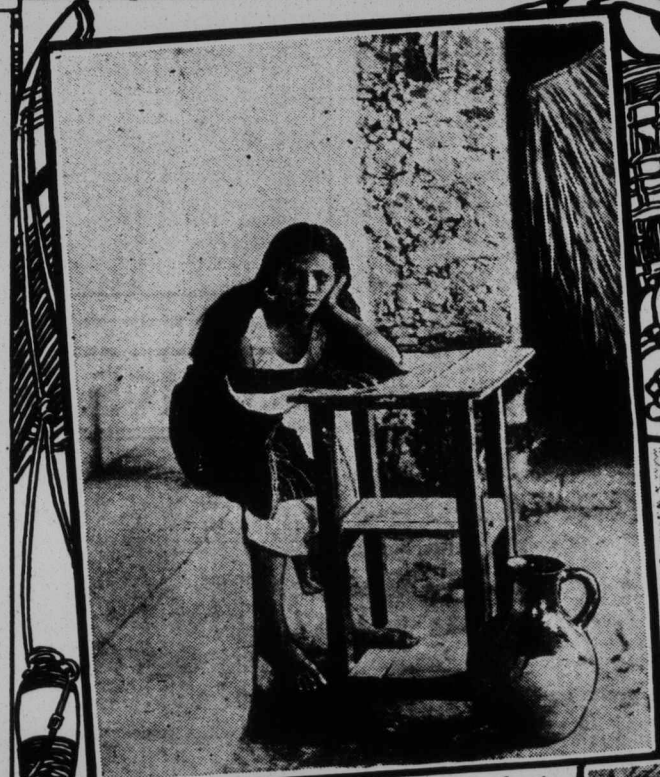


THE WOMEN'S PAGE

MILITANT SUPFRAGETTE OF MEXICO



Mexican Women at Market



An Indian Girl, Such as her Numerous in Mexico



A Little Mexican Mother Preparing a Meal



Types of Mexican Girls

The Cry for the Uplift of Their Sex That Is Coming From the Women Beyond Our Southern Borders

MEXICO is the seat of another revolution. This one may go down in the history of time as even more important and interesting than its recent predecessor. Moreover, it is likely to last for years.

Don't get alarmed. It is really nothing more nor less than the determination of the modern Mexican girl to emulate her American sister and throw off the shackles of convention that have held her in the thrall common to Latin women.

All well and good for the everyday persons. But, alas for those who love romance! The Romeo and Juliet courtship, so characteristic of Mexicans, will, if the revolt keeps on revolting, become a matter of memory. Beau Brummels are actually calling upon girls when they aren't even engaged, and young couples can be seen on the streets without a chaperon. As if that wouldn't be enough to break many a grandmother's heart, a suffrage movement was recently inaugurated. To climax that, 500 women recently signed a petition asking President de la Barra to use his influence to pass laws granting an easier divorce.

DESPITE reports to the contrary, life in Mexico for a northerner is really a second Paradise. The old-time animosity against any foreign invasion, particularly from across the borders, is fast waning, and there is not a vestige of it in some parts. The Mexicans of today have a tender spot for their Yankee neighbors, or Gringos as they call them, and the housewives do not hesitate to give a hospitable welcome.

These are the tidings that are brought here by visitors from this country who were across the borders before and during the recent hostilities. That Mexican life for a Yankee woman isn't half as bad as it is painted is shown by Mrs. Mary B. Hughes, the wife of Dr. George M. Hughes, who went to Mexico on her honeymoon trip six years ago and did not return until a few months ago. Doctor Hughes, who is a neighbor of the late Dr. Joseph Price, an eminent American surgeon, accompanied his wife to their home in an eastern city, but the craving for the Mexican life was so strong that he recently went back to western Mexico. He will soon be followed by his wife and their young daughter.

APING AMERICANS

Mrs. Hughes said that the fact that she wanted to return proved that she was delighted with Mexico. She lived most of the time at a mining camp in La Colorado, but traveled with her husband occasionally, and had ample opportunity to study the Mexicans as a whole. And she could not help noticing a strong inclination toward American manners and customs.

"The conditions in Mexico are different from those here," says Mrs. Hughes, "because they virtually have only two classes, the wealthy and the poor, or peon. The middle class of this country is unknown. It is either one or the other, and no go-betweens. The rich people have been content to take things easy and the poor class are uneducated, and therefore the girls are unable to fill commercial positions, and wouldn't if they could.

"American men who went to Mexico for business or commercial purposes needed stenographers and they sent to the United States for them. The Mexicans had always employed young men from this country, but even they started to engage girls from this country. That was what started the ball rolling, and caused a little feeling of jealousy, which showed the Mexican señoritas that if they only had the ambition and studied they could do the work as well as the girls from this country.

"In the past, the Mexicans thought it was an outrage for a girl, except those in the peon class, to work. Even the peon lassies will not labor unless they really have to. That is the reason the desire of the up-to-date girl to compete with those of this country is so interesting, because work in any form has practically never been known to them.

"If your thoughts should turn to a dark-haired girl of the Spanish type, adorned by a beautiful lace mantilla, and bare on a typewriter, you would be seeing things as they never are, for even in dress the Mexican señoritas are adopting modern styles and

have thrown aside their picturesque costumes for a skirt and waist or a simple summer dress.

"Of course, heavy winter garments are never worn, as it is summer all the year round, and a traveler in Mexico wouldn't have a chance to display any furs," said Mrs. Hughes. "But our summer styles can be found there. Even at dances and balls the girls studiously watch the gowns worn by American guests, and at the next function many of the same pattern can be noticed. Some have their gowns made in New York and other American cities, and a goodly number patronize the Paris modistes.

"A few years back it wasn't considered necessary for a daughter to be highly educated; but the modern mothers are extending the subject in a different light, and are sending their girls to school in this country—mostly to convents, so that they can be closely guarded. For, in Mexico, a mother is considered indiscreet to let her daughter out of her sight if not in the care of a chaperon, and to send her to a distant school alone is not thought wise. But these old prejudices are gradually dying out. Some mothers are even allowing their daughters to go to

convents in France, Spain and Italy. But the majority of them come to this country, which is remarkable, as the Mexicans in the past have made a pretense of disliking everything English.

"When Doctor Hughes first went to Mexico, very few people spoke the Anglo-Saxon language, but now one doesn't find much difficulty in getting into conversation with a native. Formerly, all that was necessary for an accomplished person was to be familiar with French, Spanish and Italian. English wasn't considered. It was almost a disgrace to use it. Now the Mexicans themselves often engage in conversations in our tongue. The señoritas have found the English a novelty and desire to speak it.

"Convention rules everything in a señorita's life. It is bad form for her to be seen alone on the street and even worse to be unchaperoned with a male escort. But even this rule isn't as strictly enforced as in the past. Women who went to Mexico from this country and England found difficulty in following these customs a few years ago, and the natives, even the peons, had no patience with them if they

didn't. I heard of one woman, the wife of an English consul, who laughed when she was told that she couldn't go on the street alone. She was very independent, and paid no attention to the advice of other foreigners. One day she felt like walking and took a stroll up the main road. It wasn't long before a jeering, hooting mob followed her, and she was forced to run to the home of an American woman for protection. It is similar cases that spread the reports that American and English women are not wanted in Mexico. It was not because she was English that she was jeered at, but the Mexicans thought that she had overthrown all feminine modesty by going on the street alone. The natives believed that she was an American, for every one who speaks the English language is supposed to come from the United States. The Mexicans cannot tell the difference. Consequently, there is a strong bond of sympathy between the women of this country and those from England who have settled in Mexico.

The suffragette and divorce movements were news to Mrs. Hughes, for they started since she left Mexico. In the sections she visited, politics never bothered the women. The stir and excitement that was caused by the recent revolution has no doubt promoted the interest in the political situation and made a decided change in the country's thinking. The two movements started in Mexico City, and both petitions were signed by 500 women, including many society leaders of the capital. In demanding the



Mistress of the Isle of Arran, Lady Graham

IT'S a wonder that the novelists are able to earn their salt nowadays instead of making the wretched publishers send up cries of anguish over their royalties, while the best sellers go leaping into hundreds of thousands. We have turned into a nation of realists, finding our heroines in the daily news and following their fortunes with the zest we used to give to every heiress Mrs. E. D. E. N. Southworth sent rearing through ancestral halls.

The same interest attaches to the real women that we give the belles of fiction, with the one great, dominant advantage in the reality rather than the romance.

sented infinitely more of genuine romance than all the happiness to them before. That's where the central figures of the countless little dramas of actual life far surpass their prototypes in fiction. There's always some sequel, if it's only a baby or a divorce—or both.

There's a sequel, with pretty good measure, to

She's happy. Isn't that a sequel? Why, it's the untold sequel that readers count on for ninety-nine novels out of a hundred. And it's the one that real people enjoy in a far less percentage, this being a world of trouble and woe, relieved only by three square meals a day—when we can get them.

Besides, she has had her own troubles, a circumstance that makes romance out of life's dull prose as soon as it gets on paper instead of being lived in one's own pained and surprised person.

She's the marchioness of Graham now, and ever since her marriage, five years ago, she has been obliterated almost as completely as the beautiful princess was after Aladdin married her. That marriage is presumed to be blessed which, like a nation, hasn't any history; and all Scotland and all England, after a few years, learned to get along without hearing every week or so about the enormous fortune of the heiress of the Hamiltons.

When she came of age, in 1906, she acquired an income of \$570,000 a year from the estate of her father, who was the duke of Hamilton. On the island of Arran, where she had her home amid the acres and acres of the finest shooting and fishing, with an adoring populace to run at her beck and call, she was a little queen.

She was only 10 years old when her father died, and her childish birthday present was always a little pig. It continued to be her pet until it grew out of the pathos stage, when little Lady Mary's generous way was to sell it and give the money to some poor family she had under her special protection. Her custom was written about, and one year Brodick Castle was flooded with begging letters from people who hoped her childish generosity would give them a dollop out of her enormous fortune. But Lady Mary was so completely ignorant of the immense estates and the income awaiting her that she appealed to her mother:

"Mamma," she asked, "who do all these people write to me for money? How did they know I was going to sell my pig?"

the most popular romance England has known in this century, the romance of the lovely Lady Mary Hamilton, the greatest heiress and one of the greatest beauties of the United Kingdom.

The only jarring note is that she's considered too thrifty. Among the richest of the world's women, she's also among the best managers.

Captain Lochiel, of the Gordon Highlanders, who would have been her husband now if it hadn't been that her mother was as determined Lady Mary shouldn't wed a plain gentleman as she herself had been to marry plain Mr. Robert Carnaby Forster after the duke's death. Lady Mary rebelled like the daughter of her mother that she was; she vowed she'd marry her Lochiel or no one. Her family urged the suit of the marquis of Graham, who is her cousin, and Lady Mary showed her mettle by publicly denying the report of her engagement to him.

But young Graham, while far from having the wealth that was hers, was a handsome, dashing, agreeable fellow, heir to the dukedom of Montrose.

Real life goes very different from fiction; Graham got her. The story of her marriage was one of the climaxes of the world's real romances that contented every one, including the new marchioness, for she responded to the influences that make an innocent girl love the man who is a charming fellow and has every opportunity to let her see it.

Two children, a boy and a girl, came to them, and the merriment of the marriage bells ought to have gone right on without interruption to date. But the woman who, as a girl, had shown spirit enough to fight the man she loved, proved she was a wonderful when she was her own mistress in complete control of her huge inheritance. A couple of years after her marriage it was reported that her iron rule of the household, through the holding of the purse-strings, had offended her husband's pride. Comparatively poor as the Montrose family is, its heir is a man of force and dignity, and he refused to be relegated to a minor position in his own home. He left his wife to entertain her guests alone at the imposing mansion on Arran and went on a tour to Switzerland.

But he came back again. The quarrel, if it reached proportions so serious, was dispensed, and only the stream and field, with her husband, the marquis, in the role of lover as devotedly as he was when they were married five years ago.

Just the sequel to a romance of reality that enthralled a nation and was then forgotten, as the romances of fiction mostly are. But it's as good a sequel as most heroines of real life can hope for, isn't it?

BRITAIN'S RICHEST and THRIFFIEST WOMAN

right to vote and hold office, they signed themselves "friends of the people."

As for the divorce law, Mrs. Hughes couldn't understand what a native woman would do with a divorce. Of course, on account of their religious views, the Mexicans strenuously oppose divorce, and few cases of separation are known. If a Mexican and his wife can't get along, they keep it to themselves. They may continue to live under the one roof and only speak when absolutely necessary, that a bad example won't be set for their children. They idolize their offspring and slight their own happiness in showing their devotion.

Even if the Mexican señoritas still love their husbands and haven't got their eyes on any other man, it is evident that the spirit of progress is working overtime and is changing the unwritten rules governing courtship and marriage.

The old-fashioned courtship might appeal very well to the romantic mind, but it wouldn't suit the young men and women of this country. In the first place, Mexicans don't approve of a daughter conversing with a man she is not engaged to. So the question is, how can a girl become engaged when she isn't allowed to talk to men?

To begin with, a youth will notice on the street a girl whose charms impress him, and he will follow her with such salutations as "Sweet one," "Oh, my dearest," "Such beautiful eyes." The presence of the chaperon doesn't make any difference. If the girl likes the chap, she will await her opportunity and give a smile in return. The love-smitten youth will follow the señorita to her home, and night after night will stand under her window in the hope that she may part the curtains and look down upon him. Some girls keep their fellows guessing for several nights. Later, they may kiss a rose and drop it to the adoring one.

LOVE'S HIDDEN LETTERS

Then love letters are sent, not in the open mail, but by messengers, or hidden among groceries and other articles. Of course, the husbands are in on the scheme and help the daughter of the house. These secret conversations are arranged and, instead of asking the girl to marry him, when the fellow thinks he is on the safe side he goes to the front door and asks the father's permission. The daughter is consulted. Of course, she says "It is so hard to check the unsavory president, doesn't he?"

Many engaged couples insist on the rule beyond the Rio Grande for years. Though the fathers and mothers have been through the same mill, they remain properly blind. Once a betrothal has been made, they are much more complaisant than used to be the fathers of this country. The government announced that to check the unsavory president, the theater alone. A few years ago this would have been impossible, for when a man was showing attention to his fiancée, he had to take the entire family to the theater, banquet, reception or wherever they were.

The "bear," as a balcony lover is called, was always the goal, and this was true even at the wedding. When the bridegroom had to pay all the expenses, even for the bride's trousseau. The modern girl is getting more independent in this line, too, especially among the wealthier families, and buys her own dresses.

Probably the most important work in bettering social conditions in recent years has been among the Indian women and those of the lower peon class. The lives of these women and girls have been in sharp contrast to those of the Mexicans. They are as lax in their better neighbors as the keeping of marital vows as the Mexicans are particular. The government officials and the clergy have been working hard for years to check the unsavory president, and at last are meeting with success.

The women of the better class have also taken a deep interest in the work and have given their assistance by visiting their poorer sisters and giving them suggestions. Many have also helped the movement financially.

The Indian question is more important in Mexico than the outsider would imagine for the population numbers several millions; but about one-half of those are known as mestizos, or halfbreeds. The native women, as a rule, are small and plump. They resemble gipsies, both in their appearance and dress, but are more homely, and a good-looking girl is rare. The young girls are often handsome and attractive, and many dress well and take pride in their appearance; but after marriage they soon fall into the ways of their parents. Some of the women have no regard for the marriage laws at all. They enter wedlock, as a rule, when they are 14 years old. The marriages are usually civil ceremonies and are not recognized by the Catholic church.

DISPENSE WITH DIVORCE

Occasionally, when a couple tires of one another, they take up with other partners, giving the excuse that they were never married, and many cases of polygamy can be found. It is in this particular that the church and the government have been fighting against.

All of the Indians have large families, a childless woman being rare. The Indian peon women are particularly slothful and untidy. Tortilla baking is their most usual occupation, and throughout Mexico women can be found daily making tortillas. Some make just enough for their own use, while others are a little more industrious and work on the street and sell the tortillas to pedestrians. They have a good reason to see a barefooted Indian woman, with her head uncovered and child slung in a rebozo over her shoulder, bending over the tortillas.

The Indian women are known as being lazy, but even at that they spend more time over their tortillas than is necessary. Foreign women have tried hard to get them to have one big bake and get done with it; but this is considered nonsensical, and they pound the corn on the metate and bake just enough tortillas for the next meal.

In some parts of Mexico the Indian women do all the work, while their husbands stand by and watch them. This is particularly true of Tehuantepec, where the market is one of the features of the place. The women squat on the way and tried to buy a large portion of their wares he would instantly be turned down. But he could get the whole business at the market, and perhaps at bargain prices. If a woman sold her stock on the roadway she wouldn't know what to do when she got to the market, and she wouldn't think of returning home.