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The Front Ranges of Sierra Madre Oriental, Mexico, from Ciudad Victoria to Tamazunchale.

By Arnold Heim, Zurich.

With 3 plates (XVI—XVIII) and 10 textfigures.

Contents.

	page
I. Introduction	314
II. Stratigraphy	316
(a) General Observations.	316
(b) Region of Ciudad Victoria	316
Gneiss	316
Phyllites (Pre-Mississippian).	318
Peregrina Formation (Mississippian)	318
Red Beds (Permian?)	318
Novillo Formation	319
Olvido Formation ("Gypsum Beds")	320
Portlandian-Valanginian	320
Tamabra Limestone (Lower-Middle Cretaceous)	321
Xilitla (= Agua Nueva) Formation (Turonian)	322
San Felipe Formation (Coniacian)	322
Mendez Marls (Senonian)	324
(c) Front Ranges South of Victoria	324
Tamabra Limestone	324
Xilitla (Agua Nueva) Formation	326
San Felipe Formation	328
Mendez Marls	329
Tamesí Formation	329
Tanlajás Series (Lower Chicontepec)	330
Chalma Shale (Middle Chicontepec)	331
Quintero Limestone	331
Caliche (Recent)	331
(d) Cretaceous of the Inner Ranges.	331
(e) Jurassic of Tamazunchale.	332
Tamán Formation	334
Pimienta Series	334
Tenestipa Limestone	334
III. Igneous Rocks	334
IV. Structure	335
The Huizachal Anticline	335
The Front Folds north of Llera.	336
The Front Folds south of Llera.	336
The Foreland from Xicotencatl to Guerrero	337

	page
The Main Anticline from Monte Cristo to Chamal	337
The Sierra del Abra from Chamal to the Rio Tampoan	339
The Antiguo Morelos Syncline	339
The Sierra Nicolas Perez	339
The Nuevo Morelos Syncline	340
The Sierra Colmena and its Prolongation	340
The Sierra de Aquismón	342
The Overthrust of the Sierra de Xilitla	343
Tamazunchale	343
The Chicontepec Mountains north of the Rio Moctezuma	343
Summary and Conclusions	344
V. Summary of Geological History	346
VI. Petroleum	347
Surface Indications	347
Sulphur-Water.	348
Drilling	348
Origin of Oil	349
VII. Appendix: Note on the Inner Ranges west of Victoria	349
VIII. References	352

I. Introduction.

The field-work on which this paper is based was undertaken for the Shell Group of oil-companies, between April and August, 1925. The directorate of the Bataafsche Petroleum Maatschappij at the Hague has generously invited me to publish the results not directly related to commercial production.

As a geologist of the Shell Group, J. M. MUIR had the writer's reports at his disposal and has used certain data in his excellent book on the geology of the Tampico district (MUIR, 1936). So far, only two brief notes have been published by myself on the Tampico region (ARN. HEIM, 1926, 1934).

In addition, two valuable papers by W. STAUB have been published in 1937 and 1939 on the Tampico region. The former one contains a series of complete sections in 1:200 000 including Sierra Tamaulipas and Sierra Madre Oriental, the latter after my observations.

The region involved measures 300 kms from north to south and is 30—50 kms wide. The adjoining map is a reduction of twelve 1:100 000 sheets. The work was hampered by bad weather, poor roads, slow transportation and untrustworthy base-maps. The northern and southern extremities of the area could not be studied as thoroughly as intended. The topography of the 1:100 000 map of Mexico proved very unreliable. Much time was lost in the field over orientation and topographic correction.

North of Xicotencatl, the basalt-mesas were plane-tabled. The distance from this town to the mountain-front proved to be about 6 kms too short on the 1:100 000 map. Hence, in such regions where the topographic contours are entirely false, we compromised by drawing the geological boundaries without regard to topography. In the reduced scale of the map, it was impossible to enter the strikes and dips, of which several thousands are indicated on the original sheets.

So long as the dry weather lasted, part of the work along the plain was done with the help of two Ford cars. But on the first days of heavy rain they stuck in the mud; even travelling on horseback became difficult. The hilly region