

## CHAPTER XII.

1814.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE 2D OF JANUARY AT SAN FRANCISCO DE CARACAS—SPEECHES OF BOLIVAR, OF MENDOZA, OF RODRIGUEZ DOMINGUEZ, OF ALEBUR—DECISION OF THIS SESSION—BOLETTIN DE PUERTO RICO.

**T**HE celebration of the most august act shone out from the dawn of the year 1814.

A popular assembly, such as had never been seen before in Venezuela, called together by order of the Liberator, to pronounce judgment upon his conduct, turned unawares into an astonishing scene.

On the one hand stood forth the virtues of the hero; his moderation, his unselfishness, his generosity, seeking no greater reward than glory; his political and military talents; on the other, the purest sentiments of a people's love and gratitude displayed themselves. . . .

The call was sent forth on the first day of January, for the following day; the place, San Francisco, being the point marked out for the meeting, and the corresponding notices being sent around to all the magistrates, corporate bodies and the citizens in general, by means of official advices, placards and proclamations.

The gathering was immense. The day dawned bright.

At ten o'clock in the morning, the Political Governor Doctor Christopher Mendoza, was presiding over an assembly essentially popular.

The most agreeable satisfaction depicted itself on the countenances of all.

When General Bolivar came forward, the applause was intense and reached even the pitch of delirium.

What an enthusiasm! The hearts of all swelled amid the sweetest hopes. . .

The noble act of disinterestedness and generosity of the conqueror in submitting his conduct to the judgment of those who owed their all to him, fired their hearts, filling them with amazement. . . . which burst forth instinctively into vivas and frantic shouts of praise.

And, indeed, what more beautiful sight can there be, than that of a warrior with the valor of Reinaldo and the virtues of Washington, who is the object of his enemies' respect, and of the trust and gratitude of his friends, coming forward to give an account of his conduct after having not only gained but secured the triumph of the most holy of causes! *Sic pulchra, ante ipsum, non fuerunt talia usque ad originem*: never before had there been witnessed actions so grand and admirable!

But, above all, the sight of that all-powerful dictator, becoming the first in South America to pay his homage and his submission to the sovereignty of the people, produced a profound sensation. That sublime act of lofty republicanism, was the bright and convincing sign that usurping tyrants could never exist on American soil. And, say what we may, from the immortal Bolivar have we received the first and the most effectual lessons in noble disinterestedness; from him have we learned the religious sanctity of patriotism, the inexhaustible love of independence, the reverence for justice, and the force of perseverance. During the long and bloody struggle against Spanish power, in the midst of the conquest made by the country over usurpation, and by mind over brute force, he taught us to be free and to love both glory and virtue.

Around him shone forth other men born of the revolution; but, amid the clash of arms, in victories as in reverses, in the midst of the maze and fearful preparation of armies and for campaigns, he was the one who, with pleasure and kindness, gave light to some; roused the virtue of others, and kept burning the hope of all. From his mouth came forth, as from a fountain of life, salutary counsels; from him were heard at all times flattering words about liberty, about rights and guarantees, about the majesty of Congress, about laws, national dignity and fidelity to the great principles of the revolution.

Bolivar was the unwearied teacher whose lessons have brought forth the choicest fruits for all America. Liberty is our sovereign, he taught us to love her; and with him we learned to defend her.

The session having been opened amid the most profound silence on the part of the spectators, the Liberator arose and said:

"CITIZENS:

"Hatred to tyranny caused me to leave Venezuela, when I beheld my country for a second time enslaved; and from the distant confines of the Magdalena, love for liberty has led me back to her, overcoming all the obstacles which opposed themselves to the march which was conducting me, to redeem my country from the horrors and oppressions of the Spaniards. My hosts, accompanied by fortune, have taken possession of all, and have destroyed the enemy. Your chains have passed to your oppressors; and the Spanish blood, which stains the battle-field, has revenged the shades of your sacrificed countrymen.

"I have not given you freedom. You owe it to my fellow soldiers. Contemplate their noble wounds, which yet shed blood, and recall to your memory those who have perished in battle. I have had the glory of directing their military virtue. Neither pride nor ambition for power have inspired me in this undertaking. Liberty fired in my bosom this sacred flame; and the spectacle of my fellow citizens expiring infamously on the scaffold, or groaning under chains, caused me to unsheathe the sword against the enemy. The justice of the cause joined under my banners the bravest soldiers, and just Providence led us to victory.

"To redeem you from anarchy, and to destroy the enemies who attempted to sustain the party of oppression, was the reason that I consented and preserved sovereign power. I have given you laws, I have organized for you an administration of justice and revenues, and finally I have given you a government.

"CITIZENS:—I am not the sovereign. Your representatives should form your laws; the national revenues do not pertain to him who governs you. All the depositaries of your interests should render you an account of the use they have made of them. Judge with impartiality if I have managed the elements

of power, for my own elevation, or if I have sacrificed my life, my feelings, all my time to constitute you into a nation, to increase your resources, or more so to create them.

"I long for the moment to transmit this power to the representatives, which you should name, and I hope, fellow citizens, that you will exempt me from a destiny which some of you are able to fulfill worthily, allowing me the honor to which alone I aspire, which is that of continuing to fight your enemies, as I shall never sheathe my sword as long as the liberty of my country is not completely secured.

"Your glories acquired by the expulsion of your oppressors were darkened; your honor was compromised; you had lost it, having succumbed to the yoke of the tyrants. You were the victim of a wicked vengeance. The interests of the State were in the hands of bandits. Decide whether your honor has been replaced; whether your chains have been broken; whether I have exterminated your enemies; whether I have administered you justice; whether I have organized the treasury of the republic.

"I present to you three justified reports from those who have been the organs through whom I have exercised the supreme power. The secretaries of state will make you see whether you have again returned on the theatre of the world; and if all nations who already had considered you annihilated, return to fix their eyes on you, and to contemplate with admiration the efforts you make to preserve your existence; whether these very same nations can oppose themselves to protect and recognize your national flag; whether your enemies have been destroyed on as many occasions as they have presented themselves against the armies of the republic; whether placed at their head I have defended your sacred rights; whether I have employed your treasure in your defence; whether I issued rules to economize and increase it; and whether even in the midst of the battle-fields and the fury of combats I have thought of you, and of placing the foundations of the edifice which constitutes you into a free, happy and respectable nation? Answer, finally, whether the plans adopted will cause that republic to be raised to the highest grade of glory and happiness."

The reports of the three secretaries were read aloud from the forum; the people by a deep silence showed the great interest with which they wished to inform themselves of the actual state of their affairs. The reading being concluded, the civil governor stepped forward and spoke as follows:

"When I represent to myself a youth who, included in the ignominy which covered all his fellow-citizens on the downfall of the republic, conceives the project of liberating it without any other assistance than a passport which the unwary Monteverde placed in his hands; when I see him land at Cartagena, and endeavor to realize it without any other recourse than his sword, in the quality of a simple adventurer, at the time that province, with the exception of the capital and brave city of Mompox, was prostrated under the yoke of the conquerors of Santa Marta; when I observe the fortune of his undertakings and the rapidity of his triumphs at Tenerife, Guamal, Banco, Chiriguana, Puerto de Ocana, etc., etc.; and that in less time than it would take the post, he gives freedom to the provinces of Cartagena, Santa Marta and Pamplona, and in a certain manner to the whole of Terra Firme; when from the most elevated of the mountains of New Granada, I remark that at the voice of Bolivar the republic of Venezuela shows signs of life, and comes forth from the tomb; that he destroys its oppressors at Cucuta, La Grita, Betijoque, Carache,

Niquitao, Barinas, Barquisimeto and Taguanes; and finally, when I remember the new campaigns which victory has crowned against the obstinacy of the reinforced enemies at Barbula, Trinchera, Vigirima and Araure, my imagination is confounded by the greatness of the object, by the happiness of the execution, and by a thousand glorious accidents which constitute the Liberator of Venezuela a hero worthy of being placed alongside of the immortal Washington; and who, in a certain manner, has gained the bravery and military science of him, and the wisdom and statesmanship of his companion Franklin.

"But it is not in this, sirs, that the true greatness of this incomparable man consists; his merit, his heroic virtue, is ciphered in the act which you now behold. Invested with the supreme power, which has been placed in his hands by the mass of circumstances to which you have listened in the documents which have just been published, and now no longer at the head of a handful of men, badly armed and undisciplined, as the one with which he undertook his journey, but of an army formidable and inured to war, in respect to the country he convokes you in a mass, collects by his order this august assembly; and for what reason? To render an account to the people of his military and political conduct, to make a solemn acknowledgment that the authority he exercises does not pertain to him; to convince you that he is not a usurper of your rights, returning to you the reins of government which arms and fortune had surrendered to him; to make known to the whole world that not only the old continent, nor the northern portion of the new, have produced the virtues of republican genius.

"Notwithstanding, I venture to announce in the name of this illustrious people over whom I have the honor of presiding, that it would be exposing ourselves to a new ruin, if, in our present position, a substantial innovation should be treated of, or of a general convention which should reorganize the republic, once dissolved by the weakness and insubsistency of its primitive bases; and that not losing sight of the necessity of establishing a government and to form a respectable nation, we should only for the present charge this same chief, whose liberality of ideas, whose activity and skill are so well known, to work immediately to form the indissoluble union of western Venezuela with its eastern portion, and with all the free provinces of New Grenada, to whose general Congress naturally pertains the formation of the new constitution, manifesting by this same trust our gratitude to the Liberator to whom for the people I return thanks."

The Liberator took the floor and said:

"I have not been able to listen without blushing and without confusion, that I should be called a hero, and be tributed so many praises. To expose my life for the country is a duty which all our brethren have fulfilled on the field of battle; to sacrifice all to LIBERTY, you yourselves, generous fellow-countrymen, have done it. The sentiments which elevate my soul also exalt your own. Providence, and not my heroism, has operated the prodigies which you admire.

"After madness or cowardice had given you up to the tyrants I endeavored to depart from this unhappy country, I beheld the treacherous one who betrayed you into his wiles, to leave you fettered with chains. I was a witness of the first sacrifices which gave general alarm. In my indignation I determined to perish in despair and misery, before I would witness the outrages of the despot. I fled from tyranny, not to save my life, not to hide it in obscurity, but to expose it on the battle-field in search of glory and LIBERTY. Cartagena, under

the shelter of the republican banners, was selected as my asylum. This virtuous people defended with arms their rights against an oppressing army, which had already subdued almost all the State. Some of our countrymen and myself arrived in the moment of the conflict, and when already the Spanish troops were approaching the capital and had intimated its surrender. The efforts of the Carraquenians contributed powerfully towards expelling the enemy from all points. The thirst for combats, the desire of revenging the insults of my countrymen, then caused me to enlist in those armies, which gained signal triumphs. New expeditions were formed against other provinces. Already at that epoch I was at Cartagena, colonel, inspector and councilor, and, notwithstanding, I asked to serve in the quality of a simple volunteer under the order of Colonel Labatut, who was marching against Santa Marta. I disregarded rank and distinctions, I aspired for a more honorable destiny: to shed my blood for the LIBERTY of my country.

"It was then that unworthy rivalries reduced me to the most difficult alternative. If I obeyed the orders of the chief I could find no opportunity to fight; if I followed my natural impulse, I flattered myself on capturing the fortress of Tenerife, one of the most impregnable of South America. My solicitation to obtain from him that he should confide to me the direction of the undertaking being in vain, I thought best to run all risks and results, and undertook the assault of the fort. Its defenders abandoned it to my arms, which took possession of it without finding any resistance, when it could have repelled the largest army. Five days, marked by consecutive victories, ended the war, and the province of Santa Marta was afterwards occupied without any difficulty.

"Such fortunate successes made me obtain from the Government of New Granada the command of the expedition against the province of Cucuta and Pamplona. Nothing there could detain the impetus of the soldiers I led. They defeated and routed the enemy wherever they met him, and this province was liberated.

"In the midst of these triumphs, I longed for those which should give liberty to Venezuela—the constant view of all my efforts. Difficulties could not terrify me, the vastness of the undertaking excited my ardor. The chains which you dragged, the insults you received, inflamed my zeal more. My petitions at last obtained a few soldiers and the permission to face the power of Monteverde. I then set out at their head, and my first step would have discouraged me if I had not preferred your weal to mine. Desertions were continual, and my troops had been reduced to a very small number, when I obtained the first triumphs in the territory of Venezuela.

"Large armies oppressed the republic, and you beheld, fellow-countrymen, a handful of liberating soldiers fly from New Granada to this capital, conquering all, and restoring Merida, Trujillo, Barinas and Caracas to its former political dignity. This capital did not require our arms to be liberated. Its sublime patriotism had not been weakened by one year of chains and outrages. The Spanish troops fled from an unarmed people whose valor they dreaded, and whose vengeance they deserved. Great and noble in the very bosom of opprobrium, it has covered itself with greater glory in its new regeneration.

"Fellow-countrymen! you have honored me with the title of Liberator. The officers, the soldiers of the army, behold here the liberators; behold those who reclaim the national gratitude. You well know the authors of your restoration;

these valorous soldiers; these intrepid chiefs—General Bibas, whose valor shall always live in American memory, joined to the glorious victories of Niquitao and Barquisimeto; the great Girardot, the young hero who made sad by his death the victory of Barbula; Major-General Urdaneta, the most constant and calm officer of the army; the intrepid D'Elhuyar, conqueror of Monteverde at Las Trincheras; the brave commandant Elias, pacificator of Tuy and liberator of Calabozo; the gallant Colonel Villapol, who, having fallen headlong on the crags at Vigirima, contused and almost expiring, did not lose his valor, which contributed so much to the victory of Araure; Colonel Palacios, who, in a long series of terrible encounters, a brave soldier and calm chief, has defended with a firm character the liberty of his country; Major Manrique, who, leaving his soldiers dead on the field fought his way through the ranks of the enemy with only his officers: Planes, Monagas, Canelon, Luque, Fernandez, Buroz and a few more whose names I have not present, and whose impetus and daring are publicated by Niquitao, Barquisimeto, Barbula, Las Trincheras and Araure.

“Fellow countrymen: I have not come to oppress you with my victorious arms! I have come to bring you the empire of laws! I have come with the purpose of preserving to you your sacred rights. It is not military despotism which can make the happiness of a people, nor the authority I obtain can never be advantageous, but only temperarity to the republic. A fortunate soldier does not acquire thereby any right to command his country. He is not the arbiter of the laws nor of the government; he is the defender of its liberty. His glories should be gained to those of the republic; and his ambition should be satisfied on completing the happiness of his country. I have vigorously defended your interests on the field of honor, and I protest to you that I will sustain them to the last moment of my life. Your dignity, your glories, will always be dear to my heart; but the weight of authority oppresses me. I supplicate that you exempt me from a charge superior to my strength. Elect your representatives, your magistrates, a just government, and rely that the arms which have saved the republic, will always protect the liberty and national glory of Venezuela.”

In succession, the president of the municipality, C. Juan Antonio Rodriguez Dominguez, made the following discourse:

“YOUR EXCELLENCY:

“The illustrious and numerous audience, which in this majestic moment have heard from the lips of Your Excellency his firm resolution, the most honorable that could be conceived by a mortal, of abdicating the supreme command of a nation, to which rank Venezuela rapidly rises, or to deprive himself of dictatorial faculties which the fate of war and the fortune of the country have placed in the hands of one of its sons who has broken her chains; this people, Your Excellency, would believe themselves plunged in the most profound orphanage, if indolent it should consent to such a delicateness on the part of Your Excellency to a change to a derangement of the happy march which the public affairs have under his direction.

“I, the last of the Venezuelans, although the humble president of the Municipal Body, organ of the Caraquezian people, spectator and concurrent in mass of such an august assembly, I cannot do less than emit publicly the votes of their sentiments.

“What would be our fate if in the present crisis we would allow our attention

to be drawn from the principal end, the expulsion of our enemies, to contract ourselves to organizing a representative government from the formation of the census, principal and other assemblies, until the tardy installment of a legislative corps, composed of diverse bodies, of one or more presidents of the Federal State, and of a judicial power, to which are consequent, equal establishments for the interior and particular management of the seven States which form our federation?

"It is not necessary to be a great politician to foresee that we are precipitately running to place ourselves into the hands of our most inveterate enemies. In the very core of the country, to say so, we have them occupying as yet the fort of Puerto Caballo. On the South and the vast lands of the Llano, the bandit Boyes has again invaded, and the tyrants still hold up their heads in the provinces of Guayana, Maracaibo and Coro.

"Let us place ourselves out of the reach of the enemy, let us expel them entirely, and then let our representative government be re-established. I, as zealous as any, that this desired period should arrive, consider it absolutely impracticable under these circumstances. There is no citizen who does not know the same: it is a universal vote: thus have I understood it from as many as have heretofore reflected on this point.

"The government of Your Excellency has the character proper to a dictatorship: on this recourse to which great republics, the men loving most their liberty, confided a thousand times the public weal, the most of them with a fortunate exit. This is the one which until now we have felt. Then why change of method? Dictator then, Your Excellency, in your country, complete its redemption, and let not your attention be drawn to any object other than that of the extermination of the tyrants.

"The great Washington, that tutelar genius, of the liberty of the United States of the North, was nothing less than a dictator, as although there existed a Congress to which were submitted the dispositions of that general, the wisdom and success of those never underwent any reform nor contradiction from that body; so that, in reality, he was a dictator all the time that it was exacted by the state of the war, to the total conclusions of which he preserved the character and dignity as such, which had been given to him by calamitous and urging circumstances.

"Your Excellency walks in the steps of this hero in the campaign, in society and the nobleness of feelings by which, without studied artifices he has made us see and understand that he feels as he talks and executes. With reason it can be said on this sole quality that Your Excellency is not so much Liberator, as the HONOR OF HIS COUNTRY. (*Frantic applause.*)

"Virtuous Caracas! know as a premium for your heroism that you have been the first people of Spanish America who threw off the yoke: hold as such that of Providence having given you this son of your own bosom.

"But, not stupid, let us not be deceived: the time has not as yet arrived to change anything in regard to the supreme command. This is my vote; it is that of the municipality; and it is that of all the people who hear me, and who have perfect liberty to express it, if I have mistakenly interpreted their will.

"Continue, Your Excellency, as Dictator; complete the work of the salvation country; and when you have succeeded, return to it the exercise of its sovereignty, establishing the democratic government." (*Repeated acclamations of approbation.*)

The C. Domingo Alzuru, known by the persecutions and hatred towards him of the Spaniards, for his exalted patriotism, spoke to the concourse in the midst of the people, in this manner :

“O. PRESIDENT OF THE STATE AND O. LIBERATOR :

“Free republican citizens of Venezuela : You have just listened to the series of glorious facts which have triumphantly conducted our Liberator through so many risks and labors until they have placed him in our midst, to plant the new tree of liberty and to revive the former withered to its roots by the ferocious oppression of the treacherous Monteverde. Would you perhaps believe that this act is reduced to listen to the glories of the Liberator or to make this a vain, ostentation of his merits and achievements ? You deceive yourselves. This is the first act of liberty and republicanism that we exercised, after we succumbed to the Spanish yoke. This is a solemn recognition of the sovereignty of the people represented in this honorable assembly. Do not fear listening to so many victories that they, although as rapid and multiplied as those of Caesar, will produce you a perpetual dictator, as happened with that warlike and ambitious Roman, who having filled the world with admiration by his skill and valor, made himself the oppressor of his country, the hatred and execration of his fellow-citizens, involving them in civil wars, and forcing them to profane the Capitol and to stain by the assassination and the blood of the tyrant, the heroism of their resolution, the value of their liberty. We, more fortunate than that great and illustrious republic, have a hero, whose name will be written together by all the civilized nations of the Universe, with that of Washington, and amongst those of Franklin, Brutus, Decius, Cassius and Cimbrus. His heart naturally well-formed, and not possessed by ambition, causes him to prefer the solid glory of conquering himself and to be for his country and fellow-citizens, not the terror, not the sovereign, not the first, but the father, the friend and the brother. This solemn act of the acknowledgment of the sovereignty of the people, is of all his actions, the most useful to us, the most solid and real glory for the Liberator. The most useful to us, because it puts us in possession of our rights as free men, because it secures the republic, and elevates it to such a grade, and because it dissipates the just fears of a young conqueror. The most solid and real glory for the Liberator, because who can deny that his victories, however celebrated they may have been, and although they are owing to his skill and valor, are lessened in a great part by fortune, circumstances, the numbers and bravery of the combatants ? But in this act of the disinterestedness of his greatness and authority, and acknowledgment of the sovereignty of the people, who can have had part ? Who compel or mitigate him, when all the force, all the authority in his hands ? It is then necessary to remark this act as the first of the republic, as the most glorious of our Liberator, as the most useful to us. It is then necessary to remark it, I repeat, with the spontaneous and public acclamations of the supreme dictatorial authority on the C. Simon Bolivar, so that constituting him as our first magistrate, he may drop, as also the republic, the species of dependence with which he operated as commissioner of the honorable Congress of New Granada ; and it is necessary finally to remark it by a status (*acclamations of approbation*) of Dictator, which will recall to him, to his successors and to his fellow-citizens ; to the Dictator, that his most brilliant glory is the preservation of the republic, and that his authority is never so great, that it is not subject to the people ; to his successors the triumphs and

moderation of the present, so that they imitate him; and to us his fellow-citizens, love to our country, gratitude, obedience and respect to our Dictator and Liberator."

A general acclamation sanctioned this discourse, to which the Liberator replied:

"The orators have spoken for the people; the citizen Alzuru has spoken for me. His sentiments should elevate the republican soul. Citizens! in vain you endeavor that I continue unlimitedly in the exercise of the authority which I hold. The popular assemblies cannot reunite themselves in all Venezuela without peril. I know it, fellow countrymen, and I submit against my will, to receive the law which circumstances dictate to me, being solely, until the peril ceases, the depository of the supreme authority. But further, no human power shall force me to grasp the despotic sceptre, which necessity now places in my hands. I protest to you that I shall not oppress you with it; and also that it shall pass to your representatives the moment you can convoke them.

"I will not usurp an authority which does not pertain to me. People! none can possess your sovereignty only violently and illegitimately! Flee from the country where only one exercises all the powers: it is a country of slaves. You name me the Liberator of the republic, I shall never be its oppressor. My feelings have been in a most terrible wrestle with my authority. Fellow countrymen! believe me, this sacrifice is more painful to me than the loss of my life.

"I confess that I long impatiently for the moment to renounce the authority. Then I hope you will exempt me from all, excepting to fight for you. For the supreme power there are illustrious citizens who merit more than me your suffrages. General Marino, Liberator of the East, see there a chief worthy of directing your destinies.

Fellow-countrymen! I have done all for the glory of my country. Allow me to do some for my own. I will not abandon, however, the helm of State, only when peace reigns in the republic.

"I beg of you not to think that my moderation is to hallucinate you, to arrive by those means to tyranny. My protests, I swear to you, are the most sincere. I am not like Sylla, who covered his country with sorrow and blood; but I wish to imitate the dictator of Rome, in the disinterestedness with which he abdicated the supreme power, returned to private life, and submitted himself in all to the rule of the laws.

"I am not a Pisistratus, who by artful fallacies pretends to call forth your suffrages, affecting a treacherous moderation, unworthy of a republican; and still more unworthy of a defender of the country. I am a simple citizen, who always prefers the liberty, the glory and the happiness of my fellow-citizens to my own aggrandizement. Accept, then, the purest expressions of my gratitude for the spontaneous acclamation which you have made entitling me your dictator; protesting to you, on my separation, that the general will of the people shall be to me always the supreme law: that it will be my guide in the course of my conduct, as also the object of my endeavors shall be your glory and your liberty," (*Great and universal acclamations.*)

This act concluded, by which the general-in-chief of the armies of Venezuela and its Liberator, Simon Bolivar, is popularly recognized as dictator for the time that is sufficient to secure the liberty of the country; the Governor of the State ordered the act to be written, and to pass authentic copies of it to His Excellency, for the fulfillment of all its parts, charging him very specially, that

in the name of the Venezuelan people, to manifest to the United States of New Granada in their general Congress, and by as many means as would be dictated by prudence, not only the acknowledgment and eternal gratitude for the liberty which has come to them by their hands, and that they consider themselves indebted, if not their ardent desires to unite themselves as a whole nation to that well-deserving republic, and to proceed in the use of full authority with which he was invested to realize said union in the most prompt, firm and indissoluble manner, as the best proof of the sincerity of our sentiments.

"It is the supreme honor of humanity, the penetration of the wise man joined to the bravery and abnegation of the hero." These words which Guizot wrote in the life of Washington can be admirably applied to the Liberator BOLIVAR; because in effect, he was the honor, the glory, and the fortune of humanity. My readers know what happened at Caracas on the 3d January, 1814, and have seen with pleasure how the Liberator inculcated the republican principles; how he educated the people, giving them upright, practical ideas, decisive on the rights which corresponded to them; how he substituted a legal order emanated from the exercise of the common will to the law of passive obedience, which was the social inclination that reigned in the colonies. In this noble labor, forming the national elements, and attending to the interests of the emancipation; looking to the teaching of the people and to the cares of glory, Bolivar seemed majestic and more than human. Torrente writes that all this was nothing else than "hypocrisy, and artful management, affectation of disinterestedness, efforts of intrigue to content ambition!" . . . . . but that the indefatigable Boyes had eight thousand mounted "*llaneros*," armed with lances, to go and chastise so much insolence, and to submit the insurgent territory to the paternal dominion of the merciful and august Ferdinand, *the pleasures of the world*. . . . .

Torrente does not deserve any answer. When a person arrives to such weaknesses, sorrowful products of hatred on one side, and the most vile flattery on the other, it is necessary to abandon the contender to his baseness!

On the night of the 3d January, when all were commemorating the imposing solemnity of the day, there was received at the house of the Liberator the *Boletín de Puerto Rico* in which the government gave the news that "officially it had received from Puerto Cabello," and the publication of which was made, according to the paper, for the satisfaction of all good Spaniards and for the undeceiving of the hallucinated. The bulletin related the battle delivered in the vicinity of Barquisimeto; it related it in its manner, and ponderated our losses amongst the killed they placed Montilla, D. Nicolas Castro, who was never in the campaign; Tomas Muñoz, who still lives at Caracas; Pedro Guillen, who was safe and sound, etc. . . . . As Montilla was reading the bulletin, his collocation amongst the killed was the motive for wit and humorous sayings in which he was superior. The reading was continued, and the bulletin said: "It is also confirmed that the so-called general of the Union, Simon Bolivar, is wounded." New cause for the liveliness and repartees in which the discreet and subtle minds of Bolivar, Montilla Telar, Mendiri and others of that time were happy. And as the Liberator never disregarded any occasion to patentize his most intimate thoughts, he wrote in the act, in his own handwriting, and sent to the *Gaceta* to be published the following reply:

"The General Liberator enjoys the best health and vigor, so that since the 10th of the past month, during which it is believed he is wounded, with his

accustomed activity, may have gone in marches and countermarches from Cabudare to San Carlos, Valencia, Vigirima, el Palito; again to San Carlos, to Araure, to Aparicion de la Corteza; again to Valencia, el Palito, La Victoria, Cura and from thence to Caracas, more than *five hundred leagues*. During this short space he has reorganized an army, has commanded the battles of Vigirima, has completely defeated Ceballos and Yañez; has pursued and dispersed them, and entirely destroyed their divisions. He has liberated for the second time all the western portion of Venezuela and the province of Barinas. This soldier of the country, 'so-called general of the Union,' has made glory in styling himself as such, by the unanimous vote of the people of Venezuela, than if he were given all the titles joined which the monarchs of Europe bestow on their satellites. Washington, the immortal Washington, answered the British General Gage, who manifested a disregard for the rank of this American hero, "You, sir, affect to disregard all rank which is not derived from the same fountain as yours; but I cannot conceive another more honorable which takes its origin in the incorruptible election of a brave and free people: the purest and truest fountain of all power."

This brief and appropriate reply of the Liberator was published amongst the commentaries to which gave place the bulletin, and which can be read in the *Gaceta* of Caracas of the 29th.