THE CREOLES OF HISTORY

—AND—

THE CREOLES OF ROMANCE.

A LECTURE

DELIVERED IN THE HALL OF THE TULANE UNIVERSITY,
NEW ORLEANS,

—BY—

HON. CHARLES GAYARRÉ,

ON THE 25th OF APRIL, 1885.

C. E. HOPKINS, PUBLISHER, 20 ST. CHARLES ST., N. O.

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Ladies and Gentlemen:

In every nation the human language has modified itself in the course of time. The spelling and pronunciation of many words have changed; their original meaning has frequently become obscure and misapplied. But few have met so striking a transformation as the word *criollo* in Spanish, and *créole* in French, at least in these United States, if not in any other part of the world; for it conveys to the immense majority of the Americans of Anglo-Saxon origin a meaning that is the very reverse of its primitive signification. Without going into a learned etymological investigation about it, I will content myself with stating that, according to the definitions given by the dictionaries of the French and Spanish Academies, which, as to language, are as of much final authority as the Supreme Court of the United States in matters of law, *creole* means the issue of European parents in Spanish or French colonies.

It was first invented by the Spaniards to distinguish their children, natives of their conquered colonial possessions, from the original natives whom they found in those newly discovered regions of the earth. *Criollo* was derived from the verb *criar* (create), and used only to designate the Spanish-created natives, who were not to be confounded with the aborigines—with beings of an unknown origin—with the mahogany-tinted small fry of God's creation. Therefore to be a *criollo* was to possess a sort of title of honor—a title which could only be the birthright of the superior white race. This word, by an easy transition becoming *creole*, from the verb

créer, was adopted by the French for the same purpose—that is, to mean or signify a white human being *created* in their colonies of Africa and America—a native of European extraction, whose origin was known and whose superior Caucasian blood was never to be assimilated to the baser liquid that ran in the veins of the Indian and African native. This explains why one of that privileged class is proud to this day of calling himself a *Creole*, and clings to that appellation.

Now that I have from unquestionable authorities explained, and I hope to the satisfaction of this audience, the original meaning of the word *creole*, I ask your permission, ladies and gentlemen, to call your attention to the Creoles of Louisiana in particular.

The exploring expeditions of Hernando De Soto in 1539, of Joliet and Marquette in 1673, and of La Salle in 1682, left behind them no Creoles. Those heroic adventurers founded no colony, either French or Spanish, and had with them no white woman. The first colonists date from 1699, when two brothers, Iberville and Bienville, Canadians of noble birth and distinguished officers of the navy of France, formed a settlement in Louisiana. From that time to a later one there were *six* different classes of people in the colony: the European—the Creole, or the issue of European parents—the pure Indian—the Metis, or Mestizo, a cross between the white and the Indian—the Griffe, proceeding from the African and the Indian—the Mulatto, from the white and African. Gradually these varieties crystalized into only two elements of population—the Europeans and the Creoles constituting one element (the white); the other, embracing what is known under the general appellation of *black*, or *colored*, people, who had a much inferior social standing, and no political status whatever. From the very beginning to the late war of secession, the strongest line of demarcation—I may say an impassable one—was kept up between what may be called these two halves of the population, and not the slightest cause or pretext was ever given for confounding the one with the other.

When the first creole of Louisiana was born, that is, the

first native of pure white blood, Governor Bienville and Commissary Salmon thought it an event sufficiently important to make it the subject of a joint dispatch to the French government. His name was Claude Jousset, and he was the son of a Canadian, who was a small trader in Mobile. The word *creole*, in the course of time, was so extended as to apply, not merely to children born of *European parents*, but also to animals, vegetables and fruits, and to everything produced or manufactured in Louisiana. There were creole horses, creole cattle, creole eggs, creole corn, creole cottonade, etc. The negroes born within her limits were *creoles* to distinguish them from the imported Africans, and from those who, long after, were brought from the United States. It is impossible to comprehend how so many intelligent people should have so completely reversed the meaning of the word *creole*, when any one of the numerous dictionaries within their easy reach could have given them correct information on the subject. What could have led to such a delusion in the public mind? Whence the source of so strange an error? The labor necessary to gratify curiosity on that point might be profitless, and the fullest investigation might not, after all, solve the problem. But it is important to correct the error itself, whatever may be the difficulty, or even impossibility of finding out its cause. It has become high time to demonstrate that the Creoles of Louisiana, whose number to-day may approximately be estimated at 250,000 souls, have not, because of the names they bear, a particle of African blood in their veins, and this is what I believe to have clearly established.

It may be desirable now that I should show what was the ancestry of those creoles. I will proceed to perform that task. The first settlement was made at Biloxi by Canadians in 1699. They were people of high and low degree. The chiefs were educated and refined; some of their followers were coarse and illiterate. It does not appear that there was any white woman among them. In 1704 there was another settlement at Mobile, and in that same year one of the members of the French cabinet wrote to Governor Bienville, "that His Maj-

esty sent twenty girls, carefully selected, of industrious habits, skillful at work, of exemplary virtue and piety, and destined to be married to Canadian settlers and others of the same class, in order that the colony be established on a solid foundation." In 1705 there came twenty-three respectable girls escorted by three priests and two nuns, which girls were to be married, not to officers, not to gentlemen, but to discharged soldiers, tillers of the soil, mechanics and laborers of all sorts. There came also on the same ship, not bandits, not convicts, but seventy-five soldiers. Thus far there is nothing so impure as what is mentioned in certain works of fiction that have been accepted as historical.

In 1706 Bienville wrote to the home government: "That most of the women in the colony were Parisians." I beg this assembly not to forget this fact, and therefore not to give implicit faith to malicious compositions which represent those Parisian mothers as having bequeathed to their children a jargon that no Frenchman could understand.

In order to demonstrate that the French officers did not, as a rule, choose their wives, as asserted by a romancing libeller, among women of ill-fame, and not even among the virtuous ones of a rank inferior to theirs, I quote a letter from the woman who had in charge the "carefully selected and pious girls" sent by Louis XIV, as already stated. She wrote in 1706 to one of the King's ministers at Versailles, "that Major de Boisbriant, who commanded at Mobile, had been disposed to marry her, but that he had been prevented from doing so by M. de Bienville and his brother," who probably thought that it was a disparaging match, whereupon she remarks, with refreshing simplicity, "therefore, Monseigneur, your excellency will see that M. de Bienville has not the necessary qualifications to govern this country."

The fact is that it was a necessary qualification for the ruler of the colony, at that time, to be by temperament disposed to encourage marriages, rather than check them, particularly when there were as yet but two families in the province. No native of French descent had yet made his appearance, the desired

creole was still absent—and under such circumstances Governor Bienville opposed a marriage! This was an evident infraction of sound policy. The French government, however, paid no attention to the lady's denunciation of Bienville's peculiar disqualification to be the governor of a country whose first want was population. But the sagacity of her sex was not at fault on that occasion; for, subsequently, Bienville quarrelled with Governor de Lamothe Cadillac, who persecuted him for refusing to marry his daughter; and, furthermore, Bienville, with wicked pertinacity, remained a confirmed bachelor through his very long life.

In 1713 Commissary Duclos wrote to the Ministry that twelve girls who had lately arrived were undoubtedly virtuous, but extremely ugly. "We have," he said, succeeded in procuring husbands for *two* of them; it will be difficult to get rid of the rest. We shall do our best as soon as possible. Our Canadian *coureurs de bois, ou voyagers* (travelers through forests and the wilderness) are likely fellows, and want wives as good looking as themselves. They want less virtue and more beauty." I confess that this begins to savor badly, but I show my candor in not concealing the truth. It must be observed, however, that this applies only to a certain class of men from whom much delicacy is not to be expected.

In 1714 Governor de Lamothe Cadillac advised the French government to send, if possible, women of a higher order, who should be qualified to marry officers and such colonists as were educated and refined. This dispatch shows conclusively that the French officers could not have been disposed to degrade themselves in their conjugal alliances, as complacently published with unaccountable malignity in a recent work. Other evidences of this kind abound, but to bring them all out would exhaust the patience of this audience.

Whilst the destinies of Louisiana were in the hands of the Company of the Indies, the famous financier Law sent to that colony, at different times, a very large number of honest German agriculturists. The last of them, numbering two hundred and fifty, came in 1721, under the command of Chev-

alier d'Arensbourg, a Swede, who had distinguished himself in the service of his king, Charles XII, and to whom that monarch had presented a sword as a testimonial of his esteem. That sword was long kept as a relic in his family. The descendants of those immigrants, of course, were creoles. They, in the long run of time, forgot every word of German that they ever knew, and spoke no other language than French—real French—not a hybrid jargon.

In 1731 the white population of Louisiana was about 5000 souls, and the black 2000. It had already become necessary in 1724 to define and establish permanently the status of both the whites and blacks. Gov. Bienville, in the name and by the authority of the King, promulgated the "Black Code," which remained the law of the land during one hundred years of colonial existence under the French and Spanish governments, and continued long in force after Louisiana had become a territory of the United States, and even one of the sovereign members of the Union.

It raised Alpine heights, nay, it threw the Andes as a wall between the blacks, or colored, and the natives of France, as well as the natives of Louisiana, or creoles. There could be no marriage between the two races. If a white master had a child by a slave, that master was to be punished by the infliction of a heavy fine, and was even liable to any other arbitrary punishment by a court of competent jurisdiction according to the circumstances of the case. The slave and child were confiscated and adjudicated to the hospital nearest to the place where the offense was committed. If in violation of law a priest celebrated a religious marriage between the two races that were to be kept so wide apart, he was to be severely punished. It shows the horror of miscegenation that always existed, and that was preserved actively alive between the superior race and the inferior or abject one. The King of France also prohibited any donation during life, or by testament, to be made by the whites to freedmen, and to blacks born free, and declared that such donations would be null and

void, and that the object donated would escheat to some institution of charity.

In 1749 the Creoles, that is to say, the white descendants of Europeans—I cannot repeat it too often—had become sufficiently numerous to constitute an active element that was to be distinguished from the natives of France, the Indians, and the negroes, or colored people. In that year, the Governor, Marquis of Vaudreuil, himself a native or creole of Canada, said in an official dispatch: "It is to be regretted that there are not more creoles. They are the best men to fight the Indians." I call the attention of this audience to the indisputable fact that, at all epochs under the French, Spanish and American governments, the offensive and defensive forces of Louisiana never ceased to be clearly enumerated in this precise way or order: The regulars—the militia, composed of Europeans and their descendants, called *creoles*—the friendly Indians—and the negroes or colored people. The negroes and the Indians never were admitted into the militia; they formed separate bodies that could not and never were amalgamated with the whites.

In 1751 the Marquis of Vaudreuil published an ordinance or decree, which, among other articles, contained this one: "Any Frenchman so infamous as to harbor a black slave for the purpose of inducing him or her to lead a scandalous life, shall be whipped by the public executioner, and without mercy sentenced to the galleys for life." This does not look much like a disposition to encourage the commingling of whites and blacks.

Before the French revolution of 1789, young men of gentle birth were frequently admitted into the army as volunteers to be trained to the military profession, with the well founded prospect of having their shoulders soon decorated with epaulets. In the mean time they were favored with pay and rations, and were designated under the name of *cadets*. In connection with this usage, Michel de la Rouvilliere, the French Commissary, and the official next in dignity and power to the Governor, complains in one of his dispatches of

the abuse of this privilege by the Marquis of Vaudreuil. He informs the Ministry "that the Governor appointed, as cadets in the French troops, boys of fifteen months to six years old." This, if true, was evidently wrong; but it shows this, which is to my purpose—that those infant boys were of course creoles, that they were white, and even of gentle blood, and not the sons of low and immoral women.

A certain well known writer has disseminated the belief that the French officers of that epoch, who most of them were nobles, for the very good reason that it was very difficult for plebeians to be commissioned in preference to aspirants of that privileged class, were so low and degraded in tastes and habits that, with supine forgetfulness of their rank, they chose their wives among Indian squaws and the house of correction girls of France, and, what is more strange, that they were exceedingly proud of what they had done. To this modern slanderer I oppose the testimony ot a living witness of that distant epoch. The French Commissary, Michel de la Rouvilliere, in an official dispatch complains, not of any base humility, not of too improper condescensions on the part of the officers, but, on the contrary, denounces their towering pride. He writes: "Who says *officer* says all. When that word *officer* is pronounced everybody must tremble. Whenever any one of these gentlemen has any difficulty with any civilian, he never fails to exclaim, '*Do you know, sir, that you are speaking to an officer?*' and should. by chance, the case come before me, the officer always addresses me in these words: '*What, sir! How dared this complainant thus speak to an officer, or thus to act towards an officer!*'" This is not the tone of men who were so low as to be fond of marrying squaws, negroes and French prostitute jail birds!

It was under the administration of the Marquis of Vaudreuil that sixty girls who had been ascertained to be virtuous were transported to Louisiana at the expense of the King. It was the last cargo of that kind of merchandise that was brought to the colony. Those girls were given in marriage to soldiers whose time was out, and to whom concessions of

land were made. Each couple was supplied with a cow and calf, a rooster and five hens, a gun, an ax and a spade, and for three years, dating from the first day of their settlement, they were furnished with a certain quantity of powder, shot, and seeds. It is to be hoped that, in return, they produced an abundant crop of *creoles*, as was expected. The colony had now been in existence fifty-one years, and I am not at all disposed to conceal that, during that period of time, some house of correction girls were transported to it at different epochs by the government, but the colonists protested against it, and, as far as can be ascertained, it does not appear, after all, that the number of those women exceeded one hundred and sixty. I do not think that it is so bad a showing, and it is probable that there are not many colonies, either ancient or modern, that have a much better record. No new country has ever been stocked with none but entirely virtuous and refined people, and, even in the oldest, vice occupies but too large a space. There is everywhere an inevitable compound of the bad and the good, and it is not fair to judge of the character of a whole population from some of the peculiarities of its component parts. So be it for Louisiana.

In 1754, under the administration of Governor Kerlerec, some very excellect families from Lorraine emigrated to Louisiana, and in 1765, there began to come a very large number of those Acadians who had been expelled from their native country by the English. They were very simple and honest people, of unmixed white blood, and their descendants are to be found all over the State, where many of them have acquired wealth and risen to the highest offices. Thus far it is impossible to imagine by what process of ratiocination any human mind could arrive at the conclusion that the creole population of Louisiana must be looked upon as being colored, and as having their veins tainted with African blood.

So intense at all times was the aversion among the creoles to associate with the colored people that in 1767, the Marchioness of Abrado, having come from Peru to marry the Spanish Governor, Don Antonio de Ulloa, to whom she had been affi-

anced, and having brought with her some female Peruvian friends whose complexion was yellow, the creole ladies, taking them for colored women, refused to visit the Marchioness, because, as they said, she kept company with mulatresses.

Ulloa, having been driven away by the rebels of Louisiana, wrote from Havana to the Spanish government that his expulsion was caused by the hostility of the descendants of four Canadians who had settled in the colony. Of course these descendants were creoles, and this shows that there began to be important personages in that class of the population.

Count O'Reilly, after having quelled the rebellion in 1769, bestowed on creoles some of the highest offices, civil and military. I invite your attention to the census which he ordered to be taken of the population of New Orleans in 1770. Observe how distinct the creoles are kept from the colored people in that census: Whites, 1803; slaves, 1223; free, of pure African blood, 31; of mixed blood, 68—total, 3187. Count O'Reilly confirmed and maintained the "Black Code," which established such a barrier of adamant between the African and Caucasian, and showed in every possible way that he knew better than to confound the creoles with the colored people. Unzaga, his successor, was as well informed, and married a creole, who showed herself worthy of her high position in Louisiana, and of her subsequent one, when her husband was appointed Captain General of the province of Caracas.

Count Bernardo de Galvez succeeded General Unzaga in 1777. In 1780 war being declared between Spain and Great Britain, he took, in a rapid campaign, Manchac, Baton Rouge, Natchez, Mobile and Pensacola, then in the possession of the English. In the narration which he makes of his military operations, he enumerates his forces in a very discriminating manner—the regulars; the militia, composed only of whites; a few American volunteers; a body of Indians, and a body of colored troops, who at the time were not, and never, at any time since, were admitted into the militia, because it was the privilege of the whites alone to constitute the militia. Count

de Galvez, like Unzaga, married a creole whilst governor; his only child, a creole, married an European prince. Galvez died Viceroy of Mexico, like his father.

In 1785 Miro succeeded Galvez, and like him, married a creole. A singular infatuation on the part of those men, and of almost all the Spanish officers and dignitaries of high rank who came to Louisiana during a period of about thirty-four years, to invariably ally themselves to so abject a population as is described by a certain literary dime speculator—a population whose best men, according to the same authority, are bullies, knaves and fools, with the brains of a jackass, the heart of an alligator, and the tongue ot a gibberish monkey—and whose best women, born of lawful wedlock, are inferior in every respect, to the colored bastard issue of libertinism and concubinage! Governor Miro seems to have entertained on that subject, as I will show, views very different from those of a modern sentimentalist, who, being color-blind himself, wants to make the world believe that black is white and white is black.

Shortly after entering upon the duties of his office he had a census taken ot the free colored population of Louisiana. It amounted to 1100. He issued a proclamation in which he declared that the idleness of free negro, mulatto, and quadroon women, resulting from their living on incontinence and libertinism, must no longer be tolerated; that they must renounce their mode of living and betake themselves to honest labor. He proclaims his intention to have them, if they neglect his admonitions, sent out of the province, warning them that he will consider their excessive attention to dress as an evidence of misconduct. He further complains that the distinction which had been established concerning the head-dress of colored females and white women was disregarded, and announced that he would have it enforced. He forbids the colored women to wear plumes and jewels and directs them to have their hair bound in a kerchief. Lastly, he forbids them "to have nightly assemblies." This is a discrimination with a vengeance between the colored people and the creoles, from

whose ranks he had taken his wife! A matrimonial example followed by one of the last governors, Gayoso de Lemos.

In 1803, when the French took temporary possession of Louisiana by virtue of the cession of it made by Spain, the prefect, Laussat, who represented the French government, appointed Bellechasse, a creole, commander-in-chief, with the grade of colonel, of all the militia of the city and of all the free colored companies, showing that they were distinct from the militia, exclusively composed, as I have already stated, of whites; and by a special proclamation he maintained in full force the "Black Code," promulgated in 1724, in which was shown such a horror of miscegenation and an uncompromising determination to keep as far apart as the antipodes the two races destined to live side by side on the same soil, without the possibility of a fusion of their social relations. This was done, particularly to appease the alarms of the creoles, who had become attached to the Spanish government and feared the new fangled ideas then germinating in France about the equality and fraternity of all men without distinction of color and race. Evidently the natives of Louisiana who, during more than one hundred years, showed such hostility to any social, civil, military and political association with people of African descent, cannot, by any logical construction of language and facts, be supposed to admit that they are colored when they openly call themselves *creoles*.

Monette, an American author, says in his History of the Valley of the Mississippi, that on the eve of the ceremonies that were to attend the transfer of Louisiana from France to the United States, a number of enterprising young Americans associated themselves in a volunteer company under the leadership of Daniel Clark, the consul of the United States, to preserve order in the city of New Orleans, and were joined by a number of *patriotic French creoles*. Will anybody believe that those *creoles* whom the Americans thus pressed to their bosom with fraternal embrace were colored?

The colonial prefect, Laussat, representative of France, and the Marquis Casa Calvo representative of Spain, vied with

each other in the splendid festivities they gave at the epoch of the cession. A Frenchman who was present favors us with a description of them in a book which he published on the subject. "The Louisiana ladies," he says, meaning the creoles, for there were hardly any other in the colony at that time, "appeared with a magnificence that was a cause of astonishment, and might have been compared with any efforts of that sort even in the principal cities of France. The ladies who may justly be said to be remarkable for their habitual gravity, are generally tall and exquisitely shaped. The alabaster whiteness of their complexion, which was admirably set off by their light dresses, adorned with flowers and rich embroidery, gave a fairy-like appearance to those festivities." This elegance always prevailed in New Orleans from the beginning of its existence as the capital of the colony. In 1727, Magdelene Hachard, one of the Ursuline Nuns who came to settle in that town, thus describes it in a private letter addressed to her father at Rouen: "I can assure you, my dear father, that I hardly realise that I am on the banks of the Mississippi, because there is here as much magnificence and politeness as in France. Gold and velvet stuffs, with costly ribbons, are commonly used, although they cost three times as much as at Rouen." All this is true. The ladies powdered their hair, rouged, painted their cheeks, on which they wore, at spots tastefully chosen, small patches of black silk, called *mouches*, or "flies," exactly as was done at the court of Versailles. The gentlemen sported the sword as an evidence of rank, adorned themselves with lace, and some of them had diamond buckles at the knee and on the shoes. It is remarkable that ever since those days to the present, Frenchmen and other foreigners who visited New Orleans, have always said that, on account of the refinement of its society and of the language spoken in it, they were more vividly reminded of Paris than in any other American city. I will even go further and say that many Frenchmen, after some residence here, have assured me that they preferred living in New Orleans than in any of the provincial cities of France.

Laussat, in 1803, in a dispatch to his government, describes the creoles, not as colored men, but as the worthy descendants of the French. He says "that they are gentle and docile, but touchy, proud and brave."

If the primary signification of the word *creole* be strictly adhered to, then there are very few natives of Louisiana living who can, since the cession of that territory to the United States, in 1803, appropriately call themselves *creoles*, because they were not born of European parents in a *French or Spanish colony.* Etymologically speaking, the word *Louisianian* would be now the correct one. But if the world *creole* is used simply to designate the descendants of the ancient French and Spanish population, it may be considered as not being improperly employed, and may even be fondly cherished as recalling to their memory that their origin is traced back to the founders of the colony. In this sense of the word the creoles are the Knickerbockers of Louisiana.

In 1806, under the administration of Claiborne, a census was taken of the population of that portion of Louisiana known as the "Territory of Orleans," of which he was the Governor. In that census the creoles and the colored people are mentioned with precise discrimination: Creoles 13,500; free colored 3355; Americans 3500; Europeans 5714; total 26,069. The slaves were about as numerous.

In 1809, Claiborne, in a dispatch to the Secretary of State at Washington, speaks of the creoles as the white descendants of the French, and declares himself strongly opposed to permitting free colored people to come to Louisiana. I will not expatiate further on the subject. This is enough, I believe, to show historically that there never was any ground for the impression which has become an incrustation in the heads of a large portion of the people of the United States, that *creole* means a person having African blood in his or her veins. Whence this idea originated it is impossible to imagine, and it will forever remain a matter of astonishment. Any dictionary, if looked into, would have corrected the mis-

take, and the merest attention to facts of a striking notoriety would have been sufficient to dissipate all doubt.

Governor Claiborne married successively two creoles. General Wilkinson, commander-in-chief of the army of the United States, married one. Edward Livingston, Senator of the United States, Secretary of State, Minister Plenipotentiary, married a creole. The number of Americans from every part of the United States who have allied themselves by marriage to creole families is so large that it cannot be calculated. Distinguished men from every European nation have married creoles, knowing them to be creoles and frequently proud that they were creoles, and the Emperor Napoleon the Great spoke with enthusiasm of the inimitable graces of his creole wife, the Empress Josephine. The creole women of Louisiana have been much admired and their merits fully appreciated in the most polished courts of Europe; they have entered the mansions of the highest nobility with the dignified footstep of perfect equality, and I could fill up a long list with the historical names of barons, viscounts, counts, marquises, dukes and princes, who were happy to place their coronets on the fair brows of Louisiana's creole daughters. Have not the watering places, the hotels and the private saloons of the North and West been crowded for the last eighty years with our creole ladies, to whom the heartiest welcome was tendered? Were they ever known, on any occasion, in any circumstance, and in any place whatever on which the sun shines, to conceal and deny that they were creoles? Did they ever look and act as if they had sprung from such mothers as those women described by the Spanish Governor Miro, whom he ordered to abstain from wearing feathers and jewels, and directed to make an honest living by labor, and to tie a kerchief round their hair? So much for the creole women.

Now for the men. They have for years and years filled with credit the highest legislative, judicial and executive offices of the State; they have distinguished themselves in the army and navy of the United States, and there is no official position in the Federal government to which they have not risen,

save that of President of the United States. In the ordinary occupations of life, many, as lawyers, physicians, merchants, planters, agriculturists, have occupied conspicuous positions. In the mechanical and fine arts, as well as in the sciences, some have obtained the most striking proficiency.

Abroad, more than one creole has risen to the highest eminence. The learned Jesuit, Abbé Viel, gained in Paris a literary celebrity. Audubon is immortal; Aubert Dubayet, after having faught for the independence of the United States, became a member of the National Assembly in France, and its president for a fortnight, lieutenant general, commander-in-chief, minister of war, ambassador at Constantinople; Bronier de Clouet became a general, governor of one of the provinces of Cuba, senator in Spain, and was created Count de la Fernandina; Daunoy, lieutenant general in Spain; Beluche, admiral in South America; Villamil, general and ambassador; Delpit, one of the most distinguished and successful literary men in Paris; Paul Morphy, the wonderful chess player; Gottschalk, the famous pianist and composer; and lately, a creole of Louisiana rose to be a member of the French cabinet. This nomenclature might be considerably extended.

The creole population now within the present limits of the State of Louisiana may be estimated at 250,000. I have shown that the United States have no cause to blush for having gathered them under the star spangled banner. They, with patriotic zeal, fought against the English in the war of 1814-15, and also in our subsequent conflict with Mexico. Is it not time to do away with the absurd notion that these people are colored, particularly when it is so easy to know the truth on the subject, and when it is a sign of prodigious ignorance that such an error should be kept up in the face of all the circumstances and in utter disregard of all the facts which I have stated.

Another impression in the United States, equally unjust and aggravating is, that Louisiana has originally been populated chiefly by convicts, by men and women of immoral habits, and sprung from the most ignorant and lawless class of Euro-

pean society. I have, I believe, demonstrated that nothing could be more erroneous. There never came to Louisiana any people in reality worse than those who are commonly disposed to migrate to European colonies. As to the military officers and all the employes of the government during a hundred years, they were most of them, *gentils hommes*, nobles, as their names show, being generally preceded, among the French, by the aristocratic prefix: *de*. Many were titled. They became the heads of families, and I should not be afraid to wager that, in proportion to the population, there are as many, if not more, people of gentle blood in Louisiana as any where else in America. The mere accident of noble or plebeian birth has become very insignificant in this age. But, since the question has been raised, I say that there is more than one individual among us, in an humble position, particularly since the late war, whose ancestors were knights who fought as Crusaders in the fields of Palestine; and others could prove that they are nobles from time immemorial by the grace of God, and not by the favor of any prince—which, by the by, is the highest degree of nobility, far above any manufactured mushroom ducal title. Nevertheless, Louisiana has always been socially the most democratic State in the Union. The creole population has always lacked self-assertion, not to say brass. In the days of the greatest prosperity there never was displayed a coat of arms on the panel of any carriage by those who had the best title to it, nor has any one of our families put a livery even on a slave, and the poorest pedler traveling with his box on his back never was refused hospitable admittance to the princely mansion and table of the wealthiest planter. In no country was there less of the puffed arrogance of wealth and of the foolish pride of birth.

And this is the population which one accidentally born in its bosom and claiming by virtue of that accident the right, not only to speak in the name of Louisiana, but also of the whole South, represents as very little better than the Yahoos in Gulliver's travels by Dean Swift! I beg pardon of all literary men for associating the names of Swift and Cable. It

is almost an insult to the memory of the former. But Dean Swift intended his Gulliver's travels to be only a satire, while Mr. Cable has assumed to write novels based on, and in conformity to, history or accepted traditions, and purporting to be a faithful portraiture of realities. I must admit that I have read only what passes for the best of his works—the "Grandissimes." When that book appeared, I remember having read these remarks in the Philadelphia Times, or some other well known paper of that city: "Mr. Cable's Grandissimes struck us as exceedingly dull, when published in serials in Scribner's Magazine, and it appeared to us still more dull when presented in the heavier form of a book. But its chief value is derived from its being so minute and faithful a description of a peculiar people in the United States with which we are so little acquainted, and to which the author himself belongs." I am sure that this is the sense of the passage to which I have referred, if not its precise words. It becomes therefore important for us who may suffer from the obliquity of the author's vision, and in general for all those who, by perusing his works, may be led into egregious errors, to ascertain if the dullness of the writer is compensated by the veracity of his statements, the accuracy of his descriptions or appreciations, and the verisimilitude of his creations.

On the threshold of the very rapid and short review which time and your patience will permit me to make of only a few pages of the "Grandissimes," I call your attention to one of the monstrous absurdities that form the tissue of a composition in which the audacious mutilation of what is truth in a matter of fact world, and the distortion of what could possibly be supposed by a sound mind to exist at all in the world of probabilities, exceed all precedents. If Mr. Cable had represented the most distinguished of our creole families as having forgotten to speak French, and as using only the jargon which the negroes had constructed out of that language, this invention would have far exceeded the limits of those liberties which fancy in its wildest flights may be permitted to take with common sense. But when he makes them prefer, not the

French, not the creole negro *patois*, but the broken English of the negroes of Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia, etc., the perversion or depravity of his intellect becomes overpowering and incomprehensible. He must have known that this was impossible. If he did know, and how could it be otherwise, why this violation of truth? If he says that he did not, he admits himself to be as ignorant of what he writes about, as the most uncultivated donkey is about the movements of a planet. I will state that I have carried his famous novel to intelligent negroes who could read, and not one of them could understand the spelling and pronunciation of the language attributed to their race. It seems to have been a secret possessed only by the Grandissime families of 1803. It had been lost, but has been lately discovered by Mr. Cable.

The story of the "Grandissimes" begins with a charity ball given for the relief of yellow fever patients in the end of September, 1803, at a favorable moment when an available spell of cool weather had set in. The best families of New Orleans are there assembled. Here is a specimen of the descriptive and picturesque style of the writer: "The perfumed air of the ball-room was thrilled with the wailing ecstasy of violins." According to the English meaning of the word *thrill*, we are given to understand that this *wailing ecstasy* of the violins had pierced the perfumed air with a sharp shivering sensation, and we logically infer that the shivering air must have communicated its own sensation to the whole assembly and considerably refrigerated its cheerfulness. But what sort of dances, contradances and waltzes must the violins have been playing to be thrown into a "wailing ecstasy?" If it were possible to unite together wailing and ecstasy, it certainly would suit a funeral better than a ball. Suddenly, however, this perfumed air that was thrilled with the wailing ecstasy of violins, warming itself out of its chilled condition, seems, in the inimitable language of the author, "to breathe, to sigh, to laugh, while the musicians, with disheveled locks, streaming brows and furious bows, strike, draw, drive, scatter from the anguished violins a never-ending rout of screaming harmonies!" Surely,

we understand the terrible sufferings of those agonized violins, but it is absolutely wonderful that the assembly, being assailed "by this never-ending rout of screaming harmonies," did not clap their hands to their ears, and did not run away as fast as permitted by their agonized nerves. You may think, perhaps, ladies and gentlemen, that you will be spared a further exhibition of the torture of those ill-fated violins. No; a little more endurance, if you please; for, those instruments, notwithstanding their fits "of wailing ecstasy" followed by their "scattering a never-ending rout of screaming harmonies," would occasionally "burst into an agony of laughter." Now, I can safely assure you that Mr. Cable's creoles are as fantastically absurd, as ridiculously fanciful, and as glaring impossibilities as the screaming harmonies of Mr. Cable's violins.

While the violins were cutting such antics, a rumor circulates in the ball-room that France had ceded Louisiana to the United States, and much consternation is the result. At that moment Mr. Cable introduces to his readers the head or chief of one of the highest and most distinguished families of Louisiana. His name is Brahmin Mandarin Agricola Fuselier de Grandissime. This uncouth mass of vulgar pomposity is addicted to roaring like a lion, and a very ill-bred lion too. On this occasion he roars more fiercely than ever, and the whole assembly becomes tremblingly silent. Then the lion, condescending to use human language, shouts that the pretended treaty of cession is apocryphal, because it contains no special clause for the protection of the family of Brahmin Mandarin Agricola Fuselier de Grandissime! So striking an argument is accepted as satisfactory; the public mind is restored to its usual tranquillity, and dancing recommences. Will you believe, ladies and gentlemen, in the possible existence of such an imbecile population?

There are other conspicuous personages in that masked ball. One represents a dragon of Bienville with a gilded casque and a heron's plume, and a Huguenot *fille a la cassette*, a "Huguenot casket girl," although there never were in Louis-

iana such a dragon and such an imported Huguenot girl, with a casket, or no casket. There is also a woman in the costume of a monk. The dragon and the monk flirt together. If time permitted me to give a sample of their conversation, you would think it the silliest that ever came out of human lips. Mr. Cable seems to be aware of it, for he calls it a child-like badinage. Why this "child-like badinage" between these two grown up persons who are destined to be in the novel the most refined and intellectual specimens of creole society? Is it because he wishes to intimate that creoles, from the cradle to the grave, ever remain in a state of imbecile infancy? Be it as it may with his intentions, another peculiarity with Mr. Cable's fancy is to make a creole laugh whenever he or she speaks, either to say good morning or good night. In two short pages and a half, printed in large type, and relating this child-like conversation, the word *laugh* is found sixteen times. At first the words of the future heroine of the novel "were entangled with a musical, open-hearted laugh." An open-hearted laugh may be musical, but as a broad, open-hearted laugh precludes the possibility of uttering words at the same time, how can unuttered words be entangled with such a laugh? It is immediately followed by another laugh "as exultingly joyous as it was high bred." It is not easy to comprehend from any circumstance mentioned in the book why that laugh was as exultingly joyous as it was high bred. Was it exultingly joyous because it was high bred, or was it high bred because it was exultingly joyous? It would have been interesting to know from Mr. Cable what are the characteristics of a high bred laugh.

Mr. Cable describes the arrival of a numerous family of German immigrants. One of them, Joseph Frowenfeld, of teutonic origin, is an American by birth. "What a land presented itself to their eyes as they came up the river!" exclaims Mr. Cable. "A land hung in mouruing, darkened by gigantic cypresses. submerged, a land of reptiles, silence, shadow and decay!" It is to be hoped that this description will not fall into the hands of those whom our State Board of

Immigration is trying to attract to Louisiana. Well! after having been half devoured by mosquitoes, the traveler reached the "hybrid" city of New Orleans. Why hybrid? Is it because it was inhabited only by mulattoes and mulattresses? Or is it in anticipation of what Mr. Cable hopes it to become when black men will marry white women, and white men marry blacks. Shortly after their arrival all the immigrants die of yellow fever, except James Frowenfeld. This is, by the by, another poor invitation to strangers to come to Louisiana!

The two representative families of Louisiana—the very best—the cream of the cream—the elite of the elite—as manufactured by Mr. Cable, are the Fuseliers de Grandissime and the Grapion Nancannous. The first Grandissime, a French officer of noble birth, married a ragged squaw, born in a "royal hovel," to use the very words of Mr. Cable, and the queen of a very small tribe of Indians named "Tchonpitoulas," who dwelt near the site on which now stands the Crescent City. His hybrid son marries a lady of rank, a widow without children, transported to Louisiana by virtue of a *lettre de cachet*, that is an order of arrest in the name of the King without assigning any reason for it. The author adds that she was of *unnamed* blood. If her blood was so unknown that it was even without a name, how could she be reckoned a lady of rank? This is one of a million of absurdities to be picked by any boy of ordinary common sense in Mr. Cable's master piece of bric-a-brac composition yclept "Grandissimes."

The first of the Grapion Nancannous is also a French officer of noble birth. "He took," says Mr. Cable, "a most excellent wife from the first cargo of house of correction girls." Of course, a most excellent wife! Nothing else could be expected from Mr. Cable, whose aim, through his whole book, is to villify what is reputed noble, and to ennoble what is reputed vile. The son of the officer who had so judiciously chosen "a most excellent wife" from among a gang of dissolute women, married under the administration of the Marquis of Vaudreuil one of the "casket girls," that is, one of the girls transported

to Louisiana, each one with a small box or casket containing the scanty apparel with which they were provided by the government. Mr. Cable, who has an irresistible passion for absurdities, makes of that girl a Huguenot, unaccountably mixed with Catholic women sent to the Ursuline Nuns, under whose care they were to remain until married. The learned author should have condescended to explain how it happened that the same government by which the introduction of Huguenots into Louisiana was expressly prohibited, had by a strange exception, picked up one, given her the clothes she needed, and packed her off to the address of nuns under whose wing she was to be placed, until provided with a husband. If these two families, or the like of them, constituted the best ones of the ancient population, what must have been the composition of those of an inferior class!

In connection with these marriages, Mr. Cable remarks: "Thus the Pilgrim Fathers of the Delta of the Mississippi took with Gallic recklessness their wives and moot wives from the ill specimens of three races." Gallic recklessness in choosing wives! Mr. Cable quotes this Gallic recklessness as if it were something proverbial. Why this gratuitous insult to a whole nation? Is it because the French have incurred the guilt in his eyes of having procreated the hated creole? But it is not the only passage of the book in which he shows himself afflicted with gallophobia.

What could be those three races from the ill specimens of which the Pilgrim Fathers of the Mississippi Delta took their wives with Gallic recklessness? There were no other races at that time than the Indian, the negro, and the French. What can he mean by the *ill* specimens of these *three* races? It must be the *least virtuous* of the Indian squaws, the black wenches and the French women. This becomes quite serious, for it is not an assertion placed at random on the lips of some imaginary character, but it is the author himself who speaks —and that author is a Louisianian by birth—one who claims to know thoroughly the population of which he writes. This assertion is not confined to a work of fiction, but it is repeated

by him in a historical article which he has contributed to the Encyclopedia Britannica. Among other things, he says: "A few years after its founding New Orleans was little more than a squalid village of deported galley slaves." Whence his authority for this sweeping assertion? I can furnish Mr. Cable with a list of the first settlers in New Orleans. There is not one galley slave among them.

Coming to much later times, he further says in that great work, the Encyclopedia Britannica, which is to meet the eyes of the whole world: "The pestilence of yellow fever—the plague of the Gulf—made of New Orleans one of its most famous ambuscades, and the provincialism and lethargy of an isolated and indolent civilization has allowed this last unfortunate condition to remain uncorrected." Thus Mr. Cable proclaims to the world, in the face of our Board of Health, that New Orleans continues to be one of the most famous ambuscades of yellow fever; that nothing has been done to modify that "unfortunate condition, and that the provincialism and lethargy of our isolated and indolent population," has "changed a port that had promised to become one of the greatest in the world into a monument of golden possibilities dwarfed by unforeseen and overpowering disadvantages." We cannot trace in this portrait of a mother the hand of a loving son.

I will quote, without comment, from the Encyclopedia two other passages: "The famous carnival displays of New Orleans mark one of the victories of Spanish-American over North American tastes, and probably owe mainly to the *Americain* their pretentious dignity, and to the creole their more legitimate harlequin frivolity." In his intensifying paroxysms of maniac hostility, he goes on, saying: "By the exodus of West Indian creoles in 1809, New Orleans immediately doubled its population; the place *naturally* and *easily* became the one stronghold of Latin-American ideas in the United States, a harbor of contrabandists, Guadeloupian pirates, and Spanish-American revolutionists and filibusters."

There are still living many descendants of those Pilgrim fathers of the delta of the Mississippi who chose their wives, in preference, among the most abandoned of the Indian women, negresses and French girls of ill-repute. I am sure that there cannot be here a woman's heart, or a man's heart, who will not respond to mine when I say that it is the sacred duty of those descendants and of the numerous Americans and Europeans allied to them, to protect the reputation of those ancestors who cannot come out of their graves to face and refute this defamation. It must be kept in mind that Mr. Cable does not allude to the colonists of the lowest class, but especially to those of the highest—to those whose genealogical trees, according to his own expressions, "were of the tallest in France." Mr. Cable should be called upon to name at least a single one of our good and old families that falls within the blighting radius of his description. If he cannot, he will stand convicted of having maliciously slandered a population that seems to be the object of his intense hatred.

After my digressing allusion to Mr. Cable's sentiments as expressed in the Encyclopedia Britannica, I return to the Grandissimes. The Huguenot girl with whom you have been made acquainted had proved rebellious to the authority of the Ursulines, and they had referred the case to the governor, Marquis of Vaudreuil, who tells the girl that there is no such thing as morality, honor, principle and religion in the world, not even in the King of France, not even in the archbishops and cardinals; that it is all a farce, particularly in Louisiana; and what he says is fully sanctioned by the Marquise. This is a monstrous perversion of the historical character of the Marquis, and why? Probably to give Mr. Cable the opportunity of making this remark: "This is the way they talked in New Orleans in those days. If you care to understand why Louisiana has grown up so out of joint, note the tone of those who governed her in the middle of the last century." So it seems that we are out of joint, and we shall continue to be in that disjointed condition as long as we re-

fuse to adopt the radical modifications of society proposed by Mr. Cable.

The first thing to be done, according to Mr. Cable's recommendations, to prevent Louisiana from continuing to grow out of joint, is to do away with the chronic pride of the creoles, of which here are some specimens that are peculiar to Louisiana, and never heard of anywhere else. For instance, says Mr. Cable, a creole, as in the case of Agricola Fuselier, will surrender a plantation and negroes rather than incur the reproach of having won it unfairly at cards, and rather than stand in the light of the world with a shadow of suspicion over his name—a specimen of pride No. 1. A creole woman, as in the case of Madam Nancanou, will sacrifice everything she possesses and reduce herself to poverty rather than disavow a debt of honor acknowledged by her husband—pride No. 2. A creole gentleman always stands on the punctilio of honor, with which, says Mr. Cable, in his peculiar style, "he anoints himself from head to foot," rather than adopt new ideas that would develop his financial resources—pride No. 3. "Do not credit a creole woman when she pretends to be in comfortable circumstances; she may at that very moment be starving."—pride No. 4. This is what Mr. Cable calls a preposterous, apathetic, fantastic pride, as lethargic and ferocious as an alligator, and suicidal! Suicidal! I like the word. I like the meaning he gives to it. True, it is suicidal according to Mr. Cable's code of morality, to immolate self-interest to conscience; it is suicidal to relinquish a dollar rather than do what one thinks to be mean. It is suicidal not to follow Iago's advice to Roderigo, "Put money in thy pocket; I tell thee, put money in thy pocket"—by fair or foul means. Well! The creoles accept as compliments what Mr. Cable intends as reproaches, and as they wish to reciprocate with due politeness, I assume the responsibility of declaring openly in their name that they do not believe him susceptible of any preposterous, apathetic, fantastic, and suicidal pride in business transactions and lucrative speculations; that they do not suspect him of being lethargic where self-interest speaks even in the fee-

blest voice; nor as being as ferocious as an alligator on certain punctilios recognized by a benighted world.

Honoré de Grandissime, educated in Paris, and the first merchant of New Orleans, whom Mr. Cable represents as a demi-god when compared with the other creoles, being on horseback, meets the immigrant Frowenfeld, who was footing it in the vicinity of the city. They engage in conversation, and the yellow fever convalescent consults Honoré as to the best way of making a living. This perfection of a creole gentlemen informs Frowenfeld, in substance, that he is in a country where principle and virtue do not pay. He must howl with the wolves and become as practical in dishonesty as the whole population and look at everything as merchandise, as he himself does—he, Honoré de Grandissime! He impresses upon Frowenfeld the necessity of his transforming himself like all those who come to Louisiana—"they hold out a little while; a very litle, and they assimilate to the rest." At last, Honoré de Grandissime goes so far in his inroads on propriety, his instructions become so offensive, that the immigrant protests against it with an indignant earnestness that made, says Mr. Cable, "the creole's horse drop the grass from his teeth and wheel half round." But the merchant retained his gentle composure. Wherefore it must be admitted that the horse proved himself a much more moral being than his rider, and I must agree with Mr. Cable, when he sarcastically remarks of Honoré and Frowenfeld: "One was a very raw imported material for an excellent man, and the other a striking exponent of a unique land and people"—as invented and patented by Mr. Cable.

Frowenfeld is not corrupted, however, by Honoré, and retaining all the primitive independence of his opinions, becomes a druggist. Although he is a great leveler, like Mr. Cable, whose moral and intellectual personification he seems intended to be, the creoles, whom he never ceases to find fault with, get into the habit of congregating at his shop to discuss the questions of the day. The author represents their opposition to the cession as intense. It seems that they had but

two ideas at the time; one was, to defraud the United States of as much of the public lands as possible by manufacturing false titles, and the other, to prevent the introduction of the English language into Louisiana, as they would prefer to "eat dogs" than to speak it. As to the public lands, whether it was finally Louisiana that robbed the United States, or the United States that robbed Louisiana, I leave Mr. Cable to determine as he may please. But, as to the English language, I must object to his contradicting himself so manifestly about the alleged hostility of the creoles to its introduction. He forgets that he has represented the creoles as being so passionately fond of it long before the cession, that even in the intimacy of family intercourse they had almost entirely substituted for the French language of their ancestors, and for the sweet modulations of the composite dialect of their slaves, the rough-hewn, coarse and unmusical jargon of the American negro—which, however, they had never heard at the time, and therefore could not have learned. But this absurdity not being sufficiently strong, Mr. Cable makes them cling to the broken, mutilated, africanized English of the *black man*, and reject with rage the importation of the genuine pure English of the *white man*. It is a singular contradiction which could not escape the attention of Mr. Cable. How is it that he allowed it to stand? Was it his secret intention to produce the impression on his readers in his own sly and covert ways that the creoles are instinctively attracted, by a sort of magnetic influence, to every thing that is low, base and impure, as a natural effect of that Gallic recklessness which, since the foundation of the colony, was the cause of their ignoble descent from the ill specimens of three races—Indian, African and French prostitutes? Considering this agglomerated and ever-expanding heritage of viciously mixed blood that still festers in the veins of more than two hundred thousand of his fellow-citizens, considering that, in consequence of it, Louisiana continues to be "out of joint," as he says, and to perpetrate such iniquities as are enumerated in his "Freedman's Case in Equity," Mr. Cable must have felt

himself justified, at least in his own mind, when he shook the dust of our streets from his virtuous and indignant shoes, and publicly declared that the home of his choice—the home of his heart—was in a far distant and more pure region.

The creoles, to come out purified and clean out of their native swamps, must, according to Mr. Cable's mandate, give up, not only their ferocious alligator pride, but also their mule obstinacy, which he thus illustrates: The creoles who used to assemble at the Frowenfeld's shop talked about the cession of Louisiana in the most foolish and incoherent manner. It could not be otherwise. It would have been unnatural for a creole to talk common sense. Frowenfeld, in his unbounded benevolence, attempts to enlighten them. He presents to them "excellent arguments" to remove their deep-rooted prejudices and their ill founded apprehensions. But, "unfortunately," says Mr. Cable, "those arguments gave more heat than light." If this was the case, is it astonishing that those arguments produced a more sudorific than convincing effect? Mr. Cable further informs his readers that those excellent arguments were "merciless;" that their principles were "not only lofty to dizziness, but precipitous," and "their heights unoccupied, and, to the common sight, unattainable." In consequence, "they provoked hostility and resentment." Such is the indictment. Now for the defence. Were the creoles to be blamed for not understanding arguments so lofty that only a condor or an eagle could have risen to their cloud-capped altitude? Who in this assembly would not be thrown into a violent state of exasperation, should anybody assail him with "merciless arguments," with rocky principles, "not only lofty to dizziness, but precipitous," towering to "unoccupied heights, and to common sight, unattainable?" Such an Alpine scenery of arguments and principles might charm the eyes of mountaineers, but could not be relished by the natives of the plains, prairies and swamps of Louisiana. It was Frowenfeld's fault, if not understood. His balloon flew too high above the flat intellect of those whom he addressed in 1803.

Mr. Cable himself fell into the same error in the present year, 1885, when in his "Freedman's Case in Equity," he came down upon the South with an avalanche of "merciless arguments" that threatened to crush us back into something worse than the black days of reconstruction; with a hail-storm of "principles so lofty" that they made us dizzy—"principles so precipitous" that we looked at them with affright—"principles of such unoccupied and unattainable heights," that we refused to climb them up with him, and run the risk of breaking our necks by falling into the precipice of miscegenation. Otherwise, he might have had a better chance ot success in huckstering his universal panacea, labeled on the bottle: "Social and conjugal fusion of the blacks and the whites."

I have only glanced over a book composed of 443 pages. Neither time nor my inclination permit me to enter into a more detailed analysis. Suffice it to say that, from the beginning to the end, this work represents the whole creole population as the basest and the most stupid that ever crawled in the mud of this earth. Take, for instance, the two best specimens among them, as delineated by Mr. Cable: Honoré de Grandissime and Madame de Grapion Nancannou, the refined *par excellence.* I have already laid before you the scene between Honoré and the super-honest immigrant, *Grandisson* Frowenfeld, without even forgetting the horse that dropped the grass from his teeth and wheeled half round from the sudden shock which the conversatian gave to his too sensitive nerves, thus participating in the immigrant's indignation. Another scene—and this Honoré de Grandissime, the most scrupulous, the most esteemed merchant of New Orleans, will appear to you in all the splendor which Mr. Cable wishes to give to his character. He is on the eve of breaking down, when his colored brother—illegitimate, of course, and named also Honoré de Grandissime. to whom their common father had illegally bequeathed an immense legacy which, however, was not contested by the legitimate heirs—proposes to him to put all his fortune in the house and save it from bankruptcy, provided it be henceforth openly carried on as a commercial

firm under their associated names—thus constituting a novel partnership, the partnership of bastardy and legitimacy, the partnership of black and white. This most distinguished of all the creoles greedily accepts the proposition in these words: "So just a condition—such mere justice, ought to be an easy condition," and, the legitimate white son, "lifting up his glance reverently" to the colored bastard son, his brother, further says: "My very right to exist comes after yours; you are the elder."

Once before, Honoré, the colored man, had said to Honoré, the white man, in the deepest tone of affliction: "Your are the lawful son of Numa Grandissime. I had no right to be born." The white brother had "quickly" replied: "By the laws of man it may be; but by the laws of God's justice, you are the lawful son, and it is I that should not have been born." Here we have, to use a common expression, "the milk of the cocoanut." Here we have the animus that inspired the book and the purpose for which it was written. The full meaning of this paragraph can be made apparent in a few words; and that meaning is startling. According to the new doctrine which it offers to our approbation, the black concubine of a white man is, if not by the laws of man, certainly by the laws of God's justice, a lawful wife, and the colored child resulting from this intercourse is legitimate. If that white man, seeing the sinful error of his way, subsequently marries a white woman, "she is by the laws of God's justice, if not by the laws of man, a paramour, and her child is a bastard." So much for the Honorable Honoré de Grandissime, whom Mr. Cable represents as the best and most intelligent of all the creoles.

As to Madame de Grapion Nancanou, whom Mr. Cable describes as the pearl of pearls, and incomparably superior to the rest of her sex in Louisiana, she is silly, undignified and not overburdened with too heavy a load of high-toned morality; she rubs the sill of her door with certain plants, and she besmears her floor with molasses to secure good luck. She is the intimate friend of the colored queen of the Voudous, and a Voudou herself—a Christian and a Voudou—a worshiper of

Christ and of the serpent at the same time. Mr. Cable is fond of mixtures. She divides with that queen of the Voudous a purse of gold purporting to have been sent by the Devil. At midnight she rises to invoke the demon of the Voudous, and after having promised him a libation of champagne for the next day, she creeps into bed and offsets this peccadillo by saying her prayers under her blanket. It is impossible to read of her treatment of Governor Claiborne on the public square in front of the Cathedral, without coming to the conclusion that she was better qualified to occupy a stall in the fish market than a seat in a lady's saloon.

By the by, Mr. Cable, who seems to entertain as much aversion to truth as to creoles, says that the colored queen whom Madame Nancanou had taken to her bosom, was noted for the "chaste austerity" with which she performed the rites of the Voudous. Well! It is generally believed here that the rites of the Voudous are so disgusting that no modern language among civilized nations could be used to describe the "chaste austerity" of that worship of hideous indecency, and I am sure that there are few of our negresses, among the most depraved, who would not think themselves grievously insulted by Mr. Cable, if accused by him of being Voudous.

As I wish to be fair and just to Mr. Cable, I must, in concluding, debit him for making at last a sort of charitable concession to the creoles. At the end of his book. p. 436, he says: "Under the gentle influence of a higher civilization, their old Spanish colonial ferocity was gradually absorbed by the growth of better traits. To-day, almost all the savagery that can *justly* be charged against Louisiana must—strange to say—be laid at the door of the *Americain.* The creole character has been diluted and sweetened." The ferocity of Mr. Cable's attacks against the creole population having at last become also diluted and sweetened, I am glad to declare that now I wash my hands of him, and making my last bow to that amiable gentleman, I turn him over to the tender mercies of the "American savagery" that is, to-day, almost exclusively guilty of all the atrocities and infamies perpetrated in Louisiana.