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A SUMMER IN SPAIN

During the past spring, a group of students and teachers was formed for the purpose of going to Spain to visit the country and study her language. The group was under the direction of Professor Joaquín Ortega of the Department of Spanish of the University of Wisconsin, and Mr. Lawrence A. Wilkins, Director of Modern Languages in the schools of the city of New York. We gathered at New York City on the 25th of June and sailed on the steamship "Chicago" of the French Line for Havre. After many days of only sky and water for scenery, we finally landed at Havre and got our first glimpse of France as well as of Europe. We were delighted indeed, but something lured us on still further, for France was not our goal.

After quickly going through the customs at Havre, we took a train for Paris and soon arrived at that great city. There we spent several days, some of the party exploring Paris in automobiles and others taking trips to the battlefields. Those who wish to see the battlefields in their original condition must go to France very soon, for the peasants are returning now, rolling back the barbed wire entanglements, and cultivating the soil again as best they can. Their courage should receive our highest commendation, for they are working with everything seemingly against them. In the midst of the ruins of their former homes they have built little wooden huts and roofed them over with sheet iron taken from the trenches near by.

We soon left Paris and traveled all day long to Hendaya, the last French town at the Spanish border. Here we rested over night at a hotel, rising early next morning to go through the customs in order to cross the border. After a few minutes we were in Spain at Irún, a small border town in the heart of the Pyrenees. Here we boarded a train for Madrid, and all were happy to be at last in Spain and actually on our way to Madrid. The trip through Castile was dusty and tiresome except through the Pyrenees, which was beautiful and most enjoyable. Passing through the towns of old Castile, we so often heard the cry of girls running up and down beside the train with their water bottles, "Agua fresca, agua fresca!" and occasionally, "Un vaso de leche!" Finally we reached Madrid and were glad to take carriages for the Residencia de Estudiantes, where we were to spend the next four weeks studying the Spanish language under conditions more favorable than had been our privilege heretofore.

During these next four weeks we took courses at the Centro de Estudios Históricos in literature, phonetics, reading of texts, conversation, commerce, grammar, etc. Some exchanged lessons in conversation with persons from the city or with Spanish students from the Residencia. After the four weeks of study one could receive a certificate of attendance or a diploma. The diploma was awarded provided the examinations were taken and passed.

Each week-end during the four weeks, a trip was arranged to some important city or town near Madrid. By taking advantage of these trips we

were able to visit many palaces and royal gardens, castles, and other monuments.

Our first trip was to Toledo, where we visited its magnificent cathedral, which is closed in on all sides by private dwellings. The streets are very narrow, in some places just wide enough for the little donkey and his cart. In this cathedral, as in many others throughout Spain, we saw an endless array of hand carvings, jewels, vestments, and paintings. It is impossible to describe the many magnificent things these cathedrals hold; one must simply see them, and then he stands and gazes in wonderment, unable to comprehend the marvels presented to his eyes. On many altars there are virgins with most beautiful garments, or beautifully carved crucifixes, or again famous paintings. One of the finest of these paintings of religious subjects is the "Crucifixión" by Velázquez, which is in the museum of the Prado in Madrid. After the cathedral, we visited other churches in Toledo: Santa María la Blanca, San Juan de los Reyes, and the Convento de la Concepción. Another very interesting thing in Toledo was our visit to the house of El Greco, one of the most renowned of Spanish painters.

The following week we visited the Escorial, where we saw a splendid collection of paintings in the halls of that huge palace. The visit to the tombs of the kings there was very interesting. It is said that the present king never goes to the Escorial, for he doesn't wish to visit the place where he will be buried. It seemed that there was an endless number of rooms in this palace, and each room contains at least two elaborate gold clocks. Later we went to Aranjuez, where there is another palace. Our last trip of this sort was made to Segovia and La Granja. In Segovia we visited the cathedral and the Alcazár. We climbed the towers of the Alcazár and from the top we were able to get an excellent view of the entire city. At La Granja we had the good fortune of meeting la Infanta Isabel, with whom we all shook hands. We went through the rooms of her palace and found it very interesting to see how royalty actually lives in the present day and age. After the visit to the palace we wandered through the beautiful gardens round about. These gardens were planned to resemble those at Versailles, with many elaborate fountains here and there. At the close of this very pleasant day, we took the train again for Madrid and after arriving there we prepared for the splendid treat we were to have in a trip to the south of Spain to visit Cordova, Sevilla, and Granada with its famous Alhambra.

Andalusia! It was a magic word that seemed to cast a spell over all. We were really en route to the very heart of Spain. Our first stop was Cordova. Although we remained here only one day we managed to see the beautiful Mosque. Who could doubt its being a real architectural jewel after gazing upon that infinite number of columns and those exquisite mosaics? Through the courtesy of our excellent party leader, Professor Ortega, we enjoyed several privileges throughout our trip that ordinarily tourists cannot boast of. One of these privileges in Cordova was a visit to the private homes of the Marquis de Viana. Through this visit we saw how a wealthy gentleman of the aristocracy lives in Cordova. Very interesting also was the studio of the artist Romero Torres.

From Cordova to Seville is a ride of only a few hours by train. We were a little apprehensive about going to Seville on account of the intense heat that everyone had warned us against. But the fear of our friends was to prove itself unnecessary, for in the four happy days that we spent in Seville the weather seemed to have adjusted itself entirely to suit our convenience. The Sevillians themselves informed us that never before had they enjoyed such comparatively cool weather in the summer. We were indeed fortunate not to have been subjected to the full strength of the rays of a tropical sun.

We are all familiar with the way Seville, the home of art, of beauty, of romance, has been praised by the poets. Well does she deserve these songs of praise. Who could doubt it after having been in the sumptuous cathedral with its beautiful organ, its innumerable treasures, among which must be mentioned the monument dedicated to Columbus? A visit to the cathedral is not complete, of course, without ascending the famous tower, la Giralda. From the top is obtained a magnificent view of the entire city and of the Guadalquivir. Among the other places of interest we visited were the Alcazár with its exquisite Moorish gardens; la Casa de Pilatos, one of the finest examples of mudéjar architecture and a reconstruction of Pilate's house in Jerusalem; the church of San Salvador, the altars of which are all carved gilded wood, giving the impression of solid gold; the celebrated Chapel of the Virgin of the Macarena, where come all bull-fighters of Macarena to pray before entering upon their life-or-death struggle.

Seville as the birthplace of Murillo has succeeded in retaining the largest collection of the great master's work in what is known as the Casa Murillo.

One of the pleasantest recollections of Seville will be for most of our party the delightful drive down the Paseo de las Delicias to the María-Luisa Park, near which are the exposition grounds where preparations are well under way for the big exposition in 1923. In the park itself we were especially impressed by the beautiful monument of the poet Bécquer.

If the Alcazár reminds one of the Moorish civilization that once held sway in this part of Spain, the ruins of Itálica just outside the city, the old Roman walls, the Alameda de Hércules recall the fact that another people, the Romans, have not failed to leave the stamp of their civilization in Seville, too. As in Cordova we enjoyed in Seville the privilege of visiting two private homes, that of the Countess of Lebrija, and that of Sánchez-Dalp. The latter is the richest man in Seville. The gardens of his palace, for such it must be called, suggest strongly the Orient, and contain one of the famous trees brought over from the New World by Columbus.

Another delightful experience that we had in Seville was the private exhibition of Spanish dances we witnessed. Enough has been written about the grace and the fiery spirit with which these Sevillanas dance, and surely did we see them at their best that evening. Something we all enjoyed in Seville was the trip to the mosaic factory. Here can be seen an endless array of pottery bearing weird but attractive designs in mosaic. Most of us could not resist purchasing at least a plate or two with the famous Arabic inscription, "Solo Dios es vencedor." On our way through the factory we saw an old man about eighty years of age molding out of clay all sorts of

prettily-shaped vases. When we commented upon the remarkable deftness and rapidity with which he did this, he told us that he had been working here for over fifty years.

Reluctantly we left Seville. Only the thought that we were on our way to Granada—the ancient capital of the Moors—the city that has more traces of Moorish influence than any other place in Spain, animated us. When we finally reached our destination after a tiresome day's journey in the train, far from being a twentieth century limited, we stopped at the Real Hotel Washington Irving, situated right near the Alhambra. We were determined to see this wonderful old Moorish palace under the spell of a southern moon. And we did! At about half-past ten in the evening we ascended one of the highest towers. Before us lay the city with its white houses, almost all illuminated, and interspersed here and there with dark, majestic-looking cypress trees. The silence of the night was profound. The conversation of our group had gradually grown less and less. It seemed as though each one had been placed under a magic spell and carried back centuries to a glorious reign of pagan civilization. Surely the memory of that enchanted hour will linger forever in our minds.

After the Alhambra the next point of interest seems to be the Generalife. What impressed us most here was the path, flanked on both sides by tall, stately cypresses, leading up to the palace and its lonely gardens. The visit to the Cartusian Monastery was certainly a worth-while one if for no other reason than to see the beautiful sacristy with its splendid marble of the Sierra Nevada. The Cathedral and the Chapel of the Catholic Kings remind one readily of the part played by these monarchs in the conquest of Granada and the expulsion of the Moors.

A very interesting part of Granada is the gypsy quarter. We not only drove through it but stopped and went into one of the gypsy caves to see the gypsies dance in a wild, frenzied spectacle called "Zambra," which could hardly be described.

One of the private homes we visited in Granada was that of López de la Cámara, situated on one of the principal avenues and furnished in comparative simplicity for this part of the country, but yet in exceedingly good taste. Another home we saw was that of Rodríguez Acosta, interesting on account of its underground passages. Besides these private homes we also visited the studio of Sr. Gabriel Morcillo and there made this great painter's acquaintance. He has been pronounced by certain eminent art critics the best painter Spain has had since Goya. For the rare privilege of seeing the art of Sr. Morcillo in his own studio—for his work has not yet been exhibited to the public—we are greatly indebted to Señora de Rivas, the charming wife of the ex-Minister of Public Instruction.

In the Albaycín we visited the studio of the English artist, Wynne Apperley. We had the pleasure of meeting the painter himself and of seeing some of his exquisite studies in color of gypsy types and of the surrounding landscape.

Needless to say we regretted to leave Granada. Before we realized it we found ourselves in the express that carried us back to Madrid. We were to have one more glimpse of the capital before leaving for Barcelona.

The single day that we returned to spend in Madrid was rather like a kaleidoscopic reminiscence of the numerous points of interest with which we had become acquainted during our four weeks' sojourn at the Residencia. From the Mediódia Station our ride back to the Residencia was a series of ejaculations and regrets as we caught glimpses of the Royal Palace or Armería, and when we crossed la Puerta del Sol and saw those stores where we had so often asked *¿Cuánto vale?* As we rounded Cibeles, we gazed once more upon the imposing cathedral-like Post Office, caught a fleeting view of the Museo del Prado, where several trips had been made during our former stay to study Spanish art. We turned into the oft-traversed Paseo de la Castellana and finally reached the Residencia where so many happy hours of study and social life had been spent. Then a general packing up and leaving-taking, an *adiós* of appreciation for Don Antonio García Solalinde, the Secretary of the Summer Course for Foreigners, and a last look at the friendly row of buildings up on the hill, and our buses clattered down the calle de Pinar to the station.

In one of those luxurious European sleepers we were borne during the night to Barcelona in Cataluña. The great, industrial and progressive city is divided into two parts by La Rambla, a beautiful avenue, which we traversed from one end to the other, which runs into a little plaza near the harbor where a statue to Columbus has been erected. We visited "Tibidabo," a modern amusement park outside of Barcelona at the top of a mountain reached by an electric car. We also saw the attempt of the modern world to rival the ancient—the construction of an immense cathedral—El Templo de la Sagrada Familia, a work of exceptional beauty, begun some twenty years ago, and likely to have many more years spent on its completion.

¡Adiós España! With great regret and longing we crossed the border into France to visit the southern province. Throughout the south of France we continued to find customs and distinctive notes which reminded us of the Spanish people. We visited historical monuments such as the Popes' Palace at Avignon, the Roman Baths in Nimes, and other places of interest in Arles, Villeneuve and Pont du Gard. Having finished the touring of that section, we rode on to Paris and thence to Cherbourg, where we embarked on the steamship Olympic for New York.

Our trip, which had included the most interesting places to be found in two of the European countries, was at an end and we were now to return with a fuller appreciation of Hispanic culture and what it has meant to civilization.

It would be impossible to close without expressing our deep gratitude to Don Antonio G. Solalinde, Mr. Joaquín Ortega, and Mr. Lawrence A. Wilkins, all of whom contributed towards making our trip the success that it was.

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