

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)

SYNOPSIS.—A typical prolonged dispute is developing between the royal governor of the Philippines, D. Diego de Salcedo, and the friars. A Dutch ship, bringing friars from China, is ordered by the governor to put back to sea—Salcedo deprecating the heretical Dutch who harass his king's empire. Murmurs of inquisitorial proceedings are overheard in an inn, by the mother of the narrator's mistress. The narrator, clerk to the governor, is peremptorily sent for, at midnight, the governor simply writing "Come at once—DIEGO."

CHAPTER III

IN WHICH IS RELATED THE FURTHER DETAILS OF THE PLOTTING AGAINST HIS EXCELLENCY BY HIS ENEMIES WHO BANDED TOGETHER UNDER THE ROBE OF THE CHURCH TO DESTROY HIM.

I dressed in haste, as the occasion demanded. A ruffled jacket, pantaloons of point and a heavy cloak, not forgetting to buckle on a sword which had a good blade made in Toledo. Marieta asked where I was going and I replied that Don

Diego had called me to the palace and I must go in haste. She said she would accompany me, as she had to return there early in any event. The night was as dark as a wolf's mouth and the rain still came down in torrents. We had to traverse calles Victoria, Santa Potenciana and Palacio before we arrived at the palace, at the end of Palacio, between calles Postigo and Arzobispo and the Audiencia. At frequent intervals the stormy gusts of rain added to our nervousness. A closed coach passed us, and, being close to one of the hanging street lanterns, I was surprised to see that the coachman was none other than Padre Juan, a Franciscan friar. Without any untoward incident we arrived at the palace, and were halted and recognized by the guards on duty.

Entering the palace, Marieta passed into the inner chamber or linen room, while I remained in the antechamber until his excellency called for me. Marieta, however, came out a moment later, saying the governor was waiting for me in his cabinet. Leaving my cloak and sword, I entered and found his excellency in his night clothes. He was seated at a desk on which were an infinite number of papers and dispatches in disarray. He was biting his under lip and his clenched hand lay upon the desk. He indicated that I be seated close to the table dedicated to affairs of state, upon which were a pile of bound archives. I sat down without a word, and awaited his pleasure.

Some time transpired in silence. Then, in a suffocated voice, he said:

"In the defense of his majesty's interests and those of Spain I have made many hatreds and enemies. I expect that all governors in these islands have done the same. Some have bowed to other powers too craven to defend the interests of his majesty, but I cannot do so. I have confidence of loyal servants to aid me in this task which God in his infinite wisdom has laid upon me. I am furthermore resolved to see that the laws of his majesty are complied with in these far-off islands. Can I expect unswerving loyalty and confidence from you?"

To this I replied, "I am your loyal and humble servant in all that I can accomplish to help your excellency and for his majesty, whom God guard many years. My life is his to command."

"In that case," he continued, "I order you to take note of all good Spaniards in wh... we can trust, but do this circumspectly and report to me, and may God and Spain reward you tomorrow go amongst the friars, and confessions, listening to the general news circulating. Report this to me without altering anything, so that I may be *en rapport* with all that is taking place." Here I was tempted to tell him of the news I had heard from Marieta in the early part of the evening, but, for a certain diffidence regarding my querida Lutgarda, I refrained for the moment, and I was also thinking of the sad position I would be in, by making an enemy of the dreaded Inquisition.

A loud noise outside brought my thoughts to the immediate present—the clash of arms, swords and pikes, in front of the palace, mingled with the cries of several men, after which reigned a sepulchral silence, broken only by the falling rain. With the rapidity of the practised officer, I saw his excellency gird on his sword above his nightclothes, and rush out into the main reception-hall. I grasped my sword and cloak and joined him as he descended the wide staircase, plainly hearing the terrified voice of Marieta as she intoned the seven mysteries, in her utter trepidation, in the adjoining chamber. As we reached the ground floor, we saw Sergeant Manuel de Alfenique with two of the six guards on duty. He explained that two unknown persons dismounted from a coach and attempted to enter the palace, making certain signs. As they refused to give their names to the sentinels or disarm themselves, as in custom, a scuffle had taken place, the strangers defending themselves with dexterity, until, hearing us descending the stairs, they had taken to flight in all haste.

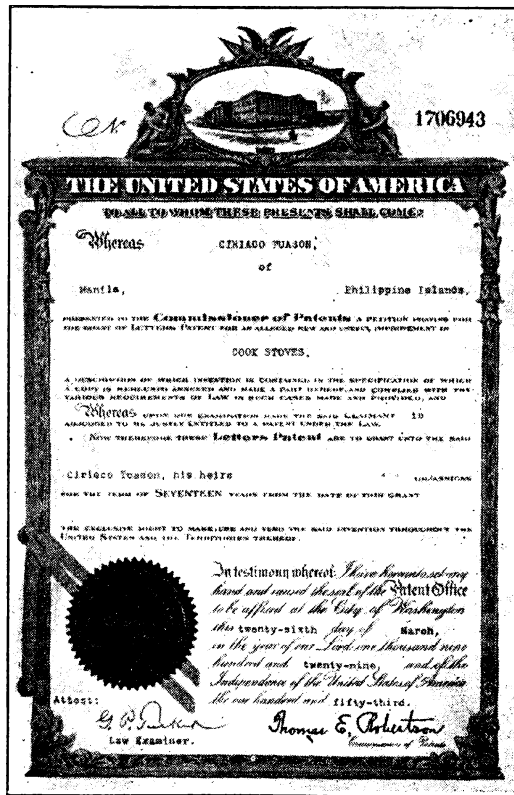
After this incident we returned upstairs and I repeated my loyalty to his excellency's orders. When leaving, I exhorted Marieta to watch over his excellency, who was surrounded by many unworthy enemies. After her protests of fidelity, I left the palace. Before leaving,

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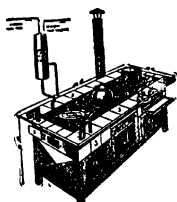
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however, I became aware that Marieta herself had illicit relations with the cook of his excellency, a native of Pampanga, called Pedro Advincula. He was of middle age, his mixed descent was betrayed by a Roman nose, though he was of dark complexion, but his other features did not give any great faith in reposing any confidence in him. Furthermore, I dimly suspected that perhaps Marieta herself had previous knowledge of the attack on his excellency, all of which perturbed me in no slight manner.

I made my way to calle Cabildo, and, arrived home safely, I smoked a cigar. It was then nearly daybreak, but I had no great desire to sleep, but laid myself down and sought rest, in spite of the torrents of rain that lashed the city. Shortly I heard the clanging of the church bells, echoed by those farther off, their tones being carried across the Pasig by the gusts of the tempest. It was about ten o'clock when I awoke, or rather when Lutgarda awakened me, bringing with her a morning cup which she declared was the best for wet and rainy weather. This was a decoction of tea, sugar and ginger imported from China, which she called *tahu* of agreeable taste, piquant and somewhat aromatic. Afterwards I dressed and sallied out into the street. The calles were full of swirling puddles; shoes were out of the question, and I was forced to take mine off. As the rain still fell, few people were abroad.

Near the crossing of Arzobispo street I met some vendors of bananas cooked in flour and lard. I bought a few of these to reinforce my slender breakfast of tahu, but lamented this later on as they caused me a severe indigestion. The churches had begun to ring for late mass and various groups of people were going in through their portals. As for myself, I abstained from the holy sacrifice, as I desired speech with the sacristan of San Francisco, an old friend, from whom I expected to gather some news of the daily happenings. He was liked by all the Franciscans. Diego Anialdo, a native of the Villa de Arevalo (Iloilo) in Panay, had been brought to Manila while very young by an Augustinian friar. He was, however, in Binunduc, (Binondo), a suburb, visiting some friends, I was informed by the door keeper, but to return at midday. I waited some time, but as he did not arrive and it began to darken up and promise rain, I made my way towards the palace.

On my way I met a number of persons in conversation near the Ayuntamiento and recognized several of them, among others the master of camp, Don Augustin de Cepeda, who was old and almost in his dotage; but like all Spaniards in this country, uncommonly fond of secret intrigue and fiercely attached to the church party. With him was Rayodoria, the arch plotter, the burly Juan Tirado and Nicolas Muñoz de Pamplona. The master of camp said, "I cannot tolerate this suspense. His excellency was not at morning mass, something must have occurred at the palace, or he must be sick." The alcaldes Rayodoria and Muñoz shook their heads in the negative, saying, "All this suspense is bad; that which commences bad ends bad." Later I was to understand the meaning of these remarks, but for the present the day passed without extraordinary happenings, but its events brought in their train that which led up to the final act.

CHAPTER IV

IN WHICH IS SET FORTH THE CONFLICTS BETWEEN HIS ILUSTRISIMO THE ARCHBISHOP POBLETE AND HIS EXCELLENCY DON DIEGO SALCEDO, AND OTHER EVENTS WHICH FIGURE IN THE HISTORY OF THE TIMES.

On August 28, 1667, I arrived at the palace a few hours late, and after the ushers and staff had commenced their daily routine. I was seated at my desk copying some orders when the chief usher announced the arrival of a certain personage with passports and credentials from his majesty and desiring an interview with his excellency. I was sent to lead him to the audience chamber. I found in the anteroom a person clad in the black habit of the Society of Jesus, of tall stature and ruddy with the health of middle age. He possessed an eagle nose and his features preserved a marked serenity, while his manner bespoke the educated man and the courtier.

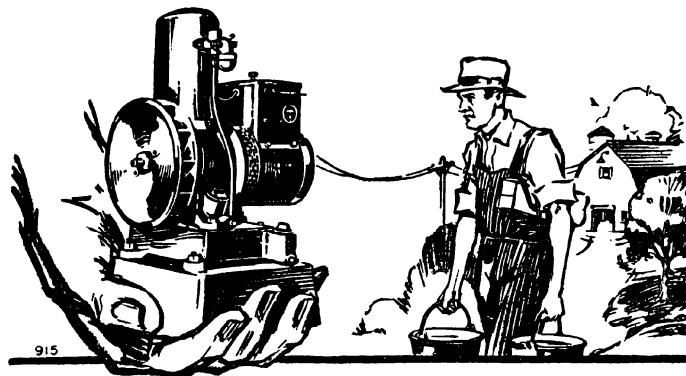
He was Don Diego de Cartagena, an expelled Jesuit (a former friend of the king who had been sent or banished to the Philippines by his majesty's orders, perhaps to cover up some escapade of his own, as was the custom of the epoch. His excellency received the visitor with marked courtesy. After taking the seat proffered him, close to his excellency's desk, the visitor unrolled from a parcel he carried beneath his arms some sealed documents and dispatches which he delivered with a courtly bow to the captain general.

"I ask help from your excellency," said the visitor, "because I expect that others to whom I make my address will pay little attention to these orders I carry." "Never mind," said his excellency, while I am here the orders of his majesty will always be obeyed by me. Whether these will be agreeable to other personages here

who do not care for me, will be of little importance. I command here in the Philippines and I hope to see others respect the name of his majesty as I respect it, and shall endeavor to have them render him equal respect."

A short while later his excellency had me indite a letter to his ilustrisimo the archbishop and the ecclesiastical cabildo to dispose of the matter relatives to Don Diego de Cartagena in conformity with the orders of his majesty, King Philip IV. (This was the granting of a living, *ración*, within the power of the archbishop, and so ordered expressly by the king).

While the illustrious personage was preparing to take his leave, I hastily made two clean copies of the letter, placed the original in the archives, and gave the other to a guard of the palace to deliver personally to his grace, and the other to Don Diego de Cartagena. It was about



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GIBBON—(Continued from page 15)

three o'clock in the afternoon of the same day, when the chief usher announced the visit of another illustrious personage, Archbishop Poblete. The usher announced him in a powerful voice, and his excellency, in an equally powerful voice, said, "Let him pass into my cabinet." Without much of the usual courtesy, his excellency desired the bishop to be seated and inquired the nature of his visit, expressing his pleasure in seeing the very reverend and illustrious archbishop of Manila at the palace.

Without much beating about the bush on his part either the archbishop said, "Your excellency must comprehend that it is impossible to comply with the order of his majesty which your excellency has transmitted to me. The ration desired from the ecclesiastical cabildo cannot be given to an expelled member of the Jesuits. Besides, it is contrary to the statutes so provided by the church that this should be done, from all of which your excellency sees that it is an order impossible to comply with."

Pallid and trembling with anger, the captain general stood up and in a convulsive voice replied as follows:

"Do all you can faithfully to comply with this order of his majesty, the king. I as one of his faithful vassals, as long as I have power to govern in the Philippines, will never permit that an order of our lord and majesty shall remain uncomplied with. If my orders transmitted to you are insufficient for obedience, I shall find ways and means, even to the sacrificing of my life in his service. I shall not consent to the fact that there are in these islands two powers who command, for it would be fatal to all concerned. I therefore advise your grace to comply with the order you have received. If not, I will see that it is complied with by force. One must obey if he expects to be obeyed. Comply with this as a good vassal of his majesty."

The Archbishop replied hotly:

"I protest against such an imposition! Your excellency understands that we ecclesiastics deserve more respect, both by our office and situation. For this, I pray you withdraw the order, at least for some time." "No!" shouted his excellency. "I will not withdraw the order! That would be rank disobedience and your grace cannot dare to make a joke of the King's order. No, a thousand times, no! The Church of God desires its name to be respected and venerated, and to gain this must respect in turn the orders of the king and not to disobey them. Go, then, and comply with the order!"

"I protest with all proper respect to your excellency, and must place myself on record that it is not possible to comply with this order, illegal and contradictory to the statutes of the Church," reiterated the archbishop. "Go, and comply," repeated the angry governor. "Guard! Conduct this person from my cabinet! Conduct him outside the palace. Today I will see what means are needed for obedience to a royal order!"

One of the palace guards entered the cabinet. Taking the prelate by the arm, after religiously crossing himself, he conducted him out of the chamber. Great drops of perspiration were visible on the forehead of the archbishop, who from age and perturbation could scarcely sustain his footsteps while passing through the antechamber; while the equally nervous captain general ordered me to prepare two royal provisions on parchment, one of these being an order of banishment of the prelate to Mariveles, in case he refused to comply with the order coming from his majesty.

The afternoon closed with gloomy forebodings in reference to these royal provisions. The humid weather gave signs of an approaching storm. To make things more sad, a woman from Ermita, named Praxedes Cuyugan, who looked like a witch, brought the news that a strange sickness that seemed epidemic was attacking the people of that suburb, which the clergy referred to as a punishment from divine providence. The night set in with heavy winds and lashing rains as if nature itself precluded the struggle about to take place—that of church and state. The written orders of the captain general were approved by the Royal Audiencia next day, and I retired quite late to my house after the labors and excitements of the last two days.

(Continued in August)

man. To the love of pleasure we may therefore ascribe most of the agreeable, to the love of action we may attribute most of the useful and respectable, qualifications. The character in which both the one and the other should be united and harmonized would seem to constitute the most perfect idea of human nature. The insensible and inactive disposition, which should be supposed alike destitute of both, would be rejected, by the common consent of mankind, as utterly incapable of procuring any happiness to the individual, or any public benefit to the world. But it was not in this world that the primitive Christians were desirous of making themselves either agreeable or useful.

The acquisition of knowledge, the exercise of our reason or fancy, and the cheerful flow of unguarded conversation, may employ the leisure of a liberal mind. Such amusements, however, were rejected with abhorrence, or admitted with the utmost caution, by the severity of the fathers, who despised all knowledge that was not useful to salvation, and who considered all levity of

discourse as a criminal abuse of the gift of speech. In our present state of existence the body is so inseparably connected with the soul, that it seems to be our interest to taste, with innocence and moderation, the enjoyments of which that faithful companion is susceptible. Very different was the reasoning of our devout predecessors; vainly aspiring to imitate the perfection of angels, they disdained, or they affected to disdain, every earthly and corporeal delight. Some of our senses indeed are necessary for our preservation, others for our subsistence, and others again for our information; and thus far it was impossible to reject the use of them. The first sensation of pleasure was marked as the first moment of their abuse. The unfeeling candidate for heaven was instructed, not only to resist the grosser allurements of the taste or smell, but even to shut his ears against the profane harmony of sounds, and to view with indifference the most finished productions of human art. Gay apparel, magnificent houses, and elegant furniture, were supposed to unite the double

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