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OFFICIAL REPORT
—OF—
CAPT. R. P. LEARY, U. S. S. S. IROQUOIS,
TO
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY, U. S.
U. S. S. IROQUOIS, 3d RATE.

Guaymas, Mexico, December 13, 1887.

HON. W. C. WHITNEY,

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.

Sir :

I have the honor to report in compliance with the Department's orders of the 6th of August and the 17th of November 1887. I have examined thoroughly the condition of the American Colonists in Sinaloa, Mexico, and submit the following report with accompanying documents, explanatory of their condition, organization, etc.

On the 5th ultimo, with the Iroquois, I left Callao, Peru, for Mexico, touching at Paita, Peru, and Acapulco, Mexico for coal, and at Mazatlan, Mexico, for consultation with the American Consul, concerning the American Colonists in Sinaloa, Mexico, and I arrived at Topolobampo, December 1st.

Accompanied by Lieutenant J. A. Norris, U. S. N., with his photographic outfit, I was met at the landing by a number of the Colonists, among whom was Mr. Wilber, the resident director, in charge of the colony. After making known the object of my visit he extended every facility for ascertaining the information desired.

The Credit Foncier Colonists, now in Mexico, number one hundred and thirty-eight (138) men, women and children, who are located on farms or camps at distances apart varying from one to forty-five miles. We visited all the camps, were five days in making the circuit, and found the general physical condition and health of the Colonists very good, there being very little if any sickness. The Colonists were not only cheerful and contented, but enthusiastic over their prospects of success. They generally acknowledge that they had experienced some hard times, had been obliged to subsist on reduced rations of monotonous sameness at various times in consequence of their supplies being detained at La Paz, and Mazatlan, by the customs officials for technical informality; but they deny that they have at any time been in imminent peril of starvation, or that their hardships have been as great as those usually endured by pioneer settlers on the Western Frontier of the United States.

Believing that the worst of their troubles had passed they declared their determination to remain in the Colony and to make every effort to establish themselves firmly in homes and occupations conforming to the principles of their society. They assured me that they had never missed their regular meals except one meal on one day, which was lost through the failure to send a wagon to bring the provisions for that occasion. Corn bread, corn meal mush, with varied rations of fresh meats, fish, clams, eggs, etc., have been their general diet, but at times for short intervals, they have been without sugar, coffee, tea, molasses and some of the minor comforts of the table.

They have gathered one crop from their farm at Sufragio, have commenced planting a crop on the new farm (La Logia) of about four hundred (400) acres, near the banks of the Fuerte River, to which most of the families are now moving; they have a crop of water-melons and sweet potatoes in the farm at Los Copas, on the shores of which there is an abundance of clams, and every week they collect several hundred dozen duck eggs from a small island in San Carlos Bay. The farm lands occupied and being worked by the Colonists are unsurpassed in fertility and richness of soil, and the climate being so mild, with the liberal irrigation from the river, crops may be planted at any season of the year. With these advantages to assist them they should be self sustaining in one year, unless baffled through dissension and lack of harmony among themselves.

The only dissatisfied family who wanted to leave the colony, was that of a man, who appeared to be a communist, rather than a socialist; who has not any money to pay for transportation, shelter or support of his family on arriving in the United States; who did not seem to know where he wanted to go, nor what work he could

find to do in order to support his family, but he had a generally vague idea that he wanted to better his condition. In the Colony he is guaranteed steady employment, and a home and support for his family, the same as the other Colonists, in consequence of which I thought it injudicious and unjust to all parties to bring him away from constant work and support to deposit him in a strange city where he and his family would in a short time become a burden and a tax upon the charity of the community.

The Colonist who sent one of the telegrams to the Department representing themselves to be in a starving condition, is an Englishman, who has never perfected his naturalization as a citizen of the United States, who has no intention of leaving Mexico, or the Colony and who stated that he did not want any assistance for himself or his family, but he did want a change in the management of the Colony. He appeared to be an insubordinate, fault finding, mischiefmaking person, fond of sowing the seed of discord rather than of harmony and one who is apt to make trouble in any community where he locates. I am told this is the third Colony with which he has been identified, having left the others in disgust.

One widow with seven children will leave the Colony as soon as she can get money enough to return to Texas, but she does not wish to leave at present.

With the above mentioned exceptions, the colonists remaining in Sinaloa, Mexico, are contented and cheerful and seem determined to remain there and stake their future on the success or failure of their Utopian enterprise. The dissatisfied Colonists who went to Mazatlan, had left there in the steamer "Newbern" before our arrival. Those who came to this port (Guaymas) have been assisted out of Mexico, through the generosity and liberality of the American Consul, Mr. Willard, except one family who preferred to remain in the port, where lucrative employment had been secured. Mr. Willard, informs me that one of those who was most blatant in appealing to the Department for assistance was an Englishman, named Ebdell, who at the time had several hundred dollars in his pockets, and objected to assisting his companions who were penniless.

Enclosed herewith are photographs taken at Topolobampo, and various explanatory documents referring to the American Colonists in Sinaloa, Mexico.

I am, sir ; very respectfully,

Yours obedient servant,

R. P. LEARY, Commander U. S. Navy,
Commanding.

A Letter from President Diaz of Mexico.

Mexico, March 2d, 1888.

SENORA J. CAMPBELL VER PLANCK.

Esteemed Madame :

Thoroughly informed of the contents of your favor of the 11th of January last, I have not until now had the pleasure of replying to it fully, because I did not wish to do so before studying personally and with due caution, the important matter to which it refers. I assure you that I am animated with the best desires to honor your valuable suggestions, both because they are yours, and because of the interest awakened within me by everything in anyway related to the prosperity of my country.

I have made special recommendations to the Secretaries of Finance and Public Works that they, working within the spheres of their special functions, shall study the matter and dictate such procedure as may effect improvements in the position of the Topolobampo Colonists. Moreover, I wrote to the Governor of Sinaloa that he should visit the Colony, and after making himself thoroughly acquainted with its needs, he should communicate his opinions and appreciations to me, to enlighten my judgment, that I may govern my proceedings accordingly, always being guided by the best disposition to contribute to the development and prosperity of the Colony by all the means in my power.

Your very sincere friend and servant,

PORFIRIO DIAZ.