

CHAPTER III.

POPULATION OF THE COUNTRY IN GENERAL, AND THE SPANISH POPULATION IN PARTICULAR.

SECTION I.

THEIR AMOUNT, DISTRIBUTION, &c.

THE country of Caracas is nearly twice as large as Peru. Cundinamarca, including Quito, is still larger. The former Capitania-General contains near 48,000 square leagues (twenty-five to a degree): Peru, after La Paz, Potosi, Charcas, and Santa Cruz de la Sierra, were separated from it, and joined to the viceroyalty of Buenos Ayres, contained only 30,000. Cundinamarca, including Quito, contains 65,000. Those calculations have been made by M. Oltmanns, from the alterations which Humboldt's astronomical observations have introduced into the maps of Spanish America.

The former of these portions, Caracas, has nearly a million of inhabitants.

Four castes compose this population—the whites, Indians, Negroes, and people of colour or mixed race. These castes are subdivided into whites born in Europe, vulgarly called Gachupines; white Creoles, descendants of Europeans; Mestizoes, a mixture of whites and Indians; Zamboes, a mixture of Indians and Negroes; and Mulattoes, a mixture of whites and Negroes.

The Spaniards born in Europe used to consider themselves as a superior class to other whites: to have been born in Europe was a kind of nobility.

As to the distribution of this population, Humboldt says,—The copper-coloured natives, or Indians, constitute a very important mass of the agricultural population only in those places where the Spaniards found regular governments, a civil community, and ancient and very complicated institutions, at the Conquest; as in New Spain, south of Durango; and in Peru, from Cusco to Potosi. In the Capitania-General of Caracas, the Indian population is inconsiderable, at least beyond the Missions, and in the cultivated zone. At the moments of great political dissensions, the natives excite no fear in the whites, or the mingled castes. Computing, in 1800, the total population of the provinces at nine hundred thousand souls, it appeared to Humboldt, that the Indians made only one-ninth; while, at Mexico, they form nearly one-half of the inhabitants.

Among the castes that compose the population of Caracas, that of the Blacks, which awakens at once the interest due to misfortune and the dread of a violent re-action, is not important from its number; but it is so from its accumulation on a small space of territory. We shall soon see, that in all the Capitanía-General they do not exceed a fifteenth of the whole population. In the island of Cuba, where, of all those in the West Indies, the Negroes bear the smallest proportion to the whites, they were, in 1811, as one to three. The Seven United Provinces of Venezuela, have sixty thousand Negroes and men of colour formerly slaves; Cuba, the extent of which is eight times less, has two hundred and twelve thousand. Considering the sea of the West India Islands, of which the Gulf of Mexico makes a part, as an interior sea with several mouths, it is important to fix our attention on the political relations that result, from this singular configuration of the New Continent, between countries placed around the same basin. Notwithstanding the isolated state in which the greater part of the mother-countries endeavour to hold their colonies, the agitations that take place are not the less communicated from one to the other. The elements of discord are every-where the same; and, as if by instinct, a concert is established between men of the same colour, although separated by differences of language,

and inhabiting opposite coasts. That American Mediterranean, formed by the shores of Caracas, Cundinamarca, Mexico, the United States,* and the West India Islands, may count upon its borders near a million and a half of Negroes; but so unequally distributed, that there are very few to the south, and scarcely any in the region of the west. Their great accumulation is on the northern and eastern coasts. This may be said to be the African part of the interior basin. It is natural that the commotions which, since 1792, have manifested themselves in San Domingo, should have been propagated to the coasts of Caracas. So long as Spain possessed those fine colonies in tranquillity, the little resistance of the slaves was entirely repressed: but when a struggle of another kind, that for independence began, the Blacks, by their menacing position, excited alternately the apprehensions of the opposite parties; and the gradual or instantaneous abolition of slavery has been proclaimed in different regions of Spanish America, not perhaps merely from motives of justice and humanity, but also to secure the aid of an intrepid race of men, habituated to privation, and fighting for their own cause.

* The produce of the states at the back of the Alleghany mountains, is exported by the Mississippi; and the possession of Florida has been so strongly desired by the Anglo-Americans, only with a view of occupying a greater extent of coast on the interior sea.

The sixty thousand Negroes and men of colour, formerly slaves, which the Seven United Provinces of Venezuela contain, are so unequally divided, that in the province of Caracas alone there are nearly forty thousand, one-fifth of which are Mulattoes; in that of Maracaibo, ten or twelve thousand; in those of Cumana and Barcelona, scarcely six thousand. To judge of the influence which these Negroes and the men of colour exert in general on the public tranquillity, it is not enough to know their number; we must consider their accumulation at certain points, and their manner of life, as cultivators, or inhabitants of towns. In the province of Venezuela, they are assembled together on a space of no great extent, between the coast and a line that passes (at twelve leagues from the coast) through Panaquire, Yare, Sabana de Ocumare, Villa de Cura, and Nirgua. The Llanos, or vast plains of Calaboso, San Carlos, Guanare, and Barquisimeto, contain only four or five thousand, who are scattered among the farms, and employed in the care of cattle. The number of persons formerly freed men is very considerable: the Spanish laws and customs were favourable to enfranchisement. A master could not refuse liberty to a slave who offered him the sum of three hundred piastres, even though he might have cost him double that sum, on account of his industry, or a particular aptitude for the

trade he practised. Instances of persons who, by their will, bestowed liberty on a certain number of slaves, was more common in the province of Venezuela than in any other place. A short time, says Humboldt, before we visited the fertile valleys of Aragua, and the Lake of Valencia, a lady, who inhabited the great village of Victoria, ordered her children, on her death-bed, to give liberty to all her slaves, to the number of thirty.

What is most interesting in South America, next to the state of the Blacks, is to know the number of white Creoles, or Hispano-Americans, and that of the whites born in Europe. It is difficult to acquire notions sufficiently exact on so delicate a point. The people in the New, as well as the Old World, abhorred numberings, suspecting them to be made in order to augment the weight of taxes. The men in office, on the other hand, sent by the mother-country to the colonies, disliked these statistical enumerations as much as the people, and this from motives of a jealous policy. These numberings, so irksome to make, were not easily withheld from the curiosity of the planters. Although ministers at Madrid, aware of the real interests of their country, endeavoured from time to time to obtain precise information respecting the increasing prosperity of the colonies, the local authorities did not in general second these useful views. It required direct

orders from the Court of Spain, to have those excellent notions of political economy delivered to the editors of the Peruvian Mercury, which they have published. It was in Mexico, and not at Madrid, that Humboldt heard Count de Revillagigedo, the viceroy, blamed for having informed all New Spain, that the capital of a country which has six millions of inhabitants, contained, in 1790, only two thousand three hundred Europeans, while it was computed that there were in it more than fifty thousand Hispano-Americans. The persons who uttered these complaints, considered the fine establishment of posts, by which a letter travels from Buenos Ayres to New California, as one of the most dangerous conceptions of Count Florida Blanca. They counselled (happily without success) the rooting up of the vines of New Mexico and Chili, in order to favour the commerce of the mother-country.

If we compare the Seven Provinces of Caracas to the kingdom of Mexico and the island of Cuba, we shall succeed in finding the approximate number of white Creoles, and even of Europeans. The first, or Hispano-Americans, form in Mexico nearly one-fifth; and in the island of Cuba, according to the very accurate enumeration of 1801, a third of the whole population. When we reflect that the kingdom of Mexico is inhabited by two millions and a half of natives of the copper-coloured

race,—when we consider the state of the coasts that are bathed by the Pacific Ocean, and the small number of whites in the Intendencies of Puebla and Oaxaca, comparatively with the natives, we cannot doubt, that the province of Venezuela at least, if not the whole of Caracas, has a greater proportion than that of one to five. The island of Cuba,* in which the whites are even more numerous than in Chili, may furnish us with a limiting number, that is to say, the maximum that can be supposed in Caracas. I believe we must stop at two hundred, or two hundred and ten thousand Hispano-Americans, in a total population of nine hundred thousand souls. The number of Europeans included in the white race, does not exceed twelve or fifteen thousand. It certainly is not greater at Mexico than sixty thousand; and several statements show, that if we estimate the whole of the former Spanish colonies at fourteen or fifteen millions of inhabitants, there are in this number at most three millions of Creole whites, and two hundred thousand Europeans.

The Indian population in the provinces of Caracas is thus inconsiderable. It is moreover

* We do not mention the kingdom of Buenos Ayres, where, among a million of inhabitants, the whites are extremely numerous in the ports toward the coast; while the table-lands, or provinces of the Sierra, are almost entirely peopled with natives.

recently civilized, and all the towns have been founded by the Spanish conquerors. Those could not follow, as in Mexico and Peru, the traces of the ancient civilization of the natives. Caracas, Maracaibo, Cumana, and Coro, have nothing Indian but the name.

SECTION II.

THEIR GENERAL CIVILIZATION.

IN China and Japan, observes Humboldt, those inventions are considered as recent, which have not been known above two thousand years: in the European colonies, an event appears extremely old, if it dates back three centuries, or about the period of the discovery of America.

The absence of memorials, which characterizes new nations, both in the United States and in the former Spanish and Portuguese colonies, is well worthy of attention. The void has not only something painful to the traveller, who finds himself deprived of the most delightful enjoyments of the imagination; it has also an influence on the greater or less powerful ties, that bind the colonist to the soil on which he dwells, to the form of the rocks surrounding his hut, and to the trees which have shaded his cradle.

Among the ancients, the Phoenicians and the Greeks, for instance, traditions and national remembrances passed from the mother-country to the colonies ; where, perpetuated from generation to generation, they never cease to have a favourable influence on the opinions, the manners, and the policy of the colonists. The climates of these first establishments beyond the seas, differed but little from those of the mother-country. The Greeks of Asia Minor and Sicily were not strangers to the inhabitants of Argos, Athens, and Corinth, from whom they boasted their descent. A great analogy of manners contributed to cement the union, which was founded on religious and political interests. The colonists frequently offered the first fruits of their harvests in the temples of the metropolis ; and when by some sinister accident the sacred fire was extinguished on the altars of Hestia, messengers were sent from the farther part of Ionia, to rekindle the flame at the Prytaneion of Greece. Everywhere, in Cyrene, as well as on the banks of the Mæotis, the inhabitants carefully preserved the traditions of the mother-country. Other remembrances, equally fitted to affect the imagination, were attached to the colonies themselves. They had their sacred groves, their tutelary divinities, their local mythology, and, what gave life and durability to the fictions of the first ages, they had poets, who extended their glory as far as the metropolis itself.

These advantages, and many others, are wanting in modern colonies. The greater part are settled in a zone, where the climate, the productions, the aspect of the sky, and the scenery of the landscape, differ altogether from those of Europe. The colonist vainly bestows on mountains, rivers, and valleys, those names which call to his remembrance the sites of the mother-country: these names soon lose their attraction, and have no meaning with the generations that succeed. Under the influence of an exotic nature, habits are generated that are adapted to new wants; national remembrances are insensibly effaced; and those that remain, like phantoms of the imagination, have neither "a local habitation, nor a name." The glory of Don Pelagio, and of the Cid Campeador, has penetrated even to the mountains and forests of America: the people sometimes pronounce these illustrious names; but they form no other notions of their existence, than that of heroes belonging to some vague period of fabulous times.

This foreign firmament, this contrast of climate, this physical conformation of the country, have a more decided effect on the state of society in the colonies, than the absolute distance of the mother-country. Such is the improved state of modern navigation, that the mouths of the Orinoco and of the Rio de la Plata seem more contiguous to Spain, than in

former times Phasis and Tartessus did to the coasts of Greece and Phœnicia. We even observe, that, in regions equally remote, the manners and traditions of Europe are more habitually preserved in the temperate zone. Similarity of situation contributes in a certain degree to maintain more intimate connexions between the colonists and the metropolis. This influence of physical causes in the state of infant societies is particularly manifested, when it concerns portions of people of the same race, who have been recently separated from each other. In traversing the regions of the New World, we imagine that we find more traditions, a greater freshness in the remembrances of the mother-country, wherever the climate permits the cultivation of corn. In this point of view, Pennsylvania, New Mexico, and Chili, resemble those elevated plains of Quito and New Spain, which are covered with oaks and with firs.

Among the ancients, history, religious opinions, and the physical state of a country, were linked together by indissoluble ties. The colonist must have renounced the faith transmitted to him by his ancestors, could he have forgotten the aspect of the sites, and the ancient revolutions of the mother-country. With modern nations, religion no longer wears, if we may use the expression, a local tint. Christianity, in furnishing new ideas, and opening a

wider range to the exercise of the intellectual faculties,—in declaring that all nations of men that dwell on the face of the earth are made of one blood, and members of the same family,—has weakened every exclusive sentiment, and has spread through both worlds the ancient traditions of the East with those that are peculiarly its own. Nations of different origin, and discordant idioms, have received from this common institution common remembrances; and the establishment of the missions, after having laid the foundation of civilization in a great part of the new continent, has given to cosmogonic and religious ideas a marked pre-eminence over remembrances that were merely national.

But this is not all: the American colonies are almost all founded in countries, where the generations that are extinct have left scarcely any trace of their existence. At the mouth of the Rio Gila, on the banks of the Missouri, in the plains that extend to the east of the Andes, traditions date no farther back than a century. At Peru, Guatimala, and Mexico, ruins of edifices, historical paintings, and monuments of sculpture, attest, it is true, the ancient civilization of the natives; but in a whole province we find very few families who have just ideas relative to the history of the Incas, and of the Mexican princes. The native has preserved his language, his dress, and his national character;

but the disappearance of the quippas, and of symbolic paintings, the introduction of Christianity, and other circumstances, have gradually extinguished historical and religious traditions. On the other hand, the colonist of European race disdains whatever relates to the conquered people. Placed between the remembrances of the mother-country, and those of the country where he first drew his breath, he considers both with equal indifference; and in a climate where the equality of seasons renders the succession of years almost imperceptible, he abandons himself to the enjoyments of the present moment, and scarcely casts back a look on the times that are past.

What a difference also between the monotonous history of modern colonies, and the varied picture exhibited by the legislation, the manners, and the political revolutions of the colonies of the ancients! Their intellectual culture, modified by the different forms of their government, often excited the envy of the mother-countries; and by this happy rivalry, arts and letters attained the highest degree of splendour in Ionia, in Græcia Magna, and in Sicily. In our days, on the contrary, the colonies have neither history, nor national literature. Those of the New World have never had powerful neighbours; and there the state of society has undergone only imperceptible changes. Without political existence,

these settlements, formed for commerce or for agriculture, have taken but a passive part in the great agitations of the world. The history of modern colonies affords but two memorable events—their foundation, and their separation from the mother-country. The first of these events is rich in remembrances, which essentially belong to the countries occupied by the colonists; but, far from recalling to mind the peaceful progress of industry, or the improvement of colonial legislation, acts of violence and injustice only protrude themselves on the scene. What charm can those extraordinary times present, when, under the reign of Charles the Fifth, the Castilians displayed more courage than virtue? and when chivalrous honour, like the glory of arms, was sullied by fanaticism and the thirst of riches? The colonists, of mild character, are freed by their situation from national prejudices, and appreciate at their just value the exploits of the conquest. The men who figured at that period were Europeans; they were the soldiers of the mother-country: they appear as strangers to the inhabitants of the colonies, for three ages have been sufficient to dissolve the ties of blood. Among the conquistadores, no doubt, some upright and generous men may be found; but, mingled in the mass, they have been unable to escape the general proscription.

I believe we have indicated the principal causes, which in modern colonies have dispelled

national remembrances, without nobly filling their place by others relative to the country newly inhabited. This circumstance, we cannot sufficiently repeat, exercises a great influence over the situation of the colonists.

There are still other comparative views which throw light on the general civilization of South America.

In Europe, our wheat, barley, and rye, cover vast spaces of ground; and in general the arable lands touch each other, wherever the inhabitants live upon corn. It is not the same under the torrid zone, where man has been able to appropriate to himself plants that yield more abundant and earlier harvests. In these happy climates, the fertility of the soil is proportioned to the heat and humidity of the atmosphere. An immense population finds abundant nourishment on a narrow space, covered with plantains, cassava, yams, and maize. The isolated situation of the huts dispersed through the forest, indicates to the traveller the fecundity of nature, where a small spot of cultivated land suffices for the wants of several families.

These considerations on the agriculture of the torrid zone involuntarily remind us of the intimate connexion that exists between the extent of land cleared, and the progress of society. That richness of the soil, that vigour of organic life, which multiplies the means of

subsistence, retards the progress of nations toward civilization. Under so mild and uniform a climate, the only urgent want of man is that of food. It is the feeling of this want only which excites him to labour; and we may easily conceive, why in the midst of abundance, beneath the shade of the plantain and bread-fruit tree, the intellectual faculties unfold themselves less rapidly than under a rigorous sky, in the region of corn, where our race is in a perpetual struggle with the elements. When we take a general survey of countries inhabited by agricultural nations, we observe, that cultivated lands are either separated by forests, or immediately touch each other; not only according to the growth of the population, but the choice of alimentary plants. In Europe, we judge of the number of the inhabitants by the extent of the cultivation: under the tropics, on the contrary, in the warmest and most humid parts of South America, very populous provinces appear almost deserted; because man, in order to find nourishment, cultivates but a small number of acres. These circumstances, highly worthy of attention, modify at the same time the physical appearance of the country, and the character of its inhabitants, giving a peculiar physiognomy to both—something wild and uncultivated, which belongs to nature, the primitive type of which has not yet been altered by art. Without neigh-

hours, almost unconnected with the rest of mankind, each family of settlers forms a separate tribe. This insulated state arrests or retards the progress toward civilization, which advances only in proportion as society becomes more numerous, and its connexions more intimate and multiplied: but, on the other hand, it is solitude that develops and strengthens in man the sentiment of liberty and independence; and gives birth to that noble pride of character, which has at all times distinguished the Castilian race.

From those causes, the land in the most populous regions of equinoctial America still retains a savage aspect, which is destroyed in the temperate climates by the cultivation of corn. Between the tropics, the agricultural nations occupy less ground; man has there less extended his empire; he may be said to appear, not as an absolute master, who changes at his will the surface of the soil, but as a transient guest, who quietly enjoys the gifts of nature. There, in the neighbourhood of the most populous cities, the land remains studded with forests, or covered with a thick mould never torn up by the plough. Spontaneous plants still predominate by their quantity over cultivated plants, and determine alone the appearance of the landscape. It is probable, that this state of things will change very slowly. If, in our temperate climate, the cultivation of corn contri-

butes to throw a dull uniformity upon the land we have cleared, we cannot doubt, that even with an increasing population, the torrid zone will preserve that majesty of vegetable form, those marks of an unsubdued, virgin nature, which render it so attractive, and so picturesque. Thus it is, that, by a remarkable concatenation of physical and moral causes, the choice and production of alimentary plants have an influence on three important objects at once—the association or the isolated state of families, the more or less rapid progress of civilization, and the individual character of the landscape.

SECTION III.

MARRIAGES, AND CHILDREN, IN COLOMBIA.

RELIGION, public opinion, and that spirit of gallantry which distinguishes the nation, all conspire to establish amongst the Spaniards, both in the Old and New World, a partiality for matrimony, which is not otherwise without its particular prerogatives. The smallest indication, for instance, of irregular conduct, is admitted as a proof against a bachelor; whereas, the most indisputable proofs against a married man are generally rejected, unless his lawful wife prefers the complaint.

In Colombia before the Revolution, girls were allowed to be married at the period which is commonly called the age of puberty at twelve; and boys, at fourteen years. This was also about the time they thought of marrying. A young man, not destined for the church, who was not married at twenty, began to be thought dilatory; and nothing was more common than to see a young couple, both whose ages when added did not exceed thirty. As soon as nature gave the hint, they sought to gratify her desire in the chaste bands of matrimony. Marriage, they thought, was the seal of manhood. The study of character seldom, however, preceded the conjugal tie. An union for life was formed with as little premeditation, as if it were that of a day. The sympathy of caprice was mistaken for that of passion; a momentary liking for a permanent attachment. This, in a great measure, was to be ascribed to the old laws, which, in this important transaction of human life, upon which depend the happiness or misery of both parties concerned for the remainder of their days, gave too little controul to parents over the inclinations of their children.

In all civilized nations, parents possess an absolute authority over their children till the period fixed by law. England has restricted this period to twenty-one for both sexes. As long as children are minors, they remain in entire dependence on their parents. During

this time, they are allowed to have no will of their own; every engagement which they contract is null; every promise is nugatory. The intention of the legislature by this wise measure was, to subject the morals of youth to a salutary controul, and to put them under the protection of enlightened guardians, capable of discovering the snares that might be laid for their inexperienced age. No one is more entitled or better qualified for the discharge of these delicate and very important duties, than those to whom nature seems to have confidentially assigned them, upon the security of such ties as render the happiness of the pupil as dear to them as their own.

The old laws seem to have supposed, that parents are indifferent with respect to the prosperity of their children. We indeed easily perceive, both from the letter and spirit of these laws, that children were not of age till twenty-one, and that till that period the consent of the parents was indispensable to enable them to enter into legal marriage. But a misapplied jurisprudence rendered that disposition abortive; for a little girl at the age of twelve, or stripling boy at fourteen, who talked of entering into the sacred bands of marriage, asked the consent of his parents as a mere matter of form. If it did not appear to be a suitable match; if the conduct, the morals, the education of the beloved object did not promise a

happy union, the parents, as no doubt was their duty, withheld their consent. But their refusal, instead of arresting all further proceedings in the business, as it would in any other country, only furnished an occasion to the refractory child to institute a scandalous law-suit against those who gave him birth. Justice, instead of defending the parental authority, gave a favourable reception to the complaints of a child in his first departure from filial duty to the pursuit of a licentious conduct. Upon the first application, they granted the female petitioner what she asked, to be removed from her father's house to another lodging. The parents, in consequence of this, were condemned to furnish money to pay her board, as well as to defray the expenses of the suit; and all that they were allowed to advance in their own defence was the inferiority of the proposed son or daughter-in-law in point of rank. That was the only point which could be admitted as satisfactory and conclusive on the part of the court. It was natural, therefore, always to insist upon that point, and it as naturally followed, that all that was said and written upon a question, so deeply interesting to a people who knew no advantages superior to those of birth, should have excited general sensibility and party passions, and given rise to vexatious suits which perpetuated animosity amongst families. But when equality of rank was incontestably

established, irregularity of life, disparity of age, and difference of fortune, were no bar to the court's authorizing a celebration of marriage.

The disobedient child had another mode more simple, but more rarely put in practice, of defying the parental authority, and gratifying her own taste. It was sufficient to constitute a valid marriage, that the bride and bridegroom publicly declared to their parish curate, that they took one another for man and wife. The want of publication of banns and consent of parents was no obstacle to the administration of the ceremony. Children who had not obtained the consent of their parents, or chose to save themselves the trouble of applying in order to avoid the mortification of a premeditated refusal, presented themselves to the curate in the street, in private houses, or wherever they could have a chance of meeting him, and on the spot passed through a formality, which, however ludicrous might be the manner of conducting it, was sufficiently effectual to unite them for life in bands, which would have been the cause of less sorrow and repentance if they had not been indissoluble.

It is true, that the civil laws, in this instance at variance with the canonical laws, prohibited these kind of marriages; but the penalties imposed on the delinquents were always eluded, because the families which ought to have insisted upon their infliction, when the affair was

over, and could not be helped, had no other part to act but to pardon; so that the child who joined effrontery to disobedience, might boast that every thing, even the laws, were favourable to his irregularities. In England, every minister who marries minors without a certificate of the parent's consent, is subject to a fine of one hundred pounds sterling. The French laws, besides disinheriting the refractory child, declared the clergyman who prostituted his ministry to a clandestine marriage, guilty of a rape, and ordered him to be prosecuted for it. This violent regulation produced an effect, which left no occasion to have recourse to it.

These regulations were subsequently changed. By a pragmatic sanction, of the 28th of April 1808, issued in order to give the decree of the 10th of the same month the force and effect of a constitutional law, his Catholic Majesty declared, that males under twenty-five years of age, and females under twenty-three, could not contract marriage without the express consent of their father, who should not be bound to give the reasons of his refusal. In case of the absence or death of the father, the mother was to exercise the same right; but, in this case, the children might marry one year before their respective majority; and, in failure of the father and mother, the grandfathers, on the father and mother's side, were to be asked for

their consent, till the age of twenty-three by the males, and the age of twenty-one by the females. Military men were to have the permission of the king to marry, and must not demand it till they had previously obtained that of their fathers. Yet, if it was refused, they could always solicit that of the king, who would grant or refuse it according to circumstances. The curates and vicars who should celebrate marriages without the observance of those forms, were to be banished, and their estates confiscated. The contracting parties were to incur the same penalty. In no court, secular or ecclesiastic, were demands to be admitted with respect to marriages not contracted in the manner here prescribed; and, in that case, they were to proceed not as for criminal or mixed affairs, but as for affairs purely civil. Even the king's children could not contract marriage without the consent of their father, or of the king his successor. They could never acquire the liberty of marrying without this consent. Here we see the light of reason gradually dissipate the darkness of prejudice. This cedula was published at Caracas, the 8d of February 1804.

After all, it would appear, says Depons, that to marriages contracted at too early a period are to be ascribed many of those domestic disturbances which so frequently appear in Creole families. To the ardour and impetuosity of

passion, which impelled the young couple to contract the engagement, succeeds the calm of reason and reflection, which unfortunately condemns the transaction. The contrariety of their characters soon embroils the matrimonial peace; and nothing but a regard to honour, public opinion, and religion, prevents them from dissolving a tie that makes them so completely miserable. Had Montesquieu been acquainted with the state of domestic society amongst the Spaniards in America, or had his writings been expressly addressed to them, he certainly would not have hazarded the opinion, that the more marriage prevailed, the less the vice of infidelity would appear amongst them.

The inconsiderate protection which the police extends to wives, to the prejudice of their husbands, is, says the same writer, another source of evil in their domestic intercourse. No mortal is more unhappy than a Creole whose wife is of a jealous, unruly, or peevish disposition. If she is tormented with jealousy, she easily finds access to the provisor, the curate, or any of the magistrates, who are all disposed implicitly to believe whatever tale of reproach her malicious ingenuity will be pleased to fabricate against the husband. The most usual subject of complaint is, that the gallant husband keeps a mistress, or at least squanders away his money in debauchery, keeps his family in penury, makes his wife unhappy, offers violence to

her person, &c. &c. Of all this she is not required to give any proof. She is credited upon her bare word. According to the rank her husband sustains in society, he is either summoned to receive a sharp reprimand, or he is immediately clapped in prison; and there he remains until his wife condescends to ask his release. If the husband complains of the misdemeanor of his wife, she has only to pretend to be highly offended at a charge which amounts to an attack upon her honour, and the poor husband is condemned to silence, to teach him more discretion; nay, he may think he has made a lucky escape, if he does not undergo the punishment that was merited by his wife.

The Creole, if married, he asserts, must not undertake a journey without the express consent of his wife, and without providing for her subsistence during his absence. If he does not return precisely on the day appointed at his departure, the magistrates, on the first application of the wife, orders the husband to return to his forlorn spouse. Were he in Chili or in California, home he must go, whether his business be finished or unfinished; his wife has spoken the word, and he must comply. Every military man, every officer of administration or justice, if a married man, leaves to his wife, who does not follow him, a proportion of his pay, never less than one-third: if he does not

do it with a good grace, the treasurer will be obliging enough to make a retention of the sum.

There are, however, a great many Creole families, we may even say the majority of them, whose heads enjoy peace and happiness, setting in their conduct an example of virtue to their children.

This people have such an air of frankness and candour in all their transactions, that, to judge from appearances, one would pronounce that there was no country in the world where filial respect is better established. Every morning when they rise from their bed, and every evening before they lie down, the children of the Creoles, whether rich or poor, crave and receive upon their knees the benediction of father and mother, and kiss, before they stand up, the hand that dispenses it. The same ceremony is repeated during the day, every time that the father, the mother, the uncle, the aunt, or the children return from abroad, and enter the house. They use likewise, with their parents, a manner of speaking expressive of the greatest humility and dependance. They honour them with "sumerced," which is not customary in society. But all these homages, asserts Depons, are, in general, merely external. They flow less from sentiment than custom, which has ranked them with the etiquettes or ceremonies,—an article of manners

sufficiently numerous and curious amongst the Creoles to demand our particular notice.

SECTION IV.

PUBLIC EDUCATION IN COLOMBIA.

ON this important subject we shall adopt the observations of D. M. J. Sanz, a gentleman of the law, born at Valencia, in the province of Venezuela. This gentleman, whose excellent natural parts, improved by education, elevated him above that thick mist of prejudice with which he was surrounded, was charged by the old government with the task of framing a code of municipal laws for the city of Caracas.

“No sooner,” observes he, in his discourse on public education, “no sooner does the child discover the first feeble efforts of intellect, than he is sent to school, where he learns to read books replete with ridiculous and extravagant tales, frightful miracles, and a superstitious devotion reduced to certain external forms, by which he is disciplined to hypocrisy and imposture.—Far from instructing him in those primary duties, from which all others are derived, by impressing his tender heart with a deep sense of the greatness, the power, the good-

ness, and the justice of the Supreme Being, the Creator of all things, so as to inspire him with truly Christian maxims, his father is contented, and thinks he has discharged his duty, provided the child knows certain forms of prayer by rote, recites the rosary, wears a scapulary, and performs certain other external acts of the Christian ritual, which, allowing them to be in themselves good, pious, and devout, are, however, by no means sufficient to make him a good Christian, or a virtuous man. Instead of teaching their children what they owe to God, to themselves, and to their neighbours, they suffer them to engage in every kind of dangerous amusement, without paying the smallest attention to the society which they frequent. Instead of precepts of morality, they inculcate certain points of pride and vanity, which lead them to abuse the privileges of their birth, because they do not know the objects for which they were conferred. There are few of the youth of Caracas who do not pretend to a pre-eminence in rank, and foolishly pride themselves in having a grandfather an alferex, an uncle an alcaide, a brother a monk, or a relation a priest.

“ These failings, which arise entirely from education, breed animosities among families, and make the citizens deceitful and irrational. There can be no sincerity, peace, attachment, nor confidence, in a country where every one

makes it the object of his particular study, to be distinguished above others by his birth and vanity; where, instead of inspiring children with a just emulation of the virtues of their distinguished countrymen, and with a horror of the vices and crimes of the wicked, they are taught, or at least hear nothing from the mouths of their parents, but, whether Peter be not as noble as Anthony,—that the family of John has such or such a blemish,—that when a marriage took place in this family, that of Diego went into mourning. Such puerile conversations banish every manly sentiment from the heart, powerfully influence manners, create divisions between families, keep up a spirit of distrust, and break the bonds of charity, which are the very foundation and object of society.

“The system of education,” continues D. Sanz, “is generally bad at Caracas. Before a child is yet able to pronounce his alphabet with propriety, to read what he is yet too young to understand, or scribble a little with his pen, they put into his hands the grammar of Nebrija, without considering that, unable to speak his native language, to read, write, or calculate, it is ridiculous to put him to the Latin language, or to make him apply to the study of the sciences which are taught at the university. For the child is exposed in society to many mortifications, and even to contempt,

notwithstanding the gratification his vanity may receive from those showy literary badges which announce him a doctor. Is it not really pitiful to see a student, after becoming pale and emaciated by several years' attendance at the higher seminaries, incapable of expressing himself with precision in his native language, of writing a letter, or even marking the accents with tolerable correctness?"

"This is a palpable evil, and requires no proof.—Nay, what is still more surprising, these scholars obstinately contend, that to acquire a grammatical knowledge of their mother tongue, and to read and write it correctly, is but a wanton sacrifice of time.

"This precipitation in their studies arises from a natural ardour for the acquisition of knowledge, and a want of method to direct it. Boys, who have prematurely commenced the study of the Latin language and the liberal sciences, before they are taught their native tongue, or the common rules of arithmetic, return with reluctance, when they are grown up, to those studies which they neglected in their youth. They fancy the whole circle of the sciences are contained in the Latin Grammar of Nebrija, the Philosophy of Aristotle, the Institutes of Justinian, the Curia Philippica, and theological writings of Gonet and Larraga. If they can make extracts from these works, say mass, display the doctor's badge, or appear in

the dress of a priest or monk, they are then sufficiently accomplished for any line or profession. Decency, however, in their opinion, debars them from agricultural pursuits, and enjoins them to treat the mechanical arts with sovereign contempt. If they wear the military dress, it is merely out of ostentation : if they make bad translations from the French, they corrupt the Spanish language. Some take up the profession of the law, merely to gain a livelihood ; others enter into holy orders to acquire importance ; and some there are who take the vow of poverty, for the express purpose of being secured against it. There is scarcely a person of any distinction but pretends to be a military officer, without having paid any attention to those qualifications which are indispensable for the profession of arms. There is not one, whether originally white, or become so by generation, who is not ambitious of becoming a lawyer, a priest, or a monk. Those whose pretensions are not so great, wish at least to be notaries, scriveners, or clerks, or to be attached to some religious community, as lay-brothers, pupils, or foundlings. Thus, the fields are deserted, whilst their fertility reproaches our inactivity. The laborious husbandman is an object of contempt. Every one wishes to be a gentleman, to lead an idle life, addicted to the frightful vices of luxury, gaming, chicane, and calumny. It is thus that

law-suits are multiplied, the wicked thrive, the good are discouraged, and every thing goes to wreck.

“ It is the want of a cultivated understanding which makes people persevere in errors so prejudicial to their felicity. If they knew, that no work is more agreeable to God than what tends to the preservation of his worship, their own good, and that of their neighbours,—the prebends which are founded for saying mass, the endowments made for celebrating the festivals of saints with drums and bonfires, the pious contributions made for ridiculous processions and noisy revelry, the expenses incurred in blazoning their armorial ensigns for escorts and funeral pomp, and other liberal distributions, which, notwithstanding they are of a religious nature, and spring from the best intentions, yet are by no means indispensable,— I say, the amount of all those expenditures would be appropriated to the use of schools, to the liberal support of good teachers, capable of inspiring youth betimes with religious and political maxims. From such a course of education might be expected wise magistrates, enlightened citizens, who, not abusing authority in order to flatter their passions, nor religion in order to conceal their ignorance under the veil of hypocrisy and superstition, nor power nor riches in order to oppress the poor, would become the ornament of society, and the active

promoters of public prosperity. We see convents and fraternities, with immense endowments and very rich images; priests with prebends invested with ten, twenty, thirty, and forty thousand dollars. Who without indignation can behold in this province all property without exception subject to ecclesiastic and monastic rents, whilst not the smallest provision is made for the payment of the teachers who publicly instruct the rising generation in the principles of the religion which they profess, and in the duties which are incumbent on them as men and as subjects?

“The misfortune which arises from giving youth an education which disposes them to enter into holy orders, is equally to be lamented. The parents of those children who do not become priests, monks, or friars, though they have not previously examined whether nature has designed them for either of these vocations, feel themselves miserably mortified at the disappointment. Without any other reason or motive but that they have been bred in some convent, or have in some capacity or other served in a church, they get themselves ordained, or take the vows, merely to gratify their parents, or because they cannot resist the taste which, from the habits of education, they have contracted for that kind of life. Thus the number of privileged persons is multiplied, and the rest of the citizens are overcharged

with prebends, fees, and rents, which are founded for the subsistence of ecclesiastics, besides other duties and contributions, from which their profession is exempted."

This representation, solely designed for the city of Caracas, was equally descriptive of the other parts of the country. It exhibited all the characters of truth. The Revolution has altered much of this; and even before the Revolution, the hand which drew this picture had perhaps given too dark a colouring to the features. The motive, however, which prompted this declamation requires no other explanation than the information, that the person who speaks is a friend to the prosperity of his country,—a man who wishes that the light of reason, with which he himself is so eminently favoured, should dissipate the darkness in which his countrymen are unhappily involved,—a father of a family, who thinks that the most precious inheritance which can be transmitted from one generation to another, is the practice of virtue, a respect for the depositaries of public authority, obedience to the laws, and the love of industry. In order to substitute wholesome for vicious opinions, useful for baneful customs, he has painted abuses and prejudices under the most hideous forms, that a strong persuasion of the enormity of the evil might the more readily dispose to adopt a remedy.

How much the Republican Government has done to reform these abuses, will be seen by the following laws.

I. PREPARATORY SCHOOLS.

The General Congress of Colombia, considering,

1st, That the education of male children in preparatory schools ought to be as general as possible, since this is the source and guide to all other human acquirements ;—

2d, That as, without a knowledge of reading and writing, citizens cannot acquire a perfect knowledge of the sacred obligations imposed upon them by religion and Christian morality, nor of the rights and duties of man in social life, so that they may exercise the first worthily, and perform the second faithfully ; decree the following :—

Article 1. That there shall be at least one preparatory school in each of the cities, towns, parishes, and villages, which shall have more than one hundred inhabitants.

Article 2. For the endowment, either wholly or in part, of these preparatory schools, it shall be recommended to the authorities and persons whom it may concern, to take care of and apply, in preference, all foundations and revenues which may have been specially devoted to this important object.

Article 3. The cities and towns which may have assigned to them domains of any kind whatsoever, shall endow the school with the residue of revenue, after providing for the common expenses.

Article 4. In cities and towns, whose domains may not suffice, and in parishes where there is no special foundation for the endowment of preparatory schools, the inhabitants shall pay. For this purpose, the chief judge of the place shall assemble them, and laying before them the importance of the said establishment, shall invite them to give, every one according to his ability, a certain sum per month: such offerings being taken down, and a list being made in a legal form.

Article 5. If, by this method, the sum necessary for the school be not completed, the cabildo in the cities and principal towns of the district and other parishes, the chief judge of the place, united to the curate and three inhabitants to be named, shall proceed to make a just and moderate assessment upon all the inhabitants living independently, even though they be bachelors, according to the ability of each; and taking into consideration for an increased quota of assessment, the number of children to be educated, which married men or widows may have. The poor are excepted: their children shall be educated gratis. The assessments shall not be collected without the autho-

rity of the governor of the province, who shall have power to reform any injustice or unfair assessment which may be complained of.

Article 6. It shall be incumbent on the chief judge of the city, town, or village, to demand personally, or by agents upon whom he can rely, the contribution for the preparatory school, and furnish to the master monthly such sums as may be necessary, without its being necessary for the said master to apply to any other person.

Article 7. In the villages of natives, formerly called Indians, the schools shall be endowed from the proceeds of the farms and from the produce of the customs, which proceeds shall be verified according to laws existing or to be made; but if there are inhabitants in such villages, not indigenou, then such inhabitants shall pay for the school in the manner expressed in preceding articles.

Article 8. The salary of the masters shall be fixed by the governors of the provinces; and shall be proportioned to the population and wealth of the city, town, parish, or village; the several districts providing a school-house and other necessary articles.

Article 9. The schoolmasters shall be named by the governors of the provinces, out of three presented by the cabildos, in the chief places of the district, and in other places by the junta, of whom mention is made in Ar-

Article 5. These masters must be examined by a commission of three individuals, named by the municipality.

Article 10. In all cities, towns, or parishes, in which are established colleges or houses of education, the school shall be incorporated with and form part of such establishments.

Article 11. The masters must at least teach their pupils reading, writing, orthography, the principles of arithmetic, the dogmas of religion and Christian morality, together with the rights and obligations of man in society.

Article 12. It being of the utmost importance for the Republic that all its members should learn these principles, the judges of the several districts shall make an exact list of all children between the ages of six and twelve, and shall oblige such fathers, as otherwise would not, (which is not expected), to place their children at school within a month after they have attained the age, or after the establishment of the school in the parish. Those parents who refuse shall be fined four dollars; and if, at the requisition of the judge, they still refuse, they shall at the end of fifteen days be fined twice as much,—both fines being applied to the use of the school, and the judge having still the power to force them to comply with the above dispositions.—Cases of poverty, joined to distance from the village, or any other impediments, to be considered by the judge,

the curate, and the three inhabitants named in Article 5.

Article 13. The disposition of the preceding article does not deprive fathers of the power of giving their children a private education, or of placing them in the school which they may prefer, provided that they can produce proof of the same.

Article 14. The method of instruction shall be uniform throughout the whole of the Republic. For this purpose the Government shall make the necessary regulations for the management and interior economy of the schools, establishing in them rewards and competitions; which regulations shall be laid before the Congress at their next meeting; for approbation or reform. The Government shall also order to be composed and printed, such alphabets, books, and instructions, as are necessary for the uniformity and perfection of the schools.

Article 15. The executive power is at the same time authorized to establish schools in all the principal cities of Colombia upon the Lancasterian plan, or system of mutual instruction, in order that thence the system may extend into all the provinces. The necessary expenses may be provided for out of the public funds, reporting the same to the Congress.

Article 16. The director of the studies in the schools which shall be established in each province, shall be intrusted with the manage-

ment of all the details ; but the governors shall superintend these establishments, taking care that the regulations be strictly acted upon ; for which purpose himself personally, or persons in his confidence, shall visit them from time to time, and reform any abuses which may have crept in, giving them all possible means also for perfecting these institutions.

Article 17. The education of girls being of equal importance for the public happiness, the executive power shall, either by voluntary contributions, as mentioned in Article 4. or by similar means, provide for the foundation of girls' schools in the chief places of the districts and parishes, wherever the same may be practicable, in order that the girls may acquire the principles spoken of in Article 11. and also learn to sew and to embroider. These schools shall be subject to the same rules as the others ; and the executive power shall propose to the Congress such measures as may appear likely to increase their number and ensure their endowment.

Let the present be communicated to the Executive for its execution.

Given in the palace of the General Congress of Colombia at Rosario de Cúcuta, on the 2d August 1821, 11th year of Independence.—The President of Congress, Alexander Osorio.—The deputy secretary, Francisco Soto.—The deputy secretary, Miguel Santa Maria.

Palace of the Government of Colombia in Rosario de Cúcuta the 6th August 1821—11th. —Let this be executed—J. M. del Castillo, for his Excellency the Vice-President of the Republic.—The Minister of the interior and of justice, Diego B. Urbaneja.

This decree was remitted to his Excellency the Vice-President of Cundinamarca, by the Minister of the interior, under date 15th September. Its accomplishment was granted.

II.—COLLEGES.

The General Congress of Colombia, considering,

1st, That public education is the fundamental basis of a representative government, and one of the first benefits which a people ought to derive from independence and liberty;—

2d, That a good system of education being established, information ought to be disseminated amongst all classes, so that each may become acquainted with their respective duties, and that religion with public and private morality may be promoted.—

Decree the following :

Article 1. There shall be established in each province of Colombia, a college or house of education.

Article 2. Besides the preparatory schools, there shall be at least two professorships : one

for Spanish grammar, Latin, and the principles of rhetoric; the other, for philosophy, and those branches of mathematics which may be considered most useful for the inhabitants of the province.

Article 8. In the colleges of such provinces as can accomplish it, there shall likewise be a professorship of the civil, canon, natural, and national law; one of dogmatic theology; and any other professorships which the free will of the inhabitants, sanctioned by the Supreme Government, may establish. Such studies shall be necessary for the obtaining of degrees in the several universities, under the regulations which will be laid down.

Article 4. The funds necessary for the endowment of the provincial colleges, or houses of education, shall be raised—

1st, From all the chapelries in the several provinces for the benefit of particular families, and whose legal possessors shall be unknown. The governor of the province, after having made the necessary inquiries, shall, where the chapelries are ecclesiastic, have recourse to the ecclesiastical authority in order that it may make the application; and where they are lay, to the civil power, in order that it may verify the same. The colleges and houses of education shall, however, satisfy all such charges or pensions as may have been imposed upon the chapelries in question by the founders.

2d, From the surplus of the revenues arising from the domains of the cabildos (common councils of the towns), after satisfaction of the sums necessary for the endowments of schools (preparatory), and other regular, ordinary, or extraordinary charges.

3d, From the donations or voluntary subscriptions of the inhabitants possessing property, and anxious for the education of their children. This is to be promoted by the governors and municipal authorities.

4th, From all other funds which the governors and cabildos, from their local knowledge, may think available. The opinions upon this point shall be transmitted, through the competent authority, to the Supreme Government for its approbation.

Article 5. To such provinces as may not have revenues sufficient for the establishment of the professorships spoken of in Article 2. the executive power is authorized to grant endowments from the public treasury, whenever the more preferable necessities of the war, and of public credit, shall permit the same, giving an account to the Congress for its approbation.

Article 6. The colleges or houses of public education shall be established in the provincial capitals, or in such other places as, in the opinion of the executive power, shall appear most convenient, either on account of central position, salubrity of climate, existence of proper buildings, or the like.

Article 7. The executive shall, by every possible means, encourage the study of agriculture, of commerce, of the mines, and of the military sciences, necessary for the defence of the country.

Article 8. The course of study shall be uniform throughout all the colleges, or houses of education. The Government shall arrange the same: and to it also is recommended the reformation of the several constitutions of colleges already in existence. The Government shall also make the necessary regulations for the ascertaining, encouragement, better administration, and preservation of the revenues and buildings destined for public education: All which shall be laid before the next Congress.

Article 9. The executive shall carry this law into effect, resolving and smoothing such doubts and difficulties as may present themselves, in order that the studies may begin in the provinces with the least possible delay;—the next Congress to be made acquainted with the progress made in this business.

Let this be communicated to the executive power, in order for its due execution.

Given at the palace of the General Congress in Rosario de Cúcuta, July 20. 1821.

The President of Congress, Jose Manuel Restrepo.

The deputy secretary, Miguel Santa Maria.

The deputy secretary, Francisco Soto.

Palace of the Government of Colombia in Rosariq de Càcuta, August 6. 1821. Let this be executed—J. M. del Castillo, for his Excellency the Vice-President *ad interim* of the Republic.—The Minister for the interior and justice, Diego Bautista Urbaneja.

III.—EDUCATION OF GIRLS.

Decree on the establishment of schools in the convents of nuns, for the education of girls.

The Congress of Colombia considering,

1st, That the education of girls requires the particular protection of Government, that class of society being so numerous, and its influence so great;

2d, That as, in the actual state of war and desolation, it is impossible that the Government of the Republic should be able to apply the necessary funds for the schools or houses of education for the girls;

3d, Lastly, that the Kings of Spain, through similar motives and through a just and religious policy, having by a bull and brief of the Pope, dispatched to the countries now composing the Republic of Colombia, before their political change, and also lately a brief, inserted in the decree of July the 8th, 1816, in which it is ordered that houses of education for girls should be opened in all those convents of nuns where it may be thought possible; the Pope

having commissioned the most reverend archbishops, and reverend bishops, and other prelates, to grant the necessary dispensations for the establishments of schools and houses of education—decrees as follows :

Article 1. Schools or houses for education of girls shall be established in all the convents of nuns. Such institutions shall be governed according to the brief of his Holiness, inserted in the Spanish warrant of the 8th of July 1816.

Article 2. The executive power, in union with the most reverend archbishops, and reverend bishops, and other prelates belonging to their respective episcopal dioceses, from whom the most active co-operation is expected, shall proceed to the establishment of the said schools, overcoming all the difficulties that shall present themselves.

Article 3. The executive power shall also make the necessary regulations for the economical government of the schools and houses of education already established, and of those which shall hereafter be established in the convents of nuns, in union with the ordinary ecclesiastics, in all in which these ought to interfere.

Article 4. In observance of the brief of his Holiness, the respective prelates shall inform the nuns of the importance of the service they will render to their country, by dedicating themselves, with that willingness and ardour

which is to be expected from their love for virtue and for the public good, to the education of young and grown up girls.

Article 5. The regulation of which Article 3. treats, and the doubts which shall occur to the executive power, shall be laid before the next Congress.

Let this be communicated to the executive power, for its execution.

Given in the palace of the General Congress of Colombia in the city of Rosario de Cúcuta on the 28th of July 1821.—The President of the Congress, Jose Manuel Restrepo.—Deputy secretary, Francisco Sotó.—Deputy secretary, Miguel Santa Maria.

Let it be executed—Jose Maria del Castillo, for his Excellency the Vice-President of the Republic.—The Minister of the interior and justice, Diego Bautista Urbaneja.

SECTION V.

STATE OF MIND IN COLOMBIA.

THE truth is, that the Creoles of Tierra Firme possess a quick penetrating mind. From their successful application in the schools, and the facility with which they acquire a perfect knowledge of the civil law, one may judge that

nothing is wanting for the improvement of their disposition, but a direction towards objects, the knowledge of which tends to open the understanding, form the judgment, and adorn the mind. Till the present period, the education of the Spanish Creoles partook of those national prejudices, which inspired contempt for every thing that did not originate amongst themselves. They were fully persuaded, that there existed no just sentiments, no solid principles, nor sound morality, but amongst the Spaniards, and consequently that they would incur a loss by a mixture of their own productions with those of foreign nations. But a happy revolution of opinion is now on the eve of being accomplished, and every thing announces, that the succeeding generation will exhibit to the astonished world the spectacle of a moral amelioration, achieved by the increased energy of the national wisdom, in consequence of the admission of whatever is useful in the principles of other nations. Indeed all the Creole youth, fully sensible of the insufficiency of their education, apply with avidity to the reading of foreign books, to supply the deficiency of domestic instruction. Among these, very few are to be seen who do not, with the aid alone of a dictionary, make shift to translate English and French, and use every exertion to speak them both, but particularly the former. It is at present agreed, that commerce contains a theory

more worthy of being attended to than it has yet been among them. They begin to be less ashamed of studying its regulations, and even of pursuing it as an occupation. Their extravagant passion for distinction is the only prejudice which seems to maintain its ground; but that in its turn will naturally yield to the progress of reason.

The report of Humboldt on this subject is very important. "We had great cause, says he, of satisfaction in the reception we met with from all classes of the inhabitants. I feel it a duty to cite the noble hospitality exercised towards us by the chief of the government, M. de Guevara Vasconcelos, then Captain-general of the province of Venezuela.—Although I had the advantage, which few Spaniards have shared with me, of having successively visited Caracas, the Havannah, Santa Fé de Bogota, Quito, Lima, and Mexico, and of having been connected in these six capitals of Spanish America with men of all ranks, I shall not venture to decide on the various degrees of civilization which society has attained in the different colonies. It is easier to indicate the different shades of national improvement, and the point toward which the unfolding of the intellect tends in preference, than to compare and class things that cannot be investigated under the same point of view. It appeared to me, that a strong tendency toward the study of the sciences prevail-

ed at Mexico and Santa Fé de Bogota; more taste for literature, and whatever can charm an ardent and lively imagination, at Quito and Lima; more accurate notions of the political relations of countries, and more enlarged views on the state of colonies and their mother-countries, at the Havannah and Caracas. The numerous communications with commercial Europe, and with that sea of the West Indies which we have described as a Mediterranean with many outlets, have had a powerful influence on the progress of society in the island of Cuba, and in the provinces of Venezuela. Civilization has, in no other part of Spanish America, assumed a more European physiognomy. The great number of Indian cultivators who inhabit Mexico and the interior of New Grenada, have impressed a peculiar, I might almost say an exotic character, on those vast countries. Notwithstanding the increase of the black population, we seem to be nearer Cadiz and the United States at Caracas and the Havannah, than in any other part of the New World.

“Caracas being situate on the continent, and its population less mutable than that of the islands, the national manners have been better preserved than at the Havannah. Society does not present very animated and varied pleasures; but that feeling of comfort is experienced in domestic life, which leads to uniform cheerful-

ness and cordiality, united with politeness of manners. There exists at Caracas, as in every place where a great change in the ideas is preparing, two races of men, we might say two distinct generations; one, of which but a small number remains, preserves a strong attachment for ancient customs, simplicity of manners, and moderation in their desires. They live only in the images of the past. America appears to them a property conquered by their ancestors: Abhorring what is called the enlightened state of the age, they carefully preserve hereditary prejudices as a part of their patrimony. The other class, less occupied even by the present than by the future, have a propensity, often ill judged, for new habits and ideas. When this tendency is allied to the love of solid instruction, restrained and guided by a strong and enlightened reason, its effects become beneficial to society. I knew at Caracas, among the second generation, several men equally distinguished by their taste for study, the mildness of their manners, and the elevation of their sentiments. I have also known men, who, disdaining all that is excellent in the character, the literature, and the arts of the Spaniards, have lost their national individuality, without having acquired from their connexions with foreigners any just ideas of the real bases of happiness and social order.

“ Since the reign of Charles V. the corporation spirit and municipal habits having passed

from the mother-country to the colonies, men take a pleasure at Cumana, and in other commercial towns of Tierra Firme, in exaggerating the pretensions to nobility of the most illustrious families of Caracas, known by the name of Los Mantuanos. I am ignorant in what manner these pretensions were formerly manifested; but it appeared to me, that the progress of knowledge, and the change effected in manners, have gradually and pretty generally destroyed whatever is offensive in those distinctions among the whites. In all the colonies there exist two kinds of nobility. One is composed of the Creoles, whose ancestors have very recently filled great stations in America. Their prerogatives are partly founded on the distinction they enjoy in the mother-country; and they imagine they can retain them beyond the sea, whatever may be the date of their settlement in the colonies. The other nobility has more of an American cast. It is composed of the descendants of the Conquistadores, that is to say, of the Spaniards who served in the army at the time of the first conquest. Among the warriors who fought with Cortes, Losada, and Pizarro, several belonged to the most distinguished families of the peninsula; others, born in the inferior classes of the people, have illustrated their names by that chivalrous spirit which prevailed at the beginning of the sixteenth century. I have else-

where observed, that in the record of those times of religious and military enthusiasm, we find, among the followers of the great captains, many simple, virtuous, and generous characters, who reprobated the cruelties that stained the glory of the Spanish name, but who, confounded in the mass, have not escaped the general proscription. The name of Conquistadores remains the more odious, as the greater number of them, after having outraged peaceful nations, and lived in the midst of opulence, did not experience toward the end of their career, those long misfortunes which appease the hatred of mankind, and sometimes soften the severity of the historian.

“But it is not only the progress of ideas, and the conflict between two classes of different origin, which have induced the privileged casts to abandon their pretensions, or at least to conceal them carefully. Aristocracy in the Spanish colonies has a counterpoise of another kind, and of which the action becomes every day more powerful. A sentiment of equality among the whites, has penetrated every bosom. Wherever men of colour are either considered as slaves, or as having been enfranchised, what constitutes nobility is hereditary liberty,—the proud boast of having never reckoned among ancestors any but freemen. In the colonies, the colour of the skin is the real badge of nobility. In Mexico as well as Peru,

at Caracas as in the island of Cuba, a bare-footed fellow is often heard exclaiming, "Does that rich white man think himself whiter than I am?" The population which Europe pours into America being very considerable, it may easily be supposed, that the axiom, "every white man is noble," "todo blanco es caballero," must singularly wound the pretensions of a great number of ancient and illustrious European families. But we may observe farther, that the truth of this axiom has long since been recognized in Spain, among a people justly celebrated for probity, industry, and national spirit. Every Biscayan calls himself noble; and, there being a greater number of Biscayans in America and the Philippine Islands, than in the Peninsula, the whites of this race have contributed, in no small degree, to propagate in the colonies the system of equality among all men, whose blood has not been contaminated by the African race.

"Moreover, the countries of which the inhabitants, even without a representative government, or any institution of peerage, annex so much importance to genealogy and the advantages of birth, are not always those where the aristocracy of families is the most offensive. We should seek in vain among the natives of Spanish origin, that cold and assuming air which the character of modern civilization seems to have rendered more common in the

rest of Europe. Conviviality, candour, and a great simplicity of manners, unite the different classes of society in the colonies, as well as in the mother-country. We might even venture to say, that the expressions of vanity and self-love are less offensive, when they retain something of simplicity and frankness.

“ I found, says he, in several families at Caracas a taste for instruction, a knowledge of the masterpieces of French and Italian literature, and a particular predilection for music, which is cultivated with success, and which, as it always happens in the pursuit of the fine arts, serves to bring the different classes of society nearer to each other. The mathematical sciences, drawing, painting, cannot here boast of any of those establishments, with which royal munificence, and the patriotic zeal of the inhabitants, have enriched Mexico. In the midst of the marvels of nature, so rich in productions, no person on this coast was devoted to the study of plants and minerals. In a convent of St Francis alone, I met with a respectable old gentleman, Father Puerto, who calculated the almanack for all the provinces of Venezuela, and who possessed some precise ideas on the state of modern astronomy. Our instruments interested him deeply, and one day our house was filled with all the monks of St Francis, begging to see a dipping-needle. The curiosity that dwells on physical pheno-

mena is augmented in countries undermined by volcanic fires, and in a climate where nature is at once so overwhelming, and so mysteriously agitated.

“ When we remember, that in the United States of North America newspapers are published in small towns not exceeding three thousand inhabitants, we may be surprised to learn, that Caracas, with a population of forty or fifty thousand souls, possessed no printing-office before 1806; for we cannot give this name to the presses, which served only from year to year to print a few pages of an almanack, or the pastoral letter of a bishop. The number of those who feel the want of reading is not very considerable, even in the Spanish colonies most advanced in civilization; but it would be unjust to attribute to the colonists what was the effect of a jealous policy. A Frenchman, M. Delpeche, allied to one of the most respectable families in the country, that of the Montillas, has the merit of having first established a printing-office at Caracas. It appears sufficiently extraordinary in modern times, to see an establishment of this kind, affording the greatest means of communication between men, follow, and not precede, a political revolution.

In a country that presents such enchanting views, and at a period when, notwithstanding some symptoms of popular commotions, the greater part of the inhabitants seem only to

direct their thoughts toward physical objects, the fertility of the year, the long drought, or the conflict of the two winds Petare and Catia, I believed that I should find many persons well acquainted with the lofty surrounding mountains. My expectations, however, were not realized : we could not discover at Caracas a single person who had visited the summit of the Silla. The hunters do not climb so high on the ridges of mountains ; and no journeys are undertaken in these countries to gather alpine plants, to carry a barometer to an elevated spot, or to examine the nature of rocks. Accustomed to a uniform and domestic life, they dread fatigue, and sudden changes of climate. It would seem as if they live not to enjoy life, but only to prolong its duration."

The laws ordained by the republic will tend greatly, and we doubt not speedily, to ameliorate these circumstances. The following will have a primary and powerful operation.

LAW ON THE LIBERTY OF THE PRESS.

The General Congress of Colombia,

Wishing to carry into effect what is prescribed in the Constitution, Article 156. by which the precious right of writing, printing, and publishing his thoughts is guaranteed to every man—a prerogative as natural to him as the faculty of speaking ; and considering that the

important objects of this liberty would be defeated by the abuses resulting from it, if not secured by fixed and determined rules; have decreed, and do decree as follows:—

SECTION I.

Of the extent of the Liberty of the Press, and of the qualifications of its abuses.

Article 1. Every Colombian has the right and liberty to print and publish his thoughts, without any previous censure.

Article 2. The Holy Scriptures shall not be printed without a license from the ordinary ecclesiastic.

Article 3. The abuse of the liberty of the press is a crime which shall be judged and punished according to the following article.

Article 4. This liberty is infringed; 1st, When any books contrary to the established dogmas of the Catholic religion are published; which writings shall be qualified with the term of subversive:—2^d, By publishing writings tending to excite rebellion, or to disturb public tranquillity, which shall be denoted by that of seditious:—3^d, By publishing any writings offensive to morality or public decorum; which shall be qualified under the title of obscene, or contrary to good morals;—4th, and lastly, By publishing writings tending to injure the

good name or reputation of any one, attacking his private character; which shall be qualified by the term of defamatory libels.

Article 5. The terms of qualification spoken of in the preceding article shall be classified into first, second, or third degree; according to the degree of gravity of the abuse in question.

Article 6. No other qualifications shall be made use of, under any pretext whatsoever, than those expressed in the preceding articles; and when the judges do not think any of the above qualifications applicable to the work, they shall then make use of the following formula,—"Acquitted."

Article 7. In the case of an author or editor publishing a defamatory libel, he shall not be exempt from the punishment established by this law, though he may offer to prove the truth of the imputation: the injured party has also the liberty to bring an action before the competent tribunals against the offender.

Article 8. No writings in which the faults committed by public functionaries are detected, with respect to their capacities, or want of activity and exactness in the performance of their duties, shall be considered as defamatory. But if in the writing any crimes compromising the honour or probity of a corporation, or that of a public functionary, be imputed to either of them, with such false accusations as are sub-

ject to positive punishment, the author or editor of them, if accused, shall be bound to make good his imputations, under pain of having his writing pronounced a defamatory libel.

SECTION II.

Of Punishments corresponding to abuses.

Article 9. The author or editor of a writing qualified under the head of subversive, in the first degree, shall be punished with six months' imprisonment, and be fined three hundred dollars: The author of a writing subversive, in the second degree, with four months' imprisonment, and a fine of two hundred dollars: The author of a writing subversive, in the third degree, with two months' imprisonment, and a fine of one hundred dollars. This resolution does not lessen the faculty, which on such matters belongs to the ecclesiastical power.

Article 10. The same punishments assigned against authors or editors for subversive writings, shall be applied to the authors or editors of writings which are seditious, according to their respective degrees; the delinquent being also subject to be tried and punished according to the common law, if, by the publication of such writing, any rebellion, or disturbance of public tranquillity, has been the consequence of it.

Article 11. The author or editor of a writing which is obscene, or contrary to good morals, shall pay a fine of five hundred dollars, if in the first degree; three hundred, if in the second; and a hundred and fifty, if in the third: and if he should not be able to pay this fine, he shall be imprisoned, according to the degrees qualified, eighteen, twelve, or ten months.

Article 12. The author or editor of a writing qualified under the title of defamatory libel, shall pay a fine of two hundred dollars, in the first degree, and be imprisoned for three months; in the second, he shall pay a hundred dollars, and suffer two months' imprisonment; and in the third, he shall pay fifty dollars, and suffer one month's imprisonment. The author or editor who shall not be able to pay this fine, shall have the time of his imprisonment doubled.

Article 13. Besides the penalties specified in the preceding articles, all the copies declared to be comprised in any of the qualifications expressed in the first section of this law, and remaining for sale, shall be seized. Those persons who shall return the copies bought before the conviction, shall be paid the same price that they originally cost, by the person convicted.

Article 14. But if the censured writing be a work estimable in itself, and if the censure fall only on certain expressions, so that they might be very easily distinguished and erased, the juries shall in this case specify the words, the

phrases, or the pages which contain them, and the copies shall be returned to the party interested, after the usual expurgations by the judge.

SECTION III.

On the Responsibility of Persons.

Article 15. The author or editor of a writing shall be responsible for the abuses committed against the liberty of the press; and, to that end, either of them shall sign the original copy, which is to remain in the hands of the printer.

Article 16. The printer shall remain subject to the same responsibility as the author or editor; and the law shall consider him as such in the following cases:—*1st*, When the printer, if required legally to present the original copy signed by the editor or author, does not comply with it;—*2d*, When the printer, called upon by the proper authorities to disclose the place of abode of either the author or editor, shall not chuse to do it; or when, if required, he do not name a person of property willing to be security for the author or editor of the work; in which two cases the trial shall commence against the printer, in order that the ends of justice may not be defeated.

Article 17. The printers shall be obliged to put their names and surnames to the printed

copies, and also the place and year when the writing was printed. Invitation letters, cards, and the like, are excepted. Defect in any of these requisites shall be punished as the absolute omission of them.

Article 18. The printers of those works or writings in which any of the above requisites may be wanting, shall pay the sum of ten dollars as a fine ; but if the writings have undergone any of the qualifications specified in the first section of this law, then the printer shall pay a fine of a hundred dollars.

Article 19. Whosoever shall sell, publish, or circulate one or more copies of any censured writing, already qualified as above, shall suffer the same penalty as the author or editor of the said writing.

SECTION IV.

Of the Method of proceeding in these Trials.

Article 20. The crimes qualified as abuses of the liberty of the press, except those comprised under the denomination of defamatory libels, produce popular action, and therefore any Columbian has the right to bring before the competent tribunal those writings which he shall judge as subversive, seditious, obscene, or contrary to good morals.

Article 21. The faculty of accusing such writings belongs more especially to the attorney and solicitor-general.

Article 22. In the cases of defamatory libels, none but the parties concerned shall have the power to accuse.

Article 23. The accusations of such writings shall be presented or sent to one of the Alcaldes Ordinarios of the head of a district, that he may impanel the juries as soon as possible, according to the method which will be established in the following articles.

Article 24. Four-and-twenty persons shall be elected by plurality of votes every year, within the first fifteen days of the month of January, in the Ayuntamiento of the canton, where there is a printing-office, to exercise the functions of juries.

Article 25. To exercise this charge, it will be required to have the rights of citizen, to have attained their majority, (fixed at twenty-five years), to reside in the district or canton, and to have a trade or a property well known, which enables them to maintain themselves without depending for their subsistence on any one.

Article 26. Persons exercising any civil or ecclesiastical jurisdiction shall not be eligible to the office of jurymen, neither shall the chief military commanders, nor the secretaries of public offices or their clerks.

Article 27. No citizen shall be permitted to excuse himself from this charge, unless he be prevented by some physical or moral defect,

which the Ayuntamiento shall determine; and in such a case they shall elect another in his room.

Article 28. If a juryman should not assist at the trial after being twice apprized of it by the judge of the cause, without showing cause or legal impediment for it, the judge shall impose upon him a fine of not less than ten dollars, nor exceeding twenty-five; which sum may be doubled for a second offence.

Article 29. After the accusation of a writing, the Alcalde Ordinario before whom it has been made, or to whom it has been directed, shall proceed with a Regidor, or the secretary of the Ayuntamiento, to draw lots for seven out of four-and-twenty billets, containing the names of the jurymen. This being done, the names of the jurymen drawn shall be registered into a book destined for this purpose.

Article 30. After this, the jurymen shall be convoked and examined by the judge of the cause, to see whether any of them has any legal impediment that may prevent him from acting as such.

Article 31. The legal impediments, in these trials, shall be no other than the being an accomplice,—the being an avowed enemy,—relationship to the fourth degree of civil consanguinity, or second of affinity, with either the accuser, or with the author or editor, if his name be ascertained.

Article 32. If one or more of the seven jurymen should be declared incapable, according to the impediments stated in the preceding article, the judge who has convoked them shall draw lots for as many as are incapable, observing the same method as in Articles 29 and 30.

Article 33. The fitness of the seven jurymen being once ascertained, the judge of the cause shall administer to them the following oath:—
“ Do you swear to discharge faithfully the function now intrusted to you, deciding with justice and impartiality whether there is ground or not to proceed legally against the denounced writing now before your eyes?”—“ Yes, we swear.” “ If you act so, God will reward you: if not, he will call you to an account.”

Article 34. After this, the judge or alcalde shall retire, and the seven jurymen remain by themselves to examine the writing, the subject of accusation; and, after having conversed on the subject among themselves, they shall declare, by an absolute plurality of votes, whether there are, or are no grounds to proceed to trial; making use of no other form but that.

Article 35. This declaration being once made, it shall at that moment be registered in a book destined for that purpose, and likewise at the end of the same accusation, signed by the seven jurymen; and the foreman of them shall present it to the alcalde who has convoked them.

Article 36. If the declaration be conceived in these terms,—“ There are no grounds to proceed to trial,” the alcalde shall then transmit to the accuser the accusation with the above declaration, and all further proceedings shall thereby cease.

Article 37. If the declaration be conceived in these terms,—“ There are grounds to proceed to trial,” the alcalde shall then take the necessary precautions to suspend the sale of those copies which exist in the hands of the printer or seller, imposing a fine of one hundred dollars, and two months' imprisonment on either of them who shall fail in the truth of the account he shall give of the number of existing copies, or if he should sell any of the copies after these proceedings.

Article 38. The judge shall proceed also to the search of the person upon whom the responsibility falls, according to what has been ordained in the 3d article of this law. But no authority shall oblige any one to disclose the name of the editor or author of the writing, before the jurymen have declared that “ There are grounds to proceed to trial.” All proceedings contrary to what is here established, shall be considered and punished as an attempt against individual security, and the officer or authority who does it shall be deposed from his power or his office.

Article 39. If the declaration—“ There are grounds to proceed to trial,” were to fall on a

writing accused as seditious, the judge shall have the person responsible arrested; but, should the accusation be for any of the other abuses mentioned in the first section of this law, then the judge shall only require a sufficient security or bail to bind him to appear when called upon his trial; and, should he not be able to find security or bail, then he shall also be put under arrest.

Article 40. Having once proceeded so far, the judge of the cause shall draw lots for seven billets out of those which remained in the box for jurymen, observing the same method as in the first drawing of lots, and also registering the names of the seven jurymen drawn.

Article 41. The fitness of those seven jurymen shall be examined by the judge of the cause, observing to this effect what has already been prescribed in the 30th, 31st, and 32d articles.

Article 42. The judge of the cause shall afterwards send to the responsible person, a certified copy of the accusation made against his writing, that he may have it in his power to prepare his defence verbally or by writing, with a copy of the list of the seven jurymen, that he may be able to reject, if he likes, in the term of four-and-twenty hours, four out of the seven jurymen, without being obliged to state the cause of his rejection.

Article 43. In the case of a rejection, the judge of the cause shall draw lots for as many

as have been rejected; and their fitness once ascertained, no further rejection shall take place.

Article 44. The number of the seven jurymen being completed, the judge shall send them notice to appear in the place appointed for the trial, and the following oath shall be administered to them by the judge before commencing the trial:—"Do you swear to discharge faithfully and honourably the trust confided to you, deciding with justice and impartiality, and according to the best of your abilities, whether or not the writing now before you be subject to any of the qualifications expressed in the 1st article of the Law on the Liberty of the Press?"—"Yes, we swear."—"If you do act so," &c.

Article 45. The trial shall take place in open court; and both the defendant and his friends shall be permitted to assist at it.

Article 46. In the same manner, the attorney and solicitor-general, or any other who acts as accuser, either by himself, or by proxy, shall be able to assist and speak; the defendant having the right to reply to the accuser, after this last has spoken in support of his charge.

Article 47. Afterwards the judge of the cause, if he be a barrister,—if not, one nominated by him, shall recapitulate the whole trial, and inform the jury as to the law on the sub-

ject, to enable them to judge the better of the case; after which they shall retire to an adjoining room to consult respecting it; and they shall on the spot qualify the writing according to what is prescribed in the first section of this law.

Article 48. The unanimous votes of six shall be required to convict the author or editor of a writing, and two shall be sufficient to acquit him. But once a writing is qualified under any of the denominations specified in the 4th article of this law, the degree belonging to it shall be assigned by plurality of votes. In cases where the votes shall be equal, the decision shall be in favour of the defendant.

Article 49. That done, the jurymen shall return to the court, and the foreman shall place in the judge's hands the qualification of the work, signed by them all.

Article 50. After having read it aloud, if the decision be "Acquitted," the judge shall make use of the following form:—"All the forms of the law having been observed in this trial, and the jury having judged by the formula of "Acquitted," the writing entitled, denounced on such a day, by such an authority or person, the law acquits N, the person responsible for the said writing; and in consequence of it I order, that he be immediately set at liberty, or withdraw his security or bail, without any damage or prejudice thereby resulting to his good name and reputation."

Article 51. The judge shall carry into effect what has been said in the preceding article without a moment's detention; and any act contrary to this shall be punished as a crime of detention, or arbitrary proceeding.

Article 52. If any of the qualifications specified in article the 4th have been assigned to the writing, then the judge shall make use of the following form:—"All the forms of the law having been observed in this trial, and the jury having qualified with the denomination of the writing entitled, denounced on such a day, by such an authority or person, the law condemns N, the person responsible for the said writing, to the penalty specified in such article; and in consequence of that, I order that the said be carried into effect."

Article 53. This being over, the trial shall be considered as completed; and the judge shall proceed to carry it into execution, by putting into the hands of both the accuser and the accused, legal copies of the sentence.

Article 54. The fees for the judge of the cause, notary, and other costs of the trial, shall be paid, according to the arancel, (certain regulations), by the person declared guilty; but if he should be acquitted, and the trial be for a defamatory libel, then the costs shall be paid by the accuser. In all other cases, the costs shall be paid from the fund created from the fines resulting from this law; which fund ought

to be deposited in the Ayuntamiento, with the respective accounts.

Article 55. If the writing should be declared to contain any of the qualifications mentioned in the first section, the attorney-general shall also receive his fees, which shall also be included in the costs; but he shall not be entitled to any thing when the person has been acquitted.

Article 56. In both cases, the qualification and sentence shall be inserted in the Government Gazette; to which end the judge of the cause shall send a written notice to the office of the said paper.

Article 57. Whosoever shall reprint a writing or a work suppressed, shall incur a penalty twice as great as that imposed on the writing.

SECTION V.

Of the Appeal granted on such Trials.

Article 58. The person condemned shall be able to appeal to the superior court of justice, when the judge of the cause shall not have imposed the penalty prescribed by this law, and within the term of five days: in both these cases his appeal will be admitted.

Article 59. The interested party may likewise appeal to the superior court, when the rules and formalities established in this law

have not been observed; but, in this appeal, the trial shall begin only where the form was interrupted, and the tribunal shall lay the responsibility on the person or persons who committed the fault.

Article 60. If both appeals should be declared unfounded, the summoner shall be condemned in costs.

Let the present be communicated to the executive power, to be published and carried into effect.

Given in the palace of the General Congress of Colombia, in the city of Rosario de Cúcuta, on the 14th September 1821, 11th year of Independence.—The President of the Congress, Vicente Azuero.—The deputy secretary, Francisco Soto.—The deputy secretary, Ant. Jose Caro.

Palace of the Government of Colombia, Rosario de Cúcuta, 17th September 1821.—Let it be executed—Jose Maria del Castillo, for his Excellency the Vice-President of the Republic.—The Minister of the interior and of justice, Diego B. Urbaneja.

Pamplona, September 29. 1821.—This has been received.—Let it be communicated to those whom it concerns to be published, in order to exact execution; and let it be printed not only in the Government Gazette, but likewise in a separate sheet of paper, that it may be sent to all the provinces and authorities of

departments.—The secretary of the interior, Vergara, remains intrusted with the execution of this order—F. P. Santander.

SECTION VI.

RELIGION.

THE religion of Colombia is the Roman Catholic: but the Inquisition is abolished; no undue restraints are imposed; and every form of worship is tolerated.

Abolition of the Holy Tribunal of the Inquisition.

The General Congress of Colombia, considering that one of its first duties is to maintain in all its purity the Roman Catholic religion, as one of the most sacred rights belonging to citizens, and which has the most powerful influence on the support of order, morality, and public tranquillity, decrees as follows:

Article 1. The tribunal of the Inquisition, likewise called the Holy Office, shall be abolished for ever; it shall never again be established; and the properties belonging to it shall be applied to the increase of the public treasury.

Article 2. In consequence of this, it is declared, that the most reverend archbishops, and