

Education in the Philippine Islands Under the Spanish Régime

BY

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MANILA
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1917

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PREFACE

This book has been published in the hope that it will prove useful to the students who are preparing themselves for the profession of teaching; to the teachers who are engaged in the mighty task of social reconstruction through education; and to the many disinterested lovers of education in the Philippines.

I began the systematic study and investigation of education about seven years ago, during my student days in Teachers' College, Columbia University. The work of which the present volume is but a partial result has been pursued with undiminished interest ever since.

I wish here to record my indebtedness to Professor George D. Strayer, my adviser and teacher while I was a student at Teachers' College, without whose encouragement and inspiration this study would not have been undertaken.

The debt I owe to the authorities consulted is greater than mere acknowledgment and citations can show.

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I

SUPERIOR EDUCATION

INTRODUCTORY

In a discussion of education in the Philippine Islands under the Spanish régime, superior education furnishes the natural starting point. Strange as it may seem, higher instruction received attention before primary education. Historically, the development of Philippine educational institutions has been from the higher to the lower, from the top downward. It is natural, therefore, to take up at the start a study of the institutions of higher education. The most important of these are the royal College of San José, and the royal and pontifical University of Santo Tomás.

THE COLLEGE OF SAN JOSE

In June, 1595, the ships, from Acapulco, called the *San Felipe* and the *Santiago*, reached the city of Manila.¹ On board were the historian, Don Antonio de Morga; a large group of Jesuits; and other persons, who belonged to the various religious orders already established in

¹ Montero, *Historia*, vol. 1, pp. 106-107.

the Philippine Archipelago.¹ The members of these orders, especially the Jesuits, were unceasing in their efforts to found colleges and seminaries in the Islands. The need of institutions of learning had been felt by them some years before the arrival of this large band of Jesuit missionaries. King Philip II, in response to petitions sent him, issued a decree² dated June 8, 1585, ordering Governor Santiago de Vera and Bishop Salazar to discuss measures for the founding of a college.

Not until the beginning of the seventeenth century, however, was a college established. The initiative of Father Diego Garcia,³ the *visitador* (visitor) of the Jesuit order in the Philippines, who reached the Islands in 1599, and the able assistance of Father Pedro Chirino were largely responsible for the establishment of the first Philippine college. On August 25, 1601, was granted an ecclesiastical "license to said religious order of the Society of Jesus, and to said Father Luiz Gomez, to found said College

¹ The Franciscans first arrived in the Philippines in 1577; the Jesuits in 1581; the Dominicans in 1587; the Augustinians in 1606. See Martinez de Zuñiga, *Estadismo*, v. 1, pp. 227, 228, 232, 231.

² Original decree in Calderon's *El Colegio de San José, Manila*, 1900. Translated in Blair and Robertson, *The Philippine Islands*, v. 45, pp. 111-112.

³ Arias, *Memoria*, p. 21.

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of San José." Father Gomez, the first rector of the institution, secured also a license from the state. Governor Francisco Tello on the same date granted the civil license recognizing the need of a college "for the rearing in virtue and letters of some Spanish youth." That day, too, saw the formal inauguration of the institution amidst great rejoicing in the city. Thirteen students were admitted, "among whom figured the nephew of the governor of the Archipelago, and a son of the senior associate justice of the audiencia in these Islands."¹ This number soon increased to twenty, all of whom were the sons of rich and influential citizens.

The expenses connected with the personnel and the various other necessities of the college were met in various ways. At first, they were defrayed by the parents or the guardians of the students. Later, part of the means of support was furnished by contributions and donations of residents. The legacy² made by Esteban Rodriguez de Figueroa helped to swell the funds. Gifts of the king of Spain enhanced

¹ Loc. cit.

² There is an interesting story in connection with this legacy in Colin's *Labor Evangelica*. In Blair and Robertson, v. 45, pp. 104-105.

the importance of the college. A royal decree¹ dated June 12, 1665, granted to the institution 8,000 pesos.² About four years later another decree conferred a gift of 12,000 pesos. Other bequests in money or in lands were made from time to time by philanthropic individuals. The college, during the early years of its existence, was in a flourishing condition. In 1636, for example, it possessed incomes aggregating 14,000 pesos.³ Four years later, it was able to support forty students easily.⁴ In 1645, however, a great earthquake occurred, which wrought great damage to the city, including much of the real property owned by the college.

Up to about 1636 natural sciences formed the backbone of the courses of instruction. During or soon after that year philosophy and theology were added. In 1722 the college was granted the title of "royal." The royal decree dated May 3, 1722, was one of the earliest of its kind in the history of Philippine institutions. There will be many occasions to speak of decrees throughout this discussion, and in order to give

¹ Blair and Robertson, v. 45, p. 118.

² A peso was fluctuating in value. Now it is equal to fifty cents in American currency.

³ Blair and Robertson, v. 45, p. 117.

⁴ *Lbc. cit.*

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a clearer idea of what is meant by the word, the decree mentioned above is given herewith:¹

Inasmuch as Augustin Soler of the Society of Jesus, procurator-general for his province of Filipinas, has represented to me that his province has charge in the city of Manila of a seminary of grammar, philosophical and theological collegiates, under the advocacy of St. Joseph, which was founded by Don Esteban Rodriguez de Figueroa, adelantado of Mindanao, which by its antiquity and royal writ of King Don Felipe IV enjoys precedence in all public functions to the other colleges; and inasmuch as in consideration of the notoriety in that community of the great profit which has followed and is experienced in the said college, in virtue and in letters from the many erudite men who have graduated from it to maintain the luster of the cathedral church of that city and the other churches of their Islands, the greater part of those who today obtain their prebends being among those who have been raised and have prosecuted their studies in the above-mentioned college, he petitioned me, in consideration of the abovesaid and so that its collegiates may have the greatest application in said studies with the luster, esteem, and credit that is due because of the particular blessing which results to that community in general, to deign to receive it under my royal protection, by conceding it the title, privileges, and pre-eminences of royal college, without any burden on my royal treasury, with the permission to place on its doors and the other accustomed places my royal arms, and to make use of the title of such in the instruments

¹ Blair and Robertson, v. 45, pp. 119-121.

which it presents, and in the letters which it writes to me: therefore, this matter having been examined in my assembly Council of the Indias, together with what was declared thereon by my fiscal, I have considered it fitting to condescend to (heed) his instance, receiving (as by the present, I do receive and admit) the above named College of San José under my royal protection. I honor it with the title of Royal *ad honorem*, in case that it has no patrons, and with the express conditions that it never has any, and that it cannot produce any effect of burden on or embarrassment to my royal treasury by reason of this title. Therefore, I order my present or future governor and captain-general of the above-mentioned Filipinas Islands and my royal Audiencia of the city of Manila, and the other ministers and justices of that jurisdiction, and I beseech and charge the archbishop of the metropolitan church of said city, and the ecclesiastical cabildo of it, not to place or allow to be placed now or in any time any obstacle or hindrance to the above-mentioned College of San José, which is in charge of the religious of the Society of Jesus, in the grace which I concede it of the title of Royal *ad honorem*, in the above-mentioned sense, and that as such it may place my royal arms on its doors and the other accustomed places, and that in all its instruments and letters which it may write me, both through my councils, tribunals, and ministers, and in all that which may arise, it may make use of the above said title of royal. Such is my will. Given at Aranjuez, May three, one thousand seven hundred and twenty-two.

I THE KING.

By order of the king our sovereign:

• ANDRES ALCOROBARRATIA GULPIDE.

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This decree was presented in the Manila Audiencia in 1723.

Twelve years after King Philip V conferred the title of "Royal" upon San José, the college was granted the right to teach canonical and Roman law, the same as the University of Santo Tomás, of which institution we shall speak presently. No degrees were granted in these courses, however, although the college had granted academic degrees in other branches. The power to grant degrees was possessed by the institution at least as early as 1636, perhaps even earlier.²

With the exception of the temporary interference caused by the earthquake of 1645, the Jesuit college, from its establishment, flourished and continued brilliantly until the expulsion of the fathers of the society in 1768. Says the royal decree of King Charles III on April 2, 1767:

I have resolved to order the expulsion from all my domains of Spain, and Indias, and the Philippine Islands, and other adjacent places of the regulars of the Company (of Jesus) both priests and coadjutors, or lay-friars, who have taken the first vows, and the novices who would desire to follow their example, and that all the temporal possessions of the company in my domains be seized.¹

¹ Arias, Memoria, p. 22.

² Montero, Historia, v. 3, p. 163.

This was the most sensational and most memorable event during Governor José Raon's administration. When this terrible order became effective, the College of San José entered upon a period of decadence from which it never fully recovered. How much Philippine education suffered through the expulsion of the Jesuit missionaries, it is impossible to say or to estimate. San José was not the only college they had at the time they were ordered to leave. They had nine other colleges; namely, three in Manila, (one being in the so-called province of Tondo) one in Cavite, one in Cebu, one in Iloilo, one in Mindanao, and two in the Marianne Islands.¹

In accordance with the terms of the decree, the college and its estates were confiscated to the crown. The buildings were turned into barracks. The archbishop of Manila protested against the confiscation, and asked of the governor-general that the college be turned over to him. His petition being granted, the archbishop ordered the former students to leave, and he converted the institution into a seminary for the education and the instruction of the native clergy.² The new seminary was placed

¹ Op. cit., v. 2, p. 183.

² Footnotes in Blair and Robertson, v. 45, pp. 123-124.

in charge of the order of the Fathers of the Piarists, whose schools resembled those of the Jesuits. The king disapproved the plan and in his royal order¹ of March 21, 1771, he commanded Governor Raón and Archbishop Basilio Sancho de Santa Justa y Santa Rufina that "they shall in the future leave things in the condition and state in which they existed before the above-mentioned innovations were made and that the collegiates must go to take their studies to the University of Santo Tomás of that city."

The college was restored to its former status, but under the changed management the administration was inefficient. It attempted the field of secondary instruction, but was unable to offer as good training as the newer institutions, such as the Ateneo Municipal de Manila and the College of San Juan de Letran.

From the records of the University of Santo Tomás it appears that almost immediately after the Jesuit fathers were expelled, instruction in philosophy and in natural sciences was resumed in the College of San José. Two professors were appointed to offer courses in these subjects. In 1795 the government of the

¹ Translation of decree in Blair and Robertson, v. 45, pp. 125-130.

Islands recommended that such instruction be abolished and that the revenues be applied to the payment of the fees of the institutes and the law courses. This recommendation failed to be carried out.

The college continued teaching only grammar and philosophy up to 1866, and pupils were required to pass an examination in the university before two professors appointed for the purpose, in order to legalize their courses. The first four years of secondary instruction were established at this period.¹

In 1875, a royal provision made the college virtually a part and parcel of the University of Santo Tomás. More will be said concerning the affiliation, in connection with the treatment of the university. Suffice it to say at this point that the faculty of medicine and pharmacy was established in the college. The studies in the medical and the pharmaceutical departments are as follows:

For medicine:²

Preparatory course (one year)—

Advanced physics; advanced chemistry; mineralogy; botany; and zoology.

Regular course—

First year: Descriptive anatomy; histology; histochemistry; technical anatomy.

¹ Arias, *Memoria*, pp. 22-23.

² *Op. cit.*, pp. 38-39; Report Philippine Commission, 1900, v. 2, p. 462; Philippine Census, 1903, v. 3, p. 628.

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Second year: Descriptive anatomy; embryology; technical anatomy; human physiology; personal hygiene.

Third year: General pathology and clinic; pathological anatomy; therapeutics, materia medica, and art of prescribing; surgical anatomy; operations, external applications and bandages.

Fourth year: Medical pathology, surgical pathology, obstetrics and gynecology, course in infant diseases, and syphilology.

Fifth year: Medical clinic (first course: surgical clinic (first course); obstetrical and gynecological clinic; diseases of children; ophthalmology and its clinic.

Sixth year: Medical clinic (second course); surgical clinic (second course); legal medicine, and toxicology; dermatology and its clinic.

The school of pharmacy had the following plan:¹

Preparatory course.—Identical with that of the medical school.

Regular course.—

First year: Instruments and apparatus used in physics and their operation; mineralogy and zoology as applied to pharmacy; pharmaceutical materia and laboratory work.

Second year: Descriptive botany; pharmaceutical materia; investigations of plants; laboratory work.

Third year: Inorganic chemistry as applied to pharmacy and laboratory work.

Fourth year: Organic chemistry as applied to pharmacy and laboratory work.

Fifth year: Chemical analysis, practical pharmacy, and pharmaceutical law.

¹ Arias, Memoria, p. 39. Report of Philippine Commission, 1900, v. 2, p. 463.

Judging from the attendance of the two departments, the courses offered were popular. During the academic year 1895-96, for example, there were 753 students in the school of medicine and 170 in the school of pharmacy.¹

Six years were necessary to complete the course in medicine, without including the preparatory studies. After the fourth year, a bachelor's degree could be obtained. Upon the completion of all the studies the degree of licentiate in medicine was conferred. This degree was absolutely necessary for the exercise of the profession.

The study of pharmacy was of five years' duration, aside from the preparatory course. At the end of the fourth year the bachelor's degree could be obtained. Upon the satisfactory conclusion of the entire course, and after it had been proven that the profession had been practiced in a pharmacy for two years, one of which might be simultaneous with the academic courses provided that it be subsequent to the second year, the degree of licentiate in pharmacy was granted. This was indispensable for the practice of the profession.

¹ Report, Commissioner of Education, 1899-1900, v. 2, p. 1621.