

Four Best Manila Newspaper February Editorials

University Selection: Also the Best Among the Four

SPEAKING FROM EXPERIENCE

(Bulletin: February 16)

Advice on the Philippines from Eugene A. Gilmore is worthy of consideration. His counsel commands attention because of his knowledge of the subject and because of his demonstrated sincerity and frank honesty in dealing with it.

That explains the rare significance of an address which the acting governor general delivered at a banquet given in his honor by the chambers of commerce of the Philippine Islands, commercial bodies representing the nationalities of the cosmopolitan community which is Manila. Added meaning is attributed to the words of the chief executive because of the fact that the function in his honor was a tribute by the various elements of the community on the occasion of his approaching retirement from the office in which he has won unstinted praise from all quarters.

Mr. Gilmore, who spoke in response to words of high praise from an American representative of the chambers of commerce and a Filipino spokesman for the Philippine legislature, gave a clear outline of the policy which he has followed in accomplishing that which the other speakers had described as rare service in good government. He responded to talks characterized by their acknowledgment of the merits of cooperation without sacrifice of fundamental principle. In such an atmosphere his counsel carried conviction. The same talk from an outside observer would have been far less important. Had he delivered the same address as he was entering office it would not have carried such weight. Even if his address had preceded that of the representative of the legislature it would not have had such telling force.

He did not scold. He did not cavil. In fact he praised liberally. He praised the legislature for active cooperation. He praised his associates in the service of the government for accomplishments enumerated by him and by the speakers who had just paid him tribute. He showed an unmistakable respect for accomplishment, an undisputable devotion to the cause of progress without regard to the identity of those getting the credit.

A full realization of the intimacy of his acquaintance, the sincerity of his friendliness and the depth of his conviction is essential to an appreciation of the meaning of his discussion of what could and should be done here to contribute to the cause of good government. It was not the voice of a carping critic heard when he pleaded for economic mindedness, when he called for the development of a public opinion which would take political issues away from personalities and tie them up with essential problems affecting the welfare of the people.

There is real merit in the advice of one who earns the right to talk and then talks. Therein lies the significance of the address of Acting Governor Gilmore at the banquet in recognition of his service.

—Best Among the Four.

HE SMOKED THE CALUMET OF PEACE!

(Herald: February 29)

Cooperation is within earshot. It has saturated the atmosphere since a new political condition came about through a temporary rift in the administration. For years, the country has been in political turmoil, with two branches of the Government, the Executive and the Legislature, fighting: the one apparently for absolute supremacy, the other for a recognition of its authority. The political air was stifling. It was overlaid with the spirit of unfriendliness, if not rancour. Towards the close of that "war of attrition," the people were feeling tired, wearied. They were showing signs of exhaustion and ennui and wished that there should come respite.

1. Speaking from Experience. (Bulletin, February 16)—Selected by Professor Vicente M. Hilario.

2. He Smoked the Calumet of Peace. (Herald, February 29)—Selected by Mr. Marcial Lichauco.

2. Osmeña's Voice. (Times, February 29)—Selected by Professor Cristino Jamias.

4. The More Economical Extension. (Tribune, February 11)—Selected by Mr. Jesus Valenzuela.

Best of the Month: Speaking from Experience.—(Bulletin, January 10)—Selected by the above four judges and G. P. Shannon.

Certified.

—G. P. Shannon

There was a relief. With the temporary change in administration, in the assignment of another man to steer the country, to administer Philippine affairs, a new era appeared to have dawned. The feeling of suspicion and distrust vanished. Mutual confidence between the people's representatives and the Chief Executive was reestablished. It was the calm after the storm,—and the calm continues to betoken that kindly feeling which means so much to the governed.

And it was Acting Governor-General Eugene A. Gilmore, the Peace-Maker, who, equipped with a better comprehension of the people's desires and a broader vision, sensed where the wound was. And, with that knowledge, he set about on the first day of his incumbency to apply his science to the disease. The change was almost miraculous. There was a general sigh of relief as he assumed his new rôle. These were a new turn in the political order. Cooperation with the Chief Executive came about as a matter of course. And it is still on. Acting Governor Gilmore is verily the precursor of the Prophet. He prepared the ground for the Prophet's advent. And the people are predisposed to receive him and to sing hosannas in his honor.

We have a peculiar and difficult government in these Islands. While it is democratic in form, it is not so in substance. While in a truly democratic government, as Senator Osmeña has indicated, like that of the United States, the power of government lies with the people and the citizenry only delegates such power to the three branches in the government, in the Philippines such a governmental plan is not followed closely, for the Chief Executive here is not elected by the people. Our Government is, therefore, only half-democratic, the people making their power felt through the Legislature which is likely to clash with the Chief Executive over the question of authority. It is this peculiar political arrangement that makes our Government a difficult system.

However, the Legislature which represents the people cannot be totally disregarded. We cannot grant authority to the people and then try to quash their wishes when they make them known through their constitutional representatives. And it takes a Chief Executive who is possessed with a benign disposition and the heart of a benevolent administrator to extricate himself from a labyrinth of technicalities, a big man who can rise above himself and view the situation under him with that high purpose of a Governor who has come not to govern or to rule, but to do good.

On this last day of Acting Governor Gilmore in the Chief Executive's chair, we want to make it plain that, although we have had a few minor

differences over various details of his administration, yet we have been the first to sense and commend publicly the "Gilmore Way" of government which he has used so successfully in winning all elements in the community to rally to the support of his shortlived administration. His was a significant period in the Philippine government. Under him, the "armistice" was brought about. His sagacious administration has prepared the mind of the people for peace and cooperation.

And on this his last day at Malacañang, we greet him as *Gilmore, the Peace-Maker*.

OSMEÑA'S VOICE

(Times: February 29)

The sphinx, which in the Philippines is Senator Osmeña, has spoken. Senator Osmeña since he faded out of the center of the stage, has seldom spoken but every time he speaks, every word he says has meat, so to speak. And yesterday was one of the few occasions where he made himself heard. It was during the farewell banquet given by Acting Governor General Gilmore to his official family and to newspapermen.

He gave a résumé of his observations in the provinces and the United States, spoke with breadth of vision and as a leader of men rose sublimely to the occasion. He paid a tribute as deserving as it is just, to government officials in the provinces and municipalities, commended Frank W. Carpenter who laid the foundations for successful and efficient provincial administration and attributed to coordination Mr. Gilmore's success in his handling of the Philippine government during these last few months.

But of special interest to the public is his declaration regarding the American government in the Philippines. As he said it, while it is true that the American government here is based on force, it is not the force of military power but the force of the promises made by the American government before the Filipinos laid down their arms. More than the force of arms, the Filipinos were conquered by the force of American ideals, by America's pledge of honor, he remarked.

The statement is the more significant as it has been made by a great Filipino leader of today. It invites serious reflection on the part of those who would have others believe that America is here by right of might and not to fulfill certain obligations she has imposed upon herself when she took over the islands.

THE MORE ECONOMICAL EXTENSION

(Tribune: February 11)

The Tribune has suggested that instead of devoting vast insular funds to the extension of Dakota Street and Taft Avenue through Pasay—two projects which are more of local significance than insular—the funds available should be applied to extending Dewey Boulevard to Pasay.

Inquiries made among competent government engineers have brought out that the most economical and expeditious method of improving Manila's contact with the South Road is by extending the Dewey Boulevard to Pasay in accordance with the Burnham plan.

From the new south breakwater to Calle Libertad is only 1,500 meters. To build a retaining wall, fill with material from the bay, and construct an asphalted boulevard 20 meters wide, would cost between P200,000 and P250,000.

On the other hand, the mere purchase of the right-of-way for the Taft Avenue extension will reach this figure, and the cost of filling the right-of-way, situated, as it is, far from the bay, would involve huge additional outlay.

Since property owners along the route of the Taft and Dakota extensions insist on blocking these projects by unreasonable prices for the right-of-way, the government should avail itself of the more economical boulevard extension where foreshore land may be reclaimed at a reasonable expense.

Let Pasay pay for its Dakota Extensions, just as the taxpayers of Manila are paying for the portions which fell within the city.