

bitterness is not so much of a personal character as a national one.

In looking over some old letters since my return, I have found one written to a friend by myself while residing in New Orleans, which by some mistake was not posted. As there is much in it concerning the first preparations for this war, I introduce it, as it will explain much in this hurried sketch I may have omitted. The letter is as follows. There is no date, but it was written early in the Spring of 1861.

“NEW ORLEANS,

“1861.

“Dear H——,

“I write you once more from the far-famed Crescent City. If anything, it is even more gay than when I wrote you last from here. We have had the usual Carnival, which this year seems to have surpassed all former festivals, of the kind in magnificence. It is the great Mardi Gras Festival, and although the French population understand it, and know why it is so called, yet the lower order of people, and young urchins strutting about with comic masks and gaudy costumes, made of red, blue, green, and other bright-coloured cotton—seem to know very little about it except that it is a time when all go in for fun and frolic of some sort. You are constantly asked in the street at this time by some dirty little urchin dressed up, for a ‘picayune’ (that’s half a dime) for ‘Muddy Graw.’

“One day I asked a boy what ‘Muddy Graw’ meant; but as I expected, he was quite in a fog as to what the Festival of Mardi Gras was. He considered a little, and finally answered, ‘Why, it means a real good time, and Muddy Graw.’