

QUEZON AND THE COMMON MAN.

This month we commemorate the birth anniversary of MW Manuel L. Quezon, the first President of the Philippine Senate, first President of the Commonwealth of the Philippines and the first Filipino Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the Philippines. Let us not mar our remembrance of him with the fact that in the Philippines this month and part of next month, we have to add five centavos more to the newly increased postage on our mail. It's bad enough, the mail system, that is. Last month, after paying 150% more on Cabletow postage, ours, mailed in Manila on July 27 got to us in Quezon City on August 8. The two cities are a dozen kilometers between city halls and our Cabletow travelled one kilometer a day!

Back in 1930 when we were pen-pushing for *The Sillimanian*, it was our impression that MW Quezon's unique contribution to the science of government in the Philippines was his social justice program. Then President of the Senate, MW Quezon, though embroiled in a campaign for the passage of the first independence law, took time out to expound his thoughts at a campus convocation, on the improvement of the common man as the foundation for independence — political, economic and sociological.

As a man of common beginnings, he understood the plight of the common man. He was one of them and while he did walk with kings, he did not lose the common touch. And in the nearly two score years that followed, we saw the continuation of the program, differently denominated at times, but his dream went upstream through the work of other leaders who succeeded him.

Lincoln said rather wryly that God must love the common man because He made so many of them. Be that as it may, no generation is without a leader who does not think of the common man. It is as well. For now we see how the world moves in the right direction because of the common man, especially when he is free.

Late this month, the Magsaysay awards will be given to people who have achieved distinction in their service to their countrymen in Asia. Again, we are reminded that distinction comes to people with a deep sense of service to their fellowmen. It is a source of pride for us to know that our Masonic tenets of brotherly love and relief find expression even by men who may not be Masons. And this is the unique contribution of Masonry to world progress. One wonders if any other institution or organization has contributed as much. △