

Masonry and the Revolution

By MWB EMILIO P. VIRATA, PGM

Wor. Bro. Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo, the Grand Old Man of the Revolution, has time and again publicly declared that our Emancipatory Movement in 1896 was masonically inspired, masonically generalised, and masonically carried out to a successful termination. One of the provinces which contributed richly in blood and fortunes to the movement was Cavite. For her valuable contribution the province became known as the cradle of Philippine freedom. She earned the reputation because —

It was in Cavite where the moving episode of our struggle for independence took place;

It was in Cavite where the Revolution of 1896 was fiercely fought;

It was in Cavite where the Philippine independence was proclaimed in June 12, 1898, after success in the fields of battle had been attained;

It was in Cavite where the Republic we now enjoy was conceived by the patriots who fought and died for the Fatherland;

It was in Cavite where many Revolutionary generals who belonged to the Craft were born;

It was in Cavite where Masonic heroism and martyrdom were recorded in the hearts of men and written in books of history; and

It was in Cavite where Ill. Gen.

Emilio Aguinaldo, Liberator of his country and President of the First Philippine Republic, saw the light of day.

Masonry was born in the Philippines more than a century ago, at Kawit, Cavite. In the place of its birth the Fraternity lived in secrecy, grew fast and spread out far and wide. Its influence inspired the Revolution which liberated our country from foreign domination and delivered our countrymen from slavery. The Republic which we now enjoy we owe to Masonry and the Revolution. Masonry's accomplishments in the Philippines are, indeed, a source of real pride and genuine satisfaction to Masons.

Andres Bonifacio, the founder of the Katipunan which plotted the overthrow of the despotic Spanish government, was a Freemason. So was Wor. Bro. Ladislao Diwa, of Cavite, one of his two co-founders. Most of the *Katipuneros* were also Masons or persons of Masonic leanings. So Bonifacio's Cry of Balintawak was wildly welcomed and actively supported by his brother Masons and countrymen who immediately joined the liberation movement. Militarily dressed in rayadillo with buri hats tipped up in front to complete the uniform, bolos or spears in hands, barbooted and hungry, the soldiers of Democracy fought valiantly the enemies

of Freedom, won the fight and set our country free.

The Revolution of 1896 covered two periods. The first period began from the Cry of Balintawak on August 16, 1896, and finished with the Pact of Biak na Bato on December 14, 1897. The second period commenced at the battle of Alapan, Imus, Cavite province, on May 28, 1898, and ended with the inauguration of the First Philippine Republic at Malolos, Bulacan, on January 23, 1899. It was provoked by the failure of Spain to comply with her commitments in the treaty. Like the first, the second period of the Revolution terminated with victory for the Revolutionary forces and defeat for the Spanish Army. Shortly after the end of the Revolution, however, the Philippines became involved again in another warfare. Aguinaldo on February 5, 1899, declared war against America due to some serious misunderstandings between the two countries. The Philippine-American war lasted for more than two years. It came to a close when Gen Emilio Aguinaldo was treacherously captured by Gen. Frederick Funston at Palanan, Isabela, on March 22, 1901. Some historians opine that the end came when the last Filipino general surrendered to the enemy in 1902. He was Gen. Miguel Malvar of Batangas. Once more the Philippines fell under a foreign power. For almost fifty years since then, we had been persistently pleading for our independence by adopting Congressional resolutions and sending political missions to the United States. At long last our plea was heeded and justice triumphed. So

on July 4, 1946, America returned to us the independence which the Revolution had won in the fields of battle and relinquished her sovereignty over the Philippine territory. The independent Philippines joined again the concert of free nations.

In the second period of the Revolution either Aguinaldo helped the Americans fight the Spaniards, or vice versa, that is, the Americans helped Aguinaldo fight the Spaniards. The fact was both fought a common enemy. The alliance was formed under America's promise to recognize Philippine independence after victory. Failing in her promise the former allies became bitter enemies. In the Revolution as well as in the war against America the Filipino Masons fought bravely to uphold the cause of freedom.

Aside from freedom there are other Masonic ideals and virtues which we must uphold if we are to be proud of our hallowed ground, our heroes, our martyrs, our patriots, our race. We must bear in mind that those divine gifts are not sweet music only to the ears — they are strong injunctions for worthy achievements. The uplift — moral, social and political — of our countrymen should be our constant endeavor, their deliverance from evil our deep concern, their happiness our ultimate goal.

Permit me to quote from some Masonic scholars on the definition of a TRUE MASON. Quote:

"A true Mason is humble and obedient. Righteous deeds need not be known, nor compen-

sated. Obedience is a virtue that exalts any man. We must be honest. In practicing honesty we must ever remember that it is our own conscience that we must satisfy and not the curious eye. Our honesty should not choose the time, place, or occasion. It must be practiced at all times, whether alone or in company.

"A true Mason must be just, for injustice disturbs the peace of minds and breeds communism, the antithesis of democracy which we all abhor. When men are treated justly they are happy and industrious. They become an asset and a credit to the community. Never take advantage of anybody. Don't prey on your fellowmen's weakness or ignorance to benefit yourself. Be always on the level.

"A true Mason must be tolerant. He must respect the religious and political beliefs of others. That way he contributes to their happiness. Among us we can not expect unanimous opinion on all questions. In a fraternity that is composed of free and intelligent members discussions are bound to arise. Ours is a democratic and not a totalitarian organization. We must not hold any grudge against anyone or speak ill of a brother in his absence. We must be frank and sincere.

"A true Mason must be charitable. But in practicing charity he should avoid indolence. Only the indigents should merit that virtue. If his charity is intended for publicity it becomes nil. And he who acts thus is nothing but a common miser.

"A true Mason must sacrifice all for a good and just cause. A little thus spent is a life worth living for. He must attain selfmastery too. He must be able to control himself whether in victory or in defeat. He must be ready and willing to apologize for his own faults."

With so much rich Masonic heritage and so many glorious Masonic traditions to draw inspiration from, we Masons, can not fail the land that gave us birth in the hour of her need. Today, we are engaged in a struggle, not bloody, yet deadly. I refer to our struggle for economic emancipation. We must free ourselves economically if we are to have a country and a home we can call our own. Resistance to economic slavery has now become extremely difficult because of our indifference and negligence in the past. The situation is further aggravated by the fact that rampant graft and corruption have crept into the inner chambers of the government participated in by the high and the low. The evil is being encouraged by weaknead and venal public officials who received orders from vested interests and moneyed individuals mostly of foreign brand. Their conduct is all the more condemnable because with their ill-gotten money they indulge in ostentatious living that is completely devoid of honesty, morality or decency. Those so-called servants of the people and their ilk promote criminality and misery, damage Filipino Pride and dignity, and cause loss of national honor and respect. In their hands the citizenry will always suffer and the nation

exposed to criticism beyond repair. They need be eliminated now and forever.

Masonry must assist in fostering our country's economy in every way. If in the past deliverance from tyranny and oppression of nations and peoples had been accomplished by leaders schooled in Freemasonry — like Bolivar in South America, Washington in North America, San Martin in Cuba, and Rizal, Bonifacio and Aguinaldo in the Philippines — there seems to be no reason why economic ills and trans-

gulation may not be cured with Masonic teachings, tenets and principles. Let us, therefore, play our part. Let us stretch forth a helping hand to remedy a national disaster that is both tragic and cruel. The task is great and requires much sacrifice. That it is and does, should not discourage us from performing an important duty. We must give our all for country and home.

Economic emancipation is the password. Let us be alert and act accordingly. Let us be Masons now, or never.



MASONIC MUSIC

(Second and last installment)

By WB. EUGENE STRANSKY, MD

Another composition of Bro. Mozart in the same year was "Maurer Freude" (Mason's Delight) to honor Bro. Ignaz Morn, the most prominent Brother at that time in Vienna whose position would be characterized now by the term Grand Master, and celebrate the union of the smaller Lodges in Vienna to a few larger Lodges. Another remarkable composition is "Eine Kleine Freimurer Kantate" (Little Cantata for Freemasons) for a small orchestra with a male choir.

One of the greatest Masonic compositions of Bro. Mozart is "Maurerische Trauermusik" (Masonic Funeral Music) composed in November 1785 on the death of two

prominent members of the Fraternity, Count Eszterhazy and Prince Mecklenburg Strelitz. It is an orchestral work with singers. It is very imposing and by far better than anything performed in our funerals. I succeeded several years ago to convince the M. W. Grand Master at that time, M. W. Bro. Macario M. Ofilada, to order the record from America. I wonder, however, if it has been played already so far. I may add here that there is likewise a composition for closing the Lodge by Bro. Mozart.

The greatest achievement of our genial Brother is the opera "Die Zauberflöte" (The Magic Flute). The text was written by Bro. Ema-