

indulged, prove but too clearly, that, under similar circumstances, nature is always the same; while liberty, in her infancy, only tends to develop more rapidly those passions, which appear, in every part of the world, to be most deeply implanted in the human breast.

The Yorkinos have made up by numbers for what they wanted originally in individual influence. Their plans have been prosecuted with great activity, and as the desperate appeal to the country, to which their opponents have just been driven, appears to have failed entirely, if they use their victory with forbearance, the success of their candidate, (General Guerrero,) at the approaching election for the Presidency, seems to be certain. But, upon forbearance, at the present crisis, every thing depends; for of General Bravo's devotion to the cause of his country but one opinion is entertained throughout New Spain. Should there be any attempt, therefore, to punish too severely a step, which all must deplore, although none can judge of its causes without a knowledge of the circumstances by which the passions, on both sides, have been excited, and the transition from political to personal hostility effected,—blood will be found to lead to blood, and a long series of calamities may still cloud the prospects of the Republic.

I trust, however, that these calamities will be averted. There are in Mexico a number of excellent men unconnected with either of the parties,

whose animosity has threatened the country with a civil war. At the head of these is General Victoria, in whose moderation, and thoroughly honourable intentions, the most implicit confidence may be placed. To him, and to his friends, I look for the preservation of tranquillity. Of its necessity he is thoroughly convinced; and his influence, if properly exerted, will, I think, be found sufficient to ensure it.

Short as the recent struggle has been, it has already done incalculable mischief, and destroyed the fair reputation which Mexico was beginning to acquire in Europe, by the fidelity with which her engagements with foreign capitalists were at first met. Dissensions, bordering upon civil war, in whatever causes they may originate, must tend to diminish the commercial demand, and with it the general resources of the country. The customs may be regarded as the basis of the whole revenue of Mexico; not only as forming in themselves its most important branch, but as facilitating the collection of all the other branches, by giving to the Executive that command of money, without which, in a new country, no system of administration can be organized, and no subordination enforced.

What my expectations with regard to them were six months ago, I have stated in the Fourth Section of the Third Book, in which I estimated their probable produce during the present year at eight millions of dollars. There is now not the least prospect that those calculations will be found correct. I am

informed that one-third of the orders given by our merchants for the present season have been countermanded, in consequence of the unsettled aspect of affairs, and of the embarrassment which the expulsion of the Old Spaniards has occasioned in the commercial world; and although the storm appears to have blown over, it is very questionable whether confidence will be entirely restored until the election for the ensuing Presidency, which takes place in October, be decided.

I shall now take leave of the only unpleasant part of my present subject. I have not traced the preceding pages without many painful feelings, for I am connected personally with most of the individuals of whom I have been compelled to speak. During three whole years, General Victoria honoured me with a most unreserved and confidential intercourse, while both with General Bravo, and with many of the leaders of the rival parties, I was on terms of frequent and friendly communication. I shall not, therefore, attempt to deny that I write under the influence of these recollections, and that feelings of a private, as well as a public nature induce me to hope that what has passed may be buried in oblivion; for the only mode of averting the evils, which must otherwise be brought upon the country, is for the victorious party to show itself worthy, by its moderation, of the ascendancy which it has acquired.

I have already trespassed upon the patience of my readers to a much greater extent than I at first con-

templated when I undertook the task of preparing my notes upon Mexico for publication. I trust, however, that I shall not solicit their indulgence in vain for a few concluding reflections.

The want of distinguished men, or rather, of some one man so distinguished as to exercise, like Bolivar, an universal influence, has been much commented upon in Europe as disadvantageous to New Spain.

In one sense, it may, perhaps, be so, for it undoubtedly retards the progress of those parts of the country, which might be pushed forward in the career of civilization by that impulse, which power, concentrated in the hands of an individual, can alone give; but it secures, in return, the stability of the present institutions, by rendering innovations difficult; and whether those institutions be good or bad, it is not by any sudden or violent change that they can be amended.

It is likewise favourable to the gradual development of the resources of the country, by removing those checks upon the activity of individuals, which the preponderance of any one man is generally found to create. In a territory so vast, and, as yet, so little explored, no central government, whatever its energy, or however beneficent its intentions, could possess sufficient local knowledge to do the good which it might desire to effect. Under the present system the whole internal arrangements of the States are left to their own care; and with some few restrictions with regard to foreign trade, they are

at liberty to adopt, without restraint, any plans of improvement that may suit the peculiarities of their respective territories:

Their ability to support this system I have had frequent occasion to investigate. To a certain extent it has been already demonstrated; and the journal of my visits to the Interior will prove that, wherever a man of activity has been placed at the head of affairs, a good use has been made by the Provinces of the free agency with which they are entrusted. In Guanajuato, San Luis, Durango, Jalisco, La Puebla, and Veracruz, as well as in some others of the Central and Northern States, important changes have taken place, and much has been done towards that gradual introduction of a better order of things, from which alone permanent improvement can be expected.

I am aware, that in giving this opinion, I expose myself to the attacks of two distinct classes of adversaries; first, those who refuse to admit the fact of any progress at all having been made; and secondly, those, who, from too enthusiastic an admiration of the new institutions, are unwilling to await the mild influence of time, and maintain that, by a proper exercise of Republican energy, roads might have been made, canals traced, rivers rendered navigable, the whole jurisprudence of the country reformed, a system of education generalized, and the work of a century compressed into a twelve-month!

To the first, I should object that they have not, perhaps, taken a very deliberate view of the actual situation of New Spain, or that, at all events, in reflecting upon things as they are, they do not sufficiently consider the point from which the Mexicans commenced their new career. To the second, I can only say that I am not one of those who believe in the practicability of hot-bed reforms. It appears to me to be as impossible to force the human mind to advance too rapidly, as it would be to compel the present generation to revert to the superstitious credulity of the thirteenth century. Nor can a change of government be productive of a simultaneous change in the habits and opinions of the people governed. It may,—indeed it must, ultimately affect them. It may exalt or debase the national character, strengthen or enervate it, according as it affords more or less scope for the developement of individual talent, and more or less encouragement for its application to the public service: but no constitution, even if it came down from Heaven with the stamp of perfection upon it, could eradicate at once the vices engendered by three centuries of bondage, or give the independent feelings of free men to a people, to whom, until lately, the very name of freedom was unknown.

It will be sufficient for me, if I am thought to have shown in the work, which I have now the honour of submitting to the public, that in three years a great deal has really been effected; that the

resources of the country are unquestionable; and that the seeds of future greatness not only exist, but have begun to develop themselves to a very considerable extent. Internal tranquillity is alone requisite to bring them to maturity; and feeling, as I do, a lively interest in the welfare of Mexico, both from my long residence in the country, and my conviction that the commercial interests of Great Britain are most intimately connected with the prosperity of the New World, it is my fervent hope that this blessing may not be denied to her. Whatever else is wanting, nature and time will supply.

THE END.

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