

## CHAPTER XI.

Maximilian goes to Queretaro—History of the city—Maximilian's opinions—His habits—Battles—Taking of the city by the Liberals—His surrender and imprisonment.

"Before my breath, like blazing flax,  
Man and his marvels pass away!  
And changing empires wane and wax,  
Are founded, flourish, and decay."

ON the 6th day of February, A. D. 1866, the French troops left the city of Mexico. Their connection with the government of Maximilian had ceased. His Majesty, fearing that the clouds of despair might darken the views of his forces within the city of Queretaro, concluded, after receiving the opinion of his Council, in unison with his own, to appear in person at that point, hoping that his presence might stimulate the soldiers, and give them new hope. Consequently, at the head of a force of not far from eighteen hundred men, composed of cavalry, infantry, and artillery, accompanied by General Marquez and Señor Aguirre, Minister of War, he took up his line of march February 13th, for Queretaro. On the first and fourth day he had light skirmishing with a party of guerrillas, the latter day's fight lasting several hours; a few were killed, and several were wounded on both sides. He reached Arroyo Seco on the 18th, distant from the latter city four leagues. Very early the next morning he was again in the saddle, and at about ten o'clock he, with his little army, entered Queretaro in the most triumphal manner. Before entering, he was met by Generals Miramon and Mejia, their staffs, and the whole force at Queretaro, numbering over three thousand men. The entrance was grand and imposing. His

Majesty sat upon a large elegant white steed, dressed in a dark blue uniform as a Mexican general, with military boots over his pants, and a small cap, called a *kepi*.

All Queretaro seemed to be out of doors. Both sides of the road were lined with people, crowding almost on to the soldiery. Shouts of "Long live the Emperor" went up from every direction, as though by one united voice. Church-bells chimed without cessation, as if they were calling the whole nation together; hats, handkerchiefs, and gay ribbons were waving, while bouquets were falling all around His Majesty in showers, thrown by smiling señoritas, as fresh as their garden-flowers. One would have concluded, while gazing at that enthusiastic mass, that they supposed a new era of perfect bliss had appeared. His Majesty, with his accustomed affability and general good-nature, was bowing, first on this, then on that side, amid the universal applause of the multitude. Surely Maximilian thought he had fallen among friends. That friendship was genuine. The citizens of Queretaro have given ample evidence of their friendship for him during all his misfortunes. Would that the same could be said of his own officers! Those citizens smiled when fortune surrounded His Majesty—they wept when sorrow lighted upon his brow.

Queretaro is situated in latitude twenty degrees and twenty-three minutes north; and in longitude one degree and five minutes west from the meridian of the city of Mexico, and distant from the latter place fifty-seven leagues. It was founded about the year fourteen hundred and forty-five, and formed a part of the Empire of Moctezuma I. It was conquered by D. Fernando de Tapia, July 25th, 1531, who gave it the appellation of Santiago de Queretaro. In the Tarasco idiom—whence the name of Queretaro—it signified a place where ball was played; probably not those leaden balls of death, which have played so important a part in this century.

In the year 1655, it was raised to the rank of a city, by King Felipe IV. It contained, a few years ago, about fifty thousand inhabitants. Now, half that number would be nearer a correct estimate of its population. Empty houses are very abundant, as well as many half annihilated from the storms of battle.

During the war with the United States, Mexico held its congressional sessions there; and there executed the treaty of Hidalgo, made between those two Governments in the year 1848.

On the arrival of His Majesty in that city, the Queretaro Club offered him their apartments, in the building known as the Casino, which had been elegantly fitted up by them. It was the most comfortable quarters that could have been tendered him. There was ample room for him and his staff. He accepted the generous offer.

On the twenty-fifth of February, the Emperor received a re-enforcement of four thousand men, under Gen. Mendez.

Soon after taking a survey of that city and its surroundings, the Emperor commenced erecting fortifications on *El Cerro de las Campanas* (the Hill of the Bells), which is a little over a mile northwest of the city. He was of opinion that that position would be first attacked by the enemy. He attended to that work in person. He remained there night and day, from the sixth of March until the thirteenth. The first three nights he slept upon the ground. The fourth day, Gen. Mejia arranged an elegant Turkish tent for the Emperor, in which he rested the last four nights. It had been purchased by Gen. Almonte in Paris, and by him presented to Mejia, who tendered it to his Majesty.

The Emperor wrote the following letter as explanatory of his acts and wishes, in order that erroneous views might not be taken relative to his intentions:

“MY DEAR MINISTER:

“QUERETARO, March 2d, 1867.

“As my departure for Queretaro, where I have come to place myself at the head of the army recently formed, might be falsely interpreted by persons badly disposed, in the country as well as out of it; and as my reasons for it ought to be known, in view of the many calumnies which our enemies propagate with so much promptitude upon the conduct of our Government, I am of opinion that it is necessary to make some brief observations, which may serve as explanations, and also as a rule of conduct in the difficult circumstances through which we are passing.

“The programme which I adopted in Orizaba, after having heard the frank and loyal opinion of the consultative bodies of State, has not been changed a particle. My prevailing thought continues to be the calling of a Congress, which I always thought to be the only means of founding the future on a durable basis, and to form a point of cohesion where may be united successively all the parties which now cause the ruin of our unfortunate country.

“I have not wished to emit this idea of a Congress (which I have always supported since my arrival in this country), until there would be a security that the representatives could assemble free from exterior influence. During all the time that the French maintained under their authority the Central provinces, it was impossible to assemble a Congress which could have deliberated freely. My trip has hastened the withdrawal of the troops of the Intervention, and thus the time has arrived when I am able to express myself openly upon the thought of a constituent Congress. The best proof that I was not able to make this resolution before is, the sad opposition which I met with in the French authorities, when I mentioned it on their departure.

"A Congress elected by the nation, a real expression of the majority, with full powers to work, and a complete liberty to deliberate, is the only possible means of terminating the civil war, and of stopping the effusion of blood so prolonged. As Sovereign and Chief, called by the nation, I shall submit with pleasure to their will, having the most ardent desire to terminate promptly this desolating struggle.

"I have done more, even. I have communicated personally with the chiefs who pretend to fight in the name of liberty and of the principles of progress, to induce them to submit themselves, as I have the intention of doing, to the national vote. What has been the result of these negotiations? Those men who invoke progress have not wished, or have not dared to accept that judgment. They have responded to me by ordering loyal and distinguished citizens to be executed; they have repulsed the fraternal hand which was extended; they have worked as blind partisans, who know no other means of governing but the sword.

"Where then is the national will? On the side of whom exists the desire of true liberty? Their only excuse is in their blindness.

"It is impossible for us to rely on such men, and our duty is to work with the greatest energy to restore the liberty of the people, so that they may express voluntarily their will.

"This is the reason why I have hastened to come here, in order to try all means to establish order, peace, and to prevent another and more terrible foreign intervention in this country. The French bayonets have marched; it is necessary then to impede the action of every influence which directly or indirectly might threaten our independence and the integrity of our territory.

"In this moment our country is for sale at public auction.

"It is necessary to employ all the means possible to free us from a situation so critical, and to place Mexico safe from every oppression, come whence it may.

"In a word, the National Congress will determine upon the destinies of Mexico—also upon the institutions that it may see proper to establish, which may exceed the present form of government; and if this Assembly cannot be invoked, because we, who wished to call it, have succumbed in the struggle, the opinion of the world will do us justice at least, and will acknowledge that we were the true defenders of the nation, that we have never sold the territory of the nation, that we have tried to save it from a second and oppressive intervention, and that we have sincerely used all our efforts in order that the principle of national suffrage might triumph.

"MAXIMILIAN."

The foregoing letter is another proof of the Emperor's desire to ascertain, and to be governed by, the will of the Mexican people.

The Liberals, under Escobedo, attacked the city of Queretaro, on the 14th of March, with a superior force of nearly thirty thousand, while that of Maximilian numbered less than nine thousand. The Emperor, on that day, saw not a moment's rest. He was in the saddle during the engagement, riding here and there, where danger was greatest, and where observation was most needed. He never seemed to think of personal danger; the defeat of the enemy was uppermost in his mind; and that was the result of the action, although accompanied by a loss on his part of about two hundred killed and three hundred wounded.

After that battle, he moved his quarters into the church called La Cruz. The comforts of life he abandoned. In fact, many of his officers had better rooms

and food than he. His new apartments were a room of about twelve feet by eighteen; and another one adjoining for his servant. The furniture that adorned his place of rest was composed of a camp-bed, two common tables, and six camp-chairs. Most officers of the rank of captain would not have considered such quarters as suitable even for them, in a city where elegant apartments could have been obtained by a written order from His Majesty. But that position was considered the best for observation; and to be there day and night, was viewed by His Majesty as extremely important. Inconveniences and the want of present comforts were considerations that did not trouble him.

His men saw no evidence that he was not willing to share hardships and deprivations equally with them. He looked upon it as a joint cause: the salvation of the army was his own success.

On the 22d of March, General Marquez left Queretaro, with orders from the Emperor to march with his thousand mounted men, selected for that purpose, to the city of Mexico, to obtain a re-enforcement of men and procure provisions and munitions of war—and to return within fifteen days: if there were not men enough to hold the city of Mexico, and also increase his force sufficiently for the defence of Queretaro, to abandon Mexico, and return to the latter city with all the men he could raise. Such a concentration of the Imperial forces at Queretaro would have saved the Emperor, and probably destroyed the army of Escobedo.

The Emperor conferred upon Marquez the title of *Lugar Teniente*, which is usually translated "*Lieutenant-General*," but which means something more. Such an officer takes the place of the Emperor, with full power to act as he sees proper. The Emperor deemed it important to place unlimited power in Marquez, in order to carry out his plans. It was an unfortunate selection

on the part of His Majesty, of a commander for such a duty; and it has been cited as an instance of his erring judgment as to human nature. Whether the Emperor did honor Marquez with the above-mentioned title, has been seriously doubted. When the latter arrived in the city of Mexico, he exhibited his authority to act in that capacity; but the question as to its genuineness was raised in the minds of many. I was informed of the fact of the appointment by His Majesty's secretary, who said he himself drafted the order empowering Marquez thus to act. And as I suggested to him the importance of knowing the truth, I cannot have any suspicions of the authenticity of Marquez's title of *Lugar Teniente*. The latter evidently abused his power—acted far beyond what justice and honor would dictate, and much to the regret of and injury to Maximilian.

On the 27th of March the Emperor attacked the enemy, captured two pieces of artillery, and nearly two hundred prisoners. He was on the field in person, urging on his men with great enthusiasm. Where the balls fell the thickest, there he was found doing duty. His loss was quite small.

Marquez did not obey orders. After reaching Mexico, and increasing his forces to four thousand, eight hundred of which were European soldiers, he advanced slowly on Diaz, who was besieging Puebla. That city was then held by about three thousand Imperial troops. Diaz had nearly fifteen thousand men.

It was the hope of Marquez that Diaz would sally out and open an engagement with him, which would have relieved the Imperial force within Puebla. General Diaz was short of the munitions of war, and he viewed an attack by him upon Marquez as extremely hazardous. He also considered inaction on his part equally dangerous. He therefore saw no probable chance for success but in an attempt to storm the city of Puebla, which he

did on the second of April, in the morning early, with a force of eight thousand. He was soon in possession of the city, although meeting with a considerable loss on his part.

Some of the prisoners which he there captured were wheeled into his own ranks; and he hurriedly prepared to follow Marquez. On the fourth of April he sent out three thousand cavalry under General Toro, who met Marquez on the sixth, at the Hacienda de San Diego de Notario, about fifteen miles from Apizaco. General Toro formed for battle on a not very advantageous ground, the place being surrounded nearly by ravines. He brought on an engagement with ill success. The first charge of Marquez sent his men flying in confusion, who were only saved by the force of General Leva, who attacked the left flank of Marquez.

The Liberals drew off and re-formed within three or four hours thereafter. Marquez retreated toward Apizaco.

At half-past three he was discovered moving on the left flank of the enemy, and in half an hour he was in front disputing his passage.

General Leva formed three thousand cavalry in line of battle, himself commanding on the right. His centre rested on a hill. His cavalry were ordered to dismount. Marquez charged up the hill, and the Liberals fell back seven leagues to Piedra Negra, where they rested all night.

The next day, Diaz having arrived, went out with his full force of over twelve thousand men near Apam, formed in line of battle, and advanced in that form five leagues.

On the eighth, at four and a half o'clock, he halted. His cavalry horses were then double-mounted, by placing one of the infantry behind each horseman. Six thousand men thus mounted advanced on a walk, as the roads

were wet and bad. Light mountain-pieces were mounted on mules. At six o'clock, in sight of San Lorenzo, Diaz formed in line of battle; and with four pieces of artillery he pushed on rapidly to engage the enemy's right flank. Diaz carried the position. He formed a line of battle around the Hacienda of San Lorenzo, and gave orders for the men to be ready at half-past four the next morning,—thinking that the enemy could not get away in the night, and that the following day would be a victorious one for him. The morrow came and found Marquez and his force absent and out of sight. Diaz followed on with cavalry at a gallop. Marquez came to a broken bridge, and not having sufficient time to repair it, ran his artillery into the ravine, and there abandoned it. He had placed his European troops in the rear, and the cavalry of Diaz never but once approached within pistol-shot of them. The foreign soldiers retreated in excellent order, losing but a few killed, and a few who were taken prisoners from weakness and sickness, which prevented their keeping up with the command. Marquez, however, with a small escort, soon deserted his men, and went flying back to the Capital like a coward. There was a narrow passage in the road where he could have held the enemy in check, but his cowardice would not permit the attempt. He afterward assumed command in the Capital, where he remained until that city also fell into the hands of the Liberals. His force followed after him, reaching the city a few days later.

Marquez considered it of the utmost importance to hold the large and opulent city of Puebla, if possible; but his force was inadequate to make an attack upon Diaz. If Diaz had had sufficient ammunition (his want of which was unknown to Marquez), he could have engaged Marquez, and considering his men equal, the probability was, he could have conquered; while at the same

time his remaining forces would have been able to support and hold good the siege of Puebla.

I apprehend the soldier may question Marquez's wisdom, under the circumstances, in disobeying the order of the Emperor.

On the 14th of April, the Emperor's forces in Queretaro, numbering but little over six thousand, made a sortie, took nineteen guns and six hundred prisoners, with a loss of a very small number. At that battle, the Emperor was also at the post of danger.

This action produced great havoc and consternation among the enemy. He was routed at all points. The opportune arrival of General Treviña, with a cavalry reinforcement of five thousand, prevented a general rout of the enemy. In order to prevent a complete stampede of the Liberals, the force under General Treviña was employed in surrounding the scattered regiments, that hardly knew which way to go, or where or when to stop.

It is difficult to say what force the Liberals had in that action. It has been estimated from seventeen to thirty thousand. They made no morning or monthly reports of their number.

Even with this re-enforcement, the Liberals felt no inclination to renew the engagement; but were content to exercise their ingenuity and skill in checking, in some degree, the wild fury and the escape of a completely disorganized army.

On the morning of that day, before the attack, everything was in readiness for a final departure from that city, with all the Imperial forces. But on reviewing that brilliant victory, His Majesty saw that he enjoyed a more signal triumph than he or his officers had anticipated,—far greater than they believed possible, when they considered the numerical superiority of their adversaries.

His Majesty, flushed and animated with the victory his daring blow had produced, reconsidered his opinion of the morning, and resolved to remain longer in that city, and save its inhabitants from what they believed to be a plundering and sacking party. The number of foreigners in the Emperor's service there did not number over two hundred, all told. But his men were better officered and better drilled than the opposing army.

As General Marquez had not made his reappearance in Queretaro, according to the Emperor's positive instructions, and more than ten days had elapsed since his contemplated arrival, the Emperor was quite uneasy, and harbored grave misgivings as to the real intent of Marquez. Consequently, with a view of ascertaining the true condition of the Capital and the movements of Marquez, His Majesty, on the 17th of April, issued orders to Prince Salm Salm, requiring him to leave for Mexico, in pursuit of Marquez, and to obtain full information as to the situation of affairs; to tell Marquez, in the name of the Emperor, to bring all of his forces forthwith to Queretaro, and, if necessary, to give up the Capital: and that if Marquez should refuse to comply with these commands, then the Prince's order was to arrest him, and to hasten back to Queretaro with him and the cavalry, particularly with the Hussars. At twelve o'clock that night, the Prince, with five hundred men, sallied out, and advanced about one half of a league, when he was attacked, and wounded by a shot in his left foot, though not seriously. His intention was to take the Cerro Gordo road. But on examining the position and number of the enemy, from whom he was receiving a heavy fire, near the Campana, from artillery and cavalry, he saw that it was impossible to break his lines, and therefore returned into the city, without making another attempt. The enemy was so

strong, that a sortie, with a small number of men, was but a waste of force, material, and time.

The Imperialists made an unsuccessful attack on the 1st of May, retreating with a small loss. It was said that the blame was due to Miramon. Their number did not exceed five thousand, while the Liberals were twenty-five thousand strong.

Immediately after a battle, the Emperor would visit the hospitals in person, seeing every sick and wounded man, inquiring of him how he felt, how he was treated, and, as he parted, a kind word of hope fell from his lips. This visit was daily made for several days following a battle, and never more than three or four days passed without his visiting them. He gave each widow of his deceased soldiers, who was there to receive it, ten dollars out of his private funds, as long as they lasted. He also paid visits to the prisoners, not passing one without speaking to him.

He was not unmindful of those who had rendered him important service. Mr. Edwin R. Wells, from Texas, formerly from New York, who had paid some attention to medicine and surgery, though not a physician, made himself exceedingly useful in the hospitals. He received some poisonous matter in his finger, and came near losing his hand while thus employed. His Majesty did not forget him. On the 22d of March he bestowed upon him a gold medal of the Order of Guadalupe.

The Emperor kept no carriage in Queretaro. He rode on horseback. Frequently he would go on foot to visit the different posts. Many mornings he was observed returning on foot, between six and seven o'clock, having, at that early hour, visited all the outposts. He superintended the placing of nearly all of the batteries, sighted the guns, and saw that all the requisite work was done. He wore a broad-brimmed Mexican white hat, high mili-

tary boots, and a white blouse, generally, in going the rounds.

He retired and rose early. He took exercise every day. If he deemed it unnecessary to visit in person the different batteries every morning, he walked at sunrise one hour in the square in front of the church La Cruz. He likewise performed the same exercise at sunset, in the same location. Usually, on those daily walks, he was attended by his secretary, or one of his aid-de-camps. When thus promenading he was not unfrequently accosted by some one who had some complaint to make, or some favor to solicit. Were they rich or poor, high or low, he never turned a deaf ear, but most patiently listened, and clothed his answers in kind words. In order that the matter should not be forgotten, he would order his secretary or aid-de-camp to enter the matter in a memorandum-book. He never failed to examine the complaints and requests, giving them due consideration.

Whoever desired an audience with him could obtain it, when he was not otherwise occupied. When saluted, he bowed, however humble the individual whence came the salutation. His disposition was such, that mildness and gentleness were his natural elements.

Whatever lofty ideas of Imperial prerogative he may have imbibed, in unison with other sovereign heads, a violation of the right of petition could hardly be imputed to him. The sincerity of his professions and declarations was among his shining qualities. One was more inclined to look upon him as a President than an Emperor.

The tower on La Cruz church was His Majesty's observatory, until it became too dangerous. Near the close of the siege, General Escobedo's guns were nearly opposite, scarcely a mile distant, and, in fact, some were within six hundred yards. General Escobedo having