

Others were taking off shirts and skirts, to leave at the pawn-brokers. The details which I saw it would be impossible to imagine. I will not describe them. They must be seen, to be believed."

"At the stroke of the clock from the cathedral tower, to announce that the priest chanting mass was elevating "The Host," every outcry ceased as by enchantment. Absolute silence followed the tumult. Hats off, the whole crowd fell upon their knees until the third stroke of the bell told the end of the elevation."

The amulet  
against law-  
suits, &c.

"The Mexicans do not like to be embroiled in the law. So they often recite the prayer of Montserrat, which I have seen attached to the doors of a multitude of houses in the haciendas, ranches, and villages of the interior. At the head of the prayer are these lines:

"This prayer contains so much virtue, that those who recite it, shall never be exposed to the law; their house shall never be visited by the police; the wife who wears it around her neck shall always be happily delivered."

"It is almost impossible to photograph the moral, political, and religious phases of the Mexicans. The contrasts, the amalgamation of good and evil, the puerilities of big children, are so strange they would scarcely be believed."

"The observations I have made of the religious sentiments of the Mexicans are not confined to the ignorant classes. *They apply equally to those who are well to do.*"

Social and  
political  
questions.

"To close this subject," says the Abbé, "I must frankly enter upon the politico-religious question, which is of such vital, such exceptional importance in Mexico. Whatever may be the consequence of speaking of the clergy as I have done, I have not hesitated to do it, that

I may not be suspected of partiality when I take up the social and political questions that belong to them."

#### OPPOSITION TO THE EMPIRE.

Bishops and  
Clergy for the  
Empire.

"The opposition of the Mexican clergy to the Empire has been greatly exaggerated and misrepresented. The entire body of the bishops and the clergy were in favor of the government of Maximilian. Their sympathies were alienated, only when the government ratified and carried out the policy and course of Juarez in ecclesiastical matters. The clergy then simply said, 'If the two governments pursue the same policy, we prefer a national government of our own to foreign domination.'"

The policy of  
Juarez adopted  
by Maximilian.

"I have conversed often, and at length, with most all of the bishops of Mexico, and have always found them very favorable to the Emperor, and disposed to sustain him. But when their privileges, their properties, their seminaries were taken away, and nothing given in return, but calumnies to boot, it is not surprising that they did not applaud such proceedings, which they did not expect. It would have been easy to have come to an understanding with them, and to have secured their co-operation. It would have been wiser and better than to have alienated them. Has not a forming government need of the aid of all the powers of the country? He that is not for us is against us. We shall yet see that the support of the clergy was one of the first necessities of the new empire."

#### THE LAW OF JUAREZ.

The French  
pamphlet  
against the  
Bishops.

"In order to facilitate the ratification of the decrees of Juarez relative to property in mort-

main, the unfortunate idea was conceived of having a chaplain of the French army write a pamphlet against the high Mexican clergy. This pamphlet, ill-judged and ill-executed, contained gross and gratuitous insults, without common sense or reason. It addresses the bishops who complain of the conduct of the government towards them, as follows: 'It is not an honorable exile to a foreign land that awaits you, but a rope and a gallows.'

The pamphlet effective.

"This pamphlet, in the worst possible taste, has produced a great effect, a great sensation, in Mexico; all the clergy, all the conservatives, that is to say, four-fifths of the population, have cried out against the author. Among foreigners, those who know how to read and to honor all respectable authority have warmly disapproved of this pamphlet. The chaplain would not sign his name to his sorry pages, more worthy of a corporal of the guard than of a priest. If he had known the least in the world of the question about which he wrote, he would singularly have modified his language."

#### THE CLERGY FOR INTERVENTION AND MONARCHY.

The real partisans of the intervention.

"It must not be forgotten, that the most zealous partisans of the intervention have been the conservative ecclesiastics and laity, who have suffered every kind of persecution under preceding governments, and that they could not be hostile to the Empire, which they have desired and aided in every way in their power."

"The *London Globe*, in February, 1864, published an article expressing astonishment, to see the regency dissolve the first body of the Mexican magistracy and replace it with other magistrates, from whom they had previously ex-

acted the promise to sustain the views of the regency respecting the *pagarès*, that is to say, the sale of property in mortmain."

The Regency adopted the policy of Juarez.

"The *Globe* was right, for the action of the regency in the matter of the *pagarès* proved that it was neither an easy nor a popular thing, since the magistracy of the country did not believe it was possible to sustain it. When it is considered that the principal ground of opposition to the Juarez Government was the sale of 'property in mortmain,' it is easily understood why the regency, in adopting the same policy, would find the same opposition."

The only friends and support of the Empire.

"The empire ought to have approved and regulated the sale decreed by Juarez; because the division and sale of the property is a resource of the State. But it ought, first of all, to have established and fortified it, by reconciling the offended sympathies of that conservative party which had invited them, instead of alienating, from the outset, the only true friends they could have."

#### THE CHURCH PROPERTY.

The interests of the Clergy the cause of Civil War.

"Modern civilization is the enemy of 'property in mortmain.' And it is right. In the name of progress, it begins almost always at once to plunder the owners of such property, in order to sell it. And as such properties are singularly the possession of the clergy, and of religious establishments, it is by their sale that the destruction of the old social state of past ages begins. In France, in Spain, in Italy, the sale of properties in mortmain did not create a great social revolution. But in Mexico it stirred up general discontent, and created civil war!"

The numbers, wealth, and power of the Ecclesiastics. "The public reprobation of this measure was not merely a religious sentiment. It was a matter of interest as well. \* \* In Mexico it was equally a religious, a political, and a financial question, affecting many other persons besides the secular clergy, and the *two hundred communities* of men and women who were despoiled."

The Clergy, the bankers of Mexico. "This explains itself. The property of the clergy, in Mexico, constitutes the basis of credit, agricultural and personal. The shareholders are the national religious corporations. In selling these at a low price to certain foreigners, public credit has been destroyed, and no other financial institution has yet taken its place. It is perhaps not known, that agricultural and personal credit has existed in Mexico for two centuries. The clergy invented it ever since they became possessors of real estate."

Productive and unproductive property. "The ecclesiastical property of Mexico consisted of productive and unproductive capital. The productive capital included interest, money, and ground-rents of the entire property of the clergy. It maintained their splendid worship, sustained the establishments of education and of charity, and finally was a fund in aid of the farmer, the merchant, the artisan, and, indeed, of the necessities of all classes of society.

"The unproductive property consisted of the value of the churches, convents, sacred vessels, and articles employed in worship."

Laws of 1859. "According to the laws promulgated at Vera Cruz in 1859, the unproductive property of the clergy could not be made the property of the nation. The other property should be awarded to purchasers for a value, represented by the lease or annual rent, which the

tenants were paying to the proprietors. One-third was to be paid "en bonds" (*pagarès*), which represented the credit of the home department. Two-thirds were payable in money.

#### SALE OF CHURCH PROPERTY.

Sequestration of Church property. "After the taking of Mexico in 1860, the reformed government declared the churches, convents, and their possessions, the property of the State. The cathedrals and parish churches alone were excepted. The real estate was sold at a ridiculously low price, as well as objects pertaining to public worship, chandeliers, gold and silver vases, and other vessels ornamented with precious stones. An aggregate value of two millions of dollars of landed property was sold to strangers for eighty thousand dollars. Some persons made considerable fortunes by the objects of gold and silver service for worship, which they re-sold in Europe."

"The *pagarès*, bonds, were mostly on long terms. They represented more than *three millions of dollars*, and were sold in reality for eighty thousand. So that those who have these possessions have been stigmatized with the contemptuous term of *detentadores*—bond-holders."

"The clerical proprietors used to lease their properties at a very moderate rate, at about one-eighth of the rates of the new holders. Besides, they lent at interest or on mortgage, to the farmers, merchants, and artisans. The new proprietors, of sharper practice, continually recalled the loans on mortgage, renewing them at considerable advance; so that the tenants and mortgagees found themselves all at once, either in ruinous circumstances, or under the necessity of dishonoring their engagements. The judges on their part refused to try

cases in ligation involving the validity of pagarès. The conscience of the magistrate and of the citizen revolted at the idea of recognizing the validity of such bonds, and all the world knows that their consciences are not over-scrupulous."

The Abbé's views of the result. "The disorders resulting from this question became very serious. The public were deprived of the use of an immense capital, which had always been at its service for two centuries. Reclamations were so numerous that the execution of the law relative to rents, to the demolition of churches, of convents, and benevolent institutions, was for some time suspended. On all sides, suits were commenced, with which the judges did not wish to meddle. It now appears why it was that the Mexican population, to a certain extent, was interested in maintaining the 'statu quo,' because the sale of property in mortmain had excited a civil war; and why the conservatives made such an outcry, when it was told to them that the French intervention would sanction the acts of the Juarez Government."

Faithful to the Pope. "It is impossible to undo the past. But the Imperial government should have inaugurated its reign by the publication of a "*Concordat with the Holy See*," declaring valid all the sales of the church property, regularly made. It should then have come to an understanding with the clergy, and regulated the action of the government in conformity with the usage in other Catholic countries."

## CHAPTER II.

## THE INTERVENTION, ACCORDING TO THE ABBÉ DOMENECH.

The Intervention. In Chapter VII., the Abbé Domenech treats of the intervention. He says, "Whatever were the motives that led to the intervention, the campaign in Mexico might have been the most brilliant act in the reign of Napoleon III." "If the Emperor had succeeded, it would have been one of the most humane, glorious, and important enterprises of the XIX. century."

Mexicans in Europe. "The greater part of the Mexicans who furthered most the creation of the Empire had been in Europe many years. They no longer knew the actual, moral condition of the country, nor the measures necessary to heal its disorders."

Who these gentlemen were, their motives and objects, and the consequent deceptions, may appear in the sequel of this work.

"Every thing was a delusion. Unhappily, there were a great many interested parties. However, be that as it may, we were deceived on every side, and urged on, if not, by a chivalric sentiment, like that which led us to take up arms for the Christians in Syria, and for the independence of the Italians, at least, by a sentiment of high policy. France entered upon Mexico, and substituted, in favor of the Archduke Maximilian, a monarchy for a republican regime."

"The intervention presents so many aspects, and such varied points of view, that it would require volumes to record the studies, which a faithful observer would have to describe."