

in the Mother-country; and as certain symptoms of liberalism had been manifested by the creoles on more than one occasion, his policy was to crush all ideas of independence in the bud. Brought up as a soldier from his infancy, he was just the man to make himself obeyed, without troubling himself about the opinions of individuals or their private interests. One day, shortly after his arrival, a deputation waited upon him to complain of the severity of his proceedings. In reply to their observations he said:—

“ ‘It appears to me, *Senores*, that this fair city of yours has become a den of thieves. Why, there is no more security in this fortified capital against assassinations and robberies than in the humblest village in the island. *Valgame Dios!* not one of you dare walk the streets without being armed *cap-a-pie*, or followed by a band of armed slaves. Assassins walk about with impunity—even the churches are not exempt from scenes which disgrace civilisation and Christianity. Look out of this window and you will see banker’s clerks escorted by my soldiers. You, who are afraid to walk the streets in daylight, who barricade your houses at night, you have the courage to talk to me of severity. I tell you, gentlemen, before six months have elapsed, you shall hear no more of robberies nor assassinations!’

“ And he kept his word. The name of Tacon soon spread terror amongst delinquents. He arrested, judged, and executed, the malefactors. He showed no sympathy, no compassion for the guilty, whether they belonged to the aristocracy or to the plebeians. He remodelled society. He abolished the lottery societies which had proved the ruin of so many—he closed all the gambling houses (which circumstance greatly offended the aristocracy, who used to spend their time and their money in these hells); and finding that the public servants kept the revenue which was destined for the support of public offices, the prisons, and the repairing of the streets, he summoned the municipality into his so-much-dreaded presence.

“ ‘You continue to oppose my measures, gentlemen,’ said he; ‘you have even gone to the length of saying that my arm weighs heavily upon this island. I forgive this; it is the nature of spoiled children to complain. Your resistance is waste of time; and as I find that you are incapable of administering the funds which are placed under your charge, I shall withdraw them from your hands. The taxes levied for paving the streets, and lighting them at night, are not employed by you for these purposes. I shall see what *I* can do.’

“ That same day the funds were transferred to his hands. The aspect of the city then soon underwent a great change; the streets were macadamised, and ornamented with elegant lamps; dilapidated houses were pulled down to make room for market-places; he built a prison, which soon became the terror of malefactors; patrols and watchmen guarded the streets by night, and any person who could not give a satisfactory account of himself was arrested.

“ People clamoured against these arbitrary measures; but the more they complained, the greater became the General’s severity. What was he to do under such critical circumstances? Relax, when the results he