

employed in collecting them, as well as the cannon, and musket-balls which were strewed about the streets; for which Morelos, whose stock of ammunition was not very copious, paid them so much a dozen.

Hostilities were not, however, confined to this distant warfare: during the month of March, an attempt was made to surprise Calleja, by an insurgent division not in Cuautla, under the orders of one of the Bravos, and Larios, which failed completely. The want of water, too, constantly brought the troops, on both sides, to close quarters. Cuautla was supplied by a stream, which, at a point not very far from the town, there was a possibility of turning into another channel. This Calleja effected; and, though his works were destroyed by a sally from the town, he had made some progress in re-establishing them, when Galeana, aware of the necessity of securing this important spot, undertook, on the night of the 25th of March, to dislodge the enemy, and to raise a fort close to the spring. This enterprise was conducted with such activity and judgment, that it was crowned with complete success. In the course of twenty-four hours, a fort, with three pieces of artillery, was completed, with a covered way, which extended to the town. Galeana himself took charge of the new fortification, and defended it against a desperate attack, which the Royalists made upon it the following night, and in which their loss was considerable, as Ga-

leana would not allow his men to fire, until the enemy was within pistol-shot of the entrenchments.

An attempt to enter Cuautla, by establishing a correspondence with some of the inhabitants, likewise failed. Calleja had managed to induce a Captain Manso, to promise to deliver up a battery entrusted to his charge, but his treachery was discovered by Galeana, and turned against the Royalists, who, on seeing the signals agreed upon, advanced, by night, and were introduced by Galeana himself into the trenches, where they were received with so general, and so well-directed a discharge, that they left one hundred men dead upon the spot.

Calleja's own reports do ample justice to the gallantry of the defence made by the Insurgents. He acknowledges, (March 25th) in his correspondence with the Viceroy, that, so far from having shown any symptoms of discouragement, they had supported both the firing and the bombardment, "with a firmness worthy of a better cause;" and that they continued to harass his troops by frequent sallies, which kept them constantly upon the alert. He calls Morelos, "a second Mahomet;" and though he terms fanaticism the enthusiasm with which he had inspired his followers, he confesses that it had produced the most extraordinary effects. At a much earlier period, he had applied for a train of heavy artillery from Përôté; but though Venegas instantly despatched the necessary

orders, the troops appointed to convoy it to Mexico were so often attacked upon the road by the La Puebla, and Vera Cruz Insurgents, that their progress was extremely slow. In these Provinces the Spaniards possessed little more than the great towns; all the open country was in the hands of the Insurgents; and they mustered in such formidable numbers about Nöpälucă, that Ōlăzabăl, who commanded the convoy of the artillery, was detained there, in a state of siege by Ōsörnö, on the 23d of March, and was only released by the arrival of a strong detachment sent from La Püēblă to his assistance.

The great object of Mörēlös was to prolong the siege until the commencement of the rainy season, when he knew that the Royalists would be forced to raise it, as Cuautla is situated in Tierra Caliente, and is a most unhealthy spot. Calleja was aware of this, and felt the ignominy with which a retreat would be attended; yet not even this could induce him to risk another general attack. All his efforts had been hitherto unavailing; and, at the end of April, he could not boast of having gained one single advantage. Unfortunately for the Mexicans, he had but too powerful an ally within the walls of the town. Cuautla had never been properly supplied with provisions, as Morelos had not expected to be besieged there in form, and famine now prevailed to a horrible extent; maize was almost the only sustenance of the troops; a cat sold for six dollars; a lizard for two; and rats or other vermin for one.

An ox, which was seen, one day, feeding between the Spanish camp and the town, nearly brought on a general action; for the troops, unable to resist the temptation, rushed out in crowds to seize the prey, and were attacked, while bringing it off, by so strong a party of the enemy, that Morelos was forced to draw out nearly his whole remaining force, in order to save them from destruction. Disease, too, began to show itself in its most frightful shape, and nearly 300 sick were lodged in the hospital of San Diego alone. Such, however, was the influence of Morelos over his men, that they endured all their sufferings with undaunted resolution, as long as there was a hope of supplies being received from without; but Mätämörös having been defeated in an attempt to introduce provisions, Mörēlös was forced to decide between making a general attack upon the camp of Calleja, and evacuating the town without delay. Had his men been in full health and vigour, it is probable that he would have attempted the first; but considering the wretched state to which they were reduced, he thought he should not be justified in risking the fate of the nation upon the issue of so hazardous an enterprize. An attack made upon Llano's great battery a short time before, convinced him of the impossibility of preserving order amongst his men, in case of a first success, and of the fatal consequences with which their confusion might be attended. The Insurgents had advanced with such

intrepidity, that they carried the whole battery at the first assault; but finding there a considerable stock of salt meat and segars, (luxuries of which they had long been deprived,) they seized upon them with such avidity, that not all the exertions of their chiefs could induce them to turn the advantage which they had gained to account; the guns were neither carried off, nor even spiked; and so much precious time was wasted, that a large reinforcement arrived from Calleja's camp, and drove them out of the battery again with considerable loss.

With such reasons for avoiding an action, one cannot but approve of the resolution taken by Morelos to evacuate Cuautla; which was executed with equal talent, and success. On the night of the 2d of May, between eleven and twelve o'clock, the troops were formed in the Plaza of San Diego; Galeana took the command of the advanced guard, Morelos of the centre, and the Bravos of the rear. Such was the silence observed by the whole column, that they passed between the enemy's batteries without being perceived; nor was it until they reached a deep barranca, (or ravine,) over which they were obliged to construct a bridge, with hurdles carried by the Indians for that purpose, that the alarm was given by a sentry, who fired his musket before Galeana had time to cut him down. The barranca was hardly crossed, when the column was attacked, on opposite sides, by the troops of Llano and Cal-

lejas. Morelos instantly gave the word for a general dispersion, as had been agreed upon, with orders to rendezvous at Izucar; and such was the promptitude with which this was effected, that the Spanish troops, finding no enemy between them as they advanced, began firing upon each other, and lost a number of men before the mistake was discovered.

Morelos reached Izucar, which was in possession of Don Miguel Bravo, in two days, and had the pleasure to find, when his different divisions arrived, that of the soldiers of Cuautla only seventeen were missing. Amongst these, unfortunately, was Don Leonardo Bravo, who had fallen into the hands of the enemy, and whose loss was universally regretted.

Calleja did not enter Cuautla until some hours after Morelos had quitted it, and even then, his troops advanced with the greatest precaution; so apprehensive were they of some new stratagem. The cruelties which he exercised upon the unfortunate inhabitants of the town, will leave, for ever, a stain upon his reputation. I have heard officers, who were present at the siege, speak of them, after a lapse of ten years, with horror. On the 16th of May, the army returned to the Capital; where its reception was very different from that which it had experienced three months before. In spite of the pompous account of its success, published in the Gazette, and the number of deaths with which Cal-

leja had swelled his reports, every body knew that he had been repulsed, and outwitted at last, by Morelos ; and, as for the army, its appearance spoke for itself. A comedy was acted a few nights afterwards, in which a soldier was introduced, who, on his return from battle, presents his general with a turban, and tells him in a very pompous manner, " Here is the turban of the Moor, whom I took prisoner !" " And the Moor himself ?" " O ! he unfortunately escaped !" The passage was received with bursts of laughter, and the application instantly made by all the spectators.

Such was the event of the siege of Cuāutlā Āmīlpās, which I have given in some detail, because it may fairly be considered as the most important military occurrence in the whole Revolution. The resources displayed by Morelos, in the course of it, gave him a degree of celebrity, and influence, which none of the Insurgent chiefs attained after him. His authority was recognised every where ; and continued to be respected until his death, in spite of the singular change of fortune, which marked the latter part of his career.

Mōrēlōs was detained some time at Īzūcār, by an injury which he received, by a fall from his horse, on the retreat from Cuautla. On his recovery, he put himself again at the head of his troops, whom Matamoros had brought into admirable order, and soon convinced Vēnēgās, that " the monster of the South," as he was termed in the Gazette of Mexico,

far from " seeking a hiding-place in caves and forests," was about to carry on the contest with all his usual activity. After defeating three Spanish divisions, Morelos made a triumphal entry into Tēhūacān, (in La Puebla,) on the 16th of September, 1812. From thence he undertook a successful expedition against the town of Ōrizāvā, where he found nine pieces of artillery, and an immense booty in money and tobacco. Obligated to evacuate the place, by the approach of a superior force, he returned to Tēhūacān, and, after refreshing his troops there, commenced, in the beginning of November, his famous expedition against Ōāxācā. After sustaining incredible hardships upon the march, the army at last arrived before the town, situated in the finest part of one of the most lovely provinces of Mexico. It was garrisoned by the Royalists, under Brigadier Regules, who attempted to defend the town ; but nothing could withstand the impetuosity of the Insurgent troops. Their artillery, under the command of Don Manuel Mier y Tērān, having silenced that of their opponents, Regules made a last stand on the edge of a deep moat, which surrounds Oaxaca, and over which there was no passage but by a single drawbridge, which was drawn up, and the approach to it defended by the Royalist infantry. The Insurgents paused on perceiving this new obstacle ; but their deliberation lasted but an instant ; Guadalupe Victoria, who was in the front rank, threw himself into the moat, sword in hand, and

swam across; the enemies were so surprised at his temerity, that they allowed him to land, and even to cut the ropes, by which the drawbridge was suspended, without receiving a single wound: the troops of Morelos rushed across it, and soon made themselves masters of the town.

After releasing all those who were in confinement for political opinions, and replacing the Spanish authorities by Mexicans, Morelos proceeded to execute his darling scheme of forming a National Congress. In order to give to this idea all the extension which he wished, the conquest of the rest of the province was indispensable. A very short time enabled him to effect this, with the exception of Acapulco, to which he laid siege on the 15th of February, 1813. This enterprise, the most important, as well as the most hazardous, that had ever been undertaken by the Insurgent armies, detained him several months: in the course of it, Morelos, whose great fault as a general was being too fond of exposing his person, had several very narrow escapes; nor was it until the 20th of August, 1813, that his object was attained.

As soon as the Mexican flag had taken the place of the Spanish colours on the fortress of San Diego, Morelos returned to Ōāxācā, where he found every thing prepared, by Matamoros, for the meeting of the Congress, which was composed of the original members of the Junta of Zītācuārō, the deputies elected by the Province of Oaxaca, and others, again,

selected by them as representatives for the Provinces in the possession of the Royal troops. Such was the Assembly, which opened its sessions on the 13th of September, 1813, in the town of Chīlpānzīngō. Its most remarkable act was the declaration of the absolute Independence of Mexico, which it published upon the 13th of November, 1813. It is difficult to say what impression this declaration might have produced upon the country, had Morelos continued his career of success; but his fortune was upon the wane, before it became at all generally known, and the influence of the Congress diminished, of course, in proportion to the decline in the reputation of its protector. The period of its installation was, undoubtedly, the most brilliant moment of Morelos's political existence. Up to that time, he had not only been successful wherever he commanded in person, but seemed to communicate a portion of his good fortune to all who served under his orders. The years 1812, and 1813, were distinguished by the victories gained by Don Nicolas Bravo, and Matamoros, at the Pālmār, and by the defence of the mountain of Cōscōmātēpēc. In the first of these actions, Bravo defeated Don Juan Lābāquī, the Commandant of the regiment of the Patriots of Veracruz, at the head of a strong detachment. The engagement lasted three days, when the village, in which the Spaniards had taken refuge, was carried by storm, (20th August, 1812.) Three hundred prisoners, taken upon this

occasion, were placed by Morelos, at the disposal of Bravo, who offered them to the Viceroy Venegas, in exchange for his father, Don Leonardo Bravo, who was then under sentence of death in the prisons of the Capital. The offer was rejected, and the sentence against Don Leonardo ordered to be carried into immediate execution. His son, in lieu of making reprisals by the massacre of his prisoners, instantly set them all at liberty, "wishing," (as he said,) "to put it out of his own power to avenge on them the death of his parent, lest, in the first moment of grief, the temptation should prove irresistible!" So noble a trait requires no comment!

From this time, Bravo had the command of a separate division, with which he carried on hostilities in the province of Veracruz, where he fortified the Cerro of Cöscomatêpêc, and defended it for two months, (September and October, 1813,) against a force of three thousand men, under the orders of Colonel Aguila. Forced at last, by want of provisions, to evacuate the place, he retired in the night without the loss of a single man, and rejoined Morelos in Oaxaca, with his whole division. But the most serious check received by the Spaniards, during the whole war, was that sustained by them in the second battle of the Pälmar, on the 18th of October, 1813, where the regiment of Asturias, composed entirely of European troops, was cut off by Matamoros, after a severe action, which lasted eight hours. This regiment (which had been at the

battle of Baylen,) came out from Spain with the proud title of "the invincible victors of the victors of Austerlitz;" and its loss was regarded by all the Spaniards as fatal to the *prestige* which had before attached to the European troops. The Insurgents, however, derived but little advantage from this victory. The time was come, at which it seemed decreed that their affairs should take an unfavourable turn, nor did fortune once smile upon them afterwards. The division of Mätämörös shortly rejoined Morelos in Oaxaca, who was then concentrating his whole force at Chïlpänzïngö, in order to prepare for an expedition against the province of Valladolid, the possession of which would have brought him into more immediate contact with the Insurgents of the Interior, and enabled him, with their co-operation, to strike a decisive blow against the Capital itself.

With these hopes Morelos collected seven thousand men, and a large train of artillery, with which force he left Chïlpänzïngö, on the 8th of November, 1813. After sustaining incredible fatigues and privations, in marching across one hundred leagues of country, which no one had ever traversed before, he arrived before Valladolid on the 23d of December, where he found a formidable force under Brigadier Llano, and Iturbide, (who had then attained the rank of Colonel,) prepared to receive him. Rendered too confident by the success which had constantly attended his arms, without allowing his troops time