

CHAPTER IX.

SINALOA — BOUNDARIES — CLIMATE — DIVISIONS — INDIANS — PRODUCTS — TOWNS — MINES. — SONORA — BOUNDARIES — DIVISIONS — RIVERS — CLIMATE — INDIANS — TRADE — TOWNS — MINES. — TERRITORY OF LOWER CALIFORNIA — BOUNDARIES — CHARACTER — POPULATION — PRODUCTS — PEARLS — SALT — MINES — SEALS — WHALES — CLIMATE — PORTS — TOWNS — POPULATION. — STATE OF GUERRERO.

THE STATE OF SINALOA.

SINALOA is bounded on the south by Jalisco, on the east by Durango, on the south-west by Chihuahua, on the north by Sonora and on the west by the Pacific coast for a distance of 200 leagues along the Gulf of California. It lies between $22^{\circ} 35'$ and $27^{\circ} 45'$ of north latitude and 107° and 113° west longitude from Paris. The river Cañas divides it from Jalisco, and the Mayo from Sonora. Its length from south-east to north-west is about 180 leagues, and its breadth in the centre 50 to 56 leagues. This State is partly mountainous and partly level coast land. On the east it lies on the limits of the Cordilleras of Mexico. The levels begin in the west near the boundaries of Jalisco, and stretch out their broad sand-wastes to the town of Alamos and the river Mayo, until they are lost in the State of Sonora. This region is scorched with a blazing sun, and is of course but thinly peopled and little cultivated. Near the city of Alamos a more genial country begins. The central and eastern parts of Sinaloa are rich in table lands and vallies, while the slopes of the mountains are thickly wooded. In the interior the rains are not heavy nor the warmth intense. A mild and genial air prevails during the whole year; but on the coast the heat is excessive, and all who are able escape from it into the interior.

The State of Sinaloa is divided into three departments:—

1st. The department *del Fuerte*, with three cantons, viz: Fuerte, Alamos and Sinaloa.

2d. The department of *Culiacan*, with two cantons, viz: Culiacan and Cosalá.

3d. The department of *San Sebastian*, with three cantons, viz: Sebastian, Rosario and Piastla.

The principal streams and rivers of this State are those of las Cañas, or Rio de Bayóna, the boundary line in the direction of Jalisco; the

Rosario, and the coast streams of Mazatlan, Piastla, Elota and Tavalá. There are besides these the Culiacan or Sacuda, Imaya, Morcorito, Ocroni, del Fuerte and Mayo.

The Indians belong to various tribes. The Coras, Nayarites, and Hueicolhués are found in the south; north of these dwell the Sinaloas, Cochitas and Tubares; and still further north, on the streams of the Ocroni, Ahomé, del Fuerte and Mayo, we find some tribes of Guasáres, Ahomes and Ocronis. The Mayos inhabit chiefly the regions west and north-west of the town of Alamos.

The white inhabitants of this State are chiefly descendants of emigrants from Biscay and Catalonia in Spain.

Sinaloa is regarded as a productive State, and yields good crops of grain in the portions which are easily irrigated. Wheat, Indian corn and barley, together with some cotton, sugar and tobacco, are cultivated successfully; whilst all sorts of fruits and vegetables are found in abundance.

The principal towns are Mazatlan, a port with anchorage on the west coast, which is much visited by European and American vessels, and has been the seat of a very large smuggling trade in which the wares of India and of northern nations were exchanged for the precious metals of Mexico, her grain and skins.

Asilos del Rosario and the Villa de San Sebastian lie in the department of San Sebastian. San Ignacio de Piastla is the capital of a canton. Culiacan lies in the department of Culiacan. Sinaloa or Villa de San Felipe y Santiago de Sinaloa, the Villa del Fuerte or Montesclaros, and Alamos, are the other towns of note in this State.

Sinaloa is rich in metallic deposits of base and precious metals, the chief of which are found at Asilos de Rosario, Cosala, Copala, Alamos, and San José de los Mulatos.

THE STATE OF SONORA.

Sonora bounds eastwardly on Chihuahua and New Mexico; southwardly on Sinaloa; and westwardly on the Gulf of California for 238 leagues between the mouths of the Mayo and the Colorado. Its northern boundary is now the line which divides the Republic of Mexico from the Californian possessions of the United States.

The western and southern portions of Sonora are generally flat. In the south, between the rivers Mayo and Yaqui and the Presidio of Buena Vista, there is a fruitful region, whose productiveness is

enhanced by a number of small lakes formed during the rainy season on the levels, which are used by the careful agriculturists for the irrigation of their farms. On the eastern boundary of the State, the ridges of the Cordillera begin to rise, until they tower into the massive mountains which form the Sierra Madre, among the spurs of which many valuable metallic deposits have been discovered. The fine and productive vallies of Bavispe, Oposura, Sonora and Dolores are found in the neighborhood of this mountain country.

Sonora is divided into two Departments:

1st. The Department of Arispe, with three cantons, viz: Arispe, Oposura and Altar.

2nd. The Department of Horcasitas, with three cantons, viz: Horcasitas, Ostimuri, and Petic.

The chief rivers are the Mayo, the boundary in the direction of Sinaloa; the Yaqui or Hiaqui; the Rio Grande de Bavispe; Oposura; Sonora; Dolores; Guayamas; Rio de la Ascencion; San Ignacio; Gila; San Francisco or Rio Azul; San Pedro; Santa Maria and the Rio Colorado.

The climate of Sonora is warm throughout the year; but the early spring is subject to remarkable and rapid changes of temperature, and to sudden variations of wind between the north and east. From April to the end of September the thermometer ranges between 75° and 84° Fahrenheit.

A large portion of Sonora is occupied by Indian tribes, some of which are partially agricultural where they have been brought into contact with the whites; but the greater portion may be regarded as belonging to the wild nomadic bands which have hitherto harassed the northern settlements of Mexico. In the eastern part of the State, on the banks of the Sonora and Oposura, and in the vicinity of the town of Arispe and the mineral region of Nocasari, we find large numbers of the Opátas. North of the Ascencion, and stretching far inland from the coast, are the Pimos Altos, the most northerly bands that have submitted to the influences of Christianity or of partial civilization. The nomadic tribes in the north and north-east of the State are Papayos or Papábi-Otawas, the Yumas, the Cucapas or Cupachas, the Cajuenches, the Coanópas, the Apaches Tontos, the Cocomarcopas, the Pimo Galenos, the Apaché Gilenos, Apaché Mimbrenos, and Apaché Chiricaguís. Of all these wild and savage tribes, the Apachés are the most uncontrollable.

The trade of Sonora is chiefly carried on at Guyamas, in latitude 27° 40' N. and 114° W. longitude from Paris,—one of the best harbors in West Mexico, in a healthy region, containing about 3,000 in-

habitants;—and at Petic, forty leagues north north-east from Guyamas, in about 29° 20' of north latitude. The latter town, containing about 8,000 inhabitants, is the depôt for goods imported through the port of Guyamas which are designed for the northern districts of Mexico. Besides these two important places, there are the towns of San Miguel Horcasitas, with 2,500 inhabitants; Arispe, with 3,000; San José de Guyamas 350 to 400; Bayoreca; Onabas; Presidio de Buena Vista; El Aguáge; Ures; Babiadora; Banamitza; Batuc; Matape; Oposura; Presidio de Bavispe; Presidio de Fronteras; San Ildefonso Cieneguilla; Presidio de Santa Gertrudis del Altar; Oquitoa; Presidio de la Santa Cruz; Presidio de Tuscon; and Presidio de Tubac.

The mineral characteristics are similar to those of Sinaloa.

THE TERRITORY OF LOWER CALIFORNIA.

The Territory of Lower California is comprehended in that long peninsular strip of land which extends from the present southern boundary of the United States to Cape St. Lucas, and which is washed on the east by the Gulf of California from the point where the Rio Colorado debouches into it, and on the west by the waves of the Pacific ocean. It lies between 32° 31' 59" 58"', and Cape St. Lucas, in about 22° 45' of north latitude.

The country, generally, is represented to be one of the most unattractive in the warm or temperate regions. The peninsula, about 700 miles long, varies in breadth from thirty to one hundred miles, its mean breadth being about fifty. The surface of this region is formed of an irregular chain of rocks, hills and mountains, which run throughout the central portion of its whole length, and some of which attain a height of nearly five thousand feet. Amid these dreary ridges there are occasionally found a few sheltered spots which, though deluged by the torrents, have not been swept clear of productive earth, and in these there is a fertile soil of small extent, yielding a thin but nutritious grass. There are few streams or springs; trees of magnitude are scarce; and the heavy showers falling on the central rocky peaks and eminences are drained on the east and west into the Pacific and Gulf of California by the sloping sides of the peninsula, so as to bear with them into the sea a large portion of cultivable soil. In the plains and in most of the dry beds of rivers, water can be obtained by digging wells only a few feet deep, and wherever irrigation has been adopted

by means of these wells, the produce of the fields has abundantly rewarded the agriculturist. Much of the soil is of volcanic origin, being washed from the mountains, as we have already stated, and its yield, by aid of irrigation, is alleged to be quite marvellous. It is probable therefore, notwithstanding the unfavorable aspect of the country as seen by a casual visiter, that its evil repute is chiefly owing to the indolent and roving character of the inhabitants, and that in the hands of an industrious and agricultural people, it would be capable of supporting a population much more numerous than the present. At an earlier period of the Territory's history, under the dominion of the missions, when very small portions of the soil were cultivated, and even those but rudely by the Indians, the four districts of San José, Santiago, San Antonio and Todos Santos, contained 35,000 souls, whereas the present population of the whole peninsula is probably not more than nine or ten thousand.

During the epoch when the missions of California still flourished the general barrenness of this territory did not subdue the energy of the priestly fathers, who in the sheltered vallies near the different mission sites, which were carefully selected, produced Indian corn, grapes, dates, figs, quinces, peaches, pears and olives. Much of these fruits was preserved and exported to the opposite coast of Mexico. But these articles, together with pearls, tortoise-shell, bullocks' hides, dried beef, soap and cheese constituted the whole product and commerce of the peninsula. The waters of the gulf were in former days more valuable to the Californians than the shores. During the sixteenth century the pearl fishery produced a valuable revenue, and towards its close, six hundred and ninety-seven pounds of the precious article were imported into Seville from America; but at the last authentic dates of twenty years past, the fishery in lower California had dwindled into utter insignificance. Four vessels and two boats were alone engaged in it; and the two hundred divers who still searched the bottom of the coasts in their perilous trade, obtained only eighty-eight ounces of pearls valued at little more than thirteen thousand dollars.

The pearl fishery seems, however, to have revived somewhat, shortly anterior to the war with the United States, and a report from one of our most intelligent officers in the Pacific at that period, states that the annual exportation of pearls amounted then to between forty and fifty thousand dollars.

Valuable mines of gold, silver, copper and lead are known to exist in the peninsula, and although only a few are rudely worked, the labor expended on them is amply rewarded. The salt mines, on the

island of Carmen, in the Gulf of California, near Loreto, are capable of supplying the whole coast of Mexico and California. The surface of the lake producing this valuable mineral is covered with a solid crust several feet in thickness, which is cut in blocks, like ice, and conveyed to the beach by convicts under the order of the Governor of Lower California, who has hitherto enjoyed a monopoly of the trade with Mazatlan and San Blas.

The country about La Paz, situated on the east coast, south of the bay of La Paz, and near the Pichilingue cove, is represented to be valuable for grazing. Some of the silver mines near San Antonio, about forty miles south, are productively wrought. Gold dust and virgin gold are brought to La Paz, and about one hundred thousand dollars of *plata pina*, are exported from it yearly. The whole coast abounds with fish, clams and oysters. Among the islands of the gulf immense number of seal are constantly found, and the whaling grounds on the Pacific coast are of great value. Magdalena bay alone has, at one time, contained as many as twenty-eight sail, all engaged in this fishery.

The coasts of Lower California are flat, sandy, irregular, and frequently indented by coves, inlets and bays, while many islands lie near and border them in the gulf. The climate is regarded as healthful; the winter is short, and frost and ice are unknown. A pure air and a deep blue sky surround and span the region; but the heat of summer is intense, parching the thin soil, and rendering life almost insupportable in the more exposed regions, or in the narrow and confined glens.

The principal ports visited by merchantmen or whalers on the west or Pacific coast, are: 1st. That of San Quentin, in latitude 30° 23', which is said to afford a secure anchorage for vessels of every description, and to be sufficient for the accommodation of a numerous fleet; and 2dly, the bay of Magdalena, which has acquired notoriety from being resorted to every winter by numbers of whalers. It is protected by the two large islands of San Lazaro and Margareta, and possesses many of the characteristics of an inland sea, being navigable for the distance of more than a hundred miles. It has several commodious anchorages. The bay of San José, near Cape San Lucas, is ordinarily frequented by coasters, and is sometimes visited by whalers and men-of-war, being the outlet of a valley, unusually fertile for Lower California, which extends upwards of forty miles inland, and affords probably the best watering and provisioning place on the peninsula, though it is a mere roadstead yielding no protection in the season of south-easters

On the west coast of the Peninsula, north of Cape San Lucas, and between that point and the 24th degree of N. latitude are the bays of San Barnabé and De los Muertos. Between the 24th and 25th degrees is the bay of La Paz, an extensive indenture, protected towards the gulf by numerous isles and islets and affording excellent anchorages for vessels of any draft or any number. In this vicinity are the principal pearl fisheries as well as the most reputed mining districts. It is the outlet of the cultivated valley of Todos Santos and of the produce of the whole region lying between Santiago and Loreto. The cove or *estero*, opposite the town of La Paz, furnishes spacious and secure anchorage, which may be reached by vessels drawing not more than eighteen or twenty feet; while the cove of Pichilingue, at the south-eastern extremity of the bay, about six miles from the town, affords anchorage for vessels of any size; but the inner bay can be reached only by merchantmen. The bar, however, between the two is only a few yards in extent; and if the importance of the place should ever justify it, the channel might be deepened without much expensive labor. There is an anchorage at Loreto at about 26° north, and there are several places of resort and anchorage in the bay of Mulejé, between 26° and 27°, but none are deemed secure for large or small craft at any season. Several other ports are found on the gulf further north, which are visited occasionally by coasters, but the region is as yet quite unexplored, and their commercial or military value is of course unknown. Beyond the bay of Mulejé, which is nearly opposite the Mexican port of Guyamas on the main continent, the gulf is so much narrower than further south, that it becomes in a great degree a harbor itself.

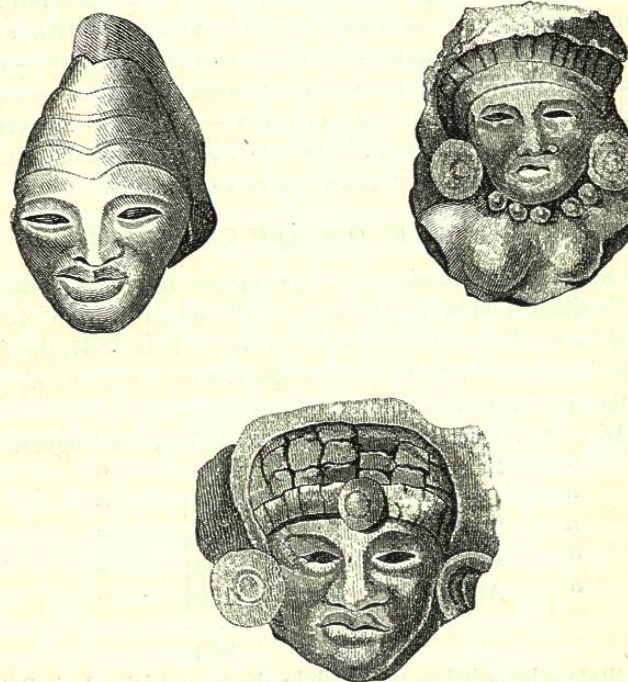
The only towns of any importance on the peninsula are those of Loreto, and La Paz the capital and seat of government. The population is of course chiefly an Indian and mixed race, for but few whites were ever tempted to prolong their residence in this lonely and unattractive region.

THE STATE OF GUERRERO.

This State was created by virtue of the fourth article of the Acta de Reformas, passed on the 18th of May, 1847, amending the constitution of 1847. By this article it was agreed that the STATE OF GUERRERO should be formed of the districts of Acapulco, Chilapa, Tasco and Tlapa, and the municipality of Coyucan,—the three

first of which belonged to the State of Mexico, the fourth to Puebla, and the fifth to Mechoacan—provided the legislatures of these three States gave their consent within three months.

It is understood that this consent was yielded, but as the organization of the new State has not been received, no elucidation of the geography of the region can be given except in the descriptions of the three original States whose districts were surrendered, and to which the reader is referred in the preceding pages.



ANCIENT HEADS MADE OF CLAY.