

Never the Ending News

There's always something! Things keep happening!

Llover sobre mojado (rain on top of soaking wet). Here's a little poem for you that I learned in Nephi Georgi's first-year German class at the U. It tends to surface through the water on my brain every time there's rain. With this week's intermittent drizzling and fizzling, precipitation is now above average for the year.

Es regnet, es regnet, die Erde wird naß;
es blühen die Blumen und grün wird das Graß.
Es regnet, es regnet, es regnet sich aus;
und wann es genug geregnet hat, dann hört es wieder auf.

It's raining, it's raining, the earth it gets wet;
Are blooming the flowers and green the grass gets.
It's raining, it's raining, it rains itself out;
And when it enough rained has, then it turns off the spout.

George's joke™. Jorge Serradell, back from his mission for about five years, is one of our best teachers. His lesson on "primeros contactos" officially is taught in the mission field, but since missionaries practice making first contacts at the MTCs (the real thing, here), we have been allowed to keep the class. Jorge has a thick black beard, not too long and beautifully trimmed. Typically, he begins his presentation by asserting that above scriptures, tracts, leaflets, cassettes, filmstrips, whatever, the missionary's most important asset is herself (himself). Then he emphasizes how important it is for the elders to be clean-shaven, which always gets a laugh. "And don't forget five o'clock shadow," he says, "especially if your beard grows back fast." Then the punch line: "Look at me, for example, and I just shaved four hours ago."

Lèse-majesté (offense against a ruler's dignity). Even an emperor, as a rule, has to do his own er, uh... and, I suppose, blow his own nose and brush his own teeth. You know how I abhor mentioning such things, but the indignity of it hit me when I, the president of the CEM, had to go this morning after having retired as early as possible last night with a medium bad cold. Somehow the emperor's plight is somewhat comforting, at that. Vive l'égalité! Long live equality! There are always sick missionaries among us, but amazingly we hardly ever catch any of their ailments. Just now, with Merrill's help, I was trying to recall: "Let's see now. Feed a cold and starve a..." At this point she interpolated: "I feed everything, and it works!" I just remembered: "...starve a fever." Feed or starve, I stay so skinny I have to cinch my belt tighter than the cinch around Charlotte's buckin' bronco because, according to Carolyn's funny joke, if my pants fell down my blinding white legs would light up the sky like the aurora borealis. Down here in the southern hemisphere we have the aurora australis. Duh... Ah aceps duh challuhnge. Pero aurora no, mañana (But not now--tomorrow). Another bother this morning: I get all dressed and then have to change my socks. Six thousand miles away and she continues to exert her inexorable influence. Grey suit, brown socks. I can hear someone say that the socks don't match. You keep out of this, Teresa! And you other inexorable enforcers too! Mom's getting a bit indifferent and lax. Bodes this ill or nil?

Buen humor. Our missionaries are fun to be with and often very funny. They like to practice what they're taught. Someone will approach Mom for anything at all and then spring a proselyting technique on her. Example: "Where are we supposed to leave the clothes we want washed?.... Do you believe in God?" One day, looking people in the eye to convey our sincerity, interest, faith, and love was emphasized. So they all went around looking everyone in the eye. Made me wonder if any of them could stare Teresa down. Since coming on this mission, I've struggled to live a pure, guiltless life and might dare to try once more (as we used to occasionally around the table)--without any confidence, though. With sincerity, interest, and love, yes, but oh me of little faith.

Way station. After about two months the Espíns finally found an apartment they could afford and now we have the Rogers staying with us temporarily. They are a retired couple serving an 18-month mission (Chile-Antofogasta) and he has just been called to be a counselor in the Santiago Temple presidency. The new president, Max Willis (former president, Chile-Concepción Mission), and wife arrived four days ago and we haven't met them yet. **Ever-loving M&D / M&W**