

• Literary Attempts •

A ROSE AND YOU

*Oh! the creamy petals that compose
The little flow'r you call a rose
On it I gaze—joy fills my heart
From thoughts of it, I'll never part.
If only that fragrance could feel
The hidden longings that I bare,
I'd send that rose back to you
With feelings tender and true.
If only I were a bee, that sips nectar—
The sought-for sweetness of the day,
I would create you as my heaven
The sole end of my long way.*

By SERAPION BASALO

FRAGMENT FROM A FADED PAGE

The cynic's laughter . . . materialist . . . defeat,
disgust . . . metamorphosis complete; . . . rebirth
. . . that died . . . so he flung away the scroll and
cried—

*"Nonsense, nonsense venerable sage!
Tell me not with knitted brows
That a falling leaf is a drop of tear
For tears are tears. Water and a grain
Of salt, no less no more;
And leaves, dead leaves
Are just leaves and nothing more.
Who hears music at the snap of a twig?
Or iancies that the howling winds
Are the moans of souls dammed in the pit?
They're naught but indolent dreamers all
As you, who left the world a mass of words;
Pretty words, silly words
Flowers of thought, useless thoughts
Not worth a bite of bread or an ounce of
meat.
Begone! of intangibles I am satiate,
'Tis not for me to exist as you once did;
I'll live to touch, to own, to have,*

Work . . . work . . . ached . . . back and legs . . .
arms . . . raked Wealth . . . power . . . degenera-
tion . . . regret . . . go back . . . galore . . . but
could find the scroll no more!

—B. D. ALMONTE

TRYST WITH THE ISABELAN WILDS

By Domingo Lantican

The sun slowly descended down to roost behind the distant horizon of Manila Bay on the 17th day of April, 1951. As the dim rays of waning light began to fade, the M/V "Basilan" of the Maritima Express Lines with the giant steamer, "George W. Tucker", giving her a liliputian look, slipped gracefully from her moorings. Her deck was cramped with 30 young men: students, rangers and new graduates from the College of Forestry of the State University. Her hold was stuffed with food supplies, surveying instruments, medicine and other necessities. The "Palanan Expedition" was on its way to make a forest survey of the unchartered regions of Isabela Province.

As the M/V "Basilan" cleared the breakwaters of North Harbor, the members of the expedition leaned against the railings for a last glimpse of gay Manila whose multicolored lights made a very impressive sight against the background of darkening skies. Far into the horizon, the airway beacons of Nichols Field, guiding her winged crafts home to roost, swept the boundless Manila skies. On the west, Corregidor, clearly silhouetted across the horizon, loomed like a watchful sentinel guarding the even tenor of Manila Bay.

At two and a half bells the following morning, everybody, after a good sleep, found the boat plowing into the blue waters of the China Sea. The sky was clear; the sea, calm. On the right side were series of rugged mountains and the rocky coast of Western Luzon; to the left, nothing but the seemingly limitless expanse of gently tossing water.

On the afternoon of April 19, the M/V "Basilan" touched off Dalupiri Island for a

day and after loading additional supplies and some laborers, sailed for Camiguin Island of the Babuyan Group to spend the night in the protecting arms of Port San Jacinto.

The following day, after passing the tip of North Eastern Luzon, the boat weighed anchor at Port Bicobian and finally, after five days of continuous sailing, the expedition landed at Palanan on Sunday, the 22nd of April. On the coast they were met by a few Christians and some Negritoes who stared at them with searching eyes.

From the coast, they were ferried six kilometers upstream of the Palanan River by small dugouts to the town proper of Palanan, a small isolated community of Isabela.

From then on started the adventure of the stout-hearted sons of Forestry, whose task it was to unravel what possibilities lay enconced in the fastnesses of the Isabela mountains.

For a week, the Palanan forest felt the biting touch of sharp steel and trudgings of weary feet. The young foresters with heavy packs on their back and a complete array of surveying instruments, pushed into the wilderness, unmindful of the nameless dangers that might lie ahead. Neither rough terrain nor the untamed furies of the elements were barriers to these courageous, determined men who pushed on with unflinching eagerness. They crossed by any means the tangled vines and thorny rattans; or the steep forbidding cliffs that cut across their way; or the strong currents of rushing water. There were times when the Sierra Madre would lose her temper, and holding back the dark, moisture-laden clouds of the Palanan skies, would let go a downpour of torrential rain. Yet these foresters drenched to the skin would just put away their discomforts with a smile.

Moving deeper into the interior, they camped where they ended the day's strenuous chores and beside the warmth of flickering camp fire would lie down to sleep. Some would sit by the fire, breaking the melancholy

stillness of the wilds with strains of sad tunes, tinged with loneliness and longings for the comforts of home.

A week later, the M/V "Basilan" was taking the party to Divilcan Bay, some forty kilometers north of Palanan. Upon landing, the party established their main camp on the agoho-fringed coast.

Divilacan is a vast area, isolated from the rest of the civilized world. During the day, the beach is a pleasant sight, blanketed with white, glittering sands and seashells, spreading against a green background of almost endless lines of agoho trees. At night, the silence is supreme, broken only by the beatings of the ever restless sea against the rocky shores, the mating calls of the deer, the chirping of the crickets, the sighing sounds of the breeze as it passes against the yielding branches of green casuarinas. It is so unthinkable that such beauty and peace could exist in such sequestered place, away from the dirt and dust of civilization, away from the political troubles and tantrums of a world in ferment.

For one solid month, the second phase of the venture went on. Day after day, the forestry youths moved into the hinterlands to carry on their chores, unmindful of the rough terrain, unmindful of the weather. Each day brought them deeper into the wilderness, which up to then was untouched by civilized hands. Once in a while, they encountered a deer or a wild boar that crossed their way; or a boa constrictor, ready to strike at these intruders who came to disturb their peace; or a wild Negrito who would run away at the sight of their beclothed, fair-skinned brothers from across the Sierra.

And then the typhoon came. For more than a week, heavy rain lashed at the men day in and day out. There were times when they would sleep with wet blankets under a leaking roof of overlapping palm leaves. To aggravate their hardships, the typhoon delayed the boat which had gone for more supplies and men. For a time the men had to

stretch whatever supplies they had. Only firm determination and sheer courage prodded them on and kept their morale high.

But neither courage and determination nor pride alone were sufficient to help each man. Bad weather and strenuous work coupled together, had gone to a point beyond human endurance. Telling signs of weariness began to show in their faces. Most of the men got sick and only the strongest continued to do what more task there was to be done.

Then on the early morning of May 26, the sirens of the M/V Basilan shattered the stillness of the Divilacan shores. There were more men, more supplies: cigarettes, canned goods, medicine, and many more things. But the best intangible things that it brought were new courage and higher spirit to the tired men who had suffered so long.

On June 4th, 65 men cramped the deck of the M/V Basilan once more, their mission accomplished. As the boat moved away, they looked back at what was for a time their sylvan home and the towering peaks of the Sierra Madre seemed to bid them a very kind "Bon Voyage".

I WAS IN PALANAN

By Napoleon T. Vergara

(Ed.'s Note: This is just one way of looking at that unforgettable venture last summer. There are other points of view which we'd rather keep closed. Lucky guy, this one.)

A Forestry student is thrown to any corner of the Philippines after his graduation from this college, so right in school he begins to go places. I have been in one of these places myself—I was in Palanan.

First, I'll correct the reader's impression that this was a pleasure trip. Of course, it was somewhat a pleasure for us who hadn't gone farther than our backyards yet, but—oh never mind the "buts". Just wait till we reach that part. Just remember that that trip was in connection with our field practice, and it was a serious business.

We were divided into two batches, the

first one going on the 16th of April, while we in the second were scheduled to set out on—oh, I remember there was no fixed date. We were just told to sit tight and wait until after two weeks from the start of the first batch. By mathematical computation, that would be around the beginning of May. Taking advantage of the gap, most of us returned to our respective homes for a brief vacation, but not wishing to be left behind, most of us were already in before the close of April. By the beginning of May, everybody was in, packed and ready to go. .

We were still on the campus when our hardships began. We had such a hell of a time waiting for the start, so much so that most of us looked old just because of this. If you don't know the strain of waiting, try someday to propose to a man-hating woman, and then wait for her "yes". Your waiting will not be very different from ours. The only difference perhaps is that we were under tension. A telegram arrived telling us to get ready (as if we were not yet ready days ago) so we had to be more ready to move at any moment's notice. The Minute Men in American history were so called because of this kind of preparedness. I think we deserved to be called minute men too at that time. Unfortunately a typhoon came, and delayed us further. To illustrate just how eager I was to go, I even wished I could device a gadget that could stop typhoons. But I couldn't, so we had to wait some more.

We finally moved off on May 21, and boy! were we all smiles! The lines in our faces caused by the strain of waiting were erased by our wide and almost endless grins. We felt like big fellows going out on an important mission.

We entrained for Hondagua, where a ship was waiting for us. The train seemed very slow to me, and yet it was an express at that. Believe me, I came close to going over to the engineer and shouting into his ears that he should give the engine more steam. Only a firm self control held me back. In order not

to feel time fly by so fast, I decided to sleep, and truly enough, when I woke up, we were already in Hondagua.

Going aboard the ship was a history (in my life, at least) for never before had I been on one. With my full pack on my back and some extra bags in my hands, I expected the ship to rock when I went up the gangplank. To my surprise, it didn't budge an inch, and I almost fell overboard staring in amazement. I thought that it must be a very great ship to be as stable as that, that I began to doubt a wave's ability to rock it. However, a few moment later, a Philippine naval vessel came to dock near it, and it was dwarfed. Nevertheless, it was a ship; it was my first ship and I was proud of it.

That day too, I ate my first meal on a ship. Who said chow on a ship is not good? Why, it was tops. Only, you have to be either an officer of the ship or a Visayan in order to get the "cream of the ship's food." (Most, if not all the crew members were Visayans you know.) The cook, (or whatever you call one who cooks on a ship) and his boys, inspite of their being Visayans, tried to please everybody aboard, Visayan or otherwise, but they failed miserably.

We were delayed for sometime in Hondagua because of a misunderstanding between the crew and the captain, but the day of sailing finally came.

Out at sea, my eyes almost dropped out of their sockets in surprise when I saw a bird plunge into the sea and never to come out again. I thought that the bird was perhaps broken hearted, or it was maybe tired of this troubled world of ours, that it decided to end everything by committing suicide. However, a Visayan, probably noticing me stupefied, explained that it was a flying fish. I couldn't be blamed for not knowing a flying fish, because I had never been out at sea before, and I had never seen one.

Out at sea, I discovered one thing in me which I forgot to consider before. I was very susceptible to seasickness. I ate my last

square meal when we were still docked. As soon as we were out in the misnamed Pacific, the waves tossed the ship as if it were an empty tin can. At that instant too, I went down flat on the deck. I was too dizzy to get up. The food that I took in during our last meal on shore probably didn't feel happy inside me, because it decided to walk out on me. Without any hard feeling, I let it go. I tried to replace it when the next meal came, but again, this second one came out. I tried to prevent the second walkout, because I began to get worried. If food came out everytime I took some in, then I would naturally starve, and I didn't like the prospect of starving when there's plenty of food aboard. I tried putting a tourniquet around my neck. It stopped the food coming out all right, but it also stopped my blood circulation and my breathing, so I gave it up. Then, I thought that if I didn't want any food to come out, I should not take in any. That was what I did, and I missed a total of five meals. Placing each meal at ₱0.50, I, at least, saved the cook ₱2.50 worth of food. It was close to starving just the same, but let us not be frightened by big words. Lets just put it mildly, and say it was merely fasting.

We landed in a place called Divilacan, about 30 kilometers north of Palanan proper but still a part of the municipality of Palanan, so we might as well call it Palanan just the same. Eager to leave the rocking ship fast, I was among the first to hit the shore. We landed, army-style, first with our full packs and then with supplies which were stacked high along the shore. From then on, our terms became militarized. I didn't know why. It was probably a case of "G.I." fever, whatever that means.

Since we could not bring all the supplies with us to the mountains we put them in Camp 1 called Supply Depot. The supply officer told us to carry as much supply as we could. I was trying to test my carrying capacity, so I made my full-pack fuller. Then we proceeded to Camp 2, two and a half kilo-

meters away. The way was along a strip of sandy shore, and the difficulty of walking on sand, the blinding heat of the sun and our heavy packs almost prevented us from reaching our destination. And to top it all, our canteens were empty, so the rough going was similar to that of a desert. It's funny to note how fast one becomes thirsty just when he knows that he can't get drinking water. We were choking all the way. Of course there was plenty of water near us, but it was sea water. It was absurd to think that we had become thirsty where there was so much water.

Camp 2 was made of two huts. One was called the Command Post, because it was where our chief of Party or Commanding Officer lived after he broke his back in action somewhere in the mountains. The other was called a Field Hospital (minus a doctor) where the sick men stayed and treated themselves. When we reached it, it was already in the afternoon. We didn't expect to be sent to the "field of operations" yet, because most of us (especially me) were still seasick, although we were already on land. But, our CO ordered us to proceed at once to an "Advance Post" or Camp 3, about 6 kilometers, far (horizontal distance). Thus began our "death march", criss-crossing a river for I didn't know how many times. The distance plus our loads dealt telling blows on us; many broke down on the way and wished to go back, "but" somehow, we reached camp 3 at dusk, with one of my shoes minus a sole. Luckily, I brought with me an extra pair. I was ready to drop flat and go to sleep at once as soon as we arrived, only to be aroused by the cook's chow call. I weakly scrambled to the kitchen area with a messkit in hand and fell in the slowly-edging line to the cook. The chow was far from being tops, but I missed so many meals aboard the ship that I was so hungry, I could eat anything, including a Dumagat's ear (brother! I wonder how it tastes). A first-batcher came over and asked us how we took the march. When we told him it was tough,

he laughed and said "Why, fellows, that's not even the beginning." Whatever he meant by that, he surely scared me into believing that it was the beginning of the end. Well, I told myself that if I was really near my end, I would make the most of my life while I still had it.

It was in Camp 3 where I got a good look at the Dumagats. They are as black as the American Negros, are four—feet—something tall (or short) and wear a scanty G-string. Their women wear the "tapis" from waist down (minus brassiere). They are a care-free, happy and contented people and I envied them. At night, one could hear their peals of laughter break the deathly silence of the forest. They just laughed because they were happy, although they didn't laugh at anything funny in particular. They have a very great desire for cigarettes, so much so, that they could afford to miss a meal, but not a cigarette.

They also have their pride. Give anyone of them any load, and he wouldn't complain. Ask him if it is heavy, and he would tell you that it is very light, although actually, he is already very tired of it. He is too proud to admit that he is licked.

They are also fast walkers. Their toes first touch the ground and their heels second, so that they have a springy way of walking. This makes them good couriers. Give anyone a piece of paper to be delivered to any member of our party, and tell him that it is very important. He will be back in a few minutes. It is hard to believe that he has gone to the other party really, but the message that he brings back is a proof. The distance is really great, not to mention the rugged terrain, but somehow he makes it. Furthermore, they seem to have built-in magnetic compasses in them. They have a sense of direction similar to that of the homing pigeon. They go to any place by short-cut,—that is, if none of us is tagging along.

The morning following our sleep at Camp 3, we were distributed to the old crews. We

were five new men to be added to five original members who were in the field. We five were required to carry a week's ration for ten men from Camp 3 to where they were. At the first phase of the trek, I carried five gantas of rice and a few canned goods in addition to my already-heavy personal pack. It may seem nothing to the reader, but try carrying that same load up a slippery 45° slope and you will see that I'm not kidding.

A crew's work was a routine chain of hardships. We woke up at dawn, usually at four, cooked our breakfast and dinner together, ate, packed and shoved off at six. It was all done with military precision. When we moved, we carried everything with us, such as our cooked dinner, cooking utensils, blankets and clothes, medicine, food supplies, water and bolos. We looked like soldiers going to battle, only we didn't have guns. We never left anything behind, because we were not supposed to return to any camp after we left it. We slept the following night at any place where night caught us.

We began "running the strip" right near the camp. We freshmen were generally the brushers, polemen and chainmen. We were seldom given work more technical, such as compassmen, abneymen or estimators had than those first mentioned. Either we were not ripe enough to handle those jobs, or our more-technical companions didn't like the idea of trying our tough luck of being the ones to do the "dirty work". However, compared to the Dumagats, we were still called "technical men" and gosh! it was music to our ears.

We cleared the compass line of sight and the path for the others to follow. Sometimes, we kept on brushing the whole afternoon that I feared my right arm might become longer. I happen to be right-handed and since my left hand couldn't handle a bolo, it was a "señorito", while my right hand did all the work.

A brusher's best friend is a bolo,—a good bolo. Our strip happened to be one of the baselines, so we were to make it as devoid of offsets as possible. When we hit a steep

slope, we scaled it; when we hit a stream, we forded it; when we hit a thick brushland, we hacked our way through it. And it happened that one day we hit an approximately 200-meter wide area with a thick growth of cogon, talahib, *batarbataran* and *agingay*, all of them grasses which are capable of growing to almost unbelievable sizes, too big for grasses. We couldn't just stand there and expect some miracle to clear the strip for us, so we rolled our sleeves, lowered our heads and hacked our way through. By the time we were through, I couldn't feel the presence of my right arm anymore. I had to touch it to be convinced that it was still there.

In the afternoons, after the whole day's work, I was usually very weak and exhausted. I wanted very badly to rest at those moments, but there was the shelter to be made and the supper to be cooked, so I couldn't. Furthermore, there were our clothes to be dried over the fire. Whether it rained or not, we were always wet, with sweat. Drying over the fire is a sure-fire method, but it was not satisfactory. It made our clothes smell awful, turned white into brown and also made them deteriorate easily. But since it was the only method we could get hold of, we had to make the most of it.

Also, there was the job of picking leeches off my body. These land leeches stuck and sucked blood whenever we passed them. I lost perhaps about 100cc of blood because of leeches alone. They are straw-like in size only when they cling to anybody, but when they drop off, they're already as large as a good-sized thumb. Not only did I lose blood to the leeches. By the time they got through sucking they had already established a pore on the skin so large that the blood oozed out freely over-night. I woke up one morning to find that a portion of my pant as wide as a plate was soaked with blood. I was so alarmed I almost got apoplexy or whatever you might call it, but anyway I fell back to sleep (don't say I went back to sleep on purpose because I didn't want to cook).

One afternoon, about 5 o'clock, we reached a river, suitable for the night camp. Looking the most exhausted and the most fagged-out in the group I was left to cook our supper, together with one Dumagat assigned to make our shelter, while the others continued the survey up to 6 o'clock. After the food was cooked, I went to cool off near the river, and saw a black log floating down. I was wondering why the log was hairy on one end, for I didn't know that it was my companion, fishing with an arrow. I picked up a stone and was about to throw at it just for luck, and with the purpose of improving my marksmanship in hand-throwing, when he raised his head to get fresh air. I kissed my right hand in gratitude for, because it ached, I was not able to throw the stone at once, otherwise I would have hit the Dumagat, and he would have hit me back with his arrow, and I would not be here writing now. My aching arm saved me.

Finally, news reached us that we would go home, so we all gathered at the shore waiting for the ship. It was then harvest time for the Dumagats. Almost all of the fire-dried clothes that we had were given to them, and it is hard to describe their happiness. They accepted everything that we gave, such as pants, shirts, underwear, shoes and socks. One boy wore size six combat boots and as he plodded around, no one could help but notice the bad proportion between his midget size and the big shoes. Another paired a leather shoe with a tennis shoe, while still another wore long pants, a jacket and a cap of cloth, all of which were too big for him so that he looked like a scarecrow. Well, anyway to most of them, it was their first time to wear real clothes and they were very much pleased.

Since we gave our old clothes to the Dumagats, most of us had only a pair each for the return trip, so that even when they became dirty we could not change them. Most of us were unshaven and had long hair, so when we landed in Aparri, the people regarded us with fear, especially because we

had with us our pistol belts, packs, and canteens. We could not blame those who suspected us to be from the mountains—in fact we were really from the mountains but we were not as bad as we appeared. And to beat all the others, some of our companions were surrounded by a combined police—PGF force while eating their supper at a restaurant in Vigan. Luckily, they had with them their identification cards and residence certificates, so the officers let them go.

We finally arrived at the Forestry campus in spite of everything. We brought home with us some people not feeling well including a less lucky one who had a serious case of malaria requiring hospitalization.

Well, that was Palanan. Although it was hell, it was fun while it lasted. I was in Palanan, and I hope I will be in some more Palanans.

WRITING AGAINST TIME

By Serapion Basalo

Though I am devoid of any creative talent there is an urge for me to write. I walk to and fro racking my brain, but no ideas seem to spring from my barren mind.

Tick, tock, tick, tock. Eleven o'clock. I stand up and again walk to and fro. Nothing can I do. I try to think deeper and deeper. Hours and minutes pass but I cannot write a line. I get drowsy and I yawn.

The draft from the nearby window chills my slumbering wits. I open my eyes—the paper in front of me is as blank as before. I take my fountain pen again and try to scribble a few lines. But for goodness sake, what are these? Vague ideas, insensible sentences.

I start, "Man is a rational being who, being born upon the earth, grows, eats, works, walks, lives and nothing more." I scratch my forehead. What can I add to this? I will write no further about man.

The moon is there, up in the sky. I am inspired. What of the moon? Does it have any

significance at all? I write, "She is up in the sky playing with some of the stars and the planets, proudly sailing aloft, because she is green among the nocturnal heavenly bodies, but when the sun comes, the moon scampers away like a frightened cat." What else? Nothing more. I cannot think anything more about the moon.

The clock is there in front of me. The minutes are in a hurry. "Can you wait for me while I do my work?" Unconsciously I address the sympathetic clock. I take up my pen again. Think, think. I glance at the sheet before me. Nothing much there. And the clock keeps ticking on.

A FRESHMAN'S LETTER TO HIS HOME

By Florencio P. Mauricio

Dear Mom,

I am certain that mingled regret, joy and pride will assail your heart upon discerning the implied contents of this my first letter to you since I came here to pursue my studies.

Regret, because you might doubt whether I am man enough to overcome the intricacies of the course. I know you've done all you can so that the only son upon whom you concentrated your devotion after Father left us (God rest his soul and also those who fell with him in the defense of Freedom) to return no more. But, darling Mother, don't you know that you've always made me realize the value and the source of all I needed before giving such to me? Those moral lessons of yours implied, directed, and hardened me into a man capable to face life as it is.

Joy also, because, at the first opportunity, I let you know about myself and how I am going along in this new world. I am aware of the fact that your expectation is near bursting point due to the long lapse of time without any news whatsoever from me.

And pride, because I am certain that your eyes will glow upon knowing that the bearer of your hopes and future happiness is benefiting from your precious advice and has vic-

toriously overcome the first ordeals of the course which I've chosen from among the many fields of endeavor open to the youth of today. Yes, Mom, your sound teachings have been sown in solid virgin ground because I know them as experiences you earned the hard way. I always heard, (you thought me asleep those times) when, after a meager supper and we have rested for the night after a hard day's work, the sobs that racked your weary body and I would share secretly with you the rigors of life. Hot scalding tears, the same type as yours, would always trickle from my closed eyelids when I hear you thus and repeat your prayers to the Heavenly Father. Remember when you found my pillow wet and you told me never to go to bed with wet hair? My pillow was soaked with the tears that welled from the depths of my heart—tears of determination to succeed in any course I shall pursue after graduation in return for your sacrifices in my behalf.

I am now duly matriculated, have fulfilled all the necessary entrance requirements, and am a bona-fide Freshman in the College of Forestry, University of the Philippines. The College is situated in the Makiling National Park, four kilometers from the nearest town, Los Baños, Laguna. This is an ideal location because the odd couple of hundred pesos you gave me will be secure from extravagant expenses. We board in government dormitories near the school and eat in a mess hall run by the school administration. I know you'll think this a lonely place to live in but, dear Mother, I am never lonely because I am always kept busy by things around here that are new and interesting to me. Besides, your stern vision always commands me to be active and never to be idle.

Some say professors of the U.P. are too severe, but to me Father had more rounds of discipline about him than all theirs combined. Of course they should maintain a strict code of instruction because how can the student learn anything fully when the instruction is very loose? I understand now why all gra-

duates of the U.P., especially those from Forestry, are responsible enough to face the world when the school sends them out of her portals to unknown and doubtless stumpy places beyond the four walls of the classroom.

As the course implies, most of our subjects concern trees and their products important to mankind. In English, we make more complete our general mastery of the English language. In Algebra, we polish our hazy knowledge of figures and facts and apply them along particular lines. In Forest Physiography, we learn more accurately than in high school the facts about the world we live in. In Introduction to Forestry, we obtain a general view of the mysteries of forests and their importance to the advancement of civilization. In Botany, we delve into the origin and types of plants. In Dendrology, we acquaint ourselves thoroughly with plants both useful and harmful to life on earth. And in Physical Education, we learn theoretically and practically the ways and means of making ourselves physically fit and mentally balanced.

In Dendrology, we go on trips six hours a week into the forest of Mt. Makiling to gather specimens for minute and careful study. Here we learn at the same time to ascend and descend a hill the easiest but safest way. At first I felt fatigued after each trip because I was raised on level ground and not used to trudging on uneven trails. Why, when we ascended a hill the first time, I felt as if I had no more energy left to go down and when we passed thru a trail near the edge of a cliff I felt so dizzy that I had to hold to one of my companions to keep myself from falling down the cliff! But now, I am more or less a mountain climber and good at that—even during a storm.

Oh, Mother dear, this place is the finest place in the world (barring our home, of course) and I am seeing the day when I shall take you here to see the mystic scenery that few eyes have ever seen.

Please don't scold me for waiting for some

time before writing you because I am always very much occupied the whole day and half the night. Not that I am about to forget you and home. It's only because the course, next to God and you, is the dearest to my heart.

Please receive my warm kiss on your cheek—wrinkled and shrivelled to the eyes of the world,—but the softest and loveliest to me. Join me in prayer to the Almighty that He may bless us with good health and well-being.

Your loving son,
Noy

KANGAROO TALES

By *Francisco N. Tamolang*

1. *Flying Saucers.*

Nothing was left of everything I cooked as it was indeed palatable and tasty. One day, the Burmese offered to cook a better one. When they set the table they found that there was no bread because I hid all of them for obvious reasons. One of them boasted that he could prepare some hot cakes. Approved.

From the frying pan hissed lard, flour, baking powder, etc. Then piled round pieces on our plates. With beaming pride the Burmese tossed a jar of honey into the air shouting:

Veni, Vedi, Vici!

Mars and I were tickled pink and could not stop laughing till we knew we were shedding tears. What we expected to be delicious hot cakes turned out to be *flying saucers*.

2. *Siamese Wins Scholarship.*

At the Australian Forestry School, students are supported by bursaries in the form of scholarships such as State, Commonwealth, Rehabilitation Scheme, Unesco, Burmese, etc. This year there are two private students from Siam.

One day, I was preparing a short write-up concerning the scholarship of each student who joined the group picture this year. Karin, who writes religiously to his father in Siam twice a week, appraised me of my mistake about his write-up. I reasoned out that

he was a private student and if he could prove to me otherwise, I should have no objection in making the corrections.

Bending low he whispered, "*Father scholarship.*"

3. *Are You Black?*

Upon our arrival at Nangwaray, South Australia, Mars (Marcelo) enjoyed playing with the children in the camp. One of the children curiously asked, "Are you black?"

The great philosopher was never caught more flatfooted in his life before. Gathering all his wits, he smiled.

"Can you see that car over there?" he pointed yonder. "That's black; I am brown, you see!"

4. *"Trade Mark"*

After we enjoyed the 'sleeper privilege' on the night train to Albury, New South Wales, Mars and I transferred to the *Spirit of Progress*, first class, for Melbourne, Victoria. We put on our heavy coats and woolen gloves to keep us warm. As the fleeting scenery through the icy glass window passed before us like an endless film strip, I rolled my cigarettes while Mars was in pensive mood. From the adjoining compartment, we heard boisterous laughter which made us suspicious.

Our suspicions merely confirmed our innocence about what was going on. The biggest news which had already caused much fun among the passengers on the train was not known to us until Beggs shambled in. Amidst broken laughter he unravelled the great surprise of a conductor who purposely by-passed us while checking passengers' tickets. The conductor really thought we were Filipino boxers.

But why such fear?

* * *

A month later, when we visited two Filipino families in Melbourne, we found the following personages: (1) *Francisco Morris* (Eusebio), formerly Star Frisco, one time Welter Weight Champion of the Orient in 1933-35; and (2) *Lorenzo Gamboa*, formerly Kid Lory,

winner of several fistic fights in Australia before he joined the U. S. Army.

* * *

We have no doubts that Filipino boxers were once popular in Australia. On Diploma Day last March, we were fortunate to meet His Excellency, the Governor General who, after expressing his felicitations on Vichy's hospitality to her daughter, exalted Dencio Cabanela's feat.

Now, we found the real answer.

* * *

What are we in this "Land Down-Under" for? We are UNESCO Fellows in forestry. We swing the axe without blisters. Not only that! Our capabilities can be summed up in four P's: *propagate, plant, protect, and preserve* trees for posterity. In short: *Mihi Cura Futuri.*

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A FORESTER . . . (Continued from page 12)

commentary on the forester, for books and periodicals are very important means of growth.

A Long Look Ahead: We must think in terms of decades rather than days and years. This is an essential for the forester that is not always easily grasped by the laymen.

Action: Any accomplishment requires action which must be wise, fearless, planned and vigorous. Without action nothing is accomplished. Wild, sporadic or injudicious action must be avoided.

We, that is you and I, are helping or hindering in the building of a profession that is difficult but worth while knowing.

We must carry forward the standards. The results will depend on how patiently and indomitably you work for the attainment of our ideals.

Talk delivered at the opening ceremony on June 27, 1951, in the College of Forestry.

On the plains of hesitation, bleach the bones of countless millions who, at the dawn of victory, sat down to rest and resting, died.

THE DAY OF TREES

By Virgilio R. Fabian

We have Heroes Day. We thought it also fitting and necessary to have a day for trees—the Arbor Day that we celebrate on the second Saturday of September which also commemorates the deeds of trees. It is also a day of arborial repentance, restitution and altruism. It is not colorful but the lessons learned in its observance will make happy and contented the declining years of the aged, make bouyant and hopeful the increasing years of youth.

It required the harmful experience of widespread forest destruction causing tremendous losses, to enlighten and convince the people the need of forestry in this country. Arbor Day reflections and activities had energized the movement for conservation of our rich but exhaustible natural resources.

It should be kept alive because the forces of destruction are still at work in our forests.

The beneficial influence of Arbor Day upon the community spirit has been far-reaching. We come to love planting trees, for trees are lovely sights. We had done a lot of planting for the beautification of highways, parks and our yards. The fruits of those plantings are the delights we now enjoy such as refreshing shade cast by the spreading branches of narras, tindalos, banabas, acacias and other trees and their beauty we behold. The benefits we now reap inspired us to do more planting for improving public grounds, establishing memorial groves and reforesting of kaingins and idle lands. We are looking forward to that charm of walking through the native woodlands among the grand trees supporting their lofty crowns and graceful boles. These magnificent specimens of God's work are not only enchanting to the individual with an aesthetic or poetic turn of mind, but are

equally interesting to any one who may wish to delve into their origin, their hidden natures, or their complicated development.

Tree-planting by school children on Arbor Day is effective in the development of citizenship and respect for property, law and order because trees symbolize progress, rationalism and forthright character. During summer, groups of boys and girls from crowded cities look to trees as their valuable and loyal friends in the whole out-of-doors of living things. If succeeding generations of our country are to carry forward the torch of civilization lighted and passed on to succeeding generations by the founders of the Nation, they can do no better than observe the liberalizing influences of the forests, the tolerance and self-reliance trees teach, the calm strength and the robust character they suggest. For these reasons boys and girls of today should grow up to know, plant and preserve trees and to see that they are used to the best possible advantage—not wasted.

The wanton destruction of forests by wasteful logging operations and the thoughtless kaingineros who cut and burn trees should come to an end. The disastrous effects (erosion by water and wind, diminution of water supply for the locality and farms, the disappearance of fish and game and timber scarcity) of the unwarranted removal of the forests which effects had been suffered by many should be a lesson to us.

Let us therefore plant trees protect, conserve and associate with them, study them, enjoy their shade and protection and discover something of the important role they play in Nature's grand scheme of life.

Ranger's wife to son: "Sonny, don't play with your dad's pay. Those bills are full of germs, don't you know?"

"Germs!" exclaimed the Ranger, "No germs can thrive on a ranger's pay."