will propagate it by every possible means. The army must be impressed with these principles. Care must be taken that not a word is said of pillage, oppression, conquest, or retaining possession of the liberated country. . . ."

With these instructions in his portfolio, all decisions made, and the army poised at the eastern entrances to the Andes, San Martín, one foot already in the stirrup, wrote (January 24, 1817) his last letter to his most intimate confidant: "This afternoon I set out to join the army. God grant me success in this great enterprise."

5. Hidalgo: Torchbearer of the Mexican Revolution

Miguel Hidalgo (1753–1811), the scholarly, white-haired priest of the town of Dolores and onetime rector of the college of San Nicolás Valladolid, hardly seemed fitted by background and disposition to head a revolution. It was Hidalgo, nevertheless, who overcame the wavering of his associates when their conspiracy was discovered and transformed what had been planned as an upper-class Creole revolt into a rising of the masses. Alamán, historian and bitter enemy of the revolution—who knew Hidalgo in the peaceful years before the great upheaval—describes the curate of Dolores.

Don Miguel Hidalgo, being neither austere in his morals nor very orthodox in his opinions, did not concern himself with the spiritual administration of his parish, which he had turned over, together with half the income of his curacy, to a priest named Don Francisco Iglesias. Knowing French—a rather rare accomplishment at the period, especially among churchmen—he formed a taste for technical and scientific books and zealously promoted various agricultural and industrial projects in his parish. He considerably furthered viticulture, and today that whole region produces abundant harvests of grapes; he also encouraged the planting of mulberry trees for the raising of silkworms. In Dolores eighty-four trees planted by him are still standing, in the spot called "the mulberry trees of Hidalgo," as well as the channels that he had dug for irrigating the entire plantation. He established a brickyard and a factory for the manufacture of porcelain, constructed troughs for tanning hides, and promoted a variety of other enterprises.

All this, plus the fact that he was not only generous but lavish in money matters, had won him the high regard of his parishioners—especially the Indians, whose languages he had mastered. It also gained him the esteem of all

Alamán, *Historia de Méjico*, 1:352–354. Excerpt translated by Benjamin Keen.

who took a sincere interest in the advancement of the country, men like Abad y Queipo, the bishop-elect of Michoacán, and Riaño, the intendant of Guanajuato. It seems, however, that he had little basic knowledge of the industries which he fostered, and even less of that systematic spirit which one must have to make substantial progress with them. Once, being asked by Bishop Abad y Quiepo what method he used for picking and distributing the leaves to the silkworms according to their age, and for separating the dry leaves and keeping the silkworms clean—concerning which the books on the subject give such elaborate instructions—he replied that he followed no particular order, that he threw down the leaves as they came from the tree and let the silkworms eat as they wished. "The revolution," exclaimed the bishop, who told me this anecdote, "was like his raising of silkworms, and the results were what might be expected!" Nevertheless, he had made much progress, and obtained enough silk to have some garments made for himself and for his stepmother. He also promoted the raising of bees, and brought many swarms of bees to the hacienda of Jaripeo when he bought that estate.

He was very fond of music, and not only had it taught to the Indians of his parish, where he formed an orchestra, but borrowed the orchestra of the provincial battalion of Guanajuato for the frequent parties that he gave in his home. Since his residence was a short distance from Guanajuato, he often visited the capital and stayed there for long periods of time. This gave me an opportunity to see him and to know him. He was fairly tall and stoop-shouldered, of dark complexion and quick green eyes; his head bent a little over his chest and was covered by sparse gray hair, for he was more than sixty years old. [Hidalgo was actually fifty-eight years old in 1810.] He was vigorous, though neither swift nor active in his movements; short of speech in ordinary conversation but animated in academic style when the argument grew warm. He was careless in dress, wearing only such garb as small town curates commonly wore in those days.

6. The Reforms of Hidalgo

Hidalgo and Morelos attempted to combine the Creole ideal of independence with a program of social justice for the oppressed classes of the Mexican population. The following decrees of Hidalgo, issued after his capture of Guadalajara, help explain why many conservative Creoles fought on the Spanish side against the patriots.

Alamán, *Historia de Méjico*, 2:25–26. Excerpt translated by Benjamin Keen.

Don Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, generalissimo of America, etc. By these presents I order the judges and justices of the district of this capital to proceed immediately to the collection of the rents due to this day by the lessees of the lands belonging to the Indian communities, the said rents to be entered in the national treasury. The lands shall be turned over to the Indians for their cultivation, and they may not be rented out in the future, for it is my wish that only the Indians in their respective towns shall have the use of them. Given in my headquarters of Guadalajara, December 5, 1810. . . .

Don Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, generalissimo of America, etc. From the moment that the courageous American nation took up arms to throw off the heavy yoke that oppressed it for three centuries, one of its principal aims has been to extinguish the multitude of taxes that kept it in poverty. Since the critical state of our affairs does not permit the framing of adequate provisions in this respect, because of the need of the kingdom for money to defray the costs of the war, for the present I propose to remedy the most urgent abuses by means of the following declarations. First: All slave owners shall set their slaves free within ten days, on pain of death for violation of this article. Second: The payment of tribute by all the castes that used to pay it shall henceforth cease, and no other taxes shall be collected from the Indians. Third: In all judicial business, documents, deeds, and actions, only ordinary paper shall be used, and the use of sealed paper is abolished.

7. The Plan of Iguala

Ironically, the work begun by Hidalgo and Morelos was consummated by a Creole officer, Agustín de Iturbide (1783–1824), who for nine years had fought the insurgents with great effectiveness. Behind Iturbide were conservative churchmen, army officers, and officials, who preferred separation from Spain to submission to the liberal Constitution of 1812, which the army imposed on Ferdinand VII. Lorenzo de Zavala (1788–1836), a brilliant Mexican statesman, publicist, and historian, describes the origin and triumph of the Plan of Iguala.

Popular revolutions present anomalies whose origin or causes are unknowable. Men who have followed one party, who have fought for certain principles, who have suffered for their loyalty to certain views or persons, suddenly change and adopt a completely different line of conduct. Who would ever have thought that the Mexican officer who had shed the blood of

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Lorenzo de Zavala, *Ensayo histórico de las revoluciones de México*, 2 vols. (México, 1918), 1:69–79. Excerpt translated by Benjamin Keen.

so many of his compatriots to maintain his country in slavery was destined to place himself at the head of a great movement that would destroy forever the Spanish power? What would have been thought of a man's sanity if in 1817 he had said that Iturbide would occupy the place of Morelos or would replace Mina? Yet the astonished Mexicans and Spaniards saw this happen.

Don Agustín de Iturbide, colonel of a battalion of provincial troops and a native of Valladolid de Michoacán, was endowed with brilliant qualities, and among his leading traits were uncommon bravery and vigor. To a handsome figure he united the strength and energy necessary to endure the great exertions of campaigning, and ten continuous years of this activity had fortified his natural qualities. He was haughty and domineering, and it was observed that to stay in favor with the authorities he had to remain at a distance from those who were in a position to give him orders. Every time that he came to Mexico City or other places where there were superiors, he gave indications of his impatience. . . . It is said that he was involved in a plan hatched at Valladolid in 1809 for the achievement of independence but withdrew because he was not placed in command, though his rank at the time did not qualify him for leadership. Be that as it may, there is no doubt that Iturbide had a superior spirit, and that his ambition was supported by that noble resolution that scorns dangers and does not retreat before obstacles of every kind. He had faced danger and difficulty in combat; he had learned the power of Spanish weapons; he had taken the measure of the chiefs of both parties—and one must confess that he did not err in his calculations when he set himself above all of them. He was conscious of his superiority, and so did not hesitate to place himself at the head of the national party, if he could only inspire the same confidence in his compatriots. He discussed his project with men whose talents would be useful to him in the political direction of affairs, and henceforth he threw himself heart and soul into forming a plan that would offer guarantees to citizens and monarchists and at the same time would remove all cause for fear on the part of the Spaniards.

Anyone who examines the famous *Plan of Iguala* (so called because it was made public in that town for the first time), bearing in mind the circumstances of the Mexican nation at the time, will agree that it was a masterpiece of politics and wisdom. All the Mexicans desired *independence*, and this was the first basis of that document. The killings of Spaniards that had taken place, in reprisal for those that the Spaniards had committed during the past nine years, required a preventive, so to speak, to put an end to such atrocious acts, which could not fail to arouse hostility among the 50,000 Spaniards who still resided in the country. It was necessary to make plain the intentions of the new chief in this respect. Accordingly, he seized upon the word *union* as expressing the solidarity that should exist between creoles and Spaniards, regarded as citizens with the same rights. Finally, since the Catholic religion is the faith professed by all Mexicans, and since the clergy

has a considerable influence in the country, the preservation of this church was also stated to be a fundamental basis, under the word *religion*. These three principles, *independence*, *union*, and *religion*, gave Iturbide's army its name of "the Army of the Three Guarantees." The representative monarchical system was established, and various articles stated the elementary principles of this form of government and the individual rights guaranteed to the people. Finally, the Spaniards were given freedom to leave the country with all their property. The expeditionary forces were offered the privilege of returning to Spain at the expense of the public treasury; those who chose to stay would be treated like Mexican soldiers. As can be seen, the plan reconciled all interests, and, raising New Spain to the rank of an independent nation, as was generally desired, with its immense benefits it silenced for the time being the particular aspirations of those who wanted the *republic* on the one hand and the *absolute monarchy* on the other. All the sons of the country united around the principle of *nationality*, putting aside for the moment their different ideals. We shall soon see the sprouting of these germs of ideas, as yet enveloped in mists or suppressed by the great matter of the common cause.

Don Agustín de Iturbide made all these preparations in the greatest secrecy, and to conceal his projects more effectively he entered or pretended to enter the church of San Felipe Neri to take part in religious exercises. There, it is said, was framed the document I mentioned. This display of piety, and the prudence and reserve with which he managed the affair, inspired the viceroy, who also was devout, to entrust him with the command of a small division assigned to pursue Don Vicente Guerrero, whose forces had increased considerably after the arrival of the news of the Spanish revolution. At the end of the year 1820 Colonel Iturbide set out from Mexico City, charged with the destruction of Guerrero but actually intending to join him at the first opportunity to work with him for the achievement of national independence. A few days after his departure from the capital, Iturbide drew near to Guerrero's camp. The latter had routed Colonel Berdejo, also sent out in his pursuit, in a minor clash, and this provided Iturbide with an opportunity to send Guerrero a letter inviting the patriot leader to abandon the enterprise that had cost the country so much futile bloodshed: "Now that the King of Spain has offered liberal institutions and confirmed the social guarantees of the people, taking an oath to support the Constitution of 1812, the Mexicans will enjoy a just equality, and we shall be treated like free men." He added: "The victories that you have recently gained over the government forces should not inspire you with confidence in future triumphs, for you know that the fortunes of war are mutable, and that the government possesses great resources."

This letter was written very artfully, for at the same time that it suggested a desire to enter into agreements and relations with the insurgents it aroused no suspicion in the viceroy, who interpreted it as reflecting the same policy

that had been so useful to him in pacifying the country. Presumably the persons employed by Iturbide to deliver these letters carried private instructions explaining his intentions. General Guerrero replied, with the energy that he always showed in defending the cause of independence and liberty, that he was resolved "to continue defending the national honor, until victory or death"; that he was "not to be deceived by the flattering promise of liberty given by the Spanish constitutionalists, who in the matter of independence [hold] the same views as the most diehard royalists; that the Spanish constitution [offers] no guarantees to the Americans." He reminded Iturbide of the exclusion of the castes in the Cadiz constitution; of the diminution of the American representatives; and, finally, of the indifference of the viceroys to these liberal laws. He concluded by exhorting Iturbide to join the national party, and invited him to take command of the national armies, of which Guerrero himself was then the leader. The vigorous tone of this letter, the sound observations that it contained, the convincing logic of its judgments, produced an astounding effect upon the Mexicans. Iturbide needed no persuasion; we have seen him depart from Mexico City with the intent of proclaiming the independence of the country, and the only matter left unsettled was the precise method of beginning the work, with himself as the leader of the daring enterprise.

He received this letter in January 1821, and replied to General Guerrero, in a few lines, that he wished to "confer with [him] about the means of working together for the welfare of the kingdom" and hoped that he (Guerrero) "would be fully satisfied concerning his intentions." An agreement was reached for an interview between the two men. [Historians are not in agreement concerning the time of the first meeting between Iturbide and Guerrero.] General Guerrero himself supplied me with details of what took place at this meeting. The conference was held in a town in the State of Mexico. . . . The two chiefs approached each other with some mutual distrust, although that of Guerrero was plainly the more justified. Iturbide had waged a cruel and bloody war on the independents since 1810. The Spanish leaders themselves hardly equaled this unnatural American in cruelty; and to see him transformed as if by magic into a defender of the cause that he had combated, would naturally arouse suspicions in men like the Mexican insurgents, who had often been the victims of their own credulity and of repeated betrayals. Nevertheless, Iturbide, though sanguinary, inspired confidence by the conscientiousness with which he proceeded in all matters. He was not believed capable of an act of treachery that would stain his reputation for valor and noble conduct. For himself, he had very little to fear from General Guerrero, a man distinguished from the beginning for his humanity and for his loyalty to the cause he was defending. The troops of both leaders were within cannon shot of each other; Iturbide and Guerrero met and embraced. Iturbide was the first to speak: "I cannot express the satisfaction I feel at meeting a patriot who has

supported the noble cause of independence and who alone has survived so many disasters, keeping alive the sacred flame of liberty. Receive this just homage to your valor and to your virtues." Guerrero, who also was deeply moved, replied: "Sir, I congratulate my country, which on this day recovers a son whose valor and ability have caused her such grievous injury." Both leaders seemed to feel the strain of this memorable event; both shed tears of strong emotion. After Iturbide had revealed his plans and ideas to Señor Guerrero, that leader summoned his troops and officers, and Iturbide did the same. When both armies had been joined, Guerrero addressed himself to his soldiers, saying: "Soldiers: The Mexican who appears before you is Don Agustín de Iturbide, whose sword wrought such grave injury for nine years to the cause we are defending. Today he swears to defend the national interests; and I, who have led you in combat, and whose loyalty to the cause of independence you cannot doubt, am the first to acknowledge Señor Iturbide as the chief of the national armies. Long live independence! Long live liberty!" From that moment everyone acknowledged the new leader as general-in-chief, and he now dispatched to the viceroy a declaration of his views and of the step he had taken. Iturbide sent General Guerrero to seize a convoy of Manila merchants bound for the port of Acapulco with 750,000 pesos; he himself set out for the town of Iguala, forty leagues to the south of Mexico City, where he published the plan which I have outlined. The Spanish troops began to leave Iturbide's division, but the old patriot detachments began to reassemble everywhere to come to his aid.

All Mexico was set in motion by the declaration of Iguala. Apodaca immediately ordered General Liñán to march with a large division against the new leader, to strangle in its cradle this movement of threatening aspect. But this was not the tumultuous cry of Dolores of 1810; the viceroy was not dealing with a disorderly mob of Indians armed with sickles, stones, and slings and sending up the confused cry "Death to the *gachupines*, long live Our Lady of Guadalupe!" He faced a chief of proven bravery, who, supported by the national will and followed by trained leaders, spoke in the name of the people and demanded rights with which they were well acquainted. . . . While this chief was making extraordinary progress in the provinces, the capital was in the greatest confusion. The Spaniards residing in Mexico City attributed the successes of Iturbide to the ineptitude of Apodaca, who a short time before, according to them, had been the peacemaker, the tutelar angel, of New Spain; now this same man suddenly turned into an imbecile incapable of governing. They stripped him of his command, replacing him with the Brigadier Francisco Novella. This fact alone suffices to give an idea of the state of confusion in which the last defenders of the Spanish government found themselves. Reduced to the support of the expeditionary forces, the dying colonial regime immediately revealed the poverty of its resources. . . . Of the 14,000 soldiers sent to defend the imaginary rights of the Spanish government, only

6,000, at the most, remained—and what could they do against the Mexican army, which numbered at least 50,000 men? Arms, discipline—everything was equal except morale, which naturally was very poor among troops suddenly transported to a strange land, two thousand leagues away from their country. . . . Was it surprising that they surrendered, in view of the situation? Thus, between the end of February, when Iturbide proclaimed his plan of Iguala, and September 27, when he made his triumphant entry into Mexico City, only six months and some days elapsed, with no other memorable actions than the sieges of Durango, Querétaro, Cordóba, and the capital. It was at this time that General Antonio López de Santa-Anna, then lieutenant-colonel, began to distinguish himself.

8. A Letter to Dom Pedro

Brazil made a swift and relatively bloodless transition to independence. The immediate causes of separation were the efforts of a jealous Portuguese cortes *to revoke the liberties and concessions Brazilians had won since 1808 and to force the prince regent, Dom Pedro, out of Brazil. Messages of support from juntas throughout the country, such as the following from the junta of São Paulo, encouraged the prince to defy the Lisbon government and to issue his famous "fico" (I remain).*

We had already written to Your Royal Highness, before we received the extraordinary gazette of the 11th instant, by the last courier: and we had hardly fixed our eyes on the first decree of the *Cortes* concerning the organization of the governments of the provinces of Brazil, when a noble indignation fired our hearts: because we saw impressed on it a system of anarchy and slavery. But the second, in conformity to which Your Royal Highness is to go back to Portugal, in order to travel incognito only through Spain, France, and England, inspired us with horror.

They aim at no less than disuniting us, weakening us, and in short, leaving us like miserable orphans, tearing from the bosom of the great family of Brazil the only common father who remained to us, after they had deprived Brazil of the beneficent founder of the kingdom, Your Royal Highness's august sire. They deceive themselves; we trust in God, who is the avenger of injustice; He will give us courage, and wisdom.

If, by the 21st article of the basis of the constitution, which we approve and swear to because it is founded on universal and public right, the deputies

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Maria Graham, *Journal of a Voyage to Brazil, and Residence There, During Part of the Years 1821, 1822, and 1823* (London, 1824), pp. 174–177.