

The Cable Tied

Vol. XVI

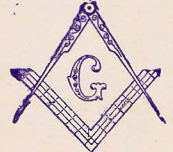
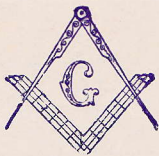
Manila, P. I., August, 1938

No. 3

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE
GRAND LODGE OF FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS
OF THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS

PUBLISHED FOR AND IN THE INTEREST OF THE MEMBERS OF THE LODGES OF THIS JURISDICTION

A TIRELESS WORKER



Rt. Wor. Bro. Julian C. Balmaseda,
Past Senior Grand Lecturer

(An interview with him appears in the Spanish section of this issue)

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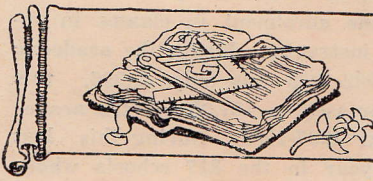
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Manila, P. I., August, 1938

No. 3



Editorial



THE CONSTITUTION MUST PREVAIL



FROM the pulpit has come this claim of the ecclesiastical authorities in the Philippines: the separation of Church and State does not prohibit them from exercising their constitutional rights. To which claim we say that nobody holds the contrary. However, when the exercise of those rights is made merely the excuse for trying to dictate the policies of the State, then it becomes entirely another question.

When President Quezon vetoed the Bill on Religious Instruction he supported his action with reasons inspired by the best interest of his people. He has since declared that the lack of Sunday schools and catechists is to blame "for the deplorable ignorance of their own religion among the Catholic youth," adding that "the words of our Lord Christ, 'Teach ye all nations.... teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you' are not addressed to kings or presidents but to the apostles and their successors, the bishops."

The archbishop and bishops of Cebu naturally did not like the President's veto. They therefore issued a pastoral which not only blames the State for the alleged irreligion of our youth, but practically tells the people to boycott the public schools and "colleges and institutions run by Protestants and other sectaries." When the President rightfully censured them for such open defiance, they said their constitutional rights were being curtailed.

The Government of this Commonwealth has not and will not curtail the exercise of rights guaranteed by the Constitution, but it is safe to assume that it will curtail the supposed right of our ecclesiastical authorities to tell the Government what to do with its schools. What is more, it will fight as best it can, for the good of this young nation, the claim of the prelates of Cebu—which quite represents the way the Catholic hierarchy thinks—that they represent the "will of the people."

In the scheme of our democracy the will of the people is voiced by their constitutional officers, not by bishops or archbishops. It is a deliberate distortion of the meaning of our political system, and an open threat of reuniting Church and State with the Church as master, for bishops now to claim representation of the popular will in a matter that concerns a state policy such as the education of our citizens.

It is bad enough, indeed, for men in black habits to be interfering with our political affairs when they should be dedicating all their energies to the salvation of lost souls, for does that not imply at least that such men have not enough to do or that they are incapable of sticking to their mission which perhaps answers for their own finding that the youth of the land is irreligious?

That is all bad enough, but what is worse is that those men in black habits should arrogate unto themselves the authority to speak the will of the people against a decision of their own highest constitutional officer. Considering the influence of the Church over our less educated classes, what might its propagandists not do to subvert those classes' loyalty to their Government whose policies even now the church would dictate?

It should be clear to all that the celebrated pastoral of the bishops of Cebu is the forerunner of what Catholic fascism will do here if the evil of ecclesiastical meddling in our affairs is not nipped in the bud. We have there all the indications of church dictation in this country if the necessary steps are not taken right now to maintain the integrity of our State.

It is our fear, and the fear of every liberty-loving Filipino, that if bishops were allowed their way they would vitiate all the substance of our democratic life. It cannot be denied that through the Religious Instruction Bill they sought to cut the opening wedge into the bulwark of our liberties, and that if they had succeeded history would have been repeated here.

The President's warning has come on time: In this country exists "one of the most menacing evils that can confront the government and people, namely, the interference of the Church in the affairs of the State." Now, the hierarchy will do well to heed this other warning: "Any attempts on their part to interfere with matters that are within the province of the government will not be tolerated."

It is clearly indicated that bishops must not use the "will of the people" as an instrument to bamboozle the Government; also, that while the Constitution they cite for their convenience must, as they say, be adapted to the will of the people and not the will of the people to the Constitution, in their particular case they must adapt themselves to it, rather than it to them.

The Catholic Hierarchy Must Acknowledge and Respect the Separation of Church and State—Quezon

The pastoral letter of the archbishop and bishops of the metropolitan see of Cebu, in which the Catholics of the Philippines are enjoined to send their children only to Catholic schools by way of counteracting the Government's refusal to teach religion in its schools, has drawn the following censure from President Manuel L. Quezon:

I am amazed at the boldness of the Metropolitan Archbishop and Suffragan Bishops of the Ecclesiastical Province of Cebu in taking up at an episcopal conference a matter concerning the constitutional duties and prerogatives of the officials and branches of the government of the Commonwealth.

I had so far ignored charges made to the effect that the hierarchy of the Catholic Church in the Philippines had instigated and was behind the movement for the enactment of the bill regarding religious instruction in the Philippines. But the pastoral letter signed by the Metropolitan Archbishop of Cebu and the Suffragan Bishops of that ecclesiastical province is an incontrovertible evidence that we did face at the last session of the legislature, and we do face now, one of the most menacing evils that can confront the government and people of the Philippines, namely, the interference of the Church in the affairs of the State. It seems that the Archbishop and Bishops who have written this pastoral letter are blind to the lessons of history including our own during the Spanish regime. Being myself a Catholic, I am no less interested in preserving the independence of the Church from the State than I am in preserving the independence of the Government from the Church.

It should be unnecessary to remind the ecclesiastical authorities in the Philippines that the separation of Church and State in this country is a reality and not a mere theory, and that as far as our people are concerned, it is forever settled that this separation shall be maintained as one of the cardinal tenets of our government.

The ecclesiastical authorities should realize, therefore, that any attempts on their part to interfere with matters that are within the province of the government will not be tolerated. If the said ecclesiastical authorities desire to have the government respect their rights and afford them every kind of protection in the free exercise of their religion, they must not only abide by the laws and lawful orders of the government, but they must also acknowledge and respect the principle of the separation of Church and State.

On matters purely ecclesiastical, the Catholic bishops may speak for the Filipino Catholics; but when it comes to expressing the will of the Filipino people as a political entity on any matter concerning legislation or governmental measures, the Catholic bishops, some of whom are not Filipinos, are assuming too much when they pretend to speak for our people, as they do in the pastoral letter, when they say that the majority of the Filipino people are demanding the enactment of the bill which I have vetoed. The fact that the majority of the National Assembly voted for the said bill does not necessarily prove that the majority of the people are for it. It only proves that a majority of the members of the National Assembly were for the bill.

If I were inclined to interfere in the affairs of the Church, as the Catholic bishops are attempting to do with the affairs of the State, I would tell the Archbishop and the Bishops of the ecclesiastical province of Cebu that the lack of Sunday schools and catequists to teach the Catholic religion is mainly responsible for the deplorable ignorance of their own religion that is found amongst the Catholic youth. Everybody knows that there are many towns in the Philippines where parochial schools do not exist and where there is not even one single Catholic priest. It seems that the high authorities of the Catholic Church would blame the government for the negligence or inability of the ecclesiastical authorities to perform their duty to teach the doctrine of their faith. The words of our Lord Jesus Christ cited in the pastoral letter "Teach ye all nations.... teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded

you" are not addressed to Kings or Presidents but to the Apostles and their successors—the bishops.

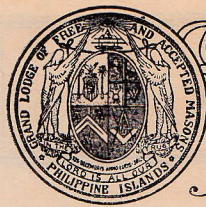
A very unfair campaign has been launched against the government, making it appear that we are not complying with the provisions of the Constitution regarding optional teaching of religious instruction. The truth is the opposite, as evidenced by the fact that while the enrolment in classes in religious instruction during the academic year 1932-1933 was only 29,996, this had increased to 187,080 in the academic year 1937-1938. During this last school year in the 817 schools where religious instruction was given, more than one-half of the children enrolled in said schools received religious instruction.

Moreover, if the desire is to have hours exclusively devoted to religious instruction in the public schools, so that the regular school activities may not interfere with said instruction, I am placing Saturdays and Sundays at the disposal of all the ministers of all the religions existing in the Philippines. On Saturdays and Sundays, the public schools are not being used for schools purposes and, therefore, they may be used for religious instruction if it is so requested. What is prohibited in the existing legislation and by the Constitution, and which, therefore, I may not allow, is that any hour needed for public school purposes be devoted to religious instruction.

It is my earnest conviction that the Filipino people will not heed the call to drag them into a religious controversy such as would result if the threat of the ecclesiastical authorities, as stated in their pastoral letter, to wage anew another campaign to change the present status of optional religious instruction as provided in the Constitution, is carried out.

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The M. W. Grand Master's Official Visitations



ISAGANI LODGE No. 96

Most Wor. Jose Abad Santos, Grand Master, accompanied by M. W. Conrado Benitez, P. G. M., Wor. Bro. Quirino Abad Santos, and Bro. Dominador Gallardo, made an official visitation to Isagani Lodge No. 96, at Tarlac, Tarlac, on May 14, 1938, on the occasion of the conferring of the Past Master's Jewel on six Past Masters of the Lodge. More than 70 Master Masons attended the ceremonies which were held in public.

M. W. Conrado Benitez, called upon to speak by Wor. Bro. Francisco Alejo, Master of Isagani Lodge, deplored that some of our public men do not seem to be aware of the principles for which their predecessors died. M. W. Benitez added that in order that our society may be interested in the civic education of our people, we should initiate a movement for a better understanding of what our public schools stand for.

Grand Master Santos expressed his appreciation for the entertainment accorded the party. He said that the singular record of Isagani Lodge stands as a shining example of what could be done if the right spirit is present among the brethren.

Recalling the trials that Masonry has undergone to test the merit of its principles, he asserted that because we fought for a just cause, triumph ultimately crowned our efforts. He ad-

vised that as patriotic Filipinos we cannot shut our eyes to the tendency by alien elements to dominate our national life. Concluding, the Grand Master said with emphasis, "Don't remain indifferent in the face of formidable forces that are fighting Masonry."

The Past Masters who were presented with the Past Masters' Jewel by the Grand Master, were Wor. Bros. Clemente Terso, Silvino Isla, Sixto Guiang, Alfonso A. Pablo, Teodoro M. Lising, and Julian Esteban. They delivered short speeches on topic about Isagani Lodge in particular, and Masonry in general.

CALAMBA VISITED

The Most Worshipful Grand Master, accompanied by the Officers and members of the Grand Lodge, made his official visitation to the three Lodges working in Laguna, at the town of Calamba, the birthplace of Bro. Dr. Jose Rizal, on Saturday, June 18, 1938 at 7:00 P. M.

This visitation was made to coincide with Dr. Rizal's birthday in order that an appropriate program in honor of our National Hero could be held by the Lodges to be visited.

The Most Worshipful Grand Master called on as many Masons as were able to do so to join in the tribute to one who best exemplified in his life the highest principles of Freemasonry. A

large number of Master Masons with their friends responded to the invitation.

The three Lodges visited, Makiling Lodge No. 72, Malinaw Lodge No. 25 and Pinagsabitan Lodge No. 26 held the following program:

1. Opening of the Lodge at 7:00 P. M.
2. Reception of the M. W. Grand Master at 7:30 P. M.
3. Welcome Address by Wor. Bro. Macario R. Abad, Master of Makiling Lodge No. 72, F. & A. M.
1. Music by Delfino Brothers
2. Address in Tagalog by Wor. Bro. Engracio L. Valmonte (72)
3. Address in Spanish by Bro. Judge Antonio Horrilleno (11)
4. Music
5. Address by M. W. Conrado Benitez, P. G. M.
6. Musical Selection
7. Address by M. W. Bro. Jose Abad Santos, Grand Master

Wor. Bro. Juan O. Chioco (72) acted as Master of Ceremonies.

Sick Committee

The Most Worshipful Grand Master appointed the following brethren to serve in the Sick Committee during the month of August, 1938:

Leon S. Eaton (3), Chairman
Anacleto Caces (88), Member
Luis San Juan (13), Member

LET US LEAD AGAIN

By MATEO D. CIPRIANO, P. M.

Masonry of today is not, I think, the Masonry that should be. Our labors are mere ritualistic routine, confined to the four walls of our temple. This is the reason why our meetings become monotonous and scarcely attended. Many a highly civic-spirited man who sought admission into our Fraternity in the hope of achieving his desire to be of service to mankind, has resigned precisely because of our seemingly stand—aloof—from—social—activities policy.

Why do we not go once in a while to the open and take part in movements

which will redound to the benefit of the communities in which we live? Why do we not offer our services and cooperation in the social reconstruction which is now the chief concern of our people and government, instead of secluding ourselves under the shadows of our temple?

Masonry was founded not for the purpose of attaining alone the moral and spiritual uplift of its members, but for the more noble purpose of guiding humanity along the road of mutual understanding and of making the world a beautiful and safe place

where men of all races may live together in peace, happiness, and contentment.

Masonry is synonymous with sacrifice, altruism, service, love. It is supposed to exist where there is something useful to be done.

At a meeting of a Lodge which is working at Plaridel Temple I had the privilege of hearing from its outgoing Master the following words:

"Masonry is service without truce. It is the accomplishment of the true

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FRATERNAL REVIEWS

By A. E. TATTON, P. M., FRATERNAL REVIEWER

OHIO, 1937

The Grand Lodge of the Most Ancient and Honorable Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of Ohio, founded in 1833, had on July 31, 1937, 623 subordinate Lodges with a total membership of 176,125, showing a net loss of 2,249 members during the year. Grand Masters: retiring, J. Philip Perry; incoming, Louis B. Blake-more of Cincinnati. Grand Secretary, Harry S. Johnson, Cincinnati, O.

The 128th Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of Ohio was held in the City of Cleveland on October 20 and 21, 1937. M. W. Bro. F. M. Ralsbottom, P. G. M., who had represented our Grand Lodge near the Grand Lodge of Ohio since October 23, 1913, when recognition of our Grand Lodge was accorded, died on February 28, 1937, aged 63 years, 8 months and 9 days. On behalf of the Grand Lodge of the Philippine Islands we extend to the Grand Lodge of Ohio and the bereaved family our fraternal sympathy. Bro. Louis P. Clark, District Lecturer, was appointed as our Grand Representative but he was unable to attend the Annual Communication as he had recently removed to California.

The Grand Master in his Annual Address reported having issued 67 Dispensations, and 16 proxies. He made 104 visitations including the Grand Masters' Conference at Washington, D. C., and the George Washington Memorial Association Meeting at Alexandria. He presented a check for \$3,000 to the Association from the Ohio Brethren.

\$32,373.04 was contributed by Ohio Masons to relieve the distress caused by the disastrous floods of the Ohio River.

A few decisions made by the Grand Master and approved by the Grand Lodge are of interest:

(a) The Dimit of a Brother who has been adjudged insane may be granted upon application of his legal guardian if such Brother is not in arrears for dues and no charges are pending against him.

(b) The installation of Officers should be in open Lodge, it being Masonic work. A Lodge must not be called to refreshment to install its Officers under any circumstances. Such installation shall not be public.

(c) Card games played for money or other things of value are

in direct violation of Sec. 13059, General Code of Ohio, and cannot be conducted in any Masonic Lodge, Society or Club, or by any organization which bases its membership on Symbolic Masonry.

(d) Ohio Masons are at all times subject to Masonic discipline for unmasonic conduct in this State due to excessive use of intoxicating liquors wherever obtained or used.

Grand Lodge officiated in the laying of corner-stones of three public schools and three post office buildings during the year.

Medals were presented to 191 Brethren who have been members in good standing for fifty years or more.

The Masonic Home in Springfield had on July 31, 1937, a total of 561 guests, there being 232 men, 160 women, 96 boys and 73 girls.

Fraternal recognition was accorded to the Grand Lodge of Uruguay. Following the report of the Committee, Bro. Eugene O'Donnell, Past Deputy Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Uruguay, was introduced as the Representative of the M. W. Grand Master of that Grand Lodge.

The Foreign Correspondent, P. G. M. Earle Stewart submitted 69 reviews or 64 Grand Jurisdictions. Our Proceedings for 1936 and 1937 were given five pages by the reviewer. Our former fraternal reviewer, Wor. Bro. Leo Fischer, is referred to as "M. W. Bro. and Past Grand Master." While he has not yet attained that exalted rank, he well deserves it for the distinguished services he has rendered this Grand Lodge during the past 26 years. For 1936 M. W. Bro. Stewart quoted from the *Cabletow* as our 1936 Proceedings had not been received. He quoted from the report of our Committee on Correspondence concerning the "China Matter" and their recommendations re fraternal recognition of various Grand Bodies. He referred to the Address of Grand Master Hawthorne as "a splendid Annual Message." Referring to the reviews of Wor. Bro. Fischer in the *Cabletow* he says, "This distinguished writer gives to his readers a worth-while portrayal of world Masonry." For 1937, he notes the presence of their Grand Representative, M. W. Bro. Seldon W. O'Brien, refers to the deaths of Past Grand Masters Trinidad and Hawthorne, and quotes from the Annual Address of Grand

Master Benitez. He again refers to the work of Wor. Bro. Leo Fischer concluding his very generous and courteous treatment of our Proceedings in the following words:

During the year, Bro. Fischer reviewed sixty-three volumes of Proceedings. Only thirteen of the reviews have been published in *The Cabletow*. Bro. Fischer was not at all satisfied with the publication service rendered, and what reviewer would have been? The number of reviews, about fifty, appear in the 1937 Grand Lodge Proceedings, which we think was a fine idea, and hope for its continuance. The reviews are well prepared, and reflect the capable ability of this very able Masonic Correspondence.

On behalf of our good friend, Wor. Bro. Leo Fischer, we thank you, M. W. Bro. Stewart, for your words of praise.

No reviews were written from January 1937 to February 15, 1938, as no one had been appointed to succeed Wor. Bro. Fischer. The present reviewer was appointed by the Grand Master and prepared his first reviews for the March 1938 issue of *The Cabletow*. The Committee on Fraternal Correspondence will confine its work to requests for fraternal recognition and kindred matter of fraternal relations with other Grand Bodies.

M. W. Bro. Seldon W. O'Brien, P. G. M., represents the Grand Lodge of Ohio near ours and is a regular attendant at our Annual Communications.

PENNSYLVANIA, 1936

The Right Worshipful Grand Lodge of the Most Ancient and Honorable Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons of Pennsylvania and Masonic Jurisdiction Thereunto Belonging, founded in 1783, had on December 27, 1935, 567 subordinate Lodges with a total membership of 138,760, showing a loss of 5,972 members during the year. Grand Master, Harold N. Rust (re-elected). Grand Secretary, John A. Perry, Masonic Temple, Philadelphia, Pa.

The Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania held Quarterly Communications on March 4, June 3, September 2, and December 2, 1936. A Special Commu-

(Continued on the next page)

FRATERNAL REVIEWS

(Continued from the preceding page)

nication was held in the Scottish Rite Temple at Philadelphia from 2:05 to 4:30 P. M. on September 2, 1936, to commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the Independence of the Grand Lodge. The Quarterly Communication of that date opened at 7:10 P. M. and closed at 9:20 P. M. At the Anniversary Communication a very interesting historical address was made by Brother Henry S. Borneman, a District Deputy Grand Master, covering the period from 1761 to 1786, the subject being "The R. W. Provincial Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania." Wor. Bro. George Ross Hull delivered an address on "Pennsylvania" and Rev. Bro. Joseph Fort Newton delivered a very interesting extemporaneous address which was taken down stenographically and printed in the Proceedings.

The business of the various Quarterly Communications pertained chiefly to the several Relief agencies and other routine affairs. At the Quarterly Communication held on December 2, 1936, the Grand Officers for the year 1937 were elected and the Grand Secretary, Bro. John A. Perry, was presented with an engrossed testimonial of appreciation for his services as Grand Secretary since October 23, 1911.

The Masonic Homes at Elizabethtown, Pa., had on November 15, 1936, 580 guests, including 55 married couples, 143 unaccompanied men, 205 widows of Master Masons, 18 mothers of Master Masons, 9 adult daughters of Master Masons, 5 adult sisters of Master Masons, 48 boys and 42 girls. The average age of adult guests was 75 years, 63 of whom passed away during the year.

The Grand Master in his Annual Address covered the major activities of the Grand Lodge under various sub-heads. With regard to the lowering of lodge fees he said:

While possibly the attempt was worth the trial, nevertheless I would like to leave this thought in the minds of our Officers and members. It is not usually the cheap things in life that man strives for; that anything that can be purchased cheaply is usually thought of in the same light by the purchaser; that a man who can only pay a certain medium amount for a luxury, usually does not have sufficient

funds for the upkeep. In other words, our Fraternity is and always has been considered a luxury; if we reduce our initiation fee merely to gain membership, are we not cheapening our order in the eyes of the profane, and at the same time, are we not gaining members who possibly cannot pay the upkeep expense or dues thereof?

He highly praised the Committee on Masonic Homes for the faithful manner in which they had performed their arduous duties.

There is no report of the Committee on Correspondence and there are no reviews.

The Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania does not exchange Grand Representatives.

TEXAS, 1936

The M. W. Grand Lodge of Texas, A. F. and A. M., founded in 1836, now has 908 subordinate Lodges with a total membership of 95,163, showing a net loss of 9,981 members during the year. Grand Masters: retiring, W. Marcus Weatherred; incoming, Galloway Calhoun of Tyler. Grand Secretary, W. B. Pearson, Waco, Texas.

The Grand Lodge of Texas held its 101st Annual Communication in the City of Waco on December 2 and 3, 1936. Our Grand Representative, R. W. Bro. Galloway Calhoun, was present and was honored by being elected M. W. Grand Master for the year 1937. We tender our sincere congratulations to our Grand Representative near the Grand Lodge of Texas and wish him a most successful year. Prior to the opening of Grand Lodge a very entertaining program was presented which was greatly enjoyed by those present.

The Grand Master in his opening remarks placed himself on record as being "A Mason of the Old School" and as opposed to the publicity features of some Grand Jurisdictions.

He paid fitting tribute to the memory of two Past Grand Masters who had died during the year, M. W. Bros. Stephen M. Bradley and Sam P. Cochran. He spoke a good word for the official organ of the Grand Lodge, the "Grand Lodge Magazine," and praised the untiring efforts of Bro. Samuel B. Contey, Jr., who served as Editor without compensation.

He refused to allow what he termed an invasion of their Jurisdiction by two national organizations, the "National Federated Craft" and the "National Sojourners." The Grand Lodge of Texas has gone on record in no uncertain terms against any and all organizations, not recognized by it, that base their membership on Masonic affiliation. He ruled that "any member of a Masonic Lodge in Texas who joins any association or organization which infringes upon the prerogatives of the Grand Lodge of Texas and within its jurisdiction, is committing a Masonic offense, and, one who persists therein must have charges preferred against him and a proper Masonic trial for the offense which he has committed." His protest to the National Presidents of the two organizations referred to was sufficient to cause them to disband their chapters, and, further, prevented the holding of a convention of the National Federated Craft in the city of Dallas, Texas. This is one Grand Lodge that seems to have solved the problem of how to get rid of the "Barnacles," the "External Groups of Masons," etc., that are the cause of so much trouble in various Grand Jurisdictions. The Grand Master attended the Grand Masters' Conference, the 125th Anniversary of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia, the conference of Grand Secretaries, and the annual meeting of the Masonic Service Association, all in Washington, D. C., also the George Washington National Masonic Memorial Association at Alexandria, Va. He asked the Committee on Foreign Correspondence to thoroughly investigate the question of fraternal relationship with the Grand Lodges of Mexico.

Following his suggestion, the Committee found that the Grand Lodge of Texas by having extended recognition to the York Grand Lodge in 1927 had bound itself to treat each of the State Grand Lodges as though irregular, as the York Grand Lodge claimed territorial jurisdiction over the entire Republic of Mexico. Their investigation showed that the York Grand Lodge in claiming such jurisdiction did so contrary to the right of state territorial jurisdiction that has always been recognized by Grand Jurisdictions. The result was that the Committee recom-

(Continued on page 51)

CHURCH AND STATE

(Contributed)

CHAPTER III

One of the most important duties of every citizen of the Philippines, one that overtops all other patriotic duties in importance, is that every citizen of this country must fight to conserve the constitutional restraints which have been written into our Constitution for the purpose of keeping our government a government of the people, and which are really the essence of liberty. One of these restraints is that of religious tolerance.

The separation of State and Church will prevent quarrels between different religious organizations. Citizens of this country must realize that religious liberty means toleration of that which our fellow man holds sacred. If we first learn that we have no right to condemn another's religious views, then we shall be in a position to ask others to respect our own religious views. We all know that people today do not adhere to the same religious beliefs. We want the right to differ and that right is given to the citizens of this country in the Constitution of the Commonwealth government. This means that every effort made by any religious organization to gain a foothold in the administration of government and education should and must be opposed. The virus of class distinction, founded upon religious education in the public school should not be allowed to pollute the organism of society. The teaching of religion in the public schools must not be allowed if we wish to keep the Church separated from the State and pass religious liberty in this country on to future generations.

If we will review our history and refresh our minds on what religious intolerance has cost the world in the past, we will realize what the separation of Church and State means to us today. The future of this country depends greatly on the perpetuity of religious liberty. You cannot put religion in the curriculum of the public schools and maintain the religious liberty provided for by our Constitution.

This is a fundamental conception that every citizen of the land should understand in its simplest form. This has nothing against any creed or against any established church or religious organization. All teachings of religious principles should be encour-

aged by everybody, but the place to teach religion is not in the public schools, but in the home or in the churches, or in the private schools which are controlled and operated by officials of the church or religious organization preferred by each individual.

Very few individual members of any religious organization, really want their particular society or church to take an active part in government affairs. It is the officials of the religious organizations who are the ones who often covet the power of government. Individual members of such organizations often support movements, believing that their support is expected as a demonstration of personal and individual loyalty to their organization. These individual members often do not look on the broader side of such movements. In the question of teaching religion in the public schools, many parents look only on the side that provides religious training for their children who attend the public schools. They do not consider the matter just beyond that point.

If these parents were convinced that should the government legislate to have religion taught in the public schools, that it was the first step towards a revival of the union of Church and State, it is more than likely that very few parents would like to see that brought about, even if the Church was the religious organization of which they were individual members.

Officials of religious organizations who have a desire to participate in civil government affairs, will naturally say that the teaching of religion in the public schools has no bearing on such an eventuality, but a student of history will know different. For this reason, parents should look on this question with a much broader view than that of simply teaching religion to their children.

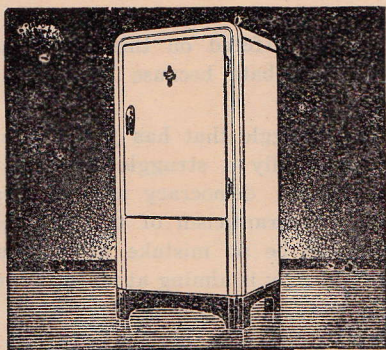
One has only to read the newspapers to see that religious persecution is taking place today in many parts of the world. Religious organizations are, even today, attempting to regain power in civil governments. We have no religious quarrels in the Philippines so why bring up a question like teaching religion in the public schools, when it should be known that such a movement

would receive vigorous opposition from those who hold the future welfare of this country at heart. It seems stranger that the officials of any religious organization would sanction such a movement when they should know that even many of the individual members of their own organization would oppose it.

Most individuals of these days and times believe in religious tolerance, and for that reason the strongest personal friendships have developed between people who hold different views on religious questions. Even marriages are taking place every day between men and women who do not belong to the same religious organization. These people have learned to respect the views and beliefs of others, which is as it should be. For this reason, a religious organization can go about so far in enforcing its rules and regulations and no further, because most of its members have learned to think for themselves, and when they go to church or religious society attempt to enforce a rule that is not a purely religious injunction, it finds that the individual will not so willingly follow it without serious question. Why then should any religious organization attempt to sponsor such a movement as the teaching of religion in the public schools? Religious organizations should limit its activities to strictly religious matters and not attempt to interfere or take part in the government of the people. This has caused more trouble in the past than any other thing and it is a very grave mistake to bring this question up in this country, at this time, when the people of many different creeds are living together in peace and harmony.

The Roman Catholic Church has often opposed the public school system of the United States, and undoubtedly opposes the public school system of the Commonwealth government, on the ground that the public school system is divorced from all positive religious teachings. With all due respect to the opinion of that religious organization, those responsible for that public school system were of the firm belief that the greatest safeguard to a republican form of government was education for all—the kind of education that brought to each individual an

(Continued on the next page)



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**Vote of Thanks
to Bro. Buencamino**

RESOLUTION PASSED AT THE
STATED MEETING OF
SINUKUAN LODGE No. 16
ON MAY 13, 1938.

Whereas, during the hearing and discussion of the Religious Instruction Bill in the National Assembly, the Honorable Bro. Felipe Buencamino, Jr., Assemblyman from the First District of Nueva Ecija, and who is an active member of Sinukuan Lodge No. 16, F. & A. M., led the group which opposed the passage of said bill;

Whereas, said religious bill has been shown by him and his group to be unconstitutional and will redound to the detriment of our people in that it will eventually give the biggest and most powerful religious organization in our country a complete control of the religious instruction in the public schools;

Whereas, Sinukuan Lodge No. 16 has always been in sympathy with him and his group in their laudable stand on said bill, and as a Mason and member of this Lodge, his stand and actions on this legislative issue, which is considered to be repugnant to the principles of Freemasonry and religious liberty, portray the highest ideals and and exemplify the best conduct that could be expected of a true Mason;

Wherefore, it is hereby resolved by Sinukuan Lodge No. 16, at its meeting of May 13, 1938, that a vote of thanks, appreciation and commendation be extended to him for his fearless stand and for the spirit of Freemasonry that he has shown in his fight to secure religious liberty, to prevent compulsory religious instruction in the public schools, and to keep inviolate the principle of the complete separation of Church and State; that a copy of this resolution be published in the *Cabletown*.

Manila, Philippines, May 13, 1938.

(Sgd.) C. SAN JOSE
Master

Attested to:

(Sdg.) GREGORIO VELASCO
Secretary

Church and State
(Continued from preceding page)

understanding of fundamental principles, and which enabled him to think for himself, and the old style of schools where religious organizations participated did not accomplish all that was necessary to bring that about. The present public school system opens its doors to new ideas and to new thoughts, while the schools of the old world, controlled by religious organizations admitted only what was in keeping with its own principles and dogma. One has only to look back a very few years to see what the public schools has done for the people of the Philippines. What did the government offer in the form of education when the Church and State were united in this country? The present public school system has accomplished miracles in the short space of time it has been in operation.

Starting at almost zero, less than forty years ago, it has accomplished wonders in the education of the masses of the people. All of this has been done without interference from any religious organization. It happens so often in this world that when any thing is prospering and going along smoothly and happily, someone introduces something that upsets the system and throws it back to where it started. Do we want that to happen with our public school system?

Religion can be taught at home or in private schools which are operated by religious organizations. All this calls for serious thought and consideration on the part of our leaders, who should look at this movement in a very broad way, and consider its possible effect on the future of our government structure from all possible angles. It is not a question of being for or against religion itself; it is a question of permitting the Church to unite with the State, even in a small way.

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IN DEFENSE OF THE PRESIDENT'S VETO

By SAMUEL WELLS STAGG

Corregidor-Southern Cross Lodge No. 3

A few calm frank words spoken from the middle of the road just now may save us from the Arsension. While I shall not mince words, I want it understood that I am in no sense attacking the spiritual faith of any Roman Catholic. That faith I respect and revere, though I do not follow it.

Unfortunately, there is a wide gap between the spiritual teachings of the Roman Catholic faith and the policies of the hierarchy in control of its temporalities. What I have to say is directed at these policies and to these alone.

I feel that the President of the Commonwealth, with great courage, has taken issues with the hierarchy in defense of the hard won liberties of the Filipino people. I believe that in the bitter fight which is just ahead of us, President Quezon is entitled to the active support of every freedom loving Filipino.

We are not against the church. It has its proper place. But when it oversteps and demands the right to enter fields that rightfully do not belong to it, and seeks to overthrow the established principles of free government, it must be firmly set back in its place. This seems to be the need of the hour.

The recent blast of the hierarchy against President Quezon for vetoing the so called religious instruction bill, and the President's sharp retort clearly draws the lines of what will be a long drawn out and bitter struggle between the Filipino people and the hierarchy for the political control of the Philippine Commonwealth.

I am told on good authority that behind the scenes the hierarchy is mending its political fences and gathering its instruction bill thru the Assembly and to pass it over President Quezon's veto if necessary.

The fundamental issue was clarified by the President's reply. The issue is not whether children shall receive religious instruction on school property, for the President offered the use of the school property for the purpose of religious instruction on Saturdays and Sundays. The issue is clearly the evident intention of the hierarchy to deal a fatal blow at the democratic fundamental of separation of the Church and State. President Quezon has elected to make his fight on this issue.

Any student of ecclesiastical and secular history knows that this struggle has been inevitable from the day that America introduced democratic government into the Philippines, a Catholic country.

The hierarchy has never favored the separation of Church and State, and is forever committed to oppose it by the ex-cathedra statement of Pope Pius IX in the famous "Syllabus of Errors" issued in 1864. In that statement, the Pope made it forever impossible for a Roman Catholic to support the principle of the separation of State and Church, for the Pope in what all true Catholics accept as an infallible utterance, declared that it was a heresy to believe in the separation of State and Church.

For this reason, the hierarchy is forever committed to fight the separation of State and Church. It has ruthlessly carried on this battle all over the world. It is one of the basic issues in Mexico and in Spain today. The fight is now beginning in the Philippines. The only reason that the hierarchy has never raised this question, and keep discreetly silent about it in the United States is because the church is a small minority in that country and dares not incur the displeasure of the American people.

I raised this solemn note of warning. The hierarchy has never hesitated to provoke rebellion and bloodshed over this issue when it felt that it was advantageous to do so. I note with some questioning the fact that the schools under the control of the hierarchy in the Philippines have enthusiastically entered the field of military training. While I have no doubt of the patriotism and loyalty of Filipino youth, I can not help wondering what if anything is being whispered into the ears of these youth by those under the direction of the hierarchy. I call your attention to the fact that the Pope has openly blessed the fratricidal war in Spain.

The hierarchy is not only opposed to the separation of Church and State, but it is the sworn enemy of all democracy. I made this fact very clear by unquestioned quotations from ex-cathedra statements of the Popes in my debate with Father Drought some years ago. With all his cleverness, Father Drought was never able to refute the

evidence offered on this point and quit the debate because he could not do so.

The struggle that has just begun is fundamentally a struggle between the liberties of democracy and the deadening obscurantism of the hierarchy. Let there be no mistake about this—the hierarchy is aiming at no less a goal than the destruction of democratic liberty in these Islands. If it wins in the present struggle to gain control of the public schools and decisively defeats President Quezon in this great political battle, it will not rest there, but it will press its advantage until it dictates the political policies of the Commonwealth. It may even go so far that to preserve the rights of the Filipino people, American intervention may be necessary.

If any thinks I am unduly alarmed, let him look closely at Spain and Mexico, just to choose two of the many possibilities.

Let us come now to the immediate issue yet keeping in mind the basic principles at stake.

The spokesman of the hierarchy claims that he has the right to express his views on any and all public questions, including the veto of President Quezon. As far as I can see, the President has never denied the priests the right to express their views.

What concerned the President, as he clearly pointed out in his answer, was the fact that the Roman Catholic hierarchy is making a frontal attack upon the basic democratic principle of separation of the Church and State, a principle based in the very nature of our Constitution. Should this principle be violated, the Constitution would become a meaningless scrap of paper.

Let the church speak all it wants to so long as its utterances are not seditious, but let the defenders of human liberty likewise speak that the people will clearly understand the real issues underlying this struggle. Then we will have no fear for the Filipino people have suffered too much at the hands of ecclesiastics drunk with political power, ever again to place the affairs of State in those hands.

I respectfully call attention to the fact that the church has now under its control thousands of parcels of property including huge buildings, church

(Continued on the next page)

IN DEFENSE OF THE PRESIDENT'S VETO

(Continued from the preceding page)

ches and convents many times larger than the local schools. These church properties stand dirty, ill-kept, in disuse, most of the twenty-four hours of each day. Holding these vast, little used properties, why should the church insist upon forcing its sectarian activities into public schools already filled to the bursting point? If the church has its way, thousands of Filipino children now waiting admittance to the schools will never be admitted. The priests will have taken the time and place that belong to these children.

Instead of crowding out a necessary part of our education and forcing themselves into our pitifully limited school resources why does the church not make better use of its own huge

properties? These properties are tax free and should be put to better use for the community, than is usually the case.

I will now tell you the real truth as to why the church is so insistent on getting its hands on the public schools. The truth is that its own huge properties are useless for religious instruction, for the simple reason that the priests have so completely lost their grip on the child life of the nation that the children cannot be induced to go to the church for religious instruction voluntarily, and the parents are so doubtful of the value of religious instruction the priests might offer that they will not compel their children to go to the church for it.

Being totally incapable of attracting the children to the church on the one hand, and having insufficient influence over the parents to compel the children to come, the priests now turn to the State and demand that the State gather the children with its power, and then turn the children over to the priests for indoctrination which neither the children nor the parents would go to the church voluntarily to get.

To me, this move of the hierarchy is an admission of the utter failure of the Roman Catholic Church to hold either the respect of the children or their parents. I ask this question: Why should the State now be asked to pull the Church's chestnuts out of the fire?

It seems very reasonable that the State should say to the Church—You have ample properties and buildings. These are tax free. We even offer

you the use of the school property on Saturdays and Sundays. But you must attract your own children in your own way. The State refuses to use its power, directly or indirectly, to compel the children to come to you for sectarian indoctrination.

The hierarchy is certainly getting ambitious these days. It seeks to strike a fatal blow at the principle of the separation of State and Church, and thus deftly remove the corner-stone of Philippine democracy. It seeks to do this under the American flag. It demands the right to thrust itself into the already over crowded public school buildings when its own huge properties stand idle and empty.

Perhaps, after all, Jose Rizal was right—this hierarchy is in danger of becoming a social cancer on the breast of Filipino liberty.

Fraternal Reviews

(Continued from page 47)

mended and Grand Lodge adopted the following resolutions:

(1) That the former Fraternal Recognition extended by this Grand Lodge to the York Grand Lodge of Mexico be and the same is hereby canceled and fully withdrawn.

(2) That Fraternal Recognition by this Grand Lodge is hereby extended to the Independent Grand Lodge "Cosmos" of the city of Chihuahua, in the State of Chihuahua, Mexico, and provision is here made for the usual exchange of Representatives.

We should like to take up some of the 99 decisions of the Grand Master but lack of space forbids.

The Fraternal Reviews are prepared and submitted by the Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Correspondence, R.W. Bro. W.M. Fly, P.G.M. Sixty-six volumes were reviewed by this very able reviewer. The reviews are preceded by a foreword in which R.W. Bro. Fly calls attention to two subjects which he considers "to be hurtful, unwise and unwarranted innovations in the body of Masonry," viz., "Go-to-Church Sunday" and "Public Schools Week." Our Proceedings for 1936 are not included.

Wor. Bro. Theodore L. Hall represents the Grand Lodge of Texas near ours.

Let Us Lead Again

(Continued from page 45)

mission of life. If life is worth living; if it is interesting, colorful, and pleasant, it is because we always hope and endeavor to be of some help at least to somebody. For service—service to God, to our country, to mankind and to ourselves—compels us to do and to move on continuously."

So if it is our desire to make of Masonry a leader in the community, steer our ship towards another route in search of broader horizons—and make the society in which we live feel our Masonic influence. Thus shall we regain the high position we, Masons, used to occupy in the past.

P.G.M. Palma Sick

Most Wor. Bro. Rafael Palma is confined at his residence, 553 Leroy, Paco, Manila, suffering with eye-paralysis. The brethren who can arrange to visit and cheer him are requested to do so.

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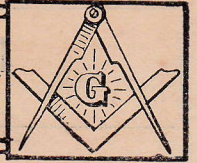
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De Charla con Nuestros Hombres



“Ya es tiempo de que tengamos nuestros rituales traducidos al lenguaje nacional, el tagalog”
afirma el M. V. Hermano JULIAN C. BALMACEDA

—Supimos que fuiste comisionado por nuestro Gran Maestro para hacer en su nombre algunas visitas oficiales a las logias del Sur.....

—Sí, fuimos comisionados los Ven. Hermanos Luna, Diokno, De la Cruz y yo, y ahora que acabo de hacer este viaje, por cierto bastante largo, puedo afirmarte con satisfacción que por allá me han hecho sentir una masonería *verdad*.....

—¿Cómo es eso?

—Tú sabes que es de nuestra idiosincracia como filipinos el estar apegados al hogar, al rededor de los nuestros, así es que a medida que nos alejamos se acentúa el malestar que se siente por el recuerdo de los seres a quienes se deja en nuestro terruño; nada, la nostalgia intensa por aquello que queda lejos, que son jirones de nuestro propio *yo*.....

—Ya.....!

—Y así, tu verás el placer que se siente cuando en medio de estos recuerdos se pone uno entre hermanos que profesan los mismos ideales, tienen los mismos sentimientos y van por el mismo rumbo que marca la corriente de la vida según la entendemos....

—Y es.....

—Y es cuando se saborea la miel de nuestra alta filosofía.....

—.....

—Llegamos a un puerto después de un viaje largo y monótono y de momento vienen los hermanos que, con el calor de su presencia y su fuerte y sincero apretón de manos, nos comunican la misma sensación de nuestra noche primera de iniciación a la vida masónica!

—¿Y cuáles son tus impresiones del Sur?

—Buenas, muy buenas. Los hermanos de aquellas regiones son masones no solo en los templos o dentro de sus cuatro paredes, sino también en sus propios hogares, en su actuación pública, en su vida privada, en sus relaciones sociales, en fin, en todas las manifestaciones de la vida.

—.....

—Puede ser que en algunas logias los hermanos no estén aún muy versados en lo que se refiere a trabajos de ritual; pero en lo que se refiere a *práctica masónica*, su conducta es admirable. Tal vez en Manila tengamos

bastante que aprender de aquellos hermanos. Allá la masonería está insuflada en los hogares e impartida a la familia.

—¿Y qué se comenta allá sobre el proyecto de ley sobre la enseñanza de la religión en las escuelas públicas?

—Cuando estábamos de viaje no sabíamos que el proyecto de ley había sido aprobado por la Asamblea Nacional. Sólo supimos esto cuando volvimos a Manila. Pero en nuestras reuniones se habló mucho sobre este desgraciado proyecto.

—.....

—Los hermanos del Sur no tenían mas que palabras de condenación para aquellos masones que hicieron causa común con los enemigos declarados de la masonería. Parecióme que aquellos hermanos sentían que los manejos de conventos y sacristías andaban de por medio cuando el proyecto se discutía entonces.

—.....

—Sin embargo, todas las logias expresaron su confianza en que la constitución política de nuestro país daría al traste con dicho proyecto, como efectivamente sucedió después, que, como ya es de conocimiento público, nuestro Hon. Presidente Manuel L. Quezon lo vetó por anti-constitucional.

—¿Y qué efectos producen estas visitas oficiales?

—Oh, sus efectos son de trascendencia para nuestra actuación. Es necesario vigorizar la labor masónica, y una visita oficial es una *vigorizante*. Se trata y se discute en estas visitas de asuntos que afectan a la orden, tanto en Filipinas como fuera de ella, y la actuación resulta así mas intensa y aunada.

—.....

—Una nota simpática ha llamado mi atención. La colecta de fondos para los damnificados por la guerra de invasión en China está siendo objeto de una acogida entusiasta, pues, a pesar de las dificultades económicas porque atraviesan algunas logias, sus miembros se suscriben por cantidades razonables.....

—.....

—Quisiera hacer constar una buena sugestión que he recibido de algunas logias que están situadas muy lejos de Manila, como por ejemplo las logias de

Joló y de Palawan. Parece ser que éstas desean tener representantes permanentes en la Gran Logia para el pronto despacho de algunos asuntos suyos que requieren pronta actuación. Se han dado casos según ellas, en que algunas peticiones no han sido despachadas con la prontitud que el caso requería, por lo mismo que ellas están muy lejos de Manila.

—Tengo informaciones de que se te traslada al Instituto del Lenguaje Nacional.....

—Talmente no me trasladan; pero a mi vuelta recibí órdenes de mis jefes para que dedique parte de mi tiempo a trabajos de este Instituto, y allí estoy ahora, si bien sigo atendiendo a mis obligaciones en la Oficina de Comercio por las mañanas.

—¿Y qué me dices de la labor de este Instituto?

—Yo creo que la labor del Instituto del Lenguaje Nacional es mas bien una labor para *hacer patria* que no una labor científica.

—.....

—Ya está escogido el lenguaje que ha de servir de base y sobre el que se ha de erigir la estructura del futuro idioma nacional, el *tagalog*.

—.....

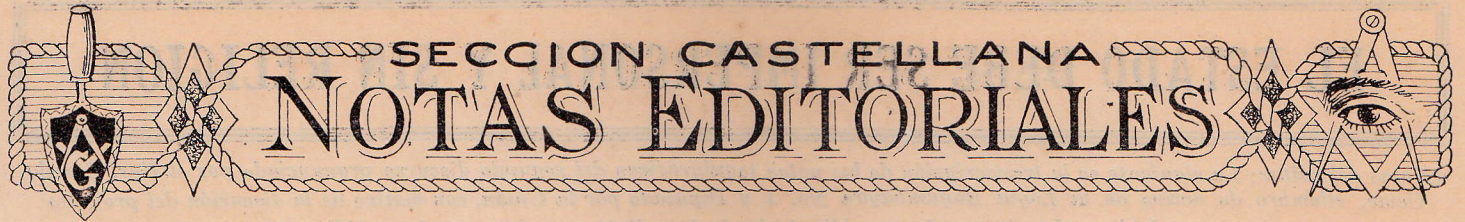
—Sobre esto quiero decirte con orgullo y satisfacción que el *tagalog* es el dialecto que mejor se presta como base del idioma nacional. En mis conferencias oficiales, en las conversaciones familiares, y hasta en las audiencias públicas que tuvimos en las regiones del Sur, el tagalog se hablaba sin dificultad.

—.....

—Es mas, yo creo llegado ya el tiempo de que nuestros rituales sean traducidos al tagalog. Tenemos muchos hermanos que pueden hacer este trabajo. No veo ninguna razón de porqué no hemos de introducir en nuestras logias el uso del poético lenguaje de Balagtás.

—.....

—Tú que has dado el primer paso introduciendo el tagalog en algunos rituales para ceremonias públicas podrás hacer mucho para que la Gran Logia tome pasos definitivos al efecto de ver nuestros rituales traducidos al lenguaje nacional. Tus ideas de llevar la masonería a las masas se realizarian pronto si esto se hiciese.



SECCION CASTELLANA
NOTAS EDITORIALES

¿INSOLENCIA O EXCESIVA PRESUNCION?



UE una observación muy sabia la de aquél que dijo que las manos que mueven la cuna son las que rigen los destinos de la humanidad. Nosotros añadiríamos que las escuelas en donde la juventud recibe las primeras impresiones de la *verdad* y de las *virtudes cívicas* son las que marcan el derrotero por donde camina la humanidad. Y es por esta razón porqué es función del Estado la educación de la juventud, y porque esta función no se puede delegar a ninguna secta religiosa ni a cualquier otra entidad u organización ajena a la autoridad estatal.

La religión católica, o mejor, la que obedece por disciplina a los dictados de Roma, ha estado siempre empeñada en asumir esta función por encima de los intereses nacionales. La lucha que actualmente está sosteniendo por la enseñanza de la religión en las escuelas públicas no es más que una obligada consecuencia de estos descarados propósitos. Como quiera que desea imponer la *verdad* y la *virtud* según su

propia filosofía y conveniencias, esta secta religiosa ha estado luchando por tener la hegemonía sobre la conciencia de la juventud para desde entonces controlarla y por su mediación actuar después en el medio social según sus propios intereses y por encima de los intereses de la nación.

Esto explica el porqué los representantes de esa secta en Filipinas están ahora empeñados en una lucha, aún contra la voz de alarma y admonición de nuestro honorable Presidente el Sr. Manuel L. Quezon. Y han llegado hasta la insolencia o presunción de afirmar que la mayoría del pueblo filipino está por la enseñanza de la religión en las escuelas públicas, olvidándose que nuestro Presidente tiene los sufragios del pueblo y actúa según sus mandatos constitucionales, y dentro de esos sufragios y de ese mandato constitucional ha dicho la última palabra sobre esta desgraciada cuestión.

¡Y todavía persisten invocando la voz del pueblo!

¿Es insolencia o excesiva presunción?

NAUFRAGIO DE DEMOCRACIAS



VIENEN luchando por su predominio sobre el conglomerado social dos ideologías fuertemente antagónicas, la ideología de las democracias y la ideología de los gobiernos totalitarios. Son dos corrientes opuestas que no pueden co-existir, pues, por su propia filosofía se repelen.

Se dice que el cincuenta y cinco por ciento de la población del mundo está bajo el yugo de gobiernos totalitarios. También se nota que esta proporción va en aumento. Si nada se hace para oponer un dique a esta ola que está invadiendo los mismos reductos de las democracias, pronto veremos a éstas en su total naufragio. Y el naufragio de las democracias sería el naufragio de la propia masonería. Algún día ha dicho y con razón que en los pueblos en donde se quiere barrer la libertad y la democracia se barre primero a la masonería y a los masones.

Que el ideal democrático está amenazado nadie lo pone en duda. Que el equilibrio social está en peligro de romperse, es evidente. ¿Que hacemos los masones ante este caos en que se está hundiendo la humanidad?

La masonería es una institución *pacifista*. Es una enamorada del *pacifismo*. Condena toda clase de

violencias, toda lucha que engendre odios o rencores porque es su ideal aliar a todos los hombres en una firme e imperecedera solidaridad.

Pero no llevemos estos ideales de *pacifismo* hasta el extremo de ver con pasividad criminal el exterminio de las democracias o su naufragio. Los gobiernos totalitarios exigen del conglomerado social la abdicación de la propia personalidad. Y la masonería y con ella las democracias se opone a la anulación de la propia personalidad porque quiere su elevación, su evolución, su desarrollo, su natural desenvolvimiento. El naufragio del ideal democrático sería el naufragio de la personalidad humana. ¿Hemos de cruzarnos de brazos los masones ante estos problemas de vital interés para la felicidad de los hombres?

Esta pugna entre estas dos ideologías no es tan fiera en nuestro país como en otras zonas del globo. Pero también aquí en nuestro suelo existe una amenaza que podría dar al traste con nuestras propias instituciones nacionales. El fascismo, que es uno de tantos gobiernos totalitarios, es aliado de los elementos reaccionarios que tanto daño han hecho a la causa de la libertad individual y política de nuestro

(Continúa en la página 58)

EL ESTADO DEBE SER IMPERSONAL Y SIN RELIGION

(Notas del editor: La siguiente es la transcripción de las notas taquigráficas del segundo discurso pronunciado por el Her. Camilo Osias, miembro de activo de la Logia Bagumbayan No. 4 y Diputado por la Unión, con motivo de la discusión del proyecto de ley sobre la enseñanza obligatoria de la religión en las escuelas públicas.)

SR. OSIAS. Señor Presidente, me cabe el alto honor y singular privilegio, obrando como estamos obrando bajo una orden especial, de cerrar el debate por parte del grupo constitucionalista que, bien o mal, se ha venido llamando así a nuestro grupo durante el debate. Y me he permitido llamar a nuestro grupo, grupo constitucionalista, tan sólo para distinguirlo del otro grupo, y para énfatizar lo que nosotros los de nuestro grupo sostenemos, que es el preservar las disposiciones de la Constitución filipina en su pristina majestad.

Señor Presidente, siento tener que decir en esta ocasión que este proyecto de ley es muy desafortunado. Es desafortunado, porque ha dado lugar a que miembros de este agosto cuerpo se sintiesen en el deber de manifestar si son cristianos o no cristianos o son miembros de tal o cual grupo religioso. No me levanto hoy como católico o no católico; me levanto como hombre, como Diputado por La Unión, enviado aquí por mis constituyentes para servir a sus mejores intereses y a los mejores intereses de la nación. Me levanto en este momento, consciente de que estamos reunidos en este templo de las leyes, en el que no debe haber mas *ismo* que el filipinismo y el humanismo, el primero, significando el culto a Filipinas, y el segundo, el culto a la humanidad.

Me levanto en defensa de nuestro lado, repito, como Diputado, sin tener en cuenta la filiación religiosa en el ejercicio de mis deberes civiles o políticos. Es lamentable que por esta medida innecesaria e inoportuna hubiesen llegado nuestras diferencias a manifestaciones, como las que acabo de oír de los labios del Caballero por Iloilo, quien se siente ofendido en sus sentimientos católicos. No afirmo que no me levanto con el propósito de zaherir susceptibilidades de nadie, porque soy de opinión que aquí debemos sentir, pensar, y obrar como Diputados sin tener en cuenta la religión profesada por cada uno de los que forman parte integrante de este agosto cuerpo.

No solamente es innecesaria e inoportuna esta medida, sino que como muy bien dijo ayer el Caballero por Cebu, (Sr. Abellana) es además desgraciada, y lo es, realmente, bajo muchos conceptos. ¿Por qué? El efecto

político que ha de surtir para todos y cada uno de nosotros va a ser lamentable y desgraciado. Ataques y contraataques se van a lanzar sin tener en cuenta los verdaderos motivos, sin saber los verdaderos sentimientos de cada uno, y vamos a presenciar el espectáculo, por vez primera, en este país—me permito profetizarlo—en las próximas elecciones, en que la religión va a ser un "issue," que no debe ser, teniendo en cuenta el principio de la separación de la Iglesia y del Estado. Esta controversia ha dado lugar a rumores de que hay fondos disponibles por parte de los sostenedores para comprar votos. Yo prefiero creer que no hay ningún miembro de esta Asamblea, que sea tan bajo, tan ruín, o tan antipatriota, que reciba algún soborno. Ni siquiera quiero pensar en la posibilidad de tal soborno. Es desgraciado este proyecto, porque, a raíz de él, las relaciones de los mismos miembros de la Asamblea se han agriado, produciendo la división que nunca hemos tenido en lo que va de vida este cuerpo, y el pueblo mismo está dividido, a causa de esta medida; es desgraciado porque, a no ser por este proyecto de ley, no hubiéramos merecido críticas acerbas de los periódicos, y no hubiéramos recibido cartas amenazadoras y telegramas arrogantes de un sector de la comunidad.

Antes de proseguir, yo quiero énfatizar una vez mas que, en la consideración de este proyecto, no debemos tener en cuenta la proporción numérica de las agrupaciones religiosas o la fé religiosa de los hombres. Aquí, en este cuerpo, debe haber igualdad entre los hombres. Si creemos realmente en la democracia, el más alto prelado de cualquiera iglesia no debe valer mas, ni debe valer menos, que el más humilde ateo.

SR. RAFOLS. Para una pregunta al orador, Señor Presidente.

SR. OSIAS. Yo tendría el gusto de contestarle después de mi discurso.

(PROSIGUIENDO.) Señor Presidente: salí la otra noche de este salón con el corazón casi despedazado, habiendo oído manifestaciones—no quiero mencionar nombres en el curso de mi peroración para que no se sientan aludidos personalmente, porque quiero discutir los hechos y no personalismos—en el sentido de que el hombre sin Dios, es un animal, es un bruto. No

quiero suscribir tal idea. Si Dios es misericordioso; si hay un Dios verdadero, Padre de toda la humanidad, el corolario lógico es que todos los hombres deben ser hermanos. ¿Por qué considerar a un hermano, a un ser humano, animal o bruto? Voy a medir mis palabras y voy a decir lo siguiente: ¿quien sabe si es más animal, más bruto, el católico, el protestante, el mismo cristiano que, habiendo tenido oportunidad de conocer a un Dios bondadoso, y habiendo tenido oportunidad de abrazar una religión basada en el amor, siente un odio hacia otro ser humano, no importa que fuese agnóstico o ateo? Estamos aquí hablando de caracteres morales. Ingersoll era un agnóstico, y no comulgo con sus ideas, pero tengo que confesar que no hay ningún hombre, o ningún escritor que me haya hecho estudiar la Biblia, como Ingersoll. El escribió una obra inmortal, que versa sobre los "Errores de la Biblia." Suyos son estos conceptos elevados, que ahora voy a leer. Fué Ingersoll quien dijo lo siguiente:

"I believe in absolute intellectual liberty; that a man has a right to think, and think wrong, provided he does the best he can to think right—that is all."

Y esto:

"Any doctrine that will not bear investigation is not a fit tenant for the mind of an honest man. Any man who is afraid to have his doctrine investigated is not only a coward but a hypocrite. Now, all I ask is simply an opportunity to say my say. I will give that right to everybody else in the world."

Un autor de conceptos tan elevados tiene que ser un hombre de carácter. Yo no predicaría que los filipinos sigan el ejemplo de Ingersoll, pero, aunque agnóstico como es, no puede negarse que él es un hombre de carácter, y digo esto, para distinguir la moralidad de la religión.

Es verdad que casi todos nosotros nos hemos empapado en la filosofía de que no puede haber carácter sin religión, pero aquí tenemos a un hombre que es de carácter, aún sin creer en Dios o en la religión. Es que la moralidad afecta a las relaciones de un hombre con otro, mientras que el dominio de la religión es el dominio es-

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piritual, tratándose de las relaciones entre el hombre y su Creador. Es desgraciado este proyecto, porque sin duda alguna ha producido innecesarias confusiones en la mente del público. No se puede negar esto. Yo mismo confieso que los debates y las varias manifestaciones, tanto de los favorecedores como de los impugnadores de este proyecto, han causado en mí una confusión y voy a decir más: es desgraciado este proyecto de ley, porque ha servido para sacudir mi fé, mi fé en lo que hay escrito sobre nuestra historia, mi fé en los viejos, mi fé en la juventud, mi fé en la misma religión, y mi fé en el unicameralismo.

Si hojeásemos después los records de estos debates en lo tocante a la muerte de Gomez, Burgos y Zamora, uno que no haya presenciado estos debates y deliberaciones, podría abrigar dudas serias sobre si los filipinos mismos fueron los asesinos de aquellos mártires de la patria. Ha habido intento aquí de negar que fuese culpable la Iglesia o el Estado de entonces, o la Iglesia y el Estado combinados en íntima relación. Pero en este asunto, para nosotros los que hojeamos las páginas de la historia, hay tres partes interesadas; la Iglesia, por un lado, el Estado, por otro, y el pueblo filipino. Ahora pregunto: ¿es el culpable el pueblo filipino? Yo niego rotundamente que lo fuera. El culpable debe ser otro; pero no el pueblo filipino.

En estos momentos, yo, que estoy en la línea divisoria que separa a la juventud de la vejez, apeo a los viejos, apeo a los jóvenes. Nosotros habremos tenido nuestras travesuras juveniles—¿por qué no decirlo, por qué ser hipócritas?—y quien sabe si aún las tenemos. No hay ningún miembro de esta Asamblea que, con la frente erguida, pueda levantarse hoy para decir que es un santo, que se atreva a tirar la piedra.

Caballeros de la Asamblea: nuestros sentimientos, nuestras filosofías, son distintos cuando llegamos a la vejez, de nuestros sentimientos y nuestras filosofías en plena juventud, vigorosa, llena de entusiasmos. Mas piedad para la juventud filipina, en quien Rizal ha cifrado su entera confianza para el porvenir de nuestra querida patria. Todavía esa juventud merece la confianza Rizalina. Yo creo sinceramente que los filipinos de hoy son mejores que los filipinos de ayer, creo firmemente, que los filipinos de mañana serán mejores que nosotros los fi-

lipinos de hoy. No digo que es perfecta la juventud filipina hoy día. Con o sin educación religiosa, tiene que ser imperfecta la juventud, y, gracias a esa imperfección, hay oficios para maestros y hay oficios para ministros de Dios.

En la sociedad humana no puede haber perfección. Gracias a Dios que no hay perfección, porque diría, no como educador sino como un mero maestro, mi ideal no es la perfección, sino la perfectibilidad. Perfección significa terminación, o mejor dicho, culminación, que hemos llegado a la cumbre de nuestras aspiraciones; pero perfectibilidad significa movimiento, progreso, y esa es la idea de perfectibilidad que abrigo para la juventud filipina.

Es lamentable que tengamos un proyecto de ley donde la filosofía de la democracia y la filosofía de la religión estan en pugna. Ante nuestro gobierno democrático hay igualdad, no hay superior ni inferior, no hay acaides ni sacristanes; pero en el imperio de la religión—y cuando hablo de la religión, no me refiero a ninguna denominación—en el imperio de la religión cuando un grupo sostiene firmemente el principio de que fuera de esa agrupación no hay salvación, necesariamente como lógica obligada, debe haber desigualdad, debe haber predilectos y preteridos, superiores e inferiores. Así es que digo que la unión del Estado y de la Iglesia, es perniciosa *per se*. Sus filosofías son distintas, sus procedimientos son diferentes. El Estado, que debe ser impersonal y sin religión, no debe tener odio ni preferencias. Es verdad que, en lo abstracto, religión puede ser un idealismo puro, pero en estos tiempos contemporáneos, la filosofía reinante es el Pragmatismo; esa filosofía, que ve las cosas bajo la prisma práctica, y adopta las enseñanzas y las doctrinas a la realidad. Es una lástima realmente que todavía el genio del hombre no haya llegado a tal grado de perfección que pueda permitir la concepción de un esperanto religioso. En la práctica, la religión es sectaria, y el sectarismo engendra odios, engendra divisiones y no unión. La iglesia esclaviza muchas veces la razón. En nuestra educación láica, sostenida por el dinero del pueblo, debe entronizarse la razón. Fué San Agustín quien dijo que, en cuanto el dogma y la filosofía estén en pugna, tiene que superditarse la filosofía al dogma. La educación moderna no debe ser así; la razón es suprema, así es que debe ha-

ber línea divisoria entre el Estado y la Iglesia, como debe haber línea divisoria entre esas dos instituciones y el hogar.

En mi humilde choza, Sr. Presidente, me siento rey; la mujer que comparte conmigo mis penas y mis alegrías, es la reina de mi hogar, y considero esa choza, por mas humilde que fuese, como mi castillo. Deben respetarse los límites del hogar, como deben respetarse los límites del Estado y los de la Iglesia. Cuando paso enfrente de una iglesia cualquiera, me siento instintivamente en el deber de tener que descubrirme, porque tengo profundo respeto a las casas de Dios. Está bien que los filipinos tengan lealtad a la religión que esté mas de acuerdo con sus convicciones y con su conciencia, pero nosotros, como Diputados, nosotros, como hombres de gobierno, nosotros, como servidores públicos, no debemos tolerar ingerencias de fuera, vinieran de donde viniesen.

Yo he abrigado la esperanza de que llegásemos algún día al periodo o a la época de nuestra historia, donde sólo el amor impere, que es el alma de la religión cristiana, y también lo es del mahometanismo, para que podamos acometer una obra nacional en el campo espiritual. Por muchos años, con un sueño rayano en quijotismo, abrigaba la esperanza de poder hacer que los jefes eclesiásticos de distintas denominaciones, siquiera las denominaciones cristianas, pudiesen reunirse, no en una sesión borrascosa, no en una sesión tumultuosa, sino con la serenidad y calma, propias de escuelas de filósofos maduros, para que, de allí dimanase una obra maestra, que concretase las bases comunes de las religiones existentes en el país, y que esas bases estén sentadas en seis principios. Dicho sea de paso, soy el humilde autor de una obra insignificante, de 662 páginas, sobre educación y religión. Hago mención de esto, para daros idea de los estudios, que, con calma he hecho de nuestros problemas educacionales y religiosos, y yo abrigaba la esperanza, como ya dije, de que podríamos llegar a un acuerdo, a base de estos principios:

1. La paternidad de Dios.
2. Aceptación de Cristo, como salvador personal.
3. Creencia en la inmortalidad del alma.

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4. Reconocimiento de la Biblia como libro de texto del Cristianismo.

5. Un código de ética y moral, fundado en principios cardinales de aceptación universal, como por ejemplo, los diez mandamientos, el sermón de la montaña, la regla de oro, etc., y;

6. La religión, como servicio social.

Pero tengo que confesar que estoy desilusionado; he perdido gran parte de mi entusiasmo, a la vista de lo que ha pasado aquí durante el curso de los debates. Si nosotros mismos que debemos venir aquí, no como representantes de ninguna secta, denominación o iglesia, si nosotros mismos aquí que pertenecemos a un sólo partido, hemos llegado a tener apasionamientos, hasta el punto de que el mallette se rompiera para que el que presidía esta Asamblea pudiese dominar aquel tumulto inusitado, un mallette de valor histórico, que fué regalado por el Vice-Presidente de los Estados Unidos, Sr. Garner, un caballero y un servidor público, íntimamente relacionado con la legislación pro-libertaria del país, un mallette que se ha confeccionado con madera de la celda de Rizal, donde este escribiera su *Ultimo Adiós*, si esto pudo ocurrir entre nosotros, ¿hay alguien que se atreva a negarme que tanto o algo peor podría ocurrir en nuestras masas? Señor Presidente, no soy dado a las supersticiones, pero no sería infundado decir que ello ha sido algo así como una protesta de ultratumba, un mensaje que el Apóstol de nuestra raza nos ha transmitido desde la otra vida, como para advertirnos que si aquel mallette se quebró por las luchas que nos trajo aquí esta cuestión, nuestra unidad nacional también podrá quebrarse algún día si no nos precavemos del peligro.

Lamento que la presentación de esta medida haya revivido en mi sentimientos relegados al olvido; pero, a raíz de las discusiones, se me vinieron a la mente reminiscencias de mi juventud. Mi familia ha sido objeto de persecuciones, por el prejuicio, por la intolerancia religiosa. Mi padre hubo de abandonar el pueblo—permitidme que haga alusión a este capítulo de la historia de mi familia, siquiera para desahogarme—mi padre, repito, tuvo que refugiarse en las montañas, para librarse de la tiranía de aquel periodo del oscurantismo. De joven he sido testigo de luchas fratricidas, a raíz de la protesta del pueblo filipino contra los agravios

inferidos por el poder combinado del Estado y de la Iglesia. Señor Presidente, en el Norte de Luzon, de donde vengo, muy joven aún, he presenciado batallas, he contemplado escenas patéticas, he visto hermanos matando a hermanos y he visto un campo poblado de cadáveres, sobre los que revoloteaban siniestros pájaros de picos torvos, haciendo honor a aquel festín de miserias, de piltrafas y despojos humanos.

Yo no quisiera que se apruebe una ley de esta naturaleza, para no reabrir heridas que deben estar ya cicatrizadas, para no correr el riesgo de que vuelvan aquellos tiempos, que tanta protesta sangrienta ha levantado de parte de los patriotas y mártires de nuestra raza.

Voy a pasar a otro punto menos patético. Nosotros, los de nuestro lado, hemos procurado demostrar que esta medida de legislación es innecesaria e inoportuna, es irregular, es desafortunada, y es desgraciada. Hemos procurado demostrar que es anticonstitucional, y cuando digo que es anticonstitucional, me refiero especialmente al proyecto de ley que fué informado por una mayoría del Comité de Instrucción Pública. Ahora, bajo la orden especial que nos permite a ser más liberales, no voy a ceñirme sólo a la discusión del proyecto informado por el Comité, sino a los otros proyectos que tienen relación con él, incluyendo la enmienda por sustitución.

Para unas palabras, que den un poco de información sobre la génesis de esta legislación. Voy a referirme sólo a hechos recientes, para no cansar demasiado la atención de los miembros de este augusto cuerpo. Esta lucha realmente comenzó en la convención celebrada en Malolos, al confeccionarse la Constitución de nuestra efímera República. Esta lucha se reanudó en el seno de la Asamblea Constituyente, en este mismo Salón, escena de la redacción de nuestra Carta Magna. Después o casi inmediatamente después o meses después de la inauguración formal del gobierno del Commonwealth, se creó un comité educacional del Arzobispo para elevar una petición al Departamento Ejecutivo, y sometió un proyecto de ley de siete artículos. Es una lástima que no disponga de tiempo para poder entrar en detalles y hacer un estudio analítico y comparativo de todos estos distintos proyectos.

Además de este proyecto de ley del Arzobispado, un grupo de sesenta y tantos Diputados elevó una comunicación al Secretario de Instrucción Pública, que

ha merecido una contestación atenta, cuidadosa, acabada del Jefe Departamental, Señor Osmeña. No voy a hacer uso de esos documentos extensos, porque no dispongo de tiempo suficiente. Ante esta Asamblea, se han presentado varios proyectos de ley, entre ellos, el del Caballero por Ilocos Sur, Señor Solivén, que contiene siete artículos; el proyecto de ley presentado por los Caballeros por Romblon e Ilocos Sur, que contiene tres artículos, y el proyecto de ley, informado por una mayoría del Comité de Instrucción Pública, que contiene ocho artículos. He hecho mención de estos proyectos de ley, tan sólo para que sirva de recordatorio sobre el proceso evolutivo de este proyecto de ley.

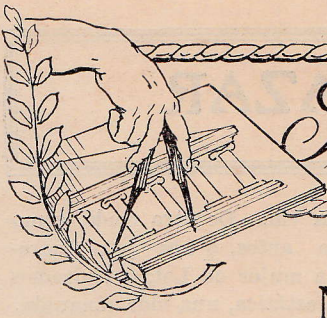
SR. FABELLA. Sr. Presidente....

SR. OSIAS. (Prosiguiendo.) Que no se sienta molestado el Caballero por Romblón, porque no tengo más que sentimiento de admiración hacia él, porque dicho Caballero y el Caballero por Ilocos Sur han tenido el coraje y la sinceridad de afrontar la cuestión, sin subterfugios, sin evasivas, y presentaron el proyecto de ley, que ellos mismos reconocieron, publicaron, y declararon que era un proyecto sobre enseñanza obligatoria de la religión en las escuelas públicas. No comulgo con las ideas de dichos caballeros; pero no por ello quedan mermados el respeto y la admiración que siento por ellos.

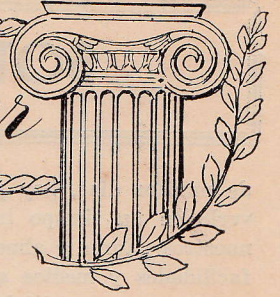
A raíz de los proyectos presentados por estos Caballeros, y a raíz de mi estudio sobre el proyecto de ley presentado por el comité del Arzobispo, yo afirmo aquí que la génesis de estas legislaciones esta fundada en el deseo de modificar el precepto constitucional, y los articulados del Código Administrativo, especialmente los artículos 927 y 928, que, por la fraseología de la Constitución sobre la enseñanza opcional de la religión, han sido elevados a la categoría de precepto constitucional. Para que no se moleste demasiado el Caballero por Cebu, (Sr. Rafols) que me está oyendo con mucha vigilancia, diré que voy a hablar de la enmienda por sustitución, porque ya estamos hablando a base de la orden especial, que es más liberal, y por lo tanto, nadie podría llamarnos al orden. El título del proyecto informado por el comité es como sigue:

"An Act providing for a course in character building and good manners and right conduct and in religion in the public schools."

(Se continuará)



Sobre la Plancha de Trazar



NO ES POR FALTA DE DOGMAS

Por Nuestro Colaborador "ELIAS"

Formidable fué la lucha entablada en el augusto recinto de nuestra Asamblea Nacional entre los propugnadores y opositores de la ley que disponía la enseñanza religiosa en las escuelas públicas. Tales fueron las fuerzas que se agitaban en el fondo de las discusiones que provocara, que su estruendo despertó a los dormidos, atrajo la atención de los indiferentes, y repercutió hasta el retiro más apartado y silencioso de la ancianidad. Esperanzas, dudas e inquietudes produjo en los corazones. Esperanzas para los que, convenidos, creían en las excelencias de la ley; dudas e inquietudes para aquellos que, conocedores de la historia de nuestro pasado, veían en la ley una amenaza, un peligro, para el principio fundamental de la separación de la Iglesia y del Estado, consagrado en todas las leyes fundamentales de países democráticos. Para estos últimos, la ley era la resurrección de un poder que creían hecho polvo, y que no renacería jamás. Vencidos en la lid, sus dudas e inquietudes se agigantaban como se agigantan las olas empujadas por una deshecha tempestad ante el temor de que ese gran estadista, cuya poderosa sagacidad es de todos reconocida, esa genial inteligencia, cuya penetrante pupila descubre y señala, al través de las angustiosas incertidumbres del presente, las certezas del porvenir, no ejerciese una de las prerrogativas que nuestra Constitución ha colocado en sus manos para poner coto a los impulsos de momento del poder legislativo. Nos referimos al ilustre Presidente de nuestra Mancomunidad, Manuel L. Quezon. Tal estado de ánimo de los opositores de la ley no estaba del todo injustificado.

Es de todos sabido que el Presidente y toda su familia son católicos. No era, pues, inmotivado el temor de que aquél obraría satisfaciendo sus sentimientos religiosos y los de esta. Pero así no pensábamos los que conocemos mejor al Presidente por su historia política, por lo que ha hecho, por lo que está haciendo. Si hay algún ciudadano filipino que pueda considerarse como el hombre más fiel y leal a la ideología que inspiró el gran movimiento del '96,' como auténtico vestigio espiritual de las

luchas del pasado, ése, ése es Manuel L. Quezon. No habíamos dudado, por tanto, ni por un momento, los que le conocemos, de que los peligros que encerraba la ley pasasen inadvertidos para él. Esperábamos, confiados, que él la vetaría, como la vetó. Opinamos, sin embargo, que su veto no soluciona definitiva y finalmente el problema que ha planteado dicha ley. Primero, porque los representantes del catolicismo, desde la creación de los Estados Pontificios hasta nuestros días, y a pesar de las enseñanzas de la historia, no han cejado en su empeño de reconquistar al poder temporal cuando lo han perdido, para con él dominar de nuevo al mundo, subyugándoles espiritualmente. Y, segundo, porque creen que la única religión poseedora de la verdad, salvadora de las almas, purificadora de las costumbres, maestra de las virtudes de ciudadanía, es la católica, apostólica, romana. Y tanto es así, que nuestro ilustre Vice-Presidente de la Mancomunidad, con ser un sincero católico, un hombre de ímpolita honradez y acrisolado patriotismo, ha sido tildado de instrumento de los protestantes y masones al oponerse a la ley. Lo cual viene a significar en pocas palabras que el protestantismo y la masonería son enemigos de la verdad, no quieren que se salven las almas, son refractarios a las buenas costumbres, y enemigos de las virtudes de ciudadanía. Naturalmente, semejante estado mental hará que los representantes del catolicismo persistan en su empeño de enseñar sus doctrinas en las escuelas públicas, tanto más cuanto que creen que la ley no sólo no infringe la Constitución, sino que concuerda con ésta. Sería pueril, pues, pensar que el veto del Presidente ha dado fin al problema planteado.

El que pergeña estas líneas no es enemigo de ninguna religión. Es más: considera al cristianismo como la mejor hasta ahora de las predicadas por los hombres. Al oponerse a la enseñanza religiosa no lo hace porque cree que las religiones son malas. Si no es partidario de la ley, es porque cree con nuestro ilustre Presidente de la Mancomunidad que la enseñanza de la

religión es trabajo que deben hacer los padres de familia y los sacerdotes de la religión a que pertenecen. Digo más todavía: la enseñanza religiosa en las escuelas públicas es innecesaria, porque el pueblo filipino estuvo bajo la dominación española cerca de cuatro siglos, durante los cuales no se le enseñó más que el cristianismo católico. Antes del fenecimiento de la soberanía española en el país no se enseñaba más religión que la apostólica-romana. Eramos, por tanto, todos fieles a dicha iglesia. Con el advenimiento de la nueva soberanía, y a la sombra de la libertad de cultos, vino a nuestras hospitalarias playas el protestantismo, en sus diferentes denominaciones, y surgió el aglipayanismo. De modo que en nuestros días podemos asegurar, sin temor a equivocarnos, que en Filipinas no hay ateísmo; todos somos creyentes; todos profesamos alguna religión. Ahora bien, si esto es así, la enseñanza religiosa en las escuelas es innecesaria.

Se dice y afirma que nuestra juventud es viciosa y corrupta por falta de religión. Este es un craso error. Como hemos indicado, en nuestro país, el que no es protestante, es aglipayano; y el que no es aglipayano, es mahometano. Dicho más brevemente: nuestro ambiente está saturado de religión. No hay que atribuir, pues, los vicios e inmoralidades de nuestra juventud y de nuestros hombres, ya sean de la antigua o de la nueva generación, a la falta de religión, sino a otros motivos, a otras causas, que muchos educadores olvidan al hablar de los vicios que, según ellos, minan nuestra sociedad actual.

Hay que tener en cuenta que la ciencia ha empequeñecido este mundo, que tan grande e inmenso nos parecía. Hoy vemos muchas cosas que no veíamos antes. Sabemos muchas cosas que no sabíamos antes. Hoy podemos comunicarnos al momento con nuestros antípodas. El telégrafo, el radio, el radio-teleéfono, el cinematógrafo, la aviación han hecho que lo que antes era imposible oír y ver sino después

(Continúa en la siguiente página)

SOBRE LA PLANCHA DE TRAZAR

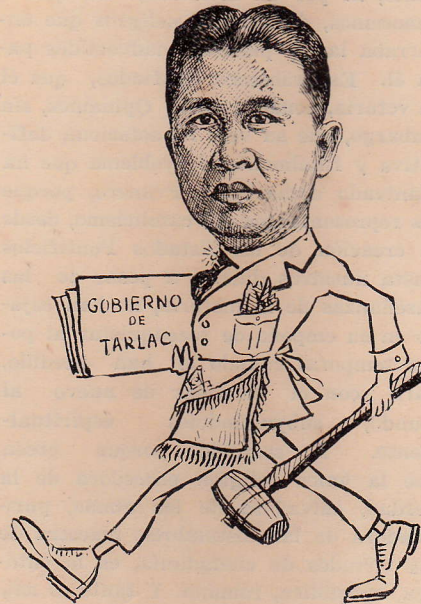
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de muchos días, hoy podemos oírlo y verlo en un tiempo insospechado para nuestros padres y abuelos. Todas estas facilidades y medios que la ciencia ha puesto en manos del hombre, han venido a producir una revolución en todos los órdenes de la vida: en lo político, en lo social, en lo económico, en lo individual. De los principios que no hace dos décadas eran normas de acción, unos han perdido totalmente su virtualidad; otros, si no la han perdido, vacilan en sus bases. Y, es porqué, como dijo Aristóteles, la vida es transformación y mudanza. Bien. Cuando la vida cambia y se transforma, cambian y se transforman, necesariamente, con ella sus necesidades. Estas necesidades pueden ser, o de orden político, o de orden social, o de orden económico, o de orden moral. Ellas crean, cada vez, un nuevo estado de cosas; y, al crearse este nuevo estado en las diferentes fases de la evolución transformadora y creadora, los pueblos y los individuos, si quieren vivir y marchar adelante, no tienen más camino, so pena de quedar petrificados como la mujer de Lot, que el vivir su vida con sus nuevas necesidades.

La vida, para que merezca el nombre de tal, para que no sea un caos, tiene que ser vida de orden; el orden supone principios a los que hay que ajustarse. La vida que vivimos hoy va no es ni siquiera la de hace una década. Los problemas que pesan sobre ella, problemas nuevos, se suceden con la rapidez del relámpago. Para que podamos, pues, vivir esta nueva vida, impónese de un modo imperativo, de una manera ineluctable, la necesidad de otros principios, de otras normas que la regulen, ya que aquellos que hacían este papel, han quedado en desuso, son como aperos de labranza viejos condenados a una inutilidad

eterna por el progreso y el perpetuo devenir de los tiempos. Si queremos, pues, reducir a su mínima manifestación, ya que es imposible extirparlos radicalmente, los vicios y los males que corroen la vida social, tenemos que

Ven. Her. ALFONSO A. PABLO



*Con la Escuadra y el Compás
gobierna Tarlac tan bien
que tiene al pueblo detrás
cual recio y firme sostén.*

crear nuevas normas, nuevos métodos y medios para realizar nuestro propósito, puesto que los ya creados e inventados se han convertido en implementos viejos, ineficaces, inútiles para abrir nuevos surcos y fecundar la nueva tierra, el nuevo estado de cosas, resultante de la ley de la evolución que rige en todos los órdenes de la crea-

ción y de la vida. De otro modo, como hemos dicho antes, o nos petrificaremos como la mujer de Lot, o viviremos una vida de estática, una vida lánguida, para morir agonizando lentamente.

Pero que no se nos comprenda mal; cuando hablamos de formulación de nuevas normas, muy lejos está de nuestra mente el hacer creer que, para resolver los trascendentales problemas humanos, bastan las normas y los principios, no; éstos no adquieren vida, son momias en las tablas de la ley, si el hombre, mediante su voluntad, no los pone en moción de tal modo que sus actos se inspiren en ellos. La voluntad es sólo una de las facultades del espíritu. Para moverla, son menester la inteligencia y el corazón. Pero la inteligencia y el corazón, con harta frecuencia, no funcionan armónicamente. La experiencia cotidiana, corroborada por la historia, nos muestra cuán raras veces ha influido e influye la razón en los sentimientos. Y aquí está el gran problema sobre el cual los caudillos de un pueblo y los educadores del hombre, en su doble concepto de materia y espíritu, debieran pensar profundamente. Y este es un problema cuya solución, en mi criterio, no está exclusiva o esencialmente en la religión ni en los centros docentes. La religión y la enseñanza podrán, a lo más, contribuir en cierto grado a la solución del problema; pero la raíz de ésta no radica en ellas; está en el hombre mismo. Sin la obra propia, pues, ninguna norma, ningún principio de acción posee suficiente virtualidad para hacer de la humanidad mejor de lo que es. La gran escuela, por tanto, del mejoramiento del hombre no está en los principios ni en las normas. Está en el hombre mismo, que debe ser, al par que fábrica, materia y yunque, fraguá y artífice de sí mismo.

NAUFRAGIO DE DEMOCRACIAS

(Continuación de la pagina 53)

pueblo. Y estos elementos reaccionarios está tratando de adueñarse otra vez de nuestros destinos.

Movámonos, pues, los masones. No seamos unos meros *contemplativos*. Enviemos a nuestros hombres a la vida de las realidades cotidianas para que ahí obren y se pongan frente a estos problemas de vital importancia para la salud del pueblo y las libertades

individuales. Debemos ir a la lucha para preservar el espíritu de nuestras instituciones nacionales que es el mismo espíritu del ideal masónico y del ideal democrático. Así, y sólo así, podremos contrarrestar la corriente que va amenazando de un naufragio a las democracias en el mundo.

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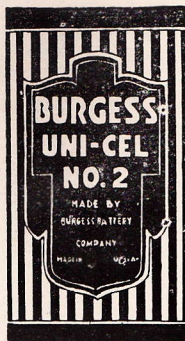
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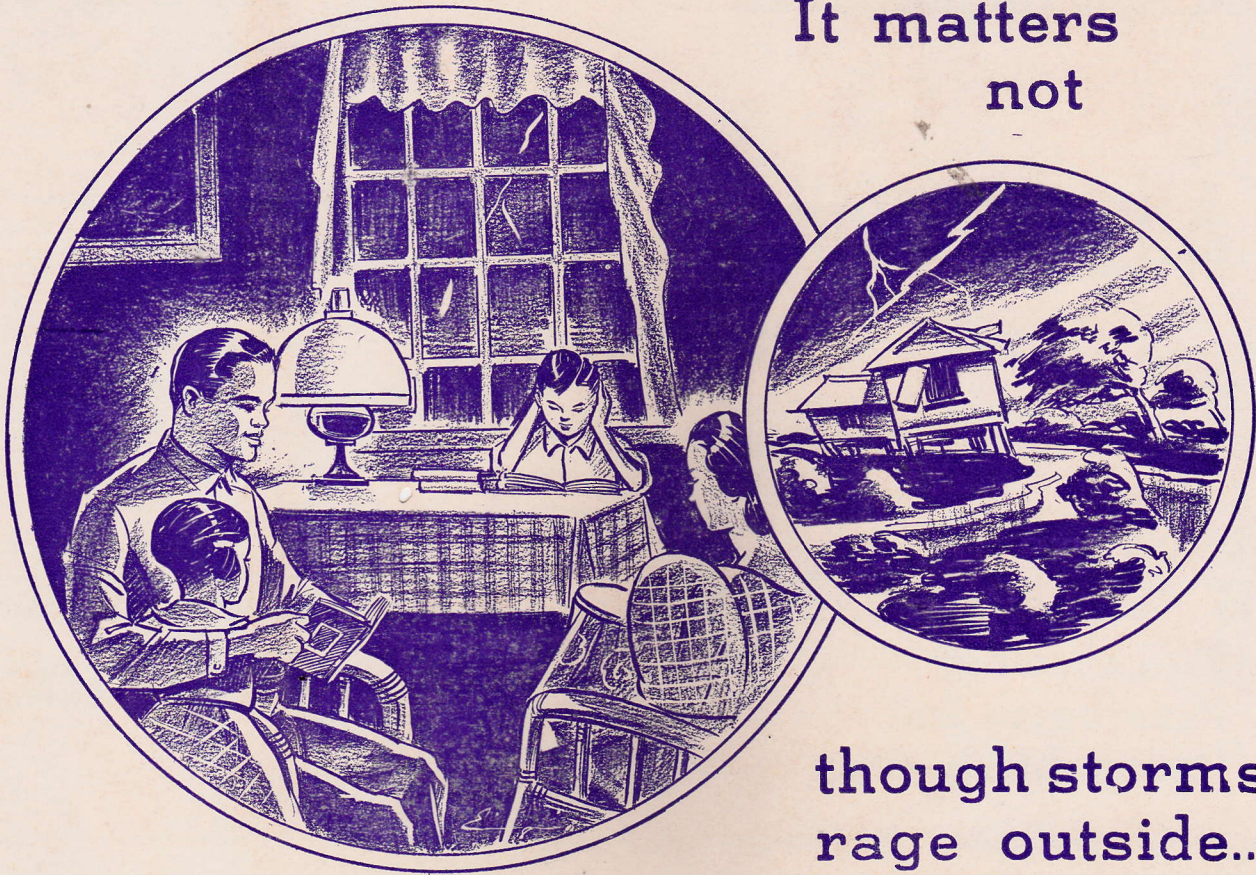
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