

short distance to the south of the Castle of Uloa. The cannons thundered on sea and land, like the artillery of heaven; loud huzzas rent the air from the living mass that swarmed the wharf, sea-shore, and house-tops; rockets hissed through the heated air; musicians were blowing themselves into notice; hats, handkerchiefs, flags, and banners were waving, high and low; the crowd, looking as though their greatest expectations had been realized, could hardly believe what their eyes beheld. Never did the arrival of living man cause in Vera Cruz such a gala-day, such a shout of universal joy. The arrival of Cortez, more than three centuries ago, might have been more surprising, but not half so welcome.

CHAPTER VIII.

Maximilian's proclamation at Vera Cruz—Ceremonies there—En route to Cordova—Orizaba—Puebla—Guadalupe—At the Capital.

IN the afternoon of the 28th of May, soon after the arrival of the steamer Novara at Vera Cruz, the following proclamation was issued by Maximilian, and circulated through that city:

“MEXICANS:

“You have desired my presence! Your noble nation, by a voluntary majority, has chosen me to watch henceforth over your destinies! I gladly respond to this call.

“Painful as it has been for me to bid farewell forever to my own, my native country, I have done so, being convinced that the Almighty has pointed out to me, through you, the noble mission of devoting all my strength and heart to a people who, tired of war and disastrous contests, sincerely wish for peace and prosperity; to a people who, having gloriously obtained their independence, desire to reap the benefit of civilization and true progress.

“The confidence which animates you and me will be crowned by a brilliant success, if we always remain united to defend valiantly the great principles which are the only true and lasting bases of modern States—the principles of inviolable and immutable justice, equality before the law, an open road to every one to every career and social position, complete personal liberty well defined, having in it the protection of the individual and property, the improvement of national

riches, the advancement of agriculture, of mining, and of industry, the establishment of ways of communication for an extensive commerce, and finally, the free development of intelligence in all that relates to the public interest.

"The blessings of Heaven, and with them progress and liberty, will not surely be wanting, if all parties, under the guidance of a strong and loyal government, unite to realize the objects I have just indicated, and if we always continue animated by the sentiment of religion, by which our country has been distinguished even in the most unfortunate times.

"The civilizing flag of France, raised to such a high position by her noble Emperor, to whom you owe the regeneration of order and peace, represents the same principles. This is what, some months ago, in sincere and disinterested language, the chief of her troops said to you, as the announcement of a new era of happiness.

"Every country which has desired to have a future, has succeeded in being great and strong by following this road. United, loyal, and firm, God will give us strength to reach the degree of prosperity which is the object of our ambition.

"Mexicans! the future of our beautiful country is in our hands. As to me, I offer you a sincere will, loyalty, and a firm intention to respect your laws, and to cause them to be respected with an invariable authority.

"God and your confidence constitute my strength: the flag of independence is my symbol: my motto you already know, 'Equity in Justice;' I will be faithful to it all my life. It is my duty to wield the sceptre conscientiously, and the sword of honor with firmness.

"The enviable task belongs to the Empress to consecrate to the country all the noble sentiments of Christian virtue, and the mildness of a tender mother.

"Let us unite to carry out a common object; let us

forget past sorrows; let us bury party hatred, and the Aurora of Peace and of deserved happiness will radiantly beam forth again over the new Empire.

"MAXIMILIAN.

"VERA CRUZ, May 28th, 1864."

Lieutenant-General Almonte being the highest officer in the Imperial service, was the proper one to receive the new Sovereigns. At five o'clock that morning he left Cordova for Vera Cruz, reaching there about five o'clock in the afternoon. Everybody was anxiously waiting his arrival. The fact was, the arrival of the distinguished personages was sooner than was anticipated; hence the delay in preparations.

A committee, composed of the city officers, assembled at the palace; and, on the arrival of General Almonte, escorted him to the wharf amid the roars of the cannon and the huzzas of the people. The General first had a private interview with the Emperor. Immediately after, the city officers, headed by the Prefect, D. Domingo Bureau, were presented by the Minister, Señor Velazquez de Leon.

His Majesty was in the saloon on the upper deck, dressed in a black frock-coat, white vest and pants, and black cravat. The committee were dressed in the same manner.

The presentation being completed, the Prefect addressed Their Majesties as follows:

"SIRE:

"Truly will the day be ever memorable on which Your Imperial Highness reached Mexico, as the desired savior to establish the Empire, which has been proclaimed under auspices so favorable, since no one having a good heart and a religious belief can fail to recognize the benign hand of Providence in the admirable events

which have prepared the regeneration of this beautiful and desolated country, opening up an enviable future, under the illustrious and benign sceptre of Your Imperial Majesty.

"The new era which commences for the Mexicans is full of hope, founded on the wisdom and noble designs which inspire Your Imperial Majesty in raising this nation (now so low) to the height of a prosperous destiny.

"Your Imperial Majesty is welcome to your new country, with which, in doing it the honor of adopting it as your own, you have wished to identify your fate.

"May God bless the noble purpose which guides Your Imperial Majesty in favor of the Mexicans, and crown with the most complete success your grand, civilizing, and Christian undertaking.

"As Political Prefect of this District, and in the name of the authorities and inhabitants of the same, I have the honor and the satisfaction of congratulating Your Imperial Majesty, and Your Majesty the Empress, for your fortunate arrival on the soil of Mexico, and of presenting you our complete and sincere adhesion, as well as our most profound respect."

His Majesty made the following reply:

"I view with pleasure the arrival of the day when I can walk the soil of my new and beautiful country, and salute the people who have chosen me. May God grant that the good-will that led me toward you may be advantageous to you; and that all good Mexicans uniting to sustain me, there will be better days for the future. The important department and city of Vera Cruz, which have been so much distinguished for their patriotism, ought to be sure of my benevolence. This port being the principal entrance to the interior, my solicitude will be devoted to the opening and extending of its commerce.

"Gentlemen, I promise to return to see you in a more favorable season, and then to remain with you as long as it may be necessary."

His Majesty then entered the other saloon, and taking the Empress by the arm, walked to the centre of the saloon, in presence of the committee; then the Minister, Señor Velazquez de Leon, advanced and presented the committee to Her Majesty. The Prefect immediately complimented her in the following terms:

"MADAM:

"Your Majesty will please condescend to receive the most sincere congratulation and the most perfect homage from the authorities and inhabitants of this district. While I have the honor to present the committee to Your Majesty on your fortunate arrival, they are struck with admiration by the virtues and talents your noble character presents. Providence has offered Mexico the double benefit of an enlightened Sovereign, united in destiny with Your Majesty, an object of affection and respect with all good hearts, and Mexico recognizes in you a worthy spouse of our elected Emperor. The Mexicans, Madam, who expect so much from the good influence of Your Majesty in favor of all that is noble and great, of all that bears relation to the elevated sentiments of religion and of country, bless the moment in which Your Majesty reached the soil, and proclaim in one voice, 'Long live the Empress!'"

The Empress, very gracefully and briefly, in Spanish, responded.

Soon after this ceremony had taken place, Their Majesties retired, in company with General Almonte, and the committee of city officers returned on shore.

That day, on board the steamer, the Emperor appointed

General Almonte the Grand Marshal of the Court and Minister of the Imperial House.

He addressed the following note to the General:

"MY DEAR GENERAL ALMONTE:

"At the moment in which I receive from your hands the affairs of the Empire, I hasten to give you, in presence of the whole country, which owes you such great obligations, a public proof of my acknowledgment.

"I have decided to appoint you Grand Marshal of the Court and Minister of the Imperial House; remitting you, with your appointment, the regulations and instructions which will guide you in the fulfilment of such distinguished functions.

"Receive, General, the proof of my consideration and appreciation.

"MAXIMILIAN.

"ON BOARD THE 'NOVARA,' May 28th, 1864."

Their Majesties were quite anxious to remain a few days in Vera Cruz, to become better acquainted with the inhabitants, and to ascertain their wants. But on account of the hot season, a somewhat dangerous one for those not acclimated, and by some considerable solicitation on the part of their friends, they were persuaded to change their determination, and to hasten on to breathe the mountain air. It was therefore decided that they would disembark on the following morning, at an early hour. The committee of city officials presented themselves on board at a very early hour the next morning, and at five o'clock Mass was said in presence of Their Majesties and the committee. His Majesty then observed: "I wish, in the future, that there be no distinction made between those who are Indians and those who are not. All are Mexicans, and have equal right to my solicitude."

The small boats were ordered to be ready, and soon Their Majesties and retinue were gliding to the shore. On arriving upon the wharf, at the entrance of the city gate, the President of the Ayuntamiento, D. Salvador Carrau, accompanied by the Council and public officers, presented to His Majesty the key of the city, which was neatly wrought, and placed on a silver waiter; at the same time congratulating him on his arrival.

The Emperor made a very happy reply.

At the conclusion thereof, Their Majesties and General Almonte entered an open carriage and rode through the principal streets, followed by many other carriages, horse and footmen. Triumphal arches were raised at various points, richly and gayly decorated; windows were wreathed with flags and flowers, and verses in honor of the new Sovereigns were visible in every direction; while the loud huzzas almost drowned the music of the band.

A short time only was occupied in viewing the city. Their Majesties and suite were soon placed in a car, and the remainder of the escort in another. They reached Soledad at nine o'clock, where they breakfasted. The escort from Vera Cruz, composed of the municipal authorities, returned from Loma Alta—there bidding Their Majesties farewell. The party did not reach Cordova until two o'clock the following morning. Notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, the city was all alive—a blazing mass of illumination. The late arrival was caused by the breaking of one of the axletrees of the carriage in which Their Majesties rode; the night was dark and rainy; but the Sovereigns did not seem to be troubled by the accident in the least—they were so much delighted with the desire exhibited by their subjects to do all they could for them under the circumstances. Long before they reached Cordova, a number of Indians were sent out from that city with

torches, which they carried in front of the carriage, and which enabled the driver to clearly see the road.

As they arrived at the *garita*, or entrance of the city limits, they were met by the President of the Ayuntamiento (or Town Council), and other city officers. The President then delivered to His Majesty the keys of the city of Cordova; at the same time addressing him in behalf of the city.

After their arrival in Cordova, that morning at ten o'clock there was a solemn *Te Deum* and Mass at the church. Soon after, the city authorities assembled at the palace, and were presented to Their Majesties. In response to the congratulations of those officers, the Emperor said:

"With true pleasure we see you, Gentlemen, near and around us, and we accept your good desires. May the day in which I find myself for the first time among you and in the heart of my new and beautiful country, be one of peace and sweet confidence. Being with all my heart a Mexican, it is my first and most ardent wish that all my compatriots may unite at my side, in order to be able, with zeal and perseverance, and upon free bases corresponding to our epoch, to work for the good of our noble country. In this simultaneous action will be found our strength and our future. You, Gentlemen, that are the representatives of this district and city, must, before all, give your fellow-citizens the example of union, of zeal, and of true patriotism."

His Majesty then addressed the Ayuntamiento thus:

"With sincere pleasure we salute you, Gentlemen. The sacred duties which the Mexican nation has imposed upon us, and those which we wish to enter upon with entire and loyal abnegation, call us forthwith to the

Capital of the Empire. We cannot then, I regret it, remain a long time in your beautiful and interesting city. Notwithstanding, say to your fellow-citizens, that the Empress and I propose, within a short time, to pass several days among you; and that then it will be for me an agreeable task and duty to study the wants and the desires of the city and its dependencies."

In the evening a fine dinner was given to the city authorities and other persons of note, numbering in all forty. Fireworks were blazing on every corner; while music was gladdening the hearts of the lookers-on.

The next morning, at eight o'clock, Their Majesties were again on the road to Orizaba, a distance of six leagues. Before reaching that place, they found a concourse of people assembled at Barranca de la Villegas, which they could not pass unnoticed. The Sovereigns and retinue halted awhile; and after receiving a complimentary speech, and making a short response, they moved on. Having arrived at the *Escarmela*, or entrance to the city limits of Orizaba, they found a deputation of city officials, and among them the Prefect, who saluted Their Majesties in the name of the city. The Emperor, resting one hand on a table, and having the Empress at his side, made a very affectionate reply.

There was a continual stream of people, banners, flowers, and music all along the road.

Subsequently, within the city of Orizaba, in answer to an address made by the Municipal Prefect, His Majesty said:

"With particular satisfaction, I and the Empress my wife receive your good wishes. The love with which our new country greets us, profoundly moves us, and we think it a happy sign of an agreeable future. If all

unite with us with the sole end of promoting the lasting greatness and prosperity of our country, Providence then will crown our efforts; and as the Empire flourishes, the divers departments and cities will commence real progress. Orizaba, in particular, has a double interest in the completion of the railroad, which I propose not to lose sight of, and I believe the day will soon arrive when the Empress and I shall return to visit you by the new way open to steam."

He then spoke to the authorities of Orizaba in general, saying:

"In traversing the territory of my new and beautiful country, I receive with pleasure the demonstrations from the generous people who have called me to govern their destinies. May it please God to hear our prayers, and to give the Empire the era of peace which it so much requires to advance in greatness and prosperity.

"The benefit of really free institutions, an order of things regulated and lasting, united to the developed material which will offer you the means of easy communication, will assure you at last the complete exploration of the extraordinary riches with which Providence has favored your land above all the rest of the earth. My government will fix, particularly, its attention on your interest. You, Gentlemen, as their organs, I promise, will watch with zeal and patriotism the execution of my orders, and will take care of their punctual fulfilment."

On that day the Emperor wore white pants, a black frock coat, and a high-crown white hat, without any distinguishing mark of royalty. The Empress wore a dress and scarf of coffee-colored silk, and a hat of the same color.

Their Majesties were perfectly charmed with the country around Cordova and Orizaba. Its natural beauty and formation; its rich and luxuriant foliage; its valleys; the grandeur of the surrounding mountains,—all presented a magnificent panoramic view.

The remarkable beauty of the scenery which had been presented to them by books, by travellers, by the natives, began to be realized. They believed that their newly adopted country was equal to the sketch of their own bright fancies. As they cast their eyes upward and beheld the white mantle of winter's snow, while beneath and around them the rich plantations of coffee, sugar-cane, cotton, oranges, bananas, and all kinds of tropical fruit were spreading their beautiful, gently-hanging, green foliage, and scenting the balmy air with their honeyed breath; while the various feathered races, with their plumage dipped in the rainbow hues, were mingling their warbling notes with the soft-tuned guitar and the sweet accents of the fair daughters of Moctezuma; while they contemplated all this great picture-gallery of nature, with the productive soil beneath, and still deeper down a mighty body of mother earth all interlaced with arteries and veins of gold and silver, they were indeed enchanted. His Majesty exclaimed, "How beautiful our country is!"

As their Majesties were entering Orizaba, the people desired to take the mules from the carriage and draw it by hand; but His Majesty did not wish to accept such homage as that. After his positively refusing, they retired from the carriage with a perfect good-will, giving at the same time the wildest shouts of enthusiasm.

The following day, June 1st, about nine o'clock in the morning, the Empress received a committee of ladies from the district of Augustina, who, after congratulating her upon her arrival, presented her with a ring, which she placed upon her finger, saying that she would ever

preserve it as a sweet recollection of her trip through Orizaba.

An hour later, Their Majesties attended Mass at the church. At the conclusion of the service they visited the schools and hospitals. The Emperor examined minutely the apartments occupied by the men; while the Empress gave a thorough look at the rooms and inmates in the female apartment. His Majesty then visited the prisons, asking each one therein how he was treated, and for what he was there.

Later in the day, at the palace, the curate of Naranjal (an Indian town) was presented to Their Majesties, together with the Alcalde and Rejidor of the town; also, two young Indian girls. The Alcalde made a speech to the Emperor in the Aztec language, which was as follows:

“No mahuistililoni tlactocatziné, nican tiqumopielia mo icno masehual conetzihua, ca san ye ohualacque o mitzmotlaepalhuiliztinoto, ihuan ica tiqumomachtis ca huel senca techyolpaqui mo hualialitzin impampa itech tiqueta aco se cosamalotl quixikintihuitz inon mexicolis mixtl nesi ye omochautiheaipan to thactocazotl. In senhulitini mitztitlania, ma ye huatzin mitzmochicahuili ica titechmaquixtis. Nis tiqumopielia inin maxochtzintl, quen se machiotl in tetlasotla litzin, mitzmo maquilia mo xocotitlan conetzitzihua.”

This speech was translated into Spanish, and in English reads thus:

“Our honorable Emperor, here you have these poor Indians, your children, who have come to salute you; and by that you know that your coming much pleases their hearts; because in it they see, as it were, a rainbow which dispels the clouds of discord that appear to have

gathered in our kingdom. The Almighty sent you; it is He that gives you power to save us. Here is this flower; see in it the sign of our love. Your sons of Naranjal give it to you.”

The flowers were woven with palm-leaves in the shape of a fan. They were peculiar to this country, called *siemprevivas* (ever-living). The colors were red and white, which, added to the green palm, constituted the colors of the Mexican flag.

The Emperor, in reply, addressed the Indians in the following words (which were spoken by him in Spanish, and interpreted to them):

“It is very pleasant to me, my dear children, to receive you as a commission from your town, because it is a proof of the confidence which you ought to place in me, in order to enjoy the peace and well-being which you have so long needed.

“You may count on the anxious care which I shall take to protect your interest, to favor your works and agricultural productions, and to improve in every manner your situation; and so you can tell it to the people of Naranjal.”

The two Indian girls then presented the Empress with a little basket, a handkerchief, and a turtle-dove. Her Majesty thanked them very kindly, with a sweet smile on her face. This seemed to please the Indians highly. She then sent for a cage to put the dove in.

After visiting again the schools, examining the scholars in their different studies, and giving each a piece of gold money, Their Majesties returned to the palace to dine. A rich banquet was spread, at which the officers and some other prominent persons assisted. At eight and a half o'clock they retired from the table, to prepare