

pedient to settle the question of the imperial succession. Maximilian and Carlotta had no children; and the very existence of the government, in the clash of opposing interests and ambitions, might hinge upon their choice. Maximilian the absolutist, with his faith in imperial authority, was in favor of the nomination of some cadet of the ancient monarchies; and his advisers of the council were of like mind, believing that no Mexican of rank or present distinction could hold the empire together. The final decision was due to the keen political sagacity of the empress, and her conviction that the perpetuity of the royal house and the realization of her visions of splendor and power were possible only through the cultivation of Mexican loyalty and patriotism, and the choice of an heir whose claims to rule and honor were rooted deep in Mexican traditions and Mexican national pride.

When Maximilian came into power, one of his first acts was to try to restore to the family of the former emperor, Iturbide (Augustin I.), the titles and grants of lands in Sonora and Lower California, which had been bestowed upon him "as a reward for having emancipated Mexico from Spanish tyranny"; and the

survivors of his family were permitted to return to their country. This was done at the instance of Josefa, Iturbide's daughter, one of the most talented and brilliant of the Mexican women. While the matter was in progress she was invited to become a member of the royal household. She was given apartments in the palace, dined with their Majesties, was present on all state occasions, became the empress's most trusted friend, sat with her at important deliberations of the imperial council, and in her heroic struggles for the empire's salvation in the last days was her confidant and comforter.

The name of Iturbide was held in honor, and his countrymen had written upon his memorial the title of "Liberator." Who could better hold the standard of peace, in distant times, than one of his race and name? Who could so surely appeal to Mexican honor as a lineal descendant of the rulers of such tender memory? Who could so satisfy the pride of race, strengthen the popularity of the court with the people, answer the demands of the political situation, and link the distant succession to the triumphs of the present?

The problem was solved in the formal

adoption of Augustin, one of Iturbide's grandsons, born in Washington in 1863. The selection was received with great favor by the Mexicans ; and the titles of princess and prince were conferred upon Josefa and the child to whom the empire should descend. Even then the empress seemed to have a premonition of the end, and of the vain appeal of Maximilian's *protégé* to the charity of Hapsburg house, since in writing to the Austrian Empress, Augusta, she used these prophetic words: "Now I consider my being childless as a blessing from heaven, for I already foresee an orphan in this prince."

In her mission to Yucatan, and in the nomination of an heir to the throne, the diplomatic skill and political sagacity of the empress were clearly shown ; but she has left, in one of her letters, another striking illustration of her accurate judgment of men and measures, and of her personal force in the government policy.

In the minds of Pius IX., Labastida, Almonte, and other clerical leaders, the cardinal motive of the intervention was the restoration to the Church of her estates and revenues confiscated under the civil war decrees.

They rejoiced in the selection of Maximilian and Carlotta as rulers, believing that they would annul the laws of reform and reinstate the clergy in their former power, tithes, and emoluments ; but the emperor, on their appeal, refused to order the return of the secularized properties, save upon satisfactory compensation to the civil owners and allottees. This action was indispensable to the financial support of the government, and the necessary outcome of the emperor's policy to cultivate loyalty in the Liberal ranks, and lead all parties to recognize the virtue of Napoleon's aphorism : "*The empire means peace.*" The contest reached a climax in the emperor's letter to the Mexican bishops, in December, 1864, in which he said :

"You must admit, venerable prelates, that the Mexican Church, by a deplorable fatality, has meddled too much with politics and temporal affairs, and neglected too persistently the Catholic education of her children. It is true that the Mexicans are pious and good ; but the larger portion of the people are not yet Catholics in an evangelical sense. This is not owing to its own faults, but to the negligence of others. The Mexicans must be enlightened ; the sacrament must be administered to them, as it is ordained in the Evangelists, gratuitously. You may doubt, if you will, the sincerity of my faith in

the Catholic religion ; but all Europe has long known my opinions. Still, however good a Catholic I may be, I shall also be a just and liberal Prince."

Carlotta had taken a leading part in the discussion of this great question, in the council of state and out of it ; and, writing to a friend in Paris, January, 1865, hiding the depth of her feeling under a veil of pleasantry, she said :

"I do not know if you are aware that the Pope, who has a sprightly disposition, often says of himself that he is a *jettatore*. It is certain, however, that ever since his envoy set foot on our land we have only experienced bitter mortifications ; and we are in expectation of others not less numerous in future. Energy and perseverance I believe we have ; but I ask myself, if difficulties of this kind continue, whether it will be possible to overcome them. That is, in truth, the actual state of things. The clergy, mortally offended by the letter of December 27, is not to be easily overcome. All the old abuses combine to evade the orders of the Emperor regarding them. In this, perhaps, there is no fanaticism ; but there is in it such steady and manœuvring tenacity that I believe it impossible for the persons who now compose the body of the clergy to adopt any other system. The question is what is to be done with them. When Napoleon III. obtained from the Pope the dismissal of the emigrant Bishops they were living abroad, and as they were holy persons they were resigned. Those whom we have here would readily leave their sees, but not their revenues. A salary from the State would

not be an equivalent ; and their ideal is to live in Europe in the possession of money, while we are struggling here to establish the position of the Church. There is to be a revision of the Church property sold—a second apple of discord ; for in consequence of acknowledging the reformed laws, we have brought the Conservatives upon us. Now we are going to have upon our shoulders the Liberals and the allottees. As there can be but one weight and one measure for all, those who have been guilty of illegal operations must give up their gains ; and I am afraid that this work of reparation and of justice will excite as much passion as the loss of their property did in regard to the clergy. . . . During the last month we have been passing through a very sharp crisis. If we pass through it successfully, the future of the Mexican Empire may be brilliant ; if not, I do not know what we must expect from it. . . . It is Nothing that will not have itself dethroned. Perhaps you would believe with me that Nothing is a manageable substance, because it is nothing ; on the contrary, you come against it at every step in this country, and it is of more solid granite than almost all the forces of the human mind. The pyramids would be less difficult to raise than the Mexican Nothing to be overcome. However, everything here would be of secondary importance were it not for the main fact that the army is diminishing, and with it the material force of the Government. I am ever afraid that we are grasping the shadow for the substance. No doubt the Corps Legislatif in France will speak out, but that will be nothing more or less than sounding speeches. Here, however, it is facts which can compromise the success of the work which France has

founded, and which is destined to bear the name of Napoleon III. to future generations. It is very well to say, as is said in the English Parliament, 'Mexico is in really such good order that it does not need any help'; but for my part I prefer keeping to realities. In order to civilize this country it is necessary to be complete master of it, and in order to get elbow room it is necessary constantly to realize its strength in great battalions. This is an argument which is not disputed. All strength which cannot be realized, such as prestige, skill, popularity, enthusiasm, has only a conventional value: these are resources which rise and fall—troops are indispensable. Austrians and Belgians are very good in times of calm, but let tempest come and they are only red trousers. If I may tell you all my thoughts, I believe it will be very difficult for us to pass through all the first vital crises if the country be not more occupied than it is. Everything is much scattered; and it seems to me that instead of recalling anything, it is perhaps essential to augment."

"It is my duty conscientiously to wield the sceptre of authority, and with firmness the sword of honor. My strength rests in God and in your loyal confidence." It was in these words that Maximilian and Carlotta saluted the people they had been called to rule; and it cannot be successfully questioned, that they devoted themselves, in a sincere and chivalric spirit, to these great purposes; and it seems fitting, while the clouds that at last shut down

upon their lives were unseen, to mark what they had accomplished.

The Republican troops had been defeated; Juarez and his followers had been driven to the northern frontier; and, save partisan bodies acting at a few distant points, the military occupation of the country was complete. Formal acts of adhesion from cities and provinces had been given; Mexican statesmen and politicians, loyal to the country and hopeful for its prosperity under the empire, were in its service in all capacities, from the cabinet to the ordinary posts, in civil, ecclesiastical, and military administration; and thousands of volunteers, from the Liberals and from the civilians, had enlisted in the imperial army. Commerce, trade, agriculture, science, art, all the economic forces and powers that blossom and bear fruit only in the sunshine of peace, found impulse and development under the protection and wise policy of the government; national improvements were begun in many directions; railroads, steamer, and telegraph lines were opened; colonization schemes were in operation; immigration on a great scale was devised; and, in a year and a half from the emperor's arrival, Mexico had opened a new

era in her history; her rulers had won the respect and confidence of a large proportion of their people; the initial problems of government seemed well settled; and something of the grandeur and strength of Hapsburg House was reflected in the reign of Maximilian I. of Mexico.

CHAPTER VI.

Attitude of United States—Non-recognition—Congressional action—Stevens, Sumner, Seward—Diplomacy—Declarations to England, France, Austria, and Mexico—Instructions to Minister to France—Monroe doctrine—Correspondence with French Minister of War—Recall of French troops—Causes—Gen'l Schofield's mission to France—Seward's ultimatum—Activity of Liberals—Order for retreat of French and Austrians—Liberal victories—General Grant's order—Sheridan—Demonstrations on Mexican frontier—Change in diplomatic relations—United States minister to Mexico—Campbell—Instructions—General Sherman's mission—Seward's policy effective.

AT this historic period—in the close of the year 1865—when the empire, whose perpetuity had been guaranteed by France, Austria, and Belgium, reached the zenith of its glory and prosperity, it is important to recall some of the incidents in the action of our government during the intervention and foreign occupation, and note some of the initial causes which at last forced Louis Napoleon to abandon one of his most cherished schemes, deny the prayers of Carlotta, and leave Maximilian to the mercy of a Mexican court-martial.