

You have to obtain reparation, to avenge your honor. Have you done nothing? The commissioner of the government said awhile ago that it was not a *coup de main* that could suffice for us, and that an enterprise such as that which has caused the flag of France to triumph before San Juan de Ulloa could not be a sufficient action in the estimation of the three powers. We were alone; but have you done nothing else? In what condition are we now? This is what I pray you to consider. I finish in a few words; I have but little strength to continue my address.

But you have not stopped at a *coup de main*; you have not confined yourselves, in conformity with the English policy, to seizing the ports and custom-houses; you have gone further than this: you have stormed Puebla after a heroic struggle; you have entered the city of Mexico. Have you done nothing in that capital? You have constituted a government there, a provisional government, I acknowledge—but a government, however—and you have placed at its head the very man to whom you gave admission into your ranks, whilst presenting him as a leader of revolution in opposition to Juarez and his government. This government of yours has appointed a junta, a council of notables—I know not what name they give it—an assembly of thirty members. They are, you see, in possession of power. Who are the men whom you have placed in that position? Those who told us that they were the representatives of the majority of Mexico; those who told us that we had only to show ourselves in their company on the coasts of Mexico to have all arms open to receive us, to have ourselves overwhelmed with grateful acknowledgments. And you have not been contented with a portion of the territory; you have taken the city of Mexico; you have established a government there; you have done more—you have made several expeditions since your occupation of the capital; you have extended your forces over a space more or less extensive, which is a very slight matter, when I compare the points on the map over which our troops have been directed and the immense extent of Mexico. But, in fine, you have assured to yourselves a territory around the city of Mexico already subjected; you have given to that government which you created an army which you pay, which is at its disposal. It has, it says, the majority of the country, and you have no difficulty in establishing an archduke emperor or king of Mexico. You have given a capital to that government; you have conquered its enemies; you have compelled the Mexican nation to undergo the cruellest insult that a nation proud of its unity and of its existence can suffer. You are masters of the capital and of a small part of the surrounding provinces. You have constituted an army a government. You are masters of the ports, the sole outlets of that country. Who hinders you from suspending war, hostilities, farther enterprises? It is not with Juarez that you must treat, but with the government which you have made. [Applause on several benches.] Has that government lied? Is it composed of men who have deceived France, of men who do not represent the majority of the country? Is the approbation now given to the French enterprise by the inhabitants of Mexico a mere fiction? Are we, then, in presence of a nation now covered with falsehood, with a negation, and does not the government which we have established represent the majority of the wishes and intentions of the people of that country?

They said that we had 5,500,000 inhabitants subject to our authority. Well, when your honor has been avenged, when victory has returned to you, when you have wiped out all the affronts which those barbarians have essayed to impress for a moment on the face of France, when you have regained victory, when you are masters of the capital, when you have founded a new government which is surrounded with all the powers which it can and ought to use, all is terminated, why not stop short? Why not? Is there nothing done? Have you done nothing? This is something that you would not like to confess.

In view of this state of affairs, which appears to me to be the true one; when you can withdraw with the honors of war, when you are conquerors of your enemy, when you have overthrown Juarez in his capital, when you are masters of that capital, when you have established there a government to which you have given an army—a considerable military force organized by you; in view of this state of affairs, I say, what hinders you from treating with that government? Is there anything in it that touches the honor, the self-love, or the interests of France in any way? What, then, do you wish to do? Do you wish, on the contrary, to persist in the development of the instructions sent to General Bazaine? But you cannot now think of persisting in your enterprise, unless you recognize the insufficiency of the government which you have founded at the city of Mexico, unless you recognize that the majority of Mexicans which you boast of having obtained is a pure fiction. [Applause on several benches.]

If you do not treat with that government which you have founded yourselves, it must be because that government has not the majority of the people of the country on its side, because you alone support it, because now the people of that country bow their heads merely on account of the presence of your arms, and they would rise up in insurrection on the day that your arms would be withdrawn. [Several voices: Good, good.]

And it is into such a country as that that you wish to take an Austrian prince to be there the representative of the majority of the people, to be the child of your victories! No, no; you will not do so; the undertaking would be foolish; it would be insane. You would deliver yourselves up to all sorts of adventures. You cannot honorably call Prince Maximilian to Mexico if that country is in such a state, if the government which you have placed there is not sufficiently powerful to sustain him alone. Or else, if you persist in calling him thither in spite of everything, you yourselves must maintain him there.

Maintain him!—eh! gentlemen; that may be for long years, for in order to sustain him nothing less will be required than to hold Mexico in subjection, if the majority is not really gained over to the government represented by General Almonte and the members of the junta. Think, therefore, before consolidating a kingdom, an empire, at the distance of three thousand leagues from us, think of what has happened at our doors! We received an affront from the Dey of Algiers; we avenged that affront; we reduced his capital, which is over against our ports; and we have required fifteen years of fighting to establish our authority over a nation which had within itself no causes of internal distraction, which was not broken up into hostile parties, and which we delivered from the yoke of the Turks; we have required fifteen years of struggle to succeed in the pacification of Algiers! What an enterprise, then, would not the pacification of Mexico be, the extinction there of the political passions of the parties which divide it, the rallying them around a new monarchy, after that unhappy country had been for fifty years subject to so many commotions and revolutions! How much resistance would you not have to overcome in order to make such a people pass from the republican to the monarchical state!

How do you propose to have the dissensions, manifested in the conferences of the plenipotentiaries of the three nations at Orizaba, cease all at once? Do you believe that the causes of those dissensions have disappeared, or that others will not arise? It was already something to have brought Spain to unite with you; but did she not do so because she hoped to succeed by your means in reconquering her ancient colonies? Do you believe that the English, who possess a part of the Antilles, who possess Jamaica, and who are so jealous of their interests, will ever regard with pleasure a power which may be able some day to compromise British interests in those quarters? Do you believe that they will throw no difficulties in the way?

There are other sources of difficulty which have been spoken of, and spoken of with reason: they are those respecting the position of the United States.

The actual condition of the United States is deplorable. As for me, with all the old traditions of my country, I am a devoted partisan of the American Union; I have seen it tear itself to pieces with the profoundest grief; I always hoped that in the daily increasing power of that great federal republic we should, by its commerce, by its navy, by the development of its population and power, find a powerful ally for France in certain grave conjunctures. [Several voices: Good, good.] Nothing afflicts me more than the actual division of the United States. I fondly hope to see peace restored with the least possible sacrifice to either part of that great people. But however things terminate, do not forget that the northern States will always constitute a nation of great power and influence throughout the whole American territory; do not forget that our course in this expedition to Mexico is a source of offence to them.

NUMEROUS VOICES. No, no.

M. BERRYER. Those who deny my assertions have not sufficiently studied the documents before our eyes and all the historic facts that cannot be denied, and which go no further back than these last three years. I speak not of that deeply rooted sentiment which is the vital principle, the nervous centre, of the political existence of the United States, of that sentiment which is called the Monroe doctrine; that is, the sentiment of impatience and hostility with which the United States consider the intervention of any European power in the affairs of America. [Divers manifestations.]

I speak not of that sentiment. But how have you commenced the Mexican expedition? By the treaty of October 31.

And what did you say in that treaty? Yielding to a desire of England, you said that the United States were invited to enter into it; you prayed them to do so; and yet, in a letter dated July 25, 1862, I have read in so many words that it was necessary to form a new establishment in Mexico precisely for the purpose of diminishing the influence of the States of the north and preventing that power, whose prosperity notwithstanding might be so useful to our commerce, from obtaining a troublesome development in South America. Thus the Mexican expedition has been partly undertaken against the United States. [Vehement denials.]

I exaggerate naught, gentlemen; I speak the truth. Read over again the letter of the month of July, 1862, and you will see there, in so many words, that it is necessary to arrest the further progress of the United States.

Well, if you succeeded, when the United States—towards which such a course has been

pursued, and which hold that vital principle of which I spoke just now—should see, after the termination of their war, a state which you could not sustain except at the price of immense sacrifices, (and however immense they should be, unfortunately I should be afraid they would prove useless,) when the United States, I say, should see this establishment raised up in opposition to them, hostilities would arise from all sides. The republic of the north would not support the imperial monarchy of Mexico, and war would break out sooner or later. Such are the perils into which you lead Prince Maximilian by inviting him to assume an impossible and impracticable position, one which would be ruinous for France if she persisted in such an enterprise. [Applause on several benches.]

NUMEROUS VOICES. Let us adjourn.

The PRESIDENT. I presume the discussion will be adjourned till to-morrow?

NUMEROUS VOICES. Yes, yes.

The PRESIDENT. However, it is well that we should understand on what ground the discussion now stands. There are two amendments relative to Mexico.

M. JULES FAVRE. Will the president please to permit me to make a simple observation?

The PRESIDENT. With the greatest pleasure.

M. JULES FAVRE. We withdraw our amendment.

M. GLAIS BIZOIN. Yes, if the discussion is continued to-morrow.

M. JULES FAVRE. Yes, we withdraw our amendment, if the discussion continues to-morrow on the amendment supported by M. Thiers.

The PRESIDENT. The question is not on stopping the discussion, but on properly understanding the state of the debate at present and before adjourning it over until to-morrow. [Applause.]

A portion of my intended remarks is rendered unnecessary by the withdrawal of one of the amendments as just announced by M. Jules Favre. It remains to me to say that it is necessary to specify precisely the character of the amendment to be discussed to-morrow, and that we should establish the difference that exists at bottom, though it is not evident in the terms, between the amendment and the paragraph of the address. [Marks of assent.] When I read both, they appear to me perfectly concordant in thought and purpose. I hope, then, that this confusion will be cleared up to-morrow.

M. THIERS. Mr. President, please read the amendment.

FROM ALL SIDES. To-morrow.

The PRESIDENT. I will read it to-morrow.

The assembly adjourned at half past six o'clock.

DISCUSSION IN THE FRENCH CHAMBERS.

SPEECHES OF MESSRS. THIERS AND FAVRE.

Corps Legislatif, session of Wednesday, 27th of January, 1864, presidency of his excellency the Duc of Morny.

President DE MORNAY. As I announced yesterday, I proceed to read the amendment actually under discussion, that presented by Messrs. de Grammont, D'Andelarre, Thiers, Lambrecht, Malézieux, Ancel, Plichon, Martel:

"Whilst applauding the courage and heroic perseverance of our soldiers, France is anxious about the proportions and the duration of the expedition to Mexico; she earnestly desires a speedy conclusion to put a stop to the sacrifices which this expedition costs us, and to prevent the political complications of which it might become the occasion."

Now the paragraph of the address is as follows:

"The distant expeditions to China, Cochin-China, and Mexico, in succession, have in fact troubled the minds of many persons in France very much on account of the sacrifices and obligations which they induce. We should be happy to see the speedy realization of the good results for which your Majesty gives us reason to hope."

Gentlemen, I do not pretend to say that both are absolutely identical; only that, combining the double quality of president of the Chamber and chairman of the committee, I am so much the more entitled to demand that the questions should be well weighed. It is for the general interest, and I know the Hon. M. Thiers too well to doubt of his approbation in this respect.

M. THIERS. Certainly, certainly.

President DE MORNAY. He cannot desire an equivocation; M. Berryer cannot desire it either; the Hon. M. Jules Favre, who presented an amendment still more expressive, will also be of this opinion; and I can affirm that the committee and the Chamber, no less than the government, desire an equivocation.

M. THIERS. Nobody desires it.

President DE MORNAY. If no one desires it, I must say that the terms of the address and the terms of the amendment seem almost identical. The difference, therefore, must appear from the developments. I say this in order that the conclusions should be well weighed and the Chamber may know what it will have to vote upon.

The committee has expressed the same wish to see the Mexican expedition come to a speedy conclusion. It expressed it after having heard the commissioners of the government. Only the committee did not deem itself authorized to propose to the Chamber to dictate a practical solution to the government, leaving to each one its responsibility. The Chambers vote supplies, or refuse them, and express their desires; but the Chambers dictate neither the management of the armies nor the diplomatic conduct of the government. [Good, good.]

What had the committee to do? It has expressed its wish to see the government withdraw as soon as possible, and with honor, from Mexico. It did not wish to go further, and the Chamber will understand why: it is because it would have thereby accepted a share of the responsibility for the consequences, supposing that in consequence of the adoption of the proposition of the honorable M. Thiers, which consists in treating with Juarez, or of the proposition of the honorable M. Berryer, which consists in treating with Almonte, a reaction should follow, and all those who have taken part for France should be persecuted, should see their goods confiscated, and should be ruined themselves, perhaps massacred. It is understood that the Chamber is not authorized to enter upon such responsibilities; the Chamber lets the government act, as it is acquainted with the question and can judge it more closely, and can come to a rational decision based on the full knowledge of all the circumstances, whilst accepting the share of responsibility that belongs to it. As to the committee, it had but one wish to express; that wish is in accord with the sentiment of the Chamber, with that of the country, and probably, as you will understand hereafter, with the desires of the government. Consequently, I return to the starting point: I request the authors of the amendment to be as precise as the honorable M. Thiers, who has spoken on the other amendment, and, in defending this one, to specify their conclusions.

M. THIERS. Gentlemen, since I have been referred to, you will consider it quite natural for me to take the floor.

Well, let us first explain clearly the principle of constitutional right. To dictate has not been for a moment in our intentions. We would be forgetful, even under the most rigorously constitutional system, of the limit of our duties, we would be forgetful of the limit of propriety, if we had intended to dictate a course of conduct to the government; and as for myself, I said some days ago that I conceded to the government the initiative in all things. So we are perfectly agreed on that point. The word *dictate* is not, to my eyes, a constitutional expression. I repudiate it, for my part; but whilst repudiating the word *dictate*, I accept from the mouth of the president—and I cannot accept a better rendition than his—I accept the word *wish*. [Sensation.] Do you frankly ask us our wish? Do you sincerely desire it? I will give it to you very clearly.

The PRESIDENT. That is what I ask.

M. THIERS. So we are agreed in this. The question is not to dictate on our part, but to express a wish, and a wish well deserves to be taken into consideration, for each of us here represents France in his own very slight way, and I do not propose to speak here merely as a deputy from Paris. No, we are all equal here, quite equal. [Good.] I propose to speak for my 290th part; I know not whether this is exactly the ratio of representation. Well, in my opinion, the wish of France is this: that as soon as possible, and as honorably as possible, we should withdraw from Mexico. [Interruption.] Gentlemen, it is not your wish that I propose to express.

VARIOUS VOICES. You have our approbation. Your wish is the wish of the committee.

M. THIERS. So much the better; and so when I took as the divisor of the fraction which I represent the number 290, I was mistaken; I should have taken a smaller number. I am delighted that we are somewhat more numerous than I thought.

NUMEROUS VOICES. All, all.

M. THIERS. I thank Heaven, we are all agreed.

M. BELMONTET. No, not all.

M. THIERS. Only it is necessary to endeavor to find expressions on which the agreement can be maintained. [Various manifestations.]

SOME VOICES. Ah! ah!

M. THIERS. Ah! well, we all wish to withdraw from Mexico as soon as possible.

SOME VOICES. Honorably.

M. THIERS. Eh! undoubtedly. The president did us the honor just now of telling us—or rather did me the honor of telling me, for he was pleased to address himself to me—that his text much resembled ours. [Sensation.]

President DE MORNAY. It is not my text.

M. THIERS. It is not yours, Mr. President, in the same way that the amendment which I have signed is not mine.

President DE MORNAY. I have not said that it was yours.

M. THIERS. Yes, Mr. President, you said so; but it does not matter. I say ours, because the necessary concurrence of several signers in the presentation of amendments requires this expression.

Well, I must tell the President that, after having read the paragraph of the address with the greatest attention and sought to find in it any likeness whatever to the text of the amendment, I have been unable to discover any. What, in fact, says the text of the address?

"The distant expeditions of China, Cochin-China, and Mexico, in succession, have in fact troubled the minds of many persons in France very much, on account of the sacrifices and obligations which they induce."

Thus far we agree.

"We acknowledge that they must inspire in distant regions respect for our countrymen and for the French flag, and that they must also develop our commerce, but we shall be happy to see the good results soon realized for which your Majesty gives us reason to hope."

If fatigue has yet left me any understanding, it seems to me that this means the following: Many wicked tongues have condemned these distant expeditions; they have said "that they trouble the minds of many persons in France very much on account of the obligations and sacrifices which they induce." Well, sire, we do not share in the opinion of these wicked tongues, for "we acknowledge that these expeditions must inspire in distant regions respect for our countrymen and for the French flag." [Interruption.]

So, the sense of the paragraph of the address is, in my opinion, thus: These distant expeditions have been blamed, but we are not of this opinion. We acknowledge that these expeditions will have such and such advantages which we are impatient to see realized.

Such is the sense of the paragraph of the address. And what is the wish that we express in the amendment? Undoubtedly, we do not pretend to say that all distant expeditions have been useless or unfortunate; but we say that in general they present great dangers, and that, in particular, the expedition to Mexico is inauspicious in itself, and destined to produce only calamitous results. [Various interruptions.] This is our idea.

COUNT DE LA TOUR. I request permission to speak.

M. THIERS. And see here in what terms, very different from those of the paragraph of the address, we express it:

"Whilst applauding the courage and the heroic perseverance of our soldiers, France is troubled at the proportions and duration of the Mexican expedition; she ardently desires that a speedy conclusion should put a stop to the sacrifices which this expedition costs us, and prevent the political complications of which it might become the occasion."

So, the two points of view are very different: on the one side there are persons who find that maritime expeditions, although they are attended with many disadvantages, have, however, this advantage of causing our countrymen and our flag to be respected, of promoting our commerce, and these persons desire that those results should be speedily obtained; on the other side there are persons who, without opposing all distant expeditions, specify this to Mexico, and to this attribute no possible good result, and desire to see it discontinued as soon as possible.

Now, as to treating with such or such a government, that is a distinct question.

NUMEROUS VOICES. Not at all; not at all; that is the very question itself.

M. THIERS. I retract nothing of what I said yesterday, but I state the question thus: Treat with whom you please, Juarez or anybody else, but beware of sending out a prince; for, when you send him out under such circumstances as the present, it can only be under your responsibility. [No, no.] We are honorable men; we are upright men. When you send out a prince, do you not make yourselves responsible for his subsequent fortune?

NUMEROUS VOICES. No, no.

OTHER VOICES. We do not send him out; he goes to Mexico freely and of his own accord.

M. GRANIER DE CASSAGNAC. That depends on what conditions we have made with him; we are responsible only as far as we are bound by our engagements.

M. THIERS. I would wish to be able to sum up all objections in one in order to reply to them. Let one objecter be appointed to discuss with me, and I shall take it upon myself to discuss with him; but I cannot do so with fifty persons. When fifty persons cry out all at once, they can say what they please; but I defy any man of good sense and good faith to tell me here publicly in discussion that, in sending out a prince to Mexico under our responsibility, we do not assume a moral engagement to sustain him. [Cries of No, no.] What would the contrary mean? [Noise.]

M. GRANIER DE CASSAGNAC. It is the prince himself that wishes to go to Mexico; we do not send him there.

M. ANDRÉ (de la Charente.) You cry out to him not to go, and yet he goes.

M. THIERS. You ask for light and I give it to you. I say that the integrity of France is pledged to protect a prince when you send him beyond the seas.

SEVERAL VOICES. No, no.

M. THIERS. Well, let those who think that the good faith of France is not pledged rise and proclaim it. Let them so record their votes, and then the prince will know on what conditions you send him to Mexico. [Numerous exclamations of Very good, very good.]

M. GRANIER DE CASSAGNAC. He knows the conditions.

M. THIERS. They say that we conceal ourselves behind equivocations. It is not we— [Exclamations.]

President DE MORNAY. Who does conceal himself behind equivocations?

M. THIERS. That was not intended to be addressed to you, Mr. President; I shall always be courteous towards a president who shows so much courtesy to me.

But I say that those who, in taking away a prince from his family and country to send him to a distant region, whilst pretending to bind themselves to no engagements towards him, conceal themselves behind equivocations. What! he goes at our call, under our protection, and yet we are under no engagement to him!

A MEMBER. Let the government explain; it is its duty to tell us.

M. THIERS. It is pretended there is no engagement. Why then were we told yesterday, that because General Almonte and his friends were at the city of Mexico, because they had formed a government with our assent, we could not now abandon them?

When I said, "Treat with any party, with Juarez if you wish," it was replied: "That would be a shame." They are not very choice in their expressions to us, you are witnesses; we are particular with them, but they are not at all particular with us. [Interruption.] For my part, I have been always particular. However, it does not matter much; I shall sacrifice, without pain, my self-love to my conscience and to moderate liberty. They may take any license they please with me; I shall suffer anything that does not attack my dignity and self-respect, and I shall never imprudently compromise the sacred cause of that moderate liberty which France now claims, and for which I shall ever struggle. [Approbation from several benches.]

Therefore, we were told yesterday that, in abandoning General Almonte and some of his friends who have compromised us, who have conducted us before Puebla, where six thousand French have been stopped, we were told that to abandon these auxiliaries would be a shame.

How! it would be a shame to abandon General Almonte and his friends, to whom we are under no obligation; and when a prince shall have been installed at Mexico, conducted thither by you, when your soldiers shall have overrun a part of Mexico to give, so they say, the Mexican people an opportunity to vote; when all this shall have been accomplished, you will dare to tell us that there will be no engagement entered into with that prince! If that be so, gentlemen, words have two meanings. They have one sense to-day and to-morrow another. For us, they never have but one sense, because our words are the words of honesty, and honesty never uses but one language.

Yesterday I said, and I repeat it now—for when we treat of such matters as these, the quality of the persons increases still more the gravity of the engagements entered into—I repeat that, when a prince is taken from one of the greatest reigning families of Europe, when that family is asked for a prince to be delivered up to the hazards of those civil wars so frequent in Mexico, to pretend that there is no obligations contracted towards him and his, is to advance a very strange idea not at all honorable to France.

It is for this reason that I allowed myself yesterday to call the most serious attention of the Chamber to the course of action to which we are about to be dragged.

What was said yesterday on the subject? Mention was made of facts already judged; and I was astonished to hear so experienced a lawyer as the honorable M. Chaix d'Est-Auge speak of facts already judged where there is question of politics. It is all well enough when we speak of the decisions of courts; I admit that then the authority of facts already judged may be invoked, but I cannot admit it in political matters. I can admit it, for example, for the guidance of the Chamber, when it verifies the powers of its members; because, in the question of elections, gentlemen, you are supreme judges. In this case the authority of adjudged facts can be invoked; but in politics is there ever an adjudged fact? Truly, I have never before heard such a maxim advanced. It matters not, however; I accept the expression; but it should serve as a lesson to you. You may now judge of the use that will be made next year of your decision of this year. They will tell you that you have already decided, that you have authorized the establishment of the Mexican monarchy, that you cannot permit that establishment, scarcely commenced, to fall, and that it must be sustained. Well, I, who consider this expression of adjudged fact rather badly employed

yesterday, I say that it will have some share of truth this time, and that it will be difficult for you to refuse your fleets and your soldiers. It is for this reason that I entreated the Chamber, and that I entreat it now again, to be on its guard as to the vote that it will give. When on the morrow of the day of your vote the prince shall set out, the situation will be very seriously changed. At present, while I am speaking, we are still free, and so is the government. Let it employ that method of solution that it may find best, for do not think that I constitute myself the patron of Juarez; I know not him or his. For me, Juarez is the representative of the party reputed to be the strongest, and I say: Treat with the strongest party, with the party which you consider as such, since you seek to rally it around you, the opinions of which you recognize as good, since now the honorable General Bazaine sacrifices Monseigneur de Labastida to those opinions.

If you do not wish to treat with Juarez, treat with the prominent men of his party; demand of them the sacrifice of Juarez; that is of no consequence to me; for, fortunately, I am not charged with the management of public affairs, and in any case it would be here that the president would have reason to say that the word *dictate* would be out of place. In fine, let the government act as it pleases; still a most important point, a point most eminently evident and clear as noonday, is that, by encouraging the departure of the prince, we make an engagement to found a monarchy in the New World. Well, I say that, in the general state of affairs throughout the world, it is an engagement that I, for my part, would never wish to make, and which I never shall make. Let those make it who wish; as to me, I repudiate utterly any such responsibility. [Vociferous approbation from some benches; applause around the speaker.]

President DE MORNAY. It does not belong to me to discuss. If I discussed, I should request to be superseded in this presidential chair, and I would proceed to take my place on one of those benches. I have merely desired to say that, for greater clearness of debate, very precise explanations were requisite. Those explanations have been given. They have elicited the real sense of the amendment, which, if members confined themselves to criticizing the expedition, both draughts would remain liable to a confusion which might be troublesome to the Chamber. [That is true; good.]

Now, it is well understood that both draughts, the paragraph of the address and the amendment, if not different in terms, are so at least in their conclusions. The Chamber will, therefore, know what it has to decide upon and what it has to do. [Good, good.]

The minister of state requests permission to address you.

His excellency M. ROUHER, minister of state. Gentlemen, I do not rise to discuss the various arguments employed, either by the honorable M. Berryer or by the honorable M. Thiers. I rise now only to weigh the question, and determine in what terms we should continue the debate.

The honorable M. Thiers has said to you: "We wish to withdraw from Mexico as soon as possible; we wish to withdraw honorably." The Chamber has accepted these two declarations. In fact, these two declarations are the sentiment of the majority and the sentiment of the government. [Good.]

But the government thinks that it would not be honorable to withdraw by treating with Juarez. [Good, good.] The government thinks that it cannot treat with General Almonte, who does not represent a regularly constituted authority; that it can negotiate only with a government springing from universal suffrage, when a contract shall have been established between the Mexican nation and the Archduke Maximilian, if he is elected. In thus treating with this sovereign, the French government will not have contracted a permanent and indefinite obligation to maintain an empire in Mexico.

This is how the question stands, and in this light I shall discuss it in my turn. But, at present, there is a difference of opinion. You wish to treat with Juarez. [No, no; yes, yes.]

M. THIERS. No; I request to say a few words.

A VOICE. Yes; you proposed to do so.

The MINISTER OF STATE. Let us avoid personal reflections. The honorable M. Thiers has complained that the organs of the government sometimes attacked him with harshness. If they have done so they have acted unintentionally; they respect his character and his person alike.

M. THIERS. I thank you.

The MINISTER OF STATE. They respect him, and especially share his sentiments when he speaks of his desire to see his country enjoy a regular and rational liberty. The government believes that it has founded that liberty in France. [Good, good.]

M. THIERS. Begun. [Exclamations.]

The MINISTER OF STATE. The government believes that it has founded that liberty in France; the government is convinced that the developments which you ask would, by their precipitancy, compromise the degree of liberty now attained. [Marks of assent.]

And now, to return to the point, if I was wrong in saying that the honorable M. Thiers

proposed to the Chamber to express a desire to have the government treat with Juarez, I took up the general question, and I declare, in the name of the government, that Juarez is our enemy, and that we will never treat with him.

I declare, in the name of the government, that it is equally impossible to treat with Almonte; and the question being thus laid down, I reserve to myself the right of unfolding to the Chamber the considerations which justify the principle of this expedition, which legitimate its different phases, and which should characterize its speedy solution. [Good, good.]

M. BERRYER. I ask permission to speak.

President DE MORNAY. M. Jules Favre is entitled to the tribune.

A MEMBER. M. de la Tour ought to have it before him; he speaks against the amendment.

M. BERRYER. The question does not seem to me now to be on the absolute merits, but on the present phase of the question, as you have very properly observed, Mr. President, and on the difference between the paragraph of the address and the amendment. This is the point reached in the debate, which is but, in some sort, a preparatory debate to the general discussion that will ensue on the amendment. It is thus that I understood the debate to have been commenced.

President DE MORNAY. I started the debate on the difference between the two texts, it is true, but that question is exhausted, and it has assumed the proportions of the real discussion by the speech of M. Thiers, which the minister of state has just answered by a simple declaration. It would be impossible for me to allow this debate to go on, which is merely based on a difference in the understanding of the two texts, which, I believe, I have demonstrated to the Chamber. The discussion should now continue on the main point, and M. Jules Favre is entitled to speak on the subject.

M. BERRYER. It is on the declaration of the minister of state that I desire to say a word, and as to the difference of the two draughts. [Interruption.]

President DE MORNAY. M. Jules Favre insists on his right to speak.

M. BERRYER. I have but one word to say. [Speak, speak.]

The declaration of the minister of state is a reply to the question which I asked yesterday of the government: Is it willing to treat with the government which it has established at Mexico, or does it desire to wait and establish the authority of the Archduke Maximilian? [Interruption.]

Allow me. The minister of state has made a complete reply to the question which I submitted yesterday to the assembly. The minister of state has said: The government cannot treat with Almonte, because Almonte is only a provisional establishment which has no legal character in that country of Mexico.

The government must wait for the imperial establishment of the Emperor Maximilian, if he is elected, [noise;] the government must wait till he is recognized by means of universal suffrage in order to treat with him; and here it is—in view of the answer given to my question of yesterday by the minister of state—that the difference exists between the two draughts. There is a kind of equivocation and ambiguity in the address; there is, on the contrary, in the amendment, a very clear expression of the desire of the assembly to see a speedy conclusion put an end to the sacrifices which this expedition costs us, and prevent the political complications of which it might become the occasion.

In this state of affairs there is but one question more, and on this the assembly desires to be satisfied: Is it true that the government has made no engagement to bind the country, either in a financial point of view, or as regards its soldiers? Are we under any obligation, or are we not?

His excellency M. ROUHER. If you had read the report of the honorable M. Larrabure you would have been instructed.

M. SEGRIS. I request permission to say one word, in order to complete the remark of the minister of state in reference to the report of M. Larrabure. Here is the reply of the organs of the government which I find in that report, and which I, for my part, fully accept:

"At this moment the Emperor's government declares"—

M. THIERS. At this moment!

M. SEGRIS. "At this moment the Emperor's government declares that it has made no engagement with any one either to leave a corps of French troops in Mexico, or to guarantee any loan whatever; it declares that it has no reason to think that it is necessary to increase the number of the French forces actually on the soil of Mexico; that the movements which will take place up to their withdrawal shall be for no other object than to replace the sick and those entitled to discharge."

M. THIERS. At this moment! [Various kinds of manifestations.]

M. SEGRIS. That is exactly the declaration which the minister of state has confirmed.

His excellency M. ROUHER, minister of state. I retract nothing whatever of it.

President DE MORNAY. M. de la Tour is entitled to speak.

COUNT DE LA TOUR. Gentlemen, the declarations which you have just heard have enlightened us on what we have to do, and we know how our votes should be. Undoubtedly we must regret that the so rapid succession of the expeditions to China, Cochinchina, and Mexico, have occurred to weigh down our finances almost simultaneously, and to derange for a moment the equilibrium of our budget. Undoubtedly we must regret that the defection of Spain and England has constrained us to give such considerable proportions to our Mexican expedition; but it is impossible for the majority to give way to the exaggerated statements made in this assembly.

It is impossible for us to lay a formal, absolute blame on our troops engaged in a national contest against an enemy who has shown himself unworthy of our generosity, against generals who have even violated military honor, for among them there are some who had been let free on their parole, and who have again taken up arms against us.

In the first place, gentlemen, the simple examination of the situation should suffice to make us reject the amendment proposed. Whenever our army has been engaged abroad in a conflict for a just and noble cause, it is impossible for a French Chamber to desert its flag, and in a kind of a way pass over to the enemy by passing a resolution of disavowal of the acts of our soldiers. [Interruptions of various kinds.]

Yes, it is thus, gentlemen, that I believe myself authorized to interpret the amendment proposed to you; it is a formal disavowal of the expedition, a formal censure of the monarchy which we propose to establish in Mexico. Now, I believe that, from the moment we were led to Mexico, the very best course for us to adopt was precisely to endeavor to establish a monarchy in Mexico.

In fact, gentlemen, consider the necessity of establishing a certain equilibrium in Mexico. [Noise.]

Please dwell upon one consideration, certainly a most important one; it is, that one of two things must occur: either our intervention will succeed in constituting a strong, wise, honorable, and regular government in Mexico—and then it will be possible for you to derive some advantages from your expedition—or else, in a few years, Mexico will certainly be swallowed up by the States of North America, which have already, in the short period of twenty years, taken away from it three of its finest provinces—Texas, California, and New Mexico. [Increased noise.]

Gentlemen, if the Chamber is not willing to grant me a few moments of attention I shall stop. [No, no; go on.] But I believe, however, that the considerations which I have to present, and which will be brief, merit the interest of the legislative body.

What is the natural and normal fruit of the republican form of government? Revolutions. What is the natural and normal fruit of monarchy? Stability. So, on one side, we have instability; on the other, stability. Such are the respective results of monarchy and republicanism.

Now, if we allow republicanism to continue in Mexico, without any effort to organize in that country a wise and honorable government—that is to say, a monarchical government—it will be utterly impossible for us to derive from our costly expedition the advantages for which we have reason to hope.

SEVERAL MEMBERS That is true.

COUNT DE LA TOUR. It is impossible for me, therefore, to blame the government for the policy which it has pursued, and I shall urge the legislative body to vote for the address as it stands. I oppose the amendment, in the first place, because we ought to try to maintain a sort of equilibrium in the New World; because it would be dangerous hereafter, for the peace of Europe itself, that Mexico should belong to a power so important as the United States, which would very soon, by taking in the five little republics of Central America, reach the Gulf of Darien and the isthmus of Panama, whence they would rule the commerce both of the Atlantic and of the Pacific oceans. I oppose the amendment, in the second place, because it is necessary that the majority, under such grave circumstances, whilst following the dictates of conscience, should remain united. Our union is indispensable to the country—within for its peace, without for its influence and its strength. [Approbation on many benches.]

M. JULES FAVRE. Gentlemen, I believe I divine the desire of the Chamber, and conform myself to it, in taking up the discussion at the point where it was left by the remarkable speeches which you heard in the session of yesterday, and by the circumstances that have occurred in that of to-day, and in rejecting, henceforth, such details as concern accomplished facts, and in regard to which many reasons might be presented for us to draw up easy but useless accusations.

Already, gentlemen, we have had occasion to express our opinions on the causes of this expedition to Mexico, which, from the very first day, we have considered as inauspicious, and as calculated to lead the country into serious embarrassment.

Succeeding events have not been such as to authorize us to change our opinion, and this opinion has received the support and defence of the eminent speakers who have laid before

you such considerations, political, financial, and of national interest, as should most assuredly strike you with their gravity, and which I shall be careful not to repeat, for fear that they should become weak in my hands.

But, if you will allow me, I shall endeavor to look at the question from an entirely different point of view; and the minister of state has authorized me to do this by an expression to which he gave utterance, and which leads me back very forcibly to the natural prepossession of my mind on this subject.

This prepossession is in regard to right, superior, undoubtedly, to all considerations of policy and interest; and if this right, such as it is, revealed to us both by the eternal principles to which we can never prove recreant without loss, and by formal engagements on the part of the government—if this right, I say, completely confirms the conclusions of which you heard the brilliant developments yesterday, we shall have deduced from thence, for the security of our consciences, the support of a demonstration which we will have the right to call inflexible.

We have to consider these questions: What are we doing in Mexico? What ought we to do? Should we withdraw from it, and under what conditions?

M. EDWARD DALLOZ. May I be permitted to say a few words?

M. JULES FAVRE. I confess, gentlemen, I am not in any way embarrassed by that which was said to you in the session of yesterday by the honorable commissioner of the government, who sought to put forward, as his justification of the propositions which he brought before you, the support given by the votes of this Chamber.

He received for answer, in my opinion very justly, that those votes should naturally be inspired by circumstances changeable in their nature. Moreover, on this very point I ask permission of the honorable commissioner of the government to be allowed to agree with him; and, as he appeals to the formal engagements of the government, I appeal, also, to the votes of the Chamber, given only after the positive declarations of which I shall have the honor to remind you, and which really form a solemn contract between the majority and the government.

And, since mention has been made of the authority of adjudged facts, it seems to me that an authority so potential might have been invoked to qualify that which has been recognized here without dispute, that is, the judgment pronounced by public opinion on the Mexican expedition, and of which I find the traces, not in documents, of which the production might be criticised by you, but, on the contrary, in official papers, the weight of which you cannot question.

The first I borrow from the language of the sovereign himself. When the session was opened, he thought it indispensable to say a word in this regard, and that word ought to be well weighed by you.

“The distant expeditions,” says the speech from the throne, “which have been the object of so much criticism, have not been undertaken in pursuance of any premeditated plan; the force of circumstances has brought them about, and yet they are not to be regretted.”

For what good, gentlemen, remark those prepossessions and those criticisms in a document in which ordinarily only unanimous approbations are mentioned? It must necessarily be that those murmurs of public opinion, whatever otherwise be the difficulties which they may have to reach the throne, have been very powerful, so as to have been noticed in a document of that nature.

I wish to place by the side of that document another no less grave, but which you will perhaps find more significant. When the minister of finance saw himself under the doubly painful necessity—painful, because he is minister of finance, and painful because he had made an engagement to the contrary—of reopening the estimates of the public debt, he did not dissemble the anxieties, the uneasiness, the restlessness of the country. For this he assigned the real cause when he said:

“I had thought that it would be possible to avoid this necessity, and that a prompt settlement of the affairs of Mexico would, on the one hand, have limited our expenses to a sum inferior to that which we have disbursed, and, on the other, have brought, by means of a loan contracted for Mexico, the reimbursement of our advances. But, notwithstanding the confident hope which we entertained of seeing, within a day not far distant, a regular government established in Mexico, we cannot repose the security of our finances on the liquidation of her debt to us.”

So, the minister of finance did not dissemble the gravity of that state of affairs resulting from this exceptional circumstance that has arisen to trouble our finances, at the same time that a profound emotion pervades the whole country; and I am not rash in affirming that the minister of finance is really an anonymous signer of our amendment. [Exclamations and laughter.]

But I find, gentlemen, a concurrence more explicit, more precious still, in a report

emanating from one of the committees of the assembly, and which I need not recall to your recollections.

When the question of supplementary credits arose, the honorable M. Larrabure, with an ability to which every one renders homage, enters into the discussion of this question in his report, and here is the way in which he expresses himself:

"We should not seek to conceal the fact that these repeated expeditions disquiet the nation. Let us hasten, however, to say, in order to be just, that as to that of Mexico, which weighs most on the public mind and on our finances, it has attained the increased proportions which it is now seen to possess only by a chain of unfortunate incidents which the government could neither foresee nor prevent," &c., &c.

And he added: "The honor of our flag being satisfied, public opinion resumes its possessions. In the state of affairs in Europe, in the state of our internal necessities and of our finances, it would be pleased that the government should continue only as short a time as possible to expend at a distance those resources that may become precious to us nearer home and for our works of public utility. These expeditions will perhaps open up new horizons, new channels for trade; but, at present, we must acknowledge that the country is less struck by the possible, but uncertain or distant advantages, than by the real and actual charges which burden it."

I could multiply these quotations. You know with what persevering energy the honorable reporter of your committee solicited from the wisdom of the government and the foresight of the Chamber the cessation of a state of things which appeared to him so inauspicious.

And beside all these authorities, beside the general acknowledgment of everybody, I can also place that of the committee on the address, for our honorable and able president told you just now that this wish, of which we seek here to determine the terms of expression, is found equally earnest in all hearts. Yes, we are unanimous in regretting that imperious necessities—thus it was that your committee on supplementary credits expressed themselves—should have engaged the government in a course of action, from which we hope it will withdraw as promptly as possible, on the condition, well understood, that the honor and interests of France be not compromised. [That is so; that is so.]

But permit me to tell you, it is here precisely that the difference of opinion commences. [Laughter. That is true.]

Your committee, in this respect, is filled with entire confidence in the views of the government. As to us, we respectfully request to be allowed not to share that confidence. I will proceed to give you our reasons for this, and to explain to you, in our turn, the desires which, in my opinion, might influence in a satisfactory manner the policy which we all wish, favorable to the grandeur and the dignity of the country. Well, no one will contradict me when I say that that which has occasioned, and which yet occasions, the gravity of the situation, is precisely the ambiguity which weighs upon it; it is that it was at its origin, and is yet, surrounded with obscurity. Every one feels it here, and I hope that the words of the minister of state will succeed completely in putting an end to it.

As for me, I shall strive, from my point of view, to tell what the causes are of this obscurity, how essential it is that it should disappear entirely, and on what conditions the light which alone can strike us, that of honor and probity, ought forever to succeed it.

When I say that, from the beginning, an inauspicious ambiguity hung over this situation, am I not right? You understand it perfectly, and I have no desire here to undertake a discussion which is exhausted, and belongs henceforth to the domain of history.

Was it possible to avoid war in 1861? After those dissensions that have so long agitated and ensanguined the republics of the New World, was there not beginning to appear a constitutional and civil authority to which it was possible to give our adhesion, and which, consolidated and strengthened by the protection of the European governments, should continue, more and more every day, to acquire a happy influence?

This is, also, gentlemen, a question for debate which I shall not discuss anew before you.

It has been decided by the French government. The French government thought that that new authority did not present it sufficient guarantee; it made it responsible for the iniquities of the governments which it had combated and destroyed; it has sought to lay upon it the responsibility of the bloody acts which, nevertheless, barred its passage to power.

All these things, gentlemen, I recall without even criticising them; and I say that when we allude to the interests of our countrymen which have been outraged, to crimes permitted to go unpunished, to the law of nations violated—when we allude to all these things, in order to make war on a country, we are right and just; that when France drew the sword against Mexico, supposing that, in fact, she had reason to do so, she was evidently acting within the limits of right, and no one ever denied it.

Only it is here that for me the uncertainty begins, and I take the liberty of asking the

government to be pleased, if it thinks it proper, to give me an answer to the question which, at the present moment and in reference to facts, I take the liberty of proposing to it.

It is incontestable that at the same time that our *chargé d'affaires* communicated to the department of foreign affairs facts of the greatest moment, when he asked the armed protection of France, when he gave information that the indemnities were not paid, that a law of Congress had appropriated to other purposes the funds that were to be applied to them, it is perfectly certain, I say, that another influence was at work upon our government besides its own. It has been sufficiently intimated to you for me to recall it to your minds.

This influence, gentlemen, was that of persons, some condemned by the political law, others proscribed by the revolutions of their country, who had received a generous hospitality in France, who, full of illusions and hopes, as all exiles are, took their dreams for realities, and magnified their own importance to such an extent that it seemed, on nearing the coasts of Mexico, that it ought to be enough to determine the course of revolutions there.

I do not concern myself now as to whether those exiles had obtained the ear of the government, whether they had not been directly placed under its protection, and whether, to speak truly, from the first day that the expedition was resolved upon up to this time at which I am speaking, the French government has not appeared to manage their affairs.

In fact, whilst negotiations were being carried on for the reparation of our grievances, the Mexican exiles pursued their intrigues and their dreams; they entertained the French cabinet with their lamentations, and unveiled to its eyes the prospect of a revolution which might prove fortunate; for, in place of those governments of a day succeeding each other merely to lay before the eyes of the world the scandalous and pitiful spectacle of their mutual overthrow, they promised to the great French monarchy a monarchy which assuredly could not be its rival, but which, being placed in its orbit, an agent of civilization in the New World, would diffuse everywhere, with our arts and our civilization, the prosperity which is their attendant.

That these dreams were grand, gentlemen, I shall not assume to discuss; but that they were dreams, when I so affirm, who can now contradict me?

Governments should not allow themselves to be led into the opinions of persons around them; they have too great a responsibility, precisely because they have immense power, not to have demanded from them a severe account of the determination to which they may have come in an unreflecting manner.

Well, not only did the government open its ears to the words of those exiles—here it is, gentlemen, that my question rests, and that it combines itself in the strictest manner with the brilliant discussion of the honorable M. Thiers and of the honorable M. Berryer—but it is incontestable that when nothing was yet known in Europe of the resolutions of France and of the allied powers, the exiles had already opened negotiations with Prince Maximilian.

Now, gentlemen, I take the liberty of asking the government, Had it any knowledge of this? One of two things must be true: either the government was ignorant of those negotiations, or it was acquainted with them. If it was ignorant of them, you understand, gentlemen, what accusation we have a right to bring against it; for those to whom it promised its support, those for whom it lavished the blood and the treasures of France—[Murmurs on several benches.]

Is it the case that the government was not acquainted with them? As for me, gentlemen, I am convinced that it is not so by any means. I will soon proceed to deduce my proofs from official documents. The government knew that the Archduke Maximilian had been visited by the exiles; that a negotiation had been begun.

I stop short for a moment, gentlemen, and I ask myself whether the Archduke Maximilian is the first comer; whether he is some person picked up at random in the midst of a revolution, nourished by the exaggerated hopes or by the factitious promises of the exiles; or whether, on the contrary, he does not belong in Europe to a reigning house, and whether, consequently, the designation that shall be made of him is not a designation eminently political?

The answer to this question could not be doubtful. I believe that it would be proper for the government to tell us what the negotiations have been in this respect with the house of Austria. Has the house of Austria been aware of these projects? Has it approved them? It could not have been ignorant of them. If it has not approved them, the French government finds its policy condemned by this very fact from the very first day that it sprung into existence; for, by the side of a reigning prince of a powerful sovereign who disposes of the forces of a great empire, they proceed to take him who is the nearest to him by blood, his brother. It knows that that Emperor does not approve the negotiations of which that prince is the object, and yet the French government continues them. And here, gentlemen, by the invincible logic of facts, by a chain of events through which your