

Continuation  
preceding page

Etching Conquistador  
mounted to

#### THE MODERN OLD SPANISH TRAIL

In keeping with the march of progress an auto-mobile trunk line was needed from Florida to California thru these Southern Borderlands. Here in olden times the Spanish conquistadores and padres explored, colonized and worked and broke their primitive trails. They left a heritage of great churches and of relics of their industrial occupations. But one old Spanish fort stands in all these Southern Borderlands. Their churches and missions and the industry they fostered were the primary policies of their empire building. Adventurers there were who plundered and killed and took what they could but the Government <sup>insisted upon</sup> ~~directed the~~ humane policies and the <sup>Robert M. Stand</sup> ~~ensuring~~ works are of the church and of the administrators.

When those 419 enthusiasts met at Mobile in 1915 and organized to promote the construction of the Old Spanish Trail <sup>as a modern Highway</sup> I doubt if any of them really comprehended the big achievements that were destined in the name of that enterprise. I have met many of those men since that time and have learned they went to that meeting with fire and determination to open this southern country to modern travel but none of them realized the financial and engineering difficulties that lay ahead. It is a long way from the primitive trails of the Spanish fathers to a smooth and unbroken highway nearly 2,800 miles long!

By 1931 there were \$80,000,000 of completed roads and bridges on this Old Spanish Trail. Trunk lines south to this highway have also been built. By the end of 1931 <sup>there will be</sup> ~~essentially~~ continuous pavement <sup>from</sup> ~~with~~ any point on the Atlantic seaboard <sup>to</sup> ~~down in~~ San Antonio and the South Texas cities and Monterrey ~~in~~ <sup>down in</sup> ~~central~~ Mexico.

The secret of course is that never has this Old Spanish Trail project been a promoter's plaything. It was organized and has been directed by the people of the South.

Somewhat it has seemed as though the spirit of the padres and the conquistadores flamed again in the soul of these Anglo-Saxon pioneers. We read the story of the Spaniards of those three centuries from <sup>Saint</sup> ~~St.~~ Augustine to San Diego and marvel at their fortitude in the face of such hardships. We view the evidences of their works and marvel at their achievements. We who have watched these modern men from Florida to California rise to the demands of this southern