

orders, the troops appointed to convoy it to Mexico were so often attacked upon the road by the La Puebla, and Vera Cruz Insurgents, that their progress was extremely slow. In these Provinces the Spaniards possessed little more than the great towns; all the open country was in the hands of the Insurgents; and they mustered in such formidable numbers about Nöpälucä, that Öläzabäl, who commanded the convoy of the artillery, was detained there, in a state of siege by Ösörnö, on the 23d of March, and was only released by the arrival of a strong detachment sent from La Püebälä to his assistance.

The great object of Mörölös was to prolong the siege until the commencement of the rainy season, when he knew that the Royalists would be forced to raise it, as Cuautla is situated in Tierra Caliente, and is a most unhealthy spot. Calleja was aware of this, and felt the ignominy with which a retreat would be attended; yet not even this could induce him to risk another general attack. All his efforts had been hitherto unavailing; and, at the end of April, he could not boast of having gained one single advantage. Unfortunately for the Mexicans, he had but too powerful an ally within the walls of the town. Cuautla had never been properly supplied with provisions, as Morelos had not expected to be besieged there in form, and famine now prevailed to a horrible extent; maize was almost the only sustenance of the troops; a cat sold for six dollars; a lizard for two; and rats or other vermin for one.

An ox, which was seen, one day, feeding between the Spanish camp and the town, nearly brought on a general action; for the troops, unable to resist the temptation, rushed out in crowds to seize the prey, and were attacked, while bringing it off, by so strong a party of the enemy, that Morelos was forced to draw out nearly his whole remaining force, in order to save them from destruction. Disease, too, began to show itself in its most frightful shape, and nearly 300 sick were lodged in the hospital of San Diego alone. Such, however, was the influence of Morelos over his men, that they endured all their sufferings with undaunted resolution, as long as there was a hope of supplies being received from without; but Mätämörös having been defeated in an attempt to introduce provisions, Mörölös was forced to decide between making a general attack upon the camp of Calleja, and evacuating the town without delay. Had his men been in full health and vigour, it is probable that he would have attempted the first; but considering the wretched state to which they were reduced, he thought he should not be justified in risking the fate of the nation upon the issue of so hazardous an enterprise. An attack made upon Llano's great battery a short time before, convinced him of the impossibility of preserving order amongst his men, in case of a first success, and of the fatal consequences with which their confusion might be attended. The Insurgents had advanced with such

intrepidity, that they carried the whole battery at the first assault; but finding there a considerable stock of salt meat and segars, (luxuries of which they had long been deprived,) they seized upon them with such avidity, that not all the exertions of their chiefs could induce them to turn the advantage which they had gained to account; the guns were neither carried off, nor even spiked; and so much precious time was wasted, that a large reinforcement arrived from Calleja's camp, and drove them out of the battery again with considerable loss.

With such reasons for avoiding an action, one cannot but approve of the resolution taken by Morelos to evacuate Cuautla; which was executed with equal talent, and success. On the night of the 2d of May, between eleven and twelve o'clock, the troops were formed in the Plaza of San Diego; Galeana took the command of the advanced guard, Morelos of the centre, and the Bravos of the rear. Such was the silence observed by the whole column, that they passed between the enemy's batteries without being perceived; nor was it until they reached a deep barranca, (or ravine,) over which they were obliged to construct a bridge, with hurdles carried by the Indians for that purpose, that the alarm was given by a sentry, who fired his musket before Galeana had time to cut him down. The barranca was hardly crossed, when the column was attacked, on opposite sides, by the troops of Llano and Cal-

lejas. Morelos instantly gave the word for a general dispersion, as had been agreed upon, with orders to rendezvous at Izucar; and such was the promptitude with which this was effected, that the Spanish troops, finding no enemy between them as they advanced, began firing upon each other, and lost a number of men before the mistake was discovered.

Morelos reached İzucăr, which was in possession of Don Miguel Bravo, in two days, and had the pleasure to find, when his different divisions arrived, that of the soldiers of Cuautla only seventeen were missing. Amongst these, unfortunately, was Don Leonardo Bravo, who had fallen into the hands of the enemy, and whose loss was universally regretted.

Calleja did not enter Cuautla until some hours after Morelos had quitted it, and even then, his troops advanced with the greatest precaution; so apprehensive were they of some new stratagem. The cruelties which he exercised upon the unfortunate inhabitants of the town, will leave, for ever, a stain upon his reputation. I have heard officers, who were present at the siege, speak of them, after a lapse of ten years, with horror. On the 16th of May, the army returned to the Capital; where its reception was very different from that which it had experienced three months before. In spite of the pompous account of its success, published in the Gazette, and the number of deaths with which Cal-

leja had swelled his reports, every body knew that he had been repulsed, and outwitted at last, by Morelos ; and, as for the army, its appearance spoke for itself. A comedy was acted a few nights afterwards, in which a soldier was introduced, who, on his return from battle, presents his general with a turban, and tells him in a very pompous manner, "Here is the turban of the Moor, whom I took prisoner!" "And the Moor himself?" "O! he unfortunately escaped!" The passage was received with bursts of laughter, and the application instantly made by all the spectators.

Such was the event of the siege of Cuāutlā Āmilpās, which I have given in some detail, because it may fairly be considered as the most important military occurrence in the whole Revolution. The resources displayed by Morelos, in the course of it, gave him a degree of celebrity, and influence, which none of the Insurgent chiefs attained after him. His authority was recognised every where; and continued to be respected until his death, in spite of the singular change of fortune, which marked the latter part of his career.

Mōrēlōs was detained some time at Īzūcār, by an injury which he received, by a fall from his horse, on the retreat from Cuautla. On his recovery, he put himself again at the head of his troops, whom Matamoros had brought into admirable order, and soon convinced Vēnēgās, that "the monster of the South," as he was termed in the Gazette of Mexico,

far from "seeking a hiding-place in caves and forests," was about to carry on the contest with all his usual activity. After defeating three Spanish divisions, Morelos made a triumphal entry into Tēhūacān, (in La Puebla,) on the 16th of September, 1812. From thence he undertook a successful expedition against the town of Ōrizāvā, where he found nine pieces of artillery, and an immense booty in money and tobacco. Obligated to evacuate the place, by the approach of a superior force, he returned to Tēhūacān, and, after refreshing his troops there, commenced, in the beginning of November, his famous expedition against Ōāxācā. After sustaining incredible hardships upon the march, the army at last arrived before the town, situated in the finest part of one of the most lovely provinces of Mexico. It was garrisoned by the Royalists, under Brigadier Regules, who attempted to defend the town; but nothing could withstand the impetuosity of the Insurgent troops. Their artillery, under the command of Don Manuel Mier y Tērān, having silenced that of their opponents, Regules made a last stand on the edge of a deep moat, which surrounds Oaxaca, and over which there was no passage but by a single drawbridge, which was drawn up, and the approach to it defended by the Royalist infantry. The Insurgents paused on perceiving this new obstacle; but their deliberation lasted but an instant; Guadalupe Victoria, who was in the front rank, threw himself into the moat, sword in hand, and

swam across; the enemies were so surprised at his temerity, that they allowed him to land, and even to cut the ropes, by which the drawbridge was suspended, without receiving a single wound: the troops of Morelos rushed across it, and soon made themselves masters of the town.

After releasing all those who were in confinement for political opinions, and replacing the Spanish authorities by Mexicans, Morelos proceeded to execute his darling scheme of forming a National Congress. In order to give to this idea all the extension which he wished, the conquest of the rest of the province was indispensable. A very short time enabled him to effect this, with the exception of Acapulco, to which he laid siege on the 15th of February, 1813. This enterprise, the most important, as well as the most hazardous, that had ever been undertaken by the Insurgent armies, detained him several months: in the course of it, Morelos, whose great fault as a general was being too fond of exposing his person, had several very narrow escapes; nor was it until the 20th of August, 1813, that his object was attained.

As soon as the Mexican flag had taken the place of the Spanish colours on the fortress of San Diego, Morelos returned to Ōăxăcă, where he found every thing prepared, by Matamoros, for the meeting of the Congress, which was composed of the original members of the Junta of Zitācuărō, the deputies elected by the Province of Oaxaca, and others, again,

selected by them as representatives for the Provinces in the possession of the Royal troops. Such was the Assembly, which opened its sessions on the 13th of September, 1813, in the town of Chīlpānzīngō. Its most remarkable act was the declaration of the absolute Independence of Mexico, which it published upon the 13th of November, 1813. It is difficult to say what impression this declaration might have produced upon the country, had Morelos continued his career of success; but his fortune was upon the wane, before it became at all generally known, and the influence of the Congress diminished, of course, in proportion to the decline in the reputation of its protector. The period of its installation was, undoubtedly, the most brilliant moment of Morelos's political existence. Up to that time, he had not only been successful wherever he commanded in person, but seemed to communicate a portion of his good fortune to all who served under his orders. The years 1812, and 1813, were distinguished by the victories gained by Don Nicolas Bravo, and Matamoros, at the Pălmăr, and by the defence of the mountain of Cōscōmătēpēc. In the first of these actions, Bravo defeated Don Juan Lăbăquī, the Commandant of the regiment of the Patriots of Veracruz, at the head of a strong detachment. The engagement lasted three days, when the village, in which the Spaniards had taken refuge, was carried by storm, (20th August, 1812.) Three hundred prisoners, taken upon this

occasion, were placed by Morelos, at the disposal of Bravo, who offered them to the Viceroy Venegas, in exchange for his father, Don Leonardo Bravo, who was then under sentence of death in the prisons of the Capital. The offer was rejected, and the sentence against Don Leonardo ordered to be carried into immediate execution. His son, in lieu of making reprisals by the massacre of his prisoners, instantly set them all at liberty, "wishing," (as he said,) "to put it out of his own power to avenge on them the death of his parent, lest, in the first moment of grief, the temptation should prove irresistible!" So noble a trait requires no comment!

From this time, Bravo had the command of a separate division, with which he carried on hostilities in the province of Veracruz, where he fortified the Cerro of Cöscömatépéc, and defended it for two months, (September and October, 1813,) against a force of three thousand men, under the orders of Colonel Aguila. Forced at last, by want of provisions, to evacuate the place, he retired in the night without the loss of a single man, and rejoined Morelos in Oaxaca, with his whole division. But the most serious check received by the Spaniards, during the whole war, was that sustained by them in the second battle of the Pälmar, on the 18th of October, 1813, where the regiment of Asturias, composed entirely of European troops, was cut off by Matamoros, after a severe action, which lasted eight hours. This regiment (which had been at the

battle of Baylen,) came out from Spain with the proud title of "the invincible victors of the victors of Austerlitz;" and its loss was regarded by all the Spaniards as fatal to the *prestige* which had before attached to the European troops. The Insurgents, however, derived but little advantage from this victory. The time was come, at which it seemed decreed that their affairs should take an unfavourable turn, nor did fortune once smile upon them afterwards. The division of Mätämörös shortly rejoined Morelos in Oaxaca, who was then concentrating his whole force at Chülpänzīngö, in order to prepare for an expedition against the province of Valladolid, the possession of which would have brought him into more immediate contact with the Insurgents of the Interior, and enabled him, with their co-operation, to strike a decisive blow against the Capital itself.

With these hopes Morelos collected seven thousand men, and a large train of artillery, with which force he left Chülpänzīngö, on the 8th of November, 1813. After sustaining incredible fatigues and privations, in marching across one hundred leagues of country, which no one had ever traversed before, he arrived before Valladolid on the 23d of December, where he found a formidable force under Brigadier Llano, and Iturbide, (who had then attained the rank of Colonel,) prepared to receive him. Rendered too confident by the success which had constantly attended his arms, without allowing his troops time

to repose, he advanced immediately against the town, and was repulsed by the Royalists with loss. On the following morning, Matamoros, (ignorant, probably, of the real strength of the garrison,) had the imprudence to order a general review of the army, within half a mile of the walls. In the midst of it, Iturbide, by a sudden sally, threw the Mexicans into confusion. They rallied, however, by degrees, and had succeeded in repulsing the Spaniards, when an Insurgent party under Nāvārrētē and el Pāchōn, (two partizans of the Independent cause in the Bāxīō,) arrived on the field of battle in order to assist Morelos, with a large body of cavalry. Not having agreed upon any general signals, they were not recognized as friends, and were fired upon by the Mexicans on their approach. They immediately made a furious charge upon the flank, and Iturbide taking advantage of an error so fortunate for him, succeeded in putting the whole army to the rout, with the loss of its best regiments, and all the artillery.

Morelos retreated to Pūrūārān, where Iturbidē attacked him again, on the 6th of January, 1814, and again obtained a complete victory. Mātāmōrōs was taken prisoner in the general dispersion. Morelos endeavoured to save his life by offering, in exchange for him, a number of Spanish prisoners, (principally of the regiment of Asturias,) taken at the Palmar, and confined at Acapulco; but Cālējā, who had, at that time, replaced Vēnēgās as Viceroy,

refused to listen to any proposal of the kind. Matamoros was shot, and the Insurgents, by way of reprisals, immediately ordered all their prisoners to be put to death.

This was the beginning of a series of reverses, which only terminated with the life of Morelos. While he himself endeavoured to recruit his forces on his old scene of action, the Southern coast, he despatched Don Manuel Mier y Tērān to take the command of the district of Tēhuācān, (in La Puebla,) and Victoria, who had distinguished himself greatly in the unfortunate affair before Valladolid, to act as Captain-general in the Province of Veracruz. But although Morelos displayed as much resolution and activity as ever, in struggling against the tide of adversity, all his efforts to retrieve his sinking fortune were ineffectual. He lost action after action; Oaxaca was retaken by a Royalist division under Brigadier Ālvārēz, (28th March, 1814,) Don Miguel Bravo was made prisoner, and died upon the scaffold, at La Puebla; Gālēānā perished on the field of battle, (27th June, 1814,) the Congress of Chīlpānzīngō was driven from that town, and forced to take refuge in the woods of Apātzīngān, where, however, it continued its labours, and sanctioned, on the 22nd of October, 1814, the Constitution known by that name. Here it was very nearly surprised by Iturbide, (in 1815,) who, by a rapid and masterly march across the mountains of Mīchōācān, came upon the Deputies almost before

they were apprized of his approach. It was in consequence of this attempt, and with a view of placing the Congress in safety, that Morelos determined to undertake his expedition to Tēhuācān, in the Province of La Puebla, where Tērān had already assembled a considerable force. With only five hundred men he attempted a march of sixty leagues, across a part of the country occupied by several divisions of Royalists. He hoped, indeed, to be joined by Tērān and Guērrērō, but his couriers were intercepted, and neither of these generals was aware of his situation.

The Spaniards conceiving the forces of Morelos to be much more considerable than they really were, did not venture to attack him until he had penetrated as far as Těsmālācā, where the Indians, though they received him with great apparent hospitality, conveyed intelligence, both of the real number of his followers, and of their wretched state, to Don Manuel Cōnchā, the nearest Spanish Commandant, who determined to attack the convoy the next day. Morelos, who fancied himself in security, as he was now beyond the enemy's line, was surprised on the following morning, (5th of November, 1815,) by two parties of Royalists, who came upon him unperceived, in a mountainous part of the road. He immediately ordered Don Nicolas Bravo to continue his march with the main body, as an escort to the Congress, while he himself with a few men endeavoured to check the advance of the Spaniards.

"My life," he said, "is of little consequence, provided the Congress be saved. My race was run from the moment that I saw an Independent Government established."

His orders were obeyed, and Morelos remained with about fifty men, most of whom abandoned him when the firing became hot. He succeeded, however, in gaining time, which was his great object, nor did the Royalists venture to advance upon him, until only one man was left by his side. He was then taken prisoner, for he had sought death in vain during the action. There can be little doubt that his late reverses had inspired him with a disgust for life, and that he wished to end his days by a proof of devotion to his country worthy of the most brilliant part of his former career.

Morelos was treated with the greatest brutality by the Spanish soldiers into whose hands he first fell. They stripped him, and conducted him, loaded with chains, to Tesmālācā. But Concha, (to his honour be it said,) on his prisoner being presented to him, received him with all the marks of respect due to a fallen enemy, and treated him with unwonted humanity and attention. He was transferred, with as little delay as possible, to the capital, and the whole population of Mexico flocked out to San Agustin de las Cuevas, to see, (and some to insult) the man, whose name had so long been their terror. But Morelos, both on his way to prison, and while in confinement, is said to have shown

a coolness which he preserved to the last. Indeed, the only thing that seemed to affect him at all was his degradation; a ceremony humiliating in itself, but rendered doubly so, in his case, by the publicity which was given to it. His examination, which was conducted by the Oidor Bätällër, (whose insolent assertion of the natural superiority of the Spaniards to the Creoles, is said first to have roused Morelos into action,) was not of long duration. On the 22d of December, 1815, Concha was charged to remove him from the prisons of the Inquisition, to the hospital of San Christoval, behind which the sentence pronounced against him was to be carried into execution. On arriving there, he dined in company with Concha, whom he afterwards embraced, and thanked for all his kindness. He then confessed himself, and afterwards walked, with the most perfect serenity, to the place of execution. The short prayer which he pronounced there, deserves to be recorded for its affecting simplicity. "Lord, if I have done well, thou knowest it; if ill, to thy infinite mercy I commend my soul!"

After this appeal to the Supreme Judge, he fastened with his own hands a handkerchief about his eyes, gave the signal to the soldiers to fire, and met death with as much composure as he had ever shown when facing it on the field of battle.

SECTION III.

REVOLUTION FROM DEATH OF MORELOS TO 1820.

THE most brilliant period of the Revolution terminated with the life of Morelos. He alone possessed influence enough to combine the operations of the different Insurgent chiefs into something like unity of plan;—to reconcile their jarring interests, and to prevent their jealousy of each other from breaking out into open discord. By his death this last tie seemed to be dissolved, and things relapsed into their former confusion. Each Province considered itself as isolated, and connected by no bond of union with the rest; and by this fatal want of combination, the Insurgent cause, though supported in many parts of the country by considerable military talent, and the most brilliant personal courage, sunk gradually into an almost hopeless state.

Morelos conceived that the Congress which he

had assembled at Oaxaca, and for which he sacrificed his life, would prove a centre of union, to which his lieutenants might look, as they had previously done to himself; but few of his officers entertained similar feelings with regard to this body, which, however useful in theory, was, practically, a most inconvenient appendage to a camp. Don Nicolas Bravo succeeded, indeed, in escorting the Deputies in safety to Tēhūacān, where they were received, at first, with great respect by General Tērān: but disputes soon arose between the Civil and Military authorities, and these terminated by the dissolution of the Congress, to which measure Tērān had recourse on the 15th of December, 1815.

There is no act in the history of the Revolution that has been more severely blamed than this, and none, perhaps, that has been less fairly judged. It cannot be denied that, by dissolving the Congress, Teran injured the general cause, by depriving the Insurgents of a *point de réunion*, which might, afterwards, have been of essential use; but it has never been proved that it was possible for him to do otherwise, or that the district under his command could, in any way, have supported the additional charge, which the arrival of the Congress must have brought upon it. The fact is, that the members of that assembly, amongst the other articles of their Constitution, had assigned to themselves, as Deputies, a yearly salary of eight thousand dollars each; a re-

solution which Bustamante, (the historian of the Revolution, and himself a Deputy,) justifies, by saying that the salary was merely nominal, and that two thousand dollars were the utmost that any one hoped to receive. Be this as it may, it is certain that whatever could be construed into public property, either as taken from the enemy, or as the produce of fines paid by the different *Haciendas*, (in the nature of black mail,) became liable for the payment of these sums, whenever the Congress chose to determine that it should be so; and moreover, the assembly was so well aware of this fact, that it always endeavoured to get the management of the public purse out of the hands of the Military Commandants, in order to entrust it to *Intendants* of its own nomination. Unfortunately, the man selected for this office at Tehuacān, (Martinez) was particularly strict and unyielding, (Bustamante calls him *cosquilloso*, ticklish,) in every thing connected with his department; and contrived to involve himself, almost immediately, in a dispute with Tērān, by demanding possession of the money, and stores, which that general had, with infinite pains, succeeded in collecting. In this claim, Martinez was supported by the Congress, and Teran was thus reduced to become, *de facto*, a dependant upon the body, which had just thrown itself upon his protection, or to deny its authority altogether. He asserts, however, that he would have supported with patience, his share of the dead weight of the Congress, had any disposi-

tion been shown by the other Independent chiefs to contribute towards its support. But no offers of the kind were made; and although all blamed Teràn for dissolving the National Assembly, and all refused to acknowledge the Government which he attempted to establish in its place, none would receive the Deputies into their camp, or undertake the charge of protecting their sessions, which might, in that case, have been resumed, as Teràn had no more right to dissolve a Congress, than he had to create one himself, in the name of the people, had he been inclined to attempt it.

It must, however, be admitted, that the breaking up of the only Central Government that had ever been at all generally recognized by the Insurgents, was attended with the most disastrous effects. From that moment, universal disorder prevailed: Victōriã, Guërrerō, Brāvō, Rãyōn, and Tërãn, confined themselves each to his separate circle, where each was crushed in turn, by the superiority of the common enemy. A multitude of inferior partizans shared the same fate. The arrival of fresh troops from the Peninsula, enabled the Viceroy to establish a regular chain of communication throughout the country, and to enforce obedience, even at the most distant points; and these discouraging circumstances, together with the facilities held out to all who had embarked in the Revolution, by the new Viceroy Apōdăcã, for reconciling themselves with the Government by accepting the *indulto*, (or par-

don,) offered by the King, reduced the number of those actually in arms, during the years 1816, 1817, and 1818, to a very inconsiderable amount.

But the reverses sustained by the Creole leaders in the field were more than counterbalanced by the effect previously produced, by the introduction of the Spanish Constitution into Mexico; which, although its most important articles were suspended almost immediately, so far favoured the development of a spirit of independence, that nothing could afterwards shake its hold upon the minds of the people. This Constitution was, as may be recollected, sanctioned by the Cortes of Cadiz, in 1812, and immediately applied, not only to Spain, but to the Transatlantic dominions of the Crown. In Mexico it took effect in the Autumn of the same year, (29th September, 1812,) under the Viceroyalty of Venegas, who was soon convinced that his authority, if submitted to the test of public opinion, could not be long retained. So many violent pamphlets against Spain, and Spanish dominion, were published during the two only months that the liberty of the press was tolerated, (it lasted exactly sixty-six days from the 5th of October, 1812,) that the tranquillity of the Capital was endangered, notwithstanding the presence of a numerous garrison, and the palace itself threatened by an infuriated mob. *Vivas* in favour of Morelos, and the Insurgents, were heard under the Viceroy's own windows, as well as cries of "Down with the bad Government!" and even