

CHAPTER VIII.

Samanon Viceroy—Spanish Soldiers—American Soldiers—Bolívar returns to Santa-Fé—Proceeds to Quito—Afterwards to Guayaquil—Character of the principal Generals.

AFTER having reconquered New Grenada, Morillo employed himself in the pacification of Venezuela, and every thing appearing tranquil in the capital, he left Samanon there as viceroy. This simple old man, faithful to the system of barbarity and conscription, that formerly rendered the name of the Duke of Alba so justly odious, and being from his age the irreconcilable antagonist of every one that opposed his ideas, augmented the number both of the victims and of the enemies of his country. All the Americans fearing lest they should be placed upon the lists of the proscribed, escaped into the open country, where Santander converted them into soldiers.*

Morillo was soon at Caracas, where he found a few European soldiers, but, knowing the disadvantages which he should experience in the plains against the savage inhabitants, he dreaded plunging into the forests of the Oronooko, where

* Jove, *Memoria manuscr.*

he might probably encounter Bolivar, and possibly get defeated.

In fact, the Americans of the nineteenth century, were far superior in courage and ability to those who existed in the fifteenth, but it was not the same case with the Spaniards; the heat, thirst, and the difficulty of marching through the country, which were no obstacles to their forefathers, were to them absolutely insupportable.

They no longer possessed that force of character, that intense ardour, that unconquerable valour, which had been transmitted to their ancestors with their Moorish blood. They were unable to endure, like them, the burning heat of the sun, while long marches with light coverings so lacerated their feet, that they were often obliged to remain shut up in the towns. Their arms were too heavy for their strength; they were in want of magazines and fresh provisions; and they would have perished with hunger, if their general, like another Cortez, had set fire to their vessels.

The Americans, on the contrary, marched barefoot, and contenting themselves with a few bananas, required no strong liquors to animate their courage; for, if they carried these with them, it was to comfort those English soldiers, who had taken part in their quarrel. Their former dread of horses and fire-arms was annihilated, and they mounted the backs of the one,

and availed themselves of the destructive powers of the other, with a rare degree of skill. Accustomed, in their forests, to the pursuit either of wild beasts, or of their flocks almost as wild, they had acquired by this exercise the art of avoiding dangers, or the power of despising them, and they often employed no other weapons than the lance and the snare, which they used in the chase of savage animals.

It was then neither the antient Americans nor the antient Spaniards, who found themselves opposed to each other ; both had experienced a change, and power had passed by inheritance to the inhabitants of the New World.

Perhaps Spain would have acted wisely had she recruited her armies, either in the islands or upon the shores of Africa, and not have exposed her children to a climate too hot for the constitutions of Europeans ; in fact, they only possessed either physical or mental strength, under the temperate climate of the Cordilleras, for upon descending into the plains, the most valiant disgracefully took to flight.

Alarmed with such a succession of misfortunes, the Spanish generals took advantage of the jealousies of the Americans, and engaged their assistance to fight the cause of Europe ; but they very little understood the art of managing these ambitious men, who could not see without displeasure their rights usurped by the

arrival of Europeans, who were always admitted into the army as the superiors of the native officers, but never as their equals; and as if this were not sufficient to damp the exertions of their auxiliaries, their devotion to the Spanish cause was treated with indifference, and seldom indeed rewarded with the least eulogium or recompense; on the contrary, no occasion was allowed to escape for demanding fresh sacrifices, which, when made, were received with disdain. Ignorant both of the means and of the value of effacing these differences between the American and the European, between the white and the black man, the Spanish officers seemed rather to be desirous of rendering them more conspicuous, and to take pleasure in showing, by the most marked insults, the contempt they entertained for those Americans, who, by their distinguished services, had obtained the rank of sub-lieutenant.

The soldiers of Bolivar, enrolled under the banners of a chief of their own nation, fought with ardor; and even his companions in arms, surmounting that jealousy always excited by the elevation of an equal, were warmly attached to him.—They but little understood the precise meaning of the words Liberty and Independence, but they were sensible of marks of distinction, and Bolivar judiciously created and distributed them.—The camps of the Spaniards were abun-

dantly supplied, while every thing was wanting in that of their opponents; yet desertions from it were very rare, and the scarcity passed unnoticed, for the Americans had always been accustomed to similar privations.—At first there was some difficulty in bringing them to face the Spaniards, but at length they learnt to beat them. They also had the advantage of being perfectly acquainted with the country; while in their fellow countrymen, they every where found brethren, who aided them in the pursuit of their object, or concealed them when threatened with danger. The horses, well broken in were under more command than those belonging to the Spaniards, and like their masters could endure long fasts without much injury. Their arms were rude, but the address with which they were managed rendered them terrible. The chiefs possessed the same turbulent activity as the private soldiers, and knowing besides their habits, their sports, and their manners, far from wearying them with an oppressive discipline, they showed themselves to be their fellow warriors by participating in the same pleasures.

This management of his troops was the great art of Bolivar; his partisans in their enthusiasm have compared him to Cæsar, but he much more nearly resembles Sertorius. Like him, he had to reduce a savage people to obedience, and to combat a powerful and ex-

perienced nation. The places of contest were nearly alike, for there was, in this portion of America, the same difficulties to surmount in the badness of the roads, and the height of the mountains, as existed in Spain in the time of Sertorius. Like him, Bolivar, disconcerted his enemies by the rapidity of his marches, by the suddenness of his attacks, and by the celerity of his flights, which rendered it easy for him to repair his defeats at a distance. In the mountains, he displayed the same activity as in the plains, and set an example of sobriety and temperance to his troops, whose numbers he thus increased from those of a small band until they formed a powerful and irresistible army. If his military tactics were different from those of the Spaniards, his conduct was still more so. He knew how to gain the affections of mankind, by pardoning the vanquished and those who had deserted the cause of their country; thus he increased their numbers. The priests even did not refuse him their prayers, for he respected their ministry, which had often been despised by the Spaniards, since their wars with the French; and finally, by flattering the pride of the Americans, in constantly extolling their valour and intelligence, he, by these encomiums, rendered the disdain with which the Spaniards treated them still more insupportable. Morillo was therefore little desirous of encountering on the banks of the Oro-

nooko, this able chief endowed with the talents of William of Nassau, to whom the Low Countries were indebted for their liberation in the reign of Philip the II ; and he turned his arms with more hopes of success against the Isle of Marguerita, peopled with fifteen thousand men of colour, and commanded by Irismendi an officer of great bravery.

This bulwark of American independence proved fatal to Morillo. His army was completely defeated, and being obliged to return to Caracas, to his great chagrin he found himself confined to this place, nearly all his soldiers having been either slain in the field or laid up in the hospitals.

He was in this situation when three thousand men arrived from Spain, under the command of brigadier general Canterac, but he did not avail himself of this reinforcement until 1818, when he entered Calabozo. Bolivar who, for many months, had been wandering in the plains of Casanara, surprised him here in the night, and pursued him to the gates of Valentia.

The Spaniards being here reinforced, attacked Bolivar in their turn, put him to the rout, and forced him to retreat once more to the province of Casanara. He there found new recruits ; its ferocious inhabitants eagerly desired to be led to battle. These shepherds, whose flocks from their wild state scarcely needed masters, were

always ready to march when the hope of pillage was held out to them.

In 1819, Bolivar offered them that of Santa-Fè; they immediately cleared the icy paramos of the Cordilleras, and near Sogamoso found the advanced guard of the army of the viceroy, who had advanced upon receiving news of Bolivar's enterprise. This however proved no check to the latter, who under favour of the night escaped Barreira, general of the Spanish troops, and leaving him behind him, proceeded by forced marches upon Santa-Fè. Barreira, fearing lest Bolivar should enter this place, and, that favoured by a numerous party, he should make himself master of it, followed him with all expedition, and encountered him at Boyaca, a place situated near Tunja. After a sanguinary contest, Barreira was completely defeated, and was taken prisoner with twenty eight officers, who were all shot by Bolivar's orders. This was the first act of reprisals of the Americans against the Spaniards; it has not been the only one.

The disgraceful flight of Samanon and the recapture of the chief town of the Cordilleras, by the inhabitants of the plains, enabled Bolivar to realize his promises to them; warehouses full of goods together with the cash and jewels of those who had taken part with the Spaniards, were the recompense of this expedition.

Bolivar was no longer an obscure partizan;

to have escaped, although beaten, from Morillo, to have seized upon the capital of the empire, and driven thence the representative of his king, to have defeated, with a few savages, eight thousand regular troops, elevated the conqueror of Boyaca to a formidable rank in the public opinion.

He was now left tranquilly to increase the splendour of his fame, for which, in the sequel, he was less indebted to his arms than to his policy, which more peaceably terminated the year 1821.

Master of Santa-Fè, Bolivar quickly re-descended into the plains of Caracas; frequent encounters took place between his soldiers and those of Morillo; but the success was nearly equal. The chief of the independants was however more fortunate in an interview which he had with the Spanish general, for he induced him to agree upon a truce for six months: this the Americans violated by seizing Maracaïbo. When hostilities recommenced, Morillo had returned to Spain, and was succeeded in the command of the army by Latorre. This general was attacked at Carabobo by Bolivar, and being less favored by fortune than his predecessor, was put to flight, and only escaped the enemy by taking refuge within the walls of Puerto Cabello.

Thus in 1821, Spain from despising the advice which had been given her of engaging Europe to support her in her contest with the American colonies by sharing them with her,

had lost her troops and her treasures in endeavouring to regain those countries, the conquest of which had formerly been effected without arms or money. No further resistance was offered to the authority of the dictator Bolivar; a congress having assembled at Cucuta to regulate the basis of a new government, and the disorganizing principles of a federation between the insurgent provinces being buried in oblivion, all ambition ceased.

The war however again broke out in the south; and although at first it was considered only as a rebellion, it afterwards assumed the aspect, and brought with it all the horrors, of a civil war. Many that had fought against the Spaniards now began to regret their government, and preferred obeying masters rather than equals whose pride rendered them insupportable. Many partisans of the confederation, who had hoped to obtain new dignities under this regime, saw with regret that they had contributed towards the destruction of the Spanish dominion, without reaping any of those advantages from the revolution which they had expected. Even the conquerors after having re-united the provinces of the plains and those of the mountains under the same government, ridiculed the founders of the former republic, by designating it *patria bobu*, or the country of fools; under which name were comprehended all the adherents of Narino.

Recourse was therefore had to arms, and in 1822, the insurrection of Pasto seemed to require the presence of Bolivar himself with five thousand men.

The chain of mountains which intersect this province affords an easy means of defence; craggy rocks, deep marshes, and impenetrable forests, inspire the inhabitants with a boldness always fatal to invaders. Bolivar attempted it, but found insurmountable obstacles both in the local difficulties and the courage of the people; having nearly fallen into their hands, he escaped swearing to respect their liberty, and to allow them if they choose to obey the Spaniards. On this condition, which he bound himself to observe by the most solemn oaths he was permitted to withdraw.

A short time afterwards, at the head of fresh forces, he again entered the province, and after subduing it, marched to the assistance of his lieutenant Suere who dared not attack Quito with the few troops under his command.

Aimerichs, a covetous old man was now at the head of the Spanish army, and conducted them against Bolivar; but, paralyzed by age, he was unable to obtain the least success with troops, who being chiefly composed of Americans, paid no respect to a man so destitute of capacity: all was consequently in confusion, and his orders were continually either neglected or misunder-

stood. There was indeed no discipline in either army; but the esteem in which Bolivar was held, supplied its place, and produced an obedient respect for his person.

The Spaniards, or rather the American Spaniards, were thus soon put to flight by the independent Americans in a battle which took the name of Pitchincha, from its being fought in the vicinity of that dreadful volcano. The whole of the province was quickly subdued, and the remainder of the Spanish troops only saved their lives by soliciting the favour either of exiling themselves, or of betraying their standards: both conditions were granted them; a small number preferred misfortune to dishonour; the greater part, however, sided with the conqueror, and more than four hundred European Spaniards took the oath of fidelity to him.

Guayaquil, which, under the Spanish government, had at one time been given to Peru, and at another to New Grenada, still hesitated which party to embrace; but Bolivar soon fixed its indecision, and, marching against this opulent city, included it among those of the republic founded by him.

The American generals who have most distinguished themselves in all these wars are: Bolivar, Santander, Sucre, Urdaneta, Bermudes, Paës, Montilla, and Padilla.—Bolivar is forty-two years of age; his military abilities, and his

political character, have already been considered; his disinterestedness is greatly extolled, his income being principally devoted to the payment of the pensions which he allows to the widows and children of the soldiers who have fallen in battle.

Although his education had been much neglected, a residence of some length in Europe had given to him a taste for languages and history, in which he made a rapid progress. He has already been compared to Sertorius; and, in fact, his manner of making war, his long marches to come up with his enemy, together with the quickness with which he traverses immense distances, give an idea rather of a bold partisan than of a general competent to the wielding of large masses; two thousand more men would probably have embarrassed his plans.

Nor is he supposed to possess more profound views in the art of governing. He has hitherto contented himself with founding a republic, which is but a bad imitation of that of the United States, and which he can only maintain by a standing army. This is chiefly composed of shepherds, who followed him from the plains to the heights of Santa-Fè; it is in this portion of his troops that he places his chief confidence, and as the greater part of them belong to the cast of mulattoes, he is obliged to pay them great attention and to conciliate them by frequent rewards.

A happy chance has hitherto rendered him invulnerable; his enemies, therefore, say that he possesses no courage; but can this be the case with him who aspires to the supreme government? He is not wanting in eloquence, for his speeches possess great warmth of sentiment, though they are often diffuse; but this it must be admitted, is a fault difficult to be avoided in the Spanish language.

He married in early youth, in Spain, and a few years afterwards lost his wife, since which he appears determined to pass the remainder of his days as a widower. The possession of a throne has not yet tempted him. Miranda said, that America was not destined to be a republic; and Bolivar does not think it calculated to become a kingdom worthy of vying with those of Europe.

The title of Liberator, by which he distinguishes himself, is new in modern languages, and is synonymous with those of dictator and protector. His tyranny has not yet been complained of, and had he not now begun to exile the discontented, and to confiscate their property, the only thing he could have been reproached with would have been, that he has sometimes used reprisals in war.

Santander was very young when he entered the army. Narino distinguished him, and made him a lieutenant: he afterwards marched against this general with Barrañá. When the Spaniards

were in possession of Santa-Fè, he established himself in the plains of Meta, where he formed a band of three thousand men, with which he afterwards joined Bolivar; a reinforcement which powerfully contributed towards gaining the battle of Boyaca. His well-known firmness gave him a title to the vice-presidency, in which situation he has displayed the possession of such talents and merit as are seldom to be found.

Sucre is not yet thirty years of age, and, like Santander, has acquired his distinctions by gaining a battle for Bolivar, namely, that of Pitchincha, which procured him the post of commandant-general of Quito.

Urdanita, descended from a respectable family at Santa-Fè, has the merit of possessing much courage; he has been ill for some time, and seems to have retired from the service by accepting the presidency of the senate.

Bermudes, fifty years of age, was born at Cumana, and entered early into the American revolution, in which he has acquired an influence which though considerable, is not however equal to that of some of his companions in arms.

A khan of Tartars, an Arabian sheik, has given the rudest shocks to the Spanish power in America.—The mulatto Paës, at the head of a few thousands of his savage lancers, has often defeated whole squadrons of disciplined troops; particularly the hussars of Ferdinand VII. This

man, who, upon the banks of the Oronooko, might easily play the part of Artigas upon those of La Plata, remains faithful to Bolivar, whose generous conduct and affable manners have gained his attachment.

Paës affects great luxury and particular politeness ; yet, notwithstanding the vanity natural to a savage, he lives upon terms of perfect equality with his troops ; when he is with them, their food, their games, and their exercises, are his own. No one rides a horse better than he, or wields a lance with more dexterity, or attacks an enemy with more fury. He thus possesses absolute power over his undisciplined hordes, who, tractable towards a leader that sets them an example of courage, obey him with the submission of slaves. His fortune has been considerably augmented by numerous gifts, and thus Spain has been deprived of a man, who has become the terror of her troops.

Montilla, the rival of the chief of the Llanos, formerly served in the body-guard in Spain, and expected to find in the revolution the means of improving his fortune. The influence he enjoys appears dangerous in the eyes of the government ; and, although he has been stationed at Carthagena, he is still too near to Caracas, where the persons of influence are desirous of opposing a chief to Bolivar, and would willingly choose Montilla : his manners are very prepossessing,

and having been educated in Europe, he expresses himself with facility, an advantage not common to the majority of Colombians.

He is accused of falsehood, and his reserve and apparent contradictions are considered as proofs of duplicity ; but it is his ambition which fears discovery and endeavours to conceal itself. It is also known that he has some causes of hatred which are rarely ever forgotten. He certainly must bear in mind, that Bolivar, in 1811, in a moment of passion, swore to shoot him if he could lay hold of him ; and, confounding Miranda with the patriotic party, he will doubtless recollect, that this general had promised to expose him for twenty-four hours to public view in an iron cage.

The mulatto Padilla is a general whose services have not been without advantage to American independence. This pilot of Carthagena, raised by the revolution to the command of a flotilla, contributed more than any one else to the capture of Carthagena from the Spaniards, and subsequently that of Maracaïbo. Sacrificed at first to the party that Montilla wishes to defend, he has since been re-established with a fresh degree of importance ; a circumstance which has produced great joy among the people of colour, who were not ignorant that the dispute between the two generals was a quarrel of colour.

All these men, at present the subalterns of

Bolivar, appear rather his equals than his lieutenants ; but, after his death, or even after a defeat, it is possible they may put themselves at the head of the party that they have secured to their interests. It is in this particular that Bolivar will most resemble Alexander. Paës, with his negroes, will occupy the plains ; Montilla, Caracas ; Padilla, the coasts ; and Sucre, Quito. Thus all depends upon the existence of Bolivar.