

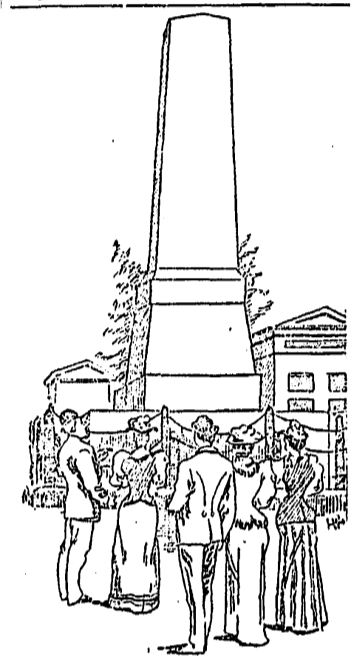
# HOMES OF THE DEAD.

Where Rest in New Orleans Cemeteries

The Remains of Distinguished Men.

Objects of great interest in our city at this season of the year are our cemeteries, and thoughts are with those lately or long since passed away.

The All Saints' day festival and its observances in New Orleans are as peculiar to this city, so far, at least, as the United States are concerned, as are her cemeteries. No such cemeteries are to be found anywhere in our country. Everywhere else the custom obtains of burying the dead underground. Here and there in the burial places of the larger cities you may see elaborate tombs, but as a rule these are merely monumental in their nature, and inside or under them the bodies are placed in graves excavated in the ground. One of the first feelings of a stranger as he walks amid the crowded tombs of our cemeteries, and realizes that the dead are not placed in the bosom of Mother Earth, is a sensation of revulsion, as though they could not rest easy in these upper air tombs. Of course, one soon understands that an underground sepulcher is practically impossible here, and that to be buried decently at all, one must be placed in a tomb; and most people soon come to think that such burial is more fitting than an underground sepulcher. It is as though our dead were nearer to us. They are not consigned to worms, and darkness, and decay, and all the dismal associations of the grave; they lie each in his narrow house, built as handsomely as our affection dictates and our means allow, where we feel that we can get closer to them, and that they are more really with us.



CHIEF JUSTICE MARTIN'S TOMB, ST. LOUIS CEMETERY.

Perhaps it is this that makes the All Saints' day observance so much more deep and general here than anywhere else in our land. It certainly is so. In other American cities you may find handsome and costlier cemeteries, magnificent cities of the dead, laid out with the most artistic skill, ornamented with mortuary monuments of extravagant cost, and kept with assiduous care, but in none of them can you find at any time such an outpouring of the population as our cemeteries witness at All Saints' day.

Going through them you will find here and there recently bereaved widows and orphans, like the sisters of Lazarus in the Gospel, "going to the grave to weep there," or to bear some floral memento of unextinguished love; you will see groups of visitors idly strolling from one rich monument to another curiously to gaze and wonder, or perchance to amuse themselves looking for grotesque inscriptions; but nowhere will you find, as here, a whole city with one consent turning out to visit the tombs of those whom they have loved and honored, to recall their names and virtues, to breathe a prayer for their happiness, and to leave some mark of affectionate remembrance.



GENERAL HOOD'S TOMB, WASHINGTON CEMETERY.

It is a universal custom observed by all classes and conditions, Catholics and Protestants, Gentiles and Jews, rich and poor, white and black, all with one consent devote All Saints' Day to the memory of the saints, saints to their hearts at least, who have preceded them through the grave and gateway of death.

It is a most sacred custom to be piously cherished by everyone who does not believe with America's eloquent infidel, that "we melt into the infinite azure of the past as all living things must melt," by everyone who "thinks he was not made to die," and sees in the life beyond a continuation of the life here with its deathless loves and its grand aspirations; by all such this All Saints' observance should be religiously kept alive.

Perhaps those whom we have loved

are not all the church counts saints, but saints to us they must ever be, who are sanctified even in their follies and frailties by the devotion of our hearts; and who dare say that the omnipotent love of the great all-Father may not sanctify them there so as our short-sighted theories and theologies have never soared to dream? Certain it is that the very tombs of our cemeteries, the houses of our departed, seem to keep them nearer to us, and encourage the beautiful observance that keeps their memories green.

And as we walk through their narrow avenues amid the clustering tombs we may well pause to spend a thought at the last resting places of others beside those who have a selfish claim upon our family affections.

A nation is a sort of family; indeed, the prime idea of a nation is the patriarchal one. It is the unity of ancestry and blood, and not the oneness of institutions, that really makes a nation, and much more is this true of a community, and especially is it true of this community, with its unique history and glorious traditions. Even the adopted stranger makes a home in New Orleans, and identifies himself with its peculiar life more quickly and closely than anywhere else in the United States.

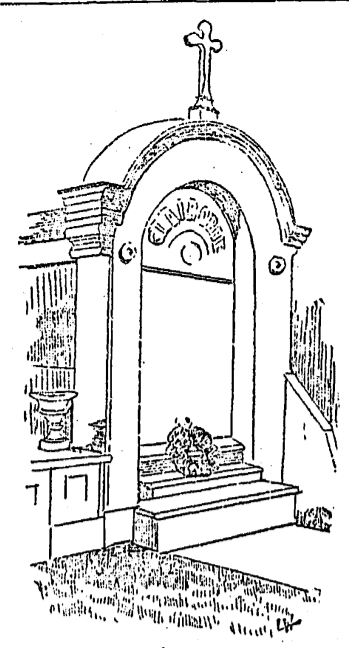
And though the descendants of generations of proud old Creole ancestors be inclined to look suspiciously on the stranger at first, and hesitate about taking him into their homes, yet if he be found to imbibe the spirit of the place, and to be worthy of the honor, he is soon welcomed as a son of New Orleans, and is merged in the city's life.

All such, and all Orleanians as they stroll on All Saints' day through the cemeteries, cannot fail to see many names there carved, often on mouldering monuments, that must stir within them emotions of civic pride. They are the names of their elder brothers, sons of New Orleans, who have done worthy deeds and have held high places in the armies and the councils of the state and of the nation. They are what we may call our civic saints.

The cemeteries of our city, and particularly the older ones, are rich in historic associations, and contain many names with which, not only this city, but the world has rung, such names as Villere and De Lamoignon, Claiborne, Soule, Martin, Plache and Drexel, names that New Orleans should never allow to be lost in oblivion, any more than the name of your first-born son should be forgotten in your household.

Many of these historic worthies lie in the old St. Louis cemetery, of which today but parts remain, the rest having been sacrificed to the exigencies of the living. One of the most interesting of these is the tomb of William C. C. Claiborne, a name intimately associated with the history of Louisiana. It was he who was appointed by the government of the United States, when this country was first ceded by Spain, to take formal possession of it in the name of the great republic. He was the first appointed governor and the first elected governor. He fell greatly in love with Louisiana, and spent the remainder of his life laboring for her interests, and ending that life in this city, his mortal remains were laid to rest in the St. Louis cemetery. Unfortunately, not for him, but, perhaps, for those who should hold his memory in honor, he died a Protestant, and his body was laid to rest in the "unconsecrated" portion of the cemetery, where also is laid the body of his wife. It is in that part of the old cemetery known to-day as the Basin street cemetery, but the curious visitor will not easily find it. If you care to look at it you must pass to the extreme end of the cemetery, where you will find a high board fence. A great heap of weeds and decaying refuse thrown against this will help you to scale it, and you will find yourself in a small yard overgrown with weeds and brambles, and choked with all manner of litter—the rubbish heap of the cemetery; and there, half buried in the waste, you will see the forlorn remains of what was once a costly and handsome tomb. The exquisite bas-reliefs that once ornamented its sides are all gone save one defaced fragment. The beautiful carved urn that surmounted it has disappeared. It stands in the midst of filth and neglect the forgotten memorial of him who was once, and not so long ago, the foremost man of the state of Louisiana.

Happily, though, this is not the only memorial of the great governor. A magnificent tomb in the beautifully



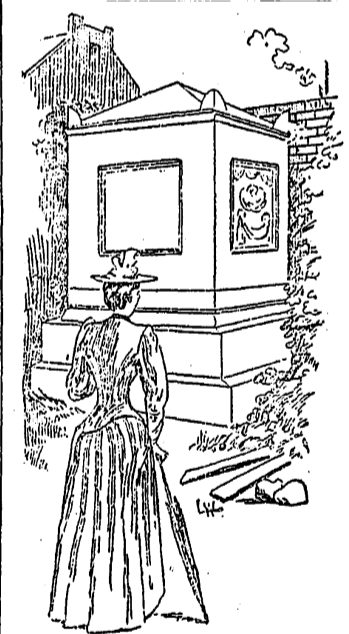
GOV. CLAIBORNE'S TOMB, METAIRIE CEMETERY.

ing the affairs of this country as he. Before and during the war he was the editor of the Delta. A clear thinker, a powerful writer, an ardent champion of the south and her rights, he did more perhaps to bring about secession than any other one man of his day.

The Claiborne street cemetery, as it is now called, is one of the most quaint and attractive burial places of the city. Its three squares are small and cramped, walled in on some sides by gloomy rows of tombs, and on others by dilapidated fences of whitewashed boards; its alleys are narrow and closely lined with the solemn houses of the dead; there is little room there for trees, or flowers, or any other of the things with which love seeks to disguise the grimness of the sepulcher; but the very narrowness of its walks and the crowding of its tombs adds to the visitors' interest, and there is no place in the city so replete with historic associations. Here, it is said, was once the tomb of Governor Villere, who succeeded Governor Claiborne, and was the first of the Creole governors of the state. No name is more closely associated with the history of Louisiana than his. His father was the Villere who was one of the leaders in the first movement for popular freedom made on American soil by the band of French patriots that undertook to throw off the foreign yoke when Louisiana was ceded by France to Spain in 1763.

The effort was unsuccessful, and its leaders suffered as martyrs, the first American martyrs to the cause of liberty, shot to death by the Spanish despot, General O'Reilly, and Villere among them. His son lived to see the liberty for which his father died spread her white wings of peace over the land, and to hold over this state the highest office in the gift of a free people. This interesting tomb a careful search has been unable to find.

In this same cemetery one may see the resting place of that famous Louisianian, Pierre Soule, the litterateur, the jurist and the statesman, who, a political exile from his native France in early life, found a second France in Louisiana, and gave it his heart and made it his home. In the courts of the state, in the state senate, in the senate of the United States, and as a foreign minister at the court of Spain, he did



THE OLD CLAIBORNE MONUMENT, POTTER'S FIELD, ST. LOUIS CEMETERY.

loyal service to his adopted country. Too clear-sighted to approve of secession, he opposed it with all his might, but when it came he saw his duty to his state and did it manfully in her councils and in her armies.

Not far from his tomb is another, quite as interesting, if in a different way. On its front is carved in large plain letters, "Dominic You." There is nothing there to tell the reader that this Dominic was a famous freebooter in his day, an associate of the Lafittes in their smuggling and semi-piratical operations; nor is there anything to tell how bravely he fought under General Jackson on the plains of Chalmette, and won a pardon for his past. It is a romantic story that some biographer will yet do justice to, along with the hundred other heroic and chivalrous deeds and lives that glorify the early history of the Pelican state.

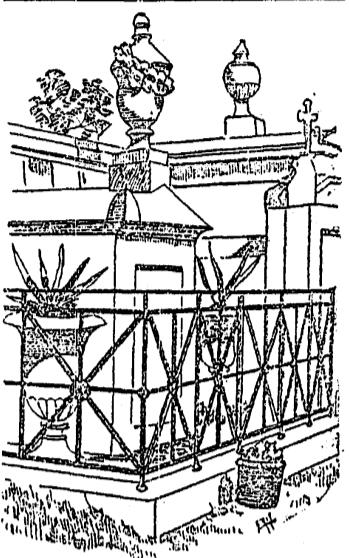
Near the midst of the middle division of the cemetery may be seen the graceful granite shaft that memorializes the great jurist of Louisiana—one of the great jurists of the world—Francois Xavier Martin, whose voluminous legal works are still standard books of reference, and gained for him the title of "The father of the jurisprudence of Louisiana." His history of Louisiana is a marvel of learning, and is the leading authority on the subject.

Close at hand an imposing tomb contains the mortal remains of that brave soldier and gallant champion of the confederacy whose name was a household word all over our state thirty years ago, Colonel Drexel, and not far away is the graceful mausoleum where rests the body of General Plache. And many more names are there which are worthy of note. Merely to enumerate them would occupy more space than we have at command. Scarcely a single name that has been prominently associated with the history of our state, at least in its earlier days, that may not be read on some monument in this curious old burial place.

There is no handsomer cemetery in New Orleans than the Washington Street cemetery. It is not so large as some of the others, but it was more carefully laid out than any of the older ones. Its alleys are roomy enough for convenience and are beautifully kept, shaded with handsome old trees and gorgeous with abundance of roses and other flowering shrubs. The costly tombs that line its walks seem fitting homes for those who once dwelt on our city's most splendid avenues; but many of those who have found here their final resting place were not distinguished in life for their wealth alone. Alas, how poor a distinction that, when one has gone away out of the world with no more than he brought into it, and his riches have been divided among his heirs. In this cemetery lie many who have far better claim on the memory of their survivors. Certainly no one can pause to read the simple inscription on the plain marble slab that covers the remains of John Bell Hood and not feel that he stands in the presence of something that compels his homage, and will compel the homage of ages. Wherever military genius and personal heroism count for

inherit, they have made New Orleans what it is, their traditions follow us, and we cannot get away from them. We aspire to a yet more glorious future—yes, we should, but that future can only grow out of this present, and on the same general lines as this present grew out of that past. A municipal life is as truly one as an individual life, and no man can make a grand success of his life by breaking away from his past, neglecting its lessons, ignoring its attainments. And the same is true of a city and of a state. Then let us remember our civic saints, recall to mind their heroic achievements and emulate their virtues, and so, as their memories are a heritage of glory to New Orleans, ours, too, shall be, and the generation to come shall gratefully rejoice that they have our footsteps in which to follow.

NELSON AYRES.

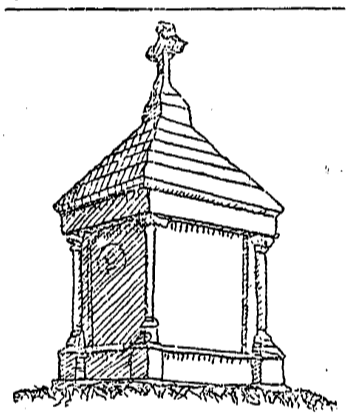


PIERRE SOULE'S TOMB, ST. LOUIS CEMETERY.

ought there the name of the South's most intrepid champion will ever be held in honor. Thirty years ago there was no name that was heard with so much fear in the union armies, or inspired so much respect as that of General Hood.

But if one would see the most charming of New Orleans cemeteries he must go to Metairie. It is the jewel of the crown of cemeteries that clusters around the head of Canal street. It is new and yet comparatively untenantated, but it is charming for location; it is laid out with the most artistic skill, ornamented with exquisite taste and contains some of the most magnificent mausoleums that are to be found anywhere in the world.

To every southerner it is consecrated by the fact that it contains all that remains of the "one Mississippian," the South's greatest hero, Jefferson Davis, by whose untimely end



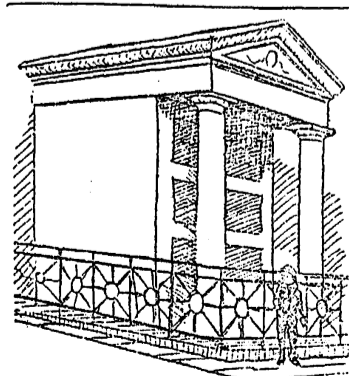
COL. C. H. SLOCUMB'S TOMB, METAIRIE CEMETERY.

"The future gains a grand historic name, The present an irreparable grief."

It is unhappily true that it is not his own tomb in which his body lies, and that his remains are destined to be removed far away from the city that loved him better than any other in the south. But though it be, there can be little doubt that the affectionate remembrance in which he is held in New Orleans will soon rear to his honor, in Metairie, or better still, in one of our parks or avenues, some memorial worthy of his greatness.

Under a great live oak tree near the furthest limits of this cemetery may be seen a curious monument. It is a huge granite boulder carved only by nature's hand save for the great name that is chiseled across its face in bold characters, the name of Frederick Nash Ogden. Distinguished for military dash and daring distinguished for commercial enterprise and uprightness, distinguished for political wisdom and zeal, distinguished for gentle humanity and devotion to the sick and suffering, there is no name on the bright roll of New Orleans' sons of which she may justly be proud than of his.

In the same cemetery may be seen the splendid monumental tomb of General Slocumb, another name that our city should never allow to be lost in obscurity, and that of Dr. Bowers, and many another that time and space reluctantly forbid the mention of. The reader's memory, if he be at all acquainted with the city's history, will readily recall many of them.



GENERAL PLAUCHE'S TOMB, ST. LOUIS CEMETERY.

And they ought to be frequently recalled, especially on such occasions as the present. To us they should be saints, and their deeds should be sacred. It is an unfortunate characteristic of our times that they are too much absorbed in the petty present, and too much given to forget the glorious past. The deeds that our predecessors did we