

in Mexico, was hauled down, and Mexico became independent.

But the difficulties of the patriots were by no means at an end. The great leader, Iturbide, in about a year succeeded in securing for himself the title and authority of emperor. His attempt at imperialism ignominiously failed, and in 1824 the Republic was proclaimed. Spanish influence remained only as a disturbing element, ever ready to intrigue with all reactionary parties in favour of monarchy. Santa Anna was for over thirty years the frequent disturber of the peace in Mexico, inspired partly by personal ambition and partly by clericalism. It was only gradually that the liberal party were taught by bitter experience that established liberty was an impossibility until all alliance between the Republic and the Church was ended. In 1857 the absolute *freedom of religion* was proclaimed, and also the nationalization of \$200,000,000 of property held by the Church and used to thwart the progress of the people toward an honourable position among the free nations of the world.

Through several years the issue between the liberals and the clericals was fought out. But in January, 1861, the government of the great liberal leader, Benito Juarez, was peacefully established.

Juarez is the greatest figure of Mexican history. Of purely native descent, he is dear to Mexicans as "our little Indian." Well educated, a lawyer by profession, inspired by high ideals of virtue and patriotism, he gave for many years all his energies to the best interests of his native land. His was the hard lot to represent the cause of Mexican independence during the sad years of the rascally French "intervention" and the usurpation of Maximilian.

The ostensible causes of Louis Napoleon's intervention were so frivolous, that as soon as they came to be understood both England and

Spain indignantly withdrew from the enterprise into which the French emperor had enticed them. Napoleon was ambitious to emulate his great predecessor's career as a king-maker; to intervene in a brilliant and striking fashion in one of the greatest countries of America was a prospect which dazzled his mean soul; a firm position in Mexico might make him formidable even to the United States; in his own words, "My object is to assure the preponderance of France over the Latin races, and to augment the influence of those races in America." Almonte, the ambassador of the clerical party in Mexico, misled Napoleon by his false assurances that Mexico was "monarchical to the core," and that the Republic was maintained only by needy and unscrupulous adventurers.

The intervention was for the moment a brilliant success. The arms of France bore down all opposition. That poor fool Maximilian of Austria became a puppet emperor, dependent upon French bayonets and clerical favour. The Church welcomed the usurpation as the occasion of resuming all her lost prerogatives and abolishing all religious freedom. But even Maximilian hesitated to go to the lengths of tyranny to which the Church, from the Pope downward, urged him. At last, deserted by the French bayonets, mistrusted by the clericals whom he had in a measure disappointed, hated by the liberals as a foreign usurper, unable to escape, he succumbed to his fate.

His death and the insanity of his unfortunate wife have elicited a world-wide sympathy which was largely undeserved. In his latest days of tyranny he had been cruel in the extreme. The "black decree" of October, 1865, had doomed all the patriot leaders, soldiers, and sympathizers to death as outlawed brigands. Many prisoners—men of honourable rank, stainless name,