

only on the back of the Cordilleras that I found a small chapel, destined, according to its inscription, for prayers to be addressed to Heaven for the destruction of the termites.

Valencia affords some historical remembrances; but these, like everything connected with the colonies, have no remote date, and recall to mind either civil discords or sanguinary conflicts with the savages. Lopez de Aguirre, whose crimes and adventures form some of the most dramatic episodes of the history of the conquest, proceeded in 1561, from Peru, by the river Amazon to the island of Margareta; and thence, by the port of Burburata, into the valleys of Aragua. On his entrance into Valencia, which proudly entitles itself 'the City of the King,' he proclaimed the independance of the country, and the deposition of Philip II. The inhabitants withdrew to the islands of the lake of Tacarigua, taking with them all the boats from the shore, to be more secure in their retreat. In consequence of this stratagem, Aguirre could exercise his cruelties only on his own people. From Valencia he addressed to the king of Spain, a remarkable letter, in which he boasts alternately of his crimes and his piety; at the same time giving advice to the king on the government of the colonies, and the system of missions. Surrounded by savage Indians, navigating on a great sea of fresh water, as he calls the Amazon, he is alarmed at the heresies of Martin Luther, and the increasing influence of schismatics in Europe.\* Lopez de Aguirre, or as he is still

\* The following are some remarkable passages in the letter from Aguirre to the king of Spain.

"King Philip, native of Spain, son of Charles the Invincible! I, Lopez de Aguirre, thy vassal, an old Christian, of poor but noble parents, and a native of the town of Onate in Biscay, passed over young to Peru, to labour lance in hand. I rendered thee great services in the conquest of India. I fought for thy glory, without demanding pay of thy officers, as is proved by the books of thy treasury. I firmly believe, Christian King and Lord, that, very ungrateful to me and my companions, all those who write to thee from this land [America], deceive thee much, because thou seest things from too far off. I recommend to thee to be more just toward the good vassals whom thou hast in this country: for I and mine, weary of the cruelties and injustice which thy viceroys, thy governors, and thy judges, exercise in thy name, are resolved to obey thee no more. We regard ourselves no longer as Spaniards. We wage a cruel war against thee, because we will not endure the oppression of thy ministers; who, to give places to their nephews and their children, dispose of our lives,