

fore, it was calculated upon, and strongly hoped, that a division should be effected between the south and the north. This desire has become so strong that it has degenerated into a mania, and that, as you remember, the whole French press friendly to the government has shown itself remarkably favorable to the cause of the south, even to the point of offending the north; and you remember that, in the course of last summer, the displeasure of the north had reached such a point that a Russian fleet, coming to rendezvous at New York, was received with an enthusiasm so great that we may be allowed to see in it a certain amount of irritation against France.

This partiality for the south, if we abstract from the reasons which I have indicated, was not really natural. France was an enemy of slavery. Now, whatever may have been said of it, there was no other cause of separation between the north and the south than slavery. [Cries of no, no, from several benches.]

SEVERAL MEMBERS. Yes, yes.

M. GUÉROULT. Gentlemen, it is not for questions of tariffs that nations rend themselves with their own hands; they are merely transitory. It is so true that slavery was the principal and, I shall say, the only cause of war, [renewed cries of No, no,] that when President Lincoln was nominated, the southern States, which up to that time had enjoyed the privilege of furnishing Presidents to the republic, did not await the manifestation of his policy; they rushed to arms and declared war. And since that time questions of tariffs have disappeared; they are spoken of no more; there is no longer any question but that of slavery. [Manifestations of various kinds.]

Gentlemen, I do not pretend to force your convictions [No, no,] but I tell you that I have carefully examined the question, and I merely ask permission to lay before you my sentiments.

In the south slavery has become almost a religious institution; it has its philosophy and, I will say, almost its theology founded on the Bible. It is on the words pronounced against Ham, "Thou shalt serve thy brethren," that this idea is based. There are preachers who preach these doctrines in the south, and who find themselves authorized to seek the sanction of slavery in that grand code of freedom for slaves, the gospel.

All this is opposed to our feelings, and yet we have inclined to the cause of the south. There is evidently a cause for this. That cause I have already declared to you. It was thought that the formation of a new state to the south of the great American republic and interposing between Mexico and the north would constitute a sort of barrier between the two nations, and that the new government which it was wished to found in Mexico might gain strength and consistency under the protection of this barrier.

If you will allow me to say so, I believe that the idea of the separation and final triumph of the south was not just. I believe that the immense disproportion which exists between the north and the south will necessarily result in the triumph of the north. I believe that this triumph will be due as well to the preponderance as to the superiority of northern industry, and then, above all, to the fact that liberty exists in the north and slavery in the south. [Marks of approbation from some benches, of disapprobation from most.]

But I go further, and I assert that, on the supposition even that the south will triumph, the south would not and could not be the sincere ally of Mexico. Gentlemen, you remember all those piratical and filibustering expeditions, undertaken by Lopez against Havana, by Walker against Nicaragua, all those attempts at conquest, that invasion of Texas, about fifteen years ago. All these attempts at aggrandizement were a political necessity for the south; slavery, left to itself and not propagated, was necessarily borne down and overthrown by the movement of ideas and of interests. It was necessary to seek recruits in order to repair the losses which were experienced. Now, I assert that, even if the south should succeed in effecting a separation, it would be found an ally of a few days perhaps, but one which, threatened on the north by its rival, would be more than ever pressed to expand itself into Mexico itself with all the energy which characterizes the race inhabiting the south of the republic, and the consequence would be that the establishment which we propose to make in Mexico would have for its first enemy that very south, on the alliance of which we had counted.

From this point of view, the idea was not well founded. But this is not all. To found an empire, the requisite elements are necessary. It is not enough to change the form of government, to change its name, in order to regenerate it.

The Mexican republic had reached a very sad condition. It is not I who assert it; it is the delegates of the Junta, or of the Assembly of Notables, as they call it, I believe, who, being sent to the Archduke Maximilian to offer him the throne, express themselves as follows in reference to their country:

"After this, it is not surprising to see highway robbers occupy the most elevated posts, to see the dilapidation of the revenues of the treasury, that of the goods of the clergy confiscated unjustly and without any profit to the country. The so-called reform has gathered

around it only vagabonds and bandits, who, under this popular standard, very popular standard indeed, have ravaged, burned the harvests and villages, and sacked the large cities," &c., &c. I suppress the rest.

It is certain that there has been, and that there is yet, immense disorder in Mexico. Now, truly, it would be a very pretty thing to believe that, because in the place of a President you will have a chief who will style himself Emperor, everything will be transformed, that this chronic disorder will disappear, that prosperity will be renewed, in a word, that there will be founded a potent state of society, of such a character as to insure respect to itself. Let us not forget that the troubles, the misfortunes, the civil war, which now desolate the United States are a temporary accident. In one way or other this war will have an end, and then you may be assured that the republic or the republics of the United States will regard with evil eye the establishment of a monarchical flag on their frontiers.

It has been said that we have no concessions to make to this American prejudice which wishes that the powers of Europe should have no right to take possession of any part of the soil of any portion of American territory.

I do not examine their right in this matter, but I ask you whether it is possible for France to wage war against a republic with which we have always maintained the best understanding, against a republic which owes to us, in a great measure, its independence, which sympathizes with us, and which constitutes for us a useful and often indispensable counterpoise to the naval power of England.

However, we have gone to Mexico and we desire to create, to prepare a new government for Mexico. Mexico, you know, was divided, like most other countries, into two great factions, the clerical party and the liberal party.

The clerical party is in Mexico pretty much what it is everywhere else, powerful, rich, marvellously skilful in appropriating to itself the richest and most fertile lands, but, as a political party, behind the age, intolerant, exclusive, aiming at impossibilities. To it religious toleration is the abomination of desolation; to it liberty of worship, liberty of the press, all liberty, in a word, is the height of anarchy and disorder; it can make no compromise whatever with the principles which are now the very principles of modern society. The clerical party was for a long time dominant in Mexico, and the sad state in which this domination placed Mexico proves that its administration was not good.

Desperate efforts have been made for some years by a fraction of the country to deliver it from the brutalizing system bequeathed to it by Spain. This is what has given birth to what is called the liberal party.

I do not come here to pronounce the apology of the Mexican liberal party. That party, like the other—both almost alike in fact—bears the traces of the unfortunate condition to which the country has been reduced.

But, in the end, the principles of the liberal party are our principles; they are the principles professed by the members of this assembly, the principles of the French revolution and of modern civilization. To sustain them, that party makes efforts unfortunately combined with acts of violence which I do not wish to justify, no more than I wish to justify those of their adversaries.

But, in the end, if we were absolutely forced, which I do not believe we are, to interfere in the affairs of that country, I assert that our natural ally would be the party that professes the same principles that we do, and not the party against which we are obliged to struggle in France, against which we are obliged to struggle at Rome, [murmurs of dissatisfaction from some benches,] and which everywhere teaches, as an article of faith, the very negation of the principles which form the basis of modern public law.

VOICES AROUND THE SPEAKER. Good, good.

M. GUÉROULT. We have, then, gentlemen, relied on the clerical party.

I willingly pass over any reference to certain acts of the French administration, unfortunate sequestrations, irritating measures of sequestration applied to the property of persons who were only guilty, after all, of defending what they believed to be the independence of their country. For, in brief, this expedition has been commenced with the declaration that it was undertaken in order to deliver Mexico. To deliver Mexico! From whom, and from what? Where is the foreigner attacking Mexico? If they fight in Mexico, it is the Mexicans themselves that fight, and it seems to me that the species of liberation which we have undertaken in their favor singularly resembles that which the Prussians pretended to exercise in our regard when they invaded France in 1792 and in 1815.

SEVERAL VOICES. That's true! Good!

M. GUÉROULT. The Mexicans are not at all thankful to us for the service which we wish to render them. They only ask one thing of us, that is, that we should stay at home and let them attend to their own business in peace.

At present, as the country is fatigued, as a new *régime* is promised to it, as the French army, with its admirable discipline, reconciles by its presence even those whose hopes it goes to overthrow, it happens that there is a sort of pacification in Mexico, and that we have



been well received there in the beginning. But the difficulties have not been slow to manifest themselves.

There has been a Junta instituted in the city of Mexico. A decree of the French authorities has instituted that Junta, which itself has nominated an Assembly of Notables. All this is done under French influence. That Assembly of Notables, which was said to contain representatives of all opinions, I have a list of here with the designation of all the members; not one of them belongs to what is called the liberal party.

But at last a provisional government composed of three members has been placed over all this machinery. This is composed of the archbishop of Mexico, General Almonte, (who has played a considerable part in this whole affair, and who, it is said, was the first instigator of the expedition,) and, lastly, General Salas.

It was not very difficult to foresee that this alliance with the clerical party would not hold together, and if you will permit me I will proceed to read to you some sentences written in the month of August last, and which are no more than an anticipated narrative of the events which I will presently lay before you:

"The presence of the archbishop of Mexico in the provisional government is indicative of a state of things full of difficulties. When General Forey expresses the desire that liberty of worship should be acknowledged, he renders himself the exponent of a sentiment wholly French; but he need not count on the assistance of the archbishop of Mexico to cause it to be proclaimed. It is not in his part, nor in the nature of things. Our bishops, who have been living for seventy-four years under the *régime* of the freedom of worship, have not yet recognized it. The Pope does not recognize it; we cannot expect, then, that the Mexican clergy should recognize it merely to gratify the Emperor.

"We are proceeding, then, to find ourselves placed in the alternative either of obeying the inspirations of the party which calls us to Mexico, and then of disavowing, as far as lies in our power, all the principles for which we have been contending for three-quarters of a century, or else to proclaim French principles authoritatively, and then to turn our only partisans against us and combine in hostility towards us the liberals whom we have overthrown, and the clericals whom we have rejected.

"Doubtless France is strong enough to make her will prevail; but while consulting her own sentiments she cools those of her partisans and runs the risk of being isolated, placed as she would be between those who are already indisposed against her for having come to Mexico and those who will be indisposed against us for having come there in order to oppose them in their absurd projects of reaction.

"At bottom, it is the Roman question which is going to be reproduced on the other side of the ocean, at the distance of two thousand leagues from our frontiers."

SEVERAL MEMBERS. From what paper? Who is the author of that article?

M. GUEROULT. What I have read is an article from the *Opinion Nationale*. [Exclamations.]

If I have permitted myself to read this article, it is because at this hour events have completely justified it; I shall proceed to give you the proofs of it.

Moreover, I will confess to you, after the manner in which the press has been spoken of in this hall for some time past, while the minister of state has told us that the effect of the press was to lead astray, to distort and to inflame public opinion; after having heard the press defended by arguments which appeared to me still worse and more sorry than the attacks, I am not displeased to be able to show you that the press sometimes happens to study and to see clearly into questions, to announce in advance that which is likely to happen, and to give counsels which the government would not do ill to follow.

M. GRANIER DE CASSAGNAC. That is what remains to be demonstrated.

M. GUEROULT. These conflicts, announced as likely to occur between the clerical party and the French authorities, are in course of development at this very moment.

Lastly, several judges had refused, on the intimation of certain members of the regency, to take cognizance of all cases relative to the goods of the clergy, which have been secularized in Mexico as they have been in France. An order interposed issued in a very irregular way; it was not signed by the representatives of French authority; it was signed only by an under secretary of state. This order enjoined on the judges to take cognizance in future of all such questions as they had wished to abstain from.

The archbishop of Mexico, Monseigneur Labastida, immediately protested; I have here the protest which I would read to you if I did not fear to abuse your patience.

SEVERAL MEMBERS. Read it, read it.

OTHER MEMBERS. No, no.

M. GUEROULT. And from this time forward the acts of the regency are signed only by General Almonte and General Salas. The signature of "Labastida" no longer figures in them. Here, then, is a commencement of dissension.

Finally, gentlemen, we have arrived at a critical period. It is necessary to take some step. Since the expedition was undertaken, since it succeeded, since we took Puebla first and subsequently the city of Mexico itself, the candidacy of the Archduke Maximilian has

been brought forward, has been affirmed, now it is considered as settled. I desire, with all my heart, that the Archduke Maximilian should accept; I admire his courage, and I would not wish to shake him; [laughter;] only I would attach a great importance to the fact that France should not be responsible for anything that might be produced under the new *régime* which is to be installed in Mexico. I would not wish her to guarantee any loans. I would not wish her to leave her army in Mexico; for, if her army should remain in Mexico, not only would she contract a kind of responsibility and identification of herself with all the events that might transpire there, but she would come in contact with an eventuality which would seem to me very much to be dreaded, and which might carry us very far beyond the sphere of the interests for which we have desired to provide. [Approbation from some benches.]

It is not doubtful, gentlemen, that as soon as the civil war shall be terminated in the United States, you will see the United States regard with a most evil eye this monarchical establishment installed on their frontiers. Governments, governments of principle especially, are jealous, and you would certainly have no more reason to be displeased with the United States for not regarding with a favorable eye a monarchical establishment on their frontiers, than you would be astonished if the imperial government of France saw with an evil eye the establishment in Belgium of a republic, for example.

SOME VOICES. What would that have to do with us?

M. GRANIER DE CASSAGNAC. And Switzerland.

M. GUEROULT. Switzerland has not been recently established. It was anterior to our government, which found it as it was, and must have accepted the neighborhood. But I believe that the propagandism of a different principle is never acceptable or agreeable to a neighboring government.

In any case, it is incontestable that the situation in which we would be placed by this eventuality of a war with the United States is out of all proportion with what wisdom and the simplest elements of good sense would allow us to risk on that side. What interest have we in Mexico? I have examined the question in a manner rather philosophic than political. In good faith, what was it that obliged us to go to Mexico? What immediate advantage can we derive from the measure? Do you think that we can effect an establishment there which, in a given time, could cover our expenses? We have in Algeria an example which I pray you to consider. Here are thirty-four years that Algeria is in our hands; it does not pay expenses. If you are in a condition to assume the guardianship of Mexico for fifty years, and to spend there 150 millions a year, I doubt not but that at this price you would reach a favorable result; but I doubt whether any of you would be willing to engage in such an enterprise. The most reasonable step, in my opinion, would be to return and to return immediately.

Since the last accounts that reached us from Mexico, it seems that instructions more conciliatory and based on a more exact knowledge of the country have reached General Bazaine, whose excellent intentions are appreciated both by the Mexicans and by the French. I say instructions more conciliatory; in fact, less harshness is manifested towards adversaries, and if a work of conciliation could be attempted, it would certainly be under these auspices. Well, all I ask is that the government should be pleased to give us some assurances in this respect.

In the amendment which we have presented, and which I have the honor to develop before you, we demand an immediate withdrawal. I request permission to explain this expression. I did not draw up the amendment, but I signed it. I pray you to allow me to tell you how I understand it. It is clear that the immediate withdrawal of our troops cannot be demanded. [Interruption.]

A VOICE. Wherefore do you demand it for the amendment?

M. GUEROULT. It is clear that everything cannot be abandoned in twenty-four hours; but what can be done is to take immediately a firm resolution not to prolong an expedition which, it must be said, is a failure. [Vehement disapprobation.]

You may be persuaded, gentlemen, that we will obtain nothing from Mexico; you may be persuaded that if France wished to be stubborn and to remain there in order to defray the expenses of the expedition, she would do as bad a thing as she did when, to insure the payment of a debt of 60 millions, she spent 300 millions. Persist now, and you will not get clear with a thousand millions.

Gentlemen, it is no easy thing to occupy Mexico. I read in the papers that Maximilian demands, as a prerequisite to his acceptance of the crown, that the Mexican people should pronounce for him by means of universal suffrage. Gentlemen, to attain that it would be necessary to be master of Mexico; it would be necessary to occupy it. Well, permit me to tell you we do not possess the twentieth part of it. [Cries of dissent.] Mexico is an immense country cut up by plains but very little inhabited, often uncultivated, in which everything is wanting, even water.

If it is desired to have a permanent army of occupation there, it is not with 30,000 men



that you will do it, nor even with 100,000 men. You will please remember that in Algeria, the surface of which is about the third part of France, we have had for a long time 100,000 men to run after Abd-el-Kader, without catching him, and restrain the Arabs.

A MEMBER. He has been caught.

M. GUEROULT. He was caught at last, but at the end of seventeen years.

Now, gentlemen, if we remain in Mexico, if we desire to occupy it in a permanent way, it will be necessary to have garrisons in all the large towns—it will be necessary to have movable colonies. The Mexican people are accustomed to partisan warfare; long years of civil war have created a population perfectly suitable for that kind of trade. If you engage in such an affair, I know not how you will be able to get out of it. I add that if the civil war ceases in the United States, the American government, without any declaration of war, without engaging in any direct struggle with France, can let loose on Mexico no less than fifty thousand volunteers, filibusters, whom peace will render disposable for such a purpose in the States of the north; it is impossible to foresee the quantity of regular troops that would be necessary to keep the field and maintain the security of the country against predatory bands of that kind.

In my opinion, there would be a most serious danger in the prolongation of the expedition. The end that was proposed to be attained I consider as not having been reached, as I mentioned to you just now. Consequently, if you believe me, we will not make much difficulty about the conditions of evacuation; we will leave to the government all the time necessary to prepare itself to effect it, to do it with honor and dignity, to afford protection to those who have confided in us and in the selection of whom we have sometimes committed the fault of not being severe enough; and then we will pray the government to bring back our troops to France. As to questions of indemnity, as to any benefits that you may be able to derive thence, take my advice, do not ask any; if with the 200 millions which we have paid this year, we have no more than 100 or 200 millions more to pay, we shall have done a good thing relatively; for if we stay there, I tell you, it will not be by hundreds but by thousands of millions that we should have to count.

*Speech of M. Thiers.*

Corps Legislative, Session of the 26th of January.—Presidency of his excellency the Duc of Morny.

M. THIERS. Gentlemen: Though the amendment to which I have attached my signature is not actually in discussion, I have sought occasion to speak, because I do not come to discuss such or such an amendment, but the question itself; and I must forthwith acknowledge to you that, attaching to that question a considerable degree of importance, and desiring to address you at some length, I have hastened to obtain the floor, for fear that I should afterwards find your attention too much fatigued. Perhaps, when you will have heard me, you will pardon me for this solicitude; and, as to the amendments, I hasten to say that the one which will carry the truth to the foot of the throne in the most deferential and most respectful form will always be that which I shall prefer. [Good, good.]

If the only question were to pronounce an opinion on the past, I should not insist; I would willingly imitate those merchants who carry some affairs to the account of profit and loss, in order to be no more troubled with them. But they act thus only in regard to affairs which no longer cost them any sacrifice. Unfortunately, it is not so with the Mexican expedition. We have been told that it cost twelve millions a month, and you know that, when such enterprises are in question, the months roll away rapidly. As for me, I am convinced that it will cost much more; but that is only a minor consideration.

Gentlemen, we are at a distance of three thousand leagues from our shores—at a distance of thirty-five days' navigation—with forty thousand Frenchmen, seven or eight thousand sailors, occupied at various services, without counting some thousands of auxiliaries—and all this for what purpose? It can no longer be ignored now. The prince who has been called to reign over Mexico is soon going to pass through Paris, to embark in one of our harbors, and to find himself borne towards Vera Cruz. Thus we have gone so far with a considerable part of our forces—why? To found a great empire in the New World.

Indeed, gentlemen, I confess to you that before such an enterprise my reason remains confounded. It is possible that I may have been educated in ideas of too much strictness; but in the present state of the world, to undertake the foundation of a great monarchy, at such a distance, without any determinate end, without any certain utility, I must say confounds my reason.

Yesterday one of our young colleagues, while doing me the honor of quoting me, re-

mind me, or thought he reminded me, that in England no opposition was ever offered to nor difficulties thrown in the way of the great enterprises in India. Our young colleague, who is a very diligent student, will not fail to read the discussions in the English Parliament, and he will be able to see how far he has been correct in his assertion; he will learn that there never has been any great enterprise in India which has not been vehemently and severely discussed; he will find the famous trials of Lord Clive and Warren Hastings; and he will see, finally, that only a few years ago the East India Company was definitively dispossessed of its power, merely on account of its imprudent and dangerous enterprises in the kingdom of Oude. Everything is discussed in England, and practical matters never lose by it.

But since it has been granted to us, gentlemen, to strive to cause the truth to reach the foot of the throne, let us profit by the occasion; for there will never be an occasion more momentous or more useful for so doing. As to me, I regard it as a duty to make the truth known; and I request your permission to examine as briefly as possible (and that will always be too long for my convenience) the following questions: By what succession of ideas have we been led from the first act of defending our fellow-citizens to the more serious enterprise of founding a monarchy in the New World? What connexion was there between these two purposes? By what sequence of circumstances have we been led from one of these purposes to the other? And now, are there any serious chances of success; and if we succeed, what utility can be derived for France, which, after all, ought always to be the final end of all our enterprises?

M. ERNEST PICARD. Good.

M. THIERS. These are the questions which I wish to debate; you see that they are well worthy of discussion.

I have fortified myself with all the information that science, politics, public economy, can offer, and, perhaps, if you are willing to listen to me with patience, you will find that you will not have entirely lost the time which you may give to me. [Speak, speak.]

Gentlemen, in order that you may properly understand the exposition which I am going to make to you, I must give you some details on the nature of the relations which the states of Europe maintain with the states of America.

I may declare it at the outset, these relations are extremely difficult. We must distinguish North from South America. In North America our fellow-citizens have always found a field for an immense commerce, which, you know, has reached the value of five hundred millions. They have always, moreover, found there perfect security—I speak of the times preceding the civil war. Sometimes they have had to suffer from the rudeness of democratic manners; but a country can no more be reproached with its manners than with its climate. It is a fact, that we have always found perfect security in North America. But we must say that security was due to a vigorous government, jealous of its honor and dignity, and from which proud and potent England herself has had more than one affront to swallow. However it be, it would be very desirable that we had found in South America such relations as those which we have found in North America.

In South America, with the single exception of Brazil, of which I shall speak presently, we have found anarchy. You know that when, at the commencement of the present century, the Spanish colonies desired to separate from the mother country, they modelled their institutions on those of North America; but they were not so well prepared for republicanism. You know that when the colonists who peopled North America emigrated beyond the seas, they were already veritable republicans in their manners and their opinions; they were, moreover, industrious men, devoted to labor, and there is no better soother for the passions than labor. But those southern populations, whom, with some placency, we style the Latin race, were scarcely prepared for republicanism when they separated from the mother country.

As far as opinions were concerned, they had only those which existed in Spain two centuries ago. They were fiery in their manners, turbulent, and disinclined to labor. Republicanism has not succeeded among them; for fifty years they have merely dragged out a miserable existence, full of inconvenience to strangers domiciled among them. Those unfortunate strangers have been harassed in a hundred ways.

In the first place, these governments of the south are always in difficulty; they borrow, and when they have borrowed they never pay. This is the first cause of claims against them. Then strangers, who spend twenty, thirty, and forty years in those countries, are soon confounded with the inhabitants themselves, and it is sought to impose on them, sometimes, military service, always forced loans and taxes for purposes of war. They complain to their native governments, and invoke their assistance. This is another subject for reclamation and demand of redress.

But the most serious of all is this: In those continually agitated countries, where there is no vigilant police, as in the old states of Europe, neither cities, nor country, nor highways offer any security. Sometimes the doors of houses are forcibly broken in; more



frequently the farms are invaded and public conveyances are stopped on the highways. Violences, robberies, sometimes assassinations, are committed; and it has been recognized as so difficult not only to hunt out the guilty parties, but to bring them to punishment in a country in which the police is a nullity and justice is weak, that people have almost renounced all idea of obtaining justice, and have converted all their grievances into claims for money.

So there has been introduced into the language of the country, into diplomatic language, a certain expression; it is that of foreign agreement. Whenever European nations have had occasion to complain, treaties are made which are called foreign agreements; and what proves to you the singularity of that state of affairs is the fact that, in making a very simple calculation, I have found that foreign agreements, those demands of indemnity, were always proportioned to the extent of the commerce which each European nation carried on with that country. This is a proof, gentlemen, that in that anarchy there is at least that species of impartiality which induces it to treat all the world alike.

Well, when we desire to address ourselves to those governments we meet with very great difficulties. To whom do we address ourselves? To anarchy. If we demand security of it, it cannot give it. If we demand payment of its debts, it does not possess the means. We find ourselves, therefore, in extreme embarrassment. So people have been very circumspect, and have taken care to keep themselves within the English rule. That rule is: When those governments can be reached by the maritime way, a degree of severity is manifested, and England has always taken care to be severe; but when they cannot be so reached, people are more sparing of menaces which cannot always be carried into effect.

I will be told that this course is not a very manly one. I grant it; but allow me to say that honor stops where the means stop; and I will cite an instance to you which is some years old.

Prussia is assuredly a very proud and very brave nation. Now, you remember that a Prussian vessel, bearing the royal standard, stopped some years ago on the coasts of Riff. It experienced a terrible attack; there were many killed and wounded; the prince himself ran great risk; everybody then said, "Prussia is going to send out an expedition." But Prussia, proud and brave as she was, yet thoughtful, never sent out any expedition, because, in fact, she had neither the interest nor the means to do so.

The English rule of acting by the maritime way is, then, neither so bad nor so humble; and if I apply it to past events, you will see that it is at bottom what, up to this time, everybody has done.

For instance, you all know that on the upper Parana, in Paraguay, Dr. Francia established himself and reigned for twenty-seven years. M. Bonpland, the colleague and travelling companion of Humboldt, in whom all Europe was interested, lived there for twenty years, detained by the government of Paraguay. Learned Europe, with one voice, demanded his release, and yet it never entered into any one's mind to send out an expedition to release Dr. Bonpland.

In the lower Plata, an odious tyrant, Rosas, treated the French in an abominable manner; he had many of them massacred by his orders; and this was not in consequence of any anarchy; it was his own will, his own ferocity. Our vessels could have reached him, and sailed right into the harbor either of Montevideo or of Buenos Ayres. For my part, I advocated severe measures at that time. My opinion did not prevail, and yet force was employed. Vessels were sent out, and a treaty was obtained by the only means possible—by maritime means.

In regard to Mexico, of which there was reason to complain, in 1838 Admiral Baudin was commissioned with the execution of a vigorous stroke; it was executed, and the consequence was that, for a certain number of years, the Mexicans retained the recollection of it, and our fellow-countrymen were not guaranteed on the highways—oh no, for, whatever is done, we will not succeed in rendering the roads safe in Mexico any more than in the kingdom of Naples; but we did succeed in having our countrymen treated with more respect.

I have deemed these reflections necessary in order to let you understand what the nature is of the relations between the states of Europe and those of America, and what kind of repression we can employ there.

When our last difficulties with Mexico commenced the state of the country was this: We had, in regard to it, only very incomplete, very uncertain statistics, to which it is difficult enough to attach any credit; however, I believe we are not far from the truth in estimating the population of Mexico at eight millions. Of these eight millions there are five millions of native Indians, who are worthy people, laborious and patient, but kept in a state of deplorable abjection and ignorance. And then there are three millions of Spaniards, pure or mixed, who are the active and influential portion of the population.

What questions are agitated among those three millions of Spaniards, pure or mixed? In truth, the very questions which have been agitated in Europe for three-quarters of a

century between what is called the old *régime* and the new one. There are two parties there—the party which styles itself conservative, and which its adversaries call the clerical party, the reactionary party, &c., &c.; and opposed to it, the party of the new *régime*, which styles itself liberal, and which its adversaries compliment with the names of anarchical party, revolutionary party, &c., &c., &c.

You know, by what passes under our own eyes, what courtesy parties use towards each other. [Laughter] Well, gentlemen, as far as I am concerned I would give them both all these names, good and bad, because they deserve them all in turn, according to their conduct. But here, in your presence, I shall employ only those qualifications which will properly express my ideas, the party of the old and the party of the new *régime*.

In what position was the party of the old *régime*? There were in that party—gentlemen, these details are necessary in order to appreciate properly the situation in which we are going to find ourselves placed in Mexico—there were in that party which calls itself conservative some great families of the highest respectability. They descend from the ancient conquerors of Mexico, from the old viceroys, and from some merchants, who acquired and retained great fortunes. These are families, I repeat, of the greatest respectability, which entertain the very beautiful dream, which I would wish to see realized for them, that Mexico should become a Brazil.

I repeat it, I would gladly wish to see its realization. But let us see how Brazil has become what it is. When we took the very unfortunate notion of invading Portugal in 1808, the house of Braganza seized upon a very happy idea, that of quitting Portugal and retiring to Brazil. Thanks to that resolution, it did not lose Portugal, which was restored to it in 1815, and it preserved Brazil. How did that happen? In the simplest manner possible. There was no interruption of the royal authority, and the people of Brazil, touched at seeing their ancient royal family seek an asylum in their bosom, became most devotedly attached to it. And we must add that that royal family, when the liberal movement manifested itself very strongly in America, had the good sense to yield to it in a certain measure, and the result is that Brazil, instead of reaching republicanism, has stopped at constitutional monarchy.

I know that the expression is not in favor here, but still every one must be permitted to speak his own language; I request your permission to speak mine.

A VOICE. Constitutional monarchy is in great favor.

M. THIERS. Under that constitutional monarchy Brazil has found order in the first place—for me, that is a matter of primary importance—and then liberty and a growing prosperity.

Now, is it easy to procure for those very respectable Mexicans of whom I have spoken the blessings enjoyed by Brazil? Unfortunately it is very difficult, for whither should we go to choose a prince for them? If we followed analogies we would proceed to ask one of Spain; but, as I mentioned to you, there has been an interruption of relations there, and the recollections of the war of independence have left such profound traces that the Mexicans have an excessive dislike for Spaniards. Then if, in default of a prince naturally indicated by his origin, we proceed to make an arbitrary selection, which I would not presume to characterize as a capricious one, we expose ourselves to the choice of princes who have no recommendation.

We are, therefore, placed between these two difficulties in Mexico. If we take the one who would be the natural prince of the country, we find the recollections of the war of independence and the antipathies which it has engendered; if we proceed to take a prince outside of the Spanish royal house, we find a prince without recommendation and without support. Moreover, the people have assumed the bad habits of republicanism—not the good, but the bad habits; these habits they have, and it is very difficult to make them change. I allow myself, then, to call this very honorable wish of the rich Mexicans, this wish of which I would be much pleased to see the realization—I allow myself, I say, to call it a beautiful dream.

Moreover, that party has an ally; that ally is the clergy. Oh! if that Mexican clergy had the virtues, the enlightened minds, of our European clergy, I would have nothing to say. But that clergy, (I wish to use only the most polite expressions,) that clergy has, I shall say, the manners of tropical climes. [Laughter] It is rich, very rich, or at least it was rich; but it was not as wise as it was rich: it has taken part in the troubles of its country; its property has been taken and sold. It was to receive, not the value of the property, but the interest. The Mexican government has sold the property at a contemptibly small price, as always happens in such cases, and in place of it it has given to the clergy an annual appropriation, which is not always paid.

What does the clergy wish? It wishes to have its property restored; and so this conservative and very respectable party, but very small in numbers, has for its only supporters a clergy which aspires to recover its property, and in opposition to it a population of three millions of souls, comprising the middle classes and the common people, and in the ranks of which are found all the purchasers of the national goods.



Well, do you imagine that it is a very easy work to rest the support of a government on one of these parties, when in the other there are included nearly the whole population, as well as the purchasers of the national goods?

Yet this is the question which was encountered in Mexico when Miramon and President Juarez found themselves in a struggle with each other, and on that occasion the two parties showed their real strength.

Miramon is a young man, celebrated for his courage, but not so much for his prudence; he was at the head of a military force and occupied the city of Mexico. President Juarez, who is of Indian origin, and a lawyer by profession, of whom his countrymen do not say that he is an unworthy man, (we must tell the truth, although it be of our enemy,) possesses a character essentially constituted of obstinacy and stubbornness. Miramon was with the army at the city of Mexico. President Juarez was at Vera Cruz, without a dollar, without any force whatever; but, with his patient character, he waited, and a short time afterwards Miramon was obliged to fly, and Juarez entered the capital of Mexico really as the chief of the party, which now is the only powerful one in Mexico.

This took place in the month of January, 1861. It was at that time that our difficulties with Mexico commenced. In the beginning all the reasonable men of Mexico desired that all enlightened and considerate people in the country should rally around President Juarez, and should form for him a moderate administration, which might govern in the name of the ideas represented by Juarez, and which might govern with that moderation which enlightened persons always bring into government. So this passed in the first days.

Juarez formed a moderate ministry, which they call the Zarco ministry, at the head of which was a man of much ability, and, as a proof of his intentions, he resisted his congress, which was composed of men of very radical opinions. So every person in those early days wished him success, as it was seen that, in fact, he sought to realize the desire of all honest people to govern moderately with the aid of the strongest party.

We had as our minister to Mexico M. De Saligny, who entered into negotiations with President Juarez in order to settle our difficulties. An agreement—one of those called foreign agreements—was effected. M. De Saligny appeared satisfied; our government was so likewise; and in those first days all went well.

But this was not all: after having signed that agreement with us, it was necessary to pay. When the day of payment came it was impossible to pay. M. De Saligny was very much excited at this refusal to execute solemn agreements. It was natural. He was entreated to wait; he did wait for a time; but whilst he was waiting he learned that congress, in spite of the president, in spite of the minister, had passed a law, in the month of July, 1861, by which they suspended the execution of all these foreign agreements for two years.

This time M. De Saligny manifested much indignation, and I can conceive how much he was justified in so doing. Nevertheless, they waited upon him; they told him all that had been done to prevent this occurrence; they promised him to use the greatest efforts with congress to have this law repealed; but they were unable to keep their word, although they succeeded afterwards.

But do you know what the motive was for this suspension of the foreign agreements? Here it is. At that time the remnants of the vanquished party, at the head of which was General Marquez, (now our ally,) committed many excesses on the highways. It was necessary to send the army in pursuit of them; the army had not been paid for a long time, and they had taken out of the treasury the sum of four hundred thousand piastres, or about two millions of francs, which were needed to pay off the army.

M. De Saligny suspended intercourse; he did not break it off entirely, but merely suspended it, and referred the question to the French government. The English minister, who had claims to make much more considerable than ours, because the English hold nearly all the debt of Mexico—the English minister, Mr. Wyke, was delighted to place himself behind the French minister; he followed his example, and, like him, referred the question to the government of London. The European governments were then intrusted with the affair.

I shall not dispute it; we had right on our side. They had signed a treaty and they had not executed it. Yet if we had opposed to us a European government, powerful, rich, able to pay, unwilling to do so, I can understand how, having right on our side, and our dignity being interested in compelling the execution of engagements assumed, we should show ourselves peremptory. But perhaps in regard to a government which had not been led into that state by any malice, which was very much embarrassed, which promised to do better when it reached a state of solvency, perhaps it would have been better to have had patience for a little while.

But there was a way of acting by which that resolution of breaking with Mexico would not have been a fault. This way was very simple; it was to adopt the English plan. The English, also, had resolved to break off relations; but they had their means already pre-

pared, which was an easy one, and which I regret much not to have been employed; for if it had been adopted by us we would not be in the embarrassment in which we now are.

The plan is this: It was to have recourse to what the lawyers call a distress; it was simply to seize upon the ports of Tampico and Vera Cruz, (it is by these two ports that all the external commerce of Mexico is carried on,) to seize the custom-houses, and to keep them until complete payment was effected. Such was, in fact, the plan which the English had resolved to follow. They declared, indeed, from the very beginning that they were determined to take and keep the two ports of Tampico and Vera Cruz, with the aid of a few vessels and some marines accustomed to the climate, and to confine themselves to this single operation.

But it has been said: "This plan was not good, because the Mexicans by removing their custom-houses backwards could elude the measure and render it inefficacious."

I consider the objection very weak; for by removing the custom-houses backwards the Mexicans could not have removed the two ports backwards, and the English would have remained masters of the two points of arrival. They would, therefore, be in a state to insure the payment of the custom-house duties on all articles of merchandise that should be presented there for entrance. I persist, therefore, in believing that this plan was excellent and the only reasonable one.

Unfortunately, the Mexican exiles—for some of those very respectable Mexicans, composing the monarchical party at Mexico, had been obliged to leave their country—had come to Europe to endeavor to propagate their ideas there, a course of action which was assuredly very lawful.

The idea which they sought most to present before the world was that Mexico was so weary of agitation that there would be no difficulty to be met with, and that as soon as a European flag should appear on the shores of Mexico there would be an instantaneous and general uprising; that the European prince who should be sent out would be received with acclamation, and would ascend a perfectly solid throne. This is what those Mexican exiles had endeavored to circulate among European courts.

In London they would not listen to them; they were told that there was no intention to interfere in the internal affairs of Mexico, and that the English would confine themselves to occupying the ports of Tampico and Vera Cruz.

In France the ideas of the Mexican exiles had been received with more favor. People allowed themselves to be persuaded, (and the events that followed prove the truth of the assertion,) people allowed themselves to be persuaded that at the first appearance of the European flag in Mexico there would be a general uprising; that no difficulty would be encountered; that thus all the advantages would be procured for Mexico which Brazil enjoys, and that we would have the honor not only of causing justice to be rendered to our countrymen, but also of effecting the complete pacification of that fine country.

I reproach no one for having been misled by these representations. I would gladly wish the delusion had been no delusion; but unfortunately it was a veritable chimera. It was always received at Paris as truth.

At this moment Spain entered on the stage. You know how high souled and generous that nation is, whose fortune has sometimes wavered, whose heart never! She had just had considerable success in Morocco; she was very proud of it; and already the national imagination dreamed of the grandeur of the monarchy of Charles the Fifth. It was the moment when the war in America commenced, and you remember perhaps that at that period the great republic of the north was as much decried as the republics of the south. It was said everywhere—I have heard it said, and you may have heard it also—that America was disgusted with its governments, and that all the old colonies would willingly return to their mother countries. A singular incident which occurred at the time was of such a nature as to confirm this sort of illusion. Dominica, (you know that this is the part of Santo Domingo which had always belonged to Spain,) Dominica rejected the republican form of government to re-establish and proclaim the Spanish authority.

I remember that after that incident it would have been difficult to persuade the public that this was not the sentiment of nearly all the people of America. Spain permitted herself to be led away by the idea; she accepted the proffered return to her authority, and this now costs her a fierce war in which she expends the products of Havana and her best soldiers.

Well, Spain broke off relations with Mexico for the same motives as you; she broke off for a foreign treaty to which they were unable to do honor at its failure, and she hastened to fit out a great expedition at Havana. What did Spain dream at that moment? I would not presume to say. I have read all the documents, French, English, and Spanish, and I confess that all my habits of seeking to penetrate the truth in historic documents have not yet clearly shown me what the real ideas of Spain were. What I believe is, that the nation inclined considerably towards the idea of a great enterprise against Mexico, but that the government, at the head of which was a very prudent man, Marshal O'Donnell, whilst



to some extent flattering the tendencies of the nation, resisted, however, because prudence showed them the danger of engaging in such an enterprise.

Here I must say that if an adventure of this kind, which I shall always style an adventure, whoever it is that undertakes it, was excusable, it was so almost on the part of Spain.

Spain has in the Gulf of Mexico a point of immense interest—Havana. You know that Havana is a magnificent colony, one of the finest in the universe, and that it is for Spain what Java is for Holland. Spain had, therefore, an immense interest there; she had, moreover, an admirable base of operations.

That Spain, therefore, having great interests, a base of operations in Havana, should have been tempted with such an enterprise, I believe must be considered a fault; however, for my part, from the point of view of the severest policy, I should have been somewhat indulgent towards her. But frankly, it is towards her alone, I must say, that I am indulgent, in the consideration of that dream of erecting at present a great monarchy in the New World. When she learned that France and England occupied themselves with the affairs of Mexico, she hastened to open a negotiation with the English and French cabinets.

At London she was well received; she was told that they asked nothing better than to have her for an auxiliary, but that they did not wish to interfere in the internal affairs of Mexico. They declared this to her in the most formal manner. I have here the English collection, which is full of these despatches. They declared to her positively that they wished only to seize the ports of Tampico and Vera Cruz. This declaration cooled off Spain very considerably. Still she addressed herself to the French cabinet.

In France they did not tell her that they wished to confine themselves to seizing the ports of Tampico and Vera Cruz; they entered into the monarchical ideas of Spain; they only told her, and with reason, that they could not adopt a Spanish prince. They maintained, and it was natural, the principle which has prevailed in the affairs of Greece: it is that none of the powers which concurred in this enterprise should see a prince of its own race advanced.

This very reasonable declaration cooled Spain off still more, and then she gave her adhesion to the English plan. I do not say that this was done entirely without regret, entirely without ulterior intentions; I believe that Spain in adhering to the English plan said to herself, that perhaps the Spanish fortune would smile upon her, and that though they did not wish to effect any more than the English plan, some happy accident might perhaps present something better.

It is clear that she appeared resigned to do all that England wished, and they drew up the treaty of October, 1861. This treaty, although short, would be too long to read to you. I shall merely analyze it.

It was, if I may say so, but a mere negation; for England wished only a maritime expedition tending to occupy the ports of Vera Cruz and Tampico; Spain desired a monarchy, but for a prince of her own; and France, also, desired a monarchy, but for an Austrian prince.

With such a disagreement, it was impossible, in signing a treaty, to sign anything but an absolutely negative treaty, but which was not the less obligatory for all that; and by that treaty they engaged to effect the mutual concurrence of the three nations for the sole purpose, says the treaty, of obtaining justice for the subjects of the three governments. They bound themselves not to make conquests, not to interfere with the internal government, to name a commission for the allotment of the indemnities, and then to inform the United States, in order that they might also unite in the intervention, if they judged it necessary.

A very singular but very significant circumstance, and one which well proves the disposition of mind in which each of the three nations was, is the number of the forces which each had offered. Spain, having already made great preparations at Havana, declared that she would send 6,000 men; and we, who now wish to create a great monarchy in Mexico, offered 2,200 men, which proves that we had given full credence to the assurances of the Mexican exiles, who told us that at the very appearance of the European flags the country would immediately arise in insurrection. As to the English, who wished nothing of all this, they gave only 700 marines to occupy Vera Cruz and Tampico.

Under these circumstances it was that the three nations began their action against Mexico. The Spaniards, who were the first on the scene of operation, and who set out from Havana, arrived at Vera Cruz towards the middle of December. For their chief they had General Prim. It was an act of courtesy on the part of France, who was opposed to the selection of a Spanish prince, to accept a Spanish officer as the generalissimo of the expedition.

All Europe knows General Prim. He is an officer of distinguished courage, of much ability, but who is fully endowed with all the Castilian haughtiness.

General Prim having arrived at Havana, set out from thence to Vera Cruz, and with his sagacity, which is very great, commenced to observe the country. He soon saw that people

had flattered themselves too much in Europe; for during the month which he spent in waiting for us, the Mexican monarchical party, which they said was to rise at the first appearance of the European flag, made no movement whatever. General Prim saw several members of this monarchical party, and to all of them he said: "We do not come here to effect a revolution; but if you effect one without our interference, we will consider it good; do it, if you can." Well, the monarchical party did nothing.

People waited, and all that was seen was a marked movement of the country in favor of the government of President Juarez, because he was threatened by foreign nations.

The Mexicans retired; they abandoned to us the ports which we had set out to occupy; they established a cordon of guerillas around Vera Cruz, and formed the project, unfortunate for us, but for them very well conceived, of blockading us in some sort in the midst of the pestilence.

The French arrived in their turn about twenty or twenty-five days after the Spaniards, and disembarked at Vera Cruz. They had for their commander a very distinguished officer, a man of ability and of much common sense, Admiral Jurien de la Gravière. He set himself, like General Prim, about examining the disposition of the people's minds, and I could cite to you letters which he wrote to General Prim, and which have been published in the discussions in the Spanish senate, and in one of which I have remarked the following phrase, which proves to you what opinion he formed of the state of affairs after a careful observation:

He wrote thus to General Prim: "I have always been disposed to agree with you in recognizing the necessity we are under here to avoid embracing the cause of the party which composes the minority, and which has opposed to it the general opinion of the country."

Such was the opinion formed by Admiral Jurien de la Gravière upon seeing the country; but he acted like a prudent man, faithful to the instructions of his government, and waited.

It was in vain to wait; no one stirred. However, they could not remain indefinitely at Vera Cruz. Although it was winter, (they were in the month of January,) they suffered much in the very close encampments in which they were lodged. Already the Spaniards had 2,000 sick. We have not been told how many we had, but we had many, and especially among our marines, who are, in general, the greatest sufferers from these sorts of expeditions, in which they manifest the greatest devotedness, perhaps not always sufficiently noticed, [That's true; good;] our marine force, above all, suffered cruelly at Vera Cruz. As to the English, they had already 130 sick out of 700 sailors.

General Prim, Admiral Jurien de la Gravière, and Commodore Dunlop declared that they could not remain at Vera Cruz. They marched out from that city and encamped at some leagues' distance from thence, at Medellin and at Tegeria. They selected somewhat better quarters there; they procured provisions for themselves, and lived in somewhat better style.

However, it was necessary to do something; it was more than a month since they had arrived; it was necessary to come to some explanations with the Mexicans. They issued a proclamation, in which they announced to them that they came neither to conquer nor to revolutionize the country, but to have justice rendered to our countrymen; and as they wished to give to this declaration the form of an ultimatum, they sought to come to an agreement in regard to the amount of claims. Each one produced his own amount.

England produced hers, which was the most considerable, for the English hold nearly all the debt of Mexico. England demanded about seventeen millions of piastres, which makes about eighty-five millions of francs; Spain eight millions of piastres, or forty millions of francs; the other nations that had claims, about four millions of piastres, or twenty millions of francs; and, finally, we demanded twelve millions of piastres, or sixty millions of francs.

This figure appeared a little surprising, because, after all the talk on the subject, people thought that the amount would not exceed ten millions.

However, each party was allowed to set forth his own pretensions. But when all was added up, it was found that these sums combined amounted to forty millions of piastres, or two hundred millions of francs. They were somewhat scared at the idea of demanding such a sum from the Mexicans.

Gentlemen, I shall speak to you presently, for a moment, of their budget, if you are not too much fatigued, [no, no;] but you must forthwith know that the Mexican budget, since the separation from the mother country, has never been able to count the receipt of fifty millions of francs, or ten millions of piastres. Now, to demand of a nation the sum of two hundred millions—that is to say, four years of its revenue—appeared an exorbitant and very embarrassing affair.

They were in this state of embarrassment when M. de Saligny, our minister, declared that this was not all; that there was another claim, and he produced the famous Jecker debt.

I shall not enter into the details of this debt; we would need the subtlest lawyer to disentangle the truth in the papers, for and against, that have been written on this subject. I