

SŌULÉ, Pierre, U. S. senator and minister to Spain, was born at Castillon, in the department of Gironde, twenty-six miles east of Bordeaux, in September, 1802, son of a judge and lieutenant-general in the army of the French republic. He was educated in the Jesuits' college at Toulouse and at Bordeaux, but at fifteen was involved in a conspiracy against the Bourbons and obliged to seek refuge in the Pyrenees, and to live as a shepherd for a year. After this he taught and studied in Paris, became a journalist there, was brought to trial in 1825 for an attack on the government, defended his conduct in a tone of lofty independence, and was sentenced to a fine and imprisonment in St. Pélagie. He escaped to England, went to Hayti in the fall of 1826, and thence wandered to Baltimore, to New Orleans, to Tennessee, where he was entertained for a time by President Jackson, and to Bardstown, Ky., where he labored as a gardener and learned the English language. After severe experiences of poverty and varied hardship, he was admitted to the bar and to partnership in a legal firm at New Orleans, and rose to great eminence as a pleader. Entering politics as a states' rights democrat, he was sent to the Louisiana senate in 1845, and two years later to that of the United States to complete a vacant term. There he remained till 1853, and was noted for his oratorical powers and his advanced opinions. He speedily became a leader of the extreme southern faction, opposed the compromise measures of 1850, and was often pitted against Clay and Webster, who testified to his ability in debate. His career as minister to Spain, 1853-55, to which President Pierce sent him with a view to the annexation of Cuba, was rather sensational than successful. He severely wounded Turgot, the French ambassador, in a duel. was accused, though without proof, of complicity in the Madrid revolt of Aug. 28, 1854; withheld a treaty for reciprocity of trade with Cuba, which had been negotiated by the U. S. secretary of legation, and with James Buchanan and J. Y. Mason met in conference at Ostend and Aix in the fall of 1854, and put forth the famous manifesto which proposed the acquisition of Cuba by force in the event of Spain's continued refusal to sell the island. Disgusted with the failure of this plan, and scarcely a *persona grata* at the Spanish court, he gave up his post the following summer, resumed his practice at home and promoted the project of a Tehuantepec canal in Mexico. In 1860-61 he had ceased to be a "fire-eater," and opposed the secession of his state, foreseeing and predicting the sad results of a civil war. He went to Europe as an agent of the Confederacy, but soon came back, was arrested after the capture of New Orleans in 1862, and confined for some months in Fort Lafayette; served on Gen. Beauregard's staff in the defence of Charleston, and was made a brigadier for a special service, but accomplished nothing. He retired to Havana, took part in 1864 in Dr. W. M. Gwin's abortive plan to colonize Sonora in Mexico, returned to New Orleans after the war, and died there March 16, 1870.

