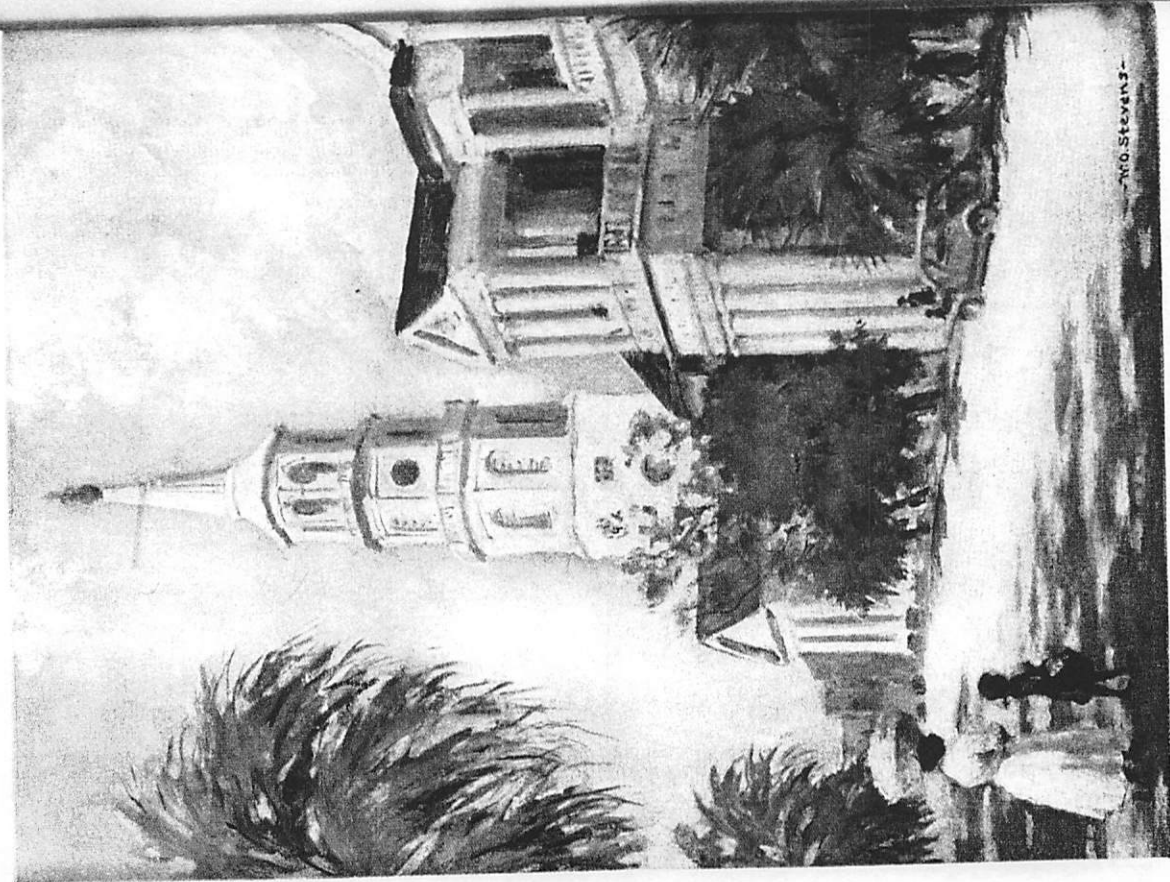


CHARLESTON
HISTORIC CITY OF
GARDENS

by
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white-pillared plantation house. Here we are introduced to the famous Southern azalea, though that particular flower is at its best in this region nearer the first of April. Besides the display of fine trees and shrubs there are the ruins of a colonial church and of a residence of Governor Tryon, where the first armed protest against the Stamp Act occurred; and, to take a jump of a hundred years, we can also see the remains of a Union fortification. The gardens make very pleasant strolling on a fine spring morning.

There is still another and still more magnificent exhibit of landscape gardening awaiting the motorist farther south on his route, and under no circumstances should it be omitted from the itinerary, for it is unique. The highway, after leaving Shallotte—which bears no resemblance to the scene of Tennyson's idyl—crosses the border into South Carolina. For a while it runs close along the ocean shore, past resort places like Myrtle Beach. Then, just before we come to Waverley Mills, we notice a sign and a roadway on our right, indicating that this is the entrance to the Brookgreen Gardens. Here we drive in, following a straight, hard-surfaced roadway for possibly a mile.

The beautifully parked area we come to was, like Orton, formerly a plantation of the same name. It was first owned by the famous South Carolina family of Allstons. The painter, Washington Allston, was born here, and on April 28, 1791, President Washington was entertained here as an overnight guest of Colonel William Allston. This officer had been one of Marion's men during the Revolution. Washington told his hostess that her estate "looked like fairyland," and noted in his diary that Colonel Allston was "a gentleman of large fortune and esteemed one of the neatest Rice Planters in the state." He

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added that he had never seen such perfection of rice cultivation. Here, awaiting him, he found Colonel William Moultrie, Colonel William Washington, and Mr. Rutledge, son of the Chief Justice of the United States, who came to escort their distinguished visitor to Georgetown, which lies only a short distance from Charleston.

Since that day the rice lands here on the Waccamaw River have been sold and resold many times. One of the most recent owners of the property was Mrs. Julia Peterkin, the novelist, who, it will be remembered, won the Pulitzer Prize in 1928. She laid the scenes of some of her stories here at Brookgreen. In 1932 the property was taken over by Mr. A. M. Huntington, the same benefactor who gave to the public that splendid Mariners' Museum near Newport News, Virginia. At Brookgreen Mr. Huntington transformed the old plantation lands into a park, in which bird life should find sanctuary and all forms of local plant life should be collected and cultivated. Best of all, from the art lover's point of view, he made the park a setting for an outdoor exhibition of American sculpture. All of this he presented as a gift to the state of South Carolina with a managing board of trustees and an endowment fund of a million and a quarter. Once again, to quote Washington's words to Mrs. Allston, "the place looks like fairyland."

It is curious that so little is known by the general public—especially the strangers who motor along the highway—about this generous benefaction, for in the matter of its open-air sculpture exhibit there is certainly no peer to it in the East anywhere. The old plantation house had long since been burned down, but the avenue of live oaks, so characteristic of these South Carolina estates, was still flourishing when the place was taken over by

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Mr. Huntington. With this avenue as a central theme, the landscape architects have created a superb scene. Against the shrubbery and along the walls are placed two hundred statues of marble and bronze representing the best work of one hundred and thirty-two American sculptors. Here and there in the low brick wall are frequent entablatures on which are engraved quotations from nature poems.

Of the old plantation there is to be seen a restored kitchen with its original huge fireplaces, old implements, and in the rear the original well and sweep. Still further back, a flight of steps leads down to Brookgreen Creek, which flows into the Waccamaw River. For Brookgreen was a rice plantation, and as such depended on waterways for both its crop and transportation.

Nothing has been forgotten for the comfort of the visitor in these gardens. Near the exit of the grounds there is a picnic area under the tall pines, with tables and benches, and little ovens for outdoor cooking. All this beauty and convenience are offered free to everyone. There are no guards or caretakers visible. Here and there are notices which are a gentle reminder that the beauty of the park is entrusted to the thoughtfulness and courtesy of the public. The amazing thing is that the appeal seems to be effective, for nothing could be more trim and orderly.

So the traveler may spend a restful and enjoyable hour at Brookgreen Gardens, and depart wishing a thousand blessings on the heads of those whose generosity and artistry brought it into being. The sculptors who are represented here should be specially grateful for the taste with which each piece is given its setting and background so that it shows to the finest advantage.

We cross the Waccamaw River at the point where it widens

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to become Winyah Bay, and on the farther shore enter Georgetown, which is the most sizable community lying between Wilmington and Charleston. It need not detain us, but as we pass through we must give a thought to a tragic story of long ago associated with this seaport. It was from here, on December 30, 1812, that Theodosia Burr Allston set sail for New York in the ship *Patriot* in order to meet her father, Aaron Burr, returning from his exile in Europe. As her husband was Governor of South Carolina at the time and could not leave on account of official duties, she went alone. That very year her only child, Aaron Burr Allston, had died, and she herself was too ill to undertake such a journey; but she could not bear to have her father return without her being on hand to welcome him. The *Patriot* sailed out of Winyah Bay but was never heard of again. There was some speculation about pirates' having captured her. In fact, there is a story about a sailor's deathbed confession to that effect. But the more probable explanation is that a great gale, which fell upon the coast shortly after, was responsible for the destruction of the vessel and every soul on board.

Shortly after we leave Georgetown, we are astonished to see a very black negro, arrayed in ministerial frock coat and battered silk hat, standing on the left of the highway. As we draw nearer, we perceive that, like Gabriel, he bears a trumpet in his hand. On our approach he blows a mighty blast at us and waves us frantically to pause. Slowing down, we discover that he guards the entry to Belle Isle Gardens, which is still another of those beauty spots where gigantic gray-green live oaks and scarlet azaleas form their contrasts to delight the eye. Belle Isle has associations with Francis Marion, the "Swamp Fox," that famous guerrilla leader of the Revolutionary War; and if the tourist

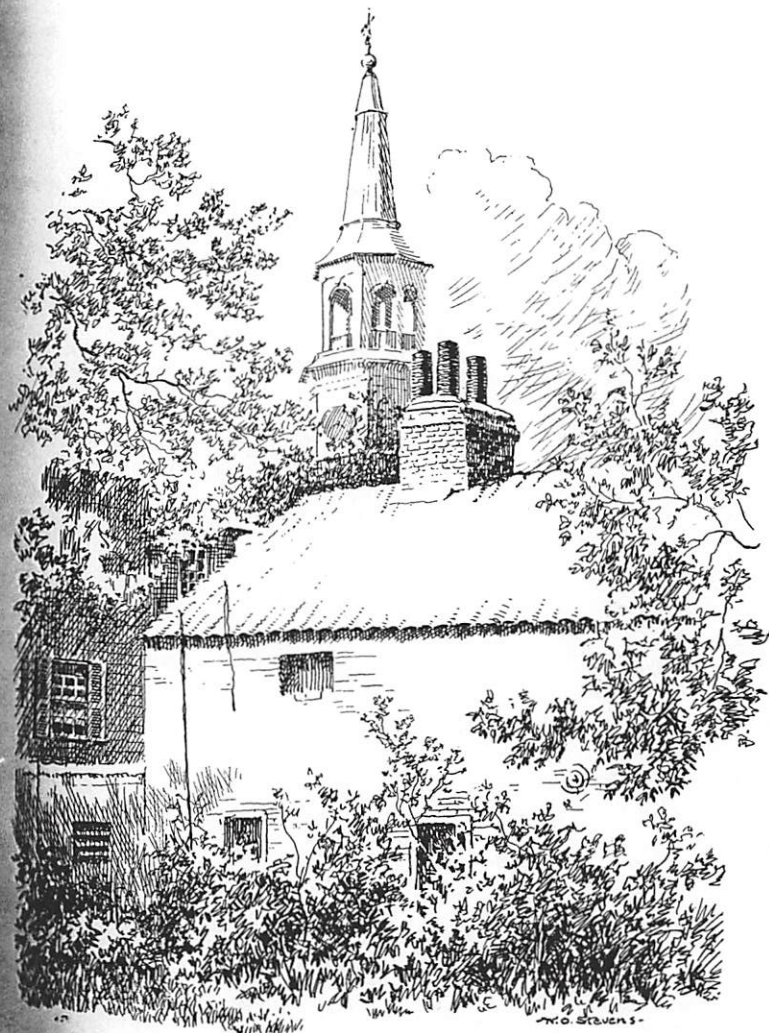
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is a similar marker, but in this case the head of a child's crib, the grave of an infant who died in 1775, and this piece of wood has decayed sadly.

In this God's acre may be seen the tomb of Robert Y. Hayne, to whom Daniel Webster made his famous "Reply" in the Senate. Here, too, is the most famous of all inscriptions in Charleston, the one on the **monument to James Petigru**. Woodrow Wilson, while at the Peace Conference in Paris after the World War, sent for a copy of this epitaph, and it has been quoted again and again. Long as it is, it cannot be abbreviated:

Future Times will hardly know
How great a Life
This simple stone commemorates;
The tradition of his Eloquence,
His Wisdom, and his Wit may fade:
But he lived for ends more durable than Fame.
His learning illuminated the principles of Law:
His Eloquence was the Protection of the Poor and Wronged.
In the Admiration of his Peers:
In the respect of his People:
In the Affection of his Family,
His was the highest Place:
The just Mead
of his Kindness and Forbearance,
His Dignity and his Simplicity,
His brilliant Genius and his unwearied Industry.
Unawed by Opinion,
Unseduced by Flattery:
Undismayed by Disaster,
He confronted Life with antique Courage:
And Death with Christian Hope:
In the great Civil War

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ST. MICHAEL'S FROM THE CONFEDERATE HOME

SOME FAMOUS LANDMARKS

He withstood his People for his Country:
But his People did Homage to the Man
Who held his Conscience higher than their Praise:
And his Country
Heaped her Honours upon the Grave of the Patriot,
To whom, living,
His own righteous self-Respect sufficed
Alike for Motive and Reward.

Here is a tribute to a man who stoutly opposed his friends and neighbors when they clamored for secession. He stood alone as a Union man, undismayed and unmoved by their disapproval. He went to his grave while the war to settle whether secession should be an accomplished fact or not was still hanging in the balance. And while the Union artillery was turning its fire on Charleston, March 10, 1863, James Petigru's funeral was conducted here at St. Michael's, amid honor and acclaim from his fellow citizens. They could not agree with him but they respected his integrity and his courage. This memorial was erected by his daughter Caroline, who composed the famous epitaph in collaboration with William Henry Hurlbut, Editor of the *New York World*. Mr. Jonathan Daniels, in *A Southerner Discovers the South*, calls this "the best statement I know of the aristocratic ideal, which remains as important as it always has been rare in the South as on earth."

Solitary as Judge Petigru was in his allegiance to the Union and his hatred of secession, yet in a sense he was a true Charlestonian. Stiff-necked independence was the characteristic quality of this city from its earliest days. It seceded from the Proprietors in 1719, from the English Crown in 1776, and from the United States in 1860. James Petigru only went a step farther down the

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the stair within. The house illustrates one of the innovations of the early nineteenth century, that of the half-octagon bay on the south side. The only piece of restoration work is the doorway, which was executed by the present owners, Mr. and Mrs. Francis J. Pelzer.

To sum it up, the newer architecture brought in long piazzas, curved or octagonal bays, oval rooms, flying staircases, slender pillars, and delicate ornamentation, though at the same time it kept the older classical note in its decoration, and its pillars and doorways. This, too, was the great age of wrought-iron gates and balconies. What we think of as the most distinctly Charlestonian architecture came into being during these years that we call "early Republic."

There was also an important change in the educational tradition. Since the Revolutionary War had broken the old ties with England, it ceased to be the custom for a young man to go to the Mother Country for his education. Some went North to college, but there developed a need for some center of learning nearer home. This led to the founding of Charleston College, which was built on the site of the old brick barracks used by the American troops during the siege of Charleston. In fact, the east wing was utilized for a part of the new building. Here, in 1794, the first class was graduated—four in all. Since then it has maintained an honorable history and still has a reputation for old-fashioned scholarship, which might well be envied by many a larger and richer institution. It was the first municipal institution in the United States. Visitors may see it on the square between Green and George streets, one more of those Greek temples of which the city possesses so large a store.

Early education was, as elsewhere before the days of free pub-

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lic schools, largely in the home. The lessons in good manners, religion, and the three R's were all learned, as the old saying went, "at the mother's knee." Probably if our commentator, Charles Fraser, were alive today he would make the observation that the twentieth-century child learned nothing at his mother's knee except possibly that there was a run in her stocking.

The second war with England happily brought no invasion in South Carolina, no second repetition of siege and destruction in the city itself. But here, as in the North, the British fleet blockaded the coast tightly. The miseries of the embargo before the war were intensified by the blockade after war began, and again the commerce of the city was wrecked. But this conflict lasted only two and a half years instead of eight, and with the return of peace there was a quick rebound to the old prosperity. The greatest personal tragedy in the city in this War of 1812 was the mysterious fate of **Theodosia Burr Allston**, the wife of the Governor of the state and daughter of a man who once came within an ace of being President of the United States. This story we touched on in passing through Georgetown.

The post-Revolutionary period in Charleston opened with the visit of President Washington. It may be said to close with that of two other famous figures associated with the Revolution. One of them was another President, the Virginian, James Monroe, the head of the nation in the "era of good feeling." The other was the young French Marquis so closely attached to Washington during the war, Lafayette.

Monroe's visit occurred in 1819. He traveled the same route as Washington had nearly thirty years earlier, and he was accompanied by South Carolina's favorite son, John C. Calhoun, whom Monroe had made his Secretary of State. Monroe's cavalcade

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On the other hand, all through this nineteenth-century, ante bellum era the town evidently looked old, dirty, and shabby, with an air of decay despite its unexampled wealth. Ralph Waldo Emerson, the year after he graduated from college, which was the same year that brought Lafayette to America, came hither and dismissed the subject by a devastating phrase, "the wretched aspect of Charleston." In 1838 Fanny Kemble, the famous English actress, stopped at Charleston on her way to her husband's plantation in Georgia. Her comment was:

The city is highly picturesque, and although pervaded with an air of decay, it is a genteel infirmity, as might be that of a distressed elderly gentlewoman. It has none of the smug primness of the northern cities but a look of state as of quondam wealth and importance, a little gone down in the world, yet remembering its former dignity.

When Sir Charles Lyell, the distinguished English scientist, came here in 1841, he arrived at the end of December. A citizen congratulated him on not having come in the summer, for then, he added in a burst of candor, the city "stinks so intolerably."

It is still hard to understand why a community riding on the top wave of prosperity should have allowed itself to give to every stranger this impression of dirt, decay, and departed grandeur. Another traveler of the year 1853, Frederick Law Olmstead, made this comment in his book, *Journey in the Seaboard Slave States*:

Charleston, more than any town in the North, has the character of an old town, where careful government and the influence of social organization has long been in operation. It is much more metropolitan and convenient than any other Southern town; and yet it seems to

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have adopted the requirements of modern luxury with an ill grace. . . . I saw as much close packing, filth and squalor in certain blocks inhabited by laboring whites in Charleston as I have witnessed in any Northern town of its size, and greater evidences of brutality and ruffianly character than I have ever happened to see among an equal population.

Evidently there was a great gulf fixed between the ruling class and the rest of the white citizenry, even as there was one between them and the blacks, both free and slave. Behind those high garden walls and wrought-iron gates, and inside those handsome doorways there went on a life urbane, cultivated, and as cheerfully unconscious of the rest of the city as if these leading citizens were the aristocrats of the court of Louis XVI.

It actually was a polished, cultivated upper class, that prized the things of the spirit more than the mere acquisition of wealth. Although money came easily in those days, Charleston society had none of the vulgarity of the *nouveaux riches*. They built up a strong tradition of regard for education and for statesmanship, and cherished a *noblesse oblige* in their manners and morals. They applauded talent in the arts, too, but preferred that it should be kept on an amateur basis. For instance, the Allstons were horrified when they discovered that their son Washington was dabbling in paints of his own manufacture. They banished him to Newport, Rhode Island, to get the silly idea out of his head and prepare himself for some respectable calling like the law. When Charles Fraser, who was actually bred to the legal profession, dropped it in order to devote his life to painting, polite circles were scandalized. To take a fee for services in law or medicine was quite gentlemanly, but to sell a picture—that was like selling a yard of muslin—you sank to the level of a

meant business he sent General Winfield Scott, with a body of troops, to Fort Moultrie, and the frigate *Constitution*, under Commodore Elliott, to Charleston harbor.

Meanwhile some of the Union men in Charleston sent a delegation to Jackson to say that the city was daily threatened with an armed outbreak, and that they did not consider their lives safe.

"The lives of Union men not safe while Andrew Jackson is President?" roared Old Hickory. "Go back to Charleston and tell the Nullifiers that if a hair of the head of a Union man is harmed, that moment I order General Coffee to march on Carolina with fifty thousand Tennessee volunteers, and if that doesn't settle the business—by the Eternal!—that I take the field myself with fifty thousand more!"

But it all blew over peacefully. Some of the Union men of the city were of the highest standing, such as Judge Huger, Colonel Drayton, Joel R. Poinsett—a close friend of the President—Henry Middleton, James R. Pringle, James Petigru, and others. It did not hurt men like these to be taunted as "Submissionists." The other faction, the "Fire-eaters" or State Rights men, might have gone the limit at this time but for the influence of their leader, Calhoun, who, though he had created the crisis more than any other one man, did not wish to bring on civil war or destroy the Union. He advised his followers to be prudent and patient.

Meanwhile General Scott and Commodore Elliott were entertained as distinguished guests by the very people they were sent down to subdue, and both made themselves great favorites in the drawing rooms of Charleston. The crisis was finally saved by Henry Clay, the "Great Pacificator," as he was called, who of-

fered a bill for the gradual reduction of the tariff, to begin immediately. As Calhoun instantly approved the proposal, the whole hullabaloo died down.

Clay's solution was a face-saving device for the Carolinians, who were thus able to claim a victory, but Jackson probably would have liked better to go to the mat on the issue then and there. He didn't like compromises, and he saw better than the rest that such a solution did not solve the problem. "It's tariff now," he said prophetically, "but by and by it will be slavery." Perhaps he was right. If the whole nullification and secession doctrine had been pushed to a showdown in 1833, it would have been killed once for all. At that time South Carolina stood alone. None of the other slave states offered to stand with her in defiance of the Federal government, although the tariff shoe pinched them as much as it did South Carolina. Instead, by Clay's soothing-sirup remedy, the doctrine was permitted, if not encouraged, to grow and spread until a generation later it involved the greatest civil war in history.

It is interesting to note that in this tense period the leaders of the state—and that still meant the city of Charleston—were not the grandees of the old city aristocracy. They were no longer Rutledges and Pinckneys, and none of them were city-born. Calhoun, the idol of Charleston, was born in the country of middle-class people. Andrew Jackson's parents were still planter. Hayne also was born on a plantation and worked his way up to leadership by his own efforts. The same was true of James Petigru, who came from the same district as Calhoun.

Another State Rights man who in his day attained to great influence in politics was Robert Barnwell Rhett. He was born at Beaufort, and under the name Smith. He and his brothers, decid-

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Pryor of Virginia, were serenaded. So in Charleston, on December 20, 1860, a new nation was born, amid tumultuous rejoicing, the sovereign State of South Carolina.

The next day the *Courier's* editorial ran:

Thursday was a day destined to become famous in the annals of history. After long years of suffering and forbearance the people of South Carolina have thrown off the yoke of an odious and infamous union. We now stand before the world a disenthralled and regenerated people, a glorious example of the brave and the free. The chains that have so long oppressed us have been thrown off the limbs they have shackled, and consigned by patriots and the sons of Revolutionary sires to dust. . . .

And so on, in the flamboyant style of 1860.

The same issue describes the celebration of the night before. One "brilliant and prominent feature was the cheerful and strikingly beautiful light which illuminated the Secession Pole at the corner of Hayne and Meeting Streets. This light was reflected from one of Jones' Patent Burners, and furnished from the establishment of our well known fellow citizen, Mr. B. Schultz, 129 Meeting Street. . . ." This was "highly creditable to Mr. Schultz whose efforts to please have certainly the most praiseworthy character." Thus, even in that thrilling hour, the editor did not forget subscriber and advertiser, even as editors do in these more prosaic times.

It is true that the spirit of revolt and the demand for leaving the Union were far more general than the corresponding sentiment in 1776. It was nearly unanimous, but not quite, even in the city of Charleston. One dissenter was Benjamin Franklin Perry, who had fought nullification in 1832 and maintained the one and only Union paper in South Carolina in the era before

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the war, the *Southern Patriot*. He kept it going in the teeth of the bitterest opposition. He was the one South Carolina delegate who refused to quit the Democratic convention in 1860, and when the Ordinance of Secession was passed, he denounced it as "madness and folly." But he was a South Carolinian, and felt that his duty lay with the state. "You are all now going to the devil," he said to the jubilant secessionists, "and I will go with you. Honor and patriotism require me to stand by my state, right or wrong." Another protestant was that James Louis Petigru whose epitaph we read in St. Michael's churchyard. He was the leader of the Unionists in Charleston during the crisis of 1832. In 1860 he was with the convention meeting in Columbia. Evidently, for some reason, they assembled in the Baptist Church, for when a stranger asked him where the insane asylum was located he pointed to the building where the delegates were gathered, and said: "It looks like a church, but it is now a lunatic asylum; go right there and you will find 164 maniacs within." When in Charleston the next day he heard the bells of St. Michael's, he thought they meant a fire alarm. On being informed that the peal was celebrating the signing of the Ordinance, he cried: "I tell you there *is* a fire; they have this day set a blazing torch to the temple of constitutional liberty, and, please God, we shall have no more peace whatever." Later when, in church, the prayer was read for the President of the Confederacy instead of the President of the United States, he arose and stalked out. Lincoln had him in mind for an appointment to the Supreme Court, but circumstances soon made that impossible.

The example set by South Carolina in the city of Charleston was followed by other slave states, though here and there individual men stubbornly fought against secession. "Are the