

a coolness which he preserved to the last. Indeed, the only thing that seemed to affect him at all was his degradation; a ceremony humiliating in itself, but rendered doubly so, in his case, by the publicity which was given to it. His examination, which was conducted by the Oidor Bätällër, (whose insolent assertion of the natural superiority of the Spaniards to the Creoles, is said first to have roused Morelos into action,) was not of long duration. On the 22d of December, 1815, Concha was charged to remove him from the prisons of the Inquisition, to the hospital of San Christoval, behind which the sentence pronounced against him was to be carried into execution. On arriving there, he dined in company with Concha, whom he afterwards embraced, and thanked for all his kindness. He then confessed himself, and afterwards walked, with the most perfect serenity, to the place of execution. The short prayer which he pronounced there, deserves to be recorded for its affecting simplicity. "Lord, if I have done well, thou knowest it; if ill, to thy infinite mercy I commend my soul!"

After this appeal to the Supreme Judge, he fastened with his own hands a handkerchief about his eyes, gave the signal to the soldiers to fire, and met death with as much composure as he had ever shown when facing it on the field of battle.

SECTION III.

REVOLUTION FROM DEATH OF MORELOS TO 1820.

THE most brilliant period of the Revolution terminated with the life of Morelos. He alone possessed influence enough to combine the operations of the different Insurgent chiefs into something like unity of plan;—to reconcile their jarring interests, and to prevent their jealousy of each other from breaking out into open discord. By his death this last tie seemed to be dissolved, and things relapsed into their former confusion. Each Province considered itself as isolated, and connected by no bond of union with the rest; and by this fatal want of combination, the Insurgent cause, though supported in many parts of the country by considerable military talent, and the most brilliant personal courage, sunk gradually into an almost hopeless state.

Morelos conceived that the Congress which he

had assembled at Oaxaca, and for which he sacrificed his life, would prove a centre of union, to which his lieutenants might look, as they had previously done to himself; but few of his officers entertained similar feelings with regard to this body, which, however useful in theory, was, practically, a most inconvenient appendage to a camp. Don Nicolas Bravo succeeded, indeed, in escorting the Deputies in safety to Tehuacán, where they were received, at first, with great respect by General Terán: but disputes soon arose between the Civil and Military authorities, and these terminated by the dissolution of the Congress, to which measure Terán had recourse on the 15th of December, 1815.

There is no act in the history of the Revolution that has been more severely blamed than this, and none, perhaps, that has been less fairly judged. It cannot be denied that, by dissolving the Congress, Terán injured the general cause, by depriving the Insurgents of a *point de réunion*, which might, afterwards, have been of essential use; but it has never been proved that it was possible for him to do otherwise, or that the district under his command could, in any way, have supported the additional charge, which the arrival of the Congress must have brought upon it. The fact is, that the members of that assembly, amongst the other articles of their Constitution, had assigned to themselves, as Deputies, a yearly salary of eight thousand dollars each; a re-

solution which Bustamante, (the historian of the Revolution, and himself a Deputy,) justifies, by saying that the salary was merely nominal, and that two thousand dollars were the utmost that any one hoped to receive. Be this as it may, it is certain that whatever could be construed into public property, either as taken from the enemy, or as the produce of fines paid by the different *Haciendas*, (in the nature of black mail,) became liable for the payment of these sums, whenever the Congress chose to determine that it should be so; and moreover, the assembly was so well aware of this fact, that it always endeavoured to get the management of the public purse out of the hands of the Military Commandants, in order to entrust it to *Intendants* of its own nomination. Unfortunately, the man selected for this office at Tehuacán, (Martinez) was particularly strict and unyielding, (Bustamante calls him *cosquilloso*, ticklish,) in every thing connected with his department; and contrived to involve himself, almost immediately, in a dispute with Terán, by demanding possession of the money, and stores, which that general had, with infinite pains, succeeded in collecting. In this claim, Martinez was supported by the Congress, and Terán was thus reduced to become, *de facto*, a dependant upon the body, which had just thrown itself upon his protection, or to deny its authority altogether. He asserts, however, that he would have supported with patience, his share of the dead weight of the Congress, had any disposi-

tion been shown by the other Independent chiefs to contribute towards its support. But no offers of the kind were made; and although all blamed Teràn for dissolving the National Assembly, and all refused to acknowledge the Government which he attempted to establish in its place, none would receive the Deputies into their camp, or undertake the charge of protecting their sessions, which might, in that case, have been resumed, as Teràn had no more right to dissolve a Congress, than he had to create one himself, in the name of the people, had he been inclined to attempt it.

It must, however, be admitted, that the breaking up of the only Central Government that had ever been at all generally recognized by the Insurgents, was attended with the most disastrous effects. From that moment, universal disorder prevailed: Victōrřā, Guerrērō, Brāvō, Rāyōn, and Tērān, confined themselves each to his separate circle, where each was crushed in turn, by the superiority of the common enemy. A multitude of inferior partizans shared the same fate. The arrival of fresh troops from the Peninsula, enabled the Viceroy to establish a regular chain of communication throughout the country, and to enforce obedience, even at the most distant points; and these discouraging circumstances, together with the facilities held out to all who had embarked in the Revolution, by the new Viceroy Apōdācā, for reconciling themselves with the Government by accepting the *indulto*, (or par-

don,) offered by the King, reduced the number of those actually in arms, during the years 1816, 1817, and 1818, to a very inconsiderable amount.

But the reverses sustained by the Creole leaders in the field were more than counterbalanced by the effect previously produced, by the introduction of the Spanish Constitution into Mexico; which, although its most important articles were suspended almost immediately, so far favoured the development of a spirit of independence, that nothing could afterwards shake its hold upon the minds of the people. This Constitution was, as may be recollected, sanctioned by the Cortes of Cadiz, in 1812, and immediately applied, not only to Spain, but to the Transatlantic dominions of the Crown. In Mexico it took effect in the Autumn of the same year, (29th September, 1812,) under the Viceroyalty of Venegas, who was soon convinced that his authority, if submitted to the test of public opinion, could not be long retained. So many violent pamphlets against Spain, and Spanish dominion, were published during the two only months that the liberty of the press was tolerated, (it lasted exactly sixty-six days from the 5th of October, 1812,) that the tranquillity of the Capital was endangered, notwithstanding the presence of a numerous garrison, and the palace itself threatened by an infuriated mob. *Vivas* in favour of Morelos, and the Insurgents, were heard under the Viceroy's own windows, as well as cries of "Down with the bad Government!" and even

of "Down with the King!" In short, (to use the words of the Audiencia, paragraph 136,) "the political writings of the day produced upon the natives the same effect that spirituous liquors cause amongst savages." A national feeling was created, and became every where predominant. Fortunately for Spain, the right of electing the Members of the Ayuntamiento, and the Deputies to the Cortes, afforded a vent for passions, which must otherwise have led to some terrific explosion. Out of *six hundred and fifty-two elective appointments*, of more or less importance, which the Mexicans were entitled by the Constitution to make, not *One* was bestowed upon an European; and most were filled by men notoriously addicted to the Independent cause! Nor were the legal forms prescribed by the new system, for the prosecution of criminals, turned to less account. *Suspitions* were no longer admitted as sufficient ground for depriving an accused Creole of his liberty. *Proofs* were required by the Constitutional Alcaldes, whose jurisdiction replaced, in most cases, that of the Audiencia; and these proofs were most critically weighed, by men, who had, in general, been recommended, by their known predilection for the cause of the Revolution, to fill those offices, which entitled them to judge of the inclinations and loyalty, of others.

Thus, under the safeguard of the new institutions, disaffection became every day more prevalent; and, neither the successes of the Royal army in the field,

nor the exertions of two Viceroys, who undoubtedly possessed very superior talents, could give to Spain any prospect of permanently suppressing the Revolution.

The assiduity of Don Carlos Bustamante, whom I have had occasion to mention frequently as the historian of the Revolution, has rescued from oblivion two most interesting State papers, which were found in the archives of the Vice-royalty. The one, is a representation addressed by the Audiencia of Mexico to the Cortes, on the 18th of November, 1813; and the other, a confidential letter of the Viceroy Calleja, (who succeeded Venegas, on the 4th of March, 1813,) to the King, on His release from captivity, dated a year later, but referring to the same period, and passing in review nearly the same events. Of the genuineness of these documents no doubt can be entertained; and they present so striking a picture of the effect produced by a little relaxation of those bonds, by which the Colonies had been previously kept in subjection, that I must recommend them most particularly to my readers, who will find a translation of both, annexed to the Appendix.* They are worthy of attention, not merely as disclosing the secret springs of the Revolution, but, as proving that, for many years before any intercourse with the Colonies, on the part of Foreign powers, was attempted, the confi-

* Vide Appendix, B and C Letters.

dential servants of the Crown of Spain felt the impossibility of maintaining its authority there, unless supported by an overwhelming force, and admitted, "that the whole population of the country was bent upon the attainment of an independent political existence." This fact is so strongly urged throughout Calleja's letter to the King, that it may be considered, (as he himself terms it,) *the corner stone* of his whole argument. He states, in one passage, "That notwithstanding the advantages which he had obtained in the field, but little had been done towards destroying the seeds of the Rebellion; the focus of which lies in the great towns, and, more particularly, in the *Capital*." In another, he says, "That the great majority of the natives is in favour of the Insurrection,"—that "the municipalities, the Provincial Deputations, and even the Spanish Cortes themselves, (as far as the provinces of Ultramar are concerned, are composed of *nothing but Insurgents*, and those of the most decided and criminal character." In another: "That the Insurgents profess attachment to the Constitution, not, because they intend to adopt it, or ever to submit to the Mother country, but, because it affords them the means of attaining all that they desire without risk." In another: "That the Insurrection is so deeply impressed, and rooted, in the heart of every American, that nothing but the most energetic measures, supported by an imposing force, can ever eradicate it:"—that "the war strengthens, and propagates the

love of Independence, by holding out a constant hope of the destruction of the old Spaniards, a *longing desire for which* is general amongst all classes!" and lastly, that "as six millions of inhabitants decided in the cause of Independence, have no need of previous consultation, or agreement, each one acts, according to his means and opportunities, in favour of the project, common to all: the judge, by concealing, or conniving at, crimes: the clergy, by advocating the justice of the cause in the confessional, and, even in the pulpit: the writers, by corrupting public opinion: the women, by employing their attractions, in order to seduce the Royal troops: the Government officer, by revealing, and thus paralyzing the plans of his superiors: the youth, by taking arms: the old man, by giving intelligence, and forwarding correspondence, and the public Corporations, by giving an example of eternal differences with the Europeans, not one of whom they will admit as a colleague!"*

What stronger arguments could the warmest advocates of the Revolution adduce, in order to prove the impossibility of ever permanently re-establishing the authority of Spain in the New World? Yet this language was held, *thirteen years ago*, by one of her most able, and most zealous defenders. It was confirmed, too, by the opinion of the whole

* *Vide* Calleja's letter to the Minister of War, Appendix, (Letter C.) from which all the preceding passages are literal translations.

Audiencia of Mexico; which admits, as unre- servedly as the Viceroy himself, the unanimity of the natives in favour of the Independent cause (*Vide* paragraphs 12, 14, 18, 19, 26, 28, and 42), and sees no hope of checking this spirit, but by having recourse to measures amounting to little less than the establishment of martial law; since it recommends that all legal restrictions should be dispensed with.*

These measures *were* resorted to, and were for a time successful. Backed by an imposing force, and relieved by the abolition of the Constitution (in 1814) from all legal trammels, the authority of the Viceroy was gradually re-established, and tranquillity, to a certain extent, restored. Seventeen thousand Insurgents are supposed to have accepted the Indulto during the Viceroyalty of Apōdācā, who assumed the reins of government in 1816; and even the expedition of Mina failed in rekindling the flame of civil war. But nothing could be more deceitful than this calm. The principles which led to the Insurrection of 1810 were daily gaining ground; they were disseminated by the Indultados themselves amongst their friends and connexions; the Creole troops were their first proselytes: disaffection spread amongst them, until whole regiments were ripe for revolt; and when, in 1820, the re-establishment of the constitutional system

* *Vide* Paragraphs, 249, 251, and 253, Appendix Letter B.

in the Peninsula allowed again of a freedom of intercourse amongst the Creoles, they found, with surprise, that all differences of opinion had disappeared, and that the army was ready to co-operate with its old enemies, the Insurgents, for the attainment of those political rights, against which it had fought during the earlier stages of the Revolution. Before we arrive, however, at this National movement, in which Iturbide took the lead, it will be necessary to take a rapid view of the events, by which it was preceded.

After the death of Morelos, the country (as I have already stated) was divided into districts, in each of which one of his former lieutenants took the lead. Guerrero occupied the Western coast, where he maintained himself in the fastnesses of the Sierra Madre until the year 1821, when he joined Iturbide. Rāyōn commanded in the vicinity of Hālpūjahūā, where he successively occupied two fortified camps, one on the Cerro del Gallo*, and the other on that of Cōpōrō. Teràn held the district of Tēhuācān, in La Puebla. Bravo was a wanderer in different parts of the country. The Bāxīō was tyrannized over by the Padre Tōrrēs; while Guādēlūpē Victoria occupied the important Province of Veracruz. The intervening spaces were overrun by insurgent partizans, Ālbīnō Gārciā, el Pāchōn,

* It is from the Cerro del Gallo that the large view of Hālpūjahūā is taken, which is now engraving,

Ĕpītāciō Sānchēz, Ōsōrnō, and Sērrānō, who sometimes acknowledged one of the principal Chiefs as their superior, and sometimes acted independently of all; as was the case with the famous, (or infamous) Vīcētē Gōmēz, whose band long infested the mountains which separate Mexico from La Puebla, and often cut off all communication between them.

It is not my intention to follow in detail the events of this period. A short sketch of the career of the principal chiefs is all that my limits will allow of. Those who are desirous of a nearer acquaintance with their military exploits, will find them traced in the pages of Robinson,* and Don Carlos Bustamante,† with a minuteness which does not suit the character of my present work. Robinson, though deficient on many points, gives a spirited sketch of what he saw; and most of the facts stated by him may be depended upon.

After the dissolution of the Congress by Tērān, (22nd December, 1815), that general was engaged, for some months, in the sort of desultory warfare which was universal, at the time, throughout America. In this he was usually successful, but his efforts were cramped by the want of arms; and, with a view to obtain a supply of these, he deter-

* "Memoirs of the Mexican Revolution, and of General Mina," by W. D. Robinson.

† "Cuadro Historico de la Revolucion de la America, Mexicana." Su autor Don Carlos Maria Bustamante.

mined to undertake a march to the Coast with a part of his force, with the intention of occupying the mouth of the river Gūasācōālcō, where he was to be met by a vessel from the United States. This hazardous attempt was made in July 1816, and, (though unsuccessful) appears to have been conducted in a very masterly manner. Tērān set out with an escort of only 300 men. The rest of his corps he left in the fortress of Cērrō Cōlōrādō, (a mountain in the vicinity of Tēhuācān), which he had fortified with extraordinary care, and where he had established a cannon-foundery, and a manufactory of powder. Surprised by the rainy season, he projected, and executed in ten days, with the aid of the Indian population of Tūstēpēc, a military road across the marsh leading to Āmīstān, (seven leagues in extent), which is even now acknowledged by the most scientific men of the day to be a very extraordinary work. From Āmīstān, he proceeded, on the 7th of September, to Plāyā Vīcētē, a depôt for the Veracruz merchants in their trade with Oāxācā: there he was overtaken by a Royalist force of eleven hundred men, under Colonel Tōpētē, which he defeated on the 10th of September, having selected so favourable a position for the engagement, that it more than compensated for the inferiority of his own numbers. But finding that his plan for occupying Gūasācōālcō was discovered, he returned to Tēhuācān, where a force of 4,000 men, under Colonel Brāchō, was detached against him by the Viceroy,