



## Rizal Appeals to Justice

LIFE in a place which lacks everything, far from the surroundings in which one was educated and to which he was accustomed, the constant struggle with the climate and the needs of poorly furnished temporary lodgings, and, what is even more terrible, the uncertainty of the future undermine the most robust health and may vitiate the few good traits which one might possess. I am, moreover, in an age when illusions vanish to give room to realities, when one must think of and consider life seriously, in an age which if not utilized may convert a useful future into one having lamentable results to him and to his fellowmen. To continue waiting in silence would not only be misinterpreted but would even be reprehensible for it would be showing little love for Justice, little affection for the Motherland, not to avoid the commission of an act which may soil your prestige. The greatest criminals, Your Excellency, those who have earned public indignation for base and abject crimes may defend themselves and enjoy the privileges that the law gives them. If they are convicted, they know for what they are condemned, and gradually, even before their term, a pardon may save them. I, on the other hand, suffer in uncertainty for an imaginary crime, which cannot be proved because it is absurd and ridiculous.—*Jose Rizal, From his letter to the Governor General, Dapitan, February, 1894.*