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MR. E. W. SCHEDLER

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The "LET YOUR HAIR DOWN"

Column

WE had a number of letters from old friends during the past month all with a bearing on the Journal. One was from Luther Parker, a well known former division superintendent of schools here who lives in Santa Cruz, California (741 Bay Street). It was addressed to the editor, and Mr. Parker wrote in part:

"I have just read that you are editing the Manila Chamber of Commerce Journal. May I congratulate you on having survived the Japanese occupation and having the strength and determination to continue working? You and McCullough Dick deserve all commendation for so bravely carrying on after the severe experiences you went through. Lesser spirits would have given up..."

Mr. W. F. Boericke wrote the editor from 25 Broad Street, New York City (Hayden, Stone & Company), in part as follows:

"I enjoyed your 'Three Christmases in Santo Tomas' [in the December Journal]. It is free from the exaggeration which has characterized so many of the accounts which have appeared. I note that you have a manuscript on the Camp which is 'still awaiting a publisher.' I have an idea it will continue to wait judging from my own experience. When I returned to this country, I sent a story to the *Elks Magazine* on the first days at the Camp. It was promptly accepted and the check I received made me wonder if there wasn't a fortune in preparing a book on the Camp. I wrote about 70,000 words, and left the manuscript with several good publishers. I had the right introductions, too, for I have written a great deal for New York papers and for the technical press, and my name is rather well known. The tip-off is what one of the partners of Doubleday said to me, when we shook hands after a personal introduction. 'I'll be glad to look at your story, but I have to tell you in

advance that you have two strikes against you before I even read a page. The public isn't interested anymore in war stories.' That isn't strictly true, for if the author makes a story gruesome enough, it can get over. 'Three Came Back' is an illustration... Perhaps the times have changed. Maybe the real story of Santo Tomas would be read with interest now. I haven't tried to place my Ms. for the last year, — been too busy with other things. I should like to know whether you have made any efforts yourself... You stated that your manuscript runs to 2000 pages. My own runs to about 300... Maybe you can see how we might join forces in getting out a story of Santo Tomas..."

In another Santo Tomas connection, the editor received an illustrated post card from Tokyo on which Mr. V. A. Brussolo, another ex-Santo Tomasite, had written under date of February 3:

"Remembering you on the date of our liberation. Saw the 1st Cavalry parade here. It's a wonderful outfit, the best in the world for us..."

To which latter sentiment we all say "Amen". But the date of the editor's liberation, and that of some 600 others, was not February 3, but February 5, as he was among the hostages held by the Japanese who barricaded themselves in the Education Building and who did not surrender until the Monday morning following the Saturday night of the main Santo Tomas liberation.

The editor (all these are the editor's letters, it seems) also had a letter from the secretary of another famous ex-internee, Father John F. Hurley, S.J.

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"Father Hurley has instructed me to thank you for the three issues of your Journal which you sent him last week. He appreciates your kindness in sending them to him and congratulates you on the very edifying task you are doing on behalf of all businessmen in the Philippines. Father Hurley left Wednesday at 5 on a PAL DC-6, and expects to be in the United States for about three months for a much needed rest-cure..."

And still another letter from a former aide to the late Governor J. Ralston Hayden when he was here on the staff of General MacArthur, Lieutenant, then, now Professor Dale Pontius (5519 S. Kenwood Avenue, Chicago 37, Illinois). The most pertinent paragraph reads in part:

"It has been a long time since I have written to you. I have felt, however, that I have had the benefit of some one-way contact. Last summer, at the Library of Congress, I saw a number of copies of the Journal, and in it I have been glad to see some of the old Hartendorp spirit resurge (if I may say so). I am a little worried, however, that the influence of being among so many businessmen will make a died-in-the-wool conservative out of you..."

The editor took that last slam seriously, — he is such a conscientious bird. "I know I am getting more conservative," he admitted. "In the first place, I am getting older, and as everybody knows, growing conservatism is natural as one ages. I can't and wouldn't escape that. In some ways I like getting old, and I am not going vainly to struggle against it. There are compensations for what one is losing. There seems to be a lessening of stress and strife in one's life; there is less of impossible wishing; there is less dependence, emotionally, on others; there is a growing calmness and serenity. And, of course, as everyone knows, too, a growing wisdom. Heh-heh!"

Then he turned quickly from what sounded like submission and acceptance, to attack:

"Dammit!" he said, "there was a time when it was a virtue to be a radical. But now there are all too many radicals everywhere, — nuts and cranks, deluded boobs, doubters and hesitators, and outright subvertists and would-be destroyers of all that mankind has achieved so far. It's coming to be a distinction to be a conservative in this loony and crazy and mad post-war era. It is one thing to stand for and fight for progress, but that never means destruction; it means building, block by block, on top of tried and firm

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foundations. Everything is not wrong. Everything after ages of social evolution, couldn't be wrong. Let us not, as in the delirium and frenzy of a fatal fever, break everything within reach. If I have to choose between being a conservative and a criminal maniac or a traitor, how do my friends expect me to choose? Hell!" the old man ended.

"Tut, tut! What language!" said the editor, looking over our shoulder. "I was just blowing off steam a little. Since you put all that down, be sure to say that I said that I did not mean to imply that my good and dear friend Dale (who is an able political scientist and who, when I was in Washington, took me on a patriotic pilgrimage to Mount Vernon) expected me to choose to be a maniac or a ruffian and a traitor when he mildly said I might become a little too conservative."

The next day, the editor, who must have been thinking over the subject at home, asked: "How did this talk about businessmen being so conservative ever get started, anyway? Are they so conservative really? It would seem that there has been a great deal more of change and advancement in our economic, than in our political institutions and procedures. In fact, that is at the bottom of a lot of the world's troubles. Let Dale chew on that a while."

Attorney Arturo L. Rodriguez, Arabejo Building, 706 Quezon Boulevard, generously sent us during the month a surprise gift consisting of 45 pre-war issues of the American Chamber of Commerce Journal covering the years from November, 1936, to December, 1940, inclusive, but with some numbers missing. As we have been trying to build up a set of back issues of the Journal, this donation was most acceptable. The missing numbers are those for February and May, 1937; October, 1938; June, 1939; and September, 1940. We should like very much to fill out these volumes and we would be very grateful to any one who could help us to do so.

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