

**WARNER
CHARLES
DUDLEY**

STUDIES IN THE SOUTH
AND WEST, WITH
COMMENTS ON CANADA

Charles Warner
Studies in The South and West,
With Comments on Canada

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Studies in The South and West, With Comments on Canada:*

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Charles Dudley Warner Studies in The South and West, With Comments on Canada

PREFATORY NOTE

**To Henry M. Alden, Esq.,
Editor of Harper's Monthly:**

My dear Mr. Alden,—It was at your suggestion that these Studies were undertaken; all of them passed under your eye, except “Society in the New South,” which appeared in the *New Princeton Review*. The object was not to present a comprehensive account of the country South and West—which would have been impossible in the time and space given—but to note certain representative developments, tendencies, and dispositions, the communication of which would lead to a better understanding between different sections. The subjects chosen embrace by no means all that is important and interesting, but it is believed that they are fairly representative. The strongest impression produced

upon the writer in making these Studies was that the prosperous life of the Union depends upon the life and dignity of the individual States.

C. D. W,

I.—IMPRESSIONS OF THE SOUTH IN 1885

It is borne in upon me, as the Friends would say, that I ought to bear my testimony of certain impressions made by a recent visit to the Gulf States. In doing this I am aware that I shall be under the suspicion of having received kindness and hospitality, and of forming opinions upon a brief sojourn. Both these facts must be confessed, and allowed their due weight in discrediting what I have to say. A month of my short visit was given to New Orleans in the spring, during the Exposition, and these impressions are mainly of Louisiana.

The first general impression made was that the war is over in spirit as well as in deed. The thoughts of the people are not upon the war, not much upon the past at all, except as their losses remind them of it, but upon the future, upon business, a revival of trade, upon education, and adjustment to the new state of things. The thoughts are not much upon politics either, or upon offices; certainly they are not turned more in this direction than the thoughts of people at the North are. When we read a despatch which declares that there is immense dissatisfaction throughout Arkansas because offices are not dealt out more liberally to it, we may know that the case is exactly what it is in, say, Wisconsin—that a few political managers are grumbling, and that the great

body of the people are indifferent, perhaps too indifferent, to the distribution of offices.

Undoubtedly immense satisfaction was felt at the election of Mr. Cleveland, and elation of triumph in the belief that now the party which had been largely a non-participant in Federal affairs would have a large share and weight in the administration. With this went, however, a new feeling of responsibility, of a stake in the country, that manifested itself at once in attachment to the Union as the common possession of all sections. I feel sure that Louisiana, for instance, was never in its whole history, from the day of the Jefferson purchase, so consciously loyal to the United States as it is to-day. I have believed that for the past ten years there has been growing in this country a stronger feeling of nationality—a distinct American historic consciousness—and nowhere else has it developed so rapidly of late as at the South. I am convinced that this is a genuine development of attachment to the Union and of pride in the nation, and not in any respect a political movement for unworthy purposes. I am sorry that it is necessary, for the sake of any lingering prejudice at the North, to say this. But it is time that sober, thoughtful, patriotic people at the North should quit representing the desire for office at the South as a desire to get into the Government saddle and ride again with a “rebel” impulse. It would be, indeed, a discouraging fact if any considerable portion of the South held aloof in sullenness from Federal affairs. Nor is it any just cause either of reproach or of uneasiness that men who were prominent in the war of the

rebellion should be prominent now in official positions, for with a few exceptions the worth and weight of the South went into the war. It would be idle to discuss the question whether the masses of the South were not dragooned into the war by the politicians; it is sufficient to recognize the fact that it became practically, by one means or another, a unanimous revolt.

One of the strongest impressions made upon a Northerner who visits the extreme South now, having been familiar with it only by report, is the extent to which it suffered in the war. Of course there was extravagance and there were impending bankruptcies before the war, debt, and methods of business inherently vicious, and no doubt the war is charged with many losses which would have come without it, just as in every crisis half the failures wrongfully accuse the crisis. Yet, with all allowance for these things, the fact remains that the war practically wiped out personal property and the means of livelihood. The completeness of this loss and disaster never came home to me before. In some cases the picture of the *ante bellum* civilization is more roseate in the minds of those who lost everything than cool observation of it would justify. But conceding this, the actual disaster needs no embellishment of the imagination. It seems to me, in the reverse, that the Southern people do not appreciate the sacrifices the North made for the Union. They do not, I think, realize the fact that the North put into the war its best blood, that every battle brought mourning into our households, and filled our churches day by day and year

by year with the black garments of bereavement; nor did they ever understand the tearful enthusiasm for the Union and the flag, and the unselfish devotion that underlay all the self-sacrifice. Some time the Southern people will know that it was love for the Union, and not hatred of the South, that made heroes of the men and angels of renunciation of the women.

Yes, say our Southern friends, we can believe that you lost dear ones and were in mourning; but, after all, the North was prosperous; you grew rich; and when the war ended, life went on in the fulness of material prosperity. We lost not only our friends and relatives, fathers, sons, brothers, till there was scarcely a household that was not broken up, we lost not only the cause on which we had set our hearts, and for which we had suffered privation and hardship, were fugitives and wanderers, and endured the bitterness of defeat at the end, but our property was gone, we were stripped, with scarcely a home, and the whole of life had to be begun over again, under all the disadvantage of a sudden social revolution.

It is not necessary to dwell upon this or to heighten it, but it must be borne in mind when we observe the temper of the South, and especially when we are looking for remaining bitterness, and the wonder to me is that after so short a space of time there is remaining so little of resentment or of bitter feeling over loss and discomfiture. I believe there is not in history any parallel to it. Every American must take pride in the fact that Americans have so risen superior to circumstances, and come out of trials that

thoroughly threshed and winnowed soul and body in a temper so gentle and a spirit so noble. It is good stuff that can endure a test of this kind.

A lady, whose family sustained all the losses that were possible in the war, said to me—and she said only what several others said in substance—“We are going to get more out of this war than you at the North, because we suffered more. We were drawn out of ourselves in sacrifices, and were drawn together in a tenderer feeling of humanity; I do believe we were chastened into a higher and purer spirit.”

Let me not be misunderstood. The people who thus recognize the moral training of adversity and its effects upon character, and who are glad that slavery is gone, and believe that a new and better era for the South is at hand, would not for a moment put themselves in an attitude of apology for the part they took in the war, nor confess that they were wrong, nor join in any denunciation of the leaders they followed to their sorrow. They simply put the past behind them, so far as the conduct of the present life is concerned. They do not propose to stamp upon memories that are tender and sacred, and they cherish certain sentiments which are to them loyalty to their past and to the great passionate experiences of their lives. When a woman, who enlisted by the consent of Jeff Davis, whose name appeared for four years upon the rolls, and who endured all the perils and hardships of the conflict as a field-nurse, speaks of “President” Davis, what does it mean? It is only a sentiment. This heroine of

the war on the wrong side had in the Exposition a tent, where the veterans of the Confederacy recorded their names. On one side, at the back of the tent, was a table piled with touching relics of the war, and above it a portrait of Robert E. Lee, wreathed in immortelles. It was surely a harmless shrine.

On the other side was also a table, piled with fruit and cereals—not relics, but signs of prosperity and peace—and above it a portrait of Ulysses S. Grant. Here was the sentiment, cherished with an aching heart maybe, and here was the fact of the Union and the future.

Another strong impression made upon the visitor is, as I said, that the South has entirely put the past behind it, and is devoting itself to the work of rebuilding on new foundations. There is no reluctance to talk about the war, or to discuss its conduct and what might have been. But all this is historic. It engenders no heat. The mind of the South to-day is on the development of its resources, upon the rehabilitation of its affairs. I think it is rather more concerned about national prosperity than it is about the great problem of the negro—but I will refer to this further on. There goes with this interest in material development the same interest in the general prosperity of the country that exists at the North—the anxiety that the country should prosper, acquit itself well, and stand well with the other nations. There is, of course, a sectional feeling—as to tariff, as to internal improvements—but I do not think the Southern States are any more anxious to get things for themselves out of the Federal Government than

the Northern States are. That the most extreme of Southern politicians have any sinister purpose (any more than any of the Northern “rings” on either side have) in wanting to “rule” the country, is, in my humble opinion, only a chimera evoked to make political capital.

As to the absolute subsidence of hostile intention (this phrase I know will sound queer in the South), and the laying aside of bitterness for the past, are not necessary in the presence of a strong general impression, but they might be given in great number. I note one that was significant from its origin, remembering, what is well known, that women and clergymen are always the last to experience subsidence of hostile feeling after a civil war. On the Confederate Decoration Day in New Orleans I was standing near the Confederate monument in one of the cemeteries when the veterans marched in to decorate it. First came the veterans of the Army of Virginia, last those of the Army of Tennessee, and between them the veterans of the Grand Army of the Republic, Union soldiers now living in Louisiana. I stood beside a lady whose name, if I mentioned it, would be recognized as representative of a family which was as conspicuous, and did as much and lost as much, as any other in the war—a family that would be popularly supposed to cherish unrelenting feelings. As the veterans, some of them on crutches, many of them with empty sleeves, grouped themselves about the monument, we remarked upon the sight as a touching one, and I said: “I see you have no address on Decoration Day. At the North

we still keep up the custom.”

“No,” she replied; “we have given it up. So many imprudent things were said that we thought best to discontinue the address.” And then, after a pause, she added, thoughtfully: “Each side did the best it could; it is all over and done with, and let’s have an end of it.” In the mouth of the lady who uttered it, the remark was very significant, but it expresses, I am firmly convinced, the feeling of the South.

Of course the South will build monuments to its heroes, and weep over their graves, and live upon the memory of their devotion and genius. In Heaven’s name, why shouldn’t it? Is human nature itself to be changed in twenty years?

A long chapter might be written upon the dis-likeness of North and South, the difference in education, in training, in mental inheritances, the misapprehensions, radical and very singular to us, of the civilization of the North. We must recognize certain historic facts, not only the effect of the institution of slavery, but other facts in Southern development. Suppose we say that an unreasonable prejudice exists, or did exist, about the people of the North. That prejudice is a historic fact, of which the statesman must take account. It enters into the question of the time needed to effect the revolution now in progress. There are prejudices in the North about the South as well. We admit their existence. But what impresses me is the rapidity with which they are disappearing in the South. Knowing what human nature is, it seems incredible that they could have subsided so rapidly.

Enough remain for national variety, and enough will remain for purposes of social badinage, but common interests in the country and in making money are melting them away very fast. So far as loyalty to the Government is concerned, I am not authorized to say that it is as deeply rooted in the South as in the North, but it is expressed as vividly, and felt with a good deal of fresh enthusiasm. The "American" sentiment, pride in this as the most glorious of all lands, is genuine, and amounts to enthusiasm with many who would in an argument glory in their rebellion. "We had more loyalty to our States than you had," said one lady, "and we have transferred it to the whole country."

But the negro? Granting that the South is loyal enough, wishes never another rebellion, and is satisfied to be rid of slavery, do not the people intend to keep the negroes practically a servile class, slaves in all but the name, and to defeat by chicanery or by force the legitimate results of the war and of enfranchisement?

This is a very large question, and cannot be discussed in my limits. If I were to say what my impression is, it would be about this: the South is quite as much perplexed by the negro problem as the North is, and is very much disposed to await developments, and to let time solve it. One thing, however, must be admitted in all this discussion. The Southerners will not permit such Legislatures as those assembled once in Louisiana and South Carolina to rule them again. "Will you disfranchise the blacks by management or by force?"

"Well, what would you do in Ohio or in Connecticut? Would

you be ruled by a lot of ignorant field-hands allied with a gang of plunderers?"

In looking at this question from a Northern point of view we have to keep in mind two things: first, the Federal Government imposed colored suffrage without any educational qualification—a hazardous experiment; in the second place, it has handed over the control of the colored people in each State to the State, under the Constitution, as completely in Louisiana as in New York. The responsibility is on Louisiana. The North cannot relieve her of it, and it cannot interfere, except by ways provided in the Constitution. In the South, where fear of a legislative domination has gone, the feeling between the two races is that of amity and mutual help. This is, I think, especially true in Louisiana. The Southerners never have forgotten the loyalty of the slaves during the war, the security with which the white families dwelt in the midst of a black population while all the white men were absent in the field; they often refer to this. It touches with tenderness the new relation of the races. I think there is generally in the South a feeling of good-will towards the negroes, a desire that they should develop into true manhood and womanhood. Undeniably there are indifference and neglect and some remaining suspicion about the schools that Northern charity has organized for the negroes. As to this neglect of the negro, two things are to be said: the whole subject of education (as we have understood it in the North) is comparatively new in the South; and the necessity of earning a living since the war

has distracted attention from it. But the general development of education is quite as advanced as could be expected. The thoughtful and the leaders of opinion are fully awake to the fact that the mass of the people must be educated, and that the only settlement of the negro problem is in the education of the negro, intellectually and morally. They go further than this. They say that for the South to hold its own—since the negro is there and will stay there, and is the majority of the laboring class—it is necessary that the great agricultural mass of unskilled labor should be transformed, to a great extent, into a class of skilled labor, skilled on the farm, in shops, in factories, and that the South must have a highly diversified industry. To this end they want industrial as well as ordinary schools for the colored people.

It is believed that, with this education and with diversified industry, the social question will settle itself, as it does the world over. Society cannot be made or unmade by legislation. In New Orleans the street-ears are free to all colors; at the Exposition white and colored people mingled freely, talking and looking at what was of common interest.

We who live in States where hotel-keepers exclude Hebrews cannot say much about the exclusion of negroes from Southern hotels. There are prejudices remaining. There are cases of hardship on the railways, where for the same charge perfectly respectable and nearly white women are shut out of cars while there is no discrimination against dirty and disagreeable white people. In time all this will doubtless rest upon the basis it

rests on at the North, and social life will take care of itself. It is my impression that the negroes are no more desirous to mingle socially with the whites than the whites are with the negroes. Among the negroes there are social grades as distinctly marked as in white society. What will be the final outcome of the juxtaposition nobody can tell; meantime it must be recorded that good-will exists between the races.

I had one day at the Exposition an interesting talk with the colored woman in charge of the Alabama section of the exhibit of the colored people. This exhibit, made by States, was suggested and promoted by Major Burke in order to show the whites what the colored people could do, and as a stimulus to the latter. There was not much time—only two or three months—in which to prepare the exhibit, and it was hardly a fair showing of the capacity of the colored people. The work was mainly women's work—embroidery, sewing, household stuffs, with a little of the handiwork of artisans, and an exhibit of the progress in education; but small as it was, it was wonderful as the result of only a few years of freedom. The Alabama exhibit was largely from Mobile, and was due to the energy, executive ability, and taste of the commissioner in charge. She was a quadroon, a widow, a woman of character and uncommon mental and moral quality. She talked exceedingly well, and with a practical good-sense which would be notable in anybody. In the course of our conversation the whole social and political question was gone over. Herself a person of light color, and with a confirmed social

prejudice against black people, she thoroughly identified herself with the colored race, and it was evident that her sympathies were with them. She confirmed what I had heard of the social grades among colored people, but her whole soul was in the elevation of her race as a race, inclining always to their side, but with no trace of hostility to the whites. Many of her best friends were whites, and perhaps the most valuable part of her education was acquired in families of social distinction. "I can illustrate," she said, "the state of feeling between the two races in Mobile by an incident last summer. There was an election coming off in the City Government, and I knew that the reformers wanted and needed the colored vote. I went, therefore, to some of the chief men, who knew me and had confidence in me, for I had had business relations with many of them [she had kept a fashionable boarding-house], and told them that I wanted the Opera-house for the colored people to give an entertainment and exhibition in. The request was extraordinary. Nobody but white people had ever been admitted to the Opera-house. But, after some hesitation and consultation, the request was granted. We gave the exhibition, and the white people all attended. It was really a beautiful affair, lovely tableaux, with gorgeous dresses, recitations, etc., and everybody was astonished that the colored people had so much taste and talent, and had got on so far in education. They said they were delighted and surprised, and they liked it so well that they wanted the entertainment repeated—it was given for one of our charities—but I was too wise for

that. I didn't want to run the chance of destroying the impression by repeating, and I said we would wait a while, and then show them something better. Well, the election came off in August, and everything went all right, and now the colored people in Mobile can have anything they want. There is the best feeling between the races. I tell you we should get on beautifully if the politicians would let us alone. It is politics that has made all the trouble in Alabama and in Mobile." And I learned that in Mobile, as in many other places, the negroes were put in minor official positions, the duties of which they were capable of discharging, and had places in the police.

On "Louisiana Day" in the Exposition the colored citizens took their full share of the parade and the honors. Their societies marched with the others, and the races mingled on the grounds in unconscious equality of privileges. Speeches were made, glorifying the State and its history, by able speakers, the Governor among them; but it was the testimony of Democrats of undoubted Southern orthodoxy that the honors of the day were carried off by a colored clergyman, an educated man, who united eloquence with excellent good-sense, and who spoke as a citizen of Louisiana, proud of his native State, dwelling with richness of allusion upon its history. It was a perfectly manly speech in the assertion of the rights and the position of his race, and it breathed throughout the same spirit of good-will and amity in a common hope of progress that characterized the talk of the colored woman commissioner of Mobile. It was warmly

applauded, and accepted, so far as I heard, as a matter of course.

No one, however, can see the mass of colored people in the cities and on the plantations, the ignorant mass, slowly coming to moral consciousness, without a recognition of the magnitude of the negro problem. I am glad that my State has not the practical settlement of it, and I cannot do less than express profound sympathy with the people who have. They inherit the most difficult task now anywhere visible in human progress. They will make mistakes, and they will do injustice now and then; but one feels like turning away from these, and thanking God for what they do well.

There are many encouraging things in the condition of the negro. Good-will, generally, among the people where he lives is one thing; their tolerance of his weaknesses and failings is another. He is himself, here and there, making heroic sacrifices to obtain an education. There are negro mothers earning money at the wash-tub to keep their boys at school and in college. In the South-west there is such a call for colored teachers that the Straight University in New Orleans, which has about five hundred pupils, cannot begin to supply the demand, although the teachers, male and female, are paid from thirty-five to fifty dollars a month. A colored graduate of this school a year ago is now superintendent of the colored schools in Memphis, at a salary of \$1200 a year.

Are these exceptional cases? Well, I suppose it is also exceptional to see a colored clergyman in his surplice seated in

the chancel of the most important white Episcopal church in New Orleans, assisting in the service; but it is significant. There are many good auguries to be drawn from the improved condition of the negroes on the plantations, the more rational and less emotional character of their religious services, and the hold of the temperance movement on all classes in the country places.

II.—SOCIETY IN THE NEW SOUTH

The American Revolution made less social change in the South than in the North. Under conservative influences the South developed her social life with little alteration in form and spirit—allowing for the decay that always attends conservatism—down to the Civil War. The social revolution which was in fact accomplished contemporaneously with the political severance from Great Britain, in the North, was not effected in the South until Lee offered his sword to Grant, and Grant told him to keep it and beat it into a ploughshare. The change had indeed been inevitable, and ripening for four years, but it was at that moment universally recognized. Impossible, of course, except by the removal of slavery, it is not wholly accounted for by the removal of slavery; it results also from an economical and political revolution, and from a total alteration of the relations of the South to the rest of the world. The story of this social change will be one of the most marvellous the historian has to deal with.

Provincial is a comparative term. All England is provincial to the Londoner, all America to the Englishman. Perhaps New York looks upon Philadelphia as provincial; and if Chicago is forced to admit that Boston resembles ancient Athens, then Athens, by the Chicago standard, must have been a very provincial city. The root of provincialism is localism, or a condition of being on one side and apart from the general movement of contemporary

life. In this sense, and compared with the North in its absolute openness to every wind from all parts of the globe, the South was provincial. Provincialism may have its decided advantages, and it may nurture many superior virtues and produce a social state that is as charming as it is interesting, but along with it goes a certain self-appreciation, which ultracosmopolitan critics would call Concord-like, that seems exaggerated to outsiders.

The South, and notably Virginia and South Carolina, cherished English traditions long after the political relation was severed. But it kept the traditions of the time of the separation, and did not share the literary and political evolution of England. Slavery divided it from the North in sympathy, and slavery, by excluding European emigration, shut out the South from the influence of the new ideas germinating in Europe. It was not exactly true to say that the library of the Southern gentleman stopped with the publications current in the reign of George the Third, but, well stocked as it was with the classics and with the English literature become classic, it was not likely to contain much of later date than the Reform Bill in England and the beginning of the abolition movement in the North. The pages of *De Bow's Review* attest the ambition and direction of Southern scholarship—a scholarship not much troubled by the new problems that were at the time rending England and the North. The young men who still went abroad to be educated brought back with them the traditions and flavor of the old England and not the spirit of the new, the traditions of the

universities and not the new life of research and doubt in them. The conservatism of the Southern life was so strong that the students at Northern colleges returned unchanged by contact with a different civilization. The South met the North in business and in politics, and in a limited social intercourse, but from one cause and another for three-quarters of a century it was practically isolated, and consequently developed a peculiar social life.

One result of this isolation was that the South was more homogeneous than the North, and perhaps more distinctly American in its characteristics. This was to be expected, since it had one common and overmastering interest in slavery, had little foreign admixture, and was removed from the currents of commerce and the disturbing ideas of Reform. The South, so far as society was concerned, was an agricultural aristocracy, based upon a perfectly defined lowest class in the slaves, and holding all trade, commerce, and industrial and mechanical pursuits in true mediæval contempt. Its literature was monarchical, tempered by some Jeffersonian, doctrinaire notions of the rights of man, which were satisfied, however, by an insistence upon the sovereignty of the States, and by equal privileges to a certain social order in each State. Looked at, then, from the outside, the South appeared to be homogeneous, but from its own point of view, socially, it was not at all so. Social life in these jealously independent States developed almost as freely and variously as it did in the Middle Ages in the free cities of Italy. Virginia was

not at all like South Carolina (except in one common interest), and Louisiana—especially in its centre, New Orleans—more cosmopolitan than any other part of the South by reason of its foreign elements, more closely always in sympathy with Paris than with New York or Boston, was widely, in its social life, separated from its sisters. Indeed, in early days, before the slavery agitation, there was, owing to the heritage of English traditions, more in common between Boston and Charleston than between New Orleans and Charleston. And later, there was a marked social difference between towns and cities near together—as, for instance, between agricultural Lexington and commercial Louisville, in Kentucky.

The historian who writes the social life of the Southern States will be embarrassed with romantic and picturesque material. Nowhere else in this levelling age will he find a community developing so much of the dramatic, so much splendor and such pathetic contrasts in the highest social cultivation, as in the plantation and city life of South Carolina. Already, in regarding it, it assumes an air of unreality, and vanishes in its strong lights and heavy shades like a dream of the chivalric age. An allusion to its character is sufficient for the purposes of this paper. Persons are still alive who saw the prodigal style of living and the reckless hospitality of the planters in those days, when in the Charleston and Sea Island mansions the guests constantly entertained were only outnumbered by the swarms of servants; when it was not incongruous and scarcely ostentatious that the courtly company,

which had the fine and free manner of another age, should dine off gold and silver plate; and when all that wealth and luxury could suggest was lavished in a princely magnificence that was almost barbaric in its profusion. The young men were educated in England; the young women were reared like helpless princesses, with a servant for every want and whim; it was a day of elegant accomplishments and deferential manners, but the men gamed like Fox and drank like Sheridan, and the duel was the ordinary arbiter of any difference of opinion or of any point of honor. Not even slavery itself could support existence on such a scale, and even before the war it began to give way to the conditions of our modern life. And now that old peculiar civilization of South Carolina belongs to romance. It can never be repeated, even by the aid of such gigantic fortunes as are now accumulating in the North.

The agricultural life of Virginia appeals with scarcely less attraction to the imagination of the novelist. Mr. Thackeray caught the flavor of it in his "Virginians" from an actual study of it in the old houses, when it was becoming a faded memory. The vast estates—principalities in size—with troops of slaves attached to each plantation; the hospitality, less costly, but as free as that of South Carolina; the land in the hands of a few people; politics and society controlled by a small number of historic families, intermarried until all Virginians of a certain grade were related—all this forms a picture as feudal-like and foreign to this age as can be imagined. The writer recently read the will of a

country gentleman of the last century in Virginia, which raises a distinct image of the landed aristocracy of the time. It devised his plantation of six thousand acres with its slaves attached, his plantation of eighteen hundred acres and slaves, his plantation of twelve hundred acres and slaves, with other farms and outlying property; it mentioned all the cattle, sheep, and hogs, the riding-horses in stables, the racing-steeds, the several coaches with the six horses that drew them (an acknowledgment of the wretched state of the roads), and so on in all the details of a vast domain. All the slaves are called by name, all the farming implements were enumerated, and all the homely articles of furniture down to the beds and kitchen utensils. This whole structure of a unique civilization is practically swept away now, and with it the peculiar social life it produced. Let us pause a moment upon a few details of it, as it had its highest development in Eastern Virginia.

The family was the fetich. In this high social caste the estates were entailed to the limit of the law, for one generation, and this entail was commonly religiously renewed by the heir. It was not expected that a widow would remarry; as a rule she did not, and it was almost a matter of course that the will of the husband should make the enjoyment of even the entailed estate dependent upon the non-marriage of the widow. These prohibitions upon her freedom of choice were not considered singular or cruel in a society whose chief gospel was the preservation of the family name.

The planters lived more simply than the great seaboard

planters of South Carolina and Georgia, with not less pride, but with less ostentation and show. The houses were of the accepted colonial pattern, square, with four rooms on a floor, but with wide galleries (wherein they differed from the colonial houses in New England), and sometimes with additions in the way of offices and lodging-rooms. The furniture was very simple and plain—a few hundred dollars would cover the cost of it in most mansions. There were not in all Virginia more than two or three magnificent houses. It was the taste of gentlemen to adorn the ground in front of the house with evergreens, with the locust and acanthus, and perhaps the maple-trees not native to the spot; while the oak, which is nowhere more stately and noble than in Virginia, was never seen on the lawn or the drive-way, but might be found about the “quarters,” or in an adjacent forest park. As the interior of the houses was plain, so the taste of the people was simple in the matter of ornament—jewellery was very little worn; in fact, it is almost literally true that there were in Virginia no family jewels.

So thoroughly did this society believe in itself and keep to its traditions that the young gentleman of the house, educated in England, brought on his return nothing foreign home with him—no foreign tastes, no bric-à-brac for his home, and never a foreign wife. He came back unchanged, and married the cousin he met at the first country dance he went to.

The pride of the people, which was intense, did not manifest itself in ways that are common elsewhere—it was sufficient to

itself in its own homespun independence. What would make one distinguished elsewhere was powerless here. Literary talent, and even acquired wealth, gave no distinction; aside from family and membership of the caste, nothing gave it to any native or visitor. There was no lion-hunting, no desire whatever to attract the attention of, or to pay any deference to, men of letters. If a member of society happened to be distinguished in letters or in scholarship, it made not the slightest difference in his social appreciation. There was absolutely no encouragement for men of letters, and consequently there was no literary class and little literature. There was only one thing that gave a man any distinction in this society, except a long pedigree, and that was the talent of oratory—that was prized, for that was connected with prestige in the State and the politics of the dominant class. The planters took few newspapers, and read those few very little. They were a fox-hunting, convivial race, generally Whig in politics, always orthodox in religion. The man of cultivation was rare, and, if he was cultivated, it was usually only on a single subject. But the planter might be an astute politician, and a man of wide knowledge and influence in public affairs. There was one thing, however, that was held in almost equal value with pedigree, and that was female beauty. There was always the recognized “belle,” the beauty of the day, who was the toast and the theme of talk, whose memory was always green with her chivalrous contemporaries; the veterans liked to recall over the old Madeira the wit and charms of the raving beauties who had long gone the

way of the famous vintages of the cellar.

The position of the clergyman in the Episcopal Church was very much what his position was in England in the time of James II. He was patronized and paid like any other adjunct of a well-ordered society. If he did not satisfy his masters he was quietly informed that he could probably be more useful elsewhere. If he was acceptable, one element of his popularity was that he rode to hounds and could tell a good story over the wine at dinner.

The pride of this society preserved itself in a certain high, chivalrous state. If any of its members were poor, as most of them became after the war, they took a certain pride in their poverty. They were too proud to enter into a vulgar struggle to be otherwise, and they were too old to learn the habit of labor. No such thing was known in it as scandal. If any breach of morals occurred, it was apt to be acknowledged with a Spartan regard for truth, and defiantly published by the families affected, who announced that they accepted the humiliation of it. Scandal there should be none. In that caste the character of women was not even to be the subject of talk in private gossip and innuendo. No breach of social caste was possible. The overseer, for instance, and the descendants of the overseer, however rich, or well educated, or accomplished they might become, could never marry into the select class. An alliance of this sort doomed the offender to an absolute and permanent loss of social position. This was the rule. Beauty could no more gain entrance there than wealth.

This plantation life, of which so much has been written, was repeated with variations all over the South. In Louisiana and lower Mississippi it was more prodigal than in Virginia. To a great extent its tone was determined by a relaxing climate, and it must be confessed that it had in it an element of the irresponsible—of the “after us the deluge.” The whole system wanted thrift and, to an English or Northern visitor, certain conditions of comfort. Yet everybody acknowledged its fascination; for there was nowhere else such a display of open-hearted hospitality. An invitation to visit meant an invitation to stay indefinitely. The longer the visit lasted, if it ran into months, the better were the entertainers pleased. It was an uncalculating hospitality, and possibly it went along with littleness and meanness, in some directions, that were no more creditable than the alleged meanness of the New England farmer. At any rate, it was not a systematized generosity. The hospitality had somewhat the character of a new country and of a society not crowded. Company was welcome on the vast, isolated plantations. Society also was really small, composed of a few families, and intercourse by long visits and profuse entertainments was natural and even necessary.

This social aristocracy had the faults as well as the virtues of an aristocracy so formed. One fault was an undue sense of superiority, a sense nurtured by isolation from the intellectual contests and the illusion-destroying tests of modern life. And this sense of superiority diffused itself downward through the

mass of the Southern population. The slave of a great family was proud; he held himself very much above the poor white, and he would not associate with the slave of the small farmer; and the poor white never doubted his own superiority to the Northern "mudsill"—as the phrase of the day was. The whole life was somehow pitched to a romantic key, and often there was a queer contrast between the Gascon-like pretension and the reality—all the more because of a certain sincerity and single-mindedness that was unable to see the anachronism of trying to live in the spirit of Scott's romances in our day and generation.

But with all allowance for this, there was a real basis for romance in the impulsive, sun-nurtured people, in the conflict between the two distinct races, and in the system of labor that was an anomaly in modern life. With the downfall of this system it was inevitable that the social state should radically change, and especially as this downfall was sudden and by violence, and in a struggle that left the South impoverished, and reduced to the rank of bread-winners those who had always regarded labor as a thing impossible for themselves.

As a necessary effect of this change, the dignity of the agricultural interest was lowered, and trade and industrial pursuits were elevated. Labor itself was perforce dignified. To earn one's living by actual work, in the shop, with the needle, by the pen, in the counting-house or school, in any honorable way, was a lot accepted with cheerful courage. And it is to the credit of all concerned that reduced circumstances and the necessity

of work for daily bread have not thus far cost men and women in Southern society their social position. Work was a necessity of the situation, and the spirit in which the new life was taken up brought out the solid qualities of the race. In a few trying years they had to reverse the habits and traditions of a century. I think the honest observer will acknowledge that they have accomplished this without loss of that social elasticity and charm which were heretofore supposed to depend very much upon the artificial state of slave labor. And they have gained much. They have gained in losing a kind of suspicion that was inevitable in the isolation of their peculiar institution. They have gained freedom of thought and action in all the fields of modern endeavor, in the industrial arts, in science, in literature. And the fruits of this enlargement must add greatly to the industrial and intellectual wealth of the world.

Society itself in the new South has cut loose from its old moorings, but it is still in a transition state, and offers the most interesting study of tendencies and possibilities. Its danger, of course, is that of the North—a drift into materialism, into a mere struggle for wealth, undue importance attached to money, and a loss of public spirit in the selfish accumulation of property. Unfortunately, in the transition of twenty years the higher education has been neglected. The young men of this generation have not given even as much attention to intellectual pursuits as their fathers gave. Neither in polite letters nor in politics and political history have they had the same training. They have been

too busy in the hard struggle for a living. It is true at the North that the young men in business are not so well educated, not so well read, as the young women of their own rank in society. And I suspect that this is still more true in the South. It is not uncommon to find in this generation Southern young women who add to sincerity, openness and frankness of manner; to the charm born of the wish to please, the graces of cultivation; who know French like their native tongue, who are well acquainted with the French and German literatures, who are well read in the English classics—though perhaps guiltless of much familiarity with our modern American literature. But taking the South at large, the schools for either sex are far behind those of the North both in discipline and range. And this is especially to be regretted, since the higher education is an absolute necessity to counteract the intellectual demoralization of the newly come industrial spirit.

We have yet to study the compensations left to the South in their century of isolation from this industrial spirit, and from the absolutely free inquiry of our modern life. Shall we find something sweet and sound there, that will yet be a powerful conservative influence in the republic? Will it not be strange, said a distinguished biblical scholar and an old-time antislavery radical, if we have to depend, after all, upon the orthodox conservatism of the South? For it is to be noted that the Southern pulpit holds still the traditions of the old theology, and the mass of Southern Christians are still undisturbed by doubts. They are

no more troubled by agnosticism in religion than by altruism in sociology. There remains a great mass of sound and simple faith. We are not discussing either the advantage or the danger of disturbing thought, or any question of morality or of the conduct of life, nor the shield or the peril of ignorance—it is simply a matter of fact that the South is comparatively free from what is called modern doubt.

Another fact is noticeable. The South is not and never has been disturbed by “isms” of any sort. “Spiritualism” or “Spiritism” has absolutely no lodgement there. It has not even appealed in any way to the excitable and superstitious colored race. Inquiry failed to discover to the writer any trace of this delusion among whites or blacks. Society has never been agitated on the important subjects of graham-bread or of the divided skirt. The temperance question has forced itself upon the attention of deeply drinking communities here and there. Usually it has been treated in a very common-sense way, and not as a matter of politics. Fanaticism may sometimes be a necessity against an overwhelming evil; but the writer knows of communities in the South that have effected a practical reform in liquor selling and drinking without fanatical excitement. Bar-room drinking is a fearful curse in Southern cities, as it is in Northern; it is an evil that the colored people fall into easily, but it is beginning to be met in some Southern localities in a resolute and sensible manner.

The students of what we like to call “progress,” especially if they are disciples of Mr. Ruskin, have an admirable field

of investigation in the contrast of the social, economic, and educational structure of the North and the South at the close of the war. After a century of free schools, perpetual intellectual agitation, extraordinary enterprise in every domain of thought and material achievement, the North presented a spectacle at once of the highest hope and the gravest anxiety. What diversity of life! What fulness! What intellectual and even social emancipation! What reforms, called by one party Heavensent, and by the other reforms against nature! What agitations, doubts, contempt of authority! What wild attempts to conduct life on no basis philosophic or divine! And yet what prosperity, what charities, what a marvellous growth, what an improvement in physical life! With better knowledge of sanitary conditions and of the culinary art, what an increase of beauty in women and of stalwartness in men! For beauty and physical comeliness, it must be acknowledged (parenthetically), largely depend upon food.

It is in the impoverished parts of the country, whether South or North, the sandy barrens, and the still vast regions where cooking is an unknown art, that scrawny and dyspeptic men and women abound—the sallow-faced, flat-chested, spindle-limbed.

This Northern picture is a veritable nineteenth-century spectacle. Side by side with it was the other society, also covering a vast domain, that was in many respects a projection of the eighteenth century into the nineteenth. It had much of the conservatism, and preserved something of the manners, of the eighteenth century, and lacked a good deal the so-called spirit of

the age of the nineteenth, together with its doubts, its isms, its delusions, its energies. Life in the South is still on simpler terms than in the North, and society is not so complex. I am inclined to think it is a little more natural, more sincere in manner though not in fact, more frank and impulsive. One would hesitate to use the word unworldly with regard to it, but it may be less calculating. A bungling male observer would be certain to get himself into trouble by expressing an opinion about women in any part of the world; but women make society, and to discuss society at all is to discuss them. It is probably true that the education of women at the South, taken at large, is more superficial than at the North, lacking in purpose, in discipline, in intellectual vigor. The aim of the old civilization was to develop the graces of life, to make women attractive, charming, good talkers (but not too learned), graceful, and entertaining companions. When the main object is to charm and please, society is certain to be agreeable. In Southern society beauty, physical beauty, was and is much thought of, much talked of. The "belle" was an institution, and is yet. The belle of one city or village had a wide reputation, and trains of admirers wherever she went—in short, a veritable career, and was probably better known than a poetess at the North. She not only ruled in her day, but she left a memory which became a romance to the next generation. There went along with such careers a certain lightness and gayety of life, and now and again a good deal of pathos and tragedy.

With all its social accomplishments, its love of color, its

climatic tendency to the sensuous side of life, the South has been unexpectedly wanting in a fine-art development—namely, in music and pictorial art. Culture of this sort has been slow enough in the North, and only lately has had any solidity or been much diffused. The love of art, and especially of art decoration, was greatly quickened by the Philadelphia Exhibition, and the comparatively recent infusion of German music has begun to elevate the taste. But I imagine that while the South naturally was fond of music of a light sort, and New Orleans could sustain and almost make native the French opera when New York failed entirely to popularize any sort of opera, the musical taste was generally very rudimentary; and the poverty in respect to pictures and engravings was more marked still. In a few great houses were fine paintings, brought over from Europe, and here and there a noble family portrait. But the traveller to-day will go through city after city, and village after village, and find no art-shop (as he may look in vain in large cities for any sort of book-store except a news-room); rarely will see an etching or a fine engraving; and he will be led to doubt if the taste for either existed to any great degree before the war. Of course he will remember that taste and knowledge in the fine arts may be said in the North to be recent acquirements, and that, meantime, the South has been impoverished and struggling in a political and social revolution.

Slavery and isolation and a semi-feudal state have left traces that must long continue to modify social life in the South, and that may not wear out for a century to come. The new life must

also differ from that in the North by reason of climate, and on account of the presence of the alien, *insouciant* colored race. The vast black population, however it may change, and however education may influence it, must remain a powerful determining factor. The body of the slaves, themselves inert, and with no voice in affairs, inevitably influenced life, the character of civilization, manners, even speech itself. With slavery ended, the Southern whites are emancipated, and the influence of the alien race will be other than what it was, but it cannot fail to affect the tone of life in the States where it is a large element.

When, however, we have made all allowance for difference in climate, difference in traditions, total difference in the way of looking at life for a century, it is plain to be seen that a great transformation is taking place in the South, and that Southern society and Northern society are becoming every day more and more alike. I know there are those, and Southerners, too, who insist that we are still two peoples, with more points of difference than of resemblance—certainly farther apart than Gascons and Bretons.

This seems to me not true in general, though it may be of a portion of the passing generation. Of course there is difference in temperament, and peculiarities of speech and manner remain and will continue, as they exist in different portions of the North—the accent of the Bostonian differs from that of the Philadelphian, and the inhabitant of Richmond is known by his speech as neither of New Orleans nor New York. But

the influence of economic laws, of common political action, of interest and pride in one country, is stronger than local bias in such an age of intercommunication as this. The great barrier between North and South having been removed, social assimilation must go on. It is true that the small farmer in Vermont, and the small planter in Georgia, and the village life in the two States, will preserve their strong contrasts. But that which, without clearly defining, we call society becomes yearly more and more alike North and South. It is becoming more and more difficult to tell in any summer assembly—at Newport, the White Sulphur, Saratoga, Bar Harbor—by physiognomy, dress, or manner, a person's birthplace. There are noticeable fewer distinctive traits that enable us to say with certainty that one is from the South, or the West, or the East. No doubt the type at such a Southern resort as the White Sulphur is more distinctly American than at such a Northern resort as Saratoga. We are prone to make a good deal of local peculiarities, but when we look at the matter broadly and consider the vastness of our territory and the varieties of climate, it is marvellous that there is so little difference in speech, manner, and appearance. Contrast us with Europe and its various irreconcilable races occupying less territory. Even little England offers greater variety than the United States. When we think of our large, widely scattered population, the wonder is that we do not differ more.

Southern society has always had a certain prestige in the North. One reason for this was the fact that the ruling class South

had more leisure for social life. Climate, also, had much to do in softening manners, making the temperament ardent, and at the same time producing that leisurely movement which is essential to a polished life. It is probably true, also, that mere wealth was less a passport to social distinction than at the North, or than it has become at the North; that is to say, family, or a certain charm of breeding, or the talent of being agreeable, or the gift of cleverness, or of beauty, were necessary, and money was not. In this respect it seems to be true that social life is changing at the South; that is to say, money is getting to have the social power in New Orleans that it has in New York. It is inevitable in a commercial and industrial community that money should have a controlling power, as it is regrettable that the enjoyment of its power very slowly admits a sense of its responsibility. The old traditions of the South having been broken down, and nearly all attention being turned to the necessity of making money, it must follow that mere wealth will rise as a social factor. Herein lies one danger to what was best in the old régime. Another danger is that it must be put to the test of the ideas, the agitations, the elements of doubt and disintegration that seem inseparable to "progress," which give Northern society its present complexity, and just cause of alarm to all who watch its headlong career. Fulness of life is accepted as desirable, but it has its dangers.

Within the past five years social intercourse between North and South has been greatly increased. Northerners who felt strongly about the Union and about slavery, and took up the cause

of the freedman, and were accustomed all their lives to absolute free speech, were not comfortable in the post-reconstruction atmosphere. Perhaps they expected too much of human nature—a too sudden subsidence of suspicion and resentment. They felt that they were not welcome socially, however much their capital and business energy were desired. On the other hand, most Southerners were too poor to travel in the North, as they did formerly. But all these points have been turned. Social intercourse and travel are renewed. If difficulties and alienations remain they are sporadic, and melting away. The harshness of the Northern winter climate has turned a stream of travel and occupation to the Gulf States, and particularly to Florida, which is indeed now scarcely a Southern State except in climate. The Atlanta and New Orleans Exhibitions did much to bring people of all sections together socially. With returning financial prosperity all the Northern summer resorts have seen increasing numbers of Southern people seeking health and pleasure. I believe that during the past summer more Southerners have been travelling and visiting in the North than ever before.

This social intermingling is significant in itself, and of the utmost importance for the removal of lingering misunderstandings. They who learn to like each other personally will be tolerant in political differences, and helpful and unsuspecting in the very grave problems that rest upon the late slave States. Differences of opinion and different interests will exist, but surely love is stronger than hate, and sympathy and

kindness are better solvents than alienation and criticism. The play of social forces is very powerful in such a republic as ours, and there is certainly reason to believe that they will be exerted now in behalf of that cordial appreciation of what is good and that toleration of traditional differences which are necessary to a people indissolubly bound together in one national destiny. Alienated for a century, the society of the North and the society of the South have something to forget but more to gain in the union that every day becomes closer.

III.—NEW ORLEANS

The first time I saw New Orleans was on a Sunday morning in the month of March. We alighted from the train at the foot of Esplanade Street, and walked along through the French Market, and by Jackson Square to the Hotel Royal. The morning, after rain, was charming; there was a fresh breeze from the river; the foliage was a tender green; in the balconies and on the mouldering window-ledges flowers bloomed, and in the decaying courts climbing-roses mingled their perfume with the orange; the shops were open; ladies tripped along from early mass or to early market; there was a twittering in the square and in the sweet old gardens; caged birds sang and screamed the songs of South America and the tropics; the language heard on all sides was French or the degraded jargon which the easy-going African has manufactured out of the tongue of Bienville. Nothing could be more shabby than the streets, ill-paved, with undulating sidewalks and open gutters green with slime, and both stealing and giving odor; little canals in which the cat, become the companion of the crawfish, and the vegetable in decay sought in vain a current to oblivion; the streets with rows of one-story houses, wooden, with green doors and batten window-shutters, or brick, with the painted stucco peeling off, the line broken often by an edifice of two stories, with galleries and delicate tracery of wrought-iron, houses pink and yellow and brown and gray

—colors all blending and harmonious when we get a long vista of them and lose the details of view in the broad artistic effect. Nothing could be shabbier than the streets, unless it is the tumble-down, picturesque old market, bright with flowers and vegetables and many-hued fish, and enlivened by the genial African, who in the New World experiments in all colors, from coal black to the pale pink of the sea-shell, to find one that suits his mobile nature. I liked it all from the first; I lingered long in that morning walk, liking it more and more, in spite of its shabbiness, but utterly unable to say then or ever since wherein its charm lies. I suppose we are all wrongly made up and have a fallen nature; else why is it that while the most thrifty and neat and orderly city only wins our approval, and perhaps gratifies us intellectually, such a thriftless, battered and stained, and lazy old place as the French quarter of New Orleans takes our hearts?

I never could find out exactly where New Orleans is. I have looked for it on the map without much enlightenment. It is dropped down there somewhere in the marshes of the Mississippi and the bayous and lakes. It is below the one, and tangled up among the others, or it might some day float out to the Gulf and disappear. How the Mississippi gets out I never could discover. When it first comes in sight of the town it is running east; at Carrollton it abruptly turns its rapid, broad, yellow flood and runs south, turns presently eastward, circles a great portion of the city, then makes a bold push for the north in order to avoid Algiers and reach the foot of Canal Street, and encountering there the heart

of the town, it sheers off again along the old French quarter and Jackson Square due east, and goes no one knows where, except perhaps Mr. Eads.

The city is supposed to lie in this bend of the river, but it in fact extends eastward along the bank down to the Barracks, and spreads backward towards Lake Pontchartrain over a vast area, and includes some very good snipe-shooting.

Although New Orleans has only about a quarter of a million of inhabitants, and so many only in the winter, it is larger than Pekin, and I believe than Philadelphia, having an area of about one hundred and five square miles. From Carrollton to the Barracks, which are not far from the Battle-field, the distance by the river is some thirteen miles. From the river to the lake the least distance is four miles. This vast territory is traversed by lines of horse-cars which all meet in Canal Street, the most important business thoroughfare of the city, which runs north-east from the river, and divides the French from the American quarter. One taking a horse-car in any part of the city will ultimately land, having boxed the compass, in Canal Street. But it needs a person of vast local erudition to tell in what part of the city, or in what section of the home of the frog and crawfish, he will land if he takes a horse-car in Canal Street. The river being higher than the city, there is of course no drainage into it; but there is a theory that the water in the open gutters does move, and that it moves in the direction of the Bayou St. John, and of the cypress swamps that drain into Lake Pontchartrain. The stranger who is

accustomed to closed sewers, and to get his malaria and typhoid through pipes conducted into his house by the most approved methods of plumbing, is aghast at this spectacle of slime and filth in the streets, and wonders why the city is not in perennial epidemic; but the sun and the wind are great scavengers, and the city is not nearly so unhealthy as it ought to be with such a city government as they say it endures.

It is not necessary to dwell much upon the external features of New Orleans, for innumerable descriptions and pictures have familiarized the public with them. Besides, descriptions can give the stranger little idea of the peculiar city. Although all on one level, it is a town of contrasts. In no other city of the United States or of Mexico is the old and romantic preserved in such integrity and brought into such sharp contrast to the modern. There are many handsome public buildings, churches, club-houses, elegant shops, and on the American side a great area of well-paved streets solidly built up in business blocks. The Square of the original city, included between the river and canal, Rampart and Esplanade streets, which was once surrounded by a wall, is as closely built, but the streets are narrow, the houses generally are smaller, and although it swarms with people, and contains the cathedral, the old Spanish buildings, Jackson Square, the French Market, the French Opera-house, and other theatres, the Mint, the Custom-house, the old Ursuline convent (now the residence of the archbishop), old banks, and scores of houses of historic celebrity, it is a city of the past, and specially interesting in its

picturesque decay. Beyond this, eastward and northward extend interminable streets of small houses, with now and then a flowery court or a pretty rose garden, occupied mainly by people of French and Spanish descent. The African pervades all parts of the town, except the new residence portion of the American quarter. This, which occupies the vast area in the bend of the river west of the business blocks as far as Carrollton, is in character a great village rather than a city. Not all its broad avenues and handsome streets are paved (and those that are not are in some seasons impassable), its houses are nearly all of wood, most of them detached, with plots of ground and gardens, and as the quarter is very well shaded, the effect is bright and agreeable. In it are many stately residences, occupying a square or half a square, and embowered in foliage and flowers. Care has been given lately to turf-culture, and one sees here thick-set and handsome lawns. The broad Esplanade Street, with its elegant old-fashioned houses, and double rows of shade trees, which has long been the rural pride of the French quarter, has now rivals in respectability and style on the American side.

New Orleans is said to be delightful in the late fall months, before the winter rains set in, but I believe it looks its best in March and April. This is owing to the roses. If the town was not attached to the name of the Crescent City, it might very well adopt the title of the City of Roses. So kind are climate and soil that the magnificent varieties of this queen of flowers, which at the North bloom only in hot-houses, or with great care are

planted out-doors in the heat of our summer, thrive here in the open air in prodigal abundance and beauty. In April the town is literally embowered in them; they fill door-yards and gardens, they overrun the porches, they climb the sides of the houses, they spread over the trees, they take possession of trellises and fences and walls, perfuming the air and entrancing the heart with color. In the outlying parks, like that of the Jockey Club, and the florists' gardens at Carrollton, there are fields of them, acres of the finest sorts waving in the spring wind. Alas! can beauty ever satisfy? This wonderful spectacle fills one with I know not what exquisite longing. These flowers pervade the town, old women on the street corners sit behind banks of them, the florists' windows blush with them, friends despatch to each other great baskets of them, the favorites at the theatre and the amateur performers stand behind high barricades of roses which the good-humored audience piles upon the stage, everybody carries roses and wears roses, and the houses overflow with them. In this passion for flowers you may read a prominent trait of the people. For myself I like to see a spot on this earth where beauty is enjoyed for itself and let to run to waste, but if ever the industrial spirit of the French-Italians should prevail along the littoral of Louisiana and Mississippi, the raising of flowers for the manufacture of perfumes would become a most profitable industry.

New Orleans is the most cosmopolitan of provincial cities. Its comparative isolation has secured the development of provincial traits and manners, has preserved the individuality of the many

ances that give it color, morals, and character, while its close relations with France—an affiliation and sympathy which the late war has not altogether broken—and the constant influx of Northern men of business and affairs have given it the air of a metropolis. To the Northern stranger the aspect and the manners of the city are foreign, but if he remains long enough he is sure to yield to its fascinations, and become a partisan of it. It is not altogether the soft and somewhat enervating and occasionally treacherous climate that beguiles him, but quite as much the easy terms on which life can be lived. There is a human as well as a climatic amiability that wins him. No doubt it is better for a man to be always braced up, but no doubt also there is an attraction in a complaisance that indulges his inclinations.

Socially as well as commercially New Orleans is in a transitive state. The change from river to railway transportation has made her levees vacant; the shipment of cotton by rail and its direct transfer to ocean carriage have nearly destroyed a large middlemen industry; a large part of the agricultural tribute of the Southwest has been diverted; plantations have either not recovered from the effects of the war or have not adjusted themselves to new productions, and the city waits the rather blind developments of the new era. The falling off of law business, which I should like to attribute to the growth of common-sense and good-will is, I fear, rather due to business lassitude, for it is observed that men quarrel most when they are most actively engaged in acquiring each other's property. The business habits of the Creoles were

conservative and slow; they do not readily accept new ways, and in this transition time the American element is taking the lead in all enterprises. The American element itself is toned down by the climate and the contagion of the leisurely habits of the Creoles, and loses something of the sharpness and excitability exhibited by business men in all Northern cities, but it is certainly changing the social as well as the business aspect of the city. Whether these social changes will make New Orleans a more agreeable place of residence remains to be seen.

For the old civilization had many admirable qualities. With all its love of money and luxury and an easy life, it was comparatively simple. It cared less for display than the society that is supplanting it. Its rule was domesticity. I should say that it had the virtues as well as the prejudices and the narrowness of intense family feeling, and its exclusiveness. But when it trusted, it had few reserves, and its cordiality was equal to its *naivete*. The Creole civilization differed totally from that in any Northern city; it looked at life, literature, wit, manners, from altogether another plane; in order to understand the society of New Orleans one needs to imagine what French society would be in a genial climate and in the freedom of a new country. Undeniably, until recently, the Creoles gave the tone to New Orleans. And it was the French culture, the French view of life, that was diffused. The young ladies mainly were educated in convents and French schools. This education had womanly agreeability and matrimony in view, and the graces of social life.

It differed not much from the education of young ladies of the period elsewhere, except that it was from the French rather than the English side, but this made a world of difference. French was a study and a possession, not a fashionable accomplishment. The Creole had gayety, sentiment, spice with a certain climatic languor, sweetness of disposition, and charm of manner, and not seldom winning beauty; she was passionately fond of dancing and of music, and occasionally an adept in the latter; and she had candor, and either simplicity or the art of it. But with her tendency to domesticity and her capacity for friendship, and notwithstanding her gay temperament, she was less worldly than some of her sisters who were more gravely educated after the English manner. There was therefore in the old New Orleans life something nobler than the spirit of plutocracy. The Creole middle-class population had, and has yet, captivating *naivete*, friendliness, cordiality.

But the Creole influence in New Orleans is wider and deeper than this. It has affected literary sympathies and what may be called literary morals. In business the Creole is accused of being slow, conservative, in regard to improvements obstinate and reactionary, preferring to nurse a prejudice rather than run the risk of removing it by improving himself, and of having a conceit that his way of looking at life is better than the Boston way. His literary culture is derived from France, and not from England or the North. And his ideas a good deal affect the attitude of New Orleans towards English and contemporary literature. The

American element of the town was for the most part commercial, and little given to literary tastes. That also is changing, but I fancy it is still true that the most solid culture is with the Creoles, and it has not been appreciated because it is French, and because its point of view for literary criticism is quite different from that prevailing elsewhere in America. It brings our American and English contemporary authors, for instance, to comparison, not with each other, but with French and other Continental writers. And this point of view considerably affects the New Orleans opinion of Northern literature. In this view it wants color, passion; it is too self-conscious and prudish, not to say Puritanically mock-modest. I do not mean to say that the Creoles as a class are a reading people, but the literary standards of their scholars and of those among them who do cultivate literature deeply are different from those at the North. We may call it provincial, or we may call it cosmopolitan, but we shall not understand New Orleans until we get its point of view of both life and letters.

In making these observations it will occur to the reader that they are of necessity superficial, and not entitled to be regarded as criticism or judgment. But I am impressed with the foreignness of New Orleans civilization, and whether its point of view is right or wrong, I am very far from wishing it to change. It contains a valuable element of variety for the republic. We tend everywhere to sameness and monotony. New Orleans is entering upon a new era of development, especially in educational life.

The Tulane University is beginning to make itself felt as a force both in polite letters and in industrial education. And I sincerely hope that the literary development of the city and of the Southwest will be in the line of its own traditions, and that it will not be a copy of New England or of Dutch Manhattan. It can, if it is faithful to its own sympathies and temperament, make an original and valuable contribution to our literary life.

There is a great temptation to regard New Orleans through the romance of its past; and the most interesting occupation of the idler is to stroll about in the French part of the town, search the shelves of French and Spanish literature in the second-hand book-shops, try to identify the historic sites and the houses that are the seats of local romances, and observe the life in the narrow streets and alleys that, except for the presence of the colored folk, recall the quaint picturesqueness of many a French provincial town. One never tires of wandering in the neighborhood of the old cathedral, facing the smart Jackson Square, which is flanked by the respectable Pontalba buildings, and supported on either side by the ancient Spanish courthouse, the most interesting specimens of Spanish architecture this side of Mexico. When the court is in session, iron cables are stretched across the street to prevent the passage of wagons, and justice is administered in silence only broken by the trill of birds in the Place d'Armes and in the old flower-garden in the rear of the cathedral, and by the muffled sound of footsteps in the flagged passages. The region is saturated with romance, and so full of present sentiment and

picturesqueness that I can fancy no ground more congenial to the artist and the story-teller. To enter into any details of it would be to commit one's self to a task quite foreign to the purpose of this paper, and I leave it to the writers who have done and are doing so much to make old New Orleans classic.

Possibly no other city of the United States so abounds in stories pathetic and tragic, many of which cannot yet be published, growing out of the mingling of races, the conflicts of French and Spanish, the presence of adventurers from the Old World and the Spanish Main, and especially out of the relations between the whites and the fair women who had in their thin veins drops of African blood. The quadron and the octoroon are the staple of hundreds of thrilling tales. Duels were common incidents of the Creole dancing assemblies, and of the *cordon bleu* balls—the deities of which were the quadron women, “the handsomest race of women in the world,” says the description, and the most splendid dancers and the most exquisitely dressed—the affairs of honor being settled by a midnight thrust in a vacant square behind the cathedral, or adjourned to a more French daylight encounter at “The Oaks,” or “Les Trois Capalins.” But this life has all gone. In a stately building in this quarter, said by tradition to have been the quadron ball-room, but I believe it was a white assembly-room connected with the opera, is now a well-ordered school for colored orphans, presided over by colored Sisters of Charity.

It is quite evident that the peculiar prestige of the quadron

and the octoroon is a thing of the past. Indeed, the result of the war has greatly changed the relations of the two races in New Orleans. The colored people withdraw more and more to themselves. Isolation from white influence has good results and bad results, the bad being, as one can see, in some quarters of the town, a tendency to barbarism, which can only be counteracted by free public schools, and by a necessity which shall compel them to habits of thrift and industry. One needs to be very much an optimist, however, to have patience for these developments.

I believe there is an instinct in both races against mixture of blood, and upon this rests the law of Louisiana, which forbids such intermarriages; the time may come when the colored people will be as strenuous in insisting upon its execution as the whites, unless there is a great change in popular feeling, of which there is no sign at present; it is they who will see that there is no escape from the equivocal position in which those nearly white in appearance find themselves except by a rigid separation of races. The danger is of a reversal at any time to the original type, and that is always present to the offspring of any one with a drop of African blood in the veins. The pathos of this situation is infinite, and it cannot be lessened by saying that the prejudice about color is unreasonable; it exists. Often the African strain is so attenuated that the possessor of it would pass to the ordinary observer for Spanish or French; and I suppose that many so-called Creole peculiarities of speech and manner are traceable to this strain. An incident in point may not be uninteresting.

I once lodged in the old French quarter in a house kept by two maiden sisters, only one of whom spoke English at all. They were refined, and had the air of decayed gentlewomen. The one who spoke English had the vivacity and agreeability of a Paris landlady, without the latter's invariable hardness and sharpness. I thought I had found in her pretty mode of speech the real Creole dialect of her class. "You are French," I said, when I engaged my room.

"No," she said, "no, m'sieu, I am an American; we are of the United States," with the air of informing a stranger that New Orleans was now annexed.

"Yes," I replied, "but you are of French descent?"

"Oh, and a little Spanish."

"Can you tell me, madame," I asked, one Sunday morning, "the way to Trinity Church?"

"I cannot tell, m'sieu; it is somewhere the other side; I do not know the other side."

"But have you never been the other side of Canal Street?"

"Oh yes, I went once, to make a visit on a friend on New-Year's."

I explained that it was far uptown, and a Protestant church.

"M'sieu, is he Cat'olic?"

"Oh no; I am a Protestant."

"Well, me, I am Cat'olic; but Protestan' o' Cat'olic, it is 'mos' ze same."

This was purely the instinct of politeness, and that my feelings

might not be wounded, for she was a good Catholic, and did not believe at all that it was “mos’ ze same.”

It was Exposition year, and then April, and madame had never been to the Exposition. I urged her to go, and one day, after great preparation for a journey to the other side, she made the expedition, and returned enchanted with all she had seen, especially with the Mexican band. A new world was opened to her, and she resolved to go again. The morning of Louisiana Day she rapped at my door and informed me that she was going to the fair. “And”—she paused at the door-way, her eyes sparkling with her new project—“you know what I goin’ do?”

“No.”

“I goin’ get one big bouquet, and give to the leader of the orchestre.”

“You know him, the leader?”

“No, not yet.”

I did not know then how poor she was, and how much sacrifice this would be to her, this gratification of a sentiment.

The next year, in the same month, I asked for her at the lodging. She was not there. “You did not know,” said the woman then in possession—“good God! her sister died four days ago, from want of food, and madame has gone away back of town, nobody knows where. They told nobody, they were so proud; none of their friends knew, or they would have helped. They had no lodgers, and could not keep this place, and took another opposite; but they were unlucky, and the sheriff came.” I said

that I was very sorry that I had not known; she might have been helped. "No," she replied, with considerable spirit; "she would have accepted nothing; she would starve rather. So would I." The woman referred me to some well-known Creole families who knew madame, but I was unable to find her hiding-place. I asked who madame was. "Oh, she was a very nice woman, very respectable. Her father was Spanish, her mother was an octoroon."

One does not need to go into the past of New Orleans for the picturesque; the streets have their peculiar physiognomy, and "character" such as the artists delight to depict is the result of the extraordinary mixture of races and the habit of out-door life. The long summer, from April to November, with a heat continuous, though rarely so excessive as it occasionally is in higher latitudes, determines the mode of life and the structure of the houses, and gives a leisurely and amiable tone to the aspect of people and streets which exists in few other American cities. The French quarter is out of repair, and has the air of being for rent; but in fact there is comparatively little change in occupancy, Creole families being remarkably adhesive to localities. The stranger who sees all over the French and the business parts of the town the immense number of lodging-houses—some of them the most stately old mansions—let largely by colored landladies, is likely to underestimate the home life of this city. New Orleans soil is so wet that the city is without cellars for storage, and its court-yards and odd corners become catch-alls of broken furniture and

other lumber. The solid window-shutters, useful in the glare of the long summer, give a blank appearance to the streets. This is relieved, however, by the queer little Spanish houses, and by the endless variety of galleries and balconies. In one part of the town the iron-work of the balconies is cast, and uninteresting in its set patterns; in French-town much of it is hand-made, exquisite in design, and gives to a street vista a delicate lace-work appearance. I do not know any foreign town which has on view so much exquisite wrought-iron work as the old part of New Orleans. Besides the balconies, there are recessed galleries, old dormer-windows, fantastic little nooks and corners, tricked out with flower-pots and vines.

The glimpses of street life are always entertaining, because unconscious, while full of character. It may be a Creole courtyard, the walls draped with vines, flowers blooming in bap-hazard disarray, and a group of pretty girls sewing and chatting, and stabbing the passer-by with a charmed glance. It may be a cotton team in the street, the mules, the rollicking driver, the creaking cart. It may be a single figure, or a group in the market or on the levee—a slender yellow girl sweeping up the grains of rice, a colored gleaner recalling Ruth; an ancient darky asleep, with mouth open, in his tipped-up two-wheeled cart, waiting for a job; the “solid South,” in the shape of an immense “aunty” under a red umbrella, standing and contemplating the river; the broad-faced women in gay bandannas behind their cake-stands; a group of levee hands about a rickety table, taking their noonday meal of

pork and greens; the blind-man, capable of sitting more patiently than an American Congressman, with a dog trained to hold his basket for the pennies of the charitable; the black stalwart vender of tin and iron utensils, who totes in a basket, and piled on his head, and strung on his back, a weight of over two hundred and fifty pounds; and negro women who walk erect with baskets of clothes or enormous bundles balanced on their heads, smiling and “jawing,” unconscious of their burdens. These are the familiar figures of a street life as varied and picturesque as the artist can desire.

New Orleans amuses itself in the winter with very good theatres, and until recently has sustained an excellent French opera. It has all the year round plenty of *cafes chantants*, gilded saloons, and gambling-houses, and more than enough of the resorts upon which the police are supposed to keep one blind eye. “Back of town,” towards Lake Pontchartrain, there is much that is picturesque and blooming, especially in the spring of the year—the charming gardens of the Jockey Club, the City Park, the old duelling-ground with its superb oaks, and the Bayou St. John with its idling fishing-boats, and the colored houses and plantations along the banks—a piece of Holland wanting the Dutch windmills. On a breezy day one may go far for a prettier sight than the river-bank and esplanade at Carrollton, where the mighty coffee-colored flood swirls by, where the vast steamers struggle and cough against the stream, or swiftly go with it round the bend, leaving their trail of smoke, and the delicate

line of foliage against the sky on the far opposite shore completes the outline of an exquisite landscape. Suburban resorts much patronized, and reached by frequent trains, are the old Spanish Fort and the West End of Lake Pontchartrain. The way lies through cypress swamp and palmetto thickets, brilliant at certain seasons with *fleur-de-lis*. At each of these resorts are restaurants, dancing-halls, promenade-galleries, all on a large scale; boat-houses, and semi-tropical gardens very prettily laid out in walks and labyrinths, and adorned with trees and flowers. Even in the heat of summer at night the lake is sure to offer a breeze, and with waltz music and moonlight and ices and tinkling glasses with straws in them and love's young dream, even the *ennuyé* globe-trotter declares that it is not half bad.

The city, indeed, offers opportunity for charming excursions in all directions. Parties are constantly made up to visit the river plantations, to sail up and down the stream, or to take an outing across the lake, or to the many lovely places along the coast. In the winter, excursions are made to these places, and in summer the well-to-do take the sea-air in cottages, at such places as Mandeville across the lake, or at such resorts on the Mississippi as Pass Christian.

I crossed the lake one spring day to the pretty town of Mandeville, and then sailed up the Tehefuncta River to Covington. The winding Tchefuncta is in character like some of the narrow Florida streams, has the same luxuriant overhanging foliage, and as many shy lounging alligators to the mile, and

is prettier by reason of occasional open glades and large moss-draped live-oaks and China-trees. From the steamer landing in the woods we drove three miles through a lovely open pine forest to the town. Covington is one of the oldest settlements in the State, is the centre of considerable historic interest, and the origin of several historic families. The land is elevated a good deal above the coast-level, and is consequently dry. The town has a few roomy oldtime houses, a mineral spring, some pleasing scenery along the river that winds through it, and not much else. But it is in the midst of pine woods, it is sheltered from all "northers," it has the soft air, but not the dampness, of the Gulf, and is exceedingly salubrious in all the winter months, to say nothing of the summer. It has lately come into local repute as a health resort, although it lacks sufficient accommodations for the entertainment of many strangers. I was told by some New Orleans physicians that they regarded it as almost a specific for pulmonary diseases, and instances were given of persons in what was supposed to be advanced stages of lung and bronchial troubles who had been apparently cured by a few months' residence there; and invalids are, I believe, greatly benefited by its healing, soft, and piny atmosphere.

I have no doubt, from what I hear and my limited observation, that all this coast about New Orleans would be a favorite winter resort if it had hotels as good as, for instance, that at Pass Christian. The region has many attractions for the idler and the invalid. It is, in the first place, interesting; it has a good deal of

variety of scenery and of historical interest; there is excellent fishing and shooting; and if the visitor tires of the monotony of the country, he can by a short ride on cars or a steamer transfer himself for a day or a week to a large and most hospitable city, to society, the club, the opera, balls, parties, and every variety of life that his taste craves. The disadvantage of many Southern places to which our Northern regions force us is that they are uninteresting, stupid, and monotonous, if not malarious. It seems a long way from New York to New Orleans, but I do not doubt that the region around the city would become immediately a great winter resort if money and enterprise were enlisted to make it so.

New Orleans has never been called a "strait-laced" city; its Sunday is still of the Continental type; but it seems to me free from the socialistic agnosticism which flaunts itself more or less in Cincinnati, St. Louis, and Chicago; the tone of leading Presbyterian churches is distinctly Calvinistic, one perceives comparatively little of religious speculation and doubt, and so far as I could see there is harmony and entire social good feeling between the Catholic and Protestant communions. Protestant ladies assist at Catholic fairs, and the compliment is returned by the society ladies of the Catholic faith when a Protestant good cause is to be furthered by a bazaar or a "pink tea." Denominational lines seem to have little to do with social affiliations. There may be friction in the management of the great public charities, but on the surface there is toleration and united good-will. The Catholic faith long had the prestige of

wealth, family, and power, and the education of the daughters of Protestant houses in convent schools tended to allay prejudice. Notwithstanding the reputation New Orleans has for gayety and even frivolity—and no one can deny the fast and furious living of ante-bellum days—it possesses at bottom an old-fashioned religious simplicity. If any one thinks that “faith” has died out of modern life, let him visit the mortuary chapel of St. Roch. In a distant part of the town, beyond the street of the Elysian Fields, and on Washington avenue, in a district very sparsely built up, is the Campo Santo of the Catholic Church of the Holy Trinity. In this foreign-looking cemetery is the pretty little Gothic Chapel of St. Roch, having a background of common and swampy land. It is a brown stuccoed edifice, wholly open in front, and was a year or two ago covered with beautiful ivy. The small interior is paved in white marble, the windows are stained glass, the side-walls are composed of tiers of vaults, where are buried the members of certain societies, and the spaces in the wall and in the altar area are thickly covered with votive offerings, in wax and in *naive* painting—contributed by those who have been healed by the intercession of the saints. Over the altar is the shrine of St. Roch—a cavalier, staff in hand, with his clog by his side, the faithful animal which accompanied this eighth-century philanthropist in his visitations to the plague-stricken people of Munich. Within the altar rail are rows of lighted candles, tended and renewed by the attendant, placed there by penitents or by seekers after the favor of the saint. On the wooden benches, kneeling, are ladies,

servants, colored women, in silent prayer. One approaches the lighted, picturesque shrine through the formal rows of tombs, and comes there into an atmosphere of peace and faith. It is believed that miracles are daily wrought here, and one notices in all the gardeners, keepers, and attendants of the place the accent and demeanor of simple faith. On the wall hangs this inscription:

“O great St. Roch, deliver us, we beseech thee, from the scourges of God. Through thy intercessions preserve our bodies from contagious diseases, and our souls from the contagion of sin. Obtain for us salubrious air; but, above all, purity of heart. Assist us to make good use of health, to bear suffering with patience, and after thy example to live in the practice of penitence and charity, that we may one day enjoy the happiness which thou hast merited by thy virtues.

“St. Roch, pray for us.

“St. Roch, pray for us.

“St. Roch, pray for us.”

There is testimony that many people, even Protestants, and men, have had wounds cured and been healed of diseases by prayer in this chapel. To this distant shrine come ladies from all parts of the city to make the “novena”—the prayer of nine days, with the offer of the burning taper—and here daily resort hundreds to intercede for themselves or their friends. It is believed by the damsels of this district that if they offer prayer daily in this chapel they will have a husband within the year, and one may see kneeling here every evening these trustful devotees

to the welfare of the human race. I asked the colored woman who sold medals and leaflets and renewed the candles if she personally knew any persons who had been miraculously cured by prayer, or novena, in St. Roch. "Plenty, sir, plenty." And she related many instances, which were confirmed by votive offerings on the walls. "Why," said she, "there was a friend of mine who wanted a place, and could hear of none, who made a novena here, and right away got a place, a good place, and" (conscious that she was making an astonishing statement about a New Orleans servant) "she kept it a whole year!"

"But one must come in the right spirit," I said.

"Ah, indeed. It needs to believe. You can't fool God!"

One might make various studies of New Orleans: its commercial life; its methods, more or less antiquated, of doing business, and the leisure for talk that enters into it; its admirable charities and its mediaeval prisons; its romantic French and Spanish history, still lingering in the old houses, and traits of family and street life; the city politics, which nobody can explain, and no other city need covet; its sanitary condition, which needs an intelligent despot with plenty of money and an ingenuity that can make water run uphill; its colored population—about a fourth of the city—with its distinct social grades, its superstition, nonchalant good-humor, turn for idling and basking in the sun, slowly awaking to a sense of thrift, chastity, truth-speaking, with many excellent order-loving, patriotic men and women, but a mass that needs moral training quite as much as the spelling-

book before it can contribute to the vigor and prosperity of the city; its schools and recent libraries, and the developing literary and art taste which will sustain book-shops and picture-galleries; its cuisine, peculiar in its mingling of French and African skill, and determined largely by a market unexcelled in the quality of fish, game, and fruit—the fig alone would go far to reconcile one to four or five months of hot nights; the climatic influence in assimilating races meeting there from every region of the earth.

But whatever way we regard New Orleans., it is in its aspect, social tone, and character *sui generis*; its civilization differs widely from that of any other, and it remains one of the most interesting places in the republic. Of course, social life in these days is much the same in all great cities in its observances, but that of New Orleans is markedly cordial, ingenuous, warmhearted. I do not imagine that it could tolerate, as Boston does, absolute freedom of local opinion on all subjects, and undoubtedly it is sensitive to criticism; but I believe that it is literally true, as one of its citizens said, that it is still more sensitive to kindness.

The metropolis of the South-west has geographical reasons for a great future. Louisiana is rich in alluvial soil, the capability of which has not yet been tested, except in some localities, by skilful agriculture. But the prosperity of the city depends much upon local conditions. Science and energy can solve the problem of drainage, can convert all the territory between the city and Lake Pontchartrain into a veritable garden, surpassing

in fertility the flat environs of the city of Mexico. And the steady development of common-school education, together with technical and industrial schools, will create a skill which will make New Orleans the industrial and manufacturing centre of that region.

IV.—A VOODOO DANCE

There was nothing mysterious about it. The ceremony took place in broad day, at noon in the upper chambers of a small frame house in a street just beyond Congo Square and the old Parish prison in New Orleans. It was an incantation rather than a dance—a curious mingling of African Voodoo rites with modern “spiritualism” and faith-cure.

The explanation of Voodooism (or Vaudouism) would require a chapter by itself. It is sufficient to say for the purpose of this paper that the barbaric rites of Voodooism originated with the Congo and Guinea negroes, were brought to San Domingo, and thence to Louisiana. In Hayti the sect is in full vigor, and its midnight orgies have reverted more and more to the barbaric original in the last twenty-five years. The wild dance and incantations are accompanied by sacrifice of animals and occasionally of infants, and with cannibalism, and scenes of most indecent license. In its origin it is serpent worship. The Voodoo signifies a being all-powerful on the earth, who is, or is represented by, a harmless species of serpent (*couleuvre*), and in this belief the sect perform rites in which the serpent is propitiated. In common parlance, the chief actor is called the Voodoo—if a man, the Voodoo King; if a woman, the Voodoo Queen. Some years ago Congo Square was the scene of the weird midnight rites of this sect, as unrestrained and barbarous

as ever took place in the Congo country. All these semi-public performances have been suppressed, and all private assemblies for this worship are illegal, and broken up by the police when discovered. It is said in New Orleans that Voodooism is a thing of the past. But the superstition remains, and I believe that very few of the colored people in New Orleans are free from it—that is, free from it as a superstition. Those who repudiate it, have nothing to do with it, and regard it as only evil, still ascribe power to the Voodoo, to some ugly old woman or man, who is popularly believed to have occult power (as the Italians believe in the “evil-eye”), can cast a charm and put the victims under a spell, or by incantations relieve them from it. The power of the Voodoo is still feared by many who are too intelligent to believe in it intellectually. That persons are still Voodooed, probably few doubt; and that people are injured by charms secretly placed in their beds, or are bewitched in various ways, is common belief—more common than the Saxon notion that it is ill-luck to see the new moon over the left shoulder.

Although very few white people in New Orleans have ever seen the performance I shall try to describe, and it is said that the police would break it up if they knew of it, it takes place every Wednesday at noon at the house where I saw it; and there are three or four other places in the city where the rites are celebrated sometimes at night. Our admission was procured through a friend who had, I suppose, vouched for our good intentions.

We were received in the living-rooms of the house on the

ground-floor by the "doctor," a good-looking mulatto of middle age, clad in a white shirt with gold studs, linen pantaloons, and list slippers. He had the simple-minded shrewd look of a "healing medium." The interior was neat, though in some confusion; among the rude attempts at art on the walls was the worst chromo print of General Grant that was probably ever made. There were several negroes about the door, many in the rooms and in the backyard, and all had an air of expectation and mild excitement. After we had satisfied the scruples of the doctor, and signed our names in his register, we were invited to ascend by a narrow, crooked stair-way in the rear. This led to a small landing where a dozen people might stand, and from this a door opened into a chamber perhaps fifteen feet by ten, where the rites were to take place; beyond this was a small bedroom. Around the sides of these rooms were benches and chairs, and the close quarters were already well filled.

The assembly was perfectly orderly, but a motley one, and the women largely outnumbered the men. There were coal-black negroes, porters, and stevedores, fat cooks, slender chambermaids, all shades of complexion, yellow girls and comely quadroons, most of them in common servant attire, but some neatly dressed. And among them were, to my surprise, several white people.

On one side of the middle room where we sat was constructed a sort of buffet or bureau, used as an altar. On it stood an image of the Virgin Mary in painted plaster, about two feet high, flanked

by lighted candles and a couple of cruets, with some other small objects. On a shelf below were two other candles, and on this shelf and the floor in front were various offerings to be used in the rites—plates of apples, grapes, bananas, oranges; dishes of sugar, of sugarplums; a dish of powdered orris root, packages of candles, bottles of brandy and of water. Two other lighted candles stood on the floor, and in front an earthen bowl. The clear space in front for the dancer was not more than four or five feet square.

Some time was consumed in preparations, or in waiting for the worshippers to assemble. From conversation with those near me, I found that the doctor had a reputation for healing the diseased by virtue of his incantations, of removing “spells,” of finding lost articles, of ministering to the troubles of lovers, and, in short, of doing very much what clairvoyants and healing mediums claim to do in what are called civilized communities. But failing to get a very intelligent account of the expected performance from the negro woman next me, I moved to the side of the altar and took a chair next a girl of perhaps twenty years old, whose complexion and features gave evidence that she was white. Still, finding her in that company, and there as a participant in the Voodoo rites, I concluded that I must be mistaken, and that she must have colored blood in her veins. Assuming the privilege of an inquirer, I asked her questions about the coming performance, and in doing so carried the impression that she was kin to the colored race. But I was soon convinced, from her manner and her replies,

that she was pure white. She was a pretty, modest girl, very reticent, well-bred, polite, and civil. None of the colored people seemed to know who she was, but she said she had been there before. She told me, in course of the conversation, the name of the street where she lived (in the American part of the town), the private school at which she had been educated (one of the best in the city), and that she and her parents were Episcopalians. Whatever her trouble was, mental or physical, she was evidently infatuated with the notion that this Voodoo doctor could conjure it away, and said that she thought he had already been of service to her. She did not communicate her difficulties to him or speak to him, but she evidently had faith that he could discern what every one present needed, and minister to them. When I asked her if, with her education, she did not think that more good would come to her by confiding in known friends or in regular practitioners, she wearily said that she did not know. After the performance began, her intense interest in it, and the light in her eyes, were evidence of the deep hold the superstition had upon her nature. In coming to this place she had gone a step beyond the young ladies of her class who make a novena at St. Roch.

While we still waited, the doctor and two other colored men called me into the next chamber, and wanted to be assured that it was my own name I had written on the register, and that I had no unfriendly intentions in being present. Their doubts at rest, all was ready.

The doctor squatted on one side of the altar, and his wife, a

stout woman of darker hue, on the other.

“*Commençons,*” said the woman, in a low voice. All the colored people spoke French, and French only, to each other and in the ceremony.

The doctor nodded, bent over, and gave three sharp raps on the floor with a bit of wood. (This is the usual opening of Voodoo rites.) All the others rapped three times on the floor with their knuckles. Anyone coming in to join the circle afterwards, stooped and rapped three times. After a moment’s silence, all kneeled and repeated together in French the Apostles’ Creed, and still on their knees, they said two prayers to the Virgin Mary.

The colored woman at the side of the altar began a chant in a low, melodious voice. It was the weird and strange “*Dansé Calinda.*” A tall negress, with a bright, good-natured face, entered the circle with the air of a chief performer, knelt, rapped the floor, laid an offering of candles before the altar, with a small bottle of brandy, seated herself beside the singer, and took up in a strong, sweet voice the bizarre rhythm of the song. Nearly all those who came in had laid some little offering before the altar. The chant grew, the single line was enunciated in stronger pulsations, and other voices joined in the wild refrain,

“*Dansé Calinda, boudoum, boudoum*
Dansé Calinda, boudoum, boudoum!”

bodies swayed, the hands kept time in soft patpatting, and the

feet in muffled accentuation. The Voodoo arose, removed his slippers, seized a bottle of brandy, dashed some of the liquid on the floor on each side of the brown bowl as a libation, threw back his head and took a long pull at the bottle, and then began in the open space a slow measured dance, a rhythmical shuffle, with more movement of the hips than of the feet, backward and forward, round and round, but accelerating his movement as the time of the song quickened and the excitement rose in the room. The singing became wilder and more impassioned, a strange minor strain, full of savage pathos and longing, that made it almost impossible for the spectator not to join in the swing of its influence, while the dancer wrought himself up into the wild passion of a Cairene dervish. Without a moment ceasing his rhythmical steps and his extravagant gesticulation, he poured liquid into the basin, and dashing in brandy, ignited the fluid with a match. The liquid flamed up before the altar. He seized then a bunch of candles, plunged them into the bowl, held them up all flaming with the burning brandy, and, keeping his step to the maddening "Calinda," distributed them lighted to the devotees. In the same way he snatched up dishes of apples, grapes, bananas, oranges, deluged them with burning brandy, and tossed them about the room to the eager and excited crowd. His hands were aflame, his clothes seemed to be on fire; he held the burning dishes close to his breast, apparently inhaling the flame, closing his eyes and swaying his head backward and forward in an ecstasy, the hips advancing and receding, the feet still shuffling

to the barbaric measure.

Every moment his own excitement and that of the audience increased. The floor was covered with the débris of the sacrifice—broken candy, crushed sugarplums, scattered grapes—and all more or less in flame. The wild dancer was dancing in fire! In the height of his frenzy he grasped a large plate filled with lump-sugar. That was set on fire. He held the burning mass to his breast, he swung it round, and finally, with his hand extended under the bottom of the plate (the plate only adhering to his hand by the rapidity of his circular motion), he spun around like a dancing dervish, his eyes shut, the perspiration pouring in streams from his face, in a frenzy. The flaming sugar scattered about the floor, and the devotees scrambled for it. In intervals of the dance, though the singing went on, the various offerings which had been conjured were passed around—bits of sugar and fruit and orris powder. That which fell to my share I gave to the young girl next me, whose eyes were blazing with excitement, though she had remained perfectly tranquil, and joined neither by voice or hands or feet in the excitement. She put the conjured sugar and fruit in her pocket, and seemed grateful to me for relinquishing it to her.

Before this point had been reached the chant had been changed for the wild *canga*, more rapid in movement than the *chanson africaine*:

“Eh! eli! Bomba, hen! hen!

Canga bafio té
Canga moune dé lé
Canga do ki la
Canga li.”

At intervals during the performance, when the charm had begun to work, the believers came forward into the open space, and knelt for “treatment.” The singing, the dance, the wild incantation, went on uninterruptedly; but amid all his antics the dancer had an eye to business. The first group that knelt were four stalwart men, three of them white laborers. All of them, I presume, had some disease which they had faith the incantation would drive away. Each held a lighted candle in each hand. The doctor successively extinguished each candle by putting it in his mouth, and performed a number of antics of a saltatory sort. During his dancing and whirling he frequently filled his mouth with liquid, and discharged it in spray, exactly as a Chinese laundryman sprinkles his clothes, into the faces and on the heads of any man or woman within reach. Those so treated considered themselves specially favored. Having extinguished the candles of the suppliants, he scooped the liquid from the bowl, flaming or not as it might be, and with his hands vigorously scrubbed their faces and heads, as if he were shampooing them. While the victim was still sputtering and choking he seized him by the right hand, lifted him up, spun him round half a dozen times, and then sent him whirling.

This was substantially the treatment that all received who knelt

in the circle, though sometimes it was more violent. Some of them were slapped smartly upon the back and the breast, and much knocked about. Occasionally a woman was whirled till she was dizzy, and perhaps swung about in his arms as if she had been a bundle of clothes. They all took it meekly and gratefully. One little girl of twelve, who had rickets, was banged about till it seemed as if every bone in her body would be broken. But the doctor had discrimination, even in his wildest moods. Some of the women were gently whirled, and the conjurer forbore either to spray them from his mouth or to shampoo them.

Nearly all those present knelt, and were whirled and shaken, and those who did not take this "cure" I suppose got the benefit of the incantation by carrying away some of the consecrated offerings. Occasionally a woman in the whirl would whisper something-in the doctor's ear, and receive from him doubtless the counsel she needed. But generally the doctor made no inquiries of his patients, and they said nothing to him.

While the wild chanting, the rhythmic movement of hands and feet, the barbarous dance, and the fiery incantations were at their height, it was difficult to believe that we were in a civilized city of an enlightened republic. Nothing indecent occurred in word or gesture, but it was so wild and bizarre that one might easily imagine he was in Africa or in hell.

As I said, nearly all the participants were colored people; but in the height of the frenzy one white woman knelt and was sprayed and whirled with the others. She was a respectable

married woman from the other side of Canal Street. I waited with some anxiety to see what my modest little neighbor would do. She had told me that she should look on and take no part. I hoped that the senseless antics, the mummery, the rough treatment, would disgust her. Towards the close of the séance, when the spells were all woven and the flames had subsided, the tall, good-natured negress motioned to me that it was my turn to advance into the circle and kneel. I excused myself. But the young girl was unable to resist longer. She went forward and knelt, with a candle in her hand. The conjurer was either touched by her youth and race, or he had spent his force. He gently lifted her by one hand, and gave her one turn around, and she came back to her seat.

The singing ceased, The doctor's wife passed round the hat for contributions, and the ceremony, which had lasted nearly an hour and a half, was over. The doctor retired exhausted with the violent exertions. As for the patients, I trust they were well cured of rheumatism, of fever, or whatever ill they had, and that the young ladies have either got husbands to their minds or have escaped faithless lovers. In the breaking up I had no opportunity to speak further to the interesting young white neophyte; but as I saw her resuming her hat and cloak in the adjoining room there was a strange excitement in her face, and in her eyes a light of triumph and faith. We came out by the back way, and through an alley made our escape into the sunny street and the air of the nineteenth century.

V.—THE ACADIAN LAND

If one crosses the river from New Orleans to Algiers, and takes Morgan's Louisiana and Texas Railway (now a part of the Southern Pacific line), he will go west, with a dip at first southerly, and will pass through a region little attractive except to water-fowl, snakes, and alligators, by an occasional rice plantation, an abandoned indigo field, an interminable stretch of cypress swamps, thickets of Spanish-bayonets, black waters, rank and rampant vegetation, vines, and water-plants; by-and-by firmer arable land, and cane plantations, many of them forsaken and become thickets of undergrowth, owing to frequent inundations and the low price of sugar.

At a distance of eighty miles Morgan City is reached, and the broad Atchafalaya Bayou is crossed. Hence is steamboat communication with New Orleans and Vera Cruz. The Atchafalaya Bayou has its origin near the mouth of the Red River, and diverting from the Mississippi most of that great stream, it makes its tortuous way to the Gulf, frequently expanding into the proportions of a lake, and giving this region a great deal more water than it needs. The Bayou Teche, which is, in fact, a lazy river, wanders down from the rolling country of Washington and Opelousas, with a great deal of uncertainty of purpose, but mainly south-easterly, and parallel with the Atchafalaya, and joins the latter at Morgan City. Steamers of good size navigate

it as far as New Iberia, some forty to fifty miles, and the railway follows it to the latter place, within sight of its fringe of live-oaks and cotton-woods. The region south and west of the Bayou Teche, a vast plain cut by innumerable small bayous and streams, which have mostly a connection with the bay of Côte Blanche and Vermilion Bay, is the home of the Nova Scotia Acadians.

The Acadians in 1755 made a good exchange, little as they thought so at the time, of bleak Nova Scotia for these sunny, genial, and fertile lands. They came into a land and a climate suited to their idiosyncrasies, and which have enabled them to preserve their primitive traits. In a comparative isolation from the disturbing currents of modern life, they have preserved the habits and customs of the eighteenth century. The immigrants spread themselves abroad among those bayous, made their homes wide apart, and the traveller will nowhere find—at least I did not—large and compact communities of them, unalloyed with the American and other elements. Indeed, I imagine that they are losing, in the general settlement of the country, their conspicuousness. They still give the tone, however, to considerable districts, as in the village and neighborhood of Abbeville. Some places, like the old town of St. Martinsville, on the Teche, once the social capital of the region, and entitled, for its wealth and gayety, the Petit Paris, had a large element of French who were not Acadians.

The Teche from Morgan City to New Iberia is a deep, slow, and winding stream, flowing through a flat region of sugar

plantations. It is very picturesque by reason of its tortuousness and the great spreading live-oak trees, moss-draped, that hang over it. A voyage on it is one of the most romantic entertainments offered to the traveller. The scenery is peaceful, and exceedingly pretty. There are few conspicuous plantations with mansions and sugar-stacks of any pretensions, but the panorama from the deck of the steamer is always pleasing. There is an air of leisure and "afternoon" about the expedition, which is heightened by the idle case of the inhabitants lounging at the rude wharves and landing-places, and the patience of the colored fishers, boys in scant raiment and women in sun-bonnets, seated on the banks. Typical of this universal contentment is the ancient colored man stretched on a plank close to the steamer's boiler, oblivious of the heat, apparently asleep, with his spacious mouth wide open, but softly singing.

"Are you asleep, uncle?"

"No, not adzackly asleep, boss. I jes wake up, and thinkin' how good de Lord is, I couldn't help singin'."

The panorama is always interesting. There are wide silvery expanses of water, into which fall the shadows of great trees. A tug is dragging along a tow of old rafts composed of cypress logs all water-soaked, green with weeds and grass, so that it looks like a floating garden. What pictures! Clusters of oaks on the prairie; a picturesque old cotton-press; a house thatched with palmettoes; rice-fields irrigated by pumps; darkies, field-hands, men and women, hoeing in the cane-fields, giving stalwart strokes that

exhibit their robust figures; an old sugar-mill in ruin and vine-draped; an old begass chimney against the sky; an antique cotton-press with its mouldering roof supported on timbers; a darky on a mule motionless on the bank, clad in Attakapas cloth, his slouch hat falling about his head like a roof from which the rafters have been withdrawn; palmettoes, oaks, and funereal moss; lines of Spanish-bayonets; rickety wharves; primitive boats; spider-legged bridges. Neither on the Teche nor the Atchafalaya, nor on the great plain near the Mississippi, fit for amphibious creatures, where one standing on the level wonders to see the wheels of the vast river steamers above him, apparently without cause, revolving, is there any lack of the picturesque.

New Iberia, the thriving mart of the region, which has drawn away the life from St. Martinsville, ten miles farther up the bayou, is a village mainly of small frame houses, with a smart courthouse, a lively business street, a few pretty houses, and some oldtime mansions on the bank of the bayou, half smothered in old rose gardens, the ground in the rear sloping to the water under the shade of gigantic oaks. One of them, which with its outside staircases in the pillared gallery suggests Spanish taste on the outside, and in the interior the arrangement of connecting rooms a French chateau, has a self-keeping rose garden, where one might easily become sentimental; the vines disport themselves like holiday children, climbing the trees, the side of the house, and revelling in an abandon of color and perfume.

The population is mixed—Americans, French, Italians, now

and then a Spaniard and even a Mexican, occasionally a basket-making Attakapas, and the all-pervading person of color. The darky is a born fisherman, in places where fishing requires no exertion, and one may see him any hour seated on the banks of the Teche, especially the boy and the sun-bonneted woman, placidly holding their poles over the muddy stream, and can study, if he like, the black face in expectation of a bite. There too are the washer-women, with their tubs and a plank thrust into the water, and a handkerchief of bright colors for a turban. These people somehow never fail to be picturesque, whatever attitude they take, and they are not at all self-conscious. The groups on Sunday give an interest to church-going—a lean white horse, with a man, his wife, and boy strung along its backbone, an aged darky and his wife seated in a cart, in stiff Sunday clothes and flaming colors, the wheels of the cart making all angles with the ground, and wabbling and creaking along, the whole party as proud of its appearance as Julius Caesar in a triumph.

I drove on Sunday morning early from New Iberia to church at St. Martinsville. It was a lovely April morning. The way lay over fertile prairies, past fine cane plantations, with some irrigation, and for a distance along the pretty Teche, shaded by great live-oaks, and here and there a fine magnolia-tree; a country with few houses, and those mostly shanties, but a sunny, smiling land, loved of the birds. We passed on our left the Spanish Lake, a shallow, irregular body of water. My driver was an ex-Confederate soldier, whose tramp with a musket through

Virginia had not greatly enlightened him as to what it was all about. As to the Acadians, however, he had a decided opinion, and it was a poor one. They are no good. "You ask them a question, and they shrug their shoulders like a tarrapin—don't know no more'n a dead alligator; only language they ever have is 'no' and 'what?'"

If St. Martinsville, once the scat of fashion, retains anything of its past elegance, its life has departed from it. It has stopped growing anything but old, and yet it has not much of interest that is antique; it is a village of small white frame houses, with three or four big gaunt brick structures, two stories and a half high, with galleries, and here and there a Creole cottage, the stairs running up inside the galleries, over which roses climb in profusion.

I went to breakfast at a French inn, kept by Madame Castillo, a large red-brick house on the banks of the Teche, where the live-oaks cast shadows upon the silvery stream. It had, of course, a double gallery. Below, the waiting-room, dining-room, and general assembly-room were paved with brick, and instead of a door, Turkey-red curtains hung in the entrance, and blowing aside, hospitably invited the stranger within. The breakfast was neatly served, the house was scrupulously clean, and the guest felt the influence of that personal hospitality which is always so pleasing. Madame offered me a seat in her pew in church, and meantime a chair on the upper gallery, which opened from large square sleeping chambers. In that fresh morning I thought I never had seen a more sweet and peaceful place than this gallery. Close

to it grew graceful China-trees in full blossom and odor; up and down the Teche were charming views under the oaks; only the roofs of the town could be seen amid the foliage of China-trees; and there was an atmosphere of repose in all the scene.

It was Easter morning. I felt that I should like to linger there a week in absolute forgetfulness of the world. French is the ordinary language of the village, spoken more or less corruptly by all colors.

The Catholic church, a large and ugly structure, stands on the plaza, which is not at all like a Spanish plaza, but a veritable New England "green," with stores and shops on all sides—New England, except that the shops are open on Sunday. In the church apse is a noted and not bad painting of St. Martin, and at the bottom of one aisle a vast bank of black stucco clouds, with the Virgin standing on them, and the legend, "*Je suis l'immaculee conception.*"

Country people were pouring into town for the Easter service and festivities—more blacks than whites—on horseback and in rickety carriages, and the horses were hitched on either side of the church. Before service the square was full of lively young colored lads cracking Easter-eggs. Two meet and strike together the eggs in their hands, and the one loses whose egg breaks. A tough shell is a valuable possession. The custom provokes a good deal of larking and merriment. While this is going on, the worshippers are making their way into the church through the throng, ladies in the neat glory of provincial dress, and high-

stepping, saucy colored belles, yellow and black, the blackest in the most radiant apparel of violent pink and light blue, and now and then a society favorite in all the hues of the rainbow. The centre pews of the church are reserved for the whites, the seats of the side aisles for the negroes. When mass begins, the church is crowded. The boys, with occasional excursions into the vestibule to dip the finger in the holy-water, or perhaps say a prayer, are still winning and losing eggs on the preen.

On the gallery at the inn it is also Sunday. The air is full of odor. A strong south wind begins to blow. I think the south wind is the wind of memory and of longing. I wonder if the gay spirits of the last generation ever return to the scenes of their revelry? Will they come back to the theatre this Sunday night, and to the Grand Ball afterwards? The admission to both is only twenty-five cents, including gombo file.

From New Iberia southward towards Vermilion Bay stretches a vast prairie; if it is not absolutely fiat, if it resembles the ocean, it is the ocean when its long swells have settled nearly to a calm. This prairie would be monotonous were it not dotted with small round ponds, like hand-mirrors for the flitting birds and sailing clouds, were its expanse not spotted with herds of cattle, scattered or clustering like fishing-boats on a green sea, were it not for a cabin here and there, a field of cane or cotton, a garden plot, and were it not for the forests which break the horizon line, and send out dark capes into the verdant plains. On a gray day, or when storms and fogs roll in from the Gulf, it might be a gloomy

region, but under the sunlight and in the spring it is full of life and color; it has an air of refinement and repose that is very welcome. Besides the uplift of the spirit that a wide horizon is apt to give, one is conscious here of the neighborhood of the sea, and of the possibilities of romantic adventure in a coast intersected by bayous, and the presence of novel forms of animal and vegetable life, and of a people with habits foreign and strange. There is also a grateful sense of freedom and expansion.

Soon, over the plain, is seen on the horizon, ten miles from New Iberia, the dark foliage on the island of Petite Anse, or Wery's Island. This unexpected upheaval from the marsh, bounded by the narrow, circling Petite Anse Bayou, rises into the sky one hundred and eighty feet, and has the effect in this flat expanse of a veritable mountain, comparatively a surprise, like Pike's Peak seen from the elevation of Denver. Perhaps nowhere else would a hill of one hundred and eighty feet make such an impression on the mind. Crossing the bayou, where alligators sun themselves and eye with affection the colored people angling at the bridge, and passing a long causeway over the marsh, the firm land of the island is reached. This island, which is a sort of geological puzzle, has a very uneven surface, and is some two and a half miles long by one mile broad. It is a little kingdom in itself, capable of producing in its soil and adjacent waters nearly everything one desires of the necessaries of life. A portion of the island is devoted to a cane plantation and sugar-works; a part of it is covered with forests; and on the lowlands and gentle

slopes, besides thickets of palmetto, are gigantic live-oaks, moss-draped trees monstrous in girth, and towering into the sky with a vast spread of branches. Scarcely anywhere else will one see a nobler growth of these stately trees. In a depression is the famous saltmine, unique in quality and situation in the world. Here is grown and put up the Tobasco pepper; here, amid fields of clover and flowers, a large apiary flourishes. Stones of some value for ornament are found.

Indeed, I should not be surprised at anything turning up there, for I am told that good kaoline has been discovered; and about the residences of the hospitable proprietors roses bloom in abundance, the China-tree blossoms sweetly, and the mocking-bird sings.

But better than all these things I think I like the view from the broad cottage piazzas, and I like it best when the salt breeze is strong enough to sweep away the coast mosquitoes—a most undesirable variety. I do not know another view of its kind for extent and color comparable to that from this hill over the waters seaward. The expanse of luxuriant grass, brown, golden, reddish, in patches, is intersected by a network of bayous, which gleam like silver in the sun, or trail like dark fabulous serpents under a cloudy sky. The scene is limited only by the power of the eye to meet the sky line. Vast and level, it is constantly changing, almost in motion with life; the long grass and weeds run like waves when the wind blows, great shadows of clouds pass on its surface, alternating dark masses with vivid ones of sunlight;

fishing-boats and the masts of schooners creep along the threads of water; when the sun goes down, a red globe of fire in the Gulf mists, all the expanse is warm and ruddy, and the waters sparkle like jewels; and at night, under the great field of stars, marsh fires here and there give a sort of lurid splendor to the scene. In the winter it is a temperate spot, and at all times of the year it is blessed by an invigorating seabreeze.

Those who have enjoyed the charming social life and the unbounded hospitality of the family who inhabit this island may envy them their paradisiacal home, but they would be able to select none others so worthy to enjoy it.

It is said that the Attakapas Indians are shy of this island, having a legend that it was the scene of a great catastrophe to their race. Whether this catastrophe has any connection with the upheaval of the salt mountain I do not know. Many stories are current in this region in regard to the discovery of this deposit. A little over a quarter of a century ago it was unsuspected. The presence of salt in the water of a small spring led somebody to dig in that place, and at the depth of sixteen feet below the surface solid salt was struck. In stripping away the soil several relics of human workmanship came to light, among them stone implements and a woven basket, exactly such as the Attakapas make now. This basket, found at the depth of sixteen feet, lay upon the salt rock, and was in perfect preservation. Half of it can now be seen in the Smithsonian Institution. At the beginning of the war great quantities of salt were taken from this mine for

the use of the Confederacy. But this supply was cut off by the Unionists, who at first sent gunboats up the bayou within shelling distance, and at length occupied it with troops.

The ascertained area of the mine is several acres; the depth of the deposit is unknown. The first shaft was sunk a hundred feet; below this a shaft of seventy feet fails to find any limit to the salt. The excavation is already large. Descending, the visitor enters vast cathedral-like chambers; the sides are solid salt, sparkling with crystals; the floor is solid salt; the roof is solid salt, supported on pillars of salt left by the excavators, forty or perhaps sixty feet square. When the interior is lighted by dynamite the effect is superbly weird and grotesque. The salt is blasted by dynamite, loaded into ears which run on rails to the elevator, hoisted, and distributed into the crushers, and from the crushers directly into the bags for shipment. The crushers differ in crushing capacity, some producing fine and others coarse salt. No bleaching or cleansing process is needed; the salt is almost absolutely pure. Large blocks of it are sent to the Western plains for "cattle licks." The mine is connected by rail with the main line at New Iberia.

Across the marshes and bayous eight miles to the west from Petite Anse Island rises Orange Island, famous for its orange plantation, but called Jefferson Island since it became the property and home of Joseph Jefferson. Not so high as Petite Anse, it is still conspicuous with its crown of dark forest. From a high point on Petite Anse, through a lovely vista of trees, with

flowering cacti in the foreground, Jefferson's house is a white spot in the landscape. We reached it by a circuitous drive of twelve miles over the prairie, sometimes in and sometimes out of the water, and continually diverted from our course by fences. It is a good sign of the thrift of the race, and of its independence, that the colored people have taken up or bought little tracts of thirty or forty acres, put up cabins, and new fences round their domains regardless of the travelling public. We zigzagged all about the country to get round these little enclosures. At one place, where the main road was bad, a thrifty Acadian had set up a toll of twenty-five cents for the privilege of passing through his premises. The scenery was pastoral and pleasing.

There were frequent round ponds, brilliant with lilies and *fleurs-de-lis*, and hundreds of cattle feeding on the prairie or standing in the water, and generally of a dun-color, made always an agreeable picture. The monotony was broken by lines of trees, by cape-like woods stretching into the plain, and the horizon line was always fine. Great variety of birds enlivened the landscape, game birds abounding. There was the lively little nonpareil, which seems to change its color, and is red and green and blue, I believe of the oriole family, the papabotte, a favorite on New Orleans tables in the autumn, snipe, killdee, the cherooke (snipe?), the meadow-lark, and quantities of teal ducks in the ponds. These little ponds are called "bull-holes." The traveller is told that they are started in this watery soil by the pawing of bulls, and gradually enlarged as the cattle frequent them. He

remembers that he has seen similar circular ponds in the North not made by bulls.

Mr. Jefferson's residence—a pretty rose-vine-covered cottage—is situated on the slope of the hill, overlooking a broad plain and a vast stretch of bayou country. Along one side of his home enclosure for a mile runs a superb hedge of Chickasaw roses. On the slope back of the house, and almost embracing it, is a magnificent grove of live-oaks, great gray stems, and the branches hung with heavy masses of moss, which swing in the wind like the pendent boughs of the willow, and with something of its sentimental and mournful suggestion. The recesses of this forest are cool and dark, but upon ascending the hill, suddenly bursts upon the view under the trees a most lovely lake of clear blue water. This lake, which may be a mile long and half a mile broad, is called Lake Peigneur, from its fanciful resemblance, I believe, to a wool-comber. The shores are wooded. On the island side the bank is precipitous; on the opposite shore amid the trees is a hunting-lodge, and I believe there are plantations on the north end, but it is in aspect altogether solitary and peaceful. But the island did not want life. The day was brilliant, with a deep blue sky and high-sailing fleecy clouds, and it seemed a sort of animal holiday: squirrels chattered; cardinal-birds flashed through the green leaves; there flitted about the red-winged blackbird, blue jays, redheaded woodpeckers, thrushes, and occasionally a rain-crow crossed the scene; high overhead sailed the heavy buzzards, describing great aerial circles; and off in the still lake the ugly

heads of alligators were toasting in the sun.

It was very pleasant to sit on the wooded point, enlivened by all this animal activity, looking off upon the lake and the great expanse of marsh, over which came a refreshing breeze. There was great variety of forest-trees. Besides the live-oaks, in one small area I noticed the water-oak, red-oak, pin-oak, the elm, the cypress, the hackberry, and the pecan tree.

This point is a favorite rendezvous for the buzzards. Before I reached it I heard a tremendous whirring in the air, and, lo! there upon the oaks were hundreds and hundreds of buzzards. Upon one dead tree, vast, gaunt, and bleached, they had settled in black masses. When I came near they rose and flew about with clamor and surprise, momentarily obscuring the sunlight. With these unpleasant birds consorted in unclean fellowship numerous long-necked water-turkeys.

Doré would have liked to introduce into one of his melodramatic pictures this helpless dead tree, extending its gray arms loaded with these black scavengers. It needed the blue sky and blue lake to prevent the scene from being altogether uncanny. I remember still the harsh, croaking noise of the buzzards and the water-turkeys when they were disturbed, and the flapping of their funereal wings, and perhaps the alligators lying off in the lake noted it, for they grunted and bellowed a response. But the birds sang merrily, the wind blew softly; there was the repose as of a far country undisturbed by man, and a silvery tone on the water and all the landscape that refined the whole.

If the Acadians can anywhere be seen in the prosperity of their primitive simplicity, I fancy it is in the parish of Vermilion, in the vicinity of Abbeville and on the Bayou Tigre. Here, among the intricate bayous that are their highways and supply them with the poorer sort of fish, and the fair meadows on which their cattle pasture, and where they grow nearly everything their simple habits require, they have for over a century enjoyed a quiet existence, practically undisturbed by the agitations of modern life, ignorant of its progress. History makes their departure from the comparatively bleak meadows of Grand Pré a cruel hardship, if a political necessity. But they made a very fortunate exchange. Nowhere else on the continent could they so well have preserved their primitive habits, or found climate and soil so suited to their humor. Others have exhaustively set forth the history and idiosyncrasies of this peculiar people; it is in my way only to tell what I saw on a spring day.

To reach the heart of this abode of contented and perhaps wise ignorance we took boats early one morning at Petite Anse Island, while the dew was still heavy and the birds were at matins, and rowed down the Petite Anse Bayou. A stranger would surely be lost in these winding, branching, interlacing streams. Evangeline and her lover might have passed each other unknown within hail across these marshes. The party of a dozen people occupied two row-boats. Among them were gentlemen who knew the route, but the reserve of wisdom as to what bayous and cutoffs were navigable was an ancient ex-slave, now a voter, who responded

to the name of "Honorable"—a weather-beaten and weather-wise dandy, a redoubtable fisherman, whose memory extended away beyond the war, and played familiarly about the person of Lafayette, with whom he had been on agreeable terms in Charleston, and who dated his narratives, to our relief, not from the war, but from the year of some great sickness on the coast. From the Petite Anse we entered the Carlin Bayou, and wound through it is needless to say what others in our tortuous course. In the fresh morning, with the salt air, it was a voyage of delight. Mullet were jumping in the glassy stream, perhaps disturbed by the gar-fish, and alligators lazily slid from the reedy banks into the water at our approach. All the marsh was gay with flowers, vast patches of the blue *fleur-de-lis* intermingled with the exquisite white spider-lily, nodding in clusters on long stalks; an amaryllis (pancratium), its pure half-disk fringed with delicate white filaments. The air was vocal with the notes of birds, the nonpareil and the meadow-lark, and most conspicuous of all the handsome boat-tail grackle, a blackbird, which alighted on the slender dead reeds that swayed with his weight as he poured forth his song. Sometimes the bayou narrowed so that it was impossible to row with the oars, and poling was resorted to, and the current was swift and strong. At such passes we saw only the banks with nodding flowers, and the reeds, with the blackbirds singing, against the sky. Again we emerged into placid reaches overhung by gigantic live-oaks and fringed with cypress. It was enchanting. But the way was not quite solitary. Numerous fishing

parties were encountered, boats on their way to the bay, and now and then a party of stalwart men drawing a net in the bayou, their clothes being deposited on the banks. Occasionally a large schooner was seen, tied to the bank or slowly working its way, and on one a whole family was domesticated. There is a good deal of queer life hidden in these bayous.

After passing through a narrow artificial canal, we came into the Bayou Tigre, and landed for breakfast on a greensward, with meadow-land and signs of habitations in the distance, under spreading live-oaks. Under one of the most attractive of these trees, close to the stream, we did not spread our table-cloth and shawls, because a large moccason snake was seen to glide under the roots, and we did not know but that his modesty was assumed, and he might join the breakfast party. It is said that these snakes never attack any one who has kept all the ten commandments from his youth up. Cardinal-birds made the wood gay for us while we breakfasted, and we might have added plenty of partridges to our *menu* if we had been armed.

Resuming our voyage, we presently entered the inhabited part of the bayou, among cultivated fields, and made our first call on the Thibodeaux. They had been expecting us, and Andonia came down to the landing to welcome us, and with a formal, pretty courtesy led the way to the house. Does the reader happen to remember, say in New England, say fifty years ago, the sweetest maiden lady in the village, prim, staid, full of kindness, the proportions of the figure never quite developed, with a row of

small corkscrew curls about her serene forehead, and all the juices of life that might have overflowed into the life of others somehow withered into the sweetness of her wistful face? Yes; a little timid and appealing, and yet trustful, and in a scant, quaint gown? Well, Andonia was never married, and she had such curls, and a high-waisted gown, and a kerchief folded across her breast; and when she spoke, it was in the language of France as it is rendered in Acadia.

The house, like all in this region, stands upon blocks of wood, is in appearance a frame house, but the walls between timbers are of concrete mixed with moss, and the same inside as out. It had no glass in tin windows, which were closed with solid shutters. Upon the rough walls were hung sacred pictures and other crudely colored prints. The furniture was rude and apparently home-made, and the whole interior was as painfully neat as a Dutch parlor. Even the beams overhead and ceiling had been scrubbed. Andonia showed us with a blush of pride her neat little sleeping-room, with its souvenirs of affection, and perhaps some of the dried flowers of a possible romance, and the ladies admired the finely woven white counterpane on the bed. Andonia's married sister was a large, handsome woman, smiling and prosperous. There were children and, I think, a baby about, besides Mr. Thibodeaux. Nothing could exceed the kindly manner of these people. Andonia showed us how they card, weave, and spin the cotton out of which then-blankets and the jean for their clothing are made. They use the old-fashioned

hand-cards, spin on a little wheel with a foot-treadle, have the most primitive warping-bars, and weave most laboriously on a rude loom. But the cloth they make will wear forever, and the colors they use are all fast. It is a great pleasure, we might almost say shock, to encounter such honest work in these times. The Acadians grow a yellow or nankeen sort of cotton which, without requiring any dye, is woven into a handsome yellow stuff. When we departed Andonia slipped into the door-yard, and returned with a rose for each of us. I fancied she was loath to have us go, and that the visit was an event in the monotony of her single life.

Embarking again on the placid stream, we moved along through a land of peace. The houses of the Acadians are scattered along the bayou at considerable distances apart. The voyager seems to be in an unoccupied country, when suddenly the turn of the stream shows him a farm-house, with its little landing-wharf, boats, and perhaps a schooner moored at the bank, and behind it cultivated fields and a fringe of trees. In the blossoming time of the year, when the birds are most active, these scenes are idyllic. At a bend in the bayou, where a tree sent its horizontal trunk half across it, we made our next call, at the house of Mr Vallet, a large frame house, and evidently the abode of a man of means. The house was ceiled outside and inside with native woods. As usual in this region, the premises were not as orderly as those about some Northern farm-houses, but the interior of the house was spotlessly clean, and in its polish and barrenness of ornament and of appliances of comfort suggested a Brittany home, while its

openness and the broad veranda spoke of a genial climate. Our call here was brief, for a sick man, very ill, they said, lay in the front room—a stranger who had been overtaken with fever, and was being cared for by these kind-hearted people.

Other calls were made—this visiting by boat recalls Venice—but the end of our voyage was the plantation of Simonette Le Blanc, a sturdy old man, a sort of patriarch in this region, the centre of a very large family of sons, daughters, and grandchildren. The residence, a rambling story-and-a-half house, grown by accretions as more room was needed, calls for no comment. It was all very plain, and contained no books, nor any adornments except some family photographs, the poor work of a travelling artist. But in front, on the bayou, Mr. Le Blanc had erected a grand ballroom, which gave an air of distinction to the place. This hall, which had benches along the wall, and at one end a high dais for the fiddlers, and a little counter where the gombo filé (the common refreshment) is served, had an air of gayety by reason of engravings cut from the illustrated papers, and was shown with some pride. Here neighborhood dances take place once in two weeks, and a grand ball was to come off on Easter-Sunday night, to which we were urgently invited to come.

Simonette Le Blanc, with several of his sons, had returned at midnight from an expedition to Vermilion Bay, where they had been camping for a couple of weeks, fishing and taking oysters. Working the schooner through the bayou at night had been fatiguing, and then there was supper, and all the news of the

fortnight to be talked over, so that it was four o'clock before the house was at rest, but neither the hale old man nor his stalwart sons seemed the worse for the adventure. Such trips are not uncommon, for these people seem to have leisure for enjoyment, and vary the toil of the plantation with the pleasures of fishing and lazy navigation. But to the women and the home-stayers this was evidently an event. The men had been to the outer world, and brought back with them the gossip of the bayous and the simple incidents of the camping life on the coast. "There was a great deal to talk over that had happened in a fortnight," said Simonette—he and one of his sons spoke English. I do not imagine that the talk was about politics, or any of the events that seem important in other portions of the United States, only the faintest echoes of which ever reach this secluded place. This is a purely domestic and patriarchal community, where there are no books to bring in agitating doubts, and few newspapers to disquiet the nerves. The only matter of politics broached was in regard to an appropriation by Congress to improve a cut-off between two bayous. So far as I could learn, the most intelligent of these people had no other interest in or concern about the Government. There is a neighborhood school where English is taught, but no church nearer than Abbeville, six miles away. I should not describe the population as fanatically religious, nor a churchgoing one except on special clays. But by all accounts it is moral, orderly, sociable, fond of dancing, thrifty, and conservative.

The Acadians are fond of their homes. It is not the fashion

for the young people to go away to better their condition. Few young men have ever been as far from home as New Orleans; they marry young, and settle down near the homestead. Mr. Le Blanc has a colony of his descendants about him, within hail from his door. It must be large, and his race must be prolific, judging by the number of small children who gathered at the homestead to have a sly peep at the strangers. They took small interest in the war, and it had few attractions for them. The conscription carried away many of their young men, but I am told they did not make very good soldiers, not because they were not stalwart and brave, but because they were so intolerably homesick that they deserted whenever they had a chance. The men whom we saw were most of them fine athletic fellows, with honest, dark, sun-browned faces; some of the children were very pretty, but the women usually showed the effects of isolation and toil, and had the common plainness of French peasants. They are a self-supporting community, raise their own cotton, corn, and sugar, and for the most part manufacture their own clothes and articles of household use. Some of the cotton jeans, striped with blue, indigo-dyed, made into garments for men and women, and the blankets, plain yellow (from the native nankeen cotton), curiously clouded, are very pretty and serviceable. Further than that their habits of living are simple, and their ways primitive, I saw few eccentricities. The peculiarity of this community is in its freedom from all the hurry and worry and information of our modern life. I have read that the gallants train their little horses to prance

and curvet and rear and fidget about, and that these are called "courtin' horses," and are used when a young man goes courting, to impress his mistress with his manly horsemanship. I have seen these horses perform under the saddle, but I was not so fortunate as to see any courting going on.

In their given as well as their family names these people are classical and peculiar. I heard, of men, the names L'Odias, Peigneur, Niolas, Elias, Homère, Lemaire, and of women, Emilite, Ségoura, Antoinette, Clarise, Elia.

We were very hospitably entertained by the Le Blancs. On our arrival tiny cups of black coffee were handed round, and later a drink of syrup and water, which some of the party sipped with a sickly smile of enjoyment. Before dinner we walked up to the bridge over the bayou on the road leading to Abbeville, where there is a little cluster of houses, a small country store, and a closed drug-shop—the owner of which had put up his shutters and gone to a more unhealthy region. Here is a fine grove of oaks, and from the bridge we had in view a grand sweep of prairie, with trees, single and in masses, which made with the winding silvery stream a very pleasing picture. We sat down to a dinner—the women waiting on the table—of gombo file, fried oysters, eggs, sweet-potatoes (the delicious saccharine, sticky sort), with syrup out of a bottle served in little saucers, and afterwards black coffee. We were sincerely welcome to whatever the house contained, and when we departed the whole family, and indeed all the neighborhood, accompanied us to our boats, and we went

away down the stream with a chorus of adieus and good wishes.

We were watching for a hail from the Thibodeaux. The doors and shutters were closed, and the mansion seemed blank and forgetful. But as we came opposite the landing, there stood Andonia, faithful, waving her handkerchief. Ah me!

We went home gayly and more swiftly, current and tide with us, though a little pensive, perhaps, with too much pleasure and the sunset effects on the wide marshes through which we voyaged. Cattle wander at will over these marshes, and are often stalled and lost. We saw some pitiful sights. The cattle venturing too near the boggy edge to drink become inextricably involved. We passed an ox sunken to his back, and dead; a cow frantically struggling in the mire, almost exhausted, and a cow and calf, the mother dead, the calf moaning beside her. On a cattle lookout near by sat three black buzzards surveying the prospect with hungry eyes.

When we landed and climbed the hill, and from the rose-embowered veranda looked back over the strange land we had sailed through, away to Bayou Tigre, where the red sun was setting, we felt that we had been in a country that is not of this world.

VI.—THE SOUTH REVISITED, IN 1887

In speaking again of the South in Harper's Monthly, after an interval of about two years, and as before at the request of the editor, I said, I shrink a good deal from the appearance of forwardness which a second paper may seem to give to observations which have the single purpose of contributing my mite towards making the present spirit of the Southern people, their progress in industries and in education, their aspirations, better known. On the other hand, I have no desire to escape the imputation of a warm interest in the South, and of a belief that its development and prosperity are essential to the greatness and glory of the nation. Indeed, no one can go through the South, with his eyes open, without having his patriotic fervor quickened and broadened, and without increased pride in the republic.

We are one people. Different traditions, different education or the lack of it, the demoralizing curse of slavery, different prejudices, made us look at life from irreconcilable points of view; but the prominent common feature, after all, is our Americanism. In any assembly of gentlemen from the two sections the resemblances are greater than the differences. A score of times I have heard it said, "We look alike, talk alike, feel alike; how strange it is we should have fought!" Personal contact

always tends to remove prejudices, and to bring into prominence the national feeling, the race feeling, the human nature common to all of us.

I wish to give as succinctly as I can the general impressions of a recent six weeks' tour, made by a company of artists and writers, which became known as the "Harper party," through a considerable portion of the South, including the cities of Lynchburg, Richmond, Danville, Atlanta, Augusta (with a brief call at Charleston and Columbia, for it was not intended to take in the eastern seaboard on this trip), Knoxville, Chattanooga, South Pittsburg, Nashville, Birmingham, Montgomery, Pensacola, Mobile, New Orleans, Baton Rouge, Vicksburg, Memphis, Louisville. Points of great interest were necessarily omitted in a tour which could only include representatives of the industrial and educational development of the New South. Naturally we were thrown more with business men and with educators than with others; that is, with those who are actually making the New South; but we saw something of social life, something of the homes and mode of living of every class, and we had abundant opportunities of conversation with whites and blacks of every social grade and political affinity. The Southern people were anxious to show us what they were doing, and they expressed their sentiments with entire frankness; if we were misled, it is our own fault. It must be noted, however, in estimating the value of our observations, that they were mainly made in cities and large villages, and little in the country districts.

Inquiries in the South as to the feeling of the North show that there is still left some misapprehension of the spirit in which the North sent out its armies, though it is beginning to be widely understood that the North was not animated by hatred of the South, but by intense love of the Union. On the other hand, I have no doubt there still lingers in the North a little misapprehension of the present feeling of the Southern people about the Union. It arises from a confusion of two facts which it is best to speak of plainly. Everybody knows that the South is heartily glad that slavery is gone, and that a new era of freedom has set in. Everybody who knows the South at all is aware that any idea of any renewal of the strife, now or at any time, is nowhere entertained, even as a speculation, and that to the women especially, who are said to be first in war, last in peace, and first in the hearts of their countrymen, the idea of war is a subject of utter loathing. The two facts to which I refer are the loyalty of the Southern whites to the Union, and their determination to rule in domestic affairs. Naturally there are here and there soreness and some bitterness over personal loss and ruin, life-long grief, maybe, over lost illusions—the observer who remembers what human nature is wonders that so little of this is left—but the great fact is that the South is politically loyal to the Union of the States, that the sentiment for its symbol is growing into a deep reality which would flame out in passion under any foreign insult, and that nationality, pride in the republic, is everywhere strong and prominent. It is hardly

necessary to say this, but it needs to be emphasized when the other fact is dwelt on, namely, the denial of free suffrage to the colored man. These two things are confused, and this confusion is the source of much political misunderstanding. Often when a Southern election “outrage” is telegraphed, when intimidation or fraud is revealed, it is said in print, “So that is Southern loyalty!” In short, the political treatment of the negro is taken to be a sign of surviving war feeling, if not of a renewed purpose of rebellion. In this year of grace 1887 the two things have no isolation to each other. It would be as true to say that election frauds and violence to individuals and on the ballot-box in Cincinnati are signs of hatred of the Union and of Union men, as that a suppressed negro vote at the South, by adroit management or otherwise, is indication of remaining hostility to the Union. In the South it is sometimes due to the same depraved party spirit that causes frauds in the North—the determination of a party to get or keep the upper-hand at all hazards; but it is, in its origin and generally, simply the result of the resolution of the majority of the brains and property of the South to govern the cities and the States, and in the Southern mind this is perfectly consistent with entire allegiance to the Government. I could name men who were abettors of what is called the “shotgun policy” whose national patriotism is beyond question, and who are warm promoters of negro education and the improvement of the condition of the colored people.

We might as well go to the bottom of this state of things,

and look it squarely in the face. Under reconstruction, sometimes owing to a tardy acceptance of the new conditions by the ruling class, the State governments and the municipalities fell under the control of ignorant colored people, guided by unscrupulous white adventurers. States and cities were prostrate under the heel of ignorance and fraud, crushed with taxes, and no improvements to show for them. It was ruin on the way to universal bankruptcy. The regaining of power by the intelligent and the property owners was a question of civilization. The situation was intolerable. There is no Northern community that would have submitted to it; if it could not have been changed by legal process, it would have been upset by revolution, as it was at the South. Recognizing as we must the existence of race prejudice and pride, it was nevertheless a struggle for existence. The methods resorted to were often violent, and being sweeping, carried injustice. To be a Republican, in the eyes of those smarting under carpet-bag *government* and the rule of the ignorant lately enfranchised, was to be identified with the detested carpetbag government and with negro rule. The Southern Unionist and the Northern emigrant, who justly regarded the name Republican as the proudest they could bear, identified as it was with the preservation of the Union and the national credit, could not show their Republican principles at the polls without personal danger in the country and social ostracism in the cities. Social ostracism on account of politics even outran social ostracism on account of participation in the education of the negroes. The very men who would say, "I

respect a man who fought for the Union more than a Northern Copperhead, and if I had lived North, no doubt I should have gone with my section," would at the same time say, or think, "But you cannot be a Republican down here now, for to be that is to identify yourself with the party here that is hostile to everything in life that is dear to us." This feeling was intensified by the memories of the war, but it was in a measure distinct from the war feeling, and it lived on when the latter grew weak, and it still survives in communities perfectly loyal to the Union, glad that slavery is ended, and sincerely desirous of the establishment and improvement of public education for colored and white alike.

Any tampering with the freedom of the ballot-box in a republic, no matter what the provocation, is dangerous; the methods used to regain white ascendancy were speedily adopted for purely party purposes and factional purposes; the chicanery, even the violence, employed to render powerless the negro and "carpetbag" vote were freely used by partisans in local elections against each other, and in time became means of preserving party and ring ascendancy. Thoughtful men South as well as North recognize the vital danger to popular government if voting and the ballot-box are not sacredly protected. In a recent election in Texas, in a district where, I am told, the majority of the inhabitants are white, and the majority of the whites are Republicans, and the majority of the colored voters voted the Republican ticket, and greatly the larger proportion of the wealth and business of the district are in Republican hands, there was

an election row; ballot-boxes were destroyed in several precincts, persons killed on both sides, and leading Republicans driven out of the State. This is barbarism. If the case is substantiated as stated, that in the district it was not a question of race ascendancy, but of party ascendancy, no fair-minded man in the South can do otherwise than condemn it, for under such conditions not only is a republican form of government impossible, but development and prosperity are impossible.

For this reason, and because separation of voters on class lines is always a peril, it is my decided impression that throughout the South, though not by everybody, a breaking up of the solidarity of the South would be welcome; that is to say, a breaking up of both the negro and the white vote, and the reforming upon lines of national and economic policy, as in the old days of Whig and Democrat, and liberty of free action in all local affairs, without regard to color or previous party relations. There are politicians who would preserve a solid South, or as a counterpart a solid North, for party purposes. But the sense of the country, the perception of business men North and South, is that this condition of politics interferes with the free play of industrial development, with emigration, investment of capital, and with that untrammelled agitation and movement in society which are the life of prosperous States.

Let us come a little closer to the subject, dealing altogether with facts, and not with opinions. The Republicans of the North protest against the injustice of an increased power in the Lower

House and in the Electoral College based upon a vote which is not represented. It is a valid protest in law; there is no answer to it. What is the reply to it? The substance of hundreds of replies to it is that "we dare not let go so long as the negroes all vote together, regardless of local considerations or any economic problems whatever; we are in danger of a return to a rule of ignorance that was intolerable, and as long as you wave the bloody shirt at the North, which means to us a return to that rule, the South will be solid." The remark made by one man of political prominence was perhaps typical: "The waving of the bloody shirt suits me exactly as a political game; we should have hard work to keep our State Democratic if you did not wave it." So the case stands. The Republican party will always insist on freedom, not only of political opinion, but of action, in every part of the Union; and the South will keep "solid" so long as it fears, or so long as politicians can persuade it to fear, the return of the late disastrous domination. And recognizing this fact, and speaking in the interest of no party, but only in that of better understanding and of the prosperity of the whole country, I cannot doubt that the way out of most of our complications is in letting the past drop absolutely, and addressing ourselves with sympathy and good-will all around to the great economical problems and national issues. And I believe that in this way also lies the speediest and most permanent good to the colored as well as the white population of the South.

There has been a great change in the aspect of the South and

in its sentiment within two years; or perhaps it would be more correct to say that the change maturing for fifteen years is more apparent in a period of comparative rest from race or sectional agitation. The educational development is not more marvellous than the industrial, and both are unparalleled in history. Let us begin by an illustration.

I stood one day before an assembly of four hundred pupils of a colored college—called a college, but with a necessary preparatory department—children and well-grown young women and men. The buildings are fine, spacious, not inferior to the best modern educational buildings either in architectural appearance or in interior furnishing, with scientific apparatus, a library, the appliances approved by recent experience in teaching, with admirable methods and discipline, and an accomplished corps of instructors. The scholars were neat, orderly, intelligent in appearance. As I stood for a moment or two looking at their bright expectant faces the profound significance of the spectacle and the situation came over me, and I said: “I wonder if you know what you are doing, if you realize what this means. Here you are in a school the equal of any of its grade in the land, with better methods of instruction than prevailed anywhere when I was a boy, with the gates of all knowledge opened as freely to you as to any youth in the land—here, in this State, where only about twenty years ago it was a misdemeanor, punishable with fine and imprisonment, to teach a colored person to read and write. And I am brought here to

see this fine school, as one of the best things he can show me in the city, by a Confederate colonel. Not in all history is there any instance of a change like this in a quarter of a century: no, not in one nor in two hundred years. It seems incredible.”

This is one of the schools instituted and sustained by Northern friends of the South; but while it exhibits the capacity of the colored people for education, it is not so significant in the view we are now taking of the New South as the public schools. Indeed, next to the amazing industrial change in the South, nothing is so striking as the interest and progress in the matter of public schools. In all the cities we visited the people were enthusiastic about their common schools. It was a common remark, “I suppose we have one of the best school systems in the country.” There is a wholesome rivalry to have the best. We found everywhere the graded system and the newest methods of teaching in vogue. In many of the primary rooms in both white and colored schools, when I asked if these little children knew the alphabet when they came to school, the reply was, “Not generally we prefer they should not; we use the new method of teaching words.” In many schools the youngest pupils were taught to read music by sight, and to understand its notation by exercises on the blackboard. In the higher classes generally, the instruction in arithmetic, in reading, in geography, in history, and in literature was wholly in the modern method. In some of the geography classes and in the language classes I was reminded of the drill in the German schools. In all the cities, as far as I could learn, the

public money was equally distributed to the colored and to the white schools, and the number of schools bore a just proportion to the number of the two races. When the town was equally divided in population, the number of pupils in the colored schools was about the same as the number in the white schools. There was this exception: though provision was made for a high-school to terminate the graded for both colors, the number in the colored high-school department was usually very small; and the reason given by colored and white teachers was that the colored children had not yet worked up to it. The colored people prefer teachers of their own race, and they are quite generally employed; but many of the colored schools have white teachers, and generally, I think, with better results, although I saw many thoroughly good colored teachers, and one or two colored classes under them that compared favorably with any white classes of the same grade.

The great fact, however, is that the common-school system has become a part of Southern life, is everywhere accepted as a necessity, and usually money is freely voted to sustain it. But practically, as an efficient factor in civilization, the system is yet undeveloped in the country districts. I can only speak from personal observation of the cities, but the universal testimony was that the common schools in the country for both whites and blacks are poor. Three months' schooling in the year is about the rule, and that of a slack and inferior sort, under incompetent teachers. In some places the colored people complain that ignorant teachers are put over them, who are chosen simply on

political considerations. More than one respectable colored man told me that he would not send his children to such schools, but combined with a few others to get them private instruction. The colored people are more dependent on public schools than the whites, for while there are vast masses of colored people in city and country who have neither the money nor the disposition to sustain schools, in all the large places the whites are able to have excellent private schools, and do have them. Scarcely anywhere can the colored people as yet have a private school without white aid from somewhere. At the present rate of progress, and even of the increase of tax-paying ability, it must be a long time before the ignorant masses, white and black, in the country districts, scattered over a wide area, can have public schools at all efficient. The necessity is great. The danger to the State of ignorance is more and more apprehended; and it is upon this that many of the best men of the South base their urgent appeal for temporary aid from the Federal Government for public schools. It is seen that a State cannot soundly prosper unless its laborers are to some degree intelligent. This opinion is shown in little things. One of the great planters of the Yazoo Delta told me that he used to have no end of trouble in settling with his hands. But now that numbers of them can read and cipher, and explain the accounts to the others, lie never has the least trouble.

One cannot speak too highly of the private schools in the South, especially of those for young women. I do not know what they were before the war, probably mainly devoted to

“accomplishments,” as most of girls’ schools in the North were. Now most of them are wider in range, thorough in discipline, excellent in all the modern methods. Some of them, under accomplished women, are entirely in line with the best in the country. Before leaving this general subject of education, it is necessary to say that the advisability of industrial training, as supplementary to book-learning, is growing in favor, and that in some colored schools it is tried with good results.

When we come to the New Industrial South the change is marvellous, and so vast and various that I scarcely know where to begin in a short paper that cannot go much into details. Instead of a South devoted to agriculture and politics, we find a South wide awake to business, excited and even astonished at the development of its own immense resources in metals, marbles, coal, timber, fertilizers, eagerly laying lines of communication, rapidly opening mines, building furnaces, founderies, and all sorts of shops for utilizing the native riches. It is like the discovery of a new world. When the Northerner finds great founderies in Virginia using only (with slight exceptions) the products of Virginia iron and coal mines; when he finds Alabama and Tennessee making iron so good and so cheap that it finds ready market in Pennsylvania, and founderies multiplying near the great furnaces for supplying Northern markets; when he finds cotton-mills running to full capacity on grades of cheap cottons universally in demand throughout the South and South-west; when he finds small industries, such as paper-box factories and

wooden bucket and tub factories, sending all they can make into the North and widely over the West; when he sees the loads of most beautiful marbles shipped North; when he learns that some of the largest and most important engines and mill machinery were made in Southern shops; when he finds in Richmond a “pole locomotive,” made to run on logs laid end to end, and drag out from Michigan forests and Southern swamps lumber hitherto inaccessible; when he sees worn-out highlands in Georgia and Carolina bear more cotton than ever before by help of a fertilizer the base of which is the cotton-seed itself (worth more as a fertilizer than it was before the oil was extracted from it); when he sees a multitude of small shops giving employment to men, women, and children who never had any work of that sort to do before; and when he sees Roanoke iron cast in Richmond into car-irons, and returned to a car-factory in Roanoke which last year sold three hundred cars to the New York and New England Railroad—he begins to open his eyes. The South is manufacturing a great variety of things needed in the house, on the farm, and in the shops, for home consumption, and already sends to the North and West several manufactured products. With iron, coal, timber contiguous and easily obtained, the amount sent out is certain to increase as the labor becomes more skilful. The most striking industrial development today is in iron, coal, lumber, and marbles; the more encouraging for the self-sustaining life of the Southern people is the multiplication of small industries in nearly every city I visited.

When I have been asked what impressed me most in this hasty tour, I have always said that the most notable thing was that everybody was at work. In many cities this was literally true: every man, woman, and child was actively employed, and in most there were fewer idlers than in many Northern towns. There are, of course, slow places, antiquated methods, easy-going ways, a-hundred-years-behind-the-time makeshifts, but the spirit in all the centres, and leavening the whole country, is work. Perhaps the greatest revolution of all in Southern sentiment is in regard to the dignity of labor. Labor is honorable, made so by the example of the best in the land. There are, no doubt, fossils or Bourbons, sitting in the midst of the ruins of their estates, martyrs to an ancient pride; but usually the leaders in business and enterprise bear names well known in politics and society. The nonsense that it is beneath the dignity of any man or woman to work for a living is pretty much eliminated from the Southern mind. It still remains true that the Anglo-Saxon type is prevalent in the South; but in all the cities the business sign-boards show that the enterprising Hebrew is increasingly prominent as merchant and trader, and he is becoming a plantation owner as well.

It cannot be too strongly impressed upon the public mind that the South, to use a comprehensible phrase, "has joined the procession." Its mind is turned to the development of its resources, to business, to enterprise, to education, to economic problems; it is marching with the North in the same purpose of wealth by industry. It is true that the railways, mines, and

furnaces could not have been without enormous investments of Northern capital, but I was continually surprised to find so many and important local industries the result solely of home capital, made and saved since the war.

In this industrial change, in the growth of manufactures, the Southern people are necessarily divided on the national economic problems. Speaking of it purely from the side of political economy and not of politics, great sections of the South—whole States, in fact—are becoming more in favor of “protection” every day. All theories aside, whenever a man begins to work up the raw material at hand into manufactured articles for the market, he thinks that the revenue should be so adjusted as to help and not to hinder him.

Underlying everything else is the negro problem. It is the most difficult ever given to a people to solve.

It must, under our Constitution, be left to the States concerned, and there is a general hopefulness that time and patience will solve it to the advantage of both races. The negro is generally regarded as the best laborer in the world, and there is generally goodwill towards him, desire that he shall be educated and become thrifty. The negro has more confidence now than formerly in the white man, and he will go to him for aid and advice in everything except politics. Again and again colored men said to me, “If anybody tells you that any considerable number of colored men are Democrats, don’t you believe him; it is not so.” The philanthropist who goes South will find many things to

encourage him, but if he knows the colored people thoroughly, he will lose many illusions. But to speak of things hopeful, the progress in education, in industry, in ability to earn money, is extraordinary—much greater than ought to have been expected in twenty years even by their most sanguine friends, and it is greater now than at any other period. They are generally well paid, according to the class of work they do. Usually I found the same wages for the same class of work as whites received. I cannot say how this is in remote country districts. The treatment of laborers depends, I have no doubt, as elsewhere, upon the nature of the employer. In some districts I heard that the negroes never got out of debt, never could lay up anything, and were in a very bad condition. But on some plantations certainly, and generally in the cities, there is an improvement in thrift shown in the ownership of bits of land and houses, and in the possession of neat and pretty homes. As to morals, the gain is slower, but it is discernible, and exhibited in a growing public opinion against immorality and lax family relations. He is no friend to the colored people who blinks this subject, and does not plainly say to them that their position as citizens in the enjoyment of all civil rights depends quite as much upon their personal virtue and their acquiring habits of thrift as it does upon school privileges.

I had many interesting talks with representative colored men in different sections. While it is undoubtedly true that more are indifferent to politics than formerly, owing to causes already named and to the unfulfilled promises of wheedling politicians,

it would be untrue to say that there is not great soreness over the present situation. At Nashville I had an interview with eight or ten of the best colored citizens, men of all shades of color. One of them was a trusted clerk in the post-office; another was a mail agent, who had saved money, and made more by an investment in Birmingham; another was a lawyer of good practice in the courts, a man of decided refinement and cultivation; another was at the head of one of the leading transportation lines in the city, and another had the largest provision establishment in town, and both were men of considerable property; and another, a slave when the war ended, was a large furniture dealer, and reputed worth a hundred thousand dollars. They were all solid, sensible business men, and all respected as citizens. They talked most intelligently of politics, and freely about social conditions. In regard to voting in Tennessee there was little to complain of; but in regard to Mississippi, as an illustration, it was an outrage that the dominant party had increased power in Congress and in the election of President, while the colored Republican vote did not count. What could they do? Some said that probably nothing could be done; time must be left to cure the wrong. Others wanted the Federal Government to interfere, at least to the extent of making a test case on some member of Congress that his election was illegal. They did not think that need excite anew any race prejudice. As to exciting race and sectional agitation, we discussed this question: whether the present marvellous improvement of the colored people, with

general good-will, or at least a truce everywhere, would not be hindered by anything like a race or class agitation; that is to say, whether under the present conditions of education and thrift the colored people (whatever injustice they felt) were not going on faster towards the realization of all they wanted than would be possible under any circumstances of adverse agitation. As a matter of policy most of them assented to this. I put this question: "In the first reconstruction days, how many colored men were there in the State of Mississippi fitted either by knowledge of letters, law, political economy, history, or politics to make laws for the State?" Very few. Well then, it was unfortunate that they should have attempted it. There are more to-day, and with education and the accumulation of property the number will constantly increase. In a republic, power usually goes with intelligence and property.

Finally I asked this intelligent company, every man of which stood upon his own ability in perfect self-respect, "What do you want here in the way of civil rights that you have not?" The reply from one was that he got the respect of the whites just as he was able to command it by his ability and by making money, and, with a touch of a sense of injustice, he said he had ceased to expect that the colored race would get it in any other way. Another reply was—and this was evidently the deep feeling of all: "We want to be treated like men, like anybody else, regardless of color. We don't mean by this social equality at all; that is a matter that regulates itself among whites and colored people everywhere.

We want the public conveyances open to us according to the fare we pay; we want privilege to go to hotels and to theatres, operas and places of amusement. We wish you could see our families and the way we live; you would then understand that we cannot go to the places assigned us in concerts and theatres without loss of self-respect." I might have said, but I did not, that the question raised by this last observation is not a local one, but as wide as the world.

If I tried to put in a single sentence the most widespread and active sentiment in the South to-day, it would be this: The past is put behind us; we are one with the North in business and national ambition: we want a sympathetic recognition of this fact.

VII.—A FAR AND FAIR COUNTRY

Lewis and Clarke, sent out by Mr. Jefferson in 1804 to discover the North-west by the route of the Missouri River, left the town of St. Charles early in the spring, sailed and poled and dragged their boats up the swift, turbulent, and treacherous stream all summer, wintered with the Mandan Indians, and reached the Great Falls of the Missouri in about a year and a quarter from the beginning of their voyage. Now, when we wish to rediscover this interesting country, which is still virgin land, we lay down a railway-track in the spring and summer, and go over there in the autumn in a palace-car—a much more expeditious and comfortable mode of exploration.

In beginning a series of observations and comments upon Western life it is proper to say that the reader is not to expect exhaustive statistical statements of growth or development, nor descriptions, except such as will illustrate the point of view taken of the making of the Great West. Materialism is the most obtrusive feature of a cursory observation, but it does not interest one so much as the forces that underlie it, the enterprise and the joyousness of conquest and achievement that it stands for, or the finer processes evolved in the marvellous building up of new societies. What is the spirit, what is the civilization of the West? I have not the presumption to expect to answer these large questions to any one's satisfaction—least of all to my own

—but if I may be permitted to talk about them familiarly, in the manner that one speaks to his friends of what interested him most in a journey, and with flexibility in passing from one topic to another, I shall hope to contribute something to a better understanding between the territories of a vast empire. How vast this republic is, no one can at all appreciate who does not actually travel over its wide areas. To many of us the West is still the West of the geographies of thirty years ago; it is the simple truth to say that comparatively few Eastern people have any adequate conception of what lies west of Chicago and St. Louis: perhaps a hazy geographical notion of it, but not the faintest idea of its civilization and society. Now, a good understanding of each other between the great sections of the republic is politically of the first importance. We shall hang together as a nation; blood, relationship, steel rails, navigable waters, trade, absence of natural boundaries, settle that. We shall pull and push and grumble, we shall vituperate each other, parties will continue to make capital out of sectional prejudice, and wantonly inflame it (what a pitiful sort of “politics” that is!), but we shall stick together like wax. Still, anything like smooth working of our political machine depends upon good understanding between sections. And the remark applies to East and West as well as to North and South. It is a common remark at the West that “Eastern people know nothing about us; they think us half civilized and there is mingled with slight irritability at this ignorance a waxing feeling of superiority over the East in force

and power.” One would not say that repose as yet goes along with this sense of great capacity and great achievement; indeed, it is inevitable that in a condition of development and of quick growth unparalleled in the history of the world there should be abundant self-assertion and even monumental boastfulness.

When the Western man goes East he carries the consciousness of playing a great part in the making of an empire; his horizon is large; but he finds himself surrounded by an atmosphere of indifference or non-comprehension of the prodigiousness of his country, of incredulity as to the refinement and luxury of his civilization; and self-assertion is his natural defence. This longitudinal incredulity and swagger is a curious phenomenon. London thinks New York puts on airs, New York complains of Chicago’s want of modesty, Chicago can see that Kansas City and Omaha are aggressively boastful, and these cities acknowledge the expansive self-appreciation of Denver and Helena.

Does going West work a radical difference in a man’s character? Hardly. We are all cut out of the same piece of cloth. The Western man is the Eastern or the Southern man let loose, with his leading-strings cut. But the change of situation creates immense diversity in interests and in spirit. One has but to take up any of the great newspapers, say in St. Paul or Minneapolis, to be aware that he is in another world of ideas, of news, of interests. The topics that most interest the East he does not find there, nor much of its news. Persons of whom he reads daily

in the East drop out of sight, and other persons, magnates in politics, packing, railways, loom up. It takes columns to tell the daily history of places which have heretofore only caught the attention of the Eastern reader for freaks of the thermometer, and he has an opportunity to read daily pages about Dakota, concerning which a weekly paragraph has formerly satisfied his curiosity. Before he can be absorbed in these lively and intelligent newspapers he must change the whole current of his thoughts, and take up other subjects, persons, and places than those that have occupied his mind. He is in a new world.

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