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HISTORY OF LOUISIANA.

A SERIES OF LECTURES.

BY

CHARLES GAYARRE.

UTILE DULCI.



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# CONTENTS.

PREFACE . . . . . 9

## FIRST LECTURE.

PRIMITIVE STATE OF THE COUNTRY—EXPEDITION OF DE SOTO IN 1539—  
HIS DEATH—DISCOVERY OF THE MISSISSIPPI IN 1673, BY FATHER  
MARQUETTE AND JOLIET—THEY ARE FOLLOWED IN 1682 BY LA SALLE  
AND THE CHEVALIER DE TONTI—ASSASSINATION OF LA SALLE . . . 23

## SECOND LECTURE.

ARRIVAL OF IBERVILLE AND BIENVILLE—SETTLEMENT OF A FRENCH  
COLONY IN LOUISIANA—SAUVOLLE, FIRST GOVERNOR—EVENTS AND  
CHARACTERS IN LOUISIANA, OR CONNECTED WITH THAT COLONY, FROM  
LA SALLE'S DEATH, IN 1687, TO 1701 . . . . . 53

## THIRD LECTURE.

SITUATION OF THE COLONY FROM 1701 TO 1712—THE PETTICOAT IN-  
SURRECTION—HISTORY AND DEATH OF IBERVILLE—BIENVILLE, THE  
SECOND GOVERNOR OF LOUISIANA—HISTORY OF ANTHONY CROZAT,  
THE GREAT BANKER—CONCESSION OF LOUISIANA TO HIM . . . 119

## FOURTH LECTURE.

LAMOTHE CADILLAC, GOVERNOR OF LOUISIANA—SITUATION OF THE  
COLONY IN 1713—FEUD BETWEEN CADILLAC AND BIENVILLE—CHA-  
RACTER OF RICHEBOURG—FIRST EXPEDITION AGAINST THE NATCHEZ  
—DE L'EPINAY SUCCEEDS CADILLAC—THE CURATE DE LA VENTE—  
EXPEDITION OF ST. DENNIS TO MEXICO—HIS ADVENTURES—JAL-  
LOT, THE SURGEON—IN 1717 CROZAT GIVES UP HIS CHARTER—HIS  
DEATH . . . . . 171



## P R E F A C E .

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IF every man's life were closely analyzed, accident, or what seems to be so to human apprehension, and what usually goes by that name, whatever it may really be, would be discovered to act a more conspicuous part and to possess a more controlling influence than pre-conception, and that volition which proceeds from long meditated design. My writing the history of Louisiana, from the expedition of De Soto in 1539, to the final and complete establishment of the Spanish government in 1769, after a spirited resistance from the French colonists, was owing to an accidental circumstance, which, in the shape of disease, drove me from a seat I had lately obtained in the Senate of the United States, but which, to my intense regret, I had not the good fortune to occupy. Travelling for health, not from free agency, but a slave to compulsion, I dwelt several years in France. In the peculiar state in which my mind

then was, if its attention had not been forcibly diverted from what it brooded over, the anguish under which it sickened, from many causes, would soon have not been endurable. I sought for a remedy : I looked into musty archives—I gathered materials—and subsequently became a historian, or rather a mere pretender to that name.

Last year, as circumstance or accident would have it, I was invited by the managers of the People's Lyceum to deliver a Lecture before their Society. The invitation was flattering, but came in a most inopportune moment. The Legislature was then in session, and, as Secretary of State, my duties and my daily relations with the members of that honorable body were such as to allow me very little leisure. I could not decline, however, the honor conferred upon me ; and with a mind engrossed by other subjects, and with a hurried pen, I wrote the first Lecture, which is now introduced to the reader as the leading one in this volume. It happened to give satisfaction : friends desired its publication : their desire was complied with ; and in the June and July numbers of De Bow's Commercial Review, the discourse which I had delivered before the People's Lyceum made its appearance. I attached



so little importance to this trifling production, the offspring of an hour's thought, that I was greatly amazed at the encomium it elicited from newspapers, in which it was copied at length, in several parts of the United States.

What! said I to myself, am I an unnatural father, and has my child more merit than I imagined? As I was pondering upon this grave question, the last epidemic took possession of New Orleans by storm. If I ventured into the streets for exercise or occupation, I immediately suffered intolerable annoyance from the stinging darts of Apollo, through the ineffectual texture of my straw hat, and my eyes were greeted with nothing but the sight of dogs, physicians, and hearses. If I remained at home, seeking tranquillity under the protection of the household gods of celibacy, indiscreet visitors would come in, and talk of nothing else but of the dying and the dead. One day I got into a very sinful fit of passion, and summoning up my servant George to my august presence, I said to him, "George, you are a great rascal, are you not?" "Master, I do not know exactly," replied he, scratching his woolly head. "Well, I do know it, George, and I am pleased to give you that wholesome information. But no matter, I forgive you."

“Thank you, master.” “I deserve no thanks for what I can’t help: but stop, don’t go yet; I have something more to say.” “Master,” quoth he, “I wish you would make haste, for the milk is on the fire, and I am afraid it will boil over.” “Out upon the milk, man, and listen to me with all the might of your African ears.” George took an attitude of mixed impatience and resignation, and I continued, with more marked emphasis in my tone, and with increased dignity in my gesticulation, “Did you not lately run away for two months, for what reasonable cause, God only knows; and did you not come back with the face of a whipped dog, telling me that you were satisfied with your experiment of that great blessing, freedom, and that you would not try it any more? Do not hang down your thick head, as if you meant to push it through that big chest of yours; but keep this in mind: if, for a whole week, you allow any human body to cross my threshold, I swear (and you know I always keep my word) that I’ll kick you away to the abolitionists. Now vanish from my sight.” What impression this order produced on *this miserable slave*, I do not know, but it was strictly executed.

After I had dismissed my sable attendant, I found myself in the same situation that many people frequently

find themselves in. I did not know what to do with myself. I had neither a wife nor children to quarrel with ; and as to servants, I hate scolding them—I reserve that for their betters. As to my books, I thought I had the right to indulge towards them in any of the capricious whims of a lover, and I bent upon their tempting and friendly faces a scowling look of defiance. One thing was settled in my mind ;—I was determined to enjoy the luxury of laziness, and to be, for a while, an indolent, unthinking sort of animal, the good-for-nothing child of a southern latitude. So, I thrust my hands into the pockets of my morning-gown, and lounged through every room in my house, staring curiously at every object, as if it had been new to my eyes.

For some time, I amused myself with my small gallery of paintings, and with a variety of trifles, which are the pickings of my travelling days. But alas! with some of them are connected painful recollections of the past ; and, much to my regret, I discovered that my soul, which I thought I had buried ten fathoms deep in the abyss of matter, was beginning to predominate again in my mixed nature. I hastily turned my eyes from a contemplation, which had interfered with the much coveted ease of the brute ; but, as fate would

have it, they settled upon some ancestral portraits. As I gazed at them, I became abstracted, until it really seemed to me that I saw a sorrowful expression steal over their features, as they looked at the last descendant of their race. I became moody, and felt that one of my dark fits was coming on.

What was to be done? I was placed in this awkward dilemma, either to eject my brains from my skull, or to stupify them. But my pistols were not loaded, and the exertion to do so would have been too great with Fahrenheit at 100. I felt tempted to get drunk, but unfortunately I can bear no other beverage than water. Smoking would, perhaps, have answered the purpose, if my attempts at acquiring that attainment and all the other qualifications connected with the use of tobacco, had not resulted in a sick stomach. I was in this unpleasant state of cogitation, when that number of De Bow's Review which contains my Lecture on the Romance of the History of Louisiana, caught my sight, as it was lying on my writing desk. I picked it up, and began to fondle my bantling: of course, I became interested, and all my morbid feelings vanished, as it were, by magic. Oh! how charming it is to have a family! Ladies, which of you will have me?

But I must not wander from my subject. I say, then, that I had in my left hand De Bow's Review, and, I do not know how, the right one imperceptibly exercised some sort of magnetic influence over my pen, which was reposing close by, and which flew to its fingers, where it stuck. A few minutes after, it was dipped in ink, and running over paper at the rate of fifty miles an hour, and raising as much smoke as any locomotive in the country.

The three other Lectures, which I submit now to the consideration of the reader, are the result of the concatenation of accidents or circumstances which I have related.

When I had finished my composition, like most people who act first and then set themselves to thinking, I began to *guess*, as some of my Yankee friends would say, whether I could not apply the fruits of my labor to some practical purpose. I had achieved one thing, it is true—I had rendered seclusion pleasant to myself; but could I not do more? Would there not be sweet satisfaction in extracting something useful to my fellow-citizens from the careless and unpretending effusions, the object of which had originally been to accelerate the flight of a few heavy hours, which I des-

cried at a short distance, coming upon me with their leaden wings and their gouty feet!

To write history, is to narrate events, and to show their philosophy, when they are susceptible of any such demonstration. When the subject is worthy of it, this is a kind of composition of the highest order, and which affords to genius an ample scope for the display of all its powers. But the information so conveyed, is limited to the few, because not suited to the intelligence of the many. The number of those who have read Tacitus, Hume, Gibbon, or Clarendon, is comparatively small, when opposed to those who have pored with delight over the fascinating pages of Walter Scott. To relate events, and, instead of elucidating and analyzing their philosophy, like the historian, to point out the hidden sources of romance which spring from them—to show what materials they contain for the dramatist, the novelist, the poet, the painter, and for all the varied conceptions of the fine arts—is perhaps an humbler task, but not without its utility. When history is not disfigured by inappropriate invention, but merely embellished and made attractive by being set in a glittering frame, this artful preparation honies the cup of useful knowledge, and makes it acceptable to

the lips of the multitude. Through the immortal writings of Walter Scott, many have become familiar with historical events, and have been induced to study more serious works, who, without that tempting bait, would have turned away from what appeared to them to be but a dry and barren field, too unpromising to invite examination, much less cultivation. To the bewitching pen of the wonderful magician of her romantic hills, Scotland owes more for the popular extension of her fame, than to the doings of the united host of all her other writers, warriors, and statesmen.

It was in pursuing such a train of reasoning, that I came to the conclusion that the publication of these Lectures might show what romantic interest there is in the history of Louisiana ; that it might invite some to an investigation which, so far, they perhaps thought would not repay them for the trouble ; and to study with fondness what hitherto had been to them an object of disdainful neglect. I have attempted to accumulate and to heap up together materials for the use of more skilful architects than I am, and have contented myself with drawing the faint outlines of literary compositions, which, if filled up by the hand of genius, would do for Louisiana, on a smaller scale, what has been done for



Scotland; would encircle her waist with the magic zone of Romance, and give her those letters-patent of nobility, which are recorded for ever in the temple of Fame. An humble janitor, I have opened the door to those realms where flit the dim shadows of the dead, which are said to be anxious to resume life, and which, to the delight of the world, and to the glorification of my native land, might, at the command of some inspired bard, be made to reanimate their deserted bodies.

Ad fluvium (Mississippi) Deus evocat agmine magno,  
Scilicet immemores supera ut convexa revisant  
Rursus et incipiant in corpora velle reverti.

VIRGIL.

I give to the world these *nugæ seriæ* for what they are worth. As a pastime, I began with shooting arrows at random, and then, gathering inspiration from the growing animation of the sport, I aimed at a particular object. If the bystanders should think that I have not shot too far wide of the mark—if the public, pleased with one or two good hits, should put on his white kid gloves, and coming up to me with the high-bred courtesy of a gentleman, should exchange a polite bow, and by way of encouragement, should utter those delicate compliments which, whether true or not, do honor to



the donor and to the donee, (for I hate vulgar praise and coarse incense,) I shall deem it my duty to cultivate an acquaintance, which may ripen into friendship, and I may, in my endeavors to deserve it, publish another series of Lectures. Well-meant criticism, I shall delight in, as a means of improvement; vituperation, I do not anticipate from one of so gentle blood; but absolute silence, I shall consider as a broad hint not to importune him any more, and I promise to act accordingly. The more so, that from the lessons of experience, and from knowledge of the world, I feel every day more disposed to ensconce myself within a nut-shell, and that my ambition has dwindled so much in its proportions, that it would be satisfied to rest for ever, "*sub tegmine fagi*," with the commission of overseer of a parish road.

NEW ORLEANS, March 1, 1848.



FIRST LECTURE.



THE POETRY,  
OR THE  
ROMANCE OF THE HISTORY OF LOUISIANA.

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FIRST LECTURE.

PRIMITIVE STATE OF THE COUNTRY—EXPEDITION OF DE SOTO IN 1539—  
HIS DEATH—DISCOVERY OF THE MISSISSIPPI IN 1673, BY FATHER  
MARQUETTE AND JOLIET—THEY ARE FOLLOWED IN 1682 BY LA SALLE  
AND THE CHEVALIER DE TONTI—ASSASSINATION OF LA SALLE.

HAVING been invited by a Committee, on behalf of the People's Lyceum, to deliver one of their twelve annual Lectures, I was not long in selecting the subject of my labors. My mind had been lately engaged in the composition of the History of Louisiana, and it was natural that it should again revert to its favorite object of thought, on the same principle which impels the mightiest river to obey the laws of declivity, or which recalls and confines to its channel its gigantic volume of waters, when occasionally deviating from its course.

But in reverting now to the History of Louisiana, my intention is not to review its diversified features with the scrutinizing, unimpassioned, and austere judgment of the historian. Imposing upon myself a more grateful task, because more congenial to my taste, I shall take for the object of this Lecture, **THE POETRY, OR THE ROMANCE OF THE HISTORY OF LOUISIANA.**

Poetry is the daughter of Imagination, and imagination is, perhaps, one of the highest gifts of Heaven, the most refined ethereal part of the mind, because, when carried to perfection, it is the combined essence of all the finest faculties of the human intellect. There may be sound judgment, acute perceptions, depth of thought, great powers of conception, of discrimination, of research, of assimilation, of combination of ideas, without imagination, or at least without that part of it which elaborates and exalts itself into poetry, but how can we conceive the existence of a poetical imagination in its highest excellence, without all the other faculties? Without them, what imagination would not be imperfect or diseased? It is true that without imagination there may be a world within the mind, but it is a world without light. Cold it remains, and suffering from the effects of partial organization, unless by some mighty fiat imagination is breathed into the dormant mass, and the sun of poetry, emerging in the heaven of the mind,

illuminates and warms the several elements of which it is composed, and completes the creation of the intellect.

Hence the idea of all that is beautiful and great is concentrated in the word poetry. There is no grand conception of the mind in which that intellectual faculty which constitutes poetry is not to be detected. What is great and noble, is and must be poetical, and what is poetical must partake, in some degree or other, of what is great and noble. It is hardly possible to conceive an Alexander, a Cæsar, a Napoleon, a Newton, a Lycurgus, a Mahomet, a Michael Angelo, a Canova, or any other of those wonderful men who have carried as far as they could go, the powers of the human mind in the several departments in which they were used, without supposing them gifted with some of those faculties of the imagination which enter into the composition of a poetical organization. Thus every art and almost every science has its poetry, and it is from the unanimous consent of mankind on this subject that it has become so common to say "the poetry" of music, of sculpture, of architecture, of dancing, of painting, of history, and even the poetry of religion, meaning that which is most pleasing to the eye or to the mind, and ennobling to the soul. We may therefore infer from the general feeling to which I have alluded, that where the spirit of poetry does not exist, there cannot be true greatness; and it can, I believe, be safely aver-

red, that to try the gold of all human actions and events, of all things and matters, the touchstone of poetry is one of the surest.

I am willing to apply that criterion to Louisiana, considered both physically and historically; I am willing that my native State, which is but a fragment of what Louisiana formerly was, should stand or fall by that test, and I do not fear to approach with her the seat of judgment. I am prepared to show that her history is full of poetry of the highest order and of the most varied nature. I have studied the subject *con amore*, and with such reverential enthusiasm, and I may say with such filial piety, that it has grown upon my heart as well as upon my mind. May I be able to do justice to its merits, and to raise within you a corresponding interest to that which I feel! To support the assertion that the history of Louisiana is eminently poetical, it will be sufficient to give you short graphical descriptions of those interesting events which constitute her annals. Bright gems they are, encircling her brows, diadem-like, and worthy of that star which has sprung from her forehead to enrich the American constellation in the firmament of liberty.

Three centuries have hardly elapsed, since that immense territory which extends from the Gulf of Mexico to the Lakes of Canada, and which was subsequently known under the name of Louisiana, was slumbering



in its cradle of wilderness, unknown to any of the white race to which we belong. Man was there, however, but man in his primitive state, claiming as it were, in appearance at least, a different origin from ours, or being at best a variety of our species. There, was the hereditary domain of the red man, living in scattered tribes over that magnificent country. Those tribes earned their precarious subsistence chiefly by pursuing the inhabitants of the earth and of the water; they sheltered themselves in miserable huts, spoke different languages, observed contradictory customs, and waged fierce war upon each other. Whence they came none knew; none knows, with absolute certainty, to the present day; and the faint glimmerings of vague traditions have afforded little or no light to penetrate into the darkness of their mysterious origin. Thus a wide field is left open to those dreamy speculations of which the imagination is so fond.

Whence came the Natchez, those worshippers of the sun with eastern rites? How is it that Grecian figures and letters are represented on the earthen wares of some of those Indian nations? Is there any truth in the supposition that some of those savages whose complexion approximates most to ours, draw their blood from that Welsh colony which is said to have found a home in America, many centuries since? Is it possible that Phœnician adventurers were the pilgrim fathers

of some of the aborigines of Louisiana? What copper-colored swarm first issued from Asia, the revered womb of mankind, to wend its untraced way to the untenanted continent of America? What fanciful tales could be weaved on the powerful Choctaws, or the undaunted Chickasaws, or the unconquerable Mobiliens? There the imagination may riot in the poetry of mysterious migrations, of human transformations; in the poetry of the forests, of the valleys, of the mountains, of the lakes and rivers, as they came fresh and glorious from the hand of the Creator, in the poetry of barbaric manners, laws, and wars. What heroic poems might not a future Ossian devise on the red monarchs of old Louisiana! Would not their strange history, in the hands of a Tacitus, be as interesting as that of the ancient barbarian tribes of Germany, described by his immortal pen? Is there in that period of their existence which precedes their acquaintance with the sons of Europe, nothing which, when placed in contrast with their future fate, appeals to the imagination of the moralist, of the philosopher, and of the divine? Who, without feeling his whole soul glowing with poetical emotions, could sit under yonder gigantic oak, the growth of a thousand years, on the top of that hill of shells, the sepulchre of man, piled up by his hands, and overlooking that placid lake where all would be repose, if it were not for that solitary canoe, a moving speck,

hardly visible in the distance, did it not happen to be set in bold relief, by being on that very line where the lake meets the horizon, blazing with the last glories of the departing sun? Is not this the very poetry of landscape, of Louisianian landscape?

When diving into the mysteries of the creation of that part of the southwestern world which was once comprehended in the limits of Louisiana, will not the geologist himself pause, absorbed in astonishment at the number of centuries which must have been necessary to form the delta of the Mississippi? When he discovers successive strata of forests lying many fathoms deep on the top of each other; when he witnesses the exhumation of the fossil bones of mammoths, elephants, or huge animals of the antediluvian race; when he reads the hieroglyphic records of Nature's wonderful doings, left by herself on the very rocks, or other granite and calcareous tablets of this country, will he not clasp his hands in ecstasy, and exclaim, "Oh! the dryness of my study has fled; there is poetry in the very foundation of this extraordinary land!"

Thus I think that I have shown that the spirit of poetry was moving over the face of Louisiana, even in her primitive state, and still pervades her natural history. But I have dwelt enough on Louisiana in the dark ages of her existence, of which we can know nothing, save by vague traditions of the Indians. Let us ap-

proach those times where her historical records begin to assume some distinct shape.

On the 31st of May, 1539, the bay of Santo Spiritu, in Florida, presented a curious spectacle. Eleven vessels of quaint shape, bearing the broad banner of Spain, were moored close to the shore ; one thousand men of infantry, and three hundred and fifty men of cavalry, fully equipped, were landing in proud array under the command of Hernando De Soto, one of the most illustrious companions of Pizarro in the conquest of Peru, and reputed one of the best lances of Spain ! “ When he led in the van of battle, so powerful was his charge,” says the old chronicler of his exploits, “ so broad was the bloody passage which he carved out in the ranks of the enemy, that ten of his men at arms could with ease follow him abreast.” He had acquired enormous wealth in Peru, and might have rested satisfied, a knight of renown, in the government of St. Jago de Cuba, in the sweet enjoyment of youth and of power, basking in the smiles of his beautiful wife, Isabella de Bobadilla. But his adventurous mind scorns such inglorious repose, and now he stands erect and full of visions bright, on the sandy shore of Florida, whither he comes, with feudal pride, by leave of the king, to establish nothing less than a marquisate, ninety miles long by forty-five miles wide, and there to rule supreme, a governor for life, of all the territory that he can subjugate. Not

unmindful he, the Christian knight, the hater and conqueror of Moorish infidelity, of the souls of his future vassals ; for, twenty-two ecclesiastics accompany him to preach the word of God. Among his followers are gentlemen of the best blood of Spain and of Portugal : Don Juan de Guzman ; Pedro Calderon, who, by his combined skill and bravery, had won the praises of Gonzalvo de Cordova, yclept “ the great captain ; ” Vasconcellos de Silva, of Portugal, who for birth and courage knew no superior ; Nuno Tobar, a knight above fear and reproach ; and Muscoso de Alvarado, whom that small host of heroes ranked in their estimation next to De Soto himself. But I stop an enumeration which, if I did justice to all, would be too long.

What materials for romance ! Here is chivalry, with all its glittering pomp, its soul-stirring aspirations, in full march, with its iron heels and gilded spurs, towards the unknown and hitherto unexplored soil of Louisiana. In sooth, it must have been a splendid sight ! Let us look at the glorious pageantry as it sweeps by, through the long vistas of those pine woods ! How nobly they bear themselves, those bronzed sons of Spain, clad in refulgent armor ! How brave that music sounds ! How fleet they move, those Andalusian chargers, with arched necks and dilated nostrils ! But the whole train suddenly halts in that verdant valley, by that bubbling stream, shaded by those venerable

oaks with gray moss hanging from their branches in imitation of the whitening beard of age. Does not the whole encampment rise distinct upon your minds ?

The tents with gay pennons, with armorial bearings ; the proud steed whose impatient foot spurns the ground ; those men stretched on the velvet grass and recruiting their wearied strength by sleep ; some singing old Castilian or Moorish roundelays ; others musing on the sweet rulers of their souls, left in their distant home ; a few kneeling before the officiating priest, at the altar which a moment sufficed for their pious ardor to erect, under yonder secluded bower ; some burnishing their arms, others engaged in mimic warfare and trials of skill or strength ; De Soto sitting apart with his peers in rank if not in command, and intent upon developing to them his plans of conquest, while the dusky faces of some Indian boys and women in the background express wild astonishment. None of the warriors of that race are to be seen ; they are reported to be absent on a distant hunting excursion. But, methinks that at times I spy through the neighboring thickets the fierce glance of more than one eye, sparkling with the suppressed fury of anticipated revenge. What a scene ! and would it not afford delight to the poet's imagination or to the painter's eye ?

In two ponderous volumes, the historian Garcillasso relates the thousand incidents of that romantic expedi-



tion. What more interesting than the reception of Soto at the court of the Princess Cofachiqui, the Dido of the wilderness! What battles, what victories over men, over the elements themselves, and over the endless obstacles thrown out by rebellious nature! What incredible physical difficulties overcome by the advancing host! How heroic is the resistance of the Mobiliens and of the Alabamas! With what headlong fury those denizens of the forest rush upon the iron clad warriors, and dare the thunders of those whom they take to be the children of the sun! How splendidly described is the siege of Mobile, where women fought like men, and wrapped themselves up in the flames of their destroyed city rather than surrender to their invaders!

But let the conquering hero beware! Now he is encamped on the territory of the Chickasaws, the most ferocious of the Indian tribes. And lucky was it that Soto was as prudent as he was brave, and slept equally prepared for the defence and for the attack. Hark! in the dead of a winter's night, when the cold wind of the north, in the month of January, 1541, was howling through the leafless trees, a simultaneous howl was heard, more hideous far than the voice of the tempest. The Indians rush impetuous, with firebrands, and the thatched roofs which sheltered the Spaniards are soon on fire, threatening them with immediate destruction. The horses rearing and plunging in wild affright, and

breaking loose from their ligaments; the undaunted Spaniards, half naked, struggling against the devouring element and the unsparing foe; the desperate deeds of valor executed by Soto and his companions; the deep-toned shouts of St. Jago and Spain to the rescue; the demon-like shrieks of the red warriors; the final overthrow of the Indians; the hot pursuit by the light of the flaming village;—form a picture highly exciting to the imagination, and cold indeed must he be who does not take delight in the strange contrast of the heroic warfare of chivalry on one side, and of the untutored courage of man in his savage state, on the other.

It would be too long to follow Soto in his peregrinations during two years, through part of Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee. At last he stands on the banks of the Mississippi, near the spot where now flourishes the Egyptian named city of Memphis. He crosses the mighty river, and onward he goes, up to the White River, while roaming over the territory of the Arkansas. Meeting with alternate hospitality and hostility on the part of the Indians, he arrives at the mouth of the Red River, within the present limits of the State of Louisiana. There he was fated to close his adventurous career.

Three years of intense bodily fatigue and mental excitement had undermined the hero's constitution. Alas! well might the spirit droop within him! He had



landed on the shore of the North American continent with high hopes, dreaming of conquest over wealthy nations and magnificent cities. What had he met? Interminable forests, endless lagoons, inextricable marshes, sharp and continual conflicts with men little superior, in his estimation, to the brutish creation. He who in Spain was cheered by beauty's glance, by the songs of the minstrel, when he sped to the contest with adversaries worthy of his prowess, with the noble and chivalric Moors; he who had revelled in the halls of the imperial Incas of Peru, and who there had amassed princely wealth; he, the flower of knightly courts, had been roaming like a vagrant over an immense territory, where he had discovered none but half-naked savages, dwelling in miserable huts, ignobly repulsive when compared with Castilla's stately domes, with Granada's fantastic palaces, and with Peru's imperial dwellings, massive with gold! His wealth was gone, two-thirds of his brave companions were dead. What account of them would he render to their noble families! He, the bankrupt in fame and in fortune, how would he withstand the gibes of envy! Thought, that scourge of life, that inward consumer of man, racks his brain, his heart is seared with deep anguish; a slow fever wastes his powerful frame, and he sinks at last on the couch of sickness, never to rise again. The Spaniards cluster round him, and alternately look with despair

at their dying chieftain, and at the ominous hue of the bloody river, known at this day under the name of the Red River. But not he the man to allow the wild havoc within the soul to betray itself in the outward mien; not he, in common with the vulgar herd, the man to utter one word of wail! With smiling lips and serene brow he cheers his companions and summons them, one by one, to swear allegiance in his hands to Muscoso de Alvarado, whom he designates as his successor. "Union and perseverance, my friends," he says; "so long as the breath of life animates your bodies, do not falter in the enterprise you have undertaken. Spain expects a richer harvest of glory and more ample domains from her children." These were his last words, and then he dies. Blest be the soul of the noble knight and of the true Christian! Rest his mortal remains in peace within that oaken trunk scooped by his companions, and by them sunk many fathoms deep in the bed of the Mississippi!

The Spaniards, at first, had tried to conceal the death of Soto from the Indians, because they felt that there was protection in the belief of his existence. What mockery it was to their grief, to simulate joy on the very tomb of their beloved chief, whom they had buried in their camp before seeking for him a safer place of repose! But when, the slaves of hard necessity, they were, with heavy hearts but smiling faces,

coursing in tournament over the burial-ground, and profaning the consecrated spot, the more effectually to mislead the conjectures of the Indians, they saw that their subterfuge was vain, and that the red men, with significant glances, were pointing to each other the precise spot where the great white warrior slept. How dolorously does Garcillasso describe the exhumation and the plunging of the body into the turbid stream of the Great Father of Rivers!

Then comes an *Odyssey* of woes. The attempt of the Spaniards to go by land to Mexico; their wandering as far as the Rio Grande and the mountainous region which lies between Mexico and Texas, and which was destined, in after years, to be so famous in American history; their return to the mouth of Red River; their building of vessels capable of navigating at sea; the tender compassion and affectionate assistance of the good Cazique Anilco; the league of the other Indian princes, far and wide, under the auspices of the great king, Quigualtanqui, the Agamemnon of the confederacy; the discovery of the plot; the retreat of all the Indian chiefs save the indomitable Quigualtanqui; the fleet of one thousand canoes, mounted by twenty thousand men, with which he pursued the weary and despairing Spaniards for seventeen long days, assailing them with incessant fury; the giving up of the chase only when the sea was nearly in sight;

the fierce parting words of the Indians to the Spaniards: "Tell your countrymen that you have been pursued by Quigualtanqui alone; if he had been better assisted by his peers, none of you would have survived to tell the tale;" the solemn rites with which, in their thousand canoes riveted on the water, they, on the day they ceased their pursuit, adored the rising sun and saluted him with their thanksgivings for the expulsion of the invaders; the hair-breadth escapes of the three hundred Spaniards who alone out of the bright host of their former companions, had succeeded in fleeing from the hostile shore of Louisiana; their toils during a navigation of ninety days to the port of Panuco, where they at last arrived in a state of utter destitution, are all thrilling incidents connected with the history of Louisiana, and replete with the very essence of poetry.

When Alvarado, the Ulysses of that expedition, related his adventures in the halls of Montezuma, Don Francisco de Mendoza, the son of the viceroy, broke out with passionate admiration of the conduct of Quigualtanqui: "A noble barbarian," exclaimed he, "an honest man and a true patriot." This remark, worthy of the high lineage and of the ancestral fame of him who spoke it, is a just tribute to the Louisianian chief, and is an apt epilogue to the recital of those romantic achievements, the nature of which is such, that the poet's pen would be more at ease with it than that of the historian.

One hundred and thirty years had passed away since the apparition of Soto on the soil of Louisiana, without any further attempt of the white race to penetrate into that fair region, when on the 7th of July, 1673, a small band of Europeans and Canadians reached the Mississippi, which they had come to seek from the far distant city of Quebec. That band had two leaders, Father Marquette, a monk, and Joliet, a merchant, the prototypes of two great sources of power, religion and commerce, which, in the course of time, were destined to exercise such influence on the civilization of the western territory, traversed by the mighty river which they had discovered. They could not be ordinary men, those adventurers, who in those days undertook to expose themselves to the fatigues and perils of a journey through unknown solitudes, from the St. Lawrence to the Mississippi! That humble monkish gown of Father Marquette concealed a hero's heart; and in the merchant's breast there dwelt a soul that would have disgraced no belted knight.

Whether it was owing to the peaceful garb in which they had presented themselves, or to some other cause, the Indians hardly showed any of that hostility which they had exhibited towards the armed invasion of Spain. Joliet and Father Marquette floated down the river without much impediment, as far as the Arkansas. There, having received sufficient evidence that the

Mississippi discharged itself into the Gulf of Mexico, they retraced their way back and returned to Canada. But in that frail bark drifting down the current of the Mississippi, and in which sat the hard plodding merchant, with the deep wrinkles of thought and forecast on his brow, planning schemes of trade with unknown nations, and surveying with curious eye that boundless territory which seemed, as he went along, to stretch in commensurate proportion with the infiniteness of space; in that frail bark, I say, where mused over his breviary that gray-headed monk, leaning on that long staff, surmounted with the silver cross of Christ, and computing the souls that he had saved and still hoped to save from idolatry, is there not as much poetry as in the famed vessel of Argos, sailing in quest of the golden fleece? Were not their hearts as brave as those of the Greek adventurers? were not their dangers as great? and was not the object which they had in view much superior?

The grandeur of their enterprise was, even at that time, fully appreciated. On their return to Quebec, and on their giving information that they had discovered that mighty river of which the Europeans had but a vague knowledge conveyed to them by the Indians, and which, from the accounts given of its width and length, was considered to be one of the greatest wonders of the world, universal admiration was expressed; the bells of the Cathedral tolled merrily for a whole day, and the

bishop, followed by his clergy and the whole population, sang a solemn *Te Deum* at the foot of the altar. Thus, on the first acquaintance of our European fathers with the great valley of the Mississippi, of which our present State of Louisiana is the heart, there was an instinct that told them it was *there* that the seeds of empire and greatness were sown. Were they not right in those divinations which pushed them onward to that favored spot through so many obstacles? Greatness and empire were *there*, and therefore all the future elements of poetry.

Joliet and Marquette were dead, and nothing yet had been done to take possession of the newly discovered regions of the West ; but the impetus was given ; the march of civilization once begun could not retrograde ; that mighty traveller, with religion for his guide, was pushed onward by the hand of God ; and the same spirit which had driven the crusaders to Asia, now turned the attention of Europe to the continent of America. The spell which had concealed the Mississippi amidst hitherto impenetrable forests, and, as it were, an ocean of trees, was broken ; and the Indians, who claimed its banks as their hereditary domain, were now fated to witness the rapid succession of irresistible intruders.

Seven years, since the expedition of Marquette and Joliet, had rolled by, when Robert Cavalier de La Salle,



in the month of January, 1682, feasted his eyes with the sight of the far-famed Mississippi. For his companions he had forty soldiers, three monks, and the Chevalier de Tonti. He had received the education of a Jesuit, and had been destined to the cloister, and to become a tutor of children in a seminary of that celebrated order of which he was to become a member. But he had that will, and those passions, and that intellect, which cannot be forced into a contracted channel of action. Born poor and a plebeian, he wished to be both noble and rich; obscure, he longed to be famous. Why not? Man shapes his own destinies when the fortitude of the soul corresponds with the vigorous organization of the mind. When the heart dares prompt the execution of what genius conceives, nothing remains but to choose the field of success. That choice was soon made by La Salle. America was then exercising magnetic attraction upon all bold spirits, and did not fail to have the same influence on his own. Obeying the impulse of his ambition, he crossed the Atlantic without hesitation, and landed in Canada in 1673.

When on the continent of America, that fond object of his dreams, La Salle felt that he was in a congenial atmosphere with his temperament. His mind seemed to expand, his conceptions to become more vivid, his natural eloquence to be gifted with more persuasion,



and he was acknowledged at once by all who saw and heard him, to be a superior being. Brought into contact with Count Frontenac, who was the governor of Canada, he communicated to him his views and projects for the aggrandizement of France, and suggested to him the gigantic plan of connecting the St. Lawrence with the Mississippi by an uninterrupted chain of forts. "From the information which I have been able to collect," said he to the Count, "I think I may affirm that the Mississippi draws its source somewhere in the vicinity of the Celestial Empire, and that France will be not only the mistress of all the territory between the St. Lawrence and the Mississippi, but will command the trade of China, flowing down the new and mighty channel which I shall open to the Gulf of Mexico." Count Frontenac was seduced by the magnificence of the prospect sketched by the enthusiast, but not daring to incur the expenses which such an undertaking would have required, referred him to the court of France.

To France, then, the adventurer returns with increased confidence; for he had secured one thing, he had gained one point; introduction to the noble and to the wealthy under the auspices of Count Frontenac. The spirit of Columbus was in him, and nothing abashed he would have forced his way to the foot of the throne and appealed to Majesty itself, with that assurance which genius imparts. But sufficient was it for

him to gain the good graces of one of the royal blood of France, the Prince de Conti. He fired the prince's mind with his own contagious enthusiasm, and through him obtained from the king not only an immense concession of land, but was clothed with all the powers and privileges which he required for trading with the Indians, and for carrying on his meditated plans of discovery. Nay, more, he was ennobled by letters-patent, and thus one of the most ardent wishes of his heart was gratified. At last, he was no longer a plebeian, and with Macbeth he could exclaim, "Now, thane of Cawdor, the greatest is behind."

u / La Salle re-crossed the Atlantic with one worthy of being his *fidèle* *Achates*, and capable of understanding the workings of his mind and of his heart. That man was the Chevalier De Tonti, who, as an officer, had served with distinction in many a war, and who afterwards became famous among the Indians for the iron hand with which he had artificially supplied the one which he had lost.

On the 15th of September, 1678, proud and erect with the consciousness of success, La Salle stood again in the walls of Quebec, and stimulated by the cheers of the whole population, he immediately entered into the execution of his projects. Four years after, in 1682, he was at the mouth of the Mississippi, and in the name (as appears by a notarial act still extant) of

the *most puissant, most high, most invincible and victorious Prince*, Louis the Great, King of France, took possession of all the country which he had discovered. How his heart must have swelled with exultation, when he stood at the mouth of the great river on which all his hopes had centred ; when he unfurled the white banner and erected the stately column to which he appended the royal escutcheon of France, amidst the shouts of his companions and the discharge of firearms ! With what devotion he must have joined in the solemn *Te Deum* sung on that memorable occasion !

To relate all the heart-thrilling adventures which occurred to La Salle during the four years which elapsed between the opening and the conclusion of that expedition, would be to go beyond the limits which are allotted to me. Suffice it to say, that at this day to overcome the one-hundredth part of the difficulties which he had to encounter, would immortalize a man. Ah ! if it be true that man is never greater than when engaged in a generous and unyielding struggle against dangers and adversity, then must it be admitted that during those four years of trials La Salle was pre-eminently great. Was he not worthy of admiration, when to the camp of the Iroquois, who at first had received him like friends, but had been converted into foes, he dared to go alone, to meet the charges brought against him by the subtle Mansolia, whose words were so per-

suasive, and whose wisdom appeared so wonderful, that it was attributed to his holding intercourse with spirits of another world? How interesting the spectacle! How vividly it pictures itself to my mind! How it would grace the pages of a Fennimore Cooper, or of one having the magic pen of a Walter Scott! Methinks I see that areopagus of stern old Indian warriors listening with knit brows and compressed lips to the passionate accusation so skilfully urged against La Salle, and to the prediction that amity to the white race was the sure forerunner of destruction to all the Indian tribes. La Salle rose in his turn; how eloquent, how pathetic he was when appealing to the better feelings of the Indians, and how deserving of the verdict rendered in his favor!

But the enmity, the ambushes of Indians were not to him the only sources of danger. *Those* he could have stood unmoved! But what must have been his feelings when he became conscious of the poison which had been administered to him by some of his companions, who thought that by destroying him they would spare to themselves the anticipated horrors of an expedition which they no longer had the courage to prosecute! What his despair was, is attested by the name of "*Creve Cœur*," which he gave to a fort he built a short time after—the fort of the "Broken Heart!" But let us turn from his miseries to the more grateful spectacle of his ovation.

In 1684 he returned to France, and found himself famous. He, the poor boy, the ignoble by birth, for whom paternal tenderness had dreamed nothing higher than the honor of being a teacher in a seminary of Jesuits, was presented to Louis XIV, amidst all the splendors of his court! That Jupiter among the kings of the earth had a smile to bestow upon the humble subject who came to deposit at the foot of the throne the title-deeds of such broad domains. But that smile of royalty was destined to be the last smile of fortune. The favors which he then obtained bred nothing but reverses. Every thing, however, wore a bright aspect, and the star of his destiny appeared to be culminating in the heavens.

Thus a fleet, composed of four vessels, was put at his disposal, with all the materials necessary to establish a colony, and once more he left the shores of his native country, but this time invested with high command, and hoping perhaps to be the founder of an empire. That, indeed, was something worth having struggled for! But alas! he had struggled in vain; the meshes of adverse fate were drawing close around him. *Here* is not the place to relate his misunderstandings, degenerating into bitter quarrels with the proud Beaujeu, who had the subordinate command of the fleet, and who thought himself dishonored—he, the old captain of thirty years' standing, he, the nobleman—by being

placed under the control of the unprofessional, of the plebeian, of him whom he called a pedagogue, fit only to rule over children. The result of that conflict was, that La Salle found himself abandoned on the shores of the Bay of St. Bernard, in 1685, and was reduced to shift for himself, with very limited resources. Here follows a period of three other years of great sufferings and of bold and incessant wanderings through the territory of the present State of Texas, until, after a long series of adventures, he was basely murdered by his French companions, and revenged by his body-servant, an Englishman by birth. He died somewhere about the spot where now stands the city of Washington, which owes its foundation to some of that race to which belonged his avenger, and the star-spangled banner now proudly waves where the first pioneer of civilization consecrated with his blood the future land of liberty.

The rapid sketch which I have given shows that so much of La Salle's life as belongs to history, occupies a space of fifteen years, and is so full of incidents that it affords materials enough for the production of a voluminous and interesting book. But I think that I may safely close my observations with the remark, that he who will write the life of that extraordinary man, however austere his turn of mind may be, will hardly be able to prevent the golden hues of poetry from over-

spreading the pages which he may pen, where history is so much like romance that, in many respects, it is likely to be classed as such by posterity.

Here I must close this historical sketch ; here I must stop, on the threshold of the edifice through which I should like to wander with you, in order to call your attention not only to the general splendor, but to the minute perfection of its architecture. Perhaps, at a future period, if your desire should keep pace with my inclination, I may resume the subject ; and I believe it will then be easy for me to complete the demonstration that our annals constitute a rich mine, where lies in profusion the purest ore of poetry, not to be found in broken and scattered fragments, but forming an uninterrupted vein through the whole history of Louisiana, in all its varied phases, from the primitive settlement made at Bilóxi to the present time, when she wears the diadem of sovereignty, and when, with her blood and treasure, and with a spirit of chivalry worthy of her Spanish and French descent, and of her Anglo-Saxon adoption, she was the first to engage in the support of that war which, so glorious in its beginning at Palo Alto, Resaca de la Palma, Monterey, and Buena Vista, will undoubtedly have an equally glorious, and I think I may add, a poetical termination in the walls of Mexico !





SECOND LECTURE.



## SECOND LECTURE.

ARRIVAL OF IBERVILLE AND BIENVILLE—SETTLEMENT OF A FRENCH COLONY IN LOUISIANA—SAUVOLLE, FIRST GOVERNOR—EVENTS AND CHARACTERS IN LOUISIANA, OR CONNECTED WITH THAT COLONY, FROM LA SALLE'S DEATH, IN 1687, TO 1701.

I CLOSED my last Lecture with La Salle's death, in 1687. A few years after, in the latter part of the same century, a French ship of 42 guns, on one of those beautiful days which are the peculiar offspring of the autumnal climate of America, happened to be coasting the hostile shore of New England. At that time England and France were at war, and the bays and harbors of the British possessions were swarming with the floating battlements of the mistress of the sea. Nevertheless, from the careless manner in which that ship, which bore the white flag of France, hugged the coast, one would have thought that no danger was to be apprehended from such close proximity to captivity or death. Suddenly, three vessels hove in sight; it was not long before their broad canvas wings seemed

to spread wider, and their velocity to increase. To the most unpractised eye it would have been evident that they were in pursuit of an object which they longed to reach. Yet, *they of the white flag* appeared to be unconscious of the intention of their fellow-travellers on the boundless desert of the ocean. Although the French ship, with her long masts, towering like steeples, could have borne much more canvas; although the breeze blew fresh, and the circumstance might have invited to rapidity of motion, yet not one additional inch of sail did she show, but she continued to move with a speed, neither relaxed nor increased, and as if enjoying a holiday excursion on Old Neptune's domains.

High on the quarter-deck stood the captain, with the spy-glass in his hands, and surrounded by his officers. After a minute survey of the unknown vessels, as they appeared, with outlines faint and hardly visible from the distance, and with the tip of their masts gradually emerging, as it were, from the waves, he had dropped his glass, and said to the bystanders: "Gentlemen, they are vessels of war, and British." Then he instinctively cast a rapid glance upward at the rigging of his ship, as if to satisfy himself that nothing had happened *there*, to mar that symmetrical neatness and scientific arrangement which have ever been held to be a criterion of nautical knowledge, and therefore a proper source of professional pride. But the look which he

flung at the deck was long and steady. That thoughtful, lingering look embraced every object, animate or inanimate, which there stood. Ay! that abstracted look and compressed lips must have conveyed meaning as distinct as if words had been spoken; for they produced instantaneous action, such action as when man prepares to meet man in deadly encounter. It was plain that between that chief and his crew there was that sympathetic congeniality which imparts thought and feeling without the use of language. It was plain that on all occasions when the soul was summoned into moral volition and stirred into the assumption of high and uncommon resolves, the same electric fluid, gushing from the heart, pervaded at once the whole of that human mass. But, if a change had come over the outward appearance of that ship's deck, none had taken place in her upper trimming. The wind continued to fill the same number of sails, and the ship, naiad-like, to sport herself leisurely in her favorite element.

In the meantime, the vessels which had been descried at the farthest point of the horizon, had been rapidly gaining ground upon the intervening distance, and were dilating in size as they approached. It could be seen that they had separated from each other, and they appeared to be sweeping round the Pelican, (for such was the name of the French ship,) as if to cut her off from retreat. Already could be plainly disco-

vered St. George's cross, flaunting in the wind. The white cloud of canvas that hung over them seemed to swell with every flying minute, and the wooden structures themselves, as they plunged madly over the furrowed plains of the Atlantic, looked not unlike Titanic race-horses pressing for the goal. Their very masts, with their long flags streaming, like Gorgon's dishevelled locks, seemed, as they bent under the wind, to be quivering with the anxiety of the chase. But, ye sons of Britain, why this hot haste? Why urge ye into such desperate exertions the watery steeds which ye spur on so fiercely? *They of the white flag* never thought of flight. See! they shorten sail as if to invite you to the approach. Beware ye do not repent of your efforts to cull the Lily of France, so temptingly floating in your sight! If ye be falcons of pure breed, yonder bird, that is resting his folded pinions and sharpening his beak, is no carrion crow. Who, but an eagle, would have looked with such imperturbable composure at your rapid gyrations, betokening the thunderbolt-like swoop which is to descend upon his devoted head?

Now, forsooth, the excitement of the looker-on must be tenfold increased: now the four vessels are within gunshot, and the fearful struggle is to begin. One is a British ship of the line, showing a row of 52 guns, and her companions are frigates armed with 42 guns each. To court such unequal contest, must not that French

commander be the very impersonation of madness? There he stands on the quarter-deck, a man apparently of thirty years of age, attired as if for a courtly ball, in the gorgeous dress of the time of Louis the Fourteenth. The profuse curls of his perfumed hair seem to be bursting from the large, slouched gray hat, which he wears on one side inclined, and decorated with a red plume, horizontally stuck to the broad brim, according to the fashion of the day. What a noble face! If I were to sculpture a hero, verily, I would put such a head on his shoulders—nay, I would take the whole man for my model! I feel that I could shout with enthusiasm, when I see the peculiar expression which has settled in that man's eye, in front of such dangers thickening upon him! Ha! what is it? What signify that convulsive start which shook his frame, and that deathlike paleness which has flitted across his face? What woman-like softness has suddenly crept into those eyes? By heaven! a tear! I saw it, although it passed as rapidly as if a whirlwind had swept it off, and although every feature has now resumed its former expression of more than human firmness.

I understand it all! That boy, so young, so effeminate, so delicate, but who, in an under-officer's dress, stands with such manly courage by one of the guns,—he is your brother, is he not? Perhaps he is doomed to death! and you think of his aged mother! Well

may the loss of two such sons crush her at once! When I see such exquisite feelings tumultuously at work in a heart as soft as ever throbbed in a woman's breast; when I see you, Iberville, resolved to sacrifice so much, rather than to fly from your country's enemies, even when it could be done without dishonor, stranger as you are to me, I wish I could stand by you on that deck and hug you to my bosom!

What awful silence on board of those ships! Were it not for the roar of the waves, as they are cleft by the gigantic bulks under which they groan, the chirping of a cricket might be distinctly heard. How near they are to each other! A musket shot would tell. Now, the crash is coming! The tempest of fire, havoc, and destruction is to be let loose! What a spectacle! I would not look twice at such a scene—it is too painful for an unconcerned spectator! My breast heaves with emotion—I am struggling in vain to breathe! Ha! there it goes—one simultaneous blaze! The eruption of Mount Vesuvius—a strange whizzing sound—the hissing of ten thousand serpents, bursting from hell and drunk with its venom—the fall of timber, as if a host of sturdy axes had been at work in a forest—a thick overspreading smoke, concealing the demon's work within its dusky folds! With the occasional clearing of the smoke, the French ship may be seen, as if animated with a charmed life, gliding swiftly by her foes,



and pouring in her broadsides with unabated rapidity. It looks like the condensation of all the lightnings of heaven. Her commander, as if gifted with supernatural powers and with the privilege of ubiquity, seems to be present at the same time in every part of the ship, animating and directing all with untiring ardor.

That storm of human warfare has lasted about two hours; but the French ship, salamander-like, seems to live safely in that atmosphere of fire two hours! I do not think I can stand this excitement longer; and yet every minute is adding fresh fuel to its intensity. But now comes the crisis. The Pelican has almost silenced the guns of the English 52, and is bearing down upon her, evidently with the intention to board. But, strange! she veers round. Oh! I see. God of mercy! I feel faint at heart! The 52 is sinking—slowly she settles in the surging sea—there—there—there—down! What a yell of defiance! But it is the last. What a rushing of the waters over the ingulfed mass! Now all is over, and the yawning abyss has closed its lips—horrid! What remains to be seen on that bloody theatre? One of the English 42s, in a dismantled state, is dropping slowly at a distance under the wind, and the other has already struck its flag, and is lying motionless on the ocean, a floating ruin!

The French ship is hardly in a better plight, and the last rays of the setting sun show her deck strewed

with the dead and the dying. But the glorious image of victory flits before the dimmed vision of the dying, and they expire with the smile of triumph on their lips, and with the exulting shout of "*France for ever!*"

But where is the conquerer? Where is the gallant commander, whose success sounds like a fable? My heart longs to see him safe, and in the enjoyment of his well-earned glory. Ah! there he is, kneeling and crouching over the prostrate body of that stripling whom I have depicted: he addresses the most tender and passionate appeals to that senseless form; he covers with kisses that bloody head; he weeps and sobs aloud, unmindful of those that look on. In faith! I weep myself, to see the agony of that noble heart: and why should that hero blush to moan like a mother—he who showed more than human courage, when the occasion required fortitude? Weep on, Iberville, weep on! Well may such tears be gathered by an angel's wings, like dew-drops worthy of heaven, and, if carried by supplicating mercy to the foot of the Almighty's throne, they may yet redeem thy brother's life!

Happily, that brother did not die. He was destined to be known in history under the name of Bienville, and to be the founder of one of America's proudest cities. To him, New Orleans owes its existence, and his name, in the course of centuries, will grow in the esteem of posterity, proportionately with the aggran-

dizement of the future emporium of so many countless millions of human beings.

The wonderful achievement which I have related, is a matter of historical record, and throws a halo of glory and romance around those two men, who have since figured so conspicuously in the annals of Louisiana, and who, in the beginning of March, 1699, entered the Mississippi, accompanied by Father Anastase, the former companion of La Salle, in his expedition down the river in 1682.

Since the occurrence of that battle, of which I have given but an imperfect description, Iberville and Bienville had been through several campaigns at sea, and had encountered the dangers of many a fight. What a remarkable family! The father, a Canadian by birth, had died on the field of battle, in serving his country, and out of eleven sons, the worthy scions of such a stock, five had perished in the same cause. Out of the six that remained, five were to consecrate themselves to the establishment of a colony in Louisiana.

Before visiting the Mississippi, Iberville had left his fleet anchored at the Chandeleur Islands. This name proceeds from the circumstance of their having been discovered on the day when the Catholic Church celebrates the feast of the presentation of Christ in the temple, and of the purification of the Virgin. They are flat, sandy islands, which look as if they wish to sink back

into the sea, from shame of having come into the world prematurely, and before having been shaped and licked by nature into proper objects of existence. No doubt, they did not prepossess the first colonists in favor of what they were to expect. The French visited also *Ship Island*, so called from its appearing to be a safe roadstead for ships, but it offered to the visitors no greater attraction than the precedent. The next island they made had not a more inviting physiognomy. When they landed on that forbidding and ill-looking piece of land, they found it to be a small, squatting island, covered with indifferent wood, and intersected with lagoons. It literally swarmed with a curious kind of animal, which seemed to occupy the medium between the fox and the cat. It was difficult to say whether it belonged to one species in preference to the other. But one of the French having exclaimed, "*This is the kingdom of cats!*" decided the question, and the name of Cat Island was given to the new discovery. Here that peculiar animal, which was subsequently to be known in the United States, under the popular name of racoon, formed a numerous and a contented tribe; here they lived like philosophers, separated from the rest of the world, and enjoying their nuts—their loaves and fishes. I invite fabulists, or those who have a turn for fairy tales, to inquire into the origin of that grimalkin colony, and to endear Cat Island to the

juvenility of our State, by reciting the marvellous doings of which it was the theatre.

It was fraught, however, with so little interest in the estimation of the French, that they hastened to leave it for the land they had in sight. It formed a bay, the shores of which they found inhabited by a tribe of Indians, called Biloxi, who proved as hospitable as their name was euphonic.

On the 27th of February, 1699, Iberville and Bienville departed from Biloxi in search of the Mississippi. When they approached its mouth, they were struck with the gloomy magnificence of the sight. As far as the eye could reach, nothing was to be seen but reeds which rose five or six feet above the waters in which they bathed their roots. They waved mournfully under the blast of the sharp wind of the north, shivering in its icy grasp, as it tumbled, rolled, and gambolled on the pliant surface. Multitudes of birds of strange appearance, with their elongated shapes, so lean that they looked like metamorphosed ghosts, clothed in plumage, screamed in the air, as if they were scared at each other. There was something agonizing in their shrieks, that was in harmony with the desolation of the place. On every side of the vessel, monsters of the deep and huge alligators heaved themselves up heavily from their native or favorite element, and, floating lazily on the turbid waters, seemed to gaze at the intruders. Down

the river, and rumbling over its bed, there came a sort of low, distant thunder. Was it the voice of the hoary sire of rivers, raised in anger at the prospect of his gigantic volume of waters being suddenly absorbed by one mightier than he?—In their progress, it was with great difficulty that the travellers could keep their bark free from those enormous rafts of trees which the Mississippi seemed to toss about in mad frolic. A poet would have thought that the great river, when departing from the altitude of his birth-place, and as he rushed down to the sea through three thousand miles, had, in anticipation of a contest which threatened the continuation of his existence, flung his broad arms right and left across the continent, and uprooting all its forests, had hoarded them in his bed as missiles to hurl at the head of his mighty rival, when they should meet and struggle for supremacy.

When night began to cast a darker hue on a landscape on which the imagination of Dante would have gloated, there issued from that chaos of reeds such uncouth and unnatural sounds, as would have saddened the gayest and appalled the most intrepid. Could this be the far-famed Mississippi? or was it not rather old Avernus? It was hideous indeed—but hideousness refined into sublimity, filling the soul with a sentiment of grandeur. Nothing daunted, the adventurers kept steadily on their course: they knew that, through those



dismal portals, they were to arrive at the most magnificent country in the world; they knew that awful screen concealed loveliness itself. It was a coquettish freak of nature, when dealing with European curiosity, as it came eagerly bounding on the Atlantic wave, to herald it through an avenue so sombre, as to cause the wonders of the great valley of the Mississippi to burst with tenfold more force upon the bewildered gaze of those who, by the endurance of so many perils and fatigues, were to merit admittance into its Eden.

It was a relief for the adventurers when, after having toiled up the river for ten days, they at last arrived at the village of the Bayagoulas. There they found a letter of Tonti to La Salle, dated in 1685. That letter, or rather that *speaking bark*, as the Indians called it, had been preserved with great reverence. Tonti having been informed that La Salle was coming with a fleet from France, to settle a colony on the banks of the Mississippi, had not hesitated to set off from the Northern Lakes, with twenty Canadians and thirty Indians, and to come down to the Balize to meet his friend, who, as we know, had failed to make out the mouth of the Mississippi, and had been landed by Beaujeu on the shores of Texas. After having waited for some time, and ignorant of what had happened, Tonti, with the same indifference to fatigues and dangers of an appalling nature, retraced his way back, leaving a

letter to La Salle to inform him of his disappointment. Is there not something extremely romantic in the characters of the men of that epoch? Here is Tonti undertaking, with the most heroic unconcern, a journey of nearly three thousand miles, through such difficulties as it is easy for us to imagine, and leaving a letter to La Salle, as a proof of his visit, in the same way that one would, in these degenerate days of effeminacy, leave a card at a neighbor's house.

The French extended their explorations up to the mouth of the Red River. As they proceeded through that virgin country, with what interest they must have examined every object that met their eyes, and listened to the traditions concerning Soto, and the more recent stories of the Indians on La Salle and the iron-handed Tonti!\* A coat of mail which was presented as having belonged to the Spaniards, and vestiges of their encampment on the Red River, confirmed the French in the belief that there was much of truth in the recitals of the Indians.

On their return from the mouth of the Red River, the two brothers separated when they arrived at Bayou Manchac. Bienville was ordered to go down the river to the French fleet, to give information of what they

\* He had lost one of his hands, which he had supplied by an artificial one made of iron.



had seen and heard. Iberville went through Bayou Manchac to those lakes which are now known under the names of Pontchartrain and Maurepas. Louisiana had been named from a king: was it not in keeping that those lakes should be called after ministers?

It has been said that there is something in a name. If it be true, why should not I tell you who were those from whom the names of those lakes were borrowed? Is it not something even for inanimate objects to have historical names? It throws round them the spell of romance, and sets the imagination to work.

Louis Phelypeaux, Count Pontchartrain, a minister and chancellor of France, was the grandson of a minister. He was a man remarkable for his talents and erudition. His integrity was proverbial, and his enlightened and inflexible administration of justice is found recorded in all the annals of the time. When he was appointed to the exalted office of Chancellor of France, Louis the XIVth, on administering to him the required oath, said, "Sir, I regret that it is not in my power to bestow upon you a higher office, as a proof of my esteem for your talents, and of my gratitude for your services."

Pontchartrain patronized letters with great zeal, and during his long career, was the avowed friend of Boileau and of J. B. Rousseau, the poet. He was of a very diminutive size, but very well shaped, and had

that lean and hungry look which Cæsar did not like in Cassius. His face was one of the most expressive, and his eyes were lighted up with incessant scintillations, denoting the ebullitions of wit within. If his features promised a great deal, his mind did more than redeem the physical pledge. There is no question, however abstruse, which he did not understand as if by intuition, and his capacity for labor appeared to stretch as far as the limits allotted to human nature. He was constitutionally indefatigable in all his pursuits ; and his knowledge of men, which was perhaps superior to all his other qualifications, remarkable as they were, greatly helped his iron will in the successful execution of its conceptions. But, although he knew mankind thoroughly, he did not assume the garb of misanthropy. On the contrary, his manners spoke of a heart overflowing with the milk of human benevolence ; and his conversation, which was alternately replete with deep learning, or sparkling with vivacity and repartee, was eagerly sought after. If, on matters of mere business, he astonished, by the clearness of his judgment and his rapidity of conception, those he had to deal with, he no less delighted those with whom he associated in his lighter hours, by his mild cheerfulness and by his colloquial powers, even on the veriest trifles. No man knew better than he, how to temper the high dignity of his station by the utmost suavity and simplicity of

address. Yet in that man who, conscious of the misery he might inflict, was so guarded in his expressions that he never was betrayed into an unkind one—in that man, in whom so much blandness was allied to so much majesty of deportment—there was something more dreaded far than the keenest powers of sarcasm in others. It was a *smile*, peculiar to himself, which made people inquire with anxiety, not what Pontchartrain had said, but how Pontchartrain had smiled. That smile of his blasted like lightning what it was aimed at; it operated as a sentence of death, and did such execution that the Pontchartrain smile became, at the court of Louis the Fourteenth, as famous as the *Mortemart wit*.\* In 1714, resisting the entreaties of the king, he resigned his chancellorship, and retiring into the house of a religious congregation (Les pretres de l' Oratoire) he devoted the remainder of his life to prayer, reading, and meditation.

Jean Frederic Phelypeaux, Count Maurepas, was the son of Jerome Phelypeaux, a minister and secretary of state, and the grandson of Pontchartrain, the chancellor. At the age of fourteen, he was appointed secretary of state, and in 1725, in his twenty-fourth year, became minister. This remarkable family thus

\* The hereditary wit of all the members of that family, male or female, was marked with such peculiar pungency, that it became proverbial, and was called the *Mortemart wit*.

presented an uninterrupted succession of ministers for one hundred and seventy-one years. The obstinacy with which prosperity clung to her favorites appeared so strange that it worked upon the imagination of the superstitious, or of the ignorant, and was attributed at the time to some unholy compact and to the protection of supernatural beings. Cradled in the lap of power, Maurepas exhibited in his long career all the defects which are usually observed to grow with the growth of every spoiled child of fortune. He was as capricious as the wind, and as light as the feather with which it delights to gambol. The frivolity of his character was such that it could not be modified even by extreme old age. Superficial in every thing, he was incapable of giving any serious attention to such matters as would, from their very nature, command the deep consideration of most men. Perhaps he relied too much on his prodigious facility of perception, and on a mind so gifted, that it could, in an instant, unravel the knots of the most complicated affair. In the king's council, his profound knowledge of men and of the court, a sort of hereditary ministerial training to business, imperfect as it was, enabled him to conceal to a certain degree his lamentable deficiency of study and of meditation. As it were by instinct, if not by the diviner's rod, he could stamp on the ground and point out where the fruits of the earth lay concealed ;

but instead of using the spade and mattock in search of the treasure, he would run after the first butterfly that caught his eye. To reconcile men to his imperfections, nature had given him a bewitching sweetness of temper, which was never found wanting. Urbane, supple, and insinuating in his manners, he was as pliant as a reed : fertile in courtly stratagems, expert in laying out traps, pitfalls, and ambuscades for his enemies, he was equally skilful in the art of attack and defence, and no Proteus could assume more varied shapes to elude the grasp of his adversaries. There was no wall to which he could be driven, where he could not find an aperture through which to make his escape. No hunted deer ever surpassed him in throwing out the intricate windings of his flight, to mislead his sagacious pursuers. Where he unexpectedly found himself stared in the face by some affair, the serious complexion of which he did not like, he would exorcise the apparition away by a profuse sprinkling of witty jests, calculated to lessen the importance of the hated object, or to divert from it the attention of persons interested in its examination. No Ulysses could be more replete than he with expedients to extricate himself out of all difficulties ; but the moment he was out of danger, he would throw himself down, panting with his recent efforts, and think of nothing else than to luxuriate on the couch of repose, or to amuse himself with trifles.

Maurepas, in more than one respect, was made up of contrarities, a living antithesis in flesh and blood, a strange compound of activity and indolence that puzzled the world. Upon the whole, he was generally thought to be, by superficial observers, a harmless, good natured, easy sort of man. But withal, in spite of his habitual supineness, he could rival the lynx, when he applied the keenness of his eye to detect the weak, ridiculous, or contemptible parts in the formation of his fellow-beings : and no spider could weave such an imperceptible but certain web around those court flies he wanted to destroy, or to use to his own purposes. He was born a trifler, but one of a redoubtable nature, and from his temperament as well as from his vicious education, there was nothing so respected, so august, or even so awful, as not to be laughed or scoffed at by him. There was no merit, no virtue, no generous, no moral or religious belief or faith in any thing, that he would not deride, and he would sneer even at himself, or at his own family, with the same relish, when the mood came upon him. Yet, worthless as that man was in his private and public character, he had such a peculiar turn for throwing the rich glow of health around what was most rotten in the state ; he could present to his master and to his colleagues, the driest matter under such an enlivening aspect, when they met in the council-chamber ; he could ren-



der apparently so simple what seemed so complicated as to require the most arduous labor ; and he could solve the most difficult political problem with such ease, that it looked like magic, and made him the most fascinating of ministers.

For such a king as Louis the XVth, who felt with great sensitiveness any thing that disturbed the voluptuous tranquillity which was the sole object of his life, Maurepas, as a minister, had a most precious quality. Born in the atmosphere of the court, he was intimately acquainted with his native element, and excelled in hushing that low buzzing of discontent, so disagreeable to a monarch, which arises from the unsatisfied ambition, the jealousy, and the quarrels of his immediate attendants. None knew better than Maurepas the usages and secrets of the court, and how to reconcile the conflicting interests of those great families that gravitate round the throne. He knew exactly what was due to every one, either for personal merit or for ancestral distinction. His was the art to nip in the bud all factions or cabals, to stifle the grumbings of discontent, or to lull the murmurs of offended pride. He knew how to make the grant of a favor doubly precious by the manner in which it was offered ; and the bitterness of refusal was either sweetened by assurances of regret and of personal devotion, or by a happy mixture of reasoning and pleasantry, which, if it did

not convince the mind, forced disappointment itself to smile at its own bad luck.

With all his faults, such a minister had too much innate talent not to do some good, in spite of his frivolity. Thus, he made great improvements and embellishments in the city of Paris ; he infused new life into the marine department, corrected many abuses, visited all the harbors and arsenals, sent officers to survey all the coasts of France, had new maps made, established nautical schools, and ordered the expeditions of learned men to several parts of the world. Geometers and astronomers, according to his instructions, went to the equator and near the boreal pole, to measure, at the same time and by a concurrent operation, two degrees of the meridian. Thus, La Condamine, Bouguer, Godin, Maupertuis, Clairant, and Lemonnier, were indebted to him for their celebrity. Also, in obedience to his commands, Sevin and Fourmont visited Greece and several provinces of the East ; others surveyed Mesopotamia and Persia, and Jussieu departed to study the botany of Peru.

That frivolous minister did, through his strong natural sagacity, partially discover that commerce ought to be unshackled, and withdrew from the India Company the monopoly of the coffee trade and of the slave trade. By such a wise measure, he largely contributed to the prosperity of the French colonies. But, in such an



elevated region of thought, conception, and action, Maurepas was too boyish to remain long. He would confide the labors of his office to those whom it was his duty to guide, and would steal away to the balls of the opera, or to every sort of dissipation. If he remained in the cabinet destined to his official occupations, it was not to think and to act in a manner worthy of the minister, but to write lampoons, scurrilous drolleries, and facetious obscenities. He took a share in the composition of several licentious pieces, well suited to the taste and morals of the time, and contributed to one which attracted some attention, under the title of *The Ballet of the Turkeys*. These things were not, for him, the result of a momentary debauch of the mind, but matters of serious occupation and pursuit. Such a relish did he find in this pastime, which would be called childish if it had not been tainted with immorality, that it took the mastery over his prudence, and he had the indiscretion to write a lampoon on the physical charms of the Marquise de Pompadour, the acknowledged favorite of Louis the XVth. The pruriency of his wit cost him his place, and in 1749, after having been a minister twenty-four years, he was exiled to the city of Bourges, and afterwards permitted to reside at his *Chateau de Pontchartrain*, near Paris. There, his princely fortune allowed him to live in splendor, and to attach a sort of mimic court to his person.

He appeared to bear his fall with philosophical indifference, observing that, *on the first day of his dismissal, he felt sore ; but that on the next, he was entirely consoled.*

On the death of Louis the XVth, his successor sent for Maurepas, to put him at the helm of that royal ship, destined soon to be dashed to pieces in that tremendous storm which might be seen gathering from the four quarters of the horizon. The unfortunate Louis could not have made a poorer choice. Maurepas had sagacity enough to discover the coming events, but he was not the man, even if the power had been in his hands, to prepare for the struggle with those gigantic evils, whose shadow he could see already darkening the face of his country. Such an attempt would have interfered with his delightful suppers and disturbed his sleep ; and to the Cassandras of that epoch, the egotistical old man used to reply with a sneer and a shrug of his shoulders, "The present organization of things will last as long as I shall, and why should I look beyond !" This observation was in keeping with the whole tenor of his life ; and, true to the system which he had adopted, if he lived and died in peace, what did he care for the rest ? He had no children, and when he married in all the vigor of youth, those who knew him intimately, predicted that the bridal bed would remain barren. The prediction proved true, and had not

required any extraordinary powers of divination. Is it astonishing that the lineal descendant of a succession of ministers should be without virility of mind, soul, or body? What herculean strength, what angel purity would have resisted the deleterious influence of such an atmosphere, working, for nearly two centuries, slow but sure mischief, from generation to generation?

After having been a minister for six years under Louis the XVIth, Maurepas died in 1781. So infatuated was the king with his octogenarian minister, that he had insisted upon his occupying, at the Palace of Versailles, an apartment above his own royal chamber; and every morning, the first thing that the king did, was to pay a visit to the minister. Pleasant those visits were, because the old wily minister presented every thing to his young master under the most glowing colors, and made him believe that his almost centenarian experience would smooth the rugged path that extended before him. If parliaments rebelled, if fleets were defeated, if provinces were famished, Maurepas had no unpalatable truths to say. Only once, the eaves-droppers heard his voice raised above its usual soft tone. What frightful convulsion of nature could have produced such a change? None but the death of a cat! Distracted with the shrieks of his wife, whose troublesome fourfooted favorite, interfering with the king when engaged in his darling occupation of a blacksmith

had been killed by an angry blow of the royal hammer, he loudly expostulated with the murderer for the atrociousness of the deed. What must have been his dread of his wife, when under the cabalistic influence of her frowns, such a courtier could so completely drop the prudential policy of his whole life, as to venture to show displeasure to the king!

When Maurepas died, the king shed tears, and said with a faltering voice, "Alas! in the morning, for the future, when I shall wake up, no longer shall I hear the grateful sound to which I was used—the slow pacing of my friend in the room above mine." Very little deserving of this testimonial of friendship was he, who never loved any thing in this world but himself.

So much for Pontchartrain and Maurepas, who have given their names to those beautiful lakes which are in the vicinity of New Orleans. From Lake Pontchartrain, Iberville arrived at a sheet of water which is known in our days under the name of Lake Borgne. The French, thinking that it did not answer precisely the definition of a lake, because it was not altogether land-locked, or did not at least discharge its waters only through a small aperture, and because it looked rather like a part of the sea, separated from its main body by numerous islands, called it Lake Borgne, meaning something incomplete or defective, like a man with one eye.

On that lake, there is a beautiful bay, to which Iberville gave the patronymic name of St. Louis. Of a more lofty one, no place can boast under the broad canopy of heaven.

Louis the IXth, son of Louis the VIIIth of France, and of Blanche of Castille, was the incarnation of virtue, and, what is more extraordinary, of virtue born on the throne, and preserving its divine purity in spite of all the temptations of royal power. In vain would history be taxed to produce a character worthy of being compared with one so pure. Among heroes, he must certainly be acknowledged as one of the greatest; among monarchs, he must be ranked as the most just; and among men, as the most modest. For such perfection, he was indebted to his mother, who, from his earliest days, used to repeat to him this solemn admonition: "My son, remember that I had rather see you dead than offending your God by the commission of a deadly sin." When he assumed the government of his kingdom, he showed that his talents for administration were equal to his virtues as a man. Every measure which he adopted during peace, had a happy tendency toward the moral and physical improvement of his subjects, and in war he proved that he was not deficient in those qualifications which constitute military genius. He defeated Henry the IIIrd of England at the battle of Taillebourg in Poitou, where he achieved prodi-

gies of valor. He gained another decisive victory at Saintes over the English monarch, to whom he granted a truce of five years, on his paying to France five thousand pounds sterling.

Unfortunately, the piety of the king making him forgetful of what was due to the temporal welfare of his subjects, drove him into one of those crusades, which the cold judgment of the statesman may blame, but at which the imagination of the lover of romance will certainly not repine. In 1249, Louis landed in Egypt, took the city of Damietta, and advanced as far as Massourah. But after several victories, whereby he lost the greater part of his army, he was reduced to shut himself up in his camp, where famine and pestilence so decimated the feeble remnant of his forces, that he was constrained to surrender to the host of enemies by whom he was enveloped. He might have escaped, however; but to those who advised him to consult his own personal safety, he gave this noble answer: "I must share in life or in death the fate of my companions."

The Sultan had offered to his prisoner to set him free, on condition that he would give up Damietta and pay one hundred thousand silver marks. Louis replied, that a king of France never ransomed himself for money; but that he would yield Damietta in exchange for his own person, and pay one hundred thou-



sand silver marks in exchange for such of his subjects as were prisoners. Such was the course of negotiation between the two sovereigns, when it was suddenly arrested by the murder of the Sultan, who fell a victim to the unruly passions of his janissaries. They had rebelled against their master, for having attempted to subject them to a state of discipline, irksome to their habits and humiliating to their lawless pride. Some of those ruffians penetrated into the prison of Louis, and one of them, presenting him with the gory head of the Sultan, asked the French monarch what reward he would grant him for the destruction of his enemy. A haughty look of contempt was the only answer vouchsafed by Louis. Enraged at this manifestation of displeasure, the assassin lifted up his dagger, and aiming it at the king's breast, exclaimed, "Dub me a knight, or die!" Louis replied, with indignation, "Repent, and turn Christian, or fly hence, base infidel!" When uttering these words, Louis had risen from his seat, and with an arm loaded with chains, had pointed to the door, waving the barbarian away with as much majesty of command as if he had been seated on his throne in his royal palace of the Louvre. Abashed at the rebuke, and overawed by the Olympian expression of the monarch's face, the Saracen skulked away, and said to his companions, when he returned to them, "I have just seen the proudest Christian that has yet come to the East!"

After many obstacles, a treaty of peace was at last concluded : Louis and his companions were liberated ; the Saracens received from the French eight hundred thousand marks of silver, and recovered the city of Damietta. But they authorized Louis to take possession of all the places in Palestine which had been wrested from the Christians, and to fortify them as he pleased.

When the king landed in France, the joy of his subjects was such, that they appeared to be seized with the wildest delirium. On his way from the sea-coast to Paris, he was met by throngs of men, women, and children, who rushed at him with the most frantic shrieks, and kissed his feet and the hem of his garments, as if he had been an angel dropped from heaven to give them the assurance of eternal felicity. Those testimonials of gratitude, extreme as they may appear, were not more than he deserved. He, who used to say to his proud nobles, "Our serfs belong to Christ, our common master, and in a Christian kingdom it must not be forgotten that we are all brothers," must indeed have been beloved by the people ! How could it be otherwise, when they saw him repeatedly visiting every part of his dominions, to listen to the complaints of his meanest subjects ! They knew that he used to sit, at Vincennes, under a favorite oak, which has become celebrated from that circumstance, and there loved,



with august simplicity, to administer justice to high and low. It was there that he rendered judgment against his own brother, Le Comte d'Anjou ; it was there that he forced one of his most powerful barons, Euguerrand de Coucy, to bow to the majesty of the law. It was he whose enlightened piety knew how to check the unjust pretensions of his clergy, and to keep them within those bounds which they were so prone to overleap. It was he who contented himself with retorting to those who railed at his pious and laborious life, "If I gave to hunting, to gambling, to tournaments, and to every sort of dissipation, the moments which I devote to prayer and meditation, I should not be found fault with."

Louis undertook a second Crusade ; and having encamped on the site of old Carthage, prepared to commence the siege of Tunis, to which it is almost contiguous. There, privations of every sort, incessant fatigue, and the malignant influence of the climate, produced an epidemical disease, which rapidly destroyed the strength of his army. His most powerful barons and most skilful captains died in a few days ; his favorite son, the Count de Nevers, expired in his arms ; his eldest born, the presumptive heir to the crown, had been attacked by the pestilence, and was struggling against death, in a state of doubtful convalescence ; when, to increase the dismay of the

French, Louis himself caught the infection. Aware of approaching death, he ordered himself to be stretched on ashes; wishing, he, the great king, to die with all the humility of a Christian. At the foot of his bed of ashes, stood a large cross, bearing the image of the crucified Saviour, upon which he loved to rest his eyes, as on the pledge of his future salvation. Around him, the magnates of France and his own immediate attendants knelt on the ground, which they bathed with tears, and addressed to Heaven the most fervent prayers for the recovery of the precious life, which was threatened with sudden extinguishment.

Out of the royal tent, grief was not less expressive. The silence of despair, made more solemn by occasional groans, reigned absolute over the suffering multitude, that had agglomerated on the accursed Numidian shore; and the whole army, distracted, as it were, at the danger which menaced its august head, seemed to have been struck with palsy by the horror of its situation. The dying were hardly attended to, so much engrossed were their attendants by heavier cares; and even they, the dying, were satisfied to perish, since they thus escaped the bitterness of their present fate; and their loss elicited no expression of regret from their survivors, so much absorbed were they by the fear of a greater misfortune to them and to France. There appeared to be a sort of frightful

harmony between the surrounding objects and the human sufferings to which they formed an appropriate frame. The winds seemed to have departed for ever from the earth; the atmosphere had no breath; and the air almost condensed itself into something palpable; it fell like molten lead upon the lungs which it consumed. The motionless sea was smoothed and glassed into a mirror reflecting the heat of the lurid sun: it looked dead. Beasts of prey, hyenas, jackals, and wolves, attracted by the noxious effluvia which issued from the camp, filled the ears with their dismal howlings. From the deep blue sky, there came no refreshing shower, but shrieks of hungry vultures, glancing down at the feast prepared for them, and screaming with impatience at the delay. The enemy himself had retreated to a distance, from fear of the contagion, and had ceased those hostilities which used momentarily to relieve the minds of the French from the contemplation of their situation. They were reduced to such a pitch of misery as to regret that no human foes disturbed the solitude where they were slowly perishing; and their eyes were fixed in unutterable woe on those broken pyramids, those mutilated columns, those remnants of former ages, of faded glories, on those eloquent ruins, which, long before the time when they sheltered Marius, spoke of nothing but past, present, and future miseries.

Such was the scene which awaited Louis on his death-bed. It was enough to strike despair into the boldest heart, but he stood it unmoved. A perpetual smile, such as grace only the lips of the blessed, enlivened his face; he looked round not only without dismay, but with an evangelical serenity of soul. He knew well that the apparent evils which he saw, were a mere passing trial, inflicted for the benefit of the sufferers, and for some goodly purpose; he knew that this transitory severity was the wise device of infinite and eternal benignity, and therefore, instead of repining, he thanked God for the chastisement which served only to hasten the coming reward. The vision of the Christian extends beyond the contracted sphere of the sufferings of humanity, and sees the crowning mercies that attend the disembodied spirits in a better world.

By the manner in which Louis died, this was strikingly illustrated. Calm and collected, after having distributed words of encouragement to all that could approach him, he summoned his son and successor to his bedside, and laying his hands on his head to bless him, he bid him a short and an impressive farewell. "My son!" said he, "I die in peace with the world and with myself, warring only against the enemies of our holy faith. As a Christian, I have lived in the fear, and I depart in the hope of God. As a man, I have never

wasted a thought on my own perishable body ; and in obedience to the command of our Lord Jesus Christus, I have always forgotten my own worldly interest to promote that of others. As a king, I have considered myself as my subjects' servant, and not my subjects as mine. If, as a Christian, as a man, and as a king, I have erred and sinned, it is unwillingly and in good faith, and therefore, I trust for mercy in my heavenly Father, and in the protection of the Holy Virgin. So I have lived—do thou likewise. Follow an example which secures to me such a sweet death amid such scenes of horror. Thou shalt find in my written will such precepts as my experience and my affection for thee and for my subjects have devised for thy guidance and for their benefit. And now, my son, farewell ! This life, as thou knowest, is a mere state of probation ; hence, do not repine at our short separation. Blessed be thou here, and in heaven, where I hope to meet thee in everlasting bliss. So help me God ! In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen !” Thus saying, he devoutly crossed himself, looked upwards, and exclaimed : “ *In- troibo in domum tuam, adorabo ad templum sanctum tuum.*” These were his last words. During his life, he was emphatically the Christian king : shortly after his death, he was canonized by the church, and became a saint.

In spite of these circumstances, which must have been hateful to Voltaire's turn of mind, the recollection of such exalted virtue extorted from that celebrated writer an eulogy which is doubly flattering to the memory of him to whom the tribute is paid, if the source from which it came be considered. That arch scoffer, that systematic disbeliever in so much of what is held sacred by mankind, said of St. Louis, "That prince would have reformed Europe, if reformation had been possible at that time. He increased the power, prosperity, and civilization of France, and showed himself a type of human perfection. To the piety of an anchorite, he joined all the virtues of a king; and he practised a wise system of economy, without ceasing to be liberal. Although a profound politician, he never deviated from what he thought strictly due to right and justice, and he is perhaps the sole sovereign to whom such commendation can be applied. Prudent and firm in the deliberations of the cabinet, distinguished for cool intrepidity in battle, as humane as if he had been familiar with nothing else but misery, he carried human virtue as far as it can be expected to extend."

Thus, it is seen that the Bay of St. Louis could not borrow a nobler name than that under which it is designated. The magnificent oaks which decorate its shore, did perhaps remind Iberville of the oak of Vincennes, and to that circumstance may the bay be indebted for its appellation.

From the Bay of St. Louis, Iberville returned to his fleet, where, after consultation, he determined to make a settlement at the Bay of Biloxi. On the east side, at the mouth of the bay, as it were, there is a gentle swelling of the shore, about four acres square, sloping gently to the woods in the background, and on the right and left of which, two deep ravines run into the bay. Thus, this position was fortified by nature, and the French skilfully availed themselves of these advantages. The weakest point, which was on the side of the forest, they strengthened with more care than the rest, by connecting with a strong intrenchment the two ravines, which ran to the bay in a parallel line to each other. The fort was constructed with four bastions, and was armed with twelve pieces of artillery. When standing on one of the bastions which faced the bay, the spectator enjoyed a beautiful prospect. On the right, the bay could be seen running into the land for miles, and on the left stood Deer Island, concealing almost entirely the broad expanse of water which lay beyond. It was visible only at the two extreme points of the island, which both, at that distance, appeared to be within a close proximity of the main land. No better description can be given, than to say that the bay looked like a funnel, to which the island was the lid, not fitting closely, however, but leaving apertures for egress and ingress. The snugness of the



locality had tempted the French, and had induced them to choose it as the most favorable spot, at the time, for colonization. Sauvolle, a brother of Iberville, was put in command of the fort, and Bienville, the youngest of the three brothers, was appointed his lieutenant.

A few huts having been erected round the fort, the settlers began to clear the land, in order to bring it into cultivation. Iberville, having furnished them with all the necessary provisions, utensils, and other supplies, prepared to sail for France. How deeply affecting must have been the parting scene! How many casualties might prevent those who remained in this unknown region from ever seeing again those who, through the perils of such a long voyage, had to return to their home! What crowding emotions must have filled up the breast of Sauvolle, Bienville, and their handful of companions, when they beheld the sails of Iberville's fleet fading in the distance, like transient clouds! Well may it be supposed that it seemed to them as if their very souls had been carried away, and that they felt a momentary sinking of the heart, when they found themselves abandoned, and necessarily left to their own resources, scanty as they were, on a patch of land, between the ocean on one side, and on the other, a wilderness which fancy peopled with every sort of terrors. The sense of their loneliness fell upon them like the gloom of night, darkening their hopes, and filling their hearts with dismal apprehensions.



But as the country had been ordered to be explored, Sauvolle availed himself of that circumstance to refresh the minds of his men by the excitement of an expedition into the interior of the continent. He therefore hastened to dispatch most of them with Bienville, who, with a chief of the Bayagoulas for his guide, went to visit the Colapissas. They inhabited the northern shore of Lake Pontchartrain, and their domains embraced the sites now occupied by Lewisburg, Mandeville, and Fontainbleau. That tribe numbered three hundred warriors, who, in their distant hunting excursions, had been engaged in frequent skirmishes with some of the British colonists in South Carolina. When the French landed, they were informed that, two days previous, the village of the Colapissas had been attacked by a party of two hundred Chickasaws, headed by two Englishmen. These were the first tidings which the French had of their old rivals, and which proved to be the harbinger of the incessant struggle, which was to continue for more than a century between the two races, and to terminate by the permanent occupation of Louisiana by the Anglo-Saxon.

Bienville returned to the fort to convey this important information to Sauvolle. After having rested there for several days, he went to the Bay of Pascagoulas, and ascended the river which bears that name, and the banks of which were tenanted by a branch of

the Biloxi, and by the Moelobites. Encouraged by the friendly reception which he met every where, he ventured farther, and paid a visit to the Mobilien, who entertained him with great hospitality. Bienville found them much reduced from what they had been, and listened with eagerness to the many tales of their former power, which had been rapidly declining since the crushing blow they had received from Soto.

When Iberville had ascended the Mississippi for the first time, he had remarked Bayou Plaquemines and Bayou Chetimachas. The one he called after the fruit of certain trees, which appeared to have exclusive possession of its banks, and the other after the name of the Indians who dwelt in the vicinity. He had ordered them to be explored, and the indefatigable Bienville, on his return from Mobile, obeyed the instructions left to his brother, and made an accurate survey of these two Bayous. When he was coming down the river, at the distance of about eighteen miles below the site where New Orleans now stands, he met an English vessel of 16 guns, under the command of Captain Bar. The English captain informed the French that he was examining the banks of the river, with the intention of selecting a spot for the foundation of a colony. Bienville told him that Louisiana was a dependency of Canada; that the French had already made several establishments on the Mississippi; and he appealed, in

confirmation of his assertions, to their own presence in the river, in such small boats, which evidently proved the existence of some settlement close at hand. The Englishman believed Bienville, and sailed back. Where that occurrence took place the river makes a considerable bend, and it was from the circumstance which I have related that the spot received the appellation of the *English Turn*—a name which it has retained to the present day. It was not far from that place, the atmosphere of which appears to be fraught with some malignant spell hostile to the sons of Albion, that the English, who were outwitted by Bienville in 1699, met with a signal defeat in battle from the Americans in 1815. The diplomacy of Bienville and the military genius of Jackson proved to them equally fatal, when they aimed at the possession of Louisiana.

Since the exploring expedition of La Salle down the Mississippi, Canadian hunters, whose habits and intrepidity Fenimore Cooper has so graphically described in the character of Leather-Stocking, used to extend their roving excursions to the banks of that river; and those holy missionaries of the church, who, as the pioneers of religion, have filled the New World with their sufferings, and whose incredible deeds in the service of God afford so many materials for the most interesting of books, had come in advance of the pickaxe of the settler, and had domiciliated themselves

among the tribes who lived near the waters of the Mississippi. One of them, Father Montigny, was residing with the Tensas, within the territory of the present parish of Tensas, in the State of Louisiana, and another, Father Davion, was the pastor of the Yazooos, in the present State of Mississippi.

Father Montigny was a descendant from Galon de Montigny, who had the honor of bearing the banner of France at the battle of Bouvines. It is well known that in 1214 a league of most of the European princes, the most powerful of whom were the King of England and the Emperor of Germany, was formed against Philip Augustus. The allied army, composed of one hundred thousand men, and the French army mustering half that number, met at Bouvines, between Lille and Tournay. Before the battle, Philip reviewed his troops, and in their presence, removing his crown from his temples, said to the assembled host, "Peers, barons, knights, soldiers, and all ye that listen to me, if you know one more worthy of the crown of France than I am, you may award it to him." Shouts of enthusiasm declared that he was the worthiest. "Well, then," said he, "help me to keep it." The battle soon began, and raged for some time with alternate success for the belligerents. To the long gilded pole which supported the banner of France, and towered in proud majesty over the plain, the eyes of the French knights, scattered

over the wide field of battle, were frequently turned with feverish anxiety. So long as it stood erect, and as firmly fixed in Montigny's iron grasp as if it had taken root in the soil, they knew that the king was safe, it being the duty of the bearer of that standard to keep close to the royal person, and never to lose sight of him. It was an arduous and a perilous duty, which devolved on none but one well tried among the bravest; and it was not long before Montigny had to plunge into the thickest of the fight, to retain his post near Philip Augustus, who felt on that trying occasion, when his crown was at stake, that the king was bound to prove himself the best knight of his army.

On a sudden, a cold chill ran through the boldest heart in the French ranks. The long stately pole which bore the royal banner, was observed to wave distressfully, and to rock like the mast of a vessel tossed on a tempestuous sea. That fatal signal was well known—it meant that the king was in peril. Simultaneously, from every part of the field, every French knight, turning from the foe he had in front, dashed headlong away, and with resistless fury forced a passage to the spot, where the fate of France was held in dubious suspense. One minute more of delay, and all would have been lost. The king had been unhorsed by the lance of a German knight, trampled under the feet of the chargers of the combatants, and

had, with difficulty, been replaced on horseback. Those that came at last to the rescue, found him surrounded by the corpses of one hundred and twenty gentlemen of the best blood of France, who had died in his defence. His armor was shattered to pieces, his battle-axe, from the blows which it had given, was blunted into a mere club, and his arm waxing faint, could hardly parry the blows which rained upon his head. Montigny stood alone by him, and was defending, with a valor worthy of the occasion, the flag and the king of France. That occasion, indeed, was one, if any, to nerve the arm of a man, and to madden such a one as Montigny into the execution of prodigies.

To be the royal standard-bearer, to fight side by side with his king, to have saved him perhaps from captivity or death; such were the proud destinies of the noble knight, Galon de Montigny. His descendant's lot in life was an humbler one in the estimation of the world, but perhaps a higher one in that of heaven. A hood, not a crested helmet, covered his head, and he was satisfied with being a soldier in the militia of Christ. But if, in the accomplishment of the duties of his holy faith, he courted dangers and even coveted tortures with heroic fortitude—if, in the cause of God, he used his spiritual weapons against vice, error and superstition, with as much zeal and bravery as others

use carnal weapons in earthly causes—if, instead of a king's life, he saved thousands of souls from perdition—is he to be deemed recreant to his gentle blood, and is he not to be esteemed as good a knight as his great ancestor of historical renown?

Father Davion had resided for some time with the Tunicas, where he had made himself so popular, that, on the death of their chief, they had elected him to fill his place. The priest humbly declined the honor, giving for his reasons, that his new duties as their chief would be incompatible with those of his sacred ministry. Yet the Tunicas, who loved and venerated him as a man, were loth to abandon their old creed to adopt the Christian faith, and they turned a deaf ear to his admonitions. One day the missionary, incensed at their obstinate perseverance in idolatry, and wishing to demonstrate that their idols were too powerless to punish any offence aimed at them, burned their temple, and broke to pieces the rudely carved figures which were the objects of the peculiar adoration of that tribe. The Indians were so much attached to Father Davion, that they contented themselves with expelling him, and he retired on the territory of the Yazoos, who proved themselves readier proselytes, and became converts in a short time. This means, that they adopted some of the outward signs of Christianity, without understanding or appreciating its dogmas.



Proud of his achievements, Father Davion had, with such aid as he could command, constructed and hung up a pulpit to the trunk of an immense oak, in the same manner that it is stuck to a pillar in the Catholic churches. Back of that tree, growing on the slight hill which commanded the river, he had raised a little Gothic chapel, the front part of which was divided by the robust trunk to which it was made to adhere, with two diminutive doors opening into the edifice, on either side of that vegetal tower. It was done in imitation of those stone towers, which stand like sentinels wedged to the frontispiece of the temples of God, on the continent of Europe. In that chapel, Father Davion kept all the sacred vases, the holy water, and the sacerdotal habiliments. There he used to retire to spend hours in meditation and in prayer. In that tabernacle was a small portable altar, which, whenever he said mass for the natives, was transported outside, under the oak, where they often met to the number of three to four hundred. What a beautiful subject for painting! The majesty of the river—the glowing richness of the land in its virgin loveliness—the Gothic chapel—the pulpit which looked as if it had grown out of the holy oak—the hoary-headed priest, speaking with a sincerity of conviction, an impressiveness of manner and a radiance of countenance worthy of an apostle—the motley crowd of the In-



dians, listening attentively, some with awe, others with meek submission, a few with a sneering incredulity, which, as the evangelical man went on, seemed gradually to vanish from their strongly marked features—in the background, a group of their juggling prophets, or conjurers, scowling with fierceness at the minister of truth, who was destroying their power;—would not all these elements, where the grandeur of the scenery would be combined with the acting of man and the development of his feelings, on an occasion of the most solemn nature, produce in the hands of a *Salvator Rosa*, or of a *Poussin*, the most striking effects?

Father Davion had acquired a perfect knowledge of the dialect of his neophytes, and spoke it with as much fluency as his own maternal tongue. He had both the physical and mental qualifications of an orator: he was tall and commanding in stature; his high receding forehead was well set off by his long, flowing, gray hairs, curling down to his shoulders; his face was “sicklied over with the pale cast of thought;” vigils and fasting had so emaciated his form that he seemed almost to be dissolved into spirituality. There was in his eyes a soft, blue, limpid transparency of look, which seemed to be a reflection from the celestial vault; yet that eye, so calm, so benignant, could be lighted up with all the coruscations of pious wrath and indignation, when, in the pulpit, he vituperated his congregation for some act

of cruelty or deceit, and threatened them with eternal punishment. First, he would remind them, with apostolic unction, with a voice as bland as the evening breeze, of the many benefits which the Great Spirit had showered upon them, and of the many more which he had in store for the red men, if they adhered strictly to his law. When he thus spoke, the sunshine of his serene, intellectual countenance would steal over his hearers, and their faces would express the wild delight which they felt. But, anon, when the holy father recollected the many and daily transgressions of his unruly children, a dark hue would, by degrees, creep over the radiancy of his face, as if a storm was gathering, and clouds after clouds were chasing each other over the mirror of his soul. Out of the inmost recesses of his heart, there arose a whirlwind which shook the holy man, in its struggle to rush out : then would flash the lightning of the eye ; then the voice, so soft, so insinuating, and even so caressing, would assume tones that sounded like repeated peals of thunder ; and a perfect tempest of eloquence would he pour forth upon his dismayed auditory, who crossed themselves, crouched to the earth and howled piteously, demanding pardon for their sins. Then, the ghostly orator, relenting at the sight of so much contrition, would descend like Moses from his Mount Sinai, laying aside the angry elements in which he had robed himself, as if he had come to

preside over the last judgment ; and with the gentleness of a lamb, he would walk among his prostrate auditors, raising them from the ground, pressing them to his bosom, and comforting them with such sweet accents as a mother uses to lull her first-born to sleep. It was a spectacle touching in the extreme, and angelically pure !

Father Davion lived to a very old age, still commanding the awe and affection of his flock, by whom he was looked upon as a supernatural being. Had they not, they said, frequently seen him at night, with his dark, solemn gown, not walking, but gliding through the woods, like something spiritual ? How could one, so weak in frame, and using so little food, stand so many fatigues ? How was it, that whenever one of them fell sick, however distant it might be, Father Davion knew it instantly, and was sure to be there, before sought for ? Who had given him the information ? Who told him whenever they committed any secret sin ? None ; and yet, he knew it. Did any of his prophecies ever prove false ? By what means did he arrive at so much knowledge about every thing ? Did they not, one day, when he kneeled, as usual, in solitary prayer, under the holy oak, see, from the respectful distance at which they stood, a ray of the sun piercing the thick foliage of the tree, cast its lambent flame around his temples, and wreath itself into a crown of glory,

encircling his snow-white hair? What was it he was in the habit of muttering so long, when counting the beads of that mysterious chain that hung round his neck? Was he not then telling the Great Spirit every wrong they had done? So, they both loved and feared Father Davion. One day, they found him dead at the foot of the altar: he was leaning against it, with his head cast back, with his hands clasped, and still retaining his kneeling position. There was an expression of rapture in his face, as if, to his sight, the gates of paradise had suddenly unfolded themselves to give him admittance: it was evident that his soul had exhaled into a prayer, the last on this earth, but terminating, no doubt, in a hymn of rejoicing above.

Long after Davion's death, mothers of the Yazoo tribe used to carry their children to the place where he loved to administer the sacrament of baptism. There, those simple creatures, with many ceremonies of a wild nature, partaking of their new Christian faith and of their old lingering Indian superstitions, invoked and called down the benedictions of Father Davion upon themselves and their families. For many years, that spot was designated under the name of *Davion's Bluff*. In recent times, Fort Adams was constructed where Davion's chapel formerly stood, and was the cause of the place being more currently known under a different appellation.

Such were the two visitors who, in 1699, appeared before Sauvolle, at the fort of Biloxi, to relieve the monotony of his cheerless existence, and to encourage him in his colonizing enterprise. Their visit, however, was not of long duration, and they soon returned to discharge the duties of their sacred mission.

Iberville had been gone for several months, and the year was drawing to a close without any tidings of him. A deeper gloom had settled over the little colony at Biloxi, when, on the 7th of December, some signal guns were heard at sea, and the grateful sound came booming over the waters, spreading joy in every breast. There was not one who was not almost oppressed with the intensity of his feelings. At last, friends were coming, bringing relief to the body and to the soul! Every colonist hastily abandoned his occupation of the moment, and ran to the shore. The soldier himself, in the eagerness of expectation, left his post of duty, and rushed to the parapet which overlooked the bay. Presently, several vessels hove in sight, bearing the white flag of France, and, approaching as near as the shallowness of the beach permitted, folded their pinions, like water-fowls seeking repose on the crest of the billows.

It was Iberville, returning with the news that, on his representations, Sauvolle had been appointed by the king, Governor of Louisiana; Bienville Lieutenant-Governor, and Boisbriant commander of the fort at

Biloxi, with the grade of Major. Iberville, having been informed by Bienville of the attempt of the English to make a settlement on the banks of the Mississippi, and of the manner in which it had been foiled, resolved to take precautionary measures against the repetition of any similar attempt. Without loss of time, he departed with Bienville, on the 17th of January, 1700, and running up the river, he constructed a small fort, on the first solid ground which he met, and which is said to have been at a distance of fifty-four miles from its mouth.

When so engaged, the two brothers one day saw a canoe rapidly sweeping down the river, and approaching the spot where they stood. It was occupied by eight men, six of whom were rowers, the seventh was the steersman, and the eighth, from his appearance, was evidently of a superior order to that of his companions, and the commander of the party. Well may it be imagined what greeting the stranger received, when, leaping on shore, he made himself known as the Chevalier de Tonti, who had again heard of the establishment of a colony in Louisiana, and who, for the second time, had come to see if there was any truth in the report. With what emotion did Iberville and Bienville fold in their arms the faithful companion and friend of La Salle, of whom they had heard so many wonderful tales from the Indians, to whom he was so well known

under the name of "Iron Hand!" With what admiration they looked at his person, and with what increasing interest they listened to his long recitals of what he had done and had seen on that broad continent, the threshold of which they had hardly passed!

After having rested three days at the fort, the indefatigable Tonti reascended the Mississippi, with Iberville and Bienville, and finally parted with them at Natchez. Iberville was so much pleased with that part of the bank of the river, where now exists the city of Natchez, that he marked it down as a most eligible spot for a town, of which he drew the plan, and which he called Rosalie, after the maiden name of the Countess Pontchartrain, the wife of the Chancellor. He then returned to the new fort he was erecting on the Mississippi, and Bienville went to explore the country of the Yatasses, of the Natchitoches, and of the Ouachitas. What romance can be more agreeable to the imagination than to accompany Iberville and Bienville in their wild explorations, and to compare the state of the country in their time with what it is in our days?

When the French were at Natchez, they were struck with horror at an occurrence, too clearly demonstrating the fierceness of disposition of that tribe, which was destined, in after years, to become so celebrated in the history of Louisiana. One of their temples having been set on fire by lightning, a hideous



spectacle presented itself to the Europeans. The tumultuous rush of the Indians—the infernal howlings and lamentations of the men, women, and children—the unearthly vociferations of the priests, their fantastic dances and ceremonies around the burning edifice—the demoniac fury with which mothers rushed to the fatal spot, and, with the piercing cries and gesticulations of maniacs, flung their new-born babes into the flames to pacify their irritated deity—the increasing anger of the heavens blackening with the impending storm, the lurid flashes of the lightnings, darting as it were in mutual enmity from the clashing clouds—the low, distant growling of the coming tempest—the long column of smoke and fire shooting upwards from the funeral pyre, and looking like one of the gigantic torches of Pandemonium—the war of the elements combined with the worst effects of the frenzied superstition of man—the suddenness and strangeness of the awful scene—all these circumstances produced such an impression upon the French, as to deprive them, for the moment, of the powers of volition and action. Rooted to the ground, they stood aghast with astonishment and indignation at the appalling scene. Was it a dream?—a wild delirium of the mind? But no—the monstrous reality of the vision was but too apparent; and they threw themselves among the Indians, supplicating them to cease their horrible sacri-



fice to their gods, and joining threats to their supplications. Owing to that intervention, and perhaps because a sufficient number of victims had been offered, the priests gave the signal of retreat, and the Indians slowly withdrew from the accursed spot. Such was the aspect under which the Natchez showed themselves, for the first time, to their visitors: it was an ominous presage for the future.

After these explorations, Iberville departed again for France, to solicit additional assistance from the government, and left Bienville in command of the new fort on the Mississippi. It was very hard for the two brothers, Sauvolle and Bienville, to be thus separated, when they stood so much in need of each other's countenance, to breast the difficulties that sprung up around them with a luxuriance which they seemed to borrow from the vegetation of the country. The distance between the Mississippi and Biloxi was not so easily overcome in those days as in ours, and the means which the two brothers had of communing together were very scanty and uncertain. Sauvolle and his companions had suffered much from the severity of the winter, which had been so great that in one of his despatches he informed his government that "*water, when poured into tumblers to rinse them, froze instantaneously, and before it could be used.*"

At last, the spring made its appearance, or rather

the season which bears that denomination, but which did not introduce itself with the genial and mild atmosphere that is its characteristic in other climes. The month of April was so hot that the colonists could work only two hours in the morning and two in the evening. When there was no breeze, the reflection of the sun from the sea and from the sandy beach was intolerable; and if they sought relief under the pine trees of the forest, instead of meeting cool shades, it seemed to them that there came from the very lungs of the trees a hot breath, which sent them back hastily to the burning shore, in quest of air. Many of the colonists, accustomed to the climate of Canada and France, languished, pined, fell sick, and died. Some, as they lay panting under the few oaks that grew near the fort, dreamed of the verdant valleys, the refreshing streams, the picturesque hills, and the snow-capped mountains of their native land. The fond scenes upon which their imagination dwelt with rapture, would occasionally assume, to their enfeebled vision, the distinctness of real existence, and feverish recollection would produce on the horizon of the mind, such an apparition as tantalizes the dying traveller in the parched deserts of Arabia. When despair had paved the way, it was easy for disease to follow, and to crush those that were already prostrate in mind and in body. To increase the misery of those poor wretches, famine herself raised her spec-

tral form among them, and grasped pestilence by the hand to assist her in the work of desolation. Thus, that fiendish sisterhood reigned supreme, where, in our days, health, abundance, and wealth, secured by the improvements of civilization, bless the land with perpetual smiles.

Sauvolle, from the feebleness of his constitution, was more exposed than any of his companions to be affected by the perils of the situation ; and yet it was he upon whom devolved the duty of watching over the safety of others. But he was sadly incapacitated from the discharge of that duty by physical and moral causes. When an infant, he had inherited a large fortune from an aunt, whose godson he was. With such means at his future command, the boy, who gave early evidence of a superior intellect, became the darling hope of his family, and was sent to France to be qualified for the splendid career which parental fondness anticipated for him. The seeds of education were not, in that instance, thrown on a rebellious soil ; and when Sauvolle left the seat of learning where he had been trained, he carried away with him the admiration of his professors and of his schoolmates. In the high circles of society where his birth and fortune entitled him to appear, he produced no less sensation ; and well he might, for he appeared, to an eminent degree, capable of adorning any station which he might wish to occupy. Nature had been

pleased to produce another Crichton, and Sauvolle soon became known as the *American prodigy*. Racine called him a poet; Bossuet had declared that there were in him all the materials of a great orator; and the haughty Villars, after a conversation of several hours with him, was heard to say, "Here is a Marshal of France in embryo."

The frivolous admired his wonderful expertness in fencing, in horsemanship, and his other acquirements of a similar nature; artists might have been proud of his talent for painting and for music; and those friends that were admitted into his intimacy, were struck with his modesty and with the high-toned morality which pervaded the life of one so young. The softer sex, yielding to the fascination of his manly graces, was held captive by them, and hailed his first steps on the world's stage with all the passionate enthusiasm of the female heart. But he loved and was loved by the fairest daughter of one of the noblest houses of France, and his nuptials were soon to be celebrated with fitting pomp. Was not this the acme of human felicity? If so, whence that paleness which sat on his brow, and spoke of inward pain, moral or physical? Whence those sudden starts? Why was he observed occasionally to grasp his heart with a convulsive hand? What appalling disclosure could make him desert her to whom his faith was plighted, and could so abruptly hurry him

away from France and from that seat where so much happiness was treasured up for him? That it was no voluntary act on his part, and that he was merely complying with the stern decree of fate, could be plainly inferred from that look of despair which, from the ship that bore him away, he cast at the shores of France when receding from his sight. So must Adam have looked, when he saw the flaming sword of the angel of punishment interposed between him and Paradise.

Sauvolle arrived in Canada at the very moment when Iberville and Bienville were preparing their expedition to Louisiana, and he eagerly begged to join them, saying that he knew his days were numbered, that he had come back to die in America, and that since his higher aspirations were all blasted, he could yet find some sort of melancholy pleasure in closing his career in that new colony, of which his brothers were to be the founders, and to which they were to attach their names for ever.

Poor Sauvolle! the star of his destiny which rose up at the court of Louis the XIVth with such gorgeousness, was now setting in gloom and desolation on the bleak shore of Biloxi. How acute must his mental agony have been, when, by day and by night, the comparison of what he might have been with what he was, must have incessantly forced itself upon his mind! Why had Nature qualified him to be the best of husbands

and fathers, when forbidding him, at the same time, to assume the sacred character which he coveted, and to form those ties, without which, existence could only be a curse to one so exquisitely framed to nourish the choicest affections of our race? Why give him all the elements of greatness, and preclude their development? Why inspire him with the consciousness of worth, and deny him time and life for its manifestation? Why had such a mind and such a soul been lodged in a defective body, soon to be dissolved? Why a blade of such workmanship in such an unworthy scabbard? Why create a being with feelings as intense as ever animated one of his species, merely to bruise them in the bud? Why shower upon him gifts of such value, when they were to be instantly resumed? Why light up the luminary which was to be extinguished before its rays could be diffused? Was it not a solemn mockery? What object could it answer, except to inflict extreme misery? Surely, it could only be a conception or device of the arch-enemy of mankind! But how could he be allowed thus to trifle with God's creatures? Were they his puppets and playthings? or, was it one of God's inscrutable designs? Was it an enigma only to be solved hereafter?—These were the reflections which were coursing each other in Sauvolle's mind, as he, with folded arms, one day stood on the parapet of the fort at Biloxi, looking sorrowfully at the



scene of desolation around him, at his diseased and famished companions. Overwhelmed with grief, he withdrew his gaze from the harrowing sight, heaved a deep sigh and uplifted his eyes towards heaven, with a look which plainly asked, if his placid resignation and acquiescent fortitude had not entitled him at last to repose. That look of anguish was answered: a slight convulsion flitted over his face, his hand grasped the left side of his breast, his body tottered, and Sauvolle was dead before he reached the ground.

Such was the fate of the first governor of Louisiana. A hard fate indeed is that of defective organization! An anticipated damnation it is, for the unbeliever, when spiritual perfection is palsied and rendered inert by being clogged with physical imperfection, or wedded to diseased matter! When genius was flashing in the head, when the spirit of God lived in the soul, why did creation defeat its own apparent purposes, in this case, by planting in the heart the seeds of aneurism? It is a question which staggers philosophy, confounds human reason, and is solved only by the revelations of Christianity.

What a pity that Sauvolle had not the faith of a Davion, or of a St. Louis, whose deaths I have recorded in the preceding pages! He would have known that the heavier the cross we bear with Christian resignation in this world, the greater the reward

is in the better one which awaits us : and that our trials in this, our initiatory state of terrestrial existence, are merely intended by the infinite goodness of the Creator, as golden opportunities for us to show our fidelity, and to deserve a higher or lesser degree of happiness, when we shall enter into the celestial kingdom of spiritual and eternal life, secured to us at the price of *sufferings* alone : and what sufferings ! Those of the Godhead himself ! He would not then have repined at pursuing the thorny path, trod before, for his sake, by the divine Victim, and with Job, he would have said : “ Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge ? Therefore have I uttered that I understood not ; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away ; blessed be the name of the Lord ! ”

I lately stood where the first establishment of the French was made, and I saw no vestiges of their passage, save in the middle of the space formerly occupied by the fort, where I discovered a laying of bricks on a level with the ground, and covering the common area of a tomb. Is it the repository of Sauvolle’s remains ? I had with me no pickaxe to solve the question, and indeed, it was more agreeable to the mood in which I was then, to indulge in speculations, than to ascertain the truth. Since the fort had been abandoned, it was evident that there never had been any



attempt to turn the ground to some useful purpose, although, being cleared of trees, it must have been more eligible for a settlement than the adjoining ground which remained covered with wood. Yet, on the right and left, beyond the two ravines already mentioned, habitations are to be seen; but a sort of traditional awe seems to have repelled intrusion from the spot marked by such melancholy recollections. On the right, as you approach the place, a beautiful villa, occupied by an Anglo-American family, is replete with all the comforts and resources of modern civilization; while on the left, there may be seen a rude hut, where still reside descendants from the first settlers, living in primitive ignorance and irreclaimable poverty, which lose, however, their offensive features, by being mixed up with so much of patriarchal virtues, of pristine innocence, and of arcadian felicity. Those two families, separated only by the site of the old fort, but between whose social position there existed such an immense distance, struck me as being fit representatives of the past and of the present. One was the type of the French colony, and the other, the emblem of its modern transformation.

I gazed with indescribable feelings on the spot where Sauvolle and his companions had suffered so much. Humble and abandoned as it is, it was clothed in my eye with a sacred character, when I remem-

bered that it was the cradle of so many sovereign states, which are but *disjecta membra* of the old colony of Louisiana. What a contrast between the French colony of 1700, and its imperial substitute of 1848! Is there in the mythological records of antiquity, or in the fairy tales of the Arabian Nights, any thing that will not sink into insignificance, when compared with the romance of such a history?

THIRD LECTURE.



### THIRD LECTURE.

SITUATION OF THE COLONY FROM 1701 TO 1712—THE PETTICOAT INSURRECTION—HISTORY AND DEATH OF IBERVILLE—BIENVILLE, THE SECOND GOVERNOR OF LOUISIANA—HISTORY OF ANTHONY CROZAT, THE GREAT BANKER—CONCESSION OF LOUISIANA TO HIM.

SAUVOLLE had died on the 22d of July, 1701, and Louisiana had remained under the sole charge of Bienville, who, though very young, was fully equal to meet that emergency, by the maturity of his mind and by his other qualifications. He had hardly consigned his brother to the tomb, when Iberville returned with two ships of the line and a brig, laden with troops and provisions. The first object that greeted his sight, on his landing, was Bienville, whose person was in deep mourning, and whose face wore such an expression as plainly told that a blow, fatal to both, had been struck in the absence of the head of the family. In their mute embraces, the two brothers felt that they understood each other better than if their grief had vented itself in words, and Iberville's first impulse was to seek Sauvolle's tomb. There he knelt for hours, bathed in

tears, and absorbed in fervent prayer for him whom he was to see no more in the garb of mortality. This recent blow reminded him of a father's death, whom he had seen carried back, bleeding, from the battle-field; and then his four brothers, who had met the same stern and honorable fate, rose to his sight with their ghastly wounds; and he bethought himself of the sweet and melancholy face of his mother, who had sunk gradually into the grave, drooping like a gentle flower under the rough visitations of the wind of adversity. On these heavy recollections of the past, his heart swelled with tears, and he implored heaven to spare his devoted family, or, if any one of its members was again destined to an early death, to take *him*, Iberville, as a free offering, in preference to the objects of his love. But there are men, upon whom grief operates as fire upon steel: it purifies the metal, and gives more elasticity to its spring; it works upon the soul with that same mysterious process by which nature transforms the dark carbuncle into the shining diamond. Those men know how to turn from the desolation of their heart, and survey the world with a clearer, serener eye, to choose the sphere where they can best accomplish their mission on this earth—that mission—the fulfilment of duties whence good is to result to mankind, or to their country. One of these highly gifted beings Iberville was, and he soon withdrew his attention from the grave, to give it en-

tirely to the consolidation of the great national enterprise he had undertaken—the establishment of a colony in Louisiana.

According to Iberville's orders, and in conformity with the king's instructions, Bienville left Boisbriant, his cousin, with twenty men, at the old fort of Biloxi, and transported the principal seat of the colony to the western side of the river Mobile, not far from the spot where now stands the city of Mobile. Near the mouth of that river, there is an island, which the French had called Massacre Island, from the great quantity of human bones which they found bleaching on its shores. It was evident that *there* some awful tragedy had been acted ; but tradition, when interrogated, laid *her choppy finger upon her skinny lips*, and answered not. This uncertainty, giving a free scope to the imagination, shrouded the place with a higher degree of horror, and with a deeper hue of fantastical gloom. It looked like the favorite ball-room of the witches of hell. The wind sighed so mournfully through the shrivelled up pines, whose vampire heads seemed incessantly to bow to some invisible and grisly visitors ; the footsteps of the stranger emitted such an awful and supernatural sound, when trampling on the skulls which strewed his path, that it was impossible for the coldest imagination not to labor under some crude and ill-defined apprehensions. Verily, the weird sisters could not have

chosen a fitter abode. Nevertheless, the French, supported by their mercurial temperament, were not deterred from forming an establishment on that sepulchral island, which, they thought, afforded some facilities for their transatlantic communications. They changed its name, however, and called it Dauphine Island. As, to many, this name may be without signification, it may not be improper to state, that the wife of the eldest born of the King of France, and consequently, of the presumptive heir to the crown, was, at that time, called the Dauphine, and her husband the Dauphin. This was in compliment to the province of Dauphiné, which was annexed to the kingdom of France, on the abdication of a Count of Dauphiné, who ceded that principality to the French monarch in 1349. Hence the origin of the appellation given to the island. It was a high-sounding and courtly name for such a bleak repository of the dead!

Iberville did not tarry long in Louisiana. His home was the broad ocean, where he had been nursed, as it were; and he might have exclaimed with truth, in the words of Byron:—

— “I have loved thee, Ocean! and my joy  
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be  
Borne, like bubbles, onward: from a boy  
I wantoned with thy breakers—they to me  
Were a delight; and if the freshening sea



Made them a terror—'twas a pleasing fear,  
For I was as it were a child of thee,  
And trusted to thy billows far and near,  
And laid my hand upon thy mane."

But, before his departure, he gave some wholesome advice to his government :—" It is necessary," said he, in one of his despatches, " to send here honest tillers of the earth, and not rogues and paupers, who come to Louisiana solely with the intention of making a fortune, by all sorts of means, in order to speed back to Europe. Such men cannot be elements of prosperity to a colony." He left those, of whom he was the chief protector, abundantly supplied with every thing, and seeing that their affectionate hearts were troubled with manifold misgivings as to their fate, which appeared to them to be closely linked with his own, he promised soon to return, and to bring additional strength to what he justly looked upon as his creation. But it had been decreed otherwise.

In 1703, war had broken out between Great Britain, France and Spain ; and Iberville, a distinguished officer of the French navy, was engaged in expeditions that kept him away from the colony. It did not cease, however, to occupy his thoughts, and had become clothed, in his eye, with a sort of family interest. Louisiana was thus left, for some time, to her scanty resources ; but, weak as she was, she gave early proofs of that gen-

erous spirit which has ever since animated her ; and, on the towns of Pensacola and San Augustine, then in possession of the Spaniards, being threatened with an invasion by the English of South Carolina, she sent to her neighbors what help she could, in men, ammuniion, and supplies of all sorts. It was the more meritorious, as it was the obolum of the poor !

The year 1703 slowly rolled by, and gave way to 1704. Still, nothing was heard from the parent country. There seemed to be an impassable barrier between the old and the new continent. The milk which flowed from the motherly breast of France could no longer reach the parched lips of her new-born infant ; and famine began to pinch the colonists, who scattered themselves all along the coast, to live by fishing. They were reduced to the veriest extremity of misery, and despair had settled in every bosom, in spite of the encouragements of Bienville, who displayed the most manly fortitude amidst all the trials to which he was subjected, when suddenly a vessel made its appearance. The colonists rushed to the shore with wild anxiety, but their exultation was greatly diminished when, on the nearer approach of the moving speck, they recognized the Spanish, instead of the French flag. It was relief, however, coming to them, and proffered by a friendly hand. It was a return made by the governor of Pensacola, for the kindness he had experienced the

year previous. Thus, the debt of gratitude was paid : it was a practical lesson. Where the seeds of charity are cast, *there* springs the harvest in time of need.

Good things, like evils, do not come single, and this succor was but the herald of another one, still more effectual, in the shape of a ship from France. Iberville had not been able to redeem his pledge to the poor colonists, but he had sent his brother Chateaugué in his place, at the imminent risk of being captured by the English, who occupied, at that time, most of the avenues of the Gulf of Mexico. *He* was not the man to spare either himself, or his family, in cases of emergency, and his heroic soul was inured to such sacrifices. Grateful the colonists were for this act of devotedness, and they resumed the occupation of those tenements which they had abandoned in search of food. The aspect of things was suddenly changed ; abundance and hope reappeared in the land, whose population was increased by the arrival of seventeen persons, who came, under the guidance of Chateaugué, with the intention of making a permanent settlement, and who, in evidence of their determination, had provided themselves with all the implements of husbandry. We, who daily see hundreds flocking to our shores, and who look at the occurrence with as much unconcern as at the passing cloud, can hardly conceive the excitement produced by the arrival of those seventeen emigrants among men

who, for nearly two years, had been cut off from communication with the rest of the civilized world. A denizen of the moon, dropping on this planet, would not be stared at and interrogated with more eager curiosity.

This excitement had hardly subsided, when it was revived by the appearance of another ship, and it became intense, when the inhabitants saw a procession of twenty females, with veiled faces, proceeding arm in arm, and two by two, to the house of the governor, who received them in state, and provided them with suitable lodgings. What did it mean? Innumerable were the gossipings of the day, and part of the coming night itself was spent in endless commentaries and conjectures. But the next morning, which was Sunday, the mystery was cleared by the officiating priest reading from the pulpit, after mass, and for the general information, the following communication from the minister to Bienville: "His majesty sends twenty girls to be married to the Canadians and to the other inhabitants of Mobile, in order to consolidate the colony. All these girls are industrious, and have received a pious and virtuous education. Beneficial results to the colony are expected from their teaching their useful attainments to the Indian females. In order that none should be sent except those of known virtue and of unspotted reputation, his majesty did intrust the bishop of Quebec with the mission of taking those girls from such establishments, as,

from their very nature and character, would put them at once above all suspicions of corruption. You will take care to settle them in life as well as may be in your power, and to marry them to such men as are capable of providing them with a commodious home."

This was a very considerate recommendation, and very kind it was, indeed, from the great Louis the XIVth, one of the proudest monarchs that ever lived, to descend from his Olympian seat of majesty, to the level of such details, and to such minute instructions for ministering to the personal comforts of his remote Louisianian subjects. Many were the gibes and high was the glee on that occasion ; pointed were the jokes aimed at young Bienville, on his being thus transformed into a matrimonial agent and pater familiæ. The intentions of the king, however, were faithfully executed, and more than one rough but honest Canadian boatman of the St. Lawrence and of the Mississippi, closed his adventurous and erratic career, and became a domestic and useful member of that little commonwealth, under the watchful influence of the dark-eyed maid of the Loire or of the Seine. Infinite are the chords of the lyre which delights the romantic muse ; and these incidents, small and humble as they are, appear to me to be imbued with an indescribable charm, which appeals to her imagination.

Iberville had gone back to France since 1701, and

the year 1705 had now begun its onward course, without his having returned to the colony, according to his promise, so that the inhabitants had become impatient of further delay. They were in that state of suspense, when a ship of the line, commanded by Ducoudray, arrived soon after the opening of the year, but still to disappoint the anxious expectations of the colonists. No Iberville had come: yet there was some consolation in the relief which was sent—goods, provisions, ammunitions; flesh-pots of France, rivalling, to a certainty, those of Egypt; sparkling wines to cheer the cup; twenty-three girls to gladden the heart; five priests to minister to the wants of the soul and to bless holy alliances; two sisters of charity to attend on the sick and preside over the hospital of the colony, and seventy-five soldiers for protection against the inroads of the Indians. That was something to be thankful for, and to occupy the minds of the colonists for a length of time. But life is chequered with many a hue, and the antagonistical agents of good and evil closely tread, in alternate succession, on the heels of each other. Thus, the short-lived rejoicings of the colonists soon gave way to grief and lamentations. A hungry epidemic did not disdain to prey upon the population, small as it was, and thirty-five persons became its victims. Thirty-five! That number was enormous in those days, and the epidemic of 1705 became as celebrated in the medical annals of the country, as will be the late one of 1847.



The history of Louisiana, in her early days, presents a Shaksperian mixture of the terrible and of the ludicrous. What can be more harrowing than the massacre of the French settlement on the Wabash in 1705; and in 1706, what more comical than the threatened insurrection of the French girls, who had come to settle in the country, under allurements which proved deceptive, and who were particularly indignant at being fed on corn? This fact is mentioned in these terms in one of Bienville's dispatches: "The males in the colony begin, through habit, to be reconciled to corn, as an article of nourishment; but the females, who are mostly Parisians, have for that kind of food a dogged aversion, which has not yet been subdued. Hence, they inveigh bitterly against his grace, the Bishop of Quebec, who, they say, has enticed them away from home, under the pretext of sending them to enjoy the milk and honey of the land of promise." Enraged at having thus been deceived, they swore that they would force their way out of the colony, on the first opportunity. This was called the *petticoat insurrection*.

There were, at that particular time, three important personages, who were the hinges upon which every thing turned in the commonwealth of Louisiana. These magnates were, Bienville, the governor, who wielded the sword, and who was the great executive



mover of all; La Salle, the intendant commissary of the crown, who had the command of the purse, and who therefore might be called the controlling power; and the Curate de la Vente, who was not satisfied with mere spiritual influence. Unfortunately, in this Lilliputian administration, the powers of the state and church were sadly at variance, in imitation of their betters in larger communities. The commissary, La Salle, in a letter of the 7th of December, 1706, accused Iberville, Bienville, and Chateaugué, the three brothers, of being guilty of *every sort of malfesances and dilapidations*. "They are rogues," said he, "who pilfer away his Majesty's goods and effects." The Curate de la Vente, whose pretensions to temporal power Bienville had checked, backed La Salle, and undertook to discredit the governor's authority with the colonists, by boasting of his having sufficient influence at court to cause him to be soon dismissed from office.

On Bienville's side stood, of course, Chateaugué, his brother, and Major Boisbriant, his cousin. But Chateaugué was a new man (*novus homo*) in the colony, and consequently, had, as yet, acquired very little weight. Boisbriant, although a zealous friend, had found means to increase the governor's vexations, by falling deeply in love. He had been smitten, perhaps, for the want of something better, with the charms of a lady, to whose charge had been committed

the twenty girls selected by the Bishop of Quebec, and who had been appointed, as a sort of lay abbess, to superintend their conduct on the way and in Louisiana, until they got provided with those suitable monitors, who are called husbands. That lady had reciprocated the affections of Boisbriant, and so far, the course of love ran smooth. But, as usual, it was doomed to meet with one of those obstacles which have given rise to so many beautiful literary compositions. Bienville stoutly objected to the match, as being an unfit one for his relation and subordinate, and peremptorily refused his approbation. Well may the indignation of the lady be conceived! Boisbriant seems to have meekly submitted to the superior wisdom of his chief, but she, scorning such forbearance, addressed herself to the minister, and complained, in no measured terms, of what she called an act of oppression. After having painted her case with as strong colors as she could, she very naturally concluded her observations with this sweeping declaration concerning Bienville: "It is therefore evident that he has not the necessary qualifications to be governor of this colony." Such is the logic of Love, and although it may provoke a smile, thereby hangs a tale not destitute of romance.

These intestine dissensions were not the only difficulties that Bienville had to cope with. The very

existence of the colony was daily threatened by the Indians; a furious war, in which the French were frequently implicated, raged between the Chickasaws and the Choctaws; and the smaller nations, principally the Alibamous, that prowled about the settlements of the colonists, committed numerous thefts and murders. It seemed that all the elements of disorder were at work to destroy the social organization which civilization had begun, and that the wild chaos of barbarian sway claimed his own again. Uneasy lay the head of Bienville in his midnight sleep, for fearfully alive was he to the responsibility which rested on his shoulders. In that disturbed state of his mind, with what anxiety did he not interrogate the horizon, and strain to peep into the vacancy of space, in the fond hope that some signs of his brother's return would greet his eyes! But, alas! the year 1707 had run one half of its career, and yet Iberville came not. To what remote parts of heaven had the eagle flown, not to hear and not to mind the shrieks of the inmates of his royal nest? Not oblivious the eagle had been, but engaged in carrying Jove's thunderbolts, he had steadily pursued the accomplishment of his task.

Dropping the metaphorical style, it will be sufficient to state, that during the five years he had been absent from Louisiana, Iberville had been, with his usual success, nobly occupied in supporting the honor

of his country's flag, and in increasing the reputation which he had already gained, as one of the brightest gems of the French navy. If the duration of a man's existence is to be measured by the merit of his deeds, then Iberville had lived long, before reaching the meridian of life, and he was old in fame, if not in years, when he undertook to establish a colony in Louisiana. From his early youth, all his days had been well spent, because dedicated to some useful or generous purpose. The soft down of adolescence had hardly shaded his face, when he had become the idol of his countrymen. The foaming brine of the ocean, the dashing waters of the rivers, the hills and valleys of his native country and of the neighboring British possessions, had witnessed his numerous exploits. Such were the confidence and love with which he had inspired the Canadians and Acadians for his person, by the irresistible seduction of his manners, by the nobleness of his deportment, by the dauntless energy of his soul, and by the many qualifications of his head and heart, that they would, said Father Charlevoix, have followed him to the confines of the universe. It would be too long to recite his wonderful achievements, and the injuries which he inflicted upon the fleets of England, particularly in the Bay of Hudson, either by open force, or by stealth and surprise. When vessels were icebound, they were more than once stormed by Iberville and

his intrepid associates. Two of his brothers, Ste. Hélène and Méricourt, both destined to an early death, used to be his willing companions in those adventurous expeditions. At other times, when the war of the elements seemed to preclude any other contest, Iberville, in a light buoyant craft, which sported merrily on the angry waves, would scour far and wide the Bay of Hudson, and the adjacent sea, to prey upon the commerce of the great rival of France, and many were the prizes which he brought into port. These were the sports of his youth.

The exploits of Iberville on land and at sea, acquired for him a sort of amphibious celebrity. Among other doings of great daring, may be mentioned the taking of Corlar, near Orange, in the province of New-York. In November, 1694, he also took, in the Bay of Hudson, the fort of Port Nelson, defended by forty-two pieces of artillery, and he gave it the name of Fort Bourbon. In 1696 he added to his other conquests, the Fort of Pemknit, in Acadia. When Chubb, the English commander, was summoned to surrender, he returned this proud answer: "If the sea were white with French sails, and the land dark with Indians, I would not give up the fort, unless when reduced to the very last extremities." In spite of this vaunt, he was soon obliged to capitulate. The same year, Iberville possessed himself of the Fort of St. John, in Newfound-

land, and in a short time forced the rest of that province to yield to his arms. The French, however, did not retain it long. But his having revived La Salle's project of establishing a colony in Louisiana, constitutes, on account of the magnitude of its results, his best claim to the notice of posterity. We have seen how he executed that important undertaking.

After a long absence from that province, the colonization of which was his favorite achievement, he was now preparing to return to its shores, and arrived at San Domingo, having under his command a considerable fleet, with which he meditated to attack Charleston, in South Carolina; from whence he cherished the hope of sailing for Louisiana, with all the pomp, pride, and circumstance of glorious victory. He had stopped at San Domingo, because he had been authorized to reinforce himself with a thousand men, whom he was to take out of the garrison of that island. The ships had been revictualled, the troops were embarked, and Iberville was ready to put to sea, when a great feast was tendered to him and to his officers, by the friends from whom he was soon to part. Loud the sound of revelry was still heard in hall and bower, when Iberville, whose thoughts dwelt on the responsibilities of the expedition which had been trusted to his care, withdrew from the assembly, where he had been the observed of all, leaving and even encouraging his subordinates to enjoy the

rest of that fairy night, which he knew was soon to be succeeded for them by the perils and hardships of war. He was approaching that part of the shore where his boat lay, waiting to carry him to his ship, when, as he trod along, in musing loneliness, his attention was attracted by the beauties of the tropical sky, which gleamed over his head. From that spangled canopy, so lovely that it seemed worthy of Eden, there appeared to descend an ambrosial atmosphere, which glided through the inmost recesses of the body, gladdening the whole frame with voluptuous sensations.

“ All was so still, so soft, in earth and air,  
You scarce would start to meet a spirit there ;  
Secure that nought of evil could delight  
To walk in such a scene, on such a night !”

Iberville's pace slackened as he admired, and at last he stopped, rooted to the ground, as it were, by a sort of magnetic influence, exercised upon him by the fascinations of the scene. Folding his arms, and wrapt up in ecstasy, he gazed long and steadily at the stars which studded the celestial vault.

O stars ! who has not experienced your mystical and mysterious power ! Who has ever gazed at ye, without feeling undefinable sensations, something of awe, and a vague consciousness that ye are connected with the fate of mortals ! Ye silent orbs, that move



with noiseless splendor through the infiniteness of space, how is it that your voice is so distinctly heard in the soul of man, if his essence and yours were not bound together by some electric link, as are all things, no doubt, in the universe? How the eyes grow dim with rapturous tears, and the head dizzy with wild fancies, when holding communion with you, on the midnight watch! Ye stars, that, scattered over the broad expanse of heaven, look to me as if ye were grains of golden dust, which God shook off his feet, as he walked in his might, on the days of creation, I love and worship you! When there was none in the world to sympathize with an aching heart, with a heart that would have disdained, in its lonely pride, to show its pangs to mortal eyes, how often have I felt relief in your presence from the bitter recollection of past woes, and consolation under the infliction of present sufferings! How often have I drawn from you such inspirations as prepared me to meet, with fitting fortitude, harsher trials still to come! How often have I gazed upon you, until, flying upon the wings of imagination, I soared among your bright host, and spiritualized myself away, far away, from the miseries of my contemptible existence! Howsoever that ephemeral worm, cynical man, may sneer, he is no idle dreamer, the lover of you, the stargazer. The broad sheet of heaven to which ye are affixed, like letters of fire, is a book prepared by God

for the learned and the ignorant, where man can read lessons to guide him through the active duties and the struggles of this life, and to conduct him safely to the portals of the eternal one which awaits mortality!

Thus, perhaps, Iberville felt, as he was spying the face of heaven. Suddenly, his reverie was interrupted by a slight tap on the shoulder. He started, and looking round, saw a venerable monk, whose person was shrouded up in a brownish gown and hood, which hardly left any thing visible save his sharp, aquiline nose, his long gray beard, and his dark lustrous eyes. "My son!" said he, in a deep tone, "what dost thou see above that thus rivets thy attention?" "Nothing, father," replied Iberville, bowing reverentially, "nothing! From the contemplation of these luminaries, to which my eyes had been attracted by their unusual radiancy, I had fallen insensibly, I do not know how, into dreamy speculations, from which you have awakened me, father." "Poor stranger!" continued the monk, with a voice shaking with emotion, "*thou* hast seen nothing! But *I have*, and will tell thee. Fly hence! death is around thee—it is in the very air which thou dost breathe. Seest thou that deep, blue transparency of heaven, so transparently brilliant, that the vault which it forms, seems to be melting to let thy sight, as thou gazest, penetrate still farther and without limits,—it portends of death! This soft, balmy breeze which encompasseth

thee with its velvet touch, it is pleasing, but fatal as the meretricious embraces of a courtesan, which allure the young to sin, to remorse, and to death! Above all, look at that sign, stamped on the stars: it is a never-failing one. Dost thou see how they blink and twinkle, like the eyes of warning angels? They no longer appear like fixed incrustations in the vault of heaven, but they seem to oscillate with irregular and tremulous vibrations. Hasten away with all speed. The pestilence is abroad; it stalks onward, the dire queen of the land. It is now amidst yonder revellers, whose music and mundane mirth reach our ears. Incumbent on its hell-black pinions, the shapeless monster hovers over you all, selecting its victims, and crossing their foreheads with its deadly finger. Mark me! That awful scourge, the yellow fever, has been hatched to-night. Keep out of its path, if yet there be time: if not, mayst thou, my son, be prepared to meet thy God!" So saying, the monk made the holy sign of the cross, blessed with his extended index the astonished Iberville, who devoutly uncovered himself, and then slowly departed, vanishing like a bird of ill omen in the gloom of the night.

It was morn. With his brother officers, Iberville sat at a table, covered with maps, charts and scientific instruments. The object of their meeting was to come to a definite understanding as to the plan of the intended

campaign, and to regulate their future movements. Suddenly, Iberville, who, calm and self-collected, had been explaining his views, sprung up from his seat with the most intense expression of pain in his haggard features. It seemed to him as if all the fires and whirlwinds of a volcano had concentrated in his agonized head. His blodshot eyes revolved in their orbits with restless vivacity, and had that peculiar daguerreotype glare, so annoying to the looker-on. Yellowish streaks spread instantaneously over his face, as if there deposited by a coarse painter's brush. Sharp shooting throes racked his spine : cold shudderings shook his stiffened limbs, and his blood pulsated, as if it were bursting from his veins to escape from the tormoil into which it had been heated by some malignant spell.—At such a sight, the officers cried out, with one simultaneous voice, “Poison! poison!” “No! no!” exclaimed Iberville, gasping for breath, and falling on a couch, “not poison! but the predicted pestilence! fly, fly, my friends—ah! the monk! the prophetic monk!—he spoke the truth! O God! my prayer at Sauvolle's tomb has been heard!—Well! content! Thy will be done! To mother earth I yield my body, ashes to ashes, and to *Thee* my immortal soul!” These words were followed by the wildest delirium, and ere five hours had elapsed, Iberville had been gathered to his forefathers' bosom. Thus died this truly great and good man, in

compliment to whose memory the name of Iberville has been given to one of our most important parishes.

Ill was the wind that carried to Louisiana the melancholy information of Iberville's death. It blasted the hearts of the poor colonists, and destroyed the hope they had of being speedily relieved. Their situation had become truly deplorable: their numbers were rapidly diminishing: and the Indians were daily becoming more hostile, and more bold in their demands for goods and merchandise, as a tribute which they exacted for not breaking out into actual warfare. Bienville convened the chiefs of the Chickasaws and of the Choctaws, in order to conciliate them by some trifling presents of which he could yet dispose, and to gain time by some fair promises as to what he would do for them under more favorable circumstances. With a view of making an imposing show, Bienville collected all the colonists that were within reach: but notwithstanding that display, a question, propounded by one of the Indian chiefs, gave him a humiliating proof of the slight estimation in which the savages held the French nation. Much to his annoyance, he was asked if that part of his people which remained at home was as numerous as that which had come to settle in Louisiana. Bienville, who spoke their language perfectly well, attempted, by words and comparisons, suited to their understanding, to impart to them a correct notion of the extent of the population

of France. But the Indians looked incredulous, and one of them even said to Bienville, "If your countrymen are, as you affirm, as thick on their native soil as the leaves of our forests, how is it that they do not send more of their warriors here, to avenge the death of such of them as have fallen by our hands? Not to do so, when having the power, would argue them to be of a very base spirit. And how is it that most of the tall and powerful men that came with you, being dead, are replaced only by boys, or cripples, or women, that do you no credit? Surely the French would not so behave, if they could do otherwise, and my white brother tells a story that disparages his own tribe."

Thus Bienville found himself in a very critical situation. He was conscious that his power was despised by the Indians, who knew that he had only forty-five soldiers at his disposal, and he felt that the red men could easily rise upon him and crush the colony at one blow. He was aware that they were restrained from doing the deed by their cupidity only, bridled as they were by their expectation of the arrival of some ship with merchandise, which, they knew from experience, would soon have to come to their huts to purchase peace, and in exchange for furs. Bienville felt so weak, so much at the mercy of the surrounding nations, and entertained such an apprehension of some treacherous and sudden attack on their part, that he thought it prudent

to concentrate his forces, and to abandon the fort where he kept a small garrison on the Mississippi.

On the other hand, the death of Iberville had encouraged the hostility of Bienville's enemies. They knew that he was no longer supported by the powerful influence of his brother at court, and they renewed their attacks with a better hope of success. The commissary La Salle pushed on his intrigues with more activity, and reduced them to a sort of systematic warfare. He divided the colony into those that were against and those that were for Bienville. All such persons as supported the governor's administration were branded as felons: and those that pursued another course, whoever they might be, were angels of purity. At that time, there was in the colony a physician, sent thither and salaried by the government, who was called the king's physician. His name was Barrot: from the circumstance of his being the only member of his profession in the country, and from the nature of his duties, he was in a position to exercise a good deal of influence. La Salle attempted to win him over to his side, and having failed in his efforts, he immediately wrote to the minister, "that Barrot, although he had the honor of being the king's physician in the colony, was no better than a fool, a drunkard and a rogue, who sold the king's drugs and appropriated the money to his own purposes."



Authors, who have written on the structure of man, have said that if his features were closely examined, there would be found in them a strange resemblance with some of the animals, of the birds, or of the reptiles that people this globe. I remember having seen curious engravings exemplifying this assertion with the most wonderful effect. In a moral sense, the resemblance is perhaps greater, and the whale, the lion, the eagle, the wolf, the lamb, and other varieties of the brutish creation, may, without much examination, be discovered to exist, physically and spiritually, in the human species. Among the bipeds that are reckoned to belong to the ranks of humanity, none was better calculated than La Salle to personate the toad. His mission was to secrete venom, as the rose exhales perfumes. Nature delights in contrarities. Fat, short, and sleek, with bloated features and oily skin, he was no unfit representative of that reptile, although certainly to him the traditionary legend of a jewel in the head could not be applied. Puffed up in self-conceit, an eternal smile of contentment was stereotyped on the gross texture of his lips, where it was mixed with an expression of bestial sensuality. His cold grayish eyes had the dull squint of the hog, and as he strutted along, one was almost amazed not to hear an occasional grunt. This thing of the neuter gender, which, to gift with the faculty of speech, seemed to be an injustice done to the

superior intellect of the baboon, did, forsooth, think itself an orator. Whenever this royal commissary had a chance of catching a few of the colonists together, for instance, on all public occasions, he would gradually drop the tone of conversation, and sublimate his colloquial address into a final harangue. Thus, the valves of his brazen throat being open, out ran the muddy water of his brain, bespattering all that stood within reach. Pitched on a high and monotonous key, his prosy voice carried to his hearers, for hours, the same inane, insipid flow of bombastic phrases, falling on the ear with the unvaried and ever-recurring sound of a pack-horse wheel in a flour-mill. A coiner of words, he could have filled with them the vaults of the vastest mint; but if analyzed and reduced to their sterling value, they would not have produced a grain of sense. This man, contemptible as he was, had actually become a public nuisance, on account of the impediments with which he embarrassed the administration of Louisiana. He was eternally meddling with every thing, under the pretext of correcting abuses, and although he was incapable of producing any thing of his own, that could stand on its legs for a minute, he was incessantly concocting some plan, as ill-begotten as his own misshapen person. He was, in his own delirious opinion, as complete a financier, as skilful a statesman, as great a general, and, above all,

as profound a legislator, as ever lived; so that this legislative Caliban had even gone so far as to imagine he could frame a code of laws for the colony; and, because all his preposterous propositions were resisted by Bienville, he had conceived for him the bitterest hatred. To do him justice, it must be said that he was in earnest, when he reproached others with malversation and every sort of malfeasances. There are creatures whose accusations it would be wrong to resent. They see themselves reflected in others, and, like yelping curs, pursue with their barkings the sinful image: it would be as idle to expect them to understand the workings of a noble heart and of a great mind, as it would be to imagine that a worm could raise itself to the conception of a planet's gravitations.

So thought Bienville, and he passed with silent contempt over La Salle's manœuvres. Was he not right? He who thinks himself your adversary, but who, if you were to turn upon him with the flashes of honest indignation, with the uplifted spear of physical and mental power united, with the threatening aspect of what he does not possess and dreams not of, a soul, convulsed into a storm, would shrink into an atom and flatten himself to the level of your heels, cannot be a real adversary: his enmity is to be regarded as a vain shadow, the phantasm of impotent envy. This is no

doubt the most dignified course to be pursued, but perhaps not the most prudent; and Bienville soon discovered that, howsoever it may be in theory, there is, in practice, no attack so pitiful as not to require some sort of precautionary defence. Thus on the 13th of July, 1707, the minister dismissed Bienville from office, appointed De Muys in his place, and instructed this new governor to examine into the administration of his predecessor, and into the accusations brought against him, with the authorization of sending him prisoner to France, if they were well founded. A poor chance it was for Bienville, to be judged by the man that pushed him from his stool, and whose continuance in office would probably depend upon the guilt of the accused! This was but a sorry return for the services of Bienville and for those of his distinguished family. But thus goes the world!

La Salle had no cause to triumph over the downfall of Bienville, for he himself was, at the same time, dismissed from office, and was succeeded by Diron d'Artaguelle. Nay, he had the mortification of seeing Bienville retain his power, while he lost his; because De Muys never reached Louisiana, having died in Havana, on his way to the colony of which he had been appointed governor. To increase his vexation, he saw that most of the colonists, even those who had been momentarily opposed to Bienville, became sud-

denly alive to his merits, when they were on the eve of losing him, and with spontaneous unanimity, subscribed a petition, by which they expressed their satisfaction with Bienville's administration, and supplicated the minister not to deprive them of such a wise and faithful governor. This was sufficiently distressing for La Salle's envious heart; but his spleen was worked into a paroxysm of rage, when he was informed that his successor, the royal commissary, Diron d'Artaguelle, had made a report to the king, in which he declared, that all the accusations brought against Bienville, were mere slanderous inventions, which rested on no other foundation than the blackest malice. Writhing like a snake, under the unexpected blow, he still attempted to sting, and he wrote to France, "that D'Artaguelle was not deserving of any faith or credit; that he had come to an understanding with Bienville, and that they were both equally bad and corrupt."

It was by such misunderstandings among the chiefs of the colony, that its progress was checked so long. In 1708, its population did not exceed 279 persons. To that number must be added sixty Canadian vagabonds, who led a wandering and licentious life among the Indians. Its principal wealth consisted in 50 cows, 40 calves, 4 bulls, 8 oxen, 1400 hogs, and 2000 hens. This statement shows the feebleness of the colony after an existence of nine years. But the

golden eggs had been laid in the land, and although kept torpid and unprofitable for more than a century, by the chilling contact of an imbecile despotism, they, in the progress of time, were hatched by the warm incubation of liberty into the production of that splendid order of things, which is the wonder of the present age.

But, at that time, the colony seemed to be gifted with little vitality, and the nursling of Bienville threatened to expire in his hands at every moment. The colonists were little disposed to undertake the laborious task of securing their subsistence by the cultivation of the soil, and they expected that the mother country would minister to all their wants. Servile hands would have been necessary, but Indian slavery was not found to be profitable, and Bienville wrote to his government to obtain the authorization of exchanging Indians for negroes, with the French West India Islands. "We shall give," said he, "three Indians for two negroes. The Indians, when in the islands, will not be able to run away, the country being unknown to them, and the negroes will not dare to become fugitives in Louisiana, because the Indians would kill them." This demand met with no favorable reception. Bienville was so anxious to favor the development of the colony, that he was led by it into an unjust and despotic measure, as is proved by the follow-

ing extract from one of his despatches. "I have ordered several citizens of La Rochelle to be closely watched, because they wish to quit the country. They have scraped up something by keeping taverns. Therefore it appears to me to be nothing but justice to force them to remain in the country, on the substance of which they have fattened." This sentiment, howsoever it may disagree with our modern notions of right and wrong, was not repugnant to the ethics of the time.

In spite of the spirited exertions of Bienville, famine re-appeared in the colony, and in January, 1709, the inhabitants were reduced to live on acorns. As usual, under such circumstances, the intestine dissensions, of which such a melancholy description has been already given, became more acrid. The minds of men are not apt to grow conciliating under the double infliction of disappointment and famine, and the attacks upon Bienville were renewed with more than usual fierceness. La Salle, although now stripped of the trappings of office, still remained in the colony, to pursue his game, and to force the noble lord of the forest to stand at bay. His associate in persecution, the Curate de la Vente, hallooed with him in zealous imitation, and it is much to be regretted that they were joined in the chase by Marigny de Mandeville, a brave and noble-minded officer, lately come to the country, who informed his government



“that the colony never would prosper until it had a governor with an honest heart and with an energetic mind;” which meant that Bienville was deficient in both. It was an error committed by Marigny de Mandeville, and into which he was no doubt led by the misrepresentations of La Salle and of the Curate de la Vente.

Bienville had so far remained passive, but was at last stung into angry recriminations, which he retorted on all his adversaries, particularly on the Curate de la Vente, who, said he, “*had tried to stir up every body against him by his calumnies, and who, in the mean time, did not blush to keep an open shop, where his mode of trafficking showed that he was a shrewd compound of the Arab and of the Jew.*”

The scarcity of provisions became such in 1710, that Bienville informed his government that he had scattered the greater part of his men among the Indians, upon whom he had quartered them for food. This measure had been more than once adopted before, and demonstrates that the Indians could hardly have been so hostile as they have been represented; otherwise, they would have availed themselves of such opportunities to destroy the invaders of their territory. Be it as it may, the colony continued in its lingering condition, gasping for breath in its cradle, until 1712, when, on the 14th of September, the King of France granted to

Anthony Crozat the exclusive privilege, for fifteen years, of trading in all that immense territory which, with its undefined limits, France claimed as her own under the name of Louisiana. Among other privileges, were those of sending, once a year, a ship to Africa for negroes, and of possessing and working all the mines of precious metals to be discovered in Louisiana, provided that one-fourth of their proceeds should be reserved for the king. He also had the privilege of owning for ever all the lands that he would improve by cultivation, all the buildings he would erect, and all the manufactures that he might establish. His principal obligation, in exchange for such advantages, was to send every year to Louisiana, two ships' loads of colonists, and, after nine years, to assume all the expenses of the administration of the colony, including those of the garrison and of its officers; it being understood that, in consideration of such a change, he would have the privilege of nominating the officers to be appointed by the king. In the mean time, the annual sum of fifty thousand livres (\$10,000) was allowed to Crozat for the king's share of the expenses required by Louisiana. It was further provided that the laws, ordinances, customs, and usages of the Prevostship and Viscounty of Paris should form the legislation of the colony. There was also to be a government council, similar to the one established in San Domingo and Martinique.

This charter of concessions virtually made Crozat the supreme lord and master of Louisiana. Thus Louisiana was dealt with, as if it had been a royal farm, and leased by Louis the XIVth to the highest bidder. It is a mere business transaction, but which colors itself with the hue of romance, when it is remembered that Louisiana was the farm, Louis the XIVth the landlord, and that Anthony Crozat was the farmer.

Anthony Crozat was one of those men who dignify commerce, and recall to memory those princely merchants, of whom Genoa, Venice, and Florence boasted of yore. Born a peasant's son, on the estate of one of the great patricians of France, he was, when a boy, remarked for the acuteness of his intellect; and having the good fortune of being the foster brother of the only son of his feudal lord, he was sent to school by his noble patron, received the first rudiments of education, and at fifteen was placed, as clerk, in a commercial house. There, by the protection of the nobleman, who never ceased to evince the liveliest interest in his fate, and particularly by the natural ascendancy of his strong genius, he rose, in the course of twenty years, to be a partner of his old employer, married his daughter, and shortly after that auspicious event, found himself, on the death of his father-in-law, one of the richest merchants in Europe. He still continued to be favored by circumstances, and having had the good fortune of

loaning large sums of money to the government in cases of emergency, he was rewarded for his services by his being ennobled and created Marquis du Chatel.

So far, Crozat had known but the sunny side of life ; but for every man the hour of trial must strike, sooner or later, on the clock of fate, and the length or intense-ness of the felicity that one has enjoyed, is generally counterbalanced by a proportionate infliction of calamity. Happy is he, perhaps, whom adversity meets on the threshold of existence, and accompanies through part of his career. Then, the nerves of youth may resist the shock, and be even improved by the struggle. The mind and body, disciplined by the severe trial through which they have passed, have time to substitute gains for losses in the account book of life. At any rate, when the tribute of tears and sufferings is early paid, the debtor may hope for a clear and bright meridian ; and when the sun of his destiny sinks down in the west, he has some right to expect, if some clouds should gather round the setting orb, that it will only be to gladden the sight by the gorgeousness of their colors. But if smiling fortune, after having rocked her favorite in his cradle, gives him her uninterrupted attendance until his manhood is past, she is very apt to desert him on the first cold approach of old age, when he is most in need of her support ; for, the stern decree that man is born to suffer, must be accomplished before the por-

tals of another life are open ; and then, woe to the gray-headed victim, who, after long days of luxurious ease, finds himself suddenly abandoned, a martyr in the arena of judgment, to the fangs and jaws of the wild beasts of an unfeeling and scoffing world ! Woe to him, if his Christian faith is not bound to his heart by adamantine chains, to subdue physical pain, to arm his soul with divine fortitude, and grace his last moments with sweet dignity and calm resignation !

Crozat was doomed to make this sad experiment. The first shaft aimed at him fell on his wife, whom he lost, ten years after the birth of his only child, a daughter, now the sole hope of his house. Intense was his sorrow, and never to be assuaged, for no common companion his wife had been. Looking up to him with affectionate reverence as one, whom the laws, both divine and human, had appointed as her guide, she had lived rather in him than in herself. She had been absorbed into her husband, and the business of her whole life had been to study and to anticipate his wishes and wants. Endowed with all the graces of her sex, and with a cultivated intellect chastened by modesty, which hardly left any thing to be desired for its perfection, she rendered sweeter the part of ministering angel which she had assumed, to bless him in this world. With feminine art, she had incorporated herself with his organization, and gliding into the very

essence of his soul, she had become the originating spring of all his thoughts and sentiments. It was beautiful to see, how, entwining herself round his conceptions, his volition and actions, she had made herself a component part of his individuality, so that she really was flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone. Is it to be wondered at, that when she died, he felt that the luminary which lighted up his path had been extinguished, and that a wheel had suddenly stopped within himself? From that fatal event, there never was a day when the recollections of the past did not fill his soul with anguish.

Crozat's only consolation was his daughter. The never ceasing anxiety with which he watched over her, until she grew into womanhood, would beggar all description; and even then she remained a frail flower, which, to be kept alive, required to be fanned by the gentlest zephyrs, and to be softly watered from that spring which gushes from the deep well of the heart, at the touch of true affection. She was exquisitely beautiful, but there was this peculiarity in her beauty, that although her person presented that voluptuous symmetry, that rich fulness of form, and that delicate roundness of outline which artists admire, yet soul predominated in her so much over matter, that she looked rather like a spirit of the air, than an incarnation of mortality. She produced the effect of an

unnatural apparition: forgetting the fascinations of the flesh, one would gaze at her as something not of this world, and feel for her such love as angels may inspire. She appeared to be clothed in terrestrial substance, merely because it was necessary to that earthly existence which she wore as a garment not intended for her, and which had been put on only by mistake. She was out of place: there was something in her organization, which disqualified her for the companionship of the sons of Eve: she looked as if she had strayed from a holier sphere. Those who knew her were impressed with an undefinable feeling that she was a temporary loan made to earth by heaven, and that the slightest disappointment of the heart in her nether career, would send her instantly to a fitter and more congenial abode. Alas! there are beings invested with such exquisite sensibility that the vile clay which enters into their composition, and which may be intended as a protecting texture, without which human life would be intolerable for the spirit within, imbibing too much of the ethereal essence to which it is allied, ceases to be a shield against the ills we are heirs to, in this valley of miseries. It is a mark set upon them! It is a pledge that the wounded soul, writhing under repeated inflictions, will wear out its frail tenement, and soon escape from its ordeal. Such was the threatened fate of Andrea, the daughter



of Crozat. And he knew it, the poor father! he knew it, and he trembled! and he lived in perpetual fear: and he would clasp his hands, and in such agonies as the paternal heart only knows, kneeling down, humbling himself in the dust, he would pour out prayers (oh, how eloquent!) that the Almighty, in his infinite mercy, would spare his child!

Crozat had sedulously kept up the closest relations with his noble friend and patron, to whom there had also been born but one heir, a son, the sole pillar of a ducal house, connected with all the imperial and royal dynasties of Europe. A short time after his wife's death, Crozat had had the misfortune to follow to the grave the duke, his foster brother; and his daughter Andrea, who was known to lack at home the tender nursing of a mother, had been tendered the splendid hospitality of the dowager duchess, where she had grown up in a sort of sisterly intimacy with the young duke. There she had conceived, unknowingly to herself at first, the most intense passion for her youthful companion, which, when it revealed itself to her dismayed heart, was kept carefully locked up in its inmost recesses. Poor maiden! The *longum bibere amorem* was fatally realized with her, and she could not tear herself from the allurements of the banquet upon which she daily feasted her affections. Unknown her secret, she lived in fancied security, and, for a

while, enjoyed as pure a happiness as may be attained to—the happiness of dreams!

One day, a rumor arose that a matrimonial alliance was in the way of preparation for that lineal descendant of a princely race, for the young duke, who was the concealed idol of her heart. There are emotions which it would be too much for human endurance to hide from a sympathetic eye, much less from parental penetration, and on that day the terrible truth burst upon Crozat, and stunned him with an unexpected blow. It was a hurricane of woes sweeping through his heart: he felt as if he and his child were in a tornado, out of which to save her was impossible. Too well he knew his Andrea, and too well he knew that she would not survive the withering of her hopes, wild as they were! “Time!” exclaimed he, as he paced his room with hurried steps, holding communion with himself, “Time, that worker of great things, must be gained! But how?” A sudden thought flashed through his brain! Thank God, he clutched the remedy! Was it not currently reported and believed that the betrothed of the duke loved one, of equally noble birth, but whose proffered hand had been rejected by an ambitious father, merely because fortune, with her golden gifts, did not back his pretensions? That was enough! And Crozat, on that very day, had sought and found the despairing lover. “Sir!” said

he to the astonished youth, "in the civil wars which desolated France during the minority of Louis the XIVth, and which ruined your family, several millions were extorted from your father by one, who then had the power. Here they are—it is a restitution—ask no name—I am a mere agent and bound to secrecy." The strange tale was taken as true, and in a short time the betrothed of the young duke was led to the hymenial altar by a more successful rival.

Crozat had been a traitor and a liar!—a traitor to his friend and benefactor's son! But he was a father!—and he saw his daughter's tomb already wide open and gaping for the expected prey! And was she not to be rescued at any cost? And was he to stand with folded arms, and to remain passive, while, in his sight, despair slowly chiselled the cold sepulchral marble destined for his child? No!—he saved her, and did not stop to inquire whether the means he employed were legitimate. Now, he saw her smile again and resume, as it were, that current of life which was fast ebbing away!—and he was happy! And had he not a sufficient excuse to plead at that seat of judgment which every man has within his breast, when the shrill voice of conscience rose against him in accusation, and said, "Thou hast done wrong! to save thyself, or thine, thou hast been recreant to thy trust—thou hast injured thy neighbor, and acted dishonorably?"

Crozat, however, was not the man to lay a flattering unction to his soul. There was in him no false logic of a corrupt mind to argue successfully against the plain voice of truth: his were not the ears of the wicked, deaf to the admonitions of our inward monitor. However gently conscience might have spoken her disapprobation, he heard it, and stood self-condemned.

He went to his patron's widow, to the duchess, and told her *all*—and prostrating himself at her feet, awaited her sentence. She raised him gently from his humble posture, and self-collected, soaring as it were above human passions, while she riveted upon him the steadfast look of her calm, blue eyes, thus she spoke with Juno-like dignity, and with a sweet, musical voice, but seeming as cold to the afflicted father, in spite of its bland intonations, as the northern wind: “Crozat, this is a strange and a moving tale. You stand forgiven, for you have acted as nature would prompt most men to do, and even if your error had been more grievous, your manly candor and frank confession would redeem the guilt. Therefore, let it pass; let your conscience be relieved from further pangs on this subject. My esteem and friendship stand the same for you as before. What grieves me to the heart, is the deplorable situation of your Andrea, who is mine also, and whom I love like a daughter, although

she cannot be permitted to assume such a relation to me in the eye of the world. She is young, and it shall be our special care, by gentle means, to cure her by degrees of the wild passion which has possessed her soul, poor child. As this, our first conversation on this painful topic, shall be the last, I wish to express my sentiments to you with sufficient fullness, that I may be clearly understood. I wish you to know that my heart is not inflated with vulgar pride. I do not think that my blood is different from yours in its composition, and is noble solely because I descend from a particular breed, and that yours is vile, because the accidental circumstance of birth has placed you among the plebeians and what we call the base and the low-born. A peasant's son, if he be virtuous and great in soul and in mind, is more in my estimation than a king's, if an idiot or a wicked man. Thus far, I suppose we understand each other. There is but one valuable nobility—that in which hereditary rank is founded on a long succession of glorious deeds. Such is the case with our house. It has been an historical one, trunk and branches, for much more than twelve centuries. Kings, emperors claim a kindred blood with ours. Our name is indissolubly bound with the history of Europe and Asia, and the annals of the kingdom of France, in particular, may be said to be the records of our house. We have long ceased to

count the famous knights, the high constables, the marshals, generals, and other great men who have sprung from our fruitful race. This is what I call nobility. To this present day, none of that race has ever contracted an alliance which was not of an illustrious and historical character. It is a principle, nay more, Crozat, it is a religion with us, and it is too late for us to turn apostates. It is to that creed, which we have cherished from time immemorial, that we are indebted for what we are. If once untrue to ourselves, there is an instinctive presentiment which tells us that we shall be blasted with the curse of heaven. Right or wrong, it is a principle, I say; and there is such mysterious vitality and power in a principle, be it what it may, that if strictly and systematically adhered to for ages, it will work wonders. Therefore the traditions of our house must stand unbroken for ever, coeval with its existence, and remain imperishable pyramids of our faith in our own worth.

“I know that your daughter, whom I have raised in my lap, and whose transcendent qualities I appreciate as they deserve, would be the best of wives, and bless my son with earthly bliss. But, Crozat, those of my race are not born to be happy, but to be great. This is the condition of their existence. They do not marry for themselves, but for the glorification of their house. It is a sacred mission, and it must be fulfilled.

Every animated thing in the creation must follow the bent of its nature. The wooing dove may be satisfied with the security of its lot in the verdant foliage of the forest, but the eagle must speed to the sun, even if he be consumed by its rays. Such being the fate of our race, a hard one in many respects, you see, my dear Crozat—and I say so with deep regret at the consequences which you anticipate, not however without a hope that they may be averted—you must clearly see that an alliance between our families is an impossibility. It would be fatal to your daughter, who would be scorched by ascending, Phaeton-like, into a sphere not calculated for her; and it would also be fatal to my son, who would be disgraced for his being recreant to his ancestors and to his posterity. You deserve infinite credit for having risen to the summit where you now stand. You have been ennobled, and you are one of the greatest merchants of the age, but you are not yet a Medici! You have not forced your way, like that family, into the ranks of the potentates of the earth. If, indeed—but why talk of such idle dreams? Adieu, Crozat, be comforted—be of good cheer.—Things may not be as bad as you think for your daughter. Her present attachment not being encouraged, she may in time form another one. Farewell, my friend, put your faith in God: he is the best healer of the wounds of the heart!”



Crozat bowed low to the duchess, whose extended hand he kissed reverentially, and he withdrew from the chilling frigidity of her august presence. Crouching under the weight of his misfortune, and under the consciousness of the invincible and immortal pride he had to deal with, he tottered to his solitary room, and sinking into a large gothic chair, buried his feverish head into his convulsive hands. Hot tears trickled through the contracted fingers, and he sobbed and groaned aloud, when he recalled, one by one, all the words of the duchess, as they slowly fell from her lips, burning his soul, searing his brains, filtering through his heart like distilled drops of liquid fire. Suddenly he started up with fierce energy; his face was lighted with dauntless resolution: he ground his teeth, clinched his fist, as if for a struggle, and shook it in defiance of some invisible adversary, while he moved on with expanded chest and with a frame dilating into the majesty of some imaginary command. "O Daughter," he exclaimed, "thou shalt be saved, and if necessary, I will accomplish impossibilities. Did not the proud duchess say that if I were a Medici! . . . the ruler of provinces!—if I had an historical name? she did! and I know that she would keep her word. Well then! ye powers of heaven or hell, that helped the Medici, I bow to ye, and call ye to my aid, by the only incantation which I know, the strong

magic of an energetic mind. I invoke your assistance, be the sacrifice on my part whatever it may:—I will sign any bond ye please—I will set my all on the cast of a die—and gamble against fate. My daughter is the stake, and death to her and to me the forfeit!” This was a sinful ebullition of passion—the only excuse the paroxysm of a delirious mind. But still it was impious, and his protecting angel averted his face and flew upward. Alas! poor Crozat!

Hence the origin of that charter, by which Louisiana was ceded, as it were, to Crozat. He flattered himself with the hope that, if successful in his gigantic enterprise, a few years might ripen the privileges he had obtained into the concession of a principality, which he would form in the New World, a principality which, as a great feudatory vassal, he would hold in subjection to the crown of France. Then he would say to the proud duchess, “I am a Medici. My name outweighs many a haughty one in the scales of history:—my nobility rests not only on title, but on noble deeds. These were your words—I hold you to them—redeem your pledge—one of your blood cannot be false—I claim your son—I give him a princess for his bride, and domains ten times broader than France, or any kingdom in Europe, for her dowry!”

So hoped the heart of the father—so schemed the head of the great merchant! What man ever had

stronger motives to fire his genius? What ambition more sacred and more deserving of reward than his? And yet none, save one, guessed at the motives which actuated him! He was taxed with being insatiable of wealth: people wondered at his gigantic avidity. Some there were, who shrugged their shoulders, and said that he was tempting fate, that it was time for him to be satisfied with what he had, without exposing his present wonderful acquisitions for the uncertainty of a greater fortune. Such are the blind judgments of the world! Crozat was blamed for being too ambitious, and envy railed at the inordinate avidity of the rash adventurer, when pity ought to have wept over the miseries of the broken-hearted father. On the dizzy eminence whither he had ascended, Crozat, when he looked round for sympathy, was met by the basilisk stare of a jealous, cold-blooded world, who stood by, calculating his chances of success, and grinning in anticipation at the wished-for failure of his defeated schemes. At such a sight, his heart sank within his breast, and elevating his hands, clasped in prayer, "Angels and ministers of grace," he said, "ye know that it is no ambitious cravings, but the racked feelings of a father, that urge me to the undertaking, upon which I call down your blessings. Be ye my friends and protectors in heaven, for Crozat has none on this earth."



FOURTH LECTURE.



## FOURTH LECTURE.

LAMOTHE CADILLAC, GOVERNOR OF LOUISIANA—SITUATION OF THE COLONY IN 1713—FEUD BETWEEN CADILLAC AND BIENVILLE—CHARACTER OF RICHEBOURG—FIRST EXPEDITION AGAINST THE NATCHEZ—DE L'EPINAY SUCCEEDS CADILLAC—THE CURATE DE LA VENTE—EXPEDITION OF ST. DENNIS TO MEXICO—HIS ADVENTURES—JALLOT, THE SURGEON—IN 1717 CROZAT GIVES UP HIS CHARTER—HIS DEATH.

WHEN Crozat obtained the royal charter, granting him so many commercial privileges in Louisiana, the military forces which were in the colony, and which constituted its only protection, did not exceed two companies of infantry of fifty men each. There were also seventy-five Canadians in the pay of the king, and they were used for every species of service. The balance of the population hardly came up to three hundred souls, and that population, small as it was and almost imperceptible, happened to be scattered over a boundless territory, where they could not communicate together without innumerable difficulties, frightful dangers, and without delays which, in these our days of rapid locomotion, can scarcely be sufficiently appreciated. As to the blacks, who now have risen to such



importance in our social polity, they did not number more than twenty heads. It is probable, that of this scanty population, there were not fifty persons in the present limits of the State of Louisiana, and the contrast, which now presents itself to the mind, affords a rich treat to the imagination, and particularly to our national pride, since we were the wonder-working power.

The possession of the province of Louisiana, if possession it can be called, France had secured by the construction of five forts. They were located at Mobile, at Biloxi, Ship Island, Dauphine Island, and on the bank of the Mississippi. Those fortifications were of a very humble nature, and their materials were chiefly composed of stakes, logs and clay. They sufficed, however, to intimidate the Indians. Such were the paltry results, after fifteen years, of the attempt made by a powerful government to colonize Louisiana; and now, one single man, a private individual, was daring enough to grapple and struggle with an undertaking, which, so far, had proved abortive in the hands of the great Louis the XIVth!

It must be remembered that De Muys, who had been appointed to supersede Bienville, had died in Havana in 1707, and that the youthful founder of the colony had, by that event, remained Governor ad interim of Louisiana. But on the 17th of May, 1713, a great change

had come over the face of things, and the colonists stood on the tiptoe of expectation, when they were informed that a ship had arrived with Lamothe Cadillac, as Governor, Duclos as Commissary in the place of D'Artaguet, who had returned to France, Lebas as Comptroller, Dirigoin and La Loire des Ursins, as the agents of Crozat in the colony. Bienville was retained as Lieutenant Governor, and it was expected that, in that subordinate office, he would, from his knowledge of the state of affairs in the province, be of signal use to his successor, and be a willing instrument, which the supposed superior abilities of Lamothe Cadillac would turn to some goodly purpose. This certainly was a compliment paid to the patriotism of Bienville, but was it not disregarding too much the frailties of human nature? Cheerfully to obey, where one formerly had nothing to do but to issue the word of command, is not an every day occurrence, and it is a trial to which politic heads ought not to expose the virtue of man.

The principal instructions given by Crozat to Lamothe Cadillac were, that he should diligently look after *mines*, and endeavor to find out an opening for the introduction of his goods and merchandise into the Spanish colonies of Mexico, either with the consent of the authorities, or without it, by smuggling. If he succeeded in these two enterprises, Crozat calculated that he would speedily obtain inexhaustible wealth, such

wealth as would enable him to throw a large population into Louisiana, as it were by magic, and to realize the fond dreams of his paternal heart. Impatient of delay, he had, in order to stimulate the exertions of Lamothe Cadillac, secured to him a considerable share in the profits which he hoped to realize. Lamothe Cadillac had fought with valor in Canada, and as a reward for his services, (so, at least, his commission declared,) had been appointed by the king, governor of Louisiana. Had Crozat known the deficiencies of that officer's intellect, he, no doubt, would have strongly remonstrated against such a choice.

Lamothe Cadillac was born on the banks of the Garonne, in the province of Gascony, in France. He was of an ancient family, which, for several centuries, had, by some fatality or other, been rapidly sliding down from the elevated position which it had occupied. When Lamothe Cadillac was ushered into life, the domains of his ancestors had, for many past generations, been reduced to a few acres of land. That small estate was dignified, however, with an old dilapidated edifice, which bore the name of *castle*, although, at a distance, to an unprejudiced eye, it presented some unlucky resemblance to a barn. A solitary tower dressed, as it were, in a gown of moss and ivy, raised its gray head to a height which might have been called respectable, and which appeared to offer special attraction to

crows, swallows and bats. Much to the mortification of the present owner, it had been called by the young wags of the neighborhood, "*Cadillac's Rookery*," and was currently known under that ungentle appellation. Cadillac had received a provincial and domestic education, and had, to his twenty-fifth year, moved in a very contracted sphere. Nay, it may be said that he had almost lived in solitude, for he had lost both his parents, when hardly eighteen summers had passed over his head, and he had since kept company with none but the old tutor to whom he was indebted for such classical attainments as he had acquired. His mind being as much curtailed in its proportions, as his patrimonial acres, his intellectual vision could not extend very far, and if Cadillac was not literally a dunce, it was well known that Cadillac's wits would never run away with him.

Whether it was owing to this accidental organization of his brain, or not, certain it is that one thing afforded the most intense delight to Cadillac:—it was, that no blood so refined as his own ran in the veins of any other human being, and that his person was the very incarnation of nobility. With such a conviction rooted in his heart, it is not astonishing that his tall, thin, and emaciated body should have stiffened itself into the most accurate observation of the perpendicular. Indeed, it was exceedingly pleasant, and exhilarating to

the lungs, to see Cadillac, on a Sunday morning, strutting along in full dress, on his way to church, through the meagre village attached to his hereditary domain. His bow to the mayor and to the curate was something rare, an exquisite burlesque of infinite majesty, thawing into infinite affability. His ponderous wig, the curls of which spread like a peacock's tail, seemed to be alive with conscious pride at the good luck it had of covering a head of such importance to the human race. His eyes, in whose favor nature had been pleased to deviate from the oval into the round shape, were possessed with a stare of astonishment, as if they meant to convey the expression that the spirit within was in a trance of stupefaction at the astounding fact that the being it animated did not produce a more startling effect upon the world. The physiognomy which I am endeavoring to depict, was rendered more remarkable by a stout, cocked up, snub nose, which looked as if it had hurried back, in a fright, from the lips, to squat in rather too close proximity to the eyes, and which, with its dilated nostrils, seemed always on the point of sneezing at something thrusting itself between the wind and its nobility. His lips wore a mocking smile, as if sneering at the strange circumstance that a Cadillac should be reduced to be an obscure, penniless individual. But, if Cadillac had his weak points, it must also be told that he was not without his strong ones. Thus,

he had a great deal of energy, bordering, it is true, upon obstinacy;—he was a rigidly moral and pious man;—and he was too proud not to be valiant.

With a mind so framed, was it to be wondered at that Cadillac deemed it a paramount duty to himself and to his Maker, not to allow his race to become extinct? Acting under a keen sense of that duty, and impressed with a belief that he might, by a rich alliance, restore his house to that ancient splendor which he considered as its birthright, but of which evil tongues said, that it was indeed so truly ancient, that it had long ceased to be recorded in the memory of man, he, one day, issued in state and in his gayest apparel, from his feudal tower, and for miles around, paid formal visits to all the wealthy patricians of his neighborhood. He was every where received with that high-bred courtesy, which those of that class extend to all, and particularly to such as belong to their own order, but he was secretly voted a quiz. After a few months of ineffectual efforts, Cadillac returned to his pigeon hole, in the most disconsolate mood; and, after a year's repining, he was forced to content himself with the hand of a poor spinster, who dwelt in a neighboring town, where, like Cadillac, she lingered in all the pride of unsullied descent and hereditary poverty. Shortly after her marriage, the lady, who was a distant relation to the celebrated Duke of Lauzun, recommend-

ed herself and her husband to the patronage of that nobleman, who was then one of the brightest of that galaxy of stars that adorned the court of Louis the XIVth. Her letter was written in a quaint, fantastic style, and Lauzun, who received it on his way to the king's morning levee, showed it to the monarch, and was happy enough, by the drollery of his comments, to force a smile from those august lips. Availing himself of that smile, Lauzun, who was in one of his good fits, for the kindness of his nature was rather problematical, and the result of accident rather than of disposition, obtained for his poor connexion the appointment of captain to one of the companies of infantry, which had been ordered to Canada.

The reception of this favor with a congratulatory letter from Lauzun, added stilts to Cadillac's pomposity, and his few dependents and vassals became really astounded at the sublimity of his attitudes. On that occasion, the increased grandeur of his habitual carriage was but the translation of the magnificence of his cogitations. He had heard of the exploits of Cortez and Pizarro, and he came to the logical conclusion in his own mind that Canada would be as glorious a field as Peru or Mexico, and that he would at least rival the achievements of the Spanish heroes. Fame and wealth were at last within his grasp, and the long eclipsed star of the Cadillacs would again blaze out with renewed lustre !



The dreams of Cadillac were soon put to flight by sad realities, when he landed in Canada, where hardships of every kind assailed him. The snows and blasts of Siberian winters, the heat of summers equal to those of Africa, endless marches and counter-marches after a wary and perfidious enemy, visible only when he could attack with tenfold chances in his favor, the sufferings of hunger and thirst which were among the ordinary privations of his every day life, the wants of civilization so keenly felt amidst all the destitution of savage existence, days of bodily and mental labor, and nights of anxious vigil, hair-breadth escapes on water and on land, the ever-recurring danger of being tomahawked and scalped, the war-whoops and incessant attacks of the Indians, the honorable distinctions of wounds and of a broken constitution in the service of his country—these were the concomitants and the results of Cadillac's career in Canada during twenty years! All this Cadillac had supported with remarkable fortitude, although not without impatience, wondering all the time that something or other did not happen to make him what he thought nature and his birth intended and entitled him to be—a great man!

But twenty years had elapsed, and at their expiration, he found himself no better than a lieutenant-colonel. To increase his vexation, he had no other

issue by his marriage than a daughter, now eighteen years of age, and thus he remained without the prospect of having an heir to continue his line, and to bear his noble name. The disappointment of his hopes in this respect, was the keenest of all his afflictions; he was approaching the trying climacteric of fifty-four, and he was as poor as when he departed from the banks of the Garonne. A lieutenant-colonel he was, and would remain, in all probability. His superior officer seemed to be marvellously tenacious of his post and of life, and would neither die nor advance one step beyond his grade: bullets spared him, and ministers never thought of his promotion. Thus it was clear, from all appearances, that Cadillac was not in a position soon to become a marshal of France, and that Canada was not the land where he could acquire that wealth he was so ambitious of, to enshrine his old gray-headed tower, as a curious relic of the feudal power of his ancestry, within the splendid architecture of a new palace, and to revive the glories of his race. Hence he had imbibed the most intense contempt for the barren country where so much of his life had been spent in vain, and he would sneer at the appellation of *New France* given to Canada; he thought it was a disparagement to the beautiful and noble kingdom of which he boasted to be a native, and he frequently amused his brother officers with his indignation on this

subject. "This world may revolve on its axis to all eternity," he would say, "and Canada will no more be made to resemble France, than a dwarf will ever be the personification of a giant!" This was a favorite phrase with which he loved to close his complaints against the object of his abomination, whenever he was betrayed into an expression of his feelings; for of late, he had become silent and moody, and only talked, when he could not do otherwise. It was evident that his mind was wrapped up within itself, and absorbed in the solution of some problem, or the contemplation of a subject which taxed all its powers of thought. What could it be? But at last it was discovered that the object of Cadillac's abstracted cogitations, was the constant blasting of all his hopes, in spite of his mighty efforts to realize them. So strange did it appear to him, that he could come to no other conclusion than that, if he had not risen higher on the stage of life, it was necessarily because he was *spell bound*.

Cadillac, since his arrival in Canada, had kept up, with the great connexion he had acquired by his marriage, the Duke of Lauzun, a regular correspondence, in which, to the infinite glee of that nobleman, he used to enumerate his manifold mishaps. Now, acting under the impression that he was decidedly the victim of fate or witchcraft, he wrote to Lauzun a long letter,

in which he surpassed himself in his bombastic style, and out-heroding Herod, poured out on paper, in incoherent declamations, the vexed spirit which ailed him, and cut such antics in black and white, that Lauzun, on the perusal of this epistolary elegy, laughed himself into tears, and almost screamed with delight. It happened at that time, that the ministry was in search of a governor for Louisiana, and the mischievous Lauzun, who thought that the more he exalted Cadillac, the greater source of merriment he prepared for himself, had sufficient power to have him appointed to that office. This profligate nobleman never troubled his wits about what would become of Louisiana under such an administration. Provided he found out a fit theatre, and had it properly illuminated, to enjoy, at his ease, the buffoneries of a favorite actor, what cared he for the rest?

Before taking possession of his government, Cadillac went to France, to receive the instructions of the ministry, and to revisit his paternal domain. His return produced no slight sensation within a radius of forty miles round his so long deserted hearth. If the waggish boys who used to torment him with their pranks had grown into manhood, tradition had handed down so much of Cadillac's peculiarities to their successors, that when he appeared before them, it was not as a stranger, but rather as an old acquaintance.

Dressed in the fashion which prevailed at the time he left his native province, twenty years before, and which at present helped to set off with more striking effect the oddities of his body and mind, he was, as before, an object of peculiar attraction to the mischievous propensities of the juvenility of his neighborhood. One of them, still fresh from the university, where he had won academical honors, availing himself, in order to display the powers of his muse, of Cadillac's reappearance at home, composed a ballad which he called, "*The Return of the Iroquois Chief*," and which was a parody of a celebrated one, well known as "*The Knight's Return from Palestine*." It met with great success, and was sung more than once under the Gothic windows of Cadillac's tower. But he listened to the sarcastic composition with a smile of ineffable contempt. "Let them laugh at my past misfortunes," he would say to himself, "the future will avenge my wrongs, and my enemies will be jaundiced with the bile of envy. I am now governor of Louisiana, of that favored land, of which so many wonders are related. This is no longer the frozen climate of Canada, but a genial region, which, from its contiguity, must be akin to that of Mexico, where the hot rays of the sun make the the earth teem with gold, diamonds, and rubies!" Working himself into a paroxysm of frenzied excitement, he struck passionately,

with the palm of his hand, the wall of the room he was pacing to and fro, and exclaimed, "O venerable pile, which derision calls *Cadillac's Rookery*, I will yet make thee a tower of strength and glory! I will gild each of thy moss-coated stones, and thou shalt be a tabernacle for men to wonder at and to worship!" As he spoke, his eyes became suffused with tears, and there was so much feeling and pathos in his action, and in the expression of his aspirations, that, for the first time in his life, not only he momentarily ceased to be ridiculous, but, to one who had seen him then, would have appeared not destitute of a certain degree of dignity, and perhaps not unworthy of respectful sympathy. Such is the magic of deep sentiment!

When Cadillac landed on the bleak shore of Dauphine or Massacre Island, what he saw was very far from answering his expectations. From the altitude of flight to which his imagination had risen, it is easy to judge of the rapidity of its precipitate descent. The shock received from its sudden fall was such as to produce a distraction of the mind, bordering on absolute madness. As soon as Cadillac recovered from the bewildered state of astonishment into which he had been thrown, he sent to the minister of the marine department a description of the country, of which I shall only give this short abstract: "The wealth of Dauphine Island," said he, "consists of a score of fig-trees, three



wild pear-trees, and three apple-trees of the same nature, a dwarfish plum-tree, three feet high, with seven bad looking plums, thirty plants of vine, with nine bunches of half-rotten and half-dried-up grapes, forty stands of French melons, and some pumpkins. This is the terrestrial paradise of which we had heard so much! Nothing but fables and lies!"

It will be recollected that Lamothe Cadillac had arrived on the 13th of May. He had since been exploring the country, and with his usual sagacity, he passed this remarkable judgment on Lower Louisiana: "This is a very wretched country, good for nothing, and incapable of producing either tobacco, wheat, or vegetables, even as high as Natchez." It is fortunate that from this oracular decision there has been an appeal, and we now know whether it has been confirmed or annulled.

The 1st of January, 1714, had come in due time, and Cadillac had not allowed his unfavorable opinions of Louisiana to depart with the expiring year, if we may judge from the dispatch in which he said: "The inhabitants are no better than the country; they are the very scum and refuse of Canada, ruffians, who have thus far cheated the gibbet of its due, vagabonds, who are without subordination to the laws, without any respect for religion or for the government, graceless profligates, who are so steeped in vice that they prefer



the Indian females to French women! How can I find a remedy for such evils, when his Majesty instructs me to behave with extreme lenity, and in such a manner as not to provoke complaints! But what shall I say of the troops, who are without discipline, and scattered among the Indians, at whose expense they subsist?" Cadillac went on in this strain, in no sparing style, and summed up the whole with this sweeping declaration: "The colony is not worth a straw for the moment; but I shall endeavor to make something of it, if God grants me health."

God granted the worthy governor as robust health as he could have wished, but without enabling him to redeem his word, with regard to bettering the condition of the colony; and at the expiration of the year 1714, Cadillac found out that his situation, as an administrator, was far from being an enviable one. He had quarrelled with Dirigoïn, one of Crozat's agents, because, if we take his representations as true, he was a fool; and with the comptroller, Lebas, because he was dissipated; with the inhabitants, because they were dissolute and had hitherto refused to build a church, which was a thing not yet to be found in the whole colony; with the soldiers, because they were without discipline; with the officers, and particularly with Bienville, Boisbriant, Chateaugué, and Sérigny, because they neglected to apply for the holy sacrament, even at Easter; with the

commissary, Duclos, because his views were different from his own on more than one occasion ; with Richebourg, a captain of dragoons, who had come with him in a ship of the line, because he had seduced most of the girls who had embarked with them for Louisiana, and who ought to have been respected ; with the girls themselves, because they had suffered their virtue to be seduced, which was the cause of their remaining on his hands, inasmuch as every one refused to marry them on account of their known misconduct. Is it astonishing that, under such untoward circumstances, Cadillac's displeasure at his situation should have swelled into such gigantic proportions as to induce him to allow his gathering indignation to embrace the whole of America within the scope of his animadversion ? Is it not to be supposed that his understanding must have been a little confused by his perplexities, when he wrote to the ministry—" Believe me, this whole continent is not worth having, and our colonists are so dissatisfied that they are all disposed to run away ?"

The feud between the magnates of the land grew every day more fierce, and the colony presented the aspect of two hostile camps, Trojans and Greeks, tugging in irreconcilable enmity. On one side, there was the governor, who was the Agamemnon of his party, and who was backed by Marigny de Mandeville, Bagot, Blondel, Latour, Villiers, and Terrine, scions of noble

houses, and all of them young and brilliant officers, who would join in any strife merely for the sake of excitement. The fanatic Curate de la Vent, was their Calchas, and stimulated them to the contest. On the other side stood Lieutenant-Governor Bienville, the Hector of the opposition, with the king's commissary Duclos, Boisbriant, Chateaugué, Richebourg, Du Tisé, Sérigny, and others of some note or influence, who were at least fully a match for their antagonists. Thus, on this small theatre, the human passions were as keenly at work, and there was as hot a struggle for petty power, as if the stage for their display had been a more elevated one, and the objects of contention more exciting to ambition.

From the annals of the Dutch settlements of New-York, or rather from the overflowing richness of his own imagination, which, to be prolific, had only to alight on and to be connected with a favorite subject, Washington Irving drew those humorous sketches, which first gave celebrity to his name. But in the early history of Louisiana, which has nothing to borrow from the fields of fiction, there spring up characters and incidents, fraught with as much originality, and tinged with as much romance, as any so felicitously described by him in his productions, or by other authors in any work of fancy. What writer could pretend, in his most whimsical creations, to produce a being more fantasti-

cal than Lamothe Cadillac? What powers of invention could match his style and the sentiments expressed in his letters? But let us follow the erratic course pursued by this eccentric personage.

He had come to Louisiana to acquire sudden wealth by the discovery of mines, and not to superintend and foster the slow and tedious progress of civilization. Hence, it is not to be wondered at, that, on his receiving, one day, positive orders to assist the agents of Crozat in establishing trading settlements or posts on the Wabash and on the Illinois, he got out of humor, and in a fit of impatience, had the hardihood to write back to the ministry, in these terms: "I have seen Crozat's instructions to his agents. I thought they issued from a lunatic asylum, and there appeared to me to be no more sense in them than in the Apocalypse. What! Is it expected that, for any commercial or profitable purposes, boats will ever be able to run up the Mississippi, into the Wabash, the Missouri, or the Red River? One might as well try *to bite a slice off the moon!* Not only are those rivers as rapid as the Rhone, but in their crooked course, they imitate to perfection a snake's undulations. Hence, for instance, on every turn of the Mississippi, it would be necessary to wait for a change of wind, if wind could be had, because this river is so lined up with thick woods, that very little wind has access to its bed."

As to the ministerial expectations that he should devote most of his time to favoring agricultural pursuits among the colonists, Cadillac took it in high dudgeon, that such recommendations should ever be addressed to him, as if he had not something better to attend to—the discovery of gold, diamonds and pearls! To trouble himself about conceding and locating lands, was a thing concerning which he never admitted the possibility of his being seriously employed, and he treated the matter very lightly in one of his dispatches, in which he said to the ministry, “Give the colonists as much land as they please. Why stint the measure? The lands are so bad that there is no necessity to care for the number of acres. A copious distribution of them would be cheap liberality.”

Thus, agriculture and commerce had failed to engage the sympathies of Cadillac, who, since the first day he landed in Louisiana, had bent all his energies and all the means at his command, towards the discovery of mines. He had sent Canadians in every direction to explore for the hidden treasures of the earth, but months had elapsed without gratifying the cravings of Cadillac’s appetite for gold. Some of the Canadians had been killed by the Indians:—others found so much amusement in their favorite avocations of fishing and hunting, that they forgot the duties imposed upon them, and for the discharge of which they

were paid:—there were more than one who, having gone so far as the Illinois and the Missouri, suddenly be-thought themselves of some love-sick maid, some doting mother or aged father, whom they had left pining on the banks of the St. Lawrence, and instead of returning down the Mississippi, to give to Cadillac an account of their mission, they pursued their way up to their native villages. It must be confessed that all were little competent and too ignorant to investigate properly the object of their inquiries. The few who came back had but “a beggarly account of empty boxes” to lay before Cadillac. But if he had been favored with a romantic turn of mind, he would have found some indemnification in the recital of their marvellous adventures.

Cadillac came at last to the conclusion that he was in a sorry predicament. Sancho, when assailed with the cares of his insular government, never felt the tenth part of his embarrassment. So much so, that Cadillac deeply regretted that he could not be for ever asleep; because, when awake, he could not but be aware that he had spent all the funds he could command, and had no more left to consecrate to his favorite scheme. The sad reality stared him in the face:—his purse was empty, and his Canadians were gone. But when he was asleep, his dreams beggared the wonders of the Arabian Nights. Then Queen Mab



would drive, four in hand, her tiny cobweb carriage through his brain: some merry elf of her court would tickle his nose with a feather from a humming-bird's tail, and instantly Cadillac would see a thousand fairy miners, extracting from the bowels of the earth and heaping upon its surface enormous piles of gold and silver, having a fantastic resemblance to those Indian mounds which, in our days, make such strong appeals to our curiosity. Heated by those visions, Cadillac addressed himself to Duclos, the king's commissary, for more funds to prosecute his researches after the precious metals for which he thirsted. Duclos replied that the treasury had been pumped dry. "Borrow," answered Cadillac. "I cannot," observed Duclos. "Well, then!" said the governor very pithily, "what is the use of your being a financier, if you cannot raise money by borrowing, and what is the use of my being a governor, if I have no funds to carry on the purposes of my government!"

Low did Cadillac hang his head, in spite of all his pride, when he found himself so cramped up in his operations. But it would require a more powerful pen than mine to describe his indignation, when Duclos, the king's commissary, requested him to render his accounts for all the funds which had been put in his hands, and for all the goods and trinkets which had been delivered to him for distribution among the In-



dians. It was long before he could be made to understand what was expected from him, so strange and unnatural to him did *such a pretension*, as Cadillac called it, really seem on the part of the commissary. There was to him something stupendous in the idea that there should ever be the possibility of any such event happening, as that of a commissary calling upon *him*, Cadillac, the noblest among the noble, *him*, the governor, *him*, the representative of the Lord's anointed, to furnish his accounts, just in the same way that such a call might have been made upon any ordinary biped of the human species. Was not such a pretension the forerunner of some extraordinary convulsion of nature? Be it as it may, Cadillac immediately wrote to the ministry to inform them of this astounding fact, which, in his opinion, was a demonstration of the wild notions that had crept into the colony. Evidently, the commissary was "non compos mentis!"

The tribulations of Cadillac were destined to pursue a progressive course, and he was hardly out of one difficulty, when another and still another came in quick succession, like the ghosts that haunted Macbeth. To increase his perplexities, the troops refused to go through all the duties of their regular service, on the ground that they had nothing to eat but corn, when they were entitled to wheat bread. "A deputation of twenty of them," said Cadillac, in his communications to the min-

istry, "had the impudence to address me on the subject. I immediately sent the spokesman to prison, and having convened the officers, I told them that the troops in Canada were satisfied with corn for their food, that those in Louisiana had, as I had been informed, lived on it three years, and that I saw no reason why they should not continue. None of the officers dissented from me, except the commissary, who expressed a different opinion, which he supported with the most puerile reasoning; but I chid him and gave him a good rapping on the knuckles."

The spirit of discontent was not confined to the soldiery, but had spread through the minds of the colonists themselves. "They have dared to meet without my permission," said he, in another dispatch, "and to frame a petition to demand that all nations should be permitted to trade freely with the colony, and that the inhabitants should have the right to move out of this province, according to their pleasure. Freedom of trade, and freedom of action!—a pretty thing! What would become of Crozat's privileges? The colonists also insist on Crozat's monopoly of trade being confined to the wholesale disposition of his goods and merchandise. They pretend that he should in no case be allowed to retail his goods, and that his gains should be limited to fifty per cent on the original cost. Their petition contains several other demands equally absurd. In order

to cut all these intrigues in the bud, I declared that if this petition was ever presented to me, I would hang the bearer. A certain fellow, by the name of Miragoïn, had taken charge of this precious piece of composition, and had assumed the responsibility of its presentation, but on his being informed of my intentions, he tore it to pieces."

One would have thought that Cadillac had *supped full of annoyances, if not of horrors*. But another cause of deep mortification, particularly for one so pious and so strictly moral as he was, had been kept in reserve ; which was, his finding himself under the necessity of resisting the solicitations of his friend, the Curate de la Vente, and of the other missionaries, who insisted upon his expelling out of the colony, two women of bad character, that had lately arrived. "I have refused to do so," said he, in one of his dispatches, "because if I sent away all women of loose habits, there would be no females left, and this would not meet the views of the government. Besides, (he slyly observed,) one of these girls occupies the position of a servant in the household of the king's commissary, who will no doubt reclaim her from her vicious propensities. After all, I think that the members of the clergy here are perhaps too rigid, and too fond of exacting long and repeated confessions. A little more lenity would better suit the place and time. Let me add, in conclu-

sion, that if you do not check the intrigues of Bienville and of the commissary, who have gained over to their side most of the officers and of the inhabitants, Crozat will soon be obliged to abandon his enterprise."

We see that there was a deep feeling of animosity between Cadillac and Bienville, which threatened to be of long continuance. But Cadillac had a daughter, and Bienville was a young man, and one of such as are framed by nature to win the affections of the fair descendants of Mother Eve. Whould not a novel-writer imagine, under such circumstances, a love story, either to soothe the two chiefs into a reconciliation, or to fan into more sparkling flames the slow burning fire of their inextinguishable hatred? Is it not strange that what would certainly be devised to increase the interest of a dramatic plot, did actually turn out to be an historical occurrence? But what fact or transaction, commonplace as it would appear any where else according to the ordinary run of things, does not, when connected with Louisiana, assume a romantic form and shape?

Thus Cadillac's daughter did really fall in love with Bienville. But although her eyes spoke plainly the sentiment of her heart, Bienville did not seem to be conscious of his good fortune, and kept himself wrapped up in respectful blindness. The lady's love, however, made itself so apparent, that it at last flashed upon

Cadillac's mind. This was indeed a discovery! How he did wince at the idea that one whom he looked upon as so inferior to himself in birth and rank, and particularly that a *Canadian* should have won the heart of his daughter! Vehemently and long did he remonstrate with his progeny on the unnatural passion which she had conceived; but the love-sick maid thought it perfectly natural, and showed a pertinacity which greatly shocked her equally obstinate parent. Nay, she did what others had done before her, and became so pale and emaciated that she frightened her father's opposition into an acquiescence with her wishes. So much so, that Cadillac brought himself, at last, to think that this match would not be so disproportionate as he had conceived it at first. Bienville, after all, was a gentleman by birth, he was the founder of a colony, and had been a governor!—That was something to begin with, and he might, in the course of time, rise to an eminence which would show him worthy of an alliance with the illustrious Cadillac family. Besides, Cadillac was getting old, and had so far had a poor chance of acquiring the wealth he had been in quest of so long. If he died, what would become of his daughter? These reflections settled the question, and Cadillac said to himself, "Bienville shall be my son-in-law." Never did he, for one single moment, dream of any obstacle. Nothing remained but to encourage Bien-

ville's fancied timidity, and to lift up the curtain which concealed from him the bliss awaiting his unconscious innocence.

One morning, Bienville, much to his astonishment, received a friendly invitation to the governor's closet. There, the great man proffered to his subordinate the olive branch of reconciliation, and by slow degrees, gave him to understand that the god Hymen might seal the bond of their amity. Bienville received this communication with low and reverential obeisance. Much delighted did he show himself at this offer of reconciliation, and much honored with the prospect, however distant, of an alliance so far beyond his humble aspirations; but, at the same time, he plainly intimated to Cadillac his firm determination, for reasons best known to himself, for ever to undergo the mortifications of celibacy! So unexpected this answer was, that Cadillac reeled in his seat, as if he had been stunned by a sudden blow. There he stood in a trance, with his mouth gaping wide, with his eyes starting from their sockets, and with dilating nostrils, while Bienville and the very walls, and every thing that was in the room, seemed to spin and whirl madly around him, with electric rapidity. Now, indeed, he had known the worst, fate had entered the lists, and *Birnam wood had come to Dunsinane!* What! his daughter, a Cadillac, to be refused by a Canadian ad-



venturer! No doubt a screw had broken loose in the machinery of the universe, and our whole world was to be flung back into the womb of old chaos again! Before Cadillac had recovered from this paroxysm, Bienville had made his exit, and had gone to tell the anecdote to some confidential friends. The fact which I have related, is thus briefly mentioned by Bienville in one of his dispatches: "I can assure your excellency that the cause of Cadillac's enmity to me, is my having refused to marry his daughter."

Bienville did not wait long to receive a signal proof of Cadillac's vindictive spirit, and he anticipated a manifestation of it, when summoned a second time to appear before his chief. Nor was he deceived; and when he was ushered into Cadillac's presence, that dignitary's countenance, which looked more than usually solemn and stern, indicated that he had matured his revenge for the insult he had undergone. "Sir," said he to Bienville, "I have received secret information that four Canadians, on their way to Illinois, have been massacred by the Natchez. You must punish the murderers, and build a fort on the territory of that perfidious nation, to keep it in check. Take Richebourg's company of thirty-four men, fifteen sailors to man your boats, and proceed to execute my commands." "What!" exclaimed Bienville, "do you really intend to send me with thirty-four men to en-



counter a hostile tribe that numbers eight hundred warriors!" "A truce to your observations," continued Cadillac, with a bitter smile, "to hear must be to obey. I cannot dispose of a greater force. I have myself good grounds to expect being attacked by the neighboring nations, who, as I am informed, have entered into a conspiracy against us. Yet the offence committed by the Natchez must be instantly requited, or they would be emboldened into the perpetration of worse outrages. Go, then, with such means as I can give; in case of success, your merit will be greater, but if you should meet with any reverse, you will be at no loss for an excuse, and all the responsibility shall be mine. Besides, you and Richebourg have such talents and courage as will easily extricate you out of any difficulty. You are a very Hercules, and he is a perfect Theseus, in licentious propensities, at least. What is the mission I send you upon, compared with the twelve labors of the mythological hero, who, like you on this occasion, was sent forth to redress wrongs and punish crimes!" To the studied sarcasm of this set speech, Bienville made no answer. In those days of adventurous and almost mad exploits in America, in an age when the disciplinarian rules of hierarchy commanded such respect and obedience, none, without disgrace, could have questioned the word of his superior, when that word was to brave danger, however

foolish and reckless this exercise of authority might be. Moreover, Bienville saw that his ruin had been deliberately planned, and that remonstrance was useless. Therefore, signifying mute assent to Cadillac's wishes, he withdrew to betake himself to the execution of the orders which he had received, and to advise with Richebourg on the best means of defeating Cadillac's malicious designs.

Richebourg was a brave officer, full of intelligence and of cool daring, whose career in Europe, as a military man, had been interrupted by several duels, which at last had forced him to leave his country. He was so amiable, so obliging, so exceedingly conciliatory, that it was difficult for one who did not know a certain eccentric peculiarity of his mind, to understand how he had come to have so many quarrels. Who more gifted than he with suavity of manners and the art of pleasing? He never was fretted by contradiction, and ever smiled at opposition. Popular among men, a favorite with women, he never allowed words of blame to fall from his lips, but on the contrary was remarkable for the good nature of his remarks on all occasions except one. How could this milk of human kindness, which was the dominant element of his disposition, be suddenly soured into offensive acidity, or turned into gall? It was passing strange! But it was nevertheless true, that, for some cause which

he never explained, he had conceived the most inveterate hatred for all that smacked of philanthropy. There suddenly sprung up in his heart a sort of diseased aversion for the man, who, in his presence, either went by the name of philanthropist, or expressed sentiments which gave him a claim to that character. Richebourg, on such occasions, would listen with exemplary composure, and, treasuring up in his memory every philanthropic declaration that fell from the lips of the speaker, he would, as soon as he found the opportunity, put him to the test, as to whether his practice corresponded with his theory. Alas! few stood the test, and then Richebourg was not sparing of the words, *humbug*, *impostor*, and *hypocrite*. What was the consequence? A quarrel; and in variably the philanthropist was run through. On this inexplicable whim, on this Quixotic tilting with all pretenders to philanthropy, Richebourg's friends frequently remonstrated, but found him intractable. No answer would be given to their observations, but he kept steadily on the same course of action. At last it became evident to them, that it was an incurable mania, a crotchet which had got into his brain and was incapable of eradication. With this imperfection they put up with good humor, on account of his many noble qualities, and he became generally known and designated as the philanthropist hater. His companions in arms, who loved him—

although with some of them he had actually fought because, either in earnest or in jest, they had hoisted the red flag that was sure to rouse the bull—had, in a joking manner, convened one day all the officers and inhabitants of Mobile and Massacre Island, and had passed, with mock gravity, a resolution, which was however seriously adhered to, and in which they declared that, for the future, no one would allow himself, either directly or indirectly, to be a philanthropist within a radius of three miles of Richebourg. This secured peace; but woe to the imprudent or uninformed stranger who trespassed on that sacred ground, with the slightest visible sign of the heresy which the fanatic Richebourg held in utter abomination!

Such was the officer who was to share with Bienville the dangers of the expedition, which was subsequently known in the annals of Louisiana, as the *first Natchez war*.

On the 24th of April, 1716, Bienville, with the small force which had been allotted to him, encamped on an island, situated in the Mississippi, opposite the village of the Tunicas, at the distance of about eighteen leagues from the Natchez. He immediately sent a Tunica to convey to the Natchez the intelligence that he was coming to establish a factory among them, to trade in furs, and to supply them, in exchange, with all the European merchandise they might want. Bienville had

been informed that the Natchez believed that the late murders they had committed on the persons of some French traders, had not been discovered, and he resolved to avail himself of this circumstance to accomplish his purposes without the risk of a collision. He affected, therefore, to have come on the most friendly errand, and gave out that he had encamped on the island merely to afford rest to his men, and to minister to the wants of some that were sick. He nevertheless took the precaution to have an intrenchment made with stakes or posts, within which he erected three log-houses. One he intended as a storehouse for his provisions and ammunition, the other as a guard-house, and the third for a prison.

On the 27th, three Natchez came, under the ostensible purpose of complimenting Bienville, on the part of their tribe, but in reality to act as spies, and they tendered to him the calumet, that mystic pipe which the Indians use for fumigation, as the ensign of peace. Bienville refused to smoke with them, and pretended to consider himself as not treated with the respect to which he was entitled, because their chiefs had not come in person, to greet *him*, the chief of the French. "I see," said he, "that your people are not pleased with the idea of my forming a settlement on their territory, for trading with them. Otherwise they would have expressed their satisfaction in a more becoming man-

ner. Be it so. If the Natchez are so thankless for what I meant to be a favor, I will alter my determination, and give the preference to the Tunicas, who have always shown themselves such great friends to the French.”

After this speech, Bienville ordered the three envoys to be well feasted and treated with kindness. The next day they returned to their villages, with a Frenchman sent by Bienville, and whose mission was to address a formal invitation to the Natchez chiefs to a conference on the Tunicas Island. On this occasion, the Natchez felt greatly embarrassed, and many consultations were had on the best course to be pursued. Some were of opinion that it would be imprudent for their chiefs to put themselves in the power of the French, who might have received information of what had lately occurred, and who might have come, under the garb of peace, to entrap their great men and wreak vengeance upon them. Others maintained that, from the circumstance of the French having come in such small number, it was evident that they were ignorant of the death of their countrymen, and did not intend to act as foes. “That inference,” they said, “was confirmed by the information which had been carefully collected by their spies. They had no pretext to treat the French with indignity, and therefore it was proper for the chiefs of their tribe to go to meet and escort to their villages

the wise and valiant pale-faced chief, who had already visited them on preceding occasions. A different course might excite suspicion, and investigation might lead to the discovery of what it was desirable to conceal. At any rate, the chiefs, by refusing to accept Bienville's invitation, would certainly incur his displeasure, and he might, by forming a trading establishment at the Tunicas, enrich that rival nation, to the detriment of the Natchez." These arguments prevailed, and in an evil hour for the Indian chiefs, their visit to Bienville's camp was resolved on.

On the very day that Bienville had dismissed the three Indian envoys, he had dispatched one of his most skilful Canadian boatmen, to ascend the river, with the utmost secrecy, during the night, and proceeding to a certain distance beyond and above the villages of the Natchez, to give notice to the French, who might be coming down the river, of the danger that threatened them from the Natchez. That man was provided with a score of parchment rolls, which he was to append to trees in places where they were likely to meet the eyes of those descending the Mississippi, and which bore this inscription : "The Natchez have declared war against the French, and M. de Bienville is encamped at the Tunicas."

On the 8th of May, at 10 o'clock in the morning, the Indian chiefs were seen coming, with great state, in



four pirogues. The chiefs were seated under parasols, and were accompanied by twelve men, swimming. At that sight, Bienville ordered half of his men to keep themselves well armed and concealed in the guard-house, but ready for sudden action. The other half he instructed to appear without any weapons, to assist the Indians in landing, and to take charge of all their war apparel, as it were to relieve them from an encumbrance, and under the pretext that it would be improper to go in such a guise to the awaiting feast and carousal. He further commanded that eight of the principal chiefs, whom he named, should be introduced into his tent, and the rest be kept outside until his pleasure was made known. All this was carried into execution without the slightest difficulty. The chiefs entered the tent, singing and dancing, and presented the calumet to Bienville. But he waved it off with contempt, and sternly told them that, before drawing one whiff from the smoking pipe, he desired to know what they had to say, and that he was willing to listen to their harangue. At this unexpected treatment, the chiefs were highly disconcerted: they went out of the tent in dismay, and seemed, with great ceremony, to be offering their calumet to the sun. Their great priest, with extended arms, made a solemn appeal to that planet, supplicating the god to pour his rays into the heart of the pale-faced chief, to dispel the clouds which had there accumulated,

and had prevented him from seeing his way and doing justice to the feelings of his red friends. After all this religious display, they returned to the tent, and again tendered their calumet to Bienville, who, tired of all these proceedings, thought proper at once to take the bull by the horns and to come out with his charges. "Before I receive your token of amity," said he abruptly, "and pledge my faith in return, tell me what satisfaction you offer for the death of the Frenchmen you have murdered." The Indians, who had really thought that Bienville knew nothing of that crime, appeared to be struck aghast by this direct and sudden apostrophe: they hung down their heads and answered not. "Let them be carried to the prison prepared for them," exclaimed Bienville impatiently, "and let them be secured with chains, stocks, and fetters."

On this demonstration of hostility, out came the Indians with their death-songs, which, much to the annoyance of the French, they kept repeating the whole day:—they refused all food, and appeared determined to meet their expected doom with the dauntless energy so common in that race of men. Towards evening, Bienville sent for the great chief, called "The Great Sun," and for two of his brothers, whose names were, "The Stung Serpent" and "The Little Sun." They were the three most influential rulers of the nation. Bienville thus addressed them: "I know that it was

not by your order, or with your consent, that the French, whose death I come to avenge, have been murdered. Therefore, your lives are safe, but I want the heads of the murderers, and of the chiefs who ordered or sanctioned the deed. I will not be satisfied with their scalps:—I wish for the very heads, in order that I may be sure that deceit has not been practised. This whole night I give you for consultation on the best mode of affording me satisfaction. If you refuse, woe to your tribe! You know the influence which I have over all the Indian nations of this country. They respect, love and trust me, because from the day, seventeen summers ago, when I appeared among them, to the present hour, I have always been just and upright. You know that if I raise my little finger against you, and give one single war-whoop, the father of rivers will hear, and will carry it, up and down stream, to all his tributaries. The woods themselves will prick up their leafy ears, from the big salt lake, south, to the fresh water lakes at the north, and raising their mighty voice, as when struggling with the hurricane, they will summon from the four quarters of the horizon, the children of the forests, who will crush you with their united and overwhelming powers.

“You know that I do not boast, and that those red allies will gladly march against you, and destroy the eight beautiful villages of which you are so proud,

without my risking the life of one single Frenchman. Do you not remember that, in 1704, the Tchioumaqui killed a missionary and three other Frenchmen? They refused to deliver the murderers to me,—my wrath was kindled, and I said to the neighboring Indian nations: ‘Bienville hates the Tchioumaqui, and he who kills a Tchioumaqui, is Bienville’s friend.’ When I passed this sentence upon them, you know that their tribe was composed of three hundred families. A few months elapsed, and they were reduced to eighty! they sued for peace at last, yielded to my demands, and it was only then that the tomahawk, the arrow and the rifle ceased to drink their blood. Justice was satisfied:—and has Bienville’s justice a smaller foot and a slower gait when it stalks abroad in the pursuit of the white man who has wronged the red man? No! In 1702, two Pascagoulas were killed by a Frenchman. *Blood for blood*, I said, and the guilty one, although he was one of my people, no longer lived. Thus, what I have exacted from the Indians, I have rendered unto them. Thus have I behaved, and thus have I deserved the reputation which I enjoy in the wigwams of the red men, because I never deviated from the straight path of honesty. Hence I am called by them the *arrow of uprightness* and the *tomahawk of justice*.

“*Measure for measure!*—this is my rule. When the Indians have invoked my arbitration between

themselves, they have been invariably subject to this same rule. Thus, in 1703, two Taouachas having killed a Chickasaw, I obliged their chiefs to put them to death. *Blood will have blood.* When the Choctaws murdered two Chactioumans in 1715, I said, *tooth for tooth, lives for lives*, and the satisfaction was granted. In 1707, the Mobilians, by my order, carried to the Taouachas, the head of one of their tribe in expiation of an offence of a similar nature; and in 1709, the Pascagoulas having assassinated a Mobilian, ‘*an eye for an eye,*’ was my award, and he who was found guilty, forfeited his life. The Indians have always recognized the equity of this law, and have complied with it, not only between themselves, but between them and the French. In 1703, the Coiras made no difficulty to put to death four of their warriors, who had murdered a missionary and two other Frenchmen. I could quote many other instances,—but the cause of truth does not require long speeches, and few words will convince an honest heart. I have done. I do not believe that you will refuse to abide by the law and custom which has always existed among the Indians, and between them and the French. There would be iniquity and danger in the breach of that law: honor, justice, peace and safety lie in its observance. Your white brother waits for an answer.”

The Indians listened to this speech with profound

attention, but made no reply, and Bienville ordered them to be remanded to prison. The next morning, at daybreak, they requested to speak to Bienville, and they were conducted to his presence. The Indian, who was the first of the chiefs by rank, addressed him in these terms : "The voice of the Great Spirit made itself heard within us last night. We have listened to his dictate, and we come to give our white brother whatever satisfaction he desires. But we wish him to observe that we, the great chiefs, being all prisoners, there is no man left behind, who has the power to accomplish the mission of bringing the heads thou demandest. Let therefore the Stung Serpent be liberated, and thy will shall be done." To this request, Bienville refused his assent, because he knew the energy of that chief, and doubted his intentions ; but he consented that Little Sun should go in his brother's place.

Five days had elapsed, when Little Sun returned, and brought three heads. After a careful examination of their features, Bienville sent again for all the chiefs, and ordering one of the heads to be flung at their feet ; "The eye of the white chief," said he, "sees clear through the fog of your duplicity, and his heart is full of sorrow at your conduct. This is not the head of the guilty, but of the innocent who has died for the guilty. This is not the head of Oyelape, he whom ye call the Chief of the *White Clay*."

“True,” answered the Indians, “we do not deny thy word, but Oyelape has fled, and his brother was killed in his place.” “If even it be so,” observed Bienville, “this substitution cannot be accepted.”

The next day, the 15th of May, Bienville allowed two other chiefs and the great priest to depart for their villages, to try if they would not be more successful than the Little Sun. They returned on the 25th, and informed Bienville that they could not discover the place of Oyelape’s concealment, but they brought along with them some slaves and part of the goods which had belonged to the murdered Frenchmen. In the meantime, twenty-two Frenchmen and Canadians who were coming down the river in separate detachments, having seen the parchment signs posted up along its banks, by the order of Bienville, had given a wide berth to the side occupied by the Natchez, and using proper precaution, had arrived safely at Bienville’s camp. Thus he found himself at the head of seventy-one men, well armed, of tried hardihood, and used to Indian warfare. This was a fortunate accession to his forces; for the Indians had almost determined to make, in their canoes, a night attack upon the island, and to rescue their chiefs in the attempt. The Tunicas had given to Bienville notice of what was brewing among the Natchez, and offered forty of their best warriors to assist the French in the



defence of the island. But Bienville, who, although he affected to put great trust in them, feared that they might prove traitors, refused, with apparent thankfulness, their proffered assistance, and replied that, with his small force, he could make the island good against the whole tribe of the Natchez. This manifestation of confidence in his strength, and the timely arrival of the twenty-two white men, with some Illinois, no doubt prevented the Natchez from carrying their project into execution. It is probable that they were also deterred by the consideration, that the French, if hard pressed, would put their prisoners to death.

The Great Sun, the Stung Serpent, and the Little Sun, who, perhaps, had so far delayed to make any confession, because they entertained the expectation of being rescued, having at last given up this hope, came out with a frank avowal. They maintained that they never had any previous knowledge of the intended murder of the French, and declared that four of the assassins were among Bienville's prisoners. One of them was called the Chief of the *Beard*; the other was named Alahoflechia, the Chief of the *Walnut Village*; the two others were ordinary warriors. They affirmed that these were the only guilty ones, with the exception of Oyelape, the Chief of the *White Clay*, who had fled. "The Great Spirit," they said, "has blinded them, has turned their wits inside out, and they have,

of their own accord, delivered themselves into thy hands. It is fortunate that it be so; otherwise, the two warriors might have fled, and the two chiefs are such favorites with the nation, that they would have successfully resisted our demand for their heads, and to give thee satisfaction would have been impossible. As it is, it shows that our Great Spirit has shaken hands with the God of the Cross, and has passed on the side of our white brother.”

It was then the 1st of June, and the river which was rising daily, had overflowed the island, one foot deep, and made the quarters of the French more than uncomfortable. Humidity, combined with heat, had engendered disease, and half of Bienville's men were stretched on the couch of sickness. It was then high time for him to put an end to the situation he was in. Summoning to his presence all his prisoners, with the exception of the four men who had been designated as the assassins, he said to them: “Your people after having invited my people to trade with them, suddenly violated the laws of hospitality, and treacherously murdered four Frenchmen who were their guests. They thought the atrocious deed would remain unknown, and that they would quietly enjoy their blood-stained plunder. But the souls of the dead spoke to me, and I came, and I invited you to my camp, as you had invited the French to your villages, and you be-

came my guests, as they had been yours, and I rose upon you, as you rose upon them. Measure for measure. But I shall not butcher you, as you butchered them. You killed the innocent and the confiding—I shall kill only the treacherous and the guilty. Who can say that this is not justice? Now, let us bury the hatchet of war. I am satisfied with and believe your last declarations. Hear, then, on what conditions I consent to release you and grant you peace. You will swear to put to death, as soon as possible, Oyelape, the Chief of the White Clay, and you will bring his head to the French officer whom I shall station among you. You will consent also, to my putting to death the two chiefs and the two warriors who are in my hands. You will restore every object that you may ever have taken from the French; for what has been lost or wasted, you will force your people to pay the equivalent in furs and provisions. You will oblige them to cut two thousand five hundred stakes of acacia wood, thirteen feet long by a diameter of ten inches, and to convey the whole to the bank of the Mississippi, at such a spot as it will please the French to erect a fort; and furthermore, you will bind yourselves to furnish us, as a covering for our buildings, with the barks of three thousand trees. This is to be expected before the first day of July; and above all, you will also swear, never, and under no pretext

or color whatever, to entertain the slightest commercial or friendly relations with the British, whom you know to be the eternal enemies of the French."

The chiefs assented to these terms, swore by the sun that they would, for the future, be the best friends of the French, and urged Bienville to smoke the pipe of peace. Bienville knew well what to think of these hollow protestations, but affected to believe in the return of the Natchez to the sentiments they professed. He refused, however, to smoke, because he considered that the treaty of peace would not be valid, until ratified in a meeting of the whole nation, but he dismissed all the Indians, with the exception of the Stung Serpent, the Little Sun, and the four criminals who were doomed to death. With the departing Indians, he sent Aid-major Pailloux, accompanied by three soldiers, to be present at the ratification of the treaty. On the 7th of June, nine old men came, with great ceremony and pomp, to give to Bienville official information of the expected ratification.

On the 12th, the two Indian chiefs were put to death, the two warriors having already met their fate on the 9th. When the Chief of the Beard saw that the moment had come for the execution of the sentence passed upon him, he ceased his death-song which he had been chanting for some time, and took up a sort of war-song, whilst he looked fiercely at the

threatening muskets of the French, and at the few Indians of his tribe whom Bienville had detained to witness the death of the culprit.

## War Song.

### I.

“Let there be joy in the hearts of the Natchez! A child is born to them of the race of their suns. A boy is born with beard on his chin! The prodigy still works on from generation to generation.” So sang the warriors of my tribe when I sprung from my mother’s womb, and the shrill cry of the eagle in the heavens was heard in joyous response. Hardly fifteen summers had passed over my head, when long and glossy my beard had grown. I looked round, and I saw that I was the only red man that had this awful mark on his face, and I interrogated my mother, and she said :

Son of the Chiefs of the Beard,  
 Thou shalt know this mystery,  
 In which thy curious eye wishes to pry,  
 When thy beard from black becomes red.

### II.

Let there be joy in the hearts of the Natchez! A hunter is born to them, a hunter of the race of their suns. Ask of the bears, of the buffaloes, of the tigers, and of the swift-footed deer, whose arrows they fear most. They tremble

and cower when the footstep of the hunter with beard on his chin is heard on the heath. But I was born too with brains in my head, as well as beard on my chin, and I pondered on my mother's words. One day, when a leopard, whom I strangled, had torn my breast, I painted my beard with my own blood, and I stood smiling before her. She said nothing, but her eye gleamed with wild delight, and she took me to the temple, where, standing by the sacred fire, she thus sang to me :

Son of the Chiefs of the Beard,  
Thou shalt know the mystery,  
Since, true to thy nature, with thy own blood,  
Thy black beard thou hast turned to red.

## III.

Let there be joy in the hearts of the Natchez ! for a witted chief, worthy of the race of their suns, has been born to them, in thee, my son ; a noble chief, with beard on his chin ! Listen to the explanation of that prodigy. In days of old, a Natchez maid, of the race of their suns, was on a visit to the Mobilians. There, she soon loved the youthful chief of that nation, and her wedding day was nigh, when there came from the big salt lake, south, a host of bearded men, who sacked the town, slew the red chief with their thunder, and one of those accursed evil spirits used violence to the maid, when her lover's corpse was hardly cold in death. She found, in sorrow, her way back to the Natchez hills, where she became a mother ; and lo ! the boy had beard on his chin ! and when

he grew to understand his mother's words, she whispered in his ear :

Son of the Chiefs of the Beard,  
 Born from a bloody day,  
 Bloody be thy hand, bloody be thy life,  
 Until thy black beard with blood becomes red.

IV.

Let there be joy in the hearts of the Natchez ! In my first ancestor, a long line of the best of hunters, of chiefs, and of warriors, of the race of their suns, had been born to them, with beard on their chin ! What chase was ever unsuccessful, when over it they presided ? When they spoke in the council of the wise men of the nation, did it not always turn out that their advice, whether adopted or rejected, was the best in the end ? In what battle were they ever defeated ? When were they known to be worn out with fatigue, hardships, hunger or thirst, heat or cold, either on land or on water ? Who ever could stem, as they, the rushing current of the father of rivers ? Who can count the number of scalps which they brought from distant expeditions ? Their names have always been famous in the wigwams of all the red nations. They have struck terror into the boldest breasts of the enemies of the Natchez ; and mothers, when their sons paint their bodies in the colors of war, say to them :

Fight where and with whom you please,  
 But beware, oh ! beware of the Chiefs of the Beard !  
 Give way to them, as you would to death,  
 Or their black beards with your blood will be red !



## V.

Let there be joy in the hearts of the Natchez ! When the first Chief of the Beard first trimmed the sacred fire in the temple, a voice was heard, which said, " As long as there lives a chief, of the race of the suns, with beard on his chin, no evil can happen to the Natchez nation ; but if the white race should ever resume the blood which it gave, in a bloody day, woe, three times woe to the Natchez ! of them nothing will remain but the shadow of a name !" Thus spoke the invisible prophet. Years rolled on, years thick on years, and none of the accursed white faces were seen ! But they appeared at last, wrapped up in their pale skins, like shrouds of the dead ; and the father of my father, whom tradition had taught to guard against the predicted danger, slew two of the hated strangers ; and my father, in his turn, killed four !

Praise be to the Chiefs of the Beard !  
Who knew how to avenge their old ancestral injury !  
When with the sweet blood of a white foe,  
Their black beard they proudly painted red.

## VI.

Let there be joy in the hearts of the Natchez ! When I saw the glorious light of day, there was born to them a great warrior, of the race of their suns, a warrior and a chief with beard on his chin ! The pledge of protection, of safety, and of glory stood embodied in me. When I shouted my first war-whoop, the owl hooted and smelt the ghosts of my ene-

mies!—the wolves howled, and the carrion vultures shrieked with joy, for they knew their food was coming!—and I fed them with Chickasaw flesh, with Choctaw flesh, until they were gorged with the flesh of the red men! A kind master and purveyor I was to them, the poor dumb creatures that I loved! But lately, I have given them more dainty food. I boast of having done better than my father: five Frenchmen have I killed, and my only regret at dying, is, that it will prevent my killing more!

Ha! ha! ha! that was game worthy of the Chief of the Beard!  
 How lightly he danced! ho! ho! ho!  
 How gladly he shouted! ha! ha! ha!  
 Each time with French blood, his black beard became red!

#### VII.

Let sorrow be in the hearts of the Natchez! The great hunter is no more! The wise chief is going to meet his forefathers: the indomitable warrior will no longer raise his hatchet in the defence of the children of the sun. O burning shame!—he was betrayed by his brother chiefs, who sold his blood. If they had followed his advice, they would have united with the Choctaws, with the Chickasaws, and all the other red nations, and they would have slain all the French dogs that came prowling and stealing over the beautiful face of our country. But there was too much of the woman in their cowardly hearts. Well and good! Let the will of fate be accomplished! The white race will soon resume the blood which they gave, and then the glory and the very existence

of the Natchez nation will have departed forever, with the Chief of the Beard ; for I am the last of my race, and my blood flows in no other human veins. O Natchez ! Natchez ! remember the prophet's voice ! I am content to die, for I leave behind me none but the doomed, and I go to revel with my brave ancestors !

They will recognize their son in the Chief of the Beard ;  
They will welcome him to their glorious homestead,  
When they see so many scalps at his girdle,  
And his black beard with French blood painted red !

He ceased, and stood up before the admiring eyes of the French, with a look of exulting defiance, and with his fine athletic person, measuring seven feet high, and seemingly dilated into more gigantic proportions by the excitement which convulsed his soul. The French officer who commanded the platoon of soldiers, chosen on this occasion to fulfil a melancholy duty, gave the word, "*fire !*" and the Chief of the Beard passed into another world.

On the 3rd of August, the fortifications ordered by Bienville, had been completed, the Indians having strictly complied with the terms of the treaty. They did more : they not only furnished all the materials which had been stipulated, but labored with great zeal in cutting ditches, in raising the parapets and bastions of the fort, and in constructing the buildings required

by the French. Stung Serpent even sent one hundred and fifty men to the French, to transport all their baggage, ammunition and provisions, from the Tunicas to the Natchez. On the 25th of August, Bienville found himself comfortably and securely established in the strong position which he had, in such a wily manner, obtained, as we know, from the Natchez. However, they appeared to have dropped all resentment at the mode by which Bienville had got such advantages over them, and they behaved as if they were extremely desirous to impress upon him the belief that they were delighted at his forming a settlement among them. Five or six hundred men of that tribe, accompanied by three hundred women, came one day to dance under the walls of the fort, as a manifestation of their joy at the termination of their quarrel with the French, and at the determination of the pale faces to establish themselves among their red friends. Bienville invited the chiefs to come into the fort, and treated them with due honors. It is evident that the Indians wished to propitiate the strangers whom they could not shake off, and whom, from instinct alone, they must have regarded as their most dangerous enemies, and as the future cause of their ultimate ruin. But that they felt any satisfaction at the intrusion of these new comers, the knowledge of human nature forbids to believe. Two distinct and antagonistical races had met front to

front, and at the very moment they appeared to embrace in amity, and joined in the carousing feast, the one was secretly meditating subjugation, and the other, resistance and revenge.

On the 28th of August, seeing no signs of hostility from the Indians, Bienville left Aid-major Pailloux in command of the new fort, which was called "Rosalie," and departed for Mobile, where he arrived on the 4th of October, with the satisfaction of having accomplished the difficult task with which he had been charged. This was one cause of triumph over his adversary, Cadillac, but he there found another cause of gratulation in a letter to him from the minister of the marine department, in which he was instructed to resume the government of the colony, in the absence of De l'Épinay, appointed to succeed Cadillac. This was fortunate for Bienville, for he found his quondam superior in a towering rage at his success, and at what he called Bienville's execrable perfidy in taking forcible possession of the Indian chiefs, as he did. But Bienville contented himself with laughing at his impotent vituperation.

Before closing with Cadillac's administration, I shall briefly relate some other curious incidents, with which it was signalized. In 1715, a man by the name of Dutigné, who loved a joke, wishing to amuse himself with Cadillac's inordinate passion for the discovery

of mines, exhibited to him some pieces of ore, which contained certain proportions of silver, and persuaded him that they had been found in the neighborhood of the Kaskaskias. This was enough to fire Cadillac's overheated imagination. Anticipating the realization of all his dreams, he immediately set off for the Illinois, where, much to his mortification, he learned that he had been imposed upon by Dutigné, to whom the deceptive pieces of ore had been given by a Mexican, who had brought them from his country. After an absence of eight months, spent in fruitless researches, he returned to Mobile, where he found himself the laughing-stock of the community. This was not calculated to soothe his mind, and in one of his dispatches, in which he gave an account of the colony, he said :

“ There are as many governors here as there are officers. Every one of them would like to perform his duties according to his own interpretation. As to the superior council of this province, allow me to represent to your grace, that its assuming the authority to modify his Majesty's orders, is fraught with injury to the royal interest, and precludes the possibility of establishing here a good government, because the language of its members smacks more of the independence of republicans than of the subordination of loyal subjects. ‘ *I will or will not,*’—‘ *it shall or shall not be,*’ are words of daily utterance in their mouths. A governor must

be clothed with power superior to any other, in order that he may act with effect, and cause to be executed, with prompt exactitude, the commands of his Majesty, instead of his being checked by any controlling or opposing influence; which is always the case, when he is forced to consult subaltern officers, who are swayed entirely by their own interest, and care very little for the service of the king, or for the prosperity of the colony." These were stones flung at Bienville, at the commissary Duclos, and at the superior council, who threw obstacles in his way, and interfered with the exercise of the absolute power which he thought that he possessed, because, as governor, he considered himself to be an emanation from, and a representation of the king!

On his way up the river to search for gold and silver, Cadillac stopped at Natchez. As soon as he was known to approach, the Indian chiefs came out in barbaric state to meet him, and, according to their usages, presented to him their calumet, in token of peace and amity. Highly incensed Cadillac was at the presumption of the savages, in supposing that he would contaminate his patrician lips with the contact of their vile pipe. He accordingly treated the poor Indians very little better than he would uncouth animals, thrusting themselves into his presence. His having departed without having consented to smoke



with them, had impressed the Natchez, who could not understand the nature of his pride, with the idea that he meditated war upon their tribe. Then, they resolved to anticipate the expected blow, and they secretly massacred some Frenchmen who happened to be in their villages. Hence the origin of the first quarrel of the Natchez with the French, to which Bienville put an end, with such signal success, but with a little sprinkling of treachery.

It was not the Natchez alone whom Cadillac had offended. He had alienated from the French the affections of the Choctaws, who had always been their friends, but who, latterly, had invited the English to settle among them. Cadillac ordered them to expel their new guests, but the Choctaws answered that they did not care for him, nor for the forty or fifty French rogues whom he had under his command. This was the kick of the ass, and Cadillac resolved not to bear it, but to show them that the lion was not yet dead. After deep cogitations, he conceived, for their punishment, a politic stroke, which he carried into execution, and of which he informed his government, with Spartan brevity: "I have persuaded," said he, "the brother of the great chief of the Choctaws to kill his sovereign and brother, pledging myself to recognize him as his successor. He did so, and came here with an escort of one hundred men. I gave him presents, and secured from him an advantageous peace."

Thus, it is seen that Cadillac, with a very bad grace, pretended that his tender sensibilities were shocked at the treatment of the Natchez chiefs by Bienville. In his case it was the eye with the beam finding fault with the mote in his neighbor's eye.

On the 22nd of June, 1716, the exasperation of Cadillac, who found himself in a hornet's nest, had become such, that he vented his feelings in these terms, in one of his dispatches: "Decidedly this colony is a monster without head or tail, and its government is a shapeless absurdity. The cause of it is, that the fictions of fabulists have been believed in preference to the veracity of my declarations. Ah! why is there in falsehood a charm which makes it more acceptable than truth? Has it not been asserted that there are mines in Arkansas and elsewhere? It is a deliberate error. Has not a certain set of novel writers published that this country is a paradise, when its beauty or utility is a mere phantasm of the brain? I protest that, having visited and examined the whole of it with care, I never saw any thing so worthless. This I must say, because my conscience forbids me to deceive his Majesty. I have always regarded truth as a queen, whose laws I was bound to obey, like a devoted knight, and a faithful subject. This is, no doubt, the cause of my having stuck fast in the middle of my career, and not progressed in the path of promotion, whilst others,

who had more political skill, understood how to frame, at my expense, pleasing misrepresentations. I know how to govern as well as any body, but poverty and impotence are two ugly scars on the face of a governor. What can I do with a force of forty soldiers, out of whom five or six are disabled? A pretty army that is, and well calculated to make me respected by the inhabitants or by the Indians! As a climax to my vexation, they are badly fed, badly paid, badly clothed, and without discipline. As to the officers, they are not much better. Verily, I do not believe that there is in the whole universe such another government."

It is not surprising that, under such circumstances, and with the ideas which fermented in his head, Cadillac should have thought that a terrible crisis was at hand. Laboring under that impression, he took refuge in Dauphine Island, where he issued a proclamation, in which he stated that considering the spirit of revolt and sedition which reigned in the colony, and the many quarrels and duels which occurred daily and were produced by hasty or imprudent words, by drunkenness, or by the presence of loose women, he prohibited all plebeians from wearing a sword, or carrying other weapons, either by day or by night, under the penalty of one month's imprisonment and of a fine of 300 livres, to be applied to the construction of a church. As to persons of noble birth, they were to prove their

right to wear a sword, by depositing their titles in the archives of the superior council, to be there examined and registered. Cadillac's enemies, and he had many, availed themselves of this proclamation to turn him into ridicule;—they fabricated every sort of mock papers of nobility, to submit them to the superior council, the members of which, from ignorance or from a desire to annoy Cadillac, referred the whole of them to him, who, as governor, was their president. Sadly puzzled was Cadillac on these occasions, and his judgments afforded infinite amusement to the colonists. His waggish tormentors went farther, and pretending to have formed an order of chivalry, they elected him, in a solemn meeting, grand master of that order, under the title of the *Knight of the golden calf*. They declared, with feigned gravity, that this was done in commemoration of the wonderful achievements and labors of their illustrious governor in his researches for precious metals. This piece of pleasantry stung him to the quick; but he winced particularly at a song which, in alternate couplets, compared the merits of the *Knight of the golden calf* with those of the celebrated *Knight of the doleful countenance*, and gave the preference to the first.

Cadillac was preparing to repress these rebellious and heinous disorders, when he received a letter from Crozat, in which the great merchant told him bluntly, that all

the evils of which he complained, originated from his own bad administration. At the foot of the letter, the minister of the marine department had written these words: "The governor, Lamothe Cadillac, and the commissary, Duclos, whose dispositions and humors are incompatible, and whose intellects are not equal to the functions with which his Majesty has intrusted them, are dismissed from office." I leave it to a more graphic pen to describe Cadillac's look and Cadillac's feelings when this thunderbolt fell on his head. Suffice it to say, that he contemptuously shook off his feet the colonial dust which had there gathered, and bundling up his household gods, removed himself and them out of Louisiana, which he pronounced to be hell-doomed.

At that time, there were only a few negroes in the colony, and they were all to be found about Mobile or in Dauphine Island. These were the only persons in whom some sympathy was discovered for the departing governor. This sympathy arose from a ludicrous cause. Cadillac had carried to America the fondest remembrance of his home in Europe, and he loved to dilate on the merits of France, of his native province of Gascony, of the beautiful river Garonne, and particularly of his old feudal tower, in which he pretended that one of his ancestors had been blest with the inestimable honor of receiving the famous Black Prince, the boast of England. There was hardly one day in the week

that he did not harp upon this favorite theme, which he always resumed with new exultation. There was not a human creature in the colony, with the exception of the Indians, who was not familiar with this oft-repeated anecdote, which had gained for Cadillac the nickname of the *Black Prince*. It became a sort of designation by which he was as well known as by his own family name; and the poor Africans, who frequently heard it, had supposed that Cadillac drew his origin from a prince of their blood and color. This was to them a source of no little pride, and to the colonists a cause of endless merriment.

There was another person who highly appreciated Cadillac, and who keenly regretted his dismissal from office: that person was the Curate de la Vente. No Davion was he, nor did he resemble a Montigny. With a pale face and an emaciated body; with a narrow forehead, which went up tapering like a pear; with thin compressed lips, never relaxed by a smile; with small gray eyes, occupying very diminutive sockets, which seemed to have been bored with a gimlet; and with heavy and shaggy eyebrows, from beneath which issued, habitually, cold and even stern looks; he would have struck the most unobserving, as being the very personification of fanaticism. When he studied, to qualify himself for his profession, he had, several times, read the Bible and the Gospels through; but his little



mind had then stuck to the letter, and had never been able to comprehend the spirit, of the holy books. Like a fly, it had moved all round the flask which contained the sweet liquor, without being able to extract the slightest particle of it. When ordained a priest, the Bible and the Gospels were consigned to oblivion. For him, kneeling was prayer, and prayer was religion. Christianity, which is the triumph of reason, because it exacts no belief but that which flows from rational conviction, was, according to his conception, nothing but a mysterious and inexplicable hodge-podge of crude and despotic dictates, to be accepted on trust and submitted to without reflection, discussion, or analysis of any kind : for him, thought in such matters would have been a grievous sin ; his breviary was the only book which he had read for many years, and he laid to his soul the flattering unction that he was a pious man, because he minutely complied with the ritual of his church. He fasted, did penance, and never failed reciting, in due time, all the litanies. Thus, observing strictly all the forms and discipline of the Roman Catholic faith, he thought himself a very good Christian. But every man who did not frequently confess to a priest, and did not receive the sacraments as often as the catechism of his creed required, was, in his opinion, no better than a pagan, and was entirely out of the pale of salvation. Animated with the fierce zeal of a



bigot, he would not have scrupled, if in his power, to use the strong hand of violence to secure converts, and to doom to the stake and to the fagot, the unbeliever in all the tenets, whether fundamental or incidental, of Catholicism : for his religion consisted in implicit belief in all the prescriptions of his church, and his church was God. Hence, all government which was not theocratical, or bordering on it, he looked upon as an unlawful and sinful assumption of power, which the church, by all means, was bound to take back, as its legitimate property.

With such dispositions, the Curate de la Vente soon became the terror of his flock, whose frailties he denounced with the epileptic violence of a maniac, and whose slightest delinquencies he threatened with eternal damnation. A fanatic disciplinarian, he had been shocked at the laxity with which the soldiers, the officers, the Canadian boatmen and traders, and the other colonists, performed their religious duties. He did not take into consideration that a judicious allowance ought to be made for the want of education of some, for the temptations which peculiar circumstances threw in the way of others, and for the particular mode of life to which all were condemned, and which might be received in extenuation, if not in justification of many faults. He might have reclaimed some by the soothing gentleness of friendly admonition : he discouraged or

disgusted all by the roughness of intemperate reproach. Aware of the aversion which he had inspired, and indignant at the evil practices in which some indulged openly from inclination, and others, out of vain bravado to a minister they detested, he had supported Cadillac in all the acts of his administration, in all his representations of the state of the country; and he had himself more than once written to the ministry, that God would never smile upon a colony inhabited by such demons, heathens, and scoffers at the Holy Church; and he had recommended, not a Saint Bartholomew execution, it is true, but a general expulsion of all the people that were in the colony, in order to replace them with a more religious-minded community. As to the Indians, he considered them as sons of perdition, who offered few hopes, if any, of being redeemed from the bondage of Satan.

Seeing that the Ministry had paid no attention to his recommendations, he had determined to make, out of the infidels by whom he was surrounded, as much money as he could, which he intended to apply to the purpose of advancing the interests of the church, in some more favorable spot for the germination of ecclesiastical domination. With this view, he made no scruple to fatten upon the Philistines, and he opened a shop, where he kept for sale, barter, or exchange, a variety of articles of trade. He disposed of them at a

price of which the purchasers complained as being most unconscionable ; and he also loaned money to the Gentiles, at a rate of interest which was extravagantly usurious. As a salvo to his conscience, he had adopted the comfortable motto that the end justifies the means. The benighted Indians and the unchristian Christians (to use his own expressions) were not spared by him. When the circumstance was too tempting, and he had to deal with notorious unbelievers, he would even indulge in what he would have called actual cheating, if coming from a Christian dealing with a Christian. On these occasions, he would groan piteously, cross himself devoutly, fall on his knees before the image of our Savior, and striking his breast with compunction, he would exclaim, "O sweet Jesus, if this be an infraction of thy law, it is at least a trifling one, and it is done for the benefit of thy church : forgive me, O Lamb of mercy, and I will, in expiation, say twelve paters and twelve aves at the foot of the altar of thy Virgin Mother, or I will abstain a whole day from all food, in thy honor." After this soliloquy, he would get up, perfectly reconciled with himself and with his Maker, to whom, in those cases, he always took care to keep his plighted word. Many a time, his worldly transactions for the glorification of the church, and for the increase of church property at the expense of those he considered as infidels, forced him to enter into such strange com-

promises with his conscience and with his God. Hence the origin of the accusation brought against him by Bienville, in one of his dispatches, and which I have already reported, "that he kept open shop, and was a shrewd compound of the Jew and of the Arab." The truth is, that he was sincere in his mistaken faith, pious to the best of his understanding, a Christian in will although not in fact, a zealous priest in his way, which he thought a correct one, and a lamentable compound of fanaticism and imbecility.

In August, 1716, a short time before the recall of Cadillac, there had returned to Mobile a young man named St. Denis, who was a relation of Bienville, and whom, two years before, Cadillac had sent to Natchitoches, to oppose the Spaniards in an establishment which it was reported they intended to make in that part of the country. His orders were, to proceed afterwards to New Mexico, to ascertain if it would not be possible to establish in that direction internal relations of commerce between Louisiana and the Mexican provinces, where it was hoped that Crozat would find a large outlet for his goods. When St. Denis arrived at the village of the Natchitoches, hearing no tidings of the supposed expedition of the Spaniards, he left there a few Canadians, whom he ordered to form a settlement; and, accompanied by twelve others, who were picked men, and by a few Indians, he undertook to accomplish the more difficult part of his mission

I would recommend this expedition of St. Denis, and his adventures, to any one in search of a subject for literary composition. It is a fruitful theme, affording to the writer the amplest scope for the display of talent of the most varied order. St. Denis is one of the most interesting characters of the early history of Louisiana.

“He hither came, a private gentleman,  
But young and brave, and of a family  
Ancient and noble.”

He was a knight-errant in his feelings and in his doings throughout life, and every thing connected with him, or that came within the purview of his existence, was imbued with the spirit of romance. The noble bearing of his tall, well proportioned, and remarkably handsome person was in keeping with the lofty spirit of his soul. He was one in whom nature had given the world assurance of a man, and that assurance was so strongly marked in the countenance of St. Denis, that wherever he appeared, he instantaneously commanded love, respect, and admiration. There are beings who carry in their lineaments the most legible evidence of their past and future fate. Such was St. Denis, and nobody, not even the wild and untutored Indian, could have left his presence, without at least a vague impression that he had seen

one, not born for the common purposes of ordinary life.

The laborious journey of St. Denis, from Mobile to Natchitoches, the incidents connected with it, the description of the country he passed through, and of all the tribes of Indians he visited, would furnish sufficient materials for an interesting book. But what an animated picture might be drawn of that little band of Canadians, with St. Denis and his friend Jallot, the eccentric surgeon, when they crossed the Sabine, and entered upon the ocean-like prairies of the present state of Texas! How they hallooed with joy, when they saw the immense surface which spread before them, blackened with herds of buffaloes, that wallowed lazily in the tall luxuriant grass, which afforded them such luscious food and such downy couches for repose! For the sake of variety, the travellers would sometimes turn from nobler to meaner game, from the hunchbacked buffalo to the timid deer that crossed their path. Sometimes they would stumble on a family of bears, and make, at their expense, a delicious repast, which they enjoyed comfortably seated on piled-up skins, the testimonials of their hunting exploits. Oh! there is sweetness in the prairie air, there is a richness of health and an elasticity of spirit,

“Which bloated ease ne'er deigned to taste.”



But these pleasures, exciting as they were, would perhaps have palled upon St. Denis and his companions, and might, in the end have been looked upon as tame by them, from the frequency of their repetition, if they had not been intermingled with nobler sport, which consisted in oft-recurring skirmishes with the redoubtable Comanches, upon whose hunting grounds they had intruded. On these occasions, St. Denis, protected against the arrows of the enemy by a full suit of armor, which he had brought from Europe, and mounted on a small black jennet, as strong as an ox and as fleet as the wind, would rush upon the astonished Indians, and perform such feats with his battle-axe, as those poor savages had never dreamed of. These encounters gave infinite satisfaction to Jallot, who was a passionate lover of his art, and who never was seen in a good humor, except when he was tending a wound. In that respect, with the Indians he had very little chance, except it be that of dissecting them, for, in most cases, the stroke of the white man's weapon was certain and instantaneous death. But he found some compensation in the numerous wounds inflicted by the Indians on his own companions ; he had a fondness for arrow wounds, which he declared to be the nicest and genteelest of all wounds. One day, he was so delighted with a wound of this kind, which he pronounced, much to the exasperation of his patient, to



be supremely beautiful, that he actually smiled with self-gratulation and cracked a joke!—to do this, his excitement must have been immense. Another day, when an Indian had been struck down by the battle-axe of St. Denis, without, however, being killed outright, he felt such a keen professional emotion at the prospect of probing and nursing a gash which he thought rare and extraordinary, that he frantically jumped upon St. Denis, hugged him with enthusiasm, called him his best friend, passionately thanked him for the most valuable case he had given him, and swore that *his Indian* should be carried on, whatever impediment it might be to their march, until he died or was cured. Who would have thought that this man, when he was not wielding his surgical instruments, was the most humane being in the world, and concealed, under an appearance of crabbed malignity, the tenderest sensibilities of the heart? Such are the mysteries of human nature!

St. Denis and his troop reached at last the Rio Bravo, at a Spanish settlement then called the Fort of St. John the Baptist, or Presidio del Norte. Don Pedro de Villescas was then the commander of that place. He received the French with the most courteous hospitality, and informed them that he could not make any commercial arrangements with them, but that he would submit their propositions to a superior officer,

who was governor of the town of Caouis, situated at the distance of one hundred and eighty miles in the interior. Spaniards are not famous for rapidity of action. Before the message of Villescas was carried to Caouis, and before the expected answer came back to the Presidio del Norte, St. Denis had loved, not without reciprocity, the beautiful daughter of the old Don. What a pretty tale might be made of it, which would deserve to be written with a feather dropped from Cupid's wing! But when the lovers were still hesitating as to the course they would pursue, and discussing the propriety of making a full disclosure to him who, in the shape of a father, was the arbiter of their destiny, there arrived twenty-five men, sent by Don Gaspar Anaya, the governor of Caouis, with secret instructions, which were soon made manifest, to the dismay of the lovers; for, these emissaries seized St. Denis and his friend Jallot, and conveyed them to Caouis, where they were detained in prison until the beginning of 1715. From his place of confinement, St. Denis, fearing that the hostility evinced towards him, might be extended to the rest of his companions, ordered them to return speedily to Natchitoches.

Ye Bulwers of America, I invite your attention! Here history presents you with the ready-made groundwork for whatever superstructure and embellishments

you may choose to imagine for the amusement of your readers.

Don Gaspardo Anaya had been the unsuccessful suitor of Doña Maria, the daughter of Villescas. What must have been his rage, when he was informed by his spies that the new comer, the brilliant Frenchman, had triumphed, where he had failed? But now, he had that hated rival in his clutches, and he was omnipotent, and if the stranger died in the dungeon of Caouis, who, in these distant and rugged mountains, would bring *him*, the *governor*, to an account? Perilous indeed was the situation of St. Denis, and heavy must have been his thoughts in his solitary confinement! But what must have been his indignation when, one day, Anaya descended into his dark cell, and told him that he should be set free, on condition that he withdrew his plighted faith to the daughter of Villescas! How swelled the loyal heart of the captive at this base proposal! He vouchsafed no answer, but he gave his oppressor such a look as made him stagger back and retreat with as much precipitation, as if the hand of immediate punishment had been lifted up against him.

For six months, St. Denis was thus detained prisoner, and the only consideration which saved his life, was the hope, on the part of Anaya, that prolonged sufferings would drive his victim to comply with his

request. At the same time, he repeatedly sent secret messengers to Doña Maria, whose mission was to inform her that her lover would be put to death, if she did not wed Anaya. But the noble Castilian maid invariably returned the same answer: "Tell Anaya that I cannot marry him, as long as St. Denis lives, because St. Denis I love; and tell him that if St. Denis dies, this little Moorish dagger, which was my mother's gift, shall be planted, either by myself, or by my agent's hand, in the middle of his dastardly heart, wherever he may be." This was said with a gentle voice, with a calm mien, as if it had been an ordinary message, but with such a gleam in the eye as is nowhere to be seen except in Spain's or Arabia's daughters. The words, the look and the tone were minutely reported to Anaya, and he paused!—and it is well that he did so, and a bolder heart than his would have hesitated; he knew the indomitable spirit of his race—he knew the old Cantabrian blood—and that Spain's sweetest doves will, when roused, dare the eagle to mortal combat!

The Spanish maid did not remain inactive, and satisfied with deploring her lover's captivity. She despatched to Mexico a trusty servant, such as is only found in Spanish households, one of those menials that never question the will of their lord or lady, dogs for fidelity, lions for courage, who will tear to pieces what-

ever is designated to them, if such be the order of their masters. His mission was to find out the means of informing the Viceroy, that a Frenchman, a presumed spy, had been for several months in the hands of the governor of Caouis, who was suspected of concealing his captive from the knowledge of the higher authorities, in order to tamper with his prisoner for a ransom. The object of this false information was to excite the jealous attention of the government, and to withdraw St. Denis, at all risks, from the dangerous situation he was in. This stratagem succeeded, and much to his astonishment, Anaya received a peremptory order to send his prisoner to Mexico, with a sure escort, and at the peril of his head, if he failed!

One morning, St. Denis found himself suddenly seated on a strong, powerful horse, amidst a detachment of twenty men, who were evidently prepared for a long journey. He asked whither he was to be carried, and was particularly inquisitive about his friend Jallot, who had been put into a separate dungeon, and of whom he had heard nothing since his captivity, but he was dragged away, without any answer being given to his inquiries. Seven hundred and fifty miles did he travel without stopping, except it be for such time as was absolutely necessary to take a hurried rest, when the magnificent city of Mexico burst upon his

sight, in all its imperial splendor. *There*, he flattered himself that he would obtain justice, but he soon experienced that change of place had been for him no more than a change of captivity. Look at the woe-begone prisoner in that horrible dungeon, where he is chained to the wall, like a malefactor! His constitution is completely broken down; his body is so emaciated by his long sufferings and by the want of wholesome food, that it presents the appearance of a skeleton; his long matted hair shrouds his face, and his shaggy beard hangs down to his breast. Who would have recognized the brilliant St. Denis in this miserable object, in this hideous-looking, iron-bound felon—a felon in aspect, if not in reality!

One day, an unusual stir was observed in front of his prison. The short, brief word of command outside, the clashing of arms, the heavy tramping of horses, St. Denis could distinctly hear in his dismal abode. The noise approached; the doors of his cell turned slowly on their rusty hinges; on came the bustling and obsequious jailer, ushering in an officer, who was escorted by a file of soldiers. It was one whom the Viceroy had ordered to examine into the situation of all the prisons of Mexico, and to make a report on their unfortunate tenants. "Who have we here?" said the officer, in an abrupt tone. "I," exclaimed St. Denis, starting to his feet, "I, Juchereau de St. Denis, a gen-

tleman by birth, a prisoner by oppression, and now a suitor for justice." On hearing these words, the officer started back and looked wild with astonishment; then, rushing to St. Denis, and putting his face close to his face, removing with his trembling hand the dishevelled locks that concealed the prisoner's features, and scanning every lineament with a rapid but intense look, he said, with a quivering voice, which, through emotion, had sunk to a whisper, "You were born in Canada?" "Yes." "Educated in France, at the Royal College of Paris?" "Yes." "You left France to seek your fortune in Louisiana?" "I did." "By heaven, jailer, off with these accursed chains! quick! set those noble limbs free!" And he threw himself sobbing into the arms of the astonished St. Denis, who thought himself the dupe of a dream, but who at last recognized in his liberator, one of the companions of his youth, his best early friend, the Marquis de Larnage, who, with some other young Frenchmen, had entered into the Spanish army, and who had risen to be the Viceroy's favorite aid-de-camp. What a dramatic scene! And would not this incident of Louisianian history be welcomed on the stage by an American audience!

What a change! Here we are in the gorgeous halls of Montezuma, where the barbaric splendor of the Aztec emperors has been improved by the more correct and tasteful application of Spanish magnificence: there is a festival at the palace of the Viceroy:—



“The long carousal shakes the illumined hall ;  
Well speeds alike the banquet and the ball.”

Noble and beautiful dames!—Silk, brocade, and diamonds!—Gentlemen of high birth—renowned soldiers—glittering uniforms, studded with stars and other decorations—breasts scarred with wounds—brains teeming with aspirations—grave magistrates—sage councillors—subtle diplomatists—scheming heads! What subjects for observation! The walls are alive with paintings which court the eye, or ornamented with mirrors which multiply the reflected beauty of the glorious pageantry. Now and then, scions of the greatest houses of Spain; younger sons, that had been sent to Mexico to better their fortunes; men whose names, when pronounced, sound like a trumpet inciting to heroic exploits, would make their appearance, and to let them pass, the crowd of brilliant guests would reverentially open their ranks. Such is the involuntary respect paid, mechanically as it were, to those who carry round their foreheads the agglomerated rays derived, through the magnifying focus of one thousand years, from the historical distinction of a long, uninterrupted line of illustrious ancestors!

Suddenly, the large folding doors of an inner apartment are thrown open, and the Viceroy is seen at table, with a few favored and envied guests, enjoying the delicacies of the most gorgeous banquet. What an

accumulated treasure of gold and silver, under every form that convivial imagination can fancy, and in the shape of plates, dishes, chandeliers, and every sort of admirably chiseled vases! But who is that noble-looking cavalier on the right-hand side of the Viceroy? Can it be St. Denis, the late tenant of a gloomy jail? It is. Presented by his friend, the aid-de-camp, to the representative of the Majesty of Spain, to the Duke of Linares, he has become such a favorite that his daily and constant attendance is required at court. Nay, the affection which the Viceroy had conceived for St. Denis, had so grown upon that nobleman, that he had insisted upon the young Frenchman being lodged in the palace, where every favor was at his command. The whole city of Mexico had been convulsed with astonishment at the unexpected turn of fortune, which was the lot of the foreign adventurer. Marvelous indeed, and inexplicable did the fascination exercised by St. Denis on the Viceroy, seem to the multitude! Instead of attributing it perhaps to its true cause, to the congenial affinity of mind to mind, and of heart to heart, they indulged in a thousand wild conjectures. At last, these surmises had settled in the belief that St. Denis had saved the life of the Viceroy, in a nocturnal adventure. It was positively ascertained, however, that St. Denis, a short time after his liberation, passing in a secluded street, heard the clashing of swords. Rushing to the

spot from which the noise of conflict came, he saw a man with a mask on his face, and with his back to the wall of a house, who was sorely pressed by three other men, masked also, who were attacking him with the greatest fury. St. Denis took side with the weaker party, and put to flight the cowardly assassins. He never said to whom he had rendered such an eminent service, and if he knew—

——— “He shunned to show,  
As hardly worth a stranger’s care to know ;  
If still more prying such inquiry grew,  
His brow fell darker, and his words more few.”

His secret died with him !

Amidst all the festivities of the vice-regal court, St. Denis had but one thought, one aspiration, that of returning to his lady love, and to his friend Jallot. He had even refused the most brilliant proposals from the Viceroy, such as a high grade in the Spanish army, saying, “I can serve but one God and one king. I am a Frenchman, and highly as I esteem the Spaniards, I cannot become one.” “But,” replied the Viceroy, “you are already half a Spaniard, for you have confessed to me that you love a Spanish maid.” “True,” observed St. Denis, “but it is not certain that I can marry her, because I consider her father’s consent as doubtful.” “Well then, accept my offers,” exclaimed the Viceroy,

“and I pledge my knightly word to remove every obstacle that may be in your way.” St. Denis expressed his thanks, as one overwhelmed with gratitude at such kindness, but could not be shaken from his determination. “At least,” continued the Viceroy, “do me one favor. Do not depart now. Take two months for reflection on what you reject. When that delay shall have expired, I will again put this question to you—will you attach yourself to my person, and transfer your allegiance from the Bourbons of France to the Bourbons of Spain?” The two months rapidly flew by, and the chivalric St. Denis remained firm to his purpose. “To lose such a man as you are,” said the Viceroy, “is a serious trial to me, but I admire, even in its exaggeration, the sentiment by which you are actuated. Farewell, then, and may God bless you and yours forever. My last hope is, that Doña Maria will induce you to adopt New Spain for your country. With regard to the commercial relations, which, in the name of the governor of Louisiana, you have asked me to permit between that province and those of my government, tell him that it is not in my power to accede to his propositions.” The preparations of St. Denis for his departure were not of long duration, for the lady of his heart beckoned to him from the walls of the Presidio del Norte. The Viceroy presented him with a large sum in gold, which he graciously said, was

intended to pay his wedding expenses. He also sent him, for his journey, a superb Andalusian steed, ordering at the same time that he should be escorted by an officer and two dragoons from the city of Mexico to Caouis.

On the forced departure of St. Denis for the city of Mexico, Jallot had been set at liberty, and had ever since remained at Caouis waiting for the decision of the fate of St. Denis. He was known to be a physician, and as he was the only one within a radius of one hundred miles, he was soon in full practice. In the course of a few months, he had performed so many cures and rendered so many services, that he was looked upon as something almost supernatural. One day, he was summoned to the house of the governor, Don Gaspardo Anaya, whither he went with such a grim smile as clearly indicated that his feelings were in a violent state of excitement. He examined, with the most minute care, the body of that dignitary, and on his being asked his opinion on the situation of his patient, he went into the most luminous exposition of his disease, and declared that if a certain operation, which he described with much apparent gusto, was not performed, the sick man would certainly die within one month. "Well then," said the governor, "go on with the operation, as soon as you please." "It shall never please me," cried Jallot, in a voice of thunder;

and shaking his fist at the enemy of St. Denis, whom, in his turn, he had now in his power, he doggedly withdrew from the house of the infuriated governor. Remonstrances, entreaties, large offerings of money, threats, could not bring him back. At last, the governor swore that he would hang Jallot, and he sent some soldiers to arrest him. But the people, who loved Jallot, and feared being deprived of his invaluable services, rose upon the soldiery, beat them off, and proclaimed that they would hang the governor himself, if he persisted in his intention of hanging Jallot. Matters were in this ticklish situation, when St. Denis returned to Caouis.

In company with his friend Jallot, who was almost distracted with joy at his safe return, St. Denis immediately waited upon the governor, to whom he communicated a letter patent, by which the Viceroy gave authority to St. Denis to inflict upon Anaya, for his abuse of power, any punishment which he might think proper, provided it stopped short of death. The terror of the governor may easily be conceived, but after enjoying his enemy's confusion for a short time, St. Denis tore to pieces the Viceroy's letter, and retired, leaving the culprit, whom he despised, to the castigation of heaven and to the stings of his own conscience. He did more: he had the generosity to request Jallot to perform the operation which this worthy had hitherto so obstinately

refused to do. The surgeon, who was mollified by his friend's return, consented, not however without terrific grumblings, to use his surgical skill to relieve the bed-ridden governor, and he admirably succeeded in the difficult operation upon which the fate of his patient depended. But he peremptorily and contemptuously refused the fee that was tendered him, and informed the governor, face to face, and with his roughest tone, that he deserved no remuneration for the cure, because he had saved his life merely out of spite, and under the firm conviction that he would ere long die on the gallows.

Let us now rapidly proceed with St. Denis from Caouis to the Presidio del Norte. There he found a great change;—not that the lady of his love was not as true and as beautiful as ever, but the place looked lonesome and desolate. The five Indian villages which formed a sort of belt round the Presidio, at a short distance from its walls, were deserted. A gloomy cloud had settled over the spot which he had known so brisk and thriving;—and Villescas told him, with the greatest consternation, that the Indians had withdrawn on account of their having been molested by the Spaniards, who used to go to their villages, and there commit every sort of outrage; that he confessed he was much to be blamed for not having checked sooner the disorderly practices of his subordinates; and that



if the Indians persisted in their intention of removing away to distant lands, the government at Mexico, whose settled policy it was to conciliate the frontier Indians, would be informed of what had happened, and would certainly visit him with punishment for official misconduct, negligence or dereliction of duty. "I will run after the fugitives," exclaimed St. Denis, "and use my best efforts to bring them back." "Do so," replied the old man, "and if you succeed, there is nothing in my power, which I can refuse you." On hearing these words, which made his heart thrill, as it were, with an electric shock, St. Denis vaulted on his good Andalusian steed, and started full speed in the direction the Indians had taken. He was followed, far behind, by Jallot, who came trotting along, as fast as he could, on a restive, capricious, ill-looking little animal, for whom he had perversely conceived the greatest affection, perhaps, on account of his bad qualities.

The Indians, encumbered with women and children, had been progressing very slowly, with the heavy baggage they were carrying with them, and St. Denis had not travelled long before he discovered from the top of a hill, the moving train; he waved a white flag and redoubled his speed; the Indians stopped and tarried for his approach. When he came up to them, they formed a dense circle around him, and silently waited for his communication. "My friends!" said St. Denis,

“I am sent by the governor of the Presidio del Norte, to tell you that he pleads guilty to his red children; he confesses that you have been long laboring under grievances which he neglected to redress, and that you have been frequently oppressed by those whom it was his duty to keep in the straight path of rectitude. This is a frank avowal, as you see. With regard to the governor himself, you know that he has always been kind and upright, and that, personally and intentionally, he has never wronged any one of you: the old chief has been too weak with his own people—that is all you can say against him. But now, he pledges his faith that no Spaniard shall be allowed to set his foot in your villages without your express consent, and that every sort of protection which you may claim shall be extended over your tribe. Do not, therefore, be obstinate, my friends, and do not keep shut the gates of your hearts, when the pale-faced chief, with his gray hairs, knocks for admittance, but let his words of repentance fall upon your souls, like a refreshing dew, and revive your drooping attachment for him. Do not give up your hereditary hunting grounds, the cemeteries of your forefathers, and your ancestral villages, with rash precipitancy. Whither are you going? Your native soil does not stick to your feet, and it is the only soil which is always pleasant; and the wheat which grows upon it, is the only grain that will give

you tasteful bread ; and the sun which shines upon it, is the only sun whose rays do not scorch ; and the refreshing showers which fall upon its bosom, would elsewhere be impure and brackish water. You do not know what bitter weeds grow in the path of the stranger ! You do not know how heavily the air he breathes weighs on his lungs, in distant lands ! And what distant lands will you be permitted to occupy, without fighting desperate battles with the nations upon whose territory you will have trespassed ? When you will be no longer protected by the Spaniards, how will you resist the incessant attacks of the ferocious Comanches, who carry so far and wide their predatory expeditions ? Thus, my friends, the evils you are running to, are certain, and behind them, lie concealed in ambush, still greater ones, which the keenest eye among you cannot detect. But what have you to fear, if you return to your deserted villages ? There, it is true, you will meet some old evils, but you are accustomed to them. That is one advantage ; and, besides, you are given the assurance that to many of them a remedy will be applied. Why not make the experiment, and see how it will work ? But if you persist in going away, and if you fare for the worse, your situation will be irretrievable. On the other hand, if you return, as I advise you, should the governor of the Presidio not keep his word, and should you not be sat-

ified, it will always be time enough to resume your desperate enterprise of emigration."

This is the substance of what St. Denis told his red auditory, and the Indians, who, perhaps, were beginning to regret the step they had taken, spontaneously marched back, with St. Denis riding triumphantly at their head. They soon met Jallot, jogging along with impatience, cursing and spurring his favorite with desperate energy. When he saw that St. Denis, about whom he was extremely uneasy, was safe, and had succeeded so well in his embassy, he gave a shout which made the welkin ring; but he was so astonished at his own doing, and at the unusual sound which had so strangely issued from his throat, that he looked round like a man who was not very sure of his own identity. Those who knew him well, remained convinced that this shout had settled in his mind, as the most extraordinary event of his life.

Now, all is joy again at the Presidio, and the smile of contentment has lighted up the face of the country for miles around. From the Spanish battlements, banners wave gayly, the cannons crack their sides with innocent roaring, muskets are discharged in every direction, but from their tubes, there do not sally any murderous balls; the whole population, white and red, is dressed in its best apparel; whole sheep, oxen, and buffaloes are roasted in the Homeric style; immense

tables are spread in halls, bowers, and under shady trees ; whole casks of Spanish wines and of the Mexican *pulque* are broached ; the milk and honey of the land flow with unrestrained abundance ; the Indians shout, dance, and cut every sort of antics. Well may *all* rejoice, for it is the wedding-day of St. Denis and Doña Maria ! Here the long and beautiful procession which is slowly moving to the rustic parochial church, might be described with some effect, but I leave the task to future novel writers. I now dismiss this episode, and only regret that I have not done it the justice which it deserves. Let me add, however, that, after an absence of two years, St. Denis, having returned to Mobile, with Don Juan de Villescás, the uncle of his wife, was appointed, in reward for the discharge of his perilous mission, a captain in the French army.

On the recommendation of Crozat, another undertaking was made to open commercial relations with the Spanish provinces of Mexico. Three Canadians, Deléry, Lufrenière and Beaujeu, were intrusted with a considerable amount of merchandise, went up Red River, and endeavored to reach the province of Nuevo Leon, through Texas ;—but this attempt was as unsuccessful as the one made by St. Denis.

On the 9th of March, 1717, three ships belonging to Crozat, arrived with three companies of infantry and

fifty colonists, with De l'Épinay, the new governor, and Hubert, the king's commissary. L'Épinay brought to Bienville the decoration of the cross of St. Louis, and a royal patent, conceding to him, by mean tenure in soccage, Horn Island, on the coast of the present state of Alabama. Bienville had demanded in vain that it be erected in his favor, into a noble fief.

Hardly had L'Épinay landed, when he disagreed with Bienville, and the colony was again distracted by two factions, with L'Épinay on one side and Bienville on the other. There were not at that time in Louisiana more than seven hundred souls, including the military; and thus far, the efforts of Crozat to increase the population had proved miserably abortive. In vain had his agents resorted to every means in their power, to trade with the Spanish provinces, either by land or by sea, either legally or illegally;—several millions worth of merchandise which he had sent to Louisiana, with the hope of their finding their way to Mexico, had been lost, for want of a market. In vain also had expensive researches been made for mines, and pearl fisheries. As to the trading in furs with the Indians, it hardly repaid the cost of keeping factories among them. Thus, all the schemes of Crozat had failed. The miserable European population, scattered over Louisiana, was opposed to his monopoly, and contributed, as much as they could, to defeat his plans. As to the officers,

they were too much engrossed by their own interest and too intent upon their daily quarrels, to mind any thing else. There was but one thing which, to the despairing Crozat, seemed destined to thrive in Louisiana—that was, the spirit of discord.

In the beginning of the month of August, 1717, Crozat, finding that under the new governor, L'Épinay, things were likely to move as lamely as before, addressed to the king a petition, in which he informed his Majesty, that his strength was not equal to the enterprise he had undertaken, and that he felt himself rapidly sinking under the weight which rested on his shoulders, and from which he begged his Majesty to relieve him. On the 13th of the same month, the Prince of Bourbon and Marshal D'Éstrées accepted, in the name of the king, Crozat's proposition to give up the charter which he had obtained under the preceding reign.

Against his adverse fate, Crozat had struggled for five years, but his efforts had been gradually slackening, in proportion with the declining health of his daughter. The cause of his gigantic enterprise had not escaped her penetration, and she had even extorted from him a full confession on the subject. In the first two years of her father's *quasi* sovereignty over Louisiana, she had participated in the excitement of the paternal breast, and had been buoyed up by hope. But although



her father tried, with the utmost care, to conceal from her the ill success of his operations, she soon discovered enough to sink her down to a degree of despair, sufficient to undermine in her, slowly but surely, the frail foundations of life ; and when Crozat, losing all courage, abandoned to the tossing waves of adversity, the ship in which he had embarked the fortune of his house, his daughter could hardly be called a being of this world. On the very day that he had resigned the charter, on which reposed such ambitious hopes, and had come back, broken-hearted, to his desolate home, he was imprinting a kiss on his daughter's pale forehead, and pressing her attenuated hands within his convulsive ones, when her soul suddenly disengaged itself from her body, carrying away the last paternal embrace to the foot of the Almighty's throne.

Crozat laid her gently back on the pillow, from which she had half risen, smoothed her clothes, joined her fingers as it were in prayer, and sleeked her hair with the palm of his hands, behaving apparently with the greatest composure. Not a sound of complaint, not a shriek of anguish was heard from him : his breast did not become convulsed with sobs ; not a muscle moved in his face. He looked as if he had been changed into a statue of stone : his rigid limbs seemed to move automaton-like ; his eyeballs became fixed in their sockets, and his eyelids lost their powers of contraction. Calmly,

but with an unearthly voice, he gave all the necessary orders for the funeral of his daughter, and even went into the examination of the most minute details of these melancholy preparations. Those who saw him, said that he looked like a dead man, performing with unconscious regularity all the functions of life. It was so appalling, that his servants and the few attending friends, who had remained attached to his falling fortune, receded with involuntary shudder from his approach, and from the touch of his hand, it was so icy cold! At last, the gloomy procession reached the solemn place of repose. The poor father had followed it on foot, with his hand resting on his daughter's coffin, as if afraid that what remained of the being he had loved so ardently, might flee away from him. When the tomb was sealed, he waved away the crowd. They dared not disobey, when such grief spoke, and Crozat remained alone. For a while, he stood staring, as in a trance, at his daughter's tomb: then, a slight twitch of the muscles of the face, and a convulsive quiver of the lips might have been seen. Sensibility had returned! He sunk on his knees, and from those eyes, so long dry, there descended, as from a thunder-cloud, a big heavy drop, on the cold sepulchral marble. It was but one solitary tear, the condensed essence of such grief as the human body cannot bear; and as this pearly fragment of the dew of mortal agony fell down on the daughter's

sepulchre, the soul of the father took its flight to heaven.  
Crozat was no more!

“ My task is done—my song hath ceased—my theme  
Has died into an echo: it is fit  
The spell should break of this protracted dream—  
The torch shall be extinguished which hath lit  
My midnight lamp—and what is writ, is writ,—  
Would it were worthier! But I am not now  
That which I have been—and my visions flit  
Less palpably before me—and the glow,  
Which in my spirit dwelt, is fluttering, faint and low.”

“ Farewell! a word that must be, and hath been—  
A sound which makes us linger—yet—farewell!”

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NOTE.—Crozat died in 1738, at the age of eighty-three. He had several sons and one daughter, Marie Anne Crozat, who married Le Comte D'Evreux. I hope I shall be forgiven for having slightly deviated from historical truth in the preceding pages, with regard to particulars which I deemed of no importance. For instance, I changed the name of Crozat's daughter. Why? Perhaps it was owing to some capricious whim—perhaps there is to me some spell in the name of Andrea.



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