

Maximilian in Mexico

venues from those ports, which for three months in 1864 had been \$96,000 and \$900,000 respectively, had for the same period in 1865 risen respectively to \$431,000 and \$1,645,000.

Large concessions for railroads had been asked for and granted under solid guaranties—the line from Vera Cruz to Mexico to an Anglo-French company, pledged to complete it in five years, and another concession for three lines, for the carrying out of which \$4,500,000 had been subscribed. Telegraph lines were being established; coal, petroleum, and gold- and silver-mines were being exploited, or were in a fair way to be.

The good management of the regency under General Almonte's frugal administration had accumulated a balance of 15,000,000 francs in the treasury—a small surplus which must have been encouraging to the Emperor upon his arrival. Moreover, the loan of 200,000,000 francs, so readily taken up abroad, had given a substantial foundation for hopeful anticipation, and it seemed as though France might possibly get out of her rash venture with honor and profit.

The mirage that had lured Napoleon to these perilous shores now appeared materially nearer, and its outlines seemed more vivid and attractive than ever before.

But if it was an easy matter to create an empire as the result of an armed invasion of an unwilling land, it was quite another thing to organize it upon a permanent basis. As Prince Napoleon—familiarly known as Plon-Plon—very wittily remarked

A Bed of Roses in a Gold-Mine

later, "One can do anything with bayonets, except sit upon them." ("On peut tout faire avec des baïonnettes, excepté s'asseoir dessus.") For over two years Napoleon III endeavored to make Maximilian perform the latter feat—with what result we all know only too well.