

forming a project, in London, in its favour. This brave youth had rendered eminent services to his native country, and had been a principal instrument in frustrating the designs of the emperor Napoleon with regard to Spain. In what manner his distinguished services were requited by the ungrateful Ferdinand, the following chapter will explain.

Prior to Mina's departure from London, he had received some accounts of the disasters in Mexico, which we have briefly noticed: but, so far from his ardour being damped by the unpropitious intelligence, it appeared to furnish him with new incentives to resume his deeds of hardihood and valour, in the cause of an oppressed people. The constancy of this high-minded Spaniard, struggling with obstacles almost insurmountable, has rarely been equalled—never excelled.

The reader will find, in the annexed biographical sketch of Mina, and in the relation of his daring exploits in Mexico, the portrait of a hero worthy of occupying, on the page of history, a distinguished rank among the martyrs of liberty.

CHAPTER III.

General Mina—His early life, and career in Spain—His motives for embarking in the cause of Mexico—Arrival at, and transactions in Baltimore—Departure of the Expedition—Occurrences at Port au Prince—Arrival of the Expedition at Galvezton—Treachery of Correa—Departure of the Expedition from Galvezton, and its arrival off the bar of the River Santander—Disembarkation of the Division.

DON XAVIER MINA was born in the month of December, 1789. He was the eldest son of a well-born and respected proprietary, whose domains lay near the town of Monreal, in the kingdom of Navarre. Brought up among the mountains of his native province, he was accustomed to wander through their rich valleys, and to pursue the chase amidst the grandeur of the Pyrenees. His faculties, thus nurtured and exercised, expanded themselves at an early period, while his mind imbibed all the energy of an unconquerable boldness. The wild aspect, the rugged scenery of an Alpine country, and the cheerful and buoyant feelings they ex-

cite, are well known to have a powerful effect upon the formation of character. It is there that the simple mountaineer, removed from the influence of the refinements of society, escapes its corruption; and we find the elevated valley "dignified as the abode of bravery and virtue." It is there, that the elements of great and noble daring are cherished; that patriotism is a feeling of spontaneous growth; and thence have sprung those heroic spirits, whose exalted deeds have shed a lustre on humanity.

The early studies of Mina were pursued at Pampeluna and at Zaragoza. In 1808, at the commencement of the resistance of the Spaniards to the French invasion, he was a student in the university of Zaragoza. At that period, between eighteen and nineteen years of age, he felt the strong enthusiasm of the times. When the massacre at Madrid, of the 2d of May, shook all Spain, and the cry of vengeance was heard from the Ebro to the Guadiana, he abandoned his studies, joined the army of the north of Spain as a volunteer, and was present at the battles of Alcornes, Maria, and Belchite. The events of that period are still fresh in our remembrance — the general rising of the Spanish nation, and the awakening of the heroism of the Spanish people from the slumber in

which it had been spell-bound since the days of Charles V.

Irritated by the capture of his armies, Napoleon, at this time, began to pour fresh troops into Spain; and it became particularly important to the Spaniards to have a communication with France, as the means of procuring intelligence. The gallant young Mina undertook the enterprise. Availing himself of his knowledge of the country, the peasantry, and the passes of the mountains, he executed it with complete success; establishing a secret communication with the provinces of France adjacent to the Pyrenees, by which much valuable information of what was passing in France was obtained by the Spanish generals.

The Spanish armies, however, were unable to cope with the numerous and veteran troops with which Napoleon overspread the country; and, being defeated in every regular encounter, they retreated before the French.

The Catalonian army, after the defeat at Belchite, a town to the southward of Zaragoza, fell back to Tortosá, while the French occupied a line extending, in the direction of the southern frontier of Arragon, into Catalonia.

It was in this gloomy situation of affairs, that Xavier Mina formed a determination, which

had the most important effects, not only upon his own fortune in life, but upon the whole war in Spain. He resolved to pass through the line of the French position, and, gaining his native province of Navarre, to make its mountains and fastnesses the theatre of his hostile operations; to hang on the rear of the invaders, to intercept their convoys and couriers, and to cut off their straggling detachments.

In an evening walk he first communicated, to a friend and kinsman, his plans and schemes; and unfolded, with enthusiasm, his hopes and fears, and visions of glory. His kinsman heard him to the end in silence; and then, pointing to a gibbet which stood near, "If you succeed, it will be great: if you fail, there is your portion," was his reply. In answer to his solicitation to be permitted to put his plans in execution, the Spanish general told him it would only be throwing away his life, as he would be cut off from the army. "*I do not,*" said Mina, "*think I am cut off, so long as I can find a path for my horse.*" Finally, he left Tortosá with *twelve men*, and, passing with skill through the line occupied by the French army, arrived in Navarre. Of those twelve, one is at present a lieutenant; another has retired with nine wounds; and the rest fell in battle.

The first attempt of Mina was upon a small guard of a dozen French. He attacked them with about twenty men, and captured them without much resistance. The next was on a party of thirty men. The Spaniards, who had nearly the same number, lay concealed behind a stone wall; upon the approach of the enemy, they rose and fired. In the contest which ensued, a tall grenadier fired at Mina with deliberate aim, and, taking shelter behind a tree, encouraged his party. But the Spaniards, leaping the wall, rushed on, and settled the combat with their sabres. This successful beginning produced the most important results. The spirits of the peasantry were roused; many successful adventures took place; the French foraging parties were cut to pieces; their convoys attacked and plundered; and their couriers intercepted. The Spanish government had scarcely finished their rejoicing for the first successes of Mina, when they were again surprised by his sending them a large body of prisoners, among whom was a lieutenant-colonel; and, at another time, *seven hundred* prisoners, with a quantity of military equipments, stores, and money.

The French were not passive spectators of these chivalrous exploits. Upwards of thirty

individuals, nearly or remotely connected with Mina's family, were suddenly arrested, and sent into France. War, with all the meliorations introduced by modern civilization, is sufficiently terrible to a reflecting mind; but it is in those political struggles, where the relations and kindred of an individual are made answerable for his opinions and acts, that it comes armed with its severest afflictions. Among the relatives of Mina, thus torn from their country, was an accomplished young lady, the object of his early attachment. Separated from each other, time, and the waves of an adverse fortune, bore them still farther asunder, and their mutual affection, the sport of this cruel destiny, was overwhelmed and lost for ever.

Repeated expeditions were undertaken to destroy Mina; but the affections of every peasant being with him, and having correct intelligence of every movement, he was enabled, not only to baffle and elude his enemy, but frequently coming on them by surprise, to defeat and destroy his pursuers. When he found their forces too numerous to be openly resisted, he appointed a place of rendezvous, dispersed his band, and, separating from each other, they eluded pursuit. The armed mountaineers retired to their homes, or to secret recesses, and

there waited till their leader gave the signal; when, suddenly re-appearing, they seemed to spring from the earth, like the men of Cadmus, a legion of soldiers. Mina, with a select band, the nucleus of his army, retired to the mountains. A hill, near his father's mansion, was his principal retreat. He was familiar with its fastnesses, and solitary recesses; and the neglected flocks of his own family furnished him and his brave companions with food. When he determined on striking a blow, he gathered his forces, like a tempest on the mountain-top, and, descending in terror, swept the province to the very gates of Pampeluna.

In this manner was begun the insurrection in the province of Navarre. From this period, bands of guerillas were organized throughout the country. Thus commenced that system, which was the great means of keeping up the spirit of desperate animosity, and which became, eventually, the principal means of delivering Spain from her invaders. The accounts of Mina's successes ran through the country, and produced a powerful excitement in the minds of the people. He was thence soon enabled to raise a respectable division of troops, whose numbers were increased by the peasantry, whenever it was contemplated to strike a blow.

The central junta of Seville conferred on him the rank of colonel, and, soon after, the dignity of commandant-general of Navarre. The junta of Arragon also appointed him commanding general of Upper Arragon. He won these honours most gallantly by his sword, in a gloomy and desperate hour; they were confirmed to him by his country; and he continued his brilliant career, lighting up an hostility and daring resistance, which has made the French invasion of Spain one of the most remarkable events in the history of modern Europe.

In the winter of 1810-11, Mina was directed by the Spanish government to destroy, if possible, an iron foundry near Pampeluna, from which the French were supplied with a number of articles for the service of the war. Whether it was from one of those accidents which no prudence can foresee, or that the enemy had obtained information of his movements, this unfortunate enterprise was fatal to Mina. Two strong bodies of French troops, on their march in contrary directions, arrived at the same time at the two entrances of a narrow valley. Mina and his corps, who were then in the defile, were completely inclosed. The fight that ensued was obstinate and bloody. The gallant Mina, defending himself with his sword, fell, pierced

with wounds, a prisoner, into the hands of the enemy.

Thus ended the rapid but brilliant career of Xavier Mina in Spain. Fortune, as if jealous of the skill and heroism which threatened to raise him above her capricious favours, played him false at last. But the spirit he had raised was still alive; the rage of his warrior mountaineers was kindled, and they chose one of his family to lead them to revenge. His uncle *Espoz* was the chief whom they selected, and he proved himself worthy of so high a trust. He stands first among those, whose names are chaunted through Spain, in the hymns of triumph of a delivered people. He watched faithfully through the dark and perilous night, which overhung his country; and when the morning of her deliverance broke, *Espoz* was seen chasing the last Frenchman from Spain. But let not the full glory of the uncle diminish that of the nephew. Xavier Mina was less fortunate, but not less deserving, than *Espoz*. *Ego feci, tulit alter honores*. It was Xavier, who first taught the mountaineers of his province where to strike at the invader, and gave system to their irregular valour. He encouraged, by his successes, the Spaniards to follow his daring example; he braved the terrors of Napoleon's

vengeance; and opened, with his sword, the path which led to the deliverance of his country. He was not one and twenty when taken prisoner. What might not have been expected from this heroic youth, if his career had been continued?

Mina was taken to Paris, after his capture, and shut up in the castle of Vincennes. The afflictions, which press upon the unfortunate state prisoner, were aggravated to him, by the care with which all intelligence of the fate of his relations and struggling country was concealed from him. His hair fell off, and his person was completely changed. In time, however, the rigours of his imprisonment were softened, and books were given to him. He applied himself, with great industry, to the study of the military art, in which he derived great assistance from some of the veteran officers who were his fellow-prisoners. He remained in Vincennes till the allied armies entered France; nor was he set at liberty until the general peace, which took place upon the abdication of the emperor Napoleon.

It is well known, that king Ferdinand, on his return to Spain, was met by a deputation, bearing for his approval the constitution under which Spain had been governed during the

captivity of the king—a constitution that was founded on the basis of a meliorated and limited monarchy. It was formed to meet the liberal opinions of enlightened Spaniards, and those changes which the age, and modern ideas, demanded. One, out of the many instances of this melioration, may be cited from article No. 304, which for ever abolishes all confiscation of the property of the person condemned for crimes against the state; and the humane reason assigned is, that confiscation is a punishment of the innocent children, and not of the criminal. Nor will the merit of this distinction be fully appreciated, until we reflect that there is scarcely a state or kingdom in Europe, in which the contrary doctrine is not held.

The conduct of Ferdinand, on his return to Spain, is well known to the world. The sympathies of the liberal and enlightened, once so strong in his favour, in every country, have been destroyed by the persecution of the Cortes, and the proscription of the patriot leaders; by the prohibition of foreign books and journals; by the destruction of the opening sources of national improvement; and by the revival of the Inquisition, with its demon train of judicial murders and midnight tortures. The dungeons of the Holy Office—the fortifications and galleys,

in which soldiers of honour were condemned to work with the vilest criminals—and the list of banishments, confiscations, and executions, forcibly shew, in what manner bigotry and political interest will destroy the most generous feelings, and sanction the vilest ingratitude.

Being conspicuous members of the party of *Liberales*, or *Constitutionalists*, the two Minas soon experienced the displeasure of the court, and the frowns of the king. Xavier, however, was offered the command of the military forces in Mexico, a situation next to that of the viceroy of New Spain. He declined it; and, being apprehensive of the consequences, retired into Navarre. Espoz y Mina, who still remained at the head of his mountain warriors in Navarre, immediately received an order, depriving him of his command. Matters being thus brought to a crisis, it was determined by the two Minas to raise the standard of the Cortes and the constitution. They had no time to form any extensive plan. It was agreed to strike immediately, before the order depriving Espoz of his command should be publicly known. The details of this bold attempt are interesting, and present some features of romance; but we can only glance slightly at them. While Espoz was to put his troops in motion, that he might arrive,

at a concerted hour, under the walls of Pampe-luna, Xavier Mina entered the fortress. There, he soon communicated with a few officers, who were known to him, and whose sentiments were favourable to the Cortes. Popular in the whole Spanish army, and his name endeared to those soldiers of freedom, he selected a few of them to be his guests at a convivial banquet. After supper, as the time drew nigh, Mina rose up suddenly amidst them; addressed them in a nervous and enthusiastic harangue; unfolded the ingratitude and injustice of the court; and, finally, exhorted them to give the blessings of freedom to the country they had saved. The effect was electric and complete. They arose, and crossing their swords, as they stood around the banqueting table, swore to be faithful. The sentinels on the appointed bastion were withdrawn; the ladders were fixed; and, from the dead of night, almost till the dawn, they waited, with breathless anxiety, the approach of the troops under Espoz y Mina. Had they then arrived, a new æra, pregnant with important events, would have opened on Spain.

The causes which led to the failure of this enterprise were partly accidental, and implicate the policy, not the bravery, of Espoz. It is now understood, that the troops, instead of being

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excited and stimulated for such an occasion, by his orders were rigidly kept from liquor and refreshment. They were altogether ignorant of the reason and nature of an expedition, so strange to them, in time of peace; and, after marching till a late hour in the night, they began to murmur. Some confusion arose in a corps whose commander was unpopular; the march was delayed; a nocturnal tumult ensued; and the soldiers lay down in scattered parties in the fields, or wandered in search of refreshments. Espoz, who had rode on a-head, found, on his return, in the darkness of the night, a scene of confusion, to remedy which all his exertions were baffled. It was irremediable, and the opportunity was lost. The confederates in Pampluna speedily received the fatal intelligence, and immediately quitted the fortress.

Although the Spaniards are accustomed to obedience, and "the king's name is a tower of strength," yet, on this occasion, they scorned to do any injury to their generals. Xavier Mina traversed the whole province in safety, collected all those friends whom he thought might be compromised by his attempt, and entered France in full uniform, with thirty officers. He was arrested by the orders of the French government, and imprisoned near Bayonne; but was after-

wards liberated, and passed over to England. From the British government he received a liberal pension—we believe, two thousand pounds sterling per annum.

During his stay in England, he was treated by several eminent personages with flattering attentions; but particularly by an English nobleman, alike distinguished for his attachment to the cause of freedom throughout the world, and his urbanity to strangers. By this nobleman, Mina was made acquainted with General Scott, of the army of the United States, then on a visit to England. He was also furnished with a ship, arms, and military stores, by some English gentlemen attached to the cause of freedom, to enable him to prosecute an enterprise he had been some time meditating, against the kingdom of Mexico, as the quarter whence the most severe blow could be struck against the tyranny of Ferdinand.

Mina, in drawing his sword in favour of the independence of Mexico, considered he was espousing a cause consonant with those sacred principles for which he became an exile. Power and place might have been his, if he had chosen to float in the eddy of court favour; but his character and principles forbade him. He believed, with many philosophers of the last