



THE PHILIPPINE MAGAZINE OF GOOD READING

Entered as second class mail matter at the Manila Post Office on Dec. 7, 1955

Vol. XIX

MANILA, PHILIPPINES

No. 5

### FOR A REAL DEMOCRACY

The excellence of popular government lies not so much in its wisdom — for it is as apt to err as other kinds of government — as in its strength. It has been compared, ever since Sir William Temple, to a pyramid, the firmest based of all buildings. Nobody can be blamed for obeying it. There is no appeal from its decisions. Once the principle that the will of the majority honestly ascertained must prevail, has soaked into the mind and formed the habits of a nation, that nation acquires not only stability, but immense effective force. It has no need to fear discussion and agitation. It can bend all its resources to the accomplishment of its collective ends. The friction that exists in countries where the laws or institutions handed down from former generations are incompatible with the feelings and wishes of the people has disappeared. A key has been found that will unlock every door.

On the other hand, such a government is exposed to two dangers. One, the smaller one, yet sometimes troublesome, is the difficulty of ascertaining the will of the majority. I do not mean the difficulty of getting all citizens to vote, . . . but the difficulty of obtaining by any machinery yet devised a quite honest record of the results of voting.

The other danger is that minorities may not sufficiently assert themselves. Where a majority has erred, the only remedy against the prolongation or repetition of its error is in the continued protests and agitation of the minority. — *By Lord Bryce in The American Commonwealth, p. 266-267.*