CHAPTER X
THE PASSAGE OF THE ANDES AND THE BATTLE OF BOYACA, 1819

On the 27th February 1819 Bolivar set out once more for the Apure, after first sending Urdaneta to Margarita to take command of Colonel English's British troops, which were expected to arrive there, and to try, if possible, to land at La Guaira in order to operate against Caracas in Morillo's rear. On the 10th March, Bolivar was at Araguaquen, and, a few days later, on the right bank of the Arauca, where he joined Paez. Morillo had passed to the south of the Apure in the end of January. It was certainly a risky move, for the climate of these plains was sure to play havoc with his European troops, and, if he allowed himself to be detained there till the rainy season commenced in May, he was almost certain to be destroyed by the floods and consequent starvation. Still he moved forward, and on the 3rd April was close to the left bank of the Arauca, beyond which were Bolivar and Paez.

On this day Paez gained a notable success. Reckless as ever, he had crossed the river with 150 Llaneros. Morillo, seeing him retreating with the river behind him, made sure of exterminating him, and sent in pursuit 1000 cavalry, all he had. Paez continued to retreat till he had drawn the royalist horsemen well away from their infantry; then, utilising his intimate knowledge of the ground, which told him exactly where it was sound and
where marshy, he turned on his pursuers. Dividing his men into small bodies of twenty or thirty each, he attacked in several directions, utilising the marshy ground and inflicting very heavy loss on the Spaniards, who were driven back in confusion on Morillo. The action is known by the name of Queseras del Medio. Every survivor of it on Paez’s side was rewarded by Bolivar next day with the “Order of the Liberators.”

The rivers were now beginning to rise with the melting of the snows of the Eastern Cordilleras, and Morillo’s real difficulties began. Thinking the campaign must be over for the season in these parts, the Spaniard made his way back to Calabozo to find better quarters for his troops. But Bolivar, relieved of the pressure of Morillo, was about to execute a design which he had been contemplating for some time, namely the reconquest of the central and southern provinces of New Granada. The scheme was perhaps one of the best Bolivar ever designed; for its success would cut Morillo from the rich provinces which could supply him when the exhausted hill tract in the north of Venezuela should fail him. It was a large scheme, requiring much preparation, which had already been begun by the despatch, in August 1818, of Santander to the plains of Casanare. The Liberator’s first move was to march on Barinas, which had been uncovered by Morillo’s retreat to Calabozo. All went well till the Apure was reached, via Mantecal, about Nutrias. There it was found that the cavalry horses had been rendered practically useless by hard work, and a

1 Professor Bingham (“Caracas to Bogotá,” p. 97) places Queseras del Medio a little east of Guadalito. Codazzi’s map shows it a very long way farther east, south of Achaguas. The latter certainly seems the more probable locality, looking to Bolivar’s movements about this time. It seems as if there was some confusion with Mata de la Miel, an earlier victory of Paez, the field of which Codazzi shows almost exactly where Mr Bingham puts Queseras del Medio.

2 Supra, p. 209.
halt had to be made whilst Paez went to beat up fresh horses about Guadalito. Whilst halted at Cañafistolo, Bolivar received Santander's report of the state of affairs in New Granada. The country, goaded to desperation by the tyrannies of the Viceroy Sámano, was ripe for revolt. Santander had ingratiated himself with the Casanare people. At a council of war Bolivar expounded generally his idea of a march on Bogotá, which was not accepted by all the members. The army then marched back to Mantecal, whence, on the 25th May, Bolivar started for Guadalito. There he left Paez with 1000 cavalry to execute a movement on Cúcuta. This was designed to screen Bolivar's own movements from Morillo, as well as to prevent La Torre from retiring into New Granada, there to oppose Bolivar's own expedition. On the 4th June the Liberator commenced his march westwards, still concealing its destination, as far as possible, even from his own men; for he knew that the unknown terrors of a march through the great range of the Eastern Cordilleras would alarm the weaker spirits. But some general idea leaked out, and desertions became numerous. The Llaneros in particular, with their rooted aversion to leaving their own plains, abandoned the expedition in great numbers. Colonel Iribarren, one of the dissentients of the recent council of war, left with his squadron; so did Colonel Rangel, who was ill, taking his squadron with him. On the other hand, Rook, with the British Legion, vowed he would follow Bolivar to Cape Horn if required.

On the 11th June the Liberator was at Tame, where he was joined by Santander with the forces he had organised in Casanare. The whole expedition now counted some 2500 men.

Looking at the map, it seems but a small matter to march across the broad open plains which lie at the foot of the Eastern Cordilleras all about the head-
waters of the Apure, the Arauca, and other tributaries of the Orinoco. In the dry season, no doubt, it is comparatively easy; for, though the roads were, and still are, elementary in the extreme, the dead level of the country is only varied by slight elevations rising a few feet above it. Even the rivers, shrunk to mere brooks for the moment, are generally no serious obstacle. The country is a vast sheet of grass, broken only by scattered clumps of palms, and streaked with lines of forest trees marking the course of the innumerable rivers and streams. As for the roads, they are mere cattle tracks, rendered difficult only by the fact that the heat of the sun in a period of drought has left a hardened mould of every hoof mark and every rut worn when the mud was soft. But in the rainy season, from May to November, it is very different. The rivers and streams have overflowed their banks, and for the sea of grass has been substituted a sea of water, with islands representing the raised ground, and the lines of the water-courses still marked by the upper part of their fringe of trees. The roads have practically disappeared, and every petty stream has become a raging torrent. It was over such country that Bolivar's little army marched day after day. For a week on end the soldiers would be marching all day up to their knees, or even their waists, in water and soaked by the rain above. At night they camped on the nearest eminence where they could obtain, not dry ground indeed, but ground not covered deeply by water. Day after day they had to ford a dozen streams, or to swim or ferry themselves across in boats constructed of hides. Swimmers were always exposed to terrible risks from alligators, electric eels, and the dreaded "caribe" fish. The men, badly fed, were unable to find any shelter at night, and with difficulty kept their powder dry in the torrential rain. None suffered more than the English, ill suited as they
were to live on the small ration which kept the frugal Venezuelan alive and well. Bolivar, of necessity, shared all the hardships of his soldiers on equal terms.

The Mark Tapley of the expedition seems to have been Colonel Rook, commanding the English contingent. Nothing could damp his irrepressible good humour, and he was always satisfied, whatever the miseries and the discomforts.¹

Pore was reached on the 25th June, and here the ascent of the Cordilleras began, an ascent full of difficulties, which culminated after Paya was reached on the 27th. At Paya the first armed resistance was met with. Three hundred Spaniards, attempting to defend the place, were dislodged and driven back on Labranza Grande, on the ordinary road to Bogotá.² They expected to be followed thither, but Bolivar, fully aware of the immense defensive strength of the positions on the mountain road, had other designs. After a few days’ rest at Paya, during which he issued proclamations to the Granadians announcing his advent, which he could no longer conceal, he started again on the 2nd July. Instead of marching on Labranza

¹ O’Leary tells some amusing stories of Rook’s imperturbable acquiescence in the existing conditions. On one occasion he was very near fighting a duel with a friend who maintained that Bogotá was a finer city than Caracas. Neither of the disputants had seen either of these capitals, but Rook felt bound to defend the claims of the capital of the country in which he happened for the moment to be.

Later on, he was left behind at the foot of the Cordilleras as rearguard. When he rejoined Bolivar he reported, in reply to a question, that all was well with his corps, which had had quite a pleasant march through the awful gorges and over the freezing “paramo.” Anzoátegui, who was as pessimistic as Rook was optimistic, happening to be present, retorted that 25 per cent. of the men had perished in the march. Rook was quite ready with an answer. It was true, he said, but it was really a very good thing, for the men who had dropped out were all the wastrels and weaklings of the force.

² The general map in this part is not accurate. The enlarged sketch, which is taken from Codazzi’s atlas, should be consulted. It is more accurate.
Grande, he turned to his right by the track which led over the elevated and desolate Paramo de Pisba. So difficult was this route, rarely used even in dry weather, that the Spaniards never thought of guarding it, believing its passage by the army to be impossible. Road there was none in the ordinary sense of the word. The track which was followed was in many places blocked by fallen rocks or trees, over which the soldiers had to scramble as best they might. In other places the path had disappeared in a landslide. Every horse which had survived so far perished. Late in the night of the 2nd July the army bivouacked at the foot of the Paramo de Pisba. The unfortunate Venezuelans, hailing from a climate which is always warm and in the plains excessively hot, now found themselves, poorly clothed at the best, some of them almost naked, in even greater misery than before; for these “paramos,” at an elevation of 12,000 to 15,000 feet, only just below the line of eternal snow, are truly the abomination of desolation. Swept by an icy north-east wind, constantly enveloped in a chilly fog, almost devoid of animal life, and even of vegetation, except for a few stunted and distorted thorny plants of low orders, Dante, had he known them, would have described them as one of the infernal circles. Yet there was no retreating, and the weary, shivering men pushed on next day over the “paramo” itself. Many died from the effects of the freezing and rarified air. Flogging had to be resorted to, not for punishment, but to revive circulation in the failing bodies. There were even women enduring these hardships. O’Leary records that his attention was called to the case of a soldier’s wife who, in this awful desert, gave birth to a child, and yet marched on five miles on the same

1 Santander (“Apuntamientos para las memorias sobre Colombia,” p. 9) avers that Bolivar would have turned back but for the persuasion and arguments of himself and Anzoátegui.
day over this ghastly road. Ranks or order it was impossible to preserve as the troops toiled painfully through gorges where a hundred resolute men might have barred the way against the whole army. But no Spaniard was seen, for none supposed it possible the republicans could reach the uplands by this horrible pass.

On the 6th July they had descended beyond the “paramo” to Socha, only some 9000 feet above the sea, and all the horrors of the past days were almost forgotten in a climate where it is always spring, where the thermometer rarely rises to 70° Fahrenheit in the shade, and as rarely falls below 50°, where frost is almost unknown, and where, in the broad and fertile upland valleys, every crop of temperate climates can be grown irrespective of season. The army was in a terrible state. Not a horse was left, and the Llaneros were reduced to an unaccustomed mode of progression on their own legs. What stores had not been left

---

1 Some may think, as many have thought, that this account of the difficulties of the passage of the Andes is exaggerated. Fortunately there is now available the evidence of a witness who, holding this view, decided to test it. In the (English) Geographical Journal for October 1908, Professor Hiram Bingham describes how he and a friend followed the route of Bolivar’s march. He begins his article thus: “I had always felt that the difficulties of this march, which has been compared to those of Hannibal and Napoleon, had been greatly over-estimated.” He then describes the route, noting that he passed the plains of Casanare in the dry season instead of, like Bolivar, in the rains. It was only when he got into the mountains that he encountered the spring rainy season (March to May). (There are, it should be noted, only two seasons in the plains—May to November being rainy, the rest of the year dry. In the Andes of New Granada there are two wet seasons—March to May and September to November.) The last sentence of the article runs thus: “In regard to the difficulties of Bolivar’s famous march, we came to the conclusion that the half had not been told.”

Since that article appeared Professor Bingham has published a book, “The Journal of an Expedition across Venezuela and Colombia, 1906-1907,” giving a fuller account of his travels. He gives the height of the “paramo” of Pisha as about 13,000 feet. For brevity, the book is referred to in the notes as “Caracas to Bogotá.”
behind at Paya were almost all lost, for want of transport, in the passage of the "paramo." The cartridges had been kept dry with infinite difficulty, but the muskets were so rusty that the first operation was to get them reasonably clean. It had been essential to push over the "paramo" with the utmost rapidity before the movement could be discovered, and, therefore, much of the ammunition had been left at Paya to follow later with the British Legion, the men of which Bolivar described as half dead with their exertions.

At Socha the invaders were received with open arms, and supplied with food, tobacco, and country beer. Bolivar was all activity collecting supplies, arms, ammunition, horses, mules, and recruits. The class of recruit he got has already been described. Arrangements were made for bringing up what had been left at Paya, including the British Legion, and some of the stragglers dragged themselves in from the "paramo."

By the 7th July Bolivar was able to send out a cavalry patrol, which captured a small royalist detachment at Corrales, about half-way to Sogamoso. At the last-named town the Spanish commander, Colonel Barreyro, had some 1500 or 1600 troops commanding the main road from the plains by Labranza Grande, by which he had expected the republicans to arrive. Finding that he had been turned by the march over the "paramo" of Pisba, he now moved northwards to meet the invaders, who were moving southwards against him.

In another small advance-guard action at Corrales the royalists were again worsted, but their main body continued to advance, and had crossed the river Gameza when it encountered Santander's division. Barreyro

1 Not often saddles, however. The Llaneros, when they were again mounted, for the most part had to ride barebacked, until they were able to get saddles from the stores of the defeated Spaniards.

2 Supra, p. 146.
SIMON BOLIVAR

drew back over the Gameza to a strong position, the Peña de Topagá. Santander halted for the night at Tasco. Next morning Barreyro again advanced towards the Gameza, but fell back to his position of Topagá as soon as he encountered Santander. Bolivar ordered an attack upon the position before Barreyro could get up the reinforcements he was expecting from Bogotá and elsewhere. Barreyro's rearguard held on to the bridge of Gameza until they were forcibly dislodged, when the whole force took up a still stronger position at Molinos de Topagá. After fighting most of the day, the republicans fell back again. Santander was slightly wounded.

Barreyro was clearly not disposed to fight, for he was waiting for reinforcements from his rear, and, moreover, expected to hear of Morillo advancing by Cúcuta against the rear of the patriots; for he could not believe that Bolivar's march had been concealed from Morillo. The Liberator redoubled his efforts to draw to his standard the patriots who had taken refuge from the tyrannies of the Viceroy Sámano in various out-of-the-way places. Seeing that he could not force Barreyro out of his position, the Liberator marched to his right, towards Santa Rosa across the Chicamocha river, and occupied the fertile valley of Serinza. The move had had the desired effect of drawing Barreyro from his strong position at Topagá. Fearing to be turned and cut from Bogotá, he had followed Bolivar's westward march and taken up an equally strong position above the plain of Bonza.¹ He had now got in most of the local forces, and was prepared to accept battle.

On the 20th July Bolivar advanced over the plain but found the enemy's position too strong for attack. On the 22nd he was joined by Rook with the British Legion. On the 25th he repeated his manœuvre of a

¹ On the left bank of the upper Sogamoso (Chicamocha), a little east of Duitama.
march westwards towards Paipa. Barreyro followed the same direction, and, at Pantano de Vargas, was found on the hills facing the republicans, whose position was by no means favourable. Their right rested on the marsh ("pantano") of Vargas, but their left was dominated by heights, which Barreyro seized with one battalion, aiming at getting in rear of the patriots. Santander was easily driven off the heights. At the same time the Spaniards attacked Bolivar's centre with such vigour that the battalions "Rifles" and "Barcelona" gave way. The day seemed lost, when Bolivar sent Rook with the British Legion to recapture the heights on his left. This was gallantly carried out by the Englishmen. Simultaneously another vigorous attack was made in the centre by Barreyro, which was at first successful, but was repulsed by Bolivar's small reserve. At this critical moment the Liberator seized upon Colonel Rondon, commanding a squadron of Llaneros, and with the words, "Colonel, save the Fatherland!" launched him against the Spanish cavalry, who were driven back in disorder. The infantry, following up, completed the discomfiture of the royalists. Night put an end to the desperate and still doubtful combat. Defeat had been saved by the desperate valour of the British and of Rondon's Llaneros. Both forces fell back on their former positions.

1 Vargas, according to Professor Bingham's new book, is south of Duitama, beyond the upper Sogamoso (Chicamocha), on the road to Tunja via Toca. The marsh is on the right (west) of the road which runs close under hills on its left. When Bolivar crossed the river, Barreyro moved from Paipa to meet him on this road with 3800 men. The cavalry were on the plain, the infantry on the hills. "Caracas to Bogotá," p. 272.

2 Juan José Rondon, born in Caracas, 1790, served in the Spanish forces till 1817, when he joined Paez, and distinguished himself by gallantry in many actions, notably at Queseras del Medio, where he played a leading part. He died in 1822 from tetanus, supervening on a wound in the foot received in one of his fights under Paez.

3 Rook was badly wounded at Pantano de Vargas. Next day his arm had to be amputated. With his unperturbable equanimity he underwent the
Recruits now came in freely for the republican force, 800 being collected in a few days, and ammunition also arrived. On the 3rd August Bolivar again advanced, with the result that Barreyro evacuated Paipa, and retired to the heights commanding the road to Tunja. That night Bolivar encamped in front of the enemy. Next afternoon (4th) he marched off ostentatiously towards his old position on the plain of Bonza, but at nightfall suddenly counter-marched, crossed the river at Paipa, and marched for Tunja by the Toca road, leaving the enemy in position on his right rear. At 9 a.m. on the 5th he was at Civatá, and two hours later captured Tunja with the small garrison left in it. The governor had, in the early morning, marched north to join Barreyro with the "Numancia" battalion and three guns. All Bolivar's troops were in Tunja by 2 p.m., thus having placed themselves across Barreyro's communications with Bogotá.

It was only at dawn on the 5th that Barreyro discovered the real direction of the republican march. He at once set off along the main road to Bogotá, halting at 5 p.m. short of Combitá, and starting again at 8 p.m. At 6 a.m. on the 6th he was at Motavita, three or four miles north-west of Tunja, always watched and harassed by a detachment of Bolivar's dragoons.

At dawn on the 7th the republican scouts brought news that the enemy was marching on Samacá, and a personal reconnaissance by Bolivar revealed the fact that Barreyro was trying to regain the main road to the capital at Boyacá, and to pass by the bridge there. The republican force marched off in the same direction by the main road from Tunja.

At 2 p.m. Bolivar's cavalry came upon Barreyro's operation with some facetious remarks as to the beauty of the limb he was losing. He died a few days later, a victim, no doubt, to the very rough surgery of Bolivar's medical department. Before he went to South America he had served on the staff of the Prince of Orange at Waterloo.
advance-guard, just as it was nearing the bridge of Boyacá. The Spaniards, thinking they had only to do with some scouts, sent their chasseurs to drive them off the road, whilst the main body moved along it. But the rest of the republicans had hurried up, and the Spanish advance-guard found itself opposed to the whole of the patriot infantry. Driven back at first behind a wall, the Spaniards were presently forced across the bridge and took position beyond it, the rest of their force being still a mile and a half short of it.

Santander, on the patriot left, attacked the bridge, which was held by Barreyro's advance-guard, and, after a sharp fight, succeeded in capturing it. Meanwhile, the rest of Barreyro's force, cut off from its advance-guard by the stream, was attacked by the other republican troops. Anzoátegui charged the Spanish (European) cavalry on the right flank, which fled, abandoning the artillery. The infantry, which had fought bravely so far, was forced to retire to a second position further west. Here they were again attacked, whilst Santander, at the same time, passed the bridge and completed the rout of the advance-guard. The main body was now in a desperate situation, and the whole of it surrendered to Bolivar, except the cavalry and some others who had effected their escape. Barreyro had already been captured, and there fell into the hands of the victors Jimenez, his second in command, 1600 men, besides nearly all the officers, the artillery, and all the military stores. The republicans state their loss at only 13 killed and 53 wounded.¹

¹ It is extremely difficult to follow the exact movements in this battle and others, such as Pantano de Vargas and Carabobo, seeing that no plan of them has ever been published. Professor Bingham appears to have thoroughly studied these three fields in 1906-7, but until he publishes the plans he presumably made, the difficulty must continue to some extent. With regard to Boyacá, he says that the Spaniards were obliged by want of a guide to take the road to Bogotá by the bridge of Boyacá instead of that by Chiquinquirá.
Santander pursued the remnants of Barreyro's force as far as Venta Quemada on the road to Bogotá.

At Bogotá there was consternation in official quarters, but the news of the defeat of Boyacá only leaked out generally on the morning of the 9th August, when the Viceroy had already fled. Despite his great age, he managed to reach Honda, on the Magdalena, in twenty-four hours, a good three-days' riding for most people even nowadays. He was accompanied by the troops left behind by Barreyro, and by all the officials.

Bolivar entered the capital on the evening of the 10th August 1819, amidst the plaudits of the inhabitants. At Boyacá he had won his first really decisive victory, one which undoubtedly marked the final liberation of the Andean tracts of New Granada from Spanish dominion. The indomitable courage and determination which he showed in deciding on this bold stroke against Cundinamarca, the resolution with which he carried through his terrible march against all obstacles, are worthy of the highest praise. This was, perhaps, the first occasion on which he had, of his own motion, shown a broad strategical insight. He had promised, in his proclamation of August 1818, the rescue of New Granada. Unlikely of realization as it seemed when made, he had redeemed his promise. His success at Boyacá he owed largely to his British troops.

It is admitted by O'Leary that there was some looting and misappropriation of funds by so-called patriots in Bogotá, but Bolivar soon reduced the place to order. He had already, on arrival on the plateau of Bonza, appointed governors of the provinces of Pamplona and...
Socorro farther north. He now organised civil government in Bogotá, and was recognised by an assembly of the principal inhabitants as “Liberator of New Granada.” But military matters equally required attention. In order to raise the strength of his army, the Liberator enlisted all the South American prisoners taken at Boyacá. He sent Soublette 1 northwards with one force to occupy the Cúcuta valleys, where he had intended Paez to be. The Spanish commander, Calzada, had gone with the Bogotá garrison towards Popayan and the Quito frontier, whilst Sámano the Viceroy, on arrival at Honda, had embarked on the Magdalena for Cartagena. In pursuit of Calzada, Bolivar despatched another force to occupy Popayan and watch the Quito frontier. Colonel Cordova, 2 with 150 men, was ordered from Honda into the Central Cordilleras of Antioquia, to rouse the people of that province, the best in many ways of the population of New Granada.

On the 18th September, Bolivar enjoyed the triumphal entry into Bogotá which had been decreed to him along with his title of “Liberator of New Granada.” He passed from the north, down what are now the Camellon de las Nieves and the Calle de San Francisco, to the Cathedral in the Plaza Bolivar.

A provisional government was now established, with

1 Carlos Soublette was born at Caracas in the end of the eighteenth century. He was engaged in most of Bolivar’s campaigns up to 1819, when he was chief of the staff at Boyacá. His name will appear several times as Vice-President of Venezuela. Ducoudray-Holstein is particularly hostile to him, and tells many scandalous stories about him and his family, which may be taken for what they are worth. He joined Paez in the separation of Venezuela from the rest of Colombia. Was President in 1837-38, and died in 1870.

2 José María Cordova, born at Rio Negro in 1799, was already fighting for the republican cause at the age of fifteen. He fought in many battles with Paez as chief, and was with Bolivar at Pantano de Vargas and Boyacá, when he became colonel. His subsequent doings and death will be recorded in this volume.
Francisco de Paula Santander as Vice-President of New Granada. Before leaving Bogotá for the north, Bolivar proposed to Sámano an exchange of Barreyro and the other Spanish prisoners.

On the 20th September the Liberator left Bogotá in charge of Santander. Bolivar's back was scarcely turned when, on the 11th October, Santander had the unfortunate Barreyro and thirty-eight other Spanish officers publicly shot on the square in front of the Palace which the vice-president occupied. He himself was present on horseback at the execution, which was conducted with the greatest brutality and ignominy. The victims were gallant Spanish officers who had done their duty honourably, yet they were shot in the back like cowards or traitors. For this "cowardly and unnecessary crime," as O'Leary frankly styles it, there is no possible defence. That the Spaniards had shot patriots in the back in Cartagena, Bogotá, and elsewhere, is no excuse, nor can any weight be attached to Santander's defence, that there was danger from the presence of these unfortunate men in Bogotá, where they were in prison with no friends about them. Of this crime Bolivar is absolutely

---

1 Santander, as a native of the province, was extremely popular in New Granada. It will be remembered that he had formerly been a supporter of Castillo against Bolivar (supra, p. 90), and it will be seen in the sequel that the old enmity never really died out.

2 Larrazabal says that the round number of forty was made up by the addition of a Spanish civilian, who, on seeing the preparations for the execution, was rash enough to utter invectives against the republican government. Yet Larrazabal is quite inclined to plead extenuating circumstances for Santander. Probably he would have tried to whitewash Satan, had there been any reason to believe he was a South American patriot.

3 See his "Apuntamientos para las memorias sobre Colombia," p. 10.

4 O'Leary gives the following account of the execution. In the night of the 10th October, the prisoners were removed in chains from the houses in which they were confined to the cavalry quarters in the plaza, and late at night were informed of their fate. Next day at noon they were marched, heavily ironed, across the square where the benches had been set up for the execution. The unfortunate Barreyro handed a portrait of his fiancée to the
innocent. He had already sent to Sámano to propose the prisoners' exchange on equal terms, and he was much distressed when the news of the execution reached him. O'Leary adds that, "for the honour of the country it should be said that this measure of Santander was generally disapproved."

Bolivar was on his way back to Angostura, whence bad news reached him. He enjoyed an unbroken triumph as he passed northwards through Velez, Socorro, and Pamplona.

Let us see now what had been happening in Venezuela in his absence. Morillo had remained at Calabozo till the beginning of August, when he moved to Valencia, and, later, to Caracas, where he heard of the battle of Boyacá. Then he went to Tinaco and Barquisimeto, doing his best to conceal the bad news, and to spread reports of Canterac's successes in Peru, and of the great expedition then fitting out in Spain under O'Donnell. In Guayana the republican executive power, as we know, had been vested in Zea, a man of somewhat feeble character, though a scholar and a good writer. He, as a civilian, was looked down upon by the military leaders. There was a good deal of grumbling against him and the absent Bolivar, and presently, Zea himself tried to curry favour by turning against the Liberator. Aris-

officer in charge, begged him to give it to her brother. Then he, Jimenez, his second in command, and the others were led out in succession and shot in the back. "An ignominious death, certainly not deserved by a brave soldier who on the field of battle had always courageously exposed his breast to the bullets of the enemy." At this sickening scene Santander, mounted on his charger and surrounded by his staff, calmly looked on from in front of the Palace hard by. When all was over, he addressed a few words, "unbefitting the occasion," to the people, and then rode through the principal streets preceded by some musicians, and himself joining in the chorus of a song alluding to the tragedy which had just occurred. If this story is true, could anything be more disgraceful or more unworthy of a man in Santander's position? (O'Leary, i. 583.) These details are not given by Restrepo or Larrazabal. Let us hope O'Leary was misinformed.
mendi had been told by Bolivar before he left, to get 500 soldiers from Margarita. Even Arismendi's great influence in the island could only induce the brave Margaritans, fishermen mostly, to serve as sailors, but Zea was obstinate in insisting on having soldiers. Then disturbances began at Angostura, fomented by Arismendi and Gomez.

Mariño, meanwhile, had gained a considerable success at Cantaura. Instead of allowing him to reap the full fruits of his victory, Zea insisted on his coming to Angostura to sit in Congress. Not unnaturally, when Mariño arrived, he joined the party of Arismendi against Zea. There was a disturbance and interruption of Congress by a mob raising the cry of "Down with the Vice-President" (Zea). Zea resigned on the 14th September, and Arismendi was appointed in his place by the Congress, which fetched him from the prison into which he had been thrown. His first act was to appoint Mariño to the command of the "Army of the East." That general at once went off to supersede Urdaneta and Bermudez.

Arismendi did not govern so badly, but soon made himself unpopular by decreeing a State monopoly in hides, spirits, and tobacco. Then he went off to Maturin to organise the army.

Bolivar was at the Salt Mines of Chita, on the eastern slope of the Cordilleras, when he received this unwelcome news, as well as that regarding the executions in Bogotá, and that of the death of Anzoátegui, who had greatly distinguished himself at Boyacá. He had suddenly dropped dead at table.

The Liberator at once hastened his march for

---

1 José Antonio Anzoátegui, born at Barcelona (Venezuela) in 1789. He had been through the earlier wars, but, in 1815, left the army in consequence of the feud between Bolivar and Castillo. He rejoined the Liberator in Haiti, and was one of his most trusted lieutenants until his death at Pamplona on the 15th November 1819.
BOLIVAR REACHES ANGOSTURA

Angostura. Leaving Chita on the 20th November, and travelling by Casanare and Apure, he was in Angostura on the 11th December. There he was received with enthusiasm by the fickle people; for Arismendi had not yet returned from Maturin, though, as a matter of fact, he was already on the opposite bank of the great river. Thence he could see flags waving in Angostura, and hear the discharge of guns and the shouts. He flattered himself they were meant for him, and sent over an A.D.C., followed by two others. When none of them returned, he crossed over to Angostura, only to find that the welcome was for Bolivar, not for himself. Seeing the game was lost, Arismendi made his peace with Bolivar, and, on the 17th December, resigned his post of Vice-President. The Liberator said little to him or his friends, or those of Mariño, and took no action against them, though he spoke his mind freely to some of his own special dependants who had deserted him in his absence.

The Congress was now all subserviency to its returned master. The members all went out on the 14th December to meet him at the entrance of the chamber, brought him in, and invited him to address them.

After recounting his exploits in New Granada, he told them that the time had come to frame a solid and permanent base for the republic. Then Zea, as President of the Congress, made a speech full of the grossest flattery, in the end of which he urged the union of Venezuela, New Granada, and Quito in one republic. Bolivar replied with flattering remarks about his subordinate commanders in the recent campaign. Then Alzuru, a deputy who had been in the opposition when Bolivar was away, added his tribute to the merits of the Liberator. However bold they might be when Bolivar was far away, few at this period dared to oppose

'O'Leary, ii. 14.
him when he was on the spot. The conduct of Arismendi, Zea, and Alzuru is a good example of this. On the 17th December, Congress elected Bolivar President of Colombia (including Venezuela, New Granada, and Quito), Zea Vice-President of the Republic, Roscio Vice-President of Venezuela, and Santander of New Granada. The law for the incorporation of the three provinces had just been passed. As for Quito, the election of a vice-president was postponed until the province should be wrested from the Spaniards who still held it. At this time Bolivar was reconciled to Mariano Montilla, who had been his bitter opponent in the disputes with Castillo at Cartagena in 1815, and in the expedition from Haiti in 1816. Montilla was now sent, with the Irish Brigade of Devereux, to try and take Cartagena from Sámano.

1 Cf. supra, p. 219.