1970

Translated and Annotated Autobiografia Del General Jose Antonio Paez, Volume I. (Volumes I and II).

Hilda Sanchez Krousel
Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_disstheses

Recommended Citation
https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_disstheses/1732

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at LSU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in LSU Historical Dissertations and Theses by an authorized administrator of LSU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact gradetd@lsu.edu.
KROUSEL, Hilda Sánchez, 1927-
TRANSLATED AND ANNOTATED AUTOBIOGRAFÍA DEL
GENERAL JOSÉ ANTONIO PAEZ, VOLUME I. (VOLUMES
I AND II).

The Louisiana State University and Agricultural
and Mechanical College, Ph.D., 1970
History, general

University Microfilms, A XEROX Company, Ann Arbor, Michigan

© Hilda Sánchez Krousel 1970

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

THIS DISSERTATION HAS BEEN MICROFILMED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED
TRANSLATED AND ANNOTATED AUTOBIOGRAFÍA DEL
GENERAL JOSÉ ANTONIO PÁEZ, VOLUME I

Volume I

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of History

by

Hilda Sánchez Krousel
B.A., Florida State University, 1949
M.A., Florida State University, 1951
January, 1970
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The translator and editor would like to express her sincere appreciation to Dr. Jane Lucas DeGrummond, who directed this dissertation. She not only gave invaluable help in securing materials, but also offered encouragement through the years. She would also like to thank Dr. J. Preston Moore for his assistance and consideration.
FOREWORD

The development of democratic institutions in the Latin American Republics has been retarded by the continuous appearance of "the man on horseback," or the caudillo. This type of an illiterate or semi-literate leader usually comes from the military class and possesses a magnetic and forceful personality. The caudillos rule with dictatorial powers, sometimes under the guise of a more or less democratic constitution. In most instances, the majority of the people they govern are either partially or totally illiterate and follow the dictates of their leader without pondering the violation of the principles he professes to uphold. The pattern for this type of government was initiated throughout most of Latin America after the end of the wars for independence from Spain. In Venezuela, the government of the "man on horseback" began the very day that nation became an independent Republic, and it was embodied in the person of José Antonio Páez.

The translating and editing of the Autobiografía del General José Antonio Páez, Volume I, and a study of General Páez's life, reveal the many facets involved in the development of caudillo government. To begin with, it clearly pictures masses of ignorant men of mixed blood who do not
understand, or even seem to need to understand, the principles involved in democratic government. It delineates the economic conditions which force these men to be so involved in the process of eking out a meager existence, that they have no time to formulate thoughts on government. Finally, it portrays Páez himself as the resolute, strong, and likable caudillo who assumed the reins of the Venezuelan government. He was a simple man who, although very much aware of his intellectual limitations, accepted his country's mandate to rule not only because of his personal ambition, but also out of a sincere belief that he best suited his country's needs. Páez ruled his country like an autocratic father would rule his family. The progress and development of all institutions, including the Church to a certain extent, depended on his personal wishes and whim rather than on the intellectual and social growth of the populace. Thus General Páez set the stage for the dictators who were to govern Venezuela in the future. Unfortunately, few if any of these men had the interest in their country and fellow citizens that Páez had; consequently, none ruled so benevolently as he did.
Translating and editing the *Autobiografía del General José Antonio Páez*, Volume I, posed several questions. The first of these concerned the whereabouts of the original manuscript, for perhaps it could offer clues as to whether General José Antonio Páez wrote the manuscript himself, without editorial supervision; whether he wrote the manuscript and later submitted it for editorial corrections; or whether he dictated the material to a secretary who edited it.

Unfortunately, no information can be found regarding the whereabouts of this original manuscript, and it can only be assumed that it was either destroyed or lost after publication. Therefore, any answers to the queries about the original manuscript necessarily have to be conjecture to a certain extent. It is known that Páez had limited funds on which to live in New York, so limited in fact that he was forced to leave for Argentina the year after he wrote his manuscript in order to work as a commission agent for a cattle company. This suggests that he could not afford a secretary or editorial supervision for any extended period of time. Furthermore, judging from the style of writing, and the length of some sentences and paragraphs, it is safe to venture that General Páez wrote his autobiography himself with limited assistance.
The second problem concerned the type of translation to be made, either literal or free. After much consideration, the translator decided on a literal translation insofar as grammar and readability permitted. Perhaps in this manner, Páez's charm and candor could more readily be seen. However, when the sentences or paragraphs were too long and involved, the editor divided them, always trying to keep the meaning and spirit of the original. Necessarily, the capitalization varies somewhat from that used by Páez.

The matter of handling footnotes posed still another difficulty, for Páez had footnotes in his manuscript, and the translator-editor had many footnotes to interject. This raised the question of how to distinguish between the two. It was solved by stating first, before giving the citation, when it was Páez's footnote. All the other footnotes are those written by the translator-editor.

Toward the middle of the first volume, General Páez began to add material and documents that either did not add substantially to the text, or were already reproduced elsewhere. The translator-editor deleted these which include the following: in Chapter XI the long list of names of the men in the patriot army who fought at Queseras del Medio in 1819; in Chapter XIII the lengthy official decree issued by the Colombian Constituent Congress expressing thanks to the victors of the Battle of Carabobo; in Chapter XV the articles of capitulation whereby the Spanish Colonel Manuel de Carrera
y Colina surrendered Puerto Cabello to General Páez; in Chapter XVIII Páez's official letter to the Liberator explaining his conduct in 1826, printed in many collections of documents and letters; in Chapter XXI Páez's official letter to the Liberator in 1827, also reproduced in many collections; and in Chapter XXIV a varied assortment of letters which General Páez inserted. Other deletions made by the translator-editor are indicated in the text by the use of a footnote.

There are two editions of the Autobiografía del General José Antonio Páez. The first edition was published in New York by Hellet and Breen in 1869. A copy of this edition is in the United States Library of Congress in Washington, D. C. The second edition was published by H. R. Elliot & Co., Inc., with printings in Caracas and in New York in 1946. These printings are exact reproductions of the first edition except for the fact that the following items were added: two pictures of General José Antonio Páez; a copy of a painting of Queseras del Medio; the Liberator's proclamation to the Bravos de Apure; and the Prologues. The Prologue of the Caracas printing was written by Doctor Juan Oropesa, Rector of the Universidad Central de Venezuela; the Prologue of the New York printing, by José Martí, the precursor of the Cuban independence movement. Since copies of the first edition are almost extinct, the translator-editor used the Caracas printing of the second edition.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOREWORD</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRANSLATOR-EDITOR'S NOTE</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>xi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Volume I**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX</td>
<td>290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XI</td>
<td>365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XII</td>
<td>384</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Volume II**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>XIII</td>
<td>407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIV</td>
<td>425</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

viii
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>XV</td>
<td>444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVI</td>
<td>457</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVII</td>
<td>478</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVIII</td>
<td>494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIX</td>
<td>514</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XX</td>
<td>532</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXI</td>
<td>563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXII</td>
<td>569</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXIII</td>
<td>580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXIV</td>
<td>613</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXV</td>
<td>654</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXVI</td>
<td>659</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>688</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VITA</td>
<td>696</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ILLUSTRATION</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Musical Compositions</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. General José Antonio Páez</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Las Queseras Del Medio</td>
<td>380</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSTRACT

The wars for South American independence have presented a panoramic, but often neglected, view of man's willingness to endure any and every type of hardship in pursuit of that most elusive ideal--freedom. The leaders of this movement range from the intellectuals of Simón Bolívar's stature to the almost illiterate. José Antonio Páez, a native of Venezuela, is illustrative of the latter category. In his later years while he was in exile in New York, after he had acquired an education, he wrote a two-volume autobiography, which gives a vivid picture not only of his life, but also of the wars for independence in Northern South America. This dissertation is a translation and editing of the first volume of Autobiografía del General José Antonio Páez. It covers the years 1790 to 1829. The author included innumerable letters and documents relative to this period in his life. Some of these have been deleted because they do not add substantially to the material in the text or because they may be found elsewhere in their original form. My introduction to the Autobiografía is a review of Páez's life from the beginning until his death in 1873. It depicts his role as a military leader in the wars for independence; his political career as President of Venezuela (1831-35; 1838-42),
as the power behind President Vargas (1835-38) and President Soublette (1843-47), and as dictator (1861-62); and some aspects of his personal life.

This volume reveals José Antonio Páez's inauspicious beginnings as an ignorant _llanero_, or cowboy, on the Venezuelan _llanos_, or plains. It tells how when the war for independence from Spain broke out in 1810, he enlisted in the patriot army. After enduring indescribable hardships, he became the undisputed leader of the _llanero_ army that was the scourge of the seasoned Spanish troops. His military prestige now made his friendship indispensable to the Liberator, Simón Bolívar. Páez not only led his fellow Venezuelans to victory over Spain, but also eventually to a rejection of Bolivar's ideal of a unified Latin America. When Venezuela could no longer tolerate domination from Bogotá in 1829, Páez was on hand to take over the reins of an independent Venezuelan government. Thus he became Venezuela's first constitutionally elected President.

There are two main interrelated questions that arise concerning Páez's career. The first is his personal loyalty or disloyalty to his Commander-in-Chief, Bolívar. The second concerns his attitude toward Venezuelan nationalism. Did he ever give anything but a token fealty to Bolívar's Republic of Gran Colombia? This volume attempts to answer both questions. It reveals Páez as being loyal to Bolívar to the point where it would have been foolhardy for Páez to
ignore his country's requests. Páez's fealty to Gran Colombia in the beginning was as sincere as his loyalty to Bolívar. Although his mental horizons were circumscribed to a great extent by the *llanos* more than by Venezuela itself, he seems to have respected Bolívar's opinions. It was only when public opinion showed itself markedly opposed to union with Colombia, that Páez yielded to Venezuela's request for independence.

The translation and editing of this first volume manifest General Páez to be not only the dominant figure in Venezuela both prior to independence and the period immediately succeeding it, but also one of Bolívar's most important Generals. Without Páez and his *llanero* army, the war for independence in Northern South America might have presented a different picture and seen Spain victorious for an indefinite period of time.
INTRODUCTION

Some men are born, live, and die and barely ruffle the waters of existence; others plunge in and alter the currents. Such a man was José Antonio Páez. Born of humble parentage in the western Venezuelan province of Barinas, without the benefit of a formal education, this man became the scourge of seasoned Spanish troops in the battles for South American independence and eventually became president of the country he helped to liberate and create. The stories about how Páez attained these achievements are abundant and much intermingled with myth and legend. The cold, bare facts about his life, however, are even more interesting than anything legend could create. Páez was an exceptional man in every sense of the word. Physical and mental feats that would have daunted a lesser man merely served as a challenge to him. And yet, very much aware of the limits placed on him by his lack of schooling, he could be as humble and trusting as a child. True to his Hispanic background, he was a victim of flamboyance and grand gestures. There is one main fact that shines throughout all the actions of his life and compensates for his shortcomings and mistakes. This was his zest for living and his sincere love for and belief in his fellow man. It must have been very difficult to know him and not like him.
José Antonio Páez was born June 13, 1790 on a farm near the Curpa River bank, close to the town of Acarigua in the Araure District of Barinas. He was the seventh son of Juan Victorio Páez and María Violante Herrera. He had reddish hair and a fair complexion, for he was "white on all four sides." Since his father was employed in a government tobacco store in the town of Guanare and his mother, for some unexplained reason, did not live with him, young Páez had an unusual childhood. Señora Páez and her sons never had a fixed abode. Despite this when he was eight years old his mother sent him to a school which was operated by Señora Gregoria Díaz. Here he learned the rudiments of Christian doctrine and how to read and write. He was delivered from

1There is considerable divergence of opinion relative to Páez's literacy (or illiteracy). R. B. Cunninghame Graham, José Antonio Páez (London, 1929), 2, states that at the age of eight Páez attended a "hedge school" and probably learned the basics of an elementary education. Later, on page 114, Cunninghame Graham propounds that Páez "must have been over twenty years of age before he learned to read and write." General Daniel F. O'Leary describes Páez as "completely illiterate," Memorias del General Daniel Florencio O'Leary, 3 vols. (Caracas, 1952), I, 451. Jesus María Henao and Gerardo Arrubla (Fred Rippy, trans. and ed.), History of Colombia (Chapel Hill, 1938), 310, state that "he received but little education." Sir Robert Ker Porter, first British consul and charge d'affairs to Venezuela (Walter Duperouz, ed.), Caracas Diary, 1825-42 (Caracas, 1966), 119, describes Páez as "being totally uneducated. . . . Feeling this inferiority, and anxious to improve, he has within these very few years, applied himself to reading and writing; which acquirement until then, he was totally ignorant of."

What may be deduced from all this is that José Antonio Páez could probably barely read and write when he became President of Venezuela in 1830. At this time he seems to have started a campaign to improve himself culturally because he was soon able to read and write French, English, and a little Italian, in addition to his native Spanish.
Señora Díaz's rather harsh teaching methods by his brother-in-law, Bernardo Fernández, who employed him as a sales clerk in his mercantile store. Páez proved fairly proficient at his tasks; consequently, an uncle, Domingo Páez, hired him and one of his brothers to come to the town of San Felipe to assist him in the management of his varied business interests.

Shortly after this, when Páez was barely seventeen years old, his mother sent for him to come to Guanare to run an important family errand in the neighboring province of Barquisimeto. This errand proved to be the event that was to alter drastically the pattern of Páez's life and subsequently, the pattern of Venezuelan and Gran Colombian history. All the details of this mission are not known. What is known is that in June of 1807 Páez set off with certain documents and a sum of money to present to a lawyer who lived in Patio Grande, and that he did accomplish his mission successfully. On his return trip home, Páez stopped at one of the small local stores. Obviously impressed with his attainment, he brandished his money purse. This act caused him to be accosted later on the road by several of the local ruffians. In the affray which ensued, he shot and killed one of the men. Panic seized Páez when he thought of the consequences which might result from this act, but he managed to reach home and said nothing except to one of his sisters, about what had transpired. Tormented by the fear of being accused of murder, and without saying a word to his family, he headed toward the
llanos, where then as now, a man may hide himself from the whole world.

Henceforth the llanos (the great Venezuelan plains that stretch north from the Guiana Highlands and the Orinoco to where the Andes skirt the Caribbean Coast, and west through the Apure in Venezuela and Casanare in New Granada, to the Andes in New Granada) were destined to dominate José Antonio Páez's existence. They represented a great inland sea of grass, broken only by small islands of slender palms, which were inundated six months out of the year when they became a huge lake. "The climate of the Llanos with its temperature of ninety-two, the snakes, the boas, the crocodiles, the electric eels, the stinging rays, caribes, the tigers in the woods, the inundations and the droughts, the ever present insect plague, made life in the great plains a constant battle to the inhabitants." Consequently, the inhabitants of this vast, wild region were a distinctly separate breed of men. Mostly Indians or men of mixed blood, the inhabitants that survived in this environment were exceptionally hardy—immune to heat, cold, and hunger, and able to face daily dangers with equanimity. This was the world and the men with whom Páez was thrown when the Venezuelan independence movement began thus making Venezuela the bloodiest battleground in Spanish America.

When Páez had penetrated deep into the llanos, he went

---

2 Cumpuchamere Graham, Páez, 17.
to the cattle ranch of La Calzada. It was owned by a Don Leon Manuel Pulido, and here Páez worked as a cattle peon at the salary of three dollars a month. The adjustment he was forced to make was tremendous. He had nothing in common, either in blood or upbringing, with the swarthy llaneros who nicknamed him "El Catire," meaning fair in their dialect. To add insult to injury, Páez immediately incurred the dislike of Manuelote, the big Negro overseer of the ranch. He gave young Páez every impossible task to perform and then at night would force him to come wash his feet. It was these experiences that tempered the steel of Páez's character and body and were destined to make him the undisputed leader of the llanero hordes.

As fortune would have it, the foreman Manuelote decided to take Páez to El Paguey to assist him with the branding of some cattle. While he was there, Páez met Don Pulido, owner of the ranch. The latter was immediately taken with young Páez and sent him to sell cattle at the nearest town. Páez discharged this task so well that Pulido decided to keep him close by. He gradually taught Páez the cattle business, and Páez started buying some cattle on his own and prospered a little. In 1809 he married Dominga Ortiz. Other than being the mother of his only legitimate son, Manuel Antonio, Dominga must have had very little, if any, influence
on Páez, for he seldom mentions her in his autobiography.\(^3\) This seems particularly unusual considering that she accompanied him on all his campaigns until 1821, when he deserted her.\(^4\) However, Páez does not mention Barbara Nieves in his autobiography, and she was his reason for abandoning Dominga. According to John G. A. Williamson, the first diplomatic representative of the United States to Venezuela, Páez lived with Barbarita after he deserted Dominga "with all the apparent care prudence & circumspection of a married man."\(^5\) Ramón Díaz Sánchez later wrote that in Páez's love for his lovely and spirited mistress, "there was not only voluptuousness and carnal jealousy, but superstition, mysterious magic. 'She was my good star,' he sobbingly said when death snatched her away from him in 1845."\(^6\)

When Páez was eighteen, Napoleon Bonaparte was near the zenith of his power. In 1808 he invaded Spain and after the abdication of Charles IV and Ferdinand VII, proclaimed his brother Joseph Bonaparte King of Spain. Spain's American possessions refused to recognize Joseph. They established

\(^3\) Although Páez had several illegitimate children later, Manuel Antonio remained his only legitimate heir. John G. A. Williamson (Jane Lucas de Grummond, ed.), Caracas Diary, 1835-1840 (Baton Rouge, 1954), 268.

\(^4\) Vicente Dávila, Diccionario Biográfico de Ilustres Próceres de la Independencia Suramericana, 2 vols. (Caracas, 1926), II, 52.

\(^5\) Williamson, Caracas Diary, 241.

\(^6\) Ramón Díaz Sánchez, Guzmán, Elipse de una Ambición de Poder (Caracas, 1950), 173-74.
juntas to govern themselves in Ferdinand's name. Páez's province of Barinas and six others (Caracas, Cumaná, Margarita, Barcelona, Mérida, and Trujillo) called themselves the American Confederation of Venezuela. It was not until July 5, 1811, however, that this new nation declared its independence from Spain. It promulgated a constitution which changed a monarchical form of government to a republican, and created a new federal state known as the Confederation of the States of Venezuela. This early independence movement was not a popular movement. The masses had little or no interest in securing their independence. They remained loyal to the monarchy and the church. The Venezuelan historial Guillermo Morón states: "The people, the Venezuelans, did not understand or desire Independence. It had to be imposed on them."7 Keeping these facts in mind makes it easier to understand the wars for independence in Venezuela during which men and armies changed sides and loyalties with amazing rapidity. This was the way to survive; and after all, they were merely changing their leaders, not their principles.

Páez was twenty years old in 1810 when he enlisted in the revolutionary cavalry and served under his old master Don Manuel Pulido in the province of Barinas. There is no record to show that he saw much service in this first enlistment. When the First Republic came to an end in 1812 with Francisco

---

Miranda's capitulation to Domingo Monteverde, Páez retired from the revolutionary army with the rank of sergeant and an indefinite leave. He must have been living quietly at his small cattle ranch when he received an order from the Spanish General, Don Antonio Tiscar, to round up cattle and deliver them to Barinas. Although Páez claims to have always been a patriot at heart, he was wary of openly defying the Spanish General. It was only when the Spaniards issued him a Captain's commission and command of a cavalry troop, that Páez seized the opportunity to flee to Santa Barbara. There he rejoined Don Pulido who had been commissioned a Lieutenant Colonel by the Republicans. It was then that the temporary patriot government of the Second Republic offered Páez the rank of Captain as compensation for the rank he had refused to accept from the Spanish.

On June 15, 1813 in Trujillo, Simón Bolívar issued his Decree of War to the Death. Within two months he had swept east to Caracas and reestablished the Republic of Venezuela. It was during this time that Páez had his first success as a military leader. He surprised and defeated a Spanish detachment of four hundred men led by Commander Miguel Marcelino at Las Matas Guerrerena, parish of Canagua, parish of Canagua.

\[8\] One of the major factors leading to Miranda's capitulation was the earthquake which occurred on Good Friday, March 26, 1812, along the Venezuelan coast. Caracas was almost completely destroyed, and the clergy used this natural phenomenon as antipatriot propaganda, claiming that it was God's punishment for the Venezuelan declaration of independence.
in the Apure Department. When Páez was returning with the prisoners he took to Barinas, he met a soldier who informed him that the Spanish had taken the town of Barinas. On learning this, Páez's men deserted him. Hence, he was forced to wander for days, hiding from the Spanish and enduring all sorts of privations, until finally he was able to communicate with Don Manuel Pacheco, an old friend who was the Spanish military commander of Canagua. Páez conceived the plan of joining the patriots in San Carlos by securing a passport to Barinas from Commandant Pacheco, and getting another passport there from another friend, Don José María Luzardo, the Spanish governor of Barinas, under the pretext of going to present himself to Colonel José Yañez y Yiscar at his headquarters in Guanare. While attempting to carry out this plan, Páez was seized and imprisoned by the Spanish. Following almost unbelievable escapes from two executions, he was freed and rejoined the patriots. However, the Second Republic had now disappeared, for in 1814 a new Royalist caudillo, José Tomás Boves, had risen to lead the formidable llaneros. Together they had defeated the patriot leader Vicente Campo Elias in February of 1814; and in June, Bolivar's and Santiago Mariño's combined forces at the Second Battle of La Puerta. Boves swept into Caracas and then to the east, but Bolivar and Mariño managed to escape him and flee to Cartagena.

When Páez rejoined the patriots, Commander Ramón García de Sena made him commander of his cavalry. In time,
Páez, disgusted with García de Sena's treacherous actions, transferred his loyalty first to Governor Juan Antonio Paredes and later to Captain Antonio Rangel. Still later in 1814, he joined General Rafael Urdaneta in Mérida in western Venezuela.

In the summer of 1814 Urdaneta with the Venezuelan Army of the West and many patriot families fled by the Mérida-Cúcuta route into New Granada and established his headquarters at Cúcuta. Páez refused to follow him because of a disagreement with one of Urdaneta's officers, Commander Rafael Chavez. Then Páez decided to carry out a scheme he had been pondering for a long time, especially after he heard of Boves's death in December of 1814. This was to take possession of the Apure region and win its fierce inhabitants, the llaneros, over to the patriot cause. Páez knew from experience that these men would fight only if they found a leader whose personal courage and qualities they could respect. He also was aware that his zest for fighting and total disregard for personal safety had already made him famous among them. With his wife and child, he now made the dangerous crossing of the Andes from Mérida to the plains of Casanare. Páez finally arrived at Pore, the capital of Casanare. There the Venezuelan Commander who had been appointed Commander-in-Chief by the Casanare government, General Francisco Olmedilla, welcomed him and immediately gave him command of a cavalry regiment. With their guerilla forces they carried the war east into the Apure where Páez
and Olmedilla won the Battle of Guasduaquito in 1814.

Except for the guerrilla pockets of resistance in the llanos defended by men like Olmedilla and Páez, most of Venezuela was back under Spanish control at the beginning of 1815. Bolívar was in Cartagena where he explained to the Congress of New Granada why his campaign in Venezuela had failed, and why once again Colombia must help liberate his native state. The Granadan Congress promoted Bolívar and sent him to subject the rebellious state of Cundinamarca. Having accomplished this mission, he was made Captain General of the Armies of the Confederation. His next assignment was to free Santa Marta from the Royalists, which would enable him to invade Maracaibo and thus reenter Venezuela. Unfortunately, Bolívar fell afoul of the governor of Cartagena, General Manuel del Castillo. The latter refused to supply arms and munitions for the Santa Marta campaign; and after failing to force Castillo to conform, Bolívar resigned his command on May 8, 1815 to prevent further bloodshed of patriots. The next day he sailed to Jamaica; and on May 14, he reached Kingston where his host, Maxwell Hyslop, was most gracious but unable to secure any help from England for Bolívar's cause since England and Spain were allies at this time.

Meanwhile, the Cortés had restored Ferdinand VII to the throne of Spain. He quickly nullified the Liberal Constitution of 1812 and the decrees of the Cortés. He then organized an expedition of more than ten thousand veterans from the
Napoleonic Wars for the purpose of subduing his rebellious colonies. He put General Pablo Morillo in command, and the expedition landed on the eastern coast of Venezuela on April 3, 1815. Morillo swept west through Venezuela and then began a two-pronged attack against New Granada: one by sea to Cartagena and south to Bogotá; the other over the Andes to Bogotá.

Bolívar left Jamaica on December 10, 1815 and set sail for Haiti. He landed first at Aux Cayes (Los Cayos) and then went to Port-au-Prince on December 31, 1815. Here he was welcomed by President Alexandre Petion and destined to get invaluable help. With Petion's assistance, Bolívar organized an expedition of two hundred and forty men which sailed in seven small vessels to the island of Margarita, still partly under the guerrilla control of the patriot Juan Bautista Arismendi. Together Bolívar and Arismendi subdued the island and went on to the mainland, only to be defeated by Francisco Tomás Morales, one of Morillo's lieutenants. Once again Bolívar was forced to return to Haiti.

During this time Páez and other guerrilla chiefs continued to operate in the llanos against the Royalists.

---

9Writers such as Madariaga state that Bolívar at this point had set sail for Cartagena and decided to go to Haiti only when he learned that Cartagena had been captured by Morillo. The latest scholarship, however, affirms that when Bolívar left Kingston he had no intention of going to Cartagena, but rather was headed for Haiti. This is revealed in a newly-discovered letter Bolívar had written to President Petion. Alfredo Boulton, *Miranda, Bolívar y Sucre, Tres Estudios Iconográficos* (Caracas, 1959), 51.
Unfortunately, Olmedilla became too hard-pressed by the early patriot reverses and decided to move his family and all the men who would follow him to San Juan de los Llanos, a frontier town in what is now Colombian territory. Páez considered this tantamount to a desertion of the patriot cause and refused to follow him. Instead he joined N. Solano, the new patriot governor of Casanare. Under the latter's orders, it became Páez's painful duty later to arrest Olmedilla for his desertion. Shortly afterwards, Páez joined General Joaquin Ricaurte's forces.

At the end of 1815 the province of Casanare, which was the only part of New Granada that Morillo had not conquered, was invaded by the Spanish General Sebastian de Calzada. With an army of three thousand infantrymen, five hundred cavalrymen, and two pieces of artillery, he penetrated to the region of Chire. There the llanero troops were waiting under Ricaurte's command; and on December 31, 1815 at the Battle of Chire Páez as cavalry commander helped Ricaurte and Ramón Nonato Pérez, the most powerful caudillo from Casanare, to defeat General Calzada and to completely rout the Spanish troops. It was on this occasion that Páez had the first of the curious nervous attacks which were destined to plague him in the future before a battle. Several contemporary writers noted these strange seizures and credited them either to epilepsy or violent nervous excitement. In describing these fits, Cunninghame Graham states: "One thing is certain, that for the time being, he used to behave like
a man possessed, brandishing his lance, and foaming at the mouth, till he fell off his horse."\(^{10}\)

It was shortly after this fit or attack, on February 16, 1816, that the Battle of Mata de la Miel, which looms so prominently in Venezuelan history, took place. Páez had been left in command of the small army defending Guasdualito after its commander, General Francisco Guerrero, fled with his staff and several companies of soldiers on hearing that the Spanish were advancing with superior forces and artillery. Páez left Guasdualito with only five hundred cavalrmen to find the enemy forces led by Colonel Francisco López, the Spanish governor of Barinas. Encountering them at Mata de la Miel, he ordered a charge at dusk. This was good strategy since night rendered their powerful artillery fire harmless. The Royalists fled before Páez's inspired attack, which killed or wounded four hundred of their men.\(^{11}\) This was a total defeat of the Royalists and was the first time that the llaneros routed regular soldiers armed with artillery. It was also the occasion when Páez emerged from obscurity to display his skillful leadership and for which he was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel. Henceforth, his name became known throughout the country.

Now immigrants from New Granada fleeing Morillo's

\(^{10}\)Cunninghame Graham, *Páez*, 92.

\(^{11}\)Vicente Lecuna, *Crónica Razonada de las Guerras de Bolívar*, 3 vols. (New York, 1950), I, 484.
oppression began pouring into the Apure. Generals Páez, Urdaneta, and Santander had already moved east to escape the Spanish General Miguel de la Torre. In Arauca, the Commandant General Miguel Valdez called a meeting of officials and notable persons to constitute a government and name the chief of arms. This junta named Fernando Serrano, President; Francisco Javier Yañes, Secretary; and Francisco de Paula Santander, General in Chief. Santander immediately sent Páez on an expedition to round up horses. However, the llaneros refused to acknowledge Santander as their commander; so when Páez returned from carrying out Santander's order, he discovered that his army had "mutinied," demanding that he dissolve this government and assume control of both civil and military command. Páez yielded to the entreaty of his troops in September of 1816. Vicente Lecuna states that: "In reality his election, in that environment of practical and primitive customs, without any further law than that of force, was inevitable."12

After the Spanish reestablished the Barinas division in 1816, Colonel Francisco López, who was La Torre's second in command, invaded the Apure region again as far as Mantecal. López's troops occupied and won command of the Lower Apure, but fearful of attacking Páez in the Upper Apure, he retired toward Nutrias. Páez, having just been elected Commander-in-Chief of this area, decided to invade the Lower Apure,

12Ibid., 485.
which had greater available resources than the Upper Apure. He divided his troops into three columns under the orders of Generals Urdaneta, Santander, and Manuel de Serviez. On October 8, 1816 they attacked and defeated López's more numerous troops at the Battle of Yagual. Páez and his generals then pursued a fleeing López to Achaguas.

After López had finally set up his headquarters on the shores of the Apure, he carelessly fell prisoner to Páez's troops. Páez ordered López beheaded, and "with this political blow he affirmed his power in those immense llanuras." The llanero chieftain now determined to send General Urdaneta to Barinas while he himself led the siege on San Fernando, the control point on the Apure. (It was at this time that Nonato Pérez evacuated Casanare and left it to the Spanish General La Torre while he proceeded to set up his headquarters in the Upper Apure.) When Páez discovered that General Salvador Gorrín was marching to relieve San Fernando, he set out to encounter him. The rival forces met in battle at El Palital on December 18. Páez was unable to defeat Gorrín, and the latter entered San Fernando peacefully while Páez returned to Achaguas in the Apure to concentrate and train his cavalry to meet Morillo, who was also marching to the Apure. Meanwhile Calzada was approaching Mérida from New Granada with three times as many troops as the patriots had.

13 Ibid., 486.
On December 31 of 1816 Bolivar's second expedition, organized in Haiti, landed at Barcelona. Urdaneta, who had fled Barinas ahead of Calzada, first returned to Páez's headquarters and then went to join the Liberator early in 1817. On his way to Barcelona (along the Guayana Province and the llanos of San Diego de Cabrutica) many patriot men and officers who could not take the hardships of life in the Apure joined Urdaneta. This necessarily reduced the size of Páez's forces.

In January of 1817, with the Liberator still ignorant of Páez's contributions to the patriot cause in the Apure, the llanero chieftain ordered Nonato Pérez to attack La Torre. Unfortunately, Pérez insisted on first fighting Calzada's troops, stationed in Guasdualito. The battle that ensued on January 4, was a total defeat for the patriots. In fact, Pérez lost so many men that he could not challenge La Torre as scheduled. Consequently, Páez was not able to prevent Morillo and La Torre from marching across the plains of Mucuritas and joining forces. Then Páez immediately joined Nonato Pérez's forces and they confronted the Royalists at Mucuritas on January 28. In several brilliant tactical cavalry maneuvers Páez outwitted La Torre, who had to withdraw from the battle zone that night. Lecuna asserts that "this brilliant victory confirmed Páez's titles as lord of the Apure."14

14Ibid., II, 5.
After their defeat, the Royalists marched in the direction of San Fernando, by way of Banco Largo and Achaguas, clinging to the edge of the forests. Páez marched parallel to them on the open plain and tried to draw them into battle at Achaguas. The Royalists refused to give battle and proceeded to San Fernando. From here Morillo sent La Torre with troops and supplies down the Orinoco to reinforce Angostura, which had been beseiged by General Manuel Carlos Piar since January 18. Morillo left a force at San Fernando and moved east to the valleys of Aragua. As for Páez, he began detailed preparations to enable his refugee families and troops to survive the rainy season which was about to begin. Páez also divided his forces and spread them to occupy almost all of the Apure and part of the territory of Barinas. He set up his headquarters first at El Yagual and later in Achaguas. When his line of communication was interrupted by a Spanish regiment of three hundred men commanded by Jacinto Perera at San Antonio, on the bank of the Apure, he sent Vicente Peña to rout it. Commandant Peña was repelled, with heavy losses: so Páez personally led another attack on Perera; but he, too, was defeated.

It was while Páez was at his headquarters in El Yagual in July of this year that he received commissioners from Mariño and Bolívar, both asking to be recognized as the supreme authority. Cognizant of Bolívar's superior abilities and attributes, Páez chose to recognize him as supreme chief. With all the troops he could muster, he swore his allegiance
to Bolívar before Father Ramón Mendez, later Archbishop of Caracas.

By this time Morillo had abandoned Angostura, and a few of the Royalists had escaped down the Orinoco and north to Caracas. Bolívar set up his headquarters at Angostura. It was not until the end of the year 1817 that Bolívar had enough supplies to move up the Orinoco and join forces with Páez. Finally, on January 30, 1818 Bolívar and Páez met for the first time at Cañañafistola. It was a warm and long-awaited meeting, but Páez could not help but express his amazement later "that Bolivar's outward appearance, his weak frame, accustomed from infancy to the comforts of a home, provided quite a contrast to that of the inhabitants of the llanos."15 On the sixth of the following month Bolívar expressed his amazement at the llaneros when they captured the enemy launches he needed at the mouth of the Cople River. Knowing that Bolívar wanted these vessels to move his army across the Apure River, Páez had ordered two parties of his llaneros, with twenty-five men each, to swim alongside their horses and capture them. When this "water cavalry" accomplished its mission, Bolívar was pleasantly surprised. He immediately ordered the first squadron to cross the river and attack the Royalist detachment at Guayabal. The patriots did this successfully and were able to keep anyone from

15José Antonio Páez, Autobiografía del General José Antonio Páez, 2 vols. (New York, 1869), I, 140.
escaping and informing General Morillo in Calabozo about what had transpired.

With his army safely across the Apure, Bolívar ordered the march to Calabozo. By February 12 of 1818 his forces had obliged Morillo to evacuate Calabozo and move north. Pursuing the Spanish General, Bolívar made a thrust at Caracas which was unsuccessful, partly because Páez, General Manuel Cedeño, and Colonel Antonio Ranjel had outvoted Bolívar in favor of remaining in Calabozo and using it as a base to take San Fernando, a besieged city they believed was bound to fall. Bolívar returned to Calabozo and on February 22 named Páez Governor and Commandant General of the Barinas Province.

Páez still seemed to be obsessed by San Fernando, which according to Salvador de Madariaga was an obsession "due to the lure of booty to be won there."\(^\text{16}\) Whatever his ulterior reason, Páez did leave Calabozo and besiege San Fernando. The siege was successful, for on March 6 the Spanish troops evacuated it, and Páez personally led his forces in their pursuit. After this victory, Páez retired to Achaguas, where he received news this same month of Bolívar's defeat at La Puerta by Morales.\(^\text{17}\) The llanero

---

\(^{16}\) *Bolívar* (New York, 1952), 306.

\(^{17}\) General Morales, who was seriously wounded in this battle, was made Marques de La Puerta as a result of the victory. With Morales wounded, General La Torre assumed command of the Spanish forces here, and General Francisco López became second in command.
chieftain then, in answer to Bolívar's entreaties, went on to meet the Liberator at Ortiz. On May 21, 1818 the Royalists recaptured Calabozo, with Páez himself suffering a defeat by La Torre's troops at Cojedes. Bolívar now returned to Angostura, leaving Páez in the Apure.

Although the year 1818 had been a sad year indeed for the patriot cause, it had one redeeming feature with respect to morale. This was the arrival of English officers and troops who, out of work after the Napoleonic Wars, came to seek their fortunes by aiding the patriots. In August of 1818, Colonel Gustavus Hippisley, with a regiment known as "The First Venezuelan Hussars," joined Páez's forces. The English officers and men took an immediate liking to the llanero chieftain. So much so, in fact, that on the same month they had joined him, one of the Englishmen, Colonel Belford H. Wilson, led a movement in San Fernando de Apure to promote Páez to be the Commander-in-Chief. Although there were insinuations that Páez had instigated the movement himself, he denies it fervently in his autobiography. At any rate, Páez states that he refused to accept the "commission" of government given him and sent Wilson to Bolívar in Angostura.18

Bolívar remained in Angostura until December of 1818, busy with the operations of his Army of the East. He had

---

18Bolívar arrested Colonel Wilson and later expelled him from the territory of Venezuela. Madariaga, Bolívar, 315.
sent Santander to prepare forces and supplies in Casanare, for the Liberator was planning to invade New Granada. When the military details of this invasion had been worked out to his satisfaction, he turned his attention once again to the organization of a government for Venezuela and issued regulations for convoking a congress. On December 21 Bolívar's expedition sailed up the Orinoco to meet Páez again to win his support for an attack on Morillo. Páez's support was vitally necessary for Bolívar, for in this San Fernando area it was Páez, and not Bolívar, who was in command of the troops. On January 17, 1819 he reviewed Páez's troops at San Juan de Payara, but failed to get Páez's support for an immediate attack on Morillo. Then Bolívar received news on January 21 of the arrival of numerous English volunteers in Angostura whom he was most desirous of incorporating in his army. He also wanted officially to install the delegates from Venezuela and New Granada meeting in Angostura; consequently, he left General Páez in command of the troops in the Apure and returned to Angostura. The Congress of Angostura met on February 15, and on the following day Bolívar was elected President and Francisco Antonio Zea, Vice-President. This Congress also organized New Granada and Venezuela as the Republic of Gran Colombia.

Meanwhile General Morillo had decided to invade the Apure and end the patriot resistance there once and for all. He started his march into this area on January 1, 1819. Fortunately for the patriot cause, Páez had foreseen this
invasion as early as December of the previous year. He determined to defend the Apure by using his cavalry to wear out the enemy cavalry with continuous attacks and to save his infantry by moving it to the island of Urbana. He put this scheme into operation and drew Morillo's troops deeper into the llanos. Morillo soon divined Páez's plan. The Spanish General knew that his cavalry could not defeat the llanero chieftain's cavalry in the plains. When Morillo realized that he could not overtake Páez with his infantry, he decided to suspend his pursuit of the llaneros and retire north of the Arauca. Morillo thus divided his forces in order to cover distant points and thus maintain himself in the Apure on the defensive. Thus the Spanish General established his headquarters on the north side of the Arauca, while Páez was on the south side. Such was the military situation in this area when Bolivar arrived unexpectedly on March 10 with a force numbering three thousand infantrymen and fifteen hundred cavalry. Bolivar felt that now was the most opportune time to attack and destroy Morillo completely; consequently, the Liberator's forces provoked Morillo, who had closeted his forces in Achaguas, for thirty-six consecutive hours. But Morillo refused to be baited, and Bolivar had to retire south along the Arauca and set up his headquarters at Potreritos Marrerenos.

19 Lecuna, Crónica Razonada, II, 263.
20 Ibid., 269.
Morillo was soon joined in Achaguas by the fifth Spanish division under the command of La Torre and Calzada. Then he left this town and crossed the Apure Seco River, determined to give the patriots battle. By April 2 the Royalist forces were camped across from Bolívar's at Queseras del Medio, separated only by the Arauca River. Páez asked Bolívar's permission to cross the Arauca and attack Morillo. Gaining the Liberator's approval, Páez and his one hundred and fifty cavalrymen on April 3, 1819 defeated Morillo by brilliant guerrilla tactics. The defeat proved fatal for Spanish morale, and Morillo withdrew first to Achaguas, and then crossed the Apure and returned to Calabozo on May 12.

Bolívar appears to have been undecided at this point over what course of action to follow. It seemed that at first he wanted to pursue Morillo across the Apure, and then thought it more prudent to gather cattle for wintering in Barinas. Páez states in his autobiography that he was against going to Barinas, and that he thought the Liberator should march on to New Granada through the plains to Casanare. Bolívar's decision was made easier when Colonel Jacinto Lara arrived to inform Bolívar that Santander had everything in readiness for a revolt in New Granada.

---

21 Páez, Autobiografía, I, 191. Madariaga states that "this may be an after-the-event attempt by Páez to deprive others of the glory of having thought first of the Andes expedition; but it sounds true to life. Páez always thought of operations that would send Bolívar as far away as possible." Bolívar, 341.
Thereupon Bolivar called a general council of war which unanimously approved the plan to transfer operations to New Granada. Bolívar left the Apure to direct these operations, while Páez was both selected and elected to remain in the Apure and hold this area at all costs. During the period of reorganization which followed, Bolívar got his Army of the West ready, and it left the Mantecal area headed for New Granada on May 27. By June 22, 1819 this army had reached Pore where it joined Santander's division. The combined forces started the hazardous ascent of the Andes along the Pisba Moor early in July. After the descent and several skirmishes, Bolívar defeated the Spanish forces under José María Barreiro in the famous Battle of Boyacá on August 7, 1819; and so "exactly six months from the opening of the campaign in Apure, and within seventy-five days of marching from El Mantecal, enduring all types of hardships and sufferings, the victory delivered to the hero the main part of the viceroyalty of New Granada."22 On August 10 Bolívar triumphantly entered Santa Fé and spent the next few weeks establishing control in the heart of New Granada. The Royalists had been pushed north to Cartagena and south to Popayán.

Except for the battalion of llaneros he had given Bolívar, Páez had refused to collaborate in the New Granadan

---

22 Lecuna, Crónica Razonada, II, 349.
venture. Not only had he failed to occupy the valleys of Cúcuta as Bolívar had asked him to do, but he also refused to even deliver horses to Bolívar. At this point, he would neither leave the llanos nor deplete any of its resources. Páez spent most of his time late in 1819 and early in 1820 either at Achaguas or at his Yagual ranch training an infantry corps destined to be known as "Los Bravos de Apure."

Having found a good Vice-President for New Granada in Santander, Bolívar left the capital to return to Venezuela on September 20, 1819, and arrived in Angostura December 11. Almost immediately, he called a meeting of the Congress of Angostura to verify a plan he had brought all the way from Santa Fé: the union of Venezuela, Colombia, and Quito under one single constitution. Congress obliged Bolívar, and on December 17 passed the bill which founded the Republic of Colombia. In this way, the Liberator hoped to impress foreign powers and secure recognition of the nascent state.

Fourteen days after his arrival in Angostura, Bolívar left for the Apure and arrived in San Juan de Payara on January 10, 1820, hoping to head Páez's fresh army against Morillo's main force. This hope was thwarted by the fact that Páez's cavalry had been rendered unfit for warfare due to an epidemic among the horses, while his infantry had been

---

23 This battalion was known as the "Bravos de Páez." Madariaga states that "when the llaneros beheld the Andes, they looked on such stupendous heights with awe and wonder, and marvelled at the very existence of lands so different from theirs." As a result many of them deserted. Bolívar, 344.
weakened by desertion. Furthermore, Páez thought that Morillo wanted to draw Bolívar into a fight in the mountains, where the Spanish General felt stronger; so he would not yield to Bolívar's request to move his army. Bolívar, on the other hand, did not want to delay attacking Morillo for fear that it would give him time to receive the reinforcements he had asked for from Spain. The irreconcilable temperaments of the two strongest men in Venezuela clashed in this argument. "Bolívar knew only too well that he could not master the indomitable Llanero. What was he to do? Exactly what he had done a year earlier in the same situation: seek another city, another army, another man he would be able to control. He decided to give up his Venezuelan campaign and go to rule New Granada over the head of Santander."24

Meanwhile in Spain, the troops that were destined to reinforce Morillo and permanently subjugate the colonies rebelled against the power of the King on January 1, 1820.25 With all hopes of receiving aid from the Peninsula dashed, the Royalist cause in America was dealt a tremendous blow. Bolívar was freed of the necessity of attacking Morillo immediately, and instead concentrated his efforts on making the patriots more secure in the interior by pushing the

24Ibid., 366.
25Lecuna, Crónica Razonada, II, 377. Lecuna states that this revolt, part of a general liberal movement was brought about in part by the effect which the patriot victory at Boyacá, which had quickly liberated the rich provinces of New Granada, had had on the Spanish populace.
Royalists closer to the Caribbean coast. The Liberator also took advantage of the order issued General Morillo by the Spanish Cortés to arrange an armistice with the patriots, to meet and confer with the latter and sign the Treaty of Trujillo on November 26, 1820. This famous Treaty declared a six months' armistice and regularized the conduct of war, ending the "war to the death" which had been mercilessly practiced by both sides. The armistice proved to be a moral victory for the patriots and gave them the time needed to effectively reorganize their forces. It also gave the patriots an added advantage in that it helped General Morillo come to the decision to return to Spain. Spurred on by the belief that the war in the colonies was lost unless overwhelming reinforcements were received, the Spanish General sailed for Spain on December 16, 1820. He left General La Torre, a much less capable man, in his place. This in itself represented a victory for the patriots.

Before the end of the six months' interval, Bolívar had felt the need to end the armistice. His troops were being decimated everywhere by disease and want, for the cattle of the Apure were being diverted, under the protection of the armistice, from military use to peaceful trade. Following the attack on Maracaibo by Urdaneta's men, the truce ended April 21, 1821. Bolívar set his forces in motion: he had Páez in the Apure; Urdaneta, in Maracaibo; and he himself, in Barinas. General José Francisco Bermúdez was ordered to attack and take Caracas before the end of May. Bermúdez
fulfilled these orders on May 14, with the Spaniards taking refuge in Puerto Cabello.

By June all parties, both patriot and Royalist, were converging on the plains of Carabobo. Both sides realized that this next campaign would seal the fate of Venezuela, and consequently employed their most experienced troops. The rival forces led by Bolívar and La Torre met on June 24 at Carabobo. Since the Spanish artillery commanded the valley through which Bolívar had to pass in order to reach the plain, he sent Páez and his cavalry to use an unfrequented path through the hills to the west and enter the plain to the rear of the Spaniards. Páez accomplished his mission, reaching a hilltop from where he could see the Spanish army two miles away. In his autobiography, the llanero chieftain states that from this hilltop, "The Apure Battalion vigorously resisted the enemy infantry fire while descending into the woods and crossing a riverlet. It maintained its fire until the British Legion arrived under the command of its gallant Colonel (Thomas) Farriar."26 Later Páez sent his men back farther north. Here, under the cover of brush and trees, he and his llaneros were able to reach the plain and attack the Spaniards from the rear just as Bolívar's main force arrived by the direct road. La Torre lost control of his troops and soon the Royalist army was routed. Páez, commanding the llanero cavalry, the infantry division known

26Páez, Autobiografía, I, 206.
as "Los Bravos de Apure," and the British Legion, had rendered such an important contribution to this victory, that Bolívar promoted him on the spot to General in Chief. "However correct, the Liberals chiefly attributed the victory at Carabobo to the valor and military skill of General Páez."27 Though the victor, Páez had a miraculous escape during the battle.

General Morales, La Torre's second in command, now retreated with what was left of the Royalist army and shut himself up in Puerto Cabello. Bolívar and Páez entered Caracas on June 29. Here Bolívar organized the Venezuelan government under republican forms but on a military basis. "He knew full well that the actual boss would be Páez; but this leader of cowboys was not yet presentable, nor reliable either. So Bolívar put at the head of the State as Vice-President his henchman Soublette, an urban and even urbane general; while Páez, promoted to the rank of general in chief, was given the military and civil command of the Province."28 This action was taken at a time when José Antonio Páez represented "almost the only permanent fixture in the regional government."29

27 Henry R. Lemly, Bolívar, Liberator of Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia (Boston, 1923), 248.
28 Madariaga, Bolívar, 398.
29 David Bushnell, The Santander Regime in Gran Colombia (Newark, 1954), 294. Páez and Soublette disagreed so markedly during this period about general policies, particularly the expulsion of Spaniards from the territory, to
Bolívar left Caracas for Bogotá on August 1, 1821. He was invited by the Congress which had been meeting in Cúcuta since May 6 of this year to join it. The purpose of the invitation was to offer him the Presidency of the Republic of Colombia. Bolívar finally accepted this post on October 3, and Santander was made Vice-President. The Liberator almost immediately turned his gaze to the war in the south, and on December 14 left to direct operations in Quito. He would not return to Colombia until the end of 1826.

General Morales, except for occasional forays, was still holed up in Puerto Cabello. In May of 1822, Páez decided to besiege the fortress. At times he was forced to lift the siege either by the need to go quell a revolt, or because of malignant fevers that played havoc with his men. It was during these withdrawals that General Morales, in command of the Spanish troops since General La Torre had

which Páez was strongly opposed, that Soublette handed over the departmental intendancy to the Marqués Francisco Rodríguez del Toro, an old-line aristocrat. He and Páez got along somewhat better, chiefly because he, too, was anxious to suspend the expulsion of Spaniards. When the Marqués retired to private life, he was succeeded by General Juan Escalona.

The disagreements between Páez and Soublette seemed to disappear after Páez became President in 1831. From this year until 1847 they alternated in the presidency, with Soublette riding Páez's coattail. Williamson, Caracas Diary, 234.

30 The Congress of Angostura had dissolved on January 15, 1820. The new congress ratified the Fundamental Law of the Republic which formally adopted the union of Venezuela and New Granada to constitute the Republic of Colombia. The constitution it promulgated differed but little from that of Angostura and proclaimed a centralized, popular, and representative government.
been named Captain General of Puerto Rico, sallied forth and forced Páez to fight several skirmishes. Although nearly always victorious, Páez suffered serious losses. On one of these occasions, reinforced by the Anzoátegui Battalion, he pushed Morales further into the hills. But the latter returned to Puerto Cabello then, left it under the command of General Sebastián de la Calzada, and embarked with a considerable force for Maracaibo. Morales seized the San Carlos Fortress and the city of Maracaibo.

In the meantime, Páez had been raising a considerable force to attack Morales. When he arrived in Trujillo he learned that the San Carlos Fortress had been given up without a blow by its cowardly commander, Colonel Natividad Villasmil, and that the Spanish squadron had crossed the sandbar into the inland sea. Páez then countermarched to Valencia and sent word to General Soublette that the patriot fleet was needed at Lake Maracaibo. Soublette sent General José Padilla with his small patriot fleet which outmaneuvered and defeated the superior Spanish fleet on July 24, 1823. Morales, attacked on every side, capitulated to Padilla and surrendered the fortress at San Carlos, Puerto Cabello, and the remainder of the Spanish fleet.

On August 15, 1823 General Morales set sail for Habana. Thus, after a thirteen-year struggle, the last high-ranking official representative of Spain left the country. Unfortunately, General Calzada, whom Morales had left in charge at Puerto Cabello, refused to recognize the capitulation.
Páez was forced to lay siege of Puerto Cabello once again in September. After resisting some of Páez's most memorable exploits, Calzada finally surrendered. The Spaniards had lost their last inch of Venezuelan territory, and the war of independence was at an end. Venezuela was completely incorporated into the Republic of Colombia.

After the fall of Puerto Cabello, Páez set out with Generals Mariño and Bermúdez for Caracas. This turned out to be a long, triumphal march for the _llanero_ chieftain. After all, Puerto Cabello had resisted all patriot attacks since 1812: "Thus the joy at its fall was quite legitimate, and all his countrymen naturally saw in Páez the incarnation of their independence... So for the moment he occupied a position that he enjoyed for a brief period and to which he never rose again throughout his long career."31

The following year, 1824, saw General Páez's rapprochement with the ultra-liberal group in Caracas. Even though the latter was violently opposed to everything military which Páez embodied, they looked on him as their only support against Santander's tyranny. Páez, on his own part, had very little in common with the liberal faction, but he did have a concrete rivalry with the existing central regime and its agents. Later in the year two minor crises occurred which hastened his alignment with the extreme liberal faction. The first of these occurred when Páez issued a decree, late

---

31Cunninghame Graham, _Páez_, 211.
in November, declaring the Departments of Venezuela and Apure in a state of siege because of the appearance of a French squadron in the Caribbean. When it became apparent that the French were not hostile, Vice-President Santander ordered Páez to lift the state of siege. The llanero General personally felt it necessary to continue the siege a little longer because of new outbreaks of disorder within the Department of Venezuela. He was chagrined by Santander's order and by Father José Antonio Páez's subsequent motion to impeach Páez for declaring martial law without due cause. Although this latter motion was rejected by an overwhelming vote, and Santander later reversed himself on this issue, it all served to foment Páez's disillusionment with legislative procedures and civilian politicians in general, particularly those in Bogotá.

The second crisis was actually one of the reasons why Páez's continuation of the state of siege was not unwarranted. On December 9, 1824, the town of Petare, on the outskirts of Caracas, was raided by a band of men armed with machetes yelling, "Long live the King and death to the whites!" These raiders seem to have been slaves from nearby plantations, who had no association with any preexisting guerrilla band. The raid produced very little damage; however, the incident came to be known as the Petare conspiracy and caused nation-wide wrangling and dissension. General Páez regarded the incident simply as a small disturbance, but General Escalona, the intendant, considered the incident as having been fomented
by the Caracas liberals and consequently of a very serious nature. The Bogotá government, led by Vice-President Santander, chose to believe Escalona's version rather than Páez's; so Congress granted the Vice-President "extraordinary faculties" for dealing with similar situations in the future. According to David Busnell, "The Petare affair together with its aftermath was thus one more reason for the growing rift between Páez and the Santander regime that marked the year 1825."32 The Caracas liberals, led by Antonio L. Guzman and General Francisco Caraballo, took advantage of this opportunity to further win Páez's favor. Somehow, the llanero General failed to see that the ideals of this liberal group were similar to those of the Santanderean liberals whom he considered his enemies.

General Páez was severely chastized again by the Bogotá government in 1926. The Congress at Bogotá, alarmed by the rumors of a Spanish expedition sent to recover the lost territory and needing to provide troops for Bolívar's war elsewhere against the Spaniards, had passed a decree to raise a force of fifty thousand men. The Caraqueños had generally continued to resist the enlistment decree. Consequently, Páez, unfortunately for his popularity, was given the task of enforcing the decree. As General Military Commander, he called a meeting of the citizens of Caracas to enlist them in his army. When only a few responded, he

32The Santander Regime in Gran Colombia, 302.
ordered his troops to arrest every man seen on the streets. The Municipality of Caracas, backed by General Escalona, protested this action and instituted formal accusations against Páez before the Colombian Senate. The Senate accepted the accusations, instituted impeachment proceedings against the llanero chieftain, and suspended him as Military Commander of the Department. To add insult to injury, General Santander then appointed Escalona to replace Páez while the latter was ordered to Bogotá to stand trial.

It is surprising that Páez even considered going before Congress and commanded his troops to obey Escalona, for the masses openly and enthusiastically supported him. He pathetically asked Santander to use his great influence in the Senate to win an acquittal. Páez also contacted Bolívar who begged him to be patient until 1831 at which time the Constitution would be changed. However, the picture changed abruptly on April 30, 1862, when the Municipality of Valencia, reportedly led by Dr. Miguel Peña, ignored the orders of the Bogotá government and reappointed Páez its Military Commander. Other municipalities throughout the Department, including Caracas, resentful of having to take orders from General Santander, a native of Bogotá, and perhaps "urged" to do so by the presence of Páez's troops, followed Valencia's example. They all voted to keep Páez in command until Bolívar returned to preside over the Convention that was to be convoked in 1831 to deal with national problems. Páez was invested with the supreme authority, in
civil and military affairs, and once more was President of Venezuela in all but name. In his autobiography Páez states apologetically, "In a fatal moment for me, I reassumed the command that had been suspended so unjustly." When he was sworn in at Valencia on May 14, 1826 it was understood that he would not follow orders issued by the Bogotá government. Immediately Páez restored the mint at Caracas and perhaps foolishly prohibited the circulation of letters and papers from neighboring departments. He was really governing Venezuela like a dictator.

33Autobiografía, I, 294.

34Following is an account of these events as reported in the Philadelphia National Gazette and Literary Register, June 20, 1826, reprinted from the Baltimore Gazette, June 17, 1826. "From the beginning of the month of May the inhabitants of this country, who have more or less property, have been put under some dread, by a commotion which might have been injurious to foreign traders in La Guayra, Puerto Cabello and Caracas, if the genius of Páez had not arrested the fire of rebellion even from the commencement. . . .

". . . The Cabildo of Caracas is against the General. Santander, the Vice President, ordered with great promptitude that Páez should be deprived of his military command. Páez conformed to the order and transferred the command over to Escalona, who, previously was Intendant of Venezuela. When this became public, the inhabitants perceived that there was a great discontent among the population, but this discontent sprang more from the desire which men without property have, to draw some advantage from public disorders, than from patriotic motives. . . . When it was known that the government of Bogotá had deprived Páez of his command and transferred it to Escalona, the troops of Valencia mutinied and ransacked the Tobacco monopoly warehouse--a few murders were committed, and in other places the signs of seditions of armed people appeared. For fear that things would grow worse, the Cabildo of Valencia assembled and requested Páez to resume the military command. The Cabildo of Caracas, more afraid than the other, they being the accusers of Páez, sent a deputation also requesting him to resume the command. From the moment in which he took the command tranquility was
Meanwhile, in Bogotá and New Granada public opinion as a whole was generally hostile to Pérez's "rebellion," known as the Cosiata. Vice-President Santander condemned the movement as wholly illegal and declared all its acts to be null and void. He immediately assumed his "extraordinary powers" to deal with the Venezuelan situation, but he did not take any immediate action against the revolutionists. Santander unleashed a bitter propaganda campaign against Pérez. However, he believed that this revolt could be overcome by Bolívar's mere presence in Caracas and accordingly wrote to him urging his immediate return. Santander was more than ever convinced that Bolívar should return when he received reports that Pérez's strength was declining as a result of the active opposition of Fernando Peñalver, José Francisco Bermúdez, and General Rafael Urdaneta.

Simón Bolívar when he first heard about the Congressional impeachment proceedings against Pérez, expressed strong sympathy for the accused. He appears to have regarded Santander's appointment of Escalona as a major cause of the revolt, and had expressed only a perfunctory disapproval of Pérez's course of action. It appears Bolívar was impressed with Pérez's pledge not to introduce any reforms before his restored and things went on as usual. If you have heard that Pérez has become Dictator or King, or wishes to separate Venezuela from the general government and things like these, do not believe them. Pérez is a man of great natural genius, and he could not commit the great faults which the timorous and ignorant of this country would represent."
own return to Venezuela. In compliance with both Páez's and Santander's requests, Bolívar left Peru in the latter part of 1826 for Venezuela, leaving Santander in charge at Cundinamarca. He maintained a conciliatory attitude toward Páez. However, when Páez announced to the Venezuelans that the Liberator was coming as a mere citizen and not as President, Bolívar became enraged. He had also heard reports that Páez was going ahead with his reorganization of Venezuela without waiting for the Liberator.

The llanero chieftain sent Dr. Miguel Peña to inform Bolívar that he must either accept Venezuela's demands or halt his march. Unfortunately, Colonel William Fergusson, who was Bolívar's aide de camp at the time, arrested Dr. Peña and sent him to Trujillo as a prisoner. Páez retaliated by arresting Bolívar's emissary, Laurencio Silva. On January 1, 1827, Páez sent Silva with a message to Puerto Cabello. Bolívar used this gesture to effect a reconciliation. He issued a decree confirming Páez as chief civil and military authority in Venezuela; and in return for a general amnesty (a guarantee that Páez and his followers would retain their property, rank, and public offices), and the promise of a Great Convention for constitutional reform, Páez recognized the Liberator's supreme authority. On January 4, 1827 Bolívar and Páez met and embraced, for Bolívar had decided to win over Páez in his struggle against the "republic of lawyers" led by Santander. Together, they entered Caracas triumphantly on January 10.
Then Bolívar left Páez in command in Venezuela and went to Bogotá where he reassumed the Presidency. Bolívar adopted a set of policies that made his open breach with Santander inevitable. Not content with the recent amnesty he had given Páez relieving him of any responsibility to answer the charges made against him in Congress, he went on to proclaim that the Venezuelan chieftain had "saved the republic." Bolívar heaped fire on the coals by rewarding Páez's leading supporters with jobs and favors.35

The year 1828 which followed was a most unfortunate year for Páez. The treasury was empty. The soldiers were unpaid and roamed the streets and countryside begging or stealing. Bolívar was ill and unable to dominate the Convention of Ocaña which had been called in response to a general demand for reform of the constitution. In fact, because of Santander's powerful opposition, Bolívar dismissed the Convention. It was now evident that there were two strong parties in Colombia: the Santanderistas, or federalists, and the Bolivianos, or centralized republicans. By 1829 Páez was so disillusioned that he wanted to retire from public life; however, his sense of duty to his native land prevented him from doing so.

35 During this period of rapproachment between Bolívar and Páez, despite the burden placed on them by governmental policy decisions and problems in Bogotá and the Apure, the two men spent many hours planning the liberation of Cuba and Puerto Rico. In fact, Páez devoted all of Chapter XX in the first volume of his autobiography to discussing these plans.
Páez's love of music and drama, which had long been semidormant, came to the fore in the year 1829 when, despite all his other preoccupations, he sponsored the presentation of Othello in his own home. Páez himself took the role of Othello; General Carlos Soublette, Brabancio; and Dr. Miguel Peña, Iago. According to Francisco González Guinan, Páez accurately and vividly interpreted Othello. Later his interest in the fine arts led him to support and encourage the first theatre in Valencia which was built by 1832 and called 'El Teatro del Coronel Celis.'

In November of 1829 Páez presided over a convention in Caracas that explicitly called for a separation of Venezuela from the Republic of Colombia. Páez was temporarily caught on the horns of a dilemma. On the one hand, his admiration for and long obedience to Bolívar prompted him to oppose this project. Yet on the other hand, urged by his local patriotism, staunch Republicanism, and his own personal ambition, he was encouraged to accept the measure for separation. A conference was held at Cúcuta to settle the differences between these two "countries." It resolved nothing, for it met mainly to please a dying Bolívar.

On January 13, 1830 General Páez officially proclaimed Venezuela an independent nation and set up a provisional government with himself as head. He appointed a Cabinet with three Secretaries; of Home, Justice and Police; of

---

36 *Tradiciones de Mi Pueblo* (Caracas, 1954), 38.
Finances; and of Foreign Affairs, War and Navy. He named to these posts respectively Peña, Urbaneja, and Soublette. On April 29 word came that Bolívar had resigned the presidency in his last message to the Congress at Bogotá. Páez had already called a constituent congress to meet on April 30 in Valencia, which now became the capital. This congress, ignoring Bolívar's constitution, wrote a new one which proclaimed a republican, popular, representative, and responsible government. The legislature was divided into a Senate and a House of Representatives, with each province electing two Senators and a number of Representatives proportionate to its population. The Executive power was to be embodied in a President elected for four years and not eligible for reelection. Both the electors and the elected had to be males, over twenty-one years of age, literate, with a small annual income from property, or exercising some trade or profession. In 1831 Páez began his first term as constitutionally elected president. Cunninghame Graham says of him at this time:37

Páez, from the humblest origin, had now risen to be the first citizen of the republic. The wheel of fortune had indeed come round full centre, and he who once had washed the negro [sic] Manuelote's feet was seated in the presidential chair. Until the year 1847, he dominated the public life of the republic, making and unmaking generals at his will and ruling like a patriarch.

The llanero President, accompanied by Barbarita and

37Cunninghame Graham, Páez, 249.
his new government, moved to Caracas. His home was known as La Viñeta, and Barbarita was its mistress. Fair-complexioned, slim, with dark brown hair cascading down to her hips, this woman is said to have inspired Páez with "a passion in which the flesh is set on fire by the vibrations of pride," and that he regarded her as a "living trophy which his prestige has wrested from the prejudices of a society which still shows itself scornful and stubborn," and liked "to exhibit her as if she were a medal won in the great war maneuvers." 38 She helped him immeasurably now with his campaign for self-improvement. Some evenings she would read Rousseau, Lamartine, or Cervantes to him. On other evenings she would hire professional singers, preferably Italians, to come sing at La Viñeta. There were times when Barbarita would play the piano and sing in her soprano voice while Páez accompanied her with his robust baritone, their spirits joined "by a tie which is deeper than that of the flesh—by the love of art and particularly music." 39

General Páez's first term as constitutional President of Venezuela, 1831 until 1835, was relatively peaceful. With Urbaneja as his Vice-President, he was able to put down General José Tadeo Monagas's revolt for the reestablishment of the Republic of Colombia without bloodshed. Páez managed

38 Sánchez, Quzmán, 43-44.

39 Ibid., 175.
to avert a threatened war with Colombia and removed any final
danger of a Spanish attempt to regain power. It is also to
Páez's credit that he allowed freedom of the press and per­
mitted Congress to act independently.

During this first presidency, Páez continued to agi­
tate for the abolition of slavery, a passion which had
consumed him since the early days of the wars for independence.
He failed to win this battle, but he was successful in secur­
ing legislation which forbade the selling of slaves out of
their district and the importation of new slaves. He also
promoted education for Negroes.

Páez's relations with the Catholic Church during this
period may be summed up by relating his difficulties with
the Archbishop of Caracas. The Archbishop refused to take
the oath of fealty prescribed by the Venezuelan constitution.
Páez tendered the oath to him several times unsuccessfully;
but finally, at the end of the year 1831, the archpriest
accepted the oath. This did much to enhance Páez's prestige.

Perhaps Páez's greatest achievement in this first
term was in the field of public education. Having been
denied the benefits of proper schooling in his youth, he was
moved by a desire to provide an adequate system of education
for his people. Consequently, he supported and protected
Feliciano Montenegro in his efforts to establish primary
schools. The pioneer of Venezuelan education, Montenegro
founded El Colegio de la Independencia in Caracas.

By 1835, Venezuela was fairly prosperous and national
finances were improving slowly. The two political parties that were destined to rule Venezuela's future had also emerged—the Mantuanos and the Democrats. The former was the party of the aristocrats, and by a strange freak of fortune, Páez had become their leader while Monagas, a wealthy and well-educated man, was the champion of the Democrats.

The presidential election of 1835 was contested by such strong candidates as General Carlos Soublette, Dr. José Maria Vargas, and General Santiago Mariño. Consequently, no candidate gained the two-thirds majority of the Electoral College necessary for a victory; so Congress had to elect the president. Although it was well known that Páez favored Soublette, Congress chose Dr. Vargas, a civilian who had not fought in the wars for independence, and who did not really want the office, but was coaxed into accepting it by the anti-military politicians. Mariño, dissatisfied with the results of the election, started a so-called party of reform which was responsible for a military revolt led by a Major Pedro Carujo which forced President Vargas to abdicate and go into exile on June 10, 1835. Mariño then assumed military control of the country, called a Popular Assembly which confirmed what had just taken place, and recommended the calling of a National Convention. The Reformists, expecting Páez to join them, named him provisional President and Mariño military Commander in Chief.

Unfortunately, in the east José Tadeo Monagas proclaimed a federation, as he had done in 1831, in an additional
attempt to gain autonomy for his region. At this point some of the old independence warriors, such as Generals Urdaneta and Arismendi, declared for the Constitution, and in July an exiled Vargas appointed Páez his own Chief of Operations. When the General accepted this commission, it represented an end for the "reformers." Within fourteen days Páez brought about the submission of all the revolutionary leaders, including Monagas. Even though Páez had not originally supported Vargas, he now reinstated him in the presidency. This represented a moral triumph for the llanero leader, and a step toward constitutional government in Venezuela. In appreciation for his services, the Venezuelan National Congress now bestowed the title of Ciudadano Esclarecido, or Enlightened Citizen, on General Páez. By this time Páez's fame was spreading abroad, and in 1837 King William IV of England presented him with a sword of honor. The inscription on it ran: "from William IV to General Páez as a proof of his admiration for his character, and for the disinterested patriotism that has distinguished his brilliant and victorious career."\textsuperscript{40}

The Vargas government that Páez had helped to reinstate was short-lived. Dr. Vargas and his supporters attempted to bring a truly civilian government to Venezuela, but the militarists quickly doomed this attempt to failure. After

\textsuperscript{40}Cunninghame Graham, Páez, 275. King William IV had sent General Páez this sword as a token of his appreciation for the two white deer Páez had sent him. Porter, Caracas Diary, 957.
defeating Monagas, Páez had proclaimed an amnesty which allowed even Monagas and his officers to keep their ranks. The Congress of 1836 would not tolerate the leniency and summarily punished some of the rebels itself. Páez, who had promised these men their lives and honor, fell out with Congress. President Vargas, caught between his loyalty for General Páez and his loyalty to his anti-militaristic Congress, resigned his office. The presidency now was filled briefly by three other men until the end of this disastrous term.

The standard of revolt was raised again in April of 1837 by two llaneros, Juan Pablo and Francisco Farfan. These two brothers of gigantic stature, whom Páez had earlier expelled from his army because of insubordination, were fighting for the reinstatement of the Republic of Colombia. Knowing how quickly his fellow llaneros would join any adventure, Páez sped to the llanos. There he encountered and defeated the rebels at the town of Payara. Such was the feat of arms he accomplished at this battle that it won him the title of León de Payara, a name by which he is often referred to by his countrymen. His life was imperiled so many times during this struggle, that "Páez always spoke of his fight on the Payara, as the most desperate of his life."^41

In 1838 José Antonio Páez was elected once again to serve as president of his country. This term of office was

^41Cunninghame Graham, Páez, 273.
considerably more peaceful than his first. He turned his
attention now to the deplorable state of transportation
facilities in his country and saw to it that the first roads
since the expulsion of the Spanish were built. Faithful to
the memory of the Liberator, he brought his remains back to
Venezuela in 1842.

Two political parties, Conservatives and Liberals,
were formed in 1840 from the remnants of the Mantuanos
and the Democrats, and came to be Venezuela's two historic
parties. In the 1842 election, the Conservative Party backed
General Soublette while the Liberals supported both Santos
Michelena and Diego Urbaneja. Páez supported Soublette again,
and Soublette won and became President in 1843. Although
the Liberals respected his election and his cabinet, they
objected to the fact that General Páez was still influential
behind the scenes, for he was "still the arbiter." This
government filled out its term, for it upheld the Constitu­
tion, Congress, and the courts. In fact, Morón states that
this was one of the few honest governments which Venezuela
has had.

It was in December of 1846 that Páez, accompanied by
his son Ramón, paid his last visit to his beloved llanos.

42Morón, History of Venezuela, 158.  43Ibid., 159.
44It was as a result of this trip to the llanos that
Don Ramón Páez wrote Wild Scenes in South America or Life in
the Llanos of Venezuela (New York, 1862), which contains
many vivid and interesting descriptions of this region.
And it was here that he refused the presidency for a third term and gave his support to José Tadeo Monagas, his chief opponent in the east during his previous administration. Páez retired now from public life and received outstanding honors from France and the Scandinavian countries. King Louis Philippe made him a member of the Legion of Honor, and the King of Sweden and Norway made him Commendator of the Order of the Sword.

The joys of private life were destined to be short-lived for the old warrior. The Liberals, who had split their vote between three candidates, Antonio L. Guzmán, José Felix Blanco, and General Bartolomé de Salom, lost the presidential election to Páez's candidate, Monagas. President Monagas began his government in 1847 with a Conservative cabinet and officials, but when the Conservatives objected to the personalist rule that Monagas was setting up, in direct defiance of the Constitution, Monagas retaliated by replacing them all with Liberals. The Liberal leader Guzmán became his Vice-President. The Conservatives now pleaded with General Páez to rebel against the President's tyranny (which included forcing Congress by means of armed threats to vote him dictatorial powers). Páez realized his error in supporting Monagas, and led a revolt which lasted from February to March of 1848. Defeated as much by trickery and disloyalty within his own ranks as by force of arms, the old General retired to New Granada. In July of 1849 he led another revolt in conjunction with a Conservative uprising in Caracas.
However, this attempt was poorly coordinated: so when Páez met the government forces, led by the former leader of his Guard of Honor, Cornelio Muñoz, he was soundly defeated again. General Páez was captured and sentenced to exile either in Europe or the United States, but he was promised that the life and property of his followers were to be spared. Unfortunately, this capitulation was not honored by the government, and the llanero chieftain was kept in prison for months "suffering the disillusionment of the old, despised warrior when even his dignified protest to Congress was, of course, rejected." His imprisonment at the Fortress of San Antonio de Cumaná must have been made even more bitter for Páez by the fact that his long-neglected wife visited him and tended to his needs religiously, while his mistress, Barbara Nieves, stayed away completely.

Finally in 1850 General Páez was permitted to go into exile. He chose to go to New York City. Here he received a public welcome, and when he visited Philadelphia later in the year he received another public welcome. Following is a description of this welcome from the Public Ledger on October 3, 1850:

Reception of General Antonio Páez.—This Venezuelan hero was received in this city, yesterday, by the Mayor and Council of the City. On the arrival of the steamer from New York, General Páez was received by the Philadelphia Greys, Lieut. Vance, and the Washington Greys, Capt. P. C. Ellmaker. He was escorted to Independence Hall, occupying an open barouche. Here

45Morón, History of Venezuela, 163.
he was received by Mayor Jones and the City Councils on the part of the city. The Mayor welcomed General Páez in an appropriate speech, to which the Venezuelan hero replied in Spanish, which was interpreted by Señor Percy. Citizens were then introduced and the General was escorted to his quarters, at the Washington Hotel. Shortly after he had entered, he showed himself on the balcony, and was repeatedly cheered by the crowd in front of the hotel.

Páez was sixty years old now and well educated, speaking both English and French in addition to his native Spanish. He decided to use New York as his headquarters while he traveled extensively. In 1851 he went to Baltimore where he received public honors again. In Mexico, General Santa Anna received him with acclamation. When Páez went to Europe, King Louis of Bavaria also greeted him with public acclamation.

Meanwhile, back in Venezuela another revolt against the Monagas's regime, now officially headed by José Tadeo's brother, José Gregorio, had broken out in Valencia in 1853 and had spread throughout the country. José Gregorio helped to quell this revolt by signing a law abolishing slavery in 1854 and thus winning over forty thousand slaves to his side. This measure also helped to win the presidential election again for his brother, José Tadeo, in 1855. Unfortunately, José Tadeo developed dictatorial ambitions and had Congress draw up a new constitution which extended the presidential term to six years with no prohibition against reelection.

---

46 Cunninghame Graham, Páez, 295. Perhaps Páez accepted the services of an interpreter in Philadelphia out of deference to his many listeners who would not be able to understand his English spoken with a Spanish accent.

47 Constitución de 1857, Titulo XII, José Gil Fortoul,
He did succeed in getting elected to another term in 1857. However, by now the opposition of both the Conservative and Liberal parties became intense. Led by Páez and his friends in New York and Manuel Felipe Tovar in Venezuela, the Conservatives organized their forces while the Liberals were following suit under the leadership of Guzmán, Wencesleo Urrutia, and Joaquín Herrera. These conspirators joined forces in an effort to find a common leader. Recognizing that General Páez could not be their choice since he was too deeply committed to the Conservatives now, they agreed on the Governor of Carabobo, Julian Castro. A successful revolt was effected, and in 1858 Castro set up a government and installed a National Convention in Valencia to write a new constitution.

According to Guillermo Morón, "From March 15, 1858 to July 24, 1863, a wave of anarchy transformed the country, and as government after government wilted, the social and political structure changed radically under the blows of war and desolation." Invited by Castro, Páez made a brief reappearance in Venezuela in 1859. However, when Castro

Historia Constitucional de Venezuela, 3 vols. (Caracas, 1942), III, 401-402.

48 History of Venezuela, 169.

49 General McLellan had organized a parade in New York to bid General Páez farewell. As fate would have it, Páez's horse slipped and fell on him during the parade. The famed horseman sustained a leg injury in this incident from which he never completely recovered, for he was almost seventy years old now. Cunninghame Graham, Páez, 297.
started negotiating with the Federalists, Páez hurriedly left Venezuela again. He was destined to return in 1860 when Manuel F. Tovar was elected President; Pedro Gual, Vice-President; and he himself, Minister of War and Navy. In 1861, Tovar resigned and Gual assumed the Presidency. When Páez tried to negotiate with the Federalists, Gual asked him to resign. The Commander of the Caracas garrison retaliated by arresting Gual and proclaiming Páez chief. On September 10, 1861, Páez became dictator of his country. Unfortunately, Páez now fell under the influence of Pedro José Rojas. The latter's evil counsels pushed Páez into acts that destroyed his prestige. He failed to conciliate the Federalists; so on June 16, 1863 Páez signed the Treaty of Coche which brought the Federalist leader, General Juan Crisóstomo Falcón, to power. Federation triumphed after five years of bloodshed!

Once again in 1863 José Antonio Páez left Venezuela. This was destined to be his last exile. Stripped of all his property and goods except for a small grant from General Falcón, he returned to New York where he was received with respect. At age seventy-eight, poverty, and the inducements of greater prosperity offered by his friend, Domingo

50 Even though he was in exile, Páez's son, Dr. Manuel Antonio Páez Ortiz, was able to get his name incorporated in the list of Ilustres Próceres de la Independencia Sur-Americana, with its corresponding salary, in July of 1867. Dávila, Diccionario Biográfico, II, 52.
Faustino Sarmiento, forced him to leave New York.\footnote{Sarmiento and Páez became good friends while the former was Argentine Minister to the United States and the latter was in exile here by General Falcón's orders. Francisco R. Bello, \textit{Páez en Buenos Aires} (Caracas, 1941), 17-18.} He set out for Buenos Aires to serve as a commission agent for a cattle company.

When the old \textit{llanero} leader arrived in Buenos Aires in June of 1868, he was welcomed enthusiastically as a legendary hero by all of the first families. He took up residence with the powerful Carranza family. Dr. Adolfo Carranza described him thus: "Of medium height and muscular body, he had lost his agility as a result of a fall from a horse while leading a July 4 parade in Washington, during which President Grant served as his \textit{aide-de-camp}."\footnote{Ibid., 20.}

On October 12 of 1868 Sarmiento assumed the Presidency of Argentina. Consequently, the Argentine Senate voted General Páez the rank of Brigadier General in its army with the corresponding pay. Perú followed this example by granting him a substantial pension. As a result, Páez was able to live comfortably and happily in Buenos Aires. It was during these years that he revealed a relatively unknown facet of his personality. He composed music and wrote lyrics. For the piano he composed a waltz entitled, \textit{La Flor del Retiro}; for the violin and piano, \textit{Escucha, bella María}.\footnote{Ibid., 27-28.}

In 1870 General Páez was forced to leave his haven by an outbreak of yellow fever. He went first to Bolivia where
FRANCISCO R. BELLO

PAEZ EN BUENOS AIRES

LA FLOR DEL RETIRO

VALZ

tempo muy lento

que travieso la vida, de todo su

bien, llevo renuevo perno, en cal la

ier Que fresco e' la alma, que rehala de

iería sin esperanza, sin di chisar...
Qué triste el recuerdo, que pesa en el alma
De aquellos ensueños, felices de ayer;
Son tristes las horas, que ruedan en calma
Llevándose infaustas, del hombre el placer.
Qué triste es la noche, sombría y oscura
Sin que se perciba, siquiera un rumor;
Muy triste es la noche, que al hombre le augura
Penas sempiternas, profundo dolor.
ESCUCHA!
BELLA MARIA!
he was received with acclamation. In 1872 he visited Perú and Colombia. Finally, he returned to the United States and died in New York on May 7, 1873. His ashes now rest in the national pantheon at Caracas. In 1905 General Cipriano Castro ordered Páez's statue erected in the Plaza de la República.

It is difficult to judge or truly evaluate a man such as José Antonio Páez. Even his contemporaries, his fellow countrymen as well as foreigners, varied greatly in their opinion of him. From among his countrymen, let us consider first Simón Bolívar's opinion of General Páez. Perhaps it is impossible to capture Bolívar's true opinion of General Páez, for as Salvador de Madariaga points out in his biography of the Liberator, the latter "was always significantly careful not to commit to paper any adverse opinion on his chief adversary." In fact, the thought that he may have entertained an adverse opinion is only suggested by a letter written to Bolívar by his mistress, Manuela Sáenz, in which she states: "I wish to God that all these devils on two sticks such as Paula (Santander), Padilla, Páez would die."

---

54 M. Leonidas Scarpetta and Saturnino Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico de los Campeones de la Libertad de Nueva Granada, Venezuela, Ecuador i Perú (Bogotá, 1879), 426.

55 Bello, Páez en Buenos Aires, 30.

56 Madariaga, Bolívar, 613.

Contrary to this opinion, a perusal of Bolívar's published letters generally reflect the high esteem in which he appeared to regard the llanero General. In a letter to Páez on October 16, 1825 Bolívar told him: "I have written General Santander naming you to serve as intendant in Venezuela. . . . I, in truth, do not know anyone better qualified to rule her." Yet in a letter Bolívar wrote to General Francisco de Paula Santander on December 27, 1825, after mentioning his disapproval of Escalona for the post of intendant of Venezuela, Bolívar says regarding Páez: "It is a very touchy matter for Páez to enter himself as a candidate for an office he cannot hold."

When the Liberator wrote General Bartolomé Salom on April 14, 1827 he advised him to "Get close to General Páez, who is my best friend." On May 4, 1828 he wrote to Páez: "I rely on you to be the man to guide Venezuela's destinies." In a letter to General Pedro Briceño Méndez on March 26, 1829, he cautioned him to "always take care of General Páez, for Venezuela's health depends on him." By 1829 when Páez's break with Bolívar and Gran Colombia was obvious, the Liberator commented: "This country is beyond

---

59Ibid., 197.
60Ibid., VI, 266.
61Ibid., VII, 256.
62Ibid., VIII, 274.
help: "The man (Páez) wants only to be absolute."\textsuperscript{63}

Finally, in 1830, Bolívar said that he "did not want to begin another struggle like that between Páez and Santander, which in the end has destroyed us all."\textsuperscript{64}

Madariaga claims that the root of Bolívar's pessimism in 1830 "was Páez, the petty tyrant of all colours and races. Páez had been the chief factor in his life; . . . The dreaded cowboy had neutralized or reduced to impotence, subservience, or futile rebellion all the Venezuelan generals who had remained in the east--Soublette, Bermúdez, Mariño, Monagas and the rest."\textsuperscript{65} Consequently, Bolívar's feelings toward Páez were bound to have some hostility. The degree of hostility, however, seems to have been tempered by the Liberator's awareness of Páez's strength and simple virtues. Bolívar knew that without Páez he could not control the llanos, and without the llanos Venezuela was lost to him. It might be also that Bolívar did not break openly with the llanero General because he thought Páez would never be a threat to him outside the llanos.

Francisco de Paula Santander, whose life and fortunes were as much entwined with those of José Antonio Páez as were the Liberator's, openly expressed his disapproval of

\textsuperscript{63}\textit{Ibid.}, IX, 208. Letter to General Rafael Urdaneta, December 6, 1829.

\textsuperscript{64}\textit{Ibid.}, 389. Letter to General Urdaneta, November 16, 1830.

\textsuperscript{65}Madariaga, \textit{Bolívar}, 647.
General Páez. In September of 1826 he wrote to Bolívar: "Know that this is Páez's thought, to be Venezuela's liberator, or its regenerator, to be called its Washington, become richer than what he is and satiate his boundless ambition." 66 When he wrote to General Mariano Montillo in October of 1826 he stated: "It may be seen, that heads as poorly organized as Páez's and hearts so filled with self-love could only think and feel that the people would aspire to disorders and Venezuela to have a dictator." 67 Again writing to Bolívar from Bogotá on November 5, 1826, he expressed the belief that "Páez believes he has greater moral power than anyone, and Páez is very ambitious." 68 Santander warned Bolívar that, "Páez is to be feared because of his ignorance and ambition, and everything possible should be done to diminish his influence among the troops for the sake of order and tranquility." 69 The polished, educated, and law-abiding Santander had little in common with the rough-hewn llanero chieftain.

General Antonio José Sucre, one of the most capable and most loyal to Bolívar of all the revolutionary leaders, was guarded in the opinion he reflected on most everyone, including José Antonio Páez. Perhaps this is why he seems

66 Vicente Lecuna (ed.), Cartas de Santander. 3 vols. (Caracas, 1942), II, 279.
67 Ibid., 296.
68 Ibid., III, 3.
69 Ibid., 35. This was in a letter written on December 23, 1826.
to have managed to keep intact his friendship with Bolívar and with other men. 70 A perusal of his published letters reveals but one instance in which he may be said to express an evaluation of the llanero leader. This occurred in 1826 during the Cosiata. From Chuquisaca he wrote Bolívar the following on August 12: "I do not have enough data to judge who is right; but I see that General Páez has acted violently in the manner in which he has conducted himself in the uprising in Valencia. If he had complaints against Congress he should not have avenged himself in a manner that damages the credit and even the existence of the nation." 71 Unfortunately, General Sucre was assassinated in 1830. Had he lived during the next fifteen years, he might have been prompted to reflect a stronger opinion.

The opinions expressed by foreigners who knew and worked with General Páez were generally highly complimentary. The exception to this was Daniel Florence O'Leary. One of Simón Bolívar's most trusted and dedicated aides, O'Leary wrote the Liberator that Páez was "an immoral, malicious, insidious man, unworthy of Your Excellency's protection." 72

70 Madariaga, Bolívar, 421.

71 Daniel F. O'Leary (ed.), Cartas de Sucre al Liberator (1820-1830), Biblioteca Ayacucho, XXXVI, XXXVII (Madrid, 1919), XXXVII, 78. Páez weaves into his autobiography the opinions and judgments of a New Granadan, the historian José Manuel Restrepo.

72 O'Leary, Memorias, III, 69. This quotation is contained in a personal letter from O'Leary to Bolívar written at Bogotá on October 8, 1826.
O'Leary had previously described Páez in the following manner: 73

He was of middle height, robust and well shaped, though the lower part of his body was not proportioned to his bust; his chest and shoulders, very wide, his neck short and thick, a big head, covered with dark auburn hair, short and wavy; dark, quick eyes, straight nose and wide nostrils, thick lips and a round chin. His clear complexion told his good health, and would have been very white but for the sun. Caution and mistrust were the chief features of his physiognomy. . . .

As a guerrilla chief, he was without rival. . . . Without organization, without knowledge, without moral courage, he was void of effect in politics. Inconstant in his friendships, he lavished nevertheless, his confidence on the favorite of the moment and allowed himself to be guided by his advice when it did not clash directly with his interests. . . . He coveted power, but absolute power, the power of caprice and abuse. This ambition and greed were his dominant passions. He was able to acquire an extraordinary influence over the llaneros that made up his army, by tolerating their propensity for looting and relaxing military discipline. Such was the chief of the Apure.

Cunninghame Graham asserted that O'Leary was the only British officer who came into personal contact with Páez and disliked him. 74 This assertion is substantiated in the memoirs of George L. Chesterton and Colonel Gustavus Hippisley. The latter, after his first meeting with the llanero General, said: "It was impossible not to be impressed in favour of this man. Next to the padre before mentioned, he was the only man I had seen who could inspire me with

73 Ibid., I, 451-52.

74 Cunninghame Graham, Páez, 155.
feelings of friendship at a first interview." Later in his narrative, Hippisley wrote:

Páez is self taught and sprang up all of a sudden from nothing during the revolution. . . . His courage, intrepidity, repeated successes and the number of his followers speedily gained him a name. His followers too were all so many Páezes, looking up to their general as a superior being. . . . On the parade or in the field, Páez was their general, and supreme. In the hours of rest from the fatigues of a long and rapid march, or from conquest over the adversary, and the retaliation rigidly executed, Páez would be seen dancing with his people in the ring formed for that purpose, smoking with them, drinking from the same cup, and lighting the fresh segar from the one in the mouth of his fellow soldier.

Chesterton in his account of proceedings in Venezuela in 1819 and 1820 states that the British soldiers "Represented Páez as a man willing to do more for them than any other commander they were ever under; and described his manners as amiable, though rough." Although he himself never met the llanero chieftain, Chesterton recorded the following impression of Páez given to him by fellow Britishers:

Páez is a native of the Plains, and was formerly a herdsman. As I have before said, he is much respected, and always spoken of favourably. Being a man, who, though uneducated, possesses much natural talent, he is beloved by his men who do not desert from him; and has been known to act on some occasions

75 Gustavus Hippisley, A Narrative of the Expedition of the Rivers Orinoco and Apure in South America (London, 1819), 391.
76 Ibid., 416.
77 George Laval Chesterton, A Narrative of Proceedings in Venezuela in the Years 1819 and 1820 (London, 1820), 117.
78 Ibid., 143.
with much generosity towards the English officers.

The unknown British officer in the Colombian navy who wrote *Recollections of a Service of Three Years During the War-Of-Extermination* has left by far the most glowing British description of General Páez. After mentioning Páez's solicitude over his wound, he goes on to describe him thus: 79

This heroic and noble-minded man has derived all his ideas and virtues from nature. Nurtured in a country perfectly uncivilised, without the advantages of either birth or fortune, he has, by his own personal merit, his prowess and undaunted courage, raised himself, through the incidents which have from time to time occurred to him during the revolutionary contest, to the command of by far the most effective and useful native force of any in the country. . . . He does not appear to have entertained any wish to aggrandise himself at this period, nor indeed at any subsequent one, as his conduct has ever been marked with a most perfect disinterestedness and indifference, as to his own advantage, in every action of his life. . . . He is particularly fond of the English, calling them his brothers, and ever advocating their claims to the gratitude of the country with the greatest enthusiasm. His intrepidity rendered him equally beloved by them, and excepting General Mariño, he was the most popular chief with them in Colombia.

He is, above all things, a sincere patriot, and certainly a bright ornament to his country, which there can be but little doubt he has been the principal means of continuing thus long a Republic.

Sir Robert Ker Porter, Great Britain's first consul and charge d'affairs to Venezuela, was also a most enthusiastic admirer of General Páez. Porter's editor, Walter Dupouy,

states: "Porter admired Páez second to Bolívar." This fact Porter easily and quickly reveals in his many references to the *llanero* leader in his diary. Speaking of an occasion in 1833 when Páez called on him to discuss several matters of national importance, Porter says: "On all which subjects his good sense and liberality shone conspicuously." In January of 1835 Porter noted:

General Páez has published his address to his fellow citizens which does honour to his character as the most unblemished patriot, and the most unambitious of men—*I* mean unambitious, because he had both the *means* and the feeling of the leading people, to continue in power—but he has shewn himself [to be] what I always thought of, an honest and pure hearted son of liberty and real independence.

General Páez's apparel and conduct, which were a cause of concern for some diplomats, are favorably described by this proper Englishman in the following manner:

The General was dressed quite in his *llanero* costume; a low-crowned broad brimmed straw hat, white *calzoncillos* (*a* sort of short linen trouser), black, unpolished long leather gaiters lacing up the sides, shoes with spurs, and over his person a white linen (but much marked by service) *Cobija*, ornamented round the edges and corners with needle work. A scarlet, broad belt embroidered with golden oak leaves crossed his shoulder, from when hung his trusty sword. He looked what he really is, a Hero.

The *llanero* chieftain's great increase in wealth during the Presidency was also a topic of much discussion

80 Sir Porter, *Caracas Diary*, lxviii.
and concern. The British diplomat explains it thus:  

Páez was originally only a simple herdsman, and without one single head of cattle he could call his own. Now he is the greatest hero, one of the most talent patriots in the country - and likewise, the richest citizen, both in cattle and estates within the Republic of Venezuela. All, all gained gallantly, gloriously, and honourably, for services rendered to his country.

Sir Porter rendered Páez aficionados a great service when he noted in his diary what the people's feelings and attitudes were toward General Páez. On June 20, 1826 he wrote: "Several weekly papers of a single sheet are now published - very abusive and personally violent against all those at the seat of Gov't who oppose or are supposed to be inimical to Páez or the views of his party. He is as much adulated as the others are abused."  

Barbarita, the General's mistress, Porter plainly referred to as Páez's Madame Pompadour. He describes her as a "good expressioned person - darkish with fine eyes and jetty hair - and I am told though fond of filthy lucre, yet withall is very charitable and good-hearted." In fact Porter even painted a portrait of Bárbara and refers to this

---

84 Ibid., 689.  
85 Ibid., 108.  
86 Ibid., 715.  
87 Ibid., 693. John G. A. Williamson, the first American diplomatic representative in Venezuela, felt that Barbarita was indeed fond of "filthy lucre." He said: "The Genl's woman is said to be sensible and shrewd and cunning like all animals in their native state, that she is calculating & worldly there is no doubt, as it is commonly reported she has already secured a large sum in money & investments of property, sufficient to enrich all her children--" Caracas Diary, 251.
painting thus: "Finished some days ago Páez's Mad. Pompadour - which I sent [to his] home this day - a great nuisance got over."\textsuperscript{88} Surprisingly enough, Porter did not react unfavorably to Páez's household arrangement as did others. Speaking about Páez's illegitimate children, he states: "The youngest, Juana, is very graceful and well made - Páez seems proud of them, and \textit{la Señora} Bárbara also - who is an excellent person. What a fortunate thing it would be for Páez as well as Bárbara - if Madame Páez, was to be 'gathered to her mothers!!!'"\textsuperscript{89}

Even after Porter's services in Venezuela were terminated at the end of 1840, he continued to extol General Páez's virtues. Having returned to Russia to be with his daughter, he noted: "I had a very long discourse with His H. the Prince about my part of South America and took good care [to] speak highly in praise of Gen. Páez and the excellency of his Government and rationality of his Republic -"\textsuperscript{90} In 1842 in speaking to the Russian Prince again about Venezuela he said: "I was not backward in bringing forward Venezuela and its glorious chief."\textsuperscript{91}

John G. A. Williamson, the first diplomatic representative of the United States in Venezuela, who arrived in Caracas in 1826, had different opinions about the llanero chieftain. In February of 1839 he wrote:\textsuperscript{92}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{88}Sir Porter, \textit{Caracas Diary}, 726.
\item \textsuperscript{89}Ibid., 1011. \textsuperscript{90}Ibid., 1156. \textsuperscript{91}Ibid., 1168.
\item \textsuperscript{92}Williamson, \textit{Caracas Diary}, 310-11.
\end{itemize}
Called on Genl Páez found him engaged in his private cockpit preparing for his great fight some day next month - he red me in a jackit & slippers without cravat or vest. . . . A stranger would scarcely have recognized the President of Venezuela and the soldier in his present garb.

Genl Páez is decidedly the democrat of the Country. . . . He has so long commanded free as the wind, that restraints of Law, Govt and constitution, and I may say Civilization are yet but threads in his hands, yet obeys and I think will continue to do so perhaps for ever and make himself the first Citizen of his Country-

In June of 1839 he unflatteringly depicted Páez thus: 93

Genl Páez is in peaceble possession of the Presidency, running horses, caring not a great deal about any thing but his own private views and interests, for certainly there is not a man in the Republic who thinks more of his own individual interest in all things touching money than he does -

Williamson's attitude relative to Páez's relations with his mistress was rather harsh also. In describing President Páez's visit to the George Goslings on the coast at Camburi, he states: 94

. . . he takes with him the mother and children of his present family, she of course a _______ and the children all bastards - Mr. Gosling has certainly but little respect for the feelings of his wife to introduce to her society the Genl's family under these circumstances, and I should be glad to learn she has maintained her dignity of mother & wife by leaving the house to the possession of her unprincipled husband and his guests.

Despite all this, in 1840 the American diplomat had the following to say about Páez: "He had tallents, but rather of the fiero nature kind instead of the Enlightened

---

93Ibid., 335. 94Ibid., 251.
acquirements of the age - He however suits the Country and the state of things that govern it."\(^{95}\)

Later writers and historians have had the same diversity of opinion concerning Páez that his contemporaries had. Salvador de Madariaga, one of Simón Bolívar's noted biographers, characterized Páez at thirty-five as a man "who, then in perfect health, was capable of an untiring physical and moral activity; who never complained; for whom no hardship was unbearable, no march too long, no task too menial; who would cheerfully load mules and canoes, or swim his horse back and forth to help across the rivers weak soldiers or women."\(^{96}\) He states that when Páez became Boves's successor as leader of the llaneros, although Páez was a republican and a patriot, he was destined to become "more of a scourge for Bolívar than ever Boves had been."\(^{97}\) He also states that the llanero chieftain would eventually "oust Bolívar not only from Venezuela but from life itself."\(^{98}\) According to Madariaga, "Páez and Bolívar were hardly ever in agreement; and as soon as Bolívar arrived, discord broke out again. . . . Páez was as happy as a king warring about in the Plains. He was, of course, as good a patriot as any; but his chief interest was less to save the Republic than to live the life of a warring chieftain of Apure."\(^{99}\) Madariaga further propounds that Páez "had never been Bolívar's friend.

\(^{95}\)Ibid., 380. \(^{96}\)Madariaga, *Bolívar*, 343. 
\(^{97}\)Ibid., 236. \(^{98}\)Ibid., 286. \(^{99}\)Ibid., 339.
He was as ambitious as Bolívar, but lacked the magnanimity and the intellect which justified, qualified, and restrained Bolívar's ambition. In their relationship, Bolívar had always been the more generous, the more reasonable, possibly also the more afraid of a break.\textsuperscript{100}

Henry Rowan Lemly, another one of Bolívar's important biographers, depicts Páez as "of humble origin and somewhat ignorant, especially in the art of war; but he made up for the latter by an astute cunning and by his dash and reckless bravery."\textsuperscript{101} In evaluating Páez's break with Bolívar and the dissolution of Gran Colombia, Lemly states:\textsuperscript{102}

The conduct of Páez, who had had every opportunity of learning Bolívar's true sentiments, was full of duplicity. While pretending to the government at Bogotá that he would proceed in accordance with its views, he dexterously availed himself of circumstances, with a view to obtaining the first magistracy of an independent state, by destroying the Colombian union.

Guillermo Morón, a Venezuelan historian, states that "Both in 1826 and 1829 it was obvious that Páez wanted to rule, and also that Peña's gift for intrigue was at his service."\textsuperscript{103} However, Morón goes on to explain that "Although Santander and Páez caused the dissolution of Colombia and Páez and his friends made the revolution of 1829-30, the people too wished for separation from

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{100}Ibid., 613.
\item \textsuperscript{101}Lemly, \textit{Bolívar}, 149.  \textsuperscript{102}Ibid., 370.
\item \textsuperscript{103}Morón, \textit{History of Venezuela}, 145.
\end{itemize}
R. B. Cunninghame Graham, who has written the only biography in English of José Antonio Páez, seems to have been completely entranced by his subject. He described Páez in the following terms:

... a personality that endeared itself to everyone ... had those little failings that often make a man more popular than his more admirable qualities. ... Moreover he was generous about money, when he had any; loved dancing, and was approachable and courteous, qualities without which no mortal can be popular either with the Spanish or Spanish Americans.

He further states that the llanero General "was one of those rare men in any country, but rarer still in Spanish America in those days, who put his country's welfare above the triumph of his principals." In describing the political events of 1829, Cunninghame Graham asserts that:

Certainly a few men in history have had a greater chance to seize supreme power than Páez had at this juncture of his life. That he resisted is a tribute to his character, and shows how a man almost completely destitute of primary education, exposed to flattery on every side, and without one true friend on whom he could rely for counsel and advice still kept a level head.

This biographer felt that if Páez had "refused to take up power the country would have fallen into anarchy, for there was no one of sufficient note or character to take his place." 

---

Vicente Lecuna, the greatest authority on Bolívar and an expert on the military tactics of the wars for independence in northern South America, rates General Páez as "master of cavalry tactics." He states that: "The few patriot losses and the numerous losses of their adversaries prove that the confusion and horror introduced in the enemy ranks with a series of instinctive and instantaneous acts by the violence of the unexpected attack, were very natural phenomenons provoked or created exclusively by Páez's fertile genius." Lecuna's admiration for Páez extends to his ability as a leader also, for he proclaims that "Páez, active and vigilant, could not prevent certain omissions and negligence, but he maintained order and discipline in the army, in so far as the llanero habits permitted." The General's personal qualities did not impress Lecuna equally. He refers to Páez's "spirit of pride in wanting to impose his will, and his ignorance." Regarding the llanero chieftain's loyalty to his superior commander, Bolívar, he states that in 1818 Páez "did not care about Bolívar's fate, nor was he interested in rejoining him." In evaluating Páez's autobiography, Lecuna reminds us that there "is a psychological phenomenon which our self esteem imposes on us

109 Lecuna, Crónica Razonada, III, 417.
110 Ibid., II, 284.
111 Ibid., 431.
112 Ibid., 157.
113 Ibid., 188.
to erase certain memories and forge others favorable to our pride."114

After reading all these reflections written about General José Antonio Páez, the question arises as to wherein lies the true nature of his character. It seems to be that of an exceptionally gifted man, both physically and mentally, who lacked the polish and refinement of the emotions which sometimes results from a formal education early in life. Although he did not have the intellect of a Simón Bolívar, he was blessed with a quick and agile mind. Perhaps he was not as aware as the Liberator was of the overall picture and principles involved in an issue, but on the other hand this left his mind free to perceive and evaluate matters at hand often times more clearly than Bolívar did. This appears to be particularly true when it came to the military tactics to adopt in the Apure region. No one, not even Bolívar himself, could compare with Páez in instinctively knowing how to fight the Royalists in this area. It was not only his familiarity with the terrain and his physical prowess that made him supreme here, it was also the unusual strategies he employed—strategies which defined his innate military genius.

Páez's success as the undisputed military leader in the llanos depended greatly also on the control and discipline he exercised over the uncivilized hordes of llaneros. In this instance, Páez's superior physical abilities stood him

114Ibid., 273.
in good stead. Had he not been able to best the llaneros in all of their physical feats, he would not have been able to demand and secure their blind obedience to his orders. The llaneros would follow their Tío, or Uncle, as they affectionately called Páez, into the thickest of any fray. Since they were fanatically devoted to him, the llaneros always fought at their very best when he led.

Páez's determination presents another keynote to his character, for it was also something quite out of the ordinary. This in itself made him a formidable friend or foe, for once he had decided on a course of action, nothing could deter him. He was not given to pondering the results a given action might have such as Bolivar did. His practical, telluric outlook precluded any of the mental anguish experienced by a visionary or dreamer such as the Liberator. Having sprung from the barbaric, uncivilized llanos, Páez was, despite a veneer of civilization, the embodiment of the spirit of the llanos—fierce, wild, and strong.

The question of Páez's loyalty or disloyalty to his superior, Simón Bolívar, gives further insight into his character. There should be no doubt left in anyone's mind that José Antonio Páez greatly respected and acknowledged the Liberator's privileged intelligence and because of this recognized his superior authority. To this extent, he was loyal to Bolívar. He even wrote to him as late as 1829 inviting him to come share his exile with him in
Venezuela. However, once Páez became convinced that the split with Colombia was inevitable, and men such as Dr. Miguel Peña had persuaded him that Venezuela would fall into anarchy without his leadership, his loyalty to Bolívar fell victim to his loyalty to his beloved llanos and Venezuela. After all, Páez's horizon had always been circumscribed by the llanos.

Having quickly learned both the extent of his capabilities and the degree of his shortcomings, General Páez appears to have been alternately arrogant and then humble. This perhaps was the final attribute of his character that prevented him from having the international status of a Simón Bolívar or Francisco Miranda. However, it was one more foible that helped to endear him to the masses of people, and the bulk of them did love him. Obviously nature had further endowed José Antonio Páez with a rare gift— that of an extremely likeable personality. Perhaps people liked Páez because they sensed he liked them. And like them he did, for throughout his long and chequered career, he revealed concern and compassion for the lot of his fellow man. This concern may well be the main key to his character.

In concluding, it seems appropriate to insert the following citation from his autobiography.116

I shall not deny that it is the peoples' fault if demagogues find in them a passion they can easily

115 Páez, Autobiografía, I, 542.  
116 Ibid., 516-17.
seduce, flatter, and convert into harm for society. Because of this, I shall always place among the friends of humanity those who use all their influence to destroy these vulgar preoccupations, leave behind all idea of division, and make all interest homogeneous. For the man of talent, regardless of his origin, color does not grant or take away titles of merit. Color shall always be an accident, as is the greatest or slightest perfection of the configuration of the human body. God has established a more noble inequality which is convenient to know because it is an individual justice and a social stimulus. Appreciate the man because of his soul, because of his capacity, because of his heart, and because of his virtues. The most capable and the most virtuous shall be the most distinguished citizens in a State, regardless of whether they are white, black, or mottled. These have been the principles I have held all my life, and I have professed them with sincerity, publicly as well as privately.
INTRODUCTION

It has become the custom, and I might add the duty, of every man who has figured in his country's political scene, to write an account of the events he has witnessed and of the acts in which he has participated. This will enable a judicious posterity to have the abundance of documents and data necessary to disentangle the historical truth - a truth often obscured by the impassioned and seldom-similar accounts of contemporaneous writers. It is for this reason that today, after the anxieties of a very agitated life, I undertake to open the archive of my memories and register the documents I have managed to save from the ravages of time and revolutionary tempests.

The Hispanic-American revolution, last episode of the great drama that began in North America and had its most interesting period in France, has not yet been properly evaluated as a splendid triumph of the ideas of modern civilization, or as a training for peoples who suddenly trade the smock of the slave for the tunic of the free man. The opinions of historians who have written about the events of such an important era are not in agreement on many major points. Perhaps this is because they did not have access to unedited documents, or because of personal interests and
considerations. Nevertheless, it is necessary to review the works of these historians.

Of prime consideration are the official documents of Colombia, which some scholars have collected and compiled into twenty-two volumes.¹ In these volumes can be found the most authentic data of the events of the revolution.

Another work of merit for this period is that of Don Feliciano Montenegro. An erudite Venezuelan, he dedicated to the youth of his country a book that in a few pages covers all the principle events of the independence movement.² This work is of great value not only because the author witnessed the events he refers to, but because he was a Royalist of high military rank. Montenegro gives valuable information which today can be found only in the impenetrable Spanish archives.

Four years after the publication of Montenegro's first volume, Señor José Manuel Restrepo, Secretary of Foreign Relations in Colombia, published his monumental history.³

¹The author must refer here to the work compiled by Francisco Javier Yafyes and Cristobal Mendoza, Documentos para la Vida Pública del Libertador, 22 vols. (Caracas, 1826-29). Later these documents were incorporated by José Felix Blanco and Ramón Azpurúa, Documentos para la Historia de la Vida Pública del Libertador de Colombia, Perú, y Bolivia, 14 vols. (Caracas, 1875-77).

²Feliciano Montenegro Colón, Geografía General para el Uso de la Juventud de Venezuela, 4 vols. (Caracas, 1823-37).

³Historia de la Revolución de la República de Colombia, 10 vols. (Paris, 1827). This work contains three volumes of important documents, an Atlas with maps of each of the twelve departments of the Republic, and a general map of Colombia.
Subsequently, he wrote a corrected and improved edition.  

The last historian we review is Señor Rafael María Baralt. He clothed with the brilliant dress of a correct and pure style the accounts of those who preceded him in the undertaking.

At this point, I must state that in the sections in which Señores Restrepo and Baralt refer to the events of my life, I have found grave errors. This is particularly true of Restrepo who, permitting himself to be chained in more than one chapter by the spirit of provincialism, is excessively unjust and too partial in his judgments and evaluations.

If the desire to give my country one more document for its history were not sufficient stimulus to make me undertake the task of writing my memoirs, the need to answer some of the charges made by my political adversaries would move me to do so. I thank Providence for prolonging my life sufficiently so that I could do this. It is my intention now to tell all that I know and hold to be certain and true; to correct some historical errors that writers have incurred;

---

4 *Historia de la Revolución de la República de Colombia,* 4 vols. (Besanzón, 1858). Restrepo condensed the ten volumes of the prior work into four volumes and in the *Advertencia* of this edition stated that the prior work had many errors which "deformed" its history completely and had been incurred when he was not present to correct the printing.

5 *Resumen de la Historia de Venezuela desde el descubrimiento hasta el año 1830,* 3 vols. (Paris, 1841). Páez neglected to mention the co-author of this work, Ramón Díaz.
and, without failing to confess to the mistakes I may have
made due to error in judgment, to defend myself from the
attacks which bad faith or the spirit of party politics have engendered against me. I am certain that the hostility shown
by some writers towards me will be readily understood by
those who know the hatreds dividing our political society.
However, since the predominant number of the principles dis­
puted in our political society are not generally known, it
appears necessary to sketch them here.

On declaring political emancipation from the Spanish
government, the colonies were confronted with the grandiose
example of peoples who under the name of the United States
had confederated for the sake of common security, and yet
preserved for each section its sovereignty and particular
laws. The spectacle of the prosperity enjoyed by these
states made some men believe that the same principles which
they saw develop there so successfully could be applied to
us. Yet they believed that the Spanish had left the country
with a serious affliction as a result of their policy of
uniting different colonies founded by different conquista­
doers under the sovereignty of viceroys or captain generals.
As a result, they felt that all that pertained to centraliz­
ing power, even under the most democratic form, was a
vestige of Spanish domination which must be destroyed as
unworthy of a people that had achieved liberty at the cost
of so many sacrifices. Thus, then, centralization and
despotism became synonymous to some people. These doctrines,
expounding the virtues of the dignity of the individual and his freedom as opposed to autocratic regimes, as beautiful as they are seductive, began to diffuse themselves throughout all the peoples of emancipated America. Each city that had participated in the war or could present some historic title aspired to become the capital of a sovereign and independent state. Each individual, too, believed himself duty-bound to use the same mediums with which independence was achieved in combating all doctrines opposed to his.

Respectable men who knew the state of our society, while greatly admiring the generous impulses of the new generation, opposed adopting in the government of their country principles that were producing such excellent results in North America. They realized that, until the public was given a new education, these same principles were impossible to establish in a country where despotism had reigned for a long time and where all the vices of colonial domination remained. Let us listen, then to what Señor Restrepo, the first Secretary of State in Colombia and the first historian of the Republic, has to say:

The author of this history concurred in forming the act of federation and was an enthusiastic supporter of that system. Seduced by the rapid growth of the Republic of the United States and by the complete liberty that its inhabitants enjoy, I had the greatest veneration for its political institutions. Then I believed, as did the leaders of New Granada, that our

6The author footnotes this as follows: "Restrepo, Historia de la Revolución de la República de Colombia, I, 147, note 9." This citation is correct.
provinces were in the same state as those of North America in 1776 when they formed their confederation. However, the lessons of time and the events that I have witnessed, added to my reflections, convinced me rather quickly to the contrary. There was and still is a great difference between the United States, which were founded and grew in the shadow of republican institutions, and provinces that had always depended on a monarchical and despotic government. In the latter, democratic forms were absolutely new. In fact, many of them were directly opposed to the customs, habits and age-old preoccupations of the peoples involved. Generally speaking, in the United States, it was necessary only to change from the appointment of the governor, as done previously by the kings of England, to the election of this official. The constitutio

Sional charters and laws of the old provinces of North America served as the governing instruments for the same areas when they later transformed themselves into republics. In New Granada, to the contrary, it was necessary to change almost everything that existed in order to establish the federal system. The little stability of our nacent states, then, was not to be admired; their laws did not suit the people and were directly opposed to their old attitudes.

The Liberator himself said in his message to the Congress of Angostura: 7

When I admire to the fullest the excellence of the federating constitution of Venezuela, I see all the more the impossibility of applying it to our situation. According to my manner of thinking, it is a miracle that its model in North America has existed with so much prosperity and that it did not fall into confusion at the first appearance of danger or difficulty. Despite this, that country is an example of political virtue and of moral rectitude. Liberty has been its cradle, and it has grown in liberty and maintains itself in pure liberty. I shall add that that country is unique in the history of the human race. And I repeat that it is a miracle that a system as weak and complicated as the federative one, could have existed under the difficult and delicate circumstances under which it has. Nevertheless, regardless of the situation with respect to the government, I must say to the

7 A copy of this document can also be found in Vicente Lecuna (ed.), Proclamas y Discursos del Libertador (Caracas, 1939).
American people that the idea of comparing the situation and nature of two nations as different as the Anglo and Hispanic-American never entered my mind. Would it not be very difficult to apply to Spain the political, civil, and religious code of England? Well, it would be even more difficult to adopt in Venezuela the laws of North America. Does not the spirit of law say that the laws must conform with the peoples that make them, and that it is only by great coincidence that the law of one nation is suitable to another?—that laws should have a relation to the physical state of a country, its climate, the quality of its earth, its location, its size, and the mode of life of its inhabitants? The laws should refer to the degree of liberty that the constitution can endure, to the religion of the people, to their inclinations, to their riches, to their numbers, to their commerce, and to their customs and morality.

In addition to the unsuitability of adopting principles developed in countries that had been conceived in liberty, so to speak, many patriots, knowing that Spain did not desist in her pretensions to reconquer, believed that the new states could be respected only by possessing a strong central force that in case of danger could work without any difficulty against exterior aggressions. There could be nothing hateful nor despotic in this centralization of power, since the head of the government exercised the authority that the people deposited with him for a limited period of time. I confess that these doctrines do not sound as well as those preached by their adversaries. However, in dealing with sacred and vital interests one must not allow himself to be flattered by theories that sound good, but instead he should put into practice truths that produce positive results.

I have belonged to the group that defends the
principles just mentioned. For these I have had to suffer persecutions, banishment, loss of my possessions, and misery. Yet all of this would have been little enough had my adversaries not reached the point that, in order to satisfy their wrath, they attributed to me faults and errors I have not committed. I will not deny that I have made some mistakes. But who has not been deceived in dealing with men, unless God were to concede to him that marvelous grace of perceiving the truth behind the mask which clothes ambition and the desire to prosper at another's expense?

How many times have I pondered the future fortune of America! Crises will continue to arise. What is happening now could have been foreseen, if statesmen had noted how anarchy has desolated our states. The resultant weakness has provoked those unjust aggressions that today are inflamed by hatreds which time has begun to extinguish and that, as was to be expected, have produced no other results except to convince Spanish America that only union and material power make countries strong and respected.

While llanos, pampas, and sabanas exist to invite men

---

8Undoubtedly, Páez is referring in "what is happening now" to the war between Spain and the Quadruple Alliance—Perú, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Chile. This war resulted in the bombardment of Callao and Valparaíso by the Spanish. The conflict, which officially began in January, 1866, represented a futile attempt by Spain to regain part of her lost empire.
to enjoy liberty, I do not believe that Spain will again
conquer even a span of land that it possessed before. But
it will take many years of work for South America to become
what she seems destined to be. Internal discords will con-
tinue as long as the causes of anarchy are in force, and
sooner or later the question of boundaries and the right of
navigation on the great rivers will cause new difficulties
to surge. Will all of these problems promote the establish-
ment in South America of separate and distinct nations, all
jealous of one another, as has occurred in Europe? I have
faith in the future. Still, unless our country adopts a
program of education for all classes of society, I do not
see any way for us to safely enter the path of reform which
the progress of modern ideas demands.

I will not fail in this prologue to expound a desire
I have cherished for a long time, but which seems impossible
to realize as long as Spain has colonies in America.9 I
would like to see not only the fraternal union of the South
American countries, but also the union of all of these with
their old mother country. I would still nourish such
alluring hopes if the events presently verifying themselves
would not have come to destroy them.10 If Spain would

9At the time that Páez wrote this introduction, in
1867, Spain still held Cuba and Puerto Rico as colonial
possessions.

10Again Páez refers to the war between Spain and the
Quadruple Alliance.
recognize the independence of her old colonies, then both parties could put aside the hatreds inflamed by war and exist united by the powerful bonds of a common origin. Thus we would know each other better and would present to the world the grandiose spectacle of more than forty million people who, recognizing similarity of origin and language, and having the same vices and virtues, would unite always in order to stimulate each other in any cultural idea. The present generation would forget the offenses of their parents, and brothers of both hemispheres could maintain a perpetual fraternal commerce, generously exchanging their land produce and nobly competing in their literary triumphs. It is evident to me that liberal men of both hemispheres have been animated by these same desires. It is necessary to confess, however, that the lack of this fraternity must be attributed solely to the government of unfortunate Spain. Spain's animosity, which has not and cannot cause us any harm, has served only to unite the Americans in a common cause.

There are men that still preach the doctrine of races in America, and who want to begin a crusade of the peoples they call Latins against what they term the ambitious pretentions of the Anglo-Saxon race. That doctrine, which is nothing more than a European plan of aggression against the United States, can only find followers among those who are not familiar with the condition of Washington's republic and that of the Hispanic-American countries. Furthermore, it is a fact belied by even the slightest observation of
this continent, for here the fusion of all races is constantly taking place—a result of modern progress and the principle of universal fraternity.

I shall end this introduction recommending earnestly to my countrymen to have courage and arms only for a foreign war and to work with faith and devotion for the future of our country. For our country needs only peace and order for the development of all the varied aspects of prosperity. The latter has not been given the proper attention due to the dissensions and anarchy that have always made desolate countries so favored by the Supreme Being.

JOSÉ ANTONIO PÁEZ.

New York, April 19, 1867.
CHAPTER I


1790-1809

I was born June 13, 1790, in a modest little house on the shores of the Curpa stream, near the town of Acarigua in the province of Barinas, Venezuela. I was the next to the youngest of the children of Juan Victoria Páez and María Violante Herrera. Of their eight sons, I am the only one living today. My parents were very poor, for my father was employed by the colonial government in the department of the tobacco monopoly. This department was established in the city of Guanare. My father, therefore, had to reside in Guanare, and consequently leave my wonderful mother alone frequently—my mother who for different reasons never had a settled abode with her children.

I was eight years old when my mother sent me to Señora Gregoria Díaz's school, located in the town of Guama. There I learned the first rudiments of a very limited education. Since there was always an interest in preventing education from being diffused in the colonies, there were no schools under the Spanish government in Venezuela, except in the principal towns. The reader can imagine what that school at
Guama was like if he pictures a reduced populace, separated from the chief centers, concerned chiefly in providing for the material necessities of life. The reader must picture also a teacher, such as Señora Díaz, who opened up a school primarily as a means of earning a living. This teacher was barely able to teach reading forced us to memorize Christian doctrine by means of blows; and at best, taught penmanship according to the method of Professor Palomares. I was taken from this school by my brother-in-law, Bernardo Fernández, who then employed me in his dry-goods store. There he taught me to retail goods, but only after occupying my morning and afternoon hours with the planting of cacao. I remained with my brother-in-law until a relative of ours, Domingo Páez, took me and my brother, José de los Santos, to San Felipe. There he employed us in one of his many businesses.

My mother, who then lived in Guama, called me home in 1807. In June of that year, she commissioned me to carry certain family papers to a lawyer who lived in Patio Grande, a town in the present province of Barquisimeto. I was also to take a moderate sum of money. I was seventeen years old then, and I was honored by this commission, especially because I was provided with a good mule, an old sword, a pair of bronze pistols, and two hundred pesos destined for my personal use. I was accompanied by a peon, who on his return was to bring several things for the family.

The trip to Patio Grande was uneventful. However,
the return trip was quite different. Completely pleased with the idea that I was a trusted young man with quite a sum of money, I was anxious to show off. I took advantage of the first opportunity to do so. On passing through the town of Yaritagua, I went into a clothing store on the pretext of buying something. When I started to pay, I pulled out all the money I had and put it on the counter. I did not notice the persons present, except to flatter myself with the thought that they were witnesses to the fact that I was a man of means and weapons.

The spectators must have recognized quickly the thoughtlessness of youth, and perhaps planned immediately to rob me. I thought about them no longer, however, and continued the trip. I entered the narrow road that crosses the Mayurupi mountain, happy to be carrying arms and at the thought of using them. I removed the one loaded pistol from the saddle to kill a parrot that was perched up on a branch. But at that very moment it occurred to me that it was already late, that I had to journey an entire night in order to get home, and that my principal defense rested with the loaded pistol.

I had barely continued my journey when the occasion arose to show the correctness of my reasoning. A tall man appeared a few paces from the left side of the road. He was followed by three others who darted to grab my mule by the bridle. Immediately I jumped to the ground on the right side, pistol in hand. Young, without having had any
experiences in dangerous circumstances, my difficulty at that moment could not have been greater. But, I was animated by an extraordinary recklessness on seeing the treachery of my aggressors. I resolved to give them my life only at a high price. The one who seemed to be the chief of the highwaymen advanced toward me with eyes fixed on the pistol aimed at him. I retreated as he advanced. He had a machete in one hand and a club in the other. Perhaps he thought I would not dare shoot him, for he disregarded my warnings to stop. Perhaps he thought it would be as easy to take me as it had been to take my mule. He kept advancing towards me, and I kept retreating. When we were about twenty yards from his companions, he threw himself on me and lunged furiously with the machete. Without hesitating, I fired—still without intent to kill. Up to that point, I was satisfied with wounding him in the leg. However, in order to avoid the bullet, he pulled back violently and got it in the groin. I remained mute and motionless for an instant. Believing that the shot had gone haywire, and that that horrible man would come to deal with me later, I unsheathed my sword. When I started to run him through, I stopped, for I saw him fall to the ground and lay motionless. Blind with anger and thinking only of saving my life, I ran then with naked sword toward the other thieves; however, they did not wait for me. They fled when they saw themselves without a leader and pursued by someone who had been converted from an unwary and easily-frightened youth into a determined pursuer of his aggressors.
I was really very lucky, for perhaps on that spot I might have paid with my life for the temerity of sustaining such an uneven struggle. Recognizing this and without losing any time, I quickly mounted my mule which the thieves had abandoned in the mountain. On passing by the cadaver of the highwayman, I threw the pistol on him and hastily continued my journey. It was only then that I noticed that the pistol, which had exploded in my hands when I fired it, had hurt my hand.

Night fell an hour after this event. It was accompanied by thundering and a heavy rain, so dark and gloomy, that I had to stop many times to find the road. My position was extremely cumbersome. Surrounded everywhere by torrents that noisily descended on the ground, it seemed that everything conspired to augment my anxieties and fears. This was so even though it had occurred to me that what X had done was an act justified by divine and human laws.

At four in the morning I arrived home. Though I was very worried, I told only one of my sisters what had occurred. I was fairly calm there for a few days, until rumors began to spread that I had been the hero of the episode in the forest. Then, without consulting anyone, and induced only by a childish fear, I resolved to hide. Heading toward Barinas, I went as far as the shores of the Apure. There, desiring to earn an honest living, I found employment in the peon class, earning three pesos a month in the hato de la Calzada, belonging to Don Manuel Pulido.
I must describe now an hato of that period, for the ones found today on those same sites differ as greatly from the ones I knew in my youth as civilization differs from barbarianism. Progress has introduced a thousand reforms and improvements in these farms. Yet, it is important to note that the character of the inhabitants has not been altered completely. I will not stop, however, to copy what the Venezuelan [Rafael Maria] Baralt and the Granadine [José N.] Samper have written with such veracity and exactness.¹ Instead, I shall proceed to talk about the hatos as I knew them.

The hatos were then, as they still are in some respects, very rustic cabins with roofs of dried palm leaves. Around them, grass grew at will, and the only paths leading to them were those formed by the cattle tracks. Skulls of horses and heads of alligators constituted the only furnishings of the solitary habitations. These served as chairs for the llanero when he returned home exhausted from riding an ornery colt. The skins of the cattle heads or dried hides served as the only bed on which to stretch his weary body after having eaten his one meal at 7:00 P.M. Happy was he who had a hammock on which to restore his lost vigor!

¹Páez refers here to the descriptions of the llaneros written by Baralt and Díaz, Resumen de la Historia, I, 349; and José M. Samper, Ensayo sobre Las Revoluciones Políticas y la Condición Social de las Repúblicas Colombianas (Paris, 1861), 188.
The llanero I knew would spend the night in one litter or another, lulled frequently by the monotonous sound of rain on the roof or the chirping of crickets, frogs, or other insects. The rooster, who slept in the same room with him, was his clock; the dog, his sentinel. He would get up at three in the morning, while it was still raining, and saddle his horse. At this time he would have already surmounted the first obstacle of the day. This was to stumble barefoot over the pyramids of cattle heads which surrounded his home to the small cluster of grass where he had tied his horse.

His first task was to round up the cattle and drive them to the camping area. This operation was known as the rodeo if it included both cows and horses. If only horses were included, it was called the junta. "Juntas," the llaneros would exclaim later when told of those formed to defend the sovereignty of Spain, "We know of no juntas here except those we form with animals!"

After camp was made, the yearling calves were separated and taken to be branded. Then the cows with calves were rounded up, the bulls castrated, and the cattle to be sold set aside. If the cow or horse set aside tried to escape, the llanero followed it, lassoed it, or pulled it down by the tail if necessary.

Just before nightfall, the llaneros would all return to their hatos to lock up the cattle. Then they would kill a cow, each taking his piece of meat and roasting it over an
open fire. They had neither salt to season it with, nor bread to aid in its digestion. The only luxury of the meal consisted of tipping the *tapara*, a kind of gourd that kept water cool. Then the *llanero* might say with the almost resigned despair of the powerless:

"El pobre con agua justa,
Y el rico con lo que gusta."

To pass the time away after his sparse meal, the *llanero* would sometimes begin to sing. It would be one of those melancholy songs that are now proverbial as the lamenting voices of the desert. If he had been fortunate enough to go to Mass that Sunday at a nearby town and been able to persuade a troubadour to return with him, he would have accompaniment for his song. At other times, he would amuse himself by combing his horse's hair and making twisted halters.

Such was the life of the *llaneros*. Since cities were beyond their horizon, they thought of them as inaccessible. They never heard the sound of the bell that recalls religious obligations, and they lived and died as men who had no fate other than to struggle with the elements and beasts. They limited their ambition to one day becoming the foreman of the place where they served as a peon.

With what ease this description is written in a furnished room next to a pleasant fire! But how different...

---

2This refrain says in essence: "The poor with just (holy) water, and the rich with whatever he desires."
It was to experience it! The struggle of man with wild beasts, for horses and savage bulls are wild beasts, is an unceasing struggle in which life survives as if by miracle. It is a struggle that tests bodily strength, requires boundless moral resistance, and much stoicism, or else habits acquired since childhood. Consider how difficult this struggle must have been for me. I had not been born to endure it; and furthermore, I looked on it as the punishment of my self-imposed exile. Imagine how difficult the apprenticeship in such a life was, for this is a life that only a robust man can withstand—a man accustomed from early youth to exercises requiring great physical strength and good health. This was the gymnasium where I acquired the athletic robustness that later served me in good stead many times, and which even today many men still in the vigor and strength of their youth envy me. My body, by force of blows, became like iron. My soul, with the adversities of the early years, acquired that disposition that even a most painstaking education could hardly have given it.

But let me return now to Don Pulido's hato de la Calzada and my first employment there. It was my luck to have as foreman a tall, taciturn Negro whose grave countenance was made more venerable by a thick, bristly beard. His name was Manuel or, as all of us called him, Manuelote. He was Don Pulido's slave and his overseer. Since the house had burned down and the owner consequently did not visit the farm at the time, the hato was at the disposal of this grim
overseer. The suspicions that some peons had aroused in Manuelote that I, under the pretext of finding employment, had come to spy on him, made him treat me very harshly. He always assigned me the hardest tasks, such as the taming of wild horses.

The task of taming wild horses was one with which Manuelote delighted in initiating any novice placed under his orders. His imperious voice would almost immediately order the poor peon to ride an unbridled horse, a horse that had never even felt the weight of a load on its back. This order brooked no objection, excuse, or hesitation. The peon would have to leap on a savage colt and grab its rough, thick mane. When barely mounted, the wild beast would begin to jump and arch its back, or snap furiously at the rider, thus placing the rider's legs in grave danger. The beast either would continue to try to unload the unaccustomed cargo, which was unbearable for him, or spouting what seemed to be fire through his eyes and nose, dart furiously in search of his companions in the plains, as if to entreat their aid against the enemy oppressing its flanks. By now the poor rider feels as if a hurricane with all its unbridled fury is carrying him and nearly dragging him on the surface of the land—the land, which although he imagines but a short distance from his feet, is still out of reach, for it, too, flees with the speed of lightning. The wind buzzes in his ears as if it were penetrating the cavaties of a deep cavern with full force. The unfortunate individual hardly dares to
breathe. And if he does keep his frightened eyes open, it is only to see if he can find assistance somewhere, or to convince himself that the danger is not as great as he pictures it.

The land, which to the peaceful spectator seems very level, appears at each step to be frightful chasms into which rider and beast will certainly hurl themselves. No aid, except that which Heaven may offer, can be expected; consequently, the rider commands himself with all fervor to the Virgen del Carmen, whose scapulary he wears around his neck. At each moment he awaits his last second. Finally, the anguish ceases, for the horse surrenders out of pure tiredness, and little by little abandons the impetuous escape that wears out his strength. The next time the novice llanero performs this act, he is less frightened. Finally, there comes a time when there is no greater pleasure for him than to tame the animal that before had made him experience inexplicable terrors.

Another duty that Manuelote assigned to me and that I hated the most because of the heat and the vigilance it required, was to pasture the cattle during the day. At night he ordered me to watch the horses in case they got frightened and tried to run away. He also gave me the job of chopping wood for the fences. Finally, he ordered me to get out in the river with the horses, before I had learned to swim, in order to serve as their guide in crossing from one shore to another. I remember that one day, on reaching a river, he
shouted at me: "Get in the water and guide the cattle."

Because I hesitated, and thus revealed I did not know how to swim, he told me in an angry tone: "I am not asking you whether you know how to swim; I order you to get in the river and guide the cattle."

I suffered very much while being treated like this. My hands cracked open as a result of the great efforts I made to hold the horses by the horsehair halters used to tame them. Forced to struggle with those wild animals, either bareback or on a wooden saddle with raw leather straps, my thighs were hurt so, that many times they were covered with abrasions that bled. Even worms came out of my wounds, but this was not rare in those deserts and in that savage life. Similar embryos were produced by the multitude of flies abounding there in the rainy season.

After finishing the day's work, Manuelote would lie down on his hammock and say: "Catire Páez, bring a camazo with water and wash my feet."³ Later, he would order me to swing him until he fell asleep. He distinguished me with the name of Catire, and chose me above all the other peons to carry out the most difficult and dangerous tasks that had to be performed on the farm.

Many years later, when I took Manuelote prisoner in the Battle of Mata de la Miel, I treated him with the greatest kindness, even to the point of making him sit at my

³Catire, blond; camazo, jug.
table. One day when I revealed the desire to serve him in some way, he begged me as sole favor to give him safe conduct to go back to his home. I accommodated him. Later, grateful for the good treatment he had received, he joined my army. Then, the other llaneros in my presence were wont to say to one another with certain malice: "Catire Páez, bring a camazo with water and wash my feet." Manuelote, bothered with those allusions to other times, would answer them: "I know you all say that to annoy me; but you have such a strong leader, and the nation such a good fighter, because I made a man of Páez."

After living two years in the Calzada farm, I went with Manuelote to the farm at Paguey, also belonging to Don Pulido. There I was to help capture and brand cattle that were to be sold. I had the good fortune then to meet Pulido, who elevated me from the peon status. He employed me to handle the sale of his cattle and, since my family had recommended me to him, offered me his protection by keeping me at his side. For almost a year I carried out the charge which he gave me. Under his guidance I learned the business and later retired to pursue this business on my own. After some time had passed, Pulido had to collect a certain sum of money through the sale of cattle. He put me in charge of this business. Gratefully and with pleasure I carried out his charge. When I finished it, I began again to tend to my own business affairs.

There are times in one's life which, although appearing
insignificant, leave indelible memories. It seems that Providence takes pleasure in giving man a certain rest before making him a participant of great events. She had selected me as one of her tools to contribute to the liberation of my country from Spanish tyranny. Before hurling me into the whirlwind of battles, fate wanted me to forget the life I had spent as a peon and taste the sweetness of a period calmed and ennobled by the pleasure of earning a living leisurely. During this time, I acquired some worldly goods. My work provided me with sufficient means to live independently. I felt satisfied and happy, and I desired nothing else for myself. But, the hour of redemption was approaching, and Venezuela was preparing to conquer her freedom!
CHAPTER II


The Republic of Venezuela, previously a Captaincy General of the same name, comprises a vast expanse of territory that lies between New Granada, which forms its Western boundary; the Atlantic, which bathes its Northern shores; British Guiana, which borders it on the East; and the Tapirapecu and Pacaraima Mountains, which separate it from the empire of Brazil. She has excellent ports to export the riches that are to be found in the interior of the territory. Above all, she has the beautiful Gulf of Maracaibo, which the first visitors took to be a sea. The topography of the land presents great problems of communication between the interior and the coast. In order to surmount this difficulty in the llanos, Providence gave us majestic rivers such as the Orinoco. It flows between rich tropical plains and is navigable for ocean-going vessels as far as the city of Angostura and even further for smaller ships. This river and others fertilize the areas around their shores. Here tropical fruits may be grown in abundance. In addition,
great numbers of cattle, which were and still are one of the principal sources of the country's riches, pasture in these plains.

Before Independence, according to Humboldt's calculations, the Captaincy General of Venezuela had 800,000 inhabitants.¹ A great part of this population disappeared during the revolt against Spanish tyranny, for Venezuela suffered more casualties during the war which it sustained for thirteen years than the other colonies that rebelled. Furthermore, fears that Spain would attempt to conquer the territory anew prevented the flow of European immigration to the new republics. Thus in 1822, the year in which Colombia was divided into seven departments and thirty-two provinces, the total population of this state was 2,644,600.²

¹Páez refers here to Alexander von Humboldt, the distinguished German scientist who first visited Venezuela in July of 1801. In collaboration with Aimé Bonpland, a French scientist, he wrote Relation Historique du Voyage aux Regions Equinociales du Nouveau Continent, 1799-1804 (Paris, 1814-33). The Venezuelan Ministerio de Educación Nacional authorized Don Lisandro Alvarado to translate this work. It was published in five volumes under the title Viaje a las Regiones Equinocciales del Nuevo Continente, 1799-1804 (Caracas, 1940). In the second volume of this translated work, 294-95, Humboldt states that the Capitanía general de Caracas o de provincias de Venezuela had close to a million inhabitants in 1801. In 1823, however, he lists the population of Venezuela as 785,000. Ibid., V, 92.

²The Republic of Colombia had been created in December of 1819 at the Congress of Angostura. It included the former Captaincy General of Venezuela and the former Viceroyalty of New Granada. The country was divided then into three main departments, former main colonial divisions: Venezuela, with its capital at Caracas; Quito (modern Ecuador), with Quito as its capital; and Cundinamarca (modern Colombia), with its capital at Bogotá. In May of 1821 the fundamental
In the new form of government, Caracas was selected to be the capital of the department of Venezuela, the city where the Captain General had resided previously. Many foreigners came to Caracas then, particularly the English and French. Enamored of the nation's riches, they established their residences and told their fellow countrymen about the resources they found. Among the prominent persons we had among us then was the celebrated Joseph Lancaster, who came to diffuse the benefits of his system of education.\(^3\) Despite the importance and popularity of Caracas and the fact that it is located only a few miles from the port of La Guayra, access to this capital was not easy at this time

\[^{3}\] Joseph Lancaster, who had been born in London in 1778 and had developed a successful system of elementary education for the children of the poor, came to Caracas, Venezuela about 1811 with the express purpose of establishing his system for education. Although the Lancasterian system demanded very little in the way of equipment and supplies, it did require "Monitors" to assist the master in teaching large numbers. There were few people in Venezuela at this time capable of or willing to serve as monitors, and to this fact "may be attributed the evanescent influence of the Lancasterian schools of Hispanic America." Webster E. Browning, "Joseph Lancaster, James Thomson, and the Lancasterian System of Mutual Instruction, with Special Reference to Hispanic America," Hispanic American Historical Review, IV (Baltimore, February, 1921), 60.
because of the mountains. But today there is a regular highway leading to the city which was built during my administration.

Another important city in the department was Puerto Cabello. Serving as Valencia's port, it was destined to be one of the leading market places of the country because of its excellent bay which harbors all kinds of ships.

Angostura, heroic Angostura, eighty-three leagues from the sea, can ship all the riches from the Guayana provinces on the Orinoco River. She was and still is the capital of this province under the name of Ciudad Bolívar. The Apure, swollen by the waters of other navigable rivers, brings to the Orinoco all the riches of the llanos of the Barinas Province and all that is sent by the cities of Guanare, Araure, San Carlos, San Fernando de Apure, and the province of Casanare.

At this point it is easy to observe the need and importance of establishing good communications between ports and the interior, of opening good roads where there are none, and of endeavoring to make our rivers the best means for the defense and assistance of the coastal regions. But even all these advantages will be of no avail if we do not attempt to get all possible profit from the agricultural wealth that the interior of our privileged territory possesses. We must introduce into our country all the industrial and artistic improvements that are producing such good results in states less favored by nature.
Let us pause for a moment here and discuss education in the department of Venezuela. In the period preceding the Revolution, it was limited to that offered by the colleges and universities in a plan of studies formulated by the government of the mother country. Naturally, Spain and her representatives were very careful to limit the books that entered the colonies to those that aimed at inspiring in the youth of the territory the respect for all authority that had been venerated through the ages. Before this authority, they were to be humble and never to examine or discuss anything that men had elevated to the stature of dogma. Despite this, Don Antonio Narino translated Rousseau's *Social Contract.* This was a crime for which he

---

4Higher education during this period was provided mainly by Chairs of Grammar, one of which was founded as early as 1593 in Caracas by Philip II and another in 1608 by Bishop Alciaga. These chairs existed from then on in Caracas and possibly in other towns. The education consisted of Latin, rhetoric, arithmetic, history, geography, divinity, language, and literature. This type of secondary education was also given in church schools in the larger towns. In the eighteenth century schools were organized using textbooks that were current in Madrid. In 1673 the Seminary of Santa Rosas was officially opened by Bishop González de Acuña, but it was not until 1721 that it secured permission from the King to become a University. With the Pope's blessing in 1722, the University of Caracas became Royal and Pontifical. Morón, *History of Venezuela,* 81-83.

5Don Antonio Narino, born to a noble family in Santa Fé in 1765, was treasurer of tithes, a very remunerative office within the Spanish hierarchy. In 1794, he became so enamored of *A History of the Constitutional Assembly of France,* that he translated and printed that portion relating to the Declaration of the Rights of Man. This established him as the Precursor of the revolution. For this, also, he was tried by the audiencia and sentenced in 1795 to ten years imprisonment in Africa and perpetual exile from
was locked up in the dungeon of Cartagena and later sent to Spain. All rigorous measures were to no avail, for enlightenment began to spread. Just how much progress was made, even in the most difficult branches of administration and diplomacy, can be seen in all documents published after independence. New universities and colleges were established and supported by a portion of the ecclesiastical wealth. Maps, pictures, and scientific apparatus were introduced. Finally, many schools following the Bell and Lancaster plan could be counted in Colombia, along with several colleges and universities.

There are many still alive today who witnessed the establishment of the education system founded in Venezuela by Señor Feliciano Montenegro. Don Montenegro also gave our country a wonderful treatise on geography which is still consulted as a source of valuable data. During my presidency I always tried to give my support and attention to the intellectual progress of youth. For this reason I established mathematics classes from which have emerged men who are

America. Enroute to the African prison, Nariño managed to escape at Cádiz. He subsequently went to Paris, then London. In 1797, using several disguises, he returned to his native land and presented himself to the Viceroy. He was arrested, and in 1803, while still a prisoner, was sent to a house in the country to recuperate from an illness. The Spanish revolution of 1810 led to his liberation, and when the independence movement started in South America, he was one of its first advocates. In 1822, he became Vice-President of Colombia. He died in Leiva in 1823. Henao and Arrubla, History of Colombia, 180-84.
honoring our country today. I encouraged Señor [Rafael María] Baralt to give the world his excellent history, a classic work that Spain does not fail to place among the best works written in her language.

About 1823, naval schools of both a practical and scientific nature were established in Cartagena and Guayaquil. These were the principal naval stations in Colombia. By then the Republic could rely on a respectable armada capable of antagonizing the Spanish even in the waters surrounding its possessions in the Antilles.

Countries, such as Venezuela, possessing long coastal regions that are within easy access even for ocean-going vessels and into which great navigable rivers empty, will always be exposed to an easy invasion from any naval power. This is true unless large sums of money are spent to completely defend the coastal areas. Venezuela is not rich enough to defray the enormous expenses required by modern artillery to protect its extensive shores. But then no European nor American nation is rich enough to maintain such a long line of well-guarded and mounted fortifications. Only a powerful squadron could prevent the disembarking of an aggressive power.

There are other means of defending our territory from an enemy invasion. It is a very singular coincidence that where Providence has led peoples of the Spanish race to live in hot climates, it has also placed them in areas where
topografic accidents help immeasurably to defend their nationalities. During the time of Spanish domination, forts were constructed in some ports to push back the attacks of the filibusters or buccaneers that would risk penetrating their ships even as far as the heart of the bays of populous cities. When these fears were ended, those forts were maintained in order to enforce maritime ordinances and also to threaten the people in case of armed insurrection. But, these forts could not protect all the shores effectively when they were located great distances from one another. All these forts fell successively to the patriots, and with them all the tools of war that the Spanish had in them for safe-keeping.

After our independence was assured, I was always of the opinion that those fortified ports only occasioned useless expenses, for it was necessary to maintain strong garrisons in them. Above all, I considered them harmful in cases of insurrection against the established government. If the forts did not have a strong garrison, there was the risk that in a moment of surprise a mutinous crowd, armed only with sticks and stones, could easily take possession and gain strength, by using the government supplies stored there.

After putting up all possible resistance on the coast, there are three lines of defense left to us against an invader. We can retire to the narrow mountain passages where the European cannot take a step without struggling against
great obstacles. Or we can go to the jungles where each man familiar with the terrain is worth many of his foreign adversaries. It would be advantageous to take howitzers weighing nine and twelve arrobas\(^6\) to these points transporting them on mules.

If we are forced to abandon this first line, we can go to our plains, which are traversed by copious rivers and channels that are very difficult to ford. These are inhabited by dangerous animals that terrify the foreigner who is unaccustomed to seeing them and struggling with them in mid-stream as the llanero is. This second line of defense is the theater where the cavalry will play an important part. The horses the enemy might have brought from his homeland will be worthless when pitted against our cavalry. That is, of course, unless our horses have been rendered completely useless in the ravines forming our first line of defense.

The third line of defense would be the immense uninhabited territory that comprises a great part of the Republic. This area is crossed by great rivers and is covered by impenetrable jungles. If all else were lost, the Venezuelan can come forth from here to rout the enemy—an enemy greatly weakened already by the attacks of our first two lines. But it is almost impossible for the enemy to reach this point. However, if he were to attain it, he would then need an

\(^6\)One arroba is equivalent to approximately twenty-five pounds.
extensive line of troops to cover his communications and to prevent his retreat from being cut off, and from being com­pletely routed by inferior numbers.

The climate is another one of the elements we rely on in case of a foreign invasion, for it is an American patriot who will always help its children against the European aggressor. Add to this the inconveniences of our roads, impassable during the rainy season; the insects; and even the fruits which, though a palatable gift of the natives, are poison to the foreigner seeking refreshment and nourishment from them. Relying on all these factors, there is no need ever to risk a field battle. The need, instead, is to force the enemy to march time and again, never giving him a place to rest. This will reduce his numbers, tire him, and get him in a lethargic state.

Our country is thus unconquerable. But please do not believe that because of this I do not approve of being aware of the contingencies of war in peacetime. I believe that good armories should be built in different places to store our tools of war safely rather than depositing these in the coastal forts. For example, in Valencia Lake there is a small island called El Burro, possessing luxuriant wood­lands and good pastures and which belonged formerly to the Marqués del Toro. It is the most suitable place to

7The Marqués del Toro was Francisco Rodríguez del Toro. He tried to suppress the insurrections in Coro and Valencia in 1808 and failed in both instances. Lecuna, Crónica Razonada, I, xvi-xvii.
establish a good armory and a military school. Here the young cadets could find recreation, in addition to learning and practice.

After these pages are written, the experience of what is happening now in the Pacific should serve as a lesson to the republics on the Atlantic coast. It should make them see the need for fortifying their most important ports if they do not want the appearance of one lone enemy ship on their coast to place them in difficult straits. They should also try to train good sailors, even in foreign schools if necessary, in order not to have to rely on foreigners when it becomes necessary to form a squadron.

I have wanted to delve into all these considerations at this point to give an idea of the state of our country and of the good things that Independence has produced. How much my country could still profit if her sons would put aside the hatreds and grudges that divide opinions, and decide to reap benefits from the many gifts with which Heaven has blessed this interesting section of the American Continent!

No one is unaware of the fact that the first political movements of the South Americans were in the beginning expressions of loyalty and sympathy toward the mother country at a time when her King was a prisoner on foreign soil and her

---

8Páez refers again to the War of the Quadruple Alliance [Chile, Perú, Ecuador, Bolivia] vs. Spain.
GENERAL JOSÉ ANTONIO PÁEZ
Gloria de Acarigua, Jefe incomparable de los inditos Llaneros de Venezuela a quienes llevó siempre a la victoria en todas sus batallas.
The Glory of Acarigua, incomparable Chief of the famous Llaneros of Venezuela, whom he led to victory in all his battles.
throne occupied by an intruder supported by French bayo-
nets.9 While in Spain prominent men and distinguished
generals applauded the fall of the Bourbons and the rise of
a new dynasty, and while the Spanish lieutenants in America
accepted in a pleased and submissive manner the new order of
things, the American people, full of indignation, refused to
abandon the cause of him whom they felt was their legitimate
monarch. The juntas formed in various provinces of the
Peninsula sent their representatives to the colonies so that
the latter would recognize them as the supreme ruling
authority of Spain during the absence of the monarch. The
colonies, not knowing which of the representatives were
legitimate and afraid of falling into the misgovernment and
anarchy that prevailed in Spain, believed themselves within

9This alludes to the events that had occurred in Spain
in 1808 when Napoleon Bonaparte, Emperor of France, under
the pretext of stimulating the war with Portugal, asked and
secured permission from the weak Charles IV to send troops
across Spain in return for certain concessions wanted by
Manuel Godoy, Charles IV's favorite. The Spanish people
realized the threat posed to their national independence by
the presence of French troops: so they rose against Godoy,
whom they considered Napoleon's agent. Charles IV speedily
resigned then in favor of his son, Ferdinand VII. When
Charles changed his mind subsequently about his abdication,
Ferdinand appealed to Napoleon. Both monarchs then sped to
Bayonne, France for an interview with Napoleon and settle-
ment of their claims. Napoleon imprisoned them both there
and placed his brother, Joseph, on the Spanish throne. The
colonists in America followed the example set by the
Spaniards in the peninsula and formed juntas declaring
loyalty to Ferdinand VII, not Charles IV. Baralt and Díaz,
Resumen de la Historia, I, 16-18. Henao and Arrubla, History
of Colombia, 189-90.
their rights to create other juntas and assemblies until the Spanish monarch was returned to the throne from which he had been wrested so violently. The intruder King, whose brother had placed him on the throne of San Fernando, also sent his emissaries to America to demand colonial submission to His authority.10

With the legitimate King a prisoner, a civil war in progress, and disagreements even among the provinces loyal to the King, there could not have been a more opportune time for Americans to shake off the yoke of the mother country. However, the sentiment of loyalty to their monarch was still considered one of their most sacred duties. In July of 1808 when a French ship arrived on the coast of Venezuela with orders from King Joseph, the indignation of the people of Caracas was such that the captain of the ship, afraid of being attacked, thought it prudent to raise anchor and leave.11

10 The reference here is once again to Joseph Bonaparte whom Napoleon had placed on the Spanish throne. In July of 1808 he sent Lt. Paul de Lamanon to inform the authorities in Caracas of the events in Spain and to urge the Spanish Captain General Juan de Casas to recognize Joseph as King of Spain. He failed in his mission and was escorted back to the port of La Guaira. There he reembarked only to be captured by the British frigate Acasta, Captain Philip Beaver. Morón, History of Venezuela, 97.

Let us see how this event is described by Captain [Philip] Beaver, officer in the English navy, who brought the news of the happenings at Bayonne to Venezuela.\textsuperscript{12}

On entering the city, I observed a great agitation among the people, an agitation such as is wont to precede or follow popular mutinies. When I entered the big inn of the city, I found myself surrounded by all classes of people. I discovered then that the French Captain that came yesterday had brought news of all that had transpired favorably for the French in Spain, that he had announced the ascendancy of Joseph Bonaparte to the Spanish throne, and that he had also brought orders from the French Emperor.

The city armed itself immediately. Ten thousands of her inhabitants surrounded the palace of the Captain General and asked that Fernando VII be proclaimed king. The Captain General promised to do this the following day. But the people were still unsatisfied; so that very afternoon by means of heralds they proclaimed him King throughout the city with the proper ceremonies and placed his picture between the lights in the City Hall gallery.

The French were publicly insulted in a cafe and forced to leave. In fact, the French Captain had to leave Caracas secretly that very night at 8:00 p.m. escorted by a detachment of troops. He barely managed to escape with his life, for about 10:00 p.m. the mob demanded that the Governor deliver the Frenchman to them.\textsuperscript{13} When they discovered that he had left, three

\textsuperscript{12}The British frigate \textit{Acasta} had arrived in La Guaira in July also. Its captain, Philip Beaver, had been commanded by Vice-Admiral Alexander Cochrane, commander of the British Leeward Islands squadron, to inform the people of Caracas and Cumaná that the Spanish people on the peninsula had risen against the French. He was to inform them also that the French government in Spain was illegitimate, that a governmental junta had been set up in Seville, and that England was now Spain's ally against France, their common enemy. Captain General Casas received the English commissioner rather coolly, for he was more sympathetic to the French. \textit{Ibid}.

\textsuperscript{13}By Governor in this instance, Captain Beaver refers to the Captain General, Juan de Casas. Andres Bello, who served as interpreter for Lamanon and later was secretary
hundred men began to search for him in order to kill him.

Despite the fact that the Governor received me coolly, the most respectable inhabitants of the city surrounded me and acclaimed me their liberator. They read the news that I had brought from Cadiz with great interest and shouted out their gratitude toward England.

At 5:00 p.m., when I returned to the Governor's palace, I asked him to deliver the French schooner or at least to let me capture it in the bay. He refused both demands and told me that he had issued orders for its immediate departure. I told him that I had already taken measures to capture it if it left port, and that if it were not controlled by Spaniards on my return to La Guayra, I would seize it. He responded that he would order the Commandant at the square to fire on my ship if I attempted such a thing. I replied then that he would be responsible for the consequences. I further added that the reception he had given me was more like that given an enemy rather than a friend, even when I brought him news that hostilities between Great Britain and Spain had ceased. I pointed out that his conduct revealed his friendship to the French even though it was evident that Spain was at war with France. He answered that he knew nothing pertaining to the latter. I repeated it again and asked him then if he did not consider the imprisonment of the monarchs and occupation of Madrid as acts of hostility indicative of war. His reply was that His Government had not communicated anything to him about this war and that he did not consider the dispatches I had brought as official.

for a meeting called by Casas of the principal Spanish officials, describes these events vividly. Miguel Luis Amunátegui, Vida de Don Andrés Bello (Santiago de Chile, 1882), 40-46.

14 This is taken from part of the letter that Captain Philip Beaver wrote Admiral Alexander Cochrane from La Guaira, July 19, 1808. The entire letter may be found in Amunátegui, Vida de Don Andrés Bello, 47-48. Casas' pro-French feelings were not completely without reason. The Americans had a voice in their government for the first time under the Bonapartist government, for the Spanish National Assembly that was called included not only deputies from the Spanish provinces, but also from the colonies. Casas could not help but remember that in 1808 the Supreme Central Junta of
When it was known that disorder still continued in Spain, the respectable citizens of Caracas went to the Captain General, Don J[uan] de Casas, and asked that a junta similar to the ones formed in Spain be established. This public official arrested them. Fortunately, he was forced to free them later by the power of public opinion.

In 1809 a junta was formed in Quito under the Presidency of the Marqués del Selva-Alegre. The Viceroy of Santa Fé wanted to oppose this, but consulted the influential citizens of Bogotá concerning the course he should pursue. All unanimously agreed that if the authority of the legitimate sovereigns was not quickly restored in Spain, this city would follow Quito's example. Viceroy [Antonio] Amar [y Borbon] who was opposed to these measures, asked each citizen to write an opinion. To further intimidate those who did not agree with him, he ordered the city-guard troops to patrol the weapons. As if to further frighten the faithful supporters of true authority, which included the most eminent citizens, the Viceroy decided to punish what he considered an insubordination. He joined the Viceroy of Perú and

Government set up in Aranjuez had two deputies from each province in Spain but excluded the American ones. Morón, History of Venezuela, 97-98.

Páez refers here to the Viceroy of Santa Fé or New Kingdom of Granada (a viceroyalty created in 1717), Antonio Amar y Borbon. He had arrived in Santa Fé with his wife in 1803 and had been received with enthusiasm. Deaf and lacking energy, he was a poor choice to rule the colony at this critical period. Henao and Arrubla, History of Colombia, 123, 187.
marched with armed forces to dissolve the junta at Quito.\textsuperscript{16} On August 2 of this year many of the members of the junta were barbarously murdered in prison. To punish the city, Viceroy Amar then turned it over to the looting of the soldiers.

Such atrocities were sufficient to cool the loyalty of the Americans; but this sentiment was so deeply rooted in their hearts, that the victory at Talavera was not received any less joyously in the colonies than in the Peninsula.\textsuperscript{17} The Marqués de la Romana declared the Junta Central illegitimate so its members had to take refuge in the Isle of León, one of the few spots not occupied by French troops.\textsuperscript{18}

\textsuperscript{16}The Viceroy of Perú at this time was José Fernando de Abascal y Sousa. Occupying this post from 1806 through 1816, he wrote Memoria o Relación de Gobierno, 2 vols. (edited by Vicente Rodríguez Casado and José Antonio Calderón Quijano, publicaciones de Escuela de Estudios Hispano Americanos, Seville, 1944).

\textsuperscript{17}Parra-Pérez calls this "victory" an indecisive battle which occurred in May of 1809, and did force the British to retreat, but gave Wellesly the illustrious name of Wellington. Historia de la Primera República, I, 253.

\textsuperscript{18}The Marqués de la Romana commanded fourteen or fifteen thousand troops who were serving with the French armies when the Spanish revolt against the French broke out in 1808. With the aid of the British, he and his army "defected" to Spain. He fought in countless battles against the French. After the Junta Central was banished, the regency of Spain and the Indies, which was subsequently established, issued a decree in February of 1810 advising the Americans to elect deputies to the Spanish Cortés on the basis of one for each capital of a viceroyalty and one for the capital of each captaincy general. William Francis Patrick Napier, History of the War in the Peninsula and in the South of France from the Year 1807 to the Year 1814, 5 vols. (Philadelphia, 1842), I, 178-79. Henao and Arrubla, History of Columbia, 193-94.
There they formed a Regency consisting of five members.

It seemed, then, that the colonies had no other alternative but to recognize the sovereignty of the French or to declare themselves completely independent while the King was imprisoned in Bayonne. While they hesitated between these two extremes, the Regency sent its representatives to the colonies encouraging them to promote their own interests and reminding them of the vexations to which they had been subjected by the ambition and caprice of the governors. They said that the new government planned to end these evils soon.

In 1810 news was received in Caracas of the sad state of the national cause in Spain. The people knew that the governors were determined to recognize any government in the mother country rather than permit the Americans the right of adopting measures which they considered revolutionary. As a result on April 19, they deposed the Captain General [Vicente Emparan] in the name of the Catholic Monarch and organized a junta to govern the country until the Spanish throne was occupied again by its legitimate sovereigns.19

Such measures alarmed the peninsulares residing in America. They began to manifest open opposition against the

---

19The Captain General at this time was Vicente Emparan. By this act of April 19, 1810, the town council of Caracas was transformed into the government of the Venezuelan provinces. It took the name of Supreme Junta for the Conservation of the Rights of Ferdinand VII. This occurred on a Holy Thursday and is Venezuela's First Independence Day. Parra-Pérez, Historia de la Primera República, I, 267-78.
creoles, whose loyalty they suspected now. In Santa Fé, a Spaniard insulted an American with offensive words directed against his countrymen. As a result of this incident disturbances exploded between the two groups. Parties were then formed on both sides.

These events were told to the government of the mother country in an exaggerated manner by the governors of the colony. Undoubtedly for this reason, the Regency answered the official dispatches of the junta of Caracas by publishing a decree on August 31, 1810, that declared the city in a state of siege. In the decree, the Regency accused the city of wanting to declare itself independent from the mother country under the false pretext of forming juntas representing the monarchy. The loyalty of the provinces of Maracaibo and Coro was commended, for they had not followed the pernicious example of the insurgent capital. The Regency proposed to end these evils by rigorously punishing the guilty unless they resorted to the amnesty offered them by the clemency of the government.

Such language was equivalent to a declaration of war, for it came from a gathering of individuals and not from the monarchy—the monarchy whose authority and decrees the people were accustomed to respecting without appeal. The manifesto in which Caracas explained the reasons that had prompted it to take the measures termed revolutionary, and which were really only a loyal expression of the sentiments which joined the colonies with the mother country, could not
placate the susceptibility of the Regency. The Spanish Cortés became indignant at the daring of the Americans. One of the deputies said: "If the Americans complain of having been oppressed for about three hundred years, they shall experience the same treatment for another three thousand years." "I am glad," said another after the victory of Albufera [Albuera], "I am glad we triumphed because now we will be able to send troops to quell the insurgents." And Deputy Alvarez from Toledo exclaimed: "I do not know to what race of people those Americans belong."

Thus was loyalty paid! This is the manner in which appreciation of a generous people ready to sacrifice their dearest interests was shown! It was necessary now to answer insult with threat, and threat with a struggle of blood and fire until arms, and arms alone, would decide where right and reason lay.

The rigorous measures taken to intimidate the patriots served only to exasperate the spirit of the colonists further and separate them more from the mother country, even breaking all bonds of fraternity. When the first juntas were formed, no one thought of declaring independence from Spain. However, the conduct of the ministers in Spain and of her

---

20 The victory at Albuera occurred in 1814 when the combined British and Spanish forces defeated the French army under Marshal Soult. It was really a nominal victory, for it occurred only because of Soult's error in judgment in withdrawing, for in reality he had superior forces. Napier, War in the Peninsula, II, 328-40.
representatives in America was such, that it gave the colonists the right to proclaim before the world that they desired and deserved freedom, even at the expense of life and property.

The revolutionary movement started in Caracas. On July 5, 1811, representatives from several Venezuelan provinces drew up their Declaration of Independence. This set an example that was quickly followed by the provinces of the Viceroyalty of Santa Fé, México, and later on, the provinces of the Río de la Plata region.

The Spanish Cortés became alarmed then and thought to resort to conciliatory measures. But it was too late. The Americans asked that they be given, according to the decree of October 15, 1809, the same rights possessed by Spaniards born on the Peninsula. Among other rights, these included having representatives in the National Congress; opening the doors to the products of allied and neutral nations; having free commerce with Spain and the Asiatic colonies; abolishing the monopolies that enriched the public treasury and the King's coffers, and reimbursing both by levying new duties

---

21 This "second" declaration of independence came about when the Venezuelan Congress took measures which were incompatible with the acceptance of the authority of Ferdinand or any Spanish government. The new country took the name of the American Confederation of Venezuela and comprised the united provinces of Caracas, Cumaná, Barinas, Margarita, Barcelona, Mérida, and Trujillo. Coro, Maracaibo, and Guayana remained Royalist. The seven stars in the Venezuelan flag are for the first seven provinces mentioned. Morón, History of Venezuela, 105-109.
on the same articles; and giving the Creoles the right to hold civil, military and ecclesiastic offices on the same basis as Spaniards.

The English, who in 1797 had encouraged the revolutionaries of Venezuela, declared themselves adversaries on this occasion. In 1810 Lord Liverpool ordered the Governor of Curacao to interpose his good officers to help adjust the differences between the malcontents and their governing officials. The government of Great Britain even offered its mediation services, encouraging the Americans to reconcile with the mother country. The terms they proposed were the following: that hostilities between Spain and her colonies cease; that general amnesty for all those involved in the movement be granted; that the Americans be given representation in the Cortes and freedom of commerce, with preference to Spain; that the appointments of Viceroy and Governors be made indiscriminately from both peninsulares and creoles; that local autonomy be granted to the cabildos of municipalities, whose members should be both Spaniards and Hispanic-Americans; that the colonists recognize the sovereignty of the Cortes as representative of Fernando VII. These and other

22 After the Treaty of San Ildefonso in 1796, Charles IV declared war on England, attempting to reconquer Gibraltar and Jamaica; consequently, England captured Trinidad in 1797 and allowed the Venezuelan revolutionaries to use it as a base of operations. However, in 1808 England reversed this position after she had signed a new alliance with Spain. Parra-Pérez, Historia de la Primera Republica, I, 253.
propositions were rejected by the Cortés who saw in them only Great Britain's desire to prosper from the commerce of the colonies.

On July 24, the Junta de Comercio of Cádiz replied to the British by issuing a manifesto which said:

Freedom of commerce with the American provinces would be the greatest calamity that could befall Spain. Those who want to establish it are imposters deserving an exemplary punishment and banishment for life, since the fortune of Spain and its political existence depend on the solution of this question, the names of those who propose such disastrous traffic should be transmitted to posterity so that the latter may view them with the deserved indignation. The Americans have not solicited the establishment of this free commerce. Instead, they have detested it as prejudicial to their interests since Spain could become the toy of foreigners, her commerce and manufacturing could be ruined, and all freedom lost. Such commerce is against all rights of religion, morality and order.

Whether these propositions were of interest to Great Britain or not, the fact was that this nation, which had previously supported [Francisco] Miranda, now not only showed itself indifferent to the American cause, but even hostile to a certain extent. This attitude was what was most suitable now to her interests on the European continent stirred up by Bonaparte. Nevertheless, the junta at Caracas commissioned Don Luis López Méndez and Don Simón Bolívar to solicit its support, just as it had named Don Telésforo Orea to entreat the aid of the United States.

Since all efforts to bring help from some foreign power were in vain, the patriots now depended only on the justice of their cause—a cause which they determined to
defend at all costs. The Caracas junta deposed the Spanish authorities and established itself as a legislative body issuing decrees which revealed the progress of new ideas. Following its example, other juntas were formed in the rest of the provinces except Maracaibo. There the Governor [Fernando] Miyares, seized the deputies from the Caracas junta and sent them as prisoners to Puerto Rico. As a reward for these services, the Regency named him Captain General of Venezuela and ordered him to adopt severe measures to stifle the insurrection.

With the thought of opposing Governor Miyares and of protecting the patriotic provinces, the Caracas junta sent troops under the command of Marqués del Toro. Since the peaceful negotiations that the latter proposed to Miyares were in vain, hostilities broke out. The Marqués entered the province of Coro in November [1810]. However, he was finally forced to evacuate it for fear of losing contact with his supply lines.
CHAPTER III


1810-1813

After the struggle against the mother country started, forces began to arise in all parts of America to fight the Spanish. In 1810, I was called into the service of the patriot army for the first time, and I enlisted in the cavalry squadron that Don Manuel Pulido commanded in Barinas. I served for some time. Three months before the occupation of the country by the Spanish chief Don Domingo Monteverde, I retired from the army with an indefinite leave. I had attained the rank of first sergeant in 1813.

When Bolivar occupied Cúcuta, the deputy police chief

---

1Don Domingo Monteverde became Captain General after the destruction of the first republic in July, 1812. In control of the area mainly because of Miranda's inactivity and the impressions created by the great earthquake, he was overconfident when it came to his own abilities. He ruthlessly pursued the patriots. He was so influenced by ignorant favorites, that even the Royalists wanted revenge. Lecuna, Crónica Razonada, I, 25.
of Canaguá handed me an order from the Spanish General, Don Antonio Tiscar, in which he commanded me to go with thirty men to the Carrao farm, fifty leagues from Barinas.² There I was to round up all the tame horses and the largest cattle in that farm and bring them to his general headquarters in Barinas. Although I was not a soldier in the Spanish army, for remember I have said I had served in the ranks of the patriots and was presently on leave, I had to obey that order. In the state of military oppression that the country was in, any resistance to such orders was considered a crime, regardless of whether it was given to a soldier or to a civilian. Thus I could not refuse the commission conferred on me. With the feelings of repulsion that were to be expected, I went to carry out the order. I made an agreement with the foreman of the farm not to take more than two hundred horses and only a thousand head of cattle out of the fifteen thousand they had. I returned to general headquarters with these animals.

This time Tiscar recognized me. He manifested such deference to me that he even invited me to eat at his home. There I found some other guests who were officers. Tiscar had recently imposed a forced contribution on the citizens of Barinas. Those who would not or could not pay it were obliged to take arms. In this manner he collected funds and

²Don Antonio Tiscar was Capitán de fragata and the Spanish Commandant General of Barinas. Ibid., 32.
augmented the ranks of his army in order to face Bolivar, who was approaching with his forces from New Granada. Wanting to find out how much I had to contribute directly from Tiscar, who constantly "courted" me, I asked him the amount then. He replied that he wanted no contribution from me, for he thought to assign me to military service with the rank of cavalry captain.

True to his word, Tiscar sent orders for me to come to his headquarters a month later. He sent this dispatch by Lieutenant Montero, who also had orders to place at my disposal a company of mounted men and whatever resources I needed to get there. Tiscar wanted to encounter Bolivar; so he ordered me to join his forces immediately. Montero presented me with a captain's commission and told me that within three days all would be ready for me to march and join Tiscar. Without accepting the commission, I told him that I had to go to my farm first and make the necessary arrangements. I asked him to hold my commission until my return, for I would be back in the appointed length of time. However, I had already decided not to serve in the Spanish army and had resolved to search for the patriots and join them. I crossed the Pedraza mountains accompanied by Don Antonio María Fernández, a proprietor of Barinas. When we arrived at the town of Santa Barbara, I found the patriot Commander Manuel Pulido who had come from Mérida with a few troops. I joined him immediately, and we marched toward Barinas over the same road that I had just traveled. On
reaching that city, we discovered that it had been evacuated by the Spanish forces after General José Félix Rivas had defeated one of Tiscar's divisions in Niquitao.³ Tiscar, along with the rest of the Spanish army, retreated towards Nutrias and San Fernando de Apure. The Spanish Commander [José] Yañez [y Tiscar] then left Guasdualito to join Tiscar.⁴

The government established by the patriots in Barinas began to organize troops to operate in those areas, for Bolívar had left and gone towards Caracas with all his forces. It was at this time that the Barinas government conferred

³José Félix Rivas or Ribas, named by Bolívar Mariscal de Campo, was born in Caracas, on September 19, 1775. He belonged to a noble and rich family, and he was Bolívar's uncle by marriage. Embracing the revolutionary cause immediately, he opposed the recognition of Joseph as King of Spain on July 5, 1808. He then became instrumental in asking for the creation of the Junta of Caracas. After the Junta de España e Indias on January 22, 1809 declared the colonies in America part of the Monarchy, Rivas was one of those accompanying Bolívar to meet in Caracas with the royal commissioners, Carlos Montufar and Antonio Villavicencio. Then on Holy Thursday, April 19, 1810 he participated in the acts of imprisoning and deporting Captain General Emparan. Rivas worked ardently to help form the junta that met in Caracas on March 2 of 1810 and for the declaration of independence on July 5, 1811. While at his hideout in Tamanuce, he was surprised and killed by his enemies. Then the head of this illustrious Venezuelan was placed on a spike in a public thoroughfare. When his wife, Josefa Palacios, was informed of his tragic end, she retired to her bedroom and stated that she would remain there until the patriots brought her news of the triumph of their cause. Bolívar had the pleasure of bringing his aunt this news after the Battle of Carabobo. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 516-18.

⁴Don José Yañez y Tiscar was the Spanish Commandant General of the llanos in Apure. Lecuna, Crónica Razonada, I, 12.
the rank of captain in the patriot army on me as recompense
for my refusal of that same rank in the Spanish army.

I never served in the King's troops. It is very
probable that the erroneous supposition on the part of some
historians who say the contrary originated from the following:
the aforementioned interview with Tiscar; the issuance of
the commission which I have mentioned earlier; and the ful-
fillment of the order given me to round up cattle for the
Spanish, which I had to execute against my wishes.5

The patriots of Barinas occupied the cities of Nutrias
and Achaguas. The Spanish then set up their headquarters in
San Fernando de Apure. In October of 1813, General Yaflez
moved with strong cavalry and infantry divisions on Achaguas.
He attacked the island and set fire to part of the town.
Although the patriots did everything possible to maintain
their position, they finally had to retreat toward Barinas.
Then Yaflez took possession of Nutrias. While Yaflez was there,
I received orders to attack Commander Miguel Marcelino, who
occupied the parish of Canaguá, with a cavalry squadron of
four hundred horses. I succeeded in finding him in the
Sabana de Suripa, where he had retreated. At dawn I surprised
him in a place called "Las Matas Guerrerenaes," and I sub-
sequently defeated him. I pursued him as far as the left
bank of the Apure River, from where I returned to Barinas

5The historians the author refers to in this instance
undoubtedly must be Rafael María Baralt and José Manuel
Restrepo.
with the prisoners we had taken.

A short distance from Suripa, I encountered a soldier from my squadron called Pedro Andueza whom I had left in Barinas due to illness. He brought me a letter from a friend telling me that Yañez had occupied Barinas and that the patriots had retired towards San Carlos. In view of the unpleasant news, I decided to go to Guasdualito. If I could not maintain my position there, I would go to the province of Casanare in Colombian territory. The squadron accompanying me was composed of citizens from Canaguá and other nearby points.

I did not have much confidence in the patriotism of those men who accompanied me and who had enlisted solely because they liked me. Consequently, I recommended urgently to the soldier who brought me the letter not to reveal its contents. But he did not obey my order. Because of this and because of the flanking movement I started, which abandoned the Barinas direction, my troops naturally became suspicious. Having spent the night in the Calzada farm, I started the march before dawn. After about a league, I was forced to stop. The repugnance of the troops toward continuing in that direction had not been kept from me. The new day had barely dawned when I told my companions what had occurred at Barinas. I let them know that since there was no way of joining the forces that had left Barinas, I had decided to cross the Apure River by the pass at Palmarito and head towards the province of Casanare. I asked them to
tell me frankly if they wanted to accompany me and conquer the obstacles we might encounter on the way. Some replied that it seemed impossible to them to cross the Apure at the point I suggested, for there was an enemy force there that had control of the ships. They added that they would retire to their homes and hide in the forests until the patriot troops returned. Then they would rejoin the army. With the intent of finding out which ones I could depend on, I asked those who wanted to stay to step forward. Nearly all did this. I found that only twenty, including both officers and men, were ready to follow me.

Vexed, but not discouraged by this disappointment, I took the weapons of those who refused to accompany me. Then I continued my march to the shore of the Cajaro River and hid these weapons there. We marched on, but stopped at the Cerrito farm so that my companions could eat. Here they decided that they, too, wished to return to their homes. The only one that stayed with me was an eighteen-year-old youth called José Fernández, brother of the man who had crossed the Pedraza mountains with me. After four days, the young man became very despondent. Unable to withstand the hunger, mosquitoes, and the rains, he surrendered to a Spanish chief who had him shot a few days later.

I was alone then, wandering over those plains and suffering every kind of privation. What was even worse was that I did not have anyone to communicate with, for all the inhabitants of the province of Barinas were fanatic Royalists.
In addition, they were armed and were pursuing and killing patriots or those whom they suspected were patriots.

My friend, Don Manuel Pacheco, was military commander of Canaguá at the time. I was also a relative of his, but this did not stop him from pursuing me like an enemy. One day we had an interview a league from the town of Canaguá. This came about when Pacheco sent a soldier for me. I replied that he must come alone if he wanted to talk to me. He agreed and came immediately to the rendezvous. He told me how much he hated to see me in that predicament, but that he had to fulfill his duty. After assuring me that the Spanish authorities were sorry that I had taken up arms against the King, he said he was certain that I would receive good treatment and no attention paid to my previous conduct if I presented myself to them. He concluded by telling me that the Governor of Barinas was Don José María Luzardo, citizen of Maracaibo, and a friend of mine. This was an additional guarantee I could rely on.

I conceived the plan then of joining the patriots that were in San Carlos. To do this I would have to accept a passport from Pacheco for Barinas. There I would accept another from Luzardo on the pretext of joining Yañez who was in Guanare. Thus I would be able to travel on the highway, for it would be very dangerous to carry out my plan if I used another road without a passport. I told Pacheco that I accepted his proposition and that I would leave with him immediately for Canaguá. But he replied that it would be
better to go the following day. I followed his suggestion. When I got to town I noticed that the street on which Pacheco's and my house were located had a picket of about thirty cavalrmen with Pacheco himself commanding. I entered my house, dismounted, put away the loaded blunderbuss I carried, and then went out in the street. I addressed the picket detail saying: "Señores, here I am! I am the very one you have been pursuing. If you have any vengeance to wreak on me, there could not be a better time for it. Act as you will."

"We have no vengeance to wreak on you," they answered. "Long live the volunteer José Antonio Páez."

Commander Pacheco approached and asked me for my sword. I turned it over to him without the slightest objection, relying on the good faith he had promised me. However, when I was gone from my house, Pacheco came and confiscated my blunderbuss. I was so careful with this weapon, that the first thing I noticed when I returned was that it had disappeared. I found out immediately through my sister Luisa that Commander Pacheco had taken it. I went to his house and asked him for a passport to go to the Governor of Barinas. He told me that this was unnecessary, for he himself would accompany me on the journey when he went to take the picket detail. We agreed to leave at twelve noon. When we were ready to march, I asked him for my weapons. Since he seemed in doubt about turning them over to me, I told him: "You cannot deprive me of my weapons and take me as a prisoner in
the middle of troops."

He replied, "I will confer with these people and see if we can return your weapons."

Indignant at such proceedings and distrustful of Pacheco now, I replied that I was determined to recover my weapons. Without further evasion, I immediately entered Pacheco's house and seized them. I went out into the street, and for one-half hour I tried to incite them. Finally, I told them, "If you want to take me as a prisoner without arms, come and get them."

Throughout all of this, Pacheco begged me not to express myself in that manner, for such words jeopardized us both and would gain nothing except to aggravate my situation. He was finally able to calm me. He made me enter his house and there assured me that I would not be molested and that I could go to Barinas with my weapons. But when he got outside, he told the men who made up the picket that they had seen how I had seized my weapons and that he felt they should take them from me. A sergeant replied by saying that it was their duty to do this and that he (Pacheco) could count on them to be faithful servants of the King. Pacheco responded to this by telling them that since I seemed ready to defend myself to the last, it would be best not to use force. He added that although force would gain the objective, it would also result in the loss of some lives. It would be better to be crafty. They agreed on this. After a short while Pacheco came to tell me that he was ready to march to Barinas.
We got under way accompanied by the picket.

At the pass of the Paguey River, six or eight leagues from Barinas, I found Fray Simón Archila, priest of Canagua, and a very good friend of mine. He spoke to me secretly and told me how sorry he was I had taken such a step, for the Spaniards would rejoice in capturing me. He went on to tell me that he knew the members of the picket well enough to know that they would be the first to accuse me on our arrival at Barinas. I informed him that I had presented myself solely with the object of joining the patriots sooner. In view of what he said, however, I told him that I was going to demand that Commander Pacheco order the picket to leave or I would not continue. Father Archila begged me not to do such a thing, for since Pacheco had seen us talking secretly, it would be very natural for him to attribute my decision to his advice; consequently, I agreed not to make the demand until after we had gone further up the road.

We continued our march. After we had walked about two leagues, we stopped at the Espada farm in order to rest. Then I approached the Commander. Taking him aside, I asked him to do me the favor of ordering the picket to return, for I did not want to get to Barinas as a prisoner. I added that if he were truly interested in me, he would render me this service. At first he refused to comply, alleging that he carried the troops in order to present them to the military governor. However, when he observed my determination not to continue with the picket, he acceded to my wishes. He told
me then that he himself would have the pleasure of accompany­ing me, for he wanted to help me in Barinas.

After the picket had been dismissed, the two of us continued our march alone until we were close to the city. "Friend," I told him then, "we have come to the point where you can lend me your good offices. I want you to enter the city and tell Governor Luzardo that I am here and that I need a passport from him in order to continue to Yañez's general headquarters. I rely on you to exert yourself in obtaining it and bringing it to me yourself." He offered to do it and went on into the city.

After he had talked to the Governor, he returned with a letter from the latter asking me to come talk to him. He told me not to be afraid of anything and not to doubt his word and friendship, for I would be given all the desirable guarantees. I decided to present myself before Luzardo, who received me with many kindnesses and much affection. He informed me that my trip to Yañez's headquarters did not seem to be the right thing to do. He felt that it would be better for me to remain in his home until some encounter between the two armies would indicate more clearly what measure should be adopted. Innocently trusting in his friendship, I followed his advice. Two hours had barely passed, however, when he told me that it would be desirable for me to pose for some three days as having been arrested. This, he said, was in order to avoid the censure of the Spaniards there and to maintain appearances. I submitted myself to the
pretended arrest.

On the third day, when I expected to be freed, the Spanish Commander Antonio Pérez arrived with his cavalry squadron. He was immediately proclaimed Governor and Commander of Arms of the province. The act concluded, Captain Juan Rafarte came to the jail with a guard of lancers and twenty-six pairs of shackles to put on the prisoners who were there. He ordered all the persons to appear in the upper corridor of the jail. When Lieutenant Pedro García, a prisoner also, begged him to put the lightest shackles on him, Rafarte became infuriated. He took a blunderbuss that they had taken from García away from his assistant and told him: "This blunderbuss that you loaded in order to blow a Spaniard's brains out shall serve to blow yours out. Light shackles! Light shackles! What a fine kettle of fish!"

Unable to witness that stroke of weakness on the part of my comrade García without indignation, and wishing to give courage to the others, I said in a loud voice: "As for me, it does not matter if you put the heaviest shackles on me. Put two pairs on if you like, for I am a man that can carry them." On hearing this, Rafarte and the other Spanish officers looked at one another. But I, serene and dauntless, approached the pile of shackles and, taking the largest and heaviest, said to Rafarte: "Señor Don Juan, do me the favor of having these put on me." Who would believe that this act of haughtiness failed to incur the anger of the Captain and his comrades? Well, this is exactly what occurred. Instead,
with or without reason, I won the favor of the officers, and especially that of Rafarte.

I separated myself from the group of prisoners after they had put on our shackles. I went into the capitulary hall where they had lodged me. Sitting on my hammock, I began to sing in a low voice. One of the officers who had witnessed the event concerning the shackles and who had curiously found out the identity of the hot-headed youth, approached me and ordered me not to sing. "Why," I queried. "Do you also want to tie my tongue? Aren’t you satisfied with the shackles you have put on me?" The officer informed me then that he was giving me a warning, for the authorities might think that I was mocking the prison. Acknowledging the justice of such an observation, I stopped singing.

A few minutes later Rafarte came in and ordered me to return to where they were shackling the men so that they could exchange mine for lighter ones. Mine were to be used on Juancho Silva, a mulatto from Barinas of such extraordinary strength, that he was wont to take a wild bull by the horns and kill it with one blow. Silva was also a very honest proprietor and in favor of the independence cause. They took my shackles then and put them on Silva, giving me lighter ones. From that moment on, Rafarte showed great interest in me. He even offered to interpose his good offices with [Antonio] Puy so that he would pardon my life.6 He

---

6The author is referring here to Colonel Antonio
pointed out that it must be common knowledge that to be a prisoner was equivalent to being condemned to death.

Two hours after Rafarte had shackled all the prisoners the Spaniards were most interested in safeguarding, Puy arrived with his secretary, the ex-governor, and Don Francisco Celis, my friend and Luzardo's partner. Puy ordered a table to be placed in the center of the capitulary hall. There he questioned all the prisoners about their neighborhood, the reason for their imprisonment, and the rank they held in the insurgent army. When my turn came, he asked me: "Your name is Don José Antonio Páez?" "Yes Sir," I answered. Then he addressed his secretary and told him: "Put Don José Antonio Páez down as Captain."

Ex-governor Luzardo and Don Francisco Celis told Puy that I was very honest. He retorted, "Yes, and very much the patriot and very brave, according to what they say. Notice that his shackles are not well riveted. If he escapes," he told the jailer later, "I will cut your head off with this sword." As he said this, he touched the sword he carried at his side.

An hour later, Commander Ignacio Correa came with a party of lancers, took out the list of prisoners, and ordered the jailer to bring them to him. Then he began calling the names of those whom he had been ordered to put in the death house. I was fourth on the list of those

Puig, alias Antonio Puy. He is described as a ruthless Catalan. Lecuna, Crónica Razonada, I, 201-202.
destined to die. About three in the afternoon they locked us up in a room where we stayed until twelve that night. Correa returned at this time, accompanied by some unmounted lancers. They were to take us to the place where we were to be executed by lance thrusts. Some of us were not shackled. Correa sent those who were shackled outside and ordered a soldier to tie the rest with halters. I was one of the ones with shackles. When I went outside, I missed my hat. I begged the Commander to let me go get it. But he answered me in a burlesque tone, "You won't need it."

We marched toward the right shore of the Santo Domingo River, which was very close to the city. When we were about a block from the plaza, one of Puy's adjutants overtook us. He gave Correa a secret order from Puy. Then Correa countermarched with his victims toward the Governor's house. There he locked us up in such a small room that we hardly fit in it. We spent the rest of the night without being able to lie down nor even sit down for lack of space. On the next day, when no one had heard anything about the prisoners, everyone believed we had been executed.

About 11:00 a.m. my wife, Señora Dominga Ortiz, who had just arrived from Canaguá, went to Puy's house to find out where I was. She was bringing me a letter from the priest of that parish, Fray Simón Archila. In this letter Fray Archila told me that my painful situation had come to his attention, and that he hoped the Spaniards would not act cruelly against me, taking my honesty into consideration.
Furthermore, he felt that my commitments were not of such a grave nature as to warrant capital punishment. When R. P. Archila was writing that letter, he was unaware of my true position.\(^7\)

My wife had gone first to the jail. When she was unable to get any news of me there, she thought it more opportune to go to Puy's home. There she was told I was in the house by the corporal of the guard that watched us. That same corporal told her that despite the fact that all the prisoners were supposed to be held incommunicado, he would open the door of the room where we were so that she could see me a moment.

That good man carried out his word. Unfortunately, Puy himself stepped out at the time that my wife neared the door of the room. Because of this, she only had time to give me the letter. When Puy saw my wife near the room, he offended and insulted her. He then ordered her to leave immediately and threatened to shoot the corporal four times. This act, so very painful for me, made my situation unbearable. A moment later, I opened the letter. I was careful not to tear it as I opened the seal, for I thought I would give it to Puy if its contents were favorable and pretend not to have read it. As I have said before, though, the letter spoke well of me, and I resolved to send it to Puy by means of the corporal. The corporal fulfilled his charge.

\(^7\)R. P. means *Reverendo Padre* or Reverend Father.
and Puy came immediately with his secretary. He called me
and gave me the sealed letter so that I would read it aloud.
I opened it and pretended not to be able to understand the
handwriting easily. I begged him to read it himself or to
have it read. He ordered the secretary to do so. After the
letter was read, he took it and went away saying, "This sly
priest must be very patriotic."

About an hour later I went to the door to get some
water. I had the good fortune to be seen by Senor D. N.
Escutasol, a merchant who was a very good friend of mine and
a man of great influence among the Spaniards. He came close
to greet me and told me how sorry he was to see me in that
situation. I called to his attention the fact that if he
put his influence into play and offered the Spanish some
money, he could perhaps obtain my pardon. He did this. By
means of his determination and the support of Rafarte and
other persons, Escutasol achieved the desired end. One hour
later he returned and told me I would be pardoned for the
sum of three hundred pesos. After showing Escutasol my
gratitude for the important service he had just rendered me,
I begged him to serve as my bondsman and get the money I
needed. Although he excused himself from doing this per-
sonally, he offered to get me another bondsman. True to his
word, he brought Don Cristobal Orzda, who bound himself to
answer for that sum.

Then I was transferred to the jail, and my shackles
were removed. Chance would have it that while climbing the
steps leading to the upstairs of that jail, I should encounter Señor Marcos León. He was a handsome individual, though advanced in years. He asked me several questions regarding my position and told me that the Governor had summoned him. As soon as Puy came, he ordered León locked up in the room where I had been and where my comrades still were. That very night they were all barbarously killed by lance strokes, León included. It seems that the unfortunate man had gone to replace me.

When I went to Puy to arrange for the payment of my pardon, he told me that it was not three hundred pesos, but six hundred pesos instead. Although this was double the amount that he had previously ordered that I had to pay, I had no recourse but to give it to him if I wanted to remain free.

Fifteen days after these events, on December 5, and while I was in Barinas, one of Puy's assistants came and took me to him. Without giving me so much as a glance, he asked a soldier who had served under me, what numbers I had used to attack Commander Marcelino in the Sabana de Suripa. The soldier answered that I had used one hundred and fifty men. Turning toward me, Puy asked me where the weapons belonging to that column were. When I started to utter the word "sir" in order to answer him, he interrupted me brusquely. He called Commander Correa, whom he always had at his side, and told him: "Put him in jail, rivet a pair of shackles on him, and put him in the death house."
At 5:00 p.m. I found myself in the same position from which Providence had freed me fifteen days earlier. Undoubtedly the soldier had told Puy that I had disarmed the column. This had exasperated that monster. I convinced myself that my last hour had arrived. The Spanish authorities had adopted the system of executing prisoners by lance thrusts in the darkness of the night. Dating from the time that my previous prison companions had been killed, various parties of prisoners had been sacrificed night after night. Thus convinced that that very night I would be killed, and no longer relying on any possible aid, I gave in to a deep sleep that I enjoyed uninterrupted until 11:00 p.m. At that time I was awakened by shouts of "Long live the King," and the noise of troops in the plaza. A ray of hope penetrated my mind. Again, I entertained the idea of living. A violent reaction took place in me. It seemed that I was passing from death into life. A multitude of contradictory thoughts accumulated in my mind. I thought I heard the shouts and clamor of the patriot army, and in my heart I felt the vehement desire to fly to its ranks. Suddenly, I remembered that it was that same Commander Puy who, when the patriot forces that were retiring from Barinas approached, had ordered the assassination of all the prisoners he had in the Guanare jail. (The only person who had escaped the rage of that barbarian was Señor Pedro Parra. He had gotten the fortunate idea of hiding behind the door of the jail when the party of lancers came to carry out the sanguinary order.)
This uncertainty between life and death, between hope and fear, made my situation unbearable.

The cause for all the movements was a rifle shot heard in the direction of the river area. Correa, who was sent with a picket to reconnoitre the area, informed the Spanish that there was an infantry corps on the other side of the river. Puy became alarmed, assembled the troops in the plaza, and ordered a new reconnoissance. While executing this order, Correa called out, "Who goes?" According to what he said later, he was answered by, "A free America, soldier of Death." Then Puy decided to go to San Fernando de Apure on the Canaguá road. His first thought was to have the prisoners killed as he had done before in Guanare. However, he was seized by such terror at the thought that he might be attacked by superior forces if he delayed any longer, that he marched without ordering the slaughter of the prisoners. He was anxious only to escape from the "soldiers of Death," for Correa had assured him that the moonlight had revealed them to be very numerous.

This dreamed-up army was later called even by the Spaniards themselves the "army of spirits." It gave occasion later also for the inhabitants of Barinas to tell me in a joking tone: "You are such a lucky man that even the blessed spirits favor you!"

Puy continued his retreat up to Achaguas. The city of Nutrias was also abandoned then. Barinas was left without troops. However, when the Spaniards retreated from here, an
officer approached the jailer and entrusted him with the care of the prisoners. He threatened him with the loss of his own life if he opened even one cell. He told him that the forces were going out to reconnoitre near the city and would return soon.
CHAPTER IV

Condition of the Patriot Prisoners—My Departure from the Prison—I Free the Rest of the Prisoners—I March In Search of Puy—Arrival at Canaguá—Events that Had Transpired in that Town—Capture of Several Indians—March to Barinas—I am Named Governor and Commander of the Province—I Do Not Accept—I Retire to the Calzada Farm—Persecution of Commander Marcelino—Flight.

1813

The prison at Barinas had one hundred and fifteen individuals doomed to die in the still of night at the hands of Spanish executioners. Arrested without any proof except that submitted by mercenary informers, and guilty only of being sympathetic toward the independence cause, they remained in jail whatever period of time a barbarous commander indicated. They left that jail only when they were led to the place of execution. These were the methods that had been adopted to terrorize the patriots and to strangle the sentiments of freedom and independence. However, such atrocities did little to extinguish these sentiments.1

1It seems necessary to mention here that 1813 was the year for Bolívar's "Admirable Campaign" during which, with considerable aid from New Granada, Venezuela was wrested from Spanish control once more and placed in patriot hands. Beginning with the liberation of San Antonio de Tachira in March, Bolívar successively freed Mérida, Trujillo,
Observing that the plaza had been left abandoned and that the guard was not in sight, I left the death house to look for the jailer. I begged him to remove my shackles. He did not yield to my pleas, however, even when I offered to accompany him in his flight. He was that afraid of the threats that had been made to him. Fortunately my bondsman, Señor Orzda, came at that moment. He, too, begged him to free me and promised I would return if the Spanish army returned. Finally, the jailer conceded. He was to pay dearly for this act of generosity, for I learned later that he was sentenced to be run through.

After I got out of jail, I went home to get my sword and my horse in order to free the other prisoners. On returning to the plaza, the first thing I saw was the guard

Barquisimeto, Barinas, Valencia, and finally Caracas. The liberating army was at first composed of two divisions, one under the New Granadan Colonel Manuel Castillo, and the other under the Venezuelan Colonel Ribas. Castillo was replaced in command by Francisco de Paula Santander once inside Venezuela after a disagreement with Bolívar. Santander soon had to return to New Granada because of the same reason.

The liberating army was reorganized in Venezuela placing Atanasio Girardot in command of the first division with Fausto D'Elhuyar as his second-in-command. Ribas commanded the rear guard, and Urdaneta became Bolívar's second-in-command.

The main battles were at Niquitao, where on July 2 Ribas defeated Colonel José Martí; Los Horcones, where Ribas was again victorious; Taguanes, where Bolívar completely defeated the Spanish on July 31.

In the eastern part of Venezuela, Santiago Mariño, along with Antonio José Sucre, Manuel Carlos Piar, and the Bermeduz brothers, had forced the Spanish Generals José Tomás Boves and Francisco Tomás Morales to retreat. The Oriental Provinces now recognized Mariño as their Supreme Chief. For a more detailed account of this "Admirable Campaign," see Lecuna, Crónica Razonada, I, 1-73.
in front of Puy's home. He asked me, "Who goes?"

"Spain," I answered.

"Who are you?" he asked then.

"And who are you?" I replied.

"The governor's guard."

"Well, I am the devil who will soon come to take all of you away."

Pulling back as if I were going to join others, I cried, "Forward!"

The guards had barely heard this when they abandoned their posts and fled hurriedly. They supposed that the Spaniards had left. I went to the jail door then and dismounted. Without saying a word to the guard, who perhaps took me to be a Spanish officer and consequently offered no resistance, I began to distribute saber blows. I did this with such fury, that the mark of one of the many I gave is still on one of the doors. Most of the soldiers, surprised and terrified, threw themselves on the ground. Finally all of them fled, except for the jailer. I ordered him then immediately to open the cells where the one hundred and fifteen victims were ready for the sacrifice. I threatened to run him through with my sword if he did not comply with my order immediately. The jailer refused tenaciously until I threw myself on him and gave him a strong blow with the sword. He decided to open the doors after this "argument." In fact, such was the terror that seized him, that he could not even put the key in the lock. The delay this produced filled me with anguish, for I was
anxious to leave as soon as possible and get to the horse I had left in the street. All the doors were finally opened. The shackled prisoners, without even waiting to have their chains removed, came out hurriedly, each one seeking to hide in the safest possible place.

The undertaking of freeing the prisoners was extremely risky and rash, for I had gone into the jail, which was subject to the arrival of an enemy party. The latter could easily have taken me in that most dangerous place of such fatal memories. Despite this, however, after I had freed the male prisoners, I freed the female prisoners also.

This act completed, I went about the city inquiring concerning the whereabouts of the enemy forces. About 2:00 a.m., I found out from a woman that the enemy had taken the road leading from Barinas to Canaguá. Then I decided to leave Barinas in disguise and join them, for I was intent on killing Puy before dawn. And I would have accomplished this, too, had I been able to overtake them.

About 8:00 a.m. I intercepted a lieutenant of the Spanish army, Don Diego Ramírez, near the Paguey River. I felt such anger in my heart, that I proposed to take revenge on this person for all the insults I had received. While conversing with him, the impetus to carry out my project accosted me several times. However, I desisted from this act of vengeance when I recalled that Providence had just spared my life a few hours earlier, perhaps as a sort of recompense for never having committed acts of cruelty. I
tried, then, to remove this idea from my mind, and I asked him several questions with regard to the possible reasons why Puy had abandoned Barinas. But he could not answer me satisfactorily, for he said that he was completely confused on the matter himself.

We continued our march together until 3:00 p.m. when we arrived at Canaguá. Puy had left with the infantry just a few hours earlier, headed toward Nutrias or San Fernando. He had ordered the cavalry to cross the Apure River at the Quintero Pass.

Before Puy's departure he had forced all the families to leave town, except that of Señor Marcelino Carrizales. My sister Luisa was his housekeeper. While the Spanish officer was resting and my sister was preparing food for the two of us, Señor Escutasol, Commander Loyola, and some other European gentleman appeared. They were surprised to see me, for they thought that all the prisoners had been assassinated. They could not imagine how I had escaped from Puy's claws and had gotten to Canaguá ahead of them. Nor could they fathom, how I, after having suffered so much in his hands, could place myself in danger of falling into them again. I told them that all their doubts would evaporate when they knew that my motive for following Puy was to join his ranks and kill him under cover of night. I authorized them to repeat all this and to add to it that I was determined to fight and die on the battlefield before falling into his hands alive again and becoming a toy of his diabolic
pleasures. I asked them to say that I found myself more determined than ever to defend the independence and freedom of my country.

These gentlemen were retreating from Barinas and following Puy's army. After they ate with me, they prepared to leave. Señor Escutasol asked me then to give him as much money as I could spare, for he had left Barinas so hurriedly that he had been unable to take any money with him. All I had was sixty pesos. I kept one and gave him the rest. At the same time officer Ramirez approached me and told me that he did not even have enough money to buy bread. He asked if I could please help him with something. I pulled out the peso I had kept and gave it to him. I assured him that it was all I had, and that I regretted not having more to offer him.

They left after this, but not before advising me to desist from my resolution, for they were certain that Royalist troops would return to Barinas very soon. I was left on those plains without being able to count on one individual to accompany me, for all had pronounced in favor of the King of Spain. Furthermore, these people were armed and defending this Monarch with an ardor worthy of a better cause.

The following day I went to the place not very far from Canaguá where I had my possessions. I changed horses there and returned to town. When I entered my house, I encountered five of Yañez soldiers. They immediately seized
the reins of my horse and asked me who I was and where I was going. I gave them a feigned name, and I assured them that I was going to San Fernando de Apure to join Puy's army. They doubted the veracity of my reply, for they asked me why I had waited until that moment to march. They demanded my sword and warned me that I must remain with them as a prisoner. I told them that I was determined to die before surrendering my sword, but that I would follow them since I was not familiar with the road. Their leader retorted that he was certain I not only knew the road, but was also a citizen of the town. Despite this, however, they finally acceded to my wishes. They eagerly asked me where they might find something to eat. I responded pleasantly that I would take them to a house that was inhabited, for all the rest of that town had gone with the Spanish army. Accosted by hunger, the poor soldiers accepted the offer. We went to Señor Carrizales's home where I gave them some trifles to eat and whiskey to drink. When I saw them quite carried away by the liquor, I tried to make them prisoners by means of deception. I was successful in achieving this and in getting some companions at the same time.

All of these men did not have my confidence. But there was a certain Rafael Toro among them, a lively and arrogant youth, who commanded the others. I called him to one side and said, "I like you quite a bit; therefore, though I am in a position to harm you and your companions, I would like to avoid it if you can reward the confidence you have
inspired in me with loyalty." He responded that he, too, had liked me very much, and that he was ready to offer me his services for something useful.

"Well then," I told him, "understand that I am a Captain in the patriot army. At the outskirts of this town I have a company of mounted men. If you want to remain with me, you will have all the guarantees you want and my esteem, to boot."

"Long live the Republic," answered Toro. He wanted to continue his "Long Lives," but I contained him. I told him that it was necessary to consult the opinion of his other companions.

"They will do what I want," he replied. "Long live the patria! You can rely on us."²

All of the men did manifest a desire to accompany Toro and continue under my orders, offering fidelity to the patriot cause. That night we all slept together. On the following day, however, they began to distrust my position, for not one man of the imaginary company had appeared. It would have been natural for at least one of them to come and give me news or to receive orders. I tried to convince them that such a company did exist by telling them that my soldiers

²It seems apropos here to interject an observation made by the historian and biographer, Salvador de Madariaga. "These first campaigns had thrown up a number of facts: the first was that the Spanish hold of the country was precarious. The second was that allegiance was just precarious either way, for everybody wanted peace rather than the victory of this or that side." Madariaga, Bolivar, 192.
were recruits and that they made many mistakes, which we had to overlook. I added that they liked to get fresh horses for riding, and that I was certain they were engaged in that task on the neighboring farms.

Not knowing what to do in such a difficult position, I went to the bank of the river near the town. A moment later I could distinguish eight Indians on the opposite bank, who were coming from Palma and were armed with arrows. When they were within hearing distance I called out, "Who goes?"

"Spain," they answered.

I ordered them to cross the river. They did so, using a canoe. When they jumped on land I ordered them, brandishing my sword, to throw down their arms immediately if they did not want to be slashed to ribbons. Those poor Indians, who did not expect such a welcome, threw down their arms, full of terror. I bundled the bows and arrows, put them on my shoulders, and herded the Indians up to the town. I quartered them in a house next to mine. When they discovered later that no one was watching them, they escaped that very night.

The following day at 6:00 a.m. Toro told me: "Captain, I do not believe you have such a company of men; but since I have pledged my word to accompany you faithfully in the service of this country, I am ready to do so if we leave right now for the capital of Barinás. There we shall see if we can find some patriots we can join. If you are not ready to carry this out, I want to leave with my men this minute."
This was precisely what I wanted, for I was ready to seize any opportunity to disengage myself from the difficult position I was in. It is needless to point out again that I did not have such a company and that I had been accompanied only by a youth of fifteen, called José Fernández. Nevertheless, I still calmly maintained that the company did not present itself for the reasons I had given them previously. I told them, though, that the idea of going to Barinas definitely received my approval.

After we decided to march on and I had told them that I would leave orders for my company to follow, we set out for Barinas. At Totumal, a "stop-over" town, three gentlemen, Juan José Osorio, Manuel Ocariz, and Julian Santamaría, joined us. We arrived at Barinas the following day. The town received me with as much joy as if I were leading a column of troops. Immediately a great number of citizens gathered in the cabildo to name me Governor and Commandant of Arms of the province. Before the appointment was officially communicated to me, however, I went before that assembly and told the members that I had just found out they had named me Governor and Commandant of Arms. I thanked them for such an honorable charge, but I added that it was my duty to inform them of the province's state of affairs and of the only condition under which I would accept the appointment.

"We do not have," I told them, "the elements of war necessary to defend the population and sustain the authority
conferred on me. Furthermore, there is no news of the patriot army, although there are rumors that it has been the victor in Araure. Nevertheless, if we remain in the plaza until said army comes, or if we resist the Spanish if they show up, you can count on my services."

I saw later that these citizens did not have the determination needed to carry out my proposal; so I told them that it would be better for all to stay quiet until help came from the patriot troops. In the meantime, I would move toward the interior of the plain to assemble more men and then return later to aid and protect them. The assembly or junta decided to follow my advice, despite the fear they harbored of the consequences they had exposed themselves to by the imprudent step they had just taken.

Rafael Toro's resolution to march to Barinas had been truly fortunate, for the very night after we left Canaguá, Commander Miguel Marcelino arrived with forty cavalrymen and the determination to kill me. Several citizens told me then that he was not very far away and would soon overtake us. With the seven men that accompanied me, I went to the Calzada farm to get some horses for them. Because of certain misgivings, I decided not to stay there to sleep, but went on into the plains, half a league away. It was very lucky for me that I took this precaution. Without it, I would have been a victim of Marcelino and his companions that very night, for at 3:00 a.m. they circled the farmhouse. They were certain that they would find me there. They asked the
housekeeper a thousand questions. She informed them that I had left to sleep on the plains, but that she could not tell them the exact spot. However, she felt certain that I would probably return that very day, for she had heard me say that I was only going to get some animals. She added that my companions had left some clothes to be washed. Marcelino decided then to hide his company in ambush in the "Mata de Leon," a little more than a mile from the farm. This was the exact spot we had to go by our own return.

Marcelino's plans would have been fatal for me. Fortunately for me again, I heeded a foreboding that seized me a mile before reaching the "Mata de Leon." We were taking about five hundred animals to corral and tame on that very farm. Following a secret instinct, however, I told my companions that I felt certain that we would be assassinated if we went to that farm—probably without even being able to defend ourselves. The enemy was bound to come at the very time we were dismounted getting the horses. Because of this, I was changing the plans. We would tie the animals we needed under a tree, a mile from the "Mata de Leon." My men kept trying to persuade me that it was better to go on to the farm and tie the animals there. They felt that it would be impossible to tie them if they were not corralled. This would be especially true in the case of two wild horses whose beauty excited the greed of all. Luckily for me, the two animals escaped just at the moment we were conferring. My companions finally decided to march to the place I had
pointed out. There I climbed a tree and started tying up the animals.

Despite the fact that our enemies must have seen that we had changed direction, they still did not leave their ambush. They probably thought that we would have to go to the farm eventually to get the things we had left there. From the tree, I was able to inspect a great deal of the terrain, for the area was flat and very clear. When I finished rounding up the animals, I discovered about a league away, in a different direction from the one we would have taken to reach the farm, some forms which were indistinguishable because of the distance. Without even waiting for some of my companions to finish mounting, I got on my horse and shouted orders for them to follow me as soon as they were mounted. Then I left at a gallop, only to find a few unarmed men leading a herd of cattle. While I asked them questions about Marcelino and his party, my lieutenant, Vicente Gallardo, had me observe that a cavalry troop was coming out from the center of the "Mata de Leon." I turned toward the place indicated. Then I asked the men that had already joined me if they were ready to follow me and fight until victory or death. I asked this same question three times, and each time I received the same answer, "You can count on us!" But I realized that we only had one rifle and three lances and that the enemy had forty men; so I told my people that although I had confidence in them, I did not consider the place suited for any resistance. I told them
that we were too much out in the open and could easily be surrounded. Consequently, I thought it prudent to retreat to the bank of the Cajaro River, a league away, and seek support there.

They were easily convinced of the wisdom of my advice. They agreed that I should order the retreat. But the enemy was already very near. When they saw us turn our backs, they believed it to be the opportune moment to attack us. Acting as the rear guard, I turned my face from time to time to impose respect on those who were advancing on us. Because of this or because they saw that we were retreating orderly, they did not attack us. When my comrades got to the river bank, they threw themselves in, although it was very deep. I, who followed as rear guard, was forced to do the same thing in the midst of enemy firing. Our pursuers did not risk jumping in the river, for although this river was not very wide, it was full of quicksand and ferocious animals, such as man-eating alligators. Furthermore, since by then we had established ourselves firmly on the opposite shores, they realized the great advantage of our position. They stayed there while I headed out on another road in the direction of the capital of Barinas. There I had hopes of finding some patriot troops.

An incident occurred then which, although funny in some circumstances, would have had fatal consequences for me had it happened just a little earlier. My horse, so useful to me up to that point started shaking. He stopped and was
unable to continue the march except a step at a time. If our pursuers had crossed the river, I would have undoubtedly fallen into their hands. The fear that they could still do this caused me quite a bit of anxiety. Fortunately, at that time I saw a Negro at some distance who seemed to have a good mount. Instantly I conceived the idea of taking it from him. I ordered my companions to continue the march, and I went on alone following the road the Negro had taken. At first that poor devil tried to change directions. Finally we had to meet and then I approached him to talk. I asked him several questions about things of little interest. When he least expected it, I jumped to the ground, sword in hand, and secured the reins of his horse. The Negro then jumped to the ground. Without the slightest opposition, he left me in possession of the animal. I was able to continue my way then in order to join my companions.

A little later, I saw a man on horseback at a certain distance who was galloping in the same direction we were, for one of my companions recognized my old horse. It seems my horse had recovered his strength and was being ridden by the same Negro whom I had just robbed.

Not very far away we discovered a group of cavalrymen. We were afraid they might be enemies, and I went ahead to reconnoiter. The cavalrymen turned out to be farmers of Tapia. They had become alarmed by the news the Negro had given them of what had occurred to him. They had come, with the rest of the citizens of the town, to block the passage
of those they thought to be a party of bandits. On recognizing us, they put aside all fear. They took us to their homes and entertained us all with the greatest generosity.
CHAPTER V


1814

Far from my pursuers, I continued the march up to Barinas, where I arrived after traveling forty-eight hours. The patriot Commander Ramón García de Sena was there with five hundred infantrymen and two hundred horses.¹ He put me in charge of the cavalry and ordered me to lead an excursion up to Guasdualito by way of the towns of Canaguá and Quintero. I carried out his orders with the speed demanded

¹Ramón García de Sena was a colonel in the patriot army. He worked zealously to help form the revolutionary junta of Barcelona in 1811. He joined Bolívar to help liberate the northern part of New Granada. In the battle of Cerritos Blancos he fought heroically with inferior forces against the Indian Reyes Vargas. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfica, 176-77.
by the circumstances, for the enemy army under Yañez's command was between the border of San Fernando and the city of Nutrias, only three days march away. Permit me to copy here the account of the events that transpired later, which were reported with sufficient accuracy in an article of the Nacional of Caracas on August 12, 1838, number 124.

Under the orders of the aforementioned leader (García de Sena), approximately nine hundred men were gathered in Barinas at the beginning of the year 1814. Among these men, there were about four hundred select, well-mounted cavalrymen. On the twelfth, the city was besieged by one thousand cavalrymen under the command of Remigio Ramos and the Catalan, Puy. Among the officers in Sena's army were the Señores Florencio Palacios, Diego Ibarra, León Ferrer, Rafael Rosales, Francisco Conde, José Antonio Páez, Francisco Olmedilla, and Juan José Conde. These patriot officers wanted very much to go after the besiegers who had set fire to the city even as far as a quarter of a mile from the plaza. But Sena would not allow this. In fact, the rumor began to spread in the army and among the citizens that García de Sena was trying to abandon the city. Consequently, he found it necessary to present himself before the army and swear repeatedly, even by the cross on his sword, that this was not so. He told them that he would go out to fight the enemy and that, regardless of the outcome, he would return to the city. Trusting in this solemn oath, almost three hundred of the most distinguished citizens of Barinas, almost unarmed, consented to guard the city. On the afternoon of this day, January 19, García de Sena and his division left on the Mérida road. On the first encounter, they defeated the enemy, who fled heading toward Nutrias. Our army was not permitted to pursue them. Instead, our men were ordered to halt when they were within sight of the city. Finally at night fall, they were ordered to march off by files toward Mérida on the Barinas road. They did this without giving those who remained in the plaza the slightest warning, notwithstanding the fact that the

2Remigio Ramos was the Spanish Colonel in command of a cavalry division in Apure and Barinas. Lecuna, Crónica Razonada, I, 202, 223, 354, 361. The Catalan Puy has been previously identified.
enemy was so terrified that they had not stopped fleeing in two days. On January 22 the people of Barinas still believed that our army was pursuing the enemy. It was only when the city was besieged the next day that the treachery of García de Sena became known.

This one (García de Sena) wanted at all cost to join General [Rafael] Urdaneta's division, which was in Barquisimeto. Then in order to whitewash his black action, he tried to say that his cavalry was betraying him. He even pretended to fire on these

---

3 General Rafael Urdaneta was born in Maracaibo in 1788. He studied Latin and Philosophy in Caracas and Maracaibo. In 1804 he went to Bogotá to work with his uncle who was Contador Mayor del Tribunal de Cuentas. In 1810 he became active in the revolutionary movement and joined the battalion "Patriots of Cundinamarca." In November of this year he was placed in command of "Battalion No. 3 of the Union" and went with Bolívar to Venezuela. While serving under Colonel Castillo he aided Bolívar in the defeat of Colonel Ramón Correa and was promoted to the rank of colonel. He joined José Félix Ribas and together they were victorious at Niquitao. He was defeated in Barquisimeto and Arao, but won laurels with Bolívar at Carabobo. He led the retreat when Boves defeated the Republic and reorganized the dispersed troops. By 1815 he had become a division general. He went to the Apure region and accepted Páez as squadron commander. In 1818 Bolívar appointed him Governor and Commandant General of the Province of Caracas. In 1819 he represented Barinas at the Congress of Angostura. Then Bolívar appointed him Chief of Staff of the Army of the Apure. He joined his troops with the British Legion and the German Column. In 1821 he was promoted to General in Chief and Commander in Chief of the Military Department. In 1822 he was Commandant General of the Department of Cundinamarca. From 1823 to 1824 Urdaneta served as President of the Senate of Gran Colombia. In 1826 he bitterly opposed Páez's disobedience to Colombian laws. He became Colombia's Secretary of War and Navy. He voted against Bolívar's dictatorship and in 1830 was elected a member of the Congreso Admisible. In 1831 he retired from public office only to return periodically to serve his country. He died in Paris in 1845 while serving as Colombia's Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary to Spain. Dávila, Diccionario Biográfico, II, 343-49; Memorias del General Rafael Urdaneta (Caracas, 1888), 11-15.
men the first night of the march, after he had left them as rear guard. What signs of treason could a cavalry troop that had just defeated the enemy and marched towards Mérida possibly give? Perhaps they might have spoken some words of reproof for a conduct which was obviously treacherous, dishonest, and prejudicial. The fact was that this cavalry troop obeyed as many orders as were given to it. They were even forced to go by Callejones, where nearly all the horses perished. As a result, very few of the cavalry reached the town of Piedras. There García de Sena told them to take whatever course they wanted. From here Páez went on foot toward Mérida. He was accompanied by Luciano Blasco, José María Olivera, and Andrés Elorza, who later became a Colonel. It was also here that García de Sena received an official communication from the Governor and Commander of Arms in Mérida, Juan Antonio Paredes, asking him for help. García de Sena sent him about one hundred infantrymen led by Commander Francisco Conde and went on to Barquisimeto to the Trujillo road. The Goths then took Barinas and assassinated its unarmed defenders.

Governor Paredes was in Lagunilla getting ready to march toward Bailadores where the Goths had risen up in arms and were threatening the capital. It was there that Paredes received a relay sent by Commander [Bartolomé] Lizón, who had joined the soldiers of Bailadores with his five hundred infantrymen. This

4Commander Francisco Conde was born in Caracas in 1780. He joined the revolutionary army in 1810 and served first under Miranda and later Bolívar. He went to New Granada with Urdaneta and later fought with Páez in Apure. In 1818 he became a Colonel. In 1821 he served as Governor of Guayana and in 1823 of Barinas. He was named Intendant of the Department of Apure in 1825. He died in 1842. Dávila, Diccionario Biográfico, I, 95-96.

5It is interesting to note that the Latin Americans, particularly during the wars for independence, referred to the Spaniards as godos, or Goths. This was a disparaging term they used to remind the Spaniards of their barbaric Visigothic ancestors, who had ruled most of Spain from 441 until the invasion of the Saracens under Tarik in 711. Even to this day, in some sections of Latin America the term godo is used to denote someone cruel and unrefined. Cunninghame Graham, Páez, 75.

6The Spanish Captain, Bartolome Lizón, was able to defeat Colonel Francisco Santander and his patriot forces on
relay told of the surrender of Mérida and announced that Lizón would come with a knife in one hand and an olive branch in the other. He threatened to behead all the population and reduce the city to ashes if even the lowest of his soldiers was wounded. By means of this relay it also became known that Lizón had stayed in Bailadores with three hundred musketeers and then had advanced up to Estanques with two hundred light infantry, and two artillery pieces, under the command of Commander Matute. Paredes resolved to attack the latter before Lizón joined them. In the meantime, Páez had asked Paredes for a post, and the latter wanted to put him in charge of a cavalry company. However, Páez did not accept this command, for he felt that the men of this company were not well suited to serve in that capacity. Instead he preferred to serve as an assistant in the small squadron led by Captain Antonio Ranjel. Páez was on his own personal mount, an excellent horse he had found in Egido.

Then the patriot forces marched from Lagunilla toward Estanques, as the famous cacao plantation is called. The Goths were there when the patriots arrived. Some shooting occurred, and as a result the

October 12, 1814, in the plains of Carrillo. This victory placed the Spaniards in possession of Pamplona, the most important city in the north of New Granada, and thus put them in control of the valleys of Cúcuta and to a certain extent also, the province of Mérida. Baralt and Díaz, Resumen de la Historia, II, 202.

Colonel Antonio Ranjel was born in Mérida on June 13, 1788. He began his services for Colombian independence dating from 1810 when he was in Venezuela. In 1813 he moved to Casanare where he had Páez under his command after the latter's dispute with Commandant Chavez in Bailadores. He fought victoriously in Chire in 1815 and participated in the action against Vicente Peña in Arauca. In 1816 he fought against the Royalist Colonel Francisco López in the battle at Palmarito. In 1817 he was defeated in Nutrias by Reyes Vargas. In 1819 he returned to the llanos. After participating in the Battle of Carabobo, he was ordered by Bolívar to besiege Puerto Cabello. He died of a fever while carrying out this order. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 498-99.
Goths retreated toward Bailadores and the patriots took possession of that plantation. The Goths crossed the plantation grounds and later formed a small column. There Ranjel, Páez, and their fifteen riflemen found them. Some shots were exchanged. Later Ranjel retreated with his men, despite the fact that Páez insisted on staying. Consequently, Páez was the only one remaining to observe the Goths.

After Ranjel retreated, Matute's column marched off by files in the direction of Bailadores along a slope that in its widest section barely allowed the soldiers to march more than in a single file. Páez followed the enemy and, observing that they could not form to resist an attack, shouted "Long Live the Patria!" Simulating different voices, he shot suddenly and killed the last sergeant in the rear guard. Frightened, the enemy forgot how to defend itself. Páez achieved an easy, though very important, victory. Some of the enemy soldiers left the road and found death in the precipices. Others trampled over their companions and presented better and bigger targets for the bullets of the daring champion. Others threw themselves on the ground and shouted for mercy. Still others threw down their arms and munitions. They even abandoned their two artillery pieces.

The only one who disputed this victory with his life was a certain José María Sánchez, a man who was greatly feared by the people of Mérida. He forced Páez to get off his horse and engage in hand-to-hand combat for the possession of his (Páez's) lance. When Páez finally wrested it from Sánchez, all opposition ceased. 8 Páez then followed the enemy to where

---

8 Páez states in his footnote to the above: "This Sánchez was famous among the Royalists for his valor and daring. He was also greatly feared by the patriots of Mérida. It was said that in an encounter in the town of Lagunillas he had dismounted a violento, or mountain cannon, and carried it on his shoulders as if it were the lightest rifle made. When I was pursuing the terrified Royalists, Sánchez turned suddenly and was successful in warding off the lance thrusts I aimed at him with the short carbine he carried. When he saw that he could not use the firearm freely, he threw it on the ground and grabbed my lance, intending to fight me for it. Without letting my lance go, I threw myself off my horse. Through a great effort, I was able to wrest the lance from him and wound him mortally. Seeing him stretched out on the ground, I tried to take a handsome cartridge belt or
the downgrade of the slope ended with a small river called the San Pablo. Matute arrived at Bailadores with only twelve men. The result of this heroic action, in addition to destroying a strong enemy column which left all its armaments, flag, baggage, munitions, and artillery in our power, was that Lizón fled ashamedly toward Zulia. He officially communicated to Commander Briceño (alias Pacheco, el Cotudo), residing in Guasualito, that he was retreating, for a cavalry column had destroyed two hundred of his men.

When Páez returned, he found our army in the same place where Sánchez lay dead. The citizens of Mérida were there also. They could not find words with which to praise him for his victory and for, above all, having ended the life of the monster, Sánchez. Our troops entered Bailadores on the following day. The Mac-Gregor division of New Granada arrived a little later.9 Senores Concha, [Fernando] Serrano, and

muleteer's girdle that he had around his waist. He broke out in angry words, improper for the moment. I exhorted him then to die well, and I said the Apostles' Creed aloud, encouraging him to repeat it. Fortunately for me, I turned my eyes accidentally and saw that, instead of accompanying me in my prayers, he was unsheathing the dagger he had at his waist. I confess that my charity died completely, and my indignation did not permit me to concern myself any longer with the future of my adversary. With one lance thrust, I freed him from the anger that engulfed him even more than the blood he was shedding.

After this encounter with Sánchez, I continued the pursuit. I took the eight Royalist artillerymen prisoners, and I took possession of their flag and two cannons. One of the cannon was a gift from a lady of Mérida, and her name was inscribed over its mouth. According to rumors, this was the same cannon that Sánchez had carried from Lagunillas. Later we lost this same artillery piece three times and recovered it an equal number of times."

9 The Mac-Gregor division was led by Gregory Mac Gregor, descendant of an old Highland family. In his youth he had served in the British Army. In 1811 he went to Caracas to join the revolutionaries. There he married a Venezuelan lady, Doña Josefa Antonia Andrea de Xeres Aristeguieta y Lovera Bolivar. He became Colonel and Adjutant-General to Francisco Miranda. After the latter's fall, he served under Bolivar with such distinction, that he was received into the order of Libertadores in 1817. In 1819 he and his men took Puerto
Cabello, but were surprised by the enemies and forced to flee. In 1821 he quit the Venezuelan service and settled on the Mosquito Coast. There he made himself Cacique of the Payais Indians under the title of His Highness Gregor. In 1839 he petitioned the Venezuelan government to be reinstated in his general's rank and pay. His request was granted. He died a few years later in Caracas. Alfred Hasbrouck, *Foreign Legionaries in the Liberation of Spanish South America* (New York, 1928), 25, 26, 154-58; Cunninghame Graham, *Páez*, 96.

No additional information could be found on Señor Concha. Fernando Serrano was the colonel whose forces, pursued by Morillo's troops, had crossed from New Granada to Venezuela. He participated in a junta of a small group of lawyers and chieftains who decided to set up their own government. This junta had appointed Serrano as Supreme Chief, Francisco Yafes as Minister of State, and Colonel Francisco de Paula Santander as commander of the troops. Páez was called before this group and acquiesced in all these appointments—probably tongue in cheek. However, when Páez returned from the horse-catching expedition Santander had sent him on, his troops had "mutinied" and insisted that he dissolve this government and take both civil and military command. Páez obliged his troops in September of 1816. Madariaga, *Bolivar*, 294.

Francisco de Paula Santander was born in April, 1792 in Cúcuta. When the revolution broke out, he was a student at the College of San Bartolomé at Santa Fé where he was studying law. He was barely eighteen when he took up arms against Spain. In 1810, he was banner-bearer of the national guards and adjutant of the military commander at Marquita. A soldier of the federation, he was made prisoner by Narino in 1812. After his retreat to Casanare, he fought in the Venezuelan campaigns and attained the rank of brigadier general. Bolivar, an excellent judge of men, selected him as the most capable Granadine to organize and lead the invasion of New Granada after the Royalists had regained control there in 1816. He became famous for his heroism in the Battle of Boyacá in 1819 in which the Spanish were defeated. In 1819 also he was named Vice-President of New Granada, with the special commission of directing the war in the liberated provinces while Bolivar went off to conduct the war in Ecuador and Peru. When Bolivar accepted dictatorial powers in 1828, Santander openly opposed the dictatorship and became Bolivar's chief rival. That same year he was banished from Colombia on the grounds of suspicion of having participated in a conspiracy to take Bolivar's life. He was traveling in Europe
After the action at Bailadores, I stayed in Mérida until the middle of the year 1814 when Urdaneta arrived on his way out of Venezuela.\textsuperscript{11} He incorporated me in his troops, giving me command of a cavalry company that I myself had organized in Mérida. This company was composed of all those llaneros that García de Sena had cast aside. I went on to take part in the Battle of Mucuchies. However, I never entered the action because a mile before getting to the battlefield, Urdaneta discovered that Barlovento’s battalion

\textsuperscript{11}The year 1814 was militarily disastrous for Venezuela, for all that had been accomplished in the brief but memorable campaign of 1813 was undone. The reverses were caused mainly by the rise of a new Royalist leader, José Tomás Boves. He defeated Vicente Campo Elias at La Puerta on February 3. Boves then advanced toward Aragua while Bolívar marched from Caracas to Valencia in order to face him. They fought a battle on February 28 and another on March 24. Then Boves was forced to face Mariño, who was coming up from Aragua de Barcelona. Mariño defeated Boves at Bocachica. Boves then retreated toward Calabozo, pursued by Bolívar. At this point Ceballos had to lift his siege of General Urdaneta in Valencia. While Generals José Ceballos and Juan Manuel de Cajigal, who came to reinforce Ceballos, were being defeated by Bolívar at Carabobo on May 28, Urdaneta was "saving the army of Caracas" by marching it to Cúcuta. It was now that Páez joined Urdaneta.

The rest of 1814 went as badly for the patriots. Boves recovered enough from Carabobo to defeat the combined forces of Bolívar and Mariño at the second battle of La Puerta. By July 16, Boves was in Caracas and had set up a dictatorship even more severe than that of Monteverde. At Aragua de Barcelona Bolívar’s forces were wiped out by Morales. Bolívar escaped and sailed to Cartagena. \textsuperscript{12, 13, 14, 15}
had been defeated. This battalion had been ordered by Urdaneta to remain where they were until he arrived with the rest of the troops, composed of battalions from Valencia, Guaira, and seventy cavalrmen under my command. Urdaneta had to protect Barlovento from the enemy, who was pursuing him before his very eyes. Consequently, he did not want to enter the battle, but instead countermarched immediately to Mérida in order to begin his retreat to New Granada.

In Bailadores, I left Urdaneta because the cavalry Commandant General Chavez, decided to take my horse and give it to another officer. I objected to this injustice until I was finally forced to yield purely for reasons of military discipline. Nevertheless, I was so disgusted, that I decided to leave and carry out the resolution I had made in Mérida to go to the plains of Casanare and begin operations against Venezuela. I wanted to take possession of the Apure territory and of the very men who had destroyed the patriots under the orders of [José Tomás] Boves, [José] Ceballos, and Yañez. Everyone I told about my project thought I was

---

12 Boves was born José Tomás Rodríguez in Jijón in the province of Asturias, Spain. He had been a pilot's apprentice by profession. Convicted of piracy, he was condemned to eight years' imprisonment in Puerto Cabello. A Spanish mercantile family by the name of Jovei succeeded in getting this sentence commuted to confinement and exile in Calabozo. Here he dedicated himself for some time to the business of being a merchant. (By this time he had changed his name to Boves, either out of gratitude for his benefactors or out of embarrassment for his own.) His business now took him to the various little towns and hamlets in the llanos where he purchased the "fruits of the country"—cheeses, hides,
delirious. They could not see how the llaneros, who had shown themselves to be so enthusiastic for the cause of the feathers, and furs. It was during this time that he learned to be the consummate horseman his future exploits proved him to be. It was even more important that during this time he became popular with the llaneros. A contemporary described him then as fair, with blue eyes, of medium height, and capable of expressing both great energy and cruelty.

When the revolution broke out in 1810, Boves joined the patriots enthusiastically, serving under the orders of Juan Escalona. When the latter struck him when he refused to do the duty of a common soldier, Boves deserted and joined the Royalists under Monteverde. He soon rose to be a captain in the Royalist ranks. When the Spanish General Cajigal evacuated the town of Barcelona in 1813, he left Boves and his lieutenant Francisco Tomás Morales his ammunition and arms. At this point, Boves, taking advantage of his knowledge of the llanos and its inhabitants, retired to the llanos and raised a large army, partly by promising the plunder of the towns as reward. Boves called this force the Infernal Legion. (At this same time another Spaniard, Yañez, was raising a second army of llaneros on the plains of Apure.)

In October of 1813, Boves was defeated by another Spaniard, Vicente Campo Elías, who was serving the patriot cause, at La Sabana de Mosquitero. When Campo Elías celebrated his victory by cutting the throats of one-half of the inhabitants of Calabozo, the llaneros flocked by the hundreds to join Boves, most anxious for revenge. Boves then found himself at the head of an army of seven thousand and marched victoriously on Ocumare. After his victory over Bolivar at La Puerta, Boves swept onward like a prairie fire, destroying everything and murdering all prisoners. His cruelty seemed to grow. He bound his followers, who were mainly of mixed blood, closer to him by declaring war and death on all whites—this despite the fact that he was white himself. He defeated Bolivar again in the second battle of La Puerta. Fortunately for the patriots, Boves was killed in battle in December of 1814.

Boves' bloodthirstiness and excessive cruelty have become legendary and caused him to be known as another Atila, the Hun. Despite these traits and his great personal ambition, Boves unintentionally made two great contributions to the patriot cause. First of all, he organized the llaneros not only into a cavalry unit, but also into a conscious group with a collective spirit ready for a leader such as José Antonio Páez. Secondly, he established a social democracy in his forces, freeing slaves and promoting mixed
Spanish Monarch and who had committed themselves so deeply in the fight against the patriots, could change and decide to defend the patriot cause. If I were unable to change their loyalty, everyone also felt that I would find it difficult to defeat them in the battles which would necessarily follow, for they were superior in numbers and horses.

Despite the logic of these objections, I left Bailadores for the Casanare plains without a passport from Urdaneta, but still with the firm determination to carry out my plan. In fact, my resolution was so firm, that I refused the command of a cavalry regiment that García Rubira offered me when I went through New Granada. Defying a thousand difficulties and traveling on foot the greater part of the way, I was able to cross the Andes and arrive at the Casanare plains accompanied by my family and some Venezuelans. I had been forced to resort to selling several personal objects in order to provide a meager subsistence for us.

When we arrived at Pore, the capital of Casanare, I


José Ceballos was the military commander of Coro who opposed the independence movement in Caracas in 1810. He ordered Monteverde to begin his offensive against the patriots from Coro. As mentioned earlier, he had besieged Urdaneta's army in Valencia and was defeated by Bolívar at Carabobo in 1814. Morón, History of Venezuela, 108, 109, 118, 119.

General José Yañez y Tiscar has been previously identified.
went to see the Venezuelan Commander, Francisco Olmedilla.\textsuperscript{13} He had been appointed Commander-in-Chief by the Casanare government. Olmedilla and the government welcomed me enthusiastically. They facilitated funds and proved so eager to help me with my plans, that within three days I was able to be in the town of Betoye at the head of a cavalry regiment. Several Venezuelan officers who were there without a post joined me. Soon we had a cavalry corps of more than a thousand men. Then we started the march to Venezuela on October 10, 1814.

Under Olmedilla's command, our division crossed the deserts of the plains of Larenas in order not to be seen by the enemy. We only marched at night and rested during the day. We swam across the Arauca River, carrying out weapons and saddles over our heads. I carried the weapons and saddles of those who did not know how to swim in this manner in cow-hide boats. Thanks to these precautions, we were

\textsuperscript{13}Francisco de Olmedilla joined the revolutionary movement in 1810. The Governor of Barinas then, Manuel A. P. Briceno, placed him in command of a cavalry detachment. From 1812 until 1813 he was in exile during Monteverde's rule. He joined Briceño again in 1813 and fought against the Royalists in Berinas. He joined the Liberator in the Declaration of 1813 and fought with him in Araure. He returned to Barinas with García de Sena when Governor Briceño resigned his post after a disagreement with Bolívar over governmental principles. After the siege of Barinas in 1814, he emigrated to New Granada. He went from Casanare in Arauca and in 1815 defeated Colonel Miguel Briceño Pacheco in Guasualito. Olmedilla fell into Brigadier Calzada's hands in Pore in 1816. Dávila, \textit{Diccionario Biográfico}, II, 27-28.
able to arrive at the village of Guasdualito at 4:00 a.m. on January 29 without having been discovered by the enemy. There were about eight hundred Royalists there, counting both cavalrymen and unmounted dragoons on garrison, under the command of Commander Pacheco Briceño, nicknamed el Cotudo. Our division was organized in three columns. I led the first column, and we were placed on the road leading away from Guasdualito and into the interior of Venezuela and San Camila. The second column flanked the town, while the third was situated across from where I was.

Before dawn, Olmedilla imprudently ordered a cannon blast and the sounding of reveille. This let the enemy know they were surrounded. They formed full strength in a column in the plaza. Then they marched to where I was and attacked suddenly. It was so dark, that we failed to see the enemy forces until they started firing at close range on one of the squadrons that was at the front of the street where they were heading. Consequently, they were able to break through this line. Unwittingly, the enemy failed to notice that there was another squadron on the left flank, for I had established a hammer formation—the only one permitted by the terrain. Suddenly this squadron, which I was leading, attacked the enemy from behind. Despite the many efforts of the Spanish Commander, the enemy was completely defeated in this one lone charge. Very few of the soldiers escaped death or being taken prisoner. There were more than two hundred dead and wounded left on the battlefield, and
twenty-eight men were taken prisoners. The enemy then tried to take the road called "Manga," which goes out to the valleys of Cúcuta, for they were attempting to seek refuge with General [Sebastián de la] Calzada who had marched the previous day with fifteen hundred men from Guasdualito to invade those valleys.\textsuperscript{14} The routed enemy was fleeing in the area between the town and the Apure River, one league away. Among them were Commander Manuel María Marchán, Captains Francisco Guerrero and José Ricaurte, and other officers. Well-mounted, these men had been able to withdraw from the battlefield. I followed them very closely.

When they reached the shore of the Apure River, these men went separate ways. Three of them went into the forest. Two of them stopped and threw down their swords. Commander Marchán and Captains Guerrero and Ricaurte hurled themselves in the river with their horses. I hurled myself in the river also. Guerrero and Ricaurte came out on the opposite shore and left their command behind. I interrupted the latter's retreat, for I got to land before him. I waited on the river bank for him and let the other two go. As soon as

\textsuperscript{14}General Sebastián de la Calzada was a Spaniard of humble birth and education who had served in the Queen's battalion in 1810. He succeeded General Yañez in command of the Spanish forces after the latter's death in battle in 1814. Although Calzada was generally considered little more than a guerilla chieftain, he still refused to yield to Morales's order to surrender Puerto Cabello in 1822 after the capitulation order had been signed. He fought bravely to defend Puerto Cabello, but lost to Páez. Cunninghame Graham, Páez, 85, 92, 203-209; Madariaga, Bolívar, 303-304.
Marchán's horse set foot on land, I ordered him to surrender. He did this without any opposition, but begged me to spare his life. I told him I would and ordered him to come out of the river. I was astonished that this man, who was riding such a famous horse, did not have the determination to escape. I was also astonished that he did not have the courage to attack me, particularly when he saw that I could not receive help from my people.

Marchán agreed to cross the river with me again. On the opposite bank, I found that my troops had destroyed the crews of two Royalists boats. I organized my people then and went to Olmedilla with two hundred and twenty-eight prisoners. When I finished giving him the account of the battle, which had ended so happily, I told him that I had offered to spare the life of the Spanish Commander.

"How do you have the courage," he asked me, "to present this man alive to me? Why have you not killed him? Because I have never used my arms against the vanquished!" I answered. "There he is. Kill him if you want to!"

On the spot Olmedilla ordered Captain Rafael Maldonado to cut Marchán's head off. Maldonado carried out this barbarous order. Immediately Olmedilla ordered all the troops to go to the plaza with the prisoners. The troops formed in a square, with the prisoners in the middle. Olmedilla ordered his second in command, Fernando Figueredo, to have
all the prisoners' heads cut off. Figueredo, who rivaled Olmedilla in savage cruelty and bloodthirstiness, flew to witness the execution. He appointed Captains Juan Santiago Torres and Rafael Maldonado to carry out the order.

The prisoners had been unaware of the meaning of those preparations until they noticed Chaplain A. Pardo coming with a Santo Cristo in his left hand. They fell on their knees as he started to bless them with his right hand. Immediately, the two captains began cutting off heads. When the fifth head fell, I could no longer contain my indignation. I headed my horse toward the two executioners, and I warned them that if they killed just one more individual, it would cost them their lives. The captains, frightened and surprised, stopped the execution. Meanwhile, Figueredo reprimanded me. He was irritated by my opposition to the fulfillment of the orders of our commanding

Colonel Fernando Figueredo was born in San Carlos, Venezuela in 1790. He entered the revolutionary army as a captain in 1810. In 1812 he was imprisoned for seven months in Coro and Puerto Cabello. When he got free, he joined Bolívar and continued the campaign. In 1814 he fought with Urdaneta and was forced to emigrate to New Granada. After fighting under Ranjel and Olmedilla, he joined Páez in 1815. When Olmedilla decided it was useless to fight for the patriot cause any longer against such great obstacles, he left his troops to Figueredo's command. In 1816 Figueredo joined these troops to Páez's to fight in Apure. In 1819 he fought with Páez in Las Queseras and with Bolívar in Boyacá. At this point he was rated one of Páez's most trusted "lieutenants." As a colonel in 1824 he fought in the Battle of Carabobo. For three years he was Commandant of Arms in San Carlos and later served in this same capacity in the Province of Carabobo until 1827. He died in Nutrias in 1841. Dávila, Diccionario Biográfico, I, 150-51. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 154-55.
officer. I told him calmly that I was determined to die in order to defend the lives of those unfortunate beings whom they were assassinating so horribly. Figueredo screamed at me, insisting that the prisoners must die regardless of what I had to say.

When the captains stopped obeying Figueredo's orders, the latter went to Olmedilla so that he could dispose anew how to carry out his wishes. Before Figueredo found Olmedilla, however, I had already presented myself to him. I was telling him what was happening and trying to make him see the inhumanity and stupid barbarity of that slaughter. I pointed out how unwise this action was particularly when the time came to penetrate Venezuelan territory with the title of liberators and friends of humanity. Olmedilla, without reasoning, coldly answered me that the life of the prisoners was in Figueredo's hands.

"Well, if this is the case," Figueredo answered, "they shall all die."

We started arguing again before the troops and the prisoners. Finally, I won the argument, for Figueredo was unable to have another man killed. Furthermore, he was unable to have me punished as he wanted to do, for he knew that the troops would not permit a violent act to be perpetrated against me.

Thus, the lives of those unfortunate beings were saved. They had been condemned to death by the evil heart of a vandal. The good treatment they received now made
friends out of our former enemies. In fact, all of them later enlisted in our infantry. They became such faithful and inseparable companions in so many battles that, had there not been many witnesses to these events, these men would run the risk of passing before posterity as fables invented for solace and entertainment.

This account—and I say it deliberately—involves one of the acts of disobedience and insubordination with which I am accused by those who dislike me. Insubordination to Olmedilla and Figueredo indeed! No! Obedience, even in its strictest military sense, cannot change the sword of the soldier into the knife of the executioner, or transform war into the slaughter of prisoners. I give the Almighty infinite thanks because he has left me time, reason, and the good memory necessary to relate these events as they happened so that just men might judge them as they deserve.

16Páez's insubordination was really to Simón Bolívar and his Decree of 1813 which declared "war to the death" to all Spaniards.
CHAPTER VI


1815

An order from Olmedilla to countermarch to Casanare ended our dispute over the prisoners. With the latter well-secured, the army started moving. We were afraid that Calzada would return to Guasdualito when he heard what Guerrero and Ricaurte were bound to tell him about our slaughter of the troops he had left there. That very afternoon, the army got to the shore of the Arauca River, only five leagues from Guasdualito. Olmedilla put me in charge of crossing the army, ordering me to send the prisoners first. This operation took the entire night, for we had only one canoe. The following morning about 9:00 I crossed to the other side of the river. At the camp I discovered that they were assassinating the seventy-six prisoners at that very moment at a place called "Las Cuatro Matas." Many of the officers came to me and begged me to save them. I
asked how much time had elapsed since they had been gone. I deduced from their answer that it was too late to save them.

Olmedilla continued the march to Cuiloto. When we got there, though, he had left the troops under Figueredo's command while he himself headed toward Pore, the capital of Casanare. Before his departure he revealed that he was very displeased with the Casanare government. He stated that he would not return to head the troops and told everyone to do whatever he thought best. Figueredo then ordered all the men to remain on foot at the outskirts of Cuiloto. He put the horses on the plains in the direction of the enemy camp. This act alarmed the troops greatly, for they were still afraid that Calzada might march against us. Because of this fear, a junta of officers was formed which commissioned four of its members to tell Figueredo that the horses were not well placed. They wanted to point out that should the enemy forces attack suddenly, they could easily take possession of our horses. They also wished to remind Figueredo that there were other roads, that were not covered by advance guards, which the enemy could use to advance. This commission was composed of Major Rosario Obregon, Captains Genaro Vásquez, and Juan Pablo Burgos, and myself.¹ Since I commanded two

¹No further information was available on Rosario Obregon and Juan Pablo Burgos. Captain Genaro Vásquez, a native of Venezuela, started his military career in 1814. His comrades-in-arms described him thus: "Valor was a habit with him." Páez always relied on him for his riskier undertakings. Vásquez was killed in the Battle of Ortiz on March
squadrons, it fell my lot to be the spokesman. We all feared that Figueredo, a capricious and haughty man, would not receive our commission well. We were correct.

When we were brought before Figueredo, I told him that we wanted to talk to him privately about military affairs. He ordered us to a room and closed the door. After we had placed our swords on the table, I fulfilled my charge by telling him what had brought us there. I pointed out to him the need of putting the horses at the rear of the army and of covering our unguarded points. Figueredo showed great displeasure on hearing these observations. He retorted that the army had nothing to say about the measures he took for its security, and that he was of the opinion that the camp and the horses were in a secure place. He added that in the final analysis he was the only one responsible for the army; therefore, he would appreciate it if in the future we would abstain from making observations that he had not solicited.

"Commander," I responded, "Permit me to tell you that you are not the only one here who is responsible for this army. Each one of us has his share of responsibility, and I, for one, am not satisfied to have another person be fully responsible when my life and honor are at stake."

27, 1818. Fourteen years later, in 1832, Páez took his remains to Valencia. Seeking to perpetuate the name of his beloved friend, Páez named the lake at his farm in San Fernando after him. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 675.
Figueroedo could not contain the anger that dominated him any longer. Pronouncing a certain military word energetically, he kicked the floor and shouted at us: "I repeat that I am the one who is responsible here, and that the army has nothing to say about my measures."

It was not possible for me to let that exclamation go unanswered, so I replied with equal vigor and firmness. Then Figueredo, who was already predisposed against me because of the incident involving the prisoners in Guasdualito, opened the door of the room, called Lieutenant Juan Antonio Mirabal, and said to him: "Take Commander Páez prisoner and shackle him."

I already knew the manner of man I was dealing with. I took my sword and left the room, exclaiming in a loud voice: "Come and get me. But let me warn you that I am determined to die killing rather than let myself be dragged like a criminal. If I am to be judged, an order for my arrest will be sufficient. Force, however, shall never be able to conquer me." Then I headed toward the troops.

Figueroedo immediately suspended the order to imprison me and spoke with the other three men who had remained in the room. He asked them to go quiet me, for he supposed that I had gone to raise the troops against him. When he was convinced that I had not thought of such a thing, he resumed his haughty tone. He told me that I was insubordinate and that he would gladly give me a passport if I asked him for one.
The following day Figueredo did issue me a passport for the capital. Twenty-four hours after I had left, the greater part of his army had already deserted. Figueredo then informed the government about what had transpired. I did, too; and I related the event clearly and justified my resistance to the unjust prison order he had issued against me. The government approved my conduct and removed Figueredo from command.

General Calzada then advanced toward the camp at Cuiloto where only one hundred and eighty men remained out of the original thirteen hundred. This remnant retreated under the orders of citizen Miguel Guerrero to a town named El Puerto, which bears toward the left shore of the Casanare River.\(^2\) Guerrero then replaced Figueredo in command of the troops, and thus he began his military career.

Calzada got as far as Cuiloto and took possession of a great part of the horses, saddles, and lances that had belonged both to the troops that had deserted and to those that had followed Guerrero. The latter had left in such a hurry that some of them had not been able to corral horses

\(^2\)Miguel Guerrero became a general in the Venezuelan army. Although he had performed many invaluable services to the cause of independence while under Olmedilla's command, his military career really began at this point. Later he served with Páez in the Battles of Chire and Mata de la Miel. He was in the battles against Peña in Arauca and Palmarito. In 1819 he was a member of the Congress of Angostura. In 1826 he declared himself in favor of Bolívar in Venezuela. Later he was opposed to Páez as Commandant of Arms in Barinas. Scarpetta and Vergara, *Diccionario Biográfico*, 204-205.
for their retreat. A shipment of salt that had just arrived from Chitaga also fell in Calzada's hands. Salt was a very rare commodity and of prime necessity for the troops. At this time Calzada could have easily taken possession of the entire province of Casanare if he had continued. I do not know why he countermarched to Guasdualito, for the patriots in that province then had time to organize a new corps of troops.

When I arrived at Pore, I found Olmedilla there. Knowing that I had left the army, he asked me to come to his house. I went without delay. He was somewhat indisposed, or at least he seemed that way. "I regret to hear," he told me, "that you have left the army, for I know what an asset you are to it. On the other hand, though, I am glad, for it offers me the opportunity to tell you what I think about the unequal battle that America has undertaken against the power of Spain. I believe that it is impossible for us to win, and that we shall all perish in this contest without profiting from our labors and vigilance, and without even the gratitude of the people or of those we command. Therefore, I have decided to leave the army and go to Vichava—a place which is inhabited only by savage Indians, but which is completely inaccessible to the Spanish troops. I rely on some companions, who are convinced of our critical circumstance, to follow me. I hope that you, too, Commander Páez, will follow me. If you do, I will order you to return to the army immediately. There you will hand pick some two or three
hundred men and an equal number of horses. In the meantime, I shall return to the Meta with my family and yours. There I will get what I can for our embarkations. I will also get salt, which is indispensable, and a priest to serve as our pastor there. On your return trip from Cuiloto, you shall take the gold and silver vessels from the church in Pore and all the money you can wrest from the citizens, because I am certain that everything will fall later into Spanish hands. Take heart, amigo Páez, to carry out this plan, for no one can carry it out better than you. Then, too, I know the love you profess for the army."

This speech, coming from Olmedilla, left me astounded. I did not know what to say to him. Knowing him, though, it seemed better not to contradict him suddenly, but I did not want to agree with him, either. Thus, without revealing my opinion on this matter, I asked him to let me go home to think his propositions over carefully. I returned an hour later. Then I pointed out to him the necessity and suitability of having him continue at the head of our army. I admonished him not to abandon the cause he had embraced in such dangerous times, and to desist from a project which seemed unwise to me for many reasons. Although he did not say a single word, I knew, of course, that I had displeased him greatly. Aware of this and lamenting his conduct, I took leave of him.

About two hours later, I received a dispatch from Olmedilla ordering me to return immediately to the army and
assume command of my regiment. I did this. As I was leaving town, I noticed that Olmedilla was setting out with his family for San Juan de los Llanos.

On the way to rejoin my regiment in the town of Puerto, I found the one hundred and eighty men who under Guerrero's command had fled from Calzada. This small corps had been in Puerto augmenting its ranks with new recruits from all over the province.

Meanwhile, quite unexpectedly, Governor N. Solano appeared and proclaimed the news that Olmedilla had deserted. Solano was determined to have Olmedilla arrested, and he ordered me to do so immediately. This order displeased me greatly, not only because of the personal considerations I owed Olmedilla, but because of the fact that he had revealed his plans to me confidentially. He was bound to believe that I had denounced him. Despite all the excuses I could offer, I was finally obliged to obey Solano's order. Accompanied by four officers and their assistants, I left at a forced march to overtake Olmedilla and his companions.

After five days of uninterrupted travel, we overtook Olmedilla at dawn in the province of San Martin. He was lodged in a way-side inn. When he and his companions discovered our presence, they armed themselves. Then Olmedilla

---

3N. Solano was the new patriot governor of the remote province of Casanare, a haven for defeated patriots. Cunninghame Graham, Páez, 88-89.
appeared, armed with a blunderbuss and a sword, at the fence
gate and asked: "Who goes?"

"A free America," I answered.

"What are you doing here?" he asked me.

"Ordering you and your companions to surrender as prisoners," I replied.

Olmedilla responded to this with an outburst of insults against the government. He went on to say that he was determined to die rather than return to Casanare as a prisoner. Furthermore, he stated that I had no authority to arrest him, for he was outside the jurisdiction of the patriot government. I told him that my orders were to capture him wherever I found him.

"Very well," he replied. "I would like to see the order for my arrest."

After he had read this order, which authorized me to take him dead or alive, he expressed a desire to talk to me privately. With this in mind, we went to the spot he designated. He stayed inside the fence while I remained on the outside.

"Let us see how we can fix this affair, Páez," he told me.

"This affair will be fixed in Casanare," I replied. "Do not resist me. Instead, rely on my influence and that of my friends, and nothing will happen to you."

"Promise me that you will take me to Bogotá as a prisoner. Then I will go with you."
"I cannot take you to that city," I answered, "For I have been commissioned by the government of Casanare and not that of Bogotá."

"Pieces of Olmedilla," he replied furiously. Throwing the paper that contained my orders at me, he said again, "You will take pieces of Olmedilla, but you shall never take him alive!"

"I will regret having to take you in pieces, my commander; but if you insist on this, I shall have to comply."

"Whenever you are ready," he replied. Heading toward the hut where his wife and children were, he said, "Daughter, I am going to die, for Olmedilla does not allow himself to be captured alive."

With surprising resignation she told him, "You are doing the right thing. I prefer to see you wallow in your blood and be a witness to your agony, than to see you humiliated and a prisoner."

Olmedilla turned to me then and said, "Well what have you decided, Páez?"

"I am going to decide this minute, my commander," I said as I dismounted. I ordered my companions not to move, and then I began to remove the locks from the door. When I entered the inn, Olmedilla cocked his blunderbuss and put himself on guard. With much serenity and a peaceful tone, I said to him: "Is it possible, my commander, that after having been together on so many battlefields, tearing the enemies of our country to pieces, and sharing all the
dangers and disasters of war, we might now destroy one another? How can we do this when we have before us a vast field in which to collect laurel wreaths, when we can offer the burnt sacrifice of our lives to the cause of the freedom and independence of our country?"

"I am not a slave," he responded, "to be forced to serve, and I do not choose to serve this cause any longer."

Both my comrades and I saw Olmedilla's desire to kill me, for he probably thought that I had told the authorities at Casanare about his plan to desert. Nevertheless, I approached him, showing the greatest confidence. I intended to distract him with conversation while I tried to grab the blunderbuss he held. His wife, armed with rifles, was some paces away with two of her children. Believing that she might bring him to surrender without resisting, I asked her, "Señora, use your influence and help me to convince your husband to return with me to Casanare. I give you my word of honor that nothing bad will happen to him."

"I have already told my husband," she replied, "That it would affect me less to see him die than to see him humiliated and taken prisoner."

Her response made me lose the aplomb and patience I had shown until then, and I answered rather annoyed: "Well, if you think that would be very difficult, I want to prove the contrary to you." Drawing my sword, I turned toward Olmedilla who was still complaining to my comrades about the manner he was being treated. I asked him firmly: "Do you
"I see," he said, "that what you want is to humiliate me and have me sacrificed in Pore. Well, I am going to please you." He handed me his sword and his blunderbuss. On hearing his words, his sons and the others who accompanied him flung their weapons spitefully on the floor. His sons shed tears of anger.

That same day I countermarched with Olmedilla, leaving the other persons that were there to protect his wife. On the way, Olmedilla held back his horse repeatedly and would exclaim, full of despair: "What have I done? Is it possible that I was cowardly enough to surrender and see myself humiliated in this manner?" I repeatedly tried to calm him and inspire him with confidence until we got to Pore. There I turned him over to Governor Solano. The latter treated Olmedilla very harshly and immediately ordered him to be put in two pairs of shackles.

Later that day Olmedilla sent for me. After much difficulty, I was able to get Solano to give me a pass to go see him. Olmedilla was very uncomfortable, for the shackles did not permit him to move. I offered to talk to the Governor to see if I could relieve his situation. I found Solano so inflexible that, despite the deference he had for me, I was successful only in having one pair of shackles removed from Olmedilla.

All of Olmedilla's friends made many efforts to save him. Among them was Señor Méndez, later Archbishop of
Caracas. Finally we were able to get the government of Bogotá to pardon him. But then, when the capital of New Granada was lost by the patriots after the defeat of General Rovira in Cachiri and the Spaniards invaded the province of Casanare, Olmedilla jeopardized his position again. Instead of going to Guasdualito as the other patriots did, he remained in Casanare, still pursuing his favorite scheme. There, in the deserts of that province, he was subjected to the greatest poverty. According to some of his friends, he was even forced to eat the cadaver of one of his small children in order to satisfy the horrible hunger that overwhelmed him. Thus ended the life of that chief. Had he only possessed greater perseverance, he would have been able to render great services to his country and leave a name full of glory for posterity. Olmedilla was then replaced in the patriot army by General [Joaquin] Ricaurte.

At the end of 1815, the province of Casanare was invaded by General Calzada. With an army of three thousand infantrymen, five hundred cavalrymen, and two pieces of

---

4Páez does not include in this account the fact that Olmedilla was beheaded by General Calzada and his head placed on public display.

5General Joaquin Ricaurte was born in Bogotá. On July 20, 1810 he signed the act of independence and was designated a Sergeant Major in the army. In 1812 he went on to Venezuela where he was second in command. By 1814 Bolívar had conferred the rank of general on him. He proved his valor and loyalty to his country in countless battles, specifically the Battle of Chire in 1815. Ricaurte died a natural death on July 27, 1820. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 513.
artillery, he penetrated up to the region of Chire. In that area, in a great plain called Banco de Chire, our troops were waiting under Ricaurte's command. Ricaurte assembled the army and then had the strange idea of retreating to the rear guard some three miles back, with his chief of staff Valdéz, before the enemy had even come within cannon-fire range. There he ordered his assistant, Antonio Ranjel, to climb a tree and observe the outcome of the battle. The worst of it was that Ricaurte took the eighty dragoons, armed with the only rifles we had, as his personal guard.

It was December 31, 1815. I commanded squadron Number Two, consisting of two hundred men. Ramón Nonato Pérez commanded squadron Number One. His forces formed the first line of defense. After the enemy artillery had opened fire, Commanding General Miguel Guerrero gave orders for our cavalrymen to file off to the right. But before continuing with this account, I believe it apropos to mention here a singular event, one that has influenced several acts in my life. At the beginning of all battles, when the first shots were fired, a violent and nervous excitement would seize me and impel me to hurl myself against the enemy and receive the first blows. I would have always done this if my

---

6 Ramón Nonato Pérez became a Colonel in the Venezuelan army. He was born and reared in Venezuela, and he played an active role in the terrible wars of the llanos from 1815 to 1819. He served Páez well and faithfully. When he joined Bolívar in the campaign against Cundinamarca, he crossed the cordillera and fought in Paya. He was wounded in this battle and returned to his beloved llanos where he died. Ibid., 460.
companions had not contained me with great efforts. An attack of this nature hit me before entering the fight at Chire, for I had already come forward and had an encounter with the advance guard. My companions were struggling to hold me to the rear of the army; however, when they heard the first firing by the Royalists, they had to release me to go occupy their posts. Fortunately, by then I had recovered from the affliction and mounted a horse. Seeing the flank movement of our cavalrymen, whom I thought were trying to flee, I ran toward them. I put myself at the head of my squadron and shouted without consulting anyone, "Forward and load!" This order was carried out immediately. The enemy cavalry had also seen our flank movement. Undoubtedly they, too, believed that we were fleeing so they loaded. We went to meet them so unexpectedly however, that we set them in complete flight. We also routed the left infantry wing which was formed four deep in a single line.

The bewilderment of the enemy infantry after this encounter was such that I was easily able to go behind their lines in search of Calzada or some other chief. If possible, I wanted to distinguish myself that day by killing one of the Spanish chiefs. Our forces continued pursuing the enemy. However, when our cavalrymen found the commissary and all the equipment that the Spanish had left behind, they stopped their pursuit in order to take possession of the spoils. The Spanish infantry, which otherwise would have fallen in our power, was thus saved. Had our cavalry continued its pursuit
on the Salina de Chita road, we would have spared ourselves many misfortunes, including the defeat of General Urdaneta in Chitaga. For Calzada in his flight encountered Urdaneta and his forces and whipped them completely. The other fugitives took advantage of our soldiers' disorder and took to the summits of the mountain range that was at their right. They followed the Chita road and penetrated into the heart of New Granada as far as Ocaña.

Accompanied by a carabineer, I pursued the enemy tenaciously to the other side of the Casanare River. I recall that in the midst of the pursuit I found a soldier, assistant to Commander Delgado, whom I intimidated into surrendering. At this time I took a famous saber belonging to his chief from him, which I gave later to Captain Miguel Vásquez. The assistant pleaded with me not to kill him. I told him I pardoned his life and asked him to take my hat, which my comrades knew well, as proof of the fact that I had pardoned him. He did this; but he still almost lost his life, for my comrades, who did not see me return, supposed that he had assassinated me and taken my hat. They started to kill him several times.

On the other side of the Casanare River, the twenty-

7Miguel Vásquez, a native of Venezuela, eventually became a colonel in the army as a result of his heroic actions in the battles for independence. He joined Páez in Guadualito after defeating the Spanish Colonel Torrellas. Later he fought to support Páez and his government. Ibid., 675.
five fugitives who were ahead of me scattered in the woods. Among these men was the young Juan José Flores, who later became a General and President of Ecuador. He had been with the patriots in the siege of Valencia where he had been taken prisoner by the Spanish and added to the military health department. After four or five days of fleeing through the woods along the river bank, he came to us voluntarily. From then on he served in the patriot ranks, under my immediate command, until the beginning of 1821. Then he

---

8 Juan José Flores was born in Puerto Cabello in 1800 of Indian parents. He was a Venezuelan like Miranda, Bolivar, and Sucre. Having little formal education, he enlisted in the Spanish army at an early age. When his master in this army was taken prisoner, Flores joined the ranks of the patriots and soon became one of Bolivar's most trusted lieutenants and fought in more than twenty-three battles. He was a Lieutenant Colonel at twenty, a Colonel at twenty-two, a General of Brigade at twenty-six, and a General of Division at twenty-nine. He was major Chief of Staff in the army of the West in the Battle of Carabobo and later Chief of Staff to Bolivar in the Battle of Cuenc. After the defeat at Pasto he retired from the army and went to live in Popayán. There he succeeded General Solom in 1824 as Chief of the Army. He brought the revolutionary war to a close after his victories at Sucuimbo and Pasto. In command of all Ecuadorian armies now, he quelled the military rebellion in Quito and Guayaquil. Along with Sucre he won the famous Battle of Tarqui against Perú. When his army helped declare the independence of the province of Quito from Gran Colombia, Bolivar sent General Sucre to supersede him. Sucre was assassinated in route and many claimed Flores was the instigator of the foul deed. When Bolivar died in 1830, Flores succeeded in establishing Ecuadorian independence from Gran Colombia. He was elected to the presidency for two years then but served in this capacity until 1834 when he "condescended" to let Rocafuerte be elected to this high office. He was reelected President in 1839 and served until 1845. He remained a powerful force in Ecuadorian politics until his death, of natural causes, in 1864. A. Curtis Wilgus, South American Dictators During the First Century of Independence (Washington, D. C., 1937), 348-63.
went to join the army formed in New Granada to invade Venezuela.

When I crossed the Casanare River and found myself completely alone, I realized the imprudence I had committed in going ahead so far. I decided to move back, not on the road I had used to come, but on a different one, for I was afraid of falling into the hands of one of the enemy parties I had left behind. To make my risky position even more difficult, my horse was lame. Fortunately, I found another one in the lowlands of the river which I was able to capture after considerable effort. I continued my march along the lowest slope of the mountain which was covered with straw. I did not know exactly where I was, and I was guided solely by a bonfire I saw in the distance. I supposed our camp was located there. The fire I saw, however, had been started on the plains by rifle plugs during that day's battle.

Grouping thus in the dark and surmounting a thousand difficulties, I descended in the direction of the fire about midnight. I found myself at our camp. It was completely covered with the enemy spoils that our men had abandoned there as useless. Without knowing what fortune had befallen our army and even afraid that it might have been defeated, I decided to go to the place where we had agreed to reunite in case of disaster. A few moments after starting out, I heard the call, "Who goes?" Instead of answering this query, I asked the same question. "A free America," cried out a voice which I recognized as belonging to the courageous [Francisco]
Aramendi.\textsuperscript{9} I told him who I was then, and I was received with a great deal of joy by my companions, for they had thought I was dead.

The day after the Battle of Chire, General Ricaurte ordered everyone who had taken booty from the Spaniards to place it at the disposal of the Chief of Staff. He alleged that the sole objective of this measure was to force the soldiers to be more prompt in pursuing an enemy that was still in sight. He offered to divide the booty later among the troops. All the soldiers religiously turned in the spoils of war they had wrested. Ricaurte then marched to the town of Morcote. He took the valuable cargo with him, and these he later divided exclusively among the individuals of his staff and escort.

The troops remained under the command of Guerrero who was ordered to march toward Guasdualito. It happened that some days later I went to Pore to fulfill my military duty and present myself to Ricaurte. I was barefooted and poorly dressed. My trousers, of green flannel, were gnawed up to the middle of the leg. I presented a miserable sight from head to toe. However, this was very common during those times of war, even among the military of the highest rank.

\textsuperscript{9}Páez refers here to Colonel Francisco Aramendi, designated at Páez's inseparable companion. He fought with unsurpassed bravery in the battles for Venezuelan independence from 1814 to 1823. He was assassinated in 1827. Scarpetta and Vergara, \textit{Diccionario Biográfico}, 23-24.
"I congratulate you, Commander Páez," he told me, "for your courage and heroic comportment in the Battle of Chire. But how can you come before me in that beggar’s get-up?"

"My general," I responded, "It is the only one I have. I believed it my obligation as a military man to present myself to my superior. I have done this without bothering about my clothing and believing that no one is forced to do more than he is able to do." Anyone would think that the heir of the victors of Chire, seeing my painful need for clothes, would at least offer me some; but the man changed the conversation then and did not mention dress etiquette again.

About the middle of January we heard that the enemy was rounding-up cattle in the plains outside the town of Arauca. Immediately we decided to set an ambush at daylight in a brushless plain. We were able to accomplish this feat, although at first sight it appeared very difficult. We put six hundred cavalrmen in the hollow of a dry ravine. They were so well covered that they could only be seen at a distance of about one hundred varas.10 Stretched out over the horses’ necks, our cavalrymen awaited the enemy. The latter, five hundred strong, were under the orders of Commander

10 There are 2.8 feet in a vara.
Vicente Peña. These men were leading the cattle and horses they had gotten in the Lareños farms and were headed toward Guasdualito. Since we were well hidden and quiet, the Spaniards marched on, completely unaware of our presence. When they were about three hundred feet from us, we took them so by surprise that they were forced to flee. We charged them on the front and flanks. Then we pursued them to the Arauca River where they threw themselves in the water. The outcome of that surprise attack was very profitable for us. Without having to round them up, we got over two thousand cows, nine hundred horses, and eighty prisoners. The greater part of the enemy corps perished, for only Peña and twenty-five of his men later joined Arce in Guasdualito to relate what happened. Captains Nonato Pérez, Rafael Ortega, Genaro Vásquez, Basilio and Gregorio Brito

11 Vicente Peña fought heroically against the patriots during 1815 in the Province of Barinas under the orders of Francisco López. In Palmarito he was defeated and captured by Páez. Peña's bravery and stoicism so impressed Páez, that he used all his power to save him from being killed and then to persuade him to join the patriot cause. He finally joined the patriots in 1815 and went on to fight in the Battle of Mata de la Miel against his former chief, Colonel López. In 1817 Páez promoted him to the rank of lieutenant colonel. In 1821 he fought at Carabobo and later in 1823 he took part in the siege of Puerto Cabello. When the government of Bogotá promoted him to cavalry colonel in 1823, he retired to Villa de Obispos. Peña died in Obispos in 1826. Dávila, Diccionario Biográfico, II, 81-82.

12 Colonel Arce was the Spanish governor of the province of Barinas. He gave refuge to Juan Vicente Peña in Guasdualito. Judging this town indefensible, he evacuated it in 1815. Páez immediately occupied it. Cunningham Graham, Páez, 94.
distinguished themselves particularly in the encounter.¹³

On the third day of this journey we occupied Guas­
dualito, which had been abandoned by Arce. Under orders
from Colonel Francisco López, Arce headed toward the
capital of the province of Barinas to organize new forces in
the town of Quintero.¹⁴ We knew that Quintero was only
seventy miles from Guasdualito and that López intended to
march against us. We also knew that López had a detachment
of five hundred cavalrymen posted in the pass of Palmarito,

¹³Nonato Pérez and Genaro Vásquez have been identified
previously.

Rafael Ortega was born in San Carlos in 1790. He
enlisted in the revolutionary army in 1810 and by 1814 had
attained the rank of captain. In 1814 he went to Cúcuta to
join General Urdaneta. It was after he went to Casanare
that he joined Páez and fought valiantly with his forces. He
attained the rank of general. On July 6, 1836, he died of
natural causes in Maracaibo. Scarpetta and Vergara,
Diccionario Biográfico, 411.

Basilio Brito, a native of Ospino, was Gregorio
Brito's brother. He fought valiantly for the independence
cause in the battles of Mata de la Miel and Carabobo.
Ibid., 66.

Gregorio Brito was born in Ospino also. He was one
of the first to enlist in the independence movement. He
fought valiantly under Páez until he was mortally wounded in
the Battle of Mata de la Miel. He died on February 16, 1815
the day after this battle. Ibid.

¹⁴Francisco López, Venezuelan by birth, was General
La Torre’s second in command when the latter became the
Royalist commander when General Morillo was wounded at La
Puerta. Cunninghame Graham in his José Antonio Páez on page
146 describes him as "an energetic soldier and well accus­
tomed to guerilla warfare." He was the man who, relying on
the fact that then only special regiments from Spain wore
distinctive uniforms, conceived the plan to surprise Bolívar
in the middle of his camp. His men, masquerading as patriots,
would have killed Bolívar in his hammock if he had not risen
exceptionally early that morning. When López was killed in
battle following this surprise attack on Bolívar in 1818, the
Spanish lost their best cavalry officer. Ibid., 146-49.
on the Apure River. Consequently, I marched with three hundred of our men to surprise them. I ordered meat to be roasted and prepared for three days in advance so that we would not have to slaughter cattle and attract the vultures, very numerous in those plains, which would have announced our presence. At the end of a three-day march, we arrived at daybreak at the Spanish camp; and at 6 a.m., on February 2, completely unexpected by the Spanish, we attacked and destroyed them completely. Almost all the Royalists fell prisoners. Among them was Chief Vicente Peña who had been held back by one of our soldiers as he was attempting to swim across the river.

When Peña was brought before me he said: "Commander, I am not asking you to spare my life, for I should not and do not want to do so. The only favor I ask of you is to let me say goodbye to my wife."

"We are not assassins," I answered. "Although we try to destroy the enemy on the battlefield, we are generous with the vanquished."

The arrogance and serenity of that man who knew well the fate that awaited him in that era of implacable war to the death, called my attention in an extraordinary manner. I tried to win him over to our cause by pointing out the bad choice he had made, for he was an American. I told him enthusiastically how useful it would be for him to support the principles of freedom and to give his valor and determination of purpose to the sacred cause of his country. But
he always answered without hesitation that he looked on life with the greatest contempt and that he would take glory in dying for the King's cause which he believed to be very just. It was impossible for me to permit such a valiant military man to be sacrificed. Contrary to the practices of the times, I sent him to Pore with the rest of the prisoners, recommending him very highly. In Pore there were many eminent patriots, among them Señor Méndez and Dr. Yañez. These men, though uselessly at first, made the greatest possible efforts to convert Peña to our cause. Finally, he was unable to resist the influence of those eloquent men who were sacrificing all for their country. He decided then to serve under the banners of independence.

The Pore government sent Peña to our camp, where I welcomed him with the greatest joy. However, President Serrano, who was in Guasdualito, did not believe that Peña served us in good faith. Fearing that he would escape and tell the Spaniards about our critical situation, he ordered me once and for all to take his life. All my efforts to persuade Serrano of Peña's sincerity were useless. Finally, I had to obey, and I issued the necessary orders for his execution. But when they were taking him away, I was unable to contain the desire I had to save him. Assuming all the responsibility for the wrath my action might incur, I suspended the order. Peña remained impassive.

15See Footnote 10 in Chapter V.
I returned to Serrano's house. I begged, pleaded, and presented new arguments so that he would spare the life of that valiant man. Serrano remained inflexible. But after great efforts on my part and after saying that I would be personally responsible for the good conduct of my protege, I was finally able to save him at the last second. Later events were to prove how correct I had been in my opinion of Peña—an opinion which I had formed exclusively because of his courage. But I shall talk about this later in the course of the narration.

I was with Peña, resting in a log cabin, when a cavalryman presented himself to Peña and said to him: "There is nothing wrong in the Mata del Cardonal." The poor man did not realize that Peña was a prisoner. This official communication drew my attention greatly. Consequently, I called the messenger and induced him to take us to the place where he had come from, warning him that any deception on his part would cost him his life. The good Indian guided us along the bed of a ravine leading to the place indicated. He did this with so much certainty and secrecy that we completely surprised the guard detail to which the communiqué referred, and did not even give them time to think about defending themselves.

The guard detail consisted of a complete company, minus a captain. It was lodged in an orchard which was so free of brush that everything was visible under the trees. Where was the captain of this guard then? We searched and asked for
him in vain, for his loyal soldiers refused to tell us where he was. We retreated then, accompanied by the prisoners we had taken there. We had gone some distance when one of our soldiers, Romualdo Salas, yelled and pointed out the missing captain to us. It seems that he had climbed a palm tree and covered himself with its fronds so well, that he could not be seen from beneath, except by accident. He was intimidated into coming down right away. When he hit the ground he said as serenely as he did cleverly, "My goodness! In Guasdualito I escaped on the wings of the rabbit; but here not even our Señora del Cobollo was able to save me." Charmed by the conduct of that courageous man, I sent him to Bogotá. I do not know what his fate was later.

After we had been in Guasdualito a short while, General Joaquin Ricaurte arrived and placed himself at the head of our forces. He established his headquarters here.

At midnight on February 15, a servant of Commander Miguel Guerrero arrived at our camp which was situated outside Guasdualito. He had been sent by one of Guerrero's brothers, called "el Chato," who served as a captain in the Spanish army, to warn Guerrero not to participate in the battle which was to ensue, for we would probably lose it. He pointed out that the enemy had more men than we did, and that these soldiers were more select and well-disciplined. He informed him also of the enemy's proximity and told him that we would be attacked the following day. Guerrero warned the servant to keep silent. At 6:00 a.m., he went to
General Ricaurte's home to tell him what was happening. He took that very servant with him so that he could give all the information wanted from him.

After Ricaurte heard this account, he ordered Guer­rero and his brother's emissary not to say a single word on the matter. He assembled all the army officers, telling them that he wanted to know their opinion on a plan to retreat to the other side of the Arauca River in the province of Casanare. Since several moments passed without anyone responding, he turned to me and asked my opinion on the plan. I answered that I had told the people of Guasdualito that we would defend them from the enemy until the very last. I begged him to release me from his orders if he intended to carry out the plan to retreat and allow me to remain with my squadron, because I wanted to fulfill my promise to the people of Guasdualito. Without saying another word to me, he asked the other officers the same question. They all answered that they shared my opinion. "Well, then," he said angrily, "Let Commander Páez command you. I no longer wish to lead you. Those who do not want to follow me to Casanare may continue under his orders."

In effect Ricaurte retreated to Casanare without telling us one thing about the proximity of the enemy. He was followed by Calvary Captain Miguel Guerrero, Chief of Staff Miguel Valdés, the staff, an infantry company, another
company of dragoons, and a few more chiefs and officers. I was left, then, as chief and with a force that had been reduced to five hundred cavalrymen.

Not knowing what the others knew, those of us who stayed set out immediately in search of the Spanish army to fight it wherever we found it. About a league away our reconnaissance met the enemy's reconnaissance, attacked it, and set it in flight. Our men then pursued these Royalists with ardor and courage, but were unable to take a single prisoner because the Royalists had very good horses.

While our reconnaissance forces were pursuing the fleeing Royalists, we were left behind without any news. I had remained looking over the town so that no men would stay behind. When I was leaving to catch up with my forces, I ran into a soldier who was galloping at full rein to tell me about the encounter our advance guard had had. Alarmed by the news, I accelerated the march. After I had joined my forces, I issued an order to double the march. I went on

16 Colonel Miguel Valdés was born in Puerto Cabello about 1774, son of Lieutenant Colonel Juan de Dios Valdés de Yarza, who was Governor of the island of Trinidad. He joined the army in 1790 and campaigned with Miranda in 1811 and 1812. In 1813 and 1814 he fought with Bolívar and attained the rank of Colonel. He helped General Ricaurte defeat General Calzada at Chire. In 1817, together with Generals Urdaneta, Carreño, and Cordoba, he left the Army of the Apure to seek out Bolívar. Gravely ill with cancer, though, he was forced to stay behind in Urbana del Orinoco where he died in 1818. Dávila, Diccionario Biográfico, II, 358-59 states that Páez's troops, with Páez's knowledge and approval, stripped Valdés of all his possessions before his death. Miguel Guerrero later denounced this to Bolívar.
ahead until I found our reconnaissance forces. They had stopped to watch a big cloud of dust that was rising from the place called the "Mata de la Miel." This was the first inkling we had of the presence of the Spanish.

Quickly I grasped the fact that that cloud was being raised by an army that was heading toward us. I decided to approach it, despite the fact that it was very far away, in order to familiarize myself with its quality and numbers. Commander Nonato Pérez and sixteen dragoons, who were a little ahead of our reconnaissance, had also left to reconnoitre. He asked me where I was going. I stopped long enough to answer him and then continued at a gallop. Fortunately, he followed me with his dragoons.

When I was within sight of the enemy, I stopped in order to conduct a better inspection. The enemy reconnaissance, consisting of thirty men, was about six hundred yards from its army. Their officer in charge and I began to boast to one another impudently. I challenged him to single combat. I did this with such ardor that, without realizing it, I got closer than was suitable for my personal safety. He ordered his men to fire then, and one bullet succeeded in mortally wounding my horse. The handsome animal fell, pinning one of my legs under his body. With great difficulty I managed to free myself. The Spaniards would have had enough time then to knife me while I was on the ground. However, they contented themselves only with firing some shots at me. Since Nonato Pérez and his men stayed immobile about
a block away, I shouted for him to advance as soon as I could get on my feet. He obeyed and killed five of the enemy's advance guard. Pérez then returned to the place where I was. I took the horse belonging to one of the dragoons and rejoined my troops. I addressed them then, I remember as if it were today, with the most astonishing proclamation that ever occurred to any general. Full of sorrow over the loss of my horse, I told them, "Comrades, they have killed my good horse. If you are not ready right now to avenge his death, I will hurl myself against the enemy alone and die in their ranks." They all answered, "Yes, we will avenge it!"

I accelerated the march again for it was so late in the evening that many of the leaders thought we should suspend the attack until the following day. They felt that by the time we got within rifle range it would already be dark. I retorted that the darkness of night would be as great a handicap to the Spaniards as it would be for us. At a moderate distance from the enemy, I ordered the formation of two lines. The first was to be under the command of the valiant Nonato Pérez; the second, under that of the gentlemanly and enterprising Commander Genaro Vásquez. We marched slowly and approached the Spanish army until we forced it to start firing.

The Spanish chief, Colonel Francisco López, let us approach to within less than half the rifle-range distance. Then he broke out with his artillery and musketeers. Our
first line, with Nonato Pérez at the lead, charged so impetuously and orderly then, that it may be said that it pulled more than two-thirds of the enemy cavalry out of formation and defeated them completely.

I had warned Vásquez not to advance until he received orders from me. I was located between his column and Nonato's. When I had noticed that the enemy was aiming and ordered the first line to advance, Vásquez believed that order included him also; so he advanced. I had to run toward him in order to detain him. When I was doing this, my horse was wounded by a bullet and began to leap. He threw me quite a distance, with my saddle between my legs, and fled in the direction of the enemy. I remained on the spot, covered by a thick cloud of dust raised by the cavalry, without even knowing where I was. Fortunately, I left those shadows and ran into citizen Esteban Quero. I asked him for his horse, which he generously gave me as soon as he recognized me. I had barely mounted when I noticed that the second line was retreating.

I sped to halt that retreat. After a good struggle, I succeeded in making the cavalry turn back. Animated again by my presence and effectively aided by Vásquez and the officers, we hurled ourselves full blast on the remains of the enemy cavalry, which had stayed to the right and consisted of about four hundred men. The enemy could not resist the impetuous attack. They whirled about and immediately started to flee. Pursued by our men, the enemy forces ran
into our first line which had broken them first and was not further ahead. The worst part for the enemy occurred then, for we lanced them without pity. We did have the misfortune of counting among our wounded the courageous Captains Rafael Ortega and Gregorio Brito. The latter died the next day, lamenting the egoism of Ricaurte and Guerrero, who had not told us about the proximity of the enemy.

The very bloody struggle with the enemy cavalry ended. Then, since it was already about 8:00 p.m., we turned on the infantry. But the infantry had already left its former position and started its retreat toward the thickets of the Apure River. Although we did encounter this enemy infantry about 9:00 p.m., we barely took any prisoners.

Baralt, commenting about that day states: "There is nothing sadder than a battle in the darkness of night. For then deeds go by without witnesses or glory. Those who die do so without exciting compassion. There are no friends to aid you. Even courage and skill are worthless against the enemy blows."¹⁷ Such was the Battle of Mata de la Miel in which the enemy lost nine hundred men, four hundred killed and five hundred taken prisoners. The enemy also lost 3,345 horses and a great number of lances and rifles. Captains Genaro Vásquez, Nonato Pérez, Miguel Antonio Figueredo,

¹⁷This exact citation may be found in Baralt and Díaz, Resúmen de la Historia, I, 350. Note that Baralt lists this battle as occurring in 1816.
Antolín Mujica, Francisco Hurtado, Hermenejildo Mujica, Gregorio Brito, and Juan Antonio Romero distinguished themselves in this battle as usual. The government of New Granada, on which the troops under my command in Casanare were dependent, then sent me a dispatch promoting me to Lieutenant Colonel.

No further information was available on Miguel Antonio Figueredo.

Captain Antolín Mugica was a native of Venezuela. He enlisted in the patriot ranks in 1814 and fought most outstandingly against the Royalists. In December of 1815 he fought with Páez at the Battle of Chire against General Calzada. He was at the surprise attack on Vicente Peña at Arauca. Distinguishing himself particularly at the Battle of Mata de la Miel, he went on to another victory against the Spanish at Paso del Frío. In 1816 he joined Captain Antonio Ranjel in the Battle of Achaguas. He was defeated and captured. Colonel Andrés Torrellas had him shot and beheaded. Then his head was fried in oil and placed on public display in Calabozo until 1818 when Bolívar and Páez entered the city, removed it, and buried it with the proper pomp and circumstance. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 371-72. Cunninghame Graham, Páez, 110-11.

José Francisco Hurtado joined Páez's forces in 1816 as company captain. In 1819 he became a cavalry lieutenant colonel and a member of Páez's Honor Guard. In 1826 he attained the rank of colonel. Dávila, Diccionario Biográfico, I, 252-53.

Colonel Hermenejildo Mujica was Antolín's brother and a fierce warrior who waged battle as if death were meaningless. He fought in the battles of Achaguas, Mucuritas, Ortiz, and Rincon del Toro. He particularly distinguished himself at the Battles of Mata de la Miel, Boyacá, and Carabobo. Ibid., 392-93.

Juan Antonio Romero was born in Santa Lucia about 1795. In 1813 he enlisted in Miranda's squadron and fought in Mosquitero. He fought under Campo Elias at the first battle of La Puerta in 1814 and was defeated. In 1819 he fought under Páez at La Cruz. Continuing to fight ardently against the Royalists, Bolívar promoted him in 1827 to the rank of lieutenant in the cavalry. Páez gave him his retirement papers in 1830. In 1845 he became Militia Captain in Orituco and by 1853 was second in command there. Romero died of cholera in 1856 in Caracas. Ibid., II, 204.
I gave the prisoners from the Spanish army the freedom to desert and return to their homes if they so desired. Because of their good treatment, many of those whom I did not send to New Granada, joined my ranks before the end of the month. Nearly all of them were Venezuelans and in that time there was middle ground between friend and enemy. The news of my generosity toward the prisoners and the glory brought by victory spread throughout the towns of Barinas and Apure. Their inhabitants, who previously had held a bad opinion of the patriots because of the cruel conduct of some of their leaders, were converted to the justice of our cause. Coaxed by the leniency of our conduct toward the vanquished, they slowly began to join our ranks and become later the bulwark of the forces for Colombian independence.

While we were still pursuing the remains of López's army in the direction of Barinas, Commander Guerrero presented himself in Guasdualito with orders from Ricaurte to assume command of the forces I was leading. This was stupid of the man after he had turned us over to the enemy—an enemy which was now fleeing before our troops. After all, these troops, on the strength of their own efforts and guided by other leaders, had just triumphed over the very forces that had set Ricaurte and Guerrero into flight. Although the bulk of these troops had not yet returned, Ricuarte's authority was immediately disregarded by those who were with the wounded and with the prisoners. I was proclaimed head of the army, as I had been in the battle.
Despite the good reasons for the action taken by the troops, I countermarched hurriedly toward Guasdualito as soon as I received news of the event. Exercising my influence there with the leaders of the uprising, I achieved Guerrero's reinstatement. He continued in command. This was much to my satisfaction, for despite all the inconveniences, it was better to have him as leader than to get rid of him at the cost of a mutiny or a barracks' congress which is usually ill-advised and seldom beneficial.
CHAPTER VII

[Miguel Antonio] Vásquez's Occupation of Mantecal—
The Priest, Colonel [Andrés] Torrellas—López Decides to Attack Me—I Prepare for the Defense—I Take the Offensive Against the Spaniards—Obstacles of the Apure Campaign—The Valiant Captain, Antolín Mugica—His Disastrous End—I Go to Arichuna Parish—Movements of the Royalist Army under the Command of [Miguel de] La Torre—Tasks that the Chief of the Army, Colonel Francisco de Paula Santander Assigns to Me—I am Named Supreme Chief in Place of the Latter on My Return—Condition of the Army I had Under my Command.

1816

Eventually [Miguel] Guerrero was called to the province of Casanare, and I was left in charge of the army in Guas­dualito. I ordered Commander Miguel Antonio Vásques to march with five hundred cavalrymen to occupy the town of Mantecal. He did this, destroying a picket of forty enemy riflemen that he found there. However, he was quickly dislodged from Mantecal and pursued up to Trinidad de Arichuna by a column of eight hundred enemy cavalrymen. This column, under the command of the priest Colonel Andrés Torrellas, then lodged itself in that town.1 Vásquez continued retreating toward

---

1Colonel Andrés Torrellas was a priest in the town of Siquisique when on March 10, 1813, he joined the Royalist forces to fight against his countrymen. He came to be one of Páez's implacable foes in the terrible wars of the llanos. In fact, he was so zealous in his devotion to the Royalist cause, that he shot many patriot prisoners, among them the
Guasdualito. When I heard about this, I set out to meet him. Placing myself at the head of his column, we returned immediately toward Mantecal. Torrellas, either afraid or cautious, did not wait for me. Instead he retreated to Mata de Totumo. I pursued him without results, for he retreated constantly until he reached the other side of the Apure River, which he crossed at the Paso del Frio. I stayed in Mantecal where, about the middle of June, López decided to attack me.

Despite the fact that our army had suffered many casualties, we went out to wait for the enemy in an open plain. There I stationed my small column of three hundred men. I had sent fifty of my men in formation under the command of Captain Basilio Brito to the town of Rincon Hondo. López formed his men to the right of the ditch at Caicara. He had a force of twelve hundred cavalrymen and four hundred infantrymen and six pieces of artillery. Neither side gained any ground during the day since there were only a few skirmishes between the two hundred Royalist riflemen and fifty of the patriots led by the very brave Captain Antolín Mugica. Our force repelled the enemy in several attacks, killing many of them. Our only casualties consisted of

Brave Antolín Mujica. By 1822, however, he embraced the patriot cause and fought for it with equal zeal. Soublette then named him governor of the province of Coro. Though Torrelles supported Páez in his movement for the separation of Venezuela from Gran Colombia in 1826, Bolívar still named him General of the Colombian army when Páez submitted to Bolívar's authority. He died near Caracas in 1848. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 624-25. Cunningham Graham, Páez, 110-11.
three wounded and Mugica's horse.

Afraid of being surprised during the night, I retreated to a sand dune which was behind us and surrounded by somewhat deep water. Here the Spaniards did not dare attack us, not even the following day. They stayed in sight until they retreated on the following night to the Nutrias road in search of Paso del Frío. It was not in keeping either with my character nor my plans to remain idle any longer. The minute I discovered their retreat, I gave the order to march. We overtook the Spaniards two days later. What was even worse for them was that we surprised them at 4:00 a.m. at the Paso. The battle which ensued was disastrous for them. Their casualties amounted to over three hundred men. This included the dead, scattered, and wounded, and five hundred horses. We were unable to inflict greater damage because of the swampy terrain. Covered with woods and water from the overflowing river, the area afforded the Spanish infantry a cover from which to defend itself advantageously.

Normally, the Apure campaign presented infinite obstacles. Moreover, we had to cross an estuary about a league long in order to reach the aforementioned river pass. It was so full of water, that our horses could barely stand up. The pass was as full of alligators as the rest of our plains. This trip, across the overflowing waters and in the darkness of night, seemed little less than impossible. It took the Spaniards completely by surprise when we were able to carry out this operation successfully.
After this surprise at the Paso del Frio, I returned to Mantecal. There Captain Antonio Ranjel and some other officers insisted that I send them to take the city of Achaguas, which was seventy leagues from Mantecal and unguarded. To take it by surprise, I detached one hundred and fifty men under the command of Ranjel, and ordered them to remain hidden as long as possible. To do this, they had to go around the Zancudo corner, cross the Apure Seco River below the mouth of the Payara River, and attack the city unexpectedly from behind.

The difficulties that Ranjel had to surmount in order to carry out this plan are inconceivable, for all the terrain he had to cross was inundated by the overflow of those rivers, and by the gamelotales which grow at the edge of the water. However, he was finally able to get to the vicinity of Achaguas without having been detected. There he discovered that there were one hundred grenadiers in the barracks in the plaza. These forces had come down from Frio and embarked with the purpose of collecting their scattered forces and augmenting their ranks with new recruits. Unfortunately, Ranjel was not informed that there was another barracks at the edge of the river, about two blocks from the plaza, with two hundred unmounted lancers.

At dawn, Ranjel attacked the infantry barracks and was able to enter, killing all who resisted him either with a lance or a saber. At that moment, the two hundred lancers charged and forced the patriots to retreat outside the city.
and abandon their prisoners and the arms they had taken. Ranjel proposed to retreat now by the same road that he had come. The fiery Captain Antolín Mugica, said he would not do this. He added that he would rather die continuing the fight than be the bearer of the unhappy news of an unfortunate battle. He invited all the men to accompany him in continuing the attack. Unfortunately for him, some men did follow him, and in the charges and countercharges that took place, his horse fell in a rainwater pool, created for the purpose of drinking water in the summer. There he was made a prisoner and shot by the priest, Colonel Andrés Torrellas. His head, separated from the body, was fried in oil and sent back to the city of Calabozo. There it was placed on a spike and remained in execrable exhibition until we found it in 1818 when, by General Bolívar's order, it was taken down and buried with due reverence.

After this unfortunate event, I decided to change my position to the Arichuna parish in order to facilitate communications with Guasdualito. Meanwhile [Pablo] Morillo's troops had occupied New Granada and destroyed the government.2

2General Pablo Morillo was born in Fuentesecas, Spain, on May 5, 1778. A man of humble birth, he had served in the Spanish army first as a soldier, corporal and sergeant. At the time of the French invasion in 1808, he became an officer. He fought so brilliantly in the siege of Vigo, that he won the rank of colonel. Serving under Wellington until the end of the Peninsular Campaign, he finally attained the ranks of field marshall and lieutenant general. Unfortunately, he was the type of man who was only at home in an army camp. The
With a strong column under [Miguel de] La Torre's command, the Royalists had also pursued the remains of the Republican troops up to Casanare. General [Manuel de] Servier, leader of the patriots in the unfortunate retreat from Bogotá to Casanare, was able to save only about two hundred men from the defeat that Lieutenant Colonel Antonio Gómez had

title of Pacificador and the mission to subdue all of South America in one hundred and sixty days were incompatible with this man. He was in command of the Spanish forces in America from 1815 until he was replaced by La Torre in 1820. He held the titles of Count of Cartagena, Marqués de la Puerta, and Captain General of Madrid and New Castile. He died while in France in 1837. Henao and Arrubla, History of Colombia, 269-70, 347. Thomas Rourke, Man of Glory, Simon Bolívar (New York, 1939), 235-36. Laura F. Ulrich, "Morillo's Attempt to Pacify Venezuela," Hispanic American Historical Review, III (November, 1920), 535-65.

General Miguel de la Torre began his career as a common soldier. When he had become a sergeant, he came to America where his valor and knowledge were influential in his promotion to brigadier. In 1816 he was given an important command in Venezuela where he distinguished himself particularly in the siege of Angostura. He was forced to abandon Angostura by illnnesses and lack of supplies. In 1820 he was promoted to field marshal, and soon replaced Morillo as supreme commander of the Spanish forces in America. He was defeated by Bolívar and Páez in the Battle of Carabobo in 1821. In 1822 he was still in command of the Spanish forces. By 1823 he was named civil and military governor of Puerto Rico, a post he maintained until 1837. Espasa-Calpe (Hijos de J. Espasa, eds.), Enciclopedia universal ilustrada Europeo-Americana, 70 vols. (Madrid, 1905-30); Appendices, 10 vols. (Madrid, 1930-33), LXII, 1301.
inflicted on him in Caqueta on June 11.\textsuperscript{4} Two days later, La Torre overtook Servier, but he was unable to prevent the latter's retreat which was accomplished, although with some losses, because of the cover afforded by the intervening Ocoa River.

On June 22, La Torre overtook Servier again in Upia and finished scattering his troops; consequently, General Servier arrived at Pore to join General Urdaneta on June 23 with a very insignificant number of men. There Servier joined the emigration and was deprived of his command by order of Colonel Miguel Valdés. The latter had replaced General Ricaurte in Guasualito when he had resigned, unknown to Urdaneta, under the pretext that the government was dissolved and unable to appoint him. Meanwhile in Pore, Colonel Juan Nepomuceno Moreno remained in command with the title of governor but without sufficient forces or means to maintain himself.\textsuperscript{5}

\textsuperscript{4}General Servier is usually referred to as General Manuel de Serviez. He was a Frenchman who came to Cartagena in 1812 and fought for two years in the Cauca Valley under Mariño. In 1816, at the head of the second line of defense, Servier saved the patriot army from destruction and led what was left of it to safety at Bogotá. In October of 1816, when he had gone to Achaguas to cooperate with Páez, he was assassinated. Hasbrouck, \textit{Foreign Legionaries}, 343.

\textsuperscript{5}Juan Nepomuceno Moreno was born in the province of Casanare. He fought with Páez, Aramendi, and Olmedilla for the cause of independence beginning with the Battle of Guasualito until the Battle of Yagual and the seizure of Achaguas. As Governor of Pore he assembled regiments that fought with Bolívar in countless battles. He himself fought against the Royalist in the Battle of Boyacá. While serving
Two other patriot columns had also crossed the mountain range headed toward Casanare. La Torre, anxious for them to approach, stopped his march. He intended then to surround Pore and end the campaign in that province. One of La Torre's columns, under Lieutenant Colonel [Matías] Escuté's command, went from Tunja, by way of Sogamoso and Taso, to the salt mines of Chita. There it occupied the site of Sacama as an impregnable position. Colonel Juan Villavicencio then came down from San Gil with two hundred and seventy horses, and on June 29 had an encounter on the plains of Guachiria with eighty cavalrymen and seventy-five infantrymen under Moreno's command. Both forces disputed the field gallantly until, mutually pressed by the fear of being charged by

---

as Chief of the Republic's troops in Casanare, he refused to accept Venezuela's separation from the confederation. In 1830 he defeated General Justo Briceño in a battle ensuing from the revolution which was promulgated against the existing government. He entered Bogotá with his troops then and took part in the junta that supported Vice-President Caicedo. He succeeded in getting the head of the government to issue his decree of June 10 by which the doors of the country were opened again to those who had been exiled after the conspiracy of September 25, 1828. Scarpetta and Vergara, Dicciónario Biográfico, 359-60.

Colonel Matías Escuté was in command of the first of Morillo's two squadrons in Venezuela in 1816. Lecuna, Crónica Razonada, II, 2.

Colonel Juan Villavicencio is sometimes listed as Colonel Manuel Villanvicencio. He was in command of another one of Pablo Morillo's columns in Venezuela. Villavicencio left San Gil with some of Ferdinand VII's cavalry and light artillery to join Escuté and take over the command of both Spanish columns. D. Mariano Torrente, Historia de la Revolución Hispano-Americana, 3 vols. (Madrid, 1829), II, 248.
greater forces (their exact numbers were hidden by the darkness of night), they abandoned the struggle. Villavicencio returned toward the mountain with quite a number of losses. The patriots returned toward Pore, and remained masters of the llanura until they evacuated the city and went with a large part of the emigration to Arauca.

La Torre occupied Pore on July 10 and pursued the patriot forces to Bocoyes. He failed to overtake them, returned to Pore, and established his winter quarters there until the worst of the rains had passed and the swollen rivers had returned to their normal size.

Morillo considered La Torre's march from Bogotá in a period of forty-four days an unheard of feat. During this time La Torre did not sleep in an inhabited place and only had meat to eat. He had been forced to endure continuous rains and cross swamps and the copious Negro, Upi, and other rivers. According to what he himself said later, the smallest of these rivers was wider than the Ebro at its mouth. For a native of our country, admiration for having conquered such hardships and difficulties is incomprehensible, for we do not need many comforts while on campaign and are used to eating only meat, without bread or salt or any other condiment. When we do get any of these articles mentioned, we are completely satisfied. We do not need shoes and always live out in the open. We sleep on the plains or in the forest as if we were under the most comfortable roof.
We are frugal, and we are never despondent or desperate when we find ourselves surrounded by difficulties and dangers. For a European, La Torre's march was truly extraordinary. However, it is insignificant when compared with what the Colombians accomplished who covered the immense territory of five republics in need of everything. The few of them who are alive today talk about their dangerous marches to Cuzco as if they had been nothing more than excursions of fun.

In Trinidad of Arichuna, I received a communication from Colonel Valdés, the Commanding General of the Casanare troops, to come to Arauca and attend a meeting of the Granadine and Venezuelan leaders and officers for the purpose of establishing a provisional government and selecting a leader. Lieutenant Colonel Fernando Serrano, ex-governor of Pamplona and a person of great merit, was unanimously named President of the State. Doctor Don Francisco Javier Yañez was named Secretary of State and Generals Servier and Urdaneta were named Counsellors. Colonel Francisco de Paula Santander was appointed General-in-Chief of the army. This government was later installed in Guasualito, and its members swore to support it and never capitulate.

After this event, I went with Santander to the town of Trinidad where the column under my command, the only one that existed then, was stationed. The horses were unable to begin active operations. Ramón Nonato Pérez was in the plains of Cuiloto with two hundred men and one thousand
horses, but he refused to recognize any authority. Santander commissioned Father Trinidad Travieso and me then to persuade him and his people to join our army. He offered to do so, but did not carry out his word.

In view of the need we had for horses, Santander himself also commissioned me to go to the Lareño farm to get colts to use for cavalry mounts. I did this and was bringing five hundred of them to headquarters when, about a league away, I found out through several leaders and officers who came out to meet me, that the troops had named me supreme chief and were in formation at camp waiting to get my consent for their action. These chiefs and officers begged me when we reached the camp not to report the outcome of my commission to Santander, for he was no longer chief.

This is one of the most notable events of my life, and perhaps the beginning of that continued series of caprices with which fortune chose to elevate me and give me a place in the history of Colombia. Now let us hear what

---

8 Although Scarpetta and Vergara state that Nonato Pérez served Páez well, Vicente Lecuna mentions that Colonel Ramón Nonato Pérez was brought to trial in 1816 supposedly because of inflicting arbitrary deaths, stealing, communicating with the enemy, and bad conduct toward the refugees in Guasdualito. In reality, the charges were "trumped up" by Páez as a means of punishing a disobedient chief. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 460. Lecuna, Crónica Razonada, II, 308.

9 Father Trinidad Travieso was born in 1798 in San Felipe, Venezuela. From 1813 until early in 1822 he served as aide-de-camp to General-in-Chief, Rafael Urdaneta. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 633.
Baralt (and Díaz) in their *Historia de Venezuela*, Volume I, page 289, have to say about Serrano's and Santander's government.¹⁰

The truth is that this apparatus of regular government in those waste lands, designed by a few fugitives without either subjects or land to govern, was highly ridiculous, illegal, and what is more, embarrassing. Serrano was an excellent man. However, he was from New Granada and was now in Venezuelan territory. Which republic was he to direct? And where was the army Santander was to lead—Santander who was a Granadine also and unknown in Venezuela? Servier, French by birth and a Granadine officer, could not inspire any confidence. The names of Urdaneta and Yanez, so respected in Venezuela and New Granada, were not sufficient to lend authority and weight to that wretched government, situated as it was in the midst of semi-barbaric men for whom civil virtues, and even military virtues of a certain elevated order, were strange and foreign things. Naturally, that retinue only lasted a very short time, for it had barely arrived at Trinidad de Arichuna, when several Venezuelan leaders thought about destroying it and substituting it with what was needed then. And this was one sole and absolute leader who had the confidence of the llaneros and could lead them in war. A mutiny of three squadrons was attempted while a junta of officers met to pretend to be intimidated, seek means to appease the troops, and find these means in the deposition of Santander. The latter cut short the confusion by presenting himself before the junta and immediately after before these squadrons. Realizing that he was not the man needed in these circumstances, he resigned his command immediately in the presence of President Serrano. The junta, composed of Colonels Juan Antonio Paredes and Fernando Figueredo, of Lieutenant Colonels José María Carreño, Miguel Antonio Vásquez, and of Sergeant Major Francisco Conde, went on later to elect a person who would occupy both Santander's and Serrano's positions simultaneously—a

¹⁰In the 1939 edition of Baralt and Díaz, *Resúmen de la Historia* published by Desclée de Brouiver in Paris, this citation may be found in Volume I, 351-54.
man who was to be the absolute leader in the llanos. The election went to Páez, caudillo of the only force there was there, and this explains his victory. As for the rest of this curious event, which seen in the light of military regulations is a true anomaly, it was very natural in those circumstances. The error, of course, was not in the destruction of that kind of government, for it had been the work of an unauthorized junta. Necessarily, it would last only as long as the voluntary submission of the chiefs, officers, and troops to which the Republic had been reduced. It was easy to foresee that such obedience would not last long. Santander himself said it when he wrote in 1827: 'I saw only too well that everything that was being done would tumble the day that one of those chiefs wanted it, and this would be a chief who, by analogy of the customs, also would have influence over the llaneros. Furthermore, by then I had already been labeled an enemy of the Venezuelans because of the differences originating in Cúcuta between Bolivar and [Manuel del] Castillo.' And further on Santander writes: 'This attempt suppressed, I could not continue commanding men who leaned toward rebellion, particularly in a country where it was believed to be dishonorable for a Granadine to command Venezuelans.'

---

11 No further information was available on Juan A. Paredes.

José María Carreño was born in Cua, Venezuela. He joined the revolutionary army in 1810. On September 13, 1813, he lost the use of his right arm in the Battle of Cerritos Blancos, but he still continued the campaign. He later became Governor of the Province of Santa Marta and Intendant of the Isthmus, Zulia, and Orinoco. In 1830 he was a deputy to the Congreso Admirable, and in 1832 he returned to Venezuela as General of Division. He died in Caracas in 1849. Dávila, Diccionario Biográfico, I, 73.

12 Baralt refers here to Manuel del Castillo, a New Granadan, who in 1813 was in command of one of Bolivar's two divisions destined to liberate Venezuela. Castillo and Bolivar quarreled, and in Cúcuta Castillo was replaced in command by Santander. In 1815 Castillo was governor of Cartagena and refused to help Bolivar to carry out his commission, given by the government of New Granada, to liberate Santa Marta from the Royalists. Because of this, on May 8, 1815, Bolivar resigned his command in order not to quarrel with another patriot official and sailed for Jamaica. Morón, History of Venezuela, 114, 121.
The truth of the matter is that Santander had strong antipathies working against him. He was not man enough for the situation and in the final analysis, although gifted with a distinguished capacity, he did not have the background nor the natural disposition to wage war. He had been placed by the llanero in that derogatory category of officers called 'of letters.' But Serrano, it will be said, exercised a purely civil authority and was in addition a good and respected man. Whose way was he in? Unfortunately, he was in everybody's way, for there was nothing more to the republic than a camp of semibarbaric soldiers. Therefore, Serrano's supreme authority embarrassed war operations, especially when the ignorant and the ignored of the country could not direct them. No; the evil was that in saying the military hierarchy, indispensable basis of discipline, Páez was to command officers of rank higher than his. Among these was a Venezuelan General, capable, courageous, and known for many and eminent services. History can respond to this with the fact that Santander's election was in this same category, and that Urdaneta, aspiring only to join Bolívar wherever he appeared, did not want to take part in these affairs. He knew the llaneros too well to believe that he could command a troop of them—alone as they were and without ever having been submitted to the rule of any ordinance.

Servier, a foreigner and unknown to the country, contributed to not being considered by showing his jealousy of Urdaneta. The other leaders, although very worthy of esteem and considerations, because of their merit could not compete with Páez who was worshipped by his troops. He was caudillo or the only force that existed, famous because of his valor and the constant success that had accompanied him in all his undertakings.

That election, which could easily have been marked by intrigue and violence, met with success instead. In fact, it is evident to us that several courageous citizens, including Servier, were very anxious to promote the change spontaneously. It so happens, though, that these citizens came to flatter themselves into thinking that they could later direct Páez. But Páez shook himself from them, leaving them feeling a little cheated and peev ed.

I have cited Baralt as the best authority among us. However, I will not fail to correct the errors his narration
contains, and I shall relate the events in the manner in which they occurred.

On September 16, 1816 I arrived at Santander's headquarters. After the events which I have mentioned previously, the leaders and officers who had stayed in the camp, accompanied by a large part of the civilians, came out to welcome me. They proclaimed me their supreme leader. Surprised by this, I reprimanded them and asked how they could disregard Santander and the other authorities who governed them. They answered that they did not find Santander capable enough or with sufficient judgment to save them in those very dangerous circumstances, and that they had agreed to take this step "in order that I would liberate them from the deathhouse in which they already considered themselves." They insisted that I should not refuse their proclamation since everyone at headquarters was in agreement. I reprimanded them again, telling them that I was not disposed to support them. They pointed out that they, representative of the emigration from New Granada and Venezuela, and the only relics of both Republics, were the only sovereign. Because of this, they felt that they were in a position to resolve and execute what best suited them on this occasion.

They made many other observations to me, all of which I ignored. In fact, I tried to detach myself from them in order to go to Santander's house and give an account of the commission he had given me. They tried to prevent me from doing so and to make me see that I was their chief and
consequently had to account to no one. They begged me to march with them before the troops and be recognized as supreme chief. I resisted and got away from them. Then I went to Santander's house and gave an account of my commission without telling him anything concerning what had just occurred.

After I had retired to the ranch that served as my home, the same leaders and officers, accompanied by even more citizens, came to urge me again to go with them before the troops that were in formation and ready to recognize me. I refused for the hundredth time. But at this point Santander came in and asked what was happening. He had noticed that the troops were in formation. They told him that since they considered themselves to be in eminent danger because of the critical circumstances that surrounded them, they had resolved to confer the supreme command on me and to obey my wishes blindly; they were certain that I was the only one who could save them from the dangers that threatened them from all sides. Santander answered that he agreed with them and that, furthermore, he would submit himself to my orders with pleasure if they would accept the resignation he would tender right then. They pointed out the uselessness of such a resignation, for they had already ignored his authority. They told him further that they, along with the people that had saved themselves from the Spanish, represented sovereignty, for there was not any government left anywhere in New Granada or in Venezuela. Santander still insisted that he be permitted to resign. The assembly resisted his request
vehemently until Santander stuck his sword in the ground and said emphatically that he preferred that they take his life with his sword rather than give his consent to this outrage. I spoke then for the first time and pointed out the justice of Santander's demand. I said that I would not accept the command if he were not permitted to resign. They finally yielded, and then I accepted the supreme command and was recognized as chief.

In the citation from Baralt [and Díaz] which I gave previously, it is easy to detect another error when he [they] ascertained that I attended the meeting called to decide on Santander's deposition and my elevation to command. I have already said that at that time I was executing the commission that that chief had given me to corral horses for the troops and to convince Nonato Pérez to join our army.

Restrepo states in Volume 27, page 326 of his work that:13

Such was the confidence that all had in Páez's courage, in his energy, in his influence on the llaneros, and in the other gifts that graced him, that Generals Urdaneta and Servier, and some colonels submitted themselves willingly to his authority. They looked on this step as the only narrow chance of salvation in that frightful disaster. Páez immediately decreed the end of President Serrano's functions by declaring before the troops that he alone had the

---

13The work of José Manuel Restrepo, Historia de la Revolución de la República de Colombia, published in Besanzón in 1858 by the Imprenta de José Jacquino is condensed into four volumes. The second volume contains discussions of the years 1815, 1816, and 1817 among others. This citation could not be located in these discussions.
supreme authority. In that difficult and sad occasion, it could not have been any other way. Civil authority and division of command would have caused difficulties in adopting and executing the active and energetic measures that were needed, and without which the unfortunate relics of the patriots that had taken to the llanos situated between the Arauca and the Apure could not have been saved.

After speaking to the troops and the people and thanking them for the confidence they had shown in me, I advised them to ask Divine Providence not to deny me the protection I needed in the arduous enterprise before me. I was thinking about leaving that very day to encounter the enemy, after I had placed the non-combatants in the safest possible place.

Now I was in control of the supreme command of what remained of the Republics of New Granada and Venezuela. I formed a junta then in order to familiarize myself with the opinions of the principal officers concerning the operations we had to undertake to save our last hopes. We had to agree on a plan of operation against the enemies of our independence.

It is necessary at this point to give the reader an idea of the condition of the troops and the resources we relied on to save our country. The army horses, untamed and new, were worn out because the pasture in the plains where we were was scarce and poor in quality. Most of the soldiers

---

14At this time the Supreme Commander, Simón Bolívar, was in Haiti, where he had been forced into exile by the Spanish reoccupation of Venezuela. His liberating expedition did not leave Haiti until December of 1816. Restrepo, Revolución de la República de Colombia, II, 369-70.
had no weapons other than the lance and apricot-tree sticks, sharpened like a pike at one end. Very few of them carried fire arms. They clothed themselves with quayucos. Their hats had rotted with the rigors of the rainy season. They had no saddles, and we could not even supply them with a blanket or any other soft seat. When we killed a cow, the soldiers fought over its hide, for they needed it as shelter from the rain at night in the open plain. We were forced to stay on the open plains in order to prevent being taken by surprise; for, with the exception of the territory where we were, all the rest of the area was occupied by the enemy. Those who committed the indiscretion of separating themselves from the center of our forces were pursued and killed.

The historian[s] Baralt [and Díaz] state with considerable accuracy:

It is impossible to imagine the depths of poverty endured by those men who then and later fought a war in the llanos. The soldiers were so naked, that they were forced to use the raw hides of the cows they killed to cover themselves. A few of them had hats, but none had shoes. The customary and only source of nourishment was meat without salt or bread. In addition to all this, the rains were very frequent, and the overflowing rivers and ditches had inundated the territory. There was a need for horses, and since these are indispensable to the llanero soldier, it was necessary above all things to look for them. Consequently, the first movements were aimed at this acquisition. The horses that were usually found were wild and had to be tamed by squadrons according to the custom of the llanos. This was by the effort of the riders.

---

15 Quayuco is a loin cloth used by the Indians of Venezuela and Colombia.

16 Baralt and Díaz, Resúmen de la Historia, I, 354-55.
It was a curious spectacle to see five or six hundred men at a time struggling with those ferocious animals. Several officers were placed around the camp of exercise. They were mounted on tame horses, not for the purpose of helping the riders that fell, but for chasing the horses that had knocked them down and retrieving the saddle, even if it was nothing more than the tree and bow of a saddle with raw leather straps. 'We wanted risk,' wrote a witness much later, 'in order to end such a bitter life with glory.'

In addition to all this, there were the difficulties presented by a numerous emigration and the need of providing a livelihood at each step, for there were no storage facilities. This group of men, women, and children, without homes or country, vividly presented the image of a nomadic people who, after having consumed the resources of the area they occupied, lifted their tents to conquer another by force.

I would add that our emigration reminded me of the exodus of the Israelites from their captivity in Egypt. The sole difference was that we did not have a cloud of fire to guide us on our way. Neither did the poor Moses leading us have a wand capable of making manna rain from the heavens nor water burst forth from the ground as did the Hebrew caudillo. To make the comparison more exact, news reached us that General Morillo, as another Pharaoh, was searching for us to reduce us again to the old slavery.

Oh! Those times! Only God knows what we suffered. Rather than go to the towns and there risk life in the arms of a despised and vengeful tyranny, we had to acquire more than stoicism and heroism to face an existence so full of dangers and needs, that it seemed more than a human could endure. Our children will never be able to imagine even remotely the price we paid for independence; but those times
brought forth men who possessed bodies and souls that were tempered of steel. Nothing was left to us then but hope and an indomitable resolution which was greater than all the calamities and misfortunes put together. Hope nourished us and our determination served as a basis on which to raise again the sacred altar of our fatherland.
CHAPTER VIII


1815-1816

Spain would not abandon her goal of reconquering the countries that had risen against her domination. She was barely free from the French invasion when, without stopping for any reconstruction, she readied an expedition to accomplish this purpose. Spain felt that she would get more than enough compensation from the reconquest of the rebellious territories. Don Pablo Morillo headed the expedition. Lord Wellington, recalling the distinguished military attributes and integrity of character that Morillo had exhibited in the Peninsula, had recommended him as the most apt person for the undertaking. Morillo has been justly compared with the celebrated Duke of Alba, whom Philip II had considered the most capable of his generals for the subjection and punishment of the rebellious Flemish. He was seconded in command
by Don Pascual Enrile, a native of Habana and thus a dis­
grace to the American name.¹ This expedition consisted of
10,642 men, selected from the cream of the Spanish troops.
They sailed in sixty merchant vessels and were escorted by
three large war frigates, thirty smaller ones, and the war-
ship, San Pedro Alcántara.

The question arises now as to what the condition of
the patriot cause was in New Granada and Venezuela at this
time when the mother country was sending such a formidable
force to subjugate them again. In New Granada the fire of
civil discord had ignited. Bolivar had been forced to sus­
pend his activities against the Royalists in order to reason
with the people who refused to recognize the government of
the Union. This was particularly true of Cartagena, a city
which he finally had to lay under siege when it resisted

¹Brigadier Enrile was of noble lineage and was born
in Cádiz. Since he spent his childhood in Havana, it was
believed to be his native city and explains Páez's error in
this instance. He had excellent military training and
served with distinction in the Peninsular War against
Napoleon. At this time he commanded the Spanish naval forces.
As Morillo's Chief of Staff, he wielded great influence over
the expeditionary leader. Henao and Arrubla, History of
Colombia, 270, 276, 287, 294. Lemly, Bolívar, 111.
peaceful transactions. Bolívar eventually was forced to abandon command and embark for Jamaica when the means to continue the war were refused him under deceiving pretexts. Even his absence was not sufficient to end the internal discords, for the dissensions had grown to such proportions, that they could have been detrimental to the American cause if the need for a common defense had not come to conciliate spirits.

Meanwhile the patriots of Venezuela had been subjected by Boves's llaneros. The patriots did not even have an army with which to protect Caracas. They were forced to abandon the siege of Puerto Cabello, and La Guaira was then occupied by Boves. Valencia, after resisting with unequal fearlessness, was forced to capitulate at a high price. The barbarous and ferocious Boves, failing to fulfill solemn oaths,

2Páez's and Henao and Arrubla's views on this incident (see Footnote 13 in Chapter VII) are not shared by some later writers. Salvador de Madariaga, for instance, perhaps overlooking the facts that the Congress of New Granada had given Bolívar military command and that General Castillo in Cartagena was his subordinate, is highly critical of Bolívar's action in this instance. He points out that Bolívar used the troops that the Union Government had given him to fight the Spaniards in Santa Marta for the purpose of subduing Cartagena and its Military Governor, General Castillo. Madariaga states: "We are told Bolívar could not take Santa Marta because he lacked the means which Cartagena possessed; and that, therefore, he had to go to besiege and take Cartagena and wrench from the obdurate city the means to fight Santa Marta. How could he then force Cartagena without means? As all this is sheer nonsense, the sense must be somewhere else. Bolívar wanted first to get rid of Castillo and then to liberate Santa Marta and Venezuela, but on condition that he would be the one and only Libertador." Madariaga, Bolívar, 249.
sacrificed the best citizens after having insidiously taken possession of all their riches.

This was the condition of both countries when on April 3, 1815 the expedition presented itself at Carúpano. It advanced quickly to the island of Margarita where some Venezuelan patriots, including the never sufficiently-praised [Francisco Esteban] Gómez, [Juan Bautista] Arizmendi, and [José Francisco] Bermúdez were staying.3 Any resistance to

3 General Francisco Esteban Gómez was born in Margarita. He served the independence cause until Morillo landed in April of 1815. In 1816, when the island fell into patriot hands again, Gómez served as Governor of the island while Arizmendi went to Barcelona to aid Bolívar. He welcomed Bolívar to Juan Griego on December 28, 1816. From 1817 until 1819 he fought Morillo's reoccupation of the island. In 1819 he became Governor while Arizmendi was named Military Chief. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 182-84.

Juan Bautista Arizmendi was a native of the island of Margarita and was half-Creole and half-Indian. He was the leader of the local movement on the island which seconded the Junta founded in Caracas on April 19, 1810. When Margarita set up its own Junta, Arizmendi became Commander of Arms. This weighed heavily against him when the island fell into Spanish control under Pascual Martínez. Martínez treacherously imprisoned Arizmendi. However, on June 13, 1813 Arizmendi led a revolt that forced the Spanish garrison to surrender. On April 7, 1815 when Morillo's forces sighted Pampatar, the chief city and port of Margarita, Arizmendi ordered the Spanish flag raised. On April 9, the Spanish troops landed after the island offered to surrender if forgiven for its past deeds. Arizmendi stayed on in Margarita and reported to Morillo under cover of Morillo's proclamation granting amnesty to all rebels. Morillo forgave Arizmendi, even against Morales's advice. In November of the same year, Arizmendi broke his word to the Spanish General and initiated a second revolt in Margarita. It has been said that this act of treason completely altered Morillo's policy of conciliation. Madariaga, Bolívar, 216, 257-58, 274.

General J. F. Bermúdez was born in Venezuela in 1782. As early as 1809 and 1810, he fought Spanish domination in the revolutionary juntas of Caracas. He joined General Mariño's forces in 1812 and with him suffered the defeat at
the disembarking of the expeditionary troops would have been futile. A great number of those who were on the island, including Bermúdez, escaped between the enemy ships and took refuge in Cartagena and the Antilles.

After disembarking at Margarita, Morillo went on to Caracas where some Royalist corps joined him. In August he left Puerto Cabello with the object of besieging Cartagena, a patriot stronghold. He stopped in Turbaco to form his line that was to cut land communications to the plaza. Then he occupied "Boca Grande" and severed its sea communications. Just as heroically as at Sagunto, Numancia and Zaragoza, the plaza was defended against the repeated attacks of the

La Puerta in 1814. With Generals Rivas and Piar he helped defeat General Morales in Maturín in 1814. He fled to Margarita this same year and joined General Arismendi only to flee to the mainland again when Morillo was landing his Spanish troops. Legend says that he escaped by passing right through the heart of the Spanish fleet, shouting who he was and insulting the Spanish. In 1816 Bolívar named him Chief of the First Division, and in 1819 he replaced Mariño as head of the Army of Oriente. He was victorious at the Battle of Carabobo in 1824. In 1826 he did not support Páez in his split with the Union. By 1831, he yielded to the inevitable and recognized the legitimate government of Páez as President of Venezuela. Later this same year he was assassinated in Cumaná by Francisco Carrera. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 47-49.
Spanish troops. Although the patriots found themselves reduced to the extreme of eating even the most unclean animals, they would not surrender. Finally when the daily mortality rate ascended to that of one hundred persons, they evacuated the plaza, forcing passage with their ships through the midst of the enemy ships.

When the Spanish entered this city, according to the account given by Captain General Montalvo, they found only cadavers, people who were dying, and an air of pestilence

---

4 The Battles of Sagunto, Numancia, and Zaragosa have become legendary in the history of the Iberian Peninsula as examples of the indomitable courage of the Spaniards when fighting for their fatherland.

The Battle of Sagunto or Saguntum (the town is now officially known as Sagunto) took place in 219 B.C. When Hannibal took over supreme command of Punic Iberia, he led his victorious armies over the whole of southern and eastern Spain. One city alone resisted this Carthaginian onslaught in such a courageous manner that "the name of Saguntum lives in history, as glorious as that of Hannibal himself." Ulrick B. Burke, *A History of Spain from the Earliest Times to the Death of Ferdinand the Catholic*, 2 vols. (London, 1900), I, 12. See also Rafael Altamira, *A History of Spanish Civilization* (London, 1930), 26, 27.

The Battle of Numancia or Numantia took place intermittently from 209 to 27 B.C. when the Celtiberians here defied the Roman legions that had conquered most of the rest of their territory. It took sixteen months of a continuous siege led by Scipio Africanus to make the city surrender. When the Romans entered the city, they found that those who had survived the famine, had slaughtered each other rather than yield to Rome. Burke, *History of Spain*, I, 14-28.

The Battle of Zaragosa or Saragosa occurred in 1809 during the Peninsular Wars against French domination under Napoleon. It was only after the most desperate resistance failed that the city was captured. Louis Bertrand and Sir Charles Petrie, *The History of Spain 711-1931* (New York, 1934), 443.
that interfered with breathing. There were groans and laments from all parts. When the great deeds of the South American Revolution, which are second to none, become known, history shall do justice to this heroic defense.

With Cartagena occupied and the Cachiri battle lost, New Granada was at the mercy of the conqueror. Morillo quickly took possession of Santa Fé. There he covered his name with well-earned infamy by killing its most illustrious citizens. Among these was the eminent scholar, Don Francisco José de Caldas, whose loss Granadine letters will always mourn. The expeditionary leader wrote to the

5 Field Marshal Francisco Montalvo, a native of Havana, was appointed in 1813 as Captain General of the New Kingdom of Granada. In 1816 a royal decree made the captaincy general of New Granada a viceroyalty once more and Montalvo was appointed Viceroy. His residence then was in Cartagena with the royal audiencia. In February of 1818, he resigned and abandoned his post. Henao and Arrubla, History of Colombia, 248, 265, 271, 273, 276, 299, 302.

6 The Battle of Cachiri occurred on February 21 and 22 in 1816. The patriots led by García Rovira held their position at the entrance of the Cachiri and fought desperately for two days against great odds. The Spanish Commandant Calzada finally defeated them with a cavalry charge. Ibid., 277-79.

7 Madariaga asserts that Morillo's harsh attitude toward the citizens of Santa Fé stemmed directly from Arizmendi's betrayal. Madariaga, Bolívar, 290-91.

8 Don Francisco José de Caldas, known as El Sabio or Wise One, was born in Popayán in 1771. He graduated from the Colegio del Rosario where he specialized in physical sciences and mathematics. He published treatises on these subjects in el Semanario and the Diario Político. In 1810 he consecrated himself to the independence cause and became a Colonel in the engineering corps, supervising the manufacture of cannons and gun powder. When Popayán fell to the Spanish again in 1816,
Minister of War in a letter, found on board a ship seized by a corsair from Buenos Aires, that the scholars of New Granada were the ones that directed the revolution while the patriots of Venezuela helped with the sword. Morillo wrote: "They owe everything to the rebels of Venezuela. These men fight like animals when they are in their territory. If they are successful in getting able leaders, it will take many years to subjugate them. Even so, this objective will be accomplished only at the price of much bloodshed and considerable sums of money."

The system of war that the patriots had to adopt against these veteran troops was like the one the Spaniards themselves had adopted in the Peninsula to destroy their invaders. These Spanish troops were accustomed to fighting in terrain similar to ours. In addition, they were well-disciplined, courageous, and extremely loyal to their cause. In Columbia, as in Spain, the terrain offers natural defenses in all parts. Later with sufficient reason the Liberator said to the Congress of Bolivia, "that the savage nature of this continent (America) itself rejects monarchical

he fled to Paispamba. There he was taken by Simón Muñoz and brought to Bogotá. Pablo Morillo had him executed in October of 1816, saying to those who pleaded for his life—"Spain has no need of wise men." Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 76-77.
order, for deserts invite independence." 9

The guerrilla system of warfare is and always shall be the type to adopt against an invading army in countries such as ours where there is more than enough land and not enough people. The forests, mountains, and plains invite men to freedom, while the hills and plateaus nurture him in their breasts to protect him from the numerical superiority of the enemy. In the mountains and in the forests the patriot must never take the offensive. However, in the plains he should never neglect any opportunity to take the initiative against the enemy and attack him with vigor and courage. We, the Americans, owe the advantages that we gained while we still lacked a numerous and well-organized army to this type of warfare. Against the discipline of the Spanish troops, we pitted the patriotism and courage of each individual combatant. Against the bayonet, that powerful weapon of the Spanish infantry, we hurled the formidable lance as wielded by the even more formidable arm of the llanero. With this weapon, whether on horseback or on foot, the llanero broke the Spanish squares and swept over their battalions. Against the superiority of their artillery, we used the speed of our movements, aided by the noble animal raised on our llanos.

9Páez refers here to the speech that Bolivar made before the Constitutional Congress of Bolivia. This particular citation may be found in Lecuna (ed.), Proclamas y Discursos, 327.
The llanos opposed our invaders with all the inconveniences presented by a desert. If the enemy did penetrate them, we knew how to keep from them any of the advantages that the llanos held for us. The rivers served to block their march; however, they were but a small obstacle to us, for we knew how to cross their currents with as much ease as if we had been born in the water. All of these factors, plus the hope that the people would finally become aware of the sanctity and justice of the cause we defended, made us disregard the formidable forces that pretended to subject us again to the yoke of Spanish domination.

Our leaders could not agree on the action that should be taken. Some of them felt that we should go to Barinas, while others felt that we should cross the Orinoco and join [Manuel] Cedeno's party in Caicara. I felt that we should attack and destroy the enemy that was in Achaguas. Thus we would be able to take possession of the Lower Apure and there find the resources necessary to face Morillo. This would add to the advantage we would have already gained by

---

10 General Manuel Cedeno was born in Apure in 1784. He enlisted in the revolutionary movement in Caracas in 1810 and was active in it until his death. He was particularly active in pursuing Boves in 1814. On March 8, 1815, he defeated the Spanish Governor Cerriti and knifed the remnants of his forces in Caicara. He joined Bolivar in the Battle of Yagual. He became Governor and Commandant General of Guayana. He was Chief of the Second Division of the army which freed Venezuela at Carabobo in 1821. He was killed in this battle. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 103-104.
getting in touch with Cedeño and not being situated between two enemy forces, both stronger than ours. My opinion finally prevailed.

Toward the end of September, we went to the Lower Apure along the road that leads from Trinidad to Rincón Hondo and from there to Achaguas. The Royalist Colonel, Don Francisco López, knowing that I was searching for him, came out to meet me then. He had been in Queseras Blanqueras, not very far from us, when one of our men, called Ramon La Riva, detached himself from the emigration, went before him and told him among other things: "Do not wait for the patriots in an open field, for although they know very well that they are inferior in number and weapons, they rely greatly on their skill in handling the lance. With this weapon they do not fear the enemy in open-field combat. Also, keep in mind that these men are determined to sell their lives at a high price, and even to kill one another in the event of misfortune."

López took heed of the information given to him by that intelligent deserter. He countermarched some leagues to claim the left bank of the Arauca and take a strong position in the farm of Yagual, the property of a Biscayan by the name of Elizalde. When I received the news about that movement, I marched with my troops and the emigrants up to the sand bank of the Araguayana, sixteen or eighteen leagues from Achaguas. There I left the women, children, and men who were unable to fight under the custody of a select
cavalry company led by Captain Pablo Aponte. Then I incorporated in the army all who could carry arms and formed a reserve corps consisting of clergymen, men of letters, and those incapable of military service. I placed the latter group under the command of Captain Juan Antonio Mirabal.\textsuperscript{11}

Since Trinidad de Arichuna, the patriot forces had been organized in three squadrons. The first squadron was under the command of General Rafael Urdaneta; the second, under General Servier; and the third, under Colonel Santander. All of these troops, including the reserve, formed a total of seven hundred combatants.

With this small army organized, I still could not set out until I had consoled those unhappy families we were leaving behind with a few words of goodbye. I was leaving them there with very little hope of any of us ever seeing each other again in this world, for the coming campaign offered great obstacles. The superiority of the enemy, the flooded rivers of the Lower Apure during that season, and the enemy embarkations defending its fords, were all going to present us with a thousand difficulties. With all this in mind, those families listened to my goodbye while showing signs of great anguish. More than one tear, too, shone in

\textsuperscript{11}Captain Juan Antonio Mirabal was born in San Fernando de Apure. On Páez's recommendation, Bolívar promoted him to the rank of Colonel. In 1830 he was Governor of Angostura. As General Muñoz's Chief of Staff, he fought against his former chief, General Páez, in 1848. He died in San Fernando in December of 1849. Dávila, \textit{Diccionario Biográfico}, I, 368-69.
the eyes of those brave men who were courageously going to encounter the enemy.

After this moving scene, we started the march. Our weak and tired horses could barely travel three leagues a day to search for an enemy that had provided its cavalry and its reserve with good mounts. The day after our departure from Araguayuna, when the division was already on the march, I went ahead about a league as usual. I was accompanied by nine people, including aides-de-camp, officers, and orderlies. I did not expect to find enemy troops in that vicinity. However, when I got to a little house and asked its only occupant, a woman, whether she could tell me anything concerning the whereabouts of the Royalists, she replied that one of their battalions had been in the farm of "Los Cocos," a mile away, on the previous day. Looking in the direction she mentioned, I saw a cloud of dust. This was a sure sign that there were troops in that area. Immediately we all mounted in order to go attack them. In our position, we were left no choice but to fight without intermission and to seek out our enemy in all parts. In effect, that cloud of dust had been raised by fifty-five Royalist cavalymen. They were reconnoitering under the orders of Captain Facundo Mirabal. Thirty of them were armed with both rifles and lances, and the rest had only lances.

When the leader of the enemy party saw that we were approaching, he came out of the farm hurriedly and drove out about one hundred horses so that we could not get them.
Horses! Imagine what these meant to us then when we did not have any! On the spot I decided to get them. We marched hurriedly toward the enemy who halted and faced us. Without hesitating, we hurled ourselves impetuously against them. We charged with such courage and spirit, that they quickly yielded ground. When they saw that neither the discharges from their thirty guns nor the points of their twenty-five lances could make us retreat, they began to flee. The Royalists lost many from their ranks then, including those taken prisoners and those who were killed. In fact, only eight of them escaped, and among them was Captain Mirabal. He abandoned his horse and took refuge in the forest of "Mata de la Madera," for he saw that Aramendi and I were already pursuing him closely with our lances in hand.

This unexpected stroke of good fortune was equivalent to a great victory, for we not only procured the horses we needed so badly, but in addition our troops gained moral strength. They saw that the enemy's greater numbers were not indicative of the final outcome of the battle—no matter how desperate our position might seem to be.

All those who accompanied me in this encounter rivaled each other in courage. They were as follows: the courageous lieutenant, Francisco Aramendi; the then-rankless Vicente Peña (whose life I had saved in Guas dualito); Pedro Chirinos, who was wounded in this encounter; Sergeant Ramon Valero; First Corporal Cornelio Muñoz, who later became a brigadier general; and soldiers Paulino Blanco, Francisco Ortiz,
Francisco Villamediana, and José María Olivera.  

The following day the division continued its march, and we camped in Aguaditas. The enemy now was to our right and about a league away. I was purposely leaving the enemy to one side in order to mount a large inlet that almost completely surrounds the Yagual farm. We stayed there without moving and rested the horses. That night we started the march, filing off in a semicircle so that we could get behind the enemy. We endured a thousand hardships, for it was dark and the road was so swampy that our horses got stuck at every step. Furthermore, there were ravines over which our horses stumbled frequently and which impeded our march—a march that necessarily had to be very silent in order not to alert the enemy and have them encounter us at the exit of the inlet.

Finally at dawn we came out on dry land and looked over the enemy camp. They had seventeen hundred cavalrymen and six hundred infantrymen about a mile away from us. López had formed the cavalry behind the house and the corral.

---

No other data were available on the other men mentioned except for Cornelio Muñoz. Corporal Muñoz was born in Venezuela. He began his career in the revolutionary army in the Battle of Guasdualito in 1815. From then on, he fought incessantly for the cause of Venezuelan independence, taking part in the celebrated seizure of Puerto Cabello on November 8, 1823. In 1826 he was Governor of the province of Apure and was promoted to the rank of General by Bolívar. He died a natural death in Caracas, in 1852. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 374-75.
He had placed the infantry within the sheepfold, and its door was defended by four pieces of artillery. In the Arauca River, which is almost a rifle shot's distance from this farm, the Royalists had four ships armed with cannons.

I wanted to attain two goals with this operation. In the first place, I wanted to force my troops to fight with desperation, for they could see that the land behind them was occupied by the enemy. Then secondly, I wanted to get all the horses that the Royalists were guarding at that point. The success of this operation would fulfill my wishes and hopes.

We approached the enemy and formed three lines. Urdaneta's squadron was at the vanguard; Servier's, in the center; and Santander's, at the left. The reserve, consisting of the prominent patriots whose names the reader already knows, was located as rear guard, outside the range of rifle fire because I wanted to preserve the lives of these eminent men. Nevertheless, the clergymen, Ramón Ignacio Méndez, [Ricardo] Becerra, Trinidad Travieso, and the Colonel Priest, José Félix Blanco, came to take part in the battle. The

---

13Ramón Ignacio Méndez I la Barta was born in Barinas in 1794 and was Archbishop of Caracas when the revolution started. On April 19, 1810 he became a member of the governing revolutionary junta and later became a member of the Congress in Caracas. He was Páez's comrade in the Battles of Arichuna, Achaguas, San Fernando, and Yagual. In 1823 and 1826 he was a member of the Congress of Colombia. In 1827 he was elected Archbishop of Caracas. Later he refused to accept the Venezuelan constitution when it subjected the church to the state. In 1830 he was expelled to Curazao,
example they set and the words they spoke greatly encouraged the combatants.

While Captain José María Angulo with a picket of riflemen was reconnoitering the terrain to the right of the enemy, he was attacked by the enemy's superior rifle forces. If I moved to reinforce Angulo with the rest of our company, López would realize that a general attack could be started along my right flank. Following this line of thinking, he

from where he wrote Páez begging him to conciliate Church and State. Páez was able to accomplish this when Archbishop Méndez signed the constitution and ended his exile in 1832. Political events in 1836 forced his final exile from Venezuela. He died in Bogotá on August 6, 1839 of natural causes. Ibid., 316-17.


The Priest Colonel, José Félix Blanco, was a native of Venezuela. He left the priesthood for an army career, feeling that he could best serve his country in the latter capacity. He served as a Colonel under Páez in many battles, including those of Yagual, Calabozo, Carabobo, and Puerto Cabello. Bolivar promoted him to the rank of General in 1830. Blanco, with the assistance of Ramón Azpurúa, collected and edited a fourteen-volume work entitled Documentos Para la Historia de la Vida Pública del Libertador de Colombia, Perú y Bolivia. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 51. Lecuna (ed.), Cartas del Libertador, XI, 349, 407, 408, 409.

José María Angulo became a Colonel in the Venezuelan army. He was a native of Venezuela and had joined the army at the beginning of the independence movement. A brave warrior of the llanos, he served under Páez in the Battles of Mata de la Miel, Achaquas, Yagual, Trinidad de Arichuna. When he was a Lieutenant Colonel, he was one of the one hundred and fifty men selected by Páez to humiliate Morillo's six thousand soldiers in Queseras del Medio. He also fought in the Battle of Carabobo. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 20.
ordered a squadron of his riflemen to flank our right. These men approached us at less than half rifle-fire range. Here they were favored by a ravine that was between us which was full of water. In addition, this ravine formed several curves which would make it necessary for us to cross the water many times if we were to attack them.

When the enemy opened fire, most of the advantages were on their side. To begin with, there was the short distance that separated us. Furthermore, we did not have sufficient fire arms to answer their discharges. So, I decided then to detach half of Santander's squadron, under the command of the intrepid Genaro Vásquez, and ordered it to cross the ravine and dislodge the enemy from that favorable position. Vásquez was able to accomplish this and had the Royalists in flight when a squadron of lancers came to assist the latter. Vásquez was forced to fight them and lost the ground he had won. Then I sent Colonel Santander with the other half of the squadron, and they were able to repel the enemy again.

The Royalist leader was determined not to yield this ground, and sent two squadrons for reinforcements. I counteracted this by ordering General Servier to advance with the second squadron, assist Santander, and simultaneously attempt to flank and surround the enemy on the right. When Santander and Servier were most engrossed in a rigorous lance battle, Colonel Torellas, who was López's second in command, came out on the right. He had a squadron of two hundred men
under the orders of Commandant Morón, one of López's most trusted leaders. His objective was to destroy Santander's and Servier's forces along the rear. In order to achieve this objective, López ordered the remainder of his cavalry to attack them at the same time. When I saw this movement, I ordered General Urdaneta to encounter him. I accompanied Urdaneta myself, and we attacked him with such daring, that the Royalist commander did not have time to carry out his operation. In fact, Urdaneta even dashed Torellas against the shore of the lake that was at their side. The fight was desperate and bloody. Some of the men were finally forced to throw themselves in the lake and swim across. This victory saved Santander's and Servier's brigades when they were in difficult straits.

We pursued the Royalists vigorously. We even charged after them as far as the very door of the corral of the farm. Here the valiant Captain Vicente Braca died when he was pierced by a lance that a zambo, called Ledesma, hurled at him as if it were an arrow. A great part of the enemy cavalry left the field in defeat. López was left with only some one thousand cavalrmen who had taken refuge behind the infantry on the outskirts of the corral.

I reorganized my forces quickly and remained the rest of the day at half rifle-fire range from the enemy. The latter, having had enough for the day, did not dare to start the battle again. As for us, we could not have started to fight again except poorly, for López maintained himself in a
very strong position. His infantry was protected inside the corral fences and the corral in turn was defended by the artillery.

Our horses were now on the ground panting out of sheer exhaustion. Night fell, and in order to avoid being attacked by surprise in the darkness, we got in a ravine on our right that was full of water. Had we failed to do this, the thousand cavalrymen led by Torrellas, who looked for us all that night, would have attacked us. But who would have thought to look for us in the water?

On the following day we, who were masters of the territory that was behind us and of the enemy horses that were there, remounted our people. Then we ate, for we had not had time to do so the day before. That afternoon we attempted to provoke the Spanish into a new battle. They refused to accept the challenge and retreated in the cover of night to Achaguas. They sent their wounded and their artillery to launches which went down the Arauca River to its junction with the Apure Seco River, and then on the Apure Seco to the city it passes. We pursued them, and on the following day we got to the right bank of the Apure Seco River, facing Achaguas. There, from a woman who crossed the river in a small canoe, we found out that the Royalists had retreated from that point also.

Urdaneta, Santander, Servier, [José María] Vergara, [Tomás] Montilla, I, and some others then crossed the river,
two by two in the canoe. We entered a house in the plaza in order to find some newspaper or notice that would tell us what was happening in the world. We had not been in the building long when we heard a shot. We abandoned it hurriedly. Immediately a dragoon presented himself to us and said that he had been shot by the enemy who lay in ambush at the outskirts of the city, opposite the river. We hurried to

15 Undoubtedly, the Vergara Páez refers to here is José María Vergara who was born in Bogotá December 8, 1792. He was educated in Spain, for his father had died while the two of them were in route to Cádiz, and the young boy had remained there. He became an officer in the Spanish Guards and fought in the Peninsular wars in 1808 and 1809. He managed to return to his native state, however, when he heard of the revolutions in Caracas and Bogotá. He served in Urdaneta's, Santander's and Servier's armies and fought in the Battles of Cachiri, Los Cocos, Yagual, and Achaguas. In 1819, Bolívar promoted him to the rank of General of Brigade. He served as a member of the Congress of Angostura and did research on the English jury system. His productive years ended in 1820 when a mental disorder gradually deprived him of his reason. He died thirty-six years later on June 19, 1857. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 689-90. See also Lecuna, Cartas del Libertador, XI, 121.

Of the two famous Montilla brothers, Mariano and Tomás, Páez refers here to Tomás. A member of one of the most illustrious and wealthy families of Caracas, Tomás was one of Bolívar's comrades in the Revolutionary Clubs and a powerful member of the Junta of April, 1810. He was imprisoned later by Monteverde when he refused to accept the agreement the latter had made with Miranda. On July 31, 1812 he helped Bolívar to prevent Miranda's departure. In 1813 Bolívar named him Secretary of War. In 1815 he sought out Páez and fought in the Battles of Arichuna, Yagual, and the seizure of Achaguas. In 1818 he was Governor of Guayana and a member of the Congress of Angostura. He died of natural cause on June 25, 1822. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 345-46. See also Madariaga, Bolívar, 188, 209, 249, 312, 315, 371; Lecuna, Cartas del Libertador, XI, 164.
recross the river after I had sent orders to Captain Genaro Vásquez, who had already crossed it with a company of riflemen, to take a defensive position in a plantation on the riverbank.

Four enemy gunboats appeared navigating upstream, obviously trying to cut off our retreat. Then the enemy infantry that had been in ambush ran up the shore of the river and occupied a trench that had been prepared beforehand. From this position, they fired on those of us who were on the opposite side of the river and also on Vásquez's company which was to their right. The boats also fired cannon shots and approached intending to cut Vásquez down. However, aided by our riflemen, we forced the boats down river five or six times. In the meantime, Vásquez made his soldiers swim across little by little and used the canoe to take weapons and clothing. He was finally able to join us, having lost only twelve men, including the wounded and scattered. Night put an end to the battle. During the night the enemy left Achaguas and went toward the San Fernando plaza.

López had left beforehand to go with the cavalry and some infantrymen to the town of Apurito. He left the rest of his infantry, which we found in Achaguas, under the
command of Reyes Vargas. In the meantime, he crossed the Apure River and situated himself on its left bank between the towns of San Antonio and Apurito. Then he appointed Commandant Loyola to be in command, and he and some officers embarked for the fortified city of Nutrias.

I sent Colonel Miguel Guerrero to San Fernando with a part of my forces. With what remained of them, I went on to the town of Apurito. I was unable to find the enemy there, for López had already crossed the Apure River and taken a position on its left bank to dispute our passage with four gunboats.

We remained in that position for some days, for we positively lacked the means with which to cross the river. Meanwhile, López returned from Nutrias. Knowing that I was

---

16 Colonel R. Reyes Vargas was a full-blooded Indian chief who, along with the priest Torellas, started a pro-Spanish movement in 1811 that swamped the first Republic. Able to command the entire Indian population of Venezuela, this chief represented a powerful force for the patriots to contend. Reyes Vargas further injured the republican cause when he saved Boves from the clutches of Escalona in 1812. Finally in 1813, after he had inflicted much damage on the patriot troops, one of Bolívar's commanders, García de Sena, was able to defeat him at Cerritos Blancos, not far from Barquisimeto. In October of 1820 he defected from the Royalist cause and proclaimed ardently for the independence movement. In January of 1822 he fought against Morillo and was defeated, and in July of 1822 he was defeated by Morales also. He was assassinated by Colonel Reyes González in 1823. Bolívar, who had great affection for Reyes Vargas, had González tried for the crime and then shot on the exact spot where he had killed the Indian chief. Madariaga, Bolívar, 194, 215-16, 220. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 671-72.
there, he asked for a conference. Yielding to his wishes, I went with some officers to meet him in a canoe in the middle of the river. López embarked in a gunboat and received me with great courtesy. After exchanging the first civilities, he began to praise my activity and commend my military feats, lamenting that I did not consecrate my efforts to the defense of the "sacred rights of the King." He told me that he believed that I had abandoned the King's service due to some injustice that a Spanish leader might have wreaked on me. I responded that he was ill informed about my ever having served in the King's army, for I had begun my career in the patriot ranks. I told him further that I had never and would never abandon these ranks, regardless of how great our adversities might be or how flattering his words of seduction. He interrupted me then saying that he had not asked for an interview in order to convert me, but rather to satisfy the desire he had to know me personally and to thank me for the generosity with which I had always treated prisoners, especially "the poor Europeans." We parted cordially and I returned to my camp. Who would have made that man believe then that his days were already numbered, and that his life would end shortly?

Returning, as I have said, to the other side of the river, I ordered as many dragoons as would fit in the only canoe we had to embark. Their leader was Vicente Peña, whom I had elevated to the rank of captain and they were to operate against the enemy camp so that they would start
firing and thus end the truce occasioned by the interview. Peña manned the canoe with eight men, and then he came to ask me what he was supposed to do. I was angered by this query, for I had already given him his orders. Nevertheless, I told him again to cross the river and attack the enemy camp. The leaders present there could not keep from pointing out to me that this order was tantamount to ordering the useless sacrifice of those few men. I remained deaf to their indications and did not revoke the order. I was relying on the good fortune that had always protected my rash undertakings. In truth, this undertaking could not have been any more rash.

Peña carried out his orders perfectly, and he crossed the river without being seen by any of the enemy guards. The latter were in the shade of a forest of mangroves and were eating (it was about noon), when our dragoons opened fire and charged them violently. They had barely fired one hundred shots when the terrified Royalists began to flee. They thought that they were being attacked by forces superior to theirs. Chief López embarked and retreated without even attempting to approximate the number of those who were attacking. I ordered a company of lancers and eighty unmounted riflemen to go to Peña's assistance. Before nightfall, I ordered the lancers to recross the river. This was so that López, who was watching, would believe that there were no more enemy forces left on the other side. Then, just in case he would come up stream to go to the plaza at
Nutrias, and this was probable, I ordered the riflemen to divide in two sections; one was to be in ambush in the man­groves, and the other, in the shelter of a flying sap which was on an island of sand situated in the middle of the stream.

My supposition was correct. At 8:00 p.m. López's squadron began to come up the river. Our ambushes opened fire. Two of the enemy's long, sharp canoes retreated. One of them got stuck in the sand, and its men were forced to abandon it. We imprisoned them. López, however, succeeded in passing the point where our men were in ambush. From one of the prisoners, I found out that it was the Governor's canoe that had passed. Immediately I decided to capture it. I had already sent a cavalry party to get another canoe on the way to the town of Banco Largo, ten leagues from Apurito. This had been achieved. In order to take advan­tage of all the fruits of this victory, I immediately sent an order to that same party to come quickly in the canoe, encounter López, and assault him while he was boarding the ship. Our canoe obeyed promptly. Navigating downstream, it encountered López's canoe at dawn the next day. López realized that our canoe was not friendly. Aided by the cur­rent, he turned on the side to gain the advantage. The two boats came downstream, chasing one another.

From our camp we could see that the first ship belonged to López. We wanted to cut off his retreat, and to this end we equipped one canoe with eight men and the canoe we had captured the night before with all the people it
could hold. Then we went to encounter the boat that was obviously fleeing. López ordered his men to row quickly, and we were unable to prevent his canoe from passing in front of our boats. However, we continued to chase it, and finally a bullet succeeded in killing the pilot of the Royalist launch. Without its pilot and as it was making a hazardous turn, we were able to board the canoe. López, two officers, and all the crew fell into our hands.

Already possessing three armed launches, I saw to it that they were immediately put in a serviceable condition. I wanted them to attack another four enemy launches that were stationed in front of the town of Santa Lucía, six or eight leagues from Apurito. I charged Captain Vicente Peña with this commission and the command of these canoes. With the intent of deceiving the leaders who commanded the Royalist convoy, I made Peña put on Governor López's three-cornered hat and go in the latter's launch. Furthermore, he was to sit at the prow so that he could answer the enemy's "Who goes?" as if he were the Governor. This way he would be able to get close enough to board those ships without firing a shot. This was useless strategy, however, for when Peña approached the Spanish, they ordered him to halt, despite the title he assumed. Disregarding this, Peña ordered his men to row ahead. When he was within less than half-cannon shot range, he received the first shots. He boarded then with such courage and good fortune, that the four canoes fell in his hands. He went to Apurito with them
in order to go back to the Apure and fight another squadron which, under the command of Son Juan Comos, was in the port of Nutrias. I crossed the Apure then with all the forces I had there and went on to Nutrias.

After marching for two days, I spent the night in the town of Santa Catalina which is situated on the left shore of the Apure River. At dawn the next day I was informed that there were five enemy launches a little ways from the town. These were the ones belonging to Comos. Lacking the means to attack them, I decided at least to detain them until our launches arrived. To do this, I had to get in the river with Aramendi and twenty-five lancers. All of us got in water up to our chests and stood on a bank of sand, situated in the middle of the river, where the Apure runs deep. We carried out this operation within view of the enemy. They immediately attacked us. They fired grapeshot with their cannons for more than an hour without inflicting damage on us, for we ducked in the water when we saw the flame from the mouth of the barrels.

When they finally saw that they were not harming us, the enemy launches went back by the canal on the right. We got out of the water and mounted our unsaddled horses. We went up ahead a little and thrust ourselves in the river again, determined to board at least one of the launches. We did not succeed in our mission, however, for the configuration of the deep hollow of the river and its impetuous current scattered us so, that we did not have any unity of
action. We were fortunate that we did not have to lament any personal misfortune in that crazy enterprise.

Within a short time our gunboats arrived, for they had been attracted by the sound of the enemy cannon. However, by this time the enemy had gotten too far away. Therefore, I continued my march toward Nutrias, and I slept that night in the town of Santo Domingo. I left the following morning and headed toward the river, which was not far away. I intended to obstruct Comos's trip as much as I could. I got into a well-manned canoe and succeeded in delaying him for more than three hours. I would always attack the last of the ships that they were withdrawing so that the others would have to pull back and defend it. The Spanish chief, detecting our squadron's sails, continued his retreat, thanks to a favorable breeze and in spite of the shots that were fired from both shores.

I continued my march to Nutrias by land. When I got to this city, though, the enemy had already abandoned it. Comos continued to sail upstream. He took with him all the shipping that there was in the port of Nutrias and many individuals who belonged to the Royalist party. Peña overtook him at the mouth of the Masparro River and attacked him there. He was able to take possession of all the enemy's armed and unarmed ships, a total of twenty-four. As a reward for this glorious deed, I elevated the intrepid Peña to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the Navy. I placed all our naval forces under his command. All this might seem insignificant
now. To have achieved this then, was the equivalent of a Roman undertaking.

In Nutrias I appointed General Urdaneta to occupy the capital of Barinas with all his forces. He was to form an army there and operate in accordance with what the circumstances demanded. Then I went with my squadron of twelve launches down the Apure with the object of taking possession of the plaza of San Fernando. Before I left, I ordered Peña to continue descending the river as far as the mouth of the ditch of Biruaca and there await my instructions.

I disembarked in the town of Apurito. I went from there to Achaguas to rejoin my second-in-command, Commandant Miguel Guerrero, who was in Rabanal. With the small guard that I found in Achaguas, I continued my march toward San Fernando. Later I added Guerrero's forces to mine and surveyed the plaza by land. Then I took two hundred cavalrymen and sent them to the mouth of the ditch of Biruaca. They were to embark in the twelve launches and assault the plaza during the night along the side facing the river, while I attacked on land with two hundred lancers that I had primed for that purpose.

This plan was not as successful as I had expected it to be, for a Royalist named Herrera, whom we had imprisoned and pardoned a few days before, warned the enemy of our plans. Herrera had found out all the details because he was always at Guerrero's side. Being Apureño, he was also very familiar with the obstacles we would face just a little more
than a mile from the plaza when we ran into a shoal that forms at the junction of the Apure and Portuguesa rivers. There our men would have to disembark from the launches and carry them across. Provided with this useful information, General [Ramón] Correa, leader at the plaza, ordered a strong infantry column to take ambush on the shore of the river at the spot that Herrera indicated. When our men disembarked, they opened fire on them, scattered them, and took possession of eight of the twelve launches we had. Fortunately, I had ordered the two hundred men who were to attack the plaza by land, and who were already less than pistol-fire range from it, to return to their horses and immediately take their place in line if they heard any firing that was not directed against the city.

I continued surveying the plaza on the south side. With the purpose of cutting its communications with the capital and the plains of Calabozo, I ordered Commandant Ranjel to cross the river with eighty men from Guardia at

---

17 General Ramón Correa was the commander of the Spanish forces in Pamplona and Cúcuta. Bolívar had defeated him in 1813 in the Battle of Cúcuta. Later that same year, Correa refused to meet Bolívar's forces in battle at Mérida. Correa served also as Governor of Maracaibo. In 1816 Morillo sent him with six hundred men to fight in the Apure area at Nutrias. He established himself then with the Fourth Division in Nutrias and Barinas. In November of 1820 he was one of the Spanish commissioners present at the armistice treaty. His honesty was so legendary that Bolívar named him to represent Colombia in the negotiations. Lemly, Bolívar, 40, 41, 43, 45. Lecuna, Crónica Razonada, I, 10, 14, 363; II, 5, 34, 68, 464, 465; III, 31, 32.
the mouth of the Cople. He was to surprise the town of Guayabal and then camp on the road that leads to Calabozo and Caracas. There he intercepted a communique that Correa was sending to Lieutenant Colonel Don Salvador Gorrín. This dispatch, in answer to one dated in Camagüan, which is seven leagues from San Fernando, told him that he was coming with sufficient forces to aid him. Knowing that Gorrín had left Calabozo with five hundred infantrymen, three hundred cavalrymen, and five hundred horses with which to remount the cavalrymen who were on foot in the plaza, I decided to go attack that force. I could not let these forces join those besieged in the plaza, for this would give them great advantages over us.

At the head of two squadrons, I marched toward the Diamante hacienda. We walked all night, arrived there at dawn, and crossed the river. Two or three hours later we also swam across the Apurito. Taking the Guayabal road, I went to rejoin Ranjel who was waiting for me at the Palital Lake. At that moment Ranjel's squadron of riflemen was engaged in battle with Gorrín's, I hurried the march in order to arrive in time to help my people.

18Don Salvador Gorrín was born in the Canary Islands. He began his military career as a cavalry officer and later became oficial general in Margarita. When Páez besieged San Fernando, Gorrín marched to the aid of the Spanish there. Morillo later appointed him to head one of the two major Spanish cavalry divisions. Lecuna, Crónica Razonada, I, 69, 509; II, 3, 68.
I had barely gotten my forces, which were augmented then by Ranjel's eighty men, in formation when Gorrín opened fire. I charged him on the front and on the side and succeeded in making his cavalry flee. Then I took possession of the horses he brought for remounting. After this first charge, Gorrín formed an arch with the infantry (whose line was a picket of about fifty lancers) and the rest of the cavalry he had brought.

I divided my forces into four parts, and then I hurled them simultaneously at the enemy's front, flanks, and rear guard. Despite the efforts we made to break that formation, we were repelled by the infantry fire and by the cavalry. The latter, dismounted and with rapid lances, resisted us tenaciously. They lanced our horses and killed some of our men. However, I did not desist in my determination to break the enemy because of this. I formed our men again in the same manner as before. We charged again and were repelled anew. There I lost some of my best and most courageous officers, including the valiant Captains Pedro León Gómez, Remijio Caridad, and José de la Paz Rojas. The gallant Commandant Francisco Hurtado was wounded.

I did not continue in this attack, for it would have been imprudent. I recalled that when I started my march against Gorrín, I had received a bulletin from the town of Mantecal telling me that General Morillo had occupied Guasdualito. Therefore, I suspended the attack; and Gorrín, aided by a column that came out of the plaza, entered San
Fernando.

With this state of affairs, I ordered our retreat on the same road by which we had come. After recrossing the river, I rejoined Guerrero in the site of Rabanal. He had retreated because he lacked sufficient forces to withstand the sallies that might be forthcoming from the plaza.

I had left Commandant Freites in Guayabal with a company to recruit men with which to augment the forces we would use to fight the enemy in those llanos. The day after I rejoined Guerrero, the enemy came out through the forest at the edge of the river. Shielded by the woods, they came to Rabanal and ordered a company of riflemen to advance on my guerrillas. I charged them with a squadron of the Guard and destroyed them completely. Then the enemy countermarched to the plaza along the same path they had come.

With the object of going to Achaguas and other towns to gather forces with which to resist Morillo, I marched with my Guard. I left Guerrero in Rabanal at the head of

---

19 Of the several Freites prominent in the independence movement at this time, Páez refers here to J. M. Freites, a native of Venezuela. He had been with Páez's forces from the time he escaped from jail in Barinas. He returned to Barinas to free all his comrades who were imprisoned there and then went on to fight the terrible war of the Llanos. He fought at Mata de León in 1812; at Estanqués and Bailadores in 1814; at Chire in 1815, and at the Battles of Mata de la Miel, Achaguas, Yagual, Palital, Rabanal and Paso del Frío. He was killed in 1816 in Guayabal when he headed patriot forces of three hundred men that were pitted against General Morillo's forces of over one thousand. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 164.
eight hundred cavalrymen. A few days later the enemy returned to this spot. They attacked Guerrero, scattered him completely, and forced him to cross to the other side of the Arauca along the Caujaral and Marreren o passes. He notified me from there of what had happened and told me that he had been successful in reuniting only two hundred men. They awaited my orders there. I admonished Guerrero to stay at that point.

Then I continued my march to Mantecal by way of the towns of Apurito and Banco Largo. In Banco Largo I received the news that Colonel Nonato Pérez and Governor Moreno of Casanare, were in the Los Cocos farm with some part of the force that they had taken from Cuiloto. I went to see them immediately, leaving the forces I had already gathered in the plains of Mucuritas. When these leaders placed themselves under my orders, I returned with them and their people to Mucuritas. There I incorporated them in our army. I organized a division of twelve hundred men and gave Nonato Pérez the command. I ordered him to march to Guasdualito and fight Morillo provided that [Juan Vicente de] Arce, the Spanish chief who was coming down from Cúcuta along the San Camilo mountain, had not joined him. In case Arce had already joined Morillo's forces and these combined forces

20Pérez must be referring here to Juan Vicente de Arce, who had previously served as Spanish Intendant for the Caracas area. Parra-Pérez, Historia de la Primera República, I, 330.
were to march against him, Pérez should always retreat within sight of the enemy. He and his men were to join me then in the farm at Frío or the one in Mucuritas.

After Pérez left, I returned to Achaguas to recruit more men and then return to Mucuritas to wait for him. This was the place where I wanted to fight the enemy. When I was in Achaguas, and after I had gathered some forces, I received fatal and unexpected news. This news included the defeat and death of Freites, who had assembled three hundred men in Guayabal; the destruction and death of Commandant Roso Hurtado, who with six hundred men had been in the town of San Jaime, province of Barinas; and the scattering of General Urdaneta's division. The latter, finding himself in the capital of Barinas, retreated toward Apure by way of Nutrias. He was pursued as far as the town of Santa Catalina by General Calzada who had come from New Granada using the by-ways of Mérida.

This series of adverse happenings, coupled with the news that Morillo was already approaching with forces three times as large as ours, made many chiefs and officers feel that I and my few troops could not resist the numerous and veteran ones led by the expeditionary general. Some asked me for passports to retreat to the province of Guayana, while many left without a passport. Following this pernicious example, some rifle officers deserted with eight of their men and took the two loads of stores which constituted our entire armory. Among those who abandoned me with a passport in that

21 Manuel Manrique was born in San Carlos in 1795. He participated in the revolutionary juntas of Caracas in 1809, 1810, and 1811. He joined Páez's ranks and fought with him in all the battles until the seizure of Achaguas. Then he left Páez and sought Bolivar. In 1821, he was in charge of the defense line in the siege of Puerto Cabello. With Páez again in 1822, he helped defeat Morales at Cumbre de Valencia. Finally in 1823, he beseiged Maracaibo and defeated Morales. He sent a silver key to Vice-President Francisco de Paula Santander to the Fortress of San Carlos i Barras of Maracaibo. He died on November 30, 1823 in Maracaibo while serving as Commandant of Zula. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 289-90.

General Manuel Valdés was born in Caracas in 1785. He embraced the revolutionary cause in 1810. After the Treaty of San Mateo between Miranda and Monteverde and the consequent loss of Venezuela to the Spanish, Valdés joined Mariño in Trinidad and started to campaign against the Spanish once again. He fought bravely in the Battles of Bocachica, San Mateo, Carabobo, La Puerta, and Angostura. In 1819 Bolivar appointed him and Urdaneta in charge of foreign troops and went on to Cundinamarca with them as Chief of the Army of the South. He defeated Colonel López in Pitayo in 1820. Then Bolivar named him head of the first Colombian division to aid Perú. In 1926 he was Commandant of Arms in Guayaquil and with Intendent Castillo formed the July act for Colombian acceptance of the Bolivian constitution. In 1831 he opposed General Montilla and was exiled from Colombia. He died in Angostura in 1845. Ibid., 661-63.

Doctor José María Salazar was born in Antioquia, New Granada, in 1785. He was a Doctor of Jurisprudence and Rector of the College of Mompox in New Granada when the revolution broke out in 1810. Miranda named him Minister Plenipotentiary. He went on to the Apure area later and in 1816 served as Auditor in Páez's army. Then he spent a few years in Trinidad. In 1820 he became a Minister of the Supreme Tribunal of Venezuela and in 1827 he was Minister Plenipotentiary to North America. He died in Paris in 1828 while serving as Colombian Minister. Dávila, Diccionario Biográfico, II, 231.

Doctor Francisco Javier Yañez was Cuban, but he had joined the republican cause in Venezuela in 1810. He fought
These great mishaps were not sufficient to make me lose heart, however. They could not force me to abandon what had been half-started and what could be successfully accomplished if only faith, daring, and confidence were not lacking. When in any undertaking a man experiences that extraordinary force called faith, he should always follow its impulse, and recall that a sacred oracle has told us that faith works marvels and miracles. In addition to this faith, I had the firm conviction that those llanos of Apure, even if the rest of Venezuelan territory was subjected, could represent to us what the mountains of Asturias had for the Spanish patriots after their disaster on the shores of the Guadatele.

Fortunately for our cause, the people of Apure in that occasion were true to the pattern of heroic patriotsism which they had demonstrated so many times before. Thinking little about the veteran forces that were coming to attack them and the many laurels that these had won in other battlefields, they prepared to resist them with the fury possessed by lions when hunted in their native jungles. The people of Apure, although they had the indifference of the Spartans in their civic virtues, always showed all the daring of the Cossack and the intrepidity of the Arab on the battlefield.

---

with Páez in the Battles of Arichuma, Yagual, and Achaguas. An attorney, he was a member of the Congress in Caracas in 1811. He died in Caracas in 1842. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 707.
They had placed their haciendas at the disposal of the patriot cause, and they had consecrated their indomitable courage to its triumph. The number of heroes in the areas that the Apure River bathes could be counted by counting the number of its inhabitants. How good, how courageous they were!

To stop desertion as much as possible, I sent a cavalry party to overtake those who were leaving and did not have a passport. They were able to bring back only Lieutenant José María Corboda (later renamed General of Colombia), and Captain Ramón Durán. A war council condemned them to death. However, they were pardoned in the end, for the Governor of Casanare, Padre Trinidad Travieso, and the worthy Lieutenant

23 There is no further information available on Captain Ramón Durán. José María Cordoba was born in Rionegro, September 8, 1799. He was an engineering student when the revolutionary war broke out. In 1816 he was in the retreat of the emigrants from Casanare, where his inseparable friend, Servier, had been assassinated. He fought with Páez in the Battles of Arichuma, Yagual, Achaguas, and Guasdualito. After the Battle of Boyacá he attained the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He helped to defeat the Spanish General Villalobos in the Battle of Matara, and it was on his head that Bolívar placed the crown of gold and precious stones that Perú conferred on him. In 1828 he was Bolívar's Secretary of War and later Chief of the Army that went south to combat Obando and López. He rebelled against Bolívar in 1829, much to the latter's chagrin and disbelief. The three hundred men under his orders were no match for O'Leary's three thousand; so he was defeated at Santuario on October 17, 1829. While wounded and alone in a hut, he was assassinated by an English officer, Rupert Hand. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 112-12; Lemly, Bolívar, 291-93, 343, 353, 359, 360-62.
Pedro Camejo, alias the First, interceded in their behalf. I do not exaggerate when I say that if Morillo's troops had fought the Apure forces then, they would have dealt a mortal blow to the patriot cause in Venezuela. If the enemy had secured control of that territory, it could have taken all its immense resources and then marched against [Manuel Carlos] Piar in Guayana and destroyed him completely.

---

23 Trinidad Travieso has been identified previously. Pedro Camejo was known as "Negro Number One" because he had been the slave of a proprietor of Apure, a certain Don Vicente Alfonso, and because he fought so valiantly. Don Alfonso had enlisted Camejo in the Royalist army, but the latter had become so disgusted with the cause he was serving, that he deserted and hid in the Apure area for a long time. After Páez's victory at Yagual, Camejo presented himself to Páez and enlisted in his ranks. He worshipped the brave, active Páez, a man after his own heart, so to speak, and remained at his side after that until he was killed at the Battle of Carabobo in 1821. Both Bolivar and Páez wept over the loss of this Negro, whom they had admired and loved not only for his unsurpassed courage, but for his wit and humor. Cunninghame Graham, Páez, 189-90, 193-95.

24 Manuel Carlos Piar was born to a Negro mother and white father in 1782 in Curazao. He came to Colombian soil, however, to defend the independence movement in 1810. With Miranda, he waged the first campaign against the Royalists in 1811. In 1813 in Maturin he defeated Monteverde, who lost his equipment and escaped miraculously. He participated in the siege of Puerto Cabello. In 1817 he defeated Morales in the famous Battle of San Félix which Bolivar himself designated as the "most brilliant success our army has had in Venezuela." Later that year, however, Piar joined the unfortunate conspiracy of General Mariño and Bermudez against the authority of the Liberator. Mariño and Bermudez managed to reconcile themselves with Bolivar, but Piar refused the pardon and passport granted him and went to Angostura to stir up a revolt. On October 15, 1817, he was unanimously court-martialed and sentenced to death. He was executed the following afternoon in the presence of the entire army. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 464-65. See also Lemly, Bolívar, 132-37, 142, 143, 144, 145-47; and Cunninghame Graham, Páez, 96, 106-107, 134.
The enemy forces could have done the same to the other leaders who had parties in the provinces of Barcelona and Cumana. Thus, it was indispensable not to let the enemy take possession of the Apure plains.

The fate of the Republic was determined in the llanos of Apure in the Battles of Mata de la Miel, Yagual, and Mucuritas, and in the 1819 campaign against Morillo. It is painful to note that those who have written the history of our independence have not seen it this way. General Morillo understood this well, though, for it was to the llanos of Apure that he came three times when he believed New Granada was pacified, and he wanted to subject Venezuela. Further on I shall describe this General's plan in his campaign against us in 1819. However, now I want to pause briefly to refute several errors that the historians of Colombia have copied from one another. They depict the army of Apure in that epoch as a dispirited soldiery, accustomed to stealing, without respect or obedience to any authority. I plead with future historians to refute these statements and to keep uppermost in their mind the data I am going to present in order that they may do more justice to the heroic army to which Colombia owed so many triumphs.

I had taken the most severe measures, dating from the time I took over the command, to maintain order and discipline in this army. Illustrative of this fact was the decree I issued ordering capital punishment for those who were found committing any act of violence. Commandant Ramón Zapata was
assassinated at that time by Second Lieutenant Lorenzo Serrano, a European, and Sergeant Rafael Toro. The latter, knowing the fate that would befall them if they fell in my hands, went over to the enemy. I was able to take these men prisoners, though, and they were immediately sentenced to death. I will not deny that some crimes were committed; however, their perpetrators were villains who had served in other armies and not in the one I commanded at the time.

I shall copy now what Baralt [and Diaz] have to say about these crimes on page 295 of the first volume of Historia de Venezuela:25

Shortly after the battle of Yagual, Servier was assassinated at the headquarters in Achaguas by men who had the audacity to show their spoils of war with impunity. The most singular thing about the case was that this infamous crime had been whispered about beforehand in the camp. It seems that almost everyone expected it to occur, but lacked the means of preventing it. Later on, the old Giraldot, father of the celebrated Atanasio, and Lieutenant Colonel Miguel Valdés met the same fate.

When Señor Baralt returned from Paris, after his work had been printed, I called his attention to some errors that I had noted in it. I lamented that he had not added respect for justice and historical truth to the beauties of his lyrical style. He answered that many of the notes that he had used for his history had already been given to him when he sailed for Europe. Also, he added that since he had been away from the people who could have supplied him with data,

25 This citation may be found in the 1939 Desclée edition of Baralt and Diaz, Resumen de la Historia, I, 359.
and since I had refused to give him any information on the events in which I had participated, he had been forced to write only with the documents and the information that he had in his possession. Therefore, I feel that I must correct now what he wrote as truth when he placed too much confidence on ill-intentioned individuals who deceived him.

General Servier left our headquarters at Achaguas with my permission to go in the country for a few days and rest from the fatigues of a war that had ruined his health. He went toward "Chorreron," a place a league away from Achaguas, to the home of a woman called Presentación. While he was there, according to what this woman said, four men on horseback came late at night and knocked on the door. They said that they brought an order from me for the General. He told them to send it to him, but the men replied that it was a verbal message and that they had to tell him in person. Servier came to the door and was subsequently captured by these bandits who must have been from the scattered forces from Yagual. They took him to a nearby forest and assassinated him.

An extensive investigation was conducted to find out where the assassins were. The only witness to the event, however, did not know them. No data were ever found later to determine their identity. In those times when there were so many men loose in the fields who did not belong to the army, it was imprudent on the General's part to have gone far from it. This was especially so since he had more than
enough enemies who had followed him from New Granada. He did not have any enemies among us, for he had just come to our soil and had behaved very well in the Battle of Yagual.

Giraldot, who had taken a passport to go to the province of Guayana, was overtaken in his march and assassinated near the banks of the Orinoco by two men. I had them followed immediately. We overtook one of them, a Lieutenant Juan Ignacio Garcia. He was tried and later killed in Yagual. His accomplice, a certain Santa Maria, escaped to Trinidad.

Baralt commits another error in placing Lieutenant Colonel Miguel Valdés among the number of victims of that time. Valdés died on the banks of the Orinoco from cancer of the face.26 This is verified by a letter written by his doctor, Miguel Palacios, which I have in my possession.27 Dr. Palacios still lives in Calabozo.

---

26Páez's account of Valdés's death is verified by the accounts given by Dávila, Diccionario Biográfico and Scarpetta and Vergara in their Diccionario Biográfico. Dávila states that Páez's troops stripped Valdés of all his possessions before his death, with Páez's approval. But he still says that he died of a grave illness. Dávila, Diccionario Biográfico, II, 359. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 664, state that he died of cancer.

27Dr. Miguel Palacio Fajardo joined the ranks of the patriot cause in 1810. In 1816 he joined General Páez's forces and served with him until 1821. He was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel of the cavalry in 1821. In 1825 he received his certificate as member of the "Order of Liberator." He died in Calabozo in 1871, ruined financially by the federalist wars. Dávila, Diccionario Biográfico, II, 58-59.
I recall nothing about Lieutenant Colonel Miguel Santana, whom Montenegro places among the victims of that time. I do not remember either having heard any talk about this event which even Baralt fails to mention.
CHAPTER IX

I Join Nonato Pérez--Battle of Mucuritas--Defeat of General La Torre--Operations in Barinas and Casanare--Surprise Attack on the Royalists in Chire--Dissensions in Casanare--I Continue My Operations in Barinas--"Astonishing Boldness" of Guillermo Iribarren in Banco Largo--Battalion "Bravos de Páez"--Defeat of Royalist Commandant Jacinto Perera--My Camp in El Yagual--Heroic Deeds of Vicente Peña and Aramendi--We Take the Things we Need in Barinas--Return to Yagual--Arrival of the Commissioners Sent by the Liberator--I Recognize his Authority as Supreme Commander--Our Cavalry Captures the Enemy Launches at the Mouth of the Coplé.

1817-1818

I ordered the people at the hospital and the civilians to go to the Yagual farm, and then I left with five hundred men to look for Nonato Pérez. The latter, who was already in Mantecal, was to join me in Mucuritas at the Frio farm. After four days' march, I arrived there. However, I did not find Pérez, for lack of water and horses had forced him to retreat to a spot a league away. For the same reasons, I found myself forced to go where I thought he might be. His forces had diminished so greatly, that he could only count on six hundred men. The rest of the soldiers had left him because of the poor manner in which he treated them. This chief, though very valiant, was very haughty and despotic with his subordinates.
While the Spanish General Calzada, who had left Nutrias with a division, joined forces with Morillo in the Mantecal region, General La Torre continued his march in search of us with three thousand infantrymen and seventeen hundred cavalrymen commanded by Colonel Remigio Ramos. This cavalry chief had distinguished himself greatly since the times of Boves and Yañez.

On January 27, La Torre spent the night at the Frio farm, which was about a league away from the place I had selected for the battle. The following morning, when we marched to occupy this site, we noticed that La Torre was already marching through it. I then had to march obliquely, and double the pace until we were marching with the wind. In the llanos, and particularly those of the Apure, marching against the wind is dangerous, particularly for the infantry. This is because of the dust, the powder smoke, the wind, and above all, the danger of fire starting from plugs in the straw.

Once I attained the windward position on the plains, I formed my eleven hundred men in three lines. The first line was commanded by the enterprising Commandants Ramón Nonato Pérez and Antonio Ranjel; the second, by the intrepid Commandants Rafael Rosales and Doroteo Hurtado.¹

¹Commandant Rafael Rosales took an active part in the military campaigns of 1811, 1812, and 1813. In 1814 he was with Urdaneta in the Araure campaign. He was one of the twenty-five officers who were turned over by Urdaneta to
The third line, under the orders of the brave Commandant Cruz Carrillo, was to remain in reserve.  

With both armies facing each other, La Torre came out accompanied by twenty-five hussars to reconnoitre my right flank. He stopped when he reached a place where he could do this. I immediately detached Sergeant Ramón Valero and eight soldiers, selected because of their personal valor, to attack that group. I threatened them all with death if they did not return to the formation with their lances stained by enemy blood. They set out on their agile horses; and the enemy hussars, seeing them within firing range, discharged their rifles. Through the smoke my courageous cavalrymen hurled themselves on the enemy, lancing them with such fury

Miguel Antonio Vásquez. From 1816 on he campaigned with Páez. He was with Páez in 1818 when General La Torre defeated him in Cojedes. In 1819 Bolívar promoted him to the rank of Colonel. He died a natural death in Valencia on August 18, 1845. Dávila, Diccionario Biográfico, II, 217-18.

Commandant Doroteo Hurtado was a citizen of the Province of Barinas. In 1821 Bolívar promoted him to lieutenant colonel in the cavalry, back-dating the commission to 1817. From 1821 to 1825 and from 1822 to 1827, he served as Chief of Arms of San Jaime. He helped pacify the Alto Llano in 1829 and in 1830 Páez promoted him to the rank of Colonel in the cavalry. He died in Guadarrama in 1852. Ibid., I, 252.

2Cruz Carrillo was born in Trujillo in 1796. He took part in the military campaigns of 1813, 1814, and 1815. In 1816 he was with Páez in the Battles of Mata de la Niel, Yagual, and Achaguas. He was also with Páez at the defeat at Cojedes. In 1819, after the campaign of Boyacá, he was promoted to the rank of Colonel. As Civil and Military Chief of Trujillo in 1821, he helped to distract the Royalists from Carabobo. He was a representative in the Congreso Admirable of 1830. In 1846 he helped to pacify Barinas, and in 1848 he rose to the defense of the Congress killed by José Tadeo Monagas. He died a natural death in 1865. Ibid., I, 74-75.
that only four or five of them remained alive to flee, terrifi-
died, to rejoin their army. La Torre had judged it prudent
beforehand to retreat when he saw our men leave ranks to
attack them.

It is impossible to relate here the enthusiasm and
hurrahs with which the army welcomed that handful of valiant
men who returned covered with glory and proudly showing the
lances they had stained with the blood of our enemies. I
took advantage of this opportunity—for my previous order
had had no other objective—to make my troops see that they
should count the enemy's numbers only in terms of the pris-
oners they could take or in the number of dead that their
lances could leave strewn on the battlefield.

Without losing time, La Torre advanced on us until he
had gotten within firing range. When he opened fire, our
first line charged him vigorously. Half-way across this
charge, and in accordance with my instructions, our column
divided to the right and to the left. These two sections
were to flank the cavalry that formed the wings of the enemy
infantry. I had prepared my men to retreat toward the summit
and feign defeat if they were repulsed. This would deceive
the enemy. Then the men of our first line were to turn
around when they saw our second line attacking the Royalist
cavalry from behind. This operation had the desired success,
and soon the enemy was left with nothing but some two hundred
European hussars. The rest of their forces were completely
defeated and scattered.
At this point, the fifty men whom I had instructed to furnish themselves with combustibles, set fire to the llano in different areas. Immediately the llano became an inflamed sea which issued forth waves of fire on the front, on the right side, and on the rear guard of La Torre's infantry. Fortunately for the enemy, the llanos to the left had been burned a few days previous to this battle. This coincidence afforded them their sole means of retreat, and thus saved the Spanish army from perishing in a situation far more terrible than that of Cambyses in the Libyan desert. Even so, in this retreat the Spaniards had to endure the repeated charges of our cavalry who jumped over the flames and pursued them to Paso del Frío, a league away from the battlefield. There their persecution ended, for the Royalists took refuge in a forest on the right edge of the river where it was impossible for our cavalry to penetrate.

Reporting on this battle later, Morillo wrote in a manifesto: "Fourteen consecutive charges on my tired battalions made me realize that those men were not a small gang of cowards, as I had been told, but organized troops capable of competing with the best His Majesty the King had to offer."

This combat forced the Royalists to lose a great part of their supplies, many beasts of burden, and a great number of weapons that their soldiers threw down when fleeing from the fire. Our losses, on the other hand, consisted of the death of the valiant Commandant Segarra and a few other officers and soldiers. This victory gave our cause a great
moral strength, for it represented the first reverse that Morillo's army suffered after its arrival in Costafirme.

When Morillo, who was in San Vicente, heard about the disaster that had befallen his lieutenant, he came that very night to Paso del Frio to join the army. From there, the Royalists took the road to Banco Largo and headed toward Achaguas—always marching through the forests. Since I could not follow them there with my cavalry, I continued marching on the plain in a line parallel to theirs. When they got to Achaguas, I was there before them. However, they refused a new battle and went on to San Fernando; I continued marching on the plains to San Juan de Payara.

From San Fernando, Morillo sent General La Torre to operate against Piar in Guayana. He also sent forces to Nutrias. Leaving one troop to defend the new fortifications he had constructed in the San Fernando Plaza, he marched with the rest of his men from the province of Barcelona to operate against the patriots who were on the island of Margarita.

For my part, I divided my forces also so that they could operate from the province of Barinas in different directions. 3 I sent Captain Juan Galea with his company to

3 Páez inserts the following footnote here. "Among the forces that I designated to operate at different places, there was a guerrilla force under the command of Captain Correa and later under Commandant Hipólito Cuevas. It had orders to take possession of the district of Rio Negro, in Guayana, and achieved this with eighty men who imprisoned
Casanare. He was to wage a discreet war in that province and recruit all the men possible. They were to join the other guerrillas there who already amounted to a respectable corps. In his march, Galea encountered an enemy cavalry column under the command of Don Antonio Plá and heading toward Guasdualito. Despite the fact that Galea had only forty men, he fought the Royalist troops and cleared a path through them. The Spanish leader [Julián] Bayer, who was in Casanare, received confused notices about this encounter.

the Royalists guarding these points.

At this time I received a communiqué from Commandant Orozco, who was imprisoned by the government of Brazil, I do not remember for what reason, in which he asked me to reclaim him as a Venezuelan. Although he had served in the Royalist ranks, I did not ignore his petition. The following year, when I was with Bolívar in Potreritos Marreremos, I succeeded in getting a satisfactory reply from the Brazilian government. Orozco joined my troops in the winter of 1818."

Juan Galea was a native of Casanare and attained the rank of Colonel. In "pacifying" the important province of Barinas, he completely defeated the Spaniard A. Plá. Later in Cuiloto he defeated the Spanish Colonel Julián Bayer, whom he shot. In 1816 he helped to defeat the Spanish Captain Manuel Jiménez in Chire. He participated with Páez in the attack on Puerto Cabello in 1823. In 1826 he joined Colonel Guerrero in helping formulate opinion against Páez in Achagua and Mantecal. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 167-68.

Don Antonio Plá was a Spanish Colonel. He was in command of two squadrons of the Lancers del Rey or King's Lancers. Lecuna, Crónica Razonada, II, 193-94.

Lieutenant Colonel Julián Bayer was in charge of the second of the four columns that General Morillo had organized to invade the Santa Fé area from different directions. He had attempted and failed to penetrate the Atrato River area in 1812. Torrente, Historia de la Revolución, II, 238-39.
Wanting to know the truth about it, he left Pore with six hussars and four dragoons. He arrived in Cuiloto after Galea had joined his forces with those of Captain Francisco Rodríguez. The latter came out and attacked the enemy by surprise with such luck that he was able to imprison Lieutenant Colonel Bayer and all those who accompanied him.

Thus united, our two chiefs marched on to Chire intent on surprising an enemy cavalry squadron consisting of one hundred and twenty men, led by Captain Don Manuel Jiménez. The latter, not knowing of Bayer's disaster, was so unprepared that the guerrilla patriots even found a great number of the Royalist soldiers still in bed. Consequently, they were destroyed, scattered, or imprisoned. We took possession of their weapons and clothing. Disguised in these seized Royalist uniforms, our men marched on to Pore, entered the city at bugle call, and imprisoned the guard defending it. Thus the province of Casanare was liberated from the enemy.

Galea notified me of his victories and asked me at the same time to appoint a leader for that territory. I sent

---

7Francisco Rodríguez was commissioned a captain by Vice-President Santander in 1826. The commission was back-dated, 1816. This indicates that he had served in the army since 1816. He served on the island of Margarita until 1821. He retired with a salary in 1844. Dávila, Diccionario Biográfico, II, 180.

8Don Manuel Jiménez was one of Morillo's "lieutenants." He was considered to be a very competent officer. Madariaga, Bolívar, 296, 299.
Ramón N. Pérez, accompanied by Governor Moreno and the rest of the Casanareños that were in Apure. I also sent Galea one thousand horses. Almost immediately difficulties began to arise between the civil and the military authorities as a result of Pérez's outrages. It got to the point that I found it necessary to send Commandant Miguel Antonio Vásquez to assume command and send the turbulent Pérez to me as a prisoner.⁹

It seems opportune here to correct the error Restrepo makes in his Historia de Colombia in stating that the patriots were divided between Juan Galea, whom I had appointed General commander, and the old governor of the province, Juan Nepomuceno Moreno. He further states that in order to support my favorite I was on the verge of moving to Casanare with my Honor Guard.¹⁰ The Colombian historian was misinformed on this. I have just stated how I had reconciled the divided wills, without encountering opposition and without resorting to the illogical plan of interrupting my operations to adjust a local question which at best deserved only a command. I was that certain that no one would fail to recognize my authority or fail to submit to the leaders I appointed.

But let us return to our operations in Barinas. The

⁹See Footnote 9 in Chapter VII.

¹⁰This citation cannot be found in the 1858 Imprenta José Jacquin edition of Restrepo's Historia de la Revolución de la República de Colombia available in the library at Louisiana State University.
separate parties I had sent to operate in that province had attained the desired goals of recruiting men and securing all the horses, even those that were useless at the time to keep the enemy from using them later. At the end of March, I gathered these separate parties and those that had been operating in the province of Barinas at my headquarters.

The enemy forces crossed the Apure, and, interested in occupying both river banks, they intrenched themselves with an infantry company in the town of Banco Largo. Knowing this, I sent Captain Guillermo Iribarren and his company to attack the enemy trenches. Marching under cover of the thickets, Iribarren appeared unexpectedly before the enemy. His troops assaulted the trenches before any but one lone shot was fired—a shot which mortally wounded the valiant Sergeant Roso González.

To reward Iribarren for his conduct on this occasion, I gave him a gold coat of arms with the motto, "Astonishing Thrust." The prisoners he took then served to help me organize my first infantry battalion which I called, in accordance with the requests of its leaders, the "Bravos de Páez."

---

11 Juan Guillermo Iribarren was born in Barquisimeto in 1797. After the campaign at Banco Largo, he participated in the Battle of Yagual and the seizure of Achaguaes. In 1817 he took part in the seizure of Barinas; and in 1818, that of Calabozo. He fought in Cojedes and later participated in the Junta de Guadualito which resolved to let Bolívar wage the campaign in New Granada and let Páez contain the Royalists in the llanos. He fought beside Páez in the famous Battle of Carabobo in 1824. He died April 28, 1827. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 235-56.
This formed the basis of the famous corps which distinguished itself in many battles. Later, it was worthy of having its name changed to Conquerors of Boyacá because of its heroic conduct of this battle.

After the Battle at Banco Largo, a column of two hundred infantrymen under the command of Commandant Jacinto Perera arrived from Nutrias, the center of enemy operations. This column intrenched itself in the town of San Antonio, a league away from the Apure River. Four days later, using an out-of-the-way road and circling around, I came out in front of this town at the same spot where the enemy had entered. I organized our attack immediately. At full speed, we hurled ourselves on the trench before us and dismounted hurriedly. We destroyed a scouting party that was outside the trench, and then we succeeded in entering one of the openings. The enemy took refuge in a second trench at the rear. Some of our men followed them there. Among these was a soldier called José Camacho. With machete in hand, he penetrated as far as the parlor of the house, wounding and killing those he encountered. Finally, he fell, stabbed like a sieve.

We organized anew, returned to the battle, and dismounted with lance in hand. Our men, protected by the trenches and stimulated by the thought of the rewards I had

---

12Commandant Jacinto Perera was a Venezuelan who had joined the Spanish forces. According to Lecuna, he defeated Páez's forces in this Battle of San Antonio—a fact which Páez does not relate here. Lecuna, Crónica Razonada, II, 6, 7, 274.
offered those who would seize rifles from the Royalists,
grabbed weapons from the enemy as they tried to take aim.
Finally, aided by night and by the surrounding forests, the
enemy abandoned that position and retreated to Nutrias. We
went on to our camp at Yagual with our wounded.

At Yagual we found ourselves in the direst poverty.
In order to shelter all those people who had placed them­
selves under my protection, we had to construct ranch houses.
The rainy season was approaching and these emigrants were
accustomed to the comforts of civilian life; therefore, it
was necessary to provide some shelter for them. Furthermore,
there were many invalids among them due to old age and sick­
ness; and this did not include the women and children. I
issued a decree ordering the civilians to give me all the
silver they might have with them so that I could return it
to them stamped and sealed. Right then and there, a silver­
smith from Barinas, called Anzola, made a seal and converted
into money all the metal those citizens had brought with
them when they had been forced to leave their homes.

Among the belongings which the citizens of Apure placed
at my disposal were their slaves. I freed them when I
liberated all the territory. This provision was confirmed
later by the Congresses of Guayana and Cúcuta in their laws
of manumission.

In the midst of these events and despite my absolute
dedication to the war, I never lost sight of the importance
of preserving the herds of cattle as a matter of vital
interest to the country. I gave my whole-hearted support to this project, and clearly showed it by the efficacious measures I dictated to prevent the annihilation of the cattle. I flatter myself in believing that these measures preserved a seed bed of riches which, despite the long duration of the war and the heavy consumption of the belligerent armies, germinated later throughout the Republic. This is evidenced by the fact that the beginnings of all the farms that exist in our country today have come from the Apure.

General Santander, when speaking of our plight at this time in his *Apuntamientos Históricos*, states:13

During the campaign in the llanos in 1816 and 1818, war was waged on the Spaniards with cavalry and very little infantry. The mobility of the cavalry, the ease of crossing the rivers and swollen ravines by swimming, the practical knowledge of the terrain, the abundance of cattle which furnished the only source of nourishment for the troops, the lack of hospital, armories, and provisions—all of these gave the independent troops considerable advantages over the Spanish. The horse and cattle were taken as common goods wherever they were found, without any counting. Those who had clothes wore them; those who did not, rode naked on their horses in the hope of acquiring clothing in the first encounter with the enemy. Accustomed as the llaneros were to living on meat alone, and to securing strength from enduring the rain, they were not afraid of the lack of other foods nor of the harsh winter in that territory. Swimmers by habit, no river detained them in their marches; courageous by nature, no risk intimidated them. From this it can be inferred that the officers, soldiers and civilians who were not llaneros had to endure labors and privations almost impossible to conceive. The recruiting was generally always made among all persons capable of bearing arms. No one was exempt. Thus it happened

---

13 General Santander's *Apuntamientos Históricos* were unavailable, and therefore it was impossible to verify this quotation.
that in the Battles of Yagual and Mucuritas, lawyers, priests, and all capable persons wielded their lances. Until 1818 everyone, including the military and civilians, men and women, old and young, was forced to live and march together. Everyone was fed alike on roasted meat, without salt, and everyone went barefoot.

In the month of June in 1817, eight enemy launches convoyed by an enemy gunboat were coming up the Apure River from Guayana toward Barinas. These were protected by one hundred grenadiers. I knew that they were carrying clothing; so I decided to seize this commodity which my troops needed so badly. With this goal in mind, I embarked men in five bongos that I had in Yagual, armed with small cannons. Aided by a favorable wind, the enemy ships passed the point at Apurito where our men had hoped to attack them. My bongos, under the command of the daring Vicente Peña and manned by men from my Guard, followed the orders of Captains Aramendi and Laurencio Silva and continued navigating.14

14Laurencio Silva was born on September 7, 1792 in Tinaco, Venezuela. He joined the patriot army in 1810 in Caracas and from then on fought unceasingly for the cause of independence. He fought in the Battle of Junín. In 1817 he participated in the attack on the enemy ships at Paso del Frío and saved Aramendi's life on this occasion. He fought in the Battle of Carabobo and in the assault of Puerto Cabello on November 8, 1823. Because of his deeds of bravery at the Battle of Ayacucho, he was promoted to the rank of General. He supported Bolívar in the Bolívar-Páez dispute in 1831; consequently, he was exiled from Cartagena on April 23 of this year. Much later in 1849 he was Monagas' adversary. In 1855 he was named Secretary of War and Councilor of State. Silva was Bolívar nephew-in-law, for he had married the latter's niece, Felicia. Believing in a fusion of races which would produce a new and stronger American racial type, Bolívar had forced his niece to marry Silva who was a mulatto. General Silva died on February 27, 1873, after having been one of the handful who had stayed with the Liberator until his death. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 587-88. Rourke, Man of Glory, 328-29, 355.
They found the launches and the gunboat anchored a little further up from Paso del Frio.

The enemy had barely seen our improvised and weak squadron at a distance, when they started firing on it. When one of our cannon answered their fire, it fell in the water. Another one of our ships, loaded with men, capsized on firing the first volley. The men who had manned it managed to swim ashore despite the heavy firing from the enemy launches that were also pursuing our bongos. The latter, by much rowing, also managed to get to the shore. Our men got to land almost at the same time that their pursuers did. Aramendi turned around and gave the grenadier who pursued him the closest a thrust and started yelling for the cavalry. All the grenadiers were frightened by this and thought it prudent to abandon the pursuit and reembark in their launches, taking only one of our bongos. The valiant Aramendi was wounded in this encounter.

Frustrated in this plan, I returned to Yagual determined to organize an expedition to march on Barinas and seize the goods that the launches carried to the warehouses there. I could not bear the idea that they might escape me, especially since the clothing was indispensable to us.

Necessity forced us to fight not only men, but nature also. However, we determined to use the obstacles presented by nature to our advantage. We knew that the enemy relied on these obstacles to feel secure and confident in their position. Who would have thought it possible for our cavalry
troop to cross the Lower Apure at that time when so much of
the terrain was covered with water and when, above all,
several ravines and five rivers were all flooded at the same
time? So I decided to take one thousand lancers mounted on
dapple-gray horses and an equal number of reserve horses,
also dapple-gray. The llaneros believe, and I do too, that
a dapple-gray horse swims better than any other.

We got to Paso de Quintero on the Apure River. Fortu­
nately we did not encounter the enemy launches there, for
they were in the port of Nutrias. I ordered seventy men of
the Guard to cross the river and attack the town of Pedraza
since the warehouses there contained some clothing. These
men were to join me with their booty later in the town of
Canagua. I warned them above all not to alarm the enemy at
Barinas, for if the latter found out that some patriot
forces crossed the Apure River, they would ascertain that it
was a party with the sole objective of pillaging the ware­
houses at Pedraza. In the meantime, I swam across the river
with the rest of my troops and sent weapons across in a
canoe.

The men of my Guard, having fulfilled their objective,
were returning from Pedraza when they were attacked at the
farm of Mamom by a strong guerilla force under the command
of Captain Teodore Garrido. However, they succeeded in
defeating this force without any further misfortune than the
wounding of one of our officers. They continued their march
and finally joined us in Canagua. Garrido, seeing our men
countermarch toward the Apure, notified Barinas of this movement. He did not realize that I had taken advantage of this stratagem to deceive the enemy there.

With all my forces reunited, I headed toward Barinas. We swam across the Canagua and Paguey rivers carrying our saddles over our heads. We appeared so unexpectedly in front of the plaza, that by a rare coincidence Remigio Ramos at that very moment was assuring the inhabitants as a group that the party of thieves from the Apure that had pillaged Pedraza had taken refuge again in the territory from where they had come. I went to the street openings in the city and sent three cavalry columns, along three different streets, to charge the five hundred European infantrymen and one hundred cavalymen, which had arrived from Caracas and with which Ramos opposed us. The enemy's resistance was in vain, for we swept away all who came before us on the points of our lances and with the impetus of our horses. Ramos escaped with some officers and was pursued to Bocono. The rest of the enemy force remained in my power.

The outcome of this surprise attack was that we were able to seize the resources we needed with which the warehouses of Barinas were well-stocked. The goods that the eight launches had brought, and the very reason for our pursuit, also fell into our hands. Furthermore, we got two thousand equipped mules that served to transport all the goods that we had secured—clothing, munitions, rifles, et cetera.
Leaving the fortified plazas of San Fernando and Nutrias behind (particularly the armed launches which were in the latter place), and fearful that the guards of these two plazas would invade the Yagual, I hurried my return to the Apure. On the way to the town of Canagua, I seized many dry hides that I fortunately found in a warehouse there. From these I made boats to cross the Apure River with our load of confiscated goods.\textsuperscript{15}

Thinking that the gunboats would locate themselves at Quintero to prevent our passage, I sought out an accessible point that I knew, which was about two leagues further up and a little below the Suripa River. Commandant Don Juan Comos, chief of that enemy squadron, went down the river in his canoe, for he feared that we would cross it at another point. With this in mind, we went into the Suripa, a tributary of the Apure. Some patriot soldiers that were going along the banks of this river told me they saw a canoe which they thought belonged to Captain Como. To prevent his going into the Apure River and joining the rest of the launches which would then dispute our passage, I ordered a cavalry company armed with rifles to hide behind a parapet at the mouth of the Suripa. Comos tried in vain to force

\textsuperscript{15}Páez inserts this footnote here. "This boat-making procedure is as follows. You take one hide and, running a rope through the holes that are made in its ends, you place the goods inside. Then you tighten the rope and knot it. Then a man is able to pull this bundle across by carrying the cord in his teeth."
his way through, but our men repelled him. Meanwhile, I crossed the Apure River and carried the cargo in the hide boats we had made.

As I feared, General Calzada had left San Fernando with five hundred men and headed toward the Yagual. However, when he got to Achaguas, I was already there; so he went on to Apurito. He surprised the small garrison I had there under the command of Commandant Rebolledo, who died there. Calzada returned afterwards to the San Fernando plaza via the Apure River.

Thus ended this very risky undertaking. In this instance an urgent need had compelled me to weaken the Apure forces by operating so far from my base. After my arrival at Yagual, the only notable event that occurred was the arrival of the commissioners that the Liberator sent to propose that I acknowledge him as supreme commander.

Dr. Felipe de Larrazabal has just published a pompous eulogy of Bolivar in New York (Life of Bolivar, 1886). This writer has inflicted the Liberator with the incomparable misfortune, among his many and great misfortunes, of establishing himself as his Homer. Larrazabal is my merciless enemy. He blames only me for Colombia's ills. He finds no

16Felipe Larrazabal, Vida y Correspondencia General del Libertador Simón Bolívar. Enriquedida con la Inserción de los Manifiestos, Mensajes, Exposiciones, Proclamas, &c., Publicados por el Héroe Colombiano desde 1810 hasta 1830 (New York, 1887). This volume was edited and brought up to date by R. Blanco-Fombona who shortened the title to Vida del Libertador Simón Bolívar (Madrid, 1918).
merit in my services, nor in those of any other South American leader, except Sucre. This newspaperman, due to ingratitude, swore vengeance on me and mine. He does not waste any opportunity to depict me as a savage, incapable of reasoning and always ready to rise up in arms. It is an immeasurable calamity that the greatest man of America, the Genius of Liberty of a Continent, should suffer the posthumous grief of having his eulogy written by a stunted author. It is no less of a misfortune, however, that in the end a good man should be forced to defend himself against the attacks of hatred. This "historian" accuses me always of having opposed the Liberator. The event which I am about to relate and others that will appear later will be sufficient to convince those unfamiliar with the history of our revolution of the falsity of Larrazabal's charge.

After I had defeated the Spaniards with untrained soldiers in all the encounters we had had, I had organized in the Apure a cavalry corps and the famous Battalion Páez, victorious later in Boyacá. Bolívar was not as surprised by the fact that I had formed this army, as by the fact that I had succeeded in maintaining it in a good disciplined state. This was so because the greater part of this army was composed of the same individuals who, under Yañez and Boves, had been the scourge of the patriots. To be honest, who would have ever believed that those men, classified as savages by some writers and accustomed to venerating the name of King as holy, could have ever decided to abandon their
sacred cause to follow that of the patria—a name which held no significance for them? Who would have ever believed it possible to make those men, who held everyone and everything in contempt who could not compete with them in brute force, understand that there was a force superior to this, to which it was necessary to submit? Nevertheless, despite all these drawbacks, I succeeded in aligning them with me. I was able to get them to suffer, content and submissive, all the miseries, discomforts, and necessities of war. At the same time, I inspired in them a love for glory, a respect for life and property, and a veneration for the name of patria.  

There in Apure I also came to possess the resources of this province, which its inhabitants generously placed at my disposal. It was calculated then that the properties of Apure were as much as a million cows and five hundred thousand riding horses. I had forty thousand of the latter, pastured and ready for campaigning. I also had under my command military men of recognized merit. Furthermore, I exercised the authority as supreme chief that had been conferred on me in Trinidad de Arichuna by the remnants of the Republics of New Granada and Venezuela.

Now at this time, when I had at my disposal all the resources mentioned and had under my command an army of invincible men who obeyed me with pleasure and loved me as a father—now when I found myself vested with an all-embracing authority—Bolivar, whom I still did not know personally, sent Colonel Manuel Manrique and Vicente Parejo from Guayana
to propose to me that I recognize him as supreme chief of the Republic. If I had harbored ambitious designs, there could not have been a more opportune occasion to show them. However, without hesitating a moment, I respectfully received the commissioners in the farm at Yagual. Then I informed the army of my resolution to acknowledge Bolívar as supreme chief of the Republic.

The troops were very happy to know that he [Bolívar] was in Guayana. Still and all, when I told them I was going to recognize him as chief, the greater part of the army and the civilians pointed out to me that I did not have the power to delegate the authority of supreme commander which I had been granted. Considering only the good of the country, keeping in mind Bolívar's military gifts and the prestige his name carried even in foreign countries, and realizing above all the advantages of having a supreme authority and a

---

17 Francisco Vicente Parejo was born in Cumaná in 1780. In 1810 he was a militia Captain in Chamariapa. He fell a prisoner in the attack on Angostura in 1811 and remained one until he managed to escape in 1813. He joined Mariño's forces then and fought with him in all the battles. When Bolívar arrived in Margarita in 1816, Parejo was filled with joy and immediately recognized him as the head of the nation. Then he joined MacGregor's forces. In 1821 he participated in the Congress of Angostura. In 1825 he succeeded in getting Cisneros to surrender. He opposed Páez in the separation of Venezuela from Colombia. In 1836 he was promoted to General of Brigade. Since Bolívar was always the sole thought of Parejo's public life and the only object of his disinterested affection, it seems appropriate that when he died on July 24, 1864, his ashes were placed under the same roof as those of the Liberator in the National Pantheon in Caracas. Scarpetta and Vergara, *Diccionario Biográfico*, 439-40.
focal point to direct the various caudillos operating in different sections, I decided to subject my authority to that of General Bolivar. I ordered the troops that I had in Yagual to get into formation. Then I called Father Ramón Ignacio Méndez, later archbishop of Caracas, to receive my oath acknowledging General Bolivar as supreme chief in the presence of these troops. Later I ordered the troops to follow my example and also commanded the corps in other places to follow suit.

A few days prior to the arrival of these commissioners, I had received a communique from the "Congress" of Cariaco brought to me by Commandant Rebolledo, in which I was notified of the meeting of that group and asked in strong terms to acknowledge and support its resolutions.\(^8\) I openly refused this demand and responded that although I was not under Bolivar's orders, I felt it necessary for all to recognize him as supreme commander in directing the war and smoothing over the difficulties that might stand in the way of the meeting of a true national Congress.

Although Larrazabal does not make any accusations against me in this instance, I have wanted to delineate this occasion fully to prove that I was against opposing Bolivar.

\(^8\)Although Mariño had recognized Bolivar's supreme authority in 1817, the minute Bolivar left Barcelona to go to Quayana he attempted to usurp Bolivar's authority. He called a Congress at Cariaco which proclaimed a Federal Republic. Mariño was soon defeated and lost Cumaná and Barcelona. Morón, History of Venezuela, 126.
This was true even at a time when I exercised a boundless authority with the unanimous approval of those who had conferred it. Further on we shall see this same thing confirmed in more than one act of my military life.

At this time, fevers developed along the slopes of the rivers and forced me to move to Achaguas, a city that had been abandoned for some time. While I was there the Spanish chief [Juan] Aldama threatened me from Nutrias. He informed me that if I did not submit to the King's authority, he would come looking for me and reduce me to obedience. He asked me to remember that he was the victor of Barcelona and that he brought victory in his pocket. I answered this boast by saying that I would save him the trouble of crossing the Apure to come and search for me, for it was my intention to be the first to test my forces against his. Immediately, I detached Commandant Ranjel with a column of four hundred men. They took possession of the town of Santo Domingo, four

---

19 Juan Aldama was a Spanish Colonel. In the battle that occurred on April 7, 1817 when he forced his way into Casa Fuerte, his troops behaved with unbelievable cruelty. On July 20, 1817 Aldama's division landed on the island of Margarita in order to help Morillo maintain Spanish control. Despite the fact that the Spanish troops advanced steadily, Morillo evacuated Margarita when he heard of the loss of Guayana and the threat to Caracas. Now Morillo decided to concentrate on the mainland, for by the end of 1817 he realized that the troops of Aldama's division were the only seasoned soldiers left him. Vicente Lecuna and Harold A. Bierck, Jr. (eds.), Selected Writings of Bolívar (New York, 1951), I, 141. Madariaga, Bolívar, 297, 302, 303.
leagues away from Nutrias, after having destroyed the small garrison they encountered there. Ranjel continued his march toward Nutrias, and for a few days had Aldama contained within the boundaries of the city. When I found out that Morillo and Calzada were going to join Aldama, I ordered Ranjel to return to my headquarters.

Aldama marched to join Morillo and joined him on the plain at the farm of Camoruco. From here both marched to occupy the town of Apurito. They crossed the Apure, learned that I was sick in Achaguas, and ordered three hundred cavalrymen under Commandant A. Ramos, to attack me by surprise. Fortunately a soldier by the name of José María Ariza, who deserted them in the march, flew to notify me of the danger I was in. I hurried to evacuate the sick and the civilians, sending some by land and others in the ships there were in that port to the shores of the Arauca. I stayed with fifty men on the other side of the river to attack the enemy when they entered the city and to gather more forces in the meantime.

I was about a league away seeking better pasture for the horses when, about 8:00 a.m., I was informed that the enemy had occupied the town [Achaguas]. Immediately I started to march against these forces, but they did not stay. They left when they saw that there was no one in the city. I

---

20 Antonio Ramos was commandant of the Spanish squadron of Guayabal. Later he took charge of a cavalry regiment. Lecuna, Crónica Razonada, II, 5, 68, 263.
pursued them for about a league. Failing to overtake them, I countermarched to Chorreron where some forces joined me. There I discovered that the entire enemy army had already crossed the river and was entrenched in the church in this town, while the cavalry maintained itself posted a league away. I sent Colonel Aramendi with a squadron of lancers to surprise this cavalry. He was completely successful in the attack, for he kept his march a secret until he thrust himself suddenly on the camp, killing and scattering many people. Meanwhile, I went to San Fernando with the Battalion Páez and some cavalry.21 I arrived at that plaza at night and attacked it vigorously--yelling "hurrahs" for Bolívar and the troops at Guayana. The object of this was to call Morillo's attention toward Calabozo and get him to abandon the Apure campaign.

I believe it was this false attack rather than the cavalry loss sustained in Aramendi's surprise attack, that prompted Morillo's forces to recross the river along the

21Páez inserts the following footnote: "I was also taking three hundred Cunabiche Indians. They were under the command of one of their own men, called Linache, whom I had given the rank of general among his companions.--Before the simulated attack on the plaza, knowing how cowardly the Indians became on hearing the whistling of the bullets, I distributed rations of whisky among them. This liquor made them gain so much spirit, that they pierced their tongues with the points of their arrows and then bathed their faces in the blood that came out of these wounds. Then they hurled themselves, full of the greatest daring, against the enemy trenches. One of my Indian captains, called Dos-Reales, hurled himself ahead of time against a trench and was killed by machete blows."
same Apurito and road to San Jaime. They crossed the Portuguesa River and went to Calabozo. The Spanish General had ordered the Fifth Division previously to locate in the town of Guadarrama and the squadrons to form again in the towns where they belonged. These movements amounted to giving Bolivar the advantage of being without Morillo's opposition as he marched to join me in San Juan de Payara Where I awaited him.

At the beginning of 1818, knowing that Bolivar was already in the farm of Cañafistola, about four leagues from Payara, I went on to meet him. I was accompanied by my chief army leaders. He had barely seen me from a distance, when he immediately mounted to come receive me. When we met we dismounted and happily embraced tightly. I let him know that his being in the llanos was a very happy omen for the patriot cause. I hoped his privileged intelligence in finding new methods and utilizing the resources we placed at his disposal would launch rays of destruction against the enemy we were trying to conquer. With the generosity that characterized him, he answered me in flattering phrases. He praised highly my constancy in withstanding the dangers and privations of every kind in defending the patria. Then he assured me that our mutual efforts could completely destroy the enemy that oppressed us.

Bolivar was then in the prime of his life and possessed a robustness which civilian life seldom gives. Although he was not tall, he was not short enough so that a sculptor who
wanted to depict a hero would ignore his stature. His two chief distinctive features were the excessive mobility of his body and the brightness of his eyes which were black, alive, penetrating, restless, and had the gaze of an eagle. These factors were more than enough to make him outstanding among his companions despite his slighter stature. He had black and somewhat curly hair, hands and feet as small as those of a woman, and a voice that was sharp and penetrating. His skin, toasted by the sun of the tropics, still maintained the cleanliness and luster which the rigors of an outdoor life and the continuous and violent changes in climate had not been able to wrest from him. Those who expect to find the man of arms only in the robust athlete, however, would have been disappointed on seeing Bolivar. An artist, however, or any keen observer for that matter, could find in him at a single glance the outward signs characterizing a man who is tenacious in purpose and ready to carry out undertakings requiring great intelligence and great constancy. Despite the agitated life that he had lived until then, calculated to undermine the most robust constitution, he [Bolivar] was still healthy and full of vigor. He had a happy and jovial disposition. Though he had a placid character in personal dealings, he was impetuous and dominating in dealings of national importance. Thus he combined the pleasantness of the courtier with the spirit of the warrior.

He was fond of dancing and was very gallant and susceptible to women. Skillful in handling horses, he liked
to gallop at full speed over the plains of Apure and pursue the deer that were abundant there. In camp he maintained good spirits with opportune jokes. On marches he always seemed somewhat restless and tried to distract his impatience by singing patriotic songs. He was fond of battles and perhaps even squandered too much of himself on them. However, while the battle lasted, he was completely serene. He never failed to set the example, to provide the commanding voice and sword in order to restrain the defeated ones.22

I must repeat that Bolívar's outward appearance, his weak frame, accustomed from infancy to the comforts of a home, provided quite a contrast to that of the inhabitants of the llanos; for the latter were robust athletes who had never known any other way of life but the continuous struggle with nature and wild animals. It can be said here that the two indispensable elements needed to wage war were joined now—the intellectual force to guide and organize plans, and the raw material to carry out these plans. Both elements

22 Thomas Rourke in his biography of Bolívar includes a quotation from a certain Fernando González to describe Páez which is both interesting and appropriate at this point. González says of Páez, "He was an innocent child, a primitive who looked on Bolívar as a god and at other times, when he was afar, as a devil. He was a child even unto his crimes, enamored of anything that shone." Rourke, Man of Glory, 193. Another apropos quotation reads as follows: "Bolívar is real, Páez unreal. Bolívar belongs to history, Páez to legend; their cooperation has the smack of Bonaparte joining hands with Achilles." Thomas Russell Ybarra, The Passionate Warrior, Simón Bolívar (New York, 1942), 148.
must help each other mutually and can do nothing without the other. Bolívar brought with him the knowledge of military tactics learned in books and which he had already put into practice on the battlefields. For our part, we were going to give him the experience acquired in places where it becomes necessary to vary the plans conceived beforehand at each step, and to operate according to changes in the terrain.

Bolívar, impatient to begin the campaign, had been in San Juan de Payara for three or four days wondering how to cross the Apure River with the army. We did not have the ships necessary to do so, and in addition, the enemy was guarding the only place where we could cross the river without exposing ourselves to the cannon of the plaza. He was in a state of turmoil pondering how to solve these problems, while I kept encouraging him to start the march. I assured him that I would get him the necessary ships. He kept asking me, "But, man, where will you get them?" I told him that I would get those that were at the river pass opposite to us.

"And how can we take possession of these?"

"With cavalry."

"Where is that water cavalry?" he asked me, "For land cavalry can not perform such a miracle."

Finally he decided to march and approach the river, not with the hope that the anticipated operation would be carried out, but to decide what means to take. A mile before reaching the river, I begged him to halt the army so that I could detach the men we needed to seize the enemy launches.
Although he still felt that this was either a dream or a joke, he yielded to my wishes.

I took only fifty men from the Cavalry Guard, and we arrived at the river bank with loosened girths and without cruppers so that we could roll our saddles on the ground without dismounting. We did this and all fell in the water at the same time. This unexpected operation shocked the enemy so, that they only fired a few cannon shots. Immediately, the greater part of their men jumped in the water. Our cavalry group hurried to place itself in front of the plaza in order to prevent the enemy forces from informing General Morillo who was in Calabozo. We captured fourteen ships, including both the armed and unarmed ones. Bolivar was astonished. He declared that if he had not witnessed this act, he would never have believed it.

All I have to do now is to copy here the written testimony of an English writer. Although I do not know this Englishman's name, he says he served under me.\(^{23}\) This citation will be long, and even though the narration could endure corrections, it is beautiful and true and certainly worth reading. The book is entitled, *Recollections of a Service of Three Years During the War-of-Extermination in the Republics of Venezuela and Colombia*—London, 1828, and states as follows.\(^{24}\)

\(^{23}\)The Englishman was Captain Cowie, first name not listed.

\(^{24}\)Captain Cowie (?), *Recollections of a Service of Three Years*, II, 173-87.
Proceeding on toward the town of Barinas, I was informed by some of the natives that Bolivar was encamped a few miles from it, in the direction of the Villa de Aranca, and I there joined him. The brave General Páez received me, though a stranger, with the greatest cordiality, and seeing me weak from a wound which I had received in the engagement with the Spaniards, generously offered to yield up all his own little accommodations till I should be quite recovered.

This heroic and noble-minded man has derived all his ideas and virtues from nature. Nurtured in a country perfectly uncivilised, without the advantages of either birth or fortune, he has, by his own personal merit, his prowess and undaunted courage, raised himself, through the incidents which have from time to time occurred to him during the revolutionary contest, to the command of by far the most effective and useful native force of any in the country. He is a native of the plains of Capac (sic), and descended from the horde of Llaneros, who have ever lived there in the most barbarous and savage manner. When the revolution was first agitated, he was then a young man, and a private in one of the bands of Lancers which are raised on the plains. In this humble situation he soon found means to distinguish himself. His extraordinary courage and strength enabled him to beat all competitors in the gymnastic exercises, to which the Llaneros daily accustom themselves; and by the adroitness which, from continued practice, he had acquired in the use of their favorite weapon, the lance, he could with ease beat them into submission when any disputes arose. These, together with the numbers he always placed hors de combat in their numerous skirmishes, procured him the respect of all his companions, while his mild and unassuming disposition ensured him their respect and friendship. He does not appear to have entertained any wish to aggrandise himself at this period, nor indeed at any subsequent one, as his conduct has ever been marked with a most perfect disinterestedness and indifference, as to his own advantage, in every action of his life. The usual fate however of the chiefs of these bands, and the general esteem in which he was held, soon placed him in command. The leader of the party he belonged to having been killed in action, the whole of the troops instantly and unanimously elected him their chief, and in this station he enacted so many deeds of bravery, and with such universal success, that his band was hourly receiving volunteers, and in a short time became augmented from about 300 to above 2000. With these he commenced operations on a larger scale, and soon became the most formidable foe
the Spaniards ever had in Venezuela, and to him may certainly, with the strictest justice, be attributed in a great degree the independence of that part of Colombia, while his exertions in the cause of New Granada have been also great and extremely beneficial to it. He could not, at the time I served with him either read or write, and, until the English arrived on the plains, he was totally unacquainted with the use of knives and forks, so rude and uncivilized had been his previous life. As soon however as he began to mingle with the officers of the British legion, he copied their manners, customs, and dress, and invariably acted as they did, as far as his previous habits would admit, on all occasions. He is about five feet nine inches in height; his frame is very muscular and finely formed, and he possesses wonderful strength and agility. His countenance is handsome and manly; his hair thick, black, and curling; his temperament sanguine, disposition warm, generous and kind, and his mind, though quite uncultivated, enriched with all the virtues which most adorn human nature. Open, frank, and unsuspecting, he is the best of friends, and being perfectly free from the baser passions, the most generous of enemies. He is particularly fond of the English, calling them his brothers, and ever advocating their claims to the gratitude of the country with the greatest enthusiasm. His intrepidity rendered him equally beloved by them, and, excepting General Mariño, he was the most popular chief with them in Colombia. Frequently, when the jealousy of the native officers has led them to make harsh and unmerited observations respecting the services of the British Legion, has he, by a well-timed reproof, checked them; and he was, with but two or three exceptions, the only one who ever candidly acknowledged the benefit which the cause of liberty derived from their services; and he alone ever proposed a public testimonial of it on the part of the Congress.

To enumerate all the anecdotes of this extraordinary man would more than fill a volume, so numerous and romantic are the actions of his life. One of them, which is truly characteristic of his bravery and resolution in cases of emergency, and which illustrates his military character, I will relate. Bolívar was on the plains of the Apure, with his troops in a starving condition, and without the means of procuring food for his army, unless he took a circuitous march of many leagues, to which the strength of the man was incompetent, or found means to arrive at the point he wished to gain, by crossing the river Apure, on those banks, on the opposite side, were plenty of cattle, grazing within
sight of the newly famished troops. The latter could not be accomplished, as he had no boats of any description, or timber to construct rafts; but about midway across the river was a fleet of sixty flecheras which belonged to the enemy, and were well armed and manned. Bolivar stood on the shore gazing at these in despair, and continued disconsolately parading in front of them, when Páez, who had been on the look out, rode up and enquired the cause of his disquietude. His Excellency observed, "I would give the world to have possession of the Spanish flotilla, for without it I can never cross the river, and the troops are unable to march." "It shall be yours in an hour," replied Páez. "It is impossible," said Bolivar, "and the men must all perish." "Leave that to me," rejoined Páez, and galloped off. In a few minutes he returned, bringing up his guard of honour, consisting of three hundred lancers selected from the main body of the Llaneros, for their proved bravery and strength, and leading them to the bank, thus briefly addressed them: "We must have these flecheras, or die. Let those follow Tío who please."

And at the same moment, spurring his horse, dashed into the river and swam towards the flotilla. The guard followed him with their lances in their mouths, now encouraging their horses to bear up against the current by swimming by their sides and patting their necks, and then shouting to scare away the alligators, of which there were hundreds in the river, till they reached the boats, when, mounting their horses, they sprang from their backs on board them, headed by their leader, and, to the astonishment of those who beheld them from the shore, captured every one of them. To English officers, it may appear inconceivable that a body of cavalry, with no other arms than their lances, and no other mode of conveyance across a rapid river than their horses, should attack and take a fleet of gun-boats amidst shoals of alligators; but, strange as it may seem, it was actually accomplished, and there are many officers now in England who can testify to the truth of it.

The strength with which nature has endowed General Páez, is surprising. He will at any time, for mere sport, when his troops are catching wild cattle by means of the lazo, single out a bull from the herd, and

---

25 Cowie footnotes Tío thus: "Uncle. A name by which the Llaneros frequently address Páez, particularly the guards of honour, who are more privileged than the others." At this point Páez makes no explanation of the discrepancy in the number of men which he says he took (50) and the number that Cowie says he took (300).
following him on horseback seize him, while at full speed, by the tail, by a sudden twist of which he will throw the animal over on his side. If upon any excursion he meets with a tiger or wild boar, he instantly transfixes him with his lance. From thirty to forty men have been known to fall by his single arm in one engagement, and he is unquestionably the first lancer in the world. He has, since he has risen into notice, generally had from 3,000 to 4,000 men under his command, all of the Llaneros tribes, and these form by far the most formidable native force in the Republic; with their aid and by his own indefatigable assiduity he was always able to hold Morillo in check. Páez has ever proved himself a most inveterate enemy to the tyrannical dominion of Spain, and a terrible avenger of his country's injuries. For weeks and months he has followed the steps of Morillo, unceasingly clinging to him like his shadow, and upon every opportunity dashing into his camp at night with frequently not more than 150 to 200 men, slaughtering all whom he encountered, and on every occasion cutting his way back with very trifling loss. At other times, when the Royalist army was passing through the country, he would seize a favourable moment, when they were fatigued by a harassing day's march, to drive off all their cattle and baggage mules, leaving them without provisions. It was acknowledged by Morillo, that, upon one occasion, when marching from Caracas to Santa-fé-de-Bogata, he was deprived of upwards of 3,000 men, and the whole of his military stores, by the unceasing attacks made upon him by Páez, and that he was in consequence obliged to abandon the object of his expedition until he was reinforced.

The Llaneros are natives of the plains of Capac and the Apure. They are raised in the manner of militia, but receive no pay excepting what arises from their plunder, which is equally divided amongst them. They are mounted on horses, which, from being long habituated to abstinence and fatigue, are the most serviceable and hardy animals in the world, being trained to perform almost everything their owners can desire. When mounted either in the field or for the chase, both horse and rider appear as if they were actuated by the same impulses; the sagacity of the one enabling it to

26 Cowie footnotes lazo thus: "A slip knot, or noose, which is thrown with great preciseness over the head of the animal intended to be caught. This operation has been so well described by other travellers, that any account of it here is unnecessary."
comprehend the most trifling motion of the other. The Llaneros are badly apparelled and accoutred; their covering and appointments being of the same scanty nature as that worn by the Guerillas, commanded by Colonel Montes, but they are far more brave, and better qualified for field operations; they are exceedingly dextrous and active, and perform any required movements with amazing velocity. Their only weapon is the lance, the shaft of which is from nine to twelve feet in length, light and elastic, but tough and durable. The lance itself has not what is termed a shoulder, like those of European cavalry, but is formed like the blade of a long knife, both edges of which are as sharp as a razor of good metal, substance, and temper. This is lashed to the shaft by cow-hide thongs, leading from the top of the socket to about eight inches downwards. From their earliest childhood the Llaneros are accustomed to the use of this weapon, small ones being made for such practice by their parents. Previously to their being admitted to the ranks of the bands, it is necessary that they should be duly instructed in the use of this weapon, and that they should be able to catch a wild horse, never before mounted, and after placing one of their large and severe bits in his mouth, go with him at once into action. They are therefore trained to horsemanship as soon as they can strike the steeds of their fathers, and constant practice gives them a perfect fearlessness, so that they will ride on the brink of a precipice and over rocks that would make a less experienced horseman shudder to look at. No observance of respect towards their superior officers is observed amongst them; all appear on the same footing; but they pay the most unlimited attention to their orders in the field, where they know it is certain death to treat them with levity. In this point, I believe, lies all their discipline; as out of the field they are dirty, irregular, and dishonest, and treat their officers (who are, it must be confessed, but very little better than themselves in any respect) with the same freedom as they do each other. It was a thing of usual occurrence to see one of these ruffians approach General Páez, and address him by the appellation of Tio, or Compadre, and ask for anything he might want, without the smallest anticipation of a refusal, from his known good nature; and if the chief happened to be absent when they wished to see him, they would go all over the camp or town in search of him, uttering the above names in a loud sonorous tone, till he had heard and satisfied them. 27

27 Cowie footnotes *Compadre* as "Protector."
At other times, while on service, if he were at his meals, which were generally enjoyed in the open field, should any of them take a fancy to the piece of tassao, or other provisions, he was about to eat, they would with peculiar adroitness go behind him and snatch it away, at which he would only laugh, and cry out animo Justo...28

The Llaneros express themselves on most occasions when they are deeply interested, and particularly in their armours, in couplets, which are perfectly extemporaneous; their rhymes are generally very happy, and their meaning very applicable to the occasion. They also play on a guitar of rather rude construction, upon which they accompany themselves while serenading their mistresses, and their songs are always extemporaneous. They have a habit, which they derive from education, of appropriating the property of others to their own use,

---

28 Cowie footnotes animo justo "Well done—right."
Paz omits an entire paragraph here, since it was not particularly flattering to the Llaneros, it appears to be worth including. "The Llaneros only yield in bravery to the Sambos, and this arises, I presume, from their not entertaining the doctrine of fatalism; to all the remaining races they are superior in courage. They are decidedly the best of the native forces, but are nevertheless obstinate, and at times will yield to a very inferior force, not wholly through fear, but for the sake of betraying any of their officers, who may have offended them, into the hands of the enemy. Their evil propensities are to be ascribed to their mode of living in their youthful days. Exclusively bred on the plains, not having any intercourse with the more civilised inhabitants of the Republic, and living as they do beyond the pale of any law, they carry on a system of rapine and murder from their childhood, over which the government appears not to have the slightest control, but who will, I apprehend, at a time perhaps not far distant, have to deplore and dread the increased exercise of their lawless power."

Captain Cowie (?) Recollections of a Service of Three Years, II, 182-83.
which becomes so natural to them that no dread of
the most condign punishment can divest them of it.29

The Llaneros are a tall, muscular set of men,
capable of great fatigue, and are commonly abstemious,
but they are deceptive, cunning, and prone to revenge.
The latter passion, they will employ every means in
their power to gratify, and that in the most cruel and
sanguinary manner they can devise. They shed the blood
of their dearest ties on the most trivial occasions
with frigid indifference, and had they not been
restrained in a great degree by the active and powerful
energies of their leader, they would long before this
have had the whole of the wealth of the country in their
hands. General Páez possesses all the requisites of
commanding this horde, and of keeping them in subjection,
and is perhaps the only man in Colombia who could so
effectually restrain them in their rapacity and passion
for murder. He has no laws by which he governs them,
but trusts solely to his own prowess to quell all dis-
turbances, and to chastise all their delinquencies.
Whenever any of them commit acts which are deserving of
punishment, or express dissatisfaction at any regula-
tion which may have been adopted, he tells them they
must meet him in single combat; and this they are
obliged by their own usages to do, or their comrades
would drive them from the ranks. They thus receive the

29 Páez omits another paragraph and a half here from
his citation. This portion is as follows: "The horses
belonging to the officers of the British Legion, which were,
in most cases, of the Santa Fé breed, and are esteemed the
finest in the country, were always stolen, whenever the owners
of their servants left them but a few moments unguarded. One
instance of this kind of theft is rather ludicrous, and, as
it shows their dexterity, it may be worth while to relate it.

"Major Manby had two very valuable chargers, and having
reason to apprehend that they would be stolen, as several of
his brother officers had met with similar losses, he was
determined to secure them if possible. With this intention
he tied their halters, which were made of very strongly
twisted hide, to each of his own legs, leaving the animals
sufficient room to graze, and laid himself down under a tree
to sleep. When he awoke he found, to his dismay, that the
horses were both gone, and his legs so firmly fastened to
the tree with the halters, that he was obliged to use his
sword to release himself from his bed. There is no possi-
bility of ever regaining animals thus purloined, as they are
immediately driven two or three hundred miles across the
plains to a place of security." Ibid., 183-84.
reward of their offences from the hands of their chief, whose valour always prevails; and this circumstance gains him more weight and respect with such troops than any other method he could pursue.

General Páez is subject to attacks of epilepsy upon any violent excitement of the nervous system, and they generally seize him either during an action, or immediately after it. The manner of warfare followed by the Llaneros, consists in charging repeatedly with the utmost fury through the thickest of the enemy's lines, until they succeed in throwing the whole into confusion, on which they slaughter all around them. On these onsets the exertions of Páez are so violent, that he is seized with sudden vertigo and falls from his horse, which is so trained that it will stop the instant it feels his rider leaving its back, who remains on the ground until some of his men raise him. He is then taken to the rear, and the only means used to recover him are dashing cold water over him, or, if there be sufficient at hand, by immersing him suddenly into it, accompanied by a violent shaking. These attacks have subjected him to the most imminent danger, the enemy having been known to pass over him several times before his men could approach to rescue him. He is generally very weak for several days after these fits, although he invariably re-enters the field, if sufficiently recovered to be able to retain his seat on horseback, before the action is finished. In some instances he has done this, notwithstanding he had been nearly speechless from the severity of the fit. In short, he is altogether a most wonderful man; and were the numerous extraordinary incidents of his life to be formed into a narrative, it would have more the semblance of romance than authentic biography. He is, above all things, a sincere patriot, and certainly a bright ornament to his country, which there can be but little doubt he has been the principal means of continuing thus long a Republic.

I repeat that this narrative could be corrected somewhat, and I must add that a few of these corrections would be required by modesty. But since so very much has already been written against me, why not publish also what has been said in my favor?

Let us now continue the interrupted narrative.
CHAPTER X

March on Calabozo—I Seize the Cattle the Enemy Had at the Outskirts of this City—Morillo Comes out with his Staff to Check the Proximity of our Army—We Charged and Placed the Expeditionary General in Grave Danger—Defeat of Three Hundred European Hussars—Bolivar's Plan—My Opinion of This Plan—Reply to the Charges of Insubordination that Restrepo Has Made Against Me—The Campaign Plan I Proposed to the Liberator—I Leave to Seize the San Fernando Plaza—Encounters in the Ravines of the Biruaca, the Negro, and the Enea Rivers—Union of Colonel López's Forces with Those of General La Torre—Battle in Ortiz—Death of Genaro Vásquez—My March Against López—The Liberator is Saved Miraculously at Rincón de Los Toros—La Torre's Movements—Action at Cogedes—I March to San Fernando—Return to Achaguas—The San Fernando Troops Name Me General-in-Chief—In Defense of the Army of Apure.

1818

The event that I have just related occurred at the mouth of the Coplé River, less than a mile from San Fernando, and proves that there is no greater danger than unprepared men. The army crossed the river then with the greatest speed, and Bolívar immediately started the march on Calabozo. He did not use the highway, but an out-of-the-way road instead to avoid having some enemy patrol detect him and notify Morillo. Before his departure he stationed Colonel Miguel Guerrero with a squadron in front of San Fernando to prevent the men in the plaza from getting supplies. Guerrero was also to expedite our communications and maintain our line
of operations with Apure and Guayana.

We succeeded in completing the march without being discovered. We crossed the Guarico River at the Altagracia farm. Then we crossed the Orituco River at the pass of Tres Moriches and spent the night on the right bank, three leagues from Calabozo. At four in the morning we raised camp, and I went on ahead with a cavalry party. My plan was to seize the cattle that were in a corral at the outskirts of the city which the enemy garrison used to ration its troops. We succeeded in accomplishing this at dawn. Putting the cattle behind us, I remained at the outskirts of the city, in the open plain that bears to the Southwest.

When Morillo was told that the cavalry party that had seized the cattle was still at the outskirts of the city, apparently waiting for another enemy army to join it, he jumped from bed and exclaimed: "What army was able to get here? Did it fly here?" To further ascertain this matter, he mounted his horse and rode out to the outskirts of the city accompanied by his staff and two hundred infantrymen that he left in ambush behind him. When I saw cavalry accompanying an enemy officer, I surmised immediately that it must be Morillo and his staff. With my comrades, I approached them little by little until they turned to go back to the city. Then I charged them full-blast in order to lance them before they entered the plaza. Morillo waited for us until he felt it imprudent to let us get any closer. Then he turned around. We charged with such tenacity and
got so close, that the intrepid Aramendi almost lanced Morillo. He was prevented from doing so by a Captain Carlos in Morillo's staff who came between the two and received the mortal blow intended for his chief.

At this point the infantry Morillo had left in ambush behind us, opened fire on us. This precautionary measure Morillo had taken proved to be his salvation and that of his staff, for without it not even one of them would have escaped. We were finally forced to return to the llanos by breaking through this ambush.

We were bemoaning the fact that such an important prisoner had escaped us, when Captain (later general) Francisco Guerrero said: "Here comes an infantry and cavalry column, which I know does not belong to our army, for it is coming from an opposite direction." We went to reconnoitre and discovered that it was a corps of three hundred infantrymen and three hundred hussars, all Europeans. They had been posted in the Misión de Abajo with orders to march to Apure, for this was where Morillo planned to go when the cavalry joined him. We charged them, were repelled, and then pursued by the hussars. When we saw that the latter had separated

---

1 General Francisco Guerrero was a native of Venezuela. A companion of the very intrepid Colonel Francisco Aramendi, he participated in the Battles of Chire, Guas dualito, Mata de la Miel, los Cocos, Hato del Frio, and Carabobo in 1824. He was very instrumental in organizing an auxiliary division in Carabobo for Peru. He supported and assisted Páez in setting up the government of Venezuela. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, pp. 201-202.
from the infantry, we turned around and defeated them completely. Only about sixty of these men were able to go to the plaza.

The Liberator, approaching with the army, heard the firing. He ordered the Apure Guard to go at full gallop and reinforce us. Later he also sent a company of scouts from the Barcelona Battalion under the command of Captain José María Arguindíquez. Bolstered by this aid we continued to attack the enemy with greater vigor. They, too, had been reinforced by two hundred men that had been detached for this purpose when Morillo got to the outskirts of the city. Our Guard charged the Royalist infantry in square formation six or eight times without being able to break the square. Finally our Guard dismounted. Lance in hand and accompanied by the scouts, they advanced and destroyed that entire force—a force that had defended itself with unequaled daring.² By this time our army, consisting of two thousand infantrymen, over two thousand horses, and four artillery pieces, had arrived. It formed in front of the city in the open plain. Despite this, however, the Royalist Battalion Castilla, which was in Misión de Arriba, succeeded in getting into the plaza

²Páez footnotes this as follows: "The Spanish soldiers fought with such desperation that our llaneros, commenting that night on the events of the day, said that (and I will allow myself to repeat it in their very words), 'When there were four left, they defended themselves c... with c....' This is to say, that even four of them formed a square. This was very true. They would not surrender, and it was necessary to kill them."
without further losses than its equipment and some men that we had taken prisoners.

Morillo, finding himself without food stuffs even for as short a period as eight days, already thought himself lost. In effect we would have been able to finish him then if Bolivar had abandoned the idea of leaving him in the plains to go seize Caracas. He attached such great importance to the occupation of the capital, that the idea of leaving the Spanish Chief in an area where he could very soon gather forces and then march in search of us, did not detain him.

We started the march, and the army recrossed the Guarico at the San Marcos pass. From there we went on to the town of Rastro. But first, we left Commandant Guillermo Iribarren and his squadron in front of Calabozo to observe enemy movements.

In the town of Rastro, three leagues from Calabozo and on the way to Caracas, Bolivar summoned me to a conference outside the house. He wanted to know what I thought of his plan to leave Morillo in Calabozo in order to go march on the capital. He told me that his objective was to take possession of it, not only for the moral strength that such an acquisition would give the cause, but also because of the certainty that he would be able to recruit four thousand citizens in the valleys of Aragua and Caracas to reinforce our army. I responded that although I was always ready to obey his orders, I did not share his opinion on this matter.
I told him that none of his arguments seemed sufficiently strong to me to warrant exposing ourselves to the risk of leaving Morillo as rear guard. Morillo would quickly be able to assemble the forces that he had distributed in various places not too far from Calabozo, and these all together were greater than ours. I pointed out also that our superiority over the enemy was in our cavalry, and that this superiority was nullified the moment that we entered hilly, rocky territory covered with forests. Elucidating further, I told him that it was unwise to leave the fortified plaza of San Fernando in Apure. Then I added that even if he were successful in recruiting all the men he hoped to, we still would not have any equipment for them. This conference was so long and heated, that it attracted the attention of those who were watching from a distance and who perhaps thought that we were quarreling.

At dawn the following day, while Bolívar was still undecided, a communique came from Iribarren. The latter, the reader will recall, had stayed close to Calabozo observing the enemy. He informed us now that Morillo had evacuated the city in the middle of the night, and that as yet he did not know what direction he had taken. Bolívar immediately ordered the army to countermarch to Calabozo. He insisted on this order although those familiar with the area told him that if we continued the march toward Caracas we would be able to recross the Guarico River at the Palomas ford and appear unexpectedly before the enemy. He felt that it was
always more convenient to follow the enemy's tracks; therefore, it was indispensable to go to Calabozo and find out exactly which road they had taken.

I particularly call the reader's attention in this instance to compare this account with the one that Larrazabal copied from Restrepo. He will be surprised to see how events are distorted when related by those who have found out about them through ill-intentioned channels or those who report what they have not witnessed.

We marched to Calabozo then, which was already occupied by Iribarren. There a certain Pernalete told me that someone had told Bolívar that I had come ahead with my forces so that I could loot the city. Full of indignation, I went immediately before Bolívar, who was in the plaza. I told him that if such a thing had been said to him, I was determined to punish the person who had been vile enough to invent such a perfidious lie with the very sword that I wielded in defense of my country. Bolívar was extremely irritated on hearing about this falsity. He told me that the man who had

3Páez refers here to Larrazabal's statement that Bolívar wanted to pursue Morillo's fleeing forces but that Páez and some other chieftains objected. Larrazabal footnotes this in a manner which removes any doubt but that he secured this information from Restrepo. Vida y Correspondencia del Libertador, II, 126-27.

4In his biography of Páez, Cunninghame Graham mentions this incident and cites Pernalete's name. However, he gives no additional information about this informer. Cunninghame Graham, Páez, 142.
said this was a liar. He urged me to name the infamous liar so that he could have him shot immediately. I was satisfied with these assurances, and I did not want to expose Pernalete to suffer the consequences of Bolivar's anger.

It is very probable that some who witnessed this scene interpreted it as lack of respect for the supreme chief. Certainly it must have been because of this that it began to be rumored that we were at odds with each other and that consequently were going to abandon pursuing Morillo. Those who believed this were wrong, however, for after having lunch together that very day, we left about twelve to pursue Morillo. Despite the time we lost in Calabozo, we still could have overtaken him with all the army had it not been for a mistake. Unfortunately, our infantry took the road to Calvario instead of the one to Sombrero and had to retrace its steps more than a league. As we marched, we took the stragglers as prisoners. When I came out at Uriosa, a spacious and clear plain, I took only fifteen cavalrymen with me, among them were the brave leaders General Manuel Cedeno and Colonel Rafael Ortega. I overtook the enemy's rear guard then and imprisoned those I found drinking water in a rain pool and successively all those who came to this spot. All in all, I took four hundred prisoners without ever seeing the enemy chief.

The above occurred at 5:00 p.m. At six, when the sun was setting, and reinforced by some one hundred and fifty cavalrymen, I attacked the enemy who were separated from us
by the Uriosa ravine. My objective was to fight seventy hussars that had advanced about rifle range from their army, and comprised the only cavalry the enemy had. These hussars, although good soldiers on horseback, did not withstand our charge. They fled and when they got to where their infantry was, the latter opened fire on them and on us. Seven hussars and three horses died from bullets fired by their own comrades, while we were repelled without any losses.

By 9:00 p.m. our army was assembled in Uriosa, and so we continued the pursuit at that hour. The next morning we were about a mile from the town of Sombrero where the enemy awaited us. They had already set up their defensive measures at the pass of the neighboring river. We waited for the Liberator here so that he could hear the testimony of a deserter from the Royalist hussars who had come to us mounted on the horse of the Spanish leader, Don Juan Juez.5 He advised us not to go by the real river pass, for he said that Morillo had set from seven to eight hundred men, counting both grenadiers and scouts, in ambush on the cliff opposite this pass. He also suggested that since the ascent to the cliff was very narrow, it would be better for us to take a nearby path where we could cross the river without opposition and approach the town from the open plains.

5Don Juan Juez was a colonel in the Spanish army and the Commandant General of the llanos. In September of 1817 he defeated Julian Infante near the valleys of Barvacoas and Camatagua. Lecuna, Crónica Razonada, II, 67.
Bolivar arrived. When he was informed of all this, he preferred to listen to the dictates of his impetuous nature rather than to all the observations made by the hussar. When the infantry joined us, he said: "Soldiers, the enemy is right there in the river. Let's break them to drink water! Long live the patria! At a trot!"

Our infantry got to the river bank and in less than fifteen minutes of heavy fire was repelled. We suffered considerable losses, particularly among the officers. Fortunately, we had left the cavalry in the depot at Samán. When the enemy noticed it, they abandoned their pursuit and retraced their steps to occupy their first positions on the opposite bank of the river. This gave us the advantage of having sufficient time to assemble our scattered men.

That afternoon we crossed the river at the place indicated by the hussar. We still did not achieve our objective, for Morillo had continued his retreat that very night, taking the road to Barbacoas and going into sloping territory where it was not possible to continue pursuing him. By then the horses were very bruised, and the infantry, counting the men who were dead, sick, or had deserted, was four hundred men short. As a result, we left Sombrero and returned to Calabozo. Here Bolivar consulted me about the best plan possible for us to adopt in these circumstances.

At this time I reiterated that I believed it supremely important not to take one step forward without leaving our base of operations assured. The latter I thought should be
the San Fernando plaza which we would have to wrest from the enemy. Under enemy control, this plaza became a threat to Guayana in the event that we should suffer a defeat. I also said that in addition we should occupy all the towns situated in the plains of Calabozo and that we should try to win the inhabitants to our side. Until then, these people had always been enemies of the patriots. If we were successful in doing this, we would augment our cavalry with the one or two thousand men they had serving under the Royalists at the time; and we would also prevent future enlistments from this section in the Royalist army. In my opinion the capture of San Fernando would contribute much to this objective. I reminded Bolivar that the scourge of the patriots in the years 1813 and 1814 had come from these llanos; and that in the final analysis, it seemed too risky to leave them behind us as we went to intern ourselves in the valleys of Aragua to battle an enemy who was strong in numbers, brave, and well disciplined. I also warned him that half our cavalry would not reach those valleys, for the terrain that we had to cross was rolling and rocky and would render our horses useless. If fortune did not grant us a victory in the valleys or Aragua or while we were passing through them, our complete ruin would be more than probable. For the llaneros of Calabozo would be certain to finish us off before we reached the Apure, and the enemy army then could pursue us up to their fortified plaza at San Fernando. From here they could easily embark one or two thousand men in five or six
days and go downstream to Guayana, which they could occupy without encountering opposition since we had no forces there. If Angostura were occupied by the Royalists, the Orinoco Canal, by which we received our war supplies from abroad, would be closed to us.

We all knew that the hope that Miguel Guerrero would take San Fernando was in vain, for the enemy scorned this chief so much, that they frequently and openly would leave the plaza to forage for supplies on the right shore of the Apure and on the edges of the Biruaca ditch. Later they would return to the city loaded with foodstuffs without having encountered the slightest opposition from their beseiger. For all these reasons, Bolivar agreed that I should go take San Fernando.

When I got to the plaza, I found Guerrero reinforced by two hundred men that had come from Guayana. Before tightening the siege, I sent a delegation three times to the chief of the garrison, offering him and all who accompanied him a pardon. However, he refused to accept this offer; and on March 6, at 3:00 a.m., he left the plaza with his entire garrison. He took the road that leads to Achaguas with the intent of heading toward the province of Barinas. We pursued these men heatedly, and at 7:00 a.m. we overtook them in the ditch of Biruaca. Here they tenaciously resisted our attack. The forests surrounding the ditch facilitated their retreat to the ditch at the Negro [River], which was not very far. A second battle ensued here in which they repelled
my vanguard of two hundred scouts by using bayonets.

A little further up from the Negro, we had another encounter and forced the enemy to retreat up to the site of Enea. Here at the edge of a thick forest they stood and resisted us with admirable courage. It got dark then, and both of us retained our respective positions. Night hushed the clamor of arms.

At dawn the next day, we opened fire again and the Royalists surrendered within a few minutes. While we uttered our victory cries, several of their chiefs and officers fled. However, since in the Apure area the Royalists could not find anyone to help them, they were all finally taken, except for four or six who managed to save themselves.

José M. Quero, from Caracas, had commanded these Royalist troops. A man of proven valor, he continued dauntlessly to command his people each time they were attacked even though he had received two wounds during the first attack, and one of them was mortal. On our side, we lost seven cavalry officers, among them Captain Echeverria and three others of this same rank. The brave Commandant

---

6 The Spanish historian Torrente lists José María Quero and the division he commanded in San Fernando de Apure as repeating the "magnificent example of the old heroes of Numancia and Sagunto." He further states that Quero withstood three attacks and was finally shot the last time while in the hammock in which he was being carried around on the battlefield. Historia de la Revolución, II, 451-52.
Hermenegildo Mugica was also wounded. Our other casualties included twenty dead and thirty wounded.⁷

This simple account of what occurred is sufficient to belie the error in Señor Restrepo's work when he states that I marched to take possession of San Fernando against Bolívar's wishes and decision.⁸ Such conduct would have amounted to desertion on my part, and I certainly would not have returned to join him as soon as he notified me from the city of Victoria that he needed help quickly in a very precarious situation. This communique was the first news I received concerning his march toward Caracas.

Colonel Don Rafael López, after the defeat that Bolívar suffered in Sémon, came out from Tiznados with almost a thousand cavalrmen to cut off the latter's

⁷Páez inserts the following footnote here: "In the principle plaza, we found the head of the honest, courageous, and very refined gentleman, Commandant Pedro Aldao. It had been placed as a jeer on a pike by Boves' command, who had sent it from Calabozo as a trophy. When we took it down to honor it and give it a Christian burial, we found that a little bird had formed its nest in the cavity and had two offspring there. The birds were yellow--the distinctive color of the patriots."

⁸Restrepo states that Bolívar was not interested in or planning to stop long enough to take San Fernando. Rather he wanted to give the impression that this was his objective so that the Spanish leaders would be taken off guard when he attacked the troops stationed at Calabozo. Revolución de la República de Colombia, II, 437.
retreat. In the plains of San Pablo at a place called Mangas Largas he surprised Commandant Blanco, who was leading some of those who had been defeated, and knifed all those who fell in his power. Fortunately, the Liberator had left that place and was in Calabozo; and many others had headed in other directions from the town of Ortiz, six leagues from Mangas Largas.

La Torre marched at the head of the victorious army of Sénem, and López joined him in the pass at Caiman, where he executed his last slaughter. From there they marched together up to Banco del Rastro, a league away from the town of the same name. That very day I arrived at Banco del Restro with twenty-two hundred men, including both infantry and cavalry, on the Guardatinajas road. I immediately notified the supreme chief of my arrival there, that the enemy was a league away, and that I was ready to engage them in battle. My communique was taken by an officer who found him

9Colonel Rafael López, though a native of Barinas, was La Torre's second in command. At this point, Morillo named him Commandant General in the llanos and gave him orders to attack the patriots wherever he found them and to prevent Bolivar's reunion with Páez. Cunninghame Graham, Páez, 146. Restrepo, Revolución de la República de Colombia, II, 456.

The Battle of Sénem took place on March 16, 1818. According to Morón this battle occurred after Bolivar tried to surprise General Morillo at Calabozo on February 12, 1818 and chased the Royalist army toward Caracas. Morón states: "Páez could not or would not bring his men to leave their chosen fighting terrain, the llanos, so that Bolivar, advancing in the Valleys of Aragua, was forced to retreat by Morillo, reinforced by fresh troops under his lieutenant Calzada, before being defeated in a battle at Semen on March 16th." History of Venezuela, 127.
at Lake Chinea, two leagues from Calabozo. Bolivar replied that I was to wait for him where I was then. The following day he joined me with three hundred men, counting the soldiers and emigrants from the valleys of Aragua.

The day prior to this reunion, General Cedeño had asked me for twenty-five men from my Guard to go provoke the enemy cavalry. However, the latter did not move from their camp, despite the fact that our men got within rifle range.

General La Torre, who commanded the entire army now that Morillo was wounded, retreated toward the town of Ortiz when he discovered my arrival at Rastro. However, as soon as I was reunited with Bolivar, we began the march to overtake him at a double pace. We were not able to do this on the plain, for he, too, doubled his pace until he reached the rolling terrains and narrow passages.

The Royalist General, while passing through the plain of San Pablo, ordered López to situate himself in the Tiznados in order to sever our line of communication with Calabozo and Apure; so López waited for us in the town of Ortiz. Here he placed himself in a favorable position in the elevated area dominating the entrance to the town. Here Bolivar engaged in a six-hour battle which was more than frightening, for our cavalry could not participate because of the terrain. Several times our infantry ascended the

---

10Páez includes the following footnote here: "In the Battle of Sémén the then-Captain Juan Pablo Farfán wounded him with his lance."
slopes and was forced to return in defeat. This occurred despite the fact that Bolívar was repeatedly told that there was a point on our right from which to overcome that hill. As the situation stood, it was impossible to force our passage. Here we had to lament the irreparable loss, among others, of Colonel Genaro Vásquez, who was mortally wounded when the corps of two hundred riflemen in his command dismounted and succeeded in reaching the top of the hill. When Vásquez was wounded, an enemy infantry column descended on another side and came up to the spot where the rest of our infantry was in formation and pushed it back some two hundred yards. However, with the quick and efficacious help that I was able to give our infantry by ordering Iribarren to charge vigorously with a cavalry column, the enemy returned to the top of the hill. Then Vásquez and his column were able to rejoin us. Vásquez arrived wounded, carried by his soldiers. He died that very night.

The sun was almost setting, and since we were all terribly thirsty and had no water there, Bolívar ordered our retreat to a place about six leagues behind us where there was some. The enemy took advantage of this movement and started their retreat up to the valleys of Aragua, approximately eight or ten leagues from Ortiz.¹¹

¹¹Páez inserts this footnote here. "The loss of Genaro Vásquez was very painful for me, for he was one of the champions from Apure on whom I had always relied for any kind of undertaking, regardless of how risky it might be. A
Bolivar marched with the rest of the army to San José de los Tiznados with the intent of operating against the enemy west of Caracas. Thus he changed his line of operation, for till then the road to La Puerta had been dismal for him. When we got to the town of San José de los Tiznados, he decided to go to Calabozo with part of the troops to organize forces with a column that came from Guayana. I received orders to march toward San Carlos so that Colonel Ranjel could join me there. The latter with a cavalry corps had been ordered to operate in the West. I was to go across grateful patria must not forget the name of this valiant man because there is no monument to commemorate the names of those who died for her on the battlefields. Fourteen years after his death, I gathered the remains of this gallant comrade-in-arms and took them to Valencia. In his memory I named a lake that is in the patio of my San Pablo farm—the place where he was first buried."

The author refers to the three bloody battles the patriots had lost at this site. Early in 1814 the forces Bolivar organized under Campos Elias to prevent Boves from advancing further north after his victory over the patriots at San Marcos were routed. On June 15th of the same year both Marino and Bolivar were totally defeated in La Puerta by Boves' men. Few of the patriot soldiers escaped the bloody carnage that followed this terrible disaster. Again in 1818 on the plain watered by the Semen rivulet, close to La Puerta, Morales and his troops, aided by the fresh troops brought by Morillo, completely routed Bolivar's troops. Morillo led the attack against the patriots himself. Although he received an almost fatal wound in this encounter, he inflicted the following losses on Bolivar's forces—eight hundred dead, four hundred prisoners, and all Bolivar's papers. From this it may be deduced that Páez was mild in his evaluation when he states that the road to La Puerta was "dismal" for Bolivar. Restrepo is more dramatic and perhaps more accurate when he describes La Puerta as a "funeral site" for the patriots. Restrepo, Revolución de la República de Colombia, II, 223, 258-59, 450-51. Madariaga, Bolívar, 224, 227, 229-30, 231, 307, 400.
the province of Barinas, and at the same time see if I could
defeat López who was in the Pao of San Juan Bautista. The
latter refused the battle that I offered him, and retreated
to Cañada along the Valencia road. However, when he saw that
I had crossed the Pao, he started toward Tiznados along the
mountain range headed toward Cocuizas. His goal was to fight
Bolívar whom he figured by then was coming to join me with
seven hundred cavalrymen and four hundred infantrymen.

While López was in the town of San José waiting for
the Liberator, the latter camped with his forces a league
away at Rincón de los Toros. When he got to this town and
discovered that López was very near, he sent General Cedeño
with twenty-five cavalrymen to tell me to stop and let me
know he was already marching to join me. That very night
one of our sergeants went over to the enemy and revealed the
saint and sign of the division, the strength it counted on,
and the place where the Supreme Chief rested. López con­
ceived the idea then of attacking the Liberator by sur­
prise. He entrusted this operation to Captain Mariano

13Restrepo's account is at variance with Páez's in
this instance. He states that López captured a servant of
Bolívar's aide-de-camp and forced this information from him.
Revolución de la República de Colombia, II, 456.

14Restrepo states that it was Renovales, and not
López, who conceived the idea of surprising and killing the
Liberator that night of April 17. Ibid.
Renovales and eight other men selected for their courage.15

Meanwhile Bolívar rested in his hammock which was hung between trees a short distance from camp. About 4:00 a.m. when Colonel Santander, Chief of Staff, was going to tell the Liberator that all was in readiness for the march, he stumbled on Renovales' men. After demanding the saint and sign, he asked the nature of this patrol. Renovales responded that he had come from reconnoitering the enemy camp in accordance with orders he had received from the Supreme Chief. He was trying to find him now so that he could report the findings of his commission. Santander told him to come with him, for he, too, was going to find Bolívar and notify him that all was in readiness for the march.

When they got to the outskirts of the group of trees where Bolívar and his retinue had hung their hammocks, Santander pointed out Bolívar's white one to them. Immediately the Royalists fired on his hammock.16 Fortunately, Bolívar had left his hammock just a few minutes before to go mount his mule. He already had his foot in the stirrup when the mule, frightened by the shots, broke out running and left

15 Both Restrepo and Lecuna give Renovales' first name as Tomás. Restrepo states that he was a Captain of Dragoons in López's army, and Lecuna states that he was a native of Calabozo who was in the service of Spain. Lecuna, Crónica Razonada, II, 191. Restrepo, Revolución de la República de Colombia, II, 456.

16 Páez footnotes this as follows: "Bolívar himself told me what happened here. The shooting killed some of those who accompanied the Liberator."
him. Surprised by such close shots, Bolivar tried to save himself. In the darkness of the night, he could not find the camp site.

This event has been related with considerable inaccuracy by some Colombian historians. There have even been those who have recorded it in both a ridiculous and dishonorable manner for the Liberator. It should not be surprising that he could not find the camp, for even the best **llanero** who gets lost in the dark in those places finds himself in the same predicament as the navigator who, in the middle of the ocean, loses his compass on a stormy night. I have thought myself lost in the **llanos** during an entire night, only to discover at dawn that I had been at the foot of the same tree many times.

The confusion that resulted in the camp when Bolivar failed to appear was great. Everyone thought that he was either dead or held prisoner by our enemies. Consequently, when the Royalists attacked our camp at dawn, they encountered very little resistance, for panic still reigned. Some of our brave leaders died in this attack, while others were imprisoned and shot later by Morillo's orders. Our compensation was that Rafael López was killed here, and he had been the best cavalry leader that the Royalists had, as much for his courage as for his wisdom. He was a native of Pedraza, province of Barinas, and a member of one of its best-known families.

General Cedeño, although he slept far from the camp,
heard the combat fire and countermarched to find out what had happened. When he arrived at the camp, he did not find either friend nor foe. Still he realized that the patriots had suffered a disaster; so he went to Calabozo to search for Bolivar. In the meantime, the scattered forces of Rincón de los Toros found the Liberator and gave him López's horse, which Commandant Rondón had seized after the rider's death.17

I received news of the disaster. Since Bolivar did not send me a counter order, however, I continued my march toward San Carlos where La Torre was with three thousand men. When we got to this city, we encountered a party of hussars leaving it, and we mowed them down with our lances. To do this, we had to go up to the very plaza where the troops were quartered in two-story houses. They fired on us, and we were forced to retreat outside the city.

General La Torre left San Carlos then and took a position in the small San Juan hills. For five days I stayed

17Madariaga states that this horse was such a good one, that Bolívar thought that Colonel Rondón meant to trap him and deliver him to the enemy. Bolívar, 308. Commandant Rondón is Juan José Rondon. Born in Caracas in 1790, he served in the Royalist ranks until 1817 when he joined Bolívar and Páez. He fought so well under Páez in the Battle of Queseras del Medio when ordered to provoke the enemy with twenty of his lancers, that Páez himself shouted at him, "Bravo! Bravísimo Commandante!" To this Rondón replied, "This is the way that the sons of the Alto Llano fight." He also fought heroically in the Battle of Boyacá and the second Battle of Carabobo. In the Battle at Cerro de Valencia, he got wounded in the foot, contracted tetanus and died as a result on August 23, 1822 in the city of Valencia. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 541-42. Lecuna, Crónica Razonada, I, 510; II, 66, 280, 281; III, 234.
in the plains in front of him. Finally, suspecting that he was waiting for reinforcements, I thought it wise to retreat to the town of Cogedes and summon Ranjel who was in Cabudare, which was almost a suburb of Barquisimeto. Ranjel came, but he only had two hundred cavalrymen with him. He informed me that the rest of this column had deserted. Despite the fact that my forces were not strong, I decided to return to San Carlos and fight against whatever numbers might present themselves. The same day that I left Cogedes, in the site of Camoruco, I unexpectedly encountered the enemy. They were looking for me after having been reinforced by fifteen hundred men, mostly cavalrymen.

I was forced to countermarch, for since the terrain in those areas is hilly and very wooded, I did not even have a field in which to form my men. The enemy attempted to trample me with a battalion while I was retreating. However, at a turn in the road my Honor Guard, which I had left posted there, fell upon them. They killed some men and forced the enemy to abandon the road and separate to either side of it. Then I was able to continue an orderly retreat to the plain of Cogedes. Here I decided to wait for the Royalists. I formed my troops at the edge of the plain, with their backs to the town that was about half a mile away.

Although I saw that the enemy was very superior in forces, for they had close to a thousand men, I still did not lose hope of obtaining a victory that day. This shows what great confidence I had in the courage and daring of my troops.
I set my three hundred infantrymen in a two-line battle formation. I placed the cavalry guard under the command of Cornelio Muñoz to the right, and Iribarren and his squadron to the left. The rest of the cavalry, under Ranjel's command, formed the second line.

I communicated my plan of attack to General Anzoátegui who commanded the infantry, to the rest of the leaders, and to my chief of staff. This plan amounted to waiting for the enemy without firing a shot until they were very close. Then we were to open fire while both the Guard and Iribarren's squadron charged the enemy cavalry. After the latter was defeated, and I held this to be almost certain, we would execute a flanking movement while maintaining the formation we had. This would place us at the enemy's left flank and within rifle range. This move was intended to prevent the

---

General José Antonio Anzoátegui was born in Barcelona, Venezuela in 1789. When the republic was reestablished due to Bolívar's heroic efforts, he joined in the terrible campaign of 1813-1814. When Venezuela was subjugated anew by the Royalists, he went to New Granada with the remnants of Urdaneta's army. Under Bolívar's orders, he attended the unfortunate struggle with the Government of Cundinamarca. In 1815 he retired from military service and went into exile in the English colonies. In May, 1816 he presented himself to Bolívar with the daring project of invading Venezuela: so Anzoátegui was one of the three hundred officers who went to destroy Ferdinand's empire in Venezuela which was supported by more than 10,000 soldiers. He became Commandant General of the infantry and second in command in the Occidente army. At the Battle of Boyacá, the Liberator promoted him to division General. When he was marching to assume command of the army of the North, he died suddenly on November 15, 1819 in Pamplona. He was only thirty years old. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 21-23.
enemy, when they saw themselves forced to move and without
cavalry, from trampling us as they sought refuge in the
forest and town that were behind us. The plan appeared excel­
lent to all; however, Anzoátegui begged me three times not
to advance with the cavalry, for he felt that my presence
was needed in order to carry out the movement.

At this time, I confirmed the common saying that there
is no sane man on horseback. Forgetting my promise, I
advanced with the Guard and trampled almost all the enemy
cavalry and also broke an infantry battalion that was on
reserve. The havoc that my three hundred infantrymen wreaked
on the enemy was horrible. Even the Royalists themselves, in
letters that were later intercepted in New Granada telling
of that event, said that there were bullets that went
through three men. This is completely credible, for the
enemy advanced in closed column, and we opened fire only when
they were within pistol range. In that moment of both firing
and charging, that compact corps of men swayed as would a
tree that is bending under the woodcutter's ax.

In the heat of battle, I remembered what I had prom­
ised Anzoátegui, but it was too late then. I held my horses
back and saw that my men were fleeing scattered, without
knowing why. Immediately I ordered my cavalrymen to abandon
the rich booty they were gathering. With the first twenty­
five men that I assembled, I charged the enemy to see if I
could save my infantry. It was too late. They were fleecing.
The enemy also abandoned the camp. They left their wounded
with their weapons and went to seek refuge in the town surrounded by forests. I remained, then, master of the terrain with my Guard. Soldiers from the latter joined me little by little as they returned from pursuing the enemy. I stayed on that battlefield all night and until 8:00 a.m. the following morning. We had thirty-six dead. I collected all our rifles and those belonging to the enemy that were scattered throughout the camp. Then I distributed two hundred of these among the soldiers of my Guard; and forming files with the rest that we left abandoned, I started my retreat along the same road that my scattered men had taken.

In the village of Araure I found out that all of my men had united and had passed by there. I dispatched a picket to overtake them, and they found them in the site of Guamito. There they waited for me. When I joined them, I placed the leaders and officers, with the exception of Anzoátegui and the infantry officers, under arrest. I entrusted the custody of the prisoners to a squadron and continued my march toward the Apure, intending to try them there. However, yielding to General Anzoátegui's pleas, to whom they had manifested how disgraceful it would be for them to arrive at Apure in that manner, I freed them.

During our march, Ranjel asked my permission to go occupy the city of Nutrias which was a few leagues away to our side. I gave it to him and turned two hundred men over to him. He did occupy it in effect; but the Indian Reyes Vargas, who was in that vicinity, arrived there also with a
column of four hundred infantrymen. After a rough battle, Ranjel was defeated with very heavy losses. Thirteen of our chiefs and officers, all very courageous, were killed. One of them was the daring Colonel Cuesta.

Ranjel succeeded in assembling fifty of his cavalrymen in the site of Caiman, and so at midnight he turned again on the enemy that was camped outside the city. He slaughtered a great number of them, but finally he was repelled. He crossed the Apure River the following day, and sent me a communique telling me of the disaster from the town of Setenta. I ordered him to stay there, gather the scattered men who had left Nutrias, and augment his forces with men from the towns of Mantecal and Rincón Hondo.

I arrived at Achaguas. Accompanied by my Guard, I went on to San Fernando where the Supreme Chief was. After I had been there two or three days, General Cedeño arrived. He had been defeated by Morales in the Patos Lake and had lost all his infantry. Cedeño was extremely mortified by this disaster and attributed it to the little cooperation of the cavalry chiefs, particularly Colonel Aramendi. When these two met in the street they exchanged offensive words. Cedeño pulled out his sword to wound Aramendi, who was unarmed. The latter, in the manner of the llanos, knocked Cedeño on the ground. However, when Cedeño shouted and ordered his men to kill Aramendi, the latter started to run. Pursued by Colonel Fajardo and twenty-five lancers who were on foot, he came seeking refuge in my house. When he told
me about the case, I took him under my protection for the moment. Then I took him myself to the Principal as a prisoner. The Liberator, informed of this disagreeable event, appointed a council of war to try Aramendi. Yielding to my entreaties, though, he decided to take him with him to Angostura that day (May 24) so that he could be tried there. As they were about to embark, Aramendi escaped and remained hidden for some time until I took him in and offered him my personal guarantee.

I have related this event to show how much importance was attached to obedience in the army of Apure. In order to maintain it, even such a deserving officer as Colonel Aramendi was not given special consideration.

After Cedeño's defeat in the Los Patos Lake, Morales sent a column of his troops to Guayabal, a town three leagues away from San Fernando. Immediately I ordered the cavalry Guard to cross the river and attack them by surprise. The latter carried out my order successfully on the night of May 28, destroying the enemy and taking possession of the town again. This unexpected blow made Morales, who was in Calabozo, retreat toward Sombrero. He thought that we were turning on him again. Instead, I ordered our men to abandon Guayabal so that I could concentrate my forces, organize the army of Apure, and herd and pasture the horses because these were the elements that gave us superiority over the enemy.

Historian Restrepo's observation that Cedeño and I should have concentrated our forces in Apure seems very just
to me, for at this point it seemed that the campaign did not present advantages for those remnants of the army. I would have liked to have done this, but an order to do this would have had to come from the Supreme Chief and not from either one of us who, under his orders, were operating together.

When I accomplished the objective which I mentioned previously, I sent cavalry parties along different roads to accost the Royalists in the plains of Calabozo, San Carlos, and Barinas. The advantages achieved by these parties were great, for despite the swollen rivers and their consequent overflows across the plains, they were able to penetrate to the heart of enemy territory. Some of these parties, abusing the liberty given them to operate against the enemy at their discretion, committed excesses against peaceful citizens. This was particularly true of the ones that patrolled the province of Barinas and the llanos of San Carlos. Consequently, I was forced to order them to retire to Apure. Some who had obtained good profits from the vandal-like excursions repeated them without my knowledge. I found myself in the position then of proclaiming a general order that threatened

---

19 The Colombian historian states: "In Cojede, Páez allowed his brilliant courage to be wasted by engaging in a battle with the Royalist Army, which was double his in size and more than triple in infantry; the result was to be expected--defeat. Finally, Cedeño, who could have saved the last remnants of the Republican army by going to the Apure, sacrificed them in Los Patos, also engaging in a field battle. Restrepo, Revolución de la República de Colombia, II, 464-65."
with the death penalty those who went into enemy territory without my permission. In carrying out this order, I had to shoot four men—the famous Commandant Villasana, a very brave captain of the Guard called Garrido, a second lieutenant, and a sergeant. Thus I succeeded in ending hostile actions against the peaceful citizens that lived in enemy territory.

In August of the same year of 1818, the troops that guarded San Fernando proclaimed an act appointing me General-in-Chief. They succeeded in getting other army corps in other places to follow their example. I was at my headquarters at Achaguas at the time, unaware of what was happening, when this act came into my hands. It was signed by all the army corps with the exception of the garrison at Achaguas and my Honor Guard. I was very surprised. Fearing that this might be the first step toward some disorderly end, I embarked for San Fernando immediately since it was obvious from the acts that the idea had originated here. Upon my arrival, I summoned all the chiefs and officers and asked them what had prompted a resolution which I did not approve and which they had no authority to draw. They answered that they had done this in the belief that they had the proper authority. They asked me then to overlook their error, for it was only evidence of their good intentions. They had had no desire to create confusion or disavow the authority of the Liberator. The chiefs and officers of the other divisions excused themselves with similar reasons. Thus, contrary to
what had been feared, the existing order was not disturbed in the slightest.

When I was informed that the English Colonel Wilson had taken a very active part in drawing up this resolution, I ordered him to leave for Angostura. I wanted him to present himself to General Bolivar so that he could order him to another post. The Liberator, who embarked in San Fernando for Guayana on May 24, was in Angostura. He did not return to Apure until the beginning of the year 1819.

Had a real revolution against Bolivar occurred in Apure, would not Bolivar have stopped sending me resources of all kinds for the troops under my command from the time he arrived in Guayana? This fact alone is more than sufficient

---

Páez is referring here to Colonel Henry Wilson, who was authorized to raise the Second Venezuelan Hussars (Red Hussars). When Wilson was ordered to take Colonel Robert Skeene's place as Lieutenant-Colonel of the First Hussars and let Skeene, who had been promoted to Colonel, command the Second Venezuelan Hussars, he refused to accept this arrangement and decided to make himself responsible for the equipment of a regiment of his own. This is a prelude to his later action when he "tried to tamper with the loyalty of General Páez, suggesting that he shake off his allegiance to his superior officer and declare himself commander-in-chief... arranged a grand review at which he led the right of the line, parading his Englishmen in their gaudy new uniforms. After the review a proclamation was read and signed, declaring Páez captain-General of the army." Though Páez seemingly gave his consent to this act of disloyalty, he sent Wilson to Angostura with letters of recommendation to Bolivar. Wilson was immediately thrown into prison on his arrival there. He demanded a trial, but there were not enough British field officers to compose a court; so he was dismissed from the army and allowed to escape from the fortress at Old Guayana where he was confined. When he left Venezuela, Wilson did all that he could to injure the cause he had so recently defended. Hasbrouck, *Foreign Legionaries*, 47, 49, 58, 70, 72, 76-78, 371, 382.
to refute the falsity with which Larrazabal comes out in his work when he deals with this event.  

No less unjust, Baralt [and Diaz] directs his [their] attack against the army of Apure, believing it to have been in revolt against Bolivar's authority. To prove this he [they] states that the dissenting Apureños wanted to halt General Santander's march in Cariben, and that the latter was fortunate enough to get to the destined place only because his enemies were late in arriving at the ambush site. In order for everyone to give it its proper importance, I shall now relate the event to which Señores Baralt [and Diaz] allude exactly as it happened.

General Santander prepared to leave and carry out the mission that Bolívar had assigned to him. He wrote a letter to Colonel Pedro Fortul, who was in Guasdualito, telling him about the task that had been conferred on him and the resources that he carried to organize an army in Casanare.

---


22 Almost these exact words can be found in Baralt and Diaz, *Roadmen de la Historia*, I, 427-28.

23 Pedro Fortul or Fortoul was born in Cúcuta in May of 1789. He joined the patriot ranks in 1810 as a Lieutenant and by 1829 was a Division General. He served on the Staff of Operations in the North; Commandant of the militia Corps of Cúcuta; second chief of the second cavalry line of Apure; second chief of the vanguard of the army of operations on New Granada; first chief of operations in the North (1819); and Commandant in Chief of the army of operations situated in Cúcuta (1822-24). He governed as Intendant and Commandant General of the Department of Boyacá for five years. Until 1820, he received no compensation of any sort for his
He invited him and the other citizens of Granada, who were in Apure, to come join him. Among other things, the letter said: "It is necessary for all of us Granadinos to unite in Casanare in order to free our country, and to knock down the pride of those malign, lazy Venezuelans." 24

I do not recall how this letter came into Colonel Miguel Antonio Vásquez's hands. But he gave me the letter immediately. I was much alarmed by the words which I have just cited; consequently, I sent the letter to Bolivar. At the same time I ordered the then-Captain Laurencio Silva to go with a cavalry party to the mouth of the Meta and detain Santander. I wrote the latter and told him that some unfavorable news I had received from Casanare demanded that he halt until the matter was cleared up. Silva got to where Santander was and gave him the letter. Santander halted, but he wrote asking that I grant him permission to go on, for even though the Royalists had made incursions in Casanare, he was sure it could not have been more than as a simple efforts. Since the Spaniards completely destroyed all his property and holdings, he was consequently destitute. He died in Cúcuta on January 5, 1837, still sick in his soul as a result of the poverty and misery to which he had subjected his beloved family in fighting for his country. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 160-61.

24 This incident is mentioned in the Archivo Santander, 24 vols. (Bogotá, 1913-32), I-II, 357-58. A copy of the letter is not included. This letter is not included either in Vicente Lecuna (ed.), Cartas de Santander, 3 vols. (Caracas, 1942).
threat since they had retreated immediately. The Liberator wrote me, too, and told me that informed of the contents of the letter, he authorized me to operate as I believed most prudent. Then I decided to let Santander go on.

From what I have just said, it is easily understood that I never disregarded the authority of the Supreme Chief. I informed him of everything that came to my attention and always waited for his decision. It can also be seen that the step that I took here was not an ambush spread out for Santander, but a precautionary measure that I saw myself forced to adopt while Bolivar resolved this grave matter.

No one will think any the less of me for insisting on defending the army that I had the honor to command as many times as I might think it necessary, nor for insisting on proving that Colombia owes the triumph of its independence in great measure to that army. In effect, the troops of Casanare, composed of Granadines and Venezuelans, that conquered the obstinacy of the Apureños in Palmarito, Mata de la Miel, Mantecal, and Yagual, and that later joined these in the action of Mucuritas, undoubtedly saved the patriot cause. What would have become of the patriots if the enemy had taken possession of the valuable resources of the Apure and marched against the forces that occupied some points of the province of Guayana and operated in other places? Did their leaders have sufficient resources to resist the veteran expeditionary troops had the latter had the devotion of the inhabitants of the llanos and possessed all the elements that
these offer an army on campaign? Why would Morillo insist on concentrating all his attention, coming three times with all his forces, against the defenders of Apure? If I had not exerted myself so much in 1819 to keep from compromising the army I commanded in a field battle in order not to lose the infantry which was greatly inferior in numbers and in discipline to that of the enemy, what army would the patriots have used to go liberate New Granada?

It is not an exaggeration, then, to assert that the future of Colombia was being decided in Apure. If any of the battles already cited had been lost, it is very doubtful that the cause of independence would have triumphed.

Señor Restrepo, speaking of the guerilla chieftains that operated in different places in Venezuela, states that they operated as great lords of feudal times, with complete independence; and that it was slowly and with strong repugnance, particularly in the case of this writer, that they subjected themselves to the authority of the Supreme Chief. This historian forgets that there was no central government at that time. Necessity forced us, the military chiefs, to exercise an independent authority until Bolivar returned from abroad and asked us to acknowledge his authority as Supreme Chief.

Finally, in order to prove that order and subordination to authority were my principles, whether operating independently or under the orders of a chief, I will copy completely what the Liberator said at the Congress of
Angostura. This can be seen in Volume One, page 195 in the

Documentos de la Vida Pública del Libertador: 25

General Páez, who has saved the relics of New Granada, has the provinces of Barinas and Casanare under the protection of the arms of the Republic. Both provinces have political and civil governors, and such organizations as circumstances will permit. Order, subordination, and good discipline reign in all parts there, and it does not even seem as if war agitates these beautiful provinces. They have recognized and given their oath of fidelity to the supreme authority, and their magistrates deserve the confidence of the government.

25 The correct title of this work is Colección de Documentos Relativos a la Vida Pública del Libertador de Colombia y del Perú, Simón Bolívar, para servir a la historia de la independencia Suramericana. 21 vols. (Caracas, 1826–1829). The rest of Páez’s citation is correct.
1819

Early in January of this year, the Liberator returned to San Juan de Payara. However, he had to return to Angostura immediately in order to attend the opening of the Congress that was going to assemble there. He left me in command of the army and with the power to operate at my discretion in defending the Apure territory—an area which Morillo was threatening to invade with a strong army that had been organized for over two months at the site of Chorreron, two days' troop-travel time from San Fernando.

I had set up my headquarters in this location [San Fernando] shortly after Bolivar's departure, when Morillo

---

1Páez inserts the following footnote here: "He asked me at this time whether I feared that the events I have previously mentioned might not have bad results. I answered in the negative, for the authors of the plan had been recalled. Convinced that it was not in their power to take that step, they had begged me to forget what had occurred. Then Bolivar was at peace."
appeared before that plaza with five thousand infantrymen and two thousand cavalrymen. All I had at my command then were four thousand men, including both infantrymen (recruits) and cavalrymen. Since this army of the Apure was the strongest one that the Venezuelan patriots had, I did not deem it prudent to expose it to forces that were superior not only in numbers, but in quality also. For this reason I decided to adopt another type of warfare—a war of movement, marches, and countermarches. I hoped in this manner to lead the enemy to the deserts of Cariben.

Having made this decision, I called a meeting of all the citizens of San Fernando. I told them of my decision to abandon the town and let the enemy cross the Apure and Arauca rivers without any opposition in order to lure them to the aforementioned-deserts. Those brave citizens accepted my decision unanimously and proposed that we reduce the city to ashes in order to prevent the enemy from using it as a very important military base of operations. They told me at this time also that they were all ready to set fire to their homes with their own hands when the need arose and then take arms and join the liberating army. This sublime resolution was carried out when the Royalist army appeared on the left bank of the river. Oh! Those were the times when there was a true love of liberty!

When Morillo saw the fires, he could do no less than confess the impossibility of subjecting peoples of such
calibre. This action on the part of the citizens of San Fernando reveals once again that "the citizen who is interested in promoting the triumph of the cause for which the soldier is fighting, will not hesitate to make any sacrifice."^3

It occurs to me now to relate an interesting incident that occurred during this campaign. The Royalist army crossed the Apure River without opposition, and we retreated to the other side of the Arauca. When Morillo had his army ready the following day to march in search of us, I ordered four savage horses brought to the edge of his camp, approximately within rifle range. Since it was 10:00 p.m., I ordered my men to bind the horses' tails with rawhide or thongs and release them in the direction of the enemy camp while they simultaneously fired some shots. The horses bolted out furiously through the camp, and the Spaniards believed that a tremendous cavalry charge was upon them. Several corps started firing, and disorder spread throughout. Our horses wreaked greater havoc in their impetuous flight than did the two thousand oxen that Hannibal launched on the Roman camp. The Spaniards were not able to march the next day. In fact, they lost two or three days reorganizing.

^2Torrente in his account of this event does not note any such thought on Morillo's part. Rather, he mentions the exceptional bravery with which Morillo personally led his men in the attack of the burning city. Torrente, Historia de la Revolución, II, 516-17.

^3This is Páez's quotation.
their forces.

After this brief interval, Morillo continued to search for us. He encountered us at the Caujaral pass on the Arauca River. We had decided to resist his attack here, where we were entrenched with some artillery pieces. We exchanged uninterrupted fire for two days. Finally, the Spanish chief realized that he could not force our position, and so he headed toward the Marrereño pass. He arrived there at dawn on February 4. I had situated Commandant Fernando Figueredo with a squadron of riflemen here, approximately three or four leagues from my headquarters. Figueredo was attacked vigorously with artillery and infantry. Although he resisted with admirable daring, he was not able to prevent the Royalists from crossing further down the river, a half-mile from the Marrereño pass, in six canoes which they had brought from San Fernando. When I learned from Figueredo that he was being attacked by the entire enemy army, I started marching with six hundred lancers to reinforce him. However, when I arrived, more than one thousand enemy infantrymen had already crossed the river.

At this point, when we had the enemy in a position where the river served as rearguard, I started to carry out my plan. I placed my infantry on Urbana Island, situated in the Orinoco River. The rest of the cavalry, the remounts, and the emigration from the neighboring towns, I located safely. Then I left with eight hundred men to search for the enemy. I encountered General [Francisco Tomás] Morales with
three thousand men coming toward the farm at Cañafistola. Realizing that this was not the entire enemy army, I attacked it. However, Morales, favored by the forest on the shore of the Arauca, started a retreat toward Caujaral which was about half-league's distance from Morillo and the rest of the army. Our attack now cost Morales dearly, for he lost the squadron that had been assigned to him for the purpose of getting cattle. He sent four of his men to tell Morillo of his predicament. The latter came to his aid with the rest of the army. Now I organized my eight hundred men into four parallel columns forming a square and started a retreat. However, this was only after issuing orders that if the enemy cavalry charged us, as I expected judging from the fact that they outnumbered us two to one, the two rear columns were to move forward, pass between the front two, and then flank out to the right and to the left. The remaining columns were to follow suit and engage the unsuspecting enemy forces face-to-face.

Morillo pursued us from 8:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m.,

---

4Páez refers here to Francisco Tomás Morales who had been sent by General Morillo to Venezuela in 1816 to organize a Royalist force. Morillo gave Morales only a company of foot soldiers and a group of officers. With these and Boves' old warriors, Morales was to form two battalions of 1,200 troops each--the Tercero del Rey and los Cazadores del Rey. According to Morillo, his name and influence in Venezuela were tremendous. It is true that Morales' arrival in Valencia frustrated Bolívar's attempt to disembark in Ocumare. Later he operated against Páez in the Apure campaign. Lecuna, Crónica Razonada, I, 414; II, 264.
almost always at rifle-range distance. Even though his cavalry was numerically superior to ours, he never saw fit to engage it. We had only a light skirmish which was provoked when Commandant Narciso López and a squadron of riflemen approached to fire from the rear.\(^5\) I ordered twenty-five men to charge him suddenly. This caught López so by surprise, that he ordered his riflemen to dismount, even though their rifles did not have bayonets. He was saved only because our men did not carry out my orders to charge as a platoon.

Morillo spent that night in Congrial de Cunabiche, very close to the entrance of the Cariben desert. He did not press forward, revealing his tactical experience. He had been warned that he would not find any resources and in the event of a compulsory retreat, he would also have to combat the traps I planned to set at his rear flank.\(^6\) On the following night, he countermarched, recrossed the Arauca,

---

\(^5\)Torrente refers to this as the campaign of the *trapiche de la Gamarra*. Noting a Royalist "victory," he lauds the heroism of the "coronel americano don Narciso López." Torroente, *Historia de la Revolución*, II, 519.

Narciso López was a Spanish squadron chief and Morales' subalternate. At one time he was charged with watching the coast of Chuao preventing Bolívar's possible disembarking. He assisted actively and capably in Morillo's Apure campaign. Lecuna, *Crónica Razonada*, I, 464, 473; II, 261-76, 280, 422.

This Narciso López is not to be confused with the Cuban filibusterer who operated in the 1850's. Further information on the Cuban López will be provided in Chapter XX, footnote 7, of this manuscript.

\(^6\)The Royalist historian agrees with Páez's evaluation on this point. Torroente, *Historia de la Revolución*, II, 520.
and established his headquarters in the city of Achaguas. I pressed his retreat with my eight hundred men, and my guerrillas molested his front, flanks, and rear guard constantly. We took prisoners daily. Above all, we were successful in preventing the enemy from getting cattle easily for food rations.

One of the guerrilla groups composed of thirty men of the Guard, under the command of the untiring Aramendi, vigorously attacked the enemy cavalry as it crossed the Arauca River along the Caujaral pass. Despite the feats of marvel Aramendi performed during his successive charges, he was repelled. He lost twelve men, counting the dead and captured. Our enemy lost some men, too. Among them was Commandant Antonio Ramos who was wounded by a young soldier of the Guard called Juan Torralba. Torralba, who was being pursued by Ramos, had leaped off his horse, run him through with his lance, and taken the Spanish leader's horse. Meanwhile Commandant Juan Gómez, who had been ordered to operate between the towns of San Fernando and Guasimal, succeeded in

7Captain Juan Torralba or Torrealba joined the patriot army in 1813. When Boves subjugated the area to Spanish rule again in 1814, he emigrated with Urdaneta to New Granada. In 1816 he joined the guerrillas in Casanare and went on to Apure where he fought with Páez until 1821. Bolívar promoted him to cavalry captain in 1820, back-dating the commission to 1819. He was Adjutant Major in Colonel Ranjel's Regiment of "Valientes." Torrealba served as Military Commissioner of Barinas and in 1823 became Tobacco Administrator in Barquisimeto. He sided with Páez and not Bolívar in the break-up of Gran Colombia. He died in Barquisimeto in 1854. Dávila, Diccionario Biográfico, II, 312-13.
destroying the squadron led by the Royalist Commandant Paloma near Guasimal as he collected foodstuffs to supply the plaza of San Fernando. 8

Such was the state of the campaign when Bolívar arrived at my headquarters in Caujaral de Cunabiche at the end of March determined to seek out and attack the Royalists. Having assumed command of the infantry that was in Urbana and the rest of the cavalry, he asked me for information concerning the numbers of the enemy army. I assured him that they mounted up to six thousand men. 9 This was the reason I had not engaged all my forces in general combat. Instead I was keeping the enemy busy far away from Caracas in order to give Urdaneta time to occupy that city with the fifteen hundred men that Bolívar had placed at his disposal on the island of Margarita. If Morillo marched against them, it was

---

8 There were many men by the name of Juan Gómez in the wars for Venezuelan independence. Páez does not give enough information to identify this one. There was no further information available on the Royalist Commandant Paloma.

9 Páez inserts the following footnote here: "The Liberator did not want to believe that the enemy had such strength. However, the European prisoners he had called before him gave him the same numbers that I had. He still refused to believe it. Asking them the number of battalions they had, he counted the troops which composed these, and thus ascertained that the enemy could not possibly have more than three thousand men. Later, when Bolívar had an interview with Morillo, the latter confessed to him that during this time he had seven thousand men." Lecuna cites that on January 30 of 1819, Morillo reviewed his troops of six thousand two hundred men. Crónica Razonada, II, 260.
my intent then to pursue him with all the army.

Bolívar approved this plan, but he remarked that perhaps we were too far from Morillo to overtake him when he marched on Urdaneta. We informed him then that if we got any closer with the entire army, the Spanish General could force us into battle. Although he agreed with my observations, he felt it was necessary for the army to cross the Arauca in order to expedite the pursuit of Morillo. We crossed at San Juan de Payara and then decided to march to Achaguas to attack Morillo.

Five leagues from Achaguas, we encountered Valencey's second battalion commanded by [José] Pereira and two hundred cavalrymen led by Narciso López at the Gamarra sugar mill, which was completely surrounded by forests. Bolívar ordered four battalions to attack and dispatched them in less than fifteen minutes. The enemy, finding out through some prisoners that we still had a battalion and two thousand cavalrymen in reserve, retreated toward Achaguas. Bolívar then busied himself reuniting the scattered men, and later countermarched toward the Arauca bank.

The following day, when he learned that Morillo was going to attack us, Bolívar called me and asked my advice concerning the strategy to adopt. I was somewhat offended, for he had not heeded my previous observations. I simply

10Commandant José Pereira was the Royalist Commandant of the Pardos de Valencia. Lecuna, Crónica Razonada, II, 181.
told him that I was ready to follow him in whatever plan he might adopt, regardless of whether it had my approval. He was not satisfied with this; and as if to force me to give my opinion, he convoked all the chiefs in a war council. General [Carlos] Soublette stated that Bolívar had called the meeting with but one object in mind—to hear my opinion. It now seemed foolhardy to me to withhold my advice any longer. I repeated then what I had told Bolívar previously. I added that we should do everything possible not to expose Guayana, for this was our only source of securing supplies from abroad; that we should try to conserve the infantry, for then Morillo could not march on this port as I was certain he wanted to do; and that above all, we should try to maintain the army intact for at least a year in order to inspire confidence in the patriots.

---

11 General Soublette was born Carlos Soublette in Caracas. He joined the independence army in 1810 and became General Miranda's Secretary and Aide in 1811. After the disaster of the Battle of La Puerta, he became Major General of the Palacios Division. Then he became second in command of Mac Gregor’s army. He took part in the Junta de Angostura and helped to organize the government of the Republic. Soublette then took an army that had been victorious in such battles as Vargas and Boyacá to join Páez in the Apure region. He assisted in taking Caracas in 1821. As Vice-President of Venezuela, he activated the campaign of Coro, which he lost to Morales in 1822. This same year he served as civil and military chief of Venezuela. In 1826 he was Secretary of War and Navy in Bogotá. When the separation came between Venezuela and Colombia in the Juntas of Caracas in November of 1829, Soublette followed Páez as his Secretary General. Later, he was Páez's Secretary of War and Navy. The people of Venezuela elected him to the Presidency in 1837. He died in Caracas on February 11, 1870. Scarpetta and Vergara, *Diccionario Biográfico*, pp. 201-202.
After the conference, Bolivar, following the advice proffered at the meeting, ordered us to cross the Arauca River to avoid an encounter with the enemy. The following day, Morillo arrived on the left bank of this river. He made camp in Mata del Herradera, a mile further down from where we were. At 3:00 p.m. on that very day a cavalry officer called Vicente Camero crossed over to us and, before presenting himself to the Supreme Chief, informed me that Morillo was planning to make me a prisoner. Morillo's strategy would be to attack me with his army as I harassed them as usual, separate me from my army, and then send two hundred select cavalrymen on his best horses to pursue and imprison me.

At this point, I feel obliged to relate an event that occurred when the army began to cross the Arauca, for this helps to explain the hatred the Spanish chief had for me. I had left that morning very early with about nineteen companions to take the offensive. The enemy had barely seen us when Morillo hurled all his cavalry against me. I divided my men into small sections. I ordered Aramendi, who was in charge of one of them, to fire, advance, and retreat, without pursuing his harassment. I supported him at the same time with the rest of the men. In one of those attacks and retreats, Aramendi and Commandant Mina found themselves in serious trouble, for they had penetrated too far into the enemy lines. Had I not hurried to help them personally, they would have been completely surrounded. It was then that the
Royalists suspended the attack, having lost some cavalry. Our only loss was a wounded horse. One can easily understand now why the Spanish General could not forgive this loss of face, and why he would be anxious to make me pay for it with interest. I would not be a bad captive for him.

After I heard the officer's account, I ran to see Bolivar and related Morillo's plan to him. I told him that if he permitted me to cross the river with a small number of my men, I would attract the Royalist forces so that they would come right in front of where we were. We could set an ambush on the river bank, using the companies of infantrymen and cavalry with all their artillery, and deal the Spaniards a hard blow. I could charge head-on at the same time that the ambushed forces attacked the enemy's flank. Bolivar acceded to my wishes, and I crossed the river immediately with one hundred and fifty men. At a gallop we headed toward Morillo's camp. The latter moved to execute his plan. We kept him busy with frequent charges and retreats until we led his forces right in front of the spot we had selected for the ambush. Immediately, the cavalry division posted there opened fire against the Royalists; however, this division was not as strong as I had agreed with Bolivar that it should be.12 Our situation was very difficult then, for the enemy

12Lecuna terms this an unjust recrimination of Bolivar by Páez. He states that the official bulletin dictated by Bolívar on that day reveals that the battle took place beyond where Bolívar's infantry was situated. Furthermore, he
was corralling us on both sides with cavalry and was pursuing us relentlessly with rifle and cannon fire. Fortunately at this point the valiant Royalist Commandant Don Narciso López inadvertently gave me the opportunity to take an advantageous offensive. This occurred when López preceded the infantry with his squadron of riflemen. I immediately ordered Commandant Rondón, one of those leaders in whom valor is a custom, and twenty men to charge at open lance and retreat post haste before the two divisions of the enemy cavalry fenced them in. After that, I wanted them to unite, return, and attack the enemy vigorously. Rondón charged with the speed of lightning, and López imprudently dismounted with his riflemen. Rondón killed some of López's men and was able to effect his retreat without being hemmed in. Then seeing that the two enemy cavalry sections had united, and the objective of Rondón's attack fulfilled, I ordered my men to wheel around and attack with the spirit and courage they used in their most desperate moment.

It was now that the lance, arm of the heroes of antiquity, in the hands of my one hundred and fifty men, wreaked no less havoc than it did during Homer's times. It has become part of historical legend how three hundred Spartans, arms in hand and at the mouth of a narrow passage, states that Páez recrossed the Arauca at the mouth of Cancero and returned to camp the next day at seven in the morning, ample proof of the fact that the fighting had taken place far from the camp. Crónica Razonada, II, 281-82.
resisted until death the assaults of the armies of the King of Persia—armies so numerous that their arrows clouded the sun. It has also been related that one sole Roman disputed the passage of a bridge to an entire enemy army. Is not the action now executed by the one hundred and fifty patriots of Apure comparable to these feats? Homer's heroes and the companions of Leonidas had but to deal with the personal valor of their adversaries. The Apureños, on the other hand, with their bare arms, had to also battle that enemy element that Cervantes called a "diabolic invention, with which an infamous and cowardly arm, that perhaps trembles as the machinery goes into operation, cuts down and terminates in a moment the thoughts of life of someone who deserved to enjoy them many years."

As I saw Randón gather so many laurels on the field of battle, I could do no less than exclaim: "Bravo, Bravísimo, Commandante." "General," he answered and alluded to my reprimand after the charge made on López a few days earlier, "General, thus fight the sons of the Alto Llano."

Everything contributed to giving that battle a quality of terrible sublimity. The night approached accompanied by its shadows. The dust raised by the horses of both sets of combatants mingled with the powder smoke. It all recalled the sublime exasperation of the impetuous Ajax when he begged the Gods to scatter the clouds so that he could fight the Greeks by the clear light of the sun.

The enemy cavalry fled. The infantry saved itself by
taking refuge in the forest. The artillery left its pieces on the field. However, we could not see the latter because of the darkness of night. Finally, long before dawn, Morillo started a retreat toward Achaguas.

Bolivar and the rest of the army chiefs had witnessed the fray from across the river. Later he confessed to me that he had not been able to sleep that night for fear that I might have been killed. Yet on that very morning of April 3, a few hours before Camero had come to me, Bolivar, with his characteristic impetuousness, had been most impatient with the army's state of inactivity and had wanted very much to enter into action.

"Patience, General," I said to him. "Behind a hill there is a plain. He who knows how to await the good he desires, does not take the road of losing patience the minute it does not arrive."

"Patience! Patience!" he answered me. "Many times there is as much laziness as weakness in allowing oneself to be directed by patience. How much of this virtue do we need to resist the bitter privations that we suffer—the sun blazing like fire itself; the wind, dust, and carbon; the meat from a thin bull, eaten without bread or salt; and as a complement, dirty water. If I do not desert, it is because I do not know where to go."

These temper fits on Bolivar's part were not brought on because his spirit failed him in adversity. Rather, they were only the result of the natural impatience possessed by
LAS QUESERAS DEL MEDIO
CROQUI SEGÚN DATOS DEL
AGRONÓMOS SEÑOR
PEDRO VICENTE BOLÍVAR

ESCALA

Nota - El Cato Vuelo y O Cato
Medanos de emigración

Médano Grande
Medanos de la Emigración

Río Atacazo
Cerro Charitas
Río Apurito

Sabinas Camacheras
Rosita
Paso Arcoízquera

Casa Murcielago
Mata del Murcielago

Queseras del Medio
Ejército de Morillo

Vuelvan Caras
Retirada de Paz

Río Atacazo

Brazo Canoero
Puente de los Caminos
Casas Apurito
Potrerillos
Marronos
men of impetuous character who wish to gather the fruits of their vigilance and fatigues as soon as possible. When we joined Bolivar after the battle, he gave the Cross of Liberators to the one hundred and fifty warriors and issued the following proclamation.

To the Brave Men of the Army of Apure

"Soldiers! You have just executed the most extraordinary feat that the military history of nations can celebrate. One hundred and fifty men, or rather one hundred and fifty heroes, guided by the dauntless General Paez, deliberately attacked Morillo's entire Spanish army head on. Artillery, infantry, cavalry, nothing has been too much for the enemy to use to defend itself from the one hundred and fifty companions of the very intrepid Paez. The cavalry columns have succumbed to the blow of our lances; the infantry has searched for an asylum in the forest; the fire of their cannons has stopped before our horses. Only the shadows could have saved that army of vile tyrants from complete and absolute destruction.

"Soldiers! What has been done is only a prelude to what you can do. Prepare yourselves for battle and rely on the victory that you carry implicit on the points of your lances and of your bayonets."
"Headquarters in the Potreritos Marrereños, April 3, 1819.

Bolívar."  

This battle took place at Queseras del Medio. Morillo in his account calls it the Herradera. The Royalist historian, Torrente, to make the defeat appear less shameful, states that ours were five hundred *llaneros* of gigantic stature and herculean musculature. Bolívar had the enemy's dead counted, and the number came close to five hundred. We had only two fatalities, Isidoro Mugica and first corporal Manuel Martínez. Our wounded included among others, Lieutenant Colonel Manuel Arraiz, and Captains Francisco Antonio Salazar and Juan Santiago Torres. The width of these men's

---

13 This proclamation can also be found in Lecuna (ed.), *Proclamas y Discursos*, 237.

14 Torrente's exact quotation is as follows: "El faccioso Páez perdió una gran parte de su célebre guardia de honor, compuesta de 500 feroces llaneros de los más aguerridos y diestros en el manejo del caballo; los realistas quedaron sorprendidos al examinar el campo de batalla, cubierto de cadáveres de figura gigantesca, y de hercules musculatura. Tales fueron las tropas vencidas en dicha Batalla." *Historia de la Revolución*, II, 519.

15 No biographical data can be found on Captains Salazar and Torres. Lieutenant Colonel Manuel Arraiz was a native of Venezuela. His military career in these wars of independence is intimately linked with Páez's military campaigns. He fought in Mata de la Miel, Mucuritas, Calabozo, Misión de Abajo, Semen, and Ortiz among other battles. His biographers list him as having been wounded on June 22, 1819 at the Battle of la Cruz rather than at Queseras del Medio. Scarpetta and Vergara, *Diccionario Biográfico*, p. 31.
wounds and the fact that they were on the men's backs, revealed to us that they had been wounded by our own men in the confusion and darkness of the battle.
CHAPTER XII


1819-1820

When Morillo marched toward Achaguas, Bolivar immediately recrossed the Arauca and ordered Colonel Muñoz and the Guard to follow him. The following day while we were marching westward on the left bank of the Arauca, we saw some distance from us, close to the Trujillo farm, a group of either people or animals on the plains. We could not distinguish beyond this because of the morning fog. Bolivar ordered a halt and sent me out to reconnoitre. I discovered an enemy squadron corralling cattle for the army stationed in the aforementioned farm. As I approached, the squadron retreated to rejoin the rest of the army. Discovering this, I hurried back to tell Bolivar. He resolved to fall back to the bank of the river.
and recross it again to avoid an encounter, for he thought it would be too risky. Since the Guard was away pursuing Morillo, and the rest of the cavalry under Ranjel and other leaders had gone to take Nutrias and operate behind Morillo, we did not have sufficient forces to oppose the enemy.

At the same time Morillo raised camp and continued retreating toward Achaguas. In so doing he escaped the surprise ambush that the Guard had set the previous night in a mata next to the camp while the Royalist were eating.¹ Muñoz, the leader of the Guard, notified the rest of us of Morillo's movement and said that he would continue pursuing the latter. However, his communique arrived after we had recrossed the river and missed the favorable opportunity to finish off the Spanish army. Already demoralized by the last defeat in Queseras del Medio, this army would not have been able to resist us if we, assisted by the Guard, had attacked then: so we continued our march toward the West along the right bank of the Arauca to the "Caraballero" farm where we again forded the river. From there Bolívar went to Rincon Hondo. The Guard and I continued marching toward Achaguas. My advance guards notified me then that Morillo had ordered a cavalry section and some infantry to herd cattle. I ordered a part of the Guard to attack them immediately. They encountered the Royalists in a place called "Sacra Familia"

¹Páez footnotes this as follows: "A mata is a portion of terrain populated with trees of only one specie."
where they forced them to abandon the animals they had already corralled. After a few losses the Royalists, aided by the thickets that covered the area, returned to Achaguas.

After the Guard rejoined us, we continued the march toward Achaguas. I had to interrupt this march, however, when I learned that Morillo was abandoning this city and heading toward the province of Barinas with his headquarters and part of the army, and that the rest of the forces under Morales's command were heading in the direction of San Fernando. I decided then to overtake Morales; but I was unable to do this despite all my efforts.

About 7:00 p.m. that day we captured a man from the Canary Isles who had stayed behind with some supplies. He informed me that the Royalist army was camped in that vicinity. Since that terrain was too wooded, I did not want to attack Morales there. Flanking his forces, I decided to set an ambush at the spring at Caramacate and attack him by surprise the next day as he passed.

We marched all night and arrived at this place. By dawn I had begun to carry out my plan. I set my men in an ambush. A little ahead of the spring, I placed a company of riflemen with orders to fire as if wanting to dispute the enemy's passage. At this moment the men were to come suddenly out of ambush and try to cut the enemy in the center. With this stratagem I hoped to destroy a part of the Royalist army. I knew that a lack of infantry and the wooded terrain would keep me from destroying it completely.
The enemy approached and would have surely fallen into our trap had not one of those errors which are so fatal in wars, occurred about a mile from us to frustrate our wise plans. The advance guard that led our munitions had stayed a little behind, and it was attacked by a squadron of our cavalry under the command of Captain N. Sandoval who was looking over the area of the San Fernando plaza. He and the Guard both believed they had stumbled on part of the enemy army and fired on each other within sight of the enemy. The latter stopped to find out what was happening.

When I heard the shooting and was told that the advance guard had been taken prisoner, it did not seem prudent to remain in ambush any longer. When I came out and saw the enemy nearby, I realized the fatal mistake which had victimized us. Because of this the Royalist army was able to continue its march with impunity. Still and all, it always bordered the forest until entering the plaza a league away.

Meanwhile I marched toward Achaguas where Bolivar arrived after ordering his infantry to Mantecal. From Achaguas we left together and headed toward Barinas. When the army was united in the farm of Cañafistola, next to the Setenta Pass where we were going to cross the Apure River, Bolivar ordered a halt. He commanded me to go to Guasdualito to arrest Colonel Nonato Pérez and to take charge of his forces, including over five hundred horses that he had pastured there.

The night before my departure I had a conference with
Colonel Ranjel, and I told him that I did not approve of Bolivar's march to Barinas because we would not find resources there for an army which was already suffering scarcities of all kinds. Instead of going to Barinas, where Bolivar said that we would at least get tobacco to sell in Guayana and thus get some money, I thought that greater advantages could be gained if Bolivar directed his march to New Granada through Casanare. The plan seemed very good to Ranjel, and he begged me not to leave without telling the Supreme Chief about it. Even though I offered to do this, I did not, for I was still most reluctant to give Bolivar my opinion on plans and operations.

While I was in route to Guasdualito, Colonel Jacinto Lara arrived. He had been sent by General Santander to

2General Jacinto Lara was born in Carora in 1780. He joined the revolutionary forces in 1810 and participated actively in Miranda's campaign. When Venezuela was reconquered by Spain in 1812, he joined Nicolas Briceño and together they went to Bolivar in Cúcuta and there with one hundred and forty-three cavalry formed the nucleus of a Venezuelan fighting force. They were defeated by the Spanish General Tizcar in Barinas in 1813. He escaped this attack miraculously and rejoined Briceño and General Marino. Later he fought with Páez in the Battles of Los Cocos, San Fernando, and Mata de la Miel. He accompanied Santander in the Casanare campaign on New Granada. In 1820 he took Santa Marta. Bolivar added him to his army, took him to the Battle of Bombona, and then joined him to General Valdés who headed the first auxiliary Colombian Division to Perú. In 1824 he lost the Battle of Matara. Then he joined Sucre and commanded the reserve battalions in the Battle of Ayacucho. With Sucre he entered La Paz in 1825. Although he was exiled from Perú in 1827 by Colonel Bustamente, he returned to serve it ably. Decorated with the Order of Liberator and medals of Liberators of Venezuela, Boyacá, Junín, and Ayacucho, he died in Barquisimeto in 1859. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 251-53.
inform the Liberator of the favorable results of his operations in Casanare and of the enthusiasm of the Granadines for the Independence Cause. A junta was convoked over which Bolivar presided. Its members were Anzoátegui, Pedro León Torres, Soublette, Ranjel, Iribarren, Pedro Briceño Méndez, Ambrosio Plaza, and Manrique. They unanimously approved

3General Pedro León Torres was born in Carora in 1790. He joined the independence army in 1810 as a sublieutenant. General Monteverde imprisoned him in 1813, but he escaped and sought out Bolivar. He fought in the Battles of San Mateo, Maturín, La Puerta, Sombrero, Sémon, and Cojedas with astonishing bravery. He was Bolivar's companion in the expedition of Los Cayos and in the glorious march of Ocumare. He stayed and fought with Páez in Venezuela. In the Battle of Bombona, he received both the Order of the Liberator and his mortal wound. He died in 1822 in Yacuanquer, having been defeated only once (La Hogaza) in the thirty battles in which he figured prominently. Ibid., 631-32.

General Pedro Briceño Méndez was born in Barinas and studied Philosophy and Law at the Universities of Mérida and Caracas. He married Benigna Palacios, daughter of Juana Bolivar, the Liberator's sister. He joined Bolivar in Cúcuta and served as his Secretary in the campaigns of 1813, 1814, and 1815. In 1816 he went in the expedition of Los Cayos and went on in Aquacates with MacGregor. In 1817 he was Piar's Secretary. He returned to Bolivar's service as a colonel and became Secretary of War and Navy in Angostura. Accompanying Bolivar in the Campaign of New Granada, he was one of those who signed the Treaty regulating war in 1820. In 1823 he was promoted to General of Brigade and was Secretary of War and Navy in Bogotá until 1825 when he became Minister Plenipotentiary to the Congress of Panama. He was a Senator in Colombia in 1827, and in 1828 became Páez's Secretary and Intendant of Venezuela. In 1835 he became a Venezuelan Senator and died that same year in Curazao. Dávila, Diccionario Biográfico, 1, 49-50.

General Ambrosio Plaza was born in Bogotá in 1790. He joined the revolutionary cause and Bolivar in Cúcuta. With Bolivar he entered Trujillo in 1813 and was with him also in Mérida when he announced his "war to the death." In 1814 he was victorious in Bogotá. Later he was forced to emigrate and join Páez in the llanos where he fought at the Battles of Achaguas, Yagual, Barinas, and Cañafistola among others. He was killed at the Battle of Carabobo in 1821 while
the plan of moving the campaign to New Granada.

The day after I got to Guasdualito, Ranjel came to me accompanied by Lieutenant Juan José Flores, later General and President of Ecuador, with a note from Bolivar, in his own handwriting. In this letter he told me that Ranjel had informed him of my opinion on the advantages of going to New Granada instead of heading toward Barinas. Since he approved of this idea, I was to wait for him in Guasdualito. There I could decide which of the two of us would be the leader to go to New Granada. If I went, he would go to the East to form an army against Caracas. If he were selected to go, then I was to remain in the Apure and safeguard it at all costs, even if all other areas were lost.

When Bolivar joined me in Guasdualito, I thanked him for the deference he had shown me in his letter, and I told him that then as always I was ready to approve and carry out whatever he decided. He told me that he thought it was better for him to go to New Granada, for he was better known there, and for me to stay in the Apure—an area, which as he had stated in his letter, it was necessary to preserve at all costs.

On June 4th Bolivar was already in the town of Arauca, and by the eleventh of the same month he had joined

-----------------------
attacking the retreating Spanish Valencey Division. His close friend and rival, General Cedeño, was also killed in this attack. Scarpetta and Vergara, *Diccionario Biográfico*, 473-74.
Santander's division. In accordance with what we had agreed, I remained safeguarding the Apure with the special charge of diverting the enemy's attention along the road from San Camilo to Cúcuta, and to penetrate if possible as far as the valleys of this name. To do this it was necessary to destroy some strong guerrilla forces, which under the command of Commandant Silva, had taken shelter in Guaca. I directed my attention to this immediately, for it can easily be seen that it would be unwise to leave them behind me. I succeeded in dispersing these guerrillas; however, I could not destroy them completely since it was impossible for me to pursue them in those wooded areas that were inaccessible to our cavalry.

While I was in Guaca, I found out that the enemy had one place between Cúcuta and San Cristobal that was fortified and garrisoned, called San Josesito. It was impossible to take this place, particularly with cavalry, because to reach it we would have to traverse twenty leagues of wooded area and clay pits that had no pasture for our horses. In view of these insurmountable obstacles, I decided to return to

4Páez inserts the following footnote here. "Baralt says that I did not want to go to Cúcuta in accordance with the instructions that the Liberator had given me. The reader has already seen the obstacles that prevented us from doing so. Furthermore, remember that Bolívar had recommended nothing as highly to me as safeguarding the Apure, which would have been abandoned if I insisted on committing the reckless undertaking of penetrating into the Valleys of Cúcuta." This quotation may be found in Baralt and Díaz, Resumen de la Historia, II, 457.
Achaguas to organize an infantry and cavalry force with which to penetrate to Guanare in the province of Barinas. Here I proposed to prevent General La Torre from crossing to aid the Royalists of New Granada.

After organizing my forces, I started marching. At the Frío Pass, however, seeing the obstacles presented to us by the flooded plains and overflowing rivers, I ordered the infantry composed of Creoles and Englishmen to return to Achaguas. I headed toward Guanare with only the cavalry and left the city of Nutrias to one side, for I could not attack the plaza here without sufficient infantry forces. Before leaving I gave Colonel Aramendi orders to attack the capital of Barinas with the regiment of "La Muerte," to disperse or distract the forces he had defeated a few days earlier, and then to join me in Guanare.

On the seventeenth I continued my march along the road that leads to the town of La Cruz, which was the best one according to my guides, in order to enlist the guerrillas that operated in that area. After a march of three consecutive days, without finding any provisions for our troops nor even a dry spot on which to rest, we camped on the evening of the nineteenth a league away from La Cruz. My spies informed me now that a column of three hundred and fifty infantrymen and some riflemen, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel [Juan] Durán, had just taken possession of the town. Their objective in doing this was many-fold: to defeat the guerrillas; to continue operations in those areas; to burn
the town; to destroy the plantations; and to take the inhabi-
tants prisoners to Nutrias.

I prepared immediately to attack this column. By
dawn of the twenty-second, with the enemy unaware of our
movements, we were at the edge of the town. While I was
organizing the attack, one of my riflemen fired a shot acci-
dentally. In order not to give the Royalists time to prepare
a defense, I ordered the Guard to advance immediately on the
plaza. This could not be achieved without arousing the enemy
forces. They had fortified themselves in the Church by the
time the Guard got there, and easily repelled their attacks.
I charged with the rest of the forces as far as the corners
of the plaza where the Church was located. My hussars
entered the battle. When they had penetrated to the center
of the plaza, I ordered the Guard to attack again. One
hundred Royalist lancers from the Barinas regiment charged
my hussars with bayonets and forced them to fall back to a
corner of the plaza as the Guard penetrated to attack the
Royalists from the rear. By an unfortunate coincidence, the
lancers of Barinas were dressed in uniforms like those of my
hussars. This deceived the Guard, particularly because the
dense powder smoke prevented distinguishing objects clearly;
consequently, they suspended the attack immediately. The
Royalists then broke out with a terrible firing, and the
Guard was forced to retreat. In this charge Colonel Urquiola
and Captain Prado were among those killed. Several other
officers and soldiers were wounded.
The enemy, realizing that the Church did not offer them a very advantageous defense, abandoned it and took cover in a tiled house with a mud-wall fence that was about a block away from the Church. Here they rejected our repeated attacks. We would return to charge with such courage, that the officers even cut the balusters of the windows with their sabers and the soldiers strained themselves in knocking down the big door of the house. Exposed to the killing fire that the Royalists could discharge from their advantageous position, we had to suspend the attack on more than one occasion. In one of these attacks Captain Pedro Juan Gamarra was killed while penetrating through an opening formed between the fence and the walls of the house.5

The greater part of the Spanish officers had been killed or wounded by this time. These valiant men had been led by a corporal, a Venezuelan, who exhorted his companions to let themselves be killed rather than surrender to the enemies of the King. I realized then that it would be impossible to penetrate there without the necessary tools to open a breach; so I gave orders to suspend the attack. I assured my men that by that very night we would be masters of the house. I placed four groups of unmounted hussars in the

5Captain Pedro Juan Gamarra enlisted in the independence cause in 1816, joined Páez, and participated actively in the Apure campaigns. He was promoted to the rank of Captain in 1818 and died heroically in 1819 at the Battle of La Cruz. Dávila, Diccionario Biográfico, I, 167.
adjacent houses and ordered them to fire at the windows occupied by the Royalists. My men wrought great havoc on their defenders now, crowded together as they were in that narrow enclosure and obstructed by a multitude of cadavers.

At nightfall I organized my forces for the attack. Rather late, I had discovered a path that had escaped my observation during the morning assaults. We attacked the house at this spot and occupied it with little resistance. The Commandant, thirty soldiers, and the heroic corporal escaped at the moment our men entered, guided by the ungrateful American, Captain Yarza. We found only a multitude of cadavers and wounded men in the house. With reason the Spanish said in the communique they issued on this encounter that "that house was not defended by troops of the King, but by a sad hospital overflowing with blood." This capitulation was very favorable for us, however, for we took munitions and over two hundred stored rifles.

Our losses consisted of five officers, four sergeants, and two soldiers who were killed, and eleven officers and eighty-five soldiers who were wounded. Among the dead were the already-cited Colonel Urquiola, Lieutenant Colonel Navarro, Captain Pedro Juan Gamarra and Lieutenant Pedro Gómez. Among the wounded were Colonel Juan Gómez, Lieutenant Colonel Manuel Arraiz, Captain Ramón Esteves, Lieutenant Fructuoso  

6Except for Pedro Juan Gamarra, no information is available on any of these men.
Esteves and Second Lieutenants Romualdo Salas, Encarnación Castillo, Eusebio Ledesma, Julián Peña, León Esteves, Pedro Olivar and Juan Aspre. 7

General Torres, Colonel Ranjel, Colonel Muñoz, and Lieutenant Colonel Laurencio Silva distinguished themselves for their daring and courage and were the first to assault the windows with their swords. Colonel [Francisco] Carmona, Lieutenant Colonel Jacinto Mirabal, and Lieutenant Tomás Castejón also distinguished themselves for their bravery. 8

---

7 No further information was available on Captain Ramón Esteves, Lieutenant Fructuoso Esteves, and Second Lieutenants Romualdo Salas, Encarnación Castillo, Eusebio Ledesma, León Esteves, Pedro Olivar and Juan Aspre. Julián Peña received a commission in the cavalry from the government of Gran Colombia in November of 1826, back-dating it to 1819. In 1826 he was stationed in Barinas and retired in 1830. Dávila, Diccionario Biográfico, II, 80.

8 No further information is available on Lieutenant Colonel Jacinto Mirabal. Colonel Francisco Carmona was a native of Maturín. By 1812 he was fighting against the Royalists in the Battle of Puerto Cabello. He fought with Marino and was at the victory of Bocachica in 1814. Displaying marked bravery, he was at the Battle of Carabobo. He was part of General Piar's Honor Guard when Bolívar sent Cedeño to arrest the latter; Carmona allowed Piar to be captured only because he wanted to obey the Liberator's order. In 1819 he was one of the one hundred and fifty men selected by Páez to cross the Arauca and defy Morillo's six thousand. He also fought in the Battles of Quesera del Medio and La Cruz. After liberating Ocaña in 1820, Carmona went on to defeat the Spanish in the Santa Marta province. In 1830 he supported the movement in Santa Marta favoring Urdaneta as Commandant General of the liberating army. He was defeated by General Mosquera in 1841 during the Revolution of 1840. In 1853 he was assassinated in his home. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 89-91.

Lieutenant Tomás Castejón joined the revolutionary cause in 1814 and fought in the Apure campaigns. In 1819 he was promoted to Lieutenant and to Captain in 1830. In 1835 he fought against the Reformistas and retired in 1836. Dávila, Diccionario Biográfico, I, 77.
The events that we have just related gives proof that the Royalist soldier did not slacken before danger. This was particularly true when they had leaders such as the one that resisted us in the town of La Cruz.

The forces under my command were weakened after this heated battle, and it was not possible for me to continue the march to Guanare. I decided then to retreat toward Achaguas and guard my wounded in such a manner that they would not be imprisoned by the enemy troops stationed at the plaza at Nutrias as we passed close to it. We had to endure great privations during this march, subsisting only on wild fruits, crossing flooded estuaries, and swimming across some deep ravines.

When we got to the town of Santa Catalina, I shipped the wounded to Achaguas. I crossed the Apure River by the Frío Pass and again established my headquarters in that city. On September 3 Commandant Antonio Díaz joined me here with a fleet of gunboats. Knowing that the enemy had another

---

9Antonio Díaz was a naval captain and was born in Venezuela. He fought in the Battle of Cartagena and the siege of Puerto Cabello. In January of 1816 he left the Cayos with Bolívar to undertake the invasion of Venezuela. Later this year he helped board and capture the ships Intrepido and Rita. Assisting Admiral Brion in 1817, he helped recapture the ships lost in Casacaima. He was victorious at the Battle of Guiria in 1818 and again in Pozuelos in 1819. His fame was well-established after his victory at Apure Seco. He assisted Brion in the Magdalena campaign and was part of the brilliant squadron that took Santa Marta in 1820 and Cartagena in 1821. Later he assisted in securing the surrender of Maracaibo and Puerto Cabello. He became Commandant General of Angostura in 1824. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 130.
squadron of eleven armed launches in the port of Nutrias ready to come down to join those in San Fernando, I ordered Diaz to locate his ships at the mouth of the Apure Seco and remain hidden there to make a surprise attack on the enemy fleet as it came down the river. Diaz did this on September 30 in front of the town of Apurito. He won a complete victory, for he took possession of all eleven enemy ships. According to my further orders, Diaz then came down with his fleet to the mouth of the Portuguesa River to prevent any supplies from reaching the San Fernando plaza along this river or the Apure. While he was there, he was attacked by the enemy fleet from San Fernando. He routed this fleet to the point that the men thrust their launches on the left bank of the Portuguesa and defended the ships carrying the enemy infantry from land. Diaz then returned to Achaguas with the wounded. The only fatality in this battle was Diaz's second in command, Commandant M. Muñoz.

Early in October, while I was in my Yagual Farm, General Soublette came to see me on his way to Angostura. He informed me that there were fifteen hundred recruits in Guasdualito under the command of Colonel Justo Briceño that the Liberator had ordered be placed under my command. 10 I

10 General Justo Briceño was born in Mérida in 1790. He joined the revolutionary cause against the Spanish in 1810 and emigrated to Trinidad in 1813. He fought with Mariño in the Battles of Tucupedo, Lizania, Bocachico and Carabobo. He was forced to emigrate again, joined the Cayos expedition, and was named chief of the Cazadores battalion. He was
ordered these to come down from Achaguas. With these recruits and others that were arriving continually from New Granada, we formed several battalions. After being disciplined in Apure, these battalions served to reinforce the Liberating army that was to operate west of Caracas when I opened the campaign of 1820.

Almost all of the year 1820 was spent in enlisting and disciplining recruits and pasturing the horses. We also herded and castrated bulls and then pastured them in order to have a ready meat supply when the army opened the campaign. We also sent arms to New Granada. Despite our relative inactivity during this period, the army of Apure remained a permanent threat against the Royalists forces in Venezuela and thus prevented their union with those in New Granada.

The only movement made during this time was a march to Barinas in January. We ran into Bolivar on the way, for he was coming from New Granada headed toward Guayana. He spent one night with me, and I told him then that this march was solely a diversion. It would protect the guerrillas I had operating on the plains of Calabozo, San Carlos, and that very province, and at the same time offer my troops some

defeated in Carupano and Aguacates in 1814; but he went on to fight victoriously in the Battles of Carabobo, Cumbre de Valencia, and Puerto Cabello. Accompanying Valero, he was part of the auxiliary army to Perú. He opposed Páez in the pronouncement of 1826, and in 1830 defended Bolívar's dictatorship. In 1848 he defended the Monagas dictatorship and by 1865 was General in Chief. He died in Caracas in 1868. Ibíd., 63-64. Dávila, Diccionario Biográfico, I, 51-52.
400

movement and activity. Bolivar approved this and continued his march toward Guayana. I continued toward Barinas and occupied the city. After staying there a few days, I returned to Apure on the Nutrias road without encountering any difficulty.

While I was in San Juan de Payara in August, Lieutenant Colonel Jalón came to me. He had been commissioned by Morillo to propose a suspension of hostilities. I answered that my operations depended on orders from the government and that I was not authorized to enter into any sort of negotiations with the enemy. Morillo then sent two commissioners, Don Juan Cires and Don José Domingo Duarte, to propose peace negotiations. The Congress replied on July 11, "That it was anxious to establish peace and would listen with pleasure to all the propositions made by the Spanish government if these had as their basis the acknowledgment of the sovereignty and independence of Colombia."

Commissioners were also sent to Bolivar. Since he was away, he delegated his power to Pedro Briceño Méndez and to Urdaneta. These two openly refused to accept the proposition made to them to return to obedience to the King, despite all the guarantees that were offered Colombia. They also replied to the Spanish that the patriot leaders were deeply offended by the promise made to preserve their ranks in the Spanish army in return for helping effect a reconciliation with the old metropolis.

For the time being the negotiations failed to produce
any results. A little later Bolivar wrote Morillo from San Cristobal on September 21, telling him that notwithstanding the harm that could befall the Republican forces in suspending hostilities, he had decided to enter negotiations for the armistice that he had proposed as long as Colombia was granted the guarantees and securities that she had a right to demand. Morillo, in a letter dated October 20 in San Carlos, answered by inviting Bolivar to enter the preliminary negotiations necessary to sign an armistice.

After having filled the thoughts of the reader with the terrible scenes of war, it is indeed pleasant to mention one of the most notable episodes of these times when passion ceded to reason and ended the horrors that had been committed as much by those who defended the sacred rights of the fatherland as by those who supported despotism. On November 21, 1820 the leaders of the belligerent forces, anxious to end the war of extermination with which they had horrified the world, concluded a treaty in Trujillo to regulate the conduct of the war according to the practices of civilized countries. They agreed to treat prisoners of war generously; to exchange them for others of equal rank and class; to respect the inhabitants of the towns occupied by military forces; and finally, to do all those things that civilized countries are apt to do during times of war. Among the articles it is noteworthy to call attention to the seventh, couched in these terms: "Since this war started because of differences of opinion with the combatants finding themselves allied by very
close ties and relations and thus anxious to prevent as much bloodshed as possible, it is now established that the military or employees who had previously served either of the two governments and who had deserted its banners and then enlisted on the other side, cannot be subject to capital punishment.—The same shall be understood with respect to the spies of one or the other side."

With the treaties of November 25th and 26th concluded, General Morillo invited the Liberator to a conference in the town of Santa Ana. Bolivar, accompanied by his staff, arrived and was received by the Spanish chief with every respect, offers of friendship, and professed admiration. After ten years of horrors and hatred to the death, Spain and Colombia seemed to have reached a reconciliation that no one would have deemed possible. Spanish character, noble and generous always, did not belie itself in that conference between men who had fought like beasts in one hundred battlefields. All of the participants, setting aside inveterate hatreds, praised each other and cited with admiration the most glorious deeds performed by the enemy while they broke the bread of fraternity in a friendly banquet. General Morillo proposed that a monument be erected on that spot to recall that memorable day, and the Liberator embraced the idea with the enthusiasm with which he always viewed all acts of generosity. The first stone was laid, and both generals embraced. The officers that accompanied them followed suit.

At the banquet the Liberator toasted "the heroic
tenacity of the combatants of both armies—their constancy, sufferings, and unequalled valor; the worthy men that despite the horrors of war sustained and defended their liberty; the wounded of both armies who manifested their intrepidity, their dignity, and their character.—Eternal hatred to those who desire bloodshed and will spill it unjustly.  

General Morillo responded by saying: "May God punish those who are not animated by the same sentiments of peace and friendship that we are." The Spanish General La Torre said to Bolívar, full of enthusiasm: "We shall descend together to the hells in pursuit of tyrants."

History does not present a more beautiful or grandiose scene. Such a spectacle proves that the human heart, no matter how hard passions might make it, always maintains a remnant of sensitivity that needs only a simple act to reveal all its grandeur.

The historian[s] Baralt [and Díaz] state that some patriot chieftains disapproved of this armistice. Since my silence now could include me in this group, I want to mention something in order to eliminate this possibility.

---

11 A copy of this toast made in Santa Ana on November 27, 1820 may be found in Lecuna (ed.), Proclamas y Discursos, 253. Páez omitted one phrase: "to those who died gloriously defending their country or their glory."

12 Baralt and Díaz state that this armistice met with the disapproval of "almost all the chiefs that operated some distance from Bolívar's camp; was ill-received in Guayana although it produced great results." Resumen de la Historia, III, 270.
When Bolivar passed by the Apure to attend the conference with Morillo, I presented him with a written plan in which I expressed that I felt prolonging the armistice as long as possible would give us additional time to discipline our troops well and receive armaments with which to organize a reserve army in New Granada. This would enable us to maintain control over this territory, which seemed to depend on the outcome of one sole battle. The patriots had lost it only after the defeat of their troops in Cachiri, while the Spanish lost it in the Battle of Boyacá.

Shortly after the celebration of the armistice on December 17, Morillo left for Spain despite the protests of the most prominent Royalists. He left the command of the expeditionary troops to General La Torre. The Spanish General had come to the realization that it was impossible to subjugate the so-called insurgents; consequently, he wanted to retire from the scene before events forced him to do so. This was a prudent measure on the part of someone who could not have foreseen such an end!

Morillo had committed grave errors in his mission as pacificator. In adopting orders of extreme severity to subjugate the country, he had alienated even the most indifferent souls. He had been wrong also in looking disdainfully on those ill-advised soldiers who, under the orders of Boves and Monteverde, had wreaked disaster on their compatriots. It would be unjust, however, to deny him the valor and audaciousness that he showed under all tests. He possessed
a great constancy, military talent, and all those qualities needed to inspire faith and confidence in subordinates. Nevertheless, Morillo did not fail to make some military errors in his campaigns in Venezuela.\textsuperscript{13}

The first of these errors was to have divided his army in San Fernando, after the action of Mucuritas. He sent La Torre with one part to Guayana and went himself with the other to the island of Margarita. This plan reveals more of an excessive confidence in his troops and disdain for those of the enemy, than the idea of attacking the two patriot strongholds simultaneously. Instead of dividing his army like this, Morillo should have led all his army personally to Guayana. There he should have routed the Republicans and closed the canal by which they imported war materials from abroad as far as the interior of New Granada. Embarking from San Fernando, he could have arrived in Angostura within five or six days. If he had not had the number of ships there necessary to carry his army, he could have ordered the ones that were in Baul and Nutrias to come down.

\textsuperscript{13}The Spanish historian Torrente expresses the opinion that the only grave error Morillo committed was to leave his command at a time when the expeditionary forces were strong and the cry "Morillo vive!" was sufficient to inspire such terror in the hearts of the patriots, that it could hold back the emigration from La Guaira. Torrente states that Morillo should never have abandoned the American shore and forsaken his compatriots here and his King, for only he "could have prevented the loss of the dominions of Ultramar." \textit{Historia de la Revolución}, III, 115.
At the end of the campaign of the year 1818, he should have gone immediately to Guayana instead of taking winter quarters. He could have accomplished this with great ease, for the patriots at that time did not have an infantry with which to oppose his march. Thus he could have prevented the assembling of the Congress of Angostura—a congress that gave the independence cause the prestige of an already-established government with members gathered to deliberate freely and without any opposition.

The third mistake committed by the Expeditionary General was the vain hope of destroying the army under my command in the Apure with the idea of enlisting the insurgents in Guayana. I say vain because he should have had very much in mind the inconveniences with which he would have to struggle in a place where the numerical superiority of his troops would be worthless when pitted against the knowledge we had of the terrain and the resources it offered us to wage the war of movement which I have already mentioned.14

14Páez footnotes this as follows. "I have omitted accounts of a multitude of disputed encounters that occurred before the armistice was signed between the Royalists and my guerrillas under the command of the valiant chiefs Rafael Rosales, Fernando Figueredo, Doreteo Hurtado, Cornelio Muñoz, Juan Gómez, Valentín Cortés, and José López, in the llanos of Calaboso, San Carlos, and Barinas."
TRANSLATED AND ANNOTATED AUTOBIOGRAFÍA DEL
GENERAL JOSÉ ANTONIO PÁEZ, VOLUME I.
Volume II

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of History

by
Hilda Sánchez Krousel
B.A., Florida State University, 1949
M.A., Florida State University, 1951
January, 1970
CHAPTER XIII

End of the Armistice—My Sad March to Guanare to Rejoin the Liberator—General La Torre Sends Him a Flag of Truce—La Torre Anxious to Know if I Had Rejoined Bolivar—Countermarch to Carabobo—Glorious One Day's March in the Carabobo Llano.

1821

The occupation of Maracaibo by Urdaneta's troops, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel José Rafael Heras who had entered this plaza according to an agreement with its governor, the Venezuelan Francisco Delgado, promulgated the protest by the Royalist chief. Bolívar did not answer this protest in a satisfactory manner. Therefore, the hostilities, which had been suspended by the celebrated armistice of the previous year, would commence anew on April 28. All the leaders prepared for the new operations. I received

1 Colonel Rafael Heras was a native of Habana, Cuba. He joined the Venezuelan independence cause as early as 1810. He emigrated when the first campaign failed. He returned to Venezuela and joined Bolívar in the campaign for Cúcuta. In New Granada he fought at the Battle of Boyacá in 1819. In 1821 he helped defeat General La Torre in the Battle of Carabobo. Heras was killed in the Battle of Hata de Juana de Ávila in 1822. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 216-17.

Lieutenant Colonel Francisco Delgado, a citizen of Maracaibo, was the Royalist Governor of the city who defected to the patriot side and proclaimed the independence of Venezuela on January 28 and 29. When the city thus "spontaneously" declared for the Republic, Heras felt free to occupy Maracaibo, despite the truce. Madariaga, Bolívar, 385-86.
orders from Bolívar to march with the army under my command and rejoin his headquarters in Guanare: so, on May 10 I left Achaguas with one thousand infantrymen, fifteen hundred cavalry, two thousand reserve horses and four thousand recruits. I crossed the Apure by the Enriquero Pass.

It is impossible to relate the grievances and hardships evoked on us by marching with such a large herd. Every night the horses would escape in throngs, and we did not have sufficient men to stop them. Fortunately, since the horses had always been herded in droves in the pasture grounds, they would gallop together and this made it easier for us to follow them by their hoof prints in the sands. To make matters worse, the sands were very soft, for we were in the rainy season. These escapes occurred every night at eight, for once the marvelous instinct of those animals had discovered the possibility of escaping to their pasture grounds, they always redoubled their efforts at the same hour on the following day. When my llaneros would finally capture them and rejoin us the following day, I would accelerate the march in order to rejoin Bolívar as soon as possible.

In the town of Tucupido I found out that Bolívar had moved on toward Araure, which La Torre had abandoned in order to fall back to San Carlos. He abandoned San Carlos also when he found out that Bolívar had occupied Araure, and finally retired to Carabobo where he proposed to give battle to the Republican troops.

Knowing that the Liberator had very little cavalry, I
left the infantry under the command of Colonel Miguel Antonio Vásquez and I went on ahead to San Carlos with the cavalry. Together we overtook the General-in-Chief. After the infantry was assembled and ready to march, General La Torre sent a flag of truce to the Liberator. This flag was carried by the Spanish Colonel Churruca whom Bolivar, inviting me to accompany him, went out to receive in the town of Tinaco, four leagues away from San Carlos. Churruca's supposed objective was to propose a new armistice, but his real one was to see whether I had rejoined Bolivar so that he would know whether to attack him immediately.

Churruca arrived at dinner time; consequently, before tending to the matter that had brought him to the Republican camp, Bolivar invited him to eat. During dinner the Spanish commissioner asked about me and Bolivar immediately introduced me. After the dinner they went on to the conference, and Churruca stated that the purpose of his commission was to bring him La Torre's offer of a new armistice. During this armistice the Republican troops were to retire to the right bank of the Portuguesa River boundary and let this river serve as the dividing line between the two enemy armies. Since this proposal was equivalent to demanding that we lose all the territory we had gained, Bolivar did not accept it. Churruca returned to La Torre's camp, notified him of the results of the interview, and told him that I had already joined forces with the Liberator.

As I have stated previously, the enemy had concentrated
its forces in Carabobo since early June after being expelled from San Carlos. From Carabobo they openly detached recon-noitering forces to Tinaquillo. We sent Lieutenant Colonel José Laurencio Silva against them, and he succeeded in capturing these forces after an encounter during which the Spanish Commander died. It was then that the enemy deemed it prudent to withdraw a detachment from the summits of Buenavista. Naturally, the patriot army occupied it subsequently, and from there we observed that the enemy was preparing to prevent our descent to the plain. We continued our march. The first division, under my command, was composed of the British Battalion, the Bravos de Apure, and fifteen hundred horses. The second division consisted of a brigade of the Guard, the firing battalions, the Sacred squadron under the command of the intrepid Colonel Aramendi, and the Boyacá and Vargas Battalions, names which recall heroic deeds. General Cedeño, whom Bolívar called the bravest of the brave, was the leader of this second division. The third division, under the orders of the intrepid Colonel Plaza, was composed of the first brigade of the Guard, aided by the Battalions Rifles, Grenadiers, Vencedor en Boyacá, Anzoátegui, and a cavalry regiment under the command of the courageous Colonel Rondón.

Everyone, officers and men alike, understood the importance of a decisive victory for our cause. Some of the braver men would tell their companions not to commit themselves too recklessly, as was their custom, nor to take
foolish chances if they wanted to achieve the glory of surviving the victory and finally seeing their patriotic desires fulfilled.

The Spanish army that awaited the patriots was composed of the flower of the expeditionary troops. Their leaders had come to America after gathering many laurels on the battlefields of the Peninsula fighting heroically against the armies of Napoleon. Knowing this, we continued our march full of enthusiasm and ignoring all past and present fatigues. We were determined to go out into the plain through the mouth of the narrow passage at the end of our path. When we saw its summits occupied by the Valencey and Barbasto Regiments, however, we turned toward the left flank with the intent of bending the enemy's right flank. We executed this movement despite heavy enemy artillery fire.

The Spanish general left the two aforementioned regiments at the mouth of the narrow passage and came to challenge our descent into the valley with the rest of his army. To do this he occupied a small hill that rose at a small distance from the point Pica de la Mona through which we intended to enter the plain led by a guide that Bolivar had taken prisoner in Tinaquillo. The Apure Battalion vigorously resisted the enemy infantry fire while descending into the woods, crossed a riverlet, and maintained its fire until the British Legion arrived under the command of its gallant
Colonel [Thomas] Farriar. These brave men, worthy compatriots of those who a few years before had fought with such serenity at Waterloo, stood their ground and endured the enemy fire until they got in battle line. The battle continued and when I saw that these men were already short of ammunition, I ordered them to charge with their bayonets. Subsequently, this British Legion, the Apure Battalion, and two rifle companies under the command of the heroic Commandant Heras, finally forced the enemy to abandon the hill and take a new position on a neighboring one to the rear. From here the Spanish sent their cavalry and the Reina Battalion against our left flank. I ordered Colonel Vázquez with the Chiefs of Staff and a company of the Honor Guard commanded by Captain Angel Bravo to face them. They were able to

---

2 The name of this British officer is variously spelled as Ferrier, Ferrer, Farriar, and Farrar. Hasbrouck in his work on the foreign legionaries who fought in the wars for Spanish American independence prefers to list him as Colonel Thomas Ferriar. He succeeded Colonel Blosset as commander of the British Legion after the latter had been killed in a duel with Colonel Power. Credited with being much more efficient than his predecessor, Ferriar organized the British Legion to make a glorious stand at the Battle of Carabobo making it possible for the Bravos de Apure to reform and complete the destruction of the Spanish battalions. Unfortunately, Colonel Ferriar was mortally wounded in the first charge made by the Spanish. Hasbrouck, Foreign Legionaries, 79, 138, 236, 241, 244, 372, 384.

3 The author footnotes this as follows: "This was composed of some thirty-four individuals, counting the chiefs and officers affiliated with them."

4 Captain Juan Angel Bravo began as an enlisted man in the independence army in 1816. He became a sergeant in 1817, a lieutenant in 1819, and a captain in 1821. He fought in
repel the enemy and continued fighting with the enemy cavalry at the rear. This officer, Bravo, fought with such bravery, that later the fourteen lance marks he had received in the encounter, without having been wounded, were visible on his uniform. This prompted the Liberator to remark that he deserved a uniform of gold.

The Royalist Valencey and Barbastro Battalions, seeing that the rest of the army was losing ground, abandoned their position in order to join the main body of their army. I hurried to propose that they surrender. I was accompanied by Colonel Plaza who had left his division and joined me out of a desire to take part personally in the skirmish. During the charge a bullet mortally wounded this very brave officer who ended his services here to the fatherland.

Reinforced by three hundred cavalrymen who came out from the highway, I charged the Barbastro Battalion and forced it to surrender. Immediately we attacked the Valencey Battalion, which was a short distance away and seeking protection in the Carabobo Ravine. It resisted our attack. On this occasion I almost missed surviving until the victory, for I was suddenly seized by one of those terrible attacks that deprived me of my senses. During the heat of battle, I was in the midst of the enemy forces and would perhaps have been killed if Commandant Antonio Martinez, from the Morales

cavalry, had not led me away. He seized the reins of my horse and mounted a patriot lieutenant by the name of Alejandro Salazar, alias Guadalupe, behind me to hold me in the saddle. Both carried me safely over to my side.

At this time the valiant General Cedeño, inconsolable because he had not been able to enter the action with the troops under his command, advanced with a detachment of cavalry as far as a quarter of a mile in front of the ravine. When he reached the enemy and charged, he fell over dead from a bullet wound.

When I was coming to my senses, Bolívar joined me. In the midst of triumphal exclamation, he offered me the rank of General-in-Chief in Congress's name.

This was the glorious day at Carabobo. With its important results for the independence of Columbia, it may very well be compared to that of Yorktown for the United

---

5Cunninghame Graham mentions Antonio Martínez as a "Llanero from the town of Calabozo, though serving with the royalists." He also states that when Mirabal surrendered to Páez later, he brought Martínez with him. Páez pardoned him immediately, only to have Martínez lead a revolt against him in Calabozo the following year. Páez, 188-89, 197, 200.

6Páez inserts this footnote here: "I still do not know what prompted Martínez to execute that unexpected and for me providential act. He was a llanero from Calabozo and had always served the Spanish since the time of Boves and was rightfully known as one of their deadliest lancers. He was with us the night after the action at Carabobo, but was gone from our camp by dawn. We will encounter him again later."
States in North America. Bolívar in his proclamation said that the victory had confirmed the political birth of the Republic of Colombia and that:

Only Páez's division, composed of two infantry battalions and fifteen hundred cavalry, of which only a few were able to fight, were sufficient to defeat the Spanish army in forty-five minutes. If all the independence army had been able to operate in that celebrated battle, hardly any of the enemy would have escaped. The independence of Colombia was sealed at Carabobo. The indomitable valor, the activity and intrepidity of General Páez contributed beyond measure to the consummation of the very splendid victory.

Barely recovered from the attack I have mentioned, I spurred my infantry on to continue the pursuit; but Bolívar, knowing that our army had exhausted all its ammunition in the battle, ordered them to halt until the Rifle and Grenadier Battalions were ahead and could pursue the enemy. At this time a very heavy rain began to fall and made the sides of the ravine so very slippery, that we were not able to pursue the enemy with the speed we desired. It was only

---

7 When Bolívar won the Battle of Carabobo on June 24, 1821, Venezuela virtually became incorporated into Gran Colombia. Thus the results of this battle were far-reaching, for it secured the independence of both Venezuela and New Granada. In addition, it allowed the Liberator to turn his attentions to affairs further south in the continent. Morón, History of Venezuela, 133-34. For a detailed account of the military tactics involved in the Battle of Carabobo, see Lecuna, Crónica Razonada, III, 46-56.

8 A careful search through Lecuna (ed.), Proclamas y Discursos, and both collections of documents pertinent to Simón Bolívar's public life, Colección de Documentos, and Blanco and Azpurda (eds.), Documentos Para la Historia, have failed to reveal this quotation.
because of this that the Valencey Battalion and the remains of the Spanish army were able to escape being made prisoners. Only fifty Republican cavalrymen and a few chiefs and officers who had left their divisions to take some part in the victory were able to pursue the enemy closely. Of these, several were wounded including the Portuguese Commandant, José [Ignacio] de Lima. Colonel [Juan] Mellado fell dead in the Barrera Ravine and so did Lieutenant Olivera in Tocuyito.

---

9Colonel José Ignacio de Lima was born in Brazil to a rich and noble family. When his father was executed in 1817 for having taken part in a revolutionary attempt at independence, de Lima fled prison and went to Colombia. Incensed by the terrible deeds being committed by the Royalists under Figueroa in northern New Granada, he joined the revolutionary army and fought in the campaigns of New Granada and Venezuela. In 1819 he accompanied Soublette when he moved the Irish Division to the Eastern part of Venezuela, and in 1822 he commanded the Colombian forces in Maracaibo when they seized the Spanish sloop of war, the María Francisca. He went to North America to seek war materials for the war in Venezuela where he served as Páez's aide-de-camp. He was honored with the medals of Liberator of Venezuela, Cundinamarca, Boyacá, Puerto Cabello, and Carabobo. In 1831 he returned to his native country and remained there until his death. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 260-61.

10No additional information is available on Lieutenant Olivera. Colonel Juan Mellados was born in Venezuela. From the very beginning of the outbreak of hostilities against Spanish control, he fought under Páez's command and was victorious with him in the Battles of Estanques, Guasdualito, Palmarillo, Mata de la Miel, Achaguas, and Yagual. In 1819 he participated in the famous Battle of Queseras del Medio and later in the Battle of Boyacá. On June 24th, 1821 he was killed while pursuing the fleeing Valencey Battalion in the famous Battle of Carabobo. Ibid., 315.
Our cavalry was not able to overtake the enemy infantry corps because it was unable to cross the ravines. Bolivar, seeing that the enemy was approaching the city of Valencia, ordered two hundred grenadiers to mount and overtake the enemy forces that were marching off by files en route to Puerto Cabello. We exchanged firing in the corrals at the entrance of the streets of Valencia. Thinking that the fighting would be fierce in the heart of the city, I went on to the plaza. I found it entirely deserted. All the doors and windows of the houses were closed, and there was not a single person in sight we could ask what direction the enemy had taken.

While I was going down the street which I imagined led to Puerto Cabello, I saw citizen Don Pedro Guillen at an open window. He informed me that the other street parallel to the one we were on was the one leading to that plaza. So I followed this direction. A little later, however, Colonel Diego Ibarra, Bolivar's aide-de-camp, came to inform me that the enemy was at the bridge that leads from Valencia to Caracas. I turned back and in effect discovered a column

Colonel Diego Ibarra was born in Guacara in 1798. He was greatly devoted both to the cause of independence for his country and to Simón Bolívar. He enlisted in the revolutionary army in 1810 immediately after the outbreak of hostilities. In 1813 he joined Bolivar in his campaign in Venezuela. With García de Sena in 1814, he fought in los Callejones. After the Battle of Araure he emigrated to Margarita in 1816. Later he took part in the Battles of Boyacá and Carabobo. In 1821 Bolivar sent him to Peru with important papers for San Martin. He returned to Guayaquil
of hussars there. Two of them came forward and asked, "Who
Goes." When we answered "the Fatherland," they fired on me
and the group of officers that accompanied me. We charged
those that were at the bridge, killed the two hussars who
had just fired on us, and set all their comrades into a dis-
orderly flight. They fled over the road to Vigírima in the
direction of Puerto Cabello. Night fell about that time,
and the Liberator ordered the pursuit of the enemy suspended.

The Royalist army, fatigued from the hurried march
they had made from Carabobo, spent the night at the foot of
the hill that was three leagues away from Valencia. On the
following morning, the enemy forces began to ascend this hill
and succeeded in entering the plaza of Puerto Cabello. On
June 25 Bolívar left [Santiago] Mariño, Chief of Staff, to
head the troops in Valencia and marched with me and a

in 1823 with Bolívar and later fought in the Battle of Junín.
Bolívar sent him to Venezuela to demand troops with which to
aid Perú in its struggle for independence. Páez later sent
Ibarra to tell Bolívar of the uprising in Valencia in 1826.
Ibarra remained Bolívar's aide-de-camp and was with the
Liberator when he died in San Pedro. He was decorated with
the medals of Liberator of Venezuela, Junín, and Boyacá.
After his death in Caracas in 1852, he was buried at the
foot of Bolívar's gravesite. Ibid., 229-30; Dávila,
Diccionario Biográfico, I, 254-56.
battalion toward Caracas.\textsuperscript{12} We arrived at this city. It had been evacuated by [Colonel José] Pereira on the night of June 29 after he heard about the defeat of the Royalists in Carabobo and about the proximity of the Liberator.\textsuperscript{13}

Pereira, unable to disembark because of the lack of ships, pretended to leave by the coast of Sotavento for the

\textsuperscript{12}General Santiago Mariño was born on the island of Margarita in 1788 of a rich and illustrious family. When the revolution for independence broke out in 1810, he was in Caracas with the rank of sublieutenant in the Spanish army. He resigned from this army, joined the revolutionary army, and was immediately given the rank of Captain. He fought so gallantly and brilliantly, that before Miranda's capitulation he had attained the rank of colonel. He emigrated to Trinidad and from there along with Bermúdez, Piar, and another forty-five men, he helped organize an expedition against the Spanish in 1813. These patriots defeated Boves in Bocachica. In 1814 Mariño joined Bolívar in La Victoria. As Bolívar's second in command, he fought at the first battle of Carabobo. He was defeated at the siege of La Puerta. In 1816 he was named second Chief of the Army, and in 1817 he went to Bolívar's aid in Barcelona. He suffered two severe defeats in this same year at Cariaco and Cardpano. Bolívar appointed him Chief of the Oriente army in 1819. This same year he lent his support to the Congress of Angostura. From 1822 to 1827 he ably assisted Páez in governing the Venezuelan territory. In 1827 in Querézas del Medio Bolívar presented Mariño with a sword. When Páez led Venezuela away from Gran Colombia, Mariño accompanied him as Secretary of War and General-in-Chief. He retired from public service for a while but returned in 1848 to serve as Commandant General of Caracas. Mariño died on September 4, 1854, in La Victoria. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 294-96; Morón, History of Venezuela, 133, 156-57.

\textsuperscript{13}Colonel José Pereira was the commander of the Spanish Battalion, Los Pardos de Valencia. He was chief of operations in Barcelona, and he defeated Bermúdez's forces in the Calvario of Caracas. In 1821 he surrendered at La Guaira as a result of the defeat of the Spanish at Carabobo. Lecuna, Crónica Razonada, II, 181, 262, 365; III, 53, 55.
town of Carayaca with the object of finding out if the Spanish squadron would come there to take him aboard. Since the squadron did not appear, he returned to La Guaira to gather strength there, always hoping that the ships from Puerto Cabello would help him. Finally he had to capitulate to the Liberator on July 4 when he saw that no Spanish vessel appeared at the port. The articles of his capitulation may be seen in Volume II of the *Documentos de la Vida Pública del Libertador.*

My staff officers who died in this memorable battle included Colonel Ignacio Melean; Manuel Arraiz; Captain Juan Bruno; Lieutenant Pedro Camejo[a]; the Negro Primero; Lieutenant José María Olivera; and Lieutenant Nicolás Arias. Of

---

14Páez footnotes this as follows: "Torrente states: 'When the French Admiral Jurien refused to admit the Royalist Troops on board by professing the strict neutrality he was forced to observe, he offered his mediation, nevertheless, so that an agreement could be reached between Pereira and Bolivar by which those soldiers would be given the freedom to choose between remaining in the service of the Republic or embarking for Puerto Cabello. Of the seven hundred negroes [sic], mulatoes, and zambos of which the infantry was composed, only six embraced the first offer. This formed a strange contrast to the cavalry which was composed mainly of Europeans and yet had a greater number of individuals abandon the banners of the King, even though their total force did not reach seventy.' Among those six that Torrente says remained in the service of the Republic was that corporal who had so heroically resisted us in the city of La Cruz." This quotation may be found in Torrente, *Historia de la Revolución*, III, 245.

15The author refers again here to the Colección de Documentos. The articles of capitulation may be found in Volume II, 299-301.
all these men I recall Camejo, generally known then by the nickname of Negro Primero, with the greatest affection. A slave at one time, he had taken a great part in some of the events to which I have referred in the course of this narration. He had come to me when I had gone down to Achaguas after the Battle of Yagual. My soldiers from Apure recommended that I take him into the army, for it was clear to them that he was a man of great valor and above all a very good lancer. His robust constitution recommended him highly to me. Shortly after talking with him, I noticed that he possessed the candidness of man in his primitive state and one of those likable personalities that quickly attracts the affection of those with whom they deal.

Camejo had been a slave of the proprietor citizen of Apure, Don Vicente Alfonso. The latter had placed him in the service of the King because the Negro's character, very jealous of its dignity, had frightened him. After the action of Araure he had become so disgusted with military service, that he fled to the Apure and had hidden there for some time until he came to me following the Battle of Yagual. After I admitted him to my ranks, he was always at my side and proved to be a most valuable acquisition. He gave such proofs of valor in all the embattled encounters we had with the enemy, that his own companions gave him the title of Negro Primero. They had great fun with him, for his home-spun humor and observations on all he witnessed kept their morale very high. Invariably they were seeking him out to
give him new topics of conversation.

When Negro Primero heard that Bolivar was coming to join me in the Apure, he ardently begged everyone not to tell the Liberator that he had served in the Royalist army. This was enough to have the men tell Bolivar enthusiastically and immediately upon his arrival about the Negro and his anxiety to keep from him that he had been in the service of the King. Consequently, when Bolivar saw him for the first time, he went up to him affectionately and after congratulating him on his valor, asked him: "But whatever prompted you to serve in the ranks of our enemies?" The Negro looked at those around him as if he wanted to twist them for the indiscretion they had committed, and then said: "Sir, it was greed."

"What do you mean?" asked Bolivar.

"I had noticed," the Negro continued, "that everyone went to war without a shirt and without a peseta and later returned dressed in a very handsome uniform and with money in his pockets. Then, too, I wanted to go in search of my fortune and more than anything get three silver spurs—one for the Negro Mindola, another for Juan Rafael, and another one for me. The first battle we had with the patriots was the one at Araure. They had more than one thousand men, so I told my friend José Félix. We had many more men, and I begged to be given any weapon with which to fight, for I was certain we were going to win. When I thought the battle had ended, I got off my horse and went to remove a very handsome coat from a dead white man. At that instant the Commandant
came screaming, Get on your horses! Why? I asked. Isn't this war ended? It most certainly was not ended, for there were so many men coming that it looked like a flock of vultures."

"What did you say then?" asked Bolivar.

"I wanted us to go out to pasture then. There was nothing left to do but flee, and I started running away on my mule. However, the blasted animal got tired on me, and I had to take to the woods on foot. The following day José Félix and I went to a ranch to see if we could get some food. When the owner found out that I was with Náfa's [Yafiez] troops, he looked so hard at me, that it seemed best to flee and go to the Apure."

"They say," Bolivar interrupted him, "that you killed cattle there that did not belong to you."

"Naturally," he replied, "for if I hadn't, what would I have eaten? Finally the superintendent (for this is what he called me) came to the Apure, and he showed us what the fatherland was and that the diablocracia wasn't anything bad. Since that time I've been serving the patriots."

Conversations such as these maintained in a language sui generis served to amuse Bolivar greatly. During our marches the Negro Primero was indeed a source of great distraction and entertainment for us. He continued in my

16 Obviously the illiterate Negro had confused the two words diablo, meaning devil, and democracia, meaning democracy, and made one word out of the two of them.
service, always distinguishing himself in all the most important battles. The reader may have already seen his name among the heroes of Queseras del Medio.

The day before the Battle of Carabobo, which he said was going to be **cisiva**, he harangued his comrades and imitated the language he had heard me use in similar cases.\(^\text{17}\) In order to infuse them with valor and confidence, he told them with the fervor of a Moor, that the doors of Heaven would open to the patriots that died on the battlefield, but would close to those who died fleeing from the enemy.

The day of the battle, at the first shots, he fell mortally wounded. News of this later produced a deep sorrow in all the army. When Bolivar heard about it, he considered it a misfortune and openly lamented the fact that he had been deprived of the pleasure of introducing this man in Caracas—a man whom he considered without equal in simplicity and particularly notable for the inimitable style in which he expressed his ideas.

\(^{17}\) In this instance the **Negro Primero** had to mean **decisiva** or decisive.
CHAPTER XIV

My Return to Valencia—The Liberator Marches Toward New Granada—I Am Named Commandant of One of the Military Districts Into Which He Divided Venezuela—Operation of My Forces Against Some Royalist Chiefs—Morales Leaves Puerto Cabello, Disembarks at Some Points Along the Coast, and Finally is Forced to Return to that Port—The Royalists Leave Puerto Cabello and Head Toward Valencia—Destruction of a Royalist Division in Patanemo—I Lay Siege to Puerto Cabello—Illnesses Force Me to Lift the Siege—General Calzada Takes Command of the Plaza.

1821-1822

Shortly after I had arrived in Caracas, Bolivar ordered me to return to Valencia to head the army. He stayed at the capital conferring with the Vice-President, General Soublette, about certain points of government and administration. Later he joined me in Valencia. Early in August he marched toward New Granada with some army corps, leaving Venezuela provisionally divided into three military districts. I was named Commandant General of the one that was formed with the provinces of Caracas, Carabobo, Barquisimeto, Barinas, and Apure.

Two hundred Creole cavalry from the Royalist forces defeated at Carabobo had gone to Puerto Cabello. They were joined there at the same time by none other than that famous chief of Boves' cavalry, Colonel José Alejo Mirabal, who had just returned from the Peninsula. La Torre gave Mirabal command of this Creole cavalry and named him Commandant
General of the Calabozo llanos with orders to operate at our rear. He augmented his forces not only with the soldiers that had escaped from Carabobo and were found scattered in those territories, but also with partisans of the King that he found there.

Alejo [Mirabal] left Puerto Cabello by Morón and surprised a detachment we had in Canoabo. He marched to the Pao de San Juan Bautista without meeting any opposition, for unfortunately the forces we sent to encounter him did not arrive at the right time at the place I had designated. Alejo came out to the llano where, operating with the activity which was characteristic of him, he was able to increase his forces to five hundred cavalry. With these he besieged Colonel Judas Tadeo Piñango who was in command in Calabozo.1

Discovering that I had left Valencia with the Apure Guard and was approaching Calabozo, he lifted the siege and went

---

1 General Judas Tadeo Piñango was born in Caracas. When Bolívar left Caracas in 1812 with a passport from Monteverde, Piñango begged to accompany him and thus began his services to the independence cause. He fought in the Magdalena campaign and in the Battle of Cúcuta in 1813. He was victorious in the Battles of Barbula, Trincheras, Vijirima, Araure, and La Victoria but was defeated along with Urdaneta at Mucuchies. In 1815 he helped defend Cartagena and in 1821 fought at the second battle of Carabobo. He defeated Colonel Tello in 1822 in Chipare but was later imprisoned by General Morales. When Puerto Cabello was assaulted by Páez, Piñango was rescued and then helped in the pursuit of Cisneros. He supported Páez in the separation of Venezuela from Gran Colombia and became chief of the Venezuelan troops. He was killed in Caracas in 1848 while trying to stifle a mutiny. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 470-71.
on to the town of Guardatinajas. I sent the Guard to pursue him and they surprised him and annihilated his men in the vicinity of that town. After wandering for some days, the military chief of the villa of Pao de San Juan Bautists surrendered.²

On my way to Valencia and near that city, I saw a man go by on foot. There was something suspicious about him; so I had him searched. We found a communique on him from Mirabal to Morales in which the former told the latter about the events that had forced him to present himself to the Republican authorities. Mirabal hoped by this stratagem to get near to Puerto Cabello and easily take refuge in this plaza if he did not receive aid beforehand. As soon as the communique was read, I ordered Mirabal brought to my headquarters under heavy guard. When he tried to escape, according to what Commandant of the Guard Guillermo Iribarren later told me, he was killed instantly by the sentinel that guarded him.

On November 1 of this year, 1821, Morales left Puerto Cabello and headed toward the shore with eight hundred men. He embarked these on the frigate Ligera. Taking a brigantine and eight schooners also, he came close to Chichirivichi;
but on the way he lost one of the schooners which was captured by the Colombia brigantine *Vencedor*. On the fourteenth at 10:00 a.m. this convoy appeared before Macuto, and on the afternoon of the fifteenth some of the ships approached the coast of Naiguatá but did not dare disembark. On the sixteenth they headed leeward toward La Guaira, and on the eighteenth they returned to Catia and disembarked six hundred men. The latter went to Ocumare while the ships followed in the same direction carrying the rest of the forces. On the nineteenth the Commandant of the Valleys of Aragua came close to get them with a small column of militia. However, he was forced to retreat when he was attacked by superior forces in Trapiche. Morales, not daring to penetrate into the interior, reembarked and returned to Puerto Cabello.

Noting from the communiques I was constantly receiving that the Spanish squadron was heading toward the windward side, I left Valencia with a battalion to go to the aid of Caracas. While in that city I found out that the squadron was coming down toward Puerto Cabello. Without losing any time, I countermarched in the direction of Valencia. In Maracay I received a communiqué from Colonel Manrique, whom I had left in charge in Valencia. He informed me that a column of five hundred men, under the command of Colonel [Basilio] García, had left Puerto Cabello headed toward
Valencia and was already in the town of Naguanangua. I ordered Manrique to evacuate the city and go to Guacara where I would join him immediately. My plan was to march from Guacara along the road to San Diego that leads to the foot of the hill. There I would cut short the Royalist retreat if they advanced as far as Valencia and destroy them with far superior forces. However, García did not judge it prudent to march to Valencia and countermarched hurriedly toward Puerto Cabello.

Things remained like this until the month of April of 1822 when I went with a battalion to the town of Patanemo to surprise a Royalist detachment there. I also wanted to get in touch with Commandant Renato Beluche, who was crossing windward from Puerto Cabello with two armed schooners, for I was already preparing to lay siege to the plaza. I managed

---

3 The Spanish Colonel Basilio García had been General Calzada's second in command in the Battle of Boyacá. He was in charge of the Spanish forces at the Battle of Bomboná. Lecuna, Crónica Razonada, II, 351; III, 100.

4 Renato Beluche was born in New Orleans in 1780. He was only seven when his father died leaving five children and a pregnant wife; consequently, Beluche went to sea at an early age and within a few years was part owner of two privateers sailing under letters of marque from Guadaloupe. In 1814 he was in Cartagena helping transport troops for the new Republic. For this service he was awarded the rank of naval lieutenant in the Cartagena navy. Beluche remained in this service for three years and reputedly destroyed more than a million dollars worth of Spanish shipping—particularly after the Battle of New Orleans when he and two hundred Baratarians raided Spanish shipping under letters of marque from Cartagena. In 1816 Beluche superceded Luis Brión in command of the Los Cayos expedition during the attack on Spanish ships off the coast of Margarita. He now became a commodore in the
to rout said detachment, and I continued my exploration as far as the town of Borburata without being able to talk to Beluche. From here I countermarched to Valencia along the same road I had come. Without losing time I followed the Cumbre road to go and lay siege to Puerto Cabello. I took possession of Pueblo Afuera, and I also immediately occupied Borburata. I laid siege to Mirador de Solano (La Vigia) and forced Captain Montero, who guarded it with a company, to surrender.⁵ He had been communicating all my movements to the plaza by telegraph.⁶

Colombian Navy and helped Páez seize Puerto Cabello in 1823. After the wars for South American independence were over, he became a Venezuelan citizen and continued to participate in turbulent episodes. He died at 79 and was buried in Puerto Cabello. Jane L. de Grummond, *The Baratarians and the Battle of New Orleans* (Baton Rouge, 1961), 4, 5, 6, 8, 17, 155, 156, 157. Williamson (De Grummond, ed.), *Caracas Diary*, 1835-40, 127, 128, 164, 165.

⁵ The author interjects this footnote. "The Spaniards shot this officer in Puerto Rico for having surrendered." No other information is available on Captain Montero.

⁶ Páez footnotes this as follows: "During the siege I was forced to leave my troops in order to prevent the outbreak of a rebellion in the Apure caused by the indignation of the inhabitants over the tyrannical conduct of the governor, Miguel Guerrero. The latter had treacherously had the intrepid Aramendi assassinated, according to a declaration made by Cabaneiro, one of the accomplices. He had also had three officers shot because they censured this act, and finally had mistreated some good officers of the Guard and returned them handcuffed to my headquarters. My presence calmed everyone, and that province remained quiet."
At the beginning of May the Valencey Battalion ventured out of the plaza but retreated after having lost many men. At this time La Torre had such few provisions, that he hurled more than two hundred persons, including women, children, and useless men, from the plaza. On June 2, however, he received foodstuffs brought by the Commander of the Spanish squadron, Don Angel Laborde, in the frigate Ligera. Laborde had managed to enter the port despite the opposition made by our small squadron.

During these circumstances General Soublette, Minister of War, went to the province of Coro to inspect the operations of the forces commanded by Piñango. Following the event of Dabajuro, which forced him to retreat to Carora, he fought against Coro again. Morales did not wait for him this time, but embarked instead on the Vela on June 16 and arrived in Puerto Cabello with the greater part of his troops to succeed La Torre in command of the army. The latter had been named Captain General of Puerto Rico.

7Angel Laborde was defeated by the patriot naval Commander Padillo at Maracaibo in 1822. Lecuna, Crónica Razonada, III, 287.

8Despite the victories of the patriot forces in Venezuela, it is interesting to note that the interior province of Coro had pronounced in favor of Spain. General Soublette had gone to Coro to reenlist its support in the patriot cause. On June 17, 1822 he was decisively defeated by Morales' forces at Dabajuro. Torrente, Historia de la Revolución, III, 346-47.
In the middle of June I suspended the siege of Puerto Cabello and retreated toward Valencia because my troops had been decimated to little over one thousand. Malignant fevers had taken the lives of the rest of the three thousand seventy-nine men with which I had started the siege of the plaza.\footnote{The author includes this footnote at this point.}

9The author includes this footnote at this point. "General Hilario López, ex-president of New Granada, who commanded one thousand militia men from the valleys of Aragua in the next to the last siege of Puerto Cabello and who distinguished himself in many of his more risky operations, writes as follows in Volume I, page 127 of his Memoirs: 'The unheard of efforts of General Páez were insufficient to constrict the plaza or assault it. This chief hurled himself at it many times as if defying the most imminent dangers. At times he would dress as a common soldier and operate under the orders of a corporal against the fortification. Then again he would put on his magnificent uniform and station himself near the fort, coolly serving for long periods of time as a target for the good shots who defended it. At other times he would embark on a small ship and get in the most dangerous position. Our navy, composed of small ships, tried to resist the entrance of three Spanish ships that left Curazao to bring foodstuffs and could not prevent it, even when the plaza was at the point of surrendering due to lack of food.'

"'I again charge you,' Santander told me in a letter dated June 15, 1822 in Bogotá, 'not to expose yourself needlessly to getting shot without cause. Your life is precious, and for the sake of your very honor you should prevent exposing it unless there is a great and urgent necessity. . . . Do not act in a crazy manner when there is no need. I say this for your actions in Puerto Cabello have been foolish ones born out of rashness. Without a navy we can accomplish nothing. I have known this for a long time, but not everyone knows that I have not had the means nor the manner with which to acquire it.'"

On August 10 Morales allowed himself to be seen at the top of the hill that descends to the plain of Naguanagua. At this time I was at Palito with the Anzoátegui Battalion. I had a little over two hundred cavalry and was waiting for the column of five hundred men under the command of the Royalist Commandant, Don Simon Sicilia, that Morales had sent along the coast toward Puerto Cabello. About three or four leagues in my rear, at a place called Agua Caliente, I had left a militia battalion just in case Sicilia took that road. On the day following Morales' arrival at the hill, Sicilia defeated this militia. Then, to avoid an encounter with the troops that were coming from Palito along the trail called Miguija, Sicilia entered Puerto Cabello.

On the afternoon of this same day, I received the news of Morales' arrival at the hill. Immediately, I started marching with my forces. I went on ahead myself with fifty cavalrymen after sending a message to Valencia ordering them to send me immediately the five hundred recruits garrisoned there and the three hundred veteran grenadiers—all the forces that were in Valencia. My orders were carried out with the desired speed. At six o'clock on the morning of the 11th I had, in addition to my fifty cavalrymen, eight hundred infantrymen from Valencia.

At this very time, Morales was descending into the plain. When he completed his descent, he got ready to attack me and divided his forces into three columns. One column was composed of the Battalion Leales Corianes and marched
toward my left flank. Another column of four hundred European riflemen under the command of Colonel [Manuel] Lorenzo marched on my right flank. In the meantime Morales and the rest of his forces, which totaled two thousand men, approached me in front at regular pace. When I saw this operation, I detached one hundred veterans, one hundred militia men, and twenty-five cavalrymen under the command of the intrepid Colonel Rondón and ordered them to attack the Leales Corianes. With the same number of forces under the command of the daring Colonel Mina, I ordered the enemy forces on my right attacked. I faced Morales with my remaining forces.

The first two enemy columns were defeated within a short time, for the charges made by my cavalry were innumerable, particularly on Lorenzo's column. The latter was forced to form a square. Then our infantry, dispersed in guerrilla bands, ravaged its ranks to the point of forcing

---

10 Colonel Manuel Lorenzo had been the Spanish Chief of Operation in Cardpano, Rio Caribe, Barquisimeto, and Yaracuiy. Lecuna, Crónica Razonada, II, 422; III, 43, 46, 52.

11 Colonel Juan Antonio Mina was born in Venezuela. He fought nobly for the independence of his native country at the side of Colonel Francisco Aramendi and Colonel Cedeno. In 1821 Urdaneta appointed him Governor of the Province of Coro immediately after the Royalists abandoned it. With Páez, he helped defeat General Morales in Valencia in 1822. He also distinguished himself in 1829 in the Battle of Tarqui against the Peruvian invading army. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 327-28.
them to take to the hills in a direction opposite to the one that Morales occupied. The column that attacked Rondón dispersed when it was impossible to form a square. However, its scattered members were able to reunite with the center column which was already falling back also, mauled by the force that I personally directed against it. We followed in pursuit of the enemy up to the first two turns in the hill. Then it became prudent to turn back because the narrow passage offered the enemy strong positions. It was here that Commandant Rondón received a wound in his foot. Tetanus set in a few days later and the very brave and likable chief of our cavalry ended his glorious career. We also lost cavalry Captain Santos Garrido and cavalry Lieutenant Alvarez in this battle. All the veteran grenadier officers were wounded, but there were not many losses in the rank and file. The Royalists lost five hundred men counting the dead, wounded, and those taken prisoner.

An hour after the struggle, the Anzoátegui Battalion arrived. The cavalry that I had left that very night on the road to Palito also arrived. It seems that the roughness of the terrain and the darkness of night had prevented them from making as hurried a march as was needed. Three or four days

---

No additional information was available on Lieutenant Alvarez. Captain Santos Garrido participated in the Apure campaign as early as 1817. He was with Bolívar in the triumphal Battle of Carabobo in 1821. While helping to besiege Puerto Cabello, Garrido was killed. Dávila, Diccionario Biográfico, 182.
later, the Minister of War, General Soublette, arrived with some of the corps he had in Coro. I was reinforced with these.

Morales remained on the hill ten or twelve days without daring to come down. Undoubtedly, he was waiting for the results of a revolution that was to break out in the plains of Calabozo in favor of the King led by Commandant Antonio Martinez, my saviour in Carabobo. This rebellion did break out in the town of Guardatinajes, but it was immediately suppressed. Probably this was what finally decided Morales to retire to Puerto Cabello. He embarked from here on the 24th for Maracaibo and left the plaza under the command of General Don Sebastián de la Calzada. Morales disembarked in Cojoro and marched with his army, enlarged by some Indians, to the port of Sinamaica. There he forced the officer who commanded it to abandon it and occupied Maracaibo after the action of Salina Rica.

Baralt [and Díaz] state: ¹³

Hardly had Morales found himself in control of Maracaibo when he issued a decree imposing the death sentence and confiscation of property on the foreigners that were found armed. Not content with this scandalous infraction of the Treaty of Trujillo, he later declared many of its articles impossible to fulfill. After several reclaims were made by the government of the Republic and the Commandant of the Anglo-American naval forces in the Antilles, Páez ordered the Colombian troops under his command to follow strictly the provisions of the treaty despite the enemy's flagrant violations. This was a noble and worthy act meritorious of the highest praise.

¹³This citation may be found in Baralt and Díaz, Resumen de la Historia, II, 105-106.
When General [Lino de] Clemente, Commandant of Maracaibo, embarked for Betijoque, province of Trujillo, he specifically ordered the Governor of the Fortress of San Carlos, Colonel Natividad Villasmil, to remain in it without entering into negotiations of any kind with the enemy.  

General Lino de Clemente, a native of Venezuela, attended the patriotic juntas in Caracas in 1809 and 1810 and was one of the forty-four members of the Congress that declared Venezuelan independence on July 5, 1811. He fought in the Battles of Tenerife, Banco, Mompos, Ocaña, Niquitao, Puerto Cabello, Carabobo, and Rincón de los Toros among others. In 1819 he was a member of the Congress of Angostura and in 1821 he participated in the taking of Cartagena. In 1821 also he was defeated by General Morales in Salinarica. Clemente was tried and exonerated for Villasmil's delivery of San Carlos to General Morales. In 1826 he was Secretary of State and Intendant and Commandant General of Zulia. Although he was married to one of Bolivar's sisters, he worked assiduously to assemble the junta in Caracas that led to the separation of Venezuela from Gran Colombia. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 107-108.

Colonel Natividad Villasmil (or sometimes listed as Villamil) was born in Maracaibo about 1788. He had become a member of the garrison guarding Maracaibo in 1805 and in 1812 was implicated in the attempted revolt of this garrison. Imprisoned by the Governor of Maracaibo, Pedro Ruiz de Porras, he was sent to Puerto Cabello and then to Spain. He managed to escape from the latter and to go Habana where he was recaptured. When he was being shipped to Puerto Rico, a patriot corsair rescued him from this, and he was able to rejoin Bolívar in Haiti. He went with Bolívar to Margarita and there fought under Arismendi and F. E. Gómez. When he got on the mainland again he fought with Colonel Rafael Jugo, Tomás Montilla, and with Bolívar in the Apure. In 1822, while participating in the Maracaibo campaign and as Commandant of the San Carlos Fortress, he capitulated to General Morales, reportedly for the sum of five thousand dollars. Also in 1822 he suffered the defeat at Garabuja. In 1823 he found himself obliged to defend himself in the newspapers from the public censures heaped upon him as a result of these two defeats. Ibid.; Dávila, Diccionario Biográfico, 393-94.
This cowardly chief, however, capitulated as soon as the first threat was made. He did not even offer the slightest resistance. Relying on the fact that the San Carlos Fortress was occupied by patriot forces, I marched with two thousand men to the province of Trujillo, hoping that perhaps the enemy squadron could not enter the lake. In that case it would be easy for me to cross it in the many small boats that were there. Then Morales and his army could not escape being imprisoned. However, when I reached Trujillo I got the news that the fortress had capitulated and that the Spanish fleet had entered Maracaibo.

I countermarched to Valencia and took a skilled sandbar pilot called Iribarren with me. I sent him on to General Soublette and told the latter that this pilot could take our fleet into the lake without risk. Soublette sent him out to the fleet and ordered its commander, General [José] Padilla, to carry out the operation. It was executed with only the

---

15 General José Padilla was born in Riochacha in 1778. Having joined the Spanish navy, he fought in the Battle of Trafalgar and was imprisoned for a while in England. Freed from there in 1808, he returned to Cartagena as a boatswain. There he contributed to the revolutionary movement of 1811. In 1814 he took part in the naval action of Tolu. He was the brave defender of Cartagena in 1813 and later was able to emigrate to Jamaica and join Bolívar in the Cayos expedition. Joining forces with Luis Brión's squadron, he helped take Riohacha in 1820. With Montilla he helped defeat Sánchez Lima in Laguna Salada. In 1823 Padilla and Montilla occupied Santa Marta. His conduct of the naval Battle of Maracaibo, termed the "most daring naval enterprise of the wars for independence," was heroic. He was also victorious in the Punta de Palma campaign. In 1828 General Padilla was judged to be the cause for the revolutionary movement in
loss of one bergantine. The squadron then combined its movements with the land forces led by Colonel Manrique in the Puertos de Altagracia and attacked the Spanish led by Don Angel Laborde. The latter's defeat decided the Maracaibo campaign.

Señor Restrepo mentions disagreements between Soublette and me during this period and accuses me of aspiring to the position that this General held with the approval of all.16 To resolve this, I will now copy the letter I wrote Vice-President Santander answering the unjust charge.17

SR. BRIGADIER GENERAL FRANCISCO DE P. SANTANDER

Valencia, May 28, 1822

Esteemed Comrade and Friend:

I shall return the confidence with which you distinguished me in your treasured letter of this past February 15th answering mine of this past January 15th by frankly disclosing all my feelings. I wish that in this case, more than in any other, the human heart were necessarily candid. This is not to say that mine is not, but rather so that you and the world could easily believe that my expressions are sincere.

You told me that 'when you tenaciously refused to accept the vice-presidency and complained of your lot,

Cartagena. He was shot on October 2 and thus ended "the precious life of the Colombian Nelson." Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 421-22.

16Restrepo's allegation may be found in the José Jacquin edition, Revolución de la República de Colombia, III, 200.

17This letter cannot be found in the Archivo Santander although several other letters written by Páez to Santander appear.
it was because you saw in Venezuela a country devastated by war, scanty of resources, inhabited by peoples of a strange character that had representatives in the upper eschelons accustomed to acting on their own, with discontent llaneros, that you despaired of being able to remedy so many evils. If I had been near you at that time, I would have taken the liberty of assuring you that the strange character of the Venezuelans was to be the fertile fountain from which were to spring many blessings. The unquiet and resolute genius of the Venezuelans, in my opinion, is accompanied by much good judgment. The progress I have observed in the revolution has forced me to believe this, for the Venezuelans have been aware of their own best interests more than any other country. They believed they should separate from Spain, and for this objective they have sacrificed part of their will, part of their strength, their comfort, their properties, and even the love of their families. The people of Venezuela, like any other people, are incapable of discerning the justice or injustice that has served as basis for the law. This is reserved for philosophers. However, they have known how to obey the laws, and this public moral is a great consolation for me, as it must be for you. I have convinced myself that Venezuela might suffer shortages, but it shall be the last to disturb the national tranquility.

You also told me in your letter that in order not to offend my delicacy and generosity you did not want to talk about the situation in which I find myself, following the path marked out for me by the pilot. My dear friend, I speak to you with all honesty. Nothing that you tell me offends me, not even the advice you give me, which is highly appreciated. What does offend me is the reason for your doing it. You have misunderstood what I have said. Señor Soublette, worthy and most honorable superintendent of Venezuela, is because of his talents, abilities, and political and military knowledge, the best man and perhaps the only one that you could have selected for the elevated and very sad destiny you have given him. I am very far from having been displeased even once while serving under his orders. On the contrary, an amiable leader such as he, without pride, without any resentments toward me, helps me to carry the enormous burden you have placed on my shoulders. I wish that you could enter my heart and, searching my innermost feelings, could be convinced and satisfied that I have not aspired to be superintendent of these provinces. Rather I am heartily convinced that neither I nor my friends would be capable of
fulfilling this job with the prudence, tenacity, maturity, and dexterity with which Señor Soublette is performing it for the general welfare of the people. Please do not think I beg you, not even for an instant, that envy or ambition could have entered my heart. I do not sacrifice anything in obeying Señor Soublette's orders because I follow them with great pleasure. When I told you that I did nothing but follow the path pointed out by the pilot, it was only to reveal to you that in my character as Commandant General of the army, I did not have the responsibility of guiding the war, but of marching and commanding the operations of the army where I was told.

I thanked Heaven a thousand times because the government of the Republic had not chosen me for this task. To prove my truthfulness, I must add that in times of peace and tranquility when order is established I would perhaps be flattered by the title of superintendent. Today I could not have accepted it, for I would not be able to surmount the many obstacles presented by politics nor find the strength to establish law and order. Soublette was the man needed in Venezuela for this purpose, and I repeat and will repeat a thousand times that you were right in selecting him. If I have said something about him, it is what I would say to him in a friendly manner. It is because of my fiery temperament that I cannot keep some thoughts to myself, particularly when I believe that expressing them might be of some value.

I well know how great and heavy the obligations are on me as Commandant General of the army. I try to fulfill them in the best possible manner, and I will do everything necessary on my part so that Colombia's armies will not fail to be triumphant because of lack of activity or interest. Other generals might have commanded and may be commanding armies without provisions. I, too, have led them naked, and I believe that no other soldiers have suffered as much as those of Venezuela. Having been in war constantly, the country is devastated and without resources. If I have told you about this more ardently, it has been out of a desire to alleviate the privations. It did not mean that I will stop doing all that is necessary on my part to make the soldiers extraordinarily content and to console them and alleviate their fatigues.

You recommend very highly to me that I sacrifice my person, my goods, my rights, and my sentiments for my country. I do not know if it is as a result of the rare character of the Venezuelans, or the frankness
that is peculiar to me, that I am going to tell you everything that I am about to. I have not made any sacrifices for my country, and my country has made a thousand sacrifices for me. I have been one of those upper-eschelon representatives accustomed to acting on his own. I was placed in that elevated position by circumstances, and I left it of my own accord. The last day of my absolute command was the first day of my real contentment. Since then I have done what the governing leaders have wanted me to do, and my conscience does not bother me for ever having failed to obey. I find myself now one of the happiest beings in the revolution. If anyone tends to believe that I have been insubordinate, my acts have belied this. Few men have been given a more ample opportunity to testify what they are to the world. During all the time I commanded, I did not do one single thing that revealed ambition. I commanded a considerable corps of men without any laws other than my will. I engraved money and did everything that an absolute lord can do on his estates. Yet no traces can be found of my even having desired to perpetuate my name.

It would be in vain for me to spend time repeating my desires for order and tranquility. I have attained the rank of General-in-Chief and look upon this title as a wife looks upon the dress and jewels she puts on on her wedding day. Occupied as she is in the more important business of pleasing her husband, she scarcely remembers them. Thus I barely remember the rank of general except to be of great use to my country, for my head is filled with the desire to destroy my enemies. If they were expelled from the territory tomorrow, my sole ambition would be to govern and augment the properties my country has given me. I would very happily become a citizen even if this were not the mode or manner of representative governments. To leave a command by force is for someone who loves to command. I would leave a command because of my character and for my peace of mind.

My country has covered me with honors. It has more than recompensed me for the efforts I made for my own defense and independence. I leave to superior talents the task of establishing civil liberty and order. I am always quick to act like a soldier wherever I am sent. The less freedom I have in my command, the happier I am. While I was absolute, I triumphed over the enemy. I have ended this career with glory, and if I could now retire with the reputation I have, I would be a lucky mortal. I cannot rise any higher in the esteem of my fellow citizens, and I very much fear losing what I have
acquired. It is only a sense of honor and the desire to repay my country that keep me in command. I will do everything possible not to be unworthy of its confidence and to certify to all my constancy, my obedience, and my gratitude.

Forgive me, my dear friend, for writing this long letter as proof of my desire to erase whatever slight unfavorable impression my letter of January 15 might have made on you. Receive it as proof of the esteem in which I hold you, for I do not want my cherished friends to think ill of me unjustly. Please always write me with frankness, for I appreciate it very much. If I am guilty of error, I believe I am docile enough to correct myself. If I am not, I will have the opportunity to remove the impressions that possibly the speed of the pen can project. I have taken too much time from a man who has as much to do as you.

Correct the country for us. I know it is time now for you to leave this letter and return to arranging the great affairs of the Republic. Believe me to be sincerely your friend, and do not hold as insignificant someone who wants to prove to you that he had the honor of being your attentive servant and friend.

José A. Páez.
CHAPTER XV

Siege of Puerto Cabello—Ultimatum to Calzada—
His Reply—I Decide to Assault the Plaza—Dangerous
Enterprise—Surrender of the Plaza and the Fort—
Losses of the Royalists and Patriots.

1823

While I was in La Guaira getting provisions and
materials for the siege of Puerto Cabello, I very secretly
wrote the Commandant of the Plaza, Don Sebastian de la
Calzada, on September 17 and urged him to lay down his arms
in order to avoid useless bloodshed. Furthermore, I offered
him twenty-five thousand pesos for the expenses that might
be incurred by his departure from the plaza. I also wrote
the Spaniard, Don Jacinto Iztueta, a man whom I knew was not
very happy with the Royalists.¹ I selected two prisoners to
take these letters. Without removing their handcuffs, I set
sail with these prisoners in the corvette Urica. I dis­
patched them from Ocumare in a canoe to Puerto Cabello,
instructing them to present themselves to the Spanish leader

¹Jacinto Iztueta was a native of Biscay. In 1811 he
was an enthusiastic supporter of the "banner of Castilla." He
later was imprisoned at Puerto Cabello because he was an
ardent Royalist. Parra Pérez, Historia de la Primera Repú-
as escapees from the prisons of La Guaira.

Calzada did not delay long in answering me, secretly also. He told me that his honor and military responsibility did not permit him to take the step I proposed to him, and he ended by saying that he had resolved to defend the plaza until the bitter end. Consequently, I went ahead then and besieged the port, for I saw that it was impossible to conquer the bold obstinacy of the enemy in any other manner.

The plaza at Puerto Cabello was divided in two sections. The first section, called Pueblo Interior, formed a peninsula that by means of an isthmus joined the town called Pueblo Afuera. The latter town originated in said isthmus and extended toward the continent. The interior town was separated from the exterior by a canal that ran from the sea to the heart of the bay. This canal bathed its waters at the foot of the battery called Estacada, which with a battery at the East called Principe and another at the West called Princesa, defended the plaza on the South. On the East the enemy had a battery called Picayo or Constitución which was set up at the edge of town across from the extensive plantation of mangrove trees that were on that side of the bay.

Páez footnotes this as follows. "On one occasion I had to leave temporarily in order to go to Valencia to ask for food provisions, which were very scarce. The inhabitants of this city, always most generous with their country and with me, not only gave me the necessary provisions, but in addition anything that could serve to please the troops during the fatigues of the siege."
On the North, the plaza had no other defense than the battery of Corito and the fortress of San Felipe. The latter were constructed in front of an island situated on the mouth of the canal that forms the entrance to the port. The mouth of this canal was closed by a chain that stretched between the aforementioned fortifications. All these points were perfectly mounted with cannons. From the Corito battery ran a rampart to the South until it joined the Principe, but this had no artillery. The exterior part of the town was in front of the Estacada and behind a clear space of about two hundred and fifty yards. In front of this part of the town and coming from within, there was an established, fortified line, defended on the West by a fort which was situated at the mouth of the San Estéban River and along a canal in front of Calle Real [Royal Street] of the inner town. From there to the East the line curved to leave the path free for fires from the Princesa.

Even under the sure fire of the enemy's excellent artillery, I started trying to mount artillery on the Trincherón battery. On October 7 we took possession of this battery, situated at the edge of the mangrove plantation, and placed a twenty-four pounder. The Royalist Lieutenant Don Pedro Calderon came in a long, narrow, armed canoe along the narrow passage formed by the mangroves and the Trincherón battery at the foot of the hill, and he prevented us from bringing our materials of war from the port at Borburata. Later he had to retreat from here with great losses. From
then on the path was clear for us to aim the other batteries against the plaza.

On the eighth the San Luis battery was mounted west of Trincherón. It offered the advantage of giving us greater protection for the war materials coming from Borburata. On the twelfth we were successful in constructing a battery in Cocos which dominated the mouth of the river and kept those besieged from coming out and getting water. It also enabled us to attack the fort. The enemy took advantage of the fire that resulted from this battery when a grenade exploded and attempted to come out. This attempt was repelled by Captain Laureano López, and the enemy was forced to return to the plaza.³

West of the Cocos battery we placed a mortar and set up the batteries of Royal Street against the canal on the

³General Laureano López was born in Popayán and was the brother of General J. H. López. He was with the Republicans that General Nariño led in the brilliant campaign of the South and thus fought in the Battles of Palacio and Calibio. In 1815 he was victorious in the Battle of Palo. He was defeated in the Battle of Cuchilla del Tambo and later fell prisoner in the Battle of Las Cruces. The Spanish forced him to serve as a soldier in their ranks then until the Battle of Boyacá in 1819 when he was rescued. He fought at the second Battle of Carabobo under Páez with such distinction, that Páez later selected him as one of the captains to lead the assault on Puerto Cabello. He was wounded in this attack and received a special commendation. In 1826 he was promoted to Sergeant Major and ten years later he attained the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. By 1851 López had become a General. He died in Popayán in 1852. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 272.
outside line. *Rebote* battery was to confront *Princesa* and some launches that the Royalist had posted in the mangrove plantation. We had already come so close to the walls, that we had opened a breach in the fort and in the masthead. The enemy had good workmen, however, and they repaired the damages received during the day at night. By now the enemy force that had occupied the Mirador de Solano had capitulated. This point now served us as it had the enemy before—as a lookout point from which to observe the interior of the besieged plaza.

The story which I am going to relate now is what made me hope we could take the plaza by assault. Every morning we found human footprints on the beach on the way to Borburate. I posted men there and was successful in having them surprise a Negro who waded in that terrain, covered with water, in the dark of night. This Negro told me that he was called Julián, was Don Jacinto Iztueta's slave, and that he had left the plaza with orders to observe our position. I set him free to return to the plaza, and I presented him with some gifts. Charging him to say nothing of what had occurred that night, I told him that he would never be prevented from returning to the plaza so long as he promised that he would always come to me. After he had come and gone many times, I was finally able to win the Negro over to my side. I had him stay with us and finally persuaded him to show me the weak point at the mangrove plantation through which he was wont to make his nightly excursions. I sent
three officers—Captain Marcelo Gómez, Lieutenant Juan Albornoz, and José Fernández—to accompany him one night.\textsuperscript{4} They returned within two hours and reported they had gotten close to land without ever having left shallow water.

Having twice proposed to Calzada to enter an agreement to prevent further bloodshed, I finally sent him an ultimatum to surrender the plaza and gave him twenty-four hours to decide. If he refused to capitulate, I threatened to take the plaza by force and knife the entire garrison. When the twenty-four hours elapsed, he answered me saying that the

\textsuperscript{4}Captain Marcelo Gómez was born in Guasdualito about 1795 and became a citizen of Achaguas. He enlisted as a soldier in Commandant Olmedilla's cavalry. In 1814 he was with García Sena in the defeat at Barinas, but in 1815 he participated with Olmedilla at the victory in Guasdualito. He helped defeat Calzada in Chire while serving under General Ricaurte in 1815. By 1816 Gómez had joined Páez in Palmarito and was promoted to corporal. While serving under Páez, he was wounded at the Battle of Barinas and promoted later to the rank of Lieutenant. He served under Bolívar in the Battles of Cañafistola and Gamarra in 1819. He was again promoted, this time to captain, and fought at the second Battle of Carabobo. In 1822 he participated in the siege of Puerto Cabello. He became a member of the Lanceros de la Victoria and served in this regiment until 1827. In 1831 he campaigned in the Alto Llano. Dávila, Diccionario Biográfico, I, 192–93.

Juan Ignacio Albornoz was born in Barcelona, Venezuela. In 1814 he was a lieutenant and in 1817 helped defend the fort at Barcelona. He was in New Granada in 1819 and in 1821 fought at the Battle of Carabobo. He participated in the siege of Puerto Cabello in 1823. Albornoz was killed in 1835 while fighting against the Reformistas. Ibid., 6.

José Fernández was a citizen of Caracas. In 1822 he attained the rank of Sublieutenant in the Granderos de la Guardia. He participated in the siege of Puerto Cabello. Ibid., 143.
plaza was defended by old soldiers who knew how to fulfill their duty and were resolved as a last resort to follow the glorious examples of Sagunto and Numancia. If fate allowed me to penetrate those walls, they would follow my orders although they expected that I would not want to stain the lustre of my sword by an act worthy of the times of the barbarians.

When the group that had gone for conference left the plaza, the troops lined up along the walls and challenged us with great huzzas to come run them through with a knife. It was then that I decided to enter the plaza on the side of the mangrove plantation. In order that the enemy would not believe that we were going to carry out immediately the threat we had made to Calzada, I put five hundred men to digging ditches during the night. I thus twisted the course of the river so that the besieged enemy would believe that I was thinking only of lengthening the siege and not of assaulting the walls of the plaza for the time being. On this occasion I miraculously escaped with my life, for while inspecting the work very early that morning, a cannon ball hit the pile of sand I was standing on with such force, that it hurled me violently into the ditch. However, I was not hurt at all.

Almost certain that the enemy did not suspect that I was ready to assault, I ordered all our guns to start firing at five in the morning and not stop until I sent a counter
order. My intention was to call the enemy's attention to the front and tire him so we could catch him unprepared that night. Then I assembled my troops and ordered them to disrobe, keeping only their weapons.

On the night of November 7 at ten o'clock, four hundred men from the Anzoátegui battalion and one hundred lancers were moved from Alcabala under the orders of Manuel Cala and Lieutenant Colonel José Andrés Elorza and commissioned to assault in the following order.⁵

First, Lieutenant Colonel Francisco Farfan was to take possession of the batteries Princesa and Principe with two companies under the command of Captain Francisco Domínguez[z]

⁵No further information is available on Manuel Cala. Lieutenant Colonel José Andrés Elorza was born in San Felipe el Fuerte. As a lieutenant in 1813 he served under Colonel Olmedilla in the attack on Pedroza. He became ill and was taken prisoner. Managing to escape, he joined Garcia de Sena and participated in the unfortunate siege of Barinas in 1814. He then emigrated to Mérida. Serving under Captain Ranjel, he was victorious at the Battle of Bailadores. In 1815 he was in Casanare with Olmedilla and General Ricaurte. From 1816 on he served under Páez and fought at the Battles of Yagual, Achaguas, Nutrias, and San Fernando. In 1817 he participated in the triumph at Mucuritas. He suffered the defeats at Cojedes and Ortiz. By 1819 he had become a Lieutenant Colonel and in 1821 at the Battle of Carabobo he commanded a cavalry column. He fought brilliantly at the siege of Puerto Cabello and in 1823 campaigned in Riohacha at the head of the Dragones de Venezuela. He attained the rank of Colonel in 1826. Elorza died in Achaguas. Ibid., 123-24.
and fifty lancers under the command of Captain Pedro Rojas. On hearing the first firing, they were to charge hurriedly on the ramparts and bastions without giving the enemy time to bring out artillery pieces to repel them.

Second, a company under the command of Captain Laureano López and twenty-five lancers under the orders of Captain Juan José Mérida were to occupy the dock. Captain Joaquín Pérez with his company was to take over the battery at Corito. Captain Gabriel Guevara with another company was to attack the battery Constitución. Lieutenant Colonel José de Lima with twenty-five lancers was to occupy the door of

---

6 Colonel Francisco Farfan was born in Ecuador. He fought under Páez in the Battles of Mata de la Miel, Yagual, Achaguas, Mucuritas, Los Cocos, and Queseras del Medio. Serving under Bolívar, he was victorious at Paya, Gameza, and Vargas. In 1819 he fought at the Battle of Boyacá and later at the Battle of Carabobo. In 1823, serving under Páez, he helped in the siege of Puerto Cabello. Later the same year he helped in the Pasto campaign. Bolívar named him Minister of the Superior Military Court in 1826. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 149.

Captain Francisco Domínguez was born in Cumaná. He started his services to his country in 1811 in Angostura. He was wounded while fighting at the Battle of Barinitas. Later, he was taken prisoner while attempting to occupy Margarita. He escaped and fought under Páez's orders at the Battle of Carabobo in 1821 and later participated in the siege of Puerto Cabello. Ibid., 133.

Captain Pedro Rojas was also born in Cumaná and joined the independence cause as early as 1811. He fought at the Battles of Bocas del Pao, Cumaná, Barcelona, Aragua, Carabobo, and Puerto Cabello. Ibid., 537.

7 Captain Juan José Mérida was born in El Tinaco and was a merchant. Although he had been in the revolutionary army much earlier, the first written record available concerning his activities in battle start with the Battle of Carabobo in 1821. He also participated in the siege of Puerto Cabello in 1823. He died in El Tinaco in 1841. Dávila, Diccionario Biográfico, I, 364.
the Estacada. This was the point where the force which covered the outside line could enter the plaza. The company of riflemen under Captain Valentin Reyes along with Mayor Cala was to form the reserve. The launches I had posted in Borburata were to fake an attack on the dock of the plaza.

There will be some who will consider this risky operation rash. We must take into account, however, that rashness in war ceases to be imprudent, no matter how risky the undertaking, when one is certain the enemy is unprepared for an unexpected blow and thus virtually assured of success.

We spent four hours crossing the mangrove plantation with water up to our chests, walking on very muddy terrain, and without being seen—thanks to the dark of the night. We passed so close to Princesa battery, that we heard the guards exclaim over the great numbers of "fish" that were agitating the water that night. We also passed very close to the prow of the battle corvette Bailen, and we were successful in not

---

8Captain Valentin Reyes was born on the island of Margarita in 1803. He joined the independence cause in 1815 in Margarita and under Arismendi's command fought in the Battles of Guacuco, Caranta, and the Fort of Santa Rosa. In 1816 he went to the mainland with Bolivar. He then fought under Mac Gregor as first sergeant. In 1817 he participated in the fruitless assault on Angostura. He was with Mariño in 1818 in Cariaco and in 1819 became a Lieutenant. He went to New Granada in 1820 and returned with Bolivar in 1820. He fought at the second Battle of Carabobo as a Captain. Under Páez's orders, he helped besiege Puerto Cabello. In 1829 Reyes was promoted to Commandant. He died in the cholera epidemic of 1856 in his estate at Tamanavere. Ibid., II, 157-58.
being seen by the Spanish launches patrolling the bay.

The attack was made. As was to be expected, it had the best possible results. The enemy forces defended themselves with desperation until they saw the futility of all resistance. They had been forced to fight face-to-face and had been unable to retreat to the fortress, thanks to the precautions I had taken. With the plaza occupied, the exterior line was attacked by a company from the Battalion of Grenadiers that I had left stationed there to deceive the enemy. This line was forced to surrender.

At dawn two priests came and told me that General Calzada had taken refuge in a church and wanted to surrender to me personally. I went to see him immediately. He congratulated me for having "sealed my glories" (these were his words) with such a risky operation, and then he surrendered his sword. I thanked him, took him by the arm, and led him to drink coffee at the house he had occupied during the siege.

While I was on the side of the plaza that faces the fortress and a trumpeteer was sounding the truce, four cannon grape shots were fired from the fortress, killing one of my sergeants. However, when the enemy soldiers heard the trumpet announcing the truce, they raised a white flag and suspended the firing. Almost immediately I heard a terrible explosion. I turned my head to where the dense smoke was rising and realized that the enemy had blown up the war corvette Bailen anchored in the bay. I manifested my indignation at such an act to Calzada. He attributed it to the
rashness of the Commandant of the fortress, Colonel Don Manuel Carrera y Colina, and offered to write him ordering him to cease all hostilities as long as the garrison of the plaza and its chief were at the mercy of the conqueror.\footnote{Torrente mentions that Carrera y Colina in his communications with General Páez had "assured an honorable surrender." \textit{Historia de la Revolución}, III, 440.} That Commandant responded that if General Calzada were a prisoner, he was forced to cease recognizing his authority as his superior officer. I returned Calzada's sword to him then and sent him to the fortress. He wrote me from there shortly afterwards telling me that Carrera had recognized his authority on seeing him free, and that in his name he invited me to lunch with him at the fortress. Always confiding in Castilian chivalry, I went to that fort. I was received with military honors and with all the gallant courtesy that I could expect from such valiant adversaries.

While we were having lunch, the soldiers who had surrendered in the Mirador de Solano came before me and told me that they were still being tried. I interceded on their behalf, but since they always presented the argument of the need for severity in military discipline, I asked for the dispatches on the matter. With a brusqueness which the Spanish leaders forgave me because of my good intentions, I put them in my pocket. I then returned to the plaza where we entered into negotiations which ended with a most generous surrender.
The historian[s] Baralt [and Diaz] after telling briefly about the previous acts, conclude with these words: 10

Thus succumbed Puerto Cabello, the last precinct that still held Spanish weapons in the vast territory that lay between the Guayaquil River and the magnificent delta of the Orinoco. HERE ENDS THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE. Henceforth the weapons of the republic will not be used except against bands of robbers, which the peninsular tenacity armed and nourished for some time, or in aiding sister towns outside its boundaries in the conquest of their rights.

The Royalist losses on this occasion amounted to one hundred and fifty-six dead, fifty-six wounded, and fifty-six officers and five hundred and thirty-nine soldiers taken prisoner. This included the fort garrison. We had only ten dead and thirty-five wounded. Captains Sebastián Taborda and Marcelo Gómez, in addition to the ones already cited, distinguished themselves. The patriots seized sixty pieces of every type of artillery without counting the dismounted cannons, six hundred and twenty guns, three thousand hundredweights of powder, six cannon launches, and a multitude of military and naval implements.

10 This citation is in Baralt and Díaz, Resumen de la Historia, III, 114-15.
CHAPTER XVI

Efforts of the Patriots to Get Aid from the European Powers and from the United States—Sympathy of the English and American Peoples for the Cause of South American Independence—Recognition of Colombia—Brief Reflections on the Monroe Doctrine—Congress of Panamá.

1822

When the drama of the Colombian revolution ended following the capture of Puerto Cabello, the new Republic believed itself to have the right to be recognized as an independent nation by European powers and the United States. During our struggle with Spain, friends of liberty in both hemispheres had contented themselves with giving sterile signs of sympathy for the South American patriots, and despite our efforts, we were never able to get the assistance of any foreign power. When in 1804 Colonel W. [William S.] Smith and Mr. [Samuel] Ogden of New York placed the two corvettes Leandro and Emperador with rifles, ammunition, and two hundred volunteers at Miranda's disposal, we received the first foreign aid.¹

¹The author is referring here to Colonel William S. Smith, who was ex-President John Adams's son-in-law and an Inspector or Collector of Customs, and Mr. Samuel Ogden, who was a New York merchant. They assisted Miranda in outfitting this filibustering expedition in 1806 in New York apparently
In 1810 the junta of Caracas had commissioned Señores Luis López Méndez and Simón Bolívar to secure a treaty obtaining Great Britain's help. They were not able to get it because the interests of that nation were identified then with those of Spain in the fight against Bonaparte. That same year this junta also sent Telesforo Orea and Vicente Bolívar to the United States to interest this nation in the struggle Colombia was sustaining for her independence.

2Don Luis López Méndez was the financial agent for the Caracas government in London and perhaps a prototype of the South American financial agent of those days. He was profuse in his promises to the British soldiers coming to fight for Venezuelan independence regardless of whether he intended or was capable of implementing these promises. Cunninghame Graham, Páez, 152-53, 169.

3Telesforo Orea or de Orea and Juan Vicente Bolívar, the Liberator's brother, arrived in Baltimore on June 5, 1810. They were cordially, though not officially, received by Dr. Thornton, a close friend of President James Madison. Later they were received by Secretary of State Robert Smith, and still later by the President. Although Smith did not accept Juan Vicente Bolívar's credentials, he expressed his enthusiasm for Venezuelan independence. Juan Vicente did not wait for a later appointment with Smith and left immediately for Philadelphia to see the Spanish Minister there, Don Luis de Onís, and negotiate an agreement. The plan he offered the latter was moderate, for he was willing to leave the constitutional status of Venezuela unaltered if complete equality were granted in office-holding to Creoles and Spaniards and if Creoles were given a share in the economic administration of the country. Orea, who had left for Caracas when Juan Vicente Bolívar went to Philadelphia, returned now with the authority to oust Juan Vicente. Onís reported to his government now that Juan Vicente told him: "that instead of an agreeable answer, he had received letters from his brother and friends to the effect that he was being superseded by Don Telesforo de Orea, born in Tenerife, one of those knaves without good blood or property, who are leading the
North American people gave then, as always, signs of sympathy for our cause; however, they were unable to get the federal government to depart from the policy of neutrality which it maintained in foreign affairs. Despite this failure, Manuel Palacio [Fajardo] was sent to Washington in 1812 to inform the President that the peoples of New Granada could no longer support themselves alone in the unequal battle which they had started against despotism.  

The revolution, and that the people shout for his head and the confiscation of his property which is the largest in the country, only because he had negotiated with me. I saw his brother's original letters in which he advises him to leave for Europe and on no account return to Caracas." By 1811, Simón Bolívar had been able to free Juan Vicente’s property and allow him to return and report on his mission. In July of 1811 the latter perished at sea during a storm off the Bermudas while he was returning home. Madariaga, Bolívar, 154-55, 161-63.

4 Manuel Palacio Fajardo was born in Mijagual, Venezuela, in 1784 to a wealthy and patriotic family. He finished his studies in law and medicine at the University of Santa Fé de Bogotá. When the cry for independence broke out in Caracas, Palacio flew back to his country. He was immediately elected to the first Congress which met in 1811 and to membership in the Sociedad Patriótica. His speeches and actions in this Congress were brilliant. Joining arms with Miranda, he counseled the higher governmental echelons. In 1812 he emigrated to Cundinamarca and there was charged with the commission to obtain arms in the United States and Europe. He failed to get any assistance in the United States. Acting on Mr. Serrurier's (French minister in Washington) recommendation, he went to Paris in 1813 to seek aid from Napoleon. Palacio Fajardo was negotiating with Napoleon's Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Duke de Bassano, when the Battle of Leipzig occurred (October, 1813) which spelled Napoleon's defeat. In 1817 he wrote and had published in English a most significant work entitled Outline of the Revolution in Spanish America (London, 1817). In 1818 he was named Secretary of State of the Angostura government. He died on March 8, 1819 in Angostura just as he was putting all his enormous talents into play for his country’s benefit. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 427-28;
government in Washington gave that emissary this response: "That although the United States had no alliance and was at peace with Spain and thus unable to help the patriots, as inhabitants of the same continent, they still hoped that our efforts would be successful." This emissary lost hope of securing help from the cabinet in Washington and went to the French minister in that city, Mr. Serrurier. The latter advised him to go see Napoleon; however, when Napoleon seemed best disposed to second the efforts of the South American patriots, the Battle of Leipsig occurred and forced him to think only of defending his territory from invasion by the Allies.

In 1815 the Senate of New Granada sent Pedro Gual to Washington. The following year Bolivar sent General Lino

Caracciolo Parra Pérez, Una Misión Diplomática ante Napoleon en 1813 (Caracas, 1953), 7-89.

Dr. Pedro Gaul was born in Venezuela. He took part in the revolutionary junta in Caracas in 1810, and in 1814 he helped assemble an electoral college to revise the constitution. After helping to defend Cartagena in 1813, he was forced to emigrate to Jamaica. He returned in 1819 to Venezuela and was of great help to Bolivar in the task of governing the country. He became one of Bolivar's Finance Ministers and later became Secretary of State. He retired from public service in 1830 and dedicated himself to the practice of law in Bogotá. He broke his prolonged retirement only twice: the first time to fulfill a diplomatic mission for Ecuador in Spain in 1842 pertaining to the settlement of the war.
Clemente, for he believed that the government of the United States would be more disposed to lend its powerful help to aid Colombian independence now that an expedition was being armed in Louisiana in favor of the Mexican patriots. President Madison, faithful to the traditional policies of his predecessors of maintaining the strictest neutrality in the affairs of other countries and of not forming entangling alliances, ordered that expedition to be dissolved by proclamation in December of that year. This was also authorized by Congress and prohibited American citizens from selling war ships to subjects of any foreign belligerent power.

Despite this, the people of the United States did not cease to manifest their sympathies for the South American patriots. In 1818 the legislature of Kentucky, inspired by the eminent orator H[enry] Clay, invited the federal government to recognize the independence of the Hispanic-American debt and negotiating a treaty for commerce and navigation; the second time to assume the Presidency of Venezuela only temporarily in 1861. Páez, who was his Minister of War and Navy then, tried to negotiate with the Federalists. Gual disapproved of this action and asked Páez to resign his ministry. It was then that the commander of the garrison stationed in Caracas asked Gual to resign, arrested him, and proclaimed Páez the dictator. Gual was forced into exile in Ecuador where he died in Guayaquil in 1862. Scarpetta and Vergara, *Diccionario Biográfico*, 199-200. Harold A. Bierck, Jr., *Vida Pública de Don Pedro Gual* (Caracas, 1947), 11-569.
countries. Now arms and munitions were sent secretly from the United States.

The names of Colonel [William] Duane, Lord Holland, and Sir Robert Wilson must be recorded here. Later they were worthy of receiving a tribute of thanks from the Colombian Congress for the interest they manifested in favor of the independence cause.

In his message to the Congress of the United States in December, 1819, President Monroe, the reputed author of the doctrine by this name, said that the South American struggle was of great interest to the United States. However, he added that he considered it of great importance to the

7 The author interjects this footnote at this point. "This is the same man who later as Secretary of State gave the instructions to the commissioners to the Congress of Panama that I shall copy later." For a detailed account of the life of Clay see Calvin Colton, The Life and Times of Henry Clay. 2 vols. (New York, 1846).

8 No further information was available on Lord Holland. Colonel William Duane was an American who was sent to Colombia in 1822 to settle claims against the Colombia government, among which was the Jacob Idler claim. After completing his mission, he wrote A Visit to Colombia in the Years 1822 and 1823 (Philadelphia, 1826), Jane L. DeGrummond, "The Jacob Idler Claim Against Venezuela, 1817-1890," The Hispanic American Historical Review, XXXIV (May, 1954), 131-57.

Sir Robert Wilson was a General in the British Army. He sent his third son, Captain Belford Hinton Wilson, to Colombia and asked Bolivar to appoint him to his staff as his aide. Young Wilson served Bolivar well and faithfully, and the latter attested to this in his will. Sir Wilson pronounced an eulogy on Bolivar in Parliament and later was voted a thanks from the Venezuelan Congress for his efforts in promoting the cause of independence. Hasbrouck, Foreign Legionaries, 335, 392, 394.
national character and morality to prevent any violation of the laws of neutrality.

We owed the English people some help in the unequal struggle we maintained against the metropolis. During the year 1817, six ships left England carrying seven hundred and twenty men recruited by Colonels [Robert] S. Keene [sic, Skeene], [Belford H.] Wilson, [Gustavus] Hippisley, [Donald] Campbell, [J. A.] Gillmore [sic, Gilmour] and [Donald] Mac Donald [sic, Mc Donald]. 9 Despite the fact that part of the

9Colonel Robert Skeene was a retired Lieutenant Colonel in the British Cavalry. He temporarily accepted the rank of Brigadier General in the First Venezuelan Hussars. Ibid., 48.

The Wilson Páez refers to here is Colonel Belford Hinton Wilson (see Footnote 8 in this Chapter). He was educated at Westminster and Sandhurst and joined Bolivar just in time to be present at the Battle of Junín. In 1824 he was granted a leave for health reasons, but he returned in time to make his remarkable ride carrying the Bolivian constitution to Sucre. The latter feat won him his promotion to Colonel. Wilson remained with Bolivar until his death in 1830. In 1832 he was appointed British Consul General in Peru, and in 1849 he was given a similar post in Venezuela. Ibid., 334, 335.

Colonel Gustavus Hippisley was appointed a Colonel in the First Venezuelan Hussars. With López Méndez's encouragement and backing, he agreed to complete the organization of the First Venezuelan Lancers and receive an appointment as Brigadier General in return. In December of 1817 he left England with thirty officers and one hundred and sixty non-commissioned officers on the Emerald. By 1818 this regiment had been so reduced by sickness, resignations, and desertions, that Colonel Hippisley was able to crowd them all on board the Tiger and sail for the Orinoco. After his arrival at Angostura, he and Colonel Wilson consolidated the remnants of their regiments in one brigade known as the "British Brigade." Then Hippisley received orders to join Bolivar at San Fernando de Apure where he encountered the wild confusion of the Republican army retreating before Morillo's Spanish forces. Colonel Hippisley's men deserted him now due to the poverty, hardships, and privations. It seems López Méndez had not been able to fulfill any of his promises regarding
troops that arrived in 1818 succumbed to the inclemency of
the climate, General [John] D'evereux [sic, D'Evereaux],

pay, housing, and rations. When he saw that the patriot
treasury could not give his men and officers better rations
and pay, Hippisley resigned. When he arrived in London, he
ordered López Méndez arrested for non-payment of the debt due
him by the Republic of Venezuela. He also spread many
calumnies against Bolivar. Ibid., 47, 48, 55, 58, 67, 70,
72, 73, 74, 75, 371.

Colonel Donald Campbell was appointed Colonel of a
rifle regiment by López Méndez's "factory of colonels." He
was an experienced infantry officer and was so efficient,
that he was one of the first to embark his regiment on a ship
he had chartered from his brother. Feeling that the other
colonels were his brothers-in-arms, he generously offered to
wait for Colonel Hippisley and finally embarked along with
the latter on the Dawson with thirty-seven officers and
almost two hundred non-commissioned officers. When this regi­
ment arrived in the West Indies, it dispersed because of
desertions and resignations. Yellow fever added to the chaos.
When Colonel Campbell's son, Duncan, died from this fever, he
himself resigned and sailed for home. Ibid., 49, 50, 53, 58,
69.

Colonel J. A. Gilmour was appointed Colonel of an
artillery brigade and sailed in 1817 on the Britannia accom­
panied by ten officers and eighty non-commissioned officers.
When he realized that guns were not forthcoming due to lack
of funds, he was forced to disband the organization. This
did not daunt his loyalty to the patriot cause, however, and
he later helped Bolivar assemble an artillery brigade on the
island of Margarita. Ibid., 49, 58, 68, 78, 118-19.

Colonel Donald Mc Donald had been commissioned by
López Méndez to recruit the First Venezuelan Lancers. He
had been so impatient to get to the scene of action, though,
that he sailed before his regiment was fully organized and
left its completion to Colonel Hippisley. In reality, Mc
Donald had hoped to obtain a higher rank by arriving early
and reporting to Bolivar as an independent volunteer. He
was prevented from achieving this when he was forced to put
into port at the Madeiras by a severe storm. There he and
his men left a trail of riot and disorder. When they finally
arrived at the Danish Island of St. Thomas, Mc Donald boasted
so loudly about his anti-Spanish feeling, that the Governor
of that island, fearing reprisals from the Spanish Governor
of Puerto Rico, ordered his ship, the Two Friends, expelled.
The Captain slipped away one night and left Mc Donald and his
men on shore. Then Captain Lane, an American, offered to
convoy Mc Donald as far as Amelia Island where he could
justly called the Lafayette of South America, during the next year organized a legion of one thousand seven hundred and twenty-nine Irishmen for the service of Colombia. Before report to MacGregor. He finally arrived in Angostura in 1819 on board the ship Grace. While ascending the Orinoco River, Mc Donald's incorrigible vanity induced him to put on his elaborate uniform for a boat excursion ashore. A party of Indians mistook his magnificent uniform as belonging to the Royalists, shot arrows at him, and killed him. Ibid., 47, 66, 81, 159-62, 163.

General John D'Evereaux was born in Ireland, but he had become a citizen of the United States after he was exiled from his native land as a result of the part he had taken in the uprising of 1798. He had been introduced to Bolivar in Cartagena while employed as supercargo of a vessel loading at this port, and he offered to raise an Irish Legion of five thousand men for the Liberator and also provide the requisite arms, ammunition, and military stores. In return for this, he wanted to be given a command with the rank of General of Division and to be paid one hundred and seventy-five dollars for each soldier he brought to Venezuela. When these conditions were granted, he returned to Dublin with the rank of Major General and started issuing commissions in the Irish Legion. D'Evereaux left for the New World months after his Legion had departed and reached Venezuela. Since he had made no provisions for this Legion, the men suffered untold hardships on the island of Margarita. Consequently, they defected and General D'Evereaux spent months trying to find his "orphan legion." While he was at Cúcuta he managed to pick a quarrel with General Antonio Nariño, the Vice-President, over a supposed insult to General English's widow. Nariño ordered D'Evereaux confined to a dungeon. In 1821 he was honorably acquitted by a Congressional committee of inquiry and confirmed in his rank of Major General by Bolivar. The Liberator even absolved him from any blame in the matter of the defection of the Irish. D'Evereaux remained in the service of the Colombian army for two more years. In 1823 he was appointed Colombian envoy extraordinary to the courts of northern Europe. While traveling in Italy for his health in 1825, he was arrested by the Austrian authorities for his role in the South American revolutions. He was eventually released by Metternich on the request of the Duke of Wellington. Returning to the United States then, he lived on a pension from the Venezuelan government until his death in 1854. D'Evereaux was then buried at the National Pantheon at Caracas. Ironically, this man who never took part in a
leaving with his troops, D'Evereux [sic, D'Evereaux] attended a banquet that his friends gave for him in Dublin and there he said he believed he was serving his country while fighting in the provinces of South America, a "land blessed by God and damned by man, prodigious in all that nature can concede; but wasted during centuries by the most frightening tyranny that ever hurt or humiliated humanity." This same year, Colonel [George] Elsom [sic, Elsam] and [James T.] English also recruited two thousand and two individuals in Europe, among which were three hundred Germans. At the same time single engagement with the Irish Legion and whose sole connection with this group lay in organizing it as a speculation from which he made a considerable profit, has been characterized as the "Lafayette of South America." Ibid., 137, 164, 165-67, 168, 170, 172, 186, 187, 257, 379, 384, 395, 401.

Colonel George Elsam was authorized by Bolívar to recruit one thousand men in London. For this he was to be paid fifty pounds sterling for every man he landed in South America and receive the rank of Colonel. Elsam found recruiting a relatively easy matter, for at this time the Allied armies had been withdrawn from France and Belgium and many regiments had been demobilized, thus leaving England full of discharged soldiers. He also enlisted many German veterans of the Napoleonic wars. As soon as the men were recruited and vessels were secured, Colonel Elsam sent them to Venezuela. He arrived there himself in April of 1819 with one hundred and ninety-two more men, raising the total number of his command to seven hundred men. Unfortunately, Elsam was not able to lead this force in battle, for he died soon after landing. Ibid., 83, 85, 105, 112, 113, 115, 119.

Colonel James T. English had been authorized also by Bolívar to recruit soldiers in England under the same conditions as Colonel Elsam with reference to payment, except that his rank was to be that of Brigadier General. He made especially alluring offers to both officers and enlisted men, promising them more pay, land grants, and bonuses. Thus he organized the British Legion. On April 7, 1819 General English arrived at Margarita. There General Urdaneta claimed
the Scotch General Mac Gregor brought six hundred men and Colonel [Francis] Maceroni [sic, Maceroni] another three hundred. We suppose that these British leaders were not moved by a spirit of avaricious ambition to abandon their country to fight in favor of a people oppressed on the American continent, but rather by the ambition of military glory, an affinity for new and dangerous adventures, and that passion for excitement which makes the Englishman seem like a crazy man sometimes and a hero at others.

Some years after the independence of Colombia was won, Lord Byron left the peace of the cities to go fight in the mountains of Greece for a people who, like the South Americans, wanted to win their independence. It is easy to understand why a Pole, as a lyric Italian says in speaking that the promises English had made his men were impossible for the Republic to fulfill and that the Colonel knew that when he made these promises. When his officers and men mutinied, General English ordered the lash to be used on the leaders and the men to be drilled in the hot sun six hours a day. When General Urdaneta would not attack Agua Santa, he assumed charge and responsibility and led the attack. Colonel English was defeated and even his own men blamed him for this disastrous defeat. Shortly afterwards, probably due to the disgrace and remorse, he was sent back to Margarita and died there of a fever. Ibid., 82, 105, 112, 113, 115, 117, 124, 128, 129, 164, 171, 173, 382, 384.

Colonel Francis Maceroni was an international soldier of fortune who assisted José María del Real, the diplomatic agent from New Granada, in recruiting soldiers in England. It was reported that for a sufficiently large amount of money, he would bestow the baton of Field Marshall. Ibid., 139, 143-45, 148-49, 150.
of his compatriots *servi si ma ognor frementi*, will fight wherever an oppressed people raise the standard of liberty.\textsuperscript{13} However, it is not easy to understand why an Englishman, who finds all the happiness a citizen can aspire to in his country, will abandon it to aid oppressed people.\textsuperscript{14} This can only be attributed to the noble character, determined and adventuresome, of the descendants of that King whom they called the Lion Hearted. I am happy to have the opportunity now to pay tribute on my country's behalf to the valiant champions of the British Legion and the Battalion of Carabobo. At this same time, I want to openly express my deep admiration for the English people to whom the world owes the belief that it is possible for people to guide their own destinies and to whom in addition humanity is in debt for many philanthropic institutions that honor them in the highest degree.

After the capture of Puerto Cabello, on December 9, 1823, the first minister that the United States sent to

\textsuperscript{13}The Italian phrase means "serve me yourself, please."

\textsuperscript{14}Hasbrouck does not find it hard to understand why the English left their country to fight elsewhere. After the Battle of Waterloo, the reduction in the English army and navy left literally thousands unemployed; consequently, Hasbrouck states that "recruiting was a relatively easy matter; for just at this time the allied armies had been withdrawn from France and Belgium, many regiments had been demobilized, and London, Liverpool, Manchester, Dublin and Brussels were full of discharged soldiers, yearning for the free companionships of the army, and eager for a renewal of their lives of adventures." *Foreign Legionaries*, 105.
Colombia, Mr. [Richard C.] Anderson, finally arrived in Bogotá. 15 On October 3, 1824 the first treaty between these two countries was signed. France and England had already sent their representatives.

The peoples of South America, who counted on the intervention of the United States or felt that at least these States would be obligated openly to facilitate means with which to resist their European enemies, must not give much value to the acts I have related. This is because of that doctrine which they say President Monroe proclaimed in one of his messages. If we did not see this doctrine invoked by the North Americans relative to the Mexican Empire, we would deem it unjust and unreasonable to exact from them the semi-quixotic sacrifice of peace and exposure to the perils of war in order to defend another nation threatened by a foreign power.

This Monroe Doctrine seems to have been interpreted in two very different manners. For some, it represents a supposed right that a nation has of not letting another one take possession of a territory that in case of a question of ownership should belong to no one but her. For others,

---

15 Richard C. Anderson presented his credentials to Santander on December 17. He brought instructions to negotiate a treaty of commerce in which the Colombian government tried to include a compulsory arbitration clause that the American government rejected. Madariaga, Bolivar, 494, 551. Dexter Perkins, The Monroe Doctrine, 1823-1826 (Cambridge, 1927), 185.
undoubtedly more generous, it is the holy alliance of the American peoples against the unjust pretensions of a league of European governments. However, history does not present but one sole example of this principle being put into practice from the times of Monroe until those of President [Andrew] Johnson.\textsuperscript{16}

The idea behind that doctrine would have been great, indeed sublime, if it had been accepted more actively than it has been until now, and if it had been formulated in the following manner. It could have been a League of all the Hispanic-American Republics dedicated to opposing all foreign attempts to reestablish their monarchical reign in countries where they had been defeated. These Republics could also have pledged their sacred respect to the territorial boundaries in America so that none could extend their limits at another's expense except by a transfer of property made in a national congress. In this manner an American equilibrium could be maintained, and no one would ever have accused the noble eagle of the North unjustly of being the most voracious of the birds of prey.

The peoples of South America with adjacent territories or common interests would have formed alliances in case of

\textsuperscript{16}Páez refers here to the pressure put by the United States on France immediately after the Civil War to get out of Mexico. Arthur P. Whitaker, \textit{The Western Hemisphere Idea: Its Rise and Decline} (New York, 1954), 66-67, 74.
danger without being forced by any doctrine. After all, this has been and always will be the policy of wise govern­ments. In this same manner, no one can prevent distant peoples from manifesting their sympathies for any cause in which they have no further interest than that which is awakened by community of origin or similarity of political institutions.

It is easy to understand why the United States could not look with indifference at the consolidation of an imperial government within the confines of her territory. For the same reason Spain could not ignore the establishment of a Republic adjoining the Pyrrenes, nor another France on this side of the La Mancha Canal, and England could not tolerate the Fenians in Ireland. Perhaps the time has come when the United States has to put into practice the so-called Monroe Doctrine, not out of respect to the republican ideal which they represent in America, but out of consideration for the inconveniences to its political existence that the nearness of a government whose principles are not analogous to theirs could bring.

In case of danger, the South American Republics should not rely on anything but their own strength and at the most, the assistance of their neighbor if it suits its interests. Nearly all of these countries have long coastlines. If they want to be prepared to resist foreign aggression, they must fortify their ports well and try to form a fleet to help defend them.
When the so-called Holy Alliance was formed in Europe to secure the thrones and defend the religious principles which they proclaimed, the emancipated peoples of America believed their independence was threatened. It was natural for Spain to seek allies to reestablish her dominion in America, even though she might be forced to divide her territories with them. From this surged Bolivar's great idea of forming an American confederation in order to pit a Holy Alliance of the American Republics against the one of the European Kings. This confederation considered Spanish control over the islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico as a threat to the life of the new Republics. Consequently, these same Republics planned to use their combined efforts to free them from the Hispanic yoke.

A plan was already in existence by 1825 in Mexico to assemble an expedition in Florida, if the United States permitted it, destined to free Cuba. The United States, Mexico, Colombia, Buenos Aires, Perú, Chile, and Santo Domingo were to contribute men and ships for this purpose. Unfortunately, the plan did not materialize beyond being a threat to Spain. More successful was Bolivar's proposal to gather representatives from all the American nations on the isthmus of Panamá --"Center of the globe which looks at Asia on one side and at Africa and Europe on the other." The United States was invited to send delegates to that assembly, and the government in Washington accepted the invitation, naming Señores
Richard C. Anderson and John Sergeant as commissioners. The instructions given these men reveal the great prudence with which this great nation has always acted in serious matters, and the good faith and respect it holds for the nations with which it lives in peace. The advice that the United States gave all the commissioners and the instructions given its own were as follows.

The Congress of Panamá finally assembled. Its results

17 It is interesting to note that President Adams appointed these two men amidst many objections from Congress, including that he was trying to involve the United States in an entangling alliance. While the Jacksonian Democrats filibustered in their attempt to discredit Adams' administration, Congress delayed this Panamá mission so long that it became futile. One of the American delegates died on the way to the conference, and the other arrived after it was over. Ibid., 38, 41-42. Perkins, The Monroe Doctrine, 204-22.

18 The author included a translation of the general instructions given Anderson and Sergeant. These are omitted because a copy of the original instructions may be found in Henry Clay, Spanish America. Observations on the Instructions Given by the President of the United States of America to the Representatives of that Republic, at the Congress Held at Panamá, in 1826; on the Conduct of Mr. Poinsett, Minister of the United States in Mexico; and Generally on our Relations with Spanish America; with a copy of the Instructions (London, 1829), 28-65.
may be seen in what I copy from the work of the historian [Cesar] Cantu.19

The Americans, inexperienced in public affairs, jealous of a liberty that they still were not familiar with and thus ignoring all the prudence it requires, and unable to tolerate a social state that would harness loose passions, could arrive at nothing.

The North Americans attended this Congress, but did not take part in its deliberations. Chile was agitated by internal turbulence. Buenos Aires rejected the idea of the convention. Peru, or rather Bolivia, was still not recognized as an independent State. Paraguay was isolated. Brazil, having declared its freedom in a different manner, was not invited to attend. Thus only the delegates from Mexico, Guatemala, Colombia, and Peru swore to maintain the perpetual federation; a popular, representative, and federal type republic; and a constitution similar to that of the United States, except that it did not grant religious tolerance.

I was in this part of my Memoirs when the diplomatic correspondence about French intervention in Mexico between the eminent statesmen Mr. [William H.] Seward and the Minister of France, Mr. [Edmond] Druyn [sic, Drouyn] de Lhuys, was made public.20 I cannot resist the desire to insert an

19 Cesar Cantu was born in Brivio, Italy on December 5, 1804 and died in Milan in 1895. He was a historian, philosopher, and poet who had embraced an ecclesiastical career which he abandoned before he was ordained. When his father died, he took over the task of supporting his large family of ten children. At seventeen he was already a grammar professor. In 1836 he started publishing his monumental Storia Universale, which he finished in 1847 with a total of thirty-two volumes. Although Cantu wrote many other works on diverse subjects, this is his most famous work. A Spanish translation of Storia Universale by Fernández Cuesta was published in Barcelona. It is from this translation that Páez is undoubtedly quoting. Enciclopedia Universal Ilustrada, XI, 279-81.

20 According to Frederick Bancroft: "One of the striking facts connected with the negotiations about
extract from a document that is so precious to American interests. It states as follows in the section that refers to the Monroe Doctrine and the accusations which have been directed against Mexico for the anarchy which has reigned in the country since its independence.

Wherever the peoples of a country have established and subjected themselves voluntarily to a monarchical institution of their own choice, free from all foreign coercion or intervention, like in Brazil today or Mexico in 1822, the United States shall not refuse to maintain relations with these governments nor try to topple over such institutions by means of propaganda, force, or intrigue. On the other hand, if a nation has established republican and domestic institutions similar to ours, the United States shall maintain in their favor that no foreign nation can legally intervene by force to subvert these Republican institutions and establish those of an opposite character. . . .

Mr. Druyn [sic, Drouyn] de Lhuys maintains that Maximilian's government is undergoing the fate that is very common to new powers, particularly since it has the misfortune of having to endure the consequences of the discords produced under the previous government. Mr. Druyn [sic, Drouyn] de Lhuys manifests that this misfortune and this fate are in effect the misfortune and fate of governments that have not encountered armed competitors and that have enjoyed an authority during peace without any opposition. He alleges that revolutions and civil wars are the natural state in Mexico. He also insists that the opposition made by some military caudillos against the establishment of an empire under Maximilian is only a natural result of the same lack of discipline and the same continuation of anarchy which have victimized those who have preceded him in the government of Mexico.

It is not the intent, nor would it matter to the character of the United States, to deny that Mexico has been the theatre for factions and internal wars for a long time. The United States confesses this with sorrow, so much more sincerely because Mexico's experience has been painful not only to its own people, but unfortunately served as a pernicious influence in other nations. On the other hand, the United States would be unjust and would not be living up to the friendship professed for Mexico if it dragged its past calamities before these people or invoked or approved the infliction of a punishment for its political errors by a foreign nation. The people of Mexico and their status have peculiarities that are undoubtedly well understood by France. At the beginning of this century they saw themselves forced by convictions which humanity cannot but respect, to defeat a foreign monarchical government which they deemed incompatible with their well-being and growth. They saw themselves forced at the same time by convictions which the world must respect, to test the establishment of Republican institutions without the complete experience, practical education, and usage which would necessarily assure the success of these American institutions and ideas. They had African slavery, colonial institutions, and ecclesiastical monopolies. They shared the first one with the United States, while we were happily exempt from the others.

We cannot deny that the anarchy in Mexico which Mr. Druyn [sic, Drouyn] de Lhuys complains of was necessary and even wisely tolerated in the efforts made to establish a sure base for full Republican liberty. I do not know if we can expect France to agree with us in this viewpoint which in our opinion mitigates the errors, misfortunes, and calamities of Mexico. However it may be, we return again to the opinion we hold that no foreign power can legally intervene in trials such as those of Mexico, or that, under the pretext of wanting to correct these errors, be able to deprive the people of their natural right to domestic and Republican liberty. All the damages and wrongs that Mexico has committed against any other State have already been severely punished by the consequences that legitimately followed their commission.

Nations are not authorized to correct each other's errors except when it is necessary to avoid or unravel a wrong that is very dear to them. If one power has the right to intervene in another to establish order, constituting itself the judge of the occasion, then each State has the same right of intervening in the
affairs of other and being the only judge of the time
and occasion. In this manner, carrying the principle
of intervention to its practical end, all sovereignty
and independence would come to be uncertain and false
and so would all peace and international friendship.

Everyone has to admire the diplomatic tact and good
faith with which this document handles the issue of having
the United States declare the meaning of the Monroe Doctrine.
Fortunate is the nation that can rely on men like the one
who drafted this interesting document!

I shall end the chapter by translating what ex-Presi-
dent [James] Buchanan has published on Mr. [George] Canning's
plan to oppose the projects of the Holy Alliance which
resulted in President Monroe's celebrated message.21

21Páez's translation of what President James Buchanan
wrote relative to Mr. George Canning's plan is being omitted
because the original may be found in a section on the origin,
history, and nature of the Monroe Doctrine included in James
Buchanan, Mr. Buchanan's Administration on the Eve of the
Rebellion (New York, 1866), 276-83.
CHAPTER XVII

Triumphal March from Puerto Cabello to Caracas—
Congress Orders the Drafting of Fifty Thousand
Men--Revolutionary Movement in Petare--Claims of
Captain Dupotet of the French Navy--My Replies--
My Proclamation Abolishing the Edict of the
Assembly.

1824-1825

On December 1, after leaving the plaza of Puerto
Cabello under the command of General [Juan] Escalona,
Mariño, Bermúdez, and I left Puerto Cabello and headed toward
Caracas. In the towns we passed along the way, we were

---

1The author interjected the following footnote here.
"This general had accompanied me during the siege. However,
when Bermúdez came with reinforcements from Maracaibo, he
sent Mariño to Caracas and La Guaira to bring a corvette that
was at the latter port and to ask General Soublette for re­
sources with which to continue the siege. Mariño arrived
two days after the plaza was taken."

2General Juan Escalona was born in Venezuela and was
an untiring champion of the independence cause. He figured
prominently in the early juntas in Caracas and in the battles
against Monteverde. In July of 1811 he was a member of the
Congress that signed the Declaration of Independence. When
Monteverde took over Caracas after his treaty with Miranda,
Escalona joined Mariño and accompanied him in the Oriente
campaign. In 1814 he was with Mariño at the formidable
Battle of Bocachico. He was in Valencia when it was beseiged
by Boves and later fought bravely at the Battles of Bogotá,
Chire, and Cañafistola. In 1819 he was a member of the Con­
gress of Angostura and Governor of Coro. In 1824, in Páez's
absence, he was Chief of Puerto Cabello. By 1826 he was
Intendant of Caracas and later Commissioner of the Departments
of Venezuela and Apure. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario
Biográfico, 140.
received with extraordinary demonstrations of enthusiasm and joy. The capture of the plaza that had been believed almost impregnable, produced this great glee, for the Royalista had occupied it since the year XII [1812] without the Republicans being able to wrest it from them. This spot, Santander said, seemed enchanted and gave the uninformed a false idea of the Republic's strength.

At the end of 1823, the fear still existed that Spanish obstinacy, relying on the co-operation of the partisans of the old regime who had remained in the country, would still try to reconquer the territory. Congress then had to take some precautionary security measures such as granting extraordinary powers to the chiefs of the departments. The Executive authorized them to expel the Royalists from the territory of Venezuela in the event of an outside invasion or any armed commotion in any of the provinces.

Nothing noteworthy occurred in the Republic during the year 1824 if we exclude the pursuit of those isolated parties that in the name of Royalism, such as the bandits of Calabria, committed major atrocities without being caught. Knowing the pathless terrains and hidden mountain paths, they eluded the pursuing Republican troops or resisted them from such advantageous positions, that it was almost impossible to attack them.

These bandit parties founded their hopes on the promises made to them in the press by the raging Royalist and unworthy Venezuelan who had taken refuge in Puerto Rico,
Don José Domingo Díaz. He told them that a formidable expedition would arrive soon at the Venezuelan coast. The principle leaders of these bands were José Dionisio Cisneros, Juan Centeno, and Doroteo Herrera. All of these officers had distinguished themselves in the Royalist ranks and after the Battle of Carabobo captained guerillas supporting the "Catholic Monarch" in the Tuy Valleys and in the Districts of Guarenas, Petare, and Guires. The most notable among them was Cisneros, the Fra-Diavolo of Venezuela. He had been a sergeant in Morales's troops and had assembled a band of thieves, claiming that a religious man from Caracas ordered him to make "war on all whites and acknowledge only Santander...

3Don José Domingo Díaz has the reputation of being one of Simón Bolívar's severest critics. The letters he wrote and published in Puerto Rico chastized the Liberator so vehemently, that the latter suffered some loss of prestige. Díaz was also the author of Memorias de la Rebellión en Caracas (Madrid, 1829). In this work he confessed that in the beginning the Republican Government was not interested in persecuting or killing the Spaniards. In this same work, he greatly exaggerated the strength and number of Boves' troops. Lecuna, Crónica Razonada, I, 69, 71-80, 283, 342-67. Torrente, Historia de la Revolución, III, 569.

4José Dionisio Cisneros is listed by the Spanish historian Torrente as an Indian who led the Royalist forces in the area of Santa Lucía, Charallave, and La Guaira de Paracotes. Historia de la Revolución, III, 569. Juan Celestino Centeno was the Commandant of the Royalist forces in the Guires area. Torrente mentions him as a pardo of quality. He had been an infantry Captain and Commandant of Arms in the town of Valle de Pascua until the revolutionists occupied that territory in 1821. In 1824 he became the Royalist Commandant of the Lealtad Battalion and was promoted to Colonel. Ibid., 572.

Doroteo Herrera was also a pardo. He was named Commander of the Lanceros squadron which was composed of two hundred and thirty men armed with lances. Ibid., 572-73.
as the true defender of the Spanish throne" (Torrente). Further on in this narrative we will have occasion to deal with these bandits again.

When the war ended, it was necessary to dismiss a great part of the troops that had served under my orders. Since the treasury of the Republic was unable to pay these men in coin, they were given instead, according to their rank, a certain number of cavalry horses and cattle taken from the confiscated Royalist herds. The men receiving these had to themselves take possession of the animals that had been given in payment for their services. From this arose great disorders which Señor Restrepo has not hesitated to label as armed robbery. Cattle were slaughtered in such great numbers for their hides and fat, that the llaneros constructed barricades at the gates of the corrals with their skeletons. Truthfully, there were times when those herding the cattle resorted to violence in order to take possession of unbranded cattle belonging to some farmers. These disturbances, a result of an imprudent and thoughtless governmental order, forced me to take certain measures, such as forming overnight camps which under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Facundo Mirabal quickly put an end to the disturbances and re-established order in the Apure territory.

---

5Ibid., 580-81.

6Restrepo, Revolución de la República de Colombia, III, 413-14.
On May 6, 1824 Congress ordered the drafting of fifty thousand men, for rumors were spreading that the European Holy Alliance was threatening to destroy the independence of the new States. Congress was also considering sending troops to Perú where the Liberator urgently needed help to free that country from the considerable Spanish forces occupying it. Consequently on August 20, I sent a division of two thousand six hundred and forty-four men under the command of Colonel José Gregorio Monagas from Puerto Cabello destined for Perú.  

The need for supporting troops outside the territory of the State and the fears of a new Spanish expedition made it necessary for the Vice-President of the Republic, General Santander, to order a general draft of all the citizens for the purpose of forming a militia corps or filling those

7Colonel José Gregorio Monagas was born in Maturin in 1795 and was General José Tadeo Monagas's brother. He enlisted his efforts in the revolutionary movement in 1810 and fought his first battle against the Royalists in March of 1813 at Maturin against Fernández de la Hoz. He was destined to fight here again in May of the same year against General Monteverde and in October and December of 1814 against General Morales. He also fought in the Battles of Bocachica, Arado, La Puerta, Carabobo, and Urica. Governor Gorrino, Colonel López, and Generals Morales, Morillo, and La Torre felt his military strength in the Battles of Carraqueño, Alacran, Juncal, Calabozo, and Sámen. After independence was won, Monagas put up his sword until the movements of 1831 and 1836 when he came out in their support. In 1846 he was a candidate for the Presidency of Venezuela but was defeated; however, he was elected to this high office in 1854. This very year he had Congress declare all the slaves free. In 1858 his enemies had him imprisoned in Puerto Cabello where he died of natural causes. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 336-37.
already established. This decree was not well received, and it fell my lot as Commandant General of the Departments of Caracas and Apure to enforce it. To my detriment, I had to carry this out despite the observations of the recorder and the Municipality of Caracas.

The Intendant of Venezuela, General Juan Escalona, offered me his assistance in carrying out the governmental measure. I called the citizens together so that they would agree to the draft. Only a few came, and I was forced to convene them again on January 6. Since they did not obey the decree even then, perhaps encouraged by the leniency with which I proceeded, I was forced to send small detachments from the Anzoátegui and Apure Battalions to bring the citizens they found in the streets to the convent of San Francisco. Escalona offered to enforce enlistment on these. It was then I suspended the order I had given previously. The following day, the Intendant, pretending to be a jealous defender of the rights of the people, wrote to the Executive denouncing as abusive the measures I had taken to carry out the governmental orders. The Municipality of Caracas expressed similar complaints. From this was born the accusation against me that I shall deal with in one of the following chapters.

On December 6, 1825 a revolutionary movement of doubtful character broke out in the village of Petare, two leagues away from the capital. The anxiety which is habitual among some people of always fearing caste revolutions found
an opportune occasion in this act for increasing the value of money. This was the significance later given to the tumult of Petare. Since the capital and its tribunals were alarmed, they sent a commission composed of Colonel (then) Diego Ibarra and Dr. Cristobal Mendoza, Minister of the Superior Court, to Maracai where I was and asked me to go to Caracas. Carried away by their unfounded fears, they imagined that there was a conspiracy of great ramifications, and they wanted to be supported by my presence during the proceedings and different judicial inquiries which had already been started. I went, and I called a meeting of twelve persons, selected for their knowledge in judicial matters, to examine the dispatch and give me their opinion on what I should do. These men told me that it was not a clear case of conspiracy, and that therefore it would be

---

8Don Cristobal Mendoza was born in the city of Trujillo, Venezuela in 1772. He was an intellectual who embraced the ideals of the revolution as soon as it broke out in 1810. He was a member of the Supreme Junta, the Federal Congress, and of the Triumvirate that represented the Executive Power of Venezuela. In 1812 he was forced to emigrate to Santa Fé. Later the same year Bolivar named him Governor of the Province of Cúcuta. In 1814 he presided over the junta at Caracas that judged Bolivar's conduct. Also in 1814, he was forced to emigrate to Jamaica. There he wrote under the pseudonym of Un Patriot. In 1821 Dr. Mendoza returned to Caracas and was elected Minister of the Supreme Court. Páez's political movement of 1826 did not meet with his approval or support. He died in Caracas in 1829, an impoverished man. It is interesting to note that in addition to his political career, Dr. Mendoza fathered sixteen children. Ibid., 318-19.
wiser not to give it great importance. Realizing that the event was not really of the magnitude imagined and that it had assumed its gravity from unjust warnings, I also convinced myself of the need of preventing our society from being deeply perturbed by the indefinite prosecution of a lawsuit that was assuming such an alarming character. In order to do this, I removed the lawsuit to a superior court, which I was able to do in my capacity as Commandant General of the Department. Militarily, I ended the affair by punishing only three of the principal offenders and thus left ineffective the actions involving a great number of persons.

Immediately after I issued a proclamation on December 21 in which I announced how I had evaluated the event. I revealed my conviction that the evil character and magnitude attributed to this revolution stemmed from fearful suspicions. I stated that patriotism was invoked at times in a torturous manner, and that the public tranquility could not only be disturbed by the enemies of the State, but also by the exaggeration of spontaneous fears. Also, I let it be known that my authority would not take into account a person's rank if I were forced to use this authority. Finally I sealed the matter with a general and absolute pardon to end the anxiety of all those who were afraid, and I signed it on the following day, December 22. With this, confidence was restored and the capital breathed easily once more. (Both of these acts may be found in Volume 6 on pages 107 and 109 of the
Thus ended the alarming Petare revolution. Had it been handled by tribunals, it could have enveloped the country in hatreds and persecutions and carried many citizens to the gallows.

Despite the prudence with which I proceeded in this affair, a deputy from Caracas, Dr. José Antonio Pérez, wanted to accuse me before the Senate. Because of this, I directed the following address to the Executive Power of the Republic.

MOST EXCELLENT SENOR VICE PRESIDENT:

I know from a respectable source that Dr. José Antonio Pérez, deputy from Caracas, has moved in the House of Representatives that I be accused before the Senate for having declared Venezuela under martial law; and with reference to the occurrence at Petare, stated that I was dominated by a faction from Caracas, as if to prove by this that I did not take all the measures required out of consideration for the declared faction. This is an atrocious, unpardonable insult which can only be aborted by the most vehement passions and which holds out as most important that I consider the least. This is especially so when one considers that the lawsuit was conducted according to the governmental decrees of the Military Commandant of Caracas and in which all persons who participated in that event appeared. Truthfully, there was not a person there I knew and by whom it is supposed I was dominated. This proposition was supported by the other deputies of the same province, except for Dr. Osio.

When a deputy advances such a bold proposition in Congress as to accuse me before the nation just a few minutes after I contributed, along with my comrades in arms, to its independence in the best way I could, let us go beyond the ingratitude surrounding this act to examine the motive for the honorable Dr. Pérez’s accusation.

9This citation may be found as the author states.
In the first place, it should be noted that this measure has been found strange only when I put it into practice. It has never been opposed by any member of the government during the very recent times when these very departments and others in the Republic have been placed under martial law and when we generals of a superior rank have obeyed those of an inferior rank. However, it seems that the ways of military men are appreciated only in times of dangers, and found annoying when these dangers are no longer feared.

The insults made to a man in public life resulting from an administration are not the kind directed to a private individual. In the latter case generosity or scorn can take place, but in the former case it is not possible to put their vindication aside according to the laws that govern us.

I can at least pay my gratitude to the majority of Congress that set aside Señor Pérez's proposition. However, I cannot continue being worthy of the confidence of the public and of the government unless this matter is made known with all the dignity which is due the government itself and a General of the Republic who does not have the slightest reason for concealing even the least imputation. This is to be considered even less if attention is paid to the fact that governments should act on qualified events and not on invectives or conjectures, for then no citizen will be able to depend on his individual security.

I shall not cite persons nor singular events. I invoke the testimony of the departments in which this measure was necessary, and I challenge my adversary to present one single person before me that was molested by the military during the period about which we are speaking. On the contrary, there are some who grasped it as a refuge from the civil authority. How much blood would have been shed in the capital of Caracas if I had followed the advice of some men of letters and of those who, unaccustomed to fight against the enemy on the field of honor, seek this fight from across their desks in the midst of peace, wanting to avenge personal injuries under the sacred pretext of the public cause.

Señor Pérez should prove the reasons he has had to accuse me before Congress, and name the faction to which he refers. If he has enough data to do so in a legal argument, I will submit myself to the law. Otherwise, I want a public testimony exonerating me from the accusation. While a decision is pending, I ask the government to relieve me from the office of Commandant
General of the Department of Venezuela and from the task of directing the war, where I frequently find obstacles which oppose the reverence due its very authority. It must be well understood that it will not be sufficient for the Executive Power alone to show itself satisfied with my procedures.

I beg Your Excellency to take this matter through all the channels of law, keeping in mind that I am determined not to yield in anything I have expounded.

God keep Your Excellency many years.

PÁEZ

Achaguas, March 28, 1825.

The response I received to the above address is the one that follows:

OFFICE OF THE NAVY AND WAR-CENTRAL DEPARTMENT

Palace of the Government in Bogotá
June 7, 1825 — XV

To the Most Excellent Señor General in Chief, José A. Páez.

I have had the honor to answer in the government office Your Excellency's letter dated in Achaguas this past March 28, where you ask to be removed from the office of Commandant General of Venezuela and that of conducting the war which has been entrusted to you because of the motion made by the honorable Deputy José Antonio Pérez to the House of Representatives proposing that Your Excellency be accused before the Senate for having declared the Department under your command under martial law and for other declarations that arose out of the occurrence in Petare. You demand legal proof, or in its stead, a public testimony which will put Your Excellency's conduct in this instance out in the open. I have received orders to answer Your Excellency as follows: 'Article 66 of the Constitution is opposed to the very worthy General Páez's entreaty and just as this chief should rest easy in the judgment he owes the Executive Power, he should also be satisfied by the fact that in this case the House of Representatives rejected Deputy Pérez's motion. This proves that it did not find it just and that consequently the conduct of the Commandant General of Venezuela is believed to be
according to the law and circumstances.' I enclose
the above resolution from the Executive Power in
answer to Your Excellency's entreaty.

God keep Your Excellency, etc.

PEDRO GUAL.

On January 10, 1825 a French squadron presented itself
before Puerto Cabello. It was composed of a frigate of sixty,
two schooner brigs, and a schooner. It was under the command
of navy Captain Dupotet. He had barely sounded the depths
of the water, when he sent a communique to the naval Com-
mandant General of this port asking him for satisfaction in
the name of Admiral Julien, who was Commandant at this time
of the French Antilles. This was to be for the supposed
insult he said had been given in front of Portobelo by the
Commandant of the frigate Venezuela to the Commandant of the
French schooner Gazelle, forcing the latter to send an
officer on board. ' In addition, this Admiral demanded the
return of all the cargo of the merchant corvette Urania that
had been captured with Spanish goods on board by the captains
of the corsairs Poli-Hampton and Centella.

The tone in which this Captain formulated these unjust
claims, addressing subordinates rather than the government
of the Republic, together with the violation of our coastal
area by those foreigners, even after satisfactory answers
were made by the naval Commandant General of Puerto Cabello,
made me exceedingly angry. As Commandant General of the
Department of Venezuela, I demanded an explanation from the
chief of the French squadron. With the dignity warranted by
the occasion, I reminded him that the Venezuelans had the constancy necessary to defend their rights when foreigners did not know how to respect them.

The Frenchman left the coast of Ocumare free. Since he directed these unjust claims later to the supreme government of the Republic, the latter answered him in almost the same terms that I had at the beginning.

Prior to this event, the Spanish Captain Don José del Cotarro had presented himself in La Guaira in order to turn over the brigantine Roma Libre to the Colombian government. He had become disgusted seeing that the constitutional system in Spain had been defeated and that the absolute regime had been reinstated. He brought a cargo of Negroes on his ship, and they were freed immediately.

After citing the above events, Restrepo states: 10

As much because of the combined attack by France and Spain that had been feared in Venezuela, as because of some movements that were perceived in Baruta and Tucupido, in the Sombrero and in other points in that section of the Republic, it was feared that the peace could be disturbed. Commandant General Páez was authorized, consequently, with extraordinary powers by the National Executive dating from the early days of this year—an authorization that was later amplified on March 17 in accord and with the consent of Congress. It was believed, not without sufficient reasons, that a considerable part of the territory of Colombia, far from the center which occupied such an advanced position and which contained so many elements of discord, would be unable to remain quiet unless there was a strong and immediate power to keep a vigil in preserving order. However, the frequent declaration of extraordinary powers, and the ability of said departments to

10 Revolución de la República de Colombia, III, 457-58.
declare martial law, made the Venezuelan lover of liberty angry despite the good use that General Páez made of the extensive power conferred on him. The decree mentioned dated March 17 was a reason for avoiding the clamors of the municipality of Caracas, which addressed the House of Representatives to complain against the Executive Power. While this step did not produce consequences, it increased the discontent against the central government at a time when it still did not possess the necessary strength because of its newness and because it had barely been recognized. (Page 457, Volume 3, History of Colombia.)

On March 8, 1825 I issued a proclamation in which I gave an account of all these events, and of the interior state of the Republic. In it I revealed the reasons that had compelled me to declare the Departments of Venezuela and Apure under martial law at a time when the Republic was threatened by an invasion of two thousand men which the Peninsula thought to send against Colombia and which had already been assembled on the Canary Isles. The proclamation states thus:

José Antonio Páez, one of the liberators of Colombia, decorated with the Medal of Puerto Cabello, General-in-Chief of the armies of the Republic, Commandant General of the Department of Venezuela, and Director of War in the Departments of Venezuela and Apure, etc., etc.

Although the inhabitants of the departments where I direct the war surely are not unaware of the reasons that led me to declare martial law, according to the edict of November 29 of the past year, I find the need very much in accordance with the principles that govern us to express, although succintly, the reasons for adopting these measures, just as there are reasons now to rescind them.

News that had been verified by different sources that there was a foreign expedition in the Antilles was sufficient cause, if not to imagine that the designs on the part of that government were completely
hostile, at least to call the attention of the military authorities who were charged with the defense of the Departments of the Republic. The news from Spain that some forces were set aside to go to America, and the fact that there were war ships in Habana were sufficient in themselves to merit some precautionary measures.

A movement that took place just a short time ago in the vicinity of the capital of Venezuela confirmed the need for martial law. The need for measures to stop the progress of the Guires faction demanded that a military government exist during the time it was being destroyed. Some domestic arrangements pertaining to the formation of an armed force encountered obstacles in the diversity of jurisdiction. It was for these reasons that it was believed necessary to declare the Departments of Venezuela and Apure under martial law. Fortunately, circumstances have changed and now permit the reestablishment of affairs to the state in which they should be in accordance with the laws of the Republic.

Some debates with the chief of a French naval force have made known the care given to certain claims with respect to its commerce until now. According to the last communications, to these are added the securities of the general government of the Republic. The operations of our adversaries by themselves did not demand great efforts until now. However, this does not mean they are looked upon with indifference by those entrusted with the security of this territory.

The occurrence near the capital, which has been mentioned, ended happily as all have seen it as an absurd project. There were not any persons involved in it in any state who were capable of causing the government anxiety. Had there been any, though, they could have been deterred by the good conduct of the existing military authorities.

By virtue of this, I have deemed it convenient to abolish, as I do abolish in the present decree, the measure I adopted for the previously-cited month of November, of declaring the Departments of Venezuela and Apure under martial law, which was verified then according to Articles 1 and 5 of the decree of August 15, 1824.
The military authorities of Venezuela and Apure shall publish and fulfill the present order.

Achaguas, March 8, 1825 --XV.

JOSÉ ANTONIO PÁEZ.

FRANCISCO CARABANÓ, Secretary.
CHAPTER XVIII

Accusation Before the Colombian Senate--General Santander's Apparent Duplicity--The Saddest Period of My Public Life--Pronouncement of the Venezuelan Municipalities--The Towns Become Anxious for Reforms --Assembly in the Convent of San Francisco de Caracas.

1826

When a nation such as ours has won its independence, three types of actors are wont to appear on the political scene. The first type includes those who with sword or pen fought for the fatherland during the struggle and aspire to collect the prize for their efforts and fatigues, for not all men are satisfied as were Cincinnatus and Washington with posthumus glory and the appreciation of generations. It is very common to find this type among those who had been caudillos in the military armies, and who in peace time still maintained the severity of character that became habitual while commanding the armies. These men very quickly alienated the will of the people who regarded them as little tyrants aspiring to rule them.

The second type is composed of those men who took no part in the fighting but still aspired later to occupy high positions in the government of the nation. To attain these positions, they constitute themselves as censors of the
government, denouncing the faults of those who direct public affairs, and slandering those who served the country during its most destitute times.

To the third type belong those who adhere to the old order of things. Of them it may be said that it was only sheer force that made them accept the change. Vengefully, they strive to prove with their conduct how little society has gained from the new organization given to it.

These were the elements that already composed the Colombian people when the old rulers were expelled from the country. The person in charge of directing internal policy would have to deal with them.

The exaggerated enthusiasm of some men also serves sometimes as an obstacle to the peaceful march of society which needs the union of all its members to organize in a stable manner, and to carry out the necessary reforms. These individuals imprudently go forth proclaiming flattering theories that the people accept with enthusiasm, for these flatter their passions. From this stems the fact that anarchy is wont to follow the conquest of independence. It is in vain to preach the modus in rebus, for a new country is like an individual in his youth: it disdains the lessons of the past until, at the cost of innumerable evils, it acquires an experience it pays for very dearly.

After 1814 and 1815, when the Republican governments were dissolved in Venezuela and New Granada after the disasters suffered by the patriots, forces had been raised in
these two territories to combat the common enemy. The chiefs, forced by circumstances, had acted independently, for there was no central government. When the patriots were conquered in one province, they would go fight the Royalists in another. Here they would unite their forces with those operating in that territory out of a spirit of patriotism and not because of any governmental order. Venezuela and New Granada for their mutual interest lent each other aid. However, the thought of uniting the two territories under one sole authority did not come about until December 17, 1819 when the Venezuelan Congress proclaimed the Republic of Colombia. Its constitution was adopted later by another Congress that met in Cúcuta on August 30, 1821 and recognized a supreme government.

The vast extent of Colombian territory, the very difficult communications between the provinces and the central government that was established in Bogotá, and the jealousies and rivalries between the Venezuelans and the New Granadans, all indicated that the Republic of Colombia would have a very ephemeral existence. In this period that we are dealing with now, the symptoms of an inevitable separation were already being felt—a separation that sooner or later would have to be carried out without anyone being able to stop it.

I have already stated earlier that as a result of the measures I took to fulfill the urgent governmental draft orders, the Municipality of Caracas accused me of having exceeded my authority by using violent measures. Letters
were sent from that city to its deputies in Bogotá. The latter created a terrible scandal in the House [of Representatives]. The clergyman [Juan Nepomuceno] Azuero figured among my principle enemies in this instance while Doctors Osio and Arvelo defended me.\footnote{No additional information was available on Doctors Osio and Arvelo.} One of the latter proposed that the Executive ask immediately for information on the happenings in Caracas, and for the provisions that I might have dictated on this affair. When this proposal was approved, the President of the House sent an official letter to General Santander, Vice-President in charge of the Executive, asking for this information. However, anxious to

Juan Nepomuceno Azuero was born in Socorro in February of 1780. He studied at the Colejios del Rosario and the Seminary of Bogotá where he got his orders to serve as a priest in the town of Guanare in the Orientes llanos. Here he won the hatred of the Spanish Governor Bobadilla for his love of the Indians and his attempts to help civilize them. In 1809 he became parish priest at Anapoima. He allowed his republican and independent ideas to be known and consequently was recalled to Bogotá and imprisoned by both the ecclesiastical and political authorities. While in Bogotá, however, he was still instrumental in formulating the revolution which broke out July 20, 1810. On this day when he saw that the people were not enthusiastically supporting the independence movement out of fear of Viceroy Amar, believing him to be sacred and holy, he forced him to go to the top of one of the public buildings and showed him to be the human being he really was. When Morillo was back in power, Azuero fled and did not return until after the Battle of Boyacá in 1819. Then for twenty years he served as a member of the national Congresses. He was once elected to serve as the Bishop of Antioquia, but he refused this post. He died on July 1, 1857. Scarpetta and Vergara, 

\textit{Diccionario Biográfico}, 35.
mediate the affair further, or so General Santander told me in one of his letters, he did not give the information as quickly as my accusers wanted it. In the meantime a very strong representation from the Municipality of Caracas, directed to the House, arrived; and information was once again demanded from the Executive. The latter then had to manifest to the House on February 19, "that there was no clear evidence that I had ordered houses to be leveled or those who refused to be drafted fired upon; that it was not an infringement of the law to force lazy citizens to obey a government order as long as they were not mistreated or forcibly pulled from their homes; and that the accuser had not proven that I had ordered the excesses on which the accusation was based."

The Executive further stated:

The case requires prudence at all cost today more than ever: the common enemies can invade us, for they have the means. Venezuela has an infinite number of points of easy access; and the Spanish frequently plan to attack, counting on the fact that there are sufficient numbers in their favor. The immigrants who have lost their properties come from that territory; and some enemy guerrillas concert their efforts to multiply our difficulties and to occupy our attention. In these circumstances, if the enemy had the assurance of not finding General Páez at the head of the Republican army of Venezuela, their invasion could be quick and their success less doubtful. General Páez enjoys an unquestionable reputation as a soldier; and the enemy, because of this, fears him and has half the battle lost. I do not want to infer by this that we should sacrifice our laws and rights as citizens for the convenience of maintaining a general in the Venezuelan army who, although of military value, obstructs the march of the legal regime. No, indeed; we must save our laws and save our rights as citizens; but let us not sacrifice a citizen without the corresponding evidence—especially
a citizen worthy of public esteem. Our first obligation is to save ourselves from the Spanish knife, and the honorable House knows how many sacrifices are made or should be made on the altars of our physical existence.

Despite everything, the House admitted the accusation. Then the matter was taken before the Senate which vacillated the first days on whether to continue the case or wait for the documents that the Executive offered for its briefing. Meanwhile a letter was received in the Senate from the Secretary of the House asking for complete copies of the official letters from the Intendant of Caracas, Escalona. These were remitted.

In a letter dated May 10 of that year Santander told me as follows:

My opinion gathered from everyone with whom I have talked to about the matter, including your very enemies, was that the accusation was light and that new proofs must be awaited, for the personal security and honor of a citizen, whosoever it might be, should not be at the mercy of such destructive information. The President of the Senate and Colonel Piñango seem to be very much against you; so despite the fact that four Senators worked to defer the matter, the accusation was admitted on the terms you may have seen. According to what they have told me, this is all that has occurred. I can assure you that justice, perhaps even more than friendship, has made me take the prudent path I have followed, for if I had not seen the faults they proclaimed in your procedure and later found them to be so, I would have been the first to speak out against you out of love for the laws and for public vengeance. I have had a declaration taken from old Gómez here, which is good, and I have sent it to the commission familiar with the cause. I know you have already risen above this event with the

---

2 What the author cites here are excerpts from a letter which Santander wrote him from Bogotá on the date cited. A copy of the entire letter may be found in Archivo Santander, XIII-XIV, 322-24.
same serenity with which you have faced death in battles. I am certain that you will come out victorious, and I would be willing to bet my life on it. The Senate will have many new members this coming year, and those members who do remain, although they may have voted to admit the accusation, are not malicious men anxious to ruin you. In part these men have proceeded as instigated by the vigorous declamations of almost all the deputies from Caracas, for a good man is easy to deceive and advise.

I have told you to bring many documents from Caracas to belie the imputations of the accusation. You do not need a lawyer here, for you will find all the means necessary for making a victorious defense. After obtaining the absolution, there will be time to make an energetic, but moderate, manifesto of your conduct, under the constitutional regime, concerning the origin of this persecution, your submission to the laws you have defended with your sword, and all the rest that shall occur then. These steps will honor you as much or more than the glories you have known how to exact from your enemies. Nothing you could do could lose you as completely as any act of disobedience to the Senate. The latter would be a blot that would stain your reputation eternally. I cannot think you capable of such procedure. I judge you as I do because I know your character and your heart, and I will be responsible for your submission to anything that emanates from the 'constituted authorities.'

Almost at this same time, on July 15, General Santander wrote Bolivar the confidential letter which may be seen on page 210, Volume 6 of the Documentos de la Vida Pública del Libertador. This letter was directed entirely to making the most unjust charges against me. Perhaps he believed he was fulfilling his duty when he committed an injustice out of misinformation. Unfortunately, this is an error rather frequent in rulers subject, as are all men, to the fallibility of their judgments.

---

3This letter, referring to Páez's "scandalous and insubordinate conduct," may be found as the author states in Colección de Documentos.
When I saw that [Francisco] Soto and other Representatives and Senators who were considered Santander's echoes in both houses were decidedly against me, I felt I had a strong argument to accuse Santander of not proceeding with the justice he professed in his letters. If Santander had expressed one sole word in good faith against what they were doing, not only would they not have taken sides against me, but they would have been for me. This is especially so when in my way of thinking Santander was obligated to be on my side, for the accusation against me stemmed from the actions I took to execute his own decree of the Rules of the Militias.

---

Francisco Soto was born in 1789 in Cúcuta. He received his law degree in March of 1807. While a law student he had become an ardent Republican and joined the revolutionary movement in 1810. In 1813 he presented himself to Bolívar as a soldier. The Liberator immediately added him to his staff as secretary and sent him to Tunja to ask congressional permission to follow the army to Venezuela. In 1815 he was Lieutenant Governor of El Socorro. During the emigration after Spanish reoccupation, Soto remained sick and abandoned the Guadualito. There the Spanish General La Torre, though knowing Soto's affiliation with the revolution, had him treated and cured by his personal physician. He subsequently served as Secretary in the staff of Colonel Galea, J. A. Romero, and Ramón N. Pérez. In 1819 he was named Governor of Pamplona, and he served with the justice and wisdom for which he was well known. He was subsequently elected to be a member of the Congresses of 1823, 1824, 1825, and 1826. Later he was Attorney General in the Cundinamarca Tribunal. He opposed Bolívar's dictatorship and was exiled until 1830. He then became Governor of Pamplona again and opposed Urdaneta's dictatorship. In 1832 and 1837 he served as Secretary of State and as member of Congress again in 1838 and 1839. Favoring amnesty for the revolutionists of 1839, he was imprisoned. He was freed by Generals Mosquera and Herrán and returned to Cúcuta in 1842. Soto died on February 1, 1845. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 598-600.
which had encountered opposition in Caracas and which he had not suspended despite the fact that Congress had passed a law organizing the militia on a different basis.

Well then, my desire to execute this decree by using armed patrols on the streets to catch the recalcitrants was nothing more or less than what was done in Bogotá every Sunday in Santander’s very presence without it scandalizing him or anyone else, and without it appearing as a violation of public liberties and the rights of the peoples to Congress. Naturally, he should have used all his influence to protect the provisions made by a chief who had done nothing more than obey him. Far from having this reasoning, he added insult to injury by naming Escalona, my accuser, to succeed me. According to statute, he should not have even been in the running for this post when other older generals, of higher rank, still had no positions. I was deeply hurt by this imprudent measure. Despite the support I could count on in my Department to reject such humiliation, I acknowledged my successor on April 29.

I enter a period now that is painful for me—a period of memories that still torment me and that I wish I could erase from the book of my life. I say this despite the fact that I did all that could be asked of an honest man after he has committed a fault, and that is to sacrifice his pride on the altars of justice and confess to the whole world, without making excuses, the error he committed during some hasty moments. I said this very thing in 1837. During the
Colombian period, I always held high and dangerous positions, experiencing along with the Nation the uncertainties and anxieties of trial and error. But my heart and my will always belonged to my country, although my understanding was subjected, as is that of all men, to mistakes and deceits—mine were understandably so considering that from the occupation and isolation of the llanos I came into a theater of scenes absolutely unknown to me. What do the theories of revolutions and the complicated science of politics have in common with the simple occupations of the shepherd?

In 1837 I told the Venezuelans as follows.

I have committed a thousand errors whose painful sensations have been mitigated by the indulgence of my compatriots. The events of 1826 to which an unjust accusation against me in the Colombian Senate and an even worse interpretation by others led me, still fill me with bitterness and repentance. The desire to separate Venezuela from the centralization of Colombia was already widespread, and the occurrence of Valencia seconded by other cities was the first step toward the great change that was finally verified later. This separation was indicated by acts emanating from some corporations and by the press which is the vehicle of public opinion. The protest of the illustrious Municipality of Caracas on swearing in the Constitution of 1821, and the newspapers in 1824 and 1825 had prepared those events which enveloped me like a weak straw in the impetuous winds of a hurricane. The horror of civil war, my love for order, and the happiness of my country made me submit those events for the consideration of the Liberator of Colombia. Thus I showed myself willing to be the victim and to sacrifice my life and honor before allowing one drop of blood to be shed for my cause.

The Liberator heard my pleas, realized that his country was bordering a precipice, and flew to interpose his art of government and his powerful influence to save it. His presence reestablished public confidence, and somewhat calmed those desires for separation.

There were no complaints or persecutions, and I submitted myself happily to obeying the decrees he issued,
and to the system which seemed necessary to rule the Republic of Colombia. My authority was extended to other departments, and all of their inhabitants are witnesses to the conciliatory spirit which guided my administration. Everyone has seen the principles I professed and delivered in my Manifesto of February 7, 1829.

Let us return now to the deplorable events which have caused me so much bitterness and which I lament now before my fellow citizens. On the very night that General Escalona assumed command, disorders of different kinds by various parties were committed in Valencia. Among these appeared Royalists, who perhaps only sought a pretext to confuse the public tranquility in support of their ideas.

On April 27, 1826 several citizens had asked the Municipality of Valencia to suspend the order that took my command away. That body called the lawyers of the city to consult with them on this proposal which they felt, if carried out, could occasion disturbances and insurrections. One of these lawyers, Doctor Miguel Peña, with two others, proposed: "That there was no legal measure which could suspend the execution of the order and that not even the Executive itself could do so without openly infringing the Constitution." The

---

5Dr. Miguel Peña was born in Valencia, Venezuela, on September 29, 1781. In 1807 he was Reporter for the Audiencia of Caracas and later an aide to a prominent English lawyer in Trinidad. In 1811 he returned to Caracas to join the Patriotic Society in this capital. He became Miranda's Assessor and the latter named him Governor of La Guaira. He was serving in this post when General Miranda was imprisoned. In 1814 he helped Escalona defend Valencia. In 1821 he was a member of the Congress of Cúcuta. From 1821 until 1825 he served as President of the Supreme Court. The Senate
Municipality agreed then that I be told the following:

... that they felt genuine sorrow knowing that an accusation had been admitted against me; that they were certain I would justify myself completely; that the entire territory was convinced of the punctuality and exactness with which I had discharged my obligations, winning the confidence, respect, and friendship of all; and that if there were need to leave the Department in order to obey the laws, they would be consoled by seeing me absolved satisfactorily again.

In order that the fears they had shown before would seem well-founded, those who were not satisfied with such a declaration resorted to murder. They killed two poor individuals who had not played any role in the events that were being debated, and tossed their bodies at the door of the Municipal Building. There were many individuals here anxious to know the final result of the affair, when the Governor of the Province, Fernando Peñalver, demanded that Colonel Francisco Barabáño, Commandant of the troops of the city, order the military men who were in the building to declare

suspended him from this post when he refused to sign the death sentence for Colonel Infante. Peña returned to Venezuela after its separation from Colombia, and here he was elected Secretary of the Interior. He became President of the Congress of Valencia in 1833. Peña died in Valencia on February 8, 1833. Ibid., 450.

Madariaga evaluates Peña as follows: "He was a mulatto himself who, as Civil Governor of La Guaira, had contrived with Bolívar to deliver Miranda to the Spaniards; inconstant in his allegiance during the early days of the Republic; and known to have made money to the detriment of the State by speculating with the sum of 500,000 pesos the Government had entrusted to him to convey from Bogotá to Caracas." Bolívar, 524.
themselves in favor of the movement. Carabaño sent them to their quarters, and then those who were there came tumultuously to my house and carried me on their shoulders before the Municipality.

It is necessary to have been under similar circumstances to understand the difficult position in which a public man finds himself when the people run to him begging him to head a movement he believes just and reasonable. Knowledge

6General Fernando Peñalver was born in Piritú in 1765. While living in Valencia, he was chiefly responsible for having the Municipal Council here recognize the revolutionary junta of Caracas. He then became a member of the First Constitutional Congress and signed the July 5 Declaration of Independence. In 1812 he was imprisoned by General Monteverde first in La Guaira and then in Puerto Cabello. He escaped from here after Bolivar's triumph after the first Battle of Carabobo. He was forced to emigrate in 1814 and unable to return until 1817. It was then that he brought the first printing press to Guayana and thus quickly helped spread the ideals of freedom. He was named Intendant and then went with General Vergara to London to seek aid. In 1821 he was President of the Congress of Cúcuta, and by 1826 he was Governor of the Province of Carabobo. He was elected Senator to the Venezuelan Congress in 1831. Unfortunately, Peñalver was unable to finish his term, for he died in May of 1831. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 452-53.

General Francisco Carabaño was born in Cumaná, Venezuela. He was with Bolivar in the Jamaican exile and later followed him back to Venezuela to fight in the Battles of Quebrada Honda and Alacran under Mac Gregor. He also fought under General Piar at Juncal and San Felix. He was Chief of Staff in Valencia in 1826. In 1827 Bolivar promoted Carabaño to the rank of General and in 1829 he was a representative to the Constituent Congress of Venezuela. By 1830 he was Secretary of War and Navy. While serving as Chief of Operations in 1848, Carabaño was assassinated. Ibid., 85-86. Dávila, Diccionario Biográfico, I, 68.
vacillates between the obedience owed the laws and the established principles, and the fear of the great harm which might result if the people take the responsibility of the act on themselves. Meanwhile there is no time to think. The people get impatient, shout, and invoke the most sacred sentiments. The public man, without even realizing what he is doing, yields and allows himself to be carried by the waves as an inert body that floats on top of a tempestuous ocean.

In a fatal moment for me, I reassumed the command that had been suspended so unjustly. With the first step taken, it was necessary to follow through with the error committed. The Municipality of Valencia invited the other cities of Venezuela to approve the movement she had initiated so that all together they could express the great motives which had made my replacement in command necessary—a command I should keep to maintain order and public tranquility until the Liberator returned and the great Convention met in 1831. However, they felt this Convention should be held sooner in view of the difficulties that had come to the Republic. Even the Municipality of Caracas, which had shown itself so hostile to me previously, adhered to the Valencia Act, and I found myself invested with the supreme civil and military authority. It was then I directed the following proclamation to the provinces.

The peoples' free vote has entrusted me with command of the army and the civil administration. Aside from my own situation, only the future of the country has called my attention. Our enemies were congratulating each other, and they thought we were in their power
once again. They are mistaken, for they shall find us ready as always to repel them.

Our own preservation is the supreme law. It is what has dictated the measures we have adopted which are contained in the municipal acts. The press will notify the public concerning everything. Meanwhile it should be enough to know that the present laws are binding and that all the guarantees will be respected. In a word, everything that is not against the step we have taken will continue as before.

The people were afflicted by a bad administration and were anxious for a remedy to their evils. This very reason gives us an occasion, and we are taking advantage of it by seeking the remedy in the constitution itself. We are determined to speed up the meeting of the great convention which was announced for the year [18]31. The Liberator President will be our arbiter and mediator, and he will not be deaf to the clamor of his compatriots.

Our peculiar situation places us in need of arming ourselves. Threatened externally by our common enemies, while subject to the machinations of egoism, we would be foolish not to assume a practical attitude.

The power you have entrusted in me is not to be used to oppress you, but rather to protect you and assure your liberty. I will always consult the opinion of sensible men and will carry out their wise deliberations.

General Headquarters in Caracas, May 19, 1826.

J. A. PÁEZ.

The Executive in Bogotá declared "that the occurrence that took place in Valencia on April 30 was a true armed insurrection," and General Bermúdez, Commandant General of the Department of Orinoco, at first took a hostile attitude toward the movement and did not act in these circumstances with any greater prudence and or caution than was to be expected from his impetuous and excessively violent nature. However, Bolívar was not of the same opinion as the Executive.
His Secretary General, José G. Pérez, informed the Municipality of Guayaquil when acknowledging receipt of the Act of July 6 as follows.7

Even though His Excellency has not yet officially received an account of the events occurring in Valencia in the last days of April in order to form a just concept of their character and nature, privately he has been told by respectable individuals that these have not caused a mutiny in the Colombian pact. That part of the Republic wants a reform made in the Constitution, and the very leader who is in command of the army, General Páez, has received a provisory commission to do this until Your Excellency returns to Colombia—and only with the latter express condition has it been conferred. This general has proclaimed that the Liberator's name is written across his heart, and that his spirit calls to him in every sigh. We do not expect further steps nor revolutionary measures to be taken. On the contrary, we can surmise that all will remain as it is until Your Excellency arrives.

Guayaquil also desires reform in the agreement without breaking the ties uniting it to Colombia.

The reasons expounded are grave and powerful and shall be carefully considered by the national representation.

His Excellency the Liberator professed his political ideals in the constitution presented to Bolivia. In it

7General José Gabriel Pérez was born in Caracas. In 1814 he joined Bolívar in the exodus to Oriente and henceforward accompanied the Liberator. He participated in the seizure of Bogotá in 1815. He emigrated to the Antilles and in 1816 was part of Bolívar's Haitian expedition. In 1819 he campaigned in Boyacá as Bolívar's Adjutant General. Returning to Venezuela in 1820, he signed along with Sucre and Briceño Méndez, the armistice and treaty with Morillo regulating the conduct of the war. From 1822 until 1826 he served as Bolívar's Secretary General. Ill health forced him to leave this post, but he did accept the job as Superior Chief of the Department of the South later in 1926. He disagreed with Santander over Bolívar's dictatorship. In 1828 he died suddenly while taking a thermal bath. Ibid., II, 98-99.
all the origins and general and particular rights of the people are entrusted, and in it the guarantee of a government with the most unlimited liberty has been collected in the most convenient manner. A greater summary of social and individual security will never be achieved under any other political system.

God guard V.S.I. many years.

JOSÉ G. PÉREZ

The people began to talk about reforming the constitution and requesting that the Great Convention meet earlier. The federal system was recommended by many as the most convenient form of government for the people, and as the only one capable of saving the Republic from the anarchy which threatened it. Puerto Cabello on August 8 proclaimed the federation, and its example was quickly followed by Maracaibo, Aragua, Cumaná, and finally Quito and Guayaquil, located at Colombia's other extreme.

Anarchy threatened on all parts. Some were in favor of adopting the Bolivian code. Others wanted a decentralization of the government without breaking up the Republic. Still others favored the establishment of a monarchy. Then there were those who were ready to resort to arms to carry out any of these movements.

A junta was convoked in Caracas, and on October 5 and this junta agreed to adopt a popular representative federal system of government. It also agreed to have the deputies of the municipalities of the province meet on November 1 to select the representatives to be sent to the Congress so that when the Great Convention met, they could agree on what reforms to make.
On November 7 another meeting was held in the Convent of San Francisco in Caracas. Since its members hesitated in making their decision and since I had already been called to this reunion, I proposed that if the will of the people was to constitute themselves and support the constitution with their blood, those present were to show this by raising their hands. In this manner the will of the majority was known.

On the thirteenth of the same month I issued a decree designating December 10 as the meeting day for the electoral colleges in the respective provinces, and January 10 of the following year as the installation date for the constituent body in Valencia. This decree is as follows:

JOSE ANTONIO PÁEZ, CIVIL AND MILITARY CHIEF OF THE STATE OF VENEZUELA, ET CETERA, ET CETERA.

In order to fulfill punctually the deliberations of the great popular assembly held in the Convent of San Francisco of this city on the seventh of this month, whose basic premise it is to create a nation of Venezuela, and supporting the constitution which shall be given it by their legitimate representatives if necessary, I come to decree and do decree the following:

Article 1. The electoral colleges existing now shall meet in the capital cities of their respective provinces on the following December 10. In case of death, absence, or physical impediment of any of the electors, the substitute or substitutes will fill the post.

Article 2. When the electoral colleges meet, they shall proceed to elect a double number of deputies from which they will select those for the Congress of Bogotá so that the constituent body will be as numerous as possible. The elections for the deputies will be arranged as is presently done in the Constitution of Colombia, except that no senators will be named.

Article 3. In order that the election of these deputies be freer and so that enlightenment may be united with whatever other good qualities can be found
within the State for such an important office, individuals from Colombia may be elected even if they are not natives or citizens of the province holding the election as long as they possess the other requirements stipulated by the Constitution of Colombia.

Article 4. Those who have an absolute plurality of votes will be deputies, and the electoral college itself shall give them the credentials to present to the constituent Congress of the State of Venezuela. These credentials should contain a special clause stating that they were elected and named to assist the constituent Congress of the State of Venezuela and to frame its Constitution on the basis of a popular representative federal government. The President and Secretary of the aforementioned electoral college will authorize said credentials, and for this ceremony it shall have the full faith and credit that is required by law for such acts.

Article 5. All the elected deputies shall be in the city of Valencia by this January 10th with their corresponding credentials. Those not present on the appointed day without having qualified some physical impediment in due form, will be immediately liable for the punishment by an irremissible fine of two hundred pesos which shall be applied to the expenses of the Congress and which will not be charged to the constituents.

Article 6. The electoral college of the Province of Carabobo before dissolving will name a commission of five of its members to check the credentials of the first five deputies that arrive. Later these five will form a junta to check the credentials of the other deputies as they arrive.

Article 7. The Constituent Congress of the State of Venezuela should be installed on January 15 of the incoming year, with the attendance of at least four-fifths of its members. The civil and military chief of said State will install it. Immediately after, Congress shall proceed to elect a President and Vice-President from among its members and two Secretaries who may be non-members.

Article 8. The meals for these deputies should come out of the same funds which provided them for the Congress of Bogotá, providing naturally for those taken on the trips both coming and going, at the rate of a peso a league. The rate for meals during the length of the sessions should be three pesos daily.
Article 9. All persons, without any exceptions, who directly or indirectly oppose the Acts prior to the elections, the elections themselves, or the fulfillment of any of the Articles in this decree, shall be judged and punished as a traitor to the country.

Article 10. Let the Secretary communicate this decree to the Intendant of the State for its fulfillment and circulation among those whom it concerns.

Issued in the city of Caracas, November 13, 1826.--XVI of independence.

JOSÉ ANTONIO PÁEZ.

New difficulties arose from this measure, and I found it necessary to enforce the decree. Puerto Cabello, as we have seen before, had declared in favor of the federation, and on the 21st pronounced against the above-mentioned system. I had to send troops to reduce the battalion of grenadiers that guarded the plaza to obedience. They had been led by Captain of the Navy, Sebastián Boguier.

Fighting the different factions incessantly, repressing the excitement of the towns anxious for reforms until I no longer could, it was my intent to maintain peace and order until the Liberator came and put an end to the discords with his presence. This is what I told him in the following official letter.8

8The author inserted a letter he wrote to Bolivar from Caracas on May 24, 1826. He also included a private letter he wrote the Liberator on May 25, 1826, and letters he received from Bolivar on May 20, 1826 and August 8, 1826. These letters have been omitted because they do not add substantially to the text and because copies may be found in Blanco and Azpurda (eds.), Documentos para la Historia, X, 336-40, 529-31; Colección de Documentos, VI, 85.
CHAPTER XIX

The Liberator's Arrival in Venezuela—Our Cordial Meeting—Decrees and Proclamations—Triumphant Entry Into Caracas—Gift to the Liberator in this Capital—The Liberator's Return to Bogotá—Advice He Gave Me Before Leaving.

1827

On September 4 the Liberator left Lima. After stopping over in Guayaquil, he arrived in Bogotá on November 14. Here without changing any of the ministers who tried to resign, he declared himself reinvested with the extraordinary powers that the country's state demanded, threatened as it was by civil war and a foreign invasion. After also making other provisions that the public economy required, he left for Maracaibo and arrived there on December 16. Then he issued a proclamation that brought the different parties to an agreement.

As soon as I knew that the Liberator was in Bogotá, I issued the following proclamation.

VENEZUELANs:

Our troubles have ceased, for the Liberator heard our cries from the heart of Perú and has flown to our aid. His heart is all Venezuelan and all Caraqueño, and so he brings you the greatness of his name, his immense services, and his powerful influence as pledges of his affection for your security and your union. As soon as his native soil called him to give his consolation as a citizen, he tore himself away from the dictatorship
that demanded his services in a foreign country. Our brother, our friend comes now with open arms to hold us close. The country’s most illustrious son, Venezuela’s glory and first hero as a result of his military feats, returns out of the purest affection to see his old comrades-in-arms and the places where monuments to his glory stand. He comes for our benefit and not to destroy the civil and military authority he has received from the people: he comes to help us with his counsel, his wisdom, and his consummate experience to perfect the work of the reforms.

Prepare yourselves to receive as does the arid land, the rich dew that brings so many benefits, for the latter are going to exceed your hopes. Bolivar was great up to the point of admiration: from now on Venezuela owes him deification. Yield to the purest pleasure without any fear. I am authorized to promise you this. If you want still more, your guarantees shall be my life, my honor, and my very blood. Let contentment, jubilation, and pleasure reign. Venezuelans, forget your troubles: the great Bolivar is with us.

Issued at General Headquarters in Valencia on December 15, 1826.

JOSÉ ANTONIO PÁEZ.

The last day of the tremendous year of 1826 the Liberator arrived in Puerto Cabello.¹ In the following

¹Páez inserts this footnote here. "Bolivar was detained at Puerto Cabello for the following reason. Colonel [William] Ferguson who came in a hostile attitude along the West, sent Doctor Peña and Colonel José Hilario Cistiago as prisoners to Trujillo where General Urdaneta was. I had commissioned Cistiago to find Bolivar and inform him that I was waiting for him in Valencia. In the Araure Villa Ferguson wanted Colonel Cala and his column of five hundred men to surrender to him and demanded the same of Commandant Domingo Hernández and his column of eight hundred men in San Carlos. These pretensions, which were resisted, alarmed Bolivar as well as me. In similar circumstances, General Silva arrived in Valencia as a prisoner. Cornelio Muñoz was sending him to me from Apure, where Bolivar had sent him from Cúcuta to settle the differences between the Apureños and the citizens of Mantecal who had revolted with Echazu under Miguel Guerrero's orders. I immediately sent Silva to Puerto
decree, issued on January 1, 1827, he confirmed my title and authority as civil and military chief.

REPUBLIC OF COLOMBIA

Simón Bolívar, Liberator President, Et cetera, Et cetera

Considering: First, that Venezuela's situation is mutually calamitous for the parties that are fighting; second, that I am authorized to save the country by extraordinary powers and the national vote; third, that domestic peace is everyone's well-being and the Republic's glory, I decree:

First. No one shall be persecuted nor judged by the actions, speeches, or opinions that were made or held in favor of the reforms.

Cabello to assure Bolívar that we were all ready to receive him with open arms, but that the hostile acts Ferguson had committed made us fear that he would not be a peaceably inclined."

No further information was available on Colonel Cistiago, Colonel Cala, Commandant Domingo Hernández, and Echazu.

Colonel William Ferguson had left a minor position with a firm in Demerara to enlist as a drummer-boy in the British Battalion of the Lower Apure. He was captured and imprisoned by the Royalists for fourteen months at Puerto Cabello. When he managed to escape, he made his way to Margarita Island and joined the Irish Legion. He became General Montilla's aide and fought at Rio Hacha, Magdalena, and Cartagena. Later he fought at the Battles of Bombona, Junín, and Ayacucho. On one occasion he was tried for breach of discipline and sentenced to be shot; however, on the appeal of the Captain of a British man-of-war he was restored to his command. From 1824 until his death, he was on the Liberator's personal staff. One of his most important missions was to carry the new Bolivian constitution to Sucre at Chuquisaca. He accomplished this exhausting feat of covering eighteen hundred miles leading across the higher Andes in nineteen days. In 1828 Colonel Ferguson was killed while protecting Bolívar from a band of assassins that attacked the President's Palace in Bogotá. Hasbrouck, Foreign Legionaries, 262, 279, 296, 333-34.
Second. The person, goods, and jobs of those compromised in the cause of the reforms are guaranteed without exception.

Third. General-in-Chief José Antonio Páez is to remain in control of the civil and military authority as Superior Chief of Venezuela with all its corresponding powers. General-in-Chief Santiago Mariño shall be the Intendant and Commandant General of Maturín.

Fourth. Immediately after notification of this decree, my authority as President of the Republic shall be acknowledged and obeyed.

Fifth. All hostile acts committed after notification of this decree shall be judged as guilty by the State and punished according to the laws.

Sixth. The Great National Convention shall be convoked according to the December 19 Decree to decide the fate of the Republic.

Issued at the Liberator's General Headquarters in Puerto Cabello on January 1, 1827--XVII of Independence--Signed by my hand, sealed with the Republic's seal, and countersigned by the Secretary of State and General of my office--SIMÓN BOLÍVAR--By the Liberator President, the Secretary of State and His Excellency's General, J. R[AFael] REVenga.2

2José Rafael Revenga was born in Cosejo, Venezuela on December 24, 1781. In 1810 the Caracas Revolutionary Junta sent him to the United States to seek aid. By 1815 he was Bolívar's secretary in the Magdalena campaign. He emigrated to Jamaica with Bolívar. From here the Liberator sent him back to the United States to win sympathy for the Venezuelan cause. In 1819 he became Bolívar's Secretary General in the campaigns of Venezuela and New Granada. Later he went to Spain to negotiate for peace. On his return he became Bolívar's Secretary of Foreign Affairs. He accompanied the Liberator to Venezuela in 1826. In 1828 he was promoted to Counselor of State. Because of his opposition to Venezuelan separation from Colombia, he was exiled in 1829. This exile was ended in 1844, and he immediately returned to governmental duties. He became a member of Congress, Director of the Bank, and eventually President Monagas' Secretary. He died in Caracas in 1852. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 506-507.
Then I issued the following decree.

REPUBLIC OF COLOMBIA

José Antonio Páez, Superior Civil and Military Chief of Venezuela, ET CETERA

I promised the Venezuelan towns in my proclamation of this past December 15 to guarantee with my life, honor, and blood, that His Excellency the Liberator would come with open arms to clasp us to his heart; to bring us peace and reestablish confidence; to calm our domestic dissensions with his authority, influence, and power; and to work toward perfecting our lot and future well being. Since I received at midnight last night the January 1 Decree, issued by His Excellency at his General Headquarters in Puerto Cabello, I come to decree and do decree the following:

1. Let the decree he announced by proclamation with the due pomp and solemnity. This decree is exactly as follows: (Said decree copied.)

2. From this moment forward, His Excellency the Liberator's authority in his capacity as President of the Republic will be completely acknowledged and recognized. The previous decree shall be fulfilled entirely.

3. Since His Excellency the Liberator President in his December 19th Decree issued in Maracaibo ordered the Great National Convention to meet in Caracas and take care of the reforms wanted by the people and determine the fate of the Republic, my December 13 Decree ordering the assembling of the Venezuelan representation in Valencia is revoked.

4. Since the National Congress decreed triumphal honors for His Excellency the Liberator President when he returned from Peru to the heart of the country and since furthermore it is a sweet and sacred duty for Venezuela to pay homage to her most illustrious son, the towns along his path should prepare to receive him with majestic pomp, according to a ceremony used in ancient times to demonstrate the national gratitude justly due the heroes and founders of liberty.

5. This present decree must be printed and circulated by the Secretary among all the civil and military authorities so that it may be observed and executed.
punctually. These authorities must have it published by proclamation in all the cantons, towns, and places in their respective provinces.

Issued at General Headquarters in Valencia on January 2, 1827 -- XVII.

JOSÉ ANTONIO PÁEZ.

José Nuñez Caceres, Secretary General.

Then I manifested to Bolivar my desire to see my conduct vindicated. For this purpose, I asked him to form a tribunal to evaluate the charge made against me. My letter to him was as follows.3

General Headquarters
Valencia, January 3, 1827

TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE LIBERATOR PRESIDENT OF COLOMBIA, ET CETERA

Most Excellent Señor:

When on April 25 of this past year I received the order from the Supreme Executive Power announcing my suspension as Commandant General of this Department and naming General Juan de Escalona my successor, I quickly and blindly resigned and had the army acknowledge the appointed successor. From that moment on I began to prepare for my march to Bogotá where I was to suffer the judgment of the tribunal that was to evaluate my cause. This is an act that cannot be doubted, for it rests on irrefutable documents. Furthermore, the series of posterior events prove their authenticity. My march to the capital of the Republic was the spark that fell on the riverlet of gunpowder that created the explosion of April 30, and it is from it that my slanderers have inferred that the political reaction that started on this date had no other origin nor any other objective than my desire not to account to the nation about my public conduct as Commandant General. This is not the opportune time to spend myself refuting arbitrary imputations. I have consulted

3A copy of this letter may be found in Blanco and Azpurda (eds.), Documentos Para la Historia, XI, 79.
my conscience and it has left me at peace concerning the sinister intentions that injustice and ingratitude attribute to me. I foresaw at these turbulent times that a time of peace would come when, quieting the cry of exalted passions, I could give the nation an exact account of how I fulfilled my duty. It was for this reason that in a manifesto which I issued concerning the execution of the decree from the Executive Power for the drafting of militias I said to the whole world: That I did not fear the judgment of the nation nor of impartial men; that on the contrary, if someday I were free from the commitments which tie me to Venezuela, I would glory in being judged by the manner in which I fulfilled my duties in the Commandancy General, prior to this past April 30, and I would resign myself happily to whatever sentence the judges imposed on me.

I think, most Excellent Señor, that this happy time has arrived. Your Excellency's authority as President of the Republic is recognized in Venezuela. I saved this very authority for Your Excellency the same day that I swore never again to obey the government of Bogotá. Since Your Excellency has assumed the responsibility for directing the Republic, order, tranquility, and confidence have been reborn. Then, it is my first duty to beg Your Excellency to immediately name the judges or tribunal who are going to try my case. This case had not been annulled, but rather postponed until a calmer time, which now has happily arrived for the entire Republic under Your Excellency's command. I would not be satisfied to continue exercising the supreme authority in Venezuela which Your Excellency bestowed on me in this decree of the first of this month without first giving this public testimony of my obedience and submission to the laws.

God keep Your Excellency, et cetera.

JOSÉ ANTONIO PÁEZ.

The Liberator's Secretary General sent me the following official letter from Puerto Cabello.4

---

4Ibid., 79-80.
General Headquarters
Puerto Cabello, January 3, 1827

TO HIS EXCELLENCY GENERAL IN CHIEF J. A. PÁEZ, SUPREME CHIEF OF VENEZUELA, ET CETERA

Señor:

The Liberator has just jubilantly received Your Excellency's submission to the government of the Republic. With this illustrious testimony of your dedication to Colombia and your respect for the laws, Your Excellency has culminated the measure of your own glory and national happiness. The Liberator told me: General Páez saved the Republic yesterday and has given it new life. Gathering Colombia's remains, General Páez has preserved the country's plank which had shipwrecked because of the disasters of the war, the convulsions of nature, and internal dissensions. He exposed his life valiantly in one hundred battles to free the people who, reassuming their sovereignty, have issued their fundamental laws. These are the laws that have been offended; these are the people who owe him gratitude and admiration. Today he has given us domestic peace. Instead of listening to complaints and laments, let us go like Scipio to thank the heavens for having destroyed the enemies of the Republic. Only the voice of joy and the sentiment of generosity should speak on this day. Far from being guilty, General Páez is the saviour of the country.

His Excellency then orders me to tell Your Excellency that in keeping with the decree of day before yesterday, no one in Venezuela shall be considered guilty because of the reforms. All judgment on what is past is a violation of a sacred law guaranteeing everyone's health.

Respectfully I am Your Excellency's most obedient servant.—Secretary of State and the Liberator's General. --J. R. REVENGA.

Knowing that the Liberator was coming from Puerto

5The author interjects this footnote. "The Liberator refers here to the reunion in Trinidad de Arichuna under my protection of what remained of Venezuela and New Granada after Boves's and Monteverde's troops, the Caracas earthquake, the dissensions in Cartagena, and the loss of New Granada seemed to have dealt the death blow to the patriot cause."
to Valencia where I was, I set out to meet him on January 4. We met at the foot of the Naguanagua Cerro. We embraced cordially and entered Valencia together in the midst of the rejoicings of the people who gathered to receive us. I immediately ordered the veteran and militia troops that lined the road to file off in front of the Liberator and retire to their homes or quarters.

Then I issued the following proclamation to the Venezuelans:

JOSE ANTONIO PAEZ, SUPREME CIVIL AND MILITARY CHIEF OF VENEZUELA, ET CETERA

VENEZUELANs:

Venezuela's days of grandeur will mark day before yesterday as one of its most fortunate periods. The Liberator President arrived at the foot of the Puerto Cabello Cerro at two o'clock in the afternoon with outstretched arms to communicate his love for his comrades in arms and for all Venezuela. This embrace was consecrated with the holy oil of all the virtues, and the furies of poisonous discord fled terrified to bury themselves in the eternal abyss of oblivion. The soil that witnessed this new scene, almost as if it were alive, has changed itself into a monument which will exceed the pyramids and obelisks in grandeur and duration; it will recall to posterity not the haughtiness of the conquistadores, but the sublime work of patriotism, civilization, and friendship.

Venezuelans: the Liberator made his triumphal entry

6Pavez inserts this footnote: "I recall an incident here which gave Bolivar the opportunity to reveal that genius of his which was always ready in opportune circumstances. After embracing, the guards of the swords we were wearing got so entangled, that it took us some time to disentangle them. During this time, Bolivar was smiling and telling me, as a Roman General would have done in similar circumstances: 'This is a good omen, General, revealing the fate which will befall us in the future.'"
into this city at five in the afternoon, and the Republic's destinies already rest on his robust shoulders. His star guides it: it is a sun of new creation that enlivens the land that saw his birth with its rays.

Venezuelans: I have fulfilled my promises. The genius for good is amongst you, and he has placed your fate in his hands. I guaranteed you that your rights would not be violated, and the Great Convention will be convoked immediately. In it you will be able to exercise the great acts of your sovereign will: in it you will give your liberty firm and sure guarantees. All of these benefits are the recompense for your heroic conduct: glory belongs to you, gratitude to me.

General Headquarters in Valencia on January 5, 1827.--XVII.

JOSÉ ANTONIO PÁEZ.

I must confess that the unlacing of these events were not completely sufficient to tranquilize my soul, and I eagerly awaited the opportunity to give my country a public testimony of my disinterested conduct. As a result, I asked the Liberator President, first by word and later by letter, for permission to leave Venezuela for whatever time he deemed convenient. Even with my limited discernment, I could see that the country would be disturbed again because of the conflict between its interests and the state of public opinion. I wanted to be away so that this upheaval which I foresaw could not be attributed to me. However, my desires were in vain, for the Liberator refused my pleas. I remained in an uncertain and compromised position.

Even the most short-sighted political calculation was sufficient to show that Venezuela's separation was indicated from the time of Colombia's origin. Venezuela still did not
have a government strengthened by time. On the contrary, the one that existed had been created under the influence of the necessities of war and with only the guarantee of arms, and with the people being even unable to discuss their interests or balance their institutions between their real convenience in the course of peace and a lasting tranquility. The constitution did not offer all the freedom and guarantees which the citizens desired, and because of it the magistrates were able to abuse their power (Article 128). Finally, the rehearsal period was flourishing and the prominent man of the nation, General Bolívar himself, was not in accord with the established regime. Everything coincided to prepare us for a general confusion; so when the Convention of Ocaña in 1828 declared the reform of the constitution necessary, and thus announced its instability, the catastrophe was already inevitable.

Despite all of this, order was maintained under the regime of an organic decree that the Liberator issued and by announcing the convocation of a constituent Congress in Colombia. All my desires and all my efforts then were reduced to maintaining peace in the departments that were under my command. The extraordinary powers that had been given to me were used only to prevent anarchy from devouring us. I remind my fellow citizens of my conduct during those times of differences among the Colombians and when, for even greater misfortune, the war with Perú broke out. I flatter myself with the approval given my behavior in the difficult
position in which I was placed. I can always take pride in having respected the freedom and all the guarantees of the Venezuelans.

Bolivar and I went on together to Caracas where we were received with the same marked enthusiasm that was in evidence in all the towns along the way. The Liberator’s entrance into Caracas was truly triumphant. Everyone jubilantly acclaimed Fortune’s First-born, the Creator of three Republics, and the Genius of War and Peace who came armed with the olive branch from the Temple of the Sun to give new life to the country. This municipality had deputized individuals from its midst to go out and meet him in Victoria and accompany us to the capital. We entered the latter under arches which, although not comparable to the sumptuous marble ones that a proud Rome elevated to Trajan, nor to those which the humiliation of those conquered built against their wishes for the fortunate conquistadores, were a thousand times more demonstrative of affection and gratitude. These arches were offered from the heart and had been built from yellow palms and green willows, beautified with bows of ribbon and tri-colored streamers on which were written eulogies to the hero. Everything which the enthusiasm of a people can invent to give visible signs of joy and love was presented before the illustrious caudillo. It was truly a republican fiesta, as was ascertained by the presence of the flags of all the new Republics intermingled with the starred banner of the eagle of the North. The multitude pressed
around the elegantly adorned carriage that had been given the Liberator and in which, at his insistence, I took a seat.  

We entered the cathedral where a solemn Te Deum was sung, and then we went to the house that had been prepared previously for the honored guest. Here a select committee awaited him. In order that all those ceremonies would more effectively recall the times of Republican Rome, fifteen young girls, richly attired and symbolizing civic and war virtues, came out then to receive the Liberator. They presented him with two crowns of unwithering laurel, one for the triumph obtained over tyranny and another for the one he had attained by preventing civil war. On accepting these the Liberator said: "Señores, two beauties have presented me these crowns, symbols of victory: I value them more than my heart, but I must be permitted to dispose of them justly." And with the generosity which was proverbial in him, he placed one on my temples and dedicated the other one to the illustrious people of Colombia.

Meanwhile delightful music filled the air, and young

---

7 This carriage had been given to Bolivar by Jacob Idler, a Philadelphia merchant who had been supplying the Venezuelan government with guns. Idler himself is supposed to have led the two horses pulling the carriage. DeGrummond, "The Jacob Idler Claim," The Hispanic American Historical Review, XXXIV (May, 1954), 131-57.

8 The author footnotes this as follows: "Larrazábal does not mention this event."
Caracas girls in chorus sang hymns to the Liberator of the country. First, they presented him with Colombia's flag with these words: **This flag shall be an eternal monument of the heroism, the constancy, the valor, and the courage with which you placed it in the temple of glory. Colombia, united by the strong ring of your name, receives new life with your presence.** Then they presented him with the Peruvian flag with these words: **You broke the sceptre that Pizarro built, and you tore the Lion of Castile to pieces by putting the Hydra of discord in chains. Your modesty exalts you on the peaks of Chimborazo, while this flag waves in Peru under its shadow.** Finally, the young girl that held the Bolivian flag placed it in the hands of the founder of that Republic saying: **With the resplendent brilliance of your skills you have eclipsed the Father of Lights whom the Incas adored. Bolivia boasts your name and owes its liberty and good fortune to your pen.** The Liberator then took the pennants which were inscribed with the military and civic virtues from the young girl's hands. The one which had written **Disinterest** on it he gave to General [Fernando del] Toro; **Honesty**, to Don Critobal Mendoza; **Politics**, to Great Britain; **Generosity**, to Caracas; **Valor**, to me; and **Constancy**, he reserved for himself.9

---

9General Fernando del Toro was born in Caracas to one of its most illustrious families. He showed an early predilection for an army career; so his family sent him to Spain to get schooled in it. He quickly became a member of
The Municipality prepared an evening meal in the Judicial Building during which tributes of appreciation and admiration for the Liberator were renewed. The gifts, the fiestas, the same throngs of citizens continued wherever Bolivar appeared on the following day. A temple was built in the plaza during the night which was crowned with statues alluding to the music and songs which would be sung in it. Then on the thirteenth, the Municipality gave a splendid banquet which was attended by two hundred of its most select citizens. When it came my turn to propose a toast, I said the following.

**Señores:** Permit me to express a sentiment of pride. I cannot contain it within my heart, for it is a noble pride. Señores: the Liberator has culminated the measure of his favors, of my glory, and even that of his power. He cannot give me any more, for he has given me the sword that has freed a world.

If the Spanish Royal Guards and rose to the rank of Colonel. With Bolivar, he witnessed Napoleon's coronation in Paris and later went with Bolivar to Italy. He returned to Spain to help free her from the French yoke. When he returned to Caracas in 1809, however, he quickly identified with his compatriots and resigned from the Spanish army. He was immediately named military Governor of Caracas and later its representative to the first Venezuelan Congress. When Venezuela yielded to Monteverde in 1812, Toro was forced to take refuge on the island of Trinidad. Here for ten years he suffered all types of hardships and privations. After the victory at Carabobo in 1821, he returned to Caracas a veritable skeleton. He died in 1823, still one of Bolivar's most intimate and cherished friends. Scarpetta and Vergara, *Diccionario Biográfico*, 622-23.

Páez footnotes this as follows: "On his arrival in Caracas, Bolivar presented me with a sword; a beautiful lance with gold engravings; two magnificent Peruvian horses; and a luxurious dressing-table case to use during military campaigns."
Frederick's sword, which did nothing more than defend his inheritance and usurp a foreign one, could be a priceless present for the sovereign of Europe, then what can I say when I hold in my power the sword which represents terror for tyrants, the sword that redeemed humanity? Among earthly gifts, has there ever been one, or could there ever be one, of equal value? Bolivar himself can give me no more. And what use shall I make of this sword? How can I preserve its laurels, its glories, and its unique honor? It centuplicates my duties and requires strengths from me that only Bolivar possesses. It confuses me. This sword that has redeemed mankind!

But in my hands it will be no more than Bolivar's sword: his will shall direct it while my arm wields it. I will die one hundred times and shed all my blood rather than allow this sword to leave my hand or spill the blood of those which up to now it has helped to free. Fellow citizens, Bolivar's sword is in my hands: for you and for him I shall carry it until eternity.

Toast the inviolability of this oath with me.

The Municipality's Attorney General, referring to Bolivar's gift, said: "I toast, then, the inviolability of this monument established between the people and their Liberator, and the fact that the sword and the lance donated by this Venezuelan Achilles shall be used only to defend the rights of the people."

A beautiful ten-year-old girl, called María de la Paz and the daughter of Señor Joaquín Caraballo and Señora Romualda Rubi, gave a gracious elocution directed to the Liberator and placed a palm in his hands and a crown of laurel on his temples. The Liberator duly answered: he gave the palm to the army and thrust the crown symbolizing triumph and power to the people.

In summary, let me say that the individual citizens and the entire town gave the Liberator the greatest and most
spontaneous proofs of appreciation that any hero has ever received. More details concerning these gifts may be seen on page 27 in Volume 9 of the Documentos de la Vida Pública del Libertador.\textsuperscript{11}

From Caracas I left for Apure, accompanied by Colonel José Felix Blanco, who later became a general, to get fifteen hundred cavalrymen to put down their arms. They had refused to do this until they had seen how Bolívar would deal with me. I achieved my objective simply by appearing there.

Close to the time when the Liberator was due to leave for New Granada, where General Santander was beginning to show his hostility, he told me in a private conversation that he believed the separation of Venezuela and Colombia to be already inevitable. Expecting that I would be named the first President of the new Republic, he advised me a thousand and one times that once the separation was effected, I should oppose the adoption of the federal system with all my influence. In his opinion this system was synonymous with disorder and dissolution. He recommended the Bolivian constitution highly to me. He also requested me to divide the debt, the territory, and the army after the separation was made. Then he would come to live in Venezuela; however, if the federal system were adopted, he would not even stay as a spectator.

\textsuperscript{11}These details may be found as the author states in Colección de Documentos.
When the Liberator left for New Granada, I issued the following proclamation to the Venezuelans.

VENEZUELANs:

Your good fortune is as certain now as your prudence is necessary. The hero that through rough paths has always led us across the dangers up to the peaks of glory, came to our soil heeding our call. He has heard first hand our complaints against the corrupt administration of the government: he has felt our hurts; and he has felt the pain of our situation vividly. New agitations in the southern part of Colombian territory hastened his sensible farewell. In the last moments of his honorable visit, he left in his proclamation an illustrious proof that his sublime soul is devoured by the most ardent desires to foster the prosperity of the soil where he was born.

Venezuelans: Nearly all the departments have entrusted their fate to the great man who, with his genius and valor, has freed us from oppression. General Bolivar's power, influence, and name have been invoked to reform the institutions and calm the discord. Their invocation shall not be in vain. He has offered to use all his efforts to convocate the convention: here your rights will be treated with dignity and circumspection. From the wisdom of this sovereign corps will come the guaranteed results of your stability, peace, and happiness.

Meanwhile, I have remained in charge with extraordinary powers to carry out and execute the existing laws and decree issued by the Liberator. In such a dangerous office I dare recommend union to you as the basis for order; reason, prudence and duty force me to pawn all my zeal and authority to keep Venezuela on the same footing it was entrusted to me. Yes, Venezuelans, you who have always seen me as your compatriot and your friend, should give me the opportunity to congratulate myself and you when our days of contentment and joy arrive for having fulfilled my duties without bitterness, convinced that only the criminal has felt the weight of the law.

General Headquarters in Mocundo, July 16, 1827.--XVII.

J. A. PÁEZ.
CHAPTER XX

CUBA

One of the main things that the Liberator talked to me about in 1827 concerned liberating Cuba and Puerto Rico. He thought, and rightfully so, that while the Spaniards still possessed the best of the Antilles, they would have a very rich arsenal at their disposal. After all, the remnants of the immense power that Spain had just lost on the American continent were now assembled on these islands. The Spaniards could threaten Colombia in particular, for her coasts were open to all attacks and invited expeditions that would be easy to carry out.

Cuba's geographic location and the fact that she was the meeting place for all those who had emigrated from the continent when they could not reconcile themselves to the new order of things which the revolution had established, caused Bolivar much concern about the stability of the Republican governments. This was all the more so because the sharp instinct of that profound politician already saw his work crumbling as a result of the anger of one party and the towns' lack of preparation for his new institutions. If to these misgivings were to be added the check Spain would have on us while she possessed Cuba, taking advantage of every
available opportunity to help the discontent and agitate internal discords, it could be deduced logically that to free Cuba and Puerto Rico was not only a part of the task of independence, but also the most certain and perhaps the only guarantee we could have against such a tenacious nation—a courageous and daring nation whose caudillos were tormented by the idea of having lost after a good fight. Even the powerful aid of the natives who in great part and throughout the continent were their faithful allies had not been sufficient to help them keep the extensive dominion over which the sovereigns of Castille and Aragon had not seen the sunset during the centuries of prosperity which the blindest fortune had heaped on them with full hands.

Another reason, to my knowledge, inspired Bolívar to organize the expedition to liberate Cuba and Puerto Rico from Spanish control: Colombia possessed an army that was inured to war and was composed almost entirely of men who were accustomed to camp life. These men were sons of combat, good only under military discipline, and incapable of leading a life other than the military—a life that is made dear by habit and whose very disappointments are flattering to the imagination of the man who has lost fear. This is a dangerous life for society after victory has canceled the need for the sword and it becomes necessary to hang it up so that the quiet citizen shall not have to fear military domination which, after the tyranny of the revolutions, is the worst of all tyrannies.
It was impossible to maintain Colombia's army, which had leveled Spain's power in the Atlantic on the plains of Carabobo and had forever broken the Viceroy's sceptre in the Pacific at Junin and Ayacucho, for this nation still did not have a Treasury and its customs resented the evils of colonialism. Even more than the latter, it resented the reaction produced by the victory that had broken, it is true, the chains of slavery, but which in no way had formed the doubly strong chains of the law which binds the citizen to his word as much as the other maintains him immobile under the weight of iron. In a word, the army was a threat to public tranquility, and Bolivar knew that this would be the case until the intelligence and knowledge of the people advanced to the point when civilian life would become a habit. This was an arduous enterprise which could not be accomplished in one day, especially following a period of revolutions and war which are the worst school in which to learn social virtues.

Bolivar's expedition was justified in everyone's opinion. In the eyes of the warrior, it was right to complete his conquest. To the politician, it was right to free a society that was beginning to constitute itself from danger. For the philosopher, sufficient justification would be found in the benefits that populations akin to ours would reap when their prosperity would be boundless after the locks were broken with which Spain unfortunately suffocated the progress of her colonies.
The Liberator's plan consisted of sending me (begging the person's pardon who made Sucre chief of the expedition when he was four thousand leagues away fulfilling the task of the presidency of Bolivia) of sending me, I repeat, with ten thousand infantrymen and a thousand cavalry to embark on the Colombian fleet, which was capable of confronting the forces that the Spaniards had in the heart of Mexico. We were to dash over to one of the many magnificent ports, hidden to the world in the Pearl of the Antilles because of the suspicions of the Spanish governors, but known to all those considering military disembarkation on that beautiful island. That we would take the island was a certainty. Neither the Liberator, who ordered the undertaking, nor I, who was to carry it out, ever doubted the success of the expedition once our ships had arrived at the harbor that had been selected. In the first place, we relied on the numbers and valor of our soldiers to whom the Spaniards could never be invincible, and for whom (I shall say it plainly) it had become habit to conquer the Spaniards. The type of troops forming the expedition guaranteed a certain success even if the natives did not help but just a little. This help would be not so much with men, whom they would always give us but which we did not really need, but with material aids, with food provisions, with advice, and with those other countless ways in which a friendly people can efficaciously lend a hand to an invading army.

We also relied on Mexico's promise to lend us very
effective help. Anyone wanting to find data on this matter pertaining to Mexico may consult the Recopilación de Leves compiled by the lawyer, Don Basilio José Arrilaga. The most important documents on this matter may be found in this work—especially the law of May 12, 1828 in which "the departure of national troops to wage war in Cuba or other points dependent on the Spanish government was permitted." This law was circulated that very day by the Secretary of War and published by proclamation on the twenty-fourth. In the year [18]23, the Secretary of War, Señor Pedraza, had authorized Don Pedro de Rojas to license privateers and to reach an understanding with the inhabitants of Cuba for the purpose of fomenting the revolution. This revolution, known on the island by the name Soles de Bolívar, failed because of the reasons which we shall partially see later on.¹

Once the island of Cuba was taken according to the Liberator's plans, his fiery heart would not be content with the conquest alone. By force, all the inhabitants of the island and those of Puerto Rico would be free without any exceptions. It goes without saying that among these would be included the unfortunate Africans who still suffered the sum of human misfortunes. To think that we would have thought

¹The Soles de Bolívar, or Soles y Rayos de Bolívar which was its complete name, was the principal revolutionary organization in Cuba working for independence. Literally meaning the "Suns and Rays of Bolívar," it functioned chiefly during 1823. Charles E. Chapman, A History of the Cuban Republic (New York, 1927), 32.
it feasible or logical to free a country and then leave a part of its inhabitants sunk in servitude, is an absurdity which the Liberator of Colombia would never have incurred. With the free Negroes, the Liberator told me, I was to immediately form an army and transport it to Spain to aid the Liberal Party. This would be to show Colombia's greatness and to ask for the official recognition of those who wanted the ideals of the century placed on Ferdinand's throne.

At this moment I do not know if it would have been possible to realize all of Bolivar's plans. I give my word as a soldier that at the time they seemed possible to fulfill to me, and that I embraced his thought with the joy and the blind enthusiasm with which I had become accustomed to conquering always. I do not believe that any of my companions either doubted the possibility of conquering the Spaniards simply because the terrain of our common struggles would vary. As for me, I already pictured myself in the precinct of El Morro dictating the law to a Captain General from Castile just as I had had the good fortune of dictating to Calzada, successor of the valiant and gentlemanly La Torre, at Puerto Cabello.

The Liberator, persistent in this idea as in all the great concepts that sprang forth from his ardent imagination, without taking the time to rest his mind when he ended the campaign of Perú, directed his attention immediately to the independence of Cuba. It was then that he wrote me the two letters that I shall copy below. They are precious documents
to me in more than one sense, and reveal that when he com-
municated his plan in 1827, he had been preparing to fulfill
it for some time.

The first letter states as follows.²

La Paz, August 30, 1825.

My Dear General:

You who have done so much for the glory and peace
of Venezuela will not fail to do the last thing that
is lacking to keep our beloved country completely
fortunate. You who know the state of affairs there
better than anyone else because you are living them,
will know how important the service we are going to
render Colombia is to her. I shall render this
service by sending a brilliant division from the
troops we have in Peru, and you by taking the greatest
care to preserve it in this state, placing it in the
healthiest atmosphere, and in short, looking on these
men as your most beloved children.

The Junin Battalion, which is one of the best corps
on foot, now marches under the command of Colonel
Ortega, a very good officer, and so does [Ramón]
Escobar's squadron of grenadiers on horseback with
which you are now familiar.³ The Junin is magnifi-
cent, and it has a thousand four hundred squares,
and the squadron that has two hundred is second to none
in its class. I find it excusable to recommend this
division, which shall render us such an immense
service, to you again, my dear General.

I am affectionately yours.

BOLÍVAR

In the other letter he is even more explicit although
he does not mention the true objective for which the troops

²A copy of this letter may be found in Blanco and
Azpurúa (eds.), Documentos Para La Historia, X, 125.

³Ramón Escobar was a brilliant cavalry leader who
attained the rank of Colonel after his role in the Battles
of Junín and Ayacucho. He also took part in the Battle of
Carabobo. Lecuna, Crónica Razonada, I, 158; III, 47.
are destined. This was demanded by the prudence with which it was necessary to proceed in this matter.

This letter states as follows.4

Potosí, October 16, 1825.

My Dear General:

I have received your valuable letter of March 29 in Achaguas with pleasure. Thank you, my dear General, for your congratulations on the successes of the liberating army of Perú.

By my previous letters, you might have seen that one thousand six hundred men have marched to Venezuela; that an equal number will march within three months; and that probably next year I shall go taking six thousand men. I assure you that every day I am more and more determined to execute this operation from which Colombia could derive an immense benefit.

I have written General Santander and proposed you as Intendant in Venezuela. I do not doubt that he will fulfill a duty on which the happiness of our beloved country certainly depends. To tell the truth, I do not know another person who is better suited to command it than you. You are one of its liberators and have so many rights to its gratitude. I expect that you will not excuse yourself from accepting this task.

Affairs progress very nicely around here, and we have nothing to fear. The Chuquisaca Assembly has recessed after naming the commissioners who must negotiate with Buenos Aires, Perú, and Colombia, for the recognition of the Republic of Bolívar.

Consider me always, my dear General, your most affectionate, heart-felt friend.

BOLÍVAR.

Bolívar was the perfect man to carry out what he repeatedly recommended to me, and he would have carried it

4 A copy of this letter is to be found in Blanco and Azpurúa (eds.), Documentos Para la Historia, X, 125.
out had it not been for a complication of circumstances which conspired against our final and grandiose project and struck it down. The first unfortunate circumstance was [Colonel Jose] Bustamente's uprising in Peru which forced the troops which were descending the Andes for the expedition against Cuba to countermarch. The uprising urgently required the presence of these troops on the Colombian frontier, which was ungratefully invaded, if I may be permitted to say so. From that moment on, Cuba was not thought of again, for internal needs were such, that they hardly afforded the opportunity to take care of them from moment to moment. These needs interlaced themselves and succeeded themselves with such rapidity, that even Bolivar's genius and his untiring perseverance were barely sufficient to accommodate them.

Bolivar encountered another very grave obstacle, and one that was most unexpected for us considering that the project should have been opposed by the Spaniards only. The Washington government, I say it with sorrow, earnestly opposed the independence of Cuba. They gave as their reason, 

5Colonel Jose Bustamante had fought in 1824 at the Battles of Junin, Matará, and Ayacucho. After Bolivar had liberated Peru from the Spanish, he left Bustamante as Chief of Staff of the third Colombian division he was leaving in Peru. In 1827 Colonel Bustamante led the majority of Granadino Captains and subalterns to oust the Venezuelan commanding officers and declared against any attempts at dictatorship. This was one of the factors leading to Bolivar's declaration of war on Peru, which ended victoriously for the Colombians in 1829. Madariaga, Bolivar, 545, 547, 550. Henao and Arrubla, History of Colombia, 394, 406-407.
among others, one which Hispanic American nations should always remember, and that was that: 6

. . . no power, not even Spain itself, has in such a variety of forms, so deep an interest in its (Cuba's) future fortunes, whatever they may happen to be, as the United States . . . for ourselves (the Anglo-Americans) we desire no change in the possession or political condition of that island; and that we could not, with indifference, see it transferred from Spain, to any other European power. We are unwilling to see its transfer or annexation to either of the new American States.

These words, which spelled death for our project, were written by Henry Clay himself. His character, as well as that of the administration which his talents served, clearly warned us at the very least to forego any idea contrary to the convenience which the United States derived from the continuation of Spanish power in Cuba. The United States spoke so explicitly then, that it is so surprising to see how anyone later could sacrifice himself to secure the independence of this island without counting first on the consent and unanimous cooperation of its inhabitants. I pointed this out to the unfortunate General Don Narciso López, to whom I spoke with all the loyalty with which his courage inspired me, for he had been one of the first Spanish warriors in the

6This quotation was extracted from Henry Clay's instructions to the commissioners at the Congress of Panamá. Spanish America, 52-53.
battles fought on the Venezuelan plains.\(^7\)

With this painful incident ended, let us return to the principle question regarding the policy of the United States with respect to Cuba.\(^8\) Allow me to refer the reader to the instructions which Mr. Clay gave in 1828 to the commissioners he sent to the Congress of Panama and which I

\(^7\) General Don Narciso López was a native of Venezuela who had risen to the rank of General in the Spanish army because of the services rendered to the mother country in the Wars of Independence in Venezuela. He took up residence in Cuba, married there, and became devoted to the interests of the Cuban people. Being a man of liberalist tendencies, he finally resolved to promote a revolt against the tyranny of Spanish rule. He did not want a free Cuba, however, for he feared it might become a Negro Republic like Haiti. Instead he wanted Cuba annexed to the United States, and he was encouraged in this thought by the Southern states who provided him with arms and ammunition. He set the date for the revolt on June 24, 1848. This proved to be an abortive attempt that resulted in failure. López returned to the United States and organized another expedition which left for Cuba in the spring of 1850 with a force of nearly six hundred men, mostly Americans. After winning a preliminary victory, López re-embarked his forces, for the Creoles were not anxious for annexation to the United States. In April of 1851 López had another expedition ready, but the United States government discovered the plot and kept him from sailing. In August, however, López left for Cuba with four hundred men, again mostly American. He was defeated, captured, and executed this time. Facing death bravely on the scaffold, López became the martyr and rallying point for Cuban independence. Chapman, *History of the Cuban Republic*, 35-39. For a more detailed account of Narciso López and his activities see Herminio Portell Vila, *Narciso López y su Época*. 2 vols. (Habana, 1930); Robert Granville Caldwell, *The López Expeditions to Cuba, 1848-1851* (Princeton, 1912).

\(^8\) For early relations of the United States and Cuba see Whitaker, *The Western Hemisphere Idea*. Later relations between these two countries are detailed in Basil Rauch, *American Interest in Cuba: 1848-1855* (New York, 1948).
will copy completely in this chapter.  

The objective of the negotiations between the United States and Russia mentioned in the instructions was to induce the Emperor of Russia to intervene with the Spanish government to secure its consent for the immediate cessation of hostilities between her Catholic Majesty and her former colonies. The principal argument the Minister was to use was the great possibility that Spain would lose not only her continental possessions, but also the islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico which the free Republics would attack. He was to make it obvious later that the war on Spain's part would become defensive instead of offensive and that because of Colombia's and Mexico's position, a swarm of corsairs would not only destroy Spanish commerce on the Gulf of Mexico and sea of the Antilles, but also along the coast of the Peninsula. After adding that the preservation of Cuba and Puerto Rico deserved every consideration and should satisfy a reasonable ambition, he was to further propound the following.  

9The year 1828 which the author cites in this instance is incorrect, for the Congress of Panamá met in 1826 and Henry Clay issued his instructions to the commissioners that same year. The author's translated version of these instructions has been omitted because the original may be found in Clay, Spanish America, 52-58.  

10Páez's translation of the letter of instructions from Henry Clay, Secretary of State, to Henry Middleton, United States Minister to Russia, has been omitted because the original may be found in William R. Manning, Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States Concerning the Independence of the Latin American Nations. 3 vols (New York, 1925), I, 244-50.
I relate all this that has occurred without any desire other than to have everything known. This is without hatred for Spain, for I learned to love her people while fighting her noble and valiant sons. This is also without rancor, God deliver me, for the United States whose hospitality I have delightfully enjoyed during the last years of my life. Finally, this is without any further interest in Cuba than that of presenting the events and the tendencies of the government of that period under its true light.

Since I am as interested now as I always was in what concerns Cuba, I assumed the task of scanning the documents on the history of this island while writing this chapter.\textsuperscript{11} I wanted to investigate the reasons why, when all the Spanish colonies unanimously raised the cry of emancipation against the mother country, Cuba and Puerto Rico did not echo this cry. The only reason I could come up with was that one or the other island was always the arsenal where Spain kept all the arms used to subjugate those of us who were fighting, relying only on the justice of our cause.

On July 17, 1808 Cuba received news from Spain which gave occasion in other points of Spanish America for the formation of juntas as had been done in several cities of the Peninsula. The Marqués de Someruelos governed the

\textsuperscript{11}Páez’s role in the independence of Cuba is explored in more detail in J. A. Cova, Páez y la Independencia de Cuba (Habana, 1959), 13-31.
island at the time. When he saw himself forced to permit the publication of this news, he firmly opposed the formation of juntas, and in order to avoid the complications which would be brought by a free discussion of the state of affairs in Spain, he recognized the Supreme Junta of Seville as legitimate. By means of this coup d'etat Someruelos ended all the difficulties. The people directed their attention then to the pursuit of the French, for there were many naturalized citizens on the island, especially ex-colonials from Santo Domingo, who had emigrated to Cuba with their fortunes as they fled from that theatre of revolutionary horrors.

During Someruelos's rule, the Spanish cortes manifested its plans to emancipate the slaves in Cuba and Puerto Rico. This measure greatly alarmed the inhabitants of these islands, for they believed that not only were their lives and haciendas threatened, but also the future of the white race. Their fears were not unfounded, for there were riots

12The Marqués de Someruelos replaced the Conde de Santa Clara as Captain General of Cuba in March of 1799 at a time when Spain feared a war with the United States and wanted a younger, more vigorous military man in command of the Pearl of the Antilles. When the threat of war subsided, Someruelos allowed the return of commerce between Cuba and North America and was instrumental in getting the mother country to liberalize her policy on the monopoly of trade. Although General James Wilkinson characterized Someruelos as "extremely feminine in his exterior and of feeble intellect," he successfully fulfilled his charge of temporarily preserving Cuba for Spain. Herminio Portell Vila, Historia de Cuba. 4 vols. (Habana, 1938), I, 129, 154.
in several sugar and coffee plantations about that time. A conspiracy was even discovered which was led by the Negro Aponte. His name is still used on the island to recall the perversity of an individual. It is easy to understand how these well-founded fears, promoted by having to deal with a race which had received terrible instructions from acts verified on a neighboring island, could work in such a manner on the soul of the Cubans so as to make them consider any revolutionary movement as dangerous. Even if it could grant them their own independence, such a movement could also serve to awaken a spirit of insurrection in the slaves. It had already been proven that the slaves did have a very pronounced tendency in this direction. Nevertheless, the youth of the island, who were not wont to circumscribe themselves within the limits of prudence, could not remain indifferent. They saw the laurels that the independents gathered in other places and the proof of their valor in the decimated troops which arrived in Habana from Costa Firme after they had turned over the fortresses that they defended to the so-called insurgents. Consequently, secret societies were formed. The outstanding one among them was the one called Soles de Bolivar. Its name reveals that Bolivar was the saint and sign of the conspirators. The infamy of a son of Cuba exposed the conspiracy to General Don Dionisio Vives,
and thus the revolutionary spirit was suffocated for the time being.  

In 1825 several Cubans, who had emigrated from their country, had organized a patriotic junta in Mexico which decided to send a commission to Bolivar to encourage him to undertake attacking the Spanish power in the Antilles. The Liberator embraced the project with the greatest enthusiasm, and the reader has already seen that it was not his fault that his plans encountered invincible obstacles. These Cuban patriots had directed the following representation to the Mexican congress. This is an unedited document which I owe to the generosity of a son of Cuba whose name has figured in the latest revolutionary plans.

SEÑORES VOTERS OF THE CHAMBERS OF DEPUTIES AND SENATORS:

The individuals, some natives of the island of Cuba and others Mexican citizens, who subscribe to this

13 General Francisco Dionisio Vives was the Spanish Captain General of Cuba from 1823 until May 15, 1832. While a stern governor, he did not play the part of a despot and always sought the support of the wealthy Creole class. In 1823 and 1824, aided by his spies, he did suppress an insurrection inspired and led by the revolutionary society known as El Aguila Negra, or the Black Eagle. Consequently in 1825 he was given unlimited dictatorial powers. Since Mexico had conspired against Spanish occupation of Cuba, General Vives sent a military expedition against Mexico in 1828. He fully expected the Mexicans to join his soldiers and was very much surprised when his expedition was forced to surrender. William F. Johnson, The History of Cuba. 5 vols. (New York, 1920), II, 343-64. Philip S. Foner, A History of Cuba and its Relations with the United States. 2 vols. (New York, 1962), I, 104, 118-19, 120, 121, 122, 151, 175-76.
petition are all interested in the happiness of both countries. They address the Mexican General Congress, full of the sacred enthusiasm which the love of liberty inspires, with the following exposition:

When as the result of the heroic efforts of the Americans, the entire new continent finds itself free from foreign domination, and especially when the towns oppressed by the Spaniard have completely shaken the chains of that barbarous government, the unfortunate island of Cuba, important and precious part of America, still finds itself today bent under the terrible yoke of that ferocious enemy of all liberty. In these circumstances the sons of Cuba, though always united in desires with their brothers of the continent, but still isolated in all other senses, have no other recourse but to wait for the Mexican or Colombian nation to deliver them their freedom or to pledge themselves to the desperate course of insurrection which in the midst of such a heterogeneous population could lead to very doubtful results. In the midst of the effervescence which the desire of being free produces in the public spirit of that island, a resolution or a party has not yet been adopted. Consequently, those most enthusiastic for independence or those who could most easily do so, have left their native soil to seek aid where they believed they had reasons to expect it—close to a powerful nation whose interest should impel her to lend a hand to a people who must necessarily be its ally in all things and who will fight in the vanguard for the security of both. Mutual interest and convenience demand that the Mexican Republic rush to the aid of the island of Cuba and assist her to get out of the state of degradation and slavery in which it is maintained by the common enemy of the Americas. This state is due more to force of habit and other particular circumstances than to moral influence; due more to the inertia that is natural in all towns enjoying certain commodities because of the acquiescence of the inhabitants to the system in effect which dishonors their country; in a word, due only to that natural inclination of man to maintain himself in a state of peace while sacrificing even his liberty and most precious rights if the results of a sudden upheaval can be dismal. But this state of peace has ceased to be natural now to the island of Cuba. Her inhabitants are now aware of the sanctity of their rights. They are surrounded everywhere by brilliant examples of heroism, and they are taught by the practical lessons of the many free peoples with whom they are in close contact. In complete contrast, they find themselves under a government whose very name spells degradation in the sight of cultured peoples. Every day they
are deprived more and more of the commercial relations which constitute their riches and fortune, and they find themselves without confidence because of the fear produced by a nearby revolution. Finally, they are impelled by the forces of enlightenment and civilization to search for a system more in accord with their interests and their new necessities. They are already at the point of staging a revolution which without the protection of a friendly nation can end dismally for our unfortunate brothers. If supported and directed by this Republic, this revolution could lead to the complete triumph of liberty and independence for the island.

These, señores, are not vain theories nor assertions founded only on sterile wishes and desires. They are true axioms extracted from the nature of society and from the circumstances in which events have placed the island of Cuba. We appeal to the judgment of the true Mexican patriots, to that of the deputies and senators who have had the glory of seeing the birth, growth and triumph of their country's freedom. Is there a Mexican heart that has not been irresistibly drawn to the cause of independence? Is there one (Mexican) that did not ardently desire the destruction of the Spanish government and did not proclaim the triumph of the nation's arms? Still, the inevitable disorder of the revolution dissuaded some; fear of an unfortunate end daunted others; lack of organization alienated many; and certain decorous jobs or commitments held back the others. And who would not have wanted an organized force to appear then and organize the new order of things by extinguishing the fatal discord and untying the sons of the country under the nation's banner? Then a voice would have been heard from Dolores to Yucatán, and the year Ten would have seen the portents of the year Twenty-One realized. How much blood, how many disasters would have been spared the country! Its prosperity would have continued in the place of the hatreds, the killings, the ruins, and the vices produced by a civil war. To what degree of riches, abundance, and civilization the great Mexican people could have been elevated! Apply these considerations, señores, to the island of Cuba in its present state. Everything points out that a revolution is impending in that country; everything stimulates and precipitates it. Shall the Mexican nation stand by indifferently while a part of the American soil inundates itself in a blood to which it is closely bound by so many ties of friendship and kinship? Shall the Congress of a free people look on coolly without extending a helping hand while a friendly and sister country submerges itself in the gulf of misfortunes which threaten it? We do not speak only to your hearts,
senores. We direct ourselves to your reason, and we argue with those who oppose favoring the Cubans.

We know that governments do not decide to act as individuals do many times, for the sentiment of compassion and the desire to favor the unfortunate are not the qualities which establish the policy of nations. This very consideration stimulates us to ask the Mexican government for the aid that we seek. Yes, senores, the interests of the Republic are committed to those of the island of Cuba, for as long as the latter is not independent, Mexico's future cannot be absolutely assured. Recall, senores, where the first point of support for the conquistadores was. Then think about where the basis for the hopes of the Spanish government lies today, and do not forget why the Fort of Ulua is in the hands of the enemy. Consider also the position of this beautiful island at the mouth of the Gulf of Mexico, and that it is in contact with one of the more important States of the federation. Remember that commercial nations watch over the destinies of the modern Tiro, and that the London of America, that rich Habana, shall have a powerful influence on the future of the states of the new continent: that a terrible crisis could place this island under the control of a race of men that for the misfortune of humanity could enter into social relations with civilized peoples. The domination of these men in the Antilles could influence the destinies of all America in a disadvantageous manner. Senores, are not these weighty considerations sufficient to incline you to order an expedition to the island? What reflections could possibly oppose the irresistible reasons which we have just expounded? The Liberator Bolivar and the Congress of Colombia decided with less powerful motives and having less chances of success, to order a liberating army to the other part of Ecuador to redeem their brothers in Peru from the oppressive force of another veteran army that was very sure of itself because of its victories and the influence these gave it. Nothing can detain the tutelar genius of South America: it flies to new triumphs and crosses rivers, seas, and mountains which are inaccessible to less patriotic men: it conquers seemingly insurmountable obstacles. The credit of a nation that has yet to recuperate from its closest misfortunes is pawned. Soldiers, officers, and generals whose arms are still tired of fighting, who have not recuperated from the fatigues of the past war, whose wounds have not yet healed, rush to another soil to fight for their brothers' freedom, to redeem them from oppression, and to aid them during their times of anguish. And what shall we say of the efforts of the
peoples of Chile and Buenos Aires for the same objective? Neither distance, nor the sacred obligation of attending to their own defense, nor the shortage of resources keeps them from coming to shake hands across the Andes with their Colombian brothers in order to free the oppressed Peruvians.

In modern Greece, the inhabitants of Morea and Peloponneso fight with one hand to defend their soil from the barbarians, and with the other hand they send aid to the islands of the Archipelago. While fighting on the continent, they simultaneously aid the Cretans and the Rhodians to shake their oppressors' yoke.— These are not examples taken from ancient history and acts that have come to us disfigured and whose application is inexact the greater part of the time. These are events which have just occurred and which are still happening before our very eyes: they are events which are in the nature of society and result from the sympathy of principles, equality of opinions, and uniformity of sentiments and interests. What reasons can justify the apathy and indifference of Mexico with respect to the island of Cuba? The former is a warring nation that is full of the sentiments of freedom and which has just established its independence by having united only its valiant sons. It also has greater resources than any of the other States, and a burning desire to propagate liberal ideas while enjoying an imperturbable peace and tranquility. What obstacles can such a nation find to prevent it from helping a people that have expressed in whatever manner is possible to them a desire to be independent—a people that have announced everywhere that they are only awaiting some assistance in order to build on the ruins of the present government another national one which would be in accordance with the enlightenments of the century? Spanish despotism is already stuffing itself on innumerable victims, for the prisons are now filled with patriots. The sons of Cubanacan are already dispersed through foreign lands fleeing from persecution while families sob silently for the absence, banishment, or imprisonment of the son, brother, husband, or father.14 Espionage engenders

---

14 Cubanacan, which was the Indian name for the island of Cuba, became the name of the island's first proclaimed Republic. This Cubanacan Republic was proclaimed sometime in the summer, probably in August, of 1823, by a native of Habana, José Francisco Lemus. The "conspiracy" as the Spanish Captain General Vives termed it, was short-lived, for Lemus was captured and the movement collapsed. Foner, History of Cuba, I, 112-14.
distrust and terror in all classes of society producing confusion, disorder, fears, and anxieties. This is the state of the people that ask for our protection and aid—people who shall perhaps be unfortunate for many centuries if you do not run to their aid but which could shortly attain an enviable prosperity if you decree their salvation.

The destinies of two great countries rests in your hands, Fathers of the country. The fate of many generations of a country that has half a million free men depends on you. To enable the deputies and senators to talk and vote knowledgably on this important question, we enclose the documents that we have been able to get relative to it. Among other things, what the Attorney General says about the celebrated conspiracy of this past year of 1824 is noteworthy. We call Congress's attention to the following words: The Attorney General is convinced that those who appear here as the conspirators of the association known as the Soles y Rayos (he speaks of juntas by this name whose objective it was to promote independence) are not alone, for the evil has spread and diffused itself all through the Island just as an over-flowing river spreads over many fields along its path. This idea is borne out by the incidents which have occurred in these last days proceeding from Hanaban and the surrounding area. This phrase in the Attorney General's opinion in all its context shows that the sons of the island of Cuba, instead of being far removed from knowing the noble American cause, were straining to place themselves on an equal footing with their brothers of the continent. There is valor, there is patriotism in those inhabitants, but there are also obstacles opposing the attainment of the undertaking—obstacles of such nature, which when considered well almost appear insurmountable. In short, señores, the considerable numbers of slaves anxious for the freedom of which they are deprived by a misfortune, if you wish but inevitable in actuality, serves as a bridle to hold back the nacent efforts of the patriots who are opposed by the double force represented by an established government and this relatively inert mass. The state of tranquility which the proprietors enjoy under the present system makes the despotism tolerable. It is an exchange for not being exposed to the terrible convulsions experienced by a neighboring island whose history forms an episode corresponding to the revolution of France, its metropolis. It is the fear, then, on the part of the owners of rustic farms of seeing themselves ruined by the uprising of their slaves and deprived of their means of living added to the consideration on the part of others that a revolution of
in a state of uncertainty which will in the end be sadder than their very fears. Listen to the reasons.

The Spanish government loses its moral force on the island of Cuba more and more each day; consequently its physical resources are weakened. This decadence of the present government in that country is caused by the opposition, corresponding that of Madrid, to the progress of civilization and more particularly to the inevitable tendency which former Spanish colonies have to secure their emancipation. From this point on it is just a step to having the present Administration lose its vigor and energy and then to establishing a balance of power and of influence between it and the party in favor of independence. Furthermore, since public opinion gives impetus to public affairs, it alone is not sufficient to contain the disorders produced by anarchy. It may come to pass that the Spanish government will be reduced to nullity, and when there is not another one to take its place after all means of power have been weakened and all social ties relaxed, a third force which although unorganized still has all the elements necessary to an intimate union, shall instinctively take possession of public power and give a completely different impetus and direction to the revolution. Let us not forget the events of Santo Domingo which resulted chiefly from France's oscillations and the state of nullity in which the government of this island found itself. The Creoles were not sufficiently strong to superimpose themselves on the metropolis, and the metropolis had lost its power to contain the slaves. Both became the victims of the united force created by those who could not choose by system but only by the instinct possessed by all men to seek their liberty.

These are the circumstances in which the largest island of the Archipelago close to Mexico finds itself; these are the risks which threaten Cubana. The trade between that country and this one, the political relations that naturally should start with independence, the elucidation, the liberty, the culture of our fathers—all these are threatened and all are in danger if the revolution takes on the horrible aspect which we have announced because the Mexican nation did not send a force capable of raising the flag of independence some place on the island and calling all her sons. Then the Cuban patriots who are sighing today and waiting for their brothers of the continent on their beaches will fly to unite under the wings of the
invincible Eagle. Spanish pride will then receive its last blow and be forced to retreat and concentrate on the Peninsula; then all the Americans will be able to join in singing about the complete triumph of our independence and write hymns to liberty. Habana could serve as the center for the new amateurs of Columbus's continent. From the assemblies meeting here shall come decrees that will honor the cause of humanity, which is today the cause of all Americans. The ships of the Republics shall sail freely on our seas, and the flags of friendly nations shall be respected. There shall be peace, abundance, and prosperity. The ships that arrive at the most celebrated ports of this powerful nation will cease to fear encountering an enemy who with the opprobium of its heroism dares to maintain itself before and within sight of its shores. The plaque of pirates which infest the Mexican Gulf will disappear forever. Everything shall change. The names of the Mexican heroes will be diffused with those of the liberators of the island and stir up memories of gratitude even in the most remote generations.

Let your votes join with those of the inhabitants of the island of Cuba to move the Mexican Congress to take a stand which will place it on a plane with that of the liberators of peoples and of that celebrated monarch of Sicily who as a reward for his victories in defeating one hundred and fifty thousand Carthaginians imposed as a condition for peace that both enemies cease offering their first-born sons as sacrifices to their gods.

---Antonio Abad Yznaga, Lorenzo Zabala, José Antonio Mozo, Joaquín Casares y Armas, Manuel Gaul, José Antonio de Echavarri, José Teurbe Tolon, Antonio Valdés.

The South American people looked upon the cause of liberty for Cuba with such enthusiasm, that after the celebrated Battle of Ayacucho, according to what General Sucre wrote me from Chuquisaca on April 27, 1826, the army offered itself to the government for the purpose of liberating Habana. According to that chief, however, the government answered only by giving its thanks. This may have been because it lacked the pecuniary means to sustain a new
campaign or because it may not have been convenient to Colombia's interests to enter into a new dispute which might prove embarrassing. 15

The fact is that Bolivar was afraid to give any publicity to such a worthy undertaking which required great

15 Paez inserts this letter as a footnote here.

Chuquisaca, April 27, 1826

My Dear General:

After the Battle of Ayacucho I had the pleasure of writing you to inform you that the final outcome of the campaign of Peru was victory, and to thank you in the name of the conquering army for the efforts that you made in Venezuela to assist us. Even though this aid did not arrive in time, it still had merit, for we consider the efficacy with which you prepared it and the good intentions you held for the glorious success of your comrades in this country who were committed to the most noble cause.

I have not received an answer from you, and I do not know if it is because my letter did not arrive; because yours was lost in the return mail as has happened many times; or because you have not written. In any case, I write this to greet you again and reiterate my feelings.

Recently, from Ayacucho, our army offered itself to the government for the purpose of liberating Habana. Whether it was because there was not the pecuniary means to sustain a new campaign, or because it is not convenient to Colombia's interests to enter in a dispute which might prove embarrassing, the government answered only by giving its thanks. Our army's morale is excellent as a result of the discipline, order, system, and above all, the national and military spirit which doubles its strength. It would be capable of any undertaking worthy of arms.

I have seen in the newspapers that you, continuing your distinguished services to the country, maintain good order in Venezuela. I owe and render you my gratitude for this great service to this land which is so beloved to me.

Please, my esteemed General, accept the sentiments of affection and consideration with which I am your very attentive and obedient servant.

A. de Sucre.
caution and major prudence. It would truly have been grandiose and worthy of the American revolution if the conquering army from Ayacucho, composed of troops from all the South American countries, could have ended its career of triumphs after having seized the territory on which Pizarro had planted in other times the proud flag of the castles and lions, by seizing the most precious of the jewels in the Castilian crown. Only those people who have not dealt intimately with the multitude of the sons of Cuba who come in the summer months to these States to breathe the vivifying atmosphere of democracy, can believe that the Cubans are well satisfied and content with Spanish domination and that they are satisfied only with the material prosperity made possible for them by the agricultural riches from the soil of their country which is exhuberant in valuable and precious productions. In past epochs I have seen wealthy men from that island generously offer their treasures for liberating expeditions. I have seen and still am seeing youths with talent and a good future, who eat the bitter bread of emigration kneaded with the sweat of their brows, form patriotic juntas without freeing themselves from the ridicule with which the positivists look upon all those who begin undertakings which they do not believe can be carried to a successful end without the cooperation of those who have pecuniary resources at their disposal. None of this is sufficient cause for the Cuban patriots to cease working with faith and enthusiasm for the liberty of their unfortunate
country. Similar to the sons of the unhappy Polonius, they form associations in foreign countries to echo before the liberal world the sighs and laments of their comrades who live under the colonial yoke. They say and repeat every instant, addressing their country, "fosti tu men bella o almen piu forte." 16

There is no doubt that the hour of redemption shall come for Cuba, whether it is as a result of the efforts of her own sons or due to the aid lent them by any foreign nation with which Spain undertakes a prolonged war. Cuba is like an Achilles' heel for Spain, the vulnerable part of its body. If the government that reigns in the Peninsula were not so jealous of what it calls national pride, and if it would sacrifice the interest and glory of seeing their race perpetually and solidly established on the American continent to this vain sentiment, Spain could leave the Cubans in free possession of the land on which they were born. Limited to her geographical boundaries, Spain could then reconquer the Strait by occupying Gibraltar and the opposite coasts of Africa. Spain then, in truth, would not possess dominions on which the sun never sets, but in its stead it could set the law down to all the nations whose ships plow the valuable arm of the sea which bathes the coasts of three continents of the ancient world.

As for the Cubans, in the midst of their present

16"If only you were less beautiful or at least stronger."
misfortunes, let them seek consolation from the future lot which shall befall them as a free and independent nation. Tutored by the inconveniences and evils with which the people of the same race that preceded them in the conquest of independence have had to struggle, they can avoid making the same mistakes committed by those who today are atoning painfully. Let the Cubans try to keep the last day of Spanish domination from becoming the first of a reign of anarchy and internal dissensions. Let them keep the first mistakes we made after attaining our independence before them so that they do not forget to avoid them. Let them remember the faults we committed, the excesses and defects of our failures, and thus they will be able to implant the basis of their future well-being along with their declaration of independence.

The inhabitants of Cuba shall have in common with us the evils that follow the Spanish colonial system. In order that they do not imitate us in those evils which we ourselves created, do not let them be blinded by theories which promise more than they can give. Do not let them ever adhere to the political composition which kills, but rather adhere to the political spirit which vivifies. Let them remember that the social body is similar to the human: sometimes its afflictions are healed by a simple topical application applied in time while at other times it is necessary to cure the evil with hot irons so that the venomous virus can not be innoculated into the canals of vitality. And do not ever let them
forget that a people cannot be free as long as they maintain slaves in their midst.17

17Páez inserts this footnote. "This opinion is not new to me. Besides being an axiomatic truth, I put it into practice when I commanded in Apure as chief in 1816. Many of the slaves became valiant officers later who distinguished themselves in the army. Later I tried to extirpate slavery in Venezuela. The proprietors opposed me in 1826, in 1830, and in 1847. With one pretext or another they never accepted an act of justice which would benefit all. See the following notes I wrote for a delegation to the Congress of 1848.

If Venezuela's birth as a nation demanded to be marked with an act of kindness, another act of justice would have been no less noteworthy. When the entire Republic breathes freedom, when it has proclaimed the rights of men, and when it has declared that no man can be the property of another, to permit slavery is to contradict oneself in one's own principles and to conflict with one's own acts and undermine one of the principle basis upon which the social edifice should be built. With these foundations, Congress should solicit a small loan of money outside the country to redeem the slaves and indemnify their owners as is provided for in the Constitution in Article 208. The law which Congress could dictate on this important event could no doubt be received in Venezuela as well as in foreign countries watching us, as the wisest and the most philanthropic. This would be because it would give the Republic an infinity of citizens which now do not belong to society but instead are the property of a few. --Man as a free being cannot be the property of another. No obstacles should be placed in the way of the innocent exercise of his faculties nor should he be deprived of the great prerogative of his freedom. Slavery in Venezuela should be excluded from the midst of properties. I have the good fortune of being one of the liberators of my country, and I would descend to the sepulchre painfully if I were not inclined to cooperate with seeing to it that justice is well distributed. But in order that we can see how we can exercise this justice without harming the interests which represent the future of the families supporting themselves on the work of slaves, let us compare two equal capital sums, one invested in slaves and the other placed on interest rates.

$15,000. Capital placed at an interest rate of 12% annually, which is the rate generally paid in this country, would give a profit of . . . $1,800.

$15,000. Capital invested in slaves, according to the following manifestations, would only produce . . . $1,400
Fortunately for Cuba she has neither impenetrable jungles nor territories which cover vast horizons. Therefore,

\[
\text{Difference against the capital invested in slaves} \quad \ldots \quad \$400.
\]

**MANIFESTATIONS**

With the capital mentioned, fifty slaves would be bought at $300.

These slaves, according to the customs already established in this country, would only work two hundred days in the year, for out of the 364 days, 164 must be subtracted in the following manner:

- For Saturdays and Sundays ........... 104
- For feast days ......................... 20
- For sicknesses, escapes, *et cetera* ............ 40

\[
164
\]

The two hundred days of work at *two reales libres* daily would be $2,500.

Ordinary expenses such as clothing, medicines, medical aid, *et cetera*, should be deducted at the rate of $10.00 each ... $500.

The value of two slaves which, according to all probabilities would die yearly or become useless, must also be deducted if only at 4% ............. 600 $1,100

\[
1,400
\]

This manifestations shows that the money invested in slave proportions a notable loss when compared to that placed at common interest rates. If we remember also that one capital is *perishable* and the other *perpetual*, the great void that still remains in this comparison will be seen.

The $10.00 of yearly expenses calculated to each slave is figured as follows:

- A small cloak for women ......................... $1.00
- Twelve yards of hair cue at two *reales* .... 3.00
- A hat ......................................... 4.00
- Medical aid at the rate of $150 a year for one doctor amounts to this rate per slave ......................... 3.00
- Food, nurse, *et cetera* ..................... 5.00

\[
10.00
\]

The presupposed dress differs much from that provided by law.

There are about twenty thousand slaves in Venezuela which at two hundred dollars (medium terms) would represent $4,000,000. What incalculable advantages the circulation of such a quantity of money would bring to the country!

Keep in mind also that the proprietors can lose the greater part of the capital employed in slaves in an epidemic, and that that loss cannot be repaired easily, not only in
it would not be possible for rebel parties to find shelter--
parties which to the tune of patriotism live off sacking the
towns. Neither shall they have space for their cavalry
forays which are organized by caudillos who reveal, in all
its horror, the European who has regressed to a barbaric
state in the pampas of the Southern hemisphere. Those topog-
graphical accidents which I consider as the best means of
defense in my country against a foreign nation, would present
to an emancipated Cuba the same evils we have had to fight
since we expelled our foreign oppressors. Due to her geo-
graphic position, Cuba will be safe from any aggression from
an outside enemy if she dedicates a great part of her trea-
sury to defending her coast and establishing a fleet that
someday would be worthy of the honorary title of Tiro del
Nuevo Mundo.

I pray that I do not die before witnessing the repeti-
tion on the fields of Cuba of the scenes I had the glory of

terms of hands for work, but in terms of credit in the market
where the landowner buys the goods urgently needed on his
properties.

The political events of [18]48 did not permit me to
present the ideas I have outlined in these notes before Con-
gress."

The figures Páez gives in this account do not check
out correctly. This may be due to some type of printing or
typographical error.
I know that in one of the departments of the island there are inhabitants who need only to exchange the javelin of the cow-boy for the lance of the soldier in order to attain the fame of the Venezuelan llanero.

The author footnotes this as follows. "Humboldt in his Voyages to the Equinoctial Regions states that in 1800 in Turmero there was a reunion of the nation's militia. Only its appearance announced that the peace in those valleys had not been interrupted for centuries. The Captain General, hoping to give a new impetus to the military spirit, had ordered extensive exercises. The Turmero Battalion in a simulated battle had fired upon that of La Victoria. Our host, a Lieutenant in the local militia, did not tire of describing the danger of this action to us. 'I have seen myself,' he told me, 'surrounded by rifles that could explode at any moment: they have kept me in the sun for four hours without even permitting my slaves to hold an umbrella over my head.' How rapidly even the most peaceful peoples take to the customs of War! I smiled then at a timidity that was manifested with such candor. Twelve years later those very valleys of Aragua, those same quiet plains of La Victoria and Turmero, the narrow passage of La Cabrera and the fertile shores of the lake of Valencia, came to be the scene of the most bloody and cruel combat between the natives and the soldiers of the metropolis. This quotation may be found in Humboldt, Viaje a las Regiones Equinoxiales del Nuevo Continente, III, 84."
CHAPTER XXI

Royalist Conspiracies—Coronado and the Castillos—Conspiracy in Barinas—Mutiny in Angostura—Pursuit and Extermination of the Rebel Parties.

1827-1828

The historian[s] Baralt [and Díaz], after relating the end of the affairs which had been agitating other sections of Colombia, state in speaking about Venezuela: "When the agitations and restlessness were calmed on one front (Ecuador), such commotions, open violence, and wars broke out on other fronts, that it seemed as if the disturbing elements had met and agreed at the same time but with diverse means, to lacerate the country purposely in order to distribute the pieces among themselves."¹ In effect, the Royalist conspirators did plot. They were animated by proclamations and excited by many partisans of the king who had remained in the country, appearing to submit themselves to the new order of things. I believed it opportune to take precautionary measures. At the same time that I seized persons involved in the plot, such as friars Ravelo and García, I sent my forces against several separate parties that had rebelled at

¹This quotation may be found in Baralt and Díaz, Resumen de la Historia, II, 351.
different points. Offering a pardon to the guilty by means of a proclamation, I succeeded in getting more than four hundred individuals to lay down their arms. Perhaps misinterpreting the leniency with which I had treated the rebels in Cumaná, Pedro Coronado, who had been given a prison sentence because of his incendiary writings, placed himself at the head of one hundred and fifty men to resist the authorities who had pronounced sentence against him. I sent his brother Bonifacio and Colonel Ramón Burgos to deal with him and make him understand the grave consequences which would follow his rash actions. Thus I was able to get Coronado to abandon his projects and present himself to me.

On October 24 of this year I was writing the Liberator:

"The country marches along the path that His Excellency the Liberator traced: towns have gotten used to the execution of your decrees, order reigns everywhere. I have some basis on which to found my hopes that the situation will remain unchanged until the sought-after and happy time arrives when

---

2 No additional information is available on Bonifacio or Pedro Coronado.

Ramón Burgos was born in Guanare. He was a law student when the revolution broke out in 1810. He left his studies to enlist as a soldier in Caracas. By 1813, after fighting at the Battles of Barbula, Puerto Cabello, and Araure, he had attained the rank of Lieutenant. In 1814 he was at San Carlos and emigrated from there as a Captain. He went on to fight at Apurito, Barinas, and Carabobo and rose to the rank of Colonel in 1827. Burgos served as Commandant of Arms at Mérida, Cumaná, and Barinas. He retired from military service in 1831. Dávila, Diccionario Biográfico, I, 54-55.
the Great Convention dictates the reforms."³

A conspiracy was uncovered in Barinas on October 19 in which the partisans of the Spaniards were involved. Among them were many individuals of color who planned to promote disturbances to steal and sack the national coffers and behead some citizens. The Governor Commandant of Arms, José Ignacio Pulido, declared the province under martial law and started investigations to punish the guilty.⁴ This conspiracy was suffocated in its origin, which dealt a good blow to the deluded Royalists who proposed to sustain the Spanish flag in a district of Coro, commanded by militia Captain Candelario Olivares.⁵ The citizens of the Coro District, who during other times had shown themselves so favorably inclined to the Royalist cause, in this instance rendered the country the service of exterminating the rebels.

³A copy of this letter does not appear either in the Colección de Documentos or Blanco and Azpurda (eds.), Documentos Para la Historia.

⁴General José Ignacio Pulido was born in 1795 in Bravos. He joined the patriot army in 1814 and took part in the siege of Carabobo in 1815. Then he emigrated to Los Cayos. From 1818 to 1820 he fought unceasingly against the Royalists at Calabozo, La Puerta, Sombrero, Gamarra, and Cúcuta. He served with distinction from 1822 to 1826 as Commandant of Arms in the Orinoco Department, rapidly extinguishing the conspiracy of 1827. Pulido died in Barinas on January 28, 1868. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 489-90.

⁵Restrepo mentions Olivares and states that he proclaimed in favor of the King in the canton of San Luis. Revolución de la República de Colombia, IV, 70.
who pretended to revive the already-extinguished spirit of
adhesion to the old metropolis.

The Liberator had commissioned Colonel José Félix
Blanco, who later became a general,⁶ to be Intendant of the
province of Guayana. He was to set ceiling prices to end the
scandalous contraband there, and to execute some of the
Liberator's decrees relative to the prohibition of the
exportation of mules, to sales taxes, to patents, and to
maritime customs. To execute any order in which a man of
character and tenacity is needed, there was no one better
suited than Colonel Blanco. Thus when he arrived in Angos-
tura he proposed to act in keeping with the confidence that
the Liberator had placed in him. Blanco's inflexible con-
duct was in great contrast to the weakness shown by General
José Manuel Olivares, Governor of the province. Therefore,

⁶The author interjects this footnote. "I transcribe
here with pleasure what El Federalista of Caracas said about
this veteran of the independence wars on April 19, 1866.
'Blanco, the almost secular soul who received the revolution
of 1810, was already full of the echoes of the tempest of
1789. Strong, honest, a patriot of all epochs; as credulous
in liberty and in the happy future of America at eighty as
he would have been with the ardors of his youth.'

'General Blanco, after his great services to the
country that gave him birth, has had the patriotic idea of
publishing a reformed edition of Documentos de la Vida
Pública del Libertador. Let God grant that this undertaking,
started in other times by eminent men who were interested in
spreading knowledge concerning the history of Colombia to
the world, be finished now."

The correct title of the work by Blanco is Documentos
Para la Historia de la Vida Pública del Libertador de
Colombia, Perú y Bolivia.
it is not strange that the inhabitants became displeased very quickly with the newly-arrived intendant, whose mission it was to end the illicit markets.

On the night of October 28 a group of men leveled the Intendant's house, asking for his and the Governor's removal, for it was the latter's duty to maintain the Liberator's Commissioner in office. A great part of the population mutinied, and in an act drafted in assembly the following day, they removed Colonel Blanco from his post. They accused him of having committed repeated acts of despotism and revealing himself to be General Santander's enemy, who then exercised the executive power. They were no less severe on the political Governor of the province, General Olivares, for they also removed him from command. The Intendant presented himself before the revolutionary authorities. He was first sent to prison and later sent to the capital by way of Apure and Barinas. Fortunately, this mutiny only had the character of a personal animosity against the person of Intendant Blanco. Consequently, when General José Laurencio Silva was appointed Governor of the province, everything became calm again.

With Coronado removed from the rebellion he had stirred up, his comrades the Castillos continued to abuse the conciliatory measures I had adopted to avoid the shedding
of blood. They remained armed and attacked the troops that Generals Mariño, Bermúdez, and Monagas commanded. They resisted them for six months and committed all sorts of excesses. Not even because of this was less clemency shown the rebels. As a result some reported to be pardoned, but it still did not conquer the rebels' obstinacy. However, Commandant Juan de Dios Manzaneque and his forces defeated the rebel elements on February 8, 1828, and took possession of all the means they had used to maintain themselves until then on the mountain ridge.

The rebel leaders, Francisco Villareal and José del Rosario Farias, and their comrades resorted to the government's clemency. It promised them complete obliteration of the past if they retired to the life of peaceful citizens.

In another chapter I shall deal with the other Royalist parties that circulated during these very times in the territories and spread consternation among the peaceful inhabitants.

---

7The Castillo brothers were Isidoro, Luis, and Rosario. Restrepo states that they had a party of seventy armed men. Revolución de la República de Colombia, IV, 70-71.
CHAPTER XXII

Persecution of Several Royalist Parties—Arrival of Spanish Lieutenant Colonel [José Antonio] Arizábalo to Head Them—His Pursuit by the Troops Under My Command—Arizábalo's Capitulation—Instructions Which General La Torre had Given Him.

1827-28-29

The parties of bandits under the Royalist banner that scoured the Venezuelan territory, committing all sorts of excesses, kept the troops of the Republic in continuous movement. It was impossible to exterminate these hordes, for they took refuge in the mountains and inaccessible places, and there challenged the numerically superior forces sent against them. The citizens in the rural towns, afraid of the damages these bandits could and did inflict on their farms, not only failed to help the government persecute them, but instead served as their spies and kept them informed of the measures taken which were designed to surprise them in their dens.

Don José Domingo Díaz, from Puerto Rico, exaggerated all these acts to the King of Spain in an effort to prove to him how easy it would be to reconquer the countries of the mainland if an expeditionary army or at least some officers were sent out to lead the parties that still defended the rights of His Catholic Majesty in the American territory.
Spain was not without those who would undertake the enterprise of fomenting a movement in Colombia in favor of the King. It was with such an objective that Lieutenant Colonel José Arizábaló disembarked in La Guaira.\(^1\) He was a native of Vizcaya, but had been taken to Caracas at the age of seven; so his family and interests were in that city. The revolution had barely started against the metropolis, when Arizábaló joined the Royalist ranks. He rose to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the infantry and Commandant of artillery, and he was commanding the fort at Barra de Maracaibo when he had to abandon the country as a result of Morales'...

\(^1\)José Antonio Arizábaló had been a Lieutenant Colonel in the Spanish army and had fought admirably in the Royalist army in Venezuela until 1823 when he was forced to yield his command of La Barra Castle in Maracaibo by Morales's capitulation to the revolutionaries. He was well known for his devotion to the Spanish monarch and his aversion to the revolution. Despite this, since Arizábaló's family lived in Caracas, for he had come to Venezuela when he was seven years old, he was permitted reentry into Venezuela in 1826. When Bolivar found out in 1827 how vast Arizábaló's knowledge of artillery was, he offered him the rank of Colonel in the patriot army and complete command of artillery in the Caracas province. Arizábaló asked for six months to consider the proposition. Bolivar, confident that he could be won over to the patriot cause, gave him free conduct and passage in Venezuela. Arizábaló used these to help foment and cement a general Royalist conspiracy in Venezuela. He even secured the approval and a promise of assistance from the Captain General of Puerto Rico to reestablish Spanish control on the mainland. In September of 1828 he started an implacable war against the patriots which lasted until June of 1829. When Arizábaló finally surrendered to Páez, he had only one hundred and eighty-three men left. He had to return to Spain, but even on this trip back to his homeland he refused to acknowledge the rebel flag that flew over the ship on which he was sailing. Torrente, *Historia de la Revolución*, III, 566-602.
capitulation. He promised not to take arms again against the Republic of Colombia. In January of 1827 he presented himself to Bolivar in Caracas. The latter, aware of Arizábal's profound knowledge in the field of artillery, offered him the rank of Colonel and command of the artillery in the entire province of Caracas. "He listened with pleasure," said Torrente, "to the propositions which offered him the opportunity of cementing his noble plans without obstacle; and answering these with simulated urbanity, he asked for six months in which to make up his mind, certain that said time would be sufficient to give the cry of death against the disloyal Venezuelans."²

Such a generous reception and such indiscreet proofs of confidence in his feigned good faith facilitated the Royalist penetration into the territory. It also enabled Arizábal to establish relations with the guerrillas Centeno, Doroteo, Inocencio [Rodríguez], and Cisneros, who commanded the parties I have already mentioned.³ All of them, except the latter, revealed themselves ready to recognize him as chief. Then Arizábal sent emissaries to General La Torre, who commanded in Puerto Rico, asking him to grant him in His Majesty's name, the appointment as chief of the Royalist

²Ibid., 568.

³Inocencio Rodríguez was an Indian who had served as a Captain in the Queen's Battalion since 1814. He was named second in command of the Lealtad Battalion. Ibid., 572.
forces operating on the mainland. He also asked for aid in arms, and asserted that he would quickly assemble a respectable army. La Torre sent him the title he requested, including a sheet of instructions which will be seen at the end of this chapter. To encourage him further, La Torre promised that on October 27 of that same year Spanish ships carrying the assistance he demanded would arrive at the Venezuelan coasts. Arizábaló immediately went to be acknowledged as chief of the previously-cited guerrillas. All submitted themselves to him except José Dionisio Cisneros who, accustomed to working advantageously on his own recognizance and at his own risk, showed himself very jealous of the authority he exercised over his subordinates.

Centeno, who was chief of the parties that existed in Los Guires, placed nine hundred men under Arizábaló's orders. With the assistance of Captain Tazon's two nephews who assembled the discontent people from the Camatagua neighborhoods, he very quickly added another four hundred men to that number. "Even the married men," says the infamous Torrente impudently, "abandoned their wives and sons, and the old forgot the torpidness of their limbs to participate in the glory of being the defendors of Altar and Throne."

With falsehoods such as these, the King of Spain was deceived into thinking that America had been lost against the will of America itself!

4Ibid., 571.
To arm all these people well, Arizábaló demanded that the Governor of Puerto Rico hasten sending the ships which he had promised. He advised him to disembark the troops at Rio Chico, where it would be easy for him to go and get them.

The first encounters between our forces and those parties of bandits were of little importance. In Puneral on September 7 they surprised forty-five patriots and imprisoned them. Torrente states: "This first encounter sustained by Arizábaló had the good result which was the best portent of the happy ending awaiting an undertaking which could not but be protected by the God of the armies, from Whom the purity of the intentions of those pledged in it was not hidden." It is noteworthy to copy Torrente's words to bring them to the attention of those who have not read the work of this venal writer. He calls the system of the Spanish constitution ominous, and defends the rights of that monarch who is so detested in Spain itself. He did not hesitate to slander the most eminent American patriots to win the approval of that despot who trampled underneath his feet the sacred rights of the generous Spanish public that had given him so many proofs of love and loyalty.

When all the parties were finally assembled, Arizábaló dedicated himself to organizing them and naming Juan Celestino Centeno, Inocencio Rodríguez, and Doroteo Herrera as their leaders. Then he selected six hundred men to go to

5Ibid., 572.
the Tamanaco Mountains to till the soil and gather resources for the parties of men that he had left along different routes to fight the so-called insurgents.

In the town of Lezama, where he routed the small force of one hundred and seventy men that guarded it, Arizábal proclaimed the King's government and had the Spanish flag blessed—a flag which he thought would wave over the other towns they planned to overrun. However, two days later he was forced to evacuate Lezama when he found out about the troops we had sent against him. He then went to Maicarita and from there dispatched parties in different directions. He himself stayed at the head of the three hundred and sixty men with which he surprised Colonel López's column while the latter was going through a narrow passage.

With the intent of going to Rio Chico, where the Spanish ships loaded with supplies sent from Puerto Rico were to arrive, Arizábal interned himself in the very dense Tamanaco Mountains. There he discovered that Centeno had been defeated in Macairita. Joining Inocencio Rodriguez and later Doroteo Herrera, he determined to make even greater efforts until the ships arrived with the promised assistance. Despite his persevering efforts, he was not able to get Cisneros to join forces with him. That barbarian even refused to give the wounded the aid they asked for, alleging "that he beheaded his soldiers who had the misfortune of finding themselves in a similar situation so that they would not reveal their hiding places if they fell into the
enemies' hands."

Finally, I shall conclude by saying that Arizábaló, pursued and accosted on all parts, and knowing that General Laborde had left the Rio Chico waters with his ships, saw himself forced to capitulate in the Tamanaco Mountains, following the example of his Lieutenants Centeno and Doroteo Herrera. He was encouraged in this decision because nothing indicated to him that the Royalists had won any triumphs in the interior of the territory, and because perhaps now he believed that those parties who called themselves Royalists were only bands of robbers.

INSTRUCTIONS

For His Majesty's Chief of Arms in Venezuela, regarding the organization, discipline, and conduct that the corps that are created should observe themselves and with the towns they occupy and return to the true government.

Organize all the parties possible, and those which exist already, giving them the denominations of battalions when they exceed four hundred men and squadrons when they exceed two hundred men. Their commandants shall be proven members of the infantry and cavalry. With the companies divided, captains, subaltern officers, and other ranks shall be named. These shall be given the proper commission titles.

You shall call the officers of the King that there might be in the country so that they will organize districts and place themselves in them or other military jobs.

As soon as possible you will organize the corps under the method prescribed by Royal ordinances.

You shall inspire the chiefs with the due order, discipline, and subordination, telling them that their services shall be advantageously rewarded.

Any chief or officer that comes over with enemy
troops and armaments shall be kept in his rank and his services used without prejudicing other rewards, depending on the merit and importance of his union with the Loyalist ranks.

As long as the army you organize is divided into battalions and squadrons, it will be very advantageous when in service. It shall be easier to manage and much more useful in military undertakings.

You must impress on your men that just as the soldier must be terrible against his enemy in war, if the latter surrenders, generosity must shine in him as the proper attribute of courage.

The soldiers must be humane with the towns and attract its citizens by gentleness and good treatment. They should treat them as brothers and not censure them nor mention their previous conduct. In this manner they will win gratitude for their services and admiration for their skills and fidelity.

The Chief of Arms or the Commandant who operates the retailing of provisions and supplies shall try by means of proclamations to show the towns that are occupied, that the objective of his troops is to unite the territory of His Majesty's soft and paternal government, to destroy the revolutionary anarchy of the Republic, to protect the citizens' life and properties, to thrust out the tyrants and reestablish that happy state the inhabitants enjoyed in 1809, and to return the enjoyment of the calm, both in property and justice, which has been wrested from them by the stupid, the infamous, the ignorant, and the traitors.

They shall make apparent to them that His Majesty has pardoned all the past deviations up to this point, and that no accusation made out of vengeance shall be accepted. Each individual will also be able to keep and enjoy the goods he has secured legitimately. Resentment will have no place. Finally each word given by the Chief of Arms on every one of these points shall be infallible in its fulfillment.

All acts of treason committed after the entrance of the Royalist troops will be punished immediately and militarily, maintaining the ordinance rules in so far as circumstances permit.

Try to annoy the towns as little as possible, keeping an account and reason of what they supply with the proper explanations and formality.
In all towns in which His Majesty's arms enter, the corresponding authorities will be reestablished on the same footing on which they were found in 1809. Try to give these appointments to persons of most notable wisdom and conduct. All public offices and the Lieutenants Lord Chief Justice will be established for now in conjunction with the military command because it will be more convenient in this interim period when we are proceeding toward pacification. In this manner the Royal service will be faster.

The civilian employees will be provisionally established in the same manner. In case these officers are presented to property owners, the time they fulfill these will be especially meritorious for them.

The Royal Treasury shall be placed in clean, economical, and trustworthy hands, for this branch holds the key for the opportune and quick recovery of debts and has the ability to cover the public's needs without tasking the neighborhood.

An urban militia and its officers shall be organized in all the towns to maintain good order and police the internal security. These shall be kept armed and disciplined.

The following should serve as the basis for pacification: 1, to manifest that His Majesty's arms know no parties, resentments, offenses, or vengeances, with its objective being the true pacification of the country; 2, to guarantee the peace of the territory and the security of all the citizens and the property each one has legally acquired; 3, to show that, just as no value will be placed on what transpired during the unfortunate times of the revolution in which the provinces have been, they will severely and quickly punish new crimes of this type which may be perpetrated and to which ingrates may deliver themselves; 4, to grant an armistice under these principles which will be fulfilled with the greatest religious punitiveness; 5, to provide jobs and duties to the persons who maintain the good will of the towns because of their moderation, knowledge, wisdom, and uncensurable conduct; 6, to place everything in the order in which it was in 1809; 7, to maintain through the supporting hand of the press the publication of past misfortunes and differences during the time of the revolution and that which has succeeded it, and the state of ruin to which the rebels have driven the provinces, forcing agriculture, commerce, and industry to disappear, and burdening the towns with enormous taxes and chains worse than those used by the sultans.
to make their slaves suffer. Show that from the prosperous state enjoyed by all the continent in that period, they have hurriedly reduced it to nothingness by destroying their capitals, scaring away their citizens, and placing them in the lamentable situation in which they now find themselves. Duly impress the multitude with the number of domineering persons that have been created and their insulting ostentation and insufferable pride while the people groan in misery; that the happiness they proclaimed had only their own sordid interest as an objective and to these they have sacrificed many victims and destroyed great quantities of riches. Remind the people that this sad state of affairs should be compared with what they had before the revolution. Present them with cases, events, and the settlement that would be made in the taxes, removing the onerous contributions, poll tax, and other unknown charges with which they attempted to cover their thefts, wastes, and foreign debts. Finally, combat the enemy victoriously with the help of the press and discover where public opinion should be augmented, for it is because of it that the present evils exist which have promoted the ignorance with which they have commanded, the barbaric procedures, the scandalous attempts, the unjust treason, and the horror which the memory of the revolutionary government must evoke.

The ecclesiastic state must be respected, and the just considerations corresponding its individuals must be maintained. They shall have great weight in forming public opinion because of the advice given privately, publicly, and from the pulpit.

With the parties organized under these principles and conducting themselves accordingly, the happiest success of the undertakings can be assured. The desired pacification will be achieved, and for these services, whether they are verified separately or collectively, these parties shall be rewarded in every case as soldiers. Their leaders shall also be rewarded in keeping with the political policy they manifest in favor of good order and in the manner in which they preserve it.

The Commandant General shall give the Captaincy General of all the operations an account for now. He will communicate the details, will make known the services of his subordinates and those of the organization he established. This instruction shall serve him provisionally until he gets the Royal approval, which
will be given him to observe by using the powers which His Majesty has invested in this government. Puerto Rico, June 30, 1827.

------Miguel de la Torre.
CHAPTER XXIII


1828

The towns anxiously awaited the reforms needed by the Constitution which had reigned until then. In reality they could not truly expect anything flattering or favorable in view of the hostility of the parties into which the Republic was divided and in view of the passions which dominated many of the men that had placed themselves at the head of the so-called liberal group. The military hoped to see the services they had rendered their country rewarded with interest. They also wanted their rights and exemptions preserved and to have the State pay them their claims. To achieve these objectives they wanted a strong government established and headed by an individual belonging to their class. The demagogues that admired the events of the French Revolution of '96 and proposed the federal constitution of the United States of North America as a model, preached to the towns in
the pompous names of liberty and national sovereignty, theories that could not be realized in a nation still in its infancy and very ill disposed by customs and education toward a form of government created for well-educated people that held these theories traditionally. Finally, the men who were deeply aware of the country's needs and who feared the evils which had already been glimpsed, favored the establishment of a government founded on a solid basis. To give them unity, they wanted the Liberator who represented good in the country, to place himself at the head of the Republic until the government was consolidated and the country free of all fear of foreign invasion and of the disturbances promoted by internal factions. Then it would be possible to proceed to try to give the nation institutions suitable to its nature, to its customs, to its antecedents, and to its true needs, and which above all, would guarantee its future.

The Liberator was displeased at seeing Colombia divided into factions which seemed to await only an opportune moment to destroy her. Having already lost by virtue of long experience the illusions of his volcanic genius and the poetic imagination which had been formed during the early years of the revolution, he needed to rest. He was already exhausted by the fatigues and anxieties suffered in the marches and in the battlefields; consequently, he witnessed the agitation of the parties and had no faith whatever in the movement that was going to begin. He had become convinced that "those who worked for independence had plowed the
seas," and called the country "an immense desert peopleed by beasts desirous of devouring each other."¹ He also said that "a very difficult thing had been attempted in Colombia, which was to conquer the country with a very liberal constitution and to make free, wise, and prudent men out of slaves, forgetting that we had learned much wretchedness from our owners the Spaniards and from our comrades the slaves."²

Thus Bolivar awaited the promised reforms with a painful skepticism. It was only out of love for the fatherland and a sentiment of duty, or as he himself said, in order not to desert himself, that he was still on the political scene.

¹This quotation is taken from a letter Bolivar wrote General Juan José Flores on November 9, 1830. Lecuna (ed.), Cartas del Libertador, IX, 376.

²Páez inserts part of the following letter the Liberator wrote to him. "I am in the South now very busy fighting the enemies of Perú who are very strong and most capable of overrunning everything. We have sent six thousand more men from the other American States here. Even with this force it is still more difficult to conquer the enemy due to the many difficulties presented by Perú in waging war. The government and people of Lima call me to go command them. I know there is much difficulty (here the manuscript is not legible), but I will go if Congress permits me in order to keep Colombia from entering a new war in this instance. Generals Valdés and Sucre are commanding our troops. The other Allied Generals are very good leaders, but they do not understand each other because of rivalries, jealousies, and other miseries we have learned from the Spaniards and our comrades the slaves. The kings and generals of Europe understand each other perfectly because they have been born free while we, although being equal in everything, cannot reconcile ourselves with each other.

Letter from the Liberator, dated in Guayaquil, May 29, 1823."

A copy of this letter may be found in ibid., III, 195-96.
For my part, I did not want to belong to any political party other than the people's, nor to defend any cause other than the one they adopted. Peace and domestic tranquility are the most invaluable benefits of society, and I proposed to maintain both unless the irresistible force of events and the need of defending the country's well being and honor demanded that I alter my course. Not trusting my own judgment and afraid of making a mistake in the difficult position in which I had been placed by a generous fortune and by the vote of the people and the will of the Liberator, I gathered around me the most able counselors available. I selected them from among the men who because of their patriotism, love of order, talents, and virtues seemed to me then, and justly so, to be the most intelligent and honest representatives of the people.

On March 13, by means of a decree, the Liberator, aware of the dangers threatening peace and order in Colombia, reinvested himself with the supreme power of the Republic in all its departments, excepting the district of Ocaña where the Great Convention was to be held. When the election of the deputies for that assembly began, the Santander party unfurled its greatest activity to get individuals known for their animosity against Bolívar and a unitarian elected. Venezuelan communities filed acts asking that Bolívar remain in command and that the Convention be given no further powers than to deal with matters of local interest and of little importance. Meanwhile, the deputies who had arrived at
Ocaña began to qualify the elections. They refused to admit Dr. Miguel Peña under the pretext that the case against him for the misapplication of public funds was still pending. The municipal council of Valencia protested against this insult proffered its deputy, and while doing this directed incriminations against Santander, accusing him of the same guilt with which Peña was charged. The Liberator tried to defend the latter, but his arguments were to no avail; so he substituted Dr. Osio in his place.  

From this point on the military party began to show itself entirely too arrogant in its pretensions. It came to

---

Páez footnotes this as follows. "The historians of Colombia seem to have conspired to present Doctor Miguel Peña as an intriguer appearing on the political scene after Colombia had already attained her independence. All who knew this illustrious Venezuelan, can do no less than to acknowledge the political tact which made him worthy of occupying distinguished posts in the nation's councils. During the colonial government he served the office of Reporter of Judicial Causes in the Audiencia for nearly three years, a laborious task which greatly weakened his health. Almost the greater part of the year XII he spent in the forests, fleeing from Monteverde and suffering unaccustomed fears and labours. During the years XIII and XIV he contributed important services to his country. In the year XIV Boves imprisoned him in Valencia, and then he had to suffer great penalties with cruel uncertainties about the fate that might befall him in the clutches of that fierce caudillo. He escaped from the prison disguised as a priest, and then he owed his salvation to a spirited lady patriot, Vicenta Rodríguez, who allowed him to take refuge in her home. From there he went to the Alto Llano to join General Tadeo Monagas and served in his ranks for some time until he retreated to the island of Trinidad. From this island he left to attend the Congress of Cúcuta where he distinguished himself for his eloquence and ability. In the year 1821 he worked unceasingly, despite his delicate health, during the sessions of the Congress of Cúcuta. The severity of his character, and perhaps the envy which his talents aroused caused the good faith of his procedures to be questioned more than once."
such a point, that General Padilla asked the Ocaña deputies in an exposition to tend to the needs of those who had distinguished themselves in military campaigns, for he considered them very worthy of compensation and special privileges. If Padilla found any officers who opposed said exposition and refused to sign it, he resorted to action, threatening peaceful citizens and showing himself ready to sustain his pretensions through forceful means. Knowing about these events, General Mariano Montilla marched from

4For early information on General José Padilla see footnote 15 in Chapter XIV of this manuscript. It is important to note at this point that Padilla's men had not been paid for some time, and that Páez's judgment of him is rather harsh. The incidents which Páez describes subsequently seemed to have stemmed from a personal rivalry between two protagonists: Padilla, who was a Granadine, a zambo, and a Santanderist; and Montilla, who was a Venezuelan, a white, and a Bolivarist. Both were vying for control of Cartagena while neither actually held command; however, Montilla held a secret order from Bolivar authorizing him to take over the civil and military command of the department in case of emergency. This is exactly what Montilla did when Padilla forced General José Montes to resign. Padilla aroused the colored populace and had himself proclaimed civil and military chief. Realizing Montilla held the real power, he retreated to Mompox and wrote his own version of the episode to Bolivar. When Padilla returned to Cartagena, Montilla had him arrested. When he was freed from his prison by Santanderist artillery men and Colonel Bolivar was killed, it is not certain that he was at all responsible. Nevertheless, Padilla was tried and judged guilty of this affair and the Cartagena insurrection. It is generally felt that his judicial murder was inexcusable. Madariaga, Bolivar, 523, 528, 529, 543, 555, 556, 557, 559, 567, 571, 573, 574.
Turbaco to Cartagena where Padilla had promoted his disorders. Those who did not approve of the seditious plans joined Montilla, and finally Padilla was forced to embark on March 8 to Tolu. There he interned himself to seek partisans in the heart of the Republic. From Mompox he wrote Dr. Francisco Soto, who was then the Director of the Deputies who had already assembled in Ocaña, and painted the events that had occurred in Cartagena with the colors that plagued his heated imagination. Soto, in the deputies' name, wanted to send him a tribute of thanks for his zeal in favor of public order, observance of laws, and the security of the

5 General Mariano Montilla was born in Caracas on September 8, 1782. In 1799 he was a bodyguard for the Prince of Peace during the war between Spain and Portugal. He was wounded and returned to Caracas in 1808 where he helped to organize the revolutionary juntas of 1809 and 1810. He was with Bolívar when General Miranda was arrested. In 1814 he helped defend La Victoria and fought at San Mateo and Bocachica. In 1815 he defended Cartagena from Morillo and was forced to withdraw in the Battle of Bahia and seek refuge in the United States. By 1819 he was able to join General Urdaneta in Margarita as Chief of Staff. In this year also he prevented the Royalist, Saint Just, from assassinating Urdaneta. He left Margarita in 1820 with twelve hundred soldiers from the Irish Legion and took Rio Hacha. When the Irish rebelled, he was forced to send them to Jamaica and follow suit himself by joining Brion's squadron. Failing in an attempt to besiege Cartagena, he later attended the first Venezuela Congress in 1821 and saw the "creation" of Colombia. He besieged Cartagena again and this time with his one hundred and eighty-seven soldiers was victorious over its eight hundred defenders. In 1828 Montilla put an end to the Padilla insurrection. He was Chief in Santa Marta in 1830 and ordered Bolívar's funeral. (The Liberator's remains were later moved and entombed in 1842 in Caracas.) In 1831 General Montilla defended Cartagena against General Luque and forced him into exile. Then he became Venezuela's first Minister to Europe and made treaties with England. He died in Caracas in 1851. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 343-45.
convention; but he finally consoled himself by answering Padilla that the delegation had seen with appreciation the sentiments of respect for the Great Convention that Padilla manifested in the document he had sent. From this document, it was very clear to that assembly that his objective was not to deal impartially with the state of Colombia, but rather to head a faction that wanted to take possession of the Republic and govern it according to the ideas and plans they had formulated beforehand.

Finally, on April 9 the Convention was installed with only sixty-four members present out of the one hundred and eight which were to represent all the Republic. From the first session, signs of great animosity against the person of the Liberator were evident, despite the fact that the provisional president, Francisco Soto, said in his opening speech that "no altars should be raised in the temple of the fatherland, but rather sepulchres should be opened to bury discord."

I was very much surprised by the Liberator's proclamation, dated in Bogotá on March 3, in which he called the Convention the hope of the country. In it he also stated that the legislators, that is to say the Congress, should be praised for having started to remedy our weaknesses, complying with the public will. This was after all Venezuela had declared that body unable to convene the Convention then, basing itself on the very letter of the Constitution that deferred it until the year XXXI; and that then only the
Liberator, because of the acclamation of the majority of the towns and to avoid greater evils, would be able to convoke it. In the proclamation it was also stated that the delegates would fill the nation with confidence. This was after all of Venezuela had protested against the nullity of the Convention basing itself first, on the unconstitutional manner of convocation by Congress; second, on what was vicious in the ordinance as much because of its origin as because of the doctrines it contained which destroyed equality of representation by excluding the right of suffrage as well as that of being elected to a portion of citizens whom the constitution did not exclude; and third, for many other reasons that have been published extensively in the newspapers.6

In my letter of April 10 to the Liberator I stated:

"If the Ocaña Convention makes a mockery of your hopes and decrees the subdivision of Colombia, we will have to obey its resolution, for by the contents of your proclamation, you have sanctioned it beforehand. In the same manner, the

6Páez was not alone in this evaluation of the Ocaña Convention. Henao and Arubla state: "But there human weakness was even greater and passions fed the blaze which was to consume everything . . . the convention had scarcely begun its serious deliberations when army officers, magistrates, and corporations, all with one accord and as if obeying the same impulse, pronounced themselves against the reforms they had solicited, and now urged that Bolívar continue his absolute rule. Some desired that the Convention, turning aside from its constitutional mission, should limit itself to the passage of unimportant laws; . . . and in some of the new petitions it was even revealed that Bolívar was given authority to dissolve the Convention. In brief, it was a sad page in our history." History of Colombia, 397.
Colombians who do not belong to New Granada become rebels. How many dangers I see in these contradictions!  

The Liberator's recommendations that a firm and powerful government be adopted, because this is what the country was crying for, were interpreted as the desires of ambition. These gave a basis for Santander's partisans to consider the Republic in danger of becoming the victim of a monarchical tyranny. The first sessions of the convention were very heated. Exaltation by the Federalists made pale that of the Jacobines of the French Revolution, whom it seems they had set up as their model.

Obeying the wishes of the municipalities in my Department, those of the militia corps, and those of the greater part of the military chiefs and men of letters in Venezuela, I proposed that our opinion be to centralize the power and place the supreme command of the State in the Liberator's hands. The people would call him to this task by unanimous acclamation until the time when the independence of the nation and tranquillity of the government could implant the form of government that would be acceptable to the general public. This, more or less, was also the opinion of the departments in Central and Southern Colombia.

The following communication that I directed to the

7 A copy of this letter is not included in Blanco and Azpurda (eds.), Documentos Para la Historia.
people's representatives in the national Convention is of vital importance to me.  

HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE GREAT CONVENTION:

A sacred duty places me in the position of bringing to the attention of the convention a legalized testimony sent to me by several representatives from the civilian and military corporations and the heads of families and respectable property owners in these departments, showing the desires that motivate them in the present crisis during which the independence of the Republic is threatened by internal factions and incursions by the enemy, and which would place it on the border of ruin if the tasks of the Convention are not limited to the centralization of its power and to placing the supreme command of the State to which the towns have elected him by unanimous acclamation in the hands of the Liberator President until such a time as when the independence of the nation and tranquility of the territory is assured, and a form of government acceptable to the general public can be established.

On relaying the wishes of these inhabitants to this honorable corporation, I feel possessed with the noble enthusiasm which inspired the motivation for their petitions. These are supported by the general and well-pronounced clamor of some people who, after the immense sacrifices made to win their independence from foreign domination, and wasting their blood in battles, have reason to fear that the work of their heroism and the anxieties of their supporters will be annulled. They are made fearful by positive acts that convince one that in no other time since the establishment of the Republic, has there been such a danger of becoming the captive of a foreign power or of a devastating anarchy. Aided by the weak institutions for which the people are not ready, they fear being led into a political dissolution fomented by insidious parties. Finally they have the experience of eighteen years in their favor, during which time they have witnessed during the last seven years the demoralization, disorder, and imperium of all vices as the only fruits of the Constitution of Cdcuta.

I shall present with difficulty an unfinished picture of the condition in which these departments find

---

8A copy of this proclamation may be found in ibid., XII, 223-24.
themselves. The spirit of sedition is disseminated everywhere, and arms in hand it disturbs the public tranquillity at each step and keeps the provinces in continuous agitation. It may be said that there is not a department that maintains the calm which is needed to accept the reforms that are not adapted to the strong repression of crimes and the firm support of independence. Spain has observed these political dissen­sions, and her agents stir up the discord and circu­late incendiary papers belittling the Liberator's moral force as the sole means of subjecting the country to her domination. During these moments of anguish, an expedition appears at our coasts which will gain advantages while the towns tear themselves apart in internal war—advantages which it could not attain if a vigorous government were directing the nation's efforts, and the man who has given it life were at the head of public affairs to make it respected, to con­sсолidate its vacillating existence, to regenerate the morale, and to, in a word, save it from its ultimate end.

It is this honorable corporation's turn now to fathom the country's true interests and to provide accordingly the remedy for so many evils. The forms of government should be adapted to the places that are going to receive them and not the latter to them; this sublime truth, which is proven now more than ever, will enable the Convention to see that while brilliant theories dazzle momentarily, they are the sad danger which serve as a sepulchre for men and actions. I have no doubt that the Deputies who compose this honorable corporation will consult the means of pre­serving their dearest interests. If sight is lost of this painful picture on which the unanimous opinion of the people is based and the salvation of the State is risked in the disasters of anarchy, I shall not answer to the nation for the sad consequences which will follow.

Caracas, March 15, 1828.—XVIII.

The Superior Chief,
José A. Páez.

Deputies to the Convention looked upon all these expositions with the utmost disdain, and decided to proceed with the plans they had formulated beforehand. All agreed that the Constitution should be reformed; however, when a
proposal was made to adopt the federal system, it was rejected by a majority of forty-four votes against thirty-two. Then I proposed that the government of Colombia unite its three powers. Dr. Azuero drafted a constitution which was named for him and which, without consulting local interests of the Colombian sections, divided Colombia into twenty departments. Each one was to have its respective assembly to take care of local interests. In this Constitution, the executive lost all its power.

When the Liberator informed me from Bucaramanga about these early works of the Convention, I answered him in the following manner on May 15.9

I imagine that Colombia is at the edge of a precipice and that in such a state, she will owe her salvation not to theories, but to the combined calculations of a superior genius. These shall be calculations born out of the circumstances, not daughters of these same theories, and similar to those of a general who in a battlefield moves his troops as the enemy attacks him in directions not foreseen in his general campaign plan. I see Colombia rushing to that very precipice, with her fatal destiny guiding her uncertain steps, and discovering a considerable number of her children at a distance planting flowers on her tomb and preparing her funeral. I also see her turning her face to her most beloved children and asking them for support and protection in a penetrating voice. Finally, I see Colombia, my dear General, fix her eyes on you—on you who are her father, her creator, and to whom she owes the glory of her name—and ask you with painful cries to save her, to wrest her from the hands of her enemies and from those of her more ungrateful sons, and place her at the point that your sword signaled out to her in the llanura of Apure and on the battlefields of Vargas and Boyacá. . . . Witness, then, Colombia actually fixing her languid sight on you, asking you on bended knees to save her at any cost, and that as if she had never existed, place her at the level you had pointed

9A copy of this letter may be found in ibid., 224-25.
out when you traced her boundaries with your sword in the luxuriant forests of Orinoco. The clamors are the cries of the people who call you their father and governor. In my opinion, you cannot disengage yourself from the people without becoming responsible for their future repose. The majority of them is sovereign. If you seek legitimacy in the representation of a revolutionary assembly, divided as it is by passions and agitated by individual interests, you will only find that anarchy which will fall on the country, on liberty, on independence, and on you yourself.

On this same date the Liberator was writing the following lines to General Lino Clemente.10

You must know that the Convention has decreed a central government and agreed to preserve the Constitution with few alterations. This is to say that after so many contentions for reforms, we remain as we were before or perhaps even worse. They expect many things; but I do not share the same hope. Consequently, I have decided to go to Venezuela and contribute to the happiness of my poor country. Herrera came from Ocaña, and the Great Convention wrote to me sending me Venezuela's representations, adding that it did so because it was in charge of maintaining public order. This is to say that the representations have disturbed it, and I do not know what to do or say about this state of affairs. I sent Herrera back to Ocaña with my latest ideas; but, regardless of whether they accept these or not, I plan to continue my march to try with the aid of my friends to save our poor country.

This was Colombia's epitaph written by its Liberator.

I was of the opinion that the Republic should be divided into three great sections, leaving each one with the rudiments of its economy, and concentrating on the force that would give life and movement to the political body in order that the extremities could receive the respective warmth

---

10 A copy of this letter may be found in Lecuna (ed.), Cartas del Libertador, VII, 254. Páez erred in citing May 15 as the date Bolívar wrote this letter, for it was written on May 4.
that was owed them. In my opinion, what could calm down all the factions and unite them at one point was a strong government in the center of the Republic, with the power to do good and repress the abuses of those entrusted with the administration of justice; a small representative body in each one of the sections to promote the municipal and economic laws according to each one's character; and a small senate in each one also whose members were to be selected by strict judgment, knowledge, and unstainable patriotism, to enforce these laws, prior to the Executive's report. The latter group would simultaneously serve as a governmental council. Above all, what seemed most necessary to me if we wanted to avoid the evils caused by past legislatures and the debts which suffocated the Republic, was to formulate codes to remove the complication of the laws. In the case of assembling a congress, for only four or five-year periods for the purpose of remaking or amending the laws, only those that the Executive deemed suitable should be sanctioned. Experience had taught me that the government which we should adopt should be the simplest and most vigorous one in order to repress the insolence of the riotous people in the towns who were accustomed to obey by force or disobey by habit.

Deputy Dr. José María Castillo [i Rada] proposed that the Liberator go to Ocaña and settle the differences between the deputies; however, without even permitting a discussion
on this, the greater part of them refused this proposal. It was then that the Bolivians, seeing their voices suffocated by an insulting majority which, according to them, made a great to-do over their triumph, decided to leave Ocaña in order not to sanction by their presence what they believed would be the country's ruin. They carried this decision out on June 10, and they published a manifesto in the province of Santa Cruz which explained the reasons that had forced them to take such a step. On June 13 the Intendant of Cundinamarca, General Pedro Antonio [sic, Alcantara] Herrán, called a meeting of heads of families in Bogotá to discuss

11José María del Castillo i Rada was born in Cartagena on December 21, 1776, and embraced the Republican cause in 1810. By 1813 he was Governor of Tunja, and in 1814 he served temporarily as the Executive Power in New Granada. He went into hiding with the arrival of Morillo and his troops in 1814, but figured prominently again in national affairs after the Battle of Boyacá in 1819. He became a member of the Congress of Cúcuta and conflicted with Bolívar when he himself refused to accept the Vice-Presidency of the nation, for he felt the time was not ripe yet for a civilian to assume this office. However, he was responsible for getting Santander named Vice-President and then served as his Secretary of State from 1821 until 1828 when he left to attend the Ocaña Convention. Later he became President of the Council of Ministers that Bolívar created. In reality this post amounted to being Vice-President of the Republic. When he died on February 23, 1825, he was so poor that his former students from the Colegio del Rosario, where he had taught and lectured on political economic theories, had to pay for his funeral. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 99-100. Lecuna and Bierck (eds.), Selected Writings, II, 545, 687, 700, 715.
the state of the Republic. From here came an act which discredited the Convention, revoked the powers given the Deputies, and entrusted the Liberator with the supreme command. Consequently, the Liberator entered Bogotá on June 24 in the midst of the people's hurrahs and acclamations.

Believing the Republic in great danger, the same heroic means were resorted to that the Roman Republic adopted whenever it became necessary to prevent evils and impede disorders. Bolívar was given dictatorial power which he was to maintain until the national representation could meet and attempt to write the constitution which the state of the country demanded. This measure was held in very bad esteem by the party that called itself Liberal. Henceforth, the Brutuses and Cassiuses began to sharpen the daggers they

12 General Pedro Alcántara Herrán was born in Bogotá in 1800. He joined the patriot army in 1814 and fought at the Battle of Cuchilla del Tambo where he was captured and imprisoned. When he managed to free himself in 1821, he rejoined the patriots. From 1821 to 1823, he fought in the Southern campaign; from 1824 to 1825, in the Peruvian campaign; from 1839 to 1841, in the Northern campaign; from 1841 to 1842, in the Magdalena campaign; and in 1854 and 1859, in the Guaranda campaign. He fought with exceptional bravery in the Battles of Junín and Ayacucho. In 1828, while serving as Intendant of Cundinamarca, he assembled the junta in Bogotá which dissolved the Ocaña Convention and gave Bolívar extraordinary powers. During the Northern campaign against the revolutionaries, Herrán was elected President of New Granada, but he resigned his post after only two months in order to continue his campaign against the revolutionaries. After he defeated the insurgents, he resumed charge of the government. In addition to the Presidency, he served his country as Minister to Washington, Senator, Secretary of War, and General-in-Chief of the armies. He died in Bogotá on April 26, 1872. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 221-22. Henao and Arubla, History of Colombia, 444-46, 471, 478, 479, 481.
thought to sink in the heart of the one that had given them a country and whom they accused of harboring the same projects as the conqueror of Pompey.

On September 21, I swore to recognize Bolívar as supreme chief of Colombia before Archbishop Ramón Ignacio Méndez. I did this in the great plaza before the people. The municipalities, tribunals, military chiefs, and the army, which assembled came close to six thousand men, all took the same oath. Then I delivered the following oration to the town.

Caraqueños:

Transported by joy, I come to guarantee with the most sacred religious ties, my sincere and heart-felt wishes. You were the first who, seeing our country close to its ruin, searched for the remedy to its grave ills in the person of the American hero, illustrious because of his deeds, more illustrious because of his genius: your fortunate election conferred the supreme magistracy on Colombia's first soldier. Familiar with victory, he will always carry us to triumph: privileged by nature with an admirable disposition for reason, he shall make our Republic united, stable, and blessed.

Caraqueños: The Liberator heard your call and came from Peru. Your echoes were repeated when the Great Convention wanted to deviate the national opinion. If he seemed indifferent to your ardent desires then, it was to get to know better with the calm of prudence, if passions had been mixed with your pure zeal. Quickly you came to him from all parts—South, Central, and North—and knew that his great virtues would revitalize ours. Bogotá, the capital, made the most solemn invocation, charging him exclusively with the destinies of the country. The Liberator received with indulgence the weight of such a grave charge, offering his energetic services to save his own work.

To such a laudable objective, you have repeated your cries in acts subscribed to by the municipalities and heads of families. I have brought this to his attention. The vote of the nation is uniform: he is
proclaimed supreme chief of the Republic with limitless powers to do good.

Such an elevated magistracy demands our respect and our obedience. Listen attentively to what I offer: on my part, I recognize General Simón Bolívar as supreme and exclusive chief of the Republic of Colombia, and I promise under oath to obey, guard, and execute the decrees that he dispatches as the Republic's laws. Heaven, a witness to my oath, will reward the fidelity with which I fulfill my promise.

Caraqueños: Live peacefully; let unity be the guarantee of your tranquility. Under a respectable government, the country will very quickly forget its troubles.

That very afternoon, in the Marte Camp there were assembled six thousand soldiers; ten thousand spectators of all classes, ages, and conditions; and multitudes of handsomely-dressed ladies. Then I delivered the following oration to the troops.

Soldiers! Your lances pulled Colombia out of nothingness, glory promulgated its name on earth, and the Almighty inscribed it on the tablet of life.

Soldiers! An insulted Spain returns again to invade the sacred soil of your fatherland; it wants to dominate its illustrious conquerors. Let her come; the son of glory presides over us; the vanguard is mine. Those bayonets shall severely punish her stubbornness. Even our cadavers will serve as a barricade to her ambition.

Comrades! What will Spain bring to our land? Chiefs and soldiers fatigued from imploring your clemency. That flag that you have trampled on so many times, will it come to dominate Colombia? Before this happens, the sun will fail to shed its light on America; before this happens, let death snatch every living thing. When nothing exists, neither shall tyrants.

Determination was that indispensable at that time when, with the departments threatened by the Spanish, it was necessary to recognize the Chief of State after the Convention was
dissolved and the Constitution of Cúcuta had fallen into ridicule.

After receiving the Liberator's communication of August 26, which was the organic decree that was to serve as Colombia's provisional constitution, and his proclamation to the Colombians in which he tried to simplify and abridge the essential principles of the government, I had them published in the capital with the proper solemnity. I also had them circulated among the other authorities so that they could follow suit. Many were sorry that the Liberator had by-passed the power that the towns had conferred on him in order to constitute them in the most analogous manner in keeping with their habits and interests. I saw a positive evil in the proximity of the convocation of the national representation, even if it did not get to meet. This was because the towns were resting quietly now, blindly confiding in the complete authority with which they had invested Bolivar. They were all dedicated now to their own undertakings, and public confidence was being restored once again. No one thought now about forms of government while under the protection of the chief to whom they had entrusted their lot. Now in view of the decree, public richness and speculations of all kind had to necessarily suffer, if not a retrogression, at least a paralization.

With regard to my taking charge of the Prefecture of N, I told the Liberator that I would endure the pain of renouncing it, for I could not give the very detailed
attention demanded by the public taxes. No good could come
to the government or to the country by my assuming such a
heavy charge.

Meanwhile, the Liberator's enemies were plotting con­spira­
tries to treacherously assassinate him. The leaders were
Juan Francisco Arganil, Agustin Horment, both French, and
the Venezuelan Pedro Carujo.13 The conspiracy was to break
out October 28, on Saint Simón's Day. The Liberator could
have been assassinated in a ride he made to the town of
Soacha accompanied by very few men. General Santander knew
about the plan and opposed it; however, he failed to notify
the Liberator of the danger that threatened him. Finally,
the government got the news that a conspiracy was being
hatched and precautionary measures were taken. These alarmed
the conspirators and decided them to act on the night of
September 25. Relying on the artillery corps, a few assas­
sins headed toward the Liberator's house, surprised the
guard, forced the doors open, and went to the room where they
thought he was then. Not finding him, for he had already

13 No additional information was available on Juan
Francisco Arganil. Madariaga has this to say about the other
two conspirators: "The leaders of the conspiracy were a
Frenchman aged 29, Augustin Horment, and a Venezuelan officer,
Carujo. This Carujo was a man of some parts, a linguist, and
a mathematician. He was then Córdoba's teacher in French,
English, and military topography. He was an ardent repub­
lican and seems to have been the moving spirit behind the
plot." Bolívar, 569. Pedro Carujo obtained a commutation
of his death sentence by revealing the names of the other
conspirators. Henao and Arrubla, History of Colombia, 404.
jumped out through a window and was hiding on the banks of a stream, the assassins satisfied their rage by knifing Bolivar's pillow.\(^{14}\) Bolivar's aide-de-camp, [Diego] Andrés Ibarra, was wounded when he defended the entrance to his chief's room on the steps, and the faithful Ferguson was killed by a bullet fired by the infamous Carujo. General Urdaneta then placed himself at the head of the troops he was able to assemble, pursued the rebels, and imprisoned those who were not killed by the government troops. From where he was hiding, the Liberator heard one of the parties of the valiant and faithful Vargas Battalion announce the defeat of the conspirators. He joined them, appeared in the public plaza, and was received with great signs of jubilation by the troops and the multitude congregated there.

A tribunal was named under General Urdaneta's presidency to punish criminals. The death penalty was quickly pronounced against General Padilla. Freed from the prison in which he had been placed, Padilla had witnessed the

\(^{14}\)Páez omits the role played by Manuel Sáenz in this instance. Bolivar's first impulse had been not to flee, but rather to defend himself from the intruders. "When he heard the turmoil, he grasped his sword and pistol and started to oppose the invaders who were violating the sanctity of his apartments, but from this hazardous attempt he was fortunately dissuaded by Manuel Sáenz, a native of Quito and a woman of rare beauty, intelligence and valor, ostensibly his housekeeper but said to have been his mistress. Showing him the balcony which gave upon the side street and entreat ing him not to waste precious moments but escape while it was yet possible, she then turned her attention to the intruders, whom she endeavored to delay." Lemly, Bolivar, 347-48.
treacherous assassination of his guard, Colonel José Bolívar. Dr. Azuero and many other conspirators were also given the death penalty. Carujo was pardoned in exchange for an impeachment. The severity of the law was also pronounced against General Santander who knew about the conspirators' plans.

Well now, what would have resulted if the assassins had succeeded in their perverse intent? When Caesar was killed after it had been only suspected that he wanted to exchange his crown of laurel for the crown of a dictator, his Lieutenant Mark Anthony had picked up the dictator's bloody tunic and, showing it to the people, claimed vengeance against the assassins. The crime was punished and Octavius was able after the Battle of Actium to place the crown of the

15 Colonel Bolívar was not kin to the Liberator. Madariaga gives this account of his assassination. "Meanwhile a party of artillery men had leapt over the wall between their barracks and the yard of the building where Padilla was imprisoned under the custody of Colonel José Bolívar. Suddenly Padilla heard Colonel Bolívar shout: 'General, I am being killed.' Colonel Bolívar, naked, was endeavouring to shelter himself behind Padilla while the soldiers and the officer threatened to kill Padilla if he stood in the way. Colonel Bolívar was seized, dragged down and shot dead." Bolívar, 571.

16 General Santander was tried and actually sentenced to death for his role in the conspiracy. However, since it could not be definitely proven that he had taken part in the affair, the council of government commuted his sentence to banishment. Bolívar accepted this decision: so Santander was imprisoned at Bocachica for a few months until he was allowed to proceed to Europe. Henao and Arrubla, History of Colombia, 404.
Caesars on his forehead without any opposition. In Colombia there would not have been lacking those who would have followed Mark Anthony's example in demanding vengeance for the death of their chief, and blood would have been shed in torrents. The hatreds between Venezuelans and Granadines would have been carried to the point of cruelty. If the common enemy would have taken advantage then of such favorable moments, who knows if in the end the work of so much heroism, of so many labors, and of so much bloodshed, would have been lost.

Bolivar's death would have been the horrible murder of someone who was due reverence. It would have been terrible in its consequences, and fatal for all factions. It might have even been the ruin of the very institutions they wanted to consolidate with his death. Those crimes of exaggerated Republicanism, which perhaps admired pagan antiquity and rejected Christian civilization, have never produced the results that its perpetrators proposed.

It was not very long ago that a theatre actor, a fanatical admirer of Brutus, while in the midst of a numerous gathering that rejoiced in the return to peace of a country that had been desolated by a terrible four-year conflict, assassinated one of the most innocent men who had led the destinies of a nation. Brandishing a homicidal arm before the terrified multitude, he exclaimed with theatrical
What results did he achieve? He gave the victim a martyr's crown, brought unanimous disapproval on himself, and increased the catalogue of crimes with an execrable name.

When I received the notices of the horrible attempt of September 25, I wrote Bolivar the following letter.¹⁸

TO THE MOST EXCELLENT SEÑOR LIBERATOR PRESIDENT

Valencia, October 30, 1828.

My very beloved General and Friend:

It would have been impossible to imagine that there would be room in the heart of even the most perverse Colombian to commit such a great crime as that proposed by the conspiracy of September 25 which broke out in that city against your life and the existence of the Republic. The assassins marked their first steps with blood, and in their fury did not search but for victims whose horror would diminish the iniquity of their black infamy. From the first moments, they let the character of their contrivance be known: they proposed to destroy you in order to annihilate later all your party, talent, valor, and patriotism. What a sad and at the same time happy event! The criminals have been discovered and you have been saved. The country is preserved in your person, and the evils shall be remedied. What punishment can be sufficient for the ferocious ones who conceived and perpetrated such an enormous attempt? Justice should leave it to indignation to exercise its rage for some moments. You have worked more effectively and have sent them to be judged. We should expect justice to be severe until society is well satisfied. How many evils Colombia would have experienced if you had perished at the hands of your enemies!—Well, let them suffer these without any mercy. Blood would have

¹⁷"Thus always to tyrants."

¹⁸A copy of this letter may be found in Blanco and Azpurda (eds.), Documentos Para la Historia, XIII, 153-55.
flowed in torrents, and reorganization would have been impossible; therefore, their blood should not remain within their veins, nor should there be enough of them left so that they can assemble again to conspire. If there is any conspirator in this country and he is discovered, he will pay with the same penalty that the enemies of the country do.

In my previous letter I spoke to you about the motives which had forced me to proceed against General Gómez as a seditious person. Because of what you tell me in your esteemed letter of the 30th of this past month, I see that my judgment was not wrong: I am determined to execute the sentence which was pronounced. If it were not merited, I shall suspend it until I find out if this General is included in the suit filed in that city against the conspirators. Since I have already given an official account, I expect that in your reply, you will send me some documents, if they exist, that will serve as proof to add to the process.

You also tell me in your letter to expel all the representatives who took part in approving the Padilla insurrection in Cartagena. In an official letter you order me to expel only those who, because of their heated opinions in Ocaña, can be prejudicial to the country. I would not want any to remain, and by the faith I have promised you, none shall remain but the ones I am not aware of or those whom you want to be employed such as Gómez, the Commandant of the Antioqui Battalion, and the always memorable Mr. Boguier.

May Providence watch over you. You are exceptional even in your luck, for to escape from a band of armed assassins searching for you in your own palace who had already defeated the forces guarding you, should prove that Heaven is your best custodian and that we still have not become unworthy of its benedictions. The assassins pretended to rob us of our greatest treasure, which is peace, and we have kept it in you. Such a fortunate escape is much to the admiration and congratulation of all your friends and of all patriots. The details of the event, contained in the Gazette, came to us the evening before Saint Simón's feast. This contributed to making us enjoy that day with greater jubilation and happiness—that day in which Valencia showed herself with a martial spirit while at the same time revealing enthusiasm for your life. In the morning the flags of the Fifth Battalion, which had twelve hundred well-uniformed squares, were blessed. With this function terminated, all the authorities and the people swore acknowledgment of your authority. During the afternoon I received the oath from all the
cavalry troops, of which there were more than a thousand squares. The entire city was out in the streets: the jubilation and happiness of the people could be seen on all their faces. You would have been very happy to witness this scene and to consider that while there are some vile assassins who conspire against your life, there are entire towns interested in preserving it. The voices of "Long Live the Liberator" resounded everywhere. The imminent danger you escaped has only served to augment our joy.

My beloved General: I embrace you from here and congratulate you fervently on the preservation of your life. Had it been lost, Santander would not have reaped the fruit of his infamous work, for I would have avenged it, or he would have multiplied the number of his victims.

I am always your sincere friend.

JOSE A. PÁEZ.

While the events I have referred to were occurring in New Granada, I continued struggling in Venezuela with the parties led by Arizábal and Cisneros. I also maintained a watch over the coast, which was threatened by a disembarkation of Spanish troops destined to assist them. Furthermore, I contained the rebel factions that were little satisfied with the political state of the Republic. To maintain a vigil over the rebellious ones and prevent the Royalists who had remained in the territory after the retirement of the Spanish troops from disturbing the public order, I formed a police regiment and named the active General Arismendi as chief. Despite all these preoccupations, I did not fail to occupy myself with the needs of the towns and putting an end to the evils which afflicted them.

Obeying the order that the Liberator sent me to try to investigate the cause of the misery which afflicted
Venezuela and to propose the measures to remedy it, I assembled the landholders, farm employees, lawyers, and merchants. The principal observations they made in the meeting were with respect to the currency which Bolivar had ordered out of circulation. The commissioned merchants found profit in it, and the landholders saw an increase in the value of their crops, even if it were momentary. When I saw that the discussion was getting heated in the meeting, I presented my ideas on the matter in a small memorandum written hastily and without sufficient time to project my calculations. However, this measure was opposed chiefly because of the difficulty of getting thirty thousand pesos monthly to put the plan I proposed into effect, even though some merchants told me they would get up that sum of money if the currency were put in circulation according to my ideas. It seemed fair to them for commerce to protect the government if government protected commerce.

It was impossible to remedy in a moment the poverty of which the towns complained. It was the result of the lack of commerce and the low price of the crops. Could the government increase these when they were in the same state of dejection in the European markets? The evil was universal: its remedy would be time and the consolidation of the government until confidence was reborn. Then there would be new agricultural and commercial undertakings. I worked on this point incessantly and believed it very convenient and powerful in public opinion to agree on an exemption of the
duties on corn, rice, and other articles of primary necessity to the subsistence of the needy, which were the product of the work of the greater part of our men in the fields. These unfortunate people, after the great expenses they sustained to transport their crops to market, had to pay a duty making their condition even sadder. On the other hand, the income from the provisional taxes in this department was insignificant. By this means, I thought that cultivation would be stimulated, the stipend would be more acceptable, and these items of primary necessity would be cheaper.

Agriculture is going to suffer a great set back with the spreading of the cultivation of coffee. Its low price will not offer its harvesters any advantage. Since our country abounds in different branches of agriculture, as soon as the people become convinced that it is impossible to raise the price of coffee, they should dedicate themselves to other branches such as the cochineal which abound in Coro, Carora, Tocuyo and other places and which no one cultivates due to lack of stimulation. This is also the case with the wax which has given other countries immense riches. A foreigner had introduced some beehives which had progressed quite a bit; however, these would remain similarly abandoned if the government did not aid them. With this objective, I thought to grant some tax exemptions with the government's approval. Indigo and cotton could not replace coffee because both are cultivated in many places where they are produced in infinitely greater quantities than in ours because of the
ease and low cost with which they are cultivated there.

Because of the remonstrances of the landholders and heads of families in the town of Ocumare on the Coast, the Liberator ordered me to suppress the municipalities and substitute an authority similar to that of the old mayors or lord chief justices. This was to be in accordance with the opinion of respectable men. I was also to establish an ordinance which seemed most appropriate to me, and I was to send it on for his approval. I was trying to fulfill this order when I received another official communication in which Bolivar told me that he had asked the Intendants in Venezuela, Maturín, and Orinoco to give information on the matter and also ask the superior court of justice for information and send this on to him so that he could make the suitable reforms.

I hesitated for some moments to suspend the plan I had started, satisfying myself by remitting the information I would have collected to the Liberator so that the reforms could come from there if they were to be put into practice. If my objective had been solely to place obstacles in the path of these undertakings, I would have found enough motive in these two communications. Since my desire was to help Bolivar with all my efforts in everything possible, I called a meeting of the landholders and citizens in the different districts of the province under my command, and some from Carabobo who were in Caracas, who along with some lawyers, gave their opinion on the elimination of the municipalities.
All were convinced that these corporations were useless because they did not have the means with which to fulfill their duties, did not have public spirit, and did not know how to discharge their duties.

It was difficult to find men who wanted to give their opinion and sign their name. No one wanted to compromise himself in the slightest, for everyone feared everyone without discernment. At times men feared to compromise themselves with the government and at others, with their friends or the town. Each one aspired to be an Egoist in approving or censuring everything that was done. To this effect, everyone found it convenient to hide his ideas in order to give favorable or unfavorable opinions in different circles and according to the persons in the group. Nevertheless, the act was signed, and I sent it to the Liberator.

The evils caused by the superior government treasury were what I wanted to be remedied by a quick and vigorous resolution. The creditors of the State had increased prodigiously, animated by the power to complete supplementary proofs and to find witnesses disposed to declare and certify in accordance with their wishes. Meanwhile, the Attorney General because of corruption, according to some, or because of negligence, or because of lack of means, did not execute against the proofs nor oppose their pretensions. Thus the Superior Junta was writing great quantities weekly against the government, quantities so excessive that they scandalized everyone who knew about them. The State was assuming a debt which it
could never pay, and if this continued, it would be useless

to think of balancing the treasury. All that was economized

on one hand would be drained off through this wide channel.

In the end, the multitude of new creditors, seeing the

impossibility of payment, would confuse the public tranquility
to secure private convenience. I judged that tribunal then as the font of future dissensions. Because of my desire for a stable peace, I wanted the Liberator to find the means to limit its authority or to delineate such type of checks, that the government could not be prejudiced nor obligated to satisfy anything but what it really owed.

At this time I also conceived a plan to divide the Republic into new departments. It was then that I manifested my ideas on this project and those which I believed most suitable. The plan consisted of dividing the Republic in six departments with equal forces to serve as a check for the other sections, and whose total force would belong to the government and thus help to temper the basis of the association. I thought this plan to be very just, even though when it was put into effect some provinces might feel wronged by the terms assigned them and by being annexed to capitals to which they had not belonged previously.

It did not seem very natural to me that the Barinas province be added to the new department whose capital was to be the Rosario de Cúcuta Villa. Instead, I thought a part of it could be extended up to Guanare, which could run from Coro up to Tocuyo, and from this point to this city of
Guanare or at least to that of Portuguesa. Otherwise, Venezuela would penetrate too far into the Tocuyo and its boundary would be stretched too much, running from that point beyond Aruare. Then, too, with the Cúcuta Department exercising its jurisdiction as far as Guanare, the jealousies and discussions between Venezuelans and Granadines could be dissipated.

Finally, it would take too long to enumerate all the works and attentive acts which occupied me during the period we are discussing in this narration. This was a period, as the reader has seen, which was fertile in events of great transcendency. Above all it was a period of great danger for the Republic that was beginning to organize itself.

In view of all the disturbances that occurred in this epoch, and of the great risks which threatened the Republic's existence, who could find it strange that many eminent men desired the establishment of a firm and vigorous government? Many did not desire it under the Liberator's presidency as I did, but under the sceptre of a monarch, even if it were necessary to go to the old European dynasties to find this monarch.
CHAPTER XXIV

Projects for the Establishment of a Constitutional Monarchy in Colombia—Unjust Charges Directed Against Me—My Opinions Concerning Forms of Government.

1829

Dating from the time we had won our independence and even before this, the anarchy existing in the Hispanic-American countries made the need for establishing a vigorous government apparent. Many of the wisest men in these countries had pronounced in favor of a constitutional monarchy. This trend was seen in the United Provinces of the Rio de la Plata in 1816 when the Congress of Tucumán declared that "despite the ultra democratic ideas which have been manifested in the entire revolution, the Congress, as representative of the most sane and wise section of the people and truly of the community, is ready to favor a moderate constitutional monarchy, adapted to the condition and circumstances of the country."

In a conference the French Foreign Minister had with [José Valentin] Gómez, envoy from the United Provinces, he
told him:¹

... that reflecting on the true interests of those countries, he was convinced that their interests depended entirely on the establishment of a government under whose influence the advantages of peace could be enjoyed. He firmly believed that said form of government could only be a constitutional monarchy with a European prince at the head, whose relations could inspire and augment respect for the State and facilitate the recognition of national independence.

The Duke of Luca, heir to the kingdom of Etruria and a Bourbon on his mother's side, was recommended for the post. It was added that the Austrian and Russian Emperors would protect him, and that England would not oppose his elevation to the throne. France would facilitate the naval and land forces necessary to enforce respect for this prince, and Luca would marry a Brazilian princess if the government of

¹The author reveals later in this chapter that the French Foreign Minister he refers to here was in reality a special French Minister sent to investigate Spanish American affairs. His name was Charles Bresson. Lemly, Bolívar, 362.

José Valentín Gómez was born in Buenos Aires on November 8, 1774. He studied at the San Carlos College and received his Doctorate in Theology from the University of Córdoba. He was pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in the Banda Oriental, and it was here that he began his revolutionary career. At the Battle of Piedras, he distinguished himself as a military chaplain. Following this, he was transferred to Buenos Aires. In 1813 and in 1821 he was Vicar General and Governor of this bishopric. He figures prominently as an educator, serving as rector of the University from 1826 until 1830. Politically, his services were also eminent, for he served as a member of the famous Argentine National Assembly of 1813 and as Argentine representative in the peace overtures in Montevideo in 1814. From 1818 until 1821 he was envoy extraordinary to the Courts of France and England. Gómez was also a member of the Argentine National Constituent Congress from 1825 to 1827. He died in 1833. Julio A. Muzzio, Diccionario Histórico y Biográfico de la República Argentina (Buenos Aires, 1920), 204.
this Empire would cede the territory situated East of the La Plata River to the United Provinces. This advice was very much in accord with what, by disposition of the Congress of Tucumán, the Argentine government had charged a commissioner it sent to Brazil to propose the coronation of one of the Brazilian infantas in those Provinces, under a constitution that the Congress would frame.

In the secret session on November 12, the Congress approved France's project, but under new conditions. The new conditions were chiefly that H. M. Cristianísima had to obtain the consent of the five great European powers to facilitate the marriage of the Duke of Luca with the Brazilian Princess; that the land session mentioned previously be effected; that France give the Duke all the support necessary to defend and consolidate the monarchy whose boundaries should include all the Eastern part, including Montevideo and Paraguay; and that France lend four million pesos to give the country a means of defense against Spain to assure its independence.²

In 1818, the Chilean Senate authorized the Supreme Director, [Bernardo] O'Higgins, to promote in Europe the

establishment of a monarchy in Chile and Peru. Even Peru sent commissioners to London with this objective. In Mexico and in Guatemala independence from the metropolis was declared, and a moderate monarchy was established as a result of the emancipation. There were projects afloat sometimes to place a Spanish prince on the Mexican throne and at other times, to crown the Duke of Sussex, youngest son of George III of England. The latter asked if there would be sufficient means in this country [Mexico] to give a suitable luncheon for a European prince. There were also those who proposed bringing and crowning the Inca Don Dionisio Yupanqui, who resided in Madrid and had represented Peru in the Spanish cortes. In addition to him, there was the Count of Moctezuma to consider. The latter, a Spanish grandee of the first order and descendent on his maternal side of the last emperor of Mexico, presented himself in London and solicited to be declared Emperor of that country. Moctezuma addressed the Chilean government and asked for assistance to carry out this undertaking. That government answered him, addressing

3Bernardo O'Higgins became the Supreme Director of the Chilean Republic after the Battle of Chacabuco, which occurred on February 12, 1817. Primarily chosen for this office because of his military reputation, he demonstrated executive ability from the outset. Since he never affiliated with the aristocratic oligarchy that tried to rule Chile from Santiago, he was finally ousted from his post in 1823. The Chilean aristocracy had changed little since the winning of independence and "in early Chile, as in Rome, the word 'republic' means little except the absence of a dynasty in the state." A. Curtis Wilgus, _Argentina, Brazil, and Chile Since Independence_ (New York, 1963), 294.
him as Imperial Majesty, and authorized its representatives in England and France to guarantee a small loan of a million pesos which the pretender Emperor stated he needed to effect his move to Mexico.

There were also many foreigners, even those holding the most liberal ideas, that believed as did many South Americans, that a constitutional monarchy was the system of government most suitable to Spanish America. [Henry M.] Breckenridge [sic, Brackenridge] who was secretary of the United States mission sent in 1817 to collect information on the state of the South American countries, manifested in his account of the trip that he had:

... heard it expressed by persons of some pretensions, that nothing is necessary but the introduction into any country, of the forms of free government, and that the people will at once be free as a matter of course. This is a great mistake. A people must be educated and prepared for freedom. It is true that despotic forms will soon extinguish the flame of liberty; but a different kind of government, such as we enjoy, would be useless and inoperative among a slavish ignorant people.

The following illustrious men thought in a similar manner:

---

4Henry M. Brackenridge, Voyage to South America Performed by Order of the American Government in the Years 1817 and 1818. 2 vols. (London, 1820), I, 47. It is interesting to note that Páez misquoted Brackenridge's last sentence in this instance, writing instead, "the undertaking was quimerical, that a type of government as that of the United States was useless and embarrassing in the Spanish colonies."
San Martín, Pueyrredón, Monteagudo, Rivadavia, Belgrano, the Balcarces, Sarratea, Gómez, Guido, Moreno, Vieites, Larrea, Posadas, Alvear, and many others in Buenos Aires; O'Higgins, Pérez, Vicuña, Lazo de la Vega, Salas Rosas, Lecaros, Canas, Lecavarrenes, Errázuris, Echeverría, Cienfuegos, the priest Larrain, Rodríguez Aldea, Encalada, Tagle, Alcalde and many important men in Chile; Torre Tagle, Unanue, Carrión, Pando, Pardo, Rivaguero, Rivadaurre, in Perú; General Juan José Flores, and the Great Marshal A. J. de Sucre in Ecuador; Pombo, Restrepo, García del Río and some others in New Granada; the Urdanetas, Archbishop Méndez, the Montillas, the Ibarras, General Pedro Briceño Méndez and

5The author footnotes this as follows. "When General San Martín put Viceroy Laserna in Perú in a tight spot in 1811, the latter proposed a friendly agreement at this time with Don Manuel Abreu, commissioned by the constitutional government to negotiate an agreement with the patriot chiefs, when he arrived from Spain. Nothing was achieved by the leaders on either side in the conferences held; so San Martín then invited Viceroy Laserna to an interview in Punchauca. San Martín believed at the time that the means of pacifying Perú lay in establishing a government that was independent from the Peninsula. But, states the record that was written then, the experience of an eleven-year revolution had revealed that the government most suited to the classes, customs, vices, preoccupations, character of the people, and education in Perú, was a constitutional monarchy that would guarantee its independence, liberty, security, and prosperity. In His Excellency's [San Martín's] concept, the most worthwhile work of those who held the public's confidence was to lay the foundations of this principle on a solid basis and assure peace with Spain. General San Martín offered to go to Spain to solicit a prince of the ruling dynasty in Spain to come and head a constitutional monarchy. See Restrepo, Volume III, page 121."

This citation may be found as the author states in the José Jacquin edition of Restrepo, Revolución de la República de Colombia.
some of the mantuanos in Venezuela. 

It is not strange, then, that Bolívar could have conceived the idea that the Spanish colonies could live in peace under a moderate monarchical government and progress as their political infancy allowed them. Bolívar, who repeatedly said that Spanish America presented a chaos which threatened a most complete anarchy constantly, was convinced that these people needed a firm, stable, and strong government. The Liberator had manifested this in his message to the Congress of Guayana, and in his predilection for the Bolivian Constitution, which he always recommended and

6Páez interjects this footnote. "When I went with the Liberator in the year XXVI from Valencia to Caracas, we stopped in the San Pedro Parish. Don Martin Tovar [Ponte] arrived there from the capital, and a little later, he retired with Bolívar to a room. They remained there for over an hour in a seemingly-interesting conference. When we began our march anew, as we started to climb the hill, the Liberator told me: 'Would you believe that in the conference I have just had with Tovar, that man, known for his ultra-democratic ideas, has told me that I should take advantage of these moments to forge a crown for myself, for everything is propitious and favorable to this. It is delirium to think about monarchies when we ourselves have so ridiculed crowns. If it were necessary to adopt such a system, we should consider the Bolivian Constitution, which is nothing more than a monarchy without a crown.'"

Martin Tovar Ponte was one of the leaders of the Caracas Junta in 1810 that removed Spanish Captain General Empraran from power. He belonged to the wealthy, white Spanish aristocracy at a time when this class was living in a "kind of twilight of loyalties." He was a brother of Manuel Felipe Tovar, who served as President of Venezuela from 1860 to 1861. (Páez served as his Minister of War and Navy.) Madariaga, Bolívar, 18, 124, 126, 232. Morón, History of Venezuela, 169, 170.

The mantuanos were that half of the Creole class composed of city men who were the owners of large estates which they might visit on occasion. The lower classes referred to them as the grandes cacaos. Ibid., 59.
called a monarchy without a crown.\footnote{Páez footnotes this as follows. "Several of his friends had heard the Liberator say, according to Restrepo, IV, 207, 'that Colombia and all Spanish America had no remedy other than to establish constitutional monarchies, and that if the people of Colombia would decide in favor of this system of government and would call a foreign prince to rule, he would be the first to submit to his authority and use his influence to support him.' He repeated this same thing later." This quotation may be found as Páez cites in the José Jacquin edition of Restrepo, Revolución de la República de Colombia.}

I can hear now the cry of excommunication that the ultra liberals will raise on reading the lines I have just written. I seem to see them collecting diatribes and invectives against me in order to defend the memory of the Liberator, whom they will say is being slandered by one of his friends. Let those scandalized know that I do not pretend in these Memoirs, which I am writing now when the length of time I have already lived serves to remind me of the little time I have left in which to account to God for the actions of my life; let them know, I repeat, that I do not pretend to praise anyone, but to utter the truth as others have already done before the tribunal of history. I shall confess the errors which my inexperience made me incur; however, this will not stop me from believing that it is just for me to defend myself from the calumnies which have been propagated against me by bad faith and especially by those passions foreign to party spirit.

I venerate the memory of the Liberator of Colombia as
that of a benefactor of my country, and as that of a great
man and a very favorite friend. I am convinced that I am
not belittling the glory of his name in any way with what I
have just written about his ideas. "The project of changing
republican institutions for monarchical ones," says Restrepo,
"might have been extemporaneous, unadaptable, and almost
destructive for Colombia, but it was not criminal."\(^8\)

Let those who call themselves liberals know that I believe in the good faith of men, even though they might preach what others recognize to be in error. Let them know also that it was possible to be a partisan of the monarchical form without ceasing to love the country and take an interest in its future. I was not a partisan of the establishment of a monarchy, and I am going to prove it despite the fact that it has already been proven. Nevertheless, I do not believe that those who advocated it were enemies of the country. I belong, and have always belonged, to the Republican school. However, I have never belonged to that school for which liberty is the goddess who is worshipped with a knife and incendiary torch, whose altars are purified with human blood, and whose worshippers must purge the land of those who do not think as they do concerning the country's interests. I do not belong to that sect who hold those horrible words of Voltaire as a motto:\(^9\)

\(^8\)It was not possible to locate this citation. \textit{Ibid.}

\(^9\)"The last king must hang
From the bowels of the last priest."
Du Bovau du dernier prêtre

Il faut pendre le dernier roi.

I am, and always have been, on the side of those who believe that each individual has the right to manifest what he believes and what his reason dictates to him concerning the interests of the land on which he was born.

It would be an infamous calumny, and one which no one could support with any remnants of truth, to suppose that General Bolivar ever entertained the desire to exchange his imperishable laurels as Liberator for the ephemeral crown of an American Empire. I do not stop to give reasons for this, for he gave more than enough in all the occasions which were offered to him to speak on the matter. However, that he believed that a monarchical government or one similar to it would be suitable for the country, is something that cannot be denied by those who dealt with him closely and knew

---

10 The author footnotes this as follows. "The historian Cesar Cantu in his history One Hundred Years, says in speaking of Bolivar: 'His adversaries pretended that this renunciation (of the presidency) was not real as the others, and made only so that his powers could be returned to him. Happy is the man who cannot be calumned except in his intentions! The historians in their preoccupation recognize aspiration to a throne as the center of all ambition; however, illustrious men with superior nobility can have many others. A sceptre could not have made Bolivar as great as his own sword, to which an entire continent owed its freedom.'"

For information on Cantu, please see footnote 19 in Chapter XVI of this manuscript.
how disillusioned he was with democracy, and what pain Colombia's sad situation caused him. The struggle he

11 The author interjects the following footnote. "The following are the Liberator's words, which show how little faith he had in the future of the Spanish American countries. (This is copied from a bulletin which was published in Cuenca in 1828 under the title 'A Look Toward Spanish America.')

There is no faith in America, not among men, nor among nations. Treaties are papers; constitutions, books; elections, battles; liberty, anarchy; and life, a torment.

This is, Americans, our deplorable situation; if we do not change it, death is better; anything is better than indefinable struggles whose malignancy is increased by the violence of movement and the prolongation of time; let us not doubt it, the evil multiplies every moment and threatens us with complete destruction.

Colombians! You have suffered much, and sacrificed much without benefit, for you have not hit upon a healthy path. You fell in love with Liberty, dazzled by its attractive powers; but since Liberty is as dangerous as beauty in women, who seduce and claim everything in the name of love or vanity, you have not kept it pure and innocent as when it descended from the heavens.

Let us hear the cry of the country, of the magistrates and citizens, and of the provinces and armies, so that forming together a corps impenetrable to the violence of the parties, we can redeem the national representation with virtue, force, and the enlightenment of Colombia.

Predictions made by the Liberator himself on November 9, 1830, thirty-eight days before his death, are as follows. 'America is ungovernable. Those who have served the revolution have plowed the seas. The only thing that can be done in America is to emigrate. These countries will most certainly fall into the hands of the frenzied multitude in order to pass on later into those of small, almost imperceptible, tyrants, of all colors and races, devoured by every crime, and extinguished by ferocity. The Europeans, perhaps, will not deign to conquer them. If it were possible for a part of the world to return to primitive chaos, this would be America's final period.'"

This last quotation is taken from a letter Bolivar wrote to General Juan José Flores, November 9, 1830. Simón Bolívar, Obras Completas, 3 vols. (Habana, 1950), III, 501-502.
maintained between his own convictions and the fear of opposing the multitude's wishes, which were nourished on modern ideas imported from France and the United States and did not agree with him with respect to Colombia's needs, must have been horrible. There is not one document of the Liberator's in which this struggle is not observed.

If Bolivar had not had the conscience of his glory, or if he had been an ambitious, common person, he could have unscrupulously crowned himself King of Colombia, seemingly with the best intentions. There were many people in the Republic that desired this. Even Lord Aberdeen, Her Britanic Majesty's Secretary of Foreign Affairs, when he was consulted about a European prince, gave assurances that the English government would not place any objections at all if the Colombian people proposed the Liberator as their monarch.

As in all the other American states, there was public talk in Colombia about changing the system of government and establishing a monarchy. There was a meeting in Bogotá of persons known for their talents and virtues and who occupied high positions, to discuss the adoption of the monarchical system. As a result of what was resolved here, the ministers agreed on September 3, 1829 to open negotiations with the diplomatic agents from France and England. They wanted to know if Congress were to decree a constitutional monarchy, if their respective governments would look favorably on such
a tremendous change. They also wanted to know if they could rely on the cooperation of France and England in case the United States and other Republics became alarmed and opposed the project.

The counselors of state said:

The habits of our people are monarchical, for a monarchy is the system of government they have had for centuries. They decided in favor of independence, and in the intoxication of the triumphs obtained in destroying Spanish power, they persuaded themselves that a boundless liberty was suitable for them; however, experience has made them recognize that it was harmful to them; so today a general tendency toward monarchical institutions is noted.

Dr. Labastida [or La Bastida] writing to Mariño in name of the Bishop of Tricala, Dr. Mariano Talavera, whom that General had asked for information concerning what was happening in Bogotá, told him among other things that:

---

12 The diplomatic agents from France and England were Charles Bresson and Patrick Campbell. Lemly, Bolívar, 362.

13 Although Gil Fortoul does not include this particular quotation, he does cite many direct quotations which reveal the pro-monarchy sentiments in Colombia at this time. Historia Constitucional de Venezuela, I, 624-47.

14 Dr. La Bastida along with Briceño, Delgado, and others helped to write the Mérida Constitution which abounded in high ideals and ardent patriotism. Parra-Pérez, Historia de la Primera República, II, 154.

Dr. Mariano Talavera, one of the most enlightened and enthusiastic members of the clergy in Venezuela, was in favor of the independence movement. He helped to eradicate the qualms of the clergy who had taken an oath to support the government of Ferdinand VII by stating that the oath had been invalidated by Ferdinand's renunciation. Ibid., 150, 151, 152.
... he (the Bishop) informed me in detail concerning what occurred in a friendly meeting held in Bogotá this past March [1829] at Dr. Castillo's house in which the Minister Restrepo secretly proposed the establishment of a monarchy in Colombia. This project, although ill-received by several of those attending, had no opposition other than that of the Bishop himself and two lawyers from the city. Although our party worked actively to diffuse opinions, it barely found any support, particularly among the learned youth of the country and among the women, who profess an implacable hatred of General Bolivar.

Mr. Charles Bresson, the French commissioner, sent the Duke of Montebello, who was traveling through our countries, to notify King Charles X that Colombia, wanting to free herself from demagoguery, was planning to adopt the monarchical system. Furthermore, he stated that she was ready to accept a prince of the House of Orleans as king. General Madrid and M. Palacios, Colombian ministers, received instructions to negotiate on this matter with the Tuileries and St. James cabinets. The council of ministers said that the Liberator had not issued his opinion on this matter, but that since his inviolable principle was to support what Congress did, they expected that he would approve the plan when a majority adopted it.

Many letters were written to Bolivar asking him to frankly state his opinion, but he answered none of them. This proves that he was not entirely opposed to the ministers'

15 General Madrid succeeded in establishing relations with Holland from his post in London. He negotiated a treaty of peace, navigation, and commerce with Baron Falk in 1829. Restrepo, Revolución de la República de Colombia, IV, 216-17.
plans, for if he had been, surely he would not have left letters unanswered that dealt with such a vital affair for the Republic. The ministers, then, were not officially authorized to do anything but seek the protection, influence, mediation, or safeguard of a European nation other than Spain. This greatly displeased the admirers of the United States of North America whose minister in Colombia, Mr. [William] Harrison, counseled Bolivar on the establishment of a government similar to that of his country.  

In the month of August, Bolivar wrote to [Patrick] Campbell, who was in charge of Her Britannic Majesty's affairs. This is the letter that no Colombian historian has published. Since the Secretary of Foreign Affairs received a copy of it, the ministers supposed that Bolivar approved of their projects. The letter is as follows.  

TO COLONEL PATRICIO CAMPBELL, HER BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S CHARGE D'AFFAIRS

Guayaquil, August 5, 1829.

My Esteemed Colonel and Friend:

16 William Harrison had been appointed minister to Colombia by the John Quincy Adams administration and given specific instructions not to meddle in the internal affairs of the country. Judging by the United States' actions in Mexico under Poinsett, the Colombians seriously doubted that he would carry out these instructions. Harrison immediately plunged into the country's political affairs and declared himself to be the Liberator's enemy when the latter did not advocate a system of government similar to that of the United States for Colombia. When Harrison was replaced by Colonel Thomas Moore in 1828 after Jackson's victory, Colombians sighed a sigh of relief. *Ibid.*, 203, 217-18.

17 A copy of this letter may be found in Bolivar, *Obras Completas*, III, 278-79.
I have the honor of informing you that I received your esteemed letter of May 31, dated in Bogotá. I cannot but begin by thanking you for the multitude of kindnesses that you pour toward Colombia and me in your letter. How many claims do you have on our gratitude? I am humbled when I consider what you have thought and done since you have been among us in order to support the country and the glory of your chief.

The English minister residing in the United States honors me greatly when he says: that he has hopes for Colombia only because there is a Bolivar here. But he does not know that his physical and political existence are very weakened and will fail soon.

What you tell me with respect to the new project of naming a European prince as my successor, does not surprise me. I had been broached on this topic somewhat, a little mysteriously and a little fearfully, for my way of thinking is known.

I do not know what to tell you about this idea which encompasses a thousand difficulties. You must know that there would be no obstacles presented by me, determined as I am to leave the command to this next congress; but, who can mitigate the ambition of our chiefs and the fear of inequality in the common people? Do you not think that England would feel jealousy at the election of a Bourbon? How much would the new American States oppose this? And the United States, which seem destined to plague the Americas with miseries in the name of liberty, how much would they oppose this also? It seems to me that I already see a general conspiracy against this poor Colombia (already envied too much by as many Republics as there are in America). All the press would launch a new crusade against the accomplices of treason to Liberty, against the proponents of the Bourbons, and against the violators of the American system. On the south, the Peruvians would light the flame of discord, while on the Isthmus the people of Guatemala and Mexico would follow suit. Throughout the Antilles, the Americans and liberals from all parts would rebel. Santo Domingo would not remain inactive, but would call her brothers to wage a common cause against a prince of France. Everyone would be converted into enemies, and Europe would do nothing to support us, for the New World does not merit the expenses of a Holy Alliance. At any rate, we have reason to think this is how Europe would react because of the indifference with which she saw us start to fight for the emancipation of half the world—a world which will very soon become the most productive fount of European prosperities.
Finally, I am very far from opposing the reorganization of Colombia according to the institutions experimented with by a wise Europe. On the contrary, I would be infinitely happy and would enliven my forces to assist a task which might be called one of salvation and which would be achieved only with difficulty even when supported by England and by France. With the powerful aid of these two countries, we would be capable of anything; but without it, we would not. Because of this, I hesitate to give my definite opinion until we know what the English and French governments think about the aforementioned change of system and the election of a dynasty.

I assure you most sincerely, my worthy friend, that I have told you all my thoughts and held back nothing. You may use these thoughts as you find convenient to your duty and the well-being of Colombia: this is the natural state of my thought. Please receive the affectionate heart of your attentive and obedient servant.—BOLÍVAR.

This is a private copy.

The above letter is a copy of the one General Urdaneta included in his letter directed to General Páez on September 16, 1829, to whose care he entrusted it.—Caracas, October 1, 1841.

JOSÉ [Hilario] De Sistiaga.18

The above letter is a copy of the one Urdaneta included in his letter directed to General Páez on September 16, 1829, to whose care he entrusted this copy.—Caracas, November 2, 1841.

MANUEL CEREZO.

18Colonel José Hilario de Sistiaga, a native of Valencia, was issued a Cavalry Colonel's commission in 1830 by General Páez, which back-dated to 1826. This fact is offered as an indication of the services he rendered the independence cause. In 1828 Páez had named him Governor of the Carabobo Province, and in 1834 he appointed him to serve as a Judge of the Central Court Martial Court. Dávila, Diccionario Biográfico, II, 280.
Whether it was because the Liberator feared to assume the responsibility for adopting a measure of uncertain success, or because he feared the youth who were enthusiastically supporting the modern ideas and would involve the country in new dissensions, he disapproved all the plans in favor of a monarchy in an official letter dated November 22. Restrepo states that the ministers became indignant on reading this note and adds:

... the Liberator could have and should have made them avoid the risks and multitude of displeasures by speaking to them frankly from the beginning so that they would not have counted on his support in that difficult undertaking. No later than the month of May, they had told him about the plan they were entertaining concerning a monarchy. Four months went by before the celebrated agreement of September 3 was reached. There was more than enough time to have told them expressly that he could not support such a goal. This was something that he should have done at least out of friendship. Nevertheless, he remained silent an additional three months, at the end of which he sent his gruff official disapproval. The language of events is eloquent.

On December 3 the ministers answered Bolivar's note telling him that in order to carry out the orders he had given them to secure the protections of a European nation, they had felt it was necessary to show the latter that an attempt was being made to establish a lasting, stable, and permanent government. Furthermore, they stated that they had done even less than their instructions decreed, for these ordered them to solicit a protectorate for all of

19 This citation is not found in the José Jacquin edition of Restrepo, Revolución de la República de Colombia.
America, and that they had only asked for Colombia's protection. Finally, since the counselors were hurt, they said that if they had to retract the propositions they had made, their ministry should be changed "so that those who enter negotiations will not have had any part in the project, and therefore will be able, without muffling or embarrassment, to manifest that we have changed our mind." Undoubtedly, much valor and a strong conviction was needed to take on such a tremendous responsibility as that which the ministers assumed in putting their projects into practice.

In Bolivar's opinion, the most efficacious means to prevent the annihilation of his efforts, was to elect a President for life and to have a hereditary senate. He had proposed this in Guayana in 1819. It can easily be seen that this system is very close to a constitutional monarchy, and that if Bolivar did not openly promote this type of government, it was due to an excess of prudence. He knew that he would have to reckon with violent parties, among which there would surely be those who would attribute ideas unworthy of his glory and of his genius to him. In an attempt to find out what the Liberator's opinion was on this matter of great interest being discussed in Colombia, I sent
the following letter with Commandant José [de] Austria.20

**HIS EXCELLENCY THE LIBERATOR PRESIDENT, GENERAL SIMÓN BOLÍVAR**

Mayquetia, July 22, 1829.

My Beloved General and Friend:

Since my return from Apure, I have written you a letter in every outgoing mail about all the issues which I have considered worthy of your attention, and which could lend wisdom to your deliberations. These considerations, which have always been an inviolable precept for me and the norm of my actions, lead me now with more reason than ever before to seek orders from you in order to bind myself to these as the only rule to guide the path of my political ship in the midst of the conflict presented by the opinion of some respectable and friendly people. I also want to delineate the observations I have made so far from your communications as well as from public opinion. Since the results will be of major transcendency and gravity, I shall not deviate one iota from your resolution. In order to obtain the latter with the promptness and security I have felt necessary, I am sending Commandant José [de] Austria to bring this letter. He will be able to explain verbally all those things which are not easy to write, and I shall limit myself to making some general suggestions.

I have received a letter from General Urdaneta informing me of his opinion, as well as that of the most notable persons in the middle, concerning the

---

20A copy of this letter may be found in Blanco and Azpurúa (eds.), *Documentos Para La Historia*, XIII, 590-91. General José de Austria was born in Caracas in 1791. He enlisted in the independence army in 1810 and served under Miranda in 1811 and 1812. In 1821 he served with General Bermudez in the Caracas campaign and by 1828 he was with Bolivar in Southern Colombia. He was promoted to the rank of General. He wrote the important *Bosquejo de la Historia Militar de Venezuela en la Guerra de su Independencia*. Austria died in Caracas in 1863. Dávila, *Diccionario Biográfico*, I, 24-25. Lecuna, *Crónica Razonada*, I, 37, 137, 163. José de Austria, *Bosquejo de la Historia Militar de Venezuela en la Guerra de su Independencia* (Caracas, 1855), v-xlvii.
reforms on the governmental system. He has also demanded that I reveal my feelings to him. The sincerity of my character, the true friendship I profess for you, and the interest I take in your glory, have all made me think seriously about this arduous question which is vital for Colombia no matter how it is considered. This is because it is the heart of all the other branches of public administration and shall form either a monster that will destroy itself, or a moral being marching in harmony with its proper elements to create general happiness. I have had recourse to your letters, especially the one in which you entrusted me to give the people an energetic manifesto to belie the calumnies with which your name was being maligned, and the one in which you told me to give the deputies the instructions that were in accord with the general will. In these I found that you stand for no other form of government but a liberal one which is firm and vigorous, and which is capable of destroying anarchy forever and repelling federation and monarchy as foreign to public opinion. With these facts in mind, I frankly informed General Urdaneta about what you shall see in the copy I am including. Although in your reply you agree with me on everything, I understand from General Ibarra that you have written to him as well as to Urdaneta concurring with the opinions that they had manifested to you previously. Perplexity concerning your feelings has replaced certainty. You know, my dear General, that my desire is to do the correct thing, and I am certain that you cannot guide me except along the path that leads to Colombia's general well-being. This pleasant thought helps create the sincerity in me which essentially make me speak to you from my heart and never disguise the truth. Since not even a moment can be lost in these matters, I expect that you shall resolve this question which only you can conclude. Certain of my unchanging attachment to you, you may rest assured that I shall always be at your side as I have always told you.

Austria's efficacy and the speed with which he had discharged his previous commissions, afford me no anxiety regarding the promptness and other considerations demanded by prudence.

Your most faithful friend and obedient servant who loves you with all his heart says goodbye.

JOSÉ A. PÁEZ.
In reply to this letter, the Liberator sent me the following instructions by Austria. These may be seen in Volume XXII, page 15, of Documentos de la Vida Pública del Libertador. 21

When His Excellency the Liberator sent me from Popayán on this past December 15, after I had fulfilled the commission which His Excellency the Superior Chief of Venezuela saw fit to confide in me, he reduced his instructions and special charges to two principal points.

First: to manifest to His Excellency the Superior Chief and his other friends, the unsurmountable obstacles that existed opposing the establishment of a monarchy in Colombia. Consequently, those persons who desired a change in our political form as the only means to improve the critical situation the country demanded, were very much in error. Public opinion has said nothing about this transformation. One had to be of the opinion that the people, whose will would serve as the only guide, would not change their republican forms for a monarchy—a word which would only serve to alarm them and to revive the patriotic enthusiasm which was born with the first cry of liberty. Uttered on the first day of our revolution, this cry inspired immense sacrifices from the people and heroic efforts from the citizens.

That if at other times His Excellency had indicated that he was in favor of a more or less energetic and stable government, it should never have been deduced that this was in the sense of this violent a change. Judging from the customs, morals, and enlightenment of the country, he has been able to assign the criteria of his thoughts to his fellow citizens and use as his only guide at all times the protection of the public liberties and the granting of the greatest number of individual guarantees possible.

That the day has arrived in which the people in

21 Since Documentos Para la Historia contains only fourteen volumes, Páez must refer here to the Colección de Documentos. It contains only twenty-one volumes, however, and these instructions were not included in Volume XXI. A copy of these instructions are included in Bolivar, Obras Completas, III, 384, 385 ff.
general, and men in particular, could freely and legally pronounce the forms of government which should be established, or the improvements that the country demanded. This was as a result of the October 16 Decree, which should serve as the norm for the deliberations by the constituent congress. Because of this, His Excellency had abstained from giving any opinion on the matter so that the deputies would recognize no other principles but those which emanated from the pure force of the nation.

That His Excellency has said previously that he would never exchange his title of Liberator for that of emperor or king, and that this has been, and still is, his heart's most sincere desire. Finally, even if all of Colombia, in a most determined and resolved manner, should want a king, His Excellency would not be the monarch.

Secondly: To persuade His Excellency the Superior Chief about the advantages which would accrue to Colombia from the Liberator's separation from the Republic's supreme command. His Excellency hesitated quite a bit at this point and demonstrated insurmountable reasons. He made the advantages which the country would report from this alienation very evident. These would be so much more useful and necessary when the august and formidable tribunal of opinions of the Old and New World had opened their judgments on His Excellency's political conduct, and after Colombia and other sister towns had disturbed the peace and altered their institutions. They would be influenced apparently by the immense power that a conflagration of unheard of evils and fortuitous circumstances had forced the people to deposit in His Excellency's hands, and which he had been forced to accept and exercise despite a thousand conspiracies.

That the opinions that were evidently in favor of a political change to bring a monarchical form of government to the country made his resolution to rush from the Presidency of the State and mingle with his fellow citizens, more irrevocable. It also made him want to fling himself first before the Constituent Congress that was going to assemble and swear his obedience before the new magistrate they would elect. He would offer him all his influence and all his resources in order to buttress his authority and to secure the triumph and stability of this regeneration which would be based exclusively on the people's most spontaneous free will.
That this great moral act on His Excellency's behalf was necessary as the most splendid end to his public life after suppressing a thousand internal revolutions that had recognized different and contradictory principles, after celebrating an honorable peace with Perú which satisfied the vindication of Colombia's honor, and after completely reuniting the national sovereignty. After this eloquent example, who could possibly intend to usurp the rights of the people? Tyrants could never exist in Colombia.

Complying with the opinion generally held that he not leave the country, he would be satisfied for now to renounce his supreme command and lend his services as a general, if they were thought to be necessary. He would redouble his zeal and his efforts until he saw that the Constitution and the laws ruled, and that the ferocious Hydra of anarchy had left forever. His Excellency repeated a thousand times to me that his resolution was irrevocable, that he wanted to raise his head up high one day without being aggravated by atrocious and incessant calumny.

That the good or the evil produced by his administration in Colombia has fallen exclusively on him, when perhaps some of this had originated elsewhere since he had never been absolute in his country's administration. He had always been surrounded by a ministry. Listening to the voice of a Council, he could never credit himself with being the exclusive author of either the good or the bad. Although his name presided over a thousand acts, he had neither had, nor wanted to have, a part in some of them. Finally, he begged His Excellency General Páez, and all his fellow citizens to cooperate with him to save his glory, for this glory was not his exclusive property. Rather, it belonged to Colombia, and being Colombia's, it should be preserved intact.

In order to alienate the will of the people and find some means to satisfy their wrath, my enemies have forged the calumny that I was an instrument in South America to prepare the fall of the Republican system and the establish-
miento of a monarchy.\textsuperscript{22} Once again, as I have already done at other times, I challenge them before a tribunal of those who were contemporary to the events to present the testimony of a worthy Venezuelan out of those that still live and figured in the period which we are now narrating, to prove that I had any part in the projects for a monarchy in Colombia. Do not think that my efforts to prove the contrary arise out of a need to vindicate myself for a crime of which I am accused. No: I only propose to confuse a calumny that was forged by dislike. If I had propagated for a monarchical government, I would confess it today without blushing. This has already been done by many of Colombia's eminent men who ended their great services to the nation's independence cause at a time when others began to vociferate, in the plazas and by means of the press, their love for a land which the former had

\textsuperscript{22}On October 1, 1825 Páez wrote a letter to Bolívar in Peru in which he compared the state of Colombia to that of France when Napoleon was in Egypt. At the beginning of this letter, Páez stated that he was sending this message by Briceño "who can tell you everything that is not expressed in this writing." Blanco and Azpurúa (eds.), Documentos Para la Historia, X, 119. On December 11, 1826 Bolívar wrote Páez from San José de Cúcuta: "You know very well that Guzmán did not come to Lima except to offer me your proposition that I destroy the Republic, imitating Bonaparte... By Colonels Ibarra and Urbaneja you have proposed a crown for me which I have duly rejected." Lecuna (ed.), Cartas del Libertador, VI, 118. Although Páez cites Briceño as the bearer of his October 1 letter, Bolívar mentions Guzmán repeatedly as the messenger who delivered this particular epistle. The reason for this deviation is that Briceño Méndez was forced to stay in Bogotá as a deputy to Congress, and so he gave the correspondence to Guzmán. Gil Fortoul, Historia Constitucional de Venezuela, I, 627.
given them at the cost of many sacrifices. The only document they have dared to present to prove their accusation is a letter concerning which I shall copy what can be seen in Numbers 6 and 7 of the Revisor, a newspaper edited in Curazao by Señor D[on] A[ntonio] J[osé de] Irisarri in the year 1849.23

In the Republicano, number 214, may be found another article on Flores, Páez, and Irisarri, which contains only the most solemn document concerning the fraud with which General Páez's enemies try to deceive the Venezuelan people. The letter which is copied in the cited number of the Republicano, reportedly sent by General Páez to Bolívar by General Briceño, is not the letter that General Páez sent, but one which was forged by the malevolence of this General's enemies. This has been proven most solemnly on the nineteenth of this month in the presence of forty-five persons assembled casually to witness the evil of those letter-forgers who today govern Venezuela.

The following men were assembled on this cited day in Señor Tomé Naar's country house in the vicinity of Curazao for the purpose of celebrating the anniversary of April 19, 1810: the home owners; Señores Tomé Naar, Jr., Jacabo Naar, Jacobo Henriquez, José Dacosta Gómez, and Pedro Cranveld, a Dutchman; Señores Clemente Barclay, Samuel M. Jarvis, and Nathaniel Jarvis, North Americans; Señores General Páez, Don Angel Quintero, Dr. Hilario Nada. Dr. Pedro José Estequera, General Domingo Hernández, Minister José Ayala, Colonel José F. Castejon, Colonel Dolores Hernández; and Señores Mariano Ustaris, J. A. Serrano, J. A. Izquierdo, J. E. Gallegos, Jaime Harris, José de J. Villasmil, Antonio Tinoco Ayala, Juan R. Marcucci.

23 Antonio José de Irisarri had served as Chilean ambassador in London in the 1820's and had been able to secure a loan for the purchase of ammunition and supplies. Lecuna, Crónica Razonada, III, 267.

In 1849 Páez, who had broken with President José Tadeo Monagas, had been defeated by the Monaguistas and was in Saint Thomas, en route to his exile in the United States which began in 1850. Cunninghame Graham, Páez, 290. Morón, History of Venezuela, 163.

Señor Pedro Cranveld, one of those attending, presented at this gathering Number 214 of the Republicano, which he had gotten in the mail, and began to read the letter found there from General Páez to Bolívar. General Páez immediately said that he remembered having written something similar to that, but that it was not the same. In order to convince everyone present of the truth, he ordered the box that contained the correspondence with Generals Bolívar and Urdaneta brought from his house. The box was brought in effect, and someone started to read Bruzual's printing and I, the editor of the Revisor, read the carbon of the letter in the presence of all those there. We found that entire sentences had been suppressed, that large sections had been added, and that passages had been altered to make the letter contain the opposite of what General Páez wrote. All the world shall also see what we, the forty-five witnesses, have seen in General Urdaneta's letters. This is to say that if the project for a monarchy which the Duke of Montebello brought was not carried into effect, it was due to General Páez's opposition.24

In later years a letter had been published which it is claimed Bolívar directed to me in answer to this one. In it there is talk that Colombia is not France, nor the Liberator, 

24The author footnotes this as follows. "On different occasions malicious people have forged my signature to authorize some document. In 1835 the Reformists falsified it to deceive and compromise General Manuel Valdés, Commandant of Arms of the Cumaná Province. By means of a false letter they led him to believe that I supported the reforms. Later in 1840, a Venezuelan Colonel, also by means of a false letter of mine, defrauded General Santa Anna of ten thousand pesos. A little later Señor Sayors, of La Guaira, was the victim of another deceit and paid three thousand pesos to a certain 'Lucas Gómez' in compliance with another forged letter of mine. The person the public pointed out as the thief is still living."
Napoleon, et cetera. 25 I do not remember ever having received this letter, which is not to be found in the Documentos de la Vida Pública de Bolívar. 26 It has more of the characteristic of a manifesto to the nation, than a reply to a private communication.

There are those who have written that Señor [Antonio] Leocadio Guzmán was commissioned by me to take this letter in which I was supposed to have proposed the establishment of a monarchy in Columbia to the Liberator. 27 Fortunately, Señor

25 This is a letter the Liberator is supposed to have written Páez from Magdalena on March 6, 1826. In it Bolívar states: "I have received your very important letter of October 1 of this past year which you sent by Señor Guzmán, whom I have seen and heard not without surprise, for his mission is extraordinary. You tell me that the situation in Colombia is very similar to that of France when Napoleon was in Egypt... Nor is Colombia, France, nor I, Napoleon." Lecuna (ed.), Cartas del Libertador, V, 230-40.

26 In effect, Páez never received this letter, for Santander intercepted it in Bogotá and kept it, claiming to Bolívar later that the letter had arrived at a time when Páez was being called before the Senate, and he feared Bolívar's letter might arouse Páez to further insubordination. Gil Fortoul, Historia Constitucional de Venezuela, I, 629. Contrary to what the author states, however, this letter is included in Blanco and Azpurda, Documentos Para la Historia, X, 211-12.

27 Antonio Leocadio Guzmán was a Paecista at one time. In 1840, when the names of Venezuela's two historic parties, Conservative and Liberal, came into use, he founded the Liberal Party. Since he had fallen out of favor with Páez because of a personal clash with a stronger Paecista, Guzmán founded this party as the one in opposition to the reigning conservatives. In fact, Guzmán followed a conservative philosophy. In 1846 he led a Liberal revolt which was quashed, and in 1847 Guzmán was condemned to death, but later this sentence was commuted to exile. He left the country, but returned soon to collaborate with José Tadeo Monagas, the Conservative President-elect. Then in 1857 Guzmán led
Guzmán still lives and still boasts about being my enemy. Nevertheless, I appeal to his testimony to state if I gave him the aforementioned letter, or if he ever received funds either out of mine or Venezuela's to go on this commission to Perú where the Liberator was. I also want him to state if his voyage had as its objective proposing any plan of monarchy to him.

The person who wrote in "The Order of Caracas" on "Monarchy in Colombia," should know that General Urdaneta was the chief instigator of the establishment of a monarchical form of government, and not I. No one should hold this against him, for he believed that his ideas would save the country from the anarchy which threatened to desolate it. No bastard project could animate that General when he possessed the idea that the realization of his plan could end all the difficulties with which the Liberator struggled. His illustrious name, acquired at the cost of great sacrifices

the Liberal opposition to Monagas which by 1859 had become Federalist under Zamora. In 1863 Falcón became provi­sional president of the Venezuelan federation, and Guzmán Blanco, Guzmán's son, became Vice-President. From this point on, Guzmán Blanco assumed his father's leadership over the "Liberal" Party. Morón, History of Venezuela, 158, 159, 160, 161, 164, 165, 167, 168, 170-71, 175, 176, 179.

28Gil Fortoul, noted expert on the constitutional his­tory of Venezuela, does not mention General Urdaneta once in connection with the proposed plans for the establishment of a monarchy. However, he does discuss at length Páez's "Caesaristic project of 1825." Historia Constitucional de Venezuela, I, 626-30.
and great deeds, cannot suffer any detriment simply because
the ultra-republicans of the day might choose to believe
that the ideas he held are a sin against the Holy Spirit.
It is very painful for me today to have it appear that I
want to obscure in the slightest the glory acquired by a
comrade in arms, who was a worthy general and an illustrious
patriot; however, these and other bitter tests have to be
survived by those who have to defend themselves against the
attacks of malevolence. In the name of honesty, I want to
assert again that it is not my desire to attack the memory
of Bolivar's illustrious friend. I am only forced to make
this protest by the intolerant spirit of the pseudo-liberals
who believe today that one can be a patriot only by being
ultra-republican.

As a result of the letters I had written him pre­
viously, Urdaneta wrote me on May 30, 1829 telling me he had
desisted from his project in favor of an idea that had been
generally accepted by many notable and very eminent men in
Colombia. Despite his promise not to speak about the matter
again, he sent me the Liberator's letter to Campbell in
September. At this time he wrote me again about the plan,
fearing that I had not understood it well. Finally, on
November 23, he promised definitely not to think about the
matter again. He stated this in a manner which is the best
recommendation that can be made concerning his character,
and the best proof of the good faith with which he had been
working on this project.
Well now: if I had thought differently than what I had written Urdaneta in my letters, why does he not refer to this, throw my inconstancy in my face, and remind me of my previous commitments? The letter which cites the article that I am concerned with, does not exist in my archives, and I do not remember having received it. If it was written, I never received it. To prove all this, it is sufficient to compare that sole letter with all the others. If this is not adequate, I copy in continuation here fragments of other letters from Urdaneta, which I do not copy in their entirety because they also deal with other matters.

On April 23, 1829, Urdaneta wrote me: "I am anxiously awaiting a letter from you after Austria's arrival. It is necessary that we take charge of Colombia's future. All my measures are partial, as you say, until I hear from you."^29

On February 9, 1830 he wrote the following.^30

Do not find it strange that I speak to you again about the injustice with which the Liberator has been attacked.—Read my correspondence again and you shall see in all of it that the Liberator has been very far from having a part in the project. I always told you that many men, supposedly patriots, and very much the patriots, desired a change in the form of government. I, too, have deemed it necessary. These ideas have been born out of the horrors with which the parties

---

^29General Rafael Urdaneta wrote Memorias del General Rafael Urdaneta. (See footnote 3 in Chapter V of this manuscript for additional information on Urdaneta.) He included many important letters he wrote and received in this work. It is significant to note that he did not include this one to Páez.

^30Urdaneta did not include this letter to Páez either in his Memorias.
have distinguished themselves, and out of the hopelessness for peace and order left to us after the events of the year XXVII until the conspiracy of September 25 and the later ones. Not being able to count on the Liberator’s support for it, the project could not be achieved unless the nation forced him to admit it and sacrifice his glory for Colombia’s stability.—You told me in one of your letters that you would do nothing until the Liberator commanded you because you did not want to do anything without his consent. I replied to you that the Liberator could not tell you anything concerning a matter of which he disapproved. If it were believed to be suitable for Colombia, it should be done by the nation, completely separate from the Liberator, who would never approve it, and because of this, could never advise you to do it. I invited you to join in this project, for there was no opposition here. If Venezuela adhered to it, it could all be done. If, then, from all my correspondence it can be seen that the Liberator has been opposed to the project, why is he attacked? Why so much offense? If only they would write against me and against those of us who have held these opinions. It would never be just because I have done nothing more than to seek your support and that of a few friends from there in favor of an idea which in my eyes, could save us from the horrors we have witnessed in these later times and from the general anarchy which has condemned America up till today. However, I have not hurt anyone.

To those who have written that the objective of the commission which I gave [Diego Bautista] Urbaneja when I sent him to the Liberator in Perd was to offer him a crown on his return to Colombia, I direct the following letter which I demanded from Urbaneja when this infamous calumny began to be propagated.31

31Diego Bautista Urbaneja was born in Barcelona, Venezuela in 1785. By 1810 he was in Caracas, an ardent proponent of the revolution and liberty. He was forced to emigrate in 1814 when Monteverde reestablished Spanish control in Venezuela. In 1819 he was a member of the Congress that met in Angostura and signed the Constitution. He was immediately
Señor General José Antonio Páez.

Caracas, September 9, 1841.

My esteemed friend and sir:

In your esteemed letter of the sixth, you demand my testimony concerning the purpose of the commission which you conferred on me in the year XXVI for His Excellency the Liberator. You tell me expressly not to omit any detail from it, even if it were confidential.

Immediately following the political changes of the year XXVI, Dr. Cristobal Mendoza revealed your desire to me that I accompany Señor Diego Ibarra on the mission you were thinking about sending to the Liberator concerning the troubles we were experiencing in those times. He outlined its objectives somewhat, and I did not hesitate to take charge. It followed, then, that I should approach you to receive your orders and instructions. You told me briefly then that the objective of the mission was to instruct the Liberator about what had occurred and show him the urgent need for his return to Colombia to take charge of its government. You considered this the only means of avoiding the civil war which could engulf the Republic. Nevertheless, you added that it might be wise to listen to the opinions of some employees and notable persons on this matter: so a junta was celebrated in effect. Its result was what you had indicated to me it would be. I limited the fulfillment of the confidence you saw fit to deposit in me to this. The mission contained no other objective, public or private.

---

named Secretary of Internal and Foreign Affairs. Later he became a Supreme Court Justice. In 1831 he was elected Vice-President of Venezuela and served in this capacity until 1835. When Páez was reelected to the presidency in 1839, Urbaneja was a member of his cabinet. In 1847, under José Tadeo Monagas' Presidency, he served as Vice-President of Venezuela again. Urbaneja died in Caracas in 1855. Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 640-41. Morón, History of Venezuela, 127, 141, 153, 154, 156, 158, 162.
With the greatest consideration, I am your very attentive and obedient servant.

Q.B.S.M.32

D. B. URBANEJA.

If my profession of faith is desired, I shall make it anew here and in this manner relegate it to history. I am certain that it is not possible for me to change my opinion, for I have reached that period in life when error is wont to be tenacious and impenitent.

In keeping with my background, my character, the impressions of my youth, my love for the people, and if my enemies choose, my own ambition, I could not be a partisan of the monarchical system. The disorders that followed independence would have been sufficient to make me a monarchist if I had not been convinced that those evils arose, not out of the principles we had adopted, but out of stupid egotism and evil ambition—two mortal enemies of nations' well-being. The ravages these have caused include; falsifying the most sacred beliefs; placing the principles of political and private morals in difficult straits; and flattering the evil instincts of bad passions with fawning just as in other times Caesar's courtesans flattered the tyrant's bad instincts and passions in order to dominate him better after he was corrupted. These evils are certainly

---

32 These initials stand for Quien Besa Su Mano, "who kisses your hand."
not circumscribed only to the unfortunate South American
Republics.

From time to time there will appear among all the
people of the earth similar deluges in the political order.
These will be more or less prolonged, in keeping with the
degree of enlightenment and disposition of the people in­
volved. In the final analysis, we see these deluges in all
countries, in all zones, under all systems of government,
with more or less just diverse pretexts. These invoke
exaggerated and flattering principles difficult to realize
which announce themselves, appear, and eclipse themselves
later. Then these principles leave behind them the stamp of
destruction and the bitter memory of an experience dearly
acquired. A century has not yet elapsed since illustrious
Europe, both monarchical and republican, felt the most pro­
found shaking that any people on earth can experience.
Liberty, morals, religion, and humanity fled for some time
from that Old World—a world old with years and experience
in the practice of social life, and always proud of its
illustrious and powerful titles. Still that unfortunate
period passed, and the European towns knotted the chain of
progress and continued advancing in the path of civilization.
At the cost of terrible tests, Europe has acquired a wealth
of expensive experience for the future and the certainty
that, despite every effort, the same scenes will repeat
themselves later on. Meanwhile the people shall always be
the spectators and the victims. Stupid egotism and evil
ambition, the two untiring executioners, will be repaid in infamy and the opprobrium of many years, and conceded only the hour of triumph by the ignorance of the mass of hallucinated people.

The simple enunciation of these historical truths and these contemporary events, which are repeated at certain times in all countries, regardless of the form of government and homogeneity of its population, authorize me to conclude with sane logic that America's misfortunes, and particularly those of Venezuela, do not stem from the institutions nor the political principles adopted, nor from the heterogeneity or diverse colors of the population, but from those endemic evils which I have mentioned. These sprouts exist in all hearts, and when their growth is stimulated by turbulent geniuses, they blossom out and necessarily cause misfortunes, many times irreparable. Universal phenomena should also recognize universal causes: man is susceptible to demoralize himself everywhere with more or less ease, in keeping with the degree of his learning, his disposition, his station in life, and even the climate and air that he breathes. If this is true, it is no less true that the American people who are more innocent, more simple, less learned, placed under climates propitious to the development of passions, spread out over an immense and almost deserted territory, and with difficult means of communication, would also lend themselves more readily to serve as an instrument for the ambitious demagogues in exchange for flattering promises which are
never attainable. It is for these reasons that scenes of bloodshed and desolation which prevent progress and the consolidation of these young Republics [regardless of their governmental form, of the kindness of their political principles, or of the strict and sane intentions of their good sons] are repeated more frequently among us. This is why there have been and still are Republics in America that are happy with these elements and have progressed with astonishing rapidity among their sisters who are victims of the most unchecked anarchy. In Chile essentially the same principles reign that have been adopted in all Spanish America, and its population is also heterogeneous. Yet Chile's progress is to be envied and worthy of being presented as a model to the other Republics sharing the same origin.

For a period of sixteen years Venezuela also enjoyed the same advantages. Her credit in the world market was superior to that of this very Chile. Her industry had been developed in a portentous manner. The habits of order, morality, work, and submission to the law had been disseminated among the people in such a manner, that I did not need bayonets to govern the Republic peacefully both times it fell my lot to guide her destinies. I barely maintained insignificant garrisons to guard the chief prisons and the national parks. Everyone possessed confidence in public opinion and national security, and these were the object of admiration and praise from all learned foreigners who visited our country. All the citizens enjoyed the most ample and
boundless right of voting, being elected, and revealing their thoughts in word and writing. There were always complete individual guarantees. Property and the Venezuelan right of asylum were held sacred. Free public instruction was available on all scales, and without any exceptions. Perhaps we dedicated to this important branch greater quantities of money than our finances permitted. Industrial freedom, without any catches or privileges of any kind, was guaranteed to all persons who were interested. Never was any Venezuelan excluded from participation in these pleasures. Equality before the law was an effective principle in the Republic. Religious freedom was respected. From 1830 until 1846 the people were free to elect whom they wanted. Few Venezuelans of some merit have failed to fill some public post. Those who did not must remember that there was not sufficient positions in any country to satisfy the ambition of all those who can aspire to them. Then some of these men might have lacked the moral aptitude to guarantee the proper discharge of their duties, which is what creates happiness for the people.

I shall not deny that it is the people's fault if demagogues find in them a passion they can easily seduce, flatter, and convert into harm for society. Because of this, I shall always place among the friends of humanity those who use all their influence to destroy these vulgar preoccupations, leave behind all ideas of division, and make all interests homogeneous. For the man of talent, regardless of
his origin, color does not grant or take titles to merit. Color shall always be an accident, as is the greatest or slightest perfection of the configuration of the human body. God has established a more noble inequality which is convenient to know because it is an individual justice and a social stimulus. Appreciate the man because of his soul, because of his capacity, because of his heart, and because of his virtues. The most capable and the most virtuous shall be the most distinguished citizens in a State, regardless of whether they are white, black, or mottled. These have been the principles I have held all my life, and I have professed them with sincerity, publicly as well as privately.

Finally, I must declare this: no anti-republican tendency in South America has ever merited my support or approval. I have stated this, and I have proven it repeatedly in the course of my long public career. My enemies in bad faith have proposed to attribute to me tendencies contrary to the Republican form. I have challenged them, and I challenge them again to present an authentic document or at least an event to justify their calumny. Vain declamations and free suppositions are not sufficient to stain the public life of a citizen. Proofs admissible to sane criticism are necessary.

Out of moderation and respect for memories which are sacred to me, I had not wanted to publish documents which the reader has seen; however, my enemies have made it necessary for me to take this step. Meanwhile, they are the ones
who should prove the imputation of what they have made themselves responsible for if they do not want to be labeled before the impartial tribunal of opinion with the deserved title of liars. I leave them in possession of this. I have always believed, and I have always maintained with profound conviction that the Spanish American States should not and cannot admit any form of government but the republican one. To think the opposite would be delirious in my opinion. Yes, an honest republic sooner or later will create the happiness of these nations. Before achieving this, however, they will have endured many painful tests as daughters of inexperience, which is inherent to all periods of infancy and to all systems which are being tried out. This is especially true when they have not been preceded by a preparatory period. However, true liberty shall finally triumph in America. All tyrannies, whether one or many, will be equally execrated. Columbus's world will attain the high destinies which nature has assigned to it with so much predilection.

These have been the beliefs I have held all of my life. Today these are my legitimate hopes, and as long as Providence keeps me alive, I shall dedicate myself unreservedly to the triumph of the same principles which I have maintained since 1810. Age and the ingratitude of men have not made the ardor and purity with which I have always lived lukewarm. The events of my life have well proven this.

General [Joaquín] Posada [or Posada Gutiérrez] in the Memoirs which he has just published, and even others before
this worthy soldier of independence, affirm that I was responsible for preventing the projects of monarchy in Colombia from being successfully carried out. It becomes difficult to conciliate the opinions of some with the calumnies of others. As for me, I am content.

33 General Joaquín Posada Gutiérrez was born in Cartagena in 1797 and entered the Republican army as a Lieutenant in 1821. He fought in the Battles of Coro, Quicirio, and Barranquilla. He was forced to retreat to Maracaibo when the Royalist Army occupied the Coro Province. Wounded at both the Battles of Casiguano and Juritiva, he went on to fight at the Battles of Molino and Cienaga which kept Morales's forces from dominating this territory. From 1824 until 1826 he was in Cartagena. By 1826 he had been promoted to the rank of Colonel, and then helped to draw up a boundary treaty with Ecuador. A member of the Granadine Congress at various times, he supported the established government in the revolutions of 1840, 1854, and 1860. He wrote and published Memorias Histórico-Políticas del General Joaquín Posada Gutiérrez, 4 vols. (Bogotá, 1929). Scarpetta and Vergara, Diccionario Biográfico, 485. Madariaga, Bolívar, 532, 569, 584, 613, 621, 622, 624, 640.
CHAPTER XXV

Internal Situation of Colombia--Manifesto to the Northern Colombians.

1829

The year we are now in our narration revealed how grave Colombia's situation was. Very complicated questions presented themselves. A study of them should serve the judicious historian as an explanation of the events which would verify themselves in later years. Among the evils which afflicted the Republic, the war with Perú was not one of the least important.\(^1\) Aside from the scandal presented the world by the fratricidal war among people that had yet to organize themselves, sending troops and ships to the territory and coasts of Perú cost more than the Colombian treasury

\(^1\)This was a short struggle that started in 1828 and ended in 1829 over the ownership of part of the province of Mainas and the whole of Jaén. The former had come under the Viceroyalty of Perú in 1802, and the latter in 1821. This area which had once been under Peruvian political jurisdiction, came under Colombian control in 1824. When the friction between Colombia and Perú reached a climax in 1828, Perú sent forces north with the aim of annexing Guayaquil. The Colombian troops led by General Sucre decisively defeated the Peruvians; consequently, in February of 1829 Perú agreed to a withdrawal from the soil claimed by Colombia, the surrender of a war vessel, and the payment of $150,000 to Colombia. Mary Wilhelmine Williams, *The People and Politics of Latin America* (Boston, 1945), 605.
could afford. Even then, our coasts and territory remained exposed to the threats of the Spaniards who did not desist from the projects of reconquest and who, according to public rumors, were preparing a new expeditionary army against Costa Firme.

The laurels gathered by some military men in the war with Perú and the luxury with which they returned from that country, excited the jealousies and animosities of the veterans who had stayed in Colombia and had not yet been paid for their services. However, the latter were too pretentious in their demands. The heroes of Perú and the military men of Colombia formed the sane external contrast that the comrades of Sebastián de Benalcazar and the soldiers of Nicolás Federmann did when both conquistadores encountered Gonzalo Jiménez de Quesada on the plain of Bogotá.2

2Henao and Arrubla state: "Quesada's men wore cotton clothes made by the Indians, Federmann's were dressed in hides, while Benalcazar's wore fine scarlet and silk." History of Colombia, 53.

Sebastián de Benalcazar (or Belalcazar, depending on the writer) was born probably between 1478 and 1480 in the village of Belalcazar, Spain. His family name was Moyano, and his parents, of humble origin, worked their own small farm. When Columbus was getting ready in Seville in 1498 to make his third voyage to the New World, young Sebastián made his way to that city and obtained passage with the idea of settling in Santo Domingo. During the conquest of this island, he served in the ranks, distinguishing himself until he became an experienced captain. Santo Domingo proved too small for his ambitions; so he went to Darien to serve under Balboa in the exploration of the Pacific Coast. Under Pedrarias orders, he accompanied Francisco de Córdoba in the expedition to Nicaragua and won the appointment as alcalde of the city of León. He returned to Panamá and joined his
The Liberator's absence at a time when a sordid agitation and conjectures of a nearing tempest were beginning to

former friends, the Pizarros, in the conquest of Peru. He even founded Quito, capital of the Republic of Ecuador. Benalcazar was not content, however, with being a subaltern, and he decided to push northward beyond Peru's frontiers to discover new lands. While doing this he heard Luis de Daza speak about a tale an Indian had told him relating the peculiar ceremony in which the chief of one of the Indian villages would cover his body with gold dust and then bathe himself in a small lake into which the jewels offered the gods were thrown. From this came the name El Dorado given to the region, in search of which the Spaniards suffered so many hardships. To find this "gilded man," Benalcazar ordered explorations across the southern frontier of Colombia and was responsible for founding several cities. In 1541 Benalcazar returned from Spain with the title of adelantado and an appointment as life-governor of Popayán, which he had founded. In 1546 he had Jorge Robledo, one of his lieutenants, killed because of insubordination. He then served under Pedro de la Gasca in the pacification of Peru. In 1550, due mainly to the complaints of Robledo's widow, Benalcazar was tried, deposed, and sentenced to death. The sentence was commuted, however, and Benalcazar was sent to Spain. He died in Cartagena on April 30, 1551 of a fever he contracted on the voyage. Ibid., 35-41, 52-53, 68-69, 73-75, 77, 80.

Nicolás Federmann was the most celebrated of the Germans who explored for the Welsers. He was a native of the city of Ulm. In 1530 Federmann was in Venezuela at the head of an expedition and wrote Narración del Primer Viaje de Federmann a Venezuela (Caracas, 1916), to describe it. Early in 1535, [Jorge de] Spira (who had been appointed to succeed Federmann) and Federmann met in Coro and agreed to divide the men and each go his own way in search of gold. In 1539 Federmann's forces encountered those of Quesada in the Bosa fields. Quesada and Federmann pledged mutual friendship and support. Then Quesada sent his brother to the unknown force camped on the Magdalena, which consisted of Benalcazar's men, to secure information on their objective. Benalcazar received the emissary courteously and told him he did not intend to contest Quesada's rights, but wished only unobstructed passage to continue search for El Dorado. However, when Benalcazar learned of Federmann's proximity, he tried to get him to align with him against Quesada and force the latter to surrender the territory, claiming it was under Pizarro's jurisdiction. Federmann refused to go along with this; consequently, the chaplains were able to get Benalcazar to yield on this point and submit the claim to Spain. Father
be felt in Colombia placed me in great conflict, for it deprived me of his advice when I needed it most.

On February 7 I issued the following manifesto to the Northern Colombians.³

It is in this unexpected and satisfactory manner for you, that Colombia shall see assembled the august representation of its towns within a short period of eleven months. In this national assembly the principles of our happiness and the glory of the Republic will be fixed forever. You shall see

Las Casas returned to Spain with the three conquerors. Feder­mann died in Madrid in February, 1542. Ibid., 32-33, 51-52, 84, 102.

Gonzalo Jiménez de Quesada was born in Granada, Spain, about 1499. He came from a good family and, like his father, was a lawyer. He exercised his profession before the royal chancellery of Granada until he came to the New World with Fernández de Lugo. In 1536 General Quesada left Santa Marta with his land forces. Part of his expedition was to go in seven boats to the mouth of the Magdalena River and then up the river to join Quesada. When his forces finally reunited, Quesada had to impose his authority to keep his men from turning back. His explorations and discoveries now led him to become the most noted among the conquerors of Colombia and finally to found the capital of the Republic. An unquenchable thirst for gold, however, led him to extreme cruelties which tarnished his image as it did that of the other Spanish explorers. After his meeting with Benalcazar and Federmann and his return from Spain, he obtained the title of marshall of the New Kingdom and the post of councilor for life of Santa Fé. In 1569 he undertook a large and brilliant expedition which crossed the San Martín plains and finally reached the junction of the Guavire and Orinoco rivers. Instead of finding gold, however, Jiménez de Quesada lost money. Then he wrote the history of his discoveries known as Compendio Historial or Historial Compendium. Unfortunately, this priceless manuscript was lost. Quesada died a poor man on February 16, 1579, when he was over eighty years old. Ibid., 43-54, 89, 95, 101-102.

³The greater part of this manifesto has been deleted, for it is a flowery repetition of preceding events and proclamations. The entire manifesto may also be seen in Blanco and Azpurda (eds.), Documentos Para la Historia, XIII, 376-86.
the Liberator in this sovereign Areopagus present himself once more as a plain citizen to render his homage to the only Colombian monarch, which is the people assembled legitimately. Then cruel remorse, shame, and eternal opprobrium shall cover his impious detractors with terror and horror. At the same time, just Colombians shall see the Father of the Republic with venerable respect mingle among us—more glorious and triumphant than in Boyacá, Carabobo, and Junín.

Let us prepare ourselves, then, to enjoy now a delightful and ineffable period. Let even the slightest vestige of discord disappear from among us. Since the district under my command has been purged of those stray sons who attempted to alter its peace, let us all embrace with the ties of complete and sincere national reconciliation. Let the perturber of public order perish as a result of our love of country; let us submit ourselves with a pure patriotism to the constituted authorities; and let us banish from our homes the wicked ones who dare to disobey them. Recognizing the great man we owe our independence and liberty to, let us regard anyone who even imagines that the Liberator of Colombia could ever cease being that, as an enemy of the country.

It is time to conclude this exposition now. On ending it, I solemnly declare to you once more that my life, my blood, and all of me are the burnt sacrifice with which I pay tribute to your happiness and your glories. Is it not sweet to perish, Colombians of the North, for such noble interests? I shall repeat to you, then, the same concepts that you heard on another occasion, and with which I shall seal my lips.

"The sword redemptress of humanity! In my hands it shall never be anything but Bolivar's sword: his will directs it, while my arm wields it. I shall perish a hundred times, and my blood shall be shed before I allow this sword to leave my hand or attempt to shed the blood that it has liberated until now. Fellow citizens! Bolivar's sword is in my hands: for you and for him, I shall go to eternity with it."

Caracas, February 7, 1829—XIX.

JOSE A. PÁEZ.
CHAPTER XXVI

Difficulties of My Position in Venezuela—
General Córdova's Insurrection—Letter He Wrote
Inviting Me to Take Part in It—General Santan­
der's Arrival in Venezuela as a Prisoner. My
Correspondence with Him During These Circumstances
--Judgment on General Santander--Difficulties With
Which I Would Have to Struggle if the Liberator
Abandoned Colombia--His October 14 Circular to the
Colombian Departments--Its Results--Junta of
Citizens in the San Francisco Convent in Caracas--
My Communication to the Minister of Interior--My
Defense of the Liberator--Letter to the Liberator
--I Convoke a Junta in the Caracas Theatre--Mani­
ifesto of the Town of Caracas to the Liberator--
General Soublette's Letter to General Urdaneta--
Reply to Some Charges that Restrepo Makes Against
Me.

1829

All the events of these last years had made me under­
stand the great responsibility that accompanied command in
Venezuela; consequently, my greatest desire was to retire to
private life to tend to my affairs. Since I could tell from
the Liberator's letters that he, too, was animated by the
same desire, I offered him my fortune and invited him to come
to his country to live and retire with me in my home, far
from the turbulences and displeasures which embittered his
existence.1

1The author interjects this footnote here. "In his
reply (September 13, Guayaquil) to my invitation, Bolívar
told me: 'I am your appreciative friend, my beloved
I had not learned the intrigues of court on the battlefields, nor did I know the power of ambition and of Machiavelism. I thought that courage and virtue were the only means to attain good fortune, and for six years I still considered them the poles on which the earth revolved. I thought the majority thought as I did. But even the government which I was consecrated to obey and which I had as my only support, had mediated and concerted plans for my destruction since the beginning of my elevation to power. A thousand hurdles were stretched out before me. I was delivered from these either by my good faith or fortune. Nevertheless, the measure of perfidy had to be fulfilled: so the August 30 Decree was dispatched. I was then placed in a cruel alternative: to carry it out or not. Either way, I would be judged. I did what my duty advised me, and I

general. I say appreciative, for this letter which I am answering is very noble and generous to me. I have been moved by the idea you have given me, and I hope I may enjoy private life and intimate companionship with you. (Volume XXI, page 74, Documentos de la Vida Pública del Libertador.)" A copy of the entire letter may be found in Blanco and Azpurúa (eds.), Documentos Para la Historia, XXI, 74.

2Páez must be referring to the August 31, 1829 Decree which the Liberator issued from Guayaquil. Bolivar, aware of his failing health and apparently sincerely wanting to relieve himself of all power and responsibility, dispatched his celebrated circular asking the people to "freely express their opinions on the type of government and constitution which the next constituent congress should adopt and about the chief of administration that was to be elected." Felipe Larrazábal, La Vida de Bolívar, Libertador de Colombia y del Perú, Padre y Fundador de Bolivia. 2 vols. (New York, 1871), II, 484.
executed it. As a result, I was accused, suspended, and called to Bogotá. It was well known that Venezuela would not consent to having me obey this order, and that I would not fail in my duty to her. This very data, however, influenced my moral enemies to promote a revolution by means of a sheet of paper. Nevertheless, I was faithful, even despite the indignation of many and to the point of injuring my dearest interests, Venezuela's, and the Liberator's. The latter know how to save us, however.

It was then that I should have abandoned the field of politics. As a candid and faithful soldier, I had already passed my zenith. I should have retired. I wanted to retire, and I persistently asked the Liberator about this; however, he opposed my retirement tenaciously. Renewing my gratitude and duties even further, he entrusted Venezuela to my inexperience. I obeyed, as I always did, for I was certain that I had the Liberator in Bogotá at the head of the Republic backing me with his authority and directing me with his advice. I relied on a reciprocal faith in the government, and I continued with difficulty, but with complete confidence. At these very moments the Liberator was leaving, and I was being left without a guide, for the Council was not Bolivar: I was not certain of the government's good faith, dexterity, or good accord.

Since April of this year, General José María Córdova had been tracing a conspiracy to oppose what he called Bolívar's ambitious desires. To achieve it, he proposed to
excite the jealousies and animosities between the Venezue-
lans and the Granadines. When he believed that his plans
were very advanced, he wrote me the letter which I copy
below.³

MOST EXCELLENT SEÑOR GENERAL IN CHIEF JOSÉ A. PÁEZ.

Medellín
September 18, 1829.

Señor:

I had been persuaded by the reiterated oaths with
which General Bolivar promised so many times to sus-
tain and respect Colombia's liberty, by the liberal
opinions he manifested in his writings, by the vene-
ration he seemed to hold for the rights of the people
during other times, and by the fact that the glorious
title of Liberator of his country is more worthy than
all the crowns of the universe, and that no man would
want to renounce it in order to dominate his brothers,
that it was not possible for General Bolivar to
depreciate honor and glory and aspire to dominate his
country. I saw the alarm of free men who had pene-
trated his ambitious desires while examining his con-
duct, as the deliriums of an excessive zeal.
Furthermore, I thought I saw in the public writings
that clearly outlined his criminal projects either an
alleviation from envy, or an expression of fear or
fearful temperaments that created phantoms to scare
themselves. When I saw that his acts were contrary to
the constitution and laws, I thought that he did this
dragged by the force of circumstances, or that his
reason had deviated momentarily without his heart taking
any part in these deviations. I expected later acts to
erase these stains which were eclipsing his reputation.
Sensitive to honor, I thought he would retrace his
steps; ashamed of having abandoned the path of his
duty, he would correct his deviations. With his
repentance, I knew he would again win the people's
esteem and affection; however, I have waited a long
time in vain. Finally, after meditating slowly on his
proceedings and comparing his acts, I have come to
penetrate his desires. My reason becomes indignant at
the aspect of the scandalous attempts which form the
series of his conduct in these last years. Seeing

³This letter is in Blanco and Azpurda (eds.), Docu-
clearly now, most excellent Señor, that far from seeking the road of correction, he removes his mask without shame to allow his base pretensions to be seen, my patriotism is inflamed against this General—this General who has deceived his country with vain oaths and who had the impudence of offering it an ignominious yoke as a reward for its sacrifices. . . .

I am stimulated by the liberal sentiments which have never left my heart. I am tired of waiting for General Bolivar, moved by the unanimous clamor of the people, and sensitive to the glory of which he has been deprived by his ambition, to renounce his criminal projects and restore to Colombia the liberty which he has usurped from it. Finally, undeceived by his latest actions that he is thinking less about anything than restoring liberty, and that all his desires are on the path of cementing tyranny, I have yielded to the cries of my compatriots and the instigations of my heart. I have raised the standard of liberty in this province, and all the people have enthusiastically declared for such a just cause. Free men run to join us from all parts. All of us proclaim to die a thousand times rather than suffer tyranny. Yes, most excellent Señor, this is our resolution, and there is nothing which can make us desist from it. The decision and ardor which is manifested everywhere for liberty, convince me that from one end of the Republic to the other, the people will take advantage of this occasion to allow their hatred for tyranny to be seen and to shake the yoke that oppresses them. . . .

It is not possible for Your Excellency to want the degrading title of vassal of a monarch as recompense for your heroism, sacrifices, and triumphs. We all rely on the fact that Your Excellency will no longer acknowledge General Bolivar's arbitrary government and will place yourself at the head of the free men in those departments. Then we expect you will establish relations with me, reach an agreement, and then together we shall destroy despotism forever. Let us unite and liberty will most certainly triumph. . . .

I end my letter by begging Your Excellency to hear the cry of the people who implore our protection, and that reaching an agreement with me, we lend our arms to shake the chains of slavery. Please remove from your side all those men whom General Bolivar has brought to surround you always, for knowing Your Excellency's heart, he fears each instant that with you at the head of the republicans of Venezuela, his tyranny will end. Please search the heart of all honest citizens, and you
will find that they all harbor the sentiments which I have manifested to you.

Please accept the sentiments of esteem and affection with which I have the honor of being Your Excellency's most attentive and obedient servant.

JOSÉ MARÍA CÓRDOVA.

If I had had, as some malevolent writer has supposed, any preconcerted plan against Bolívar's authority and Colombia's integrity, I would not have allowed the occasion offered me by Córdova's insurrection to pass. This chief had attained quite a bit of fame in Perú, but was ruined by the speed with which he wanted to carry his plans into effect.

In August of this year, the frigate of war Cundinamarca entered Puerto Cabello carrying General Santander, whom the government had imprisoned in the Bocachica Fortress and was now sending to receive my orders. General Santander had written me from that fortress telling me about the misfortune he suffered and of the hopes he had of finding good treatment with me which would be compatible with security. He claimed this right as a man who had gone without sleep to second the worthy and magnificent projects of General Bolívar whose life he had saved at a time when his existence depended on his will. I answered this letter with the following one. 4

To Señor General Francisco de P. Santander

Caracas
April 22, 1829.

Señor General:

When your letter written in Bocachica on this past February 19th reached my hands, I already had news of your coming to Venezuela by disposition of the government. I also knew about the misfortunes prepared for you by a series of unfortunate happenings and events. In opportune time also, I learned about the attempt of September 25 in Bogotá, and later about everything published with respect to your accomplices.

It is not my place to analyze the government’s reasons for suspending the Liberator’s beneficous providence, who according to what you tell me, opposed your banishment from the country. However, it is very satisfactory for me to assure you that as soon as I learned of your confinement in Venezuela, I prepared to correspond to the government’s confidence and your hopes.

Rest assured, Señor General, that I have the best intentions to favor you, always conciliating the duties of my position with my natural inclinations. Come to Venezuela confident that you will find the best hospitality and consideration with which I am your obedient servant, General.

JOSÉ A. PÁEZ

Arriving in Puerto Cabello, Santander sent me a testimonial in which he tried to vindicate himself of the crimes of which he was accused, and he begged me to free him from privations and sufferings by granting him a passport to a foreign country. This document abounds in historical citations, and it is well known that he wrote it under the veil of a profound sadness. He terminated it with these words:

If Your Excellency’s sword has given life and fortune to many Colombians, a feeling of humanity and even of justice on your part, will give in this instance a less bitter existence to an old Colombian;

---

health, to a sick man; and consolation, to a family inundated in tears.

In 1816 Your Excellency gave me protection against the oppressors of my native land: do the same in 1829 against the adversity and anger of my ignoble enemies.

Santander added the following letter to this testimonial.6

To His Excellency, General in Chief José Antonio Páez.

Bay of Puerto Cabello
August 19, 1829

Señor General:

In Bocachica I opportunely received your very attentive letter in reply to the one I sent you from that fortress. This answer has corresponded entirely with my hopes and has filled me with consolation. As much for what it promises me for the future, as for having sent it, I thank you most expressively and sincerely.

My situation does not permit me to bestow any favor which would contribute to improving it. Since you have generously offered me all your services in my misfortune, I have thought it suitable to present you the testimonial accompanying this letter, which the commandant of this ship is delivering. I know that a magistrate always has to protect himself, sometimes before his superiors, and sometimes before sane public opinion. I have no doubt that I shall secure from you, or through your mediation, what I asked for in this paper. I know your heart and character well, and I also know well what influence you have in the government. Since the public voice occupies itself today with nothing other than to praise and bless the kindnesses you have used with the banished and those confined to the territory under your command, how can I not expect relief, consolation, and my freedom from your powerful hand? Confident of this, I have reached this port. In the midst of the tribulations, of the penalties of sixty days of navigation, and of my cruel

6A copy of this letter may be found in Blanco and Azpurúa (eds.), Documentos Para la Historia, XIII, 605-606.
infirmities, I am consoled and vivified by the thought of being under your custody.

Overlook my impertinences. A sick man, who is absent from his family, pursued, and confined, has many necessities to consider, and a thousand reasons for being impertinent. Nevertheless, you can be sure that I will not demand anything which will compromise your honor or mine: for this is the only jewel left me by my superiors. Out of my long public career in my country's service, I am determined to preserve it at all cost and in the midst of misfortunes and bitterness. The enclosed certificate which General Montilla has given me will show you that I have conducted myself with honor in the prisons, as I shall always conduct myself in any circumstance. I beg you to please return said document to me and keep a copy, or if you keep the original, please send me an authentic copy.

I remain, Señor General, a most acknowledged, obedient, humble servant.

Q.B.S.M.

F. de P. Santander.

When I received this letter, I answered with the following.7

To Señor Francisco de Paula Santander

Puerto Cabello
August 20, 1829

My Esteemed Señor:

I have read your letter dated yesterday aboard the frigate of war, Cundinamarca, in which you honor me with the hopes of relief from your present misfortune. You do justice to my sentiments, which are always inclined to make the lot of an unfortunate person less bitter. I thank you most sincerely for this belief. Even if I will flatter myself by considering myself worthy of it, I shall always be honored by your conviction.

Fortunately you have arrived at Venezuelan shores at a time when I am competently authorized by the government to make your situation more bearable. The desires which you manifested to me in your first letter from

---

7Ibid., 606.
the Bocachica fortress in Cartagena will be satisfied, and I shall have the pleasure of simultaneously fulfilling my duties to the government and to you.

By chance I arrived at this port three days ago. If my proximity can be useful to you in anything conducive to relieving your afflictions and making your stay and the trip on which you are going to embark less painful, please tell me, confident that I shall do everything possible.

I remain your obedient servant.

JOSÉ A. PÁEZ.

Today, as I review the letters that General Santander wrote me at various times, I cannot understand how this man has come to appear in Colombian history as one of my worst enemies. In all those letters and in the ones that I sent him in reply, there is not the slightest animosity. If in one or in another we manifest some resentment, it may be seen by the dates that we were satisfied very quickly by the explanations we gave each other. Santander continued to write me from New York and Hamburg. Those who read this correspondence cannot believe that this is the same Santander who wrote Bolívar the confidential letter which I have mentioned previously.

General Santander is a historic personage who has been judged in two diametrically opposed manners. Undoubtedly, it is still very difficult to justly place him in his proper niche. As a patriot in the early years of the revolution, he is unquestionably one of Colombia's heroes: as administrator of her interests, he cannot be denied great talent and ability if the grave obstacles with which he had to
struggle are taken into consideration. Sometimes moderate in his conduct while exaggerated in his principles at others, his administration hurt itself because of the lack of harmony between its deeds and its principles. Thus it is that while appearing to defend Colombia's integrity, Santander was perhaps the most powerful instrument preparing for the necessary separation of the three sections. Much to the contrary of what has always happened to controversial men in republics, Santander returned to his country, directed its destinies again, and died in the land where he was born. When he declared himself Bolivar's enemy, posterity believed itself with the right to accuse him of ambitious desires and excessive presumption. It falls to the future historians of Colombia, when they are able to write without the impressions of the moment, to place this exalted personage of the American independence movement in the position pointed out by his civic virtues and his errors.

When the Liberator saw the war in Peru ended satisfactorily and was preparing to return here, I manifested my desire to retire to private life to him once more--the private life which was my element and which promised me the inestimable joys of which I was deprived. If the Liberator left Colombia and left the reins of government, my obligation would be ended, for I thought it useless and perhaps dangerous for me to occupy such a precarious position. I feared that the government council, which frequently revealed itself most satisfied with me, would not have the same inclination in
Bolivar's absence. I did not trust my forces if I were lacking the support of a friend who knew the needs of his native state, the character of its inhabitants, and the moral strength and prestige which it enjoyed. There would be many and repeated occasions when it would be imperative to work in favor of the public good when the government would not see the need. There would be other times when a measure selected by the government to provide for the needs at hand, would be funeral for Venezuela, so far from its sight. At still other times it would be indispensable to modify the resolutions whose extensive character would clash, either with the decrees issued by the Liberator in the departments, or with other statutes agreed upon and approved by the local government itself and which might not be considered. In any case, the responsibility of those who governed would be endangered at each step, either because they would detain execution of a decree to avoid harm, or because they would allow the latter to come without being able to prevent it. In a country where calumnies against the government and those who governed were fomented by certain disorganized men, who were enemies of Colombia, all resolutions would be exposed to their detractions and even their accusations. In a country subject to this calamity, it was indispensable to maintain the government, especially that of the Liberator.

There was no hope that the Constituent Congress could make provisions for these evils or that later the structure
of the great political machine they created could resolve these difficulties. This was because without the Liberator's immediate instructions to the deputies, without his enlightenments given by time and experience, nothing could be done, or what was done would necessarily have omissions. The latter was something which a stable constitution, to which the future of Colombians would be entrusted forever, should not possess. It fell to the Liberator, then, to resolve the difficult political problems which would be considered by the national representation: the latter, although selected from the best that our countries could offer, would find itself consumed by a thousand perplexities unless the Liberator guided its course and aided its efforts.

Finally, I believed that Bolivar's presence in Colombia was vital to her organization. I also believed that my duration in the command of Venezuela was marked by that of the Liberator in the Presidency and his stay in that territory. I told him all this in my letters. Bolivar was Colombia's soul: his genius gave it life: without him, only a cadaver would remain.

On October 14 of this year, the Liberator directed a circular to the departments of Colombia authorizing them to express their views frankly on the type of political regime that would best suit them. If I failed to publish the

---

8This circular was first issued on August 31, 1829. See footnote 2 in this chapter.
circular, I would be considered a tyrant who oppressed the liberty of the people when the Liberator had ordered them to express their desires openly. If I published it, I would be in open battle with the party that did not believe its publication opportune. Finally, I decided to face the consequences, and I published the circular. Then the towns make their wishes known. These were so irreconcilable, that it was impossible to take any definite action. The citizens of Manavi and other points desired a moderate monarchy under Bolivar's sceptre. In Maracaibo, some of the people requested that this life-time leader be named the head of a republic with the authority to select a successor from among the three men that the citizens selected. In the village of Perija this program was varied somewhat. These citizens wanted the vice-president to succeed the supreme chief of the republic until the nation could name a successor. The city of Valencia, by the unanimous vote of its most notable men, pronounced against the monarchical form and favored the dissolution of the three states which formed Colombia. They requested that this petition be sent to Congress.

On November 26 a junta of Caracas's best citizens assembled in the San Francisco Convent. It resolved: (1) to separate from the Bogotá government and disallow General Bolivar's authority, but to maintain peace, friendship, and concordance with their brothers from the central and southern departments of Colombia; to draw up a treaty and establish what would suit their common interests, and this was
applauded and greeted with extraordinary enthusiasm; (2) to send the act justifying the procedure, including the resolutions, to the general superior chief, asking him to consult the will of the departments which comprised the old Venezuela, and convocate primary assemblies in all the territory under his command as quickly as possible so that, in accordance with the known regulations, electors could be nominated and successively representatives to compose a Venezuelan convention; taking this basis into consideration, it would proceed immediately to establish a republican government—representative, alternative, and responsible; (3) to extend the manifesto which was directed to their Colombian brothers and to the whole sphere, stating the reasons which imperiously demanded its resolution; (4) to maintain the worthy General José Antonio Páez as chief of these departments, and that holding the people's confidence as he did, he was to maintain public order and keep all the branches of the administration under the existing forms until the convention was installed; (5) to keep its commitments to foreign countries and private individuals who had granted aids to consolidate her political existence, even though Venezuela had adopted measures relative to her security by separating from the government that had governed until then, it was expected that the convention would arrange these just obligations in the most suitable manner.9

When I received this junta's act in Valencia, I directed the following communication to the Minister of Interior.10

REPUBLIC OF COLOMBIA

José Antonio Páez, Superior Civil and Military Chief of Venezuela, et cetera, et cetera.

General Headquarters, Valencia December 8, 1829.-No. 98.

To the Minister of State in the Department of the Interior.

I received your official communique of this past October 16 containing the resolution of the government council expedited in accordance with the decree of His Excellency, the Liberator President, to have the people freely express their wishes with regard to the form of their government, a decree which should be sanctioned, and to name the chief of the nation, which should be communicated directly to the departmental prefects. I had this published by proclamation, and the citizens of each town have assembled and manifested their wishes, but not in a similar manner. In some cities, villages, and parishes, they have taken the form of a petition directed to the constituent congress; in others, they have taken the form of resolutions. All ask for or desire the separation of Venezuela from the rest of the Republic and to have her constituted as a sovereign state, leaving the relations which should be established with the other states which have been within Colombia's territory to the consideration of its government. The town which has most exceeded the terms of the decree has been Caracas. Here popular assemblies were held on the twenty-fifth and the twenty-sixth of this past month where it was resolved by act to separate Venezuela and disallow His Excellency the Liberator's authority, arranging beforehand to proceed immediately to form a constituent congress with representatives selected for this, and for me to take charge of the new order and direct the movement.

I had come from Caracas to this city in order to

10 Ibid., XIV, 29-30.
maintain peace and quiet in the surrounding areas of the valleys and towns in the West, for I was alarmed by the news that was spreading that the people were considering organizing the Republic under a monarchical system. I received the Caracas Act in this city. It was delivered to me by three secretaries and two additional citizens who were substituting for Doctor Andrés Narvarte, another commissioned secretary who had become ill. The commissioners demanded that I march to Caracas immediately to take charge of the new administration and issue the decrees needed for the execution of their projects. However, I let them know that the nature of my commitments and the obedience I had sworn to the provisional organization, did not permit me to do this in any way. Nevertheless, since I was pressed urgently, and since I considered on the other hand that the desperate state in which that town found itself might induce it to take other measures of action which might be capable of causing confusion and perhaps even leading us to anarchy, I promised them that they would not be molested because of their opinions. I have also promised them that their wishes shall have effect through the resolutions of the constituent congress—the legal font to which they should direct their act for a decision. Meanwhile, I ask to be permitted to govern, as is my duty, in the name and under the authority of His Excellency the Liberator President. In this manner I have managed to maintain order, and quiet the people's agitation and alarm, for they have been and still are very restless.

Since on the first day of this month when the mail arrived in this capital, I was occupied all morning and part of the afternoon receiving the commissioners who brought the Caracas Act, I barely had time to inform His Excellency the Liberator President and the Most Excellent Minister of War by private letters about this event. I take advantage now of this first opportunity to inform you so that you can tell the government council, adding that if the separation of Venezuela is an evil, it now seems inevitable. Everyone seems to desire it vehemently, and I believe this occasion will not be allowed to pass except at the cost of bloody, horrible, and unfortunate sacrifices. This opinion is general and superior to the influence of any man. In reality, it is the public opinion. I have not wanted to participate in any of it because His Excellency

11Dr. Andrés Narvarte had been one of the three provisional members of the triumvirate which composed the national executive in 1811. Morón, *History of Venezuela*, 103.
the Liberator forewarned me to allow the people to act and say what they wanted to with complete frankness and freedom. They have done this. As for me, I shall believe that I have fulfilled my duties if I can maintain order, tranquility, and the administration of the present regime to which I have sworn allegiance, until the constituent congress resolves this matter. These are the recommendations I have made to all the authorities that are under my command in these provinces, giving them orders at the same time to maintain respect, veneration, and obedience to His Excellency the Liberator President.

May God keep you.

JOSÉ ANTONIO PÁEZ.

In those days lampoons appeared in Caracas which were injurious to the Liberator's person and which made violent allusions to his government. I sent orders then from Valencia to the authorities so that they would punish these excesses. I said the following to the inhabitants.12

... the liberty which the governmental decrees has given the people to request what would be most suitable for their future and prosperity does not authorize them to write abuses and threats against the first magistrate, who was simultaneously the most notable hero of this part of the New World, and to whom immense services were owed. These excesses could only be the work of some violent persons who in a delirious moment had written what not even their own hearts, much less those of the rest of the Venezuelans, desired; that in any case such conduct was always painful and dishonorable for the country; and finally, that freedom of the press and the right of petition gave no cause to resort to such base means.

All the Venezuelan towns manifested the same desires as the capital city did to separate peacefully from Bogotá

12 These are excerpts from a decree Páez sent from his general headquarters in Valencia on November 30, 1829 to the Departmental Prefect. A complete copy of this decree may be found in Blanco and Azpurda (eds.), Documentos Para la Historia, XIII, 727-28.
and form an independent state. Mine was a most difficult position, for I was struggling between my considerations for the Liberator and the unanimous will of the people. On December 1, I wrote the following letter to the Liberator from Valencia.\textsuperscript{13}

To His Excellency the Liberator Simón Bolívar, Et Cetera, Et Cetera.

My Beloved General and Friend:

Today the commissioners from Caracas arrived to deliver the act they have recorded asking for Venezuela's separation by act, and to be constituted under republican forms. If they had limited themselves to this, I would not have found it strange, for the opinions of these towns were known to me. However, the part in which they address you personally has caused me grief. The commissioners have come determined to demand that I go to Caracas to take charge of and direct this movement; however, I have excused myself because of my commitments. I have promised them wholeheartedly that this love which they have manifested for liberty shall have no painful consequences for them. I have not seen anything in the act but the realization of the fears which I expressed to you in the letter I sent yesterday. I knew that the Venezuelans wholeheartedly opposed the union with Bogotá and were determined to make any sacrifice to achieve this separation; but I believed that the reason for their doing this forces me to dissimulate it. The commissioners are satisfied with the offer I have made to them—an offer which I had to make to them because I could not leave that town in desperation and exposed to taking other disastrous and disorganizing measures. Thus I have continued to command on the same footing I had before and until such time as the resolution of the constituent congress is known.

If the separation is an evil, it is already inevitable, and I hope that far from opposing it, you will recommend it to the congress. In this manner you will contribute greatly to the well-being and contentment of your countrymen and compatriots. On the other hand, if you or the government council attempt to suffocate it,

\textsuperscript{13}\textit{Ibid.}, XIV, 5-6.
I cannot account for anything, for daily I see nothing but violence to contain. This is an opinion which is superior to the influence of any man. Furthermore, I shall tell you that I am not certain that the moderation with which I am acting will be enough to maintain affairs in the order they still have. I say this because there is already talk, almost bare-faced, of seeking another chief to guide Venezuela in this movement. I recommend this cause to your prudence. Reflect on it calmly, for those involved are your friends, and your brothers. If the lance is engaged, very precious blood shall be spilled. A war shall be started which we shall not see ended. Give the Venezuelans their peace, and add this to the many benefits you have already given them.

I work to maintain your glory and reputation as my chief and my friend. This is the one task I perform with pleasure at this time, for I am very tired of commanding. I do not have a moment's peace. Displeasures have taken away my sleep and even my appetite.

It grieves me to tell you what I have to in this letter; however, it would grieve me even more if you did not know about it or if someone else told you before I did. I do not know what course these events shall take, but regardless of what they may be, and even if destiny carries me to misfortune, I shall always prove that I am your heart-felt friend.

JOSÉ A. PÁEZ.

On December 21, I again wrote the Liberator from Caracas in the following terms.14

Caracas December 21, 1829

My Beloved General and Friend:

After I received the pronouncement from this city, I remained in Valencia until I was forced to come by the agitation I observed in this town. I arrived here on the twelfth. Caracas was truly in a lamentable state, for there was no trusting anything or anyone. Only thoughts about extreme revolution were contemplated as protection from any attempt which might be

14Ibid., 54-55.
made against the pronouncements. I tried to see everyone, and I have succeeded in inspiring confidence; however, the people still are not quiet. The provisions I take with every precaution to calm resentments and passions disturb them in such a manner, that I am chagrined at each step because I fail to go crazy. I am suffocated, and I feel incapable of keeping the people quiet: prudence appears to be timidity; any job appointment excites jealousies; and everything that is not inflammatory, is considered contrary to their movement.

I have not proposed any idea, but I have tried to moderate the existing ones without opposing the general will of the public. It would be impossible for me to do otherwise. Moreover, it would be harmful and contrary to my own ideas, for desiring Venezuela's fortune and prosperity as much as most, I am determined to maintain her wishes while trying by every means possible to prevent civil war, and internal dissensions and persecutions from devouring her. I am determined to do this because I see very clearly that there is no other path left open to us: not you, nor I, nor anyone can contain this movement. The person who attempts this will achieve nothing more than to ruin himself and destroy the country. A show of arms, or the first rifle shot, would be the sign for a general uprising. If the Venezuelan troops were defeated, the uprising would be even more devouring, for a chieftain would arise in each canton, in each town. Then the country would be divided at the very least into guerrilla factions which would be impossible to ever bring to any accord. We would die like savages, without the hope of ever seeing any social organization again. Perhaps this soil will get to be Spanish because those engaged in the conflict would fling themselves into the arms of anyone offering protection.\footnote{The author footnotes this as follows. "Señor Restrepo, who undoubtedly did not see this letter, states in Volume IV, page 269: 'He (Páez) wrote a private letter to Bolívar at the same time manifesting his resolution to him and urging him not to insist on going against the determined will of the Venezuelans; that if he attacked them, the entire country would be covered with guerrillas that would destroy him; and that in the final analysis they would rather deliver themselves to the Spanish. We do not believe that Páez and his partisans would ever have thought of fulfilling this criminal threat.' I beg the reader to compare these expressions with the contents of my letter, and thus keep me from...}
We have arrived at the worst imaginable state, for I have never seen myself in a more difficult and dangerous situation. My future and my reputation are compromised, and I believe it not only necessary, but indispensable, to assemble a Venezuelan congress for the purpose of deliberating and organizing the country. If this meeting is held without contradiction from you, without snares, and without any instigations on anyone's part to introduce discord and foment lack of confidence, we can still expect days of peace and tranquility. Convince yourself of this, my dear General. Believe, believe me that I speak the truth, and the pure truth, without any other interest than the well-being of the country. I have no personal goal, and much less, any intention of contradicting you. Believe me for the good of the country, and believe me for our friendship's sake.

Goodbye, my dear General. I wish you the skill necessary to untie this knot, and I hope that you do not make any mistakes in your resolutions or in your actions. I also hope that you believe I am animated by the sentiments of consideration and friendship with which I am your affectionate servant and friend.

JOSÉ A. PÁEZ.

On December 24, with the object of determining the opinion of the citizens of Caracas for myself, I convoked a junta of its most select citizens at the public theatre in order that the inhabitants of the city in which the Liberator had been born could express their opinion anew. More than two thousand persons came to this junta, which was in session from 11:00 a.m. until 4:00 a.m. the following day. Among the orators, there were some who started to upbraid the Liberator's conduct. Among these was Señor Julián García who went to the extreme of calling him unjust and tyrannical.

commenting on the accusation of the Granadine historian." This citation may be found where the author states in the José Jacquin edition of Restrepo, Revolución de la República de Colombia.
Presiding over this assembly, I rose, interrupted the orator, and addressed him in the following manner.

Señor García, you are out of order. We have not come here to discuss what the Liberator has been or is. The Liberator has sent an authorization to all the departments in Colombia so that they may express their wishes concerning the type of political regime they consider most suitable for the Republic. Therefore, I declare that I shall not allow one sole word to be uttered against the Liberator.

A deep silence followed this short discourse, and the discussion ended with the reading of the resolution adopted by the assembly and which follows below. It may also be found in Volume XXI, page 91, Documentos Relativos a la Vida Pública del Libertador.16

EXPOSITION OF THE TOWN OF CARACAS TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE LIBERATOR PRESIDENT

Most Excellent Señor:

We the priests, heads of families, and notable citizens of the city of Caracas to which we subscribe, while assembled in the presence of His Excellency the Superior Chief, accompanied by the wisdom and moderation which the desire for peace and justice of our cause inspires, have determined to manifest to His Excellency that this town on this past November 25 and 26, and the other towns on different days, have expressed their unanimous desire to separate the old Venezuela from the union with the rest of the territory forming the Republic of Colombia. In this manner Venezuela would regain her sovereignty and the power to create a republican, popular, representative, alternative, responsible and elective government, which is considered the most suitable to her customs, climate, and circumstances. These people want to proceed with this task involving their future repose and well-being motivated only by their own meditation and conscience. They fear that the shadow of the height that Your

16Blanco and Azpurúa (eds.), Documentos Para la Historia. The rest of the author's citation is correct.
Excellency has attained might prevent free rein to your reflections, or that the execution of your ardent wishes might find obstacles in the councils of Bogotá. It was not without agitation and pain that Venezuela tore herself from her sovereignty. Now she works for her future well-being without placing limits or price on the love of liberty.

We recommend most earnestly that you, Your Excellency, who has been so interested in the independence and glory of this soil where you were born, and where your relatives, friends, and the respectable ashes of your parents are, exercise your powerful influence so that our separation and organization may be made peacefully, and so that no one will alter our union or pretend to oppose our precious and laudable undertaking. There is no justifiable motive before humanity that can arm Your Excellency nor the Bogotá government to invade our rights so long as Your Excellency realizes that we are permitted to defend ourselves and resist. The world will investigate the cause of the misfortunes, deaths, and horrors which will come, and not the pretexts sought to wreak these upon us. We shall leave the victim's sepulchres open so that their descendants may see the blood their fathers shed, and the sounds they received at the hands of those who uselessly wanted to suffocate their heroic patriotism.

Caracas, December 24, 1829—XIX.—José A. Páez, Rafael Ortega, priest Luis Acosta, priest Joaquín Rada, priest Ramón Calzadilla, priest Dr. Juan Hilario Bocett, Diacono Ramón Bermúdez, priest Dr. Francisco Javier Narvarte, priest Listo Freites, priest José María Hurtado, priest Juan Francisco Atencio, Diacono Pedro Osio, Dr. Tomás Francisco Vicente Parejo, Diego B. Urbaneja, Carlos Soublette, Rafael Revenga, Mariano Herrera, Alejo Fortique, Angel Quintero, Ramón Ayala, Pedro Machado, Caludio Viana, José Félix Salas, Tomás Antero, Raimundo R. Sarmiento. An additional fifteen hundred signatures follow.

I shall not close this chapter without answering some of the unjust and malicious charges that have been directed against me and the Venezuelans as a result of the events of this year. I shall reply to those who accuse Venezuela of having been the center from which sprung the projects of monarchy, and those who believe that it was planned beforehand
to divide the Republic in the territory which I commanded, by including the following letter from the worthy General Soublette to Urdaneta when the latter was trying to fulfill his monarchical schemes.\textsuperscript{17} No one will refuse to admit General Soublette's authorized word, for he was a veteran patriot and most republican in feeling. On April 19 of this year 1866, a Caracas newspaper has justly written the following words about him:

Soublette, Miranda's, and Rivas's aide-de-camp, was a general of the sword and a brilliant person who inspired. More than once he was the leader in the famous retreat from Ocumare. He was also the defender of Cartagena, Bolivar's loyal friend, author and witness of all our glories and administrator with Santander. Today he possesses the respect and sympathies of all parties in South America.

General Soublette's Letter to General Urdaneta.

\textit{Caracas}  
\textit{October 13, 1819 [1829].}

My dear General and friend:

Your letter of September 9 and the copy you enclosed for me of the one you wrote General Páez on this same day, have sickened me and reduced me to a miserable state. From the very first time you had the kindness to speak to me about the great affair which occupies you, I manifested my opinion frankly to you. You have mistrusted your ground-work, thought us to be seeing phantoms, have continued working along these lines, and insist that we co-operate in fulfilling the project. What hope remains for me then? None, and this is the thought that destroys my spirit.

Each day I have further reasons to realize that these departments will resist a monarchy, and that civil war shall result from the adoption of this form of

\textsuperscript{17}It is interesting to note that this letter is not included in Urdaneta, \textit{Memorias} or in Blanco and Azpurda (eds.), \textit{Documentos Para la Historia}. 
government—a civil war which shall return us to Spanish domination after a thousand horrors and disasters. I do not seem to have the power to convince you of this, for my words reach you without efficacy. You do not believe me, and attribute my opposition to varied fears. All of this causes me a mortal agony. I am your friend and a friend to all who are in this undertaking. I know the purity of your intentions, and because of this my torments increase. I see that with the best intentions in the world, you all have adopted the only means that can ruin us without remedy. Forgive me this frankness, my friend; however, I consider it a duty to tell you things as I see them.

After the letters of September 9 were received, the project has been publicized. Already everyone in this city knows about it, and very quickly all Venezuela will be aware of it. You have only surprised your friends and confirmed eternal doubts in others who already celebrate their triumph and relish Venezuela's sighed-for separation and the fall of the Liberator and all his friends. Those friends he has here are as sad as I am. We get together to sigh and deplore the fate that awaits us. We ask ourselves how can it be possible for you, Castillo, and the other important citizens involved, to have such little knowledge of Venezuela's true state and condition as to give this direction to things. No one can answer this. We go to see General Páez, and we find him in bed—pale, sleepless, and unable to occupy himself with anything since the arrival of the September 9 mail. All this considered, can it be expected that any of these deputies will support the monarchy in Congress?

If, as I understand it, you all do not have any personal goals in this matter, but rather are animated by the desire to give the nation stability and order, why have you not modified the plan since you learned there was opposition in Venezuela? This is because you have not believed us and as a result you are going to cause a revolution in the country whose consequences neither of us can calculate. If until now it has been easy to prove that the Liberator opposed a monarchy, it may not be so easy to do later. If it is judged that Venezuela is not worth much and will be oppressed by the weight of the other parts of the Republic, allow me to tell you that this is an incorrect judgment. Venezuela has war materials, more so than any other people in Colombia, and her state of poverty prepares her for revolution. After the latter has broken out here, opposition will reveal itself throughout all that territory and in that army on which you rely so securely. Ah! If you all would abate just a little, I could still expect good
fortune for the country.

Perhaps my friends are going to become angry with me as a result of my constant opposition to this project, but it shall be one of the many misfortunes I expect and which I shall endure in silence. You can be certain that I shall never be mutinous.

I am.

C. Soublette.

Señor Restrepo states that the Venezuelans were discontent with my administration during this period. He forgets that it was exactly at this time that they gave me the greatest proof of confidence and the greatest sign of affection that a citizen can receive. By their free and spontaneous will, the Venezuelans kept me at the head of the national party. When they constituted a new state into its political existence, they entrusted me with the direction of their interests and gave me all the authority I needed to defend them.

With reference to the ordinances I decreed for policing the nation, the results they produced answer the accusations made by the Granadine historian. What he calls "intruding into even the worker's most hidden hovel to prescribe regulations for him concerning the raising of his cattle and domestic animals," represented nothing more than the proper provisions for preserving some elements of the wealth of my

18See Restrepo, Revolución de la República de Colombia, IV, 200.
country.19 I understood the value of this wealth since I had been a shepherd in my early youth and chief of military operations in those areas where possession of these elements was of great interest to the Republic.

Regarding the meat trade where he presents me with a personal interest in the sale of young bulls from my farms, Restrepo errs in supposing me the owner of a sufficient number of heads of cattle to establish a monopoly at the time to which he refers.20 I remember that a merchant from Puerto Cabello committed the same error then, proposing deals to me which I could not accept because my pecuniary means could not satisfy his solicitations.

19Ibid. 20Ibid., 201.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES

I. Published Documents

Austria, José de. Historia Militar de Venezuela en la Guerra de su Independencia. Caracas, 1855.

Blanco, José Félix, and Ramón Azpurúa (eds.). Documentos para la historia de la vida pública del Libertador de Colombia, Perú y Bolivia por su orden cronológico, y con adiciones y notas que la ilustran. 14 vols. Caracas, 1875-1877.


Colección de documentos relativos a la vida pública del Libertador de Colombia y del Perú, Simón Bolívar, para servir a la historia de la independencia de Suramérica. 21 vols. Caracas, 1826-1846.


Clay, Henry. Spanish America: Observations on the Instructions Given by the President of the United States of America to the Representatives of that Republic, at the Congress Held at Panamá in 1826: On the conduct of Mr. Poinsett, Minister of the United States in Mexico; and Generally on Their Relations with Spanish America: With a Copy of the Instructions. London, 1829.

Larrazábal, Felipe. Vida y Correspondencia General del Libertador enriquecida con la inserción de los manifestos, mensajes, exposiciones, proclamas, &c. Publicados por el Héroe Colombiano desde 1810 hasta 1830. 2 vols. New York, 1887.


______. *Proclamas y Discursos del Libertador*. Caracas, 1939.


II. Diaries, Memoirs, and Travel Accounts


Decoudray Holstein, H. L. V. *Memoirs of Simón Bolívar, President Liberator of the Republic of Colombia, and of his Principal Generals. Secret History of the Revolution, and of the Events which preceded it from 1807 to the present time*. Boston, 1830.


Hippisley, Gustavus Butler. A Narrative of the Expedition to the Rivers Orinoco and Apure, in South America; which sailed from England in November 1817, and joined the Patriotic Forces in Venezuela and Caracas. London, 1819.


Páez, José Antonio. Autobiografía del General José Antonio Páez. 2 vols. New York, 1869.

Páez, Ramón. Wild Scenes in South America or Life in the Llanos of Venezuela. New York, 1862.


SECONDARY SOURCES

I. Biographies

Amunátegui, Miguel Luis. Vida de Andrés Bello. Santiago do Chile, 1882.


______.* Páez y la Independencia de Cuba.* Habana, 1959.


Robertson, William S. *Iturbide of Mexico.* Durham, 1952.


II. Histories


_____ *Tradiciones de mi Pueblo*. Caracas, 1954.


——. *Una Misión Diplomática Venezolana ante Napoleon en 1813*. Caracas, 1953.


Samper, José M. *Ensayo sobre las Revoluciones Políticas y la Condición Social de las Repúblicas Colombianas*. Paris, 1861.


Whitaker, Arthur Preston. *The United States and South America, the Northern Republics*. Cambridge, 1948.

——. *The United States and the Independence of Latin America, 1800-1830*. Baltimore, 1941.


III. Geography


III. Biographical Dictionaries, Encyclopedias


IV. Articles

Browning, Webster E. "Joseph Lancaster, James Thomson, and the Lancasterian System of Mutual Instruction, with Special Reference to Hispanic America," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, IV (February, 1921), 49-98.

VITA

Hilda Sánchez Krousel was born in Tampa, Florida on October 8, 1927. She graduated from Jefferson High School in 1945 and received the Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts degrees from Florida State University in 1949 and 1951. She began work on the Doctor of Philosophy degree at Louisiana State University in September, 1951. In September, 1953 she married Walter Richard Krousel, Jr., but still continued to take one course a semester. On May 31, 1956 her oldest child, Marlene María, was born. In May, 1957, however, Hilda Krousel took and passed the General Examinations for the Ph.D. In September of 1957 she went to California to join her husband, who was a Lieutenant in the United States Navy at this time. During the year and a half she was in California, she translated both volumes of Autobiografía del General José Antonio Páez.

In April of 1959 Hilda Krousel's family returned to Baton Rouge, Louisiana. September 9, 1959 marked the arrival of her oldest son, Walter Richard, III, and in February of 1960 she enrolled at Louisiana State University again and began the task of revising and editing the Autobiografía. She continued working until the arrival of her third child, Marie Antoinette, on May 5, 1961. By this time her graduate
committee had decided that, because of the extreme length of the Autobiografía, the translation and editing of one of the volumes of the Autobiografía would be sufficient to meet the requirements for the dissertation. Her fourth child, Karl Eric, was born on December 28, 1963; her fifth child, Elizabeth Ann, on October 13, 1965.

In September of 1967 Hilda Krousel enrolled at Louisiana State University again. Since then she has been working continuously on her dissertation. She is a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in January, 1970.
EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

Candidate:  Hilda Sanchez Krousel

Major Field:  History

Title of Thesis:  TRANSLATED AND ANNOTATED AUTOBIOGRAFIA DEL GENERAL JOSE ANTONIO PAEZ, VOLUME I

Approved:

Jane De Graumond  
Major Professor and Chairman

Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

Date of Examination:  December 16, 1969