





TRAVELS
IN
LOUISIANA
AND
THE FLORIDAS,

IN THE YEAR, 1802,

GIVING

A CORRECT PICTURE OF THOSE COUNTRIES.



Translated from the French, with Notes, &c. by

JOHN DAVIS.



Aspice et extremis domitum cultoribus orbem,
Eaosque domos Arabum, pictosque Gelonos :
Divisæ arboribus patriæ.

VIRGILIUS,



NEW-YORK:

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NO. 1. CITY-HOTEL, BROADWAY.

1806.



District of }
New-York. }^{ss.} **BE IT REMEMBERED,** That on the
third day of October, in the thirty-first
year of the Independence of the United States of America,
ISAAC RILEY, of the said District, hath deposited in this Of-
fice, the Title of a Book, the right whereof he claims as pro-
prietor, in the words and figures following, to wit:

“ Travels in Louisiana and the Floridas, in the year, 1802, giv-
“ ing a correct Picture of those Countries. Translated from the
“ French, with notes, &c. by JOHN DAVIS.

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Eosque domos Arabum, pictosque Gelonos :
Divisæ arboribus patriæ.

VIRGILIUS.”

IN CONFORMITY to the Act of the Congress of the United
States, entitled “ An Act for the encouragement of Learning,
“ by securing the Copies of Maps, Charts, and Books, to the
“ Authors and Proprietors of such Copies, during the times
“ herein mentioned ;” and also to an Act entitled “ An Act sup-
“ plementary to an act entitled, An act for the encouragement of
“ Learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts, and Books,
“ to the Authors and Proprietors of such Copies, during the
“ times therein mentioned, and extending the benefits thereof,
“ to the Arts of Designing, Engraving and Etching historical and
“ other prints.”

EDWARD DUNSCOMB,
Clerk of the District of New-York,

55

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

THERE is a preface of considerable length prefixed to the original work from which I have made this translation, but as it is absolute *verbiage*, mere sound signifying nothing, I have, without deliberation, suppressed it. The reader will believe that its excellence is very moderate when I acquaint him that the author gravely tells us he has divided his book into chapters that the reader may find time to breathe; and and that he has seasoned his work with anecdote to keep attention awake. One passage is, however, deserving of notice.

“ I have never,” says the author, “ violated truth in the progress of my narrative: I speak not from hearsay but positive knowledge; and in my prerogative of a traveller, I shall not be deterred by any mean pusillanimous motive from the

“ true statement of facts.” Again, says he,
 “ I may be arraigned with severity, but I
 “ have, in reality, been tender. Boileau
 “ has said

J'appelle un chat un chat, et Rolet un fripon.

I hate that tenderness so much in vogue ;
 I call a cat a cat, a rogue a rogue.

“ But I, from a delicacy that abhors the
 “ wounding of the feelings of a whole family
 “ by the personal mention of any member
 “ of it, have avoided all names.”

This work in the original has acquired great notoriety at Paris. It comprehends a picture of manners in a corner of the globe hitherto very partially and inaccurately represented; this part has made it popular among all classes of readers, for wit and satire are transitory and perishable, but nature and passion are eternal.

While the work was in a Paris press, a few extracts, constituting a sort of *avant courier*, were published in the *Gazette de France*, under the title of *Lettres d'un Colôn*

de la Louisiane. They necessarily excited interest; the volume was eagerly expected and it was ushered before the public in August, 1803.

There cannot be a doubt that a translation of this volume is a *desideratum* to the inhabitants of the United States. The books published by Pratz and his followers on the subject of Louisiana, either relate to military operations, or are so defective in whatever can interest the feelings, or inform the understanding, that they are now no longer found in the hands of general readers, but in the libraries of the curious. A work therefore was wanting relative to this colony that by its useful information should aid or correct the ideas of Americans on commercial and agricultural speculations. Such a work has been in a great measure, if not wholly, supplied by our present traveller. It possesses all the internal evidence of diligent inquiry, immediate observation, and deep reflection. His views are comprehensive; they embrace a variety of objects. And, though he passes over

slightly some things, yet on the subject of manners, the topography of the country, the soil and climate, its manufactures and staple commodities; on these subjects he is full, discriminative and solid.

It will be thought by many that our author has not always written to gratify curiosity, but to indulge envy, malignity, and a petulant desire to depreciate the country and its inhabitants. But the business of a traveller is to deliver manly sentiments, and he ought not to be deterred from his purpose by the petty objections of petty readers. If he be prodigal of his censure, he is not sparing of his praise, and he has devoted a chapter of eulogy to the inhabitants of the United States.

As far as I am capable of judging, he is an original writer. Other travellers in America are eternally consulting books, and endeavour to supply their poverty of remark by affluence of quotation. They are perpetually referring their readers to authors of

public notoriety, and a wide margin is devoted to the names of Jefferson and Morse. This is not the case with the present traveller. He observes, compares and reflects for himself. He never servilely follows the beaten track of his contemporaries.

His chief defect is in what relates to the natural history of the country; he treats it in such a superficial manner, that he neither assists the researches of the student, nor gratifies the curiosity of the inquisitive. But these are only shades that set off his lights more strongly.

I cannot speak favorably either of his style, his language or manner. His style is involved, his language not pure, and his manner not pleasing. In his long preface he heats himself with informing us that he has sacrificed to the graces in the construction of his sentences; and declaims about *precision, methode, clarte, solidite, &c.* But he endeavours in vain to defend himself with the shield of his own panegyric.

In the progress of this translation I have thought it my duty neither to omit nor interpolate, neither to soften nor aggravate, but make it my object to be true to the sense of my author. I have no other claim but that of diligence; I am only the interpreter of another's observations.

JOHN DAVIS.

CHAPTER I.

THE DEPENDENCE, SITUATION, AND EXTENT OF
THE COLONY.

YOU desire me, sir, with so much earnestness, to impart to you the observations I have made on a country in which I have dwelt two years and a half, and you estimate so highly my powers of discernment, that my mind is held in suspense by contrary impulses how to proceed; whether to decline the task, or comply with your pressing solicitations. In the first instance, I expose myself to the pain of disobliging you; and in the other, I run the risk of diminishing your esteem, by producing a trifling, superficial, and incorrect work. I am, however, determined in this affair, by the recollection that friendship is indulgent, and that the eye of Pylades has not the severity of that of Aristarchus.

Expect not, however, a description of every thing that can engage the attention. My object will be to acquaint you with the situation,

extent, and commerce of the colony ; its climate, population, manners, government, and productions. These solely merit the attention of the philosopher and man of sense ; the rest may serve to amuse, but bring no information to the understanding.

The colony known by the name of the province of Louisiana and West-Florida, belongs to the King of Spain. The major part of this territory, composed of Louisiana and the isle of New-Orleans, belonged formerly to France ; its first establishment having been made towards the end of the reign of Lewis XIV. or rather, under the regency of the Duke of Orleans, the founder of the colony : it was ceded to Spain by the French government after the war of 1756.

The taking possession of this new colony in the name of its new master, was in every respect a disastrous era for the country. The bands which had heretofore united it to France, were violently torn asunder. Assassinations of persons, confiscation of property, tyrannical expulsions, cruel imprisonment, and the horrors of the inquisition, were exercised by the new government. I do not exaggerate the impression made by the rigorous abuse of power when I

affirm, that there are still colonists existing, who, after a lapse of more than thirty years, never make the recital of those tragic scenes without discovering emotions of pity, horror, and indignation.

This colony, taken in its fullest extent, comprehends, upon the right bank of the Mississippi, and from its source to its mouth, all the territory composing Louisiana; bounded on the south by the Gulf of Mexico, and on the north by the Red Lake, (from the twenty-ninth to the forty-sixth degree of north latitude) on the east by the Mississippi, and on the west by New Mexico, and vast countries unexplored; and on the left bank of the same river, the territory called West-Florida; bordered on the south by the Gulf of Mexico, and on the north by the boundary line between the United States and Spain, fixed at the thirty-first degree of latitude; on the east by East Florida, and on the west by the Mississippi.

It will be seen by this view, that the river divides the colony into two unequal parts, namely, upon the right bank, and from its discharge at the Red Lake to its discharge in the Gulf of Mexico, is comprehended the vast territory of Louisiana, and upon the right bank, a narrow tract that extends towards the east, the

length of the same gulf, to the bay and river of Apalachia, bounded on one side by the ocean, and on the other by the frontiers of the United States, about the thirtieth or thirty-first degree of latitude.

If we take into consideration the whole extent of the tract comprehended in the boundaries that have been just exhibited, the colony under that point of view, includes an immense territory. But appreciating things by their real value, and considering the country in another point of view, both with regard to the nature of its soil and other local circumstances, without including Upper Louisiana, which begins at the thirty-first degree of latitude, and extends to the north and the east, an immense territory, wild and uncultivated, with a few partial exceptions, I am disposed to believe that this part of the colony, composed of Lower Louisiana and West Florida, situated at the thirtieth and thirty-first degrees of north latitude, and at the sixty-eighth or sixty-ninth degree of east longitude, from the meridian of Ferrol, where the principal settlements of the colony are established; this immense tract, I insist, comprehending a space of four thousand leagues, affords only five hundred square leagues of land

adapted to the purposes of agriculture: of these too, seventy-five are upon the banks of the Mississippi, a hundred and twenty-five in the interior of the country, and three hundred in the tract bounded by the Atacapas and the Apelousas; from which the inference is manifest, that only the eighth part of this vast country can be appropriated to the labours and residence of man, the remainder being covered with lakes, forests, and swamps, and dry and sandy deserts.

The centre of almost the whole of this part of the colony, taken from the banks of the river, and penetrating, from one part to another, into the interior of the neighbouring country, is, with a few exceptions, a level soil, where not a hillock presents itself six feet in height. There is, however, a slight elevation on the banks of the river, to the lakes and canals situated in the deep recesses of the country.

There is no map, or sketch deserving the name, of this colony. The defect is to be lamented. It can be attributed only to the carelessness of the government, and the indifference of the colonists. Hence, a country that has been inhabited for a century by a civilized people, is scarcely known to geographers; or, if any at-

tempts have been made to describe its countenance, they have been vague, feeble, and indigested.*

* The precise boundaries of Louisiana, westward of the Mississippi, though very extensive, are at present involved in some obscurity. Data are equally wanting to assign with precision its northern extent. From the source of the Mississippi, it is bounded eastwardly by the middle of the channel of that river to the thirty-first degree of latitude; thence, it is asserted upon very strong grounds, that according to its limits, when formerly possessed by France, it stretches to the east, as far, at least, as the river Padigo, which runs into the Bay of Mexico, eastward of the river Mobile.

It may afford useful information to remark, that Louisiana, including the Mobile settlements, was discovered and peopled by the French, whose monarchs made several grants of its trade, in particular to Mr. Crosat in 1712, and some years afterwards, with his acquiescence, to the well known Company projected by Mr. Law. This Company was relinquished in the year 1731. By a secret convention the 3d of November, 1762, the French government ceded so much of the province as lies beyond the Mississippi to the Iberville, thence through the middle of that river, and the lakes Maurepas and Pontchartrain to the sea, was ceded to Great Britain. Spain having conquered the Floridas from Great Britain during our revolutionary war, they were confirmed to her by the treaty of peace of 1783. By the treaty of St. Ildefonso, of the 1st of Oct. 1800, his catholic majesty promises and engages on his part to cede back to the French republic, six months after the full and entire execution of the conditions and stipulations therein contained, relative to the Duke of Parma, "the colony or province of Louisiana, with the same extent that it actually has

CHAPTER II.

OF THE RIVER MISSISSIPPI, AND ITS RELATIONS
TO THE COLONY WHICH IT RUNS
THROUGH AND DIVIDES.

THE Mississippi which divides the colony, and whose real name in the language of the aborigines of the country, is *Messachipi*, which signifies the *Father of Waters*, is one of the most considerable rivers in America. Its course is from nine hundred to a thousand leagues, considered from the Red Lake, whence it proceeds, towards the forty-sixth degree of north latitude, to the Gulf of Mexico, where it empties itself, at nearly the twenty-ninth degree, in a direction chiefly from north to south, but with a number of windings in a zig zag form, princi-

“ in the hands of Spain, that it had when France possessed it, “ and such as it ought to be after the treaties subsequently entered into between Spain and other states.” This treaty was confirmed and enforced by that of Madrid, of the 21st of March, 1801. From France it passed to the United States, by the treaty of the 30th of April, 1802, with a reference to the above clause, as descriptive of the limits ceded.—*Official Documents.....Trans.*

pally in the lower part. Its mouth, about a league wide, divided into several branches, is very confined, and is moreover obstructed by a quantity of mud, wood, and other substances, which it gathers in its course, and which it deposits upon its shores and in its bed, before it discharges itself into the Mexican Gulf. This mouth supplies but two channels, of which the better one offers a safe passage only to vessels whose draught of water does not exceed from twelve to fifteen feet. This is the more lamentable, as on this side of its mouth, the bed of the river, in the progress of about a hundred leagues, and, consequently, in the whole space of the lower part of the colony, which it divides, is of sufficient depth to admit vessels of the largest burthen, which might navigate its waters in perfect safety. But such is this inconvenience, that vessels above three hundred tons, cannot enter the river at present, nor go out of it, laden, without being exposed to the risk of running aground; unless it be in the Spring, during the great rise of the stream. Yet, tradition records, that sixty years ago, ships from seven to eight hundred tons, entered and went out of the river, at every season, without apprehension of danger.

The depth of the bed of the river, in the centre of the colonial settlements formed on its banks, about as far up as the arm of the Creek of the Fourche,* and at fifty leagues from its mouth, is, as nearly as can be ascertained, from thirty to forty fathoms, and its breadth in the same place, from four to five hundred fathoms, according to the rise or diminution of its waters, at the different seasons of the year; the river rising considerably in March, April, and May, and falling in September, October, and November.

The Mississippi in its upper part, taken above the thirty-first degree, or a hundred or more leagues beyond its winding course, on this side of its mouth, and in ascending thence to its source, is, in many places, obstructed by small islands, flats, and huge crooked branches of entire trees, which, carried along by its flood, during its rise, are stopped by banks of sand, and form, upon the surface of the water, a species of rocks not a little formidable; they are called stumps by the inhabitants. Hence the naviga-

* The Creek or Bayou of the Fourche, is on the west side of the Mississippi, about 25 leagues from New-Orleans; it is called in the old maps, La Riviere des Chitamaches. It flows from the Mississippi, and communicates with the sea to the west of the Balise.

tion of the upper part of the river is seldom practised during the night, from fear of accidents that may happen, particularly during its diminution. In fact, its navigation is made only with a kind of large covered arks, in the shape of chests, which are used to descend the stream, and barks or boats of smaller dimensions, equally adapted to ascend or go down it; sails are rarely used, but commonly oars, or else the boat is hauled along the river's bank, or pushed forward with poles. The passage of about five hundred leagues, from the station of the Illinois, the remotest establishment in the northern part of the colony, to New-Orleans, its principal settlement, is made in these boats, and generally effected from fifteen days to a month; and the passage back from New-Orleans to the same station of the Illinois, demands from six weeks to three months, according to the season, or, rather, according to the rise or diminution of the river.

Although during a great part of the year, the stream of the river is tolerably placid, being frequently broken by numerous elbows, which restrain its impetuosity, yet, it cannot be ascended without labour and difficulty. The reason is obvious. The river enjoys not the advantage of tides, nor can the diversity of winds, so use-

ful to navigation, produce any lasting effect, as the same wind may be both favourable and contrary in the same hour, in consequence of the serpentine progress of the stream. Hence its navigation is so tedious, that a vessel is not unfrequently fifteen days ascending from the Balise* to New-Orleans, though the distance exceeds not thirty-five leagues.

Under these circumstances, it would be impracticable to ascend this great river, deprived of the advantage of tides and favourable winds, if its numerous windings, by extending its course, did not calm its impetuosity, particularly during its rise and plenitude, the six first months of the year. It falls, on the other hand, and maintains a certain point of depression during the other six months; the difference of the two extremes being from twelve to fifteen per-

* About eight leagues below Plaquemines, the Mississippi divides itself into three channels, which are called the passes of the river, viz. the east, south, and south-west passes. Their course is from five to six leagues from the sea. The space between is a marsh with little or no timber on it; but from its situation, it may hereafter be rendered of importance. The east pass, which is on the left hand going down the river, is divided into two branches about two leagues below, viz. the Pass a la Loutre, and that known to mariners by the name of the Balise, at which there is a small block-house, and some huts of the pilots who reside here.—*State Documents*.....Trans.

pendicular feet. During the acme of its rise, the force of its current may be estimated at about a league an hour, and at its lowest state of depression, towards the close of the year, its current is scarcely perceptible.

In contemplating this grand and magnificent river, so remote in its source, receiving into its bosom so many mighty streams, and augmenting its waters from other concurring causes; the melting of the snow and ice towards the north; the superabundance of rain which increases the mass and violence of its water by freshes; beholding this majestic river thus augmented; traversing an immense territory, and involving in its flood a prodigious quantity of the largest trees of the forest, and hurrying them along its banks that overlook its surface; a stranger just arrived in the country, cannot view without awe the spectacle before him, or refrain from wondering at the profound tranquillity with which the inhabitants dwell on the river, and pursue their labours with apparent unconsciousness of danger. But the emotions of the stranger abate, when he reflects that these same banks have been inhabited by the colonists and their ancestors for nearly a century, without experiencing any disaster from the river's inundation; its inundations having been only temporary, par-

tial and without any serious consequences, unlike the rivers of Europe, which, by a sudden eruption have involved in their torrents, houses, cattle, and the human species.

Let us investigate the causes of this physical phænomenon, where an immense tract has been preserved, which seems to be momentarily threatened with a total subversion.

In the first place, that this river, traversing a vast region which is almost level, before it reaches the inhabited places, acquires no fatal impetuosity in its course; that when arrived in Lower Louisiana, the country possessing less acclivity, if it be possible, than the preceding, it runs there with less force than before; the windings too, which the river makes, and the frequent angles and protuberances of its banks, concurring at the same time to constrain its impetuosity. Its volume of water too, is considerably enfeebled and diminished, by a subtraction made of a great part on the left bank, by the formation of the Manchac arm, or otherwise the Iberville river, which discharges itself into lake Pontchartrain, and on the right bank, by the Ichafalaya, Plaquemine, and Fourche, of which the two first empty themselves into lakes, towards the south-west end

of the colony, and frontiers of New Mexico, and the last, into the ocean, on this side of the lakes.

In the second place, it is to be remarked, that the land, being more elevated on the banks of the river than in the interior of the country, (with the exception of some insulated spots) has, in consequence, towards the interior, and the lakes, a small, but uninterrupted declivity; which, procuring to the river, in its inundation, an easy opening, tempers its violence, and shelters the country from the ravages and devastation, which would otherwise result from the choaking up of the waters. Inasmuch as that in this country, by a remarkable peculiarity, the river which washes it, and menaces it with destruction, cannot destroy it by a general deluge; as the surface of its waters is higher than that of the adjacent land; and, in its overflowings, a declivity every where encounters and opposes its force.

This, I think, is one of the great causes which explains the rareness of the inundations of this mighty river, and the harmless consequences ensuing from them, in proportion to the inference of danger, naturally drawn from appear-

ances. And, hence, the undisturbed tranquility of the inhabitants on its banks; who, without reflection, or a desire to trace effects to their causes, dwell, with perfect unconsciousness of danger, and entertain no apprehension from the great stream, whose superficies, exceeding, by several feet, the level of their habitations, rolls and thunders above their heads.

Notwithstanding, many philosophers concur in opinion, that if, during the highest elevation of the waters of the river, when it washes the brim of the shores, and involves in its progress, branches and entire trees; if, during that period, a hurricane was to rage,* it is probable, that horrible consequences would ensue; that the wind, swelling the river above its banks, would overturn the soil in a general deluge. But happily, the union of these circumstances, if not impossible, is highly improbable: The hurricanes never prevail before August, when the river begins to fall.

The planters avail themselves of the waters of the river, during its highest elevation, to soak and drown the rice-fields, by the means of

* Hurricanes are not unknown to Louisiana; but they have always happened when the Mississippi was in a state of depression.

drains ; and, by the means of canals which receive the water and discharge it at the distance of forty French acres, in the bottom of the swamps, they also put in motion a great number of saw-mills. The same practice might be used to water the sugar cane plantations ; but the fresh and humid property of the soil renders unnecessary a resource so much practised and almost indispensable at the Antilles. During this elevation, the water of the river, which insinuates itself into the interior of the country, reaches so nearly the superficies of its banks, that, in agitating it at certain places, it will spout out and run over. An exception to the proverb which affirms that the water goes always to the river. On the contrary, the waters of the river filtrating always with force through the soil, penetrate abundantly into the drains, and form an assemblage of currents which lose themselves in a remote part of the country, in a kind of basins named Bayoux. At this period, in navigating the river, the surface of the water appears to the mariner on a level with the tops of the houses ; these houses are built within a hundred yards of the banks, and about three hundred from each other.

The inhabitants drink no other water than that of the river ; in fact, there is no other here drinkable, and they make no use of cisterns. They drink it filtrated, or after it has deposited its sediment. Before this operation, in its natural state, it is disagreeable to the palate, at least to those who are not accustomed to it ; nor is its insipid raw taste more repugnant than the saffron colour it acquires from its sediment. Otherwise, it appears to possess no noxious properties, notwithstanding the river is the receptacle of immense filth, and a thousand dead beasts are thrown into it, whatever malady may have caused their death. But whatever the water may be, the Creoles of the country make a pompous eulogium of it, attributing to it the rarest and most salubrious properties.

There exists no easy communication from one bank of the river to the other ; no ferry-boats cross over at regulated prices ; the chief obstacle seems to be, the quantity of wood and trees hurried along the river at its period of elevation. Hence, these two parts of the colony may remain distinct and unconnected in their interests. This defect of communication, which is only partially obviated by canoes, will conduce to keep the right shore of the river, that is

Louisiana, in a state less active and flourishing than the left, or West Florida ; and to the latter, is superadded the incalculable advantage of possessing the sole entrepot of the colony, the central point towards which all trade inclines, the mart of all the commerce—New Orleans.

After having thus spoken of the Mississippi, of that admirable river to which we shall frequently recur in the progress of this work, as the most interesting object of the country ; let us traverse its borders, and see what they present.

CHAPTER III.

SETTLEMENTS ON THE BANKS OF THE MISSISSIPPI IN THE LOWER PART OF THE COLONY, AND DESCRIPTION OF NEW-ORLEANS.

THE tract which presents itself for the first twenty leagues on the two banks of the river, supplies only an aspect, monotonous, sad, and uninviting. A low and swampy shore, in many parts, drowned by the river, uninhabited and uninhabitable, where only a wild and mishapen vegetation subsists; wet rushes, or trees whose trunks stand in the mud, and are covered with divers reptiles, and troublesome insects, such, for instance, as musquitoes, and those cruel tormentors on which the natives have bestowed the significant appellation of gallinippers; such is the picture that offers in this vast space, at the first entrance into the colony.

It is about fifteen leagues below New-Orleans, that the settlements on the colony commence, which comprehend a tongue of land susceptible only of cultivation between the river and the

swamps. After which, advancing confusedly beyond the elbow which forms the bend of the river called *Le Detour des Anglais*, and is so difficult to double, a small number of saw-mills, some sugar-houses, and spots where vegetables are cultivated, disposed in a file one after another along the river's bank, present themselves to view.*

At length, after eight or nine days navigation, the vessel which transports you advancing slowly, sometimes by oars, and sometimes by sails, you arrive and anchor before *New-Orleans*.†

New-Orleans is situated in the thirtieth degree of north latitude, and the ninetieth degree west longitude from the meridian of *Greenwich*, on the east side of the *Mississippi*, thirty-five leagues from the sea. In following the

*These plantations are yet thin, and owned by the poorest people. Ascending, you see them improve on each side, till you reach *New-Orleans*.....*Trans*.

† The usual distance accomplished by a boat in ascending, is five leagues per day. The rapidity of the current in the spring season, when the waters of all the rivers are high, facilitates the descent, so that the same voyage by water, which requires three or four months to perform from the capital, may be made to it in from twelve to sixteen days.....*Trans*.

course of the river, it is built on its left bank, on an island dependant upon West Florida, and formed by the Gulf of Mexico, lake Pontchartrain, the Manchac, or river Iberville, and the Mississippi. This island is about sixty leagues long; its breadth varies from two to fifteen leagues. But the major part of this tract offers insurmountable obstacles to cultivation, and is even uninhabitable, on account of the vast swamps with which it is intersected, and the physical impossibility to drain them, and purge a soil like that of Lower Louisiana.

The river forms before the city, a large creek, or kind of semi-circular bason, here and there widening. It is an equivalent for a port on the east, where vessels anchor close to one another; and so near the water-side, that by means of a couple of forts, in the form of a bridge, there is an easy communication from land to each vessel, and their cargoes are discharged with the greatest ease.

The depth of the river, taken at the middle of its bed, in front of the city, is about forty fathoms; about half a century ago, its depth at the same place was seventy fathoms. Hence it follows, (if these measurements be not faulty) that the bed of the river loses in depth what

it gains in breadth: it is considerably wider than it was. Its breadth, estimated at the same place, is about five hundred fathoms, proportionate to the elevation and depression of its waters.

Behind the city is a communication by water with the lake Pontchartrain, which is not more than two leagues distant, in a right line, towards the north-east, from whence small vessels come up with sails, by the way of the Bayou Saint John, which there empties itself. At this confluence is an open canal, which was made some years ago, under the direction of Mons. de Carondelet, a work truly useful; which, in procuring to the city the advantages of a double port, purged and drained the neighbouring swamps. Formerly, those very vessels navigated the canal, which now anchor before the city; but, it having been neglected since the departure of the governor, it has lost its advantages in being choaked up; and, it is now the receptacle of only the most diminutive barks.

The city is about three thousand six hundred feet in length. To which may be super-added the suburbs, extending, like the city, along the river, and about half as long. But,

strictly speaking, both the city and suburbs are mere outlines, the greatest part of the houses being constructed of wood, having but one story, erected often on blocks, and roofed with shingles; the whole being of a very combustible wood, that is, of cypress.* Hence, this city has been twice on fire, accidentally, in the interval of a small number of years, in the month of March 1788, and the month of December 1794. Yet, notwithstanding, the inhabitants every day build wooden-houses, regardless of consequences.

There are a few houses, more solid and less exposed, on the banks of the river, and in the front streets. Those houses are of burnt brick; some one, others two stories high, having the

* The city is laid out on Penn's regular, but monotonous plan, with the streets crossing each other at right angles. The number of houses may be computed at about fourteen hundred, and the area of the city about three hundred acres; the whole of which, however, is not built over, as many of the squares, at the north-west end, are totally void of houses. The principal buildings are as near the river as the plan of the city will admit; and houses situated near this spot, are of more value than those situated farther back from the Mississippi. The houses are raised about seven or eight feet from the earth, to make room for the cellars, which are on a level with the ground; for no business can be carried on below its surface, on account of the surrounding waters.....Trans.

upper part furnished with an open gallery, which surrounds the building. In the heart of the town, and the suburbs, one sees nothing but barracks.

The streets are well laid out, and tolerably spacious; but that is all. Bordered by a foot-way of four or five feet, and throughout unpaved, walking is inconvenient: but what more particularly incommodes the foot-passenger is, the projecting flight of steps before every door. The streets being flat, the filth from the houses remains where it was thrown; and, during a great part of the year, they are a common sewer; a sink of nastiness, dirt, and corruption.

With regard to the public buildings, there are only the Hotel de Ville, and the Parochial Church,* both built of brick; the former has, however, but one story. They stand near each other, on a spot contiguous to the river. At both times, when the city was on fire, they offered asylums to the inhabitants; many seeking refuge under their roofs, instead of exerting themselves to extinguish the flames.

* This church is a plain brick building of the ionic order, and is the best edifice in the place.....Trans.

Nearly in the centre of the town is a small theatre,* where, on my arrival, I saw several dramas performed with considerable ability. The company was composed of half a dozen actors and actresses, refugees from the theatre of Cape Francais, in the island of St. Domingo. Nor is this the first instance of Louisiana having profited by the calamities of that island.

But by some misunderstanding between the civil and military of the colony, and the indifference of the citizens and colonists, the theatrical troop has been dispersed, and the theatre shut. Not long ago, however, some of the citizens were seized with a fit of play-acting, and a display of their dramatic talents was made in the representation of the Death of Cæsar. They in consequence stabbed with great vigour, rage, and perseverance, this enemy of Roman liberty in the person of an old colonist, bald headed from years, and corpulent with good living. The venerable colonist sustained his part well. But the spectators, who could not yield themselves to the theatrical il-

* This little theatre is built of wood, and consists of one row of boxes only, with a pit and gallery. The inhabitants of New-Orleans are musical, and gentlemen often perform in the orchestra of the theatre.....Trans.

lusion, ceased not to see, throughout the representation, in the hero of ancient Rome raised from the dead, and transported from the banks of the Tiber to those of the Mississippi ; they did not cease a moment to behold the venerable and portly Mr. B*****.

In winter, during the Carnaval, there is a public ball open twice a week, one day for grown people, and another for children. It is nothing but a kind of hall made out of a huge barrack, and stands in such an unfortunate part of the city, that it is only accessible through mud and mire. Each side is accommodated with boxes, where the mamas form a tapestry, and where ladies of younger date, who come merely as spectators, are accommodated with seats. The latter, in irony, are called Bredouilles. But these Bredouilles often find their passions raised so high by the scene before them, that they cannot rest satisfied with passively looking on. Animated by the voluptuous attitudes, and significant looks of the dancers, they frequently descend into the scene of pleasure, the face, neck, and bosom suffused with crimson, and, giving their hands to the first partners that offer, go down the dance with the rest, panting and palpitating. The musicians are half a dozen gypsies,

or else people of colour, scraping their fiddles with all their might.

The room is miserably lighted ; no chandeliers, but simple candles. In short the *ensemble* is so wretched, that every emulation of embellishment would be ridiculous.

It is hither, in the months of January and February, but seldom sooner or later, that the inhabitants repair, men and women, to forget their cares in dancing ; nor will they tire at their country dances, *grosso modo*, from seven at night till cock-crowing the next morning. The price of admittance into this temple of Terpsichore is four dutch shillings, or half a piastre for every individual. Every white person in a decent garb, is admitted for this sum. But the dancing is afterwards engrossed by a certain number of persons who preconcert the business. This species of monopoly is often productive of unhappy consequences. The respectable mother of a family in this country, owes to it the loss of her only son, a youth of the most promising talents and acquirements. He had lately returned from Europe, and resented with becoming spirit the monopoly of an amusement which was designed to be general. A meeting took

place between him and one of the dancers the next day, they fought with swords, and the youth was run through the body.

An affair of more notoriety is still fresh in the recollection of the inhabitants. The eldest son of the governor, not liking the French country dances, or else acquitting himself ill in them, lost no occasion to substitute for them the English country dances; an innovation the company tolerated from deference for his distinguished rank. This act of complaisance in the assembly was misunderstood by the youthful Spaniard; he abused it grossly. A number of French country dances being formed, and the dancers beginning to move, behold our young illustrious Spaniard calls out, "*Contre-danses Anglaises!*" and the dancers inflamed at his want of moderation, ordered the music to play on, exclaiming unanimously, *Contre-danses Francaises!* The son of the governor soon found partizans, who joined with him in the cry of "*Contre-danses Anglaises!*" while the dancers, firm to their purpose, reiterated "*Contre-danses Francaises!*" It was *confusion worse confounded*, a vociferation without end. At length the illustrious Spaniard finding the dancers obstinate, called out to the fiddlers, "Cease playing, you

rascals !” The fiddlers instantly obeyed. The party of the young governor gained strength. The officer who was stationed with a guard of soldiers to maintain order in the place, thought only of enforcing the will of the illustrious Spaniard ; he ordered his men to fix their bayonets, and disperse the dancers. The scene now beggared all description. Women shrieking and wringing their hands, girls fainting and falling on the floor, men cursing and unsheathing their swords. On one side grenadiers with fixed bayonets stood in a hostile attitude ; on the other the gallant dancers were opposed with drawn swords. During this squabble and uproar, how did a number of Americans act, who were present at the ball? Men of a pacific nature, and habituated to neutrality, they neither advocated† the French nor English country dances. They ran to the assistance of the fair ladies who had fainted away ; and, loaded with their precious burdens, carried them through drawn swords and fixed bayonets to a place of safety. Mr. D*****, a French merchant of the city, running to the succour of his wife, found her senseless in the arms of four Americans.

† I introduce *advocate* as a verb with a hesitating hand. It is not authorised by any of those writers whose works are considered the Wells of English Undeiled....Trans.

It was at the moment a conflict was about to take place, and the farce of the governor's son was likely to terminate in a tragedy, that three young Frenchmen, lately arrived from Europe, mounted the orchestra and harangued the crowd. They spoke with an eloquence prompted by the occasion. They declaimed on the superiority of concord over dissention; they entreated, conjured, and exhorted the parties, as they respected the safety, preservation, and lives of the ladies not to make a field of battle of a place that was consecrated to soft delight. Their exhortations restored peace and harmony to the society; and to the eloquence of these youthful mentors may be applied aptly the line of the roman poet.

Ille regit dictis animos et pectora mulcet.

By godlike Orat'ry's persuasive charms.

Their minds he governs, and their rage disarms.

The ball was even resumed, and continued in the presence of the governor, who had arrived to calm the tumult of the assembly. The field of battle remained in possession of the advocates for the French country dances, and the officer of the guard was put under arrest.

What I have here represented is founded on facts. It will serve to place in a just light the emphatical eulogiums pronounced on this

ball by the inhabitants, in the presence of strangers. In the extravagance of praise, they maintain it transcends the Ridotto at Venice, the Vauxhall of London, and the Opera at Paris. It is time to pull down this fabric of vain glory, and reduce their ball to its real standard. Such ought to be the object of a traveller; not to exhibit things through a prism, which distorts while it embellishes, but to shew them as they really are. I persuade myself I shall not merit the application of the proverb incurred by so many travellers. *Il fait beau mentir qui vient de loin.*†

What more shall I say of the city and its institutions? Shall I name its Military Hospital, or Royal Hospital, if you like the term better? It is a poor structure. Shall I describe the Charitable Hospital?‡ It is more deserving of notice. Must I make mention of Fort St. Charles, and its pre-

† *It is to no purpose that a traveller tells lies, for in virtue of his profession he will not be believed.* Whether our traveller ever violates truth or not, let the people of New-Orleans determine. But this is a fact which no one will dispute, that his greatest enemies cannot accuse him of flattery. I guess, if he ever leaves again the banks of the Seine, it will not be for those of the Mississippi.....Trans.

‡ Belonging to this Hospital there is an annual revenue of 1500 dollars, endowed by an individual lately deceased.....State papers, page 19.

tended ramparts ?§ It would provoke the risibility of an engineer. Shall I pry into the recesses of the convent of nuns ? It is composed of forty sisters. All these are buildings of the meanest order. Nor can the city boast an exchange, a college, or a library.||

In the suburbs have been established two important manufactories, two cotton mills and a sugar bake-house. That of the cotton mills is concentrated in the same work shop ; a thousand weight of cotton is cleaned, packed, weighed and delivered in a day. Both these useful inventions owe their origin to some French refugees from St. Domingo.

§ This fortification consists of five bastions regularly laid out, and is furnished with a banquette, rampart, parapet, ditch, covert way, glacis ; the curtines are nothing more than a line of pallisades about four feet high, which are set at a small distance from one another, and consequently penetrable by a musquet ball. None of the bastions mount above four or five pieces of cannon.

|| It is not in young countries that we are to expect much taste for literature. Emigrants to such places are generally men of a speculative turn ; it is not the muses but Mammon they worship. Look at our United States. Did ever a review or magazine live to any kind of maturity ? If any thing succeeds it is a folio of four pages, viz. a newspaper....Trans.

The population of the city and suburbs may be estimated at about ten thousand individuals of both sexes, and all ages, of whom four thousand are whites, between two and three thousand freed people of colour, and the rest slaves. In this enumeration I do not comprehend from seven to eight hundred men who compose the garrison of the city, nor those attached to the marine and merchant service, nor strangers who are not residents.

Census of the City of New-Orleans, extracted from State Documents.

Date	Quarters.	Whites.	Free people of colour.	Slaves.	Total.	
1803	First Quarter.	745	203	546	1494	
	Second Quarter.	891	—	951	1842	
	Third Quarter.	722	787	579	2088	
	Fourth Quarter.	440	219	225	884	
	Sub. of St. Charles.	70	—	170	240	
	Do. of St. Louis.	380	126	302	808	
			—	—	—	—
			3248	1335	2773	7356
		700	—	—	700	
		—	—	—	—	
		3948			8056	

N. B. This Census underrates the population. The number of free people of colour in the Second quarter not being included.

Every article of subsistence that the country produces has, in the space of a few years, been almost doubled in value, and is becoming every day more dear at New-Orleans, partly owing to the great influx of emigrants, partly to the preference the culture of cotton claims over that of rice, and partly to the multiplication of those alimentary, vegetable and animal productions which were formerly the object of labour. Inso-much that a barrel of bruised rice sells now at the New-Orleans market at from eight to nine piasters; a quarter of indian corn in the ear one piaster; a turkey from one and a half piasters to two piasters: a capon from six escalins* to a piaster; a hen from four to five escalins; a fowl twenty-five sols or a quarter of a piaster; a pair of small pigeons three escalins; a dozen of eggs twenty-five sols, and all other articles at a proportionate rate.

The current coins of the city, as well as of the whole colony, are as follows: In gold, the quadruple value sixteen piasters; the half quadruple eight piasters, and some other pieces of less value, but all scarce enough: in silver, the dollar piaster, value eight escalins or a hundred sols; the half-piaster value four escalins or fifty sols;

* Eleven escalins make a dollar.

the quarter of a piaster or gourdin, value two shillings or twenty-five sols, the escalin value twelve and a half sols ; and the picailon or half escalin value six sols and a quarter. It is to be noticed that this estimation by sous is only ideal, there being no copper money in use.

Such is New-Orleans at the present era. It deserves rather the name of a great straggling town, than of a city ; though even to merit that title, it would be required to be longer . In fact, the mind can, I think, scarcely image to itself a more disagreeable place on the face of the whole globe ; it is disgusting in whatever point of view it be contemplated, both as a whole, separately, and the wild, brutish aspect of its suburbs. Yet it is the only town in the whole colony, and, in the ardour of admiration, it is called by the inhabitants the capital, the city !

It must however be acknowledged that New-Orleans is destined by nature to become one of the principal cities of North America, and perhaps the most important place of commerce in the new world, if it can only maintain the incalculable advantage of being the sole *entrepot* and central point of a country almost flat, immense in its extent, of which the Mississippi is the

great receptacle of its produce, and where the soil is fertile, the climate generally salubrious, and the population increasing beyond all former example.† If the advantages of its situation be duly considered, the most sanguine mind cannot but predict its future greatness, wealth and prosperity.

† The Mississippi first acquires importance in the latitude of forty-five north. It flows in a devious course above two thousand miles, and enters the Bay of Mexico, by many mouths, in latitude 29. In these latitudes is comprized the temperate zone, which has been always deemed most favorable to the perfection of animal and vegetable nature. This advantage is not marred by the *sterilizing* influence of lofty mountains, the pestilential fumes of intractable bogs, or the dreary uniformity of sandy plains. Through the whole extent there is not a snow-capt hill, a moving sand, or a volcanic eminence.

This valley is of different breadths. The ridge which bounds it on the east, is, in some places, nearly a thousand miles from the great middle stream. From this ridge secondary rivers of great extent and magnificence flow towards the centre, and the intermediate regions are an uncultivated paradise. On the west the valley is of similar dimensions, the streams are equally large and useful, and the condition of the surface equally delightful.

There cannot be imagined a district more favorable to settlement. In addition to a genial climate and soil, there are the utmost facilities of communication and commerce. The whole district is the sloping side of a valley, through which run deep and navigable rivers, which begin their course in the remotest borders, and which all terminate in the central stream. This

There is no other town, or even village, in the whole extent of Lower Louisiana, whether on the banks of the river, or the various cantons

stream, one of the longest and widest in the world, is remarkably distinguished by its depth and freedom from natural impediments. It flows into a gulf, which contains a great number of populous islands. Among these islands are numerous passages into the ocean which washes the shores of Europe. Thus, not only every part of the district is easily accessible by means of rivers, but the same channels are ready to convey the products of every quarter to markets the most contiguous and most remote.

Fancy in her happiest mood cannot combine all the felicities of nature and society in a more absolute degree than will be actually combined when the valley of the Mississippi shall be long enough included with the American states. Not one of the impediments to opulence will be found here. Not one of the advantages, the least of which have made other regions the envy and admiration of mankind, will here be wanting.

The Nile flows in a torrid climate through a long and narrow valley. The fertility which its annual inundations produce, extends only two or three leagues on either side of it. The benefits of this fertility are marred by the neighborhood of scorching sands, over which the gales carry intolerable heat and incurable pestilence, and which harbour a race of savages whose trade is war and pillage. The greater Nile of the western hemisphere diffuses by its inundations the fertility of Egypt twenty leagues from its shores, and occupies a valley wider than from the Duna to the Rhine, flowing among the most beautiful dales, and under the benignest seasons.

The territories of Great Britain in India, produce nothing which the territory of the Mississippi could not as easily produce. The Ganges fertilizes a valley less extensive. Its Deltas,

scattered more remote. For one would not surely dignify with the name of town the establishment of Pensacola. When the English had possession of the place, it wore the aspect of a snug town, but since it has fallen under the domination of Spain, it has never been better than a mere military post.

as well as those of the Nile, are in the same latitudes, and these rivers generate the same exuberant soil, only in smaller space and less quantities than the American Nile : but the Mississippi comprehends in its bosom the regions of the temperate zone as well as the tropical climates and products.

A nation could not bury itself in a more accessible fortress than this valley. The mouths of the river, as to all attacks by sea, are better than the bastions of Malta. All around the entrance is impassable to men and horses, and the great channel is already barred by forts, easily extended and improved.

But the grand advantage which flows to the American States from the possession of the Mississippi is, that the door is open to Mexico, and the valuable mines and provinces of Spain are exposed to an easy invasion. The Spanish possessions lie on the west and south. The road to them is easy and direct. They are wholly defenceless. The frontier has neither forts, nor allies, nor subjects. To march over them is to conquer. A detachment of a few thousands would find faithful guides, practicable roads, and no opposition between the banks of the Mississippi and the gates of Mexico. The unhappy race whom Spain has enslaved, are without arms and without spirit ; or their spirit would prompt them to befriend the invader. They would hail the Americans as deliverers, and execrate the ministers of Spain as tyrants.

(Translated from a French pamphlet (I believe a very scarce one) published at Paris.) Translator.

CHAPTER IV.

MANNERS AND CUSTOMS. OBSERVATIONS ON THE WHITE CREOLES OF LOUISIANA.

THE greatest part of the whites who inhabit this colony, is composed of creoles or natives, the rest is a mixture of French, Spaniards, Germans, Americans, &c.

The Creoles of Louisiana, male and female, are generally of a middle stature, well formed, and rather robust than slender. They are seldom fresh coloured; one sees few faces purpled over with the ruddy hue of health. They are rather fair than brown, and their hair is commonly light from their infancy, or if changed by years, attains to a chesnut.

The women of this country are peculiarly the favourites of nature. Their skin, without being of a ravishing white, is fair; their features though irregular, are agreeable; their lips are of a blushing red, their bosoms are heaving snows, their eyes blue and voluptuous, and their fair hair is often long enough to fall almost to their feet.

The women, however, are not remarkable for that grace, that elegance, that ease, in a word that *je ne sais quoi*, a charm to be felt but not described, which the French ladies so eminently possess.

The women, considered morally, are superior to the men. They have more penetration. Though quite as ill instructed, their ignorance is not so apparent. To them also belongs the practice of hospitality. When a stranger of any gentility goes into a house and requests shelter, it is the mistress who receives him and does the honours of the place. The master, if he sits down with his guest, is upon thorns; he leaves him without ceremony to be entertained by his wife, and goes about his business. The being that can think, will always be superior to him who can only labour. Hence the Louisianian wives acquire an ascendancy over their Creole husbands.

When an European, however, joins himself to one of these women, the scene is different. Influenced by example they aspire at the government. But, to use a vulgar phrase, an European husband not being quite so easy, will not suffer them to wear the breeches. Hence those jars and conflicts, that squabbling and scolding, that are witnessed by the river god, and resound from the banks of the disturbed Mississippi. One sees in

the country, but oftener in the town, a great number of females, who are neither maids, nor wives, nor widows ; but who, finding their European husbands would not cede to them the empire, have beaten a retreat, determined not to yield to a superior.

In other respects the Lousianian women have a number of good qualities. They are respectable daughters, affectionate wives, and tender mothers, skilled in domestic economy, frugal, modest and reserved. Ought not a husband, blessed with one of these fair spirits for a wife, to make a sacrifice of his authority to preserve peace in his house? What man in his senses would disdain the government of a seraph form, or not obey sweet mandates from cherub lips? But husbands are fools on this subject. They begin with discussions and end with divorce.

It is, perhaps, owing to this cause that there are so few marriages in Louisiana. The country abounds in fine girls, who languish in celibacy, and of whom many will never have husbands but in their dreams. Marriage for these unfortunate vestals is the cup of Tantalus.

Besides, the number of girls in the colony greatly exceeds that of boys. The birth of a boy

creates rejoicings ; that of a girl, is looked upon as another weight put into the scale that already preponderates too much.

The female Creoles being in general without education, can possess no taste for reading, music or drawing ; but they are passionately fond of dancing. They will pass whole nights in succession at this exercise.

They are very prolific, bear early and long. They are seldom married seven years without having half a dozen children, and sometimes more ; they are still young, fresh, healthy, and usually complete the dozen. It is a very common thing for the mother and daughter to be big at the same time ; sometimes the grand-daughter figures in the scene, and makes a trio of big bellies.

The Creoles say the Mississippi water, which they drink, has a tendency to make them prolific. It is a fact, that women who in other parts of the world could never breed, have become pregnant in a year after their arrival in Louisiana.

The rarity of marriages is lamentable, when we consider the aptitude to propagation peculiar to the country. During the two years and a half that I resided in the colony, there were not thirty

marriages within thirty leagues of New-Orleans, and comprehended in that space, there were at least six hundred white girls from fourteen to five and twenty, comely, healthy and capable of fulfilling the precept of increase and multiply.

The ladies of New-Orleans dress themselves with taste. In the short space of a few years, the change in their dress from rusticity to elegance is really astonishing. Only three years ago, they almost all wore disgusting round short petticoats,* long gowns with sweeping trains, without any earthly taste in the colour of their garments. Such glaring flaring ribbons, such flaunting top knots; in short all their finery was mixed with such frippery as could not but provoke the smiles of a man acquainted with the dress of real high life. They now feel the ridicule of such a costume. Their present dress recommends them. They have been taught by the example of a few female Parisians, to sacrifice to the graces in the choice of their clothes, and manner of adjustment. Their gowns suit their shapes, they have thrown away their stays, and the gauze shades, but does not conceal their heaving beauties.†

* Jupes rondes et courtes.

† It is the peculiar felicity of a Frenchman to discuss subjects the most profound, and assist with skill at the toilettes of the ladies.... Trans.

The women in the country are less pompous in their apparel. But they love it equally well. Their little hearts beat with tumult at the sight of a new dress, that has the character of being fashionable. Their waists are every day getting short, their arms more naked, and their bosoms more bare.

A custom peculiar to this country, is, when any one falls sick to transport him to New-Orleans, however remote it may be. A physician or surgeon among the planters would find no encouragement; instead of having a dinner to eat, he would count the trees of the forest. They are content with a few books on the science of medicine, which they are perpetually thumbing over, such as the works of Tissot, Buchan,* and *hoc genus omne*. At the first symptoms of sickness, they hold the book in one hand, and mix up medicines with the other. But often mistaken in their prog-

* I had long the honor of Dr. Buchan's acquaintance in London. His upright figure, silver locks and prominent nose impressed respect. He lodged at a hair-dresser's next door to the Chapter, and was such a constant attendant at the coffee-house, that when it was once put up for sale, a wag placed his name among the fixtures of the catalogue....Trans.

nostics and diagnostics, and making an apothecary's shop of the throat of the patient, they often bring that indisposition to a serious malady, which a few simples, or even nature left to herself would have cured. Then the market cart is brought out, Dobbin is harnessed, and the sick person is jolted from the plantation to the city.

It is for the profound gentlemen of the faculty, to decide whether this transportation of twenty or more miles has not an injurious tendency. Whether it be conforming to the precepts of Hippocrates to drag a sick man out of his bed, place him in an uneasy vehicle, and persevere in a day's journey, scarcely stopping to rest? I suspect the physicians of New-Orleans would advocate the practice. It is their interest to countenance it, and hence that city is a hospital of sick; those gentleman every day behold the sick presenting themselves at their doors, as customers repair to the shop of the baker. They meet together, press the pulse, look very profound, shake their noddles, administer physic, and send in their bills.

Hence no profession is so lucrative at New-Orleans as that of a physician. But a physician there is also a surgeon, apothecary and man-midwife. As the demon of the day decrees, he prescribes, phlebotomizes, mixes medicine and uses the forceps.

The women are not less infatuated than the men. When the full projection of their shape admonishes that the time of deposing their burthen is at hand, they repair also to New-Orleans. They have been taught to believe that a safe delivery can only be expected from a surgeon; and thus they submit that operation to a man, which not only from delicacy, but from superior female tenderness and dexterity, belongs to a woman; experience does not justify them in this preference. Whatever may be the cause, whether the ignorance of the surgeons, or the humidity of the atmosphere, together with the little care the women take of themselves before and after delivery, there is no place where lying-in is more fatal than in the town of New-Orleans.

Luxury within a dozen years, has made great progress through the colony. Every thing in the town is tinctured with ostentation. An air of expense distinguishes the apparel, vehicles, furniture of the inhabitants. Simplicity has taken flight, parade has usurped its place. This luxury is dangerous in a rich nation, but to regions ever doomed to mediocrity it is a mortal poison.

When I speak of luxury, I use it as a relative term. What is luxury at New-Orleans, would not have been thought such at Cape Francois be-

fore its calamity. Luxury is the extension of a man's expense beyond his means. As the resources, therefore, of these people bear no proportion to their expenses, they are infected with luxury.

Luxury and corruption go hand in hand. This is strongly exemplified at New-Orleans by the number of white infants, the fruit of illicit commerce, exposed nightly in the streets, a maternal sacrifice to false honour. One of these unfortunate babes was found last winter by an Indian woman, exposed to the rigours of an inclement night. She was attracted to the spot by its cries ; she instantly pressed the child to her heart, gave it the breast, took it home to her family, and adopted the little foundling abandoned by the world, and devoted to death. What a contrast of sentiment and conduct, humiliating to the one, and glorious to the other ; and what consequences are to be deduced from a practice so frequent and notorious !

The society of New-Orleans is not desirable. The inhabitants assemble, not to enjoy the flow of soul, but from motives of ostentation. It is a good dress, not a good heart that conciliates ; one never finds a reciprocity of sentiment, or an interchange of reason. It is too a tessellated pavement ; here a Creole, there an

Englishman ; here a Frenchman, there a Spaniard ; here a German, there an Italian. It is a tower of Babel ; various are the dialects, or if one general language prevails, it is the language of interest.*

Falsehood has attained to such a height, that one lies here for the pleasure of lying. No people in the world have such a tendency to hyperbolic amplification. They will exaggerate a fly into an elephant, and a mole-hill into a mountain.

The French language is generally used in the colony : Spanish and English are, however pretty

* In all societies, where a number of people from different countries have met together, every one will naturally persevere in those habits to which he has been accustomed in his own country ; and though a promiscuous intercourse may induce many to relax a little, yet it will be long before they form a general character. The residents at New Orleans are English, Scotch, Irish, Americans, French and Spanish ; and though the former constitute by far the greatest body of the people, yet the two latter form a distinct division, of which the Spaniards are the least considerable. The characteristics of the nations are nearly the same as in the mother country, though somewhat altered by that natural progress of assimilation already hinted at. The climate too may have some influence, and induce them to make some little deviation from usage for the sake of ease and comfort.....Trans.

universal ; the first on account of the ascendancy of the government, whose acts, as well as those of the administration and judiciary order, are issued in that language ; the second owing to the influence of the commerce and neighbourhood of the American United States. And both in consequence of the great number from the two nations who have settled in Louisiana and perpetually visit it.

With certain vicious exceptions, French is tolerably spoken here. But they have a disgusting drawling method of pronouncing their words.—What Cæsar said to a bad reader may be applied to the Louisianians ; “ If you sing, you sing very ill.” They also lame and disfigure certain words, such as *bien, tu, une, &c.* which they thus pronounce : “ Il a *ben* fait” — “ t’ as vu mon fils ? ” — “ C’est *eune* belle femme,” &c.

In this stricture I do not include the Acadians nor Germans, nor their descendants ; these all speak French more or less corrupt. I advert to the Creoles descended from the French.

Besides this clipping of the republican French, there seems to be in this country a physical embarrassment, a defect in the conformation of the organ of speech, in both sexes. They trans-

form the *ç* into *Z*, and the *ch* into *ce*; as will be apparent from an example. I will suppose a Creole addicted both to hunting and lying, desirous to express himself in these terms :

*“ Je ne sache point avoir jamais ete chasser
que je ne sois rentre chez moi avec ma charge
de gibier.”**

His tongue embarrassed and little flexible, and his elocution slow and painful, would make him pronounce these words in the following manner :

*“ Ze ne zace point avoir zamais ete sacer, que
ze ne sois rentre ce moi avec ma carze de zibier.”*

And so on with the rest. *Ab uno disce omnes.*

There is in this country no public institution for the education of youth but a simple school supported by government. It is composed of about fifteen children of poor parents, who are taught reading writing and cyphering in the French and Spanish languages. The nuns of

* I never remember to have gone hunting, without returning home loaded with game.

the convent, who are Ursulines, receive young ladies as boarders, and instruct them in needle-work, reading, &c. There is also a private school in the city, conducted by an European of elegant literary attainments. But as cheapness is the primary object here, the noble colonists, not being able to dispute his merit, have found fault with him for not being sufficiently diligent; and, under this pretence have cloaked their meanness in sending their children to a petty Creole school. Hence the only good school in the place has struggles to exist; while the most contemptible schools multiply. The people of New-Orleans think it abominable to be charged more than two piasters a month for their children, and content themselves with any dull pedagogue who will take that sum; while the sugar-planters, cotton-planters and indigo planters in the country pick up some worthless vagabond on the road, whom they take into their houses to teach their families, and cram his throat with victuals, but his pocket with little money.*— Yet these same people will complain that New-Orleans and the country are in want of good instructors! And so let them be. Yes! while the

* Wretched as this picture may seem, it is exceeded by that of the school masters in our eastern states. There they teach one part of the year, and *now* another.....Trans.

Louisianians refuse to exchange their perishable coin for lasting knowledge, may they ever have masters incapable of imparting to the minds of their children a single idea. I could fill a volume on the turpitude of these people in neglecting the culture of the minds of their offspring.— But it were useless. For when men openly and avowedly set at defiance all the obligations of morality, it is to no purpose to expostulate on the breach of them: they are beyond the reach of your arguments; and though your conclusions are unanswerable with respect to yourself, they lose all their force when applied to your adversary.

There is neither a college, nor a library here, whether public or private. The cause of the last defect is obvious. A librarian would starve in the midst of his books, unless he could teach his readers the art of doubling his capital at the end of the year. There is only one printing office in the city; a petty trifling institution. A meagre weekly newspaper now issues from its press once a week, alphabets and catechisms for children, passports, &c.

Men of cultivated talents are very rare here.— There are few good musicians, and I know but

one portrait painter. Finally, in a city peopled with ten thousand souls, such as New-Orleans, I am persuaded there are not ten men of polite literary attainments, whose minds have been embellished, who are capable of appreciating the merit of a Descartes and Newton, a Mallebranche and a Locke, a Buffon and a Linnæus; who can feel the homage due to the eloquence of a Bossuet and a Massillon, or relish the charms of genius, sentiment and nature, in Corneille and Racine, Fenelon and Voltaire.

In their parties there is no delicacy. All is grossness, and noise, and uproar. Wine, not conversation is sought. The men will not only get tipsey, but stagger and reel in the presence of the ladies; this intemperance at table incurs no disgrace; the men walk with devious steps before the ladies, and the ladies laugh at the eccentricity of their walk.

The standard of individual merit in this country is, first a man's riches, and secondly his rank. Virtue and talents obtain no respect.

The city abounds with tippling houses. At every cross street of the town and suburbs, one sees those places of riot and intoxication crowded

day and night. The low orders of every colour, white, yellow, and black, mix indiscriminately at these receptacles, finding a market for their pilferings, and solacing their cares with tobacco and brandy. Gambling is practised to an incredible excess. To dancing there is no end.—Such a motley crew, and incongruous scene!—In this corner a party staking their whole cash at a game of all fours; here slaves, free people of colour of both sexes, and sailors in jacket and trowsers hopping and capering to the sound of a fiddle, there a party roaring out some dirty song, and boy-waiters responding ‘coming’ to the loud, frequent and ardent vociferation for more grog! Will any one deny the truth of what I advance? I need only name in support of my assertion, *La Maison Coquette*. Is it not eternally open, and is this thing done clandestinely? I have seen its gala nights announced on hand-bills at the corners of the streets, with the express permission of the civil governor, his excellency Don Maria Nicholas Vidal: I may yet have honourable mention to make of him.

Under these auspices, it is no wonder that the tavern-keepers of New-Orleans make such rapid fortunes. Their tap is eternally going. Do the police ever intrude? Mine host finds a

ready argument to calm his suspicions ; the privileged villain tips the officer a piece of silver or gold, according to his rank.

The Catholic religion is the only one allowed in this country ; every other is interdicted.* Attendance on public worship is, however, not indiscriminately exacted ; a man has only to profess an outward respect for the prominent worship, and he need be under no inquietude.† Once it was contemplated to establish the tribunal of the inquisition at New-Orleans ; but the Monk charged with the mission of the holy office, found himself so obnoxious to the people, that, to avoid being stabbed, or thrown over the pier, he decamped back in haste to Spain.

The judiciary branch is a chaos of never ending chicanery. It is the cave of Trophonius

* When the Earl of Ferrars was going to be hanged, discoursing with his clergyman on religion, he expressed his opinion that an universal toleration was striking at the vitals of all religion.

† The clergy consists of a Bishop who does not reside in the province, and whose salary of four thousand dollars is charged on the revenue of certain bishopricks in Mexico and Cuba ; two canons having each a salary of six hundred dollars, and twenty curates, five for the city of New-Orleans, and twenty for as many country parishes, who receive each from three hundred and sixty to four hundred and eighty dollars a year.

from which no man, who has once entered, ever comes out cheerful. Going to law in Louisiana is going to the devil.*

People here (as in all other countries) frequently mistake their talents, and undertake things *Invita Minerva*. Mankind are fond of exerting themselves in characters for which nature has totally disqualified them, while they neglect what they would excel in.† I knew a dancing master at this place, who in grace and agility was scarcely inferior to Vestris ; he was dancing into a fortune. Yet this fellow who could command the heels of every well bred man and fine woman in the city, took it into his head

* Suits are of various durations. In pecuniary matters the laws encourage summary proceedings. An execution may be had on a bond in four days, and in the same space on a note of hand after the party acknowledges it, or after his signature is proved. Moveable property is sold after giving nine days warning, provided it be three times publicly cried in that interval. Landed property must be likewise cried three times with an interval of nine days between each. All property taken in execution must be appraised and sold for at least half of the appraisement. In pecuniary matters the governors decide verbally without appeal, when the sum does not exceed one hundred dollars.....State Documents.

† Nil facies invita Minerva.....Hor.

Nil decet invita Minerva, id est repugnante Natura, &c.....Cicero.....Trans.

to be a politician, and spent so much time over American news-papers that he lost all his scholars to a young rival, who cared not three straws whether Jefferson or Adams delivered messages to congress.

Vanity is a passion that is to be found wherever there are human beings. But I know no part of the globe where it is so prominent a feature of the moral character as in Louisiana. A man represents himself here twice as rich as he is. The most ordinary habitation is a terrestrial paradise. The men are always frank and generous, the women never old, nor the girls ever ugly. *Credat Judæus.*

The female parties compose a school for scandal. The women would be much better employed in the affairs of their household, than in slandering the absent, and even each other after they have separated.

Dissentions, between whatever sex, are generally a war of words. Both women and men will exchange with one another the most opprobrious language, and then be reconciled. Sometimes indeed a quarrel between the men terminates *a la Mendoza*; they strip and maul each

other : but that is all. One hears of no duels among the Creoles.

A *tutoiement* prevails in the familiar conversation of domestic life. It is never *you*, but always *thee* and *thou*. It has, however, no particular force. It is the babble of Lucas talking to Mathurin, or that of Babet wantoning with Perrette. It owes its origin to the base birth, the vulgar manners and low discourse of the first colonists.

One seldom sees a Creole of either sex lame or deformed. But both are subject to lose their teeth at an early age, and to be afflicted with cutaneous disorders. This premature loss of the teeth is caused by the humidity of the air, and its frequent and sudden vicissitudes. Some attribute it to the water they drink ; but this is problematical.

Louisiana, from its origin to the present era, has always been a colony more or less poor, and insulated, for a long time, from the rest of the globe. The country miserable in its soil was not less so with regard to its inhabitants. Its first settlers were either needy French or German adventurers, who scarcely improved their

fortune to mediocrity. Under the domination of Spain their condition was not meliorated; the war of Europe paralyzed the commerce of the district, and such was its languid, distressed and insulated condition, that in France, the word Mississippi was used to designate proverbially the end of the world. It is true that the court of Spain in its wisdom lent the colony the succour of considerable sums of money; but the colonists continued poor, and the agents of government only became rich by their skill in the science of monopoly.

Hence the Creoles of Louisiana being all of base extraction, and without any other motive in going to this corner of the world than to seek their fortunes, they were naturally illiterate, ignorant and rude; qualities inherited and preserved by their descendants. In fact, the present race seem to have degenerated from their ancestors, they are rude, envious, interested, avaricious, and presumptuous. They are insensible yet given to raillery, caustic yet practised in dissimulation, notorious romancers, and their ignorance exceeds all human credibility. They without exception prefer a gun to a pen, and a pettiauger to a desk.

A Creole told me with great naïveté one day, that a never failing method to make him fall asleep, was to open a book before him. Another had such a mortal hatred to every thing that issued from the printing-office, that in order to get rid of his company, it was only necessary to shew him a printed paper, a simple gazette; he would take to his heels. Another having by some miraculous interposition, caught a passion for reading, and delighting to pore over his book, he was considered by his companions as a madman. In a word, a library in Louisiana is as rare as a Phœnix.

The most enlightened of the governors of the colony, was Mr. de Carondelet. This gentleman encouraged the institution of a printing-office at New-Orleans, in order to publish a weekly newspaper; it was entitled the Louisiana Monitor, and embraced the subjects of commerce, agriculture and the arts; a considerable portion was also devoted to intelligence. The Creoles are naturally inquisitive and eager after news. The paper was well conducted; it was just to infer that it would be universally encouraged, that subscribers would multiply to the colonial sheet; yet how was it received? The printer himself told me, that there were

never more than twenty-four subscribers obtained for the paper, and that in consequence it died. You, therefore, who delight in the belles-lettres, shun, I conjure you, the banks of the Mississippi ! The very air of that region is mortal to the muses.

The Creoles live insulated on their plantations, visiting each other but seldom, however allied by consanguinity; when they do visit, it is from caprice and whim. This retired mode of life, neither softened by a taste for letters, nor the exercise of feeling awakened by the picturesque scenery of Nature, is not to be envied. Yet the Creoles of Louisiana are infatuated with their condition, and boast themselves the happiest of mortals. So the stupid Laplander, and the savage Hottentot, think their miserable regions transcend all places upon earth.

The vanity and self-sufficiency of these Creoles are perfectly ridiculous. Some French ladies of the first order of fashion having arrived at New-Orleans, it was observed by a Frenchman that there would be now models of fashion for the Louisianian ladies, "say rather," exclaimed an enthusiastic Creole, "that they may

“ now correct their taste by imitating the dresses
 “ of the women of the colony.” Pursuant then,
 to this doctrine, the wild shores of the Missis-
 sippi have already eclipsed the smiling banks of
 the Seine, and the elegant female Parisian must
 borrow fashions from Louisiana !

Our Creoles likewise choak themselves in
 talking of the illustriousness of their families, and
 the amiable moral qualities of a crowd of rela-
 tions whom they do not visit for whole years,
 however contiguous their abodes. And when
 one of the family dies, it is customary for all
 the rest down to the seventh degree to go into
 mourning, that their grief may be apparent
 for an individual whom living they disregarded.

They are the greatest egotists in the world ;
 their conversation is eternally about themselves.
 They are vulgarly familiar with their equals,
 insolent towards their inferiors, cruel to their
 slaves, and inhospitable to strangers.

One trait in their character is peculiarly appa-
 rent, their singular conduct towards a stranger ;
 a stranger newly arrived is an object of wonder,
 a being whom they have a right to appropriate in
 their own manner. They survey him from

head to foot, compliment, feast and caress him ; but when his novelty has subsided, he is, however rare and transcendant his merit, a mere non-entity ; unless his opulence excites in them an interested deference.

Their inhospitality is proverbial, but it was never more apparent than towards the unfortunate French refugees from St. Domingo. I shall shew this in its proper place : I content myself at present with an anecdote.

A negress, servant in a French family who rented a country seat a few miles from New-Orleans, presented herself, authorised by a permission in writing, to the proprietor of a neighbouring plantation, a German Creole of the country ; she exhibits her ticket, and requests permission to sell a few trifles in her basket to the negroes in their huts ; the Creole signifies his assent. She went among them and disposed of several articles, the ingenious work of her own hands ; but on her second visit, she was seized by the brutal Creole of the plantation, and taken into the house ; the poor girl exhibited in vain her second passport, the German Creole shut his eyes to it. He summoned his driver, and caused the innocent wench to be

laid along the ground, to be disrobed of her under garment, and saw the discipline of the whip severely inflicted on her naked body .

The master of the girl being informed of this outrage, sent his son the next day to remonstrate with the German Creole on the impropriety of his conduct. "My father, Sir," said the youth, "thinks that in the treatment
 "suffered by his slave, you have neither behav-
 "ed towards him with the friendship of a neigh-
 "bour, or the politeness of a gentleman."—
 "The devil take his thoughts," cried the Creole, boiling with brutal indignation, "I have lived
 "thirty years in this colony, and your father
 "only two."

These proceedings backed by such sentiments, are no great allurements for Europeans to embark themselves and fortunes, in order to seek a retirement in Louisiana; they would only transport themselves to a fen and be buried alive among snakes, scorpions and toads.

I will not absolutely tax the Creoles of Louisiana of cowardice. But during the last war did any of their numerous youth, like the French West-India Creoles, come forward to assist their

parent country? We may, therefore, justly suspect them totally destitute of all real patriotism. however they may declaim, and affect to rejoice at the success of the revolution.

The truth is, the Creoles of Louisiana are devoid of moral energy. If stimulated to activity it can be only by the spring of all their motions—interest. Did we not see them some years ago, catch the sacred flame of liberty, form themselves into assemblies, and sing in concert the French hymns that celebrate the rights of man? And a little after this vain parade, did they not shrink back into their shells, and submit to the tyranny of the Spanish government? Did they not all come back with a whistle, a whoop, a call. At the bark of the shepherd's dog, did they not all arrange themselves under his crook?

How did the news of the general peace operate on their moral feelings? After a war of nine years marked with blood and desolation, how were they affected to learn that the sword was turned into a plough-share, and the javelin into a pruning hook? How did this intelligence, calculated to transport every feeling heart with joy and gladness, operate on the Creoles? It produced in

them a vague sensation, a fluctuation of ideas, a kind of stupor. Every one consulted whether it would promote or retard his individual interest. This sentiment influenced both the town and country. Peace was not hailed by these Creoles, as by the Europeans and French West-Indians ; she was not looked upon by them as a ministering angel. There were no public feasts or rejoicings. Merchants considered the change as injurious to their interests ; the rest adopted the opinion, and a gloom pervaded the colony.

As a counterpart to this picture of our Creoles it may be urged that, “ they have often wished to “ be restored to their ancient government, and again become Frenchmen.” I insist that in this desire they were guided only by personal interest. The petition was made in 1790. Their privilege of unrestricted commerce with the French ports was nearly expired. A prohibition impended from the court of Madrid. The desire, therefore, of the Louisianians to be united to France did not arise from any real attachment to that country, but from that interestedness which influences all their actions. Unless their personal interest be menaced, they care not under what government they live. Let Spain grant them a free commerce with the American United States, and they will be devoted to Spain.

It may be urged in another point of view, that this conduct in the Louisianians, this desire to obtain the rose unhurt by the thorns, is indicative of address. Yes ! In pursuing their interest the Louisianians are without rivals or competitors ; if you would dupe a Louisianian in what regards his pecuniary interest, you must rise very early.

Never expect from a Louisianian Creole the slightest service, unless he be sure of extracting from it a tenfold profit. Generosity is a stranger to their moral character. On this subject I will cite a fact ; assertion is nothing without proof. A colonist, father of a large family, having little fortune, but surrounded by opulent relations, was unrelentingly prosecuted by a merchant of New-Orleans, to whom he owed the trifling sum of eighty piasters. Condemned to the payment of this sum, and pressed to effect it without possessing the means, he knocks at several doors, and addresses his relations and friends in succession, but without obtaining the money. A pretended friend, however, offered to lend the sum on condition that the colonist made sale at a vendue of two elegant saddle horses ; a condition the unfortunate colonist would not comply with. An execution was issued. The commanding officer of the parish, charged with the execution, set out for the man's habitation. For pursuant to the Spanish law, this act

of rigour which debases in another country, ennobles here. The officer stops to dine at a public house, half way on the road. He mingles with the company at the table *d'hote*, and expresses without reserve his unaffected sorrow at the decree he was obliged to put into execution. A young Frenchman was present, lately arrived from Europe. He was by no means opulent, for his trade was that of a pedlar ; but a man does not become mean by a mean situation, he was possessed both of sentiment and education, nor could the savage wilds of Louisiana deprive him of either. Hearing mention made of the money, he inquired if the debtor was without a relation or friend who, by advancing such a trifling sum, would extricate him from his embarrassment ? Every body stared at him with evident tokens of surprize, as though he had made the most extraordinary interrogation ; and he was answered that the debtor was a man of unimpeachable character who had an abundance of relations ; but that consanguinity was no plea for borrowing of money.

The young fellow was astonished at this profound insensibility ; he was touched with lively emotion at the lamentable condition to which the honest father of a family was reduced ; he made no reply, but finished his dinner in haste. Putting up the eighty piasters in his pack, he departs

for the habitation of the debtor, and requests to speak with him in private. He beholds a man of an interesting physiognomy, surrounded by his wife and children. He calls him one side, and, communicating to him the execution that impends, entreats he will do him the favour to accept the sum which he is unable to pay. The colonist, astonished at his conduct, which was only the offspring of education operating on a good heart, was moved to tears. He accepted the tendered sum, and made the young man this answer, which paints well the contrast of character between an enlightened generous mind, and the brutal instinct of an ignorant clown. "You, sir, are a stranger, and without fortune, yet oblige me ; and my relations, who are opulent, abandon me to my fate."

I could multiply instances of this insensibility, which is the distinguishing characteristic of a Creole of Louisiana. But I shall content myself with one more. This however will paint not only the insensibility but barbarity of the Creoles ; it will expose to view a heart shut to the common feelings of humanity. In the month of last June, during the elevation of the waters of the Mississippi, one of the colonists, a miller, was seen in the middle of the day, busied with his negroes disengaging from the stream of his mill the bodies of three

Americans, that had been drowned in the river. But his motive was not to rescue the bodies from the flood, and give the rights of sepulture to the remains of these unfortunate men. He was pushing them with long poles into the bed of the river, that they might be carried away with the current, and no longer annoy his mill. This miller was a Louisianian. Readers of sensibility, I see you shuddering at this recital; it makes my own blood run cold.

What augments my unhappiness in this respect is, that this moral atrocity is not confined to the ruder colonists, but equally extends through all the ramifications of society. This insensibility to the social energies is epidemical in Louisiana.

I have not yet done. I cannot refrain from observing that Louisiana has experienced at various periods uncommon kindness from the inhabitants of St. Domingo. They always manifested for the Louisianians the most lively interest, whether before or after the possession of this country by the Spaniards; offering a retreat and asylum in their island. When New-Orleans was burnt, they received into the bosoms of their families a number of unfortunate citizens who had lost their effects in the flames. And from others no bounty, no assistance, no succour was withheld.

Louisiana, it might have been expected, after the kindness and hospitality exercised towards her by St. Domingo, would have discovered some sensibility at the catastrophe of that island, and the total ruin of its inhabitants. It was looked for that Frenchmen would have wiped the tears from the eyes of Frenchmen. It was to be hoped that, from a reciprocity of good offices, their doors would have been opened to the unfortunate outcasts. But how did the Louisianians act? Oh horror! my colour goes when I think of it.

Yet before I exhibit the hideous picture of the proceedings of the Louisianians towards the unfortunate colonists of St. Domingo, let me paint the noble conduct of the inhabitants of the United States, the lively interest they took in the misfortunes of the refugees. When the island was gained by the rebellious blacks, the town at the Cape set on fire, and so many of the whites butchered, the conduct of Americans towards the flying colonists claims the fairest page in the annals of humanity. Every American opened his arms to a fellow creature in distress. The state of Maryland in particular distinguished herself for hospitality. I was an eyewitness of the scene, and am able to detail it from ocular knowledge.

CHAPTER V.

CONTRAST BETWEEN THE CONDUCT OF THE PEOPLE
OF THE AMERICAN UNITED STATES AND THOSE
OF LOUISIANA TOWARDS THE UNFORTUNATE
COLONISTS OF ST. DOMINGO.

THE miserable colonists of St. Domingo having escaped through flames and swords from their country, and flying to the United States, were received with open arms by the inhabitants ; all seemed to contend which should be the foremost in extending succour to the afflicted. The whole of the unhappy colonists, whether men, women, or children every where found a kind people ready to assist them. Houses, cloathes and sustenance were supplied them by the humane Americans. Baltimore immortalized herself in the eyes of France by the magnanimity with which she received into her bosom the suffering colonists. The government of Maryland contributed money, lodging and provisions to every needy refugee.

But Maryland did not confine herself to these acts of bounty. One of the fundamental laws of

the state is the inhibition of the importation of slaves. But from respect to a law more sacred, the *caritas humani generis* (love of the human species) the government of Maryland assembled at Annapolis, and sensibly affected at the fate of the outcasts, unanimously decreed that the slaves who had followed their masters to America should be continued in their service, and considered as their property.

In this proceeding the generous Americans not only made a sacrifice of their own personal interest, but of that of their country. A formal law had been long established, and rigorously enforced, that no more slaves should be admitted into the state, a law founded on an acquaintance with the interests of the republic. But the axiom of *salus populi suprema lex esto* ceded to the powerful feelings of humanity, and that spirit of hospitality which characterises this great people; forgetting all personal consideration, every man succoured with alacrity a suffering fellow creature : *Homo sum, humani nihil a me alienum puto.*

Besides, it was the rational opinion of Americans that a small number of slaves, who had abandoned the seducing offer of liberty to share the fortunes of their masters, could not be dangerous. The event justified their expectation.

And far from bringing any calamity on the country, the influx of the flying colonists has greatly contributed to the prosperity of Baltimore ; its trade, agriculture, manufactures have increased. So true is it that an enlightened policy, is not less advantageous than honourable to a country.

To this rapid but faithful sketch of the frank, noble, and magnanimous conduct of Americans towards the colonists of St. Domingo, let us oppose the inhuman proceedings of the inhabitants of Louisiana.

Scarcely had the Louisianians heard of the calamities that had befallen the French in the West-Indies, than they hastened to have a law made and sanctioned by the Cabildo, expressly to inhibit the landing of any negro on their soil, under a penalty of four hundred piasters a head. By this law, prohibiting the landing of slaves, they proscribed their own countrymen. Great numbers of Frenchmen would have sought an asylum in the colony with the wreck of their fortunes, but could not abandon their slaves, who having partaken of their prosperity, were willing now to be the sharers of their adversity.

Some refugees, unconscious of the law that had been passed, landed with their slaves ; their slaves were seized, and sent to prison.

Madame de Fleury, a beautiful widow, and not less distinguished by the graces of her mind, than those of her person, had fled to New-Orleans with three lovely daughters and three negro women, who had accompanied them in their flight with fond attachment. Immediately on her landing, while mutually embracing and being embraced by her daughters at the thought of their safety; while returning thanks to the throne of god, amidst the sobs of the faithful slaves; a couple of constables approach the spot, lay hands on the three negro women, and drag them to prison! The same evening, in a large and *brilliant* party of the town people, an American lady was lamenting with poignant sorrow the fate of Madame de Fleury and her three daughters, “who
 “in a foreign land, were unfortunate not to have
 “at least one of her three servants to wash their
 “linen, and cook their victuals.”—“Ah!” said a Louisianian *lady* in company, bridling and tossing her head, “*Elle est bien a plaindre, cette
 “belle dame du Cap! Si elle n’a pas de quoi payer,
 “qu’elle blanchisse son linge et fasse sa cuisine
 “elle-meme.*”*

† Ah! she is much to be pitied, truly; this fine Cape Francois lady; I should not have thought of it indeed: if she has not money to hire a servant, let her put her own hands in the wash-tub, and cook for herself.”

Such a barbarous law, and inhospitable spirit, chased effectually from Louisiana the distracted, flying colonists of St. Domingo. The Louisianians exulted in their accumulated miseries, calling them *Les echappes de St. Domingue!* Those who did land on their soil, quickly embarked for a less savage clime, and brushed the dust of that miserable country from their feet. In the United States, but particularly that of Maryland, they were received, cherished and protected; they there found a home in a land of strangers. May this page, while it transmits with infamy to posterity the conduct of the Louisianians, be a lasting monument to the magnanimity of the inhabitants of the United States. Time! scatter if thou wilt the rest of this volume to the winds of heaven, but let that be sacred which records the generous spirit of Americans!

CHAPTER VI.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE STRANGERS.

THE French who inhabit Louisiana, are, with the exception of a small number of distinguished families, people of one extraction, uneducated, and occupied as workmen, retail dealers, and farmers. And others are adventurers who have fled from St. Domingo, to escape the punishment due to their crimes, such as adultery and seduction, various robberies, and breach of trust. Louisiana particularly claimed their preference, as, by flying thither, they found their own language and habits under a different government. Of those some have terminated their lives in misery, wretchedness and woe. Others have become honest or took the mask of honesty, it matters not which; for, as Montaigne observes, mankind are easily cheated with the appearances of things.

The Acadians are the descendants of French colonists, transported from the province of Nova-Scotia. The character of their forefathers is strongly marked in them; they are

rude and sluggish, without ambition, living miserably on their sorry plantations, where they cultivate Indian corn, raise pigs and get children. Around their houses one sees nothing but hogs, and before their doors great rustic boys, and big strapping girls, stiff as bars of iron, gaping for want of thought, or something to do, at the stranger who is passing.

The Germans are somewhat numerous, and are easy to be distinguished by their accent, fair and fresh complexion, their inhospitality, brutal manners, and proneness to intoxication. They are, however, industrious and frugal.

A few Italians obtain a livelihood by fishing, and there are some Bohemians in the colony, who have attained to civilization.

In a word there is, perhaps, no place in the globe, where the human species may be seen in greater diversity than at New-Orleans, in the months of January, February and March; it is then interest assembles this motley crew in the city.

CHAPTER VII.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE FREED PEOPLE OF COLOUR.

THE class of free people of colour is composed of negroes and mulattoes, but chiefly of the last, who have either obtained or purchased their liberty from their masters, or held it in virtue of the freedom of their parents. Of these, some residing in the country, cultivate rice and a little cotton; a great number, men, women and children collected in the city, are employed in mechanical arts, and menial offices.

The mulattoes are in general vain and insolent, perfidious and debauched, much giving to lying, and great cowards. They have an inveterate hatred against the whites, the authors of their existence, and primitive benefactors. It is the policy of the Spanish government to cherish this antipathy; but nothing is to be feared from them. There is a proportion of six whites to one man of colour, which, with their natural pusillanimity, is a sufficient restraint.

The mulatto women have not all the faults of the men. But they are full of vanity, and very libertine ; money will always buy their caresses. They are not without personal charms ; good shapes, polished and elastic skins. They live in open concubinage with the whites ; but to this they are incited more by money than any attachment. After all we love those best, and are most happy in the intercourse of those, with whom we can be the most familiar and unconstrained. These girls, therefore, only affect a fondness for the whites ; their hearts are with men of their own colour.

They are, however, not wanting in discernment, penetration, finesse ; in this light they are superior to many of the white girls in the lower classes of society, girls so impenetrably dull, that like that of Balsac's village, they are too stupid to be deceived by a man of breeding, gallantry and wit.

CHAPTER VIII.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE NEGRO SLAVES.

WE come now to the class of negro slaves, the most numerous but least fortunate of all. The negro Creoles of the country, or born in some other European colony, and sent hither, are the most active, the most intelligent, and the least subject to chronic distempers ; but they are also the most indolent, vicious and debauched.

Those who come from Guinea are less expert in domestic service, and the mechanical arts, less intelligent, and oftener victims of violent sickness or of grief (particularly in the early part of their transportation) but more robust, more laborious, more adapted to the labours of the field, less deceitful and libertine than the others. Such are the discriminative characteristics of each, and as to the rest, there is a strong relation between their moral and physical character.

Negroes are a species of beings whom nature seems to have intended for slavery ; their

pliancy of temper, patience under injury, and innate passiveness, all concur to justify this position ; unlike the savages or aborigines of America, who could never be brought to servile controul.

This colony of Louisiana, offers a philosophic and instructive spectacle on this subject, from which I shall make a number of deductions. If nature had imparted the same instinct to negroes that she has to savages, it is certain that, instead of subjecting themselves mechanically to the eternal labours of the field, and the discipline of an imperious task-master, they would abandon those places, (to which they are not chained) and gaining the woods, encamp themselves in the interior of the country ; in this imitating the savages, or aborigines, who sooner than live in the vicinity of the whites, retire at their approach.

Is it the uncertainty of a subsistence in this new mode of life, that deters them from undertaking it? They have never any solicitude for their future support. Is it the fear of being pursued and overtaken that is an obstacle to the project? Ignorant as they are, they cannot but know that, protected by almost impene-

trable woods, and formidable in numbers, they might set at defiance a handful of whites. Does the apprehension of being combated by the Indians damp their enterprize? Such a chimera could never affright them, since the Indians roving in detached parties, would be the first to flee; nay, they would probably court their union, there having been instances of negroes finding an asylum among them, but after a lapse of time, unworthy to enjoy freedom, the fugitives have returned to their plantation, like a dog, who, having escaped from his kennel, returns to it by an instinct of submission. To multiply comparisons, as the ox resigns himself to his yoke, so the negro bends to his burden.

Their defect in instinct is apparent. Could the Indians be ever brought to that state of slavery which the negroes bear without repining; every method hitherto practised to deprive them of their liberty, has been ineffectual.

But it is not so with the negroes. In their own country, or abroad, if they have ever discovered a desire to emerge from slavery, this flame has resembled a meteor which appears only for a moment. And even, the scenes which have been witnessed in the French colonies, and, particularly, the isl-

and of Saint Domingo,* serve to corroborate and support my theory. It is undeniable that the negroes of that colony have never ceased to be slaves. Before their insurrection they were the slaves of their legitimate masters ; in the early part of the revolution they were slaves to the French commissioners and mulattoes ; and afterwards they became subject to the nod of negroes like themselves. We do not alter the substance of a thing by changing the name.

Nature may be modified but cannot be essentially changed. It is not possible to impart to the dog the habits of the wolf, nor to the ape those of the sheep. This position cannot be refuted. Sophistry may for a while delude, but the mind reposes upon the stability of truth.

From this digression let us return to the examination of the negro slave of Louisiana. He has the faults of a slave. He is lazy, libertine, and given to lying, but not incorrigibly wicked. His labour is not severe, unless it be at the rolling of sugars, an interval of from two to three months, when the number of labourers is not proportionate

* It is apparent that our author once lived at St. Domingo. I imagine he was a sufferer by the revolt, insurrection and triumph of the negroes, hence his aversion to them, hence his revilings, hence his outrageous invectives.....Trans.

to the labour ; then he works both day and night. It must be allowed that forty negroes rolling a hundred and twenty thousand weight of sugar, and as many hogsheads of syrup, in the short space of two cold, foggy, rainy months (November and December) under all the difficulties and embarrassments resulting from the season, the shortness of the days, and the length of the nights, cannot but labour severely ; abridged of their sleep, they scarce retire to rest during the whole period. It is true they are then fed more plentifully, but their toils are nevertheless excessive.

* In a country where there are not those resources that distinguish the Antilles, nor its spontaneous supplies, such as bananas, yams, sweet potatoes, &c. the food of the negroes is less abundant.

* The disastrous events proceeding from the late war should be impressed with redoubled force upon the minds of all slaveholders throughout the globe, they should teach them the necessity of keeping them in that state of content and subordination, which will alienate them from the wish of acquiring a freedom, which has cost so much blood to the colonists of St. Domingo. I subjoin for the information of the inhabitants of the United States the directions issued by the Spanish government for the treatment of slaves in Louisiana. They exhibit the internal police of the plantations.

Every slave shall punctually receive the barrel of corn allowed by the usage of the colony, and which quantity is voluntarily augmented by the greater part of their masters.

The fixed ration of each negro a month is a barrel of maize not pounded ; indian corn being the only grain of the colony which can assure an unfailing subsistence to the slaves. The rice, beans and potatoes cultivated here, would not supply a quarter of them with food. Some masters, more humane than others, add to the ration a little salt.

The Syndics shall take measures to induce the planters of their district to allow their negroes a portion of their waste lands ; by which they will not only add to their comforts, but increase the productions of the province, and that time will be usefully employed which would otherwise be devoted to libertinism.

Every slave shall be allowed half an hour for breakfast, and two hours for dinner ; their labor shall commence at break of day, and shall cease at the approach of night. Sundays shall be the holiday of the slaves, but their masters may require their labor at harvest, &c. on paying them four escalins per diem.

The slaves who have not a portion of waste lands shall receive punctually from their masters a linen shirt and trowsers for the summer, and a woollen great coat and trowsers for the winter.

No person shall cause to be given, at once, more than thirty lashes to his slave, under penalty of fifty piasters, but the same may be repeated, if necessary, within an interval of one day.

It is permitted to shoot at an armed run-away negro, who shall refuse to stop when required ; or who cannot otherwise be taken, even if he be not armed ; at a negro who shall dare to defend himself against his master or overseer ; and lastly at those who shall secretly enter a plantation with intent to steal.

Whosoever shall kill a slave, unless in one of the cases before mentioned, shall be punished to the extent of the law, and if he shall only wound him, he shall be punished according to the circumstances of the case. Intrigues, plots of escape, &c. arising

The negro, during his hours of respite from labour, is busied in pounding his corn ; he has afterwards to bake it with what wood he can procure himself. Both in summer and winter, he must be in the fields at the first dawn of day. He carries his sorry pittance of a breakfast with him, which he eats on the spot ; he is, however, scarce

in general from the negroes of one plantation visiting those of another, the inhabitants are forbidden under the penalty of ten piasters, to allow any intercourse or resort of negroes to their plantations for the purpose of dancing, &c. And the amusements of their own slaves, which shall be allowed only on Sundays, shall terminate always before night.

A slave shall not pass the bounds of his master's land, without his permission in writing, under the penalty of 20 lashes.

A slave who shall ride the horse of his master or of any other person, without permission, shall be punished with 30 lashes.

Slaves are not permitted to be proprietors of horses, under penalty of the confiscation thereof.

Fire-arms are prohibited to slaves, as also powder, ball and lead, under the penalty of thirty lashes and the confiscation thereof.

An inhabitant may not have more than two hunters, who are to deliver up their arms and ammunition on their return from the chase.

Slaves may not sell any thing without the permission of their master, not even the productions of the waste lands allowed them.

Rum, fire-arms and ammunition shall be seized when in possession of coasters, and sold at public auction for the use of the treasury.

New-Orleans, June 1, 1795.

Le Baron de Carondelet.

allowed time to digest it. His labour is suspended from noon till two, when he dines, or rather makes a supplement to his former meal. At two his labour re-commences, and he prosecutes it till dark, sometimes visited by his master, but always exposed to the menaces, blows and scourges either of a white overseer, or a black driver.

The good negro, during the hours of respite allowed him, is not idle. He is busy cultivating the little lot of ground granted him, while his wife (if he has one) is preparing food for him and their children. For it is observable that in this colony, the children of the slaves are not nourished by their masters, as they are at the Antilles; their parents are charged with them, and allowed half a ration more for every child, commencing from the epoch when it is weaned.

Retired at night to their huts, after having made a frugal meal, they forget their labors in the arms of their mistresses. But those who cannot obtain women (for there is a great disproportion between the numbers of the two sexes) traverse the woods in search of adventures, and often encounter those of an unpleasant nature. They frequently meet a patrol of the whites, who tie them up and flog them, and then send them home.

They are very fond of tobacco ; they both smoke and chew it with great relish.

Nothing can be more simple than the burial of a slave ; he is put into the plainest coffin, knocked together by a carpenter of his own colour, and carried unattended by mourners to the neighbouring grave-field. The most absolute democracy, however, reigns there ; the planter and slave, confounded with one another, rot in conjunction. *Under ground precedency is all a jest !*

“ Imperial Caesar dead, and turned to clay,

“ May stop some hole to keep the wind away !”

Pope.

Death is not so terrible in aspect to these negroes as to the whites. In fact death itself is not so formidable to any man as the pageantry with which it is set forth. It is not death that is so terrible, but the cries of mothers, wives and children, the visits of astonished and afflicted friends, pale and blubbering servants, a dark room set round with burning tapers, our beds surrounded with physicians and divines. These, and not death itself, affright the minds of the beholders, and make that appear so dreadful with which armies, who have an opportunity of being thoroughly acquainted and often seeing him.

without any of these black and dismal disguises, converse familiarly, and meet with mirth and gaiety.

The only cloathing of a slave is a simple woollen garment ; it is given to them at the beginning of winter. And will it be believed, that the master, to indemnify himself for this expense, retrenches half an hour from his negro's hours of respite, during the short days of the rigorous season !

Their ordinary food is indian corn, or rice and beans, boiled in water, without fat or salt. To them nothing comes amiss. They will devour greedily racoon, opossum, squirrels, woodrats, and even the crocodile ; leaving to the white people the roebuck and rabbit, which they sell them when they kill those animals.

They raise poultry and hogs, but seldom eat either. They prefer selling them, and purchasing from their profits, cloathing and brandy. They love brandy to excess. Promise a negro a dram, and he will go through fire and water to serve you.

Their smoaky huts admit both wind and rain. An anecdote offers itself to my pen on this sub-

ject, which will exhibit the frigid indifference of the colonists of Louisiana towards every thing that interests humanity. Being on a visit at a plantation on the Mississippi, I walked out one fine evening in winter, with some ladies and gentlemen, who had accompanied me from the town, and the planters at whose house we were entertained. We approached the quarter where the huts of the negroes stood. "Let us visit the negroes," said one of the party; and we advanced towards the door of a miserable hut, where an old negro woman came to the threshold in order to receive us, but so decrepid as well as old, that it was painful for her to move.

Notwithstanding the winter was advanced, she was partly naked; her only covering being some old thrown away rags. Her fire was a few chips, and she was parching a little corn for supper. Thus she lived abandoned and forlorn; incapable from old age to work any longer, she was no longer noticed.

But independently of her long services, this negro woman had formerly suckled and brought up two brothers of her master, who made one of our party. She perceived him, and accosting him, said, "My master, when will you send one of your carpenters to repair the roof of my hut? Whenever it rains, it pours down upon my head."

The master lifting his eyes, directed them to the roof of the hut, which was within the reach of his hand. "I will think of it," said he,—“ You will think of it,” said the poor creature. “ You always say so, but never do it.”—“ Have you not,” rejoined the planter, “ two grandsons who can mend it for you ?”—“ But are they mine,” said the old woman, “ do they not work for you, and are you not my son yourself ? who suckled and raised your two brothers ? who was it but Irrouba ? Take pity then on me, in my old age. Mend at least the roof of my hut, and God will reward you for it.”

I was sensibly affected ; it was *le cri de la bonne nature*. And what repairs did the poor creature's roof require ? What was wanting to shelter her from the wind and rain of heaven ? A few shingles !—“ I will think of it,” repeated her master, and departed.

The ordinary punishment inflicted on the negroes of the colony is a whipping. What in Europe would condemn a man to the galleys or the gallows incurs here only the chastisement of the whip. But then a king having many subjects does not miss them after their exit from this life, but a planter could not lose a negro without feeling the privation.

I do not consider slavery either as contrary to the order of a well regulated society, or an infringement of the social laws. Under a different name it exists in every country. Soften then the word which so mightily offends the ear ; call it dependence.

The most common maladies of the negroes are slight fevers in the spring, more violent ones in the summer, dysenteries in autumn, and fluxions of the breast in winter. Their bill of mortality, however, is not very considerable. The births exceed the deaths.

The language of the negro slaves, as well as of a great number of the free mulattoes, is a *patois* derived from the French, and spoken according to rules of corruption. There are some house-slaves, however, who speak French with not less purity than their masters : *their* language, it may be presumed, is depraved with many words not to be found in a Voltaire, a Thomas or a Rousseau,

CHAPTER IX.

A GENERAL VIEW OF THE INDIAN TRIBES OF LOUISIANA.

WE come now to the Indians or Aborigines of the country. Of the various nations living in the territory of the Mississippi, those which, from their vicinity, have the most connexions with the colony are the Chis, the Osages, the Arkansas, the Tonicas, the Toumachas, towards the upper part of the river, the Oumas, the Bayagulas, the Poutoucsis, and principally the Chactas or Tchactas, in the vast cantons of the lower part of the colony; the Alibamons, Mobilians and Talapousses, in various parts of West-Florida, and towards the border of the Gulph of Mexico.

The manner in which these men conduct themselves, and the social compact that binds them, cannot be assimilated or compared to any known form of government. It bears some resemblance to that of the ancient Germans before the Romans had subdued and civilized them.

The old men and fathers of families are rather their Mentors than chiefs, and preside over them

rather by the voice of persuasion than that of authority. In the event of war, they willingly follow their chiefs to the field, and submit to them not from a blind and passive obedience, but voluntarily and by a common assent which results from the confidence they place in their talents, and the necessity of acting with unanimity in their operations. In other respects the law of retaliation is the basis of their political, civil and criminal code ; they exercise it rigourously from nation to nation, family to family, and individual to individual.

Their principal places of residence are a sort of towns formed of wigwams or huts, raised without either care or art. Others rove in the woods, occupied with hunting, which is the darling passion of these people. But their rendezvous is always at their towns.

The Mobilian language is the radical one from which all the others have sprung, and are only ramifications : by this too a general intercourse and intelligence can be held. It is not without melody, but rendered unpleasant to the ear by the harsh, inarticulate and guttural pronunciation of the savages. I have seen many vocabularies collected from the dialects of these people, but they are all so vague and distorted that they promote no useful purpose.

Every winter, are seen a great number of the savages from different nations assembling at New-Orleans. These various hordes repair hither, the chief place of the colony, in order to receive their annual gifts from government, in token of their friendship; consisting of woollen garments, blankets, fowling pieces, powder and shot, vermillion, &c. Each band has its encampment in the vicinity of the town, composed of huts covered with the skins of bears and other beasts. The squaws are to be seen busy in making baskets and mocassins, which they sell to the colonists. The men kill wild fowl, drink rum, or sit on the ground in a pensive posture doing nothing, retired in the shade if it is warm. and courting the sun if it is cold.* Their dress is a piece of coarse cloth, or a blanket thrown over their shoulders;

* As this account of the Mississippi tribes of Indians is circumscribed, and the subject peculiarly interesting to American readers, I am happy to have it in my power to make up our author's deficiencies from recent, high and unquestionable authority.....Trans.

The Indian nations within the limits of Louisiana are as far as known as follows. On the eastern bank of the Mississippi, about 25 leagues above Orleans, the remains of the nation of Houmas are found; they do not exceed 60 persons. There are no other Indians settled on this side of the river, either in Louisiana or West Florida, though they are at times frequented by parties of Choctaws. On the west side of the Mississippi, and above Point Coupee, is the remnant of the Tonicas, consisting of 50 or 60 persons.

but they decorate themselves with broaches, ear-rings, and even nose jewels. They paint

IN THE ATACAPAS.

On the lower parts of the Bayou Teche, at about eleven or twelve leagues from the sea, are two villages of Chitimachas, consisting of about one hundred souls.

The Atacapas, properly so called, dispersed throughout the district, and chiefly on the Bayou or creek of Vermilion, about one hundred souls.

Wanderers of the tribes of Bilexes and Choctaws on Bayou Crocodile, which empties itself into the Teche, about fifty souls.

IN THE OPELSUSAS, TO THE N. W. OF ATACAPAS.

Two villages of Alibamas in the centre of the district near the church, consisting of a hundred persons.

Conchates, dispersed though the country as far west as the river Sabinas, and its neighbourhood, about three hundred and fifty persons.

ON THE RIVER ROUGE.

At Avoyelles, nineteen leagues from the Mississippi, is a village of the Biloni nation, and another on the lake of the Avoyelles, the whole about sixty souls.

At the Rapide, 26 leagues from the Mississippi, is a village of Choctaws of one hundred souls, and another of Bilexes, about two leagues from it, of about one hundred more : about eight or nine leagues higher up the red river is a village of about 50 souls. All these are occasionally employed by the settlers in their neighbourhood as boatmen.

About 80 leagues above Natchitoches on the red river is the nation of the Cadoquies, called by abbreviation, Cados : they can raise from three to four hundred warriors ; are the friends of the

their faces with streaks of red and blue, which with their dress and accoutrements gives them

whites, and are esteemed the bravest and most generous of all the nations in this vast country : they are rapidly decreasing, owing to intemperance and the numbers annually destroyed by the Osages and Choctaws.

There are, besides the foregoing, at least four to five hundred families of Choctaws, who are dispersed on the west side of the Mississippi, on the Onacheta and Red rivers, as far west as Natchitoches; and the whole nation would have emigrated across the Mississippi, had it not been for the opposition of the Spaniards and the Indians on that side, who had suffered by their aggressions.

ON THE RIVER ARKANSAS, &c.

Between Red River and the Arkansas there are but a few Indians, the remains of tribes almost extinct. On this last river is the nation of the same name, consisting of about two hundred and sixty warriors ; they are brave, yet peaceable and well disposed, and have always been attached to the French, and espoused their cause in their wars with the Chickasaws, whom they have always resisted with success. They live in three villages. The first is eighteen leagues from the Mississippi on the Arkansas river, and the others are three and six leagues from the first. A scarcity of grain on the eastern side of the Mississippi has lately induced a number of Cherokees, Choctaws, Chickasaws, &c. to frequent the neighbourhood of Arkansas, where game is still in abundance : they have contracted marriages with the Arkansas, and seem inclined to make a permanent settlement and incorporate themselves with that nation.

On the river St. Francis, in the neighbourhood of New Madrid, Cape Girardeau, Riviere a la Pomme, and the environs, are settled a number of vagabonds, emigrants from the Delawares,

an air of masquerade, and suits the carnival, at which season they assemble.

Shawnesé, Miamis, Chickasaws, Cherokees, Piorias, and supposed to consist in all of five hundred families : they are at times troublesome to the boats descending the river, and have even plundered some of them, and committed a few murders. They are attached to liquor, seldom remain long in any place, many of them speak English, all understand it, and there are some who even read and write it.

At St. Genevieve, in the settlement among the whites, are about thirty Piorias, Kaskaskias, and Illinois, who seldom hunt, for fear of the other Indians. They are the remains of a nation, which fifty years ago, could bring into the field one thousand and two hundred warriors.

ON THE MISSOURI.

On the Missouri and its waters are many and numerous nations, the best known of which are : The Osages, situated on the river of the same name, on the right bank of the Missouri, at about 80 leagues from its confluence with it : they consist of one thousand warriors, who live in two settlements at no great distance from each other. They are of a gigantic stature and well proportioned ; are enemies of the whites and all other Indian nations, and commit depredations from the Illinois to the Arkansas. The trade of this nation is said to be under an exclusive grant. They are a cruel and ferocious race, and are hated and feared by all the other Indians. The confluence of the Osage river with the Missouri is about eight leagues from the Mississippi.

Sixty leagues higher up the Missouri, and on the same bank, is the river Kansas, and on it the nation of the same name, but at about seventy or eighty leagues from its mouth. It consists of about two hundred and fifty warriors, who are as fierce

Both men and women are rather slender than robust ; nor are they either full in flesh. They

and cruel as the Osages, and often molest and ill treat those who go to trade among them.

Sixty leagues above the river Kansas, and at about two hundred from the mouth of the Missouri, still on the right bank, is the *Riviere Platte*, or Shallow River, remarkable for its quicksands and bad navigation ; and near its confluence with the Missouri dwells the nation of Octolactos, commonly called Otos, consisting of about two hundred warriors, among whom are twenty-five or thirty of the nation of Missouri, who took refuge among them about thirty-five years since.

Forty leagues up the *River Platte*, you come to the nation of the Panis, composed of about seven hundred warriors in four neighbouring villages ; they hunt but little, and are ill provided with fire-arms ; they often make war on the Spaniards in the neighbourhood of Santa Fe, from which they are not far distant.

At three hundred leagues from the Mississippi, and one hundred from the *River Platte*, on the same bank, are situated the villages of the Mahas. They consisted in 1799 of five hundred warriors, but are said to have been almost all cut off last year by the small pox.

At fifty leagues above the Mahas, and on the left bank of the Missouri, dwell the Poncas, to the number of two hundred and fifty warriors, possessing in common with the Mahas their language, ferocity and vices. Their trade has never been of much value, and those engaged in it are exposed to pillage and ill treatment.

At the distance of 450 leagues from the Mississippi, and on the right bank of the Missouri, dwell the Aricaras, to the number of seven hundred warriors ; and sixty leagues above them, the Mandane nation, consisting also of about seven hundred

have all a muscular and well shaped leg. Their features are strongly marked, and if not remarka-

warriors. These two last nations are well disposed to the whites, but have been the victims of the Sioux, or Naudowessis, who being themselves once provided with fire-arms, have taken advantage of the defenceless situation of the others, and have on all occasions murdered them without mercy.

No discoveries on the Missouri, beyond the Mandane nation, have been accurately detailed, though the traders have been informed that many large navigable rivers discharge their waters into it, and that there are many numerous nations settled on them.

The Sioux, or Naudowessis, who frequent the country between the north bank of the Mississippi, are a great impediment to trade and navigation. They endeavour to prevent all communication with the nations dwelling high up the Missouri; to deprive them of arms and ammunition, and thus keep them subservient to themselves. In the winter they are chiefly on the banks of the Missouri, and massacre all who fall into their hands.

There are a number of nations at a distance from the banks of the Missouri, to the north and south, concerning whom but little information has been received. Returning to the Mississippi, and ascending it from the Missouri, about 75 leagues above the mouth of the latter, the River Moingona, or Riviere de Moine, enters the Mississippi on the west side, and on it are situated the Ayoas, a nation originally from the Missouri, speaking the language of the Otachatas: it consisted of 200 warriors before the small pox lately raged amongst them.

The Saes and Renards dwell on the Mississippi about 300 leagues above St. Louis, and frequently trade with its inhabitants; they live together, and consisted lately of 500 warriors: their chief trade is with Michilimakinac, and they have always been peaceable and friendly.

The other nations on the Mississippi higher up are but little

ble for animation, bespeak a pensive, thoughtful and reflecting soul. The colour of their skin approaches that of a bright mulatto; their hair is jet black, and their teeth good. The men have little beard, and what hairs appear they pluck out by the roots.

These beings, almost naked, in the middle of a rigorous season, during a wet and cold night, sleep contentedly in their smoaky wigwams, which are open to the weather, and live from hand to mouth.

Independent of their aversion to our civilized modes of life, their invincible passion for roving is an insuperable bar to their embracing it. Yet let us not pronounce them miserable beings. *Chacun a son gout dans ce monde.* The habitation of the Mole, dark and wretched as it may appear, has yet charms for its tenant.

known to us. The nations of the Missouri, though cruel, treacherous and insolent, may doubtless be kept in order by the United States, if proper regulations are adopted with respect to them.

It is said that no treaties have been entered into with Spain by the Indian nations westward of the Mississippi, and that its treaties with the Creeks, Choctaws, &c. are in effect superseded by our treaty with that power of October the 27th, 1795.

These people are free and independent. But this liberty and independence, far from inciting, deters them from labor. Their darling passion of hunting, while it brings them their sole support, favours their disposition to sloth and fondness for a vagabond life.

Agriculture then is the aversion of the men; it devolves on the squaws, who hoe the ground, plant and pull the corn. In fact it is the women only who toil. In a march of these savages, I have seen the squaws bending beneath their burdens, while the men walked gravely before, painted with vermilion, and carrying on their shoulders only a light fusee.

These men, however, unamiable as they may appear in this light, are not without their good qualities. A traveller, loaded with gold and silver, would be in more safety in one of their villages than any town of Europe. And he would be received with the utmost tenderness; for hospitality is one of the prominent features of the moral character of these Indians.

Their race has been thinned, and will probably soon become extinct. The small pox and spirituous liquors have committed unexampled devastation among their tribes. The vicinity of

the whites will accelerate the blow ; to civilize them is not practicable ; they visit New-Orleans to trade and receive presents ; they behold with indifference the grandest performances of art, or frigidly exclaim “ That is pretty.”

These people have been called Savages, but I think undeservedly. They are not savages in the real import of the word ; we find among them political, civil and criminal codes that indicate a higher order of beings.

CHAPTER X.

SOIL, CLIMATE AND DISEASES OF THE COUNTRY.

FROM the moral there is an easy transition to the physical world. The soil of the banks of the Mississippi and of all its branches, is a grey earth, composed of muddy and sandy properties, and which becomes of a brown cast by its contact with water. One finds no species of stones or flints either on the surface or interior of the ground : water is obtained by the slightest digging. In fact, the whole soil in the vicinity of the river, as well as of all Lower Louisiana, is apparently created by it. Trees are found under ground, deposited there in the formation of the land by the water.

The soil is fertile, when disengaged by drains of its cold watery parts. And every vegetable flourishes here that demands a fresh and humid land ; such as garden plants, rice, and the sugar cane.

Cotton, fruit trees, and particularly the sweet potatoe, succeed here only partially ; nor does

the common potatoe flourish in abundance ; melancholy privation where so many slaves are to be supported.

The soil of the Atacapas and a part of the Opelousas, unite with the good properties of the river, some valuable ones of its own. It is but far less humid, and consequently more adapted to every species of plants, except that of rice wheat of every kind ; the vine, the olive, the mulberry tree ; flax, hemp, and madder flourish there ; as well as the sugar-cane, cotton, indigo and tobacco. I do not mean to insinuate that the culture of all these is general ; but what has been cultivated has succeeded.

I examine now the climate and the temperature of the country, beginning at Lower Louisiana and West-Florida, which constitute the essential part of the colony.

This country, situated from the thirtieth to the thirty-first parallel, has this in common with the rest of the American continent, that it is less hot and more humid than that portion of the globe in the same latitude, separated from it by the ocean.

This humidity inherent in the soil and air of America, is endemical, and more considerable in New-Orleans than any other place I am acquainted with. At certain seasons the walls of the houses are so impregnated with moisture, that water is seen dripping down them.

Neither has Louisiana an agreeable and useful diversity of dry and wet weather; but an uniformity of either the one or the other prevails.

The spring announces itself the beginning of March, by her flowers and verdure, and mild temperature; moderate rains succeed, and southerly winds rather strong, which are followed by calm, pure and delightful weather. A lovely spring now discovers herself, and vouchsafes her smiles from the first days of April till the middle of June. Summer is now indicated by an increase of heat, some storms, and considerable rain. The beginning of autumn is fine, and the temperature of it agreeable till the middle of November, when the season is involved, and becomes sometimes cold, sometimes rainy; and sometimes a partial white frost announces the approach of winter.

In the winter season two winds maintain dominion, one immediately after the other; the

south or south-east, producing a wet, and ordinarily, raw weather ; and the north or north east which brings with it a cold, dry and pure air. These two winds rule with absolute sway over this part of the year, and impart their opposite qualities ; insomuch, that during the cold season which commences towards the middle of November, and terminates towards the middle of March, a colonist shivers and courts a fire on day while the north wind blows, and the next day throws open the doors and windows at the coming of the south. Yet these vicissitudes of temperature in the air have no sensible effect on the inhabitants. In general, from the end of November to the beginning of April, rains are frequent, as also fogs, which rise in the morning sometimes above the woods, and sometimes over the Mississippi, which forms the centre of the same horizon, and they are dissipated as the day advances.

One enjoys then, in this country, a mild and agreeable air during a part of spring and autumn. The heat of the summer is very supportable with the exception of some days, and the cold of winter is certainly moderate. By a thermometer of Reamur, suspended in the shade of a room exposed to the action of the air, the

average heat of three summers that I passed in Louisiana, was from 80 to 86 degrees. The same thermometer being exposed during the winter I was there, and which was one of the severest experienced for a long time, that of 1800, the cold was generally above the degree of congelation; and the most considerable cold never made the mercury fall more than two degrees below ice.

The following winter was considerably milder, and the one after still more so, having produced, till the beginning of February, only a trifling white frost. The thermometer descended only twice, and momentarily, to the degree of congelation, and sustained itself almost always from ten to twenty degrees above ice; a temperature belonging rather to spring than winter.*

During the first winter I have mentioned, when the cold was severe and long, I saw ice quite hard; and what seemed a phænomenon to the inhabitants, the snow fell in flakes the whole morning of the second of February 1800; a spectacle that had not been witnessed in Louisiana for twenty years. But what particularly

* They who have been accustomed to Fahrenheit's scale, will allow for the difference between that and Reaumur's....Trans.

interested me, and awakened all my attention, was the appearance of the sugar-houses enveloped up to the vent holes of their chimneys in a robe of snow, while the volcanoes of smoke that issued from them, formed in their dark clouds a striking contrast with its whiteness. The reflections this *coup d'ail* inspired me with were of a nature to make me forget the rigor of the season. The culture of what belonged peculiarly to the torrid zone, had acquired perfection, and was naturalized in a climate of frost and snow.

A still greater phenomenon occurred in February, 1804. There had been a very heavy fall of snow in the upper part of this vast territory, which was wafted in huge masses five hundred or more leagues down the Mississippi, into Lower Louisiana. The river from shore to shore, was filled with snow. It was impracticable to cross it for three or four days; the enormous masses contending with each other in the waves, and menacing with their noise. The river carried it into the sea; vessels navigating at a considerable distance from the coast encountered the masses. The gulf of Mexico would have justified the presumption to a stranger, that it was bounded by the poles, and had the wind come from the north-east, as it does frequently

in that season, it is probable that a great part of the snow would have been carried to the island of Cuba, and consequently beyond the tropics.

The weather in the month of July is the hottest and most oppressive ; a silence in the heavens, a perfect stillness then prevails ; there is not a breath of wind from any point of the horizon to temper the heat, nor does any rain then fall. The coldest month is that of December, when the wind prevails from the north and north-east. It brings with it a chilling effect, and produces a white frost ; in the night the ice attains to the thickness of half an inch, and is dissipated with the first rays of the sun.

This same wind chasing before it the clouds and mists, clears and purifies the sky, and, however sharp and cold, dispenses health and vigour, and cheerfulness. The colonists call it *Le Balaï*, the *Besom*. It gives a tone to the system, and dissipates the sad, heavy and melancholy impressions acquired from the south and the east gale. I have often gazed with a mixture of delight and admiration, at the blue cloudless sky at this season, enlightened with a glorious sun ; or contemplated with rapture the firmament discovering its innumerable vivid stars, at the return of the northern wind.

But as there is no good in the world unmixed, this wind, which in the latter season promotes health, and is so useful to arrest the progress of a too active and superabundant vegetation, that it may acquire new vigour after the winter ; this same wind when it obtrudes itself with violence in the spring, injures the health, is the parent of colds and fluxions of the breast, and extending its devastation to the earth, strips the trees of their opening blossoms.

I come now to the subject of the diseases of the country. In taking a survey of the colony, we find few serious maladies prevailing ; deaths not frequent, but people of both sexes living to a good old age. The men are still fresh, active and vigorous at sixty. Upon the whole the country may be considered a healthy abode.

This, however, for several years, has not been the case with New-Orleans. During the months of July, August, September and a part of November, the town is afflicted with a species of malignant fever, which baffles the science of the physicians in that place. In fact this is not to be wondered at, for there the gentlemen of the faculty are a disgrace to the profession.

This fatal disease is known at New-Orleans, as well as in the American United States, by the name of *Yellow Fever*. It is terrible and rapid in its progress, though little terrifying in its first symptoms. It begins commonly with a redness which greatly inflames the face; a pain in the head, and vague flying pains over the body. The fever is constant.

From the second to the third day the malady augments, and is characterized by an extreme heat; a total defect of perspiration, and a copious bleeding at the nose or vomiting of blood, which is commonly succeeded by another vomiting of brown matter, something resembling in colour pitch and tar. This is again followed by a feebleness in all the animal faculties; moments of delirium, and death about the ninth day. But what seems peculiar to this fatal disease, is the striking contrast in the patient at its beginning and termination; at the first period his flesh is inflamed to a burning red colour, and at the end he becomes of a livid yellow, intermixed after death with black and purple spots, not unlike those proceeding from a bruise. Hence for the want of another name, this disease has been denominated the yellow fever. I had almost forgotten to observe that the brown matter vomited

by the patient just before his death, is of such a bitter sharp and corroding quality, that if the least particle adheres to the lips, it burns them like fire.

There are three particulars, then, to be observed in this disease: in its beginning the inflamed red colour of the patient, and in its crisis the vomiting of blood, as well as the general jaundice that takes possession of the system. In endeavouring to ascertain the cause of the disease by the examination of its principal effects, we may, I think, attribute it to the extreme effervescence, decomposition and corruption of the mass of blood, rather than to that of the bile and humours. I may be mistaken like many others, on the subject; but this is my sincere belief.*

This disease has now for seven years, made, every summer, great ravages at New-Orleans; but scarcely any in the country, where it is only known by communications from place to place.

* Our French traveller and Dr. Hosack agree in their pathology of yellow fever. Dr. Hosack says, "I consider this disease as having nothing to do with bile or bilious fever; I think there is a deficiency of bile in yellow fever."

David Hosack Esq. to Noah Webster, Jun. Esq.

Professional men advance that it is not epidemical. I shall not take so much latitude in my position as they, but confine myself to an opinion that it is not contagious, or, more strictly speaking, pestilential. I am disposed to think, that its reigning principle is in the air ; and that, if a man does not run an imminent risk of taking the disease from the patient who is infected, he exposes himself greatly by frequenting those places where it commits its ravages ; inasmuch that it is not the contact with the infected persons, but the influence and action of the air, impregnated with the morbid qualities, upon the habit and disposition of the body, that communicates the disease.

In support of what I advance, I observe that, in many circumstances it has been noticed that people who have long lived in the town, and whose affairs oblige them to continue there during the disease, are less disposed to take it than those who go to it, whether from the country or elsewhere ; and that a temporary is infinitely more dangerous than a permanent residence ; as if the body assimilated itself with the existing air, and that a sudden impression was more dangerous than its continued influence.

It deserves notice, that among the inhabitants of the city, the Americans are principally the victims of the disease ; that the French are much less subject to it, and the Spaniards scarcely at all. In investigating this subject, it is to be remarked that the Spaniard, accustomed to the influence of a warm climate, and having in his blood all the relative qualities of its temperature, is less subject to suffer its inconveniences than the American, coming from a cold climate, and having his veins more copiously filled with blood, and consequently more susceptible of inflammation and corruption by the action of the heat. The Spaniard too lives temperately, on simple aliments, and avoids spirituous liquors ; whereas the American revels on succulent meats, and spices, and has often the bottle or glass to his mouth. These causes will serve, I think, to explain why this disease, so fatal to Americans, creates no solicitude in the breast of a Spaniard, and suspends few or none of the diversions of a Frenchman.

But to what shall we attribute the prevalence of such a disease in the city, when the neighbouring country is exempt from it? I will make my own observations on this subject, as well as furnish those of some enlightened men upon the spot.

I shall in the first place, enumerate some of the causes, which without doubt, concur to corrupt the air breathed at New-Orleans; and which, during the heat of summer, make it susceptible of impregnation with every impure, noxious and baneful effluvia.

1. The filth and dirt spread over the town, on the wharves, in the streets, the unoccupied corners, in the very courts before the houses, where every kind of dirt is thrown and suffered to remain.

2. The defect of the draining off of corrupted waters, which mixing with the dirt, filth and ordure, augments the evil.

3. The high brick houses, which have been built within a few years, and, which collecting and communicating much humidity, intercept the current of the air, which unobstructed, would attenuate the malignant particles of the atmosphere.

4. The open ditches, dug round the city, within a few years, under the pretence of fortifying it, and the rubbish of rotten wood in the suburbs, from which, during the summer heat fœtid vapours are exhaled.

Yet I think it very rational to suppose, that the yellow fever is not peculiar to New-Orleans ; but, that after being brought thither, it is propagated by the causes I have enumerated. A stranger to the climate and soil, it may, by proper remedies and pains be totally extirpated.

It is the general opinion that the yellow fever at New-Orleans was imported from the United States of America. It was not known in that town more than seven years ago, at which period the American commerce with New-Orleans had attained to a considerable extension.

It is thought to have its origin from the fever that committed its ravages at Philadelphia in 1793 ; and that it was brought to New-Orleans by the Americans themselves, who are always its principal victims.

However this may be, it is notorious that this mortal fever has for ten years spread desolation in the principal towns of the United States, but particularly those of New-York and Philadelphia, where it apparently had its birth, and acquired its name. Since the year 1793 few summers have passed without the appearance of this unwelcome guest at Philadelphia and New-York ; in both those places it commits great havock in the months of

July, August, September and a part of October. At the first alarm in either of those towns all is dismay and confusion. The banks are the first to fly, and whithersoever they go, the citizens go too ; for money would engross the thoughts of traders, were even the day of judgment come upon earth. Not the earth opening its jaws ; not thunder cleaving the bank, would dislodge from it the merchants, while there was a stone or brick of the structure left to cling to. In the meantime the editors of papers are careful of themselves ; from the consciousness, I presume, that their loss would be irreparable. They cull all the flowers of speech to acquaint their subscribers with the spot they have moved to in the season of danger, insinuating thereby that the fever has not suspended their politics, their scandal, their lies and defamation.

Enough of yellow fever. I return from this digression with observing that the climate of Lower Louisiana is by far more healthy than it is commonly supposed. Men are apt to draw general conclusions from particular circumstances ; and, because New-Orleans, at certain periods, is said to be unhealthy, the whole of the colony is involved in the same representation.

From the end of October to the beginning of July, diseases are not common, and mortalities

are rare, in the city as well as the country. And I am of opinion, that when disorders do occur, they are owing to the variations of the atmosphere; the quick transitions from hot to cold, and vice versa.

Epidemical diseases are not known there. The small-pox, so often fatal in other countries, is seldom attended with dangerous consequences in Louisiana.

With respect to the temperature of Upper, it is more salubrious than that of Lower Louisiana, on account of its situation. The air is in general more pure; and the natives have consequently their fibres less relaxed, and more colour in their cheeks.

CHAPTER XI.

BEASTS, BIRDS AND REPTILES.

ALMOST all the domestic animals, whether quadruped or winged, are found here in great numbers, except the ass, goat and guinea-hen, which are seldom seen.

The ox is employed in the labours of agriculture, but its flesh is not good in March, April and May, being then very meagre.

The mutton is not delicate eating, whether in the town or country.

The poultry is bad in summer, but savoury in winter.

The Louisianian horses are neither handsome nor good. Raised in humid pastures that have little body, they are without much vigour; they are besides weak at the fetlocks, and do not captivate by a handsome forehead. In a word, the country does not produce elegant riding horses, that go well in all their paces, but ponies that shuffle and pace.

The wild quadrupeds are the American tiger,* the bear, big fox, the cat, wood rat, roeluck, squirrel, rabbit, &c.

The birds are the partridge, cardinal and pope, and a species of mocking bird, called the nightingale. But it bears no resemblance in the melody and undulation of its tones to the songstress of the ancient and modern bards of Europe; it was not one of these that the great English poet Milton sought in the stillness of solitude and night:

Sweet bird that shun'st the noise of folly,
 Most musical, most melancholy;
 Thee! chauntress oft the woods among,
 I woo to hear thy evening song.

On the other hand, however, the country abounds with rooks and crows, and other birds of evil note, that fill the ear with their detestable concerts.

* The tiger is not known to the American continent. When the tiger is mentioned by travellers in America, the panther is always meant.—It is a singularity in the history of nature, that while the forests of Europe, Asia and Africa, resound with the shrieks of the victims to the lion, the tiger, the leopard and hyena, the sojourner in America, with no other weapon than a staff of reed may traverse its wilderness in perfect safety, from the unlimited ocean of the west to the shores of the Atlantic.....Trans.

There is a bird very common here, which is found in silent flocks near the houses, the size of a small turkey, of an ordinary plumage, ignoble aspect, and heavy flight, living on insects and reptiles, that is called carancro ; it is, I am of opinion, the gallinazo of Mexico.

Certain birds of passage are numerous here, such as duck and teal ; they are seen in great flocks during winter, and afford both good shooting and nourishment to the colonists.*

The fresh water fish are not very good, though they are abundant enough ; those of the sea are better. On the borders of the sea and lakes are found tolerably good oysters.

Nature seems to have designed this country as a receptacle for insects and reptiles. The crocodile is every where to be found, it being amphibious, whether in the water or on land ; it even comes to the doors of the houses. But, however hideous its aspect, it is not to be feared when out of the water.

* In South Carolina, about November, I have seen such flocks of wild ducks alight on the ponds formed by the rain, that one might shoot a hundred of an evening....Trans.

The rattle snake (*serpent a sonnettes*) is common here ; but a more dreadful animal is the congar viper. They are both found in the swamps, woods, and sometimes the houses.

The country abounds with frogs and toads ; the toads after the first rains of summer sometimes cover the earth.

But the greatest tormenter in Louisiana is the musqueto. You can avoid the crocodile, the rattle-snake and toad, by staying at home, or leaving these reptiles masters of the field of battle. But the musqueto is not to be eluded. From spring to autumn this diabolical insect provokes, teases, and preys on you ; day and night he is your unremitting persecutor, no place is sacred ; he intrudes himself into every apartment, and thirsts after your blood. A veil of gauze or muslin suspended from the cieling over your bed, is the only defence against this enemy of repose in the night. He then buzzes outside, and you sleep to the harsh music. The musqueto alone would deter me from settling in Louisiana.

Then why, it will be said, did you remain two years and a half in the country. Imperious circumstances imposed on me the residence ; my abode there was not voluntary.

CHAPTER XII.



TREES OF THE COLONY.

THE trees that form the curtains of forests with which the two banks of the Mississippi are bounded, are, with the exception of the cypress and green oak, not remarkable for their elevation. Nor is their aspect agreeable or flattering to the sight, but, on the contrary, melancholy and sad. For from the branches of the trees a species of moss, or rather misletoe, hangs in tresses of a colour inclining to grey, that marks their verdure, and forms a disagreeable *coup d'œil*.*

The wood of the cypress is used in building houses, pettiaugers and canoes ; it is, in fact, the only wood that could be applied with facility to these purposes below Upper Louisiana. It is very combustible and venomous. The least splinter of it in the flesh irritates and inflames, and is sometimes attended with fatal consequences.

* On the contrary, in my opinion, this moss, hanging in tresses through the extensive forests of the new world, renders their aspect more venerable....Trans.

There is another tree in this country admirably adapted to joiner's work, and, when well wrought, produces tables equal to any mahogany. It is called merisier. It is scarce in Lower, but plentiful in Upper Louisiana.

In what relates to the different kinds of wood with which the colony abounds, I observe that in general the cedar and pine are found on the borders of the gulf, the cypress in its neighbourhood, and on the banks of the Mississippi, and in the marshy ground, the oak, merisier, walnut, &c.

Generally speaking, fruit trees do not succeed in Louisiana, whether owing to the viciousness of the soil, or want of care. However, the orange, fig, peach, pear, apple, and the vine grow there. But they neither conciliate the eye nor the taste.

Among the natives of the country, the pacamier, a species of nut tree, offers an agreeable verdure, and the jessamine is not less captivating, though inferior in height. The sassafras is common here.

Vegetables are quick in growth, but have less flavour than those of Europe. The melons, but especially the water-melons, are excellent.

CHAPTER XIII.

SETTLEMENTS ON THE MISSISSIPPI ; STAPLE COMMODITIES OF THE COLONY.....SUGAR, COTTON, &C, FUR-SKINS. THE GALLANTRY OF THE AMERICAN BOWLES AT THE HEAD OF A FEW INDIANS ; HE ATTACKS AND CARRIES A SPANISH FORT.

I COME now to the establishments in the colony, and shall begin with those on the banks of the Mississippi.

This space of seventy-five leagues, which extends along the two banks of the river, comprehends in the whole tract from twelve to fifteen hundred habitations, where the sugar-cane, cotton, indigo, tobacco, and carpenter's wood, offer, in divers places, more or less resources by their products, and sustain a great number of proprietors where the soil admits of cultivation.

On leaving New-Orleans, and ascending the Mississippi, in the extent of five leagues, I counted seventy habitations large and small, of which forty were on the right bank of the

river, and thirty upon the left. But this enumeration being made in the vicinity of the city, the result would not be so numerous. This was from the suburbs of the town to Trudeau's habitation on the left bank of the river, and from Bernandy's house on the right bank, to Eugene Fortier's abode.

The chief part of these plantations consist of seventy-five sugar-houses, established here and there on the river's banks ; the other establishments are cotton manufactories, some indigo plantations, and others of tobacco towards the Natchitoches ; together with mills for sawing wood, and settlements of inferior note, where maize, and rice and potatoes and greens is cultivated.

The only important manufactures deserving of attention in the colony are those of sugar in the lower, and cotton in the upper part.

It is seven or eight years since the first sugar establishments were made in the colony, and it owes its principal advantage to the calamities of St. Domingo, which raised the demand for sugar from Louisiana, and sent many of the planters and workmen of that unhappy island to seek a settlement on the Mississippi.

However it may be, the sugar cane which the Louisianians unsuccessfully attempted to cultivate fifty years ago and totally abandoned, (the winter then seemed an insurmountable obstacle to its growth and the extraction of its sugar) assimilates now to the climate, and grows with surprising facility. The sugar cane planted in January, February, and even March, shoots out from the earth the beginning of spring, languishes in May and June, begins to assume vigour in July, and in the space of only three months, favoured by the rains and active heat, rises and expands, discovers in October a stalk from eight to nine feet high, and, at the end of the same month is fit to be cut and wrought, with such a real advantage, that an acre of ground, well prepared and planted skilfully with canes at the beginning of February, is in a state nine months after to yield a neat product of two thousand weight of sugar, and two thousand hogsheads of syrup.

An inhabitant who is a good planter, and whose land and establishments are in good condition, may, possessed of a hundred French acres and forty negroes, produce, *communibus annis*, a hundred and twenty thousand weight of rough sugar, and the same quantity of hogsheads of syrup.

The canton of Atacapas supplies a soil peculiar-

ly favourable to the cultivation of this plant. It is pretended that the sugar of no part of Louisiana is of a good consistence, but that it soon runs into molasses, either when put in motion by heat or the effect of transportation. If this charge from Americans be well founded, it will be a great misfortune to Louisiana, as this article is likely to become its staple and principal resource. It is true that the haste of the colonists to sell their sugar, before it is well purged of its syrup, may have given rise to the presumption of the feeble consistence of this grand production of their soil ; and it is to be hoped they will sacrifice the interest of the moment to views more comprehensive, reputable, and remotely profitable.

For my own part, I am persuaded that the sugar cane, an exotic in Louisiana, cannot fail of succeeding there with proper care : I have never seen fewer canes in any part of the West-Indies. The soil is admirably adapted to its cultivation ; it only requires a slight ploughing, and to be drained of its humidity. Neither is the plant subject to destruction from any kind of insect.

The sugar planter too of Louisiana enjoys three essential advantages for facilitating his establishment ; namely, brick, which he prepares from the earth on the banks of his river, and wood, either for building, cooperage or fuel.

These are obviously advantages, but as there is never good without some mixture of evil, the Louisianian planter has, on the other hand, several obstacles to combat. A hurricane in September or October may tear up his canes by the roots, and scatter them in every direction ; or heavy rains may so injure them that they shall afford only syrup.

I have already observed that the lower part of Lower Louisiana, in the neighbourhood of New-Orleans offers but an unfavourable soil for the culture of the sugar cane. It is consequently there of no importance. But in the upper cantons of Baton Rouge and Point Coupee, where the land is higher and less humid, it grows in all its vigour, as well as in the cantons of Atacapas and Opelousas. Indigo, within twenty years, has been generally abandoned in Louisiana.

In the cantons I have just named, cotton prospers, and is a lucrative plant. But it is to be observed that this culture is more precarious than that of the sugar cane ; cotton is exposed to the preying of the catterpillar, and the ravages of the rains.

Sugar and cotton are the staple commodities of the colony. Scarcely any indigo is raised. To-

bacco succeeds in the upper parts, particularly that of Natchitoches, but the frauds introduced in the curing of that commodity have ruined its commerce.

The produce of fur skins has much diminished, principally owing to the havoc made among the fallow beasts by the English and Americans. An American named Bowles, at the head of a handful of Talapsusses Indians, attacked and carried, about two years ago, the fort of Apalachas, fortified with cannon, supplied with ammunition and provisions, and garrisoned by a captain and company of Spanish troops, who like base cowards abandoned their post without making resistance ; but getting into their gallies moored at the foot of the fort, escaped to Pensacola. Had this captain inherited but a small portion of the spirit of a Smith, he would have heard unmoved the war-whoop, and smiled at the arrows of a host of Indians. But let me not profane the tomb of the dead by associating the memory of the great father of Virginia with such a miserable poltroon.*

And what was the object of Bowles in getting possession of this fort ? solely that of carrying on

* For the history of the courage, fortitude, and moderation of Captain Smith, vide the *First Settlers of Virginia*, an historical novel, just published.

with less restraint and more extent the trade in fur skins with the Indians of the surrounding country. It is true that about three months after the fort was retaken, without striking a blow, by the Spaniards ; but the troops they collected, and their pomp of artillery &c. showed how formidable they considered an American at the head even of a few timid, raw and undisciplined Indians. Bowles, in his turn, deserted the fort at their approach, and decamped without beat of drum, or sound of trumpet.

Rice, although it has been sold here, within two years, at eight piasters a barrel, is not a branch of any considerable importance.

CHAPTER XIV.

POPULATION OF THE COLONY.

IN speaking of the population of this country, I shall begin with its principal part, comprehending Lower Louisiana, and West Florida; from the thirty-first degree of north latitude, to the borders of the Gulph of Mexico, and from the sixty-eighth to the sixty-ninth degree of longitude west of the meridian of Ferrol.

I am of opinion that the number of inhabitants contained within this space, (without comprehending scattered remnants of Indians) does not exceed sixty thousand; of whom from twenty-six to twenty-seven thousand are whites, from five to six thousand free people of colour, and twenty-eight thousand slaves.

This population of sixty thousand souls is thus distributed; thirty-two thousand upon the banks of the river, of which ten thousand are at its chief settlement, and twenty-two thousand in the country, six thousand in the canton of Fourchè, twelve thousand in the cantons of Atacapas and Opelousas, six thousand at the establishments of Bayou, Sara, Avoyelles, Natchitoché, and Ouachita, and

four thousand in the neighbourhood of the Lakes Pontchartrain and Barataria, and upon the borders of the Gulf of Mexico.

With regard to the population of Upper Louisiana, comprized within the three posts of Arkansas, New Madrid and the Illinois, I conceive it does not exceed ten thousand individuals.

Such was our traveller's estimate of the population of Louisiana in 1802. It is at all times difficult to obtain the census of a country, and the impediments are increased in this by its scattered population. I annex an enumeration of its inhabitants from high authority: according to the following census, No. 1 of Louisiana, including Pensacola and the Natchez, as made in 1785, the whole number of inhabitants amounted to 32,062, of which 14,215 were free whites, 1,303 free people of colour, and 16,544 slaves.

The statement No. 2, from the latest documents, makes the whole number 42,375, the free whites 21,244, the free people of colour 1,768, and the slaves 12,920.

A particular statement respecting the population, &c. of Upper Louisiana in the year 1802, is numbered 3.

No. I.
CENSUS OF LOUISIANA*

IN THE YEAR 1785.

Districts.	whites.	Free people colour.	Slaves	Total.
Balize to the city	387	67	1,664	2,118
New-Orleans	2,826	563	1,631	5,028
St. Bernardo	584	2		586
Bayou St. John	91	14	573	678
Costa de Chapitoulas	1,128	263	5,645	7,036
First German coast	561	69	1,273	1,903
Second do.	714	5	581	1,300
Catahanose	912	18	402	1,332
Fourche	333		273	606
Valenzuela	306		46	352
Iberville	451		222	673
Galveztown	237		5	242
Baton Rouge and } Manchac }	68	2	100	170
Point Coupee	482	4	1,035	1,521
Atacapas & Ope- } loussas }	1,204	22	1,182	2,408
Ouachita	198		9	207
Avoyelles	149	138		287
Rapide	63		25	88
Nachitoches	404	8	344	756
Arkansas	148	31	17	196
Illinois	1,139	18	434	1,591
Natchez	1,121		438	1,559
Mobille & Tombigbee	325	31	461	837
Pensacola	384	28	184	596
	14,219	1,303	16,544	32,062

* The census of New-Orleans has been subjoined to the description of that place.

No. II.
C E N S U S

*Of the Districts or Ports of Louisiana and West-Florida,
from the latest documents.*

Names & situations of the Posts of Districts.	whites.	Free people colour.	Slaves.	Total.
Balize to New-Orleans.				2,388
San Bernardo, or Terre aux bœufs, on a creek running from the English turn east to the sea and lake Borgna				661
City of New-Orleans and suburbs, as per detail subjoined to the description of it	3,948	1,335	2,773	8,056
Bayou St. Jean and Chantilly, between the city and lake Pontchartrain				489
Coast of Chapitoulas, or along the banks of the Mississippi, 6 leagues upwards				1,444
First German coast, from six to ten leagues upwards, on both banks	688	113	1,620	2,421
Second do. from 10 leagues and end- ing at 16 do.	883	21	1,046	1,950

Names & situation of the Posts of Districts.	whites.	Free people colour.	Slaves.	To- tal.
Catahanose, or 1st A- cadian coast, com- mencing at six- teen leagues above the city and end- ing at 23 on both banks	1382		818	2200
Fourche, or 2d A- cadian coast, from 23 to 30 leagues above town	677		464	1141
Valenzuela, or settle- ments on the Ba- ton de la Fourche, running from the west side of the Mississippi to the sea, and called in old maps the Fourche or riviere des Chillmachas	1797		267	2064
Iberville parish, com- mencing at about 30 leagues from Orleans, and end- ing at the river of the same name	658	13	386	1057
Galveztown, situated on the river Iber- ville, between the Mississippi & lake Maurepas, oppo- site the mouth of the Arnet	213	8	26	247

Names & situation of the Posts of Districts.	whites.	Free people colour.	Slaves.	To- tal.
Government of Ba- ton Rouge, includ- ing all the settle- ments between the Iberville and the line of demarca- tion	958	16	539	1513
Point Coupe & False river behind it, 50 leagues from New Orleans, on the west side of the Mississippi	547		1663	2150
Atacapas, on the rivers Teche and Vermilion, &c. to the west of the Mississippi, and near the sea	859	58	530	1447
Opelousas adjoining to, and to the north east of the forego- ing	1646		808	2454
Ouachita, on the ri- ver of the same name, or upper part of the black river which emp- ties into the river Rouge				361
Avoyelles, on the Red river	336	2	94	432
Rapid on do.	584		169	758
Natchitoches, on do. about 75 leagues				

Names & situation of the Posts of Districts.	Whites.	Free people colour.	Slaves.	To- tal.
from the Missis- sippi	785		846	1631
Concord, an infant settlement on the banks of the Mis- sissippi, opposite Natchez	Numbers unknown.			
Arkansas, on the ri- ver of the same name, about 12 leagues from its mouth		335	5	48
Spanish Illinois, or Upper Louisiana, from la Petite Prairie, near N. Madrid, to the Missouri inclu- sive, as per de- tail, No. 1.	4948	197	883	6028
Mobile and country between it and N. Orleans, and bor- ders of lake Pont- chartrain				880
Pensacola, exclusive of the garrison				300
	21,244	2,768	12,920	42,375

Statement of the Population of the settlements of Upper Louisiana, with the Births, Marriages, Deaths, Stock and Productions of the year 1799.

Names of the Settlements.	Whites.	Free Mulattoes.	Free Negroes.	Slaves.	Total.	Marriages.	Births.	Deaths.	Bushels of Wheat.	Bush. of Ind. Corn.	Pounds of Tobacco.	Bushels of Sa .	Pounds of Lead.	Horned Cattle.	Horses.	Exports for New-Orleans.
St. Louis	601	50	6	268	925	9	52	20	4300	10300	1650			1140	215	1754 packs of shaved skins, of 100lb. each valued at \$70160
Carondelet	181	3		184	3	15	41	11	3300	2760	4500			198	45	8 packs bear-skins 256
St. Charles	840			55	895				6645	12170	4053			202	57	18 do. buffalo 540
St. Fernando	259			17	276	5	34	7	5800	2350	750			230	153	35000 lb. lead 2160
Marias des Liards	337			42	379				1019	1504	6800			629	125	2000 lb. flour 60
Maramée	115			115					200	6370	3150			574		
St. Andrews	361	5	27	393					730	16950	5465			122		
St. Genevieve	636	1	2	310	949	5	64	14	16400	21450	1999	965	150000	253	268	
New Bourbon	445		1	114	560				1630	14300	300		20000	595	83	
Cape Girardeau	416	105		521					510	16200				707	200	
New Madrid	711			71	782				47765					1188	243	
Little Meadow	46			3	49					2675				35		
	4748	161	36	883	6028	34	191	52	88349	84534	28667	965	170000	7980	1703	

MEMORANDUM.

St. Louis is situated on the Mississippi, five leagues below the mouth of the Missouri. Carondelet is two leagues below St. Louis, on the Mississippi.—St. Charles is on the Missouri, about seven leagues from its mouth, and about six from St. Louis by land.—St. Fernando, or Harisariot, is three to four leagues from St. Louis in a valley on one of the roads from St. Louis to St. Charles.—Marias des Liards is four leagues from St. Louis, and a league west of the foregoing.—Maramée is on the river of the same name.—St. Andrews is situated five leagues above St. Charles on the Missouri.—St. Genevieve is opposite Kaskaskias and on the banks of the Mississippi.—New Bourbon is a league below St. Genevieve.—New Madrid is on the Mississippi, fifteen leagues below the mouth of Ohio.—Little Meadow is 7 leagues below New Madrid, on the banks of the river.

MEMORANDUM.

All the fine furs are shipped to Canada, as well as a great quantity of deer and bear skins, where they bring a better price than at New-Orleans; and this being a contraband trade, no notice is taken of it in the above account of exports, which is the official one.

CHAPTER XV.

COMMERCE OF THE COUNTRY.

RELATIVE to what concerns the commerce of the colony, I shall observe, in the first place, that, from the beginning of the maritime war, which has lately terminated, that is, about nine years, this commerce has been entirely in the hands of the Americans, who have shared the profits with the English, to whom they are factors or agents.*

* The following may be received as a sketch of the exports of Louisiana....Trans.

IMPORTS AND EXPORTS.

20,000 bales of cotton, of 3 cwt. each, at 20 cts. per pound.	}	1,344,000	increasing.
45,000 casks of sugar, 10 cwt. each at 6 cents per lb.	}	302,400	ditto
800 do. molasses, 100 gallons each.	}	32,000	ditto
Indigo,	}	100,000	} diminishing rapidly.
Peltry,		200,000	
Lumber,		80,000	
Lead, corn, horses and cattle, uncertain.			
All other articles, suppose		100,000	
		2,158,000	
		2,158,000	

It is to be presumed that the peace will change the order of things, and replace it by another ;

According to official returns in the treasury of the United States, there were imported into our territory from Louisiana and the Floridas, merchandize to the following amounts, in the several years annexed.

In 1799 to the value of	\$507,132
1800	904,322
1801	956,635
1802	1,006,214

According to the same authority, which makes the total of the exports to amount to 2,158,000 dollars, the imports, in merchandize, plantation-utensils, slaves, &c. amount to two and a half millions, the difference being made up by the money introduced by the government, to pay the expenses of governing and protecting the colony.

According to the returns in the treasury of the United States, exports have been made to Louisiana and the Floridas, to the following amount in the years annexed :

In 1799 to the value of	
	3,056,268 in foreign articles.
	447,824 in domestic do.
	<hr/>
	\$3,504,092
	<hr/>

In 1800	{	1,795,127 in foreign articles
	{	240,662 in domestic do.
		<hr/>
		\$2,035,789
		<hr/>

the Americans and their French agents established at New Orleans already feel inquietude at this idea. It is thus the future presents itself to the merchant, who is always affected by it as it regards his interest, which is ever found to be the governing principle of his mind.

In 1801	{	1,770,794 in foreign articles.
		137,204 in domestic do.
		<hr/>
		\$1,907,998
		<hr/>

In 1802	{	1,054,600
		170,110
		<hr/>
		\$1,224,710
		<hr/>

It is observed, that if the total of the imports and exports into and from these provinces, (of which the two Floridas are but a very unimportant part, with respect to both) be as above supposed, viz.

Imports,	2,500,000
Exports,	2,158,000
	<hr/>
	4,658,000
	<hr/>

The duty of six per cent ought alone to produce the gross sum of two hundred seventy-nine thousand, four hundred and eighty dollars, and that the difference between that sum and its actual nett produce, arises partly from the imperfect tariff by which the value of merchandize is ascertained, but principally from the smuggling, which is openly countenanced by most of the revenue officers.

Let us see what is the amount of produce exported from the colony, and what its value is at the present era.

After mature examination, I am of opinion that the mass of the productions of the colony, exported in 1801, consisted of about four millions weight of rough sugar, two millions weight of cotton, very little syrup, with a moderate quantity of indigo, tobacco, carpenters' and coopers' wood, to which may be added some furs.

This is the place to remark that the commerce of this country is carried on by about twenty vessels, that sail under American colours, from different parts of Europe and America. They are from one hundred to two hundred and fifty tons each,* and come and go in succession. It

* NAVIGATION EMPLOYED IN THE TRADE OF THE PROVINCE.

In the year 1802 there entered the Mississippi two hundred and sixty-eight vessels of all descriptions, eighteen of which were public armed vessels, and the remainder merchantmen, as follows, viz.

	American.	Spanish.	French.
Ships,	48	14	
Brigs,	63	17	1

is further to be remarked that, properly speaking, there are no merchants in this colony, but

Polacres,		4	
Schooners,	50	61	
Sloops,	9	1	
Total.	<u>170</u>	<u>97</u>	<u>1</u>

Of the number of American vessels, twenty-three ships, twenty-five brigs, nineteen schooners, and five sloops came in ballast, the remainder were wholly, or in part laden.

Five Spanish ships and seven schooners came in ballast. The united tonnage of all the shipping that entered the river, exclusive of the public armed vessels, was 33,725 register tons.

In the same year there sailed from the Mississippi two hundred and sixty-five sail, viz.

American.	Tons.	Spanish.	Tons.	French.	Tons.
Ships, 40	8972	18	3714		
Brigs. 58	7546	22	1944		
Schrs. 52	4346	58	3747	3	105
Sloops, 8	519	3	118		
Polacres,		3	240		
Total, 158	<u>21383</u>	<u>104</u>	<u>9753</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>105</u>

	Total.	Tons.
Americans,	158	21383
Spanish,	104	9753
French,	3	105
Grand total,	<u>265</u>	<u>31241</u>

The tonnage of the vessels which went away in ballast, and that of the public armed ships, are not included in the foregoing account: these latter carried away masts, yards, spars, pitch, tar, &c. at least 1000 tons.

In the first six months of the year 1802, there en-

simple traders, selling every thing in retail like the meanest shopkeeper; and a great number

tered the Mississippi 173 sail, of all nations, four of which were public armed vessels, viz. two French, and two Spanish, whose tonnage is not enumerated. This will be apparent from the following list.

American.	Tons.	Spanish.	Tons.	French.	Tons.
Ships, 23	5396	14	3080	5	1002
Brigs, 44	5701	20	2173	8	878
Polac.		3	480	2	436
Schrs. 22	1899	18	1187	7	488
Sloops, 4	278	3	167		
Tot. 93	13264	58	7087	22	2804

Total of Ships.		Total of Tons.
Americans,	93	13264
Spanish,	58	7087
French,	22	2804
Grand Tot. 173		23155 tons.

In the same six months there sailed from the Mississippi one hundred and sixty-six vessels, viz.

	American.	Spanish.	French.
Ships,	21	18	2
Brigs,	28	31	1
Polacres,		4	
Schrs,	17	26	5
Sloops,	2	1	
Total.	68	80	8

COASTING TRADE.

There is a considerable coasting trade from Pensacola, Mobile, and the creeks and rivers falling into, and

of these are only agents and commission merchants.

in the neighbourhood of Lake Ponchartrain, from whence New Orleans is principally supplied with ship-timber, charcoal, lime, pitch and tar, and partly with cattle, and the places before named are supplied with articles of foreign growth and produce in the same way from Orleans. The vessels employed are sloops and schooners, some of which are but half-decked, from eight to fifty tons; five hundred of which, including their repeated voyages, and thirteen gallies and gun boats, entered the Bayou of St. Jean last year. There is likewise a small coasting trade between the Atacapas and Opelusas, and New-Orleans, by way of the Balize, which would much increase, if there was any encouragement given by government to clear away a few obstructions, chiefly caused by falling timber in the small rivers and creeks leading to them.

CHAPTER XVI.

GOVERNMENT OF THE COLONY.

THE governor of the country, besides his judicial power, is chief of the army and militia, and the head of the civil government. He is also president of the cabildo, or provincial council. He appoints and removes at pleasure the commandants of districts. He appoints the officers of the militia, who are, however, commissioned by the king; and he recommends military officers for preferment. He is superintendent of Indian affairs. He promulgates ordinances for the good government and improvement of the province; but he has no power to assess taxes upon the inhabitants without their consent. Until the year 1798, he possessed the sole power of granting lands, but it then passed into the hands of the intendant.

The cabildo is a hereditary council of twelve, chosen originally from the most wealthy and respectable families. The governor presides over their meetings. Their office is very honourable, but it is acquired by purchase. They have

a right to represent, and even remonstrate with the governor, in respect to the interior government of the province. The police of the city is under their controul and direction. In it they regulate the admission of physicians and surgeons to practise. Two members of the cabildo serve by turns monthly, and take upon themselves the immediate superintendence of markets, bakers, streets, bridges, and the general police of the city.

This council distributes among its members several important offices, such as alguazil, mayor, or high sheriff, alcaide provincial, attorney general, &c. The last is a very important charge: the person who holds it is not merely the king's attorney, but an officer peculiar to the civil law. He does not always prosecute; but after conviction he indicates the punishment annexed by law to the crime, and which may be, and is mitigated by the court. Like the chancellor in the English system, he is the curator and protector of orphans, &c. and, finally, he is the expounder of the law, the defender of the privileges belonging to the town, province or colony, and the accuser of every public officer that infringes them. The cabildo is also vested with a species of judicial authority.

The intendant is chief of the departments of finance, and exercises the judicial powers. He is totally independent of the governor, and no public monies can be issued without his express order. The land office is under his direction.*

The contador, treasurer, and interventor, are officers subordinate to the intendant. The first has four clerks under him, and keeps all accounts and documents respecting the receipt and expenditure of the revenue; the contador is therefore a check upon the intendant.

The treasurer is properly no more than a cashier, and is allowed one clerk.

The interventor superintends all public purchases and bargains.

The administrator is subordinate to the intendant, and, with a number of inferior officers,

* Considering an acquaintance with these functions, an indispensable branch of knowledge to the American gentleman who has a higher object in opening this volume than mere amusement, I entertain no fear of being accused of superfluity of detail. It will enable the reader to appreciate the propriety of any new code, whether it be a just modification of the ancient system or not.—Trans.

manages every thing respecting the custom-house. Every clerk in these offices receives his commission from the king.

The auditor is the king's counsel, who is to furnish the governor with legal advice in all cases of judicial proceedings, whether civil or military.

The assessor's functions are similar to those of the auditor, and are properly applicable to the intendant's department.

A secretary of the government and another of the intendency.

A surveyor general.

A harbour master.

A storekeeper, who takes charge of all public moveable property.

An interpreter of the French and Spanish languages, and a number of other inferior officers.

All appointments in the province with a salary of more than thirty dollars per month are made by the king, and most of those with a lower salary by the governor or intendant, as be-

longs to their respective departments. There are no officers chosen by the people.*

* The salaries and perquisites of the principal officers are as follows :

	Dollars.		Dollars.
Governor annually	6,000	Salary.	2,000
Intendant - - -	4,000		Perquisites.
Auditor - - -	2,000		none
Contador - - -	2,000		2,000
Assessor - - -	1,200		none
Treasurer - - -	1,200		1,000
Administrator -	1,200		none
Sect. of Government	600		none
			2,000

The commandants of districts, who have no military post or pension, receive each a hundred dollars from the king annually.

CHAPTER XVII.

EXPENSES AND DEBT.

THE expenses of the present government,* comprehending the pay and support of the regiment of Louisiana, part of the battalion of the

* It will doubtless be proper to enumerate the

TAXES AND DUTIES.

Instead of paying local taxes, each inhabitant is bound to make and repair roads, bridges and embankments through his own land.

A duty of six per cent. is payable at the custom-house, on the transfer of shipping. It is levied upon the sum the buyer and seller declare to be the real consideration. As no oath is required from either, they seldom report more than half the price.

The following taxes are also payable in the province.

Two per cent. on legacies and inheritances coming from collaterals, and exceeding 2,000 dollars.

Four per cent. on legacies given to persons who are not relatives of the testator.

A tax on civil employments, the salaries of which exceed 300 dollars annually, called *media annata*, amounting to half the first year's salary. By certain officers, it is to be paid by

regiment of Mexico, a company of dragoons, and one of artillery, which form the garrison of the country, including Mobile; the repairs of public buildings and fortifications; the maintenance of a few galleys to convey troops and stores throughout the province; Indian presents and salaries of officers, clergy, and persons employed for public purposes, amount to about 650,000 dollars. A sum in specie, which does not generally exceed 400,000 dollars, is annually sent from Vera Cruz; but this, together with

two annual instalments, and by others in four. The first person appointed to a newly created office pays nothing; but the tax is levied on all who succeed him.

Seven dollars are deducted from the sum of twenty, paid as pilotage by every vessel entering or leaving the Mississippi; but the treasury provides the boats, and pays the salary of the pilots and sailors employed at the Balize. The remainder of the twenty dollars is thus distributed: To the head pilot 4, to the pilot who is in the vessel 4, and 5 to the crew of the row-boat that goes out to put the pilot on board, or take him ashore.

A tax of forty dollars per annum on licenses to sell liquors.

A tax on certain places when sold, such as those of regidor, notary, attorney, &c.

But the principal tax is that of 6 per cent. levied on all imports and exports, according to a low tariff, the proceeds of which nett about 120,000 dollars, while all the other taxes are said not to yield more than 5 or 6 thousand dollars annually.

the amount of duties and taxes collected in the province, leaves usually a deficiency of one hundred, or one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, for which certificates are issued to the persons who may have furnished supplies, or to officers and workmen for their salaries. Hence a debt has accumulated, which, it is said, amounts at present to about 450,000 dollars. It bears no interest, and is now depreciated 30 per cent. The latter circumstance has taken place, not from want of confidence in the eventual payment of the certificates, but from the uncertainty of the time when, and the want and general value of specie. The whole of this debt is said to be due to the inhabitants, and to American residents. It would have been long since paid off, but for a diversion of the funds, destined for that purpose to different and external objects.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE FORTIFICATIONS OF THE COLONY.

THE fortifications of New-Orleans, which I have before slightly noticed, consist of five ill constructed redoubts, with a covered way, palisade and ditch. The whole is going fast to decay, and it is presumed they would be of but little service, in case of an attack. There is a powder magazine on the opposite side of the river.*

* For internal defence there is a militia in Louisiana. The following is the return of it, made to the court of Spain by the Baron de Carondelet.

	Militia
From the Balize to the city--volunteers of the Mississippi--4 companies of 100 men each—complete	} 400
City--Battalion of the City, 5 companies	500
Artillery Company, with supernumeraries	120
Carabineers, or privileged companies of horse, 2 companies of 70 each--incomplete	} 100
Mulattoes, 2 companies: Negroes, 1 do.	300
Mixed Legion of the Mississippi, comprehending Galveztown, Baton-Rouge, Pointe Coupee, Atacapas and Opelousas, viz.	

The fort of Plaquemines, which is about twelve or thirteen leagues from the sea, is an

2 companies of grenadiers	
8 do. of fusileers	
4 do. of dragoons	
2 do. lately added from Bayou Sara	
<hr/>	
16 companies of 100 men each -	1600
Avoyelles, 1 company of infantry	100
Oucheta, 1 do. of cavalry	100
Natchitoches, 1 do. of infantry and 1 of cavalry	200
Arkansas, 1 do. of infantry and cavalry	100
Illinois, 4 do. of cavalry } These are always above }	800
4 do. of infantry } the complement. }	
Provincial regiment of Germans and Acadians, from the first German coast to Iberville	
10 companies, viz. 2 of grenadiers } -	1000
8 of fusileers }	
Mobile and the country East of Lake Ponchartrain	
2 companies of horse and foot, incomplete -	120
	<hr/>
	5,440
The Island of New-Orleans, with the opposite margin and the adjacent settlements - }	
	5,000
The West margin from Manchac, including Pointe Coupee and extending to the Red River - }	
	800
Atacapas, along the coast, between the delta of the Mississippi and the river Sabine - }	
	350
Opelousas -	750
Red River, including Bayou Bœuf, Avoyelles, Rapide and Natchitoches - }	
	1,000
Ouachita -	300

ill constructed, irregular brickwork, on the eastern side of the Mississippi. It might be taken perhaps, by escalade, without difficulty.

It is in a degree ruinous. The principal front is meant to defend the approach from the sea, and can oppose, at most, but eight heavy guns. On the opposite bank are the ruins of a small closed redoubt, called Fort Bourbon; its fire was intended to flank that of the Fort of Plaquemines.

Concord - - - - -	40
Arkansas - - - - -	150
New Madrid and its vicinity - - - - -	350
Illinois and Missouri - - - - -	1,000
The settlements on the East side of the Mississippi, from the American line to the Iberville, and some other settlements - - - - -	600
	<hr/>
	10,340

It is to be observed that none of these statements include the country beyond the river Sabine, nor even all those which lie East of it. Data are wanting to give them.

CHAPTER XIX.

OF LANDS AND TITLES.

THE lands are held in some instances by grants from the crown, but mostly from the colonial government. But perhaps not one quarter of the lands granted in Louisiana are held by complete titles; and of the remainder a considerable part depends upon a written permission of a commandant. Not a small proportion is held by occupancy, with a single verbal permission of the officer last mentioned. This practice has always been countenanced by the Spanish government, in order that poor men, when they found themselves a little at ease, might, at their own conveniency, apply for and obtain complete titles. In the meantime such imperfect rights were suffered by the government to descend by inheritance, and even to be transferred by private contract. When requisite, they have been seized by judicial authority, and sold for the payment of debts.

Until within a few years, the governor of Upper Louisiana was authorised to make surveys

of any extent. In the exercise of this discretionary power some abuses were committed; a few small monopolies were created. About three years ago he was restricted in this branch of his duty; since which he has been only authorised to make surveys to emigrants in the following manner: Two hundred acres for each man and wife, fifty acres for each child, and twenty acres for each slave. Hence the quantity of land allowed to settlers depends on the number in each family; and for this quantity of land they paid no more than the expense of surveying. These surveys were necessary to entitle the settlers to grants; and the governor, and after him, the intendant at New-Orleans, were alone authorised to execute grants on the receipt of the surveys from the settlers. The administration of the land-office is at present under the care of the intendant of the province.

There are no feudal rights nor noblesse.

It is impossible to ascertain the quantity of lands granted, without calling upon the claimants to exhibit their titles; the registry being incomplete, and the maps made by the different surveyors-general having been burnt in the fires

of New-Orleans of 1788 and 1794, no estimate has been obtained.

All the lands on both sides of the Mississippi, from the distance of sixteen leagues below New-Orleans to Baton Rouge, are granted to the depth of forty acres, or nearly half a league, which is the usual depth of all grants.

CHAPTER XX.

RECAPITULATION. A SUMMARY VIEW OF ALL THE SETTLEMENTS IN UPPER AND LOWER LOUISIANA.

THAT the reader may the more readily digest the intelligence imparted in this volume, I will make a kind of recapitulation of the most prominent parts.

Louisiana, including the Mobile settlements, was discovered and peopled by the French, whose monarchs made several grants of its trade, in particular to Mr. Corosat, in 1712, and some years after, with his acquiescence, to the well known company projected by Mr. Law.*

* The Mississippi scheme, by Law, beside the madness, misery, and calamities it occasioned, was likewise productive of many circumstances truly ridiculous, during the golden dreams of the whole French nation.

If Law, says an historian, wished for the favours of French women, they would have kissed his *derriere*. One day when he gave audience to a great number of ladies, they would not suffer him to leave them for the most pressing occasions, which though he was forced to explain, they only cried out, "Oh! if that's all, we certainly shall not part with you—

This company was relinquished in the year 1731. By a secret convention on the third of November, 1762, the French government ceded so much of the province as lies beyond the Mississippi, as well as the island of New-Orleans to Spain; and by the treaty of peace which followed in 1763, the whole territory of France and Spain eastward of the middle of the Mississippi to the Iberville, thence through the middle of that river, and the lakes Maurepas and Ponchartrain to the sea, was ceded to Great Britain. Spain having conquered the Floridas from Great Britain during the American war, they were confirmed to her by the treaty of peace of 1783.

“ you may do whatever you please, provided you listen to us
“ the while.”

One lady despairing of seeing Mr. Law by any other means ordered her coachman to drive to the door of a house where she knew he was to dine, and began to cry “ fire ! fire ! ” with all her might; on which the whole company ran out to see where, and Law among the rest; when the curious lady jumped out of her coach to have a full view of him, which having accomplished, she took to her heels, and made her escape. Another lady ordered her coachman to overturn her carriage opposite to Law’s house, in order to bring him out to her relief; when she confessed to the terrestrial Plutus that the accident was brought about expressly to have an opportunity of speaking to him.—“ The projector Law,” says Montesquieu, “ turned the state as a botcher turns a garment.”—Fragmens de Lettres.—Trans.

By the treaty of Saint Ildefonso, of the first of October, 1800, his catholic majesty promises and engages on his part to cede back to the French Republic, six months after the full and entire execution of the conditions and stipulations therein contained, relative to the Duke of Parma, "The colony or province of Louisiana, "with the same extent that it actually hath in the "hands of Spain, that it had when France possessed it, and such as it ought to be after the "treaties subsequently entered into between "Spain and other states." This treaty was confirmed and enforced by that of Madrid, of the 21st of March, 1801. From France it passed to the United States by the Treaty of the 30th of April, 1801, with a reference to the above clause, as descriptive of the limits ceded.*

The province as held by Spain, including a part of West-Florida, is laid off into the following principal divisions: Mobile, from Balize

* It is a matter of mirth what erroneous notions the world has relative to the cession of Louisiana to the United States. A thousand people imagine at this moment that New-Orleans belongs to us; whereas New-Orleans still belongs to his Catholic Majesty the king of Spain; it is comprehended in the tract reserved by him.—Trans.

to the city, New-Orleans and the country on both sides of Lake Ponchartrain, first and second German coasts, Catahanose, Fourche, Venezuela, Iberville, Galvez Town, Baton Rouge Pointe Coupée, Atacapas, Opelousas, Ouachita, Avoyelles, Rapide, Natchitoches, Arkansas, and the Illinois.

In the Illinois there are commandants at New-Madrid, St. Genevieve, New-Bourbon, St. Charles, and St. Andrews, all subordinate to the commandant-general.

Baton Rouge having been made a government subsequently to the treaty of limits, &c. with Spain, the posts of Manchac, and Thompson's creek, or Feliciana, were added to it.

Chapitoulas has sometimes been regarded as a separate command, but it is now included within the jurisdiction of the city. The lower part of the river has likewise had occasionally a separate commandant.

Many of the present establishments are separated from each other by immense and trackless deserts, having no communication with one another by land, except now and then a solitary instance of its being attempted by hunters, who

have to swim rivers, expose themselves to the inclemency of the weather, and carry their provisions on their backs for a time proportioned to the length of their journey. This is particularly the case on the West of the Mississippi, where the communication is kept up only by water, between the capital and the distant settlements; three months being required to convey intelligence from one to the other by the Mississippi.

The principal settlements in Louisiana are on the Mississippi, and begin to be cultivated about twenty leagues from the sea, where the plantations are yet thin, and owned by the poorest people. Ascending you see them improve on each side, till you reach New-Orleans, which is five leagues higher. The best and most improved are above the city, and comprehend what is there known by the *Paroisse de Chapitoulas*, premier and second *Côte des Allemands*, and extends sixteen leagues.

Above this begins the parish of *Catahanose*, or first *Acadian* settlement, extending eight leagues on the river. Adjoining it and still ascending is the second *Acadian* settlement, or parish of the *Fourche*, which extends about six

leagues. The parish of Iberville then commences, and is bounded on the east side by the river of the same name, which, though dry a great part of the year yet, when the Mississippi is raised, it communicates with the lakes Maurepas and Ponchartrain, and through them with the sea; thus forming what is called the island of New-Orleans. Except on the point just below the Iberville, the country from New-Orleans is settled the whole way along the river, and presents a scene of uninterrupted plantations in sight of each other, whose fronts are all cleared to the Mississippi, and occupy on that river from five to twenty-five acres with a depth of forty; so that a plantation of five acres in front contains two hundred.

A few sugar plantations are formed in the parish of Catahanose, but the remainder is devoted to cotton and provisions, and the whole is an excellent soil incapable of being exhausted. The plantations are but one deep on the island of New-Orleans, and on the opposite side of the river as far as the mouth of the Iberville, which is thirty-five leagues above New-Orleans.

The sugar-cane may be cultivated between the river Iberville and New-Orleans, on both sides

of the Mississippi, and as far back as the swamps. Below the city, however, the lands decline so rapidly that beyond fifteen miles the soil is not well adapted to it. Above the Iberville the cane would be affected by the cold, and its produce would, therefore, be uncertain. Within these limits, the best planters admit that one quarter of the cultivated lands of any considerable plantation may be planted in cane, one quarter left in pasture, and the remaining half employed for provisions, &c. and a reserve for a change of crops. One Parisian arpent of one hundred and eighty feet square, may be expected to produce, on an average, twelve hundred weight of sugar, and fifty gallons of rum.

From the above data, admitting that both sides of the river are planted for ninety miles in extent and about three-fourths of a mile in depth, it will result that the annual product may amount, in round numbers, to twenty-five thousand hogsheads of sugar, together with twelve thousand puncheons of rum. Enterprising young planters say, that one third, or even one half of the arable land might be planted in cane. It may also be remarked, that a regular supply of provisions from above, at a moderate price, would enable the planter to give his attention to a greater body

of land cultivated with cane. The whole of these lands, as may be supposed, are granted ; but in the Atacapas country there is undoubtedly a portion, parallel to the sea-coast, fit for the culture of the sugar-cane. There vacant lands are to be found, but the proportion is at present unknown.

In the above remarks, the lands at Terre au Bœuf, on the Fourche, Bayou St. Jean, and other inlets of the Mississippi, south of the latitude supposed to divide those which are fit from those which are unfit for the cultivation of the cane, have been entirely kept out of view. Including these, and taking one-third, instead of one-fourth of the lands fit for sugar, the produce of the whole would be fifty thousand, instead of twenty-five thousand hogsheads of sugar.

The following quantities of sugar, brown, clayed and refined, were imported into the United States from Louisiana and the Floridas, viz.

In 1799,	-	-	773,542 lb.
1800,	-	-	1,560,865
1801,	-	-	967,619
1802,	-	-	1,576,933

About twenty-five leagues from New-Orleans,

on the west side of the Mississippi, the creek or Bayou of the Fourche, called in the old maps *La Rivière des Chitamaches*, flows from the Mississippi, and communicates with the sea to the west of the Balise. The entrance of the Mississippi is navigable only at high water, but will then admit of craft of from sixty to seventy tons burthen. On both banks of the creek are settlements, one plantation deep, for nearly fifteen leagues, and they are divided into two parishes. The settlers are numerous, though poor, and the culture is universally cotton. On all creeks making from the Mississippi, the soil is the same as on the banks of the river, and the border is the highest part of it, from whence it descends gradually to the swamp. In no place on the low lands is there depth more than sufficient for one plantation, before you come to the low grounds incapable of cultivation. This creek affords one of the communications to the two populous and rich settlements of Atacapas and Opelousas, formed on and near the small rivers Teche and Vermillon, which flow into the bay of Mexico. But the principal and swiftest communication is by the Bayou or creek of Plaquemines, whose entrance into the Mississippi is seven leagues higher up on the same side, and thirty-two above New-Orleans. These settlements abound in cat-

tle and horses, have a large quantity of good land in their vicinity, and may be made of great importance. A part of their produce is sent by sea to New-Orleans, but the greater part is carried in *batteaux* by the creeks above mentioned.

Immediately above the Iberville, and on both sides of the Mississippi, lies the parish of Manchac, which extends four leagues on the river, and is well cultivated. Above it commences the settlement of Baton Rouge, extending about nine leagues. It is remarkable as being the first place where the high land is contiguous to the river, and here it forms a bluff from thirty to forty feet above the greatest rise of the river. Here the settlements extend a considerable way back on the east side; and this parish has that of Thompson's creek and Bayou Sara subordinate to it. The mouth of the first of these creeks is about forty-nine leagues from New-Orleans, and that of the latter two or three leagues higher up. They run from north-east to south-west, and their head waters are north of the thirty-first degree of latitude. Their banks have the best soil, and the greatest number of good cotton plantations of any part of Louisiana, and are allowed to be the garden of it.

Above Baton Rouge, at the distance of fifty leagues from New-Orleans, and on the west side of the Mississippi, is Pointe Coupée, a populous and rich settlement, extending eight leagues along the river. Its produce is cotton. Behind it, on an old bed of the river, now a lake, whose outlets are closed up, is the settlement of Fausse Rivière, which is well cultivated.

In the space now described from the sea, as high as, and including the last mentioned settlement, are contained three-fourths of the population, and seven-eighths of the riches of Louisiana.

From the settlement of Pointe Coupée on the Mississippi, to Cape Girardeau, above the mouth of the Ohio, there is no land on the west side that is not overflowed in the spring, to the distance of eight or ten leagues from the river, except a small spot near New-Madrid ; so that in the whole extent there is no possibility of forming a considerable settlement contiguous to the river on that side. The eastern bank has, in this respect, a decided advantage over the western, as there are on it many situations which effectually command the river.

On the west side of the Mississippi, seventy

leagues from New-Orleans, is the mouth of the Red River, on whose banks and vicinity are the settlements of Rapide, Avoyelles and Natchitoches, all of which are thriving and populous. The latter is situated seventy-five leagues up the river. On the north side of the Red River, a few leagues from its junction with the Mississippi, is the Black River, on one of whose branches, a considerable way up, is the infant settlement of Ouachita, which, from the richness of the soil, may be made a place of importance. Cotton is the chief produce of these settlements, but they have likewise a considerable Indian trade. The River Rouge, or Red River, is made use of to communicate with the frontiers of New-Mexico.

There is no other settlement on the Mississippi, except the small one called Concord, opposite to the Natchez, till you come to the Arkansas river, whose mouth is two hundred and fifty leagues above New-Orleans.

Here are but a few families, who are more attached to the Indian trade, by which they chiefly live, than to cultivation. There is no settlement from this place to New-Madrid, which is itself inconsiderable. Ascending the river, you come

to Cape Girardeau, St. Geneviève, and St. Louis ; where, though the inhabitants are numerous, they raise little for exportation, and content themselves with trading with the Indians, and working a few lead mines. This country is very fertile, especially on the banks of the Missouri, where there have been formed two settlements, called St. Charles and St. Andrew, mostly by emigrants from Kentucky. The peltry procured in the Illinois is the best sent to the Atlantic market ; and the quantity is very considerable. Lead is to be had with ease, and in such quantities as to supply all Europe, if the population were sufficient to work the numerous mines which are to be found within two or three feet from the surface in various parts of the country. The settlements above the Illinois were first made by the Canadians, and their inhabitants still resemble them in their aversion to labour, and love of a wandering life. They contain but few negroes, compared to the number of the whites ; and it may be received as a general rule, that in proportion to the distance from the capital, the number of blacks diminish below that of the whites ; the former abounding mostly on the rich plantations in the vicinity.

When compared with the Indiana Territory,

the face of the country in Upper Louisiana is rather more broken, though the soil is equally fertile. It is a fact not to be contested, that the west side of the Mississippi possesses some advantages not generally incident to those regions. It is elevated and healthy, and well watered with a variety of large, rapid streams, calculated for mills and other water-works. From Cape Girardeau, above the mouth of the Ohio, to the Missouri, the land on the east side of the river is low and flat, and occasionally exposed to inundations; that on the Louisiana side, contiguous to the river, is generally much higher, and in many places very rocky on the shore. Some of the heights exhibit a scene truly picturesque. They rise to a height of at least three hundred feet, faced with perpendicular lime and free stone, carved into various shapes and figures by the hand of Nature, and afford the appearance of a multitude of antique towers. From the tops of these elevations, the land gradually slopes back from the river, without gravel or rock, and is covered with valuable timber. It may be said with truth that, for fertility of soil, no part of the world exceeds the borders of the Mississippi; where the land yields an abundance of all the necessaries of life, and almost spontaneously; very little labor is required in the cultivation of the

earth. That part of Upper Louisiana which borders on North Mexico, is one immense *prairie*; it produces nothing but grass, it is filled with buffalo, deer, and other kinds of game; the land is represented as too rich for the growth of forest trees.

The salt works are pretty numerous; some belong to individuals, others to the public. They already yield an abundant supply for the consumption of the country; and, if properly managed, might become an article of more general exportation. The usual price per bushel is 150 cents in cash at the works. This price will be still lower as soon as the manufacture of the salt is assumed by the government, or patronized by men who have large capitals to employ in the business.

The geography of the Mississippi and Missouri, and their contiguity for a considerable length, are but little known. The traders assert that, one hundred miles above their junction, a man may walk from one to the other in a day; and it is also asserted, that 700 miles still higher up, the portage may be crossed in four or five days. This portage is frequented by traders, who carry on a considerable trade with some of the Missouri Indians. Their general route is through Green Bay,

which is an arm of lake Michigan ; they then pass into a small lake connected with it, and which communicates with the Fox River ; they then cross over a short portage into the Ouisconsing river, which unites with the Mississippi some distance below the falls of St. Anthony. It is also said that the traders communicate with the Mississippi above these falls, through lake Superior, but their trade in that quarter is not considerable.

The canal of Carondelet, behind New-Orleans, is about a mile and a half long ; it communicates with the creek called Bayou St. Jean, flowing into lake Pontchartrain.

On the east side of the Mississippi, about five leagues below New-Orleans, and at the head of the English Bend, is a settlement known by the name of the Poblacion de St. Bernardo, or the Terre aux Bœufs, extending on both sides of a creek or drain, whose head is contiguous to the Mississippi. The inhabitants of this settlement are almost all Spaniards from the Canaries.

At the distance of sixteen leagues below New-Orleans, the settlements on both banks are inconsiderable. The English turn, or small tongue of land, extends some way into the sea, and is visible

on both sides of the Mississippi from a ship's mast.

From Plaquemines to the sea the country is low, swampy, and chiefly covered with reeds; and is subject to hurricanes that sweep away men and cattle; they commonly happen in August.

About eight leagues below Plaquemines, the Mississippi divides itself into three channels, which are called the passes of the river; their course is from five to six leagues to the sea.

The country on the east side of Lake Ponchartrain to Mobile is a poor thin soil, overgrown with pine, and contains no good land whatever, except on the banks of a few small rivers.

The inhabitants of Louisiana are chiefly the descendants of the French and Canadians. There are a considerable number of English and Americans in New Orleans. The two German coasts are peopled by the descendants of settlers from Germany, and a few French intermixed. The three succeeding settlements up to Baton Rouge contain mostly Acadians, banished from Nova Scotia by the English and their descendants. The government of Baton Rouge, especially the east side, which includes all the country be-

tween the Iberville and the American line, is composed partly of Acadians, a very few French, and of a great majority of Americans. On the west side they are mostly Acadians ; at Pointe Coupée and Fausse Rivière they are French and Acadians : of the population of the Atacapas and Opelousas, a considerable part is American. Nachitotches, on the Red River, contains but a few Americans, and the remainder of the inhabitants are French ; but the former are more numerous in the other settlements on that river, viz. Avoyelles, Rapide, and Ouachita. At Arkansas they are mostly French, and at New-Madrid, Americans. At least two-fifths on the Spanish side of the Mississippi are likewise supposed to be Americans. Below New-Orleans, the population is altogether French and the descendants of Frenchmen.

I now bring to a conclusion my account of this important country ; important in the eye of every comprehensive mind, as New-Orleans, when the western States of the American government increase in population, will necessarily become the centre of an immense commerce. If I have been acrimonious in my strictures on certain classes of its inhabitants, it was with a desire to mark vice with infamy, and expose meanness to contempt. But I make not a general inference from

a particular position. There are many exceptions to my character of the creoles of Louisiana. I have known among them good fathers, tender mothers, affectionate wives, and obedient children. Let the stricken deer go weep; the sorrow of the wicked provokes no sympathy.

I repeat I have not drawn my inferences from preceding writers, but observed, reflected and compared for myself. My countrymen generally deal in such frivolity, that the understanding starves on their page; but more important objects have exercised my mind than the state of the taverns on the road, the temper of the landlords, the number of beds in a room, and the quality of their linen.

*LOUISIANA, Coast of Chajitoulas,
May 10, 1802.*

F I N I S.



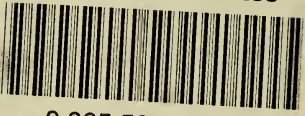
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