

HER WOMEN ARE THE HOPE of FOR LORNA MEXICO

They Are Creatures of Toil and Long Suffering But Their Stability of Character is a Nation's Hope



At Twenty the Mexican Woman is the Mother of Four.

By William Atherton Du Puy.
TRAVELED for a month through the heart of Mexico looking for the women of beauty and romance of whom I had heard so much. In all that month I saw not one of them. Instead there was always a horde of sad creatures, child-laden, prematurely old, who repeated the plaint, "un centavo, un centavo," always begging for a mere penny. And further back there was the hovel where the mother presided over the destinies of a large family and attempted to make ends meet on the small and irregular earnings of her men folk.

There are two dominating ideas in the mind of the resident of the United States with reference to the people of Mexico. Light opera is responsible for both. The first is the picture of a wide-brimmed hat, of flowing, scarlet sash and colorful blanket. And the picture is true in its minutest detail. No stager of light opera has ever exaggerated the man of Mexico. He loafs today in magnificent ennui about the railway stations at Chihuahua and Saltillo and San Luis Potosi so arrayed as to defy exaggeration.

The second Mexican idea of the man from the states is of the senorita, gay clad, bespangled, jangling her tambourine and with a dagger, for jealousy, hidden in her bosom. But this maiden is as conspicuous for her absence as is the male of the species for his omnipresence.

Where Poverty Prevails.
For it must be remembered that the people of Mexico are inexpressibly poor. It is of the masses I am writing, the 98 per cent. When Diaz became President there was an occasional opportunity for the native to earn 15 cents a day at hard labor. Diaz let in foreign capital for the development of industry and in 20 years these same men could earn 60 cents a day and had more opportunity to work. Yet even this was not luxury.

And the boys and girls grew up as do the herds in the fields and mated long before they had reached maturity. Sometimes there was the formality of marriage, but more often there was not, for the fees were prohibitive. It was rare that a peon girl passed the age of 14 without having found herself a mate.

This same girl at 30 was the mother of four children. At that age she should have just been coming into her maturity, blossoming into whatever of beauty lay within her. But the girl of 20 who, in poverty, has brought into the world four youngsters and cared for them, has had little chance for the flowering forth of the latent beauty that may have been her birthright.

Beauties of Tehuantepec.
It is a condition almost universal but

not quite. There is the town of Tehuantepec that saves the day, for Tehuantepec is the home of women who throw down the gauntlet to all the world for beauty and for those characteristics of leadership that dominate all around them.

Where Mexico grows narrow toward the southern end the isthmus of Tehuantepec separates the main body of the country from Yucatan. A railroad crosses this isthmus and makes a short cut between New York and the Orient. At the top of the divide there is a native Indian town and here reside Mexico's amazons. Here are found those rare natives with the fluted and extraordinary headgear that has won an international reputation.

When the traveler alights in Tehuantepec he is met by peddlers of opals, and beads beaten out by native goldsmiths from the metal of tribal mines, and the fruits of the "tierra caliente." Soon he notices that these peddlers are all women and that many of them are young and beautiful. He passes into the market place where he finds innumerable stalls, also presided over by women. There is the appearance of immaculate cleanliness and the air of business efficiency. Nearby are native stores also presided over by women. There is hardly a male creature anywhere to be seen.

Eventually the traveler learns that this is a city of women. There are 3000 of them and but 500 men. They have assumed the reins of government and the responsibility for providing for their own support. They have done both an effectively that Tehuantepec is the cleanest, best governed, most prosperous community between the Rio Grande and Guatemala.

And the beauty of these self-governing, self-supporting women lifts the traveler out of his boots. They are a remnant of the unskilled blood of Aztec, that race of high civilization that suffered so tragically when it fell under the all-blighting domination of Spain. They are the remnant of the people who built pyramids that rival those of Egypt and temples of such decorative beauty as to draw students from the world into the jungles of Yucatan. And these women have a classic delicacy of feature and a dignity that is in accord with this ancestry.

A Diaz Tragedy.
This manless Eden is also a heritage from the Diaz regime. President Diaz sent his younger brother to Tehuantepec as Governor. This latter was but an unlettered Indian and possessed none of the unusual qualities of Porfirio. He governed his Aztec subjects with aboriginal cruelty and stupidity. His many atrocities came to a climax when, one day, he shot and killed one of these women of Tehuantepec as she passed his dwelling. The shooting was done upon a wager and merely to prove his marksmanship. There is a touch of cruelty in even the Aztec when aroused. The people rose as a man and went for Governor Diaz. When they had captured him they performed an operation that is not unpopular in Mexico. They



A Woman Bullfighter of Mexico.

A Beauty of Tehuantepec

skinned the bottom of his feet and then forced him to walk to his execution.

To avenge the death of his younger brother President Diaz dispatched an army to Tehuantepec with instructions to kill every male in the village. The orders were so effectively carried out that the only men left were those who fled to the mountains.

Since then the town has been a community almost without males. As I walked the streets of this native city of the efforts of nature to keep her balance was thrust upon me. The male children of the Tehuanaos go stark naked but little girls wear a skirt about their waists. I noticed that there seemed to be many more male children than female. So great was the apparent difference in numbers as between the sexes that I began to keep a tally. At the end of the day I had seen four or five boys as girls. I have ever since wondered if nature was here at work in an attempt to supply abundantly the males of which there were such a lack in the community.

Giving a Party.
An opportunity to study these women was afforded by the fact that the individuals of the party of which I was a member decided to give a party in Tehuantepec. There was but one American in the town, he being a mining engineer in charge of a nearby property. We asked him how to start some form of entertainment in accordance with native practice. He said that the system locally resorted to was based upon the employment of the native band of the community. This organization

might be subsidized and, at the proper hour it would march through the streets at the head of a procession. The people giving the party would fall in behind the band. The public was thus invited and whosoever saw fit might join the procession. When the crowd was sufficient the band would repair to a nearby dancing pavilion and the entertainment would begin.

We followed this programme and soon found ourselves hosts to the entire village. The dancing pavilion was merely a thatched roof for shelter and had neither walls nor floor. The music was excellent. The programme began with native dances, stately Indian dances not unlike lanterns. But soon the band struck up a two-step and, to our utter surprise, native beau and maidens glided forth in this dance of civilized man, performing the steps no differently from the manner to which we were accustomed in Washington or St. Louis or San Francisco.

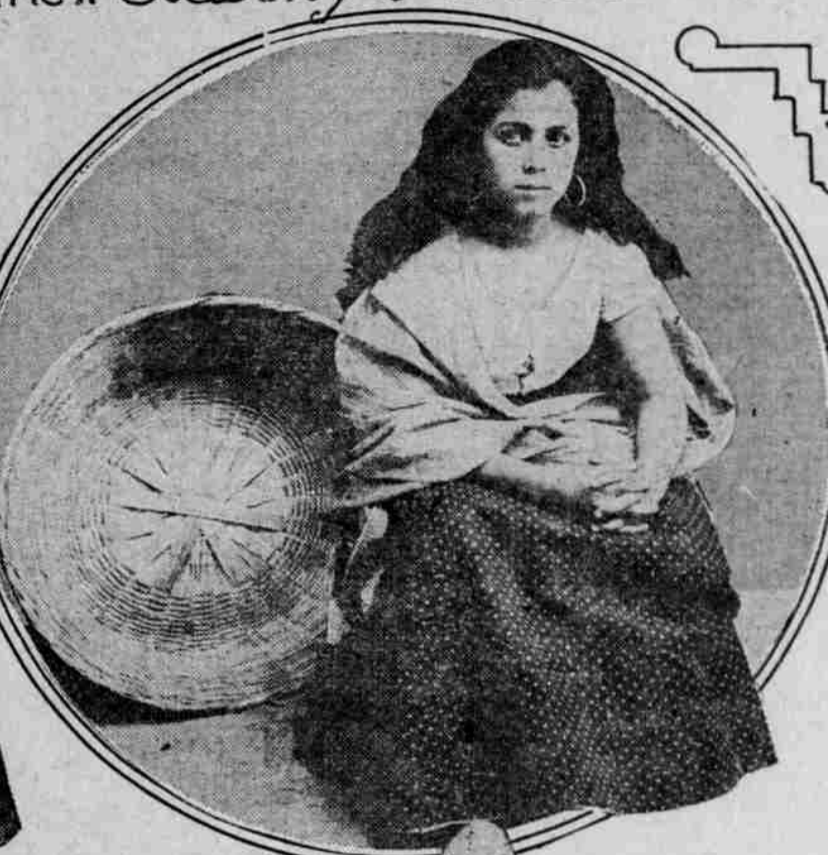
The members of the party grasped the opportunity. Soon these effete representatives of the northern civilization found themselves gliding about in the efforts of this native dance of the efforts of nature to keep her balance was thrust upon me. The male children of the Tehuanaos go stark naked but little girls wear a skirt about their waists. I noticed that there seemed to be many more male children than female. So great was the apparent difference in numbers as between the sexes that I began to keep a tally. At the end of the day I had seen four or five boys as girls. I have ever since wondered if nature was here at work in an attempt to supply abundantly the males of which there were such a lack in the community.

The Beauty Secret.
But the women of Tehuantepec tell the story of the possibilities of the native women of the whole land. They are beautiful because they have been given an opportunity to develop. The maiden of the isthmus reaches the age of 20 and the full bloom of her womanhood without the over tax of poverty and child-bearing that is the lot of the Mexican woman elsewhere. She comes into her maturity in forests and orchards in beauty. Yet her blood is little different from that of her sisters of other tribes and there is little indication that they would not be as fair as she if they but had the opportunity. And as the condition of the Mexican woman is largely due to the poverty that surrounds her, she may be said to await the coming of prosperity to take her place among the creatures of beauty who bring happiness into the world.

The women of Mexico possess in a marked degree the cardinal virtue of cleanliness. In Tehuantepec the whole population turns out at sunrise for its bath in the river that runs through the town. Men, women and children take their dip in the stream as might so many sparrows and as unabashed by the absence of bathing suits. The Mexican native everywhere is as regular in bathing if there is but an opportunity.

The Virtue of Cleanliness.
The ranchmen of Arizona and New Mexico know the peon family well and there this family may be seen almost at its best. The Mexicans irrigate the farms of the Americans, clean their ditches, look after their livestock. This labor, on the American side of the line, gets the wage of a dollar and a half a day, to him enormous. The home of his family may be pitched by the side of the ditch in which he works, or near the village which is his headquarters. This home is usually a shack of adobe or of brush. He has built it himself and its furnishings are worth four dollars. It is as good as his people have ever known.

The Mexican wears the blue overalls that are the clothes of the West. But if they are old the blue is largely gone from them and they ap-



An Unspoiled Daughter of the South.

proach whiteness. This is due to the insistence of the wife upon washing the clothes of her husband with such regularity. The Mexican is scrupulously clean. The American who works beside this man of the South is not so particular. Neither is the wife of the American. Measured side by side the Mexican woman may be depended upon, despite the primitive conditions under which she lives, to be vastly more cleanly than is the American woman. In fact, your family doctor will tell you, if asked, that two-thirds of his women American patients are derelict in the matter of bathing. The American woman is, in fact, rather a slovenly creature in this respect. The Mexican woman is greatly her superior.

The brush shack of the Mexican family is likewise clean. The hard-packed dirt of the floor is swept frequently with a broom that the wife has made from the tops of a bundle of watermory bushes bound together. The piece of tin upon which she cooks her tortillas is burnished and shining. Her trijole pot is immaculate. The ashes are always brushed back from the open fire at which she cooks. She is, under these unfavorable conditions, the model of a housewife. Here are the elements of sterling worth from which may be depended to spring the merit of a self-respecting people when Mexico comes into its own.

The weakness of the character of the

Mexican man is his love of a sporting life. He has a mania for gambling, for cockfighting, for the bullring. As he grows prosperous a good many of him will be led away by these things. But the impression should be corrected that the Mexican does not work or is a poor workman.

I grew up on a ranch in Arizona and know the Mexican hired man well. Not only is he a willing worker but he is effective and intelligent and apt at his work. With the natural opportunities for productiveness that exist in Mexico and the willingness to work which the native possesses, there is a great future ahead for that people if it can be but given an opportunity. The only thing that stands in its way is the habit of misgovernment that is the heritage wherever Spain has been the preceptor.

Widest Women of Mexico.

Of course, there are many tribes that are apart from the chief stock of Mexico. The most aboriginal of these are the Seri Indians, on the island of Tiburon, in the Gulf of California. They are the most primitive people in the world. Among them, also, women dominate, and these are brawny Amazons, who, through centuries of necessity, have developed such physical fortitude that they can capture rabbits on the open plain.

The marriage requirements that these Amazons force upon prospective husbands are the severest tests of fitness for parenthood that are anywhere



An Amazon of the Seri Tribe.

applied, and result in the elimination of any man of less than the maximum of fortitude. These people have instinctively developed a severe eugenic test, for less than the superman could not survive in the inhospitable region in which they dwell.

When a Seri youth applies for the hand of a maiden, he is asked to come to live for a year under the roof of her parents that his eligibility may be tested. Here he proves himself by providing food for the family during that period. He catches game barehanded in the desert or the thicket. He must dwell in this household and view the coming of rivals and the courting of his sweetheart with unconcern. The maiden lavishes favors on her visitors in attempts to make him lose control of his feelings. She practises all her allurements upon him in an attempt to make him once become demonstrative of his feeling for her.

But his part is that of the stoic, the man of iron control. Through it all he toils and provides and shows no sign of the fire that burns within. If he is steadfast to the end of a year he is married to the maiden. If he falls to provide, if jealousy causes him to turn his hand against some other suitor, if the maiden can tempt him to a show of affection, he is driven into the desert by the members of the tribe, there to wander unscoured until thirst and hunger overtake him and his body becomes food for the vagrant coyote. The woman who has undene him remains to lure other men to their ruin or to find the superman that she may bear others of his kind.

Woman Loses Her Place in Ranks of French Army

PICTURESQUE CANTINIERS ARE DONE AWAY WITH AFTER BRAVE CAREER



Abolished by Law. Picturesque Costume of the Famous Cantiniere of the French Army.

black apron and underneath a pair of trousers. A leather hat was the practical headgear that went with this queer-looking combination. To the arm of each cantiniere's coat was attached a little white iron plaque with her name and that of the battalion to which she was assigned engraved on it.

The cantiniere in the time of peace had no legal existence, so that it was only when war was proclaimed that she figured on the army lists. In a letter to the directorate dated March 17, 1797, the Napoleonic Marie Dauranne, of the Fifty-first Brigade, "who on seeing a reasons for the new law, which abolished soldier fall into the river and in consequence of a swift current being swept on, jumped in without a moment's hesitation and saved him from drowning."

"I have presented to her a collar of gold from which is suspended a civic crown with the name of the soldier engraved on it who is indebted to her for his life."

Some time later Josephine Tinchard, of the Sixty-third regiment, received a cross for having killed a cossack and thus saved the life of her Colonel in the retreat from Russia.

Marie Tete-de-Bois, whose name is probably a sobriquet, as translated, it is Marie Head of Wood, was in 17th century campaigns. Her husband was killed on the battlefield and she herself on the battlefield. The faithful cantiniere was scarcely cured of her last wound when she again took up her duties as water-carrier and followed Napoleon to Waterloo. During the battle a stray bullet struck her and lodged in her face. As she fell she shouted, "Long live France." The ball had made an ugly wound and the torn and bleeding flesh made her almost unrecognizable. A grenadier bent over her and while supporting her in his arms, in order to make light of her condition, said, "Marie, really you are not beautiful like this." "That's possible," was her response, "but I can boast of being daughter, wife and widow of a trooper," and she expired.

The records show a long list of cantiniere who have been rewarded with military medals as an acknowledged bravery. There has hardly been a French writer or poet of the 19th century who has not been inspired to immortalize them with the pen.

The cantiniere now is only a name, but woman still has her role to play in an outbreak of war. The uniform of the cantiniere will be replaced by the hospital dress of the nurses of the Red

ISLANDS WASHED AWAY.

The islands in the Potomac and along the eastern side of Chesapeake Bay are being reduced with more or less rapidity, and it is said to be a question of only a few years before several of them will disappear. During every big storm portions of St. Georges and the other islands in the lower river are carried away, but the erosion is particularly marked at St. Georges, the area of which has been much reduced in the last quarter of a century.

Just above Glymont, about 22 miles below this city, is Cranesy Island, and on it formerly stood several houses used by fishermen in seine hauling. The island was then large enough to accommodate easily the fishermen and a gig storehouse. The use of the island for fishing purposes was abandoned 20 or more years ago, and since that time the waves of the Potomac have almost completely washed the island away, until but a small spot of land remains above water.

According to the investigators in the geological survey service, Tilghman, Sharp and James Islands, along the eastern shore of Chesapeake Bay, above Point Lookout, are rapidly decreasing in size from the action of the waves. Tilghman Island, the largest and most northerly of the islands, is more than three and a half miles long and has an acreage of more than three square miles, providing homes for many prosperous farmers and fishermen. At its north end are located the towns of Tilghman and Avalon, with a population of several hundred persons.

Sharp Island is the smallest of the three. Less than a generation ago it was a Summer resort and supported several families throughout the year. Now all the trees have disappeared save half a dozen, and the buildings have been washed away except a large hotel, which stands alone in the center of the island. The site of an artesian well has been reached by the waves. In 1848 the island contained 438 acres of land. In 1900 only 91 acres remained, and in 1910 only 32. If the present rate of erosion continues unabated, the island will be gone in 14 years.—Washington (D. C.) Cor. New York Sun.

Tons of Ore Unmined. Baltimore American. It is estimated that there are 4,255,000,000 tons of iron ore unmined in the United States.



Drawn by Mrs. Jerome Myers. "WHY DO SUCH ODDIOUS PEOPLE RIDE IN THE STREET CARS?"