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# THE HISPANIC AMERICAN HISTORICAL REVIEW

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## THE CONFERENCE OF GUAYAQUIL

GERHARD MASUR\*

For the past ten years the controversy arising from the Conference of Guayaquil has raged with unabated violence among historians of the South-American Independence movement. Although, during the century following the conference, scholars and leading personalities close to the two protagonists in this drama had advanced different interpretations of the fateful event, there was, nevertheless, no marked instance of any impassioned stand on the part of historians.

The present controversy originated in 1940 with the publication of a book entitled *San Martín y Bolívar en la entrevista de Guayaquil a la luz de nuevos documentos definitivos*, written by the Argentine ambassador to Peru, Colombres Marmol.<sup>1</sup> Not only did the appearance of this work provoke a vehement protest from leading Venezuelan academicians, but it also aroused Bolivarian historians, especially Vicente Lecuna, to a concerted effort to destroy the foundations of Colombres Marmol's version of the meeting between San Martín and the Liberator. Lecuna denounced Colombres Marmol's four hundred pages as little more than a slanderous pamphlet concocted by its author for the glorification of San Martín and the villification of Bolívar.<sup>2</sup> Lecuna asserted that the entire documentary evidence which Colombres Marmol claimed to have unearthed and which he had called definitive, was an ill-executed forgery. Lecuna's opinion was confirmed by succeeding graphological studies of the letters under consideration, and most Latin-Americanists adhered to his view.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Buenos Aires, 1940.

<sup>2</sup> V. Lecuna "En defensa de Bolívar," *Boletín de la Academia Nacional de la Historia* (Caracas), No. 100, p. 3 ff. Of easier access today is Vicente Lecuna *La entrevista de Guayaquil* (Caracas, 1948), p. 39 (hereinafter cited as Lecuna, *Entrevista*).

<sup>3</sup> See the letters of W. S. Robertson, C. H. Haring, and others in Lecuna, *Entrevista*, pp. 193, 203.

But the discussion, once in progress, was not allowed to rest at this point. Lecuna undertook to develop his own ideas of what had really happened when Bolívar met San Martín in July, 1822, and it was here that today's vehement controversy was touched off. After disposing of Colombres Marmol in the summary fashion indicated above, Lecuna took as his next target the famous letter which San Martín was supposed to have written to Bolívar after his return to Lima on August 29, 1822. The letter was first published by the French captain, Gabriel Lafond, in his work, *Voyages dans les deux Amériques*.<sup>4</sup> This document, too, was declared part of the "propaganda contra Bolívar con documentos falsificados."<sup>5</sup> Dr. Cristóbal Mendoza, also of the Academy of History of Caracas, came out with a detailed study in which he endeavored to support Lecuna's surprising thesis.<sup>6</sup> As might have been expected, the uncompromising nature of this attack drew the Argentine historians to the field in an attempt to defend the founding father of the republics of Argentina, Chile, and Peru, and their own position on one of the most important issues of the whole Independence movement. While the Academy of History at Buenos Aires had accepted Lecuna's refutation of Colombres Marmol's hypothesis with good grace, it now embarked on a determined defense of the authenticity of the letter of August 29, 1822. Ricardo Levene published a pamphlet called *La carta de San Martín a Bolívar de 29 de agosto de 1822*.<sup>7</sup> The main thesis of Levene's work, which we shall scrutinize later in this article, is that the letter is not only authentic, but a fundamental document in both Argentine and American history. A year later, the Buenos Aires Academy published the sixth volume of the *Historia de la nación argentina*. Chapter IX of this work is dedicated to "La entrevista de Guayaquil," and was written by Ricardo Rojas, author of a biography of San Martín.<sup>8</sup> Rojas' study is the best documented investigation stemming from the Argentine point of view. It is thorough, comprehensive, and judicious, and its

<sup>4</sup> (2 vols., Paris, 1844), II, 138.

<sup>5</sup> Lecuna, *Entrevista*, p. 39.

<sup>6</sup> C. Mendoza "Informe sobre la carta apócrifa de Lafond" *Boletín de la Academia Nacional de la Historia* (Caracas), XXXI (1948), No. 121.

<sup>7</sup> Instituto Nacional San Martiniano (Buenos Aires, 1947).

<sup>8</sup> Ricardo Rojas, "La entrevista de Guayaquil," R. Levene, ed., *Historia de la nación argentina* (12 vols., Buenos Aires, 1948), VI, 579, 656. After the completion of this essay the author became acquainted with: Academia Nacional de la Historia (Buenos Aires), *La autenticidad de la carta de San Martín a Bolívar de 29 de agosto de 1822* (Buenos Aires, 1950), it contains essays by Argentine, Uruguayan, Paraguayan, and Chilean authors supporting Levene's position. Levene's article is reprinted in this volume.

arguments deserve careful examination. The latest contribution, by Tomás Diego Bernard, professor of San Martinian history at the University of La Plata, gives additional circumstantial evidence in support of the authenticity of the letter under consideration.<sup>9</sup>

In the meantime, the issue has become public domain, and has been debated passionately not only in Caracas and Buenos Aires, but throughout the Latin-American world. 1950 having been declared by the Argentine government "the year of the Liberator San Martín," the special congressional investigating commission in Buenos Aires deemed it timely to direct a blow against the printing establishment which had undertaken the publication of Vicente Lecuna's latest book on the controversy.<sup>10</sup> Lecuna's volume carries the subtitle, *Restablecimiento de la verdad histórica* and it seems questionable whether governmental procedure of this kind will either promote or obstruct the disclosure of historical truth. The net result of these various inquiries has been, therefore, a deadlock in which neither party seems willing to yield.

Unless new and conclusive documentary evidence, proving either the authenticity or the fraudulence of the letter, can be advanced by one side or the other, the only way to break the stalemate would seem to be a critical appraisal of all the material available which might throw new light on the problem. Since the issue at stake is fundamentally a question of the historical significance of Bolívar's meeting with San Martín, this essay will not be limited merely to the question of whether the letter of August 29 deserves praise or blame, but will review the circumstances in the broader perspective of their importance for the independence of the continent.

The name of San Martín first appears in Bolívar's correspondence after the former's victory at Chacabuco.<sup>11</sup> At this point San Martín's triumph strengthened Bolívar's faith in his enterprise to liberate New Granada. Two years later, after San Martín had landed in Peru, the Argentine sent Bolívar a message expressive of solidarity.<sup>12</sup> The Liberator answered in a letter replete with praise and admiration. After telling San Martín about his

<sup>9</sup> Tomás Diego Bernard, *Sobre la carta de Lafond de San Martín a Bolívar* (Buenos Aires' 1949.)

<sup>10</sup> *New York Times*, January 25, 1950.

<sup>11</sup> *Cartas del Libertador*, Vicente Lecuna, ed. (11 vols. Caracas and New York, 1929-1948) II, 51. Hereinafter cited as *Cartas*.

<sup>12</sup> Rojas, *op. cit.*, p. 583.

contemplated march to Quito, he concludes, "Bien pronto la divina Providencia que ha protegido hasta ahora los estandartes de la Ley y de la Libertad, nos reunirá en algún ángulo del Perú, después de haber pasado por sobre los troféos de los tiranos del mundo americano."<sup>13</sup> It is at this time, then, that a meeting of the two men is first visualized; at the end of all strife, they will meet in some Peruvian corner to rejoice over American Independence. But the fight was still on, and Bolívar utilized San Martín's successes to impress his own adversaries.<sup>14</sup> However, Bolívar's imagination had caught fire; the idea of meeting his Argentine brother-in-arms continued to occupy his mind. In the summer of 1821, while outlining his plans of operation to Santander, he writes:

Pero cuidado, amigo, que me tenga Vd. adelante 4 ó 5,000 hombres para que el Perú me dé dos hermanas de Boyacá y Carabobo. No iré, si la gloria no me ha de seguir, porque ya estoy en el caso de perder el camino de la vida, o de seguir siempre el de la gloria. El fruto de once años no lo quiero perder con una afrenta, ni quiero que San Martín me vea, sino es como corresponde al *hijo predilecto*.<sup>15</sup>

The psychological overtones of this letter do not need to be emphasized. Bolívar dreams of two victories in Peru like those won in Venezuela and New Granada; he is not willing to gamble away his glory, and he wants to appear before San Martín as the Chosen Son. Shortly afterward, when he again addresses himself to San Martín, his desire for glory is veiled under a cloud of incense, but may still be noted when he writes that, after the welfare of Colombia, nothing concerns him so much as the success of San Martín's arms. He reiterates his desire to meet the Argentine, and he adds: "Quiera el cielo que los servicios del ejército colombiano no sean necesarios a los pueblos del Perú."<sup>16</sup> Even as early as this, Bolívar had a premonition that both his services and those of the Colombian army might be required to complete Peruvian independence, but he preferred to clothe his apprehension in the diplomatic form of a wish that San Martín might be able to finish the job alone. Meanwhile, he dispatched one of his confidants, Colonel Diego Ybarra, to San Martín as *officier de liaison* and he suggested that the Chilean-Peruvian fleet should go to Panama to help in the final assault on Ecuador.<sup>17</sup> There

<sup>13</sup> *Cartas*, II, 298.

<sup>14</sup> *Cartas*, II, 322.

<sup>15</sup> *Cartas*, II, 374. The expression, "hijo predilecto," was coined by Santander himself; see Gerhard Masur *Simón Bolívar* (Albuquerque, 1948), p. 447.

<sup>16</sup> *Cartas*, II, 380.

<sup>17</sup> *Cartas*, II, 381, 382. See his letters to Lord Cochrane and Bernardo O'Higgins, *ibid.*

can be no doubt that San Martín's triumph spurred the Liberator to complete the emancipation of the continent.<sup>18</sup>

As Bolívar moved southward, practical considerations became daily more urgent, and the friendship, which so far had been merely theoretical, developed into a closer working relationship. The international situation—the danger of a reactionary victory in Mexico—forced Bolívar to appeal for military help, and he asked San Martín to send one battalion, composed of Colombians who were fighting under Argentine command, to Guayaquil.<sup>19</sup> Although San Martín was ready to accede to Bolívar's request, it was precisely the question of Guayaquil that produced the first embarrassment and tension between these two leaders of the independence movement.

When news of San Martín's landing in Peru in September of 1820 reached Guayaquil, the port had risen in rebellion against Spain. Bolívar had been quick to take advantage of this patriotic move to foster his own designs. In a statute of the republic of Colombia issued in 1819 by the Congress of Angostura, the department of Quito had been included in the boundaries of the new state.<sup>20</sup> Bolívar now hastened to advance claims to Guayaquil, the title to which he considered to be in harmony with the principles of international law professed by the revolution.<sup>21</sup> He promised the government of the city of Guayaquil his support, and sent Sucre to take care of the situation. His intention was to make Guayaquil the spring board of his campaign against the Spaniards in Ecuador, and he was, therefore, doubly interested in the fate of this vital stronghold on the Pacific.

Sucre's mission, however, met with obstacles which Bolívar could not easily have foreseen. Not only did the royalists hamper Sucre's activities, but the city government itself presented a fresh problem by declaring its desire for complete independence.<sup>22</sup> At the same time, San Martín's regard for the port had been quickened, and he hoped to incorporate it in the territory of Peru under his protectorate. Each of the three factions: that favoring independence, the group supporting the Colombian claims, and the one which preferred annexation to Peru, had its supporters among the inhabitants. San Martín took the opportunity to send two of his co-workers to spread propaganda in the interest

<sup>18</sup> *Cartas*, II, 392.

<sup>19</sup> *Cartas*, II, 411.

<sup>20</sup> S. B. O'Leary, ed., *Memorias del general O'Leary* (32 Vols., Caracas, 1883), XVII, 5-8.

<sup>21</sup> For this question, see the "Real Cédula" in Lecuna, *Entrevista*, pp. 102-105.

<sup>22</sup> Masur, *op. cit.*, p. 451.

of the Peruvian solution. He announced that he would oppose the Colombian claims by force of arms if the people of Guayaquil declared themselves either in favor of independence or of annexation to Peru.<sup>23</sup>

The fate of the port had thus become a bone of contention between the two liberators. At the end of the year 1821, the Colombian forces were more in need of support than was San Martín. Sucre, in his attempt to reach Quito, had suffered a severe reverse at Ambato in the autumn of 1821, and he approached San Martín with an appeal for military help, for the lack of which the whole of Ecuador might be lost.

San Martín consented to send an auxiliary division under the command of Colonel Andrés Santa Cruz, but an agreement was drawn up by which it was provided that Colombia would pay the expenses of the division and would also replace any casualties it might suffer. The so-called *división Santa Cruz* was composed of 1200 men, and the part it played in the campaign of 1822 became an important issue at the meeting of the two men.<sup>24</sup> In the meantime, although Bolívar certainly welcomed this military aid, he remained adamant on the question of Guayaquil. On January 2, 1822, he wrote to the government of Guayaquil: "Colombia no permitirá jamás que ninguna poder de América enzete su territorio."<sup>25</sup>

San Martín deeply resented Bolívar's attitude, and ordered Santa Cruz' contingent to return to Peruvian territory, using as a pretext a royalist threat against Lima. At the same time, he addressed Bolívar in a dignified but severe tone, stating that the destiny of border territories should be determined by the voluntary vote of the inhabitants. "Dejemos que Guayaquil consulte su destino y medite sus intereses para agregarse libremente a la sección que le convenga."<sup>26</sup> In Lima, even the possibility of declaring war against Colombia was entertained for a short time, although caution finally prevailed. Bolívar, on the other hand, decided on a policy of resolution and audacity. He wrote San Martín:

Yo no pienso como V. E. que el voto de una provincia debe ser consultado para constituir la soberanía nacional porque no son las partes

<sup>23</sup> *Documentos del archivo de San Martín* (12 vols., Buenos Aires, 1910-12) VII, 433

<sup>24</sup> Mitre: *Historia del general San Martín* (4 vols., Buenos Aires, 1890) III, 559.

<sup>25</sup> O'Leary, *op. cit.*, XIX, 112.

<sup>26</sup> Lima, March 3, 1822, Lecuna, *Entrevista*, pp. 119-120.

sino el todo del pueblo el que delibera en las asambleas generales reunidas libre y legitimamente.<sup>27</sup>

He drew a sombre picture of the anarchy prevailing in Guayaquil. However, although he did not promise a plebiscite, he consented to ask for the general opinion in the port. "No es el interés de una pequeña provincia lo que puede turbar la marcha majestuosa de América meridional."<sup>28</sup>

In point of fact, the interests of a small province had not deferred the majestic steps of the independence movement. Sucre had persuaded Santa Cruz to disregard San Martín's orders, and the Peruvian division had remained in Ecuador. In May of 1822 it had made a contribution to the final victory at Pichincha. Bolívar's military and political situation was fundamentally changed by the conquest of Ecuador.

Some days after Bolívar's triumphal march into Quito he again addressed the Protector in a formal expression of gratitude for the services rendered by the Peruvian forces. He promised to give equal or greater help to San Martín in his endeavor to expel the Spaniards from American soil.

Tengo la mayor satisfacción en anunciar a V. E. que la guerra de Colombia está terminada, que su ejército está pronto para marchar donde quiera que sus hermanos lo llamen, y muy particularmente a la patria de nuestros vecinos del Sur.<sup>29</sup>

Bolívar was not unmindful of the part played by the *división* Santa Cruz, and he bestowed high honors on the commander and his men. He ordered the promised replacement of casualties suffered by Santa Cruz, taking war prisoners for this purpose as was commonly done at that time. Bolívar took care that it should not be said he was less generous than his neighbors.<sup>30</sup>

But Bolívar's gesture was merely a point of honor, and did not for a moment signify that his political plans had been altered; on the contrary. After pondering the issue for some days, he decided to forge ahead and bring about the annexation of Guayaquil. He relied on the legality of Colombia's claims, and also on the attitude of the population, which he believed was veering toward Colombia after the victory at Pichincha, but he did not hesitate to take advantage of his military superiority. He or-

<sup>27</sup> A. M. Candiotti, "Una comunicación del Libertador," *Boletín de Historia y Antigüedades* (Bogotá), XXVIII, 107; O'Leary, *op. cit.*, XIX, 318.

<sup>28</sup> *Cartas*, III, 50-52.

<sup>29</sup> *Cartas*, III, 42.

<sup>30</sup> *Cartas*, III, 48, 54.



dered the triumphant army of Pichincha to march to Guayaquil, and on July 11, with his guard close at his heels, he entered the city himself.<sup>31</sup> Since he had been apprehensive lest the Peruvian division might anticipate his move, he had delayed and diverted its march, and now, in order to avoid a possible clash between his own men, the Peruvian division, and the population of Guayaquil, he sent Santa Cruz to a small island, La Puna, at the mouth of the Guayaquil river, there to wait until the time of his departure for Peru.<sup>32</sup> Thus, Bolívar had taken a practically unassailable position and could await San Martín's next move in tranquillity since he knew that their meeting was about to take place. We have already noted the firm tone he had adopted when he acquainted San Martín of his decision to take possession of Guayaquil, but he had also made it clear that he desired to meet the Protector of Peru. On June 22, 1822, he wrote San Martín, "La entrevista que V.E. se ha servido ofrecirme yo la deseo con mortal impaciencia, y la espero con tanta seguridad, como ofrecida por V.E."<sup>33</sup>

It seems logical to pause at this point and to consider just what San Martín expected from a meeting with Bolívar. In my opinion, San Martín, previous to 1821, anticipated nothing more from a meeting with Bolívar than the opportunity of making the acquaintance of an important contemporary who was striving for aims similar to his own. Before 1821 he would not have given political and military significance to, nor expected important consequences to be derived from, any personal contact with Bolívar. However, when he became Protector of Peru and when Lima and El Callao were occupied by his army in September of 1821, he faced a different situation. He had not been able to destroy Spanish power in Peru, nor had he been able to accelerate operations toward a speedy termination of the war. The Spanish viceroy maintained his stronghold in the Peruvian sierra and was able to concentrate an army numerically superior to that of the Independents. On the other hand, Bolívar's move toward Ecuador—well under way by the fall of 1821—had brought the two revolutionary movements within reach of each other. The threads of their destinies had become intertwined in Guayaquil where they strove for a dividing line between the Colombian and the Peruvian-Argentine demands for hegemony.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>31</sup> O'Leary, *op. cit.* (*Narración*), II, 151.

<sup>32</sup> T. C. Mosquera *Memorias sobre la vida del General Simón Bolívar* (Bogotá, 1940), p. 452.

<sup>33</sup> *Cartas*, III, 52.

<sup>34</sup> Mitre, *op. cit.*, III, 542, 576-77. Masur, *op. cit.*, p. 465.

The situation confronting San Martín forced him into a contingent and expectant attitude. Since his own forces did not seem strong enough to destroy the royalist power, he decided to approach the Guayaquil problem from a diplomatic angle and to support Bolívar's conquest of Ecuador. It seems apparent that he pinned his hopes on a future combination of operations with the Colombian army. A meeting with Bolívar would offer him the opportunity of discussing the problems pending between the two power blocs and of coming to some agreement on a plan of action. In August of 1821, therefore, he had ordered from the northern province of Trujillo the drafting of the Santa Cruz division.<sup>35</sup> Time was an important element in San Martín's game, but, as far as Peru was concerned, he found himself reduced to a state of military passivity, and the lack of action did not fail to undermine his prestige with the public and his authority with the army. The army's position was indeed abnormal; it had come to Peru as an army of liberation, but circumstances had very nearly converted it into an army of occupation. Composed of four heterogeneous national elements—Argentine, Chilean, Peruvian, and Colombian—with an additional sprinkling of European officers, it could hardly enjoy much stability. Moreover, San Martín's misunderstanding with Lord Cochrane, commander of the fleet, seemed to indicate a break between the two. High ranking officers were found guilty of plotting against the authority and the life of the Protector, and although an uprising was averted, San Martín's heart was lacerated by so much ingratitude and treachery.<sup>36</sup> While the façade of military unity was cracking, the political scene was actually exploding with discord. San Martín began to doubt whether it was possible to "erigir estos países en repúblicas," as he stated in a confidential letter to O'Higgins. Since 1821, at least, San Martín had favored the creation of monarchies administered by European princes for the South American countries. His co-worker, Monteagudo, now founded the "Patriotic Society of Lima" as a means of "selling" this idea to the Peruvian people. It is very likely that San Martín thought this solution would serve a two-fold purpose: a ready acceptance by the aristocracy of Lima, and a step toward international recognition by the European powers. Diplomatic missions sailed for Europe, but neither did they accomplish their aim, nor did San

<sup>35</sup> Leopold R. Ornstein, "La guerra terrestre y la acción continental de la revolución argentina," *Historia de nación argentina*, VI, 510-511.

<sup>36</sup> Ornstein, *loc. cit.*, p. 512. M. T. Paz Soldán, *Historia del Perú independiente* (2 vols., Lima, 1868-74) I, 225.

Martin's stock rise in public opinion. The situation between Spaniards and Independents in Peru at the end of 1821 may very well be termed a stalemate, except that the impasse favored the Viceroy more than the Protector, since the former could, during the period of inactivity, draw on the Indian reserve of man-power and thus constantly increase his army.<sup>37</sup>

Quick and close coöperation with the Colombian forces seemed, therefore the only way out of the dilemma. San Martín had not been able to profit by his Peruvian conquest, militarily speaking. A few contingents and some guerilla forces were all he had been capable of mustering. Since the Argentine army had given ominous indications of disintegration, it was logical for him to expect a solution by coöperation with Colombia.

Thus, the meeting with Bolívar had gradually developed into an issue of the highest political significance. San Martín prepared for his conference with the Liberator by promising to summon a Peruvian congress which should decide the highly controversial question of governmental structure. He delegated his powers to the Marqués de Torre Tagle on January 19, 1822, and three weeks later he set sail for his meeting with Bolívar in Guayaquil. In the preamble of his decree announcing the change in government, he writes,

... la causa del continente americano . . . exigió que me encargase del ejercicio de la autoridad suprema, y me sometí con zelo a este convencimiento: hoy me llama a realizar un designio cuya contemplación alhaga (*sic*) mis más caras esperanzas: voy a encontrar en Guayaquil al libertador de Colombia: los intereses generales de ambos estados, la enérgica terminación de la guerra que sostenemos y la estabilidad del destino a que con rapidez se acerca la América, hacen nuestra entrevista necesaria, ya que el orden de los acontecimientos nos ha constituido en alto grado responsables del éxito de esta sublime empresa.<sup>38</sup>

Specifically, these words meant that San Martín wanted (1) to discuss Guayaquil (los intereses generales del Perú y Colombia) (2) the war in Ecuador and Peru (la enérgica terminación de la guerra) and (3) the problem of state government (la estabilidad del destino). He saw himself and Bolívar as the arbiters of South America's destiny. These were the matters of greatest import to San Martín in February of 1822, and it is well to keep them in mind as we view his subsequent line of conduct.

<sup>37</sup> Ornstein, *op. cit.*, pp. 514-515.

<sup>38</sup> Mitre, *op. cit.*, III, 610. *Gaceta del Gobierno* (Lima) (No. 6), January 19, 1822.

The projected meeting did not, however, take place at this time. Instead of joining Sucre in Guayaquil as he had planned, Bolívar was forced to take the inland road and fight the Spaniards for the possession of Pasto. It is a matter of controversy among historians whether San Martín, already on his way to Guayaquil to join the Liberator, learned of Bolívar's new destination and therefore returned to Lima, or whether other motives prompted him to cancel the interview. Lecuna, in his most recent publication, ventures the thesis that San Martín did not undertake this first trip to Guayaquil with the idea of meeting the Liberator. He believes that it was instead a well calculated maneuver to speed the annexation by Peru of the coveted port. He further asserts that San Martín dropped his plan to visit the city, not because Bolívar had changed the route of his advance, but because San Martín acted under the assumption that the Liberator was about to arrive in Guayaquil accompanied by the bulk of his army.<sup>39</sup>

In the light of the clear evidence contained in San Martín's proclamation of January 12 it seems impossible to deny that the Argentine general sincerely hoped to meet Bolívar in Guayaquil. He had been informed that Bolívar would arrive there before many days, and there does not exist a single document emanating from or influenced by San Martín to invalidate his statement: "Voy a encontrar en Guayaquil al Libertador de Colombia."

The problem of why the Protector interrupted his voyage on February 22, at Huanchaco, port of the Peruvian city of Trujillo, is a different matter. Lecuna argues that it was here that San Martín learned of Bolívar's energetic defense of Colombia's claim of January 2, together with other alarming news sent him by the municipal government of Guayaquil. This may well be, but he may also have heard about Bolívar's new plan of campaign directed toward Pasto. In reality, both Bolívar's note concerning the political status of Guayaquil and his design to take the inland road were conceived between January 2 and 7, 1822. There is no logical reason to think that only one part of this information would have reached San Martín in Huanchaco.<sup>39a</sup>

In any case, the Protector returned to Lima during the first days of March. Apparently under the influence of Bolívar's firm

<sup>39</sup> V. Lecuna: *Crónica razonada de las guerras de Bolívar* (3 vols., New York, 1950), III, 166-169. Camilo Destrugé: *La entrevista de Bolívar y San Martín* (Guayaquil, 1918), pp. 44-45, had previously maintained the same thesis.

<sup>39a</sup> See also Sucre's opinion: "Sé que al general San Martín le sentó muy mal la venida del General (Bolívar), no obstante se embarcó y vino a recibirlo a Guayaquil. En Trujillo supo que no venía y se devolvió a Lima." Quoted by Lecuna, *ibid.*, III, 170.

and aggressive policy, San Martín issued the hostile order which called the Santa Cruz division back to Lima, and considered even more far-reaching steps to check the Liberator's scheme. However, all of these moves were soon abandoned.

Between March and July the situation, at least from the Protector's viewpoint, took a turn for the worse. The problem of Guayaquil had proved thornier than he had expected, and, in addition, one of his divisions was completely destroyed at Macacona. This defeat made a meeting with Bolívar even more urgent. San Martín felt that immediate and decisive action against the Spaniards was now imperative. He reassumed the supreme military command, leaving Torre Tagle in charge of political affairs.

San Martín set to work on a blueprint of military operations for the near future. According to this program the bulk of his army was to go to the so-called *puertos intermedios* taking as their goal the conquest of Arequipa and Cuzco, thus driving a wedge into the Spanish forces in the Sierra which would eventually result in the acquisition of upper Peru. At the same time San Martín hoped he would be able to use the Santa Cruz division, now free of other duties, to outflank the royalist position in the north. He expected Argentina and Chile to coöperate in this plan. Of course the capital, Lima, would have to be protected against surprise attack by a strong garrison. But many unknown elements were inherent in this apparently simple plan. The rugged terrain, the enormous distances, the lack of communications, made it very difficult to synchronize the strategic moves in proper sequence. San Martín's resources would of necessity be spread very thin, and it was by no means sure that he could count on effective support from Argentina and Chile.<sup>40</sup> And what could he expect from Bolívar? When San Martín had first received the news of Pichincha he had asked Sucre to return the division Santa Cruz "con otra de 1500 o 2000 bravos colombianos para terminar la guerra de America."<sup>41</sup> But when he had received Bolívar's letters of June 17 and June 22, which we have analyzed above, he must have changed his mind. Bolívar had reiterated his desire to meet the Protector, and he had expressed his readiness to lead his army into Peru. In his precarious military and political situation San Martín seized the proffered opportunity. "Los triunfos

<sup>40</sup> L. Ornstein, *op. cit.*, pp. 524-525. Actually O'Higgins told San Martín that he would send a battalion if he had anything that deserved this name. Argentina, or rather the governors of Córdoba and San Juan, promised 500 men by the end of the year.

<sup>41</sup> Lecuna, *Entrevista*, p. 206.

de Bomboná y Pichincha han puesto el sello de la unión de Colombia y del Perú. *El Perú es el único campo de batalla que queda en America y en el deben reunirse los que quieran obtener los honores del último triunfo contra los que ya han sido vencidos en todo el continente. Acepto su generosa oferta. El Perú recibirá con entusiasmo y gratitud todas las tropas de que V.E. pueda disponer a fin de acelerar la campaña y no dejar el mayor influjo a las vicisitudes de la fortuna . . .*<sup>42</sup> Es preciso combinar en grande las intereses que nos han confiado los pueblos, para que una sólida y estable prosperidad les haga conocer el beneficio de su independencia . . . Marcharé a saludar a V.E. a Quito. Mi alma se llena de gozo cuando contemplo aquel momento. Nos veremos, y presiento que la America no olvidará el día que nos abracemos."<sup>43</sup> This letter, dated July 13, 1822, is San Martín's last communication before he sets out to meet Bolívar, and this writer is inclined to attribute great importance both to its tone and to its phraseology. One has but to compare it with his earlier letters to see clearly the change wrought in him by Bolívar's triumph in Ecuador and by the Liberator's offer to lead his army to the last remaining battlefield, the battlefield of Peru. San Martín accepts the offer; he will leave nothing to the hazards of fortune. He speaks of great combinations which would enable the people of South America to enjoy in solid and stable prosperity the fruits of independence.

There is an ominous omission of the question of Guayaquil in this letter. How can it be explained? Had San Martín decided to forego his claim? This cannot be assumed. He believed Bolívar to be still in Quito. Already the Peruvian fleet, under pretext of receiving the returning soldiers of Santa Cruz, had been ordered to the port of Guayaquil. Now San Martín plans to appear himself in Guayaquil. Without any doubt, both moves were made with the intention of influencing the inhabitants of the city to vote either for independence or for annexation by Peru. A success of this kind in Guayaquil might have, he could have argued, wholesome effects on the internal situation in Peru. But San Martín did not go so far as to attempt annexation by force. If he had intended such a move he would have ordered Santa Cruz to march into Guayaquil. Instead he had left the division under Sucre's command, and Sucre, acting under orders from Bolívar, had made sure that Santa Cruz could not interfere with the Liber-

<sup>42</sup> The italics are mine. G. Masur.

<sup>43</sup> Mitre, *op. cit.*, III, 613; O'Leary, *op. cit.*, XIX, 335.

ator's scheme.<sup>44</sup> Thus, Bolívar had frustrated in advance part of San Martín's plans. A certain question arises here, however: Is it possible that San Martín could have expected Bolívar to accept such an encroachment on the declared rights of Colombia, and still be willing to support him wholeheartedly? The explanation of this apparent incongruity lies, I believe, in the character of San Martín. The Protector was primarily neither statesman nor politician; he was a soldier, and he viewed political problems with an objective eye looking for the best solution. He was likely to forget, however, that, in the realm of foreign policy, the best solutions are frequently altered by the catalytic agency of personal influence, the centrality of power and imponderables. His program for the meeting with the Liberator was contradictory and he went to it without a single trump card up his sleeve.<sup>45</sup> He must have had a presentiment of failure, however, because, prior to his departure, he drew up a summons for the convening of the Peruvian Congress, and he left behind a sealed envelope containing his resignation of the position of Protector.<sup>46</sup>

The situation which greeted San Martín on his arrival in Guayaquil was substantially different from what he had expected. Bolívar was not in Quito, but on the coast, and he had solved the problem of Guayaquil as Alexander had cut the Gordian knot. San Martín was momentarily overwhelmed by this reversal and he refused to disembark. But Bolívar, in an intimate letter, urged him not to cancel his plans, and after some hesitation San Martín regained his composure and went ashore.<sup>47</sup>

The meeting, or rather the meetings, took place on July 26 and 27. The first day's conversation was short. On the 27th the two men deliberated for four hours behind closed doors. Let us now examine the documentary evidence in order to establish as accurately as possible a satisfactory record of the matters discussed.

The material stemming from Bolívar's side should be mentioned first. Here the sources are copious; the original letters are extant and are beyond dispute. They include the following

<sup>44</sup> Most historians have overlooked the fact that San Martín left the Peruvian division under Sucre's command. See Sucre's letter to Tomas Guido, Peruvian minister of war, of June 22, 1822 (*Gaceta del Gobierno*, [Lima] July 27, 1822), Sucre writes: "Me es altamente satisfactorio reiterar al supremo gobierno del Perú, mi expresivo reconocimiento a la disposición que V.S.I. me comunica, de que la división auxiliar que manda el Sr. Coronel Santa Cruz quede a mis ordenes, mientras lo juzgue necesario el Libertador, &."

<sup>45</sup> The above analysis is a slight modification of opinions previously expressed by me. See Masur, *op. cit.*, p. 477.

<sup>46</sup> *Cartas*, III, 61-62.

<sup>47</sup> *Cartas*, III, 56-57; Lecuna, *Entrevista*, p. 218.

documents: two secret reports about the meeting which Bolívar's secretary-general sent to the government in Bogotá and to Sucre respectively, dated July 29; two personal letters from Bolívar to Santander, vice-president of Colombia, dated July 29 and August 3. To these pieces of primordial importance, later occasional references to Bolívar's impressions of the meeting must be added.<sup>48</sup>

Our information from San Martín's side is more spotty, and for good reasons. There is first San Martín's proclamation on his return to Lima.<sup>49</sup> In addition, we have the debated letter of August 29; a letter to Guido of December 18, 1826;<sup>50</sup> a letter to Miller, of April 19, 1827,<sup>51</sup> and, finally, a letter of September 11, 1848, to Ramón Castilla, at that time president of Peru.<sup>52</sup> To these sources it is necessary to add the version, based on San Martín's own words, given by Tomás Guido, intimate collaborator of San Martín.<sup>53</sup> Secondary material, such as the articles by Alberdi and Sarmiento, may be used with proper caution.<sup>54</sup>

The letter of August, written only a month after the event in question, is undoubtedly the most important document from San Martín's side. The arguments brought against its authenticity are: (1) the original manuscript has not yet been found, (2) it was published twenty-two years after it was written, and (3) it has not been clearly established how Lafond came into possession of the letter, that is, whether he received it from one of Bolívar's aides or directly from San Martín.<sup>55</sup> But this uncertainty does not seem in itself sufficient to discredit the letter. Similar charges can be preferred against many a famous South American document; take, for instance, Bolívar's "Carta de Jamaica." We are, therefore, obliged to submit the letter to further examination to determine its credibility, and it seems expedient at this point to present the document in full, in order that text and analysis may be clearly followed.

Lima, 29 de agosto de 1822.

Excmo. Señor Libertador de Colombia, Simón Bolívar.

Querido General:

Dije a usted en mi última, de 23 del corriente, que habiendo reasumido el mando supremo de esta república, con el fin de separar de él al débil e

<sup>48</sup> *Cartas*, XI, 221-231; III, 56 ff.

<sup>49</sup> *Gazeta del Gobierno* (Lima) No. 18, August 24, 1822.

<sup>50</sup> *Documentos del archivo de San Martín*, VI, 502.

<sup>51</sup> *San Martín, su correspondencia* (Buenos Aires, 1911), p. 66.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71.

<sup>53</sup> T. Guido, *San Martín y la gran epopeya* (Buenos Aires, 1936), pp. 232-243. First published in *Revista de Buenos Aires*, IV, 5.

<sup>4</sup> Rojas, *op. cit.*, pp. 650-651.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 615.



inepto Torre Tagle, las atenciones que me rodeaban en aquel momento no me permitían escribirle con la extensión que deseaba; ahora al verificarlo, no sólo lo haré con la franqueza de mi carácter, sino con la que exigen los grandes intereses de la América.

Los resultados de nuestra entrevista no han sido los que me prometía para la pronta terminación de la guerra. Desgraciadamente, yo estoy íntimamente convencido, o que no ha creído sincero mi ofrecimiento de servir bajo sus órdenes con las fuerzas de mi mando, o que mi persona le es embarazosa. Las razones que usted me expuso, de que su delicadeza no le permitiría jamás mandarme, y que, aun en el caso de que esta dificultad pudiese ser vencida, estaba seguro que el congreso de Colombia no consentiría su separación de la República, permítame general le diga, no me han parecido plausibles. La primera se refuta por sí misma. En cuanto a la segunda, estoy muy persuadido, que la menor manifestación suya al congreso sería acogida con unánime aprobación cuando se trata de finalizar la lucha en que estamos empeñados, con la cooperación de usted y la del ejército de su mando; y que el alto honor de ponerle término refluirá tanto sobre usted como sobre la república que preside.

No se haga V. ilusión, general. Las noticias que tiene de las fuerzas realistas son equivocadas; ellas montan en el Alto y Bajo Perú a mas de 19,000 veteranos, que pueden reunirse en el espacio de dos meses. El ejército patriota diezmado por las enfermedades, no podrá poner en línea de batalla sino 8,500 hombres, y de éstos, una gran parte reclutas. La división del general Santa Cruz (cuyas bajas según me escribe este general, no han sido reemplazadas, a pesar de sus reclamaciones) en su dilatada marcha por tierra, debe experimentar una pérdida considerable, y nada podrá emprender en la presente campaña. La división de 1,400 colombianos que V. envía será necesaria para mantener la guarnición del Callao, y el orden de Lima. Por consiguiente, sin el apoyo del ejército de su mando, la operación que se prepara por puertos intermedios no podrá conseguir las ventajas que debían esperarse, si fuerzas poderosas no llamarán la atención del enemigo por otra parte, y así la lucha se prolongará por un tiempo indefinido. Digo indefinido porque estoy íntimamente convencido, que sean cuales fueren las vicisitudes de la presente guerra, la independencia de la América es irrevocable; pero también lo estoy, de que su prolongación causará la ruina de sus pueblos, y es un deber sagrado para los hombres a quienes están confiados sus destinos, evitar la continuación de tamaños males.

En fin, general; mi partido está irrevocablemente tomado. Para el 20 del mes entrante he convocado el primer congreso del Perú, y al día siguiente de su instalación me embarcaré para Chile, convencido de que mi presencia es el solo obstáculo que le impide a usted venir al Perú con el ejército de su mando. Para mí hubiese sido el colmo de la felici-

dad, terminar la guerra de la independencia bajo las órdenes de un general a quién la América debe su libertad. El destino lo dispone de otro modo, y es preciso conformarse.

No dudando que después de mi salida del Perú, el gobierno que se establezca reclamará la activa cooperación de Colombia, y que usted no podrá negarse a tan justa exigencia, remitiré a usted una nota de todos los jefes cuya conducta militar y privada puede ser a usted de alguna utilidad su conocimiento.

El general Arenales quedará encargado del mando de las fuerzas argentinas. Su honradez, coraje y conocimientos, estoy seguro lo harán acreedor a que usted le dispense toda consideración.

Nada diré a usted sobre la reunión de Guayaquil a la República de Colombia. Permítame, general, que le diga, que creí que no era a nosotros a quienes correspondía decidir este importante asunto. Concluída la guerra, los gobiernos respectivos lo hubieran transado, sin los inconvenientes que en el día pueden resultar a los intereses de los nuevos estados de Sud-América.

He hablado a usted, general, con franqueza, pero los sentimientos que exprime esta carta, quedarán sepultados en el más profundo silencio; si llegasen a traslucirse, los enemigos de nuestra libertad podrían prevalecerse para perjudicarla, y los intrigantes y ambiciosos para soplar la discordia.

Con el comandante Delgado, dador de ésta, remito a usted una escopeta y un par de pistolas, juntamente con un caballo de paso que le ofrecí en Guayaquil. Admita usted, general, esta memoria del primero de sus admiradores.

Con estos sentimientos, y con los de desearle únicamente sea usted quien tenga la gloria de terminar la guerra de la independencia de la América del Sud, se repite su afectísimo servidor.

José de San Martín<sup>56</sup>

There are many factors which support the authenticity of this letter. Let us consider them in order: (1) Few historians before Lecuna have ever questioned the document. Even Bolívar's most ardent partisans, as, for instance, Larrazabál or the very objective Paz Soldán, accepted it as true evidence: (2) Lafond, in whose book the letter was first published, was at the time of its writing in close contact with San Martín. He had asked the Argentine for documents and information, and had been supplied with both, including character sketches of Bolívar and Sucre.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>56</sup> Mitre, *op. cit.*, IV, 615; also printed by V. Lecuna, *Cartas apócrifas sobre la entrevista de Guayaquil* (Caracas, 1945), pp. 126-127.

<sup>57</sup> Levene (*op. cit.*), has published in facsimile some of the letters of Lafond to San Martín and the latter's answers.

If the letter is not authentic we would be obliged to believe that San Martín had condoned an historical forgery in his own interests. Such an idea was alien to San Martín's somewhat stoic and unostentatious temperament and seems incompatible with all the maxims and norms which had guided him during his life. Furthermore Juan B. Alberdi, visited San Martín in 1843 and later published a biographical article about his hero including the now notorious letter as an *addendum*:<sup>58</sup> (3) The letter of August 29 is confirmed by two other letters written at great intervals, the first one to Miller in 1827, and the second to Castilla in 1848.<sup>59</sup> Both contain references to the meeting of Guayaquil which coincide with the statements made in August, 1822. It is beyond the bounds of reason to assume that the so-called forger of 1843 could have known what San Martín said to Miller sixteen years before and what he was going to say to Castilla five years in the future. Furthermore, the gist of the letter, as well as its style and expression have the true San Martinian ring. When we take these particulars into account and, in addition, remember that Lafond, though familiar with Spanish, was a Frenchman, it seems out of question that he could have produced a piece of forged evidence bearing unmistakable characteristics of the genuine and original.

However, Lecuna and Mendoza rank the letter as a fraud, and we must consider their arguments. The Venezuelan historians assert that San Martín's summary of the meeting openly contradicts the reports given by Bolívar about the nature of the deliberations. But such an argument seems inconclusive. If we take into consideration the divergent characters of the protagonists and the controversial nature of the matters under discussion, it is only logical to expect a disparity in their recollections, specifically colored by the crucial conceptions of each man. The Venezuelan historians consider false certain specific figures and statements in the third paragraph of the document. Unfortunately neither Rojas nor Levene have discussed these points. They have, instead, based their case on the accumulated circumstantial evidence mentioned above. However, we can arrive at an unprejudiced opinion only after giving ample consideration to the criticism of Lecuna and Mendoza. The following sentences constitute the grounds for the first deadlock: "No se haga V. ilusión, general. Las noticias que tiene de las fuerzas realistas son equivocados; ellas montan en el Alto y Bajo Peru a mas de 19,000

<sup>58</sup> Rojas: *op. cit.*, p. 617. Alberdi, *Obras completas* (8 vols., Buenos Aires, 1888) II.

<sup>59</sup> Lecuna, *Entrevista*, p. 231; Mendoza, *op. cit.*, pp. 53-55.

veteranos. . . ." Lecuna and Mendoza insist that this figure is basically inaccurate and that San Martín would never have made such a statement since he himself would have known its falsity. Certainly this is a valid assertion; in various letters of the same period, to O'Higgins, to Toribio de Luzuriaga and others, San Martín had stated that his army was approximately equal in numbers to the Royalist army. Lecuna gives the figures of the Spanish army as 10,930. His appraisal, based on a solid study of the relative strength of the two adversaries, is very probably correct. Granting these facts, how shall we explain the discrepancy in San Martín's figure of 19,000? In my opinion the number 19,000 is quite clearly a transposition, an error not infrequent in those days.<sup>60</sup> In this case there is a reversal of the second and third numbers. If this explanation be accepted, San Martín's letter would set the Royalist figure at 10,900 (instead of 19,000) and this is the number given by Lecuna. San Martín estimated the first line of his fighting forces to be 8,500 men which, compared with 10,900 Royalists, gave the latter a slight edge of superiority.

But, the critics contend, does not such an argument defeat its own purpose? If San Martín believed his army nearly equal to that of the enemy, why should he appeal to Bolívar for support? We have already noted San Martín's plan of campaign, i.e., to send the bulk of his army to "puertos intermedios." An operation of this kind required auxiliary forces for the defense of Lima and for the protection of the northern provinces against a surprise attack from the Spanish. San Martín, therefore, writes, ". . . sin el apoyo del ejército de su mando, la operación, que se prepara por puertos intermedios no podrá conseguir las ventajas que debían esperarse, si fuerzas poderosas no llamarán la atención del enemigo por otra parte, . . . ." In other words, San Martín believed the realization of his plan demanded a force superior to that of his foe. Quite justifiably one may doubt the wisdom of San Martín's strategy, but as long as he adhered to this costly and dangerous operation, he did, indeed, need a greater number of men than he commanded at the time. But the critics continue: how could San Martín in his letter to Bolívar express an apprehension concerning the military success of his plans and, at the same time, assure his officers in Peru and his friends in Chile, "Es imposible tener un mal suceso?"<sup>61</sup> The explanation of this contradiction seems obvious.

<sup>60</sup> A similar mistake can be found in San Martín's letter to Miller, where he writes that Bolívar offered him 1,070 men, when he meant to write, 1,700.

<sup>61</sup> *Documentos del archivo de San Martín*, V 510.

When San Martín wrote to his Argentine and Chilean friends he felt obliged to explain how it was that he could consider resigning his power at the moment when the main endeavor of his life—the expulsion of the Spaniards—was still unfinished. It was only natural that he should attempt to convince them that the job was practically accomplished; all that remained was the execution of his instructions. It is for this reason that he writes to Rudecindo Alvarado, whom he appointed commander-in-chief, “Voy a embarcarme, usted queda para concluir la gran obra.”<sup>62</sup> But, in his heart of hearts, he was assailed by doubts which he could not reveal to his companions. To Bolívar he could, nay he must, speak in different vein. Since his letter was a last appeal to the Liberator to come to the help of Peru, he outlined the situation in sombre colors, colors which, however, proved true. He was not afraid of speaking his mind, because his words were absolutely confidential (*los sentimientos que exprime esta carta, quedarán sepultados en el más profundo silencio*) and would, he hoped, never reach the ears of his officers and undermine their confidence.

Another serious objection made by the Venezuelan historians concerns San Martín's reference to the Santa Cruz division. The offending sentence reads: “La división del general Santa Cruz (cuyas bajas según me escribe este general, no han sido reemplazadas, a pesar de sus reclamaciones). . . .” In their refusal to accept this portion of the letter Lecuna and Mendoza are backed by certain evidence.<sup>63</sup> It is indeed true that Sucre had ordered the replacement of the casualties. In addition Santa Cruz had written to Guido, San Martín's minister of war, “He reemplazado triplicamente la pérdida de la división con los prisioneros americanos.”<sup>64</sup> But, of course, these facts do not preclude the possibility that Santa Cruz may have written another letter to San Martín in which he complained about the tardiness of the Colombians in replacing the casualties. In view of the tension existing between the Peruvian and the Colombian headquarters, this would seem more than likely.<sup>65</sup> This particular inconsistency

<sup>62</sup> Mendoza, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

<sup>63</sup> Lecuna, *Entrevista*, pp. 204-205.

<sup>64</sup> Quito, May 28, 1822, M. de Odriozola, *Documentos históricos del Perú* (10 vols., Lima, 1873) V, 28.

<sup>65</sup> See Paz Soldán, *op. cit.*, I, 328 ff. A possible explanation of the discrepancy in the source material has been offered by Jacinto R. Yaben, *La Autenticidad de la Carta . . . del 29 de agosto de 1822* (Buenos Aires, 1950), p. 150. “Tales bajas fueron cubiertas en verdad con prisioneros realistas dos veces, pero como esta clase de soldados aprovecha la primera oportunidad para desertarse, es lo que sucedió en este caso en una gran proporción. . . .

must, for the moment await the uncovering of additional factual detail. Our main consideration at this point is to note whether the whole fabric of the document is affected by a defection in one part. If the letter can be proven accurate in all other instances, it would seem only logical to withhold judgment on this item until further evidence is forthcoming.

The third and last point of contention also concerns the fate of the division Santa Cruz—"... en su dilatada marcha por tierra, debe experimentar una pérdida considerable, y nada podrá emprender en la presente campaña." Both Lecuna and Mendoza state flatly that San Martín would never have written such nonsense, since the division, as they maintain, did not return by land but by sea, convoyed by the Peruvian navy, and by August, 1822, was safely back in Lima.<sup>66</sup> To prove their point they quote certain passages in Sucre's letters, which do indeed state that the division Santa Cruz was going on board the Peruvian warships in the last ten days of July.<sup>67</sup>

But the above argument suffers from a certain omission: the embarkation of the division at Guayaquil did not preclude an overland march to Lima. Let us look further into Bolívar's letters, letters which have been edited by Señor Lecuna, and, we should suppose, closely scrutinized by Mendoza. It is difficult to comprehend how the following evidence could have been overlooked. In a letter of September 14, 1822, Bolívar writes to Santander: "*Hoy he visto una carta del general Santa Cruz al coronel Heres en que le dice, desde Piura, que marchaba para Lima aunque con poco gusto suyo.*"<sup>68</sup> Here is incontrovertible proof, in Bolívar's own letters, that Santa Cruz had not returned to Lima in the first days of September. The significance of this fact is far-reaching. We must understand that Santa Cruz had led the division back to Piura, whence it had come originally to participate in

Según el convenio ajustado entre los coroneles Andrés de Santa Cruz- por parte del Perú- y Tomás de Heres- por parte de Colombia- las tropas peruanas serían pagadas con igual sueldo que él que percibían en el Perú y que las bajas que sufriera la División se reemplazarían con soldados de Colombia (Paz Soldán, páginas 249 y 250 del Tomo I de la Historia del Perú Independiente). Esta importantísima cláusula no se cumplió y los reemplazos- soldados realistas prisioneros- desertaron en una gran cantidad." This fact would certainly explain the contradiction between Santa Cruz' letter of May 28, and his alleged complaint to San Martín.

<sup>66</sup> Mendoza, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

<sup>67</sup> *Cartas*, III, 54. See also Sucre's letter to Santander, *Archivo Santander* (24 vols., Bogotá, 1913), VIII, 318-319; Mosquera, *op. cit.*, p. 452.

<sup>68</sup> *Cartas*, III, 88. Piura, capital of the Peruvian province of the same name, is near the border of Ecuador.

the Ecuadorian campaign. Furthermore, we are given the positive evidence that Santa Cruz "*marchaba para Lima*," thus clearly confirming San Martín's comment, "en su dilatada marcha por tierra." In addition the letter brings specific information that San Martín counted for his initial campaign on the arrival of the Colombian auxiliary forces, but not on the division Santa Cruz! Could one ask for more conclusive proof of the authenticity of the disputed document?

There is, moreover, still further supporting evidence concerning the march of the division. An officer, who was with Bolívar's army in Guayaquil at the time, writes: "Le (Bolívar) devolvió sus tropas al gobierno peruano, haciéndolas regresar por tierra como habían venido."<sup>69</sup> Paz Soldán also indicates that at the time of San Martín's resignation the division had not yet returned to Lima: "La división de Santa Cruz, orgullosa con los triunfos de Riobamba y Pichincha estaba en marcha."<sup>70</sup> Further circumstantial evidence is provided by the fact that the *Gazeta del Gobierno de Lima* for the crucial months of July to October 1822 makes no mention whatever of the return of the victorious corps. It pays homage to every manifestation of Peruvian patriotism, but it carries not a single line about the supposed arrival of the division. This additional evidence is, however, unnecessary, since Bolívar's letter quoted above gives us absolute proof that Santa Cruz was in Piura and not in Lima during the contested interval. San Martín's statement of August 29 must, therefore, be accepted as accurate.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>69</sup> Manuel Antonio López: *Recuerdos históricos* (Bogotá, 1878), p. 86. These memoirs were written in 1843.

<sup>70</sup> Paz Soldán, *op. cit.*, I, 328.

<sup>71</sup> I assume that originally the division Santa Cruz was supposed to return on the ships of the Peruvian fleet, as Bolívar and Sucre state in several letters. Later, when Bolívar ordered an auxiliary corps to go to Lima the Peruvian ships were used to transport the Colombian troops, while the Peruvian division marched back to Piura. Unfortunately, I have not been able to trace with exactitude the movements of the Santa Cruz division. We know that the division and its commander were still on Colombian soil on July 24, because on this date the Liberator sent an order to Sucre concerning money to be paid to the Peruvian general. We must assume that Santa Cruz made a short voyage by sea from a point in the province of Guayaquil to a Peruvian port in the province of Piura, where he was at the beginning of September, 1822, according to the letter quoted in the text. In the same letter the statement is made that Santa Cruz had a personal interview with San Martín in which the latter expressed a favorable opinion of Bolívar. Most probably, San Martín stopped on his return to Lima at some intermediate port where he met Santa Cruz. In any case, Santa Cruz could not have gone from Guayaquil to Lima and back to Piura between July 24 and the first days of September when, we may suppose, he wrote the letter to Heres to which Bolívar alludes. According to Lecuna (*Crónica*

Since the foregoing arguments include the principal premises on which the letter has been termed a forgery, it may be helpful at this point to summarize briefly the results of our investigation. The letter of August 29, 1822, is substantially identical with and confirmed by two later letters of San Martín of which the original manuscripts have been preserved. Of the references which have been brought forward as incontrovertible evidence of the forged character of the document in question, the first, concerning the number of the royalist troops, is probably a typographical error; the second, referring to the replacement of casualties in the division Santa Cruz, may offer some material for doubt, but in view of the overwhelming testimony in favor of the letter, we feel that it is not sufficient to invalidate its historical value as first hand source material; the third point, dealing with the method of transportation and the arrival in Lima of the division Santa Cruz, must be discarded entirely as supporting evidence for the Lecuna-Mendoza allegation.

Let us now consider the actual problems discussed by San Martín and Bolívar at their meeting in Guayaquil. In this account we will endeavor to incorporate the two different sources of information, the San Martínian and the Bolívarian, being continually aware, however, that the attitude of each man necessarily colored or even distorted his recollections of the event.

In his letter to Santander Bolívar writes: "Yo creo que él ha venido por asegurarse de nuestra amistad, para apoyarse con ella con respecto a sus enemigos internos y externos."<sup>72</sup> It is quite clear that Bolívar was under no misapprehension as to San Martín's motives in coming to Guayaquil. If, in the same letter and in the reports given by his secretary, Bolívar affirms that San Martín came without any particular project, that he came as a simple visitor without political or military purposes, then he here very definitely contradicts himself in his own words.<sup>73</sup> Furthermore, if San Martín's discourse was in reality of a superficial and

*razonada de las guerras de Bolívar*, III, 169), the voyage from Guayaquil to El Callao lasted from twenty-two to twenty-six days in those times. Even though the voyage in the opposite direction, from El Callao to a port near Piura, was considerably quicker, the trip back and forth could not have been accomplished in the contested interval, between July 24 and the first days of September. But here, too, further research is needed to clarify the last details of this intricate problem.

<sup>72</sup> *Cartas*, III, 58.

<sup>73</sup> *Cartas*, III, 59, 62. It is impossible to believe that San Martín, who had announced his program beforehand, would leave Lima at so critical a moment to pay a visit to Bolívar without either political or military aims. See Rojas *op. cit.*, p. 594.



aimless nature, it seems utterly illogical to find Bolívar sending two secret reports which he designated as strictly confidential, following these with private letters, and finally dispatching a messenger, Captain Gómez, to communicate orally to Santander those matters which Bolívar thought should not be handled by "esos muchachos de la secretaría."<sup>74</sup>

The case is clear. San Martín came with a definite purpose in mind; all his letters and proclamations confirm this assumption. He had said to Bolívar that a few hours between soldiers would suffice to deal with all their problems, here again revealing his objective military spirit.<sup>75</sup> Once in Guayaquil, he openly avowed his designs and approached the subjects on his mind with characteristic candor.<sup>76</sup>

Quite naturally the question of Guayaquil came up first.<sup>77</sup> We know that San Martín's hopes had been dissipated by the *fait accompli* resulting from Bolívar's quick and energetic action. San Martín declared, therefore, that he did not wish to discuss the matter further and that he had no intention of interfering with the *status quo*. The confusion which had arisen over the affair he laid at the doors of the inconsistent inhabitants of the city. In a word, he realized the futility of his earlier plans and withdrew them without hesitation. Bolívar, playing the part of the sincere democrat, explained to San Martín that he would fulfill the latter's wish for a voluntary, popular vote, but assured him that such a vote would certainly favor Colombia. The discussion then veered to military affairs. Both branches of source material agree on this matter.

San Martín began by outlining his plan for the next campaign.<sup>78</sup> It would seem that Bolívar, with his customary perspicacity, immediately detected the weak points in San Martín's strategic design, i.e. the proposal to attack the Spaniards along two different lines separated from each other by hundreds of miles. He

<sup>74</sup> *Cartas*, III, 63, 67.

<sup>75</sup> *Cartas*, III, 57. "Pocas horas . . . son bastantes para tratar entre militares."

<sup>76</sup> *Cartas*, III, 61. "El Protector se abrió desde luego a las conferencias más francas."

<sup>77</sup> *Cartas*, III, 61. See also San Martín's statement to Sarmiento, in *Un manuscrito de Sarmiento*, reprinted by Lecuna (*Entrevista*, p. 272) "El objeto de mi visita era muy simple. Desde luego la anexión de Guayaquil, que habia dado ocasión a desavenencias. Nuestra misión como generales, le decía yo, es solo vencer a los españoles. Las pueblos arreglarán sus límites."

<sup>78</sup> *Cartas* III, 61. ". . . siguió tratando de negocios militares relativos a la expedición que va a partir." "Por otra parte yo no tenía fuerzas para abrir una nueva campaña contra los españoles, y era necesario reunir nuestras fuerzas." (San Martín) Sarmiento: *op. cit.*

cautiously suggested another scheme, one which, however, San Martín considered infeasible.<sup>79</sup> It is possible that San Martín's failure to agree with Bolívar's plans may have had its influence when the Liberator was faced with San Martín's request for a wholehearted support from Colombia in his future undertakings.

But let us read San Martín's report to General Miller, written on April 9, 1827, five years after the meeting.

Encuanto a mi viaje a Guayaquil él no tuvo otro objeto que el de reclamar del General Bolívar los auxilios que pudiera prestar para terminar la guerra del Perú: auxilios que una justa retribución (prescindiendo de los intereses generales de América) lo exigía por los que el Perú tan generosamente había prestado para libertar el territorio de Colombia. Mi confianza en el buen resultado estaba tanto más fundada cuanto el ejército de Colombia después de la batalla de Pichincha se había aumentado con los prisioneros, y contaba con 9.600 bayonetas; pero mis esperanzas fueron burladas al ver que en mi primer conferencia con el Libertador me declaró que haciendo todos los esfuerzos posibles sólo podía desprenderse de tres batallones con la fuerza total de 1.070 plazas.<sup>80</sup> Estos auxilios no me parecieron suficientes para terminar la guerra, pues estaba convencido que el buen éxito de ella no podía esperarse sin la activa y eficaz cooperación de todas las fuerzas de Colombia.<sup>81</sup>

It is here that our sources evidence the greatest disparity. In his letter to Santander, Bolívar alludes solely to the auxiliary corps that Colombia was giving to San Martín (in recompense for the help received from the Santa Cruz division), stating that Peru would receive altogether 3,000 men, but he never mentions specifically San Martín's request that he should lead the whole Colombian army into Peru.<sup>82</sup> San Martín's letters, on the other hand, make a point of the fact that these demands were unequivocal. Since this issue is the real crux of the matter, we must decide how to interpret the divergence. We venture to hazard a logical explanation of what probably happened. San Martín first asked Bolívar to make redress for the losses that his troops had sustained in Ecuador, and in addition requested an expedi-

<sup>79</sup> O'Leary, *op. cit.* (*Narración*), II, 173. "En su entrevista con San Martín, preguntóle el Libertador con empeño si no sería preferible marchar al interior del Perú con toda la fuerza disponible, a dividirla, y de ese modo exponer al ejército a ser batido en detal, a lo que contestó el Protector, objetando que las provincias independientes del Perú no tenían los recursos suficientes para mover una gran fuerza a través de los Andes."

<sup>80</sup> This number should be 1,700.

<sup>81</sup> *San Martín: su correspondencia, 1823-1850*, p. 66.

<sup>82</sup> *Cartas*, III, 58 ff.

tionary corps for the liberation of Peru. Bolívar agreed to this proposal, promising to send a Colombian division of four battalions, 1,800 men altogether. This meagre offer was a great disappointment to San Martín, who declared that Peru could not be freed by such half-measures. He told Bolívar further that if the Liberator was unwilling to entrust his Colombian troops to him, San Martín, he should then come himself to Peru to fight the last battle for independence.<sup>83</sup> Bolívar refused this appeal on the pretext that as president of Colombia, he could leave the country only on the consent of Congress, adding that he was certain such a request would be refused. Bolívar's stated motive for refusal was legitimate, but he had other and more cogent reasons which he did not reveal to San Martín. It was out of the question for him to strip Colombia of his army at that time. Puerto Cabello, in the north, was still in Spanish hands; Pasto, in the south, defied its conquerors; Guayaquil was a cauldron of rebellion. Bolívar understood that a headlong plunge into the Peruvian adventure might well place the entire hard-won unity of Colombia in hazard. Briefly, he could not offer his army to San Martín, because he needed it himself. It was, moreover, a much smaller army than San Martín supposed. Bolívar did not, however, deem it wise to disclose his motives, and since San Martín could not fathom them, he believed Bolívar to be prompted by personal ambition only. He could not bring the Liberator to give a clear answer to his propositions, and he came to the conclusion that Bolívar was simply evading the issue.<sup>84</sup> He thought Bolívar was obsessed by a lust for power, a craving to command and a longing to reap the fame of liberation. Fame, on the other hand, meant little to San Martín, and he expressed his willingness to serve with his army under Bolívar's leadership.<sup>85</sup> But Bolívar rejected this offer, too, and San Martín was obliged to think that Bolívar either doubted his sincerity or was embarrassed by his person. Finally, he reached the conclusion that he, himself, stood in the way of Colombia's active participation in the liberation of Peru.

Así es que mi resolución fue tomada en el acto, creyendo de mi deber hacer el último sacrificio en beneficio del Perú. Al siguiente día y a presencia del Vice-Almirante Blanco dije al Libertador que habiendo

<sup>83</sup> Letter of August 29, 1822. Sarmiento, *op. cit.*

<sup>84</sup> See San Martín's character sketch of Bolívar which he wrote for Lafond (*Voyages*, II, 142). See also Sarmiento, *op. cit.*, "No pude arrancarle una respuesta clara."

<sup>85</sup> Letter of August 29, 1822. See also Sarmiento, *op. cit.*, "Iba pues a ofrecerle (Bolívar) el mando en jefe de ambos ejércitos, poniendome yo a sus ordenes."

dejado convocado al Congreso para el próximo mes—el día de su instalación sería el último de mi permanencia en el Perú, añadiendo—Ahora le queda a Vd. general un nuevo campo de gloria en el que va Vd. a poner el último sello a la libertad de la América. Yo autorizo y ruego a Vd. escriba al general Blanco—a fin de rectificar este hecho.<sup>86</sup>

Realization was bitter for San Martín, and he controlled himself with difficulty during the first moments, but on the following day he was calm enough to tell Bolívar of his decision to leave Peru and to invite the Liberator to take over. For the second time, however, San Martín had misjudged Bolívar's intentions. It is all too true that the Liberator was egotistical and selfish; if he could be jealous of Sucre, he must have sensed a far more dangerous rival in San Martín.<sup>87</sup> But his desire for fame was not his sole motive. We know that Bolívar had serious misgivings in regard to San Martín's plan of campaign, and the Liberator must have entertained grave doubts as to whether San Martín could ever bring himself to accept the judgments of a younger man. Moreover, there was the army itself to consider; even if the older and more professional officer had been willing to subject himself to the instructions of the younger, would his army be willing to go along with him? Bolívar must have felt that in every crisis he would be in danger of an uprising of the Argentine-Peruvian army under the command of San Martín. A subordinate position under Bolívar's command was both illogical and impossible, but the Liberator could not make this fact clear to San Martín in so many words, and he felt obliged to be evasive and to say that his delicacy forbade that he should command the Protector.<sup>88</sup> In his reports to the Colombian government Bolívar omits any reference to San Martín's offer, but in his private letter to Santander he writes, "No hay género de amistad ni de oferta que no me haya hecho."<sup>89</sup>

<sup>86</sup> See note 51 *supra*. See also the letter of Sept. 11, 1848 to Ramón Castilla. "Yo hubiera tenido la más completa satisfacción habiéndole puesto fin con la terminación de la guerra de la Independencia en el Perú, pero mi entrevista en Guayaquil con el general Bolívar me convenció, no obstante sus promesas, que el sólo obstáculo de su venida al Perú con el ejército de su mando, no era otro que la presencia del general San Martín, a pesar de la sinceridad con que le ofrecí ponerme a sus ordenes, con todas las fuerzas de que yo disponía." (Rojas, *op. cit.*, p. 632). Even Mendoza (*op. cit.*, p. 70), admits that the description of events, as given in the letter to Miller, may be correct.

<sup>87</sup> Masur, *op. cit.*, pp. 460-461.

<sup>88</sup> Letter of August 29, 1822. The first one to suggest the idea of a joint command had been Sucre, who had, in previous months, expressed his willingness to serve under an Argentine commander in the Ecuadoran campaign. It may be that his offer influenced San Martín to propose a similar solution for the Peruvian campaign.

<sup>89</sup> *Cartas*, III, 59, 63.

During their second conference on the following day, San Martín, drawing his conclusions from the previous meeting, told Bolívar that he had determined to resign. He spoke of the burden of responsibility he carried, and, most bitterly, about his Argentine companions-in-arms who had betrayed him in Lima. He even said that he had left his resignation of the protectorate in a sealed envelope in Lima, that he would give up his military power as soon as the first victory had been achieved, and that he would go to Mendoza to live in retirement.<sup>90</sup> He added, however, that before taking these final steps, he wished to make sure that the foundations of government were well established. He reiterated his belief that Peru's political problems could be solved only by summoning a European prince to assume the powers of state. It would seem that the discussion became more violent at this point. Bolívar was a republican and had many reasons to fear monarchic experiments, and he said frankly that he would not tolerate a monarchy, neither in Colombia nor in America.<sup>4</sup> He declared that he would fight it if he could. He thought, however, that each state should be free to choose its own government, and he alluded to his political ideas as expressed in the famous "discurso de Angostura." San Martín did not wish to press the point and remarked that the importation of foreign princes could be left to the future. But Bolívar was unwilling to compromise, and declared that such a plan would be out of question at any time, that he, Bolívar, would prefer the Iturbides *e tutti quanti* to be crowned as kings rather than allow Bourbons or Hapsburgs to set foot on American soil.<sup>91</sup>

Here again our source material shows divergencies. San Martín's later letters do not mention this part of his discussion with Bolívar, and certain historians, like Rojas, for example, adopt the conclusion from this fact that San Martín merely used his ideas on American monarchies as a diplomatic ruse.<sup>92</sup> I cannot accept the Rojas viewpoint since all of Bolívar's letters show that San Martín's monarchical plans had moved him to a profound degree. Once again we are obliged to realize that each of these men recollected the events of Guayaquil in the light of his own ideas. Hence their reports are disparate, and it is the duty of the historian to select the evidence that seems most valid.

Whatever San Martín's proposal may have been, Bolívar suspected that the Argentine himself had designs on the crown.

<sup>90</sup> *Cartas*, III, 59, 61-62.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>92</sup> Rojas, *op. cit.*, p. 600.

Here, however, he was mistaken; San Martín championed monarchy only as the most efficacious antidote for anarchy in America. But Bolívar was unacquainted with his rival's personality and he could not read his mind. Under the circumstances, we can hardly be surprised if his doubts influenced his general reluctance to coöperate closely with San Martín in the liberation of Peru.<sup>93</sup>

The other issues discussed at Guayaquil are of minor importance, and so far have produced no controversy. Shortly before the meeting took place, a treaty of friendship between Peru and Colombia had been signed in Lima which needed ratification by the parliaments of the two countries.<sup>94</sup> The treaty provided for union and federation between Peru and Colombia and for mutual support and guarantee. The other Latin-American nations were to be invited to join Peru and Colombia in this federation, which was expected eventually to expand into a true Latin-American League of Nations. Bolívar's interest in such a league is well known.<sup>95</sup> San Martín was whole-heartedly in favor of the plan; he desired an exchange of garrisons, which would, he thought, strengthen both governments.<sup>96</sup> San Martín offered his services in disposing of the border problems between Peru and Colombia, promising to intercede with Congress in case of dispute. Bolívar expressed his thanks, but thought it wiser not to ask for definite commitments, since San Martín had officially delegated his power.<sup>97</sup>

Putting minor topics of conversation aside, it may be well at

<sup>93</sup> *Cartas*, III, 62. "Es de presumirse que el designio que se tiene es erigir ahora la monarquía sobre el principio de darle la corona a un príncipe europeo con el fin, sin duda, de ocupar después el trono el que tenga más popularidad en el país, o más fuerzas de que disponer. Si los discursos del Protector son sinceros, ninguno está mas lejos de ocupar tal trono. Parece muy convencido de los inconvenientes del mando." *Cartas*, III, 59. "Diré que no quiere ser rey, pero tampoco quiere la democracia y si el que venga un príncipe de Europa a reinar en el Peru. Esto último yo creo que es pro-forma." See also *Cartas*, III, 88.

Mosquera (*op. cit.*, p. 458) insists that San Martín's main purpose in Guayaquil was to win Bolívar over for the establishment of monarchies in America. His article, however, is crowded with errors and the conversation of the two Liberators, which he pretends to have attended, is more fiction than history. See Levene, *op. cit.*, p. 47 and Rojas, *op. cit.*, p. 651. It should be noted, however, that also Mosquera brings the version of San Martín's offer to serve under Bolívar's command.

<sup>94</sup> Lecuna, *Entrevista*, p. 207.

<sup>95</sup> Masur, *op. cit.*, pp. 579 ff.

<sup>96</sup> *Cartas*, III, 62. "... porque juzga que las tropas de un estado al servicio del otro deben aumentar mucho la autoridad de ambos gobiernos con respecto a sus enemigos internos, los ambiciosos y revoltosos. Esta parte de la Federación es la que más interesa al Protector y cuyo cumplimiento desea con más vehemencia."

<sup>97</sup> *Cartas*, III, 62.

this point to place on record the final words of Bolívar's report. Perhaps they may show more clearly than any attempt at interpretation the significance which San Martín had attached to his meeting with Bolívar and the spirit in which he had approached him.

El Protector ha dicho a S.E. que pida al Peru toda lo que guste, que el no hará mas que decir si, si, si, a todo, y que espera que en Colombia se haga otro tanto. La oferta de sus servicios y amistad es ilimitada, manifestando una satisfacción y una franqueza que parecen sinceras.<sup>98</sup>

Any objective reading of Bolívar's letters and reports concerning his meeting with San Martín forces the acknowledgment that all the proposals came from the latter, that Bolívar met the suggestions either with evasive answers or with an unequivocal rejection, as in the case of the monarchic idea. Even when San Martín touched upon the Liberator's own aims, Bolívar obviously preferred to act independently, refusing to accept San Martín's proffered help. San Martín was ever the suppliant; Bolívar the dissenter. Bolívar did not wish to commit himself and San Martín was in no bargaining position. The result, as we have previously noted, left each man with his separate impression. Bolívar felt that he had obtained another victory; in summing up the many triumphs gained in the past year, he writes to Santander on the day after San Martín's departure, "Por Dios, que no quiero más: es por la primera vez que no tengo nada que desear y que estoy contento con la fortuna."<sup>99</sup> San Martín, on the other hand, was deeply mortified. He left Guayaquil in the early hours of dawn on July 28, in a thoughtful and disheartened mood. He confessed to his friends that the Liberator was not the man they had imagined him to be,—“el general Bolívar nos ganó de mano.”<sup>100</sup> He found in Bolívar an extraordinary superficiality, an inconsistency in principle, and a puerile vanity. He believed him to be a man in whom the will to power was a controlling passion.<sup>101</sup> He even thought Bolívar capable of invading Peru if such an action would add to his fame. “He comprendido su desabrimiento por la gloria que pudiera caberme en la prosecución de la presente campaña. El no excusará medios, por audaces que fuesen, para penetrar a esta república, seguido de sus tropas.”<sup>102</sup>

<sup>98</sup> *Cartas*, III, 63.

<sup>99</sup> *Cartas*, III, 60.

<sup>100</sup> Mitre, *op. cit.*, III, 619.

<sup>101</sup> Letter to Guido, Dec 18 1826 *Documentos del archivo del genera' San Martín*. VI, 502.

<sup>102</sup> Guido, *op. cit.*, 242.

These were San Martín's impressions of Bolívar as he expressed them after his return from the meeting at Guayaquil.

Bolívar could afford to be more generous. He first wrote to Santander: "Su carácter me ha parecido muy militar y parece activo, pronto y no lerdo. Tiene ideas correctas de las que a Vd. le gustan pero no me parece bastante delicado en los géneros de sublime que hay en las ideas y en las empresas."<sup>103</sup> Soon, however, a note of contempt crept into his letters. Now he considers San Martín a lucky general rather than as a great man, a general whose reputation depended more on a semblance of success than on real merit.<sup>104</sup> Bolívar heard through the channels of gossip what San Martín had thought of his behavior, but this only confirmed his belief that San Martín was seeking royal power.

But the conference of Guayaquil would not be worth the ink and paper that has been expended on it had it produced results in the realm of human impressions alone. Let us now consider the political consequences as viewed by the two opposing actors. When San Martín returned to Lima on August 20, he found that his minister, Monteagudo, had been overthrown by a political conspiracy which had met with the silent approval of his own army. Even before the Guayaquil meeting San Martín had entertained the thought of abdication. He now realized that he had lost the support of public opinion, and he made his final resolution to leave Peru. He appointed General Alvarado as commander-in-chief, summoned the Peruvian Congress to relinquish the power into its hands, and announced his decision both to O'Higgins and to Bolívar, to the latter in the famous letter of August 29.<sup>105</sup> He remained firm in the face of all attempts to draw him anew into the game of political and military intrigue; he resisted the bitter criticism of his Argentine companions for abandoning his life work before its completion, and following out his expressed determination, he retired to private life. No explanation revealed either his emotions or his motives.

Can it be said that Bolívar's refusals produced San Martín's resignation? Absolutely not. The Argentine had made up his

<sup>103</sup> *Cartas*, III, 59.

<sup>104</sup> *Cartas*, III, 103.

<sup>105</sup> A final proof for the authenticity of the letter may be found in a letter which San Martín directed to Bolívar from Mendoza on August 3, 1823. Here he writes, "Pocos días antes de mi salida de esa capital escribí a V. después lo volví a verificar desde Chile, y no he tenido contestación alguna." *Boletín de la Academia Nacional de Historia* (Caracas) XXXII (No. 128), 343. The letter alluded to here, written shortly before San Martín left Lima, must be the one of August 29.



mind before he had gone to see the Liberator. However, if Bolívar had agreed to coöperate with him he might have remained. But beyond all personal reasons Bolívar may have had for refusing to join forces with San Martín, was his belief that San Martín's plans were impractical and replete with dangerous potentialities. San Martín was not the type of ruthless leader who would force the people to fight for independence. He was not the man to shoot his personal enemies or to confiscate property, as Bolívar found it feasible to do whenever he deemed it necessary. San Martín spoke of "the misfortune of being a public figure" (*la desgracia de ser un hombre público*), and admitted that the baton was slipping from his hands (*el palo se me cayó de la mano*).<sup>106</sup> He assured his friends that after his death they would find among his papers "*documentos originales*" which would explain "*las razones de mi retirada del Perú*."<sup>107</sup> In only one conversation, a few hours prior to his departure, did he lift the veil of reticence. Hard pressed by his minister, Guido, he imparted to him one of the motives for his retreat: "*Bolívar y yo no cabemos en el Perú: he penetrado sus miras arrojadas. El no excusará medios, por audaces que fuesen, para penetrar a esta República seguido de sus tropas, y quizás entonces no me sería dado evitar un conflicto a que la fatalidad pudiera llevarnos, dando así al mundo un humillante escandalo. . . . . No seré yo, mi amigo, quien deje tal legado a mi patria, y preferiría perecer, antes que hacer alarde de laureles recogidos a semejante precio; ¡eso no! Entre si puede el General Bolívar, aprovechándose de mi ausencia; si lograrse afianzar en el Perú lo que hemos ganado, y algo mas, me dará por satisfecho: su victoria sería, de cualquier modo, victoria americana.*"<sup>108</sup>

These sentences, confirmed by still later utterances of San Martín, are in line with all his letters. We cannot pretend that his opinion of Bolívar is unerring, but we must insist that such was the picture of Bolívar which San Martín carried away with him from Guayaquil.<sup>109</sup>

Turning now to the Liberator, we find, of course, a very different outlook. If, as Bolívar's report would have us believe, San Martín had come north only to visit Bolívar; if he had really assured the Liberator that the Peruvian forces were strong enough

<sup>106</sup> *Memorias del general Tomás de Iriarte* (Buenos Aires 1857), III, 123. Guido, *op. cit.*, p. 241.

<sup>107</sup> *Documentos del archivo de San Martín*, VI, 502.

<sup>108</sup> Guido, *op. cit.*, p. 242.

<sup>109</sup> Rojas, *op. cit.*, p. 653; Bernard, *op. cit.*

to deal with the situation, and if he did not ask Bolívar for any help, we should have the right to assume that Bolívar could have no doubts about the fate of Peru. A careful scrutiny of Bolívar's letters, however, brings us to a contrary conclusion. Less than a week after the meeting Bolívar assured Santander that his (Bolívar's) presence in Quito was necessary, that he had to wait for the results of the Peruvian campaign. He asks for weapons and ammunition to arm another fighting force "en caso que el enemigo triunfe de San Martín lo que, según todas las noticias, puede muy bien suceder." He even advises dispatching 2,000 men from Colombia in case of such an eventuality.<sup>110</sup> Five days had passed since San Martín had left for Lima; what possible news could Bolívar have received during this brief interim that could cause his outlook to become so sombre and pessimistic? Is it not logical to assume that San Martín had made it quite clear to Bolívar that help was indeed needed? Bolívar's correspondence continues in this vein; on September 13 and 14 he emphasizes San Martín's vanishing popularity in Lima; he accuses him of acting like another Iturbide ("y así tendremos dos reinos a los flancos que acabarán probablemente mal"), and he continues to insist that his presence in the south is necessary.<sup>111</sup> "Yo creo que todo nos queda por hacer si San Martín no triunfa en el Perú."<sup>112</sup>

The first positive step to contribute in any great measure to the final solution in Peru was taken by Bolívar on September 9, 1822. Through his secretary general he approached the Peruvian government with a military offer of 4,000 additional men.

Since this document figures as one of the most important results of the meeting of Guayaquil, a substantial part of it is given here:

Aunque S.E. el Protector del Perú en su entrevista en Guayaquil con el Libertador no hubiese manifestado temor de peligro por la suerte del Perú, el Libertador, no obstante, se ha entregado desde entonces a la más detenida y constante meditación, aventurando muchas conjeturas que quizás no son enteramente fundadas, pero que mantienen en la mayor inquietud el ánimo de S.E.

S.E. el Libertador ha pensado que es de su deber comunicar esta inquietud a los Gobiernos del Perú y Chile, y aun al del Río de la Plata, y ofrecer desde luego todos los servicios de Colombia en favor del Perú.

S.E. se propone, en primer lugar mandar al Perú 4.000 hombres más de los que se han remitido ya, luego que reciba la contestación de esta

<sup>110</sup> *Cartas*, III, 64.

<sup>111</sup> *Cartas*, III, 85, 86, 88.

<sup>112</sup> *Cartas*, III, 86.

nota, siempre que el Gobierno del Perú tenga a bien aceptar la oferta de este nuevo refuerzo; el que no marcha inmediatamente porque no estaba preparado, y porque tampoco se ha pedido por parte de S.E. el Protector. Si el Gobierno del Perú determina recibir los 4.000 hombres de Colombia, espera el Libertador que vengan transportes y víveres para llevarlos, anticipando el aviso para que todos los cuerpos se encuentren en Guayaquil oportunamente.

En el caso de remitirse al Perú esa fuerza, el Libertador desearía que la campaña del Perú se dirigiese de un modo que no fuese decisivo y se esperase la llegada de los nuevos cuerpos de Colombia para obrar inmediatamente y con la actividad más completa, luego que estuviesen incorporados al Ejército aliado. S.E. no se atreve a insistir mucho sobre esta medida, porque no conoce la situación del momento; pero desea ardientemente que la vida política del Perú no sea comprometida sino con una plena y absoluta confianza en el suceso. El amor a la causa de América le ha dictado estos sentimientos, que no ha podido reprimir y que se ha creído obligado a comunicar a ese gobierno.<sup>113</sup>

Here Bolívar proposes not only to send 4,000 men to Peru—troops which he insists have not been requested by San Martín—but he advises the Peruvian government to ask for further support from Chile and Argentina, and even sketches a new line of military conduct in case San Martín's strategic plans should end in failure.

What explanation can there be for so radical a change in his appraisal of the Peruvian situation? In his letters Bolívar states that Colonel Heres had brought him alarming news.<sup>114</sup> But such information would hardly have moved him to make this startling offer. Whether Bolívar had received San Martín's message of August 29 by September 9, or whether he simply acted under the assumption that San Martín would sooner or later remove himself cannot be ascertained with any degree of certainty.<sup>115</sup> It is significant, however, that Bolívar's message of September 9 seems to take it for granted that San Martín is no longer in the running. It will be noted that the offer is directed to the Peruvian foreign minister, and not to San Martín. If the Liberator thought that San Martín could still wield any influence in governmental decisions in Peru it would seem very strange that Bolívar should overlook him in a matter of such magnitude. Not only

<sup>113</sup> O'Leary, *op. cit.*, XIX, 370.

<sup>114</sup> *Cortas*, III, 85.

<sup>115</sup> It is not impossible that a letter posted in Lima on August 29 could reach Bolívar in Cuenca on September 9.

would it be an act of gross discourtesy to one who had, only six weeks previously, paid him an official visit, but it would come very close to a confession of their basically disparate viewpoints. In fine, we must assume that Bolívar knew when he sent his offer to the Peruvian government that San Martín's departure from Lima was imminent.

The four thousand men offered by Bolívar were not at his disposal at the time his secretary transcribed this remarkable document. He had hopes of receiving reinforcements from northern Colombia which could be passed on to Peru. He also foresaw the necessity of appealing to Peru's southern neighbors, as San Martín had earlier in the year. So far the document seems to be the logical consequence of the events as analyzed above. There is, however, one reference in the letter of September 9 which calls for further explanation. Bolívar states explicitly that the Protector had not asked for help. Now since the document was published in a Buenos Aires newspaper while San Martín was still on Argentine soil, why did he not protest against such a distortion of historical truth?<sup>116</sup> Lecuna and Mendoza respond to this question by saying that he did not make any attempt to refute Bolívar because Bolívar was telling the truth.<sup>117</sup> We, on the other hand, believe that San Martín's silence was merely a part of his conduct of resignation and sacrifice for the good of the American cause.

Only after the lapse of more than twenty years was San Martín willing to break the silence which had until then clouded the part assigned to him in the momentous drama which led to his departure from America and eventually to Bolívar's final victory in Peru. San Martín himself said that America owed him a debt of gratitude not only for his self-effacing attitude, but for the complete silence he had preserved about his decision and the circumstances which had motivated him. "Si algún servicio tiene que agradecerme la América, es él de mi retirada de Lima, paso que no solo comprometía mi honor y reputación, sino que era tanto mas sensible, cuanto que conocía que, con las fuerzas reunidas de Colombia, la guerra de la Independencia hubiera sido terminada en todo el año 23. *Pero este costoso sacrificio y el no pequeño de tener que guardar un silencio absoluto (tan necesario en aquellas circunstancias) por los motivos que me obligaron a dar este paso, son esfuerzos que usted podrá calcular y que no está al alcance de todos el poder apreciarlos.*"<sup>118</sup>

<sup>116</sup> Published in *El Argos de Buenos Aires*, May 31, 1823. See Lecuna, *Entrevista*, p. 44.

<sup>117</sup> Mendoza, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

<sup>118</sup> Letter to Ramón Castilla, *ibid.* Italics are mine. G. Masur.

When the security and independence of South America was finally assured, San Martín felt he could reveal what he believed to be the truth about Guayaquil. In 1846, therefore, he spoke to Sarmiento about the events of 1822 just as he had already spoken to Lafond and Alberdi. Sarmiento thereupon wrote his study, "San Martín y Bolívar," as he expresses himself, "casi bajo el dictado de San Martín y mereció su completa aprobación."<sup>119</sup> The essay was first published in French, when Sarmiento was received as a member of the Institut Historique de France, and later in Spanish. Sarmiento took part frequently in the Bolívar-San Martín controversy, and in various unpublished studies and notes expressed the attitude to which we have referred above.<sup>120</sup> However, although he accepted San Martín's words as historical evidence, he recognized that the picture presented was necessarily biased. He was far from believing that either of the two protagonists was able to give an entirely veracious account of so complex an event as the Guayaquil meeting. His words could well be taken as a motto for our own endeavor:

Estoy muy distante . . . de poner entera fe en las declaraciones de uno de los grandes caudillos de la independencia americana. Cada uno de los hombres públicos que han figurado entonces tiene que rehacer alguna página de su historia, y el trabajo más ingrato de la generación que les sucede, es el de restablecer los hechos y la verdad en despecho de las aseveraciones interesados de los personajes.<sup>121</sup>

A few last words should be added concerning Bolívar's recollections of his meeting with San Martín. As long as the Argentine general and the ideas of which he was an exponent remained politically significant, Bolívar could not relegate him to a niche labeled "mission accomplished." During the time that he was in the south of Colombia, occupied with the establishment of

<sup>119</sup> Rojas, *op. cit.*, p. 618. I wish to correct here a statement made in my book, *Simon Bolívar*, p. 480, n. 31. Sarmiento's son, Jose Clemente Sarmiento, affirmed that his father read the essay under consideration at one of the sessions of the Institut, in San Martín's presence. I believed this statement to be true. Manuel Gálvez: *Vida de Sarmiento* (Buenos Aires, 1945), pp. 185-186, has proved that the essay was not read; instead it was published in the *Journal de l'Institut Historique de France*. However, this fact does not change the picture substantially, since San Martín, in a letter directed to the Institut, expressed his gratitude for the publication of the aforementioned study. See Rojas: *op. cit.*, p. 656.

<sup>120</sup> D. F. Sarmiento: *Obras completas* (53 vols., Paris, 1909), III, 297; II, 371; XXI, 33. See also Lecuna, *Entrevista*, p. 271, "Manuscrito de Sarmiento." Levene, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-49.

<sup>121</sup> See Sarmiento's article "Bolívar y San Martín," of July 17, 1851, reprinted by V. Lecuna, *Cartas apócrifas sobre las conferencias de Guayaquil* (Caracas, 1945), pp. 118-119.

administrative order and the imposition of the new republican rule-by-force on the seditious inhabitants of Pasto, his imagination prowled restlessly about the fermenting complexities of the Peruvian problem, the solution of which was to be his last military assignment. He felt certain that the outcome of the campaign then under way would be unfavorable for the cause of independence; he despaired of getting assistance from either Chile or Buenos Aires, and he foresaw the necessity of making "esfuerzos inauditos para terminar la guerra por esta parte."<sup>122</sup> From time to time San Martín's name appeared in his correspondence, accompanied now by an openly confessed attitude of contempt.<sup>123</sup> When the news reached him that the Peruvians had tried to recall San Martín, he writes: "San Martín no añade nada al bien del Perú, porque el mismo es un principio de desunión."<sup>124</sup> Later, when he was actively engaged in terminating the Spanish power, he refers to San Martín as "un terrible ejemplo" that he would be disinclined to emulate.<sup>125</sup> In his correspondence he continued to allude to San Martín's monarchic designs as another terrible example from which he recoiled. But before long the personality of the Argentine general faded from his mind; allusions to him became less frequent and finally disappeared altogether. This writer does not recall a single instance during Bolívar's later years when he ventures to express an opinion, either in letters or in conversation, about his former rival or the critical days of July, 1822. The *Diario de Bucaramanga*, for example, so replete with brilliant historical sketches both of Bolívar's co-workers and of dramatic situations pertinent to his career, is revealingly silent on the subject of the meeting of Guayaquil.<sup>126</sup>

No great psychoanalytical effort is required to explain a silence which stands in so marked a contrast to San Martín's repeated efforts to draw the encounter into the open and to remove its ambiguous character. Bolívar was the victorious general; he had triumphed where San Martín had failed. Moreover, San Martín had made no great impression on the Liberator. In fact, the visionary statesman and general and the taciturn and stoic soldier

<sup>122</sup> *Cartas*, III, 97.

<sup>123</sup> *Cartas*, III, 158.

<sup>124</sup> *Cartas*, X, 434.

<sup>125</sup> *Cartas*, IV, 11.

<sup>126</sup> Rojas (*op. cit.*, pp. 631, 648), suggests that José Manuel Restrepo's (*Historia de la revolución de Colombia* [10 vols., Paris, 1827]) account of the meeting of Guayaquil shows traces of having been influenced by Bolívar. Restrepo states that neither man was really satisfied with the results of their meeting, and gives as the purpose of their deliberations the expulsion of the Spaniards from America. I have not found any documentary evidence to confirm Rojas' belief that Restrepo's narration reflects Bolívar's opinion.

never appreciated or fully understood the other's character. Bolívar could not very well proclaim San Martín's resignation as another of his many victories, though he may well have believed it to be so, but he most certainly shed no tears over San Martín's withdrawal.

To summarize: Full recognition, demanded by careful examination, has been accorded to both San Martinian and Bolivarian sources, and the picture that emerges is, like a mosaic, composed of many different fragments. During the earlier years of the war for independence both San Martín and Bolívar thought of their proposed meeting as a friendly conclave between two liberators, but as time went by, both men began to consider it as a political and military move of great importance. While the political sky over the Protector grew darker, Bolívar found himself approaching the goal of his aspirations; he believed himself to be ready for and worthy of the title which he had so desired, that of *hijo predilecto*. The liberation of Great Colombia had been accomplished, and he could wait with equanimity for whatever role destiny might have in store for him. On the other hand, San Martín's Peruvian enterprises had either been frustrated or stifled, and it was only natural that he should be cast in the part of postulant and solicitor. It was logical, then, that all the suggestions and projects discussed at Guayaquil should have originated in San Martín's mind, while Bolívar confined himself to an expression of his own viewpoint as opposed to the position of his rival. He criticized, rejected, or refused, but he never came to the point of substituting any proposals of his own to replace those of San Martín.

San Martín had come to the meeting with three basic interests the importance of which he graded in this order: 1) a solution for the problem of Guayaquil; 2) the possible establishment of monarchies in the newly liberated countries as the most promising answer to the many unsolved problems that endangered the peaceful development of the Latin-American nations; and 3) the assurance of assistance from the Colombian army which might lead eventually to a union of the Peruvian-Argentine and the Colombian forces.<sup>127</sup> As we have noted, however, the situation gave him no opportunity to discuss these matters freely. The question of Guayaquil had already found its solution, little as San Martín might approve of it; his monarchic designs met with un-

<sup>127</sup> Rojas (*op. cit.*), observes rightly that such combinations of armies had occurred before, not only in San Martín's own campaigns, but also in Sucre's recent campaign in Ecuador.

mitigated opposition from Bolívar; his request for aid was only partly answered, while the idea of uniting the two armies was completely disregarded by Bolívar.<sup>128</sup>

In our opinion, both men displayed their true characters, and they reacted as their respective circumstances prompted them. It is quite true, as Lecuna has noted, that San Martín could still have persisted in his original mission to liberate Peru.<sup>129</sup> Although the help offered by Bolívar was less than he had hoped for, it was by no means negligible. However, in order to carry out his plans, he would have been obliged to apply severe and even terroristic measures, and his nature did not allow him to consider such procedures. He said as much to Guido in the following words: "Tenga Ud. por cierto que por muchos motivos no puedo ya mantenerme en mi puesto, sino bajo condiciones decididamente contrarias a mis sentimientos y a mis convicciones más firmes. Voy a decirlo: una de ellas es la inexcusable necesidad a que me han estrechado, si he de sostener el honor del ejército y su disciplina, de fusilar algunos jefes; y me falta el valor para hacerlo con compañeros que me han seguido en los días prósperos y adversos."<sup>130</sup>

In 1813, 1814, and 1817, in similar circumstances, Bolívar had shown the uncompromising and inexorable quality of his will, just as he was again to display it in 1824, when he finally shouldered the full responsibility for the independence of Peru. But San Martín was not the man for *la guerra a muerte*; he would never have executed a man like Piar, nor could he have tamed a lion like Páez. San Martín had faced the possibility of failure even before he had set sail for Guayaquil, and with this contingency in mind had prepared his resignation in case his meeting with Bolívar should prove to be an *affaire flambée*. In the face of Bolívar's refusal, San Martín felt unequal to the supreme effort of finishing the task on his own. He believed Bolívar possessed of a ruthless desire for power and glory which would recognize no block, not even that of civil war between the forces of the independence movement, and he decided to remove his person from the political and military scene, leaving to Bolívar a new field of glory. The complete silence in which he wrapped himself concerning the motives and circumstances of his decision was entirely characteristic. That he overrated Bolívar's military

<sup>128</sup> I think it is a mistake for Rojas (*op. cit.*, pp. 636-637) to list five topics, which, according to him, were *not* discussed at Guayaquil, and to limit the significance of the meeting solely to the question of the union of the two armies.

<sup>129</sup> Lecuna, *Entrevista*, p. 277.

<sup>130</sup> Reprinted in Lecuna, *Entrevista*, p. 133.



strength at the moment of their meeting, that he underestimated the political difficulties which had to be overcome before a union of the two armies could have been effected, were matters of secondary importance and influence in his line of conduct. It cannot be said, therefore, that Bolívar was responsible for San Martín's resignation; all that can be admitted is that Bolívar made no effort to prevent it.

As for Bolívar, we feel that he, too, behaved true to form. The annexation of Guayaquil was a matter of vital importance to him if his ideas for a Great Colombia were ever to be realized. The full significance of his step was realized in 1824 when Guayaquil became his supply base for Colombian reinforcements at the time when he and his army were stationed in northern Peru.

In regard to military help, he promised and gave to San Martín more than the latter had given him for his Ecuadoran campaign. That he refused to lead his army into Peru was, at that juncture, an inevitable decision, since the consolidation of his recent conquest and the stabilization of Colombia in general were still pending. His refusal to consider a joint Colombian-Argentine high command, or to accept San Martín's offer to serve under his direction was, we believe, evidence of political acumen, the better part of which is so often, if not skepticism, at least a realistic appraisal of all the elements involved. He had formed an accurate judgment regarding San Martín's plan of operation, realizing the dangers involved and the failure to be anticipated. However, Bolívar erred in overrating the personal ambitions of the Protector. San Martín did indeed harbor monarchic ideas, but he had no wish to become the "Iturbide de Peru" or possibly of all southern Latin America, as Bolívar believed.

It can hardly be doubted, however, that the Liberator was influenced by personal motives. To attain glory was the greatest ambition of his life; in him it reached almost the force of an obsession.<sup>131</sup> Mariño, Piar, Santander, and Sucre had all aroused his jealousy, and San Martín seemed a far more dangerous rival. Since 1814, he had dreamed of carrying the banner of freedom to Lima and Potosí, a dream in which his continental vision and his personal ambition were intermingled. Was it not human that he should feel relieved to see his great competitor about to withdraw with no decisive action necessary on his own part? He needed only to sit tight and watch events from the sidelines, and for a full year he preserved this attitude. He took quarters near the Peruvian theatre of war, remaining in the south of Colombia

<sup>131</sup> See Masur, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

although he was repeatedly urged to take his place in Bogotá. He had studied San Martín's tactics, and he believed he knew what mistakes might be expected. He had determined not to go to Peru until the Peruvian patriots begged him to come; he decided to bury the unpopular project of monarchy, alien to him in any case, and to develop other military ideas for the solution of the stalemate between the Spaniards and the independents. If necessary, he would be inexorable, for freedom had its price, and he would oblige the people to fight for their liberty.

In this great undertaking Bolívar considered San Martín a mere runner-up who had outlived his usefulness. Thus the outcome of the Guayaquil interview was preordained, in view of the political situation and the personalities involved. San Martín's resignation was a necessity; it would very likely have taken place even had Bolívar acceded to all the Protector's requests, since the characters, the temperaments and the ideas of these two men were entirely incompatible. It was a mark of greatness in San Martín that he recognized the dilemma; he made necessity his virtue, as he had always made virtue his necessity, to speak with Restrepo and Rojas. Bolívar's greatness lay in his ability to see matters in their true light and to weigh the political issues at stake in cold perspective. And while the ambitious and pugnacious victor could soon consign to oblivion an encounter which for him was no more than a steppingstone, San Martín remained mindful of the fact that a stronger and more ruthless genius than his own had been needed to effect the final liberation of South America. On August 29, 1822 he had written, "La independencia de América es irrevocable," but *au fond* he was convinced that it would be consummated only through Bolívar's action. In 1823, when living in retirement in Chile, he received the news of the arrival of the Liberator in Lima, and he wrote to Guido, "El sólo puede cortar los males, pero con un brazo de acero."<sup>132</sup> And after the liberation of Peru had been realized, San Martín did not hesitate to admit that "los éxitos que yo he obtenido en la guerra de la Independencia son bien subalternos en comparación de los que dicho general ha prestado a la causa general de América."<sup>133</sup> Every historian should recognize this expression of modest objectivity. While Bolívar's achievements were greater from the historical point of view, San Martín's resignation deserves praise as an act of self-sacrifice and abnegation.

<sup>132</sup> Quoted by Levene (*op. cit.*, p. 30).

<sup>133</sup> To Guido, Bruselas, Dec. 18, 1826, *Documentos del archivo de San Martín*, VI, 502.