



Rizal on Independence and Tyranny

WE owe our ills to ourselves; we should not lay the blame on others. If Spain had seen us less complacent with tyranny and more determined to struggle and to suffer for our rights, Spain would have been the first to give us liberty, for when the fruit of the conception reaches maturity woe unto the mother that wishes to stifle it. Therefore, as long as the Filipino people do not have sufficient strength to proclaim, with head erect and bosom bared, their right to social life and to preserve it with their sacrifices, with their very blood; as long as we see our countrymen, in private life, feel the shame within them and hear the clamor of the voice of conscience revolting and protesting, but, in public life, keep themselves quiet and even join those abusing their power in ridiculing the abused; as long as we see them shutting themselves up in their selfishness and praising with forced smiles the most iniquitous acts, begging with their eyes a portion of the booty; why should they be given liberty? With Spain or without Spain they will always be the same, and perhaps, perhaps, worse! What is independence for if the slaves of today will be the tyrants of tomorrow? And they shall undoubtedly be such, because he loves tyranny who submits himself to it. Señor Simoun, as long as our country is not prepared, as long as it enters the struggle deceived or forced, without a clear understanding as to what it will do, the wisest attempts will fail; and it is better that they fail, for why should the bride be delivered to the groom if he does not love her enough, if he is not determined to die for her?—*Jose Rizal, extracted from El Filibusterismo.*