

ment which those we have brought with us are now tasting. They will remain prisoner until the liberty of the Nation, which we have hinted at, and its independence is achieved, at which time they will become full citizens and their rights of ownership of those possessions of which we temporarily deprive them in the pressing interests of the nation, will be recognised. If, on the other hand, they should reject this request, I shall spare no force nor any pains to destroy them utterly, nor can they expect any quarter. May God grant you a long life; such is the wish of your humble servant, Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, Captain-General of America.'

(V. Riva Palacio, *México a través de los siglos*, vol. III, pp. 115–16.)

III

Marshal Soult opens the war to the death, 9th May

1810

'There is no Spanish army apart from that of His Catholic Majesty, Joseph Napoleon. All factions now in existence anywhere in the country, whatever their size and whoever leads them, shall therefore be treated as gangs of bandits ... All individual members of these groups caught sword in hand shall be summarily tried by the local army commander and shot: Their bodies shall be put on public exhibition in the streets.'

(Toreno, *Historia del levantamiento ...*, vol. III, pp. 265–6.)

112

News of the Revolution in Venezuela

1810

'Events in Caracas.

One of the saddest effects of the sorry pass to which the affairs of state had come last January was the regrettable effect the news