

CHAPTER XII

THE LADIES OF THE CABINET

SEÑORA DOÑA CARMEN ROMERO RUBIO DE DIAZ, besides being one of the most beautiful women in Mexico, is the best loved. Added to her natural endowment of beauty, she has a thorough knowledge of various languages. She is twenty-nine years old, and the president is about forty years her senior. She became *la Presidenta* at the age of eighteen, their love and courtship alike being as romantic as her daily life at the castle of Chapultepec.

She has filled this position with the grace and elegance of a queen, her salons being quite famous. She dresses with exquisite taste. Her gowns are made in Mexico, for she feels that as the wife of the president she should have her toilettes made by native workers. She has been seen at balls of magnificent splendor beautiful and radiant in a dainty white gown of silk garnished in point applique; a cord of pearls hung from her waist, and in her lovely black hair a solitary red rose nestled, as if proud to be worn by the first lady of the land. While the Mexican women are all inclined to displays of colors and jewels, "Carmelita," as every one loves to call her, sets a worthy example of good taste and refinement. She is not fond of society, and only a few friends are admitted into the intimacy of the home circle.



SEÑORA DOÑA CARMEN ROMERO RUBIO DE DIAZ,
THE WIFE OF THE PRESIDENT OF MEXICO.

a friend, and bowing and smiling to those who tip their hats in recognition of the president's wife. In fact, Señora Diaz is probably the most popular woman in Mexico, occupying a very

On *fiesta* days Señora Diaz is found standing in the shadow of the massive doors of the cathedral, tossing pennies to the poor, who gather there to receive her gifts. In an hour thousands of *centavitos* are given from her hands to the grateful wretches, who deem it an honor and privilege to kiss the hem of her gown as she stands there, all simplicity, distributing her favors, occasionally recognizing

warm place in the hearts of the Mexican people. She goes about from street to street and from house to house in the poorest suburbs and districts of the city of Mexico every day, distributing alms and alleviating the sufferings of the poor. For her many charitable acts and her social qualifications, her virtues and amiability, it is safe to say that one of the sources of the popularity of General Diaz comes from his wife.

The president has a charming family. The eldest daughter married, a few years ago, Señor Don Ignacio de la Torre, who belongs to one of the old and distinguished families of Mexico. She is as beautiful as she is gracious, and is a great favorite in society at the Mexican capital on account of her many endearing personal qualities, as well as her accomplishments and position. Captain Porfirio Diaz, the only son, gives great promise of a distinguished military career.



SEÑORA IGNACIO DE LA TORRE,
DAUGHTER OF THE PRESIDENT.

He is at present studying in Europe. One young daughter, Señorita Luz, is a lovely and gentle girl, whom every one loves. She may be seen almost every morning on the Paseo, where she goes for a constitutional on horseback, with her distinguished father as her escort.

There are a number of beautiful American women who have married prominent Mexicans and have settled down into good señoras. This land of romance and enchantment has waved a beckoning hand to these beautiful and distinguished American women, and they have obeyed her summons. The life of the ladies of the public service in any land calls for rare intelligence, unerring tact, and exquisite affability, and these qualities are of special value in the Spanish-American countries, where the blood runs hotly, revolutions are of quick growth, and sudden changes of leaders not infrequent. To all these require-



SEÑORITA LUZ DIAZ,
DAUGHTER OF THE PRESIDENT.



CAPTAIN PORFIRIO DIAZ.

cal, who is a grandmother, but still fresh and beautiful. Her official position gives her the seat of honor at the right hand of the wife of the president.

Señora Manuel Cosío is the distinguished wife of the Secretario de Gobernación. She devotes her time to charities, and her name is connected most prominently with many of the worthy charitable institutions of Mexico. She is a beautiful woman, and an ornament to any society.

Señora José Ives Limantour is the youngest lady in the cabinet, and is a typical Mexican, with large and beautiful dark eyes. Her home in Avenue Juárez is one of the most beautiful in Mexico. She loves society, and entertains a great deal during the season.

Señora Joaquín Baranda has a sweet and sympathetic personality, and is very gracious in manner. She is an accomplished linguist, speaking English perfectly, as well as several other languages. She lives with her children in Campeche.

ments the American women who have graced the court circles of Mexico have responded with a record that has proclaimed them born diplomats and queens of society.

Señora Ignacio Mariscal is a rarely enchanting woman. Every feature is perfect, and her countenance is lighted by eyes of softest splendor. She was Miss Laura Smith, of Maryland, U.S.A. Her family at one time resided in Washington, and she was one of the most noted belles of the city. It was while Señor Mariscal was secretary of the Mexican legation that his life's happiness in this beautiful form came to him. Their marriage was a notable social event. Señor Don Ignacio Mariscal has occupied many posts of honor, and in every position Señora Mariscal has shown charming adaptability and unusual force.

Mrs. Limantour and Mrs. Moran, both of whom are members of *la alta sociedad* in the city of Mexico, are daughters of Señora Mariscal.



SEÑORA MARISCAL.

Most Mexican ladies speak more than one language. In addition to their native Spanish, Mexican señoritas are taught English and French. One charming trait about them, too, is



SEÑORA LIMANTOUR.



SEÑORA COSÍO.

their extreme kindness of manner. One never hears rough words or unkind sentiments among them, nor even in the Mexican family circle. As a consequence, the people are universally polite, and the women especially have exquisite manners.



BIBLIOTECA PÚBLICA DEL ESTADO