

Unrivaled Tourist Attractions of the Philippines to be Advertised to the World

- *Philippine Tourist Bureau out to get a proper share of tourist attention for the Philippines.*

One of the great mysteries to anyone who knows the Philippines is the unanimity with which travelers have stayed away. We have here a great, teeming port; the cosmopolitan city of Manila—a treasure house of historical spots standing nearly intact, and bringing mental pictures of ancient seafarers, Moro pirates, priests burning with zeal for their mission, the scene of the end of Spain's greatness at the hands of Dewey. Narrow streets lined with dingy, yet romantic shops offering the wares of China, India and Japan are a stone's throw from the famed Escolta—a modern thoroughfare winding along the banks of the Pasig.

The Walled City stands today the same as it did when the Spaniards built it centuries ago, in an effort to keep out the Chinese, the Japanese, the Dutch and the British, and the fierce Moro raiders who sometimes carried off slaves from the very city gates. Practical Americans saw these walls as a menace to health because they kept out light and air. They wanted to tear the walls down, but somehow satisfied themselves with merely cutting openings in them so the sun and the cooling breezes could get through.

They drained the moat and built where the water used to be—of all things—a golf course!

But you can see in form of public playgrounds where the moat used to be, and the walls still stand. The city inside the walls remains as it was—a small company of American soldiers now are barracked where armored Spaniards recited their novenas in one breath, and cursed the Moros in the next; Commonwealth Government offices now function efficiently where proud representatives of Spain promulgated their decrees—but the old city is essentially the same as it was when Dewey first saw it.

The United States paid Spain \$10,000,000 at the Treaty of Paris for the "improvements" (it was said) which Spain had made in the Philippines. Pragmatic critics assert that this was a gift—Spain made no improvements here. They are mistaken. Ten million dollars is an insignificant figure to pay for the priceless relics of the dim past which Spain left behind her.

Governor Murphy, at the suggestion of Walter Robb, and Dean Edward R. Hyde, created the Historical

Concrete encouragement to those who hope eventually to see the Philippines get their proper share of tourist attention is contained in newspaper reports that the new Commonwealth budget sets aside P100,000 for tourist attraction activities.

This sum will be ample for a vigorous program during the year. Add the P50,000 appropriation given to the Historical Markers Research Committee for its activities in delving into the history of Manila's historical spots and marking them, and we have a substantial sum with which to work.

Markers Committee, which immediately set to work to mark conspicuously some of Manila's oldest antiquities. President Quezon roared with laughter when he saw the Governor's order; Murphy had stated what the duties of the Committee were to be with scrupulous exactitude, but he had provided no funds with which it could carry out those duties. With ample funds provided by the Commonwealth Government,

and now under the chairmanship of Eulogio Rodriguez of the National Library the Committee proceeds with its work. Many of the spots marked are churches, centuries old and lately in bad repair. The old *padres* noted the markers placed on their edifices, contemplated anew their majestic past, and set about to refurbish the churches.

But we are getting away from our story. There is a lot for tourists to see in the Philippines besides Manila. There is Baguio, city of pine trees, corduroyed miners, stock brokers branch offices, picturesque Igorots—and rest. Or, if the tourist does not want to go so far, there is Tagaytay, scene of much building activity just now, with its unrivaled view of two oceans, a volcanic lake, and the city of Manila in the distance. Pagsanhan rapids afford a delightful memory. A trip to the Southern Islands does not take long, is cheap, and will never be forgotten.

Of recent years, we have witnessed the Dutch attract an ever-increasing flood of tourists to Bali, their tiny island near Java. We are not denying that Bali is quite a place, that



Offices and part of the personnel of the Philippine Tourist Bureau in the Manila Hotel.

the natives there have a native art and culture which is very charming and distinctive, but we also think that publicity had quite a lot to do with Bali's present popularity, and that brings us back to the Philippine Tourist Bureau.

This organization succeeded the old Philippine Tourist Association about a year ago. It is jointly operated by the Manila Railroad, and the Manila Hotel. Manila Railroad and Manila Hotel funds have paid all expenses to date, but the bureau hopes to receive government aid soon, in order better to carry on its activities both here and abroad.

Offices of the bureau are in the Manila Hotel. Francisco Limjap is in charge, and is assisted by a corps of trained travel people.

The purposes of the Philippine Tourist Bureau are quite simply stated—to bring the Philippines to the attention of tourists. To accom-

plish this, it plans to do several things.

First, a staff of tourist guides must be trained. These guides must know the city of Manila, and must be versed in the art of taking parties of tourists about, and educating them in Manila's past and present without at the same time boring them. Official badges will identify these guides, and will serve as the tourists' guarantee that the men wearing them are reliable, and know their business.

The second object of the bureau is related to the first, and has to do with shops. All tourists want to shop wherever they go. But they don't want to be charged stiff prices for what they buy, or be sold inferior articles. The bureau intends to see that this does not happen by warning all shops that any unfair dealing with tourists will result in the offending shops being taken off the bureau's list, and losing tourist trade.

The third object has to do with the frequently-heard objection of tourists that scenic spots near Manila Hotel will have little or no accommodation for travelers. The Manila Hotel will build small hostleries at various places in the archipelago, and will manage these hotels itself. Land has already been purchased at Tagaytay, where a small hotel will be erected.

As to advertising the Islands' attractions—the bureau feels that a pleased tourist is the best advertisement, but it will supplement its efforts to please tourists here with a vigorous advertising campaign in travel magazines and with folders and advertisements abroad. Efforts will be made to hold international gatherings here in Manila. Results are expected to be slow at first, but eventually the bureau hopes that its efforts will bring results in the form of an ever-increasing stream of travelers to the Philippines.

The Philippine Tourist Bureau emphasizes that it does not exist to serve any person or group, but the entire Philippines. Its offices are located in the Manila Hotel for convenience only. Its activities are being carried on, and will be carried on for everyone's benefit. The bureau welcomes suggestions as to how it can better accomplish its avowed purpose—to secure for the Philippines their proper share of tourist attention.

Mr. Mendoza of the Manila Hotel told the *Journal* that the bureau hopes to send one or two representatives abroad soon. The idea is that personal contact with tourist organizations abroad will do more to boost Philippine travel than anything else. The representatives will distribute posters, pamphlets and other literature anent the Philippines in the places they visit.



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