

In the accompanying pictures, Professor Gimeno is seated in his spacious living room, a beautiful part of his Spanish home. The accompanying reproduction of one of Mr Gimeno's paintings is of a scene in Colorado. In his collection the artist has many portraits, among them portraits of former Governor Lee Cruce, Dr. S. Roy Hadsell of the English department, Theodore H. Brewer, head of the department of English and Dr. William Bennett Bizzell, president of the university. He devotes several hours of each day to his painting

Patricio Gimeno

BY WILLIAM H. WITT, '32

IN spite of his peaceful life of the present day, Patricio Gimeno, professor of Spanish at the university, has a colorful career tucked away in the archives of his "past." He has lived a life of adventure, filled with travel and the romantic glamor of the Old World.

This lovable person is extremely modest—as most of the celebrities are. Although he could spin many a yarn savoring of story book adventure which has been a part of his early life, he prefers to silence them somewhat and substitute the pleasant reverie of educational theories and philosophy. He does this because he has no desire to boast or make statements which will even lean toward the conduct of the braggart.

Professor Gimeno is a veteran on the campus of the university. He has been a member of the faculty for twenty-two years, since 1911. Here is an instance of a man changing his vocation to his avocation, for in reality, Professor Gimeno is an artist, and a most worthy one. Evidences of his artistic ability are to be found in practically every building on the campus of Oklahoma's leading institution for higher learning. Some twenty-five or thirty of his paintings are now hanging in our buildings. Spending the greater part of his spare time at work on what he regards as his pastime, Professor Gimeno has produced some wonderful work which has been donated to the school.

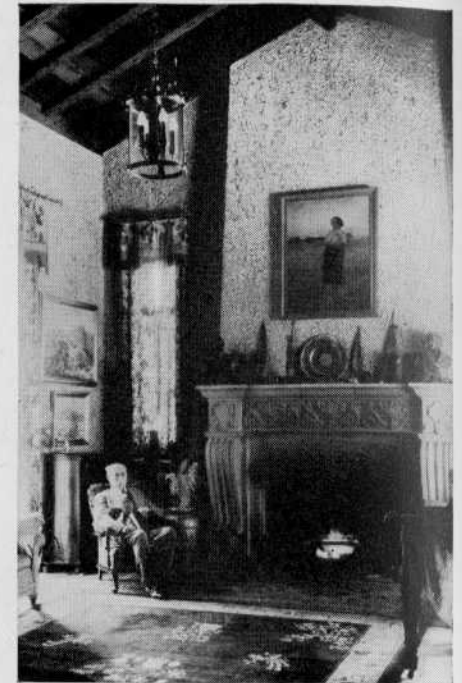
He received his education in the Escalpius College, preliminary work in the academy, and received his Bachiller en Artes from this institution in Valencia. He studied art in various institutions

in Spain. He explained that the art schools were separated from the institutes of higher learning designed to provide a general education.

After graduation at Valencia, Professor Gimeno went to Cuba to paint and later came to New York City to engage in the same profession. In 1911 he came to the university as an instructor in art, being then the only art teacher on the campus, hence head of the department. Señor Gimeno recalls now that his studio was located in the Old Engineering building and that the Administration building was not yet completed when he arrived. A little later his studio was moved to the new administration building.

Professor Gimeno's ability as a linguist made him a most valuable asset, and as the demand for students with the knack of speaking Spanish became greater, Dr. Stratton D. Brooks, president of the university, transferred Mr Gimeno to the modern language department, making him head of the Spanish department. This was in 1914, so that Professor Gimeno remained the art instructor for four years, and for the remainder of his tenure during these eventful years, has been an instructor in the languages. During these many years on the campus, Professor Gimeno has not limited his activities to the teaching of Spanish, but has taught French and Italian.

Among his other qualities, Professor Gimeno has a keen appreciation of music, and is also a writer of some note, especially in the matter of Spanish literary criticism. Some of this work has been contributed to various Spanish pub-



HEFFNER

lications as well as *Books Abroad*, the international publication of reviews, printed by the University of Oklahoma Press.

Professor Gimeno is the son of a talented Spaniard, José Gimeno, whose wife was an equally talented Italian lady. Patricio Gimeno was born in Arequipa, Peru, but was taken to Spain while he was but a baby. His parents were students of the Spanish opera and as talented musicians traveled extensively in Europe, South America, North America, and Central America. Hence at an early age, Patricio saw quite a bit of the world, and made a good many trips between Spain and the Americas.

Here is a dash of adventure for you. The first few trips made by Mr Gimeno between Spain and the new World across the Atlantic were made in wooden sailboats. It took months to complete the trip around the South American horn, and there were storms and other equally exciting happenings. Here indeed was a most picturesque setting for a life of art for a talented youngster.

With this Spanish and Italian ancestry it was natural that he should inherit a desire for the mastery of languages. His mother spoke English, French, Italian and Spanish, and his father spoke Spanish altogether. As a youngster he often performed on the stage, and after he came to the university assisted with the presentation of student plays. He likes to act, he says, but does not like the life of the actor. His youthful roamings were cut short when he was ten years old, at which time his father died. He went with his mother to live with his father's relatives in Valencia.

Some thirty-four years ago, he returned to Peru and other South American countries, in the interest of his art work and to revisit some of the scenes of his early travels. With his knowledge of South American commerce, he has been able as a teacher to provide many young men with a firm foundation in the understanding of Spanish so that they have been able to take their places in American export work. Professor Gimeno in discussing his advent into the educational field as an instructor of Spanish states:

"Our commerce with South America was growing by leaps and bounds, and there was a scarcity of people who could speak both the English and Spanish languages. German and English companies had recognized a vast market in South America. Their salesmanship was far ahead of that of companies in the United States. But with the tremendous growth of American manufacturing methods in the early nineteen hundreds, this country put up a fight for commercial supremacy. The United States has been winning this supremacy more and more as the years have rolled by. A command of the Spanish language is the weapon which has enabled American tradesmen to win this victory. The importance of the command of Spanish in foreign trade is shown when we note that from our first Spanish classes hardly large enough to keep one teacher busy, the university has grown until now we have more than 500 students of Spanish."

Professor Gimeno's instruction of Spanish is practical, for he believes in giving his students a working knowledge of the language rather than a mere scholastic knowledge. He is able to point out many concrete examples of the benefits derived from practical knowledge of languages, but one in particular impressed the writer. He spoke of a young man connected with the Choctaw Milling Co., who took a course from Professor Gimeno in an extension class. This man handled extensive correspondence in

Spanish from South American commercial people. His success in the local dealings with foreign trade later enabled this young man to accept a fine position in New York and later to travel extensively in South America in the interest of his business firm.

In stressing the point of a practical working knowledge and use of a language, Professor Gimeno says:

"My first impression in the teaching field was that there was something wrong with the old academic methods of teaching modern languages. I received this impression through personal first hand experience. Although I had studied the English language in my student days at Valencia, when I arrived in this country I found my scholastic English of little value, and as time went on I believe it was more of a hindrance as a background than a help. My first aim has always been to make the student understand Spanish and speak it with as near a correct pronunciation as possible. To learn a lot about a language and its grammatical construction and then find yourself unable to understand a native when he speaks it and not be able to express yourself is proof enough that you have wasted your time. However the directness of the teaching must necessarily be deleted when we have large classes. The efficient learning of a language is a thing which requires practice and it is the aim of the teacher to give the student that practice in class. Explaining a lot about Spanish grammar in English will do little toward teaching the student to express himself.

"One of my most interesting experiences in teaching a language under purely direct methods was during the World War when I was sent to Camp Travis to teach the soldiers French. It was a question of teaching the most in the shortest time to men who were to use what they were taught. Rules and grammar were hardly mentioned. It was a matter of drilling their tongues and their

ears. I believe we as educators are leaning toward this method of instruction more and more every day."

Evidence of Professor Gimeno's success as a language teacher are presented when we point out some of the members of the language faculty of the university who are former students of this Spanish gentleman. Among them are Miss Gladys Barnes, assistant professor of Spanish; Todd Downing, instructor in Spanish; Miss Eugenia Kaufman, assistant professor of modern languages; Kenneth Kaufman, assistant professor of modern languages and Miss Stella Sanders, instructor in romance languages.

There are many others, who have received their first instruction in Spanish from Professor Gimeno. The subject of this article remembers that Dr. Edwin DeBarr, former head of the chemistry department for whom DeBarr Hall was named, was at one time a student in Spanish classes and that Mrs Stratton D. Brooks, wife of the former president of the university was also in his class.

Some seven years ago, Professor Gimeno took a sabbatical leave and worked on a varied course in Harvard university. While there he studied art under Dr. Denman Ross. An evidence of Mr Gimeno's liberality and respect of opinions of others is illustrated in his discussion of Ross's instruction. Professor Gimeno believes that one is born an artist. Doctor Ross taught that art could be learned in a mechanical way, through the mathematical application of color.

"Since that course in Harvard, I am always eager to read accounts of exhibitions by Mr Ross and to examine his work, for I am interested in watching the progress of those with whom I have been associated," he says.

Like his father, Harold Gimeno, Professor Gimeno's son has inherited a love of the beautiful. He was graduated from the university with a degree in music and later attended Harvard where he received his Master of Arts degree in architecture. The younger Gimeno has built a number of buildings in Norman, and built the Gimeno home, a beautiful Spanish dwelling located at 800 Elm avenue in Norman. In this home there is a touch of Old Spain transplanted in Oklahoma. His daughter, Margarita, now Mrs Leo Conisidine of Oklahoma City, is a talented musician, and is also a graduate from O. U. One of the most important of Professor Gimeno's outside activities is the collection of a large and valuable library. He started with a very few old volumes handed down in his family. He has several old volumes in this collection with the license of the Spanish Inquisition. In this library he also has one of the first translations of Marco Polo's travels, in Spanish. This book was printed in the year 1601, years

(TURN TO PAGE 214, PLEASE)



OKLAHOMA CITY O. U. BOOSTERS

IMAGE IS NOT AVAILABLE
ONLINE DUE TO COPYRIGHT
RESTRICTIONS.

A paper copy of this
issue is available at
call number LH 1 .06S6 in
Bizzell Memorial Library.

PATRICIO GIMENO

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 199)

before the first settlers of Massachusetts arrived in this country.

"This book of Marco Polo's travels also carries the license of the Spanish Inquisition and has some amazing facts between its covers. Centuries before the world knew anything of petroleum and coal, the writer carried a description in this book about a peculiar sort of oil found in the creeks of Southern Russia that the barbaric natives used as fuel and light. Centuries have passed and now the Standard Oil Company has developed oil fields in this vicinity," Professor Gimeno points out.

But his activities are not limited to reading and collection of books, for with all his other achievements, he is a journalist too, and this interest has led him to edit and illustrate a number of books.

Professor Gimeno is somewhat of a philosopher and an economist. In this connection his estimate of the value of learning Spanish and the relation to trade brings out some most interesting side-lights. He says:

"I have always felt that my mission was to instill an interest in Spanish and Spanish literature in the students with whom I come in contact. Being able to express one's self in another tongue helps one express himself in his own tongue. Many of our great Americans have been scholars of Spanish and its literature, Washington Irving, Longfellow and James Russell Lowell. In my library I have many of the volumes of Spanish literature from Lowell's history.

"By knowing the language and the literature of a people, you learn the nature of that people. There never was a better time to learn about Latin America. We are in the trough of a depression, our factories are closed and the wheels of industry are thirsting for more markets. There are seventy millions of people south of us, Spanish speaking people, who are still 'buying European.' We have only scratched the surface of trade. Millions of them are wearing clothes which were woven in England out of Australian wool and Indian cotton!

"Englishmen are very good at learning the ways of others and their likes. And a noteworthy fact is that one of the best texts I have been able to find in teaching Spanish commercial practice in connection with export and import trade is written by an Englishman and published in London. In the preface the author gives the following wise advice about certain peculiar customs of South America: Such letters are expected by our foreign customers, and if we wish to trade with Rome we must write as the Romans write, and not as we think they ought to write.

"I foresee for the very near future vast outlets and markets for our machinery.

The wealth is there and the wealth is here but it needs circulation. And it will take trade with these millions to the south of us to start that circulation and get us out of this temporary period of stagnation."

With many years of teaching service to his credit and the exertion of a wholesome influence on the lives of many Oklahomans who have carved their niches in the world of business, Professor Gimeno has performed a worthy task and there are many years of a peaceful, contented and happy life in store for this man, who has made a place for himself in the hearts of all those who have had the privilege of coming in contact with him. A toast to the Spanish gentleman.

▲ ▲ ▲ THE CONTRIBUTION OF SOONER ENGINEERS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 189)

ing important executive positions are: L. B. Curtis, '10, secretary-treasurer of the Mining Research Bureau at Boulder, Colorado; Leo H. Gorton, '13, president of Dresser & Gorton, Inc., at Tulsa; C. T. Hughes, '18, superintendent of power of the Electric Railways of Connecticut, Milldale, Connecticut; R. F. Danner, '20, general superintendent of the Oklahoma Gas & Electric Company, in which firm fifty-seven Sooner engineers are employed; Enoch B. Ferrell, '21, radio engineer with the Bell Telephone laboratories in New York, where Mr Ferrell is at the forefront in short wave transmission experimentation; W. H. Reilly, '23, assistant to the general manager of the Southwestern Bell Telephone Company; P. H. Robinson, '25, transmission engineer for the Houston Light & Power Company at Houston, Texas; Watson Jones, '28, engineer with the RCA Photophone Company at Oakland, California.

Notable among the successful graduates of the school of mechanical engineering are the following: Joseph C. Gordon, '15, mechanical engineer for the Pure Oil Company, Fort Worth, Texas; Harry S. Odermann, '16, president of the Detroit City Service Company, Detroit, Michigan; Eugene Pembleton, '17, superintendent of the refinery of the Henry L. Doherty Company, Boston, Massachusetts; Edward H. Reeves, '18, professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston, Massachusetts; Benjamin Stockwell, '18, manager of the Southwestern Pipe Line, Bristow, Oklahoma; Floyd Waterfield, '20, superintendent of the Oklahoma Pipe Line Company, Muskogee and president of the Oklahoma section of the A. A. E.; John H. Baxter, '21, sales manager for the Inland Gas Company, Ashland, Kentucky; David E. Fields, '25, mechanical engineer for the Tulsa Boiler and Iron Works, Tulsa; Guy S. Mitchel, '25, gas engineer for the Pittsburgh Light and Power Company, Pittsburgh, Pennsyl-