

Maximilian in Mexico

sooner or later come into direct antagonism with allies who were pledged to the most benighted form of clericalism, and into real, though perhaps unconscious, sympathy with their opponents who stood arrayed upon the side of progress.

It was not long before the pretensions of the church and party complications caused a breach between the Corps Expéditionnaire and its original supporters, which placed the French in the unlooked-for, and by them much deprecated, attitude of invaders and conquerors of the land, equally hated by ally and foe. And yet at the outset one aspect of the situation was favorable to the success of the French undertaking.

The sweeping reforms carried out by Juarez during his brief undisturbed occupation of the country had greatly smoothed the way for the French in their self-imposed task of Mexican regeneration. The new laws had already been enforced regulating the relations of church and state. The confiscation of clergy property, the breaking up of the powerful religious orders, and religious tolerance, all had been proclaimed, as well as the freedom of the press.

Spanish influence, which in these struggles had been exercised strongly against reform, had been abruptly brought to an end by the summary dismissal of Señor Pacheco, the Spanish minister, and the Archbishop of Mexico had been exiled.

III

M. DE SALIGNY AND M. JECKER

ONE of the first problems, and quite the most important, to be faced by President Juarez, upon his establishment in the capital, had been the raising of funds with which to carry on the expense of the Liberal government. As a measure the throwing upon the market of the nationalized church property recommended itself. There was, however, but little confidence, and still less ready money, in the country after many years of civil strife. So much real estate suddenly thrown upon the market depreciated property. The easy terms of sale—a third cash, the balance to be paid in *pagares*—tempted speculators and gave rise to many fraudulent transactions, and the measure brought little relief to the government.

Although in March, 1861, President Juarez had signed a convention adjusting anew the pecuniary claims of the French residents, on July 17 Congress found itself compelled to suspend payment on all agreements hitherto entered into with foreign powers. The very next day the representatives of France and Great Britain entered a formal protest