

SAMPAGUITA GARLANDS

By HERMINIA ANCHETA *

ALL through the hot afternoon, Berto trotted up street and down alleys in search of customers. He was on the look out for ladies to buy his sampaguita garlands.

"Sampaguita garlands! Sampaguita garlands!" he called to a slim looking girl. The girl shook her head and walked on her way. The old afternoon sunshine glazed brightly on the stone *patio* of the Quiapo church. Berto was sure to find customers here where women often came to lay offerings to the patron saint.

He was lucky enough to sell six garlands to a couple of young women. The garlands would match their balintawak costumes. Berto's attention was caught by the sign boards of the old Metropolitan show. Berto passed through the pavement across the crowded street to the show house. Inside the Cine the audience roared with laughter. The hero was Douglas Fairbanks.

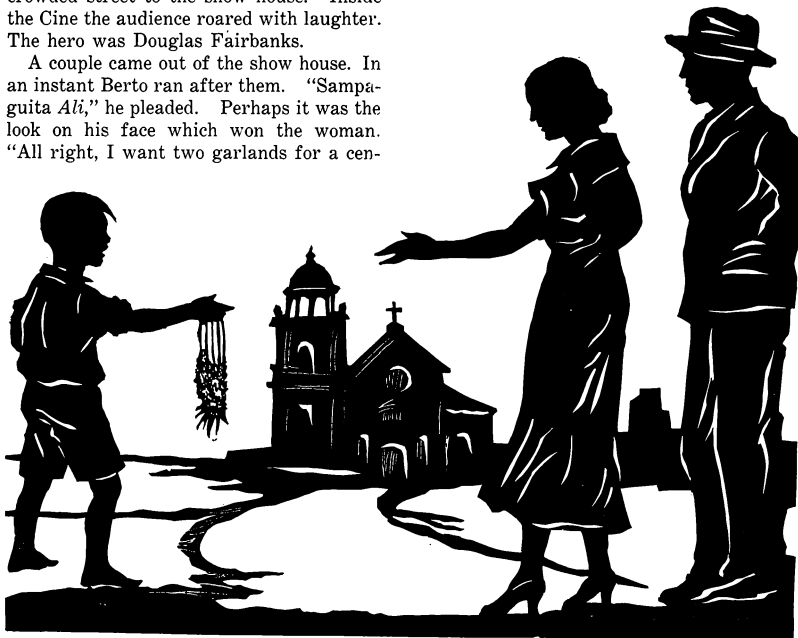
A couple came out of the show house. In an instant Berto ran after them. "Sampaguita *Ali*," he pleaded. Perhaps it was the look on his face which won the woman. "All right, I want two garlands for a cen-

tavo" replied the woman with a tone of finality. "Surely *Ali*, how many please." "Only five centavos" came the answer. Berto allowed the woman to pick out the good ones. Berto slipped the coin which the woman paid him into his pocket. His flowers were all sold.

In a hole in a pavement just a stone's throw from his place lay a purse. A lady's purse. His eyes swept from the pavement to the young couple disappearing in the distance. He stooped and picked up the pocket. It was bulky. He supposed it contained peso bills. That meant a new shirt for him and then a good supper.

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HAPPY LITTLE NENA

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Butterflies and flowers were embroidered on the table runners, chair covers and curtains. Nena felt as if she were in a garden. But the most beautiful thing in the room was a sweet little girl with big curls on her head and a beautiful twinkle in her eyes.

"Anita, I have brought you a playmate."

"Oh, how do you do?" Anita extended her hand to greet Nena.

"My name is Nena. I live in the small house at the foot of that hill."

"Would you like to play doll? I have many, many dolls."

Anita opened a case. She brought out a Japanese doll in kimono. She put out a Spanish doll in a beautiful lace dress. There was a French doll with white hair and wide skirt. There were dolls that said, "Mamma" and dolls that danced. There was a baby doll in a crib. There was a big lady doll in a carriage.

Nena looked long at everyone of them. She touched their rosy cheeks. She stroked their curly hair. She said over and over again, "cute, lovely, beautiful!" She forgot Father, Mother, and Baby at home. She had not seen such beautiful dolls before. Her dolls were tiny things without hair and without clothes.

On her way home, Nena kept thinking of Anita's dolls. If she could only have one which said, "Mamma!"

When she was met by her mother on the stairs, she cried breathlessly.

"O Mother, such a beautiful house!" And the girl is very lovely. Her name is Anita. She had dozens of the prettiest dolls. Mother, may I have a doll that cries 'Mamma'?"

"Perhaps I can buy you one next Christmas if I could begin saving now. I must save at least fifty centavos every month and it will take me a whole year to save enough to buy a big doll."

"A whole year. Mother?" Nena's eyes were very wide with surprise.

"Yes, dear, and you will have to go without school dresses." The

LOVE OF COUNTRY

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country so dear as the Philippines, because she is your motherland. Under her skies, you first saw the light of day. Just as you can't help breathing her air, so you can't help admiring her woods, her rivers, her mountains; her sunshine, her plains and valleys, because they are filled with a singular beauty. You are growing up under their good and kind influences. Are you not glad that you were born in a country to which our Mother Nature has been most generous?

You can show your love of country by serving her with all your soul. True love of country does not mean blind worship of everything that has to do with one's country. "My country, right or wrong!" is not a wise principle to follow. Truth and justice should guide your conduct. If you know something to be wrong and improper, you should not uphold it simply because it happens to be of your native land. The best way to show that you have the welfare of your country at heart, is to work for the happiness and prosperity of its people. You should employ yourself in some profitable occupation so that you may be able to make your own living. You should willingly help those who you see are in need of help. You should love your fellow country men as you love your

mother murmured very softly.

"Ma, ma, ma. Da da da" came the silvery ripple of the baby's voice from the bedroom. Nena tore herself away from Mother's embrace. In a moment she had Baby in her arms.

"Why, Mother. Baby can say Mamma like Anita's doll. She can say *Dada*. Perhaps it means Daddy. She can cry and she can laugh. Don't buy me a doll. I love Baby better than all Anita's dolls."

"Tey, Tey" crooned the baby.

"Mother, she calls me 'Sister. Sister.'" And Nena pressed the baby's cheeks against hers.

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He shot out of the street like a bullet. He was swallowed in a stream of factory women picking their way home. He was almost crushed below the wheels of a taxicab had not the whistle of a traffic policeman stopped the car. Berto pushed on unmindful of the driver's curses. He found them at the corner of Echague and Villalobos. He was panting and shouting: "*Ati, Ati* is this your purse?" "Oh yes, that is mine." Where did you find it?" "Near the show house," answered Berto wiping his forehead with the hand.

The man brought out a few coins and handed them to Berto. Berto flashed a smile and was gone.

By this time fleeting shadows had come.

When Berto was gone the woman opened her purse.

Two folded show programs, a prayer book, and a rosary came out.

Berto strode off, whistling a familiar talkie song hit as his fingers caressed the two five-centavo pieces which the man had given him.

own brother.

If you truly love your country, you will obey and respect its laws. If the people do not obey their own government, there can be no peace and order in the land. Under such a condition, the life as well as the property of the people are constantly in danger of being lost. Ours is a country in which the people rule themselves by electing their own officials. If we want a good, clean government, we must elect only those men whom we believe to be entirely capable to run the government. Once they have been elected, it is our solemn duty to obey and respect them.

What must you do when your country is drawn into war with another? There can be only one answer. Fight for her! If need be, die for her! As patriotic sons of your motherland, you should be willing to shed your last drop of blood for her.