

**Notes on the state of Sonora / by Charles P. Stone, 1860.**

Stone, Chas. P. (Charles Pomeroy), 1824-1887.

Washington, [D.C.] : Henry Polkinhorn, printer, 1861.

<https://hdl.handle.net/2027/loc.ark:/13960/t79s2jm0w>

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Chas. P. Stone*

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NOTES

On the State of Sonora.

1860.

*Charles P. Stone*







# NOTES

ON

## THE STATE OF SONORA

BY

CHARLES P. STONE,

1860.

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WASHINGTON:  
HENRY POLKINHORN PRINTER.  
1861.

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## SONORA.

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The Mexican State of Sonora, is bounded on the north by that portion of United States territory, called *Arizona*, in the jurisdiction of New Mexico; on the east by the Mexican State of Chihuahua, from which it is separated by the great mountain chain, the Sierra Madre; on the south by the State of Sinaloa, from which it is separated by the river *del Fuerte*; and on the west by the Sea of Cortes, (Gulf of California) and the territory of Lower California.

The northern boundary line commences on the west, at a point of the Colorado river, twenty miles below the mouth of the Gila river, lat.  $32^{\circ} 29' 44.45''$  N., long.  $114^{\circ} 48' 44.53''$  W., and runs on a great circle of the earth, southeasterly to the intersection of 31 deg. 20 min. north, and the 111th meridian of longitude west of Greenwich; thence it follows the parallel 31 deg. 30 min., east to near meridian 108 deg. west; thence the boundary line runs north, to parallel 31 deg. 47 min., when it again turns east, following that course to the summit of the great chain which is the limit between Sonora and Chihuahua. The eastern boundary line, has never been exactly determined on the ground by the Mexican government; but it is to be marked along the crest of the Cordillera, which runs nearly south, with occasional deflections from a right line.



The uncertainty which exists as to the exact course of the eastern boundary, makes it extremely difficult to make a calculation of the area of the State. But as nearly as I can at present estimate, it seems to be about eighty thousand square miles, all included between the parallels 26 degrees and  $32\frac{1}{2}$  degrees north latitude. The State is washed, along its western boundary for more than 500 miles, by the waters of the Sea of Cortes; and has the advantage of several large and many small rivers: 1st. The *Colorado of the West*, which forms a portion of its western boundary, and is navigable for small steamers for hundreds of miles above its mouth. 2d. The river *Yaqui*, which, rising in the northeastern part of the State, flows nearly the whole length of it from north to south, receives, among others, the waters of the river *Mulatos*, and empties into the sea some twenty-five miles south of *Guaymas*. 3d. The *Fuerte*, forming the southern boundary. 4th. The *Mayo*, the course of which lies between those of the *Fuerte* and the *Yaqui*, where it turns west. 5th. The river *Sonora*, which rises in the north of the State, east of the middle meridian, flows southerly as far as *Ures*, the capital, and then turns westerly past *Hermosillo*, towards the sea, (receiving in its course the little river *San Miguel*,) which, however, it never reaches, its waters being appropriated for irrigation along its whole course, and those which escape this use being lost in the sand-plains near the coast. 6th. The river *San Ignacio*, which rises near the northern boundary and the middle meridian, flows south to *La Magdalena*, and thence westerly past *Altar*, to sink in the sand-plains of the coast, having first received the waters of the river of *Altar*, an intermittent stream.



The river *Santa Cruz*, which rises in American territory, flows south, west, and north west, re-entering our territory after a course of some fifty miles in Sonora.

The face of the country presents every possible diversity of appearance and formation. Along the coast, from the mouth of the Colorado to the island of Tiburon, are found vast plains of barren sand, broken only by isolated short ranges of volcanic hills. Proceeding along the coast to the south, spurs from the interior ranges of mountains jut out into the sea, and make a rock-bound coast until you pass below Guaymas, when the eye rests with pleasure on the broad and fertile valleys of the Yaqui and the Mayo rivers, backed by the great mountain mass of the Cordillera in the distance.

In traversing the interior, one is surprised in passing through long tracts of desert, that there can be a country so sterile and utterly unproductive; and the next hour, is astonished at the wonderful beauty and fertility of some broad and well watered valley, which is entered. The foreigner will find himself wondering at the luxuriant crops produced by the imperfect cultivation in use there, and at the broad leagues of excellent lands left uncultivated for want of a little outlay of labor in clearing them and supplying them with the necessary irrigation. It would be hard to find, in any quarter of the globe, more worthless or barren and unreclaimable land than some along the north-western coast, and it would be impossible to find more productive and beautiful agricultural lands than those along the rivers of the south, centre, and east of the State, or richer pasturage, for millions of cattle, than



is afforded by the foot hills of the Sierras, and the rolling hills and plains of the centre and northeast of Sonora.

Notwithstanding the great extent of sea coast, the State has but one good port, capable of receiving shipping of all classes, in any important number. This is the port of Guaymas, situated in lat. 27 deg. 55 min. 34.46 sec. N., lon. 110 deg. 56 min. 4 sec. W. of Greenwich. This port is perfectly land-locked, has a safe and deep entrance, affording at low tide five fathoms of water, and is sufficiently spacious to meet the requirements of a first class commercial town. The port is divided into what are called the inner and the outer harbor, the first being used by all vessels drawing less than seventeen feet of water, the latter affording good and safe anchorage for ships drawing from four to five fathoms. A good supply of back-water, is furnished by the large but shallow bay of Old Guaymas, which discharges, at each ebb tide, a strong current through the outer harbor.

Near the mouth of the river Mayo, is the port of Santa Cruz, an open roadstead, where vessels sometime discharge cargo. It is not a harbor. Between the Mayo and Fuerte rivers, there is a small harbor, in what is called the Bay of Ajiobampo; it is perfectly land-locked, and has deep water and good holding ground; but the entrance is crooked, and on the bar, it has, at low tide, only  $2\frac{1}{2}$  fathoms of water. A few miles northwest of Guaymas, there is an excellent harbor, perfectly land-locked, and affording entrance and protection to vessels of the largest class; but it is very small, and cannot shelter more than three or four large ships at a time, if swinging at their anchors.

What is called the harbor of Lobos, north of the island



of Tiburon, affords shelter in one part from northerly, and in another from southerly winds; but in no part of the so called harbor, is a vessel safe from all winds. The same remark applies to the "*Bay of Pinacate*," called on the English charts "*Adair Bay*," near the mouth of the Colorado river; but the anchorage is bad, the bottom being rocky in many places, and there is no protection from westerly winds. This bay has the additional disadvantage of the want of a bold shore; and as the tides sometimes rise twenty-odd feet above low water mark, vessels are obliged to anchor at a great distance from the dry landing. Guaymas must therefore always remain the port of Sonora, for all foreign commerce: and through it must pass all imports destined for that State, and the territory of Arizona on the north.

The principal cities and towns in Sonora, are Hermosillo, Ures, Alamos, Guaymas, Altar, La Magdalena, and Arispe.

#### HERMOSILLO,

The first in population and present commercial importance, was originally established as a military station under the name of the "*Presidio of Pitic*." Afterwards it became a pueblo, under the same name, and then was declared a *ciudad*, or city, under its present name. The population was estimated to be 5,000 at the time of Iturbide's government, (1822,) and in 1840 it was estimated at 13,000, including domesticated Indians. In 1850, Velasco estimated it at least 15,000; but from the best sources of information within my reach, while there in 1858-'9, I am inclined to think he overestimated it; for, although the population has undoubtedly diminished, it has not



done so with such rapidity as to reduce it to its present number, which I think does not exceed 11,000 souls, including the resident Indians.

The city is pleasantly situated on the north bank of the Sonora river, at a point nearly north of Guaymas harbor, and about one hundred miles distant from it.

It contains but few public buildings, and these are not large or handsome; but many of the dwelling-houses are spacious, handsomely built, and richly furnished. Many of the private dwellings of the richer class have gardens and vineyards of several acres in extent attached to them, producing, in their season, abundance of figs, pomegranates, oranges, lemons, melons and grapes. The surplus water of the river is skilfully turned through the town in small canals, furnishing an abundant supply of water for domestic purposes, and for irrigating the gardens, orchards, and vineyards, as well as the numerous grain fields on the outskirts of the city. The climate is healthful and agreeable, excepting during the months of July and August, when, during the day, the heat is excessive; the thermometer sometimes ranging as high as 95 or 100 deg. Farh.; but even in those months, the nights are cool and agreeable, as the sea breeze from the gulf invariably sets in when the sun goes down. Hermosillo receives annually from abroad, through the port of Guaymas, about two millions of dollars worth of foreign goods, which are sold thence to the merchants of the interior towns. These goods consist of cloths, cotton goods, (especially the coarse brown sheetings,) lawns and other goods for dress, hardware of every description, iron and steel for all purposes of mining and agriculture, a little machinery, and lumber



from California and the southern coast. She boasts of two steam power flouring mills, several mills worked by horse power, a manufactory of wagons, producing excellent work, and numerous small mechanical establishments in the different branches of art. Her vineyards produce, annually, for home consumption, from 1,000 to 1,500 barrels of brandy, and some wine. Above and below Hermosillo, along the river, the lands are exceedingly productive, and yield unrivalled crops of wheat and corn, and some little sugar. Long trains of wagons are constantly plying between Hermosillo and Guaymas, carrying down hides, wheat, and flour for exportation, and bringing back foreign goods. The wheat of this region is the finest I have ever seen; and it is so highly esteemed in that great wheat-growing country, California, that it is sent there in large quantities to be used for seed; commanding, in the market of San Francisco, a price 50 per cent. above that of native wheat. The crops are put in in November, and harvested in May; they rarely suffer from rust or smut, but do some years from late frosts in the spring, after the berry has formed.

#### URES,

Which has been the capital of the State most of the time since 1838, is situated in a beautiful portion of the Sonora river valley, 47 miles, by the post road, from Hermosillo. It was founded very early, by the Jesuit fathers, as a missionary station; and in the Jesuit records of Father Alegre, I find the *pueblo of Ures*, mentioned in the notes on the year 1646. It seems to have been first occupied as a mission, about the year 1635, by the apostolic priest Father Pedro Mendez, who labored forty years in those regions,



and subjected tribe after tribe of savages to the rules of civilized life. It derives its name from that of the tribe of Indians found there when the missionaries entered. The town is but poorly built, and, for a capital city, is singularly destitute of public buildings.

The population was estimated at 7,000 in 1850. At present, it hardly rises to half that number. The country along the river, above and below Ures, is picturesque and very productive. The principal crops, are wheat and corn. Some little sugar and tobacco are also produced. Cotton has been successfully grown here, and yielded remarkably well; but in consequence of the loss of one or two crops by some peculiarity of the season, its culture has been entirely abandoned. Tobacco yields there an abundant crop, and its quality is excellent.

#### ALAMOS

Is a mining town situated between the rivers Mayo and Fuerte, and is (1859) the second place in Sonora in respect to population, which amounts to about 6,000 souls.

Alamos represents a large amount of wealth, drawn from the mines of silver, which abound in the district, and have been successfully worked since about 1690.

From its situation, far removed from the country of the Apaches, it is free from the attacks of those savages, and industrial pursuits can be carried on in its neighborhood with much more safety than about the towns of the north and centre.

The mines being abundant and productive, but little attention, comparatively, is paid to other branches of industry; but there are some extensive and well conducted



ranchos and haciendas, which supply grains, coarse sugar, beans, beef, and working animals, for the purposes of the district. In times of quiet, and absence of revolution, (which, during the past few years have been but few and short) this district has supplied large numbers of mules and horses for the markets of California.

#### GUAYMAS,

Or *San Fernando de Guaymas*, is built close to the waters of the inner harbor of Guaymas, already mentioned, and contained, in 1859, a population estimated at from 2,500 to 3,000 souls, supported principally by the foreign commerce.

The town is surrounded, on the land side, by high hills, nearly destitute of vegetation; and from the north, these hills crowd down so abruptly upon the town, as to leave but little room for extension in that direction; but to the east, west, and southwest, there is abundance of space for a large commercial town. The climate is oppressively hot during the months of June, July, August and September. For many days in succession, the thermometer ranges, throughout the day, at 95 to 98 degrees Fahrenheit; and, being closed in by dark rocky hills, which absorb the heat of the sun during the day and evolve it after sunset, the nights of this season are almost as oppressive as the days. To add to the discomfort during the summer, there sometimes blow from the north, strong winds; which, gathering heat and fine dust from the parched plains of the interior, serve to almost suffocate every living thing exposed to them. These simooms, which fortunately are not very frequent, drive the inhabitants within doors, where — with windows, doors, and shutters closed — they suffer intensely from the stifling heat.



During the rest of the year the temperature is very agreeable; frost occurs in December and January.

The supply of drinking-water for the town, comes from wells in the outskirts — most of them at least thirty yards deep. The water is slightly tainted with salts, but is very healthful, and after a few weeks' use, the taste is found to be agreeable. Should Guaymas ever become a large town, it will be necessary to construct large tanks for the preservation of rain water, and to bring an additional supply from springs some sixteen miles from the harbor.

The business of importing and selling on commission, for foreign goods, is all in the hands of foreign houses, of which the principal are: one Venezuelan, two Spanish, one American, and one German, altogether representing a business capital of perhaps one and a half millions of dollars, and receiving, by purchase and on commission, imports to the amount of from \$3,000,000 to \$5,000,000 annually of goods from foreign ports and those of the west coast of Mexico. To meet the value of the imports, there are shipped, principally, silver and gold bullion to Europe and California; flour for the supply of Mazatlan, San Blas, Manzanillo, Colima, and Acapulco; wheat, copper and hides, to California. There are owned, in Guaymas, and constantly employed in the trade there, two barks and two large schooners, besides many small coasters, of an aggregate tonnage of probably fifteen hundred or two thousand tons, which are all employed in traffic between Guaymas, San Francisco, and the ports of the west coast. The heavy imports are usually direct from England, and come in English bottoms.

The export of flour, probably reaches twenty or twenty-five thousand barrels per annum, and of wheat, in



good seasons, perhaps 20,000 bushels. With different regulations concerning the exportation of mineral ores, a large trade might be carried on there in the ores of copper and silver from localities where it is difficult to reduce them. At present, the exportation of silver ores is prohibited by law. Hides, form an important article of export; but I have been unable to procure any exact information as to the number shipped. The health of Guaymas is always good. It has once been visited with the cholera; but with this one exception, it seems to have been always free from epidemics. The residents are sociable with strangers, and very hospitable.

#### A L T A R

Was established as the military post for the protection of the northwestern missions, about the year 1700. It had but little white population until after the revolution against the Spaniards; but in the year 1837, gold placers having been discovered in the neighborhood, the population increased rapidly, until it reached an estimate of 6,000, including Indians. With the decline of the placers, the population began to diminish; and it is not now a place of great importance. Near the northern frontier, on the bend of the San Ignacio river, is the now flourishing town of "*La Magdalena*." Of but little importance before the acquisition of Arizona by the United States, and known only for its annual fairs and its exposed position to the attacks of the Apache Indians, it has, since 1853, rapidly improved in appearance and condition, as well as in population; and an active trade exists between this town and the settlements of Arizona, which draw from Magdalena



their principal supplies of corn, flour, beef, &c. The population appeared to me to be about 2,000 in 1859, and several merchants there seemed to be doing a thriving business.

#### ARISPE

Was, in the time of the Spanish rule, the capital of the province, and continued so through the government of Iturbide; and in 1822, contained more than 2,000 inhabitants. Now, it hardly contains 600 souls. It is delightfully situated on the Sonora river, in the midst of a fertile country, and surrounded by excellent pastures and mines of silver; but the country far and near, is devastated by the Apaches, who approach without apparent fear, to the town itself, and strip the pastures of all the cattle and horses which come in their way. For this cause, the population has steadily diminished ever since its abandonment as the capital.

This was the point selected by President Buchanan for the principal military station of troops of the United States which he recommended Congress to establish in Sonora, to give protection against the hostile Indians. As soon as his message was published in Sonora, Arispe was, by the Governor, again declared the capital of the State. But it would be highly dangerous for the Governor to attempt to visit his new capital, without an escort of at least fifty of his best soldiers.

Allowing liberally for the population scattered through the villages, mines, haciendas, and ranchos, the white and mixed population of Sonora cannot exceed 60,000 souls.

The Indian population is large, and, properly regulated,



would be exceedingly useful. As it is, the labor of the State, in mines and agriculture, is really performed by the Indians. Of these, the most numerous tribe is that of the Yaquis. This tribe now occupy the same territory in which they were found by the Spaniards in the year 1853, when Diego de Guzman\* made an excursion among them, seeking captives to enslave. Guzman, who had been accustomed to instantly putting the Indians to flight, on his appearance among those of Sinaloa, was astonished to find these people forming in squadrons to oppose him, and in the first engagement he had two of his men, and ten of his horses wounded. He retired from the Yaqui river, without gaining a single captive. An attempt was made by the Spanish captain, Martinez de Hurdaide, about the year 1609, to bring the Yaquis to terms by force of arms. This he three times attempted, with ill success, losing each time a large number of his men, and being obliged each time to retire from their country.†

Eight years later, the Jesuit priests, Fathers Rivas and Basilio, went among the Yaquis accompanied only by a few friendly Indians, and in the course of very few years gathered the entire nation, which could then assemble from eight to ten thousand fighting men, and must have numbered from 40,000 to 50,000 souls, into towns which they established along the river; and reduced them all to civilization and christianity. From that day to this, the Yaqui Indians have retained their pueblos, or towns, along their river, governed by chiefs of their own tribe, appointed by the Spanish and Mexican governments.

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\*Buckingham Smith, "Coleccion de Documentos," published 1857, Madrid, pp. 95, et seq.

† Rivas, *Historia de los Triunfos de la fe*, Madrid, 1645.



The towns are, counting from the coast up the river, *Belen*, near the mouth, *Huiviris*, *Rahun*, *Potam*, *Bicam*, *Torin*, *Bacum*, *Cocori*; the last being near the mountains. The Yaquis have, from the earliest time, been exceedingly jealous of all whites, and have looked with displeasure on the residence of any in their towns, excepting always the Catholic priests, who are highly respected by them, as a class from whom they have always received kindness and benefits, and never injuries.

The lands of the Yaqui valley, are unsurpassable for beauty and fertility. Nearly every crop known in America, from sugar and coffee, to corn and wheat, can be raised with success; one crop each year growing from the supply of water furnished the soil by the annual freshets, and one more can be raised by a little care in irrigating.

Formerly, large herds of cattle, bands of horses, and immense flocks of sheep, were to be found near these Indian towns; and a single mission on the river was possessed, during the last days of the Spanish rule, of more than *forty thousand sheep and goats*. But the frequent wars which have been made upon them during the past forty years, have nearly destroyed the cattle and sheep. During the war of 1857-'8, thousands of cattle and sheep were driven off by the State troops, and sold in the upper country.

From that time to this, there has been almost continuous war between the Yaquis and the State authorities; and the condition of the towns must be very miserable. These Indians are not only the most numerous, but are the best laborers in the northwest of Mexico. They are of good stature, strongly built, and well made. They form the



great body of farm laborers, workers in the mines, porters and longshoremen in the ports, and pearl-divers in the gulf. The usual price of their labor, is from four to six dollars per month, with a ration of corn. It is difficult to form an estimate of their numbers, since from their manner of living, it is not easy to find out the populations of the towns, and there are at all times many thousands scattered through the State as servants, miners and laborers. I think they may number in all, perhaps twenty thousand, including women and children, notwithstanding the great losses they have sustained in the late wars. In the year 1740, when an insurrection occurred among them, they presented a mass of ten thousand fighting men for giving battle to the Spaniards. In the conflicts following this rising, they are said to have lost five thousand men left dead on the fields of battle.\*

The origin of the name "Yaqui," is thus given by Father Rivas, the first priest who went among them: "It happened to me, when I entered this country, they came to see and welcome me according to their custom; and they spoke in so loud a tone, that I, being surprised, and deeming it a token of arrogance unusual among the nations I had visited, said to them, in order to moderate this arrogance, that it was not proper for them to speak in that rough tone, when coming peaceably to salute the priest who came to teach them the word of God. \* \* \* Their reply was: '*Dost thou not see that I am a Hiaqui?*' and this they said, because the word and name *Hiaqui* signifies *one who speaks in shouts*."

The *Mayo* Indians, occupy towns on the river of the

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\* Velasco.



same name. They were first reduced by the Jesuit priest Father Pedro Mendez, in the early part of the 17th century. They were from the first a docile and laborious people, given to agriculture, and raising considerable crops of Indian corn at the time of the entry of the Spaniards. Their name comes from their position, and means in their own language *boundary*, they having been bounded on both sides by hostile tribes, and kept confined within their boundaries. Father Mendez assembled them in towns, and these towns they still hold, named *Santa Cruz*, (near the sea,) *Echojoa*, *Guitajoa*, *Cuirimpo*, *Nabajoa*, *Nezia*, *Canamoa* (or Camoa) *Conicari*, and *Macollagui*. The number of these Indians does not probably exceed 10,000 or 12,000. From long continued intercourse with the Yaquis, they have become very like them in their habits, customs, and hates, and they have sometimes joined the Yaquis in their wars against the whites. In the early days of Spanish occupation, they were anxious to have the whites among them, and encouraged their immigration to their lands.

The *Onavas* and *Opata* Indians, occupy towns east and southeast of Ures; they, like the two preceding tribes, were christianized in the early days of Spanish occupation, at which time they occupied the whole western slope of the Sierra, from the headwaters of the Sonora river to Nuri, near the Yaqui towns. They were then esteemed different tribes in different localities, and are named in the old records as *Jobas*, *Tequimas*, *Teguis* and *Coguinachies*. Now, they are few in number, and more given to service in the army than to labor on the farms and in the mines. Yet, in times of peace, they are laborious and industrious in cultivating their fields. Until within a few years, they have



formed an important portion of the troops of Sonora, and they have rendered signal services against the Apaches; but they are now at war with its government.

The *Ceris* are a peculiar tribe of Indians, occupying the island of Tiburon and the neighboring coast.

They are yet in a perfectly savage state, and live solely by fishing and hunting. Having been at war with the whites from the time of the first missions, they have become reduced in numbers to about 300, counting some eighty warriors. They are of large stature, well made and athletic. In war, and in the chase, they make use of poisoned arrows, the wounds from which are almost always fatal. In preparing the poison, it is said they procure the liver of a deer or cow, and by irritating rattlesnakes and scorpions with it, cause it to be struck by a great many of these reptiles. They then hang up the mass to putrify in a bag, and in the drippings of this bag they soak their arrow heads. I cannot vouch for the truth of this statement, but it is current in Sonora. I was informed by a gentleman in Hermosillo, that one of his servants, who was slightly shot by a Ceris' arrow, died quickly from the effect of the wound, (which mortified almost immediately) in spite of the best medical treatment. Their language is guttural, and very different from any other Indian idiom in Sonora. It is said that on one occasion, some of these Indians passed by a shop in Guaymas, where some Welsh sailors were talking, and on hearing the Welsh language spoken, stopped, listened, and appeared much interested; declaring that those white men were their brothers, for they had a tongue like their own. They are very filthy in their habits, and are said to be worshippers of the moon.



## THE PAPAGOES

Are a tribe of Indians occupying the northeastern frontier of the State, and were formerly called the lower Pimas. They live principally by hunting, and sometimes pursue their game near Hermosillo, and between there and Guaymas. They are very warlike, and are bitter enemies of the Apaches, from which cause they have of late years been very useful to the whites. These Indians were visited in 1687, by the Jesuit priest, Francisco Eusebio Kühn, (called, in the Spanish, Kino,) who established missions and towns among them, gathered them into communities, and taught them civilization and christianity. He obtained an order from the audience of Guadalajara, that his neophytes should not be enslaved by the Spaniards, either in the mines or on farms, for five years after their conversion; and this term was afterwards prolonged to twenty years. So long as this order was enforced, these Indians advanced rapidly in civilization; but this remarkable man, who, alone braved the dangers of long journeys through Sonora, to the Gila and Colorado rivers, who preached and taught the gospel and arts of civilization to the Papagoes, Apaches, Pimos, Yumas, Cocopas, and Maricopas, establishing missions and villages along the whole length of the Gila, where the troops of the King dared not enter, except in numerous force, died in 1710, and his neophytes were left to the mercy of the speculators of the day. In spite of the protestations of the few priests left behind him in the missions, by Father Kühn, the tamed Indians were forced into the mines, and to excessive labor on the plantations; and soon roused to insurrection, the Papagoes drove the whites from among them. From that time to the pre-



sent, excepting a slight revolution in 1840, they have contented themselves with the independence of all Spanish and Mexican government they have always enjoyed, in fact, and have been willing to recognize the Mexican government so long as it does not interfere with them in their own country. Fortunately for them, the country they occupy is not very valuable for agricultural purposes, and I believe they do not object to the whites searching for minerals there.

#### THE APACHES,

The great scourge of Sonora, do not make their residence in great numbers within the limits of the State.

The tribes or bands which most frequently enter to commit depredations, are the *Mescaleros*, the *Gilenos*, the *Pinals*, the *Coyoteros*, and the *Chiricaguis*. All these bands live within United States territory, and only enter Sonora for purposes of plunder, or to fly pursuit from the American troops. In the time of Spanish rule, when respectable garrisons were kept up, and while the missions were maintained, the Apaches were kept at bay by the exertions of the troops, aided by large bands of the mission Indians. Their depredations were then mostly confined to small attacks on the extreme frontier settlements, and the frontier was then along the Gila river and the San Pedro. But when the Jesuits' expulsion was afterwards followed by a partial breaking up of the missions the whites lost the support of many bands of friendly Indians, and the Apaches soon carried on their campaigns down to a new frontier, embracing Arispe, Fronteras, and La Magdalena. This was followed by a retiring of the larger populations southward; and the Apaches have



steadily encroached on the territory of the State, until now, they kill, destroy, and rob, as far south as the vicinity of Guaymas. During my residence in Sonora in 1858-'9, a band of these savages drove off cattle and killed a herdsman within ten miles of the port, and I myself have pursued them within forty miles of that town. It is melancholy to behold this conquest of civilization by savages in this century, and to pass through beautiful valleys known to have been once teeming with the wealth of a civilized population, and now evidently capable of maintaining thousands of families, to find them a solitude, and with nothing to mark their past prosperity, but the crumbling walls of the dwellings of their former occupants, and the nearly obliterated marks of lost cultivation.

A single mission, that of *Cocospera*, at the time the Jesuits had charge of the missions, branded in one year 10,000 head of horses and cattle, the increase of that year; and possessed, at the same time, many thousands of sheep and goats. Now, not a hoof exists there, and the horses of a company of cavalry, should one be stationed there, would hardly be safe from the attacks of the Apaches.

The mission of Matape, once selected from its herds 800 milk white bulls, and sent them to Guadalajara; now, a caravan, guarded by 20 Mexican soldiers, is not safe half a mile from the centre of Matape. A single rancho in the north, once boasted of thirty thousand head of horned cattle; now, the buildings are gone to decay, and not a domestic animal is to be found there.

I have known, within the past two years, cattle and horses to be driven off in large numbers, within a few miles of Hermosillo; and am informed that during the last



spring, a high officer of the State, traveling with an escort between Ures and Arispe, was attacked by the Apaches, lost all his baggage and animals, and was himself saved only by the speed of his horse.

The Apaches enter the State from the northeast, in bands of from fifty to three hundred. Breaking up into small parties of from six to twelve, a district is assigned to each party. They carefully reconnoitre the ranchos during the first week of the moon, and ascertain where the best and fleetest broken horses are kept; this ascertained, they take advantage of the full-moon, seize the well broken and fleet horses, mount them themselves, and having thus secured good mounts, and deprived their enemies of them, they collect all the stock of the place, and whirl it away to an agreed upon point of rendezvous, where the whole band will soon be assembled; and with the collected plunder, all push rapidly to the mountains, and by difficult and dangerous passes, regain their homes.\* They rarely attack armed men unless obliged to do so in securing their plunder, or when they have great superiority of numbers; but once engaged, they struggle desperately, and never give or expect quarter.

They always endeavor, during their raids, to capture women and children; these they do not generally kill, but retain in captivity, making slaves of the women, and

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\*In June, 1859, a large band of these savages from near the Gila, entered Sonora. When passing the mail stage station, at Dragoon Springs, they stopped and held a talk with the station keeper. The chief said, jokingly, that he was going down to drive up stock from the great "*Apache Rancho*," Sonora. That there they allowed the Sonorans to live, simply for the purpose of raising and herding stock for the Apaches.



bringing up the children, if taken young, in their own habits; some of the boldest and most desperate of their warriors, are the sons of their enemies, thus captured in childhood.

The tribes which I have thus hurriedly described, embrace all now in Sonora, excepting a few of the Co-co-pa nation, who live along the banks of the Colorado. These are described in the report of Lieut. Milcher, to be found in Emory's report of the Mexican Boundary Commission. The records of the Jesuits name many other tribes and nations, such as the *Nebomes*, *Guaimas*, *Sobaypuris*, *Nures*, *Ures*, &c.; but these were often only separate villages of the same nation, and in the other cases, the small tribes have become merged in the nations which have been described. Counting all the Indians within the State limits and outside the white pueblos and cities, I do not think their numbers can exceed 60,000; so that the entire population of the State, counting whites, those of mixed blood, civilized, half civilized, and barbarous Indians, will not exceed one hundred and twenty thousand—or 15-10 inhabitants to each square mile of territory—and I am inclined to think this estimate considerably too high to be sustained by a careful census.

From my own observations, and from the best information I was able to obtain while in Sonora, I estimate that there are at least six millions of acres of the best possible quality of arable land within the State, with water for irrigation at convenient distance. There is more than the same quantity of land suitable for cultivation, but requiring the outlay of capital and labor to make it available. One-third of the whole territory may be looked on as



valueless for agricultural or grazing purposes, and the balance, or say twenty millions of acres, is available for grazing purposes.

Great as the agricultural resources of the country are, there is no doubt but that the mineral resources are greater. Commencing at the south, are found the silver mines of Alamos and Vayoreca, which have been successfully worked from 1690 to the present day, and now yield abundantly of rich ore. Between the Mayo and Yaqui rivers are the rich silver veins of Vayoreca; on the Rio Chico, a branch of the Yaqui, on the slopes of Great Sierra, is the district of Trinidad, abounding in mines of silver, copper, and lead. At San Marcial, seventy-five miles northeast of Guaymas, silver mines are worked in spite of the frequent raids of the Apaches, and revolutions of the Yaquis. At San Xavier, in the same direction, there were formerly many silver veins worked with enormous yield; and even now, although the Apaches almost possess the district, the silver veins are worked with some degree of success. In the neighborhood of Oposrira, there are a large number of valuable veins of silver, some of which have been opened and successfully worked, but all of which are now, and have long been, given up from fear of the Apaches. Along the river Sonora, there are many mines, abandoned for years past, because they cannot be worked in safety. One of these was re-opened in 1858, but the son of the owner and his servants were killed by the Apaches almost at the outset, and the workings were immediately abandoned.

North of La Magdalena, are the famous mines of the *planchas de plata*, from which were taken, during the 17th



century, lumps of native silver, a number of which weighed 500 pounds each. One mass was found, about 1770, which weighed, according to the Jesuit records, 3,500 pounds. Numerous attempts have been made during the present century to re-occupy this region. In 1817 an expedition of 200 men was started for the purpose, but they failed to find the place. The famous expedition of the French Count, Raouset de Boulbon, in our own time, was formed with the view of getting possession of this mine. General Blanco, about the same time, with a large force, examined the district where the treasure was supposed to exist, but while he found and denounced a number of rich silver veins, he failed to find the masses of pure silver.

In the Jesuit records of the middle of the last century, I find the following :

"In 1730, there was discovered near the garrison of Pimeria, a mine, from which was taken, in a short time, a quantity of silver so great, that the inhabitants of New Spain were astonished; and it was doubted whether it was a mine or a hidden treasure of the Indians."

But silver is not the only precious metal found in Sonora. On the river Mulatos, a gold mine is now worked with great success. The metal is found in a vein of decaying quartz, and is of very high standard. Gold is worked also in veins near Barajita, on the road from Hermosillo to La Magdalena. These ores produce a steady result, but are not what would be called rich in California.

In the same region, further west, large quantities of gold were discovered about the year 1800, in placers; the gold was scattered over the surface of the ground in nuggets from the size of a mustard seed up to that of a large pea, and hundreds of lumps were found, weighing from six



and eight ounces each, to two hundred and sixteen ounces. In a few years, all the gold on the surface was picked up, and some excavations were made in which gold was found disseminated through the soil; but as the placers were far from running water, the labor of transporting the dirt several leagues to water was too great to make the workings profitable; and they were finally abandoned, after having produced some millions of dollars in gold.

Gold is found along the courses of the Mulatos and Sonora rivers, and on some portions of the Yaqui.

Copper ores abound in the State—some of them rich. In the northwestern part, several varieties are found, including the carbonate, red oxide, and sulphuret.

Near *Nacosari* are numerous veins of excellent copper ore; also along the Yaqui, below the mouth of the Mulatos, and in the mountains north of Hermosillo.

Zinc is found between the rivers San Miguel and Sonora. Rich veins of lead in the neighborhood of Matape, and along the western slope of Sierra, and sulphuret of antimony in large quantities in various parts of the State.

I am satisfied that could the *Apaches* be conquered, and population and capital introduced into Sonora, a just and wise government maintained, and guarantees furnished to labor and capital, this State would quickly rival California in the amount of her mineral productions, and would soon outdo the best stock-raising States of our own country, in the production of horses, mules, and horned cattle.

#### TO RECAPITULATE.

The State has an area of say 80,000 square miles. Of this area, more than one-fifth is susceptible of cultivation.



More than one-third is good grazing land, and full one-third is valueless for agricultural or grazing purposes.

The population is not more than  $1\frac{5}{10}$  persons of all ages, sexes, and colors, to each square mile of territory.

One-half the territory is ravaged by the hostile Apaches, almost without attempt at defence on the part of the inhabitants.

The richest portion of the State is occupied by civilized Indians, in almost constant revolution. Nevertheless, the State produces from three millions to five millions annually of the precious metals, and sufficient breadstuffs to supply the population and furnish a considerable amount for export.

She possesses, in her different districts, soil and climate, suited to the production of almost every grain and fruit known in America. She would be able, if administered by a strong and just government, affording protection to life, property, and industry, to multiply her mineral products at least ten times, and her agricultural products almost indefinitely. She possesses a port advantageously situated for supplying imports to all her own territory, as well as that of eastern Chihuahua and Arizona; and that port, it will be seen by a glance at the map, is the easiest one on the Pacific coast to be reached by a railway from the Gulf States of our country.

One day these resources and advantages will be developed and enjoyed; but such a consummation cannot be attained until a strong government shall rule the destinies of Mexico.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *December*, 1860.

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