

**JOSE RIZAL:**

Life, Works and Writings of a  
Genius, Writer, Scientist and  
National Hero

Second Edition

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# PREFACE

This new book on Rizal is primarily written to replace the previous college textbooks on Rizal by the senior author, namely, *Jose Rizal: Life, Works and Writings and Rizal: Asia's First Apostle of Nationalism*, published in 1957 and 1970, respectively. While these two Rizal books have been widely used both here and abroad, the present authors feel that there is a need to write a new Rizal book on account of the fact that new material on the national hero's life have surfaced in the history's limelight, making the older editions rather obsolete or inaccurate in certain passage.

For instance, the International Congress on Rizal, which was held in Manila on December 4-8, 1961 to commemorate the centennial anniversary of the national hero's birthday, uncovered many hitherto unknown facts on Rizal. Since then, more Rizal materials have been researched by Rizalist scholars in foreign countries, particularly Hong Kong, Singapore, Japan, England, Spain, and Germany.

It is delightful to know and to write the biography of Rizal for two reasons. He was an exceptional man, unsurpassed by other Filipino heroes in talent, nobility of character, and patriotism. And, secondly, his life is highly documented, the most documented in fact, of all the heroes in Asia. Possessing a keen sense of history and an aura of destiny, Rizal himself kept and preserved for posterity his numerous poetical and prose writings, personal and travel diaries, scientific treatises, and hundreds of letters written to, and received from, his parents, brothers, sisters, relatives, friends, and enemies. With these preserved documentary sources, any biographer, with not much difficulty may weave his life story. To climax his heroic life, Rizal welcomed his execution on December 30, 1896 with serene courage, knowing that he was going to die in a blaze of glory --a martyr for his people's freedom.

This book is a product of more than three decades of extensive research work on Rizal's life, works, and writings in the Philippines and in foreign countries where he sojourned. We have included in this book certain episodes or incidents in the hero's life which other Rizal biographers have either missed in their works or mentioned casually without proper documentation. Among these interesting Rizalian episodes are the following:

1. Rizal's pilgrimage in 1881 to Pakil, Laguna, where he witnessed and was fascinated by the turumba, a religious spectacle of the people publicity dancing and singing during the procession of the Birhen Maria de los Dolores.
2. The full story of the Rizal-O-Sei-San romance in 1888, including O-Sei-San's real name, how Rizal met her, and what happened to her after Rizal had left her.
3. The friendship between Rizal (a Filipino patriot) and the Tetcho (a Japanese patriot).

4. The Hibiya Park incident in March 1888, in which Rizal discovered that the principal members of the Imperial Regimental Band giving the weekly public concerts, performing exquisite Western classical music, were actually Filipino musician—an early case of “brain drain” (export of talents foreign countries).
  5. Rizal as a student activist participated in the bloody and violent student demonstrations in Madrid, November, 1884.
  6. Rizal did not bother to obtain the diploma as Doctor of Medicine. He practiced medicine using his diploma as Licentiate in Medicine.
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7. Rizal supported Spain in the bitter Spain-Germany Controversy (1885) over the ownership of the Carolinas and Palau archipelagoes in the Pacific.
  8. Rizal worked as a proof-reader in a German publishing company in Leipzig (1886).
  9. Rizal was almost deported from Germany in 1887 because he was suspected by the Berlin police as a French spy.
  10. Rizal and the secret society, R.D.L.M. (Redemption of the Malays).
  11. The near duel between Rizal and Lardet (Frenchman) in Dapitan, 1893.

In conclusion, we express our gratitude to the prestigious Rizalist biographers (including Retana, Craig, Palma, Guerrero, Jose Hernandez, Carlos Quirino, Esteban A. de Ocampo, and Jose Baron Fernandez), whose works we consulted in the preparation of this book. Of special mention is Professor Ocampo for his valuable suggestions and the use of his Rizaliana Collection. With his kind permission, we use as **APPENDIX A** his definitive essay “**Who Made Jose Rizal Our Foremost National Hero, and Why?**” to blast the myth that Rizal was “an American-made national hero.”

**GREGORIO F. ZAIDE**

**SONIA M. ZAIDE**

Pagsanjan, Laguna

June 19, 1983

## PREFACE TO THE CENTENNIAL EDITION

In celebration of the Centennial of Philippine Nationhood (1896-1996), the martyrdom of Jose Rizal (December 30, 1896-1998), we are issuing a Special Edition of this textbook for the many librarians, teachers and researchers who have requested for a copy that will have a longer shelf life than the previous news print edition. Due to the economic conditions of the book publishing market in our country, the previous popular edition used lower-priced paper, so as to make available the information contained in the Rizal book accessible to the widest possible number of students and the general public.

Since this biography of Jose Rizal is the most popular textbook in the market, we were pressed on every side by pirated editions which were sold at bargain basement costs, which we were constrained to compete with by cutting down costs. The National Hero would probably have been happily surprised by how much demand a mere biography of his life, times and writings could demand.

Here we are a hundred years from the time of our revolutionary heroes, celebrating the memory of their heroism in this era of growing national freedom and global development. At last, we are able to see, in comparison to what they experienced and suffered, how much we have benefited from their sacrifices. Surely, no new nation is forged without the noble sacrifices rendered by heroic men and women, who, in the face of terrible odds and great persecutions, labored, fought and even died—all without the expectation of material gain, personal benefit, or chariots of glory preceding their entrances and exits.

Today, we enjoy more freedoms and material advantages, all thanks to the revolutionary heroes like Jose Rizal, our National Hero, who led them all in the nobility of his character and life, the application of his talents, and the utmost sacrifice of his life. In an act of political martyrdom which he faced with serenity and dignity that converted even some of his enemies to his cause, Rizal destroyed the moral authority of the Spanish Empire in the Philippines.

The outpouring of national and international outrage at his execution in Manila, on December 30, 1896, would be paralleled only, a hundred years hence, by the assassination of Senator Benigno (Ninoy) Aquino Jr., in August 21, 1983. Hence, it is simply not true, as some revisionist historians have suggested, that Rizal “was an American-made hero.” Such a foolish statement shows no sensitivity for the hero’s life and acts, belittles the wisdom of the Filipinos who themselves raised Rizal to heroism, and denies the international glory that accompanied Rizal’s fame, which eventually helped the Filipinos to win the respect of the world.

Even today, Rizal is acknowledged to be “The Greatest Malayan,” and to this end, the Malaysian government feted the National Hero with an International Conference on Rizal in 1996 and other nations continue to hold him in high esteem. Hence, the honor accorded to Rizal by foreigners also accords honor to our people.

The anti-heroic writers, who wish to denigrate Rizal and other heroes by indecently dwelling on their human frailties, by questioning their motives, by maliciously fabricating false

stories about them, can sow their snide and clever remarks to the wind, but they will inherit only a whirlwind. Heroes will stand tall because of the recognition of their worth by their contemporaries and countrymen, and time will measure the validity of their ideas and sacrifices.

My late father, Dr. Gregorio F. Zaide, wrote most of this book over a period of time, dating especially to the 1960's, when in celebration of Rizal's birth centenary, he, along with other writers, made researches and wrote about hero. These special centennial editions, along with a Filipino language translation of this book, are our offering for the Philippine Centennial. I hope it will enlighten many readers who have not yet known or heard about Rizal, who was a unique hero in the world, since he was not a military leader.

I also wish to correct some wrong impressions about Rizal, which titillate the imagination of college undergrads and which I have often been asked in classes or seminars about the hero, namely:

1. That Adolf Hitler was really the illegitimate son of Rizal, because he had with a hotel chambermaid while in Austria. Rizal could have had his pick of many European women whom he met and befriended during his sojourn in Europe, but he avoided liaisons with them all (until his exile in Dapitan and his marriage to Josephine Bracken) because he wanted to live an uncomplicated life, in the service of his country. Furthermore, Rizal traveled in Vienna with Maxino Viola, who was his patron at the time. The only incident with a chambermaid noted in his diary was the story of how, at the Hotel Krebs in Leitmeritz, Blumentritt's hometown, a chambermaid had found his watch and Blumentritt returned it to follow him at the Hotel Metropole in Vienna (see pages
2. That Bonifacio or Aguinaldo should be the National Hero, because they fought in the Revolution, while Rizal had cautioned against it. It is really difficult to compare heroes; one might as well compare oranges and apples. But, even using different yardsticks, like who would have been a better military leader, or who was the one that succeeded in fighting for our freedom. Then we shall have to admit that both Bonifacio and Aguinaldo failed against the stronger armies of Spain and America, respectively. Not many people know that Bonifacio lost all of his 29 battles, and, as every schoolchild knows, Aguinaldo surrendered to the Americans in 1901. Now, as for Rizal, who used the pen (a weapon mightier than the sword), he waged a non-violent crusade and suffered political martyrdom. But, in the end, this proved more effective in destroying both the Spanish Empire and the American absolutism in the Philippines. Not even the armies of Spain and America could stop the ideas that Rizal fought and died for. In the end, Bonifacio was repudiated by his countrymen, and Aguinaldo surrendered. But Rizal won over all of them—Filipinos, Spaniards and Americans.
3. That Rizal was somehow an “American-made hero,” who was used by the Colonialists to miseducate us and suppress our national sentiments by giving us a hero who was a model of cooperating with a colonial power rather than fighting against it. Nothing could be farther from the truth, as we have shown in this book, and by including Appendix A, “Who Made Rizal Our National Hero, and Why?” As a professor Steve Ocampo, the great Rizalist writer and colleague of Dr. Gregorio F. Zaide, wrote: The answer is: all of them –Rizal himself, the Spaniards, the Filipinos and the Americans –raised Rizal to the rank of supremacy among our

heroes. Thus, Rizal's life, works and martyrdom raised him to the highest place in the pantheon of our revolutionary heroes. His supremacy was acknowledged by his contemporaries (Aguinaldo, Bonifacio etc.); Spanish writers also acknowledged his fame; and so did American colonial legislators who came to admire our people through his story. It is simply not true that there ever any colonists' meeting or plot to impose Rizal as the national Hero of the Philippines. The decision to honor him in this way was made by the Filipinos, for the Filipinos.

In making this Special Centennial Edition of the Rizal biography, we dedicate it to the Filipinos who have gone abroad to work or to live away from home. Many find that, in other lands, they become homesick and come to love the Philippines more than when they were here. Truly, there is no place like home. Like Rizal in his many travels abroad, they have come to appreciate our nation more, and hopefully, they will also make their contribution from far away or when they return.

I wish to acknowledge the students I taught in the Rizal and other Philippine history classes, for their making it interesting to teach the subject, and for letting me see new insights about the hero's life and times by their questions and interest.

SONIA M. ZAIDE  
January 30, 1999

## **Rizal and His Times**

To appreciate and understand the life of Dr. Jose Rizal, it is necessary to know the historical background of the world and of the Philippines during his times. The 19<sup>th</sup> century when he lived was a century of ferment caused by the blowing winds of history. In Asia, Europe, and the Americas, events surged inexorably like sea tides, significantly affecting the lives and fortunes of mankind.

### **The World of Rizal's Time**

On February 19, 1861, four months before Rizal's birth in Calamba, the liberal Czar Alexander II (1855-1881), to appease the rising discontent of the Russian masses, issued a proclamation emancipating 22,500,000 serfs. When Rizal was born on June 19, 1861, the American Civil War (1861-65) was raging furiously in the United States over the issue of Negro slavery. This titanic conflict, which erupted on April 12, 1861, compelled President Lincoln to issue his famous Emancipation Proclamation on September 22, 1862 freeing the Negro slaves.

On June 1, 1861, just eighteen days before Rizal's birth, Benito Juarez, a full-blooded Zapotec Indian, was elected President of Mexico. A year after his election (in April 1862) Emperor Napoleon III of the Second French Empire, in his imperialistic desire to secure a colonial stake in Latin America, sent French troops which invaded and conquered Mexico. President Juarez, owing to the raging American Civil War, could not obtain military aid from his friend, President Lincoln, but he continued to resist the French invaders with his valiant Indian and Mexican freedom fighters. To consolidate his occupation of Mexico, Napoleon III, installed Archduke Maximilian of Austria as puppet emperor of Mexico at Mexico City on June 12, 1864. Finally, after the end of the American Civil War, Juarez, with U.S. support, defeated Maximilian's French in the Battle of Queretaro (May 15, 1867) and executed Emperor Maximilian on June 19, 1867 (Rizal's sixth birthday anniversary). Thus, fizzled out Emperor Napoleon III's ambition to colonize Latin America.

In Rizal's times two European nations (Italians and German) succeeded in unifying their own countries. The Italian under the leadership of Count Cavour and of Garibaldi and his army of "Red Shirts" drove out the Austrians and French armies from Italy and proclaimed the Kingdom of Italy under King Victor Emmanuel, with Rome as capital city. The Prussians led by Otto von Bismarck, the "Iron Chancellor", defeated France in the Franco-Prussian War and established the German Empire on January 18, 1871, with King Wilhelm of Prussia as first Kaiser of the German Empire. With his defeat in the Franco-Prussian War, Emperor Napoleon III's Second Empire collapsed, and over its ruins the Third French Republic arose, with Adolph Thiers as first President.

The times of Rizal saw the flowering of Western imperialism. England emerged as the world's leading imperialist power. On account of her invincible navy and magnificent army,

she was able to conquer many countries throughout the world and to establish a global colonial empire. Thus the British people during the glorious reign of Queen Victoria (1837-1901) proudly asserted: “Britannia rules the waves.” By winning the First Opium War (1840-1842) against the tottering Chinese Empire under the Manchu dynasty, she acquired the Island of Hong Kong (Fragrant Harbor). In the Second Opium War (1856-1860), she won again and forced the helpless Manchu dynasty to cede the Kowloon Peninsula opposite Hong Kong. In 1859, after suppressing the Indian Rebellion and dismantling the Mogul Empire, she opposed her raj (rule) over the subcontinent of India (now consisting of India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh). By winning the Three Anglo-Burmese Wars (1824-26, 1852, and 1885), she conquered Burma. Other lands in Asia which became British colonies were Ceylon (Sri Lanka), Maldives, Aden, Malaya, Singapore, and Egypt. Australia and New Zealand in the South Pacific also became British colonies.

Other imperialist, following the Britain’s example, grabbed the weak countries in Southeast Asia and colonized them. In 1858-1863, France, with the help of Filipino troops under Spanish officers, conquered Vietnam; annexed Cambodia (1863) and Laos (1893); and merged all these countries into a federated colony under the name of French Indochina. The Dutch, after driving away the Portuguese and Spaniards from the East Indies in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, colonized this vast and rich archipelago and named it the Netherlands East Indies (now Indonesia).

Czarist Russia, unable to expand westward to Europe, turned eastward to Asia, conquering Siberia and later occupied Kamchatka, and Alaska (which she sold in 1867 to the U.S. for \$7,200,000). From 1865 to 1884, she conquered the Muslim Khanates of Bokhara, Khiva, and Kokand in Central Asia. Expanding towards China, Czarist Russia joined England, France, and Germany in the despoliation of the crumbling Chinese Empire, acquiring Manchuria as a “Sphere of influence,” thus enabling her to build the 5,800-mile Trans-Siberian Railway, reputed to be “the world’s longest railroad” linking Vladivostok and Moscow.

Only July 8, 1853, an American squadron under the command of Commodore Mathew C. Perry re-opened Japan to the world. After this event, which ended Japan’s 214-year isolation (1639-1853), Emperor Meiji (Mutsuhito) modernized the country by freely accepting Western influences, including imperialism. No sooner had Japan strengthen her navy and army along Western lines, when she, joining the Western imperialist powers, began her imperialist career by fighting weak China in the Sino-Japanese War (1894-95) and grabbed Formosa (Taiwan) and Pescadores. And later in 1910 she annexed Korea.

Germany, it should be recalled became a sovereign state in January 1871, and was late in the scramble colonies in Asia and Africa. In search for colonial stakes, she turned to the islands archipelagoes of the mid-Pacific world. On August 25, 1885, a German warship, the *Ilties*, entered the harbor of Yap (an island in the Carolines), landing the German marines who seized the island, hoisted the German flag and proclaimed the Carolines and Palau archipelagoes as colonies of Germany. Strangely, the Spanish governor of the Carolines (Don Enrique Capriles) was present in the island, with two Spanish ships moored at its harbor, but due to cowardice or other reasons, he did not offer resistance to the German aggression.

The German seizure of Yap Island enraged Spain, who claimed sovereignty over the Carolines and Palau by right of discovery. It should be noted that the island of Yap was discovered by the Manila galleon pilot, Francisco Lezcano, who named "Carolina" in honor of King Charles II (1665-1700) of Spain, which name was applied to the other islands. Spanish-German relation grew critical. In Madrid, the Spanish populace rose in violent riots, demanding war against Germany. To avert actual clash of arms, Spain and Germany submitted the Carolina Question to Pope Leo XIII for arbitration.

The Holy Father, after careful study of pertinent documents submitted by both parties, issued his decision on October 22, 1885 favoring Spain –recognizing Spain sovereignty over the Carolines and Palau, but granting two concessions to German navy. Both Spain and Germany accepted the Papal decision, so that the Hispano-German War was aborted. It is interesting to recall that during the critical days of the Hispano-German imbroglio over the Carolines, Rizal was in Barcelona visiting his friend Maximo Viola. At the same time he wrote an article on the Carolina Question which was published in *La Publicidad*, a newspaper owned by Don Miguel Morayta.

While the imperialist powers were enjoying the fruits of their colonial ventures and achieving global prestige, Spain, once upon a time the "mistress of the world," was stagnating as a world power. Gone with the winds of time was the dalliance of the imperial glory of her vanished *Siglo de Oro* (Golden Age). She lost her rich colonies in Latin America –Paraguay (1811), Argentina (1816), Chile (1817), Columbia and Ecuador (1819), the Central American countries (Costa Rica, Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua) in 1821, Venezuela (1822), Peru (1824), and Bolivia and Uruguay (1825). These former Spanish colonies had risen in arms against Spanish tyranny and achieved their independence. Evidently, Spain never learned a lesson from the loss of these colonies, including Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines.

### **The Philippines of Rizal's Times**

During the times of Rizal, the sinister shadows of Spain's decadence darkened Philippine skies. The Filipino people agonized beneath the yoke of Spanish misrule, for they were unfortunate victims of the evils of an unjust, bigoted, and deteriorating colonial power. Among these evils were as follows: (1) instability of colonial administration, (2) corrupt officialdom, (3) no Philippine representation in the Spanish Cortes, (4) human rights denied to Filipinos, (5) no equality before the law, (6) maladministration of justice, (7) racial discrimination, (8) frailocracy, (9) forced labor, (10) haciendas owned by the friars, and (11) the Guardia Civil.

**Instability of Colonial Administration.** The instability of Spanish politics since the turbulent reign of King Ferdinand VII (1808-1833) marked the beginning of political chaos in Spain. The Spanish government underwent frequent changes owing to bitter struggles between the forces of despotism and liberalism and the explosions of the Carlist Wars. From 1834 to 1862, Spain had adopted four constitutions, elected 28 parliaments, and installed no less than 529 ministers with portfolios; followed in subsequent years by party strifes, revolutions, and other political upheavals.

This political instability in Spain adversely affected Philippine affairs because it brought about frequent periodic shifts in colonial policies and periodic rigodon of colonial officials. For instance, from 1835 to 1897, the Philippines was ruled by 50 governor generals, each serving an average term of only one year and three months. At one time –from December 1853 to November 1854 –a period of less than a year, there were four governor-generals.

To illustrate the confusing instability of Spanish politics and its inimical effects, an anecdote was told as follows: In the year 1850 a Spanish jurist, who was appointed oidor (magistrate) of the Royal Audiencia of Manila, left Madrid with his whole family and took the longer route via Cape of Good Hope, arriving in Manila after a leisurely trip to about six months. Much to his surprise and discomfiture, he found out that another jurist was already occupying his position. During the six months when he was leisurely cruising at sea, the ministry which appointed him fell in Madrid, and the succeeding ministry named his successor. And this new jurist traveled faster, taking the shorter route via the Isthmus of Suez and reached Manila earlier.

The frequent change of colonial officials hampered the political and economic development of the Philippines. Hardly had one governor-general begun his administration when he was soon replaced by his successor. Naturally, no chief executive, no matter how able and energetic he was, could accomplish much for the colony.

**Corrupt Colonial Officials.** With few exceptions, the colonial officials (governor-general, judges, provincial executives, etc.) sent by Spain to the Philippines in the 19<sup>th</sup> century were a far cry from their able and dedicated predecessors of the 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. They were highly corrupt, incompetent, cruel, or venal. Apparently, they symbolized the decadent Spain of the 19<sup>th</sup> century –not Spain of the *Siglo de Oro* which produced Miguel Cervantes, Lope de Vega, Calderon de la Barca, El Greco (Domenico Theotocopuli), Velasquez, St. Theresa de Avila, and other glories of the Hispanic nation.

General Rafael de Izquierdo (1871-73), a boastful and ruthless governor general, aroused the anger of the Filipinos by executing the innocent Fathers Mariano Gomez, Jose Burgos, and Jacinto Zamora, the “Martyrs of 1872”. His successor, Admiral Jose Malcampo (1874-77), was a good Moro fighter, but he was an inept and weak administrator. General Fernando Primo de Rivera, governor general for two terms (1880-83 and 1897-98), enriched him by accepting bribes from gambling casinos in Manila which he scandalously permitted to operate. General Valeriano Weyler (1888- 91), a cruel and corrupt governor general of Hispanic-German ancestry, arrived in Manila a poor man and returned to Spain a millionaire. He received huge bribes and gifts of diamonds for his wife from wealthy Chinese who evaded the anti-Chinese law. The Filipino scornfully called him “tyrant” because of his brutal persecution of the Calamba tenants, particularly the family of Dr. Rizal. The Cubans contemptuously cursed him as “The Butcher” because of his ruthless reconcentration policy during his brief governorship in Cuba in 1896, causing the death of thousands of Cubans. General Camilo de Polavieja (1896-97), an able militarist but heartless governor general, was widely detested by the Filipino people for executing Dr. Rizal.

Other Spanish colonial officials were of the same evil breed of men as the corrupt and degenerate governors-general mentioned above. After the loss of Mexico, Guatemala, Chile,

Argentina, and other colonies in Latin America, numerous job-seeker and penniless Spanish sycophants came to the Philippines, where they became judges, provincial executives, army officers, and empleados (government employees). They were either relatives or proteges of civil officials and friars. Mostly ignorant and profligate, they conducted themselves with arrogance and superciliousness because of their alien white skin and tall noses. They became rich by illegal means or by marrying the heiresses of rich Filipino families.

As early in 1810, Tomas de Comyn, Spanish writer and government official, bewailed the obnoxious fact that ignorant barbers and lackeys were appointed provincial governors, and rough sailors and soldiers were named district magistrates and garrison commanders.

**Philippine Representation in Spanish Cortes.** To win the support of her overseas colonies during the Napoleonic invasion, Spain granted them representation in the Cortes (Spanish parliament). Accordingly, the Philippines experienced her first period of representation in the Cortes from 1810 to 1813. History demonstrates that the first Philippine delegate, Ventura de los Reyes, took active part in the framing of the constitution, and was one of its 184 signers. This constitution was extended to the Philippines. Another achievement of Delegate De los Reyes was the abolition of the galleon trade.

The first period of Philippine representation in the Spanish Cortes (1810-1813) was thus fruitful with beneficent results for the welfare of the colony. However, the second period of representation (1820-23) and the third period (1834-37) were less fruitful because the Philippine delegates were not as energetic and devoted in parliamentary work as De los Reyes.

Unfortunately, the representation of the overseas colonies (including the Philippines) in the Spanish Cortes was abolished in 1837. Since then the Philippine conditions worsened because there was no means by which the Filipino people could expose the anomalies perpetrated by the colonial officials. Many Filipino patriots valiantly pleaded for the restoration of Philippine representation in the Cortes. One of them, the silver-tongued Graciano Lopez Jaena, implored in sonorous Castilian on October 12, 1883, during the 391<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the discovery of America by Columbus in Madrid: ‘We want representation in the legislative chamber so that our aspirations may be known for the mother country and its government.’ Lamentably Spain ignored the fervent plea of Lopez Jaena and his compatriots. Their grievance was embittered by the fact that Cuba and Puerto Rico were granted representation in the Cortes by the Spanish Constitution by 1876. Until the end of Spanish rule in 1898, Philippine representation in the Cortes was never restored.

No wonder, Jose Rizal, M.H. Del Pilar, Graciano Lopez de Jaena, and other youthful patriots launched the Propaganda Movement, which paved the way for the Philippine Revolution of 1896.

**Human rights Denied to Filipinos.** Since the adoption of the Spanish Constitution of 1812 and other constitutions in succeeding years, the people of Spain enjoyed freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of association, and other human rights (except freedom of religion). The Spaniards ardently guarded these rights so that no Spanish monarch dared abolish them.

Strangely enough, the Spanish authorities who cherished these human rights or constitutional liberties in Spain denied them to the Filipinos in Asia. Such inconsistency was lamented by Sinibaldo de Mas, Spanish economist and diplomat, who wrote in 1843: “Why do we fall in an anomaly, such as combining our claim for liberty for ourselves, and our wish to impose our law on remote peoples? Why do we deny to others the benefit which we desire for our fatherland?”

**No Equality before the Law.** The Spanish missionaries, who introduced Christianity into the Philippines as early as in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, taught that all men, irrespective of color and race, are children of God and as such they are brothers, equal before God. Fascinated by this noble concept of human relations and convinced by the truths of the Christian faith, most Filipinos (except those in the hinterlands of Luzon and the Visayas and in Mindanao and Sulu) became Christians.

In practice, however, the Spanish colonial authorities, who were Christians, did not implement Christ’s precept of the brotherhood of all men under the fatherhood of God. Especially during the last decades of Hispanic rules, they arrogantly regarded the browned-skinned Filipinos as inferior beings, not their Christian brothers to be protected but rather as their majesty’s subjects to be exploited. To their imperialist way of thinking, brown Filipinos and white Spaniards may be equal before God but not before the law and certainly not in practice.

It is true that the *Leyes de Indias* (Laws of the Indies) were promulgated by the Christians monarchs of Spain to protect the rights of the natives in Spain’s overseas colonies and to promote their welfare. However, these good colonial laws, infused as they were with Christian charity and justice, were rarely enforced by the officials in the distant colonies, particularly the Philippines. Consequently, the Filipinos were abused, brutalized, persecuted, and slandered by their Spanish masters. They could not appeal to the law for justice because the law, being dispensed by Spaniards, was only for the white Spaniards.

The Spanish Penal Code, which was enforced in the Philippines, particularly imposed heavier penalties on native Filipinos or mestizos and lighter penalties on white complexioned Spaniards. This legal inequality was naturally resented by the Filipinos. As Professor Ferdinand Blumentritt wrote to Dr. Jose Rizal in 1887: “The provision of the Penal Code that a heavier penalty will be imposed on the Indio or mestizo irritates me exceedingly, because it signifies that every person not born white is in fact a latent criminal. This very great injustice that seems enormous and unjust for being embodied in law.”

**Maladministration of Justice.** The courts of justice in the Philippines during Rizal’s time were notoriously corrupt. Verily, they were courts of “injustice”, as far as brown Filipinos were concerned. The Spanish judges, fiscales (prosecuting attorneys), and other court officials were inept, venal, and oftentimes ignorant of law.

Justice was costly, partial, and slow. Poor Filipinos had no access to the courts because they could not afford the heavy expenses of litigation. Wealth, social prestige, and color of skin were preponderant factors in winning a case in court. Irrespective of the weight of evidence, a rich man or a Spaniard, whose skin was white, easily achieved victory in any litigation.

To the Filipino masses, litigation in court was a calamity. The expenses incurred even in a simple lawsuit often exceeded the value of the property at issue, so that in many instances the litigants found themselves impoverished at the end of the long tussle. Criminal cases dragged on for many years during which period either the delinquents took to flight, or the documents were lost.

The judicial procedure was so low and clumsy that it was easy to have justice delayed. And justice delayed, as a popular maxim states, “is justice denied”. Thus related John Foreman, a British eyewitness of the last years of Spanish sovereignty in the Philippines:

It was hard to get the judgment executed as it was to win the case. Even when the question at issue was supposed to be settled, a defect in the sentence could always be concocted to reopen the whole affair. If the case had been tried and judgment given under the Civil Code, a way was found to convert it into a Criminal Code, a flaw could be discovered under the Laws of the Indies, or the Siete Partidas or the Roman Law, or the Novisima Recopilacion, or the Antiguos Fueros, Decrees, Royal Orders, Ordenanzas del Buen Gobierno, and so forth by which the case could be reopened.

A specific instance of Spanish maladministration of justice was the infamous case of Juan de la Cruz in 1886-1898. On the night of June 7, 1886, two men were brutally killed in their sleep at the waterfront of Cavite. The next day a coxswain of a motor launch named Juan De la Cruz was arrested on mere suspicion of having perpetrated the murder. Without preliminary investigation and proper trial, he was jailed in Cavite, where he languished for twelve years. When the Americans landed in Cavite after the Battle of Manila Bay (May 1, 1898), they found him in jail still awaiting trial.

Dr. Rizal and his family were victims of Spanish injustice. Twice, first in 1871 and second in 1891, Dona Teodora (Rizal's mother) was unjustly arrested and jailed on flimsy grounds. Rizal himself was deported in July, 1892 to Dapitan without benefit of a trial. His brother Paciano and several brothers-in-law were exiled to various parts of the archipelago without due process of law. Like Fathers Mariano Gomez, Jose Burgos, and Jacinto Zamora, Rizal was executed—a noble victim of Spanish miscarriage of justice.

**Racial Discrimination.** Into Spain introduced Christianity into the Philippines with its beautiful egalitarian concept of the brotherhood of all men under God the Father. The Spanish authorities, civil as well as ecclesiastical, zealously propagated the Christian faith, but seldom practiced its sublime tenets. They regarded the converted Filipinos not as brother Christians, but as inferior beings who were infinitely undeserving of the rights and privileges that the white Spaniards enjoyed.

With this unchristian attitude, many Spaniards and their mestizo satellites derisively called the brown-skinned and flat-nosed Filipinos “Indios” (Indians). In retaliation, the Filipinos jealously dubbed their pale-complexioned detractors with the disparaging term “bangus” (milkfish). During Rizal’s time a white skin, a high nose, and Castilian lineage were a badge of vaunted superiority. Hence, a Spaniard or a mestizo, no matter how stupid or mongrelborn he was, always enjoyed political and social prestige in the community.

Racial prejudice was prevalent everywhere—in government offices, in the courts of justice, in the armed forces, in the social circles, and even in the educational institutions and in the ecclesiastical hierarchy. One of the shining stars of the Filipino clergy, Father Jose Burgos (1837-1872) bewailed the Spanish misconception that a man's merit depended on the pigment of his skin, the height of his nose, the color of his hair, and the shape of his skull; and complained of the lack of opportunities for educated young Filipinos to raise in the service of God and country. "Why for instance," he lamented, "shall a young man strive to rise in the profession of law or of theology, when he can vision no future for himself save that of obscurity and jaunty unconcern? What Filipino will aspire to the seats of the wise and will devote sleepless nights to such an ideal, when he clearly sees that his noblest feelings are crushed down in the unwelcome atmosphere of contumely and oblivion, and when he knows that among the privileged few only dispensed the sinecures of honor and profit?"

**Frailocracy.** Owing to the Spanish political philosophy of union of Church and State, there arose a unique form of government in Hispanic Philippines called "Frailocracy" (frailocracia), so named because it was "a government by friars". History discloses that since the days of the Spanish conquest, the friars (Augustinians, Dominicans, and Franciscans) controlled the religious and educational life of the Philippines, and later in the 19th century they came to acquire tremendous political power, influence, and riches.

The friars practically ruled the Philippines through a façade of civil government. The colonial authorities, from the governor general down to the alcaldes mayors, were under the control of the friars. Almost every town in the archipelago, except in unpacified Islamic Mindanao and Sulu and in the pagan hinterlands, was ruled by a friar curate. Aside from his priestly duties, the friar was the supervisor of local elections, the inspector of schools and taxes, the arbiter of morals, and the censor of books and comedias (stage plays), the superintendent of public works, and the guardian of peace and order. So great was his political influence that his recommendations were heeded by the governor-general and the provincial officials. He could send a patriotic Filipino to jail or denounce him as a filibuster (traitor) to be exiled to a distant place or to be as an enemy of God and Spain.

Rizal, M.H. del Pilar, G. Lopez Jaena, and other Filipino reformist assailed frailocracy, blaming it for the prevailing policy of obscurantism, fanaticism, and oppression in the country. Rizal, for instance, denounced the friars as the enemies of liberal reforms and modern progress in the Philippines.

Like the Roman god Janus, frailocracy had two faces. Its bad face was darkly portrayed by Rizal and his contemporaries by way of retaliation against certain evil-hearted friars who persecuted them. For the sake of his historical truth, the other face of frailocracy, its good face, should be known. In the felicitous opinion of Dr. Jose P. Laurel, "it would be a gross ingratitude on the part of the Filipinos to be conscious only of the abuses of the friars and to close their eyes to the beneficent influences of the ecclesiastical element on the life of the Filipinos".

Credit must certainly be given to the Spanish friars for having introduced Christianity and European civilization into the Philippines. To them, the Filipinos owe a lasting debt of gratitude. Without their magnificent services the Filipino people would not have emerged from their past as

a unique Christians nation, the only nation in Asia with an Oriental, Latin and Hispanic-American cultural heritage.

Of course, it is regrettable that not all Spanish friars who came to the Philippines were good men and worthy ministers of God. Among the bad friars who were recreant to their sublime calling and the traditions of Iberian *pundonor* were Fray Miguel Lucio Bustamante, Fray Jose Rodriguez, Fray Antonio Piernavieja, and other renegade friars who were portrayed by Rizal in his novels as Padre Damaso and Padre Salvi and hilariously caricatured by Jaena as *Fray Botod*. These bad friars besmirched the noble escutcheon of Spain, tarnished the reputation of hundreds of their good brethren (including Fray Andres de Urdaneta, Fray Martin Rada, Fray Juan de Plasencia, Bishop Domingo de Salazar, Fray Francisco Blancas de San Jose, and Fray Miguel de Benavides), and aroused the bitter hatred of the Filipinos towards the Spanish religious orders.

**Forced Labor.** Known as the *polo*, it was the compulsory labor imposed by the Spanish colonial authorities on adult Filipino males in the construction of churches, schools, hospitals; building and repair of roads and bridges; the building of ships in the shipyards; and other public works.

Originally, Filipino males from 16 to 60 years old were obliged to render forced labor for 40 days a year. Later, the Royal Decree of July 12, 1883, implemented by the New Regulations promulgated by the Council of State of February 3, 1885, increased the minimum age of the *polistas* (those who performed the force labor) from 16 to 18 and reduced the days of labor From 40 to 15. The same royal decree provided that not the only native Filipinos, but also all male Spanish residents from 18 years old to 60 must render forced labor, but this particular provision was never implemented in the Philippines for obvious reasons. So actually the brown Filipinos did the dirty job of building or repairing the public works. The well-to-do among them were able to escape this manual labor by paying the *falla*, which was a sum of money paid to the government to be exempted from the *polo*.

The Filipinos came to hate the forced labor because of the abuses connected with it. First of all, the whit Spanish residents, contrary to law, were not recruited by the colonial authorities to perform the obligatory labor. Second, the Filipino *polistas*, according to law, were too received only a part of his amount and worse, they got nothing. And, thirdly, the annual forced labor caused so much inconvenience and suffering to the common people because it disturbed their work in farms and shops and also because they were sometimes compelled to work in construction projects far from their homes and towns.

A true incident of the hardship suffered by the Filipinos from forced labor was related by Rizal, as follows:

In the town of Los Banos a hospital was built by laborers snatched from all the towns of the province. Each laborer forced by the authorities was paid eight curators (five centavos) daily, the ordinary daily wage being two pesetas or four peales Fuertes. In addition, sale and charity bazaars were held to defray the cost of the buildings. The architect was a Franciscan brother. The hospital was erected, a palace of the captain general was constructed, agriculture and the towns suffered for their construction. Why

are the people who pay their taxes compelled to work gratis? Why do they pay taxes if they are not going to be allowed to live with their families? Do they pay taxes so that they will be used to hire petty tyrants and not to attend to the demands of society? What? Is the Spanish flag perchance the flag of the slave trade?

**Haciendas Owned by the Friars.** During Rizal's times the Spanish friars belonging to different religious orders were the richest landlords, for they owned the best haciendas (agricultural lands) in the Philippines. The rural folks, who had been living in these haciendas and cultivating them generation after generation became tenants. Naturally, they resented the loss of their lands which belonged to their ancestors' since pre-Spanish times; legally, however, the friars were recognized as legal owners of said lands because they obtained royal titles of ownership from the Spanish crown. No wonder, these friar haciendas became hotbeds of agrarian revolts, in as much as the Filipino tenants regarded the friar owners as usurpers of their ancestral lands. One of these bloody agrarian revolts was the agrarian upheaval in 1745-1746.

As early as in 1768 Governor Anda, realizing the danger of the Friar-owned haciendas to Filipino-Spanish relations, strongly recommended to the Madrid government the sale of the friar estates. Unfortunately, his wise recommendation was ignored. Filipino odium towards the friars, who turned hacienda owners, persisted unabated until the end of Spanish rule.

Rizal, whose family and relatives were tenants of the Dominican Estate of Calamba, tried to initiate agrarian reforms in 1887, but in vain. His advocacy of agrarian reforms ignited the wrath of the Dominican friars, who retaliated by raising the rentals of the lands leased by his family and other Calamba tenants.

According to Rizal, the friar ownership of the productive lands contributed to the economic stagnation of the Philippines during the Spanish period. In his famous essay "*Sobre la Indolencia de los Filipinos*" (Indolence of the Filipinos), he wrote:

The fact that the best plantations, the best tracts of land in some provinces... are in the hands of the religious corporations... is one of the reasons why many towns do not progress inspite of the effort of their inhabitants. We will be met with the objection, as an argument on the other side, that those which do not belong to them. They surely are! Just as their brethren in Europe, in founding their convents, knew how to select the best valley, the best uplands for the cultivation of the vine or the production of beer, so also the Philippine monks have known how to select the best towns, the beautiful plains, the well-watered fields, to make of them rich plantations. For some time the friars have deceived many by making them believe that if these plantations were prospering, it was because they were under their care, and the indolence of the native was thus emphasized; but they forgot that in some provinces where they have not been able to get possession of the best tracts of land, their plantations, like Buan and Liang, are inferior to Taal, Balayan and Lipa, regions cultivated entirely by the natives without any monkish interference whatsoever.

**The Guardia Civil.** The last hated symbol of Spanish tyranny was the Guardia Civil (Constabulary) which was created by the Royal Decree of February 12, 1852, as amended by the

Royal Decree of March 24, 1888, for the purpose of maintaining internal peace and order in the Philippines. It was patterned after the famous and well-disciplined Guardia Civil in Spain.

While it is true that the Guardia Civil in the Philippines had rendered meritorious services in suppressing the bandits in the provinces, they later became infamous for their rampant abuses, such as maltreating innocent people, looting their carabaos, chickens, and valuable belongings, and raping helpless women. Both officers (Spaniards) and men (natives) well illtrained and undisciplined, unlike the Guardia Civil in Spain who were respected and well-like by the populace.

Rizal actually witnessed the atrocities committed by the Guardia Civil on the Calamba folks. He himself and his mother had been victims of the brutalities of the lieutenant of the Guardia Civil.

It was natural that Rizal directed his stinging satire against the hated Guardia Civil. Through Elias in *Noli Me Tangere*, he exposed the Guardia Civil as a bunch of ruthless ruffians good only “for disturbing the peace” and “persecuting honest men”. He proposed to improve the military organization by having it be composed of good men who possessed education and good principles and who were conscious of the limitations and responsibility of authority and power. “So much power in the hands of men, ignorant filled with passions, without moral training, of untried principles,” he said through Elias, “is a weapon in the hands of a madman in a defenseless multitude.”

\* \* \* \* \*

# Chapter 1

## Advent of A National Hero

Dr. Jose Rizal is a unique example of a *many-splendored genius* who became the greatest hero of a nation. Endowed by God with versatile gifts, he truly ranked with the world's geniuses. He was a physician (ophthalmic surgeon), poet, dramatist, essayist, novelist, historian, architect, painter, sculptor, educator, linguist, musician, naturalist, ethnologist, surveyor, engineer, farmer businessman, economist, geographer, cartographer, bibliophile, philologist, grammarian, folklorist, philosopher, translator, inventor, magician, humorist, satirist, polemicist, sportsman, traveler, and prophet. Above and beyond all these, he was a hero and political martyr who consecrated his life for the redemption of his oppressed people. No wonder, he is now acclaimed as the national hero of the Philippines.

**The Birth of a Hero.** Jose Rizal was born on the moonlit night of Wednesday, June 19, 1861, in the lakeshore town of Calamba, Laguna Province, Philippines. His mother almost died during the delivery because of his big head. As he recounted many years later in his student memoirs: "I was born in Calamba on 19 June, 1861, between eleven and midnight, a few days before full moon. It was a Wednesday and my coming out in this vale of tears would have cost my mother her life had she not vowed to the virgin of Antipolo to take me to her sanctuary by way of pilgrimage.

He was baptized in the Catholic church of his town on June 22, aged three days old, by the parish priest, Father Rufino Collantes, who was a Batangueno. His godfather (ninong) was Father Pedro Casanas, native of Calamba and close friend of Rizal family, his name "Jose" was chosen by his mother who was a devotee of the Christian saint *San Jose* (St. Joseph).

During the christening ceremony Father Collantes was impressed by the baby's big head, and told the members of the family who were present: "Take good care of this child, for someday he will become a great man." His words proved to be prophetic, as confirmed by subsequent events.

The baptismal certificate of Rizal reads as follows:

"I, the undersigned parish priest of Calamba, certify that from the investigation made with proper authority, for replacing the parish books which were burned September 28, 1862, to be found in Docket No.1 of Baptisms, p. 49, it appears by the sworn testimony of competent witnesses that JOSE RIAZAL MERCADO is the legitimate son, and of lawful wedlock, of Don Francisco Rizal Mercado and Dona Teodora Realonda, having been baptized in the parish on the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of June in the year 1861, by the parish priest Rev. Rufino Collantes, Rev. Pedro Casanas being his godfather. -Witness my signature.

(Signed): LEONCIO LOPEZ

It should be noted that at the time Rizal was born, the governor general of the Philippines was Lieutenant-General Jose Lemery, former senator of Spain (member of the upper chamber of the Spanish Cortes). He governed the Philippines from February 2, 1861 to July 7, 1862. Incidentally, on the same date of Rizal's birth (June 19, 1861), he sent an official dispatch to the Ministry of War and the Ministry of Ultramar in Madrid, denouncing Sultan Pulalun of Sulu and several powerful Moro datus for fraternizing with a British consul. Among his achievements as a governor general were (1) fostering the cultivation of cotton in the provinces and (2) establishing the politico-military governments in the Visayas and in Mindanao.

**Riza's Parents.** Jose Rizal was the seventh of the eleven children of Frncisco Mercado Rizal and Teodora Alonso Realonda. The hero's father, Francisco (1818-1898) was born in Binan, Laguna, on May 11, 1818. He studied Latin and Philosophy at the College of San Jose in Manila. In early manhood, following his parent's death, he moved to Calamba and became a tenant-farmer of the Dominican-owned hacienda. He was a hardly an independent-minded mind, who talked less and worked more, and was strong in body and valiant in spirit. He died in Manila on January 5, 1898, at the age of 80. In his student memoirs, Rizal affectionately called him 'a model of fathers'.

Dona Teodora (1826-1911), the hero's mother, was born in Manila on November 8, 1826 and was educated at the College of Santa Rosa, a well-known college for girls in the city. She was a remarkable woman, possessing refined culture, literary talent, business ability, and the fortitude of Spartan women. Rizal lovingly said her: "My mother is a woman of more than ordinary culture; she knows literature and speaks Spanish better than I. she corrected my poems and gave me good advice when I was studying rhetoric. She is a mathematician and has read many books." Dona Teodora died in Manila on August 16, 1911, at the age of 85. Shortly before her death, the Philippine government offered her a life pensioned. She courteously rejected it saying, "My family has never been patriotic for money. If the government has plenty of funds and does not know what to do with them, better reduce the taxes," Such remarks truly befitted her as a worthy mother of a national hero.

**The Rizal Children.** God blessed the marriage of Francisco Mercado Rizal and Toedora Alonso Realonda with eleven children –two boys and nine girls. These children were as follows:

1. Saturnina (1850-1913) –oldest of the Rizal children, nicknamed Neneng; she Married Manuel T. Hidalgo of Tanawan, Batangas.
2. Paciano (1851-1930) –older brother and confidant of Jose Rizal; after his younger brother's execution, he joined the Philippine Revolution and became a combat general; after the Revolution, he retired to his farm in Los Banos, where he lived as a gentleman farmer and died on April 13, 1930, an old bachelor aged 79. He had two children by his mistress (Severena Decena) –a boy and a girl.
3. Narcisa (1852-1939) –her pet name Sisa and she married Antonio Lopez (Nephew of Father Leoncio Lopez), a school teacher of Morong.
4. Olimpia (1855-1887) –Ypia was her pet name; she married Silvestre Ubaldo



a telegraph operator from Manila.

5. Lucia (1857-1919) –she married Mariano Herbosa of Calamba, who was a nephew of Father Casanas. Herbosa died of cholera in 1889 and was denied Christian burial because he was a brother-in-law of Dr. Rizal.

6. Maria (1859-1945) –Biang was her nickname; she married Dannel Faustino Cruz of Binan, Laguna.

7. JOSE (1861-1896) –the greatest Filipino hero and peerless genius; his nickname was Pepe; during his exile in Dapitan he lived with Josephine Bracken, Irish girl from Hong Kong; he had a son by her, but this baby-boy died a few hours after birth; Rizal named him “Francisco” after his father and buried him in Dapitan.

8. Concepcion (1862-1865) –her pet name was concha; she died of sickness at the age of 3; her death was Rizal’s first sorrow in life.

9. Josefa (1865-1945) –her pet name was panggoy; she died an old maid at the age of 80.

10. Trinidad (1868-1951) –Trining was her pet name; she died also an old maid in 1951 aged 83.

11. Soledad (1870-1929) –youngest of the Rizal’s children; her pet name was choleng; she married Pantaleon Quintero of Calamba.

Sibling relationship among the Rizal children was affectionately cordial. As a little boy, Rizal used to play games with his sisters. Although he has boyish quarrels with them he respected them. Years later when he grew to manhood, he always called them Dona or Senora (if married) and Señorita (if single). For instance, he called her older sister “Dona Ypia,” his oldest sister “Senora Saturnina,” and his unmarried sisters “Señorita Josefa” and Señorita Trinidad.”

Rizal’s relationship with his only brother Paciano, who was ten years his senior, was more than that of younger to older brother. Paciano was a second father to him. Throughout his life, Rizal respected him and greatly valued his sagacious advice. He immortalized him in his first novel *Noli Me Tangere* as the wise Pilosopo Tasio. In a letter to Blumentritt, written in London on June 23, 1888, he regarded Paciano as the “noblest Filipinos” and “though an Indio, more generous and noble than all the Spaniards put together”. And in a subsequent letter also written to Blumentritt and dated London, October 12, 1888, he spoke of his beloved older brother, as follows: “He is much finer and more serious than I am; he is bigger and more slim; he is not so dark; his nose is fine, beautiful and sharp; but he is bow-legged.”

**Rizal’s Ancestry.** As a typical Filipino, Rizal was a product of the mixture of races. In his veins flowed the blood of both East and West –Negrito, Indonesia, Malay, Chinese, Japanese and Spanish. Predominantly, he was a Malayan and was a magnificent specimen of Asian manhood. Rizal’s great-great grandfather on his father’s side was Domingo Lameo, a

Chinese immigrant from Fukien city of Changchow, who arrived in Manila about 1690. He became a Christian; a well-to-do Chinese Christian girl of Manila named Ines de la Rosa, and assumed in 1731 the surname Mercado which was appropriate for him because he was a merchant. The Spanish term Mercado means “market” in English. Domingo Mercado and Ines de la Rosa had a son Francisco Mercado, married a Chinese-Filipino mestiza, Cirila Bernacha, and were elected *gobernadorcillo* (municipal mayor) of the town. One of their sons, Juan Mercado (Rizal’s grandfather), married Cirila Alejandro, a Chinese-Filipino mestiza. Like his father, he was elected *gobernadorcillo* of Binan. Capitan Juan and Capitana Cirila had thirteen children, the youngest being Francisco Mercado, Rizal’s father.

At the age of eight, Francisco Mercado lost his father and grew up to manhood under the care of his mother. He studied Latin and Philosophy in the College of San Jose in Manila. While studying in Manila, he met and fell in love with Teodora Alonzo Realonda, a student in the College of Santa Rosa. They were married on June 28, 1848, after which they settled down in Calamba, where they engaged in farming and business and reared a big family.

It is said that Dona Teodora’s family descend from Lakan-Dula, the last native king of Tondo. Her great-grandfather (Rizal’s maternal great-great-grandfather) was Eugenio Ursua (of Japanese ancestry), who married a Filipina named Benigna (surname unknown). Their daughter, Regina, married Manuel de Quintos, Filipino-Chinese lawyer from Pangasinan. One of the daughters of Attorney Quintos and Regina was Brigida, who married Lorenzo Alberto Alonso, a prominent Spanish-Filipino mestizo of Binan. Their children were Narcisa, Teodora (Rizal’s mother), Gregorio, Manuel, and Jose.

**The Surname Rizal.** The real surname of Rizal family was Mercado, which was adopted in 1731 by Domingo Lamco (the paternal great-great-grandfather of Jose Rizal), who was a full blooded Chinese. Rizal’s family acquired a second surname –Rizal –which was given by a Spanish *alcalde mayor* (provincial governor) of Laguna, who was a family friend. Thus said Dr. Rizal, in his letter to Blumentritt (without date or place):

I am the only Rizal because at home my parents, my sisters, my brother, and my relatives have always preferred our old surname Mercado. Our family name was in fact Mercado, but there were many Mercados in the Philippines who are not related to us. It is said that an *alcalde mayor*, who was a friend of our family added Rizal to our name. My family did not pay much attention to his, but now I have to use it. In this way, it seems that I am an illegitimate son.

“Whoever that Spanish *alcalde mayor* was,” commented Ambassador Leon Ma. Guerrero, distinguished Rizalist and diplomat, “his choice was prophetic for Rizal in Spanish means a field where wheat, cut while still green, sprouts again.”

**The Rizal Home.** The house of the Rizal family, where the hero was born, was one of the distinguished stone houses in Calamba during Spanish times. It was a two-storey building rectangular in shape, built of adobe stones and hard-woods, and roofed with red tiles. It is described by Dr. Rafael Palma, one of Rizal’s prestigious biographers, as follows:

The house was high and even sumptuous, a solid and massive earthquake-proof structure with sliding shell windows. Thick of lime and stone bounded the first floor was made entirely of wood except for the roof, which was a red tile, in the style of the buildings in Manila at that time . . . At the back there was an azotea and a wide, deep cistern to hold rain water for home use.

Behind the house were the poultry yard full of turkeys and chickens and a big garden of tropical fruit trees –*atis*, *balimbing*, *chico*, *macopa*, *papaya*, *santol*, *tampoy*, etc.

It was a happy home where parental affection and children's laughter reigned. By day, it hummed with the noises of children at play and the songs of the birds in the garden. By night, it echoed with the dulcet notes of family prayers.

Such a wholesome home, naturally, bred a wholesome family. And such a family was the Rizal family.

**A Good and Middle-Class Family.** The Rizal family belonged to the *principalia*, a town aristocracy in Spanish Philippines. It was one of the distinguished families in Calamba. By dint of honest and hard work and frugal living, Rizal's parents were able to live well. From the farms, which were rented from the Dominican Order, they harvested rice, corn, and sugarcane. They raised pigs, chickens, and turkeys in their backyard. In addition to farming and stockraising, Dona Teodora managed a general goods store and operated a small flour-mill and a home-made ham press.

As evidence of their influence, Rizal's parents were able to build a large stone house which was situated near the town church and to buy another one. They owned a carriage, which was a status symbol of the *ilustrados* in Spanish Philippines and a private library (the largest in Calamba) which consisted of more than 1,000 volumes. They sent their children to the colleges in Manila. Combining affluence and culture, hospitality, courtesy, they participated prominently in all social and religious affairs in the community. They were gracious hosts to all visitors and guests – friars, Spanish officials, and Filipino friends – during the town fiestas and other holidays. Beneath their roof, all guest irrespective of their color, rank, social position, and economic status, were welcome.

**Home Life of the Rizals.** The Rizal family had a simple, contented, and happy life. In consonance with Filipino custom, family ties among the Rizals were intimately close. Don Francisco and Dona Teodora loved their children, but they never spoiled them. They were strict parents and they trained their children to love God, to behave well, to be obedient, and to respect people, especially the old folks. Whenever the children, including Jose Rizal, got into mischief, they were given a sound spanking. Evidently, they believed in the maxim: "Spare the rod and spoil the child."

Every day the Rizals (parents and children) heard mass in the town church, particularly during Sundays and Christian holidays. They prayed together daily at home – the Angelus at sunset and the Rosary before retiring to bed at night. After the family prayers, all the children kissed the hands of their parents.

Life was not, however, all prayers and church services for the Rizal children. They were given ample time and freedom to play by their strict and religious parents. They played merrily in the *azotea* or in the garden by themselves. The older ones were allowed to play with the children of the other families.

## Chapter 2

# Chilhood Years in Calamba

Jose Rizal had many beautiful memories of childhood in his native town. He grew up in a happy home, ruled by good parents, bubbling with joy, and sanctified by God's blessings. His natal town of Calamba, so named after a big native jar, was a fitting cradle for a hero. Its scenic beauties and its industrious, hospitable, and friendly folks impressed him during his childhood years and profoundly affected his mind and character. The happiest period of Rizal's life was spent in this lakeshore town, a worthy prelude to his Hamlet-like tragic manhood.

**Calamba, the Hero's Town.** Calamba was a hacienda town which belonged to the Dominican order, which also owned all the lands around it. It is a picturesque town nestling on a verdant plain covered with irrigated ricefields and sugar-lands. A few kilometers to the south looms the legendary Mount Makiling in somnolent grandeur and beyond this mountain is the province of Batangas. East of the town is the Laguna de Bay, an inland lake of songs and emerald waters beneath the canopy of azure skies. In the middle of the lake towers the storied island of talim, beyond it towards the north is the distant Antipolo, famous mountain shrine of the miraculous Lady of Peace and Good Voyage.

Rizal loved Calamba with all his heart and soul. In 1876, when he was 15 years old and was a student in the ateneo de Manila, he remembered his beloved town. Accordingly, he wrote a poem *Un Recuerdo A Mi Pueblo* (In Memory of My Town), as follows:

When early childhood's happy days  
In memory I see once more  
Along the lovely verdant shore  
That meets a gently murmuring sea;  
When I recall the whisper soft  
Of zephyrs dancing on my brow  
With cooling sweetness, even now  
New luscious life is born in me.

When I behold the lily white  
That sways to do the wind's command,  
While gently sleeping on the sand  
The stormy water rest awhile;  
When from the flowers there softly breaths  
A bouquet ravishingly sweet,  
Out-poured the newborn dawn to meet,  
As on us she begins to smile.

While sadness I recall . . . recall

Thy face, in precious infancy,  
Oh mother, friend most dear to me,  
Who gave to life a wondrous charm?  
I yet recall a village plain,  
My joy, my family, my boon,  
Besides the freshly cool lagoon, --  
The spot for which my heart beats warm.

Ah yes! My footsteps insecure  
In your dark forests deeply sank;  
And there by every river's bank  
I found refreshment and delight;  
Within that rustic temple prayed  
With childhood's simple faith unfeigned  
While cooling breezes, pure, unstained,  
Would send my heart on rapturous flight.

I saw the Maker in the grandeur  
Of your ancient hoary wood,  
Ah, never in your refuge could  
A mortal by regret be smitten;  
And while upon your sky of blue  
I gaze, no love nor tenderness  
Could fail, for here on nature's dress  
My happiness itself was written.

Ah, tender childhood, lovely town,  
Rich fount of my felicities,  
Oh those harmonious melodies  
Which put to flight all dismal hours,  
Come back to my heart once more!  
Come back, gentle hours, I yearn!  
Come back as the birds return,  
At the budding of the flowers!

Alas, farewell! Eternal vigil keep  
For thy peace, thy bliss, and tranquility,  
O Genius of good, so kind!  
Give me these gifts, with charity.  
To thee are my fervent vows, --  
To thee I cease not to sigh  
These to learn, and I call to the sky  
To have thy sincerity.

**Earliest Childhood Memories.** The first memory of Rizal of Rizal, in his infancy, was his happy days in the family garden when he was three years old. Because he was a frail, sickly,

And undersized child, he was given the tenderest care by his parents. His father built a little nipa cottage in the garden for him to play in the daytime. A kind old woman was employed as an *aya* (nurse maid) to look after his comfort. At times, he was left alone to muse on the beauties of nature or to play by himself. In his boyhood memoirs, he narrated how he, at the age of three, watched from his garden cottage, the *culiauan*, the *maya*, the *maria capra*, the *martin*, the *pipit*, and other birds and listened “with wonder and joy” to their twilight songs.

Another childhood memory was the daily Angelus prayer. By nightfall, Rizal related, his mother gathered all the children at the house to pray the Angelus.

With nostalgic feeling, he also remembered the happy moonlight nights at the *azotea* after the nightly Rosary. The *aya* related to the Rizal children (including Jose) many stories about the fairies; tales of buried treasure and tress blooming with diamonds, and other fabulous stories. The imaginary tales told by the *aya* aroused in Rizal an enduring interest in legends and folklore. Sometimes, when he did not like to take his supper, the *aya* would threaten him that the *asuang*, the *nuno*, the *tigbalang*, or a terrible bearded and turbaned Bombay would come to take him away if he would not eat his supper.

Another memory of his infancy was the nocturnal walk in the town, especially when there was a moon. The *aya* took him for a walk in the moonlight by the river, where the trees cast grotesque shadow on the bank. Recounting this childhood experience in his student memoirs, Rizal wrote: “Thus my heart fed on somber and melancholic thoughts so that even while still a child, I already wandered on wings of fantasy in the high regions of the unknown.

**The Hero's First Sorrow.** The Rizal children were bound together by ties of love and companionship. They were well-bred, for their parents taught them to love and help one another.

Of his sister, Jose loved most of the little Concha (Concepcion). He was a year older than Concha. He played with her and from her he learned the sisterly love.

Unfortunately, Concha died of sickness in 1865 when she was only three years old. Jose, who was very fond of her, cried bitterly at losing her. “When I was four years old,” he said, “I lost my little sister Concha, and then for the first time I shed tears caused by love and grief . . .” The death of little Concha brought him his first sorrow.

**Devoted Son of the Church.** A scion of a Catholic clan, born and bred in a wholesome atmosphere of Catholicism, and possessed of an inborn pious spirit, Rizal grew up a good Catholic.

At the age of three, he began to take part in the family prayers. His mother, who was a devout Catholic, taught him a Catholic prayer. When he was five years old, he was able to read haltingly the Spanish family Bible.

He loves to go to church, to pray, to take part in novenas, and to join religious processions. It is said that he was so seriously devout that he was laughingly called *Manong Jose* by the *Hermanos* and *Hermanas Terceras*.

One of the men he esteemed and respected in Calamba during his boyhood was the scholarly Father Leoncio Lopez, the town priest. He used to visit this learned Filipino priest and listen to his stimulating opinions on current events and sound philosophy of life.

**Pilgrimage to Antipolo.** On June 6, 1868, Jose and his father left Calamba to go on a pilgrimage to Antipolo, in order to fulfill his mother's vow which was made when Jose was born. Dona Teodora could not accompany them because she had given birth to Trinidad.

It was the first trip of Jose across Laguna de Bay and his first pilgrimage to Antipolo. He and his father rode in a *casco* (barge). He was thrilled, as a typical boy should, by his first lake voyage. He did not sleep the whole night as the *casco* sailed towards the Pasig River because he was awed by "the magnificence of the watery expanse and the silence of the night." Writing many years later of this experience, he said: "With what pleasure I saw the sunrise; for the first time I saw how the luminous rays shone, producing a brilliant effect on the ruffled surface of the wide lake."

After praying at the shrine of the Virgin of Antipolo, Jose and his father went to Manila. It was the first time Jose saw Manila. They visited Saturnina, who was then a boarding student at La Concordia College in Santa Ana.

**The Story of the Moth.** Of the stories told by Dona Teodora to her favorite son, Jose, that of the young moth made the profoundest impression on him. Speaking on this incident, Rizal wrote:

One night, all the family, except my mother and myself, went to bed early. Why, I do not know, but we two remained sitting alone. The candles had been already been put out. They have been blown out in their globes by means of a curved tube of tin. That tube seemed to me the finest and most wonderful plaything in the world. The room was dimly lighted by a single light of coconut oil. In all Filipino homes such a light burns through the night. It goes out just at day-break to awaken people by its spluttering.

My mother was teaching me to read in a Spanish reader called "The Children's Friend" (*El Amigo de los Ninos*). This was quite a rare book and an old copy. It had lost its cover and my sister had cleverly made a new one. She had fastened a sheet of thick blue paper over the back and then covered it with a piece of cloth.

This night my mother became impatient with hearing me read so poorly. I did not understand Spanish and so I could not read with impression. She took the book from me. First she scolded me for drawing funny pictures on its pages. Then she told me to listen and she began to read. When her sight was good, she read very well. She could recite well, and she understood verse-making, too. Many times during Christmas vacations, my mother corrected my poetical compositions, and she always made valuable criticisms.

I listened to her, full of childish enthusiasm. I marveled at the nice-sounding phrases which she read from those same pages. The phrases she read so easily stopped me at every breath. Perhaps I grew tired of listening to sounds that had no meaning for

me. Perhaps I lacked of self-control. Anyway, I paid little attention to the reading. I was watching the cheerful flame. About it, some little moths were circling in playful flights. By chance, too, I yawned. My mother soon noticed that I was not interested. She stopped reading. Then she said to me: "I am going to read you a very pretty story. Now pay attention."

On hearing the word "story" I at once opened my eyes wide. The word "story" promised something new and wonderful. I watched my mother while she turned the leaves of the book, as if she were looking for something. Then I settled down to listen. I was full of curiosity and wonder. I had never even dreamed that there were stories in the old book which I read without understanding. My mother began to read the fable of the young moth and the old one. She translated it into Tagalog a little at a time.

My attention increased from the first sentence. I looked toward the light and fixed my gaze on the moths which were circling around it. The story could not have been better timed. My mother repeated the warning of the old moth. She dwelt upon it and directed it to me. I heard her, but it is a curious thing that the light seemed to me each time more beautiful, the flame more attractive. I really envied the fortune of the insects. They frolicked so joyously in its enchanting splendor that the ones which had fallen and been drowned in the oil did not cause me any dread.

My mother kept on reading and I listened breathlessly. The fate of the two insects interested me greatly. The flame rolled its golden tongue to one side and a moth with this movement had singed into the oil, fluttered for a time and then became quiet. That became to me a great event. A curious change came over me which I have always noticed in myself whenever anything has stirred my feelings. The flame and the moth seemed to go farther away and my mother's words sounded strange and uncanny. I did not notice when she ended the fable. All attention was fixed on the face of the insect. I watched it with my whole soul. . . It had died a martyr to its illusions.

As she put to bed, my mother said: "See that you not behave like the young moth. Don't be disobedient, or you may get burnt as it did." I do not know whether I answered or not. . . The story revealed to me things until then unknown. Moths no longer were, for me, insignificant insects. Moths talked; they knew how to warn. They advised just liked my mother. The light seemed to me more attractive. I knew why the moths circled the flame.

The tragic fate of the young moth, which "died a martyr to its illusions," left a deep, impressed on Rizal's mind. He justified such noble death, asserting that "to sacrifice one's life for it," meaning for an ideal, is "worthwhile." And, like that young moth, he was fated to die as a martyr for a noble ideal.

**Artistic talents.** Since early childhood Rizal revealed his God-given talent for art. At the age of five, he began to make sketches with his pencil and no mould in clay and wax objects which attracted his fancy.

It is said that one day, when Jose was a mere boy in Calamba, a religious banner which was always used during the fiesta was spoiled. Upon the request of the town mayor, he painted in oil colors a new banner that delighted the town folks because it was better than the original one.

Jose had the soul of a genuine artist. Rather an introvert child, with a skinny physique and sad dark eyes, he found great joy looking at the blooming flowers, the ripening fruits, the dancing waves of the lake, and the milky clouds in the sky; and listening to the songs of the birds, the chirping of the cicadas, and the murmurings of the breezes. He loved to ride on a spirited pony which his father bought for him and take long walks in the meadows and lakeshore with his black dog named Usman.

One interesting anecdote about Rizal was the incident about his clay and wax images. One day when he was about six years old his sister laughed at him for spending so much time making those images rather than participating in their games. He kept silent as they laughed with childish glee. But as they were departing, he told them: "All right laugh at me now! Someday when I die, people will make monuments and images of me!"

**First Poem by Rizal.** Aside from his sketching and sculpturing talent, Rizal possessed a God-given gift for literature. Since early boyhood he had scribbled verses on loose sheets of paper and on the textbooks of his sisters. His mother, who was a lover of literature, noticed his poetic inclination and encouraged him to write poetry.

At the age of eight, Rizal wrote his first poem in the native language entitled *Sa Aking mga Kababata* (To My Fellow Children), as follows:

#### TO MY FELLOW CHILDREN

Whenever people of a country truly love  
The language which by heav'n they were taught to use  
That country also surely liberty pursue  
As does the bird which soars to freer space above.

For language is the final judge and referee  
Upon the people in the land where it holds sway;  
In truth our human race resembles in this way  
The other living being born in liberty.

Whoever knows not how to love his native tongue  
Is worse than any beast or evil smelling fish.  
To make our language richer ought to be our wish  
The same as the mother loves to feed her young.

Tagalong and Latin language are the same  
And English and Castilian and the angel's tongue;  
And God, whose watchful care o'er all is flung,  
Has given us His blessing in the speech we claim,

Our mother tongue, like all the highest that we know  
Had alphabet and letters of its very own;  
But these were lost –by furious waves were overthrown  
Like bancas in the stormy sea, long years ago.

This poem reveals Rizal's earliest nationalist sentiment. In poetic verses, he proudly proclaimed that a people who truly love their native language will surely strive for liberty like "the bird which soars to freer space above" and that Tagalog is the equal of Latin, English, Spanish, and any other language.

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**First Drama by Rizal.** After writing the poem To My Fellow Children, Rizal, who was then eight years old, wrote his first dramatic work which was a Tagalog comedy. It is said that it was staged in a Calamba festival and was delightfully applauded by the audience.

A gobernadorcillo from Paete, a town in Laguna famous for lanzones and woodcarvings, happened to witness the comedy and liked it so much that he purchased the manuscript for two pesos and brought it to his home town. It was staged in Paete during his town fiesta.

**Rizal as Boy Magician.** Since early manhood Rizal had been interested in magic. With his dexterous hands, he learned various tricks, such as making coins appear or disappear in his fingers and making a handkerchief vanish in thin air. He entertained his town folks with magic-lantern exhibitions. This consisted of an ordinary lamp casting its shadow on a white screen. He twisted his supple fingers into fantastic shapes, making their enlarged shadows on the screen resemble certain animals and persons. He also gained skill in manipulating marionettes (puppet shows).

In later years when he attained manhood, he continued his keen predilection for magic. He read many books on magic and attended the performances of the famous magicians of the world. In Chapter XVII and XVIII of his second novel, *El Filibusterismo* (Treason), he revealed his wide knowledge of magic.

**Lakeshore Reveries.** During the twilight hours of summertime Rizal, accompanied by his pet dog, used to meditate at the shore of Laguna de Bay on the sad conditions of his oppressed people. Years later, he related:

I spent many, many hours of my childhood down on the shore of the lake, Laguna de Bay. I was thinking of what was beyond. I was dreaming of what might be over on the other side of the waves. Almost every day, in our town, we saw the Guardia Civil lieutenant caning and injuring some unarmed and inoffensive villagers. The villager's only fault was that while at a distance he had not taken off his hat and made his bow. The alcalde treated the poor villagers in the same way whenever he visited us.

We saw no restrain put upon brutality. Acts of violence and other excesses were committed daily . . . I asked myself if, in the lands which lay across the lake, the people lived in this same way. I wondered if there they tortured any countryman with hard and cruel whips merely on suspicion. Did they there respect the home? Or ever yonder also, in order to live in peace, would once have to bribe tyrants?

Young though he was, he grieved deeply over the unhappy situation of his beloved fatherland. The Spanish misdeeds awakened in his boyish heart a great determination to fight tyranny. When he became a man, many years later, he wrote to his friend, Mariano Ponce: "In view of these injustices and cruelties, although yet a child, my imagination was awakened and I made a vow dedicating myself someday to avenge the many victims. With this idea in my mind, I studied, and this is seen in all my writings. Someday God will give me the opportunity to fulfill my promise."

**Influences on the Hero's Boyhood.** On the night Jose Rizal was born, other children were born in Calamba and hundreds of other children were also born all over the Philippines. But why is it that out of all these children, only one boy –JOSE RIZAL–rose to fame and greatness?

In the lives of all men there are influences which cause some to be great and others not. In the case of Rizal, he had all the favorable influences, few other children in his time enjoyed. These influences were the following: (1) hereditary influence, (2) environmental influence, and (3) aid of Devine Providence.

1. Hereditary Influence: According to biological science, there are inherent qualities which a person inherits from his ancestors and parents. From his Malayan ancestors, Rizal, evidently, inherited his love for freedom, his innate desire to travel, and his indomitable courage. From his Chinese ancestors, he derived his serious nature, frugality, patience, and love for children. From his Spanish ancestors, he got his elegance of bearing, sensibility to insult, and gallantry to ladies. From his father, he inherited a profound sense of self-respect, the love for work, and the habit of independent thinking. And from his mother, he inherited his religious nature, the spirit of self-sacrifice, and the passion for arts and literature.

2. Environmental Influence: According to psychologist, environment, as well as heredity, affects the nature of a person. Environmental influence includes places, associates, and events. The scenic beauties of Calamba and the beautiful garden of the Rizal family stimulated the inborn artistic and literary talents of Jose Rizal. The religious atmosphere at his home fortified his religious nature. His brother, Paciano, instilled in his mind the love for freedom and justice. From his sisters, he learned to be courteous and kind two women. The fairy tales told by his *aya* during his early childhood awakened his interest in folklore and legends.

His three uncles, brothers of his mother, exerted a good influence on him. *Tio* Jose Alberto, who had studied for eleven years in British school in Calcutta, India, and had traveled in Europe inspired him to develop his artistic ability. *Tio* Manuel, a husky and athletic man, encouraged him to develop his frail body by means of physical exercises, including horse riding, walking, and wrestling. And *Tio* Gregorio, a book lover, intensified his voracious reading of good books.

Father Leocio Lopez, the old and learned parish priest of Calamba, fostered Rizal's love

for scholarship and intellectual honesty.

The sorrows in his family, such as the death of Concha in 1865 and the imprisonment of his mother in 1871-74, contributed to strengthen his character, enabling him to resist blows of adversity in later years. The Spanish abuses and cruelties which he witnessed in his boyhood, such as a brutal acts of the lieutenant of Guardia Civil and the alcalde, the unjust tortures inflicted on innocent Filipinos, and the execution of Fathers Gomez, Burgos, and Zamora in 1872, awakened his spirit of patriotism and inspired him to consecrate his life and talents to redeem his oppressed people.

3. Aid of Divine Providence: Greater than heredity and environment in the fate of man is the aid of Divine Providence. A person may have everything in life –brains, wealth, and power –but, without the aid of Divine Providence, he cannot attain greatness in the annals of the nation. Rizal was providentially destined to be the pride and glory of his nation. God had endowed him with the versatile gifts of a genius, the vibrant spirit of a nationalist, and the valiant heart to sacrifice or a noble cause.

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# Chapter 3

## Early Education in Calamba and Binan

Rizal had his early education in Calamba and Binan. It was a typical schooling that a son of an *ilustrado* family received during his time, characterized by the four R's –reading, writing, arithmetic, and religion. Instruction was rigid and strict. Knowledge was forced into the minds of the pupils by means of the tedious memory method aide by the teacher's whip. Despite the defects of the Spanish system of elementary education, Rizal was able to acquire the necessary instruction preparatory for college work in Manila and abroad. It may be said that Rizal, who was born a physical weakling, rose to be an intellectual giant not because of instruction obtaining in the Philippines during the last decades of Spanish Regime.

**The Hero's First Teacher.** The first teacher of Rizal was his mother, who was a remarkable woman of good character and fine culture. On her lap, he learned at the age of three the alphabet and the prayers. "My mother," wrote Rizal in his student memoirs, "taught me how to read and to say haltingly the humble prayers which I raised fervently to God."

As a tutor, Dona Teodora was patient conscientious, and understanding. It was she who first discovered that her son had a talent for poetry. Accordingly, she encouraged him to write poems. To enlighten the monotony of memorizing the ABCs and to stimulate her son's imagination, she related many stories.

As Jose grew older, his parents employed private tutors to give him lessons at home. The first was *Maestro* Celestino and the second, *Maestro* Lucas Padua. Later, an old man named Leon Monroy, a farmer classmate of Rizal's father, became the boy's tutor. This old teacher lived at the Rizal home and instructed Jose in Spanish and Latin. Unfortunately, he did not live long. He died five months later.

After Monroy's death, the hero's parents decided to send their gifted child to a private school in Binan.

**Jose Goes to Binan.** One Sunday afternoon in June, 1869, Jose, after kissing the hands of his parents and a tearful parting from his sisters, left Calamba for Binan. He was accompanied by Paciano, who acted as his second father. The two brothers rode in a carromata, reaching their destination after one and one-half hours' drive. They proceeded to their aunt's house, where Jose was to lodge. It was almost night when they arrived, and the moon was about to rise.

The same night, Jose, with his cousin named Leandro, went sightseeing in the town. Instead enjoying the sights, Jose became depressed because of homesickness. "In the moonlight," he recounted, "I remembered my home town, my idolized mother, and my solicitous sisters. Ah, how sweet to me was Calamba, my own town, inspite of the fact, that it was not as wealthy as Binan."

**First Day In Binan School.** The next morning (Monday) Paciano brought his younger brother to the school of *Maestro Justiniano Aquino Cruz*.

The first school was in the house of the teacher, which was a small nipa hut about 30 meters from the home of Jose's aunt.

Paciano knew the teacher quite well because he had been a pupil under him before. He introduced Jose to the teacher, after which he departed to return to Calamba.

Immediately, Jose was assigned his seat in the class. The teacher asked him:

"Do you know Spanish?"

"A little, sir," replied the Calamba lad.

"Do you know Latin?"

"A little, sir."

The boys in the class, especially Pedro, the teacher's son, laughed at Jose's answers.

The teacher sharply stopped all noise and began the lessons of the day.

Jose described his teacher in Binan as follows: "He was tall, thin, long-necked, with a sharp nose and a body slightly bent forward, and he used to wear a *sinamay* shirt, woven by the skilled hands of the women of Batangas. He knew by heart the grammars by Nebrija and Gainza. Add to this his severity, that in my judgment was exaggerated, and you have a picture, perhaps vague, that I have made of him, but I remember only this."

**First School Brawl.** In the afternoon in his first day in school, when the teacher having his siesta, Jose met the bully, Pedro. He was angry at this bully for making fun of him during his conversation with the teacher in the morning.

Jose challenged Pedro to a fight. The latter readily accepted, thinking that he could easily beat the Calamba boy who was smaller and younger.

The two boys wrestled furiously in the classroom, much to glee of their classmates. Jose, having learned the art of wrestling from his athletic *Tío* Manuel, defeated the bigger boy. For this feat, he became popular among his classmates.

After the class in the afternoon, a classmate named Andres Salandanan challenged him to an arm-wrestling match. They went to a side walk of a house and wrestled with their arms. Jose, having the weaker arm, lost and nearly cracked his head on the sidewalk.

In succeeding days he had other fights with the boys of Binan. He was not quarrelsome by nature, but he never ran away from a fight.

**Painting Lessons in Binan.** Near the school was the house of an old painter, called Juancho, who was the father-in-law of the school teacher. Jose, lured by his love for painting, spent many leisure hours at the painter's studio. Old Juancho freely gave him lessons in drawing and painting. He was impressed by the artistic talent of the Calamba lad.

Jose and his classmate, Jose Guevarra, who also loved painting, became apprentices of the old painter. They improved their art, so that in due time they became "the favorite painters in the class".

**Daily Life in Binan.** Jose led in methodical life in Binan, almost Spartan in simplicity. Such a life contributed much to his future development. It strengthened his body and soul.

Speaking of his daily life in Binan, he recorded in his memoirs:

Here was my life. I heard the four o'clock Mass, if there was any, or studied my lesson at that hour and I went to Mass afterwards. I returned home and I went to the orchard to look for a *mabolo* to eat. Then I took breakfast, which consisted generally of a dish of rice and two dried small fish, and I went to class from which I came out at ten o'clock. I went home at once. If there was some special dish, Leandro and I took some of it to the house of his children (which I never did at home nor would I ever do it), and returned without a saying a word. I ate with them and afterwards I studied. I went to school at two and came out at five. I prayed a short while with some nice cousins and I returned home. I studied my lesson. I drew a little, and afterwards I took my supper consisting of one or two dishes of rice with an *ayungin*. We prayed and if there was a moon, my nieces me to play in the street together with others. Thank God that I never got sick away from my parents.

**Best Student in School.** In academic studies, Jose beat all Binan boys. He surpassed them all in Spanish, Latin, and other subjects.

Some of his older classmates were jealous of his intellectual superiority. They wickedly squealed to the teacher whenever Jose had a fight outside the school, and even told lies to discredit him before the teacher's eyes. Consequently the teacher had to punish Jose. Thus Rizal said that "in spite of the reputation I had of being a good boy, the day was unusual when I was not laid out on a bench and given five or six blow."

**End of Binan Schooling.** Before the Christmas season in 1870, Jose received a letter from his sister Saturnina, informing him of the arrival of the steamer *Talim* which would take him from Binan to Calamba. Upon reading the letter, he had a premonition that he would not return to Binan, so that he became sad. He prayed in the town church, collected pebbles in the river for souvenirs, and regretfully bade farewell to his teacher and classmates.

He left Binan on Saturday afternoon, December 17, 1870, after one year and a half of schooling in that town. He was thrilled to take passage on the steamer *Talim*, for it was the first time he ever rode on a steamer. On board was a Frenchman named Arturo Camps, a friend of his

father, who took care of him.

**Martyrdom of Gom-Bur-Za.** On the night of January 20, 1872, about 200 Filipino soldiers and workmen of the Cavite arsenal under the leadership of Lamadrid, Filipino sergeant, rose in violent mutiny because of the abolition of their usual privileges, including exemption from tribute and polo (forced labor) by the reactionary Governor Rafael de Izquierdo. Unfortunately, this Cavite Mutiny was suppressed two days later by troop reinforcements from Manila. The Spanish authorities, in order to liquidate Fathers Mariano Gomez, Jose Burgos, and Jacinto Zamora, leaders of the secular movement to Filipinize the Philippine parishes, and their supporters (Jose Ma. Basa, Attorneys Joaquin Pardo de Tavera and Antonio Ma. Regidor, etc.) magnified the failed mutiny into a “revolt” for the Philippine independence.

Accordingly, Gom-Bur-Za (Gomez, Burgos and Zamora), despite the archbishop’s plea for clemency because of their innocence, were executed at sunrise, February 17, 1872, by order of Governor General Izquierdo. Their martyrdom was deeply mourned by the Rizal family and many other patriotic families in the Philippines.

Paciano, enraged by the execution of Burgos, his beloved friend, teacher, and housemate, quit his studies at the College of San Jose and returned to Calamba, where he told the heroic story of Burgos to his younger brother Jose, who was then nearly eleven years old.

The martyrdom of Gom-Bur-Za in 1872 truly inspired Rizal to fight the evils of Spanish tyranny and redeem his oppressed people. Seventeen years later, in his letter written in Paris, April 18, 1889, to Marianoponce, he said:

Without 1872 there would not be now either a Plaridel or Jaena, or Sanciangco, nor would there exist brave and generous Filipino colonies in Europe; without 1872 Rizal would be a Jesuit now and, instead of writing *Noli Me Tangere*, would have written the opposite. At the sight of those injustices and cruelties while still a child my imagination was awakened and I swore to devote myself to avenge one day so many victims and with this idea in mind I have been studying, and this can be read in all my works and writings. God will someday give an opportunity to carry out my promise.”

And later, in 1891, he dedicated his second novel, *El Filibusterismo*, to Gom-Bur-Za.

**Injustice to Hero’s Mother.** Before June of 1872, tragedy struck the Rizal family. Dona Teodora was suddenly arrested on a malicious charged that she and her brother, Jose Alberto, tried to poison the latter’s perfidious wife. Jose Alberto, a rich Binan ilustrado, had just returned from a business trip in Europe. During his absence his wife abandoned their home and children. When he arrived in Binan, he found her living with another man. Infuriated by her infidelity, he planned to divorce her. Dona Teodora, to avert family scandal, persuaded him to forgive his wife. The family trouble was amicably settled, and Jose Alberto lived again with his wife. However, the evil wife, with the connivance of the Spanish lieutenant of the Guardia Civil, filed a case in court accusing her husband and Dona Teodora of attempting to poison her.

The lieutenant happened to have an ax to grind against the Rizal family, because at one time Don Francisco (Rizal's father) refused her to walk from Calamba to Santa Cruz (capital of Laguna Province), a distance of 50 kilometers. Upon arrival in Santa cruz, she was incarcerated at the provincial prison, where she languished for two years and a half until the Manila Royal Audiencia (Supreme Court) acquitted her of the alleged crime.

Recounting this incidence of his mother's imprisonment, Rizal said in his student memoirs: "Our mother was unjustly snatched away from us and by whom? By some men who had been our friends and whom we treated as honored guests. We learned later that our mother got sick, far from us and at an advanced age. My mother was defended by Messrs. Francisco de Marcaida and Manuel Marzan, the famous lawyers of Manila. She finally succeeded to be acquitted and vindicated in the eyes of her judges, accusers, and even her enemies, but after how long? After two and a half years."

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# Chapter 4

## Scholastic Triumphs at Ateneo de Manila (1872-1877)

Four months after the martyrdom of Gom-Bur-Za and with Dona Teodora still in prison, Jose, who had not yet celebrated his eleventh birthday, was sent to Manila. He studied in the Ateneo Municipal, a college under the supervision of the Spanish Jesuits. This college was a bitter rival of the Dominican-owned College of San Juan de Letran. It was formerly the *Escuela Pia* (Charity School) a school for poor boys in Manila which was established by the city government in 1817. When the Jesuits, who had been expelled from the Philippines in 1768, returned to Manila in 1859, they were given the management of the *Escuela Pia*, whose name was changed to *Ateneo Municipal*, and later became the *Ateneo de Manila*. They were splendid educators, so that Ateneo acquired prestige as an excellent college for boys.

**Rizal Enters the Ateneo.** On June 10, 1872 Jose, accompanied by Paciano, went to Manila. He took the entrance examinations on Christian doctrine, arithmetic, and reading at the College of San Juan de Letran, and passed them. He returned to Calamba to stay a few days with his family and to attend the town fiesta. His father, who first wished him to study at Letran, changed his mind and decided to send him to Ateneo instead.

Thus, upon his return to Manila, Jose, again accompanied by Paciano, matriculated at the Ateneo Municipal. At first, Father Magin Ferrando, who was the college registrar, refused to admit him for two reasons: (1) he was late for registration and (2) he was sickly and undersized, for his age. Rizal was then eleven years old. However, upon the intercession of Manuel Xerez Burgos, nephew of Father Burgos, he was reluctantly admitted at the Ateneo.

Jose was the first of his family to adopt the surname ‘Rizal.’ He registered under this name at the Ateneo because their family name “Mercado” had come under the suspicion of the Spanish authorities. Paciano had used “Mercado” as his surname at the College of San Jose and he was known to the authorities as Father Burgos’ favorite student and confidant.

At the time Jose studied in the Ateneo, this college was located in Intramuros, within the walls of Manila. He first boarded in a house outside Intramuros, on Caraballo Street, 25 minutes’ walk from the college. This boarding house owned by a spinster named Titay who owned the Rizal family the amount of P300. Jose boarded with her order to collect part of the debt.

**Jesuit System of Education.** The system of education given by the Jesuits in the Ateneo was more advanced than that of other colleges in that period. It trained the character of the student by rigid discipline and religious instruction. It promoted physical culture, Humanities, and scientific studies. Aside from academic courses leading to the degree of Bachelor of Arts, it offered vocational courses in agriculture, commerce, mechanics, and surveying.

The students heard Mass in the morning before beginning of the daily class. Classes in every subject were opened and closed with prayers.

Students were divided into two groups, namely: the “Roman Empire” consisting of the *internos* (boarders) and the “Carthaginian Empire” composed of the *externos* (non-boarders). Each of these empires had its ranks. The best student in each “empire” was the emperor; the second best, the tribune; the third best, the Decurion; the fourth best, the centurion; and the fifth best, the standard bearer. Within the “empire”, the students fought for positions. Any student could challenge any officer in his “empire” to answer questions on the day’s lesson. His opponent could lose his position if he committed three mistakes. Any student might be at the end of the line, but if he studied hard and was brilliant, he could depose the officers one after another and become an emperor.

The two groups, “Roman Empire” and “Carthaginian Empire” were in constant competition for supremacy in the class. They had their distinctive banners: red for the Romans and blue for the Carthaginians. At the beginning of the school term, both banners were used equally in the classroom. “Upon the first defeat, the banner losing party was transferred to the left side of the room. Upon the second, it was placed in an inferior position on the right side. Upon the third, the inclined flag was placed on the left. Upon the fourth, the flag was reversed and returned to the right. Upon the fifth, the reversed flag was placed on the left. Upon the sixth, the banner was changed with a figure of a donkey.”

The Ateneo students in rizal’s time wore a uniform which consisted of “hemp-fabric trousers” and “stripe cotton coat.” The coat material was called *rayadillo*, which later became famous for it was adopted as the uniform for Filipino troops during the days of the First Philippine Republic.

**Rizal’s First Year in Ateneo (1872-73).** On his first day of class in the Ateneo, in June, 1872, Rizal first heard Mass at the college chapel and prayed fervently to God for guidance and success. When the Mass was finished, he went to his class, where he saw a great number of boys, Spaniards, mestizos and Filipinos.

Rizal’s first professor in the Ateneo was Fr. Jose Bech, whom he described as a “tall, thin man, with a body slightly bent forward, a harried walk, an ascetic face, severe and inspired, small deep-sunken eyes, a sharp nose that was almost Greek, and thin lips forming an arc whose fell toward the chin.”

Being a newcomer and knowing little Spanish, Rizal was placed at the bottom of the class. He was an *externo*, hence he was assigned to the Carthaginians, occupying the end of the line.

After the first week, the frail Calamba boy progressed rapidly. At the end of the month, he became “emperor”. He was the brightest pupil in the whole class, and he was awarded a prize, a religious picture! He was proud of it because it was the first prize he ever won at the Ateneo.

To improve his Spanish, Rizal took private lessons in Santa Isabel College Dring the

noon recesses, when other Ateneo students were playing or gossiping. He paid three pesos for those extra Spanish lessons, but it was money well spent.

In the second half of his first year in the Ateneo, Rizal did not try hard enough to retain his academic supremacy which he held during the first half of the term. This was because he resented some remarks of his professor. He placed second at the end of the year, although all his grades were still marked "Excellent".

**Summer Vacation (1873).** At the end of the school year in March, 1873, Rizal returned to Calamba for summer vacation. He did not particularly enjoy his vacation because his mother was in prison. To cheer him up, his sister Neneng (Saturnina) brought him to Tanawan with her. This did not cure his melancholy. Without telling his father, he went to Santa Cruz and visited his mother in prison. He told her of his brilliant grades at the Ateneo. She gladly embraced her favorite son.

When the summer vacation ended, Rizal returned to Manila for his second year term in the Ateneo. This time he boarded inside Intramuros at No. 6 Magallanes Street. His landlady was an old widow named Dona Pepay, who had a widowed daughter and four sons.

**Second Year in Ateneo (1873-74).** Nothing unusual happened to Rizal during his second term in the Ateneo, except that he repented having neglected his studies the previous year simply because he was offended by the teacher's remarks. So, to regain his lost class leadership, he studied harder. Once more he became "emperoe".

Some of his classmates were new. Among them were three boys from Binan, who had been his classmates in the school of *Maestro Justiniano*.

At the end of the school year, Rizal received excellent grades in all subjects and a gold medal. With such scholastic honors, he triumphantly returned to Calamba in March, 1874 for the summer vacation.

**Prophecy of Mother Release.** Rizal lost no time in going to Santa Cruz in order to visit his mother in the provincial jail. He cheered up Dona Teodora's lonely heart with news of his scholastic triumphs in Ateneo and with funny tales about his professors and fellow students. The mother was very happy to know that her favorite child was making such splendid progress in college.

In the course of their conversation, Dona Teodora told her son of her dream the previous night. Rizal, interpreting the dream, told her that she would be released from prison in three month's time. Dona Teodora smiled, thinking that her son's prophecy was a mere boyish attempt to console her.

But Rizal's prophecy became true. Barely three months passed, and suddenly Dona Teodora was set free. By that time, Rizal was already in Manila attending his classes at the Ateneo.

Dona Teodora, happily back in Calamba, was even more proud of her son Jose whom likened to the youthful Joseph in the Bible in his ability to interpret dreams.

**Teenage Interest in Reading.** It was during the summer vacation in 1874 in Calamba when Rizal began to take interest in reading romantic novels. As a normal teenager, he became interested in love stories and romantic tales.

The first favorite novel of Rizal was *The Count of Monte Cristo* by Alexander Dumas. This thrilling novel made a deep impression on him. His boyish imagination was stirred by the sufferings of Edmond Dantes (the hero) in prison, his spectacular escape from the dungeon of Chateau d'If, his finding a buried treasure on the rocky island of Monte Cristo, and his dramatic revenge on his enemies who had wronged him.

Rizal read numerous other romantic novels with deep interest. The reading habit helped to enrich his fecund mind.

As a voracious reader, he read not only fiction, but also non-fiction. He persuaded his father to buy him a costly set of Cesar Cantu's historical work entitled *Universal History*. According to Rizal, this valuable work was of great aid in his studies and enabled him to win more prizes in Ateneo.

Later Rizal read *Travels in the Philippines* by Dr. Feodor Jagor, a German scientist-traveler who visited the Philippines in 1859-1860. What impressed him in this book were (1) Jagor's keen observations of the defects of Spanish colonization and (2) his prophecy that someday Spain would lose the Philippines and that America would come to succeed her as colonizer.

**Third Year in Ateneo (1874-75).** In June 1874, Rizal returned to the Ateneo for his junior year. Shortly after the opening of classes, his mother arrived and joyously told him that she was released from prison, just as he had predicted during his last visit to her prison cell in Santa Cruz, Laguna. He was happy, of course, to see his mother once more a free woman.

However, despite the family happiness, Rizal did not make an excellent showing in his studies as in the previous year. His grades remained excellent in all subjects; he won only one medal—in Latin. He failed to win the medal in Spanish because his spoken Spanish was not fluently sonorous. He was beaten by a Spaniard who, naturally, could speak Spanish with fluency and with right accentuation.

At the end of the school year (March 1875), Rizal returned to Calamba for the summer vacation. He himself was not impressed by his scholastic work.

**Fourth Year in Ateneo (1875-76).** After a refreshing and happy summer vacation, Rizal went back to Manila for his fourth year course. On June 16, 1875, he became an interno in the Ateneo. One of his professors this time was Fr. Francisco de Paula Sanchez a great educator and scholar. He inspired the young Rizal to study harder and to write poetry. He became an admirer and friend of the slender Calamba lad, whose God-given genius he saw and recognized. On his

part, Rizal had the highest affection and respect for Father Sanchez, whom he considered his best professor in the Ateneo.

In his student memoirs, Rizal wrote of Father Sanchez in glowing terms, showing his affection and gratitude. He described this Jesuit professor as “model of uprightness, earnestness, and love for the advancement of his pupils”.

Inspired by Father Sanchez, Rizal resumed his studies with vigor and zest. He topped all his classmates in all subjects and won five medals at the end of the school term. He returned to Calamba for his summer vacation (March 1876) and proudly offered his five medals and excellent ratings to his parents. He was extremely happy, for he was able to repay hi “father somewhat for his sacrifices”.

**Last Year in Ateneo (1876-77).** After the summer vacation, Rizal returned to Manila in June 1876 for his last year in the Ateneo. His studies continued to fare well. As a matter-of-fact, he excelled in all subjects. The most brilliant Atenean of his time, he was truly “the pride of the Jesuits”.

Rizal finished his last year at the Ateneo in a blaze of glory. He obtained the highest grades in all subjects –philosophy, physics, biology, chemeitry, languages, mineralogy, etc.

**Graduation with Highest Honors.** Rizal graduated at the head of his class. His scholastic records at the Ateneo from 1872 to 1877 were as follows:

#### 1872-1873

Arithmetic .....	Excellent
Latin I .....	"
Spanish I .....	"
Greek I .....	"

#### 1873-1874

Latin 2 .....	Excellent
Spanish 2 .....	"
Greek 2 .....	"
Universal Geography .....	"

#### 1874-1875

Latin 3 .....	Excellent
Spanish 3 .....	"
Greek 3 .....	"
Universal History .....	"
History of Spain and the Philippines	
Arithmetic & Algebra .....	"

#### 1875-1876

Rhetoric & Poetry .....	Excellent
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French I .....	Excellent
Geometry & Trigonometry .....	"

### 1876-1877

Philosophy I .....	Excellent
Mineralogy & Chemistry .....	"
Philosophy 2 .....	"
Physics .....	"
Botany & Zoology .....	"

On Commencement Day, March 23, 1877, Rizal who was 16 years old, received from his Alma Mater, Ateneo Municipal, the degree Bachelor of Arts, with highest honors. It was a proud day for his family. But to Rizal, like all graduates, Commencement Day was a time of bitter sweetness, a joy mellowed with poignancy. The night before graduation, his last night at the college dormitory, he could not sleep. Early the following morning, the day of graduation, he prayed fervently at the college chapel and "commented my life," as he said, "to the Virgin so that when I should step into that world, which inspired me with so much terror, she would protect me".

**Extra-Curricular Activities in Ateneo.** Rizal, unsurpassed in academic triumphs, was a mere bookworm. He was active in extra-curricular activities. An "emperor" inside the classroom, he was a campus leader outside. He was an active member, later secretary, of a religious society, the Marian Congregation. He was accepted as member of this sodality not only because of his academic brilliance of his devotion to Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, the college patroness. Rizal was also a member of the Academy of Spanish Literature and the Academy of Natural Sciences. These "academies" were exclusive societies in the Ateneo, to which only Ateneans who were gifted in literature and sciences could qualify for membership.

In his leisure hours, Rizal cultivated his literary talent under the guidance of Father Sanchez. Another professor, Father Jose Vilaclara, advised him to stop communing with the Muses and pay more attention to more practical studies, such as philosophy and natural sciences. Rizal did not heed his advice. He continued to solicit Father Sanchez's help in improving his poetry.

Aside from writing poetry, he devoted his spare time to fine arts. He studied painting under the famous Spanish painter, Agustin Saez, and sculpture under Romualdo de Jesus, noted Filipino sculptor. Both art masters honored him with their affection, for he was a talented pupil.

Furthermore, Rizal, to develop his weak body, engaged in gymnastics and fencing. He thereby continued the physical training he began under his sports-minded *Tio* Manuel.

**Sculptural Works in Ateneo.** Rizal impressed his Jesuit professor in the Ateneo with his artistic skill. One day he carved an image of The Virgin Mary on a piece of *batikuling* (Philippine hardwood) with his pocket-knife. The Jesuit fathers were amazed at the beauty and grace of the image.

Father Leonart, impressed by Rizal's sculptural talent, requested him to carve for him an image of the Secret Heart of Jesus. Young Rizal complied, and within a few days he presented it to Father Leonart. The old Jesuit was highly pleased and profusely thanked the teenage sculpture. He intended to take the image with him to Spain, but, being an absent-minded professor, he forgot to do so. The Ateneo boarding students placed it on the door of their dormitory, and there it remained for many years, reminding all Ateneans of Dr. Rizal, the greatest alumnus of their Alma Mater. This image played a significant part in Rizal's last hours at Fort Santiago.

**Anecdotes on Rizal, the Atenean.** One of Rizal's contemporaries in the Ateneo was Felix M. Roxas. He related an incident of Rizal's schooldays in the Ateneo which reveals the hero's resignation to pain and forgiveness. One day many Ateneans, including Rizal, were studying their lessons at the study hall. Two Ateneans, Manzano, and Lesaca, quarreled and violently hurled books at each other. Rizal, who was busy at his desk poring over his lessons, was hit in the face by one of the thrown books. He did not raise a cry of protest, although his wounded face was bleeding. His classmates brought him to the infirmary where he had to undergo medical treatment for several days. After the incident, he continued to attend his classes, feeling neither bitterness nor rancor towards the guilty party.

Another anecdote on Rizal the Atenean was related by Manuel Xeres Burgos, in whose house Rizal boarded shortly before he became an interno in the Ateneo. This anecdote illustrates Rizal's predilection to help the helpless at the risk of his own life. One Thursday afternoon, being vacation day, the boys flew their kites from the azotea. Young Rizal then was a busy reading a Spanish book of fables at the window. After a while he heard Julio Meliza from Iloilo, one of the smallest boarders, crying –because his kite was caught by the vines growing on the belfry of the Manila cathedral which was near the boarding-house. The bigger boys were laughing, making fun of Julio's misfortune. Rizal closed the book he was reading and told Julio not to cry, for he would try to retrieve the kite. True to his promise he courageously climbed the high cathedral tower and successfully recovered the kite.

**Poems Written in Ateneo.** It was Dona Teodora who first discovered the poetical genius of her son, and it was also she who first encouraged him to write poems. However, it was Father Sanchez who inspired Rizal to make full use of his God-given gift in poetry and improved the latter's poetical art by opening his mind to the enriching influence of the world's literature.

The first poem Rizal probably wrote during his days in the Ateneo was *Mi Primera Inspiracion* (My First Inspiration) which was dedicated to his mother on her mother. It is said that he wrote it before he was 14 years old, that is, in the year 1874. Before this year he did not write poetry because there was gloom in his heart owing to his mother's imprisonment. Upon the release of her mother in 1874, his poetic heart began to sing with ecstasy and joy.

In 1875, inspired by Father Sanchez, he wrote more poems, as such:

1. *Felicitacion* (Felicitation).
2. *El Embarque: Himno a la Flera de Magallanes*. (The Departure: Hymn to Magellan's

Fleet).

3. *Y Es Espanol: Elcano, el Primero en dar la Vuelta al Mundo* (And He is Spanish: Elcano, the First to Circumnavigate the World).
4. *El Combate: Urbiztundo, Terror de Jolo* (The Battle: Urbiztundo, Terror of Jolo).

In 1876, Rizal wrote poems on various topics –religion, education, childhood memories, and war. They were as follows:

1. *Un Recuerdo a Mi Pueblo* (In Memory of My Town). A tender poem in honor to Calamba, the hero's natal town.
2. *Alianza Intima Entre la Religion y la Buena Education* (Intimate Alliance Between Religion and Good Education).
3. *Por la Educacion Recibe Lustre la Patria* (Through Education the Country Receives Light).
4. *El Cautiverio y el Triunfo: Battala de Lucena y Prision de Boabdil* (The Captivity and the Triumph: Battle of Lucena and the Imprisonment of Boabdil). This martial poem describes the defeat and capture of Boabdil, last Moorish sultan of Granada.
5. *La Entrada Triunfal de los Reyes Catolicos en Granada* (The Triumphal Entry of the Catholic Monarchs into Granada). This poem relates the victorious entry of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabel into Granada, last Moorish stronghold in Spain.

A year later, 1877, he wrote more poems. It was his last year in the Ateneo. Among the poems written that year were:

1. *El Heroismo de Colon* (The heroism of Columbus). This poem praises Columbus, the discoverer of America.
2. *Colon y Juan II* (Columbus and John II). This poem relates how King John II of Portugal missed fame and riches by his failure to finance the projected expedition of Columbus to the New World.
3. *Gran Consuelo en la Mayor Desdicha* (Great Solace in Great Misfortune). This is a legend in verse of the tragic life of Columbus.
4. *Un Dialogo Alusivo a la Despedida de los Colegiales* (A Farewell Dialogue of the Students). This was the last poem written by Rizal in Ateneo; it is a poignant poem of farewell to his classmates.

**"My First Inspiration."** It was most fitting that the first poem written by Rizal as an Atenean should be about his beloved mother. In his poem, he felicitates his mother on her birthday, expressing his filial affection in sonorous verses. It runs as follows:

### My First Inspiration

Why do the scented bowers  
In fragrant fray  
Rival each other's flowers  
This festive day?

Why is sweet melody bruited  
In the sylvan dale,  
Harmony sweet and fluted  
Like the nightingale?

Why do the birds sing so  
In the tender grass,  
Flitting from bough to bough  
With the winds that pass?

And why does the crystal spring  
Run among the flowers  
While lullaby zephyrs sing  
Like its crystal showers?

I see the dawn in the East  
With beauty endowed.  
Why goes she to a feast  
In a carmine cloud?

Sweet mother, they celebrate  
Your natal day  
The rose with her scent innate,  
The bird with his lay.

The murmurous spring this day  
Without alloy,  
Murmuring bids you always  
To live in joy.

While the crystalline murmurs glisten,  
Hear you the accents strong  
Struck from my lyre, listen!  
To my love's first song.

**Rizal's Poem in Education.** Although Rizal was merely a teenager, he had a very high regard for education. He believed in the significant role which education plays in the progress and welfare of a nation. Thus he stated in his poem:

### THROUGH EDUCATION OUR MOTHERLAND RECEIVES LIGHT

The vital breath of prudent Education  
Instills a virtue of enchanting power;  
She lifts the motherland to highest station  
And endless dazzling glories on her shower,  
And as the zephyr's gentle exhalation  
Revives the matrix of the fragrant flower,  
So education multiples her gifts of grace;  
With prudent hand imparts them to the human race.

For her a moral man will gladly part  
With all he has; will give him calm repose;  
For her are born all sciences and all arts,  
That brews of men with laurel fair enclose.  
As from the towering mountain's lofty heart.  
The purest current of the streamlet flows,  
So Education without stint or measure gives  
Security and peace to lands in which she lives.

Where education reigns on lofty seat  
Youth blossoms forth with vigor and agility;  
His error subjugates with solid feet,  
And is exalted by conception of nobility,  
She breaks the neck of vice and its deceit;  
Black crime turns pale and Her hostility;  
The barbarous nations She knows how to tame,  
From savages create heroic fame.

And as the spring doth sustenance bestow  
On all the plants, on bushes in the mead,  
Its placid plenty goes to overflow  
And endlessly with lavish love to feed  
The banks by which it wanders, gliding slow,  
Supplying beauteous nature's every need.  
So he who prudent Education doth procure  
The towering heights of honor will secure.

From out his lips the watercyrstal pure,

Of perfect virtue shall not cease to go.

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With careful doctrines of his faith made sure,  
The powers of evil he will overthrow,  
Like feaming waves that never long endure,  
But perish on the shore at every blow;  
And from his good example other men shall learn  
Their upward steps toward the heavenly paths to turn.

Within the breast of wretched humankind  
She lights the living flame of goodness bright;  
The hands of fiercest criminal doth bind;  
And in these breasts will surely pour delight  
Which her mystic benefits to find, --  
Those souls She sets aflame with love of right.  
That gives to life its surest consolation.

And as the mighty rock aloft my tower  
Above the center of the stormy deep  
In scorn of storm, or fierce Sou'wester's power  
Of fury of the waves that raging sweep,  
Until, their first mad hatred, spent, they cower  
And, tired at last subside and fall asleep,--  
So he takes wise education by the hand,  
Invincible shall guide the reigns of motherland.

On sapphires shall his service be engraved,  
A thousand honors to him by his land be granted;  
For in their bosoms will his noble sons have saved  
Luxuriant flowers his virtue transplanted;  
And by the love of goodness ever laved.  
The lords and governors will see implanted  
To endless days the Christian Education;  
Within their noble, faith-enraptured nation.

And as in early morning we behold  
The ruby sun pours forth resplendent rays;  
And lovely dawn her scarlet and her gold,  
Her brilliant colors all about her sprays;  
So skillful noble Teaching doth unfold  
To living minds the joy of virtuous ways.  
She offers our dear motherland the light  
That leads us to immortal glory's height.

In another poem, The *Intimate Alliance Between Religion and Good Education*, Rizal showed the importance of religion in education. To him, education without God is not true education. Thus, he said in his poem

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**THE INTIMATE ALLIANCE BETWEEN  
RELIGION AND GOOD EDUCATION**

As the climbing ivy over lefty elm  
Creeps tortuously, together the adornment  
Of the verdant plain, embellishing  
Each other and together growing,  
But should the kindly elm refuse its aid  
The ivy would impotent and friendless wither  
So is Education to Religion  
By spiritual alliance bound.  
Through Religion, Education gains renown, and  
Woe to the impious mind that blindly spurning  
The sapient teachings of Religion, this  
Unpolluted fountain-head forsakes.

As the sprout, growing from the pompous vine,  
Proudly offers us its honeyed clusters  
While the generous and loving garment  
Feeds its roots; so the fresh'ning waters  
Of celestial give new life  
To Education true, shedding  
On it warmth and light; because of them  
The vine smells sweet and gives delicious fruit.

Without Religion, Human Education  
Is like unto a vessel struck by winds  
Which, sore beset, is of its helm deprived  
By the roaring blows and buffets of the dread  
Tempestuous Boreas, who fiercely wields  
His power until he proudly sends her down  
Into the deep abysses of the angered sea.

As the heaven's dew the meadow feeds and strengthens  
So that blooming flowers all the earth  
Embroider in the days of spring; so also  
If Religion holy nourishes  
Education with its doctrines, she  
Shall walk in joy and generosity  
Toward the Good, and everywhere bestrew  
The fragrant and luxuriant fruits of Virtue.

**Rizal's Religious Poems.** During his student days Rizal expressed his devotion to his Catholic faith in melodious poetry. One of the religious poems he wrote was a brief ode entitled *Al Nino Jesus* (To the Jesus Child). It is as follows:

### TO THE CHILD JESUS

How, God-Child hast Thou come  
To earth in cave forlorn?  
Does Fortune now deride Thee  
When Thou art scarcely born?

Ah, woe! Celestial King,  
Who mortal from dost keep  
Woulds't rather than be sovereign  
Be Shepherd of Thy Sheep?

This poem was written in 1875 when he was 14 years old.

Another Religious poem which he wrote was entitled *A La Virgen Maria* (To the Virgin Mary). This poem is undated, so that we do not know exactly when it was written. Probably, Rizal wrote after his ode to the Child Jesus. It runs as follows:

### TO THE VIRGIN MARY

Dear Mary, giving comfort and sweet peace  
To all afflicted mortals; thou the spring  
Whence flows a current of relief, to bring  
Our soil fertility that does not cease;  
Upon thy throne, where thou dest reign on high,  
Oh, list' with pity as I weeful grieve  
And spread thy radiant mantle to receive  
My voice which rises swiftly to the sky  
Placid Mary, thou my mother dear,  
My sustenance, my fortitude must be,  
And in this fearsome sea my way must steer.  
If deprivation comes to buffet me,  
And if grim death in agony draws near,  
Oh, succor me, from anguish set me free.

**Dramativ Work in Ateneo.** While Rizal was still a student at the Ateneo, his favorite teacher, Father Sanchez, requested him to write a drama based on the prose story of St. Eustace the Martyr. During the summer vacation of 1876, he wrote the requested religious drama in poetic verses at his home in Calamba and finished it on June 2, 1876.

Upon the opening of classes at the Ateneo in June 1876 –his last academic year at Jesuit college –he submitted to Father Sanchez the finished manuscript of the drama entitled *San Eustacio, Martir* (St. Eustace, the Martyr). The good priest-teacher read it and felicitated the young Atenean for work well done.

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**First Romance of Rizal.** Shortly after his graduation from the Ateneo, Rizal, who was then sixteen years old, experienced his first romance –“that painful experience which comes to nearly all adolescents”. The girl was Segunda Katigbak, a pretty fourteen years old Batanguena from Lipa. In Rizal’s own words: “She was rather short, with eyes that were eloquent and ardent at times and languid at others, rosy-cheeked, with an enchanting and provocative smile that revealed very beautiful teeth, and the air of a sylph; her entire self diffused a mysterious charm.”

One Sunday Rizal visited his maternal grandmother who lived in Trozo, Manila. He was accompanied by his friend, Mariano Katigbak. His old grandmother was a friend of the Katigbak family of Lipa. When he reached his grandmother’s house, he saw other quests. One of whom was an attractive girl, who mysteriously caused his heart to palpitate with strange ecstasy. She was the sister of his friend Mariano, and her name was Segunda.

His grandmother’s quests, who were mostly college students, knew of his skill in painting, so that they urged him to draw Segunda’s portrait. He complied reluctantly and made a pencil sketch of her. “From time to time”, He reminisced later, “she looked at me, and I blushed.”

Rizal came to know Segunda more intimately during his weekly visits to La Concordia College, where his sister Olimpia was a boarding student. Olimpia was a close friend of Segunda. It was apparent that Rizal and Segunda loved each other. Theirs was indeed “a love of first sight”. But it was hopeless since the very beginning because Segunda was already engaged to be married to her townmate, Manuel Luz. Rizal, for his entire artistic and intellectual prowess, was a shy and timid lover. Segunda had manifested, by insinuation and deeds, her affection for him, but he timidly failed to propose.

The last time they talked to each other was one Thursday in December, 1877 when the Christmas vacation was about to begin. He visited Segunda at La Concordia College to sat goodbye because he was going home to Calamba the following day. She, on her part, told him she was also going home one day later. She kept quiet after her brief reply, waiting for him to say something which her heart was clamoring to hear.

But Rizal failed to come up to her expectation. He could only mumble: “Well, good-bye. Anyway --I’ll see you when you pass Calamba on your way to Lipa.”

The next day Rizal arrived by steamer in his hometown. His mother did not recognize him at first, due to her failing eyesight. He was saddened to find out about his mother’s growing blindness. His sisters gaily welcomed him, teasing him about Segunda, for they knew of his romance through Olimpia.

That night he demonstrated his skill in fencing to his family. He had a friendly fencing bout with the best fencer in Calamba and bested him.

The following day (Saturday) he learned that the steamer carrying Segunda and her family would not anchor at Calamba because of the strong winds; it would stop in Binan. He saddled his white horse and waited at the road. A cavalcade of carromatas from Binan passed by.

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In one of whom was Segunda smiling and waving her handkerchief at him. He doffed his hat and was tongue-tied to say anything. Her carriage rolled on and vanished in the distance like "a swift shadow". He returned home, dazed and desolate, with his first romance "ruined by his own shyness and reserve". The first girl, whom he loved with ardent fervor, was lost to him forever. She returned to Lipa and later married Manuel Luz. He remained in Calamba, a frustrated lover, cherishing nostalgic memories of a lost love.

Three years later, Rizal, recording his first and tragic romance, said: "Ended, at an early hour, my first love! My virgin heart will always mourn the reckless step it took on the flower-decked abyss. My illusions will return, yes, but indifferent, uncertain, ready for the first betrayal on the path of love."

\* \* \* \* \*

## Chapter 5

# Medical Studies at the University of Santo Tomas (1877-1882)

Fortunately, Rizal's tragic first romance, with its bitter disillusionment, did not adversely affect his studies in the University of Santo Tomas. After the finishing the first year of a course in Philosophy and Letters (1877-78), he transferred to the medical course. During the years of his medical studies in this university which was administered by the Dominicans, rival educators of the Jesuits, he remained loyal to Ateneo, where he continued to participate in extra-curricular activities and where he completed the vocation course in surveying. As a Thomasian, he won more literary laurels, had other romances with pretty girls, and fought against Spanish students who insulted the brown Filipino students.

**Mother's Opposition to Higher Education.** After graduating with the highest honors from the Ateneo, Rizal had to go to the University of Santo Tomas for higher studies. The Bachelor of Arts course during Spanish times was equivalent only to the high school and junior college courses today. It merely qualified its graduate to enter a university. Both Don Francisco and Paciano wanted Jose to pursue higher learning in the university. But Dona Teodora, who knew what happened to Gom-Bur-Za, vigorously opposed the idea and told her husband: "Don't send him to Manila again; he knows enough. If he gets to know more, the Spaniards will cut off his head." Don Francisco kept quiet and told Paciano to accompany his younger brother to Manila, despite their mother's tears.

Jose Rizal himself was surprised why his mother, who was a woman of education and culture, should object to his desire for a university education. Years later he wrote in his journal: "Did my mother perhaps have a foreboding of what would happen to me? Does a mother's heart really have a second sight?"

**Rizal Enters the University.** In April 1877, Rizal who was then nearly 16 years old, matriculated in the University of Santo Tomas, taking the course on Philosophy and Letters. He enrolled in this course for two reasons: (1) his father liked it and (2) he was "still uncertain as to what career he pursues". He had written to Father Pablo Ramon, Rector of the Ateneo, who had been good to him during his student days in that college, asking for advice on the choice of a career. But the Father Rector was then in Mindanao so that he was unable to advise Rizal. Consequently, during his first-year term (1877-78) in the University of Santo Tomas, Rizal studied Cosmology, Metaphysics, Theodicy, and History of Philosophy.

It was during the following term (1878-79) that Rizal, having received the Ateneo Rector's advice to study medicine, took up the medical course, enrolling simultaneously in the preparatory medical course and the regular first year medical course. Another reason why he

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chose medicine for a career was to be able to cure his mother's growing blindness.

**Finishes Surveying Course in Ateneo (1878).** During his first school term in the University of Santo Tomas (1877-78), Rizal also studied in the Ateneo. He took vocational course leading to the title of *perito agrimensor* (expert surveyor). In those days, it should be remembered, the colleges for boys in Manila offered vocational courses in agriculture, commerce, mechanics, and surveying.

Rizal, as usual, excelled in all subjects in the surveying course in the Ateneo, obtaining gold medals in agriculture and topography. At the age of 17, he passed the final examination in the surveying course, but he could not be granted the title as surveyor because he was below age. The title was issued to him on November 25, 1881.

Although Rizal was then a Thomasian, he frequently visited the Ateneo. It was due not only to his surveying course, but more because of his loyalty to the Ateneo, where he had so many beautiful memories and whose Jesuit professors, unlike the Dominicans, loved him and inspired him to ascend to greater heights of knowledge. He continued to participate actively in the Ateneo's extra-curricular activities. He was president of the Academy of Spanish Literature and secretary of the Academy of Natural Sciences. He also continued his membership in the Marian Congregation, of which he was the secretary.

**Romances with Other Girls.** Notwithstanding his academic studies in the University of Santo Tomas and extra-curricular activities in the Ateneo, Rizal had ample time for love. He was a romantic dreamer who liked to sip the "nectar of love". His sad experience with his first love had made him wiser in the ways of romance.

Shortly after losing Segunda Katigbak, he paid court to a young woman in Calamba. In his student memoirs, he called her simply, "Miss L," describing her as "fair with seductive and attractive eyes". After visiting her in her house several times, she suddenly stopped his wooing, and the romance died a natural death. Nobody today knows who this woman was. Rizal himself did not give her name. Hence, her identity is lost to history. However, he gave name two reasons for his change of heart, namely: (1) the sweet memory of Segunda was still fresh in his heart and (2) his father did not like the family of "Miss L".

Several months later, during his sophomore year at the University of Santo Tomas, he boarded in the house of Dona Concha Leyva in Intramuros. The next door neighbors of Dona Concha were *Capitan Juan* and *Capitana Sanday Valenzuela* from Pagsanjan, Laguna, who had a charming daughter named Leonor. Rizal, the medical student from Calamba, was a welcome visitor in the Valenzuela home, where he was the life of the social parties because of his clever sleight-of-hand tricks. He courted Leonor Valenzuela, who was a tall girl with a regal bearing. He sent her love notes written in invisible ink. This ink consisted of common table salt and water. It left no trace on the paper. Rizal, who knew his chemistry, taught Orang (pet name of Leonor

Valenzuela) the secret of reading any note written in the invisible ink by heating it over a candle or lamp so that the word may appear. But, as with Segunda, he stopped short of proposing marriage to Orang.

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Rizal's next romance was with another Leonor —Leonor Rivera —his cousin from Camiling. In 1879, at the start of his junior year at the university, he lived in "Casa Tomasina," at No. 6 Calle Santo Tomas, Intramuros. His landlord-uncle, Antonio Rivera had a pretty daughter, Leonor, a student at La Concordia College, where Soledad (Rizal's younger sister) was then studying. Leonor, born in Camiling, Tarlac, on April 11, 1867, was a frail, pretty girl "tender as a budding flower with kindly, wistful eyes". Between Jose and Leonor sprang a beautiful romance. They became engaged. In her letters to Rizal, Leonor signed her name as "Taimis," in order to camouflage their intimate relationship from their parents and friends.

**Victim of Spanish Officer's Brutality.** When Rizal was a freshman medical student at the University of Santo Tomas, he experienced his first taste of Spanish brutality. One dark night in Calamba, during the summer vacation in 1878, he was walking in the street. He dimly perceived the figure of a man while passing him. Not knowing the person due to darkness, he did not salute nor say a courteous 'Good Evening'. The vague figure turned out to be a lieutenant of the Guardia Civil. With a snarl, he turned upon Rizal, whipped out his sword and brutality slashed the latter on the back.

The wound was not serious, but it was painful. When recovered, Rizal reported the incident to General Primo de Rivera, the Spanish governor general of the Philippines at that time. But nothing came out of his complaint, because he was an Indio and the abusive lieutenant was a Spaniard. Later, in a letter to Blumentritt, dated March 21, 1887, he related: "I went to the Captain-General but I could not obtain justice; my wound lasted two weeks".

**"To the Filipino Youth" (1879).** In the year 1879 the Liceo Artístico-Literario (Artistic-Literary Lyceum) of Manila, a society of literary men and artists, held a literary contest. It offered a prize for the poem by a native or a mestizo, Rizal, who was then eighteen years old, submitted his poem entitled *A La Juventud Filipina* (To the Filipino Youth).

The Board of Judges, composed of Spaniards, was impressed by Rizal's poem and gave it the first prize which consisted of a silver pen, feather-shaped and decorated with a gold ribbon. Young Rizal was happy to win the poetry contest. He was sincerely congratulated by the Jesuits, especially his former professors at the Ateneo, and by his friends and relatives.

The prize-winning poem, *A La Juventud Filipina* (To the Filipino Youth), is an inspiring poem of flawless form. In exquisite verses, Rizal beseeched the Filipino youth to rise from lethargy, to let their genius fly swifter than the wind and descend with art and science to break the chains that have long bound the spirit of the people. This poem is as follows:

#### **TO THE FILIPINO YOUTH**

*Theme: "Grow, O Timid Flower"*

Hold high the brow serene,  
O youth, where now you stand.

Let the bright sheen  
Of your grace be seen,  
Fair hope of my fatherland!

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Come now, thou genius grand,  
And bring down inspiration;  
With thy mighty hand,  
Swifter than the winds volation,  
Raise the eager mind to higher station.

Come down with pleasing light  
Of art and science to the flight,  
O youth, and there untie  
The chains that heavy lie,  
Your spirit free to bright.

See how in flaming zone  
Amid the shadows thrown,  
The Spaniard's holy hand  
A crown's resplendent band  
Proffers to this Indian land.

Thou, who now wouldst rise  
On wings of rich emprise,  
Seek from Olympian skies  
Songs of sweetest strain,  
Softer than ambrosial rain.

Thou, whose voice divine  
Rivals Philomel's refrain,  
And with varied line  
Through the night benign  
Frees mortality from pain.

Thou, who by sharp strife  
Wakest thy mind to life;  
And the memory bright  
Of the genius's light  
Makest immortal in its strength.

And thou, in accents clear  
Of Phoebus, to Apollos dear;  
Or by the brush's magic art  
Takest from nature's store a part  
To fix it on the simple canvas' length.

Go forth, and then the scared fire  
Of the genius to the laurel may aspire;  
To spread around the flame,  
And in victory acclaim,

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Through wider spheres the human name.

Day, O happy day,  
Fair Filipinas, for thy land!  
So bless the Power today  
That places in thy way  
This favor and this fortune grand.

This winning poem of Rizal is a classic in Philippine literature for two reasons: First, it was the first great poem in Spanish written by a Filipino, whose merit was recognized by Spanish literary authorities, and secondly, it expressed for the first time the nationalistic concept that the Filipinos, and not the foreigners, were the “fair hope of the Fatherland”.

**“The Council of the Gods” (1880).** The following year (1880) the Artistic-Literary Lyceum opened another literacy contest to commemorate the fourth centennial of the death of Cervantes, Spain’s glorified man-of-letters and famous author of *Don Quixote*. This time the contest was opened to both Filipinos and Spaniards.

Many writers participated in the contest –priest, newspapermen, scholars and professors. Rizal, inspired by his poetical triumph the previous year, entered the literary joust, submitting an allegorical drama entitled *El Consejo de los Dioses* (The Council of the Gods).

The judges of the contest were all Spaniards. After a long and critical appraisal of the entries, they awarded the first prize to Rizal’s work because of its literary superiority over the others. The Spanish community in Manila, spear-headed by the Spanish press, howled in great indignation against the decision because the winning author was an Indio. Despite all objections, the prize was awarded to Rizal, a gold ring on which was engraved the bust of Cervantes. A Spanish writer, D.N. del Puzo, won the second prize. For the first time in history, an Indio –a nineteen-year old Filipino medical student at that –excelled in a national literary contest, defeating several Spanish writers of his time in Manila. Rizal was particularly happy, for he proved the fallacy of the alleged Spanish superiority over the Filipinos and revealed that the Filipino could hold his own in fair competition against all races.

The winning allegory of Rizal was a literary masterpiece based on the Greek classics. In wring it, Rizal, although a student of the University of Santo Tomas was aided by the kind Father Rector of the Ateneo in securing the needed reference materials. The allegory established a parallel among Homer, Virgil, and Cervantes. The gods discuss the comparative merits of these great writers and finally decide to give the trumpet to Homer, the lyre to Virgil, and laurel to Cervantes. The allegory gloriously closes with the naiads, nymphs, satyrs, and other mythological characters dancing and gathering laurels for Cervantes.

**Other Literary Works.** Aside from the two prize-winning works mentioned above, Rizal, although studying medicine, produced other poems and a zarzuela, this *zarzuela* was *Junto al Pasig* (Beside the Pasig), which was staged by the Ateneans on December 8, 1880, on the occasion of the annual celebration of the Feast Day of the Immaculate Conception, Patroness of the Ateneo. He wrote it as President of the Academy of Spanish Literature in the Ateneo.

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As a piece of literature *Junto al Pasig* is mediocre. But there are passages in it which express in subtle satire the author's nationalist ideas. For instance, Rizal makes Satan say that the Philippines –

*"Now without comfort,  
Sandy groans in the power of a foreign people,  
And slowly dies  
In the impious clutch of Spain."*

In the same year (1880), he wrote a sonnet entitled *A Filipinas* for the album of the Society of Sculptors. In this sonnet, he urged all Filipino artists to glorify the Philippines.

The year before, in 1879, he composed a poem entitled *Abd-Azis y Mahoma*, which was declaimed by an atenean, Manuel Fernandez, on the night of December 8, 1879 in honor of the Ateneo's Patroness.

Later, in 1881, he composed a poem entitled *Al M.R.P. Pablo Ramon*. He wrote this poem as an expression of affection to Father Pablo Ramon, the Ateneo rector, who had been so kind and helpful to him.

**Rizal's Visit to Pakil and Pagsanjan.** In the summer month of May, 1881, when he was still a medical student at the University of Santo Tomas, Rizal went on a pilgrimage to the town of Pakil, famous shrine of the Birhen Maria de los Dolores. He was accompanied by his sisters – Saturnina, Maria, and Trinidad and their female friends. They took a *casco* (flat-bottom sailing vessel) from Calamba to Pakil, Laguna, and stayed at the home of mrs. And Mr. Manuel Regaldo, whose son Nicolas was Rizal's friend in Manila.

Rizal and his companions were fascinated by the famous *turumba*, the people dancing in the streets during the procession in honor of the miraculous Birhen Maria de los Dolores. As they danced, the dancers sang:

*Turumba, Turumba, Mariangga  
Matuwa tayo 't Masaya  
Sumayaw ng turumba  
Puri sa Birhen Maria*

In Pakil Rizal was infatuated by a pretty girl colegiala, Ybardolaza, who skillfully played the harp at the Regaldo home. From Pakil, Rizal and his party made a side trip to the neighboring town of Pagsanjan for two reasons –it was native town Leonor Valenzuela, one of Rizal's girl friends in Manila, and to see the world famed Pagsanjan Falls.

Year later Rizal mentioned the *Turumba* in Chapter VI of *Noli Me Tangere* and Pagsanjan Falls in his travel diary (United States –Saturday, May 12, 18880, where he said that Niagara Falls was the “greatest cascades I ever saw” but “not so beautiful nor fine as the falls at Los Banos, (*sic*) Pagsanjan”.

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**Champion of Filipino Students.** Rizal was the champion of the Filipino students in their frequent fights against the arrogant Spanish students, who were often surpassed by the Filipinos in class work and who insultingly called their brown classmates –“*Indio, chongco!*” In relation, the Filipino students called them “*Kastila, bangus!*” Hostility between these two groups of students often exploded in angry street rumbles.

Rizal participated in these student brawls. Owing to his skill in fencing, his prowess in wrestling, and his indomitable courage, he distinguished himself in these students’ skirmishes. In 1880 he founded a secret society of Filipino students in the University of Santo Tomas called *Companerismo* (Comradeship), whose members were called “Companions of Jehu,” after the valiant Hebrew general who fought the Arameans and ruled the Kingdom of Israel for 28 years (843-816 B.C.). He was the chief of this secret student society, with his cousin from Batangas, Galicano Apacible, as secretary. As chief, he led the Filipino students into combat against the Spanish students in various street fights.

In one of the fierce encounters between the Filipino students and their pale-skinned detractors near the Escolta in Manila, Rizal was wounded on the head. His friends brought him bleeding and covered with dust to his boarding house, “Casa Tomasina”. Leonor Rivera tenderly washed and dressed his wound.

**Unhappy Days at the UST.** Rizal, Ateneo’s boy wonder, found the atmosphere at the University of Santo Tomas suffocating to his sensitive spirit. He was unhappy at this Dominican institution of higher learning because (1) the Dominican professors were hostile to him, (2) the Filipino students were racially discriminated against by the Spaniards, and (3) the method of instruction was obsolete and repressive.

In this novel, *El Filibusterismo*, he described how the Filipino students were humiliated and insulted by their Dominican professors and how backward the method of instruction was, especially in the teaching of the natural sciences. He related in Chapter XIII, “The Class in Physics,” that his science subject was taught without laboratory experiments. The microscope and other laboratory apparatuses were kept inside the showcases to be seen by visitors, but the students could not even touch them.

Because of the unfriendly attitude of his professors, Rizal, the most brilliant graduate of the Ateneo, failed to win high scholastic honors. Although his grades in the first year of the philosophy course were all “excellent,” they were not impressive in the four years of his medical course. His scholastic records in the University of San Tomas (1879-82) were as follows:

1877-78 (Philosophy & Letters)

Cosmology & Metaphysics . . . . . Excellent

Theodicy . . . . .	Excellent
History of Philosophy . . . . .	Excellent

Physics . . . . .	Fair
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Chemistry . . . . .	Excellent
Natural History . . . . .	Good
Anatomy I . . . . .	Good
Dissection I . . . . .	Good

#### 1879-1880 (Medicine) -2<sup>nd</sup> Year

Anatomy 2 . . . . .	Good
Dissection 2 . . . . .	Good
Physiology . . . . .	Good
Private Hygiene . . . . .	Good
Public Hygiene . . . . .	Good

#### 1880-1881 (Medicine) -3<sup>rd</sup> Year

General Pathology . . . . .	Fair
Therapeutics . . . . .	Excellent
Surgery . . . . .	Good

#### 1881-1882 (Medicine) -4<sup>th</sup> Year

Medical Pathology . . . . .	Very Good
Surgical Pathology . . . . .	Very Good
Obstetrics . . . . .	Very Good

**Decision to Study Abroad.** After finishing the fourth year of his medal course, Rizal decided to study in Spain. He could no longer endure the rampant bigotry, discrimination, and hostility in the University of Santo Tomas. His older brother readily approved his going to Spain and so did his two sisters Saturnina (Neneng) and Lucia, Uncle Antonio Rivera, the Valenzuela family, and some friends.

For the first time, Rizal did not seek his parents' permission and blessings to go abroad, because he knew that they, especially his mother, would disapprove it. He did not bring his beloved Leonor into his confidence either. He had enough common sense to know that Leonor, being a woman, young and romantic at that, could not keep a secret. Thus Rizal's parents, Leonor, and the Spanish authorities knew nothing of his decision to go abroad in order to finish his medical studies in Spain, were the professors were more liberal those of the University of Santo Tomas.

## Chapter 6

# In Sunny Spain (1882-1885)

After finishing the 4<sup>th</sup> Year of the medical course in the University of Santo Tomas, Jose Rizal, being disgusted with the antiquated method of instruction in this Dominican-owned university and the racial prejudice of Dominican professors against Filipino students, decided to complete his studies in Spain. At that time the government of Spain was a constitutional monarchy under a written constitution which granted human rights to the people, particularly freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and freedom of assembly. Aside from this ostensible reason, he had another reason, which was more important than merely completing his studies in Spain. This was his "secret mission," which many Rizalist biographers (including Austin Craig and Wenceslao E. Retana) never mention in their writings.

**Rizal's Secret Mission.** This mission which Rizal conceived with the approval of his older brother Paciano was to observe keenly the life and culture, languages and customs, industries and commerce, and governments and laws of the European nations in order to prepare himself in the mighty task of liberating his oppressed people from Spanish tyranny. This was the evidenced in his farewell letter which was delivered to his parents shortly after his departure for Spain.

Aside from begging his parents' forgiveness for leaving the Philippines without their permission and blessings, he said in this letter:

When the telegram informing us of your departure was received in Calamba, as it was natural, our parents were grieved, especially the old man (Don Francisco -Z.) who became taciturn, always staying in bed, and weeping at night, and the consolation offered by the family, the curate, and strangers was of no avail. He made me to go to Manila to find out with what means you were able to undertake the voyage. On my return I assure them that your expenses were defrayed by some friends of yours in Manila, hoping that this would calm him. Notwithstanding, he remained always sad. Seeing this and fearing that his taciturnity might degenerate into a malady, I told him everything, but to him alone, begging him to keep the secret and he promised to do so. Only since then have I seen him a little gay and return to his usual ways. This is what occurred in the family.

. . . . .

It is said here that you will finish the medical course in Barcelona and not at Madrid. To me the principal purpose of your departure is not to finish this course but to study other things of greater usefulness or that to which you are more inclined. So I think that you ought to study at Madrid.

**Secret Departure for Spain.** Rizal's departure for Spain was kept secret to avoid detection by the Spanish authorities and the friars. Even his own parents did not know because he knew they, especially his mother, would not allow him to go. Only his older brother (Paciano), his uncle (Antonio Rivera, father of Leonor Rivera), his sisters (Neneng and Lucia),

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the Valenzuela family (*Captain Juan* and *Capitana Sanday* and their daughter *Orang*), Pedro A. Paterno, his *compadre* Mateo Evangelista, the Ateneo Jesuit fathers, and some intimate friends, including *Chengoy* (Jose M. Cecilio). The kind Jesuit priests gave him letters of recommendation to the members of their Society in Barcelona. He used the name Jose Mercado, a cousin from Binan.

Before his secret departure, he wrote a farewell letter for his beloved parents and another one for his sweetheart Leonor Rivera –both delivered shortly after he sailed away.

On May 3, 1882, Rizal departed on board the Spanish steamer *Salvadora* bound for Singapore. With tears in his eyes and gloom in his heart, he gazed at the receding skyline of Manila. He hastily took paper and pencil and sketched it as it vanished in view.

**Singapore.** During the voyage to Singapore he carefully observed the people and things on board the steamer. There were sixteen passengers, including himself –“five or six ladies, many children, and the rest gentlemen. He was the only Filipino, the rest were Spaniards, British, and Indian Negroes.

The ship captain, Donato Lecha, from Asturias, Spain, bestfriended him. Rizal described him in his travel diary as an affable man, “much more refined than his other countrymen and colleagues that I have met”. He was, however, peeved by some Spaniards (his fellow passengers) who spoke ill of the Philippines, ‘to which they go for pecuniary reasons’.

To while away the tedious boredom of sea voyage, Rizal played chess with his fellow passengers who were much older than he. He defeated them many times, for he was a good chess player.

On May 8, 1882, while the steamer was approaching Singapore, Rizal saw a beautiful island. Fascinated by its scenic beauty, he remembered “Talin Island with the Susong Dalaga”.

The following day (May 9) the *Salvadora* docked at Singapore. Rizal landed, registered at Hotel de la Paz, and spent two days on a sightseeing soiree of the city, which was a colony of England. He saw the famous Botanical Garden, the beautiful Buddhist temples, the busy shopping district, and the statue of Sir Thomas Stanford Raffles (founder of Singapore).

**From Singapore to Colombo.** In Singapore Rizal transferred to another ship *Djemnah*, a French steamer, which left Singapore for Europe on May 11. It was a larger and cleaner vessel which carried more passengers. Among these passengers were British, French, Dutch, Spaniards, Malays, Siamese, and Filipinos (Mr. and Mrs. Salazar, Mr. Vicente Pardo, and Jose Rizal). French was mostly spoken on board because it was a French vessel and the majority of the passengers in French, but to his surprise and embarrassment, he found out that his book French

which he learned at the Ateneo could not be understood, so that he had to speak in mixed Spanish-Latin supplemented by much gesticulation and sketching on paper. By conversing daily with the French passengers, he was able gradually to improve his knowledge of the French language.

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On May 17, the *Djemnah* reached Point Galle, a seacoast town in southern Ceylon (now Sri Lanka). Rizal was unimpressed by this town. On his travel diary, he wrote: "The general appearance of Point Galle is pictureque but lonely and quiet and at the same time sad."

The following day the *Djemnah* weighed anchor and resumed the voyage towards Colombo, the capital of Ceylon. After a few hours of sailing, she reached this city on the same day. Rizal was enamoured by Colombo because of its scenic beauty and elegant buildings. He delightfully scribbled on his diary: "Colombo is more beautiful, smart and elegant than Singapore, Point Galle, and Manila."

**First Trip Through Suez Canal.** From Colombo, the *Djemnah* continued the voyage crossing the Indian Ocean to the Cape of Guardafui, Africa. For the first time, Rizal sighted the barren coast of Africa, which he called an "inhospitable land but famous".

At the next stopover –in Aden –Rizal went ashore to see the sights. He found the city, hotter than Manila. He was amused to see the camels, for it was the first time he saw these animals. From Aden, the *Djemnah* proceeded to the city of Suez, the Red Sea terminal of the Suez Canal. Upon arrival at Suez, Rizal disembarked and went sightseeing, like an ordinary tourist. What impressed him most was the beautiful moonlight which reminded him to Calamba and his family.

It took the *Djemnah* five days to traverse the Suez Canal. Rizal was thrilled because it was his first trip through this canal which was built by Ferdinand de Lesseps (French diplomat-engineer). It was inaugurated on November 17, 1869.

At Port Said, the Mediterranean terminal of the Suez Canal, Rizal landed in order to see the interesting sights. He was fascinated to hear the multi-racial inhabitants speaking a babel of tongues –Arabic, Egyptian, Greek, French, Italian, Spanish, etc.

**Naples and Marseilles.** From Port Said, the *Djemnah* proceeded on its way to Europe. On June 11, Rizal reached Naples. This Italian city pleased him because of its business activity, its lively people, and its paronomic beauty. He was fascinated by Mount Vesuvius, the Castle of St. Telmo, and other historic sights of the city.

On the night of June 12, the steamer docked at the French harbor of Marseilles. Rizal, after bidding farewell to his fellow-passengers, disembarked. He visited the famous Chateau d'If, where Dantes, hero of *The Mount of Monte Cristo*, was imprisoned. He had enjoyed reading this novel of Alexander Dumas when he was a student at the Ateneo. He stayed two and a half days in Marseilles, enjoying every day of his sojourn.

**Barcelona.** On the afternoon of June 15, Rizal left Marseilles by train for the last lap of his trip to Spain. He crossed the Pyrenees and stopped for a day at the frontier town of Port Bou. Here he noticed the difference accorded by the Spanish immigration officers to tourists, in direct contrast with the courtesy of the French immigration officers.

After the passport inspection at Port Bou, Rizal continued his trip by rail, finally reaching his destination –Barcelona on June 16, 1882.

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Rizal's first impression of Barcelona, the greatest city of Cataluna and Spain's second largest city, was unfavorable. He thought that it was ugly, with dirty little inns and inhospitable residents, because he happened to stay upon arrival at a dingy inn situated on an impressive narrow street in the “town's most ugly side” and the staff and guests in this inn were indifferent to him. Later, he changed his bad impression and came to like the city, with an atmosphere of freedom and liberalism, and its people were open-hearted, hospitable, and courageous. He enjoyed promenading along Las Ramblas, the most famous street in Barcelona.

The Filipinos in Barcelona, some of whom were his schoolmates in the Ateneo, welcomed Rizal. They gave him a party at their favorite café in Plaza de Cataluna. After the customary exchange of toasts, they told their guest of the attractions of Barcelona and the customs of the Spanish people; in turn he gave them the latest news and gossips in the Philippines.

**“Amor Patrio.”** In progressive Barcelona, Rizal wrote a nationalistic essay entitled “*Amor Patrio*” (Love of Country), his first article written on Spain's soil. He sent this article to his friend in Manila, Basilio Teodoro Moran, publisher of *Diariong Tagalog*, the first Manila bilingual newspaper (Spanish and Tagalog).

Rizal's “*Amor Patrio*,” under his pen-name *Laong Laan*, appeared in print in *Diariong Tagalog* on August 20, 1882. It was published in two texts –Spanish and Tagalog. The Spanish text was the one originally written by Rizal in Barcelona. The Tagalog text was a Tagalog translation made by M.H. del Pilar. The article caused quite a sensation among the readers in the Philippines because of its nationalistic flavor. As in his prize-winning “*Juventud Filipina*.” Rizal in his “*Amor Patrio*” urged his compatriots to love their fatherland, the Philippines. Among other things, he wrote:

After the fashion of the ancient Hebrews who offered in the temple the first fruits of their love, we in a foreign land, dedicate our first accounts to our country, enshrouded among the clouds and mists of morn, always beautiful and poetic, but ever more idolized in proportion as we are absent and away from it. . . Under whatever aspect, whatever its name, we love her (*patria*) always just as the child loves its mother in the midst of hunger and misery.

And how strange! The poorer and more miserable she is, the more we suffer for her, and the more she is idolized and adored; yes, there is real joy in suffering for her. . .

Child, we love play; adolescent, we forget it; youth, we seek our ideal; disillusioned, we weep and go in quest of something more positive and more useful; parent, the children die and time gradually erases our pain just as the air of the sea slowly

effaces the shores as the boat departs from them. But, love of country can never be effaced, once it has entered the heart, because it carries in itself the divine stamp that makes it eternal and imperishable.

It has always been said that love is the most potent force behind the most sublime deeds; very well, of all loves, the love of country is what produced the greatest, the most heroic, and the most disinterested. Read history . . .

Publisher Basilio Teodoro Moran, deeply impressed by "*Amor Patrio*," congratulated Rizal, and requested for more articles. In response to his request, Rizal wrote the second article for *Diariong Tagalog* entitled "*Los Viajes*" (Travels). His third article, entitled "*Revista de Madrid*" (Review of Madrid), which he wrote in Madrid on November 29, 1882, was returned to him because the *Diariong Tagalog* had ceased publication for lack of funds.

**Manila Moves to Madrid.** While sojourning in Barcelona, Rizal received sad news about the cholera that was ravaging Manila and the provinces. Many people had died and more were dying daily. According to Paciano's letter, dated September 15, 1882, the Calamba folks and nocturnal processions and prayers so that God may stop the dreadful epidemic, which the Spanish health authorities were impotent to check.

Another sad news from the Philippines was the chatty letter of *Chengoy* recounting the unhappiness of Leonor Rivera, who was getting thinner because of the absence of a loved one.

In one of his letters (dated May 26, 1882), Paciano advised his younger brother to finish the medical course in Madrid. Evidently, heeding his advice, Rizal left Barcelona in the fall of 1882 and established himself in Madrid, the capital of Spain.

**Life in Madrid.** On November 3, 1882, Rizal enrolled in the University Central de Madrid (Central University of Madrid) in two courses –Medicine and Philosophy and Letters. Aside from his heavy studies in the university, he studied painting and sculpture in the Academy of Fine Arts of San Fernando; took lessons in French, German and English under private instructors; and assiduously practiced fencing and shooting in the Hall of Arms of Sanz y Carbonell. His thirst for knowledge of music, he visited the art galleries and museums and read books on all subjects under the sun, including military engineering, in order to broaden his cultural background.

Rizal led a Spartan life in Madrid. He knew that he came to Spain to study and prepare himself for service to his fatherland. Accordingly, he rigidly budgeted his money and time. He lived frugally, spending his money in food, clothing, lodging, and books –never wasting a peseta for gambling , wine, and women. His only extravagance was investing a few pesetas for a lottery ticket in every draw of the Madrid Lottery. He spent his leisure time reading and writing at his boarding house, attending the reunions of Filipino students at the house of Paterno brothers (Antonio, Maximino, and Pedro), and practicing fencing and shooting at the gymnasium. At the

other times, during the summer twilights, he sipped coffee and fraternized with the students from Cuba, Mexico, Argentina, etc. at the Antigua Café de Levante.

On Saturday evenings, he visited the home of Don Pablo Ortiga y Rey who lived with his son (Rafael) and daughter (Consuelo). Don Pablo had been city mayor of Manila during the administration of the liberal governor general Carlos Ma. de la Torre (1869-1871) and was later promoted vice-president of the Council of the Philippines in the Ministry of Colonies (Ultramar).

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**Romance with Consuelo Ortiga y Perez.** Rizal was not a handsome man. In physique, he was neither dashing nor imposing, for he was a shy small man –a few inches above five feet in height. But he possessed an aura of charisma due to his many splendored talents and noble character which made him attractive to romantic young women. No wonder the prettier of Don Pablo's daughters (Consuelo) fell in love with him.

Rizal being a lonely young man in a foreign country, far from his natal land, was attracted by Consuelo's beauty and vivacity. He even composed a lovely poem on August 22, 1883 dedicated to her. In this poem titled *A La Señorita C. O. y P.* (To Miss C.O. y P.), he expressed his admiration for her. He found solace and joy in her company.

However, before his romance with Consuelo could blossom into a serious affair, he suddenly backed out for two reasons: (1) he was still engaged to Leonor Rivera and (2) his friend and co-worker in the Propaganda Movement, Eduardo de Lete, was madly in love with Consuelo and he had no wish to break their friendship because of a pretty girl.

**“They Ask Me For Verses.”** In 1882 shortly after his arrival in Madrid, Rizal joined the *Círculo Hispano-Filipino* (Hispano-Philippine Circle), a society of Spaniards and Filipinos. Upon the request of the members of this society, he wrote a poem entitled “*Me Piden Versos* (They Ask Me For Verses) which he personally declaimed during the New Year’s Eve reception of the Madrid Filipinos held in the evening of December 31, 1882. In this sad poem, he poured out the cry of his agonizing heart, as follows:

#### THEY ASK ME FOR VERSES

You bid me now to strike the lyre,  
That mute and torn so long has lain;  
And yet I cannot wake the strain,  
Nor will the Muse one note inspire!  
Coldly, it shakes in accents dire,  
As if my soul itself to wring,  
And when it sounds seems but to fling  
A jest at its own low lament;  
So in sad isolation pent,  
My soul can neither feel nor sing.

There was a time –ah, ‘tis too true –  
But that time long ago has past –  
When upon me the Muse had cast

Indulgent smile and friendship's due;  
But of that age now all too few  
The thoughts that with me yet will stay;  
As from the hours of festive play  
There linger on mysterious notes,  
And in our minds the memory floats  
Of minstrelsy and music gay.

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A plant I am, that scarcely grown,  
Was torn from out its Eastern bed,  
Well all around perfume is shed  
And life but as a dream known;  
The land that I can call my own  
By me forgotten ne'er to be,  
Where thrilling birds their song taught me,  
And cascades with their ceaseless roar,  
And all along the spreading shore  
The murmurs of the sounding sea.

While yet in childhood's happy day,  
I learn upon its sun to smile,  
And in my breast there seems the while  
Seething volcanic fires to play,  
A bard I was, my wish always  
To call upon the fleeting wind,  
“Go forth, and spread around its flame,  
From zone to zone with glad acclaim,  
And earth to heaven together bind!”

But it I left, and now no more –  
Like a tree that is broken and sere –  
My natal gods bring the echo clear  
Of songs that in past times they bore;  
Wide seas I cross'd to foreign shore,  
With hope of change and other fate,  
My folly was made clear too late,  
For in the place of good I sought  
The seas reveal'd unto naught,  
But made death's spectre on me wait,

All these fond fancies that were mine,  
All love, all feeling, all emprise,  
Were left beneath the sunny skies;  
Which o'er that flowery region shine;  
So press no more that plea of thine,  
For songs of love from out a heart  
That coldly lies a thing a part;

Since now with tortur'd soul I haste  
Unresting o'er the desert waste,  
And lifeless gone is all the art.

**Rizal as Lover of Books.** A favorite pastime of Rizal in Madrid was reading. Instead of gambling and flirting with women, as many young Filipinos did in the Spanish metropolis, he stayed at home and read voraciously until midnight. Since early childhood, he liked to read.

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Rizal economized on his living expenses, and with the money he saved, he purchased books from a second-hand book store owned by a certain Señor Roses. He was able to build a fair-sized private library. His collection of books included *The Bible, Hebrew Grammar, Lives of the Presidents of the United States from Washington to Johnson, Complete Works of Voltaire (9 Volumes), Complete Works of Horace (3 Volumes), Complete Works of C. Bernard (16 Volumes). History of the French Revolution, The Wandering Jew, Ancient Poetry, Works of Thusidides, The Byzantine, Uncle Tom's Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Works of Alexander Dumas, Louis XIV and His Court*, and numerous books on medicine, philosophy, languages, history, geography, arts and sciences.

Rizal was deeply affected by Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and Eugene Sue's *The Wandering Jew*. These two books aroused his sympathy for the oppressed and unfortunate people.

**Rizal's First Visit to Paris (1883).** During his first summer vacation in Madrid Rizal went to Paris, sojourning in this gay capital of France from June 17 to August 20, 1883. At first, he was billeted at the Hotel de Paris on 37 Rue de Maubange; later, he moved to a cheaper hotel on 124 Rue de Rennes in the Latin Quarter, where it was cheaper to live.

Like all tourist, Rizal was charmingly titillated by the attractive sights of Paris, such as the beautiful boulevards (particularly the Champs Elysses), the Opera House, the Place de la Concorde, the Arch of Triumph, the Bois de Boulogne (magnificent park), the Madelaine Church, the Cathedral of Notre Dame, the Column of Vendome, the Invalides (containing the tomb of Napoleon the Great), and the fabulous Versailles. Unlike ordinary tourist, whose main interest in visiting foreign countries is to see the beautiful sights, to enjoy themselves in night clubs and theatres, and to shop for souvenir items, Rizal improved his mind by observing closely the French way of life and spending many hours at the museums, notably the world-famous Louvre; the botanical gardens, especially the Luxembourg; the libraries and art galleries; and the hospitals, including the Laennec Hospital, where he observed Dr. Nicaise treating his patients and the Lariboisiere Hospital, where he observed the examination of different diseases of women.

On the lighter side of his visit in Paris, Rizal was mistaken by the Parisians as Japanese. The prices of food, drinks, theatre tickets, laundry, hotel accommodation, and transportation were too high for his slender purse so that he commented in a letter to his family: "Paris is the costliest capital in Europe."

**Rizal as a Mason.** In Spain Rizal came in close contact with prominent Spanish liberal and republican Spaniards, who were mostly Masons, including Miguel Morayta, statesman,

professor, historian, and writer; Francisco Pi y Margal, journalist, statesman, and former President of the short-lived First Spanish Republic; Manuel Becerra, Minister of Ultramar (Colonies); Emilio Junoy, journalist and member of Spanish Cortes; and Juan Ruiz Zorilla, parliamentarian and head of the Republican Progressive Party in Madrid.

Rizal was impressed by the way of Spanish Masons openly and freely criticized the government policies and lambasted the friars, which could not be done in the Philippines. In due

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time, in March 1883, he joined the Masonic lodge called *Acacia* in Madrid. His reason in becoming a mason was to secure Freemasonry's aid in his fight against the friars in the Philippines. Since the friars used the Catholic religion as a shield to entrench themselves in power and wealth and to persecute the Filipino patriots, he intended to utilize Freemasonry as his shield to combat them.

Later he transferred to *Lodge Solidaridad* (Madrid), where he became a Master Mason on November 15, 1890. Still later, on February 15, 1892, he was awarded the diploma as Master Mason by *Le Grand Orient de France* in Paris.

As a Mason, Rizal played a lukewarm role in Freemasonry, unlike M.H. del Pilar, G. Lopez Jaena, and Mariano Ponce who were very active in Masonic affairs. Only his Masonic writing was a lecture titled "Science, Virtue and Labor," which he delivered in 1889 at *Lodge Solidaridad*, Madrid. A pertinent portion of this lecture reads as follows:

The duty of modern man, to my way of thinking, is to work for the redemption of humanity, because once man is dignified there would be less unfortunate and more happy men that is possible in this life. Humanity cannot be redeemed so long as there are oppressed peoples, so long as there some men who live on the tears of many, so long as there are emasculated minds and blinded eyes that enabled others to live like sultans who alone may enjoy beauty. Humanity cannot be redeemed while reason is not free, while faith would not to impose itself on facts, while whims are laws, and while there are nation who subjugate others. For humanity to be able to attain the lofty destiny toward which God guides it, it is necessary that within its fold there should be no dissensions nor tyranny, that plagues do not decimate it and no groans and curses be heard in its march. It is necessary that its triumphant career march to the tune of the hymns of glory and liberty with a bright face and serene forehead.

**Financial Worries.** After Rizal's departure for Spain, things turned from bad to worse to Calamba. The harvests of rice and sugarcane failed on account of drought and locusts. On top of this economic disaster, the manager of the Dominican-owned hacienda increased the rentals of the land cultivated by the Rizal family. This hacienda manager, a frequent guest at the Rizal home, used to ask for a turkey from Don Francisco (the hero's father), who was a good raiser of turkeys.

But there came a time when a dreadful pest killed most of the turkeys. When the manager requested for a turkey, Don Francisco had to deny him because he needed the few surviving turkeys for breeding purposes. Enraged by his failure to receive a turkey, the vindictive manager arbitrarily increased the rentals of the lands leased by Don Francisco and Paciano.

Due to hard times in Calamba, the monthly allowances of Rizal in Madrid were late in arrival and there were times when they never arrived, causing much suffering to him. At one time Paciano was forced to sell his younger brother's pony in order to send money to Madrid.

A touching incident in Rizal's life in Madrid occurred in June 24, 1884. Because he was broke, he was unable to take breakfast that day. With an empty stomach, he attended his class at

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the university, participated in the contest in Greek language and won the gold medal. In the evening of the same day he was able to eat dinner, for he was a guest speaker in a banquet held in honor of Juan Luna and felix Resurreccion Hidalgo at Restaurant Ingles, Madrid.

**Rizal's Salute to Luna and Hidalgo.** The banquet on the evening of June 25, 1884 was sponsored by the Filipino community to celebrate the double victory of the Fillipino artist in the National Exposition of Fine Arts in Madrid –Luna's Spolarium winning first prize and Hidalgo's *Christian Virgins Exposed to the Populace*, second prize. It was attended by prominent Spabish artists, newspapermen, and men-of-letters, statesmen, and Filipino.

Speaking in sonorous Castilian, Rizal held his audience spellbound. He saluted Luna and Hidalgo as the twp glories of Spain and the Philippines, whose artistic achievements transcended geographical frontiers and racial origins, for genius is universal –“genius knows no country, genius sprouts everywhere, genius is like light, air, the patrimony of everybody, cosmopolitan like space, like life, like God.” He also assailed with refined sarcasm the bigotry and blindness of certain unworthy Spaniards (referring to the bad friars in the Philippines) who could not comprehend the universality of genius.

This magnificent speech of Rizal was greeted with wild ovation, for seldom did the Spaniards hear such an ovation from the lips of a brown Filipino which was almost peerless in nobility of thought, in Spanish rhetoric, in sincerity of feeling, and in sonorous eloquence. Its full text is as follows:

In speaking before you, I am not scared by the fear that you may listen to me with lukewarmness. I come to join your enthusiasm; ours, the stimulus of youth, and you cannot help but be indulgent. Sympathetic effluvia saturate the atmosphere; fraternal currents run in all directions; generous soul listen; and consequently I do not fear for my humble person nor do I doubt your benevolence. Men of good will, you seek only goodwill, and from that height where noble sentiments reside, you do not perceive petty trifles, you see the whole and you judge the case, and you extend your hand to one who like me, desires to join you in one single brought, in one single aspiration –the glory of genius, the splendor of the motherland.

Here is, in fact, the reason why we are gathered. In the history of nations there are names that by themselves signify an achievement, that recall passion and greatness, names that, like magic formula, evoke pleasant and smiling thoughts, names that became a pact, a symbol of peace, a bond of love between a nations. The names of Luna and Hidalgo belong to these; their glories illumine the two extremes of the globe –the East and the West, Spain and the Philippines. In uttering them I believe I see two luminous

arches that, starting from both regions, are going to be entwined there above, impelled by the feeling that height unite two peoples with eternal bonds, two peoples that sea and space separate in vain, two peoples in which the seeds of disunion that men and their despotism blindly do not germinate. Luna and Hidalgo are Spanish as well as Philippines glories. They were born in the Philippines but they could have been born in Spain, because genius knows no country, genius sprouts everywhere, genius is like light, air, the patrimony of everybody, cosmopolitan like space, like life, like God.

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The patriarchal era in the Philippines is waning. The deeds of her illustrious sons are no longer wasted away at home. The oriental chrysalis is leaving the cocoon. The morrow of a long day for those regions is announced in brilliant tints and rose-colored dawns, and that race, fallen into lethargy during the historic night while the sun illuminates other continents, again awakens, moved by the electric impact that contact with Western peoples produces, and she demands light, life, the civilization that at one time they bequeath her, thus confirming the eternal laws of constant evolution, of change, of periodicity, of progress.

You know this well and you exult in it. To you is due the beauty of the diamonds that the Philippine wears in her crown. She produced the precious stones; Europe gave them polish. And all of us contemplate proudly your work; we are the flame, the breath, the material furnished.

They imbibed over there the poetry of nature –a nature grandiose and terrible in its cataclysms, in its evolutions, in its dynamism; a nature, sweet, tranquil, and melancholy in its manifestation constant, static; a nature that stamps its seal on all that it creates and produces. Its children carry it wherever they go. Analyze if not their character, their works, and however slightly you may know that people, you will see it in everything as forming their knowledge, as the soul that presides over everything as the spring of the mechanism, as the substantial form, as the raw material. It is not possible not to reflect on what one's self feels, it is not possible to be one thing and do something else. The contradictions are only apparent, they are only paradoxes. In *El Spoliarium*, thought that canvas that is not mute, can be heard the tumult of the multitude, the shouting of the slaves, the metallic creaking of the armor of the corpses, the sobs of the bereaved, the murmurs of prayer, with such vigor and realism, as one hears the din of thunder in the midst of the crash of the cataracts or the impressive and dreadful tremor of the earthquake.

The same nature that engenders such phenomena intervenes also in those strokes. On the other hand, in Hidalgo's painting the purest sentiment throbs, ideal expression of melancholy, beauty, and weakness, victims of brute force; and it is because Hidalgo was born under the brilliant assure of that sky, to the cooing of its sea breezes, in the midst of the serenity of its lake, the poetry of its valleys, and the majestic harmony of its mountains and ranges.

For that reason in Luna's are the shadows, the contrasts, the moribund lights, mystery, and the terrible, like the reverberation of the dark tempests of the tropics, the lightning and the roaring eruptions of their volcanoes. For that reason Hidalgo is all light,

color, harmony, feeling, limpidity, like the Philippines in her moonlight nights on her tranquil days, with her horizons that invite to meditation, and where the infinite lulls. And both, despite being so distinct in themselves, in appearance at least coincide at the bottom, as all our heart do in spite of notable differences. In reflecting on their palette the splendiferous rays of unfolding glory with which they surround their Native Land, both express the spirit of our social, moral, and political life; mankind subjected to harsh tests; unredeemed mankind; reason and aspiration in an open struggle with preoccupations,

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fanaticism, and injustices, because sentiments and opinions cut passage through the thickest walls, because to them all bodies have pores, all are transparent, and if they lack pen, if the press does not help them, the palette and brushes will not only delight the eye but will also be eloquent tributes.

If the mother teaches her child her language in order that she may understand his joys, his necessities, or his sorrows, Spain, as mother, teaches also her language to the Philippines in spite of the opposition of those myopic men and pygmies, who, desiring to insure the present, do not see the future, do not weigh the consequences –rachitic wet nurses, corrupt and corruptors, who extend to extinguish all legitimate feelings, who perverting the hearts of the people, sow in them the germs of discord in order to reap later the fruit, the aconite, the death of future generations.

But, I forget those miseries! Peace to those who are dead, because the dead are dead; they lack breath, soul, and worms corrode them! Let us not evoke their dismal memory; let us not bring their stench into the midst of our rejoicings! Fortunately, brothers are larger in number; generosity and nobility are innate under the sky of Spain; all of you are patent proof of that. You have responded unanimously; you have helped and you would have done more if more have been asked of you. Seated to share our supper and honor the illustrious sons of the Philippines, you honor also Spain because you have done very well. The boundaries of Spain are neither the Atlantic nor the Cantabrian nor the Mediterranean –it would be ignominious for the water to place a dam to her grandeur, to her idea –Spain is there, there where her beneficent influence is felt, and thought her flag might disappear, there would remain her memory, eternal, imperishable. What does a piece of red and yellow cloth matter, what do rifles and cannons matter, there were no fusion of ideas, unity of principles, harmony of opinions exist?

Luna and Hidalgo belong as much to you as to us; you love them and we see in them generous hopes, precious examples. The Filipino youth in Europe, ever enthusiastic, and others whose heart always remain young for the disinterestedness and enthusiasm that characterize their actions, offer to Luna as a crown, a modest gift, small indeed for our enthusiasm, but the most spontaneous and the most voluntary of all the gifts hitherto presented to him.

But the gratitude of the Philippines towards her illustrious sons was not yet satisfied, and desiring to give free rein to the thoughts that bubble in the mind, to the sentiments that abound in the heart, and to the words that escape from the lips, we have all come here to this banquet to join our wishes, in order to give form to the mutual

embrace of two races that one another and like one another, morally, socially, and politically united for a period of four centuries, so that they may form in the future one single nation in spirit, in their views, in their privileges.

I drink then to the health of our artists Luna and Hidalgo, legitimate and pure hand on the dolorous path of art. I drink to the health of the Filipino youth, sacred hope of

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my Native Land, that they may imitate such precious examples so that Mother Spain, solicitous and heedful of the welfare of her provinces, implement soon the reforms she has contemplated for a long time. The furrow is ready and the ground is not sterile! And I drink finally for the happiness of those parents who, deprived of the tenderness of their children, from those distant regions follow them with moist eyes and palpitating hearts across seas and space, sacrificing on the altar of the common welfare the sweet consolations that are so scarce in the twilight of life, precious and lonely winter flowers that sprout along the snow-white borders of the grave.

**Rizal Involved in Student Demonstrations.** On November 20, 21, and 22, 1884, the serene city of Madrid exploded in bloody riots by the students of the Central University. Rizal and other Filipino students participated, together with Cuban, Mexican, Peruvian, and Spanish students, in the tumult. These student demonstrations were caused by the address of Dr. Miguel Morayta. Professor of history, at the opening ceremonies of the academic year on November 20, in which he proclaimed "the freedom of science and the teacher". Such a liberal view was condemned by the Catholic bishops of Spain, who promptly excommunicated Dr. Morayta and those who applauded his speech.

Angered by the bigotry of the Catholic bishops, the university students rose in violent demonstrations. They rioted in the city streets, shouting: "Viva Morayta! Down the Bishops!" Practically all the students in various colleges (Law, Medicine, Philosophy, and Letters, etc.) joined the massive demonstrations, including Rizal, Valentín Ventura, and other Filipinos. The police and the army troopers tried to suppress the angry students, but in vain. Bloody fights raged in the university buildings and in the city streets. The students armed with clubs, stones, and fists, fought the government forces. Many university professors openly supported the student rioters. The Rector, who also took the side of the students, was forced to resign and was replaced by Doctor Creus, "a very unpopular man, disliked by everybody".

The appointment of the new Rector intensified the fury of the student demonstrators. More student demonstrations convulsed the city. Recounting the tumultuous rioting to his family in a letter dated November 26, 1884, Rizal said:

When the new Rector went to assume office next day [November 21, 1884 - Z], feelings were much irritated, we were still seeing red, it was resolved not to return to classes as long as they did not give us satisfaction, and remove the Rector. There were repeated shouts of "Down with Creus!" It was there also. On that day there were new encounters, new fights, wounded, cane blows, imprisonment, etc. It was on this same day, the 21<sup>st</sup>, when a police lieutenant and a secret service man wanted to seize Ventura and me, but he and I escaped. Two Filipinos were taken prisoners.

On the third day, Saturday, Rector Creus called the police to occupy the University, to the great disgust of the professors and the great indignation of the students.

On this day, because the agents of the law were staring very much at me, and I do not know why, I had to disgust myself three times. None entered the classes. More blows, wounded, etc. More than 80 guards occupied the University up and down; they had their guns and bugles in the lecture hall. The boulevard Del Prado was occupied by the cavalry, cannons, and soldiers. On this day we swore no to return to this dishonored University, whose Rector was imposed on it by force and threat, and in which we are

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treated as persons without dignity; and we have sworn not to go back until they give us complete satisfaction, and reinstate the old Rector, remove Creus who is a disgrace to the physicians who wanted to expel him from the Academy [of Medicine and Surgery] for lacking in dignity and self-respect. . . This Rector; to avoid the catcalls and insults of the students, leaves and enters the University thru a secret door in the garden. All the papers of Madrid and in the provinces, except of those of the Ministry, are in our favor, severely accusing the Government; the people also are on our side, and the students of the provinces are adhering to us. A rich banker offered ten thousand duros to the ex-Rector to bail out the imprisoned students . . . and all the professors are in favor of the students, so much so that they take our cause as theirs. I had the luck of not having received even a cane blow, nor taken prisoner, nor arrested despite my two roles as student of medicine and of philosophy and letter. . . Whether it was luck or not, the case is that there were wounded old men, women, children, soldiers, strangers; I did not even have to run. . . No Filipino was wounded, but Cubans and Spaniards many.

**Studies Completed in Spain.** Rizal completed his medical course in Spain. He was conferred the degree of Licentiate in Medicine by the Universidad Central de Madrid on June 21, 1884. The next academic year (1884-85) he studied and passed all subjects leading to the degree of Doctor of Medicine. Due to the fact, however, that he did not present the thesis required for graduation nor paid the corresponding fees, he was not awarded his Doctor's diploma.

His scholastic records in medicine at the Universidad central de Madrid were as follows:

### **Fifth Year (1882-83): Continuation of Medical Course in the University Of Santo Tomas**

Medical Clinic I .....	Good
Surgical Clinic I .....	Good
Obstetrical Clinic .....	Fair
Legal Medicine .....	Excellent

### **Sixth Year (1883-84)**

Medical Clinic 2 .....	Good
Surgical Clinic 2 .....	Very Good

**Licentiate in Medicine awarded on June 21, 1884  
With the rating "Fair"**

### **Doctorate (1884-85)**

History of Medical Science .....	Fair
Surgical Analysis .....	Good
Normal Histology .....	Excellent

### **Doctor of Medicine (Not awarded)**

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Rizal also finished his studies in Philosophy and Letters, with higher grades. He was awarded the degree of Licentiate in Philosophy and Letters by the Universidad Central de Madrid on June 19, 1885 (his 24<sup>th</sup> birthday), with the rating of “excellent” (*Sobresaliente*). His scholastic records in this course follow:

#### **1882-83**

Universal History I .....	Very Good
General Literature .....	Excellent

#### **1883-84**

Universal History I .....	Very Good
General Literature .....	Excellent

#### **1884-85**

Universal History 2 .....	Excellent
Greek and Latin Literature .....	Excellent (with prize)
Greek I .....	Excellent (with prize)

#### **1882-83**

Spanish Language .....	Excellent w/ a scholarship
Arabic Language .....	Excellent w/ a scholarship

A long last, Rizal completed his studies in Spain. By obtaining the degree of Licentiate in Philosophy and Letters, he became qualified to be a professor of humanities in any Spanish university. And by receiving his degree of Licentiate in Medicine, he became a full-fledged physician, qualified to practice medicine. He did not bother to secure the post-graduate degree of Doctor of Medicine because it was, together with the licentiate in philosophy and letters, good only for teaching purposes. Being a man of high intelligence and foresight, he knew that with his brown color and Asian racial ancestry no friar-owned university or college in the Philippines would accept him in its faculty staff. Thus he said, in his letter to his family written in Madrid, November 26, 1884: “My doctorate is not of very much value to me. . . because although it is useful to a university professor, yet I believe they [Dominican-friars –Z] will never appoint me

as such in the College of Santo Tomas. I say the same thing of philosophy and letters which may serve also for a professorship, but I doubt if the Dominican fathers will grant it to me."

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## Chapter 7

# Paris to Berlin (1885-87)

After completing his studies in Madrid, Rizal went to Paris and Germany in order to specialize in ophthalmology. He particularly chose this branch of medicine because he wanted to cure his mother's eye ailment. He served as assistant to the famous oculists of Europe. He also continued his travels and observations of European life and customs, government and laws in Paris, Heidelberg, Leipzig, and Berlin. In Berlin, capital of then unified Germany, he met and befriended several top German scientists, Dr. Feodor Jagor, Dr. Adolph B. Meyer, Dr. Hans Meyer, and Dr. Rudolf Virchow. His merits as a scientist were recognized by the eminent scientists of Europe.

**In Gay Paris (1885-86).** Shortly after terminating his studies at the Central University of Madrid, Rizal, who was then 24 years old and already a physician, went to Paris in order to acquire more knowledge in ophthalmology.

On his way to Paris, he stopped at Barcelona to visit his friend, Maximo Viola, a medical student and a member of a rich family of San Miguel, Bulacan. He stayed for a week, during which time he befriended Senor Eusebio Corominas, editor of newspaper *La Publicidad* and made a crayon sketch of Don Miguel Morayta, owner of *La Publicidad* and a statesman. He gave editor Corominas an article on the Carolines Question, then a controversial issue, for publication.

In November 1885, Rizal was living in Paris, where he sojourned for about four months. He worked as an assistant to Dr. Louis de Weckert (1852-1906), leading French ophthalmologist, from November 1885 to February 1886. He rapidly improved his knowledge of ophthalmology, as revealed by his letter to his parents on January 1, 1886. "With respect to the study of the ailments of the eyes," he wrote, "I am doing well. I know now how to perform all the operations; I only need to know what is going on inside the eye, which requires much practice".

Outside of his working hours at Dr. Weckert's clinic, Rizal relaxed visiting his friends, such as the family of the Pardo de Taveras (Trinidad, Felix, and Paz), Juan Luna, and Felix Resurreccion Hidalgo, Paz Pardo de Tavera ws a pretty girl, who was engaged to Juan Luna. On the album of this girl, Rizal drew a series of sketches on the story of "The monkey and the Turtle".

At the studio of Luna, Rizal spent many happy hours. He discussed with Luna, the great master of the brush, various problems on art and improved his own painting technique. He helped Luna by posing as model in several paintings. In Luna's canvas "The Death of

Cleopatra," Rizal posed as an Egyptian priest. In another of Luna's great paintings, "The Blood Compact," he posed as Sikatuna, with Trinidad Pardo de Tavera taking the role of Legazpi.

**Rizal as Musician.** Music played an important part in all Filipino reunions in Barcelona, Madrid, Paris and other cities of Europe. The Filipino contemporaries of Rizal could either play an instrument or sing. Especially, in the home of the Pardo de Taveras and in the Luna studio,

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every reunion was enlivened with the playing or singing of the kundimans and other Philippine melodies.

Rizal had no natural aptitude for music, and this he admitted. But he studied music because many of his schoolmates at the Ateneo were taking music lessons. In a letter dated November 27, 1878, he told Enrique Lete that he "learned the solfeggio, the piano, and voice culture in one month and a half". However, he confessed that he could not sing well. "If you could hear me sing," he wrote to Lete, "you would wish you were in Spain because my voice is like the braying of the asses".

By sheer determination and constant practice, Rizal came to play the flute fairly well. He was a flutist in various impromptu reunions of Filipinos in Paris. It is said that he even composed some songs, particularly *Alin Mang Lahi* (Any Race), a patriotic song which asserts that any race aspires for freedom, and a sad danza, *La Deportacion* (Deportation), which he composed in Dapitan during his exile.

**In Historic heilderberg.** After acquiring enough experience as an ophthalmologist in Dr. Weckert's clinic, Rizal reluctantly left gay Paris on February 1, 1886 for Germany. He visited Strasbourg (capital of Alsace Lorraine) and other German border towns.

On February 3, 1886, he arrived in Heilderberg, a historic city in Germany famous for its old university and romantic surroundings. For a short time he lived in a boarding house with some German law students. These students found out that Rizal was a good chess player so that they made him a member of the Chess Player's Club. He became popular among the German students because he joined them in their chess games and beer-drinking, and watched their friendly saber duels.

After a few days, Rizal transferred to a boarding house which was near the University of Heilderberg. He worked at the University Eye Hospital under the direction of Dr. Otto Becker, distinguished German ophthalmologist, and attended the lectures of Doctor Becker and Prof. Wilhelm Kuehne at the university.

During week-ends, Rizal visited the scenic spots around Heidelberg, including the Heidelberg Castle, the romantic Neckar River, the theater, and the old churches. He noticed that the German Catholics and Protestants practiced ecumenism, for they lived together in harmony and cordiality. One of the town churches was used "one-half by the Catholics and the other half by the Protestant."

**“To the Flowers of Heidelberg.”** In the spring of 1886, Rizal was fascinated by the blooming flowers along the cool banks of the Neckar River. Among them was his favorite flower –the light blue “forget-me-not”.

The beautiful spring flowers reminded him of the blooming flowers at the garden of his home in Calamba. In his mood of homesickness, he wrote on April 22, 1886, a fine poem “*A Las Flores de Heidelberg*” (To the Flowers of Heidelberg), as follows:

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Go to my native land, go, foreign flowers.  
Sown by the traveler on his way.  
And there, beneath its azure sky.  
Where all my affection lie;  
There from the weary pilgrim say,  
What faith is his in that land of ours!

Go there and tell how when the dawn,  
Her early light diffusing.  
Your petals first flung open wide;  
His steps beside chill Neckar drawn,  
You see him silent by your side,  
Upon its Spring perennial musing,

Saw how when morning’s light,  
All your fragrance stealing,  
Whisper to you as in mirth,  
Playful songs of Love’s delight,  
He, too, murmurs his love’s feeling  
In the tongue he learned at birth.

That when the sun of Keenigstuhl’s height  
Pours out its golden flood,  
And with its slowly warming light  
Gives life to vale and grove and wood,  
He greets the sun, here only upraising,  
Which in his native land is at its zenith blazing.

And tell there of that day he stood,  
Near to a ruin’d castle gray  
By Neckar’s banks, or shady wood,  
And pluck’d you from beside the way  
Tell, too, the tale to you addressed,  
And how with tender care,  
Your bending leaves he press’d  
‘Twixt pages of some volume rare.

Bear then, o flowers, love’s message bear;

My love to all the lov'd ones there,  
Peace to my country –fruitful land –  
Faith whereon its son may stand,  
And virtue for its daughters' care;  
All those beloved creatures greet,  
That still around home's altar meet.

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And when you come unto its shore,  
This kiss I now on you bestow,  
Fling where the winged breezes blow;  
That borne on them it may hover o'er  
All that I love, esteem, and adore.

But though, O flowers, you come unto that land,  
And still perchance your colors hold;  
So far from this heroic strand,  
Whose soil first bade your life unfold  
Still here your fragrance will expand;  
Your soul that never quits the earth  
Whose light smiled on you at your birth.

**With Pastor Ullmer at Wilhelmsfeld.** After writing "To the Flowers of Heidelberg," Rizal spent a three-month summer vacation at Wilhelmsfeld, a mountainous village near Heidelberg. He stayed at the vicarage of a kind Protestant pastor Dr. Karl Ullmer, who became his good friend and admirer. His pleasant personality and talents in languages and sketching endeared him to the pastor's wife, who was a good cook, and two children, Etta (daughter) and Fritz (son).

So delightful was his stay at Pastor Ullmer's home that Rizal felt the pangs of sadness when he ended his sojourn on June 25, 1886. He returned to Heidelberg, carrying with him beautiful memories of the Ullmer expressing his gratitude, as follows: "I thank you very much once more. You may also receive, when you are abroad, the same treatment and friendship as I have found among you; and if being a foreigner, I can do nothing for you in a foreign country, I can be of some service to you in my homeland, where you always find a good friend, if I do not die, of course. The joy of being understood by other people is so great that one cannot easily forget it. You understood me too, in spite of my brown skin which to many people is yellow, as if that were puzzling or absurd."

Later, on May 29, 1887, Rizal wrote from Munich (Muchen) to Friedrich (Fritz), son of Pastor Ullmer: "Tell the good Frau Pastor, your dear Mama, that when I reach home, I shall write to her. I shall never forget how good she, as well as your Papa, had been to me when I was an unknown stranger, without friends and recommendations. . . I shall never forget Wilhelmsfeld with its hospitable parish house."

**First Letter to Blumentritt.** On July 31, 1886 Rizal wrote his first letter in German (which he had improved after his stay with Ullmers) to Professor Ferdinand Blumentritt, Director of the Ateneo de Leimeritz, Austria. He had heard of this Austrian ethnologist and his interest in Philippine languages. In his letter, Rizal said:

I have heard that you are studying our language, and that you had already published some work about it; permit me to send you a valuable book written by my countrymen in our language. The Spanish version is mediocre because the author is only a modest writer but the tagalong part is good, and it is precisely the language spoken in our province.

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With the letter, Rizal sent the book which he mentioned. That book was entitled *Aritmetica* (Arithmetic) and was published in two languages –Spanish and Tagalog –by the University of Santo Tomas Press in 1868. The author was Rufino Baltazar Hernandez, a native of Santa Cruz, Laguna.

Rizal's letter from Heidelberg impressed Blumentritt, who reciprocated by sending Rizal a gift of two books. It marked the beginning of their long and frequent correspondence, also of their friendship that lasted all their lives. Blumentritt, the Austrian, became the best friend of Rizal, the Filipino.

**Fifth Centenary of Heidelberg University.** Rizal was fortunate to be sojourning in Heidelberg when the famous University of Heidelberg held its fifth centenary celebration on August 6, 1886. It was three days before his departure, and he was sad because he had come to love the beautiful city and its hospitable people.

The following entry on his diary dated August 6, 1886 describes the celebration of the fifth centenary of the famous University of Heidelberg:

For its fifth centenary the famous University of Heidelberg celebrated its *Festung* this morning, and we attended. I liked the picture better than the original itself. There were, however, many elegant and brilliant costumes; Bugmuller, the famous student of Heidelberg, was dressed as Frederick the Victorious; Lieberman, as a gentleman of the seventeenth century; Gregoire, wolf of schwaben, etc. Last night was *Schlorsfest*. When will these gaieties enjoyed in this poetic and beautiful city come back? When will the foreigners return there? When I shall return after I shall have left? Inquire the fate of the molecules of water that the sun evaporates. Some fall as dew on the bosoms of the flowers; others are converted into ice and snow; others into mud or swamp or torrential cascade –they are not lost but continue to live in nature. Will my soul have fate of water –never being lost into nothingness?

**In Leipzig and Dresden.** On August 9, 1886, three days after the fifth centenary celebration of the University of Heidelberg, Rizal left the city. He boarded a train, visited various city of Germany, and arrived in Leipzig on August 14, 1886. He attended some lectures at the University of Leipzig on history and psychology. He befriended Professor Friedrich Ratzel, famous German historian, and Dr. Hans Meyer, German anthropologist.

In Leipzig, Rizal translated Schiller's *William Tell* from German into Tagalog so that the Filipinos might know the story of that champion of Swiss independence. Later, he also translated into Tagalog for his nephews and nieces Hans Christian Andersen's *Fairy Tales*.

Rizal found out that the cost living in Leipzig was cheapest in Europe so that he stayed in two months and a half in this German city. He corrected some chapters of his second novel and performed his daily physical exercise at the city gymnasium. Because of his knowledge of German, Spanish and other European languages he worked as a proof-reader in a publisher's firm, thereby earning some money.

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On October 29, he left Leipzig for Dresden, where he met Dr. Adolph B. Meyer, Director of the Anthropological and Ethnological Museum. He stayed two days in the city. He heard Mass in a Catholic church. Evidently, this Mass impressed him very much, for he wrote in his diary: "Truly I have never in my life heard as a Mass whose music had greater sublimity and intonation."

In the morning of November 1, Rizal left Dresden by train, reaching Berlin in the evening.

**Rizal Welcomed in Berlin's Scientific Circles.** Rizal was enchanted by Berlin because of its scientific atmosphere and the absence of race prejudice. In this city, he came in contact with great scientist. He met for the first time Dr. Feodor Jagor, celebrated German scientist-traveler and author of *Travels in the Philippines*, a book which Rizal read and admired during his student days in Manila. Dr. Jagor visited the Philippines in 1859-60, when Rizal was a boy. In this book (published in Berlin in 1873), he foretold the downfall of Spanish rule in the Philippines and the coming of America to Philippine shores. Rizal had a letter of introduction by Blumentritt for him.

Dr. Jago, in turn, introduced Rizal to Dr. Rudolf Virchow, famous German anthropologist, and the latter's son, Dr. Hans Virchow, professor of Descriptive Anatomy. Rizal also met Dr. W. Joest, noted German geographer. He worked in the clinic of Dr. Karl Ernest Schwiegger, (1830-1905) famous German ophthalmologist.

Rizal became a member of the Anthropological Society, the Ethnological Society, and the Geographical Society of Berlin, upon recommendation of Dr. Jagor and Dr. Meyer. His membership in these scientific societies proved that his scientific knowledge was recognized by Europe's scientists. He was the first Asian to be accorded such honors.

Dr. Virchow, who recognized Rizal's genius, invited the latter to give a lecture before the Ethnographic Society of Berlin. In response to Virchow's invitation, Rizal wrote a scholarly paper in German, entitled *Tagalische Verkunst* (Tagalog Metrical Art) which he read before the society in April 1887. This paper was published by the society in the same year, and it elicited favorable comments from all scientific quarters.

**Rizal's Life in Berlin.** In Berlin, Rizal was not a mere student or a curious tourist. He lived in this famous capital of unified Germany for five reasons: (1) to gain further knowledge of

ophthalmology, (2) to further his studies of sciences and languages (3) to observe the economic had a political conditions of the German nation, (4) to associate with famous German scientist and scholars, and ?(5) to publish his novel, *Noli Me Tangere*.

Rizal led a methodical and frugal life in Berlin. By day, he worked as an assistant in the clinic of Dr. Schweigger, eminent German ophthalmologist. At night, he attended lectures in the University of Berlin.

At his boarding house, he kept himself in physical trim by daily exercises and practiced speaking German, French, and Italian. He wanted to master French so that he may be able to

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write it as well as in Spanish. He took private lessons under a professor of French, Madame Lucie Cerdole in order to master the idiomatic intricacies of the French language. Aside from perfecting his academic studies, he performed daily exercises in a Berlin gymnasium to develop his body.

He spent his leisure moments touring the countrysides around Berlin, observing keenly the customs, dresses, homes and occupation of the peasants. He made sketches of the things he saw. He also enjoyed of Berlin, sipping beer in the city's inns, and talking with the friendly Berliners.

**Rizal on German Women.** One of his important letters written while he was in Germany was that addressed to his sister, Trinidad, dated March 11, 1886. In this letter, Rizal expressed his high regard and admiration for German womanhood.

The German woman, said Rizal to his sister, is serious, diligent, educated, and friendly. She is not particular about beautiful dresses and expensive jewelry, though she could dress nicely like any other woman in the world.

Rizal regretted that in the Philippines, the women are more interested in how they dress than in how much they know. He praised, however, the delicacy of feeling, the fine manners, devotion, and hospitality of the Filipino women, especially those in the provinces who are not yet sophisticated. If only they can cultivate their intellect by education and by taking more interest in worldly affairs, remarked Rizal, they can command the respect of all men.

Accordingly, Rizal advised his sister, Trinidad: "Now that you are still young you should strive to read, read, and learn. You must not allow yourself to be conquered by indolence because it costs so little to cast it off."

**German Customs.** Aside from the German women, Rizal admired the German customs which he observed well. It must be noted that he was a keen observer of the customs of the peoples in all the countries he visited.

The Christmas customs of the Germans delighted him most. Of this Yuletide custom, he wrote: "On Christmas eve, the people take from the bushes a pine tree, selecting one which must not only be straight, but also must have leaves that do not fall in spring; I mean that dry leaves are not leaves at all in this particular case, but are a kind of small needle. It is adorned with

lanterns, papers, lights, dolls, candies, fruits etc.; and shown at night to the children (who had not seen it being prepared). Around this tree is made the family observance.”

Another interesting German custom observed by Rizal is self-introduction to strangers in a social gathering. In Germany, when a man attends a social function and finds that there is nobody to introduce him to the other guests, he bows his head to the guests, introduces himself and shakes the hands of everyone in the room. According to the German code of etiquette, it is bad manners for a guest to remain aloof, and wait for his host or hostess to make the proper introduction.

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**Rizal's Darkest Winter.** Rizal spent winters in many temperate countries. The winter of 1886 in Berlin was his darkest winter. During this bleak winter, he lived in poverty because no money arrived from Calamba and he was flat broke. The diamond ring which his sister, Saturnina, gave him was in the pawnshop. He could not only one meal a day. And that daily meal consisted of bread and water or some cheap vegetables soup. His clothes were old and threadbare. He washed them himself because he could not afford to pay the laundry.

Out in far-away Calamba, Paciano tried desperately to raise money. He knew his younger brother was in a dire financial situation in Berlin. But the crops had failed due to the ravages of the locusts. The sugar market collapsed. Time was of the essence, but poor Paciano was delayed in raising the necessary funds.

Meanwhile, Rizal starved in Berlin and shivered with wintry cold. His health broke down due to lack of proper nourishment. He began to cough, and he feared that he was going to be sick with tuberculosis. Never had he suffered such physical blows of penury, so that his soul cried out in despair.

## Chapter 8

# Noli Me Tangere Published in Berlin (1887)

The bleak winter of 1886 was memorable in the life of Rizal for two reasons: first, it was a painful episode for he was hungry, sick, and despondent in a strange city and, second, it brought him great joy, after enduring so much suffering, because his first novel *Noli Me Tangere* came off the press in March, 1887. Like the legendary Santa Claus, Dr. Maximo Viola, his friend from Bulacan, arrived in Berlin at the height of his despondency and loaned him the needed funds to publish the novel.

**Idea of Writing a Novel on the Philippines.** His reading of Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, which portrays the brutalities of America slave-owners and the pathetic conditions of the unfortunate Negro slaves, inspired Dr. Rizal to prepare a novel that would depict the miseries of his people under the lash of Spanish tyrants. He was then a student in the Central University of Madrid.

In reunion of Filipinos in the Paterno residence in Madrid on January 2, 1884, Rizal proposed the writing of a novel about the Philippines by a group of Filipinos. His proposal was unanimously approved by those present, among whom were the Paternos (Pedro, Maximo, and Antonio), Graciano Lopez Jaena, Evaristo Aguirre, Eduardo de Lete, Julio Llorente, Melecio Figueroa, and Valentin Ventura.

Unfortunately, Rizal's project did not materialize. Those compatriots who were expected to collaborate on the novel did not write anything. The novel was designed to cover all phases of Philippine life. However, almost everybody wanted to write on women. Rizal was disgusted at such flippancy. He was more disgusted to see that his companions, instead of working seriously on the novel, wasted their time gambling or flirting with Spanish señoritas.

Unfortunately by his friends' indifference, he determined to write the novel –alone.

**The Writine of the Noli.** Toward the end of 1884, Rizal began writing the novel in Madrid and finished about one-half of it.

When he went to Paris, in 1885, after completing his studies in the Central University of Madrid, he continued writing the novel, finishing one-half of the second-half. He finished the last fourth of the novel in Germany. He wrote the last few chapters of the *Noli* in Wilhelmsfeld in April-June, 1886.

In Berlin during the winter days of February 1886. Rizal made the final revisions on the manuscript of the *Noli*. Sick and penniless, he saw no hope of having it published, so that in a momentary fit of desperation, he almost hurled it into the flames. Years later he told his good

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friend and former classmates, Fernando Canon: "I do not believe that the *Noli Me Tangere* would ever be published when I was in Berlin, broken-hearted, weakened, and discouraged from hunger and deprivation. I was on the point of throwing my work into the fire as the accursed and fit only to die.

**Viola, Savior of the Noli.** In the midst of his despondency and misery, Rizal received a telegram from Dr. Maximo Viola who was coming to Berlin. This friend of Rizal was a scion of rich family of San Miguel, Bulacan. When he arrived in Berlin shortly before Christmas Day of 1887, he was shocked to find Rizal living in poverty and deplorably sickly due to lack of proper nourishment.

Upon seeing his talented friend's predicament, Viola, being loaded with ample funds, gladly agreed to finance the printing cost of the *Noli*. He also loaned Rizal some cash money for living expenses. Thus it came to pass that Rizal and Viola happily celebrated the Christmas of 1886 in Berlin with a sumptuous feast.

After the Christmas season, Rizal put the finishing touches on his novel. To save printing expenses, he deleted certain passage in his manuscript, including a whole chapter –"Elias and Salome."

On February 21, 1887, the *Noli* was finally finished and ready for printing. With Viola, the savior of the *Noli* Rizal went to different printing shops in Berlin to survey the cost of printing. After a few days inquiries, they finally found a printing shop –Berliner Buchdruckei-Action-Gessellschaft –which charged the lowest rate, that is, 300 pesos for 2,000 copies of the novel.

**Rizal Suspected as Frenchy Spy.** During the printing of the *Noli*, a rare incident happened to Rizal. One morning the chief of police Berlin paid a sudden visit to Rizal's boarding house and requested to see the latter's passport. Unfortunately, Rizal could not produce a passport, for he had none –in those days it was possible to travel without a passport. The police chief then told him to secure a passport within four days, otherwise he would be deported.

Immediately, Rizal, accompanied by Viola went to the Spanish embassy to seek the help of the Spanish ambassador, the Count of Benomar, who promise to attend to the matter. But the

ambassador failed to keep his promise, for it turned out that he had no power to issue the required passport.

As the expiration of the four-day ultimatum, Rizal presented himself at the office of German police chief, apologizing by his failure to obtain a passport and politely asked the latter why he was to be deported when he had not committed any crime. The police chief informed him that he had received intelligence reports that he (Rizal) had made frequent visits to the villages and little towns in the rural areas, thereby arousing the German government's suspicion that he was a French spy, inasmuch as he entered Germany from Paris, where he resided for some years and was apparently a lover of France, whose language and culture he knew so much. At that time the relations between Germany and France were strained on account of Alsace-Lorraine.

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Rizal, in fluent German language, explained to the police chief he was not a French spy, but was a Filipino physician and scientist, particularly and ethnologist. As an ethnologist, he visited the rural areas of the countries he visited to observe the custom and life-styles of their simple inhabitants. Favorably impressed with Rizal's explanation and fascinated by his mastery of the German language and personal charisma, the police chief was satisfied and allowed him to stay freely in Germany.

**Printing of the *Noli* Finished.** After the incident of his aborted deportation as a suspected French spy, Rizal, with the help of Viola, supervised the printing of the *Noli*. Day by day, they were at the printing shop proof-reading the printed pages.

On March 21, 1887, the *Noli Me Tangere* came off the press. Rizal immediately sent the first copies of the printed novel to his intimate friends, including Blumentritt, Dr. Antonio Ma. Regidor, G. Lopez Jaena, Maraino Ponce, and Felix R. Hidalgo. In his letter to Blumentritt, dated March 21, 1887, he said: "I am sending you a book. It is my first book, though I have already written much before it and received some prizes in literary competitions. It is the first impartial bold book on the life of the Tagalogs. The Filipinos will find it the history of the last ten years. I hope you will notice how different my descriptions are from those of others writers. The government and the friars will probably attack the work, refuting my arguments; but I trust in God of Truth and in the persons who have actually seen the sufferings at close range. I hope I can answer all the concepts which have been fabricated to malign us."

On March 29, 1887, Rizal, in token of his appreciation and gratitude, gave Viola the galley proofs of the *Noli* carefully rolled around the pen that he used in writing it and a complimentary copy, with the following inscription: "to my dear friend, Maximo Viola, the first to read and appreciate my work -Jose Rizal."

**The Title of the Novel.** The title *Noli Me Tangere* is a Latin phrase which means "Touch Me Not." It is not originally conceived by Rizal, for he admitted taking it from Bible.

Rizal, writing to Felix R. Hidalgo in French on March 5, 1887, said: "*Noli Me Tangere*, words taken from the Gospel of Saint Luke, signify "do not touch me." In citing the Biblical source, Rizal made a mistake. It should be the Gospel of St. John (Chapter 20, verses 13 to 17).

According to St. John, on the first Easter Sunday, St. Mary Magdalene visited the Holy Sepulcher, and to her Our Lord, just arisen from the dead, said:

“Touch me not; I am not yet ascended to my father but to go my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God and your God.”

**The Author’s Dedication.** Rizal dedicated his *Noli Me Tanger* to the Philippines –“To My Fatherland.” His dedication runs as follows:

Recorede in the history of human sufferings is a cancer so malignant a character that the least touch irritates it and awakens in it the sharpest pains. Thus, how many times, when in the midst of modern civilizations I have wished to call thee before thee with other countries, hath thy dear image presented itself showing a social cancer like to that other!

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Desiring thy welfare which is our own, and seeking the best treatment, I will do with thee what the ancients did with their sick, exposing them on the steps of the temple so that everyone who came to invoke the Divinity might offer them a remedy.

And to this end, I will strive to reproduce thy condition faithfully, without discriminations; I will raise a part of the veil that covers the evil, sacrificing to truth everything, even vanity itself, since, as thy son I am conscious that I also suffer from thy defects and weaknesses.

**Synopsis of the “Noli.”** The novel *Noli Me Tangere* contains 63 chapters and as epilogue. It begins with a reception given by Capitan Tiago (Santiago de los Santos) at his house in Calle Anloague (now Juan Luna Street) on the last day of October. This reception or dinner was given in honor of Crisostomo Ibarra, a young and rich Filipino who had just returned after seven years of study in Europe. Ibarra was the only son of Don Rafael Ibarra, friend of Capitan Tiago, and a fiancé of beautiful Maria Clara, supposed daughter of Capitan Tiago.

Among the guest during the reception were Padre Damaso, a fat Franciscan friar who had been parish priest for 20 years of San Diego (Calamba), Ibarra’s native town; Padre Sybila, a young Dominican parish priest of Binondo; Senor Guevara, an elderly and kind lieutenant of the Guardia Civil; Don Tiburcio de Espadana, a bogus Spanish physician, lame, and henpecked husband of Dona Victoria; and several ladies.

Ibarra, upon his arrival, produced a favorable impression among the guests, except Padre Damaso, who was rude to him. In accordance with a German custom, he introduced himself to the ladies.

During the dinner the conversation centered on Ibarra’s studies and travels abroad. Padre Damaso was in bad mood because he got a bony neck and a hard wing of the chicken *tinola*. He tried to discredit Ibarra’s remarks.

After dinner, Ibarra left Capitan Tiago’s house to return to his hotel. On the way, the kind Lieutenant Guevara told him the sad story of his father’s death in San Diego. Don Rafael, his father, was a rich and brave man. He defended a helpless boy from the brutality of an illiterate

Spanish tax collector, pushing the latter and accidentally killing him. Don Rafael was buried in consecrated ground, but his enemies, accusing him of being a heretic, had his body removed from the cemetery.

On hearing about his father's sad story, Ibarra thanked the kind Spanish lieutenant and vowed to find out the truth about his father's death.

The following morning, he visited Maria Clara, his childhood sweetheart. Maria Clara teasingly said that he had forgotten her because the girls in Germany were beautiful. Ibarra replied that he had never forgotten her.

After the romantic reunion with Maria Clara, Ibarra went to San Diego to visit his father's grave. It was All Saints Day. At the cemetery, the grave-digger told Ibarra that the

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corpse of Don Rafael was removed by order of the parish priest to be, buried in the Chinese cemetery; but the corpse was heavy and it was a dark rainy night so that he (the grave-digger) simply threw the corpse into the lake.

Ibarra was angered by the grave-digger's story. He left the cemetery. On the way, he met Padre Salvi, Franciscan parish priest of San Diego. In a flash, Ibarra pounced on the priest, demanding redress for desecrating his father's mortal remains. Padre Salvi told him that he had nothing to do with it, for he was not the parish priest at the time of Don's Rafael death. It was Padre Damaso, his predecessor, who was responsible for it. Convinced of Padre Salvi's innocence, Ibarra went away.

In his town, Ibarra met several interesting people such as the wise old man, Tasio the philosopher, whose ideas were advanced for his times so that the people, who could not understand him, called him "Tasio the Lunatic;" the progressive school teacher, who complained to Ibarra that the children were losing interest in their studies because of the lack of a proper school house and the discouraging attitude of the parish friar towards the both teaching of Spanish and of the use of modern methods of pedagogy; the spineless *gobernadorcillo*, who catered to the wishes of the Spanish parish friar; Don Filipo Lino, the teniente-mayor and leader of the liberal faction in the town; Don Melchor, the captain of the *cuadrilleros* (town police); and the former *gobernadorcillos* who were prominent citizens –Don Basilio and Don Valentín.

A most tragic story in the novel is the tale of Sisa, who was formerly a rich girl but became poor because she married a gambler, and a wastrel at that. She became crazy because she lost her two boys, Basilio and Crispin, the joys of her wretched life. These boys were *sacritanes* (sextons) in the church, working for a small wage to support their poor mother. Crispin, the younger of the two brothers, was accused by the brutal *sacristan mayor* (chief sexton) of stealing the money of the priest. He was tortured in the convent and died. Basilio, with his brother's dying cries ringing in his ears, escaped. When the two boys did not return home, Sisa looked for them everywhere and, in her great sorrow, she became insane.

Capitan Tiago, Maria Clara, and Aunt Isabel (Capitan Tiago's cousin who took care of Maria Clara, after her mother's death) arrived in San Diego. Ibarra and his friends gave a picnic in a lake. Among those present in this picnic, were Maria Clara and her four girl friends –“the

Merry Sinang, the grave Victoria, the beautiful Iday, and the thoughtful Neneng;" Aunt Isabel, chaperon of Maria Clara; albino, the ex-theological student who was love by Sinang; and Ibarra and his friends. One of the boatmen was a strong and silent peasant youth named Elias.

And incident of the picnic was the saving of Elia's life by Ibarra. Elias bravely grappled with a crocodile which was caught in the fish corral. But the crocodile struggled furiously so that Elias could not subdue it. Ibarra jumped into the water and killed the crocodile, thereby saving Elias.

Another incident, which preceded the above-mentioned near-tragic crocodile incident, was the rendering of a beautiful song by Maria Clara who had a sweet voice. Upon the insistent request of her friends, she played the harp and sang:

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THE SONG OF MARIA CLARA

'Sweet are the hours in one's native land,  
Where all is dear the sunbeams bless;  
Life-giving breezes sweep the strand,  
And death is soften'd by love carress

"Warm kisses play on mother's lips,  
On her fond, tender breast awakening;  
When round her neck the soft arm slips,  
And bright eyes smile, all love partaking.

"Sweet is death for one's native land,  
Where all is dear the sunbeams bless;  
Death is a breeze that sweeps the strand,  
Without a mother, home, or love caress."

After Maria Clara's song and the crocodile incident, they went ashore. They made merry in the cool, wooded meadow. Padre Salvi, *Capitan Basilio* (former gobernadorcillo and Sinang's father), the *Alferez* (lieutenant of guardia Civil) and the town official were present. The luncheon was served, and everybody enjoyed eating.

The meal over, Ibarra and *Captain Basilio* played chess, while Maria Clara and her friends played the "Wheel of Chance," a game based on a fortune-telling book. As the girls were enjoying the fortune-telling game, Padre Salvi came and tore to pieces the book, saying that it was a sin to play such a game. Shortly thereafter, a sergeant and four soldiers of the Guardia Civil suddenly arrived, looking for Elias, who was hunted for (1) assaulting Padre Damaso and (2) throwing the Alferez into a mudhole. Fortunately Elias had disappeared, and the Guardia Civil went away empty-handed. During the picnic also, Ibarra received a telegram from the Spanish authorities notifying him of the approval of his donation of a schoolhouse for the children of San Diego.

The next day Ibarra visited old Tasio to consult him on his pet project about the schoolhouse. He saw the old man's writings were written in hieroglyphics. Tasio explained to him that he wrote in hieroglyphics because he was writing for the future generations who would understand them and say, "Not all were asleep in the night of our ancestors!"

Tasio was pessimistic about the project of Ibarra to build a schoolhouse at his own expense. However, the construction of the schoolhouse continued under the supervision of the architect called Nor Juan.

Meanwhile San Diego was merrily preparing for its annual fiesta, in honor of its patron saint San Diego de Alcala, whose feast day is the 11<sup>th</sup> of November. On the eve of the fiesta, hundreds of visitors arrived from the nearby towns, and there were laughter, music, exploding bombs, feasting and *moro-moro*. The music was furnished by five brass band (including the famous Pagsanjan Band owned by the *escribano* Miguel Guevara) and three orchestras.

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In the morning of the fiesta there was a high Mass in the church, officiated by Padre Salvi. Padre Damaso gave the long sermon, in which he expatiated on the evils of the times that were caused by certain men, who having tasted some education, spread pernicious ideas among the people.

After Padre Damaso's sermon, the Mass was continued by Padre Salvi. Elias quietly moved to Ibarra, who was kneeling and praying Maria Clara's side, and warned him to be careful during the ceremony of the laying of the corner stone of the schoolhouse because there was a plot to kill him.

Elias suspected that the yellowish man, who built the derrick, was a paid stooge of Ibarra's enemies. True to his suspicion, later in the day, when Ibarra, in the presence of a big crowd, went down into the trench cement the cornerstone, the derrick collapsed. Elias, quick as a flash, pushed him aside, thereby saving his life. The yellowish man was the one crushed to death by the shattered derrick.

At the sumptuous dinner that night under the decorated kiosk, a sad incident occurred. The arrogant Padre Damaso, speaking in the presence of many guests, insulted the memory of Ibarra's father. Ibarra jumped from his seat, knocked down the fat friar with his fist, and then seized a sharp knife. He would have killed the friar, were it not for the timely intervention of Maria Clara.

Ibarra's attack on Padre Damaso produced two results (1) his engagement to Maria Clara was broken and (2) he was excommunicated. Fortunately, the liberal-minded governor general visited the town and befriended Ibarra. He told the young man not to worry. He persuaded *Capitan Tiago* to accept Ibarra as son-in-law and promised to see the Archbishop of Manila to lift the ban of excommunication.

The fiesta over, Maria Clara became ill. She was treated by the quack Spanish physician, Tiburcio de Espanada, whose wife, a vain and vulgar native woman, was a frequent visitor in *Capitan Tiago*'s house. This woman has hallucinations of being a superior Castillan, and, although a native herself, she looked down on her own people as inferior being. She added

another “de” to her husband’s surname in order to be more Spanish. Thus she wanted to be called “Doctora Dona Victorina de los Reyes de De Espanada.” She introduced to *Capitan Tigo* a young Spaniard, Don Alfonso Linares de Espanada, cousin of Don Tiburcio de Espananda and godson of Pafre Damaso’s brother-in-law. Linares was a penniless and jobless, fortune hunter who came to the Philippines in search of a rich Filipino heiress, both Dona Victorina and Padre Damaso his wooing of Maria Clara, but the latter did not respond because she loved Ibarra.

A touch of comedy in the novel was a fight between two ludicrous señoritas –Dona Consolacion, the vulgar mistress of the Spanish alferez, and Dona Victorina, the flamboyantly dressed wife of a henpecked Spanish quack doctor. Both insulted each other in gutter language, and, not satisfied with their verbal warfare, they squared off to come to blows. The timely arrival of Padre Salvi stopped the fight, much to the regret of the curious onlookers.

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The story of Elias, like that of Sisa, was a tale of pathos and tragedy. He related it to Ibarra. Some 60 years ago, his grandfather, who was then a young bookkeeper in a Spanish commercial firm in Manila, was wrongly accused of burning the firm’s warehouse. He was flogged in public and was left in the street, crippled and almost dead. His wife, who was pregnant, begged for alms and became prostitute in order to support her sick husband and their son. After giving birth to her second son and the death of her husband, she fled, with her two sons, to the mountains.

Years later the first boy became a dreaded tulisan named Balat. He terrorized the provinces. One day he was caught by the authorities. His head was cut off and was hung a tree branch in the forest. On seeing this gory object, the poor mother (Elias’ grandmother) died.

Balat’s younger brother, who was by nature kindhearted, fled and became a trusted laborer in the house of a rich man in Tayabas. He fell in love with the master’s daughter. The girl’s father, enraged by the romance, investigated his past and found out the truth. The unfortunate lover (Elias’ father) was sent to jail, while the girl gave birth twins, a boy (Elias) and a girl. Their rich grandfather (father of their mother) took care of them, keeping secret their scandalous origin, and reared them as rich children. Elias was educated in the Jesuit College in Manila, while his sister studied in La Concordia College. They lived happily until one day, owing to certain dispute over money matters; a distant relative exposed their shameful birth. They were disgraced. An old male servant, whom they used to abuse, was forced to testify in court and the truth came out that he was their real father.

Elias and his sister left Tayabas to hide their shame in another place. One day the sister disappeared. Elias roamed from place to place, looking for her. He heard later that a girl answering to his sister’s description was found dead on the beach of San Diego. Since then, Elias lived a vagabond life, wandering from province –until he met Ibarra.

Ibarra’s enemies left no stone unturned to bring about his ruin. They engineered an attack on the barracks of the Guardia Civil, at the same time warning the *alferez* to alert his men that night. They deceived the attackers by telling them that the mastermind was Ibarra. So that when the attack failed and the surviving were caught. Ibarra was blamed for the catastrophe.

Elias, learning of Ibarra's arrest, burned all the papers that might incriminate his friend and set Ibarra's house on fire. Then he went to prison and helped Ibarra escape. He and Ibarra jumped into a banca loaded with *sacate* (grass). Ibarra stooped at the house of *Capitan* Tiago to say goodbye to Maria Clara. In the tearful last scene between the two lovers, Ibarra forgave Maria Clara for giving up his letters to her to the Spanish authorities who utilized them as evidence against him. On her part, Maria Clara revealed that those letters were exchanged with a letter from her late mother, Pia Alba, which Padre Salvi gave her. From this letter, she learned that her real father was Padre Damaso.

After bidding Maria Clara farewell, Ibarra returned to the banca. He and Elias paddled up the Pasig River toward Laguna de Bay. A police boat, with the Guardia Civil on board, pursued them as their banca reached the lake. Elias told Ibarra to hide under the *zacate*. As the police boat was overtaking the banca, Elias jumped into the water and swam swiftly toward the shore. In this

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way, he diverted the attention of the soldiers on his person, thereby giving Ibarra a chance to escape.

The soldiers fired at the swimming Elias, who was hit and sank. The water turned red because of his blood. The soldiers, thinking that they had killed the feeling Ibarra returned to Manila. Thus Ibarra was able to escape.

Elias, seriously wounded, reached the shore and staggered into the forest. He met a boy, Basilio, who was weeping over his mother's dead body. He told Basilio to make a pyre on which their bodies (his and Sisa's) were to be burned to ashes. It was Christmas eve, and the moon gleamed softly in the sky. Basilio prepared the funeral pyre. As life's breath slowly left his body. Elias looked toward the east and murmured: "I die without seeing the dawn brighten over my native land! You, who have it to see, welcome it—and forget no those who have fallen during the night!"

The novel has an epilogue which recounts what happened to the other characters. Maria Clara, out of her loyalty to the memory of Ibarra, the man she truly loved, entered the Santa Clara nunnery. Padre Salvi left the parish of San Diego and became a chaplain of the nunnery. Padre Damaso was transferred to a remote province, but the next morning he was found dead in his bedroom. *Capitan* Tiago, the former genial host and generous patron of the church, became an opium addict and a human wreck. Dona Victorina, still henpecking poor Don Tiburcio, had taken to wearing eye-glasses because of weakening eyesight. Linares, who failed to win Maria Clara's affection, died of dysentery and was buried in Paco cemetery.

The *alferez*, who successfully repulsed the abortive attack on the barracks, was promoted major. He returned to Spain, living behind his shabby mistress, Dona Consolacion.

The novel ends with Maria Clara, an unhappy nun in Santa Clara nunnery—forever lost to the world.

**The "Noli" Based on Truth.** The *Noli Me Tangere*, unlike many works of fictional literature, was a true story of Philippines conditions during the last decades of Spanish rule. The

places, the characters, and the situations really existed. "The facts I narrate there," said Rizal, "are all true and have happened; I can prove them."

The characters —Ibarra, Maria Clara, Elias, Tasio, Capitan Tiago, Padre Damaso, Padre Salvi, etc. —were drawn by Rizal from persons who actually existed during his times. Maria Clara was Leonor Rivera, although in real life she became unfaithful, unlike the heroine of the novel, and married an Englishman. Ibarra and Elias represented Rizal himself. Tasio the philosopher was his elder brother, Paciano. Padre Salvi was identified by Rizalist as Padre Antonio Piernavieja, the hated Augustinian friar in Cavite who was killed by the patriots during the revolution. *Capitan* Tiago was Capitan Hilario Sunico of San Nicolas. Dona Victorina was Dona Agustin Medel. The two brothers Basilio and Crispin were the Crisostomo brothers of Hagonoy. Padre Damaso was typical of a domineering friar during the days of Rizal, who was arrogant, immoral, and anti-Filipino.

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**Missing Chapter of the Noli.** In the original manuscript of *Noli Me Tangere*, there was a chapter entitled "Elias and Salome" which follows Chapter XXIV —"In the Woods". This particular chapter on Elias and Salome was deleted by Rizal so that it was not included in the printed novel. His reason for doing so was definitely economic. By reducing the pages of the manuscript, the cost of printing would correspondingly be reduced. The missing chapter runs as follows:

In a nipa hut by the placid lake, Salome, a winsome girl in her early teens, sat on a bamboo batalan, sewing a camisa of bright colors. She was waiting for Elias to arrive. She was beautiful "like the flowerets that grow wild not attracting attention at first glance but whose beauty is revealed when we examine them carefully". When he heard footsteps, she laid aside her sewing, went to the bamboo stairway where Elias stood carrying a bundle of firewood and a bunch of bananas which he placed on the floor, while he handed a wiggling *dalag* to the girl.

Salome noticed her lover was sad and pensive. She tried to console him; asking about the girls at the picnic which the Guardia Civil soldiers disturbed, looking for him. He told her in a gay mood that there were many beautiful girls, among who was Maria Clara, the sweetheart of a rich young man who had just returned from Europe.

Afterwards, Elias arose, preparing to leave. Speaking in a soft voice, he said: "Good-bye, Salome. The sun is setting, and it won't appear good for the people to know that night overtook me here." He paused for a moment, and then continued: "But you've been crying. Don't deny it with your smile. You've been crying."

She was crying, for soon she would leave this house where she grew up. She explained: "It is not right for me to live alone. I'll go to live with my relatives in Mindoro. Soon I'll be able to pay the debt my mother left me when she died. . . to give up his house in which one was born and had grown up is something more than giving up one's being. A typhoon will come, a freshet, and everything will go to the lake. . ."

Elias remained silent for a moment; then he held her hands, and asked her: "Have you heard anyone speak ill of you? Have I sometimes worried you? Not that either? Then you are tired of my relationship and want to drive me away . . ."

She answered "No, don't talk like that. I am not tired of your friendship. God knows that I am satisfied with my lot. I only desire health that may work. I don't envy the rich, the wealthy, but . . ."

"But what?"

"Nothing. I don't envy them as long as I have your friendship."

"Salome," replied the youth with bitter sorrow. "You know my cruel past and that my misfortune is not of my own making. If not for the fatality that at times keeps me thinking, with bitterness, if it were not that I don't want my children to suffer what my sister and I suffered, you would have been my wife in the eyes of God. But for the sake of this very love, for the sake of

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this future family, I have sworn to end with myself the misfortune that we have been inheriting from father to son, and it is better that it should be so, for neither you nor I would wish to hear our children lament our love, which would only bequeath them misery. You do well to go to the house of your relatives. Forget me; forget a love so mad and futile. Perhaps you'll meet there one who is not like me."

"Elias," exclaimed the girl reproachfully.

"You have misunderstood me. In my words, there is no complaint against you. Take my advice; go home to your relatives. . . Here you have no one but me, and the day when I fall into the hands of my pursuers, you will be left alone for the rest of your life. Improve your youth and beauty to get a good husband, such as you deserve, for you don't know what it is to live among men."

"I was thinking that you might go with me," Salome said softly.

"Alas," rejoined Elias shaking his head. "Impossible, and more so than ever. . . I haven't yet found what I came here to seek –it's impossible. Today, I forfeited my liberty."

Elias then narrated what happened earlier at the picnic that morning; how he was saved by Ibarra from the jaws of a crocodile. To show his gratitude, he vowed to repay the good deed done by Ibarra, even to the extent of sacrificing his life. He explained that anywhere he would go, even to Mindoro, the past would still be discovered, sooner or later.

"Well then," Salome said, looking at him tenderly: "At least when I'm gone, live here, stay in the house. It will make you remember me; and I will not think in that distant land that the hurricane had carried my nut to the lake. When my thoughts turn to these shores, the memory of you and of my house will appear to me together. Sleep was I have slept and dream –it will be as though I were beside you."

"Oh," exclaimed Elias, waving his hand in desperation, "Woman, you'll make me forget."

After disengaging himself from her tender embrace, he left with a heavy heart, following the lonely path lined with the shadows of somber trees in the twilight. She followed him with her gaze, listening sadly to the fading footsteps in the gathering darkness.

**Rizal's Friend Praise the Noli.** The friends of Rizal hailed the novel, praising it in glowing colors. As to be expected, Rizal's enemies condemned it. Rizal anticipated the vitriolic attacks of his enemies, who were sore to be told the truth of their evil ways. As he told Blumentritt: "The government and the friars will probably attack the work, refuting my statements, but I trust in the God of truth and in the persons who have actually seen our sufferings.

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Of the numerous congratulatory letters received by Rizal from his friend about the *Noli*, that from Blumentritt was significant. "First of all," wrote Blumentritt, "accept my cordial congratulations for your beautiful novel about customs which interests me extraordinarily. Your work, as we Germans say, has been written in the blood of the heart, and so the heart also speaks. I continue reading it with much interest, and I shall beg to ask you now and then for an explanation when I find words unknown to me; for instance, the word *filibuster* must have certain meaning in the Philippines that I do not find in the Spanish of the Peninsulars nor in that of the Spanish peoples of America.

"I knew already," continued Blumentritt. "that you were a man of extraordinary talent (I had said it to Pardo de Tavera, and this also be seen from the marvelous short time in which you have acquired my difficult and rough mother tongue); but in spite of this, your work has exceeded my hopes and I consider myself happy to have been honored with your friendship. Not only I but also your people can also be called lucky for having in you a son and a loyal patriot. If you will continue thus, you can become one of those great men who will exert a definite influence on the spiritual development of your people."

In London, Dr. Antonio Ma. Regidor, Filipino patriot and lawyer who had been exiled due to his complicity in the Cavite Mutiny of 1872, read avidly the *Noli* and was very much impressed by its author. On May 3, 1887, he felicitated Rizal, saying: "If the Quixote immortalizes its author because it exposes to the world the ailments of Spain, your *Noli Me Tangere* will bring you an equal glory. With your majesty and your veracious idea and in every word a fitting advice, he will be inspired and he will regard your book as the masterpiece of a Filipino and the proof that those who thought us incapable of producing great intellects are mistaken or lying".

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## Chapter 9

# Rizal's Grand Tour of Europe with Viola (1887)

After the publication of the *Noli*, Rizal planned to visit the important places in Europe. Dr. Maximo Viola agreed to be his traveling companion. Rizal had received Paciano's remittance of P1,000 which was forwarded by Juan Luna from Paris. He immediately paid Viola the sum of P300 which the latter kindly loaned so that the *Noli* could be printed. Having paid his debt, and with adequate funds in his pocket, he was ready to see Europe before returning to Calamba. First, he and Viola visited Potsdam, a city near Berlin, which Frederick the great made famous.

**The Tour Begins.** At dawn of May 11, 1887, Rizal and Viola, two browned-skinned doctors on a roaming spree, left Berlin by train. It was an ideal season for travel. Spring was in the air, and all over Europe the flowers were blooming, the meadows were turning green, the villages were humming with activity. According to Viola, the luggage of Rizal included all the letters he had received from his (Rizal's) family and friends. Their destination was Dresden, "one of the best cities in Germany".

**Dresden.** Rizal and Viola tarried for some time in Dresden. Their visit coincided with the regional floral exposition. Rizal, who was interested in botany, studied the "numerous plant varieties of extraordinary beauty and size". They visited Dr. Adolph B. Meyer, who was overjoyed to see them. In the Museum of Art, which they also visited, Rizal was deeply impressed by a painting of "Prometheus Bound" and recalled seeing a representation of the same idea in an art gallery in Paris.

While strolling at the scene of the Floral Exposition, they met Dr. Jagor. Upon hearing of their plan to visit Leitmeritz (now Litomerice, Czechoslovakia) in order to see Blumentritt for the first time, Dr. Jagor advised them to wire Blumentritt of their coming because the old professor was of a nervous disposition and he might suffer a shock at their student visit.

Teschen (now Decin, Czechoslovakia) was their next stopover after leaving Dresden. Rizal and Viola sent a wire to Blumentritt, as per suggestion of Dr. Jagor.

**First Meeting with Blumentritt.** At 1:30 p.m. of May 13, 1887, the train, with Rizal and Viola on board, arrived at the railroad station of Leitmeritz, Bohemia. Professor Blumentritt, who had received their wire, was at the station. He was carrying a sketch of Rizal which the letter had previously sent him, so that he could identify his Filipino friend. He warmly received Rizal and Viola.

For the first time, the two great scholars –Rizal and Blumentritt –who came to know each other by correspondence, met in person. They greeted each other in fluent German.

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Blumentritt was a kind-hearted, old Austrian professor. Upon seeing the talented Rizal for the first time, he immediately took him into heart, loving him as a son.

Professor Blumentritt, the genial host, helped Rizal and Viola get a room at Hotel Krebs, after he brought them to his home and introduced them to his wife and family. The two Filipino tourists spent many pleasant hours at the home of their kind host. They stayed in Leitmeritz from May 13 to May 16, 1887.

**Beautiful Memories of Leitmeritz.** Rizal had beautiful memories of his visit to Leitmeritz. He enjoyed the warm hospitality of the Blumentritt family. The professor's wife Rosa, was a good cook, and she prepared Austrian dishes which Rizal liked very much. His children were Dolores (called Dora or Dorita by Rizal), Conrad and Fritz.

Blumentritt proved to be a great tourist guide as well as a hospitable host. He showed the scenic and historical spots of Leitmeritz to his visitors. One afternoon he invited them to a beer garden where the best beer of Bohemia was served. At a near table there was a lively discussion among the drinkers about the advisability of having the railroad pass through a neighboring town. One of the men in the group was the burgomaster (town mayor) of that town; Blumentritt knew the burgomaster, so that he approached the party and delightfully introduced his two Filipino friends. Rizal talked in fluent German, for which reason the burgomaster and his friends were amazed. The burgomaster asked Rizal how long it took him to learn German. And Rizal replied: "Eleven months, sir". The burgomaster was further amazed, and in great admiration, he lauded the "privileged talent" of Rizal. Blumentritt embraced Rizal, telling him that few Germans could speak well their own language as Rizal could.

On other afternoon Rizal and Viola were invited to a meeting of the Tourists' Club of Leitmeritz, of which Blumentritt was a secretary. Rizal spoke extemporaneously in fluent German to the officers and members, praising Austria's idyllic scenes and its hospitable, nature-loving, and noble people. The audience wildly applauded him, for they were enchanted by his eloquence and fluency in German.

Rizal, desiring to commemorate his happy hours at the Blumentritt home, painted a portrait of the kind professor and gave it to him. Blumentritt was pleased with the gift.

It was during his visit to Leitmeritz when Rizal met another renowned scientist of Europe, Dr. Carlos Czepelak. Blumentritt brought him to Czepelak's home, and Rizal had a nice conversation with this Polish scholar. Blumentritt also introduced Rizal to Professor Robert Klutschak, an eminent naturalist.

On their last night in Leitmeritz, Rizal and Viola, to reciprocate Blumentritt's hospitality, tendered a banquet –a farewell dinner –in his honor at their hotel.

On May 16, at 9:45 A.M., Rizal and Viola left Leitmeritz by train. Blumentritt, his wife, and children were at the railroad station to see them off, and they all shed tears in parting as the train slowly departed.

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Rizal carried unto his grave the beautiful memories of his visit to Leitmeritz. In a letter to Blumentritt, written in Vienna on May 24, 1887, Rizal expressed his and Viola's concern for the illness of Dora, the professor's little daughter, "Viola and I," thus wrote Rizal, "are very sad because our little friend Dora is sick. We still remember her little blue eyes; we hear her merry laughter and we see her little teeth. Poor Dorita! I saw her run after us when the train was leaving! With all my heart I wish her prompt recovery".

In another letter, written in Brunn, Austria, on May 19, 1887, three days after leaving Leitmeritz, Rizal wrote to Blumentritt: "I shall make my good friends of Leitmeritz the objects of my thoughts and I shall say of myself: You are not alone, Rizal; in a small corner of Bohemia there are good, noble, and friendly souls who like you; think of them; consider them as if they were with you, as if they saw you; they will rejoice over your joys, and will weep over your suffering . . . Please kiss the children for me, express my greetings to your wife, and to your good father and the friends in Leitmeritz. I am at heart an inhabitant of Leitmeritz just as you yourself are a Filipino in sentiments. I believe Austria will always live in my heart". In the same letter, Rizal told Blumentritt that he forgot his diamond stickpin at his room in Hotel Krebs.

**Prague.** After Leitmeritz, Rizal and Viola visited the historic city in Prague. They carried letters of recommendation from Blumentritt to Dr. Wilkomm, professor of natural history in the University of Prague. The good professor and his charming wife and daughters welcomed them and showed them the city's historic spots.

Rizal and Viola visited the tomb of Copernicus, the famous astronomer; the museum of natural history; the bacteriological laboratories; the famous cave where San Juan Nepomuceno, the Catholic saint, was imprisoned; and the bridge from which this saint was hurled into the river.

After saying good-bye to professor Wilkomm and his family, the two tourists went to Brunn. According to Viola, "nothing to importance happened" in this city.

**Vienna.** On May 20, Rizal and Viola arrived in the beautiful city of Vienna, capital of Austria-Hungary. Famous in song and story, this city fascinated Rizal because of its beautiful buildings, religious images, haunting waltzes, and majestic charm. Vienna was truly the “Queen of the Danube”.

Rizal and Viola, armed with a letter of recommendation from Blumentritt, met Norfenzals, one of the greatest novelist in Europe during that time. This great Austrian novelist was favorably by Rizal, and years later he spoke highly of Rizal, “whose genius he so much admired”.

In Vienna, Rizal received his lost diamond stickpin. It was found by a made in Hotel Krebs and was given to Blumentritt, who, in turn, forwarded it to Rizal in Vienna.

Rizal and Viola stayed at Hotel Metropole. They visited the city’s interesting places, such as churches, museums, art galleries, theaters, and public parks. They met two good friends of Blumentritt –Masner and Nordmann, Austrian scholars.

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**Danubian Voyage to Lintz.** On May 24, Rizal and Viola left Vienna on a river boat to see the beautiful sights of the Danube River. As they traveled along the famous river, Rizal observed keenly the river sights –the barges loaded with products, the flowers and plants growing along the river banks, the boats with families living on them, and the quaint villages on the riversides. We particularly noticed that the passengers on the river boat were using paper napkins during the meals, which was a novelty to him. His fellow passenger, Viola, commented that the paper napkins were “more hygienic and economical than cloth napkins”.

**From Lintz to Rheinfall.** The river voyage ended in Lintz. They traveled overland to Salzburg, and from there to Munich where they sojourned for a short time savor the famous Munich beer, reputed to be the best in Germany.

From Munich, they went to Nuremberg, one of the oldest cities in Germany. Among the sights which they saw in this city were the horrible torture machines used by the Inquisition. Rizal examined carefully these torture machines. He and Viola were impressed by the manufacture of dolls which was the biggest industry of the city.

After Munich, they visited Ulm. The cathedral of this city was “the largest and tallest in all Germany”. Viola related that he and Rizal climbed its many hundred steps. He rested twice on the way to the tower and felt dizzy from the strain upon reaching the top. Rizal, on the other hand, ascended without resting and was not tired when he reached the top.

From Ulm, they went to Stuttgart, Baden, and the Rheinfall (Cascade of the Rhine). At Rheinfall, they saw the waterfall, “the most beautiful waterfall of Europe”.

**Crossing the Frontier to Switzerland.** From Rheinfall, they crossed the frontier to Schaffhausen, Switzerland. They stayed in this city from June 2 to 3, 1887. They continued their tour to Basel (Bale), Bern, and Laussane.

**Geneva.** After sightseeing in Laussane, Rizal and Viola left on a little boat, crossing the foggy Leman Lake to Geneva. This Swiss city is the one of the most beautiful cities in Europe, visited by world tourists every year. The people of Geneva were linguists, speaking French, German, and Italian. Rizal conversed with them in these three languages.

Aside from visiting the tourist spots, Rizal and Viola went boating on the lake. In this aquatic excursion, Rizal showed his rowing prowess which he acquired during his boyhood days in Calamba.

On June 19, 1887, Rizal treated Viola to a blow-out. It was his 26<sup>th</sup> birthday. According to a Filipino custom, he celebrated his birthday with a sumptuous meal.

Rizal and Viola spent fifteen delightful days in Geneva. On June 23, they parted ways – Viola returned to Barcelona while Rizal continued the tour to Italy.

**Rizal Resents Exhibition of Igorots in 1887 Madrid Exposition.** While Rizal, accompanied by Dr. Viola, was happily touring Europe, an Exposition of the Philippines was

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held in Madrid, Spain. Upon reaching Geneva (Switzerland), he received sad news from his friends in Madrid of the deplorable conditions of the primitive Igorots who were exhibited in this exposition, some of whom died, and whose scanty clothing (G-strings) and crude weapons were objects of mockery and laughter by the Spanish people and press.

Being a champion of human dignity, Rizal was outraged by this degradation of his fellow countrymen the Igorots of Northern Luzon. In a letter to his friend, Blumentritt, dated Geneva, June 6, 1887, he said:

‘My poor compatriots (Igorots –Z.) who are now being exhibited in Madrid are mocked by Spanish newspapers, except *El Liberal* which says that it is not consistent with human dignity to be exhibited side by side with animals and plants. I have done everything possible to prevent the display of this degradation of men of my race, but I have not succeeded. Now one woman died of pneumonia. The Igorots were housed in a *barraca* (rustic house made of bamboo, grass, and tree branches –Z.). and *El Resumen* still makes means jokes about it!’

In other letter to Blumentritt, dated Geneva, June 19, 1887, Rizal said he was in favor of holding an exposition, “but not an exhibition of odd individuals, showing our countrymen as a curiosity to entertain the idle inhabitants of Madrid”. He emphatically reiterated: “We want an industrial exposition, but not an exhibition of human beings who are compelled to live almost outdoors and die of nostalgia and pneumonia or typhus!”

**Rizal in Italy.** From Geneva, Rizal went to Italy. He visited Turin, Milan, Venice, and Florence. On June 27, 1887, he reached Rome, the “Eternal City” and also called the “City of the Caesars”.

He was thrilled by the sights and memories of the Eternal City. Describing to Blumentritt, the “grandeur that was Rome”, he wrote on June 27, 1887.

I am in rome! Everything I step on is the dust of heroes. Here I breath the same air which the Roman heroes have breathed. I salute every statue with reverence, and to me, a humble native of a small island, it seems that I am in a sanctuary. I have already seen the Capitolium, the Tarpeian Rock, the Platinum, the Forum Romanum, the Amphitheatre, etc. Everything here is glorious except the cafes and the café singers. I do not enter these (cafes) because I loathe hearing their French songs or seeing modern industries. My favorite places are the Amphitheatre and the Roman Forum; there I remain seated for hours, contemplating everything and restoring life to the ruins . . . I have also visited some churches and museums, like the Capitoline Museum and the Church of Santa Maria Maggoire, which is also grandiose.

On June 29<sup>th</sup>, the Feast Day of St. Peter and St. Paul, Rizal visited for the first time the Vatican, the “City of the Popes” and the capital of Christendom. He was deeply impressed by the magnificent edifices, particularly of St. Peter’s Church, the rare works of art, the vast St. Peter’s Square, the colorful Papal Guards and the atmosphere of religious devotion that pervaded the Vatican.

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Every night, after sightseeing the whole day, Rizal returned to his hotel, very tired. “I am tired as a dog,” he wrote to Blumentritt, “but I will sleep as a good”.

After a week of wonderful sojourn in Rome, he prepared to return to the Philippines. He had already written to his father that he was coming home.



## Chapter 10

# First Homecoming, 1887-88

All the alluring beauties of foreign countries and all the beautiful memories of his sojourn in alien lands could neither make Rizal forget his fatherland nor turn his back to his own nationality. True that he studied abroad, acquired the lore and languages of foreign nations, and enjoyed the friendship of many great men of the Western world; but he remained at heart true Filipino with an unquenchable love for the Philippines and an unshakable determination to die in the land of his birth. Thus, after five years of memorable sojourn in Europe, he returned to the Philippines in August 1887 and practiced medicine in Calamba. He lived the quiet life of a country doctor. But his enemies, who resented his *Noli*, persecuted him, even threatening to kill him.

**Decision to Return Home.** Because of the publication of the *Noli Me Tangere* and the uproar it caused among the friars, Rizal was warned by Paciano (his brother), Silvestre Ubaldo (his brother-in-law), Chengoy (Jose M. Cecilio), and other friends not to return home. But he did not heed their warning. He was determined to return to the Philippines for the following reasons: (1) to operate on his mother's eyes; (2) to serve his people who had long been oppressed by Spanish tyrants; (3) to find out for himself how the *Noli* and his other writings were affecting Filipinos and Spaniards in the Philippines; and (4) to inquire why Leonor Rivera remained silent.

In a letter to Blumentritt, written in Geneva on June 19, 1887, Rizal said: "Your advice that I live in Madrid and continue to write from there is very benevolent but I cannot accept it. I cannot endure the life in Madrid where everything is a voice in a wilderness. My parents want to see me, and I want to see them also. All my life I desire to live in my country by the side of my family. Until now I am not Europeanized like the Filipinos of Madrid; I always like to return to the country of my birth".

In Rome, on June 29, 1887, Rizal wrote to his father, announcing his homecoming. "On the 15<sup>th</sup> of July, at the latest", he wrote, "I shall embark for our country, so that from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 30<sup>th</sup> of August, we shall see each other".

**Delightful Trip to Manila.** Rizal left Rome by train for Marseilles, a French port, which he reached without mishap. On July 3, 1887, he boarded the steamer *Djemnah*, the same steamer which brought him to Europe five years ago. There were about 50 passengers, including Englishmen, 2 Germans, 3 Chinese, 2 Japanese, many Frenchmen, and 1 Filipino (Rizal).

Rizal was the only one among the passengers who could speak many languages, so that he acted as interpreter for his companions.

The steamer was enroute to the Orient via the Suez Canal. Rizal thus his historic canal for the second time, the first time was when he sailed to Europe from Manila in 1882. On board, he played chess with fellow passengers and engaged in lively conversation in many languages. Some passengers sang; others played on the piano and accordion. After leaving Aden,

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the weather became rough and some of Rizal's books got wet.

At Saigon, on July 30, he transferred to another steamer *Haiphong* which was Manila-bound. On August 2, this steamer left Saigon for Manila.

**Arrival in Manila.** Rizal's voyage from Saigon to Manila was pleasant. On August 3<sup>rd</sup> the moon was full, and he slept soundly the whole night. The calm sea, illuminated by the silvery moonlight, was a magnificent sight to him.

Near midnight of August 5, the *Haiphong* arrived in Manila. Rizal went ashore with a happy heart for the once more trod his beloved native soil. He stayed in the city for a short time to visit his friends. He found Manila the same as when he left it five years ago. There were the same old churches and buildings, the same holes in the roads, the same boats on the Pasig River, and the same heavy walls surrounding the city.

**Happy Homecoming.** On August 8<sup>th</sup>, he returned to Calamba. His family welcomed him affectionately, with plentiful tears of joy. Writing to Blumentritt of his homecoming, he said: "I had a pleasant voyage. I found my family enjoying good health and our happiness was great in seeing each other again. They shed tears of joy and I had to answer ten thousand questions at the same time".

The rejoicing of Rizal's return over, his family became worried for his safety. Paciano did not leave him during the first day after arrival to protect him from any enemy assault. His own father would not let him go out alone, lest something might happen to him.

In Calamba, Rizal established a medical clinic. His first patient was his mother, who was almost blind. He treated her eyes, but could not perform any surgical operation because her eye cataracts were not yet ripe. News of the arrival of a great doctor from Germany spread far and wide. Patients from Manila and the provinces flocked to Calamba. Rizal, who came to be called

“Doctor Uliman” because he came from Germany, treated their ailments and soon he acquired a lucrative medical practice. His professional fees were reasonable, even gratis to the poor. Within a few months, he was able to earn P900 as a physician. By February, 1888, he earned a total of P5, 000 as medical fees.

Unlike many successful medical practitioners, Rizal did not selfishly devote all his time to enriching himself. He opened a gymnasium for young folks, where he introduced European sports. He tried to interest his town mates in gymnastics, fencing and shooting so as to discourage the cockfights and gambling.

Rizal suffered one failure during his six months of sojourn in Calamba –his failure to see Leonor Rivera. He tried to go to Dagupan, but his parents absolutely forbade him to go because Leonor’s mother did not like him for a son-in-law. With a heavy heart, Rizal bowed to his parent’s wish. He was caught within the iron grip of the custom of his time that marriages must be arranged by the parents of both groom and bride.

**Storm over the Noli.** Meanwhile, as Rizal was peacefully living in Calamba, his enemies

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plotted his doom. Aside from practising medicine, attending to his gymnasium, which he established, and taking part in the town’s civic affairs, he painted several beautiful landscapes and translated the German poems of Von Wildernath into Tagalog.

A few weeks after his arrival, a storm broke over his novel. One day Rizal received a letter from Governor General Emilio Terrero (1885-88) requesting him to come to Malacanan Palace. Somebody had a whispered to the governor’s ear that the *Noli* contained subversive ideas.

Rizal went to Manila and appeared at Malacanang. When he was informed by Governor General Terrero of the charge, he denied it, explaining that he merely exposed the truth, but he did not advocate subversive ideas. Pleased by his explanation s aband curious about the controversial book, the governor general asked the author for a copy of the *Noli* so that he could read it. Rizal had no copy then because the only copy he brought home was given to a friend. However, he promised to secure one for the governor general.

Rizal visited the Jesuit fathers to ask for the copy he sent them, but they would not part with it. The Jesuits, especially his former professors –Fr. Francisco de Paula Sanchez, Fr. Jose Bech, and Fr. Federico Faura, who ventured an opinion that “everything in it was the truth”, but added: “You may lose your head for it”.

Fortunately, Rizal found a copy in the hands of a friend. He was able to get it and gave it to Governor General Terrero. The governor general, who was a liberal-minded Spaniard, knew that Rizal’s life was in jeopardy because the friars were powerful. For security measure, he assigned a young Spanish lieutenant, Don Jose Tavel de Andrade, as bodyguard of Rizal. This lieutenant belonged to a noble family. He was cultured and knew painting, and could speak English, French, and Spanish.

Governor General Terrero read the *Noli* and found nothing wrong with it. But Rizal's enemies were powerful. The Archbishop of Manila, Msgr. Pedro Gregorio Echavarria of the University of Santo Tomas for examination by a committee of the faculty. The committee, which was composed of Dominican professors, submitted its report to the Father Rector, who immediately transmitted it to Archbishop Payo. The archbishop in turn, lost no time in forwarding it to the governor general. This report of the faculty members of the University of Santo Tomas stated that the *Noli* was "heretical, impious, and scandalous in the religious order, and anti-patriotic, subversive of public order, injurious to the government of Spain and its function in the Philippine Islands in the political order.

Governor General Terrero was dissatisfied with the report of the Dominicans, for he knew that the Dominicans were prejudiced against Rizal. He sent the novel to the Permanent Commission of Censorship which was composed of priests and laymen. The report of this commission was drafted by its head, Fr. Salvador Font, Augustinian cura of Tondo, and submitted to the governor general on December 29. It found the novel to contain subversive ideas against the Church and Spain, and recommended "that the importation, reproduction and circulation of this pernicious book in the islands be absolutely prohibited".

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When the newspaper published Font's written report of the censorship commission, Rizal and his friends became apprehensive and uneasy. The enemies of Rizal exulted in unholy glee. The banning of the *Noli* only served to make it popular. Everybody wanted to read it. News about the great book spread among the masses. What the hated Spanish masters did not like, the oppressed masses liked very much. Despite the government prohibition and the vigilance of the cruel Guardia Civil many Filipinos were able to get hold of copies of the *Noli* which they read at night behind closed doors.

Thanks to Governor General Terrero, there were no mass imprisonments or mass execution of Filipinos. He refused to be intimidated by the friars who clamored for harsh measures against people caught reading the novel and its author.

**Attackers of the *Noli*.** The battle over the *Noli* took the form of a virulent war of words. Father Font printed his report and distributed copies of it in order to discredit the controversial novel. Another Augustinian, Fr. Jose Rodriguez, Prior of Guadalupe, published a series of eight pamphlets under the general heading *Cuestiones de Sumo Interes* (Question of Supreme Interest) to blast the *Noli* and other anti-Spanish writings. These eight pamphlets were entitled as follows:

1. *Porque no los he de leer?* (Why Should I not Read Them?).
2. *Guardaos de ellos. Porque?* (Beware of Them. Why?).
3. *Y que me dice usted de la peste?* (And What Can You Tell Me Of Plague?).
4. *Porque trinfan los impios?* (Why Do The Impious Triumph?).
5. *Cree usted que de versa no hay purgatorio?* (Do You Think There Is Really No Purgatory?).
6. *Hay o no hay infierno?* (Is There or Is There No Hell?).
7. *Que le parece a usted de esos libelos?* (What Do You Think of These Libels?).
8. *Confesion o condenacion?* (Confession or Damnation?).

Copies of these anti-Rizal pamphlets written by Fray Rodriguez were sold daily in the churches after Mass. Many Filipinos were forced to buy them in order not to displease the friars, but they did not believe what their author said with hysterical fervor.

Repercussions of the storm over the *Noli* reached Spain. It was fiercely attacked on the session hall of the Senate of the Spanish Cortes by various senators, particularly General Jose de Salamanca on April 1, 1888, General Luis M. de Pando on April 12, and Sr. Fernando Vida on June 11. The Spanish academician of Madrid, Vicente Barrantes, who formerly occupied high government positions in the Philippines, bitterly criticized the *Noli* in an article published in *La Espana Moderna* (a newspaper of Madrid) in January, 1890.

**Defenders of the *Noli*.** the much-maligned *Noli* had its gallant defenders who fearlessly came out to prove the merits of the novel or to refute the arguments of the unkind attackers. Marcelo H. del Pilar, Dr. Antonio Ma. Regidor, Graciano Lopez Jeana, Mariano Ponce, and other Filipino reformists in foreign lands, of course, rushed to uphold the truths of the *Noli*. Father Sanchez, Rizal's favorite teacher at the Ateneo, defended and praised it in public. Don Segismundo Moret, former Minister of the Crown; Dr. Miguel Morayta, historian and statesman; the Professor Blumentritt, scholar and educator, read and liked the novel.

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A brilliant defense of the *Noli* came from an unexpected source. It was by Rev. Vicente Garcia, a Filipino Catholic priest-scholar, a theologian of the Manila Cathedral, and a Tagalog translator of the famous Imitation of Christ by Thomas a Kempis. Father Garcia, writing under the penname Justo Desiderio Magalang, wrote a defense of the *Noli* which was published in Singapore as an appendix to a pamphlet dated July 18, 1888. He blasted of Fr. Rodriguez as follows:

1. Rizal cannot be an "ignorant man", as Fr. Rodriguez alleged, because he was a Graduate of Spanish universities and was a recipient of scholastic honors.
2. Rizal does not attack the Church and Spain, as Fr. Rodriguez claimed, because what Rizal attacked in the *Noli* were the bad Spanish officials and not Spain, and the bad and corrupt friars and not the Church.
3. Father Rodriguez said that those who read the *Noli* commit a mortal sin; since he (Rodriguez) had read the novel, therefore he also commits a mortal sin.

Later, when Rizal learned of the brilliant defense of Father Garcia of his novel, he cried because his gratitude was overwhelming. Rizal, himself defended his novel against Barrantes' attack, in a letter written in Brussels, Belgium, in February, 1880. In this letter, he exposed Barrantes' ignorance of Philippine affairs and mental dishonesty which is unworthy of an academician. Barrantes met in Rizal his master in satire and polemics.

During the days when the *Noli* was the target of a heated controversy between the friars (and their minions) and the friends of Rizal, all copies of it were sold out and the price per copy soared to unprecedented level. Both friends and enemies of the *Noli* found it extremely difficult to secure a copy. According to Rizal, in a letter to Fernando Canon from Geneva, June 13, 1887,

the price he set per copy was five pesetas (equivalent to one peso), but the price later rose to fifty pesos per copy.

**Rizal and Tavel de Andrade.** While the storm over the *Noli* was raging in fury, Rizal was not molested in Calamba. This is due to Governor General Terrero's generosity in assigning a bodyguard to him. Between this Spanish bodyguard, Lt. Jose Tavel de Andrade, and Rizal, a beautiful friendship bloomed.

Together, Rizal and Andrade, both young, educated and cultured, made walking tours of the verdant countrysides, discussed topics of common interest, and enjoyed fencing, shooting, hunting, and painting. Lt. Andrade became a great admirer of the man he was ordered to watch and protect. Years later, he wrote of Rizal: "Rizal was refined, educated and gentlemanly. The hobbies that most interested him were hunting, fencing, shooting, painting and hiking . . . I well remember our excursion to Mount Makiling, not so much for the beautiful view . . . as for the rumors and pernicious effects that result from it. There was one who believed and reported to Manila that Rizal and I, at the top of mountain, hoisted the German flag and proclaimed its sovereignty over the Philippines. I imagined that such nonsense emanated from this friars of Calamba, but did not take the trouble to make inquiries about the matter".

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What marred Rizal's happy days in Calamba with Lt. Andrade were (1) the death of his older sister, Olimpia, and (2) the groundless tales circulated by his enemies that he was "a German spy, an agent of Bismark, a Protestant, a Mason, a witch, a soul beyond salvation, etc."

**Calamba's Agrarian Trouble.** Governor General Terrero, influenced by certain facts in *Noli Me Tangere*, ordered a government investigation of the friar estates to remedy whatever iniquities might have been present in connection with land taxes and with tenant relations. One of the friar estates affected was the Calamba Hacienda which the Dominican Order owned since 1883. In compliance with governor general's orders, dated December 30, 1887, the Civil Governor of Laguna Province directed the municipal authorities of Calamba to investigate the agrarian conditions of their locality.

Upon hearing of the investigation, the Calamba folks solicited Rizal's help in gathering the facts and listing their grievances against the hacienda management, so that the central government might institute certain agrarian reforms.

After a thorough study of the conditions in Calamba, Rizal wrote down his findings which the tenants and three of the officials of the hacienda signed on January 8, 1888. These findings, which were formally submitted to the government for action, were the following:

1. The hacienda of the Dominican order comprised not only the lands around the Calamba, but also the town of Calamba.
2. The profits of the Dominican Order continually increased because of the arbitrary increase of the rentals paid by the tenants.
3. The hacienda owner never contributed a single centavo for the celebration of

the town fiesta, for the education of the children, and for the improvement of agriculture.

4. Tenants who had spent much labor in clearing the lands were dispossessed of said lands for flimsy reasons.

5. High rates of interest were charged the tenants for delayed payment of rentals, and when the rentals could not be paid, the hacienda management confiscated their carabaos, tool, and homes.

**Farewell to Calamba.** Rizal's exposure of the deplorable conditions of tenancy in Calamba infuriated further his enemies. The friars exerted pressure on Malacan Palace to eliminate him. They asked Governor General Terrero to deport him, but the latter refused because there was no valid charge against Rizal in court. Anonymous threats against Rizal's life were received by his parents. The alarmed parents, relatives and friends (including Lt. Tavel de Andrade) advised him to go away, for his life was in danger.

One day Governor General Terrero summoned Rizal and "advised" him to leave the Philippines for his own good. He was giving Rizal a chance to escape the fury of the friars' wrath.

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This time Rizal had to go. He could not very well disobey the governor general's veiled orders. But he was not running like a coward from a fight. He was courageous, a fact which his worst enemies could not deny. A valiant hero that he was, he was not afraid of any man and neither was he afraid to die. He was compelled to leave Calamba for two reasons: (1) his presence in Calamba was jeopardizing the safety and happiness of his family and friends and (2) he could fight better his enemies and serve his country's cause with greater efficacy by writing in foreign countries.

**A Poem for Lips.** Shortly before Rizal left Calamba in 1888 his friend from Lipa requested him to write a poem in commemoration of the town's elevation to a villa (city) by the virtue of Beccerra Law of 1888. Gladly, he wrote a poem dedicated to the industrious folks of Lipa. This was the "*Himno Al Trabajo*" (Hymn to Labor). He finished it and sent it to Lipa before his departure from Calamba, it runs as follows:

### HYMN TO LABOR

#### *CHORUS:*

For our country in war.  
For our country in peace  
The Filipino will be ready,  
While he lives and when he dies.

#### *MEN:*

As soon as the East is tinted with light  
Forth to the fields to plow the loam!

Since it is work that sustains the man,  
The motherland, family and the home.  
Hard though the soil may prove to be,  
Implacable the sun above,  
For motherland, our wives and babes,  
‘Twill be easy with our love.

*WIVES:*

Courageously set out to work.  
Your home is safe with a faithful wife  
Implanting in her children, love  
For wisdom, land, and virtuous life.  
When nightfall brings us to our rest,  
May smiling fortune guard our door;  
But if cruel fate should harm her man,  
The wife would toil on as before.

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*GIRLS:*

Hail! Hail! Give praise to work!  
The country’s vigour and her wealth;  
For work lift up your brow serene  
It is your blood, your life, your health.  
If any youth protests his love  
His work shall prove if he be good.  
That man alone who strives and toils  
Can find the way to feed his brood.

*BOYS:*

Teach us then the hardest task  
For down thy trails we turn our feet  
That when our country calls tomorrow  
Thy purposes we may complete.  
And may our elders say, who see us.  
See! How worthy of their sires!  
No incense can exalt our dead ones  
Like a brave son who aspires!



## Chapter 11

# In Hong Kong and Macao, 1888

Hounded by powerful enemies, Rizal was forced to leave his country for a second time in February 1888. He was then a full-grown man of 27 years of age, a practicing physician, and a recognized man-of-letters. The first time he went abroad in June 1882, he was a mere lad of 21, a youthful student in search of wisdom in the Old World, a romantic idealist with beautiful dreams of emancipating his people from bondage by the magic power of his pen. Times had changed. Rizal at 27 was an embittered victim of human iniquities, a disillusioned dreamer, a frustrated reformer.

**The Trip to Hong Kong.** On February 3, 1888, after a short stay of six months in his beloved Calamba, Rizal left Manila for Hong Kong on board the Zafiro. He was sick and sad during the crossing of the choppy China Sea. He did not get off his ship when it made brief stopover at Amoy on February 7. For three reasons: (1) he was not feeling well, (2) it was raining hard and, (3) he heard that the city was dirty. He arrived in Hong Kong in February 8.

During his stay in Hong Kong, a British colony, Rizal wrote a letter to Blumentritt, dated February 16, 1888, expressing his bitterness. This letter runs as follows:

At last I can write freely. At last I can express my thoughts without fear of censorship from the chief! They forced me to leave my country. Half sick I left the house.

Oh, dear Blumentritt, you have no idea of my minor odyssey. Without the aid of my friend Lieutenant Taviel de Andrade, what would become of me! Without the sympathies of the Governor General, the directors of the civil administration and civil government, I would now be in some dungeon.

All the provincials and the archbishop went daily to the Governor General to complain against me. The syndic of the Dominicans wrote a denunciation to the alcalde that at night they saw me hold secret meetings with men and women on top of a hill. It is true I went walking at dawn to a hill accompanied by many men, women, and children, for the purpose of enjoying the coolness of the morning, but always escorted by the lieutenant of the Guardia Civil who knows Tagalog. Who is the conspirator of secret sessions that will hold them in the open air among women and children? I allowed the accusation to reach the Governor General so he could see what kind of enemies I have.

My countrymen offered me money to leave the islands. They asked me to do so not only for my own interest but also theirs, because I have many friends and acquaintances whom they would have deported with me to Balabag or Marianas Islands. Thus, half sick, I bade a hasty farewell to my family. I am returning to Europe by way of Japan and the United States. We should see each other again. I have so much to tell you.

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In Hong Kong, Rizal stayed at Victoria Hotel: He was welcomed by the Filipino residents, including Jose Maria Basa, Balbino Mauricio, and Manuel Yriarte (son of Francisco Yriarte, alcalde mayor of Laguna).

A Spaniard, Jose Sainz de Veranda, who was a former secretary of Governor General Terrero, shadowed Rizal's movement in Hong Kong. It is believed that he was a commissioned by the Spanish authorities to spy on Rizal.

"Hong Kong," wrote Rizal to Blumentritt on February 16, 1888, "is a small, but very clean city. Many Portuguese, Hindus, English, Chinese, and Jews live in it. There are some Filipinos, the majority of whom being those who had been exiled to the Marianas Islands in 1872. They are poor, gentle, and timid. Formerly they were rich mechanics, industrialist, and financiers."

**Visit to Macao.** On February 18, Rizal, accompanied by Basa, boarded the ferry steamer *Kiu-Kiang* for Macao. He was surprised to see among the passengers a familiar figure –Sainz de Veranda.

"Macao is a Portuguese colony near Hong Kong. "The city of Macao," wrote Rizal, in his diary, "is small, low and gloomy. There are many junks, sampans, but few steamers. It looks sad and is almost dead."

In Macao, Rizal and Basa stayed at the home of Don Juan Francisco Lecaros, a Filipino gentleman married to a Portuguese lady. He was rich and spent his days cultivating plants and flowers, many of which came from the Philippines.

During his two-day sojourn in Macao, Rizal visited the theatre, casino, cathedral and churches, pagodas, botanical garden, and bazaars. He also saw the famous Grotto of Camoens, Portugal's national poet. In the evening of February 19, he witnessed a Catholic procession, in which the devotees were dressed in blue and purple dresses and were carrying unlighted candles.

On February 20, Rizal and Basa returned to Hong Kong, again on board the ferry steamer *Kiu Kiang*.

**Experiences in Hong Kong.** During his two-week visit in Hong Kong, Rizal studied Chinese life, language, drama, and customs. He wrote down in his own diary the following experiences:

1. Noisy celebration of the Chinese New Year which lasted from February 11<sup>th</sup> (Saturday) to 13<sup>th</sup> (Monday). Continues explosions of firecrackers he exploded. Rizal himself fired many firecrackers at the window of his hotel.

2. Boisterous Chinese theatre, with noisy audience and noisier music. In the Chinese dramatic art, Rizal observed the following: (1) a man astride a stick means a riding on horseback, (2) an actor raising his legs means he entering a house, (3) a red dress indicates a wedding, (4) a girl about to be married coyly covers her face with a fan

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even in the presence of her fiancé, and (5) a man raising a whip signifies he is about to ride a horse.

3. The marathon lauriat party, wherein the guests were served numerous dishes, such as dried fruits, geese, shrimps, century eggs, shark fins, bird nests, white ducks, chicken with vinegar, fish heads., Roasted pis, tea, etc. The longest meal in the world.

4. The Dominican Order was the richest religious order in Hong Kong. It engaged actively in business. It owned more than 700 houses for rent and many shares in foreign banks. It had millions of dollars deposited in the banks which earned fabulous interests.

5. Of the Hong Kong cemeteries belonging to the Protestants, Catholics, and Muslims, that of the Protestants was the most beautiful because of its well-groomed plants and clean pathways. The Catholic cemetery was most pompous, with its ornate and expensive mausoleums and extravagantly carved sepulchers. The Muslim cemetery was the simplest, containing only a little mosque and tombstone with Arabic inscriptions.

**Departure From Hong Kong.** On February 22, 1888, Rizal left Hong Kong on board the *Oceanic*, an American steamer. His destination was Japan. He did not like the meals on board, but he liked the ship because it was clean and efficiently managed. His cabinmate was a British Protestant missionary who had lived in China for 27 years and knew the Chinese language very well. Rizal called him "a good man".

Other passengers, with whom Rizal conversed in their own languages, were two Portuguese, two Chinese, several British, and an American woman Protestant missionary.

## Chapter 12

# Romantic Interlude in Japan (1888)

One of the happiest interludes in the life of Rizal was his sojourn in the Land of Cherry Blossoms for one month and a half (February 28 –April 13, 1888). He was enchanted by the natural beauty of Japan, the charming manners of the Japanese people, and the picturesque of shrines. Moreover, he fell in love with a Japanese girl, whose loveliness infused joy and romance in his sorrowing heart. Her real name was Seiko Usui. Rizal affectionately called her O-Sei-San. Fate, however, cut short his happy days in Japan. He had to sacrifice his own happiness to carry on his work for the redemption of his oppressed people.

**Rizal Arrives in Yokohama.** Early in the morning of Tuesday, February 28, 1888, Rizal arrived in Yokohama. He registered at the Grand Hotel.

The next day he proceeds to Tokyo and took a room at Tokyo Hotel, where he stayed from March 2 to 7. He was impressed by the city of Tokyo. He wrote to Professor Blumnetritt: “Tokyo is more expensive than Paris. The walls are built in cyclopean manner. The streets are large and wide.”

**Rizal and Tokyo.** Shortly after Rizal's arrival in Tokyo, he was visited at his hotel by Juan Perez Caballero, secretary of Spanish Legation. The latter invited him to live at the Spanish Legation.

Rizal, being an intelligent man, realized that the Spanish diplomatic authorities were instructed from Manila to monitor his movements in Japan. He accepted the invitation for two reasons: (1) he could economize his living expenses by staying at the legation and (2) he had nothing to hide from the prying eyes of the Spanish authorities.

On March 7, Rizal checked out of Tokyo Hotel and lived at the Spanish Legation. He and Perez Caballero became good friends. In a letter to Blumentritt, he described the Spanish diplomat as "a young, fine, and excellent writer" and "an able diplomat who had traveled much".

During his first day in Tokyo, Rizal was embarrassed because he did not know the Japanese language. He looked like Japanese, but could not talk Japanese. He had a hard time shopping, for he could not be understood and the Japanese children laughed at him. Thus he wrote to Blumentritt. "Here you have your friend, Rizal the wonder of the Japanese. On the streets, when I go shopping, people look at me and ill-educated children laugh because i speak a strange language. In Tokyo very few persons speak English, but in Yokohama many speak it. Some believe I am an Europeanized Japanese who does not want to be taken as such."

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To avoid further embarrassment, Rizal decided to study the Japanese language. Being a born linguist, he was able to speak it within a few days. He also studied the Japanese drama (kabuki), arts, music, and judo (Japanese art of self-defense). He browsed in the museums libraries, art galleries, and shrines. He visited Meguro, Nikko, Hakone, Miyoshita, and the charming villages of Japan.

**Rizal and the Tokyo Musicians.** One cool afternoon in March, 1888, Rizal was promenading in street of Tokyo near a park. It was a beautiful spring afternoon. There were many people at the park.

As he approached the park, Rizal heard the Tokyo band playing a classical work of Strauss. He was impressed by the superb performances of the Western music. He stopped and listened in rapt attention. He thought: "How admirable was the rendition. I wonder how these Japanese people have assimilated the modern European music to the extent of playing the beautiful musical masterpiece of the great European composers so well!"

The band stopped playing. The musicians descended from the bandstand and walked around for rest. Some began to converse. To Rizal's amazement, they were talking in Tagalog. He approached them, inquiring in Tagalog: "Paisano, taga saan po kayo?" (Compatriot, where are you from?).

The musicians were equally surprised and delighted to meet him. They told him they were Filipinos and that the principal instruments in the band were Japanese, but they were playing only the secondary instruments.

**Rizal's impression of Japan.** Rizal was favorably impressed by Japan. He was a keen observer, taking copious notes on the life, customs, and culture of the people. He was no silly, lightheaded tourist who really enjoys attractive sights that appealed only to the senses. The things which favorably impressed Rizal in Japan were:

1. The beauty of country –its flowers, mountains, streams, and scenic panoramas.
2. The cleanliness, politeness, and industry of the Japanese people.
3. The picturesque dress and simple charm of the Japanese women.
4. They were very few thieves in Japan so that the houses remained open day and night, and in the hotel room could safely leave money on the table.
5. Beggars were rarely seen in the city streets, unlike in Manila and other cities.

However, there is one thing which he did not like in Japan, and that was the popular mode of transportation by means of rickshaws drawn by men. His sensitive soul recoiled at seeing human beings working like horses, pulling the carts called rickshaws. He felt disgusted at the way a human being was employed like a horse.

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**Romance with O-Sei-San.** One spring afternoon, a few days after he had moved to the Spanish Legation in the Azabu district of Tokyo, Rizal saw a pretty Japanese girl walking past the legation gate. Being a man with an eye for feminine beauty, he was attracted by her regal loveliness and charm. He craved to meet her –but how?

Rizal made inquiries among the legation employees and learned from one of them (a Japanese gardener) that she was Seiko Usui, who lived in her parents' home and that she used to pass by the legation during her daily afternoon walk.

The following afternoon, Rizal and the Japanese gardener waited at the legation gate and watched for the girl. As she approached, he took off his hat and politely introduced himself, as was the custom in Germany. At that time, Rizal's Japanese was still very poor so that the gardener came to his aid and explained to the girl that the young man was a physician from Manila who was a guest of the Spanish Legation.

Seiko-san was mildly amused at the gallant gentlemen from the Philippines who spoke in halting Japanese. She replied in English, for she knew that language and also French –the language barrier was thus eliminated.

Since that first meeting, Rizal and O-Sei-San, as Rizal called her, met almost daily. Together, they visited the interesting spots of the city –the Imperial Art Gallery, the Imperial Library, the universities, the Shokubutsu-en (Botanical Garden), the city parks (particularly Hibiya Park), and the picturesque shrines.

Both found happiness in each other's company. Rizal was then a lonely physician of 27 years old, disillusioned by his frustrated romance with Leonor Rivera and embittered by Spanish injustices at home. O-Sei-San was a lonely samurai's daughter of 13 years old and had never yet experienced the ecstasy of true love. Affinity of interest in the arts paved the way for their romance.

Rizal saw in lovely O-Sei-San the qualities of his ideal womanhood –beauty, charm, modesty, and intelligence. No wonder, he fell deeply in love with her. O-Sei-San reciprocate his affection, for it was the first time her heart palpitated with joys to see a man of gallantry, dignity, courtesy, and versatile talents.

O-Sei-San helped Rizal in many ways. More than a sweetheart, she was his guide, interpreter, and tutor. She guided him in observing the shrines and villages around Tokyo. She improved his knowledge of Nippongo (Japanese language) and Japanese history. And she interpreted for him the Kabuki plays and quaint customs and mores of the Japanese people.

O-Sei-San beauty and affection almost tempted Rizal to settle down in Japan. At the same time, he was offered a good job at the Spanish Legation. If he were a man lesser heroic mould, of lesser will power, he would have lived permanently in Japan –and happily at that with O-Sei-San; but then the world, in general, and the Philippines, in particular, would have lost a Rizal.

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**Rizal on O-Sei-San.** Rizal's great love for O-Sei-San is attested by the hero's diary. On the eve of his departure, he wrote in the diary:

"Japan has enchanted me. The beautiful scenery, the flowers, the trees, and the inhabitants –so peaceful, so courteous, and so pleasant. O-Sei-San, Sayonara! I have spent a happy golden month; I do not know if I can have another one like that in all my life. Love, money, friendship, appreciation, honors –these have not been wanting.

To think that I am leaving this life for the uncertain, the unknown. There I was offered an easy way to live, beloved and esteemed. . . .

To you I dedicate the final chapter of these memoirs of my youth. No woman, like you, has ever loved me. No woman, like you has ever sacrificed for me. Like the flower of the chodji that falls from the stem fresh and whole without falling leaves or without withering –with poetry still despite its fall –thus you fell. Neither have you lost your purity nor have the delicate petals of your innocence faded –Sayonara, Sayonar!

You shall never return to know that I have once more thought of you and that your image lives in my memory; and undoubtedly, I am always thinking of you. Your name lives in the sight of my lips, your image accompanies and animates all my thoughts. When I shall I return to pass another divine afternoon like that in the temple of Meguro? When shall the sweet hours I spent with you return? When shall I find them sweeter, more tranquil, more pleasing? You the color of the camellia, its freshness, its elegance. . .

Ah! last descendant of a noble family, faithful to an unfortunate vengeance, you are lovely like. . . everything has ended! Sayonara, Sayonara!

With this tenderly tragic entry in his own diary, Rizal bade farewell to love O-Sei-San.

**Sayonara, Japan.** On April 13, 1888, Rizal boarded the *Belgic*, an English streamer, at Yokohama, bound for the United States. He left Japan with a heavy heart, for he knew that he would never again see this beautiful “Land of the Cherry Blossoms” and his beloved O-Sei-San. Truly, his sojourn in Japan for 45 days was one of the happiest interludes in his life.

**O-Sei-San After Rizal's Departure.** As everything on earth has to end, the beautiful romance between Rizal and O-Sei-San inevitably came to a dolorous ending. Sacrificing his personal happiness, Rizal had to carry on his libertarian mission in Europe, accordingly, he resumed his voyage, leaving behind the lovely O-Sei-San, whom he passionately loved.

Broken-hearted by the departure of Rizal, the first to capture her heart. O-Sei-San mourned for a long time the loss of her lover. Eventually, she became resigned to her fate, cherishing unto death the nostalgic memories of her romance with Rizal.

About 1897, a year after Rizal's execution, she married Mr. Alfred Charlton, British teacher of chemistry of the Peer's School in Tokyo. Their wedlock was blessed by only one child –a daughter named Yuriko. After many years of teaching, Charlton was awarded by the Japanese

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government with an imperial decoration –Order Merit, 5<sup>th</sup> Class. He died on November 2, 1915, survived by O-Sei-San, whose real name was Seiko Usui, and their daughter Yuriko. This daughter later married Yoshiharu Takiguchi, son of a Japanese senator.

Mr. Charlton (O-Sei-San), as a widow, lived in a comfortable home in Shinjuku district, Tokyo. She survived World War II, but her home was destroyed in 1944 by the U.S. bombing of Tokyo. She died on May 1, 1947 at the age of 80. She was buried in her husband's tomb at Zoshigawa Cemetery. A Japanese inscription on their tombs reads as follows:

### **Alfred Charlton, 5<sup>th</sup> Order of Merit, and wife Seiko.**

**Voyage Across the Pacific.** Despite his sorrowing heart, Rizal enjoyed the pleasant trans-Pacific voyage to the United States. On board the ship, he met a semi-Filipino family –Mr. Reinaldo Turner, his wife Emma Jackson (daughter of an Englishman, their children, and their maid servant from Pangasinan,

One day of the children, a bright young boy, asked Rizal:

“Do you know, sir, a famous man in Manila named Richal? He wrote a novel, *Noli Me Tangere*.

“Yes, hijo, I am Richal,” replied Rizal.

In great joy the boy rushed to his mother, informing her that the famous man is their fellow passenger, she felicitated Rizal, feeling proud that they were travelling with a celebrity.

**Rizal and Tetcho.** Another passenger which Rizal befriended on board the Belgic was Tetcho Suehiro, a fighting Japanese journalist, novelist, and champion of human rights, who was forced by the Japanese government to leave the country, just as Rizal was compelled to leave the Philippines by the Spanish authorities. At the beginning of the voyage from Yokohama, Tetcho was miserably alone, for he knew only his own Japanese language and so he could not communicate with the ship officers who knew many foreign languages, including Japanese, befriended him and acted as his interpreter during their long trip from Yokohama to San Francisco, across the U. S. to New York until they reached London, where they parted.

Rizal and Tetcho were kindred spirits. Both were valiant patriots, implacable foes of injustice and tyranny. Both were men of peace using their trenchant pens as formidable weapons to fight for their peoples' welfare and happiness.

Rizal told Tetcho the story of his life's mission to emancipate his oppressed people from Spanish tyranny and of the persecutions which he and his family suffered from the vindictive Spanish officials and bad friars, causing him and his family to flee to foreign countries where he could freely carry on his libertarian activities. During their intimate acquaintanceship of almost eight months (April 13- December 1, 1888) Tetcho came to admire Rizal, whose patriotism and magnificent talents greatly fascinated him and influenced him to fortify his own crusade for human rights in his own country.

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On December 1, 1888, after a last warm handshake and bidding each other "goodbye," Rizal and Tetcho parted ways –never to meet again. Rizal remained in London to conduct historical researches on Mora at the British Museum, while Tetcho returned to Japan.

In 1889, shortly after his return to Japan, he published his travel daily which contained his impressions of Rizal, as follows:

"Mr. Rizal was a citizen of Manila in the Philippines. Age about 27 to 29. Young as he was, he was proficient in seven languages."

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"It was in S/S *Belgic* that we first met. I came to England by way of America with him. Ever since I had been intercoursing with him."

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"Rizal was an open-hearted man. He was not hair-splitting. He was an accomplished, good at picture, skillful in exquisite wax work, especially."

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"I arrived at London late in May, 1888. I temporarily stayed at "King Henry's Road," then moved to Room 56 of Parliament Hill Road. I intended to stay here until

February or March, but unfortunately London had been shrouded by fog since early October. I have a slight illness, and it appeared to be very hard for me to spend the coming winter here. I decided to go home, and scheduled to leave London on December the First.

"On December the First, I got up early; it was a fine sunny day, after uncomfortable days of fog and rain. The sun rose as if it congratulated my lucky departure for home. I took a farewell of my people and at 9:30 A.M. when I was going down the Parliament Hill Road, I met Mr. Rizal coming to my hotel. I called him to ride with me on the coach. Mr. Rizal came from Manila. He has a good command of seven different foreign languages at the age of only twenty-seven... He was a frank and daring fellow, fond of various arts, especially good and dearing..."

After the publication of his travel daily, Tetcho resigned his position as editor of Tokyo newspaper, *Choya*, and entered politics. In 1890 he was elected as member of the lower house of the First Imperial diet (Japanese parliament), where he carried on his fight for human rights. The following year (1891) he published a political novel titled *Nankai-no-Daiharan* (Storm Over the South Sea) which resembles Rizal's *Noli Me Tangere* in plot. Three years later (1894) he published another novel entitled *O-unabara* (The Big Ocean) which was similar to *El Filibusterismo*.

While still a member of the Imperial Diet, Tetcho died of heart attack in Tokyo on February, 1896 ten months before Rizal's execution). He was then 49 years old.

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## Chapter 13

# Rizal's Visit to the United States (1888)

Rizal first saw America on April 28, 1888. His arrival in this great country was marred by racial prejudice, for he saw the discriminatory treatment of the Chinese and the Negroes by the white Americans. He kept notes of what he observed during his trip from San Francisco to New York, where he took a ship for England. From his notes and his letters to his friends, we get a wealth of first-hand impression of America, some of which were rather unfavorable but true. Rizal was a man of truth, and he wrote what he had seen and experienced.

**Arrival in San Francisco.** The steamer *Belgic*, with Rizal on board, docked at San Francisco on Saturday morning, April 28, 1888. All passengers were not allowed to land. The American health authorities placed the ship under quarantine on the ground that it came from the Far East where a cholera epidemic was alleged to be raging. Rizal was surprised because he knew there was no cholera epidemic at that time in the Far East. He joined the other passengers in protesting the unjustifiable action of the health authorities. The American consul in Japan had given the ship a clean bill of health, and the British Governor of Hong Kong certified to the absence of cholera cases in China.

He soon discovered that the placing of the ship under quarantine was motivated by politics. The ship was carrying 643 Chinese coolies. At that time public opinion on the Pacific coast was against cheap coolie labor because the coolies from China were displacing white laborers in railroad construction camps. To win the votes of the whites in California (for election was near), the administration impeded the entry of Chinese coolies.

Rizal noticed that contrary to quarantine regulations 700 bales of valuable Chinese silk were landed without fumigation, that the ship doctor went ashore without protest on the part of the health officers, and the customs employees ate several times on board the supposedly cholera-infested ship.

After a week of quarantine, all first-class passengers, including Rizal, were permitted to land. But the Chinese and Japanese passengers of the second and third-class accommodations were forced to remain on board for a longer quarantine period.

**Rizal in San Francisco.** On Friday afternoon, May 4, 1888, the day he was permitted to go ashore, Rizal registered at the Palace Hotel, which was then considered a first-class hotel in the city. On this day, he wrote on his diary:

I lodged in Palace Hotel; \$4 a day with bath and everything included. Stockton St., 312. I saw the Golden Gate. . . On Sunday the stores are closed. The best Street in San Francisco is Market Street.

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Rizal mentioned in his diary the name of Leland Stanford, who was a millionaire senator representing California in the U.S. Senate at that time. This senator was the founder and benefactor of Stanford University at Palo Alto, California. Also recorded in Rizal's diary was a street —Dupont Street—in Chinatown which is Grant Avenue today.

Rizal stayed in San Francisco for two days —May 4 to 6, 1888. The President of the United States at that time was Grover Cleveland.

**Across the American Continent.** On May 6, 1888 —Sunday, 4:30 P.M. —Rizal left San Francisco for Oakland, nine miles across San Francisco Bay, by ferry boat.

In Oakland, he boarded the train for his trip across the continent. He took his supper at Sacramento for 75 c and slept in his coach.

Early the following morning (May 7), he awoke and had a good breakfast at Reno, Nevada, now glamourized by American high-pressure propaganda as "The Biggest little City in the World." Rizal's diary recounts his travel observation as follows:

Monday, May 7. I saw an Indian attired in semi-European suit, and semi-Indian suit, leaning against a wall. Wide deserts without plants nor trees. Unpopulated. Lonely place. Bare mountains. Sands. A big extension of white land, like chalk. Far from this desert can be seen some blue mountains. It was a fine day. It was warm, and there was still snow on the top of some mountains.

Tuesday, May 8. This is beautiful morning. We stop from place to place. We are near Ogden. I believe with a good system of irrigation this place could be cultivated. We are at Utah state, the 3<sup>rd</sup> state we passed over. In approaching Ogden the fields are seen with horses, oxen, and trees. Some small house are seen from a distance. From Ogden to Denver. The clock is set one hour ahead of time. We are now beginning to see flowers with color yellow on the way. The mountains at a distance are covered with snow. The banks of Salt Lake are more beautiful than other things we saw. The mules are very big. There are mountains in the middle of the lake like the island of Talim in Laguna de Bay. We saw three Mormon boys at Farminton. There were sheep, cows, and horses in the meadows. This region is not quickly populated. A flock of ducks in the lake. . . Children greeted us at Salt Lake City. In Utah, the women serve at the table . . . We changed train at Ogden, and we will not have any change until Denver. In Provo I ate much for 75c. We are passing between two mountains through a narrow channel.

Wednesday, May 9. We are passing through the mountains and rocks along a river; the river is noisy and its noise gives life to the lifeless territory. We woke up at Colorado, the 5<sup>th</sup> state we crossed over. At 10:30 we climb up a certain height and this why snow is seen along the way. There are many pines. We passed through tunnels made of wood to protect the road against snow. Icicles in these tunnels are very bright which gave majestic effect. The porter of the Pullman Car, an American, is a sort of thief. Colorado has more trees than the three states we passed over. There are many horses.

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Thursday, May 10. We woke up in Nebraska. The country is a plain. We reached Omaha, a big city –the biggest since we left San Francisco. The Missouri River is twice as wide as the Pasig River in its widest part. It is marshy . . . the train passed over the Missouri bridge for 2 and ½ minutes; the train goes slowly. We are now in Illinois.

Friday, May 11. We woke up near Chicago. The country is cultivated. It shows our nearness to Chicago. We left Chicago at 8:14 Friday night. What I observed in Chicago is that very cigar store has an Indian figure, and always different. (2775 Washington Street, Boston, Miss C.G. Smith).

Saturday, May 12. A good Wagner Car –we were proceeding in a fine day. The country is beautiful and well populated. We shall arrive at the English territory (Canada –Z.) in the afternoon, and we shall soon see Niagara Falls. We stop for some time to see the points that are beautiful; we went to the side below the Falls; I was between two rocks and this is the greatest cascade I ever saw. It is not so beautiful nor so fine as the falls at Los Banos (sic Pagsanjan –Z); but much bigger, more imposing . . . The cascade has various falls, various parts. We left the place at night. There is a mysterious sound and persistent echo.

Sunday, May 13. We woke up near Albany. This is a big city. The Hudson River which runs along carries many boats. We crossed over a bridge. The landscape is beautiful; and it is not inferior to the best in Europe. We are going along the banks of the Hudson. They are very beautiful although a little more solitary than those of the Pasig . . .

The Hudson is wide. Beautiful ships. Sliced granite rocks were between trees. Day fine. Our grand transcontinental trip ended on Sunday, May 13, at 11:10 A.M.

**Rizal in New York.** On Sunday morning, May 13, Rizal reached New York, thus ending his trip across the American continent. He stayed three days in this city, which he called the “big town”. He visited the scenic and historic places. He was awed and inspired by the memorial to George Washington. Of this American, he wrote to Ponce: “He is a great man who, I think, has no equal in this country”.

On May 16, he left New York for Liverpool on board the *City of Rome*. According to Rizal, this steamer was “the second largest ship in the world, the largest being the Great Eastern”. He saw with thrilling sensation the colossal Statue of Liberty on Bedloe Island as his ship steamed out of New York Harbor.

**Rizal's Impressions of America.** Rizal had good and bad impression of the United States. The good impressions were (1) the material progress of the country as shown in the great cities, huge farms, flourishing industries, and busy factories; (2) the drive and energy of the American people; (3) the natural beauty of the land; (4) the high standard of living; and (5) the opportunities for better life offered to poor immigrants.

One bad impression Rizal had of America was the lack of racial equality. There existed racial prejudice which was inconsistent with the principles of democracy and freedom of which

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the Americans talk so much but do not practice. Thus he wrote to Ponce: “They do not have true civil liberty. In some states the Negro cannot marry a White woman, nor a White man a Negress. Hatred against the Chinese leads to difficulty for other Asiatics who, like the Japanese, are mistaken for Chinese by the ignorant, and therefore being disliked, too”.

In 1890. Two years after Rizal's visit to the United States, Jose Alejandro, who was then studying engineering in Belgium, roomed with him on 38 Rue Philippe Champagne, Brussels. Alejandro had never been in America, so that one day he asked Rizal: “What impressions do you have of America?”

“America,” answered Rizal, “is the land par excellence of freedom but only for the whites”.

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## Chapter 14

# Rizal in London (1888-89)

After visiting the United States, Rizal lived in London from May 1888 to March, 1889. He chose this English city to be his new home for three reasons: (1) to improve his knowledge of the English language, (2) to study and annotate Morga's *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas*, a rare copy of which he heard to be available in the British Museum, and (3) London was a safe place for him to carry on his fight against Spanish tyranny. In London, he engaged in Filipiniana studies, completed annotating Morga's book, wrote many articles for *La Solidaridad* in defense of his people against Spanish critics, penned a famous letter to the young women of Malolos, carried on his voluminous correspondence with Blumentritt and relatives, and had a romance with Gertrude Beckett.

**Trip Across the Atlantic.** The trans-Atlantic voyage of Rizal from New York to Liverpool was a pleasant one. He won many friends of different nationalities on board the palatial *City of Rome* because of his friendly nature and his ability as a linguist.

Rizal entertained the American and European passengers with his marvelous skill with the yo-yo as an offensive weapon. The *yo-yo* is a small wooden disc attached to a string from the finger. It is used by Filipino children as a toy. But Rizal manipulated it as a weapon of offense, to the great amazement of the foreigners.

On board the steamer were some American newspapermen on their way to Europe. Rizal discussed with them the current social and political problems of mankind, and found them to be inadequate in geo-politics. He could not enjoy their companionship because they were intellectually inferior to him.

Rizal arrived at Liverpool, England, on May 24, 1888. He stayed one day in this port city, spending the night at the Adelphi Hotel. "Liverpool", he wrote to his family, "is a big and beautiful city and its celebrated port is worthy of its great fame. The entrance is magnificent and the customhouse is quite good".

**Life in London.** On May 25, 1888, a day after docking at Liverpool, Rizal went to London. For a short time, he stayed as guest at the home of Dr. Antonio Ma. Regidor, an exile of 1872 and a practicing lawyer in London. By the end of May, Primrose Hill. He was a boarder of the Beckett family. The Becketts were Mr. Beckett, organist of St. Paul's Church, Mrs. Beckett (his wife), two sons and four daughters. The oldest of Beckett sisters was a Gertrude, called "Gettie" or "Tottie" by her friends.

The Beckett home was to Rizal conveniently located. It was near the public parks and was within easy walking distance to the British Museum where he expected to do much research work.

Rizal came to know Dr. Reinhold Rost, the librarian of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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an authority on Malayan languages and customs. Dr. Rost was impressed by Rizal's learning and character, and he gladly recommended him to the authorities of the British Museum. He called Rizal "a pearl of a man" (*una perla de hombre*).

Rizal spent much of his time in the British Museum poring over the pages of Morga's *Sucesos* and other rare historical works on the Philippines. He frequently visited Dr. Regidor and discussed with him problems pertaining to Philippine affairs.

He spent Sundays in the house of Dr. Rost, with whom he had many pleasant discussions on linguistics. He also played cricket (popular English game) and boxed with Dr. Rost's sons.

**News from Home, Good and Bad.** Both good and bad news from home reached Rizal in London. Of the bad news, were the injustices committed by the Spanish authorities on the Filipino people and the Rizal family. Among which were as follows:

1. Persecution of the Filipino patriots who signed the "Anti-Friar Petition of 1888" which was presented by Doroteo Cortes, prominent Mason and lawyer, to Jose Conteneo, Civil Governor of the Province of Manila, on March 1, 1888. This petition was signed about 800 patriots and was actually written by M. H. del Pilar. It was addressed to the Queen Regent of Spain requesting the expulsion of the friars, including Archbishop Pedro Payo (Dominican) of Manila.

2. Persecution of the Calamba tenants, including Rizal's family and relatives, for their courage to petition the government for agrarian reforms.

3. Furious attacks on Rizal by Senators Salamanca and Vida in the Spanish Cortes and by Desenganos (Wenceslao E. Retana) and Quioquiap (Pablo Feced) in Spanish newspapers.

4. Rizal's brother-in-law, Manuel T. Hidalgo, husband of Saturnina, was exiled by Governor General Weyler to Bohol without due process of law.

5. A friend of Rizal, Laureano Viado, a medical student at the University of Santo Tomas, was arrested and jailed in Bilibid Prison because copies of the *Noli* were found in his house.

One good news cheered Rizal, and that was Rev. Vicente Garcia's defense of the *Noli* against the attacks of the friars. He heard this good news from Mariano Ponce. He was deeply gratified by the courageous action of Father Garcia, a venerable Filipino canon of the Manila Cathedral. Later, On January 7, 1891, he wrote to Father Garcia, expressing his personal thanks. In the famous letter, he said:

We young Filipinos are trying to make over a nation and must not halt in our onward march, but from time to time turn our gaze upon our elders. We shall wish to read in their countenances approval of our actions. We are anxious to learn of the Philippines' past which we need to understand in order to plan and intelligently for the future. We

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want to know all that our ancestors knew, and then add our own studies to theirs. Thus we shall progress the faster because we can go on from where they left off.

**Annotating Morga's Book.** The greatest achievement of Rizal in London was the annotating of Morga's book, *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas* (Historical Events of the Philippine Islands) which was published in Mexico, 1609. He spent many days in the reading room of the British Museum poring over the pages of this book and laboriously reading the old histories of the Philippines, such a those written by Fr. Chirino, Fr. Colin, Fr. Argensola, Fr. Plasencia, etc. Of all written histories published during the early years of the Spanish regime, that of Dr. Morga was, in his considered opinion, the best.

In a letter to Blumentritt, dated September 17, 1888, Rizal said: "Morga's work is an excellent book; it can be said that Morga is a modern scholarly explorer. He does not have the superficiality and exaggeration which are found among Spaniards today: he writes very simply, but one has to read between the lines . . . ."

For about ten months (May 1888-March 1889), Rizal was deeply immersed in his historical studies in London. During which time his compatriots in Spain were waging the crusade for Philippine reforms. At one time, Mariano Ponce, whom he had never yet met and who was then living in Barcelona, urged him to edit a newspaper which would defend the Filipino interests from the scurrilous attacks of their Spanish detractors. He refused Ponce's

request because he was busy. "Today," he wrote to Ponce on October 12, 1888, "I am dedicated day and night to certain studies, so that I do not want to edit any newspaper".

**Short Visit to Paris and Spain.** Early in September, 1888, he visited Paris for a week, in order for more to search for more historical materials in the Bibliotheque Nationale. He was entertained in this gay French metropolis by Juan Luna and his wife (Paz Pardo de Tavera), who proudly showed him their little son Andres (nickname Luling). After poring over the old books and manuscript in the Bibliotheque Nationale, he returned to London.

On December 11, 1888, he went to Spain, visiting Madrid and Barcelona. He contacted his compatriots and surveyed the political situation with regards to the agitation for Philippine reforms. For the first time, he met Marcelo H. del Pilar and Mariano Ponce, two titans of the Propaganda Movement. He exchanged ideas with these new friends and promised to cooperate in the fight for reforms.

**Christmas in London (1888).** Rizal returned to London on December 24 and spent Christmas and New Year's Day with the Becketts. He experienced a delightful Christmas Eve, his first on English soil. That night he wrote to Blumentritt: "it is now Noche-Buena (Christmas Eve); it is the holiday I like best to celebrate. It reminds me of the many good days not only of my infancy, but also of history. Whether or not Christ was born exactly on this day, I do not know; but exact chronology is immaterial to see the joy of this night. A great Genius was born who preached truth and love. He suffered on account of His mission, but because of His sufferings the world had improved, if not saved. How it shochs me to see people misuse His name to commit many crimes".

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To his friend, Blumentritt, Rizal sent as Christmas gift a bust of Emperor Augustus which he had made. This emperor was the ruler of the Roman Empire when Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem. To another friend, Dr. Carlos Czepelak (Polish scholar), he gave as Christmas gift a bust of Julius Caesar.

Rizal's landlady, Mrs. Beckett, knowing of his interested in magic, gave him as Christmas gift a book entitled *The Life and Adventures of Valentine Vox, the Ventriloquist*. Rizal was delighted to receive this book, for he had great admiration for this British magician who was famous for his ventriloquism.

**Rizal Become leader of Filipinos in Europe.** While busy in his historical studies in London, Rizal learned that the Filipinos in Barcelona were planning to establish a patriotic society which would cooperate in the crusade for reforms. This society, called *Asociacion La Solidaridad* (Solidaridad Association), was inaugurated on December 31, 1888, with the following officers: Galicano Apacible, president; Graciano Lopez Jaena, vice-president; Manuel Santa Maria, secretary; Mariano Ponce, treasurer; and Jose Ma. Panganiban, accountant.

By unanimous vote of all the members, Rizal was chosen honorary president. This was a recognition of his leadership among all Filipino patriots in Europe.

As the leader of his countrymen in Europe, Rizal wrote a letter addressed to the members of the Association La Solidaridad, on January 28, 1889. In this letter, he expressed his thanks for the honor of making him honorary president and gave the following advice:

1. In young associations the spirit of tolerance ought to prevail when it concerns trifles that do not affect the essential part of a thing: in the discussion, the conciliatory tendency ought to dominate before the tendency to oppose. No one should resent defeat. When any opinion is rejected, its author, instead of despairing and withdrawing, should on the contrary wait for another occasion in which justice may be done him. The individual should give way to the welfare of the society.

2. A great deal of integrity and much good will. No member should expect rewards or honors for what he does. He who does his duty in the expectation of rewards, is usually disappointed, because almost no one believes himself sufficiently rewarded. And so that there may not be discontented or ill-rewarded members, it is advisable for each one to do his duty just for its own sake and at best expect to be later treated unjustly, because in anomalous countries, injustice is the prize for those who fulfill their duties.

Thrift, thrift, thrift.

Seriousness and equal justices for all.

**Rizal and The La Solidaridad Newspaper.** On February 15, 1889, Graciano Lopez Jaena founded the patriotic newspaper called *La Solidaridad* in Barcelona, where he was then residing. This was forthnightly periodical which served as the organ of the Propaganda Movement. Its aims were as follows: (1) to work peacefully for political and social reforms; (2) to portray the deplorable conditions of the Philippines so that Spain may remedy them; (3) to

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oppose the evil forces of reaction and medievalism; (4) to advocate liberal ideas and progress; and (5) to champion the legitimate aspirations of the Filipino people to life, democracy, and happiness.

Two days after the birth of *La Solidaridad*, M.H. del Pilar wrote to Rizal in London: "At last our little newspaper was born. It is democratic in its opinion, but very much more so in the organization of its staff. One should see how editor Graciano writes, corrects proofs, directs printing, distributes the copies, and even takes them to the mail. Naning [Mariano Ponce -Z], the manager, gathers the data, edits, corrects the proofs, writes the leads, prepares the correspondence, and also distributes the copies. I am only idler, though the newspaper had me preoccupied during the period of its conception and birth, for which reason I am behind in my correspondence with you".

Rizal congratulated Lopez Jaena and his associates in founding *La Solidaridad*. As evidence of his approval and cooperation he prepared articles for the periodical which were subsequently published. In his letter to Lopez Jaena, he advised him that great care should be taken in publishing only the truth in *La Solidaridad*. "Be careful", he admonished, "not to publish exaggerations or lies or imitate others, who avail themselves of dishonest means and of vulgar and ignoble language to attain their ends. See that the periodical is just, honest, and truthful so that its opinion may always be respected. It is necessary that we show our enemies

that we are more worthy than they, morally and humanly speaking. Should we tell the truth we shall have won our cause because reason and justice are on our side. There is no need for knaveries.

**First Article in La Solidaridad.** Rizal's first article which appeared in *La Solidaridad* was entitled *Los Agricultores Filipinos* (The Filipino Farmers). It was published on March 25, 1889, six days after he left London for Paris.

In this initial article, he depicted the deplorable conditions in the Philippines which cause the backwardness of the country.

He wrote:

The Filipino farmer has to struggle not only against petty tyrants and robbers. Against the first, defense indeed is permitted; against the latter, not always . . .

After the floods, locusts, fires, bad harvests, and the like, the farmer capitalist has to deal with the constable who takes away from him his laborers for personal services, some public works, repair of roads, bridges, and others; with the civil guard who arrests them for various reasons, sometimes for not carrying with them their personal cedulas (certificates) for not saluting properly, for being suspicious persons or for no reason whatsoever, and they manacle them to clean the barracks and thus compel the capitalist to live on better terms with the chief and, if not, they take away his carabaos, oxen, in spite of many protests . . .

At times it is not constable or the civil guard who opposes so indirectly the minister of colonies. An official of the court or of the provincial government, dissatisfied

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savings, arrives, presents himself, waits, returns the next day and waits, finally to be asked with a frown and the look of a judge, abstruse and unknown things. He is lucky if he comes out free from the questioning, for not infrequently after it, he is sent to jail from which he comes out later as stupid as before . . .

**Writing in London.** While busy in research studies at the British Museum, Rizal received news on Fray Rodriguez' unabated attack on his *Noli*. In defense, he wrote a pamphlet entitled *La Vision del Fray Rodriguez* (The Vision of Fray Rodriguez) which was published in Barcelona under his nom-de-plume *Dimas Alang*. This opus is a satire depicting a spirited dialogue between St. Augustine and Fr. Rodriguez. St. Augustine told Fr. Rodriguez that he (St. Augustine) was commissioned by God to tell him (Fr. Rodriguez) of his stupidity and inform him of his penance on earth that he (Fr. Rodriguez) shall continue to write more stupidity so that all men may laugh at him.

In *La Vision del Fray Rodriguez*, Rizal demonstrated two things: (1) his profound knowledge of religion and (2) his biting satire.

In London, Rizal wrote the famous "Letter to the Young Women of Malolos" (February 22, 1889) in Tagalog. He penned it, upon the request of M.H. del Pilar to praise the young ladies of Malolos for their courage to establish a school where they could learn Spanish, despite the

opposition of Fr. Felipe Garcia, Spanish parish priest of Malolos. The main points of this letter were: (1) a Filipino mother should teach her children love of God, fatherland, and mankind; (2) the Filipino mother should be glad, like the Spartan mother, to offer her sons in the defense of the fatherland; (3) a Filipino woman should know how to preserve her dignity and honor; (4) a Filipino woman should educate herself, aside from retaining her good racial virtues; and (5) faith is not merely reciting long prayers and wearing religious pictures, but rather it is living the real Christian way, with good morals and good manners.

Dr. Rost, editor of *Trubner's Record*, a journal devoted to Asian studies, requested Rizal to contribute some articles. In response to his request, the latter prepared two articles –(1) “Specimens of Tagal Folklore” which was published in the journal in May, 1889; and (2) “Two Eastern Fables”, published in June, 1889.

The first article consisted of Filipino proverbs and puzzles, as follows:

### **1. Proverbial Sayings**

Malakas ang bulong sa sigaw, Low words are stronger than loud words.

Ang laki sa layaw karaniwa'y hubad, A petted child is generally naked (i.e poor)

Hampas ng magulang ay nakatataba, Parent's punishment makes one fat.

Ibang hari ibang ugali, New king, new fashion.

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Nagpuputol ang kapus, ang labis ay nagdurugtong, What is short cut off a piece from itself, what is long adds another on (the poor gets poorer, the rich richer).

Ang nagsasabi ng tapos ay siyang kinakapus, He who finishes his words finds himself wanting.

Nangangako habang napapako, Man promises while in need.

Ang naglalakad ng marahan, matinik ma'y mababaw, He who walks slowly, though he may put his foot on a thorn, will not be hurt very much (Tagals mostly barefooted).

Ang ,maniwala sa sabi'y walang bait sa sarili, He who believes in tales has no own mind.

Ang may isinuksok sa dingding, ay may titingalain, He who has put something between the walls may afterwards look on (the saving man may afterwards be cheerful). –The wall of a Tagal house is made of palm-leaves and bamboo, so that it can be used as a cupboard.

Walang mahirap gisingin na paris nang nagtutulogtulungan, The most difficult to rouse from sleep is the man who pretends to be asleep.

Labis sa salita, kapus sa gawa, too many words, too little work.

Hipong tulog ay nadadala ng anod, The sleeping shrimp is carried away by the current.

Sa bibig nahuhuli ang isda, The fish is caught through the mouth.

## II. Puzzles

Isang butil sa palay sikip sa buong bahay, One rice-corn fills up all the house. –the light.  
The rice-corn with the husk is yellowish.

Matapang ako sa dalawa, duwag ako sa isa, I am brave against two, coward against one. –  
The bamboo bridge. When the bridge is made up of one bamboo only, it is difficult to  
pass over; but when it's made of two or more it is very easy.

Dala ako niya, dala ko siya, He carries me, I carry him. –The shoes.

Isang balong malalim puno ng patalim, A deep well filled with steel blades. –The mouth.

**Romances with Gertrude Beckett.** Rizal had a romantic interlude with the oldest of the three Beckett sisters –Gertrude, Gettie, as she was affectionately called, was a buxom English girl with brown hair, blue eyes, and rosy cheeks. She fell in love with Rizal. On cold winter mornings she had a sunny smile for him, chattering gaily like a humming bird. During the family picnics, she was particularly very happy because Rizal was with them and she gave him all her attention. And in rainy days when Rizal stayed at home, she helped him by mixing his colors for

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painting or assisted in preparing the clay for sculpturing.

Rizal, being a man of normal emotions, found exhilarating joy in Gertrude's company. Their friendship drifted towards romance. Rizal affectionately called her "Gettie," in reciprocation, she fondly called him "Pettie." As their flirtation was past approaching the point of no return, Rizal suddenly realized that he could not marry Gettie for he had a mission to fulfill in life.

With iron will, he suppressed the passionate yearning of his heart, and decided to go away so that "Gettie" may forget him. Before leaving London, he finished four sculptural works –(1) Prometheus Bound, (2) "The Triumph of death over Life," (3) "The triumph of science over Death," and (4) a composite carving of the heads of the Beckett sisters. The last-named carving he gave as farewell gift to the Beckett sister. He packed "The Triumph of Death our Life" and "The Triumph of Science over Death" and sent them to his friend, Professor Blumentritt, in Leitmeritz.

**Adios, London.** Suddenly on March 19, 1889, Rizal bade goodbye to the kind Beckett family (particularly Gertrude) and left London for Paris. He was sad as he crossed the English Channel, for he cherished so many beautiful memories of London.

## **Chapter 15**

# **Rizal's Second Sojourn in Paris and the Universal Exposition of 1889**

Paris in the spring of 1889 was bursting with gaiety and excitement because of the Universal Exposition. Thousands of visitors from all corners of the world crowded every hotel, inn, and boarding house. Everywhere in the metropolis the hotel rates and house rents were soaring skyhigh, Rizal, fresh from London, was caught in the whirl of gay Parisian life. Despite the social parties and the glittering lights of the city, he continued his fruitful artistic, literary, and patriotic labors. He published his annotated edition of Morga's *Sucesos*; founded three Filipino societies, the Kidlat Club, the Indios Bravos, and the R.D.L.M.; and wrote *Por Telefono*, a satire against Fr. Salvador Font.

**Difficulty of Finding Quarters.** In March 1889, it was extremely difficult for a visitor to find living quarters in Paris. The approaching Universal Exposition of 1889 which was so that all hotel accommodations were taken. To the great disgust of Rizal, the cost of living spiraled high because the French landlords, taking advantage of the great demand for living quarters, raised the rents of their rooms.

For a short time, Rizal lived in the house of his friend Valentin Ventura, at No. 45 Rue Maubeuge, where he polished his annotated edition of Morga's book. He transferred his residence several times, moving from one hotel to another, from one boarding house to another.

Finally, he lived in a little room, together with two other Filipinos –Capitan Justo Trinidad former gobernadorcillo of Santa Ana, Manila, and a refugee from Spanish tyranny, and Jose Albert, a young student from Manila.

**Life in Paris.** Although life in Paris was gay, with sparkling merriment and joyous social parties, Rizal continued to be busy in his serious pursuits. Hours were too precious for him to waste. He spent them frugally and fruitfully. He used most of his time in the reading room of the Bibliotheque Nationale (National library) checking up his historical annotations on MOrga's book, in his living quarters writing letters to his family and friends, in the gymnasium for his daily physical exercises, and visiting his friends.

In his spare hours, Rizal used to dine at the homes of his friends, such as the Pedro de Taveras, the Venturas, the Bousteads, the Lunas, etc. He was a good friend of the three Pardo de Taveras –Dr. Trinidad H. Pardo de Tavera, physician by vocation and philologist by avocation. Dr. Felix Pardo de Tavera, also physician by vocation and an artist and sculptor by avocation, and Paz Pardo de Tavera, wife of Juan Luna. These Pardo de Taveras were the children of Don Joaquin Pardo de Tavera, an exile of 1872 who escaped from the Marianas and lived in France.

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On June 24, 1889, a baby girl was born to Juan Luna and Paz Pardo de Tavera. She was their second child, the first was a boy named Andres, whose pet name was Luling. Her baptismal godfather (ninong) was Rizal, who chose her name "Maria dela Paz, Blanca, Laurena, Hermenegilda Juana Luna y Pardo de Tavera."

In his letter to his family in Calamba, Rizal gave an interesting account of his life in Paris. One of these letters (dated May 16, 1889) related:

My daily life in Paris is spent in the following manner: one or two hours in the gymnasium and in fencing, three or four hours in the library, the rest I use up in writing and visiting friends. . . Every other night from 8:00 to 11:00 we meet in a café where we play chess. On Saturdays I am invited to eat at Luna's house, on Sundays at Mrs. Juliana's, and on Fridays I visit the family of Boustead (also a Filipino) where sometimes I take tea."

In another letter to his family, written on September 21, 1889, he said: "We Filipinos gather four times a week and we sing the kundiman, we eat sotanghon, adobo, etc. on Wednesday in the house of Dona Tula, on Thursdays in the house of Dona Juliana."

**Rizal and Paris Exposition of 1889.** Like any ordinary Filipino tourist in a foreign land, Rizal was fascinated by the Universal Exposition of Paris which opened on May 6, 1889. The greatest attraction of this exposition was the Eiffel Tower, 984 feet high, which was built by Alexander Eiffel, celebrated French engineer.

Rizal and his friends attended the opening ceremonies and saw the cutting of the ribbon by President Sadi Carnot of the Third French Republic. Paris was jammed with thousands of tourist coming from all parts of the world. Daily the Exposition drew a vast crowd of 200,000 persons or more.

One of the features of the Exposition was the international art competition, in which Felix R. hidalgo, Juan Luna, Felix Pardo de Tavera, and Rizal participated. Hidalgo's painting was awarded second prize, the paintings of Juan Luna and F. Pardo de Tavera each obtained the third prize, while Rizal's entry (a bust which he modeled) got no prize. This bust was quite good to qualify for the exhibition, but not good enough to win an international prize.

**Kidlat Club.** On March 19, 1889, the same day when he arrived in Paris from London, Rizal organized his paisanos (compatriots) into a society called Kidlat Club. Among the members were Antonio and Juan Luna, Gregorio Aguilera, Fernando Canon, Lauro Dimayuga, Julio Llorente, Guillermo Puato, and Baldomero Roxas.

The Kidlat Club was purely a social society of a temporary nature. It was founded by Rizal simply to bring together the young Filipinos in the French capital so that they could enjoy their sojourn in the city during the duration of the Universal Exposition. Thus he told Blumentritt in a letter dated March 19, 1889: "Today we have formed a Kidlat Club. Kidlat in Tagalog means "lightning" and for the same reasons this club will last only during the Exposition. We have thought of it and formed it in one hour. It will disappear also like lightning."

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**Indios Bravos.** In their sightseeing tour of the exposition grounds, Rizal and the members of the Kidlat Club were amazed to see the Buffalo Bull show which featured the American Indians. These red-skinned Indians were proudly riding their sturdy ponies, elegantly dressed in their native attire and wearing their war feathers and paints.

Rizal was enchanted by the dignified and proud being of the American Indians. He told his friends: "Why should we resent being called Indios by the Spaniards? Look at those Indios from North America –they are not ashamed of their name, let us be like them. Let us be proud of the name Indio and make our Spanish enemies revise their conception of the term. We shall be Indios Bravos!"

Thus was born a new society of Filipino patriots in Paris –the Indios Bravos (Brave Indians). It replaced the ephemeral Kidlat Club. Its members pledged to excel in intellectual and physical prowess in order to win the admiration of the foreigners, particularly the Spaniards. They practiced with great enthusiasm the use of the sword and pistol. Rizal taught them judo, an Asian art of self-defense that he learned in Japan.

**R.D.L.M> Society.** Another society founded by Rizal in Paris during the Universal Exposition of 1889 was the mysterious Sociedad R.D.L.M. (R.D.L.M. Society) Many

biographers of Rizal do not mention it. In fact, its existence and role in the crusade for reforms are really enigmatic. Of the numerous letters written by Rizal and his fellow propagandists, only two mentioned this secret society, as follows: (1) Rizal's Letter To Jose Maria Basa, Paris, September 21, 1889 and (2) Rizal's Letter to Marcelo H. del Pilar, Paris, November 4, 1889.

According to Dr. Leoncio Lopez-Rizal, grandnephew of the hero, the society has a symbol or countersign represented by a circle divided into three parts by two semi-circles having in the center the interlocked letters I and B meaning *Indios Bravos*, and the letters R.D.L.M. placed outside an upper, lower, left and right sides of the circle." The letters R.D.L.M. are believed to be the initials of the society's secret name *Redencion de los Malayos* (Redemption of the Malays).

So much mystery surrounded the R.D.L.M. because Rizal rigidly guarded its secret existence. Evidently, it was patterned after Freemasonry. It had various degrees of membership, "with the members not knowing each other," Only a few of Rizal's trusted friends became members of the R.D.L.M., namely, Gregorio Aguilera, Jose Ma. Basa, Julio Llorente, Marcelo H. del Pilar, Mariano Ponce, Baldomero Roxas, and Father Jose Maria Changco (Filipino priest).

The aim of the secret society, as stated by Rizal was "the propagation of all useful knowledge –scientific, artistic, literary, etc. –in the Philippines." Evidently, there was another aim that is, the redemption of the Malay race. It must be noted that Rizal was inspired by a famous book entitled *Max Havelaar* (1860) written by Multatuli (pseudonym of E.D Dekker, Dutch author). This book exposed the miserable conditions of the oppressed Malay inhabitants of the Netherlands East Indies under Dutch rule.

A discerning study of the available Rizaliana documents and Rizal's actuations show that the R.D.L.M. had something to do with the Malay race. As Dr. Leoncio Lopez-Rizal cogently

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stated, Rizal's colonization project in Borneo was "not merely to have a place where Filipinos could live and work with more liberty as well as free themselves from the oppressive conditions in the Philippines. . . but for something else more important, which is to have freedom of action to attain the aims of the R.D.L.M. which means. . . the Redemption of the Malay Race."

Rizal, writing to Blumentritt from Hong Kong on February 23, 1892, revealed his intention to be a leader of freedom, if not in the Philippines, then in other lands "In Borneo," he told Blumentritt, "I shall not be a planter (plantador) but the leader (caudillo) of the planters who are thinking of emigrating there with me. I feel flattered by the idea that I can still serve my country with my pen. You know very well that always, at all times, I am ready to serve my fatherland not only with my pen, but also with my life whenever my fatherland would demand this sacrifice. But as I see that I am getting old, my ideals and dreams are fading; if it is impossible for me to give freedom my country, at least I should like to give it to these noble compatriots in other lands."

Moreover, the contract for his Bornean colonization included such provisions as the right of the colonists to buy the lands, the free use of the seashores, and the unusual long term of lease for 999 years, "a period of time long enough for many generations to form a nation and to consolidate its status" and to realize Rizal's dream of redeeming the Malay race.

**Annotated Edition of Morga Published.** Rizal's outstanding achievement in Paris was the publication in 1890 of his annotated edition of Morga's *Sucesos*, which he wrote in the British Museum. It was printed by Garnier Freres. The Prologue was written by Professor Blumentritt, upon the request of Rizal.

In his Prologue, Blumentritt commended Rizal for his fine historical scholarship. However, he frankly censured Rizal for two things which revealed Rizal's errors, namely: (1) Rizal commits the error of many historians in appraising the events of the past in the light of present standards and (2) Rizal's attacks on the Church were unfair and unjustified because the abuses of the friars should not be construed to mean that Catholicism is bad. Thus Blumentritt said:

The high estimation of your notes (Rizal's annotations -Z.) does not prevent me from confessing that more than once. I observed that you participate in the error of many modern historians, who judge events of centuring past, in the light of concepts that correspond to contemporary ideas. This should not be. The historian should not impute to the men of the 16<sup>th</sup> century the wide horizon of ideas that move the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The second point with which I am not in agreement has to do with some of your fulminations against Catholicism. I believe that not in religion but in the cruel method and the abuses of many priests should we look for the origin of many events lamentable for religion, for Spain, and for the good name of the European race.

Notwithstanding the two blemishes of Rizal's work, it is a splendid piece of historiography. Rizal annotated and published Morga's *Sucesos* because it was the best of the many histories of the Philippines written by the early Spanish writers, being accurate in the narration of events, unbiased in judgement, and unmarred by childish fantasies.

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Rizal dedicated his new edition of Morga to the Filipino people so that they would know of their glorious past. His dedication is as follows:

### TO THE FILIPINOS

In the *Noli Me Tangere* I started to sketch the present state of our Fatherland: the effect which my attempt produced made me realize, before proceeding to develop before your eyes other pictures to follow, the necessity of first giving an understanding of the past in order the better to judge the present and measure the path traversed during the three centuries.

Born and reared in ignorance of our past like almost all of you: without voice nor authority to speak of what we have not seen nor studied I deemed it necessary to invoke the testimony of an illustrious Spaniard who controlled the destinies of the Philippines at the beginning of its new era and personally witnessed the last days of our ancient nationality. It is, therefore, the shadow of our ancestors' civilization which the author now shall call before you. I transmit to you faithfully his words without changing them nor mutilating them, adapting, only in so far as possible, to modern orthography and introducing greater clearness in the rather defective punctuations of the original, to

facilitate its reading. The office, the nationality, and the virtues of Morga, together with the date and testimonies of his contemporaries, Spaniards for the most part, commend the work to your serious consideration.

If the book succeeds in awakening in you, the consciousness of our past blotted from memory, and in rectifying what has been falsified and calumniated then I shall not have labored in vain, and with this basis, slight though it be, we can all devote ourselves to the study of the future.

In this historical work, Rizal proved that the Filipinos were already civilized before the advent of Spain. They had clothes, government, laws, writing, literature, religion, arts, sciences and commerce with neighboring Asian nations. Rizal thus blasted the historical heresies of the Spanish writers who claimed that the early Filipinos were savages and were of low mentality. Rizal's annotated edition of Morga reads: "Paris, Libreria de Garnier Hermanos, 1890." From this printed date, all biographers of Rizal came to assert that his edition of Morga was published in 1890.

However, there is documentary evidence to show that Rizal's edition of Morga must have come off the press in 1889-not 1890. On October 12, 1889, Blumentritt wrote to Rizal from Leitmeritz, saying: "I have just received your magnificent edition of Morga. This edition with your erudite notes will glorify your name."

Rizal himself, in his letter to Dr. Baldomero Roxas from Paris, December 28, 1889, stated: "Today I sent to Lipa four copies of Morga. Later I will send some more."

From Barcelona, Mariano Ponce wrote to Rizal on December 31, 1889, saying: "I received the book *Sucesos*. Many thanks. I have read only Blumentritt's prologue. Truly

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excellent. Please send me immediately about ten copies that I can send to the Philippines by the first mail that is going there."

The three letters cited above -from Blumentritt, B. Roxas, and M. Ponce -are incontrovertible proofs that Morga's *Sucesos* by Rizal actually came off the press in 1889. Otherwise, how could these three friends of Rizal read the book before 1890?

**Rizal as Historian.** Rizal's research studies in the British Museum (London) and in the Bibliotheque Nationale ( Paris) enriched his historical knowledge. His splendid annotations to Morga's book showed his familiarity with the basic principles of historiography. As he once told Isabelo de los Reyes: "A historian ought to be rigorously imparted. . . I never assert anything on my own authority. I cite texts and when I do, I have them before me."

His knowledge of foreign languages enabled Rizal to read historical documents in the languages in which they were originally written. For instance, he read Pigafetta's famous *First Voyage Around the World* in Italian; the historical works of Marsden, Raffles, Lord Stanley, and Wallace in English; the writings of Blumentritt, Jagor, and Virchow in German; the books of M. jacquet, J. Mallat, and A. Marche in French; and the works of T.H. Pardo de Tavera, Pedro A. Paterno, Miguel Morayta, and Pi y Margall in Spanish. By his extensive reading of archival

sources and books in foreign countries, he acquired wide knowledge not only of Philippine history, but also the history of European colonization in Asia.

Aside from his excellent annotations on Morga's book, Rizal wrote other works which qualify him to be a real historian. Among them were the two historical commentaries written in London, *Ma-yi* (December 6, 1888) and *Tawalisi* of Ibn Batuta (January 7, 1889); *Filipinas dentro de Cien Anos* (The Philippines Within a Century), published in *La Solidaridad* in four issues on September 30, October 31, December 15, 1889 and February 15, 1890; *Sobre la Indolencia de los Filipinos* (The Indolence of the Filipinos), published in *La Solidaridad* in five successive issues on July 15, July 31, August 1, August 31, and September 1, 1890; *La Política Colonial en Filipinas* (colonial Policy in the Philippines), no date; *Manila en el mes de Diciembre, 1872* (Manila in the Month of December, 1872), no date; *Historia de la Familia Rizal de Calamba* (History of the Rizal family of Calamba); no date and *Los Pueblos del archipiélago Índico* (The Peoples of the Indian Archipelago), no date.

**The Philippine within a Century.** In this article Rizal expressed his views on the Spanish colonization in the Philippines and predicted with amazing accuracy the tragic end of Spain's sovereignty in Asia. He portrayed at the beginning of his article the glorious past of the Filipino people, then described their economic stagnation and unhappiness under the harsh and bungling Spanish rule. Toward the last paragraphs of the article, he peered into the future and warned Spain of what would happen to her colonial empire in Asia if she would not adopt a more liberal and enlightened policy toward the Philippines.

Significant passages in this historical essay are as follows:

To recapitulate: the Philippines will remain Spanish if they enter upon the life of law and civilization, if the rights of their inhabitants are respected, if the other rights due

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them are granted, if the liberal policy of the government is carried out without trickery or meanness, without subterfuges or false interpretations.

Otherwise, if an attempt is made to see in the Islands a lode to be exploited, a resource to satisfy ambitions. . . shutting its ears to all cries of reason, then, however great may be the loyalty of the Filipinos, it will be impossible to hinder the operations of the inexorable laws of history. Colonies established to subserve the policy and commerce of the sovereign country, all eventually become independent. . .

If the Philippines secure their independence after heroic and stubborn conflict, they can rest assured that neither England nor Germany, nor France, and still less Holland will dare to take up what Spain has been unable to hold.

Perhaps the great American Republic, whose interests lie in the Pacific and who had no hand in the spoliation of Africa may some day dream of foreign possession. This is not impossible, for the example is contagious, covetousness and ambition are among the strongest vices. . .

Very likely, the Philippines will defend with expressible valor the liberty secured at the price of so much blood and sacrifice. With the new men that will spring from their soil and with the recollection of their past, they will perhaps strive to enter freely upon the wide road of progress, and all will labor together to strengthen their fatherland. . . . Then the mines will be made to give up their gold for relieving distress, iron for weapons, copper, lead, and coal. Perhaps the country will revive the maritime and mercantile life for which the islanders are fitted by their nature, ability, and instincts, and once more free, like the bird that leaves its cage, like the flower that unfolds to the air, will recover the pristine virtues that are gradually dying out and will again become addicted to peace – cheerful, happy, joyous, hospitable, and daring.

**The Indolence of the Filipinos.** This other essay of Rizal is also a prestigious work of historical scholarship. It is an able defense of the alleged indolence of the Filipinos, in the spirit of a real scholar, Rizal made a critical study of the causes why his people did not work hard during the Spanish regime. His main thesis was that the Filipinos are not by nature indolent.

Long before the coming of the Spaniards, he pointed out, the Filipino were industrious and hard-working. They were very active in agriculture, industries, and commerce. The Spanish conquest of the country brought about a decline in economic activities because the Filipinos had abandoned their pre-Spanish industries and worked less than their ancestors. Such decline in economic life was due to certain causes: (1) the native revolts and other internal disorders which followed the establishment of Spanish rule, (2) the wars which the Filipino fought for Spain against the Dutch, Portuguese, English, and other enemies; (3) the frightful raids on the coastal towns and village of Christian Philippines by the Muslim pirates of Mindanao and Sulu; (4) the forced labor which compelled thousands of Filipino laborers to work in shipyards, roads, bridges, and other public works, resulting in the abandonment of industry, commerce, and agriculture; (5) lack of stimulus to work harder because the people could not enjoy the fruits of their labor; (6) government neglect and indifference to agriculture, industry, and commerce; (7) the bad example

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shown by the Spaniards in despising manual labor; (8) the teaching of Spanish missionaries that it is easier for a poor man to enter heaven than for a rich man, hence the Filipinos prefer not to work and be poor so that they could easily enter heaven after they die; (9) encouragement and propagation of gambling by the Spanish authorities; and (10) system of Spanish education did not promote economic enterprise and activity, for, as Rizal asserted, the education of the native was “from his birth until he sinks into his grave. . . is brutalizing, depressive and anti-human” and “deprives him of his dignity”.

It is true, admitted Rizal, that the Filipinos are easy-going and do not work so hard because they are wise enough to adjust themselves to their warm, tropical climate. They do not have to kill themselves working hard in order to live because nature gives them abundant harvest by working less than those in temperate and arid countries. “The fact,” explained Rizal, “is that in tropical countries violent work is not a good thing, as it is death, destruction, annihilation. Nature knows this and like a just mother has therefore made the earth more fertile, and more productive, as a compensation. An hour’s work under that burning sun, in the midst of pernicious influences springing from nature in activity, is equal to a day’s labor in a temperate climate; it is, then, just that the earth yields a hundredfold!”

**International Association of Filipinologists.** Taking advantage of world attention which was then focused at the Universal Exposition of 1889 in Paris, Rizal proposed to establish an “International Association of Filipinologist” and have its inaugural convention in the French capital. He first submitted this idea to Blumentritt in a letter dated January 14, 1889, and the latter gladly supported him. He wrote the prospectus of this international association. According to his prospectus, the aim of the association is “to study the Philippines from the specific and historical point of view.” The officers were as follows:

President .....	Dr. Ferdinand Blumentritt (Austrian)
Vice –President .....	Mr. Edmund Plauchut (French)
Counsellor .....	Dr. Reinhold Rost (Anglo-German)
Counsellor .....	Dr. Antonio Ma. Regidor (Filipino-Spanish)
Secretary .....	Dr. Jose Rizal (Filipino)

Rizal scheduled the holding of the inaugural convention of the International Association of Filipinologists in Paris in August 1889. He prepared the agenda and invited renowned scholars in Europe, such as Dr. Reinhold Rost, Sir Henry Yule, Dr. Feodor Jagor, Dr. A.B. Meyer, Dr. H. Kern, and Dr. Czepelak, to take part in the proceedings. Unfortunately, their inaugural convention did not materialize because the French government discouraged the holding of conferences by private organizations during the period of the international exposition.

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**Project for Filipino College in Hong Kong.** Another magnificent project of Rizal in Paris which also fizzled out was his plan to establish a modern college in Hong Kong. He wrote to his friend, Jose Maria Basa, about this matter. According to Rizal, this college aims “to train and educate men of good family and financial means in accordance with the demands of modern times and circumstances”. A rich Filipino resident in Paris, Mr. Mariano Cunanan, from Mexico, Pampanga, promised to help him raise P40,000 as initial capital for the college.

The curriculum consisted of the following subjects:

Ethics – Study of Religion – Natural Law – Civil Law – Deportment – Hygiene.  
Mathematics - Physics and Chemistry - Natural history - Geography - Political Economy.  
Universal History - Philippine History - Logic, Rhetoric, and Poetics.  
Spanish - English - French - German - Chinese - Tagalog.  
Gymnastics - Equitation - Fencing - Swimming - Music - Drawing - Dancing.

Unfortunately, this project of Rizal to establish a modern college in Hong Kong did not materialize. However, years later, during his exile in Dapitan, he actually founded a school for boys, in which he put into practice some of his splendid pedagogical concepts.

**“Por Telefono.”** We have mentioned before that Rizal defended his *Noli* from the slanderous attack of Fray Jose Rodriguez by penning a satirical booklet entitled *La Vision del Fray Rodriguez*. In the fall of 1889 he wrote another satirical work entitled *Por Telefono* as a reply to another slanderer, Fr. Salvador Font, who masterminded the banning of his *Noli*.

**Por Telefono** was published in booklet from in Barcelona, 1889. Rizal received the printed copies from Mariano Ponce, as revealed by his letter to the latter, dated Paris, August 13, 1889.

This satirical pamphlet under the authorship of “Dimas Alang” (one of Rizal’s pen-names) is a witty satire which ridicules Father Font. It describes in comical vein a telephone conversation between Father Font who was in Madrid and the father provincial of the San Augustin Convent in Manila.

Incidentally, *Por Telefono* demonstrates not only Rizal’s sparkling wit, but also his prophetic insight. Its opening paragraph reads as follows:

In the year 1900 the Philippines for the first time was connected to the Metropolis (Madrid –Z.) by means of the telephone laid out by an Anglo-Catalan company called The Trans-Oceanic Telephone Company, so well-known in its time for its truly bold ideas.

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By this opening paragraph, Rizal predicted much ahead of his times that people could carry on overseas telephonic conversations. It is amazing how he could have foreseen this phenomenon, which we enjoy now. History shows that the first radio-telegraph signals received by Marconi across the Atlantic was in 1901 –twelve years after the publication of Rizal’s *Por Telefono*.

**Christmas in Paris.** December 25, 1889 was a wintry day in Paris. Rizal and Jose Albert, who were living frugally in a small room occupied by Capitan Justo Trinidad, planned to have a sumptuous Christmas dinner. They scraped enough money to celebrate Yuletide. They prepared a Christmas dinner with fried chicken, rice and vegetables. This dinner proved to be Rizal’s last Christmas dinner in Paris.

Shortly after New Year, Rizal made a brief visit to London. Biographers do not know the purpose of this visit. It may be due to two reasons: (1) to check up his annotated edition of Morga’s *Sucesos* with the original copy in the British Museum and (2) to see Gertrude Beckett for the last time.

By the middle of January 1890, he was back in Paris. He complained of a terrible headache. At that time an epidemic of influenza was raging in Europe. Fortunately, he was not stricken with flu.

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## Chapter 16 In Belgian Brussels (1890)

On January 28, 1890, Rizal left Paris for Brussels, capital of Belgium. Two reasons impelled Rizal to leave Paris, namely: (1) the cost of living in Paris was very high because of the Universal Exposition and (2) the gay social life of the city hampered his literary works, especially the writing of his second novel *El Filibusterismo*. His friend, including M.H. del Pilar and Valentin Ventura, were of the belief that he left because he was running away from a girl just as he left London. When he told them that the reason for his leaving Paris was economic because his money was dwindling, Ventura generously invited him to live with him in Paris without paying rent. He could not accept Ventura's invitation, for he had a high sense of dignity and would not accept charity from any man.

**Life in Brussels.** Rizal was accompanied by Jose Albert when he moved to Brussels. They lived in a modest boarding house on 38 Rue Philippe Champagne, which was run by two

Jacey sisters (Suzanne and Marie). Later Albert left the city, and was replaced by Jose Alejandro, an engineering student.

In Brussels, Rizal was busy writing his second novel which was a continuation of the *Noli*. He was never idle even for an hour. Aside from writing its chapters, he wrote articles for *La Solidaridad* and letters to his family and friends. Being a physician, he spent part of his time in the medical clinic. For recreation, he had gymnastics at the gymnasium and target practice and fencing at the armory. Thus he wrote to Antonio Luna: "I go to the clinic, I read, I write, I go to the gymnasium and to the armory. Speaking of shooting, I am sending you a target containing ten bullets holes; it was seven and a half meters from me. At twenty-five meters I can put all my shots into a twenty-centimeter target."

Speaking of Rizal's frugality Jose Alejandro, his roommate in Brussels, said: "In Brussels we took our meals in a house and Rizal on one occasion suggested that we eat pancit. We were spending so much a day and we spent one day's appropriation for the purchase of the necessary ingredients. It seems, however, that he committed an error in his calculations this time for we spent two day's appropriation and the pancit came out more than what we intended to have. In order to remedy the error we were compelled to have pancit for lunch and supper for two days."

**Articles Published in La Solidaridad.** During his sojourn in Brussels, Rizal wrote articles for *La Solidaridad* in defense of his oppressed people and to point out the evils of Spanish rule in the Philippines. Among these articles which appeared in the patriotic periodical were:

1. "A La Defensa" (To La Defensa), April 30, 1889. This was a reply to an anti-Filipino writing of a Spanish author Patricio de la Escosura which was published by *La Defensa* on March 30, 1889.

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2. "La Verdad Para Todos" (The Truth For All), May 31, 1889. Rizal's defense against the Spanish charges that the native local officials were ignorant and depraved.

3. "Vicente Barrantes' Teatro tagalo," June 15, 1889. In this article, Rizal exposes Barrantes' ignorance on the Tagalog theatrical art.

4. "Una Profanacion" (A Profanation), July 31, 1889. A bitter attack against the friars for denying Christian burial to Mariano Herbosa in Calamba because he was a brother-in-law of Rizal. Herbosa, husband of Lucia, died of cholera on May 23, 1889.

5. "Verdades Nuevas" (New Truths), July 31, 1889. A reply to Vicente Belloc Sanchez' letter published in *La Patria*, Madrid newspaper, on July 4, 1889, which asserted that the granting of reforms in the Philippines would ruin the "peaceful and maternal rule" of the friars.

6. "Crueldad" (Cruelty), August 15, 1889. A brilliant defense of Blumentritt from a scurrilous attacks of his enemies.

7. “Diferencias” (Differences), September 15, 1889. A reply to a biased entitled “Old Truths” published in *La Patria* on August 14, 1889, which ridiculed those Filipinos who asked for reforms.

8. “Inconsequencias” (*Inconsequences*), November 30, 1889. A defense of Antonio Luna against the attack of Pablo Mir Deas in the Barcelona newspaper *El Pueblo Soberano*.

9. “Llanto y Risas” (Tears and Laughter), November 30, 1889. A denunciation of Spanish racial prejudice against the brown Filipinos.

Rizal mentioned in this article how the audience, composed mostly of Spaniards and mestizos, stopped applauding when he received first prize in the literary contest in 1880 because of his brown color.

10. “Ingratitudes” (Ingratitude), January 15, 1890. A reply to Governor General Veleriano Weyler who, while visiting Calamba, told the people that they “should not allow themselves to be deceived by the vain promises of their ungrateful sons.”

**New Orthography of Tagalog Language.** In spite of his European education and his knowledge of foreign languages, Rizal loved his own native language. He was the first to advocate the Filipinization of its orthography. For instance, the Tagalog letter *k* and *w* should be used instead of Spanish *c* and *o*, thus the Hispanized Tagalog word *salacot* (peasant's head-gear) should be written *salakot* and the Hispanized Tagalog term *arao* be changed into *araw*.

As early as in September, 1886, when he was in Leipzig Rizal adopted the Filipinized Tagalog orthography in his Tagalog translations of Schiller's *Wilhelm Tell* and Andersen's *Fairy Tales* and again he used it in his first novel *Noli Me Tangere* (Berlin, 1887).

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While he was sojourning in Brussels, his article entitled “Sobre la Nueva Ortografia de la Lengua Tagala” (The new Orthography of the Tagalog Language) was published in *La Solidaridad* on April 15, 1890. In this article he laid down the rules of the new Tagalog orthography and, with modesty and sincerity, he gave the credit for the adoption of this new orthography to Dr. Trinidad h. Pardo de Tavera, author of the celebrated work *El Sanscrito en La Legua Tagala* (Sanskrit in the Tagalog Language) which was published in Paris, 1884.

“I put this on record,” wrote Rizal, “so that when the history of this orthography is traced, which is already being adopted by the enlightened Tagalists, that what is Caesar's be given to Caesar. This innovation is due solely to Dr. Pardo de Tavera's studies on Tagalismo. I was one of its most zealous propagandists.”

**Rizal Criticizes Madrid Filipinos for Gambling.** In Brussels, Rizal received news from Juan Luna and Valentin Ventura that the Filipinos in Spain were destroying the good name of their nation by gambling too much. These two compatriots in Paris urged him to do something about it.

Accordingly, Rizal wrote to M.H. del Pilar on May 28, 1890 to remind the Filipinos in Madrid that they did not come to Europe to gamble, but to work for their Fatherland's freedom. His letters runs as follows:

Luna in Paris complains of the gambling of the Filipinos in Madrid, so does Ventura. They say that, according to news from the Philippines, the parents are very much disgusted. . . I am afraid we are serving the friars scheme. There is nothing at home to remind them that the Filipino does not come to Europe to gamble and amuse himself, but to work for his liberty and for the dignity of his race. It is not necessary to leave the Philippines to gamble, for there they already gamble very much. If we who are called upon to do something, if we in whom the poor people place their modest hopes, spend our time in these things precisely when the years of youth should be employed in something more noble and lofty for the very reason that youth is noble and lofty, I fear much that we are fighting for a useless illusion and that, instead of being worthy of liberty, we are worthy of slavery.

I appeal to the patriotism of all Filipinos to give the Spanish people proof that we are superior to our misfortune and that neither are we capable of being brutalized, nor can our noble sentiments be deafened with the corruption of customs.

The gambling Filipinos in Madrid were angry when they learned of Rizal's moralizing. They derisively called him "Papa" (Pope) instead of "Pepe".

**Bad News from Home.** Letters from home which Rizal received in Brussels worried him. The Calamba agrarian trouble was getting worse. The management of the Dominican hacienda continually raised the land rents until such time that Rizal's father refused to pay his rent. Other tenants, inspired by Don Francisco's courage, also refused to pay the unreasonable rents.

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The Dominican Order filed a suit in court to dispossess the Rizal family of their lands in Calamba. Meanwhile the tenants, including the Rizal family, were persecuted. Paciano and the brother-in-law Antonio Lopez (husband of Narcisa) and Silvertre Ubaldo (husband of Olympia) were deported in Mindoro. Another brother-in-law, Manuel t. Hidalgo (husband of Saturnina) was banished for a second time to Bohol.

The sad news from home depressed Rizal. His heart bled to know the sorrowful plight of his parents, brother, and brothers-in-law. From Brussels, he wrote to his sister Soledad on June 6, 1890:

I have caused much harm to our family, but at least there remains to us the consolation of knowing that the motive is not disgraceful nor does it humiliate anybody. On the contrary it raises us up and gives us more dignity in the eyes of our very enemies themselves; to fall with the head high and the brow serene is not to fall, it is to triumph. The sad thing is to fall with the stain of dishonor. Moreover, I may be what my enemies desire me to be, yet never an accusation are they able to hurl against me which makes me

blush or lower my forehead, and I hope that God will be merciful enough with me to prevent me from committing one of those faults which would involve my family.

**Presentiment of Death.** In his moment of despair Rizal had bad dreams during the nights in Brussels when he was restless because he was always thinking of his unhappy family in Calamba. Although he was not superstitious, he feared that he would not live long. He was not afraid to die, but he wanted to finish his second novel before he went to his grave.

This morbid presentiment of early death was divulged by him to M. H. del Pilar, in a letter from Brussels dated June 11, 1890, as follows: "Sad presentiments assault me though I do not give them entire credence. In my childhood I had a strange belief that I would not reach thirty years of age. I do not know every night I had no other dream than that my friends and relatives were dead. Once I dreamed that I descended by a path a multitude of persons seated, dressed in white, with white faces, silent and surrounded by white light. There I saw my two brethren, one of them already dead and the other one still alive. Although I do not believe in this things and although my body is very strong and I have no illness and have no fear, I am preparing myself for death and for any eventuality. "Laong Laan" (Ever Ready) is my true name. for this reason, I want to finish at all costs the second volume of the *Noli* and if it is possible I do not want to leave unfinished what nobody else could continue. . . Do not believe that I am depressed or sad; every two days I go to the gymnasium and practice fencing and shooting, but who can tell any misfortune that may come?"

**Preparation to Go Home.** In the face of the sufferings which afflicted his family, Rizal planned to go home. He could not stay in Brussels writing a book while his parents, relatives, and friend in the distant Philippines were persecuted.

Upon hearing that Graciano Lopez Jaena was planning to go to Cuba, he wrote to Ponce on July 9, 1890, opposing Graciano plan of action. He said that Graciano should not go to Cuba to die of Yellow fever, instead he "ought to go to the Philippines to allow himself to be killed in defense of his ideals" Adding Rizal said "Which have only once to die, and if we do not die well

, we lose an opportunity which will not again be presented to us."

In other letter to Ponce, dated July 18, 1890, he expressed his determination to go home, as follows:

I want to go back to the Philippines, and although I know it would be daring and imprudent, what does that matter? The Filipinos are all very prudent, and that is why our country is going the way she is. At it seems to me that we are not making any progress by following prudence, I am going to look for another pathway! The only thing that can detain me is a doubt whether my parents agree. I am afraid to disturb their last years. In case they should object to my homecoming, I would work for a livelihood in some other part of the world.

All his friends, including Blumentritt, Jose Maria Basa, and Ponce, were horrified by Rizal's plan to return to the Philippines. They warned him of the danger that awaited him at home.

**Decision to Go to Madrid.** Rizal ignored the dire warning of his friends. No treat of danger could change his plan.

Something, however, happened that suddenly made him change his mind. It was a letter from Paciano which related that they lost the case against the Dominicans in Manila, but they appealed it to the Supreme Court in Spain, hence a lawyer was needed to handle it in Madrid. Accordingly, Rizal wrote to M.H. del Pilar that he was going to Madrid, in order to supervise the handling of the case.

In another letter to Ponce, written at Brussels, July 29, 1890, Rizal announced that he was leaving Brussels at the beginning of the following month and would arrive in Madrid about the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> (August).

**“To My Muse” (1890).** It was against a background of mental anguish in Brussels, during those sad days when he was worried by family disasters, that he wrote his pathetic poem, “A Mi . . .” (To My Muse). This poem lacks the exquisiteness of “To the Flowers of Heidelberg” and is less polished than “To the Filipino Youth,” but it is passionate in feeling. It runs as follows:

#### TO MY MUSE

Invoke no longer is the Muse  
The lyre is out of date:  
The poets it no longer use,  
And youth its inspiration now imbues  
With other form and state.

If today our fancies aught  
Of verse would still require,

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Helicon’s hill remains unsought;  
And without heed we but inquire.  
Why the coffee is not brought.

In the place of thought sincere  
That our hearts may feel,  
We must seize a pen of steel,  
And with verse and line severe  
Fling abroad a jest and jeer.

Muse, that in the past inspired me,  
And with songs of love hast fired me;  
Go thou now to full repose,  
For today in sordid prose  
I must earn the gold that hired me.

Now I must ponder deep,  
Meditate, and struggle on;  
E'en sometimes I must weep;  
For he who love would keep  
Great pain has undergone.

Fled are the days of ease,  
The days of Love's delight;  
When flowers still would please  
And give to suffering souls surcease  
From pain and sorrow's blight.

One by one they have passed on,  
All I loved and moved among;  
Dead or married –from me gone,  
For all I place my heart upon  
By fate adverse are stung.

Go thou, too, O Muse, depart,  
Other regions fairer find;  
For my land but offers art  
For the laurel, chains that bind,  
For a temple prisons blind.

But before thou leavest me, speak:  
Tell me with thy voice sublime,  
Thou couldst ever from me seek  
A song of sorrow for the weak,  
Defiance to the tyrant's crime.

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**Romance with Petite Jacoby.** Two things brought some measure to cheer to the despondent Rizal, as he was preparing for his trip to Madrid. First was the summertime festival of Belgium, which was celebrated in carnival style –with colorful costumes, fantastic floats, and many days of merriment. Second was his romance with Petite Jacoby, the pretty niece of his landladies.

Rizal was so charming and dignified a gentleman that Petite Susanne was attracted to him. He was lonely in a strange country and Leonor Rivera was so far away. Naturally, being a normal young man, he found certain bliss in the company of a pretty Belgian girl. He might have flirted with Petite Susanne, but he could not stop low to a deceptive amorous relationship.

Like other women –Segunda Katigbak, Orang Valenzuela, Leonor Rivera, O-Sei-San, Gettie Beckett, Consuelo Ortiga y Perez and the Nellie Boustead –Suzanne fell in love with Rizal. She cried when he left toward the end of July, 1890 for Madrid, stopping for a few days in Paris.

Although Rizal was in faraway Madrid, Suzanne could not forget him. She wrote to him in French:

Where are you now? Do you think of me once in a while? I am reminded of our tender conversations, reading your letter, although it is cold and indifferent. Here in your letter I have something which makes up for your absence. How pleased I would be to follow you, to travel with you who are always in my thoughts.

You wish me all kinds of luck, but forget that in the absence of a beloved one a tender heart cannot feel happy.

A thousand things serve to distract your mind, my friend; but in my case, I am sad, lonely, always alone with my thoughts –nothing, absolutely nothing relieves my sorrow. Are you coming back? That's what I want and desire most ardently –you cannot refuse me.

I do not despair and I limit myself to murmuring against times which runs so fast when it carries us towards a separation, but goes so slowly when its bringing us together again.

I feel very unhappy thinking that perhaps I might never see you again.

Goodbye! You know with one word you can make me very happy. Aren't you going to write to me?

\* \* \* \* \*

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## Chapter 17

# Misfortunes in Madrid (1890-91)

Early in August, 1890, Rizal arrived in Madrid. He tried all legal means to seek justice for his family and the Calamba tenants, but to no avail. Disappointment after disappointment piled on him, until the cross he bore to seemed insuperable to carry. He almost fought two duels –one with Antonio Luna and other with Wenceslao E. Retana. On top of his misfortunes, Leonor Rivera married a British engineer. The infidelity of the girl, with whom he was engaged for eleven years, broke his heart. With resilient strength of character, he survived the bitter pangs of love's disillusionment and continued his mission to redeem his oppressed people.

**Failure to Get Justice for Family.** Upon arrival in Madrid, Rizal immediately sought the help of the Filipino colony, the Asociacion Hispano-Filipina, and the liberal Spanish newspapers (*La Justicia*, *El Globo*, *La Republica*, *El Resumen*, etc.) in securing justice for the oppressed Calamba tenants, including his family. Together with M. H. del Pilar (who acted as his lawyer) and Dr. Dominador Gomez (secretary of Asociacion Hispano-Filipina) in order to protest the injustices committed by Governor General Valeriano Weyler and the Dominicans against the Calamba folks.

Nothing came out of Rizal's interview with Minister Fabie. As *El Resumen*, a Madrid newspaper which sympathized with the Filipino case, said: "To cover the ears, open the purse, and fold the arms –this is the Spanish colonial policy".

More terrible news reached Rizal in Madrid as he was waging a futile fight for justice. From his brother-in-law, Silvestre Ubaldo, he received a copy of the ejectment order by the Dominicans against Francisco Rizal and other Calamba tenants. From his sister, Saturnina, he learned of the deportation of Paciano (Rizal), Antonio (Lopez), Silvestre (Ubaldo), Teong (Mateo Elejorde), and Dandoy (Dr. Rizal's relative) to Mindoro; these unfortunate deportees were arrested in Calamba and were shipped out of Manila on September 6, 1890. He further learned from Saturnina's letter that their parents have been forcibly ejected from their home and were then living in the house of Narcisa (Antonio's wife).

In his desperation, Rizal sought the aid of the liberal Spanish statesmen, who were former members of the Ministry, including Becerra and Maura. Again, he was disappointed, for these statesmen merely gave him honeyed words of sympathy, and nothing else.

Blumentritt in Leitmeritz hearing of his friends plight, urged him to see Queen Regent Maria Cristina (then ruler of Spain during the minority of Alfonso XIII). But how could he see Her majesty? He had neither powerful friends to bring him to the queen's presence nor gold to grease the palms of influential courtiers.

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**Rizal's Eulogy to Panganiban.** Barely had Rizal settled down in Madrid, when he experienced another disappointment. This was the doleful news that his friend, Jose Ma. Panganiban, his talented co-worker in the Propaganda Movement, died in Barcelona on August 19, 1890, after a lingering illness. He deeply mourned the passing of his Bicol hero.

With a sorrowing heart, Rizal took up his pen and wrote a great eulogy to Panganiban as follows:

Panganiban, that excellent companion of labor and difficulty, that amiable friend and countryman beloved, had just described to the tomb at the early age of 27 years. We just caught his last whisper, saw him expire in our arms, as it were, and it seems as if we are listening to his phrases saturated with energetic patriotism, inspired by the purest love of his native land . . .

His was a desperation to die far, very far from the native soil, separated from his family, from his deepest affections, and in the flower of his youth, in his rosiest illusions and hopes, when a rosy future was in sight . . .

That is why last words were of loving remembrance of his idolized Fatherland, were a heartfelt farewell to the Philippines. And if we still take into account certain events of his life consecrated to a most vehement love of his native land, we understand the sorrow his heart must have felt to see buried with him legitimate hopes, ardent desires, and just aspirations.

August 19, (1890), was a day of mourning to numerous Filipinos in Europe. And what a fatal coincidence on the same month and day of the year just passed we had to deplore the death of another friend and countryman, Feliciano Gonzales Timbang.

A sad fate! Panganiban, endowed with uncommon talent, with privileged intelligence, and with indefatigable industry, was of the sacred, legitimates hopes of his unfortunate country. That head had been buried in the dust, that vigorous intelligence has been prematurely ended. Filipinas, how unfortunate thou art!

**Aborted Duel With Antonio Luna.** Towards the end of August, 1890, Rizal attended a social reunion of the Filipinos in Madrid. As was customary in these weekly reunions of the paisanos, wine was served. After drinking so many glasses, the guests became more loquacious and the conversations flowed freely. One of them, Antonio Luna, became drunk.

At that time, Luna was bitter because of his frustrated romance with Nellie Boustead. Deep in his heart, he was blaming Rizal for his failure to win her, although Rizal had previously explained to him that he had nothing to do about it. In a fit of jealousy, which his alcohol-befogged mind could not control, Luna uttered certain unsavory remarks about Nellie.

Rizal heard him. His high sense of chivalry could not tolerate any slur against the honor of any woman. Angered by the slanderous remarks, he challenged Luna, his friend, to a duel.

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Rizal was a better pistol shot than Luna. But the latter was his superior as a swordsman. Luna, as the challenged party, had the choice of weapons. Logically, he would have to choose the sword; in which case, Rizal's life would be in jeopardy.

The Filipinos were shocked by the incident. They tried to pacify Rizal and Luna, pointing out to both that such a duel would damage their cause in Spain.

Fortunately, Luna, when he became sober, realized that he had made a fool of himself during his drunken state. He apologized for his bad remarks about the girl. Rizal immediately accepted his apology, and the two became good friends again.

**Rizal Challenges Retana to Duel.** Rizal was, by nature, neither hot-tempered nor pugnacious. But when, the honor of his people, family, women, or friends was besmirched, he

never hesitated to fight even if he were risking his own life. On another occasion, he challenged another man to a duel –Wenceslao E. Retana, his bitter enemy of the pen.

Retana, a talented Spanish scholar, was then a press agent of the friars in Spain. He used to attack the Filipinos, including Rizal, in various newspapers in Madrid and other cities in Spain. One day he imprudently wrote an article in *La Epoca*, an anti-Filipino newspaper in Madrid, asserting that the family and friends of Rizal had not paid their rents so that they were ejected from their lands in Calamba by the Dominicans.

Such an insult stirred Rizal to action. Immediately, he sent his seconds to Retana with his challenge to a duel. Only Retana's blood or his apology could vindicate the good name of Rizal's family and friends.

Because he believed that discretion is the better part of valor, and, more so to save his own skin, Retana at once published a retraction and an apology in the newspapers. His seconds had warned him that he had no chance whatsoever against Rizal on a field of honor, for Rizal was his both pistol and sword.

The incident silenced Retana's pen against Rizal. He developed a great admiration for the latter, and years afterward he wrote the first book-length biography of the greatest Filipino hero, whose talents he came to recognize and whose martyrdom he glorified.

**Infidelity if Leonor Rivera.** In the autumn of 1890 Rizal was feeling bitter at so many disappointments he encountered in Madrid. One night he and some friends attended a play at Teatro Apolo, and there he lost his gold watch chain with a locket containing the picture of Leonor Rivera, his beloved sweetheart.

The loss of the locket proved to be a bad omen. Early in December, 1890, with the cold winds of winter sweeping across the shivering city, Rizal received a letter from Leonor, announcing her coming marriage to an Englishman (the choice of her mother) and asking his forgiveness. This letter was a great blow to him. He was stunned, his eyes dimmed with tears, and his heart broke.

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Several agonizing weeks passed before he could confide to his best friend, Blumentritt. In his reply to Rizal, dated February 15, 1891, Blumentritt consoled him, saying: "Your last letter filled us with sadness; after all the misfortunes that have befallen you, now your beloved has abandoned you. My wife cannot understand how a woman whom a Rizal has honored with his love would be able to abandon him; she is disgusted with this girl. I myself feel it deeply, but only on your account, for I know how your heart is pained; but you are one of the heroes who conquer pain from a wound inflicted by a woman, because they follow higher ends. You have a courageous heart, and you like one of those enchanted princesses in the German legends, who is a captive of a horrid dragon, until she is freed by a valiant knight".

Three months later, Blumentritt sent another comforting letter saying: "I am grieved with all my heart that you have lost the girl to whom you were engaged, but if she was able to

renounce a Rizal, she did not possess the nobility of your spirit. She like a child who cast away a diamond seize a pebble... In other words, she is not the woman for Rizal".

**Rizal-Del Pilar Rivalry.** Toward the closing days of 1890 there arose an unfortunate rivalry between Rizal and M.H. del Pilar for supremacy. Rizal, the most talented Filipino of his time, was until then the undisputed leader of the Filipinos in Europe. On the other hand, Del Pilar, the fearless lawyer-journalist, was gaining prestige in Madrid for his vigorous editorials in *La Solidaridad*, which he came to own. He had purchased this fortnightly periodical from Pablo Rianzares, its first proprietor, and had replaced Graciano Lopez Jaena as its editor.

As leader, Rizal tried to imbue his compatriots with his own idealism for he believed that to gain prestige for the Propaganda Movement and to win the respect of the Spanish people they must possess high standards of morality, dignity, and spirit of sacrifice. Unfortunately, his idealism was not shared by certain frivolous countrymen, who loved wine, women and cards. Consequently, Rizal's leadership declined. Some of his former admirers, who supported his leadership turned against him because they resented his interference in their private lives. They became supporters of Del Pilar.

The editorial policy of *La Solidaridad* under Del Pilar's management enhanced the cleavage between Rizal and Del' Pilar. Rizal and his close friends objected to the periodical's editorial policy which was occasionally contrary to Rizal's political views.

To avert the break-up between Rizal and M.H. del Pilar, the Filipinos in Madrid, numbering about ninety, met on January 1, 1891, New Year's Day, to patch up their differences and to intensify the campaign to reform. It was decided in this meeting that a leader called Responsible, be chosen to direct the affairs of the Filipino community and to determine the editorial policy of *La Solidaridad*. Del Pilar opposed the proposition that the periodical be placed under the control of the Responsible on the ground that it was a private enterprise; however, he was willing to publish articles that would express the aspirations and demands of the Filipino people.

Owing to Del Pilar's opposition, the proposition to place *La Solidaridad* under the control of the Responsible was abandoned. The meeting proceeded to the business of electing the Responsible. It was agreed that the Responsible should be elected by a two-thirds vote of the Filipino community.

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**Rizal Abdicates His Leadership.** The election took place during the first week of February, 1891: the Filipinos were divided into two hostile camps –the Rizalists and the Pilaristas. Passion ran high, inflaming animosity and disunity in the ranks of the compatriots. From the very beginning, on the first day of the voting, Rizal was winning, but he could not obtain the required two-thirds vote to be proclaimed Responsible. On the second day of balloting, the result was again indecisive –Rizal won but the votes cast for him did not reach the required two-thirds.

The situation was becoming explosive and critical. On the third day, Mariano Ponce appealed to his countrymen with stirring eloquence to vote for Rizal. Some Pilaristas, evidently, heeded his plea. For the voting that day resulted in Rizal's victory. Having obtained the necessary two-thirds vote, he became the *Responsible*.

But Rizal graciously declined the coveted position. He was a man of honor and dignity, with a high sense of delicadeza, which many politicians in all countries and in all ages, seldom possess, so that he did not relish being a leader of a divided people. He knew that some of his compatriots who supported Del Pilar despised or disliked him. So he preferred to abdicate his leadership rather than be the cause of disunity and bitterness among his countrymen.

**Adios Madrid.** Rizal wrote a brief note thanking his compatriots for electing him as Responsible. Sadly, he packed up his bags, paid his bills, and boarded a train leaving for Biarritz.

As his train pulled out of the railway station, he gazed through its window at the city of Madrid, where he was happy during his first sojourn (1882-85) but unhappy on his second visit (1890-91). It was the last time he saw Madrid. His agonizing heart bade goodbye to the metropolis, of which he had written years ago:

Madrid is one of the gayest cities of the world which combines the spirit of Europe and the East, which has adopted the orderliness, the convenience, the bon ton of civilized Europe without disdaining, without repelling, the brilliant colors, the ardent passions, the primitive customs of the African tribes, of the chivalrous Arabs whose traces are still recognizable everywhere, in the look, feelings, and prejudices of the people, and even in their laws.

## Chapter 18

# Biarritz Vacation and Romance with Nelly Boustead (1891)

To seek solace for his disappointments in Madrid, Rizal took a vacation in the resort city of Biarritz on the fabulous French Riviera. He was a guest of the rich Boustead family at its

winter residence –Villa Eliada. He had befriended Mr. Eduardo Boustead and his wife and two charming daughters (Adelina and Nellie) in Paris in 1889-90. He used to fence with the Boustead sisters at the studio of Juan Luna and to attend parties at the Boustead Parisian home. It was in Biarritz where he had a serious romance with Nellie and finished the last chapter of his second novel, *El Filibusterismo*.

**With the Bousteads in Biarritz.** When Rizal arrived in Biarritz at the beginning of February, 1891, he was warmly welcomed by the Bousteads, particularly Mr. Boustead who had taken a great liking for him because of his remarkable talents. As a family guest, he was treated with friendliness and hospitality by Mr. Boustead, Adelina, Nellie and Aunt Isabel (Mrs. Boustead's sister).

The one-month vacation in Biarritz worked wonders for Rizal. The scenic beaches filled with tourists from all parts of the world, the refreshing breezes of the Atlantic ocean, and the festive atmosphere of the city cheered his despondent spirit and made him forget the bitter memories of Madrid. His sorrowing heart began to sing once more with joy and his health improved with remarkable swiftness. Writing from Biarritz to Mariano Ponce on February 11, 1891, he said: "I have put on much weight since I arrived here; my cheeks are no longer shrunken as before for the reason that I go bed early and I have no cares."

**Romance with Nellie Boustead.** Biarritz, with its romantic gardens, delightful villas, and panoramic beauties, is an ideal setting for romance. On an emotional rebounce, Rizal having lost his beloved Leonor, came to entertain considerable affection for Nellie, the prettier and younger daughter of his host. He found her to be a real Filipina, highly intelligent, vivacious in temperament, and morally upright. He wrote to his intimate friends, except Professor Blumentritt, of his love for Nellie, also called Nelly, and his intention to propose marriage to her.

As early as on February 4, 1891, M.H. del Pilar teased him about changing the "o" in *Noli* and to an "e", which means *Noli* to Nelly. Five days later, Tomas Alejola told Rizal"

In your letter you talk repeatedly of Boustead who can be a madame or a mademoiselle. Several times here since last year I have been told about this young woman who, according to your letter is also a Filipino. They told me that she is highly commendable for her through education, her very beautiful moral and physical qualities a

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and in addition, for being a Filipino. On this occasion and all the time you are there exposed to the warmth of the treatment and attentions of that family, may I take the liberty for making the following reflections. Through you yourself, I know that you are now free from your engagement in the Philippines. On the other hand, while conditions there are not altered, your permanence in our country is not advisable; and even if it were so, they would never leave you in peace at your home. Consequently, by marrying there, I fear that instead of happiness, you would only find bitterness and trouble.

And what is the remedy? . . . See if Mademoiselle Boustead suits you, court her, and marry her, and we are here to applaud such a good act.

Antonio Luna, who had previously loved and lost Nelly, encouraged Rizal to woo and marry her. From Madrid, he wrote to Rizal saying:

With respect to Nelly, frankly, I think there is nothing between us more than one of those friendships enlivened by being fellow countrymen. It seems to me that there is nothing more. My word of honor. I had been her fiancé, we wrote to each other. I like her because I knew how worthy she was, but circumstances beyond our control made all that happiness one cherished evaporate. She is good; she is naturally endowed with qualities admirable in a young woman and I believe that she will bring happiness not only to you but to any other man who is worthy of her. . . I congratulate you as one congratulates a friend. Congratulations!

With the encouragement of his close friend, Rizal courted Nelly who, in turn, reciprocated his affection. Unfortunately, their romance beneath the lovely Biarritz moon did not have a happy fairy tale finale. Rizal's marriage proposal failed for two reasons: (1) he refused to give up his Catholic faith and be converted to Protestantism, as Nelly demanded, and (2) Nelly's mother did not like Rizal as a son-in-law.

Nelly Boustead, being a good Protestant, wanted Rizal to espouse Protestantism before their marriage. Rizal, being a man of firm conviction, refused. Although he became a Mason, he remained loyal to the Catholic religion, the faith of his clan. Years later, when he was living in exile in Dapitan, he refuted Father Pablo Pastells' accusation that he was a Protestant as follows: "As to being a Protestant . . . If Your Reverence only knew what I have lost for not accepting Protestantism, you would not say such a thing. Had I not always respected the religious idea, had I held religion as a matter of convenience or an art getting along in this life, instead of being a poor exile, I would now be a rich man, free, and covered with honors."

Nelly's mother, like the mother of Leonor Rivera, had no wish to entrust her daughter's happiness to a man who was poor in material things, a physician without a paying clientele, a writer who earned nothing from his pen, and a former who was persecuted by the friars and government officials in his own country.

Although they could not get married, Rizal and Nellie parted as good friends. When she learned that Rizal was leaving Europe, she sent him a farewell letter, saying: "Now that you are leaving I wish you a happy trip and may you triumph in your undertakings, and above all, may

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the Lord look down on you with favor and guide your way giving you much blessings, and may you learn to enjoy! My remembrance will accompany you as also my prayers.

**El Filibusterismo Finished in Biarritz.** Frustrated in romance, Rizal found consolation in writing. Evidently, while wooing Nellie and enjoy so "many magnificent moonlight nights" with her, he kept working on his second novel which he began to write in Calamba in 1887.

On March 29, 1891, the eve of his departure from Biarritz to Paris, he finished the manuscript of *El Filibusterismo*. Writing to Blumentritt on that date, he said:

I have finished my book! Oh, no, I have not written in it my idea of revenge against my enemies but only what is for the good of those who are suffering, for the rights of the Tagalog race, though brown and may not have good features!

Surely, I will leave tomorrow for Paris, and from there I don't know where I am going.

**To Paris and Back to Brussels.** As he had written to Blumentritt, Rizal bade farewell to the hospitable and friendly Bousteads (parents and daughters) on March 30, 1891 and proceeded to Paris by train. He stayed at the home of his friend, Valentine Ventura, on 4 Rue de Chateaudun.

From Paris, he wrote to his friend, Jose Ma. Basa, in Hong Kong, on April 4, expressing his desire to go to that British colony and practice ophthalmology in order to earn his living. Moreover, in this letter, he requested Basa to advance him the amount for a first class steamer ticket from Europe to Hong Kong.

By the middle of April, 1891, Rizal was back in Brussels, where he was happily received by Marie and Suzanne Jacoby (his landladies) and, above all, by Petite Suzanne (the Belgian girl who loved him).

**Retirement from the Propaganda Movement.** Since abdicating his leadership in Madrid in January, 1891, owing to the intrigues of his jealous compatriots, Rizal retired from the Propaganda Movement, or reform crusade. He desired to publish his second novel, to practice his medical profession, and later, when he became financially independent, he expected to make a more vigorous campaign for his country's redemption.

From Brussels, on May 1, 1891, he notified the Propaganda authorities in Manila to cancel his monthly allowance and devote the money to some better cause, such as the education of a young Filipino student in Europe. His notification was contained in a letter addressed to Mr. A.L. Lorena (pseudonym of Deodato Arellano), as follows:

Through the kindness of J.A.; I received your letter of 13 February with a draft of P100 that the Propaganda is sending me for the months of January and February and I thank you for such attention.

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In order to avoid increasing its attentions I believe my retirement is necessary. I will establish myself and earn my living. My chosen place is either in the Philippines, Hong Kong, or Japan, because Europe seems to me a place of exile and I am hereby notifying the Propaganda of my intention so that it may take its decision.

With the P50 that it send me monthly it could do something better, which is to defray the cost of the education of another young man who is not in the same situation as I am. Though such an amount is sufficient to live on in any place in Europe, it is not enough for one who wishes to accomplish something and to carry out the plans that he may cherish.

Consequently, I have asked Friend Basa to furnish me with the funds for my return, so that I can start earning a small fortune. If at last, after the end of a few years, I become financially independent, I shall be able to undertake a more vigorous and effective campaign than that I have been doing until now.

**Rizal Stopped Writing for *La Solidaridad*.** Simultaneous with his retirement from the Propaganda Movement, Rizal ceased writing articles for *La Solidaridad*. Many of his friends in Spain urged him to continue writing for the patriotic periodical, because his articles always attracted considerable attention in Europe countries.

M.H. del Pilar himself realized the need for Rizal's collaboration in both the Propaganda Movement and in the *La Solidaridad* newspaper because the enthusiasm for the reform crusade in Spain was declining. On August 7, 1891, he wrote to Rizal begging forgiveness for any resentment and requesting him (Rizal) to resume writing for the *La Solidaridad*. "In short," he said in his letter, "if you have any resentment, I beg you to put it aside; if you consider me at fault, and this fault is pardondable, forgive me . . . We would much like that you resume writing for it; not only would we strengthen *La Solidaridad* but we would defeat the friar intrigue in the Philippines."

In his reply to Del Pilar's letter, Rizal wrote denying any resentment and explaining why he stopped writing for *La Solidaridad* as follows:

I am extremely surprised at your letter, telling me about resentments, disagreements, and reconciliations, etc. I believe it is useless to talk about what does not exist, and if it has existed, it ought to have evaporated in the past. I think like you do, that there being nothing, one ought not to waste time talking about it.

If I stopped writing for *La Solidaridad*, it was because of several reasons: 1<sup>st</sup>, I need time to work on my book; 2<sup>nd</sup>, I wanted other Filipinos to work also; 3<sup>rd</sup>, I considered it very important to the party that there be unity in the work; and you are already at the top and I also have my own ideas, it is better to leave you alone to direct the policy such as you understand it and I do not meddle in it. This how two advantages: It leaves both of us free, and it increases your prestige, which is very necessary, inasmuch as men of prestige are needed in our country. This does not mean to say that I need not work and follow the course of your work. I am like an army corps who, at a needed

moment, you will see arrive to descend upon the flanks of the enemy before you. Only I ask God to give me the means to do it . . . I fight for the nation, the Philippines.

**Revising the *Fili* for Publication.** In Brussels Rizal worked after day revising the finished manuscript of *El Filibusterismo* and readied it for printing. Apparently, the revision was mostly completed on May 30, 1891. On this date, he wrote Jose Ma. Basa: "My book is now ready to go to press; the first twenty chapters are already corrected and can be printed and I am recopying the rest. If in receive any money you will surely have it in July. I am writing it with more ardor than the *Noli* and although it is not so cheerful, at least it is more profound and more

perfect . . . In case I do not receive money, will you ask them to send me money for the printing of my book? If not, I will be leaving this place and be with you."

Two weeks later, on June 13, Rizal informed Basa: "I am now negotiating with a printing firm and as I do not know if it will be printed here (Belgium) or in Spain, I cannot send it to you as yet. In case it is not published here, I will send it to you by the next mail. Only three chapters are left to be corrected. It is longer than the *Noli*, first part. It will be finished before the 16<sup>th</sup> of this month. If by chance anything happens to me, I leave its publication to Antonio Luna, including its correction . . . If my *Noli* (sic. *Fili* -Z.) is not published, I shall board a train on the following day when I receive your letter with the passage-money; but if my book is published I shall have to wait until it comes off the press."

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## **Chapter 19**

# **El Filibusterismo**

## **Published in Ghent (1891)**

Days flew swiftly for Rizal in Brussels like flying arrows. Day in and day out, he was busy revising and polishing the manuscript of *El Filibusterismo* so that it could be ready for the press. He had begun writing it in October, 1887, while practicing medicine in Calamba. The following year (1888), in London, he made some changes in the plot and corrected some chapters in Paris and Madrid, and finished the manuscript in Biarritz on March 29, 1891. It took him, therefore, three years to write his second novel.

**Privations in Ghent.** On July 5, 1891, Rizal left Brussels for Ghent, a famous university city in Belgium. His reasons for moving to Ghent were (1) the cost of printing in Ghent was cheaper than in Brussels and (2) to escape from the enticing attraction of Petite Suzanne. In Ghent, he met two compatriots, Jose Alejandro (from Pampanga) and Edilberto Evangelista (from Manila), both studying engineering in the world-famed University of Ghent.

Owing to his limited funds, Rizal lived in a cheap boarding house, with Jose Alejandro as room-mate. Theirs was very frugal life, subsisting on the barest necessities. To economize further, they prepared their own daily breakfast in their room.

Years later Alejandro, who became a general during the Filipino-American War of 1899-1902 and an engineer, recounted in his memoirs their hard life in Ghent, as follows:

In Ghent we lived in a room paying so much for our lodging and breakfast. Rizal asked me: "How much would the room cost us without the breakfast?"

I talked to the landlady and she told me that she would reduce the rent so much if without breakfast. Rizal made his calculations and concluded that if we made our own breakfast we could save something. He bought tea, sugar, alcohol and a box of biscuits. Upon arriving at the house he opened the biscuits and counted and divided them equally between us. He told me that we owned so many biscuits by 30 days, we would have so many biscuits for each breakfast. The first day, because of my personal pride, I contented on the third day, I told him that my ration was not enough for me. Then he answered: "You may borrowing I ate up all my shares in 15 days, while he rigorously limited himself to his daily ration.

**The Printing of El Filibusterismo.** Shortly after his arrival in Ghent, Rizal searched for a printing shop that could give him the lowest quotation for the publication of his novel. At last, he did find a publisher –F. MEYER-VAN LOO PRESS, No. 66 Viaanderen Street –who was willing to print his book on installment basis. He pawned his jewels in order to pay the down payment and the early partial payments during the printing of the novel.

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Meanwhile, as the printing was going on, Rizal became desperate because his funds were running low and the money he expected from his friends did not arrive. He had received some money from Basa and P200 from Rodriguez Arias for the copies of Morga's *Sucesos* sold in Manila. But these funds were also used up, and much more were needed to pay the printer.

Writing to Basa from Ghent on July 1891, Rizal said: "I have already pawned all my jewels, I live in a small room, I eat in the cheapest restaurant in order to economize and be able to publish my book; soon I will have to stop its publication if no money comes . . . .

On August 6, the printing had to be suspended, as Rizal feared, because he could no longer give the necessary funds to the printer. On this date, he wrote to Basa in Hong Kong: "As you and I will see in the enclosed clipping, the printing of the second part (sequel to the *Noli -Z.*) is advanced, and I am now on page. 112. Because no money is forthcoming and I owed everybody and I am broke, I will have to suspend the publication and leave the work half-finished".

**Ventura, Savior of the Fili.** Rizal's Calvary in connection with the printing of the *Noli* was repeated in the *Fili*'s printing. His funds ran out in Ghent, a similar calamity that he experienced in Berlin in the winter of 1886. Once more he felt the dolorous grip of despair. In a moment of bitter disillusionment, he almost hurled the manuscript of the *Fili* into the flames, just as he almost did the *Noli* in Berlin.

"I do not know," Rizal told Basa in woeful mood, "if the money which I expect does not arrive by the next mail, I will give up the book and all, and I will embark to live and work for myself . . . At times I fell like burning my manuscript. But then I think of you, and I know that there are many good men like you, good men who truly love their country".

When everything seemed lost, help came from unexpected source. Valentín Ventura in Paris learned of Rizal's predicament and immediately sent him the necessary funds. With his financial aid, the printing of the *Fili* was resumed.

**The Fili Comes Off the Press.** At last, on September 18, 1891, *El Filibusterismo* came off the press. Rizal, now a very happy man, immediately sent on this date two printed copies to Hong Kong —one for Basa and the other for Sixto Lopez.

To his friend in Paris, Valentín Ventura, who generously loaned him the funds needed to finish the printing of his novel, Rizal gratefully donated the original manuscript and an authographed printed copy. He sent other complimentary copies to Blumentritt, Mariano Ponce, G. Lopez Jaena, T.H. Pardo de Tavera, Antonio and Juan Luna, and other friends.

Filipino patriots in foreign lands and in the Philippines praised the novel to the skies. The members of the Filipino colony of Barcelona published a tribute in *La Publicidad*, a Barcelona newspaper, eulogizing the novel's original style which "is comparable only to the sublime Alexander Dumas" and may well be offered as "a model and a precious jewel in the now decadent literature of Spain".

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The liberal Madrid newspaper, *El Nuevo Regimen*, serialized the novel in its issues of October, 1891.

Practically all copies of the first edition (Ghent edition) of *El Filibusterismo* were placed in wooden boxes and shipped to Hong Kong, but almost all boxes were confiscated and the book were lost. So it came to pass that the book immediately became rare, and the few available Ghent copies were sold at very high prices, reaching as high as 400 pesetas per copy.

**Dedicated to Gom-Bur-Za.** Evidently, Rizal in all the years of his studies, travels, and labors in foreign lands, had not forgotten the martyrdom Father Gomez, Burgos, and Zamora, which Paciano related to him when he was a mere lad in Calamba. He dedicated *El Filibusterismo* to them. His dedication reads as follows:

To the memory of the priests, Don Mariano Gomez (85 years old), Don Jose Burgos (30 years old), and Don Jacinto Zamora (35 years old). Executed in Bagumbayan Field on the 28<sup>th</sup> of February, 1872.

The Church, by refusing to degrade you, has placed in doubt the crime that has been imputed to you; the Government, by surrounding your trials with mystery and shadows, causes the belief that there was some error, committed in fatal moments; and all the Philippines, by worshipping your memory and calling your martyrs, in no sense recognizes your culpability. In so far, therefore, as your complicity in the Cavite mutiny is not clearly proved, as you may or may not have been patriots, and as you may or may not have cherished sentiments for justice and for liberty, I have the right to dedicate my work to you as victims of the evil which I undertake to combat. And while we wait expectantly upon Spain some day to restore your good name and cease for to be answerable for your death, let these pages serve as a tardy wreath of dried leaves over your unknown tombs, and let it be understood that every one who without clear proofs attacks your memory stains his hands in your blood!

Never in the annals of mankind has a hero written such a sublime and touching tribute to other heroes as Rizal.

To straighten historical records, however, we must rectify Rizal's historical inaccuracies in his dedicatory note. First of all, the martyrdom of Gomez, Burgos, and Zamora occurred on February 17, 1872 –not on the 28<sup>th</sup>. Secondly, Father Gomez was 37 years old –not 85, Father Burgos was 35 years old –not 30, and Father Zamora was 37 years old –not 35.

**The Manuscript and the Book.** The original manuscript of *El Filibusterismo* in Rizal's own handwriting is now preserved in the Filipiana Division of the Bureau of public Libraries, Manila. It had been acquired by the Philippine Government from Valentin Ventura for P10,000. It consists of 279 pages of long sheets of paper.

The author's corrections are seen throughout the manuscript. Only a few pages have not been revised by Rizal.

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Two features in the manuscript do not appear in the printed book, namely: the FOREWORD and the WARNING. These were not put into print, evidently, to save printing cost.

The FOREWORD appears just before the dedicatory page in the manuscript. It runs as follows:

We have so often been frightened by the phantom of filibusterism that from only a nurse's narration it has become a positive and real being whose name alone (in depriving

us of our serenity) makes us commit the greatest myths in order not to meet the feared reality. Instead of fleeing, we shall look at its face, and with determined, if inexpert, hand we shall raise the evil to uncover before multitude the mechanism of its skeleton.

If, upon seeing it, our country and its government reflect, we shall consider ourselves happy no matter whether they censure us for the audacity, no matter whether we pay for it like the young student of Sais who wished to penetrate the secret of the imposture. (On the other hand, if in the face of reality, instead of being soothed, one's fear is increased and the trepidation of another is aggravated, then they will have to be left in the hands of time which educates the living, in the hands of fatality which weaves the destinies of peoples and their governments with the faults and errors that they are committing every day.)

Europe, 1891  
The Author

The WARNING is found on the other side of the dedication. It is as follows:

They are going to waste their time who would attack this book by holding on to trifles, or who from other motives, would try to discover in it more or less known physiognomies. Due to his purpose of exposing the disease, of the patient, and, in order not to divert himself nor divert the reader, whilst he narrates only real facts which happened recently and are absolutely authentic in substance, he has disfigured his characters so that they may not turn to be the typical pictures some readers found in his first book. Man passes; his vices remain, and to accentuate or show their effects, the pen of the writer aspires.

**Inscription on Title Page.** The title page of *El Filibusterismo* contains an inscription written by Ferdinand Blumentritt. This inscription, which is not found in many published English translations, is as follows:

It can easily be supposed that a rebel (filibuster) has secretly bewitched the league of friar-zealots and retrogrades so that, unwittingly following his incitements, they should favor and foment that policy which pursues one sole end; to spread ideas of rebellion throughout the length and breadth of the land, and to convince every Filipino that there is no salvation except through separation from the Mother Country.

Ferdinand Blumentritt

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**Synopsis of el Filibusterismo.** This novel is a sequel to the *Noli*. It has little humor, less idealism, and less romance than the *Noli Me Tangere*. It is more revolutionary, more tragic than the first novel.

The hero of *El Filibusterismo* is a rich jeweler named Simoun. He was Crisostomo Ibarra of the *Noli*, who, with Elias' help, escaped from the pursuing soldiers at Laguna de Bay, dug up his buried treasure, and fled to Cuba where he became rich and befriended many Spanish officials. After many years, he returns to the Philippines, were he freely moved around. He is a

powerful figure not only because he is a rich jeweler, but also because he is a good friend and adviser of the governor general.

Outwardly, Simoun is a friend of Spain. However, deep in his heart, he is secretly cherishing a terrible revenge against the Spanish authorities. His two magnificent obsessions are (1) to rescue Maria Clara from the nunnery of Santa Clara and (2) to foment a revolution against the hated Spanish masters.

The story of *El Filibusterismo* begins in board the clumsy, roundish shaped steamer *Tabo*, so appropriately named. This steamer is sailing upstream the Pasig from Manila to Laguna de Bay. Among the passengers are Simoun, the rich jeweler; Dona Victorina, the ridiculously pro-Spanish native woman who is going to Laguna in search of her henpecked husband, Tiburcio de Espadana, who has deserted her; Paulita Gomez, her beautiful niece; Ben-Zayb (anagram of Ibanez), a Spanish journalist who writes silly articles about the Filipinos; Padre Sibyla, Vice-Rector of the University of Santo Tomas; Padre Camorra, the parish priest of the town of Tiani; Don Custodio, a pro-Spanish Filipino holding a high position in the government; Padre Salvi, thin Franciscan friar and former cura of San Diego; Padre Irene, a kind friar who was a friend of the Filipino students; Padre Florentino, a retired scholarly and patriotic Filipino priest; Isagani, a poet-nephew of Padre Florentino and a lover of Paulita; and Basilio, son of Sisa and promising medical student, whose medical education is financed by his patron, Capitan Tiago.

Simoun, a man of wealth and mystery, is a very close friend and confidante of the Spanish governor general. Because of his great influence in Malacanang, he was called the "Brown Cardinal" or the "Black Eminence". By using his wealth and his political influence, he encourages corruption in the government, promotes the oppression of the masses, and hastens the moral degradation of the country so that the people may become desperate and fight. He smuggles arms into the country with the help of a rich Chinese merchant, Quiroga, who wants very much to be Chinese consul of Manila. His first attempt to begin the armed uprising did not materialize because at the last hour he hears the sad news that Maria Clara died in the nunnery. In his agonizing moment of bereavement, he did not give the signal for the outbreak of hostilities.

After a long time of illness brought about by the bitter loss of Maria Clara, Simoun perfects his plan to overthrow the government. On the occasion of the wedding of Paulita Gomez and Juanito Pelaez, he gives as wedding gift to them a beautiful lamp. Only he and his confidential associate, Basilio (Sisa's son who joined his revolutionary cause), know that when the wick of his lamp burns lower the nitroglycerine, hidden in its secret compartment, will explode, destroying the house where the wedding feast is going to be held and kidding all the

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government officials. Simultaneously, all the government buildings in Manila will be blown by Simoun's followers.

As the wedding feast begins, the poet Isagani, who has been rejected by Paulita because of his liberal ideas, is standing outside the house, watching sorrowfully the merriment inside. Basilio, his friend, warns him to go away because the lighted lamp will soon explode.

Upon hearing the horrible secret of the lamp, Isagani realizes that his beloved Paulita was in grave danger. To save her life, he rushes into the house, seizes the lighted lamp, and hurls it into the river, where it explodes.

The revolutionary plot was thus discovered. Simoun was cornered by the soldiers, but he escape. Mortally wounded, and carrying her treasure chest, he sought refuge in the home of Padre Florentino by the sea.

The Spanish authorities, however, learns of his presence in the house of Padre Florentino. Lieutenant Perez of the Guardia Civil informs the priest by letter that he would come at eight o'clock that night to arrest Simoun.

Simoun eluded arrest by taking poison. As he is dying, he confesses to Padre Florentino, revealing his true identity, his dastardly plan to use his wealth to avenge himself, and his sinister aim to destroy his friends and enemies.

The confession of the dying Simoun is long and painful. It is already night when Padre Florentino, wiping the sweat from his wrinkled brow, rises and begins to meditate. He consoles the dying man, saying: "God will forgive you, Señor Simoun. He knows that we are fallible. He has seen that you have suffered, and in ordaining that the chastisement for your faults should come as a death from the very ones you have instigated to crime, we can see His infinite mercy. He has frustrated your plans one by one, the best conceived, first by the death of María Clara, then by a lack of preparation, then in some mysterious way. Let us bow to His will and render him thanks!"

Watching Simoun die peacefully with a clear conscience and at peace with God, Padre Florentino murmurs:

"Where are the youth who will consecrate their golden hours, their illusions, and their enthusiasm to the welfare of their native land? Where are the youth who will generously pour out their blood to wash away so much shame, so much crime, so much abomination? Pure and spotless must the victim be that the sacrifice may be acceptable! Where are you, youth, will embody in yourselves the vigor of life that has left our veins, the purity of ideas that has been contaminated in our brains, the fire of enthusiasm that has been quenched in our hearts! We await you, O youth! Come, for we await you!"

Padre Florentino falls upon his knees and prays for the dead jeweler. He takes the treasure chest and throws it into the sea. As the waves close over the sinking chest, he invokes:

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"May nature guard you in her deep abysses among the pearls and corals of her eternal seas. When for some holy and sublime purposes man may need you, God will in His wisdom draw you from the bosom of the waves. Meanwhile, there you will not work woe, you will not distort justice, you will not foment avarice!"

There are other characters in *El Filibusterismo*. There is Cabesang Tales, who is dispossessed of his land in Tiani by the friars like that of Rizal's father. In desperation, he

becomes a bandit chieftain named Matanglawin. His daughter Juli, sweetheart of Basilio (Sisa's son), kills herself rather than be dishonored by Padre Camorra. There is Macaraiga, a rich student and leader of the Filipino students in their movement to have an academy when they could learn Spanish. There is the bigoted Dominican friar-professor, Padre Millon, who teaches physics in the University of Santo Tomas without scientific experiments. One of his students, Placido Penitente from Batangas, becomes discontented with the poor method of instruction in the university. And there is Senor Pasta, the old Filipino lawyer, who refuses to help the Filipino students in their petition to the government for educational reforms.

Other characters in *El Filibusterismo* are Tandang Selo, grandfather of Juli and Cabessang Tales' father; Mr. American impresario who owned the slideshow at the feria (fair) of Quiapo exhibiting an Egyptian mummy; Sandocal, a Spanish student who supports the cause of the Filipino students to propagate the teaching of Spanish; Pecson, one of the Filipino students who agitates for the teaching of Spanish; Cabesana Andang, the mother of Placido Penitente; Pepay; the pretty dancer and mistress of Don Custodio; Padre Fernandez, a good *Dominican* friar and friend of Isagani; Don Timoteo, the father of Juanito Pelaez; tano, the son of Cabesang Tales and brother of Juli; and Chichay, the silversmith who made the bridal earring for Paulita Gomez.

As in the *Noli* the characters in *El Filibusterismo* were drawn by Rizal from real life. For instance, Padre Florentino was Father Leoncio Lopez, Rizal's friend and priest of Calamba; Isagani, the poet was Vicente Ilustre, Batangueno friend of Rizal in Madrid and Paulita Gomez, the girl who loved Isagani but married Juanito Pelaez, was Leonor Rivera.

**"Noli" and "Fili" Compared.** The two novels of Rizal vary in many aspects, although they are written by the same author and are supposed to be dealing with the same story and have the same characters. The *Noli* is a romantic novel; it is a "work of the heart" –a "book of feeling"; it has freshness, color, humor, lightness, and wit.

On the other hand, the *Fili* is a political novel; it is a "work of the head" –a "book of the thought"; it contains bitterness, hatred, pain, violence, and sorrow.

The original intention of Rizal was to make the *Fili* longer than the *Noli*. As printed, however, it is shorter than the *Noli*. It contains 38 chapters as against the *Noli*'s 64. Rizal had to cut the *Fili* drastically owing to lack of funds.

The friends of Rizal and our Rizalists today differ in opinion as to which is the superior novel –the *Noli* as superior to the *Fili* as a novel, thereby agreeing with M.H. del Pilar who had the same opinion. Retana, Rizal's first Spanish biographer, also believes that the *Noli* is superior to the *Fili*.

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However, others –including Blumentritt, Graciano Lopez Jaena, and Dr. Rafael Palma –are of the opinion of that the *Fili* is superior to the *Noli*. Lopez Jaena, in a letter to Rizal dated October 2, 1891, said: "*El Filibusterismo* is a novel superior to your *Noli Me Tangere*, as much for its exquisite delicate, literary style, its easy and correct dialogue, its clear phraseology, vigorous and elegant, as for its profound ideas and sublime thoughts". However he was not satisfied fully with the *Fili* as a political novel because its "end is not worthy climax to a work so beautiful". Accordingly, he advised Rizal to write another novel which would give a definite

solution to the country's problem so that "the coming of the beautiful day of our redemption' may be hastened.

The issue of which is the superior novel –the *Noli* or the *Fili* –is purely academic. Both are good novels from the point of view of history. Both depict with realistic colors the actual conditions of the Philippines and the Filipinos during the decadent days of Spanish rule; both are instrumental in awakening the spirit of Filipino nationalism; and both are responsible in paving the ground for the Philippine Revolution that brought about the downfall of Spain. Neither the *Noli* nor the *Fili* is superior to one another. As Mariano Ponce aptly told Rizal, after reading the *Fili*: "It is, indeed, excellent, I can say nothing of your book, but this: It is really marvelous like all the brilliant productions of your pen. It is a true twin of the *Noli*".

**Rizal's Unfinished Third Novel.** Even before Lopez Jaena suggested the writing of another novel, Rizal had already in mind to open a third novel. On September 22, 1891, four days after the *Fili* came off the press, he wrote to Blumentritt: "I am thinking of writing a third novel, a novel in the modern sense of the word, but this time politics will not find much space in it, but ethics will play the principal role. I shall deal mainly with the habits and the customs of the Filipinos, and only two Spaniards, the friar curate and the lieutenant of the Guardia Civil will be there. I wish to be there. I wish to be humorous, satirical and witty, to weep and to laugh, to laugh amidst tears, that is, to cry bitterly".

On October 18, 1891, Rizal boarded the steamer *Melbourne* in Marseilles bound for Hong Kong. During the voyage he began writing the third novel in Tagalog which he intended for Tagalog readers. In Hong Kong he continued it, but for some reason or another he did not finish it.

The unfinished third novel has no title. It consists of 4 pages (33cm. x 21 cm) in Rizal's handwriting. Still in manuscript form, it is preserved in the National Library, Manila.

The story of this unfinished novel begins with the solemn burial of Prince Tagulima, son of Sultan Zaide of Ternate, on Malapad-na-Bato, a big rock on the bank of the Pasig River. Sultan Zaide, with his royal family and retainers, was taken prisoner by the Spaniards during the wars in the Moluccas and brought to Manila. The old Sultan, his children, and followers were promised good treatment, but the Spaniards forgot their promise and let them die on by one in misery.

The hero of the novel was Kamandagan, a descendant of Lakan-Dula, last king of Tondo. He plotted to regain the lost freedom of his fathers. One day he saved his two beautiful granddaughters, Maligaya and Sinagtala, from the lustful Spaniards –the cura and the encomendro of Bay, Laguna.

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It is said that Rizal was fortunate not to have finished this novel, because it would have caused greater scandal and more Spanish vengeance on him.

**Rizal's Other Unfinished Novels.** Rizal had other unfinished novels. One of them is entitled *Makamisa*, a novel in Tagalog. It is written in a light sarcastic style and incomplete for only two chapters are finished. The manuscript consists of 20 pages, 34.2 cm x 22 cm.

A novel in Spanish about the life in Pili, a town in Laguna, is also unfinished. The manuscript consists of 147 pages, 8" x 6.5", without title. Among the characters are the following: Padre Agaton, a Spanish friar; Capitan Panchong and Capitana Barang; Cecilia, their pretty daughter; Isagani, lover of Cecilia; Capitan Crispin, political rival of Panchong; Dr. Lopez, a free thinker.

Another unfinished novel of Rizal, also without title, is about Cristobal, a youthful Filipino student who has returned from Europe. The manuscript consists of 34 pages, 8 ½" 6 ¼". Among the characters are Cristobal, who has studied for 12 years in Europe; Amelia, his sweetheart; Capitan Ramon, the father of Cristobal; a Dominican friar; a Franciscan friar; and a Spanish lieutenant of the Guardia Civil.

The beginning of another novel are contained in two notebooks –the first notebook contains 31 written pages, 35.5 cm. x 22 cm. and the second 12 written pages, 22 cm x 17 cm. Through the mouth of the celestial characters, the author describes the deplorable conditions of the Philippines. This unfinished novel is written in Spanish, and the style is ironic.

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## **Chapter 20**

# **Ophthalmic Surgeon in Hong Kong (1891-92)**

After the publication of *El Filibusterismo*, Rizal left Europe for Hong Kong, where he lived from November, 1891 to June, 1892. His reasons for leaving Europe were (1) life was unbearable in Europe because of his political differences with M.H. del Pilar and other Filipinos in Spain and (2) to be near his idolized Philippines and family. Before sailing in Hong Kong, he notified Del Pilar that he was retiring from the political arena in Spain in order to preserve unity among the compatriots and that despite their parting of ways, he had the highest regard for him.

**Farewell to Europe.** On October 3, 1891, two weeks after the publication of the *Fili*, Rizal left Ghent for Paris, where he stayed a few days to say goodbye to the Lunas, the Pardo de Taveras, the Venturas, and other friends. He proceeded by train to Marseilles and on October 18 he boarded the steamer *Melbourne* bound for Hong Kong. He brought with him a letter of recommendation by Juna Luna for Manuel Camus, a compatriot living in Singapore, and 600 copies of the *Fili*.

The trip was delightful, “heavenly”, in Rizal’s own opinion. Writing to Blumentritt on October 22, 1891, he said: “Since we left Marseilles, we have had . . . magnificent weather. The sea is calm, placid like glass, the sky blue, the air fresh and invigorating. Truly it is a heavenly trip”.

There were over 80 first-class passengers –mostly Europeans, including two Spaniards who were going to Amoy. Rizal was the only Asian among them. As usual, he amazed his fellow-passengers because of his knowledge of many languages and his skill in sketching. He befriended many missionaries –Italian Franciscans, French Jesuits, and a bishop, Msgr. Velenteri –all going to China. With one of them, Father Fuchs, a Tyrolese, he enjoyed playing Chess. Speaking of his priest, he wrote to Blumentritt: “He is fine fellow, a Father Damaso without pride and malice”.

**Rizal and the German Ladies.** An incident happened to Rizal on board the *Melbourne* during the trip to Hong Kong. One evening at dinner time the passengers were having their meal in the dining room. Rizal, being the only Asian, was seating alone at one table. Near him was a bigger table occupied by some German ladies who were gaily eating and gossiping about lone Asian male who was quietly talking to his meal. Rizal, who was fluent in German, understood what the talkative German ladies were saying about him, but he simply kept silent, letting the ladies enjoy their gossip.

Suddenly the fast running steamer encountered a heavy squall and the door of the dining room was blown open. Nobody among the passengers who were busy eating stood up to close the door. A lady said to her companions in German: “If this man in front of us were a gentleman he would close the door”.

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Upon hearing her remark, Rizal, without a saying a word, rose and closed the door, after which he resumed his seat. He then conversed with the German ladies in perfect German. Of course, the German ladies were very much embarrassed, and thereafter they treated Rizal with admiration and respect, despite his brown skin, for he was a cultured gentleman.

**Arrived in Hong Kong.** Rizal arrived in Hong Kong on November 20, 1891. He was welcomed by the Filipino residents, especially his old friend, Jose Ma. Basa. He established his

residence at. No. 5 D' Aguilar Street, No. 2 Rednaxola Terrace, where he also opened his medical clinic.

On December 1, 1891, he wrote his parents asking their permission to return home. On the same date, his brother-in-law, Manual T. Hidalgo, sent him a letter, relating the sad news of the "deportation of twenty-five persons from Calamba, including father, Neneng, Sisa, Lucia, Paciano, and the rest of us". Hidalgo also stated in his letter that he was preparing a letter that he was preparing a letter to the Queen Regent of Spain explaining the Calamba situation in order to secure in justice. "If the Queen will not listen", he said, "we will write to Queen Victoria of England appealing for protection in the name of humanity . . ."

Hidalgo's letter clearly revealed the despair and sorrow of the Rizal family. Dr. Rizal in Hong Kong, so close to Manila, was desperately sad, for he could not succor his persecuted family and relatives.

**Family Reunion in Hong Kong.** Before Christmas of 1891, he was gladdened by the arrival of his father, brother, and Silvestre Ubaldo (his brother-in-law) in Hong Kong. Not long afterwards his mother and sisters Lucia, Josefa, and Trinidad also arrived. His mother was then 65 years old and was almost blind. She had suffered so much for Spanish brutality and injustice. The year before (1890) she was arrested on the flimsy charge that she was not using her surname "Realonda" and, despite her advanced age and blindness, she was forced by a cruel Spanish officer of the Guardia Civil to walk from Calamba to Santa Cruz (capital of Laguna). Fortunately, the Spanish governor of Laguna, who happened to be a gallant cavalier, pitied her and kindly set her free.

The Christmas of 1891 in Hong Kong was one of the happiest Yuletide celebrations in Rizal's life. For he had a happy family reunion.

On January 31, 1892, he wrote to Blumentritt, recounting her pleasant life in Hong Kong, as follows: "Here we are all living together, my parents, sisters, and brother, in peace and far from the persecutions they suffered in the Philippines. They are very much pleased with the English government".

**Ophthalmic Surgeon in Hong Kong.** To earn a living for himself and for his family, Rizal practiced medicine. A Portuguese physician, Dr. Lorenzo p. Marques, who became his friend and admirer, helped him to build up a wide clientele. In recognition of Rizal's skill as an ophthalmic surgeon, he turned over to him many of his eye cases.

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In due time, Dr. Rizal became a successful and well-known medical practitioner in the British colony. He had many patients, including British, Chinese, Portuguese, and Americans. He successfully operated on his mother's left eye so that she was able to read and write again. Aside from being an eye specialist, he was general practitioner. Writing to Blumentritt on January 31, 1892, he said: "Here I practice as a doctor I have . . . here many sick of influenza because there is an epidemic. Through the newspapers I am informed that this sickness is also causing ravages in

Europe. I hope you and your esteemed family will be spared. In our house, my mother, my brother-in-law, and one of my sisters are sick. Thank God, they are out of danger".

Some friends of Rizal who were in Europe gave him moral and substantial aid in his medical practice in Hong Kong. From Biarritz, Mr. Boustead, Nellie's father, wrote to him on March 21, 1892, praising him for practicing his medical profession. Dr. Ariston Bautista Lin, from Paris, sent him a congratulatory letter and a book on *Diagnostic Pathology* by Dr. H. Virchow and another medical book entitled *Traite Diagnostique* by Mesnichock. Don Antonio Vergel de Dios, also from Paris, offered him his services for the purchase of medical books and instruments which he might need in his profession.

Rizal possessed the qualities of a great ophthalmic surgeon. Had he devoted his lifetime to the practice of medicine he would have become one of Asia's eminent ophthalmologists. In the words of Dr. Geminiano de Ocampo, distinguished Filipino ophthalmologist:

He (Rizal) had all the qualities that would make an ideal ophthalmic surgeon – keen and analytical intellect, lightness of touch and artistry of a painter, courage and imperturbability, a broad and deep knowledge of medicine, and last but not least, he had been properly and adequately trained by master ophthalmic surgeons.

**Borneo Colonization Project.** In the face of the bleak outlook of the Calamba folks under Governor Valeriano Weyler's terroristic regime, Rizal conceived the establishment of a Filipino colony on North Borneo (Sabah). He planned to move the landless Filipino families to that rich British-owned island and carve out of its virgin wildness a "New Calamba".

On March 7, 1892, he went to Sandakan on board the ship Menon to negotiate with the British authorities for the establishment of a Filipino colony. He looked over the land up the Bengkoka River in Maradu Bay which was offered by the British North Borneo Company. His mission was successful. The British authorities of Borneo were willing to give the Filipino colonists 100,000 acres of land, a beautiful harbor, and a good government for 999 years, free of all charges. By April 20, he was back in Hong Kong.

Rizal's friend in Europe – Juan and Antonio Luna, Lopez Jaena, Blumentritt, Dr. Bautista Lin, etc. – enthusiastically endorsed his Borneo colonization project. Lopez Jaena expressed his desire to join the colony. Writing to Rizal on May 26, 1892, he said: "I have a great desire of joining you. Reserve for me there (Borneo) a piece of land where I can plant sugarcane. I shall go there . . . to dedicate myself to the cultivation of sugarcane and the making of sugar. Send me further details."

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One of Rizal's brothers-in-law, Hidalgo, the brave Batangueno, objected to the colonization project. "This idea about Borneo, "is no good. Why should we leave the Philippines, this beautiful country of ours? And besides what will people say? Why have we made all these sacrifices? Why should we go to a foreign land without first exhausting all means for the welfare of the country which nurtured us from our cradles? Tell me that!"

New trends of events in the Philippines gave Rizal a new hope for realizing his Borneo project. The infamous Weyler, whom the Cubans odiously called "The Butcher," was relieved of his gubernatorial office. A new governor general Eulogio Despujol, the Count of Caspe, announced to the Filipino people a fine program of government.

In the belief that Governor Despujol was sincere in his beautiful promises of a better government, Rizal sent him a letter of felicitation and offering his cooperation. The governor general, violating the simple rule of Spanish courtesy, did not even acknowledge receipt of his letter.

After vainly waiting for three months to a reply to his first letter (dated December 23, 1891) Rizal wrote a second letter dated March 21, 1892 and gave it to a ship captain to be sure it would reach Governor Despujol's hand. In this second letter, he requested the governor general to permit the landless Filipinos to establish themselves in Borneo.

Once more Despujol did not give Rizal the "courtesy of a reply". Instead, he notified the Spanish consul general in Hong Kong to tell Rizal that he could not approve the Filipino immigration to Borneo, alleging that "the Philippines lacked laborers" and "it was not very patriotic to go off and cultivate foreign soil".

**Writing in Hong Kong.** Notwithstanding the pressure of his medical practice and his Borneo colonization project, Rizal continued his writings.

He wrote "Ang Mga Karapatan Nang Tao," which is a Tagalog translation of "The Rights of Man" proclaimed by the French Revolution in 1879. About the same time (1891), he wrote "*A la Nacion Espanola*" (To the Spanish Nation), which is an appeal to Spain to right the wrongs done to the Calamba tenants. Another proclamation, entitled "*Sa Mga Kababayhan*" (To My Countrymen), was written in December, 1891 explaining the Calamba agrarian situation.

Rizal contributed articles to the British daily newspaper, *The Hong Kong Telegraph*, whose editor, Mr. Fraizer Smith, was his friend. Copies of this newspaper entered the Philippines so that the Filipino people were able to read Rizal's articles. The vigilant Spanish censors soon discovered the spread of Rizal's ideas and immediately banned the Hong Kong newspaper.

On March 2, 1892, Rizal wrote "*Una Visita a la Victoria Gaol*" (A Visit to Victoria Gaol), an account of his visit to the colonial prison of Hong Kong. In this article he contrasted the cruel Spanish prison system with the modern and more humane British prison system.

The elucidate his pet Borneo colonization project, he wrote an article in French entitled "*Colonisation du British North Borneo, par de Familles de Iles Philippines*" (Colonization of

British North Borneo by Families from the Philippines Islands). He elaborated on the same idea in another article in Spanish. "*Proyekto de Colonization del British North Borneo por los Filipinos*" (Project of the Colonization of British North Borneo by the Filipinos).

In June, 1892, he wrote "*La Mano Roja*" (The Red Hand) which was printed in sheet form in Hong Kong. It denounces the frequent outbreaks of intentional fires in Manila.

The most important writing made by Rizal during his Hong Kong sojourn was the constitution of the Liga Filipina, which was printed in Hong Kong, 1892. To deceive the Spanish authorities, the printed copies carried the false information that the printing was done by the LONDON PRINTING PRESS, No. 25, Khulug Street, London. The idea of establishing the Liga Filipina (Philippine League), an association of patriotic Filipinos for civic purposes, was originally conceived by Jose Ma. Basa, but it was Rizal who wrote its constitution and realized its establishment. Copies of the printed Liga institution were sent by Rizal to Domingo Franco, his friend in Manila.

**Decision to Return to Manila.** In May, 1892, Rizal made up his mind to return to Manila. This decision was spurred by the following; (1) to confer with Governor Despujol regarding his Borneo colonization project; (2) to establish the Liga Filipina in Manila; and (3) to prove that Eduardo de Lete was wrong in attacking him in Madrid that he (Rizal), being comfortable and safe in Hong Kong, had abandoned the country's cause. Lete's attack, which was printed in *La Solidaridad* on April 15, 1892, portrayed Rizal as cowardly, egoistic, opportunistic—a patriot in words only. Rizal vehemently protested to Del Pilar, the editor of *La Solidaridad*, saying : "I am more convinced that Lete, in writing the article, was too hasty, and you permitted yourself to be carried away. Friend or enemy, if the article has harmed me, it would harm more the interests of the Philippines. Who knows, however, if after all it was for the best; it has shaken me awake, and after a long silence I enter the field anew. . . I am going to activate the Propaganda again and fortify the Liga".

To Ponce, Rizal confided on May 23, 1892: "I am very sorry that Del Pilar allowed the article to be published because it will lead many to believe that there is really a schism among us. I believe that we can well have little misunderstanding and personal differences among ourselves, without exhibiting them in public. . . As for myself. . . I always welcome criticisms because they improve those who wish to be improved".

**Last Hong Kong Letters.** Relatives and friends of Rizal opposed his decision to return home because it was like bearding the lions in their den. His sister Trinidad tearfully warned him to desist, "for here they will kill you".

Not even the fear of death could deter Rizal from his decision. On June 19, 1892, he spent his 31<sup>st</sup> birthday in Hong Kong. Evidently, he had a premonition of his death, for the following day, June 20 he wrote two letters which he sealed, inscribed on each envelop "to be opened after my death," and gave them to his friend Dr. Marques for safekeeping. In the pages of history there is scarcely a parallel for these two sealed letters, which were virtually Rizal's political testaments.

The affection that I have ever professed for you suggests this step, and time alone can tell whether or not it is sensible. The outcome judges things according to the consequences; but whether the result be favorable or unfavorable, it may always be said that duty urged me, so if I die in doing it, it will not matter.

I realize how much suffering I have caused you yet I do not regret what I have done. Rather, if I had to begin over again I should do just the same, for what I have done has been only in pursuit of my duty. Gladly do I go to expose myself to peril, not as an expiation of misdeeds for in this matter I believe myself guiltless of any, but to complete my work and so that I, myself, may offer the examples of which I have always preached.

A man ought to die for duty and his principles. I hold fast to every idea which I have advanced as to the condition and future of our country, and shall willingly die for it, and even more willingly sacrifice all to secure justice and peace for you.

With pleasure, then, I risk life to save so many innocent persons –so many nieces and nephews, so many children of friends, and children too of others who are not even friends –who are suffering on my account. What am I? A bachelor, practically without a family and sufficiently undeceived as to life. I have had many disappointments and the future before me is gloomy, and will be gloomy if light does not illuminate it with the dawn of a better day for my native land. On the other hand, there are many persons, filled with hope and ambition, who perhaps might be happier if I were dead, and then I hope my enemies would be satisfied and stop persecuting so many entirely innocent people. To a certain extent their hatred is justifiable as to myself, and my parents and relatives.

Should fate go against me, you will all understand that I shall die happy in the thought that my death will end all your troubles. Return to our country and nay you be happy in it.

Till the last moment of my life I shall be thinking of you and wishing you all good fortune and happiness.

The second letter, addressed TO THE FILIPINOS, is as follows:

The step which I am taking, or rather am about to take, is undoubtedly risky, and it is unnecessary to say that I have considered it for some time. I understand that almost every one is opposed to it; but I know also that hardly anybody else understands what is in my heart. I cannot live on seeing so many suffer unjust persecution on my account; I cannot bear the sight of my sisters and their numerous families treated like criminals. I prefer death and cheerfully shall relinquish life to free so many innocent persons from such unjust persecution.

obligations to the families who suffer, to my aged parents who sight strikes me to the heart; I know that I alone, only with my death, can make them happy, returning them to their native land to a peaceful life at home. I am all my parents have, but our country has many more sons who can take my place and even do my work better.

Besides I wish to show those who deny us the boon of patriotism that we know how to die for duty and principles. What matters death, if one dies for what one loves, for native land and beings held dear?

If I thought that I were the only resource for the consummation of a policy of progress in the Philippines and were I convinced that my countrymen were going to make use of my services, perhaps I should hesitate about taking this step; but there are others who can take my place, who can do my services that are not utilized, and I am reduced to inactivity.

Always have I loved our unhappy land, and I am sure that I shall continue loving it till my last moment, in case men prove unjust to me. My career, my life, my happiness –all I have sacrificed for love of it. Whatever my fate I shall die it and longing for the dawn of its redemption.

On June 21, 1892, Rizal penned another letter in Hong Kong for Governor Despujol, incidentally his third letter to that discourteous Spanish chief executive. In this letter, he informed the governor general of his coming to Manila and placed himself under the protection of the Spanish government.

On the same date (June 21<sup>st</sup>), Rizal and his sister Lucia, widow of Herbosa, left Hong Kong for Manila. They carried a special passport or “safe-conduct” issued by the Spanish consul-general in Hong Kong.

**Rizal Falls into Spanish Trap.** Immediately after Rizal’s departure from Hong Kong, the Spanish consul-general, who issued the government guarantee of safety, sent a cablegram to Governor Despujol that the victim “is in the trap”. On the same day (June 21, 1892), a secret case was filed in Manila against Rizal and his followers “for anti-religious and anti-patriotic agitation”.

The deceitful Despujol ordered his secretary, Luis de la Torre, to find out if Rizal was naturalized as a German citizen, as was rumored, so that he might take proper action against one “who had the protection of a strong nation”.

Meanwhile, Rizal and his sister were peacefully crossing the China Sea. There were fully unaware of the Spanish duplicity.

## Second Homecoming And The Liga Filipina

Rizal's bold return to Manila in June, 1892 was his second homecoming, his first homecoming from abroad being in August, 1887. It marked his re-entry into the hazardous campaign for reforms. He firmly believed that the fight for the Filipino liberties had assumed a new phase; it must be fought in the Philippines not in Spain. "The battlefield is in the Philippines," he told countrymen in Europe, "There is where we should meet. . . There we will help one another, there together we will suffer or triumph perhaps". Two months later, on December 31, 1891, he reiterated this belief in a letter to Blumentritt, "I believe that *La Solidaridad* is no longer our battlefield; now it is a new struggle. . . the fight is no longer in Madrid". In going home to lead a new the reform movement, he was like the biblical Daniel bearding the Spanish lion in its own den.

**Arrival in Manila with Sister.** At noon of June 26, 1892, Rizal and his widowed sister Lucia (wife of the late Mariano Herbosa) arrived in Manila. A meticulous diarist, he described his second homecoming as follows:

I arrived at Manila on 26 June (1892), at 12:00 noon. I was met by many carabineers headed by a major. There were in addition one captain and one sergeant of the Veteran Civil Guard. I came down with my luggage and they inspected me at the customhouse. From there I went to Hotel de Oriente where I occupied room No. 22, facing the church of Binondo.

In the afternoon, at 4:00 o'clock, he went to Malacanang Palace to seek audience with the Spanish governor general, General Eulogio Despujol, Conde de Caspe. He was told to come back at that night at 7:00 o'clock. Promptly at 7:00 p.p., he returned to Malacanang and was able to confer with Governor General Despujol, who agreed to pardon his father but not the rest of his family and told him to return on Wednesday (June 29).

After his brief interview with the governor general, he visited his sisters in the city –first Narcisa (Sisa, wife of Antonio Lopez) and later Neneng (Saturnina, wife of Manuel T. Hidalgo).

**Visiting Friends in Central Luzon.** At 6:00 P.M. of the following day (June 27), Rizal boarded a train in Tutuban Station and visited his friends in Malolos (Bulacan), San Fernando (Pampanga), Tarlac (Tarlac), and Bacolor (Pampanga). He was welcomed and lavishly entertained at the homes of his friends. These friends were good patriots, who were his supporters in the reform crusade, and he took the opportunity to great them personally and discussed the problems affecting their people.

Rizal returned by train to Manila on the next day, June 28, at 5 o'clock in the afternoon.

**Other Interviews with Despujol.** After Rizal's visit to his friends in Central Luzon, he had other interviews with Governor General Despujol. These interviews were vividly recorded in his diary, as follows:

On Wednesday (June 29 -Z) at 7:30, I saw his Excellency. I did not succeed to have the penalty of exile lifted, but he gave me hope with regard to my sisters. As it was the feast of St. Peter and St. Paul our interview ended at 9:15. I was to come again the following day at 7:30.

The following day, Thursday (June 30), we talked about the question of Borneo. The general was opposed to it, very much opposed. He told me to come back Sunday.

On Sunday (July 3 -Z.) I returned. We talked about Sundry things and I thanked him for having lifted exile of my sisters. I told him that my father and brother would arrive on the first boat. He asked me if I would like to go abroad to Hong Kong. I told him yes. He told me to return on Wednesday.

**Following of the Liga Filipina.** On the evening of Sunday, July 3, 1892, following his morning interview with Governor General Despujol, Rizal attended a meeting of the patriots at the home of the Chinese-Filipino mestizo, Doroteo Ongjuncio, on Ylaya Street, Tondo, Manila. Among these present were Pedro Serrano Laktaw (*Panday Pira*), a Mason and school teacher; Domingo Franco (*Felipe Leal*), Mason and tobacco shopkeeper; Jose A. Ramos (*Socorro*), engraver, printer, owner of Bazar Gran Bretana, and first Worshipful Master of *Nilad*, first Filipino Masonic lodge; Bonifacio Arevalo (*harem*), dentist and Mason; Deodato Arellano, brother-in-law of M. H. del Pilar and civilian employee in the army; Ambrosio Flores (*Musa*), retired lieutenant of infantry; Agustin de la Rosa, bookkeeper and Mason; Moises Salvador (*Araw*), contractor and Mason; Luis Villareal, tailor and Mason; Faustino Villaruel (*Ilaw*) pharmacist and mason; Mariano Crisostomo, landlord; Nemeriano Adriano (*Ipil*), notary public and Mason; Estanislao Legaspi, artisan and Mason; Teodoro Plata, court clerk and Mason; Andres Bonifacio, warehouse employee; Apolinario Mabini (*Katabay*), lawyer and Mason; and Juan Zulueta, playwright, poet, and government employee.

Rizal explained the objectives of the Liga Filipina, a civic league of Filipinos, which he desired to establish and its role in the socio-economic life of the people. He presented the Constitution of the Liga which he had written in Hong Kong and discussed its provisions. The patriots were favorably impressed and gladly approved the establishment of the Liga.

The officers of the new league were elected, as follows: Ambrosio Salvador, president; Deodato Arellano, secretary; Bonifacio Arevalo, treasurer; and Agustin de la Rosa, fiscal.

1. To unite the whole archipelago into one compact and homogenous body.
2. Mutual protection in every want and necessity.
3. Defense against all violence and injustice.
4. Encouragement of education, agriculture, and commerce.
5. Study and application of reforms.

The motto of the Liga Filipina was: **Unus Instar Omnium** (One Like All).

The governing body of the league was the Supreme Council which had jurisdiction over the whole country. It was composed of a president, a secretary, a treasurer, and a fiscal. There was a Provincial Council in every province and a Popular Council in every town.

All Filipinos who have at heart the welfare of their fatherland are qualified for membership. Every member pays an entrance fee of two pesos and monthly due of 10 centavos.

The duties of the Liga members are as follows: (1) obey the orders of the Supreme Council; (2) to help in recruiting new members; (3) to keep in strictest secrecy the decisions of the Liga authorities; (4) to have a symbolic name which he cannot change until he becomes president of his council; (5) to report to the fiscal anything that he may hear which affects the Liga; (6) to behave well as befits a good Filipino; and (7) to help fellow members in all ways.

**Rizal Arrested and Jailed in Fort Santiago.** On Wednesday, July 6, Rizal went to Malacanan Palace to resume his series of interviews with the governor general. During this interview Governor General Despujol suddenly showed him some printed incriminatory leaflets were entitled *Pobres Frailes* (Poor Friars) under the authorship of Fr. Jacinto and printed by the Imprenta de los Amigos del País, Manila. They were a satire against the rich Dominican friars who amassed fabulous riches contrary to their monastic vow of poverty.

Rizal vigorously denied having those leaflets in either his or Lucia's baggage, which had been thoroughly searched upon their arrival from Hong Kong by the custom authorities who found nothing. Despite his denial and insistent demand for investigation in accordance with the due process of law, he was placed under arrest and escorted to Fort Santiago by Ramon Despujol, nephew and aide of Governor General Despujol. In Fort Santiago, he was kept incomunicado, as he related in his diary:

They assigned me a fairly furnished room with a bed, a dozen chairs, one table, a wash basin, and a mirror. The room had three windows; one without grill which opens on a patio, another with grills which looks out on the city walls and the beach and another.

which was the door closed with a padlock. Two artillery men as sentinels guarded it. They had orders to fire on anyone who might signal from the beach. I could not write nor speak with any one except the officer on duty.

The following day, July 7, the *Gaceta de Manila* published the story of Rizal's arrest which produced indignant commotion among the Filipino people, particularly the members of the newly organized Liga Filipina.

**Arbitrary Deportation to Dapitan.** The same issue of the Gaceta (July 7, 1892) contained Governor General Despujol's decree deporting Rizal to "one of the islands in the South". The gubernatorial decree gave the reasons for Rizal's deportation, as follows:

1. Rizal had published books and articles abroad which showed disloyalty to Spain which were "frankly anti-Catholic" and "imprudently anti-friar".
2. A few hours after his arrival in Manila "there was found in one of the packages . . . a bundle of handbills entitled *Pobres Frailes* in which the patient and humble generosity of Filipinos is satirized, and which accusation is published against the customs of the religious orders".
3. His novel *El Filibusterismo* was dedicated to the memory of three "traitors" (Burgos, Gomez, and Zamora), and on the title page he wrote that in view of the vices and errors of the Spanish administration, "the only salvation for the Philippines was separation from the mother country".
4. "The end which he pursues in his efforts and writings is to tear from the loyal Filipino breasts the treasure of our holy Catholic faith".

Shortly after midnight of July 14 (that is 12:30 a.m. of July 15, 1892), Rizal was brought under heavy guard to the steamer *Cebu* which was sailing for Dapitan. This steamer under Captain Delgras departed at 1:00 A.M., July 15, sailing south, passing Mindoro and Panay, and reaching Dapitan on Sunday, the 17<sup>th</sup> of July, at 7:00 in the evening.

Captain Delgras went ashore and handed Rizal over to Captain Ricardo Carnicero, Spanish commandant of Dapitan. That same night, July 17, 1892, Rizal began his exile in lonely Dapitan which would last until July 31, 1896, a period of four years.

\* \* \* \* \*

## Chapter 22

# Exile in Dapitan, 1892-96

Rizal lived in exile in far-away Dapitan, a remote town in Mindanao which was under the missionary jurisdiction of the Jesuits, from 1892 to 1896. This four-year interregnum in his life was tediously unexciting, but was abundantly fruitful with varied achievements. He practiced medicine, pursued scientific studies, continued his artistic and literary works, widened his knowledge of languages, established a school for boys, promoted community development projects, invented a wooden machine for making bricks, and engaged in farming and commerce. Despite his multifarious activities, he kept an extensive correspondence with his family, relatives, fellow reformists, and eminent scientists and scholars of Europe, including Blumentritt, Reinhold Rost, A.B. Meyer, W. Joest of Berlin, S. Knuttle of Stuttgart, and N.M. Keihl of Prague.

**Beginning of Exile in Dapitan.** The steamer *Cebu* which brought Rizal to Dapitan carried a letter from Father Pablo Pastells, Superior of the Jesuit Society in the Philippines, to Father Antonio Obach, Jesuit parish priest of Dapitan. In this letter, Father Superior Pastells informed Father Obach that Rizal could live at the parish convent on the following conditions:

1. "That Rizal publicly retract his errors concerning religion, and make statements that were clearly pro-Spanish and against revolution.
2. "That he perform the church rites and make a general confession of his past life.
3. "That henceforth he conduct himself in an exemplary manner as a Spanish subject and a man of religion".

Rizal did not agree with these conditions. Consequently, he lived in the house of the commandant, Captain Carnicero. The relations between Carnicero (the warden) and Rizal (the prisoner) were warm and friendly.

Carnicero was charmed by Rizal's fine qualities and personality. They ate together at the same table and had many friendly conversations. Carnicero came to know that Rizal was not a common felon, much less a filibuster. He gave good reports on his prisoner to Governor Despujol. He gave him complete freedom to go anywhere, reporting only once a week at his office, and permitted Rizal, who was a good equestrian, to ride his chestnut horse.

Rizal, on his part, admired the kind, generous Spanish captain. As evidence of his esteem, he wrote a poem, *A Don Ricardo Carnicero*, on August 26, 1892, on the occasion of the captain's birthday.

**Wins in Manila Lottery.** On September 21, 1892, the sleepy town of Dapitan burst in hectic excitement. The mail boat *Butuan* was approaching the town, with colored pennants flying in the sea breezes. Captain Carnicero, thinking that a high Spanish official was coming, hastily

dressed in gala uniform, ordered the town folks to gather at the shore, and himself rushed there, bringing a brass band.

The mail boat, *Butuan*, brought no Spanish officials but the happy tidings that the Lottery Ticket No. 9736 jointly owned by Capitran Carnicero, Dr. Rizal, and Francisco Equilior (Spanish resident of Dipolog, a neighboring town of Dapitan) won the second prize of P20,000 in the government-owned Manila Lottery.

Rizal's share of the winning lottery ticket was P6,200. Upon receiving this sum, he gave P2,000 to his father and P200 to his friend Basa in Hong Kong, and the rest he invested well by purchasing agricultural lands along the coast of Talisay, about one kilometer away from Dapitan.

Rizal's winning in the Manila Lottery reveals an aspect of his lighter side. He never drank hard liquor and never smoked, but he was a lottery addict. During his first sojourn in Madrid from 1892 to 1885 he always invented at least three pesetas every month in lottery tickets. "This was his only vice," commented Wenceslao E. Retana, his first Spanish biographer and former enemy.

**Rizal-Pastells Debate on Religion.** During his exile in Dapitan Rizal had a long and scholarly debate with Father Pastells on religion. It started when Father Pastells sent him a book by Sarda, with advice that the latter (Rizal) should desist from his majaderas (foolishness) in viewing religion from the prism of individual judgment and self-esteem.

The interesting religious debate may be read in four letters written by Rizal, as follows: (1) September 1, 1892; (2) November 11, 1892; (3) January 9, 1893; and (4) April 4, 1893; and in Father Pastells' replies dated: (1) October 12, 1892, (2) December 8, 1892, (3) February 2, 1893, and (4) April (no exact date), 1893.

In all his letters to Father Pastells, Rizal revealed his anti-Catholic ideas which he had acquired in Europe and embitterment at his persecution by the bad friars. It is understandable why he was bitter against the friars who committed certain abuses under the cloak of religion. As he wrote to Blumentritt from Paris on January 20, 1890: "I want to hit the friars, but only friars who utilized religion not only as a shield, but also as a weapon, castle, fortress, armor, etc.; I was forced to attack their false and superstitious religion in order to fight the enemy who hid himself behind it".

According to Rizal, individual judgment is a gift from God and everybody should use it like a lantern to show the way and that self-esteem, if moderated by judgment, saves man from unworthy acts. He also argued that the pursuit of truth may lie in different paths, and thus "religions may vary, but they all lead to the light".

Father Pastells tried his best to win back Rizal to the fold of Catholicism. Divine Faith, he told Rizal, supersedes everything, including reason, self-esteem, and individual judgment. No matter how wise a man is, he argued, his intelligence is limited, hence he needs the guidance of God. He refuted Rizal's attacks on Catholic dogmas as misconceptions of rationalism and naturalism, errors of misguided souls.

This interesting debate between two brilliant polemicists ended inconclusively. Rizal could not be convinced by Pastells' arguments so that he lived in Dapitan beyond the pale of his Mother Church.

In spite of their religious differences, Rizal and Pastells remained good friends. Father Pastell gave Rizal a copy of the *Imitacion de Cristo* (Imitation of Christ), a famous Catholic book by Father Thomas a Kempis. And Rizal, in grateful reciprocation, gave his Jesuit opponent in debate a bust of St. Paul which he had made.

Although Rizal did not subscribe to Pastells' religious interpretation of Catholic dogmas, he continued to be a Catholic. He continued to hear Mass at the Catholic church of Dapitan and celebrate Christmas and other religious fiestas in the Catholic way. His Catholicism, however, was the Catholicism that inquires and enlightens, the "Catholicism of Renan and Teilhard de Chardin".

**Rizal Challenges a Frenchman to a Duel.** While Rizal was still debating with Father Pastells by means of exchange of letters, he became involved in a quarrel with a French acquaintance in Dapitan, Mr. Juan Lardet, a businessman. This man purchased many logs from the lands of Rizal. It so happened that some of the logs were of poor quality.

Lardet, in a letter written to Antonio Miranda, a Dapitan merchant and friend of Rizal, expressed his disgust with the business deal and stated that "if he (Rizal -Z.) were a truthful man, he would have told me that the lumber not included in the account were bad".

Miranda indiscreetly forwarded Lardet's letter to Rizal. One of the hero's weaknesses, it should be noted was his sensitivity. When he reads Lardet's letter, he flared up in anger, regarding the Frenchman's unsavory comment as an affront to his integrity. Immediately, he confronted Lardet and challenged him to a duel.

When he commandant heard of the incident, Carnicero told the Frenchman to apologize rather than accept the challenge. "My friend, you have not a Chinaman's chance in a fight with Rizal on a field of honor. Rizal is an expert in martial arts, particularly in fencing and pistol shooting".

Heeding the commandant's advice, Lardet wrote to Rizal in French, dated Dapitan, March 30, 1893, apologizing for the insulting comment. Rizal, as a gentleman and well-versed in *pundonor* (Hispanic chivalric code) accepted the apology, and good relations between him and the Frenchman were restored.

It is interesting to recall that twice before his sensitivity caused him to challenge people to a duel —Antonio Luna in 1890 and W. E. Retana in the same year.

**Rizal and Father Sanchez.** Father Pastells, aside from his personal efforts to persuade Rizal to discard his "errors of religion", instructed two Jesuit in Mindanao —Father Obach, cura of Dapitan, and Father Jose Vilaclara, cura of Dipolog —to try their best to bring back Rizal within the Catholic fold. Furthermore, he assigned Father Francisco de Paula Sanchez, Rizal's favorite teacher at the Ateneo de Manila, to Dapitan.

Father Sanchez, since Rizal's days at the Ateneo, had spent three years in Europe and returned to Manila in 1881 to resume teaching at the Ateneo and to head its museum. He was the only Spanish priest to defend Rizal's *Noli Me Tangere* in public.

Immediately, upon his arrival in Dapitan, Father Sanchez lost no time in meeting his former favorite student. Of all the Jesuits, he was the most beloved and esteemed by Rizal. Almost daily they carried theological arguments in a friendly manner. But all efforts of Sanchez were in vain. For once, Rizal could not be convinced by his former beloved teacher.

Despite his failure to persuade Rizal to discard his unorthodox views on the Catholic religion, Father Sanchez enjoyed the latter's company. He assisted Rizal in beautifying the town plaza. On his birthday, Rizal gave him a precious birthday gift —a manuscript entitled *Estudios sobre la lengua tagala* (Studies on the Tagalog Language), --a Tagalog grammar which Rizal wrote and which he dedicated to his beloved former teacher.

**Idyllic Life in Dapitan.** In Dapitan, Rizal had an exemplary life, idyllic in serenity. Since August, 1893, members of his family took turns in visiting him in order to assuage his loneliness in the isolated outpost of Spanish power in the Moroland. Among them were his mother; sister Trinidad, Maria, Narcisa; and nephews Teodosio, Estanislao, Mauricio, and Prudencio. He built his house by the seashore of Talisay, surrounded by fruit trees. He had also another house for his school boys and a hospital for his patients.

Describing his life in Dapitan, Rizal wrote to Blumentritt on December 18, 1893:

I shall tell you how we live here. I have three houses: one square, another hexagonal, and a third octagonal, all of bamboo, wood and nipa. In the square house live, my mother, my sister Trinidad, a nephew and I; in the octagonal live my boys or some good youngsters whom I teach arithmetic, Spanish and English; and in the hexagonal live my chickens. From my house I hear the murmur of my crystal, clear brook which comes from the high rocks; I see the seashore, the sea where I have small boats, two canoes or barotos, as they say here. I have many fruit trees, mangoes, lanzones, guayabanos, baluno, nanka, etc. I have rabbits, dogs, cats, etc. I rise early —at five—visits my plants, feed the chickens, awaken my people and put them in movement. At half-past seven we breakfast with tea, pastries, cheese, sweetmeats, etc. Later I treat my poor patients who come to my land; I dress, go to the town in my baroto, treat the people there, and return at 12, when my luncheon awaits me. Then I teach the boys until 4 P.M. and devote the afternoon to agriculture. I spend the night reading and studying.

**Rizal's Encounter with the Friar's Spy.** During the early days of November 1893 Rizal was living peacefully and happily at his house in Talisay, a kilometer away from Dapiatn. His mother, sisters Narcisa and Trinidad, and some nephews were then living with him. His blissful life was then suddenly jolted by a strange incident involving a spy of the friars. This spy with the assumed name of "Pablo Mercado" and posing as a relative, secretly visited Rizal at his house on the night of November 3, 1893. He introduced himself as a friend and relative, showing a photo of Rizal and a pair of buttons with the initials "P.M." (Pablo Mercado) as evidence of his kinship with the Rizal family.

In the course of their conversation the strange visitor offered his services as a confidential courier of Rizal's letters and writings for the patriots in Manila. Rizal, being a man of prudence and keen perception became suspicious. Irked by the impostor's lies, he wanted to throw him out of the house, but mindful of his duty as a host and considering the late hour of the night and the heavy rainfall, he hospitably invited the unwanted visitor to stay at his house for the night. And early the next day, he sent him away.

After the departure of his bogus relative, Rizal attended to his daily chores, forgetting the incident of the previous night. Later he learned that the rascal was still in Dapitan, telling people that he was a beloved relative of Dr. Rizal. Losing his cool, he went to the *comandancia* and denounced the impostor to Captain Juan Sitges (who succeeded Captain Carnicero on May 4, 1893 as commandant of Dapitan. Without much ado, Sitges ordered the arrest of "Pablo Mercado" and instructed Anastacio Adriatico, to investigate him immediately.

The truth came out during his investigation. The real name of "Pablo Mercado" was Florencio Namanan. He was a native of Cagayan de Misamis, single and about 30 years old. He was hired by the Recollect friars to a secret mission in Dapitan –to introduce himself to Rizal as a friend and relative, to spy on Rizal's activities, and to filch certain letters and writings of Rizal which might incriminate him in the revolutionary movement. Strangely, Commandant Sitges suddenly quashed the investigation and released the spy. He promptly forwarded the transcripts of the investigation together with his official report to Governor General Blanco who, in turn, kept these documents as highly confidential. Rizal, who was surprised at the turn of events, requested for a copy of the proceedings of the investigation, but Sitges denied his request. As now declassified and preserved at the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid, these documents contain certain mysterious deletions.

These available documents on the failed mission of the friars' spy have been quoted by three Rizalist biographers –Retana (1907), Palma (1949), and Jose Baron Fernandez (1982). But none of these biographers quoted the text of another document which is more reliable and valuable in clarifying the whole incident. It is Rizal's Letter to his brother-in-law, Manuel T. Hidalgo, written in Dapitan, December 20, 1893, as follows:

My Dear Brother-in-Law Maneng,

I was unable to write you by the previous mail for lack of time, for the boat left unexpectedly.

With regard to Pablo Mercado, I tell you that he came here presenting himself as a courteous friend in order to get from me my letters, writings, etc.; but I found him out soon, and if I did not throw him out of the house brusquely, it was because I always want to be nice and polite to everyone. Nevertheless, as it was raining, I let him sleep here, sending him away very early the next day. I was going to let him alone in contempt but the rascal went around saying secretly that he was my cousin or brother-in-law, I reported him to the Commandant who had him arrested.

It was revealed in his declaration that he was sent by the Recollects who gave him P72 and promised him more if he succeeded in wrestling from me my letters for certain persons in Manila. The rascal told me that he was a cousin of one Mr. Litonjua, son of Luis Chiquito, according to him and brother-in-law of Marciano Ramirez. He wanted me to write to these gentlemen. He brought along besides a picture of mine, saying that it was given to him by one Mr. Legaspi of Tondo or San Nicolas, I don't remember exactly. It seems that he belongs to a good family of Cagayan de Misamis. Be careful of him, he is a tall boy, somewhat thickset, slightly squint-eyed, dark, slender, broad shoulders, and of impudent manners. He smokes much, spits more, and has a thin lips.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Your brother-in-law who loves you,

(Signed) Jose Rizal

Based-upon all these available documentary sources, the incident of the secret mission of "Pablo Mercado" in Dapitan was not an "Assasination Attempt on Rizal." It was merely an espionage plot concocted by the friars.

**As Physician in Dapitan.** Rizal practiced medicine in Dapitan. He had many patients, but most of them were poor so that he even gave them free medicine. To his friend in Hong Kong, Dr. Marquez, he wrote: "Here the people are so poor that I have even to give medicine gratis." He had, however, some rich patients who paid him handsomely for his surgical skill.

In August 1893 his mother and sister (Maria) arrived in Dapitan and lived with him for one year and a half. He operated on his mother's right eye. The operation was successful, but Dona Teodora, ignoring her son's instructions, removed the bandages from her eyes, thereby causing the wound to be infected. Thus Rizal told Hidalgo, his brother-in-law: "Now I understand very well why a physician should not treat the members of his family." Fortunately, the infection was arrested so that Dona Teodora's sight, thanks to her son's ophthalmic prowess, was fully restored.

Rizal's fame as a physician, particularly as an eye specialist, spread far and wide. He had many patients who came from different parts of the Philippines –from Luzon, Bohol, Cebu, Panay, Negros, and Mindanao –and even from Hong Kong. A rich Filipino patient, Don Ignacio Tumarong, was able to see again because of Rizal's ophthalmic skill; and highly gratified by the restoration of his sight, he paid P3,000. Another rich patient, an Englishman, paid P500. Don Florecio Azacarraga, a rich hacendero of Aklan, was also cured of eye ailment, and paid Rizal a cargo of sugar.

As a physician, Rizal became interested in local medicine and in the use of medicinal plants. He studied the medicinal plants of the Philippines and their curative values. To poor patients, who could not afford to buy imported medicine, he prescribed the local medicinal plants.

**Water System for Dapitan.** Rizal held the title of expert surveyor (perito agrimensor), which he obtained from the Ateneo. He supplemented his training as a surveyor by his reading of engineering books, so that he came to know about engineering. In Dapitan, he applied his knowledge of engineering by constructing s system of waterworks in order to furnish clean water to the townspeople.

Modern engineers marveled how Rizal could have built such a system of waterworks, for he had inadequate tools and meager materials, and his finances were very limited. Without any aid from the government, he succeeded in giving a good water system to Dapitan.

An American engineer, Mr. H.F. Cameron, praised Rizal's engineering feat in the following words:

Another famous and well-known water supply is that of Dapitan, Mindanao, designed and constructed by Dr. Rizal during his banishment in that municipality by the Spanish authorities . . . This supply comes from a little mountain stream across the river from Dapitan and follows the contour of the country for the whole distance. When one considers that Doctor Rizal had no explosives with which to blast the hard rocks and no resources save his own ingenuity, one cannot help but honor a man, who against adverse conditions, had the courage and tenacity to construct the aqueduct which had for its bottom the fluttet tiles from the house roofs, and was covered with concrete made from limed burned from the sea coral. The length of this aqueduct is several kilometers, and it winds in and out among the rocks and is carried across gullies in bamboo pipes upheld by rocks or brick piers to the distribution reservoir.

**Community Projects for Dapitan.** When Rizal arrived in Dapitan, he decided to improve it, to the best of his God-given talents, and to awaken the civic consciousness of its people. He wrote to Fr. Pastells: "I want to do all that I can for this town."

Aside from constructing the town's first water system, he spent many months draining the marshes in order to get rid of malaria that infested Dapitan. As a European-trained physician, he knew that malaria is spread by the mosquitos which thrive in swampy places.

The P500 which an English patient paid him was used by him to equip the town with its lighting system. This lighting system consisted of coconut oil lamps placed in the dark streets of Dapitan. Electric lighting was unknown then in the Philippines. It was not until 1894 when Manila saw the first electric lights.

Another community project of Rizal was the beautification of Dapitan. With the help of his former Jesuit teacher and friend, Father Sanchez, he remodeled the town plaza in order to enhance its beauty. He jokingly remarked that he would make it nicely so that it could "rival the best in Europe". In front of the church, Rizal and Father Sanchez made a huge relief map of Mindanao out of earth, stones and grass. This map still adorns the town plaza of Dapitan.

**Rizal as Teacher.** Since boyhood Rizal knew the value of good education. During his travels abroad he observed the educational system of modern nations. He himself planned to

establish a modern college in Hong Kong for Filipino boys so that he could train them in modern pedagogical concepts, which were then unknown in the Philippines.

His exile to Dapitan gave him the opportunity to put into practice his educational ideas. In 1893 he established a school which existed until the end of his exile in July, 1896. It began with three pupils and in the course of time the enrolment increased to 16 and later to 21. In his letter to Blumentritt on March 13, Rizal said that he had 16 pupils in his school and that these pupils did not pay any tuition. Instead of charging them tuition fees, he made them work in his garden, fields, and construction projects in the community.

Rizal taught his boys reading, writing, languages (Spanish and English), geography, history, mathematics (arithmetic and geometry), industrial work, nature study, morals, and gymnastics. He trained them how to collect specimens of plants and animals, to love work, and to "behave like men".

Formal classes were conducted between 2:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. Rizal, the teacher, sat on a hammock, while the pupils sat a long bamboo bench. On one day the lessons were conducted in Spanish; on the next day, in English. As in the Ateneo, the best pupil was called "emperor" and he sat at the head of the bench; the poorest pupil occupied the end of the bench.

During the recess the pupils built fires in the garden to drive away the insects, pruned the fruit trees, and manured the soil.

Outside the class hours, Rizal encouraged them to play games in order to strengthen their bodies. They had gymnastics, boxing, wrestling, stone-throwing, swimming, *arnis* (native fencing), and boating.

"**Hymn to Talisay.**" Rizal conducted his school at his home in Talisay, near Dapitan, where he had his farm and hospital. His favorite rendezvous with his boys was under a talisay tree, after which the place was named. In honor of Talisay, he wrote a poem entitled "*Himno A Talisay*" for his pupils to sing:

#### HYMN TO TALISAY

At Dapitan, the sandy shore  
And rocks aloft on mountain crest  
Form thy throne, o refuge blest,  
That we from childhood days have known.  
In your vales that flowers adorn  
And your fruitful leafy shade,  
Out thinking powers are being made,  
And soul with body being grown.

We are youth not long on earth  
But our souls are free from sorrow;  
Calm, strong men we'll be tomorrow,

Who can guard our families' rights.  
Lads are we whom naught can frighten,  
Whether thunder, waves, or rain  
Swift of arm, serene of mien  
In peril, shall we wage our fights.

With our games we churn the sand,  
Through the caves and crags we roam,  
On the rocks we make our home,  
Everywhere out arms can reach.  
Neither dark nor night obscure  
Cause us fear, nor fierce torment  
That even Satan can invent  
Life or death? We must face each!

“Talisayans”, people call us!  
Mighty souls in bodies small  
O'er Dapitan's district all  
No Talisay like this towers.  
None can match our reservoir.  
Our diving pool the sea profound!  
No rowing boat the world around  
For a moment can pass ours.

We study sciences exact:  
The history of our motherland;  
Three languages or four command;  
Bring faith and reason in accord.  
Our hands can manage at one time  
The sail and working spade and pen,  
The mason's maul –for virile men  
Companions –and the gun and sword.

Live, live, O leafy green Talisay  
Our voices sing thy praise in chorus  
Clear star, and precious treasure for us.  
Our childhood's wisdom and its balm.  
In fights that wait for every man,  
In sorrow and adversity,  
Thy memory a charm will be,  
And in the tomb, thy name, thy calm.

*CHORUS*

Hail, O Talisay!  
Firm and untiring  
Ever as piring,

Stately thy gait.  
Things, everywhere  
In sea, land and air  
Shalt thou dominate.

**Contribution to Science.** Rizal found Mindanao a rich virgin field for collecting specimens. With his *baroto* (sailboat) and accompanied by his pupils, he explored the jungles and coasts, seeking specimens of insects, birds, snakes, lizards, frogs, shells, and plants. He sent these specimens to the museum of Europe, especially the Dresden Museum. In payment for these valuable specimens, the European scientists sent him scientific books and surgical instruments.

During his four-year exile in Dapitan, Rizal built up a rich collection of conchology which consisted of 346 shells representing 203 species.

He discovered some rare specimens which were named in his honor by the scientists. Among these were *Draco rizali* (a flying dragon), *apogonia rizali* (a small beetle), and *Rhacophorus rizali* (a rare frog).

Rizal also conducted anthropological, ethnographical, archeological, geological and geographical studies, are revealed by his voluminous correspondence with his scientist friends in Europe. There was no limit to his scientific versatility.

**Linguistic Studies.** A born linguist, Rizal continued his studies of languages. In Dapitan he learned the Bisayan, Subanum, and Malay languages. He wrote a Tagalog grammar, made a comparative study of the Bisayan and Malayan languages, and studied the Bisayan (Cebuan) and Sabanum languages.

On April 5, 1896, his last year of exile in Dapitan, he wrote to Blumentritt: "I know already Bisayan and I speak it quite well; it is necessary, however, to know other dialects of the Philippines". By this time, Rizal could rank with the world's great linguists. He knew 22 languages, as follows: Tagalog, Ilokano, Bisayan, Subanum, Spanish, Latin, Greek, English, French, German, Arabic, Malay, Hebrew, Sanskrit, Dutch, Catalan, Italian, Chinese, Japanese, Portuguese, Swedish and Russian.

**Artistic Works in Dapitan.** Rizal continued his artistic pursuits in Dapitan. He contributed his painting skill to the Sisters of Charity who were preparing the sanctuary of the Holy Virgin in their private chapel. For the sake of the economy, the head of the image was "procured from abroad". The vestments concealing all the rest of the figure except the feet, which rested upon a globe encircled by a snake in whose mouth is an apple, were made by the sisters. Rizal modeled the right foot of the image, the apple, and the serpent's head. He also designed the exquisite curtain, which was printed in oil by an artist Sister under his direction.

Rizal made sketches of persons and things that attracted him in Dapitan. He drew, for instance, the three rare species of animal life –the dragon, the frog, and the beetle –which he had discovered. He had sketches of the numerous fishes he caught in Dapitan waters.

One day in 1894 some of his pupils secretly went to Dapitan in a boat from Talisay; a puppy of Syria (Rizal's dog) tried to follow and was devoured by a crocodile. Rizal reprimanded them, telling them that had they not disobeyed his advice not to go to town without his permission the puppy would not have died and the mother-dog would have been spared the sorrow of losing an offspring. To stress the moral of the incident, he modeled a statuette representing the mother-dog killing the crocodile, the way of avenging her lost puppy, and called it "The Mother's Revenge".

Other sculptural works of Rizal in Dapitan were bust of Father Guerrico (one of his Ateneo professors), a statue of a girl called "The Dapitan Girl," a woodcarving of Josephine Bracken (his wife), and a bust of St. Paul which he gave to Father Patells.

**Rizal as Farmer.** In Dapitan Rizal devoted much of his time to agriculture. He bought 16 hectares of land in Talisay, where he built his home, school, and hospital, and planted cacao, to his sister Trinidad, "is half an hour from the sea. It is very poetic and picturesque. If you and our parents come I will build a big house we can all live in". later, he acquired more lands until his total holdings reached 70 hectares, containing 6,000 hemp plants, 1,000 coconut trees, and numerous fruit trees, sugarcane, corn, coffee and cacao.

On his farm, Rizal introduced modern methods of agriculture which he had observed in Europe and America. His pupils helped him in the daily farm labor. He encouraged the Dapitan farmers to discard their primitive system of tillage and adopt the modern agricultural methods. He imported agricultural machinery from the United States.

Rizal dreamed of establishing an agricultural colony in the sitio of Ponot near Sindagan Bay, where there was plenty of water and good port facilities. He believed that this place would be ideal to raise cacao, coffee, coconuts, and cattle. He invited his relatives and friends, especially those in Calamba, to come to his projected agricultural colony. "We will establish a new Kalamba," he wrote to Hidalgo, his brother-in-law. Unfortunately this colony did not materialize, like his previous Borneo colonization, because he could not get the support of the government.

**Rizal as Businessman.** Aside from farming, Rizal engaged in business. In partnership with Ramon Carreon, a Dapitan merchant, he made profitable business ventures in fishing, copra, and hemp industries. He invited his relatives, particularly Saturnina and Hidalgo to come to Mindanao, for there, "is vast and ample field for business" in the island. He particularly told Saturnina that in Dapitan she could profitably engage in the textile, jewelry, and hemp business.

In a letter to Hidalgo, dated January 19, 1893, he expressed his plan to improve the fishing industry of Dapitan. He said that the town has a good beach like Calamba and there is abundant fish in the sea; however the fishing folks, using primitive methods of fishing, were able only to catch small fishes. Accordingly, he instructed Hidalgo to help him buy a big net for trawl fishing (pukutan) and to send him two good Calamba fishermen who could teach the Dapitan folks better methods of fishing.

The most profitable business venture of Rizal in Dapitan was in the hemp industry. At one time, he shipped 150 bales of hemp to a foreign firm in Manila at huge profit for himself and his business partner. He purchased hemp in Dapitan at P7 and a 4 reales per picul and sold it in Manila at P10 and 4 reales, giving him a profit of P3 per picul. In his letter to Blumentritt on July 31, 1894, he said: "To kill time and to help also the people of this town, I have become a member. I buy abaca and ship it to Manila. Luck was with me this month. I made a profit of P200 in one stroke,,.

On May 14, 1893, Rizal formed a business partnership with Ramon Carreon (Dapitan businessman) in lime manufacturing. Their limeburner had a monthly capacity of more than 400 bags of lime.

To break the Chinese monopoly on business in Dapitan, Rizal organized on January 1, 1895 the Cooperative Association of Dapitan Farmers. According to its constitution, which he had drafted, its purposes were "to improve the farm products, obtain better outlets for them, collect funds for their purchases, and help the producters and workers by establishing a store wherein they can buy prime commodities at moderate prices".

**Rizal's Inventive Ability.** One little-known fact about Rizal was that he was also an inventor. It should be remembered that in 1887, while practicing medicine in Calamba, he invented a cigarette lighter which he sent as a gift to Blumentritt. He called it "*sulpukan*". This unique cigarette lighter was made of wood. "Its mechanism", is based on the principle of compressed air".

During his exile in Dapitan, he invited a machine for making bricks. This machine could manufacture about 6,000 bricks daily. Thus Rizal wrote to Blumentritt on November 20, 1895: "I have made a wooden machine for making bricks, and I believe it could make more or less 6,000 bricks a day. . . When I was in Belgium, I saw the making of bricks out-of-doors without kilns, and during my visit to Baden I saw also a mount of bricks on the ground. I suppose in Bohemia they make bricks by means of different method; if this is so, please inform me how the bricks are baked such that not much heat is wasted".

**"My Retreat."** In February, 1895, Dona Teodora, with her eyesight fully restored, returned to Manila. During her long stay in Dapitan, she saw how busy her talented son was and regretted that he had neglected the Muses. She requested him to write poetry again.

In response to her request, Rizal wrote a beautiful poem about his serene life as an exile in Dapitan and sent it to her on October 22, 1895. This poem was "*Mi Retiro*" (My Retreat), which is acclaimed by literary critics as one of the best ever penned by Rizal. It is as follows:

#### MY RETREAT

By the spreading beach where the sands are soft and fine  
At the foot of the mouth in its mantle of green  
I have built my hut in the pleasant grove's confine;  
From the forest seeking peace and a calmness divine,  
Rest for the weary brain and silence to my sorrow's keen.

Its roof of the frail palm-leaf and its floor the cane.  
Its beams and posts of the unhewn wood;  
Little there is of value in this hut so plain,  
And better by far in the lap of the mount to have lain,  
By the song and the murmur of the high sea's flood.

A purling brook from the woodland glade  
Drops down o'er the stones and around it sweeps,  
Whence a fresh stream is drawn by the rough cane's aid;  
And in the day's heat a crystal fountain leaps.

When the sky is serene how gently it flows,  
And its zither unseen ceaselessly plays;  
But when the rains fall a torrent it goes  
Boiling and foaming through the rocky close,  
Roaring uncheck'd to the sea's wide ways.

The howl of the dog and the song of the bird,  
And only the kalao's hoarse call resound;  
Nor is the voice of vain man to be heard;  
My mind to harass or my steps to begird;  
The woodlands alone and the sea wrap me around.

The sea, ah, the sea! For me it is all,  
And it massively sweeps from the world's apart;  
Its smile in the morn to my soul is a call,  
And when in the evening my faith seems to pall,  
It breaths with its sadness on echo to my heart.

By night an Arcanum; when translucent it glows,  
All spangled over with its millions of lights,  
And the bright sky above resplendent shows;  
While the waves with their sighs tell of their woes –  
Tales that are lost as they roll to the heights.

They tell of the world when the first dawn broke,  
And the sunlight over their surface played;  
When thousands of beings from nothingness woke,  
To people the depths and the heights to cloak,  
Wherever its life-giving kiss was laid.

But when in the night the wild winds awake,  
And the waves in their fury begin to leap,  
Through the air rush the cries that my mind shake;  
Voices that pray, songs and moans that partake  
Of laments from the souls sunk down in the deep.

Then from their heights the mountains groan,  
And the trees shiver tremulous from great unto least;  
The groves rustle plaintive and the herds utter moan,  
For they say that the ghost of the folk that are gone  
Are calling them down to their death's merry feast.

In terror and confusion whispers the night,  
While blue and green flames flit over the deep;  
But calm reigns with the morning's light,  
And soon the bold fisherman comes into sight,  
And his bark rushes on and the waves sink to sleep.

So onward glide the days in my lonely abode;  
Driven forth from the world where once I was known,  
I muse o'er the fate upon me bestowed;  
A fragrant forgotten that the moss will corrode,  
To hide from mankind the world in me shown.

I live in thought of the lov'd ones left,  
And of their names to my mind are borne;  
Some have forsaken me and some by death are left;  
But now 'tis all one, as through the past I drift,  
The past which from one never be torn.

For it is the friend that is with me always,  
That ever in sorrow keeps the faith in my soul;  
While through the still night it watches and prays,  
As here in my exile in my one hut it stays  
To strengthen my faith when doubts o'er me roll.

That faith I keep and I hope to see shine  
The day when the Idea prevails over might;  
When after the fray and death's show decline.  
Some other voice sounds, far happier than mine,  
To raise the glad of the triumph of right.

I see the sky glow, resplendent and clear,  
As when it forced on me my first clear illusion;  
I feel the same wind kiss my forehead sore,  
And the fire is the same that is burning here  
To stir up youth's blood in boiling confusion.

I breathe here the winds that perchance have pass'd  
O'er the fields and the rivers of my own natal shore;  
And mayhap they will bring on the returning blast  
The sighs that lov'd being upon them has cast –  
Messages sweet from the love I first bore.

To see the same moon, all silver'd as of yore.  
I feel the sad thoughts within me arise;  
The fond recollections of the troth we swore.  
Of the field and the bower and the wide seashore,  
The blushes of joy, with the silence and sighs.

A butterfly seeking the flowers and the light,  
Of other lands dreaming of vaster extent;  
Scarce a youth, from home and love I took flight,  
To wander unheeding, free from doubt of affright –  
So in foreign lands were my brightest days spent.

And when like a languishing bird I was fain  
To the home of my fathers and my love to return,  
Of a sudden the fierce tempest roar'd amain;  
So, I saw my wings shattered and no home remain,  
My trust sold to others and wrecks round me burn.

Hurl'd out into exile from the land I adore,  
My future all dark and no refuge to seek;  
My roseate dreams hover, round me once more,  
Sole treasures of all that life to me bore;  
The faiths of youth that with sincerity speak.

But not as of old, full of life and of grace,  
Do you hold out hopes of undying reward;  
Sadder I find you; on your lov'd face,  
Though still sincere, the pale lines trace  
The marks of the faith it is yours to guard.

You offer now, dreams, my gloom to appease,  
And the years of my youth again to disclose;  
So I thank you, O storm, and heaven-born breeze,  
That you knew of the hour my wild flight to ease,  
To cast me back to the soil whence I rose.

By the spreading beach where the sands are soft and fine,  
At the foot of the mount in its mantle of green;  
I have found a home in the pleasant grove's confine,  
In the shady woods, that peace and calmness divine,  
Rest for the weary brain and silence to my sorrow keen.

**Rizal and Josephine Bracken.** In the silent hours of the night after the day's hard work, Rizal was often sad. He missed his family and relatives, his good friends in foreign lands, the exhilarating life in the cities of Europe, and his happy days in Calamba. The death of Leonor Rivera on August 28, 1893 left a poignant void in his heart. He needed somebody to cheer him up in his lonely exile.

In God's own time, this "somebody" came to Dapitan, like a sunbeam to dispel his melancholy mood. She was Josephine Bracken, an Irish girl of sweet eighteen, "slender, a chestnut blond, with blue eyes, dressed with elegant simplicity, with an atmosphere of light gayety". She was born in Hong Kong on October 3, 1876 of Irish parents – James Bracken, a corporal in the British garrison, and Elizabeth Jane McBride. Her mother died in childbirth, and she was adopted by Mr. George Taufer, who later became blind.

No ophthalmic specialist in Hong Kong could cure Mr. Taufer's blindness so that he, accompanied by his adopted daughter Josephine went to Manila to seek the services of the famous ophthalmic surgeon, Dr. Rizal. They heard in the city that Dr. Rizal was in Dapitan, where they proceeded –accompanied by a Filipina companion, Manuela Orlac. They presented to Rizal a card of introduction by Julio Llorente, his friend and schoolmate.

Rizal and Josephine fell in love with each other at first sight. After a whirlwind romance of one month, they agreed to marry. But Father Obach, the priest of Dapitan, refused to marry them without the permission of the Bishop of Cebu.

When Mr. Taufer heard of their projected marriage, he flared up in violent rage. Unable to endure the thought of losing Josephine, he tried to commit suicide by cutting off his throat with a razor. Rizal, however, grabbed his wrists and prevented him from killing himself. To avoid a tragedy, Josephine went with Taufer to Manila by the first available his ailment was venereal in nature, hence incurable.

Mr. Taufer returned alone to Hong Kong. Josephine stayed in Manila with Rizal's family. Later she returned to Dapitan. Since no priest would marry them, Rizal and Josephine held hands together and married themselves before the eyes of God. They lived as man and wife. Of course, Father Obach was scandalized, and many unsavory tales were circulated by gossips in Dapitan.

Rizal and Josephine lived happily in Dapitan. In several letters to his family, Rizal praised Josephine and revealed his new happiness. He was no longer lonely. Dapitan had become for him a heaven of bliss.

At one time, Rizal wrote a poem for Josephine, which runs as follows:

### **Josephine, Josephine**

Who to these shores have come  
Looking for a nest, a home,  
Like a wandering swallow;  
If your fate is taking you  
To Japan, China or Shanghai,  
Don't forget on these shores  
A heart for you beats high.

In the early part of 1896 Rizal was extremely happy because Josephine was expecting a baby. Unfortunately, he played a prank on her, frightening her so that she prematurely gave birth

to an eight-month baby boy, who lived only for three hours. This lost son of Rizal was named "Francisco" in honor of Don Francisco (the hero's father) and was buried in Dapitan.

**Rizal and the Katipunan.** While Rizal was mourning the loss of his son, ominous clouds of revolution gradually darkened the Philippine skies. Andres Bonifacio, the "Great Plebeian," was sowing the seeds of an armed uprising. The secret revolutionary society, called Katipunan, which he founded on July 7, 1892, was gaining more and more adherents.

In a secret meeting of the Katipunan at a little river called Bitukang Manok, near the town of Pasig, on May 2, 1896, Dr. Pio Valenzuela was named emissary to Dapitan, in order to inform Rizal of the plan of the Katipunan to launch a revolution for freedom's sake.

On June 15, Dr. Valenzuela left Manila on board the steamer *Venus*. To camouflage his real mission, he brought with him a blind man named Raymundo Mata and a guide, ostensibly going to Dapitan to solicit Rizal's expert medical advice.

Dr. Valenzuela arrived in Dapitan in the evening of June 21, 1896. Rizal, ever a hospitable host, welcomed him. After supper, the two had a heart-to-heart talk in the garden. Valenzuela told him of the Katipunan plan and of the necessity of his support.

Rizal objected to Bonifacio's audacious project to plunge the country in bloody revolution. He was of the sincere belief that it was premature, for two reasons: (1) the people are not ready for a revolution, and (2) arms and funds must first be collected before raising the cry of revolution. He also disapproved of the other plan of the Katipunan to rescue him because he had given his word of honor to the Spanish authorities and he did not want to break it.

**Volunteers as Military Doctor in Cuba.** Months before the Katipunan contracted him, Rizal had offered his services as military doctor in Cuba, which was then in the throes of a revolution and a raging yellow fever epidemic. There was a shortage of physicians to minister to the needs of the Spanish troops and the Cuban people. It was Blumentritt who told him of the deplorable health situation in war-ridden Cuba and advised him to volunteer as army physician there.

Acting upon Blumentritt's advice, Rizal wrote to Governor General Ramon Blanco, Despujol's successor, on December 17, 1895, offering his services as military doctor in Cuba. Months passed and he received no reply from Malacanang. He gave up hope that his humanitarian offer would ever receive government approval.

Would he least expected it, a letter from Governor Blanco dated July 1, 1896 arrived in Dapitan, notifying him of the acceptance of his offer. This letter, which reached him on July 30<sup>th</sup>, also stated that the politico-military commander of Dapitan would give him a pass so that he could come to Manila, where he would be given a safe-conduct to Spain, "and there the Minister of War will assign you to the Army of Operations in Cuba, detailed to the Medical Corps".

**"The Song of the Traveler".** Great was Rizal's joy in receiving the gladsome news from Malacanang. At last, he was free! Once more, he was going to travel –to Europe and then to

Cuba. It was with this joyous thought of resuming his travels that he wrote his heart-warming poem "*El Canto de Viajero*" (The Song of the Traveler) which runs in full:

#### THE SONG OF THE TRAVELER

Like to a leaf that is fallen and withered,  
Tossed by the tempest from pole unto pole;  
Thus roams the pilgrim abroad without purpose,  
Roams without love, without country or soul.

Following anxiously treacherous fortune;  
Fortune which e'en as he grasps at it flees,  
Vain though the hopes that his yearning is seeking  
Yet does the pilgrim embark on the seas.

Ever impelled by the invincible power,  
Destined to roam from the East to the West;  
Of the remembers the faces of loved ones,  
Dreams of the day when he, too, was at rest.

Chance may assign him tomb on the desert,  
Grant him a final asylum of peace;  
Soon by the world and his country forgotten,  
God rest his soul when his wanderings cease!

Often the sorrowing pilgrim is envied,  
Circling the globe like a sea-gull above;  
Little, ah, little they know what a void  
Saddens his soul by the absence of love.

Home may the pilgrim return in the future,  
Back to his loved ones his footsteps he bends;  
Naught will he find out snow and the ruins,  
Ashes of love and the tomb of his friends.

Pilgrim, begone! Nor return more hereafter,  
Stranger though art in the land of thy birth;  
Others may sing of their love while rejoicing,  
though once again must roam o'er the earth.

Pilgrim, begone! Nor return more hereafter,  
Dry are the tears that a while for thee ran;  
Pilgrim, begone! And forget thine affliction,  
Loud laughs the world at the sorrows of man.

**Adios, Dapitan.** On July 31, 1896, Rizal's four-year exile in Dapitan came to an end. At midnight of that date, he embarked on board the steamer *Espana*. He was accompanied by Josephine, Narcisa, Angelica (Narcisa's daughter), his three nephews, and six pupils. Almost all Dapitan folks, young and old, were at the shore to bid him goodbye. Many wept as the steamer sailed away –especially the other pupils who were too poor to accompany their beloved teacher to Manila. As farewell music, the town brass band strangely played the dolorous *Funeral March* of Chopin. As its melancholy melody floated in the air, Rizal must have felt it deeply, for with his presentiment of death, it seemed an obsequy or a requiem.

As the steamer pushed out into the sea, Rizal gazed for the last time on Dapitan with his hands waving in farewell salute to its kind and hospitable folks and with a crying heart filled with tears of nostalgic memories. When he could no longer in his diary: "I have been in that district four years, thirteen days, and a few hours".

# Chapter 23

## Last Trip Abroad, (1896)

No longer an exile, Rizal had a pleasant trip from Dapitan to Manila, with delightful stopovers in Dumaguete, Cebu, Iloilo, Capiz, and Romblon. He missed the regular steamer *Isla de Luzon*, which sailed to Spain the day before he arrived in Manila Bay. While waiting for the next ship for Spain, he was kept as a “guest” on board the Spanish cruiser *Castilla*. Meanwhile, on August 26, 1896, Andres Bonifacio and the Katipunan raised the cry of revolution in the hills of Balintawak, a few miles north of Manila. Rizal, worried about the raging hostilities, left for Spain on the steamer *Isla de Panay* on September 3, 1896. It was his last trip abroad.

**From Dapitan to Manila.** Leaving Dapitan at midnight, July 31, 1896, the *Espana*, with Rizal and party on board, sailed northward. At dawn the next day (Saturday, August 1), it anchored at Dumaguete, capital of Negros Oriental. “Dumaguete,” wrote Rizal in his travel diary, “spreads out on the beach. There are big houses, some with galvanized iron roofing. Outstanding are the house of a lady, whose name I have forgotten, which is occupied by the government and another one just begun with many ipil posts”.

In Dumaguete, Rizal visited a friend and former classmates, Herrero Regidor, who was the judge of the province. He also visited other friends, including the Periquet and Rufina families. In the afternoon he operated on a Spanish captain of the Guardia Civil.

The *Espana* left Dumaguete about 1:00 p.m. and reached Cebu the following morning. Rizal was fascinated by the entrance to Cebu which he considered “beautiful”. At the house of attorney Mateos he met an old couple whom he had known in Madrid. “In Cebu”, he wrote in his diary, “I did two operations of strabotomy, one operation on the ears, and another of tumor”.

In the morning of Monday August 3, Rizal left Cebu going to Iloilo. “The voyage was fine,” he wrote, “At the right we saw Mactan, an island famous for what to Magellan. The whole afternoon was magnificent. . . We saw many islands along our way. . . The next day, in the morning, we entered Iloilo” . . . .

Rizal landed at Iloilo, went shopping in the city, and visited Molo. Of the Molo church, he commented: “the church is pretty outside and the interior is not bad, considering that it had been painted by a lad. The paintings are mostly copies of biblical scenes by Gustave Dore”.

From Iloilo, Rizal’s ship sailed to Capiz. After a brief stopover, it proceeded towards Manila via Romblon.

**Rizal Misses Ship Going to Spain.** The *Espana* arrived in Manila Bay early in the morning of Thursday, August 6, 1896. Unfortunately, Rizal was not able to catch the mail ship *Isla de Luzon* for Spain because it had departed the previous day at 5:00 p.m. He was greatly disappointed, but he took this unlucky incidence with abiding resignation.

Writing to Blumentritt later, Rizal mentioned this episode, “Unfortunately”, he said, “I did not catch the mail ship for Spain, and fearing that my stay in Manila for a month might bring me troubles I made known to the governor general, while remaining on board the ship (*Espana* – Z.), of my wish to be isolated from everybody, except my family”.

Near midnight of the same day, August 6, Rizal was transferred to the Spanish cruiser *Castilla*, by order of Governor General Ramon Blanco. He was given good accommodation by the gallant captain, Enrique Santalo, who told him that he was not a prisoner, but a guest detained on board “in order to avoid difficulties from friends and enemies”.

Rizal stayed on the cruiser for about a month, from August 6 to September 2, 1896, pending the availability of a Spain-bound steamer.

**Outbreak of the Philippine Revolution.** While Rizal was patiently waiting on the cruiser *Castilla* for the next steamer to take him to Spain, portentous events occurred, presaging the downfall of Spanish power in Asia.

On the fateful evening of August 19, 1896, the Katipunan plot to overthrow Spanish rule by means of revolution was discovered by Fray Mariano Gil, Augustinian cura of Tondo. This startling incident struck terror into the hearts of the Spanish officials and residents, producing a hysteria of vindictive retaliation against the Filipino patriots.

The tumult produced by the discovery of the Katipunan plot was aggravated by the “Cry of Balintawak” which was raised by Bonifacio and his valiant Katipuneros on August 26, 1896. At sunrise of August 30, the revolutionists led by Bonifacio and Jacinto attacked San Juan, near the city of Manila, but they were repulsed with heavy losses. In the afternoon, after the Battle of San Juan, Governor General Blanco proclaimed a state of war in the first eight provinces for raising in arms against Spain –Manila (as a province), Bulacan, Cavite, Batangas, Laguna, Pampanga, Nueva Ecija, and Tarlac.

Rizal learned of the eruption of the revolution and the raging battles around Manila through the newspapers he read on the *Castilla*. He was worried for two reasons: (1) the violent revolution which he sincerely believed to be premature and would only cause much suffering and terrible loss of human lives and property, had started and (2) it would arouse Spanish vengeance against all Filipino patriots.

**Departure for Spain.** On August 30, 1896, the day when the state of war was proclaimed in the eight provinces, Rizal received from Governor General Blanco two letters of introduction for the Minister of War and the Minister of Colonies, with a covering letter which absolved him from all blame for the raging revolution, as follows:

Mr. Jose Rizal

My Dear Sir:

Enclosed are two letters for the Ministers of War and Colonies which I think will be well received.

I have no doubt that you will justify me before the Government by your future behavior not only for your word of honor but because the present happening must have shown you palpably that certain actions which are the product of foolish ideas yield no other result but hatred, destruction, tears, and blood.

May you be very happy is the wish of your attentive servant who kisses your hand,

Ramon Blanco

The two letters of introduction were identical. The one addressed to General Marcelo de Azcarraga, Minister of War, was written as follows:

Most Excellent Marcelo de Azcarraga  
My esteemed General and distinguished friend,

I recommend to you with genuine interest Dr. Jose Rizal who is departing for the Peninsula at the disposal of the Government, ever desirous of rendering his services as physician to the Army in Cuba.

His conduct during his four years that he was in exile in Dapitan has been exemplary and he is, in my opinion, the more worthy of pardon and benevolence as he is in no way involved either in the criminal attempt that we are lamenting these days or in any conspiracy or secret society that they have been plotting.

With this object I have the pleasure to remain,

Your most affectionate friend  
and colleague who kisses  
your hand.

On September 2, 1896, the day before this departure for Spain, Rizal, on board the *Castilla*, wrote to his mother, as follows:

My Dearest Mother,

As I promised, I am addressing you a few lines before leaving, to let you know about the condition of my health.

I am well, thank God; I am only concerned as to what will happen or shall have happened to you in these days of upheaval and disorder. God will that my old father may not have any disposition.

I shall write to you from the places where the boat stops; I expect to be in Madrid or at least in Barcelona at the end of this month.

Do not worry about anything; we are all in the hands of Divine Providence. Not all

those who go to Cuba die, and in the end one has to die; at least die doing something good.

Take good care of yourself and take care of my old father so that we shall see each other again. Many regards for my brothers, sisters, nephews and nieces, aunts, etc., etc. I leave contented, confident that as long as you are alive the family will remain united and the old intimacy will reign in it. You two are the bond that unites all of us.

With nothing more, my very dear mother, I kiss your hand and that of my father with all the affection and love that my heart is capable of giving; give me your blessings of which I am in much need.

A fond embrace for everyone of my sisters; may they love one another just as I love all of them.

Your son,  
Jose

At 6:00 p.m., September 2, Rizal was transferred to the steamer *Isla de Panay* which was sailing for Barcelona, Spain. The next morning, September 3, this steamer left Manila Bay. At last, Rizal's last trip to Spain began. Among his fellow passengers on board were Don Pedro Roxas (rich Manila creole industrialist and his friend) and his son named Periquin.

**Rizal in Singapore.** The *Isla de Panay* arrived at Singapore in the evening of September 7. The following morning Rizal and other passengers went ashore for sightseeing and shopping for souvenirs. In his travel diary, Rizal wrote: "I have observed some changes: There are more Chinese merchants and less Indian . . . I bought a Chinese gown . . . Singapore has changed much since I saw it for the first time in 1882."

Don Pedro, with his son, disembarked at Singapore. He advised Rizal to stay behind too and take advantage of the protection of the British law. Rizal did not heed his advice. Several Filipino residents of Singapore, headed by Don Manuel Camus, boarded the steamer, urging him to stay in Singapore to save his life. He also ignored their appeal because he had given his word of honor to Governor General Blanco and he did not like to break it.

**Victims of Spanish Duplicity.** By refusing to break his word of honor in Singapore, Rizal sealed his own doom. For without his knowledge, Governor General Blanco was secretly conspiring with the Ministers of War and the Colonies (ultramar) for his destruction.

Great hero and genius that he was, Rizal proved to be as gullible as Sultan Zaide, another victim of Spanish intrigue. For all his wonderful talents, Rizal was after all a mortal man who committed mistakes. And one of his greatest mistakes was to believe that Governor General Blanco was a man of honor and a friend because he allowed him to go as a free man to Spain to become a physician-surgeon of the Spanish army in Cuba, where a bloody revolution was raging, and gave him to the Spanish Ministers of War and the Colonies.

The truth of the matter, as now substantiated by the declassified documents in the Ministries of War and the Colonies, was that Blanco was his implacable foe, who regarded him as a "dangerous Filipino" who was responsible for the raging Philippine Revolution, and therefore plotted his doom.

Rizal was unaware that since his departure from Manila Bay on his way to Spain, Blanco and the Ministers of War and the Colonies were exchanging coded telegrams and confidential messages for his arrest upon reaching Barcelona and that he was a deportee and was being secretly kept under surveillance.

**Rizal Arrested Before Reaching Barcelona.** The *Isla de Panay*, with Rizal on board, left Singapore at 1:00 p.m., September 8. Unaware of the Spanish duplicity, particularly of Governor General Blanco's infernal deceit, he happily continued the voyage towards Barcelona.

On September 25, he saw the steamer *Isla de Luzon*, leaving the Suez Canal, crammed with Spanish troops. Two days later (Sunday, September 27) he heard from the passengers that a telegram arrived from Manila reporting the execution of Francisco Roxas, Genato, and Osorio.

On September 28, a day after the steamer had left Port Said (Mediterranean terminus of the Suez Canal), a passenger told Rizal the bad news that he would be arrested by order of Governor General Blanco and would be sent to prison in Ceuta (Spanish Morocco), opposite Gibraltar.

Shocked by the alarming news, Rizal belatedly realized that he was duped by the unscrupulous Spanish officials, particularly the sly Governor General Blanco. With an agonizing heart, he immediately wrote a letter to his best friend, Blumentritt, unburdening his disgust and bitterness, as follows:

S.S. Isla de Panay, Mediterranean  
September 28, 1896

My very dear Friend,

A passenger on board has just told me a news that I can hardly believe and should it be true, would bring to an end prestige of Philippine authorities.

I cannot believe for it would be the greatest injustice and the most abominable infamy, unworthy not of a military official but of the last bandit. I have offered to serve as a physician, risking life in the hazards of war and abandoning all my business. I am innocent and now in reward they are sending me to prison!!

I cannot believe it! This is infamous, but if it turns out to be true, as everybody assures me, I am communicating to you these news so that you may appraise my situation.

Yours,  
(Signed) Jose Rizal

There was nothing official yet about his impending arrest; it was still merely shipboard gossip. On September 29, Rizal wrote in his travel diary: "There are people on board who do nothing but slander to become a legendary personage."

The following day (September 30), at 4:00 p.m., he was officially notified by Captain Alemany that he stay in his cabin until further orders from Manila. He graciously complied with the captain's directive.

**Arrival in Barcelona as a Prisoner.** About 6:25 p.m., September 30, the steamer anchored at Malta. Being confined to his cabin, Rizal was not able to visit the famous island-fortress of the Christian crusaders. "I saw through a tiny window," he wrote in his diary, "the beautiful view of the port [Malta -Z.], with its monumental and magnificent castle in three levels . . . illuminated by the lingering afternoon lights."

On October 3, at 10:00 o'clock in the morning, the *Isala de Panay* arrived in Barcelona, with Rizal a prisoner on board. The trip from Manila to Barcelona lasted exactly 30 days. He was kept under heavy guard in his cabin for three days. His jailor was no longer the ship captain but the Military Commander of Barcelona, who happened to be General Eulogio Despujol, the same one who ordered his banishment to Dapitan in July, 1892. It was one of those coincidences in the lives of men that make "history stranger than fiction."

On his second day in Barcelona, Rizal, although held incomunicado in his cabin, noticed the city celebration of the feast of St. Francis of Assisi. He recorded it in his diary as follows: "At 6:00 in the morning many cannon shots awakened us. It seems that they are in honor of the feast of St. Francis of Assisi. . . At 12:00 o'clock I counted as many as 31 cannon shots and at 6:00 there were again as many. At night there was a concert in the dining room which can be heard from my cabin."

At 3:00 a.m. on October 6, Rizal was awakened by the guards and escorted to the grim and infamous prison-fortress named Monjuich. He spent the whole morning in a cell. About 2:00 in the afternoon, he was taken out of prison by the guards and brought to the headquarters of General Despujol. In the interview, which lasted a quarter in an hour, the brusque general told Rizal that he would be shipped back to Manila on board the transport ship *Colon* which was leaving that evening.

After the interview, Rizal was taken aboard the *Colon*, which was "full of soldiers and officers and their families." At 8:00 p.m., October 6, the ship left Barcelona, with Rizal on board.

\* \* \* \* \*

# Chapter 24

## Last Homecoming and Trial

Rizal's homecoming in 1896, the last in his life, was his saddest return to his beloved native land. He knew he was facing the supreme test, which might mean the sacrifice of his life, but he was unafraid. As a matter of fact, he welcomed it. Gladly, he desired to meet his enemies and to offer himself as a sacrificial victim to their sadistic lust and unholy designs for he knew that his blood would water the seeds of Filipino freedom. The trial that was held shortly after his homecoming was one of history's mockeries of justice. His enemies howled like mad dogs for his blood, and they got it, without benefit of genuine justice.

**A Martyr's Last Homecoming.** Day by day, since leaving Barcelona on Tuesday, October 6, 1896, Rizal conscientiously recorded the events in his diary. He was given a good cabin in the second class and although strictly guarded, he was courteously treated by the army officers. "They officer on duty," he wrote in his diary, "seems amiable, refined, and polite, consistent with the seriousness of his duty."

On October 8 a friendly officer told Rizal that the Madrid newspapers were full of stories about the bloody revolution in the Philippines and were blaming him for it. Realizing the adverse and unjust public opinion, he thanked God for giving him the chance to return in order to confront his slanders and to vindicate his name. He wrote in his dairy on the same date (October 8):

I believe that what God is doing to me is a blessing, allowing me to go back to the Philippines in order to be able to destroy such accusations. Because, either they do me justice and recognize my innocence and then I will be rehabilitated or they sentence me to death and thereby, before the eyes of society, I atone for my supposed crime. Society will forgive me and later, without any doubt, justice will be done me and I will be one more martyr. At any rate, instead of dying abroad or in the manigua (jungle in Cuba), I'll die in my own country. I believe that what is happening is the best that can happen to me. Always let God's will be done! I feel more calm with regard to my future. . . I feel that peace has descended upon me, thank God! Though art my hope and my consolation! Let your Will be done; I am ready to obey it. Either I will be condemned or absolved. I'm happy and ready.

**Confiscation of Rizal's Diary.** It was known to the Spanish authorities on board the Colon that Rizal was keeping track of the daily events in his dairy. They were, of course, curious as to what were recorded in his diary. Not only their curiosity, but also their suspicion was aroused, for they feared that the diarist might be writing something seditious or treasonable.

On October 11 before reaching Port Said, Rizal's dairy was taken away and was critically scrutinized by the authorities. Nothing dangerous was found in its contents. The cabin was searched thoroughly, but nothing incriminating was found. On November 2, the diary was returned to him. Owing to the interruption, Rizal was not able to record the events from Monday, October 12 to Sunday, November 1. Speaking of this incident, he wrote in his diary.

Monday, 2 November –Today, they returned to me this notebook which they took away on the 11<sup>th</sup> of last month before reaching Port Said. For this reason my diary was interrupted. They searched me and inspected thoroughly my luggage. They took away all my papers and afterwards they put me behind bars and they did not take me out until we reached the Red Sea. That was what they did to me in 16 hours before our arrival. Also twice they put me in four or six hours before and they take me out when we are already in the high seas. However, at Singapore they put me in 16 hours before our arrival. Also twice they put handcuffs on me.

**Unsuccessful Rescue in Singapore.** News of Rizal's predicament reached in his friends in Europe and Singapore. From London, Dr. Antonio Ma. Regidor and Sixto Lopez dispatched frantic telegrams to an English lawyer in Singapore named Hugh Fort to rescue Rizal from the Spanish steamer when it reached Singapore by means of a writ of habeas corpus.

When the Colon arrived in Singapore, Atty. Fort instituted proceedings at the Singapore Court for the removal of Rizal from the steamer. The crux of Mr. Fort's legal contention was that Rizal was "illegally detained" on the Spanish steamer.

Unfortunately, Chief Justice Loinel Cox denied the writ on the ground that the Colon was Spanish troops to the Philippines. Hence it is a warship of a foreign power, which under international law was beyond the jurisdiction of the Singapore authorities.

Rizal was unaware of the attempt made by his friends to rescue him in Singapore because he was then kept behind bars in the ship.

**Arrival in Manila.** On November 3, the Colon reached Manila, where it was greeted with wild rejoicings by the Spaniards and friars because it brought more reinforcements and military supplies. While the Spanish community was exulting with joy, Rizal was quietly transferred under heavy guard from the ship of Fort Santiago.

Meanwhile, the Spanish authorities fished for evidence against Rizal. Many Filipino patriots, including Deodato Arellano, Dr. Pio Valenzuela, Moises Salvador, Jose Dizon, Domingo Franco, Temoteo Paez, and Pedro Serrano Laktaaw, were brutally tortured to implicate Rizal. Rizal's own brother, Paciano, was arrested and cruelly tortured. He suffered all pains inflicted by Spain's diabolical torturers, but he never signed any damaging statement incriminating his younger brother. Although his body was shattered on the torture rack and his left hand crushed by the screw, his valiant Asian spirit remained unbroken.

**Preliminary Investigation.** On November 20, the preliminary investigation began. Rizal, the accused, appeared before the Judge Advocate, Colonel Francisco Olive. He was subjected to a grueling five-day investigation. He was informed of the charges against him. He answered the questions asked by the Judge Advocate, but he was not permitted to confront those who testified against him.

Two kinds of evidence were presented against Rizal, namely documentary and testimonial. The documentary evidence consisted of fifteen exhibits, as follows:

1. A letter from Antonio Luna to Mariano Ponce, dated Madrid, October 16, 1888, showing Rizal's connection with the Filipino reform campaign in Spain.
2. A letter of Rizal to his family, dated Madrid, August 20, 1890, stating that the deportations are good for they will encourage the people to hate tyranny.
3. A letter from Marcelo H. del Pilar to Deodato Arellano, dated Madrid, January 7, 1889, implicating Rizal in the Propaganda campaign in Spain.
4. A poem entitled Kundiman, allegedly written by Rizal in Manila on September 12, 1891. This poem is as follows:

**KUNDIMAN**

In the orient beautiful  
Where the sun is born,  
In a land of beauty  
Full of enchantments  
But bound in chains.  
Where the despot reigns,  
The land dearest to me.  
Ah! that is my country,  
She is a slaved oppressed  
Groaning in the tyrant's grips;  
Lucky shall he be  
Who can give her liberty!
5. A letter of Carlos Oliver to an unidentified person, dated Barcelona, September 18, 1891, describing Rizal as the man to free the Philippines from Spanish oppression.
6. A Masonic document, dated Manila, February 9, 1892, honoring Rizal for his patriotic services.
7. A letter signed Dimasalang (Rizal's pseudonym) to Tenluz (Juan Zulueta's pseudonym), dated Hong Kong, May 24, 1892, stating that he was preparing a safe refuge for Filipinos who may be persecuted by the Spanish authorities.
8. A letter of Dimasalang to an unid=notified committee, dated Hong Kong, June 1, 1892, soliciting the aid of the committee in the "patriotic work".
9. An anonymous and undated letter to the Editor of the Hong Kong Telegraph, censuring the banishment of Rizal to Dapitan.
10. A letter of Ildefonso Laurel to Rizal, dated Manila, September 3, 1892, saying that the Filipino people look up to him (Rizal) as their savior.

11. A letter of Ildefonso Laurel to Rizal, dated Manila, 17, 1893, informing an unidentified correspondent of the arrest and banishment of Doroteo Cortes and Anbrosio Salvador.

12. A letter of Marcelo H. del Pilar to Don Juan A. Tenluz (Juan Zulueta), dated Madrid, June 1 1893 recommending the establishment of a special organization, independent of Masonry, to help the cause of the Filipino people.

13. Transcript of a speech of Pingkian (Emilio Jacinto), in a reunion of the Katipunan on July 23, 1893, in which the following cry was uttered “Long Live the Philippines! Long live Liberty! Long live Doctor Rizal! Unity!”

14. Transcript of a speech of Tik-Tik (Jose Turiano Santiago) in the same Katipunan reunion, where in the katipuneros shouted: “Long live the eminent Doctor Rizal! Death to the oppressor nation!”

15. A poem by Laong Laan (Rizal) entitled A Talisay, in which the author makes the Dapitan schoolboys sing that they know how to fight for their rights. Dr. Pio Valenzuela, Antonio Salazar, Francisco Quison, and Timoteo Paez.

On November 26, after the preliminary investigation, Colon Olive transmitted the records of the case to Governor General Ramon Blanco, and the letter appointed Captain Rafael Dominguez as special Judge Advocate to institute the corresponding action against Rizal.

Immediately, Dominguez made a brief resume of the charges and returned the papers to Governor General Blanco who, thereupon, transmitted them to the Judge Advocate General, Don Nicolas de la Pena, for an opinion.

After studying the papers, Pena submitted the following recommendations: (1) the accused be immediately brought to trial; (2) he should be kept in prison; (3) an order to attachment be issued against his property to the amount of one million pesos as indemnity; (4) he should be defended in court by an army officer, not by a civilian lawyer.

**Rizal Chooses His Defender.** The only right given to Rizal by the Spanish authorities was to choose his defense counsel. And even this was highly restricted. For he had to choose only from a list submitted to him.

On December 8, Feast Day of the Immaculate Conception, a list of 100 first and second lieutenants in the Spanish Army was presented to Rizal. He looked over the list. One name struck his fancy. It was Don Luis Tavial de Andrade, 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant of the Artillery. The name was familiar to him so that he chose the lieutenant to be his defender in court.

Lt. Luis Tavial de Andrade proved to be the brother of Lt. Jose Tavial de Andrade, Rizal’s “bodyguard” in Calamba in 1887. Upon being notified by the authorities that he was chosen to defend the accused, he gladly accepted the task. He had previously heard from his older brother (Jose Tavial de Andrade) about Dr. Rizal of Calamba.

**Reading of Information of Charges to the Accused.** On December 11, the information of charges was formally read to Rizal in his prison cell, with his counsel present. He was accused of being “the principal organizer and the living soul of the Filipino insurrection, the founder of societies, periodicals and books dedicated to fomenting and propagating ideas rebellion.” As the accused, Rizal raised no objection on the jurisdiction of the court, but pleaded not guilty to the crime of rebellion. He admitted that he wrote the Constitution of the Liga Filipina which was merely a civic association. He waived the right to amend or make further statements already made, except that he had taken no part in politics since his exile to Dapitan.

Dominguez forwarded the papers of the Rizal case to Malacanan Palace on December 13, the same day when General Camilo G. de Polavieja, with the help of the powerful Dominican friars, became Governor General of the Philippines, succeeding General Blanco. The withdrawal of Blanco from the gubernatorial office sealed Rizal’s fate, for he was more humane in character than the ruthless Polavieja and, moreover, he firmly believed that Rizal was not a traitor to Spain. Had he remained longer in office, Rizal would not have been executed. But this was one of those intriguing “ifs” in history, of which man has no control because the destiny of men and nations is in accordance with God’s divine plan.

**Rizal’s Manifesto to His People.** on December 15, Rizal wrote a manifesto to his people appealing to stop the necessary shedding of blood and to achieve their liberties by means of education and industry.

This manifesto, written in his prison cell at Fort Santiago, runs as follows:

My countrymen:

On my return from Spain, I learned that my name had been used as a war cry among some who were in arms. The news painfully surprised me, but believing it was all over, I kept silent over what I considered irremediable. Now I hear rumors that he disturbances continue, and lest any persons should still go on using my name in bad or good faith, to remedy this abuse and to undeceive the unwary, I hasten to address you these lines so that the truth may be known.

From the beginning, when I had news of what was being planned, I opposed it, fought it, and demonstrated its absolute impossibility. This is the truth, and witnesses to my words are still leaving. I was convinced that the idea was highly absurd and, what was worse, would bring great suffering. I did more. When later, in spite of my counsels, the movement broke out, I spontaneously offered not only my services, but my life, and even my name so that they might use them in the manner they saw fit to suppress the rebellion, for, convinced of the evils that befall them, I considered myself fortunate if, at any sacrifice, I could prevent such useless misfortunes. This is equally of record.

My countrymen: I have given proofs, more than anybody else, of desiring liberties for our country and I still desire them. But I place as a premise the education of the people so that by means of education and of labor they might have a personality of their own and make themselves worthy of liberties. In my writings I have recommended

redemption. I have also written (and my words have been repeated) that reforms, to be fruitful, have to come from above, that those that come from below are irregular and unstable. Imbued with these ideals. I cannot but condemn and I do condemn this absurd, savage uprising planned behind my back, which dishonors us, the Filipinos, and discredit those who may advocate our cause. I abhor its criminal methods and disclaim all participation therein, pitying from the bottom of my heart the unwary who have allowed themselves to be deceived. Return then to your homes, and may God forgive those who acted in bad faith.

Fortunately for Rizal, Judge Advocate General Nicolas de la Pena recommended to Governor General Polavieja that the manifesto be suppressed. The latter heeded the recommendation so that Rizal's manifesto was not issued to the people. thus Rizal was "saved from the shame of his manifesto's being misinterpreted and disobeyed by the Filipinos in arms."

**Rizal's Saddest Christmas.** December 25, 1896 was Christmas. On that day all Christendom joyously celebrated the birthday of Christ who was born to redeem mankind and to bring peace and brotherhood to all men on earth.

What a dark and cheerless Christmas for Rizal! He, who was accustomed to spend this merry season in the company of his beloved family or dear friends, found himself alone and depressed in a dreary prison cell.

Truly, the Christmas of 1896, his last on earth, was the saddest in Rizal's life. He was in despair for, he had no illusions about his fate. Brooding over his hopeless case, he wrote a letter to Lt. Tavel de Andrade, as follows:

Fort Santiago, December 25, 1896  
My Very Distinguished Defender:

The Investigating Judge has informed me that tomorrow my case will be heard before the court. I was waiting for you this morning to tell you of an important matter, but undoubtedly the pressure of your work did not permit you to come as expected by the Investigation Judge. If you have time, I should like to speak to you before I appear before the court; I shall be grateful if you come this afternoon, this evening, or tomorrow.

Wishing you "Merry Christmas," I reiterate, Always your attentive and affectionate servant and client,

Jose Rizal

**The Trial of Rizal.** The trial of Rizal was an eloquent proof of Spanish injustice and misrule. More than a farce, it was patently a mistrial. Rizal, a civilian, was tried by a military court composed of alien military officers. His case was prejudged; he was considered guilty before the actual trial. The military court met not to give him justice, but to accuse and condemn him. It accepted all charges and testimonies against him, and ignored all arguments and proofs in his favor. Moreover, Rizal was not given the right (which any accused is entitled to have in a real court of justice) to face the witnesses against him in open court.

At 8:00 a.m., December 26, 1896, the court-martial of Rizal started in the military building called Cuartel de Espana. Seated behind along table on an elevated dais were the seven members of the military court, dressed in their respective army uniforms, as follows: Lt. Col. Jose Togores Arjona (president), Capt. Ricardo Munoz, Capt. Manuel Reguera, Capt. Santiago Izquierdo Osorio, Capt. Braulio Rodriguez Nunez, Capt. Manuel Diaz Escribano, and Capt. Fermin Perez Rodriguez.

Also present at the courtroom were Dr. Rizal (the accused), Lt. Tavel de Andrade (his defense counsel), Capt. Rafael Dominguez (Judge Advocate), Lt. Enrique de Alcocer (Prosecuting Attorney), and the spectators. Among the spectators were Josephine Bracken, some newspapermen, and many Spaniards.

Rizal sat on a bench between two soldiers. His arms were tied behind, elbow to elbow, like a common felon. He was dressed in a black woolen suit with a white vest and black tie. He was calm and dignified in appearance.

The trial was opened by Judge Advocate Dominguez who explained the case against Rizal. After him, Prosecuting Attorney Alcocer arose and delivered a long speech summarizing the charges against Rizal and urged the court to give the verdict of death to the accused. The Spanish spectators applauded noisily Alcocer's petition for the sentence of death.

After the prosecuting attorney finished his spirited harangue, Defense Counsel Tavel de Andrade took the floor and read his eloquent defense to Rizal. He ended his defense with a noble, but futile, admonition to the members of the military: 'The judges cannot be vindictive; the judges can only be just'.

Incidentally, his admonition fell on deaf ears. The Spanish army officers who were trying Rizal were both vindictive and unjust.

When Lt. Tavel de Andrade took his seat, the court asked Rizal whether he had anything to say. Rizal then read a supplement to his defense which he wrote in his prison cell. In his supplementary defense, he further proved his innocence by twelve points:

1. He could not be guilty of rebellion, for he advised Dr. Pio Valenzuela in Dapitan not to rise in revolution.
2. He did not correspond with the radical, revolutionary elements.
3. The revolutionist used his name without his knowledge. If he were guilty he could have escaped in Singapore.
4. If he had a hand in the revolution, he could have built a home, a hospital, and bought lands in Dapitan.
5. If he were the chief of the revolution, why was he not consulted by the revolutionist?

6. It was true he wrote the by-laws of the Liga Filipina, but this is only civic association—not a revolutionary society.

7. The Liga Filipina did not live long, for after the first meeting he was banished to Dapitan and it died out.

8. If the Liga was reorganized nine months later, he did not know about it.

9. The Liga did not serve the purpose of the revolutionist, otherwise they would not have supplanted it with the Katipunan.

10. If it were true that there were some bitter comments in Rizal's letters, it was because they were written in 1890 when his family was being persecuted, being dispossessed of houses, warehouse, lands, etc. and his brother and all his brothers-in-law deported.

11. His life in Dapitan had been exemplary as the politico-military commanders and missionary priest could attest.

12. It was not true that the revolution was inspired by his one speech at the house of Doroteo Ongjuncos, as alleged by witnesses whom he would like to confront. His friends knew his opposition to armed rebellion. Why did the Katipunan send an emissary to Dapitan who was unknown to him? Because those who knew him were aware that he would never sanction any violent movement.

The military court, prejudiced as it was, remained indifferent to Rizal's pleading. The president, Lt. Col. Togores Arjona, considered the trial over and ordered the hall cleared. After a short deliberation, the military court unanimously voted for the sentence of death.

On the same day (December 26<sup>th</sup>), the court decision was submitted to Governor General Polavieja. Immediately, Polavieja sought the opinion of Judge Advocate General Nicolas de la Pena on the court decision. The latter affirmed the death verdict.

**Polavieja Signs Rizal's Execution.** On December 28<sup>th</sup>, Polavieja approved the decision of the court-martial and ordered Rizal to be shot at 7:00 o'clock in the morning of December 30 at Bagumbayan Field (Luneta). His decree on this matter runs as follows:

Manila, December 28, 1896:

Conformably to the foregoing opinion. I approve the sentence dictated by the Court Martial in the present case, by virtue of which the death penalty is imposed on the accused Jose Rizal Mercado, which shall be executed by shooting him at 7:00 o'clock in the morning of the 30<sup>th</sup> of this month in the field of Bagumbayan.

For compliance and the rest that may correspond, let this be returned to the Judge Advocate, Captain Don Rafael Dominguez.

### **Camilo G. de Polavieja**

For signing the fatal document ordering the execution of Dr. Rizal, Governor General Polavieja won the eternal odium of the Filipino people. he and other Spanish officials who were responsible for the death of Rizal will evermore remain as obnoxious villains in Philippine history.

# Chapter 25

## Martyrdom at Bagumbayan

After the court-martial, Rizal returned to his cell in Fort Santiago to prepare his rendezvous with destiny. During his last 24 hours on earth –from 6:00 A.M. December 29 to 6:00 A.M., December 30, 1896 –he was busy meeting visitors, including Jesuits priests, Josephine Bracken and members of his family, a Spanish newspaper correspondent (Santiago Mataix), some friends, and secretly finishing his farewell poem. As a Christian and a hero-martyr, he was serenely resigned to die for his beloved country, which he called “Pearl of the Orient” in an article entitled “Unfortunate Philippines” published in *The Hongkong Telegraph* on September 24, 1892.

**Last Hours of Rizal.** At 6:00 A.M., December 29, 1896, Captain Rafael Dominguez, who was designated by Governor General Camilo Polavieja to take charge of all arrangements for the execution of the condemned prisoner, read the death sentence to Rizal –to be shot at the back by a firing squad at 7:00 A.M. in Bagumbayan (Luneta).

At 7:00 A.M., an hour after the reading of the death sentence, Rizal was moved to the prison chapel, where he spent his last moments. His first visitors were Father Miguel Saderra Mata (Rector of Ateneo Municipal), and Father Luis Viza, Jesuit teacher.

At 7:15 A.M., Rector Saderra left. Rizal, in a jovial mood, reminded Fr. Viza of the statuette of the Sacred Heart of Jesus which he had carved with his pen knife as an Ateneo student. Fr. Viza, anticipating such reminiscence, got the statuette from his pocket and gave it to Rizal. The hero happily received it and placed it on his writing table.

At 8:00 A.M., Fr. Antonio Rosell arrived to relieve Father Viza. Rizal invited him to join him at breakfast, which he did. After breakfast, Lt. Luis Tavel de Andrade (Rizal’s defense counsel) came, and Rizal thanked him for his gallant services.

At 9:00 A.M., Fr. Federico Faura arrived. Rizal reminded him that he said that (Rizal) would someday lose his head for writing the *Noli*. “Father,” Rizal remarked, “You are indeed a prophet”.

At 10:00 A.M., Father Jose Vilaclara (Rizal’s teacher at the Ateneo) and Vicente Balaguer (Jesuit missionary in Dapitan who had befriended Rizal during his latter’s exile) visited the hero. After them came the Spanish journalist, Santiago Mataix, who interviewed Rizal for his newspaper *El Heraldo de Madrid*.

From 12:00 A.M. (noon) to 3:30 P.M., Rizal was left alone in his cell. He took his lunch, after he was busy writing. It was probably during this time when he finished his farewell poem and hid it inside his alcohol cooking stove (not lamp as some biographers erroneously assert) which was given to him as a gift by Paz Pardo de Tavera (wife of Juan Luna) during his visit to Paris in 1890. At the same time he wrote his last letter to Professor Blumentritt (his best friend) in German, as follows:

Prof. Ferdinand Blumentritt:

My dear Brother:

When you received this letter, I shall be dead. Tomorrow at seven, I shall be shot; but I am innocent of the crime of rebellion.

I am going to die with a tranquil conscience.

Goodbye, my best, my dearest friend, and never think ill of me.

Fort Santiago, December 29, 1896.

(Signed) Jose Rizal

Regards to the entire family, to Sta. Rosa, Loleng, Conradito, and Federico.

I am leaving a book for you as a last remembrance of mine.

At 3:30 P.M., Father Balaguer returned to Fort Santiago and discussed with Rizal about his retraction of the anti-Catholic ideas in his writings and membership in Masonry.

At 4:00 P.M., Rizal's mother arrived. Rizal knelt down before her and kissed her hands, begging her to forgive him. Both mother and son were crying as the guards separate them. Shortly afterwards Trinidad entered the cell to fetch her mother. As they were leaving, Rizal gave to Trinidad the alcohol cooking stove, whispering to her in English: "There is something inside". Trinidad understood. She knew English because Rizal taught her this language. This "something" was Rizal's farewell poem. So it came to pass that she was able to smuggle the hero's last and greatest poem –a priceless gem of Philippine literature.

After the deaparture of Dona Teodora and Trinidad, Fathers Vilaclara and Estanislao March entered the cell, followed by Father Rosell.

At 6:00 P.M. Rizal received a new visitor, Don Silvino Lopez Tunon, the Dean of the Manila Cathedral. Fathers Balaguer and March left, leaving Vilaclara with Rizal and Don Silvino.

At 8:00 P.M., Rizal had his last supper. He informed Captain Dominguez who was with him that he forgave his enemies, including the military judges who condemned him to death.

At 9:00 P.M., Rizal was visited by Don Gaspar Cestano, the fiscal of the Royal Audiencia of Manila. As a gracious host, Rizal offered him the best chair in the cell. After a pleasant conversation, the fiscal left with a good impression of Rizal's intelligence and noble character.

At 10:00 of the night of December 29<sup>th</sup>, the draft of the retraction sent by the anti-Filipino

Archbishop Bernardino Nozaleda (1890-1903) was submitted by Father Balaguer to Rizal for signature, but the hero rejected it because it was too long and he did not like it. According to Father Balaguer's testimony, he showed Rizal a shorter retraction which was prepared by Father Pio Pi, Superior of the Jesuit Society in the Philippines, which was acceptable to Rizal. After making some changes in it, Rizal then wrote his retraction, in which he abjured Masonry and his religious ideas which were anti-Catholic. This retraction of Rizal is now a controversial document, for the Rizalist scholars, who are either Masons or anti-Catholic, claim it to be a forgery, while the Catholic Rizalists believe it to be genuine. This debate between two hostile groups of Rizalists is futile and irrelevant. Futile in the sense that no amount of evidence can convince the Masonic Rizalists that Rizal retracted and the Catholic Rizalists that Rizal did not retract. As a famous saying goes: "For those who believe –no justification is necessary; for the skeptics, whose criterion for belief is not in their minds but in their wills –no justification is impossible". It is likewise irrelevant because it does not matter at all to the greatness of Rizal. Whether he retracted or not, the fact remains that he was the greatest Filipino hero. This also applies to the other controversy as to whether Rizal married Josephine Bracken before his execution or not. Why argue on this issue. Whether or not Rizal married Josephine in Fort Santiago, Rizal remains just the same –a hero-martyr.

At 3:00 o'clock in the morning of December 30, 1896, Rizal heard Mass, confessed his sins, and took Holy Communion.

At 5:30 A.M., he took his last breakfast on earth. After this, he wrote two letters, the first addressed to his family and the second to his older brother Paciano. The letter to his sisters follows:

To My Family,

I ask you for forgiveness for the pain I cause you, but some day I shall have to die and it is better that I die now in the plenitude of my conscience.

Dear Parents, brother and sisters, Give thanks to God that I may preserve my tranquility before my death. I die resigned, hoping that with my death you will be left in peace. Ah! it is better to die than to live suffering. Console yourselves.

I enjoin you to forgive one another the little meannesses of life and try to live united in peace and good harmony. Treat your old parents as you would like to be treated by your children later. Love them very much in my memory.

Bury me in the ground. Place a stone and a cross over it. My name, the date of my birth, and of my death. Nothing more. If later you wish to surround my grave with a fence, you can do so. No anniversaries. I prefer *Paang Bundok*.

Have pity on poor Josephine.

Rizal's last letter to Paciano is as follows:

My dear Brother:

It has been four years and a half that we have not seen each other nor have we communicated with each other. I do not think it is due to lack of affection on my part nor on yours, but because, knowing each other so well, we do not need to talk to understand each other.

Now I am about to die, and it is to you that I dedicate my last lines, to tell you how sad I am to leave you alone in life, burdened with the weight of the family and our old parents.

I am thinking now how hard you have worked to give me a career; I believe I have tried not to waste my time. Brother of mine: if the fruit has been bitter, it is not my fault, but the fault of circumstances. I know that you have suffered much on my account, and I am sorry.

I assure you, brother, that I die innocent of this crime of rebellion. If my former writings have contributed, I do not deny it absolutely; but then, I thought I have expiated for the past with my deportation.

Tell our father I remember him, and how! I remember my whole childhood, of his affection and his love. Ask him to forgive me for the pain that I have unwillingly caused him.

Your brother,  
(Singed) Jose Rizal

At 5:30 A.M., Josephine Bracken, accompanied by a sister of Rizal (Josefa), arrived. Josephine, with tears in her eyes, bade him farewell. Rizal embraced her for the last time, and before she left, Rizal gave her a last gift –a religious book, *Imitation of Christ* by Father Thomas a Kempis, which he authographed:

To my dear unhappy wife, Josephine

December 30<sup>th</sup>, 1896

Jose Rizal.

At 6:00 A.M., as the soldiers were getting ready for the death march to Bagumbayan, Rizal wrote his last letter to his beloved parents, as follows:

My beloved Father,

Pardon me for the pain with which I repay you for sorrow and sacrifices for my education.

I did not want nor did I prefer it.

Goodbye, Father, goodbye . . .

Jose Rizal

To my very dear Mother,  
Sra. Dna. Teodora Alonzo  
6 o'clock in the morning, December 30, 1896.

Jose Rizal

**Death March to Bagumbayan.** About 6:30 A.M., a trumpet sounded at Fort Santiago, a signal to begin the death march to Bagumbayan, the designated place for the execution. The advance guard of four soldiers with bayoneted rifles moved. A few meters behind, Rizal walked calmly, with his defense counsel (Lt. Luis Taviel de Andrade) on one side and two Jesuits priests (Father March and Vilaclara) on the other. More well-armed soldiers marched behind him.

Rizal was dressed elegantly in a black suit, black derby hat, black shoes, white shirt, and black tie. His arms were tied behind from elbow to elbow, but the rope was quite loose to give his arms freedom of movement.

To the muffle sounds of the drums, the cavalcade somnolently marched slowly. There was a handful of spectators lining the street from Fort Santiago to the Plaza del Palacio in front of the Manila Cathedral. Everybody seemed to be out at Bagumbayan, where a vast crowd gathered to see how a martyr dies.

Going through the narrow Postigo Gate, one of the gate of the city wall, the cavalcade reached the Malecon (now Bonifacio Drive), which was deserted. Rizal looked at the sky, and said to one of the priests: "How beautiful it is today, Father. What morning could be more serene! How clear is Corregidor and the mountains of Cavite! On mornings like this, I used to take a walk with my sweetheart".

While passing in front of the Ateneo, he saw the college towers above the walls. He asked: "Is that the Ateneo, Father?

"Yes", replies the priest.

They reached Bagumbayan Field. The spectators crowded a huge square formed by soldiers. The cavalcade entered this square. Rizal walked serenely to the place, where he was told to stand. It was a grassy lawn by the shore of Manila Bay, between two lamp posts.

**Martyrdom of a Hero.** Rizal, knowing that his rendezvous with destiny was imminent, bade farewell to Fathers March and Vilaclara and to his gallant defender, Lt Luis Taviel de Andrade. Although his arms were tied, he firmly clasped their hands in parting. One of the priests blessed him and offered him a crucifix to kiss. Rizal reverently bowed his head and kissed it. Then he requested the commander of the firing squad, that he be shoot facing the firing squad. His request was denied, for the captain had implicit orders to shoot him in the back.

Reluctantly, Rizal turned his back to the firing squad and faced the sea. A Spanish military physician, Dr. Felipe Ruiz Castillo, asked his permission to feel his pulse, which request was graciously granted. Dr. Castillo was amazed to find it normal, showing that Rizal was not afraid to die.

The death ruffles of the drums filled the air. Above the drum-beats, the sharp command “Fire” was heard, and the guns of the firing squad barked. Rizal, with supreme effort, turned his bullet-riddled body to the right, and fell on the ground dead –with face upward facing the morning sun. It was exactly 7:03 in the morning when he died in the bloom of manhood –aged 35 years, five months, and 11 days.

Rizal died as he described in his farewell poem, third stanza:

*“I die just when I see the dawn break,  
Through the gloom of night, to herald the day;  
And if color is lacking my blood thou shalt take,  
Pour’d out at need for thy dear sake,  
To dye with its crimson the waking ray”*.

It is also interesting to note that fourteen years before his execution, Rizal predicted that he would die on December 30<sup>th</sup>. He was then a medical student in Madrid, Spain. The entry in his diary reads as follows:

*January 1, 1883.*

Two nights ago, that is 30 December, I had a frightful nightmare when I almost died. I dreamed that, imitating an actor dying on stage, I felt vividly that my breath was failing and I was rapidly losing my strength. Then my vision became dim and dense darkness enveloped me –they are the pangs of death.

**Aftermath of a Hero-Martyr’s Death.** At the time when the bullets of Spain’s firing squad killed Dr. Rizal, the Spaniards –residents, friars (Jesuits not included), corrupt officials (including Governor Polavieja) exulted with sadistic joy, for Rizal, formidable champion of Filipino freedom, was gone. In fact, immediately after the hero’s execution the Spanish spectators shouted “Viva Espana!” “Muerte a los Traidores”, (“Long Live Spain! “Death to the Traitors!”) and the Spanish Military Band, joining the jubilance over Rizal’s death, played the gay *Marcha de Cadiz*.

Poor bigoted Spaniards of no vision! They were fully unaware of his history’s inexorable tides. For the execution of Rizal presaged the foundation of an independent nation. True that the Spanish bullets which killed Rizal destroyed his brain, but the libertarian ideas spawned by his brain destroyed the Spanish rule in the Philippines. As Cecilio Apostol, greatest Filipino epic poet in Spanish, aptly rhapsodized:

“Rest in peace in the shadows of oblivion,  
Redeemer of a country in bondage!  
In the mystery of the grave, do not cry,  
Heed not the momentary triumph of the Spaniard  
Because if a bullet destroyed your cranium,  
Likewise your idea destroyed an empire!”

By his writings, which awakened Filipino nationalism and paved the way for the Philippine Revolution, he proved that “the pen is mightier than the sword”. As a many-splendored genius, writer, scientist, and political martyr, he richly deserves history’s salute as the national hero of the Philippines.

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