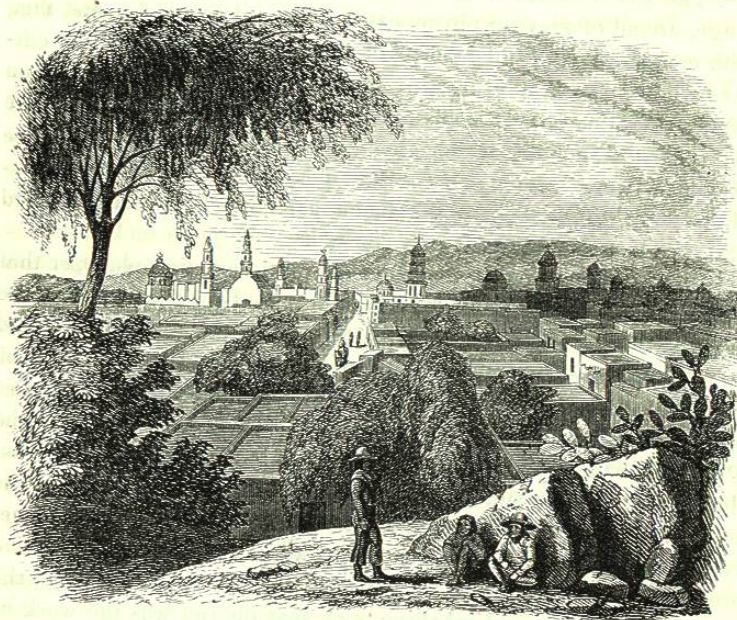


CHAPTER XI.

STATE OF SAN LUIS POTOSI — BOUNDARIES — LAKES — RIVERS —
 CLIMATE — DEPARTMENTS — PRODUCTS — SAN LUIS — TOWNS
 — MINING REGION. — NEW LEON — BOUNDARIES — CHARACTER
 — RIVERS — CLIMATE — DEPARTMENTS — AGRICULTURE — GRA-
 ZING, ETC. — MONTEREY. — COAHUILA — BOUNDARY — POSITION
 — CLIMATE — PRODUCTIONS — TOWNS. — STATE OF DURANGO —
 BOUNDARY — CHARACTER — DIVISIONS — STREAMS — PRODUC-
 TIONS — CITY OF DURANGO — TOWNS — MINES — IRON — SILVER
 — INDIAN NECROLOGY — CAVE BURIAL.

STATE OF SAN LUIS POTOSI.



CITY OF SAN LUIS POTOSI.

The State of San Luis Potosi is bounded on the east by the State of Tamaulipas; on the north by Nuevo Leon; on the west by Zacatécas; on the south by Guanajuato and Querétaro, and on the south-east by Vera Cruz. The western portion of the State is quite mountainous; but towards Tamaulipas, the Cordillera is somewhat

broken, and a lower hilly country stretches out towards the south-east. The Panuco and the Santander are the only two rivers, and the lagunes of Chariel and Chila the only two lakes of importance in the State.

The climate of the mountain region and table lands is cold, while that of the lower elevations and flats towards the eastern boundary is much warmer, and, at certain seasons, very unhealthy.

The State of San Luis Potosi is divided into four departments, ten cantons, and fifty-two municipalities, with a population of over 300,000.

1st. Department of SAN LUIS with the cantons San Luis, Santa Maria del Rio and Guadalcazar.

2d. Department of RIO VERDE, with the cantons of Rio Verde and del Maiz.

3d. Department of TANCANHUITZ, with the cantons of Tancanhuitz and De Valles.

4th. Department of VENADO, with the cantons of Venado, Catorcé and Ojocaliente.

The agriculturists of San Luis are engaged chiefly in the production of corn, wheat, barley and fodder; all of which are yielded plentifully by the genial soil of the State. But the toils of the farmer and the generosity of the ground are not always repaid by suitable prices or a good market. Corn ranges from fifty cents to seventy-five the fanega; and even at this rate often lacks purchasers. Cattle are raised in large quantities, as in Zacatécas, Durango and Chihuahua. Manufactures are progressive. Woollen and cotton fabrics are produced of excellent quality and favor among the masses. Glass, leather, pottery and metallic wares are also made in large quantities, and a busy traffic in foreign goods is carried on with the port of Tampico, and the States of Zacatécas, Durango, Sonora, New Leon, Guanajuato, Mechoacan and Jalisco. The position of this State, and especially of its principal town, naturally makes it an *entrepôt* between the coast and the interior, for imports from America and Europe. Nevertheless, a small trade, only, exists in home products, and these are chiefly sent to New Leon and Coahuila.

The chief towns are SAN LUIS POTOSI, the capital of the State and seat of government, lying on a level plain, among the steep declivities of the Cordillera in the neighborhood of the sources of the Panuco, in $22^{\circ} 4' 58''$ north latitude, $103^{\circ} 7'$ west longitude from Paris, 5,959 feet above the sea. It is a regular, well built city, with broad, paved streets, a fine *plaza* or public square, and

six handsome churches, three convents, and one hospital. Its population may be estimated at 35,000.

GUADALCAZAR, is the capital of the *partido* or district of that name, 18 leagues north-west of San Luis Potosi, in $22^{\circ} 31' 25''$ north latitude and $102^{\circ} 59' 30''$ west longitude from Paris, 5,132 feet above the sea, in a valley south of a mountain group which was once extremely productive in mineral riches.

RIO VERDE is the capital of the Department of Rio Verde, 34 leagues east of San Luis. The town of VALLES, with 3,500 inhabitants, lies on the left bank of the Rio Montezuma, in the *tierra caliente*, on the boundary of the State of Vera Cruz. Its neighborhood is rich in sugar plantations and in tropical productions generally.

VENADO, 29 leagues north of San Luis, is the chief town of its Department; it lies on the road from the capital of the State to Catorcé, and contains about 8,000 inhabitants.

In the *partido* OJOCALIENTE lies the town of that name, 28 leagues north-west of the city of San Luis, and 10 leagues south-east of the capital of Zacatécas, 6,714 feet above the sea.

CATORCÉ is a mining town, likewise in the department of Venado, and is sometimes known by the sounding title of "REAL DE LA PURISIMA CONCEPCION DE ALAMOS DE LOS CATORCÉ." The name is supposed to be derived from the slaughter of fourteen Spanish soldiers who are said to have been killed in its vicinity by a tribe of savages inhabiting these wild mountain regions before the discovery of the adjacent mines.

Nothing can be more dreary, bleak and desolate than the aspect of the Cordillera of Catorcé. A few narrow mule paths, or the worn bed of a mountain torrent alone break the monotonous coloring of the mass; and the town placed at the great height of 8,788 feet above the sea, is completely hidden from below by the bold brow of the mountain.¹ There is neither a tree nor a blade of grass on the steep and sterile flanks of these rocky elevations, though seventy years ago the whole district was covered with wood which might have endured for centuries had not the improvident and wasteful spirit of the first adventurers wantonly destroyed these valuable resources. Forests were burnt to clear the ground, and the larger timber which was required for the mines when they were wrought again after the revolution, was brought from a distance of twenty-two leagues.

¹ Ward assigns Catorcé an elevation of over 7,760 feet. The statement given in the present work is on the more recent authority of Muhlenpfordt.

On reaching a high ridge above the adjacent valley, the town of Catorcé is immediately perceived at the feet of the traveller, lying in a hollow beyond which the mountain steeps again rise precipitously above a thousand feet,—the course of the *Veta Madre*, or great "mother vein," being distinctly traced upon it by the buildings belonging to the mines and miners. The site of the town is extremely singular, as it is intersected by deep ravines, or *barrancas*, upon the ledges of which many of the dwellings are erected. Some of these strange edifices, like those of Edinburg, have one story on one side, and two or three on the other; and most of them are surrounded by massive fragments of rock, amongst which the laborers shelter themselves from inclement weather.

In this region the most valuable mines of the State of San Luis Potosi have been found and wrought.

Within a few years past a profitable quicksilver mine was discovered, south of the capital, in the jurisdiction of the Hacienda de Vilela. This mine, in the months of August and September, 1843, produced 1,068 pounds of the metal *en caldo*.

THE STATE OF NEW LEON.

This fine portion of the present Mexican Confederacy was colonized at the end of the sixteenth century by the Viceroy Monterey, and was then known by the proud title of EL NUEVO REYNO DE LEON, or, the New Kingdom of Leon. The modern State is bounded on the east by Tamaulipas; on the north by Coahuila; on the west by that State and Durango; on the south-west and south by Zacatécas and San Luis Potosi.

The geological formation of this State is generally mountainous. It lies among the first spurs and ridges of the Sierra Madre, south of the Rio Bravo, or Grande del Norte, and is interspersed with wide plains and fruitful valleys which produce good crops under careful cultivation. The rivers, all of which flow eastwardly towards the Gulf of Mexico, are the Rio Tigre, the San Juan, the Rio Blanco or Borbón, and the Sabinas, which passes into this State from Coahuila, and falls into the Rio Bravo near Revilla. There are numerous other small streams and brooks, of no geographical but of considerable agricultural importance. The climate is generally warm, except among the higher ranges of mountains; and, in summer, it is usually extremely hot, though healthy. The population is estimated at about 130,000.

New Leon is divided into five Partidos or Departments, with 25 districts.

1st. Department of Monterey, with seven districts: Monterey, Salinas Victorias, Absalo, San Nicolas Hidalgo, Pesqueria Grande, Santa Catarina, and Guajuco.

2d. Department of Cadereyta Ximenes, with five districts: Cadereyta, Santa Maria, Cerralvo, Agualeguas, and Santa Maria de las Aldamas.

3d. Department of Monte Morelos, with three districts: Monte Morelos, Mota and China.

4th. Department of Linares, with five districts: Linares, Galéana, Hualahuises, Rio Blanco and Concepcion.

5th. Department of Aldáma, with five districts: Villa Aldáma, Vallecillo, Sabinas, Lampazos and Tlascalá.

The agriculture of New Leon has not been as carefully and successfully pursued as it might have been, in the hands of a different population. The annual product of the soil has been stated by the Mexican authorities, to average 120,600 fanegas of corn; 5,700 fanegas of frijoles or beans, and 46,500 hundred-weight of sugar;—the home market affording one dollar per fanega for corn, three dollars per fanega for frijoles, and three dollars per hundred weight for raw sugar.

The chief occupation of the landholders is the grazing of cattle, and the yearly return of animals, shows that the State is quite productive in this branch of rural labor. It is calculated by official reporters that New Leon annually feeds and sends to market:—50,000 horses, 12,000 mules, 75,000 large horned cattle, and 850,000 sheep, goats, and hogs. The local value of which is six dollars a head for horses, twelve for a mule, four for neat cattle, and from fifty cents to a dollar, a piece, for sheep, goats, and swine. The State is regarded as rich in minerals of silver and lead, but the mining operations are almost abandoned, except at Cerralvo and Vallecillo. Salt is made at the salt mines on the banks of the Rio Tigre. The domestic trade is carried on in State productions with Mexico and Querétaro, and North American or European fabrics are imported through the port of Tampico de Tamaulipas.

The capital of the State is MONTEREY, in 25° 59' north latitude and 102° 33' west longitude from Paris, about 220 leagues north of the city of Mexico, situated on the plain at the foot of the Sierra Madre on the margin of one of the affluents of the Rio Tigre. Its population is estimated at about 13,000, and its climate is considered agreeable and healthy. Monterey is connected with the his-

tory of North American victories, by the capitulation it made to General Taylor, September, 1846.

The other principal towns, villages and settlements in New Leon, are SAN FELIPÉ DE LINARES, containing 6,000 inhabitants, 40 leagues south-east of Monterey; Buena Vista, a village 7 leagues north-west of Linares; Cadereyta Ximenes, a small town of 2,000 people, 10 leagues south-east of Monterey; Salinas Victorias, 10 leagues north of Monterey; Pesqueria Grande, a village north-west from Monterey, and formerly the site of silver mines and salt works; Villa Aldama; San Carlos de Vallecillo; Lampazos; Agualeguas; China, and Galeana.

THE STATE OF COAHUILA.

Coahuila was formerly united with the ancient Mexican province of Texas, until the revolution, which resulted in the independence of the latter, sundered the bond and added it to the United States of North America. The present State of Coahuila is bounded on the east by New Leon and Tamaulipas; on the south by Zacatécas; on the west by the Indian territory known as the Bolson de Mapimi, Durango and Chihuahua; and on the north by Texas.

The whole State lies on the first steeps of the Sierra Madre; its southern portion, beyond the Rio Sabinas, is extremely mountainous; but from the northern bank of this stream, the land sinks gradually into levels until it is lost in the well-watered and fruitful plains of Texas. The principal rivers in this State are the Rio Grande del Norte or Rio Bravo, the Sabinas and the Rio Tigre; and the chief lakes or lagunes are those of Parras and Agua Verde.

The climate of Coahuila is equable and healthy. From the middle of May to the middle of August the greatest heat is generally experienced, and, during this season, the country is torn by high winds which nearly every day begin to blow at sunset. The population of the State is estimated at about 97,000. Large bodies of Indians inhabit the lonelier regions of Coahuila; and, in the north, beyond the Rio Grande, the country swarms with ferocious tribes of Lipans and Cumanches. Agriculture is not flourishing though the soil of large portions of the State is good and capable of production. The remote position of Coahuila, and the thinness of its population, have probably obliged the inhabitants to congregate in towns and villages where they might afford each other mutual protec-

tion against the frontier savages; and thus they have been induced to abandon agriculture for the wilder life of *vaqueros* or herdsmen. Wheat, corn, beans and vegetables are easily raised in the best parts of the State, and in the vicinity of Parras extensive vineyards have been planted which produce an excellent wine. Horses, mules, wine and corn form the home commerce of the State; while in the neighborhood of Santa Rosa, and of two or three other villages, a small number of persons are engaged in the exploration of mines.

The principal town of Coahuila is **SALTILLO**, or, as it is sometimes called, *Léona-Vicario*, situated in the south near the boundary of Nuevo Leon, twenty-five leagues westward of Monterey, at the foot of a hill in the midst of a fruitful region. Its geographical position, according to Wislizenius, is about $25^{\circ} 25'$ of north latitude, and 101° west longitude from Greenwich. It is a well built town, whose straight streets radiate at right angles from the public square, in the middle of which a tasteful fountain constantly supplies the population with excellent water. The population exceeds 20,000; and the town is celebrated for the production of woollen blankets and *serapes* or *ponchos*, which are in demand all over the Republic.

SAN FERNANDO, or, *La Villa de Rosas*, is a town and military post in the north of the State, south of the Rio Grande, containing about 3,000 inhabitants.

MONCLOVA, is a town of 3,700 inhabitants on the Coahuila, an affluent of the Rio Tigre.

PARRAS lies west of Saltillo, on the east bank of the lake of the same name, and some years ago was estimated to contain nearly 17,000 inhabitants, including the adjacent farmers, planters and their laborers. It is celebrated for its grapes and wine, as we have already remarked.

The other villages and settlements worthy of note are Villa Longia, Viesca y Bustamante, Santa Rosa, Guerrero, Cienegas, Abasoto, Nadadores, S. Buenaventura, San Francisco y San Miguel Aguayo, Capillania and Candela.

THE STATE OF DURANGO.

Durango is bounded on the north by Chihuahua; on the west by Sinaloa; on the east by Coahuila, and on the south by Zacatecas and Jalisco.

This State is penetrated, from near its centre, in a north-westwardly direction by the main artery of the great Cordillera; and whilst the north-eastern section of Durango slopes gradually downward towards the waters of the Rio Grande, its south-western part lies high up among the table lands and mountain spurs that lean towards Sinaloa and the Pacific coast. The climate of this mountainous State is healthy and cool, and its agricultural productions are similar to those of other Mexican States whose geological formation resembles it.

Durango is divided into twelve *partidos* or departments:—Durango, San Juan del Rio, Nombre de Dios, San Dimas, Mesquital Papasquiario, Oro, Indee, Tamasula, Cuencané, Mapimi, and Nasas;—comprising 38 municipalities, 4 cities, 5 towns, 54 villages, 52 mineral works, 48 parishes, 111 haciendas, 48 estancias, and 521 ranchos. The population is estimated at about 300,000.

The chief streams and bodies of waters in the State are the Rio Nasas, Rio Guanábás, Rio Florida, and the lagunes of Cayman and Parras, the latter of which, though lying in Coahuila, bounds upon the edge of Durango.

The wealth of Durango exists in its minerals and in its cattle estates. Its *haciendas de cria* produce immense quantities of horses, mules, sheep and horned beasts which are readily sold in the various markets and fairs of the republic. At the hacienda of La Sarca, a stock of 200,000 sheep and 40,000 mules and horses, is constantly kept on hand, and at Ramos, which contains four hundred square leagues of land, 80,000 sheep are annually fed for their fleece, skins and carcasses. About 150,000 sheep are every year sent from Durango to the market of Mexico alone.

In the valley of Poanas, fifteen leagues east from the capital, there are fine corn lands; and in the deep valleys of the Sierra Madre even sugar is raised wherever the exposure and the moisture of the situation permits the successful cultivation of cane. Indigo and coffee grow wild in the warm barrancas on the genial slopes of the Cordillera; but neither of these articles is as yet cultivated by the planters. Cotton is grown in the vicinity of the Rio Nasas, and the town of Cinco Señores is the centre of a district covered with plantations which supply most of the factories of San Luis Potosi, Zacatecas and Saltillo. Mescal, a species of brandy is distilled in large quantities from the maguey which grows abundantly in Durango.

The capital of the State, seat of government, and residence of the bishop, is the city of **DURANGO**, sometimes known as *La*

Ciudad de Victoria, or, *Guadiana*. It lies under $24^{\circ} 25'$ north latitude and $105^{\circ} 55'$ west longitude, at an elevation of 6,847 feet above the level of the sea, and sixty-five leagues north-westwardly from Zacatécas. It is in the southern section of the State, and was originally founded, in 1559, by the Viceroy Velasco, as a military post designed for the control of the Chichimecas. Its population at present may be estimated at between thirty and forty thousand.

This capital, and most of the other noted towns in Durango, owe their existence to the mineral wealth of the neighborhood. Before the mines of Guarisamey were discovered the city of Durango was a mere village, or *pueblo ranchero*, containing, as late as 1783, no more than eight thousand inhabitants. But the exploration of the mines infused life, activity, and wealth into the population, and the State progressed rapidly as its resources were developed. The fine streets of the capital, its great *plaza* or square, its theatre, and all its public edifices were erected by Zambrano, who is said to have extracted upwards of thirty millions of dollars from his mines at Guarisamey and San Dimas. A mint has been established in the city, and, besides this, it possesses factories of cotton, glass and tobacco.

The towns of VILLA DEL NOMBRE DE DIOS, with 7,000 inhabitants, SAN JUAN DEL RIO with 12,000 and CINCO SEÑORES DE NASAS, are almost the only ones in the State unconnected with mines. The two first are supported chiefly by the sale of Mescal distilled from the maguey or aloe; and the last, by the extensive cotton plantations which have been already mentioned.

Besides these towns there are the Villa FELIZ DE TAMASULA, north-west of Durango on the boundary of Sinaloa; PAPANQUIARO with 6,000 inhabitants; Guarisamey, a mining town, in a deep and warm valley, surrounded with steep mountains near 9,000 feet high, and containing about 4,000 people; La Villa de Mapimi, north of the Rio Nasas, on the borders of the Bolson de Mapimi, and east of the Cerro de la Cadena, with about 3,000 inhabitants; Cuencame; El Oro; and many other villages and towns, too numerous and too unimportant for separate notice, but which deserve recollection as indicating the tendency of this region to aggregate population. The State contained in 1833, 250,000 inhabitants, according to good authority, and it is probable that at present it does not number less than 300,000.

Durango is rich in mineral deposits. Iron abounds within a quarter of a league of the gates of the capital. The Cerro del Mercado is entirely composed of iron ores of two distinct qualities,—crystallized and magnetic,—but almost equally rich, as they contain

from sixty to seventy-five per cent. of pure metal. Silver is also abundant in the mountains; but the mines have been carelessly worked, and, in some places, are abandoned for want of suitable machinery or enterprize. The principal districts and places in which this precious deposit has been found and profitably wrought, are at Gavalines, Guarisamey and San Dimas, in the two last of which the fortunate adventurer Zambrano, acquired, during twenty-five years, the extraordinary wealth he possessed. These mines are divided into Tamasula, Canélas and Sianori, lying on the western slope of the Cordillera; and Guanasevi, Indée, El Oro, Cuencame and Mapimi, on the eastern declivities. They lie about five days' journey west of the capital.

The following interesting sketch of Indian necrology is given in the valuable and recent work of Mühlenpfordt upon the Mexican Republic.

In the State of Durango,—says this interesting German author,—especially in the unexplored portion of the Bolson de Mapimi, many relics of antiquity, important for the history of this country, are probably hidden. In the summer of 1838, a remarkable old Indian cave of sepulture was discovered in this singular region. Among the few establishments which enterprizing settlers have founded in that lonely territory which is overrun by wild Indians, one of the most important is the estate of San Juan de Casta, on its western border, 86 leagues north of the town of Durango. Don Juan Flores, its proprietor, rambling one day with several companions in the eastern part of the Bolson, remarked the entrance of a cavern on the side of a mountain. He went in, and beheld, as he imagined, a great number of Indians sitting silently around the walls of the cave. Flores immediately rushed forth in affright, to communicate his remarkable discovery to his friends, who at once supposed that the story of the adventurer was nothing but an affair of fancy, as they no where found any trace or foot path to show that the secluded spot had been hitherto visited. But, in order to satisfy themselves, they entered the cavern with pine torches,—and their sight was greeted by more than a thousand corpses in a state of perfect preservation, their hands clasped beneath their knees, and sitting on the ground. They were clad in mantles excellently woven and wrought of the fibres of a bastard aloe, indigenous in these regions, which is called *lechuguilla*, with bands and scarfs of variegated stuffs. Their ornaments were strings of fruit-kernels, with beads formed of bone, ear-rings, and thin cylindrical bones polished and gilt, and their sandals were made of a species of *liana*.