saint Pierre*), he finds himself confronted by an edifice whose oddity and massiveness compel special examination,—a four-story brick tenement house with walls deep as those of a mediæval abbey, and with large square windows having singular balconies, the iron-work of which is wrought into scrolls and initials.



'SIEUR GEORGE'S.

Unlike any other building in the quarter, its form is that of an irregular pentagon, the smallest side of which looks down Royal and up St. Peter street at once and commands, through its windows, in a single view, three street angles. This is the house where 'Sieur George so long dwelt. It is said to have been the first four-story building erected in New Orleans; and it certainly affords a singular example of the fact that some very old buildings obstinately rebel against innovations of fashion, just as many old men do. Despite a desperate effort recently made to compel its acceptance of a new suit of paint and whitewash, the venerable structure persists in remaining almost precisely as Mr. Cable first described it. The cornices are still dropping plaster; the stucco has not ceased to peel off; the rotten staircases, "hugging the sides of the court," still seem "trying to climb up out of the rubbish"; the court itself is always "hung with many lines of wet clothes"; and the rooms are now, as ever, occupied by folk "who dwell there simply for lack of activity to find better and cheaper quarters elsewhere." Cheaper it would surely be easy to find, inasmuch as 'Sieur George's single-windowed room rents unfurnished at ten dollars per month. There

is something unique in the spectacle of this ponderous, dilapidated edifice, with its host of petty shops on the *rez-de-chaussée*,—something which recalls an engraving I once saw in some archæological folio, picturing a swarm of Italian fruit-booths seeking shelter under the crumbling arches of a Roman theater.

Upon the east side of *Rue Royale*, half a square farther up, the eye is refreshed by a delicious burst of bright green—a garden inclosed on three sides by spiked railings, above which bananas fling out the watered-satin of their splendid leaves, and bounded at its eastern extremity by the broad, blanched, sloping-shouldered silhouette of the cathedral. Here linger memories of Padre Antonio de Sedella (Père Antoine), first sent to Louisiana as a commissary of the Holy Inquisition, immediately shipped home again by sensible Governor Miro. But Padre Antonio returned to Louisiana, not as an inquisitor, but as a secular priest, to win the affection of the whole creole population, by whom he was venerated as a saint even before his death. Somewhere near this little garden, the padre used to live in a curious wooden hut; and the narrow, flagged alley on the southern side of the cathedral and its garden still bears the appellation, *Passage Saint Antoine*, in honor

of the old priest's patron. The name is legibly inscribed above the show-windows of the Roman Catholic shop on the corner, where porcelain angels appear to be perpetually ascending and descending a Jacob's-ladder formed of long communion candles. The "Pères Jérômes" of our own day reside in the dismal brick houses bordering the alley farther toward Chartres street,—buildings which protrude, above the heads of passers-by, a line of jealous-looking balconies, screened with lattice-work, in which wicket lookouts have been contrived. On the northern side of garden and cathedral runs another flagged alley, which affects to be a continuation of Orleans street. Like its companion passage, it opens into Chartres street; but on the way it forks into a grotesque fissure in the St. Peter street block—into a marvelous mediæval-looking by-way, craggy with balconies and peaked with dormers. As this picturesque opening is still called Exchange alley, we must suppose it to have once formed part of the much more familiar passage of that name, though now widely separated therefrom by architectural reforms effected in *Rue Saint Louis* and other streets intervening. The northern side-entrance of the cathedral commands it,—a tall, dark, ecclesiastically severe archway, in whose shadowed recess Madame Delphine might safely have intrusted her anxieties to "God's own banker"; and Catholic quadroon women on their daily morning way to market habitually enter it with their baskets, to murmur a prayer in patois before the shrine of *Notre Dame de Lourdes*. Jackson square, with its rococo flower-beds and clipped shrubbery, might be reached in a moment by either of the flagged alleys above described; but it retains none of its colonial features, and has rightly been deprived of the military titles it once bore: *Place d'Armes*, or *Plaza de Armas*.

There stands, at the corner of St. Anne and Royal streets, a one-story structure with Spanish tile roof, a building that has become absolutely shapeless with age, and may be torn away at any moment. It is now a mere hollow carcass—a shattered brick skeleton to which plaster and laths cling in patches only, like shrunken hide upon the bones of some creature left to die and to mummify under the sun. An obsolete directory, printed in 1845, assures us that the construction was considered immemorably old even then; but a remarkable engraving of it, which accompanies the above remark, shows it to have at that time possessed distinct Spanish features and two neat entrances with semicircular stone steps. In 1835 it was the *Café des Réfugiés*, frequented by fugitives from the Antilles, West Indian strangers, filibusters, *révolutionnaires*,—all that sin-

gular class of Latin-Americans so strongly portrayed in Mr. Cable's "Café des Exilés."

At the next block, if you turn down Du-maine street from Royal, you will notice, about half-way toward Chartres a very peculiar house, half brick, half timber. It creates the impression that its builder commenced it with the intention of erecting a three-story brick, but changed his mind before the first story had been completed, and finished the edifice with second-hand lumber,—supporting the gallery with wooden posts that resemble monstrous balusters. This is the house bequeathed by "Mr. John," of the Good Children's Social Club, to the beautiful quadroon Zalli and her more beautiful reputed daughter, 'Tite Poulette. As Mr. Cable tells us, and as one glance can verify, it has now become "a den of Italians, who sell fuel by day, and by night are up to no telling what extent of deviltry." On the same side of Du-maine, but on the western side of Royal street, is another remarkable building, more imposing, larger,—"whose big, round-arched windows in the second story were walled up, to have smaller windows let into them again with odd little latticed peep-holes in their batten shutters." It was to this house that Zalli and 'Tite Poulette removed their worldly goods, after the failure of the bank; and it was from the most westerly of those curious windows in the second story that Kristian Koppig saw the row of cigar-boxes empty their load of earth and flowers upon the head of the manager of the Salle Condé. Right opposite you may see the good Dutchman's one-story creole cottage. The resemblance of 'Tite Poulette's second dwelling-place to the old Spanish barracks in architectural peculiarity has been prettily commented upon by Mr. Cable; and, in fact, those barracks, which could shelter six thousand troops in O'Reilly's time, and must, therefore, have covered a considerable area, were situated not very far from this spot. But the only fragments of the barrack buildings that are still positively recognizable are the arched structures at Nos. 270 and 272 Royal street, occupied now, alas! by a prosaic seltzer factory. The spacious cavalry stables now shelter vulgar mules, and factory wagons protrude their shafts from the mouths of low, broad archways under which once glimmered the brazen artillery of the King of Spain.

A square west of Royal, at the corner of Bourbon and St. Philip streets, formerly stood the famed smithy of the Brothers Lafitte; but it were now useless to seek for a vestige of that workshop, whose chimes of iron were rung by African muscle. Passing St. Philip street, therefore, the visitor who follows the



MADAME DELPHINE'S HOUSE.

east side of Royal might notice upon the opposite side an elegant and lofty red-brick mansion, with a deep archway piercing its *rez-de-chaussée* to the court-yard, which offers a glimpse of rich foliage whenever the *porte cochère* is left ajar. This is No. 253 Royal street, the residence of "Madame Délicieuse"; and worthy of that honor, it seems, with its superb tiara of green verandas. A minute two-story cottage squats down beside it—a miniature shop having tiny show-windows that project like eyes. The cottage is a modern affair; but it covers the site of Dr. Mossy's office, which, you know, was a lemon-yellow creole construction, roofed with red tiles. What used to be "the Café de Poésie on the corner" is now a hat store. Further on, at the intersection of Royal and Hospital streets (*Rue d'Hôpital*, famous in creole ballads), one cannot fail to admire a dwelling solid and elegant as a Venetian palazzo. It has already been celebrated in one foreign novel; and did I not feel confident that Mr. Cable will tell us all about it one of these days, I should be tempted to delay the reader on this corner, although Madame Delphine's residence is already within sight.

No one can readily forget Mr. Cable's description of "the small, low, brick house of a story and a half, set out upon the sidewalk, as weather-beaten and mute as an aged beggar fallen asleep." It stands near Barracks street, on Royal; the number, I think, is 294. Still are its solid wooden shutters "shut with a grip that makes one's nails and knuckles feel lacerated"; and its coat of decaying plaster, patched with all varieties of neutral

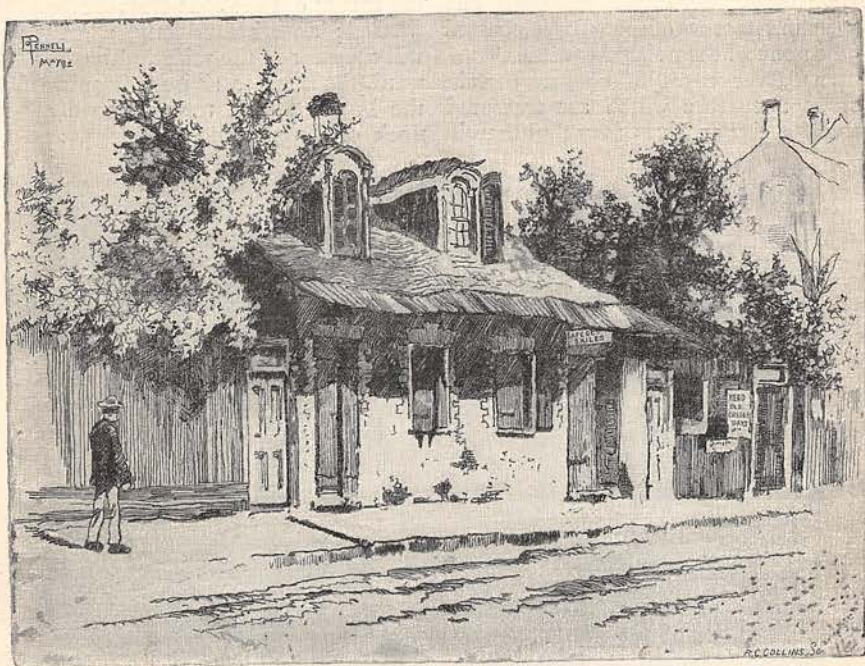
tints, still suggests the raggedness of mendicancy. Even the condition of the garden gate, through which Monsieur Vignevielle first caught a glimpse of Olive's maiden beauty, might be perceived to-day as readily as ever by "an eye that had been in the blacksmithing business." But since the accompanying sketch was drawn, the picturesqueness of the upper part of the cottage has been greatly diminished by architectural additions made with a view to render the building habitable. Over the way may still be seen that once pretentious three-story residence "from whose front door hard times have removed all vestiges of paint," a door shaped like old European hall doors, and furnished with an iron knocker. It has not been repainted since Mr. Cable wrote his story, nor does it seem likely to be.

Only a few paces farther on yawns the dreamy magnificence of aristocratic Esplanade street, with its broad, central band of grass all shadow-flecked by double lines of trees. There Royal street terminates, Esplanade forming the southern boundary line of the old French quarter.

If the reader could now follow me westwardly along one of the narrow ways leading to the great *Rue des Remparts*, he would soon find himself in that quadron quarter, whose denizens still "drag their chairs down to the narrow gate-ways of their close-fenced gardens, and stare shrinkingly at you as you pass, like a nest of yellow kittens." He would be at once charmed and astonished by the irregularity of the perspective and the eccentricity of the houses: houses whose foreheads are fantastically encircled by

wooden parapets, striped like the *foulards* of the negresses; houses yellow-faced and sphinx-featured, like certain mulatto women; houses which present their profiles to the fence, so that as you approach they seem to

the *Café des Exilés* will bring you to Congo square, the last green remnant of those famous Congo plains, where the negro slaves once held their bamboulas. Until within a few years ago, the strange African dances were



CAFÉ DES EXILÉS.

turn away their faces with studied prudery, like young creole girls; houses that appear felinely watchful, in spite of closed windows and doors, gazing sleepily at the passer-by through the chinks of their green shutters, as through vertical pupils. Five minutes' walk over *banquettes* of disjointed brick-work, through which knots of tough grass are fighting their upward way, brings one to Rampart street, where Mr. Cable found the model for his "*Café des Exilés*." It was situated on the west side, No. 219, and THE CENTURY'S artist sketched it under a summer glow that brought out every odd detail in strong relief. But hereafter, alas! the visitor to New Orleans must vainly look for the window of Pauline, "well up in the angle of the broad side-gable, shaded by its rude awning of clapboards, as the eyes of an old dame are shaded by her wrinkled hand." Scarcely a week ago, from the time at which I write, the antiquated cottage that used to "squat right down upon the sidewalk, as do those Choctaw squaws who sell bay and sassafras and life-everlasting" was ruthlessly torn away, together with its oleanders, and palmettoes, and pomegranates, to make room, no doubt, for some modern architectural platitude. A minute's walk from the vacant side of

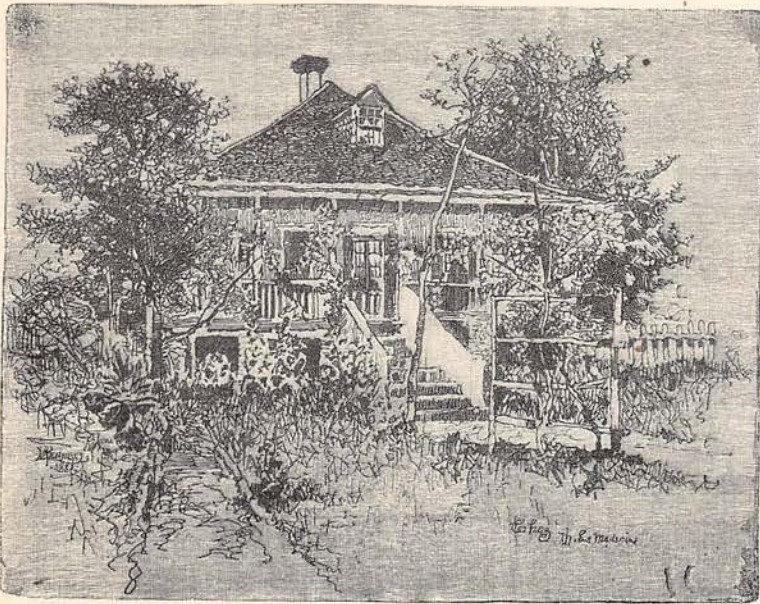
still danced and the African songs still sung by negroes and negresses who had been slaves. Every Sunday afternoon the bamboula dancers were summoned to a wood-yard on Dumaine street by a sort of drum-roll, made by rattling the ends of two great bones upon the head of an empty cask; and I remember that the male dancers fastened bits of tinkling metal or tin rattles about their ankles, like those strings of copper *gris-gris* worn by the negroes of the Soudan. Those whom I saw taking part in those curious and convulsive performances—subsequently suppressed by the police—were either old or beyond middle age. The veritable Congo dance, with its extraordinary rhythmic chant, will soon have become as completely forgotten in Louisiana as the signification of those African words which formed the hieratic vocabulary of the Voodooes.

It was where Congo square now extends that Bras-Coupé was lassoed while taking part in such a dance; it was in the same neighborhood that Captain Jean Grandissime of the Attakapas lay hiding—secure in his white man's skin "as if cased in steel"—to foil the witchcraft of Clemence; and it was there also that a crowd of rowdy American flat-boatmen, headed by "Posson Jone'," of

Bethesdy Church, stormed the circus and slew the tiger and the buffalo. Now, "Cayetano's circus" was not a fiction of Mr. Cable's imagining: such a show actually visited New Orleans in 1816 or thereabouts, and remained a popular "fixture" for several seasons. The creole-speaking negroes of that day celebrated its arrival in one of their singular ditties.*

And whosoever cares to consult certain musty newspaper files which are treasured up among the city archives may find therein

railings and gate-ways have been removed; the weeds that used to climb over the moldering benches have been plucked up; new graveled walks have been made; the grass, mown smooth, is now refreshing to look at; the trunks of the shade-trees are freshly white-washed; and, before long, a great fountain will murmur in the midst. Two blocks westward, the somber, sinister, Spanish façade of the Parish Prison towers above a huddling flock of dingy frame dwellings, and exhales



A CREOLE COTTAGE OF THE COLONIAL TIME.

the quaint advertisements of Señor Gaëtano's circus and the story of its violent disruption.

But Congo square has been wholly transformed within a twelvemonth. The high

far around it the heavy, sickly, musky scent that betrays the presence of innumerable bats. At sundown, they circle in immense flocks above it, and squeak like ghosts about its

* Some years ago, when I was endeavoring to make a collection, of patois songs and other curiosities of the oral literature of the Louisiana colored folk, Mr. Cable kindly lent me his own collection, with permission to make selections for my private use, and I copied therefrom this *chanson créole*:

C'est Michié Cayétane
Qui sorti la Havane
Avec so chouals et so macacs!
Li gagnin ein homme qui dansé dans sac;
Li gagnin qui dansé si yé la main;
Li gagnin zaut' à choual qui boi' di vin;
Li gagnin oussi ein zeine zolie mamzelle
Qui monté choual sans bride et sans selle;—
Pou di tou' ça mo pas capabe,—
Mais mo souvien ein qui valé sab'.
Yé n'en oussi tout sort bétail:
Yé pas montré pou' la négrail
Qui ya pou' dochans,—dos-brulés
Qui fé tapaze,—et pou' birlé
Ces gros mesdames et gros michiés
Qui ménein là tous p'tis yé
'Oir Michié Cayétane

Qui vivé la Havane
Avec so chouals et so macacs.†

† " 'Tis Monsieur Gaëtano
Who comes out from Havana
With his horses and his monkeys!
He has a man who dances in a sack;
He has one who dances on his hands;
He has another who drinks wine on horseback;
He has also a young pretty lady
Who rides a horse without bridle or saddle:
To tell you all about it I am not able,—
But I remember one who swallowed a sword.
There are all sorts of animals, too;—
They did not show to nigger-folk
What they showed to the trash,—the burnt-backs
[poor whites]
Who make so much noise,—nor what they had to
amuse
All those fine ladies and gentlemen,
Who take all their little children along with them
To see Monsieur Gaëtano
Who lives in Havana
With his horses and his monkeys!"

naked sentry towers. I have been told that this grim building will soon be numbered among those antiquities of New Orleans forming the scenery of Mr. Cable's romances.

The scene of perhaps the most singular tale in "Old Creole Days"—"Belles Demoiselles Plantation"—remains to be visited; but if the reader recollects the observation made in the very first paragraph of the story, that "the old Creoles never forgive a public mention," he will doubtless pardon me for leaving the precise location of "Belles Demoiselles" a mystery, authentic though it is, and for keeping secret its real and ancient name. I can only tell him that to reach it, he must journey far from the creole faubourg and beyond the limits of New Orleans to a certain unfamiliar point on the river's bank, whence a ferryman, swarthy and silent as Charon, will row him to the farther side of the Mississippi, and aid him to land upon a crumbling levee erected to prevent the very catastrophe anticipated in Mr. Cable's tale. Parallel with this levee curves a wagon-road whose farther side is bounded by a narrow and weed-masked ditch, where all kinds of marvelous wild things are growing, and where one may feel assured that serpents hide. Beyond this little ditch is a wooden fence, now overgrown and rendered superfluous by a grand natural barrier of trees and shrubs, all chained together by interlacements of wild vines and thorny creepers. This forms the boundary of the private grounds surrounding the "Belles Demoiselles" residence; and the breeze comes to you heavily-sweet with blossom-scents, and shrill with vibrant music of cicadas and of birds.

Fancy the wreck of a vast garden created by princely expenditure,—a garden once filled with all varieties of exotic trees, with all species of fantastic shrubs, with the rarest floral products of both hemispheres, but left utterly uncared for during a generation, so that the groves have been made weird with hanging moss, and the costly vines have degenerated into parasites, and richly cultured plants returned to their primitive wild forms. The alley-walks are soft and sable with dead leaves; and all is so profoundly beshadowed by huge trees that a strange twilight prevails there even under a noonday sun. The lofty hedge is becrimsoned with savage roses, in whose degenerate petals still linger traces of former high cultivation. By a little gate set into that hedge, you can enter the opulent wilderness within, and pursue a winding path between mighty trunks that lean at a multitude of angles, like columns of a decaying cathedral about to fall. Crackling of twigs under foot, leaf whispers, calls of birds and

cries of tree-frogs are the only sounds; the soft gloom deepens as you advance under the swaying moss and snaky festoons of creepers: there is a dimness and calm, as of a place consecrated to prayer. But for their tropical and elfish drapery, one might dream those oaks were of Dodona. And even with the passing of the fancy, lo! at a sudden turn of the narrow way, in a grand glow of light, *even the Temple appears*, with splendid peripteral of fluted columns rising boldly from the soil. Four pillared façades,—east, west, north, and south,—four superb porches, with tiers of galleries suspended in their recesses; and two sides of the antique vision ivory-tinted by the sun. Impossible to verbally describe the effect of this matchless relic of Louisiana's feudal splendors, that seems trying to hide itself from the new era amid its neglected gardens and groves. It creates such astonishment as some learned traveler might feel, were he suddenly to come upon the unknown ruins of a Greek temple in the very heart of an equatorial forest; it is so grand, so strangely at variance with its surroundings! True, the four ranks of columns are not of chiseled marble, and the stucco has broken away from them in places, and the severe laws of architecture have not been strictly obeyed; but these things are forgotten in admiration of the building's majesty. I suspect it to be the noblest old plantation-house in Louisiana; I am sure there is none more quaintly beautiful. When I last beheld the grand old mansion, the evening sun was resting upon it in a Turneresque column of yellow glory, and the oaks reaching out to it their vast arms through ragged sleeves of moss, and beyond, upon either side, the crepuscular dimness of the woods, with rare golden luminosities spattering down through the serpent knot-work of lianas, and the heavy mourning of mosses, and the great drooping and clinging of multitudinous disheveled things. And all this subsists only because the old creole estate has never changed hands, because no speculating utilitarian could buy up the plantation to remove or remodel its proud homestead and condemn its odorless groves to the saw-mill. The river is the sole enemy to be dreaded, but a terrible one: it is ever gnawing the levee to get at the fat cane-fields; it is devouring the roadway; it is burrowing nearer and nearer to the groves and the gardens; and while gazing at its ravages, I could not encourage myself to doubt that, although his romantic anticipation may not be realized for years to come, Mr. Cable has rightly predicted the ghastly destiny of "Belles Demoiselles Plantation."