

of "Down with the King!" In short, (to use the words of the Audiencia, paragraph 136,) "the political writings of the day produced upon the natives the same effect that spirituous liquors cause amongst savages." A national feeling was created, and became every where predominant. Fortunately for Spain, the right of electing the Members of the Ayuntamiento, and the Deputies to the Cortes, afforded a vent for passions, which must otherwise have led to some terrific explosion. Out of *six hundred and fifty-two elective appointments*, of more or less importance, which the Mexicans were entitled by the Constitution to make, not *One* was bestowed upon an European; and most were filled by men notoriously addicted to the Independent cause! Nor were the legal forms prescribed by the new system, for the prosecution of criminals, turned to less account. *Suspitions* were no longer admitted as sufficient ground for depriving an accused Creole of his liberty. *Proofs* were required by the Constitutional Alcaldes, whose jurisdiction replaced, in most cases, that of the Audiencia; and these proofs were most critically weighed, by men, who had, in general, been recommended, by their known predilection for the cause of the Revolution, to fill those offices, which entitled them to judge of the inclinations and loyalty, of others.

Thus, under the safeguard of the new institutions, disaffection became every day more prevalent; and, neither the successes of the Royal army in the field,

nor the exertions of two Viceroys, who undoubtedly possessed very superior talents, could give to Spain any prospect of permanently suppressing the Revolution.

The assiduity of Don Carlos Bustamante, whom I have had occasion to mention frequently as the historian of the Revolution, has rescued from oblivion two most interesting State papers, which were found in the archives of the Vice-royalty. The one, is a representation addressed by the Audiencia of Mexico to the Cortes, on the 18th of November, 1813; and the other, a confidential letter of the Viceroy Calleja, (who succeeded Venegas, on the 4th of March, 1813,) to the King, on His release from captivity, dated a year later, but referring to the same period, and passing in review nearly the same events. Of the genuineness of these documents no doubt can be entertained; and they present so striking a picture of the effect produced by a little relaxation of those bonds, by which the Colonies had been previously kept in subjection, that I must recommend them most particularly to my readers, who will find a translation of both, annexed to the Appendix.* They are worthy of attention, not merely as disclosing the secret springs of the Revolution, but, as proving that, for many years before any intercourse with the Colonies, on the part of Foreign powers, was attempted, the confi-

* Vide Appendix, B and C Letters.

(B. 2. Page 489—C. Page 509.)

dential servants of the Crown of Spain felt the impossibility of maintaining its authority there, unless supported by an overwhelming force, and admitted, "that the whole population of the country was bent upon the attainment of an independent political existence." This fact is so strongly urged throughout Calleja's letter to the King, that it may be considered, (as he himself terms it,) *the corner stone* of his whole argument. He states, in one passage, "That notwithstanding the advantages which he had obtained in the field, but little had been done towards destroying the seeds of the Rebellion; the focus of which lies in the great towns, and, more particularly, in the *Capital*." In another, he says, "That the great majority of the natives is in favour of the Insurrection,"—that "the municipalities, the Provincial Deputations, and even the Spanish Cortes themselves, (as far as the provinces of Ultramar are concerned, are composed of *nothing but Insurgents*, and those of the most decided and criminal character." In another: "That the Insurgents profess attachment to the Constitution, not, because they intend to adopt it, or ever to submit to the Mother country, but, because it affords them the means of attaining all that they desire without risk." In another: "That the Insurrection is so deeply impressed, and rooted, in the heart of every American, that nothing but the most energetic measures, supported by an imposing force, can ever eradicate it:"—that "the war strengthens, and propagates the

love of Independence, by holding out a constant hope of the destruction of the old Spaniards, a *longing desire for which* is general amongst all classes!" and lastly, that "as six millions of inhabitants decided in the cause of Independence, have no need of previous consultation, or agreement, each one acts, according to his means and opportunities, in favour of the project, common to all: the judge, by concealing, or conniving at, crimes: the clergy, by advocating the justice of the cause in the confessional, and, even in the pulpit: the writers, by corrupting public opinion: the women, by employing their attractions, in order to seduce the Royal troops: the Government officer, by revealing, and thus paralyzing the plans of his superiors: the youth, by taking arms: the old man, by giving intelligence, and forwarding correspondence, and the public Corporations, by giving an example of eternal differences with the Europeans, not one of whom they will admit as a colleague!"*

What stronger arguments could the warmest advocates of the Revolution adduce, in order to prove the impossibility of ever permanently re-establishing the authority of Spain in the New World? Yet this language was held, *thirteen years ago*, by one of her most able, and most zealous defenders. It was confirmed, too, by the opinion of the whole

* *Vide* Calleja's letter to the Minister of War, Appendix, (Letter C.) from which all the preceding passages are literal translations. (Pages 509 to 525)

Audiencia of Mexico; which admits, as unreservedly as the Viceroy himself, the unanimity of the natives in favour of the Independent cause (*Vide* paragraphs 12, 14, 18, 19, 26, 28, and 42), and sees no hope of checking ^{Page 491.} this spirit, but by ^{492.} having recourse to measures amounting to little ^{493.} less than the establishment of martial law; since it ^{497.} recommends that all legal restrictions should be dispensed with.*

These measures were resorted to, and were for a time successful. Backed by an imposing force, and relieved by the abolition of the Constitution (in 1814) from all legal trammels, the authority of the Viceroy was gradually re-established, and tranquillity, to a certain extent, restored. Seventeen thousand Insurgents are supposed to have accepted the Indulto during the Viceroyalty of Apōdācā, who assumed the reins of government in 1816; and even the expedition of Mina failed in rekindling the flame of civil war. But nothing could be more deceitful than this calm. The principles which led to the Insurrection of 1810 were daily gaining ground; they were disseminated by the Indultados themselves amongst their friends and connexions; the Creole troops were their first proselytes: disaffection spread amongst them, until whole regiments were ripe for revolt; and when, in 1820, the re-establishment of the constitutional system

* *Vide* Paragraphs, 249, 251, and 253, Appendix Letter B.
Pages 506. --- 506.

in the Peninsula allowed again of a freedom of intercourse amongst the Creoles, they found, with surprise, that all differences of opinion had disappeared, and that the army was ready to co-operate with its old enemies, the Insurgents, for the attainment of those political rights, against which it had fought during the earlier stages of the Revolution. Before we arrive, however, at this National movement, in which Iturbide took the lead, it will be necessary to take a rapid view of the events, by which it was preceded.

After the death of Morelos, the country (as I have already stated) was divided into districts, in each of which one of his former lieutenants took the lead. Guerrero occupied the Western coast, where he maintained himself in the fastnesses of the Sierra Madre until the year 1821, when he joined Iturbide. Rāyōn commanded in the vicinity of Hāl-pūjāhuā, where he successively occupied two fortified camps, one on the Cerro del Gallo*, and the other on that of Cōpōrō. Teràn held the district of Tēhuācān, in La Puebla. Bravo was a wanderer in different parts of the country. The Bāxīō was tyrannized over by the Padre Tōrrēs; while Guādēlūpē Victoria occupied the important Province of Veracruz. The intervening spaces were overrun by insurgent partizans, Ālbīnō Gārciā, el Pāchōn,

* It is from the Cerro del Gallo that the large view of Hāl-pūjāhuā is taken, which is now engraving.

Ĕpītācĭō Sānchĕz, Ōsōrnō, and Sĕrrānō, who sometimes acknowledged one of the principal Chiefs as their superior, and sometimes acted independently of all; as was the case with the famous, (or infamous) Vĭcĕntĕ Gōmĕz, whose band long infested the mountains which separate Mexico from La Puebla, and often cut off all communication between them.

It is not my intention to follow in detail the events of this period. A short sketch of the career of the principal chiefs is all that my limits will allow of. Those who are desirous of a nearer acquaintance with their military exploits, will find them traced in the pages of Robinson,* and Don Carlos Bustamante,† with a minuteness which does not suit the character of my present work. Robinson, though deficient on many points, gives a spirited sketch of what he saw; and most of the facts stated by him may be depended upon.

After the dissolution of the Congress by Tĕrān, (22nd December, 1815), that general was engaged, for some months, in the sort of desultory warfare which was universal, at the time, throughout America. In this he was usually successful, but his efforts were cramped by the want of arms; and, with a view to obtain a supply of these, he deter-

* "Memoirs of the Mexican Revolution, and of General Mina," by W. D. Robinson.

† "Cuadro Historico de la Revolucion de la America, Mexicana." Su autor Don Carlos Maria Bustamante.

mined to undertake a march to the Coast with a part of his force, with the intention of occupying the mouth of the river Gūasācōālcō, where he was to be met by a vessel from the United States. This hazardous attempt was made in July 1816, and, (though unsuccessful) appears to have been conducted in a very masterly manner. Tĕrān set out with an escort of only 300 men. The rest of his corps he left in the fortress of Cĕrrō Cōlōrādō, (a mountain in the vicinity of Tĕhuācān), which he had fortified with extraordinary care, and where he had established a cannon-foundery, and a manufactory of powder. Surprised by the rainy season, he projected, and executed in ten days, with the aid of the Indian population of Tūstĕpĕc, a military road across the marsh leading to Āmĭstān, (seven leagues in extent), which is even now acknowledged by the most scientific men of the day to be a very extraordinary work. From Āmĭstān, he proceeded, on the 7th of September, to Plāyā Vĭcĕntĕ, a depôt for the Veracruz merchants in their trade with Oāxācā: there he was overtaken by a Royalist force of eleven hundred men, under Colonel Tōpĕtĕ, which he defeated on the 10th of September, having selected so favourable a position for the engagement, that it more than compensated for the inferiority of his own numbers. But finding that his plan for occupying Gūasācōālcō was discovered, he returned to Tĕhuācān, where a force of 4,000 men, under Colonel Brāchō, was detached against him by the Viceroy,

by which he was besieged in Cerro Cölörädö, and ultimately compelled to surrender that fortress, on the 21st of January, 1817.

Tērān lived in obscurity, and under the strictest surveillance, at La Puebla, (his life having been secured by the capitulation), until the second Revolution of 1821.

He has since been Minister of War, (in 1823,) and was appointed by the President, Minister Plenipotentiary in England, in 1825. This choice was disapproved of by the Senate, some of the members of which body were induced, by feelings, (I fancy) of a personal nature, to establish what was generally regarded as a very dangerous precedent, by raking up old revolutionary stories, and urging against Teran the dissolution of the Congress, in 1815, as a disqualification for public employment, without reflecting how few men there are, at present, in Mexico, whose conduct, during that stormy period, could support a rigorous investigation.

During the last two years, Tērān has led a very retired life, occupied principally with scientific pursuits, and the mathematics, in which he has always excelled. As an engineer and military chief, few amongst the old Insurgents could be compared with him.

His division was always remarkable for its discipline, and yet, he is said to have possessed the art of inspiring his followers with the warmest attachment to his person. He is still young (about 34),

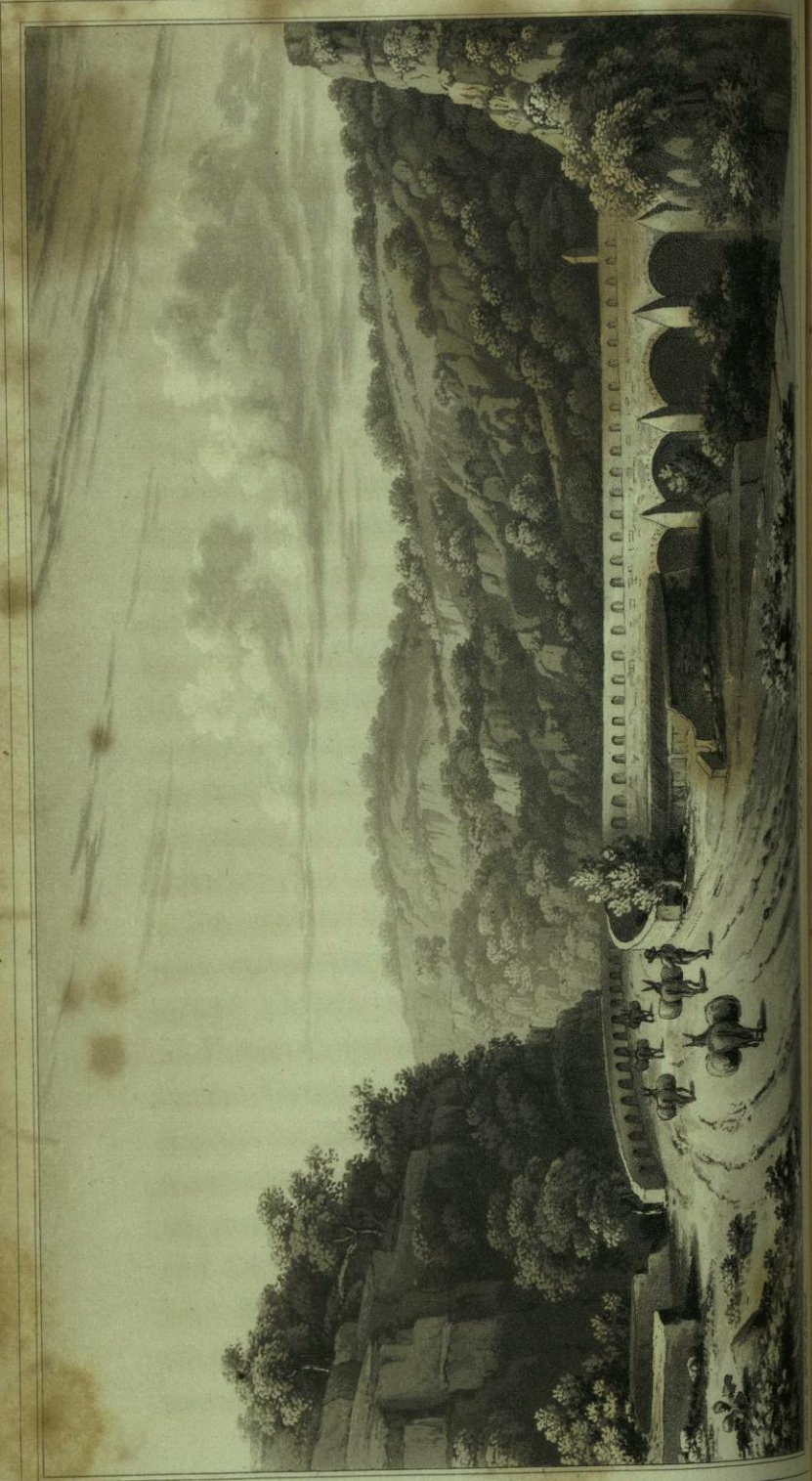
and his talents must, sooner or later, lead him to distinction.

The early career of Rāyōn we have seen in the beginning of this sketch. During the prosperity of Morelos, he acted as one of his lieutenants, but always retained a sort of independent command in the mountainous parts of the province of Vällädölid, where he was supported by the affection of the natives, and by the natural strength of the country. His principal strong-hold was in the Cerro de Cöpörö, where he was besieged, in January 1815, by a formidable Royalist force, under Brigadier Llano, and Iturbide, which retired with loss, after an unsuccessful assault upon the works, on the 4th of March. From this moment Cöpörö became an object of particular attention to the Spanish Government. The country about it was laid waste, in order to deprive the garrison of supplies, and, during the absence of Don Ignacio Rayon, the fortress was again invested by Colonel Āgüirre, to whom it was surrendered on the 2nd of January 1817. Rāyōn himself was soon afterwards taken prisoner by General Armijo, having been deserted by all his adherents, and confined in the Capital until 1821. He has since obtained the rank of General, and holds, at present, a high situation under Government in the Interior.

The fate of Don Nicölās Brāvö was similar to that of his former companions. After the dissolution of the Congress he wandered for some time

over the country, at the head of a small division, without being able to make head against the superior forces by which he was surrounded. On Mina's landing he occupied the mountain of Coporo, which he endeavoured to fortify anew, during the summer of 1817; but he was driven from it by a Royalist division, and, ultimately, taken prisoner by Armijo, (in December 1817,) by whom he was transmitted to the Capital, where he was imprisoned until 1821. After aiding Iturbide to establish the Independence, he declared against him, when he dissolved the Congress, and took a leading part in the contest, by which the Ex-Emperor was deposed. He was afterwards one of the three Members of the Executive Power, and, ultimately, a candidate for the first Presidency with Victoria, under whom he has served as Vice-President during the last three years.

But none of the Insurgent chiefs were pursued with such inveteracy, by the Royal troops, as Guadalupe Victoria, whose position, in the Province of Veracruz, was a constant source of uneasiness to the Viceroy. From the moment that he was deputed by Morelos to take the command on the Eastern line of coast, (1814,) he succeeded in cutting off almost all communication between the Capital, and the only port, through which the intercourse with Europe was, at that time, carried on. This he effected at the head of a force, which seldom exceeded 2000 men; but a perfect acquaintance



with the country, (which is extremely mountainous and intricate,) and an unlimited influence over the minds of his followers, made up for all deficiencies in point of numbers, and rendered Victoria, very shortly, the terror of the Spanish troops.

It was his practice to keep but a small body of men about his person, and only to collect his force upon great occasions: a mode of warfare well suited to the wild habits of the natives, and, at the same time, calculated to baffle all pursuit. The instant a blow was struck, a general dispersion followed: in the event of a failure, a rendezvous was fixed to some distant point; and thus losses were often repaired, before it was known in the Capital that they had been sustained at all.

Not were Victoria's exploits confined to this desultory warfare: in 1815 he detained a convoy of 6000 mules, escorted by 2000 men, under the command of Colonel Aguila, at Puente del Rey, (a pass, the natural strength of which the Insurgents had increased by placing artillery upon the heights, by which it is commanded,) and did it reach Veracruz for upwards of six months. The necessity of keeping the channel of communication with Europe open, induced Calleja, in December 1815, to intrust the chief command, both Civil and Military, of the Province of Veracruz, to Don Fernando Miyar's, (an officer of high rank, and distinguished attainments, recently arrived from Spain,) for the special purpose of establishing a chain of

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fortified posts, on the whole ascent to the Table-land, sufficiently strong to curb Victoria's incursions. The execution of this plan was preceded, and accompanied, by a series of actions between the Insurgents and Royalists, in the course of which Miyares gradually drove Victoria from his strong-holds at Puente del Rey and Puente de San Juan; (September 1815,) and although the latter maintained the unequal struggle for upwards of two years, he never was able to obtain any decisive advantage over the reinforcements, which the Government was continually sending to the seat of war. Two thousand European troops landed with Mīyārēs, and one thousand more with Apōdācā, (in 1816 :) and notwithstanding the desperate efforts of Victoria's men, their courage was of no avail against the superior discipline, and arms, of their adversaries. In the course of the year 1816, most of his old soldiers fell: those by whom he replaced them had neither the same enthusiasm, nor the same attachment to his person. The zeal with which the inhabitants had engaged in the cause of the Revolution was worn out: with each reverse their discouragement increased, and, as the disastrous accounts from the Interior left them but little hope of bringing the contest to a favourable issue, the villages refused to furnish any farther supplies; the last remnant of Victoria's followers deserted him, and he was left absolutely alone. Still, his courage was unsubdued, and his resolution not to yield, on any

terms, to the Spaniards, unshaken. He refused the rank and rewards which Apodaca proffered as the price of his submission, and determined to seek an asylum in the solitude of the forests, rather than accept the *indulto*, on the faith of which so many of the Insurgents yielded up their arms. This extraordinary project was carried into execution with a decision highly characteristic of the man. Unaccompanied by a single attendant, and provided only with a little linen, and a sword, Victoria threw himself into the mountainous district which occupies so large a portion of the Province of Veracruz, and disappeared to the eyes of his countrymen. His after-history is so extremely wild, that I should hardly venture to relate it here, did not the unanimous evidence of his countrymen confirm the story of his sufferings, as I have often heard it from his own mouth.

During the first few weeks, Victoria was supplied with provisions by the Indians, who all knew and respected his name; but Apodaca was so apprehensive that he would again emerge from his retreat, that a thousand men were ordered out, in small detachments, literally to hunt him down. Wherever it was discovered that a village had either received him, or relieved his wants, it was burnt without mercy; and this rigour struck the Indians with such terror, that they either fled at the sight of Victoria, or were the first to denounce the approach of a man, whose presence might prove so fatal to them. For

upwards of six months, he was followed like a wild beast by his pursuers, who were often so near him, that he could hear their imprecations against himself, and Apodaca too, for having condemned them to so fruitless a search. On one occasion, he escaped a detachment, which he fell in with unexpectedly, by swimming a river, which they were unable to cross; and on several others, he concealed himself, when in the immediate vicinity of the Royal troops, beneath the thick shrubs, and creepers, with which the woods of Veracruz abound. At last a story was made up, to satisfy the Viceroy, of a body having been found, which had been recognized as that of Victoria. A minute description was given of his person, which was inserted officially in the Gazette of Mexico, and the troops were recalled to more pressing labours in the Interior.

But Victoria's trials did not cease with the pursuit: harassed, and worn-out, by the fatigues which he had undergone, his clothes torn to pieces, and his body lacerated by the thorny underwood of the Tropics, he was indeed allowed a little tranquillity, but his sufferings were still almost incredible: during the summer, he managed to subsist upon the fruits of which nature is so lavish in those climates; but in winter he was attenuated by hunger, and I have heard him repeatedly affirm, that no repast has afforded him so much pleasure since, as he experienced, after being long deprived of food, in gnawing the bones of horses, or other animals, that he happened

to find dead in the woods. By degrees he accustomed himself to such abstinence, that he could remain four, and even five days, without tasting any thing but water, without experiencing any serious inconvenience; but whenever he was deprived of sustenance for a longer period, his sufferings were very acute.* For thirty months he never tasted bread, nor saw a human being, nor thought, at times, ever to see one again. His clothes were reduced to a single wrapper of cotton, which he found one day, when driven by hunger he had approached nearer than usual to some Indian huts, and this he regarded as an inestimable treasure.

The mode in which Victoria, cut off, as he was, from all communication with the world, received intelligence of the Revolution of 1821, is hardly less extraordinary than the fact of his having been able to support existence amidst so many hardships, during the intervening period.

When in 1818 he was abandoned by all the rest of his men, he was asked by two Indians, who lingered with him to the last, and on whose fidelity he knew that he could rely, if any change took place, where he wished them to look for him? He pointed, in reply, to a mountain at some distance, and

* When first I knew General Victoria, at Veracruz, in 1823, he was unable to eat above once in twenty-four, or even thirty-six hours; and even now, though he conforms with the usual hours of his countrymen, with regard to meals, he is one of the most abstemious of men.