

AMERICAN WAND AWAKES SONORA

Transformation wrought by
Enterprise in Sleepy
State.

MINERS OPEN THE WAY

Immense Investments Follow Rich Discoveries by Californians.
Great Railroads Pierce Country.

BY IRA E. BENNETT.
HERMOSILLO, Sonora, Mexico, Nov. 3.—(Special Correspondence)—Remarkable forces are at work in this remote and sparsely settled Mexican state. The sturdy civilization will find here an absorbing field of study, and he who will find civilization in the making. Sonora is one of the last of the old frontiers, and the admixture of Mexican and Indian population adds color to the drama as it unfolds. Upon the crumbling ruins of the old Spanish occupation and the tottering Mexican succession is being built a new modern community, full of oddities and incongruities.

Like most of the Western communities which are now reckoned as civilized, Sonora begins by attracting attention to her mineral wealth. Miners are the real pioneers. They go where farmers and traders fear to tread.

Miners the Pioneers.

Sonora has always had a fascination for the old Californians who have gone up and down the world seeking gold. Many of them carry tattered maps in their pack showing just where the old miners found veins. Some of them have realized the dream of years by actually penetrating the Sonoran wilds and locating an "antiqua." These locations have led to other explorations, covering a dozen years or so, resulting in discoveries which have attracted the attention of capitalists in the East. The first great mines which have been built up such big camps at Cananea, Naconari, Minas Prietas and others.

The development of mines has led to the opening of ranches and cattle ranges on a large scale. A packing plant will be established at Cananea, which will handle ready meats.

They will market for its product, as they do upon American meat products, in very high prices.

Old "Jerkwater" Railroad.

For years the only railroad in Sonora was the line running from Nogales to Guaymas. Locally and in Arizona this road is known as "The Burro." It was renowned all along the Pacific Coast as the finest sample of a jerkwater railroad in the world. The fireman and engineer often found themselves shy of wood, and it was not easy to get out and cut at the head of a grade, and then, after steaming up, to rush pell-mell down the grade, in the wild hope that Providence and momentum would lift them up the hill again. Usually they were disappointed. It is said that burros were employed occasionally to pull the engine up the top of the grade, while the conductor played monte with the passengers and the engineer took a nap. The trip from Nogales to Guaymas, a matter of less than 200 miles, was entirely problematical as to the time of arrival, and questionable as to the time of arrival.

Now this jerkwater road is becoming part of a long line stretching from British Columbia to the City of Mexico. A struggle between E. H. Harriman and the Mexican Central for the rich coast trade of Mexico has developed, and the semimonolithic valleys of Sonora are responding with the activities of railroad building. The Yagul is being pushed back into the fastnesses of the Sierra Madre, and it will never reappear again. Among the Indians and Mexicans have appeared bands of pig-tailed Chinese, armed with picks and shovels, digging and smoothing the path of civilization.

Harriman's New Railroad.

The operations of the Harriman interests in Northwestern Mexico are on a great scale. The headquarters of the work are at Tucson, but there are branch headquarters here and at Guaymas and Alamos. The official name of the new railroad is the Colorado River & Pacific. About \$50,000,000 has been appropriated for the work already outlined.

The road begins at Campsite, about nine kilometers northeast of Guaymas, on the Gulf of California, and runs southeastwardly to the Yaqui River, near Coocorit, a distance of 70 miles. Then it turns west, one line running northward and the other southward. The north line runs from Coocorit through the Yaqui Valley, tapping rich mining districts and connecting at the American border, near Douglas, Ariz., with the Harriman lines. This road will open up the Yaqui River Valley to agricultural development, and the development of many rich mining fields.

The southerly branch of the new railroad will run from Coocorit to Alamos. From Alamos the road will run through the State of Sinaloa, the Territory of Tepic and the State of Jalisco to Guadalajara, a rich and historic city, which promises to be one of the great cities of the American continent.

No Chinese Exclusion.

In the course of its meanderings this railroad will touch Cuitacan, the capital of Sinaloa; Mazatlan, the principal seaport on the Mexican Pacific Coast; Tepic, the capital of the territory of that name; San Marcos, Rosario and other mining centers. Running between tidewater and the Sierras, this railroad will develop the richest agricultural and mining resources of West Mexico and afford an outlet through the port of Mazatlan and Guaymas for the produce of fields and mines.

About 150 kilometers of this road have been completed and 100 kilometers are in operation, being the stretch between Guaymas and Coocorit. Track-laying is going on rapidly, and steamers are carrying the way from Shanghai to Guaymas with Chinese laborers. Mexico interposes no objection to the importation of contract labor and has no Chinese exclusion laws. The laborers now employed in railroad construction are Mexicans, Yaqui Indians and Chinese, with American bosses and superintendents.

The men of the contractors have been drawn upon for material for this road. Purchasing Agent Warner is importing 1,000,000 tiles from Murano, Japan; steel rails from Dusseldorf, Germany; Ardrosson, Scotland and Bilbao, Spain, and cement from Austria. The bridges were constructed of steel furnished by the American Bridge Company.

Naturally the drowsy little port of Guaymas has begun to sit up and take notice as ships of many flags appear in the harbor, loaded with men and material for the new railroad. Hermosillo, too, is awakening, and all the official business is transacted here, and other junctions promise to become thriving towns.

The Mexican Central and the Southern Pacific are said to have shared Mexican business at El Paso, and it was reported

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in copper mines in Arizona and Sonora, and has recently engaged in coal mining in Coifax County, in Northern Mexico, on an extensive scale.

One of the big gold fields of Sonora is owned and operated by John W. Gates and his associates at Minas Prietas and is supposed to be enormous.

Ancient Jesuit Mine.

Another important gold camp is that dominated by the Giroux Mining Company, 36 miles east of Carbo.

The San Juan Batista group, near the old mining town of San Juan, is now being developed. They are "antiques," or old mines, worked in the eighteenth century by the Jesuits. The silver ground out in the ancient arrastras, ruins of which are still to be seen, was taken to the City of Mexico on pack mules. The arrastras are still in use.

The San Juan mines yield silver

and copper and gold, and are being de-

veloped under direction of George F.

Woodward, of Montezuma, who redi-

covers them.

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