

CHAPTER XIII.

1814.

BOLIVAR PREPARES TO OPEN THE CAMPAIGN — TARDY HELP OF MARIÑO — INHUMAN PURPOSE OF THE ROYALIST CHIEFTAINS — LOSS OF BARINAS — DEATH OF THE ISLEÑO YANKEES — CALLEADA — SPANISH GUNERRILLAS — DEFEAT OF CAMPO-ELIAS AT LA FUERTA — ROBETS AT TUY — VICTORY OF MIERAS AT LA VICTORIA — PROCLAMATION OF BOLIVAR — HONORS WHICH THE MUNICIPALITY OF CARACAS DECREE TO HIM — HIS ANSWER — DESOLATION CAUSED AT OCUMARE BY ROBETS — MURDER OF THE SPANIARDS AT CARACAS AND LA GUAYRA — MANIFESTO PUBLISHED BY MUNOZ TEBAR IN JUSTIFICATION OF THAT CHASTISEMENT.

THE Liberator had hardly disembarrassed himself of the cares caused by the institution and the government, and which had brought him to Caracas, when he turned his eyes to the war which threatened to deluge in blood the vast extension of our territory. He reviewed the parks and forces of Caracas; he visited La Guayra so as to inform himself personally of the position and state of affairs there; and on his return he marched with the velocity that was proper to him, to the besieging lines of Puerto Cabello, by way of the valleys of Aragua and Ocumare de la Costa, whose fort he examined on the 16th.

On passing Sabana, the enemy opened on him a spirited fire, but uselessly.

The Liberator had promised himself that the siege of Puerto Cabello should now give the best and long-wished-for results, because the fleet of Cumana composed of six schooners-of-war and a small gunboat, had already commenced to capture valuable prizes; but on reviewing the line, as I have said, and giving the most necessary orders, he was astonished by the news communicated to him that Colonel Arrijoja, depending on Mariño, had disappeared, along with the body of troops he commanded, at the same time that the chief of the fleet, along with his vessels, which had aided so efficaciously in the blockade, was also retiring by a terminating order which he had received from Mariño himself. He was informed finally, that this one, on the eve of setting out at the head of a brilliant army to the help of the west, had resolved to suspend his march.

Tortured by envy because Bolivar should receive the applause of the people, agitated by that fatal spirit of rivalry which is more irreconcilable than hate, Mariño fell back into his former anxieties, when he received news of the act of the 2d of January, and, changing his mind, he issued orders contrary to the solicited help, and which he had seemed disposed to give. The Liberator alarmed, called Piar to him, who was commanding the fleet, and by force of entreaties he detained him; he wrote to Mariño a most forcible letter, imploring his co-operation to destroy the common enemy, and as a man of forethought he enclosed in the letter an acknowledgment of the authority of Mariño over the provinces of the east; a principal point which should facilitate it all, as in effect it did, because Mariño from that moment remained satisfied, and began to move his auxiliary forces.

Unhappily it was now already too late to impede evils of great consequence! The plains had been lost; Boves, indefatigable, ferocious and unmerciful, at the head of undisciplined and blood-thirsty hordes, was occupying Calabozo, and had sworn to the extermination of the American race; war had been inflamed anew in the western provinces; Yanez, the isleño, had recrossed the Apure and he was threatening Barinas with two thousand horsemen.

The year 1814 had dawned with bright hopes, but very soon they were changed into cruel and mortal sufferings.

Fatal change of things! Ordinary condition of our nature, that joys are dampened and altered by misfortunes!

And the Spaniards carried on their design of ruin and American extermination, with a wickedness of mind so lasting and implacable, that the slaughters and calamities which history relates of Atila and Gengiskan, seem child's play compared with those of Boves and his fellow-soldiers.*

* When Boves was victorious in a battle, he would say, and with reason, *that he had gained*, and when fortune was adverse and he was defeated, he would say, and also with reason, *that he had not lost*; because, his purpose being to exterminate the American race, that they should die on one or the other side was the same thing to his sanguinary views. On account of this he did kill innocent people, peaceful citizens, children, the infirm, those who yielded, women, soldiers. Infernal monster! This purpose of Boves and his followers was so well known, that in a communication October 31, 1814, Field-Marshal Don Francisco Montalvo said to the minister of war in Spain what follows: "Don Jose Tomas Boves and those who imitate him, do not distinguish between delinquents and innocents; all die for the crime (to their eyes) of having been born in America." And unfortunately Boves was not alone in this purpose. Zerberis wrote to Monteverde from Rio Caribe the 18th of June, 1813: "There is no other alternative, sir, than a military government which will put to the sword all these vile and infamous crooks. I can assure you that not one of those who shall fall into my hands shall escape." Brigadier-General Piarro, a man advanced in years, who appeared to be endowed with better feelings, wrote on the 29th of December, 1814, to one of his countrymen:

" PUERTO CABELLO, December 29, 1814.

" ESTEEMED FRIEND:—Thanks be to God that we have concluded with the rest of this gang of knaves who had taken refuge in the impregnable Maturin; there yet remain a few wandering in the mountains, and to say the truth, to extinguish this American rabble, it is necessary not to leave one alive; and thus it is that in the last battles more than twelve thousand men have perished on one and the other side; fortunately the greater part CREOLES and Spaniards very rare. If it was possible to obliterate *all Americans* it would be better; for undeceive yourself, we are in the case of extinguishing the whole present generation, because they are all our enemies, and if the people have not risen, it is because they have not been able, it being wonderful to observe that the most exalted are those born of Spaniards. Finally, my dear friend, we should sow internal war between the crooks, so that they may annihilate each other, and that we may have less enemies.

" If in the remaining regions of America there are found many Boves, I can assure you that our desires shall be granted; because, as for Venezuela, there is not much wanting to see it realized, as we have finished with *all who have presented themselves*. They have now sufficient to remember us for a long time.

" You can, my friend, freely carry on your business on the coast, as now there are no fears; and if you wish to invest in the country, we have here a number of

In this the conflicts increased every moment, and in the midst of so much savage, Bolivar, whose mission to work without ever allowing himself to be dejected by reverses, was forced constantly to reorganize the army; replace men, provisions and armament for the campaign; he had to look out for subsistence, to take care of and administrate to all, lamenting the fatal example of indecision and want of energy on the part of some of the chieftains; of indifference on the part of the people, who had not as yet learned to love liberty.

The inexplicable conduct of Colonel Garcia de Sena had given up Barinas to the Spaniards. Feigning a sally on the enemy, he evacuated the place, leaving a few brave men in charge of it, and after he was out he deviated from the road and entered the mountains. Sena, who could have defeated Puy (a lieutenant of Yanez), as he with impunity retreated before him, sacrificed Barinas, where the Spaniards entered, leveling all in their way, putting to the sword the eighty soldiers who had remained there, as also men, women and children, pillaging the dwellings, and reducing that beautiful city of ten thousand souls to ashes.

And whilst Puy fed his fury on such a weak and defenceless prey, what was Sena and his troops doing? They were surmounting the callejones of Merida, the roughest and most difficult of any in Venezuela, the cavalry dismounting, their horses having been rendered entirely useless, it being finally necessary to disband them. Garcia de Sena left the remnants of the troops at Trujillo, and came alone to Valencia. What a vigorous and decisive military operation! He attempted to excuse himself in a letter which he wrote to Urdaneta the 31st of January from Trujillo; but however dangerous may have been the position of the defenders of Barinas, it does not appear that a chief who flees without fighting can exculpate himself, and that to his military fault should be added the secret abandonment of the city, surrendering to the ferocity of the enemy thousands of patriots, models of valor and constancy, and who emulated in zeal and generous efforts to save the place from the horrors with which they were threatened by that savage and unmerciful chief.

Yanez, encouraged by the success of Barinas, in which, as has been seen, the bravery of the enemy had no part, besieged this town of Ospino. A handful of braves heroically resisted the furious assault of the Spanish forces, and to intimations of surrender made by the chief, they answered: "the defenders of liberty never surrender to tyrants." Fortunately, on the 2d of February, during a scattering fire, a bullet entered the breast of Yanez, stretching him on the ground; and his troops, disconcerted, raised the siege and retreated to Guanare. "The people of Ospino," said the bulletin which related this success, "full of fury at beholding the body of the tyrant, assembled, and solicited the chief of the republican troops to cut it in pieces!"*

Yanez was succeeded, by the nomination of the officers of the division of Apure, by Lieutenant-Colonel Don Sebastian de la Calzada.

farms to sell, which can be procured with the greatest commodity. Calculate it and give notice to your intimate friend and attentive servant,

"MANUEL FIERRO."

This Fierro was reputed as a good man; amongst the Spaniards, as the best. Reader, what do you think of this?

(In the "Gaceta de Caracas" of October 11, 1831, the foregoing letter was published.)

* Jose Yanez was a native of Canaria. He was for some time employed in a

Who was this man, and by what principles of moral and respect was he invested with the command? This may easily be understood by saying that in the year 1810 he was a soldier in the battalion of the queen, was judged and arrested for a theft practised at the house of Dr. Don Felipe Fermin Paul, being freed by the insurrection of the 19th of April. Calzada was one amongst those who with most fury pillaged and devastated the soil; his first essay consisting in returning against Ospino and reducing it to ashes.

Immediately he took possession of Araure and threatened San Carlos.

At this date the country was literally infested with royalist guerrillas, who strewed destruction, pillage and violence on all sides. Carlos Blanco lorded over the south and to the west of San Carlos; Ramos was at Sarare; the savage Millet, a Catalan, one of the most sanguinary men of whom there are memories, harassed San Felipe; Reyes Vargas, Oberto and others were indefatigable at Coro, at Barquisimeto and Tocuyo; Calzada and Puy occupied Barinas; Maracaybo and Guayana continued to be the arsenal of the royalists; Boves and Morales were at Calabozo. Thus all junction of the independents was difficult, surrounded as it was by perils, and on many occasions impossible; and the headquarters of the Liberator seemed, by force of such circumstances, as if abandoned to its own and scanty resources.

To this mountain of evils came to be added the fatal defeat of the action of La Puerta, in which Boves completely triumphed over Campo-Elias, glorying in his immense masses of "llaneros" on horseback. Such a success opened to that genius vomited from hell, the gates to the valleys of Aragua and close on to Caracas. To secure still more the exit of his victory, he caused a strong column under the command of Rosete to advance by the road of Los Pilones, with the view of operating in the valleys of El Tuy. Rosete in effect took possession of Ocumare amidst blood and horrors, causing assassination even in the temple of God, and upon the holy altar on defenceless persons who there begged pity and pardon. What ferocity! What thirst for blood! The news that arrived from all parts could have been resumed in these sole words, *calamity and death!** The reaction was barbarous, more so than barbarous, impious and without pity. Happy those who were buried within the asylum of their dwellings; because the rest, more unfortunate, should strew with their bones the fields of Venezuela after having sprinkled them with their blood, for the crime alone of having loved justice! The witnesses of these sorrows and tor-

haberdasher's store at Caracas; at the breaking out of the revolution, he went to Barinas, and there he joined the army, and made himself an implacable enemy of all the Americans. He was a man of low birth, uneducated, of evil intentions. All kind of cruelty was familiar to him, and Guasdalupe, Nutrias, Barinas, Guanare and Ospino, remember his name with horror.

* "My mind is consumed," said the Spanish bishop Coll and Pradt in his edict, "and my soul can support no longer the weight of so many evils. Theft, rapine, pillage, homicides and assassinations, conflagrations and devastations; the virgin violated, the tears of the widow and orphan; the father armed against the son, the daughter-in-law quarreling with the mother-in-law, and each one searching for his brother to kill him; the congregations dispersed, the priests fugitives, the bodies strewn on the highways, those heaps of bones which cover the battle-fields, and so much blood shed on the American soil; . . . all is contained in my heart. Great God! is Venezuela, perhaps, that bloody Ninive, at last destroyed and levelled to the ground?"

tures of that deluge of blood, those who lived dejected and breathing that atmosphere full of a vague terror, a mortal suspense, either their lives were shortened or they succumbed. Our situation was painful, and with more reason than Edward III of England could we have exclaimed: "Fire and steel devour us. The Lord has drawn his bow, he has prepared his sword and shakes it aloft. We are about to disappear from the surface of the earth!"

Now that we have mentioned above the name of Rosete, and whose beastly acts we shall have afterwards to curse, let us know who he was and with what precedents had he shown himself in the theatre of the war.

"In the year 1812, Antonanzas found him in a miserable grocery store in the town of Taguay, living more upon the kindness of the people than upon his trade. Being a Spaniard, he was put in command of the town of Camatagua, by the first assassin of Calabozo and San Juan de los Morros, and from that moment our grocer, dropping the stupid and lazy exterior, with which he had covered his affected humility, he did not now think of anything else but of distinguishing himself by his zeal in the persecution of the patriots. When the Liberator took possession of Venezuela, Rosete retired to the interior of the plains, and put himself at the head of a band of robbers; afterwards he was unceasing in his attacks upon Orituco, Camatagua, Taguay and other towns to the south of the Cordillera; now he crossed it for the first time to threaten the capital, to protect the invasion of Boves and to surpass him in his horrible vengeance. How was it possible that with such men any negotiation for peace or reconciliation could be carried out? What points of contact were there between them and the patriot chieftains, however cruel these last may have been supposed to be? What plan, finally, military or political, could be conceived by such heads for the good of Spain or her colony? One was a pirate, another a base and ignorant servant, who from a petty thief had ascended to be a military chieftain, and the last a worthless tavern-keeper; and in such men unhappily were joined energy, activity, the principal part of command; the honorable Ceballos, the kind, pious and merciful Correa, kept themselves in the subordinate state, from which they never issued, as it always happens, virtue is modest and crime daring."*

The defeat of Elias at La Puerta, caused terror and defection on all sides, and the agitation and fear were increased by the appearance of Rosete at El Tuy. Bolivar alone, who drew forth from misfortunes new vigor, greater encouragement, and whose strength, like that of Hannibal, shone forth more brilliantly in reverses, disposed the plans of resistance. He was at the besieging lines of Puerto Cabello when the fatal news of the defeat of La Puerta arrived; and although it was said (and truly) that Boves had been severely wounded, he took the greater portion of the troops who garrisoned the line, to march towards Valencia to repel the numerous and victorious hosts, which were about to fall, like a devastating torrent upon Caracas. He ordered at the same time that the colonel of engineers, Colonel Aldao, should fortify the narrow pass of La Cabrera, and that Campo-Elias should make himself firm there; he dispatched Lieutenant-Colonel Mariano Montilla with instructions for General Ribas, who was at La Victoria; gave notice to Urdaneta that he should send him one of the bodies in his division, and he himself set out with all the troops he could collect to observe the enemy.

* History of Venezuela, Vol. I.

Where was Marino! What was the army of the East doing meanwhile, whose help opportunely solicited, was now more than ever so precious! If he had put himself in movement before, or if he had left promptly, he could have succored the Liberator in the conflict in which he was plunged; but, toward the end of January, he still remained at Aragua de Barcelona, and he caused his army to march slowly, although with the motto inspiring enthusiasm, "it is necessary to die or destroy the tyrants."

It was evident that Boves would attempt to march upon Caracas, and complete by a final stroke the destruction of the republic before the troops from the East should arrive; but it was indispensable to check him, and to evade the blow at least until Marino should be advised of the peril, and advance with his columns.

The 12th of February, at 8 o'clock in the morning, Boves furiously attacked La Victoria. Long and bloody combat in the very streets of the city; a terrible fire which vomited forth desolation and death on all sides! . . . It was not a fight, but a havoc. All around Ribas, the soul of defense, his best officers were falling; he himself had three horses shot under him. At four o'clock in the evening La Victoria offered the view of a vast cemetery. Suddenly a dense cloud of dust was raised on the side of the valley. . . . It was Elias, who was coming to the help of Ribas. He sent Montilla, a youth of great qualities and energy, to break the lines of the enemy and favor the incorporation of the reinforcing column. All was executed with as much impetuosity as success, and before the lapse of an hour, the *cries* to liberty announced the defeat of the royalists. Ribas marched out of the city, and taking advantage of the favorable moments, he drove back all he met, he swept away, dispersed the enemy and remained master of the battle-field. Boves and his hordes, who had suffered the loss of 1,000 men, situated themselves in the very neighborhood of La Victoria; they there formed a junction with a large reserve which had come to them from Ojra, and they promised themselves to soon take revenge. But Ribas did not allow them time; because at daybreak of the 18th he attacked them on their own heights with such energy that they were unable to resist, and they abandoned their position in a disorderly flight, by which the American arms, had secured the most brilliant victory. Artillery, ammunition, small arms, horses, baggage, and even the book of orders of Boves, fell into our power; no prisoners were taken because the atrocious conduct of the tyrant was the cause that our troops gave no quarters!

The fame of this victory was spread on all sides. The Liberator announced it to the world in that sublime style and fiery eloquence which was inherent in him. Speaking to the soldiers of the victorious army of La Valencia, he said:

"SOLDIERS:

"You, in whose breasts the love of country is superior to all other feelings, have gained yesterday the palm of victory, raising to the most elevated grade of glory this privileged country, which has inspired heroism in your dauntless hearts. Your names shall never be cast into oblivion. Behold the glory which you have just acquired. You, whose fearful sword has deluged the battle-field with the blood of these ferocious bandits. You are the chosen instrument of Providence to vindicate virtue on the earth, to bestow liberty on your brethren, and to annihilate ignominiously these numerous hordes, led by the most perverse of tyrants.

"CITIZENS OF CARACAS! The bloodthirsty Boves attempted to bring to your

gates, crime and ruin; to that immortal city, the first which gave the example of liberty in the hemisphere of Columbus. Insensate! tyrants cannot approach her invincible walls without expiating with their impure blood the audacity of their crimes. General Ribas, against whom adversity cannot prevail, the hero of Niquitso and Los Horcones, will, from this day, be styled 'the conqueror of tyrants at La Victoria.' Those who cannot receive from their fellow countrymen and the world the gratitude and admiration which is due to them, the brave Colonels Ribas, Davila, Rom and Picon, shall be preserved in the annals of glory. With their blood they bought the most brilliant victory; posterity shall collect their noble ashes. They are happier to live in the hearts of their countrymen, than you in their midst. Fly, conquerors, on the traces of the fugitive; upon those hordes of tartars who, intoxicated with blood, intend to exterminate enlightened America, to throw into the dust the monuments of genius and virtue, but in vain, because you have saved the country.

" BOLIVAR.

" Headquarters of Valencia, 18th February, 1818; fourth year of the republic and second of war to death."

What a beautiful eulogy is contained in this document, to General Ribas! Ribas, against whom adversity cannot prevail! . . . Napoleon had said of himself, condensing all the flatteries which self-love could invent: "*L'adversité me trouvoit au dessus de ses atteintes.*"

This is the proper place to say, that to his titles of true greatness, the Liberator joined one of still more merit. He beheld without jealousy and mortification, the fame and glory of his subordinates. Praiseworthy disinterestedness, rare even in the greatest minds, and as worthy as it is beautiful in the midst of the susceptibilities of the military profession! Bolivar was always first in recognizing and praising the worthy actions of his friends. Ribas, Urdaneta, Flores, Silva, Salom, Montilla, Toro (Fernando), Santander, Cordova, Soublette. . . were the constant objects of great and well-deserved eulogies. He named Girardot "Liberator;" Marino, "Saviour of the country;" Ribas, "hero, conqueror of tyrants;" Sucre, "intrepid and dexterous;" Salom, "just;" D'Evereux, "virtuous;" Brion, "magnanimous;" Codeño, "the bravest of the brave of Colombia;" Paez, "the dauntless." Bolivar ignored envy; not as those false and double-dealing men, who feign the praise, holding in their hearts the pain of the good and prosperity of others. His kindness was repaid by ingratitude, and many requited his favors by insults and upbraidings; but his heart was like a heated furnace, in which glowed the flames of justice and liberality.

Let us return to the course of the history.

Impelled by the emotions which are always caused by extraordinary feats, the municipal corporation of Caracas resolved an agreement to immortalize the memory of General Ribas the conqueror, and addressed him an eloquent congratulation, to which the worthy chieftain answered in these words:

" TO THE HONORABLE MUNICIPAL CORPORATION AND DEPUTIES OF THE PEOPLE:

" The demonstrations with which your worships have honored me, and the honors which you have bestowed on me, are certainly the greatest, and which, imprinted on my heart, shall be carried by my gratitude to the other side of

the tomb. The erection of a statue in memory of the battle of the 19th and the triumph of the arms of the republic at La Victoria, is undoubtedly the highest honor to which a mortal can aspire; my services have not as yet passed the limits of the duties imposed on me by my country; and without deceiving myself, could not have conceived any other. In Venezuela the General Liberator is the only one who merits this recompense, to him it is that the country owes its redemption, and to him alone should be attributed the highest honors; it is he who directs the helm of the government, he who commands and organizes the armies, and he it is, finally, who has liberated Venezuela. If your worships believe I have contracted any merit, and if my services merit the approbation of my fellow-citizens, I join them all and present them to the consideration of your worships, without any other object than to supplicate you to bestow exclusively these honors on the General Liberator, I receive for sufficient recompense by the remembrance and demonstration which have been given to my country. The blood shed at La Victoria by the illustrious Caraqueñiana, and the visible protection of the blessed Virgin of the Conception, were those which saved the country on that memorable day; I exceedingly supplicate your worships, that all the recompense which is to be assigned me to be distributed in benefit of so many widows and orphans who justly merit the remembrance of the country; and I hope that the corporation shall set apart this day to bless the Mother of God with the title of ~~the~~ Holy Conception, swearing to her an annual solemn feast day in the Holy Metropolitan Church, to which shall assist all the corporations, and exhorting the rest of the cities and towns to do the same in gratitude. I assure your worships that these are my desires, and, on my attaining them, they will engrave in my breast an eternal acknowledgment; and I promise you in the best faith that it is not moderation which moves me to explain in these terms, but justice. Marble and bronze can never satisfy the heart of a republican, but the gratitude and recognition by which I to day behold myself distinguished by the citizens of the city most worthy of freedom. The country exacts of me still greater services and sacrifices; she sees herself attacked by her enemies, and I, adding to my duty the gratitude to this people, offer to this illustrious body not to sheathe my sword until I see the temple of Janus closed. With the highest respect and consideration, I have the honor of being your fellow citizen.

“JOSE FELIX RIBAS.

“Caracas, February 18, 1814, 4th and 2d.”

The Liberator, careful and diligent, as one who knows of how much importance is celerity in war, took a portion of the troops of Ribas to reconnoitre the movements of Boves, and ordered him to march to Sabana de Ocumare to destroy Rosete, who had fortified himself at Yare. Ribas punctually executed the order, putting to flight the inhuman Spaniard. In the neighboring town of Ocumare, the patriots beheld a most frightful spectacle; the streets strewn with the dying and dead bodies, the greater part composed of women and children. The whole of that unhappy town was put to the sword by the subordinates of Boves. What scenes of horror and blood! What martyrdoms! Together laid in fearful quiet, hands, feet, heads, which appertained to different bodies.

“On communicating to you,” General Ribas wrote to the Governor of Caracas, “the horrors which I have beheld in this town, at the same time that I shiver,

make me swear an implacable hatred against the carnivorous Spaniards. They have sacrificed to their ambition more than three hundred innocent victims! Heaps of bodies and dismembered limbs, is the spectacle with which they have left adorned the miserable streets of this town! With the bodies and mutilated human limbs, have they paved the streets! It is most forcible to revenge American blood. The victims of Ocumare call out to all those who have the honor of governing in the free country of America. I repeat my oath, and I offer that I shall never forgive any means to chastise and exterminate this evil race.¹²⁶

Ribas took possession, amongst other things, of the private effects of Rosete and his correspondence, by which he was informed of the plan of revolution concealed with the prisoners of La Guayra and Caracas. There was also found an iron brand in the shape of a P, with which Rosete designed to stamp the brows of the patriots and their children.†

This iron brand of barbarity was deposited at Caracas, with the object of exposing it to the sight of the people.

Oh, unfortunate country in which were to be branded the friends and defenders of independence!

At the same time that the battalions of Boves were marching upon Aragua, the situation of the Liberator at Valencia and that of the patriots at Caracas and La Guayra, was very critical. They beheld themselves surrounded on all sides by enemies. It was of the utmost necessity to form armies, and there were no men. Caracas was drained by the continual drafts, and the case had already arrived when the authorities by an edict exacted that "children of twelve years of age should present themselves to take up arms." In such pressing circumstances the independents were not only obliged to defend themselves from cruel enemies who had sworn their extermination without pity, but also to guard and keep in prison more than one thousand Spaniards and slaves, whom it was necessary to shut up to prevent them from conspiring against the republic!

The Liberator until now had complied with the decree of "war to death" with repugnance, and only against prisoners taken with arms in their hands. Thus can be explained the existence of such a large number of Spaniards and slaves detained in our prisons. As long as clemency could be exercised without injury to the republic, Bolivar and his officers were merciful. They knew well that excessive severity and vengeance dim the lustre of virtue. But now the state of affairs required the greatest rigor. The armed royalists Boves, Lizon, Rosete, Morales, shame to human kind, opprobrium of the Spanish name, behaved themselves like wild beasts; the prisoners conspired in their dungeons; the news of the devastations and the greatest ruin arrived every moment; now there were the wild joys of the feasts of St. John at Puerto Cabello; ‡ again the brutal vengeance and slaughters of Barquisimeto, in

* Decree of the 21st of February, inserted in "La Gaceta de Caracas," No. 44.

† At the battle of Araure there was taken from Yafes another iron brand, figuring the letter R, *republican, rebel, or relapsed*, which brand was intended to mark the foreheads of the Americans.

‡ In many of the towns there exists the custom of celebrating the feast of St. John. The besieged of Puerto Cabello celebrated the 24th of June, 1813, and nothing seemed more pleasing to them than to shoot four patriots having the name

which not only the prisoners but the infirm, were mutilated in the most barbarous manner; now the murder of Ramon Tovar, who, placed in stocks of two feet, and with hardly any movement, received more than sixty blows with a cutlass, until he expired without any bodily form (inhumanity unworthy of cannibals!); again, the execution of the virtuous Merced Abrego, accused of having embroidered a uniform for Bolivar, and beheaded, after the termination of a quarrel stirred amongst themselves "of who should have the preference of cutting off her head;" some remember the fearful slaughter executed by Don Bartolome Lizon in the valleys of Cucuta; others that which Calzada executed at Ospino, Boves at La Puerta and at Cura; those of Rosete at Ocumare, causing entire towns to disappear by the edge of the Spanish sword. How much bloodshed! In the moment of these remembrances there arrived to the hands of Bolivar a communication from the citizen Leandro Palacio, commandant of La Guayra, consulting him "what he should do in an instant of peril with the multitude of Spaniards who existed in the prisons of the fort, they being very numerous and the garrison very small." The reply of the Liberator was short and decisive (February 8th):

"I order you to put to the sword immediately all the Spaniards imprisoned in those cells and in the hospital without any exception."

He communicated the same order to the military and civil authorities of Caracas, which order was conducted by Raimundo, Rendon Sarmiento.

In this manner 886 Spaniards and slaves perished, victims of the unheard-of cruelties of the royalist chief!

Ribas being absent from Caracas, the military government of the city had been confided to the care of Colonel Juan Bautista Arismendi, and it was he who carried out such a tremendous execution. With too much exactitude was it executed, with too much cruelty also, as is said; "but it is necessary," observes Baralt, "to agree that the patience of a saint could not have tolerated the excesses of the royalist chiefs, and that at each step new offences increased to an unspeakable point the hatred and anger."

The execution of the Spaniards was described by a writer opposed to American independence, as a useless atrocity, the result of frenzy and revenge. It is not to be doubted that innocence suffered, as all those sacrificed should not have merited the penalty; but it is not the fault of Bolivar. In great circumstances, as Tacitus has already remarked, there is hardly any remedy without some injustice, which is compensated by the common benefit.* Those who have written before me the history of Colombia have endeavored to justify Bolivar in this act, searching in the doctrine of people's rights and in the history of Bonaparte, supports to its designs. Excused labor! The Liberator caused to be published a "Manifesto," which was signed by his Secretary of State, Antonio Munoz Tebar (14th of February, 1814), in which he puts forth the painful necessity of the sentence which, in antagonism with his characteristic generosity, he pronounced the 8th of February.

of JOHN: they did so, confiding the execution to the Spanish Captain Urbista, a monster of cruelty, who led them to the scaffold, with blows, amongst others the distinguished Venezuelan, Juan Tlacco.

* Habet aliquid ex iniquo crimine magnam exemplum, quod contra singulos utilitate publica penditur. (TACITUS, Ann., lib. 4.)

As this document is not sufficiently known, and its importance being of a superior order, I determine to publish it as follows:

MANIFESTO

Which is made by the Secretary of State, the citizen Antonio Munos T6bar, by order of His Excellency, the Liberator of Venezuela.

At the shedding of the blood of the Spanish prisoners at La Guayra, that portion of the world cognizant of our events, will applaud a measure which was imperiously demanded, for some time past, by the justice and interest of almost one half of the Universe. The State of our position, sketched alongside the history of the antecedent events, will make evident to those who have ignored our sufferings, and the generosity which increased them, the necessity of the sentence, which, contrary to his characteristic humanity, the supreme chief of the republic has pronounced. We will not mention three centuries of illegitimate usurpation, during which the Spanish government spread on all sides opprobrium and calamity upon the numerous population of peaceful America. Under the blood-sprinkled walls of Quito, where Spain first cut asunder the rights of nature and of nations. From that moment of 1810, during which was shed the blood of the Quirogas, Salinas, etc., they placed in our hands the sword of retaliation to revenge that upon all Spaniards. The bonds which unite people were cut in twain by them; and for this only and first act, the blame of the crimes and misfortunes which have followed, should fall back upon the first infractors.

The annals of generosity will preserve that of the government of Caracas during the revolution of the 19th of April that year. In vain did a resenting population demand the deaths of the authors of the public evils; the firm resistance of that government saved them. If they expel Emp6ran, a governor born in the midst of a revolution in the other continent; if to the members of the Supreme Court, Anca, Basadre, Garcia, Spanish magistrates loathed for their evil-doings, still they show the greatest consideration for their persons in these proceedings, and afford them large sums of money for their support. The new directors of the destinies of a free people seem to occupy themselves more of the fate of the tyrants than to secure by an energy proper to the circumstances, their newly born liberty. Indifferent to the machinations of the conspirators, they satisfy themselves in giving to some passports, buying the property of those who were embarrassed with them, to go and enjoy them with impunity in other countries. Although bound by the most solemn oaths not to turn against us their arms, disregarding religion as much as humanity and the rights of the people, it is those who, taken in the present war, have been chastised by the sword of the laws which condemn them, and have expiated their perjuries, treasons, and assassinations.

Many who were elevated to the first offices; many who were the most distinguished chiefs of the republic, Llamocaa, Pascual Martinez, Marti, Goira, Budia, Isidoro Quintero, have been our most cruel persecutors.* Quintero, who

* The Government of Caracas then wished to establish the strictest union between Americans and Spaniards, placing so much confidence in the latter, that it was seen, not without the jealousy of the former, that almost all the authority and powers were deposited in their hands. The Junta Suprema was presided over by Llamocaa, and its secretaries Moreno, Roy and Gonzales; the fortresses of La

had been loaded down with honors by the people and government, who obtained permission to send to the hostile province of Coro sums of money to his relations, being perhaps only a pretext to help that government in the invasion which afterwards subdued Venezuela!

In effect, our soldiers frightened by the phenomena of nature during the memorable earthquake of the 28th March, 1812, led astray by superstition preached to them by some deceiving fanatics, allowed the expedition commanded by Monteverde to penetrate into the West. Surrounded on all sides by ruins, we beheld at the same time the inhumane sacrifice of our most innocent brethren. Antofianzas and Boves, entering Calabozo and San Juan de los Morros, murdered with their own hands, almost without any exception, the inhabitants of the first place, peaceful herdsmen; and those of the second, laborers of the soil; the aged man who, loaded down with years and infirmities, ignores on his death-bed the revolutions of governments, the agriculturist who, never having taken up arms, recognizes only the authority of the priest whom he venerates. Their bodies separated from their heads shall shed immortal blood for our posterity. This will know that the bloody Boves and Antofianzas caused some to take between their teeth the muzzles of muskets, to discharge their contents into their throats: that others still living served as a target for their shots, to practice their soldiers in the use of their lances and sabres. Two years have elapsed, and still can be seen impaled at San Juan de los Morros a swinging human skeleton.

An unwary chief believes, that surrendering, he can soothe the fury of the tyrant; he flatters himself to secure the life repose and property of the Venezuelans by a capitulation. Hardly under its shelter the tyrant succeeds in en-

Guayra and Puerto Cabello, commanded by Fernandez and Ruiz; the troops in the east by Moreno; those of the west by Jalon; the artillery by Salcedo; the national incomes managed by Franco, Sata and Alustiza; and all the administrations, or almost all the lucrative and secure posts in the interior, were also confided to Spaniards. This disinterestedness and other remarkable acts of confidence, were not sufficient to satiate their proud impatience; and by the month of October of the same year (1810) the conspiracies of these wicked men began to break out against the established government and the lives of the Americans.

The project being discovered, the conspirators, tried and condemned by a court of justice, it seemed consequent that they should be beheaded; but Caracas, unwilling to stain with blood the pages of the history of her revolution, puts aside the severity of the merited penalty and is satisfied with giving a passport to some and imprisoning others, believing that she could by force of favors domesticate the ferocity of her enemies; very soon she saw her error in irremediable injuries; the commissioner Cortabarría from Puerto Rico, had undermined the provinces and sown discord in their interior towns, and even in their principal cities. During the first days of July, 1811, the conspiracies of the Spaniards and isleños broke out at Caracas and Valencia. Many were taken with arms in their hands on the evening of the 11th of said month; and when it was just and even necessary to take their lives on the spot, they were tried by law and only sixteen were condemned; the rest were pardoned in contradiction to the popular dictamen that our ruin should be followed by so much clemency; but the government could not persuade itself of so much furious obstinacy, nor of the fatal results of its moderation in favor of such implacable enemies, who, under its shelter, had all the time they wished to conspire, all that was to be dictated by their vengeance, deluding the unwary people whom they were afterwards to destroy.

slaving some of the towns where he receives only testimonies of docility, when he breaks through the inviolable and sacred contract which had raised as an insuperable barrier between him and ours; a contract which has restrained the impetus of the most savage people, subduing ambition, cupidity and vengeance by reciprocal and solemn promises. To leave no doubt of the crime, to give it new polish, they confirm their offers by their proclamations, which are no sooner published than violated.

Suddenly the scene in Venezuela is changed. The buildings which had resisted the convulsions of the earthquake, are scarcely sufficient to receive the persons brought in arrested, from all parts. Dwellings are transformed into jails; men into prisoners. The small number of Spaniards and islanders, the soldiers of the despot, women and the recent born, are the only ones excepted. The rest, either they hide themselves in the most remote forests, or they are buried in stifling dungeons, where a cruel skill prevents the entrance of light and air; or they are heaped in those very rooms, where before they had fulfilled the duties of social life, where they had found joy under the auspices of innocence, and enjoyed the wealth gained by the sweat of their brows. Now afflicted by iron, despoiled of their property, and in misery, pestilence, and suffocation, the religious and the soldier, the citizen and the countryman, the rich and the poor, the septuagenary and the infant not yet arrived to the age of reason. Those who had been invested by the people with supreme power, were yoked to stocks in the most public places; the most distinguished persons tied hands and feet, placed on beasts of burden, who dashed some to pieces on the rocks. They traveled in this state from one and the other prisons. Aged men and the dying tied most brutally, in bands of twenty and thirty, passed thus a whole day without food or drink, nor rest, in climbing by inaccessible roads.

Agriculture, industry and the movement of commerce was not any longer to be seen in a country prostrate under slavery. The manufactories rendered useless, the stores robbed; there only remained the vestiges of past greatness. In the almost deserted cities were to be seen only a few cattle feeding on the grass; nothing was heard besides the cries of the wives, the brutal insults of the soldier, the faint laments of the woman, the child, the aged who died of hunger.*

Virtue, talents, population, wealth, even the fair sex, are condemned or suffer. Crimes, accusations, brutal vengeance and misery increase. The same chief who rewards a false accuser, disregards or chastises the resolute man, who dares to sustain the language of truth. Those who feed his passions, who flatter his vanity, who desire to bathe themselves in innocent blood, compose his advisers, and oracles. Thus the system of ferocity gradually increases, from perfidies, theft and outrages they pass to greater excesses. Perceiving that the men die too slowly in their prisons, they carry them to the scaffold, and even then, requiring too much apparatus, and not shedding as much blood as they desire, they destroy entire populations, tortures are invented; the last painful moments of the victims are prolonged by means unknown, until now, to the most wicked minds.

Aragua, in the East, is the new scene of the atrocities. Zuazola is the head of the executioners; a loathsome man, if the class of his iniquities can place him amongst our fellow beings. All succumb under his blows, and those who

* This was the true position of Venezuela during the months of December, 1812, January and February, 1813.

once inhabited Aragua have never been seen since. Never has such a slaughter been executed. Children were murdered on the very breasts of their mothers; the same knife divided their necks. Even the fetus in the womb irritated these frantic men; they destroyed it with more impatience than the tiger his prey. Not only did they attack the living, but it could be said that they were conspiring that none should be born to occupy the world.

The fetus in the maternal womb was as guilty to the minds of Zuazola and his fellow soldiers, as the women, aged men, and the remaining inhabitants of Aragua. The locality of this town, in the interior of the plains, far from the capital, did not allow it to take any active part in the political innovations. Notwithstanding its population was most horribly exterminated, the Spaniards recreated themselves in beholding the tortures; they would change them; but in all, they delayed by the most cruel skill the sufferings of nature. They flayed some alive, throwing them afterwards into poisonous and pestilential swamps; they would pare off the soles of the feet of others, and in this state they would force them to run over sharp rocks; others they would cut off the beard along with the skin; to all, before or after having murdered, they cut off the ears. Some catalans of Cumana bought them at the price of gold as ornaments for their houses; to feast themselves with the sight; to accustom their wives and children to the rage of their feelings.

History had spoken to us about the proscriptions, which the ambition of tyrants, fear or hatred had dictated; of the base joy of others, contemplating heaps of bodies which had been murdered by their orders; but they were their enemies; they believed these the surest means of securing their usurpation. To cut open the womb which bears the seed of a new being; to give unheard-of tortures to children, virgins. . . . was only reserved for our tyrants. Spain alone has discovered this means; and we are the unhappy examples which have made them known. The victories of the heroes of Maturin, cause the scene to be transported to Espino, Calabozo and Barinas. Every day our most distinguished countrymen were brought to the scaffold.* These spectacles would have been repeated to us every day, if the Granadanian soldiers, victorious on the fields of Cucúta and Carache, had not rushed to liberate us.

Neither the continual superiority of the liberating arms, nor the pride which victory inspires, nor the recent remembrance of so many outrages, change in our victorious chiefs the generosity of the principles which distinguishes us so much from the enemy. The clemency of the conqueror consents to the capitulation proposed by Governor Fierro, when it was a delirium to ask it; and if before we were amazed at the cruelties which they committed on the Venezuelan people, now it cannot be conceived, how they turned themselves against their own most compromised class, abandoning it to our resentments, and annulling the capitulation which protected it. All the Spanish prisoners were left at discretion. Monteverde himself did not doubt in expressing it. He refused to sanction the capitulations given to Budias and Marmol; and declared to the

* It is known by all that Boves, under the pretext of a popular commotion, caused to be put to the sword at Espino all men that were capable of bearing arms, amongst them the Chief Justice Bolivar. Juan Bautista Riverol, Negrete and others, were also murdered at Calabozo; and at Barinas, Colonel Antonio Nicolas Brizoso and seven more officers, taken prisoners along with him, eight citizens of the most reputation in the city, etc.

face of the world that they did not have authority to make them. They should have paid it with their heads. Magnanimity saved them. Even still more exaggerated in generosity than they in treason, it was proposed to the commander of Puerto Cabello to include that place, making known to him that in case of not ceding to reason and necessity, all individuals pertaining to the Spanish nation should be exterminated.

His denial was not sufficient to cause us to fulfill our threats, and many who enjoyed full liberty, and returned this kindness by proceeding to the valleys of Tuy and Tacata, to the low lands and to the West, where they fired those insurrections, the most replete of crimes, whose sorrowful results will make themselves be felt for many years to come, amounting to more than 10,000, those whom they have deprived of existence, since the month of September, 1818, at which time the expedition from Spain arrived at our shores.

What fearful devastation, what a universal slaughter, the marks of which will not be washed out even by centuries! The execration which will attend on the names of Yáñez and Boves will be as lasting as the evils which they have caused. Bands of robbers set out to execute the ruin. Steel kills those who breathe; fire devours the dwellings and all that which resists steel. On the highways are seen persons of both sexes stretched lifeless; the cities exhale the corruption of the unburied. On all of them can be remarked the progress of sorrow, in their eyes torn from the sockets, in their bodies, lanced, in those who have been dragged at the horses' tail. No religious succor is given by those who convert into ashes the temples of the Omnipotent and the sacred images. In Merida, in Barinas, in Caracas, there is scarcely a city or a town, which has not experienced the desolation. But the capital of Barinas, Guanare, Bobare, Barquisimeto, Cogodes, Tinaquillo, Nirgua, Guayoa, San Joaquin, Villa de Cura, Valleys of Bartovento, are the most unhappy people of all; some of them have been consumed by flames, other, have no longer inhabitants. Barinas, where Puy put to the sword 500 persons and there would have been seventy-four more, if the prompt entry of our arms in that city had not allowed the executioners time sufficient to fulfill their infernal mission.* Guanare and Araure, where Liendo and Salas, benefactors of the Spaniards, are those most maltreated in receiving their murderous blows. Bobare, where they struck off the legs and arms of the prisoners made on that very spot, and in Yaritaguá and Barquisimeto.

To so many motives of indignation was added the discovery of a conspiracy of the prisoners of La Guayra, after our defeat of the 10th November, 1818, at Barquisimeto; a conspiracy fully justified, even with the genuine proofs of the weapons which they hid from our sight, under the fillings of the bolts of the prisons and the irons of those who had them.

A pardon given, putting aside the public vengeance, was employed as the

* Puy being informed at Barinas, by one of his aids, that the republican troops, having conquered Ceballos, were already crossing the river in its neighborhood, asked him: "Will they not give us sufficient time to finish with the seventy-four who are imprisoned?" The other, preoccupied by the same fear which had made him see our army crossing the river, when as yet it was some leagues away, he replied, "No," and thus they were saved from the Spanish ferocity by the shameful flight of Puy. The city of Barinas being evacuated anew, he re-entered, and then realized a universal slaughter of as many as were in it, indiscriminately.

noble means of dissuading them forever from further attempts, confounding their raving audacity by the severity manifested on ten of the principal ring-leaders.

From the first siege of Puerto Cabello the Spaniards exposed inevitably to our fires the prisoners; those old prisoners, victims of deceit, dragging their chains for nearly two years, or dying for want of food, or by the most painful fatigues. Our revenge is to procure an exchange in favor of their prisoners, a proposition made by us on six or seven occasions, and as many times denied, notwithstanding that the last ones advised the determination of taking the lives of the prisoners if they would not accept according to the usages of war. That abomination was repeated in those days; it is now necessary to retaliate; and for having put to an equal fate the Spanish prisoners, four of the unhappy ones whom they imprisoned were immediately shot. They themselves gave us their names, "de Pellin, Osorio, Pulido, Pointet." Death has put an end to their long sufferings, and their ashes now rest from the agonies in which they were plunged.

The propositions for exchange were reiterated, again they were refused. Almost all the parleys, who on the good faith offered by themselves were the conductors among others the venerable priest Garcia de Ortigosa, have been detained, violently imprisoned, some lashed and condemned to the public works. To what race of monsters belong the Spaniards whose thirst for blood did not except their own accomplices? There is no class of acts, there is no violation, there is no perfidy which they have not committed on all sides to cause us undoubtedly to retaliate on their inexperienced countrymen. Our patience has surpassed their provocations, till the public weal being endangered, has exacted their sacrifice to secure it.

The prisoners of La Guayra in agreement with Boves, Yanez, and Rosete, the combinations of sedition would have preponderated if Providence had not put into our hands the light which has guided us through the darkness of crime. Yanez by Barinas, Boves by Villa of Cura, Rosete by Ocumare attack us. The plot of the prisoners against the government is revealed, and joining to the conviction of it the clamors more vehement than ever of the people, their decapitation was ordered. At the same time Rosete, carrying out on his side his part of the agreement, puts the natives of Ocumare to a horrible end. Some are mutilated without regard to age or sex; three in the church and on the altars, three hundred memberless bodies of our brethren lay spread in the streets and neighborhood of the small town; they nail to the windows and door those parts of their bodies of which modesty prevents the mention.* This news causes

* Communication of the Presbyter Juan de Orta to Provisor and Vicar-General:

"I give your worship notice that on the 11th inst. this town was attacked by a band of robbers, led by the barbarous and bloodthirsty Rosete. It had the misfortune to succumb in such a manner that its consequences exasperate the human mind. More than three hundred bodies of the persons most distinguished for their adhesion to our liberty, cover the streets, ditches and hills of its vicinity. The cries of the widows and orphans is as universal as it is irreparable; as the whole town was robbed and pillaged till nothing was left useful to repose, preservation and the commodities of life. The most insensible and unchristian heart cannot behold, without pain, the sorrowful and horrid spectacle which the ferocity and rapacity of some unheard-of men, traced, and who shall be the opprobrium and degradation of rational nature. But it is not this only which scandalizes and terrifies; the sanctuary of the living God was violated with the greatest insult

us to fly to arms in defense of humanity, when Rosete, only seven hours distant from Caracas, was approaching in the confidence that those who were already executed would have realized their escape; but this infamous man flies away as cowardly as he was cruel, even leaving in our power his papers. We see ratified in them the conspiracy of the Spanish prisoners. By their plans, surprising the guards who watched them, and taking possession of the port, they were to co-operate on that side towards the dissolution of our forces. The fate of the town of Ocumare was reserved to all the rest of Venezuela. Some few whom they would have preserved, perhaps for their service, were to be branded with a P for their perpetual ignominy.*

and impiety. The blood of three innocent victims seeking shelter in its sacred privilege sprinkled the pavement: Jose I Machillanda in the choir, J. A. Rolo in the middle of the principal aisle, and J. Diaz on the main altar. Its door all closed by four priests, who, in union with the people, were elevating their prayers to the Almighty, were broken down with axes, and entering, they did the same to the wardrobes where the sacred robes were kept; I, meanwhile, mounted on a horse, went to the spiritual succour, and placed at the head of the troops who presided its fate, and prayed to the Lord for the defence of our town; as much because the military commander ordered me, as the greater part of the defenders consisting of my tender flock, I could not behold them with indifference and cowardice in such evident peril. The horse was twice wounded, and falling to the ground, and seeing the fight lost, I flew to the forest, where I remained hid during eleven days, until our troops returned. My mind afflicted by such ruin, by the loss of all my countrymen, by hunger, by thirst, by the climate and severity of the weather, my health could not certainly resist the enormous weight of the cure of souls. In the forests I saved all sacred vessels of gold and silver which I had hid in anticipation; only a small plate appertaining to the wine-holder has been lost; of the garments, they took a white gown along with its amice of fine linen, five altar cloths of embroidered muslin, two altar covers, one acolyte dress. The priests who remained in the church, after having shed bitter tears of sorrow and pity, and having miraculously escaped with their lives, beholding the sanctuary profaned, violated and filled with the excrement, urine and filthiness of those beastly and savage hordes, took charge of blessing anew the temple, and immediately executed and performed the divine services, undoubtedly to mitigate and cause to disappear the hatred and fury of the tyrant. I have abstained from all exercise in it, until having informed your worship from whom I expect the corresponding orders. I cannot do less than insinuate to your worship the utter misery of so many just and innocent souls, so that if it is possible for you to succour them to execute this act of charity. The commandant-general and chief of the army has helped them with remarkable piety. God keep your worship in his care.

"February 23, 1814."

"PRESBYTER JUAN DE ORTA.

* On the 4th of February, an isleño who had been put in liberty with permission to embark, denounced to the government of Caracas that Carlos Garcia had counseled him not to depart, as the blow was about to be given which was to free all the prisoners. Garcia being brought up and the investigation made, it resulted to be the same project discovered in September, which had been left unpunished, the ringleaders not appearing, in spite of the complicity which could be seen with the conspiracy chastised at La Guayra, and of the advices received from the Antilles, where the Spaniards spoke aloud about this plan. On the night of the 6th it was proved by fact; on the road of La Guayra, between Cruz and the hill of Sanchorqui, several Spaniards and isleños escaped or were placed in liberty,

After the light of truth had made known to us the secret of their machinations, to shelter them any longer was to shelter in our bosom the vipers who were to poison us with their fangs; it was to be an accomplice to their crimes, it was feeding their plots; it was risking manifestly the destiny of the republic, whose former loss had been caused by the rebellion of the Spanish prisoners in the fort of Puerto Cabello, who, possessing it on the 1st July, 1812, caused the rest of Venezuela to succumb immediately. Justice and humanity should triumph over their dark projects. Yañez was quartered at Ospino in the order of combat; Boves was conquered at la Victoria; the bands of Rosete dispersed at Ocumare, and the prisoners executed. The forces which had been occupied in guarding them, have since been able with security to march out to fight the enemy.

Generosity in vain spoke too much time in their favor; for too much time had the government been deaf to the clamors of the people; it was even preparing to transport them to other countries to enjoy liberty. A continued series of transgressions had been tolerated on our part; propositions of exchange were made to save them. We have had to repent for so much indulgence: those who owed us their lives have conspired against ours. New crimes, new perfidies, have caused in the days of liberty, around and in our midst, evils still greater than the former.

The Spanish prisoners have been put to the sword, when their impunity enforced the hate of their companions, when their conspiracies in the very midst of their prisons, hardly quelled, when they are again renewed, have imposed on us the severe measure, to which we had been authorized for a long time by the right of retaliation. In order to restrain the torrent of devastation, to drain this inundation of human blood, for which the supreme authority is responsible to the divine, it has given an example which will cause the rest to take warning, who relying until now upon the kindness, which had been the shield of these, would protect them.

What has been the object of so many treasons, cruelties, conspiracies, perfidies, repeated transgressions against the laws, against bonds, the rights of nations, and of that devastation of Venezuela, which the pen can never describe! They do not aspire to establish an empire; their object is to destroy all. Tyranny itself, that it may exist, is obliged to persevere. The plantations, the herds of cattle, the works of art, the excellencies of luxury, the wealth of the cities, are the incentives of the conquerors. Neither the Spaniards nor these are conquerors; they are the hordes of Tartars who wish to establish the traces of civilization, to cut down with their savage axe the monuments of art, to stifle industry, the very matters of the first necessity. Their desire is no other than a perseverance of cruelty, an instinct of mischievousness, which causes them to em-

assembled with fire-arms and side-arms, and, in company with some renegade Americans, they began to murder all that came or went by. The first who managed to escape gave notice at one o'clock at night; a body of riflemen set out to reconnoitre, and which it was necessary to increase the following day, on which there were found fresh bodies on the sides of the road, two women included, one of them with child. The persecution continued in concord with the commandant of La Guayra and the governors of Maiquitta, Carayaca and Antimano, until there were no traces left of these assassins, who have expiated their crimes with their blood; and the arms and munitions have been taken with which they were marching to destroy the government.

ploy their barbarity against even themselves. Behold, then, O Venezuelans, the advantages offered you by these chiefs, whom you looked upon before the revolution as highwaymen! You, who unwary follow their banners, reflect upon the reward you will receive: to be involved in an absolute extermination. When the seed of generations shall be destroyed, when cities shall be reduced to rubbish; when nature itself shall be annihilated, then abandoning Venezuela as a haunt for wild beasts, the views of the Spaniards being satisfied, shall go to those other regions of fertile America to complete the destruction of the New World. The origin of this evident undertaking unfolds itself in Venezuela, Mexico and Buenos Ayres, to cover over finally the intermediate points! People of America! read in the events of this war the Spanish intentions: reflect on the destiny which is being prepared for you. In order not to disappear from the face of the earth, decide what road is left to you. Nations of the world! who certainly do not desire that one half of the world be extinguished, know our enemies. You will deduce the inevitable alternative, that either we must or they must be immolated. You will be just: a handful of upstarts should not prevail upon millions and millions of civilized men. You already applaud our final indispensable sentence, and the suffrage of the Universe is that which most justifies it.

ANTONIO MUÑOZ TEBAR.

Headquarters of San Mateo, February 14, 1814.