CHAPTER XXI

THE DECLINE OF THE SPANISH EMPIRE

GREAT as were the depredations of the "Lutheran Pirates," this was not the main reason for the decline of the Spanish colonies.

"Panama," writes Bancroft, "had comparatively little indigenous wealth and was largely dependent for prosperity on Spain's colonial policy. Unfortunately this was characterized by a short-sightedness which eventually proved disastrous both to the province and empire."

After the first rush of golden spoils from Peru had crossed the Isthmus, its prosperity began to decline. For a while the silver from the Potosi mines and scattering consignments of booty from the west coast of Central America furnished an appearance of business activity. But gradually these sources of wealth ran dry, and no local industries, either on the Isthmus itself or in the colonies which used it as a trade route, had been developed. And so gradually the life of Panama was smothered. No more expeditions outfitted in its harbor. No returning argosies brought commerce to its market place. The death rate from "fevers and fluxes" continued high and fewer and fewer immigrants arrived from Europe. Even the creoles born on the Isthmus left for more healthy climates. Very few whites remained in the city which had been once so proud.

Mr. Haring in the introductory chapters of his "The Buccaneers in the West Indies" gives a very able analysis of the fundamental causes which led up to this remarkable decline.

"At the time of the discovery of America the Spaniards, as M. Leroy-Beaulieu has remarked, were perhaps less fitted than any other nation in Western Europe for the task of American colonization. Whatever may have been the political rôle thrust upon them in the sixteenth century by the Hapsburg marriages, whatever certain historians may say of the grandeur and nobility of the Spanish national character, Spain was then neither rich nor populous, nor industrious. For centuries she had been called upon to wage a continuous warfare with the Moors, and during this time had not only found little leisure to cultivate the arts of peace, but had acquired a certain disdain for manual work which helped to mould her colonial administration and influenced all her subsequent history. And when the termination of the last of these wars left her mistress of a united Spain, and the exploitation of her own resources seemed to require all the energies she could muster, an entire new hemisphere was suddenly thrown open to her, and given into her hands by a papal decree to possess and populate. Already weakened by the exile of the most sober and industrious of her population, the Jews; drawn into a foreign policy for which she had neither the means nor the inclination; instituting at home an economic policy which was almost epileptic in its consequences, she found her strength dissipated, and gradually sank into a condition of economic and political impotence. . . .

"The colonization of the Spanish Indies, on its social and administrative side, presents a curious contrast. On the one hand, we see the Spanish Crown, with high ideals of order and justice, of religious and political unity, extending to its ultramarine possessions its faith, its language, its laws and its administration; providing for the welfare of the aborigines with paternal solicitude; endeavoring to restrain and temper the passions of the conquerors; building churches and founding

schools and monasteries; in a word, trying to make its colonies an integral part of the Spanish monarchy. . . . Some Spanish writers, it is true, have exaggerated the virtues of their old colonial system; yet that system had excellencies which we cannot afford to despise. If the Spanish kings had not choked their government with procrastination and routine; if they had only taken their task a bit less seriously and had not tried to apply too strictly to an empty continent the paternal administration of an older country, we might have been privileged to witness the development and operation of as complete and benign a system of colonial government as has been devised in modern times. The public initiative of the Spanish government, and the care with which it selected its colonies, compare very favorably with the opportunism of the English and French, who colonized by chance private activity and sent the worst elements of their population, criminals and vagabonds, to people their new settlements across the sea. However much we may deprecate the treatment of the Indians by the conquistadores, we must not forget that the greater part of the population of Spanish America to-day is still Indian, and that no other colonizing people have succeeded like the Spaniards in assimilating and civilizing the natives. The code of laws which the Spaniards gradually evolved for the rule of their transmarine provinces, was, in spite of defects which are visible only to the larger experience of the present day, one of the wisest, most humane and best coordinated of any to this day published for any colony. Although the Spaniards had to deal with a large population of barbarous natives, the word "conquest" was suppressed in legislation as ill-sounding, 'because the peace is to be sealed,' they said, 'not with the sound of arms, but with charity and good-will.'

"The actual results, however, of the social policy of the

Spanish kings fell far below the ideals they had set for themselves. The monarchic spirit of the crown was so strong that it crushed every healthy expansive tendency in the new countries. It burdened the colonies with numerous privileged nobility, who congregated mostly in the larger towns, and set to the rest of the colonists a pernicious example of idleness and luxury. In its zeal for the propagation of the Faith, the Crown constituted a powerfully endowed church, which, while it did splendid service in converting and civilizing the natives, engrossed much of the land in the form of mainmort, and filled the new world with thousands of idle, unproductive, and often licentious friars. . . .

"In this fashion was transferred to America the crushing political and ecclesiastical absolutism of the mother country. Self-reliance and independence of thought or action on the part of the creoles were discouraged, divisions and factions among them were encouraged and educational opportunities restricted, and the American-born Spaniards gradually sank into idleness and lethargy, indifferent to all but childish honours and distinctions and petty local jealousies. To make matters worse, many of the Spaniards who crossed the seas to the American colonies came not to colonize, not to trade or cultivate the soil, so much as to extract from the natives a tribute of gold and silver. The Indians, instead of being protected and civilized, were only too often reduced to serfdom and confined to a laborious routine for which they had neither aptitude nor the strength; while the government at home was too distant to interfere effectively in their behalf. Driven by cruel taskmasters they died by thousands from exhaustion and despair, and in some places entirely disappeared. . . .

"In the colonies the most striking feature of Spanish
cy was its wastefulness. After the conquest
d, it was to the interest of the Spaniards to

gradually wean the native Indians from barbarism by teaching them the arts and sciences of Europe, to encourage such industries as were favored by the soil, and to furnish the growing colonies with those articles which they could not produce themselves, and of which they stood in need. Only thus could they justify their monopolies of the markets of Spanish America. . . . Queen Isabella wished to carry out this policy, introduced into the newly-discovered islands wheat, the olive and the vine, and acclimatized many of the European domestic animals. Her efforts, unfortunately, were not seconded by her successors, nor by the Spaniards who went to the Indies. In time the government itself, as well as the colonist, came to be concerned, not so much with the agricultural products of the Indies, but with the return of the precious metals. Natives were made to work the mines, while many regions adapted to agriculture, Guiana, Caracas and Buenos Ayres, were neglected, and the peopling of the colonies by Europeans was slow. The emperor, Charles V, did little to stem this tendency, but drifted along with the tide. Immigration was restricted to keep the colonies free from contamination of heresy and of foreigners. The Spanish population was concentrated in cities, and the country divided into great estates granted by the crown to the families of the conquistadores or to favorites at court. The immense areas of Peru, Buenos Ayres and Mexico were submitted to the most unjust and arbitrary regulations, with no object but to stifle growing industry and put them in absolute dependence upon the metropolis. It was forbidden to exercise the trades of dyer, fuller, weaver, shoemaker or hatter, and the natives were compelled to buy of the Spaniards even the stuffs they wore on their backs. Another ordinance prohibited the cultivation of the vine and the olive except in Peru and Chili, and even these provinces might not send their oil and wine to Panama, Guatemala or any other

JOHN FINDLEY WALLACE,
First Chief Engineer.

JOHN F. STEVENS,
Second Chief Engineer.

place which could be supplied from Spain. To maintain the commercial monopoly, legitimate ports of entry in Spanish America were made few and far apart—for Mexico, Vera Cruz; for Granada, the town of Cartagena. The islands and most of the other provinces were supplied by uncertain "*vaisseaux de registre*," while Peru and Chili, finding all direct commerce by the Pacific or South Sea interdicted, were obliged to resort to the fever-ridden town of Porto Bello, where the mortality was enormous and the prices increased tenfold.

"In Spain, likewise, the colonial commerce was restricted to one port, Seville. For in the estimation of the crown it was much more important to avoid being defrauded of its dues on import and export, than to permit the natural development of trade by those towns best fitted to acquire it. . . ."

Just as Las Casas was always favorably received at court, but almost always found that the most beneficent laws could not or would not be enforced by the colonial officers, so it turned out in regard to all the fair plans which the Spanish kings made for the administration. Undoubtedly the home government took its duty toward the New World with more seriousness than did the other nations. But the agents sent out to enforce the royal will were almost to a man unprincipled malefactors.

De la Rios, the governor of Panama, who succeeded Pedrarias while on the whole a mild mannered man and not notable for his cruelty had, according to Bancroft, a thirst for riches which surpassed the greed of his miserly predecessor. So corrupt was his administration that he was sent back to Spain in 1529 and convicted of malfeasance in office. Antonio de la Gama was governor until 1534 when he was displaced in disgrace and Francisco de Barrionuevo put in his place.

Under the administration of this military despot, it became the turn for the white men to suffer. His predecessors had thoroughly despoiled the natives and his only hope of "getting his" was to force loans from the merchants. A contemporary writer says: "Only that an ocean lay between Charles and his down-trodden subjects, nineteen out of twenty would have thrown themselves at his feet to pray for justice."

Bancroft writes, that "of Pedro Vazquez, who succeeded Barrionuevo as governor of Castilla del Oro, little is known, but of Doctor Robles, the successor of Vazquez, under whose administration the government was continued till 1546, it is alleged, and probably with truth, that he wrought more harm to his fellowmen in a twelvemonth than the malign genius of a Pedrarias even could accomplish in a decade."

Robles was thrown out by the rebellion of Gonzalo Pizarro and when the royal authority was restored the new series of officials finding that both the natives and the colonists had been milked dry by former administrations had to turn their attention to the royal treasury. In 1579 a Corregidor of Panama confessed on his death bed to having embezzled over six thousand *pesos de oro.* In 1594 half a dozen city officials formed a "ring" and between them cleaned up a sum about equal to $1,500,000 in our money.

And beside the ravages of the official wolves the Isthmus suffered a great deal from civil war. Between the discovery of Peru and Morgan's raid, the city of Panama was sacked and partially destroyed *by Spaniards* four several times.

At the time of Gonzalo Pizarro's rebellion, some of his ships under Hernando Bachicao captured the town, burned down a large part of it, hung every one who would not shout "Viva Pizarro." The rebels indulged in an orgy of lust and bloodshed until Hinojosa, Pizarro's admiral, appeared and restored order. During the next six months Nombre de

Dios, the other city of the Isthmus, was captured three times. Twice by the rebels and once by a loyalist force from Cartagena.

In March, 1550, de la Gasca reached Panama after his successful suppression of the Peruvian rebellion. It required 1,200 mules to carry his store of royal treasure across the Isthmus. The last pack train had only left the city a few hours when a large fleet entered the harbor from the north. It was under the command of some brothers named Contrera, one of whom had been governor of Nicaragua. They had run amuck and gathering a couple of hundred desperadoes had set out to capture de la Gasca's treasure and then go on to Peru where they planned to establish a separate kingdom. They are said to have damaged Panama to the extent of $5,000,000. But when they tried to follow de la Gasca across the Isthmus they became entangled in the jungle, their forces were scattered and cut up in piecemeal.

Added to these civil disturbances, a new danger came from the Cimarrones.

These escaped negro slaves became so formidable that in 1554, a determined effort was begun to exterminate them.

Pedro de Ursua with two hundred soldiers was sent against "King" Bayano, the most formidable Cimarrone chieftain near Panama. There were six hundred negroes in this band and it took de Ursua two years of uninterrupted campaigning before he finally captured Bayano, and was able to send him to Spain as a prisoner.

However, this was only a beginning. The number of the Cimarrones constantly increased. They fought with desperate bravery, always preferring death to recapture. The campaign against them waxed and waned. News would come to Panama that the inhabitants of an outlying *hacienda* had been massacred and the governor would send out some soldiers to discipline the bandits. But the negroes were

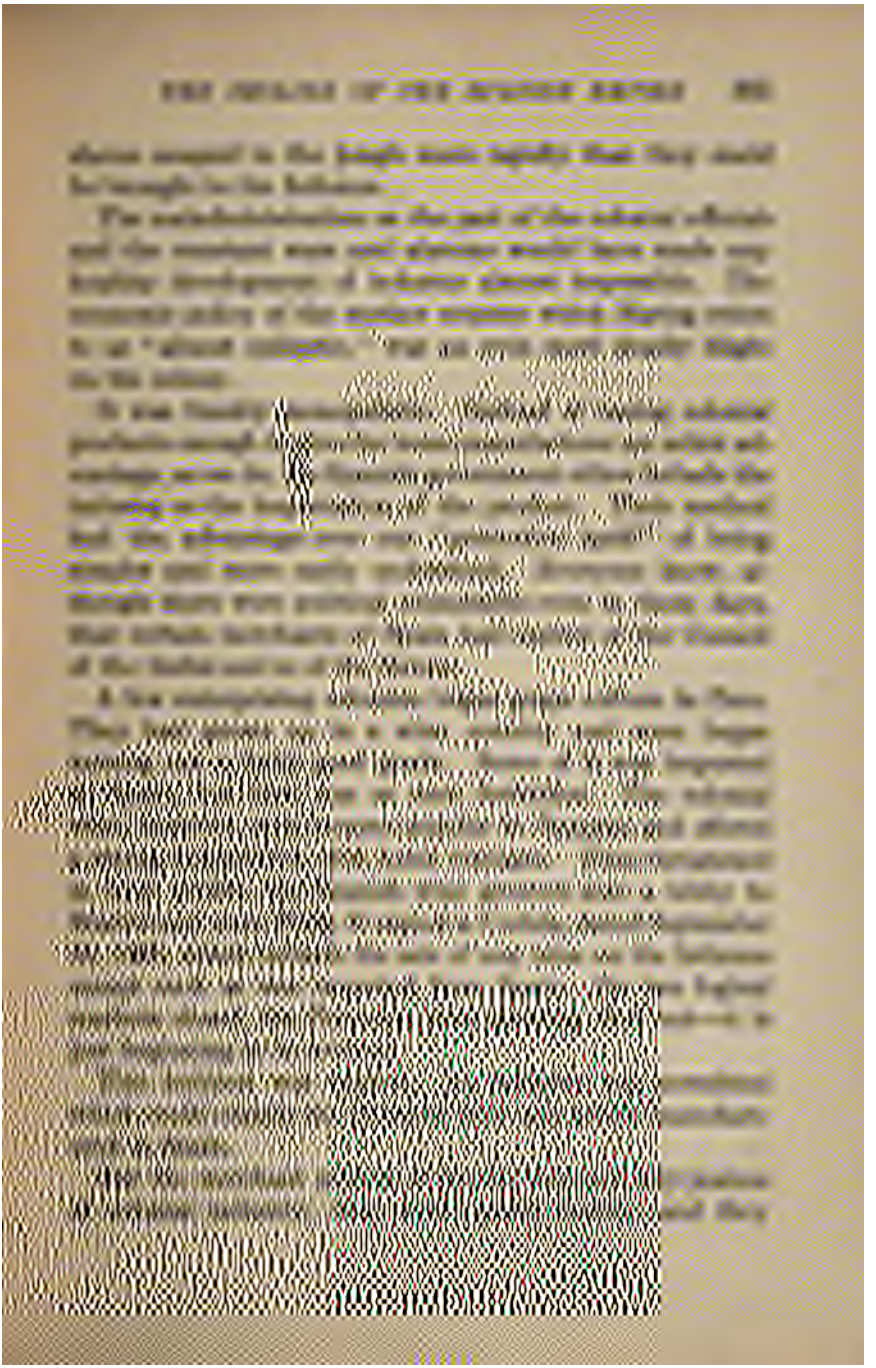
at home in the jungle. The Spaniards would slash about in the heavy underbrush a week or so and come back to town with little accomplished. And every success of the Cimarrones encouraged more slaves to escape.

In 1574 the Spaniards were forced to the humiliation of making a treaty of peace with their former servants. They recognized the freedom of the Cimarrones and in return received a pledge that in the future runaway slaves would be returned. But to the credit of the negroes this pledge was not kept and hostilities broke out afresh. Four years later Pedro de Ortega Valencia was given special orders to exterminate them. But he fared little better than those who had tried it before.

To a certain degree the Cimarrones threatened the lives of the Spaniards, but to a much greater extent they threatened, by constantly depleting the labor-market, to paralyze what little industry there was.

An official document of the day shows that in 1570 there were two thousand negro slaves—a third of whom were women—employed in fifteen gold mines in the western part of the Isthmus; ten years later all were closed but four.

The labor problem was very serious. By the end of the sixteenth century almost all of the native Indians had disappeared from the Isthmus except in the eastern part, now called "The Darien." The fashion of slave-stealing and murder set by Pedrarias and Espinosa had never been checked. A royal Cedula of 1593 calls attention to the fact "that no one had been brought to justice for any of the extortions or cruelties to which the Indians had been subjected." Two centuries after Columbus's voyage to the Isthmus, full-blooded Indians in Panama were about as rare as they are in New York to-day. The white men would not work, and it was negro labor or none at all. And the



controlled the government—to competition in commerce. In a preceding chapter (XVII) I quoted a letter from a merchant in Panama which indicates that there was considerable trade between that port and the Orient. The "business interests" of Spain wanted this fat plum for themselves and this traffic was forbidden. A Cedula of 1593—three years later than the letter quoted—says:

"Toleration and abuse have caused an undue increase in the trade between the West Indies and China, and a consequent decrease in that of the Castilian kingdoms. To remedy this it is again ordered that neither from Tierra Firma, Peru, nor elsewhere, except New Spain (Mexico) shall any vessel go to China or the Philippine Islands to trade."

If this through trade with the Orient had not been so arbitrarily cut off, the Isthmus would never have been forgotten by the world and the canal might have been built years ago.

Even the pearl trade—Panama's one indigenous industry—came to grief. At one time as many as thirty ships were engaged in fishing. In 1587 six hundred pounds of high grade pearls were received in Seville. But no withstraint was put on the fishing and the oyster banks gave out.

In 1588 more than ninety ships came to the Atlantic ports of the Isthmus. In 1601 the number had dropped to thirty-two, in 1605 to seventeen.

Even the trade down the Pacific coast between Panama and Peru was often interrupted for long periods. Hakluyt gives an account which says that Panama city was short of provisions, ". . . . for there is none to be had for any money, by reasons that from Lima there is no shipping come with maiz . . . But I can certifie . . . that all things are very deeire here, and that we stand in great extremetie for want of victuals."

This insane economic policy could result only in killing

the colonies—it could not enforce a real monopoly. Such "restraints of trade" inevitably produce smuggling. Just as moonshine whiskey is distilled in the United States, and matches are smuggled into France, so in the Spanish colonies illicit trade and contraband manufacture sprang up everywhere. In the face of the exceedingly high prices charged by the monopolists of Seville, the English, French and Dutch traders could run all the immense risks of smuggling and still make big profits.

In "A History of the Voyages and Travels of Captain Nathaniel Uring," I find this frank avowal:

"In the Beginning of the Year 1711, I went over in a Sloop, well mann'd and arm'd, to trade on the Coast of New Spain, and we carried with us a great Quantity of dry Goods, and about 150 Negroes. We first touched at Portobello, but being War-Time, we used to go to the Grout within Monkey Key . . . about four or five Miles from the Harbour and Town of Portobello . . . We lay at this Place Trading for six Weeks in which Time the Spanish Merchants at Panama had notice of our being there and they came across the Isthmus to trade with us. These Merchants frequently travelled in the Habits of Peasants, and had their Mules with them, on which they brought their Money in Jars, which they filled up with Meal; and if any of the King's Officers met them nothing appeared but the Meal, and pretended they were poor People going to Portobello to buy some trifles; but they for the most Part went through the Woods . . . in order to prevent their being discovered by the Royal Officers."

Almost all the old chronicles give the same story of illicit trade. François Coreal, whose memoirs are as informal and amusing as Captain Uring's are dry and ponderous, in speaking of the monopoly which the Spanish crown tried to maintain in Peruvian Gold, writes, "mais les Marchands Espagnols

en font passer beaucoup dans des balles de Marchandise pour frauder les Droits."

Now smuggling, like any violation of the laws, offers rich chance for graft to the officials. When Captain Uring's sloop with its "great Quantity of dry Goods" lay at anchor in Monkey Key it is hard to believe that the Governor of Puerto Bello did no know it. If he sent a warship to capture it the virtue of having done his duty would be his only reward. The confiscated cargo would have gone to the Royal Treasury. Undoubtedly the "Merchants at Panama" had reasoned with him. Perhaps he himself needed a negro slave, or more likely his good wife wanted some of those "dry Goods." To drive away the smugglers meant humble submission to the monopolist clique in Seville and no reward. To ignore their presence meant prosperity for the local merchants—some of which was sure to find its way into the governor's pocket. So the trade throve.

Of course the merchants in Spain were forever protesting against this contraband traffic. One Cedula was issued after another to stiffen up the enforcement of the laws. It was so easy for a Lutheran trader to hide in some of the coves around Puerto Bello and land his cargo that it was manifestly impossible to maintain the customs regulations in that city. But there was only one road over which merchandise could be taken across the Isthmus. So a sort of toll-gate was set up at Venta de Cruces. All traffic between the two oceans passed this place. It was a pretty good scheme but it did not work. Bancroft, who with his assistant writers, did an immense amount of research in regard to the fiscal regulations and commercial decline of the Spanish colonies, gives a report for the year 1624, which shows that goods to the amount of 1,446,346 pesos de oro were registered as passing through the Casa at Cruces, while more than seven and a half millions worth were smuggled across.

Early in the seventeenth century the fraudulent traffic was more than six times as great as the legitimate trade. By the end of the century there was little trade of any kind.

Very little worth noting happened in the eighteenth century. The Isthmus had become of so little importance that in 1718 it was deprived of its autonomy, and made an administrative province of the Vice-Royalty of New Granada.

The Fates did not seem content to let the *muy noble y muy leal Ciudad de Panama* rot. Three great fires, in 1737, 1756, 1777, swept the city and almost obliterated it.

A few people still recalled its glorious past, and dreamed of glorious days to come, but Panama itself was so lifeless that it could muster no energy to take any active part in the Wars of Independence with which the next century began.

CHAPTER XXII

THE WARS OF INDEPENDENCE—MIRANDA

THE Isthmus of Panama played a very small part in the revolt of the colonies against Spain.

It was an all-important station in the communication between the mother country and the turbulent colonies of the West Coast. The Spanish maintained a strong garrison in the fortresses of San Lorenzo on the Caribbean, and Panama City on the Pacific. The Isthmus was one of the last provinces to throw off allegiance.

Her fate, however, was bound up with that of her sister colonies, and especially with that of the Vice-Royalty of New Granada. An historical account of Panama must include a consideration of the overthrow of the Spanish Empire on the mainland of America.

A very good condensed account of the Wars of Liberation is to be found in "The Independence of the South American Republics," by Frederic L. Paxson. In describing the general conditions which preceded the revolutionary period, he writes:

"Exploitation and repression were the essential features of the Spanish colonial system. If Buenos Ayres proved to be a competitor to the Spanish merchants, her olive trees must come down and vines must come up by the roots, for it was clearly understood that Spain was to be protected, and that the colonies existed only for the benefit of the mother country. It is hard to see how such a system could have been carried out honestly, or, if this were possible, how it could have been endured. But the administration

of Spain made the colonial system a means for recuperating distressed fortunes, while the colonists utilized the cupidity of their rulers to develop an extensive, illicit and profitable foreign trade. . . .

"South America, strange as it may seem, in spite of centuries of misgovernment and blindness on the part of the mother country, was patriotic during those early years of the last century, when patriotism was almost the only asset of the Spanish peoples. The colonial system had been atrocious, but, keeping those at the bottom of the social scale in dense ignorance, and allowing those on top to enrich themselves by illicit means, it had been successful."

The impetus which set the wave of revolt in motion was Napoleon's effort to establish his brother on the throne at Madrid.

On March 19, 1808, Charles the Fourth abdicated in favor of his son, Ferdinand VII. The old king, however, quickly changed his mind, regretted having made way for his son, and called on Napoleon to assist him in regaining his throne. This was just the sort of a pretext that Bonaparte needed to get his finger into the Spanish pie. He crossed the Pyrenees, deposed Ferdinand in the name of Charles, then threw Charles overboard and put his own brother, Joseph, on the throne.

If ever a great man was bothered by a good-for-nothing family, it was the French emperor. By 1813, Joseph had thoroughly demonstrated his inability to be a real king, and Napoleon quarrelled with him. In December, he wrote to him:

"You are no longer King of Spain. What will you do now? Will you come to the defence of my throne? . . . Have you sense enough to do this? If not, retire to the obscurity of some country house near Paris. You will be useless, but you will do me no harm."

Napoleon then put Ferdinand back on the throne.

At the news of the French aggression, a wave of patriotism swept over Spanish-America. Almost without exception, the colonies refused to recognize the new sovereignty. Provisional governments, to represent the deposed king, were proclaimed in almost every South American city. They formed themselves on the model of, and at first allied themselves with, the legitimist Junta of Seville.

The first American Junta was established at Quito, in August, 1809. It was short lived. Six months later, Caracas in Venezuela followed suit. Deposing Emparen, the governor, who sympathized with the French, they proclaimed a federal government in the name of Ferdinand. Bogota, the capital of New Granada, formed a Junta in July, 1810. In December, they went a step further, and proclaimed a republic, to administer the vice-royalty on behalf of the true Spanish king. A similar movement, led by Buenos Ayres, was growing in the South.

Not until 1811 did the movement for separation take form. On July 5th of that year, the Congress of Venezuela passed a resolution of independence. Paxton says: "The wide-spread popular feeling which showed itself in this movement . . . was founded on loyalty to Spain. Many of the leaders of the day were individually in favor of complete independence, but there was as yet no public opinion to support them."

The two men who were most rigorously preaching secession in the northern provinces were Francesco de Miranda and Simon Bolivár. They were both sons of wealthy Venezuelans, and were both born in Caracas, the former in 1754, the latter in 1783.

I can find no record that Miranda ever visited the Isthmus. But the scene which was enacted in Panama, when the Spanish governor, hearing of the defeat of the last royalist

army, voluntarily and without bloodshed, resigned his authority to the patriots, was only the last act of the long drama which began when Miranda was learning at the Siege of Yorktown to dream of American independence.

In later life, Bolivár said: "The seed of liberty yields its just fruit. If there is anything which is never lost, it is the blood which is shed for a deserving cause."

It is interesting to apply this saying to Miranda, whom Bolivár believed to be a traitor and sent to his death. The historians of to-day who can study those events without passion are agreed that Bolivár misjudged Miranda, and that his death in a Spanish dungeon is the blackest stain on the record of the great Liberator.

In 1779, Miranda, a youth of 23, came north and enlisted in the Continental Army. He served his military apprenticeship under Lafayette, and was present with him at Yorktown. He followed his general to Europe and enlisted again in the cause of freedom in France. He distinguished himself at Valmy and Jemappes, and rose to the rank of major-general. His name is engraved on the Arc de Triumphe. But in 1797, he fell under the displeasure of the *directoire*, as did all who remained true to the early ideals of the Revolution, and had to flee to England. For nine years he wandered about Europe, trying to enlist sympathy for the Spanish colonies among the enemies of the Most Catholic King. His eloquence is said to have brought tears to the eyes of Catherine of Russia. She promised to help, but forgot her promise. In London he won the interest of Pitt and another promise of help. But the rising power of Napoleon distracted the attention of the English premier. At last he came to the United States and sought the friendship of Jefferson. In a letter to him, dated January 22nd, 1806, Miranda shows the visionary and poetic side of his character. In this petition for military assistance, he quotes

from the Fourth Eclogue of Virgil. An English officer, James Briggs, who later served under him, sums up his character in these words: "After all, this man of renown, I fear, must be considered as having more learning than wisdom, more theoretical knowledge than practical talent. He is too sanguine and opinionated to distinguish between vigor of enterprise and the hardness of intoleration." Later writers have not improved on this contemporaneous characterization.

Miranda organized a filibustering expedition in New York, and sailed from that port on the *Leander*, in February, 1806. The raid failed dismally. "One thing essential to a revolution," Paxton writes, "was lacking—the people of Venezuela would not revolt."

There was, however, another reason for Miranda's failure, which Paxton seems to have ignored. The filibusterers did not share his ideals. He personally furnished the enthusiasm and money for the venture. Very few of his men shared his dream—even fewer were Venezuelans who were moved by patriotism. Most of his little army were mercenaries. Many had been tricked or impressed into the expedition. A curious little volume published in Albany, New York, in 1814, and written by one of these unfortunate men, throws much light on this aspect of the enterprise. It is entitled, "History of the Adventures and Sufferings of Moses Smith during Five Years of his Life, from the Beginning of the Year 1806, when he was Betrayed into the Miranda Expedition."

It was not until they were many days out from New York that some of the men found out the goal of the journey. "Many of these men," Smith wrote, "had been forced into this expedition against their will. They had not yet shed blood nor taken any active part in warfare. The laws of their native country were not intentionally violated by

them, and they had not incurred the vengeance of any other. They determined to escape." They were much more interested in escaping than conquering. At last sixty of them fell into the hands of the Spaniards. The officers, ten in number, were executed, the rest rotted for several years in the fetid prisons of Puerto Cabello.

Miranda escaped from this fiasco, and retired to London, where he foregathered with the large company of political refugees who had found asylum there.

As we have seen, Napoleon's attempt to turn Spain into a family estate had met with resistance in the colonies. In 1810, the loyalist Junta in Caracas found itself threatened by the French and dispatched commissioners to London to enlist the aid of Great Britain and to secure arms and ammunition for their militia. They chose young Simon Bolivár for this mission. The Junta especially warned him not to become entangled with Miranda, whose extreme republicanism was known to and distrusted by the loyalist Junta. But Bolivár had a very decided tendency towards disobeying orders. He soon fell under the spell of Miranda's eloquence, and, to the chagrin of his employers, brought the old republican leader back with him to Venezuela.

The populace of Caracas gave them both an ardent ovation when they entered the city. Elections were about to take place for delegates to the provincial Congress. Miranda was elected from the district of Barcelona. Three political parties formed themselves in those days: the Loyalists, the Bonapartists and the Republicans. Miranda led the third of these parties on the floor of Congress, and Bolivár was the most active spirit in the Society of Patriots. The political association, in its ideas and influence, was not unlike the Jacobin Club of the French Revolution.

On April 18, 1810, some commissioners arrived on behalf of one of the political factions in Spain. Bolivár inaugú-

rated the separation movement by a speech before the Society of Patriots, in which he argued that the inability of the Spanish dynasty to maintain a stable government at home was warrant and invitation for the Venezuelans to govern themselves.

But the loyalist faction was still the strongest, and they forced through a constitution which declared allegiance to Ferdinand VII.

Nearly fifteen months passed before Miranda and Bolivár could swing public opinion to their view point. On July 5th, 1811, the Congress adopted a resolution, which Bolivár had presented the day before to the Society of Patriots, which declared the complete independence of Venezuela. They adopted a new constitution, forming a federated union of the prefectures of the colony, accepted the tri-color flag of Miranda, and made him commander-in-chief of the army.

Miranda, although he had proved himself a very capable subordinate officer, lacked the essential qualifications of a general commandant.

He had lived so long away from Venezuela that he scarcely knew the men under him. He lacked quick decision, and in the crisis which came ultimately, completely lost his head.

About this time a soldier of fortune named Monteverde landed in Venezuela. He held Ferdinand's commission as field-marshal. And finding no loyalist army to command, he set to work to organize one. He made little progress at first. The early months of the young republic were peaceful and to a surprising degree prosperous. A new and profitable trade had began to flow into its ports. It was rapidly acquiring stability.

However, the clergy—the world over they have been hostile to democracy—were busily but silently at work in the loyalist cause. They had sedulously preached that the

wrath of God would surely fall on those who despised the divine right of kings. On Holy Thursday, March 26th, 1812, less than a year after the declaration of independence, their prophecy seemed to be fulfilled in a terrible earthquake, the worst Venezuela had ever known. The disaster was most complete in those districts most strongly republican. The patriots seemed to be especially marked out for destruction. Six hundred of their soldiers were buried in the ruins of the barracks at Caracas, as many more were lost in the town of San Felipe, and as many as twelve hundred were killed at Barquisimento.

The priests came out in the open and began preaching a Holy War against the patriots. Monteverde was just the man to make the most of such an opportunity. He took the field at once and drove the disorganized republicans out of the town of San Carlos, where he established headquarters and unfurled the Spanish flag. A second earthquake took place on April 4th. It was not so disastrous as the first, but it was enough to definitely turn the superstitious against the republic.

Bolivár and other patriot leaders, who lived through the days which followed, always maintained that by energetic action Miranda might still have saved the republic. But he developed a perfect genius for doing the wrong thing. Instead of concentrating what was left of his forces, he dispersed them. Monteverde's army existed only in name. He could hardly have repulsed a quick attack. Miranda ordered Bolivár, with a small force, to go to Puerto Cabello, to hold its fortress. Other detachments were sent in other directions. Not till May 1st did he march out of Caracas with his 1,200 men and take the field against the army which Monteverde was rapidly recruiting and rapidly whipping into shape.

After a few days' advance, Miranda suddenly changed his

mind and began a discouraging retreat. Monteverde caught up with him at La Victoria and was defeated. But Miranda failed to follow up this victory. He continued his retreating, losing men by desertion at every step. Bolivár, hearing that Monteverde was threatening Puerto Cabello, sent dispatches to Miranda, asking for reinforcements. Miranda felt that he could not spare any.

On June 30th, the officer of the day in the fortress of Puerto Cabello accepted a bribe from the loyalist prisoners. He liberated them in the night and they surprised and massacred the sleeping garrison. Bolivár with forty men escaped into the city. For five days, with his forty men, he tried to hold the city against the fortress. But on July 5th, loyalist reinforcements from Monteverde arrived, and Bolivár and his men escaped by boat to La Guayra.

On the 29th of July, Miranda, believing that Bolivár had betrayed him, and utterly discouraged by the ease with which the priests had turned the people away from the republic, surrendered to Monteverde without a fight. By his treaty he agreed that Venezuela would accept the authority of the Spanish Cortes, and made terms with Monteverde, worthless as they afterwards proved, that no one should be prosecuted because of political opinions.

The next day Miranda arrived at La Guayra to take ship for England. The group of patriots in that city regarded him with suspicion. They did not know the terms of his treaty with Monteverde, and if they had known, would not have trusted him. They clearly foresaw the proscription which awaited them. When they asked Miranda the reasons for his surrender, he maintained a haughty reserve. In the crisis the Congress had created him dictator, and no one had a right to question his actions. When they pressed him for further explanations, he became insulting. Shortly after he had retired for the night, fugitives arrived from

Caracas, with the news that Monteverde had already begun executing the patriotic leaders. They were amazed to find that Miranda was in the city. He had promised to stay in Caracas and act as a mediator with Monteverde. He had left that city by stealth. After a heated consultation, Bolivár and two other patriots awoke the old man and arrested him and threw him into prison as a traitor.

The next morning the city was occupied by loyalist forces. Monteverde, instead of releasing Miranda, as he was bound to do under his treaty, sent him in chains to Puerto Rico, and from there he was sent to Spain.

A British officer has left this note on a visit to the prison: "I have seen this noble man tied to a wall, with a chain about his neck, neither more nor less than a dog." This old man, who had fought for liberty on three continents, never again was free. He died July 14th, 1816, in the fortress of La Caraca, Cadiz.

There is no shadow of evidence that Miranda was in any sense of the word a traitor; but, beyond question, in the supreme crisis of his life he proved a miserable failure. There is small wonder that the group of patriots mistrusted him. He had sent his best officer, Bolivár, away from the seat of war, had sent him almost single-handed to defend Puerto Cabello. After defeating Monteverde, he had continued his disastrous retreat. He had surrendered with no apparent justification. He refused to explain himself. Such action might well seem treasonable under the circumstances. They mistook the broken-hearted old man for a traitor. If they had shot him after a drum-head court martial, it would not have been so bad. But to allow him to fall into the clutches of the Spaniards was shameful.

The First Republic of Venezuela was practically an isolated phenomenon. It alone of all the colonies had formally severed its connections with the mother country.

However, while civil war had been devastating Venezuela a more subtle and also more permanent force had been at work in the other colonies.

From the moment when the first patriotic juntas had been formed, a relaxation had taken place in the rigid old colonial laws which forbade commerce with other nations. Foreign made goods, which before had been introduced into South America by means of smuggling, now had free access. Foreign merchants, especially English, started business in the ports. Buenos Ayres on the Atlantic; Valparaiso, Callao, Guayaquil on the west coast; Santa Maria, Cartagena, Puerto Cabello and La Guayra on the Caribbean, became enriched by the flourishing new trade. The colonists had become habituated to commercial freedom and to local taxation during the time that King Ferdinand was in exile.

When he was restored, he—in whose name they had instituted many liberal reforms—turned out to be an extreme reactionary. He treated his partisans in America like traitors. He tried to re-establish all the old restrictions on colonial commerce. The home land had been devastated by the long war over the Succession; he had no place to turn for taxes, except the colonies. In the olden days the Americas had laid many a golden egg for the Spanish throne. His one idea was to start the process again. But the people of South America did not submit willingly to re-enslavement.

Secession was no longer the crack-brained dream of a handful of Venezuelan enthusiasts, it had become "good business." The foreign merchants who had established themselves in the colonies, seeing themselves threatened with exclusion and ruin, became a very active force in the second phase of the revolutionary movement. Paxton rather cynically remarks: "Commercial pressure was the

CULEBRA CUT IN 1904, DECEMBER, LOOKING NORTH. FRENCH EQUIPMENT USED BY WALLACE.

great influence in keeping the patriots patriotic." This is perhaps an over-statement. But the foreign merchants certainly were a great influence. Without their ready financial assistance San Martin in the south, and Bolivár in the north, could not have armed the patriots.

The downfall of Miranda marked the end of the idealistic movement. In a few months a new movement sprang up which was largely materialistic—and entirely successful.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE WARS OF INDEPENDENCE—BOLIVÁR

When the disastrous campaign of 1812 gave Venezuela back to Spain, Bolivár fled to New Granada, and so more directly enters the history of the Isthmus.

His early life had been unhappy. His father—a rich and influential colonist—had died when he was an infant, his mother when he was fifteen. He went to Spain with a tutor, at nineteen had married a girl of sixteen. He had hardly brought her home to Caracas when she died of yellow fever. In 1805 he returned again to Europe. He saw Napoleon playing skittles with crowns. And it is said that during this trip he made an especial pilgrimage to Rome, and there on the Sacred Hill made a vow to devote his life to the independence of his people. He returned to Venezuela by way of the United States, and by 1810 had risen to sufficient prominence to be chosen by the Junta for the mission to London.

While under the influence of Miranda, he seems to have accepted all the ideals of this enthusiast. His speeches at the Society of Patriots are filled with the spirit of the Red Republicans of Paris. At this period his idol seems to have been Thomas Jefferson. But in later life he developed in the opposite direction, becoming as ardent an advocate of aristocracy as Alexander Hamilton.

When he reached New Granada, after the fall of the First Republic in Venezuela, he found this vice-royalty, of which the Isthmus was a province, in a wild ferment. A Junta

was claiming to govern it in the name of Ferdinand. But the federalist tendency had gone to such extremes that each province considered itself a "sovereign state," and a condition of chaos had resulted. A few troops—hostile to the Junta—occupied the lower valley of the Magdalena. Bolivár enlisted as a private in the patriot army, and soon rose to a small command. He began to manifest a brilliant genius for guerilla warfare and also his marked habit of disregarding orders. His commander-in-chief was a strategist of the old school, the kind of general that Napoleon had so easily overthrown in Europe. Bolivár was continually making raids on his own initiative, which were so successful that the Junta, in spite of his commander's frequent demands that he should be court-martialed for insubordination, always sustained him. In a few months he had cleared the district of the enemy and had collected a little army of six hundred men who were devoted to him and as dare-devil a crew as ever took part in partizan warfare.

Meanwhile things had been going badly for the patriots in Venezuela. General Monteverde had entirely repudiated the amnesty he had pledged to Miranda. The execution of suspects was a daily occurrence. It is doubtful if such a long continued and devastating reign of terror has ever existed—even in Russia. The nucleus of Monteverde's army were old soldiers of the Napoleonic wars, mercenaries, hardened by their profession of bloodshed, feeling themselves alien from the conquered people. They played a rôle in Venezuela similar to that of the Cossacks in present-day Russia. The brutality and rapine of the allied armies at the relief of the legations in Pekin did not exceed the cruelties of these men.

Bolivár decided on the invasion of Venezuela. Castillo, his commanding officer, was horrified at the suggestion of so wild an adventure. Bolivár went over his head and appealed

to the Junta. It is doubtful if he waited for their authorization. One thing is sure, the civil commissioners who were appointed to accompany him never caught up with him. With almost incredible speed, he had thrown his little company of six hundred across one of the low, northern passes of the Andes and was in the midst of Venezuela, before Monteverde knew he had started. Revolt broke out everywhere. Monteverde was able to capture a small force—almost three hundred men—who were marching to join the liberating army. Although prisoners of war, he massacred them all. Bolivár replied by the famous proclamation of "War to the death."

It is inexplicable how the human mind works, how it decides what acts to condemn and hold in abhorrence. For instance, history teaches us that the French Revolutionists of 1871 were monsters. During the three months of the Commune they executed about thirty-five royalists. The victorious army of Thiers massacred almost as many thousands of the Communards. Why we should condemn the former act and not the latter is indeed inexplicable. Within our more recent memory, some fanatical Moors at Casa Blanca, stirred to fury by the actions of the Europeans in tearing up a graveyard to make way for a railroad, murdered a half a dozen of them. A week or so later, the French fleet bombarded Casa Blanca in the night, killing hundreds of sleeping women and children. The act of the Moors is considered an outrage; that of the Christians legitimate.

Almost every biographer of Bolivár condemns him severely for this proclamation of "War to the death." It was simply a declaration that as the enemy refused to carry on war in the manner called civilized, the patriots would do the same. If the Devil persisted in using fire, so would the revolutionists. As soon as Bolivár came into contact with Spanish generals who were less devilish than Monteverde, he revoked

this decree and carried on his later campaigns in accordance with the ordinary military conventions.

On the 14th of August, 1814, after a series of brilliant actions, he entered Caracas in triumph. The civil commissioners arrived from New Granada, and they ordered him to call elections for a Venezuelan Congress to vote on a union with New Granada. On the ground of military necessity, he did not obey the letter of their instruction. He assembled what he called a "council of notables." They appointed him Dictator of Venezuela until the union of the two countries could be effected.

On the 3d of December he met Monteverde in a pitched battle at Araure and defeated him. A new and much more able general, Boves, now assumed command of the Spanish forces. And with the spring of 1814 commenced a successful campaign which ended in the complete defeat of Bolivár at La Puerta. Once more Bolivár was compelled to flee. He returned to New Granada. In spite of the disastrous ending of his brilliant Venezuelan campaign, the Junta gave him command of an army and dispatched him to reduce the city of Santa Fé de Bogota, which had revolted from the federation. He performed this mission with a rare mixture of force and diplomacy, and the Junta recognized his services by making him captain-general of New Granada. As he was a Venezuelan, this stirred up the jealousy of native officers, and Bolivár became involved in a disheartening mess of cheap political intrigue. At last he threw up his commission in disgust and retired to the English island of Jamaica. Here the first of a long series of unsuccessful attempts to assassinate him was made by the secret agents of Spain.

Meanwhile Ferdinand was reseated on the throne at Madrid. The colonies had refused to submit to the old embargo laws on their commerce. A punitive expedition was sent out under the command of Morillo, a general of

much experience and great prestige. In July, 1815, he arrived off Cartagena with two ships-of-the-line, six frigates, seventy transports and 12,000 veteran troops. For six months the patriots held out in the fortress of Cartagena, but were at last reduced by starvation. By June, 1816, Morillo had fought his way up to Bogota and sent a letter to Ferdinand in which he boasted that he had not "left alive, in the Kingdom of New Granada, a single individual of sufficient influence or talents to conduct the revolution."

This was the darkest period for the cause of independence in the northern provinces. Morillo was supreme in New Granada. Boves had suppressed almost all resistance in Venezuela. Only a few bands of "Llaneros," as the Spanish call their cowboys, kept up a desultory guerilla combat, under Marino and Paez, in the interior. But the patriots had no regular army in the field.

Bolivár, however, did not know that there was such a word as discouragement. At the time when the great earthquake had overthrown the First Venezuelan Republic, he had exclaimed: "If Nature opposes us, we will wrestle with her and compel her to obey!" And now, when for a second time the cause of independence seemed to others hopelessly lost, Bolivár was at work with undimmed faith. He had gone to Hayti and had made friends with that noble old negro, Alexandre Pelion, the president of the Republic. He helped the Venezuelan revolutionist to outfit a filibuster. "When your expedition shall land," he said to Bolivár, "free the slaves. For how can you found a republic where slavery exists?" Bolivár at once freed all his own slaves; it was his continued advocacy of abolition which as much as anything else kept the United States from assisting the Spanish colonies in their revolt.

With six ships and a handful of exiles, he made an unsuccessful raid on the island of Margarita in May, 1816. In

December of the same year he made another effort and this time with success. Using the island as a base, he descended on the mainland and captured the port of Barcelona, two hundred miles east of La Guayra. Here, for the third time, he proclaimed the republic. He was never again to be driven from Venezuela by the Spaniards. The tide had turned. Although he had yet to meet many reverses, the flag of independence has not since been hauled down in Venezuela.

Bolivár moved inland to help Marino's guerillas near Santo Tomas de Angostura. Morillo, the Spanish general, had hurried to Venezuela at the first news of Bolivár's operations. By a brilliant dash a Spanish force under General Aldama captured Barcelona behind the Liberator's back. Here Aldama massacred the seven hundred soldiers of the garrison, three hundred non-combatants, including women and children, and the fifty invalids he found in the hospital.

Bolivár moved his capital to Angostura, and was rapidly consolidating his government. He sent out summons for a national congress. During this year occurred an incident around which much hostile criticism of Bolivár centered —the execution for treason of General Manuel Carlos Piar.

The enemies of Bolivár claim that he caused Piar's execution in order to rid himself of a dangerous rival in the affections of the army. However, there seems to be good evidence that while an officer of Miranda's army, Piar had been guilty of an attempt to sell himself to Monteverde—at least, finding himself under such suspicion, he deserted. In 1816 he had met Bolivár in Hayti and had won forgiveness. Bolivár made him a major-general in the invading army. He distinguished himself as an officer, winning a brilliant victory at San Felix in April, 1817. Evidence of a second conspiracy sufficient to satisfy the court-martial was brought against him and he was shot at Angostura, October 16, 1817. The justice of court-martial is notoriously uncertain. And Bolivár,

as he had shown in his conduct towards Miranda, was of a suspicious nature. But it seems foreign to his character to have used his great personal power to make way with an able lieutenant because of petty jealousy.

The year 1818 passed in indecisive campaigns. There was continual skirmishing, but no decisive engagements.

The second congress of Venezuela assembled in February, 1819, at Angostura. Bolivár resigned from the dictatorship and was promptly re-elected. During the preceding year he had recruited a foreign legion, formed principally from Irish and English veterans of the continental wars. His native troops were mostly cavalry. The foreign legion gave him his necessary infantry.

As soon as congress had assembled, Bolivár took the field again. He recaptured Barcelona, which, in giving him a seaport for the free importation of ammunition and supplies, greatly strengthened his position. Morillo, however, had 12,000 trained soldiers, and was too strong to be met in an open battle. Morillo was a wily old general. He saw in Bolivár the soul of the revolt, and he was concentrating every effort to annihilate him and end the revolution. He believed that New Granada had been thoroughly cowed, and he practically denuded that province of troops in his desire to overwhelm Bolivár with numbers.

Bolivár was not the kind of a spirit to accept the apparent necessity of a Fabian campaign. The very odds which Morillo was gathering against him gave him the hint which developed into the most brilliant proof of his military genius. Leaving Paez in command of the native cavalry, with instructions to continually harass Morillo, but avoid a battle, he assembled the pick of his army, five hundred of the foreign legion and two thousand Venezuelans, and dashed up the valley of the Cosnare towards the high Andes—and New Granada.

As ordinarily happened, Bolivár made this move without asking any one's consent. As soon as he disappeared in the depths of the Cordilleras—Morillo, when he heard of it, called it a "military delirium"—the Venezuelan patriots denounced him as a traitor and made General Marino dictator in his place. But Bolivár had lost communication with Angostura and knew nothing of this. He inspired his men to persist in their advance in the midst of incredible hardships. The marches of Hannibal and Napoleon across the Alps were child's play to this raid of Bolivár. Almost all of their horses and many of the men perished in the Arctic climate of the high mountains. Although the distance was less than a hundred miles it took the army of liberators almost a month to get across.

General Barreiro, the Spanish commandant of New Granada, could only muster three thousand men to meet the invaders. The natives gave what assistance they could in the way of provisions to the famished army, and Bolivár was able to remount most of his cavalry before he met the Spaniards. By making a flank movement instead of accepting immediate battle, Bolivár, after a brisk skirmish, on the 22d of July occupied the town of Tunja. This put him between Barreiro and his base of supplies at Bogóta. The Spaniards were compelled to attack, and on August 7th were utterly defeated at Boyaca. Barreiro, nearly all his officers and over half his men were captured. This battle put a definite end to Spanish rule in all of New Granada except the Isthmus of Panama. The next day Bolivár entered Bogota.

He returned at once to Venezuela to report his victory to the congress in session at Angostura. They promptly forgave him for having deserted them to conquer New Granada, and re-elected him dictator. He had brought with him a formal request for the union of the two countries.

Then followed many months of bitter debate over the form

of constitution. Bolivár had become separated in thought from his old associates of the Society of Patriots. He was no longer the extreme democrat he had been as a youth, when under the influence of Miranda. His experience with the political turmoil of New Granada—the rivalry of petty "sovereign states"—had sickened him with the federal form of government. As a man of action, he had become disgusted with the intriguing of raw, inexperienced democracy. But he also was a dreamer, and his dream, which extended far beyond the frontiers of his native land, even farther separated him from his old friends. He felt that nothing was accomplished so long as the Spanish flag remained anywhere on the American continent. While their lawyers were becoming eloquent over the rights of constituent states of Venezuela and New Granada, and maintaining that perfect liberty could only exist in a loose federation, Bolivár realized that the war of independence was by no means over, that he had more to fear from political intrigues in his own capital than from Spanish generals, that for the great purpose of freeing the continent—his dream also included Cuba and the Philippines—a strong centralized government, essentially military, was more needful than the granting of franchises to illiterate peons. All these considerations forced him to advocate a policy which the true democrats, the disciples of Rousseau and Jefferson, denounced as reactionary. And certainly a like verdict would fall on any one who advocated the same measures in a settled democracy to-day.

However, there was nothing underhand in Bolivár's opposition to thorough-going democracy. He spoke of liberty as an island against which beat alternate waves of tyranny and chaos. These excerpts from his speeches before the Angostura Congress plainly show the trend of his thought:

"It is more difficult to maintain the equilibrium of liberty than to sustain the weight of tyranny."

"The people more frequently than the government bring in tyranny."

"Pisistratus, an usurper and a despot, did more good to Athens than her laws. . . . The republic of Thebes existed only during the lives of Pelopidas and Epaminondos, for it is men, not principles, which form governments."

"Angels alone, and not men, can exist free, peaceable and happy in the exercise of sovereign power."

He had indeed swung round entirely from his former position; he quoted no more from Jefferson; he had become an advocate of the doctrines of Hamilton.

He asked for a hereditary legislature of very limited power. It was to be chosen by limited suffrage and do little but elect a president with dictatorial powers. All the other officers of the state were to be chosen by this chief executive. As there was no possibility of any one else being chosen as president; he was practically asking for supreme power.

The example of Napoleon was too fresh in the minds of men to allow the patriots to hand themselves over thus bound to any individual. They were in the embarrassing position of wanting a man on horseback who would not trample on them. The result was a compromise. Bolivár's ideas on centralization were adopted, but the advanced democrats won on the other points at issue. This constitution was adopted on the 17th of December, 1819, and Bolivár was elected president of the new Republic of Colombia.

There was a desultory campaign in 1820. And in the spring of the next year, Bolivár took the field with a splendid army of 15,000. His foreign legion had grown to two thousand. General Morillo had returned to Spain, and had been superseded by General Torre. The decisive battle came on June 24th, at Carabobo, where the Venezuelan cavalry, under Paez, completely overthrew the last Spanish army. Torre retreated to Puerto Cabello. This fortress and that

of Panama, which dominated the Isthmus, were all that remained of the Spanish Empire in northern South America. Within a few months the people of Panama proclaimed their independence and entered the Colombian Union. Puerto Cabello held out until 1823.

Bolivár, at the height of his popularity, was by no means ready to lay down his arms. In the spring of 1822 he marched out of Bogota with his army of veterans to liberate Ecuador. On the 7th of March he defeated a strong Spanish force at Bompono. His advance was checked by a stubborn resistance and almost impassable mountain barriers. But on the 24th of May his able general, Lucre, who had landed with another army at Quayaquil, overthrew Spanish authority in Ecuador by a brilliant victory at Pinchincha. This opened the road to Bolivár, and he entered Quito on the 16th of June, the same day that John Quincy Adams recognized the independence of Colombia by officially receiving her chargé d'affaires at the White House. The newly-freed state joined the Republic of Colombia.

While this long war had been going on in the north, a similar struggle had been waged in the south. And as Bolivár had risen to pre-eminence in the Colombian army, so a general named Jose de San Martin had won the title of Liberator of the South. Starting out from Argentina, he had freed Chili and the largest part of Peru.

In many ways his career had been similar to Bolivár's. He had led an army across a pass of the Andes, which was supposed to be impossible. More than once he had snatched victory from defeat by an act of rank insubordination. But in character he was the opposite of Bolivár. Extremely modest and retiring, he stuck much more closely to his profession of arms. He seems to have had no personal ambition, and to have held politics in abhorrence.

On the 22d of July, 1822, San Martin came up from

Callao to meet Bolivár at Guayaquil. What happened in their long private interview no one knows. After it, San Martin returned to Callao and resigned from the dictatorship. The Peruvians offered him 10,000 ounces of gold for his services. He accepted only three thousand dollars, and sailed with his daughter to England, where he lived and died in obscurity.

The enemies of Bolivár claim that San Martin proposed a joint campaign against the remaining Spanish forces in Peru, even offered to accept a subordinate position, but that Bolivár, ambitious to monopolize all the glory of the liberation, would not accept his co-operation under any terms. But the frequency with which he allowed his own generals, Paez and Sucre, to win fame by commanding in decisive battles seems to militate against this explanation. I have not been able to find any account of this meeting from the pens of any of Bolivár's friends.

Bolivár waited impatiently in Ecuador for the Peruvians to invite his assistance in finishing the work which San Martin had left. But his enemies had so industriously spread stories of his Napoleonic ambitions that the Peruvians were afraid of him and decided to finish off the remaining Spaniards themselves. But one after the other, their two armies were defeated by General Conterac, who was the most able soldier that Spain had sent out to the colonies. When Conterac recaptured Lima, the capital, the patriots buried their distrust of Bolivár and sent him an urgent appeal. Sucre took the first section of the Colombian army to Peru. Bolivár arrived the first of September with the main guard. All that was left of the Peruvian congress assembled and pronounced him protector and dictator. On August 7, 1824, with a picked army composed of his own and San Martin's veterans, he defeated the Spaniards at Junin. Bolivár returned to Lima to straighten out his political affairs, leaving

Sucre in command to deliver the coup-de-grace. On December 9th the final battle took place at Ayacucho. Sucre's veterans completely overthrew the Spaniards and ended the war in Peru.

Sucre followed up his victory by leading his army into the province of Upper Peru (now Bolivia), the last stronghold of the royalists. The fighting had been severe there for many years, and the population rose as a man to greet the delivering army. The province was liberated without a battle, and the great war of independence was over. The newly-freed province named itself Bolivia, in honor of the liberator, and practically offered him the crown. This was only one of many times when Bolivár, if he had been at heart the monarchist his enemies maintained, could have acquired a throne.

Instead, he drew up the "Codigo Boliviano." It was, I suppose, as good a constitution as one could expect from a soldier. It was not, however, anything like so workable a document as the "Code Napoleon." Bolivár gave free expression to the anti-democratic tendency he had so clearly enunciated years before at the Congress of Angostura.

The constitution, written in his own hand, and which he repeatedly announced as his profession of political faith, provided for a life president who could nominate his successor. The principal novelty was that each group of ten citizens should elect one of their number as a general elector. The other nine were then to retire to the shade of their fig-tree and forget all about politics for four years—until time to choose a new elector. It was an immensely complex instrument. The Bolivians swallowed it without amending a word. And Sucre was chosen president for life.

Bolivár returned to Peru to force his pet constitution on that country, and in a decidedly high-handed manner

succeeded. The news reached him that a secession movement, inspired by the old distaste to a centralized government, had broken out in Venezuela, under his old companion in arms, Paez.

How far Bolivár had become personally ambitious, how often he allowed himself to dream of an imperial crown, no one will ever know. It is beyond dispute that with clear-sighted vision he foresaw the political chaos, the revolutions and counter revolutions, which were to disturb the great continent to whose freedom he had dedicated his life. That he dreamed of welding all the old colonies into a stable united nation is proven by almost all his speeches and letters. However, it was a hopeless dream. The chief grievance of the Spanish colonies had for a couple of centuries been the lack of home rule. All their ills had come from a distant administration. The one thing on which the Latin Americans were united was a passionate desire for autonomy. An empire cannot be built on such a motive. Under the enthusiasm of the war of independence Bolivár had been able to hush the universal demand for home rule. Now that the last battle had been fought, the old issue came to life with redoubled vigor.

On the 22d of June, 1826, just twenty years after Miranda's disastrous filibuster on the *Leander*, Bolivár's Pan-American Congress assembled at Panama. Mexico, Central America and the South American states, dominated by Bolivár, sent delegates. Chile and Argentina, fearing that the Congress was to be a pretext for him to spring his imperial conspiracy, did not co-operate. Among other resolutions, the Congress adopted the following, dictated by Bolivár:

"The Republics of Colombia, Central America, Peru, and the Mexican States, do mutually ally and confederate themselves in peace and war in a perpetual compact, the object of which shall be to maintain the sovereignty and indepen-

dence of the confederated powers against foreign subjection and to secure the enjoyment of unalterable peace."

Nothing was accomplished at this congress beyond the proclaiming of this ideal of Latin-American unity. All the contracting parties promptly fell into civil war. But the ideal gains ground year by year. The five republics of Central America now have an arbitration treaty; Chile and Argentina also. Our Bureau of American Republics and the frequent Pan-American congresses are knitting these neighbors of ours into closer unity every day. In some not too distant day the ideal of the Great Liberator will be realized.

Bolivár returned to Bogota and tried to bring order out of the chaos of the Colombian republic. The congress refused to accept his Codigo Boliviano. Peru threw off her allegiance to him. And some of his old veterans—ardent republicans—whom he had left in Peru, believing in the stories of his treason, started north to protect their country against his ambitions. The secessionist movement in Venezuela was continually growing. His own people began to plot his assassination. At last in January, 1830, he again tendered his resignation. The congress refused to accept it. The revolted province of Venezuela voted him a pension on condition that he would never set foot in the country again. This seems to have broken his heart. Although not old in years, the two decades of continual campaigning had worn him out. In April he resigned definitely, determined to retire to private life abroad.

Seven miles before reaching the port of Santa Marta, where a ship was waiting for him, he heard that Bolivia had risen in revolution; they had repudiated his Codigo Boliviano, and his dearest friend, Sucre, had been assassinated. He broke down completely, and died on the 17th of December, in the little village of San Pedro.