

from one ship steaming into a port on the Atlantic can be unloaded, carried by the transcontinental railway and re-deposited in another ship in the Pacific harbour within twenty-four hours.

The Tehuantepec National Railway has made close working arrangements with the American-Hawaiian Steamship Company owning a fleet of steamers with an aggregate cargo capacity of 100,000 tons, by which all freight previously handled by their steamship company via the Straits of Magellan will be transported across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. This traffic will average some 400,000 tons per annum.

The contracts with the American-Hawaiian Steamship Company provide for regular services by modern steamers on the Pacific, between the ports of Salina Cruz, San Francisco, and the Hawaiian Islands, and for regular services on the Atlantic, between Coatzacoalcas, New York, Philadelphia and New Orleans, and there will be other connections by regular steamers at the terminals of this railway between Europe and all parts of the world.

General Diaz, ever ready to say the right thing, remarked lately in a public speech that "Long after the present rails were rust the name of Sir Weetman Pearson would be remembered and revered on the Isthmus of Tehuantepec."

According to statistics taken from the report of the Monetary Commission, issued in 1904, the following was approximately the amount of foreign capital invested in Mexico:—

Agricultural, mining, industrial and banking undertakings	\$136,107,924
Insurance companies	16,888,490
Railway undertakings	767,151,849
Public debt	432,516,594
	<hr/>
	\$1,352,664,847

This sum was enormously augmented in 1905.

Given another period of twenty years of peace, there seems no reason to suppose that the rate of increase in the prosperity of Mexico, startling though it has been, will not be exceeded, for not only are there large tracts of agricultural country on the slopes between the high centre table-land and the seas waiting for development and for improved methods of cultivation, but the whole country is rich in minerals, its mountainous regions having been but slightly

explored. According to experts, Mexico will become in the near future one of the greatest copper producers in the world, whereas now the total annual export of copper amounts to little more than £2,000,000. Its development has been very remarkable, and the amount exported has already begun to stamp its influence on international markets. The value of these exports (including copper ore) has been as follows, during the four years:—

1900-1901.....	\$11,77,754
1901-1902.....	16,849,835
1902-1903.....	20,122,338
1903-1904.....	23,234,216
1904-1905.....	29,803,420

The gold production of Mexico is also increasing; the gold export in 1902-3 amounted to £1,420,877. More gold mines are being opened each year. But of course silver is still its greatest export, and amounts to about £7,800,000 a year.

Of its agricultural exports the principal are henequen (hempen fibre), amounting for the year ending June 30, 1903, to £3,262,057; cattle and horses, £1,300,000; and coffee, £902,150—the coffee being as good, or better, than any other in the world. Owing to the variety of climate, Mexico is capable of growing almost anything on the tropical slopes between the table-land and the two oceans, and doubtless will soon produce jute and other material for her mills, instead of having to import as she does now.

Practically every kind of banana, from the large plantain to a small red variety only two inches in length, is to be found in Mexico, and it is probable that within a short space of time the exports to New Orleans and New York and Europe from Coatzacoalcas, Vera Cruz and Tampico will be very large, as the banana is a fruit that carries well. The orange exportation is also considerable, as well as that of peppers, limes, melons, cocoa-nuts, vanilla and hard-woods.

Tobacco is largely grown in the south, where enormous haciendas, or farms, for its production are to be found. I myself saw a child of three smoking a long green cigar. He had that in one hand and a banana in the other, and was enjoying them by turns. His mother explained that he smoked four cigars a day, and that all her children had done the same. Of late the tobacco growers have devoted greater care to the selection of the leaf, and cigars are obtaining higher prices in the markets of the world.

Rubber, which grows wild, is also being cultivated to a large extent,

and in these days of motor cars, when the demand for rubber is so great, it finds a good sale.

Basket work of all kinds is made by Indians, and fine plaiting both in straw and horsehair, like that of the "Panama" hats, is done by them with great skill, and the articles find a brisk trade.

It is much to be regretted that trade with Great Britain has not increased proportionately with the increasing prosperity of the country, and it is difficult to see why this should be so, for the sea freight to England, plus the land freight from Vera Cruz to the capital, only two hundred and sixty-three miles, cannot be as heavy as the long land-freight from the manufacturing centres in the United States.

It is true that the value of the exports to Great Britain has trebled during the last twenty-eight years (from \$9,219,837 to \$26,764,507), but during that period the bulk of exports to the United States has expanded nearly fourteen-fold (from \$10,358,167 to \$139,567,083).

Imports from Great Britain have increased in gold value from about £1,700,000 to £2,123,069—in the same period the imports from the United States have increased from £1,100,000 in 1876 to £8,102,909 in 1903, while not less noteworthy, the imports from Germany have increased in a still greater proportion. The Americans, in short, have practically the whole export trade of Mexico in their hands, and one-half of the imports, the United Kingdom coming second, but far behind. Surely England might do something to improve her position. It is true, no doubt, that Mexico imports food-stuffs from the United States, and that we could not compete in that respect, but out of the total imports of £15,000,000 there are many things that could be supplied by Great Britain which are now left to the enterprise of the United States and Germany, our next most formidable rival in Mexico.

From what I am told a good deal of trade might fall to British manufacturers if they would establish agencies for the sale of such goods as winding machines and pumps, which are always being wanted as new mines are being opened up, and kept the goods on the spot—in Mexico itself. The time has gone by when people were disposed to wait until they could order what they wanted from England, and then await the good pleasure of the British manufacturer until he should care to deliver them.

One of the obstructions to the sale of many articles of British manufacture in Mexico is the fact that British salesmen are often only authorised to quote the price of their goods f.o.b., Liverpool, whereas the Americans and Germans give their price to the nearest station to the place of delivery. The American and German catalogues

are better got up, are generally in Spanish, and their salesman speaks that language, and is therefore able to push his wares. America and Germany are getting all the trade and they deserve it.

In the Central Tableland of Mexico many irrigation undertakings have been established, both by private persons as well as by the Government. All kinds of crops and fruits are produced in the country. The production of a few of these during the year 1902 was as follows:—

Rice	18,126,070 kilogrammes	CATTLE.	
Barley	2,130,118 hectolitres	Cows	5,142,457
Maize	27,521,808 „	Horses	859,217
Wheat	229,892,752 kilogrammes	Mules	334,435
Sugar cane ..	2,745,686,000 „	Pigs	616,138
Cotton	22,529,407 „	Asses	287,981
Cocoa	3,428,525 „	Sheep	3,424,430
Tobacco	3,907,311 „	Goats	4,706,011

These figures increased greatly in 1905.

One of the greatest wants of Mexico has been fuel. On their arrival in the country the Spaniards began to cut down all the great forests—as was their wont—a proceeding which has made Mexico much drier to-day than formerly. The wood has been even more ruthlessly sacrificed since railways, factories and mines have consumed so much, and that great source of supply has practically come to an end. Coal of a somewhat inferior quality has within the last few years been worked in the north, so that while the locomotives are in some parts run by wood, in others coal is used. With the increase of railway traffic neither proved sufficient. Boring for oil has lately been in progress, with the result that in the southern areas of Mexico wells affording a good yield have been struck, and oil is used as fuel for the engines. This oil has been discovered in Tamulipas, Vera Cruz and Yucatan, and it promises to become a flourishing industry.

Another source of possible wealth, long known but little exploited so far, is diamonds. According to the old papers, at the beginning of the last century when flints for the flint-lock muskets ran short, in the mountains of the southern part of the Sierra Madre round boulders of all sizes, of a reddish colour were found, which, on being broken up to make flints, disclosed diamonds. Subjoined are some statistical tables, showing to what extent foreign nations share in Mexico's trade, and a three years' return of Mexican exports:—

TABLE I.

Value of Imports into Mexico from principal countries during the years 1898-1905.

Country.	Value.			
	1898-99.	1902-03.	1903-04.	1904-05.*
United States	£ 4,832,938	£ 8,102,909	£ 8,528,059	£ 9,660,633
United Kingdom	1,842,244	2,123,069	2,005,229	2,083,669
Germany	1,135,585	1,914,802	1,909,933	1,962,107
France	1,183,433	1,307,885	1,494,694	1,696,537
Belgium	141,482	517,955	436,081	286,752
Spain	505,987	606,996	654,299	746,897
Other countries	—	—	—	735,623
Total value of imports from all countries including above... ..	10,173,839	15,180,351	15,672,154	17,172,219

* Figures for 1904-05 are approximate.

TABLE II.

Value of Exports from Mexico to principal countries during the years 1899-1905.

Country.	Value.			
	1898-99.	1902-03.	1903-04.	1904-05.*
United States	£ 9,923,875	£ 14,377,110	£ 14,153,718	£ 13,498,942
United Kingdom	1,350,768	2,687,857	2,449,146	1,671,989
Germany	385,279	966,005	1,090,041	1,571,988
France... ..	599,178	365,418	629,770	590,514
Belgium	247,028	589,821	558,914	837,521
Spain	112,412	165,418	240,106	193,431
Other countries	652,283	621,268	550,956	1,021,086
Total	13,270,823	19,772,897	19,672,651	19,385,471

* Figures for 1904-05 are approximate.

TABLE III.

Value of Mexican Exports in the last four fiscal years, for which returns are available.

Articles.	Value.			
	1901-02.	1902-03.	1903-04.	1904-05.*
Gold—	£	£	£	£
Mexican gold coins... ..	9,572	10,663	10,766	8,591
Foreign "	7,824	932	292	3,912
In bars	869,882	1,326,427	1,008,465	1,252,862
Slimes, &c.	44,247	82,855	53,128	104,248
Silver—				
Mexican dollars	1,135,176	2,109,872	1,867,159	189,989
Foreign coins	25,973	8,554	8,699	7,797
Bars	4,103,796	4,635,739	4,578,810	5,301,401
Slimes, &c.	698,316	1,001,302	1,456,399	1,053,176
Copper	1,684,983	2,012,233	2,323,421	2,980,342
Lead	573,084	566,907	482,563	550,466
Other metals	54,677	118,178	135,918	111,036
Coffee	1,022,885	902,150	867,624	925,678
Henequen	2,920,951	3,262,057	3,152,515	2,938,912
Timber	177,873	183,773	261,856	219,781
Dye woods	128,877	96,401	84,755	69,181
Leaf tobacco	97,587	138,330	189,962	272,536
Other vegetable produce	853,468	1,202,278	1,498,154	1,481,536
Animals, live-stock	503,395	700,067	362,554	314,932
Raw hides	628,657	746,648	655,409	673,961
Other animal produce	61,541	79,567	69,168	61,618
Manufactured articles—				
Henequen	148,518	135,565	106,552	4,178
Tobacco	62,646	65,422	34,086	46,544
Other manufactured goods	135,944	312,378	412,169	738,972
Various	47,462	74,587	52,227	73,812
Total... ..	15,997,334	19,772,885	19,672,651	19,385,471

* Figures for 1904-05 are approximate.

From these figures it is seen that the mineral exportations from Mexico continue to be by far the most important, although the increase is general in every branch.

This financial and industrial success, attained in thirty years, is all practically due to one man, the history of whose life has been written in the previous pages.