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THE COLLEGE, in its stony immobility, gives signs of awakening life. Somnolent, it casts off the lethargy of a long summer siesta, and makes ready to receive you, dearest young collegians, to its throbbing bosom... At last it is the first week of October, and the end of our annual course in June becomes a retrospect of centuries. The piles of exuberant textbooks impatiently await the caress of your industrious hands, while over the now no longer silent cloisters and the already noisy classroom broods the benign and gentle spirit of our illustrious Patron, the incomparable Saint Modesto of Bobbio.

So to work, my friends !

If you are a student and are made to study, this is no sort of injury. Far contrariwise. Learning and the results of learning are absolutely necessary for a man of superior station. If you study with all your forces you will amass a vast capital, on the interest of which you will one day be able to live in voluptuous ease. A student who abandons himself to beachcombing and the gipsy life, prejudices not only himself but his future sons and grandsons, and educated society in general.

With this little prologue I shall present you to the students who have crowned themselves with glory by passing with distinction their Baccalaureat. Let the presentation take the form of a few distinct interviews:

Alonzo García

I found Alonzo rolling dice, left hand against the right, in the Hall of Seraphic Youth. He is a serious adolescent in white trousers and khaki shirt, as absorbed in his game as when he played goal last spring in our football team that knocked such lumps of flesh out of our rivals of St Dominic's.

'Tell me, Alonzo -- to what career will you dedicate yourself ?'

'Well, at the moment, I shall respect my good Uncle's desire that I should join him as a humble assistant in the business which has given him so portly a belly.'

'Of course: he is a director of the Madrid Bull Ring management, is he not?'

'Exactly: he contemplates to present to the public more valiant and dependable cornupeds than ever were seen before in the history of Spain, and more valiant and brilliant artists of killing. If, in some modest way, I can contribute to the glories of the

National Fiesta...'

'You have chosen well, Alonzo. Moreover, I greatly applauded your organization of the end-of-term bullfight, which was full of colour and passion. Everything for the Fatherland... Perhaps there will be reduced fees for your old teachers.'

We parted smiling.

Diego Vásquez

Diego was discovered in a romantic corner of the cloisters. He explained to us that he had his eye on a career which would be not only momentarily profitable, but would lead to a splendid future: that of interpreter-guide to tourists visiting the public buildings of our city.

'I think you have chosen well, Diego. Although one cannot occasionally repress a feeling of disgust at a sight of these ill-mannered sightseers, especially young women who often do not hesitate to enter sacred edifices without decently shrouding their heads, or their upper arms, or their semi-bare bosoms, and who even wear tight shorts like footballers, it is necessary to forgive them. They are doubtless Protestants or Jews and therefore totally without culture. It will be your duty and privilege to instruct them, with true Spanish courtesy, in decent comportment. After all, the tourist trade is most necessary to the national economy, as the Ministers of State never fail to remind us.'

'I will try to feel no resentment towards these savages.'

'Noble boy!'

Jaime and Cayetano Bobadilla, also Antonio Alemán

The three new bachelors who are about to enter the Royal Military Academy were found in the Health and Faith Gymnasium, tossing the medicine-bag one to the other.

As I entered unexpectedly, the said bag happened to strike me on the side of the head and I fell prostrate. The three comrades made the most chivalrous excuses and explanations...

It appears that the Bobadilla brothers intend to follow in the footsteps of their illustrious ancestors and carve a way to Fortune with the shining sword. Both are super-aces in the Gymnasium referred to; but Antonio Alemán, though the son of an historical professor, almost excels them in the flame-like loyalty which he consecrates to the military life.

'I dedicate myself to repairing a historical injustice nearly three centuries old.'

'You refer to Gibraltar?'

[An audible gnashing of resentful teeth.]

'If I have to tear down the alien flag with fingers ensanguined from scaling that truly Spanish crag, I will do so.'

'May God go with you, Antonio!'

The Bobadilla brothers echo this correct sentiment fervently.

Francisco Maura

As I entered the Library, where Francisco, a dwarfish but brilliant student, was consulting a new work of algebra recently set upon the shelves, I uncovered myself; for I knew that I stood in the presence of a future Atomic Physicist!

'And the cobalt bomb ?' I asked.

'It will not be long before we Castilians are able to construct bombs of transcendental power from even the cheapest materials, which Spain and her colonies can supply in prodigal quantities. Nothing can then hold back our glorious march of scientific progress...'

'Among these materials... ?'

'I will begin with tin-plate, of which this country has an excess, owing to the growing and natural preference of the public for aluminium coffeepots and galvanized iron watering-cans.'

'May the noise of your explosions reach this Library only as a distant reverberation from the evil cities of Moscow and Leningrad -- the Sodom and Gomorrah of today!'

Francisco's good-natured grin nearly halved his cherub's face.

Mauricio Venturoso

I had envisaged Mauricio, our exalted young philosopher, as a future occupant of the Chair of Logic at the Central University, not to mention making complimentary visits to Oxford, where he would expound Hegel and Kant or refute the theories of the late Ortega y Gasset. But this is not to be, he tells me, philosophically enough.

'What alternative profession, Mauricio?'

'The simple one of entering my father's business: the fabrication of innumerable plastic novelties.'

'Demark a few, if you please.'

'What shall I say...? Plastic flower-pots, plastic infantile night-vases, plastic back-scratchers for export to the Moroccans, plastic cock-spurs.'

'Did you say "cock-spurs"?'

'Yes, indeed, they are very necessary in the cockfighting industry, since the humanity of the present regime forbids the use of metal ones; but they serve very well, being not only sharp but resistant.'

'Perhaps, after all, it is better that you should consider the nation's material interests, Mauricio, than waste your inherited talents on such difficult problems in philosophy as often entice to views incompatible with true belief.'

'Ah, flaming youth! Each to the conquest of his own ideal!'

Curiosities

An Appetite

The American soldier Chester Salvatori costs the Army authorities large sums on account of the quantity of alimentation which is a daily necessity to him. Although the aforesaid soldier weighs no more than 158 lb (or say 70 kilos), he is accustomed to breakfast off 40 eggs, eight rashers of bacon, a ration of oatmeal, with three litres of milk and one of coffee. On a certain occasion he devoured a 16-1b (or say 72 kilos) turkey at a sitting. On another he disposed of 38 pork chops. What about posting him to the Commissariat ?p>

A unique training programme

A prisoner in the Santé at Paris has evolved a very original training programme. His mattress was infested with bedbugs, and he decided to train a large-sized spider to hunt them. He succeeded remarkably well, and the spider devoured the bedbugs with such expedition that he soon was able to pass a few excessively tranquil nights.

Cure for seasickness

A Portuguese diplomat was so subject to seasickness that he feared that he would

never reach the country to which he was destined. In the midst of his anxieties he threw himself from his bunk, whereupon it occurred to him to look at himself in a mirror -- which cured him instantly. He made diverse proofs with sundry other seasick passengers, all with the same success.

The remedy is both cheap and easy.

Congratulations! His Excellency the Civil Governor and Provincial Chief of the Falange, Comrade Lorenzo Jurado Hurtado, has personally presented the First Prize of the Juvenile Pigeon-Shooting Championship to Felipe González, alumnus of this College. He felled not less than ten of the enemy in twelve discharges.

Notice: It is with sorrowful anger that the Reverend Father charged with the Direction of this Sacred College spews out the scandalous and painful charge that the Mercedes-Benz automobile, in which he takes his needful journeys, was purchased with College Funds. It is sufficiently well known that this splendid vehicle -- impudently and blasphemously nicknamed 'The Sandals of St Modesto' -- was won, equally with the Vespa motor-scooter possessed by the College Librarian, in a bona fide public lottery organized for Charity under ecclesiastical auspices.

To conclude this little bulletin, collegians! You must apply yourselves seriously to your studies in the present autumn. If you do the contrary, you will be a hazard and disturbance to your companions; a despair to your professors; a disgrace to your family and country. And how to explain your miserable frowardness to our Patron, who watches over us all and whose hot tears fall reproachfully on all unworthy heads?