

Spanish Scholar Talks on Talkies

The talkies keep rollin' along like 'man river, and in the Philippines when they are installed in our high schools will be the first practical substitute for the 900 American teachers who were at one time engaged in teaching and supervising teaching in the public schools. Corroboration of the JOURNAL'S view comes from all points of the compass, and is in happy evidence in all talkie theaters in Manila. Being about to quote from *The Language of the Future*, by C. Villalobos Dominguez, of Buenos Aires, translated in *The Living Age*, we would invite attention to the fortunate situation of the Philippines, above that of most regions of the world, in having as every-day languages English and Spanish, the two picked upon by Sr. Dominguez as destined to the widest survival.

Turning to those languages which are truly Occidental and which are spoken by highly cultured peoples, I see no reason to expect any expansion of German, French, Italian, Danish, and the other languages which are spoken by relatively few people living in relatively small areas. I therefore arrive at the conclusion (as others have before me) that only English and Spanish have any likelihood of overcoming the others in the struggle. The reason is that both English and Spanish are in the direct line of descent from the traditions of Greco-Latin culture (a requirement which alone would be enough to exclude German), and for the present, at least, they have the advantage over all others in that they are spoken over very large and scattered territories which not only are well populated to-day but give every evidence of a rapid growth in populations of unmixed race. And, most important of all, both are spoken on the American continents.

"Everything points to the ultimate predominance of English. The motion picture, for instance, was invented in France; but, because

the United States was better equipped to exploit it, the Americans have assumed a quasi monopoly of this powerful means for diffusing ideas. The result is that the screen has already had a tremendous influence in familiarizing the whole world with the products of Yankee civilization, in so far as photography and pantomime can

While waiting for the islands to grasp the boon the talkies are to them, we should like to know from Manila theater managers when some or all of the following are to be exhibited in the city:

On With the Show: A big girl-and-music talkie, all in natural colors and with a surprisingly liberal amount of plot, comedy and real eye-appeal. Well worth your while.

Drag: Richard Barthelmess and Lila Lee in an all-talkie that will keep you interested and amused from beginning to end. An unusual picture.

The Valiant: It will make you cry, and it's probably just hokum, but you should see Paul Muni's splendid performance in a very ticklish rôle.

They are recommended by A. M. Sherwood, Jr., movie critic of the *Outlook and Independent*. He knows good ones when he sees/hears 'em.—Ed.

perform this task. And now the Americans have invented talking motion pictures, a development which is of tremendous importance, since it enormously increases the possibilities of the theatre both as a means of entertainment and as

a means of spreading ideas. This new device makes it impossible to send the same films all over the world merely by translating the captions. Sound pictures which are not merely musical must be produced in a single language, and this language must be understood by anyone who wishes to enjoy the pictures. It is in the English-language countries that the best and most elaborate pictures can be made, and it is there that the biggest audiences are found. Necessarily, talking films produced in any other language will be less good. Thus an Argentine, Peruvian, French, German, or Spanish motion-picture fan who wishes to enjoy the best films must learn English.

"Can a more powerful weapon for the spread of a language be imagined? Can any reasonable person see any force which can oppose it? And since, moreover, the various phases of culture are interlinked, the more people there are who know English, the more books and periodicals printed in English will be read, the more opportunity there will be for those who write in English, the more advertisements will be written in English, the more products of the English-speaking peoples will be bought, and so on.

"It is already apparent that forced development of local dialects is reactionary, dangerous, and vain, and the time will soon come when it will be equally dangerous for the general good to attempt to maintain national languages by artificial means. In some respects, there are already obvious evidences of an attempt toward internationalization, such as the steady substitution of Roman characters for Gothic characters and Japanese ideograms, and the adoption of so-called Arabic numerals in Turkey. These changes are largely the result of the development of the typewriter.

"I am not trying to make predictions, but merely attempting to analyze a problem which exists and to draw the logical conclusions from this analysis. Possibly new or unforeseen forces will providentially arise; but it is wise not to put



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too much faith in a miraculous Providence when one is attempting to study the march of events.

"One thing is certain: the smaller languages and dialects will die off more and more quickly. The time has passed when a ridge of mountains, a river, or a valley can separate two towns and permit their inhabitants to speak different dialects. It was in that way that provincial Latin degenerated into the various Romance languages. To-day, however, steam navigation, printing, railroads, postal and telegraphic service are enough to accentuate or maintain uniformity of language within each nation and within its

colonies or within the colonies which it once held. This process by which many local dialects fuse into a single language which for one reason or another reaches a position of preeminence and becomes the national language will tend to repeat itself in the broader field of world languages. For the means of communication mentioned above are now augmented by aviation, motion pictures, and the wireless telephone, and not only do rivers and valleys offer no obstacles to communication, but even the highest mountain ranges and the broadest oceans have been overcome."

this material a plant has been raised in Manila that promises to become the progenitor of a new race that will grow in the hot low-lands. Aside from its value from the fruits it is believed that the chayote could be grown and used as an asparagus substitute.

Other useful plants recommended for introduction into the Philippines include the following species:

The ONIBASU, *Euryale ferox*, is an ornamental perennial spiny aquatic herb ranging from northern India to China and Japan. It is closely related to the lotus and the water lily. The leaves are round, from 30 to more than 100 cm. across, dark green above and purplish and spiny beneath. The flowers are about 5 cm. across, and in color vary from red to blue and purple. The round fruit attains a diameter of from 5 to 10 cm., and contains 8 to 20 large seeds, sometimes as big as cherries, embedded in a fleshy pulp. These are gathered and roasted and eaten like those of the lotus. In China the onibusu is said to have been in cultivation for some 3000 years. It has been introduced into America and Europe, where it is grown as an ornamental.

The SWISS CHARD, *Beta vulgaris cicla*, is a biennial herb 50 cm. tall or more, probably derived from a plant found wild along the coasts of southern Europe. The leaves are large, dark green, tender, and fleshy, and make excellent spinach. The stalks are thick, fleshy and tender, and may be used as a substitute for asparagus. The chard has been introduced into the Philippines, and it has been demonstrated that it thrives at all seasons, both at sea-level and in the mountain regions. As yet it is practically unknown, but is certain to be extensively cultivated as soon as it becomes better known. The seeds should be sown thinly in rows about 25 cm. apart, and thinned and transplanted to about 20 cm. apart in the row. Seeds may be purchased from most dealers in garden seeds, but are sold under various names, like Chard, Leaf Beet and Silver Beet.

The ITONO, *Geitonoplectium cymosum*, is a rather large leafy climber native of Eastern Australia

Useful Plants in Foreign Lands

By P. J. WESTER

This is the third article in a series on this subject by Mr. Wester. The next will appear in an early issue.—ED.

Rice, the most important crop in the Philippines, is probably a native of India or Indo-China, whence it has spread to all countries suited to its cultivation and has become one of the food staples of the world. It was firmly established in Babylonia some time before Alexander made it a part of his empire, according to Delandolle, and reached Syria about the beginning of the Christian Era. Thence it spread to Egypt, and finally reached Italy in 1468. Long before the Arabs had carried it into the Iberian peninsula. Prior to the close of the seventeenth century it was already established in the New World (in South Carolina).

When and by whom rice was introduced into the Philippines will always remain unknown. Since it was in cultivation in China more than 2800 years B. C., we may be sure that it is also of very ancient introduction into the Philippines, where it has become the most important crop as well as the staff of life of the people. With an area of 1,785,000 hectares planted to rice, yielding 2,200,000 metric tons, valued at P183,300,000 in 1928, this is about as strong an argument in favor of plant introduction as I know of. I am

the last to begrudge the *unknown soldier* his monument, but what of the unknown human benefactors who have helped to carry rice around the world?

The *chayote* is one of the latest examples of successful plant introduction into the Philippines. About half a dozen fruits of this excellent vegetable were received by the writer from the Office of Foreign Plant Introduction, Bureau of Plant Industry, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C., in 1920. As an insurance against accidents they were divided into two lots, one of which was sent to the forestry nursery in Baguio, while the other was mailed to James A. Wright, then the principal of the Trinidad agricultural school. Both were successful in propagating the chayote, which now is common in Baguio and has already become disseminated to a considerable extent into other parts of the Philippines, and in time may be expected to become a standard vegetable wherever it can be grown. Already it is being shipped from Baguio and marketed in Manila.

The ordinary chayote does not thrive at sea-level, and does the best at elevations above 450 meters. But a few months ago I received from O. W. Barrett in Porto Rico, four chayotes of a variety reported to do well at sea-level. From

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