

constitution. Political freedom seems to have made rapid advancement through the freedom of the press, and the voice of liberty may be said to have been heard. At first it was listened to with apprehensions, and its meaning but imperfectly understood. Although many years have since passed, the people have scarcely more than begun to feel that they possess individual rights, and for the most part yield a blind obedience to the laws. This is true as respects the population of the seaports; but in the country, the population being sparse, communication of every kind is difficult, and social intercourse embarrassed by early habits and customs. The advantages of a free and frequent interchange of sentiments are in consequence almost entirely unknown. A long time will probably elapse before there will be any political struggle among them. They are prospering in their private concerns, and contented without any ambition to advance themselves in political knowledge, or to meddle with the concerns of the government, except in their local operation. The state of society in the interior is very much of this character, and consequently the affairs of the country have suffered little derangement from the difficulties which have occurred, and mal-administration under the different sovereigns who have held rule for the last thirty years. Through part of this time a rapid decline was experienced in the national prosperity, which led to the abdication of the late Emperor Pedro I.

The whole political machine by which the government is administered is uncouth and awkward, being composed of a mixture of feudal notions with the refinements of modern times. It is moved and sustained more by the habit of obeying the laws, than by skill and judgment in administering them. There is an entire absence of all force, moral as well as physical, to sustain the government; yet to this in a great measure is it to be ascribed, that the country has not become a prey to anarchy and confusion. Combined with the above causes, is the jealousy that exists among the parties who have been called to office, and which prevents self-aggrandizement. Pretensions have been at times asserted, dangerous to public tranquillity and threatening the subversion of the established order of things. These have been promoted by the disaffected and discontented, principally composed of or countenanced by those persons who, after the departure of Don Pedro I., remained in the country, and who, having lost their importance with their offices, returned to private life, with their pride wounded, their fortunes and reputation impaired and injured, and themselves dissatisfied with their condition. These persons have sought every occasion to disturb the even current of events, and to array themselves against the power of the state, wielded as they deem