

mountains, thirteen miles back from Tampico, are found deer, turkeys, pheasants, and wild hogs in abundance. Mountain lions and tigers also exist. Tampico offers exceptional inducements to the health- and pleasure-seeker.

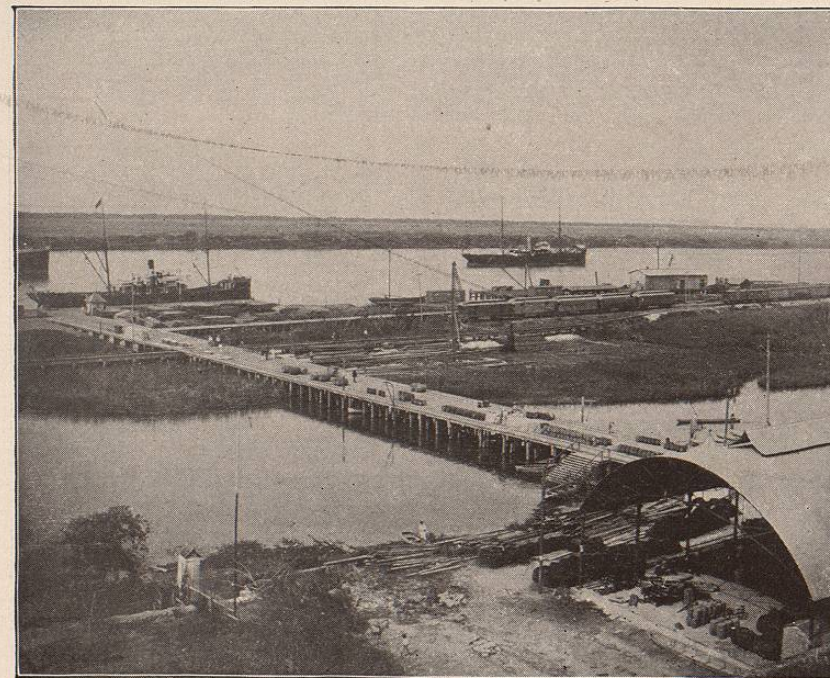
Between Villar and Tampico the mountains, foot-hills, and plains along the coast are teeming with game. Alligators and manati may be seen on the river banks, and, in fact, this section is a paradise for the canoeist or the camper-out.

The wharf and custom-house facilities at Tampico have assumed large proportions. Tampico has the most modern conveniences for the handling and discharge of cargoes, making the port second to none on the North American continent in economic handling and quick despatch of merchandise.

The regions whose outlet to tide-water is through the port of Tampico are among the most pleasant sections on the face of the globe. Here coffee does better than in any other part of

Mexico, and better, some contend, than anywhere else in the world. There are navigable rivers to Tampico, land transportation, and the railroad. Here, besides, are a beautiful climate, plenty of rainfall, an abundance of good labor at low prices, and all the conditions which make successful and profitable agricultural ventures.

There is not a more favored section on the American continent for the successful cultivation of sugar-cane than that along the railroad between Monterey and Tampico. The acreage in sugar-cane is being constantly increased, and extensive sugar-refineries are springing up at all



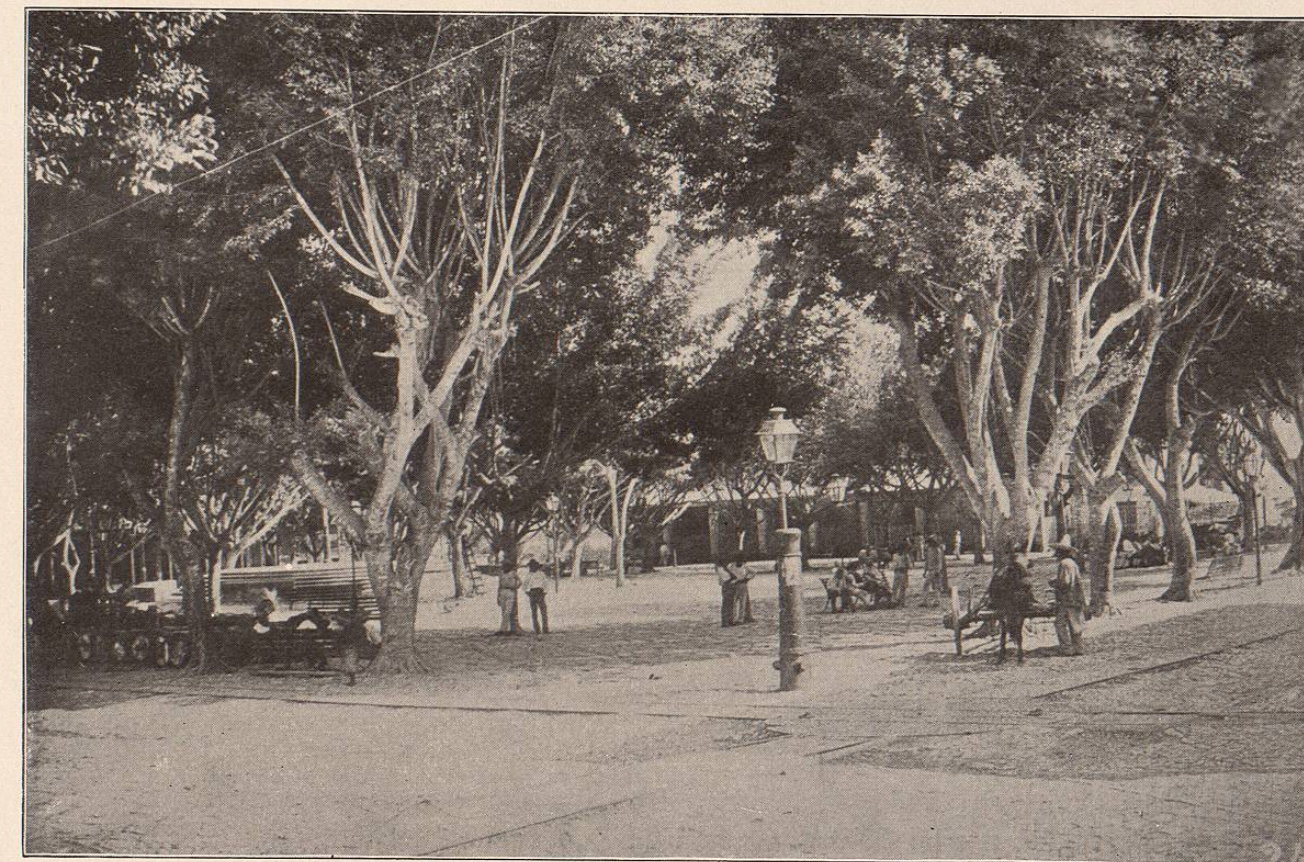
LANDING AT TAMPICO.

principal points, in which are used the latest improved sugar-machinery and the most modern methods. Primitive methods of refining are still in use extensively, but it will not be many years before the great bulk of the business will be done at the modern refineries.

The ribbon cane is the most profitable crop now grown in this district. From Tampico to Monterey, whenever a hacienda comes in view, may be seen the fields of graceful cane. In the lower country it grows to a gigantic size, often fifteen feet high; everywhere it averages eight or nine feet in height and an inch and a half through. For cane culture the perennial summer of Tamaulipas is auspicious. The plant becomes also perennial. It is common, however, to replant once in seven years, as better results are secured. One crop is harvested annually. It matures in the fall, when the peons strip off the leaves, and, cutting the stalks with *machetes*, or heavy knives, carry them on two-wheel ox-carts to the plantation mill. This consists of cast-iron rollers geared together and driven by a mule. The juice pressed by the rollers escapes into shallow open vats or pans, where it is neutralized with lime-water and evaporated in the air. The thick black syrup is poured into earthenware moulds and permitted to cool. The sugar

thus made is known as *piloncillo*. For market, the tapering cylinders, each some six inches long and three inches in the larger diameter, are wrapped in dried cane leaves and packed, one hundred and fifty pounds together, in a square sack of coarse matting. The great bulk of the sugar of Tamaulipas is this dark pilon sugar and molasses. The refinery at Linares makes one hundred and ninety tons or so of excellent white, granulated sugar in a year, so that it is no longer necessary for each farmer to put in his own mill and evaporator.

During the civil war in the United States, 1861-1865, Tamaulipas made a handsome income by raising cotton and exporting it to that country. Many farmers became rich in that way; but when the war was over, and cotton fell in price with the return of peace and the revival of the Southern States, the production declined. There is no reason, how-



THE LIBERTY SQUARE, TAMPICO.

ever, why Tamaulipas should not grow cotton as abundantly as the state of Vera Cruz, which has an annual production approximating twenty-five million pounds, with prospects of extension.

Matamoras is a frontier city of Tamaulipas, being only forty miles from the mouth of the Rio Grande, and directly opposite the city of Brownsville, Texas. It has a population of over twelve thousand, made up mostly of Americans and people of Spanish descent. English is commonly spoken. The city is finely situated on a bend of the river. Its wide streets cross at right angles, and the houses are mostly of brick and built in modern style. There is a beautiful cathedral, as well as numerous churches and convents. There is a good public school system, besides plenty of private schools. The climate is hot from April to September, and cool from December to March. Matamoras was founded early in the present century, and was named

after the great patriot, Mariano Matamoros, whose bones lie with those of Hidalgo and Morelos in the cathedral at Mexico City.

Laredo is a name by which a line of *condes* of Spain was called. One figured under the Duke of Bexar in his campaign on the Levant, proving himself an able and gallant general, and it is probable the town was named in honor of him, whether on account of the Sanchez family, one of whom founded it, being descended from this gallant general, *conde* and grandee of Spain, or directly in memory of the *conde*, is not certainly known.

Captain Sanchez came from the Alamo on the Salado River with a number of families in search of a place to settle, and, being dissatisfied with the place on the Nueces, he obtained permission to locate, and remained several years before his little settlement was formally recognized as a town, in 1767.



PLAZA, TAMPICO.

The royal commission, called "Visita General," in that year laid out the town, giving it four leagues of land,—two on each side of the Rio Grande,—and laid off above and below the town tract, on both sides, the tracts now called *porciones*, distributing them to the settlers. Since that time Laredo has been recognized as a town with municipal powers. In the earlier days of its existence, savage Indians continually committed depredations on the surrounding country, and robbed the people

of their horses and cattle; but the citizens, inured to such hardships, often chastised the savages and killed many of them in battle, always maintaining a justly merited reputation for skill, courage, and gallantry. Laredo was a kind of supply station during the Texas revolution, but took no very active part in the war. It remained under the control of Mexico, as a part of Tamaulipas, until 1846, when it was divided into two towns, Nuevo Laredo, on the Mexican side, remaining a quiet, progressive town, whose principal industry has been stock-raising, horses, cattle, and sheep; and several handsome fortunes have been made in it.

While we were in Tamaulipas, Señor Don Alejandro Prieto was the governor, and extended to us many courtesies. To his wisdom and activity the state owes a fine penitentiary, a beautiful government palace, and many other substantial improvements. His term having expired since then, Señor Guadalupe Mainero is now governor of Tamaulipas, and is carrying on with great ability the excellent system of government to which he has succeeded.

The Tamaulipan Mexicans are brave, daring patriots, who are zealous to a man for the integrity and independence of their country. This state was the nucleus of the heroic army of the north during the French campaign, and the stoic bravery of the Tamaulipan soldiers will never be forgotten in the history of the siege and fall of Querétaro; many of their illustrious names will ever stand for the bravest and most inflexible of patriots.

CHAPTER XXII

NUEVO LEÓN

NUEVO LEÓN is an inland state, bordering on Tamaulipas, Coahuila, and San Luis Potosí. It has an area of about fifteen thousand square miles, and a population of about three hundred thousand. Its surface is irregular, as several branches of the Sierra Madre range come into it, and about one-fourth of the state forms a part of the great central table-land of Mexico. Its extensive and

beautiful valleys are divided between forest, pasture-land, and cultivated fields, which are intersected by numerous and precipitous rivers and streams. Among the larger of the rivers are the Salado, forming a boundary between Nuevo León and Coahuila, the Sabinas, Salinas, Santa Catalina, San Juan, Ramos, Pilon, Linares, and Blanco, besides which are numberless mountain streams and several small lakes, so that the state is exceedingly well watered.

Mineral productions abound in the mountains, and include gold, silver, copper, lead, iron, and cinnabar. Sulphur, nitrate of potash, several varieties of sulphate of lime, alabaster, and marble are also found, while salt is very abundant. Sulphur and thermal springs abound, especially near Monterey and Morelos.

The climate is hot and humid in the lowlands and some of the valleys, temperate in the elevated regions, and varied in the hill-regions. The soil is fertile, and yields three crops a year of maize, sugar-cane, and beans (*frijoles*). Wheat and barley are raised to advantage, although not so thoroughly and extensively as they might be. Manufacturing is carried on quite extensively, cotton cloths, hats, furniture, and shoes, all of excellent quality and style, being the principal results. Steam-power is used in many manufactories, and in the weaving establishments several thousand workers are employed.

There are good public and private schools, a civil college, a female college, and a seminary.

SEÑOR GENERAL BERNARDO REYES,
GOVERNOR OF NUEVO LEÓN