

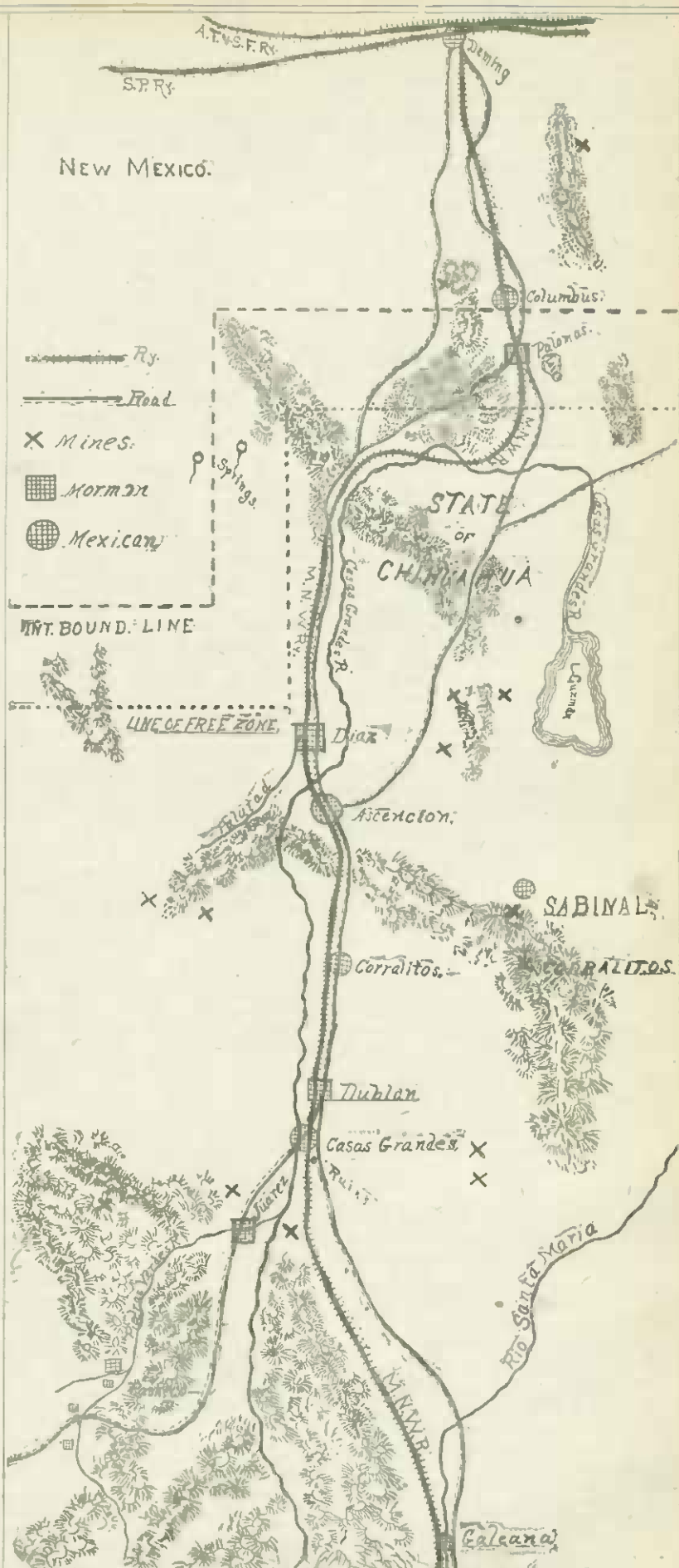
other railways being built in Mexico, but only those mentioned in the foregoing account are subsidized by the government.

Another thing of which Mexicans are quite as proud as of their railway building, is the heroic manner in which the government has met and overcome the influence of the Catholic Church. By a number of movements covering the years from 1857 to 1878, a truly praiseworthy evolution was carried forward in the Republic in this respect under the inspiration in great part of Benito Pablo Juarez, a full blooded Indian.

At the commencement of the movement for independence under the present constitution, the Catholic church was the established religion of Mexico as of Spain; and the ecclesiastical tribunals exercised the right of interference with the administration of justice. The landed property of the church amounted to about one-half of all the real estate in Mexico, and the country was fairly "enthralled in fetters and darkness."

Under the recognition of the United States, President Juarez was enabled, in 1861, to carry into effect an act abolishing the church tribunals, and confiscating the land of the church to the service of the State. But the latter movement was not accomplished without incurring the displeasure of England, Spain and France, whose armies were at once put in action to maintain the rights of their citizens. Involved in her civil war, the protest of the United States could not induce the withdrawal of the French troops, but England and Spain received a settlement, and called off their forces. It turned out that the reparation of the wrongs of his subjects, was only a pretext under which Napoleon III wished to establish in Mexico a hereditary monarchical government under a Roman Catholic emperor. Archduke Maximilian of Austria accepted the crown, but was defeated and shot in 1867, by the Republican party under Juarez. With the exception of slight interval dissensions during the nine years succeeding the execution of Maximilian, the civil authority has been supreme in Mexico, and Catholicism and militancy alike have been relegated to the background.

But along with the readiness to heroic action, there runs in the Mexican character a childlike simplicity and a proneness to resort to expedients, not at all reassuring to the well-wishes of the Republic. All this, however, to the contrary notwithstanding, one cannot but see that the institutions of Mexico do not rest for stability on a "paper" constitution; but the history of her struggles for independence, and the heroic efforts to hold the State apart from the church, show their foundation to be laid deep down in the hearts of the people. What we see here today simply indicates the present status of a people in the process of a studied evolution from savagery to civilization. At the rate of progress made in the last fifteen years, three decades will place Mexico with her friendly relations with the United States, her unbounded resources, and the susceptibility of her people to improvement, in the front rank of the great powers of the earth. The natural trend of her commerce is toward the north, for she needs our machinery



MORMON SETTLEMENTS IN MEXICO WITH THE ROADS, RIVERS, SPRINGS, TOWNS AND MINES, AND THE LINE OF THE RAILROAD NOW BEING CONSTRUCTED.