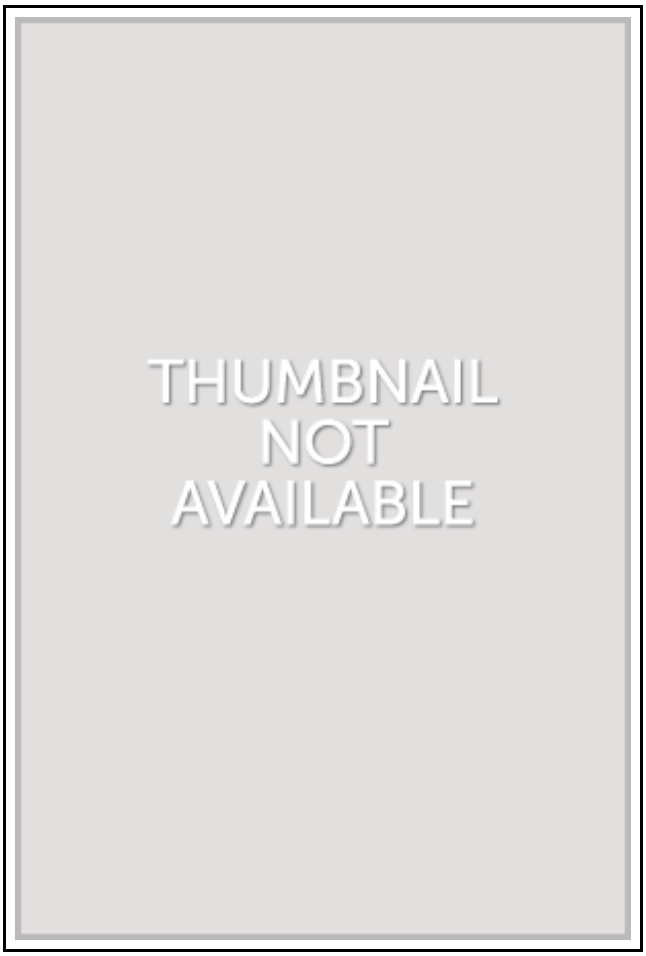
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The University of Alabama Press. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Here and There in Mexico: The Travel Writings of Mary Ashley Townsend, Mary Lee Townsend, Ralph Woodward, Mary Ashley Townsend was a novelist, newspaper columnist, and poet laureate of New Orleans who made several trips to Mexico with her daughter Cora during the last two decades of the 19th century. She collected her impressions of many aspects of life in that country - flora, fauna, architecture, people at work and play, fashion, society, food - and wrote about them during a time when few women engaged in solo travel, much less the pursuit of travel writing. Her collected work was still in progress when she died in a train accident in 1901, and was never published. Renowned Latin Americanist Ralph Lee Woodward Jr. discovered Townsend's manuscript, along with many of the author's personal papers, in the Special Collections division of Tulane University's Howard-Tilton Library. In addition to annotating the text, he has written a critical introduction to the work that provides excellent background information about the author and places the work in its historical and cultural context. Townsend's writing provides an unusual feminine perspective on Mexico as she describes the country during the middle years of the Porfirio Diaz dictatorship, a pivotal time in Mexican history. Though Townsend does not delve heavily into politics her observations of people's lives provide a valuable source for social historians of the period. Here and There in Mexico will make new contribution to the field of Latin American studies and to the travel literature genre, both as a primary source for historians and as a well-written account of a southern woman's impressions of Mexico during a crucial period in that country's development.

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