

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

the first instance into the expedition itself, and sent out, under Milne as admiral, a holiday-review force of one line-of-battle ship and two frigates with seven hundred marines. The Spanish fleet carried six thousand men, under Prim as admiral and commander—Prim, afterwards President of the Council, Minister of War, and Commander-in-Chief, who stood fast by the line and precept of the convention articles, and refused compliance with Napoleon's schemes when he discovered them, as became the man who, later, with Serrano, drove Isabella, the dissolute, from the throne, and sacrificed his titles and powers, that at last, through exile and assassination, he might turn the eyes of his countrymen to the heights of a wider liberty, soon to be made radiant with the genius of Castelar.

The demands of England could be satisfied in money; and a like consideration would serve the present interests of Spain. The English and Spanish forces were deemed sufficient to enforce the treaty provisions; but the Emperor of the French made preparation in the beginning for his ultimate purpose, and dispatched to join the allied fleet two thousand five hundred men,—veterans from many fields,

men of all arms, including the Egyptian Legion of Zouaves, Turcos, Nubians, and Chasseurs d'Afrique. To this detachment he added three thousand more troops so soon as he learned that the Spanish force was six thousand men, on the ground that the French contingent should not be inferior in numbers.

There was some misunderstanding about the orders, and the Spaniards did not wait for the English and French off Cuba. They sailed over to the "Rich City of the Holy True Cross" in December, 1861, and soon had it in their possession. The English were displeased because of the reinforcement sent from France, with no necessity in sight; and the French were chagrined because the Spaniards alone had captured Vera Cruz. Distrust arose, and the powers began to watch each other's actions, for some hidden object to reveal itself. They had not long to wait. All that was contemplated by a strict or lawful interpretation of the convention had been done. The allies had seized and occupied the coast; they held the chief seaport; they had insured the security of their resident subjects, at least within range of their guns; and it became necessary to retire with these profitless honors, or to

take measures not anticipated by some of the parties.

The situation was embarrassing, and involved serious questions. Article III. of the convention provided for a commission to distribute any funds that might be collected by way of indemnity; and the English and Spanish commissioners proposed, at this juncture, that the powers should call upon Mexico to pay or guarantee all fair claims to be certified by commissioners, and to make reparation for outrages. And, as a moral support to their demands for money, they adopted a device with which every Mexican who could read was certainly familiar. They issued a grandiloquent proclamation. This was their message to the Mexicans, with ships of war, and troops, and fortified camps in sight, and foreign flags flying in their chief port of entry:

“Listen to the voice of the allies, the anchor of salvation in the dreadful tempest before which you are being driven. Intrust yourselves, with the greatest confidence, to their good faith and upright intentions. Fear nothing on account of the unquiet and restless spirits, who, should they present themselves, your determined and decided uprightness would know how to confound, while we lookers-on preside at the grand spectacle of your regeneration, guaranteed by order and liberty.”

There was no answer to this seductive call to peace, save the sounds of preparations to resist the army of invasion. It was soon found that some of the Mexicans were quite as much in earnest as the allies.

In advance of this proclamation, and in response to the suggestion of England and Spain for a money equivalent and guaranty, the French demanded payment of fifteen million dollars in bonds negotiated by the government of Miramon with the Swiss banking firm, under French protection, at five per cent. on a dollar; and to this sum they added twelve millions more, which they intimated was about the total of what was due them, without going into items; and the French Commissioner, Saligny, said “it would save great inconvenience and much valuable time to take that amount, and call it square.” The English and Spanish were vexed with this absurd demand; claimed it would lead to war, as no nation could be expected to accede to it; and they refused to sanction it.

But more serious differences arose. A knot of the exiles, with Almonte at their head (who assumed the title of provisional president of Mexico, and opened negotiations with Mar-

quez, who was then in arms against Juarez), and some of the vilest ruffians of the civil war, had their headquarters in the French camp, and, under French protection, were issuing proclamations to their countrymen to overthrow the Liberal government, and boasting that their actions had the Emperor's approval. When it became evident that the adventurers and revolutionists who had been banished from the country for various causes, or were openly inciting treason, were welcomed and protected by the French arms, it began to dawn upon the Mexicans that the allies had some purpose to serve, other than what they professed; and their protestations that they did not intend to interfere in their affairs became ridiculous. All the assurances of the English and Spanish were set at naught by the conduct of the French. Sir Charles Wyke and General Prim protested against their claims, but without effect. The issue had come. It was peace or war, and war one of the parties was determined to have at any cost.

The diplomacy at Paris had again overreached the diplomacy at London and Madrid; and England and Spain had served as the tools of Napoleon to give the expedition char-

acter, and vantage-ground for his real designs, and without the sagacity to perceive it. They were sincere in their adhesion to the treaty. They had come to Mexico to collect their debts and protect their resident subjects. It was evident that all differences must be settled or the invasion abandoned. It became necessary to negotiate: and, through the Mexican Minister of Foreign Affairs, Doblado,—invested with extraordinary powers by President Juarez,—a conference was held at Soledad, February 19, 1862; and it was agreed that a later meeting should be held at Orizaba; the French plenipotentiary, even at that late day, protesting, in His Majesty's behalf, that he had no intention of injuring the sovereignty and integrity of the republic, and stipulating that recourse should be had to a treaty to present all the reclamations he was charged to make in the name of France.

In the meantime, owing to the heavy mortality among the foreign troops, it was agreed, on the part of the allies, by General Prim, that they should be permitted to occupy more healthful localities, to be abandoned if the later negotiations should fail; and that the Liberal government should be recognized. The French

refused their assent to these stipulations, despite their engagement; declared their belief that there was no honest intention to satisfy their grievances; and their commissioner, Count de Saligny, who was advised that the moment had come to unmask the scheme secretly planned at Paris before the meeting in London, notified the conference that orders would speedily issue for the French army to march on the capital. The English and Spanish protested against this open violation of the convention, and finally declared for peace, and made a treaty that led to an immediate evacuation of their forces, with nothing to pay even the cost of the expedition. And so the triple alliance ended; and Louis Napoleon was left to carry on his hazardous experiment of conquest and glory, alone.

War was immediately declared against the constitutional government, and orders issued for the advance of the French troops. Said the commissioners, still trusting to the virtue of the proclamation, but with singular contradiction of sentiment:

“Mexicans, we have not come here to take a part in your divisions; we have come to terminate them. We invite all good and true men to co-operate in the consoli-

dation of order, to the regeneration of your beautiful country. We desire equal justice for all, and that that justice may not have to be enforced by our arms. The Mexican people ought of themselves to be the primary agents of emancipation. We have no other object than to inspire the honest and peaceful portion of the country, that is to say nine-tenths of the population, with courage to make known their wishes. If the Mexican nation remains inert, if she will not comprehend that we offer her an un hoped-for opportunity to escape from ruin, if she does not by her own efforts give a direction and a practical and moral significance to our support, it is evident that we shall only have to attend to the precise interests for which the Convention of London was ratified. . . . The flag of France has been planted on Mexican soil; that flag will never recede. Let wise men welcome it as a friendly standard. Let the foolhardy dare to fight against it.”

The clerical exiles, the volunteers from the forces of the Conservatives, and the deserters from the Liberals, had assured the French leaders that the conquest of the country would be easy, and that the Mexicans themselves would rally in large numbers to the standards of “the army of occupation.” Its commander was Lorencez, who won his rank of major-general at the storming of the Malakoff,—a brave and honest soldier, attached to the fortunes of Napoleon by brilliant service and reward; who would not hesitate to serve his imperial

will, although he saw in the outset the mistake of the intervention, and predicted a disastrous result.

The old Spanish town of Puebla, with its approaches admirably adapted for defense, is the great strategic point that commands the road from Vera Cruz to Mexico; and it was there, in May, 1862, that the first battle was fought. The Mexicans under the gallant Zaragoza, defeated the veterans from the French campaigns, with a terrible loss of twelve hundred killed, and thrice that number wounded and missing; and the magnitude of the task they had undertaken became evident to the French commanders.

In view of the generous welcome which Almonte and his clique had convinced the French awaited their advance, Lorencez must be credited with extreme moderation, when he said in his address to his beaten army: "*Soldiers, your march on Mexico has been arrested by material obstacles which you had no reason to expect*"; and in his report to the government at Paris:

"Such was my situation before Puebla, the town most hostile to Juarez, according to persons in whose opinions I considered myself bound to trust, and who formally

assured me, according to information which they were in a position to obtain, that I should be received there with transport, and that my soldiers should enter the town covered with flowers."

The invaders learned, in their first encounter, the worthlessness of Mexican protestations, and the virtue of Mexican patriotism. Zaragoza was quite as much in earnest as Lorencez.

To a people proud of military glory, to a ruler with whom success was a necessity, and whose avowed mission was "the triumph of the Latin race on American soil," the tidings of disaster at Puebla were most unwelcome. But the fact of failure was present, and due measures must be taken to meet the situation. Lorencez fortified his position at Orizaba, and reported the need of reinforcements. Troops of all arms were sent over, until the forces in Mexico numbered forty thousand men.

General Forey was appointed commander-in-chief. Forey was the Emperor's right hand in his perilous passage from the presidency of the republic to the throne, at the *coup d'état*. He succeeded St. Arnaud as commander before Sebastopol, and held the high ranks of senator of the empire, and grand officer of the

Legion of Honor. There was one distinction he had not won ; and although, like Lorencez, he had no faith in the intervention, and advised sending a sufficient force in the beginning, and stated from his place in the Senate, after his return in 1866, that it would require an additional army of one hundred and fifty thousand men to conquer Mexico ; still, at the time of his appointment, he silenced his convictions for the glittering prize the Emperor held out for his service,—a marshalship of France.

Forey landed at Vera Cruz in August, 1862, to renew the attempt abandoned in the engagement at Puebla. He at once deprived Almonte of the provisional presidency which he had assumed at Vera Cruz, and appropriated to himself the civil and military power, and set aside with disdain the formal protests of the Mexican Congress. Under orders from Napoleon, before entering upon the serious work of his campaign, he also made a proclamation. In substance, he told the Mexicans that he had come among them simply to restore order, and not to dictate a form of government. In doing this, Forey took the Emperor at his word, as he fondly imagined,

and a demonstration of the real purpose, and of the falsity of the Emperor's pretences, is given in his personal instructions to the man who was to carry them into effect. In his letter to Forey, *July 3, 1862*, he said :

“ MY DEAR GENERAL :—At the moment when you are about to leave for Mexico, charged with political and military powers, I deem it useful that you should understand my wishes.

“ This is the line of conduct which you are expected to pursue :

“ 1. To issue a proclamation on your arrival, the principal ideas of which will be indicated to you.

“ 2. To receive with the greatest kindness all Mexicans who may join you.

“ 3. To espouse the quarrel of no party, but to announce that all is provisional until the Mexican nation shall have declared its wishes ; to show a great respect for religion, but to reassure at the same time the holders of national property.

“ 4. To supply, pay, and arm, according to your ability, the auxiliary Mexican troops ; to give them the chief parts in combats.

“ The end to be attained is not to impose upon the Mexicans a form of government which will be distasteful to them, but to aid them to establish, in conformity with their wishes, a government which may have some chance of stability, and will assure to France the redress of the wrongs of which she complains.

“ *It is not to be denied that if they prefer a monarchy, it is in the interest of France to aid them in this path.*