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**NATIVE CHRISTIAN MOVEMENTS
IN THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS**

**A Thesis Presented to
The Faculty of Concordia Seminary
Department of Practical Theology**

**In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Bachelor of Divinity**

**by
Arnold Strohschein**

May 1947

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Chapter One

Philippine Independent Church

The story of the Independent Filipino Church is actually the story of one man, Bishop Gregorio Aglipay. It was this man who led the Filipino masses in a break from Rome to set up a truly Filipino national Church, a Church that a Filipino would be proud to claim as his own, a church organized and conducted altogether by Filipino people. Therefore, it is necessary that we go into the life and background of this prominent man, Gregorio Aglipay, that we might learn what prompted him to lead his people in a revolt against Rome.

His Early Life Gregorio Aglipay y Labayen¹ was born at Batac, a city in Ilocos Norte, on May 9, 1860. His father was a farmer in the province of Ilocos Norte, who made his living by raising tobacco. Gregorio worked industriously as a boy, and at the age of sixteen he had an unforgettable experience of Spanish oppression. "He and his father were thrown into prison because they had not set out the number of tobacco

1. The name Labayen is the name of Aglipay's mother. It is Spanish custom so to utilize both the name of the father and the mother for formal purposes.

plants demanded by the government tobacco monopoly. That they had been prevented by a drought made no difference to the authorities".² Eventually both Gregorio and his father were released from prison and Gregorio then made his way to Manila, the capital of the Philippine Islands, and there sought an education, largely working his way through college. After graduating from the course in Arts and Sciences at the Dominican College of San Juan de Letran, he began to study for the priesthood. He matriculated in the Recollect Theological Seminary in Vigan and proved himself an excellent student. He was unusually apt and faithful as a student and was highly respected by the Spanish Friars. After finishing his course he was ordained as a Catholic priest in Manila in 1889.³

His Aglipay's advancement was very rapid. He held the Priesthood position of a secular priest, for that was as high in rank as a Filipino could rise. It was the practice of the Spanish Friars to hold back the Filipino priests wherever possible in order to enhance their own glory and prestige and to prevent any native priest from becoming too popular. That Aglipay did enjoy the favor of the Friars as much as he did is quite surprising. Later he was to receive the greatest honors ever bestowed upon a Filipino by the Roman Catholic Church.⁴

In the Revolt of 1896 Although Aglipay took no active part in the early revolution of the Filipinos in 1896, he nevertheless had a part in bringing peace to the nation. Soon after Aguinaldo had signed

2. Laubach, Frank, "The People of the Philippines", p. 121.

3. Fernandez, Leandro, "Brief History of the Philippines", p. 289.

4. Laubach, op.cit., p. 121.

the pact of Biac-na-bato,⁵ Aglipay was sent to one of the insurgent leaders named Makalulos to persuade him to sign the pact. Aglipay succeeded, but soon he proved himself too liberal for the Friars of Tarlac where he had been serving as priest, and only escaped arrest by fleeing to Manila, where he was given refuge by the Canon of the Cathedral.⁶

Envoy to the Insurgents Because Aglipay had been successful as an envoy in the early revolution, he was used once more by the Roman Catholic authorities in order to further their cause after America had arrived on the scene. The Friars feared American intervention, and realized that if the insurgent Filipinos joined forces with the Americans, the Friars would soon be thrown out of the country and thus they would lose all their power and influence over the church.⁷ Accordingly, the Friars sent Aglipay to the insurgent camp, in hopes that he would be able to persuade their leaders to unite with the Spanish forces against the Americans. He was to promise the insurgents autonomy, independence, anything at all, if only they would remain faithful to the Spanish government. Actually, Aglipay had little chance to succeed, for the Filipinos had tired of Spanish promises and the trickery of the Friars. They believed that anything would be better than to remain under the domination of the Friars. Aguinaldo, who reached the insurgents just three days

5. Aguinaldo led the revolt of 1896 against the Spanish. The fighting developed into a stalemate, and peace was made in the pact of Biac-na-bato, in which the Spaniards promised many privileges to the revolutionists.

6. Laubach, *op. cit.*, p.121.

7. The Filipinos rebelled against the Spanish government only in so far as they upheld the Spanish Friars. For it was the Spanish Friars who ruled the Filipino, dominated him in all walks of life, and kept him in a state of feudalistic serfdom. The rebellion was aimed at the Church, rather than the state, but since the Church practically was synonymous with the state no particular distinction was attempted.

after Aglipay got there, persuaded them that they should cooperate with the Americans. However, it almost seemed that Aglipay understood the Americans better than did Aguinaldo, for the Filipinos soon felt that America also was under the control of the Pope and favored the Spanish Friars.⁸

New Honors Given Aglipay Both the insurgents and the Friars put forth strenuous efforts to win Aglipay to their cause, but he remained a friend to both sides, though they were bitter enemies of each other. At this time, Bishop Hevia of the See of Nueva Segovia was a captive in the hands of the insurgents. In order to win Aglipay to the side of the Friars, he appointed him ecclesiastical governor of his diocese, thus investing him with the prerogatives of a bishop. In November 1898 Aglipay went to Manila and was there received with open arms by Archbishop Nozaleda, who told him the Philippines were sure to become a republic, and that Aglipay should then be a link between the Islands and the Vatican.⁹ In the words of Aglipay himself he received the following encouragement. "He (Nozaleda) gave me further directions to organize the provinces of Bulacan, Pampanga, and Pangasinan . . . He approved the transfer of the episcopate by Bishop Hevia to me, and I returned cheerfully to the great task assigned me."¹⁰

8. The insurgents had captured from eight to ten thousand Spaniards, among whom were three hundred Friars. The Vatican appealed to the President of the U.S.A. to secure the release of these Friars, and the President ordered General Otis who led the forces in the Philippines, to request that the insurgents release these Friars. This led the Filipinos to fear that America was under Friar control, which was exactly what the Spaniards wished them to believe.

9. Laubach, *op. cit.*, page 129.

10. "The Independent", Oct. 29, 1903. Quoted in Laubach, p. 130.

**Military
Chaplain**

At the same time, the insurgents sought to win Aglipay to their side. At the advice of the cunning Mabini, a brilliant young Filipino revolutionist, Aguinaldo appointed Aglipay the "First Military Chaplain of the Insurgent Army." Later on October 28, 1898, he was appointed the Vicar-General of the whole archipelago.¹¹ This was a hint at a new Filipino Church establishment, which it was the illusion of the Filipinos for a while that they could arrange with Rome. "There are various little signs that they bargained at that time with the Roman Catholic hierarchy at Manila, probably with some such end in view as the fuller recognition of the Filipino clergy; and the archbishop's palace was not above negotiating with them, though perhaps only having in mind to secure in this way the release of the Friars who were being held prisoners."¹²

**Catholic
Victory**

Suddenly the Catholics reversed their program of opposition to the Americans. With the Treaty of Paris which was signed on December 10, 1898, the Catholics won a diplomatic victory which caused them to forsake Aglipay and to turn to larger stakes. One clause of the Treaty, upon which Archbishop Chapelle of New Orleans insisted, was that the United States should purchase the Islands from Spain. But the title was not clear. "For article VII says about church property (which constituted one tenth of the improved property of the Philippines), 'The . . . cession . . . cannot in any respect impair the property rights . . . of . . . ecclesiastical . . . bodies'".¹³ All that this clause involved

11. Devins, John Bancroft, "An Observer in the Philippines", p. 255.

12. LeRoy, James E., "Philippine Life in Town and Country", p. 59.

13. Laubach, op. cit., p. 130.

was not at the time clear to the Americans nor to the Filipinos, but the Catholics knew that they would thus never lose control of the Philippines.

**Aglipay
Excommunicated**

Now that the Catholics no longer needed the aid of Aglipay, they proceeded to get rid of him.

After American forces arrived in great numbers, the Catholics wished to disavow any connection with a man who was so friendly with the insurgents and proceeded to get rid of him. American Catholic officials encouraged Archbishop Nozaleda (mentioned above) to hold an ecclesiastical tribunal on April 29, 1899 and gave to Aglipay the major sentence of excommunication. The action was glaringly unjust and entirely irregular.¹⁴ The crimes with which he was charged were either foolish or unsubstantial, such as: "Employing the title of Military Chaplain of the Revolutionary Army, claiming plenary powers to confer with the Filipino clergy, appointing a provisional vicar-general for the diocese during the absence of the bishop (Hevia), and distributing two circulars advising the Filipino clergy no longer to recognize the Spanish prelates. Aglipay was accordingly found guilty of usurpation of power."¹⁵

**Aglipay's
Retaliation**

Unfortunately Aglipay was a Filipino and could hope for nothing better at the hands of the Church. "He was far away from the Pope. There were no means at his disposal with which he could secure a removal of the illegal and unjust sentence."¹⁶ How-

14. Stuntz, Homer, "Philippines And the Far East", p. 488.

15. Laubach, op. cit., p. 131.

16. Stuntz, op. cit., p. 488.

ever, Aglipay did not accept this action without a fight. He appealed to the Pope at Rome, and he also promptly exercised his powers of a Bishop, as they were bestowed upon him by Bishop Hevia and later confirmed by Archbishop Nozaleda, by excommunicating the Archbishop himself. He made the charge that the Archbishop systematically misrepresented to the Vatican the real condition of the Islands, and that he condoned the sins of the Friars. However, Aglipay had little chance for justice, especially when the Pope sent as delegate to the Philippines Archbishop Chappelle, who immediately sided with the Friars against Aglipay.¹⁷ It is clear from all evidence then, that Aglipay was used as a tool by the Catholic Friars. As Arthur J. Browne puts it: "He was gladly used by the Spanish authorities in efforts to arouse the Filipinos against the Americans, until the victory of the latter made it convenient [for his former superiors to disavow him."¹⁸

With the Insurgents Actually Aglipay had little choice now that he had been excommunicated. There was little that he could do. He could not clear himself, and there was but one place he could go. He joined the insurgents. However, he continued quietly to perform the duties of his official church functions in the four provinces to which the Roman Catholic Archbishop had originally assigned him.¹⁹ Gradually the Filipinos began to see that they had little chance against the Americans, and the American officials succeeded in showing the Filipinos that they had only good in mind for the Philippines. This led to the de-

17. Laubach, *op.cit.*, p. 131.

18. Browne, Arthur J., *The New Era in the Philippines*, p. 67.

19. *cf.*, p. 3.

sertion of thousands of the insurgents, and the morale and hopes of the Insurgents waned considerably. It was at this time, that Aglipay really came into prominence. He had a gift for inspiring the confidence of his followers and soon secured command over their rapidly demoralizing forces.

Council at "Aglipay convoked an ecclesiastical assembly at Tarlac,
Tarlac
 to which came delegates from several dioceses. On October 23, 1899 this assembly approved Aglipay's appointment by Aguinaldo to be the head of the Filipino Church. It declared its allegiance to Rome and resolved to seek to induce the Pope to recognize the Filipino clergy and appoint Filipino bishops."²⁰ This council framed a provisional constitution for a Philippine Church.²¹ At the moment it was part of Aguinaldo's government, which at that time, however, was in a death struggle with the American forces. One result of this council was that Isabelo de los Reyes, a Filipino who had been active in writing against Spanish abuses in the Philippines, was chosen as a delegate to carry on negotiations with the Pope. De los Reyes had been imprisoned in Spain because of his revolutionistic tendencies, and was freed after the Treaty of Paris was signed. Since he was still in Spain, he approached the papal delegate to secure full recognition of the Filipino priesthood. He said that he was authorized to promise the release of the Spanish Friars who were in the hands of the Insurgents, provided Rome would concede privileges to the Filipino clergy. The answer he received from the papal delegate, Monsignor Nava de Pontife, is typical of the attitude of the Church, and sheds light on relations between Rome and the Philippines.

20. Laubach, *op. cit.*, pp. 133-135.

21. Cornish, Dr. Louis, "Philippines Calling", p. 52.

"The Nuncio's reply, says Reyes, was 'that even should the Friars be beheaded, Rome would not appoint Filipino bishops, and would not even appoint a special deputy to go to examine into the capacity of our priests'. Wise Rome had forgotten her cunning. From that hour de los Reyes began to urge a definite break with the pontificate."²²

Aglipay's Part in the Fighting By this time, the insurgent armies had been dissolved and had resorted to guerilla fighting. It was at this time that Aglipay rose to great heights. His ability to inspire the best in his followers made him a successful leader. He carried on active warfare, even after many others had given up all hope of victory. "As the Filipino troops retreated into the territory of the Ilocanos, Aglipay stirred the people of his own tongue into active revolt. He wielded the mysterious powers of the priesthood with amazing effectiveness. The Ilocanos poured into the mountains to join the revolutionary forces, armed only with bolos. Religion and patriotism became one. The Katipunan,²³ which had never before been introduced into the Ilocano country, now became the bond with which men were tied by terrible oaths to the cause of their country, every man having a tattoo of the triangle and the sun branded on his breast. Aglipay began to make startling skirmishes, sometimes at the head of these half-armed patriots. Even after the capture of Aguinaldo, in March 1901, Aglipay stayed with his troops in the mountains, stayed with his people until their cause was

22. Laubach, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

23. The Katipunan was the secret organization which organized the resistance against Spain, and which led the Filipino people into the struggle for independence. See chapter 3 regarding this organization.

hopelessly lost, and resistance was no longer heroism but madness."²⁴

Aglipay
Surrenders

It is difficult to ascertain exactly how much of a part Aglipay actually did play in the insurrection, since writers do not speak fully on this subject, and they seem to disagree. Homer Stuntz, bishop of the Methodist Church, said that he led troops only once or twice.²⁵ The Report of the Philippine Commission has this interesting note to say concerning his part in the fighting: "During the insurrection he was an enterprising partisan, and was charged with many cruelties and violations of the usages of civilized warfare, so much so, indeed, that he fell under the ban of his own superiors; but at the same time he acquired great influence over the people of the northern part of Luzon, of which he is a native."²⁶ This, however, seems an inaccurate report, since we know that he joined the active fighting, only after he had been excommunicated. Albert Sonnichson, an American soldier in the fighting in the Philippines, while captive in the hands of the insurrectionists, encountered Aglipay, and says concerning him:

"Toward evening I heard voices in the office, and applying my eye to the peephole, saw a black-robed priest in excited conversation with Acosta. I could not make out all that was said, but such disconnected words as 'Americano, prisionero, escondido' hidden, etc., reached my ears with an ominous significance. Soon the priest left and I heard no more, but Lazo, who joined me at supper gave an account of how Padre Aglipay, the self-proclaimed Filipino bishop, had accused the Governor of aiding me to escape. This hot-headed sacerdote was a well-known Insurgent leader, and was often seen on the firing line by our men encouraging the Insurgent soldiers by his presence."²⁷

24. Laubach, *op.cit.*, p. 136.

25. Stuntz, *op. cit.*, p. 488.

26. Report of the Philippine Commission, Part 1, p. 19.

27. Sonnichson, Albert, "Ten Months a Captive Among the Filipinos", p. 249.

At any rate, Aglipay is acknowledged by all to have been a good leader who gave our American forces considerable difficulties. He held the rank of Lieutenant General, and although a large reward was offered for his capture by the United States Authorities, he was never caught.²⁸ He remained in the fighting until shortly after the proclamation of April 4, 1899, by the Schurman commission, when he voluntarily surrendered himself and took the oath of allegiance to the United States.²⁹

28. Cornish, op. cit., p. 52.

29. Blair and Robertson, The Philippine Islands, Vol. XLV, p. 235.

Chapter Two

Conditions in the Roman Church

Church and
State

From the time of the Spanish conquest of the Philippines, which started with Legaspi's colonizing of the islands in 1565, The Roman Church was active there. As we study their history we note with no surprise that it was the Roman Catholic Church which was dominant in the Islands throughout the years until the Insurrection against the Americans. Not only was the Roman Catholic Church dominant in the sense that it was the only church in the Islands, but it dominated every phase of Philippine life; the life of the Filipino in his home, in his town, and even in the government, although in appearance the Philippine Islands were under Spanish government.

Abuses of
the Friars

There seems to have been continuous strife between the Filipino and his Church. However, to be correct we must say that this strife was not directed against the Church as such, but against the clergy which controlled it in the Islands. In the course of years the various religious orders of the Roman Church entered the Islands, and both the secular and the regular priests were involved in the friction between the Filipinos and the Church. The power of the

Friars increased continually, until finally in later years, they could control the Spanish government itself with impunity. Struggles between the Friars and the governors of Spain who tried to retard the power-grasping Friars, invariably led to the downfall of the governor. An individual had no chance against the powerfully organized regime of the Friars. In truth, the Friars were more absolute in their powers than was the King of Spain himself, and there was nothing that a poor Filipino could do about it.³⁰

Apolonario de la Cruz That the Friars were despots and meant by fair means or foul to hold unto their powers, is clearly illustrated in the case of Apolonario de la Cruz in 1840. This man was a lay brother of the hospital convent San Juan de Dios in Manila, and conceived the idea of organizing an altar society of his own, called the "Cofradia de San Jose". This movement was such a success, and so many people joined it, that it soon cut into the revenue of the Friars. Because of this, Apolonario was denounced as plotting rebellion. At one meeting of this society in the town of Lukban, the masses were attacked by the local militia but the soldiers were driven off. Then soldiers were brought in from Manila and on All Saints Day eight hundred members of the society, including old men and children, were killed. Brother Apolonario escaped, but was later captured, shot, and quartered. His head was hung in a cage at the entrance of the town of Lukban (his home town) so that Filipinos might behold and heed the lesson.³¹ Such treatment as this at the hands

30. Laubach, op. cit., p. 91.

31. Laubach, op. cit., p. 92.

of the Spanish Friars could lead to nothing but open rebellion.

**Hatred of Friars
Not the Church**

The Filipinos regarded the Friars as a political and social evil, and their mere presence in the Islands embittered the minds of the masses. There was hardly an enlightened Filipino in the Islands who was not in favor of having the Friars removed.³² The fight against the Friars was a fight in behalf of "the Filipino clergy, and in that way formed another aspect of the revolution in behalf of national life."³³ The Filipino clergy had demanded the ordination of more Filipino priests and the better education of Filipinos destined for the priesthood. The hatred of the Friars did not mean hatred of the Roman Catholic Church. The Filipino priests were still loyal to the Pontiff at Rome, and could see no other way for them to follow. The Friars had become an anachronism, seeking to continue a despotism which had long since gone out of date.³⁴ To the Filipino the only possible solution to his problem was to get rid of the Friar, and in order to do this, he found that the only way was to openly rebel against the Spanish government.

**The Practice
of the Friars**

To the Filipino the Friars were everything that was ghastly and enslaving. They seemed always to be hissing forth thoughts and commands which were to poison the minds of the Filipinos. The following is a fair example of their attempt to hold the Filipinos in bondage:

32. Report of Philippine Commission, part 1, p. 399.

33. Le Roy, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

34. Laubach, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

"You must reject and condemn the Masonic sect, so frequently rejected and condemned by the Supreme Pontiff. You must also reject and condemn liberty of worship, liberty of the press, liberty of thought and the other liberties of perdition, condemned and rejected by the Pontiff.

You must also reject and condemn liberalism and also modern progress and civilization, as being false progress and false civilization.

You must utterly abominate civil marriage and regard it as pure concubinage.

You must also condemn and reject the interference of the civil authorities in any ecclesiastical affairs, so much in the vogue nowadays." 35

That the Filipino people remained loyal to the Church and the Spanish government as long as they did, is a proof that they are a peaceful people, not intent on revolution or insurrection. However, the Catholic Church, through the Spanish Friars, forced the Filipinos into open rebellion, which automatically led to the formation of an independent Church.

35. Laubach, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

Chapter Three

The Katipunan

At this point it is necessary to devote a brief chapter to a discussion of an organization that also played a major role in the development of the Independent Church Movements. The Katipunan arose during the latter years of the Spanish rule in the Philippines in opposition to the government, for the purpose of bringing about needed reforms. This was not a religious body, but was a secret oath-bound society which aimed at securing reforms through violence. It was an agency which typified the spirit of nationalism of the Filipino people, and it embodied religious principles in its doctrines and practice. The Katipunan may be considered as the first successful Filipino organization to oppose the Roman Catholic Church (although its avowed purpose, as stated, was to bring about political and social reforms). At once the Katipunan replaced Romanism as the "religion" of tens of thousands of Filipinos, and gave impetus to the Filipino spirit of nationalism and awakened a desire for liberty in all things, and all this later gave rise to so many of the independent church bodies.

Founder: Andres Bonifacio The patriotic founder of the Katipunan society was Andres Bonifacio. He came from a poor family

but succeeded in securing a good education in Catholic universities. He read avidly and his favorite subject was the French Revolution, from which he drew many of his ideas of social reform, revolution, and the principles which he later infused into the Katipunan.

Direct Action Necessary Bonifacio had been an active participant in various political efforts to secure reforms for the Filipinos.

He was once a member of La Solidaridad (which sought reform through peaceful methods. Later he was a member of the Liga Filipina³⁶ which had the same purpose. When Dr. Jose Rizal, the man who led the efforts for reform through peaceful methods, and who endeavored to keep the Filipinos from violence against the Spanish government, was seized by the Spaniards and imprisoned, later to be executed, Bonifacio decided that peaceful methods would never succeed in bringing about the needed reforms. Thereupon he determined to organize a body which would be more effective.

Organization in 1892 Andres Bonifacio and five friends formed what they called the "Katsaskataasang Kagalangalang Katipunan Nang Mga Anak ng Bayan", or "The Highest and Most Respectable Association of the Sons of the People." This society was popularly known as the Katipunan.³⁷ This small secret society quickly expanded into the most powerful insurrectionary body in the Islands. It did not confine itself to the rich only but included also the masses.³⁸ It was modeled

36. The Liga Filipina was formed by Dr. Rizal and maintained a newspaper which carried propaganda for reform.

37. Laubsch, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

38. Both Spanish and Roman Catholic officials confined membership in their prominent societies to the rich and excluded the poor. Furthermore, neither the Liga Filipina nor La Solidaridad were movements of the masses, since dues were required and only the wealthy and the well-educated could join them.

after Masonry to a certain extent, and the Friars mistakenly called its members Free Masons. According to the testimony of Jose Dizon (one of the six original founders), the society made its beginning in a flat on Calle Ilaya, in the afternoon of July 7, 1892, the same day on which the decree of Rizal's deportation was published.³⁹ That the Friars had succeeded in deporting Dr. Rizal, the one man in the Philippines who endeavored to keep peace, incited the Filipino masses and they flocked to join this new organization.

Duties of Members Early in the history of the society Bonifacio formulated

a set of rules which was to be used as a primer for new members. These rules bring out the desire for complete freedom and woven within them are many religious elements. The following rules are taken verbatim from the work of Nicolas Zafra, assistant professor of history at the University of the Philippines:

"Duties of the Sons of the People

1. Love God with all thy heart.
2. Always bear in mind that the true love of God is the love of thy country, and that this love is also true love for thy fellow-man.
3. Engrave in thy heart that the height of honor and happiness is to die in order to save one's country.
4. Calmness, constancy, reason, and faith in all work and actions crown every good desire with success.
5. Maintain the mandates and aims of the K.K.K. like thy honor.
6. It is of the incumbency of all to deliver and aid, at the risk of their own lives and property, any one who runs great risk in the performance of his duties.
7. Let the acts of each in good government and the performance of duties be such as to serve as an example to his neighbor.

39. Zafra, Nicolas, M.A., "Outlined Readings on Philippine History," p. 390.

8. In so far as it is within thy power, share thy means with every indigent or unfortunate person.
9. Diligence in the efforts to earn means of subsistence is the genuine love for one self, one's spouse, son, daughter, brother, sister, and compatriot.
10. Believe in the punishment of every scoundrel and traitor and in the reward of every good act. Believe, likewise, that the aims of the K.K.K. are God given, and that desires for thy country are therefore also desires of God."⁴⁰

Doctrines That the Katipunan was a society which had many religious features is also shown by the doctrines written in the official teachings of the Association. It is not surprising that the common people should join this society and accept its teachings or doctrines as a religion to supplant the Roman Catholic Church which they had grown to hate.

"Mga Aral (Doctrines) of the Katipunan

A life that is not dedicated to a high and noble purpose is a tree without shadow, if not a poisonous herb.

Doing an act of kindness, with a view of one's own personal profit and not from a sincere desire to be kind, is not charity.

A truly godly man is he who is charitable and kind to his neighbor, and whose thoughts, deeds and words are in accord to Reason.

Whether the skin be white or black, all men are equal. One may surpass another in wisdom, wealth or beauty, but he can not be superior to him in manhood.

To the man of honor, his word is sacred.

Defend the oppressed and fight the oppressor.

The wise is cautious of speech and knows how to keep secret, things that must be held secret.

40. Zafra, *op. cit.*, p. 391. (The peculiarities in speech and grammar are exactly as found in Zafra's translation.)

In the thorny path of life, the father is the guide of his wife and children; if he goes the way that leads to evil, to evil also will his children go.

Consider your wife not as a mere plaything, but as a partner, - a companion in the hardships of life; be considerate towards her weakness and think of the mother that cared for you in your childhood.

What you would not want others do to your wife, daughter and sister, do not do to the wife, daughter and sister of another.

A man is great not because he is a king, or because his nose is high or his skin white; not because he claims to be God's representative, or because he holds high positions on earth; a man is great and noble who, though born in the forests and knows no other language than his own, is modest in his ways, possesses dignity and honor and fulfills his promises; who neither oppresses nor aids the oppressors; who knows how to love and defend his country.

When these teachings shall have been disseminated, and when the Sun of Liberty, shining radiantly over this unhappy Archipelago, will shed its beautiful rays over the united sons of the same race -- all brothers in the enjoyment of eternal bliss, then the sacrifice of those who have gone before, as are the sufferings and toils of the past, shall have been amply rewarded."⁴¹

Rite of
Membership

To become a member of the Katipunan, the candidate signed an oath in the name of God and his native land,

declaring that he would support the aims of the society, keep its secrets implicitly obey its laws, and aid any members who were in danger.⁴² The last feature of the initiation ceremony was the "blood compact." It consisted in the applicant's writing his name in his own blood which was drawn from an incision made on his arm.⁴³

Complete
Secrecy

As a secret organization the Katipunan was a success. It was in existence for four years before the Spaniards

41. Zafra, op. cit., pp. 393-394. (See previous note.)

42. Fernandez, "A Brief History of the Philippines", p. 244.

43. Zafra, op. cit., p. 395.

learned anything definite about it.⁴⁴ During the summer of 1896 there were well-defined rumors concerning a gigantic plot to attack and overthrow the Spanish government. The Friars were almost insane with anxiety over the uncertainty of the situation and constantly communicated with Spain seeking greater powers and permission to use sterner measures against the Filipinos. One Friar wrote to Spain:

"The thought of what may happen to this beautiful country at any moment terrifies us, for we do not know to what point sectarian fanaticism may go, exploiting the suggestibility of this race with their weak brains, by deeds that they are heralding . . ." ⁴⁵

Spain did grant the Friars a greater amount of power, and in order to gain information the old methods of the inquisition were employed. So violent was the persecution by the Friars in an effort to learn more about the Katipunan that the members of the Society sent a deputation to Japan to present a petition to the Mikado, praying him to annex the Philippines. The Mikado, however, simply sent the petition, with its five thousand signatures to the Spanish government.⁴⁶

The Discovery That the plans of the Katipunan were discovered was not because the Spaniards succeeded in searching out the secret details of the proposed plot. Yet the story of the discovery does indicate how completely the Spanish Friars had control over their members. The following account of the discovery is here given in full because it is the most accurate and reliable report obtainable:

44. Fernandez, *op. cit.*, p. 247.

45. Laubach, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

46. Foreman, John, "The Philippine Islands," p. 512.

"An Indian (native Filipino) named Patino, who was typesetter in the *Diario de Manila*, deeply grieved by the ill treatment he received at the hands of his fellow-members as the result of differences that arose over the payment of fees which he refused to pay, happened to mention this unpleasant incident to a sister of his who was studying in the College of Mandalayon. In relating the incident, he mentioned the cause for which he was maltreated, explaining in detail the revolutionary plot that was being organized. The sister, greatly alarmed, went to see the Superior of the college and told what she had learned from her brother. The two women, panic-stricken, informed Friar Mariano Gil of the secret and the latter advised them to send Patino to him in order to answer certain questions.

Patino, in effect, went to the convent of Tondo and appeared before Friar Mariano. The latter had a difficult task in winning Patino's confidence who tried, by evasive replies and manifestations of ignorance, to conceal the truth. But in the end Padre Mariano obtained from Patino definite information as to where the Katipunan kept secret documents which might reveal the secrets of the Katipunan and the identity of its founders.

With that information, Padre Gil, accompanied by Patino, went to the offices of the *Diario de Manila*, at seven o'clock in the evening of August 20, 1896. All the typesetters were still at work in the office and Padre Gil, braving their fury and antagonism, went to where Patino said the papers were kept and gathered these up, thus securing the incontrovertible proofs of the existence of the Katipunan."⁴⁷

Plans for
Filipino Attack

Bonifacio and his fellow leaders had previously
left Manila, and on the 17th of August made a def-

inite plan to attack the Spaniards on August 30th, beginning a general uprising.⁴⁸ However, when Father Gil made the discovery of the Katipunan on the 20th of August, Bonifacio decided to begin hostilities at an earlier date. Excitement in Manila was at a high pitch. The Friars,

47. Zafra, *op. cit.*, pp. 400-401.

48. Fernandez, *op. cit.*, p. 248.

led by Archbishop Nozaleda were in a frenzy and demanded wholesale arrests and executions. Blanco remained calm, and endeavored to restrain violent measures against the Filipinos because of the small number of his fighting men. However, on August 21st he sent the following telegram to the home Government in Spain:

"Vast organization secret societies discovered, with anti-national tendencies. Twenty-two persons apprehended, including the Grant Orient . . . Special judge will be designated for greater activity in proceedings."⁴⁹

Governor Blanco could not overthrow the Katipunan with his small forces, and waited for reinforcements to arrive from Spain. The Friars meanwhile cabled the Spanish crown protesting against Blanco's "inexplicable inactivity" and requested that he be replaced by a stronger man.⁵⁰

Outbreak Many of the Katipunan members hesitated to make an open
Caloocan attack against the Spaniards since they had not yet acquired sufficient firearms, but Bonifacio convinced them that they should begin the revolution at once. The first attack was made at Caloocan with but few guns and little ammunition. By night-fall the city had been taken. The revolution was on. The Katipunan had been successful in uniting the people in open revolt against Spain.

First Major The first real battle of the revolution took place
Battle August 30, 1896, at the village of San Juan del Monte, near Manila. It became a bloody battle with the revolutionists suffer-

49. *Ibid.*

50. Laubach, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

ing a severe defeat. The day after the battle Emilio Aguinaldo, till then a school teacher, became the "George Washington" of the Philippine Revolution. The Filipinos were able to win many engagements and were gaining in strength and number, as long as Blanco remained the Governor of the Philippines. The revolution spread to additional provinces and became a serious menace to the Spanish government. For the first time the Filipinos had succeeded in setting up a revolt that had some chance of success.

Rule of Governor
Polavieja

On December 13, 1896, Camilo G. de Polavieja became governor-general of the Philippines. The Friars had succeeded in getting rid of Blanco who was too peaceful and merciful to the Filipinos, and Governor Polavieja suited their purposes exactly. His first action upon reaching the Philippines was the execution of Jose Rizal.⁵¹ This altogether unjust act had much to do with further uniting the Filipino people in the revolt and in exciting even the more distant provinces to open rebellion. After a few months of unprecedented terror, Polavieja was recalled.⁵²

Rule of Governor
Primo de Rivera

Primo de Rivera had previously been governor of the Philippines and returned as governor for the second time. By this time Spain had tired of war, and the new governor sought to make peace. The Filipino leaders issued the following proclamation setting forth their demands:

51. Governor Blanco had previously exonerated Rizal and had granted him permission to go to Cuba as a physician in the Spanish Army. Rizal had nothing at all to do with either the Katipunan or the rebellion but was nevertheless seized on his way to Spain.

52. Cf. Laubaeh, *op. cit.*, p.p. 111-112.

1. Expulsion of the friars.
2. Parliamentary representation, freedom of the press, religious toleration, administrative and economic autonomy.
3. Equal pay and equal treatment for Spanish and Insular civil officers.
4. Restoration of all friar lands to their original owners.
5. No more banishments.
6. Legal equality of all classes." ⁵³

The object of the revolutionists at this time was not freedom from Spain, but freedom from the oppression of foreign ecclesiastics, namely, the Spanish Friars. One of the insurgent slogans was, "Long live Spain, Death to the Friars!" ⁵⁴

Pact of Pedro Alejandro Paterno acted as the agent of Governor Biac-nabato Rivera, and promised the revolutionists to fulfill their demands. The Governor's terms sounded good to the Filipinos, and they believed that the reforms would be carried out. However, little is known of the agreement which was reached, and Governor Rivera denied that he had made any promises for reforms. Governor Rivera had promised to pay \$1,700,000 to the members of the Katipunan if they would make peace, and so they supposed that he would agree to their demands. The Pact of Biac-nabato was signed and Aguinaldo and other leaders sailed to Hongkong, since they had agreed to leave the country, and the Pact money was payable only in Hongkong. ⁵⁵

53. Ibid.

54. Foreman, op. cit., p. 528.

55. Dr. Laubach reports that the document (Biac-nabato Pact) now in the war department in Washington shows that the clauses about reforms were crossed out, but when and by whom is unknown. Laubach, op. cit., p. 113.

Achievements The Katipunan had achieved at least a certain degree of success. It had begun and carried out a revolution, which, if it did not bring the reforms desired, at least had made Spain conscious of the injustices and rising feeling of nationalism in the Philippines. At the Pact of Biac-nabato there was trickery, for the promised reforms were never carried out. The most that Rivera would do was to issue a scathing denunciation of the Friars, but he did not recommend their withdrawal. He tried to take a middle path and satisfy both the Katipunan and the Spanish Friars. Only a part of the promised money was paid to the Katipunan. The Filipinos kept the agreement until they saw that Spain would not keep her promises and fresh revolts broke out in several parts of the Islands. The Katipunan had failed in bringing about the desired reforms, but it did succeed in uniting the Filipinos against oppression. Although the society did not hereafter function as an organization, its spirit and its principles have remained with the Filipino people throughout the years to this day, as is evident in a study of the religious movements in the Philippine Islands.

Chapter Four

Formation of the New Church

Times were ripe for an independent church movement in the Philippines. The Filipino people had had enough of Rome and her despotism, and looked eagerly for someone to lead them to freedom. America had freed them from the rule of despotic Spain, and now men arose who would also give them an indigenous Philippine Church.

Leaders: It was Aglipay who was the outstanding man in the Aglipay

De los Reyes development of the Independent Church, but the man who actually got things started towards establishing a Filipino Church was Isabelo de los Reyes, who as mentioned in earlier paragraphs, was the delegate of the Filipinos to the Roman Church in Spain. Here we must say more of this man and the conditions which molded his life.

Reyes' Background The circumstances and experiences which brought De

los Reyes into prominence took place in Spain. During his first imprisonment by the Spanish government for issuing propaganda for reforms in the Philippines his ideas began to take shape. After his release from prison, he felt that his religious faith had been destroyed. Then he fell in with radicals who introduced him to an anar-

chist club where he found much radical literature to read and something new or different on which to try to build his hopes. The blowing up of a building by an anarchist bomb resulted in his imprisonment again. Here he was given a New Testament by the British and Foreign Bible Society, and this he read eagerly. Through it he decided that it was only the Church of Rome which was at fault and not religion as such. After he was again released from prison, he translated the New Testament into Ilocano for the British and Foreign Bible Society.⁵⁶

Active in the Philippines As his part in helping the Filipinos against the Americans, Reyes published an anti-American periodical in Spain called "Filipinas ante Europa".⁵⁷ When all hope for the Filipino cause was lost, he gave this up, and returned to his home country. He arrived in Manila in July, 1901, and proceeded to organize a labor movement in which he wished to try out some of his new theories.⁵⁸

Agitation for an Independent Church Isabelo De los Reyes wished at once to set up a Filipino Independent Church. He sought out Aglipay and wished to make him the leader and head of this new organization. At first Aglipay was reluctant to join such a movement, since he was opposed to the ruling Friars, though still loyal to the Pope and hoped that conditions would be smoothed out without making a complete break with Rome. On the third of August, 1902, Reyes, as president of the first labor congress ever held in the Islands, attended by two thousand laborers and fishermen, proposed organizing the Filipino Church,

56. Ibid., p. 136.

57. Devins, op. cit., p. 256.

58. Laubach, op. cit., p. 138.

independent of Rome.⁵⁹ This union selected Aglipay as head of the new Filipino Church, and it appointed several bishops. However, Aglipay was not ready to make such a bold step. He was too shrewd to be stampeded into this new organization until he felt reasonably sure of its success. Accordingly, he declined the position offered him and on August 20th he published a manifesto refusing to identify himself with the Independent Church.⁶⁰

Contact with Protestants Later, however, in the same month of August, Aglipay consented to join with Isabelo de los Reyes and meet with the protestant missionaries in the Islands. Bishop Stuntz, who was present at this conference, and who was the leading Protestant missionary at the time, tells how Aglipay sought a private conference with them to outline his plans and to seek some form of co-operation or union effort. Aglipay had previously denounced the Protestants as the offscouring of the earth, and yet he sought a conference with them.⁶¹

"The conference was held in the office of the American Bible Society. Those present were the Rev. Jay C. Goodrich, agent of the American Bible Society; the Rev. James B. Rodgers, senior missionary of the Presbyterian Church; the Rev. J. L. McLaughlin, and myself, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and Senor Isabelo de los Reyes, a Filipino gentleman of good education, and an inveterate fondness for agitation.

We spent several hours in hearing the first disclosure of a plan to rend the Roman Church in the Philippines in twain. Senor Aglipay, with great clearness, set forth the situation as he saw it. He pictured the popular hatred of the friars as we had seen it. He pointed out

59. Cornish, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

60. Laubach, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

61. Dr. Stuntz cites this as an indication of Aglipay's intellectual hospitality.

the systematic ill-treatment of the native clergy by the foreign friars, and the unrest which this caused among the entire native community. He showed us proofs of the passionate fervor of all Filipinos for their Islands. He then told us that he proposed to lead in the establishment of an independent Catholic Church in the Philippines, and that he wished us to make common cause with him. The first item on his programme was separation from the Papacy and complete autonomy in the Philippines. His next step was to declare for and stand 'for Catholic Doctrine in its purity.' Other details were of less importance.

We pointed out to him the impossibility of any attempt to unite with the movement which did not make the Scriptures the rule and guide in doctrine and life, and urged him to study the situation more carefully, and throw his strength into the Protestant movement. If he could not do that, we all represented the certainty of failure, if only a programme of negation and protest were entered upon, and secured a promise that he would carefully consider the question of the endorsement of the Word of God, marriage of the clergy, and the abolition of Mariolatry."⁶²

However, this conference did not accomplish that which Reyes and Aglipay had wished for. They had believed that the Protestants would be eager to join with them in opposition to Rome. Dr. Cornish, who visited the Philippines in 1940, speaks in this manner:

"The inflexibility and attitude of superiority of the latter (the protestant missionaries) proved to be insurmountable obstacles, . . . the Americans claiming that the new church was too Roman in ritual, too rationalistic in theology, too Spanish in ethics and too independista in politics. To the American missionaries the new church was heretical on every count."⁶³

Indeed, the Protestant missionaries were on a spot. They might have liked to have helped Aglipay and his new church, but they were

62. Stuntz, op. cit., p. 490.

63. Cornish, op. cit., p. 55.

afraid that it would lead to trouble. It was common knowledge that Aglipay had been an active participant in the rebellion, and that Reyes was a radical who sought to introduce Socialism. They feared that it would identify them with the movement and thus get them into trouble with the American government as well as with the Roman Catholic Church. Whether or not they were right in so reasoning is hard to say. However, it seems evident that much more could have been done. Had they not been afraid of getting into difficulties with authorities, they could have helped to steer the Independent Church into a reformation program which might have developed into a sound Gospel church. Dr. Laubach, who has been a missionary in the Philippines since the early years after the Insurrection, gives the opinion that "some young Joshua may rise up to take the place of de los Reyes and lead that Church into the promised land, - unless it should somehow merge into the larger Filipino Christian Church which it is to be.⁶⁴ It must be true that the Protestants could have yielded a much greater influence than they did, had they had the courage to come into the open and made a bolder attempt to guide the Aglipayan movement into a proper direction.⁶⁵

Further Efforts of Reyes De los Reyes was not discouraged in his attempt

to get both Aglipay and the Protestants to support the movement. He continued to work towards setting up an independent church, and "as President of the Supreme Executive Committee he arranged

64. Laubach, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

65. The protestant missionaries in Manila did have some influence upon Aglipay and his later movement for which we must give them credit. This will be brought out in later paragraphs.

that twelve Filipino priests should invest Pedro Brillantes with the office of Bishop of Ilocos Norte, with the utmost pomp and solemnity."⁶⁶ Now a decisive step had been taken, and it gave the Filipino people something to cling to. When they saw that one of their own people, a native Filipino priest, was elected Bishop of a large province, it aroused their enthusiasm and their desire for an altogether national Church. Meanwhile, Aglipay still waited, hoping that he would receive pardon from Rome, and that the Pope would grant the Filipinos the right to govern their own church.

Friar Lands and Friar Control Since there could never be peace in the Philippines

as long as the lands were owned by the Friars, nor as long as the Friars remained in their churches, Governor Taft, as authorized by President McKinley, went to Rome to confer with the Pope on these two matters. The purchase of the Friar lands was agreed upon with the Pope and the price paid to Rome was \$7,239,784.66. This was a great relief to the American officials who felt that it would do much to quiet the situation in the Islands. However, the greater problem was their removal of the Friars, and this the Pope refused to do since he did not wish to become involved in a dispute with Spain. The best that Taft could accomplish was a promise that the Friars would gradually be withdrawn and that clergy from other countries would be introduced.⁶⁷

Aglipay's Reaction When Taft returned with the news of his negotiations, Aglipay realized that it was foolish to hope any longer

66. Leubach, *op. cit.*, p. 140.

67. Cf. *Ibid.*

for good to come from Rome. He saw clearly that the Pope had no intention of recognizing the Filipino clergy, and to replace the Friars with clergy from other countries was exactly what the Filipinos did not want. They wanted ecclesiastical independence for their own Filipino priests and nothing less than that. And it was at this time that Aglipay took the decisive step and made a definite and formal break with Rome. In October, 1902, a convention of the priests and laymen who had consented to join the movement was held, and "with their aid (Aglipay) framed and adopted a constitution for the new movement, named it the Independent Catholic Church of the Philippines,⁶⁸ and was, by the votes of these sympathizers, elected archbishop."⁶⁹ Dr. Cornish, who is perhaps the most reliable writer on this matter recounts a few details that are worth special notice. "Reyes nominated Father Gregorio Aglipay as Obispo Maximo. He was enthusiastically elected, and the new National Church entered its vigorous life. It was named Santa Iglesia Catholica Apostolica Filipina Independiente. At this same meeting Governor Taft (a Unitarian) was asked to become vice president of the Church and he accepted."⁷⁰

How Aglipay
was influenced

The Present Archbishop of the Independent Church,
Santiago Fonacier, gives an interesting account of

how Aglipay suddenly decided to break from Rome:

68. George Malcolm, who held the position as Supreme Court Justice in the Islands, gives the Spanish name, "La Iglesia Filipina Independiente de las Islas Filipinas." "The Commonwealth of the Philippines," p. 309.

69. Stuntz, op. cit., p. 491.

70. Cornish, op. cit., p. 52. Later on Governor Taft was made the honorary president of the Church. That Taft accepted the position of vice president should, it seems, have encouraged the Protestant missionaries to be a little more bold in aiding the Aglipayan movement.

"Don Isabelo de los Reyes had organized a labor union and, feeling himself supported well enough by the masses, proclaimed the secession in a meeting in Quiapo held about the early part of August, 1902. Still Bishop Aglipay did not like the idea of separation from Rome. But soon after, when for some five days he (Aglipay) was the guest of the Jesuits in Santa Ana, the inevitable happened. While conversing with Jesuit Father Foradada, Bishop Aglipay heard the phrase, 'Vicious nullities'. Father Foradada had used it in referring to Filipino priests and this immediately incensed Bishop Aglipay. By nature hot tempered, he jumped upon the Jesuit, grabbed him by the neck, and would have choked him to death had not Joaquin Luna, brother of General Luna, intervened. Rushed out of the convent, Bishop Aglipay had no sooner reached the street than he made up his mind about completely bolting Rome."⁷¹

Its Name Now at last the Filipino had their own Church. That it was not the best that could have been evolved is, of course, true. Yet, it does speak strongly for the Filipino people in the sense that it shows their extreme nationalistic feeling and their desire to rid themselves of all foreign control. In this sense it is a credit to the Philippines, for of all the countries which were at one time under the domination of Spain and consequently the Roman Catholic Church, the Philippines is the only country in which the nationals have come out boldly and taken a stand in opposition to the Roman Catholic Church. The new Church "has never taken the name Protestant. Instead it calls itself the Independent Catholic Church. It remains true, however, that to chant their modernistic faith before lighted altars . . . is as much a departure from the teachings of the Roman Church, as much a protest against them, as any ever made in Christendom. For several

⁷¹. Told by Bishop Fonacier, who had learned the details in his youth. Graphic, Philippine Newspaper, October 24, 1940.

sound reasons it has declined to use the name Protestant, but the Holy, Catholic, Apostolic and Independent Church of the Philippines has always been a protesting group, and was the first protesting group in the Islands."⁷²

Original Intentions
of Church Founders

Isabelo de los Reyes said concerning the policy of the new Church, "Let us form without vacillation our own congregation, a Filipino Church, conserving all that is good in the Roman Church and . . . the moral purity and sacredness of the doctrines of Christ."⁷³ The Independent Church was indeed a break from the Roman Church. However, it was a movement in opposition to the government of the Church, the papacy, and especially, against the Spanish Friars, rather than against Roman Catholic doctrine.

"Had Governor Taft been able to announce authoritively upon his return to the Islands that the Spanish Friars would be withdrawn, . . . it is probable that the schismatic movement would have been almost or quite smothered at the outset . . . But Rome lost the advantage which she might have secured by a frank and definite withdrawal of the ministers who had remained beyond their period of usefulness."⁷⁴

Aglipay and
Apostolic
Succession

In some respects Aglipay became Protestant in his doctrine and practice. This is especially evident in his treatment of the question of Apostolic Succession. He permitted himself to be invested as bishop by an ecclesiastical council. At first he hesitated, wondering about the question of Apostolic succession, and contemplated going to England or the Continent for the pur-

72. Cornish, op. cit., p. 66.

73. Ibid., p. 52.

74. LeRoy, op. cit., p. 62.

pose of being invested by an Episcopal bishop. He consulted with Mr. Arthur Prautch, an American business man in Manila who was the earliest worker active in the Methodist Church. Mr. Prautch insisted that there are but two orders in the New Testament, deacons and elders, and that the term bishop is but an honorary title and gives no man superior spiritual authority over another. Accordingly, it was not at all essential that Aglipay be invested according to Apostolic succession, and therefore he adopted the viewpoint of most protestants on this matter.⁷⁵ Exactly how deeply he believed Prautch's argument is uncertain, for to strict Romanists he could cite his appointment as acting bishop during the war with Spain. At any rate, "he was consecrated Obispo Maximo, with great pomp and ceremony, by the Bishops of Manila, Cavite, Nueva Ecija, Abra, Visayan, Isabela and Pangasinan, on January 18, 1903. Greetings and messages of good will flowed in upon the new Church from many parts of the world."⁷⁶

**Swift Success
and Expansion**

As soon as Aglipay had been appointed Archbishop and had appointed fifteen Filipino Bishops the people of the Islands were thrilled to the extreme and were drawn into the movement by the thousands. It swept like wild fire through the provinces, sometimes peacefully, sometimes dramatically exciting. On the first Sunday in October, 1902 Aglipay held his first mass in the new Church. "The new archbishop, in full regalia, celebrated mass in Tondo, Manila, in the open air, before several thousand people. The sensation produced

75. Laubach, *op. cit.*, p. 141 ff.

76. Cornish, *op. cit.*, p. 55. Here Dr. Cornish quotes the Rivera Ms. which was loaned to him by the University of the Philippines.

was tremendous. Sympathizers multiplied."⁷⁷

Riot at
Pandacan Church,
Manila

A Filipino priest, Father Serrondo, at Pandacan,
Manila, made some insulting remarks about Arch-

bishop Aglipay, and excited the congregation to riot:

"When he came out of the church a mob of women assaulted him, tore his cassock to shreds, rolled him in the dirt, and so hustled him that he was glad to escape without a broken head. Members of the congregation sent for the new archbishop to come and say mass in Pandacan Church. He came and said mass before a vast crowd, while over two hundred irate women took their bedding and cooking utensils and slept in the churchyard to prevent the regular priest from again entering the building. Other churches invited Aglipay to use their buildings, and the city was in a furore."⁷⁸

At once Roman Catholic ecclesiastics besieged Governor Taft, demanding Aglipay's ejection as a trespasser and a blasphemer. Governor Taft was on a spot. "He was in a shoal seas, with breakers on all sides. A mistaken decision and a civil war was far from an impossibility. With perfect justice and consummate adroitness he issued a proclamation known in the Philippines as the Proclamation of Peaceable Possession."⁷⁹

Who Owned the
Churches?

When Catholic authorities demanded the restoration
of their churches, the question naturally arose, as
to who actually owned the church properties. The Filipino people had
a legitimate claim to the property as Dr. Cornish points out:

77. Stuntz, *op. cit.*, p. 491.

78. *Ibid.*

79. *Ibid.*, p. 492.

"Every man in each community had annually been obliged to give thirty days of work without pay. And as the tally on the thirty full days was always kept by the friar, it is alleged that many men gave far more than even the allotted time. The women also worked and without pay. Both men and women labored under the whip. Certain it is that these great churches were built by labor neither voluntary nor paid."⁸⁰

Naturally the Filipino people felt that they had the right to take possession of their own buildings, even though they had transferred their allegiance from Rome to the Independent Church. Therefore, it would have been disastrous for Governor Taft to command that the Independents return the buildings to the Roman priests. However, he had to make some rule in order to quiet the situation, and therefore he issued his proclamation of peaceful possession. It was a master stroke that satisfied the Filipino people for they could see the inherent justice of this ruling. It amounted to this: Whoever was in peaceable possession of a church would be considered by the courts to be the rightful owner, and the contrary must be proved in court. Under this ruling, the Pandacan Church mentioned in the quotation above was returned to the Roman Priest, for it had been seized by force. Even so, the women who had taken possession refused to return the keys to the priest, but did hand them over to Governor Taft with the remark that they would hand them to the Governor but not to the Friars.⁸¹ So Taft did the one thing that could have avoided serious trouble. That the Roman authorities would not be content with the "Peaceable Possession" ruling was evident, but until they could prove in court

80. Cornish, op. cit., p. 56.

81. Laubach, op. cit., p. 143.

that they actually owned the property, it remained in the possession of the Independents.

Rome's Blunder Now that the Independents were assured that they would be enabled to hold church property, they bent their energies toward inducing Filipino priests to come into the Independent Church with their congregations. The Filipino priests were rather hesitant to break so abruptly with Rome, but one day Rome made a blunder that accelerated matters. The Pope issued his Bull of the Philippine Church (*Quae Mare sinico*) at a time when Filipino priests did not know exactly what they should do, - remain with Rome, - or join Aglipay. Rome lost the advantage which she might have secured by a frank and definite withdrawal of the Friars, for the Filipinos were convinced that the Vatican was being controlled by the monastic orders.

"When Mons. Guidi, the new apostolic delegate, arrived and published the Pope's bull of the Philippine Church in December 1902, the old political turmoil was revived with added fury, in consequence of the full freedom of Filipino speech and press. It was plain from that document that, subsequent to the conferences of Governor Taft in Rome, the reactionary influences had been at work at the Vatican. In some of its passages, the bull was written almost as if in vindication of the Friars, - a political mistake, whatever one may say as to its historical accuracy - and it bespoke almost open contempt for the Filipino clergy. Everything in it that might hint at the return of the friars to the parishes was promptly seized upon by the schismatics and by the other radicals who had not openly severed their connection with the Roman Catholic Church."⁸²

The issuing of the Bull at this very moment made the Independent Church for the first time an institution assured of success, whereas

82. Le Roy, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

had Rome conceded that the Friars had been at fault, and had she withdrawn them from the Islands, the Independent Church might have been killed with one blow. However, the Filipinos saw in the letter a clear intention on the part of the papacy to fasten the Friars upon them forever. It was condemned by every native priest in the Islands.⁸³

**Aglipayan
Landslide** The excitement now arose to ever greater heights than it had achieved at Aglipay's first mass. There was a landslide into the new church. "Whole provinces with every pueblo, every priest, every church with its attached convento or priest's house, went over to Aglipay solidly. In North Ilocos province but three churches and priests remained loyal to Rome. At least a million and a half people and church property worth hundreds of thousands of dollars came into the control of Aglipay as rapidly as he could pass from one town to another in a kind of triumphal procession."⁸⁴ Aglipay and his bishop priests were practically swamped with new churches which wished to join the movement. "The movement was one of the people even more than one of the priests. In no case did a priest go into the new movement without the support of his congregation. In many instances parts of congregations broke away from the priest who refused to go with them."⁸⁵ Wherever a large part of the population of a town joined the new movement, and especially where the local authorities joined the new church the Independents had possession of the old stone church structures. More than two hundred priests joined the movement.⁸⁶

83. Laubach, op. cit., p. 143.

84. Stuntz, op. cit., p. 493.

85. Laubach, op. cit., p. 144.

86. Blair and Robertson, The Philippine Islands, Vol. XLV, p. 256.

Generally, it might be said that the movement spread throughout the Christianized portions of the archipelago and although there were some provinces in which it made but little progress, there are others, notably the regions surrounding Manila, Aglipay's home in Ilocos Norte, and portions of the Bisayan Islands, where it claims more than half the population.⁸⁷

Concerning its Leaders The charge has been made that the leaders, as well as the great majority of its followers, were of the lower class of people and among the radicals who were opposed to Spain, the Church, and even the United States. But, LeRoy points out that "the promoters of the movement must be given credit for keeping generally within legal methods of conducting their propaganda; and though not ascribing undue importance to their waving the American flag over the new altars they dedicate, . . . they recognize that the principles of religious freedom resting securely under American sovereignty have alone made it possible for them to organize and conduct a movement of the sort in which they are now the men of prominence among their people."⁸⁸ It is true that there were some, as is always the case, who attached themselves to the movement only because they wanted to get something out of it. Yet, this movement brought to the Filipinos an indigent church and gave them religious freedom as well and therefore it was welcomed.

87. LeRoy, op. cit., p. 65.

88. Ibid., p. 66.

Chapter Five

Its Spread and Development

Reasons for Rapid Spread Patriotism rather than religion is the reason for its rapid spread and its basis or expectations with many is political. The fear that the Friars would again return to seize control of the churches drove the majority into the ranks of the Independent Church. Dr. Stuntz says:

"The strength of the Aglipay movement lies in its appeal to a growing feeling of nationalism, its recognition of the Word of God, its partial satisfaction of the large class whose hands have long waited for an available club with which to smite the friars, and to its easy program of religious reformation. It is a Filipino movement. It throws off the yoke of the Pope, and cuts all other ties of a foreign character. Its entire ministry . . . is Filipino. It is altogether of the soil, and therefore he who does not support it is not a good Filipino. He does not love his Fatherland unless he joins the Independent Filipino Catholic Church. This form of pressure is very effective. It brings thousands into the ranks of 'Aglipayanos' who have precious little concern about merely religious matters. They habitually stand up for anything that exalts the Philippines, hence they put down their names and accept places on the committees which Aglipay leaves in charge of his interests in every place where a Church is established." ⁸⁹

"Its easy program of religious reformation attracts thousands. It promises a better order of things, but

89. Stuntz, op. cit., p. 490.

makes no spiritual or moral demands. Priests may come into the movement, and keep their mistresses and continue their gambling. Aglipay himself has never been accused of immorality or gambling, but he sets up no standard of purity in his priesthood or among his people. The cockpit, games of cards and dice, the bingo habit and all other national vices come into the new Church without direct rebuke. This, its real weakness, gives it apparent strength. Because of this it is enabled to count its members by the million within less than two years from its birth."⁹⁰

Besides these features, which were inherent in the set up of the Aglipayan Church, there was another factor which helped to put the Independent Church on its feet. This was the foolish attempts of the Roman Catholics to take back by force some of their properties. It is but natural that such attempts would but strengthen the Filipinos in their determination to rid themselves completely of the Roman Church and its despotic principles. Dr. Stuntz cites some instances of such high-handed procedure:

"Bishop Rooker (an American Bishop) had been less than a week in his diocese in Iloilo before he deliberately took possession of a former Romish Church, now for nearly a year 'in peaceable possession' of Aglipayanos, when he chanced to find it open and empty between services. He sent for the presidente, or mayor, and demanded the keys. The presidente properly disclaimed any authority in the case, and declined to act. Bishop Rooker then sent for locks and locked all doors and carried off the keys. It was an open violation of the Taft Proclamation, and he was called to account."⁹¹

"In Northern Luzon Bishop Dougherty tried the same high-handed methods, going to church after church, placing his hands upon the door-sill, and saying in Latin, 'In the name of the Pope of Rome I take possession of this church.' Several times he was assaulted by the custodians of the buildings, and was forced to travel under a heavy escort of constabulary on his return to his headquarters in Vigan."⁹²

90. Ibid., p. 492.

91. Ibid., p. 495.

92. Ibid., p. 496.

However, in spite of the criticisms raised against the Aglipayan program, it is evident that the major factor which prompted the Filipinos to revolt against Rome and establish their own Filipino church, was their intense feeling of nationalism and desire to have everything altogether Filipino. They resented foreign interference of any kind, whether in church or government, whether of Rome or Spain, or France, or even the United States. They wanted independence in every respect and the rapid growth of the Aglipayan Church demonstrates this clearly.

Catholic Action One can well imagine how Rome must have fumed against the Aglipayans. It was a movement which cut the church in half and threatened to force many Catholic priests into starvation. "Occasionally quarrels arose between the Aglipayan municipal president and the European parish priests. In fact I was told by the secretary of the Governor-General that he received more complaints from the Roman Catholics against the Aglipayans than from the protestants (Aglipayans) against the Catholics."⁹³ At times the Catholics were successful in securing legal interference, as for example when "rules were promulgated which required a special permit from the town president before religious processions or religious meetings could be held in public streets or squares."⁹⁴ Naturally these rules applied to the Roman Catholics as well as to the Aglipayans, but these methods were intended mainly to hinder the Aglipayans. Colonel John L. White, who was an officer of the Constabulary in the Philippines, reveals interesting details in his book:

93. Rodgers, J.B., Forty Years in the Philippines, p. 195.

94. Ibid., p. 195.

"Another factor making for unrest was the Aglipayan schism. Bishop Aglipay visited the province (Negros) and subsequently there was good reason to believe that the 'National Church of the Philippine Islands' as the schism took its name, was closely if intangibly leagued with the insurgent chiefs remaining as outlaws and with all the forces that opposed the American Government. I remembered handing out secret-service funds to 'Bishop' Aglipay while I was a disbursing officer in Manila. So I knew that he was playing both ends against the middle and was a man to be watched. However, in Negros his propaganda was chiefly directed against the Spanish friars who had now returned to some of the towns from which they had been expelled during the insurrection. In this way the towns were divided into two religious camps and soon came calls for the constabulary, either to save priests from insult and the windows of their convent from stones, or to quell riots which started when rival religious processions met in a narrow village street. The majority of the municipal officials at that time favored the Aglipayan schism and welcomed the opportunity to give the friars a dig."⁹⁵

**Need for More
Priests**

So rapid was the growth of this new Church that priests could not be supplied fast enough to take care of the new congregations which joined the movement. It could have grown even more rapidly had there been enough priests available. Ten seminaries were opened in order to rush young men through enough training in ritual to act as makeshift priests. It was impossible at the time to give these men the real training necessary to make them good priests, and the urgent need of priests prompted the action of rushing them through a brief course in ritual and practice. The young priests were ordained with "somewhat startling ease and carelessness in the new seminaries which the new church opened."⁹⁶

95. White, John R., Bullets and Bolos, p. 163.

96. Blair and Robertson, op. cit., p. 236.

The present Archbishop of the Independent Church (since 1940) related his account of the ordaining of new priests in the early days; the Graphic Newspaper gives the following:

"At that time we were in great need of priests. What Bishop Aglipay did was to get out all of the students in the seminary at Vigan and, along with deacons and sub-deacons under the old regime, take them to Alcala, Cagayan, where the Roman Catholic Bishop of Nueva Segovia, Fr. Jose Hevia Campomanes, had been held prisoner by the revolutionary forces. There Bishop Campomanes ordained all the students, deacons and sub-deacons, except one, who in his estimation, did not qualify. This fact should give the lie to the claim that the Catholic Bishop was forced to ordain Filipino priests. He did the ordaining quite willingly, even appointed Bishop Aglipay, then a mere co-adjutor or assistant to the Spanish parish priest, as ecclesiastical governor of the diocese of Vigan."⁹⁷

Had it been possible to install priests who possessed high qualifications and a good general education, and even more important, priests who had a fine doctrinal and Biblical background, it is likely that the Aglipayan Church would have had a success comparable with that in Germany under Luther. A Roman dignitary spoke harshly, and perhaps without too much exaggeration when he said: "that outside of the four regular priests of the diocese of Manila who went over to the ranks of the new church, all the other priests were a helter-skelter collection of stable boys, house servants, and others of low rank, taught to go through the form of saying mass and then consecrated."⁹⁸ Since the priests of the Independent Church were of such caliber, it is only natural that they had no concrete message to give their people, but could only read mass, or preach against the Friars and the Roman Catholic Church in general. They had no positive

97. Graphic, Philippine Newspaper, October 24, 1940.

98. Willis, The Philippine Islands, quoted in Laubach, op. cit., p. 144.

message of salvation to bring to their people. Consequently the people of the new movement were drifting and no one could tell into what belief or unbelief they would soon be led.

Protestant Influence: the Bible! We must implore the fact that the Protestants were not able to imbue the Independent Church with sound Biblical doctrine, but still it is true that the Protestants did have a great influence upon the form of the Aglipayan Church in its early days. Some writers make the sweeping statement that "Protestant missions yield influence seen on every hand."⁹⁹ Originally the Independent Church planned only to break from papal authority, not Roman doctrine. However, Protestant influence carried them further than they were willing to admit. The most important trace of protestantism we can find is the stress which Aglipay and his followers placed upon the Bible, and its dissemination among the masses.¹⁰⁰ Mr. Arthur W. Prautch who was appointed by the American Bible Society as colporteur to the new Church, had a great deal of influence in leading the church to teach that the Scriptures are the only rule of faith.¹⁰¹ Mr. Prautch accompanied the Aglipayan Bishop Ramon Farolan on several trips of church visitation through the country, and wrote enthusiastically of his work of selling Bibles to the new church:

"I saw this bishop, in confirming hundreds of candidates, hand each one a copy of our Gospel instead of the usual candle, thus putting his approval and endorsement on our Scriptures! . . . We were together fifty-one days and nights. I frequently heard the Bishop explain my presence by stating that we were seeking to bring the Catholic

99. Blair and Robertson, *op. cit.*, p. 237.

100. LeRoy, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

101. Laubach, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

Church back to the condition of the primitive Church during the days of the Apostles, when the Scriptures were the rule of faith. They organized twenty-five churches and sold fourteen thousand Scriptures. My severe judgment on some of their practices that I cannot sanction is tempered by their endorsement of the Scriptures. Many of the errors in that new church will be cured by reading of the Scriptures.

When the Scriptures were to be published in the Panayan dialect of the Visayan language, I was sent to negotiate a sale of this edition to Bishop Narciso Hijalda of Iloilo. He signed a contract and arranged to pay \$125 in advance . . . No one can estimate what it means to circulate Scriptures among this restless body of people, who are drifting, and may at this time be led anywhere into any belief or unbelief."¹⁰²

Dr. Stuntz says concerning the Aglipayans and their attitude toward the Bible:

"Aglipay recommends the reading of the Bible by his priests and people. Over twenty-five thousand portions have been purchased outright by Aglipayan leaders within the last six months, and sold to their people. All that is permanently good in the movement comes from this attitude toward the inspired Word."¹⁰³

It was a wonderful thing that now finally the Filipinos were receiving through their own people, the Holy Scriptures, for the Bible had been banned from the Islands during the centuries that Spain ruled the Philippines.¹⁰⁴ Mr. Goodrich tells us that Aglipay had formally stated that the Bible should be given to priests and people. "He has written us, formally stating that in his opinion the reading of the Bible will result in the elevation of the Filipino people."¹⁰⁵ Archbishop Aglipay gave much to the Independent Church by allowing and encouraging the use

102. Stuntz, op. cit., p. 492.

103. Ibid.

104. Until the American occupation of the Philippines, any person found in possession of a Bible was persecuted; either imprisoned, executed, or banished.

105. Devins, op. cit., p. 338.

of the Bible. Just exactly how clear an idea he had regarding the inspiration and the authority of the Bible, is uncertain, for he had erroneous opinions concerning its use. At one time he "urged that the Old Testament should not be used generally because the primitive tales of the heroes and rascals of olden times were too vivid for public reading."¹⁰⁶ This view on his part shows a very inaccurate knowledge of Scripture, for in no place is sin condoned, but Aglipay evidently could not see this. In more recent years, he still worked for the spread of the Bible among the masses for "his latest step is to distribute an address of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt commending the study of the Bible. Already one hundred thousand copies of the address and Aglipay's letter commending it have been circulated in Spanish, Tagalog, and Ilocano."¹⁰⁷ This use of the Bible in the Independent Church could have had wonderful lasting effects, but somehow the idea of the Bible as an authority on Religion was lost.¹⁰⁸

Protestant Influence:
 In Practice. Since the Independent Church was a break from the despotic government of Rome, it is not at all surprising that the new Church adopted a democratic form of church government. LeRoy wrote in the early years of the movement: "The idea of lay participation in the government of the church is recognized from top to bottom, and there is somewhat of an approach to congregational government, wherever the rules of the organization are more than a dead letter."¹⁰⁹

106. Rodgers, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

107. Devins, *op. cit.*, p. 332.

108. That the Independent Church lost this principle of Bible as authority will be shown in a later chapter.

109. LeRoy, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

Furthermore, the Independent Priests were permitted to marry and are permitted to take part in politics.¹¹⁰ The use of the dialects is decreed in the services, except in the saying of the masses.¹¹¹ However, the new church did allow its members a greater freedom than they had ever enjoyed under the Roman Church. It granted the individual the freedom of interpretation of the Scriptures. The fact that their bishops and even the archbishop himself are elected, demonstrates their democratic form of government.

Effort for Union with the Episcopal Church Mr. Prautch had been very successful in selling his Bibles to the Independent Church and naturally he had much other influence. When the Aglipayan Church was still open to outside influence on doctrine and practice, Mr. Prautch tried to persuade Aglipay to affiliate with the American Protestant Episcopal Communion. Conferences were held between the American Episcopal bishops and the bishops of the Aglipayan Church, and since the new movement had become so evolved there was nothing to prevent its becoming Episcopal. But here we see the Filipino fear of foreign control and the intense feeling of nationalism among the Filipino people. Aglipay refused to join the Episcopalian body because he feared to submit to the authority of foreigners. "However, the Episcopalian Church proved a factor at least for a time in forming the ideals of the Filipino bishop. To a secretary of the British and Foreign Bible Society Aglipay said that he hoped by introducing gradual reforms into the Roman system, the Iglesia Independiente de las Islas Filipinas would grow into a replica

110. Generally writers regard this as an indication of progress in religious freedom. Aglipay himself set the example for participation in politics.

111. Malcolm, *op. cit.*, p. 310.

of the Church of England."¹¹² Bishop Stuntz for a long time held hope that the Aglipayan Church would improve in doctrine and practice and finally join with one of the Protestant bodies working in Manila. He wrote, "I am not without hope that Aglipay will take more advanced spiritual and moral ground. His own personal belief is far from being in accord with some errors at which he feels it necessary to wink lest he lose his followers. He hopes to be able to lead them to greener pastures later on."¹¹³

**Romanism
or Worse!**

During the early years of unsettled doctrine and church practice, there was wonderful opportunity for winning the Independent Church to sound Biblical teaching. Aglipay was at that time much interested in the Bible and in much that was Protestant. Furthermore, the Aglipayans were very friendly to the Protestant missionaries and looked to them for counsel and aid. Had the right man been on the job, who could have been able to overcome the Aglipayan fears of foreign control and interference in religion and politics, the Aglipayan Church might have adopted a positive program of sound religious education based on Scripture. Had this been the case, the church would have become a body to be reckoned with in the Philippines. Instead, however, the Protestant missionaries tried to avoid entanglements with the Aglipayan movement as much as possible lest they become identified with a movement that appeared radical and insurrectionary. The result was that the new Church actually developed into something far worse than Romanism. They kept the outward form of worship and the gorgeous pageantry of the Roman

112. Laubach, op.cit., p. 148.

113. Stuntz, op. cit., p. 496.

Catholic Church which the Filipino people dearly loved, but gradually "the Aglipayan church doctrine became a curious jumble of nationalism, Catholicism, and Unitarianism."¹¹⁴ Even Aguinaldo, the general who led the Philippine Insurrection, felt that the Church was drifting into troublesome seas, and looked to Protestantism for something better. In an interview with Protestant men he was asked what he thought of the Aglipayan movement and said, "It is a step in the right direction, and will lead to better things here. I may call it second grade, the first grade in time will be the Protestant Church."¹¹⁵ Perhaps much of the weakness in this respect is due to Isabelo de los Reyes, who is described as "a hopeless craver of notoriety and a shallow but fluent demagogue, the last one might wish to see exercising influence among his people when their own future good is held in view."¹¹⁶

Membership The number of adherents which this church could claim has always been rather uncertain. Aglipay himself claimed that he had at least three million members by 1903. By 1905 he claimed four million members. 1906 was the high water mark of the Aglipayan Church, for in that year came the supreme court decision regarding church property.¹¹⁷ The census of 1918 estimated their membership as 1,417,448, and that of 1939, 1,573,608.¹¹⁸ However, Dr. Cornish who visited the Philippines in 1938 and was closely related with the Aglipayan Church, stated that "the Independent Church included at least fifteen per cent of the population; this would be about two and a half

114. Horn, Florence, Orphans of the Pacific, p. 241.

115. Devine, op. cit., p. 211.

116. LeRoy, op. cit., p. 66.

117. Reliable writers, such as Florence Horn, Dr. Laubach, LeRoy, and Judge Malcolm give three million as a fair estimate. cf. Laubach, op. cit., p. 144.

118. Hayden, The Philippines, p. 405.

million, and this was the minimum estimate to be taken seriously."¹¹⁹

"In two provinces, the Independents predominate; in five provinces, they have from thirty-one to forty-three per cent of the population; in twelve provinces from nineteen to twenty-eight per cent; in six provinces from eight to sixteen per cent; while in the remaining twenty provinces they have less than eight per cent."¹²⁰

At best these figures are but approximations. Even the government census cannot be regarded as accurate. However, it is most likely that until 1906 Aglipay could claim at least three million members, but at that time it suddenly decreased until during the thirties it again increased gradually.

Type of People Who Joined The charge has been raised that the Aglipayan Church is composed mostly of laborers and poor folk, the people who had nothing to begin with, and hoped that by joining this new movement they might gain some advantages. However, this charge is not just, as Dr. Cornish ably points out:

"The Independent Constituency presents a cross section of the whole population, sheltering all sorts of people, professional folk, rich, and poor. The comment is partly true, however, for the laborers predominate, the people who toil on the land and fish the sea. This has been the glory of the Independent Church. It is always to be remembered with pride that it was founded by two thousand laborers in the first labor congress held in the Islands."¹²¹

That the Church is composed of the poorer people is demonstrated by the financial situation of the Church. Although it is numerically strong, it is financially weak. Perhaps the poverty of most of its members is the reason for this, but it seems that even these people should be able to contribute more than they do, for, according to Dr. Laubach, the

119. Cornish, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

120. *Ibid.*, p. 62.

121. *Ibid.*, pp. 64-65.

money invested in church property is only 36 centavos (18 cents) per member.¹²² In some of the provinces the congregation, although numerically strong, have no church buildings whatsoever. A further indication of the weakness of this Church body, is the attendance of its members at services. Dr. Laubach points out that:

"The Aglipayan churches have but one seat for every eight members, whereas the Roman Catholic churches have one seat for every 2.6 members, and the Protestant churches have more seats than members. Yet the Aglipay churches are almost empty save on special church holidays, and are seldom crowded even then."¹²³

Only the negative program of the Aglipayan Church and its utter lack of capable priests could account for such miserable conditions among its membership. When we take into consideration that the Independent Church had only two hundred priests, plus a number of young men or boys who were rushed through a brief course in the new seminaries, it is apparent that this small force could not possibly instruct and properly train a membership of three million or more. Archbishop Aglipay performed wonders in keeping the Church together, but it required much more than the effort of one man.

Protestant Indirectly the Independent Church was a great help to
Hopes the Protestants for it broke the Catholic Church into two parts and it attracted many from the Roman Church who later became Protestants. Bishop Stuntz wrote:

"It breaks the solid front of Romish opposition. When we are told that the Catholics are against us, we can ask, which Catholics. It attracts the chief enmity of the hierarchy. Since this schism began Rome has shot fewer arrows toward our lines. Her fury against the

122. Laubach, op. cit., p. 151.

123. Ibid., p. 152.

assumptions of an ex-communicated member of her own body has burned day and night since October 1902, and the Protestant has come off with but a few curses, and a tract or two. This will continue as long as the numerical strength of the Aglipay schism is being augmented."

"The Aglipay movement helps us by detaching tens of thousands of members from a nominal connection with the Church of Rome, and leaving them without positive instruction in a more excellent way. Our preachers get a hearing with them, and hundreds of them accept the Word and are saved. These people would never have left the Roman Catholic Church to become Protestants, feeble as was the hold of the old Church upon them; but once outside and hungry for spiritual food, they hear and are saved. Aglipay loosens the fruit from the tree and we gather it."¹²⁴

The majority of Protestant missionaries felt that the Aglipayan schism would help them in securing new converts. Dr. Cornish, the Unitarian, however, states that this hope was never realized.¹²⁵ But when we recall that in the early years this church claimed three million or more members, and later lost almost half of these after the decision of the Courts regarding ownership of the Churches, it is evident that a great many people were set at drift with no church connections whatsoever. They did not all return to the Roman Catholic Church, because they had grown tired of that body, and therefore many looked for something better. It was only logical that some would join Protestant Churches. This is, at least in part, what did happen. Many of these castaways remained without any church membership whatsoever. "Thousands, disgusted with the only religion they had ever known, and impressed by the fact that most Americans seemed to have no religion, lost faith in religion altogether."¹²⁶

124. Stuntz, *op. cit.*, pp. 493-494.

125. Cornish, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

126. Laubach, *op. cit.*, p. 150. Many Filipinos were drawn to the Americans because they, without claiming to belong to any religion, treated the Filipinos better than had the Spanish Catholics. "'The Spaniards were Christians,' said a leading Filipino, 'but we like the Americans better because they are not Christians.'" Devins, p. 262.

**Court Decision
on Church Property**

In 1906 the Independent priests were forced to leave their churches. This decision of the courts was a terrible blow for the new church. All realized that the Roman Catholics would not be content with the "Peaceable Possession" ruling of Governor Taft, but the Independents felt confident that should the matter be taken to the courts, the decision would be in their favor. "Legally the question has its troublesome aspects", wrote LeRoy, "not only where an issue of facts is raised, but also in the underlying difference between the Crown of Spain, 'royal patron of religion' and the United States Government, which is forbidden by its constitution to exercise jurisdiction in religious matters."¹²⁷ Yet it became a judicial matter and was taken to the courts. Aglipay based his claim to the church property on the intrinsic justice of the case. The Independent Church held that:

"Since the people had built the churches by their forced labor the churches should belong to the people who had built them; or to their successors. They should be the property of the communities where they stood. The people of these communities, having transferred their allegiance from the Roman to the Independent Church, the properties should belong to the Independent Church.

Since Pope Alexander VI in 1493 gave to the Kings of Spain the Roman Catholic Churches in the Spanish Colonies, and since church and state were one, it followed that the United States now owned the churches, and therefore they should be used for 'public (that is, religious) purposes', maintaining the status quo at the time of Governor General Taft's proclamation of 'Peaceful Possession'."¹²⁸

It is plain that equity was on the side of the Aglipayans, for everyone in his heart felt that the buildings were paid for by the native Filipinos, and no one would argue that the property rightfully belonged

127. LeRoy, op. cit., p. 171.

128. Cornish, op. cit., pp. 57-58.

to the Pope in Rome who had never invested a dollar in the parish buildings. Bishop Stunts reasoned correctly, however, when he predicted that Aglipay would lose possession of the buildings:

"He will be met with citations from canonical law, and from the practice of the Roman Catholic Church according to which all titles of houses of worship pass automatically to the archbishop of the diocese in trust for the Church by the act of dedication. Equity appears to be on the side of Aglipay and his followers. It is to be feared, however, that a strict interpretation of the law will not give them the hundreds of churches in which they are now worshipping."¹²⁹

But Rome did not rely solely on ecclesiastical law in her fight to regain control of the church properties. Aglipay had failed to take into consideration Article VII of the treaty of Paris which expressly, perhaps one may also say cleverly, exempted ecclesiastical property from the purchase made by the United States.¹³⁰ For, in the litigation which began in 1904, when the court of First Instance decided in favor of Rome and again at the Supreme Court decision of 1906, the Romanists used this Article of the Treaty as evidence of their ownership. The letter of the law declared in favor of Rome, but morally, the evidence argued for Filipino ownership of the churches. Dr. Cornish says, "However right it (the Courts decision) may have been legally, and the impartiality of investigating commissions and of the courts has been widely questioned, we should understand the moral justification for the Aglipayan contentions."¹³¹ The Independents had been confident that justice and right would prevail, and that now in the United States courts even every poor man's rights would be protected, and they would be able

129. Stunts, *op. cit.*, p. 495.

130. See page 4, paragraph "Catholic Victory" of this paper.

131. Cornish, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

to keep possession of the church buildings. Rome, however, had not relied on justice, but had used her cunning to win back the property she had previously owned.

A Blow to the
Young Church

It was a complete surprise when the court decision ordered the Aglipayans to leave their churches and return them to the Roman Catholics. Governor Rivera wrote: "The decision to return all ecclesiastical properties to the Roman Church were terrible blows to the young church which showed so much promise of growth and strength, and which believed so ardently in the justice of its claims."¹³² In December 1906, all of the Filipino priests had to leave their fine churches and lead their congregations into rented quarters or whatever modest structures they could afford to build. It was a blow that almost killed the Independent Church, and there were many who felt that this would mark the end of the young church.¹³³

New Houses
of Worship

As was pointed out above, the members of the Independent Church were mostly of the poorer class. Dr. Laubach explains that in Spanish times, the only persons who could be rich were those who supported the Friars, and that these wealthy people had remained loyal to the Roman Church because they depended upon the Church for their wealth.¹³⁴ After losing their regular church buildings, those in which the Filipinos had worshipped for three centuries, the Aglipayans were at a loss as to what to do. They had little money with which to build new structures, and those which they could afford to erect

132. Ibid. He quotes the Rivera Ms. which was loaned him by the University of the Philippines.

133. Ibid. Rivera Ms.

134. Laubach, op. cit., p. 149.

failed to inspire the awe and reverence which the Filipinos had known in their former magnificent churches. "It seemed to many of them that the very foundation of their religion had been torn away - as though they had lost all connection with God."¹³⁵ The new buildings were constructed mostly of bamboo or of nipa (thatched palm branches), which are very temporary building materials. Florence Horn in her book gives us interesting details regarding the reaction of the Independents to the new victory of Rome. She writes:

"At first when the rebel priests were holding forth in Catholic churches, they were quite content to use the same white images the Spanish padres used. After Rome won back its churches, Aglipay ordered that the new images should be brown, and that the garments be of native fabrics and style. . . . Much of the service was conducted in native dialects, and a virtue was made of the humble miserable stark quarters in which the Aglipayan church services were held. Some of these churches, mere nipa shacks, with a minimum of tawdry pictures and decorations, have a religious quality often lacking in the run down, old Spanish structures."¹³⁶

Archbishop Fonacier, at the time of his appointment, recalled the early days when services were held in a camarin.¹³⁷ An article in the Graphic, a Filipino newspaper, has this story:

"The bespectacled man (Fonacier) in a white drill suit pointed out the low, squat building on Lemery Street, Tondo. 'that's the camarin,' he said, almost excitedly. He stepped out of the car and surveyed the place with the air of one who had come upon a historic spot and was suddenly filled with emotions of awe and veneration for the past. He spoke on: 'The altar used to be here -' pointing to a pile of lumber, 'and there used to be six doors. We used to live up there, in a room behind the altar . . . the entrance was right here on the other side.' Then, standing on the curb, he added, 'It

135. Ibid., p. 149.

136. Horn, op. cit., p. 241.

137. A camarin is a warehouse or storage building.

was here where I was ordained.' . . . Dona Ninay was the gentle old lady who donated the camarín where Bishop Aglipay held services . . . It was also she who, about 1908, built the present Aglipayan cathedral."¹³⁸

Since the Spanish Cathedrals had meant so much to the Filipino people, it is no wonder that many felt that losing these buildings would be a death blow to the Independent Church. It is natural that this new situation struck hard at the new Church and had some effect upon its membership.

**Poorly Prepared
Priests**

It was some months after the court decision that the full effects of this tragedy became apparent.

And it was not so much the fact that the Independents had lost their imposing churches that caused the trouble, for in many of their shack-like churches there was a fine spirit of worship and loyalty, but the shortcomings of the Independent priests caused an ever greater falling away of members. The Filipino priests of the Independent Church were too often not prepared for the work and effort necessary to hold their members. They could speak long and eloquently on their hatred of the Friars and the injustice of the court decision, but they had no positive message to give their people. "They could not furnish that spiritual power which was so badly needed to take the place of the pomp and ornateness with which religion had been associated. These Filipinos were a kindly people and quickly tired of constant condemnation of the Friars. They were a religious people and found little to satisfy their soul hunger. After three years of gorgeous spectacles their new bamboo

¹³⁸. Graphic, October 24, 1940.

churches seemed lean and meagre. Their services dropped off until they would have meetings in many places only for funerals, weddings, baptisms, or annual fiesta days."¹³⁹

Unexpected Revival The Presbyterian annual report of 1908 stated that the

Aglipayan Church had almost been stifled. They said:

"It is evidently losing its hold except perhaps in two provinces, and is doomed to extinction in time."¹⁴⁰ The majority of witnesses had the same opinion, and it was a great surprise to all when the church showed signs of recovery later on. By 1912 Mr. James L. McLaughlin of the American Bible Society wrote:

"It has gone ahead and erected buildings of its own, and has struggled with the tremendous problem of preparing and directing a ministry and attending to the care of its membership in a way, that, when we consider the immensity of the task, we can but marvel that they have done as well as they have. There has been a gain, and on the whole, the church seems to be gaining ground these latter days. . . . Not a few of those who entered the ranks of the Evangelical churches have since drifted into the Independent Filipino Church, as they have been moved by the spirit of independence and protest against too much intervention in their church life."¹⁴¹

In many places there was a falling away, while in other places the congregations grew stronger and formed solid organizations. This depended upon the priest. If the priest could supply their needs, and give them spiritual food, they remained. If the priests could offer nothing but oratorical protests and anathemas, they naturally fell away. Some drifted back to the Roman Catholic Church which, under new foreign

139. Laubach, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

140. *Ibid.*, p. 150.

141. *Ibid.*, p. 151.

priests, made every effort to attract them, especially those who were the most superstitious and who had not felt much animosity toward the Roman Catholic Church. Yet it was surprising that Aglipay, the great leader and organizer, was able to hold as many members as he did.

Mr. McLaughlin paid Aglipay a splendid tribute when in 1911 he wrote:

"We would not impugn the motives of the founder of the church; rather would we sympathize with him in his herculean task of organizing, sustaining and building up a church without funds, trained workers, or constituency, other than a crowd of ignorant people prompted by the spirit of revolt against any established authority. It is not strange that he was compelled to put into places of prominence mere boys, who have been carried away by their positions and have become entangled in social and political scandals which have worked for the detriment of the movement."¹⁴²

¹⁴². Ibid., p. 150, quoting from the American Bible Society Report of 1922, p. 369.

Chapter Six

Doctrine and Practice

A Doctrinal Hodgepodge

The doctrinal development of the Aglipayan Church is as interesting as it is sad. Originally the Church intended to retain Roman Catholic doctrine in all its purity, as De los Reyes put it. Gradually some Protestant doctrines crept into the movement, as was sketched in preceding pages. But the saddest feature of Aglipayan doctrine is its tendency toward Modernistic theology. It was this feature which became the chief hindrance to further cooperation between the Aglipayans and the Evangelical Protestants. At present it is a jumble of Romanism, Protestantism, and extreme rationalism. To a great extent, the doctrinal position of a given Aglipayan church would depend on the views of the priest in charge. In some cases Aglipayans and Protestants have held union services, and in others the Aglipayan priests have been the close friends of Roman Catholic priests. "There are what the Anglicans would call 'high church' and 'low church' tendencies which are as far apart as they could well be."¹⁴³

Whence Came Rationalism?

Isabelo de los Reyes is the man mostly responsible for bringing rationalism into the Independent Church.

143. Ibid., p. 152.

"As early as 1899, more than three years before the organization of the Church, Don Isabelo de los Reyes . . . was thundering in Spain, 'our only kind of Gospel or Bible is Science,' and this is to be studied rationally."¹⁴⁴ It is to be regretted that this man did not have a better theological background. Dr. Laubach states, "De los Reyes upon a totally inadequate foundation set about to construct a religion for his nation."¹⁴⁵ At one time de los Reyes felt that all religions were wrong, but later through the study of the Bible he decided that it was only the Roman Catholic Church which was wrong. Yet de los Reyes is a thorough going modernist. He takes great delight in new progressive ideas just because they are new. He exalts science and reason above all other authorities. Reyes has written:

"All the best sons of the country wrote against the abuses of the Spanish friars who were in control of the civil authorities. Rizal, Marcelo de Pilar, Father Jose Burgos, and Anton Redigor bear witness to this. The execution of almost all these great Filipino writers gave more power to their writings so that they became the gospels of our race. . . . Our Independent Church was established as an expression of faith in the immortal teaching of its heroes. Led by the influence of their writings, it has from its inception proclaimed religious liberalism. Belief in progressive religion became its foundation stone."¹⁴⁶

The religious liberalism present in the Independent Church from its

144. Testimony of Juan A. Rivera. The quotations which are here so identified are taken from the history, The Aglipayan Movement, written in 1932 by Juan A. Rivera. Mr. Rivera is not a member of the Independent Church. From 1934 to 1937 he was Governor of La Union Province, Luzon. The writer has taken this testimony from a section of Dr. Cornish's book, Philippine Calling.

145. Laubach, op. cit., p. 153.

146. From The Position of the Independent Church, written by Isabelo de los Reyes, by request of Bishop Aglipay, especially for the book, Philippine Calling, by Dr. Cornish.

beginning has come from Rizal and other great patriots. It is deeply rooted in the teachings of the brilliant intellectuals of the revolutionary period, and has been conditioned by the impact of science, and thus the church has followed "scientific truth." Aglipay himself is largely responsible for infusing the Church with this principle. In a public speech or sermon Aglipay stated:

"Our church has never forgotten this unavoidable duty of satisfying our insatiable thirst for increasing knowledge, and in the midst of scarcity of material resources, it has proclaimed before the world our high resolve to preach a religion and a morality in absolute harmony with the truth brought forth by modern science. This decision to identify ourselves with free reason, and to reject dogmas based merely on faith in certain traditions and Scriptures, on the one hand has provoked the most bloody antagonism of many churches, venerable on account of their antiquity; on the other hand however, it has won for us the sympathy of the wise and of all the liberal churches of the world."¹⁴⁷

Statement of
de los Reyes

De los Reyes felt that all religions were good at the bottom, and at one time he proposed that the

Filipino people return to their own ancient worship of the god Bathala. He argued that the fact that God allowed so many religions in the world proved that God wanted a distinctive Filipino Religion. Again in his own writings we read:

"Our Church has retained from the Roman Catholic Church all that was found reasonable and harmless. The vestments and many of its magnificent ceremonies, that possess so great an appeal for the Filipinos and other artistic peoples, were retained, but with a rational interpretation. What is a myth to science must be a myth to us. The ritual is for the service of men, our prayers are translated into all the dialects. Rejecting all ecclesiasticism, we preserve the real teachings

¹⁴⁷. Quoted in Cornish, op. cit., pp.124-125.

of Jesus: 'Love to God and of our fellow beings.' We retain images on our altars, just as the American Unitarians have retained the figures of saints in stained glass windows, but not for worship. The images to us are only reminders of the eminent virtues of the persons represented.

We accept the leadership of Jesus as the greatest master of men, but we acknowledge him not as God but as a man, not exempted from certain frailties common to all humans. We maintain always that modern science must inspire our doctrines; hence since our establishment we have declared that through evolution man has become what he is today. We admit no miracles. We believe in God as the Mysterious Energy that keeps the Universe and that gives life and light and directs all beings. We always have maintained that the Bible has many interpolations and inaccuracies. Yet we consider the Bible as a holy book with many excellent lessons. We believe that all the scriptures of the world contain good."¹⁴⁸

Doctrinal Statement
of 1905

In 1905 the Independent Church released a
brief statement which sets forth its doctrine.

Dr. Laubach quotes from Willis, "Our Philippine Problem" this section:

"Its doctrines are rationalistic, conforming vigorously to the results of modern science. It accepts Darwinism, harmonizing it with Biblical doctrine. It denies the trinity of persons of the divinity, but believes in a trinity of attributes and names. The explanation of this idea accepted by the church is entirely new and peculiar to itself, founded upon reasoning, based upon scriptural text and upon rational writings. It denies original sin, as well as the view that the consequences of such sin were expiated through Jesus Christ, but it maintains that Christ's sacrifice has redeemed us from our errors, passions, and weaknesses by means of His divine attributes and inimitable example, but not through actual material sacrifice. It aims in its constitution and rules to re-establish a purer democracy and the common holding of wealth which Jesus preached and the disciples practiced. In general, the advanced doctrines of the Iglesia Filipina aim to re-establish evangelical truth, disfigured as it has been by the Romanists, and to restore the pre-eminence of the Filipino clergy, which has been usurped by the friars."¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁸. The Position of the Independent Church.
¹⁴⁹. Laubach, op. cit., pp. 153-154.

That the doctrine of the Independent Church is thoroughly liberal and modernistic is exemplified by the motto placed on the altar of their Churches: "Biblia y Ciencia, Amor y Libertad".¹⁵⁰

Biblia Filipina In 1908 the Independent Church issued a new version of the Gospel, which selects, paraphrases, and supplements sections of the Bible. Rev. P. H. J. Lerrigo, who has translated several interesting sections of this Gospel, has written an article entitled, "A Bible of Filipino Manufacture."¹⁵¹ This Filipino Bible is principally based on Mark as "the oldest and most reliable of the evangelists" and the least adulterated with paganism. The new version makes interesting reading, but it is a rationalized Gospel written in ordinary prose language. The Independents would say that it is "harmonized, explained, and expurged of the thousand interpolations and contradictions which are carried by the canonical texts, in the light of the writings of the Prophets and Apostles, and other ancient codices which are conserved in the libraries of Jerusalem, Rome, England, France, and Spain."¹⁵² Since the Independent Church had by this time accepted rationalism and science as the only norm of faith, it is not at all surprising that their new Bible eliminates miracles, or if it retains a few miracles, it gives them rationalistic naturalistic interpretations. Accordingly, the trinity, resurrection, and atonement are omitted, while the unity of God is the chief point held. This Bible does, however, stress the divine incarnation:

150. In English this would be, The Bible and Science. Love and Liberty. Cornish, op. cit., p. 137.

151. This article may be obtained from the American Northern Baptist Mission.

152. Laubach, op. cit., p. 154.

"The Eternal, by virtue of his limitless omnipotence, was incarnated in the bosom of the Blessed Virgin Mary, without intervention of man, with a special nature, sinless and divine. Although He had the appearance of a man He did not cease to be God; He was not a man as we are, but God with us."¹⁵³

But even though they hold the divinity of Christ in this fashion, they do not believe in his resurrection from the dead but explain it in this fashion:

"But Mary Magdalene remained without near the sepulchre, and, standing thus weeping, she stooped down to look into the sepulchre; and not finding her idolized master, but only those painful souvenirs which were left (his body having been moved to another grave), there came upon her, in the face of the desperate idea that she might never again see her well-beloved, a crisis or an infinite anguish, and in the intensity of her bitterness she lost consciousness and became as one seeing a vision of angels (as says St. Luke 24,23), and she saw two angels dressed in white seated, the one at the head and the other at the foot of the place where the body of Jesus had lain. And they said unto her, 'Woman, why weepest thou?' She answered, 'because they have taken away my Lord and I know not where they have laid Him.' And having said this she turned about and saw Jesus standing; but she did not recognize Him. Jesus said to her, 'Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?' She, thinking it was the gardener, responded, 'Sir, if thou hast borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him and I will take Him away.' Jesus said to her: 'Mary.' She recognized suddenly the affectionate voice of her beloved, was carried away by delirious jubilation, and with all the enthusiasm and tenderness of which a loving daughter is capable, upon seeing her adored father resurrected, exclaimed: 'Rabboni!' (which signifies Master, in the diminutive of affection); but when she attempted to embrace the feet of her fantasmagoric Master, the vision disappeared."¹⁵⁴

Certainly the Independent Church showed sublime self-confidence in

153. P.H.J.Lerrigo, A Bible of Filipino Manufacture.
154. Lerrigo, op. cit.

setting forth a modern version of the Gospel such as they did. It was a disappointment to many that Aglipay, who many believed would gradually draw closer to orthodox Protestantism, should allow his followers to issue a new version of the Bible, considering their almost complete lack of training and education. That they should so assail Holy Scriptures, stripping it of all that is true religion indicates their complete acceptance of science and liberalism.

Their Just exactly how near to the Unitarian Church of America
Credo the Aglipayans have drawn is shown by their Credo, or con-

fession of faith:

"All stand and follow the priest.

I believe in one God, we praise His holy name, the Force which fills the universe, as said the prophet Jeremiah, which fills the heavens and the earth, intelligent, eternal, supreme and mysterious, which gives life, directs, moves and sustains all beings; which is the great soul of the universe, the beginning of all life and movement. Although His nature has not yet been completely manifested unto us, we try to apprehend it and to see in His marvelous works His power and His admirable wisdom. We hear in the depths of our conscience His most holy voice, we experience His diligent and loving fatherhood in the providential satisfaction of our daily needs. I believe that as God is the Supreme Being, He is also the supreme Perfection. I believe that God made man to contribute with his virtues and activities to the general well-being and progress; and for this reason we ought to be useful always and with our work we should seek for the satisfaction of our needs, think and work well, for God will recompense the good in this world, and will punish in this world bad intentions and deeds, but not with the absurd hell. The inexorable justice of God is perfected through His infinite compassion. I believe that the eternal as my most loving Father protects me now, and will recognize me at death, as a good father, full of pity, would recognize his son. As it has been proved by modern science, I shall not disappear forever, but only be transformed. Amen."¹⁵⁵

155. Cornish, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

**Their
Prayers**

Except for the mention of the name Christ, there is nothing in their prayers which even hints at the Gospel of Christ. They exalt science to the highest, while they condemn "ancient religions" (those which still preach the Gospel) as being blind. Their doctrine of work righteousness is evident in some of their prayers. In a sense it is true that their prayers are beautiful if considered only from the point of view of language and flow of words and their "higher" thoughts. But when we view them in the light of the Gospel, they are dead and worthless. The Aglipayans have prayers for the dead and show a belief in salvation even after death. The following is a good example of their prayers:

"O Supreme Intelligence, noble light of the Universe! We pray Thee fervently to bless us with Thy light so that by the guidance of science we may know the marvels of Thy Supreme Power. Bless us, Oh God; that we may know and feel Thy sublime nature. Bless us, that we may learn the virtues necessary for our spiritual elevation and well-being. Bless us, Oh most holy Father, that we may consider holy goods holy. Sanctify us, our spirits and our intelligence, so that we may with aptitude make these investigations worthy of veneration. Father, bestow upon us Thy holy benediction! Amen."¹⁵⁶

**The Seven
Sacraments**

"The Independent Church considers the Sacraments as a collection of the ritualistic prayers through which we ask God for special graces." However, the Independents deny that the sacraments have any intrinsic value. They retain the seven sacraments established by the Council of Trent, but as they say, they eliminate all superstitious elements. Regarding Baptism, they teach that it does not cleanse from original sin but is a "visible profession of faith in God

156. Ibid., pp. 88-89.

and the teachings of Jesus. We baptize with clean water in the name of Jesus." Confirmation to them is the "ratification by adult members of their adherence to the Church." On confession they teach that the sinner must repent only to God, but may, if he wishes, confess to the priest as if he were a doctor of their souls. "The priest must avoid all inquisitive questions and limit himself wholly to straightening out the penitent." The Independent Church keeps the outward form of the Roman mass, but their service differs essentially. "It is a memorial, and we deny that the bread and wine are offered as sacrifice. We deny transubstantiation." Extreme Unction is regarded as symbolically commending the sick to God. They deny the theory of Apostolic Succession, and hold that ordination is an outward sign of the grace of God in the hearts of the clergy. "It confers upon the priest the proper general authority to perform the duties of the ministry." It is a "prayerful commissioning" of their men in the priesthood. In regard to matrimony, they follow all the provisions of the civil marriage law. "This sacrament perfects the legal union of a man and woman."¹⁵⁷

**Heroes Canonized
as Saints**

The Independent Church has an altogether different idea of "saints" than does the Roman Catholic Church. They believe that the saints are heroes and martyrs of a righteous cause, and although they should not be worshipped or made mediators before God, the faithful should emulate their lives of unselfishness and abnegation. Accordingly, as soon as the church was or-

¹⁵⁷. Material and quotations in this paragraph are taken from the second confessional writing of de los Reyes, The Seven Sacraments of the Independent Church. It was written expressly for Dr. Cornish's book, Philippine Calling.

ganized, it canonized Rizal, Burgos, Gomez, and Jacinto Zamora as saints, in 1903.¹⁵⁸ This action brought ridicule from many, but it plainly shows the intense nationalistic attitude of the Aglipayans.

However, the sainted Dr. Rizal gained more importance every year. The Novena del Dr. Jose Rizal, published in 1919, tried to show that Rizal avoided certain scientific errors into which Jesus and his contemporaries had fallen, because he was more modern, better educated and more scientific than Jesus was. "In 1922 Bishop Aglipay was reported in the newspapers as having said: 'Rizal, to us Filipinos, is more than a saint. He is the true Filipino Messiah, whose coming we had longed to see during our colonial days.'¹⁵⁹ Here was a tendency to place Rizal above Christ which put the Aglipayan Church almost altogether outside the ranks of the Christian Churches. It is fortunate, however, that the great mass of its membership is still Christian.

Other Doctrines For the Aglipayans heaven, hell, and purgatory does not exist, except for the punishment one might experience on this earth. "The threat of eternal punishment is a fraudulent theory to whip the people into blind obedience."¹⁶⁰ The Aglipayan church accepts whole heartedly the theory of evolution because it is "scientific". Their accent on that which is scientific is shown in a sermon of Aglipay where he stated: "In the Catholic Bible it is said that when a blind soldier pierced Jesus Christ with his weapon, Jesus' blood spurted out, sprinkling and curing his blind eyes. But, my dear sirs, Jesus Christ had been dead

158. Rivera, The Aglipayan Movement. These four men canonized died as martyrs of the Filipino cause at the hands of the Friars.

159. Laubach, op. cit., p. 156.

160. Rivera, op. cit.

for more than twenty-four hours; there would have been no live blood in his body at all."¹⁶¹ An argument such as this not only shows their rationalistic tendencies, but also their ignorance regarding things historical or scriptural, much less spiritual.

161. Horn, op. cit., p. 142.

Chapter Seven

More Recent Developments

Faithful
Until Death

Gregorio Aglipay held the position of Archbishop of the Independent Church from October 1902 until he died in September 1940. During all these years he had been the leader of his people, loved deeply by the masses. He had risen suddenly and rapidly in the new Church and took it to great heights. That one man should be responsible for the success of this Church is a great honor for any Filipino. During the last years, the duties and responsibilities which devolved upon his shoulders were enormous, but always he continued to work for the further extension of his Church. That this body is popularly known by his name bears witness to his fame and success.

Interesting
Incidents

Aglipay knew his people well and loved them. Dr. Cornish tells of Aglipay's close relationship with his members and gives this story:

"Aglipay led (a procession to another church), mounted on a spirited horse. Between him and all the others there was constant shouting back and forth. Jests flew fast. We had witnessed everywhere the same give and take. He knew his people thoroughly and understood them, and they opened their minds and hearts to him. This was one source of his power. On this day he had come among these mountain

people who were peculiarly his own. Their fathers had protected him. They were jubilant at seeing again their great leader who was both a tradition and their personal friend."¹⁶²

In 1935 Aglipay ran for the presidency of the Commonwealth against Manuel Quezon. He received about 148,000 votes, which was more than fourteen per cent of those cast in the election.¹⁶³ After his defeat he issued strong protests against the unfairness of the election, and Florence Horn speaks in this manner of the incident:¹⁶⁴

"After his defeat Aglipay faithfully kept up his stinging criticism of Quezon's leadership. Whenever Quezon was photographed playing golf with Archbishop O'Doherty, that was a signal for a fiery tirade against both the Roman Church and on Manuel. When Quezon decided to cut down expenses for defense, Aglipay loudly urged universal military training for all able-bodied Filipinos. Last summer, at the age of eighty, Aglipay died. At no time in his long life had he been a serious menace either to the Vatican or to Manuel Quezon."¹⁶⁵

Aglipay's Marriage

Although the Independent Church ruled that their priests might marry, and even recommended that they should marry, Aglipay himself never married until late in years. The "News Summary" in the Philippine Magazine of March 1939, has this article:

"Archbishop Aglipay, head of Philippine Independent Church, aged 79, marries Miss Pilar Jamias, of Sarrat, Ilocos Norte, 64, for many years a teacher. He has for many years opposed celibacy among the priesthood, but was not himself married."¹⁶⁶

162. Cornish, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

163. Hayden, *The Philippines. A Study In National Development*, p. 573.

164. There seems to have been some truth in the charges which he raised, for in his own provinces, when the National Socialist Party had its officers to conduct the voting, he (Aglipay) did not get a single vote. From "News Summary", *Philippine Magazine*, September 1935.

165. Horn, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

166. "News Summary", *Philippine Magazine*, April 1939.

**Unitarian
Affiliation**

The rise of rationalistic doctrine in the Independent Church and its tendency to minimize Christ and to discount all that is miraculous in Scripture, naturally brought the Independent Church close to the Unitarian Church of America, in doctrine if not in practice. Because of this kinship Aglipay attended a national meeting of the Unitarian Church in the United States.¹⁶⁷ In 1939 Dr. Louis C. Cornish, as the representative of the American Unitarian Association, visited the Philippines and was the guest of Archbishop Aglipay. Dr. Cornish took part in many church services with Aglipay and towards the end of his stay he was appointed honorary president, to succeed William Howard Taft who was the honorary president since the early days of the organization of the Aglipayan Church. (It was pointed out in an early chapter that Taft also was a Unitarian, - p.33.) The service was very impressive and Aglipay issued a proclamation containing the following:

"By these presents we solemnly and publicly declare and proclaim Dr. Louis C. Cornish Honorary President of our Church. May the mysterious Father of the universe maintain in his heart the affection and sympathy he has professed to us, and may our followers continue to be worthy of the fraternal sentiments of all the true liberals of the world. So be it."¹⁶⁸

**Archbishop
Santiago
Fonacier**

When in 1940, Aglipay died, the Independent Church elected its second archbishop. A consistory of 42 persons, including 14 bishops, 14 parish priests, and 14 laymen chose Santiago Antonino Fonacier unanimously to succeed Aglipay.¹⁶⁹ The new

167. Hayden, op. cit., p. 573.

168. Cornish, op. cit., p. 75.

169. Manila Bulletin, October 14, 1940.

archbishop had formerly been Bishop of an important diocese, dean of the best known of the Independent divinity schools, captain in charge of the Independent Church army chaplains, member of the important government commissions, and a former Senator. He had been a priest of the Independent Church since 1903 when Aglipay himself ordained him priest at the age of eighteen.¹⁷⁰ He was consecrated Obispo Maximo with high ceremony on October 14, 1940. The ritual required that at the conclusion of the ceremonies a sponsor lave the Archbishop's hands with perfume. "This act was performed by President Quezon, who served as one of the sponsors. Another was General Aguinaldo, famous for his leadership in 1898."¹⁷¹ At the election of the new Archbishop it was decided that he should hold the office for only three years.

"Instead of serving for life as did his predecessor, Bishop Gregorio Aglipay, founder of the church, Bishop Fonacier will serve for a term of only three years. The new leader explained after his election that there was sentiment among members of the consistory in favor of continuing the life term. However, this was overwhelmed by a strong movement for democratization of the church, hence an old amendment, approved in 1906, after Aglipay had served a term of four years, making the "obispo maximo" serve for the rest of his natural life, was killed by an amendment that the term be for three years, with one reelection."¹⁷²

Lack of a
Trained Clergy

Archbishop Fonacier reported to the Philippine
Graphic newspaper that his church is poor and

without properties to speak of. He also lamented the fact that the
Church does not attract more men to its ministry. He says:

170. Graphic, October 24, 1940

171. Cornish, op. cit., p. 115.

172. Manila Bulletin, October 15, 1940.

"The church is facing the same problem it has faced since 1902; that of lack of ministers. Although Aglipayan ministers, unlike Roman Catholic priests, are free to marry, not many men look upon a career under the Philippine Independent Church as worth their while. College graduates could, with comparative ease, attain the high rank of bishop in the church, but only a few diploma holders have joined the Aglipayan ministry so far. At present, the church cannot even afford a seminary of its own, so that prospective Aglipayan bishops have to secure training through practically the same methods of understudyship which present high officials of the Church had to pass."¹⁷³

Blair and Robertson, the writers of an immense fifty-three volume work on the Philippine Islands in its early years, give some information regarding the type of education which the Aglipayan Church endeavored to give its priests.

"1st year: Bible and theology simplified.
2nd year: Amplification of the preceding course, and application of the Bible to all problems of life, social and private, to the ceremonies and to priestly life, and to ecclesiastical discipline. By simply passing these courses, and if the good deportment of the students be proved, they shall be ordained as presbyters and placed in the parish churches . . . Those who shall have studied theology already in the Roman seminaries shall be ordained as soon as possible as sub-deacons, deacons, and presbyters, successively."¹⁷⁴

Since the Church had no Seminary as Senor Fonacier pointed out, no doubt the instruction of priests was done by understudy, just as Fonacier himself had received his instruction in the early days. Dr. Cornish reports in his book that because of the urgent need for educated priests, the Church in 1939 had decided to establish a central seminary to take the place of the tutorial type scattered over the different diocese. They had purchased the building at 1108 Taft Avenue,

173. Graphic, October 14, 1940.

174. Blair and Robertson, op. cit., p. 236.

Manila, where classes had already started.¹⁷⁵ Whether this seminary was a success or whether it failed is impossible to say, because of the scarcity of information on the subject. However, it seems that since Fonacier mentioned their lack of a seminary, it must either have been a failure, or was destroyed in the late war.¹⁷⁶

**Fonacier's
Great Hopes**

Archbishop Fonacier recognized the weaknesses in his Church but was not discouraged by them. He has great hopes for development and improvement. In an interview with a newspaper he gave these views:

"Fonacier finds inspiration in the fact that some 1,600,000 Filipinos registered themselves as Aglipayan sympathizers, if not regular Aglipayans, during the taking of the last census. He thinks that there are more Aglipayans than the public generally believes,¹⁷⁷ that his Church is one of the better by-products of the nationalistic movement which had its beginnings in Father Burgos' time. About twenty out of every one hundred Philippine Island Army trainees is an Aglipayan."¹⁷⁸

**Hard Work
Necessary**

Fonacier urged all his followers to work unceasingly until every Filipino had been converted to the Aglipayan Church. He said:

"Let us not rest on our laurels. It is rather for us to be always active and alert, and to work, work, work. Let us work unceasingly, with enthusiasm and true faith, and let us not rest until we have attained the full realization of those solemn aims which obliged us to separate from the Church of Rome and to found our own Philippine Independent Church, which is the true church of the Filipinos, for the Filipinos and by the Filipinos."¹⁷⁹

175. Cornish, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

176. The later explanation seems the more logical one, especially when we realize the enormous destruction, particularly of government buildings and schools, in Manila.

177. It is quite possible that Fonacier is correct in so thinking, for McLeish in his late work, which is a war time survey of the Philippines, gives two and a half million as the number of its adherents.

178. *Graphic*, October 14, 1940.

179. *Manila Bulletin*, October 15, 1940.

One of the weaknesses of the Aglipayan Church had been the enormous amount of work and responsibility which rested upon the archbishop. Fonacier, therefore, has determined to reorganize and revitalize the offices of the "obispo maximo" so that everyone in the church especially all bishops and priests, may be made to work for the church's advancement.

"What we need most, are apostles and ministers of God rich in faith, hope and charity, enthusiastic and active, because the lessons of history teach us that it is not the dogmas and doctrines of a church which most contribute to its triumph but apostles . . . armed with the faith that can transport mountains and divide the seas."¹⁸⁰

Whether the new Archbishop will be able to put his plans into effect is doubtful. It is certain that the Church will encounter innumerable difficulties and much opposition. Whether the Church will remain as a permanent factor to be reckoned with in the Philippines remains to be seen.

180. Ibid.

Chapter Eight

An Evaluation

The growth of the Aglipayan Church was phenomenal. Within two years after it was founded it could claim almost three million members. Why was it that the Filipino people were so eager to accept a new Church offering little in the way of a new religion? The Rev. Alvaro Carino, now missionary in the Philippines, says in his work, "Philippine History and Civilization, An Interpretation", that because of "intense nationalism brought about by the revolution which started in 1896 and inflamed by the deaths of their martyrs, the Filipino mind was prepared for the concept of liberty and freedom in its trinitarian implications and did not wait for evangelical Protestantism to come."¹⁸¹ This is borne out by the history of the Philippines, for the success of the Aglipayan movement is an expression of the Filipinos readiness to break away from the Roman hierarchical system and all its evil implications. The Filipinos were disgusted with the abuses which they had been forced to suffer at the hands of the Spanish Friars, and they realized suddenly, that it was not necessary that they suffer them forever. The revolution

181. Carino, Alvaro, Philippine History and Civilization. An Interpretation, Chapter 18, p. 153. (Manuscript Copy)

taught them that they could break away from the established authority of the Roman Church and establish their own Church; a Church by, for, and of Filipino people.

The Independent movement was, therefore, a break from Rome and the Roman system of ecclesiastical tyranny. It was not, as in the case of the Lutheran Reformation in Germany, a reformation of doctrine and life. It was (at least at its beginning) interested purely in social reforms, and therefore became a social reformation, ~~more or less comparable to the reforms of Zwingli and Calvin which were largely social.~~ Rev. Carino writes: "Here in the Philippines the Filipino leaders were largely concerned with social reforms, and no indication can be given to show that spiritual or religious reforms were a primary concern."¹⁸² There were some among its leaders, such as Isabelo de los Reyes, who felt at the beginning that the Independent Church should formulate a new set of doctrine. This man was so radical, that he would have cast out every feature of the Roman Church which had a supernatural aspect. But men of his type were the small minority, and the Independent Church was content with social reforms.

In those early days of the new movement, Aglipay was quite interested in Protestant doctrine which is shown by the various Protestant features which did creep into his movement. The Bible was something new to Aglipay, and once he stated that if he could be shown that the Baptist Church was "the true church of Christ and of the Apostles," he would join them.¹⁸³ Certainly here was the opportunity to give the Independent

182. Ibid.

183. Laubach, op. cit., p. 147.

movement a Biblical basis, and had this been done the Protestant Church would have had a strong beginning in the Philippines. However, it was a job that required delicate handling. Aglipay was on the verge of joining the Protestants and might have done so, had he not believed that by so doing he would be putting himself and his followers under the control of another foreign ecclesiastical body. If there had been a Protestant leader who could have shown Aglipay that to join the Protestants in doctrine and practice and opposition to Rome, did not imply submitting to the authority of the Americans, Aglipay, it seems, might have followed that guidance or direction. But such a man was not present in those early days. The Protestant leaders as a whole, were hesitant to deal with Aglipay, fearing that they would thus be identified with the revolutionistic features of his movement. Rev. Carino has this interesting note: "It seems that the Protestant missionaries had personal misgivings on Aglipay's sincerity. They suspected that the Aglipayan group was just a nationalistic movement. They evidently, in human weakness, harbored the idea that the natives could not be trusted, at least not as yet."¹⁸⁴ Perhaps such was the case, for at any rate the Protestants did not have as much influence on the Independent movement as one would naturally expect.

When in 1906 the Supreme Court of the Islands ruled that the church property which the Independents had held in their possession must be returned to the Roman authorities, the Independent Church suffered a severe blow. That this loss of all their church buildings did not completely stifle the new movement, proves that it was based on more than

184. Carino, *op. cit.*, chapter 18, p. 154.

nationalism. The membership of the Church was at this time greatly decreased, in fact it was soon cut down to almost half the number it once claimed. Yet it continued to remain an influence in the Philippines, and later, contrary to the expectations of the majority of observers, it staged a bit of a comeback. Certainly this speaks well for Aglipay, the leader of the Church, and shows that he had a firm hold on his people and could still claim their loyalty when all seemed lost.

The task which Aglipay, the Archbishop of the Church, had on his hands was almost overwhelming. The new Church was faced with a shortage of priests and could not supply the men necessary soundly to instruct its members. Aglipay provided seminaries, of the tutorial type, to the best of his ability. Often he had to ordain young boys as priests who were without more than a short instruction in the liturgy of the mass. There was nothing else that he could do. He provided the best that was possible at the time. The Church had grown too quickly for it to provide properly educated and indoctrinated priests. Furthermore, it was a poor church, the majority of its members coming from the poorer classes, and therefore it could not afford to build seminaries and imposing church buildings.

When we consider the numerical strength of the Aglipayan Church, and compare it with the membership of the Missouri Synod Lutheran Church, we find reason to marvel at the success of the Aglipayan Church. Our Church has since its beginning possessed seminaries which have provided capable men for its ministry. Its ministry has grown in proportion to the growth of the church at large. Not so with the Aglipayan Church - the demand for priests or ministers came at a time when there were none

to be had. Our Church has built its church buildings according to its needs, gradually building larger and more costly buildings. The Aglipayan Church was handicapped in this respect. For the Aglipayans believed that the Roman Catholic churches which they had taken from Rome rightfully belonged to them. When these were taken from them, they had nothing left, and no money with which to build new churches. If our Church had been under similar circumstances, with only one capable leader to direct all the activities of a church with a membership of more than a million, what would have been its success? Surely it must be admitted that Aglipay, struggling under the weight of responsibilities and duties which fell to him, did a good job of managing so large an organization under the circumstances. We could hardly expect more from one man in the way of control or management.

Although originally the Independent Church had as its aim only a break from Rome and foreign ecclesiastical control, it gradually evolved its own peculiar set of doctrines. The Protestants lost their chance to guide the church into proper Biblical channels, and gradually the new Church drifted into modernism and Unitarianism. Today the Independent Church denies such doctrines as heaven and hell, the vicarious atonement, the Trinity, and in general, all doctrines which do not conform with science. The Church has allied itself with science and the most extreme rationalism. It can no more be considered within the pale of the Christian Church. And as the Church has degenerated in doctrine, its followers and even its leaders have degenerated in their morality. The following is quoted from Carino: "Many of the churches are gambling dens and the priests are nothing more than professionals who earn their living

by baptizing, marrying, and burying people."¹⁸⁵

The attitude of the Filipinos themselves regarding the Aglipayan Church is quite interesting, and not at all surprising when one considers the lack of indoctrination which they have had. In talking with Filipinos who have come to America and now live here, one finds that they have a very hazy conception of the Aglipayan Church or in fact of any church. Most of the Aglipayans who have come to America have automatically joined the Roman Catholic Church, because they feel that it is the church most closely related to their own Church in the Philippines. There are a few, the better educated people, who know the doctrinal position of the Independent Church, and have accordingly either joined the Unitarian congregations in this country, or have joined no church whatever. Undoubtedly the situation is much the same in the Islands. Although there has been an ever increasing number of well educated Filipinos who accept the modernistic doctrine of the Aglipayan Church, the majority of them still believe that it is almost like the Roman Catholic Church in doctrine, and therefore we may say that there are still many Christians among the members of the Aglipayan Church.

Men of our Church who have recently returned from the Philippine Islands, such as the Rev. Theodore Martens, and the Rev. O. H. Schmidt, feel that the Aglipayan Church is almost dead. Rev. Martens particularly had little regard for this Church and stated that it had little influence in the Islands today. This view completely contradicts the hopes and plans of the present Archbishop of the Independent Church, Santiago Fonacier, who believed that through hard work and more indoc-

185. Ibid., p. 156.

trination, the church would grow stronger. Evidently, he has not been able to carry out the plans which he proposed.

Furthermore, there seems to have been a recent split in the Aglipayan Church. It has been impossible to secure information regarding this schism in the Independent Church, but Mrs. E. K. Higdon, who spent many years in the Philippines and whose husband is working there now, writes as follows: "I understand that there has been a split in the Church and that Isabelo de los Reyes, Jr. is Obispo Maximo of one section. The difficulty, as I understand it, was collaboration. I'm sorry my information is not more exact, but I haven't been able to get the documents."¹⁸⁶

When Aglipay died, it was predicted that the Aglipayan Church would die with him. However, it has continued since then, although it has certainly declined in membership and prestige. What this recent split will do to the Independent Church remains to be seen. It may be that within a few more years the Aglipayan Church will be a thing of the past.

186. From a letter written to Professor E. C. Zimmermann by Mrs. E. K. Higdon, March 25, 1947.

Chapter Nine

The Zamora Movement

Of all the schisms which the various Protestant Mission bodies in the Philippine Islands have suffered, the group which broke away from the Methodist Mission in 1909 is the most important. This church to-day claims to be the second or third largest of the Evangelical Churches in the Philippines. Its founder was the Reverend Nicolas Zamora, the first ordained Filipino Protestant preacher. The events which lead up to the formation of his independent body go back to some years before the American occupation.

Paulino Zamora Paulino Zamora is said to be the "Original Protestant" of the Filipino people. About the year 1880 he succeeded in securing a copy of the Bible from a Spanish sea captain, and he began to study it.¹⁸⁷ By reading the Bible he was converted, and since he was unwilling to keep the Gospel of grace to himself he invited his neighbors to study the Bible with him. However, this was during the period of Roman Catholic sovereignty in the Islands and it was against their rules and practice that any laymen should have a Bible in his

187. Laubach, op. cit., p. 164

possession. Therefore, when the Spanish Friars learned that Zamora had a Bible, and was not only studying by himself but was also teaching its doctrine to his neighbors, Zamora was seized by the authorities and cast into prison. After a "trial" he was banished to an island in the Mediterranean Sea where he remained until the Americans conquered the Philippines. During this time his son Nicolas Zamora was educated in Roman Catholic colleges and dedicated to the priesthood. Paulino Zamora was released and returned to Manila in 1898, the same year in which his son was graduated, and in which the Americans entered Manila.

**Soldiers
Institute**

Dr. Laubach reports that Nicolas Zamora also became interested in the Bible which had caused his father to be banished, and he studied it secretly while attending the Catholic college.¹⁸⁸ When Paulino returned home from his banishment he taught his son Nicolas the Protestant Bible, and both of them became interested in a Protestant Mission which was being opened in Manila. In July 1899, Mr. Arthur Prutch held an institute in Manila for the American soldiers. He announced that he would begin conducting Protestant services in the Spanish language at this institute for Filipinos. The services were conducted with the aid of an interpreter for three Sundays, but at the fourth service the interpreter did not appear. By this time the audience had grown to thirty people, among whom were Paulino and Nicolas Zamora. Since Mr. Prutch could not speak Spanish he asked Paulino Zamora to speak. Devins gives the following account of the service in which Nicolas Zamora became a preacher:

188. Ibid., p. 165.

"The old man stood up, and though he had stood alone for religious liberty in the Philippine Islands for years, and although he had suffered banishment and the loss of property, he could not speak in public. When the trembling father failed to speak to the people he turned to Nicolas and said: 'Nicolas, you try.' Nicolas sprang to his feet, read with enthusiasm the passage his father had taught him and told the people he had found peace without the intercession of the priests. He showed that all priestly intercession was unnecessary, the way of life being made plain in the Word of God, and denounced in a vigorous manner the friars for the way they taught the Filipino people. 'Nicolas, will you speak again next Sunday?', said Mr. Preutch as the young man sat down. Nicolas replied: 'It will give me great pleasure.'¹⁸⁹

Thus it was that Nicolas became a preacher. He was a powerful speaker and the news that he would preach again drew a large crowd of Filipino listeners. In a few months time, he was preaching at seven different centers, and was the "most widely known, best loved, and most hated man in Manila."¹⁹⁰

Zamora As a result of the fervent preaching of this Filipino
Becomes A preacher, hundreds of people became Protestants, even
Methodist though there was no ordained minister leading them. The Methodists
then called a quarterly conference under Bishops Warne and Thoburn¹⁹¹
to discuss the problem of supplying these new converts with an ordained
minister, and they considered the possibility of ordaining Nicolas
Zamora as a Methodist Minister. The entire group of men recognized
Zamora as a good man, well educated, married, converted, knowing his
Bible, and an eloquent speaker, but they raised the objection that he

189. Devins, *op. cit.*, p. 307.

190. *Ibid.*, p. 308.

191. Bishop James M. Thoburn of the Methodist Church was the first Protestant missionary to arrive in the Islands, having been transferred from India.

did not know Methodism, and therefore it was absurd to think of ordaining him as a Methodist minister. To this objection, Bishop Warne answered, "I am going to remain in Manila a month, and if that is the only objection I will teach him Methodism."¹⁹² This promise prompted the conference to recommend his ordination. The following is Bishop Warne's report concerning some features of the instruction which he gave Zamora:

"I promised to teach Nicolas Methodism. I do not know how much he learned about Methodism, but I learned much about Romanism. We studied the doctrines and rules of our church, and he was greatly interested. I said to him: 'You must have Sunday-School and teach the Bible to your children.' With knitted brow and darkened countenance he said, 'Do you mean to tell me that I must teach the Bible to little children? I thought I had gone a great way in teaching it to adults.' I then told him the facts about Sunday-Schools in Protestant countries; and as the idea of thus educating the children dawned upon him, his countenance changed, brightening into a smile, indicating intelligent understanding, and, retaining his Roman Catholic terminology, he sprang up, caught my hands and said, 'Father Warne, when you come back you will find our children in Sunday-Schools.' . . . They now have in Manila Sunday-Schools and family worship, and prayer meetings, class meetings, Bible-schools, open air preaching, Epworth Leagues, quarterly and district conferences and a fully organized Methodist Church."¹⁹³

After his instruction under Bishop Warne, Nicolas Zamora was ordained a minister of the Methodist Church by Bishop Thoburn in 1899.¹⁹⁴ Zamora's aged father sat in the audience, and after the ordination the old man rushed forward and threw his arms about Bishop Thoburn, saying

192. Devins, *op. cit.*, p. 308.

193. *Ibid.*, pp. 309-310.

194. This date is uncertain, since source material is scarce, and does not give the exact date. However, it was very soon after Bishop Thoburn had arrived in Manila, since the Methodists felt the urgent need for a native minister.

in Spanish the words of Simeon, "Lord now lettest Thou thy servant depart in peace. . . ." ¹⁹⁵ Nicolas was also sent to Shanghai by the Methodists where he studied for several months. ¹⁹⁶

Success and Popularity After Zamora returned to the Philippines his success as a preacher was phenomenal. In 1902 at a thanksgiving service he preached for 12,000 persons, among whom were Gregorio Aglipay and Isabelo de los Reyes. In the chapel at Tondo he converted many Filipinos, among whom was Dona Narcisa Dimagiba. This woman then went to Atlag where she started a church of her own, directed its construction, and sent for Zamora to come and dedicate it. This he did and later dedicated a chapel at Duhat before a thousand people. ¹⁹⁷

His Courage Dr. Laubach tells us of one instance which displays Zamora's great courage and ability as a defender of the truth. His brother, the presidente of the town of Caloccan, invited him to come and give the people of that town their first taste of evangelical preaching. A great crowd of people gathered at the town theater to hear him, and as Zamora himself told it:

"As I was about to conclude my sermon in the theater, the Filipino (Catholic) priest entered, took hold of my coat and showed his desire for a discussion. I finished my sermon, and then began a discussion upon the inutility of prayers to the saints, accompanying my arguments with Bible references. The priest was unable to reply. . . . After a general discussion for some time, I asked him to select any one of the doctrines taught by Romanists, and which would not be believed by Protestants, to serve as a basis for our

195. Compare Devins, op. cit., pp. 305-310.

196. Laubach, op. cit., p. 303.

197. Ibid.

discussion. He was unwilling and simply showed me his ignorance in regard to religious matters. After our discussion I promised to show him, on the following Sunday, all of my Bibles, one translated by Padre Scio Torres Amat, the Latin Vulgate, the Hebrew, and the Greek. The following Sunday I took them with me. More than two thousand people who heard the discussion were waiting. We waited for the priest for several hours but he did not leave his convent. Then, accompanied by a great crowd, I went to the convent and showed him my Bibles, renewing the discussion. . . . He was unable to reply in any other manner than a blow directed at my face, which I was able to escape. Many desired to avenge the blow, but thanks to the precaution of the padre in retiring to his room, trouble was averted."¹⁹⁸

Spirit and Zeal In the following years, Zamora's fame spread through-

out the Philippines. He preached at every opportunity in the territory of the Methodists. He was given "the most difficult places, because he could transform them into wide open doors in a few months."¹⁹⁹ When trouble arose at Tondo which threatened to split the church in two Zamora was sent there and soon had all its members quieted and loyal to him. His spirit of love and his desire to spread the Gospel to his people is revealed in these his words:

"There is a great desire in my heart for the salvation of my countrymen. Many are preaching schism in this field, but I have been able to prevail against it, and by the grace of God we have not lost a single member because of it. We have 558 members in full connection, 102 probationers and 800 adherents."²⁰⁰

**Zamora's
Defection**

In 1909 Nicolas Zamora determined to break away from the Methodist Church established by the Americans. That he should do this even though he had struggled against those who wanted schisms, and had spoken in words as given above, seems strange. But

198. Ibid.

199. Ibid., p. 304.

200. Ibid., p. 305.

the demand for self-determination and proper recognition became too strong. Dr. Laubach says, "Zamora chafed under the lack of appreciation which he felt he suffered from foreigners for some years, and finally came to the conclusion that the Filipino Church could move more rapidly if it out loose from mission control."²⁰¹ A writer of the Methodist Church speaks in this fashion regarding the reasons for his defection:

"He became dissatisfied with his salary, the slowness of his rise in the Conference, and the growing importance of his fellow Filipino preachers. The schism was caused partly by the spirit of the times in the Philippines, and partly by the personal ambition of one man. The Filipino papers are full of independence talk and it is the theme of the politician's address. Everywhere the people are told that they can run their own affairs without interference from outsiders."²⁰²

Evidently personal feelings and ambition did enter into the picture to some extent, but by and large it might be said that the defection was the result of the Filipino desire for independence in Church as well as in state and civil affairs. Zamora was a sincere and devout Christian, and led the defection because he honestly felt that it was the best thing for the Filipino Church.

THEMELIF Zamora called the new church body the Iglesia Evangelica Methodista en las Islas Filipinas. (The Methodist Evangelical Church of the Philippines). He took with him the larger part of the membership of the Tondo Church which he was serving, and a few members from each of the Manila churches, making about 1200 in all.²⁰³

201. Ibid.

202. Farmer, Harry, The Philippine Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church, p. 36.

203. Ibid.

At the first meeting of this independent church Zamora was elected bishop. Before the end of the year he claimed a membership of 3,000.²⁰⁴

In his book Rev. Harry Farmer of the Methodist Church relates that besides the members of the Tondo congregation who followed Zamora, he took with him also a few followers in the provinces, where either the preacher or the people had some slight grievance against the Methodist Church.²⁰⁵ Rev. Farmer seems to minimize the new movement saying, "It is surprising that the Zamora movement received so little support from the great mass of our Filipino preachers and people."²⁰⁶ That it was mainly those who felt some grievances against the Methodists who joined Zamora in his movement is evidently correct. Dr. Laubach gives this information:

"Pastors who had grievances, real or imaginary, or who felt that their careers were being retarded, followed their countrymen into the new movement. Men too, who had been or who feared that they might be disciplined because of unbecoming conduct, joined themselves with the Zamora movement. Thus one reads in Methodist reports, that the pastor in Hagonoy was 'leaving and going over to the Zamorista camp, because he harbored ill feeling toward the missionaries, because he was refused local ordination, and because he feared an investigation of his character at the next conference.'²⁰⁷

**Weakness of
The Movement**

The weakness in this new movement was the same as that in the Aglipayan movement. The **IREMELIF** (its modern nickname) suffered a lack of sufficiently educated leaders.

Nicolas Zamora himself had a fine Spanish education, having attended

204. Laubach, op. cit., p. 305.

205. Farmer, op. cit., p. 36.

206. Ibid.

207. Laubach, op. cit., p. 306.

Catholic colleges, and so also had some of his associates. However, they all lacked the necessary theological education, having received none at all or at best, a brief course in the fundamentals of Methodism. "Many of the pastors work for their living during the week, and have no time for pastoral visitation or study. They realize this themselves, and are eager for a seminary in which they may educate their young men for the ministry."²⁰⁸ Nevertheless this movement continued to grow until the death of Zamora on September 14, 1914, and since this time it has remained about even in point of membership. In 1924 it claimed thirty-nine pastors and a membership of several thousand.²⁰⁹ The most recent statistical report on its membership states that "this Church spread to eighteen provinces and today is in a sound position. There are 79 ministers with 64 churches and a membership of 18,719."²¹⁰

Its Doctrinal Position

In doctrine and organization the IEMELIF and the mother Methodist Church are identical, for the ground of difference was largely nationalistic, "to have freedom of worship and to show the ability of the Filipinos to lead a brotherhood, the primary purpose of which is to lead citizens of the country to the feet of Jesus."²¹¹ Relations between the two bodies has been greatly improved since the founding of the new body. At first there was such antagonism between the two bodies, that the Roman Catholics pointed to it in scorn as an example of the weakness of the Protestants. The division of the church also had the evil effect of making it hard to interest the un-

208. Ibid.

209. Rodgers, op. cit., p. 176.

210. McLeish, Alexander, A Christian Archipelago, p. 18.

211. Ibid.

churched people in attending church services. Some thirteen years later, however, "the bitterness of former days cooled. In some instances pastors of the two denominations hold joint evangelistic services. The day of complete reconciliation if not reunion seems not far distant."²¹²

Summary,
Evaluation

The spirit of independence and desire for freedom of all foreign control is strong in all Filipino hearts, and it was this feeling of nationalism, as well as the personal feelings of its leaders that lead to the organization of the IEMELIF. The desire to show the ability to carry on church work without help from abroad is a worthwhile purpose, one which all church bodies which do mission work in the Philippines must bear in mind, and seek to put into operation. In the Methodist Church, the missionaries were not ready to give complete independence to the Filipino clergy, for they felt that the native pastors were not yet ready for such freedom. This may be true, but the Methodist missionaries could have and should have made greater efforts to further the formation of an indigenous church. The spark which set off the independent movement which resulted in the Independent Methodist Church was based on personal desire for recognition and advancement and perhaps even spite. But the desire to escape from the authority of ministers from a foreign land is perfectly natural, and unless vigorous steps are taken to maintain the proper relation between the foreign missionary and his native co-workers, making clear the ultimate purpose of establishing an indigenous church, such schisms

212. Laubach, *op. cit.*, p. 306.

can and will occur in any church body. Such schisms often bring with them bitter feelings, (as did this Zamora movement) which causes an offense to Christians and becomes a barrier to the unchurched. The situation in the IEMELIF body has greatly improved since its early days, and it has done much good work in preaching and spreading the Gospel. At present it is firmly established and it should continue to grow in size and influence in the Philippine Islands. In 1931 this body joined with twelve other independent church bodies to form the Tondo Union. This Union pleased many of the missionaries and Dr. Rodgers wrote: "It is hoped that this church (Tondo Union) will unite with our United Evangelical Church."²¹³ Whether this union movement will have good or evil effects upon the IEMELIF remains to be seen.

213. Rodgers, op. cit., p. 179.

Chapter Ten

Other Independent Bodies

La Iglesia Trinitaria Once schisms had begun in the Philippines, others seemed to arise periodically. The *Iglesia Evangelica Methodista* (the Zamora Church) has suffered a schism from its body. This movement, called the *Iglesia Cristiana Trinitaria*, or *La Iglesia Trinitaria*, (Trinitarian Christian Church) was headed by Diosdado Alvarez. The reasons for separation are given by the secretary of this body who states, "We separated not from personal feelings, but because their interior and outside affairs rest solely upon one person, called the Bishop-superintendent, which practice does not meet with our approval." The new Church is ruled by a board of directors headed by an elder, instead of having a supreme bishop. High tributes have been paid to Rev. Moises Buzon, who in 1922 was the elder of the board of directors of the Church. The secretary of this Church body also says concerning its doctrines, "We have no particular doctrines excepting those of the mother Church, Methodist." The *Iglesia Trinitaria* had not long been in existence before it too suffered a schism. It had a small membership and after the new schism it was left with only about 500 members.²¹⁴

214. The quotations and much material in this paragraph is from Laubach, *op. cit.*, p. 307.

Iglesia de Dios The group which broke away from the Trinitarian Church, headed by the Rev. Pedro Castro, called itself the Iglesia de Dios, or, The Church of God. This body is the granddaughter of the Zamora Church and the great-grandchild of the Methodist Church and follows the Methodist doctrines. Rev. James B. Rodgers says in his book that he did not know the reason for this second schism, and that both Rev. Moises Buzon and Rev. Pedro Castro were "most devoted and most beloved for their splendid services."²¹⁵ According to Dr. Laubach, there were in 1922 a dozen ordained pastors and about three hundred members in this Church.²¹⁶

Iglesia de los Cristianos Vivos The very first group which broke away from the parent Methodist Church was the Iglesia de los Cristianos Vivos. This occurred in Bulacan Province in 1905 when a few congregations denounced the authority of the Methodist Episcopal Conference. They call themselves The Church of the Live Christians, or the Religion Evangelica Filipina de los Cristianos Vivos. An unordained preacher named Manual Aurora, "chafing under what he regarded as an inadequate salary, organized a society, the avowed purpose of which was to separate from the Methodist Mission." He withdrew from the Mission and about eighty other members followed him, having nothing against the Church, but being influenced by Aurora's arguments for independence in church affairs. This was known as the Baliuag Revolt (the name of the town where Aurora had been pastor).²¹⁷ "This group

215. Rodgers, *op. cit.*, p. 177.

216. Laubach, *op. cit.*, p. 307.

217. Quotations and much material in this paragraph is from Laubach, *op. cit.*, p. 301.

has since disappeared, absorbed by later branches or withered away because it has no real reason for existence."²¹⁸ The movement spread for a time, and Laubach lists some of their major doctrines, as follows:

"To respect and admit all sorts of religious belief and practice, provided it is not contrary to morality and law.
 To love God and one's own race and nation.
 To recognize natural law as the ruling power in nations and individuals as in all the world.
 To strive for the triumph of Filipino Christianity, and for the salvation, prosperity, strength, and security of the Filipino race."²¹⁹

Later on Aurora came to the conclusion that since God was love, He would not punish anyone for their sins. Naturally this led to immorality and as a result many of the better members fell away and organized another Church, which they called the Iglesia Nacional Filipina, which was officially registered in 1910.²²⁰ The group was led by Leonardo Santos.

Philippine Methodist Church In 1933 the Methodist Church suffered another schism, which resulted in a strong independent Church. At the Annual Conference of the Methodist Church, the Rev. Cipriano Navarro²²¹ made the following motion: "Whereas the course of events has made it clear that connectionalism with the General Conference in America and supervision of our churches in the Philippines provided by such a Conference is no longer a source of true inspiration and wise leadership, I, therefore, move that we here and now declare ourselves independent from the General Conference of America."²²² The Conference was split

218. Rodgers, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

219. Laubach, *op. cit.*, p. 301.

220. *Ibid.*

221. "The Rt. Rev. Cipriano Navarro, Bishop of the Philippine Methodist Church, has been elected executive secretary of the Philippine Federation of Evangelical Churches." From Shanghai Evening Post and Mercury, March 1, 1946.

222. McLeish, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

into two parties for some missionaries felt that this motion should be carried, while the majority felt that the motion was out of order. The Filipino clergy as well as six or more missionaries felt that it was time to make a complete break with the American Conference and to set up an altogether Independent Church. Dr. Rodgers of the Presbyterian Church, who was in the Islands at that time writes, "The movement was started on complaint when the special committee of general conference vetoed an act of the local Methodist Conference."²²³

Extent of
PMC When the conference did not approve the motion for separation, thirty-eight ministers and prominent laymen, joined by six American missionaries, proceeded to establish a new Church called the Philippine Methodist Church. In 1941 this Church had 87 congregations in fifteen provinces under six superintendents. Its workers include 64 pastors, 34 women workers and 107 lay preachers, and its Christian constituency numbers 12,000.²²⁴

Iglesia de los
Cristianos
Filipinos In 1912-1914 the Presbyterians experienced the first schism which affected their church. The causes which gave rise to this division again have nothing to do with doctrine, nor in this case, practice. Dr. Rodgers, who was the missionary stationed in Manila and Cavite where the schism grew, tells us that "false reports published in the local papers about a speech of mine (Dr. Rodgers) in the United States were a cause of division in the Cavite churches."²²⁵ The Presbyterian Annual Report of 1915 gives a

223. Rodgers, op. cit., p. 150.

224. McLeish, op. cit., p. 18.

225. Rodgers, op. cit., p. 178.

discussion of the reasons which gave rise to this schism, and quotes the following statements made by some of the schismatics: "We feel the criticism of our fellow country men who said we are anti-patriotic and belong to a church, officered by Americans." "We desire to show Americans our capabilities as Filipinos in managing our own affairs in the churches." "We wish to fulfill the instruction you are giving us that we should support ourselves." "Elder _____ was trying and very domineering." "Elder _____ returned from the Convention and told us that it was best for us to separate."²²⁶ The main cause of this separation is said to be a desire to have a truly Filipino church, a church self-propagating, self-governing, and self-supporting. This schism was begun by four of the larger Presbyterian churches in Cavite Province and these four united with a few smaller groups or congregations in Rizal and Laguna Provinces, and formed the Iglesia de los Cristianos Filipinos. The group is commonly called the Cristianos Filipinos, or, in English, the Church of the Christian Filipinos.²²⁷ Dr. Laubach says concerning this organization: "In spite of the fact that it was a movement of ignorant people led by poorly trained pastors, it has persisted and continued to grow."²²⁸ The Filipino minister who led this group to form an independent organization was Rev. Gil Domingo. The Church is still strong in number, being one of the largest independent Filipino Churches in the Islands.²²⁹ It was incorporated in 1919.²³⁰

226. Laubach, op. cit., p. 308.

227. Cf. Rodgers, op. cit., p. 172.

228. Laubach, op. cit., p. 307.

229. Neither Laubach nor Rodgers give the number of followers which this body could claim, but Rodgers in his book says, "The largest number (of thirteen independent bodies who formed a union) were the first named (the Cristianos Filipinos) who had left our Presbyterian group twenty years ago (1913)." Rodgers, op. cit., p. 179.

230. Laubach, op. cit., p. 309.

**Schism Became
A Blessing**

The Presbyterians feel that the formation of the **Cristianos Filipinos** became a blessing to them, because it led them to reorganize in a way that prevented further schisms. The break away from the American body by the Rev. Gil Domingo naturally caused excitement and a feeling of rebellion and agitation in Presbyterian churches throughout Presbyterian fields. Therefore, to forestall further movements of independence, the Presbyterian Conference on October 8, 1914 resolved to withdraw from the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America and become the Evangelical Church of the Philippines (Independent Presbyterian) a truly independent Filipino Church. This step was taken with the consent of the American Synod, and to accentuate the feeling of Filipino independence, the clerical missionaries ceased to be members of the mother Church and became members of the new organization.²³¹ In 1929 this body became part of the United Evangelical Church of the Philippine Islands.²³²

**Church of The
New Jerusalem**

In 1916 the Church of the Christian Filipinos suffered a schism within its own body. This time Ildfonso Aguli and ten others established a small church which they called the Church of the New Jerusalem, and opened communications with the Swedenborgians in America.²³³

**Iglesia Evangelica
Unida de Cristo**

In 1933 another large independent Church was formed by pastors and congregations which separated from the Methodists and Presbyterians around Manila.

231. Cf. Rodgers, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

232. *Ibid.*, p. 176.

233. Laubach, *op. cit.*, p. 308.

McLeish gives the following statistics: "This has now spread to twelve districts and has 150 ministers of whom 97 are ordained. It has a membership of 50,000 (?) and is called Iglesia Evangelica Unida de Cristo (IgEUC)"²³⁴ Rodgers says this Church is carrying on its work with zeal and promise of effective service.²³⁵

Iglesia Ni Cristo Another fairly large Church was formed by Felix Manalo,

who had served for a year as an evangelist of the Disciples Mission and later he served a year as a worker with the Seventh Day Adventists. The body formed was called the Iglesia ni Cristo, which Rodgers says is not to be confused with the "Iglesia de Cristo (Disciples)"²³⁶ while Dr. Laubach refers to it as "the Church of Christ".²³⁷ It is commonly called the Manalista Church. They are eclectic in doctrine, drawing their teachings from many sources. Rodgers says they "suddenly decided that the doctrine of the deity of Christ is incorrect . . . They are the group who are taught that their leader is the angel promised in Rev. 7, 2, who is to seal the 144,000."²³⁸

Other Churches The above are the most important of the Independent

Churches formed by the nationalistic Filipinos. There are many of them which are not even recorded in any statistics. Mr. E. K. Higdon, an outstanding missionary of the Disciples' Church stated that they have grown like trees from seeds that have fallen on fertile

234. McLeish, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

235. Rodgers, *op. cit.*, p. 180.

236. *Ibid.*, p. 179. Mr. Henry Aradanas, himself a native Ilocano, states that "ni" is a hybrid term derived from the Ilocano and Pangasinan languages, and which means "of".

237. Laubach, *op. cit.*, p. 309.

238. *Ibid.*, p. 183f.

soil. ²³⁹ Many of these are small and have only one or a few congregations, but all are indigenous.

Statistics By 1923 twenty-two independent Evangelical churches
In 1923 had been organized. Of these nineteen were duly incorporated. The following list of those incorporated is taken from Laubach's book. The names are translated from the Spanish: ²⁴⁰

1. The Evangelical Methodist Church in the Philippine Islands
(Rev. Nicolas Zamora and 13 others) IEMELIF 1909
2. The Evangelical Christian Church
(Victoriano Francisco) 1910
3. National Church
(Leonardo Santos) 1910
4. Independent Philippine Church of Pandacan 1912
5. Trinitarian Christian Church
(Diosdado Alvarez y Cruz) 1913
6. Church of Christ (Iglesia Ni Cristo)
(Felix Manalo) 1914
7. Church of Christ The Savior
(Marcelino Brioso - a barber - and others) 1914
8. Evangelical Religion of Living Christians
(Manual Aurora and 2 others) 1915
9. Church of Jesus Christ of the New Jerusalem
(Ildefonso Aguli and 10 others) 1916
10. The Modern Philippine Independent Church
(Jose Gamataro) 1917
11. Church of Jesus Christ the Son of God
(Marcelino Brioso and seven others) 1918
12. Christian Church
(Miguel Garcia) 1918

239. McLeish, op. cit., p. 21.

240. Laubach, op. cit., p. 309.

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| 13. Church of the Christian Filipinos
(Gil Domingo) | 1919 |
| 14. Church of Christ Eternal
(Valentine Lavarino and 4 others) | 1919 |
| 15. Church of God
(Pedro Castro) | 1920 |
| 16. Apostolic Evangelical Christian Church
(Vincente Baltazar y Santos) | 1920 |
| 17. Glorious Christian Church
(Clemente M. Cruz) | 1920 |
| 18. Evangelical Church
(Cornelia Pineda and 11 others) | 1921 |
| 19. Reformed Philippine Church | 1921 |

Besides these churches which were listed in 1923, there are many others which have since sprung up, as well as a large number of semi-Christian churches, such as the Iglesia Rizalina, the Government of the Church of Christ in the Philippines, and the Guard of Honor.²⁴¹

Legionarios de Trabajo Although this organization is not properly speaking an independent church movement, yet as a labor movement it is a secret society and a religion, and is meeting the religious needs of thousands of persons. It had great political power in the Islands and claimed 60,000 members. The Roman Catholic Archbishop has recognized this body by anathematizing the organization and has refused to bury any person who joins its membership. Dr. Laubach lists its teachings and creed, and since they typify the Filipino idealism of the

241. Ibid., p. 310.

present times, they are included in this paper:

"Teachings

Believe in on God who created the world.
Sow not ill will to reap the good.
Love your country, defend her, and save her by fighting
against vice."

"Creed

1. Love God and your country more than yourself - God, because he is the creator of all; your country, because to it we owe life, liberty, and peace.
2. Love is found in good acts; Love is not found in evil designs and acts; Love inspires everyone to do noble deeds.
3. A laborer is a human being with honor and a soul even as the rich and the king.
4. He who depends upon others is deprived of the means that would save him: Self-help.
5. In any fight, the one between the poor and the rich is always unequal. For that reason and above all, it is the duty of the poor to unite and be firm, for from that means Strength and Power are obtained.
6. All are brothers. Nations have no boundaries. The world is our birthplace. But it is not bad to do anything for the peace and comfort of a country where we, our children, and our children's children live.
7. All political parties and religious sects are equal. They all have one aim. So it is strictly prohibited by the Legion to talk or discuss matters pertaining to them.
8. Politics devoid of partisanship and sectionalism, politics for the welfare of the community is tolerated and should be welcomed, embraced, that is, it is allowed as part of the mission of the Legion, it being the means to real Freedom and Brotherhood.
9. To stir and improve Humanity to a common end is the real duty for every free man.
10. To imitate people of good character, love the weak, get rid of evil, and never envy anyone. Never despise your erring brothers, teach them; respect and love the old, the young, and the orphans.
11. Be a good citizen. Because of that, help the strangers and never take advantage of their weaknesses.
12. Respect and love your parents, consider your wife as a true help-mate in happiness or in misfortunes, and love her as you love yourself. Educate your children, for in Education and Efficiency lie the liberty and happiness of the children. A child who is taught, while young, in the path of good examples, is a credit to his father and his country.

13. Respect and defend your Society, for all that you can do for your Society is your honor and credit. A person who despises his own society tends to ruin it and cannot hope for it to be respected and honored by other societies."²⁴²

There are many such societies active in the Philippine Islands today. They have sprung up as a result of the need for improvement in both social and religious life. That the Filipino people accept such teachings as these as their religion demonstrates the need for a pure religion - the need for a church which teaches and builds on the solid foundation of the Scriptures.

242. Ibid.

Chapter Eleven

Conclusion

There is much that the missionaries of the Missouri Synod who go to the Philippines can learn from the history of the Independent Filipino church movements. We can observe in that history the tendencies of the Filipinos in regard to their churches, and their nationalistic attitude which is carried into their church life, and carry on our mission work accordingly. The spirit of nationalism is strong in the Filipino heart, and it must be given consideration when we seek to bring them into the Lutheran Church.

Our missionaries to the Philippines will encounter people who belong to or have belonged to the various church bodies included in this paper. Especially will they encounter those who have had considerable contact with the Aglipayan Church. Therefore we must know the background of these churches and the spirit which led to their establishment. If we wish to reach people who have fallen away from these bodies, especially from the Aglipayan Church, we must know their past history that we may understand their needs.

The chief lesson that we can learn from the story of the Independent Church is the need for a firm indoctrination of members in regard to

what the Bible teaches. The Aglipayan Church could present only a negative program of protest against Roman Catholic oppression and practice. We must present a program of positive instruction, based on the sound principles of the Gospel. After the revolution of 1896 and the insurrection against the Americans, there was a great vacuum in respect to spiritual food in the Philippines. The Aglipayan Church was not able to fill that vacuum with its program of protest and denial. The Protestant Churches which entered the Islands shortly thereafter were able to fill it only in part since they did not reach sufficient people and also since their program of evangelization and Biblical instruction was weakened because of their unionistic tendencies. There is an even greater need for sound Bible instruction and Christian indoctrination in the Philippines today since the last World War has ravaged the land, destroying the majority of its educational facilities. The land is in great need of the living Christian faith in the Redeemer which our Church is able to give it. We can provide them with a sound Biblical foundation.

Yet our missionaries must also be prepared to meet the difficulties which are bound to arise when our Filipino brothers feel the need for greater freedom and independence. We do not want to begin our work in the Islands, only to find in later years five or six different Lutheran organizations which have broken away from our Church to set up their own independent churches. Therefore we must be exceedingly careful not to allow our Filipino coworkers to feel that they are merely assistants under the domination of a foreign ecclesiastical body. We should from the outset teach clearly the doctrine of the Church and the office of the ministry, and in practice permit both to grow up side by side. If

our missionaries will themselves be clear on the doctrine of the Church then the native pastor will feel right at home in his own native Church and he will not need to serve under a foreign missionary and under a mission director in an office in a foreign country and build up a foreign mission in the Philippines. This would also imply that the members of the native church learn their responsibilities in the church for support and in expansion. We must conduct a program which will make the Filipinos feel that they are working together with us, and we with them, with the ultimate aim of establishing a truly Filipino Lutheran Church.

We must seek to build an indigenous Lutheran Church, never for a moment forgetting the policy of sound indoctrination which has been the heritage of the Lutheran Church. Problems definitely will arise if some of our Filipino pastors feel that they are being held down by an American church body. Perhaps it might be best that we adopt the "Intra Muros" policy which the United Brethren missionaries followed in the Philippines. Their policy was that the missionary work within the indigenous church, sharing with his native brethren the trials and responsibilities of building up strong churches. At any rate we must make the Filipinos feel that the Church we establish among them is their Church, a truly Filipino Church for the Filipino people to be led by Filipino ministers. Of course, it will be necessary for a while that the missionary be the leader and guide, especially at the beginning, but the purpose must be to establish a Church by, for, and of the Filipinos, a Church which the Filipino can proudly claim as his own which he would give to his fellow countrymen. Where our missionaries

establish an indigenous church and supply it with indigenous workers who with their people will feel it is their church under the great Shepherd of Souls, there will be no room for the modern-day ultra-nationalistic spirit. This is Christian, and hence is Lutheran. This is what the Filipino desires and we have the set-up according to the Scriptures that fits into his thinking. Let us work "while it is day. The night cometh when no man can work." (John 9, 4).

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