

## CONCLUSION.

THE arduous duty, fulfilled with such unremitting assiduity, by the Advocates who nobly maintained the apparent interests of the Republic, while they magnanimously wielded the legitimate weapons of defence for the unfortunate individual—the Emperor Maximilian—failed to avert from him the fearful penalty which he had unhappily incurred.

Maximilian met his death with placid resignation and heroic fortitude. As before related, marching to his tomb, he, with characteristic nobleness and dignity, presented to each of the firing-party a gold coin (*see* Frontispiece), with a pathetic request that they would aim at his heart, over which, at the last moment, he calmly placed his hand, which was instantly pierced with bullets. A tremulous motion in his body was perceptible as he fell, and the "*coup de grâce*"—that finale, which, although apparently cruel, is dictated by humane intentions—completed the tragic scene.

Maximilian sacrificed himself by his error in attempting to establish a Mexican Monarchy, in spite of the sound advice proffered to him by the agent of the Constitutional Government, the Licentiate Don Jesus Teran (*vide* page 113), who, at Miramar, gave him timely warning of the perils he would encounter in the acceptance of a Crown at the hands of an unauthorized faction, which did not, and could

not, worthily represent the mind and will of the Mexican people at large.

Let it never be believed, nor so much as suspected, that the day of his execution was one of rejoicing to Mexicans. *Not an inhabitant of Queretaro witnessed the execution—even the houses were closed, and the streets for the time were deserted!* An eloquent testimony of the sympathy of the people with the unfortunate Emperor—an example of reticence which will ever redound to the honour of that city. As soon as the fatal sentence was carried out, their true position was realised. No unseemly joy, but a sympathetic sadness, pervaded that section of society which regarded him as a noble and generous, but mistaken because misguided, Prince. And all the people grieved that he had so irredeemably compromised himself, by lending his sanction to measures that had caused widespread suffering to be inflicted on an unoffending community, together with such fearful national loss, that a pardon could not consistently be extended to him.

With tears and throbbing hearts, Mexicans mourned his fate, although, by the peculiar circumstances of the case, they were constrained to suppress the utterance of their sentiments of sympathy.

From the place of execution at Queretaro, the Emperor's remains were conveyed, with decorous ceremony, to the city of Mexico; and in solemn silence they were carried into the Palace where he had passed so many eventful days with his beloved Consort, now his pitiable and sincerely-pitied widowed wife. Thousands of Mexican hearts bled when his inanimate body passed the portals of his temporary resting-place; and earnest were the prayers they offered to the Most High for the repose of his soul!



The formal application, that the Mexican authorities deemed requisite, at length arrived from Austria, whither the corpse of the Emperor was forthwith transported, and finally deposited in the mausoleum of his illustrious ancestors.

The Intervention!—The frustrated Monarchy!—The Finale! A miserable mistake throughout, and a deplorable failure in the end, over which, in charity to both the invaded and the invaders, it were perhaps better to draw a veil. As to the effects, immediate and remote, produced on Mexico and Mexican affairs by the death of Maximilian, the writer refrains from offering any comment. But, apart from any political bias, he would fain point out one source of her national weakness—the sparsity of her population, with its usually concomitant crudity of social organisation.

Let encouragement be given for immigration to that wealthy country. This would develop her vast resources, and at the same time strengthen and consolidate her institutions; and so, accelerate the time when the world will rejoice in that bright and glorious territory, which has been—not inappropriately—designated “the Paradise of the Earth!”

FINIS.

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