

more distressing the situation of his unfortunate prisoners, and not content with the prospect of the fate which awaited them, was unceasing in heaping acts of indignity upon them. He compelled them to labour in the demolition of the works, and immediately afterwards shot them. Among those who thus suffered death was Colonel Noboa, who, in his last moments, displayed great fortitude, and died exclaiming "*Viva la Republica.*"

Of the females who were made prisoners, those belonging to the families of the chiefs were sent to the enemy's towns. In this number were two sisters of Padre Torres, one a most amiable and interesting young lady, and the whole of the female part of the family of Don Miguel de Borja. The women of the lower orders were set at liberty, after having their heads shaved bare.

The enemy found a considerable supply of grain in the magazine of the fort, but nothing else; although Liñan boasts, in his despatch, of having found a quantity of ammunition—a pitiful fabrication, of the same stamp with many others which have characterized the official accounts of the royal commandants.

Thus fell the fort of Los Remedios, having withstood, for four months, the attempts of an

enemy vastly superior in numerical force, in artillery, in ammunition, and in the superior experience and discipline of their troops, a large proportion of them having belonged to the royal armies in the campaigns of the Peninsula.

The death of Mina, and the fall of Los Remedios, enabled the royalists to take active measures to dispossess the patriots of their remaining strong hold. They flattered themselves, that when this was effected, the long-protracted insurrection would soon be terminated. They do not appear to have been fully aware of the fact, that the patriots were animated by a spirit of hatred which could not be subdued, and that if driven out of forts, they would retire to the mountains and barrancas, and instead of acceding to terms, would suffer every possible privation, and eventually become (what they are generally called) a body of banditti.

In the brief view we have taken, in the course of this work, of the military operations of the patriots, we have exhibited their alternate successes and defeats, and have shewn that the latter arose from ignorance, want of organization and discipline, a deficiency of musquets, and especially from the want of combination among the patriot chiefs. To the two last-men-

tioned circumstances, more than to any others, may be ascribed the success of the royalists; for there does not exist the least doubt in our minds, that, during the years 1814, 1815, 1816, and 1817, a union of the patriot forces, and a supply of eight or ten thousand foreign muskets, would have decided the struggle in favour of the revolutionists in a very few months. It is not now necessary to give a minute account of the series of disasters and confusion which took place among the patriots subsequent to the death of Mina, except so far as may tend to shew the unconquerable spirit of hostility to the Spanish government, which predominates in the people in arms in the intendancies of Guanajuato, Valladolid, and Mexico.

We have made mention of the little fortress of Xauxilla, the place where the members of the patriot government held their sittings. During the month of December, the royalists of the intendancy of Valladolid had raised a force of one thousand men, for the reduction of it. The direction of this operation was given to Don Matias Martin y Aguirre, commandant-general of the province of Valladolid, in which province Xauxilla was situated. Don Matias, a distant relation of the unfortunate Mina, was a most able and active officer. His exertions con-

tributed much to preserve the jewel of Mexico in the diadem of Spain. Unlike his contemporaries, he never wantonly died his hands in human blood: he obeyed with reluctance many of the cruel mandates of his government, but at the same time mercy influenced all his conduct, and tempered his sword with clemency. On account of his distinguished services, he was appointed commander of the regiment of dragoons, called the *Fieles de San Luis*, which, although composed of wretched troops, was among the best appointed, best organized, and finest cavalry in the royal service. He enjoyed, at the period of which we are now speaking, the confidence of the viceroy; and warmly seconded his exertions to attain the object of their government with as little effusion of blood as circumstances would permit. He enjoined upon all the officers within the sphere of his command to act with mercy; an injunction obeyed by some of them, while others, freed from his immediate controul, continued to give loose to their long-indulged spirit of cruelty. His conduct to the prisoners that fell into his hands, was not merely merciful, but generous; and on several occasions he took upon himself the responsibility of disobeying superior orders, rather than deprive them of their lives. We

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feel great pleasure in thus offering our faint tribute of respect to one whose sentiments present so great a contrast to those of the major part of the Spanish chiefs. Some of the officers of Mina's expedition, who fell into the hands of Don Matias, were most humanely treated; and the soldiers who were made captives, were liberated on condition that they should serve two years in the royal armies. One of them, an American, through his intercession, was pardoned, liberated, and sent to the United States. Not one of Mina's associates suffered death at his hands; and although some of them were sent to Europe by orders of the government, it was contrary to the wishes of Don Matias. Some of Mina's officers, now in the United States, owe their lives to the humane Aguirre.

Don Matias, on investing Xauxilla, found, that from its strength, and its peculiar situation, it was capable of making a formidable resistance. The fort was commanded by a man of the name of Lopez de Lara, supported by two officers of Mina's division, Captains *Lawrence Christie* and *James Devers*, both Americans. A few days after the siege commenced, the members of the government retired to the *Tierra Caliente* of Valladolid.

Don Matias, prior to the commencement of

hostilities, sent a flag of truce, offering terms of capitulation to the garrison, which were immediately rejected. Approaches were then made, and after several ineffectual attempts to carry it by storm, the enemy were compelled to await its reduction by famine.

While these operations were going on at Xauxilla, Padre Torres escaped from Los Remedios, and retired to the pueblo of Penjamo. The plains and mountains in its vicinity afforded him a temporary refuge. The pueblo of Penjamo is situated, as before observed, about four leagues from the fort of Los Remedios, upon a declivity near the foot of the range of hills in which the fort was erected, overlooking a fine plain, highly cultivated with Indian corn, and forming an amphitheatre with the surrounding hills. The inhabitants of the plain of Penjamo were, generally speaking, in easy circumstances, and many of them, prior to the revolution, had possessed considerable wealth. The pueblo of Penjamo was the general residence of those farmers, who were distinguished for urbanity and hospitality. Exclusive of their agricultural pursuits, they carried on an extensive trade in provisions, particularly in live hogs, which were sent to the city of Guanajuato.

The inhabitants of the pueblo, and indeed

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of all the plain, had been conspicuous, during the whole of the revolution, for their enthusiasm in favour of the patriots; and it was in this place that Torres had commenced his military career. He was at that time the curate of a little village near Penjamo, called *Cuitzeo de las Naranjas*. Subsequently becoming commandant of the place, at the time when Mina penetrated into the province of Guanajuato, Penjamo formed his immediate comandancia. Notwithstanding the despotic sway which he exercised over his friends from his head-quarters at Los Remedios, a great portion of the people still remained attached to him. Amidst the general destruction of towns and villages, Penjamo had not escaped. Its handsome buildings had all been razed to the ground, and on their sites had been erected a few huts. It was here that Padre Torres established his nominal head-quarters, after the evacuation of Los Remedios: we say his nominal head-quarters, because the circumstances of his situation effectually prevented him from remaining permanently in any one spot, even had his coward nature permitted him; for the enemy covered the plain with their troops in pursuit of him, and strained every nerve to overtake him. But his activity being excited by his fears, he never

slept two successive nights in the same place or on the same mountain. During this period of pursuit and danger, which continued nearly a month, Torres retained with him a small escort of cavalry; and, without leaving the plain and mountains of Penjamo, was enabled to elude the vigilance of his pursuers. Had he displayed the same activity, when it would have preserved the troops under his orders, or infested the enemy, he would have deserved and received commendation. Aware of his inability to cope with his pursuers, he was compelled to use unremitting personal exertions to guard against a surprise. Whenever it became dark, he invariably conducted his escort, through by-paths and circuitous routes, to secret places in the mountains, always distant from the place where he had passed the preceding night. He laid down with fear and trembling, with a servant near him, to give the alarm in case of danger, and a horse ready saddled and bridled, not with a view of acting on the defensive with his troops, but of securing his personal safety by instant flight. He possessed some of the fleetest horses in the kingdom, was an expert rider, and always kept near him three or four horses ready to be mounted. In the occasional actions which his troops had with the enemy, he inva-

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riably acted in a manner ill becoming a soldier and a commander, always taking post in a commanding situation in the rear, instead of animating his soldiers by his presence in the fight; and, on discovering among his men the least appearance of confusion or dismay, he would put spurs to his horse, and leave them to shift for themselves.

The enemy, in the mean time, were not idle; their light divisions scoured the country in every direction. Neither Torres nor his subaltern officers opposed any resistance to their progress, each individual being occupied in providing for his own safety. They passed the night in the mountains, *sub dio*, regardless of the inclemency of the weather; and, in the day-time, a watch was kept from the steeple of a church, or some commanding height, to guard against a surprise from the enemy. Such was then, and is now, the manner of life of these unfortunate people; and nothing can more forcibly illustrate their abhorrence of the royal government, than that they should submit to such privations, rather than accept the protection of the royal amnesty.

The enemy soon fortified themselves in the Valle de Santiago, thereby depriving the patriots of the resources of that district. They

also occupied the hacienda of Queramaro, about a league from the foot of the hill which ascended to the late fort, which prevented its being re-occupied by the patriots, and deprived Torres of a valuable portion of his *comandancia*. In the Tierra Caliente of Valladolid, they were equally active. Over the whole country the patriots seemed panic-struck; and such was the want of unity in their operations, that even skirmishes with the enemy at length became of rare occurrence.

Torres, finding that the enemy relaxed the vigour of their pursuit, made a faint exertion to relieve the garrison of Xauxilla, the siege of which place had been vigorously prosecuted by Aguirre. When arrived within a league and a half of the enemy, he despatched Don Pablo Erdozain, an excellent cavalry officer, (of whom we have before made mention), with a party of three hundred men, to lay in wait for a party of the enemy, of about the same number, who left their camp every morning for the purpose of foraging. The measures of Don Pablo were judiciously taken: placing his troops in ambush, he anxiously awaited the approach of the enemy, who were soon desisted advancing; and every thing promised a successful result: they entered the ambush

unsuspectingly, and without order: at that favourable moment Don Pablo ordered the charge; but, to his inexpressible mortification and astonishment, the troops, instead of obeying his orders, after wavering for a moment, turned their backs upon the enemy, and fled: they were immediately pursued, and the gallant Erdozain with difficulty effected his escape.

A rencounter with a party of the enemy occurred about the same time, at an hacienda called *Surumiato*, situated a few leagues from Penjamo, which terminated as fruitlessly as the action we have just related: for, although the royalists were actually defeated, and might have been totally destroyed; yet they finally came off victorious, in consequence of the flight of the patriots at a critical moment.

Padre Torres, instead of being humbled by his recent misfortunes, became every day more capricious and despotic; and at length committed an act which caused his subalterns to tremble for their personal safety, and drew down upon him their odium. Don Lucas Flores, the commandant of the Valle de Santiago, who had been one of the firmest and most useful friends of Torres, was, upon some frivolous pretext, arrested; and, without a trial or a hearing being allowed him, was conducted

to the mountains, and there privately shot. The manner of his arrest displays the treacherous and barbarous character of Torres: he sent an order to Don Lucas, to meet him at a certain place; the order was obeyed, and Torres, with his staff, met him there. The customary embraces passed between them, a social intercourse followed, and cards were introduced. Don Lucas lost all his money, of which the padre won a considerable portion; they dined with their usual cordiality, and after dinner Flores was arrested, without the least previous explanation. His personal effects were immediately shared by the staff, Torres himself taking the best horse. With savage indifference, Torres turned to Flores, and ordered him to retire. This unfortunate officer was conducted, as before observed, to some secret place in the mountains, above Penjamo, and there shot.

While Torres was committing these excesses, and flying about the country to elude the enemy, the siege of Xauxilla was steadily persevered in by Aguirre. It had held out three months; but the commandant, Lopez de Lara, and some of his officers, became alarmed. Foreseeing that the fort would be eventually reduced by starvation, and presuming that the same fate would attend the garrison that had befallen

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the patriots at the other forts, Lara thought it best to take measures in due season, for the safety of himself and his party. He concealed his intentions from Captains Christie and Devers, as he well knew that they would never consent to surrender the fort, as long as it was tenable. Accordingly, he sent a secret overture to Aguirre, offering to deliver up the fort and *the two Anglo-Americans*. The overture was of course readily accepted. Lara and his associates then seized the persons of Mina's officers, and delivered them, with the fort, into the hands of the enemy. Aguirre displayed the magnanimity of his character, by adopting a line of conduct directly the reverse of that pursued by the barbarous Liñan and other Spanish chiefs. Disgusted with the perfidy of Lara, he upbraided him in the severest terms, for his unmanly and dishonourable conduct to his allies, the two Anglo-Americans, whom he immediately ordered to be treated with as much indulgence as was consistent with their safe keeping; and, instead of shooting the troops that thus fell into his hands, he disarmed and set them at liberty.

Aguirre, after destroying the fort, and leaving a garrison in the village of Zacapo, to prevent its being re-occupied, returned to Valladolid,

taking with him his two American prisoners. They were put into close confinement, and orders from the viceroy were received to put them to death. The generous Aguirre resisted the repeated commands of the viceroy to that effect; and finally, by persevering in their behalf, prevailed on the government to spare their lives. But, notwithstanding all his exertions to have them liberated, and sent to the United States, they were removed to the capital, and subsequently transported to Europe.

The infuriated Torres was still pursuing his mad career, wandering about the country, arbitrarily seizing on every man's property, and burning towns and haciendas, under the pretext of depriving the enemy of the means of fortifying themselves in their progress through the country. The unfortunate town of Puruandiro underwent a second conflagration. Penjamo shared the same fate. Only one church in each was spared; and the inhabitants were forbidden to live among the ruins. In fine, this man's tyranny and excesses became so great, that the people in his comandancia at length hated and feared him more than they did the enemy.

The revolutionary government, in the mean time, had experienced several vicissitudes. After its seat had been removed from Xauxilla,

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