

CHAPTER XX.

1816.

SAILING OF THE EXPEDITION FROM THE CAYOS — WHY HE GOES TO MARGARITA — BOLIVAR CONVOKES AN ASSEMBLY AT VILLA DEL NORTE — HE IS PROCLAIMED SUPREME CHIEF — THE LIBERATOR ANNOUNCES THAT THE "WAR TO DEATH HAS CEASED" FOR HIS PART — HE OFFERS TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS FOR THE HEAD OF BOLIVAR AND HIS PRINCIPAL FOLLOWERS — ARRIVAL OF THE EXPEDITION AT CARUPANO — ASSEMBLY IN THIS TOWN — EXPEDITION TO OCUMARE — LOSS AT LOS AGUACAYES — PANIC AT CHORONI — MISCONDUCT OF VILLARET — THE LIBERATOR PROCEEDS TO BONAIRE, AND RETURNS TO CHORONI — MACGREGOR PENETRATES INTO THE INTERIOR, AND BOLIVAR RETURNS TO BONAIRE, FROM WHENCE HE ENHARKS FOR GUIRIA — REMARKABLE EVENTS AT THIS PORT — EXCESSES OF BERMUDEZ.

ON the 20th of March, at ten o'clock in the morning, the fleet set sail from the small port of Aquin, twelve leagues E. N. E. from the Cayos de San Luis.* The *Liberator*, with his staff and Admiral Brion, were embarked on the schooner *Boltar*; she was commanded by the frigate-captain Renato Beluche. Marino, MacGregor, Piar and other officers, went on the *Marino*; she was commanded by the Commandant Thomas Dubuille; the other schooners, *Constitucion*, *Piar*, *Brion*, *Felis* and *Conejo*, were commanded by the lieutenant commanders, Juan Morne, J. Pinell, Antonio Rosales, Lomine and Bernardo Ferrero. The rest of the expedition was embarked in them.

With a reduced number of braves, whom misfortune had thrown on the seas, and who beheld their country in his person, the *Liberator* set sail from the Cayos of San Luis. What is his purpose? In what direction does this crusade of liberty tend, which has nothing great but its daring, nor nothing wonderful and magnificent but the hope which it possesses? It would be necessary to write a volume to do justice to so much valor; that invincible faith, that conviction which anticipates the event, and which, seemingly scorning the solid laws of prudence, manifests itself as a rash presumption. None know its destination, nor what it will have to effect. No one has measured the distance from undertaking to attaining. For the time being the crew is only fatigued; as advantages and commodities could not be expected from such frail and small vessels. They are afterwards threatened by perils and combats, and who knows if not deplorable misfortunes. But the extraordinary man who guides and directs them has spoken to them of independence and glory; of the liberty of Colombia and America, and thither they go, joyful, determined,

* Restrepo writes, Aquin; Montenegro, Aquin. I hold the orthography of the most authorized documents of that place."

never discouraged, never ruled by the advices of pusillanimity, to struggle till death. None are ambitious for power; none desire titles, none wish gold or riches; the feeling which impels them is more noble, more generous; it is the love of country; to break the chains which oppress her. *Dixi toll!* they cried with ardor, as did the first crusaders which went with Godfrey of Bouillon to the Holy Land; God wishes it, and in spite of Spain we shall be free!

And God wished it, and we are free.

Our fathers and brothers bought victory and our liberty at the cost of their lives.

Bolívar set his course to Margarita. The reason causing this direction was as follows:

When Morillo arrived with his expedition at that island (1815), Arismendi, who was governing it, surrendered, as we have seen, and Morillo placed as governor Lieutenant-Colonel Don Antonio Herráiz. Immediately afterwards this liberal and honest chief was substituted for another, Don Joaquín Urreiztieta, severe and blood-thirsty, who served but too well the interest of tyranny, and ignoring it, better for those of liberty. Urreiztieta, from the moment he entered in command of the island, commenced the persecution of the already prostrated and unhappy inhabitants. Amongst other criminal projects conceived in hatred of our independence and for the better service of the king, he adopted that of assassinating the leader of the island and his principal companions at a banquet. He said that he wished to celebrate the imprisonment of Napoleon, the first enemy of Spain, and treacherously invited Arismendi and many of his comrades to keep him company at his table. Berroterán, a Carraqueñian patriot, and emigrated to Margarita, clerk to the Commandant Cobian, who governed in the north, discovered the artifice, and immediately revealed it to Arismendi. This one refused the invitation, and hid himself at "Mira," in the parish of Paraguachi, and from thence began the difficult undertaking of driving the Spaniards from the island. In November (1815), Arismendi gave the signal of insurrection; he proclaimed anew the independent government, and held the towns of Juan Griego and Villa del Norte, although deprived of arms, and only assisted with his followers by lances, hoes, knives and clubs. Active and indefatigable, Arismendi was a man of rare intrepidity and signal strength, patriotic, and able to carry into effect wonderful prowesses for liberty. His daring raised the anger of the Lieutenant-Colonel Don Joaquín María Urreiztieta, governor of the island, who, set on by Moxo, thought to devastate it.* But the surprises and hostilities of Arismendi gave him no

* One of the orders given by Urreiztieta to Captain Don Juan Garrigo, the 17th of November, 1815, is thus: "You shall give quarters to none, and you shall permit the troops, after their arrival, to pillage (Villa del Norte). You will fire the town of San Juan, and you will only retreat when all is SILENT! The town of Norte shall be set fire to on your return from San Juan."

And Don Salvador Moxo said to Urreiztieta (who, as we see, did not need much): "I order you to put aside all humane consideration. All the insurgents, or those who follow them with arms or without them, those who have assisted or who assist the same, and all those who have taken part in the crisis in which the island is now placed, shall be irremissibly shot without any previous process or summary but by the verbal council of three officers. I again recommend you much activity, and that being inexorable, you can give me a report of the entire pacification of this nest of villains, who have abused so much of our goodness and forbearance! . . .

peace. That island, so little thought of by the Spaniards, those desert places in which the expeditionary chieftains found nothing inviting, were notwithstanding the theatre of great acts, and the tomb where the pride of Morillo was humiliated. Confiscations, the outrages of the expeditionary troops, the treachery of Urreiztieta, the hatred and maltreatment of the royalists, insurrected the Margaritans, and Arismendi inspired them with the heroic determination of destroying their enemies in dying for liberty. Thus the hatred of the Spaniards was concentrated on this leader, whom they looked upon as the promoter and soul of the Margaritan insurrection; and they endeavored to destroy him by as many modes as were suggested by their desperation, Brigadier Pardo wishing to murder the Señora Luisa de Caceres, wife of Arismendi, that she might pay for, being innocent, the supposed crime of her daring husband.*

When Moxo was informed of the insolence of the rebel (thus he styled Arismendi in his communications), he sent troops to the help of Urreiztieta, and the most stringent orders to destroy all that which showed signs of independence; but the troops came out badly treated in the first encounter they had. The famous achievements of Arismendi correspond to this epoch, and without doubt they oblige history to concede to this brave chieftain, not only activity and perseverance, but also the gift of organization and military skill. The loving husband of a beautiful lady, equally full of virtues and heroism; his imprisonment, his cruel sufferings, and the frightful threats, were insufficient to break down his patriotism. Arismendi renewed the admirable example of Tarifa; but that of our island, justly called New Sparta, had the additional heroism of the young Carraquenian lady whose abnegation and sufferings for the country form one of the most interesting episodes of the history of Colombia, and, perhaps, of America.

The stubborn resistance of Arismendi filled the Spaniards with wonder and the patriots with admiration; and although he was unable to take absolute possession of the island, his insurrection gave a base to the operations of the war, and consequently was an event of vast importance, which the Liberator skillfully took advantage of.

This is the reason why the expedition directed its course to Margarita.

The fleet proceeded slowly, navigating first against contrary winds then suffering long calms. In the vicinity of the Danish island of Santa Cruz they captured a Spanish vessel, and not until the first of May were they able to touch at Testigos. On the following day they met two Spanish war vessels,

* On the 29th January, 1816, Pardo communicated to Moxo that "the wife of Arismendi had brought forth, in the prison where she was confined, a new monster . . . and that it would be convenient to decapitate it." Basely insulted, and deprived of all comfort in a narrow cell, the wife of Arismendi saw her unhappy new-born die,—that which Pardo had called "monster." But afterwards she was sent to Cadix under arrest as a criminal. The Brigadier Pardo inquired in the same communication, "if he should take the lives of all the women and men of the island of Margarita who were patriots, and who served their insurgent husbands, brothers and fathers." . . . The savage soul of Moxo recoiled with fear from the horrible proposal of Pardo. This one, notwithstanding, did all in his power to put it into practice. . . . Great misfortune, that of those times in which even the weak sex nor innocent childhood did not escape the dagger.

which, with others, blockaded the ports of Margarita; they were the brig *Intrépido* and the schooner *Rita*. These were attacked and taken by boarding, after a vigorous resistance; the remaining vessels, the *Merillo* and *Ferrolera*, fled to Cumana without daring to await the fleet of Bolívar.

In the midst of the incessant struggles of Arismendi, whose hostilities kept the Spaniards in continual fear, and consequently loss, and when these were manifesting most hatred in their tragedies, we see the Liberator appearing with his fleet in the port of Juan Griego (3d of May). The enemy, surprised, evacuated Asuncion and the port of Santa Rosa, which fell into the hands of Arismendi, and this one was then able to afford the necessary assistance to land the elements of war and the force brought by the expedition.

On the 7th Bolívar, convoked in the church of Villa del Norte a great assembly, composed of all the members of the expedition, and of as many who could form a notion of public affairs. There were present many emigrants from the continent, and all were called expressly to deliberate. The Liberator wished (and thus he expressed it in his speech) that on the opening of the third period of the republic, there should be organized a central government, capable of carrying out the great ends of the independence.

"It is necessary," he added, "to confide the supreme command to the person who enjoys the most confidence in this assembly. Far from pretending that the election should result in my favor, I fear it not only for the gravity of the charge, but also because it can excite rivalries, which would be fatal to the cause of the liberty of the country. I serve as willingly in command as in obedience."

The discussion was brief, because all placed their eyes on Bolívar, who was unanimously proclaimed *Supreme Chief of the Republic*. Mariño obtaining that of second chief.

On the following day the Liberator issued a proclamation, announcing the third period of the republic. He related how the expedition had been formed, and what was the purpose of the foreigners enlisted in it. He authorized the people to elect their deputies to the Congress, who were to enjoy the same sovereign faculties as in the first epoch of the republic; and he proclaimed to the Spaniards living in Venezuela, *the cessation of the war to death if they would cease to carry it on*, offering to the Venezuelans complete safety, "because you are always innocent in the eye of your brethren," he said in ending.

The answer given by Don Salvador Moxó, Captain-General of Venezuela, when he beheld the proclamation of the Liberator, was to issue an edict (25th of May) offering ten thousand dollars, *for the head of the rebel Simon Bolívar*, payable at the treasury! A most worthy manner indeed, to moralize people and to infuse them with the spirit of civilization and Christian law! Noble and valiant mode of carrying on war! The conduct of great chiefs, who attained the name of being spirited in arduous and perilous undertakings, was different; but Moxó! *

* The decree of Moxo is textually as follows:

"So that an end may be put to the machinations with which on all sides they endeavor to disturb the peace of the provinces of Venezuela, the rebels Simon Bolívar, José Francisco Bermúdez, Santiago Mariño, Manuel Piar and Antonio Brion, after having drained all the resources offered by pity and mercy to bring to the true knowledge of their errors, all the persons who follow the hateful maxims of rebellion with which these savages are imbued, who abandoned to despair,

The fleet blockaded Pampatar; but Bolivar knowing that he would lose precious time in this operation, and that Margarita was not a country of resources, as it should only serve as a base of the operations against the continent, he resolved to proceed to Carúpano, leaving the immortal defenders of the island provided with sufficient arms and ammunition.

The expedition arrived at Carúpano on the eastern coast of Cumana, the 1st of June, and the garrison, after an obstinate resistance, retreated to Casansi and other immediate points. The artillery, and two vessels armed-in-war, that were in the port, the brig "Bello Indio" and a schooner, with other effects, fell into the power of the patriots.

Bolivar issued a proclamation calling the slaves to the service, offering them their liberty, with indemnization to their masters. He sent Marino with the schooner "Diana," four gunboats, and arms, with the object of occupying the coast of Guiría, where he was well known, whilst Piar marched against Maturín, having to enter it by Caño Colorado; he remained at Carúpano, working indefatigably to place under arms as many as were able to carry them. He established a military academy for the instruction of officers in the theory and practice of war, and named as teacher the Lieutenant-Colonel Schmidt, an able officer, who had served in Spain against the French in the wars of Napoleon.

During these same days (28th of June) he convoked at Carúpano a popular assembly, presided over by the lawyer Diego Bautista Urbaneja. This assembly acknowledged Bolivar as supreme chief, and solicited that the government should be *one and central*. Three days before he had also been acknowledged by Monagas, Rojas, Cedeño, and other guerrilla chiefs who were operating in the interior.

Marino and Piar succeeded in their expeditions, and although the first sent the Liberator some reinforcements, impartiality forces me to say that both forgot their duties. Piar fomenting the declared pretensions of Marino, and this one dissimulating his purposes by the excuse of the excesses and insubordination of that one.

Meanwhile Don Tomas Cires, civil and military Governor of Cumaná, who had received timely notice of the landing and measures of the patriots, set out with troops from Barbastro to destroy them. He fell on the vanguard, commanded by the Lieutenant-Colonel Francisco de Paula Alcantara, and took it by surprise so completely, the chief retreated almost alone towards Carúpano. At the same time, the royalist commandant Don Rafael Lopez defeated at Punche the forces which had been reunited by Zaraza, Rojas and Monagas to help Bolivar. By this the Liberator saw himself in a very critical situation, and conceived the plan of abandoning the shores of the East and going to the West, penetrating rapidly to the valleys of Aragua, arming the patriots and organizing an army which should give freedom to Venezuela.

In effect, on the 29th and 30th of June the rearmament was made, and on the

attempt by all means to collect people to sustain their wickedness, I have thought it convenient to decree that, any person who takes, dead or alive, the bodies of those traitors, and others of their class, such as Juan Bautista Arismendi, in Margarita, shall be rewarded with the sum of \$10,000 for each head, which quantity shall be paid by the treasury. And that it may be known by all, it be printed and circulated.

"Caracas, 25th May, 1816.

SALVADOR MOKO."

1st the expedition set sail and set its course to the West, passing to the north of Margarita.

Some remained at Carupano, the greater part foreigners; amongst them a Frenchman named Brisel, and the intolerable Ducoudray-Holstein, who had made himself an enemy of Soublette, of Pedro Leon Torres, of the Lieutenant-Colonel Anzoátegui, of the Major Fernando Galindo; who had great part in the intrigues of Bermudez, and who at last found the means of forcing the Liberator to dismiss him from the service for *disloyalty*.*

In contrast, MacGregor, the noble Celt, born in the mountains of Scotland, a Highlander, but a citizen of the world, a soldier in all the causes which treated of liberty, brave, educated, as fond of adventure as the knights of old, faithful and constant, accompanied Bolivar; he loved and encouraged him in the difficult position in which he saw him.

The expedition touched at Borburata on the 5th of July, in the neighborhood of Puerto Cabello; a few jumped ashore on the island of Momo and planted a flag; but in a few hours they returned on board the vessels, and directed themselves to Ocumara, in which port they anchored in the evening.

The expedition was composed of fifteen vessels, and almost eight hundred men, distributed in nine bodies, commanded by:

"The Artillery," Bartolomé Salom; "Battalion of Infantry of Honor," Anzoátegui; "Chasseurs of Venezuela," Justo Briceño; "Girardot," Francisco Velez; "Conqueror of Araure," Leon Torres; "Cumaná," Miguel Borrás; "Guiría," José Antonio Raposo; "Cavalry," Teodoro Figueredo; the squadron, "Proud Dragoons," Francisco Alcántara.

On the same day, the 5th, the Liberator issued a proclamation, declaring that, on his part, the war to death had ceased, and that he would pardon those who would surrender, *although they should be Spaniards*.

Thus did Bolivar prepare himself for generosity before victory.

He also gave an amnesty to the Americans who followed the royal standard, and fulfilling his promise to Petion, he declared the slaves to be free. "This unhappy portion of our brethren," he said, "who have groaned under the misery of slavery, is now free. Nature, justice and policy call for the emancipation of the slaves; from this on, there will only be one class of men in Venezuela—all shall be citizens."

After this, Bolivar ordered the Major Carlos Soublette, with nearly all the forces, to march; that passing the range of mountains, they should penetrate to San Joaquin de Mariara, and take possession of the gap of Cabrera, the most important and strategic point for his campaign; he placed the Lieutenant-Colonel Francisco Pinango at Choroni to recruit men; and he in person directed the conscription at headquarters. He ordered the landing of the park, the printing-press, and various other effects, and as Brion had resolved on cruising, the Liberator took advantage of this circumstance to confide him a diplomatical mission to the government of Washington, and instructions to place himself in intercourse with the Mexican patriots.

* When the Liberator held the proofs of the treachery of Ducoudray he expelled and even severely reprimanded him. He himself says in his book, "J'étais venu, ce soir-là rendre visite à l'Amiral Brion. Le Général Bolívar entra quelques temps après moi. Aussitôt que je le vis, je me levai pour aller lui donner la main, à l'ordinaire; mais Bolívar dit, en colère, qu'il ne voulait pas donner sa main à un . . . homme qui méritait d'être fusillé, à l'instant même. (Vol. I., Chap. xx., p. 833.)

On the same day that Bolivar was landing at Ocumare, Brigadier-General Don Francisco Tomas Morales arrived at Valencia, sent with troops from Ocaña by Morillo. This accident disconcerted the plan of the Liberator; because Morales joined his forces to those of Brigadier Pascual Real and Colonel Quero, who marched from Caracas and formed a body much superior to that of the independents. Soublette, who behaved with activity, skill and valor, performing the orders of Bolivar, feared with reason to be cut off, and although victorious in a small encounter, he abandoned the points he occupied, and retreated to the foot of the hill called de Ocumare. Bolivar was informed of the unhappy news of the retrograde movement of Soublette, and flew immediately to join him with 150 recruits which he had been able to unite. On the night of the 18th, the Liberator was already joined to the division which Soublette commanded, and he gave the necessary orders for the combat which was to take place the following day. Raw troops fought there against injured veterans, and although the patriots were favored by the position, after three hours of fire, victory decided for the royalists. We lost 300 men, with killed and wounded, and 1,000 muskets, a great number of lances, cavalry and military articles. The rest of the army retreated in disorder towards Ocumare. Bolivar was to follow the retreat of the troops, and dispatched MacGregor to Ohoroni with the small forces remaining in the port.

At about five in the evening, the Liberator left for Ocumare. His object was to cause the reshipment of the park, the press, &c.* and to remove it by sea to Ohoroni. He ordered Villaret, major-general of marines, to do so on the spot. The night already advanced, the Liberator went to the arsenal, and found that Villaret had ordered the reshipment to be suspended. He made use of the pretext that he did not rely on the captains, who could leave with the precious effects which they were receiving on board. Bolivar himself gave force to this consideration, and said to the commandant Salom, pointing to the cases of arms, "This is the base of our hope to continue the undertaking."

Besides, the moment was critical. The enemy was approaching. Villaret had embarked on the "Indio Libre," where he commanded, and would not come on land. On the arrival of day, who could dare to say what was to happen? The Liberator, agitated, walked up and down on the shore, amongst the objects he wished to save and which he saw were exposed on all sides to perish. Finally he approached Salom, to give him his last orders, when he saw arriving at full gallop his aid-de-camp, Lúdro Alzuru, whom he had left in the town, so that through his means Soublette could communicate to him what was transpiring. Alzuru, whether by surprise, by consternation, or by treason (as was afterwards proved), gave the Liberator the false news that the Spanish soldiers were enter-

* The royalists have wished to put in ridicule the ideas of the Liberator, seeing him carrying among the elements of war a printing-press. Stupidity! Do they ignore that the press is the artillery of the mind? Do they not know that the mission of Bolivar was to enlighten the people? And what more proper than a press? For the very same cause that the court of Madrid would not allow in America the powerful auxiliary of the free mind; for the same cause that the Inquisition condemned it; for the same should Bolivar bring it as he did. Truth is the light of the soul, and this truth requires to be diffused in the world of minds. The Liberator was a man too intelligent not to appreciate the importance of the press in his great work of redemption! . . .

ing Ocumare, and that the republicans had proceeded precipitately towards Choroni. This false news, opposed in all to that which Soublotte sent to give, caused the greatest alarm and confusion in the port. There were many who, imprudent, fearing greater misfortunes, plunged into the water and swam off to the vessels. Salom and the other officers meanwhile pressed Bolivar to embark; they urged him with a thousand reasons. . . . His situation kept the officers in great fear. The *Liberator* embarked in the "*Indio Libre*" with some articles and baggage. Villaret sprang his anchor and set sail, seeking greater safety on the open sea.

When Soublotte knew the confusion at Ocumare, caused by the news of Alzuru, he sent the commandant Borras to contradict it; but it was too late, as Villaret, although in the waters of Ocumare, was already out of reach of the human voice.

At the break of the following day Bolivar wished to set his course towards Choroni, to place himself in communication with MacGregor and Soublotte; it was thus effected by the brig, but the schooners one by one were being left behind, and at the setting of the sun the captains raised, setting their course to Bonaire. It was necessary to follow them, in order to take measures of safety, and to better arrange the voyage. (July 16.)

In the morning, after the vessels had entered the port, the captains protested that they would retain the arms and ammunition which they had on board, to pay themselves the sums which the *Liberator* owed them for their services and assistance to the expedition. He threw up to their faces their villainous conduct; he told them that they had no right to pay themselves out of their own hands, and that the accounts not being liquidated, they could not retain even the arms, destined besides to the reconquest of American liberty. The *Liberator* soon found out that these mariners were less tractable than Bianchi, and all that he should do to bring them to obedience and to the service of the country was in vain. In such a difficulty he was also alone, as Villaret did not assist him, when fortunately Brion presented himself with his fleet, which was coming from Curaçao. The admiral informed himself of what was going on, and having called the subverted captains, he forced them to return the arms and ammunition, which they pretended to usurp.

Torrente writes that "Brion heaped on Bolivar insults and reproaches; that he slapped him publicly, and would even have thrown him in the sea, if his friends had not restrained his arm and calmed his anger, excited on beholding the enormous expenses he had made to such little profit." This is a pure invention of the unhappy Torrente. Writing under the dictation of the *Gazetteer*, Diaz, he saw insults and public slapping of the face, where there was only respect, sincere friendship and protection. Brion loved the *Liberator*; he was enthusiastic for our cause, and to his powerful intervention was it owing that these pirates returned the arms which they had already appropriated to themselves, thinking of nothing else than their sordid profits.

Bolivar departed without delay to Choroni (19th July). The fleet of Brion saluted him on leaving, and this one accompanied him in person one league out of the port.

Such were the slaps that Brion gave the *Liberator*.

As Bolivar found Choroni in the power of the royalists, he touched at Chusco to procure news. He was there informed that the patriot column had penetrated into Aragua. MacGregor (Bolivar thought) will go to join the guerrillas

of the independents, who overrun the provinces of the East. This was the project which he himself had spoken of to MacGregor; but such a daring undertaking required fortune, constancy, intrepidity. MacGregor had all this; his heroic companions had it, who, opposing the elements of dissolution, and impeding the increase of progressive losses, saved the relics of Ocumare, and performed their retreat by an eccentric movement, famous in the annals of the history of our war.

The Liberator then returned to Bonaire. He met Bermudez there. One and the other resolved to proceed to Guiria, with the hope of joining Mariño, and continue combating for liberty.

Restrepo affirms that Colonel Bermudez joined the Liberator at Bonaire, and that they left in company for the port of Guiria. There is an error. What happened was this: Bermudez had solicited at the Cayos to belong to the expedition, and Villaret refused, saying that the chief did not allow him. Bermudez and his officers, Rubio, Villegas and Manuel Isalva, remained on land.

But Bermudez, who had no other desire than that of co-operating with his efforts for the independence of his country; who loved glory, and who saw his brethren and companions leave, presented himself to Pétion, begging his favors. He told him that he could not remain in inaction and condemned to oblivion for private resentments; he spoke to him with so much passion for the liberty of Costafirma that the President of Hayti gave his word to assist him in all. On this, Bermudez chartered an American vessel, and departed from the Cayos the 9th June, 1818.

Notwithstanding the enmity of Bolivar and the inflexibility of his character, Bermudez followed him, going to Margarita, where he arrived at 11 o'clock of the night of the 29th June. On the following day, after sunrise, and when he was about to land, he received a communication from Arismendi, sent by his aid-de-camp José Vicente Tolesan, prohibiting his landing, by order of the Liberator. Bermudez then conceived the idea of passing to Carupano, where Bolivar was, to beg him to allow him to land. On the way, the corsair "Feliz," commanded by Lomina, gave him the news of the evacuation of Carupano, and that the expedition had proceeded to Ocumare. Colonel Bermudez then determined to go on board of the "Feliz" with Isalva and Rubio, to follow the tracks of the Liberator at Ocumare. He arrived at this port, and instantly sent Bolivar a communication, swearing to be his friend and begging him to allow him to land to take part in the campaign, with the protest that he would not in future oppose any of his orders. Bolivar refused. The corsair "Feliz" set out on a cruise, having on board Bermudez and his officers, and after a few days, having touched at Bonaire, he there met Bolivar, who had already come defeated from Ocumare.

Bermudez and Bolivar did not see each other, although Brion endeavored to bring about a reconciliation.

The Liberator afterwards sailed in the "Indio Libre" in the direction of Guiria, and Bermudez succeeded in embarking on the schooner of Antonio Rosales, who was also sailing for this place.

The voyage from Bonaire to Guiria lasted almost a month, where the Liberator arrived the evening of the 16th of August. The vessel which brought Bermudez had arrived two hours before, and from the very moment that he landed, he began earnestly to make Mariño disown Bolivar. Bermudez,

offended, exasperated, was not at that moment the most faithful counselor; but Mariño, always tempted by disobedience, was easily led astray. He received the Liberator with aversion and insolent indifference; he sought reasons and pretexts to excuse his coldness; and although he did not oppose Bolívar's going to Maturín in search of Piar, to attack Guayana, he secretly plotted against him.

On the 22d of August, it finally broke out.

It is unnecessary to say that the rebels shouted "Down with Bolívar! and hurrah for Mariño and Bermúdez!" These unseasonably aspired to the command, and turned the people of Guiría against Bolívar.

A troop of assassins, subalterns of Mariño, conspired openly against the life of the Liberator, who detained them by his extraordinary calmness and bravery, passing through their midst sword in hand. Bermúdez, fired with anger, and allowing himself to be carried away by the most insolent audacity, drew his sword against his chief and his Liberator. . . Abominable disorder of the mind! He was restrained by Colonel Isalva and the lawyer Gaspar Marcano, who were present, and thus parried the consummation of the most frightful crime. "Never," says an eye-witness, "did I see the arm of Bermúdez move with more vigorous impulse." . . . Ah! he was not then moved by obedience, but by anger, which is stronger, and redoubles the forces.

Those insolent cries! . . . That American hand which drew a sword against Bolívar! . . .

All was wonder and tumultuous confusion! The animosity of Bermúdez bordered on frenzy; the ambition of Mariño increasing more and more by the acclamations in his favor of this unbridled revolt. Those people, paid aggressors, who committed with impunity such a great crime!

Unhoped-for opprobrium! . . .

The energy and moral force of Bolívar made him superior in that supreme moment to rule circumstances, and give himself time to embark, leaving Mariño and Bermúdez, authors of the tumult, to enjoy the sweets of the command which they so passionately longed for.

One year had passed, when the Liberator, insulted by the violence and intrigues of Castillo, had left Cartagena, preferring exile to being the cause of intestinal discord. Mariño showed himself faithful in this difficulty, and vigorously reprehended the conduct of the chiefs of Cartagena.

The Liberator went to the Cayos. His elevated mind, unused to idleness, undertook the expedition, which was to free Venezuela. Superior to all misfortunes, he only thought of redeeming his country from her oppression; the most beautiful land on the earth. Mariño accompanied him and acknowledged his authority.

And at the first reverse of fortune he abandons him! he disowns him! and harboring hatred against him to whom he had sworn obedience, caused to degenerate into sedition the natural and due civility. The scenes of Guiría were ruder and more sanguinary than those of La Popa de Cartagena, and it could be said that at the other extreme of the littoral of Colombia, ambition raised its head, as if to manifest there where it has less excuse, its duty being nearer, it was so much more violent, not refusing any enormity to the extraordinary severities of the execution.

No one can imagine the pain I have suffered in writing the antecedent lines.

I have been an intimate friend of General Marino, who held my house as his own, and who disfructed all my sympathies and attentions; but I am obliged to write the truth of affairs, just as they have passed. When the pen of history is taken, says Polybius,* it is requisite to know how to renounce all affections, to tribute the most sublime praises to the enemies who merit it, and to make at the same time the censure of the friends whose faults may be worthy of reproof. Deprive a man of his sight and at once all is lost to him. Deprive history of truth, and there remains only an insipid and useless recital. To accuse our friends, to praise our enemies, should not give us anxiety nor mortification. Let us separate ourselves from persons; let us relate facts.

* POL., Lib.,—Cap. 14.