

MANILA OBSERVATORY

MIRADOR
BAGUIO CITY
PHILIPPINES

XIII

Zodiacal Light

From the beginning of January 1942, the blackout in Manila was total.

There was no longer any reflection in the sky of the light which before the war was diffused by thousands of groups of electric bulbs belonging to the public illuminating system and hundreds of commercial advertisements bordered with rubes of neon lights. In Manila Bay, there remained no shipafloat, the blinker-light signals of which illuminated, even for very brief moments the darkness of the night. In these conditions, under a sky that was clear, serene and spangled with stars, the belt of zodiacal light, subdued and pleasant to the sight, extended from the west up towards the zenith.

At the beginning, many, even scientific men, had no desire to admit its existence. They kept persisting in identifying it with the flashes of the cannons that were fired from the fortress of Corregidor, but after thinking it over, they were convinced that they were witnessing an astronomical phenomenon that they had never noticed, and which they would never again notice in the Manila of the future unless another cruel war should break out in these latitudes. For the space of five months, night after night, except on the nights when the light of the moon placed an obstacle in the way, I made observations on the intensity of the illumination, the width of the band of light and the height of the apex of the zodiacal radiance in relation to the stars.

The work of the M.O. during the period from Dec. 8 1941 to July 1, 1943

Tragico Fin del Observatorio de Manila

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Fr. Miguel Selga S.J.
Director M.O.