

CHAPTER XXXII

COLIMA

COLIMA, just south of Jalisco, is one of the smallest states in Mexico, only Morelos having a smaller area. Colima contains two thousand three hundred and ninety-three square miles, and has a coast-line of one hundred miles. The surface is generally level, although there are a few mountains rising to a height of one thousand feet. The volcano of Colima, as has been stated, is over the line in Jalisco. It was inactive from 1830 till 1869, and was supposed to be extinct; but on July 12

of the latter year it began to smoke, and a few weeks later it poured forth intensely hot pumice-stone enough to cover hundreds of acres at its base, keeping up the eruption for several years.

The climate of Colima is very hot, and the soil is exceedingly fertile, producing large yields of coffee, tobacco, vanilla, indigo, cacao, and various fruits.

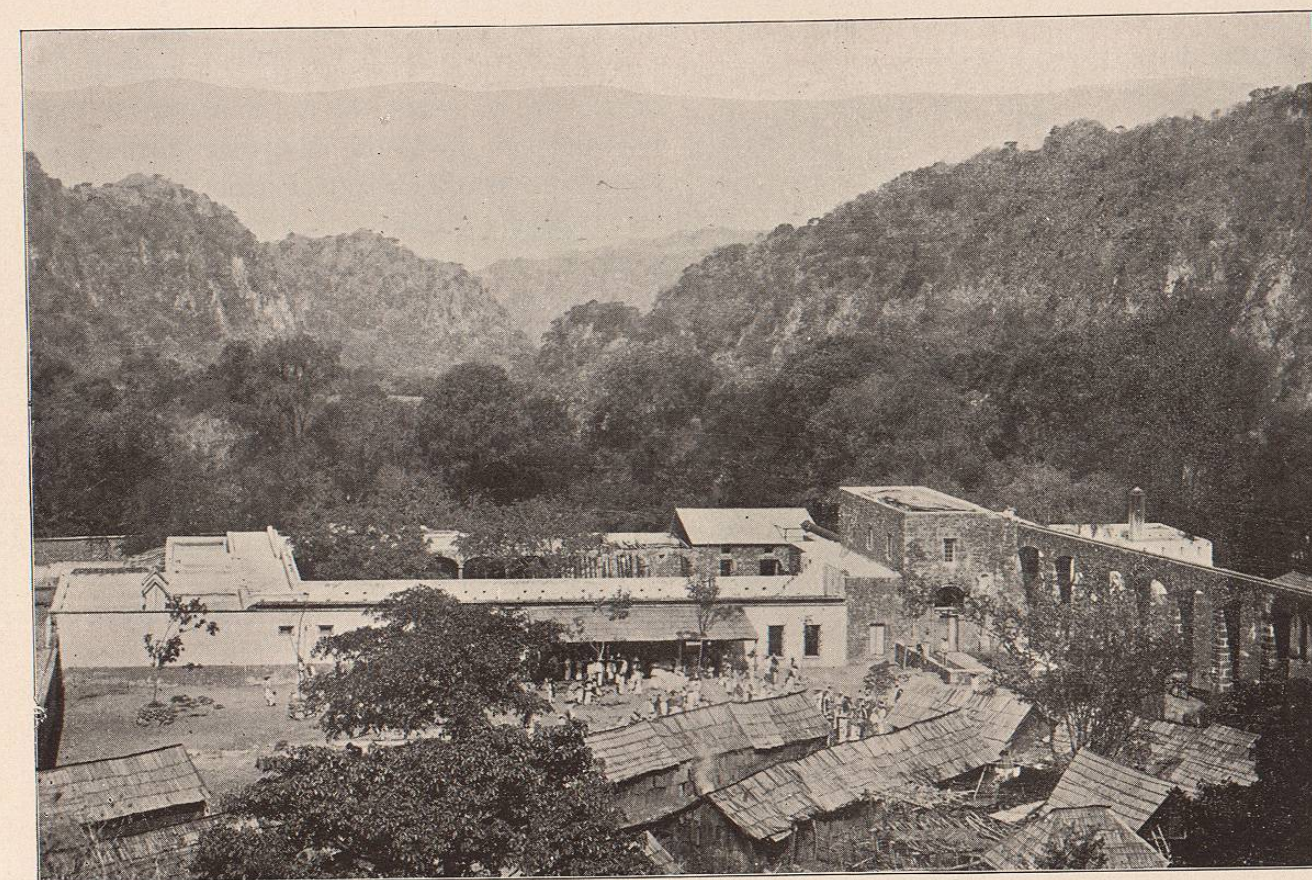
Colima was founded in 1522 by Gonzalo de Sandoval. It was incorporated, under the name of Santiago de los Caballeros, by Philip II., and was finally made a city in 1824. It is the capital city, and has a population of some twenty-five thousand. It is situated in a fertile plain. Although the inhabitants of the state are largely Indians, those of Colima are intelligent whites, and the streets are handsomely laid out, with many fine residences. There are a government house, a college, and several good schools, besides a number of churches.

The city of Colima is a very gay and lively place, with plenty of blossoming flowers and luxuriant foliage and many beautiful plazas, the principal of which is the Plaza de Armas, with an elegant iron kiosk in the centre. The

government palace is large and beautifully decorated with a magnificent public clock with a luminous dial in the front façade. There are many other beautiful buildings of a public character in Colima, as well as many imposing private residences of good architectural features.



SEÑOR CORONEL DON FRANCISCO SANTACRUZ,
GOVERNOR OF COLIMA.



HACIENDA OF SAN ANTONIO, NEAR THE CITY OF COLIMA.



LAKE JABALI, HACIENDA OF SAN ANTONIO.



INDIANS FROM THE VILLAGE OF SUCHIBLAN, IN WORKING CLOTHES.

tremendous barrancas of unfathomable depth, ascending and descending hills almost perpendicular, which we took under the hot summer sun across the Sierra Madre from Guadalajara to Colima in June. It was one of many wonderful experiences in a wonderful country never to be forgotten, a journey we could never have either undertaken or accomplished but for the generous assistance and kind courtesy of President Diaz, who furnished us letters to the governors of all the states through which we passed. The journey was accomplished on horseback in less than a week, during which we were accompanied by two trusted Indian guides and our body-servant. The magnificent scenery of the mountain district in Jalisco and Colima is not to be easily described. It is wild with all the fragrance and luxuriance of a tropical country, and picturesque with the beauty of peaks and cañons of a noble mountain-range.

The city of Colima and its surrounding district are connected by railway with the magnificent port of Manzanillo, one of the most important ports on the Pacific coast. This gives Colima commercial advantages with the United States and with Europe, although its citizens are shut off by the Sierra Madre from direct communication with the interior of their own republic. The Mexican National Company has a concession for carrying this line on from Colima to Guadalajara, and, although there are many difficulties to be overcome, this will probably be done some time in the future, thus not only opening up a wonderful mountain country, but connecting the fertile little state of Colima with the centre of Mexico's modern progress. At the present writing, however, the difficulties look to an ordinary observer almost insurmountable. Never shall I forget the fatiguing journey of two or three hundred miles on horseback, zigzagging between



INDIAN WOMEN FROM THE PUEBLAS NEAR COLIMA.

It was in Colima that we saw the process of making tuva, a most delicious and refreshing drink. It is made from the sap of the cocoanut palm, which is drawn from the very top of the tree. Señor Francisco Santacruz, the governor's son, kindly escorted us through the gardens adjacent to the palace and showed us the process. An Indian servant came to the bottom of the tree and devoutly crossed himself; then he ran up the tree with the agility of a monkey, seating himself at the topmost part, where the leaves branched out after the manner of the cocoanut palm. With a sharp knife he made a deep incision in the top of the tree, and then fastened a bowl made of the native gourd so as to catch the sap. Afterward this sap was brought down and fermented, making a delicious light wine of peculiarly delicate flavor.

Some of the barrancas of the country are terribly precipitous, and almost as picturesque as the barrancas of Jalisco. In colonial times the Spaniards hewed the mountain-roads out of solid rock, and the feet of men and mules passing over them for so many years have made them as smooth as glass,—which will give some idea of the great risk in travel.

The lake of Cuyutlan, along the border of the state, is the next to the largest lake in the country, and is navigable for its entire length.

The schools of Colima are models of their kind, the state expending annually many thousands of dollars for their support. The people of Colima, in consequence, are an intelligent, educated, and thriving class.

There are but three political districts in Colima.—Central, Alvarez, and Medellin. There



THE GOVERNOR'S HOUSE IN COLIMA.



STREET SCENE, COLIMA.

are seven municipalities,—Colima, Villa Alvarez, Comala, Coquimatlan, Tecoman, Iztlahuacan, and Manzanillo.

Both the hot lands and the temperate regions are wonderfully fertile and rich in products of every species. Colima coffee is famous everywhere for its excellence, and is raised here in



PLAZA DE LA LIBERTAD, IN FRONT OF THE GOVERNOR'S PALACE IN COLIMA.

great abundance. Owing to the climate, tropical fruits grow in astonishing luxuriance, and, as there are no mines in Colima, the people devote themselves to the pursuit of agriculture with remarkable results.

Manufacturing is not neglected in Colima. There are three important cotton-factories in the state, known as San Cayetano, La Armonia, and La Atrevida. There are two larger mills, also, for making sugar and brandy from cane, besides numerous manual industries on a smaller scale.

The governor of Colima is Coronel Francisco Santacruz, who is a progressive, well-educated man, and under whose fostering care the state is making a fine record for itself. He is particularly interested in the cause of public education, realizing that no true progress can be accomplished in any country except upon a foundation of thoroughly good common schools. I made a thorough personal inspection of the public schools of Colima, and found them conducted according to the most approved modern methods now in use in European and American cities. Thus it will be seen that while Colima is a small state it is neither poor nor unimportant.

CHAPTER XXXIII

TEPIC

THE territory of Tepic was to us a surprise and a wonder. We were the guests of Mr. Ernest Loneragan, who met us with carriages and took us through the capital and entertained us handsomely at his lovely home. We were shown over the sugar-refineries at Puga and the immense plantation of the Barron's, and took horses from Tepic to San Blas, from which place we went on one of the Pacific Mail Steamship liners to Mazatlan. At Tepic we had the pleasure of meeting General Romano, the governor of the territory. We had heard so much about this energetic man, who had crushed out brigands in that part of the country, that we expected to meet quite a piratical personage, but were most agreeably surprised when we met a charming gentleman with delicate manners and exceedingly courteous.

The territory of Tepic originally belonged to the state of Jalisco, but President Lerdo de Tejada, on account of the power which the famous one-eyed Indian chief Lozada had acquired, declared it a free territory. When Lozada attacked Guadalajara with his hordes of Indians he was met by General Corona with only twelve hundred men and repulsed. General Corona was assassinated on the 10th of November, 1880. This general, an intimate friend of Benito Juarez, had rendered great service to his country during the war of intervention of the French.

The territory of Tepic contains about one hundred and eighty thousand inhabitants, the principal towns being Tepic, with ten thousand; Santiago, six thousand; Ixtlan, five thousand; San Blas, two thousand; Ahuacatlan, two thousand; and Acaponeta, three thousand. Immediately around Tepic, however, there are factories containing as many inhabitants as some of these towns. Among these are the Hacienda de Puga sugar-factory and the Escondida. Near Tepic there are large cotton-factories, "Fábrica de Jauja." The proprietors of these factories, Messrs. Barron and Forbes, own large estates near the town of



GENERAL LEOPOLDO ROMANO,
GOVERNOR OF TEPIC.