

length, runs from San Luis Potosi to Chuacatal. It connects up with the National and Central Railways. It has seven stations.

The Torres and Prietas Railway (F. C. de Torres a Prietas) is a Mexican-owned line of 13 miles in length, running from Minas Prietas to Torres, in the State of Sonora, joining up with the Sonora Railway. There are three stations.

The Ixtlahuaca Railway (F. C. Ixtlahuaca, Mani y Nijini) is a Mexican owned and managed line, with offices both at Ixtlahuaca and Mexico City. The length of track is 28½ miles, and there are eleven stations.

The Valley of Mexico Drainage Railway (F. C. del Desagüe del Valle de Mexico) is a short Government line of some 24 miles, as its name indicates, connected with the drainage works of the city. It runs from Gran Canal to Tajo de Tequiquiac, and is managed by the Ministry of Communications and Public Works. It has connections at Gran Canal with the Mexican Central and Hidalgo North-Eastern Railways.

The Monte Alto Railway (F. C. de Monte Alto) is a native-owned and managed line of some 35 miles, running from the City of Mexico to Capetillo. At Tlalnopantla it joins up with a tram line called "The Tlalnopantla Railway," and runs thence to San Pedro. There are fourteen stations on this road.

The Hornos Railway (F. C. de Hornos) is a Chihuahua local line of some 27 miles in length, and having eight stations.

Among some of the lesser-known lines may be mentioned:—

The F. C. Villa Cardenas al Rio Grijalva (5 miles); F. C. de Cordoba a Huatusco (14 miles); F. C. de Tlacotepec a Huajuapam de Leon (47 miles); F. C. Cananea, Rio Yaqui y Pacifico (89 miles); F. C. Militar, Vigia Chico a Santa Cruz (35½ miles); and a few others.

CHAPTER XXXIII

Steamship lines—Government support and encouragement—American, European and native lines—Ward Line—Mallory Line—British lines—Royal Mail Steampacket Co.—Revival of British interests—Mexican-Canadian services—Swedish, Norwegian, French and German lines—Methods of German competitors—Presidential trip to Yucatán—Native subsidised lines.

AMONG the many wise acts of President Diaz's Government has been the fostering of several steamship services between Mexico and the rest of the world, with the result that the overseas transportation facilities of to-day will compare both for number, regularity and importance with those of any civilised country in the world. While the Government does not encourage shipbuilding as a native industry, recognising that, as matters are at present, it is easier to buy ships from abroad and to encourage those sailing under a foreign flag, than to invest many millions on its own account, there are one or two elaborate plants for building steel, iron and wooden vessels to be found in the Republic. One such is at Frontera, in the State of Tabasco, where a complete outfit of machinery and tools obtained from the U.S.A. is at work.

It is, however, in subsidising fast and regular mails that the Government has shown its interest and great discernment, so that trade even with the non-contiguous territories shows a marked increase in every direction from year to year. This is all the more remarkable when it is remembered that, previous to 1887, Mexico was practically isolated so far as activity in maritime commerce or communication was concerned. Up to 1896, 21 steamship lines had contracts with the Government for carrying the mails; but to-day this number is increased to at least 25, and promises to be still further added to, as time and opportunity suggest.

Out of the 25 subsidised lines, 9 enjoy subsidies ranging from \$75 (£7 10s.) to \$2,000 (£200) for the round trip, or from \$6,600 (£660) to \$15,000 (£1,500) per annum, other lines enjoying certain privileges and exemptions.

The various steamship lines plying to and from or around the coasts of Mexico may be divided into 4 sections:—

1. Those trading with the U.S.A.
2. „ „ with Europe.
3. „ „ with South America.
4. Native coast lines.

In regard to the first, the New York and Cuba Steamship Co. is the most important, but not necessarily the most popular. As a matter of fact, the Ward Line as conducted to-day is by no means *au mieux* with Mexicans, owing to the decidedly autocratic and high-handed manner in which the business is managed. The Company has no subvention from the Mexican Government, but it enjoys special exemptions. The steamers were formerly required, under the terms of the contract, to make 52 regular trips to and from Progreso, New York, Veracruz, Tuxpan, Tampico, Frontéra, Alvarado, Campiche, Coatzacoalcos and Laguna; but nowadays a large number of these ports are omitted or visited at uncertain intervals. The Ward Line has some fine boats on the New York-Veracruz Line, such as the *Mexico* and the *Havana*, and a great number of poor ones, while the fares are in all cases exceedingly high.

The Mallory Line, which was recently acquired by Mr. Charles W. Morse, at the price of \$8,500,000 (gold) runs between New York, Galveston and Mexican Ports, and is making an active bid for Mexican business. One of its most serious competitors is the Morgan Steamship Co., owned by the Southern Pacific Railroad, which runs passenger and freight steamers between New York, New Orleans and Mexican ports, there being semi-weekly sailings on both routes.

The Wolvin Line (Texas City Transportation Co.) plies between Texas City, Tampico, Veracruz and Progreso, while the port of Coatzacoalcos is also likely to be included in the list of the Company's stopping places very shortly. Trade

between Galveston, Texas and Mexican ports is rapidly expanding, and there is no doubt room for further lines. Messrs. A. Grimwood and Co. of Mexico City and Veracruz are the Agents of this Line.

The Galveston-Yucatán Steamship Co., with general offices at the former port, has also lately started in business, running a line of steamships between Galveston and Progreso every 12 days, the idea being to work up a good service between these two ports and take in the Isthmus of Tehuantepec trade as soon as it is sufficiently developed. The Texas City Transportation Co. began a new service, in the month of January last, between Texas City and Veracruz, and have already obtained some popularity with shippers on account of the improved service which they provided.

Other American Steamship Companies include the Pacific Mail Steamship Co., which serves very indifferently and unpunctually the Pacific coast of the Republic; the United States Steamship Co., which operates vessels transporting oil in bulk, as well as parcels, passengers, mail and merchandise from Colon to Atlantic ports; the Mexican-American Line, which dispatches weekly from New Orleans to Mexican ports, alternately from Galveston and Port Arthur, a line of steamers between Pensacola and Coatzacoalcos; and the Munson Line, which enjoys special exemptions and is required to make at least 2 round trips per month between New Orleans, Mobile and Mexican Ports, furnishing very clean, quick and punctual services over the route which it runs.

The Pacific Coast Steamship Co. makes one monthly trip between San Francisco, California and Guaymas; the Neptune Steamship Co. has formed an alliance with the National Lines, and has established a service of steamships between New Orleans and Ports in Mexico in competition with the Mexican-American Line; the American-Hawaiian Steamship Co. runs in connection with the National Tehuantepec Railway, with boats sailing from Hawaii to Salina Cruz on the one side and from Coatzacoalcos to New York on the other. The Southern Pacific Co. has a freight service from New York and Atlantic coast points to Mexico via New Orleans, and the Mexico and Orient Steamship Co., an adjunct of the Orient Railway system, operates a service of steamers from

Guaymas down the coast to Manzanillo, touching at San Diégo and Topolobampo.

After being practically out of the field for many years the Royal Mail Steam Packet Co. has again entered upon Mexican business, and in the month of November last year inaugurated a transatlantic service between British ports and Veracruz and Tampico. Undoubtedly, there is sufficient import and export business to warrant the entrance of another line of steamers, especially one of so high a character as that put on by the Royal Mail Steam Packet Co., and one which has already proved exceedingly popular with both Mexicans and Americans. At the present time the Company is doing a very encouraging amount of business with both freight and passengers, the boats on the service being the *Sabor*, the *Severn* and the *Segura*, plying regularly between Mexico, the Spanish Main and England with regular monthly sailings from the Ports of Tampico and Veracruz via Havana, North Spain and thence to Southampton. The Jefé Politico (Chief of Police) of Veracruz referred to the coming of the Royal Mail Steam Packet Co. as "the finding of a lost friend." The Company is again becoming popular in Mexico. Perhaps this is because it is represented by Messrs. A. Grimwood and Co., who are the general agents of Messrs. Elder, Dempster and Co. (Canadian-Mexican Service), the Texas City Transport Co., the Cuban Steamship Co. (Cayo Line) and others. Messrs. Grimwood and Co. occupy handsome offices in the best part of the City, and also at Veracruz (Avenida Morélos, No. 7).

The Canadian-Mexican service, which was launched in October 1906, is the enterprise of Messrs. Elder, Dempster and Co., and it is proving exceptionally successful. The commercial relations existing between Canada and Mexico are already of great importance, and are becoming more extended every day. The boats put on this service run fourteen knots per hour, and carry between 5,000 and 6,000 tons of cargo.

The Canadian-Mexican Pacific Steamship Co. began the operation of its boats between Victoria, B.C., and Salina Cruz in the month of April last. Two boats, giving a monthly service between Mexico and Canada, have been arranged for, and the condition of trade suggests that it may be possible to

increase the number to four boats within a very brief time. Coal, coke and lumber will be the principal Canadian products brought to Mexico by way of the Pacific coast-line, while in return the boats will carry away tropical fruit, rice and ore destined for Victoria and Vancouver. The British Columbia Government subsidises the line to the extent of \$100,000 gold annually, and the Mexican Government adds something about the same. Several British vessels belonging to Hull call regularly at the Gulf of Mexico Ports in preference to the U.S. Ports on the Atlantic, which is part of the new movement for more foreign trade coming into the Gulf States.

Messrs. F. Leyland and Co., Ltd., owners of the West India and Pacific branch of the Liverpool Steamship Co., have recently received a concession from the Mexican Government for a further term of five years for their services between Liverpool, the Antilles, Central American Ports, Veracruz and Tampico. The West Indian and Pacific Steamship Co. provide two trips per month, while the Harrison line conduct the same number of journeys between Liverpool and Veracruz, with the privilege of stopping on either trip at Tampico, Tuxpan, Frontéra, Campeche and Progréso. The Harrison line and the Leyland work together, their boats occupying about 18 days between Port and Port, the steamers being quick, comfortable, and exceptionally clean. The lines are represented in Mexico city by Messrs. O'Kelly and Co., Ltd.

Other foreign lines include the German Imperial Mail, which is making rapid progress, as most German undertakings do, and, with the Hamburg-American Line, threatens to become powerful competitors with all the other steamship lines doing business with Europe. The Imperial Mail enjoys special exemptions, and makes at least two monthly trips to and from Hamburg, Havre, Veracruz, Tampico and other Mexican ports. I have encountered the boats of the Hamburg-American line in all parts of the Republic of Mexico, very frequently when the boats of no other European or American line are to be met with, and probably canvassing for business which no other line would take. I notice that German vessels always seem to pick up trade somehow and somewhere, and if they do not find an opening awaiting them they make one. Certain it is that no more enterprising traders than the

Germans are to be found in any part of North, South or Central America, and one has only to glance at the official statistics published showing their shipping tonnage compared with that of other countries to appreciate what a hold they have upon such coming countries as Mexico. Moreover, the service they render is prompt, punctual and moderate; and while the Germans make few friends among the shippers, they secure their respect, and, what is very much more to the point, they get their business. The Germans also own the Kosmos Line of steamers serving between Hamburg and other European, South and Central American and Mexican Pacific Ports.

A new German enterprise, known as the Roland Line, instituted a new service between Hamburg and Mexico via South and Central America in May 1906, having a small fleet of six steamers, each of 3,000 tons. These boats compete with the Kosmos Line, doing the same sort of trade and touching at the same Mexican Ports.

As an instance of the diplomatic manner in which the Germans carry on their business, it may be pointed out that when the President of the Republic visited Yucatán last year, the Hamburg-American line immediately offered the best steamship in its service, the *Bismarck*, free of charge for the use of the President and his party. The offer, however, could not be accepted, as the reigning President of a Republic is unable to make a trip upon a vessel flying a foreign flag, since that would be equivalent to leaving the National territory, for which he would need the special permission of Congress. So soon as the German Emperor heard of this offer and its refusal, in his capacity as Honorary Director of the Hamburg-American Co., he declared, as a compliment to President Diaz, he would allow the *Bismarck* to be put under the Mexican flag. Even then, however, the Mexican President was unable to accept the suggestion, as by agreeing he would be casting a disparagement upon "the nascent Navy of his country."

The German Emperor, still persistent and persuasive, then sent a message to General Diaz offering him the Imperial yacht *Hohenzollern* should he ever desire to visit Europe. It is worth pointing out that even had the *Bismarck* hoisted the Mexican flag, it would not have overcome the difficulty, inas-

much as it is a merchant-vessel. A Mexican man-o'-war, which is "national territory," could alone fulfil the legal requirements for the President's trip. It is understood that the Hamburg-American line expended 150,000 marks (£7,500) in sending the *Bismarck* to Yucatán for the use of the Mexican President, a very clever and useful piece of advertising.

A Swedish line, owned by Messrs. Axel, Johnson and Co., now operates a line between Swedish ports, Manzanillo and Mazatlán. A line of steamships plying between Christiania (Norway) and Veracruz, touching only at Havana *en route*, was commenced last February by a Mr. G. M. Bryde, of Christiania, the owner of several other lines, one of which operates between Havana and Galveston. Mr. Bryde secured a Concession from the Mexican Government upon satisfactory terms, and his line is already doing a fair amount of business.

There is a French line of steamships trading with the Orient, which touches at the principal ports of Mexico on its way back to Europe. The service is a monthly one at present, but the intention of the owners is to make it bi-monthly, should the traffic offer inducement. A service of steamships has been started recently between Salvador and Salina Cruz, the enterprise being backed by British capital, which has been supplied to the extent of 1,000,000 pounds sterling. The service offered is both passenger and freight, and supplies facilities which neither the Pacific Mail nor the Kosmos line supply, and is being better run than either so far as punctuality is concerned.

Among the native lines are the following:—Compañía Mexicana de Navegacion, S.A., a line which enjoys special exemptions and makes several trips per month between Veracruz Coatzacoalcos, Frontéra, Laguna, Campeche, Progreso, and to Tampico and intermediate points; Compañía de Navegacion en los Rios Grijalva, Usumacinta y Palizada, which has a small subsidy, and is required to make 36 trips per year on the rivers named; Compañía Industrial de Transportes, which also receives a subsidy, and is under obligation to make 6 monthly trips on the rivers Gonzalez and Mezcalapa; Compañía de Navegacion del Pacifico, which, in return for a subsidy per round trip, is required to make 18 trips yearly between Guaymas, La Paz, Altata, Mazatlán, San Blas,

Manzanillo, Acapulco, Puerto Angel, Salina Cruz, Tonala, San Benito and other places; the Lower California Development Co., which concern receives a moderate subsidy per round trip during the continuance of the contract, and is required to make 72 trips per year between San Diégo, Todos Santos, and San Quintin; Compañia Naviera del Pacifico, which consists of three different lines, one required to make 48 trips per annum between Guaymas, La Paz and Emeka and intermediate ports, receiving for this service an annual subsidy, another line receiving a separate yearly subsidy for 4 round monthly trips between Mazatlán, Altata, and Topolobampo, and the third line making 36 trips per year between Guaymas, Santa Rosalia, Mulege, Loreto, and La Paz, receiving for this service a special payment; Compañia de Navegacion en los Rios Grijalva, Chilapa y Tuliya, a small line which is required to make 3 monthly trips between Frontéra, Tepetitan, and Pavo Réal; and Compañia Limitada de los Ferrocarriles de Veracruz. This also has a subsidy, the service required being 312 trips a year between Alvarado and Chocaltianguis, 104 between Alvarado and San Juan Evangelista, and 156 between Alvarado and Alonso Lazarro, touching at intermediate ports.

A great number of concessions have been granted by the Mexican Government to companies purposing to establish new steamship lines on both coasts, all of which promise to add greatly to the efficiency of the service between the ports on their respective itineraries.

CHAPTER XXXIV

Ports and harbours—Improvements on west coast—Tampico—Rivalry with Veracruz—Progrésco—Acapulco—Railway communication difficulties—Mazatlán—Government projects—Tuxpan—Canal enterprise—Coatzacoalcos—Harbour and port works—Salina Cruz—Port works and new town—Topolobampo—Three transcontinental routes—Mexico's interest in Panama Canal.

THE west coast of Mexico has for many years suffered from a lack of development, owing firstly to the poor accommodation at the ports and harbours which exist, and secondly to the absence of railway communication. All this is being rapidly changed, and even before these words are read at least one great system of railway and steamship transportation will have been inaugurated, and have commenced full operation, while two others will be approaching completion. The Gulf side of the Republic has been especially fortunate in regard to its geographical position, turning, as it does, not only towards North America, but towards European ports, the maritime traffic up till now having been the greatest at the Gulf ports of Tampico, Veracruz and Progrésco. Owing to its proximity to the capital (but 12 hours travel), Veracruz, with its two lines of railway (the Mexican and the Interoceanic), has until late years enjoyed far and away the bulk of European freight to Mexico. Something over 1,000,000 tons now come annually to the Veracruz quays, and the present year is bound to see this amount considerably augmented.

Tampico, which, under the fostering care of the Central Railway, has developed from a small fishing-village into a moderately comfortable town, is connected by railway with the important City of San Luis Potosi and with Monterey, which is the centre of a great and growing iron and steel industry. This port is becoming a keen rival to Veracruz