

## CHAPTER XVIII.

1815.

BOLIVAR AT JAMAICA—OCCUPATIONS OF THE LIBERATOR—HIS IMMORTAL LETTER TO A GENTLEMAN OF THAT ISLAND—BOLIVAR PENETRATES INTO THE FUTURE.

THE Liberator arrived at Kingston in May, 1815. He was there received with ovations and demonstrations of distinguished esteem. The Duke of Manchester, Governor of Jamaica, with whom he held several conferences, soliciting resources to assist Cartagena, paid him delicate attentions, inviting him to dine, and obliging him to be seated by his side. The Duke used to say, with a frankness full of grace, in reference to the enlightened intelligence of Bolivar, to his great genius, and his weak constitution and meagre appearance: "The flame has absorbed the oil."

For the rest, as he could obtain nothing from the government, he addressed himself to some friendly and enterprising foreigners capable of advancing funds for an expedition against Venezuela, "the exit he described to them as secure, as Morillo being occupied with the pacification of New Granada, and perhaps penetrating into the distant provinces of Ecuador and the kingdom of Peru, he was thus unable to operate opportunely to impede the triumph of the liberators." In his conversations, upon the desired expedition, Bolivar perceived one thing, that the periodical publications of the Spanish writers, a labor which was repeated daily, had succeeded in leading astray the opinions of the foreigners upon the origin of the American revolution, its means, and probable result. And the more he conversed with one and the other, more was he convinced of the false ideas which reigned in their minds. Then he devoted himself to write, converting into a powerful auxiliary of truth what had been before the instrument of error.

The most important writing of Bolivar, in Jamaica, the most ingenious, and which reveals better his clear intelligence, and the fertility and agreeableness of his style, is the letter of the 6th September, 1815, in reply to that of a gentleman of that island (Mr. Heliop, perhaps?) who wrote to him on the 29th of August, 1815, in reference to the events of America. Bolivar examines the causes of the misfortunes of the war, the state of the new governments, and his motives for hope; he places under contribution the history of the conquest; and with exquisite talent and easy expression, he develops the plan of government most adapted to the several independent sections, and predicts their destinies. As this document belongs to a superior order, although I pub-

lish it entire in the collection, it has seemed proper to me to place here some paragraphs, so that my readers may enjoy it in anticipation.

Bolivar commences his letter by excusing himself for being unable to satisfy entirely the solicitous demands of his correspondent, now for want of books and documents, now for his limited knowledge of such vast, different and unknown countries as the New World. Thus he said to him :

"In my opinion, it is impossible to answer the questions with which you have honored me. Humboldt himself, with his universality of theoretical and practical knowledge, could scarcely do it with exactitude ; because, although a portion of the statistics and the revolution of America is known, I dare to affirm that the greater part is plunged in mystery, and in consequence, conjectures only can be offered, more or less proximate, above all, that relative to the future destiny and the true projects of Americans ; because as many combinations as are subministered by the history of nations, of so many others is ours susceptible, by its physical positions, by the vicissitudes of war and by the calculations of politics."

"As I consider myself bound to pay attention to your esteemed favor, no less than to your philanthropical views, I feel myself animated to address you these lines, in which positively you will not find the lucid ideas which you desire, but an ingenuous expression of my thoughts."

"Three centuries have passed," you say, "since the barbarities began which the Spaniards have committed in the great hemisphere of Columbia. Barbarities which the present age has repelled as fabulous, because they appear superior to human perversity ; and never would they be believed by modern critics, if continual and repeated documents did not testify to these unhappy truths. The philanthropic Bishop of Chiapa, the apostle of America, Las Casas, has left to posterity a brief relation of them, derived from the processes brought against the conquerors at Sevilla, with the testimony of as many respectable persons that then existed in the New World, and with the lawsuits of the tyrants themselves between each other ; as testified by the greatest historians of that time. All impartial have rendered justice to the zeal and virtues of that friend of humanity, who, with so much fervor and determination, denounced to his government and contemporaries the most frightful acts of a sanguinary frenzy."

"With what feelings of gratitude do I read the paragraph in your letter, where you say to me, 'that you hope, that the success which then accompanied the Spanish arms may now accompany those of their antagonists, the much oppressed South Americans.' I hold this hope as a prediction. If justice decides the disputes of men, success shall crown our efforts, because the destiny of America has been irrevocably fixed ; the bond which united her to Spain has been cut asunder. Opinion was its strength ; by it were the parts of that immense monarchy mutually bound. That which formerly united them, now separates them. Greater is the hatred inspired in us by the Peninsula, than the ocean which divides us from it. It is less difficult to join the two continents, than to reconcile the minds of both countries. The habit of obedience, an intercourse of interests, of civilization, of religion : a mutual good-will ; a tender solicitude for the birthplace the glory of our forefathers ; finally, all which formed our hope, came from Spain. From this a principle of adhesion took root, which seemed eternal ; notwithstanding that the misconduct of our rulers slackened this sympathy, or better said, this attachment

forced by the rule of domination. At present all is reversed; death, dishonor, all that is injurious, threatens us, and we fear, we suffer all from that unnatural step-mother. The veil has been raised; we have already seen the light, and they wish to again plunge us in darkness; the chains have cast off; we have already been free, and our enemies pretend to enslave us anew. On account of this, America fights desperately; and seldom has desperation not carried victory along with it."

"If successes have been partial and alternate, we should not lose confidence in fortune. In some parts the independents are victorious, whilst the tyrants, in different places, obtain advantages. And what is the result? Is not the entire New World awake and in arms for its defence? Let us throw a glance, and we will observe a simultaneous struggle in all the extension of this hemisphere. . .

"The warlike state of the provinces of the Rio de la Plata has purged its territory and led its victorious arms to the Upper Peru, insurrecting Arequipa, and disquieting the royalists of Lima. Almost a million of inhabitants enjoy liberty there."

"The kingdom of Chili, populated by 800,000 souls, is combating with its enemies who pretend to rule it; but in vain, because those who formerly checked their conquests, the indomitable and free Araucanians, are their neighbors and fellow-countrymen; and their sublime example is sufficient to prove to them that the people who love their independence, finally gain it."

"The kingdom of Peru, whose population amounts to 1,500,000, is undoubtedly the most oppressed, and from which most sacrifices have been demanded for the service of the king; and although the relations concerning that portion of America may be different, it is certain, that it is far from quiet, nor is it able to oppose the torrent which threatens the greater portion of her provinces."

"New Granada, which is, to say so, the heart of America, obeys a general government with the exception of the kingdom of Quito, which with the greatest difficulty checks its enemies, for being attached to the cause of the country, and the provinces of Panama and Santa Marta, which suffer painfully the tyranny of its masters. Two millions and a half of inhabitants are spread over that territory, which at present they are defending against the Spanish army under General Morillo, whom it is almost certain shall succumb before the impregnable stronghold of Cartagena. But if he should take it, it will be at the cost of great losses; and in consequence, he shall be wanting in the force necessary to subjugate the brave and honest inhabitants of the interior."

"As to heroic and unhappy Venezuela her events have been so rapid and her devastations such, that she has almost been reduced to an absolute indigence and a frightful wilderness, notwithstanding that she had been one of the most beautiful countries which was the pride of America. Her tyrants rule over a desert, and only oppress the sorrowful relics of those who, having escaped death, lead a precarious existence; a few women, children and aged men are those that remain. The greater portion of the men have perished before being slaves; and those who live combating desperately in the fields and interior towns, until they expire or throw into the sea those who, insatiable for blood and crimes, rival with the first monsters who caused to disappear from America its primitive races. Almost a million of inhabitants were to be counted in Venezuela; and without exaggeration it can be affirmed that the fourth part has been sacrificed by the earth, the sword, hunger, disease, and wanderings. With the exception of the earthquake they are all results of the war."

"In New Spain there were in 1808, as is related by Baron Humboldt, 7,800,000 souls, including Guatemala. From that epoch, the insurrection, which has agitated almost all her provinces, has caused to diminish sensibly that census which appears to be exact; as more than a million of men have perished, and you can see for yourself in the exposition of Mr. Walton, who describes faithfully the bloody crimes committed in that opulent empire. There the struggle is maintained by force of human aid; all classes of sacrifices, as the Spaniards spare nothing, that they succeeded in subduing those who have had the misfortune of being born on this soil, which seems destined to be drenched with the blood of its natives. In spite of all, the Mexicans will be free, because they have embraced the cause of the country with the determination of revenging their forefathers, or follow them to the grave. They say with Raynal: the time has at last arrived to repay the Spaniards' executions with executions, and to drown this race of exterminators in their blood, or in the sea."

"The islands of Puerto Rico and Cuba, which between both can represent a population of seven to eight hundred thousand souls, are those which are most quietly occupied by the Spaniards, because they are out of the contact of the independents. But are not these islanders Americans? Are they not oppressed? Would they not desire their well-being?"

This tableau represents a military scale of two thousand leagues of longitude by nine hundred of latitude in its greatest extension, in which sixteen millions of Americans defend their rights, or are oppressed by the Spanish nation, which, although at one time was the largest empire of the world, her remnants are now unable to rule the new hemisphere and even to maintain the old one. And civilized Europe, commercial and loving liberty, permits that an old serpent, only to satisfy its poisoned hatred, devours the most beautiful portion of our globe! What! is Europe deaf to the cry of her own interests? Has she no longer eyes to see the injustice? Has she become so hardened as to be in such a degree insensible? When more I reflect on these questions, more am I perplexed. I arrive to the degree of thinking that the disappearance of America is desired: but it is impossible, because all Europe is not Spain. What madness, that of our enemy, to pretend to reconquer America without a navy, without a treasury, and almost without soldiers, as those that she has are scarcely sufficient to maintain her own people in a forced obedience, and defend herself from her neighbors! Besides, can this nation carry on the exclusive commerce of one-half the world, without manufactures, without territorial products, without arts, without sciences, without policy? This mad undertaking succeeding, and even supposing more, the pacification succeeding, the children of the present Americans, united to those of the European reconquerors, would they not form, within twenty years, the same patriotic designs, which are now being fought for?

"Europe would do a good to Spain in dissuading her from her stubborn temerity, because, at least, she would spare the expenses she defrays, and the blood she sheds; so that, fixing her attention on her own districts, she should base her prosperity and power upon more solid foundations than those of uncertain conquests, a precarious commerce and forcible extortions, in remote, hostile and powerful regions. Europe herself, for views of political weal, should have prepared and executed the project of the American independence, not only because the equilibrium of the world requires it thus, but because this is the legitimate and sure mode of gaining for herself ultramarine establishments of commerce. Europe, who does not find herself agitated by the violent passions of vengeance,

ambition, and cupidity, like Spain, seems to have been authorized by all the laws of equity to instruct on her well-understood interests.

"All the writers who have written on this subject agree on this point. Consequently, we reasonably hoped that all civilized nations would have hastened to our assistance, so that we should have acquired a good whose advantages are mutual to both hemispheres. Notwithstanding, what disappointed hopes! Not only the Europeans, but even our brethren of the North, have maintained themselves immovable spectators of this dispute, which in its essence is the justest, and in its results the most important of any that have been suscitated in ancient and modern ages; because, to what extent cannot be calculated the transcendancy of the liberty of the hemisphere of Columbus?"

"The felony by which Bonaparte, you say, imprisoned Charles IV. and Ferdinand VII., kings of this nation, which three centuries ago treacherously confined two monarchs of South America, is a very manifest act of divine retribution, and at the same time a proof that God sustains the just cause of the Americans, and will concede them their independence."

"It appears you wish to allude to the monarch of Mexico, Montezuma, arrested by Cortez, or killed by himself, according to Herrera, although Solis says by the people; and Athualpa, Inca of Peru, destroyed by Francisco Pizarro and Diego de Almagro. There exists a difference between the fate of Spanish kings and the American kings, which does admit of comparison. The former are treated with dignity, preserved, and finally recover their liberty and throne; whilst the last suffer frightful tortures, and the most shameful outrages. If Quahquemotzin, successor of Montezuma, is treated as an Emperor, and the crown is given to him, it was in mockery, and not in respect, so that he should experience this ridicule before the tortures. The fate of this monarch was the same as those of the King of Michoacan, Catzantzin, of the Zipas of Bogota, and of as many Toquis, Incas, Zipas, Ulmenes, Caciques, and remaining Indian magnates as fell into the hands of the Spaniards. The incident of Ferdinand VII. is more similar to that which took place in Chile in 1535, with the Ulmen of Copiapó, then reigning over that district. The Spaniard Almagro professed, like Bonaparte, to take the side of the legitimate monarch, and in consequence calls the usurper; he appears to restore the legitimate to his States, and ends by enchaining and throwing the unhappy Ulmen into the flames, without even listening to his defence. This is the example of Ferdinand VII. with his usurper; with this difference, that the European kings suffer only exile, whilst the Ulmen of Chile ends his life in an atrocious manner.

"After some months, you add, 'I have made many reflections upon the situation of the Americans and their future hopes, but I need many informations as to their present position and what they aspire to. I wish infinitely to know the politics of each province, as also of its population: whether they desire republics or monarchies; whether they will form a great republic or a great monarchy: all information of this class that you can give me, or indicate to me the sources to which I should recur, I shall esteem as a very particular favor.'"

"Generous souls always interest themselves in the fate of a people who take great pains to recover the rights with which the Creator and nature have endowed them; and it is necessary to be fascinated by error or the passions, not to entertain this noble feeling. You have thought of my country and interest yourself for it; this act of benevolence inspires in me the most lively gratitude."

"I have said that the population is calculated by facts more or less exact, which a thousand circumstances cause to be faulty, it not being easy to remedy this inexactitude, because the greater part of the dwellers have country residences, and on many occasions travelling; being laborers, shepherds, Indians, lost in the dense and vast forests, solitary plains, and separated amongst lakes and large rivers. Who can form a complete statistic of such districts? Besides, the tributes which the Indians pay, the penalties of the slaves, first-fruits, the tithes and taxes which weigh on the laborers, and other incidents which cause the poor Americans to leave their firesides. All this, not mentioning the war of extermination which has already mowed down almost an eighth of the population, and has frightened away a greater part; then the difficulties are insuperable, and the census will be reduced to one-half of the true one.

"It is still more difficult to foresee the future destiny of the New World; to establish principles upon its policy, and almost to prophesy the nature of the government it may adopt. All ideas in regard to the future of this country seem to me at random. Could it be foreseen when mankind was in its infancy, surrounded by so much uncertainty, ignorance and error, what should be the rules which it was to adopt for its preservation? Who would have dared to say that such a nation shall be a republic or a monarchy, this shall be small, that great? In my conception this is the picture of our situation. We are a small portion of mankind, we possess a world apart, surrounded by vast seas; new in almost all the arts and sciences, although, in a certain manner, old in the uses of civil society. I consider the present state of America as when the Roman Empire crumbled into pieces, each fragment formed a political system suitable to its interests and position or corporations, with this remarkable difference, that those scattered members returned to re-establish their former nations, with such alterations as were required by affairs or events; but we, who scarcely preserve any vestiges of what existed in a former time, and who, besides, are neither Indians nor Europeans, but an intervening class between the legitimate owners of the country and the Spanish usurpers; summing up, being Americans by birth, and our rights those of Europe, we have to dispute these from those of the country, and to maintain ourselves in them against the possession of the invaders, thus we find ourselves in the most extraordinary and complicated state. Notwithstanding that it is a sort of divination to indicate what would be the result of the line of policy which America follows, I dare to venture some conjectures that on the spot I characterize as arbitrary, dictated by a rational desire, and not by a probable reasoning."

"The position of the inhabitants of the American hemisphere has been, during three centuries, purely passive; their political existence null. We were one degree lower than slavery, and for the same reason with more difficulty to raise ourselves to the enjoyment of liberty. Allow me to place these considerations to establish the question. The States are slaves by the nature of their constitution, or by the abuse of it; then a people are slaves when the government, in its essence or by its vices, tramples on and usurps the rights of the citizen or subject. Applying these principles, we will see that America was not only deprived of her liberty, but also of active and overbearing tyranny. I shall explain myself. In absolute administrations there are no limits recognized in the exercise of governmental faculties; the will of the great Sultan, of the Khan, of the Dey, and other despots, is supreme law, and this is almost arbitrarily executed by the *bajaha*, *khana*, and *satraps*, subalterns of Turkey or

Persia, who have organized an oppression in which the subjects participate by reason of the authority confided to them. They are charged with the civil, military, political, religious and income administration. But after all, the chiefs of Ispahan are Persians, the viziers of the grand seigneur are Turks; the sultans of Tartary are Tartars. China does not seek her military commanders and wise men in the country of Genghis Khan, who conquered her; in spite of that, the present Chinese are direct descendants of those subjugated by the ascendants of the present Tartars.

"How different amongst us! We were oppressed by a conduct which, besides depriving us of the rights which corresponded to us, they kept us in a state of lasting infancy with respect to the public transactions. If we would only have managed our domestic affairs in our interior administration, we should have known the course of public affairs and its mechanism, and we should have also enjoyed the personal consideration, which imposes to the eyes of the people a certain mechanical respect, so necessary to be preserved in revolutions. Here are the reasons why I said that we were deprived even of active tyranny, as we were not allowed to exercise its functions.

"Americans, in the Spanish system which now rules, and perhaps with more force than ever, occupy no other post in society than that of ears proper for labor, and when most that of common consumers; and even this is limited by shocking restrictions. Such as the prohibition of the cultivation of the fruits of Europe; the detention of the products which the king monopolizes; the impediment to manufactories, which even the peninsula does not possess; the exclusive privileges of commerce, even of articles of first necessity; obstacles between colonies and American provinces that may not have any intercourse; finally, do you wish to know what was our destiny! The fields to cultivate indigo, grain, coffee, sugar-cane, cocoa, cotton; the solitary prairies to breed cattle; the wilderness to hunt the wild beasts; the bowels of the earth to dig out the gold, which cannot satiate that miserly nation.

"So negative was our situation, that I cannot find one similar in any other civilized association, although I inquire into all the series of ages and policy of all nations. To pretend that a country so happily constituted, vast, opulent and populous, should be passive, is it not an outrage and a violation of the rights of humanity?"

"We were, as I have just related, separated, and we might say, exiled from the universe, inasmuch as is relative to the science of the government and administration of the State. Never were we viceroys or governors, only in extraordinary cases; archbishops and bishops rarely; diplomatists never; officers only as subalterns; nobles without royal privileges; finally, we were not magistrates nor public treasurers, nor even merchants; all in direct antagonism to our institutions.

"The Americans have risen suddenly, and without previous experience, and what is more sensible, without practice in public affairs, to represent in the theatre of the world the eminent dignities of legislators, magistrates, administrators of incomes, diplomatists, generals, and as many supreme and subordinate authorities as form the government of a State regularly organized."

"When the French eagles alone respected the walls of the city of Cadix, and in their flight had thrown down the weak governments of the Peninsula, we were then left in orphanage. We had already been surrendered to the mercy of a foreign usurper. Afterwards flattered by the justice which was due to us

by alluring hopes always frustrated; lastly, uncertain of our future destiny, and threatened with anarchy, by cause of the want of a legitimate, just and liberal government, we precipitated ourselves into the chaos of revolution. In the first moment the interior safety was looked after, against the enemies inclosed in our midst. Afterwards, it was extended to the exterior safety; authorities were established, whom we substituted for those whom we had just deposed, charged to direct the course of our revolution, and to take advantage of the happy opportunity in which we were able to organize a constitutional government worthy of the present century and adequate to our position."

"The events of terra firma have proved to us that institutions entirely representative are not adequate to our character, customs, and present civilization. At Caracas, party spirit took its origin in the societies, assemblies and popular elections; and these parties plunged us anew into slavery. And thus as Venezuela has been the American republic which has most advanced in her political institutions, she has also been the clearest example of the inefficacy of the federal democratical form for our newly-fledged States. In New Granada, the excessive faculties of the provincial governments, and the want of centralization in general, has led that valuable country to the state in which we now behold her. For this reason, her weak enemies have sustained themselves against all probabilities. As long as our countrymen do not attain the talents and public virtues which distinguish our brethren of the North, systems entirely popular, far from being favorable to us, I fear much they will be our ruin. Unfortunately, those qualities seem to be very distant from us in the grade which is required; and on the contrary, we are ruled by the vices which are contracted under such a nation as the Spanish, which has only surpassed in ferocity, ambition, vengeance, and cupidity."

"'It is more difficult,' says Montesquieu, 'to make a people free from slavery, than to subjugate a free one.' This truth is proved by the annals of all times, which show us the greater part of the free nations placed under the yoke, and very few of the enslaved recovering their liberty. In spite of this conviction, the South Americans have manifested the attempt to obtain liberal and even perfect institutions; undoubtedly, by cause of the instinct which all men have to aspire to their best possible happiness, which is infallibly attained in civil societies, when they are based on the foundations of justice, liberty, and equality. But, will we be capable of sustaining in its true equilibrium, the difficult charge of a republic? Can it be believed that a people recently unchained can launch themselves into the sphere of liberty without, as Icarus, losing their wings and falling back into the abyss? Such a prodigy is inconceivable, never seen before. Consequently there is not a single probable reason to please us with that hope."

"I desire more than any other to see in America the greatest nation of the world formed, less for its extension and riches than for its glory and liberty. Although I aspire to the perfection of the government of my country, I cannot convince myself that the New World should be, for the time being, ruled by a great republic. As it is impossible, I do not dare to wish it; and I desire even less a monarchy in America, because this project, without being useful, is also impossible. The abuses which now exist would not be reformed, and our regeneration would be fruitless. The American States need the care of paternal governments, by which to heal the sores and wounds of despotism and war.

The metropolis, for example, should be Mexico, which is the only one that can be so for its intrinsic value, without which there is no metropolis. Let us suppose that it should be the Isthmus of Panama, central point for all the extremes of this vast continent, would not these continue on languidly and even in the present disorder? . . . That a government should give life, animate, put in movement all the springs of public prosperity, correct, instruct and render perfect the New World, it would be necessary that it should have the faculties of a God, and when least, the knowledge and virtues of all men."

"The spirit of party which now agitates our States would then increase with more hatred, seeing itself distant from the fountain of power, which alone can repress it. Besides, the magnates of the capitals would not suffer the preponderance of the metropolitans, whom they would look upon as so many more tyrants; their jealousies would rise to such a degree that they would compare these with the hated Spaniards. Finally, a similar monarchy would be a clumsy colossus, which would fall by its own weight at the least convulsion."

"M. De Pradt has wisely divided America into fifteen or seventeen States, independent of each other, governed by as many monarchs. I agree to the first proposition, because America can tolerate seventeen nations. As to the second, although it is easier to obtain, it is less useful, and thus, *I am not of opinion for American monarchies.*"

"My reasons are as follows:

"The well-understood interest of a republic is contained in the sphere of its preservation, prosperity and glory. Not exercising liberty universally, because it is precisely its opposite, no stimulus excites the republicans to extend the limits of their nation, with the view alone of making their neighbors participate a liberal constitution. They obtain no right, they derive no advantage, subduing them; unless they reduce them to colonies, conquests or allies, following the example of Rome. Such maxims and examples are in direct antagonism with the principles of justice of the republican systems; and I further say, in manifest opposition with the interests of its citizens; because a State too extensive in itself, or its dependencies falls at last, and converts its free form for another tyrannical; it slackens the principle it should preserve, and recurs finally to despotism. The distinctive of small republics is permanency; that of great is varying, but always incline to an empire. Almost all the first have had a long duration; of the second, Rome alone sustained herself a few centuries; but it was because the capital was republic, and the rest of her dominions were not governed by different laws and institutions.

"The policy of a king is very antagonistic, whose constant inclination is directed to the increase of his dominions, riches and power; with reason, because his authority augments with these acquisitions as much in regard to his neighbors as to his own vassals, who fear in him such a formidable power, as is his empire, which is preserved in the midst of wars and conquests. For these reasons, I think that the Americans, anxious for peace, sciences, arts, commerce, and agriculture, would prefer republics to kingdoms, and it appears to me that their wishes are in accordance with the views of Europe."

"I do not agree to the federal system amongst the popular and representative, as being too perfect, and requiring virtues and political talents far superior to ours. For the same reason, I refuse the mixed monarchy of aristocracy and democracy, which has procured so much fortune and splendor to England. Not being possible for us to obtain amongst republics and monarchies the most per-

fect and finished, let us evade falling into demagogical anarchies, or in monocratic tyrannies. Let us seek a means between the opposed extremes, which would not lead us to the same breakers—unhappiness and dishonor.”

“I shall risk the result of my meditations upon the future destiny of America: not the best, but that which may be the most convenient.”

“By the nature of the localities, wealth, population and character of the Mexicans, I imagine that they will first attempt to establish a representative republic, in which the Executive Power shall hold great attributions, concentrating it in one individual, who, if he should perform his functions properly and justly, will almost naturally preserve a life-long authority. If his incapacity or violent administration excites a popular commotion that is victorious, this same executive power will be, perhaps, placed in the hands of an assembly. If the preponderant party is military or aristocratical, it will probably exact a monarchy, which at first will be limited and constitutional, and afterwards will inevitably decline into absolute, as we should agree that there is nothing more difficult in political order than the preservation of a mixed monarchy; and it is also necessary to agree that only one people patriotic as the English are capable of checking the authority of a king, and to preserve the spirit of liberty under a sceptre and a crown.

“The States of the Isthmus of Panama, to Guatemala, shall form an association. This magnificent position between the two great oceans shall be in turn the emporium of the Universe. Its canals shall shorten the distances of the world: it will draw closer the commercial intercourses of Europe, America and Asia, and will bring to such a fortunate region the tributes of the four quarters of the world. Perhaps only there can one day be situated the capital of the world, as Constantine wished that Bizantium should be the capital of the ancient hemisphere.”

“New Granada shall unite with Venezuela, if they agree to form a central republic, whose capital shall be Maracabo, or a new city which, with the name of *Las Casas* (in honor of this hero of philanthropy), will be founded on the limits of both countries, in the magnificent harbor of Bahía Honda. This position, although unknown, is very advantageous in all respects. It is easy of access, and its position of such strength that it can be rendered impregnable. It possesses a pure and agreeable climate; a territory as proper for agriculture as for breeding cattle, and a great abundance of lumber for building purposes. The savages which inhabit it would be civilized, and our possessions would be increased by the acquisition of Goajira. This nation shall be called Colombia, as a tribute of justice and gratitude to the Creator of our hemisphere. Its government can imitate the English; with the difference that, in place of a king, there will be an executive power, when most, for lifetime, but never hereditary (if a republic is wanted); an hereditary legislative parliament or senate, which in political storms may place itself between the popular waves and the lightning bolts of the government, and a legislative body of free election, with the same restrictions as the House of Commons of England. This Constitution should participate in all the forms, and I desire that it should not participate in all the vices. As this is my country, I have an incontestable right to wish for her what in my opinion is best. It is very possible that New Granada may not agree in the acknowledgment of a central government, because she is extremely addicted to the federal form; and then she shall form herself in a State, which, if it exists, can be very prosperous for her great resources of all classes.”

"We know little of the opinions which prevail in Buenos Ayres, Chili and Peru. Judging from what is known, and by appearances, Buenos Ayres shall have a central government, in which military men shall preponderate, by consequence of her internal divisions and foreign wars. This constitution shall necessarily degenerate into an oligarchy, or a *monocracy*, with more or less restrictions and whose denomination none can divine. It would be painful that such a thing should happen, because those inhabitations are worthy of the most splendid glory."

"The kingdom of Chili is called by the nature of her position, by the sensible customs of her virtuous inhabitants, by the example of her neighbors, the high-minded republicans of Arauco, to enjoy the blessings bestowed by the just and mild laws of a republic. If any lasts for a long time in America, I am inclined to think that it will be the Chilean. Never has the spark of liberty been extinguished there; the vices of Europe and Asia came too late, or never, to corrupt the habits of that extreme of the universe. Her territory is limited; she shall always be distant from the infected contact of the rest of mankind; she will not change her laws, customs and practices; she will preserve her uniformity of political and religious opinions; in one word, Chili can be free."

"Peru, on the contrary, contains two elements hostile to all just and liberal rule: *gold and slaves*. The first corrupts all; the second is corrupted in itself. The soul of a slave rarely reaches to comprehend the value of true liberty. It is furious in disturbances, or humiliated in chains. Although these rules may be applied to all America, I believe that Lima merits them more justly, for the reasons I have thrown out, and for the co-operation she has given to her masters against her own brethren, the illustrious natives of Quito, Chili and Buenos Ayres. It is proved that he who aspires to liberty, at the least attempts it. I suppose that in Lima the wealthy will not tolerate democracy, nor the slaves and free negroes aristocracy; the owner will prefer the tyranny of one alone, in order not to suffer the persecutions of the populace, and to establish at least a peaceful order. She will be doing a great deal if she succeeds in recovering her liberty.

"From all that is said can be deduced these consequences: the American provinces are now struggling for their emancipation; they will at last succeed; some shall constitute themselves regularly into federal or central republics; monarchies shall almost inevitably be formed in the great sections, and some shall be so unfortunate that they will devour their own element at present and in future revolutions; because a great monarchy will not be easily consolidated; a great republic impossible.

"It is a grand idea to pretend to form the whole of the New World into one nation, with only bond to bind its parts amongst themselves and with the whole. Now that it has one origin, one idiom, the same customs and the same religion, it should consequently have one same government which should confederate the different States which may be formed; but it is impossible; because distant climates, different positions, opposing interests, dissimilar characters divide America. How grand would it not be that the Isthmus of Panama should be to us as that of Corinth was to the Greeks! God grant that some day we may have the fortune of installing there an august congress of the representatives of the republics, kingdoms and empires, to treat and discuss upon the all-important interests of peace and war, with the nations of the other three-quarters of the world! The class of corporation may take place at some fortunate epoch

of our regeneration; any other hope is groundless, like that of the Abbé St. Pierre, who conceived the praiseworthy delirium of reuniting an European Congress to decide on the fate and interests of those nations."

"Positively *union* is wanting amongst us to complete the work of our regeneration forever; our division is not surprising, because such is the distinctive of civil wars generally formed between two parties—*conservators and reformers*. The first are, in general, the most numerous; because the rule of habit produces the effect of obedience to the established authorities; the last are always in the minority, but more vehement and enlightened. In this manner, the physical mass is balanced by moral force, and the dispute is prolonged, its results being doubtful. Fortunately amongst us, the mass have been ruled by the intelligence.

"I will tell you what can enable us to expel the Spaniards, and to found a free government. It is *Union*, certainly; but this *Union* will not come to us by divine prodigies, but by sensible effects and well-directed efforts. America is divided in herself; because she is abandoned by all nations; alone in the midst of the universe; without diplomatical intercourse, without military succors, and fought against by Spain, who possesses more elements for war than all that we can furtively acquire."

"When successes are not secured, when the State is weak, and when enterprise is distant, all men vacillate; opinion is divided, passions are agitated, and the enemies excite them to triumph by these easy means. When we become strong under the auspices of a liberal nation who shall give us its protection, we shall be seen in concord to cultivate the virtues and talents which lead to glory; then we shall follow the majestic march towards the great prosperities to which South America is destined; then the sciences and arts which were nursed in the East, and which have enlightened Europe, shall fly to Colombia, liberated, who shall invite them in her asylum.

"Such are, sir, the observations and thoughts which I have the honor of submitting to you, that you may rectify or refute them, according to their merit, begging you to believe that I have dared to set them forth more in obedience to courtesy than because I think myself capable of enlightening you on the subject.

"I am, sir, etc.,

BOLIVAR."

All praise that can be given to this immortal letter is small. There are many ideas in it, and it is eminent in sense. Bolivar wrote in 1815, and it can be said that he saw clearly what would happen in five, twenty, thirty years afterwards. He knew the future, he foresaw it; he penetrated it.

"Scit præterita, et de futuris æstimat."

(SAP. VIII.)

Alone, without means, in a foreign country, when his friends had disowned and persecuted him, and lacerated with blind fury by his enemies; when every one beheld America bearing the yoke which Spain placed on her, an unhappy captive, who was destined to know only sorrow and tears in the most humiliating and lasting slavery, Bolivar contemplated her redeemed, and in the depth of his heart he believed himself bound to this prodigy of redemption. His spirit, which received a divine inspiration, which led a superior life communicated from above, beheld Colombia emancipated, Chili constituted, Mexico and Peru

liberated, the Isthmus of Panama, the centre of the communications and activity of human industry; he beheld South America divided in powerful nationalities, having passed from slavery to the struggle and the conquest of her own dignity, and from the rule of the sword to that of political civilization and to the constitutions of power; matters of consideration in the census of the world for her products, for her science, for her wars, for her alliances, for her laws, for her free governments . . . . with proper names, with famous histories, with superior virtues, and immortal hopes. Bolivar saw all this and wrote it. Can the human mind by chance penetrate any further ?