

FOURTEEN CENTURIES OF FILIPINO THOUGHTS

(Continued from June Number)

ANCIENT FILIPINO CULTURE AND PROMINENCE OF WOMEN

M/S No. 4

PRINCESS URDUJA

(From the Arab traveler Ibn Batutu's account of a land identified by Doctor Rizal as Northern Luzon, in about 1344. The paragraph about the European visitor is from the travels of the Italian Franciscan, Friar Ordoric, who was there twenty years earlier.)

You, Priest, I have had brought here by my guards because, of all your ship's company, you alone scorned my invitation. You told your captain that we people of Northern Luzon are infidels, and that it would be against the prophet's law for you, a holy man, to eat our food.

You behold about me, seated around my throne, the elderly ladies who are my counselors. Do their chairs of sandal-wood, does my silk-canopied and gold-plated throne, suggest the court of a barbarous people?

I greeted you with the usual salutations of courtesy in the Turkish tongue, and had one of my attendants fetch ink and paper so I could write for you in Arabic characters what you recognize as the name of the merciful and compassionate God. Are such tokens of

enjoy privileges which by their nature belong exclusively to the hosts.

For all the foregoing, holding both Republic Act No. 37 and Department of Finance Order No. 32 valid, the appealed decision is reversed, and petition dismissed.

(Sgd.) G. PERFECTO

WE CONCUR:

(Sgd.) MANUEL V. MORAN

" GUILLERMO F. PABLO

" CESAR BENGZON

" MANUEL C. BRIONES

" PEDRO TUASON

I concur in the result.

(Sgd.) F. R. FERIA

In the result.

(Sgd.) RICARDO PARAS

Ozaeta, J., did not take part.

Montemayor and Reyes, JJ., did not take part.

AUGUST, 1949

culture common among barbarians?

When my father Dalisay, the aged king by whose name you call his kingdom, was a much younger man there visited here a priest of another faith from far-distant Europe. But he did not shun novelty in food as do you. Our sago-trees that produce flour, interested him, he admired the sugar-giving buri palms, and liked our coconut wine. And I hope you will appreciate the cordials, pickles and preserves which, with some other gifts for your acceptance in remembrance of the land of Dalisay, I have had sent to your ship.

But let us speak no more of your mistaken notions of us. We pride ourselves upon our hospitality, and you, holy man though you are, need have no compunction of conscience in eating the food set before you,

You have been told all about me. You know that I am governor of this port in place of my brother because, with my army of free women, slave girls and female captives,—all of whom fought just as well as men could,—I won a big battle. And you have heard, too, I am sure, that I am still unmarried because I will marry no man except him who shall conquer me, and all the eligible suitors in this vicinity are afraid to try for fear of being beaten by a girl.

Now tell me of great India, which we know as the Pepper Country. I want to hear all about it. The little I know has fascinated me. Would there be any chance, if I should go to war with India, of my getting it? Its great wealth and great forces attract me.

(To be continued)

Page 433