Form 1228A

Charge to the account of John O. Crane, 522 Fifth avenue $

CLASS OF SERVICE DESIRED	
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Patrons should mark an X opposite the class of service desired; OTHERWISE THE MESSAGE WILL BE TRANSMITTED AS A FULL-RATE TELEGRAM

WESTERN UNION TELEGRAM

NEWCOMB CARLTON, PRESIDENT GEORGE W. E. ATKINS, FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

NO.	CASH OR CHG
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Send the following message, subject to the terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to

Eylor N. Simpson,
Apartado 538
Mexico City

Back on job here will write in day or so definitely sailing fifth have your fifteen sixteen Keiths lost please send copy greetings you both

Rogers

ENS..WSR..18.

Mexico City,D.F.,
Apartado 538,
October 23,1927.

My dear Mr.Rogers:

"The climate of Mexico City is usually mild, but exhilarating; ranging during the year from 35° to 75° Fahr., with a mean temperature of 65°." Which is to say that Mexico City actually has what the native sons of California claim to have- a climate like the little bear's soup, neither too hot nor too cold, but just right! And hereby hangs a very interesting story, the story of one of the most successful of Mexico's educational experiments- the "Escuelas al Aire Libre".

In the eight primary "Open Air Schools" which are now going concerns in Mexico City we have an excellent illustration of how happily the Mexicans can, on occasion, take an idea originally developed in other countries and adapt it to the needs of their own nation. Indeed, the "Escuelas al Aire Libre" are more than mere adaptations. As they have been planned and organized by the Secretary of Education, Dr.J.M.Puig Casauranc, they are, in truth, something altogether novel and unique.

"If it is good for weak and unhealthy children", said Dr.Puig, "to have schools with the 'windows always open on at least one side' as the 'International Congress of Open Air Schools' has recommended, why would'nt the same sort of thing also be good for normal, healthy children? And, futhermore, in a country with a climate like that of Mexico why stop with just having the windows open? Why not do away with windows altogether and take out a whole wall? or even two walls?"

Why not, indeed! A good idea , this. So they

talked the matter over and as they talked the idea grew. Perhaps the ends of health and hygiene were not the only ones that could be served by schools, sans doors and windows. "In New York", said Dr.Puig, or perhaps it was the Sub-Secretary,Mr.Saenz, "I saw on one of the busiest corners of Broadway a model cigarette factory. At almost any hour of the day or night one could find hundreds of people with their faces plastered against the windows watching the machines turn out an unending stream of cigarettes... No doubt the company profited greatly. My point is: why should not education be propagandized in the same way? If the people could actually see what was going on in the schools, would they not be more interested in them? Open air schools can do more than let air and sunshine in to the students; they can also let knowledge and inspiration out to the community....."

This undignified mixture of cigarette advertisements and pedagogical theory is not offered as a rigidly accurate report of what went on the minds of the Mexican educators. It may,however, suggest the fundamental ideas behind the program which was finally worked out for the "Escuelas al Aire Libre". To put the matter in more formal style, two things were proposed: 1. to build a type of school which would accommadate a maximum number of students at a minimum cost and, at the same time, take full advantage of Mexico's health giving sun and air; 2. to create in these schools real centers of community life; to make them architecturally beautiful and pedagogically efficient and to place them in the poorest, most negelcted quarters of the city.

In the two years since the first school was built in 1925, eight open air units have been constructed in the

City of Mexico. With each new school, profiting by former experiences, new ideas of architecture and arrangement have been introduced. Finally,in the last unit to be built, "El Centro Escolar-Sarmiento", (see case study below) the ideal for this type of educational institution has practically been reached.

The plans for a typical open air school are set forth in the official bulletin of the "Secretaría de Educación" as follows:

"The program calls for the construction of a series of "cobertizos" (pavilions ,or "sheds") which will serve to protect the students from the rain and the sun. These 'sheds' should be completely open on at least one side and arranged around a park or garden in order to insure ample light and air, and to give the students that feeling of freedom and liberty that comes from direct contact with nature."

"Stated in more detailed fashion, each school should consist of: from five to six class-room pavilions with a maximum capacity of 50 students in each; two pavilions for "trabajos manuales" (manual training, weaving, cooking etc.); seperate 'sanitary departments' for boys and girls with a minimum of two toilets and one wash basin for each class; shower rooms and lockers with at least two showers per class; and, finally, an administrative pavilion containing offices for the principle and the secretary, and a bedroom, kitchenette, and small patio for the caretaker. In addition, wherever possible, the equipment of the school should include a swimming pool and an open air theater".

Due to the experimental nature of the first schools constructed and the special exigencies of the situation presented in each case, departures have, of course, been made from this ideal

plan. For example, the amount of land devoted to these schools has varied from 710 to 5,390 square meters. The total cost per school has ranged between 23,000 and 50,000 pesos, with an average cost of about 40,000 pesos (c.$20,000.) . With an enrollment of 5,424 students the operating cost is 5.67 pesos (c.$2.50) per month,per student.

The statistics leave little room for doubting the success with which the first half of the program for the open air schools has been carried out. To build any sort of a school that will accommodate from five to six hundred students at a total maximum cost of $25,000 is remarkable enough; but to achieve with this meager outlay something that is at once a thing of beauty and perfectly adapted to the best interests of the students, is little short of marvellous. With respect to the success of the intention to make these institutions instruments for "acción social" I offer the following statement by Dr.Puig.

"In placing these schools in the poorest and most populous sections of the city, we tried to locate them where the need was the greatest. We hoped that the note of color and light, and the activity and enthusiasm of the students and teachers would act as a leaven to raise the social ideals of the community. The results have been more than gratifying...."

"Each school with its modern baths and 'servicios higiénicos' has been an ever present example and impetus for the people to get together and demand that the city council provide drainage facilities, pave the streets, and in general improve the neighborhood... They take unusual pride in their clean, beautiful schools. They no longer feel that they are forgotten; on the contrary they have been awakened to their duties and rights as cit-

izens. They have taken it upon themselves, for example, to guard and protect their new schools... Although these schools have no doors or windows to lock, not so much as a single electric light globe has ever been missed."

The educational program now in effect in the open air schools is motivated by the same fundamental principles applied in the rural schools: the students shall learn by doing (the principle of"acción"); and they shall learn those things which will most effectively prepare them to take their place in the community as self-reliant citizens(the principle of "socialización").

If you will visit the newest of the "Escuelas al Aire Libre",

"El Centro Escolar-Faustino Domingo Sarmiento"

you will find the physical equipment to be essentially that described above as "typical". If anything, it is a little more than typical, for its location in a small park on the edge of the city is superior to any of the other schools. Also, its splendid open air swimming pool, and the ample space for gardens, sports, and an open air theater give it special distinction. The class-room pavilions- completely open except for the end walls and roof- are disposed about the grounds in a pleasingly irregular fashion. However, interesting as these physical aspects of the school are, even more interesting are the organization of the classes and the methods of teaching employed.

The simple notion apparently underlying the whole pedagogical procedure is that the school belongs to the students and the community and not to the teachers and the gov-

ernment. Teachers are there to serve the students, not the students to "learn lessons" from the teachers. When the students talk to you in a very dignified manner about the work of "our" school they mean just that. They have helped build it with their own hands and,now that it is done, they take an active part in running it. This little fourteen year old lad who proudly bears the title of "Commissioner of Agriculture" explains quite simply that he has full charge of allotting the garden plots and seeing that they are properly worked. This other thirteen year old boy is the "Commissioner of Banking". His duty is to run the school savings bank and to make loans to this or that individual or co-operative society in need of help. And so it goes. Every activity of the school is managed by the students themselves. There is a"Commissioner of Marketing" who looks after the sale of the products of the gardens and of the "pequenas industrias" (small industries), a "Commissioner of Public Health", a "Commissioner of Sports" - even the discipline of the 600 students is administered by a body of grave, young "Judges".

Every student during the six year course is required to take the traditional reading, writing, and arithmetic. But aside from this and a few subjects such as history and civics, practically everything else in the program is voluntary. The whole matter is put on the basis of interest. No one is forced to take part in the activities. The student is made to feel that he is a citizen in a busy community and his participation in the community life must be purely spontaneous. And the best thing that can be said about the whole scheme is that apparently it works. The students love it. From the smallest four year old tot in the kinder-

garten to the oldest student in the sixth grade (and some are as old as twenty-one years) they come early, stay late, and work hard.

In view of the fact that this particular school has only been open for two months, it is perhaps a little early to estimate its effect as a social force in the community. According to the Principal, however, the parents are already beginning to take a deep interest in all the activities of the students. Parent's associations are being formed. The people of the neighborhood are very poor, but somehow, each one contributing his ~~bit~~ mite, they have managed to buy this or that bit of equipment- gravel for walks, rakes for the gardens, and whatnot- which the school ~~still~~ needed.

No description of the "Centro Escolar- Sarmiento" would be complete without some mention of the remarkable mural paintings by the young Mexican artist, Maximo Pacheco. A pure blooded Indian, not yet 21 years old, Pacheco is one of the most brilliant of the now famous group of revolutionary artists headed by Diego Rivera. His frescoes, portraying the students engaged in characteristic activities, have been painted on both the inside and outside walls of the pavilions. A curious mixture of realism and symbolism, they are not only splendidly decorative, but a constant stimulation to the imagination of the students.

.....

As I am leaving tomorrow morning for a week's trip in the state of Oaxaca, this is probably the last letter which you will receive from me before departing for Europe. I take it that the letter which you promised in your recent telegram will answer all the questions which I have raised. Wherefore, Sir,

I wish you "bon voyage" and charge you to convey my very best regards to the Hoppers.

Yours sincerely,

EWS.

WSR..MWS..

October 31,1927

Dear Eyler:

Your report on rural schools is very satisfactory - an opinion heartily endorsed by the several people I have had read it. I suggest that you work it over a bit for use as a magazine article and have it here when I return - about Christmas. Lead off the article with a paragraph that relates the subject to something of news interest. In other words, give it a "news look". A few pictures might be useful.

Julius Klein director of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, suggests that, instead of the Bureau sending you its reports on Mexico, you go over the material, from time to time, in the office of the Commercial Attache, Mexico City. The material reaching Washington is distributed between the various offices in the Bureau and that which is not published is hard to reassemble. Klein has written to his representative about you.

I have talked with officials of Pan American Union and with Klein about the conference to be held in Havana. There is a wide divergence of view as to just how important it may prove to be. It is likely to last from six to eight weeks.

My judgment is that you had better continue along in Mexico - above all else perfecting your knowledge of Spanish. Should the conference turn out to be really vital, we can again take up the subject with a view to your possibly being there for the closing sessions.

I like the program outlined in your No. 17, October 20th. Such reservation as I have has entirely to do with your competence to pass on

work of nature of that being done by Dr. Zozaya. I do not know how much scientific "savvy" you possess. Perhaps this is as good a time as any for you to rectify any short-comings you may have in this direction.

About the publications, they were duly subscribed for two or three weeks ago, which was, of course, long after I received your request. The delay on my part was intentional. I want you to get saturated in Mexican affairs and you can't do that, in your initial stages, if you cling to American reading and events.

Several cables have come from Hopper. While in the Urals, he picked up a fever which seems to hang on. Apparently, however, he is now on the up-grade.

John and I still plan to sail on the Majestic on the fifth. I will return about Christmas.

Continue to send your weekly letters to New York, but in addition send a carbon to John Crane, care of American Legation, Prague, Czechoslovakia.

Still have in mind looking in on yourearly in January.

Sincerely,

WSR/FC

P.S. John Langdon Davies is here and we are trying to work something out.

November 2,1927

Mrs. Eyler N. Simpson,
Apartado 538
Mexico City, Mexico.

Dear Keith:

Thanks ever so much for your interesting letter. Keep up the good work by sending along other colorful items.

There has been a riot of excitement hereabouts. John's and my plans were adjusted so that we might have the pleasure of travelling across the ocean with his father. Four or five days ago Mr. Crane, who was visiting in Virginia, was taken ill. Mrs. Crane and the family doctor hastened there. The last word, however, is that he will arrive here well enough to sail as per schedule.

Poor Hopper evidently has been having a very serious time, just how serious I cannot make out from his letters and cables. Mrs. Hopper should have reached Moscow by now - she was visiting in London.

Here's looking forward to seeing you and Eyler early next year.

Sincerely,

WSR/FC

Charge to the account of C.R. CRANE - 522 Fifth Ave. $

Form 1228A

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WESTERN UNION TELEGRAM

NEWCOMB CARLTON, PRESIDENT GEORGE W. E. ATKINS, FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

NO.	CASH OR CHG
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November 5,1927

Mr. Tyler T. Simpson
Apartado 538
Mexico City, D. F.
Mexico.

Sailing postponed one week stop making good progress negotiations

Longdon-Davies Greetings you Keith

Rogers

ENS..WSR..19.

Mexico City,D.F.,
Apartado 538,
November 6,1927.

My dear Mr.Rogers:

George Bernard Shaw's famous "dirty dig" at the teaching profession- "those who can do; those who can't teach"- may be a fair statement of the unfortunate impotency of the English schoolmarms and masters. Even the ingenious Mr. Shaw, however, would be hard put to it to make this quip fit the class of teachers with which Mexico is seeking to man its rural schools. The rural school masters in Mexico both can and do,and for this very reason they also teach. What they can do, is, perhaps judged from some points of view, rather simple; but simple or complex, the fact is the whole pedagogical procedure in Mexico's new rural schools is founded upon the basic principle that the teacher must gain his right to teach by actually being able to do the thing ~~to be~~ taught. To have heard someone's lecture, or read somebody else's phamplet on how to plow a field, or weave a blanket, or make soap, does not suffice. He must be able to demonstrate these things"en propria persona".

To discover in Mexico a sufficient number of individuals trained and ready to put into practice the philosophy of "ación" in the rural schools was, as has been indicated in the discussion of the "Cultural Missions", no easy job. The educational leaders have done the best they could with the materials at hand, but by no means are all of the 3,000 and more rural school teachers now employed ideally equipped for their work. Indeed, the whole scheme of the Cultural Missions has been devised mainly for the purpose of filling in the gaps in the

training of those at present in charge of the rural schools. Inadequately prepared as many of these teachers are, they must serve as best they may for the time being. But what of the future? What is being done to train new teachers to take the places of the ones who drop out or prove inefficient? Where will Mexico recruit its instructors for the 2,000 new schools which the federal government hopes to establish during the next few years? To answer these questions is to describe the work of the recently organized "Escuelas Normales Rurales".

"The Rural Normal Schools", states the official decree of the Secretariat of Education, " shall have the following objects":

"1. The preperation by regular courses of teachers for the rural schools in the small communities and indigenous centers.

2. The cultural and professional improvement of the teachers in service in the region where the school is located by means of short courses given during the vacatiom period.

3. The incorporation of the small communities in the region into the general progress of the nation by educational extension work."

In order to insure the best conditions possible for achieving these object the official communiqué further ordains that these normal schools shall be located in the rural districts themselves, preferably at points offering easy means of communication with the more important centers of population. At least 6 hectáreas of land (about 15 acres) shall be allowed each school for the purpose of instruction and experimentation

in the theory and practice of agronomy and animal husbandry. The school building shall be equipped with living quarters for the students and faculty, and shall have ample space for classrooms and the shops for the "pequenas industrias". A final indispensable prerequisite is that the school building shall be so equipped and located as to permit the adequate functioning of an "Escuela Primaria Rural Anexa" (i.e. a model rural primary school to furnish the normal students with practice classes).

It is unnecessary to give here in any detail the curriculum of the two year course offered by the "Escuelas Rurales Normales". Sufficient it is to state that in the four semesters of approximately five months each (a three weeks vacation is allowed at the end of a semester) only those subjects are taught which will be of the most immediate and practical value to the future teachers in putting into practice the program of the rural schools. In order to become a student in a rural normal school one must be 15 years old (14 for women) and have completed at least the four year course of a primary school. Those students who are able to pay are charged for their board and room; for deserving students who cannot pay a certain number of fellowships are provided. The schools are run as co-operative societies on a cost-plus basis. As time goes on it is hoped that each school will be at least 50% self-supporting.

The educational extension work, mentioned above, calls for the giving of special short courses of not more than three weeks duration to the local rural teachers already in service. Also an integral part of this extension work is for the students and members of the faculty to hold classes, give popular lectures, organize "fiestas" and in other ways to attempt to

raise the level of life in the neighboring communities.

So much for the "proyecto" of the "Escuelas Normales Rurales" as it appears on paper. What is actually being done to translate this plan into action? Before describing one of the normal schools which I have visited, let me present in summary the official statistics of the progress which has been made in this field of educational endeavor to date. The first normal school especially adapted for the training of rural school teachers was established in 1925. By the end of 1926, 8 schools were operating in various states with an enrollment of 485 students and a teaching personnel of 51. At the present time (August, 1927) these figures have increased to 9 schools; 625 students; and a teaching staff of 87. The rural practice schools annexed to the normal schools count a registration of 1,080 children (838 in regular attendance) and 35 teachers.

"La Escuela Normal Rural de San Antonio de la Cal".

High up on the slope of a mountain about three miles from the capital of the state of Oaxaca stands an imposing two-story building. During the time of Díaz this"edificio" with 1,200 acres of land was the seat of an "Agricultural Experimental Station". For one reason and another, but mainly because in 1915 the government, wishing to set an example in the state, gave all but 75 acres of the land to the neighboring villages for "ejidos", the station was abandoned. Ten years passed and by 1925 only the main walls of the building were left standing. "The roof, the floors, and the out buildings were in ruins". In these days of strenuous educational activity in Mexico "old ruins" are just so many challenges to the educational leaders. In July ,1925 the

Secretary of Education, Dr.Puig, decreed that the state of Oaxaca should have a rural normal school. Whereupon, not without hard labor and a strict economy in the outlay of funds (the whole expenditure was something less than $5,000), the work of rehabilitating the former agricultural station was accomplished. "La Escuela Normal Rural de San Antonio de la Cal" was formally opened in November,1925. True, much remains yet to be done. The floors are a little wobbly; the furnishings are crude and the equipment inadequate; and the stables and out-houses are still in a rather dilapidated state. But, nevertheless, the fact remains that where once stood only the crumbling walls of an abandoned experiment, now stands a Normal School that is a "going concern". Eleven "maestros" are busily engaged in turning 67 native Oaxacans into rural school teachers. Seventy-five little Zapotecan Indians attend the practice school and 35 adults are enrolled in the night classes. Six or seven hectáreas are now under cultivation and just this week the school has acquired 14 mules with which to work the rest of the land. The standard curriculum for rural normal schools, with its emphasis upon a type of practical social knowledge for the improvement of rural life in Mexico, is in full force.

One little story will serve to illustrate the work of "extensión educativa" being developed in the surrounding countryside. On either side of the school at a distance of a few kilometers is located a small village. Now, it seems that for years on end these two "pueblocitos" have had a feud over the question of the limits of their lands. To say the least, it was rather unpleasant for the citizens of one village to be caught after dark within the bounds of the other village. And

it was not unknown for an occasional member of one or the other of the clans to come upon death in ways not altogether natural. A most unfortunate, but sad to say, not an unusual state of affairs for neighboring "pueblos" in Mexico. Now enters the Rural Normal School, and,more particularly,with the school a certain teacher of music. "Music", said this gentleman, "is reputed to have charms to tame the savage breast"- or words to that effect. At any rate he sallied forth and soon had the bands of the two unneighborly villages practicing together at the school building. And lo! and behold! a little music did lead them, for now the two villages do abide in peace and mutual respect.

%%%%%%

My trip to the state of Oaxaca was both interesting and informative. Although unfortunately the Governor was out of the state, my letters to the Federal Inspector of Education served very nicely to open all the doors for me. I visited the normal school described above (and by the way, this was my first experience in trying to navigate a country road in Mexico on a bicycle- than which there is nothing requiring more of the talent of a tight-rope walker); inspected a number of the rural and several of the city schools; and made a pilgrimage to the famous archaeological ruins at Mitla. In addition, in the interest of my forth coming investigation of the land problem, I had an interesting interview with the federal Agrarian Commissioner.

After reading the recital of Bruce's diffi-

ties, I am somewhat hesitant to relate more of my own mild adventures in traveling around Mexico. However, I venture to state that what one gains in "comfort" in Mexico over Russia, one loses in the greater number of hours that are wasted in trying to get any place off the main lines. For example, I left Oaxaca at 7 A.M. and was supposed to arrive in Puebla at 7:45 P.M.- but, such is the way of railroading in Mexico, the train did not arrive until 4:30 the next morning. This would not have been so bad, perhaps, had it not been that the day before I lost several square inches of skin riding via horse-back to visit one of the rural schools, and perforce could not sit down in the usual way. This, taken in conjunction with my unhappy discovery that Mexican food and riding bicycles on country roads is hardly soothing balm for the bad case of hemorrhoids which some evil spirit of Mexico has wished off on me, gives me some slight grounds for sympathy with Bruce.

Your last letter leaves me content and I shall follow the suggestions therein contained. In reference to the article which you suggest my getting into shape, I may say that, if my plans do not miscarry, I will have in New York long before you return my complete report on education with pictures, character sketches of the leaders, etc. This should furnish material for several articles if you deem it wise to so use it.

I await with interest the outcome of your parleys with Langdon-Davies.

My best to you and John.

ENS.

November 10th, 1927

Mr. Eyler N. Simpson,
Apartado 538,
Mexico City, D. F.

Dear Eyler:

On the 25th Mr. Barrett will pay the Canadian Bank of Commerce $400. to be credited to you.

We - Mr. C. R. Crane, John, Mrs. Rogers and I - are all set to sail tomorrow night. Mr. Crane, whose illness delayed our departure a week, seems now to be in good health. He returns early in December. Mrs. Rogers and I expect to be back before Christmas - but I have my doubts.

Your educational articles continue to receive favorable comment from the select few who are permitted to read them. One of my friends, who knows Mexico, hops all over your political letter of a month or so ago. His complaint is that you are retailing gossip and are too inexperienced as yet to have an independent judgment. Be careful not to do what the journalists do - tell each other the news!

Best greetings to you and Keith.

WSR/FC

ENS-WSR-20.

Mexico City,D.F.,
Apartado 538,
November 15,1927.

My dear Mr.Rogers:

Mexico is teaching Indians to laugh. I have seen an Indian laugh- nay! even more, I have seen two hundred Indians all laughing together at the same time. I do not expect anyone to believe this. I would not believe it myself had I not seen it with my own eyes, for everyone knows that Indians are not supposed to laugh. The proper business for Indians in my own country is to wear feathers down their backs, engage in flat-footed war dances, shoot innocent Nordics, ride bareback horses in wild west shows, and live on reservations. In Mexico Indians are beings who inhabit the "sierras" and make trouble for the government, or lazy, stupid creatures that work on "haciendas", or, more romantically and more distantly, "our glorious fore-fathers who were betrayed and conquered by the unspeakable Spaniards". But in any case, whether he be in the United States or in Mexico, "lo! the poor Indian" is by tradition a solemn, stoical, even morose individual. Occasionally the novelists have allowed him a "crafty smile"- but an honest, hearty, spontaneous guffaw? Well, for Indians and horses, it just is'nt done. Now the interesting thing about all this is that for once popular tradition approximates the truth. Here in Mexico Indians don't laugh. They don't know how! Three centuries and more of virtual slavery; and generations on end of hunger, poverty, and neglect; life without hope and death without distinction- this is enough to rob any people of the gift of laughter.

It does not appear in any of the manifestos or "plans" , but in a very real sense it is true that the battles

of Mexico's great revolution were fought to vindicate the right of the Indian the laugh. "If the Indians", said the revolutionary leaders, "have somehow lost this unique human capacity, if they no longer know the joy of life, then we will teach them again the meaning of laughter and all that it symbolizes. We will prove once and for all that the Indians are not inferior clods, but men like other men, a race posessing the same range of capacities and sharing the same fundamental human nature of all other races of mankind."..... In due time the government set to work to redeem this promise in the "ideología revolucionaria" and in 1925 there was inaugurated in Mexico City "La Casa del Estudiante Indigena".

"The House (or School) of the Indigenous Student", to be sure, is not devoted solely to renewing the risibilities of the indigenous population of Mexico. Laughter is only the symbol of what is in reality the beginning of a tremendous experiment in cultural assimilation. To put the matter in the more formal and detailed language of one of the offical publications, the purpose of "La Casa del Estudiante Indigena" is:

"1. To 'annul' the cultural distance which separates the Indian from the present epoch; to transform his mentality, attitudes, and customs and adapt them to modern civilized life; to incorporate the Indian as an integral part of the life of ~~the life~~ of the nation.

2. To initiate the 'drawing together', the spiritual fusion of the various autochthonous families or racial groups that populate the nation and to awaken and strengthen in the Indians a sense of their own value..

//3. Not to arouse racial antagonisms and feelings of racial exclusiveness... but to show the Indian the part which he must play in the formation of the national soul; to exalt the significance of the Indian culture and yet at the same time make clear the mutual dependence and solidarity of all mankind.."

A clearer idea of the objects of the "Casa" may be gained by considering the statement made to me by the director of the school, Señor Enrique Corona.

"What we are trying to do",said Señor Corona, is to create wants, to stimulate ambitions in a race that, having lost all but the simplest animal wants, no longer answers to the dynamic progressive force of desire...In a word, we are striving to raise the standard of living of a people whom the untoward events of history have reduced to the level of mere existence. Isolation has always meant ignorance and cultural decay and the case of the Indians shut away in the mountains of Mexico is no exception. By bringing these Indians from all over the country here to the capital, throwing them into contact with the 'criollos' (those of Spanish descent) and the 'mestizos' (mixed Indian and Spanish) , letting them work, study, play, and- yes- struggle, suffer, and triumph- thus it is that we hope to create the "gran familia nacional'...Once these students have been incorporated into the national culture, once they share with their fellow Mexicans common aspirations and common ideals, then we plan to send them back to leaven the loaf in their native villages- each one a teacher, a leader, and a prophet for his people."

Upon analysis these two statements of the objects and purposes of the "Casa del Estudiante Indigena"

reduce to this: The School for Indians is an attempt to introduce selected representatives of the indigenous population to the technique of modern civilization, to create in them a spirit of national unity, and to prepare them as agents to carry both technique and spirit back to their native villages.

The actual pedagogical proceedure through which the educational authorities are seeking to translate these hopes into realities reveals a program in which technical and social studies receive equal emphasis. Within the school proper the students receive instruction in the more elementary hygienic and aesthetic forms of "civilized" behavior. This includes such matters as learning to sleep in beds, eat at tables, take baths, wash their teeth, and wear shoes. Of a more strictly social nature are the activities in the clubs, cooperative societies, and on the athletic field. In these and other ways the teachers strive to break down the Indian reserve and aloofness and instill in the students a spirit of"reciprocity, sociability, and camaraderie".

In order to carry out in the most effective manner the plan of constantly "mixing" the Indians with the other racial elements in the city, the formal class room instruction is, in the main, carried on in cooperation with other schools. In this way the Indians are really attending, not one, but a half-dozen different schools. In the "Escuela Práctica de Industrias", for example, they recieve instruction in the various "pequenas industrias"(conservation of fruit and vegetables, tanning, carpentry, etc.); in the "Instituto Technico" they are taught the elementary principles of mechanics, electricity, and "automo-

vilismo". Supplementing the class room work, the process of assimilation is also furthered by frequent visits to museums, libraries, historical and archaeological sites, by athletic competition with other schools, and by parties and "fiestas" in the "Casa" to which "outsiders" are invited.

Pari pasu with these efforts to introduce the students to the social and technological aspects of modern civilization go the activities devoted to "exalting the significance of the Indians own culture". Tribal clubs are formed, the students are encouraged to practice and develop their native arts and crafts, to sing their native songs, and to preserve the memory of their tribal legends and history. Above all,they are not allowed to forget their dialects for therein lies the hope of taking back to their own people the things which they have learned in Spanish.

The physical equipment of the "Casa" compared with that of many other schools in Mexico is of an exceptionally high grade. The main building is large, well arranged, and affords ample room for the dormitories, class rooms, mess halls, a library, theater, and swimming pool. In the space around the building are athletic fields, gardens, chicken pens, and various out houses. Though the architecture is unpretentious, the long galleries which with their graceful arches encircle the wings of the building, the use of native decorative schemes, and, above all, the spotless cleanliness of both grounds and buildings, gives the whole place an air of distinction and even beauty. The buildings plus the equipment represent an expenditure of about 350,000 pesos (c.$175,000.). At the present time the school counts 200 students and 8 members on the faculty.

The operating costs average 2 pesos a day per student, or about $6,000. a month. Of this expense the greater part is borne by the federal government. In a few cases,however, the state governments contribute half of the expenses of students coming from tribes within the state.

To enter the "Casa del Estudiante Indigena" a student must be between the ages of 12 and 17, a representative of a pure Indian group, and be able to speak his native Indian dialect. It is also prefered that the prospective student shall have completed at least two years of a rural school, although this is not required. The 200 students now enrolled in the school come from 21 different states of the Republic and represent families or sub-families of Indians speaking the following dialects: Amuzgo, Cajuar, Chontal, Huasteco, Huichol, Mexicano, Mayo, Maya, Mazahua, Mixteco, Otomí, Pame, Pápago, Popolaco, Quiche, Cachiquel, Tzoque, Tarahumara, Tlapaneco, Tarasco, Yaqui, and Zapoteco. (This list is inserted en toto by way of an exhibit of one of Mexico's greatest problems in education- how to reach a diversity of peoples speaking a diversity of languages. Very few of the students can speak any Spanish when they enter the"Casa".)

Those in charge of the "Casa del Estudiante Indigena" and others interested in the future of the Indians in Mexico are immensely enthusiastic about the work of the school. Already plans are being made to enlarge the plant to accomodate a thousand students. New courses are to be added and the activities of the school expanded in every way possible. The friend-

ly critic in seeking to evaluate the significance of the whole project finds it difficult to escape the contagion of this enthusiasm. Nor does one wish to escape it so far as some of the achievements are concerned. No elaborate psychological tests or series of mental measurements are needed to prove the success of the undertaking as an experiment in racial psychology. Even the most prejudiced observer will have to admit that, if the 200 students now enrolled in the school are a fair sample, the Indians of Mexico can with proper training display physical, intellectual, and artistic capacities equal to those of any other racial group. To see these Indians when they arrive at the school- dirty, sullen, ignorant, little savages, and then to see them a year later- clean, alert, laughing, and- yes- "civilized" youngsters- is almost to witness a miracle. "Ya saben reir los muchachos" (now the boys know how to laugh). Indians are human beings!

However, granting that the "Casa" has successfully demonstrated the racial equality of the Indian (in so far as such things can be demonstrated), there still remain a number of other problems to be solved before the experiment can be declared an unqualified success. The first and most important of these problems relates to the missionary aspect of the program. Will these Indian students after three or four years spent in surroundings offering every convenience of modern life, and after being given every opportunity to develop a taste for the pleasures, excitements, and interests of a large city, want to go back to the dreary monotony, the dirt, and the squalor of their native villages? In other words, are some of the critics

right in holding that the "school is an Indian zoo and that its only result will be to fire a varied assortment of savages with an ambition to wear a silk hat and get a soft political job in Mexico City"? When I raised this point with the Director of the school he assured me that the faculty was doing evrything in its power to combat this danger. On every possible occasion the students are reminded of the debt they owe to their own people and the responsibility which lies with them to pass on to their tribe the knowledge which they have acquired. Whether when the test comes this idealism will prove actually to nave taken root remains to be seen. At least it is not without interest that one old Tarahumara chief proposed to take no chances with this sort of moral suasion. The story goes that when he was about to leave fifteen representatives of his tribe at the school he addressed them in this wise: "Here you remain, my sons. When your studies are finished you will return to your native 'sierra'to teach your brothers. And rest assured, ~~that~~ if any one of you fails to return another Tarahumara will come to seek you out and punish you with death".

Another question which presents itself is: Assuming that any or all of the students do go back to their native villages, just how effective will their efforts be to "teach their brothers"? Will not the very things which they have learned- their new way of dressing, the new food they eat, the new language they speak, the new habits and tastes they have acquired-operate to isolate them from the ~~very~~ people they wish to help? Cultural and social "distances", the sociologists have pointed out, are just as real, just as formidable barriers to com-

munication as mountains and rivers. The routine of existence, the way of life, in an Indian village, uncivilized though it may appear to the white man and the city dweller, nevertheless has all the power of age-old tradition behind it. Even natives will not be able to change or "uplift" this way of life if they come wearing too strange an air.

It may be that both of the questions which have been raised here are purely theoretical and will not appear later on in actual experience. However, for the present writer at least, they represent the two chief defects in the educational program of the "Casa del Estudiante Indigena". Interesting and heartening as have been the results achieved in the school so far, one wonders if the same results could not have been obtained with even greater success by establishing regional schools, away from the cities and in the very midst of the Indian groups themselves. In other words, why not follow the plan which is being so admirably worked out in the rural schools and bring the school to the Indian and not the Indian to the school?

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I leave in the morning for a month's trip in the state of Chiapas. Most of the time we will be several days by horse from the railroad but I will try to send a report along whenever the opportunity offers.

Sincerely yours,

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