

CHAPTER III.

1807 TO 1809.

IMMEDIATE CAUSES OF THE REVOLUTION — POSITION OF SPAIN — FRENCH AND ENGLISH AGENTS —
MOVEMENT OF 15TH JULY IN FAVOR OF FERDINAND VII. — HONORABLE CONDUCT OF THE
AMERICANS — MEETINGS TO CONSTITUTE THE ASSEMBLY AT CARACAS — VIRTUES AND MERITS
OF THE REVOLUTIONISTS — UNJUST DECREES FROM CENTRAL ASSEMBLY OF SPAIN — ARRIVAL
OF CAPTAIN GENERAL EMPARÁN — HIS RULE.

AS yet we have only demonstrated the general and remote causes of the independence of the second half of the New World: injustice and oppression on one hand, and on the other the French Revolution—the great stimulant of liberty—the example for the future. Refulgent beacon raised in the center of the immensity of ages and generations to illumine to the people the path of their rights! It would not be daring too much to add that the example set by the United States of North America taught the colonists to know, that there existed a national dignity; and that a people who wish to be free can finally be so.

We will know now another and more particular and nearer motive in the changes suffered by the throne of Spain, and the final crash of that of the Bourbons; disturbances and amazement that collected in the year 1806.

About the middle of the next year the battle of Friedland took place (June 14, 1807) in the State of the eastern portion of Prussia, between Napoleon and the allied sovereigns of Russia and Prussia. This was a brilliant success for the French; and Napoleon chased his august enemies to the Hermitage which overlooks the plains of Tilsitt.

The Eagle perceived the Niemen and paused. The glory of Napoleon and French power had then arrived to their highest point, political and military, a height to which no conqueror or any nation had ever arrived.

The defeat at Friedland brought on the treaty of peace of Tilsitt. Two Emperors then disputed between them the dominion of Europe; and the conqueror of Austerlitz, Jena and Friedland had already taken possession of the geographical charts so as to divide the land.

This grand event took its name from the Niemen.

A secret paragraph to the treaty bound Russia to accept the continental blockade system, and the Czar received the commission of also enforcing it in the courts of Copenhagen and Stockholm.

The treaty was signed on the 7th of June, 1807. On his return to Paris, Napoleon sent to the Prince Regent of Portugal to accept the continental blockade and enforce it on his shores; and if he should deny, Portugal would be declared an enemy. Such a daring threat was strengthened by the presence at

Bayonne of General Junot, with 38,000 men, ready to march through Spain, which pass was negotiated at the treaty of Fontainebleau. Other bodies of troops destined, as it was said, to occupy Portugal and attack Gibraltar, took their quarters at Pamplona, at Monjui, at San Sebastian, at Figueras, at Barcelona and at other cities and fortresses of the Peninsula. The Grand Duke of Berg was the General commanding this invasion of a friendly territory; at the same time that the Marquis de la Romana, at the head of 15,000 Spanish veterans, proceeded to Hamburg and Denmark to further the interests of Napoleon.

Junot arrived with his army at Abrante (twenty leagues from Lisbon) on the 26th of November; and the Monitor announced "*that the house of Braganca had ceased to reign*." On that same day the Prince Regent and his family had embarked for Brazil, escorted by the English fleet.

What was then the state of Spain? Very strange, certainly. For more than a century had France influenced her, or better said, ruled her. The dynasty under Louis XIV., philosophical ideas under Charles III., revolutionary ones under Charles IV., had extended their rule to this side of the Pyrenees. And at present, what destinies were in store for her? Charles IV. even feared that Bonaparte would treacherously disenthroned him. His position was extremely painful. The French armies had advanced to the very heart of Spain; and only two ways were left to the Court at Madrid in this difficult emergency: either to surrender themselves to Napoleon, and lose their possessions in America, where the British would wreak their vengeance, or to ally herself with England, and leave Spain in the hands of the French, already occupied by their troops. The indecision consequent on matters of such importance did, however, but contribute towards adding more weight to the yoke of the imperial exigencies.

Meanwhile an accident precipitated the solution of this puzzle, which became more and more complicated. The disagreement of the reigning family provoked the intervention of Bonaparte.

Charles IV. had a son (the Prince of Asturias) who had unfortunately been brought up bearing hatred against his mother and Don Manuel Godoy, Prince of LaPaz, Minister, and a favorite of the King. With the desire of winning the good wishes of the Emperor, Ferdinand secretly commenced preparing communications with Mr. Beauharnais, the French Ambassador, and even pretended to the hand of one of the Emperor's nieces, Miss Tascher, who was afterwards Duchess of Arenberg. The partisans of the prince, easily led to believe in the support of Napoleon, conspired against Charles IV. The King imprisoned his son—accusing him of plotting against his father's life. The documents were searched, and his negotiations with the Minister of the Emperor were discovered. Charles brought his complaint to Napoleon against his son, as he would have done before a judge or with a King to whom he was a vassal. Napoleon advised him to evade all possible scandal. Fernando confessed his guilt and asked pardon. A decree from his father conceded it in regard to the supplications of his mother, and on account of his repentance. This drama wounded deeply the conceit of the Spaniards, completely surprising them.

Meanwhile the French troops were continually pouring into the Peninsula; their designs being altogether unknown. Some suspected the Emperor of taking the part of the father; others thought he was inclined for the misfortunes of the son; many for the success of the minister; very few for the grievances and sufferings of the nation. In this expectation, all prostrated themselves at

his feet. Amongst the people hope was predominant; at the Court, fear. Napoleon allowed to fall, as if accidentally, the idea of going himself to Madrid; and the announcement of this was sufficient alone to keep the soul, heart and senses of fourteen million of men in suspense.

On the other side, England, always alert, and successfully active, did not slumber, but poured into Spain, in handfulls, her gold and influence. Already symptoms of public fermentation were felt, which the English did not allow to be appeased, and the movement was universal when the news circulated of the occupation by the French columns, by unfair means, and without motive or reason, of the strongholds of Cataluna, Navarra and Viscaya.

About the same time it was announced that the Grand Duke of Berg was advancing from Burgos upon Madrid.

The perfidy of Bonaparte was now unveiled. The nation shook off its fatal slumber, and saw it was betrayed without understanding how or by whom. Don Eugenio Izquierdo, Councillor of State, agent of the Prince of LaPaz, arrived from the Tuilerie, and announced that Napoleon exacted the cession of all the provinces north of the river Elbe so as to annex them immediately to France; that this cession should be replaced by that of Portugal; and that for the rest, the house of Bourbon should cease to reign in Europe, Mexico being their only refuge. From that very moment the only thought of that weak and imbecile government was of fleeing to Mexico!

The preparations were being made in haste, but secretly. The Court was at Aranjuez. But, either it was that this design was foreseen or betrayed, it is certain that the secret of the intended flight was divulged. The population of Madrid and Aranjuez congregated in a tumult. Always comparing their hatred in accordance with their miseries, and their hopes with their desires, they imputed to Godoy all their sufferings, and they demanded, with loud cries, his head. The King issued a proclamation, declaring as false the rumors of the voyage to Mexico; but the mob only replied in cries of "Death to the favorite!" attributing then to him the cause of the entrance of French troops in Spain. Murat was approaching Madrid.

The name of Ferdinand went from mouth to mouth, and was pronounced affectionately, being considered as a victim of Godoy.

The Body Guards united themselves with the confused populace, to seize the Minister and sacrifice him to their vengeance. The insurrection was universal. The King alarmed, abdicated, on Ferdinand promising to save the life of Godoy. . . . This abdication, published at Aranjuez (19th March, 1808), produced a magical effect. Ferdinand was proclaimed King, and made his triumphal entry into Madrid the 24th.

This abdication, signed as it was, surrounded by a popular tumult and in the midst of the bayonets of the soldiers, should be followed by fatal consequences. No one thought it was free and voluntary. In effect, the old King sent to Napoleon, protestations against his abdication;* and when the arbitrator of Europe held in hands this document of Charles IV., he was receiving petitions from Godoy and explanations and obediences from Ferdinand.

* "I have been forced to renounce my crown, when the clanging of arms and clamors of a mutinied Guard manifested to me the necessity of choosing between life and death, and that my death would be followed by that of the Queen."—*Letter of Charles IV. to the Emperor Napoleon, the 21st May, 1808.*

Spain, in the midst of her rejoicings, awaited with anxiety a word from the Emperor! Which of the kings should reign? To whom should the master of Europe give the sceptre?

Savary, Duke of Rovigo, was at that moment in Madrid, where he had been sent with the mission of persuading Charles IV. and his family to proceed to Bayonne. Charles set out without delay to throw himself into the arms of Napoleon. On his side, Ferdinand, who was only addressed by the title "Highness," by him, went also, in compliance with the invitation which the Emperor had also made him. How unwary and unguarded was the condescendence of Ferdinand, may be judged by the words uttered by Napoleon when Savary announced that he should come to Bayonne: "How! he comes! It is impossible!"

At Bayonne, what scenes, what degradations! To abbreviate:

Ferdinand, worthy successor to the weakness of Charles IV., renounced his rights to his father.

Charles IV. renounced his own and those of his descendants to Napoleon and to the dynasty he should think proper to elect.

Napoleon transferred what he had just received from the old King to his brother Joseph Bonaparte.....!

Thus terminated that process of usurpation and vengeance between the Kings of Spain, father and son. The cession of Charles IV. to Napoleon was effectuated by the treaty of Bayonne, the 5th May, 1808, in which the Spanish nation was not counted upon at all, as if it did not exist. Meanwhile the Duke of Berg was governing Madrid in the name of Napoleon I., King of Spain and the Indies. France was mortified, Europe indignant, and Spain roared with fury.

The fire of insurrection coursed through the whole of the Iberian monarchy. War was imminent and should be at once religious and popular.

The concessions and stipulations of Bayonne coincide with the bloody scenes of the 3d May at Madrid, where Murat, a man of worth, and elevated in military glory, forgetting the dictates of humanity, caused the people to be treacherously slaughtered. The cannon vomited death on all sides, to armed enemies and unarmed, weak, aged, and even childhood, without distinction.

The provinces of Spain, and more so the Southern parts, struck the tocsin for a repetition of the Sicilian vespers, against the French and the usurping King; they announced themselves restored to their primitive sovereignty, and confided the exercises of their inalterable rights to *Juntas provinciales*. These were united by an alliance offensive and defensive with England, and announced to Europe Ferdinand VII. as King of Spain, and declared national war to France.

The necessities of an army and an administration made requisite the forming of a general government, of a hand who should wield the executive power, and from thence we have the origin of the celebrated Junta Central, installed at Aranjuez 25 September, 1808.....

Let us now see the connection of these affairs with ours, and find out in what manner they influenced the revolution for American Independence.

Early on the morning of the 15th July, the same year, there appeared at La Guayra the French sloop of war "Le Serpent," proceeding from Cayenne, bringing despatches from Bayonne, and two commissioners from the government of Joseph on board. These officers were carriers of documents which painted in

colors proper to seduce the Americans, the abjurements of the Kings of Spain, and of a dispatch from the Council of India, ordering them to recognize the new dynasty and to receive as Viceroy the brother-in-law of Napoleon, the Duke of Berg. A few hours afterwards, the English frigate "La Acosta," Captain Beaver, arrived, sent from Barbadoes by Admiral Sir A. Cochrane, with the object to announce to the authorities of Venezuela the incidents of Bayonne, the formation of the Junta, and the resistance which was being prepared in Spain.

The first Spanish authorities agreed in complying with the orders brought by the French commissioners; but hardly was the object of the envoys known in Caracas, when the people provoked, presented themselves to the Corporation and forced them to come out with the royal standard and proclaim the monarch. "A factious youth," as Diaz writes (the Salias, Pelgronca, Montillas, Bajos, Bolivares, Ribas), "whose ideas were contrary to monarchy, came out tumultuously, representing a character opposed to their projects and aspirations. They ignored as yet the art of rebelling, and wished to learn it practically." The writer of Monteverde and Boves confounds their sentiments and beliefs. These mad and turbulent young men, as it is said, loved the Republic, it is true, but they were incapable of villainies and meanness. In this memorable epoch to which I refer, the American people gave proofs of nobleness which the Spanish princes and nobles could have envied them. After the abdications at Bayonne, and when Ferdinand VII. had already been sent prisoner to Valençay, he wrote to Napoleon, under date 23d June: "Myself, brother and uncle join in offering your I. M. our most sincere felicitations for the satisfaction you must feel in having placed your brother on the throne of Spain, it having always been the object of our desires to contribute to the happiness of the generous nation who inhabit that great kingdom; and we could not have seen with more pleasure any other monarch than this one, so worthy and proper by his virtue to secure it. The wish that you honor us with your friendship, has moved us to write this letter, which I take the liberty of remitting to your I. M., supplicating that, after its perusal, you deem it worthy of sending to his Catholic Majesty." What villainies!

On his part, Charles IV. wrote to Napoleon from Marseilles (February 7, 1809): "I cannot do less than offer your Imperial and Royal Majesty my congratulations upon the fortunate results of the last campaign in Spain." How base!

Marquis Caballero, Minister and Counsellor to Ferdinand, forwarded a representation to Napoleon, asking of him for King of Spain the eldest of the august brothers of the new Cæsar. The Corporation of Madrid did the same; and Louis de Bourbon, Cardinal-Archbishop of Toledo, wrote to the Emperor, saying that "the cession of the crown imposed on him the flattering duty of placing at the feet of his Imperial Majesty the homage of his respect and fidelity." How degraded!

Napoleon carried on a most cruel war against Spain; at times he would obtain small triumphs, and Ferdinand would always hasten to felicitate him. "The pleasure (he wrote on one occasion) which it affords me, on perusing in the public papers the victories with which Providence crowns the august brow of your Imperial Majesty, and the deep interest which my brother, my uncle and myself partake in the satisfaction of your Imperial and Royal Majesty, stimulate us to felicitate you with the respect, love, sincerity and the gratitude

by which we live under the protection of your Imperial Majesty” * What meanness!

All the Viceroys and Captain-Generals sent to the New World who were Spaniards, all, with the exception of the one of Mexico, disposed themselves to swear obedience to the king of the new dynasty, whilst the American people, full of generosity, answered the seducing promises of Murat and Joseph Bonaparte by burning their proclamations and cheering for the prisoner of Valenciay. Exalted contrast, in which all the honor is due to us!

Notwithstanding all this, let no one believe that the ideas of independence had disappeared in the midst of these generous movements. No; the daughter of liberty although separated from the mother, but would not consent to see a daring and fortunate soldier stain her decorum. There was honor in the resistance of America; there was greatness; we did not desire to learn sedition practically, as this study does not require practice, and more so being attached to the destroyed authority, we manifested indignation for the perfidy, discontent and holy anger, for the disloyal conduct of the French Emperor.

The popular movement of Caracas was very disagreeable to the Spanish authorities who satisfied the agents of Napoleon, persuading them that the oath they took for Ferdinand was forced and contrary to their ideas. The people, in their indignation, demanded the imprisonment of the French emissaries; but Don Juan Casas gave them an escort, led by his own son, Don José Ignacio, officer of the militia, and had them conducted to La Guayra without the knowledge of any one. A letter, written by Captain Beaver to Sir Alexander Cochrane, contains a faithful relation of what transpired at Caracas, the 15th July, 1808, besides various other incidents worthy of being remembered, as it depicts clearly the political position:

“Her Majesty’s Ship ‘Acasta,’ La Guayra, 19th July, 1808.

“SIR,—Events of singular importance occurring at present in the province of Venezuela, I have thought it necessary to despatch to you, without loss of time, the late French corvette, ‘Le Serpent,’ in order that you might, as early as possible, be made acquainted with those that have already occurred, as well as to be able to form some opinion of those which will probably follow. The latter port (La Guayra) I made in the morning of the 15th, and while standing in for the shore, with the cartel flag flying, I observed a brig under French colors just coming to an anchor. She had arrived the preceding night from Cayenne with despatches from Bayonne, and had anchored about two miles below the town, to which she was now removing. I was never nearer than five miles to her, and could not have thrown a shot over her before she was close under the Spanish batteries, and therefore I attempted not to chase; but I claimed her of the Spanish Government, as you will perceive by my letter, No. I. Just before I set out for the Caracas, and presented your despatches, the captain of the French brig returned exceedingly displeased (I was told), having been publicly insulted in that city. About three o’clock I arrived at the Caracas, and presented your despatches to the Captain-General, who received me very coldly, or rather uncivilly, observing that that hour was very inconvenient to him and to me; and that, as I had not dined, I had better go

* This letter is dated the 6th August, 1809, and is to be found in the *Monitor* of the 6th February, 1810.

and get some dinner, and return to him in a couple of hours. On entering the city, I had observed a great effervescence among the people, like something which either precedes or follows a popular commotion; and as I entered the large inn of the city, I was surrounded by inhabitants of almost all classes.

"I have learned that the French captain, who had arrived yesterday, had brought intelligence of everything which had taken place in Spain in favor of France; that he had announced the accession to the Spanish throne of Joseph Napoleon, and had brought orders to the Government from the French Emperor.

"The city was immediately in arms; ten thousand of its inhabitants surrounded the residence of the Captain-General, and demanded the proclamation of Ferdinand VII. as their king, which he promised to do the next day; but this would not satisfy them; they proclaimed him that evening, by heralds, in form, throughout the city, and placed his portrait, illuminated, in the gallery of the town-house. The French were first publicly insulted in the coffee-house, whence they were obliged to withdraw; and the French captain left the Caracas privately, about eight o'clock that night, escorted by a detachment of soldiers, and so saved his life; for about ten o'clock his person was demanded from the Governor by the populace; and when they had learned that he was gone, three hundred followed him on the road to put him to death. Coldly received by the Governor, I was, on the contrary, surrounded by all the respectable people of the city, the military officers included, and hailed as their deliverer. The news which I gave them from Cadiz was devoured with avidity, and produced enthusiastic shouts of gratitude to England.

"Returning to the Governor about five o'clock, the first thing I demanded was the delivering to me the French corvette, or at least the permitting me to take possession of her in the roads, in consequence of the circumstances under which she had entered, as stated in my letter to him, No. 1. Both these he positively refused, as well as to take possession of her himself; but, on the contrary, he told me he had given orders for her immediate sailing. I made him acquainted with the orders I had given, to seize her if she sailed, to which he assented; and I at the same time told him that, if she was not in possession of the Spaniards on my return, I should take her myself. He replied, that he should send orders to the commandant at La Guayra to fire upon me if I did; to which I simply replied, that the consequence would fall upon him: and I further told him, that I considered his reception of me at Caracas as that rather of an enemy than a friend, while, at the same time, I had brought him information of hostilities having ceased between Great Britain and Spain; and that his conduct toward the French was that of a friend, while he knew that Spain was at war with France. He replied, that Spain was not at war with France: to which I asked him what he would consider as a war, if the captivity of two of his kings, and the taking possession of their capital, was not to be so considered? He only replied, that he knew nothing of it from the Spanish Government, and that what your despatches informed him of he could not consider as official."*

Some days after these events, the Corporation proposed to, and solicited from

* The French sloop was at length captured. Having sailed from La Guayra for Puerto Cabello, Maracaibo and Cartagena, the "Acasta" gave chase to her, and, after exchanging a few shots, she hauled down her flag and surrendered.

the Government the creation of a junta governing the province in the name of the captive monarch, and in imitation of those which had been formed in Spain; but the Spanish authorities, fearful of the erection of juntas in America, recognized, in preference, that of Sevilla, which had pompously titled itself "the Supreme of Spain and the Indies," and which recognition was solicited by the naval captain Don José Melendez Bruna, commissioned by said junta to this effect (8th August). It was so plausible to the Venezuelans to have a self-constituted government, having in charge their own mutual interests; that, notwithstanding the recognition which had just been made of that of Sevilla, and in spite of the opposition of Casas and the Spanish magistrates, they continued to foment the creation of another junta, which would be called that of "Caracas." So as to arrive at that end, meetings were held on the farm of Don Simon Bolivar, on the margin of the River Guaire, to which meetings concurred the Montillas, Ribas, the Marquis del Toro, Juan Vicente Bolivar and others of the respectable young men of the capital. Let it be understood these meetings, which the Spaniards qualified as "revolutionary," were secret. At them only friends assisted. Notwithstanding, they were betrayed by one of their associates, and perhaps, one of the most compromised, Don Manuel Matos. Matos was thrown in jail, and the proceedings were suspended for some days. Consequently, they met at the house of Don José Felix Ribas, and the patriots dissembled their intentions by gaming; here also they were again betrayed by a Spaniard, by name Don Pedro de la Mata, and by an old man Villalongu, who had been senior alderman of Barquisimeto. Being now discovered, they immediately proceeded to sign a representation demanding the establishment of the "Junta of Caracas." The Supreme Court ordered their arrest.

Thus, surrounded on all sides by inconveniences and perils, the founders of our independence kept alive the hope of emancipation; and (precise it is to say for the greater glory of these prime movers) those who attempted to change so strenuously the constituted order were not men, vagrants and without wealth, nor persons who were discontented on account of their poverty, or wickedness or crimes, but were composed of the highest nobility of the country, the wealthiest and most considered; they were those who sacrificed rank, prospects, fortune, peace of mind—proclaiming liberty to those who, under the old regime, had held most slaves. Handsome, indeed, was the offering presented to their captive and oppressed country to acquire the honorable title of being her first and bravest defenders.*

Don Diaz, in a moment of truthfulness allowed, which surprises us, to escape this observation: "For the first time," he says, "was seen a revolution fomented and carried into execution by the very persons who had most to lose; by the

* Bolivar was, amongst all, the one who sacrificed on the altar of equality the most. In his family were the family estates and the titles of Marquises of Bolivar and Viscounts of Caporette; the Seignury of Aroa, with jurisdiction in the towns which it comprehended (a favor which had not been done to Americans); the "Real Alferazgo" perpetuated to the first born of the children. The Seignury of Aroa, which comprised the towns of Conte and San Nicolas, was given to Don Francisco Martin Narvaez in 1606, the father of Josefa Maria Narvaez, wife of the lawyer Don Pedro Ponte Andrades, who was father of Doña Petronila Ponte, wife of Don Juan Bolivar, father of Don Juan Vicente Bolivar, who was that of the Liberator Simon Bolivar.

Marquis del Toro and his brothers, Don Fernando and Don José Ignacio, one of the principal and most wealthy families, who merited the first estimation of all the authorities, and who, puffed with an unsupportable pride, thought themselves superior to the rest; by Don Martin and Don José Tovar, young men, relatives of the Count of the same name, and members of the most opulent house in Venezuela; by Don Juan Vicente and Don Simon Bolivar, youths of the nobility of Caracas—the first, possessed of \$25,000 yearly income; the second, \$20,000; by Don Juan José and Don Luis Rivas, young men relations of the Count of Tovar, and of considerable property; by Don Juan German Roscio, Don Vicente Tejera and Don Nicolas Anzola, lawyers, who were held in estimation by their fellow-citizens; by Don Lino Clemente, a retired officer of the Spanish navy, highly regarded by all; by Don Mariano Montilla, formerly of the body-guard of his majesty, and his brother, Don Tomas, young men of fashion, and members of a house noted for its magnificence and luxury; by Don Juan Pablo, Don Mauricio and Don Ramon Ayala, officers of the veteran battalion, universally esteemed for the honesty of their family and their illustrious predecessors, and by a few others of similar or of scarcely less circumstances." Here the principal parts and chief rôles were not represented by "revolutionary men;" those who have no interest at stake; those who seek their fortunes in the confusion, and those who expect nothing from the authority of laws, of religion and of customs!*

Honor, then, be due to our revolution! If Dias had profounded what he wrote, he would have been convinced that American independence was a natural consequence; that, once dissolved, the bonds with Spain, even if they were legitimate and proper, men of weight should take charge of the destinies of a country newly fledged to political life; and, for this reason, there were not amongst the independents unprincipled, criminal nor ambitious men. It was not a disturbance that was intended; it was the recuperation of usurped rights; and for this, men of wealth, learning, of common-sense and generally esteemed, were called upon, and not adventurers.

The patriots strained their best energies to complete their attempt, and Casas and inferior peninsular authorities were not a little alarmed to see the idea of a separate governing junta being propagated—thus Venezuela, wishing to assimilate herself to the provinces of the metropolis. Spain was the *theme* of all the debates; and although the Junta Central had notified the viceroys, governors and other authorities of America that they maintain their people in a state of perfect ignorance, concealing from them all news by which they could discover the real state of affairs in the Peninsula;† but for all this there was always something transpired, exciting the opinions and *clashing* opposite passions, which sometimes broke out in unrestrained disputes, and thus opinion was more strongly fed by the very obscurity under which it lay.

The recognition of the Junta Central of Spain and the Indies was made at Caracas on the 18th and 16th of January, 1809.

This Junta, which should afterwards form the Regency, or recall the Cortes, resolved to appropriate to itself the Executive Power.

Without entering into any details about its government, it is here proper to refer to the memorable decree promulgated the 22d January, 1809, by which

* Remembrances of the Rebellion of Caracas; Madrid, 1829.

† Resolution of the 1st November, 1808.

the Junta declared their vast ultramarine dominions to constitute a whole with the monarchy. Recognising the principle of a perfect equality between the inhabitants of one and the other kingdoms, they disposed that America should have national representation; but that the elections should not be made by the people, directly or indirectly, but only by the Captain General and the Corporation....! So that America was not allowed the proportionate representation to that of Spain in the Cortes, but, when most, only the third part....! The representatives for Spain were 86; and those of the whole of America were 12! An enormous difference, which deeply wounded the more educated portion of the Americans, and which irritated their minds against the mother country.*

Don Joaquin Mosquera y Figueroa, Chief Judge of the Supreme Court, who was not a Venezuelan, and who had on the contrary many enemies, was elected by Venezuela. A worthy and legitimate representation!

Among all these occurrences (May 17), there arrived at Caracas two new magistrates, Brigadier General Don Vicente Emparan, and Don Vicente Basadre, named respectively Captain General and Intendant; they both took possession of their rank two days after their arrival. Emparan brought with him Don Fernando Toro, brother of the Marquis, who had been a Captain of the Royal Guard, and was destined as Inspector of militias for the Province of Caracas. By his means, the principal patriots were introduced to the society of Governor Emparan; amongst others, Don Simon Bolivar, a lieutenant of the white battalion of militia of the valleys of Aragua.† Familiar intercourse discovered to them the ideas and violent measures of Emparan, who arrived no doubt on the wings of the future destiny of Venezuela. The connivance on the part of this officer with the French, and his extravagant conduct in the government, lost to him the friendship of many persons, especially Toro and Bolivar.

* The Juntas and Regencies of Spain preserved, in respect to the Colonies, the same spirit of injustice and unfavorable prevention; and it cannot be less admired that our fathers and our brothers refused to receive liberty from *foreign hands*, soliciting the mother country to associate them in her misfortunes..... and they should find a step-mother, who in trouble depreciated and neglected them. Spain has 25,000 square leagues of territorial extension; America, 468,000, that is 443,000 more than her. Spain had 14 millions of inhabitants, with the chance of diminishing, as in effect it did till 10 millions, according to Costabarris; America had 14 millions, with the certainty of increasing, for the facility and abundance of materials, for the exuberance of our vital life, or be it the miraculous precocity of our nature, and for the absence of winters and autumns, which do not come to establish a pause in the incessant desire of multiplication; and why then the injurious difference of representation in the Cortes? On what foundation of justice was based the disposition that we should have only the third part? Twelve to thirty-six?

† "The cunning Caracacians," writes Torrente, "easily insinuated themselves in his confidence (that of Emparan), and especially Bolivar, then lieutenant of the militia of the white battalion of Aragua, a turbulent youth, as much distinguished for his wealth and the illustriousness of his birth, as for his immeasurable ambition." From whence does the writer draw this idea? Torrente makes himself the echo of Diaz, and accuses Bolivar of being ambitious, without the least reason or motive. Up to that time, he neither had the age to be ambitious, nor had he done anything else but travel. How did Torrente invent that he was ambitious, and of fool-hardy ambition? and they are called *impartial historians!*

Et voilà justement comme on écrit l'histoire!

Emparan arrived to the extreme of wearing out the patience of all; and his arbitrary measures hastened the event of the revolution. He immediately disagreed with the Supreme Court, as he aspired to make an instrument of justice; he disregarded priesthood; he humiliated the Corporation by nominating Syndics, and introducing amongst them persons which this body rejected. He impeded and injured commerce, looking with suspicion on the intercourse of one people with another; he exiled without cause or judgment several respectable persons, amongst others Don Miguel José Sanz, Assessor of the Consulate. He encouraged falsehoods with such brazen-faced impudence as to separate an apartment in his house to receive anonymous papers and to listen to accusations. He condemned to the public works, without any formality or judicial proceedings, a multitude of honest men, under the pretence of being vagrants. He made onerous enrolments. He treated as criminals those who received printed documents from foreign parts, and even from points of America ruled by Spain, and declared *that in Caracas there was no other will or law but his own! Thus governed Emparan!*

And even then Diaz complains of the extreme lenity of his government of Venezuela, of his carelessness and weakness!

He without doubt contributed by his injustice towards exasperating the minds; and, basing his security on his extreme severity, he stimulated the natives and numerous Spaniards to depose him from the command.

Esprit de vertige et d'erreur,
De la chute funeste avant-coureur.