

CHAPTER XIII.

Sailing of the expeditionary army, under command of General Bolivar, from Aux Cayes to Margarita—Naval action on the 2d May, and how General Bolivar behaved in it—Events in the Island of Margarita—Arrival of the expedition at Carupano—Characteristic Anecdotes of General Bolivar—The author takes final leave of the service—what happened between General Bolivar and him at Aux Cayes and at Port au Prince. Year 1816.

The Haytian government made great advances to general Bolivar, in ammunition, provisions and money. President Pétion and his friend general Boyer, were very favorable to his expedition, whilst the corrupt and cunning Inginac, secretary of state, was, as I was assured, secretly an enemy to all whites, who had not money enough to gam him over. This despicable man, who is a white, as has been said, had done more harm to the whites than all the colored and black people of Hayti. He is too well known to many thousands and unworthy to be mentioned more.

Louis Biron, promoted to the rank of post captain, did more than any of us to fit out the squadron in a proper way. He was named commander of the navy, and employed his great credit and the remainder of his large fortune, to enable us to depart from Aux Cayes on the 10th April, 1816.

But scarcely had we arrived at the island of San Beata, when the whole squadron was detained by—a woman; it was no other than Miss *Pepa M—*, (the Spanish name of Josephine,) the dear mistress of general Bolivar. She alone, by her secret virtues, had the power to detain the whole squadron and about a thousand men, during more than 48 hours, at anchor!

The following particulars will explain this curious and notorious fact. General Bolivar is, like all his countrymen the Caraguans, greatly attached to the fair sex, and has usually with him, one, two, and more mistresses in his retinue, besides those whom he takes a fancy to in passing from one place to another. These amours last ordinarily 24 hours or a week; but Miss *Pepa* made a rare exception to the general's customary habits.

He had known her since 1813, during his dictatorship, at which time she had much influence over him, as I have already mentioned. When Bolivar arrived from Aux Cayes at Port au Prince, he found, unexpectedly, the two sisters, Helen and Isabella Soublotte, sisters of the famous general Charles Soublotte, which our readers know already; and in Aux Cayes he met mistress Valdes and her two daughters, where Bolivar regularly passed the greatest part of his time.

As soon as he was named commander-in-chief, by the assembly held at Aux Cayes, he wrote to Miss Pepa, who resided with her mother and sister at St. Thomas', to come and join him without delay. He expected them daily with great anxiety, and detained the departure of our expedition, from one day to another, during more than six days. At last commodore Brion, growing impatient, declared to him frankly, that it was high time to embark, and that he would not and could not wait any longer. Bolivar, therefore, was obliged to sail without his mistress, and we departed. Before we arrived at the island of La Beata, some leagues from Aux Cayes, a fast sailing pilot boat brought the lucky tidings to general Bolivar, that his dear Miss Pepa, mother and sister, had arrived from St. Thomas' at Aux Cayes. This letter caused a bustle on board the whole squadron. Bolivar immediately took commodore Brion, (on board of whom, he, general Florencio Palacios his cousin, intendant Zea and myself, with the officers of the staff, had embarked,) down into the cabin, where they remained a long time talking together. Brion was strongly opposed to waiting the arrival of Miss Pepa, with whom he had been already well acquainted at Caracas, but the entreaties of general Bolivar prevailed at last, and he consented to wait. The complaisant Paez,^{*} Anzoatiqui, and Soublotte, made a formal toilette, put themselves in uniform, and sailed in the fast sailing armed schooner, the Constitution, back to Aux Cayes, in search of the dear Miss Pepa. They were rewarded for their readiness to comply with the desires of their master; Anzoatiqui was promoted to the rank of lieutenant colonel, commander of the body guard of general Bolivar, and Soublotte, adjutant general colonel, attached to the staff.

When I and others of the foreigners heard this curious news, we were greatly mortified at such a proceeding, and declared loud-

^{*} This Paez, who was an aid-de-camp of general Bolivar, must not be confounded with general Paez of the Llaneros. They are not at all related or connected.

ly that we would leave a commander who compromised the welfare of so many thousands for such a motive. When Brion heard this determination, he urged me in very strong terms to remain, and said to me that if I were to leave the expedition, all the other strangers would, undoubtedly, follow my example, and he should be greatly disappointed at it. His entreaties were so urgent that I, at last, yielded, and promised him to stay; I persuaded the others to do the same, and not a single foreign officer debarked. But general Palacios, the cousin of Bolivar, with some other Caraguins, would not remain any longer, notwithstanding the entreaties of Bolivar himself, and were put on shore not far distant from the Haytian port of Jacquemel.

The majority of the officers composing this *expeditionary army* very much dissatisfied with being under the control of such circumstances, when activity and bravery alone, and not a woman, could save the country. From that time Bolivar sunk very much in my opinion, and that of others.

The composition of that *expeditionary army* which took afterwards the title of *liberating army*, was as follows: There were six generals, nine colonels, forty-seven lieutenant colonels, a chief of the staff, three adjutant general colonels, and eighteen officers of the staff; one commandant of the artillery, one intendant general, one secretary general of the intendancy, and a good number of the administration of the army; one commandant general of the cavalry, without taking into the account that each general had his aid-de-camps, a secretary, servants, and many their mistresses or wives; that each adjutant general and each colonel had his adjutant; that the number of majors, captains, and lieutenants amounted to about 500, and that we had for these epaulets not fifty soldiers. Each lady had either her mother, sisters or some other friend male or female, servants, and a good deal of baggage, which embarrassed greatly the manœuvring of the vessels. There were besides a number of families emigrants from Venezuela, who embarked at Aux Cayes in spite of the entreaties of commodore Brion, who was against the admittance of any female on board the squadron. When Miss Pepa arrived, she was never suffered to come on board of the commodore's vessel where general Bolivar, Zea, and myself, with the staff officers, except Charles Soublette, remained. This man, before we departed from Aux Cayes, had asked, as a favor from general Bolivar, that he should not embark in the same vessel where I was; he was ordered on board the *Constitution*, and remained with Miss Pepa; he never came on board of our vessel during our whole passage, in which

we had the visits of a number of other officers from the squadron. Miss Pepa arrived at last, on the third day, from Aux Cayes, where the Constitution was obliged to remain a whole day; this belle being not prepared to embark. Bolivar made his toilette in a superb style, and left our vessel to pay his visit on board the Constitution, where he remained the whole day and night, and came the next morning on board the commodore, who was, as well as myself, and the other officers, highly displeased at having lost about four days at anchor.

When we passed the city of St Domingo, at that time belonging to the Spaniards, the whole city was in alarm, believing we should attack them; we saw, from our deck, their bustle, and laughed heartily at their fears.

On the morning of the 2d of May, the squadron being not far distant from the three elevated rocks, known by the name of the Three Monks (*Los Tres Frailes*) not far from the island of Margarita, two Spanish men of war, a large brig, and a schooner were signaled. As our squadron had no colors at all, Brion ordered the Spanish flag to be hoisted on board of each of our vessels, so that the enemy believing it was his long expected squadron, took in sail and waited for us. But as soon as they perceived their mistake, the captain of the schooner, which was a fine and fast sailing vessel, pressed sail and left his commander, whose brig sailed not so well. Both tried to escape, but too late. Brion changed his colours and fired upon them. The brig was soon overtaken by our brig a fine and large vessel, armed with eight carronades and a brass 21 pound swivel. Three fast sailing schooners were detached from the squadron in chase of the Spanish schooner, which was taken some hours afterwards. It was the Spanish royal schooner *Rita*, with two carronades, 24 pounders, six 8 pounders, and one 18 pound swivel; commanded by the captain *Don Mateo Ocampo*, who was mortally wounded in the combat. The royal brig was the *Intrepido*, with 14 pieces of eight, and 150 men, sailors and troops, commanded by the brigadier *Don Rafael Iglesias*, who was wounded and then killed by our men, who took the vessel by boarding. They entered the cabin with drawn swords while the surgeon was dressing his wound, and killed him; the surgeon attempted to appease them and was murdered too. Such was the horrid character of this barbarous war.

Commodore Brion, who fought bravely, received a wound which was, fortunately, of no dangerous consequence, and was promoted, after the action, to the rank of admiral of the republic of Venezuela.

But how did general Bolivar behave in this pretty hot and close action, which lasted more than four hours? As soon as he heard that Brion had ordered the necessary preparations for attack, he took me aside and spoke as follows: "But, my friend, do you not think that the Spaniards will resist and fight to the last." "To be sure they will," replied I laughing. "Well, but do you think that our schooner is strong enough to fight alone against these two strong vessels, (at the same time looking at them through a spy glass,) we are too distant, and too far in advance, which renders it impossible for the remainder of our squadron to support us in the action." "That is true, (said I,) but we will take them by boarding; this is the customary way to force Spanish vessels." "What? by boarding, do you think of such folly?" (*¿y pensez vous mon cher Ami? c'est une folie!*) These were the very expressions of general Bolivar to me. "But what is it best for me to do? do you not think that if I were wounded, or killed, our expedition would be totally lost, and Brion, the poor Brion, would have expended in vain, all his fortune! I looked up astonished: it first occurred to me that he might be jesting; but when I saw that these strange questions were put to me in earnest, I understood him, called Brion and said: general Bolivar has made me a just observation concerning you, he said that he being wounded or killed in the action, you Brion, would lose all your advances, as then the expedition would, of course, be disbanded. "Oh the d—d coward," said Brion to me in Dutch; (he was a native Dutchman,) "Well general, (turning to Bolivar,) you will be safely placed with the intendant Zea, to whom I have assigned a place in our cabin, (in which Bolivar, Brion, Zea, and myself slept,) at the entry of the powder magazine, to hand the necessary cartridges. As Brion said these words in an angry manner, Bolivar asked him: But my dear Brion, do you not think that Ducoudray's observation is just, do you not think so? Oh yes, yes, said Brion, and turned round. I was giving the necessary orders to our officers to arm with muskets and cartridges, when Bolivar came hastily and took me by the arm, saying: "Now I have found an excellent place, better than to be down in the cabin with old Zea," (who looked, in fact, much older than he was, and he was the same man who died as minister of Colombia in England.) He showed me the longboat which, in armed vessels, is generally fixed over the cabin windows. He jumped in, called Garcia, (his intendant,) ordered his pistols, and sword, and told him to load two balls in each pistol, which Garcia did in my presence, and looking at me and laughing. This position which Bolivar chose for himself, was surely the safest place

in the vessel, then in setting as he did in the longboat, his head and whole body was safely protected by the thickness and strength of the beam which supports the rudder of the vessel. He sat down in the boat, and requested me to take command of the officers, which I provided with arms and ammunition, and Brion entrusted me with the command of the volunteers, so that I had to survey the whole infantry of about 160 armed men. A strange contrast between the old and honest Mr. Ballot, a respectable French gentleman of 64 years of age, taking a musket with his young son of 16 years, putting themselves voluntarily under my orders, in spite Brion's and my representations that they should go down into the cabin, and assist Mr. Zea. But both, full of ardour and courage, refused positively, and said that this was a post of honor, and that they would not have any other assigned to them. In comparing the behaviour of Ballot, father and son, who exposed, voluntarily, their lives, for the welfare of a country in which they were not born, and to which they did not come in order to fight, with that of a military chieftain, already famous, by his rank, and now placed at the head of an expedition, withdrawing himself in such a curious manner, when he should have taken the command of us all; we clearly see this characteristic trait of Bolivar, and an illustration of what I must repeat in the course of these memoirs of him. Both the Ballot's fought with great courage and coolness.

We suffered much during the very warm action, from the musket fire of about a hundred men of the Spanish regiment *La Corona*, who fired from the rigging into our vessel, and wounded and killed about fifty of our officers and men. We stood more than an hour at half pistol shot distance from the brig, before we could fix the grapples for boarding. When the crew saw about a dozen of us on their deck, the battle began to be renewed with more fury; but when our number increased, and their brave commander felt himself to be mortally wounded, they lost all hopes; and about thirty of them stripped off their clothes and jumped overboard, in hopes to save their lives by swimming to the Three Rocks which lay a gun shot distance from us.

At this moment, general Bolivar, having all this time been sitting very safe behind his beam in the long boat, perceived these naked unfortunate men swimming at a very short distance from him; he took his pistol and killed one of them, took the second, fired at, but missed another!

When all was over, and the brig was taken, he jumped out of his boat, came with a radiant face to me and said, "my dear friend, you fought bravely, but I too, have not been inactive; I killed my man; but unfortunately missed the second!" I, who passed several times from one side of the vessel to the other, always seeing my commander leaning his head close to the beam, was surprised, and asked him how he could kill a man in his boat? "Ah, said he, laughing, with my pistol, in the water!"

Such was Bolivar, in the action of the 2d May, 1816. I was there; I saw him, he spoke to me, and I commanded, in his place, our corps of officers and volunteers, who will testify to the truth of my plain statement, if they are any longer living out of Colombia, and not interested, and out of his reach.

On the third of May, the squadron entered the port of Juan Griego, in the island of Margarita, with her two prizes. General Bolivar fearing, not without some reason, that general Arismendy might not receive him or recognise his authority, after what had passed between Arismendy and the two dictators, Bolivar and Maimo, in August, 1814,* requested the new admiral, Louis Brion, who being wounded, was put immediately on shore, and the chief of the staff of the navy, a Frenchman, named M. Villarette, to speak with general Arismendy. Villarette, who was formerly acquainted with Arismendy, after a couple of hours' absence, returned on board, and said to Bolivar that the governor of Margarita, highly pleased with the success of our combat at sea, expecting soon to see the cause of liberty re-established on the Main, and filled with joy and hope, was reconciled with general Bolivar, and assured him of his respect and friendship.

One hour afterwards, Arismendy arrived on board to compliment the commander-in-chief on account of his safe arrival on the shores of liberty and independence, and of his naval victory, in which Bolivar took a very eminent part, as we have related. Bolivar embraced Arismendy with that kind of frankness and cordiality, which appeared so natural in him, took him by the arm, after having presented me, and the attendant, and invited him down into the cabin, where they remained alone more than an hour. They appeared, in mounting on deck, very well satisfied with each other, and Arismendy invited us,

* See chapter VII

Bolivar, Zea, Marmó, Piar and myself, to come on shore in the afternoon, where horses would be in readiness to convey us to the villa del Norte, the head quarters of Arismendy, at a distance of three leagues from the sea-port of Juan Griego. The governor himself received us at the latter port, with a numerous retinue, and in arriving on the public square at his head quarters, the troops received us under arms, and with military music. After a good and splendid dinner, the ball began, which lasted the whole night. But not a single word passed, which had any connexion with business; Bolivar was so totally engaged in dancing, of which he was passionately fond, that he thought of nothing else but the dance. I was in a very melancholy humor, recapitulating, in my mind, all that had happened from our sailing from Aux Cayes, and declined to dance, and formed a firm resolution to quit a man, whom I could by no means love or respect. I walked up and down in the public square, and was soon joined by general Arismendy, who was full of attention and kindness to me. I was astonished to find in him a frank and good man, who spoke of military matters and politics, with much more knowledge and sense than I ever heard general Bolivar. The latter, during about a month of our being in the same vessel, and very minute, never asked me a single question on military tactics, or any thing concerning our art. His great employment was to play backgammon with me, or with Brion, or Zea, to walk up and down on deck and talk on very common topics with one or another of his officers, or to sleep. I saw him in about a month's time, three times reading in a book; and when he did, it was the first one he found in our cabin; and this not half an hour at a time. His favorite topics were, with me and Brion, to speak of his stay in Paris, to give us detailed particulars of his good fortune in this capital, and sometimes he asked me many questions about Napoleon, the dresses of the ladies and gentlemen at court, and what kind of ceremonies were necessary to be presented, &c. &c.; another time, about his mustachos, and those of the officers, the modes of dress and uniforms in the French and English armies, but never could I speak a single word about military tactics, drills, &c. He stopped me immediately, saying, 'oh yes, yes, *mon cher ami*, I know that, I know that book is very well written, but tell me'—and then he asked me a very insignificant question on absolutely indifferent trifles, which gave another turn to our conversation.

One day I saw him walking, with a quick step, to and fro on deck, absorbed in thought, and melancholy. I came up and observed that he continued so a good while, without seeing or hearing any thing that passed around us. It was some days previous to our naval engagement. I at last accosted him and said with my usual frankness and familiarity to him: "what is the matter with you, my dear general, are you unwell, or has something happened?" "Oh no," replied he, "but we are approaching the island of Margarita, where Anismendy commands, and I fear this man and his character; he is obstinate and cruel." At that time I was totally unacquainted with what had happened between these two chieftains in August, 1814, and therefore I made some inquiries about Anismendy, his manner of acting, and character. "Oh *mon cher ami*, Anismendy is a very dangerous, ambitious man, who governs the island of Margarita with great despotism; he is an absolute brute, without any education or knowledge, and of low extraction." (I must mention here, that Bolivar thinks much of both and good families, and treated all those which were not of high birth, with the common phrase of,—"*he is of low extraction.*")

I was, therefore, much prejudiced against general Anismendy; but when I found in him a plain man, and one much better instructed in military matters than Bolivar himself, I was quite surprised. I had afterwards long conversations with him, which pleased me, and when some days later, general Bolivar made the inspection of what Anismendy had done against the Spaniards, I was highly pleased and observed that when Bolivar asked me, in an ironical style, what I thought of this or that fortification, or battery, or redoubt, and I approved of them, and expressed the reasons of the construction of these works, our commander-in-chief was not at all satisfied with my observations. Anismendy, who did not understand French, but asked me afterwards to explain to him in Spanish my observations, was satisfied, and took me more and more into his favor.

But as general Bolivar had deserted Venezuela in August, 1811, and New Grenada, in May, 1815, it was necessary that his authority should be re-established in his native land, by a formal and solemn acknowledgment of what the general assembly in Aux Cayes had stipulated in his favor. Anismendy was easily gained over by various secret conversations which Bolivar had with him on the matter, in which the former received the formal promise, that Bolivar would establish a National Congress at Venezuela, as soon as he should be master of the

country. This formal promise was given to him, as he had given it to us before his departure from Aux Cayes, and so Arismendy hesitated not a moment to call a general assembly, or Junta in the cathedral of La Villa del Norte, to which all the officers of our squadron were invited by an order emanating from Arismendy and Bolivar. The principal inhabitants of the island were assembled, and the clergy, in their sacerdotal dresses, were kneeling before the altar, reciting prayers in a low voice, for the welfare of the republic. When all were assembled in church, the mass began, and afterwards the numerous clergy remained kneeling before the altar in silence and in prayers. These religious ceremonies, mixed with politics, were generally used by the Spanish leaders; and then Juntas and great assemblies were always held in churches. The patriots have continued this custom.

When the mass was over, general Arismendy delivered a long speech, in which he recommended our union, and the necessity of having one single chieftain, and related what had happened in Aux Cayes, and the election made of general Bolivar, whom he now recommended to his army to recognise and obey, as he, Arismendy, did. He then approached general Bolivar, and delivered him the wand of commander-in-chief. (a small reed with a golden head,) and proclaimed him solemnly, commander-in-chief of the republic of Venezuela and New Grenada, which were to be re-established. Bolivar then delivered a speech, in which he declared his acceptance of the wand of commander, which Arismendy had given him up. He concluded by promoting a great many of the natives to be officers in the land troops, but not a single foreigner belonging to this army was promoted, notwithstanding that a good many had distinguished themselves, particularly in the action of the second of May.

By particular and urgent request of the newly promoted and wounded admiral Brion, some few promotions were made among the foreigners belonging to the navy. I was highly displeased not to be promoted, when I could say with truth, that I had distinguished myself in the combat of the second of May, had taken Bolivar's place and the command of our officers, while Bolivar sat very safely in his long boat, and out of all danger. Many of my friends among them Brion and Zea, were astonished to see me not at the head of these promotions, having seen me at the head of the officers and volunteers, and mounting, one of the first, to enter the enemy's vessel Chypia. Martinez and

Anzoatigu, who were in the action under my orders, one of whom withdrew himself for fear of the balls, were promoted. Charles Soublotte, being a mile distant from the battle, on board the Constitution with Miss Pepa, was, notwithstanding, promoted to the rank adjutant-general-colonel in the staff. But these four were natives, and the most servile flatterers of general Bolivar.

After these promotions, a solemn *te deum* was sung in honor of the battle of the second of May, and on the present occasion under artillery salutes, &c.

This behaviour of general Arismendy was very honorable to him, as it was easy to take general Bolivar's place, at a time, where he alone was four times as strong as Bolivar, and when, as is generally known, he had much more energy and patriotism, much more knowledge and personal bravery, than ever Bolivar had possessed. Arismendy was well informed that Bolivar had treated him in his manifesto, published in Carthagena, in September 1814,* as an intriguer and an ambitious man, who contrived to take his place; he knew perfectly well the character of Bolivar, his ambition, jealousy, and his despotism as dictator, having been a long time governor of the city of Caracas. But Bolivar, since his first interview with Arismendy on board the Commodore, had captivated the simple and plain mind of the governor of Margarita, who saw his ancient master surrounded with vessels and power, and heard his brilliant and formal promises to assemble a congress as soon as matters were a little settled on the Man, and yielded to his promises, as Buon, and many others of us had done before.

I was, I must confess, highly displeas'd with all these events, and sleeping in the same room with general Bolivar from the beginning of our arrival at La Villa del Norte, in the house of a Mr. Galindo, I reproach'd him with good reason for not having kept his promises, so solemnly given to me in Aux Cayes, to give me my rank of general, as soon as we should arrive in a country of his own, which was free and independent. He jumped out of his hammock, and coming near my field bed said, taking my hand, that it was not his fault, but that he dared not promote any of us strangers, for fear Arismendy and other chieftains might be jealous of our promotion, that his authority was not yet sufficiently established to dare to take such

* See Chapter VIII

a step; that, nevertheless, he would do so, as soon as we should arrive on the Nam: and that then, no consideration should prevent him from rendering me justice, &c. &c.

I reproached him with Soublette's promotion, known by every one as a coward and a vile man, and very much disliked by his own countrymen, declaring that after what had passed in Aux Cayes with him, I could never admit him to be employed in my offices of the staff, which were, as usual, established in a room opposite to our bed chamber on the same floor; and added that Soublette, in the action of the 2d May, was a mile from the battle, on board the Constitution, and had not smelt the powder of our own guns, and still less that of the enemy's. He gave me a singular reply, in the mouth of a commander-in-chief: "I could not pass Soublette in the general promotion published this afternoon in the church, he belongs to one of the best families in Caracas, and as I promoted Chypia and Martinez to the rank of adjutant-generals-colonels in the staff, who were younger lieutenant-colonels than Soublette, I was obliged, of course, to promote Soublette."

I saw clearly by this conversation, the weakness of such a commander, appeared satisfied, and having once embarked with him, I took patience and remained.

On the day of his being received as commander-in-chief of the armies of Venezuela and Caracas, in the island of Margarita, he published a proclamation, in which he said, "he had not arrived to conquer, but to protect the country, and that he invited the inhabitants of Venezuela to unite and join him, if they would be considered by their *Liberators* as pure and good patriots. I have not arrived," continues he, "to dictate laws to you, but I advise you to hear my voice, I recommend to you union in the government, and *absolute liberty* for all classes, in order that you may not commit any more *absurdities* and *crimes*! But you cannot be *freemen* and *slaves* at the same time, if you form no more than *one single mass* of the whole population; if you choose a *central government*—(Simon Bolivar!) if you join us, you may rely upon a sure victory." This proclamation is signed by Bolivar, and dated, "Villa del Norte, Island of Margarita, May 3d, 1816."

Here is a new instance of the pompous style of Bolivar's proclamations, who repeated his illusory promises as he did in 1813, and as he has not ceased to do from that time to the present day. "*Liberators, liberating army, central government, advisers,*" &c. &c. resounded from one end to the other.

in all his proclamations. We shall soon see whether the inhabitants of Venezuela could rely upon a sure victory, and whether he acted as he promised.

When the Spaniards were apprised of our arrival in the Villa del Norte, they evacuated, on the same night, the capital, Villa del Assumption, and the famous Spanish coward, Mr. Miguel de La Torre, retired precipitately into the forts of Pompatari.

At our landing at the port of Juan Griego, Arismendy, Bolivar and I were talking, when I heard suddenly the discharge of musketry. I turned round to see what caused this firing. Bolivar told me smiling, "it is nothing, my dear friend, (speaking with me always in French.) general Arismendy has ordered some Spanish prisoners, landed from our squadron, to be shot." These unfortunate men were, in landing, tied together, while others made a large hole, before which they kneeled down and were shot in the back, so that they fell into their grave, which was immediately filled with earth. It happened that many of them, not receiving deadly wounds, were buried alive in this manner.

When admiral Bruon, detained in bed by his wound, heard of this, he gave the formal order to suffer no more of the Spanish prisoners to be landed, and saved the lives of about fifty Spaniards, who were humanely treated and put to useful employments. So should general Bolivar have acted, instead of Bruon. It would have cost the former no more than a representation to Arismendy to save them; he only smiled at the honors which I expressed for a barbarous act committed in cold blood.

The next day after his installation as commander-in-chief, Bolivar, in his proclamations, and in his official transactions, took the following titles: "Simon Bolivar, general-in-chief, captain-general of the *liberating* armies of Venezuela and New Grenada, *supreme chief* of the republic of Venezuela, commander-in-chief of the land and naval forces," &c. &c. &c. without having conferred upon him the right to name himself supreme chief, which made a very bad impression on all the foreigners who came with us from Aux Cayes. As I had promised to Bruon to remain, I made my best exertions to quell and appease these officers, and succeeded. We were absolutely destitute of every thing; the small and rocky island of Margarita was unable to furnish us the necessary provisions; the vessels were in want of rations for the crew, so that each offi-

cer and private, had a scanty ration, consisting of a little cake of indian meal, not weighing two ounces, called *arepa*, and two small salted fishes, and nothing else! We, general and staff officers, dined with general Artunduendo, but our table was surrounded by at least 50 hungry officers not belonging to the staff, who took from our table what they could reach, so that many of the company rose without being able to satisfy their own hunger. There was no money, no clothes, nor any thing but great confusion and misery!

The 25th May the squadron departed from Margarita, Brion having recovered from his wound, and arrived the 31st before the large borough of Carupano, the port of which was protected by a fort, called Sta. Rosa, upon which the Spanish colors were displayed. I have related in Chapter first, how it was taken. The patriots found a fine merchant brig and schooner, belonging to the Spaniards, with a rich cargo in each. The greatest part of the inhabitants having fled, left their stores filled with provisions and dry goods, which were plundered and disappeared in 24 hours. The confusion and disorder were very great, and no precaution was taken to distribute any of the provisions in a regular way, but each one took what he pleased, and destroyed or left the remainder. I offered to make magazines, and station guards and sentries, in order to save them, and to distribute regular rations; but Bolivar told me, laughing, "that these guards would give the first example of taking what they chose, and that all would be useless." I was highly disgusted, and had already, in Margarita, asked my absolute discharge from such a service, but remained against my will, Bolivar declaring to me in a friendly but positive manner, that it was impossible for him to grant me my request. After some day's stay at Carupano, I did the same, but was again refused.

The consequences of this disorder were, that after some days we had no provisions, and that some maladies reigned in the barracks, where the ordinary filthiness of this people, joined to the want of sufficient and wholesome food, introduced a great many diseases of which a great number died. It would have been an easy task for Bolivar to have delivered his country, in a short time, if he would have followed my advice; at that time the Spaniards, struck with panic terror at our sudden arrival, retired in great haste towards Valencia and evacuated the whole of the extensive territory from Carupano to Cariaco and Gurra, so that the communication with Matumb by land, and through the gulf of Trieste, was entirely left free. I will

relate here some particulars which passed between general Bolivar and me, which will give still further illustrations of his talents and character.

At my first interview with Bolivar at Aux Cayes, he promised to give me my rank as general, which was due to me, having sent my commission through the regular channel of the president and general-in-chief of the republic of Cartagena to the congress of New Grenada, as I have already stated. We arrived at Margarita where other officers were promoted, and I was passed over, as I have mentioned. We arrived at Carupano, a place lying on the Main, declared free and independent by our presence and that of Bolivar. After having reminded him of his promise already given, and after having said that I cared not much about a piece of paper, (meaning my commission,) which gave me not a cent of pay, nor any solid advantages; I added, that it was just I should not be degraded by the title of a colonel, when I had deserved my ancient rank, by my services at Cartagena, Boca Chica, at Aux Cayes, in the action of the 2d May, and since, at Margarita, and here on the Main; and, moreover, when I saw that Soublette, whom he himself knew to be a coward, ranked with me, who was an old veteran, not only covered with wounds, but deserving, for having some claims on account of the services I had rendered, my former rank, &c. &c. I spoke very warmly and strongly, and Bolivar, taking me by the hand, gave me again his formal promise, that after the next action, when he could promote others, I should be the first named. He added so many obliging and friendly promises, that I was again foolish enough to rely upon his word and remained.

In my frequent and long conversations with general Bolivar, I spoke to him often of the necessity of instructing the officers, who were in general very ignorant in the elementary principles of the military art, and proposed to him to establish schools for instruction in the theory and practice of forming depots and to drill recruits, a commission to examine the foreign officers who wished to enter the service; to be authorised to judge of the merits and the talents of the officers in general, of their behaviour in action, in order to recommend them for promotion, &c. I told him frankly that nothing was more degrading for an officer of honor, than to depend upon favor, flattery and protection, or the caprice of one single man, by which talents and modesty were often put aside, while intriguers and flatterers, cowards and ignoranuses, were advanced and put at the head

of men, who knew a thousand times better how to command. "And now see," pursued I, growing warm, "that general Mar — what can he know, how will he command fifty men, is he able to do it?" "Oh; *mon cher ami*," interrupted general Bolivar, laughing, "you are perfectly correct, he cannot even command *four men*." After various conversations upon these and other military matters, with general Bolivar, he named a kind of special council of war, being at Aux Cayes, in which the military and administrative operations were freely debated. It was composed of Bruon, Marino, McGregor and myself, Bolivar presiding. A commission was also established, to examine the pretensions of the foreign officers, in which I presided, composed of generals Piar and McGregor. At the first session held in my house, some foreign officers made objections to showing their commissions, but I stopped them, saying that we were assembled here by special command of general Bolivar, and that I would begin by obeying his orders. I immediately took from a drawer before me, my commission from the government of Carthagena, and ordered it to be passed round. So did Piar and McGregor, and nobody afterwards made the least difficulty. But as soon as we had arrived at the island of Margarita, every thing was forgotten, and Bolivar alone acted as he pleased.

When at Carupano, where we stayed much longer than I expected, I again urged general Bolivar to establish a school for the instruction of the officers in theory and practice, which he at last consented to. I proposed for instructor, a lieutenant colonel Schmidt, who had served under my orders at Barcelona, when I was the commander of the head quarters of the marshall McDonald, duke of Tarentum, governor of the citadel, &c. He was an able officer and highly pleased with my proposition. General Bolivar authorised me to put on the order of the day, "that every officer of infantry should assemble at such a place, hour and day fixed in my orders, to receive the necessary instructions from colonel Schmidt: That those who should not comply with the present order, without a well grounded reason, would expose themselves to be arrested and sent for 24 hours to the fort of Sta. Rosa. During several days this school was well attended by the officers, of whom a great many distinguished themselves by their zeal to learn. I must state here once for all, that the majority of these young officers were good, docile, and willing to obey, as soon as they were well treated and commanded, and that I never had to complain

of, or to punish any of them. It would not have been the case here, if some invidious, vile individuals, had not tried to make all my actions, my words and my orders, ridiculous and suspected, not in my presence, but always in my absence. One day colonel Schmidt came to complain that the officers began to be very neglectful of their duties, and that a great many came not at all. I mentioned this to general Bolivar, who authorised me to renew and sharpen the order; but by and by the same neglect was complained of by Schmidt. I said now to Bolivar, that it was high time to punish, if we would not lose all authority, discipline, &c. He approved, and authorised me to act in accordance to the existing order. I entered the next day into the large room where the officers were drilled, accompanied by some of my officers, and saw a small number of them assembled in comparison of other days, when I came to assist at their drills. I asked for the roll, on calling over which I found that among about 100, 36 were absent, of whom 15 had no excuse at all. I ordered immediately the adjutants to arrest and put them for 24 hours in the fort, and sent a written order to colonel Landeta, who commanded at Sta. Rosa, to give them leave to walk in the fort wherever they pleased, but to allow none to go out until the hour of the arrest was expired. Enclosed were the names of these officers. I reported all to general Bolivar, who approved it highly, notwithstanding his own nephew, captain Manuel Palacios, son of his sister, was among the arrested officers. Bolivar was very well satisfied and laughed, sitting in his hammock, when I told him that it was necessary to commence with his nephew's punishment, as giving to others a proof of his impartiality and justice. He finished, by approving highly my remarks and orders, and I left him well satisfied. This was about 11 o'clock in the morning. The same day, at 6 in the afternoon, arrived general Bolivar, with six or eight officers, at my house, and after having saluted me as usual, he took me by the arm, in my upper piazza, where we were alone, and spoke the following words to me: "You will never find out, *mon cher ami*, from whence I came just now. I have received a doleful note from my nephew Palacios, (which he handed to me for my perusal) who is in the fort, who urged me for his, and his companion's sake, to come and see him; I did, and come from Sta. Rosa, and can tell you that these poor devils (*les pauvres diables*) have requested me, in a very urgent manner, to pardon them, and to set them at liberty, and promised that they will never

more fail in their duty, &c. I told them that *I had not sent them to the fort*, but *you!* and that I would promise to go and make interest with you for them, and ask you to relieve them from their arrest." "What, general," said I, extremely surprised and shocked to hear him speaking these words, "it appears as if *I* was the only cause of their arrest, and as if *I* was the author of their punishment! How could you say that it is not *you* who have sent them to the fort, but *I!* Have you then not approved highly the daily orders for the army, published by me in *your name?* It is then *I*, who alone have punished them, and should you not have said that their punishment was the natural consequence of their disobeying *your* orders. Well, then, I see that I have nothing more to do here, I am of no use, when you cannot or will not support the authority given to me, without my request or my intriguing for it; I can remain no longer in a service where I cannot be of use," &c. &c. I was warm, and spoke fully determined to quit forever such a disgusting service. But Bolivar again entreated me so urgently to remain with him, told me that I should be always his good friend, that I was very useful to him, &c. &c. so that I embraced him and remained. The prisoners were released by a written order, sent by one of my aid-de-camps to colonel Landæta, and Bolivar departed after a full hour's stay at my house, very well satisfied. I must confess, I was not much satisfied, and took the firm resolution to punish nobody, to complain of nobody, and act, for a little while, in a very passive way, to see if at last, there would be any alteration in our curiously organised, or rather our totally unorganised *liberating* army, which counted not 800 men!

One day at Carupano I found Bolivar laying in his hammock alone, looking melancholy and dejected. His face was unusually pale and his eyes sunken. I asked him if he was sick; "Oh no, no, *mon cher ami*," (which was always his favorite term) not at all, but Marimo tenses me to go with Piar and twenty officers, to Guiria to recruit some more men; he wants me to give him 2000 stand of arms, ammunition and some flecheras, (large armed batges) to convoy him along the coast. But you know what we have to fear from these two generals; I am convinced they will try again to render themselves independent from me, which would renew the scenes of 1813 and 1814.*

* The reader will remember that Marimo, at that time, was dictator of the east and Bolivar of the west of Venezuela, and that the first acted entirely independently of the latter. We have seen the dreadful consequences of this rivalry. See chapter VI. and VII.

I know not indeed, how to act or what to do." If I were in your place, I would refuse their request under various pretences, of which you have so many, and never would I consent to let them be absent from you; then after what has passed in Aux Cayes,* you have certainly to fear that Marino, once detached from you, would try another time to shake the yoke from his shoulders. Brion who came in, heard my last arguments and confirmed not only what I had said, but spoke in much stronger and contemptuous expressions against Marino and Piar. Bolivar fully convinced and satisfied, promised to follow our advice.

Admiral Brion had never esteemed Marino, and said many times, that he and Piar were dangerous enemies to Bolivar. Marino indeed, never had been, nor could he be dangerous to the latter, for want of talents and character, as I shall fully show at the trial of Piar; but united with Piar, who was a colored man, a native of the island of Curacao, with Brion, he has done great mischief to Bolivar. Piar was an able partizan officer, brave, active, a secret enemy of Bolivar, who, like Brion, hated, in general, the colored men. Piar was the soul of Marino, and both were inseparable friends, so the much more dangerous to Bolivar, as Piar, the avowed friend of the constitution of the first Congress in Venezuela, in 1811, by which the colored people enjoyed the same rights as the whites, had often and loudly declared, that he wished not to see Bolivar uniting in himself alone, the three powers, but to have a Congress and good laws. Piar, who had fought various brilliant actions against the Spaniards, had a great many partisans, and was friendly and sociable with those who belonged to his family, and principally with officers of foreign countries, and colored people, who all liked to serve with him in preference to Bolivar, who was haughty and imperious. The insinuating and polite manners of general Marino, rendered him very popular, and he gained a great many partisans among the simple and uncultivated people, particularly in the provinces of Cinnana and Barcelona. Both

* San Jago Marino charged a colored captain, named Sobie, to find him 300 colored men, which should form the germ of his body guard, and who should be attached entirely to his service. Sobie, who had served under my orders at Boca Chica, and who was a brave and able officer, very much attached to me, came immediately to acquaint me with this strange commission, when I communicated to Bolivar the secret orders of Marino given to Sobie, he was alarmed and requested me to counteract this plan. I told Sobie to ask from Marino 300 doubloons, which was the ordinary engagement for 300 men, Marino had no money, and so all was finished.

knew perfectly well, that Bolivar hated them, but that he dissimulated this hatred; it was, therefore, very impolitic, even dangerous, to suffer the union of the two commanders, and their absence, in the position in which Bolivar was placed.

Recently arrived at Carupano, Bolivar was too confident that the inhabitants of Venezuela would again rise in his favor, as they did in 1813. But instead of it, they left their property and houses, and after a fortnight's stay, he could not count fifty recruits who came voluntarily to serve under his orders. His behavior as dictator, his flight, his abandoning them in the way he did in embarking at Cumana, had lost him their confidence, and many resolved and good patriots chose to keep at a distance from him, or to emigrate. Bolivar, knowing all these circumstances, and more, the great influence of Piar with the weak and ignorant Marino, should have, at least, retained Piar by giving him some honorable occupation; and he was well aware, as I told him, that Marino, without Piar, would have never been, by any means, dangerous.

Brian and myself were highly astonished to hear that these two chieftains had, at last, persuaded Bolivar to consent to their departure, to give them arms, ammunition, barges, officers, &c. They took with them the colonel-adjutant-general Chypia, the best engineer officer, and about twenty officers more. When I asked Bolivar how he could have granted this permission, he said that Marino urged him very much, had promised him to send a numerous body of men, and particularly a very good battalion of colored people, from the island of Guadaloupe, (about 400 men strong) which had, three years before, fought in the eastern provinces of Venezuela with great success, known in that country under the name of *battalion of Guiria*, &c. &c. But as soon as Marino had arrived in Guiria, he proclaimed himself general-in-chief, organised *his* army, *his* staff, named chief of the staff, colonel Chypia, and sent not a single man to general Bolivar, who was daily urging him in vain to join him, or, at least, to send him this battalion of Guiria. Nothing came. Bolivar, in fine, was no more joined by Marino nor by Piar.

I have said that we had a great many officers, and a very small number of soldiers. Then the 300 men embarked from Margarita with us to Carupano, had their officers, all natives, from that island. I one day proposed to Bolivar to give employment to these officers, and form a separate corps, which should be organised in companies, drilled, armed, &c. and employed as a guard of our head-quarters. He proposed to form

of them, at first, no more than one battalion of infantry, and a squadron of cavalry. Both proposals were highly approved of by general Bolivar. Three days afterwards, I was surprised to receive the reports of the commanders of the out posts established around our head quarters, that the commandant N. N. had passed with passports of the supreme chief, with such a number of officers, to go to such a place. The results of these different reports instructed me that five commandants or chiefs of a battalion, had absented themselves, with their respective officers, in search of recruits. I called immediately on the general with these written reports, and asked him if this was done by his order? He replied to me in a very cold and unusually dry manner, that having well reflected on the nature of my proposal, he found it *at present* inadmissible, and had thought proper to send these officers in search of recruits, and to have more forces. I objected to him that this measure might perhaps endanger the safety of these isolated officers, knowing well that the Spaniards had approached us, as far as San Jose, a small village at two leagues distance from our head quarters. He said there was no danger to be feared, and the officers went off! This change of mind in general Bolivar was caused, as I heard some days afterwards, by a conversation held at his evening assemblies in Miss Pepa's house, where Bolivar was ordinarily surrounded by his minions and flatterers, Soublette, Pedro Leon Torres, Anzoategui, Ferdinand Galindo, and others of the same description, in which they criticised the actions, orders, and innovations which I would introduce into their army. Soublette, a secret enemy of mine (the reader is instructed already for what reasons) distinguished himself more than any one of the rest, and was truly supported by Bolivar's mistress, Miss Pepa, and her mother, who could not endure me at all, because I had never visited them in Margarita, nor in Carupano. Bolivar himself told me frequently, in his ordinary jesting and laughing manner, that he many times took my defence against these ladies! They represented to the general that I was of a despotical character, that this stranger would introduce ridiculous innovations, to which they would never submit, that he, Bolivar, was very good to submit any longer to such counsel, and the influence which it appeared I had gained over him, &c. The others joined in chorus, and so it happened that Bolivar, at eleven o'clock in the night, gave the order to these commandants to depart with their respective officers. They committed so many disorders, that they were obliged to come

back without any forces at all, and so the same disorder remained ; nothing was done.

While we were in the island of Margarita, Bolivar observed to me that it appeared the foreign officers, in our service, were not satisfied to be with him. I told him frankly, that they had no reason to be so, they had no pay, no food, no means of subsistence ; but, added I, the worst of all is to be commanded by young and inexperienced officers, who are generals, colonels and lieutenant colonels, and who, by their great inexperience, exposed them to lose, not only the battle, but their lives, without being allowed to make any dispositions, or to give salutary advice. &c. &c.

As I was by office, age, and services, the most elevated, and the most in general Bolivar's mimicry, these officers came frequently to see me, and to ask my advice on different occasions ; and so I was very well acquainted with their various claims and dissatisfactions. Among them were a great many officers, French, English, Germans, Poles, who had served with distinction in Europe, and some during 20 and 25 years, and who knew twenty times as much as these officers born in the country.

The just observations of the officers inspired me with the idea, to make their services useful *in their own way*, viz. to create a corps of foreign troops, commanded by foreign officers, under the name of *legion of Venezuela*. Shortly after our arrival at Carupano, I one day found Bolivar in good spirits and alone. We talked a great deal on indifferent topics, and after a while, I introduced my plan of the creation of a foreign legion with the necessary amendments and organization, adapted to our kind of war, the country, and the resources which we could reasonably expect. I said to him, frankly, that our army, so called, was nothing more than a collection of armed men, very ill organized, clothed, drilled, instructed, and not paid at all, &c. I entered, with my usual warmth and frankness, into all the great advantages of having such a corps of men, already acquainted with war, able to beat all the Spaniards, who recruited two-thirds of their soldiers among the natives, and finished by proposing to him to make an essay with 1500 men, of which 1000 should form two battalions, one of riflemen or chasseurs, and the other of grenadiers, 500 divided into two squadrons of light cavalry, and two companies of light artillery of 100 horse each. These 1500 men could, after a while, be increased by mixing natives among them, to a full third, half or more, by giving to each company so many more natives, but

all commanded by experienced commissioned and non-commissioned *foreign* officers. I am certain, added I, that were these troops well commanded and treated, we should have in one year, 3000 of them, as each of them could write to his unfortunate countrymen, how well they were among us, and so would we be able to finish the war in a very short time, but with the express condition that nobody else than you, general Bolivar, should have the right to interfere with them.

General Bolivar heard my long demonstration with unfeigned pleasure, jumped from his hammock, shook hands with me, and said that my plan was so excellent, that we would continue to talk together over a good bottle of Bourdeaux wine, a present from one of the merchant vessels arrived from St. Thomas'. He called Garcia, his intendant, and ordered him to bring the wine into his bed chamber, and to say to his aid-de-camps that he would not be interrupted by any one. After having drunked my health, he sat down next to our small table, and said, smiling: "but, *mon cher ami*, your plan is good, but one trifle is wanting." What? said I. "The money, we have not a cent, and are as poor as Job." I said to him that the battalion of Guina having arrived, (which deserted Manno, and took by force some flecheras to come over to us) the same battalion of more than 400 colored men, from Guadaloupe, which had been already used to our manner of carrying on the war in this country for more than two years, of which I have spoken before, we could have, by adding the officers of different nations present, about 500 men already assembled here, that I had had different conversations with colonels Bidot and Boe, of whom the former had assured me, that with eight or ten dollars for each man engaged, and his passage paid, he would find easily between Martinique, Guadaloupe, St. Thomas', St. Bartholemeus', &c, more than 500 men, and that the other 500 would be procured, by sending to the United States of America. In regard to expenses, Bruon, with his credit, could be of great use; he had also a good quantity of merchandise, found in the two captured Spanish vessels, and in the stores left by their owners; the two merchant vessels might be sold; all of which would afford more than sufficient means to raise, by exchange, the necessary money, without counting a good cargo of mules, asses, cacao, tobacco and other produce of the country, which could be collected and shipped. There should be named honest agents, and able men, with the necessary knowledge of the country to which they were to be sent, in order to collect re-

sources and recruits. Bolivar said I was perfectly correct, and the more he heard me, the more he was convinced of the practicability of my plan. I proposed to send for admiral Brion, who came soon after. I had already talked much with Brion upon the usefulness of the plan, but he had always expressed his fears that general Bolivar would be opposed to it, knowing too well his suspicious character, and his general aversion to foreigners. He was, therefore, much surprised to hear Bolivar so full of praise, in regard to this plan, and offered immediately a number of his vessels, and his credit, for the execution of the plan. We drank another bottle and separated, after having taken each of us a part in the execution of the plan. Brion was charged with the vessels, and their cargoes; Bolivar with the appointment of the officers, and I with the organization of each corps, and the general instructions to the agents and recruiting officers; and so we separated, very well satisfied, at a late hour. But, in the warmth of my zeal for the prosperity of our enterprise, I committed a great blunder in saying to general Bolivar, "that if I was not the chief of his staff, I would have desired to be the commander of that legion. These words appeared to me to have made a bad impression on the suspicious mind of general Bolivar, who treated me afterwards much more coolly, even, many times, with great dryness.

I sat down the same night and drew up the outlines of my plan, which I presented the next morning to general Bolivar at the usual hour of my daily reports. As I entered his bed chamber familiarly, and without being announced, I found him lying in his hammock, as usual, occupied in reading. When he saw me, he hastily placed his book under his pillow, jumped out of the hammock to shake hands with me, but a little cooler than usual. Surprised to see Bolivar occupied in reading, which he never did before, and desirous to know with what book he occupied himself, I came nearer to the hammock and took the book out from under his pillow, asking him, "what he was reading?" He looked a little confused, and answered: "he read it to recreate his mind a little"¹⁷. It was the *New Heloise*, by J. J. Rousseau.

We spoke now of the usual military concerns during the last twenty-four hours, and I handed him my plan of the legion. Bolivar, without even looking at it, folded it and put it under his pillow, saying: "well, well, leave it with me, I will look it over in the course of to-day or to-morrow, as soon as my time will permit." These words pronounced in a cool and dry man-

ner, gave me a new conviction of Bolivar's very limited talents, and of his not being at all the man able to command for the welfare of others. I immediately took leave of him without saying a single word more.

What in fact can be thought of a *supreme chief*, upon whose activity and skill depended the welfare of so many thousands, passing the greatest part of his time in his hammock reading the *Nouvelle Heloise*, or talking with his flatterers, on trifling topics, or passing his time in the house of Miss Pepa, who *had no time* to examine a plan on which depended so greatly the success of his enterprise, while Brion and myself were busily engaged to prepare every thing which had been fixed the evening before.

I saw the general in the evening, the next morning and afternoon, and heard not a word of the plan. Meanwhile came Brion and all the foreign officers to my house to inquire if there was any news; and being myself anxious to finish the business, I determined to speak with the general, definitively. I found him in his hammock alone and half asleep, and after some indifferent words, I asked him abruptly; "*apropos*, general, have you examined the plan for the creation of that legion?" He answered me in a furious manner, and jumping from his hammock like a madman. "Foude Mr. Foreign legion! Foreign legion! How, *mon cher ami*, can you think of it? do you know the consequences of it? no, no, no, no legion. These foreigners would then impose laws on me and control me." Such was precisely the reply of general Bolivar, expressed in French. While making this reply, he walked the room to and fro, evidently in a great passion. I was highly shocked and displeased with such an unexpected scene, and approaching towards him, I took him by the arm and exclaimed in a firm and animated voice, having an upright and clean conscience, "what means this Mr. general. You forget, undoubtedly, that you speak to a foreigner? And do you think that with my white hairs and at my age, I would suffer any man to betray you, or you suppose, perhaps, what I can hardly believe, that I myself should think of betraying you?" He interrupted me here, and said in a much more moderate and friendly tone, "Ah *mon cher ami*, you certainly are not a stranger among us, you are one of our good citizens, and a man of honor; you belong to the republic by your services, which are and have been distinguished, and by your marriage with a South American lady. I have never thought nor meant you, my dear friend. Yet," added he, in a more passionate tone, "there exist some other ambitious

foreigners who are desirous of taking my place, (supplanter) and who might do it."

This was alluding to general Piar, who had separated himself with Manno from Bolivar, and chagrined to see that all his orders were disregarded by these two chieftains, who neither returned nor sent any recruits, he imagined that Piar might take his place.

I represented to him in the strongest terms, that there was not the least danger to him, in consenting to the creation of such a legion; that it would, on the contrary, be highly useful to him and the cause, &c. All was in vain, and Bolivar would never more hear of the forming of such a plan. Admiral Brion tried also to change his mind, but could not succeed; the whole plan was given up.

One day while we were at Carupano, the enemy surprised an advanced guard of 40 men of the cavalry, of whom a number came wounded, at two o'clock in the morning, to our head quarters, giving the alarm of the approach of the enemy. Bolivar, immediately struck with a panic terror, dressed himself hastily, mounted his horse, and rode at full speed to the arsenal, which lay close by the port, and the fort of Santa Rosa, so that, at the first notice of the enemy's approach, he could have the chance to embark in a few minutes, or shut himself up in the fort. All his trunks and baggage were immediately carried from his house to the arsenal, where I saw them all collected. During this time I took the few disposable cavalry and some officers, and directed my course towards the place where this guard had been surprised, to reconnoitre the enemy, and ascertain the nature of the danger. I ordered the troops in the head quarters to take arms and be ready to march at the first signal to repel the enemy in case of an attack. I saw no one at all, and all my reconnoitering parties having joined me, I returned with the usual precautions to the head quarters. In approaching the house of general Bolivar, in order to make him my report. I was surprised to find it empty, and dark. I heard from a dragoon, detached by general Bolivar in search of me, that the commander-in-chief was at the arsenal, with all his retinue, his household, trunks, &c. I found him lying in his hammock, surrounded by his flatterers, who lay half asleep, half awake, on trunks, tables, benches and boards. As soon as I saw among them Charles Soublotte stretched out on a bench, I could not refrain from giving him, in presence of Bolivar and more than twenty officers, a very harsh reprimand, because he, being nomi-

inated by the general-in-chief commandant of the head quarters, was not at his post at the head of the troops, as he should have been, and not lying on a bench, when the enemy was attempting to surprise us. Soablette, as usual, said not a single word.

I now assured general Bolivar that there was nothing more to be feared, as I had doubled the guards at the out posts, and ordered all the troops to be ready at the first signal given. I escorted general Bolivar with my dragoons, to his old quarters, where trunks, baggage and papers were again ordered, and retired to my own house feeling more and more the strange and cowardly behavior of the supreme chief, in every case of danger.

This was an authentic proof of Bolivar's incapacity to save us in case of danger, or to put himself at the head of a body of troops to attack the enemy in person, in the last critical moment, which he never did, nor ever will do, as all those who have been in any action with him, in Venezuela, in New Grenada, in Peru, will readily attest: I would be understood to speak of those persons who are no longer in the service of Colombia, and who are not dependent upon him by their connections with that, so called, republic, and who have nothing to hope or to fear from the President Liberator of Colombia. True enough, the bulletins and proclamations, drawn up all by himself, or under his immediate inspection, display him as a hero, at the head of his troops; but none of these bulletins are correct, nor can they inspire in those who know the character of Bolivar, and the composition of his, so called, liberating army, any confidence.

I have already given the authentic fact, in respect to three or four of his bulletins and proclamations, and shown how deceptive they are to distant people. On examining them closely, the clouds which surrounded them, and must naturally exalt the imagination of persons not well acquainted with all the circumstances, will at last disappear, and show, in his *true* light, the President Liberator, his actions and his military skill.

General Bolivar is the same man at the present day, that he was in 1816, with the difference, that he is much more vain, ambitious and bold. But then he has the bayonets in his favor, which accounts for many things.

I was now perfectly convinced that my longer remaining with such a commander, would be of no avail. I saw clearly that all plans and advice tending to establish order, instruction, discipline, and organization, in a word, any thing like an army, was pow-

erfully counteracted by most of those who surrounded the general, and who were too much interested *to leave every thing in statu quo*, as being much more convenient to their wishes. My intimacy with Bolivar, with whom I was always frank, as a man of character and a free man should be, excited the greatest jealousy in all, or the greatest part of these natives. I was not only a foreigner, but I reprimanded, corrected and punished those who did wrong, and Bolivar himself, threw all the blame upon me, as I have already shown. Sarcasm and ridicule have always had a great influence upon Bolivar, as in general they have upon half-cultivated and limited minds; and Soublotte, powerfully supported by Miss Pepa, was much more at his ease in these evening assemblies, called *tertulias*, than he is on a field of battle, where he has been seen pale, trembling and *mute*. To these two were joined Miss Pepa, her mother and sister, who detested me cordially, for some words spoken publicly by me, against this family, and who always called me the *maltrato Frances*. Pedro Leon Torres, whom I punished once, when I was lieutenant colonel and commander of the fort of San Jose, in Boca Chica, where I was chief; major Fernando Galindo, whom I treated once in Aux Cayes, as he deserved; lieutenant colonel Anzoatigu, whom I reprimanded one day at Canupano, and who commanded the body guard of the supreme chief, and some others, now made a combination, and tried by degrees to create suspicions against me, in the too jealous and weak mind of general Bolivar.

It appeared to me, that from the day I had mentioned the wish to command the foreign legion, general Bolivar was no more the same man; his manners were changed; he did not speak to me with the same confidence, with the same frankness, if he is at all capable of frankness, of which I have great doubts, as I said before. All these reasons, and moreover my impaired health, injured by privations and great exertions of mind, determined me at last to leave a service, in which (I declare it here frankly) no man, who has feelings of self respect and personal independence, can consent to remain. I chose, therefore, to write him an official letter, in which I formally requested him to grant me my final discharge from the army, and that I might join my family (wife and children) which I had left at Aux Cayes to restore my impaired health. I ordered one of my aid-de-camps to deliver it into general Bolivar's own hands, and when he came back with the assurance that he had obeyed this my last order, I felt at my ease and cheerful.

Four days passed before I received any answer, during which, the general sent me various persons, as the adjutant Brion, the intendant Zea, his aid-de-camp Chamberlain, who was always greatly attached to me. &c., to make me strong representations, and to persuade me to remain, and to revoke my first letter. Adjutant general, Jose Martinez, my officers of the staff, and my aid-de-camps, and a great many foreigners, tried in vain to persuade me; I remained firm, and answered that my health too much required a change of air, and rest. When Bolivar saw that nothing could retain me, he sent, at last, my absolute discharge, in very honorable and flattering terms. He had written it with his own hand, and said, among other things, that he granted me my request with great regret. (*condolor*;) and saw me departing with reluctance, but that my health having declined, he could not urge me any longer to stay, &c. &c.

Charles Soublette was named to be my successor, and as he dared not to avenge himself upon me, he had the baseness to do it upon my two adjutants, Manuel Flores and Joseph Martinez. These two young promising officers refused positively to serve any more in the staff under Soublette's orders, and had requested the general-in-chief to be placed in their respective ranks, in one of the battalions of infantry. This request was represented by Soublette to general Bolivar in a false and malicious way, and so he consented that these officers should be arrested, and put, for a couple of days, in the fort of Santa Rosa; Soublette knowing very well that I was attached to them. As soon as I heard what had happened, and being now no more in the army, I wrote to general Bolivar a very strong letter against the misrepresentations of Soublette, and urged him to put these young officers at liberty, with which general Bolivar complied, and he himself returned me a very obliging answer.

I inquired in vain for an opportunity for St. Thomas' or Aux Cayes, and was obliged to remain in Carupano. Two days after, Bolivar seeing that his position was very critical, as I had told him beforehand, gave orders to evacuate Carupano and to embark the same night. I came in the evening to pay a visit to admiral Brion; general Bolivar entered some time after me. I stood up from my seat and came to shake hands with him as usual. But Bolivar withdrew his hand like a madman, and said in a furious tone to me, "that he would not give his hand to a man who deserved to be shot instantly!" I never saw in

my life, among the houses of madmen, in Charenton and Bedlam, a figure like our *supreme chief*, at this moment! and was doubting if it was general Bolivar or some of these madmen, deserters from Bedlam, who were before me. As I have never teased any man, and as my conscience was very clear and quiet, I looked at him some moments, and asked in a firm and strong tone, for an explanation of these strange and unintelligible words, and declared to him positively, that he should explain himself, and that I feared nothing. He said not a single word more to me, abruptly left the room, jumped upon his horse, and rode away. Brion, in reply to my inquiries, said to me, I need not care about what he said, as I was no longer in his service, and added that Bolivar had been the whole day in a very bad temper, having been very much disappointed, by the desertion of Marino and Pina, who had left him in a very disagreeable position, and made it necessary for him now to evacuate this place, where the Spaniards threatened to attack him. And then, added Brion, he is very angry with you for having insisted on leaving him, &c.

I sought Bolivar every where, but could not find him, and Brion said to me, that it would be more prudent to avoid his presence, at a moment when his passion was excited, and so he brought me, who was of course enraged at such treatment, on board of one of his own vessels, the *Diana*, where the captain and officers treated me with the greatest kindness. Having not been able to see general Bolivar, I wrote a strong and laconic letter to him, in which, I asked an explanation of this strange behaviour to me, and that notwithstanding I was no more under his command, I would submit to be tried before a court martial, and hear what were the charges against me, and who was my vile accuser! That I would remain on board of the *Diana*, one of the vessels belonging to the expedition, and not go to St. Thomas, until the sharpest inquiry, from the beginning to the end of my distinguished service, should be made, and that I never could have expected to deserve such an inderorous and ridiculous treatment. I gave this letter, directed to general Bolivar, *supreme chief*, to Mr. Ballot the next morning, to deliver it into the hands of the former, telling him that I waited for an answer. Mr. Ballot gave him the letter, but he answered me not a single word.

Some months afterwards, I found myself at Port au Prince, where general Bolivar arrived as a fugitive, in September 1816, as I will relate in the next chapter. As soon as I heard of his

arrival, I said to my landlord, Mr. Wastenfield, a German and a rich and established merchant, and to Mr. Southerland, the English agent, that I was very glad of general Bolivar's arrival in a country where he did not command, and where I could address him on equal terms. I related what had happened at Carupano, to these two gentlemen, and they approved my resolution; but after a while, Mr. Southerland, who feared the consequences of such a meeting, took me aside and observed to me, that general Bolivar, being lodged at his house, he urged me, in very obliging terms, to desist from challenging general Bolivar; adding that the latter was very much dejected and melancholy, and that it would not be generous on my part, to pursue a man, who was already unfortunate enough, in such circumstances, &c. I yielded, at last, to his representations, but refused peremptorily to avoid Bolivar, as both gentlemen urged me to do; and insisted on having an explanation, before one of them, with general Bolivar, whom I feared not, and had never feared. It was then settled that Mr. Southerland should first see general Bolivar, and make him acquainted with my intended visit, and see what he said to it. But if he should refuse, I promised to both, that I would join general Bolivar, wherever I could meet him, except in the houses of these two gentlemen, Wastenfield, and Southerland.

The next morning, Mr. Southerland told me that general Bolivar would be *very happy* to see me, (his very expression.) I must confess that I was greatly astonished to hear such an unexpected answer from general Bolivar, and told them, laughing, that he would not have sent me such a polite message at the head of his troops and so I related to them his cowardice; in the naval action of the 2d of May, of the same year. Mr. Southerland told me then, that when general Bolivar heard from him of my being here, he changed color and was much surprised to hear this news, and told him hastily he would not see me by any means; but after Mr. Southerland had assured him, that in spite of my being much irritated against him, I had at last yielded to his (Southerland's) representations, to cause no scene in his house, and to consider the general's situation, &c. but that I had insisted, peremptorily, on having an explanation with him, in regard to the scene that took place at Carupano, but without intending to insult or to provoke him. &c. Bolivar, who was now fully re-assured, said to Mr. Southerland, that he would receive me with great pleasure. I went immediately and found him walking with his aid-de-camp.

Dr. Perez. (at that time lieutenant colonel, and now general, and his secretary general in Peru,) in the large piazza in Mr. Southerland's house. As soon as I came up the steps, he left Perez and came hastily towards me, embraced me with all the demonstrations of an unfeigned satisfaction, and the usual exclamation, "*Ah, vous voilà, mon cher ami*, (ah, there you are my dear friend,) I am extremely happy to see you." He took my arm, and I sat with him on the sofa. Mr. Perez, after having saluted me, retired. I was, I must confess, more confused than general Bolivar, at such a singular reception, and could hardly know if it was the same man, Bolivar in Carupano, and Bolivar in Port au Prince, or in June and September 1816! My confusion was the result of a painful conviction of the duplicity of a man of such high standing, who forgot himself twice; in Carupano, by insulting me when *he was in power*, and without giving me any reasons, and in Port au Prince, in receiving me with this apparent satisfaction, *when he was unfortunate and isolated*, and well aware that I was a man who would have called him to account wherever I could find him. "I insisted on seeing you," said I to him very earnestly, "to have a definitive explanation with you for your strange behaviour to me at Carupano. What induced you to ask in such an indecorous manner?" &c. He saw clearly, that in speaking, I grew a little warm. Bolivar, who sat near to me, took my hand again and said, "that Brion had reported to him, that I had the intention to displace him, Bolivar, and to give the command to admiral Brion! I jumped up and said, in a contemptuous manner, that I could never believe that Brion, who had always been very friendly towards me, should have reported such a ridiculous calumny; that my friendship and the frank and plain manner with which I had constantly treated *him*, (Bolivar,) my letter written from Boea Chica, my sending for him at the risk of my life, my interfering in Aux Cayes when Montilla challenged him, and my zeal for his welfare, should have convinced him of the ridiculousness of an accusation, which could have never come from Brion, but perhaps *from somebody else!* But supposing it should have come from Brion, could you not confront me privately with the admiral, who was present, and in whose house we were together; and I believe that would have been the shortest way. And how could I have acted so foolishly as to take my absolute discharge first, to lose voluntarily my authority, if I had such a plan; and then act as a madman, to effect such a conspiracy against you at a time of my to-

tal isolation, and being sick I spoke much more, and with warmth; so that he at last, fully convinced of the absurdity of such an accusation avowed to me, that it came not from Brion, but from somebody else! But he would never mention his name. "It is very true," said he afterwards, "that you have always given me proofs of being a sincere friend; that you spoke to me with frankness; that you acted in your service like an ancient soldier, and a man of honor; it is true, it is true, I should have considered all this before; but, *mon cher ami*, (our whole conversation passed in French, as usual,) you must think no more of it, you know we are not perfect," and in saying these words he gave me his hand in sign of reconciliation. This explanation does honor to general Bolivar, (if, as I suppose, it came from his heart,) and was satisfactory to me, as I declared to him. He asked me now a great many questions concerning my private concerns, useless to repeat here, and so we departed good friends, I for Aux Cayes, and he, some months later, to the Main.

I have entered in these minute details of the principal facts that happened to me, in order to show the true character of a man, who has acquired such a colossal reputation, little corresponding to what he is, in regard to heroism, bravery, military skill, firmness of character, and talents. I will close this chapter with another trait, which will show how he always takes care to preserve his own baggage, and all that belongs to him. I have already proved how he fears being wounded or killed, or takes care to have his sacred person perfectly secured.

When at Margarita, where we slept in the same room, in which he had established his office, and mine was opposite to his, on the same floor, he came one day into my office, to tell me to give the order to all the officers belonging to our army, from the general down to the second lieutenant, to take with them no more than a few changes of dress, and to leave behind their trunks and luggage. I, myself, take no more than six changes of clothes, &c. In conformity to this order, every one of us left our trunks in a kind of block house, in the Villa del Norte. I had three, full of valuable articles, and as the glass of my gold repeater was broken, Bolivar told me to leave it in one of my trunks, where I could send for them when I should be definitively settled. I left also all my papers, certificates of services from Europe, correspondence, and other very valuable documents, &c. We embarked, and being one day at Carupano, on board the admiral, I was astonished to see on

deck, more than 20 trunks, pretty large and heavy. I asked to whom they belonged, and was surprised to hear from Garcia, the attendant of general Bolivar, that they were his master's baggage! I learned from him that the general had given him orders to hire mules, and to transport all his baggage from Villa del Norte, to the port of Juan Griego, where we should embark, and that he did it the night previous to our embarking.

When I expressed my surprise to general Bolivar some days afterwards, on seeing all these trunks in his house, he answered me dryly, "that Garcia had embarked them *by mistake!*"

I have related how general Bolivar earned his trunks into the arsenal, where he took shelter, when our cavalry guard had been surprised by the enemy at Carupano. This station was safe for himself and his baggage, then from the arsenal he could in five minutes embark, or take shelter in the fort of Santa Rosa.

These are facts of which I was an eye witness. And so it came to pass, that after the defeat of Soublette at Carupano, all our baggage was plundered, the trunks broken open, and all was irreparably lost, because general Arismendy, hearing that Bolivar had fled, judged we were all taken or slain, and our baggage was distributed among the troops of Maganita. I regretted the loss of my watch and my papers; wrote twice to general Arismendy, but received no answer. These were irreparable losses which I regret to the present time.

CHAPTER XIV.

Evacuation of Carupano—Skirmish at Ocunare—Fifth flight of General Bolivar, and his retreat to the Island of Hayti—McGregor's retreat towards Barcelona.

We have seen how general Bolivar acted in Carupano, how jealous he was of his authority, and what were my recompenses after so many fatigues and disgustful services. The fear of general Bolivar that the creation of a foreign legion would compromise his authority, shows sufficiently the little confidence he had in his own merit. Then how could 1500 and more, for-