

April 1947

Mexico City Group Welcomes Visitors

There's an added attraction now in Mexico for the A.A. Tourist - a small, but vigorous group in the capital, Mexico City.

The group meets in the Y.M.C.A. on Tuesday nights and the fact that the American vacationer lacks knowledge of the Spanish language does not detract appreciably from his ability to thoroughly enjoy and participate in the discussions of the alcoholic problem. At least half of the discussion is in English; or at least the group arranges it that way when a unilingual visitor such as the writer shows up at a meeting.

The first Mexican member of the group is Fernando I., a lawyer who made contact with A.A. six months ago. His story of the mental, physical and economic tolls of alcoholism is no different, in substance, from those heard in A.A. meetings throughout this country but there's an indescribable charm in the way he tells it - partly in English, a string of Spanish now and then when his enthusiasm carries him away, and, through it all, a broad assortment of gestures that actually help tell the story.

His favorite yarn concerns the night he broke his ankle. Seems he had to jump off the roof of the family's one-story home because his wife had locked the doors. She knew that Fernando was bender-bent.

Neither Fernando, nor his charming wife and their children must in any way bow to any American family in their faith in the A.A. program. Senora I., her oldest daughter and a sister all accompanied Fernando to one of the meetings I attended. A.A. was the only topic discussed when we lunched at their home. The devotion of his family to our program of recovery indicated that A.A. will grow in Mexico. Those who live there are convinced the program will prove to be a vital factor in improving national health as it is in this country. It seems that not all of the spouses live north of the border.

There are two Americans in the Mexico City Group: Pauline D., formerly associated with the Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles Groups, and Les F., formerly of New Orleans.

The only deterrent likely to affect rapid growth of A.A. in Mexico immediately is that there is no abundance of evidence among Mexicans of the dividends of sobriety, such as the newer A.A.s of our country are able to see in our larger meetings and in our business contacts.

In Mexico, where there is virtually no such evidence, it stands out sharply as an aid to recovery. But, if the light to show the path to prolonged and contented sobriety is faint in Mexico now - as it was when A.A. was in its infancy in this country a decade ago - there still is the vigor of a young organization to make the bumps in the road seem less jarring. - *L.J., Mincola. N.Y.*