

## CHAPTER XXI.

1816.

THE LIBERATOR EMBARKS ON THE "INDIO LIBRE" FOR HAYTI—HE WRITES TO PESTON, CONGRATULATING HIM—HE PROJECTS ANOTHER EXPEDITION—OBSTACLES WHICH ARISE—MIRA—PROCLAMATION OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES—THE LIBERATOR IS RECALLED BY ARISMENDI AND ALSO BY THE CHIEFS OF THE INTERIOR—HE PERSEES HIS DEPARTURE—LETTERS TO DE. GUAL AND THE DEACON MADARIAGA—THE LIBERATOR ARRIVES AT MARCA-RITA—PROCLAMATION TO THE VENEZUELANA—HE MEDITATES A JUST AND PATERNAL ADMINISTRATION TO HEAL THE WOUNDS OF THE WAR.

THE cries of the people excited the curiosity, and perhaps the mistrust of Villaret, who was on board, and he immediately sent a boat to take information. Bolivar took advantage of it to go to the "Indio Libre," and left Guiria, setting his course towards the hospitable shores of Hayti.

Those who had plotted against the Liberator elected Marino and Bermudez as first and second chief.

Thus ended the conspiracy.

The newly-elected, proud of their unfortunate authority, communicated it to all the commandants of the guerrillas and prepared themselves to combat vigorously against the Spaniards. But the news of the successes of Guiria were badly received. Anzoategui, Monagas, Odeño, Zaraza, Rojas and the rest of the chiefs, especially MacGregor and the brave officers of the division of the centre, knowing that without Bolivar they could never attain the independence of the country; as the genius, the valor, and the resources of so great a leader were the assurance of triumph, whilst his absence plunged them in the most profound ruin and desperation; as the losses suffered could be repaired by him, and finally that it was unjust to repay with ingratitude and neglect so much abnegation, so many efforts, and such valorous principles.

As to the Liberator, he supported this blow with wonderful balance of mind. His friends at Puerto Principe advised him to take vengeance against his enemies, showing to the world their machinations; but he refused, saying to all, that "the noblest vengeance was to pardon." At other times he used to answer: "Contempt is the most polite vengeance." "There is no vengeance like forgetfulness."

It was an honor to him to separate himself from that unfortunate dispute, now that the situation was rendered so difficult by discredit; but that moderation undoubtedly was a great merit, which caused him to restrain himself amid so much baseness and ingratitude; sorrowfully beholding the mistakes of Bermudez, the anxiety and trouble of Marino, who gave way to the dreams of am-

bition which always ruled him; the perverse ambition finally of that people, who, little embarrassed by their consciences, repaid him evil for good, and returned him insults for services!

The Roman historians praise Cato as a man of great mind, who committed suicide, being unwilling to suffer patiently the superior power of Cæsar, his enemy; greater praise is due to Bolivar, who held the faith which Cato was wanting. This one, if he had sufficient strength of mind to bear prosperity (which with little effort is borne), he seemed so weak by his death, that he was unable to support misfortune; whilst Bolivar appeared in his life so stronger as he entertained purposes of triumphing and liberating his country, although he saw himself despoiled, defeated and exiled, his enemies victorious, and his rivals prosperous and happy.

Misfortunes cannot depress the minds of such men as Bolivar. Superior to all, they are not dejected by reverses, nor are they perturbed by misfortunes. The Liberator converted the bitterness of the events of Guiria into the sweetness of a proper and fruitful application for preparing another expedition against Costafirme, that should assist MacGregor, Soubllette, and the rest of the patriots who took up their march from Choroni to the plains of Barcelona.

On the 9th of October the Liberator was at Puerto Principa. Petion had just received the dignity of Chief for life of the Republic of Hayti by the free acclamation of his fellow-citizens, and Bolivar wrote to him on the spot an interesting letter congratulating him for his new and merited prosperity. He rejoiced at the happy fate of his friend: of that man, superior to his epoch and his country, whose virtues attracted admiration: whose talents inspired respect, and whose goodness called forth the purest gratitude; and with ability he made this goodness and those talents incline in favor of Venezuela. Petion showed himself this time, as always, a friend of liberty and an enthusiastic supporter of Bolivar, admiring in him more and more that unquenchable ardor, that perseverance of which history gives so few examples. In concord with Southerland, he facilitated him all that was necessary, flattering him with words of kindness and hope. The conduct of Petion was so prudent and measured, that the Spanish government found no occasion to make him the last complaint of infringing the neutrality. In spite of being animated with that beneficial and philanthropical spirit, which we know, and which will always call forth the respect of friends of mankind, as the claims were continual and pressing. Petion ceded to the severe duties of the magistracy; and to prove to the government of Spain, that that of Hayti had taken no active part in the struggle of Costafirme, he ordered that all the vessels that conducted emigrants to Margarita and Venezuela should be scrupulously searched by the cruisers of Hayti. This conflict increased the difficulties opposed to the Liberator in this second expedition; but by his skill and genius he overcame them.

Another presented itself of still greater importance.

On the 8d of July of this same year, there had landed on the shores of the Patapaco, in the roomy and safe bay of Baltimore, a young man called Don Francisco Javier Mina, a strong champion of liberty in Spain, "who hoped to attain in the New World," says a Spanish narrator, "under the favor of his chimerical fame the encumbered post which was denied him in Spain." To these narrators, passionate fanatics of absolutism and the Holy Inquisition, all fame is chimerical, except that of Monteverde, Boves, Morales, Morillo and the rest of their breed. Mina, a refugee in England, after having been defeated in his

attempt to re-establish in the Peninsula the Constitution and the liberal principles abolished by Ferdinand, "came to offer his sword and the influence of his name to the cause of Mexican independence." This chief was active, valiant, and was well received at Baltimore. Some articles elegantly written in his honor can be read in the *Maryland Journal* and *Baltimore Advertiser*. Finally, Mina succeeded in organizing an expedition at New Orleans, which landed at Sota la Marina, the end of April, 1817.

At the rumor of this undertaking, on which so many persons were occupied, and which offered rich booty, power and glory, all the persons whom the circumstances of the moment, and also their generous convictions filled with enthusiasm for the independence of Spanish America, assembled at Baltimore. Marshal Grouchy and Generals Brayer and Clausel were the first to arrive. They were followed by the sympathetic and unfortunate Carrera, so full of energy and so enthusiastic for the glories of the New World, and there also came there our Montilla, Aury and the Mexican General Toledo.

Mina, who had known in Europe the famous name of BOLIVAR, and who had listened with lively admiration to the relation of his valor, of his activity and of his talents, wrote inviting him to join the undertaking, offering to serve under his orders for the liberty of Venezuela, "after he had exterminated the oppressive power in Mexico." And added in an elegant sentence that he wished to see and speak to him. These dispatches were brought to Puerto Principe, where the Liberator was residing, by the navy officer, Felipe Estevez, who commanded the "Condor," and who had offered himself to place them in the hands of Bolivar as he did.

He also brought letters to the Liberator from General Carrera, from Father Torres, from the celebrated Guerrero, and from other chiefs of the independent portion of the north coast of Vera Cruz, generous missives expressive of admiration and respect, in which they offered General Bolivar hospitality, and to acknowledge him as commander-in-chief, with the salary and distinction as such, adding that afterwards he could draw from Mexico arms, soldiers and money to resolve the problem of the reconquest of the liberty of Venezuela.

From all sides the friends of liberty eagerly sought the assistance of Bolivar. All acknowledged that he was the minister of Providence for the redemption of the New World.

But, in the midst of such personal considerations (which undoubtedly flattered the heart of the Liberator), the expedition of the impetuous guerrilla-chief of Navarra, prodigally supplied by the speculators of Baltimore, was being carried out, many of those who promised their co-operation to Bolivar for Venezuela preparing to proceed there. Large advances were made in New Orleans. Arms, chiefs, munitions, men, etc., were shipped, and promised favorably for Mina; whilst Bolivar, without soldiers and money, did not receive the least assistance either from the government or the citizens of the North American Union. On the contrary, when he was lamenting the indifference with which the struggle of Colombia was looked upon, he had to feel the rude blow struck by President Madison, who by a proclamation prohibited all arms and all help in favor of the revolutionized countries of America, and pressed by the Spanish Ambassador Don Luis de Onis, he demanded besides, in a special message to Congress, laws to authorize him to suppress the equipment of Colombian corsairs.\* In

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\* American State Papers, Vol. 4, p. 103.

this position, officially refused the help of the only republic of the American continent (although Bolívar had never solicited it), the attention efficaciously called in favor of the expedition of Mina, which disturbed the minds of those joined to the Liberator, there was nothing left but to persuade these and urgently determine them to go to Costa Firme.

The Liberator, without losing time, urged his solicitude; he spoke to one and the other with the greatest grace, and manifest of good reasons; and as he had such a quick wit, with a few words he succeeded in captivating the wills of the greater part, thus restraining the progress of that evil which could have produced such lamentable results.

By November all was prepared and ready, and the Liberator only awaited the best opportunity of setting sail for Venezuela.

During the absence of Bolívar in Hayti, the patriots had obtained some advantages. Piar succeeded in defeating Morales at *Juncal*, between Barcelona and Piritu: before MacGregor had routed Quero at *Quebrada-Honda*, and Colonel Rafael Lopez at *Alacran*. But frequently there were disputos and rivalries amongst the chiefs. MacGregor, disgusted with the conduct of Piar, departed from Costa Firme, to return no more during the war of independence. Piar became jealous of Monagas, and dismissed him from his column, as also Colonel Parejo. Marino, regretting these rivalries, which weakened the army, saw himself forced to raise the siege of Cumana, to retake Carupano. Cedeño was operating in Guayana, but nothing was known of him. It was evident that a focus of activity and intelligence was wanting in the country. The cares of a war so active and unequal were grave; and in their midst there was needed a superior authority, a magistrate full of influence and moral power, to whom all should tribute their obedience. Arismendi was the first who recognized the evil of the absence of Bolívar, and who more faithfully hastened to suppress the anarchy which already was beginning to be dangerous, giving the supreme chief a complete satisfaction for the insult done to him, and urgently begging him to return to the bosom of the country. The letter of Arismendi is dated the 22d of September. It was brought by the citizen Francisco Olivier, to whom the Margaritan general confided the mission of proceeding to Hayti, placing at his service the sloop "Bruja," commanded by the officer José Maria Garcia. Five days afterwards (the 27th), the chiefs of the army of the interior directed a letter to the Liberator, manifesting to him the feelings of submission and obedience, which animated them; they begged him to return to take the command, and to forget forever the *deplorable scenes of Guiría*. They commissioned the Quartermaster-General Zea to place the document in the hands of Bolívar, the petitioning letter, and to testify to him that the army, the authorities and the majority of the inhabitants of Costa Firme acknowledged his authority, and swore to join and obey him. Zea consented to the mission, and set sail from Barcelona in the schooner "Diana," armed in war.

When the missive of Arismendi and the commissioner of the chiefs of the army of the interior, who bore the invitation of these, arrived at Puerto Príncipe, Admiral Brion also anchored, who, on his part, came to convince the Liberator of the necessity of returning to Venezuela to reconquer her liberty. They walked together to the palace of President Petion, who sallied to receive them to the iron railing which adorns the beautiful avenue of orange groves in front of the palace. The conversation was animated. The Liberator showed Petion the letters he had received, translating them into French, so that he might understand

them better. "There still exists a remnant of good patriots," Zee said to him; "the country lives fed by hope; but it needs a superior man, capable of converting this hope into reality. Full of this thought, the people and the army have turned their eyes on General Bolivar—to the first genius of war."

The spirit of sacrifice and love of country were always the prominent virtues of the Liberator. His feeling soul, his ardent imagination, drew him to that grand undertaking of freeing Colombia in spite of the obstacles and difficulties of all classes opposed to its accomplishment. The invitation of Arismendi, the presence of his friends Zee and Brion, found him preparing a fleet; enlisting men; gathering munitions of war; and his zeal now more strengthened, he hurried the preparations and resolved to sail.

The Liberator wrote two letters on the eve of his departure, which prove the practical knowledge he had of the necessities of the country, the multiplicity of his ideas, and the respect he attributed to civil order in the interior political rule. The first was written to Dr. Pedro Gual, living at that time in Philadelphia. After giving him notice of the expedition, he adds: "The mercantile relations between Venezuela and the United States will be advantageous to both sides; arms, munitions, uniforms, and even vessels of war are articles which will at once command a secure and profitable sale, sufficiently lucrative for those who undertake speculations of this class in the United States. The ports of Cumaná, Margarita and Barcelona, occupied by us, already offer safe points to go to, which facilitate us the possession of those of Caracas and her province. The frequent commerce between the Americans of the North, and the protection which the government shall extend to the honest foreigners who wish to establish themselves amongst us, will repair our depopulation and will give us virtuous citizens. Diffuse these ideas amongst all the foreigners of probity, causing them to see the advantages which await them."

The second letter was addressed to the Deacon Don José Cortes de Madariaga, who was at Jamaica with Dr. Roscio, Juan Pablo Ayala, and Juan Paz del Castillo. My readers recollect that Monteverde in 1812 sent to Spain these honest patriots, with irons on their feet, for the only crime of being independents. Monteverde used the right given to him by the insulting violation of the capitulation effected in July of that year. The learned Madariaga and his three companions were imprisoned at Ceuta, from whence they managed to escape to Gibraltar, towards the end of February, 1814. They were reclaimed by the Governor of Ceuta, and when they least thought of it, General Campbell, who commanded at Gibraltar, unjustly gave them up to their infamous oppressors. Our countrymen returned to the prison of Ceuta, and suffered the horrors of the most hateful persecution. They then raised their voice to the Prince Regent of England, and also represented to the Parliament. The Prince ordered Campbell to be removed, negotiated with King Ferdinand VII for the surrender of the four fugitives who had placed their feet on the hospitable soil of England, and in September, 1815, Madariaga and his companions returned to Gibraltar, restored to their rights by English hospitality. From Gibraltar they went to Martha Brae in the frigate-of-war "Pitt," and were at Kingston at the beginning of 1816.

The Liberator, who was informed of this news, wrote to them before leaving the Cayes, at the time of his first expedition; and knowing the activity, energy, the sacrifices and eminent virtues of those heroes, he invited them anew to come to contribute to the liberty of Venezuela:

"Up to this moment," he said to Sr. Cortes, "I have been unable to arrange my business, because obstacles are multiplied when means are wanting; but at least, I leave with the hope of seeing you soon in the bosom of the country, efficaciously co-operating for the construction of the great edifice of our republic. In vain will arms destroy the tyrants, if we do not establish a policy able to repair the devastations of the revolution. The military system is that of force, and force is no government. Thus, we need our heroes who, having escaped on planks from the wreck of the revolution, may lead us, amidst the breakers, to a harbor of salvation. You and your friends, Roscio and Castillo, would defraud the republic if you should not tribute your virtues and talents, remaining in an idleness that would be very prejudicial to the public cause."

"I conclude, supplicating you to please communicate this letter to your worthy companions of misfortunes and honor, whom I pray to excuse me from writing to them by cause of my occupations in such an urgent moment as the present."

This letter is dated the 26th of November, but the expedition did not leave till the 21st of December, the vessels of Brion sailing from the small port of Jacmel, in which the Liberator embarked, and landed fortunately at Juan Griego the 28th of December.

On this same day the rest of the expedition sailed from the Cayos, destined to Costafirme, commanded by Villaret, and was loaded with a great quantity of munitions.

Bolivar was accompanied by three aid-de-camps: José Gabriel Perez, Chamberlain\* and Palacios; the two brothers Piferez and some other refugees from Venezuela, who wished to return to their country to fight against the beastly tyrants.

The expedition arrived at Juan Griego, a port in Margarita, on the 28th of December, as has been said.

Before landing, the Liberator caused the citizen José Maria Guerra to come on board, a person in whom he placed the greatest confidence, a strong and able patriot: he held a long conference with him; he informed himself of all that was going on, and afterwards they both went ashore where the governor of the island awaited them, who was, in the absence of Arismendi, Colonel Francisco Esteban Gomez.†

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\* The young man Chamberlain, whom the Liberator distinguished much for his good qualities, was a native of Jamaica, and had served in the English army before being aid-de-camp to Bolivar. His father at the time of the unhappy event of Amestoy, in which the life of the Liberator was in such peril, showed himself an affectionate friend of the Colombian hero, and wished from that moment his son to accompany him, as if to guarantee him from any such wiles. Chamberlain died at Barcelona in the Casa Fuerte.

† Along with the citizen Guerra, who was called by the Liberator, there came an excellent Margaritan patriot named Manuel Rodriguez, who did not know Bolivar, but who confided in his military genius and his singular virtues. At the approach of the boat, the Liberator recognized Guerra, but he fixed his sight on the other, who came with him, a man of middle stature, strongly built, dark color, and did not know him. When they came on the deck, Rodriguez advanced, and without confusion, with affable manners and fluctuating voice, and said to the Liberator: "My life! where were you, my life! what were you doing in those lands? We love you greatly here, and cannot live without you. Do not leave us

On the same day the Liberator issued a proclamation addressed to the Venezuelans. It is not true, that in it, as Restrepo asserts, the supreme chief exposed the motives which forced him to abandon the expedition at Ocumare and the coast of Guiria. The Liberator was too political and discreet to even hint at the idea of such lamentable events, in the moment of reconciliation and hope. Marino had written to him; Arismendi had called him; Zea had taken the voice of the people of Venezuela; all begged of him to forget the past. . . It was not probable that a man so careful of the public weal as was Bolivar, should awake ideas which entertained discord, the injury and ruin of the country. The people, he said, the generals and the army by the means of General Arismendi, have recalled me. Behold me, Venezuelans! I come at the head of a fourth expedition with the brave Admiral Brion; to serve you, not to command you."

This was the language that was proper. This was that of the Liberator. He added after: "Venezuelans! you confided me the authority in the two last periods of the republic. You have forced me to ascend the tribunal, and to fight in the field. I have been unable to fulfill at one time such opposed offices. The country has suffered by the administration and by the war. Victorious, I have not been able to reach the fruits of victory, having to attend to the cares of the government. Justice, policy and commerce have suffered when I was occupied in your defence. Thus an imperious necessity requires of you the immediate installation of Congress, to take an account of my conduct, to admit the abdication of the authority I exercise, and form the political constitution which should rule you."

"Venezuelans! you have been convoked by me since the month of May, to constitute the Legislative Body, without prescribing any restrictions, authorizing you to choose the time and the place. You have not done it; the events of the war have prevented it; but now you should hasten to effect it as circumstances dictate it. The country has been and will be frequently in orphanage, as long as the magistrate is a soldier. The vicissitudes of war are so varying and terrible that they scarcely can be foreseen, much less be evaded. The transactions of the government require a more constant establishment. One same man cannot be moving and in repose at the same time. You, then, should divide the functions of the public service among the many citizens who possess the virtues and the talents sufficient for the exercise of authority."

"If those who were legally constituted by the representatives of the people in the first period of the republic, should be living free and amongst us, you should see them fill the dignities which were conferred on them; but the most deplorable fatality deprives us of the services of these functionaries. The greater portion are absent, many imprisoned, many dead, and others are traitors. Notwithstanding that their authority has finished, their functions having ended, I would have invited them to continue anew in the government of the republic.

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again my life" . . . And saying this, he tenderly embraced the Liberator, who received him with kindness, and promised him that he would never more leave Venezuela but die or live free in her. "But it is not me whom you and your good companions should love," he said to him, "it is the country, which does not exist under slavery, and in which we serve, being useful, disinterested, and behaved."

The Liberator never lost any occasion to inspire good feelings, generosity, the submission to moral duties, the Christian virtues which are the light of civilization.

They do not appear in the bosom of the liberated country; it is then indispensable to replace them."

"Venezuelans, name your deputies to Congress. The island of Margarita is completely free; in it, your assemblies shall be respected and defended by a people of heroes in virtue, in valor, and in patriotism. Assemble on this sacred soil, open your sessions and organize yourselves at your will. The first act of your functions will be celebrated by the acceptance of my resignation.

"SIMON BOLIVAR.

"Headquarters of the North of Margarita, Dec. 28, 1816."

The Liberator seeing the necessity of constituting a government, which should be the focus from which should issue the combinations of war, wished that an intelligent administration should repair at once, by just and proper measures, the ravages caused by the royalists. In the year which was now ending, there had been nothing else but confiscation and tears, ferocity and desolation. Moxo at Caracas, Morillo at Bogota, and their agents in all parts, inspired by the genius of wickedness and devastation, carried sorrow and fear to the hearts of all. Confiscations, accusations, assaults, blood, the most insupportable tyranny, such were the chronicles of 1816. The royal audience and the council protested, on several occasions, energetically, against so much iniquity, which *cried to Heaven for vengeance*; but they did not succeed. There was not a family that did not wear mourning.

Times of Moxo, Morillo, Oropega, Aldama, Morales, of Chesito Gonzales!  
Horror!

Moxo and Morillo issued manifests accusing each other reciprocally.

The King and the Cortes were informed of all; but the arbitrarities and the spoliation had been committed in America. . . to destroy Americans was no crime!

What hatred! how many barbarous acts of which even the history of savages has no example!<sup>\*</sup>

The government of Madrid rewarded, however, by high dignities and decorations the assassins and tyrants of America.

Moxo received as a reward for his rapacity and thirst for blood, the rank of field-marshal and the rank of brevet captain-general; favors which he published on the 6th of October! . . .

\* One stroke of the pen and one fact only will I relate. The first I take from Morillo himself. In his proclamation of the 15th November, 1816, advising the people of America to submit to the king, said: "On the contrary, the most common, once the sword unsheathed, is to fire the towns, put its inhabitants to the sword, destroy the country, respect neither sex nor age, and finally to occupy the place of the peaceful laborer, and to find instead of his quiet customs, a ferocious warrior, the minister of the vengeance of an irritated king! . . . It seems incredible that this should have been written in the nineteenth century! The fact I will take from the many committed by Don Joaquin Valdez, lieutenant of the first battalion of the regiment of Nunancia. He ordered a woman to be tied in the square of the city of Toro, and commanded one of her own sons to lash his mother. The son resisted, and Valdez, placing himself behind, gave him so many blows with the sword that he died a little afterward. Let the reader judge how bloody despotism and barbarity ruled in this unfortunate America.

Don Pascual Enrile, chief of staff of the expeditionary army, who did nothing else besides firing the passions and enriching himself, received the rank of field-marshal, with which rank and the millions that he drew from Venezuela, and principally from New Granada, he went in this year to the Peninsula to enjoy at the Court the fruit of his *labor*! . . .

Enrile assisted at mass the day before leaving. *Hypocrite!* What can God think of these thieves! Pizarro and Almagro, who came to slaughter the innocent of Peru, and to rob them of their gold and riches, also heard mass said to them by Hernando Luque, as if to bless the undertaking.

"I am not surprised at the omnipotence of God," exclaimed a French bishop, at the time of the revolution, "but at his patience!"