DAILY CRESCENT.

OFFICIAL JOURNAL
OF THE CONSOLIDATED CITY OF NEW ORLEANS.

From the Cincinnati Commercial.

A VISION OF YOUTH. . . By J. C. Mellon.

An old man sat by his cottage door
In the light of the setting sun,
When the reapers homeward bent their way,
Their harvest-labor done.
The red light gleamed on the distant hills,
And the rosy air was balm—
Not a leaflet stirred, for the winds were lulled
To a painless, cradle calm.

Before the cot, on the soft green sward,
His three grand-children played—
Two rosy boys, and their sister fair,
A bright-eyed little maid.
The sophyrs played with their sunny curls
As they laughed, and sported there,
And the old man smiled, as his glad sight caught
The gleam of their golden hair.

He smiled, for he thought of the halcyon days
Of his own happy childhood time,
And his pulses bounded, and he felt the fire
Of youth, in his heart again.
The cot of his father rose once more
To bless his wavering sight,
And the view lit up in his failing eye
The long-departed light.

He roamed once more o'er the wood-crowned hills
And the flowery vales sweng—
He joined his mates on the village green
He laughed, and danced, and sung,
He stood once more on the old hearthstone,
Beside the blazing fire,
And a mother's form above him hung,
And beside him was his sire.

His brothers and sisters stood around—
He heard the loved ones speak,
But his mother's eye met his long for words—
Her tears fell on his cheek!
"No tears to-day, dear mother," I pray!"
With choking voice he cried
"For never again shall my form be missed
From the group at the old fireside."

He strayed with Mary at eventide,
Along the flowery brink
Of a warbling brook where limpid wave
The water-lilies drink.
The maid was kind, and the lover asked
No other boon beside
But to clasp her fondly to his heart,
His own affectionate bride!

In youth the Future's a fairy land—
Old age looks on the Past,
But their waking dreams are alike in this,
They are all too bright to last!
With a bounding step, and a ringing laugh,
He's winsome Ella past,
And the vision fled, as the sunlight fades
When the skies are overcast!
The vision fled, the sun was set,
And the moon was bright above,
But the old man rose with a thankful heart,
For he had something yet to love!

NEW CARLISLE, Ohio.

The Gambler's Last Stake.

In an inner room of his counting-house, which occupied a wing of his splendid mansion in the Calle Alcala, sat Don Jose Solano, one of the richest bankers in Madrid; ruminating with much self-complacency upon the profitable results of a recent speculation. He was interrupted in his meditations by the entrance of one of his clerks ushering in a stranger, who brought a letter of introduction from a banker at Mexico, with whom Don Jose had had occasional transactions. The letter stated that the bearer, the Conde de Valleja, was of a highly respected family of Mexican nobility; that he was desirous of visiting Europe, and more especially the country of his ancestors, Spain; and then it went on to recommend him in the strongest terms to the Madrid banker, as one whose intimacy and friendship could not fail to be sought after by all who became acquainted with his many excellent and agreeable qualities.

The appearance of the Count seemed to justify, as far as appearance can do, the high terms in which he was spoken of in this letter. He was about eight and twenty years of age, dark complexioned, with a high, clear forehead, short crisp curling hair, an intelligent and regular countenance, and a smile of singular beauty and fascination. His eyes were the only feature which could be pronounced otherwise than extremely pleasing; although large, black, and lustrous, they had a certain fixity and hardness of expression that produced an unpleasant impression upon the beholder, and would, perhaps, have been more disagreeable, had not the mellow tones of the Count's voice, and his suavity and polish of manner, served in a great measure to counteract the effect of this peculiarity.

Doing due honor to the strong recommendation of his esteemed correspondent, Don Jose welcomed the young Conde with the utmost hospitality, insisted on taking possession of him for the whole of the day, and, without allowing him to return to his hotel, dragged him into the house, presented him to his son and daughter, and charged them to use their utmost exertions to entertain their guest, while he himself returned to his occupations till dinner-time. At one o'clock the old banker re-appeared in the sala, where he found Raphael and Mariquita Solano listening with avidity to the agreeable conversation of the Count, who, in his rich and characteristic Mexican Spanish, was giving them the most interesting details concerning the country he had recently left. The magnificence of Mexican scenery, the peculiarities of the Indian races, the gorgeous vegetation and strange animals of the tropics, formed the subjects of his discourse, not a little interesting to a young man of three and twenty, and a girl of eighteen, who had never as yet been fifty leagues away from Madrid.

Nor had the stranger's conversation less charms for the old banker. Valleja had been at the Havannah—was acquainted with scenes, if not with persons, with which were associated some of Don Jose's most agreeable reminiscences—scenes that he had visited in the days of his youth, when he laid the first foundation of his princely fortune. To be brief—the agreeable manners and conversation of the Count won upon father, son and daughter, that, when at nightfall he rose to take his leave, the banker put his house *a su disposition*, and followed up what is usually a mere verbal compliment, by insisting upon Valleja's taking up his abode with him during his stay in Madrid.

Valleja raised many difficulties on the score of the inconveniencies or trouble he might occasion, but they were all overruled, and the contest of politeness terminated in the Count's accepting the hospitality thus cordially pressed upon him. The very next day he was installed in a splendid apartment in the house of Don Jose.

Several days, even weeks elapsed, during which Valleja continued to be the inmate of the Casa Solano. He appeared very well pleased with his quarters, and, on the other hand, his host found no reason to regret the hospitality shown him. He soon became the spoiled child of the family; Don Jose could not make a move without Valleja was there to elicit with him about the Havannah; Rafael was the inseparable companion of his walks, rides and out-door diversions; while the blooming Mariquita never seemed so happy as when the handsome Mexican was seated beside her embroidery-frame, conversing with her in his low, soft tones, or singing to the accompaniment of her guitar some of the wild melodies of his native country.

Indeed, as marked were the Count's attentions to the young girl, and so favorably did she receive them, that more than one officious or well meaning friend hinted to Don Jose the propriety of instituting some inquiry into the circumstances and antecedents of a man who, it seemed not improbable, might eventually aspire to become his son-in-law. But the banker's prepossession in favor of Valleja was so strong that he gave little heed to these hints, contenting himself with writing to his correspondent at Mexico, expressing the pleasure he had had in making the Count's acquaintance, and receiving him as an inmate in his house; but without asking for any information concerning him. In fact, the letter Valleja had brought was such as to render any further inquiries nearly superfluous. It mentioned the Count as of a noble and respected family, and credited him to the amount of ten thousand dollars—a sum of sufficient importance to make it presumable that his means were ample.

Before Valleja had been three days in Madrid, he had obtained his *entree* to a house at which a number of idlers and fashionables were in the habit of meeting to play *monte*, the game of all others most fascinating to the Spaniard. Thither he used to repair each afternoon, accompanied by Rafael Solano, and there he soon made himself remarked by his judgment in play, and by the cool indifference with which he lost and won very inconsiderable sums.

For some time he was exceedingly successful. Every stake he put down doubled itself; he seemed to play with charmed money; and the bankers trembled when they saw him approach the table, and after a glance at the state of the game, place a pile of golden ounces on a card, which almost invariably won the very next moment. This lasted several days, and he began to be considered as invincible, when suddenly his good fortune deserted him, and he lost as fast or faster than he had previously won; so that, after a fortnight of incessant bad luck, it was estimated by certain old gamblers who had taken an interest in watching his proceedings that he had lost not only all his winnings, but a very considerable sum in addition. Rafael, who had played, and then only for small stakes, urged his friend to discontinue a game which he found so losing; but Valleja laughed at his remonstrances, and treated his losses as trifling ones, which a single day's good fortune might retrieve. Gambling is scarcely looked upon as a vice in Spain, and young Solano saw nothing unusual or blameable in the Count's indulging in his afternoon's *juego*, or in his losing his money if it so pleased him, and if he thought an hour or two's excitement worth the large sums which it usually cost him. Indeed, the circumstance of their visits to the gaming-room appeared to him so unimportant that it never occurred to him to mention it to his father or sister; and they on their part never dreamed of inquiring in what way the young men passed the few hours of the day during which they absented themselves from their society.

The monte table when Valleja was in the habit of frequenting, was situated on the third floor of a house in a narrow street leading out of the Calle Alcala, within two or three hundred yards of the Casa Solano. Among the persons to be met there were many of the richest and highest in Madrid: generals and ministers, counts and marquesses, and even grandees of Spain, were in the habit of repairing thither to while away the long winter evenings, or the sultriness of the summer day; and the play was proportionate to the high rank and great opulence of most of the players. The bank was held, as is customary in Spain, by the person who offered to put in the largest sum, the keeper of the room being remunerated by a certain tax upon the cards: a tax which, in this instance, was a heavy one, in order to compensate for the luxury displayed in the decoration and arrangements of the establishment. The three rooms were fitted up in the most costly manner; the walls lined with magnificent pier glasses; the floor covered in winter with rich carpets, and in summer with fine cane-bottomed matting; the furniture was of the newest French fashion. Splendid chandeliers hung from the ceiling; musical clocks stood upon the side tables; the gilt balconies were filled with the rarest exotics and flowering plants. Two of the rooms were devoted to play; in the third ices and refreshments awaited the parched throats of the feverish gamblers.

On a scorching June afternoon, about a month after Valleja arrived at Madrid, the Mexican and Rafael left Don Jose's dwelling, and bent their steps in the usual direction. While ascending the well-worn stairs of the gaming-house, young Solano could not forbear addressing a remonstrance to his friend on the subject of his losses. Although the Count's perfect command over himself and his countenance made it very difficult for so young and inexperienced a man as Rafael to judge of what was passing in his mind, the latter, nevertheless, fancied that for three or four days past there had been a change in his demeanor, denoting uneasiness and anxiety. It was not that he was duller or more silent: on the contrary, his conversation was, perhaps, more brilliant and varied: his laugh, gayer and more frequent than usual; but there was a hollowness in the laugh, and a strained tone in the conversation, as if he were compelling himself to be gay, in order to drive away painful thoughts—intoxicating himself with many words and forced merriment. Rafael attributed this to the annoyance caused by his heavy losses, and now urged him to discontinue his visits to the monte table, at least for a time, or until his luck became better. The Count met the suggestion with a smile

"My dear Rafael," cried he gaily, "you surely do not suppose that the loss of a few miserable ounces would be sufficient to annoy me for a moment. As to abandoning play, we should be puzzled then to pass the idle hour or two following the siesta. Besides that, it amuses me. But do not make yourself uneasy: I shall do myself no harm, and, moreover, I intend this very day to win back all my losings. I feel in the vein."

"I heartily hope you may do as you intend," said Rafael, laughing, quite re-assured by his friend's careless manner: and, as he uttered the words, the Count pushed open the door and they entered the monte-room.

The game was already in full activity and the play very high; the tables crowded with the showy Spanish cards, on which, instead of the spades and diamonds familiar to most European card-players, suns and vases, sabres and horses were depicted in various and brilliant colors. An officer of the royal guard and a dry, snuffy old marquis held the bank, which had been very successful. Large piles of ounces, and of four and eight dollar pieces, were on the green cloth before them, as well as several pieces of paper nearly treble the value of the specie. Twenty or thirty players were congregated round the table, eight or a few unfortunates, whose pockets had already been emptied, were solacing themselves with their segars, and occasionally indulging in an oath or impatient stamp of the foot when they saw a card come up which they would certainly have backed had they had money so to do. Two or three idlers were sitting on the low sills of the long French windows, reading newspapers and enjoying the fragrance of the flowers protected from the reflected glare of the opposite houses, on which the sun was shining in rays, by awnings of striped linen that fell from above the windows, and hung over the outside of the small semi-circular balconies.

After standing for a few minutes at the table, and staking a doubloon, which it instantly lost, Rafael Solano took up a paper, and threw himself into an arm-chair, while Valleja remained watching, with keen attention, the various fluctuations of the cards. For some time neither took to the game, rather for the astonishment of the players, who were accustomed to see him stake his money, as soon as he entered the room, with an unhesitating boldness and confidence. Half an hour passed in this manner, and the presence of Valleja was beginning to be forgotten, when he suddenly drew a heavy purseful of gold from his pocket, and placed it upon a card. The game went on: Valleja lost, and with the usual *sang-froid* saw his stake swept into the bank. Another followed, and a third, and fourth. In four *coups* he had lost three thousand dollars. Still not a sign of excitement or discomposure appeared upon the handsome countenance of the Mexican: only an officer who was standing by him, observed that a pack of the thin Spanish cards, which he had been holding in his hands, fell to the ground, torn completely in half by one violent wrench.

The four high stakes, so boldly played and so rapidly lost, riveted the observation of the gamblers upon Valleja's proceedings. Every body crowded round the table, and even the slight buzz of conversation that had before been heard, totally ceased. His attention attracted by this sudden stillness, Rafael rose from his seat and joined his friend. A glance at the nervated wealth of the bank, and the eagerness with which it seemed to be awaiting Valleja's movements, made him conjecture what had occurred.

"You have lost," said he to the Count, "and heavily I fear. Come, that will do for to-day. Let us go."

"Psha!" replied the Mexican in a more tranquil voice than usual, "you shall see me win it back. And then turning to the banker, who was just commencing a deal:

"*Cope*," said he, "the king against the ace."

For the uninitiated in the mysteries of monte, it may be necessary to state that by uttering those words, Valleja bound himself, if an ace came up before a king, to pay an equal amount to that in the bank, as well as the winnings of those who had backed the ace. If, on the other hand, the king won, the whole capital of the bank was his, as well as the stakes of those who bet against him.

"*Cope al Rey*

There was a general murmur of astonishment. The bank was the largest that had been seen to be open since a certain memorable night, when King Ferdinand himself, being out upon one of the nocturnal frolics, in which he so much delighted, had come up in disguise with an officer of his household, and had lost a sum that greatly advantaged the bankers and sorely diminished the contents of his Catholic Majesty's privy purse. There were at least thirty thousand dollars on the table in gold and paper, and besides that, scarcely had the Mexican uttered the name of the card he favored, when, on the strength of his previous ill-luck, some of the players put down nearly half as much more against it. The two bankers looked at each other; the guardsman shrugged his shoulders and elevated his eyebrows. Both movements were so slight as to be scarcely perceptible; but they were, nevertheless, excellently well observed and understood by his partner, the high-dried old marquis, sitting opposite to him, who held a pack of cards upon the table, their backs to the earth, and, after placing a piece of money on them to prevent their being disturbed by any chance puff of wind, opened his gold box, and took a prodigious pinch of snuff. Having done this with much deliberation, he let the hands fall upon his knees, and leant back in his chair with a countenance expressive of imchangeable patience. The players waited for nearly a minute, but then began to grow impatient at the delay. At the first question put to the marquis, as to its motive, he waived his hand toward Valleja.

"I am waiting for the Senor Conde," said he

"For me?" replied Valleja. "It is unnecessary."

"There were about twenty thousand dollars in the bank," said the marquis, leaning forward, and affecting to count the rouleaus lying before him, "and some eight thousand staked by those gentlemen. Will your Senoria be pleased to place a similar sum upon the table."

Several of the gamblers exchanged significant glances and half smiles. The rule of the game required the player who endeavored, as Valleja was doing, to annihilate the bank at one fell swoop, to produce a sum equal to that which he had a chance of carrying off. At the same time in societies like this one, where the players all more or less, known to each other—all men of rank, name and fortune—it was not unusual to play this sort of decisive *coup* upon parole, and, if lost, the money was invariably forthcoming the same day.

Valleja smiled bitterly.

"I thought I had been sufficiently known here," said he, "to be admitted to the same privilege as other players, Rafael," added he, turning to his friend and handing him a key, "your father's ten thousand dollars have melted, but I have a packet of notes and current securities to considerably more than the needful amount, in the brass-bound box in my apartment. Will you have the kindness to fetch them for me? I do not wish to interrupt my observation of the game!"

"With pleasure," replied Rafael, taking the key, and eager to oblige his friend.

"And, perhaps," continued Valleja, smiling, and detaining him as he was about to hasten out of the room, "perhaps you will not object to those gentlemen that, until you return with the money, they may take Valleja's word for the sum he wishes to play."

"Most assuredly I will," answered the young man hastily, "and I am only sorry that the Senor Marquis should have thought it advisable to put anything resembling a slight upon a friend of mine and my father's. Gentlemen," he continued, to the bankers, "I offer you my guarantee for the sum Count Valleja is about to play."

The old Marquis bowed his head.

"That is quite sufficient, Don Rafael," said he. "I have the honor of knowing you perfectly well." His seneria, the Count Valleja, is only known to me as the Count Valleja, and I am certain that, on reflection, neither he nor you will blame me for acting as I do, when so heavy a sum is at stake."

Don Rafael left the room. The formal marquis removed the piece of money from off the pack, and took up the cards with as much dry indifference as if he were no way concerned in the result of the important game that was now about to be played. Valleja scrutinized in the window, humming a tune between his teeth, and stepping out, pushed the awning a little aside, and leaned over the balcony.

The banker began to draw the cards, one after another, slowly and deliberately. Nearly half the pack was dealt out, without the king or an ace appearing. The players and bankers were breathless with anxiety; the fall of a pin would have been audible; the tune, which the count continued to hum from his station on the balcony, was heard, in the stillness that reigned, as distinctly as though it had been transferred out by a whole orchestra. Another card, and another was drawn, and the decisive one appeared. The sleeve was immediately exchanged for a tumult of words and exclamations.

"*Que es esto*," said Valleja, turning half round, and smelling, as he spoke, at a superb flower, which he had just plucked from one of the plants in the balcony. "What's the matter?"

"The ace," said the person nearest the window, who then passed on hesitated.

"Well," said Valleja, with a sneer, "the ace—what then? It has won, I suppose."

"It has won."

"*Muy bien*. I was to be expected it would, since I went on the king." And, turning round again, he resumed his tune and his gaze into the street.

"*Ha de ser visto*," said the Spaniard to another of the players. He must be rich. It would be difficult to take the loss of thirty thousand dollars more coolly than that."

Five minutes elapsed, during which the bankers were busy counting out their bank, in order to pass the exact sum due to them by the unfortunate loser. When the jingle of money and rustle of paper ceased, Valleja looked round for the second time.

"How much is there, Senores?" cried he.

"Sixty thousand four hundred and thirty dollars, Senor Conde," replied the old man, with a bow of profound respect for one who could bear such a loss with such admirable indifference.

"Very good!" was the Count's answer; "and here comes the man who will pay it to us."

Accordingly, the next minute a heavy step was heard on the stairs. All eyes were turned to the door, which opened, and Rafael Solano entered.

"Where is the Count?" exclaimed he, in hurried voice, and with a disconcerted countenance.

Again every head was turned toward the window; but the Count had disappeared. At the same moment, from the street below, which was quiet and unfrequented one, there rose an unusual murmur and noise of voices. The fourth players rushed to the windows, and saw several persons collected round a man whom they were raising from the ground. His hat was in the gutter, dreadfully disordered, and the pavement around sprinkled with the blood that had run from others turned down, but before they reached the street, Count Luis Valleja had expired—the gambler's last stake had been his life.

While young Solano searched his father's house, repairing to the Count's apartment, opened the desk of which Valleja had given him the key, he found that it contained neither notes nor any one else of value, but merely a few worthless papers. Astonished at this, and, in spite of his previous assertion in favor of the Count, feeling his suspicions a little aroused, he could hardly consider an open letter as hardly to be looked into, he hurried back to the monte-room, where his arrival served as a signal for the catastrophe that has been related.

The same evening the unfortunate was buried by Don Solano from the house of the widower. The following day the body of the Count was privately interred.

After the lapse of a few weeks, there came a letter to Don Jose, addressed to the one whom Don Luis Solano had written to announce the arrival of Valleja. In it Mexican proceeded to state that the Count was in reality a Spaniard, a native of Malaga, named Perez, who, after having run through a large property, had left his native country, and, after various profligate adventures, had found himself in Mexico, where, by his talents and address, he had succeeded in obtaining the hand of a lady of large fortune, whose property he had squandered in the same manner as his own. Finding himself, after a few years, reduced to poverty, he had formed the design of returning to Spain, and of endeavoring to repair his fortune by the same means which had ruined it. He had succeeded in obtaining letters of introduction to Don Jose, and had left Mexico, with the intention of visiting Madrid, and of there endeavoring to marry himself into some rich family, and thus to retrieve his affairs. He had succeeded in the first part of his design, but had failed in the second, and had met with his death in a duel, the result of a quarrel at the gaming-table.

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BATTURE SAND.—Persons wishing to take SAND from the Batture, can do so at the foot of Race st., without permit, under the direction of the Commissary of the Batture.

L. H. PILIE, City Surveyor.

Surveyor's Department, New Orleans, August 4, 1852. aug 17

SURVEYOR'S DEPARTMENT, CITY HALL, } New Orleans, June 8, 1852.

THE PUBLIC are informed that the offices of the DEPUTY SURVEYORS are located as follows:

C. M. BLANCHARD, Deputy Surveyor for Finished French District, No. 7 Bienville street, between Royal and Bourbon streets.

J. A. PERNEQUOY, Deputy Surveyor for Second and Third Districts, in the Court House, between Royal and Bourbon streets.

L. H. PILIE, City Surveyor.

No. 508.—*Resolved*, That the Comptroller be, and he is hereby, authorized to sell, at public auction, after due notice in the official newspaper, the contract for cleaning the streets of the eighth ward, lower side, and public cisterns of the district, in accordance with the specifications in the Board of Assistant Aldermen.

[Signed] WM. G. CLAIBORNE,
President of the Board of Assistant Aldermen.

Approved this December 6, 1852.

[Signed] A. D. CROSSMAN, Mayor.

No. 502.—*Resolved*, That the Comptroller be, and he is hereby requested to pay to the persons holding orders issued in accordance with the provisions of the ordinance passed January 7, 1852, the sums from previous orders contained in the ordinance passed December 24, 1851, in favor of the persons holding orders, and not included in the ordinance of January 7, 1852, and that the Treasurer countersign, and the Comptroller register, the orders issued in accordance with the ordinance of December 24, 1851, and that the Treasurer countersign, and the Comptroller register, the orders issued in accordance with