

VENEZUELA.

THE following is an abstract of a paper read before the Agricultural Society by Senor M. J. Romero of Caracas, Venezuela, who has been detailed to this place by the Venezuelan Government in order to study our experiment station methods.—[Ed.]

Venezuela was the first South American country discovered by Columbus on his third voyage. He landed on the eastern coast near the mouth of the Orinoco river on August 1st, 1498, the fourth centennial of which event was celebrated with great pomp throughout Venezuela on the first day of last August. In 1499 Alonzo de Oleda, a Spanish navigator, arrived at the Gulf of Maracaibo, on the western coast of Venezuela, where he found a small colony of Indians living in huts supported by piles extending out from the water. On account of the similarity of this settlement to the Italian city of Venice, he gave to it the name of Venecia. It was later called Venezuela (Little Venice), a name which was soon applied to the entire country.

The Spaniards spent more than forty years in subduing the native inhabitants of the country, after which time Venezuela remained in their power until the early part of the present century. In 1806 the Venezuelan General Miranda, with a band of valiant followers, raised the first cry of independence. The revolutionists were overcome and cast into prison, where Miranda died. Among his companions were quite a number of Americans, all of whom were either beheaded or hanged. A statue of Miranda, one of the finest in all Venezuela, has been erected to the memory of the Americans who lost their lives in our war for independence.

On the 5th of July, 1811, was signed the declaration of independence, but independence was not gained until after ten years of bloody warfare. Bolivar, who, for delivering five countries from Spanish bondage, has been aptly called the Washington of South America, led our forces during this long war. As Bolivar was the Washington, so was General Monagas the Lincoln of Venezuela. In 1854, he abolished slavery which had first been introduced into the country in the 16th century by the Spaniards.