

CHAPTER XXIX.

RAPID TRIP OF THE LIBERATOR FROM ANGUAYURA TO THE ARAUCA — SYSTEM OF WAR ADOPTED ON THE PLAINS — QUEBRAS DEL MEDIO — PROJECT OF AN EXPEDITION AGAINST BARINAS — ARRIVAL OF COLONEL LARA — NEWS FROM NEW GRANADA — BOLIVAR UNDERTAKES TO LIBERATE THOSE REGIONS — DIFFICULT JOURNEY — COMBAT OF GAMERA, BONTA AND VARGAS — BATTLE OF BOTACÁ — OCCUPATIONS OF THE LIBERATOR AT SANJA FÉ — CONSIDERATIONS.

THE voyage of Bolívar ascending the Orinoco was so rapid, that by the 10th of March he was at Araguaquen; and soon after upon the right bank of the Arauca, where he had an interview with Paéz.

This flight, like unto that of the eagle, that impetuous movement which ignores perils and surmounts difficulties, was very proper to the genius of Bolívar. Thus did he disconcert the enemy on many occasions by the rapidity of his marches, and he recovered by velocity what he had lost by the uncertain fate of arms.

Morillo had passed the river Apure, with 6,000 men, towards the last days of January: an imprudent manœuvre, which should cost him dearly; because if the patriots should place themselves on the defensive, leaving to work in their favor the climate and the insupportable rigors of the desert, it was evident that the Spanish army would almost all perish. This consideration did not escape the Liberator, who remained passive, and he wrote to Don Guillermo White from Laguna de los Laureles: "Our defensive has been mortal to Morillo; because in marches, counter-marches and partial combats, he has lost almost one-half of his army. I would have attacked him in front and given a general battle, almost sure of success; but I have had to repress my resolution and evade battle, to conform myself to the reiterated advices of all our friends who do not wish to see the fate of the republic depend on a general action. Besides, the ruin of the enemy is sure if we remain observing and harassing him until the expedition of General Urdaneta calls their attention to the rear. Then, either they divide their forces, or they leave one of our bodies to occupy the country they abandon. We by this shall increase our forces, and theirs will be diminished by the inevitable desertion of their troops and the scantiness of their resources. Morillo expects no help from Spain, and we are not wanting in hopes from the English for assistance. All, finally, advises me the conduct of Fabius, who, with much pain, I see myself forced to follow; as, unfortunately, I am far from having the character of that great Roman general. *He was prudent, I am impetuous.*"

Here is revealed the system of war of Bolívar in this moment: to fatigue the enemy, to tire him by marches; harass his soldiers, already too much harassed by the severe climate of the plains, with their knapsacks, overcoats, shakos, heavy boots, etc., that indispensable equipment of the *European soldier*; to take their food by driving away the cattle and burning the pastures; to spike their

guns, and keep the expeditionary columns continually on the *qui vice*. And the result was very costly to Morillo, who lost a great many men; who despaired without having been able to fight the audacious republicans, as he met nothing else but guerrillas (*fieca*, as they were called), who with amazing bravery harassed him on all sides.

It was about this time that the Spanish chief approached the left bank of the Arauca, to the positions where the Liberator was encamped on the right bank, and the occasion when General Paez, followed by 150 horsemen, crossed the river and advanced in three small columns upon the enemy.

The manœuvre could not have been more perilous. Morillo, without loss of time, moved his forces, disposing them as if for a drawn battle. The crossing of the Arauca by Paez, he held as a sign that the rest of the forces of Bolivar would come to engage in a general combat; it never entering his mind that 150 men would defy an army of 6,000. Seeing afterwards that Paez was retreating, leaving the ford of the river in the rear (the Arauca is not fordable in all parts), he believed him irremediably lost, and then launched against him all his cavalry, that is to say, about 1,000 men, and amongst them 300 riflemen, already impatient to chastise so much daring. Full of confidence, Morillo recommended the victory, and said to his officers, on marching away, "It is necessary to cut these rebels into pieces, so that they may be punished." Paez meanwhile continued his retreat without the least disorder. It was strategy on his part to attack them when the cavalry should be distant from the infantry. In effect, as soon as he saw the Spanish horsemen at a distance, he turned on his heels and charged them, dividing his small force into seven groups; and without giving the royalists time to form and resist, he broke them at the first impetus, causing them great loss. They caused the riflemen to dismount; and it was to their evil, because Paez fell upon those who were dismounting with as much energy as on the riders, and lancing them, he drove them back and disbanded the Spanish army, who in disorder awaited night to evade their ruin.

A glorious page in the military life of Paez is that of the action of *Quisnoa del Medio*! The Spaniards lost in that terrible attack more than twice the number of those who defied them. The chiefs were amazed; the troops full of fear and wonder. Never was there seen a more unequal combat, nor was any more glorious for the arms of the republic, because Morillo retreated precipitately to Achaguas, raving at what had happened to him at the Arauca, and acknowledging there to himself that the valor of the "laneros" was imponderable, and that it was very difficult to resist their impulse.

On the following day the Liberator issued a decree conceding the *Cross of Liberator* to all the chiefs, officers, sergeants, corporals and soldiers who fought in that glorious action of war (8d of April). All were well deserving; all had shown a really heroic valor. That prowess, the most extraordinary which can be related by the military history of nations, was executed with a *deliberate purpose*, "attacking the forces of Morillo in front, who had not sufficient, as said Bolivar, with artillery, infantry and cavalry, to defend himself from the 150 heroes who accompanied the intrepid Paez."

The Liberator not only officially celebrated this act of extraordinary valor, but he also wrote confidentially to a friend, and said: "Day before yesterday General Paez had gained an admirable blow on Morillo, and which could have been completely decisive if night had not hid him from our lancers. We only thought of making known to him the superiority of our cavalry; and on account of this.

we did not take advantage of the brilliant result, because we were not prepared for it. We drove back the whole army, when we had only thought of fighting a part of the cavalry. One hundred and fifty braves, led by General Paez, could not alone destroy an entire army, the Arauca being between our troops."

The rains were beginning already to inundate the pastures of the Apure, and causing the inaction to be painful on those spots. Bolivar thought of moving his forces against Barinas, taking advantage of the difficulties of Morillo, to take quiet possession of the western portion of Caracaa. The overflowing of the rivers and the swamps, which were found in those relatively low territories, did not allow military manœuvres; but nothing obstructed the best evolutions in the mountainous country. Morillo issued through his staff a bulletin (14th of May), in which he announced the conclusion of the campaign of 1819; but it was then that BOLIVAR was about to commence it, and when the expeditionary chief was crossing the Apure in direction to Calabozo, seeking better spots for the quartering of his troops, the Liberator was moving against Barinas, the divisions which he had at Rincon-Hondo, incorporating on the way by Mantecal the cavalry brigade, under the orders of Colonel Rangel, which maintained itself victorious from this town to that of Nátrias, and continuing his march towards the old and ruined town of Setenta, in the vicinity of which he intended to cross the Apure.

It seems that the horses, lean and rendered useless by the enormous marches which they had done in the winter, followed with difficulty, and Paez suggested the idea of not attacking Barinas before having fresh horses. The observation was just, and the Liberator accepted it, sending General Paez himself to Guasdualito to meet Colonel Nonato Perez, and communicate to him the order to join the army with his column, bringing besides all the serviceable horses he could find.

Bolivar had his camp at the farm of Canafistolo, at a short distance from the shore of the Apure.

Awaiting the result of the commission of Paez, the Liberator received communications from Santander, which were brought by Colonel Jacinto Lara from Casanare. By them Bolivar was informed of the true situation of the provinces of New Granada, the oppressive measures of the Viceroy Samano, and the royalist chiefs; the discontent and even the exasperation which they had produced in the minds of those peaceful inhabitants: the happy results obtained by Santander, who displayed on that occasion his moderation, his discreet zeal, his paternal authority, the treasure of his civil virtues.

The plausible news brought by Lara filled the heart of the Liberator with joy; and investigating swiftly the organized force on which Santander relied, a luminous idea, an inspiration inflamed his spirit, and caused his eyes of fire to shine with the pleasure of victory.

Did Bolivar perhaps remember his promise of Angostura: "Granadians! Venezuela with me marches to liberate you, as you with me did liberate Venezuela. The sun shall not complete its actual period without beholding raised in all your territory the altars to liberty!"

Did he calculate in an instant that it would be easy to deceive Morillo, and crossing rapidly the Granadarian Andes, free those virtuous people to whom he owed in other times love and protection?

Who knows? Great thoughts are born in the heart. The campaign of New Granada was an adventure bristling with vicissitudes and perils. To march to

Santa Fé, expel her tyrants and afterwards employ the arms, the treasures of that kingdom, to obtain the liberty of Venezuela, was a daring purpose, which offered only risks and difficulties of all classes, but which fanaticized the mind of Bolívar.

A parenthesis in the war of Venezuela! And this parenthesis was the glorious occupation of all the new kingdom of New Granada!

Gigantic idea! The import of the battles which should be delivered on the opposite side of the Andes; the occupation of that vast territory; the consummation of the Granadanian independence, and even the very circumstance of there being no possible retreat through that immensity of the range of mountains which mount to the heavens, covered with venerable forests and yawning precipices which stupefy the sight; all this tempted the genius of Bolívar.

He reflected in silence, and submitted the events to a profound examination. But he communicated nothing to any one. "I can assure you," he wrote to White, "that the delay of the expedition (Colonel English's) has caused an injury of which there is no idea, and up to now my opinion is that it would have been more useful to us not to have known anything of this English expedition, than the good its arrival can do us. All has been upset, and all has not been done as it could have been done. Finally, my dear friend, *the pretty ones do not always kiss each other*. I do not tell you what I am going to do, because it is not convenient; that it should be known, and this letter may be lost. THE RESULT SHALL SAY IT."

After having maturely reflected, he convoked a council of war, composed of the generals and officers of the army, to whom he communicated "the idea of abandoning the invasion of Barinas; of entertaining Morillo, drawing his attention from the movement, and to fall suddenly on New Granada and liberate her." Although some repeat that the idea was applauded by all, it is not so exact. Anzoategui, Ambrosio Plaza and Soublotte were among those who enthusiastically supported him. Others found it more difficult than well-conceived; more ingenious than prudent; and although, finally, the Liberator with his fiery eloquence removed all doubts and overcame all contradictions, it is undeniable that there were.

The council ended, the Liberator charging to all the most inviolable reserve and good disposition.

The army fell back to Mantecal.

On the 25th of May, the Liberator began the movement in the direction of Guasualito. At this town he left 1,000 horsemen, who, under the orders of Páez, were to operate on Barinas, and execute a movement by the mountain of San Camilo, in the direction of Cúcuta.

This operation was a feint to hide from the vigilant suspiciousness of Morillo the true plan of the republican chiefs, at the same time that interrupting the communication between Venezuela and New Granada, it did not allow Latorre to penetrate into the viceroy's district, and left Bolívar to operate at liberty.

On the 4th of June the army crossed the Arauca.

Many "hianeros" deserted on this occasion, who suspected the destination of the expedition, and did not wish to climb over the Granadanian Andes. There also retired the brave Colonel Iribarren, who was one of the council of Canafistolo, with all his squadron, and Colonel Rangel, who was sick, with his.

The pain which this separation caused Bolívar was somewhat soothed by the resolution of the noble Colonel Rook, who, at the head of the British legion,

said to the Liberator, that he would follow him *farther than Cape Horn if it was necessary.*

Bolivar joined, on the 11th, at Tama, the vanguard of Santander; on the 25th he was at Pora with 2,500 men.

The invasion of the Granadanian territory occupied by the royalists was now imminent.

In spite of the weariness of the army, which executed forced marches in the rainy season, the Liberator caused it to cross the range by the wilderness of Pisba.

On the 27th he was at Paya, and on the 5th of July at Socha, a town of the province of Tunja, the first met with on the opposite side of the Eastern Andes.

Providence had reserved to the incomparable genius of Bolivar to conquer and overcome obstacles before which any other, even Hannibal, would have been terrified. What an enterprise, from Mantecal to Tunja! The season, writes an ocular witness, was at that time of a severe winter, during which the plains were intransitable. From Apure to Pare there are to be crossed innumerable swift and many navigable rivers, deep bayous, and immense swamps! . . . The lake of "Cachicamo" must be crossed, (a lake of many leagues in diameter, which the rains form in a great basin in the vicinity of the Arauca;) more a small sea, than solid ground in the territory through which the army was to make its first marches. The troops, after the different operations that they had executed in the plains, were in a state of nakedness to the degree that it was rare to see a pair of breeches amongst the soldiers. These men, born and bred in warm climates, and dressed accordingly, were those who were to cross deserts and march in excessively cold climates. The "laneros," who had never felt the impression of a temperate climate: that child of light and heat, should pass the frozen temperature of Tunja, naked, on foot, reduced to nullity, because he could not use his horse or his lance! And in the midst of all this, who were the enemies they were going to fight? Numerous and veteran battalions, acclimated, clothed, and well-disciplined, with all the resources in their power, knowing the ground, &c. If the great generals of ancient and modern times had been consulted, their opinion on the campaign of New Granada, there would not have been one that would believe that with such elements and in such circumstances it could be undertaken. Bolivar alone could march with an army from the centre of the plains of Venezuela, provided with nothing *excepting valor and constancy*, and triumph over the nature and the oppressors of Cundinamarca.

He feared nothing.

On the 25th of May he decreed at Mantecal the liberty of the Granadanian regions; on the 4th of June, he crossed, as I have said, the Arauca; on the 23d he left the plains of Casanare, and began to ascend the mountain; on the 27th he was victorious over the enemy at Paya, and on the 5th of July he appeared in the interior provinces. His presence smoothed all inconveniences, caused obstacles to be surmounted, and inspired that confidence which infallibly precedes victory. What courage! what magnanimous constancy! That army marched without food; slept without shelter; and the troubles of a rapid movement by rugged and frightful roads had destroyed it. Bolivar had a soul of fire; fatigues cannot affect him; but the rest, did enjoy this fortitude! . . . The soldiers died from cold on those frozen and craggy summits. Many undertook to return, others fell sick and filled the hospitals. The cavalry

was much diminished, and the bodies arrived finally at Socha without a horse. The elements of life and war were abandoned, for the want of mules to cross the range, and of men to lead them.

It was in this dreadful situation that Bolivar rendered himself superior to all the great leaders of the ancient and modern world, displaying a firmness, more than can be reached by human understanding. All around him was sorrow and misery; all dejection and pain! The army seemed like a dying body; a few chiefs were the only ones fit for any service! And encamped at Socha, they were informed that the Spanish General Don José Maria Barreiro, a young man of honor, who was at the head of a mass of 5,000 warriors, at the charge of whom should expire the liberty of the country.

The irresistible influence of Bolivar was requisite to keep our troops from being paralyzed!

In three days, the Liberator mounted the cavalry and replaced the arms; he collected cannon and re-established the army. "The battles in which we are to conquer," he said, "are wanting to fill the republic with glory." He spoke to the Granadanian army with great love, animating them to the work of their emancipation: "In your midst," he said to them in a beautiful proclamation; "in your midst you have an army of friends and benefactors, and the God who protects afflicted humanity will concede victory to the redeeming arms. Do not fear those who come to shed their blood to constitute you as a free nation. The Granadanians are innocent in the eyes of the liberating army. There are no other culpable to us than the Spanish tyrants, and even these shall perish only on the battle-field."

He afterwards directed the guerrillas on the enemy; he threatened to attack them in all directions, and on the 11th of July, he presented the first battle on the heights of Gameza. The combat lasted eight hours, with a disadvantage of position on our part; but our troops fought bravely, and the enemy retreated with considerable loss.

And the Liberator allowed him no time to rally, as by a flank movement he occupied the valley of Serinza, which obliged Barreiro to abandon his positions and go to cover Tunja and Santa Fé, situating himself at Molinos de Bonza, an advantageous position for his infantry, and which besides he prepared for defence by intrenchments.

Bolivar set his camp in front and provoked the enemy in a thousand manners, although all in vain, because Barreiro remained quiet. On the 25th of July, seeing that his antagonist did not decide to come out, and fearing that this inaction was intentional to await reinforcements which should secure the victory, the Liberator ordered a movement on the left flank upon the enemy's rear-guard, with the view of attacking Barreiro in the rear, or force him to abandon the good positions he occupied. Barreiro then moved, and with such an impetus, that he forced us to combat in a notably disadvantageous position. The entire Spanish army fell upon our troops vigorously, who were crossing a marshy ravine named *Pantanos de Vargas*, surrounded by hills, which were occupied by the Spanish general, to open on the patriots an incessant and deadly fire. Fierce combat, frightful and desperate struggle, in which all fought with unspeakable effort! The victory was for a long time doubtful. The bravery of the generals and officers; the calm intrepidity of the troops; the presence of Bolivar on all sides; his voice employed in encouraging the soldiers and inspiring confidence; all this united, caused the republican arms to triumph

at Vargas. The battle lasted until night, sustained with a superhuman tenacity and rage. The Spaniards lost, between wounded and killed, more than 500 men, and left in the hands of Bolívar, victorious, prisoners, lances, muskets, ammunition, two flags of the dragoons of Granada. The brave officers, Raudon and Carvajal, distinguished themselves on that day, and the British companies covered themselves with glory on this first occasion that they fought under the eyes of the Liberator. He remained master of the province of Tunja, with the exception of the capital; Socorro and Pamplona were free, and the rest of the country in insurrection.

The Granadanian people received the liberating army with the most extraordinary enthusiasm.

The bulletin of the 6th of August was dictated by the Liberator to General Soublette, Chief of Staff, in the city of Tunja, which he had occupied by a daring manoeuvre, the garrison falling into his hands.

Here the army was reinforced; and the recruits, which for any other chief would not have been of use only after many months of instruction, were serviceable for the Liberator as soon as he enlisted them.

Gameza and Bonza had been a field of glory for Bolívar; the heights of Vargas also were, as he had dislodged the Spaniards from every position; but it was of all importance to secure these partial triumphs by a final glorious exit, and to secure them immediately, because in war there is nothing more useful than to crown some successes by others, and to recompense the fatigues of these preparatory encounters with the fruit of a decisive and memorable action.

Gameza, Bonza and Vargas announced the great battle of Boyaca.

When the enemy, under favor of the night, saved himself from a total ruin at Vargas, he retreated to Paypa, Bolívar was unable to pursue him: but on the following day he followed in his tracks, keeping him in sight. "Notwithstanding that the enemy has rallied some bodies of infantry after the battle of Pantano de Vargas," said the Liberator, "we are almost sure of victory."

This certainly was rendered more plausible by the promises made by the Governors of Socorro and Pamplona, of sending without delay men, provisions and clothing. It should be known that from Bonza the Liberator, who administered on all sides, had appointed Colonels A. Morales and Pedro Fortoul governors of those two provinces, with the pressing charge of calling to arms its inhabitants and to send reinforcements to the army. Notwithstanding, these did not arrive so opportunely, and the vanguard having marched at dawn of the 7th, as the enemy was moving, the army was placed under arms.

Barreiro, who beheld his forces diminishing, having been already defeated on three occasions, intended to form a junction with the troops of the Brigadier-General Don Juan Samano, Viceroy, who were at Santa Fé; evading an encounter with those of Bolívar. The camp of the latter was at Tunja, that is, between Barreiro and Samano, threatening one and the other, and watching an opportunity to fall upon either one. It is just to confess that his position was not entirely favorable; because at the same time he could be surrounded, being attacked in front and rear: but that singular destiny with which the immortal Bolívar came into existence did not allow these common accidents, ordinary misfortunes which do not call sympathy nor advance esteem. Barreiro and Samano did not combine any plan: and the former, at the head of 8,000 men, only wished to effect a junction.

Bolívar formed his army in the square of Tunja and awaited! Barreiro should

take the road of Samaca or that of the bridge of Boyaca. At the decision, the Liberator would resolve. It was a subject of a few minutes. Advices were repeatedly sent in. Many were posted on the heights to observe and to report. The Liberator himself, unusually anxious, and of a prodigious vivacity on important occasions, mounted and proceeded to reconnoitre the true direction of the enemy. He at last discovered it, and on the spot issued the most necessary orders to make the army fly towards the famous point, where the power which oppressed the Granadanian soil should be destroyed. "Either we force Barreiro to offer battle and we crush him to pieces," said the Liberator to Anzoátegui and the other generals who were with him, "or we prevent him from forming a junction with Samano, and the demoralization of his troops shall oblige him to surrender."

Barreiro offered battle.

He disposed of 8,000 men; Bolivar of 3,000!

Anzoátegui commanded the centre and the right wing; Santander the left wing. The force of the independents marched in line of battle. Nothing could be comparable, says the bulletin of Boyaca, to the intrepidity of Anzoátegui, to whom was reserved the honor of defeating the principal body of the enemy. To him was owing in a great part the victory. Disciple of Bolivar, his companion in misfortune, his auxiliary in war, his adorer in all parts and on all occasions, as brave in intelligence as in heart, he knew things in their place, and knew how to attain them. He behaved heroically at Boyaca, distinguishing his name in such a famous action, which shall last for centuries. The enemy kept up a withering fire; but Anzoátegui and his troops, by daring manœuvres, and executed with the severest discipline, surrounded all the enemy's bodies. The company of mounted grenadiers (all Spaniards) was the first to fly, and from that moment all the efforts of General Barreiro to rally his troops were fruitless. He himself lost his position, and even the facility of escaping, because a rifleman, Pedro Martinez, took him prisoner on the battle-field. All the hostile army fell into the hands of Bolivar. There were made prisoners, besides Barreiro and his second, Colonel Jimenez; almost all the commandants and majors of the bodies; 1,600 soldiers and his horses, armaments, artillery, ammunition, lances, military treasure, etc., fell into our hands.

Santander, who on his side had directed the movements with great skill and firmness, marched in pursuit of some of the dispersed! Anzoátegui remained during the night on the field of his glory.

The advantages of the battle of Boyaca are incalculable. Never had the Colombian troops triumphed more decisively, and on few occasions had they fought against such well-disciplined and well-commanded soldiers.

Bolivar marched to Bogota.

On his arrival at the bridge of Comun, he received news that the Viceroy, the Supreme Court, the Guard of Honor, the regiment of riflemen of Aragon, and all the civil and military employees, had abandoned the capital, leaving it in a frightful anarchy. The Liberator hastened his march, and entered on that same day (10th of August), at about 5 o'clock in the evening, in Bogota. Still, when he marched through the streets of the capital with Soublotte, Raimundo Fritze, Justo Briceño, and others who accompanied him, in some parts the king was cheered, and in others the independence. The patriots could scarcely believe what they beheld, and called Bolivar their guardian angel and Liberator! All shed tears and embraced each other! What a tender scene! above all for those who had lost on the scaffold a father, a husband, a son or a brother!

The Liberator was now with them seventy-five days after his march from the town of Mantecal, province of Barinas. Bolivar entered the capital of the new kingdom, having overcome unspeakable labors and difficulties, and destroyed an army three times greater than his own.

The immense territory which lies between Mantecal and Santa Fé can scarcely be walked over in winter by a man from the 25th of May to the 10th of August. The numerous army which crossed it in equal time, fighting, equipping, and making short rests, could only be moved by an extraordinary activity by BOLIVAR. It is sufficient to say that when the tyrants of Bogota imagined our army marching to Pore, it was already entering Tunja, having defeated an inimical body.

When Morillo in Venezuela relied on it that our army should be detained on the borders of the rivers and *there probably all should remain*, the said Barreiro was prisoner, and Samano fleeing, frightened with a consternation which does him little honor.

Bolivar, present in all the points of the battle, gave the most precise orders to bring forth the bravery of the troops, the strength of the chiefs, and to end with brilliancy the work he had undertaken. He triumphed at Boyaca, and he would have wished to multiply the moment to take advantage from the victory. From the battle-field two columns set out to the north, to the Magdalena, to Antioqua, Choco and Popsyan, and in a few days liberty had reassumed her reign over those beautiful provinces.

Boyaca is the brilliant crown of this campaign of seventy-five days, immortal in the annals of our history. There Bolivar proved, more than in any other action, his military virtues, his science of war, his forethought, his genius. There he could write as Cæsar, *veni, vidi, vici*, but he expressed himself better, because speaking to the Granadans from the capital of Santa Fé, he said: "Granadans! From the fields of Venezuela the cry of your affliction penetrated my ears, and I have flown for the third time with the liberating army to serve you. Victory, marching before our flag, has been faithful to us in your country, and twice has your capital beheld us victorious. In this, as on other occasions, I have not come in search of power or glory. My ambition has been to liberate you from the horrible tortures which your enemies forced you to suffer, and to restitute you in your rights, so that you may institute a government of your election. Granadans! Eight of your provinces breathe freedom. Preserve untouched this sacred good with your virtues, with your patriotism and valor."

Rendering an account to the government of Venezuela of the happy termination of his undertaking, he communicated to the Vice-President of the Republic, and said to him:

"HEADQUARTERS OF SANTA FÉ, August 14, 1819.

"*Simon Bolivar, President of the Republic, Captain-General of the Armies of Venezuela and New Granada, etc.*

"TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC: From the moment that I conceived the project of advancing my marches to the interior of this kingdom, I knew that an alarming fear should put in action all the resources of the Spanish authorities. In effect, this idea, based on the experience of my observations, was more confirmed when in the States which were under the power of the Viceroy, Don Juan Samano, I found that a superior force, well

organized and disciplined, was the wall against which it was intended that the brave liberating army should perish.

"I calculated, notwithstanding, that the abundance of evils with which these people had been and still were afflicted, should have prepared their minds to embrace with pleasure their heroic defenders. And in truth, scarcely had I given the first steps on this side of the mountains which divide the plains from the hilly country, bounding the province of Casanare, when I heard resound before me the blessings of some men who awaited my arms with all the enthusiasm of liberty, as a remedy to the calamities and misfortunes which had carried them to the last degree of exasperation.

"An experienced chief, at the head of an army of four or five thousand men, is the first thing which presents itself to me on the battle-field. The General Don José Maria Barreiro, charged with its direction, drains all his efforts; he moves all the springs of valor, and he has presented to me actions, which were wanting to the republic to cover it with glory."

"The discipline of his troops, his fine organization, the advantageous positions he occupied, and the abundance of resources he had opportunely proportioned for himself, caused me to believe that this enterprise was only proper to the intrepidity and bravery of the republican arms.

"The battle of Boyaca, the most complete victory which I have just obtained, has decided the fate of these inhabitants; and after having destroyed even in its elements the army of the King, I have flown to this capital, through the midst of the multitude of men, who emulously poured on us expressions of the most tender gratitude, and throwing themselves amidst the dispersed bodies of the enemy, they disregarded their own defenceless state, to co-operate actively to the extermination of these, taking their arms and making a great number of prisoners. The details of this triumph Y. E. will find consigned in the printed copies which I remit inclosed."

"My sensibility was not a little touched at my arrival at this capital of New Granada, where there can still be seen signs of the depredations and cruelty of the proselytes of the Peninsula."

"The Viceroy Samano along with all the employees, the greater part of the Spaniards, and the rest of the forces which remained, left precipitately, fugitive, at the first news they had of the last victory, and before my arrival at this capital, I caused some divisions to march to the south and west of it, which are the routes that they have taken, with the founded hopes of capturing them, and a numerous emigration."

"In spite the universal devastation which this kingdom has suffered, the republic can rely on *one million of dollars in specie*, besides the large sums which *the property of the enemy and discontented fugitives shall produce*.

"I labor actively in the organization of the interior economy, and the happy dispositions of these people, where there is scarcely to be found an enemy, cause me to foresee that the power of the tyrants will be reduced to nothing."

"Receive, Y. E., and all the republic, my sincere felicitations and the candid votes of the *illustrious Granadanian people*, who only aspire to a common happiness with the Venezuelan; deigning equally to present the victories of the arms of my command to the Supreme Congress, as a tribute of my duty.

"God keep Y. E. many years.

BOLIVAR."

Torrente finds the origin of the victories of Bolivar in Boyaca; victories

which elevated him to the surface of the glory of the most distinguished warriors of the world, not in valor (of course this was undoubted); nor in the rapidity of his movements, nor in the skill of his plan of attack, nor in the constancy with which he overcame all the obstacles of nature. This was of no value in the learned and impartial appreciation of that severe historian; but the discontent of the people, fomented by the suppression of the *montalvino*, thus called, for having been created by the Viceroy Montalvo. "It was then on account of this," he says, "the most favorable moment that the Caraqueñian leader (the seditious Bolivar) should derive the advantages proper of that critical situation."

It ought to excite shame to have to write history in such a manner!

When the victories of the antagonist can be disowned they are absolutely denied; when they are distinguished, glorious and decisive, they are attributed . . . to any accident; for example, to the *Montalvino* money! Has any one seen, since war began in the world, the miracles of valor, the most splendid victories explained, by the most trifling and incoherent causes? It could only have occurred to the *historian* Torrente to give us the origin of the immortal achievements of Bolivar in such extravagant sources, in foreign elements, absurd and valueless, in things like the *Montalvino* money.

What nonsense!

And thus does he pretend to be an historian!

Less distant from the possible order of things (although in our case far from the path of truth) is that which General Barreiro wrote to the Viceroy Samano, giving him an account of the battle of Vargas, as he said: "I have remarked that Bolivar, little satisfied of the good-will of his troops, always selects positions without outlet, so that desperation may produce the effects of bravery." This was error, but not nonsense. He was deceived or he deceived the viceroy upon the effect of those who obeyed Bolivar, and accompanied him through so many sufferings and miseries, from Venezuela; but he at least confessed that our soldiers fought like desperadoes, and that our positions had been disadvantageous, which doubles, undoubtedly, and gives more lustre to the victory.

Bolivar, conqueror, did not lose an instant in securing the benefits of the victory obtained. He was not carried away by glory, he was not perturbed by joy; nor was he distracted from his deep thoughts by so many and rich trophies, but he immediately sent columns to Popsyan to oppose Latorre; he levied forces as if by enchantment, and marched them to Pamplona, where Soublotte commanded a brilliant division; he organized, armed, disciplined and clothed new battalions which he had recruited; he sent to Guayana large sums of money, to alleviate the necessities of the patriots, who were there struggling for independence; and in the midst of all this he attended to the organization of the civil government, and the administration of the liberated country; he abolished the onerous taxes; he encouraged mining industry; he canceled the hateful law of confiscation; he suppressed useless offices, and he worked by his moderation, his benevolence, and his spirit of uprightness, the chain for the compliance of all the wills. The same who in the severest conflicts, on crossing the Andes, aided with his own hands to carry the artillery, encouraging the soldier, and inspiring in him ideas of glory; the fanaticism of liberty, the enthusiasm of great acts; the same one who conquered at Banza and Vargas with indomitable courage, counterbalancing the disadvantages of number and position with the advantage of skill and the efforts of success, is

now also the one who governs; the one who regulates; the one who raises the minds from the defection in which they were plunged, by wise and proper measures; the one who applies himself to the peaceful arts with veneration to justice, with religious respect to truth, with zeal for the common weal, with love to virtue; crowning finally his great work with talents and sublime perfections, ornaments of his fertile mind, which sprung forth for the applause and admiration of all, and remarkably for the happiness of the people.

The decree on public instruction is famous amongst all, whose considerations reveal the intimate convictions of the Liberator on the necessity of the diffusion of healthful knowledge in the republic, for its preservation and progress: "as education and public instruction are the safest principle of general happiness, and the most solid foundation of the liberty of the people; and considering that in New Granada there exists a multitude of unfortunate children, who, by the immolation of their virtuous fathers on the altars of the country by Spanish cruelty, have no other asylum nor hope for their subsistence and education than the republic" "I decree," &c.

So much was the good received by the people of Cundinamarca from the Liberator, during the few days of his residence at Santa Fé, that the civil government, and the tribunals of justice, municipality, communities, priests, and the most distinguished persons, joined in a great assembly, solemnly declared, as a vote emanating from the most just gratitude, that the President and Commander-in-chief of the armies of the republic, Simon Bolivar, was the *Liberator of New Granada*; they decreed him a triumphal entry, and a crown of laurels, with other honors, all due to his eminent services.*

* The assembly declared those who composed said armies "Liberators of New Granada," conceded them a cross of honor called from Boyaca; it decreed to General Bolivar a solemn triumph and a crown of laurels, which should be presented to him in the name of the city by a commission of young ladies. It also decreed that there should be placed under the canopy of the capital house a painting, emblematic of *Liberty*, sustained by the arm of Bolivar, and on its sides the images of Generals Anzoategui, Santander and Soublotte; that of a pillar should be raised at the entry of San Victorino, on whose upper part should be inscribed the name of the Liberator, and immediately following, those of all the braves who triumphed at Boyaca; finally that the 7th of August of each year should be celebrated as the anniversary of that famous victory.

The triumph was realised on the 8th of September, Bolivar entering by the Street of Nieves, from the convent of San Diego, to the cathedral under triumphal arches, and through the midst of a great concourse who manifested the greatest joy and the most profound gratitude to the illustrious warrior who had liberated them. The Generals Anzoategui and Santander accompanied the Liberator. After the termination of the triumphal procession, the three generals were in a pavilion erected on the great square, where a young lady, whose father had been sacrificed by the Spaniards, placed on the head of Bolivar a crown of laurels. At the same time she addressed him expressions dictated by the enthusiasm of gratitude; these caused the tears of joy to flow from the eyes of many of the spectators, on seeing themselves breathing the sweet air of liberty. Another young lady placed on the breast of the conqueror the cross of Boyaca, and two others did the same with Generals Anzoategui and Santander, General Soublotte not receiving the cross, being absent. That day undoubtedly was as honorable as it was pleasing to Bolivar and his illustrious companions-in-arms. (See Restrepo, Hist. of Colombia.)

LIFE OF BOLIVAR.

The Liberator also established a provisional government for the liberated granadanian provinces, charging the General Francisco de Paula Santander the superior command, with the title of "Vice-President of New Granada;" he proposed an exchange of prisoners to the Viceroy Samano "to free General Barreiro and all his officers and soldiers," and providing largely for the defence of the provinces which he had just liberated, he marched, on the 20th of September, for the army of the North, carrying with him considerable forces. He visited Tunja, Socorro and Pamplona. His march was triumphal. There was no testimony of gratitude, of love and of confidence, which the Granadanian people did not lavish on him. "Bolivar," writes a contemporary writer; "Bolivar enjoyed at that epoch the glory, purest to a sensible heart: *that of seeing himself the object of the blessings of so many thousands of men whom he had drawn from the most ferocious slavery.*"

Before leaving the pen, let my readers allow me to make to them a brief observation.

It was not hidden to Machiavelli and Montesquieu that there have been princes able to deliver a battle; but in all times, they say, few have been those who have known to carry on a campaign, to draw advantage from Fortune and have constancy to await her. If these writers had written in our days, they would have undoubtedly paid a tribute to justice, including Bolivar with these few.

Nothing makes more striking the superiority of our hero than the comparison of the campaign which gave Morillo the dominion of New Granada, with that by which he restituted those people in their rights.

Much has the activity of General Morillo been boasted of, which his flatterers named *prodigious*, and which was no more than a common activity. The republic had scarcely any forces in 1816, when an irresistible mass of disciplined troops, inured to war and well provided withal, attacked it in five directions.

The republic succumbed.

After the surrender of Cartagena, some ordinary events of war followed which led the Spanish General to the palace of Santa Fé.

He remained there during six months.

To the long time of his peaceful domination was owing the creation of large forces and the election of measures to secure the conquest.

All this enters in the common sphere; that is, men can do it, even the most vulgar.

BOLIVAR with only one army in one direction, struggling with all imaginable difficulties, fighting against nature and at the same time against strong and innumerable enemies, in forty days liberated as many provinces as Morillo subjugated in 1816.

The last shot was fired on the bridge of Boyaca, and all the Spanish troops disseminated from Cucuta to Popayan were taken prisoners or disappeared. The defence of New Granada was undertaken at the same time that numerous bodies were marching against Venezuela, and in forty days during which the Liberator remained at Santa Fé, he did more than Morillo would have done in forty years.

The general who without resources and in stupendous contradictions caused Venezuela to resurrect; he who did not despair in adversity; the one who labored with superhuman perseverance to inscribe on the list of nations the greater part of the second-half of the American continent; the active, indefatigable man, the column of liberty, the friend of talent, distinguisher of merit, BOLIVAR was the

instrument which Providence used in its admirable ends to establish amongst us, as he himself said, *the empire of reason and nature*.

Morillo entered Santa Fé and drowned it in blood. It could be said that his heart required the frightful scene of the scaffold, and he was prodigal with it to recreate himself. BOLIVAR did nothing else but heal the wounds of the war and shed on all sides the balsam of consolation. "I assisted throughout the campaign of New Granada," writes a Granadanian who was on the staff of the Liberator; "I have been in all the battles; I have seen many Spanish officers and soldiers taken prisoners; and never have I heard a sentence of death pass the lips of the Liberator. Very wicked and much perverted must be the man who by his orders is executed.*"

"Sufficiently public were the deaths which the Spaniards ordered of peaceful and distinguished persons; innumerable widows and orphans presented themselves to our eyes, exciting our vengeance by their presence and tears; the limbs of our countrymen hung on posts on the public roads cried for the death of their executioners; the epistolary correspondence which only breathed blood and horrors, was the process against its criminal authors. Nothing changed the heart of BOLIVAR. In vain did the army claim the execution of the officers taken prisoners; in vain was he persuaded of the justice and evident utility of retaliation. The Liberator ordered that all should be treated with decorum; and as soon as there was an opportunity he proposed an exchange."

"And what did not BOLIVAR do at his entry in Santa Fé? He opened his arms and received in them all classes of persons; he did not inquire into the former behavior of any one; he found out those who emigrated to give them a safe passport without distinction. What more could humanity expect! If this proceeding is not worthy of praise and admiration, may the history of the generosity of Titus be blotted out.

"The victory of Boyaca put us in possession of an immense territory; but the beneficial conduct of Bolivar, victorious, gave the possession of many hearts.†"

* Amongst the prisoners taken at Boyaca, the Liberator saw one whose physiognomy was not unknown to him. He fixed it an instant, and remembered in effect that it was that same Fernandez Vinoni, who, in 1813, had made the revolution in the fort of Puerto Cabello. On the spot he ordered him to be hung. Rare chance, and evident proof of the best memory!

† See pamphlet published at Bogota in 1827, entitled, "General Bolivar in the Campaign of 1819;" narration written by a Granadanian.