

The South's Catholic cleric, Bishop Patrick N. Lynch, wrote numerous pamphlets and justifying expositions on the necessary evil that was slavery. For the purpose of counteracting the effect of Archbishop Hughes' mission to Europe, the Confederate authorities sent Bishop Lynch on a special mission to France with a letter from Jefferson Davis to the Pope. (70)

Obviously, as a staunch Catholic, Empress Eugénie was sympathetic toward and supportive of the Confederacy. Although younger Prince Napoléon (*not* Napoléon III) supported the Northern government, the emperor initially was non-committal in his outward views and declarations, only encouraging Southern support with the hope he could apply his "principles of nationalities" to incur their national independence from the North.

What were these "principles?" Louis Napoléon's "secret" for his conquests lay in his crushing of Republicanism by force; installing a liberal Catholic ruler with the consenting silent majority; opposing the ultramontane policy of the papacy and native bishops; acting out his belief that "Providence had called upon him to spread across this earth the benefits of civilization;" furthering the financial interests of French investors; maintaining French honor by avenging, at whatever cost, any minor military setback at the beginning of the military campaign; avoiding a prolonged war against a great power; and *using deceit as a method of achieving these objectives*.

Although he maintained his neutrality in the American War Between the States, it was that same war that inspired Napoléon III's decision to intervene in Mexico. He received a legitimate "excuse" for intervention when Benito Juárez entered Mexico City to set up *his* government about the same time the American war was beginning. Juárez represented everything that Napoléon and his hotheaded court were set against. The commoners drowned out the voices of the cool-headed thinkers in his imperial empire. These, for the most part, by 1862 were supporting the French government. Their support perhaps originated out of necessity given the fact that there was a severe scarcity of food and because work in the fabric mills had all but ceased due to the cotton shortage, which was a direct result of the federal blockade. Even among the great thinkers at the time, the common consensus was that France *could* occupy Mexico. Speculation on whether the venture would be a success also found no naysayers. However, there were plenty of voices that questioned whether it would be worth the cost. However, Napoléon elected to *not* hear their answer in the negative

Juárez soon discovered that the government against which he and his revolutionaries had been fighting was completely bankrupt. It was hoped that the property seized from the church might be utilized to pay for the construction of new schools and extend the pitifully few railroads. However, suddenly throwing all of the seized church property onto the real estate market deflated the prices of the property, and due to unscrupulous agents, many transactions were conducted that proved later to be fraudulent in nature. The military and police corps had not been paid in months. All the transportation systems were both inefficient and inadequate. National railroads were all disjointed. The *Mosso Concession*, sold to Antonio Escandon, on 31 August 1857, only rendered a *charter* to build a railroad from Vera Cruz to a sister port on the Pacific side of the republic. Another "railroad" in existence measured a mere 3.5 miles in distance, stretching from Mexico City to Guadalupe Hidalgo. Animals and even humans were still being utilized to transport cargo and merchandise. National commerce was sluggish and refused to grow. By the spring of 1861, the monthly deficit was over \$400,000. The only way the turbulent country could survive was via a dictatorial government. However, Juárez had

campaigns and fought against the abuses of power so that the new constitution would be the basis of a legal government.

On 20 April 1861, the Guatemalan government requested that its minister, who Juárez had expelled, be allowed to return to his position in Mexico City.

Juárez vacillated with all the clamoring from Great Britain, Spain, and France who had loaned the previous Mexican government money, some loans as old as half a century. The countries now demanded redress. Juárez, deciding the debts were the responsibility of the old regime, declared a two-year moratorium on the foreign debt payments. The Mexican congress passed an act for the repayment of the national debt with the exception of the monies seized from the British owners at *Laguna Seca*. Also included in the act were the numerous conventions that had been drawn up by Great Britain, Spain, and France. That week, the Americans fought the Battle of First Manassas. Juárez knew he could no longer depend solely on the US for support. On 17 July 1861, the Mexican congress enacted another law that suspended the payment of interest on external debts for all foreign financial obligations. Representatives of both Great Britain and France residing in Mexico vigorously protested the newly enacted law and submitted formal complaints on behalf of their governments. Less than a week later, both Great Britain and France broke off official relations with Mexico. However, while Juárez was losing diplomatic relationships with Great Britain and France, he was able to sign a commerce and navigation treaty with Belgium.

Almost immediately after being sworn in for a second term, Juárez learned of an unsavory plot. French minister to Mexico, Monsieur Dubois de Saligny (who had replaced Monsieur de Gabriac), had every intention of enforcing recognition of the Jecker bonds. He argued that each succeeding government had the obligation to honor the treaties and pacts entered into by previous administrations. However, de Saligny failed to recall one small aspect of these international laws: namely that the agreement wrought under Miramón's insurgent government was not legally recognized by the new government of Mexico, let alone the rest of the civilized world. Juárez, through his minister, Señor Lerdo de Tejada, automatically declined de Saligny's demands. There was redress. De Saligny then made it his mission to do everything in his power to aggravate the situation and stir the pot with relations between the newly installed Mexican administration and France. Years later he confided in a friend that he had completely understood the wishes of Napoléon and precipitated national events so that the pending intervention would be viewed as a justified reaction on the part of the French government. (71)

On a related note, John Thomas Pickett (1823-1884) of Newport, Campbell County, Kentucky, was presented to Juárez in May 1861 as CSA President Jefferson Davis' special envoy to Mexico on behalf of the Confederate States of America. Robert Toombs, Confederate Secretary of State, wanted to quickly move in the midst of Mexico's weakened, chaotic state as a counter-measure to those actions anticipated by the US government. Pickett had previously served as appointed US consul to Vera Cruz, which position he held from 1853 until just after Lincoln's election in February 1861. However, Pickett resigned before Lincoln was inaugurated and entered the service of the Confederate states. After serving a stint as secretary to the Confederate commissioners sent to Washington to negotiate with the U.S. government in March and April 1861, Pickett continued as commissioner to Mexico from 1861 until May 1862 when he returned to Kentucky and was appointed to a position in the Confederate forces as General John C. Breckinridge's chief of staff. Pickett argued that Thomas Corwin's appointment as US minister to Mexico was proof positive that the US government intended to deter any southern

expansion by the Confederacy. When Picket arrived in Mexico City, he determined that the Union was tentatively planning an invasion of the Confederacy through Mexico.

But, Picket was perhaps one of the Confederacy's worse enemies. Given the sole task of wooing the Mexican government, Picket turned the Juarist government against the Confederacy by his imprudent, caustic, hasty, and sarcastic conversations. Having been sent with an agenda of arousing an independence movement in Vera Cruz, he was perceived as representing a government with other than peaceful designs. American citizens residing in Vera Cruz soon got wind of Picket's activities and reported them to Secretary of State Seward. Seward threatened to make true on his promise, and rattled his "invasion of Mexico" saber. Juárez attempted to ride the fence by thwarting a Northern invasion and at the same time dissolving the Confederates' attempts at annexation by introducing a bill that would allow Union troops to cross into Northern Mexico (Arizona) and utilize the Guaymas Port. This, of course, was exactly what the Confederate agents and ministers had been laboring to prevent.

Sensing that the only way to bring about a defining moment in forcing the Mexicans to side with the Confederacy, Picket got drunk in a bar in Mexico City and insulted a Northern sympathizer. This occurred after he dispatched an insulting letter to the Mexican foreign minister in which he threatened a Confederate military invasion. Juárez displayed his reciprocation for Lincoln's fine support by promptly arresting Picket and throwing him into a Mexican jail for 30 days, after which he was expelled from the country. Following Picket's release, President Davis was forced to recall him to Richmond. Although Picket alleged that he supported an agricultural society that favored slavery as well as a decentralized state government, these very actions were what inspired the Juarists to foster a relationship with the North, thereby favorably abolishing slavery (peonage), centralizing the national government, and creating a strong national economy, which would invite and accept foreign trade. Although Mexico had been an agricultural country with *peónes* working the land for wealthy aristocratic landowners, its revolution projected that the country was ready for a change more in keeping with the US's northern way of thinking.

Sensing that Mexico could provide it with an unhindered avenue to export its cotton and in turn receive European exports, the Confederacy (under Picket's replacement, General Hamilton H. Bee) also courted the government of Napoléon III, ultimately *sacrificing* the life of Maximilian in order that the French would abandon their observances of neutrality under the *Monroe Doctrine*. Maximilian, however, feigned friendship with the South so long as that friendship kept the US government from interfering with his imperial government. Southern leaders hoped that by promising no southern expansion into Mexico in return for France's recognition of the Confederacy, the US would be drawn into an armed conflict with the French military then stationed in Mexico. Some have suggested that the Confederacy would have been more successful had it softened its states' rights rhetoric when it courted foreign treaties and export.

*Executive Department,
Austin, Tex., April 4, 1861.*

*His Excellency, Jefferson Davis,
President of the Confederate States:*

Sir: This communication will be handed to you by General J. H. Rogers, who goes to your Government as the accredited agent of Texas. He is fully authorized for the purposed of his mission, which are to negotiate for the reception into the service of the Confederate States of the regiment of cavalry recently raised by Texas.

*This regiment was authorized by an ordinance of the Convention of Texas for the purpose of defending our suffering frontier from the depredations of hostile Indians and the possible invasion of **Mexican** guerrillas. The provision was made during our transition state, before we had a right to expect the protection of your Government, and before you could have afforded us any security. It was an act of immediate, imperative necessity. Having 1,700 miles of frontier, with the ungoverned **Mexican** on the west, who bear no love to us, and the **Indians** on the north and west, who are our perpetual foes, we were forced to take some steps for immediate protection. Now, however, that we are under the guardianship of the Government of the Confederate States it is right that the defense of our frontier (which is this frontier) should not be assumed by this State, but should be sustained by that Government upon which devolves the military defense of the entire country.*

It is more than probable that an effort will soon be made by the submission party of this State, with General Houston at its head, to convert Texas into an independent republic, and one of the most effective arguments will be that the Confederate States have supplied the place of the 2,800 United States troops formerly upon our frontier with only a single regiment, and that Texas has at her own cost been forced to bring another regiment into the field, and to bear the burden of its maintenance. The people of this State ...than it was under that of the old United States, and upon this assurance they now rely. Hence I cannot too urgently press upon you the policy and equity of accepting the regiment of mounted volunteers that Texas has ordered out. Our protection properly devolves upon you, and if we receive it, Texas will not only be secured against a spirit of dissatisfaction and dissension with the Confederate States, but there will be given an eternal quietus to that spirit of opposition which is always grumbling in our midst.

Our situation in detail will be unfolded to you by General Rogers, who was one of the committee on public safety, and has familiarized himself with all the facts.

Very respectfully,

Edward Clark.

On 20 May 1861, Juárez also reviewed the official qualifications of Thomas Corwin who was to represent the United States as minister to Mexico.

On 14 August 1861, Juarista troops under General Ortega led a celebratory torch-lit procession through the streets of the capital, declaring the final capture of the guerilla holdout, “*El Leopardo*” Márquez. Stopping before the building housing the French legation, a rabble of voices began to ring out, “*Down with the French! Down with the French Minister!*” Monsieur de Saligny later alleged that shots had been fired in his general direction and produced a flattened bullet as proof. Although an investigation was launched, no solid evidence could be found to substantiate de Saligny’s charges. Saligny consequently reported the incident to the French officials who had been waiting for any such acts of aggression as an “unbearable insult to the French nation.” French newspapers heralded the event as “an armed assault against Saligny.” (72) The French government subsequently instigated and pushed for a uniting of the three offended nations.

Therefore, the coalition governments of Great Britain (under Queen Victoria), France (under Emperor Napoléon III), and Spain (under Queen Isabella II) met in London on 31 October 1861 and entered into an agreement called the Tripartite Convention. Its purpose was not to interfere with Mexican politics but to *force* Mexico to honor the execution of former treaties. (73) The US was also “officially” invited to participate in the gathering and agreement (*the Convention*), but Seward’s full attention was being diverted from the imbroglio in Mexico by the conflicts between the Northern and Southern states. Together with Lord Lyons and Tassara, Mercier approached Seward the first week in December in a futile effort to lay before him a copy of the convention. Seward predictably rejected their proposals and launched into an unimpressive tirade about George Washington, the US’s regard for Mexico’s friendship and non-entanglement, and offered instead to pay off the defaulted loan in an effort to prevent the armada. However, on

21 February 1862, Dayton wrote Seward, "...money or the recovery of debts, was not the great object that took France and Spain to Mexico. If you offer to pay those debts, you will not stay their course." (74)

Astutely, Mercier saw this tactic as only a ploy to secure more of Mexico's territory, as a lien would be placed against it. As the self-proclaimed guardian of Mexico, Washington viewed its neighbors to the south as its natural heirs, and it had to jealously guard that inheritance. Although the French minister recognized this political and emotional interest and did not like it, he saw no reason to add to France's tribulations by attempting to subvert that interest. (75)

The three nations agreed to invade Mexico with a naval armada since it had actually defaulted on huge loans from these countries and to settle "other grievances." These "grievances" included outrages committed against British expatriates, mine-owners and bondholders, most of whom lost either their lives and/or property (i.e.: silver shipments being transported from the mines to the ports). Spain was still smarting from the banishment of her ambassador to Mexico as well as five clerics that Juárez dismissed from the country and the guerillas' rampant killing of Spanish citizens. French claims for compensation were similar. (76) Therefore, while Maximilian and Charlotte were being courted by the émigrés at Miramar, Monroe's 1823 'doctrine' was being carefully dissected in Madrid, Paris, and London. Now, since the US was concerned with the preservation of its own union, it was mutually agreed that there should be no opposition to the European bondholders' encroachment on the American continent. They erroneously assumed that the US federal government's warnings delivered through the American minister in Paris (William Lewis Dayton) were mere saber rattlings. (77)

Juárez met with British ambassador, Sir Charles Lennox Wyke, to arrange for the British to oversee the collection of customs since it was commonly believed that Mexico was cheating its foreign creditors. Although a tentative agreement was signed, Juárez was devastated to learn that the Mexican congress had rejected the proposal after an impassioned speech by the radical Sebastian Lerdo de Tejada y Corral.

Miles away and light years ahead of the tortured country of Mexico, the establishment of the second empire was well under way. Some historians have since described it as a "superficial time of chocolate soldiers, waltzing arch dukes, strutting dandies, and coffee house intellectuals". A Viennese observer (writer Franz Schuselka) described the overall tone of Vienna as eating, drinking, and being merry. None were worthy of their proud heritage. No one seemed capable of taking anything seriously. Festivities were always in the air as could be witnessed by prevalent music, jesting, and joking. But amidst this mindless, intoxicated frivolity were centered the fantasies of the Hapsburg empire filled with palaces and hunting lodges, dukes and duchesses, chamberlains and courtiers, and with real estate stretching from Transylvania to the Alps (including present day Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary). (78) Vienna, compared to other advancing industrializing European cities, seemed to have been frozen in time. Comprised of a conglomerate of tiny middle-European hamlets, the Austrian capital remained an enigma, momentarily suspended in time, as diverse groups of class, nations, and religions seemed completely content to abide in a society governed by a mutually accepted hierarchical arrangement. In better years, the paternalistic Hapsburgs had removed much individual responsibility from the people of the realm by strict censorship, feeding them, employing them, entertaining them, and amusing them. (79) Royalty born into this upper society was entirely removed from the teeming masses of slum-dwelling citizens that would eventually clamor for change and progress. This realm of bourgeoisie reveled day-to-day, oblivious to the sweeping democratic changes that were encompassing the entire continent of Europe. (80)

The superficially cozy, cream-colored summer palace of Schönbrunn, Maximilian's birthplace, was situated at the end of a short avenue as one approached the Austrian capital from the west. During the winter months, the royal Hapsburgs vacated the palace. In this manner select rooms and the common grounds were made available to the commoners to parade through, and just for a moment, they could fantasize about a better lot in life amongst the crystal chandeliers, marble, silk, and gilded porcelain, which was continually guarded by a never-ending phalanx of silent, stoic, imported statues. (81) Fortunately (or unfortunately) for Maximilian, fate blessed him with that one ability not endowed on the rest of the male lineage of the House of Hapsburg, mental agility. Born the second son to Archduke Karl and Archduchess Sophie on 6 July 1832, Maximilian did not share the dimwittedness that nature cruelly produced from his uncle to his own father. The eldest son, Franz Karl, who would eventually ascend the Hapsburg throne, might even be thought to be a dimwit – or a fellow with an extremely clouded sense of judgment. The strength in the family came from his mother Sophie's, side. She revolted at the forced, politically arranged marriage to the imbecile Franz Karl. But the tall, bony, iron-willed, Roman she-dragon resolved to feign contentment and happiness in union with an amiable but dim fellow upon whom fate had bestowed the burden of royalty. (82)

Perhaps the only thing that brought Sophie true happiness was the presence of the Duke of Reichstadt, Napoléon II's only legitimate son with his second Austrian wife. L'Aiglon, the eaglet, King of Rome, as the Austrians knew him, was kept captive by Austrian secret police and the French embassy in Vienna to prevent his traveling to France where staunch nationalists might attempt to make him the succeeding Napoléon of a restored French empire. The French ambassador to Vienna, who would in turn report to Paris, closely monitored his progress and growth. (83)

It is no secret that the six-year age difference between Sophie and the Reichstadt duke played no part in their intensely intimate relationship. Though both were consumed with reading and writing of deeply romantic and affectionate poetry, few examples of correspondence between them can be found. It is conjectured that Sophie destroyed all evidence tying her emotions to the duke following his unfortunate and untimely death. However, such a romantic liaison might explain the fact that Maximilian did not share the same dimwitted-genes as did his father and brothers. Although not historically proven, Maximilian's lineage to the Roman throne through Napoléon's heir has never been successfully refuted. The physical similarities between Maximilian and the duke are beyond noteworthy. More apparent were the similarities in hereditary personalities and tendencies toward poetic dreaming and escapism. Ironically enough, both met very tragic ends at early stages in their lives. (84)

Conjecture, both royal and otherwise, dictates that Maximilian was conceived during the summer of 1831 following the birth of Franz Josef when Sophie was twenty-six and the duke twenty years of age. Their fervent affection for each other became more apparent during this time at the Hapsburg court. Sophie would give birth the following summer. Since Maximilian grew to be larger, stronger, and more handsome than any of his siblings, all of Vienna proclaimed that Reichstadt was the father. (85) The duke, however, weakened from the onslaughts of tuberculosis, died sixteen days following the birth of little Max. A very pregnant Sophie had been his constant companion at his bedside. Delivering the eulogy, Sophie was cryptic, matter-of-fact, and dry-eyed, and afterward all manner of gaiety seemed to have been extinguished with the duke's passing. According to one account, a wet-nurse had to be located to replace her milk when it dried up. (86)

But although Archduchess Sophie had suffered a significant emotional setback, she was determined to strike a radical departure from the dimwitted Hapsburg heritage that so plagued her sons. She had but two goals in life: her devotion to the church, and her fanaticism that her sons be trained to rule Austria. They were destined to rule! She made it her mission to become a kingmaker. Franz Josef would rule first. Maximilian and the younger brothers would be groomed to succeed him. She obtained the tutorship of famed Frenchman Count Heinrich Bombelles, and under her strict and stern guidance, force fed Franz Josef and Maximilian on mandatory requirements for rulership to best prepare them for the roles that destiny had waiting for them. Bombarded daily from the royal playpen through their formative years, the Hapsburg brothers were exposed to various languages, sciences, and histories. Physical training was also a part of the curriculum. But above all, the emphasis was always placed on what was expected of a royal prince. Franz Josef *might*, one day, rule Austria from the Viennese throne, but efforts were not wasted on Maximilian. If the Austrian throne were occupied, perhaps Maximilian could sit on some other throne . . .

And it was Maximilian, not Franz Josef, who seemed more like “kingly material.” In many ways, Maximilian appeared more the stately prince than the emperor-designee. Where Maximilian was tall, elegant, liberal, romantic, and dreamy (presumably his mother’s ‘favorite’), Francis was conservative and practical. Whether intentional or not, Maximilian’s behavior and exploits frequently out-shone those of his elder brother. Since the world-renowned Spanish Riding Academy was located in Vienna, becoming an avid, capable horseman was not only expected as a royal attribute but also required. Maximilian excelled at horsemanship, far too often taking risks as he vaulted recklessly into the saddle. He strove to win every race and contest, choosing to gallop full-tilt. “To walk one’s horse is death,” Maximilian would later write in his memoir, *Aus Meinen Leben*. (87)

In personality, Maximilian also excelled over the elder Franz Josef. While the latter demonstrated the regal aloofness of a rigid, repressed Germanic temperament, the romantic Maximilian was poetic and artistic, almost superficial, which suited the typical Viennese just fine. The reserved elder brother was lacking in the acceptable social graces and charm, which seemed to come naturally to the engaging, cordial, and ever-popular Maximilian. Where Franz Josef sought to maintain an air of self-containment and self-absorption, Duke Max (as Viennese took to calling him) sought popularity and approval for everything he did. His “easy-going, light-hearted Austrian character,” with his constant flow of merry wit made him an instant success and pleasant alternative in the stuffy imperial court. (88)

But Maximilian’s strengths were also the weaknesses that would ultimately lead to his tragic undoing. In his kindness and good heartedness, Maximilian automatically believed that every other living soul had been exposed to the same norms and set of values that he thought were paramount. He always trusted that what was shared in confidence would be thus retained. Much of the teaching of Count Bombelles and his religious instructor had been condensed on a card that he always carried with him. Human though he was, Maximilian attempted to practice these goals:

- * Never a false word, not even out of necessity or vanity
- * Be kindly to everybody
- * Justice in all things whatsoever
- * Not to answer without reflection
- * Never joke with one’s inferiors; never converse with the servants

- * Listen to all – trust few
- * Never scoff at religion or authority
- * No exaggeration, but moderation in all things
- * Never let one's self be carried away by first impressions
- * In judging others' faults, remember one's own
- * Two-hours exercise daily
- * When unwell, cut oneself off entirely from the world
- * Take it coolly (which was written in English)

Like many dynasties, the Hapsburgs believed that they were to rule by divine right. With such a code of beliefs, they automatically believed themselves to be more exalted than the commoners and at the same time, more *selfless*. So imagine sixteen-year-old Maximilian's belief system colliding with the wide-spread European revolutions of 1848 when it was learned that Democratic reforms had been promised to the Germanic states and territories. This was a time when rampaging Austrians and not a few foreign instigators went raging through the streets of Vienna. Consider the likes of Lajos Kossuth who led a successful revolution in Hungary after traveling extensively up and down the eastern seaboard, lecturing and gaining supporters to launch the revolutions. The Hapsburgs, after appealing to Czar Nicholas I for assistance in putting down the uprising, were forced to flee to safety. By December 1848, it was all over. Maximilian's uncle, the feeble-minded Emperor Ferdinand I, abdicated his throne. Maximilian's father, Archduke Franz Karl, perhaps possessing sense enough to do so after witnessing the complete disregard of the Austrian people for the divinely appointed institution, promptly renounced his right of succession and retired to Paris, content to slurp up bowl after bowl of dumpling soup. In the end, father and uncle (Archduke Karl & ex-Emperor Ferdinand) subsequently traveled to the safety of Hradčary Castle (now situated in Prague) to live out the remainder of their years. (89) Subsequently, at the age of 18, Franz Josef was crowned the new emperor of the Austrians.

Sophie the Kingmaker, however, needed to continue her life-long mission and chose to continue at the Hofburg to ensure that her regal sons found equally eligible women from among the diplomatic corps, excluding the court tarts and damsels of questionable pedigree that Maximilian was prone to lust after. Archduchess Sophie, from one of the countless gilt chairs lining the walls of the vast ballrooms, maintained an ever vigilant eye on each of her two eligible sons during the royal palace dating games, which usually lasted from evening until well into the morning. Johann Strauss, who provided a taste of his own compositions, usually conducted orchestras, normally playing waltzes. (90)

In spite of the care his mother took to instruct him in proper royal behavior, Maximilian had a stubborn streak. His obstinacy can be detected in his journals, which at the age of eighteen foretold the disastrous end that would eventually await him. The more resilient that people were in their attempts to persuade Maximilian, the more stubborn he was in resisting them. Sophie's dreams for Maximilian almost vanished one night when he became enamored with the fifteen-year-old daughter of the Württemberg ambassador, Countess Paula von Lindon. Breaking with court protocol, Maximilian first sent the petite brunette nymph an orange blossom corsage, which she subsequently wore to a ball. Sophie, of course disapproved. (91) When Count Bombelles reprimanded Maximilian and impressed upon him the inappropriateness of his pursuit of non-royal blood, he stubbornly responded by sending an obscenely large bouquet of roses to her. As far as Maximilian was concerned "nobility" was just as good as "royalty." Subsequently,

the Dowager duchess realized she must resort to much stronger measures if she were to save her son. (92)

Thus, in 1850, Maximilian was “selected” to begin his apprenticeship in the Austrian Navy. Sophie reasoned that distance would cure the infatuated couple. For the next four years Maximilian spent his time aboard any one of the antiquated flotilla of Austrian frigates and gunships and became known as the most-traveled and most unhappy royalty of the time. (93)

Although their principle function was to float around the Mediterranean firing salutes to other vessels and forts on shore, the years 1850 to 1854 provided Maximilian the opportunity and exposure to other countries, cultures, and religions. Promoted to lieutenant at the age of eighteen, Maximilian was given command of the *Minerva* three years later. By 1854, Maximilian was promoted over his supervisors to the rank of vice admiral and commander in chief of the Austrian navy. (94)

When Maximilian returned to Vienna in 1854, his eldest brother wed his feisty, redheaded cousin, Princess Elizabeth. (95) Soon nicknamed ‘Sisi,’ the new empress and Sophie would spend the next few years in a struggle of varying degrees of hostility regarding the appropriateness of Austrian etiquette. Maximilian, upon setting eyes on Sisi, was completely smitten with Franz Josef’s brand new wife! She and Maximilian had much more in common than Franz Josef had with his bride. Besides nature and poetry, both Sisi and Maximilian shared a common bond with horses, and the young princess was even more reckless than Maximilian. Sisi should have been his, Maximilian reasoned, not belonging to the cheerless, cold, aloof life-partner that the proud, vivacious beauty had been shackled with. Naturally, Franz Josef saw how easily the two got along together and began to foster a bitter resentment against Maximilian that would pay its dividends at a later date. (96)

With the advent of armor plate for warships stemming from the technological advancements of the Crimean War, Maximilian set about acquiring a large portion of the funds allocated to national defense for the modernization of his fleet. Once he was able to funnel defense funds into his aquatic dream, Maximilian caused a vast arsenal and shipyard to be built. His plans for 4.5-inch thick armor plated warships were placed into action. But, with all these accomplishments, there was one that sadly eluded the Hapsburg prince: his hope that his brother would need his assistance in his realm in the ever-widening sphere of responsibilities. Although Franz Josef may have needed and wanted Maximilian’s assistance, he could not demonstrate his latent weakness as a ruler by acquiescing to a younger sibling, and he frequently reminded Maximilian that Ottoman emperors usually murdered or imprisoned sibling rivals. (97)

For the next few years Maximilian served his brother as an ambassador for the House of Hapsburg, traveling to ports in Portugal, Spain, and Italy, all the while sending back reports of his engaging endeavors and missions to European capitals. Maximilian also had occasion to meet, ride, and dine with the Vatican’s own Pope Pius IX. The two reportedly got along comfortably, like two re-united fraternity brothers. (98)