

the year ending December 31, 1856, amount, according to a statement just published, to \$6,127,060.

"Of this sum I doubt if one-twenty-fourth accrued from American trade. . . . There were some 6,000 to 7,000 bales (175 to 200 lbs. each) of cotton grown in this country during the year, and about 2,800 ceroons (200 lbs. net) of cochineal.

"The amount of cotton imported from the United States (New Orleans solely), during the last three months, was:

Bales, . . . . .	3,512
Half bales, 7,369, equal to . . . . .	3,684
	7,196"

*Prices in Vera Cruz, according to latest Consular returns.*

Hides, . . . . .	\$1 62	a \$1 75 each.
Calf-skins, . . . . .	75	a 87 each.
Goat-skins, . . . . .	95	a 1 00 per pair.
Logwood, . . . . .	62½	per cwt.
Fustic, . . . . .	50.	"
Mahogany, . . . . .	1½	a 2 per foot.
Cochineal, . . . . .	26 00	per 25 lbs.
Jalap, . . . . .	35 00	a 40 00 per cwt.
Sarsaparilla, . . . . .	9 00	"
Tobacco, . . . . .	2 50	a 5 50 "
Indigo, . . . . .	90	a 1 00 per lb.
Vanilla beans, . . . . .	20 00	a 60 00 per 1,000.

*Prospects of Commerce in Vera Cruz.*

It is now time to speak of the advantages offered in Vera Cruz to a regular line of steamers, touching once a week, and affording a sure means of correspondence with the United States, at stated periods. In a compar-

atively short time the railway will be opened as far as Orizava, and will eventually be continued to the Pacific.

This railway, when completed, will inaugurate a new era of prosperity for Vera Cruz—almost, if not quite as rich, as when, a century ago, it formed the great commercial emporium of "New Spain," and when the merchants of the mother country became rich with one single venture. In effect it will open up vast regions of the coasts of Oajaca, Chiapas, &c., &c., which are now almost entirely cut off from every means of either import or export, on account of the enormous price of freights, and which teem with every production of a tropical climate—minerals, dye-woods, mahogany, grain and cochineal, beside affording an extensive market for American productions in the large cities in the interior.

THE ISTHMUS OF TEHUANTEPEC.

The Isthmus of Tehuantepec deserves special notice in this work. The territory of the Isthmus proper lies between 16° 5' and 18° 21' N. latitude, and 3° 53' and 50° 30' longitude E. from the city of Mexico. It comprises a part of the states of Vera Cruz, Oajaca, Tabasco, and Chiapas. Its northern limit is the Gulf of Mexico, and its southern the Pacific Ocean. All the agricultural productions and fruits found in the states above named, except a few that belong to the cold regions, are produced in the greatest abundance throughout the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. It is perhaps one of the richest agricultural districts in the republic. The treaty contemplated with Mexico secures to the United States the important and invaluable advantages that will accrue to our country from the right of way across the Isthmus in perpetuity.

When the route is fully opened, and the transit becomes regular and easy, the passage will be made from New York to California in eighteen days. The opening of this route will at once develop the resources of the Isthmus, which are rich and varied. In addition to its agricultural products there are rare and valuable woods of the greatest variety and abundance; mahogany, Brazilwood, logwood, India-rubber, &c., now form the principal exports.

The principal river is the Coatzacoalcos, which is navigable for a distance of some seventy or eighty miles above its mouth.

The port of Coatzacoalcos is situated on the Gulf of Mexico, at the mouth of the river, and is easy of access by vessels drawing eleven to twelve feet of water. This is one of the ports at which the United States and Mexican mail steamers will touch.

Minatitlan is situated on the Coatzacoalcos, twenty miles from its mouth. Vessels crossing the bar at the mouth of the river, can reach this place without difficulty.

*Statement of the exports of Mahogany from the river Coatzacoalcos, showing progressive increase.*

	VESSELS.	TONS.
1849 . . . . .	5 . . . . .	713
1850 . . . . .	1 . . . . .	230
1851 . . . . .	6 . . . . .	690
1852 . . . . .	5 . . . . .	810
1853 . . . . .	7 . . . . .	1,242
1854 . . . . .	13 . . . . .	3,214
1855 . . . . .	19 . . . . .	3,882
1856 . . . . .	32 . . . . .	6,804
1857 . . . . .	65 . . . . .	12,556
Total, . . . . .	153 . . . . .	30,141

Vessels of all nations entered at and cleared from the port of Minatitlan, from September 30, 1857, to September 30, 1858:

	NO.	TONNAGE.
American vessels, . . . . .	31 . . . . .	5,793
French " . . . . .	1 . . . . .	318
English " . . . . .	26 . . . . .	5,044
Spanish " . . . . .	1 . . . . .	203
Sardinian " . . . . .	1 . . . . .	262
Italian " . . . . .	1 . . . . .	289
German, Swedish and Belgian vessels, 4 . . . . .	4 . . . . .	657
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	65	12,566

## YUCATAN.

Columbus, in his first three voyages, did not reach the continent of America, but on his fourth ill-fated and final expedition, after sixty days' tempestuous weather, he discovered a small island, supposed to be that now called in the charts *Bonaca*. While on shore in this island, he saw coming from the west a canoe of large size filled with Indians, who appeared to be a more civilized people than any he had yet encountered. In return to the inquiries of the Spaniards for gold, they pointed toward the west, and endeavored to persuade them to steer in that direction. "Well would it have been for Columbus," says Mr. Irving, "had he followed their advice. Within a day or two he would have arrived at Yucatan; the discovery of Mexico and the other opulent countries of New Spain would have followed; the Southern Ocean would have been disclosed to him, and a succession of splendid discoveries would have shed fresh glories on his declining age, instead of sinking it amidst gloom, neglect and disappointment."

Four years afterward, Juan Diaz de Solis held the same course to the island of Bonaca, and then steering to the west, discovered the east coast of Yucatan.

From the time of the conquest, Yucatan existed as a distinct captain-generalcy, not connected with Guatemala nor subject to the Viceroy of Mexico. So it continued down to the Mexican revolution.

The independence of Yucatan followed that of Mexico without any struggle, and actually by default of the mother country in not attempting to keep it in subjection.

Before the conquest, one language, called the *Maya*, extended throughout the whole peninsula, and the whole land of Maya was united under one head or supreme lord.

This great chief had for the seat of his monarchy a very populous city called Mayapan, and had under him a great many other lords, or caciques, who were bound to pay him tribute and serve him in war.

These lords, too, had under them cities and many vassals. Becoming proud and ambitious, they rebelled against the power of the supreme lord, and besieged and destroyed the city of Mayapan.

This took place about one hundred years before the arrival of the Spaniards, and may perhaps account, more or less, for the origin of the mysterious palaces buried deep in the solitudes of Yucatan.

To quote the eloquent words of Stephens: "The existence of most of these ruins was entirely unknown to the residents of the capital, but few had ever been visited by white inhabitants; they were desolate, and overgrown with trees. For a brief space the stillness that reigned around them was broken, and then they were again left to solitude and silence. Time and the elements are has-

tening them to utter destruction. In a few generations their façades, covered with sculptured ornaments, already cracked and yawning, must fall and become mere shapeless mounds. It has been the fortune of the author to step between them and the entire destruction to which they are destined; and it is his hope to snatch from oblivion these perishing, but still gigantic memorials of a mysterious people."

The State of Yucatan is situated between latitude 17° 49' north, and 21° 37' north, and longitude 6° 33' and 12° 28' east of the city of Mexico. Its shores are washed on the west and north by the Gulf of Mexico, and on the east by the sea of the Antilles; on the south it is bordered by Central America, and by the English territory of the Belize, of which the boundary is the Rio Hondo, or Deep River. On the south-west is the former territory of Carmen, which has been divided between Yucatan and Tabasco.

Two depressed chains of mountains traverse the state, but in the main it is a level country, and generally covered with rank vegetation, either wild or cultivated. Yucatan offers a peculiarly fine field to the explorer, and here are found some of the most curious and stupendous relics of the ancient inhabitants. Stephens and Catherwood obtained the most interesting material for their publications in this state. There are extensive regions yet unexplored by white men.

The character and variety of the productions of the State of Yucatan may be learned from the following account of the several districts:

*District of Merida; Capital, Merida.*

Horned cattle, horses, mules, tallow, jerked-beef,

leather, salt, gypsum, hemp raw and manufactured, straw hats, guitars, cigars, and logwood.

*District of Campeche ; Capital, Campeche.*

Salt, logwood, rice, sugar and marble of good quality.

*District of Lerma ; Capital, Lerma.*

Logwood, timber, rice, and fish-oil.

*District of Valladolid ; Capital, City of Valladolid.*

Cotton, sugar, gum-copal, tobacco, cochineal, saffron, vanilla, cotton fabrics, yarns, &c., wax, honey, castor-oil, horned cattle, hogs, and skins.

*Coast District ; Capital, City of Izamal.*

Horned cattle, horses, mules, tallow, jerked-beef, castor-oil, hides, wax, honey, timber, indigo, hemp raw and manufactured, straw, cigars, barilla, and salt.

*Upper Highland District ; Capital, City of Tekax.*

Horned cattle, horses, mules, hogs, sheep, skins, sugar, molasses, timber, rice, tobacco in leaf and manufactured, spirits, arrow-root, straw hats, cotton-lace, ochre, flints, and grindstones.

*Lower Highland District ; Capital, Teabo.*

Horned cattle, horses, mules, hogs, sheep, skins, tallow, dried beef, hemp raw and manufactured, and cotton-lace.

*Upper Royal Road District ; Capital, Jequechakan.*

Cattle, horses, mules, skins, tallow, dried beef, logwood, tobacco, sugar, and rum.

*Lower Royal Road District ; Capital, Maxcanu.*

Horned cattle, horses, oil of palma cristi, tobacco, hemp, and fine straw hats.

*Upper Beneficios District ; Capital, Ichenul.*

Sugar, molasses, rum, tobacco, rice, pepper, gum, sarsaparilla, hats, hammocks, ebony, barilla, gypsum, and skins.

*Lower Beneficios District ; Capital, Sotula.*

Horned cattle, horses, mules, hogs, skins, tallow, and dried beef.

*District of Tizimin ; Capital, Tizimin.*

Tortoise-shell, skins, timber, logwood, India-rubber, incense, tobacco, achiote (a rich yellow dye), starch from the yuca, cotton, wax, honey, molasses, sugar, rum, castor-oil, salt, amber, vanilla, hogs, and cochineal.

*District of Seiba-playa ; Capital, Seiba-playa.*

Timber, rice, logwood and salt.

*Bacalar District ; Capital, Bacalar.*

Logwood, valuable timber, inferior sugar, tobacco, rum, fine hemp known under the name of *pita*, resin, India-rubber, gum-copal, pimento, sarsaparilla, vanilla and gypsum.

These, with all the tropical fruits, afford an astonishing variety of natural productions.

Mining has never formed a branch of industry among the present race of inhabitants. There are traditions pointing to the existence of gold and silver mines in the state, but there is no disposition evinced to discover and work them.

Salt is obtained on the island of the Mujeres. The island of Cozumel on the east coast—which was the first land discovered by the Spaniards on their voyage to Mexico—is now almost uninhabited.

The extension of its coast is as follows :

From Point Bacalar to Cape Catoche . . . . .	276 miles.
From Cape Catoche to Punta Desconocida, in Campeche Sound, . . . . .	250 "
And from thence to the Bar of San Pedro, . . . . .	281 "
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In all, . . . . .	807 miles.

*Cities, Population, &c.*

Yucatan has four large cities in the interior, viz. :

1. Merida, capital of the state, is situated in the centre of a spacious plain, at an elevation of twenty-four feet above the level of the sea, the breezes of which maintain a cool and pleasant temperature.

Its population is 23,575, and its distance from Mexico 1,005 miles, and from Sisal twenty-eight miles.

2. Valladolid, at a distance of ninety-four miles from Merida, and 135 from Campeche, with a population of 2,389 inhabitants.

3. Izamal, thirty-nine miles from Merida, has a population of 4,797 inhabitants.

4. Tekax, fifty-seven miles from Merida, with a population of 4,348 inhabitants.

*Ports.*

The most important ports are Sisal and Campeche. Sisal is in 21° 10' N. latitude, and 9° 06' longitude E. of Mexico; population 942.

Campeche, the most important of the two, is situated on the west coast of Yucatan, and contains a population of 15,000 inhabitants, the greater part of whom are connected with the logwood trade, of which it is estimated

that 650,000 quintals are exported annually, whilst the value of other articles of merchandise by the way of the English territory of Belize, amounts annually to \$2,110,000, all of which ought and can be diverted into American channels.

According to the calculation of Mr. D. G. Rigil, which appears the most free from exaggeration, there were produced in 1853, 20,416,200 pounds of sugar, and 306,243 barrels of aguadiente.

With respect to the Genequen, which may be called an industry peculiar to Yucatan, and of which are made sacks, hammocks, curtains, cables, &c., there are exported of it annually in its manufactured state 560,500 pounds.

Other products are as follows :

	CONSUMPTION.	EXPORTATION.
Maize, . . . . .	20,000,530 bushels.	16,350 bushels.
Rice, . . . . .	1,750,000 pounds,	93,700 pounds.
Frijoles, . . . . .	24,000,000 "	144,550 "

Besides the articles above mentioned, there is an extensive production of cotton, tobacco, gum-copal, indigo, &c., &c., of which large amounts are exported. Of course these products might be doubled or trebled if the inhabitants would be at the pains of making good roads, which might be formed at small expense, from the level nature of the country, which in many places only requires the undergrowth to be cut down to admit the passage of mule trains.

From the fact of there being no swamps, the climate, although hot, is uniformly healthy.

*Laguna.*

The port of Cármen (Laguna de Términos) may be considered as the best port in the Mexican part of the