

# Mighty Mines of Mexico : World's Treasure Vault

(Copyright, 1913, by Frank G. Carpenter.)  
**MEXICO CITY.** I want to tell you of the vast quantities of gold, silver and copper which, notwithstanding the revolution, Mexico is taking out of the earth. The rebels and the banditti are retarding mining in some localities, but most of the properties are being run at their full capacity, and the output this year will run high into the tens of millions of dollars. We have now, it is estimated, more than \$23,000,000 of good hard American dollars invested in Mexican mines and our people are large owners in almost every mineral region. There are American mining engineers and prospectors even now investigating some parts of the country, and I am told there are many mineral regions which have hardly been touched.

**World's Treasure Vault.**  
 This land of Mexico is the world's great treasure vault. It has been producing silver and gold for more than 300 years, and since the discovery of America its total yield of the precious metals has been between four and five billion dollars. It has produced one-third of all the silver now in use upon earth, and its output of gold and silver is 25 per cent total more than all the money which is now in circulation in the United States. In other words, if you will take all the gold coins in this country, including the bullion in the treasury, all of the silver dollars, amounting to five hundred or six hundred millions, all of the quarters, half dollars and dimes, all of the treasury notes, and all of the United States and national bank notes, all the gold and silver certificates, and, in short, every dollar's worth of silver and gold coin and every bit of currency, and shovel them together into one pile, that pile would not equal the value by five hundred or one thousand million dollars the money that has come out of Mexico's mines. The amount is greater than all we have in our savings banks and four times as big as our national debt.

**Output Increasing.**  
 More than this, the quantity of metals mined is steadily increasing. The production in 1908 was the greatest in the history of the country and that of 1909 was nearly as great. Today Mexico ranks at the head of the silver producers. It is fifth among all those in which gold is mined, and this is so notwithstanding much of the mining is by old and wasteful methods and that there are localities containing mineral deposits which have scarcely been touched. It is said that three-fourths of the mineral possibilities are as yet unexploited. And, moreover, the mines are rapidly going into the hands of Americans, who are operating them after the most modern methods. The new smelters and the cyanide process are taking the places of the mule-crushers and patio methods; and the percentage of gold and silver gotten out of the ore is on the steady increase. During the past ten years almost \$600,000,000 worth of gold and silver have been taken out of Mexico, and in 1911, the metals produced yielded \$31,000,000. Since 1877 Mexico has produced more than \$1,000,000,000 worth of gold and silver, and there are now over 30,000 mines in operation, with something like 1,000,000 acres of mineral properties.

**Mexico's Big Silver Mines.**  
 The silver mines of Mexico have formed the chief revenue of the country for more than a century, and the yield of last year was greater than ever before. Some of the mines have yielded phenomenal quantities. Those about Zacatecas have produced more than \$1,000,000,000, and those of Chihuahua have yielded \$400,000,000 or \$500,000,000. To day silver mining is going on all over the country. The Pachuca district in the state of Hidalgo has a large number of properties, half of which belong to the Rio del Monte company, which is a subsidiary of the United States Smelting and Mining company.

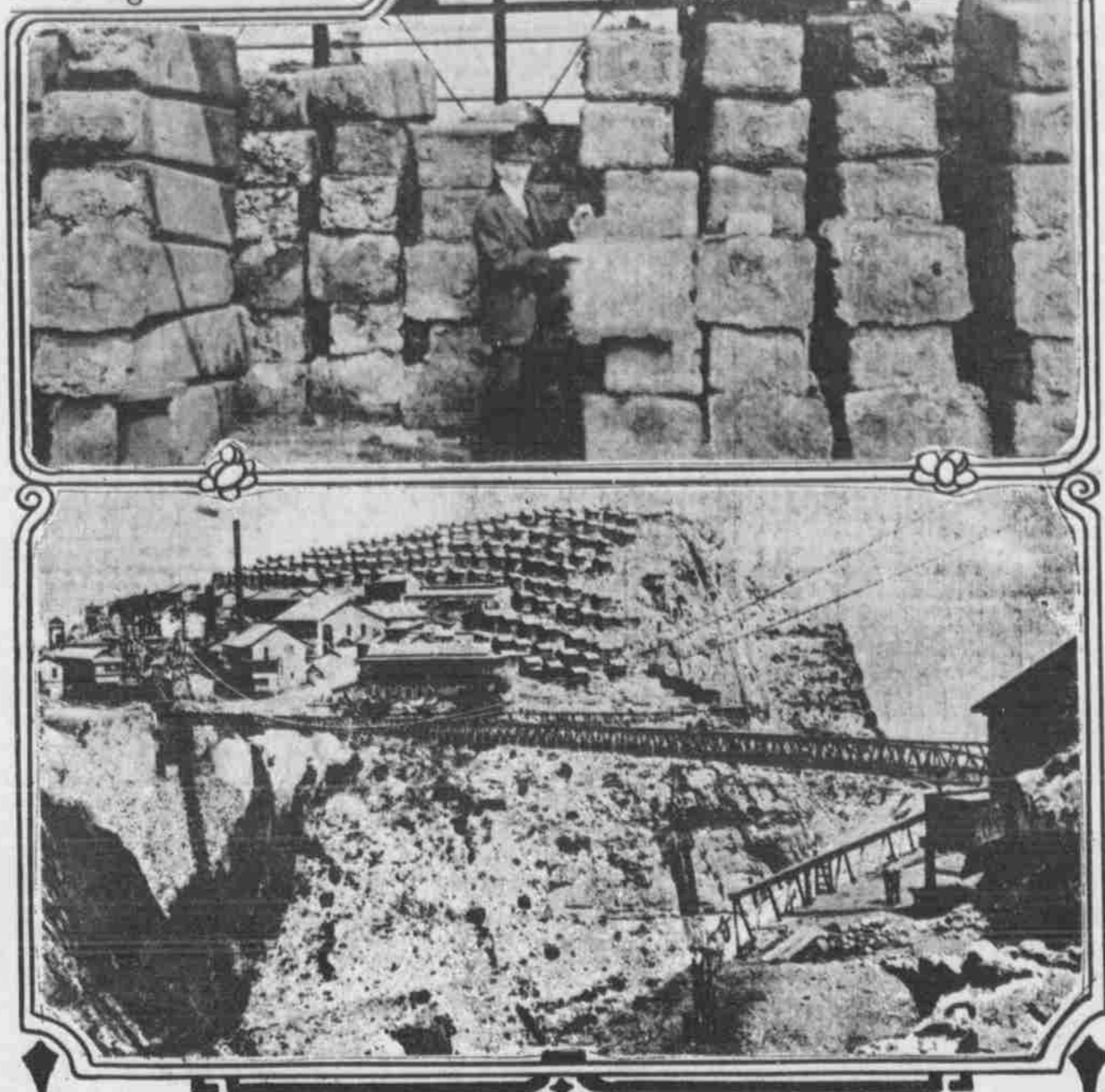
The most of these mines belong to the Mexicans, who had been working them for hundreds of years by the old patio process. The Americans have put in modern machinery. They are going down far below the depths reached by the Mexicans, and between 1906 and 1910 they had paid over \$2,000,000 in dividends. In the same region are the Santa Gertrudis mines, registered in Great Britain at a capital of \$7,500,000 and there are other companies which are doing well.

**Guanahuato and Chihuahua.**  
 In Guanahuato the Americans have renovated and increased the silver mining industry, which has been in operation there for more than 300 years. They have sunk their shafts far below those of the Mexicans and have put up enormous mills capable of dealing with hundreds of thousands of tons of ore every year. They get their power from waterfalls 150 miles distant and are mining with the most modern machinery. In 1911 the output of that region was more than \$14,000,000.

A little farther north, in Chihuahua, are silver mines which have been operated for more than three centuries, and which are still working, the output of the district running now from \$1,000,000 to \$2,000,000 per year. In this region is the Batopilas mine, which was modernized by the late Governor Shepherd; the Santa Eulalia mines, now controlled by the American Mining and Smelting company, and the famous Parral mine, whose estimated output for the present year will be \$12,000,000.

In San Luis Potosi the richest district is Catorce, which has silver and lead mixed with gold, and in Durango there are deposits formed of a network of silver veins mixed with iron and other metals. In Oaxaca there are more than a dozen mineral zones, containing silver, gold, copper and lead, and two of the mines there have increased their production.

Steel Ingots at Monterrey



Little shacks in mining camp in western Mexico

tion to about \$1,000,000. There is also work going on in Sonora, where in the past was found the biggest lump of silver on record. Its weight was 2,750 pounds, and it was discovered by a poor Indian, although by a dispute as to the ownership the whole went to the crown.

**Gold of Mexico.**  
 Mexico is now annually turning out about \$25,000,000 worth of gold. The country has never been as important in gold mining as in silver mining, and today the bulk of its gold comes from silver veins which also carry more or less of the yellow metal. The gold is a by-product of the silver.

The chief gold-producing camp is about El Oro, in the state of Mexico, where both French and English capital are invested. This region is one of the largest gold camps of America, and it has some valuable mines. The Doa Estrella has been paying over \$1,000,000 a year on a capital of \$300,000, and the Penoles has paid nearly \$4,000,000 on a capitalization of \$125,000. One of the mines has a vein of gold which, in places, is thirty feet wide.

There are also gold-bearing veins in Sonora, Sinaloa, Chihuahua, Oaxaca and Lower California. In the last state are many placer mines, some of which are doing well. The most of Montezuma's gold must have come from placer mines, for one of his presents to Cortez was a Spanish helmet filled to the brim with grains of gold. He also sent the Spanish general many ornaments, shields and helmets of pure gold, and two circular plates of gold, as large as carriage wheels. The amount of gold taken from Montezuma and sent to Spain is estimated to have been worth at least \$7,000,000.

**Where Copper and Iron Are Kings.**  
 In the future, however, the meaner metals are liable to surpass gold in the mineral production of Mexico. The copper mined in 1910 and 1911 was worth more than all the gold produced that year, and the possibilities are such that the great iron mountain at Durango that the gross metal will some day yield millions. Today the three most important copper mining enterprises are the Greene Cananea and the Moctezuma and the Boleo, in Baja California. The Boleo mine has had a uniform output for nearly ten years, and the Greene Cananea produced in 1911 more than \$1,000,000 of copper. The amount of copper in sight in western Mexico is beyond conception, and the country is sure to be one of the greatest of the copper producers for generations to come.

As to iron, new deposits of that metal have been recently found in Oaxaca and Vera Cruz, and these deposits are said to amount to many millions of tons. The most famous iron mass of the country, however, is the great iron mountain, which rises almost out of the city of Durango. This is perhaps the greatest mass of iron on earth. It is a mighty hill of solid iron a mile long and almost a quarter of a mile wide, rising to a height over three-fifths that of the Washington monument. The ore is hematite, and it is from 60 to 70 per cent pure.

The hill is said to contain 3,000,000,000 tons of ore above the surface, with no notion of what may be below, and it has been estimated to contain several billion dollars' worth of iron. There are similar deposits in Lower California and Sweden, but nothing of this size. The mountain contains enough iron to supply the whole republic of Mexico for all time to come, and with the possibility of its unknown depth it has enough probably to last the world for a thousand years.

**Was It a Meteor?**  
 It is claimed by some of the local scientists that this huge metallic lump is a meteor which was dropped upon the earth from some disintegrating planet ages ago, but the geologists say that this is absurd, and that it must be volcanic. There is no other iron in the immediate neighborhood, and Mexico has here in its school of mines a collection of meteorites found in the neighboring state of Chihuahua, one of which weighs over 35,000 pounds, and another in the neighborhood of a ton. Humboldt thought the Durango mine might be the world's greatest scoriae, and he rode more than 1,000 miles on a mule to study it. Some of this iron now goes to the big subsidized steel plant at Monterrey, where I saw it cast into ingots for making steel rails.

ply in sight, at 300,000,000 tons. In addition to this, are the enormous petroleum fields, containing fuel oil, now being opened, which promise to give this country one of the great fuel supplies of the world. I have already written of these, describing the wells which run 100,000 barrels a day, and showing that Mexico is now third among the oil producing countries, and that she will soon surpass Russia.

**American Money in Mexican Mines.**  
 But let me tell you how Uncle Sam is interested in these Mexican mines. Our people own more mineral properties than the Mexicans themselves and all other foreigners. According to the estimates of William H. Seaman, a mining engineer who has had a long experience here, the United States owns more than two-thirds of all the mineral properties in Mexico. The investments are worth \$23,000,000, while those of the Mexicans themselves are only \$7,500,000, and those of the English, who stand next to us, are only \$4,000,000, or about one-fifth as large. In addition to this we have more than twice the amount invested in smelters, having put more than \$5,000,000 into that industry, while the Mexicans and all other nations together have smelters worth only a little over \$10,000,000.

There are scores of American companies which have mineral properties here and there is hardly a city or town in the United States which does not own more or less mining stock. There are some very large companies. Take, for instance, the American Smelting and Refining syndicate. It has smelters and mines scattered all over the country and some of its organizations pay big dividends. The present value of the company's property is estimated at \$75,000,000 and in twelve years it has paid dividends amounting to \$28,000,000 and accumulated a surplus of more than \$17,000,000. This company's smelting plants have a combined capacity of 5,000,000 of 6,000,000 tons every year. In 1911 the net profits were more than \$4,000,000 and the dividends on its common stock were 11 per cent.

The Batopilas Mining company owns over 1,600 acres of mineral lands and it has in addition a smelting company with a very large plant. Its capital is \$3,000,000 and it has a surplus of an equal amount. There is a great deal of American money invested in the Guanahuato silver mines and there are four great mining companies working there. The Amalgamated Gold Mines company owns properties in the Laluz district. It has installed modern machinery worked by electricity and it has fifty-two steel cyanide tanks. The Guanahuato Consolidated Mining and Milling company, with offices in New York, has a dozen or more mines, including the Sirena, which has been worked for more than 100 years, and the Guanahuato Development company, incorporated in New Jersey, controls the Pinguico mines and the Mexican Milling and Transportation company. It is capitalized at \$1,000,000 and pays 6 per cent on its preferred stock. And then there are the San Toy Mining company, incorporated in Maine, with offices in Pittsburgh, which owns valuable mines in Chihuahua producing silver and lead. That company sold about a mile and a half of underground work in 1910 and during that year produced more than 870,000 ounces of silver and a million and one-half pounds of lead. It is capitalized at \$7,000,000. Another company is the Rio Plata Mining company, located in the same state, which has a capital of \$2,000,000 and is paying 8 per cent dividends. The Proprietary Mining company of America, has an authorized capital of \$3,000,000 and has large interests in Guanahuato, and the Mines company of America has a capitalization of \$5,000,000 and is paying dividends monthly.

**American Money in Copper.**  
 There is a great deal of United States money invested in copper properties. The largest organization of this kind is the Greene Cananea, which has an authorized capitalization of \$60,000,000. Of this, \$30,000,000 was for the purchase of the Greene Consolidated Copper company and the Cananea Central Copper company, and the other \$30,000,000 was left in the treasury. The copper properties owned by this company are very extensive. They take in a large part of the Cananea mountains, which are filled with minerals and which have enormous veins of copper, one of the tunnels of the Cananea mine having a vein thirty feet wide. The company employs thousands of men and its monthly payroll is hundreds of thousands of dollars. Its mineral output is said to be about 3,000 tons of ore per day and in 1910 it produced more than 45,000,000 pounds of copper.

Another big copper company is the Montezuma, incorporated in West Virginia with an office in New York. This company has thirty-eight mining claims in Sonora, comprising about 2,500 acres. It has lately opened the Pelaris mine, a mineralized body oval in shape which has been tested down to the 500-foot level. It is 1,700 feet in diameter from north to south and 1,200 feet from east to west. It is being mined through a tunnel five miles in length which has railroad tracks to take out the ore. It is now yielding from 1,500 to 2,000 tons a day of 3 per cent copper and it has a power plant of 4,000 horsepower which gives the electric current for the mill and the mines. This company has a capitalization of \$3,000,000, all owned by the Phelps-Dodge company. In 1904 it paid 30 per cent, in 1906 34 per cent and in 1910 18 per cent. It has already paid more in dividends than the amount of its authorized capitalization. And then Americans own the Pacific Mining and Smelting company, which has large copper properties and also smelters. They own the Mexican Metals company, whose office is in Boston and which has thousands of acres of land in the state of Sonora, and also the Mexican Metallurgical company which is capitalized at \$1,000,000 and has mines of copper and lead as well as a smelter at San Luis Potosi, with a capacity of 30,000 tons of ore monthly.

In addition to these are American investments in oil lands, including some which pay big dividends, and they have a great number of other mining companies with capitalizations which vary in size. Some of them are paying big money and some quite the reverse.

**FRANK G. CARPENTER.**

**Digestion Was Good.**  
 "Dick's line of talk on imagination," said Senator Marcus Smith of Arizona to a party of pale a few nights ago, "makes me think of a medical acquaintance of mine. Among his patients," continued the senator, "the doctor had a lady who was strong on imagination. In fancy she suffered every ill in the long sick list, and was continually calling at the physician's office or phoning for him. 'Early one evening the doctor was called to the woman's house, and although the fair patient complained of being very ill, she said she intended going to the theater. 'The doctor readily saw that she would be perfectly safe in attending the performance, and was about to take his leave when the patient called him back. 'Oh, doctor, said she in a weak and languid voice, 'I want to ask you something. Do you think that I may eat a few oysters tonight on returning from the theater?' 'Yes, madame,' replied the physician just a trifle testily as he started for the door, 'shells and all.'—Philadelphia Telegraph.

**A Breach of Etiquette.**  
 Two girls in a street car were conversing in tones safe in all of the other passengers' ears on the coast. 'She seems to be a girl at has had good druggin' up,' observed one. 'Yes,' the other agreed, 'but she ought know better'n to pick her teeth with a hatpin in company.'—Youngtown Telegram.

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