

XXXIX.

Morelos y Pavon.

The noble work of Hidalgo, the hero of Dolores, was continued by the distinguished Mexican patriot Don Jose Maria Morelos, who was born in Valladolid on the 30th of September 1765; his parents, Don Manuel Morelos and Doña Juana Pavon occupying a modest but honorable position in the social world.

Morelos was educated in San Nicolas College under the rectorship of Hidalgo. After his ordination he was twice out in charge of a Parish *per interim* and was finally made Parish-Priest, and theological examiner in his own right, of Caracuaro and Nircupétaro.

Hidalgo, who knew the patriotic feelings of his pupil of old, had entrusted him with the organization of the revolutionary movement in the South of Mexico. Morelos lost no time in mustering a number of followers

and on the 8th of December 1810 his first engagement with the enemy took place on the Veladero Mountains where he took the Spanish leader Paris by surprise, defeating him with only 700 men, and securing a number of prisoners as well as arms, munitions and the sinews of war of which he was still deficient.

This courageous and patriotic priest waged an unceasing war against the Spaniards during five years; he had at one time as many as 20,000 men under his command, and was victorious in several engagements, until he was finally defeated, made a prisoner in the battle of Yezmalaca, sent to Mexico and shot in the Village of San Cristobal de Ecatepec on the 22nd of December 1815.

It must be stated here to the glory of this celebrated priest and patriot that he could have saved himself from imprisonment and death had he not purposely dallied on the battle field for the purpose of saving the members of the Provisional Government together with its archives and treasury.

Morelos was one of the most energetic, industrious and able leaders of the whole revolutionary war. Upright, honest and fair

with friend or foe, an able tactician, a great judge of human nature and possessed of that magnetic influence which enables a man to carry conviction to the minds of all whom he encounters, he managed to recruit armies, conquer provinces, establish the first form of republican government in Mexico, bring war to the doors of the Capital City itself and would have saved years of strife and bloodshed had he been given sole control of the national forces.

Allende! Hidalgo! Morelos! three names dear to the mexican heart, three martyrs sacrificed on the national altar, three stars shining in the blue sky of Aztec land, which should lead the young generations through life in the path of duty, honor and patriotism!

J. S. H.

XL.

Iturbide

General D. Agustin Iturbide was born in the City of Valladolid (Now Morelia) on the

27th of September 1783; his parents Don Joaquin de Iturbide and Doña Josepha de Aramburu were members of Mexico's most select society.

In 1798, after having followed the course of studies of the Seminary in his native City, he enlisted in the army as Ensign and fought against the patriots in the war of independence until the end of 1820 when he decided to join the ranks of the liberal cause. At that time he was already a Colonel, commanding the Southern division of the army and very popular with the rank and file of the royal forces which he finally brought over to the cause of independence.

On the 24th of February 1821, he proclaimed the independence of Mexico in the town of Iguala, and concerting with the Generals of the united forces, he opened the campaign which finally liberated the mexican people from the Spanish yoke. From that day on victory stood with the cause of the people, and, after a few engagements with the troops of the Viceroy, Iturbide marched triumphantly into Mexico City at the head of the national army on the 27th of September 1821 amidst the rejoicings of the whole people.

After fourteen years of struggle, after sacrificing the lives of its beloved sons on the altar of liberty, after having covered with blood the breadth of its land, Mexico, at last had broken the shackles of slavery, and stood an independent and a free nation!

All honor to those who led the national forces to victory! All honor especially to the numberless unknown heroes who quietly sacrificed their fortunes and their lives for the cause, and whose deeds of valor and abnegation remain unrecorded!

Iturbide organized the government of the country in accordance with the Iguala proclamation, but only after he had altered it to suit his own purposes, and in such a manner that he was able to have himself proclaimed Emperor of Mexico by a *coup d'etat* headed by the army of which he was Commander in Chief.—Soon afterwards he dissolved Congress which threatened to dethrone him, and thus became, as he thought, master of the situation.

But the spirit of liberty was with the people and the heroes who had fought Spain and its monarchical form of government were not going to stand even one of their own as a

Dictator. More bloodshed, more valor and more heroism were needed and these were not wanting when liberty claimed its rights in the Aztec land. The battle was fought and won. Congress reasserted its rights, the usurpator was wrenched from power and banished for life under penalty of death.

Blinded by the insatiable ambition of grand-*eurs* whose prey he had been for years Iturbide returned with the hope of regaining his influence over his countrymen, but the Government was inflexible and he was shot on the plaza of the Village of Padilla, Tamaulipas, on the 19th of July 1823.

The man who had been a traitor to the Spanish Government whilst in command of its troops, and who had incited his own soldiers to desert their standard could not be expected to be true to the new born republican government when his own interests were at stake.

However severe may have been the penalty imposed upon him who had finally freed his country from spanish control, it must be admitted that peace and liberty had to be secured at any price.

America was born free and is freedom's

natural home! No emperors! No dictators! No privileged classes! An open field to all intelligences, a free course for all; equal rights, equal duties; equal possibilities, equal responsibilities! these are the sacred privileges of all American citizens throughout the whole western hemisphere, and no sacrifice is too great when they are to be upheld.

J. S. H.

XLI.

Juarez.

Benito Juarez was born in 1809 in the State of Oaxaca which is mostly inhabited by Indians of which race he was a descendant. Poor and without protection, he had to fight his way through all sorts of obstacles and difficulties; but his constancy finally brought him to the fore; he first became Attorney at Law, then was called to the Bar and so far distinguished himself in his profession that he attracted the attention of the political leaders of that period who desired to give their coun-

try the benefit of his brilliant talents.

In 1856 he was elected by his native state as its representative to the national Congress, and, in the following year, he was appointed President of the Supreme Court of Justice, which appointment, in case of an interim, gave him the title and privileges of Vice-President of the Republic.

The public life of Juarez dates from that period. He played a very important part in the civil war, and again in that which he led with so much brilliancy against the French troops sent by Napoleon to uphold the imperial throne of Maximilian. After the latter had paid with his life the penalty of his intrusion, Juarez was re-elected President of the Republic; he immediately convened Congress and worked hard and faithfully to repair the losses caused by the preceding wars.

Juarez arose from the humblest station in life to the highest office in the hands of the people. It was he who finally secured to Mexico the inestimable boon of liberty, and the republican form of government under which it is now progressing: having delivered his country of the possible attempts of any and all of the European powers for ever. He