

The civil war made his opportunity; and scarcely had the action of England been made known to foreign powers when Louis Napoleon also declared his purpose "to maintain a strict neutrality in the struggle between the Union Government and the States which pretend to form a special confederation." The alleged cause for this generous action, this graceful salute to historic memories, was the peaceful relations existing between France and the United States of America. This was the Emperor's stepping-stone to the London convention in '61, and to his magnanimous offer to act as mediator between the North and South in '63, when there were forty thousand French troops on the soil of Mexico.

The two emperors might declare peace at Zurich to serve the honor of France, the vaulting ambition of Louis Napoleon, or the necessity of Austria; but the road to peace, after the Italian campaign, lay through Italy's toiling millions with their faces toward the light of a higher freedom. Cavour in the cabinet council was their prophet; Garibaldi with his volunteers at Palermo, their priest militant; and Victor Emanuel at Naples with his artillery train, their "uncrowned king." Such men

could be silenced with no royal convenience, no mere victory of diplomacy. The storm which "the silent man of the Tuileries" had invoked could not be stayed. There could be no peace which did not recall that forty thousand Sardinians shared the victories and defeats with Briton, Frenchman, and Turk, on the bleak uplands of the Crimean Chersonese; which did not consider all that Cavour demanded for his country at the Congress of Paris; all that the Emperor of the French had promised him before he defied the power of the Austrian; all that was meant in later years of battle and revolution, and the final union of the states in an "Italy one and indivisible," certified in the election of Victor Emanuel as its ruler, at Turin, in June, '61.

"Italia Una! Now the war-cry rang
From Alp to Etna: and her dreams were done,
And she herself had wakened into life,
And stood full armed and free; and all her sons
Knew they were happy to have looked on her,
And felt it beautiful to die for her."

There could come to us, in our extremity,
but one message from such a people; and one
of the last requests of their great minister was,

that his countrymen should send an assurance to the Federal government that they could give their sympathies to no movement which tended to perpetuate human slavery.

Even at Rome our righteous cause at first found friends ; for His Holiness, Pius IX., and the gifted Cardinal Antonelli, expressed their hopes for the good fortune of the North : but the vision of a new empire of Catholic allegiance across seas, with the restoration of her confiscated estates and revenues to the Church, had not then risen to charm and delude the statesmen of the Vatican.

Spain halted for a time, in the presence of the golden opportunity our civil war made, to recover, by strategy or force, the gem of her lost colonies. But she recalled that, in answer to her overtures for an intervention in 1860, England exacted the protection of the Protestant faith, and France, not then ready for action, excluded the idea of any recourse to material coercion ; that Mexico, without the absolute domination of the Church, and with any other than a Bourbon prince as ruler, would be a standing menace to the home government ; that the annexation of Cuba, by purchase or conquest, was no novel question in

American politics ; and at last she also made a neutral declaration, which, as one of its earliest results, closed the career of the rebel cruiser *Sumter*.

At this time the balance of power in Europe was maintained by an equipoise of the questions of race and politics, that statesmanship, and diplomacy, and the shock of battle have not solved in a thousand years, and nothing can solve but the kiss of righteousness and peace, through arbitration. There was less of honor won at the siege of Paris than at the Congress of Geneva. And so, with all the powers at peace among themselves, from the necessity or the policy of the hour, and looking on in selfishness or indifference, or with sympathy and supreme interest in the contest, England, Spain, and France made the convention, so charged with danger to this Republic, as she stood amid the gathering shadows of disunion.

What were the causes of the intervention ? The text of the treaty lifts all the open reasons for the interference in Mexican affairs into the clear light of analysis and criticism.

The salient points are these. It is important to note them in their order.

The three powers engaged to make arrangements for dispatching combined naval and military forces sufficient to seize and occupy the several fortresses and military positions on the Mexican coast.

The commanders of the forces were authorized to execute the other operations on the spot most suitable to effect the object of the convention, and specifically to insure the security of foreign residents.

They engaged not to seek for themselves, in the employment of the coercive measures contemplated by the convention, *any acquisition of territory, nor any special advantage, and not to exercise, in the internal affairs of Mexico, any influence of a nature to prejudice the right of the Mexican nation to choose and to constitute freely the form of its government.*

And a commission was established to determine all the questions as to the application or distribution of the sums of money which might be recovered.

It is, however, the fourth article that had special significance for us.

“The high contracting parties desiring, moreover, that the measures which they intend to adopt should not bear an exclusive character, and being aware that the govern-

ment of the United States, on its part, has, like them, claims to enforce upon the Mexican Republic, agree, that immediately after the signature of the present convention, a copy thereof shall be communicated to the government of the United States; that that government shall be invited to accede to it; and that, in anticipation of that accession, their respective ministers at Washington shall be at once furnished with full powers for the purpose of concluding and signing, collectively or separately, with the plenipotentiary designated by the President of the United States, a convention identical, save the suppression of the present article, with that which they sign this day. But, as by delaying to put into execution Articles I. and II. of the present convention, the high contracting parties would incur a risk of failing in the object which they desire to attain, they have agreed not to defer, with the view of obtaining the accession of the government of the United States, the commencement of the above-mentioned operation beyond the time at which their combined forces can be assembled in the neighborhood of Vera Cruz.”

Such were the declared purposes of the three powers.