

This vicinity is remarkable for the immense quantities of phosphorescence in the water, so dense that it coats everything with which it comes in contact. Hundreds of fish, coated with phosphorus and all aglow with silvery light, can be seen darting in every direction; even the bottoms of boats and the paddles of the boatmen shine with the strange evanescence as they come in contact with the water. The sight from the bow of the steamer Orizaba was simply wonderful as we left the port for Lower California: hundreds of these phosphorescent fishes were following us in eager pursuit of the refuse from the ship, and a streak of silver light extended backward, caused by her passage through the water, as far as we could see.

The capital of Sonora is Hermosillo, in the midst of a region famous for producing delicious oranges and figs; as much as thirty-five thousand dollars has been cleared here in one year from



VIEW OF THE CITY AND BAY OF GUAYMAS.

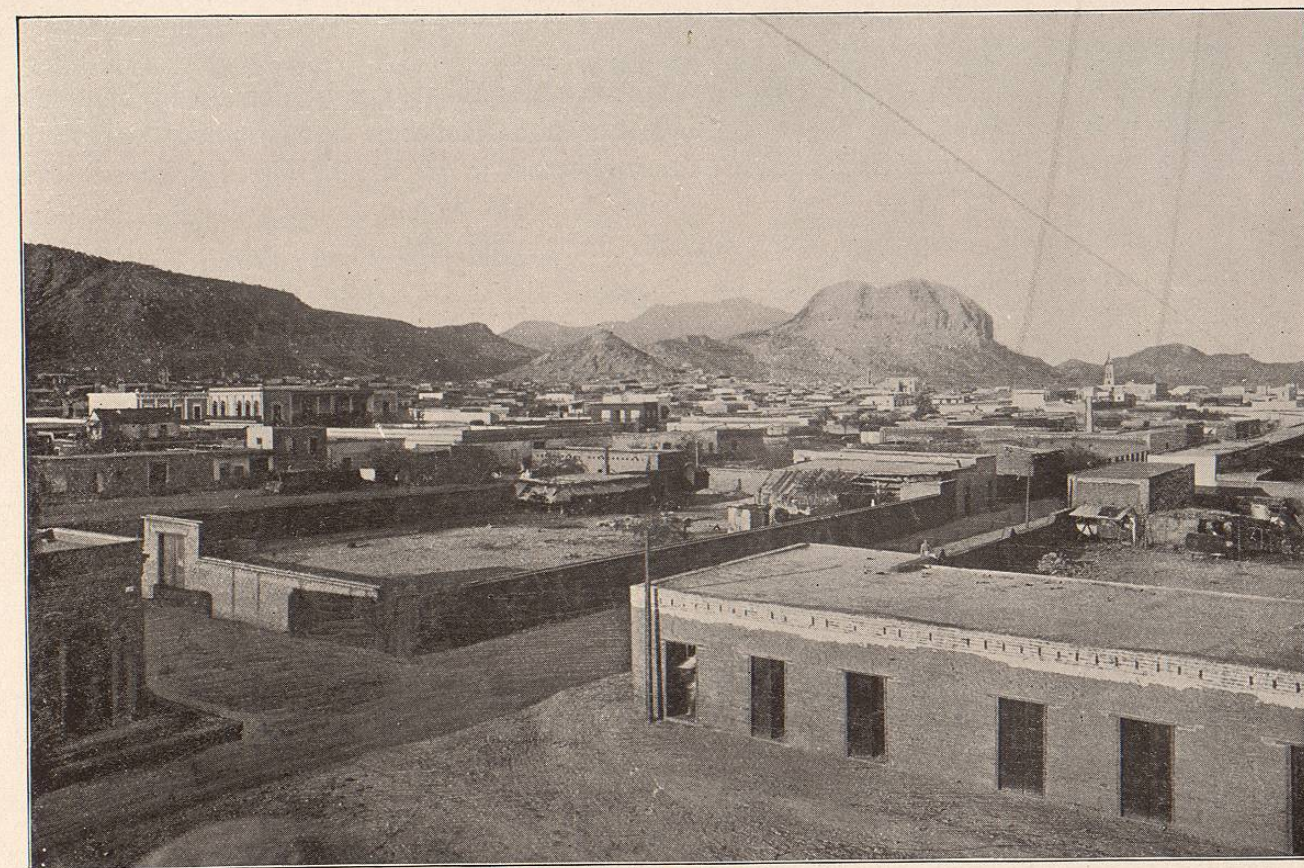
one orange plantation alone. Hermosillo is an extremely Mexican city, and is very picturesque, resting in the shadow of rugged mountains. It has a population of from fifteen to twenty thousand people, including many Yaquis. It lies in a valley near the junction of the Horcasitas and Sonora Rivers.

The climate is hot, but healthy. A great deal of wheat is raised in the adjacent country, and there are several flourishing flour-mills in the town. Large quantities of brandy are manufactured from grapes, which abound in the valley. Hermosillo was, up to 1800, a military station, and was formerly the seat of the presidio of Pitic. After the discovery and opening of gold-mines in Sonora the population of Hermosillo grew rapidly, and the town is still the chief *entrepôt* of Sonora.

In the mountainous regions of Sonora are numerous predatory bands of Indians, who have

long retarded the development of the state. The Tauri Mauri Indians number many thousand. They occupy fertile valleys far up among the mountain-trails and severest roadways. The largest city or pueblo among them is that of Norogochi, containing about eleven thousand people. The altitude of the town is seven thousand two hundred feet, and all the mountainous valleys occupied by the Tauri Mauri have an average altitude of six thousand four hundred and fifty feet. These Indians have a contempt for Mexican rule, which they show by their refusal, even after several centuries of authority, to speak Spanish or to allow it to be taught to their children.

In physique and facial appearance the Tauri Mauris resemble the Apache Indians of the United States. They wear their hair like the Apaches, and their clothing—a waist-cloth and



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sandals—is almost similar. They travel entirely on foot, and their arms are arrows and a bow. Thousands of them who work in the fields do not seem to know the use of a burro or a horse. They carry their burdens on their head and shoulders, and it is common to see an old man trotting along with a cigarette in his mouth and a load of merchandise weighing over one hundred and fifty pounds fastened to his shoulders. As a race the Tauri Mauris are intensely proud. They have never had war with the Mexican government, but they have threatened it several times when the republic has proposed to settle the land question among them on a plan similar to that of the United States with its Indian wards. Strangers are permitted to pass unmolested through the Tauri Mauri country, but are not allowed to get a living there. There are very rich gold and silver ledges in the mountains all about the Tauri Mauri valleys, but so many venturesome prospectors have gone there and never come back, that no American, at least, has



dared to make a trial of prospecting in that region for several decades. The Tauris live in houses of poles roofed with hewn planks. Their farms are fenced, and their stock is well cared for.

There are about three hundred wild and rebellious Yaqui Indians hidden in the fastnesses of the Bacatete Mountains, and some thirty thousand peaceful Yaquis working all over Sonora, among the best workers, the most successful farmers, and the quietest citizens in the whole state.

There are few things in the history of the native races of North America of more absorbing interest than the career of the Yaqui Indians. The Spanish conquistadores found them living in this country three hundred and fifty years ago. They were a strong and stalwart race. Put a Yaqui by the side of an Iroquois, and you can hardly tell them apart. Put a Yaqui and an Iroquois by the side of any other Indian in North America, and their physical superiority is seen at once. Compare them physically with all the other races of the earth, and you will find that they have few if any superiors.

The Yaquis were not, however, like their prototypes the Iroquois, dependent upon the chase for their food. From the beginning they were not woodsmen, but farmers. Cabeza de Vaca, after his long, romantic, and perilous journey across the continent, found great fields of Indian corn waving on the Yaqui River as far back as 1536. When the early Spanish missions were established in the Californias they obtained their supplies from the agricultural Indians in the Yaqui valley, and many a Spanish army was saved from starvation in times past by the Yaqui cornfields.

At Quergache are the "Gambucinos," or miners who live by creeping into the old mines and working out enough of the rich silver ores to support them for a few days. They are an ignorant, shiftless, and thievish set, who will not cultivate the ground any more than they can possibly help. Here, too, is a cathedral erected three hundred years ago, when the Spaniards worked the mines around this place. The church, built in honor of Señora Pillaro, has suffered from fire and has been only partly restored. It is a lofty, roomy affair, of cut stone carved by artists from old Spain, and patched with adobes by lazy mestizos.

In such a church and in such a city one feels as if the spirit had gone back into the ages of the past. This is not a part of the busy, bustling nineteenth century; it is a day-dream in the world of three hundred years ago.

The state of Sonora is fortunate in having for its governor Don Ramon Corral, to whose integrity of purpose and wise supervision it owes its recent prosperity.



## CHAPTER XXXVI

## BAJA CALIFORNIA

THE peninsula of Lower California forms one of the territories composing the republic of Mexico. This peninsula was discovered by Cortez in 1536. The Jesuits began to form establishments there about 1690, and instructed the native Indians in the arts of agriculture and civilization. They were taught the arts of irrigation, and exported agricultural productions to the mainland of Mexico. The Jesuit fathers remained there until 1767, when they were expelled, and the missions which they had established were placed under the charge of the Dominican fathers at Mexico City, under whom they greatly declined, so that in 1833 they were all secularized. The region settled by these Jesuit and Dominican fathers in the eighteenth century is extremely beautiful, and the ruins of the old mission are to-day exceedingly picturesque.

While everybody knows of the beauties of Southern California, there is dense ignorance among most readers of the fact that the peninsula of Lower California is equally beautiful. It is, in fact, a continuation of the same general features.

The imaginary line that separates Southern California from Baja California marks no difference in soil or climate. The valleys and *mesas* on the Mexican side are as good as those upon the American. All they need are irrigation works and roads. When these are supplied, and it becomes known that fruits, cereals, and wines can be profitably produced there, Mexico will be an open market, and the peninsula will gradually fill up with an industrious population.

Taking the steamer Orizaba at Guaymas, we went to La Paz and San José del Cabo. At La Paz we visited the pearl-fisheries, and were duly initiated into the mysteries of the hideous-looking diving apparatus. The Mexican government leases these fisheries to the companies that operate them, and some fine pearls



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