

dispositions which I found everywhere among the French people for our republic, he said :

“ You are very right to do so ; in this business the people and the government are quite distinct. The French people are indisposed to take any steps unfriendly to the United States. Unfortunately the emperor has one great advantage over us French people. He can pursue his plans steadily, and without being led aside by his self-love ; whereas we French people always make our interests secondary, where our national pride is involved. In that way he is leading us a chase whither nobody seems to know but himself ; and before we are aware of it, or can help ourselves, he may get our vanity on his side.’ ”

At various periods in the history of Mexico since her independence, it has seemed to some of her wisest politicians and statesmen that the only way to peace and prosperity, in their unfortunate country, was through the rule or protection of some foreign government. Appeals for intervention were made on several occasions to the European powers, and to the United States, without result. The tender of the crown to Ferdinand VII. of Spain, to Don Carlos and Francisco de Paulo, the Bourbon princes, to Archduke Charles of Austria, to the nominee of the Pope, to General Scott as dictator, and finally to a prince of Hapsburg

house, marks the vitality of this sentiment in favor of foreign domination.

At the outbreak of our civil war, and after the confiscation decrees had deprived the conservative party of its power and shattered its hopes of success, a number of clerical exiles and refugees found an asylum and welcome at various European courts. They were among the ablest men of Mexico. Their leader was Almonte, revolutionist, soldier, minister to France, aspirant for the presidency, minister of finance, and finally lieutenant and marshal of the empire under Maximilian. He was welcomed at the court of Napoleon III., and became his confidant and most trusted adviser in Mexican affairs. It cannot be denied that his motives were in great degree personal, and that he hoped, through the intervention of France, to reach the prize he had twice failed to secure, and convert the republic into an empire, as Iturbide had done. But he made his appeal from considerations of justice to France, payment of her obligations, and the protection of her citizens on Mexican soil. He pictured in glowing colors the marvellous wealth and resources of his country, the evils she had endured, and the honor history would

accord to him who should be her savior and the messenger of civilization and peace.

The persuasions of Almonte were strengthened by a vigorous diplomacy at London, Madrid, and Vienna; and at Rome the earnest appeals of the Mexican bishop, Labastida, led the Pope to inspire the Empress of the French with zeal for the intervention; and she urged the duty and the glory of the new crusade to restore to the Latin race its supremacy in the New World, and to recover for the Church its royal estates and revenues, and to stop the onward march of the Saxon as Charles Martel stayed that of the Saracen. And when the exiles finally told Napoleon of the attempts of some of the leaders of the Southern Confederacy to enter into a grand scheme of political union with the Mexican Liberals, which should result in an empire to encircle the Gulf of Mexico, and so insure the destruction of the Church party, of which the Emperor was the historic defender, and reminded him of the recent suggestion of Spain, that the secession of the South might prove an occasion for reviving past souvenirs and placing upon the throne of Mexico a prince of the Bourbon blood, in his willing mind the problem of a

French protectorate was soon solved. The suspension of the English, Spanish, and French convention debts furnished the pretext; and the plan which was not discussed at the alliance meeting at London, but which was settled in advance at Paris, was put into operation.

Against the simple propositions of the London treaty, and the specious arguments of its defenders, the real scheme, as history has so far written it, was this:

To consider the refugees (the representatives of the Church party) in Paris as the true representatives of the Mexican nation and promise them protection.

To encourage the Confederates in the United States, with the view of neutralizing the power of the Union, and insuring its destruction.

To crush by military force the republican government of Mexico, and establish an empire in its stead, and to offer its crown to the Austrian Archduke Maximilian, and so checkmate the designs of Spain to recover her lost possessions.

Such was the imperial purpose from the beginning, masked under protestations of justice to France and disclaimers of all ulterior motives, but laid bare in the march of events, the acts and declarations of Napoleon, and in the conduct of his royal *protégé*.

There was one cause for hesitation in the work of the diplomatists in London on that eventful day; one potent and perplexing factor in the situation; and that was the attitude the government of the United States might assume towards the proposed intervention.

It was not forgotten that our claims and causes of grievance against Mexico were quite as great and varied as were those of either of the allies, and that we commanded the strategic situation. It was not forgotten that thirty-two million souls answered to our national roll-call in 1860, that our resources were without end, and that already there were marshalled in camp and field six hundred thousand men,—the skirmish lines of a mighty host,—sworn to the defense of the republic. And so, with diplomatic courtesy, the allies tendered an urgent invitation to join their enterprise, in convention Article IV., already recited.

But a master in the precedents and learning of the law of nations sat in the Senate at Washington; and a master in the arts and scholarship of diplomacy sat in the Cabinet, and there were patriots in Congress yielding to no man in their love of country; and over all ruled the mighty brain, the exalted spirit of

the man of our time and history: and our answer to the high contracting parties was a straightforward but diplomatic refusal to join in the intervention.

Many have believed that our action was chiefly due to an adherence to the so-called "Monroe Doctrine"—the historical dogma of American politics. But that was not the controlling question in the cabinet of Lincoln. It was no mere tradition of the state, no fine-spun theory of political morals, no mock patriotism that would uphold at any hazard the sentiment "America for Americans," no vain-glorious defiance of European powers within or without the neutral circle that guided the government in its decision. Its refusal was for causes that touched the pulses of the national life. It was the outcome of the "irrepressible conflict." It was a great historical fault for which the nation was to pay a sublime and sorrowful expiation. It was the question whether a state was one of an inseparable union or a sovereignty in itself, and whether human slavery should longer stand in our policy of government by the side of human liberty—a question which abolitionism, and free-soilism, the Missouri compromise and the Dred Scott

decision, the Kansas-Nebraska bill, and the Fugitive-Slave law had failed to answer.

It was the pitiful prayer of "Uncle Tom" to the pitiless Legree. It was the bludgeon blows of Brooks, of South Carolina, upon the head of Sumner. It was John Brown, the fanatic and fatalist, at bay in the engine-house at Harper's Ferry, going to the scaffold with a smile upon his lips, that treason to the laws of Virginia might be avenged, and the epitaph of American slavery be written. It was the cannon-shot from Moultrie that stayed the *Star of the West* on her errand of mercy. It was the Confederate States of America, taken out of the old Union by the conspirators of the South, and sworn to be an empire of themselves, and to leave the Federal compact under the arch of peace if they could, through the gateway of war if they must. It was the glowing camp-fires of the Confederate armies, lighting the boundaries of eleven States that had followed South Carolina in her ordinance of Secession. It was Lincoln, the stalwart figure, by the flag in the contest of 1860; the prophet of the people, uttering in the gloom of his inauguration alike his prayer and warning, that "the central idea of Secession is the essence of anarchy."

"The great deep soul that was a home for all,
Just, eloquent, and strong,
In protest against wrong,
Wide charity that knew no sin, no fall.

"Teaching us how to seek the highest goal,
To earn the true success,
To live, to love, to bless,
And make death proud to take a royal soul."

It was Anderson and his men, seen through the smoke of Sumter, calling a nation to their support. It was the volleys of the Sixth Massachusetts in the streets of Baltimore. It was young Ellsworth, dying at Alexandria, while pulling down the emblem of treason. It was Winthrop, falling in the front at Big Bethel, while his glittering blade beckoned his men to the charge. It was the sacrifice at Manassas, when victory was turned into defeat, that roused the nation from its "sweet dream of peace." It was the great soldier of organization, McClellan, forging, on the heights of the Potomac, the massive weapons with which four years later the great soldier of execution, Grant, crushed the rebellion in the Wilderness. It was Lyon, slain in the terrific cross-fire at Wilson's Creek, after saving Missouri to the Union. It was Baker, the orator of the

Senate, dying at Ball's Bluff while rallying his men to check the charge, that turned the Union defeat into a massacre. It was the voice of a liberty-loving people in arms to save the republic, and borne to the starry heavens in its magnificent "Battle Hymn," whose refrain echoes the tread of armies and the melodies of peace :

"He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call
retreat ;

He is sifting out the hearts of men before his judgment-
seat :

Oh, be swift my soul to answer him, be jubilant my
feet,

Our God goes marching on."

CHAPTER III.

Arrival at Vera Cruz—The allies' proclamation—Military occupation—French claims—Protest of England and Spain—Negotiations with Liberal government—Almonte—Mexican exiles—Treaty with Mexico—England and Spain withdraw from alliance—France declares war—Commissioners' proclamation—Lorenz—Conflict at Puebla—French defeat—Reinforcements—Forey—Napoleon's instructions—Siege of Puebla—Forey enters the capital—Napoleon's designs—Bigelow's opinion—The Regency—Almonte, Salas, Ormachea—The Assembly of Notables—Its decree for monarchy—Napoleon's nomination—The Austrian Archduke, for emperor.

THE allies were prompt in the execution of their plans. It seemed an easy task, in a land rent with revolution, for the powers to carry out the declaration of the convention, and "seize and occupy the several fortresses and military positions on the Mexican coast." This was quickly done. It was agreed that the French and Spanish squadrons were to meet at Havana, and join the English fleet at Cape St. Antonio, and make a combined descent upon the coast. England carried her doubts of the Emperor's designs and their effect in