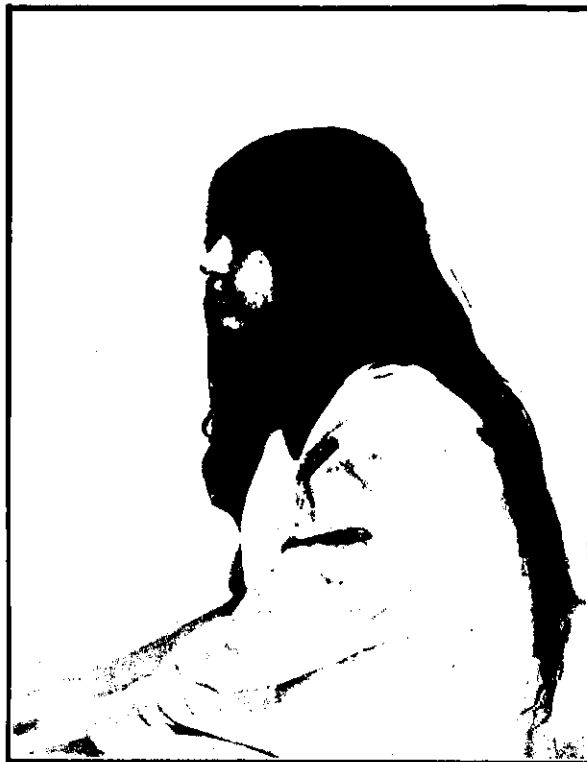


and soon, with hiss of steam and grinding of brakes, we draw up before the bungalow station of Tehuantepec. Tehuantepec is one of those names which, like Timbuctoo and Helligoland and Zanzibar and Mandalay by their combination of romance and rhythm stick long in one's memory. It means, so the jefe politico of the district told me, "the hill of the jaguar"; not that there is any overplus of the spotted beasts here, but because in the irregular patches of white quartz which wear the face of a near-by porphyritic hill the Indian fancy discerns the outline of the native tiger. It disappoints at first. All such places

do. Fez, Bokhara, and Samarkand were, at first glance, the most disappointing places I ever saw. But the town grows on acquaintance. It is built along both banks of a broad and lazy river, on the edge of immense coconut groves in an arid and dusty region which might, to all appearances, be northern Africa. Seen from within, the straggling town looks like a place which has been bombarded and deserted, due, no doubt, to the violent and oft-repeated earthquakes which every now and then do their best to demolish it. As a result of these frequent shocks, almost all of the low, one-story houses are scattered with earthquake cracks and many of them are in ruins; but, instead of clearing these away, the natives build new houses elsewhere. Situated in the very heart of the area of seismic disturbances, Tehuantepec is a city of impending dread. No matter how many years one has lived in an earthquake zone; no matter how many temblores one has experienced it is a sensation to which one never becomes inured. When the earth heaves, and the houses rock like ships in a storm, and the long, straight street writhes like a dying snake, and the squares are filled with kneeling, praying thousands, it takes a stout-hearted man to shrug his shoulders indifferently and smile.

And so we find ourselves in Tehuantepec, the home of lovely women the Utopia of the suffragette. The women, you will understand, form the bulk of the population in a proportion of five to every man. The majority of the nates are immigrants from adjoining states; they are more or less degenerate and utterly insignificant, and in every respect are infinitely inferior to the women. The Tehuana men were practically wiped out of existence as the result of the abortive uprising of Juchitan which followed the establishment of the republic. President Diaz's brother Felix, locally known as "El Chato—the Pug Nose"—was at that time commander of the military district of Tehuantepec, and he was as a result of the harsh, repressive measures which he had inaugurated, most heartily detested by the native population. So it is scarcely to be wondered at that when the next Indian uprising took place he was the first victim. The Tehuanas took him prisoner,



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The Tehuana woman is the wonder of the land. From Rangoon right around to Tiflis I have never seen her like for beauty.

and—so the local story goes—thinking to even up their score in a measure, after clubbing him nearly to death, they boiled him alive in oil. The news came, in due time, to brother Porfirio, at his palace in the capital, and when the rurales, whom he sent posthaste to the Isthmus, finished their work, there was scarcely a male



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