

XAVIER HERNANDEZ'S DEATH.

Born a Cuban Slave, He Served the
Old Hotel Griffou for 35 Years.

The death of Xavier Hernandez, for more than thirty-five years maitre d'hotel at the old Hotel Griffou, now the Hotel Europe, in West Ninth Street, may be news to members of the literary and artistic colony who have moved away from the vicinity of Washington Square, though the fact is known to all frequenters of the hotel who still live in that neighborhood.

Xavier was the last of those who were long and intimately connected with the old hotel. He was a Cuban negro, born a slave, and never doubted that he was the possession of the Griffou family, with whom he came to this country. He was devoted to the family and took delight in ministering to the wants of the regular patrons of the hotel.

During the Spanish war the hotel was filled with Cubans, some of whom were without means. The maitre d'hotel gave to these all he had, and when he had no more money and still knew that a compatriot was hungry, he would steal up to his room at night with food from the hotel larder.

The last of the Griffou family, Louis, disappeared about two years ago, following trouble about his license. The hotel was closed, but the old maitre d'hotel stuck to it. He hadn't been away from the house all night since he had arrived there. Old customers of the hotel maintained him. Then he went to St. Vincent's Hospital, to be treated for the illness of which he died, going back to the hotel for the holidays, when Oreste Giolito, the present proprietor, looked after him.

Early last Monday morning Xavier crept down to the room of a young Russian engineer and told him he was very ill. The engineer awakened Mr. Giolito, who rushed Xavier to St. Vincent's Hospital in a cab, where he died in fifteen minutes.

Mr. Giolito and two others were arrested by the police, who thought the case suspicious. They were released after spending seven hours in cells.

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