

A Triumph of the Cross Over Majesty

By FRANCISCO DE AGUAREÑA

Sometime Private Secretary to His Excellency Don Diego de Salcedo, Governor and Captain-General for His Majesty King Philip IV, in the Philippine Islands.
1663 1668

(As Translated and Arranged by Percy A. Hill)

The original MSS from the library of Don Eduardo de Lete, of Negros, deceased. In the original the margins have been annotated by Padre Nithard, which notes have been omitted in the translation.

Some of the antiquated expressions and phrases have been modernized for the benefit of the reader, and notes added in parenthesis are by the translator.

The original MSS as written partly in the Philippines and partly in Ciudad Rodrigo, Leon, Spain, were evidently brought back to the islands by the son of Aguareña, thus finding their way into the library of unpublished MSS of Don Eduardo, who dedicated a lifetime to the collection of unpublished manuscripts relating to the Philippines.—P.A.H.

"I cannot submit to such an imposition! Impossible! The poor pray for the protection of a Divine Providence. Unhappy virgins are stained by those calling themselves Apostles of the Divine Creator, and the communion service is being used for private ends. To be silent in the face of facts would be unworthy of me, having taken the sacred oath before His Majesty (Philip IV)... These abuses must cease or I will tear off my knightly insignia. I cannot admit of His Majesty's name being bandied from mouth to mouth to deceive the poor and the unhappy. I know. You are but human, and as humans liable to err, but you must err in moderation, for in any other manner I shall not permit. I shall not permit that the Orders preach that I am under their thumb. These blasphemous sermons must also cease. Get rid of these pernicious missionaries who interpret the laws of God as they please, or I as Captain General will apply the justice of His Majesty the King. As good sons of the Church, preach the doctrines of Christ and cease abusing the common people. You are abusing them, and keep on abusing them, but I am determined that this shall cease. These reports from the towns of Tayug and Nagcarlang (in Laguna province) are sufficient. These missionaries must cease their vile abuses."

These phrases were repeated with gesticulations of repugnance by the illustrious Captain-General governing these Islands on the morning of the 8th of October, 1667, in the Royal Palace of Manila (then facing the present *Ayuntamiento*). On the table of his office were piles of well-thumbed papers which, judging from their disarray, had been repeatedly handled by him. He spoke with fury to one who stood before him. This personage was dressed in a semimonastic cowl, old in appearance and of a greenish color

with age, beneath which were short trousers belted with a sword having a hilt of bronze. His jacket of fine malla cloth was open and his red-brown hat bore on the left side a somewhat bedraggled plume.

He was the *alguacil mayor* of the Holy Inquisition, Captain Francisco Viscarra y Almandia, a gigantic Basque. He bore an order from the Holy Office to the Captain-General, who laid it on his desk with a nervous hand. At the other end of the chamber, which served as an audience room, stood two of the palace guards. In the fury of the above remarks of His Excellency, they had drawn their swords with their right hands, holding their halberds in their left, as if to guard him from any untoward move on the part of the *alguacil mayor*. Who were these guards? Were they loyal to His Excellency? We shall see. One of them was named Canuto de la Llave and the other Jesus de Murgia. At that moment they were perhaps loyal to their master, but later, being suborned by the friars, they fell wholly into the power of the Commissary of the Inquisition. (This was Fray Joseph Paternina, whose importunities had got him appointed when in Mexico City, upon the death of Fray Juan Maldonado, the former Commissary). What was the order or letter that His Excellency handled with such a nervous hand? Let us see. The writer of these annals had an opportunity to read it, being confidential secretary to His Excellency, and working alongside the licentiate Don Manuel del Angulo. It was addressed to Don Diego de Salcedo and was the transcription of a letter of the parish friars of Tayug and Nagcarlang, submitted by His Grace the Metropolitan Archbishop Poblete, and bore the date September 4th, 1667.

Knowing this we will proceed to give it verbatim as copied from the original in the archives

of the Captain-General.

It must be noted that the Governor-Generals had under then till a much later date all the *alcaldes mayores*, or, to be exact, the provincial governors, and other state officials, while the friars who administered the parishes were under the direct supervision of their provincials and the Archbishop as head of the Church. The divided authority of the King of Spain and the King of Heaven is what caused so many bitter Church intrigues, many of them fatal to participants, in the struggle between Church and State.

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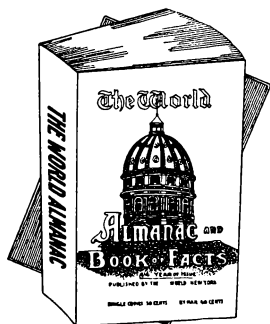
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The reader can use his judgment in weighing the evidence introduced by the letters, but it should be noted that His Excellency had no great abundance of tact and diplomacy required for steering the bark of state under the peculiar Iberian character of government that then obtained in all Spanish colonies and possessions.

Herewith the letter of the head of the Church to the head of the State, as borne by the alguacil mayor of the Holy Office of the Inquisition:

"Your Excellency sees that the interference of the alcalde mayor Don Alejandro in the town of Tayug while the priest was confessing the young woman Dolores Mocha y Moreno was a real contempt of the ecclesiastical laws punished by a severe excommunication. After being reprimanded and put out of the church, he called upon his troops, profaned the sacred temple by forcible entry, and carried off the young woman—which is deserving of the most condign punishment. He furthermore used indecent language, which amounts to blasphemy of Holy Church.

"Your Excellency said that this was not a case for the Holy Inquisition, and that you would take the necessary steps to punish the aggressor after due investigation. But to date nothing has been done about this case. If similar cases pending, of insults to God's ministers, are not taken notice of by your Excellency, the Church will not tolerate these abuses and will itself punish the guilty. It will adjust those cases still pending, and it will not tolerate such abuses committed in your name and by those under your direct authority, nearly every day.

"The Nagcarlang case, as your Excellency knows, was referent to the school of Christian doctrine. We have been sent to these islands of His Majesty the Catholic with the obligation to serve humanity, and are obliged to teach the young generation the doctrines. Very few of these, and we refer to the young native Women (the *Indias*) assist, and on the 14th of this month (evidently September 1667) only one presented herself. The priest, Fray Pedro Iztar de Santa Ana, being sick, called this foolish, (*torpe*) maiden to give him his medicine while he lay sick in bed. This woman, advised by certain malignant persons, cried out without any motive whatsoever. She was heard by the *alcaldillo* Justo Nereta, who, with insulting phrases, took the maiden by force from the convent, informing the populace with indecent stories against the holy priest of this town.

"Of this Your Excellency has been advised. The happening has roused the anger of all the natives of the town, due to the wrong impression given by others, and they have gone so far as to insult Holy Church, they and the officials of the town, and your Excellency also sees we cannot tolerate such a state of affairs. I cannot say that you are solely responsible; that is for the Holy Inquisition to decide, later. It still remains that these abuses against the Holy Roman Catholic and Apostolic Church must be punished or the people and the Church of God will take a just vengeance on those who foment such trouble."

The letter, or order, contained some more sentences that could not be read, owing to their illegibility, and it was signed by His Grace the Metropolitan Archbishop, Poblete.

(Poblete himself was a well-meaning prelate, but utterly under the influence of the regular orders; in other words, he, as a prince of the Church, lent himself too willingly to their ends. The letter, in all truth, was probably written by Fray Paternina of the Inquisition, and only signed by His Grace, and its tenor was both insulting and aggravating, considering all the circumstances in the case, and the regular battle between Church and State began, as it did under each administration. In the annals of the long centuries those struggles did not affect the people as it did the twin Spanish powers themselves, and mostly over mere prerogative. The Church during all the centuries was loyally upheld by the Spaniard no matter what his rank. But its servants, being human, very naturally erred, which is also human. The Church's teachings are a fine heritage to the only Christian people in the Orient—the Filipinos).

CHAPTER II

IN WHICH IS RELATED THE BEGINNING OF THE PLOT AGAINST THE CAPTAIN-GENERAL, HEADED

BY THE FRANCISCAN FRIARS AND LATER PUT INTO EFFECT THROUGH THE HOLY OFFICE OF THE INQUISITION

On the afternoon of March 9th, 1668, I saw several groups of persons in animated conversation near the Church of Santo Domingo in the Walled City, which abuts on the river Pasig. Outside the gate and on the esplanade facing the river were other groups of high officials gathered together, some of whom were pallid with fear. Something was about to take place out of the ordinary. The afternoon was dark and a fine rain was falling. Near the mouth of the Pasig could be dimly seen the form of a sea-going galleon. Captain General Don Diego was there on foot accompanied by an adjutant and a file of soldiers drawn from the regiment quartered in the citadel of Santiago, close by. I approached the latter group in curiosity for the troops were fully armed, one of the musketeers bearing a lighted lint, as is custom. The Captain General was speaking.

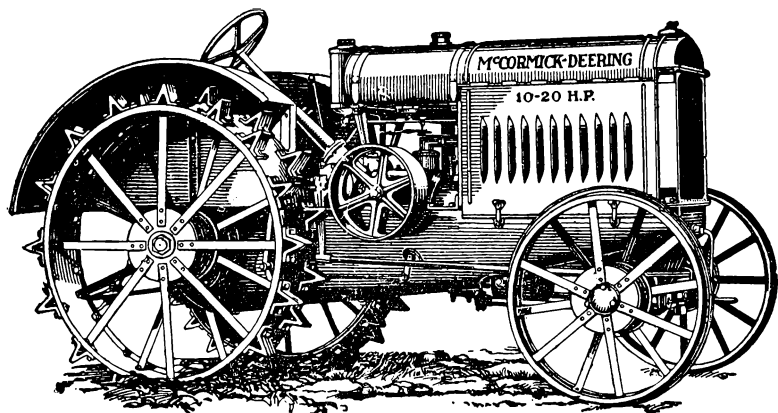
"You do not command here. I represent His Majesty as Captain-General and Governor in

these islands. Return aboard your galleon before I order the shore battery to fire upon you! Do not reply to me, or I will have you put in the stocks. Get out, insolent and daring one!" The governor thus expressed himself, being irritated beyond measure at something.

Before him stood a man of medium stature, between forty-five and forty-six years of age, ruddy and robust in expression. His uniform demonstrated that he was the captain of the ship seen in the offing, and at the foot of the stone steps descending to the Pasig was a shallow manned by six men in the dress of sailors, browned by the sun and winds of long voyages. Upon the prow of the boat were the words *Santo Niño*, from which I deduced the name of the galleon lying hove to. The ship captain who had brought down the anger of the Captain General upon him was Don Francisco Requel de Bastamonde, as Don Francisco Corvera, the King's fiscal, later informed me.

The ship captain, doffing his cap, replied to the governor.

"By your Excellency's mercy we have aboard



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Padre M. Ricci. We have had a stormy voyage and are in misery from lack of fresh water and food. Nearly all my crew are sick with the survy, and if you will not let us land we ask in mercy's name for some help in our miserable condition. We are come from Nantay (China) and are in bad shape, Your Honor." He was unable to conclude, as His Excellency cried "Who is this Padre Ricci you speak of?" "He is, Your Excellency," replied the ship captain, "a Christian missionary who has suffered persecution in China. The Hollanders permitted us to rescue him, although they are allied with Koxinga (Kue-Sing) and Padre Ricci was allowed on board with some sick Hollanders for transit to Batavia. But Padre Ricci is a Dominican and desires to take refuge with those of his order here in Manila."


"Food and equipment!" shouted the Captain General. "Help the accursed Hollanders, fanged dogs who rob, burn and assassinate!" (It should be noted that Don Diego was a trusted and high officer of Philip IV in his campaigns against the Dutch in Holland, was a Belgian by birth, although of noble Spanish parents. It was therefore very natural that he should bear an undying hatred towards the Dutch, as his enemies from birth. Hence his ungoverned fury.) "And this from you, a Spaniard upon whom the King has conferred the sacred obligation of defending the banner of Castile and its interests, to bring here sick heretics and desire to leave them ashore!" The irate Governor grasped the hilt of his sword and cried, "Get out of here, soulless traitor, brutish animal who desires to stain the arms of your country! Give thanks to God in his mercy that I do not quarter you with my sword!" Here his anger would not allow of further speech. Drawing his weapon completely from its sheath he was about to precipitate himself upon the ship captain, when a young girl about fourteen years of age flung herself between the two, and held his hand, saying, "Uncle, uncle! In the name of my dear mother who lies in this very Church of Santo Domingo, and for love of me, your niece Charing, hold your hand and do not stain it with the blood of such miserable unfortunates!"

Throwing back his cloak, Don Diego seemed ashamed of his patriotic fury and sheathed his weapon. The girl, Charing (Rosario) wiped the sweat of anger from the forehead of her uncle with her white fingers, the act seeming to calm the angry passions of the Governor for the moment. In fact his orphaned niece

Rosario had at all times a soothing influence on Don Diego. That she appeared at the right moment was due to the friendly offices of one of the gentlemen in waiting of His Excellency who had called her to the scene.

Bruskly he ordered Captain Requel to disembark Padre Ricci, who was to be taken to his private cabinet for cross examination. A coach drove up with a pair of horses mounted by a coachman. The rain increased. A footman opened the door and His Excellency entered, together with his niece, still pallid from the expe-

(The historical happening in reference to the arrival of P. Ricci is evidently recounted by Aguaruña to show his master's hatred of heretics, a crime for which he was tried later by the Inquisition. But it also shows the Governor's extreme irritability, possibly made so by the plotting of the clergy. It also shows a rigid lack of humanity to his fellow countrymen, Captain Requel and his crew, that gives a bad impression, to say the least. Nor have the friar historians neglected to call attention in their chronicles to this lack of common humanity as showing the




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rience due to her uncle's anger. At this moment Captain Requel advanced a pace and, bowing to the Governor, said, "For piety's and mercy's sake, sir, allow me to take on fresh water." The irritated governor replied, "Leave here at once, you reptile, who would sully the banner under whose folds you earn a living!" The coach drove off in the rain, disappearing through the low gate of Santo Domingo and entering the walled city.

peculiar and irritable state of the Governor's temper. But with their usual twist, they have refrained from saying this was due to his hatred of heresy—in the case of the ship captain, Requel).

Before Don Diego departed he had given orders to Don Francisco Corvera, the King's fiscal, to meet him in his private cabinet, and further ordered the *sargento mayor*, Don Juan de la Concha y Aznar, to comply with certain regulations in reference to the galleon and its unfortunate crew.

The rain began to increase every moment, and being without my cloak I hastened my steps towards calle Cabildo, to the house where I lodged. In this same house dwelt Doña Marieta de Memije, a native of Ilocos, who served in the capacity of chamber-guard to His Excellency and to whom both she and her family owed many favors. She was comely, middle-aged, and perfectly familiar with her duties at the palace, and had served for some time as personal attendant to His Excellency, who was a widower. Furthermore, she was of tried loyalty—at that date.

The wind rose to a tempest later in the evening. It was about eleven o'clock when Marieta arrived from the palace and she was wet, pale and upset. I asked her if she was sick or in pain. She replied that she was well, but highly perturbed at news she had heard on her way home from the palace on the Plaza de Armas, which by accident she had overheard. It appeared that she took shelter from the rain in a small store, which contained several other people who had sought a refuge from the storm, and had overheard what we are now about to relate.

To explain matters still further, I should say that Doña Marieta had a pretty daughter named Lutgarda, whose father was reputed to be a Spanish friar and parish priest of Laoag. She was born there and at the time of which I write she and I maintained intimate relations. She was my housekeeper, and besides being lively and handsome was also industrious. Lutgarda asked her mother if she had had supper and received an answer in the negative. Doña Marieta further said that His Excellency was in a vile humor, that he had thrown an ink well

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at an usher, broken some costly vases, and was walking about gritting his teeth in anger and at times pounding the table with his fist. She had asked permission to visit her family, which was granted by Don Diego, who ordered her to be on hand early next morning. My mistress, Lutgarda, placed an excellent supper before her mother, who, between mouthfuls, related to me the following in a mixture of Spanish, Tagalog and Ilocano, helped out by Lutgarda as interpreter.

"Aba, Nonoy (as she used familiarly to call me), as I came back here I passed through the

black and the cowls had holes for the eyes, and fire was painted on their robes!"

"What did they have to say?"

"They said that the signal was to be a strong whistle, and those who did not cry *Holy! Holy! Holy!* were to be killed."

I was, to say the least, curious.

"When did they say these things were to take place?"

"They said shortly, unless the Devil left the Royal Palace." She ended her account and, after attending to her household duties, retired. Later that night I was awakened by a loud

supplies his convent with fowl, he is even my confessor." This long list of reasons again piqued my curiosity, but saying nothing, I retired into the sala. A little later Marieta came in with one of the Palace guards, Diego de Ruelas, bringing a message from His Excellency for me. It was written in haste, short and to the point.

*To Francisco de Aguareña—
Come at once. I need you.
Your Governor General and Captain—
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The last word bore a hurried rubrica not at all like Don Diego's ordinary writing.

(Continued in June)



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principal market place, where I met a number of persons who bore bronze crucifixes on their breasts larger than any I have ever seen."

"Who were they, and what were they talking about?"

"There were Captain Tomás, Padre Ricardo, Sargento José, Cabo Gonzalo, the master of camp, Don Agustin (de Cepeda), Padre Melchor Padre Jose (Paternina, the Commissary of the Inquisition), Alguacil Captain Francisco (Viscarra), Ordinarios Don Sebastian (Rayo-Doria), Don Nicolas (Muñoz de Pamplona), Don Juan (Tirado) and Padres Francisco and Mateo." She had mixed all ranks and grades together, but they represented the highest of the officials plotting against His Excellency, especially Sebastian Rayo-Doria. (This man had married a cast-off mistress of the former governor, de Lara, and was then the alcalde of Tondo. Whether he received a slight, or thought so, from the new governor, Don Diego, is not known; but he cherished an unreasonable and deadly hatred against him, and was the prime witness and mover in the plot against His Excellency. Later found guilty of treason, his property was confiscated by the Crown, and his death only saved him from imprisonment).

"What were they saying?" I asked.

"They were saying that the hour had arrived to sacrifice the evil and redeem the good; that the devil with horns of fire had come to Manila to bring a tempest of evil upon the people and to carry them to hell without hope of pardon, and that this devil dwelt in the Royal Palace for they had seen the horns on him, growing out day by day. They were in the front part of the store, and behind them were about fifty men with large bronze crosses round their necks who were eating fried fish and drinking wine. Padre José Paternina was paying for all the entertainment, saying that in a fight with the devil there was nothing to be afraid of if God was in the heart and Christ upon the breast."

"Why do you think the others were plotters?"

"Aba, nacu, Nonoy! They had long hair, descending to their shoulders, were dressed in

knocking on the door of our house which was the usual ponderous affair, studded with star-shaped bolts. I was about to sally and open it, to see what was wanted, when Doña Marieta held my arm, saying, "Do not open the door! You go back inside to Lutgarda—not because of any fear, but that you need not be mixed up in any of this business. We women are not high enough to count; besides, I know Padre José Paternina. I have often given him alms and money for the salvation of souls. My sister

Percy A. Hill, translator of the accompanying article, recently made a trip through the Ilokos provinces, and writes of their deplorable economic condition:

"I have been here (in the Philippines) some 30 years—have visited Ilokos four times during that interval—but by James! if I were an Ilokano *kailan* or tao I would do violence to everyone who wears buttons on his pants! As an example of a poverty-stricken decayed and miserable region, this has no equal under the Stars and Stripes. Not even a sentimentalist, let alone anyone with a sense of economics, could do other than weep over this old region, condemned to poverty. All the towns from Agoo to Bangui are living on the Hawaii dole. (He means, savings sent back from Ilokano workmen employed in Hawaii). The oldest and best built of all regional towns, many of them of brick and stone, present a scene like interior China. These people, frugal, thrifty and diligent, live on *two meals a day*. Women work as *camíneros* (that is, common laborers on the roads) and carry baskets of stone on their heads over a mile at two centavos a basket. If they make 30 centavos a day and live, they are doing fine. The whole thing is a disgrace to the United States."

Mr. Hill says a bit more, but this is graphic enough. He is a reliable observer. This review has thought for a long time that the actual condition of the rural masses in these islands should be ascertained by the government, for its guidance. Mr. Hill's remarks lend emphasis to that opinion.—Ed.

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