

century, and with some of the enlightened men of his own country, that the treasures of the New World had a fatal effect on the prosperity and glory of Spain; he cannot, therefore, be justly accused of doing a wilful injury to his own country. Nor did he owe allegiance to the ungrateful Ferdinand. An exile, cut off from every tie, by the act of a sovereign who had set a price upon his head, there was no longer any ligament to bind him to the throne of Ferdinand, nor any rule, even in the forgotten code of villainage, to forbid his embarking in the glorious cause of the emancipation of Mexico. He did not, like Coriolanus, league with his country's enemies, nor, like Eugene, devote himself to a foreign court. Defeated in his attempt to uphold the Cortes, and the cause of Spanish freedom in Europe, he devoted himself to the cause of liberty in America. He boldly entered on a dangerous and desperate path of toil, bearing in his view the prospect of that fate, which once menaced Hancock and Washington, and which overtook Fitzgerald and Emmett.

The pretensions of Spain to the dominion and rule of the vast regions of the New World, are too lofty and extravagant for the jurists of the nineteenth century. The time has gone by,

when the decrees of the court of Madrid, and the bulls of a Pope, are to be obeyed and worshipped as infallible mandates, by sixteen millions of the human race, on the continent of America. Spain has, it is true, by a watchful jealousy, by the discouragement of learning, of commerce, and of improvement, by a persecuting hierarchy, and by the dreadful tribunal of the Inquisition, bound the inhabitants of Spanish America in strong fetters. But, the voice of that spirit which echoed along the Allegany in 1776, has already been heard on the Table Land of Mexico, is now rolling among the Andes, and will, ere long, break the chains of servitude for ever.

We are aware, that many circumstances, which gave a peculiar character to the contest of the North American colonies for independence, do not exist with regard to the South Americans. The English and Spanish colonies were planted in a manner as widely different, as the characters of Cortez and Pizarro were from those of Sir Walter Raleigh and William Penn. On the basis of equal laws, trial by jury, liberty of person, conscience, and speech, a beautiful fabric of society had been erected in the British American colonies; and the declaration of independence was the Corinthian



capital, which decorated and finished the columns of the temple.

The revolutions in Spanish America, on the contrary, are at this moment affording a signal proof of the effect of early dispositions implanted in nations, and perhaps (although the opinion may not be in accordance with the sentiments of some modern philosophers) of the punishment which national crime prepares for posterity. The predictions of the benevolent and venerable Las Casas have already been fulfilled. A desolating civil war has acquired, from the oppression of a tyrannic government, and the cruel disposition which has been encouraged in the mass of the people, uncommon features of horror. The frequent refusal of quarter, the sacrifice of persons in cold blood, the proscription and destruction of whole districts, the mutilations and butchery of females and children, avenge, terribly avenge the sufferings of the simple and peaceable aborigines, as well as the outrages under which the Creoles have been so long groaning.

It is a political fact, now admitted to be true in its utmost extent, that the government of Spain, over her American colonies, was worse than any other recorded in the page of history. In vain have her apologists referred us to the

ponderous volumes of "*Las Leyes de las Indias*," or to her ecclesiastical regulations, for proofs of her moderation and wisdom. We have an unerring and melancholy proof, in the past and present condition of society in those regions, of the pestilential influence of the Spanish government. It has, in every way, tended to awe, to depress, and to brutalize the people; to cut off all means of improvement; to destroy in its infancy every germ of melioration; and to deprive them of the many physical blessings which their great country afforded them.

In the vast empire of New Spain, containing nearly seven millions of people, there is but one public journal, and that newspaper is printed under the immediate control of a vigilant and jealous government. No foreign or domestic intelligence is ever inserted in this paper, but such as comports with the spirit and policy of the government. In this state of wretchedness and ignorance has the great mass of society been kept, in Spanish America, for near three hundred years. A great change, however, has taken place within the last ten years; and every friend of humanity must rejoice, that the emancipation of South America and Mexico, from Spanish thralldom, is an event now no longer doubtful. It may be retarded to a period more



distant than many sanguine friends of the cause suppose; but every day unfolds new evidences, not only of the impracticability of Spain ever re-subjugating such of the colonies as are already in open revolt, but also of the very precarious tenure on which she holds her dominion over certain sections that still acknowledge her sovereignty.

This important fact will be more clearly developed in the following narrative of Mina's expedition; and although the gallant youth and his brave companions have been sacrificed, they have perished in a noble cause. We shall demonstrate, by a plain statement of the extraordinary circumstances relating to that expedition, that had Mina landed with fifteen hundred or two thousand soldiers, instead of *two hundred and seventy*, in any part of the Mexican kingdom, he could have marched direct upon the city of Mexico, and overturned the Spanish government almost without a struggle. We are aware, that this assertion will surprise those who are uninformed of the character and feelings of the Mexican people; and we are likewise aware, that the truths we are about to develop, will be a source of mortification to the pride of the Spanish government; but, be that as it may, we pledge ourselves for the fidelity of the nar-

ration, and leave the intelligent reader to draw his own conclusions.

General Mina had originally intended, and made his arrangements, to proceed direct to the Mexican coast, conceiving that the inhabitants generally would rise in his favour; but, altering his plan a short time previous to his departure, in consequence of a part of his plans in Europe being frustrated, and some information that he received from a respectable source, he sailed from England, for the Chesapeake, in the month of May, 1816, accompanied by thirteen Spanish and Italian, and two English officers.

After a passage of forty-six days, the ship arrived in Hampton Roads. The general disembarked at Norfolk, whence he proceeded by land to Baltimore, at which city the ship arrived on the 3d of July. Mina here made an arrangement for a fast-sailing brig, pierced for guns; and purchased a quantity of field and battering artillery, mortars, ammunition, clothing, and military stores of every description. While these preparations were making, the ship was put in a state for the accommodation of passengers; and the general visited Philadelphia and New York, where several Americans and Europeans volunteered their services, as officers, to accompany him. He was not desirous of



augmenting his force, except as to officers, being under the impression, as before remarked, that he should be joined by the natives on landing in Mexico. He obtained every possible information of the state of things in that country; and ascertained, that a small place on the Mexican coast, to the northward of Vera Cruz, called *Boquilla de Piedras*, was fortified, and still held by the patriot general *Don Guadalupe Victoria*. He also learned, that, although the patriots had met with recent disasters, yet they still maintained several strong guerilla parties in the different provinces.

In the mean time, many attempts were made, by the representative of the Spanish government, to destroy the expedition. During the passage from England, some of the Spanish officers had a dispute with the general; four of whom, on their arrival in the United States, presented themselves to Don Luis de Onis, the Spanish minister, and gave such information as they possessed, relative to the general's intended operations. Although their communications were crude, enough was imparted to awaken the jealousy and suspicion of the minister; who, ever on the alert to support the dignity and interest of his master Ferdinand, immediately addressed the American government, represent-

ing the nature of the information he had received, and calling upon it to suppress the threatened undertaking of Mina: but, as the complaints of the minister were not sustained by any positive data, and as the existing laws did not prohibit the exportation of military stores, nor the sailing of American vessels to any part of the world in amity with the United States, for commercial objects; and as the rights of hospitality were alike extended to all parties; the executive did not think proper to interfere, as long as the general and his agents moved within the sphere of the laws of the republic.

The Spanish consul at Baltimore, having become acquainted with the intended object of the ship from the steward, who ran away from her, and who, understanding Spanish, had overheard the conversation of the malcontents on the voyage, applied to the British consul for his official assistance in ridding the Spanish government of this cause of its alarm. It is yet doubtful, in the mind of the writer, whether the Spanish representative surpassed the British consul, in this instance, in strenuous exertions in the cause of Ferdinand VII. He ostensibly attached more credit to the bare *ipse dixit* of a worthless deserter, than to the papers and documents of



the ship; and, without any other proof that her destination was illicit, than that of the assertions of known mutineers, he, of himself, unjustifiably assumed a high jurisdiction in a neutral country, whose government had withheld its interference; and, although the ship had not been employed in any respect in contravention to the British laws, and it could not be established that it was intended that she should be so employed while she bore a British flag, he endeavoured to throw obstacles in the way of her voyage. In fact, the British consul acted, in this business, more like the representative of the Spanish, than the consul of a free government; and, at all events, it indicated his hostility to the cause of liberty in Spanish America.

A quantity of military stores were put on board the ship, as cargo; and the passengers, destined to embark in her, being in readiness, she took from the custom-house a clearance for St. Thomas, and proceeded outside of Fort M'Henry, where she anchored: but it was not without some difficulty that the British consul was induced, even then, to relinquish his hold on the papers.

On the evening of the 28th of August, the passengers, in number about two hundred, embarked, under the direction of Colonel the Count

de Ruuth. Mina remained to go out in the brig, whose cargo was not quite ready. The ship was ordered to proceed to Port au Prince, there to await the arrival of the general.

The ship left the capes of Virginia on the 1st of September, in company with a Spanish schooner, which had been hired by Mina, and on board of which was Lieutenant-Colonel Myers, of the artillery, with his company; but, a night or two after sailing, this vessel separated from the ship, and proceeded to the rendezvous.

After a passage of seventeen days, the ship arrived at Port au Prince, where she found her consort the schooner. The following night, the island was visited by one of those destructive hurricanes common to the West Indies. Amid the scene of general havoc, the ship sustained her portion of damage. She parted one of her cables, drove with another a-head, and got foul of a Haytian frigate, of thirty-two guns; in consequence of which, the foremast, maintopmast, and several spars, were carried away, besides considerable injury being sustained in the hull; and the frigate lost her three masts by the board. The ship, however, hooking the frigate's moorings, held on; and about three o'clock the gale abated. Day-light offered to view the melancholy scene of the ship dismasted,



and the schooner, her consort, upset and grounded on a shoal.

The storm having abated, the passengers were landed in the course of the forenoon; and the ship was then hauled into the inner harbour. The misfortune which had befallen her bore a serious aspect, it being feared that it would be impracticable to repair her: these apprehensions were, however, soon relieved, by the generous conduct of the late president of the republic, by whom spars were furnished, the use of the arsenal granted, and every facility afforded.

The brig being ready for sea, the general and staff embarked, and sailed from Baltimore, on the 27th of September. During his stay in that city, the simplicity and modesty of his demeanour, the honesty of his transactions, and his gentlemanly deportment, had gained him the esteem of a considerable portion of its society. He was applied to, while in the United States, to lend his assistance to the equipping of South American privateers; and, though the offer was highly advantageous, he refused it with indignation: "What reason," said he, "have you to suppose that Xavier Mina would plunder his unoffending countrymen? I war against Ferdinand and tyranny, not against Spaniards."

While the ship was refitting, General Mina

arrived at Port au Prince. Although he was much chagrined by the late disaster, and the delay and expense resulting therefrom, yet, by his activity and perseverance, he soon surmounted this first obstacle to his expedition. He was received with particular attention by General Petion, who afforded him every assistance in his power.

In this place, several individuals, both Americans and Europeans, abandoned the expedition. In some few instances, they were prevented from accompanying it by sickness; but the majority of them assigned reasons, in extenuation of their conduct, which should have been seriously considered before they volunteered. Mina viewed their defection with merited disregard; observing, that he wished none to follow his fortunes, but such as would voluntarily and cheerfully devote themselves to the cause of liberty. This loss was, however, in some measure counterbalanced by the acquisition of some seamen, who had deserted from a French frigate then lying in the roads.

The general had understood, that Commodore Aury, a patriot naval commander was cruising in the Bay of Mexico, and that he had formed an establishment on the island of San Luis, at the mouth of the river La Trinidad. Thither



he determined to repair, under the expectation that his views would be promoted by that officer. Having engaged a small schooner, in lieu of the Spanish vessel which had upset during the late hurricane, and the ship being refitted in the best possible manner, the expedition, consisting of the brig, ship, and schooner, on the 24th of October, made sail for the island of San Luis, on the Mexican coast.

Misfortune seems to have accompanied the expedition, from the date of the ship's arrival at Hayti. After leaving Port au Prince, an almost continual calm was experienced, so that the expedition was thirty days in performing a voyage, which, with the usual sea breeze in those latitudes, could have been made in ten or twelve. The tediousness of the voyage was, however, a light evil, compared with others which the expedition was doomed to suffer. That dreadful contagion, the yellow fever, broke out on board the ship. It had been brought from the shore by one of the passengers, who died a few days after sailing. The infection spread to the other vessels. The brig, not being crowded, suffered little, losing only one man. The ship's sick list was soon swelled to fifty and sixty daily: however, not more than seven or eight died. But on board the schooner,

where the air was confined, a melancholy scene ensued: of the few on board, eight died, among whom was Lieutenant-Colonel Daly. At last, the brig was obliged to take her in tow, as there was not an individual on board free from the fever, except a black woman. Indeed, had it not been for the exertions of an excellent physician, it is probable the expedition would have been destroyed. This worthy man, Dr. John Hennessy, formerly of Kingston, Jamaica, did not merely give evidence of his professional skill; but his indefatigable activity, and sympathizing attentions, were unremitting, and endeared him to every individual of the expedition. The vessels arrived at the Grand Cayman island, where a plentiful supply of turtle was procured; which, together with cool northerly breezes, soon rendered the passengers convalescent. At this island, those who were on board the schooner represented to the general, that it was impossible for them to proceed any farther in that ill-fated vessel. Orders were therefore given, that such as were reported to be free from fever, should be passed on board the ship; while the schooner, with her sick, went into the Grand Cayman.

The ship and brig proceeded on their course, and arrived off the encampment at San Luis, on the 24th of November, after a distressing passage of thirty days.



The general here met with Commodore Aury; and, as the north winds, which render the Mexican coast very dangerous, then prevailed, an order was given for the landing of the expedition. As there was not sufficient water on the bar to admit the vessels, measures were taken to unload them; and an old hulk, lying in the harbour, was appropriated, by the commodore, for the reception of the stores.

The settlement, called Galvezton, was established on the east end of the island. The entrance into the harbour is defended by a bar, capable of admitting vessels of easy draft, there being twelve feet of water on it; but the swell often renders the channel dangerous. Inside the bar, there is a good depth of water, up to the settlement; but the bay, into which the river La Trinidad disembogues itself, is in many parts very shoal. The island is low; and the water, which is obtained by digging in the sand, is brackish: plenty of good water may, however, be obtained in the cane brakes, at some distance from Galvezton, where the shipping usually fill their casks. The island is intersected by large bays. It is covered with long prairie grass, and abounds with deer and wild fowls; while the bay yields fine fish, and the bayous excellent oysters.

As soon as the troops were landed, an encampment was laid out, and the tents were pitched. On the west side of Galvezton, Commodore Aury had commenced throwing up a mud fort; and to the westward of this was Mina's encampment. The requisite arms were served out; two field-pieces and two howitzers were landed, and the engineer department was diligently employed in preparing fixed ammunition: the mechanics were set to work; clothing was served out to the men, and the officers were furnished with their respective uniforms. The commodore supplied the division with rations of excellent fresh bread, salt beef, pork, fish, oil, and brandy; which, with the game, and the supplies brought by the coasters, enabled the division to fare well.

In the mean time, the ship and brig, as it was unsafe to keep them at anchorage on the coast, had been ordered to proceed to New Orleans.

The immediate attention of the general was directed to the organization of his regiments. Officers were appointed to the different corps, which it was expected would be filled up soon after the descent should be made. The American officers, who did not understand the Spanish language, were formed into a company,