

liberty in 1783. Venezuela had suffered more from the oppression of the Spanish kings than any other of the colonies, chiefly because she produced little or nothing of value. From the other provinces the crown got gold and silver, which were the only products regarded worth exportation, but she yielded neither, and therefore, not being considered worthy of any attention, she was left to the mercy of the brutal and despotic governors sent from Madrid. In 1528 the entire colony was ceded by Charles V to the family of Belzares, merchants of Augsburg, the Rothschilds of that time, who had loaned him money. They, discovering that the king had swindled them, stripped the country of all that was valuable and then gave it as a prey to the agents they had placed in charge. The successor of Charles V. canceled the cession and once more established a colonial government, but the people of Venezuela were prohibited from engaging in commerce and were not allowed to use manufactured articles from any country but Spain. In 1748 an insurrection was raised by Juan Francisco de Leon, one of the most intelligent and wealthy of the planters of the country, but he was easily overcome, and although he managed to escape capture his family were made prisoners and sent to Spain, his buildings were razed to the ground, and his hacienda, the finest and most productive in all Venezuela, was sown with salt by orders of the governor.

PENALTY METED OUT TO A REBEL.

In 1781 there was a similar uprising simultaneous with that in Ecuador and Peru, when the natives attempted to overthrow their Spanish oppressors and restore Tupac-Amaru, the descendant of the ancient Incas, to the throne of his ancestors. But it was a failure and the unfortunate Amaru was sentenced to a punishment that makes one shudder. First his tongue was cut out and his ears were amputated: then he was led to the center of the plaza at Cuzco, where his wife and children were all butchered in the most horrible manner before his eyes. Ropes were then tied around his ankles and his wrists and attached to four horses, which were started slowly in opposite directions so that his body was gradually torn apart. The fragments were then gathered up and hung in the plaza as a warning to traitors to the Spanish crown.

Two years later Francisco Miranda, with the fate of Amaru still fresh in the public mind, attempted to revive the revolution, and it is not strange that he did not succeed. But he escaped arrest and fled to Europe. He visited France, Germany, Italy and Russia, spending two or three years at St. Petersburg, where he was distinguished by the favor of Catherine the Great and became one of the accepted lovers of that remarkable woman, the Cleopatra of modern times. He was a man of brilliant intellect, graceful presence, and fascinating manners, wrote poetry, was gifted

in music, and had other accomplishments which in those days made him a popular and a useful attaché of any court. But his motive in all his travels seems to have been patriotic, to excite the sympathy and obtain the assistance of the European powers to secure the independence of his country and the furtherance of his own ambition. Behind the gay manners of a courtier he endeavored to conceal the craft of a diplomatist, and while entertaining the monarchs and millionaires with his accomplishments he was striving to secure financial and military aid to promote his darling object.

DOCUMENTS LEFT BY MIRANDA.

After Miranda's death his papers were sold to the British government by his son Leandro, for a considerable sum of money in hand and a life pension of £200, and they are supposed to be still in the archives of the foreign office in London. Dr. Jose Maria Rojas, formerly of Caracas but now residing in Paris, where he some years ago purchased the title of marquis, was once allowed to examine these documents and obtain possession of many others, including a thousand or more letters written by Miranda to friends in Venezuela during his residence in Europe. With this material the marquis prepared a biography of Miranda, which has been printed in French and Spanish, and is a most entertaining work. The Rojas collection has been since purchased by the Venezuelan government, and will no doubt be published as the Bolivar papers have been.

Among these papers are some very curious and interesting evidences of Miranda's amours with the Empress of Russia, particularly his letters to friends at home, in which his adventures and daily life in the palace at Tsarskoe Selo and at the Hermitage in St. Petersburg are described at great length and detail. Their publication, if they are allowed to appear intact, will create a decided sensation. Among the papers in the British archives are a number of orders for money to be paid Miranda signed by Catherine and addressed to her chamberlain, which he appears never to have used.

A GLANCE AT MIRANDA'S LIBRARY.

In the museum at Caracas Miranda's library is preserved, and his literary taste and culture are shown by many manuscript notes and annotations which appear in his handwriting. They have also his sash, a fine piece of silk net, and a beautiful traveling desk of inlaid pearl which is said to have been presented him by his imperial mistress. These relics have been or are to be sent to the French exposition. Miranda left few descendants, and such as survive now live at Lima, Peru, where a grandson, a gentleman of considerable ability and notable wit, has made a reputation in literature and politics. A grandniece was only a few weeks ago murdered at Florence, Italy, by a discarded lover.

With all his diplomacy and wit and personal charms Miranda failed to interest Catherine in the welfare of his country, although she had

showed marked sympathy with the North American colonies in their struggle for independence, and had for this reason been sought by him. Either losing his patience or her favor, he left Russia and returned to France, where he participated actively in the French revolution and became a general of division. He was held responsible for the loss of the battle of Neerwinden, tried before a revolutionary tribunal for complicity in the treason of Dumouriez and acquitted, although he was deprived of his command and compelled to leave the country. After spending some years in England he returned to Venezuela, but received no encouragement in his revolutionary projects, and in 1803 sailed for France. But Napoleon, then first consul, expelled him from the country, and he sought refuge in the United States, where he was not cordially received because of his reputation as an adventurer. But he succeeded in exciting considerable sympathy and acquiring some funds, with which he organized a filibustering expedition and sailed for Venezuela, intending to drive out the Spanish authorities and establish a republic with himself as its head. He dreamed of a career like Washington's, but his enemies assert that Napoleon Bonaparte was his ideal, and that his ambition was not entirely unselfish.

HOT RECEPTION AT LA GUAYRA.

The Spanish authorities were, however, advised of his movements, and on the 25th of March, 1806, when he arrived off the town of Commare, half-way between the ports of La Guayra and Puerto Cabello, he was attacked by men-of-war, lost two of his three vessels and most of his troops and supplies, and narrowly escaped capture himself. The governor of Caracas, Don Manuel de Guerrara, offered a reward of \$30,000 for his arrest alive, and \$20,000 for his assassination, but he succeeded in reaching the English island of Trinidad, where he placed himself under the protection of Sir Admiral Alexander Cochrane, the commander of the British fleet. Six of the prisoners taken at Ocumare, citizens of the United States, were beheaded, ten were hanged, and the remainder were imprisoned in the dungeons at Puerto Cabello, Carthagena, and San Juan del Puerto Rico, from which they never escaped.

The English at this time were at war with Spain, and Sir Admiral Cochrane assisted Miranda in fitting out another expedition, with which he landed at Coro, on the Venezuelan coast, at the head of six hundred men, mostly Englishmen.

After capturing the city Miranda raised his standard and declared a republic, but he met with no sympathy or co-operation from the people, was compelled to retire, and sailed for Jamaica, where he appealed to the English governor for military assistance. The latter failing to respond, Miranda discharged his troops and sailed for London to lay his case before the king and his cabinet, but they had matters of