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William and Lucile Mann's South American trip, 1939

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Cordoba

[[newspaper article clipping]]
Sleepless Official Gives Tourists Smiling Service

Veteran of Three Wars, Argentine Travel Man Is Steady as a Rock

(No. 28 of a Series.)
By W.H. SHIPPEN, Jr.,
Star Staff Correspondent.

CORDOBA, Central Argentina--
The young executive from the Provincial Tourist' Bureau hadn't been to sleep for five days.
No grandee of Old Spain, however, could have been more exquisitely polite. He poured tea for the ladies, he lit the gentlemen's cigars, he ran errands, answered questions, smiled and bowed.
[[image to right of paragraph: portrait of author]] W.H. Shippen, Jr.
He was dressed in flowing trousers of immaculate white linen, tucked into half boots, and a smart, double-breasted blue coat. His long-fingered hands were beautifully manicured and steady as a rock when he offered matches to the guests--first holding the flaming sticks away while the sulphur burned from the tip.
The tourist official had a Clark Gable mustache and was almost too handsome. He was at the beck and call of some 300 delegates and their wives attending an international congress of postal officials in the Argentine--guests from almost every country in the world, whose wants as to transportation, hotel accommodations, food, etc., were even more complex than their languages.

Off-Season Staff Suffices.

We met him at a splendid summer resort hotel in the Sierras of Cordoba--the Eden, about 50 miles west of here. The season for the mountain hotels is December, January, and February, but the staff on hand was sufficient to provide an elaborate Argentine lunch, including wines and champagne, for some 400 transient guests.

Our little party merely happened by, but the tourist official had time for us, although, for more than a week, he had been accompanying the postal authorities on a tour of the surrounding country. He and another young official--who was driving us on a cross-country trip--introduced Dr. William M. Mann to the Governor of the Province of Cordoba and found seats for us in the crowded banquet hall.

After we had been seated the first official bowed from the waist. "Zank you so much for coming," he said. The fellow had at least a score of immediate demands to attend to.

"How does he do it?" I asked.

"Ah, said the Argentine in our party, "he is an old campaigner!"

"But I thought your Tourist Bureau was less than a year old?"

Veteran Nevertheless.

"That is correct, But he is still the old campaigner. Before he entered the tourist business he was--what do you North Americans say?--the gentleman soldier of fortune. He has fight in three wars. The Chaco--the "Green Hell," you say and other places. He has been shot some times and knifed. He is an excellent rider, an old campaigner, and accustomed to stay awake all night...otherwise he might not wake up feeling so good...you comprehend?



After luncheon the "old" campaigner escorted us to our car. He saw the ladies and gentlemen comfortably seated, he offered cigarettes all around, shook hands and bowed many times.
"When do you plan to get some sleep?" I asked.
"Sleep, sir" he said, blinking his eyes. "I have no wish for sleep when so many charming quests are here to entertain me with their conversation! I look forward to enjoying them for two days yet!"

Service With More Smiles.

The young officer who was assigned to Dr. Mann and his party was equally as courteous. His car and his time were at our disposal some 12 hours a day. He drove us over perilous mountain roads, to ancient monasteries, shrines, and spacious resort hotels; he saw that we enjoyed the best foods and service in a country where both are abundant; he arranged hotel accommodations, shopping tours, and side trips; he helped us cash travelers' checks and acted as interpreter in a country where almost no English is understood.
This evening, when Dr. Mann called upon the Governor, His Excellency asked:

"What can we give you, Dr. Mann? What would you like to take home from our Province of Cordoba?"
"Well, sir," Dr. Mann replied, "if it's all right with you-I'd like to take home a couple of your tourist officials!"

Tomorrow: Impressions of Cordoba

[[top left image: church/cathedral on a hill]] Cathedral

Scenes in the Zoo

[[second row left image: hillside with partially obscured building]]

[[second row right image: zoo pathway with enclosed gazebo at end]]

[[third row left image: fence and plants]]

[[third row right image: elephant in its enclosure]]

[[last row left: monkey enclosure]]

[[last row right: men working on monkey enclosure]]

Monkey pit under construction [[below both bottom row images]]

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