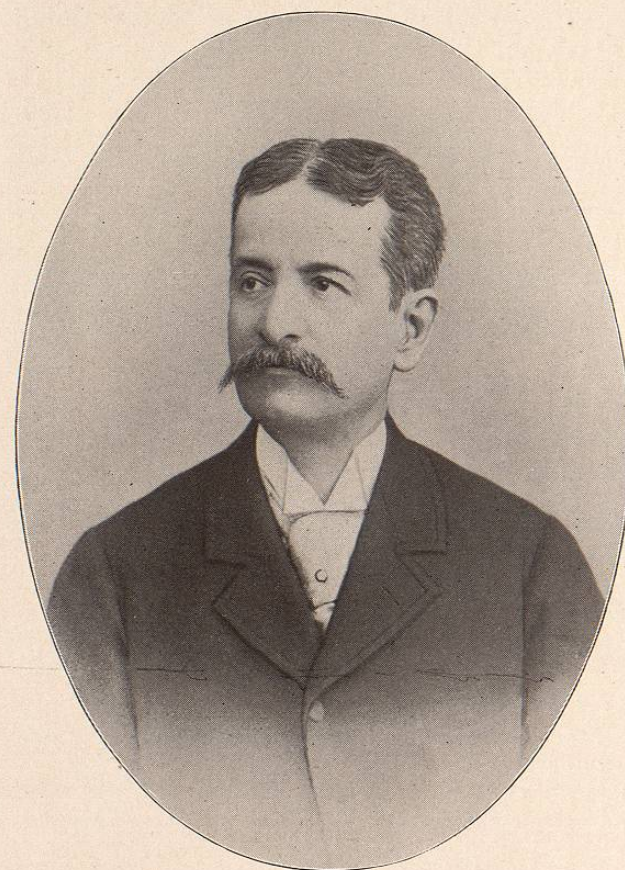


CHAPTER XXXVIII

GUERRERO

THE state of Guerrero has enormous possibilities of wealth, and is destined to play an important part in Mexico's future financial resources and developments. It lies on the southern coast, bordering on the Pacific coast, between Michoacán and Oaxaca, with Mexico and Puebla to the north. Guerrero was not a state until 1849, when three districts taken from Mexico, two from Puebla, and one from Michoacán were put together to form it. It has an area of twenty-four thousand two hundred and twenty-six square miles, and a very large Indian population, although, as in most parts of Mexico, the whites are increasing very rapidly.



SEÑOR CORONEL ANTONIO MERCENARIO,
GOVERNOR OF GUERRERO.

Anna defeated the Spaniards; but soon afterwards Bustamente and Santa Anna, on pretence that he ought not to have prolonged his dictatorship after the defeat of the Spaniards, revolted against Guerrero, who was deserted by his troops and compelled to take refuge in his hacienda

The state was named in honor of Vicente Guerrero, who was born at Tixtla about 1770, and executed at Cailapa, February 14, 1831. Guerrero was a mulatto and originally a slave. In the struggle for the independence of Mexico he exhibited great courage, and after the death of Mina became one of the leaders of the insurgents. In 1820 he entered the service of Iturbide, upon whose overthrow in 1823 he gave in his adherence to the provisional government and to the republic. In 1827 he was a candidate for the presidency, but was defeated by Pedraza by a majority of two votes in the electoral college. The partisans of Guerrero alleged that the election was carried by fraud, and rose in insurrection. Pedraza resigned in 1829, and Guerrero took possession of the presidency. On September 15 of that year he issued a proclamation abolishing slavery. The next year a Spanish force invaded Mexico, whereupon dictatorial power was conferred upon Guerrero, and his troops under Santa

at Tixtla. He was popular, and the people rallied to his support. He renewed the contest, but it was brought to a sudden close through the agency of a Genoese ship-captain, who invited him to a dinner on board his vessel at Acapulco and betrayed him to his enemies. He was tried by a military commission and shot. And thus perished another native hero of Mexico.

The state of Guerrero is traversed by the Sierra Madre with its many spurs, and is consequently very mountainous, its climate varying with the elevation, from very hot in the low

countries to cold in the higher portions. The chief river is the Río de las Balsas, which rises in Tlaxcala and, flowing southwest, finally forms the dividing line with Michoacán. There are great mining possibilities in Guerrero, some of which are already being developed. Both silver and gold abound, the mines of San José and Piedras Blancas being among the most important. Cinnabar is abundant elsewhere, as are likewise lead, sulphur, saltpetre, and copers; and anthracite is found in Chilpancingo. The soil is very fertile; vegetation, particularly arboreal, is rich and varied, and there are extensive virgin forests, containing excellent timber and many species of precious woods. Maize and beans are the chief agricultural productions, the former yielding three large crops annually. Cotton, sugar-cane, coffee, cacao, yucca, and tobacco are also cultivated, and cochineal and indigo are extensively produced. Agriculture is, however, little attended to, save in the central portions of the state. The chief articles of export are cochineal, indigo, cacao, wool, and hides; the imports consist of cotton and silk fabrics, spices, and hardware. The foreign trade, once very important, is carried on through the port of Acapulco. Manufactures are limited to coarse cotton and woollen stuffs, rude agricultural implements, and household utensils. Many of the inhabitants are miners, and on the coasts numbers are engaged in pearl-fishing.



IN TIXTLA, GUERRERO.

The first capital of Guerrero was Tixtla, which on its selection in 1849 was immediately raised to the rank of a city. It is picturesquely situated in a narrow gorge of the Sierra Madre, but has not yet become of great importance in any respect. It is five thousand feet above sea-level, and its chief occupations are coarse manufactures and agriculture.

The present capital is Chilpancingo, a few miles southwest of Tixtla, and situated on a pleasant table-land on the western side of the mountain-range.

Acapulco is, perhaps, the most important town in Guerrero, as it has one of the best harbors on the entire west coast. During the Spanish dominion Acapulco was the focus of the China and East Indian trade, and was a place of considerable importance. The California trade later gave it a period of transitory commercial life, as it was a coaling station for steamers

between Panamá and San Francisco; but with the new railroad now in process of construction, Acapulco is destined to see greater days than ever. The region around Acapulco produces the best lemons in the world, the fruit being large and juicy and far more desirable than either the Californian or the Sicilian product. As soon as the railway is completed from Cuernavaca, the way will be opened for marketing this product in New York and other ports, when the lemon



CHILPANCINGO, THE CAPITAL OF GUERRERO.

industry is likely to blossom out into the greatest agricultural one of Guerrero.

This new railroad, "The Mexico, Cuernavaca and Pacific," is a line that is to give Mexico standard gauge connection with the old and historic port of Acapulco, whither came once the richly freighted galleons of Spanish commerce from China and Japan. In this connection it is worthy of note that the first fair and equitable treaty with Japan in modern times was made by Mexico. This new line pushing on to the Pacific, C. P. Huntington's in Northern Mexico and Colonel Joe Hampson's in Central Mexico, will

enable Mexican manufacturers, working on a silver basis, to reach out for the west coast trade of South America. It is believed that the Mexico, Cuernavaca and Pacific road will open up extensive coal-fields and gold-mines in the state of Guerrero, cheapening fuel over a large region, and that eventually steamships from the Orient will touch at the piers of the Mexico, Cuernavaca and Pacific Railway at Acapulco. This port of Mexico presents an enormous field for investment. The day is not far distant when millions of American dollars will find their way there to be utilized. Guerrero is at present practically an unknown land, but for the man with a little capital at his disposal it presents a great future.

M. Le Royal, a French engineer staying in Mexico, reports that he has discovered a cave in the district of Guerrero which is much larger than the famous cavern of Cacahuamilpa, situated some distance south of Cuernavaca, a description of which is given in the next few pages, and which has hitherto been supposed to be the largest natural cave in existence in Mexico. The French engineer, after a few visits to the entrance, decided to make a thorough investigation. Accordingly he took five companions, candles, food for twenty-four hours, magnesium light, barometer, compass, etc., and set forth. It was not so easy a task as he had imagined, however, to find the end of the cave. At first the bottom of the cave was a gradual slope downward, then it changed upward, and afterward alternated for the most part between descents and ascents. Here and there a level bottom of great width was found. The height of the cave varied very much, as might naturally be expected. In some places it was several hundred feet high. For some distance from the entrance no trace of human beings was found, but occasionally magnificent stalactites and stalagmites—the finest M. Royal had ever seen—were met

with. After proceeding for ten miles he came upon what had evidently been a cemetery, as there were at least four hundred petrified bodies there, together with ancient idols, stone tools, etc. Curiously enough, there was also a fountain of beautiful, clear, sparkling water. The aneroid barometer showed that this spot was six hundred feet lower than the mouth of the cave. M. Royal and his men went inward some twenty miles and then did not find the end; on the contrary, he concluded that the end of the cave was yet some distance from him. Finally, after being twenty-six hours under ground, the company found themselves under the blue sky. What possibilities of conjecture this cave calls up! Was there once a people there, who buried their dead in this immense cavern? Was it a prison-house? The ancient Toltecs and Chichimecs must have made use of it for something, but what? And now, late in the nineteenth century, this old cave with its hundreds of petrified bodies was lighted up for the first time in ages.



PALACE, CHILPANCINGO.

A discovery of great archaeological value and importance has also been made in Guerrero by Mr. William Niven, a well-known mineralogist of New York City.

Mr. Niven is a life-member of the American Society of National History, and owner of the Rose Garnet quarries near Cautla, Morelos. While on a prospecting tour in 1894 he discovered a great and unknown prehistoric city in the mountains northwest of Chilpancingo.

The ruins are even more numerous than he had at first supposed, and cover an area of ten leagues square, or nine hundred square miles; he found in every foot-hill and mountain-ridge the remains of houses and great buildings. In most instances these prehistoric structures were little more than foundations, but many of the walls are standing from three to eight feet high and all substantially built of stone and lime. Mr. Niven has visited the ruins of twenty-two

temples, occupying a space averaging six hundred square feet each, with altars in the centre from five to twenty feet high and from ten to fifteen feet square.

At Quechomictlipan (Aztec for "what a quantity of bones on top") he found that the building-stone in some of the edifices had been carefully cut of equal dimensions; and while excavating in one of these rooms great quantities of bones of animals were secured. This room proved to be a circular chamber, or tower, about twelve feet in diameter, which was filled with dust and broken plaster. On the floor, which was also of plaster, there were large quantities of stone beads and many very curious and interesting objects, with great abundance of broken pottery, metals, etc. Excavations at Jabalin revealed plastered walls and a great quantity of broken pottery. The walls of the temple at Yerba Buena are in some



TEMPLE AT QUECHOMICTLIPAN, OMITLAN.

places eight feet high, and the altar is twelve feet high, with parts of the stairs still remaining. Here were also found many objects of terra-cotta. Photographs were made of a stone in hieroglyphics a short distance from Xoquiapán, and on the top of a hill were the ruins of a temple, with the usual altar in the centre. At Organos the ruins were almost entirely under ground. An excavation was made into one, and at ten feet the foundation of the walls was not reached. Three chambers were partly cleared out, and they were found to be filled with clay, ashes, and broken pottery. Another temple was found near there, at a place called Tejas, with more subterranean dwellings. One large cut stone at Xochocolzin, seven feet long by two feet wide, had a figure of an idol carved on one side, with head-dress complete. About eight hundred yards west of the summit of the hill were two large idols, one weighing about five hundred pounds. At Yexcal the buildings were all under ground, and near the roof of one were twelve prepared stones of the shape and size of a sugar-loaf built into the walls, placed side by side, with their broad ends projecting. On the summit of the Cerro Porterrio, as well as at Chalchintepetl, there are what appear to be great pyramids over sixty feet high.

Perhaps the most remarkable find was made at a place called Guaybo. Here were the ruins of a temple six hundred feet by two hundred feet. At the depth of nine feet from the surface, under the altar, an olla of terra-cotta was discovered filled with dirt, secreted in which were seventy-two beautiful objects of mother-of-pearl. Four were carved heads with a peculiarly shaped head-dress, and the others were carved representations of fish, etc. To reach the ruined city one must go over the route of the new railroad to Acapulco.

The governor of Guerrero, Señor Coronel Antonio Mercenario, is doing everything in his

power to further the interests of his state and so to develop its resources as to bring it to the front rank in the Mexican republic. The people of Guerrero are wide awake and earnestly



GIRLS' COLLEGE, CHILPANCINGO.

desirous of keeping abreast with modern progress, and in this laudable purpose they are led by their valiant Governor Mercenario.

