

MATTERS IN OLD MEXICO

THE STATE AND CITY OF CHIHUAHUA.

Some of the Celebrated Mines—Peonism and Other Peculiarities—Voluntary Slavery.

[Special Correspondence RECORD-TIMES.]

MEXICO, October 16, 1886.

When we first entered Mexico—three years and a half ago—nearly every body came into the country excited by water to Vera Cruz, or from Vera Cruz to Monterrey, by the Mexican National road, and thence by diligence into the interior. But since the completion of the Mexican Central Railway from the Gulf and the discomfiture of long journeys by stage. For this reason, and because of the mines, a new mode of travel has been controlled by capitalists from the United States, Chihuahua is probably better known to Americans than any other of the Mexican States, though scenically and historically it is one of the least interesting.

Proceeding southward from El Paso to the city of Chihuahua, a distance of 235 miles, there is little to be seen. The route is a stretch of sandy plain, outlined by gloomy foothills. Though apparently barren and unoccupied, this region is actually a richly cultivated tract, where the natural facilities for irrigation have been improved, and as to mineral wealth, the reports of American miners in other years and the late unprecedented "boom" are the best proof. Several of the most famous silver mines have been opened up, and at distances varying from ten to one hundred miles, the first station of importance, going southward, is Lordsburg, 74 miles from El Paso. It is situated about 100 miles west of it is the celebrated copper, or military post, called Janas, and 35 miles north of that, mighty collection of ruins known as

LAS CASAS GRANDES

(The great houses) near the modern village of the same name. It is worth making the long journey to see the ruins of the past—though only the masonry is obtainable. They lie in the midst of a fertile valley, and are called by the people "the great houses of Montezuma." Their great and fallen walls, some of them standing now to an extent of 100 feet, are the cardinal points and much resemble the Pueblo edifices of Arizona and New Mexico. The original buildings are supposed to have had three stories, but the ruins outside stairs of ladders. But, beyond a few fragments of pottery and broken pieces of the masonry, there is nothing to be seen. The ruins are supposed to have been the work of the Aztecs, and the forgotten people who at some distant period dwelt in Las Casas Grandes. A singular characteristic of the ruins is that the commercial dealings with those of the south, in that among the basins of spears and arrowheads which may be picked up, many of them are obsidian—volcanic glass melted in the far-away volcanoes of Popocatepetal and Orizaba.

The railroad skirts the city of Chihuahua about a mile to the east, and a tramway runs from the depot to the edge of the city. The tramway cars, which are of American make, are labeled as follows: (1) American, (2) first, second and third class, (3) ladies, (4) children, (5) workmen, (6) men, (7) women, (8) men, (9) women, (10) men, (11) women, (12) men, (13) women, (14) men, (15) women, (16) men, (17) women, (18) men, (19) women, (20) men, (21) women, (22) men, (23) women, (24) men, (25) women, (26) men, (27) women, (28) men, (29) women, (30) men, (31) women, (32) men, (33) women, (34) men, (35) women, (36) men, (37) women, (38) men, (39) women, (40) men, (41) women, (42) men, (43) women, (44) men, (45) women, (46) men, (47) women, (48) men, (49) women, (50) men, (51) women, (52) men, (53) women, (54) men, (55) women, (56) men, (57) women, (58) men, (59) women, (60) men, (61) women, (62) men, (63) women, (64) men, (65) women, (66) men, (67) women, (68) men, (69) women, (70) men, (71) women, (72) men, (73) women, (74) men, (75) women, (76) men, (77) women, (78) men, (79) women, (80) men, (81) women, (82) men, 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