

Juan S. Alano

A man, a nation, were born in those days.
We often used to hear him say,
"My country and I were born together"
With our paths close akin in growth with each other.
My birth was sudden, complete and eternal;
Its birth dependent on my love fraternal.
We both needed each other to grow side by side.
A good life it has been whatever betide.

Rizal, Aguinaldo, Mabini, del Pilar
All came to my Malolos from near and from far
To win independence from tyranny and strife
As warriors and statesmen with pen or with knife.
I saw them, I knew them, each common to my gaze.
We boys have a heritage that hallows our days.
Each visit to Bulacan is pregnant with scenes
Of yesterday's sacrifice—today, what it means!

But life is not dormant, much less for a boy.
So off to Manila with hope and with joy
To win the big city, its wealth and its fame
Is nothing for a boy who, I told you, just came
From the province of greatness—the cradle of things.
The Spanish were leaving; the Americans emplanting,
But this boy from Bulacan was raising the curtain
On scenes and accomplishments of a great man for certain.

Commerce and trade first took this boy's fancy
And reaching its climax he realized perchance he
Should seek knowledge further from Santo Tomas.
With an A.B. he said what he wanted he knew was
At the frontiers of progress in the province of Panay —
Where he apprenticed himself to the law where he could tie
Himself to the future he knew he could share
In the grand scheme of greatness if only he dared.

With his queen won so boldly from the barrio Bago
The south soon took notice of this promising duo.
Zamboanga their target soon became the home base
Of a dream across the channel that time will not erase.
The land knew their labor, out-tribes their attention;
Foundations were settled that today defy mention.
The Bulacan boy and sweet Bago maiden
Touched the land with their lives and made it an Eden.

Their children we know, both offspring and enterprise.
They've spread through the country benevolent and wise.
He gave to his country and those close beside him
A heritage non—ending, a light never dim.
He was restless, unrelenting, a curious sort,
Of the stuff that gets things done what'er the import.
He lived for himself—yes, that may be the charge,
But we are the richer for his heart, O so large.

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DEVELOP AND GROW

OR

DECAY AND DIE

When one year later, then, I sat alone
(In memory hearing Juan's words so oft repeat—
"Come to my home in Tairan, Bob," and see
Life in its tenderest facets to be shown.)
On his veranda, broad, serene, with a tone
So readable. The challenges fearlessly leap
"Develop and Grow or Decay and Die" to meet
My gaze and dare me take them as my own.

Then bares myself to itself—it kens as true,
That oft I would, but can't lay hold
Of courage to brave the unknown and sue
For the better I know can be mine in measures untold.
To "Develop and Grow" I must try always to hew.
To "Decay and Die" I must never permit to take hold.

(The foregoing poems are by WB Robert Jordan, PM. They were written to commemorate the first anniversary of MVB Juan S. Alano's death on July 2, 1966. The second poem drew inspiration from MW Alano's handwritten note on a blackboard a day before he died.)

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TRUST

The other day one of my managers asked me what is the most important attribute of a leader. For a moment I paused, because the requirements of good leadership consists of so many qualifications.

Then suddenly all doubt passed from my mind and I answered, "Trust."

It is obvious, that no matter how otherwise qualified a leader may be, unless his followers have trust in him, they can never respond to his leadership without some reservation of mind.

Therefore, trust should be the basic quality we search for in our Masonic leaders.

REW.