

situation, when M. de Crozat, in 1712, obtained from Louis XIV. a grant of the province of Louisiana. It comprehended both banks of the Mississippi through its whole length, a part of the Ohio to the Miami, and extended as far as lake Erie, on the borders of Canada.

During the few years that M. de Crozat possessed it, he attracted some cultivators, and took with him a crowd of adventurers. Of all the inhabited parts of the New World, no one has been peopled so slowly as New Orleans. In vain did the government, after the death of Louis XIV. offer advantages to the colonists; none but those who were without resources, or exposed to the vengeance of the laws, would go to the Mississippi.

It is difficult to imagine how much this colony suffered by the war which terminated in 1763, by the cession of Canada to England. Left to their own strength, without resources from the mother-country, the inhabitants of New Orleans had no means of obtaining clothing. At last, after five years of misery, peace restored them to abundance, and attracted new settlers.

During the two years which followed the cession of Canada, great numbers of French who were established there, abandoned it to go to a country where they might live under their native laws. New Orleans had become a considerable staple, when France, from a mistaken economy, transferred it to Spain. From that moment, affairs assumed a different aspect. The taking possession of it, which Orelli signalized by his perfidious cruelty, not only put a stop to the increase of population by the arrival of new settlers, but induced many rich proprietors to desert a country, whose new master acted as a tyrant. In vain did Spain recall them; the first impression was too strong for the recollection of it to be hastily effaced.

The whole town was destroyed by fire in 1788, and the greater part in 1794. The houses are at present built of brick, and contain about twelve thousand inhabitants. New Orleans is the seat of the superior authorities of Louisiana, which are vested in a governor and overseer. The former*, a foolish old man, who governs the colony according to the will of his son, a pragmatical and ignorant young man. The latter, a man

* It will appear scarcely credible, that he published a decree the same year that I arrived, by which he forbade inoculation, as opposed to religious principles. Above six hundred children and slaves fell victims to this absurd prejudice, which has been, and still continues to be, the scourge of the government.