

tinct and irreconcilable, were often somewhat mixed and confused in their action. The line of demarcation fluctuated at times, from side to side, attaching now to one party, and now to the other, individuals and interests of varying and vacillating influence. Nevertheless, the great fundamental, distinguishing principles of the two parties are clearly traceable from their origin, down through all the successive steps and stages of development, to the final result.

Power of the Clergy. It is not surprising that that Priestly organization wielding the ecclesiastical, political, civil, military, and monetary powers of the whole country, and backed by all the influence that could be brought to bear to sustain it from the old world, should be able to sow dissensions, foment counter-revolutions, suborn the feeble, dependent, ambitious, and in a thousand ways embarrass and thwart the plans and aims of the Republicans, feeble in everything but their principles and the justice of their cause.

The number of presidents, dictators, pronunciamientos, revolutions, reactionary movements, and Bull-run defeats in Mexico, so far from alienating our sympathies and confidence from the Mexican patriots, should only make us the more appreciate the difficulties of their terrible struggles, and honor their indomitable perseverance and patriotism.

We pass to another suggestive act in the drama.

## CHAPTER IV.

THE CONSPIRACY—THE CHURCH PARTY WITH PAREDES, TO OVERTHROW THE REPUBLIC, ERECT A MONARCHY, AND INVITE A FOREIGN PRINCE TO THE THRONE—1845.

"The Church Party" and Paredes. IN December, 1845, General Paredes, who had been placed in command of the army at San Luis Potosi, by the Republican President Herrera, pronounced against him. The Archbishop, several of the Bishops of the highest rank, military officers, and the monarchical interest generally, combined for the avowed purpose of crushing forever the republican system. The Archbishop openly avowed his determination to support a revolution, and declared that a monarchical Government was more in accordance with church principles, and better adapted to Mexico. Aided by the clergy and the army, Paredes succeeded. This new party, more formidable for its material than for its numbers, boldly pushed the scheme. Paredes, thus sustained, assumed the power of a hereditary Sovereign, completely subverted the constitution of 1824, substituted a new and totally different form of Government in its place, and by a decree, known as the "Law of Convocation," disfranchised the great body of the people, and deprived them of the right of sending deputies to the National Legislature.

"The Church" against the People. Great dissatisfaction and indignation spread throughout the country, at this violation of popular rights. The only protection of the masses against an irresponsible executive was taken away. Their future was to be, despotic rule, "absolute, and unlimited by precedent, law, or the will of the people."

A Bourbon to be called to the Throne. The Chamber of Deputies, under the new organization, was composed of individuals of the

ecclesiastical, military, and commercial classes, together with opulent miners and land-owners. The journals under the patronage of the Government, openly advocated the placing of a Prince of the house of Bourbon on the throne of Mexico.

The Republican Press. The republican portion of the press were very bitter against Paredes from the beginning. They denounced his aristocratic principles, and accused him of selling himself to the natural enemies of Mexico, of conspiring with the clergy to destroy the independence and freedom of the nation, and to bring back the odious system of monarchy which had perished with the ill-fated Iturbide.\*

Arbitrary act of Paredes. Paredes, in the exercise of his despotic power, arrested these patriotic editors and publishers, and either banished the victims of his tyranny from their homes, or confined them in the common receptacles of vice and crime, herded with robbers, thieves, and assassins.

Embarrassment of the Revolutionists. The new administration had no advantage over its predecessor, in means to carry on the Government. War with the United States, improvident expenditure, internal dissensions, and unskilful management had completely exhausted the treasury. Santa Anna had tested the power of the people to bear the burden of taxation to the last feather. Payment was suspended. Credit was gone. The salaries of all the officers in the public service had been reduced one-fourth; and disbursements, under the plea of necessity, had actually been made of revenues pledged to public creditors.

The Clergy refuse pecuniary support. Under these circumstances, Paredes determined, as his only resource, to call upon the "venerable clergy" to share of their wealth, in the pecuniary

\* Young's Mexico, ch. 4.

burdens of the State. They had zealously engaged in cathedral, church, and village chapel, in offering up prayers for the success of the Government, in the cabinet and in the field.

The Minister of Finance and the Archbishop. The Minister of Finance accordingly made official application to the Archbishop. Having specified the necessities of the State, the exigencies of the war, the importance of a faithful compliance with the engagements contracted by the nation with its creditors, and the calamities of impending bankruptcy, he added, that "*the Clergy alone had been exempted from the onerous burdens, which had been imposed, of late, upon the rest of the people; and while the Executive deprecated the necessity that obliged him to call upon the Church, he would be neglecting his duty, should he fail in straining every nerve to relieve the Government from the financial pressure under which it was about to be crushed.*"

The Archbishop and Republicanism. The Archbishop had been a chief promoter and warm supporter of the revolution that had placed Paredes in power. He hoped by this means to overthrow utterly the republican system, to exterminate republican principles, and to erect a monarchy for a Foreign Prince. Yet the Archbishop replied to the Minister of Finance, "that he would convoke a meeting of his chapter, and submit the requisition of the Supreme Government; that he was willing to aid to the extent of his power in raising supplies, in order to carry on 'a war, in which the two precious boons so dear to Mexicans were at stake,—independence and religion!'"

Numbers and strength of the Clergy. The Mexican Ecclesiastical establishment, it will be remembered, according to the Report of the Minister of Justice and Ecclesiastical affairs, consisted of one Archiepiscopal See, nine Bishoprics, eight Cathe-

dral Chapters, divided into one hundred and eighty-five prebendaries and canonries, and sub-divided into twelve hundred parishes. The number of clergy was about five thousand six hundred, two thirds of whom were secular priests.

The regulars, who wear the habit of their particular order, at least two thousand in number, possessed one hundred and fifty convents and monasteries. The streets of every large city abounded with the "Fathers" of the Dominican, Franciscan, Augustine, Carmelite, and Mercedarian orders.

Wealth of the Hierarchy. The Mexican Hierarchy was reputed to be the most opulent and splendid in the world. The Pope had granted to the Kings of Spain the revenues of the Colonies derived from the tithes usually levied by the Romish Church. The King appointed the Dignitaries, who became virtually the mere agents of the monarch, depending more upon his will than upon the Pope himself. But the principles and policy of the King and the Prelate were in perfect accord.

Revenues. The united revenues of the Archbishop of Mexico, the Bishops of Puebla, Oajaca, Valladolid, Yucatan, Guadalajara, Durango, Monterey, and Sonora, amounted to £145,000 sterling, of which the Archbishop received £27,000. The whole number of Priests, monks, and friars was about ten thousand.

Convents. In the City of Mexico alone, there were more than fifty convents, containing three thousand three hundred individuals. The clergy were generally native Spaniards, devoted to the interests of the king, the Church, and the Inquisition, passing their lives in criminal indulgence, or luxurious repose.\* The present wealth of

\* Robertson's Hist. America.

the clergy in lands, houses, plate, jewels, and money, had been estimated at \$300,000,000, yielding an annual revenue of \$25,000,000. They also held mortgages on a vast amount of real estate, in all the provinces.

Decision of the Chapter. The Archbishop submitted the application of the Minister of Finance to his Chapter, in convocation, and urged upon them the necessity of keeping upon good terms with the supreme Government at that crisis. But the Chapter decided that they had "no right to dispose of the property that had been given to the Church for sacred uses; that it was in opposition to the declarations of the Council of Trent, to surrender ecclesiastical revenues for secular purposes, and that they could not comply with the requisition of the State."

In this condition of things, the Archbishop died. The power of the Government was nearly paralyzed by the total want of popular sympathy with its principles and aims. Dissatisfaction was almost universal. The nation was ready to repudiate the usurpation of *Paredes* and the Church party, and to restore the Institutions of the Republic.

#### DEFEAT OF THE MONARCHICAL SCHEME OF 1846.

Defeat of the Monarchists.

The career of *Paredes*, in opposition to the liberal and republican party, continued less than a year. Public discontent with the principles and course of the administration appeared on every hand. Several of the Departments protested against the "Law of Convocation," and called on the President to repeal it, and restore the masses to their rights. At the April election for Deputies, at Vera Cruz, the merchants refused to send a representative. The Assembly of the Department petitioned Congress to abrogate the "Law of Convocation." *Paredes*

replied by imposing a fine on *five* of the principal merchants, and ordered the Governor to arrest and imprison the members of the petitioning council.

Popular cry for a Republic. In May, a battalion of Government troops at Guadalajara, in the State of Jalisco, joined with the populace, and fired upon the Governor's Palace, amid shouts of "Long live the Republic!" The émeute spread like contagion. The whole body of the Government troops quailed before the clamors of the people. The contest ended with a regular pronunciamiento against the whole *Paredes* Government and scheme, and a plan for the regeneration of the Republic.

Protest against a Foreign Monarchy. The preamble protested against the design of erecting Mexico into a monarchy, and placing a foreign prince upon the throne. It denounced the "Law of Convocation," and the Congress under it, about to assemble, as aristocratic, opposed to the national feelings, and excluding the great mass of the people from their rights of representation.

A new Congress. The plan then declared that a new Congress should be convened, to be composed of Deputies elected according to the electoral laws of 1824, \* \* and which Congress should adopt a constitution in accordance with the national will, which unmistakably indicated that the monarchical principle should be excluded.\*

One article declared confidence in Santa Anna, as the founder of the Mexican Republic, and that whatever may have been his errors, he had ever been its powerful champion, in spite of European Nations and the instigations of perverse Mexicans; and that he was the choice of the loyal troops at Guadalajara, as chief of the patriotic movement.

\* Young's Mexico, p. 375.

A Provisional Government was then organized, the officers of which were sworn to maintain the republican principles.

In June, at the opening in the capital, of the extraordinary session of the Congress, General *Paredes* announced, with "profound grief," that the public order and tranquillity "were disturbed in the southern part of the Department of Mexico, in part of the Departments of Puebla and Oajaca, in the Departments of Sinaloa and Sonora, and recently in that of Jalisco." The truth was, the great mass of the people were arrayed against the Government in deadly hostility.

General ALVAREZ, a noble Patriot, at the head of the Republican forces in this movement, was sustained by almost the entire population in the western and southern portions of the Republic. A small part only of the population adhered to the Government. *Paredes*, having identified himself with the monarchists and failed, Santa Anna sided with the Republicans. The city of Vera Cruz, looking for an able and experienced leader, declared in favor of Santa Anna, and publicly invited the exile to return to his native land and join in the struggles of republicanism against monarchy.

The Republic proclaimed in the Capital. On the 4th of August, 1846, Generals Morales and Salas, in conjunction with Señor Valentin Gomez Farias, raised the tri-color banner in the Capital, and issued a pronunciamiento in favor of the Republican Federal system. The people and most of the troops flocked to the standard. *Paredes* fled the city. General Bravo, honored and respected for his character and services, remained in the capital. It was a great popular uprising—a restoration, rather than a revolution. From the citadel of Mexico the decree went forth that "the

Laws of a recreant Congress were null," and that body and the various State Assemblies in collusion with it, were dissolved. All exiled Mexicans, and especially "Santa Anna," "the well-deserving of his country," were invited to return; and he was solicited to take command of the armies of the Republic. The States were to be re-organized, by new elections according to law, as sovereign and independent. A new Congress was summoned to meet in four months, the members to be elected according to the law of 1824; and that any one who should attempt to retard the election of representatives, or to dissolve the legislative body, or suspend its sessions, should be accounted a traitor to his country. The plan for the regeneration of the Republic declared, "that the monarchical principle should be excluded from the future form of government, and that the honor, rights, and independence of the people should be maintained."

This was the voice of the people—that voice that falls,

"As snow-flakes fall upon the sod,  
But executes the freeman's will,  
As lightning does the will of God."

The whole monarchical scheme was repudiated, and a failure; its President a fugitive; its Congress dispersed; the Capital in new and loyal hands; and the people throughout the country rising in their majesty to reconstruct a Republican Government.

The grounds of this revolt against the usurpations of the monarchists, and the objects the republicans had in view, are set forth in the following extracts from the preamble and articles of their Proclamation:

"The generals, chiefs, and officers having met, and being penetrated with the urgent necessity which exists

for relieving the Republic forthwith from its grievous peril, and considering,

I. That from the moment when the Constitution ceased to exist, which the Republic freely and spontaneously gave to itself, those which were afterwards framed, have not been adapted to the exigencies and desires of a great majority of the nation.

II. That hence have proceeded the incessant changes, which have afflicted the country to such an extreme, that when she was torn to pieces, and after her external ills had been studiously aggravated, some *spurious* Mexicans have deemed themselves warranted, in wishing to subject the nation to the most shameful vassalage, by attempting to invite a Foreign Prince to govern the country, with the title of a monarch.

III. That for the purpose of facilitating so horrible a treason to independence, they have been so bold as to disavow the sovereignty of the people, by naming a Congress in which with special care, were combined the most extraordinary elements, yet those most suited to complete the ignominy of the nation.

IV. That all the laws which the present Congress may pass, and all the acts of the government being null, because neither the Congress nor the government are legitimate, consequently a just motive exists for the nation to continue to demand the exercise of its incontestible rights, usurped by the present administration.

V. That the administration referred to, being composed of men devoted, some to monarchy, others to detestable centralism, and all unfriendly to the army, whose dissolution they meditated some time since, because they encountered in it, an impediment to the accomplishment of their perverse views.

VI. That if these should unfortunately be carried into effect, the benefits of independence would be illusory, to which we sacrifice our blood and our fortune, for the purpose of enjoying the right to govern ourselves conformably to our desires and interests.

VII. That by establishing a Constitution in accordance with the will of the great majority of the nation, we shall at length possess a stable code of laws, beneath whose beneficent shade, our great elements of power and wealth shall be developed, and our internal tumults forever cease:

The Proclamation. We have come to proclaim, and do proclaim the following plan for the true regeneration of the Republic:

I. In place of the present Congress, another shall meet, composed of representatives chosen by the people according to the electoral laws which served for the choice of that of 1824, which shall charge itself with constituting the nation, by adopting the form of government which may appear to be in accordance with the national will; and which shall charge itself also, with all that relates to the war with the United States, and the question of Texas and other frontier departments. The monarchical form of government, which the nation evidently detests, is excluded.

II. All Mexicans faithful to their country, including those who may be absent therefrom, are called upon to render their services in the present national movement; for which purpose we specially invite his Excellency, General Don Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, "the well-deserving" of his country, acknowledging him from this moment, as General-in-chief of all the forces pledged and determined to fight, in order that the nation may recover its rights, secure its liberty, and govern itself."

The spirit and aims of the people are further exhibited in the manifesto of General Salas, General-in-chief of the Republican Liberating army. He says,

Manifesto of the Republican Army. Fellow-citizens: Placed at the head of the movement which was happily effected on the morning of this day, I consider myself under the strict obligation to present to you an account of my conduct, of the motives which determined me to act.

Ever since the destruction of the Federal Constitution in 1835, abandoning the path of law, we have recklessly rushed along the tortuous track of arbitrary proceedings. Advancing as chance directed, without any beacon to guide us, our unfortunate country has reached the brink of a fearful abyss.

System has followed system; constitution has replaced constitution; and one set of persons has succeeded another in power. But neither have the systems been based on solid foundations, nor have the constitutions been invested with the seal of legitimacy, nor have the individuals charged with power, escaped the fatal contagion of party spirit. Thus factions have always ruled, *but the people never*. Men, not principles, have triumphed.

This is no occasion for bringing to view one by one, all the acts which have brought us to the present state; nor to throw the blame on one party, or to defend another. Every party has contributed its share to the work of the public ruin. Both the victors and the vanquished have alike been victims, because in each case a faction, not a principle, has triumphed.

The last change, however, beyond measure bolder and more imprudent than those which preceded it, was not limited like these to the mere change of the person in power, and to the expansion or contraction of social prin-

ciples. Those who effected it, raising their views to higher objects, aimed at the entire destruction of the organization of society. Utterly regardless of the character, the customs, and even the views of the nation, they sought, without respect to the length of time which has elapsed since our independence was achieved, to reestablish anew, in Mexico, a form of government for which we have not among us any of the bases, on which it rests in Europe.

The faction which entertained this design unfortunately found the most complete support in the Government of January, under whose protection it displayed its banner, and without any reserve began to unfold and sustain monarchical principles, blasting with vile calumnies our public men, bringing our affairs into contempt by means of misrepresentation or ridicule, and drawing from the past, as thus exhibited, the conclusion that the evils of the country arise from the Republican system, and that the only remedy for them consists in the measure which they dared to propose,—*the erection of a throne for a foreigner*. As an effective means of attaining this end, it dictated the summons for a Congress which should represent what is called the aristocracy, and from whose bosom the *people* were rejected with disdain and insult, as born, in the opinion of this faction, only to obey.

In vain did the Cabinet, attempt, by its measures on the 3d of August, to oppose a dyke to the torrent of public opinion, which was already overflowing its banks, to overwhelm this oligarchical administration.

MEXICO, August 6th, 1846.

On the morning of the 4th, the Citadel passed the sentence of death upon this system, and two days sufficed to overthrow it.

## CHAPTER V.

## THE RESTORATION OF THE REPUBLICAN CONGRESS, AND THE RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FEDERAL CONSTITUTION—1846.

The Congress  
of Dec. 1846.

ON the 6th of December, 1846, in conformity with the proclamation of the provisional Government, and in pursuance of the electoral law of 1824, the new Sovereign Constituent Congress of the Nation assembled in the Capital. The whole country substantially had given in its adhesion to the new Government. Santa Anna had returned from exile. In his reply to the Minister of War, September 14, 1846, he acknowledged the "decree of the Supreme Government, embracing a programme for the due celebration of the re-establishment of the Constitution of 1824," the assumption by "himself" of the Supreme Executive Power, on the anniversary of the "glorious cry of Dolores."

Professions of  
Santa Anna.

He added, "My satisfaction is extreme to observe the enthusiasm with which preparations are made to celebrate the two great blessings which have fallen upon this nation,—her independence and her liberty,—and I am penetrated with the deepest gratitude to find that my arrival at the Capital will be made to contribute to the solemnities of so great an occasion. I shall make my entrée into that city to-morrow at mid-day, and desire, in contributing my share to the National Jubilee, to observe such a course as may best accord with my duties to my country,—beloved of my heart,—and with the due respect to the sovereign will of the people.

"I have been called by the voice of my fellow-citizens to exercise the office of Commander-in-chief of the Army of the Republic." "I now see a terrible contest with a perfidious and daring enemy, in which the Mexican Republic