

vestments of his holy office. While on his knees before the representative of the bishop, he listened to the explanation of the causes which led to this painful and humiliating scene. He was then stripped of his sacerdotal garments, and turned over to the civil authorities, after which he was again shackled and taken to his cell.

Ere the first streak of dawn, on July 31, 1811, Hidalgo was summoned to prepare for the closing scene. With the utmost serenity he partook of his last breakfast. He then declared his readiness to go with the guards, and assured them of his forgiveness. So heavily ironed that he could scarcely walk, his courage and fortitude did not for an instant fail him. He even remembered and asked for some sweets left under his pillow, and divided them among the soldiers. The sun had not yet risen and orders had been given that his head should not be mutilated, so he calmly placed his hand over his heart, as a guide for their aim. A platoon fired, wounding only his hand; Hidalgo remained motionless, but continued in prayer. Another volley severed the cords that held him to his seat, and he fell, though still breathing. Life was only extinguished when the soldiers had fired three more volleys near his breast, the veneration in which he was held doubtless interfering with the accuracy of their aim. Heroic to the last, thus died Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, and the fame of the Washington of Mexico, as he is called, grows brighter with succeeding generations.

Allende, Jimenez, Aldama, and Santa Maria had met the deaths of martyrs to the cause of liberty on June 26. The next day Chico and three others were shot, all meeting their death bravely, though forced to kneel like traitors and receive the fire of the musketry in their backs. Those who were priests were first stripped of their sacerdotal robes; then, after death, each one was dressed in the habit of his order and laid away with becoming respect.

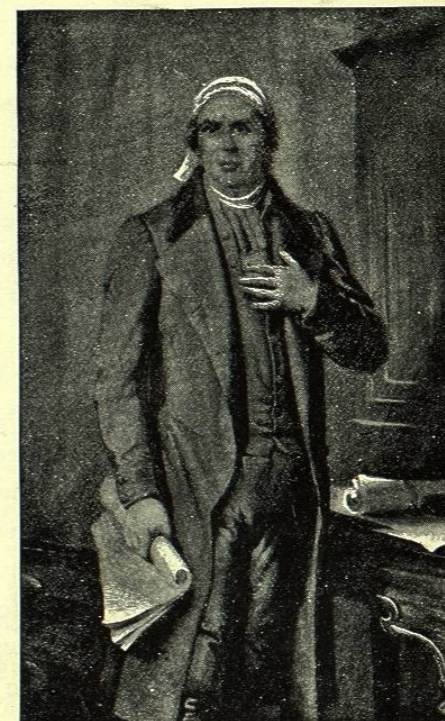
The heads of Hidalgo, Allende, Jimenez, and Aldama were placed in the four angles of the public storehouse in Guanajuato. Their bodies, however, were deposited in the chapel of the Franciscans, where they remained until 1823, when Congress ordered them, with

their heads, to be placed in the cathedral at the capital with all the honors a grateful country could bestow.

JOSÉ MARIA MORELOS.

The death of Hidalgo left the leadership to Morelos, then operating in the southwest, whose superior genius designated him as a fitting successor. Posterity delights in knowing the birthplace of distinguished men, but on this point authorities differ with regard to Morelos. Some claim Valladolid, others Apatzingan; but from his having spent a great part of his early youth in and near the former city, it is generally conceded to be the place of his nativity. His youth and early manhood were passed in hardy outdoor occupation, and although he was studious and ambitious, it was not until the age of thirty-two that he entered the college of San Nicolas, where he studied philosophy under Hidalgo, and, in accordance with his inclination, prepared for the priesthood. He became *cura* of different small towns near by, and his frugal habits enabled him at a later period to purchase a plain home in Valladolid.

At the time of becoming a soldier Morelos was forty-five years old. On receiving his commission from Hidalgo he went to his curacy and there collected twenty-five trustworthy men, whom he armed with muskets, and began the march to the southwest. I have looked on much of that barren territory of several hun-



JOSÉ MARIA MORELOS.

dred miles, and wondered how in those perilous times he could have traversed it safely with his little band. At the various towns and hamlets, however, he received reinforcements, and sometimes whole militia companies seceded to him; but these were undrilled and unarmed. With this crude material and humble beginning Morelos inaugurated a thorough and systematic course of instruction in military tactics; so that in less than two months he had not only a well-drilled force of two thousand men, but had also inspired them with much of his own ardor and patriotism. He believed more in a small force with efficiency than in large numbers without discipline. His army continued to increase, and one victory led to another; he often took by surprise Spanish garrisons, imprisoning their leaders, and inducing the troops to unite with him. With this army he contended again and again successfully with the first commanders of the time and the country.

Indeed, the tide of events had so favored him that he naturally felt that the great cause of independence was assured. This was accentuated when, in the latter part of 1811, he was joined by Mariano Matamoros, another Indian priest, who, from the evident force of his character, would lend valuable aid to the great work. Morelos made him a colonel, and together they waged the war more vigorously than ever. If one considers the previous lives of these men, the genius they displayed must appear the more extraordinary. Their special talent was latent until it burst forth in those brilliant actions which startled the world. The military ability of Morelos elicited encomiums from one of the greatest captains of the age—Wellington; while Matamoros is described by Alaman as the most active and successful leader of the insurrection.

The first great event after Matamoros joined Morelos, occurred at Cuantla, where the latter had intrenched himself. Here General Calleja, in command of the royalist forces, being repulsed with heavy loss, determined to besiege the town. For this purpose a second Spanish force was sent out, and the siege was continued for nearly three months without reducing their defenses or diminishing the

ardor and resolution of the patriots. Famine attacked them, and they were driven to the necessity of eating worm-eaten hides; but capitulation meant certain death, despite the offers of pardon made by the viceroy. All now seemed favorable for Calleja to capture the whole army, but notwithstanding his military prowess and reputation, with an ample supply of men and munitions of war, the Indian priest completely outwitted him. With masterly strategy Morelos withdrew from the town at night, and had been gone two hours before Calleja knew of his departure.

In September, 1813, Morelos called the first Congress at Chilpanzingo, the first act of which confirmed his title of Generalissimo, and a month later independence was declared.

It is not possible in this brief sketch to chronicle or enumerate his brilliant victories, in many of which he was aided by such chiefs as Matamoros, Galeana, the Bravos, Guadalupe Victoria, and Guerrero, most of whom figured afterward in the history of the country.

The city of Valladolid was a desirable point for the headquarters of either army, being in the center of a wealthy and populous country. Morelos approached its confines, and stretched his infantry in a line in front of the city, while the cavalry occupied the hill of Santa Maria. Here it was that he met with an overwhelming defeat at the hands of Colonel Iturbide, from which he never recovered. Soon after, he lost his chief support by the capture of Matamoros, who was executed on February 3d following, in the public square of Valladolid, now called Morelia in honor of Morelos. From this time Morelos met with a succession of defeats and reverses until November 16, 1815, when he was taken prisoner, contending with characteristic bravery against an overwhelming force. He was carried to the capital, tried, and degraded from the ranks of the clergy, the bishop shedding tears during this last ceremony. He was then conveyed to San Cristobal, a village north of the lake, where the closing scene was to be enacted. Having said the last prayer, Morelos himself bandaged his eyes, and was led forth bound, and dragging his shackles. He complied with the order to kneel, murmuring calmly, "Lord, thou knowest if I have

done well: if ill, I implore thy infinite mercy." "The next moment he fell, shot in the back, passing, through a traitor's death, into the sphere of patriot-martyr and hero immortal."

Among the many historic places that I visited, none interested me more than the house of Morelos in Morelia. In the drawing-room I saw a finely executed portrait, placed there by the *Junta Patriótica* (Patriotic Club) in 1858. In this the expression of the face shows that blending of firmness, energy, frankness, and magnetism, which distinguished him, as well as the humor and gravity of his character, and other evidences of the genius of this remarkable man.

In the same room there hangs a frame containing a piece of the silk handkerchief which served to blindfold him before his execution at San Cristobal. At the bottom of the frame I read with pathetic interest these lines :

" This is the venerated relic,  
The mournful bandage with which the tyrant  
Hid the gaze of Morelos,  
When the martyr of the Mexican people  
Offered to his beloved country  
His precious life as a sacrifice."

In front of the house is a commemorative tablet with this inscription :

" Illustrious Morelos ! Immortal hero !  
In this mansion which thy presence  
once honored,  
the grateful people of Morelia  
salute you.  
September 16, 1881."

It will be seen that in the portrait of Morelos a handkerchief is wound around the head. This somewhat eccentric habit of his was adopted as a measure of relief from headache, to which he was subject. His frame was massive and in harmonious development corre-

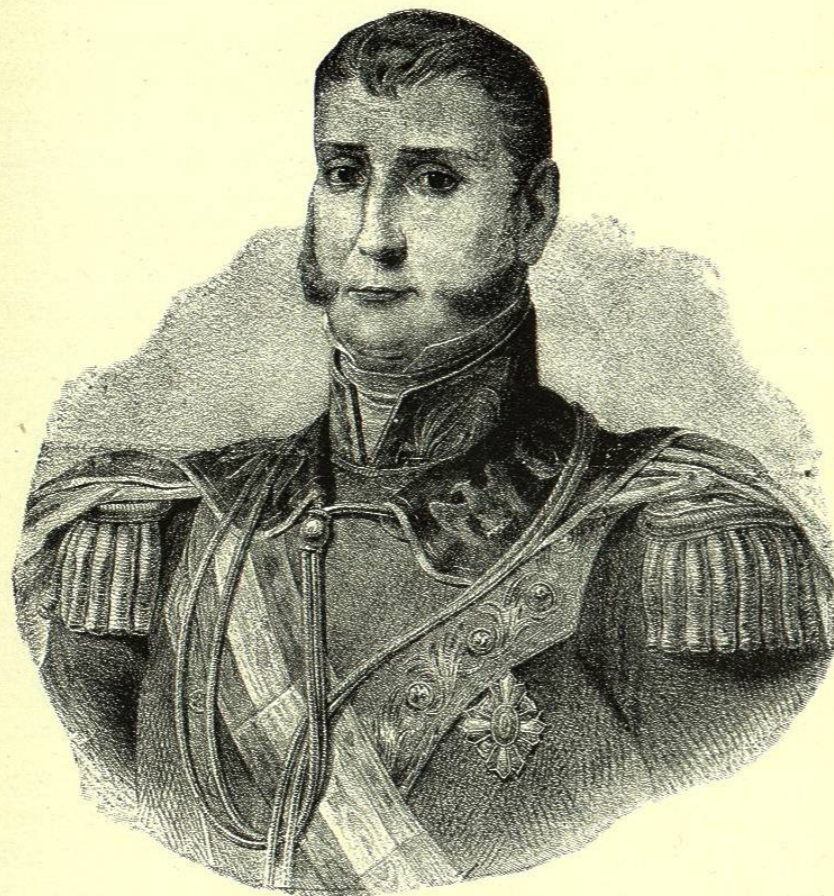
sponded with his head. He was consistent in everything, and recognizing the fact that war was a cruel necessity, he spared neither himself, his friends, nor his enemies. His piety was sincere and unostentatious, and throughout the five years of arduous service in behalf of his country, he did not omit his religious duties. He never went into an engagement without previously confessing himself; but after his first battle, always delegated to the chaplain the celebration of mass.

THE EMPEROR AUGUSTIN DE ITURBIDE.

With feelings of more than ordinary interest I now turn to a contemplation of the life of Augustin de Iturbide. A peculiar chain of circumstances has associated his memory intimately with my own experiences and first days spent in Mexico, imparting a flavor of romantic interest to the details that follow.

It will be remembered that in exploring the immense old house in which I lived, my curiosity was richly rewarded by the discovery of the dust-covered and cobwebbed portrait of a beautiful woman. The soft eyes beamed on me from the painted canvas and the lips parted as if to speak. For two years it remained a mystery, but at length I ascertained that it was the portrait of Doña Ana, the beautiful wife of the Emperor Iturbide. More than two years passed, and I again returned to the land of the Aztecs; even now scarcely expecting to tread the soil which had nurtured both Iturbide and Doña Ana. But I had not only the pleasure of visiting at Morelia the identical houses in which they were born and reared, but also had the happiness of enjoying the acquaintance and friendship of, with one exception, the last living and only descendants of this handsome and distinguished pair. Augustin de Iturbide was fifteen when his father died, and the management of large estates devolved upon him.

His parents were of noble birth from Navarre, in old Spain; but Augustin was a native of Mexico, having been born at Morelia, September 27, 1783. He was married, at twenty-two, to the lovely Doña Ana Maria Huerte, also of a distinguished Spanish family. The same



THE EMPEROR AUGUSTIN DE ITURBIDE.