

# *My First Experience in Shooting*

It Was Not A Pleasant Beginning, But It's Worth Remembering

By **FLAVIO G. CANUEL**

Life Member

N.R.P.A.

It was sometime in 1928 that a very good friend of mine, Mr. Mod. Flores, invited me to shoot in the Cosmopolitan Gun Club. I was jubilant over this invitation for I thought then it would give me a chance to be on the firing line, without in the least thinking of the effects on my physique that my first shots would give me.

I began firing on a Caliber 22 revolver, first at 10 yards, then at 15 meters, and finally at 25 yards. I made out not a very discouraging record and I felt the thrill and beauty of shooting. Then I tried a Caliber 45 government model pistol and my first shot at 10 yards was, maybe by chance, perfectly in the Bull's eye. The successive shots, however, notwithstanding the very short distance, belied my efficiency as a promising tyro. My tutor, Mr. Flores, instructed me how to aim, squeeze the trigger and to forget the recoil or kick, but no amount of instruction or encouragement, however, could conquer the fear that I might lose grip of the pistol, for the kick of a Caliber 45 pistol is such that an unexperienced man would naturally feel it while firing. With such predicament visible on my pale face, I stopped firing on the Caliber 45 pistol by pretending that I was very tired already. This I had to resort to because Mr. Flores introduced me to those then gathered in the range as one who for years had been handling, checking and certifying almost all kinds and makes of firearms, being then employed in the Firearms Section of the Philippine Constabulary, but absolutely a green horn in actual firing of firearms.

Afterwards I joined the gang firing on Caliber 30 H. P. rifles. I remembered I fired two shots at standing position and another two on a kneeling position, at a distance of 200 yards, but to my bewilderment, the red flag was hurled after every shot. I made better results in the prone position and out of my twenty shots, about five or six buried deep in the target, not one in the Bull's eye. The poor mark I obtained did not bother me a bit for that was my first time to fire on Caliber 30 rifle; it was the almost unbearable strain and pain I felt in the muscles

and bones of my shoulder, arm and breast, which put me to bed for two consecutive days. In my confinement, I was censuring Mr. Flores for having brought me to a gun club but when I got over all these pains and returned to my desk already refreshed, I began to feel very grateful to Mr. Flores for having given me an opportunity not only to do target practice but to breathe fresh air in the range, forget office worries, and associate and mingle with real, dyed-in-the-wool sportsmen.

Several months ago, on a regular day, I stealthily fired on Caliber 22 pistol in the Pureza range of N.R.P.A. and I found myself a much better shot than in my first try-out at the Cosmopolitan Gun Club. This is due perhaps to a frequent private target practice I had during the intervening period. I have in some degree conquered the natural fear in firing any gun and observed the correct principles of shooting. From my experience, I gather that it is essential and seemingly indispensable to have frequent target practice in a well established range in order that proficiency in actual handling, firing and using of firearms may be attained. I would, therefore, suggest to all members of the N.R.P.A., myself not excluded, to have constant target practice in the ranges of the club.

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