

annoyed at our cutting short the five months illness he had foretold before convalescence should begin ; but he heeded not my request, and we are still his debtors for a few francs.

I doubted not that we should find regular liners, sailing packets, from Bordeaux, the third sea port in France, to New York or some other portion of the United States ; and began my enquiries accordingly. Imagine my surprise, when I was told that such were unknown in these waters ! Behold me then in a boat, rowing about the broad Gironde, which forms the harbour of Bordeaux, and boarding every vessel that was outward bound to the New World. There were three only ! One of them was a little Swedish vessel, which I remember because it was painted green, from the mast head to the keel, and was called by some name which sounded like “ The Twistedellen ”, and which was so small, that I would not go on board ; and another from New York, which would sail about a fortnight before I could be ready to go. I asked the captain, if he could not defer his voyage, and he frankly replied : “ Well, now ; if you make it worth a captain’s

while not to put to sea, I guess he can always find something in his boat to keep him a week or so longer ; but I can't wait a fortnight."

At length, I found a French vessel called the " Belle Assize ", which had been just built by Messrs. Rothschild, and was to start about my time, on her first voyage with a cargo of claret to New Orleans. She was a beautiful vessel, apparently too roomy in her bulk to be a fast sailer ; but with excellent accommodation for a few passengers. The officers were a superior class of men, taken from the republican navy ; for, in those days, there was a republic with a president in France. New Orleans was not the part at which we wished to land ; but as we had planned to spend the next winter at St. Louis, it mattered little whether we should land at New Orleans, and go up the Mississippi ; or whether we should reach it from New York, and descend the king of rivers on our return to Europe. The terms were soon agreed upon, and we began our preparations.

I had much difficulty in finding at Bordeaux any modern map of the United States : those

which the stationers offered me as most recent, showed only wilds and rivers, where I knew several new states to have been founded; and I wish here to record my thanks to the United States Consul at Bordeaux, who invited me to his rooms, that I might study, as often as I pleased, his great map of the Union; and who gave me much information with frankness and cordiality. It seems familiarly strange to me now, (sitting, as I am, at my window at Leghorn, and overlooking the green Mediterranean,) it seems familiarly strange to me now that little sketch of the Central States of North America which lies beside me in my pocket book, as I then copied it from the consul's map, and could hardly realise the magnitude of the localities I was so soon to travel over!

We had one fatiguing day's work at the French custom house. In order to export our plate from the country, and recover the deposit, (forty-four francs on every kilogramme) which is required on all old English plate brought in for private use, it was necessary that the whole should be verified. Behold then our three chests opened, and their contents laid out on

the dressers and tables of the custom house ; behold little spoons and great spoons ; little forks and great forks ; behold knives and dishes and corner dishes and cream ewers and all the apparatus of English breakfast and dinner services, exciting the wonder and the smiles, and sometimes the admiration of the French employés as they sort each kind, and count and weigh it separately to ascertain whether, in number and weight, it corresponds with the receipt given when it entered the country ; behold them next count the whole number of pieces together, and weigh them in one lot to see if the totals correspond with their fractional entries ; behold them next replace them in the chests and weigh the chests, and then enclose the chests in canvas, cord and seal them with the leaden seal of the Douane, and again weigh them all as they lay ready for the voyage. What a labour it was ! However, this was the result, as they entered it in their books : “ Three cases, Nos. 16, 20, and 21, weighing together *brut*,” that is gross, “ 229 Kilos—stript 220 Kilos : containing 784 pieces of plate for table, weighing together real net weight 113

Kilos, 132 grammes, all having been used. Summary: brut weight 229; brut, but stript of canvass, 220. Recognised clear weight, 113, 132: 784 pieces." What a labour it was! The conclusion was satisfactory to them, and, what we more cared for, it was satisfactory to us; as we were able to receive again, so soon as they should be certified to be on board with the seals unbroken, the deposit required on entering France.

This, and other matters preparatory to our departure, were comfortably settled, and the agent for the *Belle Assize* brought in the draft of agreement for our passage. In it, was a stipulation that, if the captain should put into any harbour between Bordeaux and New Orleans, the maintenance of my family while there should be at our own cost. I demurred to this clause, and though assured that it was a usual formulary in the French passenger navy, I went to consult my wife upon it. In my absence, the agent and a clerk who accompanied him began talking together; and one of my children came and told me that they were expressing a doubt whether, on account