

Rizal in london essay sample

[Countries](#), [Philippines](#)



On February 28, 1888, a year after the publication of *Noli Me Tangere*, and six months after his arrival in the Philippines, José Rizal sailed from Manila again, by “advice” of the government. The controversy over the *Noli* took its toll on Rizal. He soon found that he had to travel abroad once again to guarantee his intellectual and personal freedom. He would have to go to some country where he would be free from spies or plots. As he prepared for his return to Europe, Rizal had an intensified sense of his own country. The reaction to the *Noli* and his own intellectual growth prompted him to look beyond the Philippines to all of Asia. Rizal decided to spend some time in London’s famed libraries, where he can find the sense of the Philippines he was searching for. 53

Before he settled in London, Rizal spent some time in Hong Kong and in Japan. While Rizal was in Hong Kong in 1888, Governor Terrero had him watched and the Spaniards closely monitored all of Rizal’s activities.

Rizal in Hongkong

While in Hongkong, Rizal took time to inform his friend – Blumentritt of what had happened to him during his short stay in Calamba. Rizal said: “At last I can write freely. At last I can express my thoughts without fear of censorship from the chief! They forced me to leave my country. Half sick I left the house.” (Rizal’s letter to Blumentritt, February 16, 1888) Rizal’s own story of his voyage to England, written to his friend Mariano Ponce after he reached London, will interest Filipinos and Americans alike. Nearly every sentence of the first paragraph was packed with fateful significance: “When I set forth I was already ill, and soon became seasick. We reached Hong Kong, which delighted me. There I was introduced to some leading Spaniards, one of

them Varanda, Spaniard, who was, they said, Secretary to General Emilio Terrero." Varanda was ordered by the Spanish government not to leave Rizal out of his sight, and he seldom did. The letter continues: " I traveled about with him several days, especially on a trip which Varanda, Basa, and I took to Macao, to see that Portuguese colony; and to visit Mr. Lecaroz, in whose house we were guests."

Lecaroz, Jose Maria Basa, (had been exiled in 1872, a victim of Spanish vengeance for the uprising in Cavite, though he had not a shadow of guilt. A noble gentleman with a beautiful influence on Filipino youth, he became one of Rizal's most trusted friends from the time of this Hong Kong visit, and played a vital part in Rizal's career thereafter) and the other Filipinos of Hong Kong are partisans and promoters of the book *Noli Me Tangere*. In Hong Kong I investigated many important matters, for example concerning the riches of the Dominicans, concerning their missions, concerning the Augustinians, etc." The study of the Dominicans which Rizal mentions, is to be remembered, because four years later a terrific arraignment of the wealth and greed of that society was found in his sister Lucia's baggage (That is, *The Poor Friars*), and led to Rizal's arrest, and ultimately to his execution. There I came to know D. Balbino Mauricio, an unfortunate man worthy of a better fate, and his acquaintanceship was useful for me, for it prepared me for a fate which may be much worse!" From this time onward Rizal alludes frequently to a presentiment that tragedy lies ahead. He began to see that perhaps one way to save his country would be to go back and let himself be crucified for her. Rizal in Japan

Rizal in Japan

As a result of the cloak and dagger surveillance, Rizal visited Japan. During his six weeks in Japan he spent an inordinate amount of time soaking up local culture. Impressions of Tokyo

Here I am in the capital city of the Japanese Empire, leading again my solitary and vagabond life in Europe. I left Hong-Kong on the 23rd of February on the Oceanic and arrived at Yokohama on the 28th after having been very sea-sick during the voyage. ...Yokohama is a city inferior to Manila with regard to its external aspect. A portion of it has been ceded to the Europeans, a portion which I believe they call "concession," according to a traveler. The Japanese, of course, occupy the greater portion of the city in low-odd-looking houses, like the little houses or cages of rabbits, very clean, with paper walls, white mats on the floor, lattices, etc. They make no noise; loud voices are not heard, they sit quietly in their stores... The Japanese women are short, stout, fair and their cheeks are red. Their hair is stiffer and thicker than ours, and I have seen few with good denture. There are some who have big eyes. Some of the men are dressed in European style and they resemble greatly those from Biñan.... Yedo or Tokyo is very big; they say that it is bigger than Paris; it has a million inhabitants. Manila is more beautiful, but this is more imposing because of its somber edifices, of its wide streets, and Cyclopean walls.

His letter continues:

" In about fifteen days I departed for Japan. I was quite seasick again, and arrived in Yokohama on February 28. A few minutes after I reached a hotel,

before I had time to brush up, I received a notice that the Spanish chargé d'affaires was calling! They introduced themselves to me with much graciousness, extending me many offers, and proposing that I make my home at the Legation. After making a few excuses, I accepted frankly, for if at bottom they had a desire to watch me, I was not afraid to let them know what I did. I lived in the Legation a little over a month. I was examining some of Japan, at times alone, on other occasions accompanied by a member of the Legation, and sometimes by the interpreter. There I studied the Japanese, and also made a study of their theater.

From Japan, he boarded an ocean liner. The Belgic, for the voyage to San Francisco. As he headed toward the United States, Rizal was eager to witness the elements of democracy. Rizal arrived in San Francisco on April 28, 1888. Finally, he arrived in New York on May 13, 1888. 54

As he boarded the City of Rome, Rizal reflected on his world tour. He had witnessed a variety of political ideas, and he had developed a varied sense of other civilizations. In San Francisco and New York, he was struck by racial differences. The Chinese were so poorly treated in the Golden State that Rizal became even more curious about researching the origin of his own people. He realized that prejudice developed from lack of knowledge about other cultures. Rizal in America

Rizal in America

Rizal reached San Francisco on April 28, 1888, and started across the continent by rail, sitting in a coach all night to save money. His letter continues: " I visited the large cities of America, with their magnificent

buildings, their electric lights, and their splendid ideas. America is indubitably a great country, but it also has many defects.”

When he left New York, Rizal wrote to the Filipino historian, Mariano Ponce, that he was struck by the primitive racial attitudes of most Americans. Not only was Rizal concerned about the Chinese, but he witnessed barbaric treatment of American. “ They do not have true civil liberty.” 55 In some states the Negro cannot marry a white woman, nor the white man a Negress. The dislike of the Chinese leads to other Asiatics like the Japanese being mistaken for them by the ignorant, and being disliked. The customs examiners are excessively severe. Nevertheless, as they say truly, America offers a motherland for the poor who wish to work. “ There is, too, much arbitrariness. He stayed in New York three days. In 1883 it was by no means the awe-inspiring city it is today. All it elicited from Rizal was this comment: “ Was in New York; big town, but there everything is new. I visited some memorials to Washington, the great man who, I think, has no equal in this century.”

Rizal in London

Rizal in London: The Scholar’s Journey

“ The City of Rome is said to be the second largest ship in the world. On board the ship they published a periodical at the end of the voyage. There I became acquainted with many people, and as I carried a yo-yo with me, the Europeans and Americans were astonished to see how I could use it as a weapon of offense. . . I was able to speak to all of them and understand them in their own languages.” In fact, as Retana tells us, “ Rizal, at the age of

twenty-seven, was one of the leading linguists of the world.” When pressed by his fellow passengers to name the languages which he knew, he replied: “ Tagalog, (his native tongue), Ilocano, Spanish, Latin, Greek, French, German, English, Arabic, Malayan, Sanskrit, Hebrew, Swedish, Dutch, Catalan, Italian, Chinese, Portuguese, and Japanese.” A few years later while exiled in Dapitan, Mindanao, he learned three others: Subanon, Visayan, and Russian, the last of these by reading Russian fiction with a dictionary, twenty-two languages in all. Rizal’s amazing linguistic accomplishments drew him to other linguists. He became a lifelong friend of the eminent Sanskrit scholar Doctor Reinhold Rost, who was librarian of the India Office.

Professor Craig considers Rost to have been the greatest linguist of that century. It was in the Rost home that José spent most of his Sundays. Rizal discussed with him the booklet of his friend Dr. Pardo de Tavera on “ Sanskrit in the Tagalog Tongue”. (Sanskrit is an Aryan language, and its presence in Tagalog might, together with other evidence, indicate Aryan blood in the Filipinos.) When he reached London, Rizal wrote to his old friend Dr. Karl Ullmer of Heidelberg this interesting letter about his departure from the Philippines: “ I have received your kind cherished letter of March 12, which was forwarded to me from the Philippines. I left my country the third of February. I traveled in China, Japan and the United States, and reached here at the end of last month. Here I shall probably remain a couple of years. I hope we may see one another next year. I will go to Belgium in search of a country, (temporarily). After disembarking at Rotterdam, I will go up the Rhine, and come to visit you and your family with whom I have passed such sweet and delightful days.

“ I have left my country on account of my book. The Filipino public welcomed Noli Me Tangere very heartedly; the edition is entirely exhausted. The Governor General [Terrero] summoned me and asked me for a copy of it. The friars were most excited. They wanted to persecute me, but they did not know how to get me. The Archbishop threatened to excommunicate me. “

The story of my return home would be long to tell and hard to understand for those who do not know life in the Philippines. My family would not allow me to eat in any house, for fear they might poison me. Friends and enemies did me favors; the latter burned my books, the former paid as much as fifty pesos for one copy. The bookstores have made big profit, but I got nothing. The friars urged my exile, but the Governor replied that they would have to bring me before the court, if there was anything illegal that I had done. I left my country in order to give my relatives peace. I am at any rate once more in a free land, breathing the free air of Europe. My fellow countrymen consider me lucky to have escaped unharmed from the Philippines. I feel like the diver Schiller described, who said: I have seen horrible things, monsters which menaced me with their talons; but by the help of God I am again on the surface!” “ Nevertheless I will go back!

José Rizal

Philippines: A Century Hence

The Philippines: A Century Hence

A few months later he wrote in The Philippines a Century (This was published in La Solidaridad in installments, from September 30 1889 to February 1, 1890) Hence the following prophecies which are now interesting in the light

of the twentieth century, especially to Americans: “ If the Philippines secure their independence after heroic and stubborn conflicts, they can rest assured that neither England, nor Germany, nor France, and still less Holland, will dare to take up what Spain has been unable to hold. Within a few years Africa will completely absorb the attention of the Europeans, and there is no sensible nation which, in order to secure a group of poor and hostile islands, will neglect the immense territory offered by the Dark Continent, untouched, undeveloped and almost undefended. “ China will consider herself fortunate if she succeeds in keeping herself intact and is not dismembered or partitioned among the European powers that are colonizing the continent of Asia. “ The same is true of Japan. On the north, she has Russia, who envies and watches her, on the south she sees England. She is, moreover, under such diplomatic pressure from Europe that she cannot think of outside affairs until she is freed from it, which will not be an easy matter.

True it is that she has an excess of population, but Korea attracts her more than the Philippines, and is also easier to seize. “ Perhaps the great American Republic, whose interests lie in the Pacific, and who has no hand in the spoliation of Africa, may some day dream of foreign possession. This is not impossible, for the example is contagious, covetousness and ambition are among the strongest vices, and [President Benjamin] Harrison manifested something of this sort in the Samoan question. But the Panama Canal is not opened nor the territory of the States congested with inhabitants; and in case she should openly attempt it, the European powers would not allow her to proceed, for they know very well that the appetite is sharpened by the first bites. North America would be quite a troublesome

rival, if she should once get into the business. However, this is contrary to her traditions. “ Very likely the Philippines will defend with inexpressible valor the liberty secured at the price of so much blood and sacrifice. . . . “ Then the mines will be made to give up their gold for relieving distress, iron for weapons, copper, lead and coal.

Perhaps the country will revive the maritime and mercantile life for which the islanders are fitted by their nature, ability and instincts, and once more free, like the bird that leaves its cage, like the flower that unfolds to the air, will recover the pristine virtues that are gradually dying out and will again become addicted to peace — cheerful, happy, joyous, hospitable and daring. “ These and many other things may come to pass within something like a hundred years.” This remarkable article closes with these words which reveal the heart of Rizal as few other things do: “ A cross on Calvary and a just man nailed thereon changed the ethics of half the human race; and before Christ, how many just men wrongfully perished and how many crosses were raised on that hill!

The death of the just sanctified his work and made his teaching unanswerable. . . “ Spain, we have spent our youth in serving thy interests and the interests of our country; we have expended the light of our intellects, all the fervor and enthusiasm of our hearts in working for the good of what is thine, to draw from thee a glance of love, a liberal policy that would assure us the peace of our native land. Spain, thou hast remained deaf, and wrapped up in thy pride, hast pursued thy fatal course and accused us of being traitors merely because we love our country, because

we tell thee the truth and hate all kinds of injustice. . . . What dost thou wish us to tell our wretched country, when it asks about the results of our efforts? Spain, must we some day tell Filipinas that thou hast no ear for her woes, and that if she wishes to be saved, she must redeem herself?” SUCESOS DE LAS ISLAS FILIPINAS

Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas

Upon reaching London on May 24, 1888, Rizal at once secured a card permitting him to work in the British Museum Library. He plunged into study and writing, which occupied his time for the next ten months. He found here one of the few remaining volumes of De Morga’s *Sucesos de Filipinas* (Events in the Philippines), which had been published in 1609. Rizal, as was said in the first chapter, first heard of this book when nine years of age at the home of his uncle in Biñan through a visit of Sir John Bowring, governor of Hong Kong. He copied every word of De Morga’s book and had it published at his own expense. It was of the utmost importance to Rizal, the patriot, as well as to Rizal, the anthropologist, for it completely exploded a falsehood which all Spaniards and nearly all Filipinos had come to believe. De Morga showed that when Spain reached the Philippines she did not find the people “in caves eating raw meat”, for there was a creditable civilization centuries old, and flourishing commerce with foreign countries on the mainland of Asia. The book revealed that in certain respects Spain had actually done the Filipinos harm.

By living in London, Rizal hoped not only to continue his mastery of English but to research the origins and content of Antonio de Morga’s *Sucesos de la*

Islas Filipinas. The Morga volume provided a unique view of the Philippines and one which suggested that there was a high level of civilization.

When Rizal started studying Dr. Morga's substantial historical work, he realized that the history that he wished to compile on the Philippines was complete. Morga had written a substantial history of the Philippines. It simply needed to be expanded, clarified, and translated to demonstrate in great detail the civilized nature of Filipinos. So Rizal decided to annotate and update Morga's fine book. But more importantly, Rizal resolved to produce a Philippine dictionary and materials to make the language accessible to everyone. 56

While Rizal was setting these Herculean tasks, he also began working on his second novel, *El Filibusterismo*. While in London, Rizal became an integral part of the propaganda movement. *La Solidaridad*

La Solidaridad and other Associations

It happened that the Filipinos in Barcelona and Madrid were preparing to launch a new magazine in place of the periodical *España en Filipinas*, which had just died. Mariano Ponce, a new friend who ardently loved Rizal and was hunting books which Rizal needed in Spain, urged him to accept the directorship of this new magazine, and an overwhelming majority of the Filipinos pressed this position upon him. He declined to accept the management, because, as his letters explain, others were ambitious for the position. The insincere attacks, which are common among candidates for an elective office, hurt him. He was eager for true criticism, but wounded when he knew it was false. The man finally chosen to head *La Solidaridad* was

Graciano Lopez Jaena, while Rizal was unanimously elected as honorary president. M. H. del Pilar and Mariano Ponce were associate editors. In February, 1889, Del Pilar wrote exultantly that “ at last our little periodical is born, democratic in its criticisms, but much more democratic in its personnel.” During that and the following year articles appeared from the pen of Rizal in nearly every issue, very much the most important material the paper ever published. And every article drove a nail into its author’s coffin, if ever he should dare to place himself in the power of his enemies!

Rizal organized a society of Filipinos who call themselves Indios Bravos, for the purpose of making the “ Indios”, as Spaniards called the Filipinos, proud of their race. This organization includes Ventura, the Luna brothers, Pardo de Taver and his wife, the Bousted family, Del Pilar, Baldomero Roxas and others. On January 12, 1889, Rizal with some Filipinos and their Spaniard friends in Madrid organized Asociacion-Hispano –Filipina (Spanish-Filipino Association). The primary objective was to work for the needed reforms which the Propaganda movement had initiated. (Francisco Zulueta, p. 80)The Spanish professor Don Miguel Morayta was elected president, while General Felipe de las Cone was vice president; and Dr. Dominador Gomez was secretary. He also organized a society called the “ Association Internationale des Philippinistas”, with Dr. Blumentritt of Austria as president, Dr. Rost of England as Vice-President, and Dr. Planchet of Paris as a director. They plan to summon an international congress to face the Philippine question. The association also sets out to study the Philippines historically and scientifically, to publish books on all Philippine topics, to create a Philippine Library and Museum. Letter to the Women of Malolos

Letter to the Women of Malolos

While José Rizal's heart was bleeding over reports of persecutions in the Philippines, he received a request from Editor Del Pilar of *La Solidaridad* to write a letter to the courageous young women of Malolos, who had dared to hoot at some disreputable friars. Instead of a letter, Rizal wrote almost a book. He also wrote *La Vision de Fray Rodriguez*, where he displayed his knowledge of religion and his literary satirical style. *The Trials of the Rizal family*

THE TRIALS OF THE RIZAL FAMILY

The friars retaliated by persecuting Rizal's relatives and town. Lucia's husband Mariano Herbosa died of cholera on May 23, 1889. On a plea that Mariano had not confessed since he was married, the Spanish friar of Calamba would not allow him to be buried in the cemetery, and he had to be buried on a little hill outside the town. When Rizal heard this, says Retana, "it required all his cool blood not to lose control of himself." Poor widow Lucia wrote tragically to her brother: "Since the death of Mariano the misfortunes which follow me have had almost no interruption. When I think my mind will be overwhelmed, the only consolation I can find is to read your letters, which serve as a balm to my miseries. . . Now abuse, folly and despotism are on the throne." (13) The Governor General in company with the rector of the University and two Dominicans were here on the 27th of this month to intimidate the tenants into paying their rent.

Hidalgo himself had been ordered to be deported anew (HE WAS JUST RELEASED FOR GOOD BEHAVIOR). The trustee had declared that Hidalgo was

the man who incited the people to refuse to pay, and that he caused the unrest in Calamba — which was doubtless partly true. Manuel wrote pleading with Rizal to appeal to the Spanish government to suspend his exile, (15) but José knew too well that his every word was like a red rag waved before a bull. The next bad news came from Elejorde of Calamba. “ They have chased your brothers-in-law off their land, and I hear they are going to do the same with all your supporters; they have accused my brother of putting his faith in Don José (Rizal) and so not paying fees for mass. They are inhuman. This letter to Ponce says:

“ If you accept these ideas, pass them on to your countrymen, tell them to show more valor, more self-sacrifice, less fear of death and tortures, so that our enemies may respect us. If they are exiled, all the better! For from the island where they live they can communicate their ideas abroad. Suppose they are killed by the disease “ friar phobia”; we will avenge them and in their blood we will steep our enemies. . . The first words I said to my family when I reached the Philippines and they showed me how much they were afraid, were, that if I were captured they should not take the smallest step in my behalf, nor interpose, nor pay money to rescue me, but teach my nephews to avenge me! This is what I now say to my countrymen: The day that you see me in the clutches of the friars, do not waste time in making remonstrance’s, do not utter moans or lamentations; that would be futile. Seek another to take my place who will avenge me and make them pay dear for my misfortune. “ Our fellow countrymen must not look upon imprisonment as death; and even if they come to that, what is death? Have they no faith in God? (18) The Alyases

THE ALYAYES

As the sting in La Solidaridad began to take effect, it increased the risks of those who wrote for it. The signatures Laong Laan and Dimas Alang were Rizal's pseudonyms. Del Pilar signed himself Plaridel, or L. O. Crame; Ponce was named Naning, etc. Assumed names were used in correspondence going to Spain or the Philippines, since letters were always in danger of being intercepted. The home of Mariano Ponce was searched in Barcelona, and he was placed under arrest. "Do not write to us directly," said Rizal's brother-in-law Hidalgo from Calamba, "for here all your letters are intercepted; so you can send them to Basa in Hong Kong, and he will then take care of sending them to us through Mr. Ramos." (21) The Filipinos organized a society with a secret countersign, to secure a more effective distribution of papers and letters. Rizal wrote to Basa appointing him as the Hong Kong correspondent. "You will see that Chinese sailors, servants, etc. carry out the aims of the society, which is to spread knowledge through our country. . . All useful knowledge, scientific, artistic, literary, etc. . . For example if you receive a little package, a book, or a letter on which you read the initials Rd. L. M. that will be sufficient warning to take special care that the thing reaches its destination, because it will be of the greatest importance. . . When these initials are so: Burn that letter, and tell none of your subordinates, for this countersign should be known only by the heads of each department, and by persons upon whom we can pin our faith." Rizal - Del Pilar Rift

Rizal-Del Pilar Rift?

When Juan Luna told him (09) that some of the countrymen in Madrid were

spending their time in idleness, gambling, and quarreling, his disappointment was pathetic. Ventura suggested that José write to them: “ You have some influence over the young element; write to a few of them that they ought to dedicate themselves a little to something more useful, and that they should understand that by doing what they do, they not only hurt themselves, but harm also their countrymen. . .” (10) So Rizal wrote to Del Pilar: “ Luna in Paris complains about the gambling of the Filipinos in Madrid, and so does Ventura. They tell me that reports come from the Philippines that the older people are very unhappy about it; it seems that Don Felipe Roxas is the one who learned that these gamblers are known in Manila. I fear we are playing into the hand of the friars. Is there nothing there to remind them that the Filipino did not come to Europe to gamble and enjoy himself, but to work for our liberty and for the honor of his race?

To gamble, it is not necessary to leave the Philippines, for there is too much gambling there. If we are the ones called upon to do anything, if we, in whom the poor country reposes its little hope, pass our time in these ways, just when the years of youth ought to be utilized in some nobler and grander manner for the very reason that youth is noble and generous, I very much fear that we will be fighting for a futile illusion, and that in place of being worthy of liberty we will be worthy only of slavery. “ Appeal to the patriotism of all the Filipinos to give the Spanish nation a proof that we are better than our misfortunes, that we are not brutalized, and that our noble sentiments cannot be put to sleep by the corruption of their customs.” The young Filipino sports in Madrid were furious when they saw this letter. Thereafter they called José the “ Pope”. He could not remain in Brussels writing books

with his family thus threatened. He began to make arrangements to return to the Philippines. He might not help them but he could at least suffer with them. (22)

First of all, he resigned as joint editor of La Solidaridad. This twenty-nine year old paper did not then expect to live another year. To Del Pilar he wrote the strangest of all his letters: “ Sad presentiments assault me though I do not give them entire credence. In my childhood I had a strange belief that I would not reach thirty years of age. I do not know why I thought this. There were two months during which almost every night I had no other dream than that my friends and relatives were dead. Once I dreamed that I descended by a path which led me to the center of the earth and there I met a multitude of persons seated, dressed in white, with white faces, silent and surrounded by white light. There I saw my two brothers, one of them already dead and the other one living.

Although I do not believe in these things and although my body is very strong and I have no illness, nevertheless I am preparing to die and arranging all I must leave behind, and getting ready for any eventuality. For this reason I desire to complete at all costs the second volume of Noli, and if it is possible, I do not desire to leave that which I have begun, which nobody else would be able to finish. . . do not believe that I am sad or have taken into melancholy. Every two days I go to the gymnasium and practice fencing and engage in target practice; but who is able to foretell the misfortunes that are likely to come? “ From time to time though, I will be sending you supplementary articles.

José Rizal

While Rizal spent countless hours on his next book in Brussels, he began to see the first harvest of what he had already sown. Dr. Blumentritt wrote enthusiastically: “Your ‘Philippines within a Century’ has had a great effect. In general the liberal group in Spain is already looking with very different eyes at the Filipinos, and Barrantes (a Spanish writer) makes concessions which would have seemed incredible a year ago. . . The fear that the friars feel must be very great.” (11)

The Persecutions and Disasters

The storm of persecution now broke with even more terrible fury against his family, his town, and as far as he could be reached, against himself. His works had already been prohibited in the Philippines. (15) His brother-in-law Hidalgo, after being released for good behavior, was exiled for the second time “without any accusation, without his knowing any crime of which he was accused, excepting that he was my brother-in-law.” (16) Hidalgo told him that “since January, many reports of your death have been heard here, presumably from friar sources: that you were poisoned, that you are imprisoned in Madrid, and that you have been bought off for more than a hundred pesos, and now direct your efforts in favor of the friars and are indifferent toward this country; rumors which are received here with laughter. . .” (17) The letters said that rents had been doubled and redoubled by the Calamba landlords until they were intolerable. Francisco Rizal and another Calamba citizen had appealed to the Supreme Court claiming that the friars had no valid title to the land which they themselves

and their ancestors had occupied from time immemorial. José had asked lawyers of the Supreme Court whether any rent should be paid before these cases were settled and had been advised not to pay the rent.

He had written this to Paciano; whereupon Francisco and many other people refused to pay. (18) Now Paciano wrote that the hacienda had filed a complaint for their immediate ejectment before the justice of the peace, regardless of the Supreme Court. "Fear," said Paciano, "had driven some of the poor people insane. The friars had brought a new lawyer into the hacienda and would soon have him made justice of the peace." Paciano had taken the troubles of his ignorant townsmen on his own shoulders and had already turned grey in his thirties. (19) The next mail said that the new lawyer had become justice of the peace and their case was lost. (20) When the news of the disasters reached Rizal he wrote his sister Soledad these noble words: "I have caused much harm to my family, but at least there remains to us the consolation of knowing that the motive is not disgraceful nor does it humiliate anybody. On the contrary it raises us up and gives us more dignity in the eyes of our very enemies themselves; to fall with the head high and the brow serene is not to fall, it is to triumph. The sad thing is to fall with the stain of dishonor. Moreover, I may be what my enemies desire me to be, yet never an accusation are they able to hurl against me which makes me blush or lower my forehead, and I hope that God will be merciful enough with me to prevent me from committing one of those faults which would involve my family." (21) To My Muse

Going back to Philippines, again?

“ I want to go back to the Philippines, and although I know it would be daring and imprudent, what does that matter? The Filipinos are all very prudent, and that is why our country is going the way she is. As it seems to me that we are not making any progress by following prudence, I am going to look for another pathway! The only thing that can detain me is a doubt whether my parents agree; I am afraid to disturb their last years; in case they object to my coming, I hope by working to gain a livelihood in some other part of the world.” (24) Horrified, his friends all urged him to stay away from the Philippines, for they knew he was walking into death. (25) In spite of them all, he would have been on his way that very month (July, 1890) if he had not received a letter from Paciano that made him change his plans.

Madrid instead of Philippines?

In Rizal’s letter to Mariano Ponce, he said:

“ I have at this moment received a letter from my brother (Paciano) to tell me that the case against the hacienda is opened in Madrid: I have made up my mind and am going there; write me whether you are going there too. . . Is Marcelo (Del Pilar) still there?. . . Pedro Serrano is in Paris. . . As he is in good circumstances financially, I will go to see him. I appreciate your unselfish invitation to come and live with you and Del Pilar; and if possible Serrano should be with us also. We four would be able to organize the whole Filipino colony in Europe; the four of us could be four better musketeers than those of Dumas; but, my friend, I do not wish to be a burden to anybody, nor do I wish to contract more debts.”

To Del Pilar, who was a lawyer by profession, he wrote: (26) “ I have received a letter about our case against the friars accused before the Supreme Court; I send you the power of attorney; if you think my presence necessary, I will come thee; if not I will return to my own country. I shall leave here at the end of the month. My brother writes that ‘ since you have carried our fight against the clergy to Europe you ought to defeat them, for if they end up in defeat they will be much weakened’ . . . The case ought to be filed with the Supreme Court before the end of this month. Present it at once and I will come. Do not tell anybody that I am coming. . . Do not be surprised if I bring Serrano with me. . . Do you have any place to lodge me there? . . . Rizal.” It was against this background of agony and uncertainty that he wrote the following poem, which lacks finish but is terrible in its depth of feeling:

TO MY MUSE

No longer invoked is the muse,
And passed out of vogue is the lyre,
Which none of the poets will use;
But young men, deluded, now choose
Quite different means to inspire.

Today if verse is called upon
To let imagination play,
No more invoked is Helicon;
They merely order the garçon
To bring a taza de café.

Instead of inspiration real

To set the beating heart on fire,

They write their poetry no higher,

(While flourishing a pen of steel)

Than foolish jest and cheap satire.

O Muse, through whom in early years

My joyous inspiration chose

To sing of love; take your repose!

Today my needs are keen rapiers,

And streams of gold and acrid prose.

I must strive in hot debate,

Meditate, and wage combat,

Sometimes weep about my fate-

Any man whose love is great

Has to suffer much for that.

Fled are all the days of calm,

Those blissful lovers' hours,

When cause enough were flowers

To give our souls a soothing balm

For every pain and grief of ours.

Those I loved have one by one

Gone forever from my side;

This one married, that one died.

The seal of fate has now undone
Every plan my hand has tried.

Go, too, Muse, I bid thee flee;
Seek another clime more pure;
For my homeland offers thee
For thy laurels — tyranny,
And for temples — jails obscure.

Though it seem a shame or impious
To drive you out, O truth within me,
Would it not appear delirious
To retain you by me thus
Deprived of all your liberty?

And — what to sing when grim command
From destiny cries: “ Search for truth”;
When tempests roar above our land;
And Filipino towns demand,
In raucous voice, thy tender youth.

And — what to sing? If my sad song,
Trembling through a flood of tears,
Can excite no pity long;
If, when others suffer wrong,
The weary world unheeding hears?

And what? If in this heedless mob
Which criticizes and maltreats—
Souls driv'n, with lips too cold to sob —
There be no tender heart that beats
In sympathy with my heart throb.

Then let slumber in the lake
Of dark oblivion, all my care;
That my spirit, with it there,
May not futile verses make,
That vanish quickly in thin air.

As the monsters of the deep
In the abysmal darkness loll,
So let my deep sorrow sleep;
All my songs and fancies keep
Entombed within my secret soul.

Well I know that all your grace
You were wont to dissipate
In the flower of youth's brief space
And of first love's thrilled embrace,
Free from clouds of worry's weight.

Many years have now passed by
Since the time your ardent kiss
Touched my brow with burning bliss

Now those kisses frozen lie;
Soon their memory will die.

But before you leave me, tell,
How, to your sublime request,
You ever found me answer well;
A song for all who were distressed
A slash for all who have oppressed.

Sacred Inspiration, thou wilt yet come back,
That my flaming fancy by thee may be fanned.
If my faith should wither, and my sword should crack.
I should not have strength to die for fatherland.

You will offer me a zither veiled in black,
Vibrant with an elegy on every strand,
To relieve the keenness of my nation's pains
And to muffle down the clanging of her chains.

If some future day, adorn'd with laurel crown,
Through our travail, my dear motherland gives birth,
Offering a queen to rule this ardent zone,
A pearl pure and white, redeemed from the earth,
Then return and sing to her with vigorous tone,
A sacred hymn of that new life of higher worth,
And we ourselves will sing to join thee in the chorus
E'en though perchance a sepulcher be arching o'er us.